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Rev. Henry Gordon, D. D.

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Henry Gordon was born at Kells, County Neath, Ireland, January 1, 1826, of Highland Scotch parents; was graduated from Trinity College, Dublin; emigrated to America in 1847; studied Theology at the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa.; was ordained to the Ministry July 2, 1848; preached fifty years, two years at Linden, Nova Scotia, eight years at Lisbon, N. Y., and forty years at Cambridge, N. Y.; served as Chaplain of the 123 Regt. N. Y. S. Vo. 1862-1863; was honored with the Degree of Doctor of Divinity by the University of Omaha; died at Coila Manse, Cambridge, N. Y., April 21, 1897.

Dr. Gordon was a man very highly esteemed by all who knew him, an able preacher of the Word, and being a man of scholarly tastes, collected a large library which he willed should be used "in aiding young men studying for the Ministry." In accordance with this provision of his will, his daughter, Jean Cooper Gordon, donated her father's books to The Allegheny Theological Seminary.

R. White. sculpsit.
Viri vere Reverendi
JOSEPHI CARYL
Vera Effigies.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE BOOK OF JOB.

VOLUME I.

By JOSEPH CARYL, ſometime Preacher to the Honourable Society of LINCOLNS-INN, and more lately of St. MAGNUS near LONDON-BRIDGE.

ROM. 11. 33. & JAMES 1. 12.

O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! how unſearchable are his judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out!

Bleſſed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he ſhall receive the Crown of life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him.

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TO THE CHRISTIAN READER:

To those Especially of this

CITY;

Who have been the

Movers and Promoters

OF THIS

WORK.

His Book of Job *bears the* Image *of these times, and presents us with a resemblance of the past, present, and (much hoped for) future condition of this* Nation. *As the personal prosperity of* Job, *so his troubles look like our National troubles; and why may not the parallel be made up, by a likeness in our Restauration?* Job *was the most flourishing, the greatest man of all the men of the East. We are the greatest, and lately were the most flourishing* Nation, *of all the* Nations *of the* North. Our Oxen *(like his)* were strong to labour, our Sheep brought forth Thousands and Ten thousands in our Streets, our Garners were full, affording all manner of Store; our Sons *(like his)* as plants grown up in their Youth, our Daughters as Corner-stones polished after the similitude of a Palace. There was no breaking-in, nor going-out, no complaining *(in reference to outward wants)* in our Streets. We washed our steps with Butter, and the Rock poured us out Rivers of Oyl. The Candle of God shined upon our Heads, and the secret of God was upon our Tabernacles: Our Roots were spread out by the Waters, and the dew *(of blessings)* lay all night upon our Branches. Unto us the Nations gave ear and waited, and kept silence at our Counsel; after our words, they spake not again, and our speech dropped upon them: If we laughed on them, they believed it not: our glory was fresh in us, and the light of our countenance they cast not down: we chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army, as one that comforteth the Mourners. *Surely, a happy* people

were we, *being in such a* case, *yea most* happy were we, *having the Lord (many wayes declaring himself) for our God. And had we (as these* mercies *did oblige us) fill'd up, or labour'd to fill up th'other part, the* better part *of* Job's character; *Had we been a* People perfect *and* upright, fearing God and eschewing evil: *We might (according to the promis'd, and often experienc'd* tenour *of* Gods dealing *with his* people) *have continued and encreased in all that happiness unto this day.*

But we (herein unlike to Job, *and, like a* foolish Nation *and* unwise) *have* ill-requited the Lord, *yea, we have requited the* Lord with evil, *for, and in the midst of all this* Goodness: *Our* Provocations *have been* many, *and our* Backslidings *have been* multiplied. *Our* sins *have put a* Sword *into the* Hand *of God: And God in* Justice, *hath put a* Sword *into the* Hands *of men* skilful to destroy. Our young men are slain by the edge of the Sword, *and the* stink of our Camps comes up into our Nostrils. *How many* sad Messengers *have* hastened *unto us (as unto* Job) *with the* Reports *of* Cities Surrendred *and* Plundred, *of* Towns Fired *and* Pillaged, *of* Villages *and* Countries laid Waste, *and almost* Desolate! *Now seeing all this is* come upon us, *is it not time for us (with* Job) *to* rent our Garments (*yea* our hearts with godly sorrow) *and falling upon the* ground, worship God, *and say,* The Lord hath (*freely*) given, and the Lord hath (*justly*) taken; Blessed be the Name of the Lord? *Our* sins *have brought these* sorrows, *let not our* sorrows *bring in more* sin, *by causing us to* murmur *against,* or charge God foolishly.

God never sends such Troubles *upon a Nation (he doth sometimes upon a* Person, *and did upon* Job) *without* cause; *that is, without respecting sin as a cause.* Job *might say (in one sence)* My Uprightness and my Integrity have procured these things unto me; *But we must say,* our way and our doings have procured these things unto us: This is our wickedness.

Yet (though all this evil *hath been* done by us, *though all these* evils *are* come upon us, *yet)* there is hope in our *Israel* concerning this thing; *yea, I believe, there is* mercy *in and from all these evils, to us and all the* Israel of our God. *Only what* Integrity we have, *let us still* hold it stedfastly; *what* evils *are (and what evils almost are not?) amongst us, let us reform them* speedily: *Without this, at least, without* hearty desires, *and* faithful endeavours *after this, we may* presume, *but we cannot* believe *or* hope *our* Deliverance. *I grant, that whensoever* God restores us, *he must* restore us freely; *and must both make us* good, *and do us* good, *for his own Name sake, in* Jesus Christ. *For as he hath* punished *us* less *then our* sins deserve, *so whensoever, or in what degree soever he restores us, it will be more then any, or all our* Repentings *and* Reformings *can deserve: yet he commands us to* Repent *and* Reform, *that we may be* restored. *God never* delivered *any people for their* Repentance, *and rarely any (if any) without* Repentance. *Yea, I may say it plainly, that he never* delivered *any (in* Mercy) *without* Repentance; *for either he gave them* Repentance *before they were* delivered, *or* Repentance

tance (*which is far the greater blessing of the two*) *with the* Deliverance. *Better have our* Troubles *continue, then our* Sins *continue. To have* Peace return, *and our* Hearts unturn'd, *were infinitely worse then* War.

And as Repentance *is better then* Peace, *so it will be an Argument, that we shall have* Peace: *May we not well conclude that God is upon the* giving-hand, *when he gives* a new Heart? *And that he hath somewhat else to give, when he hath given a* love *unto, and a* longing after *his* Truth?

When God feeds us with (*and we have a right* taste *of*) *this* Manna *in our* Wilderness, *we may rest assured that God hath* humbled us *all this while* (*and all the while his* Wisdom *shall see fit to* humble us *yet, will be*) *only to* prove us, *that he may* do us good at our latter end, *and make this* Nation (*at least*) *like* Job, *in the end which he will make.*

Ye *have heard of the* Patience *of* Job, *and what* end *the Lord made: Could we but hear of the* Repentance *of* England, *all the world* (*I am perswaded*) *should* hear *and* wonder *at the* end, *which the Lord would make: Even such an* end *as he made for* Job, *if not better; he would give us twice as much in* Temporals, *double* Riches, *double* Oxen *and* Sheep, *double* Bracelets *and* Ear-rings, *double* Gold *and* Silver, *double* Sons *and* Daughters: *And he would give us* (*which is not specified in the* Inventory *of* Job's repair) seven-fold *more in* Spirituals, seven-fold *more* Knowledge *of his* Truth, Purity *in his* Worship, Order *in his* House; *he would make the light of our* Moon *to be like the light of the* Sun, *and the light of our* Sun *to be* seven-fold, *as the light of seven dayes, in the day wherein he binds up our outward* breaches, *and* heals *the stroak of our* wound. *Thus, we may look to be restored* (*not only as* Job) *to more in* kind, *but to better in* kind, *I am sure to better in* degree: *We may look, that, for* Brass *we shall have* Gold, *or our* Gold *more* refined; *that, for* Iron *we shall have* Silver, *or our* Silver *more* purified; *that, for* Wood *we shall have* Brass, *or our* Brass *better* furbished; *that, for* Stones *we shall have* Iron, *or our* Iron *better* tempered; *We may look, that, our* Officers *shall be* Peace, *and our* Exactors righteousness, *that* Violence *shall no more be* heard *in our* Land, wasting *nor* destruction *within our borders, but* men *shall call our* Walls Salvation *and our* Gates Praise.

When these glorious issues *of our* Troubles *shall be, is in his* Hand, *who held* Job's Estate *in his Hand, so fast, that Satan could not touch a* Sheep *or a* Shoo-latchet, *till himself willed; and who, when his* time *came,* restored Job's *Estate double, to a* Sheep *and a* Shoo-latchet, *whether Satan and his* Sabeans *would or no. We have already seen, in* Job, *an* Epitome *of our former* prosperity *and of our* present Troubles: *the good Lord hasten the* latter part *of our* National likeness *unto him, in the doubled* (*and O that it might be a seven-fold*) restauration *of our* Peace *and* Truth.

In the mean time these Meditations *upon this Scripture, well digested and taken-in, may be* (*through the* blessing *of God upon them*) *a help to our* Patience, *in bearing those afflictions upon the* Land, *a help to our* Faith *in believing,*

lieving, and to our hope *in waiting for the* Salvations of the Lord. Whatsoever things were written afore-time, were written for our Learning *(but this Book was purposely written)* that we through patience *and comfort of this Scripture* might have hope. *Nor do I doubt, but that the* Providence *of God (without which* a Sparrow falls not to the ground*) directed my thoughts to this Book, as (not only* profitable *for all times, but) specially seasonable for these* times. *It is* a word in season, *and therefore should, as a* word upon the Wheels, *make a* speedy passage *into all our* Hearts: *And how should it not? While we remember that these* Wheels *are* Oyl'd *with* Blood, *even with the* Heart-blood *of* Thousands *of our* dearest Friends *and* Brethren.

I find, that this is not the first time, that this Book *hath been* undertaken *by way of* Exposition, *in such a time as this.* Lavater *a faithful Minister of the* Tygurine *Church, opened* this Scripture *in* Preaching, *and Printed it in the* German Tongue, *which was afterwards published in* Latine *by* Hartmanus Sprunglius *(as himself expresses in the Title) to* support *and* refresh *the afflicted minds of the godly in that last (as he then supposed) and saddest declining* Age *of the world.*

n. 1552 Ferus *(a* Popish Fryer, *but very* devout *according to the* Devotion *of that* Religion*) Preacher at* Mentz, *chose this* Scripture *in the time of* War *and* publick Calamity *(as the* Title *also of his Book holds forth) to* Comfort *his* Citizens. *In his fourth Sermon he makes this observable digression.* You know *(saith he to his Hearers)* that I began to Expound this History of Job, to the end I might Comfort and Exhort you to Patience in these troublesom times. *This was and is my* Intendment, *this moved me to* Handle *and* Explain *this Book. But now in my very* Entrance *upon it, the* Storm *grows so* black, *that I see you* amazed, dejected, *and almost* desperate: *Some are* flying, *others are* preparing to flye; *and in this great* Calamity, *no man is found to comfort his* Brother: *But every one increases his* Neighbours *fear, by his own fearfulness. He prescribes (as far as their* Principles *will admit)* Cordials *for the Reviving of their* Spirits, *and* Medicine *for the Cure of these* Distempers. *The whole Book of* Job, *is a* Sacred Shop, stor'd *with* Plenty *and* Variety *of both: that you may open your* Hearts *to* Receive, *and with* Wisdom *to Apply the* Consolations *and* Instructions *here tender'd from this part of it, is (and through the* strength *of* Christ*) shall be, the Desire and Prayer of*

Novemb. 8. 1643. Your very Loving Friend and

Servant for the Help of your Faith

JOSEPH CARYL.

THE INTRODUCTION,

Opening the NATURE, PARTS and SCOPE of the whole BOOK.

IT was the personal wish and resolution of the Apostle *Paul, I had rather speak five words with my understanding, then ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.* 1 Cor. 14. 19. And surely it is far better to speak or hear *five words* of Scripture with our understandings, then *ten thousand words*, yea, then the whole Scriptures, while we understand them not. Now, what *an unknown tongue*, about which the Apostle disputeth, is in reference unto all, the same is the Scripture unto most, even in their own tongue, that which they understand not. For as an unknown tongue doth always hide the meaning of words from us; so do oft-times the spiritualness and mysteriousness of the matter. While a man speaks in a strange language, we hear a sound, but know not the words; and while a man speaks in our own language, though we know the words, yet we may not understand the meaning; and then he that speaks, is to us in that reference (so the Apostle calls him) *a Barbarian*. While the Leafs of the Book are opened, and read to such, or by such, the sence is shut up and sealed.

When the Apostle *Philip* heard the *Æthiopian Eunuch* read the Prophet *Isaiah* as he travelled in his Chariot, he said to him, *Understandest thou what thou readest?* The *Eunuch* answered, *How should I, unless some man would guide me?* He understood the Language; but the meaning was under a vail. The very same may we say to many, who read the Scriptures, *Understand you what you read?* And they may answer as the *Eunuch* did, *How can we, except we have some man to guide us?* Yea, and alas, for all the guiding of man, they may answer, how can we, except we have the Spirit of God to guide us? *He hath his Pulpit in heaven, who teacheth hearts the heart of Scripture.* Acts 8. 30

Paul (we know) was a learned *Pharisee*, and much vers'd in the Law, and yet he saith of himself before his conversion, That he was *without the Law:* but when Christ came to him, then the Commandment came to him. *I was once without the Law, but when the Commandment came*, that is, *when Christ came*, and his Spirit came in or after my conversion, and expounded the Commandment to my heart, *then the Commandment came*, &c. to my heart in the power of it, and I understood to purpose what the Law was. So that the teachings of the Spirit, the teachings of God himself, are chiefly to be looked after, and prayed for, that we may know the mind of the Spirit, the Will of God in Scripture. Rom. 7. 9.

But he hath set up this Ordinance, the Ordinance of Interpretation to do it by; both that the Scripture might be translated out of the Original, into the common language of every Nation (which the Apostle calls Interpreting in that place before cited) and also that the original sence of the Scripture might be translated into the mind and understanding of every man; which is the work we aim at, and now have in hand. 1 Cor. 14. 13.

Before I begin that, give me leave to beseech you in the name of Christ, to take care for the carrying on of this work, a degree further: I mean, to translate the sence of Scripture into your lives, and to expound the Word of God by your works; *Interpret it by your feet, and teach it by your fingers* (as *Solomon* speaks in another sence) that is, let your workings and your walkings be Scripture explications. It is indeed a very great honour unto this City, that you take care for a *Commentary* on the Scripture in writing; but if you will be careful and diligent to make a *Commentary* upon the Scripture by living, or to make your lives the *Commentary* of Scripture, this will make your City glorious indeed. Prov. 6. 13.

It is the Apostles testimony of his *Corinthians*, *Ye* (saith he) *are our Epistle, forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ, ministred by us, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not in Tables of Stone, but in fleshly Tables of the Heart.* Give us, we beseech you, the same occasion of glorying on your behalf, that we may say, *You are our Exposition*, forasmuch as you are manifestly declared in your practice to be the Exposition of the mind of Christ ministred unto you by us. A walking, a breathing *Commentary* goeth infinitely beyond the written, or spoken *Commentary*. And as the Apostle makes his Conclusion (before noted) I had rather speak five words with my understanding, then ten thousand words in an unknown tongue: So I say, I had rather know five words of Scripture by my own practice and experience, then ten thousand words of Scripture, yea, then the whole Scripture, by the bare exposition of another. And therefore let the words of Christ by these verbal Explications, dwell richly in your understandings in all wisdom: And by a practical Application, let it be held forth plentifully in your lives in all holiness. Add Commentary to Commentary, and Exposition to Exposition: Add the Comment of works to this Comment of words; and an Exposition by your lives, to this Exposition by our labours. Surely if you do not, these Exercises will be costly indeed, and will come to a deep account against you before the Lord. *If you are lifted up to Heaven by the opening of the Scripture* (which is either a carrying you up to Heaven, or a bringing of Heaven down to you) and then walk groveling upon the earth; how sore will the Judgment be! But it is to me an Argument and an Evidence from Heaven, that God hath put it into your hearts to be more glorious in the practice of holiness, because he hath put it into your hearts to desire more the knowledge of holiness. 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3.

To draw in my speech nearer to the business. Having a Book full of very various matter before me, give me leave to premise some things in the general, and something more particularly by way of *Preface*, concerning the Book, before we come to the handling of the Text.

First, For the general. That which God speaks concerning the whole work of Creation, we may speak concerning the whole Book of Scripture, *It is very good. Solomon* observes, That *wheresoever the wisdom of God speaks, it spake of excellent things.* And *David*, to quicken our endeavours, and excite our diligence to the study of the Word, preferreth it in worth above *thousands of Gold and Silver, and in sweetness above the honey and the honey-comb.* And when he ceaseth to compare, he beginneth to admire, *Wonderful are thy Testimonies.* And well may that be called Wonderful, which proceedeth from the God of Wonders. *All Scripture is given by divine inspiration*, or by inspiration from God; and I need not stay to shew you the excellency of any part, when I have but pointed at such an Original of the whole. Gen. 1. 31. Prov. 8. 6. 2 Tim. 3. 16.

As therefore the whole Scripture (whether we respect the Majesty of the Author, the height and purity of the matter, the depth or perspicuity of the stile, the dignity or variety of occurrences; whether we consider the art of compiling, or the strength of arguing) disdains the very mention of *comparison* with any other humane Author whatsoever; so are *comparisons* in it self, as Book with Book, Chapter with Chapter, dangerous. There is not in this great Volume of holy counsel, any one *Book* or *Chapter*, *Verse* or *Section*, of greater power or authority

then

then other. *Moses* and *Samuel*, the writings of *Amos* the Shepherd, and of *Isaiah* a Descendant of the blood Royal; the writings of the Prophets and Evangelists, the Epistles of *Paul*, and this History of *Job*, must be received (to use the words of the *Trent Councel* in the fifth Session, but to far better purpose) *Pari pietatis affectu, with the same holy reverence and affection.* They use it about Traditions, matching Traditions with the Scriptures; but we may fully match all Scripture together, and say, all must be received with the same devotion and affection.

Yet notwithstanding, as the parts of Scripture were penned by divers Secretaries, published in divers places, in divers ages, on divers occasions, for divers ends; so the argument and subject matter, the method and manner of composing, the texture and the stile of writing, are likewise different. Some parts of Scripture were delivered in Prose, others in Verse or Numbers: some parts of the Scripture are Historical, shewing what hath been done; some are Prophetical, shewing what shall be done; others are Dogmatical or Doctrinal, shewing what we must do, what we must believe. Again, some parts of Scripture are clear and easie, some are obscure and very knotty: some parts of Scripture shew what God made us, others, how sin spoiled us: a third, how Christ restored us. Some parts of Scripture shew forth acts of mercy to keep us from sinking; others record acts of judgment to keep us from presuming. And because the way to Heaven is not strewed with Roses, but, like the the Crown of Christ here upon earth, set with thorns; because not smiles and loving imbracements from the world, but wounds, and stroaks, and temptations, do await all those that have received *the press-money of the Spirit, and are enrolled for the Christian warfare:* because every *true Israelite* must expect that which *Jacob* upon his death-bed spake of *Joseph*, *that the Archers will shoot at him, hate him, and grieve him:* In a word, because many are the troubles of the righteous; therefore the Scripture doth present us with sundry platforms of the righteous conflicting with many troubles.

Now these considerations that are scattered severally thorough the whole Scripture, seem all concentred, and united together in this Book of *Job:* which if we consider in the stile and form of writing, is in some part of it Prose, as the two first Chapters and part of the last, and the rest is Verse. If we consider it in the manner of delivery, it is both dark and clear: If we consider the subject matter of it, it is both Historical, Prophetical, and Doctrinal. In it is a mixture of mercy tendred unto, of judgments threatned against, and inflicted upon the wicked: In it is a mixture of the greatest outward blessings, and the greatest outward afflictions upon the godly, concluding in the greatest deliverances of the godly from affliction. In this last the Book is chief; there was never any man under a *warmer Sun* of outward prosperity then *Job* was; neither was there ever any man in a *hotter fire* of outward affliction then *Job* was, God seeming to give charge concerning this trial of *Job*, as King *Nebuchadnezzer* did concerning the three children, to have the *furnace heated seven times hotter then ordinary.* This is the general concerning the Book.

Now more particularly; I will not detain you in that Proemial disquisition about the Author and Penman of this Book; there is great variety of Judgment about it, some say it was one of the Prophets, but they know not who; some ascribe it to *Solomon*, some to *Elihu*, not a few to *Job* himself; but most give it to *Moses*. That resolution of *Beza* in the point shall serve me, and may satisfie you. It is very uncertain who was the Writer of this Book (saith he) and whatsoever can be said concerning it, is grounded but upon very light conjecture. And therefore, where the Scripture is silent, it can be of no great use for us to speak, especially seeing there is so much spoken as will find us work, and be of use for us: neither need we trouble our selves (being assured that the *Spirit of God* indited the Book) who it was that held the pen. Only take this, that it is conceived to be the first piece of Scripture that was written; take it to be written by *Moses*, and then it is most probable that he writ it before the deliverance of the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, while he was in *Midian*.

Neither will I stay you in the second place about the inquiry into, or rather about the refutation of that fancy; that this whole Book is a Parable rather then a History, like that of *Lazarus* in the Gospel, not a thing really acted, but only a representation of it. Now this (which was the dream of many of the *Jews* and *Talmudists*, and is fastned with no small clamor upon *Luther* by the *Jesuites*) may clearly be convinced both by the names of places and persons (which we shall have occasion to open when we come to the Book it self) and also by those allegations of the Prophets and of the Apostles concerning *Job*; the Prophet *Ezekiel* quoting him with *Noah* and *Daniel*, two men that unquestionably were extant, and acted glorious parts in the world, and therefore *Job* also. All that I will say in particular, shall be in these three things.

Luk. 15. & 16.

Ezek. 14. 14.

First, to shew you more distinctly the subject of this Book.

Secondly, The parts and division of it.

Thirdly, The use or scope and intendment of it.

First, For the subject of this Book, we may consider it, either as principal, or as collateral.

The main and principal subject of this Book is contained (and I may give it you) in *Psal.* 34. 1. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of all.*

Psal. 34. 19

Concerning this subject, there are two great *Questions* handled and disputed fully and clearly in this Book. The first is this, *Whether it doth consist with the Justice and goodness of God to afflict a righteous and sincere person, to strip him naked, to take away all his outward comforts.* Or, *Whether it doth consist with the Justice and goodness of God, that it should go ill with those that are good, and that it should go well with those that are evil.* This is one great debate, the main Question thoroughout the Book. And then secondly, here is another great dispute in reference to the former; Namely, *whether we may judge of the righteousness, or unrighteousness, of the sincerity or hypocrisie of any person, by the outward dealings and present dispensations of God towards him.* That is a second Question here debated.

The friends of *Job* maintained the first Question Negatively, the latter Affirmatively. They denied that God in Justice could afflict a righteous and a holy man. They affirmed, that any man so afflicted is unrighteous, and may so be judged, because afflicted. And so the whole argument and dispute, which the friends of *Job* brought, may be reduced to this one Syllogism. *He that is afflicted and greatly afflicted, is certainly a great open sinner or a notorious hypocrite: But* Job, *thou art afflicted, and thou art great afflicted; therefore certainly thou art, if not, a great open sinner, yet a notorious hypocrite.*

Job, as constantly and as vehemently maintaineth both those questions in the contrary sence. He acknowledged himself to be a *sinner*, yet he stiffly denied that he was a hypocrite; he disclaimed his own righteousness in point of Justification, yet he justified himself in point of uprightness. And as for the sinfulness of his nature and of his life, he was willing (except known or wilful, in sincerity) to own both, and charge himself faster then his friends could, appealing to, and triumphing in free grace for full pardon.

This one Syllogism (I say) is the sum of all the dispute, between *Job* and his three friends; this is (as it were) the hinge upon which the whole matter turned.

But besides these, there are many discourses falling in *collaterally*, which concur to make up the subject of this book: For, as it is with those that study the *Philosophers-stone*, the great thing they aim at, is to make Gold, *&c.* that's the principal, the chief end: yet collaterally they find out many excellent things, many profitable experiments have been made, many rare secrets have been discovered in prosecuting of that great design. So although this be the principal subject of the Book, yet collaterally for the carrying on of these disputes, many other rare and excellent, heavenly, spiritual and useful truths are handled and discovered. As to give you some particular instances.

First, We have the *Character* of a discreet and faithful Master and Father in a family, and the special duties which concern those relations; the doctrine of the Oeconomicks is often touched in this Book.

Secondly, We have here the *Character* of a faithful, zealous and just Magistrate in the Common-wealth, how he ought to behave himself, and what his duty is, set down also plainly and clearly by occasion of this dispute.

Thirdly, We have a great discovery made in the secrets of nature. The bowels of nature are as it were ript open, and

and the great works of Creation are here displayed. In this you have discourses of the Heavens, of the Earth, of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; of those Meteors, the Hail, the Snow, the Frost, the Ice, the Lightning and the Thunder. In this you have discourses of Jewels, of Minerals, and of Metals; in this, of Beasts, and Birds, and Creeping things. So that by occasion of this dispute, a discourse is carried about all the world, in the whole circuit of natural knowledge or Philosophy.

Fourthly, Here are discourses of Christian Morals, of the duties of equity from man to man: Of the duties of piety which man oweth to God, of the duties of sobriety and temperance towards a mans own self. Yea here we find the great duty of *Faith, the matter of believing in the Redeemer of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Lastly, Here are many discoveries made of *God*, in Himself and his Attributes; in his Power, Wisdom, Justice, Goodness and Faithfulness; yea, whatsoever may be known of God in any of these, is some way or other here discovered. So then, all being summed up together, it may well be said concerning this Book, that it is Βίβλος παντοδαπός, a Book containing all excellencies, of Wisdom and Holiness; and what (as some of the Jews and Rabbins say of it) in other Books, is *here a little and there a little*, is all plentifully gathered together in this. In a word, it is a *Summary*, a *Compendium* of all Knowledge, both Humane and Divine, both concerning our selves, and concerning God. So much of the subject of this Book, both Principal and Collateral.

The second general to be considered is the division of this Book. We may consider it in reference to the division; First, as it a Dialogue (for so some call the whole Book) which is an interchangeable discourse concerning any subject or matter whatsoever. And taking it in that notion, we may divide it by the *Collocutors* or *Speakers*, and by the several speeches which they made.

The Collocutors or Speakers in this Book, are Eight.

1. *God.*
2. *Satan.*
3. *Job.*
4. *Job's Wife.*
5. *Eliphaz.*
6. *Bildad.*
7. *Zophar.*

} *Job's* three Friends.

8. *Elihu*, Who cometh in as a Moderator of that dispute.

Their Speeches which they make, are in the whole compass of the Book, thirty two distinctions.

There are two Dialogues between God and Satan. One between *Job* and his Wife. Three between *Job* and *Eliphaz*. Three between *Job* and *Bildad*. Two between *Job* and *Zophar*. Two between God and *Job*. And then we have *Elihu* making four distinct Speeches or Orations which have no Answer. And lastly, two several Speeches or Parables (as they are called) of *Job*, one in *Chap.* 27. 1. and the other in *Chap.* 29. 1. So that, sum up all these together, and you may divide the whole Book into thirty two distinct or several Speeches, either by way of position, or answer, or reply, or determination. God speaks four times, Satan twice, *Job's* wife once, *Job* thirteen times, *Eliphaz* thrice, *Bildad* thrice, *Zophar* twice, *Elihu* four times.

Or if we should consider the Book as a *Disputation* (which is higher then a *Dialogue*) so you may distinguish it, by the *Opponents*, by the *Respondents*, and by the *Moderators*.

The *Opponents* are three. *Job's* three friends.

Job himself is *Respondent*. The *Moderators* are,

First, *Elihu*, he cometh in first as an *Umpire* between them.

Secondly, God himself at last, out of the whirle-wind giveth the decisive determinative voice and sentence. He states the question fully for *Job*, and reproveth *Job's* friends, as not having disputed and argued aright concerning him.

Yet further, We may divide the Book into five Sections, whereof

The first doth set forth the happiness and fulness of *Job's outward estate*; and the integrity and perfection of his *spiritual estate*. And that is contained in the first five *verses*.

The second presents *Job's affliction*, *Job's* fall, the great and sore calamity which in a moment did overtake him, with the occasion of it. And this you have set forth from *vers.* 5. exclusively to *vers.* 9. of *Chap.* 2.

Thirdly, We have the questions, the debates and disputes which did arise upon and about the fall of *Job* into that sad condition: which are contained from *vers.* 9. of *Chap.* 2. to the end of *Chap.* 31.

Fourthly, We have the moderation or determination of this dispute and of this argument, first by *Elihu*, and then by God himself, from the beginning of *Chap.* 32. to *vers.* 7. of *Chap.* 42. All which is but as a determination or stating of the Question.

Fifthly and lastly, We have the restitution of *Job*, his restoring and setting up again, and the repairing of his estate, and making of it double to what formerly it had been. And that is begun and continued from *vers.* 7. of *Chap.* 42. to the end of the Book. So here you have a five-fold division of the Book.

Once more, We may divide the Book into three parts. And so it sets forth,

First, *Job's* happy condition, both in regard of Externals and Internals, in the first five *verses*.

Secondly, *Job's* fall, *Job's* calamity, *Job's* trouble, from that, to *vers.* 7. of *Chap.* 42.

Thirdly, *Job's* restitution or restoring, from thence to the end.

Take the Book in this division, and it seems to hold forth to us such a representation of *Job*, as is given us in the three first Chapters of *Genesis* concerning man. In those three first Chapters, we have man set forth,

First, In the excellency and dignity of his Creation, being Lord and Soveraign of all, adorn'd with that integrity and purity of nature which God had planted in, and stamped upon him at his Creation. And in the beginning of this Book, we have *Job* like a man in innocency, shining in all his dignity, compass'd about with blessings of all sorts, blessings of the body, blessings of the soul, blessings of this life and of that which is to come.

Secondly, There we find the Devil plotting the ruine of man, and we find his plot taking for a while, and in a great measure prevailing. So here in this Book we have the Devil begging *Job's* ruine, and having obtained leave, so far as concerned his outward estate and body, quickly puts it in execution.

Thirdly, There we have *Adam* by Gods free mercy and promise restored to a better estate in Christ through the grace of Redemption, then he had before in himself, by the goodness of Creation. So here we have *Job*, through the mercy, power, and faithfulness of God, restored to all he had, and more; we see him repaired and set up again after his breaking, not only with a new stock, but a greater: his estate being doubled, and his very losses proving beneficial to him. This may suffice for the division or parts of the Book, which, I conceive, may shed some light into the whole.

Now for the third thing which I proposed, which was the use, or scope, or intendment of this Book. For that is a special thing we are to carry before us in our eye in the reading of Scripture. It is possible for one to understand the subject, and to know the parts, and yet not to be attentive to find out, or distinctly to find out what the mind of God is, or whereat he specially drives and aimeth. Therefore it will be very profitable to us likewise to consider what the tendency and intendment, or (as I may so speak) the Uses of this Book are.

First, It aims at our Instruction, and that in divers things.

First, (Which much concerns every Christian to learn,) it instructeth us *how to handle a Cross*: How to behave our selves when we are in a conflict, whether outward or inward: What the postures of the Spiritual War are; and with what patience we ought to bear the hand of God, and his dealings with us. This, I say, is set forth by the Scripture in other places to be the main, and one of the principal ends or intendments or Uses of this Book. This the Apostle *James* speaks of, *You have heard of the patience of* Job; as if he should say, do you not know why the Book of *Job* was written? Why God in his providence did bring such a thing to pass concerning *Job*? It was that all men should take notice of his patience, and might *learn the wisdom of suffering, that noble art of enduring*. Jam. 5. 11

Job was full of many other excellent graces, and indeed he had all the graces of the Spirit of God in him. But the *Patience of* Job was the principal grace. As it is with natural men, they have every sin in them; but there are some sins which are the *Master sins*, or some one sin it may be doth denominate a wicked man; sometimes he is a proud man, sometimes he is covetous, sometimes he is a deceiver, sometimes he is an oppressor, sometimes he is unclean, sometimes he hath a profane spirit, and so the like;

like; some one great Master lust doth give the denomination to the man: he hath all other sins in him, and they are all reigning in him; but one as it were reigneth above the rest, and sits uppermost in his heart. So it is with the Saints of God (and here with *Job*) every Saint and servant of God hath all grace in him, every grace in some degree or other, for all the limbs and lineaments of the new man are formed together in the soul of those that are in Christ. But there is some special grace which doth give (as it were) the denomination to a servant of God. As that which gave the denomination to *Abraham*, was Faith; and that which gave the denomination to *Moses*, was Meekness; and so this which giveth the denomination to *Job*, is Patience; and so the denomination too of this whole History, as if that were the *great lesson* that were to be taken out, the lesson of suffering and of patience: So that what the Apostle makes to
Rom. 14. be the Use of all Scripture, *What soever* (saith he) *were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* That, I say, which the Apostle there makes to be the end and scope of the whole Scripture, doth seem to be in special the principal and chief end of writing this Book of *Job*.

Secondly, Another Instruction which we are to take from the whole Book, is this; God would have us learn, that, *Afflictions come not by chance, that they are all ordered by providence*; in the matter, in the manner, and the measure; both for the kinds and for the degrees, they are all ordered, even the very least, by the wisdom, by the hand and providence of God.

Thirdly, Another thing which we are to learn generally from this Book, is this, *The Soveraignty of God*; that he hath power over us, over our estates, and over our bodies, and over our families, and over our spirits; *that he may use us as he pleaseth, and we must be quiet under his hand*; when he cometh and will take all from us, all our comforts, we must give all glory to him. This Book is written for this especially, to teach us the *Soveraignty of God, and the submission of the creature.*

Fourthly, It teacheth us, *That God doth sometimes afflict his children out of prerogative*; that though there be no sin in them which he makes the occasion of afflicting them (such was *Job's* case) yet for exercise of his graces in them, for trial of their graces, or to set them up for patterns to the world, God may and doth afflict them. *Though no man be without sin, yet the afflictions of many are not for their sins.*

Fifthly, There is this general Instruction which God would have us learn out of this Book, namely, that *the best begotten, and the best founded estate in outward things, is uncertain*; that there is no trusting to any creature-comforts. God would unbottom us quite from the creature, by holding forth this History of *Job* unto us.

Sixthly, God would also shew forth this for our learning, *viz.* The strength, the unmoveableness of faith, how unconquerable it is, what a kind of omnipotency there is in grace. God would have all the world take notice of this in the Book of *Job*, that a godly person is in vain assaulted by friends or enemies, by Men or Devils, by wants or wounds: Though he be even benighted in his spirit, though God himself take away the light of his countenance from him, yet God would have us learn and know, that over all these a true believer is more then a conqueror. For here is one of the greatest battels fought, that ever was between man and man, between man and Hell, yea between God and man: yet *Job* went away with the victory; *True grace is often assaulted, it never was or ever shall be overthrown.*

Seventhly, This also we may learn, *That God never leaves or forsakes his totally or finally.*

Eighthly, Lastly, The book teacheth this general lesson: *That the judgments of God are often times very secret, but they are never unjust.* That though the creature be not able to give a reason of them, yet there is infinite reason for them.

These are the general Uses from the general scope and intendment of this Book by way of instruction.

Secondly, This Book serves to convince and reprove that slander of worldly men and of Satan, who say that the people of God serve him for their own ends, that they *follow him for loaves*, that they attend upon him for an estate, for creature-comforts and concernments. The Lord did on purpose cause these things to be acted, and this History to be penned, for ever *to stop the mouth of Satan and all iniquity*, and to shew that his people *follow him for love*, for the excellency they find in him and in his service. Though he strip them naked of all they have, yet they will cleave to him. Here is one Confutation.

Secondly, It is to convince and reprove all those, who judge of the spiritual estate of those that are under the hand of God in sore afflictions by some unbecoming and rash speeches, which may fall from them in the time of those their conflicts, when troubles and sufferings are upon them.

Thirdly, To convince and confute those who judge of mens spiritual estates, by Gods dealing with them in their outward estates.

Fourthly, To convince and confute that cursed opinion, that a man may fall finally and totally away from grace and from the favour of God. God hath shewed by this History, that such an opinion is a lye. If ever any man were in danger of falling quite away from grace received, or might seem to have lost the favour of God, formerly shewed, surely it was *Job*: and if he were upheld in the grace of holiness, and continued in the grace of Gods love, notwithstanding all that came upon him; certainly God would have all the world know that free grace will uphold his for ever.

Fifthly, To convince all those of pride and extream presumption, who think to find out and to trace the *secrets of Gods counsel, the secrets of Gods eternal decrees, the secrets of all his works of providence*: Whereas God sheweth them in this Book, that they are not able to find out, or comprehend his ordinary works, those which we call the works of nature, the things of creation, the things that are before them, which they converse with every day, which they see and feel, and have in their ordinary use. They are not able to find out the secrets of the Air, of the Meteors, of the Waters, of the Earth, of Beasts or Birds; every one of these puts the understanding of man to a stand, and pose his reason; they are not able to comprehend the works of Creation, how are they able then to find out the counsels of God in his Decrees and purposes and judgements? And for that end it is that God sets forth here so much of the works of nature, that all men may be stopp'd in that presumptuous way of searching too far into his counsels. Here is another Use or scope of this Book.

Thirdly, There is much for Consolation.

First, That all things do work for the good of those that love God.

Second Consolation is this, That no temptation shall ever take hold of us, but such as God will either make us able to bear, or make a way to escape out of it. We can be in no condition cast so low, but the hand of God can reach us, find us out, send in deliverance, and raise us up again.

Lastly, Here are two general Exhortations.

First, We are exhorted to the Meditation and Admiration of the power and wisdom of God from all the Creatures. This is a duty which this Book leads us unto, for that is the end why so much is spoken concerning the works of Creation, that (as the Apostle saith) *The invisible things of him from the Creation of the world, may be clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* Rom. 1. 20

Secondly, To glorifie God in every condition, to have good thoughts of God, to speak good words for God in every condition. We are drawn to this, by considering how *Job* (though sometimes in vehemency of spirit he over-shot himself, yet he recovers again, and) breaths sweetly concerning God, shewing that his spirit was full of sweetness towards God, even when God was writing bitter things against him; as when he saith, *Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him*; then which, what could express a more holy and submissive frame of heart, in reference to the dealings of God with him? Surely he thought God was very good to him, who had that good thought of God, *To trust him, even while he slew him.*

These things being proposed concerning the Book in general, will help to cast a light thorough the whole at one view. And though at this time I shall not enter upon expounding of the Text it self, yet you have had in some sence, the Exposition of the whole Text. If you carefully lay up these Rules, they will much advantage and advance your profit, when we come to the Explication of any part.

AN

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Observations UPON THE THREE FIRST CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. 1. Vers. 1, 2.

There was a man in the Land of Uz, *whose Name was* JOB, *and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*

And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

THis Chapter may be divided into three Parts; whereof the first contains a Description of *JOB* in his prosperous estate; from the first, to the end of the fifth Verse.

In the second, we have the first part of *JOB*'s Affliction; set down from the sixth verse, to the end of the nineteenth.

In the third, *JOB*'s Carriage and Behaviour in, or his Conquest and Victory over that first Trial, are discovered; this concludes in the three last verses of the Chapter.

The Description of his prosperous Estate is given us in three Points.

First, What he was in person, *Verse* 1.

Secondly, What in his Possessions: We have an Inventory of his Goods, *Verse* 2, 3, 4.

Thirdly, What in his Practice of Holiness, *Verse* 5. Where one Example or Instance is set down for all the rest.

The Book begins with the Description of his Person, in the first Verse; where *JOB* is described by that which is Accidental, and by that which is Essential:

By Accidentals; so he is described,

1. By the Place where he dwelt; *There was a man in the Land of* Uz.

2. By his Name; *whose Name was* JOB.

The Essentials are four qualifications, which were essential to him, not as a Rational man, but as a Holy man; *And that man was,*

1. *Perfect.* 2. *Upright.*
3. *One that feared God.* 4. *Eschewed evil.*

As they who write the Acts or Stories of great men, usually give us some Description of their Persons, before they set down their Undertakings or Atchievments (as you see in 1 *Sam.* 17. 4, 5, 6, 7. how the great Giant *Goliah* is described) so here, the Holy Ghost, by the Pen-man of this Book, being to record a glorious Combat, a Combat not with Flesh and Blood alone, but with Principalities and Powers, a wrestling with mighty and strong temptations, first gives us (if we may so speak) the *Prosopography of this Divine Hero's Soul, the Lineaments and Abilities of his Spirit.* This was the height, and this the stature of the Combatant; such were his Limbs, and such his Weapons; there he dwelt, and this was his Name.

There was a man in the Land of Uz, whose name was JOB.

There was] That refers us either to the truth of the Story, or to the time of the Story. Such a man there was, that's certain. Such a man there was, but the time when is uncertain. It refers us to the time only indefinitely: *There was* such a man, but when, is not exactly and precisely set down. The Scripture (we know) doth often keep an exact account of years (the Scripture is the Guide and Key of all Chronologie) and sometimes it leaves things in general for the time, and only saith thus much, such a thing was, and such a person was; so here. Yet some have undertaken to define (what the Spirit of God hath left at large) the precise time wherein *JOB* lived *; and tell us in what year of the world these things were done: But I desire not to be so accurate, unless the Rule were so too. Only thus much we

* *Ar.* 2237 from the Creation, 574 years after the Flood; 282 years after *Abraham. Boldue.* in loc.

we may safely say, that *JOB* lived between the times of *Abraham* and *Moses*; and nearer *Moses* then *Abraham*; and for that, I conceive, there is ground sufficient. There are these two special Reasons, why it should be circumscribed within that limit.

1. Because *JOB* offered Sacrifice at that time in his own Countrey; which, after the giving of the Law, and setting up of a publick worship, was forbidden all, both Jews and Proselytes. They that were acquainted with the wayes of God, knew they must not worship, by Sacrifice, any where but before the Tabernacle, or (after the Temple was built) at the Temple.

2. Because in the whole Book, there is not the least print, or the least mention of any thing, which did concern those great and glorious passages of God's providence towards the people of *Israel*, either in their going out of *Egypt*, or in their journey through the Wilderness to *Canaan*. Now in a Dispute of this nature (such as was between *JOB* and his Friends) there would have been frequent occasion to have considered and instanced some of those things. There is scarce any Book in Scripture, that bears date after that great and wonderful Dispensation of God, but it makes mention of, or refers to some passages concerning them.

Again, for the time; that which some collect to clear it, is from the Genealogie of *JOB*: There are three special opinions concerning the Line of his Pedigree.

One, That he descended from *Nahor*, who was Brother to *Abraham*, Gen. 22. 21. *It was told Abraham, behold Milcah she hath born Children to thy Brother Nahor, Uz his first-born, and Buz his Brother*, &c. This *Uz* who was the first-born of *Nahor*, *Abraham's* Brother, is conceived to have given denomination to the Land of *Uz*, and so from him *JOB* to be descended.

Another opinion there is (maintained by many) that *JOB* was of the Line of *Esau*, and that he was called *Jobab* by *Moses*, Gen. 36. 33. *And Bela died, and Jobab the Son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead.* This *Jobab*, who was a Descendant, or one of the Dukes of the Line of *Esau*, they say was *JOB*. But why the name *Jobab* should be contracted into *JOB*, I see little reason offered.

A third Opinion for his Descent is, that he came from the Children of *Abraham* by his second Wife *Keturah*, *Gen.* 25. Where it is said, that *Abraham* by her had divers sons, and that he gave them Portions, and *sent them Eastward into the East-Country*; and from *Midian* (who was the fourth Son of *Abraham* by that second Marriage) our Genealogies do positively and directly affirm, that *JOB* was descended.

That may suffice for the time: for bringing of him within a narrower limit, I have no grounds but conjectural.

A man.] He is not called *A man* (here) barely as the Philosophers *Animal rationale*, &c. as Man is opposed to a Beast; nor barely is he called a Man to distinguish his Sex, as a *Man* is opposed to a *Woman*: but there is somewhat more in the expression; he is called a Man by way of excellency. And for the clearing and opening of that, we may consider that there are three words in Scripture-Original by which man is express'd.

אדם 1. Man is called *Adam*. That was the proper name of the first man, and it became the common name for all men since. So man was called from the matter of which he was made; *Adam* from *Adamah*, because (as the reason is given, *Gen.* 2. 7.) *God made man dust out of the Earth*, or, (as we translate) *of the dust of the Earth.*

אנש 2. Man is called *Enosh*: So he is called in regard of the infirmities, weaknesses and sorrows which he hath contracted by sin, since the Fall. Sin made the red earth weak and brittle earth indeed, earth moistned with tears, and mixt with troubles.

איש 3. He is called *Ish*, which the Criticks in that Language, say, comes from, and hath alliance with two words; one signifying *Being* or *Existence*, and the other *Heat or Fire*. So that the excellency of man's being, the heat, courage and spirit that flames in him, is set forth in that word; and that's the word here in the Text, *There was a man*; it is *Ish*, an excellent, a worthy man, a man of an excellent spirit, a man of men, a man fitted to honour God, and govern men. And that it is so used in Scripture I will give you an Instance or two, that you may see it is not a bare conjecture.

In the forty ninth Psalm, *David*, as it were, summons and divides Mankind. In the first verse he summons; *Hear this, all ye people, give ear all ye inhabitants of the world.* In the second verse he divides; *Both low and high, rich and poor together.* The word in the Hebrew for *high*, is *Bene-Ish*, Sons of *Ish*; and the word for *low*, is *Bene-Adam*, Sons of *Adam*. If we should translate the Text directly, according to the Letter, the words must run, *Sons of men and sons of men*; for sons of *Adam*, and sons of *Ish*, are both translated sons of men; yet when they are set together in a way of opposition, the one signifieth *low*, and the other *high*; and so our Translators render it according to the sence, not Sons of men and Sons of men, but *low* and *high*. *Junius* translates to this sence, though in more words; *as well they who are born of mean men, as they who are born of the honourable.*

בני אדם

בני איש

A like Instance we have, *Isa.* 2. 9. *The mean man boweth down, and the great man humbleth himself.* The *mean man*, that is, the *Son* of *Adam*; and the *great man*, that is, the *Son* of *Ish*; the *great man*, in regard of his excellency, is by such a circumlocution described to be more then a man: not only the son of man, but the son of an honourable and great man. So I find the word divers times used, to signifie the excellency and greatness of the person.

Then further, it signifieth, not only a man that is great; but it signifieth *a man in authority*. *There was a man*, that is, an excellent man, a man of worth: *There was a man*, that is, a man in authority. It signifies a *Magistrate*; and so in divers places of Scripture, *Man* is put for a *Magistrate*; especially, when it is expreſt as here, by *Ish*; Gen. 43. 11. *Carry a Present to the man*; *scil.* to the Governour of the Countrey. *Jer.* 5. 1. *Go through Jerusalem, and search, and see if you can find a man.* What, were men so scarce in *Jerusalem* at that time? Was there such a dearth of men, that a man could not be found? Surely no; *Jerusalem* had throngs of men in every Street. The meaning is then explained in the words following; *if there be any that executeth judgment*: that is, if there be a *Magistrate*, a publick man, that's the man I mean.

So in *Numb.* 27. 16. We find the word to signifie a *Magistrate*. *Let the Lord, the God of the Spirits of all Flesh, set a man over the Congregation. A man*, that is, a *Magistrate*; for there, that's the business; if you read the Text, you will find it, *a man in authority, a man fit to rule.* And that is it which is meant in *Acts* 17. 31. concerning Christ, *God* (saith he) *hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by that man whom he hath ordained.* It noteth Christ the man in power, in authority, because all power in Heaven and in Earth is committed to him. So you know it was usual among the *Romans* to call their Magistrates by the Names of *The men*; as the *Triumviri*, the *Septemviri*, the *Decemviri*; to call them sometimes the *Three men*; sometimes the *Seven men*, sometimes the *Ten men*. Those who were the special men in authority, that were men in place and eminency, they carried away the name of men (as it were) from all men, as if they were the only men.

Homer begins with ἀνδρὰ μοι ἔννεπε μοῦσα. *Virgil* like him, *Arma virumq; cano.*

So that we have these two things to take notice of, when it is said here that *JOB* was a man; you must carry it further then the word is ordinarily taken: He was a great man, he was a man in Authority, a Magistrate. Some carry the Magistracy so high, as to *set him on a Throne*; affirming that he was a King, a point very much contended for by divers Expositors: but that he was a Magistrate in authority, a Chief in his Countrey, is clear by that which is expres'd of him in *Chap.* 29. Where he speaks of his deciding mens rights, and executions of Justice.

In the Land of Uz.] I will not trouble you with any Geographical Discourse: In a word, we may consider three things about *Uz*.

1. Why it was called so.
2. Where it was seated.
3. What manner of People they were that dwelt in *Uz*.

First, For the Name; let it be taken from *Uz*, the name of a Man. And there were three called by that Name in Scripture, *Gen.* 10. 23. *Gen.* 22. 21. *Gen.* 36. 28. From either of these *JOB*'s Countrey might derive its Name; but from which of these, would be (I think) a nice debate; yet it is rather ascribed to *Uz* or *Huz*, the eldest son of *Nahor*, Gen. 22. 21.

Secondly, For

Secondly, For the place where it was seated; it is clear that it was upon the Borders of the *Sabeans*, and of the *Caldeans*, and of the *Arabians*, those Eastern People. Some affirm that the Lot of the half Tribe of *Manasses* on the other side *Jordan*, which was set forth for them when the People of *Israel* came into *Canaan*, was the very place where *JOB* lived, and that was called *Uz*. It is clear, that it was near those Parts above-mentioned. First, from *Lam.* 4. 21. There the Prophet *Jeremiah* speaking of *Uz*, saith, *Rejoyce and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the Land of Uz.* And *Jer.* 25. 20. He speaks again of the Land of *Uz*: *All the mingled people, and all the Kings of the Land of Uz, they shall drink of the Cup.* He mentions the Cup also in that place, *Lam.* 4. *Rejoyce and be glad, O Daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the Land of Uz; the Cup also shall pass through unto thee.* Secondly, *Uz* bordered upon those Countries; for these People made out their Parties, invaded, slew and took away *JOB*'s Estate, Cattel and Servants; therefore the place, in all probability, lay near these Countries.

For the Condition and Manners of the People; it is generally received, that they were a People prophane in their Lives, and superstitious, at least, in their Worship: *Edumeans* and *Edomites*, the Descendants of *Esau*, bear ill all the Scripture over. Among these *JOB* lived, among these *JOB* governed; there he exercised those precious Graces, and practised those excellent Duties both of Holiness toward God, and of Justice toward men. It was in the midst of a sinful and perverse Nation, in the Land of *Uz*.

Thence observe, First; *God hath his Servants in all places, in the worst places.*

There was never any Air so bad, but that a Servant of God might breath in it. Here God had a choice piece, even in the Land of *Uz*, a place of prophaneness; here was *Bethel* in *Bethaven*, a House of God in a Land of wickedness. *Lot* dwelt in *Sodom*, *Joseph* in *Egypt*, *David* in *Mesech* and in *Kedar*, there were Saints in *Cæsar's* (wicked *Nero's*) Houshold. *Babylon* holds many of God's people; yet let them not make such places their refuge, much less their election: but remember the Call, *Come out of her my people.*

Secondly, We may observe from hence (this being spoken of *JOB*, to set him forth in the excellency of his spiritual condition, that he lived in the Land of *Uz*) That

It is a great honour and a high commendation to be good, and do good amongst those that are evil.

You shall be recorded for it. This was one reason why the place is named, that the Honour of *JOB* might be lifted up; that he was good, not by the example and encouragement, but against the example of others; he was a leading-man himself: though he lived amongst those that were scoffers and wicked, yet *JOB* was holy. As they say concerning the Affection of Love, it is most unnatural for a man to hate those that love him; it is civil for men to love those that love them; but this is truly Christian, for a man to love those that hate him and do him wrong. So in regard of living and conversing, as of loving and affecting, we may say, it is a most wicked thing to be naught among those that are good; that aggravateth a man's sinfulness, to be unholy while he converseth with those that are holy: It is a good thing to be good with the good, to take example by them; but it is a most excellent thing, a glorious thing to be good among those that are stark naught, to worship God aright among Idolaters, to fear God among those that have no fear of God before their eyes, to be perfect among hypocrites, to be upright among those that are unjust, to eschew evil among those that are altogether wrapt about with evil: this was the honour and commendation of *JOB*. For a man to be as *LOT* in *Sodom*, never touched with *Sodom*'s wickedness, to keep himself pure and sincere, and without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation, to shine as a light in the midst of darkness; this brings honour both to God and man.

Phil. 2. 15.

Thirdly, From the place where *JOB* lived, we may observe,

Grace will preserve it self in the midst of the greatest opposition.

It is such a Fire as no water can wholly quench or put out. True Grace will keep it self sound and clean among those who are leprous and unclean; it is such a thing as overcomes and masters all the evil that is about it: God hath put such a mighty power into Grace, that if it once possess the heart in truth, though there be but a little of it, though there be but as much as a grain of Mustard-seed, not all the wickedness in the world, no nor all the Devils in Hell can dispossess it. As all the water in the salt Sea cannot make the Fish salt, but still the Fish retains its freshness; so all the wickedness and filthiness that is in the world, cannot destroy, cannot defile true Grace; that will bear up its head, and hold up it self for ever.

And this man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

Perfect] Not that he had a *Legal Perfection*; such a perfection as the *Papists* now contend for, and assert possibly attainable, yea, actually attained by many in this life: *For what is man that he should be clean?* And *JOB* himself professeth, *Chap.* 9. 20. *If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.* He acknowledgeth, *Chap.* 7. 20. *I have sinned.* The perfection therefore here spoken of, is not an absolute, a legal perfection. תם

For the clearing of the word, we may consider there is a twofold perfection ascribed to the Saints in this life; a perfection of Justification, a perfection of Sanctification.

The first of these, in a strict sence, is a compleat perfection. The Saints are compleat in Christ, they are perfectly justified; there is not any sin left uncovered, nor any guilt left unwashed in the blood of Christ, nor the least spot, but is taken away: His Garment is large enough to cover all our nakedness and deformities. In this respect they may be called perfect, they are perfectly justified: *By one Offering Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*, Heb. 10. 14.

Then there is a perfection of holiness or of sanctification; and that is called so, either in regard of the beginnings of, or in regard of desires after, and aims at perfection.

The Saints even in this life have a perfect beginning of Holiness, because they are begun to be sanctified in every part; they are sanctified *throughout, in soul, and body, and spirit*, as the Apostle distinguisheth, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. Though every part be not throughout sanctified, yet they are sanctified in every part throughout; and this is a perfection. When the work of sanctification is begun in all parts, it is a perfect work beginning.

They are likewise perfect in regard of their Desires and intendments. Perfect holiness is the aim of the Saints on earth; it is the reward of the Saints in heaven. The thing which they drive at here, is perfection, therefore they themselves are called perfect. As God accepts of the will for the deed, so he expresseth the deed by the will; he interpreteth him to be a perfect man, who would be perfect; and calls that person perfect, who desires to have all his imperfections cured. That is a second understanding how *JOB* was perfect.

A third way is this; He was perfect comparatively, comparing him with those who were either openly wicked, or but openly holy; he was a perfect man, he was a man without spot, compared with those, that were either all over spotted with filthiness, or only painted with godliness.

Or thus, We may say the perfection here spoken of, is the perfection of sincerity. *JOB* was sincere, he was *sound at the heart.* He did not act a part, or personate Religion, but was a religious person, *He was not guilded, but Gold.* So the word is interpreted. Some render it, *JOB* was a *simple man*, not as *simple* is put for weak and foolish, but as *simple* is put for *plain-hearted*, one that is not (as the Apostle *James* phraseth it) *a double-minded man*; *JOB* was a *simple-minded man*, or *a single-minded man*, one that had not a *heart* and *a heart*; he was not a compound, speaking one thing, and meaning another; he meant what he spake, and he would speak his mind. It is the same word that is used in *Jacob's* Character, *Gen.* 25. 27. *Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field, and Jacob*

Jacob was Ish Tam, *a plain man.* So that to be a perfect man, is to be a plain man; one whose heart you may know by his Tongue, and read the man's spirit in his actions. Some are *such Juglers*, that you can see little of their spirits in their lives, you can learn but little of their minds by their words; *Jacob* was a plain man, and so was *JOB*; some translate it, a *sound man.* It is the same Expression that is given of *Noah*; *He was* [Tamim] *in his generation*; or, *he was sound*, upright-hearted or perfect with God, *Gen.*6.9. And it is that which God speaks to *Abraham*, Gen. 17. 2. *Walk before me, and be thou* [Tamim,] *be thou perfect, or sound, or upright, or plain in thy walking before me.* In *Exod.* 28. 30. We read of the *Urim* and *Thummim* on the Breastplate of the High-Priest. *Thummim* comes from this Root, and signifies the *integrity of heart* and life required in the High-Priest, as *Urim* did the light and clearness of his knowledge.

ישר And upright.] The former word which was translated perfect, in other Texts is rendered *upright*; but when we have both the Expressions together, as here, we must distinguish the sence: It is not a Tautologie. Then the former being taken for inward soundness, plainness and sincerity; this latter (*to be upright*) may be taken for outward Justice, righteousness and equity, respecting all his dealings in the world. He was a perfect man, that is, he was plain-hearted, and he was plain-dealing too, which is the meaning of *He was upright*: So the one refers to the integrity of his spirit, the other to the honesty of his wayes; *His heart was plain, and his dealings were square.* This he expresseth fully in the 29 and 31 Chapters of this Book; which are, as it were, a Comment upon this word *upright.* There you may read what is meant by uprightness; his fairness in all parts, both of Commutative and Distributive Justice. In those things that concerned Commutative Justice, when *JOB* bought or sold, traded or bargained, promised or covenanted, he stood to all uprightly. Take him as he was a Magistrate; when *JOB* sate in Judgment, or had any Business brought before him, he gave every one his due; he did not spare or smite upon Ends: he did neither at any time justifie the wicked, or condemn the godly; but was upright in Judgment: He was not byas'd by Affection or Interest; he was not carried away by hopes or fears; but kept the path of Justice in all his dispensations toward that people among whom he lived. This is to be an upright man; and so the Prophet tells us, *Isa.* 26. 7. *The way of the just is uprightness*; that is, they are upright in their wayes; and more, uprightness in the abstract. We have a like expression, *Prov.* 29. 27. *Those that are upright in the way, are an abomination to the wicked.* Uprightness doth refer to the way wherein a man goes in his outward dealings and dispensations towards men. There is a twofold Uprightness of our wayes. 1. Uprightness of words. 2. Of works. So upright walking is expounded and branched forth, *Psal.* 15. 2, 3. *He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his Tongue.* This is the second part of *JOB*'s description; *He was perfect and upright.*

Thirdly, He was *One that feared God.*

Fearing God.] The Fear of God is taken two wayes. Either for that natural and inward worship of God; and so *the fear* of God is a holy filial affection, awing the whole man to obey *the whole will of God*: That is Fear as it is an Affection. Or the Fear of God is put for the external or instituted worship of God. So that a man fearing God, is as much as this; a man worshipping God according to his own will, or according to his mind and direction. Now whenas *JOB* is said to be a man *fearing God*, you must take it both these wayes: He had that holy affection of fear with which we must worship God (as we are taught, *Heb.* 12. 28. *Let us have Grace whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear.* And, *serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce before him with trembling*, Ps. 2. Fear is that affection with which we must worship and serve God.) And *JOB* likewise did perform that worship to God which he required; that is called Fear, and the exercise of it, fearing God: Fearing God, is worshipping God; as you may see clearly by two Texts of Scripture compared together In the Fourth of *Matthew*, *verse* 10. Christ saith to the Devil, *It is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Compare this with *Deut.* 6. 13. And there you shall have it thus expresst; *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God*: That which in one place is *worship*, in the other is *fear.* Again, *Mat.* 15. 9. *In vain* (saith Christ) *do they worship me, teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of men.* Now the Prophet *Isaiah* (from whence that is taken) *Chap.* 29. 14. expresseth it thus; *Forasmuch as their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men.* They worship me according to the precepts of men, saith Christ. Their Fear is taught by the precepts of men, saith the Prophet: So that Fear and Worship are the same. Fearing God doth include both the Affection of a Worshipper, and the Duty or Act of worshipping.

The fourth part or line of *JOB*'s Character, is, his *Eschewing evil.*

Evil is here taken for the evil of sin. Before sin came into the world, there was no evil in the world: *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* But when sin came, which was the first, and is the chiefest evil, it brought in with it all other evils. Sin hath in it the whole nature of evil, and all the degrees of evil; and from it proceed all evil effects: Hence it is eminently called evil. Sickness, and Death, and Hell, are called evil; how much rather that, but for which these evils had never been? how much rather that, with which these compared, may be called good? Further; Evil is put here indefinitely: He was one that *eschewed evil*; not this or that evil; but evil, that is, all evil; this indefinite is universal. And then further, we are to take evil here, as himself afterward expounds it in his practice, not only for the acts of evil, but all the occasions, the appearances, the provocations and incentives of, or unto evil, or whatsoever might lead him into evil; for thus he instanceth in one particular; *I made a Covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think upon a Maid?* Chap. 31. 1.

Eschewed.] In this word the prudence of *JOB* shines as bright as his holiness; who, having received a great *stock and treasure of Grace*, now watches to preserve it, and opposes whatsoever was destructive to the life or growth of the inner man. That man shews he hath both Money, and his wits about him, who suspects and provides against Thieves.

JOB eschewed evil.] There is much in that expression. It is more to say a man doth *eschew evil*, then to say a man doth not *commit evil.* It had been too bare an expression, to say, *JOB* did not *commit evil*; but when it is said, *JOB eschewed evil*, this shews that not only the hand and tongue of *JOB* did not meddle with evil, but that his heart was turned from evil. For *eschewing* is a turning aside with reluctancy and abhorrency; so the Hebrew (*Sar*) imports; *JOB* did abhor evil, as well as not commit evil. As there is a great deal of difference between these two, the doing of good, and a delight in doing good; between being at peace, and following of peace. A man may do good, and not be a lover of good, a lover of the Commandments of God, a delighter in them; he may be at peace, and not be a lover and follower of peace. So a man may be one that commits not such and such sins; he may do no hurt, and yet in the mean time, he may be one that loves those sins he commits not: Such an one is not presently a man that eschews those sins; for to eschew evil, noteth the activity of the spirit against those evils: That is the spiritualness and strength of holiness: *JOB*'s heart did (as it were) rise against evil. Some expound it by *war*; as if under this expression, were meant the enmity that *JOB* did bear against evil; that it was such an eschewing, as when a man hateth his enemy, and makes war against him, and doth by all means oppose him; so there was, as it were, a deadly feud, an irreconcileable enmity between *JOB* and evil. *He was a man that feared God, and eschewed evil.* So much for the opening of that first Verse; wherein you have the first part of the Description of *JOB*'s prosperous estate; and that is, what he was in his Person.

That man was perfect and upright.

We will observe hence somewhat in the general first, and then somewhat more particularly.

You see here, when God comes to describe a man, and to set him forth in his Glory and Excellency, where the

Spirit

Spirit of God begins, what is the chief and firſt thing which God takes notice of; it is his Grace. When he would ſet forth what a man *JOB* was, how bleſſed and how happy; here he ſets his Pen firſt, to deſcribe what his ſpiritual eſtate was. Hence then this in the general:

First, *Gracious Habits and Spiritual Bleſſings are the choiceſt of all Bleſſings.*

If God have given a man Grace, he hath the beſt and the choiceſt of all that which God can give. God hath given us his Son, and God hath given us his Spirit, and God hath given us the Graces of his Spirit; theſe are the fineſt of the Flower, and the Honey out of the Rock of Mercy. Though you ſhould not come to Children, though you ſhould not come to the other part of the Inventory, to Sheep, and Camels, and Oxen, and Aſſes; if you are in the firſt part of the Deſcription, that you have a perfect heart, and upright life, and the fear of God in your inward parts, and a holy turning againſt every evil, your lot is fallen in a fair place, and you have a goodly heritage: they that have this, need not be diſcontented at their own, nor envious at the condition of any other; they have the principal Verb, the one thing neceſſary.

Again, When God deſcribeth a gracious man, you ſee he goes thorough; he ſets him forth in every thing that concerns his ſpiritual eſtate; *Perfect and upright, fearing God, and eſchewing evil.* From hence, this alſo in the general.

Secondly, *Where one Grace is, there is every Grace.*

Grace is laid into the Soul in all the parts of it, and there is ſomewhat of every Grace laid into the Soul. We have not one man one Grace, and another man another Grace; but every man hath every Grace that hath any Grace at all. I do not ſay that every man hath every Grace, or that the ſame man hath every Grace in the ſame height and degree: Grace in ſome is more eminent then in others; and the ſame man may have one Grace more eminent then another; he may have one Grace (like *Saul* among the people) higher by head and ſhoulders then the reſt in his throng of Graces; yet that man hath ſomewhat of every Grace, that hath any Grace; all Grace goes together. Thus in the general.

Particularly; This man was *perfect*. That is (as we have explained it) he was ſincere and plain-hearted. Obſerve from hence,

First, *It is Sincerity that eſpecially commends us unto God.*

As *JOB*'s Graces are preferred in his Deſcription, before his Riches, ſo ſincerity is preferred before all his other Graces.

Sincerity is that which makes us ſo acceptable and pleaſing unto God: He was a man that was perfect; you ſee that is put in the firſt place. And indeed, whatſoever a man hath beſides, be a man never ſo juſt in his dealings, could you ſuppoſe a man worſhipping God in all his Ordinances, and avoiding all manner of evil, yet if there be doubling and falſneſs in his ſpirit, all is caſt off, all is rejected of God as abominable. Therefore here the foundation is laid, here is the bottom-Grace, Perfection, Sincerity. Whether it be a diſtinct Grace, or whether it be that which doth accompany every Grace, and gives it life and beauty in the eye of God (for my own part I conceive Sincerity is not properly a diſtinct Grace, but the perfection of every Grace) it is that which doth commend a man unto God. Chriſt tells the Angel of the Church of *Sardis, I have not found thy works perfect. Not full*; ſaith the Greek Text. There wanted ſomewhat within. Sincerity is the filling up of all our Duties: Without that, they are but empty ſounds, *as ſounding braſs, and as a tinkling Cymbal.*

He was perfect; that is, he was ſincere. Obſerve then,

Secondly, *Sincere and ſound-hearted perſons are in God's eſteem perfect perſons.*

It is not all that you can do, or all that you can ſay, or all that you can ſuffer, or all that you can loſe, that can make you perfect in the eſteem of God, without ſincerity; add ſincerity but to the leaſt, and it gives you the denomination of perfect. God accepts the very Goats-hair, the leaſt offering from one that is ſincere; he accounts it a rich Preſent, and calls the Preſenter perfect; but he will not receive the greateſt Riches, whole Droves of Cattel for Offerings, the greateſt and mightieſt Services, from one that is unſound. Truth of Grace is our perfection here; in Heaven we ſhall have Perfection as well as Truth.

Further, In that upon this perfectneſs and plainneſs of heart, there is preſently added uprightneſs: Obſerve from thence,

First, *Where the heart is ſincere towards God, the wayes are juſt and honeſt before men.*

And Secondly, *It is a great honour and an ornament unto our Profeſſion of Godlineſs, to be juſt and upright in our dealings toward men.*

This is put as a ſpecial part of *JOB*'s excellency, that he was upright, *ſcil.* in his dealings. There is much ſcandal caſt upon the Profeſſion of the Name of God, through a defect in this. The world ſaith, theſe men profeſs, they take the Name of God upon them, but they are as unanſwerable to their promiſes, as unjuſt in their tradings, *&c.* as any other. Then make proof of your perfection in profeſſion, by the uprightneſs of your converſation.

Perfect and upright, one that feared God.

Here we have fearing God added to perfect and upright. Obſerve hence,

First, *Moral Integrity and Moral Honeſty, without the Fear of God, can never render us acceptable unto God.*

There are ſome that pleaſe themſelves in this, that they are plain-hearted. (It is poſſible for a man in a ſence to be ſo, and yet not to fear God) or they give every man his due, *&c.* Theſe are good; but in *JOB* we may learn, on what theſe muſt be founded, whence they come, when we pleaſe God in them; they come from the Fear of God; that muſt be the ſpring of uprightneſs and perfection, elſe they are only Heathen-Virtues, and not Chriſtian-Graces.

God delights in nothing we do, unleſs we do it in his fear. As *Joſeph* ſaid to his Brethren when they feared ſome hard meaſure from him; *I fear God.* When this fear of God ties our hands, it ſhews the love of God fills our hearts. Not to wrong man becauſe we fear God, is an argument of more than man. Gen. 42

Fearing God.] Hence obſerve,

Secondly, *Holy Fear contains in it every Grace we receive from God, and all the worſhip we tender up to God.*

Fear is a comprehenſive word; it is more then a particular Grace. When *Abraham* had offered up his Son *Iſaac*, that was a work of mighty Faith, and the Faith of *Abraham* is wonderfully commended by it; but God ſpeaks thus, *Now I know thou feareſt me.* Fear containeth Faith, and Fear containeth Love too. Though *perfect love caſt out tormenting fear*, 1 John 4. 18. *yet perfect love calls in obeying fear. Hear the Concluſion of all*, ſaith the Preacher, *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. *Fear God, and keep his Commandments; for this is the whole duty of man*: or, *this is whole man.* Fear is all duty, and every Grace.

Fearing God, and eſchewing evil.

Hence this from the Connexion. Thirdly, *Holy Fear keeps the Heart and Life clean.*

The Fear of the Lord is clean, ſaith *David*; Pſal. 19. Clean, not only in it ſelf, formally clean; but *effectivè*: it makes clean, and keeps clean the Heart and Life. Fear is an armed man at the Gate, which examines all, and ſtops every one from entring that is unfit. It ſtands as a watchman on the Tower, and it looks every way, to ſee what's coming to the Soul; if evil come, fear will not admit it. And therefore in Scripture you ſhall have theſe two often put together, *fearing God, and eſchewing evil.* Nay eſchewing evil is not only put as an effect of the fear of God, but it is put into the very definition it ſelf of the fear of God: *The Fear of the Lord is to depart from evil.*

He eſchewed evil.

From hence obſerve alſo, First, *Godly perſons do not only forbear ſin, but they abhor ſin.* They

They have not only their hands bound from it, but they have their hearts set against it. Holy enmity against sin, is the temper of a godly man's heart; he eschews evil.

Secondly, *A Godly man's opposition of sin is universal; it is against all sin.*

JOB eschewed evil, all evil; there was no picking of this or that particular evil to oppose, but whatsoever came under the name and notion of sin, *Job*'s spirit turned against it. *Enmity is against the kind.*

Thirdly, *Godly persons do not only avoid the acts of evil, but all the occasions of evil.*

JOB eschewed evil, whatsoever led him to evil, all the *appearance of evil*, as the Apostle speaks. We cannot avoid the sin, if we will not avoid the occasion. When *Solomon* cautions to take heed of the path of the wicked, he useth four expressions, and all to the same purpose; *Avoid it,* Prov.4.15. saith he, *pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away*; to shew unto us, that if we would keep from the acts of sin, we must keep from the way of sin.

The second thing whereby his prosperous estate is set out unto us, is what his Possessions were. You have a particular Inventory of his Estate in the second and third Verses; and you have the total sum cast up after all the particulars are set down; and it amounts to thus much, that *Job* was the greatest of all the men in the *East*. In the Second verse, you have the first part of his Goods set down, his Jewels, his Children.

Verse 2. **And there were born unto him seven Sons, and three Daughters.**

This Verse contains the first part of *Job*'s outward happiness; the Blessings of Children. Concerning whom, we have three things offered. 1. Their Number; *Ten.* 2. The distinction of Sexes; *Sons and Daughters.* 3. Their mutual Love and Concord, *v.* 4.

There is little in the words that needs explication; therefore where the Scripture is plain and clear, I will not spend time.

There were born unto him.] His Children were not born against him, but born unto him, given as Comforts and Blessings to him.

Seven Sons and three Daughters.] * The number seven, and the number three, are numbers of perfection. Some trouble themselves much about them: But I will not stay upon Numbers.

There were born unto him seven Sons and three Daughters.

Here observe,

First, *Children are the Blessings of the Lord.*

They are put here as a part of his inheritance. *Children* Psa.127.3. *are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward.* They are special Blessings. Children (as it is observed) are a resemblance of our Immortality, because a man revives again, lives anew (as it were) in every Child; he is born again (in a Civil sence) when others are born to him. There are some who account their Children *but Bills of Charges*; but God puts them upon the account of our Mercies: How holily and piously speaks *Jacob* concerning his Children? *These* (saith he) *are the Children which* Gen. 33.5. *God hath graciously given thy servant.*

Secondly, Observe this; *Children as they are Blessings, and great Blessings; so they are greater Blessings then any outward thing else whatsoever.*

When a description is made of *Job*'s Goods, the best is put first. First, his spiritual Blessings are set down, then comes his outward; now Children are put in the very next degree to his Graces. What our Saviour Christ saith of a Mat.16.26. man's Soul, may be said of Children: *What* (saith he) *shall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* It is true, that is spoken there of a man's own Soul, that it is more to himself then the world; but it is a truth here too, if one have a Soul given him (and to have a Child, is to have a Soul bestowed on us) for the present, it is more then to have the whole world bestowed on him. A whole world of riches is not so good, not such goods, as one Child; therefore Children are put in the first place, as his choicest and chiefest outward Blessings.

Then from the number of his Children, he had many Children; he had *seven Sons and three Daughters.*

Observe, Thirdly, *To have many Children is a great Blessing, and the more Children the greater the Blessing.*

Some think themselves blessed, if they may have one or two Children; one to inherit their Estates, one or two to delight themselves in, to play with, or to bear their name; but if they come to a number, to a great number, then they think themselves exceedingly burdened, then they are troubles. When God casts up the estate of a blessed man in outward things, he saith not only that he hath a Child, that he is not barren; but that he hath many Children, that he hath his Quiver full of such Arrows, as the expression is, *Psal.*127.5. And that is made the blessedness of a man there, *Happy is the man* (saith he) *that hath his Quiver full of them*; that hath many arrows, such are children of the youth, *V.* 4. There are some rich and covetous men, that are in this point beyond others, rich in folly: You shall hear them pride themselves that they have no Children, or but few; this they conceive sets them off in the opinion of the world, for the richer men; whereas one Child is more riches then all the things that are in the world. And we know it is an ordinary thing (though indeed it is a very sinful thing) to say, 'tis true, such an one is a rich man, he hath a fair estate, but he hath a great charge, a great many Children, as if that did take off from his riches, or make him less happy; as if he were the poorer, because he hath a larger share of that ancient first Blessing upon man, *Be fruitful, and multiply, and* Gen.1.28. *replenish the Earth.*

Fourthly, Note this, *To have many Sons, to have most Sons amongst our Children, is the greater outward Blessing.*

JOB is described here in the most exact method of outward Blessings; he had Sons, and his Sons out-number his Daughters; he had seven Sons, and but three Daughters. And the reason why most Sons among Children are the greater Blessing, is clear; because Sons bear up the Name, and are a greater support unto the Family.

Fifthly, *To have many Sons and Daughters too, is yet a compleater Blessing.*

For by Daughters the Family is encreased, and other Families are joyned, and knit, and united to that Family. And to have Sons and Daughters both, is the perfection of that Natural Blessing; because man was so made at the first; he was made male and female. As it is with the Soul and the Body, though the Soul be more excellent then the Body, yet the Soul alone is not so perfect, as when Soul and Body are together; because though the Body be not so strong in constitution, and noble in condition, as the Soul, yet Body and Soul in Creation were joyned together, therefore their greatest perfection consists in their union. So likewise it is in a Family; though Sons, in nature are more perfect, yet because it was the first institution of a Family, male and female, therefore the fulness and compleatness of the Blessing is in the union of both. *JOB* had many Sons and Daughters likewise; this made the Blessing more compleat.

And then lastly observe this, *Children, many Children in the Family, are in themselves, no impediments, either of Piety toward God, or Justice toward man.*

As soon as *Job* was described in all his Perfections, it is added, he had so many sons and so many daughters; though he had so many children to look to & provide for, yet he omitted neither duty towards God, nor duty towards man. There are many who think it some excuse, if not excuse enough for their neglect, for their slighting holy duties, or slightness in the holy duties of Hearing, Praying, and the like; Oh, they have a great many Children, and they must rise early, and they must work late, they can spare no time, or but little for the publick or private, or secret worship of God; specially for any thing that is extraordinary: so that these Cares steal away, not only those times that might be bestowed in an extraordinary manner upon their Souls, but even the ordinary times are stollen away by them also. Further, Some think themselves by this in part excused for their injustice toward men; they have a great Family, and

if

* The word *Banim*, sons, comes from *Banah*, to build; because sons and daughters build up their Fathers house, and continue the Family; or, because they are (as it were) built and framed out of their parents.

if they deal somewhat hardly, and stick as close as they can in all businesses, they may be born with, for they have a great many Children; and they must look to provide for them, they else were *worse then Infidels*; and hence they take liberty to do what honest Infidels were ashamed of. *Job* you see was upright, though he had so many Sons, and so many Daughters to provide for. It is ill with those, whose gain for their Children is loss to their souls; but wo, when any to gain for their Children, lose their souls; doing like those in *Nahum* 2. 12. *The Lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his Lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his Dens with rapine.* By the *Lion*, there, is meant those *Oppressors* that lived in *Nineveh*; and by their *Whelps*, are meant their *Children*; and by *Lionesses*, their *Wives*; they had Wives and Children, and they must have Means and Estates for them. *Job*, as I may say, had Whelps and a Lioness, Wife and Children, yet he doth not tear for them. Nay, though he had so many to provide for, yet he rather giveth out to others. What hungry belly was not filled with his meat? and what naked back was not cloathed with his wool? He did not say, I have Children to feed and to cloath, and therefore you can have nothing. You see: though he had many Children and a great Charge, yet how compleat he was in his duty to God, and in his duty to man; he failed not either in the duties of worship and holiness, nor in the duties of Justice and Uprightness.

VERS. 3, 4, 5.

His substance also was seven thousand Sheep, and three thousand Camels, and five hundred yoke of Oxen, and five hundred She-Asses, and a very great Houshold; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the East.

And his Sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day, and sent and called for their three Sisters, to eat and to drink with them.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt Offerings according to the number of them all, &c.

Psal. 127. 4, 5.

THe *Holy Ghost* having shewed us the *qualities of* Job's *person*, in the first Verse, the *Olive-plants round about his Table* (being the first outward Blessing) in the second; now proceeds to shew also his outward estate, his stock of Cattel: *His Substance was seven thousand sheep*, &c.

Concerning the outward Estate of *Job*, we may note in this third verse,

1. The several kinds of his Stock, *Sheep*, *Camels*, *Oxen* and *Asses*.

2. The several numbers of each of these kinds; *Seven thousand Sheep*, *three thousand Camels*, &c.

It is said, *His substance was seven thousand Sheep*, &c. We in our Language, call the Estate of a man *his Substance*; and a rich man we call him a *substantial man*; though indeed riches are but external and accidental, yet they are called the *substance* of a man, because they make him subsist and stand by himself, he needs not the prop and help of others.

מקנהו

The word here in the Hebrew which we translate *substance*, is indifferent to signifie any possession; but especially it signifies possession or substance by Cattel. Therefore in those times wherein the estates of the great men of the earth were most in Cattel, this expression was chiefly used; The *Septuagint* renders it, *And his Cattel were seven thousand sheep*, &c. So then *his substance*, scil. *of Cattel, was seven thousand Sheep.*

ὑπάρξις αὐτοῦ Septuagint.

Sheep.] Sheep for meat, and Sheep for cloathing; the flesh and the fleece, both are of great use.

And three thousand Camels*.] Camels were used in those Countries for burdens, and for travel, especially in long journeys. Merchants travelled with Camels; as you may read, *Gen.* 37. 25. *Joseph*'s Brethren beheld a company of *Ishmaelites* which came from *Gilead with their Camels*, and these were very strong for travel, being able to abide much hunger and thirst (as the Natural History affirms.) Some affirm they will travel six days together in those hot Countries without drink; and therefore those Eastern parts are stock'd and stored with Camels, beasts so fit for service there.

* The Hebrew word גמל comes from the root *Gamal*, to render and make recompence; for this creature being used much for burden and travel, doth abundantly recompence his Master for his keeping. From this Hebrew word *Gamal*, the Greeks derive the name κάμηλος; the Chaldeans *Gamla*, the Latines *camelus*, and we in our English *Camel*.

And five hundred yoke of Oxen.] Oxen for the tillage of the ground. *Their Oxen are strong to labour*, Psal. 144.

The Asses were for ordinary travel, and for ordinary burdens about the house.

But you may say, We read in the Inventory which here is made of *Job*'s Estate, that he had Sheep and Camels, Oxen and Asses; but where was the Silver and the Gold? where was the goodly Houshold-stuff, the Jewels and the Plate? here is no mention made of these.

I answer, *First*, That without doubt *Job* had Silver and Gold, and precious things: It is clear that he had, when he saith (*Chap.* 31. 24.) *If I have made Gold my hope, or have said to the fine Gold, thou art my Confidence*; it had not been proper for him to deny that Gold was his hope (in this sence) if he had not had Gold in his possession; or to say, he did not confide in fine Gold, when he had no Gold to confide in: Then he had Gold and Silver. And for Jewels, the holy Story tells us (*Chap.* 42. 12.) That *God gave* Job *twice as much as he had before.* And a part of what was restored to him, was Jewels and Ear-rings; *Every man gave him a piece of Money, and every one an Ear-ring of Gold*; therefore he had Jewels also in his possession at first, or else they could not be doubled to him in the day of his Deliverance.

We find frequent mention in those ancient times, of the riches of the Patriarchs and others, in Gold and Silver. It is express'd concerning *Abraham*, Gen. 13. 2. *That Abraham was very rich in Cattel, in Silver and in Gold.* And *Abraham*'s Servant, *Gen.* 24. 35. saith of him, *The Lord hath blessed my Master greatly, and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold:* And *v.* 53. *The Servant brought forth Jewels of silver and gold, and gave them to Rebekah; he gave also to her Brother and to her Mother precious things.* And *Gen.* 23. 16. We read of *Abraham*'s *paying four hundred shekels of silver unto Ephron the Hittite*; which was called *current money with the Merchants.* So that it is plain, in those days Gold and Silver and Jewels were substance.

But here the Estate of *Job* is reckoned and cast up by Cattel; there is no mention of Gold, and Silver, and Jewels, and precious Stones, and the like. *His Substance was seven thousand sheep*, &c. Two Reasons may be given for this Accompt.

The first is this, because those ancient times were so much given to, and employed in the feeding of Cattel; therefore they did reckon their Estates by Cattel, as we now do by Money, by Gold, and by Silver, or by yearly Rents and Revenues. If a man had so many Cattel, so many Sheep, so many Oxen, *&c.* they knew his Estate, what Gold and Silver, or other Riches he might have. When the Sons of *Jacob* came before *Pharaoh*, Gen. 46. 32. they are called Shepherds; *The men are Shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed Cattel*: They are men of Cattel; as if he should say, the special Commodity, the main thing these trade in, is about Cattel, and that gives denomination: They had Gold and Silver, but they are *men of Cattel.*

אנשי מקנה

And then again, for this reason; Cattel are living Substance; Gold and Silver are dead substance. Cattel, in their own nature, are more excellent then Gold and Silver; because they have Life. Every thing that hath Life, is better in its degree then that which hath no Life. The lowest Creature that hath Life, is better then the best without Life; the lowest of a superiour order, is better then the highest of an inferiour. Now all things without Life, are put into a degree, into a classis or form below and inferiour to those that have Life. It is true, that *Money answereth all things*: Money is equivalently Sheep, and Oxen, and Asses, and Camels. Money is equivalently Bread, and Meat, and Drink, and Cloathing, and whatsoever you need; it is virtually all that you may and can receive; so that by way of commutation and exchange, Money is all things; but formally, and in it self, so these things are the life, and sustenance, and support of man; therefore these go away with the name and the title of the Estate; the Estate or Substance of *Job* was in these natural and living

Eccl. 10. 19.

Riches,

Riches, not in artificial or dead Riches. Hence it was that the *Ancients* gave the name *Pecunia* to Money; which comes *a Pecude*, from Cattel (so the Criticks observe) because they stamp'd the form of a Sheep or an Oxe upon Money, noting that Cattel were the riches and the estate of a man properly and chiefly. This may suffice for the reasons why the estate or riches of *Job* is set forth by Cattel, and not by Gold and Silver, and other-like Possessions.

Further, with this abundance of Cattel that *Job* had, we must understand (though it is not expresst) that he had Land sutable to such a Stock.

And when these Numbers are set down (because we usually say, he is but poor, that can number his Cattel) we are not to stand strictly upon the precise number of seven thousand, or five hundred, *&c.* But here are great quantities mentioned; to note, that *Job* had not only many, very many Cattel, but that he had great numbers of all these.

Then it follows, He had these, **and a very great Houshold.**

The words in the Original, do signifie Servants, or Tillage and Husbandry. Concerning *Isaac*, Gen.26.it is said that *he had possessions of flocks and of heards, and great store of servants*; so some read it; others, that he had great store of husbandry. It comes all to one purpose; for the greatness of the Houshold, or multitude of Servants, were for those uses, to mannage and order those Flocks, that Tillage and Estate that God had blessed him with. He had a very great Houshold, many attendants upon the several services of his Estate.

Lastly, We have the sum and result (as it were) of all his Estate, in the close of the Verse.

So that this man was the greatest of all the men of the East.

He was the greatest divers ways; greatest in riches, greatest in power, greatest in honour, greatest in grace, which is the best greatness of all. He was greatest all these wayes; but that which is here specially meant, is the greatness of his honour and riches: He was the greatest man in outward estate of all the men of the East.

Of all the men of the East.] Heb. *Sons of the East.* In *Gen.*25.6. *Abraham gave gifts to his Sons by the Concubines, and sent them away from his Son Isaac Eastward into the East Countrey.* Doubtless the Blessing of God followed these Sons of *Abraham* his Friend, and they waxed great, but among them all *Job was greatest.* It had been much to say, he was a great man amongst the men of the *East*; for the men of the *East* were very great men, and very rich men. As to say, one is a rich man in the City of *London*, where there are so many rich men; one that goeth for a rich man there, is a rich man indeed. But here is more in this; he was not only a rich man, or a great man amongst the men of the East; but he was the greatest, he was the richest of them: as to say, that one is the richest in the whole City, cries a man up to the height of riches. This expression then heightens the sence of the Text concerning *Job*'s greatness, he was not only great among the men of the *East*, but the greatest man of them: as if the Holy Ghost should have said, I will not stay reckoning up Particulars, or tell you this and that *Job* had; you know the East was a large Countrey, and full of rich men; his estate was the largest, and himself the richest of all the men of the East.

A Question may here be raised, Why the Holy Ghost spends so many words, and is thus accurate in the setting forth of *Job*'s outward estate?

I shall touch three Reasons for it.

1. He is described to be a man of a very *great estate*, to the end that the greatness of his affliction might appear afterward. The measure of a loss is taken by the greatness of a mans enjoyment. If a man have but little, his affliction cannot be great; but if a man have much, if he have abundance, then the affliction doth abound. After great enjoyments, want is greatest: Emptiness presses those most, who once were full. *I went out full* (saith *Naomi*, Ruth 1. 21.) *and the Lord hath brought me home empty; therefore call me not* Naomi (which is *pleasant*) *but* Marah, which is *bitter*; *for the Almighty hath done very bitterly with me.*

2. *The greatness of his Estate* is set forth, that the greatness of his Patience might appear. For a man to be made poorer, that was but poor and mean before, it is no great matter though he bear it; for a man to have but little, that never had much, is no great trial of his patience: but for a man to have nothing at all, that had, as it were, all things, and to be patient under it, this shews the proof of Patience. To a man that is born a Slave or a Captive, Captivity and Bondage is no trouble; it doth never exercise his patience, he is scarce sensible of the evil, because he never knew better: But for a King, that is born free, and hath power over others, for a King that is in the height of freedom and liberty, to become a Slave and a Captive, in such a one patience hath a perfect work, if he bear it. So for *Job*, a man that once abounded in all manner of good things, to be outed and emptied of all, that tried his patience to the full.

Scimus quia majorem dolorem commovent damna majora. Greg.

Multo facilius est non habita repudiare, quam possessa amittere. Aug.

3. It was to give all the world a testimony, that *Job was a thorough godly and holy man*; that he was a man of extraordinary strength of Grace: Why? Because he held his integrity, and kept up his spirit in the way of Holiness, notwithstanding he was lifted up with abundance of outward Blessings. To be very great, and very good, shews that a man is good indeed: *Great and Good, Rich and Holy, are happy conjunctions, and they are rare conjunctions.* Usually Riches impoverish the Soul, and the World eats out all care of Heaven; therefore *Job* was one of a thousand, being at once thus great in Riches, and thus rich in Goodness. He was *Rich in Grace*, that was so gracious in the midst of so much Riches; the Godliness of *Job* was enriched by his Riches. It argued that *Job*'s Godliness was very great, and very right, because he continued right in the midst of all his Greatness. How often do Riches cause forgetfulness of God, yea, kicking against God? How often are they made the Bellows of Pride, the Fewel of Uncleanness, the Instruments of Revenge? How often do rich men contemn, despise and oppress their weak and poor Brethren? but to make Riches the fewel of our Graces, and the instruments of Duty both to God and man, to have the house full of Riches, and the heart full of holiness, these united are admirable. *Extreams are very dangerous*; to be extream poor, or extream rich, is an extream temptation. There the wise man *Agur*, Prov. 30. *v.* 8. prayes, *Give me neither poverty nor riches.* Lord (saith he) I would not be in any of the extreams: It is a sore temptation to be far on either hand; to be far on the hand of riches, or far on the hand of poverty. To be very poor, and very holy, is a rare thing: That man hath great treasures and riches of Grace, who is so. I remember the speech of a poor woman, who having a Child about eight or nine years of age, and being once in such a streight, that hunger began to pinch them both; the Child looking upon the Mother, said, *Mother, do you think that God will starve us? No Child, answers the Mother:* The Child replied, *If he do, yet must we love him and serve him.* Such Language from the heart, becomes and argues more then a Child in Grace, a *grown Christian. They are filled with Christ, who can starve, and serve him: So likewise are they, who being full-fed, yet serve him*; and Temptations are greater upon the full, then upon the empty, upon the rich, then upon the poor: The reason of it is, because as Riches do stir up Lust, so they give fewel, and administer instruments for the obtaining and taking in of that which Lust calls for; this Poverty doth not do.

Ex ingentibus Jobi divitiis valde locupletatur ejus Sanctitas. Pined. *in loc.*

Deut. 32.

The poor (saith Christ) *receive the Gospel*; *the lame and the blind make most speed, and see their way cleerest into the Kingdom of Heaven*; but for rich men (he saith) *It is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a Needle, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* We see now the Miracle acted in *Job*; the Camel is got through the Needle's eye; *Job*, a rich man, is got through the Needle's eye with three thousand Camels, *&c.* And the reason was, because all his Camels, Cattel, and Riches, did not take up so much room in his heart, they were not so thick in his spirit, as one single thred. *All his outward estate was kept without*; not a shred, not a thred got into his spirit. Take this for a third Reason, why the Holy Ghost doth thus exactly set forth the estate of *Job*; *scil.* that he might appear to be an exact holy man.

Mat.19.24.

From the whole, take these Observations:

First, We see here *Job* a holy man, very full of Riches: Thence observe,

That Riches are the good Blessings of God.

God would never have bestowed them upon his *Job* else. Lest we should think Riches *evil*, they are given to these who

Divitiæ, ne malæ putentur, dantur bonis; ne magnæ vel summæ, dantur & malis. Aug.

who are good: And left Riches should be thought the *chiefest good*, they are given to those that are evil. *It is a certain Truth, that God never gives any thing in it self evil to those that are good; nor doth he ever give the chiefest good to those that are evil.* Therefore it shews, that Riches are good, because the Godly have them; and it shews, that they are not the chiefest good, because the wicked have them. When the Gospel calls us to renounce the world, to cast off the world; it calls us to cast the world out of our affections, not out of our possession. To hold and possess great riches, is not evil; it is evil to set our hearts upon them.

Secondly, *Job* was described before, a just man, an upright man, that is, a man just in his dealing, a man that gave every one his own; he did not decline, no not a hairs breadth (if possibly he could) from the Line of Justice, Commutative or Distributive; yet this *Job* is exceeding rich. Hence observe, That

Plain and honest dealing is no hinderance to the gaining or preserving of an Estate.

Honest dealing is no stop, no bar to getting. There is a cursed Proverb amongst us, which some use; and it is to be feared, some walk by it; *That he which useth plain dealing, shall die a Beggar.* You see *Job*, that was a plain man, a just-dealing man, yet is full of Riches. The nighest and the safest way to riches, is the way of Justice. Wo to those, who by getting riches, get a wound in their own Consciences. What will it advantage any one to gather many goods, when in the mean time, his heart tells him, that all have a *bad Master*? What will it advantage any to load and fraight his Ship by trading on forbidden Coasts, when by doing this, he splits and makes shipwrack of his Soul? If you would go the ready way to attain the things of this life, walk in the wayes of God. Honesty and Justice, Uprightness and Truth, will lead you to the highest and greatest estate, with Gods Blessing. All other riches are poverty, all other gain is loss; there is a fire in an estate ill gotten, which will at last consume it. A man builds with timber that hath fire in it, that layes the foundation of his estate by sin; *he lays up iniquity for his Children.* And so doth God, *Job* 21. 19.

It is commonly said likewise, *Dives aut iniquus, aut iniqui hæres; A rich man is either an unjust man, or heir of an unjust man.* In *Psal.* 82. The wicked are put for the rich: *How long will you judge unjustly, and accept the person of the wicked?* That is, the persons (*Divitum aut Potentum*) of rich or great men, so it is to be understood; for Judges would never accept the persons of wicked men, if they were poor, if they be in equal ballance with others, in regard of outward things: and then the opposition that is made in the next words, *Defend the poor and fatherless*, shews that the rich are there meant. These *great ones* are called wicked, because (saith the glos) they usually get and uphold their greatness by wickedness. Such is the course of the world, and it is the shame of the world, much more of Christians. We see in *Job*'s practice, that riches may be attained and maintained too by righteousness; *Job was rich and just.*

Thirdly, In that *Job*, a man fearing God, was thus rich; thus great; see here the *truth of the Promises.* God will make good his *Promise* concerning outward things to his people. *Godliness hath the promises of this Life, as well as of that which is to come.* As it hath promises made to it, so it hath promises performed to it; *Job*, a man fearing God, a godly man, is very rich. Indeed, *not many rich, not many mighty, not many honourable, not many great ones are called*: and so not many of those that are called, are mighty, and rich, and great, and noble; yet some such are, that the truth of the promises may appear sometime in the very Letter to the eye of sence, as it alwayes doth to the eye of Faith.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

1 Cor. 1. 26

Do not fear that you shall be poor, if you turn godly; for Godliness hath the promises of this life; and there was a rich *Job*, a rich *Abraham*, a rich *Isaac*, a rich *David*, and many other godly rich. God will perform when it is good for them, the promises of outward good things to his Children outwardly.

Fourthly, Here is another Observation from this place; *Job* was frequent in holy duties; he was a man fearing God, that is (as we explained in the first verse) he was much verst in the wayes of holy worship; he did not serve God by fits, or at his leisure, but *continually*; yet he was very rich. Note hence,

Time spent in holy duties is no loss, no hinderance to our ordinary Callings, or to our thriving in them.

Job serves God so frequently, that it is called continually; yet he grows in wealth abundantly. The time that he spent in the service of God did not rob his purse, impoverish his family, or hinder him in his dealings and businesses of the world. *Job* maintained both his Callings; he maintained his general Calling in the wayes and service of God, and his special or particular Calling in his relations unto men; both went on together, and they were no hindrance one to another, but a furtherance rather. The time we spend in spiritual duties, is time gained for secular. The time we spend in Prayer, &c. whets our tools, and oils our wheels, promotes all we go about, and getteth a blessing upon all.

This meets with another Blasphemy very frequent in the world. If a man professing Godliness, go backward in his Estate, especially a man that is taken notice of for his extraordinary zeal and constancy in holy duties; then the clamour is, O you see what hearing of Sermons hath brought him unto; you see what comes of his praying and fasting; he hath followed these things you see, till he is undone. I say two things unto these men.

First, Many are thought to go backward in their outward estate, because they do so much in spiritual duties, when indeed they are so far from doing too much, that they do too little, and that rather is the reason why they thrive not. The Body may be exercised often, when the Spirit works but seldom, if at all in holy things; and this indeed provokes God many times to blast an outward estate. It is a common fault, that when we see those whom we conceive godly, falling in outward things, we are taken up only in finding out answers how to acquit the Justice of God in his promises. What shall we say to such a promise, *Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you?* We trouble our selves often to satisfie the point in reference to the Justice of God, and the truth of his promise: We seldom suspect whether or how they have performed the condition of the Promise. We should rather doubt that they have not evangelically performed the condition, then trouble our selves so much with seeking how to satisfie the Justice of God in answering the Engagement and Promise on his part. For without all question, they that do seek according to the tenour of that Condition, God will administer all things unto them.

Or secondly, We should say thus rather, that they who are so much exercised in wayes of Communion with God, have surely gained a great spiritual estate; and that now God brings them to the proof of it by losses in their temporal estates. These or the like interpretations we ought to make, if we see them going backward in outward things, who have been very forward in spiritual things.

And so much concerning *Job*'s outward estate, in regard of his Riches, both what they were in the kind, and in the number.

In the next place, his outward happiness is described by the unity and concord of his Children.

Verse 4. **And his Sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day, and sent and called for their three Sisters to eat and to drink with them.**

This Verse sets forth a third part of *Job*'s happiness in respect of his outward estate. He had Children, and many Children in the second Verse: Here in the fourth, we find all these Children, Sons and Daughters agreeing and feasting one with another. We may note from the words four things concerning this feasting.

1. Their *Alacrity* and *Chearfulness*, which most do observe out of that expression, *they went and feasted*; which phrase in the Hebrew, signifies, the doing of a thing with chearfulness and readiness.

2. Their *Unanimity*: It is not said that some two or three of his Sons feasted, but his Sons indefinitely, all his Sons; and not only his Sons, but his Daughters; the three Sisters were called too. So that they were all of one mind,

they all met together in love; though they were ten in number, they were but one in heart, the same in spirit.

3. *The Place* where they feasted; *it was in their houses*; they did not go to suspected places, but in their own private houses and families, where it was most convenient, and where they might celebrate those meetings with most security; both for their Bodies, and for their Souls.

4. *The frequency of that feasting*; it was not only once, but *every one his day*. They did not meet at every one of their houses upon a special and a set day: *Every one his day*; some make the sence thus, *they feasted in their houses one every day*; as if it had been a continual Feast with them; they feasted all the week long, and they would seem to allow it by the moderation used in their feasting; but the words, *every one his day*, note a course, a certain time wherein they did feast, not a continued feasting. Some conceive it was upon their *Birth-days*; whether that be so or no, there is nothing appears from the Text; only it is said, *They feasted every one his day.*

And they sent and called for their three Sisters to eat and to drink with them.

In that we may observe three things.

1. *The Humanity of the Brethren*; they would not banquet alone and leave out their Sisters; but they sent and called them.

2. *The Modesty of the Sisters*; that they would not come but upon special invitation; they were not forward of themselves, but they were sent and called for.

3. *The end of this Invitation*; it was *to eat and to drink with them.* As under the notions of Bread and Water, or Bread and Wine, all necessaries for food are comprized; so under the actions of eating and drinking, the whole business of feasting is contained, *Luke* 12. 19. *Isa.* 22. 15. *Eccl.* 2. 24.

There is nothing further in the words, that we need stay longer in opening or clearing of them: We shall only give you some few Notes out of them.

His Sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his Day.

This is set forth as the third part of *Job's* outward happiness. Then note we first, That

The Love and mutual Agreement of Children is one of the greatest Blessings to a Parent.

The Love of Children is the Fathers blessing, and it is a great blessing. How many Fathers have their hearts rent and divided by the *rents and divisions* that are amongst their Children? It doth blast and wither all the comfort the parent hath, to see that there is no agreement of Love, no correspondency of affection, amongst those that come all from the same Bowels, from the same loins. This is a blessing which was not common in the world, no not in those times. *Adam* had not this blessing. *Adam*, when he had only two Sons, they could not agree; but one murdereth the other. *Abraham* enjoyed not this blessing; when he had but two Sons, one is *mocking the other*; *Ishmael* is mocking *Isaac*. *Isaac* failed of the blessing; he had but two sons, and one threatned to murder the other: *The days of mourning for my Father are at hand, then will I slay my Brother Jacob.* This was not *Jacob's* blessing; he had twelve sons, there was one of them, *Joseph*, the common Butt of all his Brethrens envie; they did spight him; *The Archers did shoot at him, and grieved him sorely, and hated him.* They could not all agree, there were divisions among them. It is no ordinary blessing then. You see *David*, a holy man; yet what divisions were there among his Children? one murdereth another; *Absolom* caused *Amnon* to be murdered; *Adonijah* riseth up against *Solomon*; he cannot bear it, that his Brother should have the Crown. You see then that it is a blessing, and it is an extraordinary blessing: Therefore take notice of it, you that have an agreeing family, children that live together in love and unity; look upon it as a special blessing from God.

Secondly, We may observe, That

It is a very comely thing for Brethren and Sisters to live rogether in unity.

In *Job's* children, we have that of *Psal.* 133. fulfilled; *Behold* (he calls all to look upon it) *how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* Such a sight may draw all eyes after it. *Job's* Children were many in number, in heart but one, in love the same. And as there is nothing more troublesome, so nothing more uncomely and unnatural, then rents and divisions in a Family.

Numero plurimi erant, consensu autem & concordia quasi unus, unanimitate atq; dilectione quasi idem. Orig.

Thirdly, We may note, That

It is lawful to use feasting.

The Children of *Job* here went and feasted at their several houses, *every one his day.* The Christians in the Primitive Churches had their ἀγάπας, *Love-feasts.* In a *Feast* there are two things; extraordinary provision, and extraordinary company; both are lawful. God hath given us the Creature, not only for necessity, but for delight; and it is a clear argument that such using of the creatures in feasting, is lawful, because God hath made more creatures serving for the delight of man, then he hath made for the necessity of man. If God had meant that men should do nothing, but serve their own necessity, and maintain their lives, so as they might go on in their places and callings, one half of the creatures might have been spared: But God made nothing in vain: therefore he is willing we should use the creatures for moderate delight. *Abraham made a great Feast at the weaning of* Isaac; and *Isaac* makes a Feast for *Abimelech* and *Phicol* the chief Captain of his Army, *Gen.* 26. 30. And the like examples we have in divers other places: And our Saviour Christ himself was at a Feast in *Cana* of *Galilee*; where, when wine failed, he supplied it by Miracle, *John* 2.

Tert. *Apol.* c. 39.

Deus multo plura condidit, quibus facile carere possemus, quam quibus necessario nobis opus est. Bez. *in loc.* Gen. 21. 8.

But because Feasting is so often abused, and many turn this liberty into wantonness; being then most wicked, when they should be most thankful; and grieving God most, when he gives them means or occasion of rejoycing. I shall therefore briefly discover the abuses of Feasting: which will also hint rules for the right ordering of it; *That we may* (as the Apostle speaks) *eat and drink, and do all to the Glory of God.*

1. Then Feasting is sinful, when any overcharge their Estates, and lavish out what will but serve their necessities, or conveniencies, upon delights and superfluities; to such, *Feasting* is a sin.

2. When the rich *feast* the rich, and never think upon the poor, *Luke* 14. 12, 13. *When thou makest a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours.* Observe here, this is not an absolute denial of calling Brethren, and Kinsfolks, and friends, or rich; for brethren may, yea, ought to be called; but (saith he) *when thou makest a Feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind*; that is, when thou makest a Feast, be sure to remember these; do not bid thy brethren, or the rich alone, let the poor have a portion with thee, and be refreshed at or from thy Table. When the rich feast one another, and let the poor starve or pine, this is very sinful.

3. When there is a studied *curiosity* and *exactness in feasting.* When all things that can be thought on, must be fetch'd in, strange meats and foreign sauces; when there is a lusting after Quails, when men must have meat for their Lusts. Though we may have feasting for our delight, yet we must not have feasting for our lusts: *Such make their Belly their god*, as the Apostle speaks; when there is so much Art used, as destroys the nature of the Meat, this is a sin and an errour. I remember *Bernard* speaks of his times, *That a man might be at a Fish-feast, and yet should not know whether he had eaten any Fish or no*; all things were prepared with so much Art, that the very nature of the Creature was lost. This is a sinful Vanity.

4. When there is *Intemperance in feasting* (whatsoever the provision be) when there is excess, an overcharging of Nature, which is *surfetting and drunkenness.* As by the former, man overthrows the nature of meats and drinks, so by this, meat and drink overthrow the nature of man. A man may feast himself into a Beast; and we usually say of such men, *They are disguised*: For such feasting the Land mourns.

5. When *Feastings are frequent.* Feasts are not for every day; that was the thing taxed in the Glutton, *Luke* 16. *That he fared deliciously every day.*

6. When we *spend too much of the day at any time, or too much*

much time any day in feasting; when we dine till night, and sup all or a great part of the night; this is *chambering* and *wantonness*, this is a woful expence and waste of time; and the expence of time is worse by far then the expence of money: you may regain the expence of your money; but you can never call back the expence of your time; you may be at greater charges in your feasting for the waste of time, then for the waste of Estate. All the world cannot give you back again the expence of an hour. Indeed we often hear men complain they have spent too much money in Feasting and Entertainments; but it is very rare, that any complain they have spent too much time; which is, as if a man having received a wound in his Body, should only be troubled for the hole which the Sword made in his Doublet. Prodigality of time is the worst and most dangerous prodigality.

7. *Feasting is sinful when unseasonable.* I speak in regard of occasions and opportunities: there are special times wherein it is unlawful to feast, though we should spend but very little time in feasting, *Isa.* 22. 12, 13. *In that day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth; and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine.* In the next Verse it is said, *It was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of Hosts, surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you die.* To feast in that day was sinful, and a sin that left such a stain as could not be got out; it shall not be purged from you. What time was this wherein their feasting was so sinful? What made this sin so deep-grain'd? You shall find a resolution in the beginning of the Chapter: *It was a day of trouble and perplexity, and of treading down by the Lord God of Hosts in the valley of Vision, breaking down the walls, and crying to the mountains.* It is a day of trouble and perplexity, and will you now be feasting? (saith God.) Is this a time for you to feast in, when my wrath is breaking forth amongst you? This feasting with men, is a daring of God, a sending (as it were) defiance unto Heaven. And such feasting as this *Amos* reproves, *Chap.* 6. 4, 5. *They did eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the stall; they chaunt to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves Instruments of Musick, like* David; *they drink wine in Bowls, and annoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of* Joseph.

Then at this time feasting is unseasonable; for *Joseph*, the People and Churches of God are in affliction: and this is such a day as the Prophet describes, *a day of perplexity from the Lord.* The Kingdom is full of trouble, and we are full of fears; therefore now Fasting is in season, not Feasting; now humbling is in season, not rejoycing: Or if any feast now, let them feast as if they feasted not, and rejoyce as if they rejoyced not; let them feast, as remembring the affliction and bonds, the hunger and wants of our distressed Brethren. Therefore in those feastings which have a kind of necessity in them, you should labour to have your hearts exceedingly above your feasting, not to lie so low as the Creature; it is ever very sinful to have your hearts drowned in the creature; but now especially, when you hear the voice of the Sword threatning to take the creature from us, and see God clashing them together, as if he meant to stain the beauty, and sowr the pleasures of them all.

Verse 5. **And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them,** &c.

This Verse contains the holy practice of *Job*. You saw before that he had Grace in his heart; now you may see Grace in his Life. *Holy Practice makes Grace visible.* There it lay in the *habit*, here it came forth in the *act*. Concerning this holy practice of *Job*, we may note these three things for the division of the Verse.

1. The Actions about which this holy care of *Job* was exercised: They are two.
   1. *He sent and sanctified them.* And,
   2. *Offered burnt Offerings according to the number of them all.*

2. The Ground of this holy practice of his, what moved *Job* after their feasting, thus *to send and sanctifie them.* The ground was this; *For* Job *said, it may be that my Sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.*

3. The Constancy of *Job* in this his holy practice; he did not this by fits, now and then; but *thus did* Job *continually.*

And it was so, that when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them.

That is the first thing that we are to explain and open unto you; Job *sent and sanctified them.* How could *Job* sanctifie his sons or his daughters? A Parent indeed may provide Riches for his children, but can he provide Grace also? A Parent may put Money in their purses, but can he put holiness in their hearts too, that it is said here, that Job *sent and sanctified them?* Is not sanctification the proper work of the Spirit of God? Doth not the Holy Ghost alone sanctifie?

For the clearing of this; Whereas it is said that *Job sent and sanctified them*: *First*, Some expound the meaning thus; that *Job* sent up prayers to God to sanctifie them. And indeed *Prayer is a sanctifying Ordinance.* As Prayer requireth a holy heart, so Prayer will make a holy heart, make the heart that prayes holy; yea, many times get holiness into anothers heart. *Secondly*, Others say, *He sent and sanctified them*; that is, he sent them to the place that was appointed for Sacrifice, where he intended to sanctifie them; or where, in the holy duty of calling upon the Name of God, and of offering Sacrifice, they *were to be sanctified*: *He sent and sanctified them*; he sent them to the place where the Sacrifice should be offered, that so they might *be sanctified.* But *Thirdly*, I rather take it thus; *He sent and sanctified them*; that is, he sent a Message to them, to command them to prepare and to fit themselves for the holy Duty of offering the burnt offering, or sacrificing. For to *sanctifie*, in Scripture notes two things.

1. The infusion of a holy habit, the infusion of a new principle into the soul.
2. A preparation of the soul to holy duties.

Now when it is said, that *Job sent and sanctified them*, it is not meant, as if *Job* did infuse holy habits into his Children, as if it were in his power to make them gracious; Indeed that is impossible; it is only the work of the Spirit of God; no man can come at the Spirit of another, but the Spirit of God. But this is it, he sent to them to prepare themselves, to advise and warn them to prepare themselves, that they might be ready for that holy duty, for the duty of sacrificing. And this *preparation* to holy duties, is often called *sanctifying*; as, *Gen.* 35. When *Jacob* was called to *Bethel*, to *offer sacrifice, and to build an Altar*, he said to his Houshold, *v.* 2. *Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean* (that is, sanctifie you, or be you sanctified) *and let us arise and go up to Bethel, and I will make there an Altar unto God*, &c. The preparation to the Sacrifice, was a cleansing or a sanctifying of them. So *Exod.* 19. 20. When the People were to be prepared to receive the Law, the Lord saith unto *Moses, Go unto the People, and sanctifie them to day and to morrow*; that is, prepare the people, or warn the people, that they prepare themselves for the receiving of the Law. And likewise in 1 *Sam.* 16. 5. It is said, that *Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Bethlehem, and the Elders of the Town trembled at his coming, and said, comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably; I am come to sacrifice unto the Lord; sanctifie your selves, and come with me to the Sacrifice*; that is, prepare your selves to come to the Sacrifice. So sanctification is preparation. And, *John* 11. 55. (to name no more) *The Jews Passover was nigh at hand, and many went out of the Countrey up to Hierusalem before the Passover, to purifie themselves*, or to sanctifie themselves, that they might be fit and ready for the Sacrifice. So then this sanctifying of them, was a preparing of them for the Sacrifice. There were solemn Rules given afterward, when the form of the Church-Order and Discipline was established by *Moses*; but even now before that, the Law and Light of Nature taught this, besides the teaching of God, that they must be sanctified, before they came to sacrifice. *Job sent and sanctified them, and then they came to that holy Service.*

This is the first Act of *Job*. We may here observe, first, the time when *Job* sent to sanctifie them; it was

when the dayes of their feasting were gone about. Job did not take them off from their feasting, or deny them the liberty of their feasting; but when the dayes of their feasting were gone about, then *he sent and sanctified them.* The Point we may note from hence, is this,

That, *It doth well become godly Parents to give their Children leave to take moderate refreshing and recreation one with another.*

Job did not severely and austerely forbid them, and say, What do you feasting and spending your time idly one with another? why do you spend so many days in feasting? He never interrupted them till the dayes of their feasting were gone about: It becometh Parents to loose the reins of Government so far as to give them leave for their refreshing, to let themselves out in honest wayes of recreation by their mutual society. Job did not call them to this holy service from their feasting; *but when the dayes of their feasting were gone about.*

Secondly, Job sent to sanctifie his Children. Though they were in their own houses, though they were at their own disposing (for it appears they had families and households of their own) though they were men and women grown; yet Job sent to sanctifie them. Observe hence.

That, *Parents must not cast off the care of their Children, though they are grown up, though they are men and women.*

Some think, that if they look to their Children at School, and breed them up a while, and have given them some instructions in their youth, they need not then trouble themselves any further: whereas the care of Parents ought to live as long as they and their Children live together. Job's care went after his Children to their houses: *He sent to them to bid them prepare themselves.*

Thirdly, Though these were (as we say) men and women grown, yet as soon as their Father sends the message to them, they all submit and all obey: then observe,

That, *Children that are grown up, or have Houses and Families of their own, ought yet to yield all reverence and submission to the lawful commands, counsels and directions of their Parents.*

Do not think you have outgrown obedience and honour to Parents, when you are grown in years; still we see these thought themselves under their Fathers command and counsel; there is not one of them replies, what need my Father trouble himself about us? No; but all willingly prepared themselves and came; for he offered *burnt Offerings according to the number of them all*; therefore certainly they all came.

Fourthly, From the matter of this Act, what it was that Job did; the Text saith, *He sent and sanctified them after their feasting*: He did not send a Messenger to them, to ask how they were in health, whether they had not surfetted themselves, or had got any distemper; he did not send to know how the accounts went in their Families, whether they had not spent too much; but the matter that he had his eye and his heart upon, was, that they might be sanctified and fitted for holy Duties. From hence observe,

That, *A Parents main and special care should be for the Souls of his Children.*

The care of many Parents is only to enrich their children, to make them great and honourable, to leave them full Portions and Estates, to provide Matches for them; but for sanctifying their children, there is no thought of that. Nay, many are affraid their Children should be sanctified; some Parents cannot abide their Children, because they suspect them sanctified: *Such Parents are the Devil's Children.* Job's greatest care was, that his children should be sanctified. And every Parent ought to say of his Natural Children, as the Apostle John doth of his spiritual Children (*Eph.* 3. 4.) *I have no greater joy, then to hear that my Children walk in the Truth.*

Fifthly, Job was a holy person, and you see which way his care lies; that his children may be holy: Then take this Note in the general.

He that is a holy person himself, desires to make others holy too.

Holy Job would have all his Children holy. As it is with the wicked, a wicked man would fain have all wicked with him; he would fain scatter his wickedness, and diffuse his poyson unto others: The Drunkard would fain have companions with him in his Drunkenness, *&c.* And so the man that is truly godly, would make others godly too. As *Paul* said to King *Agrippa, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am.* Grace is attractive: It desires to draw others into fellowship. A good man would not be happy alone. Act. 26.29.

Sixthly, Sanctification you see here, is ascribed unto Job; *he sent and sanctified them*; and all that he did, was but to give them counsel and warning to sanctifie themselves; as if he should have said, Go to my Children, and bid them prepare themselves; warn them that they may be ready against the Sacrifice, that they fit themselves for it; yet the Text saith, that Job *sanctified them.* Then we may observe from this,

That, *the good which others do by our advice and counsel, is reckoned as done by our selves.*

While we provoke others to goodness, that good which they do, is set upon our account, as if we had done it. As the wickedness, the sin which another commits by the advice and counsel of any man, is set upon the score of that man: If another do ill by thy advice, the ill is reckoned to thee. If one should come and say as *Absolom* said to his Servants, *Mark ye now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, smite Amnon, then kill him, fear not, have not I commanded you?* Not only did the servants kill *Amnon*, but *Absolom* killed *Amnon*, because he commanded them to kill him. You know what is said of *David*; he did but send a Letter concerning the death of *Uriah*; and the Charge cometh, *Thou hast slain Uriah with the Sword of the Children of Ammon.* All the evil others commit by thy counsel, direction, advice, command or consent, is as done by thy self. So (on the other side) all the good others do by our counsel, advice, promotion, admonition, instruction, and the like, that good shall all be reckoned to us. If another be holy by thy advice, it it will be said thou hast made him holy, thou hast sanctified him.

Lastly, Observe, That *Holy Duties call for Holy Preparation.*

We must not touch holy things with unholy hands, or with unholy hearts: *I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord*, was *David's* resolution, *Psal.* 26. 6. therefore Job intending a solemn duty, a Sacrifice, which did contain the sum of all Religion concerning the external worship of God, sends solemnly to his children to prepare themselves: O come not to the Sacrifice except you be sanctified. It is a point so clear, that I shall need but only to name it to you. How and wherein they should sanctifie themselves, and what course they took for the sanctifying and preparing of themselves for that Duty, doth not appear in this place; but afterwards, when God gave them the Law, he prescribed them a rule, what they must do that they might be sanctified: the *Jews* had special directions for their preparations. Some things were outward, and some inward. I will but touch.

For the outward, they were commanded to wash their cloaths, *Exod.* 19. that place before quoted; *Sanctifie them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their cloaths*: Not that God regarded cloaths, but he aimed at somewhat further; if the cloaths must be washed, certainly then the heart must be washed; he pointed at that in the washing of their cloaths, In *Leviticus* and *Numbers*, other outward preparations are commanded; as the *abstaining from all things that were unclean; they must not touch any thing that was unclean*: and then sometimes they were not only to wash their cloaths, but to change their cloaths: you have the expression in that place concerning *Jacob*; *Be clean* (saith he) *and change your garments*: It might be a changing by washing; but I rather conceive, that it was a change by putting on of other cloaths. There was also another

ther external requisite to the preparing and sanctifying of themselves; and that was by abstaining for a time from the lawful use of the *Marriage-bed*: You have the command expresly in that of *Exod.* 19. 15. *Be ready against the third day, come not at your wives*; and there are other the like places, 1 Sam. 21. 4. The Priest said, *There is no common bread under mine hand, but there is hallowed bread; if the young men have kept themselves at least from women*; if they have but the outward preparation; the meaning is, if they had kept themselves from their Wives: *David* affirms it was so, in the words following. The Apostle giveth the same Rule, in 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. Speaking of that point; *Defraud not one another* (saith he) *except it be with consent for a time, that you may give your selves to fasting and prayer.* So that the Holy Ghost therein intimates such an abstaining as was preparatory to solemn duties, *that you may give your selves to fasting and prayer.* Extraordinary duties call for extraordinary preparations. These outward preparations were so necessary, that when the people failed in them, *Hezekiah* prayed for pardon, 2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19. *The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his Fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary.* Though their hearts were upright, though they had hearts rightly prepared, yet he prayeth that God would pardon the want of those outward preparations. The principal preparation is of the heart, and the washing of our wayes: therefore we find how the Lord contendeth with them, in *Isa.* 1. 10, 11, &c. where he speaks of those Oblations, and great Services of the *Jews*: *I hate your solemn feasts, bring no more vain oblations*, &c. Why? *Your hands* (*scil.* your lives) *are full of blood. Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well*, &c. As if he should say, Why do you come to me in these holy duties, except you prepare and fit your selves accordingly; I cannot abide that unholy persons should come about holy things.

Jer. 7. 8, 9.

Tu Genitor cape sacra manu patriosque penates. Me bello exento digressum & cæde recenti attrectare nefas, donec me flumine vivo abluero. Virg. Æn. —*Procul, hinc procul este prophani, conclamat vates totoque absistite luco.*

The very Heathen had this Notion, they would not admit any to come to their religious services unless they were prepared. That saying of *Æneas* in the Poet, to his Father, when he came from the War, is a clear proof; *Tu genitor*, &c. Father, do you meddle with the Sacrifices; but as for me it is a sinful thing to touch them, —till I have washed my self in the fountain. This was an outward external Rite amongst them for cleansing themselves. The very Heathen saw they must not meddle with their holy things till they were cleansed; therefore they had one cried out to the people when they came to sacrifice; *All you that are unclean and prophane, go far away from these Sacrifices.* Not only the word of God, but the very light of Nature taught them, not to meddle with holy things till they were sanctified.

Therefore specially look to this, when you have any sacrifice, any duty to perform; be prepared and sanctified within and without, before you come to the duty. It is true, that the duty sanctifies, but it is seldom that the duty sanctifies us, unless we be sanctified for the duty: They get most holiness from the duty, who are most holy when they come to the duty: besides the great danger of coming unprepared. *Take heed how you hear*; not only hear, but take heed to prepare your selves for hearing: So, *look to thy feet* (it hath the same sence) *when thou comest into the house of God*; prepare thy self, be not hasty, lest thine be counted but the *Sacrifice of Fools*. So much of the first act of *Job*'s holy care; *He sent and sanctified them.*

Part of VERS. 5. & V. 6.

And rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all. For Job said, It may be that my Sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Now there was a day when the Sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

NOw follows the second Act of *Job*'s holy Care; *He rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all.*

It is ill to perform a holy duty with neglect of preparation; it is as bad to make preparation, and then neglect the duty. We see both joyned in *Job*; he is careful to prepare, and he is as diligent to perform.

He rose up early.] This notes the extraordinary diligence and zeal of *Job* toward God in this duty: He was so zealous, that he rises not only in *the morning*, but *early in the morning*. In Scripture, to do a thing in the *morning*, and to do a thing *diligently*, are the same; *Ps.* 101. 8. *I will early destroy the wicked of the Land*; the word is, *I will destroy the wicked of the Land in the morning*; and the meaning is only this, I will with all diligence and all care root out of the Land all wicked persons. So there is an expression, *Prov.* 7. 15. which illustrates this; where the wicked woman, the Harlot, tells the young man, *that she came forth to meet him, and diligently to seek his face*: The Original word there, is, *to seek thy face in the morning*; and yet we know, that in Verse 9. it was in the *twi-light, in the evening that she met him.* But the Hebrew phrase is, *I came forth in the morning to seek thy face*; that is (as it is rendred) *I came forth diligently to seek thy face.* So this coming forth of *Job* in the morning, besides the time, that it was at such an hour, the beginning of the day; notes the great diligence and exceeding care of *Job* about this work.

Yet more exactly, it is not only said, *he rose in the morning* (for there is a great latitude in the morning, there are divers hours which all are called morning) but it is said, he rose *early in the morning*, in the very beginning or first of the morning; as it is commanded, *Exod.* 23. 19. *The first of the first-fruits of the Land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord.* God would not only have the *first-fruits, but the first of the first-fruits*; if there were any ripe sooner then others, God would have them; some fruits that ripened after, were first-fruits; but God would have the very first of them. So here, *Job* gave God not only the first fruits of the day, but the earliest time, in the morning, which is the first of the first fruits of the day.

Early in the morning.

Thence observe,

First, *That it is Gods due and our duty, to dedicate the morning, the first and best of every day unto God.*

Psalm. 5. 3. *My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, in the morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee, and will look up.* We have a saying among us, that *the morning is a friend to the Muses*; that is, the morning is a good studying time. I am sure it is as true, that *the morning is a great friend to the Graces*; the morning is the best praying time.

Again, In that *Job* did rise so early in the morning to offer sacrifice, and did this because he was affraid that his sons had sinned (as we shall see afterward.) Hence observe,

Secondly, *That it is not safe for any to let sin lie a moment unrepented of or unpardoned, upon their own Consciences, or the Consciences of others.*

If a man's house be on fire, he will not only rise in the morning, or early in the morning, but he will rise at midnight to quench it. Certainly when you have guilt on your souls, you have a fire in your souls, your souls are on a flame; therefore you had need rise, and rise early, and get up as soon in the morning as you can, to get it quenched and put out.

And offered burnt-offerings.] There were divers sorts of Sacrifices among the *Jews*, when the Law or Rules of sacrificing were established. There were, First, *Whole burnt-offerings*. Secondly, *Trespass-offerings*. Thirdly, *Sin-offerings*. Fourthly, *Peace-offerings*. That which *Job* is here said to offer, was a *burnt-offering*, an *Holocost* or whole burnt-offering, so called, because it was altogether consumed; there was no part of it reserved for the Priest, or for the people; but all was offered up unto God. Of other Sacrifices, as the Sin-offering, and Trespass-offering, there were parts and portions reserved for the Priest, and part of the Peace-offerings for the People; as you may see by that expression of the Harlot, *Prov.* 7. 14. I have at my house *Shelamim, Peace-offerings*; now they did feast upon the Peace-offering, for she invited him to a Feast. But the *Burnt-offering* was wholly consumed; the word in the *Hebrew* doth signifie an *Ascension*, or a thing lifted up. He

Lev. 1, c. 3, &c. עולה ראשה משים

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offered burnt-offerings, word for word out of the Hebrew, it is, *He lifted up an elevation*, he caused an *Ascension to ascend*; *elevabat elevationem*, or *ascendere fecit ascensionem*; and it was so called, because the Sacrifice which was a whole burnt-offering, was all consumed upon the Altar, and did, as it were, evaporate or ascend up unto God.

It was called a *lifting up*, or a thing *lifted up*, for three Reasons.

1. Because when the *Sacrifice* was offered, the Smoke of it did ascend; and besides there were *sweet Odours* put upon the Altar, which did fume up also with the Sacrifice towards Heaven, and so the Sacrifice took its denomination from ascending and going upwards.

2. Because the Priest, when he offered the Sacrifice, did lift it up upon the Altar, and hold it toward Heaven, to God.

3. Because at that time when the Sacrifice was a burning, all the People that were present, did *lift up their hands and their eyes*, but especially *their souls and their spirits*, heaven-wards, and powred themselves forth in Prayer unto God. That of *David*, in *Psal.*141. 2. will give some light to this; *Let* (saith he) *my Prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening-Sacrifice. David* at that time (as Interpreters note upon the Psalm) was barred the enjoyment of the *Publick Ordinances*; he could not come to sacrificing as formerly he had done: now he seeks unto the Lord that he would accept of the lifting up of his hands and heart, instead of Sacrifice; as if he should say, *Lord, I have not a Sacrifice now to offer unto thee, I am hindered from that work, I cannot lift that up; but I will lift up what I have, and what will please thee better then a Bullock that hath horns and hoofs; I will lift up my hand and my heart unto thee, and let these be accepted for Sacrifice and all.* Prayer (which is a Sacrifice of the Gospel) it is nothing else but *a lifting up of the Soul, an elevation of the spirit unto God*: So some of the Ancients call Prayer, an *ascending of the Soul unto God*; and in allusion unto this, *Hezekiah*, when he sent to *Isaiah* the Prophet to pray for him in that time of distress, and day of
g.19. trouble, saith, *Go and desire the Prophet to lift up his Prayer for the remnant that are left*; alluding to the sacrifices which were wont to be lifted up. The like expression of Prayer you have, *Psal.* 25. 1. *Lord* (saith *David*) *I lift up my Soul unto thee.* Hence Prayers not answered, not accepted, are said to be stopt from ascending, *Lam.* 3. 44. *Thou hast covered thy self with a Cloud, that our Prayer should not pass through.* When you meet with such expressions in the Old Testament, concerning Prayer, you must still understand them to be allusions to the Sacrifices, because the Sacrifices were lifted up and did ascend. That for the Act.

For the Person, It is said that *Job* offered these *Sacrifices*, Job *rose up early and offered*, &c. Was not this to usurp upon the Priest's Office? Was it not this for which King
. 26. *Uzziah* was reprehended, and told by the Priests, *It appertaineth not to thee to burn Incense unto the Lord, but to the Priests, the Sons of Aaron?* and was he not smitten with *Leprosie* for doing of it?

I answer in a word, by that rule of the Ancients, *Distinguish the times, and Scriptures will agree*: It was *Job* that offered, and *Job* had right to offer. The *time* wherein *Job* offered Sacrifice doth *reconcile* this; it was before the giving of the Law (as we have shewed in the opening of the former points about the time when *Job* lived) now in those times the *Father*, or the *Elder of a Family* was as a Priest to the whole Family; and he had the power and the right to perform all holy Family-duties; as the duty of Sacrificing, and the like: this you may see carried along in all the times before the Law was given, in the holy Stories of the Patriarchs, they still offered up the Sacrifice.

But it may be here further enquired, If it were before the Law was given, who taught *Job* to offer Sacrifice? where had he the Rule for it?

I answer; This was not *will-worship*, though it was not *written worship*: For howsoever *Job* did offer Sacrifice before the *Law of Sacrificing was written*, yet he did not offer a Sacrifice *before the Law of Sacrificing was given*; for the Law of Sacrificing was given from the beginning, as all the other parts of worship used from the beginning, were. God could never bear it, that men should contrive him a Service; therefore *Job* did not offer up an offering unto God according to his own will, a thing that he had invented to pacifie and please God with: God had been so far from accepting, that he could not have born such a devised worship. God doth never trust man with the making of holy Institutions. There is nothing doth please him in any act of worship, unless he sees himself obeyed; *Obedience is better then Sacrifice*; and therefore a Sacrifice which is not out of obedience, cannot be accepted: He that sacrificeth, doth but *offer up a Beast*; but he that obeyeth, *offereth up himself*; sacrificeth his own will. It could not be therefore, but that *Job* had a word, a word as all the world had at that time; a word given by God, and so carried down from one to another by tradition (as it was for more then two thousand years.) All the will that God would reveal, or had revealed to them, was carried from *hand to hand*, and from *heart to heart*, from the Fathers to the Children, till at last the Law was written, and the Scripture penned by *Moses*. So then *Job* offered Sacrifice according to an Institution; though it was not an Institution written, yet it was an Institution sent forth and given by God himself.

Yet there is a third *Query* upon it; Suppose that there Psal.51.16.
was an Institution of God for sacrificing, why did God call for Sacrifices? What is his meaning? *Doth God delight in the blood of Bulls and Goats? Thou delightest not in Sacrifices* (saith *David*) *thou desirest not burnt offerings.* And what was the Sacrifice unto *Job*, or unto his Sons? Could the killing of a Beast take away sin? Why then doth *Job*, when he feareth that his Sons had sinned, go presently and offer Sacrifice?

For Answer: It is true that the Sacrifices in themselves were nothing, either to God or man; they could do no good, they had no power in them, either to *pacifie God*, or to *purge the Souls of men.* But look upon the Sacrifice, as it was an Institution, and then God saw his Son Jesus Christ in it, and was well pleased; and likewise man beheld and believed Christ in it, and was purged. When the Sacrifice was offering, man saw Christ suffering; this took away his sin, and pacified his Conscience. A Sacrifice in it self, as it was the killing or burning of a Beast, had no virtue in it, but as it had respect unto Christ; so God saw the death of his Son, and that satisfied him; and man saw the death of his Saviour, and that justified him.

Again, It was not the bare Sacrifice that was effectual, but the Faith of *Job*, and the faith of his Sons carried up in Prayer; these mingled with the Sacrifice, wrought the cure: Therefore we find in the time of the Sacrifice, still the people were at prayer; they knew the Sacrifice, the Incense, could do nothing, but as joyned with the Faith of the Sacrificer in Prayer. We read, *Luke* 1. 10. when *Zacharias* the Priest was offering the Incense within the Temple, the Text saith, *that the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of Incense.* The Incense might burn long enough, and yet the Anger of God burn too; the Incense might burn, and yet the people not be purified, but consumed. But while the Incense was burning, while the Sacrifice was offering, the people were praying and believing. These actings of Faith, and powrings out of Prayer made the Sacrifice, as effectual for man, so acceptable unto God.

Then in that he offered *burnt-offerings*, which burnt-offerings were made when he feared that his Sons had sinned; these offerings typing out and leading them to Christ and his Death; we may note this,

That, *Christ was ever the only remedy and cure of sin.*

As soon as ever there was any fear of sin, presently they had recourse to a Sacrifice; and what was that? They went to *Christ*. *Christ* hath been the help against sin in all the generations of the world from the first, and will be to the last. *If any man sin* (saith the Apostle *John*) *we have* 1 Joh. 2. 1.
an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins; he is the *Propitiatory Sacrifice for our sins.* It follows,

According to the number of them all.] That is, he offered for each of his Sons a Sacrifice. There were some Sacrifices, which did serve for the *whole Congregation*; as we may see in *Lev.* 4. 13, 14. and in divers other Chapters of that Book. Besides these, there were *personal Sacrifices*,

fices, Lev. 1. Where the Laws about Sacrifices are ſet forth; If any Soul had ſinned, that particular Soul muſt come to the Prieſt, and bring a ſacrifice for his ſin. So here, *Job* doth not offer only one *general family-ſacrifice* for them all, but he offereth up a *diſtinct particular ſacrifice* for every particular Son. This teacheth us,

First, *That every one is ſaved and pardoned by the ſpecial and particular actings of his own Faith: Every Soul muſt believe for it ſelf.*

Every one muſt have a Sacrifice. We have Congregational prayers, and we have perſonal prayers; now it is not enough for people to pray in publick with the Miniſter, or for the Miniſter (who is the mouth of the Congregation to God) to offer up a prayer for the pardon of the people; but every one muſt apart and by himſelf ſue out his own pardon; which is, as it were, his own ſacrifice, by offering up and tendering of Jeſus Chriſt unto God for the pardon of his ſins.

Then again you may note, in that *Job* offered a Sacrifice for every one of his ſons,

That, *it is not enough for Parents to pray in general for their Children, but they ought to pray particularly for them.*

As Parents who have many Children, provide portions according to the number of them all, and proportion out their care perſonally, according to the number of them all; and in the Family they provide meat and cloathing according to the particular number of them all: So likewiſe they ought to be at a proportionable expence in ſpirituals, to lay out and lay up prayers and interceſſions, *according to the number of them all*; not only to pray in general, that God would bleſs their Children and Family, but even to ſet them *one by one* before God, and ſo beg and ſue out a bleſſing upon the head of every one of them, as, without all queſtion *Job* did, when the ſacrifice for every ſon was made; he ſent up a Prayer to God for the pardon and acceptance of every ſon. That for the opening of the ſecond Act in the Text; firſt, *He ſent and ſanctified them*; and ſecondly, *He offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all.*

Now follows the Ground or the Reaſon of this Act of *Job*, both in ſanctifying them, and in offering Sacrifices for them. For Job ſaid, it may be that my ſons have ſinned, and curſed God in their hearts.

Holy Duties muſt be grounded upon reaſon. There muſt be a reaſon why we pray, before we pray; we muſt ſee cauſe for it, and great cauſe too. To pray out of cuſtom and formality, to offer ſacrifice, only becauſe it is a day of Sacrifice, is not praying nor ſacrificing. *Job* had a ſpecial reaſon; *for* Job *ſaid, it may be my ſons have ſinned.*

Let us examine the Reaſon a little; *It may be my ſons have ſinned.* What is it come to an *It may be* with *Job*, that his ſons have ſinned? What ſons had *Job?* Surely they were more then men, that the Father is but at a Queſtion whether his ſons have ſinned or no. *Solomon* after an *If*, concerning ſin, reſolves it into a concluſion, 1 *King.* 8. 46. *If* (ſaith he) *they ſin againſt thee* (here he makes a ſuppoſition; but you ſee he goes not one ſtep from it, before he makes a direct aſſertion) *for* (ſaith he) *there is no man that ſinneth not*; and yet *Job* puts it with an uncorrected *If*; or, *it may be, my ſons have ſinned.*

For the opening of this; Without all queſtion *Job* was fully and throughly ſtudied in that point of the univerſal corruption of man; his *Diſputings* (as we ſhall ſee afterwards in this Book) ſufficiently evince it. *What is man,* (ſaith he) *that he ſhould be perfect, or he that is born of a woman, that he ſhould be clean?* Here, by ſinning then, we are to underſtand ſomething more then ordinary ſinning. To ſin, ſometime is put for common and daily infirmities, ſuch as do inſeparably and inevitably cleave unto us; ſuch as, conſidering the ſtate and condition wherein we are, *having corrupt fleſh and blood about us*, we cannot be freed from. As a man who in the morning waſheth his hands, and goes abroad about his buſineſs and affairs in the world, though he doth not puddle in the mire, or rake among dunghils, yet when he returns home again to dinner, or at night, if he waſh, he finds that he hath contracted ſome uncleanneſs, and that his hands are foul: we cannot converſe in an unclean and dirty world with our bodies, but ſome uncleanneſs will faſten upon them. So it is with the Soul; the ſouls of the beſt, of the pureſt, of the holieſt, though they do not rake in the dunghil, and wallow in the mire of ſin baſely and filthily, yet they do from day to day, yea from moment to moment, contract ſome filth and uncleanneſs. And in this ſenſe it is that *there is no man that liveth and ſinneth not.* Every man hath a *Fountain of uncleanneſs in him*; and there will be ever ſome ſin, ſome filthineſs, bubling and boiling up, if not flowing forth.

Secondly, To ſin, is put for ſome ſpecial act of ſin, that which in Scripture is called a Fall; *If any man be overtaken with a fault, you that are ſpiritual, reſtore him.* And in this ſenſe the Apoſtle *John* ſaith (which is a clear anſwer to this doubt, and doth open the term) *I write unto you little Children, that you ſin not.* He did not write to them an impoſſible thing; he wrote to them about that, which in a *Goſpel-ſenſe*, they might attain unto. 1 Joh.

There are three degrees of ſinning.

1. There is one kind of ſinning, which is called a *daily infirmity*; which the Saints of God, the beſt in this life, are not freed from.

2. There is another kind of ſinning, which is to *ſin wilfully and with pure delight*; and thus, *he that is born of God, cannot ſin.* 1 Joh.

3. There is another kind of ſinning, which is called *falling into ſin*, or *the falls of the Saints*; and ſometimes they have fallen into great and ſcandalous ſins: In this ſenſe it is that the Apoſtle ſaith, *Little Children, I write unto you, that you ſin not*; that is, though you have daily infirmities, yet take heed of ſcandalous ſinnings. So here in the Text, where it is ſaid, *It may be my ſons have ſinned*; it is not meant either in the firſt or ſecond ſenſe; it is not meant, as if he thought his Sons were without infirmities, nor is it meant, that he did ſuſpect them of thoſe ſins (which are indeed incompatible with the ſtate of Grace) ſins of perfect wilfulneſs, and of malice, or the like; but it is of thoſe ſins in the middle ſort. *It may be my ſons have ſinned*; that is, have ſinned ſo, as to provoke God, and ſcandalize men in this their feaſting, in their meeting together. We may note from that,

First, *He that liveth without groſs ſins, in a Goſpel-ſence, liveth without ſin.*

To be without great and groſs ſin, is our holineſs upon earth; to be without any ſin, is the holineſs of heaven. He that liveth without fault, *ſine querela* (as it is ſaid of *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, that *they lived blameleſly*) in *Goſpel-account*, is ſaid to live without any ſin at all.

Another Point we may collect from this [*It may be my ſons have ſinned.*]

Certainly then Job's *ſons were godly.*

If *Job* be at a queſtion whether they have ſinned, they were godly without queſtion.

When a man lives ſo, that he leaves only a ſuſpition that he hath ſinned, we may be at a concluſion that he is ſanctified. For other perſons can do nothing elſe but ſin, even in holy actions, much more in civil or natural.

Again, [*It may be my ſons have ſinned.*] It was a ſuſpition in *Job* concerning his children. Hence obſerve,

It is no breach of Charity to ſuſpect ill of others, while we intend their good.

Indeed upon an *It may be*, upon a peradventure, to accuſe and charge another, is very uncharitable; but upon a *Peradventure*, or an *It may be*, ſuch a one, my Child, or my Friend, or my Brother hath ſinned, to be put to pray for him, this is very charitable. A good heart turns its ſuſpitions of others ſinnings and failings, into prayers and interceſſions, that they may be pardoned; not into accuſations and ſlanders, that they may be defamed. The uſe which *Job* made here of his ſuſpition of his ſons ſinning, was to turn it into prayer and ſupplication for the pardon of their ſin.

One thing further from this [*It may be my ſons have ſinned.*] *Job* knew of no evil that his ſons had committed; he had no report, that we read of, that his ſons had behaved themſelves unſeemly in their Meetings and Feaſtings; he only doubteth, he only is jealous and affraid that they had;

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yet at this time he prayeth, and sacrificeth, and laboureth a reconcilement for them. Note from hence,

A suspition that we our selves or others have sinned against God, is ground enough for us to seek a reconcilement for our selves or others with God.

If you that are tender Parents, have but a suspition, if there be but an *It may be*, that your Child hath the Plague, or taken the infection, will it not be ground enough for you to go presently and give your Child a good Medicine? If any of you have but a suspition, that either your selves, or your friends have taken *poyson*, though you be not certain of it, will it not be ground enough for you to take or give an Antidote presently? Sin is as a *Plague*, it is as a *Poyson*; therefore while you have but a suspition, either of your selves or of others, that you have sinned or failed thus or thus; here is ground enough for you to take an Antidote, to take a Preservative, to seek all the means you can to heal your souls, and to make your peace with God.

And if *Job* prayed thus, when he only suspected his sons had sinned; what shall we say of those Parents, who are little troubled, when they see and know their sons have sinned?

It is safest to repent even of those sins we only fear we have committed; for then we shall be sure to repent of those we have committed. A scrupulous Conscience grieves for what it suspects; a seared Conscience is not grieved for what it is *certain either it self or others have done amiss*.

Lastly, Where had *Job*'s sons been that he is thus suspitious? Had they been in any suspected place? No, it was only in their own houses. Had they been about any unlawful thing? No, it was only a friendly meeting, feasting of Brothers and Sisters together. Yet *Job* is affraid lest his sons had sinned. Hence observe,

That, *we may quickly offend and break the Law, while we are about things in their own nature lawful, especially in feasting.*

It is an easie matter to sin, while the thing you are about is not sinful; nay, while the thing you are about is holy. We may suspect our selves that we have sinned, when we have been praying; much more when we have been feasting. We may suspect our selves that we have sinned, when we have been hearing the Word, speaking the Word; just cause then much more we have to suspect our selves, when we have been trading, buying or selling, and working abroad in the world. Lawful things are oftentimes the occasion of unlawful. All the sins of the world are described thus; *they ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted*, &c. There is not one of these an act evil in it self; yet they sinned away their peace, and sinned away their souls, in dealing about these things. Therefore as you must be affraid of all things in their own nature unlawful; so be jealous of your selves in things that are lawful.

Luke 17. 7, 28.

It follows,

And cursed God in their hearts.

Interpreters are much divided about the sense of these words.

First, Some observe that the Hebrew word *Barach*, doth signifie not only to *bless*, but to *bow the knee*: So it is used, 2 *Chron.* 6. 13. *Solomon* at the Dedicating of the Temple, *had made a Brazen Scaffold, and upon it he stood, and kneeled down upon his knees before all the Congregation.* The word there, *kneeled down upon his knees*, in the Original, is the same here used. But,

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Then further, the word *Elohim*, is used in Scripture, not only for the true God, for God himself; but it is applied sometimes to *Angels*, and sometimes to *Idols*, to *Devil-gods*, to *false gods*, Exod. 18. 11. *Now I know that the Lord is greater then all gods*; *&c.* then all the Idols that the *Egyptians* did trust upon.

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They observe further, that the Hebrew word *Leb*, [in their hearts, *Bilebabbam*] doth signifie not only the *Heart*, but the middle or center of a thing: As when it is said in the Scripture, *They went down into the midst of the Sea*; the word is, *They went down into the* heart *of the Sea*; and in the *midst of the Earth*, it is the *heart of the Earth*; and so when it is said, that *Absolom was hanging in the midst of* the Oak, the Original word is, he was left hanging in the *heart of the Oak*. From all these acceptions of the single terms, the sense is made up thus; *It may be my sons have sinned*, &c. that is, *It may be my sons have sinned, bowing down to the false gods that are in the midst of them.* I confess Feasting and False worship, Sensuality and Idolatry go often together, *Exod.* 32. 6. When the *Golden Calf* was made, they *sate down to eat*, &c. And *Moses* foretels, *Deut.* 31. 20. *When they shall have eaten, and filled themselves, and waxen fat, then will they turn unto other gods.* Yet I cannot admit this of *Job*'s Children; surely he who had bestowed so much care in their institution, and had them still under his eye, could not suspect them in degenerating so soon into such palpable Idolatry.

Psal. 46. 2.

2 Sam. 18. 13.

Secondly, Others take the word [*Barach*] in the Original, in its proper sense, *It may be my sons have sinned, and blessed God*; and they expound and open it thus: *It may be my sons have sinned*, and instead of being humbled and seeking to God for the pardon of their sins, they have *rejoyced and blessed God.* Just as if a Thief that hath sped well, and hath got a good prey, should thank God that he hath prospered so well in his wickedness: So here (as if *Job* should say) *My sons have done ill in their feastings, and they are so far from being humbled, that they have blessed God in their hearts; they have been lifted up; they have given God thanks for the plenty of Creatures, but have not repented for their abuse of the Creatures.* So we may interpret it by that place, *Zech.* 11. 4. where there is such an expression; the Lord speaking to Christ, saith, *Feed the flock of the slaughter; whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty.* (They that should have been the feeders of the flock, instead of feeding of them, have destroyed them; yea, they do this, and hold themselves not guilty) *and they that sell them, say, blessed be the Lord, for I am rich.* They grew rich by selling souls (as many since have lived by the same Trade, starving the people, to feed themselves) the just character of an idle Idol-shepherd; and then they said, *Blessed be God we are grown very rich, and have got much goods, though we have done little good.* This is a second interpretation, and a clear one; only methinks it layes too high a stain of wickedness on *Job*'s sons. *It is one of the greatest wickednesses for a man to bless himself in his sins; but for a man to bless God in his sins, is far worse.*

Thirdly, Others interpret *Benedicere* by *Valedicere*, blessing by departing. Thus, *It may be my sons have sinned and departed from God in their hearts*; and they bring some Texts of Scripture, wherein the word [*Barach*] signifies to *depart*, or to take leave, and go away; as, *Gen.* 47. 10. *Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh*; he blessed him, and departed. So it is said likewise of *Joab*, 2 *Sam.* 14. 22. When he had obtained what he desired, *he fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked* (or *blessed*) *the King, and went out.* Now they would interpret this, *blessed God in their hearts*, to the same sense; *It may be my sons have sinned, and blessed God in their hearts*, that is, have departed from God in their hearts. Indeed every sin is a departure from God; as the Apostle speaks; *Take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God.* Sin is a turning away from God; yet every sin is not, nay, few sins are a farewel to God. But I shall lay by this interpretation; for the proofs come not home, no, nor near the point. In both those places, blessing is not put barely for departing; and besides, departing in those Texts, is taken in a good sence; *Jacob* departed from *Pharaoh*, not in a way of *deserting* him, but in a way of *saluting* him; so *Joab* departed from the King, not that he did revolt from him (as they would have the word to import a kind of revolting and apostatizing from God) but only he did obeisance, and went away about his business; therefore this interpretation cannot stand. Heb. 3. 12.

There is a fourth Exposition much laboured by *Zanchius* (and would it hold, it were an excellent exposition) according to the Letter of the Text: thus; *It may be my Sons have sinned, and not blessed God in their hearts*; and so he makes those words to be *exegetical*, the explication of the former, what the sin of *Job*'s sons was; *It may be my sons have sinned, and if you would know what they have sinned in, I fear they have forgot to give God the glory for* the *Zanchius.*

the refreshing they have had by the Creatures, they have not blessed God. This were an excellent and clear sence; but the way he takes to make it out, is very obscure: For he doth it only by this Rule; When (saith he) there is a negative Particle in the former, a negative is likewise to be understood in the following Clause. His Rule he clears by divers Instances. But we find in this place no negative Particle, as *Non* or *Ne*, or the like, in the former part of the *Verse*; and how there should be a negative in the latter, I cannot understand according to his Rule: *Ne forte*, (It is here said) *It may be* my sons have sinned (that is a word of doubting, not denial; rather an affirmative, then a negative) and have not blessed; now saith he, though that Particle *(not)* be not in the Hebrew, yet it must be understood of *course*, because there is a negative Particle in the former part: How he can make *(ne forte)* peradventure, a negative particle, I do not well apprehend; yet the sence in it self is very good; *It may be my sons have sinned, and not blessed God in their hearts.*

Some would read it with an Interrogation (though I question whether the Grammar will allow it) Thus, *It may be my sons have sinned; and have they blessed God in their hearts?* As if he had said, I fear they have not blessed God, or not blessed him cordially; neglect of, or slightness in such a Duty, calls for sacrifice.

Lastly, That meaning which our Translation leads unto, is most commonly taken by Interpreters both ancient and modern; namely, that here in this Text the word [*Barach*] is to be expounded by cursing; *It may be my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.* I shall present you with the grounds of this Interpretation, and how it is made good; and then leave it to the Readers Judgment, whether to chuse this, or those former which have had any countenance shewed them. For in a Scripture which may without impeachment of any Truth, admit divers sences, I would not be so positive in one, as to reject all others.

Now this Translation is maintained by a Figure, either by an *Antiphrasis*, which is the speaking of a thing sounding one way, when it is meant another way, when there is an opposition between the Letter of the word, and the Meaning of the word. Thus, 1 *Kings* 21. 13. *Naboth* is charged for *blessing God and the King*; *sc. cursing*. Or, by an *Euphemismus*; that is, when some filthy or execrable matter is expressed by a word of a fairer signification. So in Scripture, the uncleanness of some things is covered with a word, that so the offensiveness of it may be removed both from the Ear and Phansie: As for example, that Vessel wherein Nature doth unburden it self, it is called *A Vessel wherein there is no pleasure*; and so the word that the *Hebrews* use for a *Harlot*, signifies properly a *holy woman*; as, *Gen.* 38. When *Judah* asked whether they saw the *Harlot?* the word in the Hebrew *(Kedesah)* signifies a *holy woman*, by an *Antiphrasis*, or by an *Euphemismus*. Yet some think a *Harlot*, so called, because (holiness being the dedication of a thing or person) such dedicate and give themselves up to, or are possessed with a spirit of uncleanness. But to the Text; take it by an *Euphemismus*, or fair speaking: *It may be my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts*; they even *abhorring* to use such a word concerning God, express it by *blessing*; *It may be my sons have sinned, and blessed God in their hearts.* So the *Latines* use the word, *Sacrum pro execrando*, that which is the most execrable thing, they call a sacred thing.

Jer. 22. 28.

Hos. 8. 8.

קדשה

Auri sacra fames.

Now taking it thus according to the common stream of Expositors upon the place, it may yet be doubted, how *Job* could suspect his sons of this, that they should curse God?

I answer to that; Here we are not to take cursing either for that abominable act (at which Heathens blush) the casting of open reproach upon the Name of God; or for a malicious and virulent, though secret blaspheming of God, and sending defiance to Heaven in their hearts. But to *curse God in the heart*, doth signifie an irreverent, undue, unfit, unholy thought of God, any thought unbecoming the Glory and Majesty of so great a God; which, how quickly the heart may send out at a Feast, who feels not, who finds not? God is said to be cursed, when he hath not that reverence and honour which belongs to him, *whose Name is Holy and Reverent.* In that sence only we are to understand the word *cursing* here. And Mr. *Broughton* gives a Translation which lets in some light to this; *It may be my sons have sinned, and little blessed God in their hearts*; that is, they have not had such high, such holy thoughts of God as became them; *they have little blessed God:* careless thoughts of God are *little blessing* of God, and both amount to a cursing of God.

So that the Sense which results, is this. As if *Job* should have said, *I am well enough satisfied concerning my sons, that they have not broadly blasphemed God, that they have not been such as have torn his Name with Oaths, Cursings and Execrations; yet notwithstanding I know the heart is a deceitful thing, there are many starting-holes in it; it quickly conceives, and closely conceals a sin; and therefore I am very doubtful; though my sons have carried it fairly and well in their actions and words while they feasted, that yet their hearts have been loose, and their affections vain; I am affraid they have cursed, lightly regarded, or little blessed God in their hearts.*

Observe First, *That we ought to keep our hearts with all manner of keeping in every thing we go about.*

If your hearts are disorderly, it is a kind of cursing God. Remember not only to keep your hearts, when you are praying, and when you are hearing, and when you are in holy duties; but remember to keep your hearts when you are feasting and refreshing your selves, when you are in your callings, when you are buying and selling, *&c.*

Note, Secondly, That *Sins of the heart, sinful thoughts are very dangerous sins.*

Job could not accuse his sons of loud blasphemies, he only suspected the silent sins of the heart; yet he offereth sacrifice for them.

Again, When *Job* hath nothing to charge his Sons with, but only sins of the heart, you see it is with an *It may be my sons have cursed God in their hearts*; he doth not speak directly or positively that they have done so.

Whence note, *That no man can positively conclude what is wrought in the heart of another.*

The Heart is God's Peculiar; as he only hath the Lock and Key of the Heart, to shut or open it, so he only hath a Window to look into it; we may guess at the heart, we may say, *It may be*, further we cannot go. The hearts of men often come forth at their mouths, and appear in their actions, and then indeed we may conclude their hearts are naught; *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and the hand worketh*, but unless we have that testimony, unless the heart give that witness against it self, we can only suspect it; it may be thus or thus; God alone can tell when we curse him in our hearts; and (if we go on impenitently in them) irreverent thoughts will be interpreted a cursing of God.

Thus did Job continually.

This is the third thing to be opened in this *Verse*; to wit, the Constancy of *Job*. We have seen the Acts of his spiritual care, and the ground of it, his fear lest his Sons had sinned. Now we have the constancy of this duty. *Thus did* Job *continually.*

כל הימים

Continually.] The Original is, *all the dayes thus did* Job; *Cunctis diebus*, all dayes, that is, all the dayes that this occasion did offer it self. When his Sons went to feasting, then ever *Job* went to praying and to sacrificing. Continually, or all the dayes, doth not import that *Job* did offer sacrifice every day; this *continually* is to be understood in the renewed seasons; all the dayes are those dayes wherein occasion was given. We are then said to do a thing continually, when we do it seasonably; so those places of Scripture are to be understood; *Pray without ceasing*; not that a man should do nothing else but pray, but that he should labour to have his heart in a praying frame alwayes, and should actually pray as often as Duty requires; such an one *prayes alwayes.* So here; *Job*'s offering sacrifice continually, noteth only the constancy and perseverance of *Job* in the Duty, that so often as there was an occasion renewed, *Job* renewed this service and holy care concerning his sons, for reconciling them unto God. *Job* had many other things to do in the world; he had a calling, yet he offered sacrifice continually.

1 Thes. 5. 17, Eph. 6. 28.

It

It is an excellent point of ſpiritual wiſdom, to drive the two Trades for Heaven and Earth ſo, as that one ſhall not intrench upon another; for a man to pray ſo, as that it may be ſaid he prayes *continually*; and for a man to follow his Calling ſo, as that it may be ſaid, he follows his Calling *continually*. In that he offered ſacrifice as oft as his Sons did feaſt, Obſerve this,

That, *the heart of man is continually evil.*

Do not think that one Sacrifice will ſerve the heart of man; when it hath failed once in a Duty, and thou haſt humbled thy Soul for that, think not thus, now my heart will forbear, when I come to ſuch a duty, or ſuch a buſineſs again, now I have taken order with my heart, I need not fear any more: no, *the heart will ſin over the ſame ſin a thouſand times*, it will ſin continually. You ſee here *Job* ſacrificing every time his Sons feaſted, he knew their hearts were apt to conceive thoſe ſins at any time, therefore he ſeeks God for them at all times.

Further obſerve, That, *Renewed Sins muſt have renewed Repentance.*

Thus did Job **continually.**] Till you have done ſinning, you muſt never give over repenting. If there be a Leak in the Ship, that lets in water continually, the Pump muſt work continually to carry it out: We are leaking Veſſels all of us, ſin cometh in, ſin is renewed, there muſt be the Pump of Repentance to carry it out again.

Laſtly, We may note this, *Job* did it continually; *Job* was not good by fits.

That which a man doth out of Conſcience, he will do with perſeverance.

Nature will have *good moods*, but *Grace is ſteddy. Thus did* Job *continually*; whatſoever his affairs or buſineſſes were, whatſoever was laid by, he would not lay by this duty of ſacrificing.

Let this ſuffice for the Fifth Verſe, containing the care of *Job* over the ſouls of his Children. And ſo in theſe five *Verſes* already opened, we have First, ſeen the dignity and ſincerity of *Job's Perſon*. Secondly, The fulneſs and proſperity of his *Condition*. Thirdly, The holineſs and piety of his *Life*. Certainly a man thus raiſed, thus glorious, ſet up thus in *Temporals and in Spirituals*, thus furniſhed with *Subſtantials*, and adorned with *Circumſtantials*, abounding in whatſoever could make a man great and happy, both in the eye of God and man; ſurely ſuch a man as this, a man thus compleat, wanted nothing but ſome *want*, to try his ſincerity in this fulneſs. And now behold this haſtening upon him: God having thus fitted and qualified him, will now try him, try him like Gold in the Furnace of affliction. You may ſee matter gathering for this, and the fire kindling in the next part of the Chapter.

Verſe 6. **Now there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord,** &c.

Take this in the General, from the connection of the two parts.

Uſually where God gives much Grace, he tries Grace much.

To whom God hath given ſtrong ſhoulders, on him, for the moſt part, he layeth heavy burdens. As ſoon as *Job* is ſpoken of thus prepared, the next thing that follows is an affliction.

Now there was a day, &c.] And ſo we are come to the ſecond main Diviſion of the Chapter; which is, the *Affliction of Job*; and that is ſet forth from this *verſe* 6, to the end of *verſe* 19. And leſt we ſhould conceive it to have come upon him by chance, it is punctually deſcribed four wayes,

1. *By the Cauſes of it*, verſe 6, 7, &c.
2. *By the Inſtruments of it*, verſe 15, 16, &c.
3. *By the Manner of it*, verſe 14, 15, 16, &c.
4. *By the Time of it*, verſe 13.

First, His *Afflictions* are ſet forth in their Cauſes; and that is done from the ſixth verſe to the end of the twelfth. And the Cauſes are threefold.

First, The *Efficient Cauſes*, and they were two.

1. *The ſupreme and principal efficient Cauſe*, and that was *God*, ordering and diſpoſing the affliction of *Job*.
2. *The ſubordinate efficient Cauſe*, and that was *Satan*; he was an efficient but under God: Satan found out other Inſtruments and Tools to do it by; but he was an efficient ſubordinate unto God; and the Text diſcovers him three ways.
   1. *By his Diligence in tempting*, verſe 7.
   2. *By his Malice in ſlandering*, verſe 9, 10, 11.
   3. *By his Cruelty, in ſoliciting the overthrow and affliction of* Job, verſe 11.

Secondly, We have the *Material Cauſe* of *Job's* Affliction; or, in what manner he was afflicted; and that is laid down, firſt, *poſitively*, in thoſe words, *All that he hath is in thy power*; that is, his outward Eſtate; that was the matter wherein he was afflicted. Then it is laid down *negatively*, in thoſe words, *Only upon himſelf put not forth thy hand.* God doth ſet him out how far the affliction ſhall go: in the things that he hath, thou ſhalt afflict him; but thou ſhalt not meddle with his Perſon, with his Body, or with his Soul.

Thirdly, The *Final Cauſe* of *Job's* Affliction; and that is, the practical and experimental determination, deciſion, or ſtating of a great Queſtion that was between *God* and *Satan* concerning *Job's* ſincerity. God tells Satan that *Job* was a good and juſt man; Satan he denies it, and ſaith that *Job* was an hypocrite. Now the determination of this Queſtion was the general *Final Cauſe* of *Job's* affliction. When on the one ſide, God affirms it, and on the other ſide, Satan denies; how ſhall it be tried? Who ſhall be the *Moderator* and *Umpire* between them; Satan will not believe God, and God had no reaſon to believe Satan: How then ſhould this be made out? It is as if Satan had ſaid, *Here is your Yea, and my Nay; this queſtion will never be ended or decided between us, unleſs you will admit ſome courſe to have* Job *ſoundly afflicted: This will quickly diſcover what metal the man is made of; therefore let him come to the trial*, ſaith *Satan. Let him*, ſaith *God, behold all that he hath, is in thy power; do thy worſt to him, only upon his perſon put not forth thy hand.* So that, I ſay, the general final cauſe of *Job's* affliction, is the determination of the Queſtion, and deciſion of the Diſpute between God and Satan, whether *Job* was a ſincere and holy man, or no.

And all this (to give you the ſum of thoſe ſix verſes a little further) is here ſet forth and deſcribed unto us after the manner of men, by an *Anthropopathy*, which is, when God expreſſes himſelf in his actions and diſpenſations with and toward the world, as if he were a man. So God here; he preſents himſelf in the buſineſs after the manner of ſome *Great King* ſitting upon his Throne, having his Servants attending him, and taking an account of them, what they had done, or giving Inſtructions and Commiſſions to them what they ſhall do. This, I ſay, God doth here after the manner of men; for otherwiſe we are not to conceive, that God doth make certain dayes of Seſſion with his Creatures, wherein he doth call the good and bad Angels together about the affairs of the world; we muſt not have ſuch groſs conceits of God; for he needs receive no information from them, neither doth he give them, or Satan, any formal Commiſſion; neither is Satan admitted into the preſence of God, to come ſo near God at any time; neither is God moved at all by the ſlanders of Satan, or by his accuſations, to deliver up his ſervants and children into his hands for a moment. But only the Scripture ſpeaks thus, to teach us how God carries himſelf in the affairs of the world, even as if he ſate upon his Throne, and call'd every Creature before him, and gave each a direction, what and when and where to work, how far, and which way to move in every action.

So that in theſe ſix verſes following, which contain the cauſes of *Job's* affliction, are (as we may ſo ſpeak) the *Scheme or Draught of Providence* (that may be the Title of them.) If a man would *delineate Providence*, he might do it thus; ſuppoſe God upon his Throne, with Angels good and bad, yea, all creatures about him, and he directing, ſending, ordering every one, as a Prince doth his Subjects, or as a Maſter his Servants, do you this, and do you that, &c. So all is ordered according to his *Dictate.*

Thus

Thus all things in Heaven and Earth are diſpoſed by the unerring wiſdom, and limited by the Almighty power of God.

Such a repreſentation as this we read in 1 *Kings* 22. 19. Where *Micaiah* ſaid to *Ahab*, *Hear thou the word of the Lord; I ſaw the Lord ſiting upon his Throne, and all the Hoſt of heaven ſtanding by him.* And ſo he goeth on to ſhew how a Spirit came and offered himſelf to be a *lying Spirit* in the mouth of *Ahab's Prophets*. This is only a ſhadow of Providence; there was no ſuch thing really acted; God did not convene or call together a Synod of Spirits to adviſe with (*de Arduis Regni*) about hard, doubtful caſes; nor are wicked Spirits admitted into his preſence; only by this we are inſtructed and aſſured that God doth as exactly order all things in heaven and earth, as if he ſtood queſtioning or interrogating good Angels, Men, and Devils, concerning thoſe matters.

Having thus given ſome light about theſe ſix Verſes in general, I ſhall open the Particulars.

Now there was a day.] The Jewiſh Rabbins trouble themſelves much to find out what day this was: They ſay it was the firſt day of the year. Others, that it was the Sabbath day. But I account it a diſadvantage to a clear Truth, when it is proved by an obſcure Text. The Sabbath hath proof enough before the Law, though this be ſpared. The holy Ghoſt hath told us only that there was a day, or a certain time.

Hic locus refellit Chryſoſt. *qui negat Angelos unquam vocari filios Dei.* Druſ. Read more of this Point, *c.* 2. 1, where the whole Verſe is repeated.

When the Sons of God.] In *Gen.* 6. 2. The poſterity of *Seth* (who were the Viſible Church at that time) are called the *Sons of God*. The unanimous conſent of all Expoſitors (I have met with) is, that here the Sons of God are the good Angels; ſo alſo they are called, *chap.* 38. 7. of this Book. Some, it may be, will object againſt this Expoſition that of the Apoſtle in *Heb.* 1. 5. *To which of the Angels ſaid he at any time, thou art my Son?* How then do you interpret here, that the Sons of God are the Angels, whenas the Apoſtle hath expreſt, *To which of the Angels*, &c.

I anſwer, that the *Angels* are not the *Sons of God*, as the Apoſtle there expreſſeth; they are *not the Sons of God* by *eternal Generation*; but they are the *Sons of God* by *temporal Creation*; for ſo he ſpeaks there; *To which of the Angels ſaid he, thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee?* They are not the *begotten ſons of God*, but they are the *created ſons of God*. And the *Angels* are called the *ſons of God* in three reſpects.

First, Becauſe of their great and mighty power; therefore *Eph.* 1. 21. they are called *Principalities and Powers*; *far above principalities and powers, and might and dominions*; that is, far above all Angels. They are called the *ſons of God*, becauſe they are like God in power and dignity.

Then again they are called the *ſons of God*, becauſe they ſerve God as *ſons*, chearfully, willingly, readily. They do not obey as ſlaves, as ſervants, as the beſt of ſervants, they obey better then the beſt of ſervants; they obey as *Children*; they go about their work with *filial and ſonlike* chearfulneſs and delight.

Thirdly, They are called *ſons*, becauſe of the great *priviledge* that God doth vouchſafe them; he doth uſe them as his *Children*, as his *ſons*, they are his *Courtiers*, they are near him, alwayes attending him, and continually ſee his face; they have the priviledge of *ſons*.

Came to preſent themſelves before the Lord.] Not that the *Angels* are at any time out of the preſence of God, for Chriſt is expreſs in that, *Mat.* 18. 10. *Their Angels do alwayes behold the face of my Father.* But they are then ſaid to come and preſent themſelves before God, when they come upon ſome ſpecial buſineſs, or upon ſome ſpecial occaſion. As it is with us here upon the earth, we are never out of the preſence of God; for *Pſal.* 139. *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?* Yet when we come to pray, and are in other holy duties, we are ſaid to *preſent our ſelves before God, and to draw near unto God, and God is ſaid to draw near unto us* at ſuch a time, and yet God is ever with us, and we ever with him. So when it is ſaid here, that the *Angels came and preſented themſelves before the Lord*, it noteth only this, their readineſs, either to give an account of what they had done, or to receive directions from God what to do. The Angels are moſt willing to go about the ſervice and work of God, and that is all that is here meant by their preſenting themſelves before the Lord, for otherwiſe they are ever in his preſence: as, *Luke* 1. 19. *The Angel anſwered and ſaid, I am Gabriel that ſtand in the preſence of God, and am ſent to ſpeak unto thee.* I am *Gabriel* that ſtand; he ſpeaks in the preſent time, even now while I am ſpeaking unto thee, *I ſtand in the preſence of God.* The Angel while he goeth into the world, is not abſent from God, he beholdeth the face of God *alwayes*. The Schoolmen have an odd diſtinction, they ſay, there are *aſſiſting Angels*, and *miniſtring Angels*: Thoſe Angels that are aſſiſtants, ſtand alwayes before God, and never are ſent out about the world upon any occaſion; Others are miniſtring Spirits; as, *Heb.* 1. 14. *Are they not miniſtring Spirits ſent forth to miniſter for them who are the heirs of ſalvation?* This is School-Doctrine. But there needs no ſuch diſtinction of ſome to be aſſiſting or attending, and ſome to be miniſtring Angels; for whereſoever they are, they are alwayes in the preſence of God; and their preſenting themſelves before God, notes only their preparedneſs to attend the Lords Service in whatſoever he ſhall employ them.

And Satan came alſo among them.] That is, the chief of the evil Angels. The word [*Satan*] ſignifieth an *Adverſary*; and ſo it is oftentimes applied to men; as, concerning *Solomon*, it is ſaid, that while he did walk exactly with God, *there was neither Adverſary nor evil occurrant*; 1 Kin. 5. 4. the word in the Original is, there was no *Satan* in his Kingdom. And in 1 *Kings* 11. 14. it is ſaid, *The Lord ſtirred up Satan an Adverſary againſt* Solomon. And that accuſation which thoſe wretches in *Ezra* 4. ſent againſt the building of *Jeruſalem*, is called *Sitna*; they ſent *Sitna*, an accuſation, or an oppoſing Letter. It comes from the ſame Root; any kind of oppoſition is called *Sitna*, from Satan, who is an Oppoſer. It is ſometimes uſed more generally concerning any oppoſition; as the Angel that came to oppoſe *Balaam*, Numb. 22. 34. *I wiſt not* (ſaith *Balaam*) *that there was an Adverſary that ſtood in the way.*

But how can it be ſaid that Satan ſhould come among the ſons of God?

I ſaid before, that it was but an alluding ſpeech to the dealings of men in their Seſſions and Aſſemblies, and there is no neceſſity to make every Particular of it hold. We may conceive it thus,

Satan came alſo among them.] It is not ſaid that the ſons of God and Satan came and preſented themſelves before the Lord; Satan did not joyn himſelf in with them, Satan did not offer himſelf for any good ſervice; but thither he came, being ſo ordered by the over-ruling power of God.

But can Satan come into the preſence of God?

No otherwiſe then a blind man can come into the Sun; he comes into the Sun, and the Sun ſhineth upon him, but he ſees not the Sun. Satan comes ſo into the preſence of God, that he is alwayes ſeen of God; he is never ſo in the preſence of God, as to ſee God. It is queſtion'd whether the lapſed Angels ever ſaw God at all while they ſtood; becauſe if they had ſeen God, it is conceived that Viſion would have been their confirmation: But it is moſt certain, that the lapſed *Angels*, ſince their fall, never ſaw *God*, nor ever ſhall; though it be ſaid here, Satan came among the *ſons of God*: you know what the Apoſtle *Jude* teacheth, *That the Devils kept not their place, but are reſerved in Chains of darkneſs againſt the judgment of the great day:* We ſhall open that afterward, when we come to ſpeak of his compaſſing the earth, how he doth compaſs the earth, and yet is reſerved in chains of darkneſs. But I ſay, there is his ſeat, there is his place, and all that is ſpoken of him in this, doth not infer any the leaſt glimpſe or fruition of God or communion with the Angels. In regard of his nature, he is ſtill a Spirit; but in regard of his ſin, he is a miſerable Spirit; he hath loſt his excellency, though he hath not his Nature. And being a Spirit, he hath power to paſs and repaſs, to go up and down the world, to aſcend and deſcend at his pleaſure (as good Angels may and can) when God doth permit them.

We ſee here the good Angels are called the *Sons of God*; in this learn the priviledge of Believers; they partake with the Angels in this Title: The Apoſtle ſaith, *Behold what manner of love the Father hath ſhewed, that we ſhould be called the ſons of God.* If you would know what manner of

love

love it is, it is as great as the Angels in Heaven have: Chriſt took not upon him the nature of Angels, but hath given us the honour of Angels. Fallen Angels could not ſhare with us in the benefit of redemption, but we ſhare with the Angels that ſtand in the priviledge of Sonſhip. We are the Sons of God as well as they, and in ſomewhat beyond them; they are created Sons, but not (as we) adopted ſons.

Came and preſented themſelves before God.] This ſhould teach us *to imitate Angels*. This we pray for; *That the will of God ſhould be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven.* The Angels alwayes preſent themſelves, they alwayes ſtand before God, ready to do his will; we ſhould be ever in the preſence of God in this ſence, that is, preſenting our ſelves, ſtanding as in the preſence of God, ready to take and receive inſtruction, to do his will, whatever it is. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*, is as it were the voyce of an Angel ſtanding before the Throne of God. It ſhould be the voice of every Soul, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* This is the preſenting of the Soul before God.

Then conſider here, who Satan was; Satan was as good in his Creation, as any of thoſe who are called *the Sons of God*. They are called the *ſons of God*; and he is now called nothing but *Satan*, an Adverſary. His condition was once as good as theirs. Note hence,

There is no created excellency, but if it be left to it ſelf, will quickly undo it ſelf.

These Angels were as good at the firſt as any of thoſe that were here called the *ſons of God*. They were not confirmed; they ſtood upon their own bottom, they fell, and had no tempter at all; they turned about upon the freedom of their own will, and *left their habitation* (ſaith the Scripture.) *There is no truſting to any eſtate out of Chriſt.*

Further, note this, what was the difference between thoſe *ſons of God*, and this *Satan?* Only ſin; One was as good as the other in the Creation; nothing elſe made an Angel a Devil, but only ſin.

Sin deſpoiles the Creature of all its comfort and honour at once.

Again, note this, The Angel falling, and becoming ſinful, hath his name preſently changed, he is called *Satan*, an *Adverſary*; an *Adverſary* to God, an *Adverſary* to man.

He that is wicked himſelf, will quickly be an adverſary, an oppoſer of all goodneſs; no ſooner a Sinner, but a Satan.

Laſtly, note this;

To be an oppoſer of good, is to be conformable to the Devil.

The Devil is the Adverſary, the Satan; and ſo proportionably, as any one is an oppoſer of good, ſo much of Satan, ſo much of the Devil he hath in him: Therefore Chriſt ſaid to a *chief Apoſtle*, when he did oppoſe him in that greateſt good of all, *the working out of our Redemption in dying for us*; *get thee behind me Satan*, Mat. 16. *All oppoſition of goodneſs is a ſpice of the Devil.* So the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Acts* 13. 10. when he ſpeaks to *Elymas* the *Sorcerer*, ſaith, *O thou Child of the Devil, thou enemy of all goodneſs.* To be an enemy of goodneſs, is to be the child of the Devil; it is the very Character of the Devil: He is a Satan in reſpect of all goodneſs and good perſons.

And ſurely (my Brethren) if this be a character of the Devil, and to be conformable unto Satan, how conſpicuous is that conformity in this age? How many thouſands bear this *Mark of the Devil*, not only in their *hands* cloſely, but in their *foreheads* openly? How many viſible *walking Satans* are there among us, enemies of all goodneſs, oppreſſors of all righteouſneſs, oppoſers of our peace, oppoſers of our liberty, oppoſers of the Goſpel, oppoſers of Chriſt? Theſe are all as ſo many Satans in the world, ſo many enemies. Now is a time that *Satans* are let looſe in the world; the Devil, now, if ever, *works mightily in the hearts and ſpirits*, in the *hands and tongues* of theſe *children of Diſobedience*. It becometh us then, that as there are many adverſaries and oppoſers of goodneſs, to ſhew our ſelves friends and patrons of goodneſs. Chriſt hath many Challengers, let him find ſome Champions. Now it is time to raiſe your ſpirits, not only to love the Truth, but to maintain the Truth. *As it is the height of wickedneſs, not only to do evil, but to oppoſe good; ſo it is the height of holineſs, not only to do good, but to oppoſe evil.* This is juſt to be on the contrary point to Satan; he doth wickedneſs, and oppoſeth good; let us do good, and oppoſe all evil: *To be a Satan againſt Satan, is the glory of a Chriſtian.* Now ſet your ſelves againſt the Satans, be Adverſaries to that Adverſary, and all his adherents, ſo ſhall you approve your ſelves the friends of Chriſt.

VERS. 7, 8.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, whence comeſt thou? Then Satan anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, from going to and fro in the earth; and from walking up and down in it.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, haſt thou not conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the earth? a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſchewеth evil?

IN the former Verſe we ſhewed you that *great and glorious Seſſion*, the *Lord* with his *holy Angels* about him, and *Satan* too coming among them. In the Verſes following, to the end of the twelfth, we have the buſineſs or acts of the Seſſion recorded. *God* interrogates, *Satan* anſwers; *Satan* moves, *God* grants. This is the *ſum* of all the buſineſs that paſs'd in this *Seſſion*. *God* puts two *Interrogatories* to *Satan*, one concerning his Travels, or where he had been? *ver.* 7. The other, concerning his obſervations, or what he had done? *ver.* 8.

In *ver.* 7. we have the firſt Queſtion, the Lord beginneth with Satan; **And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, whence comeſt thou?**

How the *Lord ſpeaks*, is a point almoſt *unſpeakable*. There are many Diſputes about it, I will not ſtay upon them; only to open this, that you may take in all Scripture of the like kind, wherein the Lord is ſaid to ſpeak. We muſt know, that as in Scripture, God is ſaid to have a *mouth*, and a *voice*, alluding unto man by that common *Figure*; ſo likewiſe, when the Lord ſpeaks, we muſt underſtand it by the ſame figure; it is but an alluſion to the manner of men. God is ſaid to ſpeak, as men are ſaid to ſpeak; but God doth not ſpeak as men ſpeak, forming a voice by ſuch Organs or Inſtruments of ſpeech: but when the *Lord* ſpeaks, it is either by *forming and creating* a voice in the *ayr*; ſo God is ſaid to ſpeak ſometimes; as when Chriſt was *baptized*, there *came a voice from heaven, ſaying, This is my beloved Son*, &c. So *John* 12. 28. *There came a voice from heaven, ſaying, I have glorified thee*; which all the People heard ſounding in the ayr. Secondly, God is ſaid to ſpeak, when he manifeſts and declares himſelf, either to the *Spirits of men*, or unto *Angels*, who are Spirits. God doth ſpeak unto the ſpirits of men, ſometimes without any forming of a voice; ſo the phraſe is uſual in the Prophets, *The word of the Lord came unto me*; which is to be underſtood, that the Lord did ſecretly reveal himſelf to the ſpirits of his Prophets, and not by any external *audible* voice; it was an inward, not an outward word. So when the Lord ſpeaks unto Spirits or Angels, be they good or evil Angels, you muſt not underſtand it of a voice formed or faſhioned into audible words and ſyllables; but it is a manifeſtation and declaration of Gods will and mind unto the Angels mind, good or bad, as God willeth. For the will of God to declare himſelf unto an Angel, is the ſpeech of God unto an Angel. So much as God intendeth of his mind ſhould be known to the Devil, is a ſpeaking to the Devil. The intention of one Spirit is as plain to another Spirit, as the voice of one man is to another man, there is the very ſame proportion. So here in this place where it is ſaid, *The Lord ſaid unto Satan*, this was only a manifeſtation of Gods will, as he willed unto Satan; God did manifeſt himſelf thus far to Satan, that it was his pleaſure to know of him whence he came; this will was his ſpeech.

Mat. 3. 17.

To paſs from the manner of ſpeaking, we will look upon the matter ſpoken, *And the Lord ſaid unto Satan*, **whence comeſt thou?** That's the firſt Queſtion.

This Queſtion is here put, not for information; as if the Lord did not know whence he came, as men uſually queſtion, that they may be informed. But Queſtions in Scripture (eſpecially when the Lord putteth them) are to be underſtood in ſome of theſe ſences. First,

First, To exact a Confession from the mouth of the party. He said unto Satan, *Whence comest thou?* Not that he needed an information, but that he might receive a confession from the mouth of Satan. So he questioned *Adam*, *Gen.* 3. *Adam, where art thou? who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee, thou shalt not eat?* These Questions were not to inform God, but only that *Adam* might give a confession out of his own mouth concerning those things. So he questioned *Cain*, Gen. 4. *Where is Abel thy Brother?* It was a Question only to draw a confession from *Cain* of what he had done. There is a like Question of *Elisha* to his Servant *Gehazi*, when he had run after *Naaman*, and had got a reward from him, 2 *Kings* 5. 25. *Elisha* saith to him, *Whence comest thou?* or, *Where hast thou been?* He asked him this, only to draw a confession from him; for saith he afterward, *Went not my Spirit with thee, when the man turned again from his Chariot to meet thee?* He knew before where his Servant had been; God had revealed the thing unto him; only he questions him to make him acknowledge it. So here the Lord questions Satan, *whence comest thou?* that he might have a confession from himself. *Though the Lord doth know all the actions, wayes and thoughts of every Creature, yet God at the last will question every man, that he may judge every man upon his own confession.*

Secondly, This Question may be understood, as intimating a dislike of the thing or of the business that Satan had been about. Questions are many times put, not out of ignorance or nescience of what hath been done, but out of a dislike or abhorrence of the thing done. When the man or the thing is not approved, then God carrieth himself toward him and his action, as if he knew not what he had been doing, and he must have it out by confession. Thus *Hiram*, 1 *King.* 9. 13. puts the Question upon *Solomon: What Cities are these which thou hast given me, my Brother?* He saw and knew before what Cities they were; but thus he question'd, because they *pleased him not*, ver. 12. In *Hos.* 8. 4. God is said not to know that they set up Kings; *They have set up Kings, but not by me; they have made Princes, and I knew it not*: that is, I did not like them, I took no notice of them by way of approbation. So God questions about things, as if he did not know them, when he doth not like them; and we may conclude that this Question holds out to us Gods dislike of the wayes and works of Satan.

Thirdly, Questions, and this Question may be understood in a way of *objurgation* or chiding; *Satan, whence comest thou?* Thou hast been a tempting, thou art come now from murders, and thefts, and adulteries, and blasphemies, from provoking men to all these wickednesses. As that Question, *Jonah* 4. 4. was a chiding of *Jonah*; *Dost thou well to be angry?* So, *whence comest thou?* As many times when you are angry with your servants, you ask, *where have you been?* There is a reprehension in the Question: So God full of wrath toward Satan, saith, *Whence comest thou? Thou hast been doing all the mischief thou canst abroad in the world I am sure.*

Lastly, For the better conceiving of the matter of this Question proposed, *whence comest thou?* there is more to be understood then is expressed; for God doth not only enquire here concerning the *places* where he had been, but concerning the *business* and the work which he had done; all is included in it: *Whence comest thou?* what hast thou been doing in the world? what hath thy business been abroad? Every man, every Creature, every Angel, good or bad, must give an account of themselves unto God. So much of the Lords Question; now let us examine Satans Answer.

Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

If I am enquired (saith Satan) whence I come; I answer, *I come from walking up and down in the earth, from going to and fro in it.* Here again it may be doubted, how Satan speaks to the Lord; as before it was about the Lords speaking unto Satan. The speaking of Satan and all Spirits, is according to the manner before explained of Gods speaking. Then Angels speak one to another, or unto God, when they direct or intend such or such things to be known. As a thought, a conception in the mind, is a word in the mind; so the directing or putting forth, or an intending to put forth that word or that thought, is the speaking of the mind, then the mind speaks. As we know in our selves, a man meditates, he conceives such and such things, he forms them all in his spirit under some words into such notions; and he can put forth these by desires, though he doth not speak. And so we are said often in Scripture to speak unto God in our hearts, when the mouth doth not speak at all. As *Moses*, *Exod.* 14. 15 is said to *cry unto God*; that was nothing but the directing, or actual intending of such and such secret desires unto God; that was a crying unto God. So it is said of *Hannah* (1 Sam. 1. 13.) that *she spake to the Lord in her heart.* After this manner do Angels and Spirits speak. As we can speak to God in our spirits, by our hearts, when we intend or lift up such and such thoughts unto God; so they speak in the same manner by making known and revealing so much of their minds to God, as they desire he should take notice of: For if a man have such and such thoughts, and only reserve them to himself, he is said to speak to himself, to speak within himself: So Angels, though they have such & such thoughts, they do speak to themselves, and not to God, while they keep those thoughts within themselves; however God knows them all before, yet an Angel is said to speak no more to God, then he doth intentionally and obedientially (as some expres it) make known and declare to God his desire, that God may take notice of it. So here Satan answereth and saith unto God, or he speaks to God these things; that is, he doth actually intend that God should know thus much of him, what he had been about; that he was come now *from going to and fro in the earth, from walking up and down in it.*

From going to and fro, &c.

It may be doubted, how Satan can be said to *go to and fro in the earth, and to walk up and down in it*; whereas it is expres in the Epistle of *Jude*, ver. 6. that *the Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.* Now if Satan, if the Angels that fell, be in *chains*, and in *chains of everlasting darkness*, and *reserved unto the judgment of the great day*, how doth Satan here speak of himself, as being at liberty, *going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it?*

I answer, That though the Devil goeth up and down, yet he is ever in *chains*. He is in a *double chain*, even when he goes and circuits the whole earth abroad, he is in a *chain of Justice*, and in a *chain of Providence*. He is in a *chain of Justice*, that is, under the *wrath of God*; and he is in a *chain of Providence*, that is, under the *eye of God*; he can go no further then God gives him leave, then God lets out and lengthens his chain. So that still he is reserved under chains, even chains of darkness; when he goes abroad, he goes like a Prisoner, with his fetters upon his heels.

But it may be here enquired further, if Satan be thus under the wrath of God, and be a condemned spirit, if he be in such darkness, how can he intend or attempt, plot or execute those designs of temptation for the overthrow of souls, and disturbance of the Churches of God throughout the world? Will not such torment and horrour of darkness, disable and unfit him for such curious methods of doing mischief? can he have his thoughts upon any thing but upon his own woful condition, and miserable estate?

For this likewise (to clear it) we may conceive, that Satan, although he be, at present, under the *wrath of God*, yet he is not under the fulness of the *wrath of God*; he is not yet in *extremity*, he is not yet in that *degree* of judgment which hereafter he shall receive. Satan is now as full of *Discontent* as he can be, but he is not so full of *Torment* as he can be; this we see expresly in *Mat.* 8. 29. where the Devils say to Christ, *Art thou come to torment us before our time?* as noting that there will be a time wherein they shall have more torment, their full of torment, such torment, as what they now endure, compared with it, may pass for no torment, if not for pleasure. Then they shall drink the very dregs of the cup of Gods wrath; now they do (as it were) but sip, or taste it. The devils, though they are already cast down from their glorious estate, yet they are not cast into such a woful state as hereafter they shall be; therefore they may walk up and down in the world, and uncessantly set themselves about the destruction of others.

For the words, *From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.* Satan here speaks like a *Prince*; therefore some conceive, that this is the Prince of

devils that is here mentioned in this Text, *Beelzebub*, the chief of the devils; for here he speaks of himself as some great Prince, that had gone about his Countries to view his Provinces, his Kingdoms, and Cities; I come, saith he, from visiting my several Places and Dominions; *I come from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*

These expressions are not to be understood properly; for properly Spirits, such as Satan is, cannot be said *to go or to walk: A Spirit moveth*, that is proper to a Spirit: but properly a Spirit doth not walk or go, that is proper only to bodies: But the word which we translate, *from going to and fro*, is translated by some, *from compassing the earth*, or *from compassing about in the world*, and then it is proper; the Original signifying to compass or circuit about by any kind of motion, as well as by going.

שוט בארץ

Further, For the understanding of *Satans going to and fro in the earth*; we must not conceive that this is all that Satan doth, to walk up and down in the world, to go to and fro; he is no idle *Peripatetick*; but by going to and fro in the earth, is noted,

First, The exact discovery which Satan makes of all things in the earth. For the word [*Shut*] signifieth to enquire, to search diligently into a thing. It is not a bare going about, but it is a going about as a spie, to search, to enquire, to observe and consider diligently all things as one passeth along. The same word is used (*Dan.* 12. 4.) for discoursing; we translate it thus, *Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be encreased*; now, we may wonder how knowledge should be encreased by running to and fro, up and down; they that would encrease knowledge, should rather sit still and consider, and debate things; but the word (so some translate it) signifies to discourse or dispute of things; they shall discourse or go about to enquire into things, and knowledge shall be encreased. Thus Satans going to and fro in the earth, is a discoursing upon every thing, a disputing upon every point and person; he doth, as it were, debate every mans condition as he goeth, and every mans estate, every mans temper, and every mans calling; he considers what is fittest to be done against him, and how he may assault him with greatest advantage. That is the running or going to and fro which is here meant in the Text, it is a going to and fro to encrease his knowledge, and inform himself of all things as he goeth. The same word is used concerning the good Angels, *Zech.* 1. 10. It is said there, that they were sent *to walk to and fro through the earth.* It was not a bare passing through the earth, but a curious observing and prying into all things as they went; we translate it a walking to and fro; but it is a walking so as to bring God intelligence; for these were sent out as Christs Intelligencers, to bring him in a report of the state of things abroad: for so there in the Vision it is expresst after the manner of men. Though Christ needs none to inform him about the estate of his Church and People, yet he alludes to the custom of Princes, who maintain Intelligencers in all Courts and Kingdoms, to advise them how the affairs of other Nations are transacted. The very same Original word is used of God himself (*Zech.* 4. 10.) *The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth*; he is his own Intelligencer, exactly discovering and taking notice of every thing that is done in the world. So then this is the meaning, I have been *going to and fro in the earth*, saith Satan; that is, I have fully and throughly taken notice of all passages, of all persons in all places, of all conditions and sorts of men; that is the thing I have been doing: Thus Mr. *Broughton* translates, *from searching to and fro in the earth*, noting his exactness of enquiry in his travels.

Propriè est attente discurrere, circumspicere, & explorare.

Then Secondly, It noteth the *unquietness of Satan.* He is an unquiet, a restless Spirit, being cast out of heaven, he can rest no where. A Soul that is once displaced, and out of the favour of God, hath no place to repose in afterward. Now, saith he, all my business is walking to and fro, going up and down: *Satan hath no rest.* As the Sentence of *Cain* was, *Gen.* 4. when God had cast him out of his presence, *Thou shalt be a fugitive and a vagabond*; thou shalt do nothing but run up and down the world as long as thou livest. Satan is such a fugitive, a vagabond, one that runs up and down in the world; he is an unsetled, an unquiet Spirit. *They who are once departed from God, can never find rest in any Creature*; but running to and fro is their condition and their curse.

Thirdly, Some understand it thus, that Satan makes (as it were) a recreation of his tempting and drawing men to Hell. Satan cannot possibly in a proper sense, take any comfort, or be refreshed; but as one doth well expres it, he himself being lost, undone and damned, seeks to comfort himself by undoing and damning others. It is a joy to some to have companions in sorrow. All Satans delight (if we may conceive he hath any delight) is in this, in making others as bad and miserable as himself: therefore, it may be, he calls his trade of seduction and destruction, *walking up and down in the earth*; as men are said to walk up and down for refreshing and recreation; he speaks of it, not as of some toilsome hard journey, but as of walking for delight. But I conceive the former to be more proper. Take two or three Notes from this. Here we may observe,

Ipse perditus perdendis hominibus solatia quærit.

First, That, *there is no place in the world that can secure a man from temptation, or be a sanctuary from Satans assaults.*

For Satan goeth to and fro through the earth; he is an ubiquitary, he stayes no where, but runs every where. It is the folly of *Popish Votaries*, that think to shut themselves up in walls from the temptations of *Satan*: Cloysters are as open to Satan as the open field. *Satan walketh to and fro through the earth.*

Secondly, We may note here *the wonderful diligence of Satan.*

Satan is very active to do mischief.

He walketh to and fro; as *Peter* expresseth it, 2 *Pet.* 5. 8. *He goeth about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.* There is his diligence, and there is his intent. Satan speaks nothing of his intent here, he conceals that; he speaks only as if he went about like a pilgrim, walking through the earth: his main business, that he went about, to devour souls, is kept in silence; but the Holy Ghost unmasks him, and discovers the design of his walking to and fro; *He seeks whom he may devour.* If Satan be thus diligent going about to tempt, we ought to be as diligent, standing alwayes upon our watch, to prevent his temptations. Mr. *Latimer*, in one of his Sermons, where he taxes the Clergy, especially the Bishops of those times, for their idleness, proposeth to them the example of the Prophets and Apostles, and of Christ himself; their diligence in going about to preach, should quicken those Idlers: But (saith he) if you will not follow their example, follow the example of Satan; he goeth about in his *Dioceß* to and fro continually. Take example from him in doing evil, how to do good: we may take example thus far from Satan, to be as forward to do good, as he is to do hurt; to be as watchful against him, as he is watchful against us. If this be his business to go to and fro through the earth, and his intent be to devour souls, then where-ever we go in the world up and down, we ought to be careful to keep our own souls, and gain the souls of others.

Thirdly, We may observe from it,

That, *Satan is confined in his business to the earth.*

He can get no farther then the earth, or to the ayerial part: he is called the *Prince of the Ayr.* Satan being once cast out of Heaven, can never get into Heaven more. There is no tempter in heaven; there is no *Serpent* shall ever come into the *Celestial Paradise*; there was one in the earthly Paradise, but there shall never be any in the Celestial. Therefore when we are once beyond the earth, we are beyond the reach of all temptations; we are then at rest from Satans snares and practices, as well as from our own labours.

Let us now consider what the Lord replieth, or his second Question to *Satan.* Well, thou hast been walking to and fro in the earth, saith God; *Hast thou considered my servant Job?* Tell me, hast thou taken notice of such an one?

הִשַּׂמְתָּ לִבְּךָ

σοὶ προσέσχες τὴν διάνοιαν σου κατὰ τὸν παῖδά μου Ἰωβ.

Hast thou considered?] The word is, *Hast thou put thy heart upon* Job? So it is word for word in the Original; hast thou laid *Job* to thy heart? hast thou seriously, fully, and exactly considered my servant *Job?* And so it is rendred it out of the *Septuagint*; *Hast thou attended with thy mind upon my servant* Job? To put a thing upon the heart, is to have serious and special regard to it; as when the Scripture speaks of not putting a thing upon the heart, it noteth a slighting and neglecting of it. When the wife of *Phineas*

neas was delivered, and they told her that she had brought
1 Sam. 4. 20 forth a son, the Text saith, *She answered not, neither did she regard*; the Hebrew is, *neither did she put her heart upon it*: the same word is here in the Text. Thus *Abigail* speaks
1 Sam. 25. 25. unto *David*, *As for this son of* Belial, *let not my Lord put his heart upon him*, or (as it is translated) *let not my Lord regard this man of* Belial; take no notice of such an one as he is, *he is a fool, name and thing*, do not regard him, do not put him upon thy heart. There are divers such expressions, where putting upon the heart is expressed by regarding; and not putting upon the heart, by not regarding. Then here, hast thou put *Job* upon thy heart? That is, hast thou seriously weighed and considered *Job*? As if God had said, *I am sure in thy travels and wandrings about the world, thou couldst not choose but take notice of* Job, *he is my jewel, my darling, a special man among all the sons of men: He is is such a spectacle as may justly draw all eyes and hearts after him: when thou walkedst, didst thou not make a stand at* Jobs *door? I cannot but look upon him my self and consider him, therefore surely thou hast considered him. The eyes of the*
Psal. 34. 15. *Lord are upon the righteous, and his heart is upon them too. A wicked man hath not the eye of God: a godly man hath his heart, and shall have it to all eternity.* The sum is,

This Question teacheth us, *That amongst all the men that dwelt on the face of the earth,* Job *was the most considerable.*

Hast thou not considered my servant Job?

It is as if one should say to a man come from this City into the Country, were you at Court, or have you seen the King? Because he is the most eminent and considerable person. So God here speaks to Satan upon his account of walking about the earth, hast thou taken notice of *Job? A godly man is the most considerable man in the world.* But then you *must put your heart* upon him, not your *eye* only, for then, as it was said of Christ, (*Isa.* 53. 3.) you may perhaps *see no beauty in him*: his inside is the most considerable thing in the world. As a wicked man is the most unconsiderable, not worthy the looking unto, though he be
2 King. 3. 14 never so great: as *Elisha* said to the King of *Israel*, *Surely as the Lord of hostes liveth, before whom I stand, were it not that I regard the presence of* Jehosaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee nor see thee*; thou art not a man saith he, that deserveth so much as to be looked upon: A
Psal. 15. 4. godly man is therefore described to be one, in whose eyes a vile person, a wicked man, is despised.

But secondly, in reference to Satan. Some read these words not by way of Question, but by way of Affirmation, thus; Thou hast considered my servant *Job*. Thou hast been abroad in the world, surely then thou hast taken notice of my servant *Job*, thou hast considered him; that is, of all men in the world, thou hast set thy self about *Job* to tempt him and to try him: when thou camest to *Jobs* house, there thou madest an assault, there thou tryedst the uttermost of thy strength to overcome him; thou considerest him, what to do against him, how to overthrow him: and tell me, hast thou not found him a tuff piece? Didst thou ever meet with such an one in the world before? To consider a thing, is to try all wayes how to gain it, or how to compass
1 Sam. 9. 20 such a thing: as *Samuel* said to *Saul*, when he was seeking his fathers Asses, *As for thine Asses that were lost, set not thy mind on them*; that is, do not trouble thy self, do not beat thy brains to consider which way to go to find them, or where it is most probable to get them. So here, thou hast set thy mind or considered my servant *Job*, that is, thou hast beat thy brains, and set all thy wits on work, what course to take with greatest advantage to destroy my servant *Job*.

Take the words in that sense, and they yield us this Instruction.

That Satans main temptations, his strongest batteries are planted against the most eminent godly persons.

When Satan sees a man that is eminent in grace, against him he makes his hottest and subtilest assaults: he sets his heart upon such a man, yea and vexeth his heart too about him. Satan is most busie at holy duties (one said he saw in a vision ten Devils at a Sermon, and but one at the Market) and about holy persons. As for others, he doth not trouble himself about them, for they (as the Apostle
2 Tim. 2. 26 shews) *are led captive by the Devil at his will*; if he do but *whistle* (as it were) they easily follow him, and come after him presently, so that he needs not set his heart or vex himself about them. But when he cometh to a *Job*, he sets all his wits and all his strength a work, bends all his thoughts to consider what course to take to assault such a *strong hold of grace*. If he can get such a man down, then there is triumph indeed, he sings *victoria*; then (if we may so speak) there is joy in Hell. *As there is joy indeed in Heaven at the conversion of a sinner*; *so there is a kind of joy in Hell, when one sins that is converted.* If any thing can make the Devils merry, it is this, to give a godly man the foyl; though they see he is past their reach to destroy him, yet if they can but blemish or disgrace him, if they can but trouble and disquiet him; this is their delight. Hence it is that *General Satan* with his legions of darkness, those infernal spirits, encamp about such persons with deadly hatred. As when an Army meets with a strong Castle, or City, they sit down, and there consider what course to take for the besiedging and gaining of it.

Hast thou considered [my Servant Job.] The title which God gives *Job* is very observable, *My servant* Job. A Servant (you know) is one, that is not at his own dispose, but at the call and beck of another; so the Centurion describes a servant; *For* (saith he) *I am a man under authority, and I have servants, and I say to this man go, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh.* Servants are at the word of another, they are not (*sui juris*) in their own power; therefore *Aristotle* calleth Servants, *living tools*, or *living instruments*, breathing instruments, because they are at the will of another, to be used and imployed at the discretion of their Master. Here God calleth *Job* his servant: And he calleth him so, First, by way of distinction or difference; *my servant*, that is, mine, not his own. Many are their own servants, they serve themselves, as the Apostle saith, *They serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies*; they serve their own lusts, divers lusts and pleasures; *Job* is not such an one, he is my servant. ζῶντα ὄργανα. Rom. 16.

Many are Satans servants; as if God should have said to Satan here; Satan thou hast gone about the world, and thou hast found a great family of thine own, thou hast found many servants in all places, but *hast thou considered my servant?* There is one, I am sure, that oweth thee no service, and by his good will, will do thee none; hast thou not found my servant?

Some are the servants of men; but *Job* is my servant; not a servant of men, to subject himself to their lusts, either for hope or fear: *He is not* (as the Apostle speaks) *the servant of men* (in that sense) to please men, with sinning against and provoking God.

Secondly, *My servant*, by way of special right and property; So *Job* and all godly persons are called Gods servants. First, By the right of election they are Gods chosen servants, as *Paul* is called *a chosen vessel*, that is, a chosen servant, to carry the name of God. Secondly, They are Gods servants by the right of purchase; my servant whom I have bought and purchased: so in the 1 *Cor.* 6. *You are bought with a price, be not the servants of men*; that is, you are bought with a price to be my servants, therefore be not the servants of men in opposition to me, or to my disservice in any thing. So *Job* was Gods servant by way of purchase; *God buyeth every one of his servants with the blood of his Son.*

Thirdly, *My servant*, by way of Covenant. *Job* was Gods Covenant servant, God and he had (as it were) *sealed Indentures*. *Job* entred into Covenant with God, that he would perform the duty of a servant; and God entred into Covenant with him, that he should enjoy the priviledge of a servant. Now that which is Gods by right of Covenant, is his by special right.

Then again, We may further understand this, and all such like expressions: When God saith, *my servant*, he doth as it were glory in his servant. God speaks of him, as of his *treasure, my servant*; as a man doth of that which he glorieth in. As the Saints glory in God, when they use this expression, *my God*, and *my Lord, my Master*, and *my Christ*, this is a kind of glorying and triumphing in God. So this expression carryeth such a sense in it, *Hast thou not considered my servant* Job; there is one that I have honour by, one that I rejoyce and glory in, one that I can speak of with much more then content, even with triumph, *my servant* Job: There's a man.

It is a mans honour to be Gods servant, and God thinks himself honoured by the service of man.

It was once a curse, and it is a great curse still to be the
Gen. 9. *servant of servants*, as it is said of *Cham*; but it is an honour, the *greatest honour* of the creature to be a servant to God. He that is a servant of Christ, is not onely free, but noble. And Christ reckoneth that he hath not onely work done him, but honour done him by *his willing people*, and therefore he glories in any such, *my servant*.

My servant Job.] There is somewhat also to be considered in that. When God speaks of his people by name, it noteth two things in Scripture.

First, A special care that God hath over them.

Secondly, A special love that God hath to them, *John* 10. 3. *He calleth his own Sheep by name*; this noteth a special care Christ hath of his Sheep, and a special love that he beareth to them. So *Isa.* 49. 1. *The Lord hath called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name*; it noteth the special care, and the special love that God had of, and bare to Christ. See it eminently in that place, *Exod.* 33. 12. where *Moses* speaks thus unto God, *Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name*; now what it is to know by name, is by way of Exposition added in the end of the verse, *And thou hast also found grace in my sight*. So that to be known by name, is in a special manner to find grace in the sight of God: When it is said here, *My servant* Job, it shews that God did take an extraordinary care of, and did in an extraordinary manner love *Job* above all that were upon the Earth.

There is a great deal of difference between these two expressions; to know *the name of a man*, and to know *a man by name*. It is a truth, that God knoweth all your names, and the names of all the men in the world, but he doth not know all *by name*. Therefore the Scripture assures us, that God hath the names of none written, but the names of his own, as *Moses* saith in the former Chapter, *If thou wilt not forgive the sin of this people, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy Book which thou hast written*. Thou knowest me by name, my name is written in thy Book: So *Luke* 10. Christ bad his Disciples that they should not *rejoyce so much that they had the spirits subject unto them; but in this they should rejoyce, that their names were written in Heaven*. Note from hence,

That God doth take care of his elect children and servants in a special manner above all other men in the world.

The names of Princes, or Emperors, or Potentates, if they belong not to God, are not vouchsafed a place in his Book, but the names of the meanest of his Saints, are recorded for ever, and shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

Hast thou not considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, &c.

We read before at the end of the 3. verse, that *Job* in reference to his riches was *the greatest of all the men of the East*: Now he goeth beyond that, in reference to his holiness, he is *the greatest upon the Earth*, there is none like him in the Earth.

This we may understand, first, as a cause or reason why *Job* fell under the special consideration or observation of Satan, *Hast thou not considered my servant* Job, *because* (so some render that particle) *or in as much, or for that, there is not the like to him in the Earth*. As if God should say, there is reason why he must needs be taken into thy consideration; because there is not such another man as he in the Earth. You know that a man is quickly taken notice of, when there are none like unto him, in the Place or Company where he is. If a man walk in the Streets, or come into a House, who is of an extraordinary tallness; some will ask the question, did you not observe such a man, for there was never a man in the Company, never a man in the Street so tall as he? So one that is extraordinary in Beauty, or extraordinary in rich Apparrel, every one hath an Eye upon such. The reason why many are observed, is, because they are not *like to others*, they are beyond others in quality or in habit. So here, *Hast thou not considered my servant* Job, *that there is none like unto him in the Earth*, thou must needs take notice of him.

Or again, It may be understood thus; as the matter which Satan should consider and observe in *Job*. *Hast thou considered my servant* Job, *&c.* in this thing, that there is not a man upon the Earth like to him? Hast thou not taken notice of this in him? Thou who hast looked over all men, and hast (as it were) sifted all mens manners, hast thou not observed thus much, that there is not such a man upon the Earth as *Job*? Hath not that fallen under thy observation?

So now in the words [**There is none like him**] there is
10 a secret advancing of the praise of *Job*. For there is nothing that can be spoken more to the praise of man then this, to say that there is none like him. Though you say no more, you have said all. As the Scripture (we know) sets forth the wonderful praises of God, *Exod.* 15. 11. *Who is like unto thee O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee?* Which is resolved into the negative, there is none amongst the gods like unto thee, there is none like unto thee. *This is the high praise of God*, Mic. 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity?* It is the highest commenda-
20 tion of God to say, there is none like him, to set him above all creatures. In like manner here in the Text, when it is affirmed, that there was none like *Job*; this setteth him up in all praises and excellencies to the highest: though particulars be concealed, yet whatsoever may make for the honour of a man is included in this, that there is none like him.

Est quasi quædam Apostopesis maximarum laudum.

But how should we understand this of *Job*, that there was none like to him upon the Earth?

We must understand it, not only in reference to wicked men, that there was no meer natural man, no wicked man
30 like unto him: as if God had said to Satan, there is none in the Earth which is thy inheritance, no earthly man *like my servant* Job; look over all thy servants, thou hast not such an one in the Earth. That's too low. We will take it therefore in reference to all the Saints that were then upon the Earth, there was not such a godly man upon the Earth, none like unto him; and then we must expound *likeness* by a distinction. There is a double *likeness*; there is a *likeness of Quality*; and there is a *likeness of Equality*. When it is said here, that in the Earth there was none like
40 to *Job*, you must not understand it of a likeness of quality, as if there were no man that had such qualities as *Job* had: for all the Saints that are in the Earth, have the same kind of qualities, they are all alike in the main and in the general; namely, in the *conformity of their nature to the will of God, which is holiness*, that is the general quality; and thus all the Saints upon the Earth are alike; there is not any man can have any other likeness upon him then this; it is impossible. I say in this regard, the meanest and lowest Saint upon the Earth, is like to the highest and greatest Saint upon
50 Earth: yea not only so, but the meanest Saint upon Earth, is like to Jesus Christ *in Heaven*, in regard of quality; he hath the same quality, the same nature, he is *made partaker of the divine nature*: And the Apostle *Paul* exhorts the *Philippians*, *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ*. The meanest Saint hath the same mind and the same quality, in reference to his new nature, that is in God himself or in Christ, he is like to God, *God begetteth all his own children in his own likeness*. But in regard of the *likeness of equality*; thus *Job* was such a man as there was *none like him in the Earth*; no
60 man like him in the degrees of those qualities, they were not equal to him in this or that or the other grace. *Job* was a man above them all. As we know it is with wicked and natural men, all wicked men upon the Earth are alike one to another as can be; *As face answereth to face in water, so doth the heart of man to man*; the heart of one natural man to the other: but yet there are some wicked men so wicked, that there is *none like them in the Earth*. We have the very same words applied to *Ahab* in wickedness; 1 *King.* 21. 25. *But there was none like to* Ahab, *which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord*. None like
70 unto him, I say not (as in the former) that there were no wicked men that had the same sinful qualities, for all have the same sinful qualities; but there was none like him in equality of wickedness, *Ahab was a None-such*, he was a Giant in wickedness, none were grown to such a stature of wickedness as *Ahab*. In the same manner we must understand this concerning *Job*, none did reach to him in the *equality of his graces*, in the stature of the inward man; *Job had out-grown all the world in grace at that time*.

2 Pet. 1. 4.
Phil. 2. 5.
Prov. 27. 19

80 Yet a little further, for the understanding of this: We find

find sometimes when the Scripture saith of a man, that there is none like to him, the speech is to be restrained to some one particular. And it may be a *Question*, whether we are to understand this of *Job's* preheminence in the general, or in regard of some one particular grace? We read of *Solomon* that there was none like him, *Neh.* 13.26. *Among many Nations was there no King like him who was beloved of his God.* There was no King like to *Solomon*, but he restrained it to this, *who was beloved of his God*, none to whom God did so much communicate himself as to *Solomon*, none like to *Solomon* in wisdom and knowledge, in those revelations and intimate communions that God had with him, he was, as it were, *Gods darling*, as his other name *Jedediah* importeth. Then it is said of *Hezekiah* (see another instance) 2 *King.*18.5. *That he trusted in the Lord God of* Israel, *so that after him was none like him among all the Kings of* Judah. Now this we must understand of some one particular especially, that is, *of his trusting in the Lord*; in regard of his trusting so firmly in God, he went beyond all the Kings that came after him, there was none did so perfectly trust in God: for it is said, he *brake in pieces the brasen Serpent that* Moses *had made, and stamped it to pouder, trusting in the Lord.* Though some of his Counsellors might tell him, *If you do those things you may bring a world of trouble upon your self and the Kingdom; if you change these ancient customs you will make your people mutiny: this Serpent was of God, it was made in the wilderness*, &c. Yet saith he, I see it is abused to Idolatry, I care not for all that you say, *I will trust in the Lord however it go.* Here was an high, an unparaled act of confidence. Yet afterward it was said concerning *Josiah*, 2 King. 23.25. *That like unto him was there no King before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might.* Here it is said after *Hezekiah*, that *Josiah* was such a King as there was none before him; and it was said of *Hezekiah* that was before him, that he was such a one, that after him there should be none like him. How shall we reconcile these two? Only by applying those expressions to such and such particulars: *Hezekiah* was such a man, as there was no King after him for *trusting in God*; and *Josiah* was such a man, as there was no King before him, *for desire, care, and zeal in reforming the Church of God*: *Josiah's* reformation was the most perfect reformation that was made by all the Kings of *Judah*; and so in that particular, in regard of his great zeal for God, there was no King before him, like him. How shall we understand this then concerning *Job*?

2 King. 18. 4.

I answer in two Conclusions. First, When it is said, *there was none like to* Job, we are to understand it in reference to that generation. Doubtless God had as great ones in grace as *Job*, both before and afterward; *Noah* and *Abraham* before him, were eminent ones; and afterward, *Moses*, and *Joshua*, and *David*, and *Samuel*. But take *Job* in the time and the age wherein he lived, so there was none like unto him in equality, we may understand it so; For *Job* is conceived to be in the darker times, between *Abraham* and *Moses*, about the time that the people of *Israel* were in captivity in *Egypt*; so that in reference to that time *Job* lived in, he was the only man, the chief man, the greatest for grace in that age: As it is said of *Noah*, he was *a just man, and perfect in his generations*; he was the justest man of all that age, the most righteous of all that generation: so was *Job* in his.

Secondly, We may understand it, not only concerning some particular grace wherein he was most eminent: although it be a truth, that he had one grace, for which he was *cryed up* in Scripture more then for others, to wit, *Patience*; *Have you not heard of the patience of* Job? But we may take it for the whole latitude of *Job's* holiness and graces, and there was not at that time such a man upon the earth as *Job*: And so God himself seemeth to expound it, he doth not confine this to some one point, but saith, *Hast thou not considered my servant* Job, *that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and eschewth evil?* God addeth this by way of exposition, what he meaneth by a man to whom there was none like, who had no match upon the Earth. In those words the whole sum of godliness is compriſed; whatsoever goes, or may be conceived to go, toward the making up of a godly man, falls under one of those four members: And God saith there is none like him, take him in any, or in all these.

I shall only give you two or three brief Observations from hence. *There is none like unto him in the Earth.* Learn,

First, *That God hath servants of all statures and degrees.*

All his servants come not to the like pitch, to the like height, here is one that is beyond them all, *My servant* Job, not a man like him upon the Earth.

Secondly, note this, *We ought not to set up our rest in low degrees of grace; or content our selves to be like others in grace.*

We should labour (if it be possible) to go beyond all others in grace. It did not satisfie *Job* that he had gotten to such a degree, to such a frame and temper of heart, to such a course of holiness, as his neighbours or brethren that were good, had attained unto, but he laboured to go beyond them all; *Not such a man upon the Earth as* Job. It is an *holy ambition* to labour to exceed all others in grace and goodness. We have a great many in the world that desire to be so rich, as none should be like them; to be so gay in their apparel, as none should be like them; so beautiful, as none should be like them: but where are they that desire and endeavour to have such a portion or stock of grace, that none should be like them; to be above others in holiness, as *Job* was? True grace never rests in any degrees or measures of grace, but labours to increase: he that hath any grace would have more: do not think it enough when you are like others; you ought to labour to be beyond others.

Then see the *Character* that God giveth of *Job*, *A perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and eschewth evil.*

These have been already opened in the first verse, and these are but a report of the History before going, therefore I shall not need to stay upon this place; only take these two Observations from it.

First, *God hath a perfect Character of every soul.*

He knoweth fully and clearly what the tempers of your hearts and spirits are: just as the history and relation of *Job* was, such is Gods testimony of him to a tittle.

Secondly, *God will give to every man a testimony according to his utmost worth.*

God will not conceal any of your graces, or obscure your goodness, he will make it known to the world to the full, what you are. When God cometh to give testimony, he giveth it so, as his Saints can never loose by it. Oftentimes man gives a testimony short of his Brothers goodness and draweth a curtain before another mans worth; but God will draw the curtain quite back, and unveil every soul to the whole world. You shall see and hear a testimony from God before men and Angels concerning your selves to the uttermost, what you are in all godly and gracious perfections.

Job was an excellent man, a man commended indeed, who was commended of God: as the Apostle concludes it, *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but he whom God commendeth.* It is good for us to have our *Letters Testimonial from God*, to have our Letters Commendatory from Heaven. It is not what a man saith in his own heart, what he flattereth himself: It is not what your Neighbours or others flatter you, and say of you, but what God saith of you, what testimony he giveth of you. He is not approved that commendeth himself, or that other men commend only, but he whom the Lord commendeth. *And if God speak well of us, no matter though all the world be silent, or slander.*

VERS. 9, 10, 11.

Then Satan answered the Lord and said, doth Job fear God for naught?
Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the Land.
But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

IN the former verse *Job* receiveth testimony from God himself; in this, though Satan cannot deny it, yet he calumniates, and mis-interprets what he cannot contradict.

Satan grants indeed that *Job* fears God, but the latter words embaſe the former, and faſten inſincerity upon all his ſervices. *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* Fear is worth nothing unleſs in this ſenſe it be for nought. I have already ſhewed you what it is to fear God, I ſhall now clear the other term, and ſhew how much evil Satan charges *Job* with, when he queſtions, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?*

Satan accuſeth with a queſtion, *doth* Job *fear God for nought?* The queſtion may be reſolved into this Accuſation: *Job* doth not fear God for nought. The word which we tranſlate *for nought*, hath a threefold ſenſe from the Hebrew.

חנם First, Some render it *in vain*. *Doth* Job *fear God* (frustra) *in vain*. We are then ſaid to do a thing in vain, when we cannot attain the end which we propoſe in doing of it. *The* Egyptians *help in vain*, that is, they cannot procure that ſalvation and deliverance which was deſired or intended: and ſo the ſenſe here may be, *doth* Job *fear God in vain?* No, he doth not, he hath his end, he looked for riches, that he intended in taking up the ſervice of God, and that he hath attained.

Secondly, It is interpreted by, *without cauſe*, *Doth* Job *fear God without cauſe?* ſo the word is tranſlated. *Pſal.* 35.7. where *David* complaining of his enemies, ſaith, *Without cauſe have they hid for me their net in a pit, which without cauſe they have digged for my ſoul.* As if he ſhould ſay, I never gave them any cauſe why they ſhould lay ſnares for me I never wronged or hurt any of them. According to this ſenſe, when Satan ſaith, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* namely, without cauſe, it is as if he had ſaid, The Lord hath given *Job* reaſon enough, he hath given him cauſe enough to do what he doth; *Job* ſeeth reaſon in his Flocks and in his Heards in his many Children, and in his great Houſhold, in his Subſtance, and in his Honour, he ſeeth reaſon in all theſe, why he ſhould fear God, and be a very obedient ſervant, having ſo bountiful a Maſter. *Doth* Job *fear God without cauſe?*

Or Thirdly, The word is tranſlated by *Gratis* (as we expreſs it) To do a thing *gratis*, that is to do a thing without any reward, without any price, or without pay. I ſhall inſtance Scriptures wherein the word is rendred in that ſenſe, *Gen.* 29.15. *Laban* ſaith to *Jacob*, when he was come to him to ſerve him, *Thou art my kinſman, ſhouldſt thou therefore ſerve me for nought?* that is, ſhouldſt thou ſerve me *gratis*, or without wages, as he explains his meaning in the next words, *Tell me what ſhall thy wages be?* So that to do a thing for nought, is to do a thing without wages, without price. And ſo there is the ſame interpretation of the word, *Exod.* 21.11. where *Moſes* ſpeaking of the Maid that was taken into the family and was not married, ſaith, *If he do not theſe three unto her, then ſhe ſhall go out free without money*, ſhe ſhall pay nothing, ſhe ſhall go out *gratis*, or for nought. So here we may take in this ſenſe to fill up the form: doth *Job* ſerve God *gratis?* doth he ſerve God without price, or without pay? Surely no, thou haſt given him ſufficient hire, wages ſufficient for all his ſervice; *Job* doth not ſerve thee *gratis*, out of good-will and affection to thee, but he ſerveth thee for hire, becauſe thou payeſt him ſo plentifully.

So the general ſenſe of the words, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* is as if Satan had beſpoken the Lord in ſuch words as theſe: Lord thou doſt enquire of me whether *I had conſidered thy ſervant* Job? *I confeſs I have, and I muſt needs acknowledge that he is a man very diligent and zealous in thy worſhip and ſervice; neither do I wonder that he is ſo, ſeeing thou haſt out-bid all his labours and endeavours by heaps of benefits. There is no queſtion but thou mayeſt have ſervants enough upon ſuch terms, at ſuch rates as theſe: no marvail if* Job *be willing to do whatſoever thou commandeſt, whenas thou beſtoweſt upon* Job *whatſoever he deſireth. Thou ſeemeſt, as it were, to neglect all other men, and only to intend the ſafety and proſperity of thy darling* Job. *Is it any great matter, that he who hath received a flock of ſeven thouſand Sheep from thee, ſhould offer a few, ſeven, or ten, to thee in ſacrifice? Is it any great matter that he ſhould give ſome of his fleeces to cloath the poor, who hath received from thee ſo many thouſands to cloath and enrich himſelf? Is it a ſtrange thing that he ſhould feed a few, that hath five hundred yoak of Oxen? Is not* Job *well hired to work for thee? doth he fear God for nought, who hath received all theſe?*

Yet a little more diſtinctly for the opening of this expreſſion, I ſhall give you Satans ſenſe in three notable falſities or lyes, which he twiſts up together in this one ſpeech, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?*

First, That riches will make any man ſerve God, that it is no great matter to be holy when we have abundance; a man that proſpers in the world cannot chuſe but be good. This Satan implyes in theſe words, and this is an extream lye; for as there is no affliction, ſo there is no outward bleſſing can change the heart or bring it about unto God, *They did not ſerve the Lord in the abundance of all things, Deut.* 28.47. Abundance doth not draw the heart unto God: Yet Satan would infer that it doth. This might well be retorted upon Satan himſelf: Satan why didſt not thou ſerve God then? thou didſt once receive more outward bleſſings from God then ever *Job* did, the bleſſedneſs of an Angel; yet that glorious Angelical eſtate wherein thou waſt created, could not keep thee in the compaſs of obedience, thou didſt rebel in the abundance of all bleſſings, and didſt leave thy habitation; Satan thou ſhouldeſt not have ſerved God for nought. Why then didſt not thou ſerve him? thine own Apoſtacy refutes thy error in making ſo little of *Job*'s obedience, becauſe he had received ſo much.

Secondly, There is this in it; *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* Satan intimates, that God could have no ſervants for love, none unleſs he did pay them extreamly; That, God is ſuch a Maſter, and his work ſuch as none would meddle with, unleſs allured by benefits. As if Satan ſhould ſay, you have indeed one eminent ſervant, but you ſhould not have had him unleſs you had been at double coſt with him. Here is another lye Satan windeth up cloſely in this ſpeech; For the truth is, Gods ſervants follow him for himſelf: the very excellencies of God, and ſweetneſs of his wayes, are the argument and the wages by which his people are chiefly moved and hired to his ſervice. God indeed makes many promiſes to thoſe that ſerve him, but he never makes any bargains with them: His obey him freely. Satan makes bargains to hire men to his ſervice, as he did with Chriſt, *Mat.* 4.9. *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* God makes many large and gracious promiſes, but he never makes any ſuch bargain and agreement with men for their obedience.

Then there is a third ſenſe full of falſhood, which Satan caſteth upon *Job*, *Doth* Job *fear God for nought?* that is, *Job* hath a byas in all that he doth, he is carried by the gain of godlineſs, not by any delight in godlineſs, thus to ſerve God. *Job* is mercenary, he ſerveth God for hire; *Job* hath not any deſire to pleaſe God, but to benefit himſelf; *Job* doth not ſeek the glory of God, but he ſeeks his own advantage. This is the ſenſe which the words have in reference to the perſon of *Job*; that as once Satan accus'd God unto man, ſo, now he accuſeth this man unto God. He accus'd God unto man, *Gen.* 3. when God had forbidden him to eat of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil, and told him that in the day he did eat thereof he ſhould ſurely die; *You ſhall not ſurely die*, ſaith Satan, *for God knoweth, that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing good and evil.* As if he ſhould ſay, God hath not forbidden this tree, becauſe it will do you any hurt, but becauſe he would be God alone, he would have all the knowledge to himſelf, he hath an ill intent: he knows, that if you eat of it, you will be like him, as gods knowing good and evil. So here he accuſeth man to God, *Job* ſerveth you indeed, and offereth you ſacrifice, and obeyeth you, but it is that he may get by you, that he may receive more and more from you, he likes the pay, the reward, not the work; he cares not for God, but for the good that cometh from him. This is the accuſation which here the ſlanderer caſteth upon all the holy ſervices and duties of *Job*.

Thus in brief you ſee the ſenſe, I ſhall give you ſome obſervations from it.

First, *It is an argument of a moſt malignant ſpirit, when a mans actions are fair, then to accuſe his intentions.*

The Devil hath nothing to ſay againſt the actions of *Job*, but goes down into his heart and accuſeth his intentions. Malice miſ-interprets the faireſt actions, but love puts the faireſt interpretation it can upon foul actions. Malice will ſay when a man doth well, it is true he doth it, but it is for vain glory, it is to be ſeen of men, it is for his own ends, it is for gain: But when a man doth ill, love will

ſay

say, this he hath done through ignorance, or inadvertency, or violent temptations, love covers a multitude of sins as fairly as possibly it may with wisdom and with justice. How fair a cover did Christ himself put upon the foulest act that ever was in the world, upon his own crucifying, Luk.23.24. *Father forgive them, they know not what they do*; they do it indeed, but they do it ignorantly. So *Peter* afterward, *I wot* (saith he) *that through ignorance you did it, as did also your Rulers.* Love excuseth what is ill done in another, and malice accuseth what others do well. Let such men learn from hence, that in so doing they are the mouth and tongue of Satan.

Secondly, Observe, *That it is an argument of a base and an unworthy spirit to serve God for ends.*

Had this been true of *Job* in Satans sense, it had indeed spoiled and blemished all that he had done. Those that come unto God upon such terms, they are not holy, but crafty; they make a trade with God, they do not serve God; it is not *Obedientia*, but *Mercatura*, as one expresseth it, it is merchandizing with God, not obeying him. There is reward enough in God himself, there is reward enough in the very duties themselves; work and wages go together. Therefore for any to be carried out to the service of God upon outward things, argues a base and an earthy spirit. As sin is punishment enough unto it self; though there were no other punishment, though there were no hell to come after, yet to do evil is or will be hell enough unto it self: So to do good is reward enough unto it self. A Heathen Poet observed it as a brand of infamy upon the age wherein he lived, that most did repent that they had done good, or were good *gratis*, or for nought, that the price of all good actions fell in their esteem, unless they could raise themselves. If a Heathen condemn'd this, how damnable is it among Christians?

Nec facile invenies multis in millibus unum virtutem pretium qui putet esse sui.---Et gratis pœnitet esse probum. Ovid *de* Pont.

But here a Question will arise, and I shall a little debate it, because it doth further clear the main point, *May we not have respect to our own good, or unto the benefit we shall receive from God?* Is it unlawful to have an eye to our own advantage, while we do our duty? Must we serve God for nought in that strict sense, or else will God account nothing of all our services?

I shall clear that in five brief Conclusions, and these will (I suppose) fully state the sense of this Text and of this speech.

The first is this, There is no man doth, or possibly can, serve God for nought: God hath by benefits already bestowed, and by benefits promised, out-vyed and out-bid all the endeavours and services of the creature. If a man had a thousand pair of hands, a thousand tongues, and a thousand heads, and should set them all on work for God, he were never able to answer the ingagements and obligations which God hath already put upon him. Therefore this is a truth, that no man can in a strict sense serve God for nought. God is not beholden to any creature for any work or service that is done unto him.

Again secondly, this is further to be considered. The more outward blessings any one doth receive, the more he ought to serve God, and the more service God looks for at his hands. That is another Conclusion. Therefore we find still, that when God hath bestowed many outward blessings upon any, either Persons or Nations, he chargeth an acknowledgment upon them, Hos. 2. 8. *She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplied her silver and gold, which she bestowed upon* Baal; *therefore I will come and recover it*, saith *God*. You having received this, you ought to have served me with it. You see how God upbraideth *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8. *I annointed thee King of Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of* Saul, *and I gave thee thy Masters house, and thy Masters wives into thy bosom; and if this had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things. How is it then that thou hast despised the Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight?* As if he should say, the more I bestowed upon thee, the more obligations thou shouldst feel thy self under to obey me faithfully.

In the third place, it is lawful to have some respect to benefits both received and promised by way of Motive and incouragement to stir us up and quicken us, either in doing or in suffering for God. *Moses*, Heb. 11. 26. *had respect to the recompence of reward*; therefore it is not unlawful. And *Christ* himself, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Looking at the joy that was set before him.* These are examples beyond all exceptions, that respect may be had to benefits and blessings received or expected.

Fourthly, Then reference unto benefit is sinful, when we make it either the sole and only cause, or the supream and chief cause of our obedience. This makes any thing we do smell so of our selves that God abides it not: when we respect our selves, either alone or above God, God hath no respect at all to us. As Christ taxes those, *Joh. 6. You did not seek me, but the loaves.* To have respect to the loaves more then to Christ, or as much as to Christ, is to have no respect at all to Christ.

Thus when the *Sichemites*, *Gen.* 34. 23. admitted of Circumcision, and so gave up themselves as a Covenant-people to God, here was all the argument they proposed to themselves, *Shall not their cattel, and their substance, and every beast of theirs be ours?* what beasts were these *Sichemites*, what shadows of Religion, who would take upon them this badge of Religion for the gain of beasts and worldly substance? Such pure respects to our selves, defile all our services, and render our persons odious unto God.

Therefore in all our duties and holy services, we must set the glory of God in the Throne, that must be above; and then we may set our desires of Heaven and glory on the right hand, we may set the fear of hell and the avoiding of misery on the left hand, we may set our desires of enjoying outward comforts here in the world at the foot-stool. Thus we must marshal and rank respects to God and our selves. And thus we may look upon outward things, as motives and incouragements; we must not make them ends and causes; we may make them as occasions, but not as grounds of our obedience.

Lastly, We may look upon them as fruits and consequents of holiness, yea as incouragements unto holiness, but not as causes of our holiness; or we may eye these as *media*, through which to see the bounty and goodness of God, not as *objecta* on which to fix and terminate our desires. So much for the clearing of the first part of Satans answer, *Doth* Job *serve God for nought?* Wherein you see he casts dirt upon *Job*'s sincerest duties, and how we may carry our respects in the service of God to outward blessings, whether received or promised. It followeth,

Verse 10. **Hast thou not made an hedge about him and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.**

Here Satan more fully expounds himself, and what he meaneth by *Job*'s not serving God for nought. You shall see it is not for nought. He casts up the particulars of Gods benefits conferred on *Job*, and they amount to a great sum. 1. He hath an *hedge* about him, that is somewhat. 2. He hath *blessed* him, that's more. 3. He doth *increase* and *multiply*, there's the highest degree of outward happiness. Here are three degrees of Gods dealing with *Job*. These Satan reckons up in this verse, that he may make *Job*'s goodness of no account, and leave his person in no degree of acceptance with God.

Here is first *Protection* in the *hedge*, *Hast thou not made an hedge about him?*

Secondly, Here is a *Benediction* upon that which was protected. It was not a bare keeping of that from spoiling, *but it was a blessing of it.*

Thirdly, Here is also an *increase* or multiplication; he was not only blessed to keep himself and all he had in the state and plight wherein he stood, but there was a daily increase and an augmentation. Thou protectest him, thou blessest him, and thou dost increase all that he hath, *he is increased in the Land.* That is the sum and sense of the words. I shall now open them a little more distinctly.

First, He speaks here of his protection; *Hast thou not made an hedge about him?* Some render it, *Hast thou not made a wall about him?* Or, *Hast thou not made a trench about him?* It is an elegant Metaphor frequent in Scripture, shewing that as when a Field is well hedg'd, or a Town well wall'd and entrench'd, then it is safe. So when God is said to make an hedge or a wall about a man, or about a nation, the safety of that man or nation is assured by it, *Isa.* 5. 2. We have this word used, where God speaks of his vine-

vineyard, *He planted a vineyard in a very fruitful hill, and he fenced it, or he made a wall or an hedge about it.* So *verſ.* 5. when God is angry with his vineyard and will deſtroy it, it is thus expreſt, *I will* (ſaith he) *take away the hedge thereof*, that is, I will take away my protection from it. In the ſame ſenſe, *Zac.* 2. 5. *I will be* (ſaith God) *a wall of fire round about*; that is, I will be a defence unto it. So when it is ſaid here, that *God* had made an *hedge about* Job, it notes Divine Protection, he was under the wing and ſafegard of the Almighty.

Deus ipſe arx eſt quæ virum innoxium ambit.

This hedge of protection is twofold. It is ſaid God made this hedge, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* First, There is an hedge which is made immediately by the hand of God: Sometimes God makes the hedge immediately, yea ſometimes God expreſſeth himſelf to be the hedge or wall, as *Zac.* 2. 5. So *Pſal.* 18. (all thoſe are words of protection) *verſ.* 2. *Thou art my rock and my fortreſs, my deliverer, my ſtrength, my buckler, the horn of my ſalvation, and my high Tower*, &c. There God was the hedge, here God makes the hedge: God hath not put out this hedge to others to make, but he makes it himſelf; Satan obſerves as much: *Haſt not thou made an hedge about him?*

Pondus habet immenſum pronomen illud Tu, cujus ſenſus mirus ac arcanus eſt, Deum ipſum eſſe ſepem, &c. non hanc curam ſolis demandaſti angelis.

Secondly, Sometime the hedge of protection is made by the hands of others. God ſends out his Angels to guard his people, *Pſal.* 34. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.* Encamping and hedging are to the ſame purpoſe: Gods hedge is as ſtrong for ſafety as any wall, as any trench. Sometime God doth make one man to be an hedge or a defence to another. The ſervants of *Nabal* ſaid of *David*, 1 *Sam.* 25. 16. *That he had been a wall unto them both by night and day*; that is, he had been a protection and a guard to them, he had defended them all the while his Army was quartered in thoſe parts. God makes a good man to be as a wall to a wicked man. How much more will he make men and Angels to be walls and hedges for the ſecurity of his own people?

The Text further goes on and ſhews the compaſs of this hedge, what ground it takes in, how far it reacheth: and here we ſhall find that it was a very large hedg of a great extent. We know there are ſome Cities that have not only a ſingle wall, but a double wall, yea ſome ſtrong Cities and places have a treble wall about them: So we find a threefold hedg made about *Job*, and they are all expreſt here in this Text.

Here was an hedg, firſt, about his *Perſon*, that was the inmoſt hedg, or the inmoſt wall, in theſe words, *Haſt thou not made an hedg about him?* That is, an hedg about the very perſon of *Job*, an hedg about his body, leſt any ſickneſs, diſeaſes or dangers ſhould invade it; and an hedg about his ſoul, leſt ſnares and temptations ſhould take hold of, or prevail againſt that; thou haſt made an hedg about him, ſo that I cannot come at the perſon of *Job* to hurt him.

Again, Beſides this inmoſt wall, and the neereſt about his perſon, there is a ſecond wall or hedg, and that is expreſt to be about his family. *Haſt thou not made an hedg about him, and about his houſe?* By houſe, we are not to underſtand the material houſe of ſtone or timber, the edifice in which *Job* dwelt, but by the houſe we are to underſtand the houſhold, *Job* and his family, as oftentimes in Scripture, the houſe is put for the family. *This day* (ſaith Chriſt to *Zacheus*) *is ſalvation come to thy houſe*; and it is ſaid of the Jaylor, *that he believed and all his houſe*, that is, all his houſehold. So here, thou haſt made an hedg about him, and about his houſe, that is, about his family, about his children eſpecially: hence the Hebrew word for a child, for a ſon, doth ſignifie an houſe, becauſe children build up the houſe or keep up the name of their fathers. So that the houſe hedg'd about, is the children, the family and the followers and ſervants of *Job*; as if Satan ſhould ſay, thou haſt made an hedg not only about his perſon, but about all that belong unto him, about his children and ſervants, I may not meddle with them neither. There is the ſecond hedg.

Act. 16.

Jobus nihil tam v'le & exile habet, quod non cuſtodiendum in tuam ſuſceperis tutelam. Lavat. *in loc.*

Laſtly, There is an hedg or wall, *Haſt thou not made an hedg about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath?* That is about his goods, about his cattel, and about his lands: ſo far as ever any thing of *Jobs* doth extend, ſo far the hedge goeth; if *Job* have but the leaſt thing abroad, God doth make an hedge about it, he hath not the meaneſt thing belonging unto him but is under guard and protection. That is the meaning of it.

There is yet another thing to be obſerved in the words to make it more full. *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide?* It is not only ſaid, thou haſt made an hedge about him, but thou haſt made an hedge about him *on every ſide*, which is a *pleonaſm* or redundancy of ſpeech. It was a ſign of Gods care of *Job*, when he made an hedge about him; but to ſay he made an *hedge about him on every ſide*, here is expreſt an extraordinary care, that God had not left the leaſt gap for Satan, or for any annoyance, to come in unto *Job*. There is not the leaſt breach, the leaſt hole, thou haſt hedged him round about on every ſide; whereby the wonderful ſafety of *Job*, his family and eſtate, is ſet out under the protection of God. That for the opening of thoſe words.

Illud quod per circuitum vallatur, ex nulla parte poteſt pati injultum.

Per circuitum circumcirca.

Firſt, We may obſerve from the manner of this ſpeech, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* Satan ſpeaks very angerly. Queſtions as they ever expreſs quickneſs of ſpirit, ſo they, many times, expreſs much paſſion and trouble of ſpirit. Here Satan in queſtioning, ſpeaks as if he were vext, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him?* Hence note,

> *That the protection which God gives to his people and ſervants, is the vexation of Satan and of all his Inſtruments.*

It troubleth them extreamly that God doth ſo regard and hedge up his people, that they cannot come at them. No man can endure to ſee that defended, which he wiſheth were deſtroyed.

Then again, if we conſider the matter of Satans ſpeech, it is a truth, and a moſt comfortable truth, a truth full of conſolation to the people of God, *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide?* We may note hence,

> *That Satan, the father of lyes, ſometimes ſpeaks truth for his own advantage.*

For, as it is ſaid concerning *Judas* about his care for the poor, when he would have had the oyntment ſold and given to the poor, *This he ſaid* (ſaith the Text) *not that he cared for the poor, but becauſe he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.* So we may ſay here, Satan ſets forth the care of God over his people in moſt exact terms; And why doth he do this? Not that he cares to ſpeak well of God, or to advance God in the eyes of his people, by telling his people and ſervants how watchful he is over them: but he doth this only for his own advantage, that hereby he may leſſen the ſervice, and blemiſh the obedience of *Job*, becauſe he received ſo much care and love from God. As it is many times with ungodly men, they will do good, not that they care to do good, but only for ſome by-end: So Satan will ſometime ſpeak that which is true, not that he regards the truth, or that he would ſpeak a word of truth (for he hath nothing but lyes in his heart; there is a lye in his heart when there is truth in his mouth.) He never ſpeaks truth, but to deceive and do hurt by it.

Thirdly, we may obſerve this, which lieth plain in the words,

> *That the people and ſervants of God dwell in the midſt of enemies, in the midſt of dangers.*

Why elſe need there be an hedge, a wall about them? What need there be a guard about them, unleſs there were dangers about them? There are none in the world ſo envyed and ſpighted, ſo aimed at and perſecuted as the people and ſervants of God; you may ſee it by the wall that is made about them; God will not beſtow coſt and care in preſerving and guarding where there is no danger of invading. If you ſhould come to a City and ſee it mightily fortified, and ſee men make wall after wall about it, and bulwark after bulwark, you will preſently conjecture, that City ſtands in great danger, and is in the midſt of enemies: So when we read that God was fain to make wall after wall, to make hedge after hedge about the perſon, the family, the eſtate of *Job*, it ſheweth that the devil had an ill eye upon *Job* and upon all that was *Jobs*; Satan and his inſtruments, had it not been for this hedge, would quickly have fallen upon him. No godly man ſhould live a quiet moment, did not the Lord ſtretch forth his hand to ſave and protect him.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, *That God himself doth undertake the guarding and protecting of his people.*

Thou hast made an hedg about him, and about all that he hath.

God himself either doth it immediately, or he doth put those to do it to whom he giveth his power, strength and wisdom. There is no meer creature could be strength and security enough for us against our great malicious and mighty enemies, therefore God himself either is or makes the hedge. There is no strength in man but Satan can overmatch it; Satan can over-power all the strength, and out-wit all the wisdom that is in the creature. Flesh and blood are no match for a spirit. *And we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against Principalities and Powers and spiritual wickedness in high places*, Ephes. 6. 12. But if God makes an hedge about us, it is not in the power of all the enemies in the world, whether men or devils, to make a gap in it; they are sure that are under the protection of God. *They that dwell in the secret place of the most high, they shall abide (safe) under the shadow of the Almighty*, Psa. 91. 1.

Fifthly, You see here how far the hedge goeth, an hedge not only about his person and household, but about all that he hath. Take the meanest thing that *Job* hath, God protects it and hedgeth it about. Then we may note this, *That God hath an especial care, and doth exceedingly prize even the meanest thing that belongs to one of his servants.* God would not bestow an hedge about it, if he did not prize it: A man will not hedge or wall that about, which he doth not value. Psal. 116. God highly values the meanest thing that belongs to one of his servants. The *Psalmist* saith, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* But not only is the blood, the life of the Saints, precious in the sight of God, but every member, every hair of their head is precious: God numbers these. Not only are their children precious, but every thing that's called theirs, their servants, their household, their cattel, their Oxen, their Asses, whatsoever they have, is all precious in the sight of God.

Lastly, Observe, *That Satan hath a deadly spight, not only against the persons of the godly, but against every thing that belongs unto a godly man.*

Satan would not only hurt and annoy them in their persons, but in every thing that's theirs. If God (if we may so speak with reverence) should leave but a dog that belongs unto one of his servants unguarded, Satan would do it a mischief; Satan would be doing at the least thing, rather then not do mischief. If he cannot destroy our souls he would be at the very hair of our heads; therefore Christ to comfort the Disciples in the Mat. 10. 30. time of trouble, assures them, *that the very hairs of their heads were numbred:* As if he should say, God will have an account of every hair, the enemies cannot pull off a hair, but God will call them to a reckoning for it.

And it notes too that the enemies will take hold of any thing that belongs to the people of God; if they cannot get all, they will get a hair if they can, why else is it expresst that the very hairs of their heads are numbred? Those words at once intimate, *Gods care of all, and Satans malice against all.*

It followeth, *Hast thou not made an hedge about him*, &c.

Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the Land.

Thou hast blessed.] The root *Barac*, which from the word here used, doth signifie to bow the knee as well as to bless, because men used to bow the knee in blessing God or man. Blessings are carryed three wayes.

First, From man to man; one man blesseth another. There were Prophetical or extraordinary blessings, as *Isaac* blessed *Jacob*, and *Jacob* blessed his sons upon his deathbed; and there is a popular or ordinary blessing, to wish well to another is to bless another, every time we pray for our friends, we bless our friends. So man from man.

Secondly, Man blesseth God; and then man blesseth God when he praiseth God, when he takes notice of and returns thanks for the blessings received from God. *Bless the Lord O my soul*, &c. (Psal. 103. 2.) *and forget not all*, (that is,) *forget not any of his benefits.* Thankfully to remember benefits, is to bless the Lord. The Cup in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, is called the *Cup of blessing*, 1 Cor. 10. 16. because therein we commemorate the death of Christ, and render thanks to the Name of the Lord, for the unspeakable benefits conveighed to us by his blood.

Thirdly, as here in the Text, God blesseth man. Now God blesseth man, when he causeth that to prosper which man undertakes. Mans blessing unto man, it is only a wish, an optative blessing: but Gods blessing unto man is an operative blessing, as *Aquinas* expresseth it, *Dei benedicere est benefacere*, when God wisheth us good he doth us good.

So then the sense is, Thou hast blessed, that is, thou hast caused him to prosper and thrive in what he undertakes, as we shall see in the object of the blessing, *Thou hast blessed the work of his hands.*

The work of his hands.] We are not to understand it strictly for manual or hand labours, as if *Job* were a man imployed in ordinary manual services, in the labour of his hands; but according to an ordinary use of speech among the *Hebrews*, and likewise amongst other Nations, by the *work of the hands*, is understood any kind of labour, any kind of business whatsoever. As it is said of Christ, *Isaiah* 53. 10. *that the pleasure of the Lord did prosper in his hands.* Now the work that Christ had to do was not a handy work; yet it did prosper in his hands, that is, he managing and going about it, it did prosper and took success; it was effectual for the redemption and salvation of his people; This was prospering of the work in his hands. In this sense the work of the head may be called the work of the hands; the the work of the tongue, the work of the hands; any work, any business that a man doth, may be called the work of his hands. So then, *Thou hast blessed the work of his hands*, that is, thou hast blessed every thing that *Job* goeth about, as a Magistrate, as a Minister, or as a Master of a Family, in any of, in all his relations, thou hast caused his endeavours to prosper. In the 28. of *Deuteronomy*, an universal blessing is thus promised, vers. 6. *Blessed thou shalt be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out:* between those two are contained all the labours and undertakings of that people: by their going forth is meant the beginning of their labours, and by their coming in is meant the end and conclusion of their labours; so that beginning and ending, when they set their hands to a business, and when they took their hands from a business, they should be blessed, that is, they should have a thorough blessing upon all their labours. So here, *Thou hast blessed the work of his hands*, that is, every thing he putteth his hands unto.

And his substance is increased in the Land.] That is the third thing which Satan doth observe here concerning *Job*, that he was not only blessed in the estate wherein he was, but God did mightily increase and multiply his estate. *He is increased in the Land.* The word we translate *increased*, signifieth not an ordinary increase, but such an increase as breaks the bounds; it signifieth so to increase in such an abundance, as that the former place where those things were, cannot contain nor hold them, but they must seek some new place, more room for them: such a kind of increase is here meant. So the word is used, *Exod.* 1. 12. concerning the people of *Israel* when they were in *Egypt*, when they were afflicted, the Text saith, *The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew*; the same word is there used, to shew the wonderful increase of the people of *Israel* when they were in their affliction: It was such as did break the bounds. As it is with a river, the more it is stopped, the more it swelleth and breaks all the banks and bays, whatsoever is set to hinder the course of it: So much is meant in that place of *Moses*, when the people of *Israel* were stopped and hindered from their increase, they like a river did swell over all, they did increase so as they did break all the bounds. Thus of *Job*, *his substance is increased*, it is as if we should say in our Language, he had so much that there was no end of, no room for his substance: as the rich fool said, *Luk.* 12. when his estate was increased, what shall I do, my barns are not big enough? I must pull them down and build larger, that they may hold my estate. So *Jobs* estate was so increased, that the compass he had for that present could not contain it, he must make new folds for his Sheep, they increased so; and he must make greater barns for his Corn, his fields brought forth such plentiful crops; he must make larger stalls for his Oxen, he must build bigger houses for his family; *he is increased*, he is broken forth in the Land, *Gen.* 38. 29. When *Tamar* brought forth twins, the Text saith, that one put out his hand, and

פָּרַץ *In immensum excrevit.*

as he drew it back, his brother came out, and therefore they called his name *Pharez* (the same Original word that is here used) because of the breach that he made. So this signifieth the breaking forth of the estate of *Job* in the Land, he increased wonderfully and exceedingly. Thus Satan, by the most emphatical words, still heightens the dealings of God with *Job*, that he may the more debase the services of *Job* towards God.

Hebraica vox Paraz significat non solum crescere, sed præ copia & abundantia disrumpi, Merc. *Ruperunt horrea meses.* Virg.

Thou hast blessed (saith he) *the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the Land.* We may observe here,

First, That, *All success in business is from the blessing of the Lord.*

Satan speaks very good Divinity here; *Thou hast blessed:* It is from the Lord. It is said of *Joseph*, Gen. 39. 23. That, *whatsoever he did, the Lord made it to prosper.* We may do much, we may set our hands to do many things, but we cannot prosper any thing. Working is our part, but prospering is the Lords part. As it was with the Disciples, they could fish all night; but till Christ came, they could not catch; when Christ came, the blessing came; and when the blessing came, there was not only fishing, but catching; and there was catching in abundance. So it is in all the works of mens Callings; men may be labouring, and sweating, and toyling, but there is no prospering, no succeeding, till God come with a blessing. *Thou hast blessed the work of his hands.* Some take all to themselves, and thank their own labours, their own wisdom, policy and parts: Others ascribe all to their good Fortune, *&c.* We see Satan himself here preacheth a truth, that will confute them; he is more orthodox then these practical Atheists: Satan acknowledgeth, *Thou hast blessed.*

Luke 5.

Then again, we may observe, *Thou hast blessed the work of his hands.*

Every one ought to be a man of employment.

Every one ought to have some business to turn his hand unto. In the former part of this Chapter, we read of *Job's* piety and holiness, and of his zeal in the worship of God: Here now we see *Job's* care and diligence in his place and calling wherein God had set him, which is called the *work of his hands.* Every one must have two callings, and the one helpeth forward the other; *Job* feared God, and *Job* went on in the business which God set him. *Job* is said to serve God continually, and yet *Job* did work continually. These two continuals may well stand together; for both the continuals are taken for their seasons; continually, that is, seasonably, according to the several opportunities God called him to, and put into his hands. This rebukes those who have no labour, who can shew no work of their hands. It was said to *Adam*, and in him to mankind, not only as a curse, but as a command, *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread, till thou return to earth*; this is laid upon all, *In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread*: Not that every man is bound to labour in such an employment as causeth the face to sweat; but thereby is meant serious labour and employment in some honest calling: so here, the work of the hands, is taken, not strictly, but for any employment wherein *Job* was serviceable to God and his Countrey.

Gen. 3. 19.

Put these two together; *Thou hast blessed*, and, *thou hast blessed the work of his hands*; and we may observe from both,

That the Lord delighteth to bless those who are industrious.

It is seldom that there is an industrious hand, but there is a blessing of God upon it: Hence, as we find in one place, *The diligent hand maketh rich*; so in another, *The blessing of God maketh rich.* The blessing of God maketh rich, and the diligent hand maketh rich; neither of them alone, but both conjoyned; the blessing of God upon a diligent hand makes rich: a diligent hand cannot make rich, without God; and God doth not usually make rich without a diligent hand: Therefore it is said here, *that God blessed the work of* Job's *hands. Up, and be doing, and the Lord shall be with you.* God will not be with us unless we be doing. God doth not love to bless those that are idle; if we be doing, God will be blessing; his being with us, is put for his assisting and prospering of us: So it is indeed in all things. God doth not work, that we should sit still; nor bless, to the intent that we should do nothing; as it is in *Judges* 6. They proclaimed *the Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon*; those two must go together. Would you be blessed with protection? you must labour to protect your selves. Do not think that the Lord will protect you with your hands in your pockets, and your Swords rusting in your sheaths: while you labour in these times of danger, to defend your selves, you may expect defence from the Lord: How unbecoming is it for you now to stand still, and say, *Lord help us.* We must indeed *stand still* (as *Moses* counselled the people, *Exod.* 14. 13.) in regard of fear and diffidence, but beware of standing still in regard of care and diligence, as ever you hope to *see the salvation of the Lord. The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon* must be cried up at once; those two must go together.

Prov. 10. 4. Prov. 10. 22.

There is a fourth point that we must observe also from the connection of the two sentences in the Text. *Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is encreased in the Land.*

The Blessing of God where it falleth, is effectual.

If God doth but bless, we shall encrease, there is no question of it; if God doth but bless, we shall encrease mightily. *Thou hast blessed him, and he is encreased*: It is the word that followed the first blessing after the Creation, *Gen.* 1. 28. *God blessed them, and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply.* Blessing and multiplying go together: The blessing of God is a powerful blessing; *it is mighty in operation*, and carrieth all before it. You know what a strong opinion *Balak* had concerning the blessing of *Balaam*, Num. 22. 6. *I wot* (saith he) *that he whom thou blessest, is blessed, and he whom thou curses, is cursed*; a strong conceit, and but a conceit. As there are many at this day, as strongly conceited of the blessing of that *Balaam of the seven hills*, that blessing, but cursed Prophet: If they can but get a blessing from the *Pope*, they think all is safe; if they can but get a blessed Sword (such some have obtained) to do a cursed act, to cut the throat of Gods people, or of their Prince, it must needs be effectual. You know there was a blessed Standard or Banner given to them that came against us in Eighty eight: and when that Standard was lifted up, that Banner displayed, with the Popes special blessing, they accounted, nay called themselves *Invincible*: Such was their invincible ignorance, till they were taught better with *Briars and Thorns*, or rather with storms and winds fighting against them. And though they have been often cozened, yet still they retain such an esteem of the Popes blessing, that they travel and throng for it, as for their lives, more then for all manner of riches. I may say to them, as once that great Cardinal did on the same occasion; *Seeing this people will be deceived, let them be deceived.* But I desire to raise your esteem of Gods blessing; for it is a certain truth, that whom God blesseth, they are blessed: Gods blessings are fixed and effectual blessings; if he bless, we shall be blessed indeed: His blessings are irreversible blessings, as *Balaam* was forced to confess; *Behold, he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it.* If once God hath blessed, it is not in Satan, nor in all his lying Prophets, nor in all the power of the Creature to alter it, no nor to retard or hinder it for a moment.

Judg. 8. 16.

If God now give us the mercy of Protection, if he make the hedge about us, and bless us in these times, we shall be continued and established in the Land; yea, we shall be increased in the Land, we shall break forth abundantly, to the amazement of all hearers and beholders. Though *Rome* curse, though *Hell* plot, yet if *God* bless, we are safe.

This is the thing therefore that we should labour for, to be under the influence of the blessing of God. If we have but that, we have all; let means be what they will, great or little, or none at all, if God bless, he can make any thing serve the turn; any thing with a blessing, will do it; any thing with a blessing, will make us encrease; yea, make us a strong, a mighty, an invincible people; so that Satan, and his instruments, for very envie, shall be forced to acknowledge that there is a hedge about us, which they cannot break through, that there is a wall about us, which they can neither scale, nor batter with all their Engines and Artillery.

In these two Verses, we have the Answer which Satan

makes

makes to the Lords Queſtion; *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job; You ſee the ſlander that is in it, and how he doth advance the bleſſings of God upon *Job*, that he may debaſe the ſervices of *Job* toward God. Now leſt God ſhould take him off preſently with a denial, and tell him that all this is falſe; that *Job* is no ſuch man as he repreſents him to be, that he hath moſt preſumptuouſly intruded into Gods peculiar, namely, the ſecrets of the heart (for Satan had nothing to accuſe him of, that was in ſight, only he gueſſeth at his heart) leſt God, I ſay, ſhould preſently come and check him thus, for his boldneſs and impudence, both in contradicting his teſtimony, and in charging *Job* with inſincerity: Satan makes a motion in the next Verſe; *Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face*: as if Satan ſhould have ſaid, Lord, if you be not ſatisfied that thus it is with your ſervant *Job*, if you will not take my word that he is an hypocrite, and that he doth ſerve you only for ends; *do but ſtretch forth your hand*, &c. do but take away that which you have given him, and you ſhall ſee preſently he will take away that which he hath given you; if you will withdraw his riches, he will quickly withdraw his ſervice.

VERS. 11, 12.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.
And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.

THis eleventh Verſe contains Satans motion, which he ſubjoynes to his Anſwer, *ver.* 10. *But put forth thine hand now.* By his Anſwer before, he had wounded all the holy ſervices of *Job*, and now he ſeeks to wound his eſtate and poſſeſſions. His Anſwer was full of malice, and his motion is as full of cruelty. Whom before he had falſly accuſed, he (in theſe words) deſireth may be cauſleſly afflicted. *Put forth thine hand now*: As if he ſhould have ſaid, There is great queſtion concerning *Job*'s integrity, this one *Experiment* will quickly decide and determine it; *Touch all that he hath*, &c. This motion is grounded (as was before noted) upon a feared denial of his Anſwer in the former words: For there Satan had argued after this manner; That is an unſound and hypocritical profeſſion, which is grounded only upon outward benefits; but all the profeſſion of *Job* is grounded only upon outward benefits: therefore it is unſound. *Doth* Job *ſerve God for nought?* This is the ſtrength of Satans Argument. Now he perceiving the weakneſs, or rather indeed the falſeneſs, the extream Lie that was in the *Minor*, in the Aſſumption (namely, that the profeſſion and holineſs of *Job* was grounded only upon outward things) he (I ſay) perceiving that) ſeeks to confirm what he had affirm'd by his motion. If you doubt (ſaith he) whether it be ſo or no with *Job*, let that come to the trial; *touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* The ſtrength of the reaſon that lies in the motion, may be thus conceived: That profeſſion is grounded upon outward things, which a man layes down, when outward things are removed and taken away; but if thoſe outward things be removed and taken away from *Job*, he will quickly lay down his profeſſion; yea, he will take up Blaſphemy, he will curſe thee to thy face: therefore the profeſſion of *Job* is grounded upon outward things. This now is the Logick or the reaſon, upon which Satan bottoms and infers this motion, that ſo he may bring *Job* upon a further trial.

שלח **Put forth thine hand now.**] The Hebrew is, *ſend forth thy hand.* To put forth the hand, ſignifies, ſometimes to help, and ſometimes to hurt. So in *Pſal.* 144. 7. *Send forth thine hand, and deliver me.* There is a ſending forth the hand in a way of mercy. And ſo, *Acts* 4. 30. There *Peter* prayeth that Chriſt would *ſtretch forth his hand to heal.* So that ſtretching forth, or ſending forth, or putting forth the hand (for the words are all uſed in common to the ſame ſence) ſignifie to do a thing for our good and preſervation: But uſually this *putting forth, or ſtretching forth of the hand*, notes ſome affliction, ſome puniſhment. A man that ſtandeth with his hand ſtretched out, is in a poſture to ſtrike. And ſo God himſelf is often deſcribed, by having his hand ſtretched forth, when he is about to puniſh; as, in the Propheſie of *Iſaiah* divers times, *Chap.* 5. 25. *Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled againſt his people, and he hath ſtretched forth his hand againſt them, and hath ſmitten them*: And *Chap.* 9. three times; *ver.* 12. *For all this, his anger is not turned away; but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill*: and ſo at *verſ.* 17. and *verſ.* 21. *His anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill*; that is, the Lord is ſtill ſmiting and afflicting them. In *Eſther* 6. 2. Two men were found in the Chronicle, who ſought to lay (or put forth) their hands on King *Ahaſuerus*, ſcil. *they would have ſlain him.* Then the meaning of Satan here is, ſtretch forth thine hand, let him feel the weight of thine hand in ſmitings and ſore afflictions. Ezek. 6. 4.

Thy hand.] The hand of God in Scripture ſignifies, First, The purpoſe of God; as that, *Acts* 4. 28. *They have done whatſoever thy hand and thy counſel determined before to be done*; that is, whatſoever according to thy purpoſe, thou didſt determine. Secondly, The hand of God ſignifies the Spirit of God, in the mighty actings and workings of it; ſo a Spirit of Propheſie is called the hand of God, *Ezek.* 1. 3. *The hand of the Lord was there upon me*: And, *Ezek.* 37. 1. *The hand of the Lord was upon me*; that is, the Spirit of the Lord, a mighty power of Propheſie was upon me. So likewiſe a Spirit of ſtrength that is upon a man, is called the hand of God, 1 *Kings* 18. ult. *The hand of the Lord was upon Elijah, and he girt up his loins, and ran before Ahab.* Here the hand of the Lord is put for the power of the Lord; *Put forth thy hand*, that is, *put forth thy power*: and ſo the hand of the Lord is uſed often, *Iſa.* 59. 1. *The hand of the Lord is not ſhortned*; that is, the power of the Lord is not abated. The Lord hath a long hand, and his hand is alwayes of the ſame length. So, *ſtretch forth thy hand now*, that is, do thou put forth thy mighty power.

This hand of the Lords power (to clear that a little further) is taken three wayes in Scripture.

First, For his *protecting power.* There is a protecting hand; as, *John* 10. 28. *No man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand*; ſaith *Chriſt.* God hath his ſheep in his hand, and he will protect and ſafeguard them ſo, that none ſhall be able to pluck them away. This hand God put forth before for *Job.*

Again, It is put for his *correcting power*; as, *Pſal.* 32. 4. *His hand was heavy upon me*; that is, *the afflicting hand of God was heavy upon me. Let us fall into the hand of God*: (*David* choſe that, 2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) that is, into the afflicting hand of God, *rather then into the hands of men.*

Thirdly, It is put for a *revenging hand*, for a wrathful hand, by which he doth deſtroy and break in pieces thoſe who are his enemies, *Heb.* 10. 31. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. David* deſireth to fall into the hands of God, *ſcil.* into his correcting hand, becauſe he knew there was mercy; but it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God, when he cometh in wrath to take vengeance on thoſe who contemptuouſly deſpiſe his mercy, as is there expreſſed.

Now here, when Satan ſaith, *Put forth thy hand*, that is, thine hand of power; Satan intendeth not, that God ſhould put forth the hand of his power, to protect, nor barely to correct: He deſireth more then barely a correcting or chaſtiſing hand upon *Job*; he would have his revenging hand, his breaking, his deſtroying hand, as we ſhall ſee afterward.

Further, *Thy hand*; that is, Gods own hand: as if he did deſire that God himſelf would take *Job* into his own hand to chaſten and puniſh him.

The hand of God, his correcting or chaſtiſing hand, ſometimes is an immediate, and ſometimes a mediate hand. Sometimes it is immediate, when God by himſelf doth chaſten, or puniſh, or afflict, when no ſecond cauſe doth appear or intervene. So it may ſeem Satan here means, when he ſaith, *put forth thine hand*, that is, do it thine own ſelf, let no other have the handling of *Job*, but thy ſelf. God doth ſend ſuch immediate afflictions; a man is afflicted in his body, in his eſtate, and many other wayes, and he cannot find any thing in the Creature, whence it ſhould come; it is an immediate ſtroke of God, he cannot ſee how or which way, or at what door this evil came in upon him; therefore it is called a *creating of evil*, Iſa. 45. 7. *I make peace, and create evil.* Now creation is out of nothing; there is nothing

thing out of which it is wrought. So many times God bringeth evil upon a people or person, when there is no appearance of second causes, no matter out of which it is made, but it comes as a creature, formed by the only hand of God. Sometimes likewise it is called Gods hand, when it is the hand of a creature, it is Gods hand in a creatures hand; Gods hand when it is the hand of wicked men, Gods hand when it is Satans hand. So that place is translated, Psal.17.14. *Deliver my soul from the wicked which is thy Sword* (you see a wicked man is Gods Sword) *and from men which are thy hand.* So that *thy hand* may be understood of an instrument; Satan himself is Gods hand to punish in that sence, as wicked men here are said to be Gods hand; *from the men that are thy hand.* Though there be other readings of that place, some read it, *Deliver me from men by thy hand*; and others, *Deliver me from men of thy hand*: but our translation may very well carry the sence of the Original in it, *from men which are thy hand*, as *Nebuchadnezzar* that wicked King is called *Gods servant*, Jer. 43.10. *I will send and take* Nebuchadnezzar *my servant*; God speaks of him as his servant, or as his hand in the thing. So then, *Put forth thy hand*, it may be understood (I say) either immediately, do it by thy self, or do it by Instruments, strike him thy self, or give me Commission, or give others Commission to strike.

נא Particula objecrantis. There is one thing further in this expression, *Put forth thine hand now. Now.* Some read it, *Put forth thine hand a little*; and some read it, *I pray thee put fort thy hand*, The Original word is translated to all these sences; we translate it, referring to the present importunity and instancy of Satan, *Put forth thine hand now*, let not this business sleep, let it not be deferred a minute, a moment, let commission go out speedily to afflict *Job*.

And touch all that he hath.

To Touch] Notes sometime a heavy and a sore affliction, and sometime a light and a small affliction. In the Scripture we find it both wayes used. Sometime (I say) *to Touch*, doth signifie, the greatest and the sorest affliction or punishment that can be; and so *Job* doth express all the afflictions that fell upon him at the last only by touching, *Job* 19.21. *Have pitty upon me, have pitty upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* Whereas *Job* at that time lay under the sorest and heaviest affliction that could be, all his estate was gone, and his body was full of diseases, and his soul was full of horrour, and all this he doth express by this, *The hand of the Lord hath Touched me.* So *Psalm* 73.14. To be Touched signifies the greatest affliction, *All the day long* (saith *David*) *have I been plagued.* That which we translate *plagued*, is the same Original word which we translate *Touch*, in the Text; *All the day long have I been Touched*, that is, *I have been Touched with the sorest plagues*, heavy afflictions have been laid continually upon me. So that to *Touch* signifies sometimes the greatest, or the sorest strokes of trouble.

Sometimes again, we shall find it signifies only a *light affliction*, as *Gen.* 26. in two places of that Chapter, at the 11. vers. *Abimelech charged all his people, saying, he that toucheth this man or his wife, shall surely be put to death*, that is, he that doth them the least *hurt* or *wrong*. So at verse 19. in that agreement between *Abimelech* and *Isaac*, they conclude thus, *That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good.* So that to touch, notes the least ill or hurt that can be, *we have not touched thee*, that is, we have *done nothing to thee but good*: Any thing on this side doing of good to them, had been touching of them. We find the like expression in *Psal.* 105.15. where the *Psalmist* speaks of Gods extraordinary care of his people. *He suffered no man to do them wrong, he rebuked Kings for their sakes, saying, touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm. Touch not* mine annointed people, that is the meaning of that place. Though in many other places we know Princes are called the annointed of God: yet here it is meant of the people of God in general, they are Gods annoynted (as the context clearly carries it) for they have all received Unction from God, an Unction of Grace, an Unction of the Spirit, and an Unction of Priviledge. *Touch not mine annointed*, that is, do them not the least hurt. And the sence that these words may bear, *Put forth thy hand now and touch all that he hath*, might be carried, as if Satan here intended only a touch in the latter sence; Give him but the least stroak, lay but the lightest affliction upon him, do but touch him; you are so confident of your servant *Job*, that he is such a man, do but give him the least touch, and you shall see how he will discover himself. So some expound it.

He doth not say, *wound him, smite him, break him to pieces*, but *touch him* only. Neither saith he, touch him, but his: And if thou give him but a touch with the top of thy little finger, thou shalt presently find the rottenness of his heart. In that sence the word imports, an extenuation of *Jobs* sincerity, or heightning of *Jobs* hypocrisie: as if he had been so rotten in his profession, that the least touch would overthrow him, and make him discover himself to be stark nought. Like the Apples growing about *Sodom*, which have fair out-sides, but if you touch them, they moulder away into dust and ashes.

Si vel extremo digitulo levissime tangas bona sua, ejus fictum animum & simulatam probitatem manifeste comperies.

Though the words have this sence in them, and Satan carries it cunningly, expressing himself in such ambiguous terms, yet certainly Satan had a further intendment, whatsoever his language may bear: he had an intention that *Job* should be touched in the former sence, namely that he should have a touch to the quick, as we say, that he should have the sorest and deepest wound that his estate was capable of: he would have him whipt, not with cords, but with Scorpions; he would have the little finger of God heavier upon him, then his loyns upon others.

Destroy him, undo him by your *touching*. He speaks by the figure μειωσις, which is when we go less in our expressions then in our intentions, when our words are lower then our spirits: and that is proper for Satan, who is the great deceiver, the great jugler in word and deed; to desire that *Job* should only be touched, when he meant he should be utterly undone and ruined. *Touch all that he hath*, that is, all his Estate, all his Possessions, his Children, his Family, his Cattel, whatsoever belongeth unto *Job*, let all feel an undoing stroak from thy hand.

Before I come to that which he undertakes upon the affliction, I shall observe two or three things from the words, thus far opened,

Put forth Now thine hand.] We may note from that,

The extream importunity of Satan to do mischief.

He would not give God a minutes, not a moments respite to consider this thing, but do it now presently, let him presently be afflicted; he makes *haste to destroy*, he makes *haste to shed blood*; *their feet are swift to shed blood*, as the *Psalmist* speaks. So Satan, his feet are swift to shed blood; when Satan would have God to afflict us, do it presently, saith he; when Satan, would have us sin against God, do it presently, saith he; now sin, now provoke God, do not stay till the next day: but when we are called to give up our selves to God, then to morrow will serve the turn, and next year will serve to repent, yea when you are old 'tis time enough to repent; when he tempteth to do any mischief, any sin, then now, now sin; but 'tis time enough to do good hereafter, to morrow will serve for that.

Put forth now thine hand, and touch all that he hath.

It is a truth which Satan here speaks concerning the hand of God; *That if God do but touch the highest and greatest estate in the world, it will fall to pieces quickly.* There is a truth in it, take it in the easiest sence that can be, if God do but lightly touch the estate of a man, it will soon fall in pieces. God is not put to any stress to afflict and punish, as *Psal.*81.14. *I should soon have subdued their enemies, and have turned my hand against their adversaries*: God expresseth the utter over-throw of the enemies of his people, but by the *turning of a hand*: if God do but turn his hand, they are all gone presently, soon subdued; if he do but touch the might, the pomp, the greatness, the riches and the power of all those in the world that are opposers of his Church, presently they fall to the ground: A touch from the hand of God will end our Wars. If he touch the Mountains they smoak (as it is in the *Psalm*) and consume to ashes: they that are the mighty and great ones of the the World, the Mountains, by one touch of his hand fall as it were to nothing. So if God do but touch our estates, they moulder away, no creature can uphold them.

Then

Then again observe here, the cunning imposture of Satan that puts such sore, such heavy afflictions into such light and easie expressions; he cloatheth his malice, his utmost malice here in very fair words, do but touch him, saith this enemy; but you see what Satans touches are, *touch all that he hath.* Why Satan, would nothing have made a tryal, but only a touching of all? For *Job* to have lost somewhat had been a tryal, a touch: for *Job* to have lost half his flocks of Sheep, or his Oxen, had been a tryal, and no very light one neither; for *Job* to have lost a son, to have found one of his children suddenly struck dead, had been an affliction, and a heavy one too; such a touch as that might well have touched the fathers heart: Would it not serve Satan that a son should dye, or that some of his Cattel should be destroyed, but he must have all touched, *all that he hath?* The malice of Satan is unsatiable, there is nothing will serve him, unless he may devour all.

This touch of Satan, which he desireth might be laid upon *Job*, is like the touch that many have given to those, who have come into their hands amongst us; they would but touch them, but they would touch them in all; when they put forth their hands (as they pretended) in the wayes of Justice, in their Courts, they would touch men in all, touch them in their liberties by imprisonment, and touch them in their estates by extream vast fines, and touch them in their names by disgrace, touch them in their bodies by whipping and cutting, and touch them in their relations, by keeping all friends from sight of them: No moderation, no bounds, but touch them in all that they had. And (O exactness of Justice) when God came to touch that power, he gave them a touch, just after the rate and proportion of their own touches; for when those Courts and persons came to have their power and actions scanned, it was not moderating, or regulating, or restraining, or abating, or limiting their power, that satisfied, they must quite down, and be taken away. God gave them a touch, just as they touched others before: So that a man may say certainly, there is a God that judgeth the Earth. These are the touches of Satan, and the touches of mercilesse men are as like his as themselves are, they think there is nothing done unless men be undone: they never give over touching till they come to ruining.

אם לא

Touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

Some render it thus, *Touch all that he hath, if he curse thee not to thy face*: So it is word for word out of the Original, *nisi*, unless, or *Si non*, *Touch all that he hath, and see if he do not curse thee to thy face.* We give the sence of it in a direct affirmation, *Touch all that he hath, and he will*, &c. Others put the force of an imprecation to it, *Touch all that he hath, and see if he do not curse thee to thy face*; that is, as if he had said, let me never be believed, and never be trusted. Indeed Satan is so far disgraced and damned already, that he hath nothing to loose, he cannot damn himself further, he cannot wish any thing to himself worse then he already is; but yet here is a kind of execration or imprecation upon himself in it; Do this, and if he do not curse thee to thy face, let me never be accounted of, or (as many use to say) let me never be trusted; or as some wretched hellish ones, *Let me be damned*, if such or such a thing be not. There is such an *emphasis* in that manner of speaking used in the Text. But we translate it by a direct affirmation, and that is a good sence too, *Touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face*, that's certain, so saith Satan, he will do it, it is as sure as done already.

In particula si aliquid subaudiendum, ut ubi legimus, Si Davidi mentiar, si introibunt in requiem meam, hic subintelligitur, Sim vanus aut aliquid tale. Dru. *in loc.*

Curse thee.] It is the same word which is used before, *ver.* 5. *It may be my children have cursed God.* The word signifies properly to bless. It was shewed that probably in that place, it might be translated *Curse*; but in this Text there is a necessity of translating it so, seeing a clear sence cannot be made out, taking the word properly. In cursing another these three things concur. First, An ill opinion or conceit of that person. Secondly, Hatred or malice against him. Thirdly, A desire that some evil may befall him. This Satan means when he undertakes that *Job* being afflicted will Curse God. So then, to Curse God is to blaspheme God in our thoughts and words, to think or speak unworthily of God, and the wayes of God; see, if he Curse thee not to thy face, that is, see if his heart be not imbittered against thee, see if his tongue be not sharpned to wound thy honour, to reproach thy goodness, to accuse thy providence: As it is said of those, *Isa.* 8. 21. *They shall be hungry and hard bestead*; And what then? *They shall fret themselves, and Curse their King, and their God, and look upward*; that is, they shall speak basely of their King and of their God, in whom they have trusted, and whom they have followed; he speaks of those wretches that did seek to false gods, or worship the true God fallly, they shall Curse their King and their God. It is the very same, that here Satan promiseth himself and undertakes with God that *Job* will do; Do but make him hungry (saith he) and hard bestead, and he will fret himself, and Curse thee.

It was very ordinary among the Heathen to do so: when their gods did not please them, then they would Curse their gods. The Poets bring them in often raging against their gods; as he speaks of the mother that found her son dead; she calls the gods and the Stars cruel, she flies in the face of Heaven presently, who would serve such gods as these are, that thus slay my son, *&c.* Satan interprets *Job* to be a man of the same temper.

Cum complexa sui corpus miserabile nati: Atque deos, atque astra vocat crudelia mater. Virg. *Eclog.* 5. *Quem non incusavit amens hominumque deumque:* Id. *lib.* 2. Æneid.

Aquinas takes the word properly, *Touch all that he hath, and he will bless thee to thy face*: And endeavours to make out the sence thus, *Touch all that he hath*, and *thou shalt see he hath blessed thee to thy face*; he reads it in the *Preter-perfect tense*; that is, if thou afflict him, thou shalt find that all his former Religion was nothing but meer outside formality, that he served thee only from the teeth outward, served thee to thy face; he blessed thee, pray'd unto thee, and honoured thee only to thy face. He had no regard to thy worship in his heart; he did not worship thee, *ex animo*, because he loved thee, or delighted in thee, but gave thee an outward complemental blessing, because thou didst bless him outwardly. As the Apostle directs servants, *Eph.* 6. 6. *Not with eye service, as men pleasers.* Satan makes *Job* an eye-servant to God, or as if, like those of whom Christ complaineth, *Matth.* 15. in the words of the Prophet, *He had drawn nigh to God with his lips, while his heart was far from him.* The heart of *Job* hath been far enough from thee, he only blessed thee with his lips, and to thy face. Indeed this interpretation hath a fair face, but touch it by a serious examination, and it will be found without a heart. The construction of Grammar is quite against it, and for us to change the Text, and make it to speak in the Preter-perfect tense, of a thing past, whereas the words are in the Future tense, of an act to be done for the time to come, is too much boldness with Scripture. Therefore though that opinion hath a plausible sence in it, yet I shall lay it by, and take the ordinary translation, that he indeed intended this, that *Job* would break forth into blasphemous revilings of God, if God did but try him with an affliction.

And when he saith that *Job* would do it *to his face*, the meaning of it is, that he would do it openly: he will Curse thee openly, he will Curse thee boldly, he will not go behind the door to tell tales of thee, but he will speak of it before all the world, that thou art a cruel God, an unjust God, and a hard master, he will tell such tales of thee, even to thy very face. We have a like speech, *Gal.* 2. 11. *When* Peter *was come to* Antioch, *I withstood him to the face*, (saith *Paul*) that is, openly; I did not go behind his back to tell *Peter* his own, but I told him it to his face, plainly, openly before them all, (as it is explained, *vers.* 14.) *I said to* Peter *before them all*, that were then present. *Jerome* (because he would not have *Peter* receive such an open reproof, judging it would be a disparagement to *Peter*, to be rebuked by *Paul*) gives a quite contrary sence of those words of *Paul*; *I withstood him to his face*, that is, saith he, I did speak somewhat roughly to him before them, but there was no such thing in my heart, I did it but to his face, very slightly, lest I should offend the *Jews*, whose Apostle *Peter* was; and *I did it to his face*, a little, that I might satisfie the *Gentiles* who were scandalized by *Peters* walking: otherwise in my heart I had no quarrel with *Peter*: he and I agreed well enough. As if *Paul* had made but a shadow fight (*ad faciendum populum*) to delude the people. But we must not be thus wise: *I withstood him to his face*, is not opposed to withstanding him cordially, but to a withstanding of him secretly, or behind his back. So here *he will Curse thee to thy face*; that is, he will Curse thee (as the Greek Scholiast hath it) openly, and impudently; himself indeed was afraid least his sons had cursed God in their

φανερῶς, ἀναισχύντως.

hearts, but for all this his niceneſs, and ſeeming fear of his childrens ſinning in ſecret, he will Curſe thee with impudence, he will not only Curſe thee in his heart, but the Curſe will break out at his lips: *Out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth will ſpeak blaſphemy againſt God. He will Curſe thee to thy face.*

We may give ſome exemplifications, what it is to curſe God, to blaſpheme God thus to his face. You may read what it is, *Mal.* 3. 14. *Your words have been ſtout againſt me, ſaith the Lord*, you have ſpoken to my very face: why, what had they ſpoken to the Lord? *What have we ſpoken, ſay they, ſo much againſt thee? Ye have ſaid, It is vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hoſts?* &c. This is to curſe God to his face: when the wayes of God are blaſphemed, and the worſhip of God reported as unprofitable, when men ſay it is in vain to ſerve God, when they caſt aſperſions and bring up an evil name upon an holy duty, this is to blaſpheme God. They did only ſpeak againſt the ſervice of God, and they thought they had not blaſphemed God in it, *Wherein have we ſpoken againſt thee?* Yes, ſaith God, you have ſpoken againſt me, in that you have ſpoken againſt and diſcredited my wayes. So, if *Job* had ſaid the wayes of God are unprofitable, and I ſee now it is in vain to ſerve God and to fear him, this had been blaſphemy and curſing of God to his face. *David* was near upon the very brink of this blaſphemy, *Pſal.* 73. 13. when he ſaid, *I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency, becauſe* (ſaith he) *I am plagued every morning*; the judgments and afflictions that were upon him, began to make him break out thus. But he preſently befools himſelf for ſuch ſpeeches, and by that repairs God in his honour.

Secondly, To quarrel and be angry with the Providence of God, as if he were not wiſe, or juſt, or good in his diſpenſations either to particular perſons, or to the Church, this I ſay likewiſe is a curſing, a reproaching of God.

Thirdly, To curſe the ſervants and people of God, is to curſe God; If he that touches them touches God, then he that curſeth them curſeth God too. And God is curſed in any of theſe ſences two wayes, firſt, by detracting from himſelf, his worſhip, his works, or his ſervants, the good they have; or by faſtning on them, and aſperſing them with the evil which they have not.

He will curſe thee to thy face.

Obſerve two or three points from this,

First, *Satan can only gueſs at the hearts of men.*

He would undertake and enter warranty with God that *Job* would blaſpheme, if God did but touch him, but he was deceived: Satan did but conjecture at moſt, and ſpeak at a venture; If he did not lye knowingly, I am ſure he did but gueſs ignorantly. Satan knows not what is in the heart, that's God's peculiar, that's God's Cabinet. God knew there lay ſincerity in the heart of *Job* all the while, although Satan would ſtand to it, that nothing was there but hypocriſie.

Secondly, We may note, ſeeing Satan, accuſing him of hypocriſie, would have him afflicted,

That, *Affliction is the tryal and touchſtone of ſincerity.*

When God doth afflict you, then he doth bring you to the touchſtone to ſee whether you are good mettal or no, he doth bring you then to the furnace, to try whether you be droſs or gold, or what you are. *Affliction is the great diſcoverer*, That unmasks us. Satan was not out in the thing, he hit upon the righteſt way that could be; if any thing would diſcover *Job*, affliction would. Indeed ſome are diſcovered by proſperity and outward abundance. The warm Sun makes ſome caſt off that cloak, which the wind and the cold cauſed them to wrap cloſer about them. Some, when they have gotten enough from God, care not for God; and when the fiſh is caught, they lay by the net: for they do but go a fiſhing with Holineſs, and the profeſſion of Religion, and when they have their ends, there's an end of their profeſſion. Affliction and the croſs try others: Some will hold on with God as long as the Sun ſhineth, as long as it is fair weather; but if the ſtorm ariſe, if troubles come, whether perſonal or publick, then they pull in their heads, then they deny and forſake God, then they draw back from, and betray his truth; what they, ſuch and ſuch men; No, not they. Trouble makes the great tryal; bring Profeſſors to the fire, and then they ſhew their metal. This courſe Satan took with *Job*. He knew *Job* had been abundantly tryed by fulneſs and abundance, and theſe did not draw his heart from God, he muſt therefore now try another way. It is an excellent paſſage in the Church-hiſtory, concerning *Conſtantius* the father of *Conſtantine*, that to the end he might try the hearts of his Courtiers, he proclaimed, that all they who would not forſake the worſhip of the true God, ſhould be baniſhed the Court, and ſhould have heavy penalties and fines laid upon them: preſently upon this (ſaith the ſtory) all that were baſe, and came to ſerve him only for ends, went away, forſook the true God, and worſhipped Idols. By this means he found out who were the true ſervants of God, and whom he meant to make his own; ſuch as he found faithful to God, he thought would prove faithful to him. What this exploratory decree of *Conſtantius* effected in his Court, the ſame did that which the Apoſtate *Julian* ſet forth in good earneſt againſt the Chriſtians. He no ſooner cauſed it to be proclaimed, that whoſoever would not renounce the Faith, ſhould be diſcarded his ſervice, and forfeit both life and eſtate to his high diſpleaſure; But preſently upon the publication of that decree, they who were indeed Chriſtians, and they who had only the title of Chriſtians, preſented themſelves, as it were, on a common ſtage to the view of all men. Such as theſe are Willows, not Oaks. And as it was with *Naomi* and her two daughters in law, *Orphah* and *Ruth*: All the while that ſhe was *Naomi, beautiful*, and had enough, they both ſtay with her: but when once *Naomi* became *Marah*, bitter, and empty, then *Orphah* took her leave of her, but *Ruth* abides with her. Here was the tryal whether *Orphah* or *Ruth* had the ſincerer affection to *Naomi*; *Ruth* loved her mothers perſon, *Orphah* her eſtate and outward preferments. While Religion and Proſperity go together, it is hard to ſay which a man follows; but when once they are forced to a ſeparation, where the heart was, will ſoon be manifeſt. The upright in heart are like *Ruth*, whatſoever becometh of the *Goſpel*, they will be ſharers with it in the ſame condition; be it affliction, or be it proſperity; be it comfort, or be it ſorrow; be it fair weather, or be it foul; be it light, or be it darkneſs, they will take their lot with it. This is a clear truth, that, whatſoever was the cauſe of our doing a thing, that being removed we ceaſe to do it; if outward comfort and accommodations in the world, be the cauſe why we follow Chriſt in the profeſſion of his Goſpel, then as ſoon as ever they fail, our profeſſion will fail too. When zeal is kindled only with the beams of wordly hopes, when worldly hopes fail, our zeal is extinct, and our indeavour is cut off with our expectation.

Αὐτίκα ὡς ἐν χειμῶνι. εἰσὶ γὰρ ὄντες Χριστιανοὶ καὶ νομιζόμενοι φανεροὶ πᾶσιν ἐγίνοντο. Socrat. *lib.* 3. *cap.* 13.

We are next to conſider the Lords grant of Satans motion.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.

We have in this verſe. First, Gods Commiſſion, or his permiſſion unto Satan, *behold all that he hath is in thy hand.* And ſecondly, His limitation of the Commiſſion, *Only upon himſelf put not forth thine hand.* Thirdly, Satans ſpeedy execution of his Commiſſion, *So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.*

The Lord ſaid unto Satan, all that he hath is in thy hand,] *thy power*, ſo we tranſlate it: the word in the Original is, *all is in thy hand.* Satan moved that God would put forth his hand againſt *Job*; and God puts *Job* into Satans hand. Leſt Satan ſhould cavil that God had toucht him but lightly, he puts him into Satans power, and lets him do it himſelf, *who would do it throughly.* The hand (as we before noted) is put for power; and when any thing is put into the hand, it is put into the power or diſpoſition of another, *Exod.* 4. 21. *Thou ſhalt do all the wonders before* Pharaoh *which I have put into thy hand.* And *John* 3. 35. *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* This phraſe of giving or putting into the hand, is taken either for good or for evil. Sometime the putting of a thing into ones hand, is only for the managing and diſpoſing of it for good. As *Gen.* 39. 7, 8. Joſeph *ſaid that his maſter had committed all that he had into his hand*, that is, to take care

of

of it, and to order it for his masters benefit, profit, and honour: But often, to put or to give into the hand, is for evil, to do what you will with persons or things, to punish or to afflict them, *Judg.* 6. 1. God delivered the *Israelites* into the hand of *Midian*, that is, he left them to the power of the *Midianites*, to tyrannize over and vex them: And *vers.* 7. God delivered *Midian* into the hand of *Israel*, that is, he gave *Israel* power over them to destroy or afflict them. So here, he gave all into the hand of Satan, that is, he gave Satan leave to dispose of *Job*'s estate as he pleased. As if God had said to Satan; Thou hast leave to do what thou wilt with *Job*'s outward estate, spoil it, plunder it, destroy it, consume it, fire it; thou hast free leave, *All that he hath is in thy hand.*

Dan. 1. 2.

We shall note a point or two from that. You see, as soon as ever Satan had made his motion, God presently answereth, *All that he hath is in thy hand.*

It is not always an argument of Gods good-will and love, to have our motions granted.

Multi irato Deo exaudiuntur, multis propitius Deus non tribuit quod volunt, ut quod utile est tribuat, August.

Many are heard and answered out of anger, not out of love. The children of *Israel* required *meat for their lusts*, and God gave it them, he did not withhold from them their desire, they were not shortned of their lusts, they had it presently: many times his own servants call and call again, move and move again, and obtain no grant: *For this thing I besought the Lord thrice*, saith *Paul*, yet *Paul* could not have what he sought. Satan did but move once, and presently all that *Job* had was in his hand.

2 Cor. 12. 8.

But further, that which is chiefly here to be observed is,

That until God gives commission, Satan hath no power over the estates or persons of Gods people, or over any thing that belongs unto them.

Neither our persons nor our estates are subject to the will either of men or Devils. Christ must say, *All that he hath is in thy hand*, before Satan can touch a shoe-latchet: As Christ said, *Joh.* 19. 11. unto *Pilate*, when he spake so stoutly, *Knowest thou not that I have power to crucifie thee, and power to release thee?* He thought that he had all power in his hand: but Christ tells him, *Thou couldst have no power at all against me, unless it were given thee from above.* If the Devils could not go into the swine, much less can they meddle with a man, made after Gods Image, till God gives them leave. Every soul that hath an interest in Christ may suck comfort and consolation in the saddest, in the sorrowfullest day, from the breast of this truth. If Satan and wicked men cannot move till Christ saith, go; nor wound, till Christ saith, strike; nor spoil, nor kill, till Christ saith, their estates, their lives are in your power: surely Christ will not speak a word to their hurt, whom he loves, nor will he ever suffer his enemies to do a real dammage to his friends. Besides it may fill the soul with unspeakable joy, to remember, that while a man is suffering, the will of Christ is a doing.

Thirdly, Satan doth very wickedly (according to his nature,) in moving, that *Job* may be afflicted. He moveth in malice and in spight: God knew what his heart and intent was, and yet grants it. We may note from hence,

That which Satan and evil men desire sinfully, the Lord grants holily.

Unus idemque spiritus & Domini appellatur & malus: Domini per licentiam potestatis justæ! malus per desiderium voluntatis injustæ, Greg.

The will of God, and the will of Satan, joyned both in the same thing; yet they were as different as light and darkness, their ends were as different as their natures. Though it were the same thing they both willed, yet there was an infinite distance between them in willing it. The will of Satan was sinful, but the power given Satan was just: Why? Because his will was from himself, but his power was from the will of God. Satan had no power to do mischief but what God gave him; but his will to do mischief was from himself. Therefore we find that the same spirit is said to be an evil spirit, and to be a spirit from the Lord, and yet the Lord doth not partake at all in the evil of the spirit, as 1 *Sam.* 16. 14. *The Spirit of the Lord departed from* Saul, *and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.* An evil spirit from the Lord; how was it an evil spirit, if it were from the Lord? can the Lord send forth an evil from himself who is only good? In that he was evil, that was from his own will; but that he had power to trouble *Saul*, that was from the Lord: So here, Satans will and intent were most wicked, these were from himself; his power to afflict *Job* was from God, and that was good. Satan willeth *Job* should be afflicted for his destruction; God willeth it only for his tryal and probation. Satan desireth it, that God may be blasphemed; but God willeth it, that himself might be glorified. Satan willeth it, that so others in his example might be scandalized and disheartned from entring into the service of God, seeing how ill he sped; but God willeth it, that others might be strengthened and incouraged to enter into his service, beholding a man under such heavy pressures, and yet not speaking ill of God or of his wayes. Satan willeth it, hoping thereby *Job* would discover his hypocrisie; but God willeth it, knowing that he would therein discover his integrity. So then, though the same thing was willed, yet there was a vast disproportion in their ends and intentions; and though the power by which Satan did afflict *Job* was from God, yet the evil intent with which he afflicted him was from himself. Thus we see how God without any stain or touch of evil grants this, which Satan did most wickedly desire. It followeth,

Satanæ voluntas semper iniqua est, sed nunquam potestas injusta, Greg. *Deus adeo bonus est ut nullo modo mala permitterit nisi inde majora bona elicitaturus esset.*

Only upon himself thou shalt not put forth thy hand.

God gives a Commission, but it is with a limitation, there is a restriction in it; *Only upon himself*, &c. that is, not upon his person, not his body, thou shalt not afflict that with diseases; not his soul, thou shalt not afflict that with temptations. Hence note,

That God himself sets bounds to the afflictions of his people.

He limits out how far every affliction shall go, and how far every instrument shall prevail: as he doth with the Sea, *Hitherto* (saith he) *thou shalt come, and no further, here thou shalt stop thy proud waves*; so he saith to all the afflictions of single persons, or whole Nations, hither you shall come, and no further. *Only upon himself thou shalt not put forth thine hand.* This limitation respects; First, The degree or measure, thus far you shall afflict, that is, in such a degree, to such a height, and no higher. Secondly, It respects the time, thus far, that is, thus long, so many years, or so many dayes you shall have power, and no longer. God leaves not either the measure, or the time, the degree or the continuance of any affliction in the hand of Satan or his adherents: We read (*Rev.* 6. 10.) *That the souls under the Altar cry, How long Lord? how long?* They cry to God *how long?* they knew that he only had the time in his hand, he only could tell how long, and it should be as long as he pleased, *How long Lord?* They cryed not to cruel tyrants, how long will ye persecute? but Lord, how long will it be before thou come to revenge? And so *David*, Psal. 31. 15. *My time it is in thy hand*, speaking of his afflictions. There is no affliction but it is in the hand of God, for the continuance of it, as well as for the manner of it; and as no enemy, man or devil, can make thy cross greater, or longer, or heavier, so no friend, man or Angel, can make thy cross lighter, or lesser, or shorter then God himself hath appointed; *Only upon himself shalt thou not put forth thine hand*, thou shalt not move an inch further, not a hairs breadth further. As our afflictions for the matter of them are by the will of God, (as the Apostle speaks, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *While you suffer* (saith he) *according to the will of God:* those words, *according to the will of God*, note not only the righteousness of suffering, that it must be in a good cause, but also the spring from whence those sufferings come, they are *Ex voluntate Dei*, so Mr. *Beza* translates it, they are out of the will of God. Now, I say, as they are out of the will of God, or from the will of God, springing from his will, and flowing from his dispensation of things in the matter of them) so also in every circumstance; God himself gives thy cross length, and breadth, and thickness; he fills thy cup of sorrow, he directeth how many drops to a drop, shall be put into it thou shalt not have a drop more then God prescribes, and (which is more comfortable) knows will be for thy good.

Secondly, Observe, *That Satan is boundless in his malice toward the people of God.*

If God did not set him bounds, he would set himself no bounds, therefore saith God unto him, *Only upon himself*, &c. He had a mind to have gone further, he would have been upon *Job* himself, as well as upon his estate, if God had not stop'd and curb'd him. Therefore the Apostle gives that

aſſurance for the comfort of the people of God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *God* (ſaith he) *is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able:* As if he ſhould ſay, Satan would with all his heart lay more upon you, then you are able to bear; Satan would break your backs if he were let alone, but God will not ſuffer it. Satan hath a boundleſs malice againſt the people of God. Some obſerve this from his name *Leviathan*, Iſa. 27. 1. *In that day the Lord with his great and ſtrong Sword ſhall puniſh Leviathan the piercing Serpent. Leviathan* is put there for Satan, and for all the inſtruments of Satan. Now *Leviathan* ſignifieth in the Hebrew an *augmentation*, an *addition*, or an *increaſe*: And Satan is ſo called, becauſe (ſay they) he ever deſires to lay more burdens upon, to increaſe the afflictions, troubles and temptations of Gods people, he never thinks he hath done enough againſt them. His thirſt to work miſchief is never quenched, but ſtill he deſires to do more, he would fain have his Commiſſion inlarged to do more miſchief in the world. Therefore God is ſaid not to ſtrike after their ſtroak, in the ſeventh verſe of that 27. of *Iſa. Hath he ſmitten him as he ſmit thoſe that ſmote him?* In the Hebrew it is, *He hath not ſmitten him according to the ſtroak of thoſe that ſmote him: according to their ſtroak*, noting that the ſtroak of *Leviathan*, and the ſtroak of his inſtruments, is an unmeaſurable ſtroak, a boundleſs ſtroak, they would never give over ſtriking: They think the wound is never deep enough, nor blood ſhed enough; but ſaith the Prophet, verſ. 8. *God doth it in meaſure*, ſo that he oppoſeth their ſtriking to Gods afflicting by the meaſure of it. God keepeth his afflictions in ſuch a bound and compaſs, he afflicts in meaſure; but Satans ſtroak, and the ſtroaks of wicked men, are without all meaſure, that is, without all moderation: unleſs God ſtop them, they would never make an end.

Dicitur Leviathan, *i.e. Additamentum ſive augmentum, nam nullo noſtro malo contentus eſt, nullam poteſtatem ſibi ſatis eſſe putat, plus ſibi poteſtatis addi nobis malorum plus inferri ſemper poſtulat.* Pineda.

Laſtly, Obſerve how Satan is by this proved a deceiver, he intended more then he ſpake; you may ſee it plainly in this, becauſe God put a reſtraint upon him. *Touch all that he hath*, ſaith Satan; that referred to his poſſeſſions and outward eſtate, as if that had been the mind of Satan in the motion, do but afflict him in his outward eſtate, I deſire no more to make this trial: now when the Lord ſaith, *All that he hath is in thy hand*, there he grants him the motion in the letter of it: but the Lord God ſaw that Satan had a further reach, when he ſaid, *Touch all that he hath*, which words ſeem to extend no further then his eſtate; but had not God limited and reſtrained him, he by an indefinite grant to his motion, had likewiſe fallen upon his perſon, that was the great morſel he gaped after all this while, he would have been doing with *Job* himſelf, elſe there was no need of this limitation, *Only upon himſelf put not forth thy hand*; Satans fingers itcht to be medling with *Job*, though his words called for what he had, not for himſelf.

And Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord.

As ſoon as he hath leave, and his Commiſſion, he is gone preſently, *He went out from the preſence of the Lord.* The word is, he went out from the face of the Lord: Now the face of the Lord in Scripture it is taken ſometimes for the eſſential glory of God, that inacceſſible Majeſty of God, *Exod.* 33. ult. *Thou canſt not behold my face.* Sometimes the face of God is put for the favour and love of God, *Cauſe thy face to ſhine upon thy Sanctuary which is deſolate*, Dan. 9. 17. *and cauſe thy face to ſhine upon thy ſervant*: So in many other places the face of God is put for the favour of God, becauſe as the favour and love of a man is ſeen and diſcovered in his face, ſo there is ſomewhat in thoſe dealings of God which diſcover God; he is ſaid to make his face to ſhine upon his people, when he doth diſcover by any act of his, that he loves and favours them; that is the ſhining of his face upon them. The face interprets the heart, and ſhews the meaning of the ſpirit: ſo in thoſe things which interpret ſomewhat of the love of God to us, God is ſaid to make his face ſhine upon us. On the other ſide, the face of God is put ſometimes for the anger and wrath of God, becauſe anger is ſeen in the face too; ſo in thoſe things by which God diſcovereth his anger, he is ſaid to ſet his face againſt men: there is an expreſs place for it in this ſenſe, *Lam.* 4. 16. *The anger of the Lord* (the Hebrew is, *the face of the Lord*) *hath divided them*; that is, the Lord hath done ſuch things as have the character of anger upon them, that do repreſent and hold forth nothing but the anger of the Lord unto a people, and that anger of the Lord is called the face of the Lord unto a people. Thirdly, by the face of the Lord in Scripture, we may underſtand the ordinances and the worſhip of God, becauſe in them and by them, God is revealed, manifeſted and known to his people, as a man is known by his face: So in the Old Teſtament, coming to God in thoſe inſtitutions, was called *appearing before God*, becauſe in them God had promiſed to manifeſt himſelf unto his people. Laſtly, the face of God is put for the common and general preſence of God in the world, by which he filleth heaven and earth, *Pſal.* 139. 7. *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?*

Index animi vultus.

Now when it is ſaid that *Satan went forth from the face of God*, or *from the preſence of God*, it cannot be underſtood in the firſt or in the ſecond ſenſe, for he cannot ſo come into the preſence of God, or before the face of God: before his face of glory, or before his face of favour, Satan never came, nor ever ſhall. And as the preſence of God is taken for his worſhip; ſo Satan cares not to come into his preſence. Laſtly, as the face of God ſignifies his common and general preſence in the world, ſo Satan cannot poſſibly go out from his face, *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?* Pſal. 139. nor men, nor devils are able to go out of the preſence of the Lord, in that ſenſe, for he filleth heaven and earth.

Then theſe words, *He went out from the preſence of the Lord*, are ſpoken after the manner of men. When a ſervant cometh to his Maſter to receive Commiſſion to do ſome buſineſs, and hath his errand given him, then he goeth out from the preſence of his Maſter about his buſineſs. So Satan comes here upon a buſineſs unto God, he makes a motion, and deſireth to have ſuch power put into his hand, to do ſuch and ſuch things: the Lord grants it, and ſo ſoon as ever he had his diſpatch, he goeth out of the preſence of the Lord. So that the meaning is only this, that Satan left off ſpeaking with God, left off moving God any further at that time, and went out to execute that which he got commiſſion to do, as ſervants go out from the preſence of their Maſters, when they have received warrant or direction what to do. While a ſervant is in expectation of his meſſage or errand, ſo long his eyes are upon his Maſter, *Our eyes wait upon thee, O God, as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hands of their Maſters*, Pſal. 123. 3. The eyes of ſervants wait upon the face of their Maſter till they have received their meſſage, and then they go out from their preſence.

Hominum more loquitur, à quibus ſervi exeunt, ut mandata exequantur quæ ab illis acceperunt.

It notes the ſpeed that Satan makes when he receives power from God to afflict, or to chaſten and try any of his children, he makes no ſtay, preſently he goeth out from the preſence of the Lord. Satan is ſpeedy and active in executing any power that is committed unto him againſt the people of God, againſt any particular member, or againſt the Church in general: As ſoon as ever he hath but his Commiſſion to afflict, he is gone about it inſtantly: As the good Angels in Heaven are deſcribed to have wings, becauſe as ſoon as ever they have received a command from God, they are upon the wing, they fly, as it were, to fulfil the will of God; and in that ſenſe go out of his preſence: So Satan and the wicked Angels are upon the wing too in that ſenſe, as ſoon as ever they have received power, they preſently put it in execution.

And we may in this make Satan himſelf our pattern. As we pray that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven, in heaven by the good Angels: So in this ſenſe (I ſay) we may deſire that we may do the will of God with as much ſpeed as the evil Angels. It is not unwarrantable to learn from Satan ſpeedily to be doing about the will of God.

VERS. 13, 14, 15.

And there was a day when his ſons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldeſt brothers houſe.
And there came a meſſenger unto Job, and ſaid, The Oxen were plowing, and the aſſes feeding beſides them.
And the Sabeans fell upon them, &c.

IN the former context we ſhewed you the affliction of *Job*, moved by Satan, and permitted by God, *Touch all that*

that he hath, is Satans motion: *All that he hath is in thine hand* is Gods permission. From this 13. verse to the end of the 19. the afflictions of *Job* are particularly described; and we may observe six particulars in the Context concerning his afflictions.

First, The time or season of his afflictions, *And there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brothers house*, verse. 13.

Secondly, The instruments or the means of his afflictions. Satan who undertook the afflicting of *Job*, stands as it were behind the door, he doth not appear in it, but sets on others. His instruments were first cruel and bloody minded men, the *Sabeans*, verse. 15. The *Chaldeans*, verse. 17. Secondly, those active creatures, devouring fire and stormy winds; the *fire*, verse. 16. the *wind*, verse. 19.

Thirdly, The matter of his affliction, or in what he was afflicted, it was in his outward estate.

Fourthly, The variety of his afflictions: he was not smitten in some one thing, in some one part of his outward estate, but he was afflicted in all; his Oxen, his Asses, and his Camels were violently taken away, his sheep burnt up by the fire, his sons and his daughters over-whelmed and crushed by the fall of an house, all his servants attending upon these, slain, consumed, destroyed, excepting only one from every stroke, to be the sad relator or messenger of these calamities.

Fifthly, The suddenness of his afflictions, they came all upon him in one day.

Sixthly, The unceassantness of the report of these afflictions, the sound of them all was in his ears at once: as they were all brought upon him in one day, so they are all told him in one hour, yea by the story it doth appear, there were but very few moments between the first and the last. For the Text saith, that no sooner had one messenger ended his doleful news, but another begins, nay, they did not stay so long as to let one another make an end; but the Text saith, *While the former was yet speaking, there came another and said*; and so while the next was yet speaking, there came another and said; *and while he was yet speaking, another*, &c. So that Satan did not give *Job* so much as the least minute of intermission to breath a while, or recollect himself. His troubles both in the acting and in the reporting, were close linked together, like a chain, one with another, and he within them all *fast bound, and yet free.*

These are observable, thorough the whole Context concerning this great affliction of *Job*. Now we will consider the afflictions themselves, their several parts, and open the words in which they are presented to us.

Vers. 13. **And there was a day when his sons and daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldest brothers house.**

Eccles. 3.1. **And there was a day.**] *To every thing there is a season* (saith *Solomon*) *and a time for every purpose under the Sun.* God hath a time for his purposes, God hath his day: Man hath a time for his purposes; and so hath Satan: any day will not serve his turn, he picks and chooseth. יום *There was a day*, it intimates a day extraordinary, and there is an expres addition in the Original which puts an *emphasis* upon it, and makes it more then a day, there was *that day*, or that *special day*: So it is used 2 *Kin.* 4.8. *And it fell on a day that* Elisha *passed to Shunem*, or upon that day, a notable day wherein so many great things were done.

But what day was this? It is explained in the words, in the latter part of the verse. It was a notable day, for it was a day, or that day, *When his sons and his daughters were eating, and drinking wine in their eldest brothers house.*

There are three things in those words, which prove that this was an extraordinary day.

First, It was a feasting day, and feasting dayes are extraordinary dayes.

Secondly, It was an extraordinary, not an ordinary feasting day; For it is said, *they were eating, and drinking wine.* In the beginning of the Chapter (where the feasts of of *Jobs* children are described) it is said only, *That his sons went every one their day, to eat, and to drink*: But here it is said, that they did *eat, and drink wine*; which notes an extraordinary feast. For still in Scripture, when we Esther 5.6. read of a banquet of wine, or a feast of wine, an extraordinary feast is meant. Queen *Esther* invited the King and *Haman to a banquet of wine*; not that there was nothing but wine at the banquet, but that addition doth imply, that it was a plentiful banquet, a solemn banquet. It is John 2.4. more to make a *banquet of wine*, then to make a *banquet*, though scarce any banquet is made without wine. So when there wanted wine, the solemnity and glory of the feast was thought to be blemished, *They have no wine*, saith the mother of Christ unto him at the marriage feast in *Cana*. And when the Spouse would set forth the wonderfulness of spiritual delights, which she had from Christ, she expres- Cant. 2.4. seth it thus, *He brought me into the banqueting house*, the Hebrew word is, *he brought me into the house of wine*; the house of wine notes extraordinary spiritual refreshing. What a banquet had the Spouse for her soul there? Christ called her to eat and drink abundantly, to be filled with his love. See the like *Isa.* 25. 6. So *Jobs* children were eating, and drinking wine, *&c.* they were at a plentiful and and solemn feast that day.

Thirdly, It was a day of feasting in their *eldest brothers house*, that is another thing which proves it was an extraordinary feast day. It was a feast, and a feast of wine, and a feast of wine in their eldest brothers house, who had a larger estate, a fuller portion, and to answer the dignity of his primogeniture, ought to make a more solemn feast then the rest did: This was the day that Satan picks out and chooses to bring all these sad afflictions upon *Job*, an ordinary day would not serve his turn; without doubt this was not the immediate day or time, after which he got that Commission from God, *All that he hath is in thine hand*; Satan went away, he would have been at it as soon as he could, but yet he waiteth for a special time wherein he might do it with greatest advantage: and that is the point I shall observe from this.

That Satan observeth and watcheth his time to fasten his temptations most strongly upon the soul.

He watcheth a day, *there was a day*, and there was not a day in the whole year, upon which he could have done it with greater advantage then upon that day. As the mercies of God are exceedingly endeared to us by the season in which they come to us: When they come to us in our special need, how sweet is a mercy then! And as our obedience is exceedingly commended to the acceptation of God, when it is upon a fit day, when it is on the day, wherein he calls for and expects it: And as our sins are exceedingly aggravated, by the season and time wherein they are committed: What, sin upon this day? A day of trouble, 2 Kin. 5.26. a day of humiliation? As *Elisha* rebuked *Gehazi*, *Is this a time to receive money, and to receive garments?* &c. Is this a time for thy heart to run out sinfully after the world? So likewise the temptations of Satan and the afflictions which he brings upon the servants of God, are exceedingly imbittered by the season; and he knows well enough, what seasons will make them most bitter. And what can more imbitter a cup of sorrow, then to have it brought us upon a day of rejoycing. *Solomon* tells us, that *as he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that sings a song to an heavy heart.* If joy be troublesome in our sorrows, how troublesome is sorrow in the midst of our joyes, *Prov.* 25. 20. Then, Satan could never have found out such a time as this: Must he needs be afflicting the Father, when the children were a feasting? Could he find out no other time but this? Must his tears be mingled with their wine? Must the childrens rejoycing day be the Fathers mourning day? Must Satan needs shew his malice against the Father, when the children were shewing their love one to another? It was a love-feast. Thus he did with Christ; it is observed that when Christ had fasted forty dayes and forty nights, and afterwards was an hungry, then the Tempter came, he layes hold of this advantage, he would not come till he was hungry, to perswade him to turn stones into bread. What a strength had this temptation from the season? Who would not make bread for himself if he can, when he is hungry? Had Christ been full, there had not been such an edge upon, such a weight in the temptation. How many doth Satan provoke to turn stones into bread, when he comes to them in their hunger? Thou art in a strait, like to starve and perish, turn stones into bread, that is, procure thy self meat and provision by unlawful and sinful wayes; This is indeed to turn stones into bread.

So here at this time when *Job* was rejoycing (as doubtless he did) to see the love and unity of his children; now at this time Satan attempts to turn their bread into a stone, to bruise and break the heart of their tender Father. *Afflictions press most when they are least expected.*

Let us observe then this mixture of malice and cunning in Satan, in choosing his time. To carry a man from one extremity to another, puts him upon the greatest extremity: To make the day of a mans greatest rejoycing to be the day of his deepest sorrows, this is cutting, if not killing sorrow. To be brought from extream sorrow to extream joy suddenly, doth rather amaze then comfort the spirit of a man: It is said that *when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, the people were like them that dream*; the change was so great, so sudden, that they were rather astonished and amazed then comforted with it, for a while. So, much more to be hurried from extream joy to extream sorrow, from the borders of comfort to the brink of death on a sudden, is not so much to afflict a man, as to confound and distract him. This course Satan takes with *Job*.

Psal. 126. 1.

It were well if we could be wise in this respect to imitate Satan, to choose out our day to do good when there is greatest probability of success, as he chose out his day to do mischief: It is the Apostles rule, *as you have opportunity, do good*; if we could be wise to lay hold upon opportunities, it would be a wonderful advantage to us. *As a word fitly spoken is a word upon the wheel*; so a work fitly done, is a work upon the wheel, it goeth on, takes upon the heart both of God and man. Let us consider whether now we have not a season, whether this be not a day that holds forth to us a glorious opportunity. Surely we may present this day unto you, as a day to be doing in. Let us therefore be as quick in this our day to do good, as Satan was in that day to do hurt. This is a day wherein great things are a doing, and grievous things are a suffering by many of our brethren, therefore you should be working this day, make a day on't. This is a day in which sons of *Belial*, men that will not bear Christs yoke, are combining to break it, and to cast his cords from them. Then joyn this day, to help Christ; else, as *Mordecai* said to *Esther*, *If thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time* (this was a day for *Esther* to work in) *then shall their enlargement and deliverance arise to the* Jews *from another place, but thou and thy fathers house shall be destroyed:* So I may say to you in reference to the present opportunity, if you altogether hold your peace, hold your purses, and hold your hands at this time, at such a day as this, enlargement will come to the Church some other way; but you may be destroyed, who think to hold & keep your peace either by saying or doing nothing: If ever you will appear, this is a day to appear in to do good. Let us be wise to manage and improve our day; that it may never be said of us, as our Lord Christ did of *Jerusalem*: *If ye had known, even ye, in this your day, the things which belong unto your peace*, Luke 19. 42. It is a sadder thing to have had a season and not to know it, (*sc.* not to use it,) then not to have had it. *Solomon* tells us, *Eccles.* 8. 6. That, *Because to every purpose there is a time and judgment, therefore the misery of man is great upon him.* Misery cannot be great to a man, because there is a time for every purpose; but because men are either so blind that they cannot see, or so sluggish that they will not make use of the proper time for every purpose. Thus the Preacher himself expounds it, *Chap.* 9. 12. *For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds are taken in a snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.* Consider what *Solomons* experience taught him: Let not your inadvertencie of these times, make you a new experiment of that ancient truth, and leave men that should be wise, especially that pretend to wisdom, to be numbred among, and compared with a silly bird, a silent fish.

Gal. 6. 10.

Esth. 4. 14.

Then again, Forasmuch as it was the day of their great feast, of their feast with wine, upon which this great affliction assaulted *Job*; Observe,

That, *The fairest and clearest day of our outward comfort may be clouded and overcast before the evening.*

It was a fair day as ever began in *Job*'s family, a feast, and a feast with wine, and that, in the eldest Brothers house, and yet all was darkness before night.

This is true in reference to ungodly men, great and terrible judgments fall suddenly upon them; their light is turned into darkness in a moment, as Christ compares it to the dayes of *Noah*, and the dayes of *Lot*: *As it was* (saith he) *in the dayes of Noah, they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entred into the Ark, and the Flood came and destroyed them all. And as it was in the dayes of Lot*, &c. Both which, are in two words set out by the Apostle: *When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh.* Thus it is with ungodly men, their Sun often sets at noon; when they say, yea, when they conclude all's well, then judgment mixt with wrath, is at the door. This is a truth also in reference unto godly men, and the Churches of God, all their outward comforts may be clouded in a day, while they are eating and drinking, not sinfully, but in a holy manner; suppose, as the Apostle adviseth, *to the glory of God:* yet even at that time, all may presently be taken away. And therefore, as the Apostle adviseth, *Rejoyce as if you rejoyced not* in the Creature, and eat as if you did not eat, and buy as if you possessed not; Why? *For the fashion of this world*, and the Scheme of this world *passeth away*; you see it did with *Job*: in what a goodly fashion was his worldly estate in the morning? how was it drest and adorned in perfect beauty, in all its excellencies (as we heard it before described) yet, before night all the fashion of it past away, and the beauty of it was quite blasted: therefore, you that have great Estates, and good Estates, Estates well gotten, and well governed, be not high-minded, trust not in uncertain riches; if riches encrease, and if they increase in a right way, *yet set not your hearts upon them*; for the fashion of worldly things quickly passeth away. Riches make themselves wings to flie away, when thou art making doors and locks, bolts and bars, to keep them in. That for the Time, in *Verse* 13.

1 Thes. 5. 3.

1 Cor. 10. 31.

1 Cor. 7. 30.

1 Tim. 6. 17.

Psal. 62. 10.

But what did Satan upon this day? That is set down in *ver.* 14, and so on.

And there came a Messenger unto Job, and said, the Oxen were plowing, and the Asses feeding beside them.

There came a messenger.] The Jewish Rabbins, and some of the Fathers tell us, that these Messengers were Devils, evil Spirits, in the likeness of men: But surely the Opinion hath little likeness with truth; therefore with *Beza*, I lay it by, and reject it amongst the Tales of the Rabbins: These Messengers were really the escaped servants of *Job*, as we shall see afterward.

Now the Messenger bespeaks *Job* thus, *The Oxen were plowing*, they were hard at their work; *and the Asses were feeding besides them*: The word in the Hebrew is this, *the Asses were feeding at their hand*, or at hand. To be at hand, doth note nearness: In our Language we say, such a thing is at hand, or such a man is at hand, the day of our fear is at hand, when we mean, they are near: *The Lord is at hand*, *Phil.* 4. 5. *sc.* nigh unto us for our help. So, 2 *Thes.* 2. 2. It is applied also to nearness of place, as well as of time, *Neh.* 3. 2. where the building of the wall of *Jerusalem* is described, it is said, *Next unto him built the men of Jericho*, the Hebrew is, *at the hand of him built the men of* Jericho; that is, *next to him in place.*

Now the Messenger describeth all in such a posture, *The Oxen were plowing, and the Asses feeding*; by this to assure *Job* of the care and diligence of his servants about his business, for the securing of his Cattel, and improving of his ground. As if he should have said, This sad affliction which is come upon thee, did not come through our negligence or improvidence, we were about our business, according to our several places; *the Oxen were plowing, and the Asses were feeding by them*; they were not carelesly left to danger, but our eye was upon them; yet notwithstanding they were all surprized and taken away.

From this relation of the posture of *Job*'s Servants and Cattel at the time when this affliction fell upon them, we may observe thus much,

That, *All our care and diligence cannot secure outward things unto us.*

Afflictions may take us in the midst of our best and most honest endeavours. A man may be looking to, and ordering his estate, and yet at the very time, while his eye is upon it,

it, he may see it take its flight like an Eagle towards heaven; while he is ordering of it, he may see disorder and confusion coming upon it; while he is setling of it by honest care, he may quickly see it unsetled, removed, and all broken in pieces, as it was here with *Job*; he was in a very good way, his servants were honestly employed, but suddenly all is gone: the Oxen were taken away, and the Asses that fed by them. But who made this attempt? The Messenger informs that in the next words:

And the Sabeans fell upon them.

ויפל From נפל

The Sabeans. The Hebrew is, *Saba fell upon them*; the countrey put for the people, *Saba* for the *Sabeans*: As we use to say, *Spain* made war, and *France* made war; that is, the *Spaniards* made war, or the *French* made war; so it is such an expression, *Saba* fell upon them, that is, the people inhabiting *Saba*.

Fell upon them. The word noteth a mighty violence; they came upon them as from above, they come powring down upon them like a storm. There is such a phrase in war, when they go violently upon a place, they are said to storm the place, to storm the gates of a Castle, or of a City; so here, they fell upon them, that is, they came violently upon them like a storm. In *Prov.* 1. 27. Destruction is described to come upon wicked men *like a whirlwind*.

Sabæos autem Arabas intelligit, qui latrociniis dediti erant; unde posterior ætas eos Saracenos appellavit, non a Sara, ut quidam somniant; sed a Saras, verbo Arabico, quod furari & latrocinari significat. Unde Saric, Fur, Latro. Drus. in loc.

The *Sabeans* were a people (as is concluded by most Interpreters) inhabiting *Arabia Fœlix*, near the Countrey where *Job* dwelt: And for the manners of this people, it is observed by Historians, that they were a people famous only for robberies, a people that lived by pillage and plundering of their neighbours; such a people they were: These *Sabeans* fell upon them, *they took away thy Cattel, and have slain thy servants with the edge of the Sword.*

Here it may be questioned, how or why these *Sabeans* at such a time should fall upon the estate of *Job*? What hurt had *Job* done them? *Job* lived in a fair way with all his neighbours, and kept good quarter and correspondence with them, he was not a man of war or contention; how cometh it to pass that these fell upon *Job*'s estate, and took it away, and upon that day too, in this nick of time?

2 Sam. 14. 19. As when the Widow of *Tekoah* had told a fair tale to *David*, about the bringing back of *Absolom*, the King asked her, *Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?* So when you see such men, *Sabeans* and *Caldeans* falling upon the estate of *Job*, you may demand, *Is not the hand of Satan in all this?* Yes no doubt. These *Sabeans* fall upon *Job*'s estate, but Satan first fell upon the *Sabeans*, and by strong temptations provoked them to do this service.

But how could he prevail upon the *Sabeans*, that they should come and do his business now at this time?

2 Tim. 2. 26. The Apostle telleth us, *that wicked men are led captive by Satan at his will.* Satan doth lead men captive at his will, while they are, as they conceive, conquerors, riding in triumph, doing their own will. These *Sabeans* came to execute their own designs, but Satan had a design upon them, he brought them thus to spoil the estate of *Job*.

But what could Satan do? How could Satan prevail with these? Can he force men to be his Instruments, to execute his designs upon the people of God? Or hath he *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, Nations and People at his beck, or under his command?

No, Satan cannot force or compel them against their wills; but as that Scripture saith, *he leads them captive at his will*; and as another Scripture, *he is a Prince of the power of the ayr*, and he *works in the children of disobedience*; yea, *he works like a Prince, mightily and powerfully in the children of disobedience.* Though he cannot constrain them, yet he can work mightily in them to effect what he hath to do. Eph. 2.

But how doth he bring them about thus readily and suddenly to act what he projects?

Thus; First, He finds out the temper and disposition of the persons: That Satan can do; he is a great *Naturalist*, and hath a great deal of help to his skill, *long experience*; by both, he can go very far in discovering the dispositions of men, which way their spirits tend; and he found out, that these *Sabeans* were a people given to robbery and spoil, and so fit ministers for him to work by in his design of spoiling the estate of *Job*. Secondly, When he hath found out the natural temper or state of a mans heart, he can lay a bait of temptation suitable to that inclination and desire: finding out a people given to spoil, he presently sets before them rich spoils; these are a taking object: See, yonder is a brave prize for you, yonder is a rich man, his estate will be good plunder, yonder are Oxen and Asses store, there's good booty to be had. Thus finding out their disposition, he presents or holds up an object to them, which hits it fully. Thirdly, Satan deals with man to draw him to his purpose a degree further, *sc.* by injecting and casting into the mind the motion to do this: He not only presents such and such a thing, such and such an opportunity, but he casts in and injects the motion. As it is said of *Judas*, that the Devil *put it into his heart to betray Christ*. The Devil, being a Spirit, hath access to our spirits, and can convey himself into them, and instill his suggestions. As the Lord Christ did breath upon his Disciples, and so they received the holy Ghost, and were filled with the Spirit; so Satan breaths filthy suggestions into the spirits of men, and fills them with all manner of wickedness, malice, unrighteousness; he fills them with the spirit of Hell: *Why hath Satan filled thy heart?* saith *Peter* to *Ananias*. Satan had filled his heart *to lie to the Holy Ghost*. Thus he instilled these thoughts of gain by robbery and murder, into the *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, and filled their hearts brim full: Then they resolve to act it with the hand, and so they become his instruments. Joh. 13. 2. Acts 5. 3.

Lastly, Satan can do somewhat more then inject and suggest such thoughts, he can mightily irritate and provoke, and stir up the heart to be willing to give entertainment to such a motion. He not only barely presents his temptation, but vehemently backs it, and will give no rest to a man, till he yields it: As it is said of his tempting *David, that Satan stood up and provoked David to number the people*; he did not only inject such a thought into *David*, but he *provoked him*; he never let him alone, but followed him, solicited him to it. This Satan can do; and yet he cannot *press men* to take up Arms for his designs; all those that fight under Satans Colours, are *Voluntiers*; he never constrains any, neither can he; the will is never forced by him, neither can it be. Satan uses no compulsion beyond a moral perswasion well set on; he can but vex us (as the *Midianites* did *Israel*) with his wiles; He is an *Achitophel*, not an *Alexander*; a *Machiavil*, not a *Cæsar*. 2 Chr. 21. 1.

This is the manner of Satans working in the children of disobedience. All these things he can do; yet I believe he is not alwayes put to do all these upon every one over whom he prevailes; some come to this work on easier terms then others: He needs not provoke and solicit them, a suggestion wins them, the very sight of an object overcomes them: yea, some stand ready offering their service unto Satan, and selling themselves to work any wickedness he will employ them in. I have shewed you the most that Satan can do; I conceive he had not much to do with these *Sabeans*, to invite them to this war: *That which is in motion, is easily moved*: And as we say, *He must needs run whom the Devil drives*; so the Devil needs not drive them, who are running of themselves.

It being opened, what these *Sabeans* were, and how they came into the service of Satan, what made them take up Arms, as it were, in his cause; we may observe from hence,

> First, *That wicked and ungodly men, while they satisfie their own lusts, are but doing the work of Satan, and executing his designs.*

These *Sabeans*, though they did not think it, yet they came upon Satans errand: So God, when he doth justly use wicked men to punish or correct his people, they do their own will, and they have their own way; but God hath his way too, he over-rules them to effect his business at that time: As it is said of the King of *Assyria, O Assyrian, the rod of mine Anger, I will send him against an hypocritical Nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him charge; howbeit, he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so*, Isa. 10. He hath purposes of his own. So they that are agitated by Satan, and provoked by him, *they think not so*; they think not they are doing the will and work, the dirty drudgery of Satan; but the truth is, they do nothing else all the while. *You are of your Father*

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the Devil, and his luſts will you do; ſaith Chriſt to the *Jews*: while they do their own, they fulfil the luſts and deſigns of Satan. As it is ſaid in the *Revelation*, *The Devil* Rev. 2. 10. *ſhall caſt ſome of you into priſon*; it was not the Devil in perſon, it was the Devil in his ſeconds or ſervants; and theſe men little thought that they did the Devils ſervice at that time: If one ſhould have come and told them, you are now doing the Devils work, and undertaking a piece of ſervice for him, you are ſo many inſtruments and agents for Hell; they would not have believed it: but the truth is, it was the Devils work, and they did it ſo deviliſhly, that, from both, it is ſaid the Devil did it; he caſt ſome of them into priſon. It is a fearful thing to perſecute or oppreſs the people of God; ſuch, in ſerving their own luſts, are indeed the *right hand of Satan, the Devils hirelings.*

Secondly, Foraſmuch as Satan will have *Sabeans* and *Caldeans* to afflict *Job*'s eſtate (he could have deſtroyed all himſelf if he pleaſed. Good Angels have mighty power, and ſo have wicked Angels too, if God will let them alone to put out their power; therefore they are called *Principa-* Eph. 6. *lities and Powers*. Satan had leave, he might have taken what courſe he would with the eſtate of *Job*; he doth not call in the *Sabeans* and the *Caldeans* to this work, becauſe he could not do it himſelf; no, it is becauſe he would work by others, he would have inſtruments.) Note hence,

That, *Satan loveth to draw others to be partakers with him in his deſigns.*

Though he can do his work alone, yet he will have man joyn with him in it, if he can: And in this he imitates God himſelf, who hath an almighty power, is able to do all things alone, if he pleaſe; yet uſually he calleth in inſtruments. He is able to convert alone by the motion of his Spirit; but he will have Preachers to convert by the Miniſtry of the Word. He is able to protect his people from their enemies, by his own ſtrength; yet he will have Armies muſtered, to do it by. And why doth God chooſe to work thus? There is a double good in it. He doth it, that he may do good two wayes at once. Firſt, His creature is ſaved and relieved; that is one good. Secondly, Men who are employed as inſtruments, are honoured and reſpected; they having given help to God in ſuch a cauſe, (ſo he interprets it, a *coming forth to help the Lord againſt the mighty*) God gives them honour in the eyes of all his ſervants; there is another good. So Satan, while he ſetteth men awork, *Sabeans*, *Caldeans*, and others, to do miſchief, he doth a double miſchief at once; he doth miſchief to *Job*, or others whom he afflicts; and he doth miſchief to his inſtruments; he makes theſe ſin, he makes others ſuffer: If he carry on the work alone, they ſuffer, but others do not partake in the guilt of the ſin; but now when he uſeth inſtruments to effect his wicked deſigns, he makes one miſerable, and the other wicked. This is one of Satans methods, he will work by means, and do his buſineſs by the hands of men, that he may at once do a double miſchief.

Thirdly, In that theſe *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, are obſerved in Hiſtories to be a people given much to robberies and ſpoil, and theſe are the men whom Satan picks out for this buſineſs; Obſerve,

That, *Satan ſuiteth his temptations to mans natural temper and inclination.*

Whenſoever he tempteth, he takes this advantage, if he can diſcover or obtain it. He is wiſer then to ſet ſail againſt wind and tide, to row againſt the ſtream; therefore he labours all he can, to find which way the ſtream of every mans affections runs; and to what ſins his Relations, his Calling, or his Opportunities lay him moſt open and obnoxious; accordingly he layes his Snares, and ſpreads his Net. When he meets with a proud man, him he tempteth with high thoughts: When he meeteth with a covetous man, him he tempteth to the love of the world; he layes a golden bait of profit before his eyes: The adulterous, he leads to the Harlots houſe. For howſoever it be true, that every man hath in him a principle ſuting to every ſin, yet it is a truth too, that every man is not equally active for, or diſpoſed unto every ſin; and every man hath not every particular ſin predominant in him: now Satan, when he ſeeth what is predominant in any man, then he faſhioneth and frameth a temptation ſutable: He perceived theſe *Sabeans* were given to rob and ſpoil, and he ſheweth them a deſirable booty.

And have ſlain thy ſervants with the edge of the ſword.

This a further aggravation of the affliction; they did not only fall upon *Job*'s Cattel, and took them away; but they ſlew his Servants. A mans ſervants are nearer to him then his Cattel, then his Oxen and his Aſſes; ſervants are next unto our Children. So that this was a heightning of *Job*'s ſorrow, not only are your Cattel gone, but your Servants are ſlain; and they are *ſlain* (ſaith he) *with the edge of the ſword*: the word in the Hebrew is, *they are ſlain with the mouth of the ſword.*

We read in Scripture ſometimes of the *face of the ſword*, and ſometimes of the *mouth of the ſword*; as, *Iſa.* 31.8. where we tranſlate, *they ſhall flee from the ſword*, the Hebrew is, *they ſhall flee from the face of the ſword.* The like Text you have, *Jer.* 25.27. Now when the Scripture ſpeaks of the *face of the ſword*, it is meant of war coming, or war preparing and approaching. But the *mouth of the ſword* is war inflicted, war acted. This phraſe, *the mouth of the ſword*, is uſed to ſhew, that the ſword is a great devourer, *Deut.* 32.42. *I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my ſword ſhall devour fleſh.* War hath a terrible face, it hath a wide mouth, and ſharp teeth; *They have ſlain thy ſervants with the edge of the ſword*; the mouth of the ſword hath devoured them.

At this day we have great cauſe to have our hearts deeply affected with this thing. There hath been (as it were) the face of the ſword a great while looking towards us, but now there is the very mouth of the ſword gaping at us; yea, tearing, gnawing, and devouring the fleſh and bones of thouſands amongſt us. Where the ſword comes, it will devour: war is a great judgment, one of Gods ſore judgments, the ſoreſt of all Gods outward judgments. *David* chooſeth the Peſtilence rather then the ſword; the Peſtilence is a devourer, but the ſword is a greater devourer. And though the Prophet *Jeremiah*, in his *Lamentations*, makes Famine a ſorer judgment then the Sword (*Chap.* 4.9.) *They that be ſlain with the ſword are better then they that be ſlain with hunger.* Yet the ſword is in this worſe then famine, becauſe uſually it is the cauſe of famine. The ſword cuts off food, the ſupport of mans life, as well as the life of man. While the ſword is making it ſelf fat, it hath famine in the belly of it.

We need not go to *Jeremiah* or *Joſephus* for the proof of this in *Jeruſalems Babylonian* or *Roman* deſolations; ſad *Germany*, bleeding *Ireland*, are near woful witneſſes and ſpectacles of it at this day. The Sword hath opened a way for Famine to enter both; and which of the two hath eaten moſt fleſh, is hard to determine. Let us cry earneſtly to God, that the mouth of the Sword may be ſtopped, or continued open, only to devour thoſe, who would devour the man who is more righteous then they: Let us pray that blood may be ſpared, or none but corrupt blood ſpilt. *Spare thy people, O Lord:* It is (I confeſs) one of the ſaddeſt prognoſticks, in my obſervation, againſt this Nation, that God hitherto hath made little difference. Our Sword hath not yet been taught from Heaven to diſtinguiſh of men. Precious blood hath been drawn, and men, whoſe very hairs were all numbred (that is, highly prized) by God, have been numbred among the ſlain. It muſt ſatisfie us, that the will of God is ſo. The anſwer which *David* gave *Joab*'s Meſſenger, is good ſetling counſel now (2 *Sam.* 11.25.) *Let not this thing diſpleaſe thee*; (He ſpeaks this after the fall of noble *Uriah*) *for the ſword* (not by accident, but decree; not caſually, but providentially) *devoureth ſo and ſuch* (as the Hebrew elegance hath it) *one as well as another*; ſo we tranſlate. It is mercy, we are not all conſumed by this eater; as in the Text ye may read all the ſervants of *Job* were, excepting one, only one got out of the mouth of the ſword; it eat up all ſaving one, and he was ſaved, that by the report of the deſtructive ſword, he might deſtroy *Job* himſelf.

And I only am eſcaped to tell thee.

The word in the Original, is double; *tantum ego, ſolus ego*, only I; *I alone am eſcaped*: as if the man ſhould have ſaid, between horror and amazement, much ado I had to get away without loſing ſomewhat of my ſelf; I only ſin- רק אני לבדי

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gle, ſingle I got away and eſcaped. The ſword was very hungry, when but one man of all *Job*'s ſervants eſcaped the teeth of it.

But how cometh it to paſs that this one man eſcaped?

Certainly, as I ſaid before, the hand of Satan was in this alſo: For howſoever the Lord ordered and diſpoſed all theſe things, yet he let Satan work in his circle, in his compaſs, to contrive things as he pleaſed himſelf, the moſt aptly he could imagine, to afflict and trouble *Job*; therefore there is ſomewhat in it, no good-will (I believe) to *Job*, that this one man had the favour of quarter or mercy of an eſcape.

It was not out of any compaſſionate reſpect to *Job*, that one of his ſervants comes home alive. It was rather to increaſe the affliction of *Job*, and for the perfecting of his ſorrows; this man was not ſlain, that *Job* may be more deeply wounded. There are two Reaſons, which may be aſſigned, why one man eſcaped out of every one of theſe calamities.

Firſt, That the report of this affliction might come ſuddenly to him. A man that eſcapes out of ſuch a danger, needs no driving; his fear will add wings to his feet, he will run home amain.

Secondly, For the certainty of it. Reports fly abroad, they may be falſe; *Fama mendax*, Fame is a liar. *Job* might have had ſuch reports from his neighbours in the Countrey, all your Cattel are ſeized upon, and all your ſervants are ſlain; and *Job* might ſlight it, and ſay, This might be but a rumour, I give no credit to it; therefore Satan lets one of his own ſervants come frighted home with the news, one that was there, one that was an eye-witneſs, one that *Job* knew, one that had no reaſon, much leſs the boldneſs to bring falſe tales to him; that ſo the report coming ſpeedily and certainly, his heart might be ſmitten preſently. *It is ſome abatement of an evil, to have but a colour to doubt of it.* If we can but lay hold of any circumſtance which renders an evil report improbable, and may for a while ſtrengthen our unbelief of it, we may in that interim get more ſtrength of Faith to bear it, when we ſee it is certain and unqueſtionable. There was no mercy in ſuch a ſparing.

And we may obſerve out of it, that which *Solomon* ſpeaks of the mercies of the wicked is moſt true of Satans, *The very tender mercies of Satan are cruel*, the beſt of his mercies, his ſparings are woundings; he never ſpareth but with an intent to do further hurt. *Jobs* afflictions had not gone ſo deep, if this man had not been left to bring the meſſage.

It followeth,

Verſ. 16. **While he was yet ſpeaking there came alſo another and ſaid, the fire of God is fallen from Heaven, and hath burnt up the ſheep, and the ſervants, and conſumed them, and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee.**

In this verſe we have the ſecond charge which this great enemy gives *Job*, *While he was yet ſpeaking there came alſo another. Afflictions ſeldom go alone*; And therefore when one affliction is ended, look another ſhould begin, and labour to prepare for it. *Job* having received this meſſage of the loſs of his cattel and death of his ſervants, while the meſſenger was yet ſpeaking, a ſecond comes with a ſadder ſtory then that. Satan would not give him the leaſt breathing or intermiſſion; *while he was yet ſpeaking*; one evil treads upon the heel of another; as wave overtakes wave in the ſea; ſo it was here, here was wave after wave, to over-whelm his ſpirit. And as it is ſaid in the *Revelation*, concerning him that ſate on the white-horſe, that he rid out *conquering and to conquer*, there was no intermiſſion of his victories; ſo Satan goeth forth afflicting and to afflict, vexing and to vex, tempting and to tempt, he will never give over. *While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, the fire of God is fallen upon thy ſheep.*

The fire of God.

Why is it here called the *fire of God?* Some conceive it is called the *fire of God*, becauſe ſent from God: that is aſcribed to God, which comes from God, as that *Gen.* 19. 24. where it is ſaid, *that the Lord did rain fire and brimſtone upon* Sodom *out of Heaven from the Lord*: or *Jehovah* did rain from *Jehovah* fire upon *Sodom* to conſume it: And *Levit.* 10. 2. it is ſaid, *That a fire went out from the Lord and conſumed* Nadab *and* Abihu. *Elijah* procures fire from Heaven to conſume the *Captains* that came from the *King* to take him, 2 *King.* 1. 10, 12. The *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaking of the plagues of *Egypt* (Pſal. 105. 32.) ſaith *that the Lord ſent flames of fire in the land*; So ſome expound that place, Pſal. 104. 3. *He maketh his Angels ſpirits, and his Miniſters a flame of fire*, that is, he uſeth flames of fire for his Miniſters, for his meſſengers. God ſometime ſends a fire on his errands, though we know that place is applyed to the Angels by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 1. 7.

But here rather it is called the *fire of God* in another regard; for howſoever this fire was ſent of God, as all afflictions are; yet becauſe the immediate kindler of it was Satan, he had the power put into his hand; therefore this was not a fire (in that ſenſe as thoſe other fires are ſaid to be) ſent from God: But it may be called (as uſually in Scripture) *the fire of God*, becauſe of the ſtrangeneſs of the fire, it was a wonderful, an extraordinary fire; and ſo it is very ordinary in the Hebrew to uſe the name of God, *El, Elohim* or *Jehovah*, as an Epithite, as an additional word to heighten the excellence or rareneſs of things. We find that phraſe often, *A man of God.* The Hebrews ſay, to call one a man of God, is as much as to ſay, he is an *extraordinary man, a man of an excellent ſpirit*, a *Prophet, a holy man*: In that Pſalm where the Church is ſhadowed under the ſimilitude of a *Vine*, it is ſaid, *She did ſend forth her branches like the goodly Cedars*: So we tranſlate it; the Original word is, *She ſent forth her branches as the Cedars of God*, that is, *excellent Cedars, tall* and *extraordinary Cedars.* In Pſal. 36. 6. comparing the love of God to great Mountains, *Thy loving kindneſs is as the great mountains*, the word is, *like the mountains of God.* Pſal. 65. 9. *Thou refreſheſt it with the river of God*, that is, *with an excellent River.* Cant. 8. 6. ſpeaking of love and jealouſie, *Love is ſtrong as death; jealouſie is cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a moſt vehement flame*; the word in the Original is a *flame of God, the coals thereof are coals of fire, the flame of God*, that is, as we tranſlate it, *a vehement flame.* So here the *fire of God*, that is, *a ſtrange fire, an unheard of, an unuſual fire, a vehement fire*, ſuch a fire as had not been ſeen nor obſerved before. Therefore the Hebrews call extraordinary things the things of God; becauſe indeed all the wonders and excellencies, all the glory and goodneſs that is in creatures, is but a footſtep, a print or drop of that excellency and glory and power that is in God; therefore every thing that is moſt excellent, is aſcribed unto God. It is moſt equal that his name ſhould be ſtampt upon all excellent things in the creature, who is the cauſe of all creature-excellence. This fire being a ſtrange and extraordinary fire, is ſaid to be the fire of God.

Pſ. 180. 10.

This fire of God is conceived to have been ſome terrible flaſh of Lightning, which in a moment deſtroyed and conſumed the ſheep and ſhepherds. And this is more probable, becauſe it is ſaid to fall down from Heaven, that is, out of the Air; for ſo often in Scripture, Heaven is put for the Air, the middle region of the Air, where Satan hath great power; therefore he is called the *Prince of the Air*; and he can do mighty things, command much in the Magazine of Heaven, where that dreadful Artillery, which makes men tremble, thoſe fiery Meteors, Thunder and Lightning, are lodged and ſtored up. *Satan let looſe by God, can do wonders in the Air*: He can raiſe ſtorms, he can diſcharge the great Ordnance of Heaven, Thunder and Lightning, and by his Art, he can make them more terrible and dreadful then they are in nature. If the skill and art of man can heighten natural things, then much more the skill of Satan. I doubt not, but many fearful impreſſions are made in the Air by Devils, carrying Nature (by Gods permiſſion) far above its own courſe; and theſe are properly *Marvels* or *Wonders* (ſuch as the Magicians wrought in *Egypt*, by the help of Satan) for Miracles are quite out of the Devils Sphear: But he can do wonders; and ſuch was this fire falling from Heaven, *&c. A Marvel, a Wonder, is Nature mightily improved: a Miracle is Nature totally croſſed, if not contradicted.* Obſerve this for the nature of that fire; the effect of it follows in the next words.

Fulguri maximum. Jun.

It hath burnt up the ſheep and the ſervants, and conſumed them.

The word in the Original is, *It did burn them and eat them*

them up. Fire is a devouring Element. Devouring Fire, as before a devouring Sword, theſe were devouring judgements upon *Job.* Yet it doth not neceſſarily inter that the ſheep were all burnt to aſhes; but that the ſheep were all killed by that flame of lightening that came from Heaven; for it is ſaid of *Nadab* and *Abihu* (of which we ſpake before) that a fire went out from God, and did conſume them; it is the ſame Original word that is here in the Text, *A fire went out from God, and did eat them up*, yet we know their bodies were not conſumed, for they were carried out to their burial, and their garments were upon them. So that this conſuming doth not note the burning of things to aſhes, but a ſtriking of them to death; it is a devouring fire, becauſe it is a deſtroying fire, it takes away life: and thus lightenings kill rather by peircing and penetrating, then by conſuming and devouring.

But now here it will be queſtioned for the further opening of this, why Satan chooſes thus to conſume the Sheep with fire? why doth he not rather uſe ſpoylers to take them away? He could doubtleſs have got the *Sabeans* to have fetched away the flocks of Sheep, as well as the droves of greater Cattle; he could have procured them eaſily; why then doth he cauſe fire from Heaven to come down, the fire of God to conſume them?

I anſwer, his reaſon for this was to put the greater ſting into the affliction. He would not have the Sheep taken away after the ſame manner that the Oxen and Camels were, that he might aggravate *Jobs* trouble, and provoke him if he could to be paſſionate againſt God, yea and (for that was his great deſign) to blaſpheme God; therefore he procures fire from Heaven to fall upon the Sheep, thereby to beget an opinion in *Job* that God was now become his enemy as well as man. When we ſuffer from man, then the afflicted ſoul flies to God, makes his complaint and moan to him, as doubtleſs *Job* did when he heard of thoſe cruel *Sabeans*, and what they had done; but leſt *Job* ſhould reſort in his thoughts to Heaven, and comfort himſelf in God again, the next meſſenger telleth him that God is his enemy too, that the *fire of God* is fallen upon the Sheep; an extraordinary fire; as if he ſhould ſay, God fighteth againſt thee as well as the *Sabeans*; Alas now to whom ſhould *Job* make his moan! That ſpeech of *Eli*, concerning ſin may well be applied to ſuffering, *If one man ſin againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge him: but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intreat for him?* So if a man ſuffer from men, he may go unto God; But if God himſelf do appear to be an enemy and to fight againſt us, to whom ſhall we go? Indeed *Job* knew how to go to God, though he did appear as an enemy; but that is the greateſt ſtraight, and to do thus notes the greateſt ſpiritual both skill and ſtrength. Hence obſerve,

Sam. 2.25

That Satans great deſign againſt the people of God or any ſervant of God, is to provoke them to ill thoughts of God;

To perſwade them that God is their enemy, to bring the love and good will of God into ſuſpition. Therefore he cauſeth this great fire, and (it is like) formed the ſervants language in that cutting phraſe, *The fire of God is fallen upon the Sheep.* Thou canſt not put this off, as thou mighteſt do the other, and ſay, this is but the malice or the covetouſneſs of the *Sabeans*, that rob'd me of my goods, and ſlew my ſervants; No, thou ſhalt ſee now that God himſelf is angry, Heaven frowns upon thee, the fire of God from Heaven conſumes thee. Turn over the Records of all antiquity, and ſee whether God ever dealt thus with any, but thoſe curſed *Sodomites* upon *whom God rained fire from Heaven*: Thou who comeſt ſo near them in the puniſhment, haſt reaſon to judge thy ſelf not far behind them in ſin.

Secondly obſerve, *Thoſe afflictions are moſt grievous wherein God appears to be againſt us.*

The malice of Devils and the rage of men may be endured; but who can ſtand before God, when he is angry? If God doth but withdraw his comforts, the ſoul ſinkes under ſmalleſt tryals; how then can it ſtand if God ſhould reveal his wrath againſt us, when we are in great trials?

It may here be queſtioned, why the Sheep were conſumed with fire, rather then any other of his Cattel, rather then any other of his ſubſtance.

There are two things in that. Firſt, The Sheep were uſed in Sacrifice. *When the dayes of their feaſting were ended*, Job *offered Sacrifice*, and the Sheep chiefly were offered in Sacrifice. Now Satan by conſuming the Sheep hoped to faſten this upon *Job*, if poſſibly he could, that God was angry with his very Sacrifices, God was angry with his ſervices. As if he ſhould ſay, *Doeſt thou think that the offering up of thy Sheep in Sacrifice hath been pleaſing to God? Certainly if the fire of thoſe Sacrifices had delighted God, if he had ſmelt a ſavour of reſt in them* (as he is ſaid to have done, when *Noah* offered Sacrifice after the Flood, *Gen.* 8. 21.) *he would never have ſent a fire from Heaven to conſume them.* That is conceived by Expoſitors to be an eſpecial reaſon why the Sheep were conſumed, namely to caſt *Job* upon this apprehenſion, that his very Sacrifices were rejected of God; that he might conclude of himſelf (as *Solomon* ſaith of the wicked) *that his Sacrifices were an abomination unto the Lord*; and to ſhew that God would now have no more of his Sacrifices, God himſelf made one Sacrifice of them all. But *Origen* brings in *Job* excellently retorting this ſuggeſtion upon Satan: I ſacrificed now one, and then another of my Sheep to God; but now bleſſed be God, who hath accepted all my flock as one burnt-offering.

Prov. 15.8.

Againe, the Sheep were conſumed by fire, as to make *Job* conceive that his former ſervices were rejected, ſo to take him off and diſcourage him from offering any more ſuch ſervices; to make him deſpair of ever thriving in the way of thoſe duties: and conclude ſurely God is ſo angry now, that all my ſervices, all my ſacrifices will never appeaſe him, nor profit me: therefore I were as good lay by theſe duties as perform them, when I get no good. This is a dangerous temptation; if Satan by ſuch prejudices againſt holy duties, can cauſe us to lay them by, the day is won: for then the ſoul is left naked and unarm'd. We have not then ſo much as a bulruſh in our hands to ſmite him, or a paper breſt-plate to ſecure our ſelves. If we give over praying and ſeeking, we have no ground to expect Chriſt either aſſiſting or protecting us. That for the ſecond affliction.

Verſ. 17. **While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, the** Caldeans **made out three Bands, and fell upon the Camels, and have carried them away, yea, and ſlain the ſervants with the edge of the Sword, and I only am eſcaped alone, to tell thee.**

This is the third affliction, the taking away of the Camels, the deſtroying of the ſervants that waited upon them. There is not much to ſtay upon in this, having before opened moſt of the paſſages of it in the 15. *verſe.*

While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another, and ſaid, the Caldeans **made out three Bands.**] *Caldeans* ſometime note a condition or a rank of men, ſuch as were Diviners, Southſayers and Aſtrologers, theſe are in Scripture called *Caldeans.* As the *Indians* called ſuch skilful perſons *Gymnoſophiſts*, and the *Perſians* called them their *Magi*, and the *Romans* called them *Augures*, ſo the *Aſſyrians* called them *Caldeans.* When *Nebuchadnezzar* dreamed a dream, it is ſaid, that he ſent for the *Diviners and the Aſtrologers, and the* Caldeans; and afterward the *Caldeans* take up all, he ſaid to the *Caldeans*, and the *Caldeans* ſaid to the King: the *Caldeans*, were put for all thoſe that undertook the Art of divining and interpreting dreames. But here by the *Caldeans*, are to be underſtood, not a condition of men, but a Nation of men, or the people inhabiting *Chaldea*: frequently ſpoken of by the Prophets, and deſcribed to the life by the Prophet *Habakkuk*, Chap. 1. where the Lord threatned to ſend the *Caldeans* againſt his people, and then deſcribes them, *That haſty and bitter Nation, their Horſes are ſwifter then the Leopard, and more ravening then the evening Wolves:* Such a kind of people they were who were ſtirred up by Satan to take away the Camels of *Job.*

Dan. 2. 3.

Hab. 1. 6, 7.

Theſe are ſaid to make out three Bands to ſpoyl. They were a people like the *Sabeans*, delighting in war and robbery; ſo much the Etymologie of their Name *Chaſdim* (which is the word in the Original) implieth, being derived from *Sadad*, which ſignifieth to rob and ſpoyle. Theſe were a wicked generation, yet theſe prevail over the eſtate of *Job.* Victory doth not always attend a juſt cauſe. The way of the wicked often proſpers, and the way of theſe wicked *Caldeans* proſpered ſo often, that the Prophet *Habakkuk* complains to God as one ſcandaliz'd at it: *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look*

on

on iniquity; wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he? If ever we ſhould be brought upon a like caſe, to argue it thus with God, or (as *Jeremy* did, *chap.* 12. 1.) to plead with God about his judgments, let us remember to eſtabliſh our hearts (before we open our mouthes) with the Prophet *Jeremies* concluſion in that place, *Righteous art thou O Lord*, though the wicked devour the man that is more righteous then he. It is very rare that God makes one good man his rod to ſcourge another; he uſually makes the worſt of men his rod, his ſtaffe, his ſword, to inflict either trials or judgments upon his people. The durty Scullion ſcowres the Silver veſſel, and makes it both clean and bright for his maſters uſe.

VERS. 18, 19.

While he was yet ſpeaking, there came alſo another and ſaid, thy Sons and thy Daughters were eating and drinking Wine in their eldeſt Brothers houſe.

And behold there came a great wind from the Wilderneſs, and ſmote the four corners of the houſe, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am eſcaped alone to tell thee.

THis was, as the fourth and laſt, ſo the greateſt of all Satans aſſaults, the moſt fierce and terrible charge that *Job* had all the day, and Satan reſerves this untill the evening, till *Job* was ſpent and ſpiritleſs, as he hoped. I ſhall note this in general from it.

That Satan uſually keeps his greateſt ſtrength and moſt violent temptations unto the laſt.

When he thinks we are at the weakeſt, then he cometh with the ſtrongeſt aſſaults. If Satan had ſent *Job* word of the death of his Children firſt, all the reſt would have been as nothing to him: he would not have regarded the loſs of his Cattel, when he heard that all his Children were cruſhed to death by the fall of the Houſe. As ſome one great evil falling upon us, takes the heart off from having any ſenſe or joy in a leſſer good; ſo one great evil ſwallows up the ſenſe and feeling of a leſſer evil: that great evil which fell upon the Wife of *Phineas*, when ſhe heard that *the Ark of God was taken*, afflicted her ſo extreamly, that ſhe could not at all rejoyce in the birth of her ſon, ſhe had no ſenſe of that. Here was therefore the cunning of Satan, leſt *Job* ſhould have loſt the ſmart of the leſſer afflictions, leaſt they ſnould have been all ſwallowed up in the greater, he brings them out in order, the leaſt firſt, the greateſt is reſerved for the laſt. We obſerve in War, that when once the great Ordnance are diſcharged, the Souldiers are not afraid of the Musket: ſo when a great battery is made by ſome thundring terrible judgment upon the Soul, or upon the Body, or Eſtate of any man; the noyſe and fears of leſſer evils are drown'd and abated. Therefore Satan keeps his greateſt ſhot to the laſt, that the ſmall might be heard and felt, and that the laſt coming in greater ſtrength might find the leaſt ſtrength to reſiſt it.

And that this was a greater affliction then any of, or then all the former, is ſo clear that I ſhall not need to ſtay long in the confirming of it; only to quicken the point a little, take notice of the greatneſs of it in five reſpects.

First, It appeareth without controverſie to be the greateſt of all, becauſe it was upon his Children: a mans Children are more then all that he hath in the world: a mans Children are himſelf, every child is the Father multiplied; a Son is the Fathers bowels: and therefore when *Paul* wrote to *Philemon* concerning *Oneſimus*, *whom* (ſaith he) *I have begotten in my bonds*; (*ſc.* to the faith of Chriſt) *Receive him who is mine own bowels*: A ſpiritual Son is the very bowels of a Miniſter; he doth but allude to a natural Son, a Son is the very bowels of the Father. This affliction reached unto the very bowels of *Job* himſelf; Satan had no leave to afflict the body of *Job*, and yet you ſee he afflicts him in his very bowels.

Phil. v. 12.

Secondly, The greatneſs of it is ſeen in this, his Children were all taken away. To looſe all our children, is as grievous as to looſe an only Child: Now that is made a cauſe of the higheſt ſorrows, *Zach.* 12. 10. *They ſhall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for an only Son*: that is, they ſhall mourn moſt bitterly. Now as the meaſure of mercies may be taken by the comforts which they produce; ſo we may take the meaſure of an affliction by the ſorrow which it produceth, and that is the greateſt affliction which cauſeth the greateſt ſorrow.

Thirdly, It was a further greatning of the affliction, that they were all taken away ſuddenly. Had death ſent them a ſummons, by its uſual meſſenger ſickneſs, but a day before to prepare themſelves, it had much ſweetned the bitterneſs of this cup; but to hear they were dead before he knew they were ſick, yea when he thought they were merry and rejoycing, how ſad was this?

Fourthly, That they died a violent death, by a mighty wind caſting the houſe down upon them. Had they died in their beds (though ſuddenly) it had been ſome eaſe to the Fathers heart: violent death had an impreſſion of wrath upon it. And men can hardly judge well of thoſe, who fall by ſuch judgments. Suſpition will ariſe, if cenſure paſs not, from better men then *Barbarians*, if they ſee a Viper on the hand of a *Paul*, *Act.* 28. It is more then probable from our Saviours queſtion, that thoſe eighteen upon whom the Tower of *Shiloe* fell, and ſlew them, were commonly ſuppoſed greater ſinners, or ſinners, above all men that dwelt in *Hieruſalem*, *Luk.* 13. 4.

Fifthly, They were all taken away when they were feaſting; and this did exceedingly aggravate the affliction upon *Job*, that his Children were all deſtroyed feaſting; for you know what the thoughts of *Job* were concerning his Children at their feaſting; after they had done, he offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all, for he ſaid, *It may be my Sons have ſinned and curſed God in their hearts*. Now at this time, when Satan knew that *Job* was moſt ſolicitous leſt his Children ſhould ſin, at that time doth he deſtroy them; that ſo their Father might be afflicted with the thought, that his Children died unreconciled to God, that they died with ſin upon them unrepented of: That they died a double death, death at once ſeizing upon both ſoul and body. This then was a further degree of Satans malice, to wound, vex and grieve the ſpirit of *Job* unto the utmoſt. How ſadly and paſſionately did *David* lament *Abſaloms* death? Some conceive that this was the head of the Arrow that pierced him, becauſe he feared his Son died in a ſinful condition, he was ſuddenly taken away in his rebellion, unreconciled either to God or man. Such a thought might fall upon *Job*'s heart; my Children are ſuddenly dead, and dead feaſting, it may be they forgot God, it is poſſible they ſinned in feaſting, and curſed God in their hearts: Alas my Children died before they could ſo much as think of death: I fear they are gone rejoycing to Hell, where they ſhall weep for evermore. Doubtleſs Satan did or might faſten ſuch a temptation upon his heart who was ſo tender of his Childrens ſouls, and ſo fearful of their ſinning in feaſting. So then it is clear from all theſe particular conſiderations, that this was the greateſt affliction.

Be prepared then, not only to receive another affliction, but to receive a greater affliction, and have thoughts of receiving the greateſt affliction at the laſt. Satan will come with his ſtrongeſt aſſaults when thou art weakeſt. At the time of death when he ſeeth he can do no more, but that he muſt then do it, or never do it, then thou ſhalt be ſure to have the ſtrongeſt temptations.

It ſhould therefore ſtir up the people of God, ſtill to look for more and more ſtrength to bear afflictions and tentations, and to beg from Chriſt the greateſt ſtrength at laſt, becauſe they may juſtly fear the greateſt temptations at laſt. If as Satan doth greaten his temptations, Chriſt doth greaten his aſſiſtance, we ſhall be able to bear them, and be more then conquerers over them.

So much of this fourth charge in the general; I ſhall now open the words more particularly (for thoſe in the 18. *verſe* I ſhall not need to ſay any thing of them, they have been handled before at the 13. *verſe*, which runs thus; *And there was a day when his Sons and his Daughters were eating and drinking wine in their Eldeſt Brothers houſe*:) The 19. *verſe* deſcribes the manner of this trial; **And behold there came a great wind from the Wilderneſs**, &c.

Ecce adverbium demonſtrandi uſurpatur in rebus notabilibus.

And behold.] *Ecce*, or behold, in Scripture notes more then ordinary matter following. Firſt, Great things call for attention. Secondly, That which is ſudden and unexpected, calls us to behold it. Thirdly, Rare things, things ſeldom

seldom seen, invite all to see and wonder at them. Here is matter of admiration: what God threatens in the Law, he seems to fulfil upon *Job*, *I will make their Plagues wonderful.* Deut.28.59 There is no *Ecce* prefixed to any of the former three afflictions; but this as being the most strange and terrible, comes in with *Ecce*, *And behold* ——

There came a great Wind.] It was a Wind, and a great Wind that came. The Wind is elegantly said to come (as the Sun) out of his chamber, and rejoycing as a strong man to run a race, *Psal.* 19. 5. Hence the word which the Latines use for the Wind, is derived from a word that signifies *to come*; because the Wind comes with force and violence. The Wind (in the nature of it) is an exhalation arising from the Earth, drawn upwards by the power of the Sun and other Heavenly bodies: but meeting and conflicting a while with the cold of the middle region of the Air, is beaten back again; and being so light that naturally it cannot descend, and so resisted that it cannot peaceably ascend, it takes a course between both, slanting with mighty violence through the Air. Thus Philosophers teach. This Wind is said to have been a *great Wind*: great in quantity, much Wind, a large Wind; great also in quality, a vehement, boistrous, angry Wind.

Ventus à violentia & vehementia nomen habet, quod veniat ebundè, & magna vi irruat in unum aliquem locum. Magir. Phys.

Further, this Wind is described by the Coast or Quarter from which it breathed.

From the Wilderness.] Or as the Hebrew is, from beyond the Wilderness, from the other side of the Wilderness this Wind came.

מעבר המדבר *A regione deserti, vel à trans desertum.*

Winds are differenced by the quarters or points of the Heavens out of which they blow. This Wind is described by the place from whence it came, from the Coast out of which it was raised, it was from beyond the Wilderness.

There were many Wildernesses. Here Wilderness is set down indefinitely. There was the Wilderness of *Maon*, and the Wilderness of *Ziph*, and many other Wildernesses spoken of in Scripture. What Wilderness was this?

It is conceived, that this was either the Wilderness of *Idumea*, or *Edom*, spoken of 2 *Kings* 3. 8. or else it was *Arabia* the Desart, which is by way of eminency called *The Wilderness*. It came from the Wilderness, that is, it came over that part which is called *Arabia deserta*, or *Arabia* the wild.

When it is said, this Wind came from the Wilderness, the Coast is cleared, but the cause and stirrer up of this Wind is concealed. A Wind came from the Wilderness; but how this Wind was raised, and this storm was blown up, there is no mention. We must charge it on him who was the contriver and directer of all this mischief; Satan, Prince of the Air, raised up this mighty Wind.

Winds are said sometimes to come from God; As *Exod.* 10. 13. *The Lord brought an East-wind upon the Land of* Egypt *that it was covered with Locusts*, (one of the Plagues of *Egypt*.) And verse 19. *The Lord turned a mighty VVest-wind which took away the Locusts.* And *Numb.* 11. 31. *There went forth a VVind from the Lord, and brought Quales from the Sea.* Jonah 1.4. *The Lord sent out a great VVind into the Sea.* The Heathens (who divided the World among sundry Gods) gave the Winds to *Æolus*, whom they supposed to have them all shut up and lockt close in his lodge, till he gave them command to fly abroad. It is an argument of a divine power to rule the Winds. Who is this, say those Sea-men, *Matth.* 8. 27. that even *the Winds and the Sea obey him*! As God only causeth the Sun to shine, and the Rain to fall, so the Winds to blow. The Wind is Originally in the hand of God, *He gathers the Wind in his fists* (saith *Agar* of God,) *and sendeth it which way he pleaseth.* Prov. 30.4. But the Winds were put for that present into the hand of Satan, and he had leave to raise a storm for this special purpose. So then, *there came a great Wind from beyond the Wilderness*, that is, Satan stirred up a mighty Wind in those parts and quarters, *which came* ——

And smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead.] Here we see what was the work of this Wind. As it is described by the Region from whence the Wind came, so by the effects which it wrought being come; *It smote the four corners of the house*: The Hebrew word is the same used verse 11. *Touch all that he hath.* According to Satans sence, this Wind *touched the four corners of the house.* The corners of the house are the strength of the house, and the four corners are all the strength. *Christ* is called the *corner stone*, because he is the strength and binding of the Church, he holds all together. This wind smote the four corners at once. It may seem very strange, that one Wind, a Wind described to come out of one quarter, a Southern wind, as this is conceived to have been, coming from the Wilderness, that this one Wind should strike all the four parts of the house together: must it not be a Wind from the four quarters of Heaven which strikes the four corners of a house? I answer, this was an extraordinay Wind, there was a wonder carried on the wings of this Wind; therefore you have an *Ecce* of admiration, *Behold* set in the beginning of this relation; This Wind did not work according to the ordinary rate of Winds. Or we may say, It was a Whirle-wind, that tempestuous Whirle-wind, which Philosophers call *Typhon*; such a Wind as whirles about in a circle, and so it might fetch in or assault all the parts and corners of the house with one blast. Further, We must take notice, that Satan was in this Wind: He acted and wrought mightily with it for the sure and suddain effecting of this dreadful overthrow, the Devil spirited this Wind. The Wind (though, for the quickness and power of it, called a spirit) is a dull and weak thing compared to a spirit.

There came a great wind from the Wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead.

But what became of his three Daughters? did they escape? They are not named, but they also were involved. It is usual in Scripture, under one Sex, the superiour Sex, to comprise both. All *Job*'s Children perished under the ruines of that falling house. Hence Observe,

First, That Satan being left at his own disposse, can raise and enrage stormes and tempests.

It is said, *Psal.* 148. 8. *That stormy winds and tempests fulfil the will of God.* The winds go often on Gods errand; but as often as the Lord gives leave, these stormy winds and tempests fulfil Satans will; not his alone, much less against the will of God. Satan cannot raise so much wind by his own power as will wave a feather; but when God saith go, *do such and such things, then the winds likewise fulfil his will:* And then he can raise wind enough to move Mountains, and raze the foundations of the proudest and strongest buildings. It is reported that some wicked wretches trade with Witches for winds, they buy winds of the Devil: A most abominable merchandize; and the Lord doth answer them justly, to let them have what they pay for, winds of the Devil; as he speaks in the Prophet, *I also will chuse their delusions.* Isa. 66. 4. When men will be deluded, and go down to Hell for help, God will chuse their delusions, saying in his wrath, you that think the Devil can give you a wind, the Devil shall give you a wind; a wind by which you shall sayl at once to the port of your hope, and to the pit of desperation; a wind which (unless you repent) will carry you into that lake wherein there is no water, a lake burning for ever, *And the breath of the Lord like a stream of brimstone kindling it.*

Secondly, Observe here, from the effect of this wind;

That a violent and sudden death, it is no argument of Gods anger or disfavour.

Here all *Job*'s Children were destroyed suddenly and violently, yet it was not in wrath towards the Children, but for a trial unto the Father. When they told Christ of some whose blood *Pilate* had mingled with their Sacrifices; *Think not* (saith he) *that either these or those upon whom the Tower of* Shiloe *fell and slew them, were sinners above all men that dwelt in* Jerusalem; *I tell you, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* Luk. 13. 1. As there is no judging of the sins of men, by such kind of exigents and events, so neither of the wrath of God; yet how many by such appearances judge unrighteous judgment, being as barbarous as those *Barbarians* of *Malta*, who seeing a Viper coming out of the heat, and fastening on *Paul*'s hand, they (concluding he must die presently) censured him to be a murtherer, whom though he had escaped the Sea, yet vengeance followed on shore, and would not suffer to live. Acts 28. 3. *We must not ground our judgments upon the works of God, but upon his Word.* In externals there is the same event to all, *Eccles.* 9. Men can-

not

not be distinguish'd for eternity by what they suffer, but by what they do; not by the manner of their death, but by the tenor of their lives. This is a certain truth, *That man can never die an evil death, who hath led a good life.* There is nothing makes death evil, but the evil which followeth death, or the evil that goes before death.

Thirdly, Here was death, a strange and sudden death surpriz'd the Children of *Job*, and this when they were feasting, when they were *eating and drinking wine in their eldest Brothers house.* We may observe from that also by way of admonition,

Christians had need to take heed, and be holy in feasting.

While we are eating and drinking, we may be dying: therefore eating and drinking, we had need be holy. *Take heed to your selves* (saith Christ) *lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness; take heed lest at any time, because at any time the day may come upon you unawares. That day*, whether it be a day of general calamity, or personal, may come upon you unawares. It becomes us to be holy in all manner of conversation, though we had an Assurance of our lives: But seeing in what manner of conversing so ever we be, death may surprise us, and we have no assurance of our lives in our greatest joyes, how holy should-we be? *Whether you eat or drink* (saith the Apostle) *or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God.* Have God in your eye, let him be your aim. It is propheſied concerning the latter times, *That every pot in* Jerusalem *and* Judah *shall be holiness unto the Lord.* The very pots in *Jerusalem* shall be holy, that is, men at their pots shall be holy, to note that they should be holy in their eatings, in their drinkings: not holy only when they were praying, and holy when they were hearing, but holy in those ordinary natural actions of eating and drinking, holy at their Tables, and at all their refreshings with the Creature. Then indeed there is holiness in the heart, when there is holiness in the pot; *and 'tis but need, there should be holiness in the pot, when there may be death in the pot.*

Luk. 21.34

1 Cor. 10.31

Zach. 14.21

We may observe somewhat more generally from all these four sore afflictions considered together. As first, *We see how quickly the beauty of all worldly blessings may be blasted. Job* in the morning had an estate, as great and as good as his heart could desire in worldly things; there was lustre and strength in and upon all he had, but before night he had nothing but sorrow to sup upon; he had no retinue of servants left, but four, reserved only to report his losses. In one day all's gone. It is added as an aggravation of *Babylons* down-fall, that *her judgments shall come upon her in one day*, Revel. 18.8. *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be utterly burnt with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.* In one day all the beauty of *Babylon* shall be blasted. We need not now trouble our selves to think *Babylon* is in a great deal of strength, and beauty, and glory; surely there must be a long time spent in contriving and acting the destruction of *Babylon*; no, the Lord can blast her beauty and destroy her power in a day; and the Text saith, he will do so, *In one day all her plagues shall come upon her.* That which *Babylon* hath been gathering many years, shall be scattered in a moment. She thinks that by her wisdom and policy she hath laid such a foundation of her own greatness as shall never be shaken; And therefore concludes, *I sit a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.* Yet all her strength shall not hold out one day, when God in his displeasure shall lay siege against her walls. So when ye look upon other great and mighty, prosperous and flourishing enemies, such as *flourish like green bay trees*, remember the Lord in one day can wither their branches and kill their roots, yea root them up. Certainly the strength of the Lord is as mighty for the destroying of his enemies, as it is for the afflicting of his own people: if he sometimes gives Commission to take away all their comforts in a day, when their estates are highest and strongest built; Surely he will at last give Commissions for as speedy a dispatch against the estates of his greatest enemies.

And this may be unto us all, matter of Admonition, to prepare for changes, to esteem creatures as they are, *perishing substance.* Who ever had an estate better gotten, better bottom'd, or better managed then *Job?* yet all was overthrown and swept away in a moment. *We can never expect too much from God, nor too little from the creature.*

Lastly, We may learn from the fore-going story of these afflictions, considering that Satan was the contriver and engineer, who set all a work,

That Satan is mighty both in power and policy for the effecting of his designs, if God give him liberty and leave.

You see he doth not fail nor miss in the least, he brings every affliction upon *Job* in the perfection of it: and he doth not bungle at it, or do his work by halves, but he is quick and speedy, both in laying the plot and executing it. There is nothing in this inferiour world able to stand before him, no creature, no man, if God let him alone. The good Angels can match, yea and master devils, there is no doubt of that: but if God stop his Angels, and withdraw his hand, the Devil would quickly over-run all the world. *We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers.* Eph. 6. Evil spirits are called powers in the abstract, they have not only a power, they are not only powerful, (hence called *principalities*, such as have great authority and soveraignty (as it were) over others) but they are called *Powers.* It is not an empty title or a naked name that is given them, but they are filled and cloathed with strength proportionable. Satan is a mighty Prince commanding in the spirits of wicked men (there's his throne) he can kindle their lusts and inflame their spirits, set them on fire from Hell, and then cause them to go on with *a rage* (in doing mischief) *as high as heaven.* He can lead men *captive at his will*, though not against their own will. Yet to shew the efficacy of his actings, he is said to lead them *captive at his will*, to do his will and execute his *devilships designs.* It is admirable what Satan can do upon wicked men, who are his willing vassals and bond-slaves; if he speak the word, they go; if he suggest, they submit; if he move, they obey. And likewise we see what a mighty Prince he is in the air, all the Elements and the Meteors stoop to his direction. He cannot only command men who have reason, but he can command the fire, the water, the winds, the thunders, therefore he is called *the Prince of the powers of the air*; those powers that are in the air he can command. For though it be true that Satan of himself cannot make one sparkle of fire, or so much as one breath of wind, yet if he be let loose and unchain'd, he can go to Gods storehouse of wind and fire, he can go to Gods Magazin of thunder, storms and tempests, he can fetch out such store of all these, and so enrage them, that no man is able to withstand their violence.

1 Tim. 2. 26.

Eph. 2. 2.

The Apostle taxes all natural men, *that they live without God in the world*, that is, they live without a sensible apprehension of the Majesty, of the Power, and Holiness of God, they are not affected with God in the world. I may say in a sence unto many godly men (and it may be a reproof unto them) *that they live without the devil in the world*, that is, they have not such apprehensions of the power, and policy, and sleights of Satan, as they ought to have. We do not know, or apprehend as we ought, and as we might, who the Devil is, or what his power is. I do not speak this, as if I would have any meditate and pore upon the power of Satan, so as to be afraid of him, that's no part of my intent: but it is for this end, that our hearts might be raised up to bless God, who doth bind up such an enemy, and bound such a power, who if he were let alone, would do us mischief an hundred times in a day: Nay he would unquiet and unsettle the whole world. This is the reason why we should consider the power and policy of Satan, to bless God, who stops the mouth of this Lyon, so that he cannot stir to do that mischief, unto the which his nature doth at once incline and inable him.

Eph. 2. 2.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,
And said, Naked came I out of my Mothers womb; and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord.
In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

THese three verses contain the third Division of the Chapter, as we shewed in the Analysis of it. We have seen in the first, the character of *Job* in his prosperous

eſtate, and the deſcription of his proſperity. We have ſeen his afflictions in the cauſes, in the time, in the inſtruments, in the matter, and in the manner of inflicting them. In this third part we have the carriage of *Job*, how *Job* took it, how he behaved himſelf in this ſad condition. And likewiſe how God took it that *Job* did ſo behave himſelf. So then,

We may note two things in the general out of theſe three verſes.

1. We have the carriage of *Job*, his behaviour.
2. We have the teſtimony of God concerning his carriage and behaviour.

The carriage and behaviour of *Job* is laid down, *verſe* 20, 21. And concerning his carriage, the Text gives us to conſider,

1. What *Job* did.
2. What *Job* ſaid.

Firſt, What he did, and that is in the 20. verſe, and there we find mentioned five diſtinct actions of *Job* upon the receiving of the relation of his affliction.

1. *He aroſe.*
2. *He rent his mantle.*
3. *He ſhaved his head.*
4. *He fell down upon the ground.*
5. *He worſhipped.*

Secondly, What he ſaid, and that is in the 21. verſe, *And he ſaid, Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked*, &c.

His ſayings contain two ſtrong and undeniable argumental Propoſitions, and one clear Concluſion, flowing naturally from them both, or from either of them; by which he doth acquit the Lord in his afflicting of him, and alſo ſupport and ſtrengthen his own ſoul under thoſe afflictions.

The teſtimony of God concerning *Job*'s carriage is in the 22. *verſ.* The Lord comes in, as it were, like an *Umpire* to determine who got the day, which is reſolved when he ſaith, *In all this* Job *ſinned not, nor charged God fooliſhly.* Theſe words expreſly ſet the Laurel of Victory upon the head of *Job*. Satan undertook that *Job* (if touched) would curſe God; now ſaith God, look upon him touch'd, ſee what he hath done, examine all his actions that are paſt, obſerve what he hath ſpoken, weigh every word that hath come out of his mouth in the ballance of truth and reaſon, and when thou haſt done both, tell me whether he hath yet curſed me. I pronounce, that in all he hath done, in all he hath ſaid, *Job hath not charged God fooliſhly.* That in the general for the ſum of the Context, and for the parts of it.

To begin firſt with what *Job* did, his actions.

Then Job aroſe and rent his mantle, &c.

Then] *Job* ſtood out the three former aſſaults unmoveably, but when he had received the fourth, then his bowels were moved, *And then*, &c.

Job **aroſe.**] This was his firſt action. To ariſe is properly an act of one that ſitteth; he is ſaid to ariſe, that before did ſit or lie. But yet in Scripture to ariſe, is not alwayes taken ſo ſtrictly, neither is it in this place. To ariſe, in the Scripture language notes two things. Firſt, the ſpeedineſs of doing a thing: when a man doth a thing inſtantly or preſently, he is ſaid to ariſe to do it, to ariſe and do it, though he were ſtanding or walking before. This is an Hebraiſm, *He aroſe and rent his mantle*, that is, *He preſently rent his mantle* upon the hearing of theſe *meſſages*, eſpecially the laſt. And ſo you have the word in divers places, as *Judg.* 20. 18. *The Children of* Iſrael *aroſe, and went to the Houſe of the Lord*; that is, they went preſently up to the Houſe of the Lord, 2 *Sam.* 14. 31. *Then* Joab *aroſe and went to Abſolom*; the meaning is only this, that upon the receiving of that Meſſage, he went with ſpeed, he made no delayes: And *Nehem.* 2. 18. when *Nehemiah* exhorted them to the great work of building the Houſe of the Lord, the people ſhewing their willingneſs and readineſs, expreſt it thus, *Let us riſe up and build*, that is, let us build (as we ſay) out of hand, ſpeedily.

Secondly, *To ariſe*, implies the courage, conſtancy and ſtrength of thoſe who undertake or go about a buſineſs, they ariſe and do it, that is, they do it with ſpirit: So here it may import as much concerning *Job* in his ſufferings, *He aroſe and rent his mantle*, that is, though he heard all theſe ſad relations, yet his ſpirit was not overwhelmed, he was not drowned in thoſe ſorrows, he did not ſink down under them, but *he aroſe and rent his mantle*, &c. as if he had raiſed himſelf up to wreſtle with the temptation and the tempter, to wreſtle with Satan himſelf. In this ſenſe the Lord is ſaid to riſe, *Iſa.* 33. 8, 9. where there is that ſad deſcription of the Land, *The Earth mourneth and languiſheth*, Lebanon *is aſhamed*, &c. *now will I riſe, ſaith the Lord, now will I be exalted*; that is, *now will I come and ſhew my ſelf with a mighty power for the deliverance of my people.* I will be exalted, and they ſhall rejoyce. That Prayer of the old Church, *Ariſe, O Lord, and let thine enemies be ſcattered*, hath the ſame intendment, deſiring the Lord to go forth armed with ſtrength for the help of his people and the ſubduing their enemies. Thus *Job* aroſe, bound with a fourfold cord of affliction: he raiſed himſelf up like *Sampſon*, though in humility, yet with ſtrength and courage. And ſo it is oppoſed to the ſinking of the ſpirit under troubles, as you know the ſpirit of *Eli* did, 1 *Sam.* 4. 18. There was ſad tidings brought to *Eli* concerning the death of his Sons, and the taking of the Ark; the Text ſaith, *As ſoon as he heard theſe things, he fell down backward*, he had no ſpirit, no ſtrength left in him, he did not ariſe and rend his garment, but he ſunk down and brake his neck. When *Nabal* heard of the danger that his churliſh and inhoſpitable anſwer had almoſt drawn upon him, 1 *Sam.* 25. 37. *His heart died within him, and he became as a ſtone.* When all that *Job* had, was dead and gone, his heart lived, yea he was (*erecto animo*) of a raiſed ſpirit, not only when he aroſe, but when he fell upon the ground: for then he worſhipped, and worſhip is the lifting up of the ſoul to God: *In the worſhip of God while the body is upon the knee, the mind is or ought to be upon the wing.*

And rent his mantle.] That is the ſecond act. Renting of garments is very often ſpoken of in Scripture, and we find it eſpecially in theſe two caſes. In caſe of extream ſorrow, and in caſe of extream indignation.

In caſe of extream ſorrow, and that of two kinds; either in the ſorrows of afflictions, or in the ſorrows of repentance; in both theſe we find renting of the garments.

For the ſorrows of outward affliction; ſo we read frequently of renting garments: When *Jacob* heard of the death of *Joſeph*, when his Sons brought him home the *bloody Coat*, ſaying (but falſely) *that ſurely their brother was torn with wild beaſts*; he preſently *rent his garment.* And when the relation of the death of *Saul* was brought to *David*'s ear, to expreſs his ſorrow, *He took hold on his clothes and rent them, and likewiſe all the men that were with him:* And ſo again afterward at the funeral of *Abner*, David *rent his clothes*, and gave order to all the people that were with him to do the like. In great funerals or fatal mournings, it was uſual among the Hebrews *to rent their garments.* This alſo was a frequent cuſtom among the Heathen, as the Poet deſcribes a Mourner in his mixt lamentations for private and publick loſſes; he went with his garments torn, being aſtoniſhed at the death of his Wife and the ruine of the City. Many ſuch Inſtances there are amongſt their ancient Hiſtorians.

Gen. 37. 34

2 Sam. 1. 11.

2 Sam. 3. 31.

—*It ſciſſa veſte* Latinus, *Conjugis attonitus fatis urbiſque ruina.* Vir. Æn. 12

Herodotus l. 1. records the like geſtures among the *Lacedemonians.* And *Livy* among the *Sabines. l.* 1. 2 Chron. 34. 20.

Secondly, It was uſed in token of Repentance, when ſorrows for ſin brake forth and multiplied, *Joſh.* 7. 6. When *Joſhua* humbled himſelf upon the defeat, flight and ſlaughter of the *Iſraelites* before *Ai*, it is ſaid, *He rent his clothes, and fell to the earth:* This renting of their garments was in reſpect of the outward affliction, but withall in token of repentance; for *Joſhua* and the people humbled themſelves with faſting. So when the Book of the Law was read to *Joſiah*, and he ſaw how far they had departed from the rule and word of God, it is ſaid, *He rent his clothes, and he was afraid, he humbled himſelf, and his heart was tender before God.*

But it may be objected, that in *Joel* 2. *v.* 13. when we are exhorted to rent the heart, we are ſtopp'd from renting the garment, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*, in the caſe of Repentance.

For anſwer to that I ſay, the *Not* there is not an abſolute prohibition of renting the garment, it is not ſo much a negation, as a direction, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*, that is, *Rent your hearts rather then your garments*, or, *Rent your hearts more then your garments*, or, *be ſure that you rent your hearts whatſoever you do with your garments.* Negations do not alwayes quite deny a thing; In the 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. take an Inſtance for it, where the Apoſtle treating

treating of the preheminence of the Gospel in the new dispensation, saith, *Who hath made us able Ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit.* *Not*, there doth not deny, as if the Ministers of Christ did not speak and publish the letter of the word: for the letter of the word is the vessel wherein the Spirit is contained, and unless we speak the letter to the ear, the Spirit cannot in an ordinary way come into the heart; therefore understand the Apostles meaning thus, *He hath made us able Ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit*; that is, he hath made us Ministers rather of the Spirit then of the letter, or more of the Spirit then of the letter, because of the promise of the plentiful effusion of the Spirit, after the ascension of Christ.

A further Instance we have in that speech of God, *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*; that is, rather mercy then sacrifice. Sacrifice is not rejected, but mercy is preferr'd. So *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*, that is, rather rent your hearts then your garments: For otherwise you find that not only it was lawful (as in the former places) in times of repentance and sorrow to rend the garments, but they are taxed because they did not repent and rend their garments. The not renting the garment is charged as a
Jer. 36. 24. conviction of an unrent heart. When the roll of curses that *Baruch* wrote from the mouth of *Jeremiah* was read before *Jehojakim* and his Courtiers, the King cut the roll with a pen-knife and cast it into the fire, their impenitence is thus described, *Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the King, nor any of his servants, that heard all those words.* As if it had been said, this was a time that called them aloud to rend their garments, to humble themselves and repent before the Lord, when they heard such words as these (cloathed with their own sin and Gods wrath) read unto them; but they did it not; *Yet they were not afraid, neither did they rend their garments.* So then, renting of the garment was used as a ceremony of repentance, as a shadow of godly sorrow; It had nothing in it self to move God, only it testified the greatness of their grief, that their hearts did rend as their garments were rent.

Further, Renting of the garment was used in case of extream indignation. Indignation is anger and sorrow boyl'd up to the height; it is as it were the extract and spirit of them both: And it is stirr'd especially when the ear of a man is filled with a voyce of blasphemy, or his eye with a spectacle of bold transcendent wickedness against the Lord. Word being brought to *Hezekiah* of the blasphemy that *Rabshakeh* had belched out against God, when he heard how
1 King. 19. 1. Isa. 37. 1. he had reproached the *living God*, in saying, *who is the God of* Jerusalem *that he should deliver it out of my hand?* the Text saith, that *Hezekiah* rent his clothes with indignation; that report fill'd him with a mixture of grief and anger; he was grieved that the holy Name of God was blasphemed, he was angry with the blasphemer: these caused holy indignation, and this the renting of his garments.
Acts 14. 13. Thus also when *Paul* and *Barnabas* had restored the Criple at *Lystra*, the superstitious *Lystrians* would have done sacrifice to them as Gods; which when the Apostles *Paul* and *Barnabas* heard of, and saw the preparations (Oxen and Garlands brought to the Gates) for that abominable Idolatry, *They rent their clothes, and run in among the people, saying, Sirs, why do you these things? we also are men of like passions with you.* They rent their clothes with indignation, being grieved and vext to see men so besotted, and God so dishonoured.

This act of *Job* in the Text, renting his garments, may refer to either of these, it may refer to all these. If it be demanded why did *Job* rend his garments? I answer, first, He rent his garments for the greatness of that sorrow that was upon him in regard of his outward affliction. Secondly, He rent his garments, to testifie his deep humiliation under the hand of God, with repentance for all his sins. Thirdly, He rent his garments, being filled with indignation at those blasphemies which Satan suggested to him: This latter I clear thus; you know it was the main design, the very plot of Satan to provoke *Job* to blaspheme God, do this saith he, *Touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.* He did promise this to himself, and did undertake with God to bring *Job* to that height of impatience. If so, then there is no question, but as these messengers of sorrow came to him, so Satan came with them, and pointed every message with this or the like poysonous suggestions. Now see what a Master you serve, now blaspheme God; why shouldest thou make scruple of thinking, or of speaking evil of him, who hath poured out all these evils upon thee? Never stand so much upon his honour, who stands so little upon thy comfort. It is no question but Satan provok'd *Job* in some such manner. He was not wise to promote his own ends, unless he did ply him with temptations to blasphemy. Now *Job* being most sensible of these temptations, it being to him (as afterwards to holy *David*, *Psal.* 42. 10.) as a Sword in his bowels, while the Enemy said unto him, *Where is now thy God*, he arises with indignation and soul-abhorrence of these injections, *rending his garments*, &c. That for the second act. The third follows.

And shaved his head.] Shaving of the head was used sometimes to express sorrow, sometimes to express bondage, and I find it used in Scripture in opposition to both these, *sc.* in times of joy and liberty.

First, Shaving of the head was used as a note of sorrow, *Isa.* 15. 2. The Lord speaking by his Prophet of the great affliction that should come upon the *Jews*, saith, *On all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off*; that is, they shall mourn, that's the meaning of it. And *Isa.* 22. 12. *In that day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness*; that is, to shaving of themselves or cutting off their hair; the meaning of it in joyning baldness and mourning was only this, to shew that there should be extream sorrow and mourning in the Land; *The Lord called to mourning and baldness*, that is, to an exceeding great mourning, such as those mournings used to be when they shaved their heads. And the Prophet puts in this as an aggravation of their sin, that when the Lord called for such *a mourning as was joyned with baldness and shaving the head*; that then there should be *joy and gladness, slaying Oxen, and killing Sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine.* See this more clear, *Jer.* 7. 29. when the Prophet fore-shews the great affliction of *Jerusalem*, he thus bespeaks them, *Cut off thine hair, O* Jerusalem, *and cast it away, and take up a lamentation.* To add one instance more, *Mic.* 1. 16. In case of their sore affliction, the Prophet saith, *Make thee bald and pole thee for thy delicate Children, enlarge thy baldness as the Eagle:* The meaning of all is, mourn bitterly, or mourn greatly for thy delicate Children; thy delicate and sweet Children they are destroyed, mourn greatly for them, *enlarge thy baldness as the Eagle*; As the *Eagle*, because the *Eagle* (as Naturalists observe) casteth her feathers, and her head is many times quite bald, therefore it is said here, *enlarge thy baldness as the Eagle*, that is, be exceeding bald, cut off all thy hair in that great mourning. We may illustrate this by a contrary rule given by this Prophet *Jeremy*, and likewise by *Ezekiel*, when mourning was forbidden, *Jer.* 16. 6. where he speaks of some that should die and have none to mourn for them, he saith, *They shall not lament for them, nor make themselves bald for them*, Ezek. 24. 17. *Make no mourning for the dead*; what followeth? *Bind the tire of thine head upon thee*; when they should keep on their hair, their tire, that was an argument that there was no mourning.

Further we find, that the cutting off the hair, the shaving of the head, was a sign of bondage and reproach. When
2 Sam. 10. 4. *David* sent Messengers to *Hanun*, *Samuel* records, that *Hanun* took the Messengers *and shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle*, and the men were exceedingly ashamed; now the shame was not only because their beards were half cut off; for if that had been all, they might quickly have cut off the other half, and have delivered themselves from the shame; for they were at liberty: but it is therefore said that the men were greatly ashamed, because amongst them it was a mark of shame and slavery to be shaven. Hereupon *David* giveth order *that they should tarry at* Jericho, *till their beards were grown*; it was a dishonour to be shaved: And it is noted in *Plutarch* concerning *Demosthenes*, that when he had a mind to sit close at his study, and would not go abroad, or be interrupted by visits of friends at home, that he would shave himself, that so he might be ashamed to go forth or see any body, but be constrained to keep to his Book for two or three months together, till his hair were grown again: The bondage and reproach that *Nebuchadnezzar* brought upon *Tyrus* is thus described, *Every head was made bald.* And *Aristotle* observes, that the hair
Ezek. 29. 18. *Crinis est libertatis argumentum.* Arist. 1. Rhetor.

was a token of liberty. Thus the ſhaving of the head in *Job* might be a ſign both of his ſorrow and great reproach that was come upon him, being one now that was ready to be mocked and made the ſcorn and by-word of the world, as we ſee afterward he was, during this affliction.

Yet it is conſiderable from Scripture example, that the cutting off the hair, and ſhaving of the head, had not alwayes either of theſe ſignifications hitherto diſcuſs'd, but did vary according to the diverſity of places and of times. In the Book of *Geneſis*, we read that cutting and ſhaving of the hair, was a token of joy and liberty both together. When *Joſeph* was delivered out of priſon, it is ſaid, *That he ſhaved himſelf, and came to* Pharaoh. And it is noted concerning *Mephiboſheth*, as a matter of his ſorrow for *David*'s abſence, that he let his hair grow. *He trimmed not his beard*, being much troubled at the Kings abſence. I confeſs neither of theſe Inſtances come home enough to the point: both of theſe neglecting the care and culture of their bodies in their troubles, now being delivered, prepare themſelves by ſhaving and trimming the hair for the preſence of thoſe Kings. But in ſome Nations, ſhaving hath been a mark of Honour; All the *Roman* Emperors were ſhaved, till *Nero*. And it was an ancient Proverb, *Thou art a ſlave, for thou wearest locks or long hair.*

Gen. 41. 14.

2 Sam. 19. 24.

Aul. Gel. l. 3 c. 4. Servus es & comam habes.

There is an Objection that may be made concerning this act of *Job*, (becauſe afterward it is ſaid, *That in all this* Job *ſinned not*) whether or not *Job* might ſhave his head without ſin? for you have an expreſs rule to the contrary, *Lev. 19. 27. chap. 21. 5. You ſhall not round the corners of your heads, neither ſhalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.* And ſo you have it again in *Deut. 14. 1.* that they ſhould not *cut their hair, or make any baldneſs upon their heads for the dead*, namely, by ſhaving or cutting off the hair. How is it therefore here that *Job* ſhaved himſelf for the death of his children, and in regard of thoſe great troubles that were upon him?

I anſwer briefly for that, firſt, *Job* lived (as we have cleared when we ſpake of the book in general) before that Law was given, which did prohibit the cutting of the hair in that manner.

Secondly, It appears in thoſe places, where thoſe Laws are ſet down, that the Lord did forbid only conformity to the Heathen; they muſt not ſhave or cut themſelves, as the Heathen did, who cut their heads round like a globe (as it is obſerved concerning them) and were wont to dedicate their locks to their Idol-gods. That vain faſhion and groſs ſuperſtition were the things forbidden in that Law of *Moſes*.

Vovebant cincinnos in honorem deorum. Heſych.

Thirdly, Though the *Jews* were forbidden to ſhave their heads, as mourning for the death of their friends; yet (in the judgment of learned *Junius*) the ſhaving of their heads was not only permitted, but commanded in caſe of mourning for ſin, or in times of ſolemn repentance and humiliation. He inſtanceth in two places before mentioned. Firſt, The Prophet *Iſaiah* reproving the unſeaſonable mirth and deſperate ſecurity of the *Jews* in a time of publick trouble and treading down, tells them, *In that day did the Lord God of Hoſts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloath*, Iſa. 22. 12. Secondly, There is counſel given anſwerable to that reproof by the Prophet *Micah*, chap. 1. 16. *Make thee bald, and pole thee for thy delicate children, enlarge thy baldneſs as the Eagle, for they are gone into captivity from thee.*

Etſi calvitium induci pro mortuo interdictum eſt in lege, tamen certum eſt in ſanctæ reſipiſcentiæ calvitium probari atque imperari. Jun. *in* Iſa. 22. 12.

We will obſerve ſomething from theſe two actions, the renting of his garments, and the ſhaving of his head. Theſe refer to the expreſſion of his ſorrow for thoſe loſſes in eſtate and the death of his Children: As the other two actions, his falling upon the ground and worſhipping refer to the expreſſion of that homage and honour that he tendred up to God in the midſt of theſe ſorrows. From thoſe two acts of ſorrow learn we,

First, *That when the hand of God is upon us, it becometh us to be ſenſible of it, and to be humbled under it.*

Job hearing theſe ſad relations, doth not ſtand out ſtoutly, as if nothing had touch'd him: but to ſhew that ſorrow did even rend his heart, he rent his garments; to ſhew that his affliction touch'd his ſpirit, he ſhav'd his head. There are two extreams that we are carefully to avoid in times of affliction; and the Apoſtle doth caution all the Sons of God againſt them both in one verſe, *Heb. 12. 5. My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* Thoſe are the two extreams, *deſpiſing and fainting* when God doth correct. He would not have us deſpiſe his chaſtening, to ſay, I do not regard this, let God take all if he will: If my eſtate muſt go, let it go; if my children die, let them die; this is a *deſpiſing of the chaſtening of the Lord*, and God cannot bear it, that we ſhould bear it thus lightly. There is another extream, that is, *fainting*: If when goods are taken away, the heart be taken away; and when children die, then the ſpirit of the Parent dies too; *this is fainting.* Take heed of theſe two extreams. *Job* walks in the middle, in the golden mean between them both. He doth not careleſly deſpiſe, neither doth he unbelievingly faint: he riſeth up, and he rents his garments. He would have it known that he fainted not under the ſtroke, and he would have it known that he felt the ſtroke; he was not like a ſtock or a ſtone, he would not carry it with a Stoical apathy, but with Chriſtian fortitude and magnanimity. Senſleſs ones are taxed, *Jer. 5. 3. Thou haſt ſtricken them, and they have not grieved.* Such are compared by *Solomon to him that lies down in the midſt of the Sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a maſt*; ſecure and careleſs in the greateſt dangers. *They have ſtricken me, ſhalt thou ſay, and I was not ſick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*, Prov. 23. 34, 35. The Prophet *Hoſea* reproves the like; *Strangers* (ſaith he) *have devoured his ſtrength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth it not*, ch. 7. 9. That is, he is in an afflicted, in a declining condition, and yet he layeth it not to heart. A man may out of the greatneſs of his ſpirit (but not out of the careleſneſs of his ſpirit) ſay as *Luther* once did, when things went very ill, *If the World will go thus, let it go thus.* Otherwiſe it is a moſt unbecoming temper to be ſtricken of God, and not to tremble, at leaſt to take it to heart. When God afflicteth us, then we ſhould afflict our ſelves, and be humbled: when Gods hand is upon us, our hands (in this ſence) ſhould be upon our ſelves: We muſt bear our croſs upon our backs, we muſt not make a fire of it to warm our hands. Indeed the Apoſtle exhorts to *rejoyce in tribulation*, and it is an excellent thing to rejoyce in tribulation; but we muſt not ſlight, much leſs make a ſport of tribulation. Rejoycing ariſeth from a holy ſatisfaction that the ſoul hath in the dealings of God with us: But ſleighting ariſeth from an unholy contempt, or at the beſt from a ſtupid inſenſibleneſs of Gods dealings with us. The former hath in it the height of wickedneſs, and the latter hath not the leaſt degree of goodneſs. *It is no vertue to bear what we do not feel.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That in times of affliction we may expreſs our ſorrows by outward geſtures, by ſorrowful geſtures.*

Job was not only ſorrowful, but he acts ſorrow, he puts himſelf into mourning poſtures, he rents his garments, he ſhaves his head, down he falleth upon the ground. It is no hypocriſie to appear what we are: it is hypocriſie to appear what we are not. We uſe to ſay, he mourneth truly that mourneth without a garment; but if a man mourn in truth, a mourning garment is comely. To mourn in our clothes, and laugh in our ſleeves, is both ſinful and baſe. Now *Job* mourned indeed; the ſhaving his head, and renting his garment, was but to keep an outward correſpondence with what he was within. Therefore take heed of cenſuring thoſe, who in great ſorrows uſe ſorrowful geſtures, ſtriking upon their breaſts, tearing their hair, or the like. Only let all take heed of exceſſive and immoderate mourning; mourn not like *Rachel*, who would receive no comfort; mourn not like the Heathen, who had no hope. To be above paſſions will be our happineſs in Heaven, to rectifie paſſions is much of our happineſs on earth: To be without natural affections, is to fall below a man; to ſteer and mannage them, is one of the heights of a Chriſtian.

Thirdly, We ſhewed, that this renting of his garments might have reference to his repentance: whence note,

That when God afflicteth us with ſufferings, we ought to afflict our ſelves, to humble our ſouls for ſin.

Smarting times are good repenting times, and worldly ſorrow ſhould get the company of godly ſorrow. It is not

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safe to be alone with worldly sorrow, that works death; but if we mingle a few tears for sin, and our unkindness to Christ with those tears, then they will refresh us. We get by losses in our outward estate, when they lead us to look to the losses, and repair the breaches of our spiritual estate. No question but *Job* at this time fell a searching of his heart, and a trying of his wayes, renewing his repentance, and assuring of his peace with God. When afflictions cause us to return thus into our own breasts, they have then a sweet influence, a blessed operation upon us.

Lastly, Observe, *That thoughts of blasphemy against God should be cast off, and rejected with the highest indignation.*

Job rent his garments, when Satan sollicits *Job* to rent the name of God with reproach and cursings. Thoughts dishonouring God must needs be vexing to every good heart. Nothing touches a godly man, like that which touches God. When the glory of God is engaged and concern'd, he cannot contain. So much for those two acts, *He rent his garments, and he shaved his head.*

The two other acts are,

1. He falleth upon the ground. 2. He worshippeth.] The *Original words* do both signifie a *bowing to the ground*; *He fell upon the ground, and bowed*; so some translate it; you shall see the reason by and by: *He fell upon the ground and worshipped*, that is, *He fell upon the ground to worship.* To fall upon the ground is a gesture of worship; and not only is it a posture of worship, when the worshipper mourns; but it is likewise a posture of worship, when the worshipper rejoyceth. Great joy as well as great sorrow transports a man in his next actions. It is said, *Matth.* 2. 10, 11. that the *wise men*, when they found Christ, *rejoyced with exceeding great joy*, and presently, *they fell down, and worshipped him.* Neither is this posture peculiar to worship in times or upon occasions of extraordinary joy and sorrow, (unless in the degree of it) for the ordinary invitation was, *O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker*, Psal. 95. 6. I said, in the degree, for to fall down is more then to bow down. Falling down in worship proceeds not only from sorrow, but from joy; when the heart is filled with joy, then we fall down and worship. And it is probably * observed, that the ancient Prophets and holy men, the Servants of God, were called *Nephalim* (from *Nephal*, which is the Original word of the Text) *Cadentes* or *Prostrantes*, that is, *prostrates* or *fallers*, because in their worship they usually fell upon the Earth to humble themselves before God. And because adoration was so commonly made by *falling to the ground*, by *bowing the head*, by *bowing the knee*, by *bowing the whole body*, therefore the same Original word which the Hebrews use for *worshipping*, doth properly signifie *to bow down the body*. And that phrase *to bow the body*, as it is often joyned with worshipping; so sometime to bow the body, put alone, doth signifie to *worship*, 2 Kings 5. 18. *When I bow my self in the house of* Rimmon, *scil. when I worship*, &c. So likewise the Greek word to *worship* hath the same sence in it, for that word signifies (as a learned Writer observes upon it) *to bow after the manner of dogs, that crouch at the feet of their Masters for favour, or for fear.* So in *worship*, the people of God *crouch down and abase themselves at Gods feet*, as not worthy in themselves to eat the *crumbs* under his *Table*.

* *Bolduc in loc.*

וישתחו a radice שחה

προσκυνέω Quod est more catellorum ad pedes alicujus, tanquam Domini totum sese prosternere subjectionis gratia. Zanch.

Yet we are not to look upon this, as if it were the only true and acceptable worship-gesture; for we shall find in Scripture, that there were worship-gestures with which God was well pleased. Some have worshipped God standing, some sitting, some walking; all these are worship-postures. For standing, we find it, 1 *King.* 8. 22. at the Dedication of the Temple; *Solomon stood before the Altar of the Lord, and made that Prayer.* For sitting, we have, 2 *Sam.* 2. 18. When *Nathan* brought that Message unto *David*, concerning the building of the House of God, that it should be deferred till his Sons time, the Text saith, That *David went in, and sate before the Lord, and said, Who am I, O Lord?* And in the end, he saith, *Therefore have I found in my heart to pray this prayer unto thee.* We also find walking in Prayer, *Gen.* 24. 63. *Isaac went into the field to pray.* He walked and prayed; we translate it, to *meditate*; but in the margin of your books, you find it, to *pray*, as being nearer the Hebrew. So that walking, and sitting, and standing, are likewise praying-gestures, or postures of holy worship: But chiefly that posture of bowing down the body, or bending the knee, is the worship-posture; so it follows in the Text.

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He fell upon the ground, and worshipped.

And worshipped.] To worship, is to give to any one *the honour due unto him*: So the rendring unto God that *Love*, that *Fear*, that *Service*, that *Honour* which is due unto him, is the *worshipping of God*; that is the Scripture-definition, *Psal.* 29. 2. *Give unto the Lord the honour due unto his Name*: Then follows, by way of exposition, *Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness*; that is, *in his holy Temple, in his beautiful Sanctuary*, or, *in the comely honour of his Sanctuary.* So that *worship* is the tendring of honour to the Lord, in a way honourable to him; namely, according to his own will and laws of worship: which is intimated by coming to *worship him in his beautiful Sanctuary*, where all things about the Service of God were exactly prescribed by God. And then there was *beauty* or *comely honour* in the *Sanctuary*, when all things were ordered there by the rule of his prescription; varying and departing from which, would have filled that holy place with darkness and deformity, notwithstanding all the outward lustre and beauty had been preserved.

The worship of God is twofold; there is *internal worship*, and there is *external worship*. *Internal worship*, is to *love God*, to *fear God*, and to *trust upon him*; these are acts of *inward worship*, these are the sum of our duty, and Gods honour, contained in the first Commandment: And so you may understand worship in the Text: *Job fell down and worshipped*; that is, presently upon those reports, he put forth an act of love and holy fear, acts of dependance and holy trust upon God, in his Spirit, saying to this effect within himself, *Lord, though all this be come upon me, yet I will not depart from thee, or deal falsly in thy Covenant. I know thou art still the same* Jehovah, *true, holy, gracious, faithful, all-sufficient*; *and therefore behold me prostrate before thee, and resolving still to love thee, still to fear thee, still to trust thee*; *thou art my God still, and my portion for ever. Though I had nothing left in the world, that I could call mine, yet thou, Lord, alone art enough, yet thou alone art all.* Such doubtless was the language of *Job*'s heart, and these were mighty actings of *inward worship*.

Then likewise there is *external worship*, which is the sum of the second Commandment, and it is nothing else but the serving of the Lord according to his own Ordinances and institution, in those several wayes wherein God will be honoured and served; this is outward worship; and as we apply our selves unto them, so we are reckon'd to worship God. *Job* worshipped God outwardly by *falling to the ground*, by *pouring out supplications*, and by *speaking good words of God* (as we read afterward) words tending to his own abasement, and the honour of God, clearly and fully acquitting and justifying the Lord in all those workes of his Providence and dispensations towards him.

This is worship both internal and external. Internal worship is the chief; but God requireth both: and there is a necessity of joyning both together, that God may have honour in the world. Internal worship is compleat in it self, and pleasing unto God without the external: The external may be compleat in it self, but is never pleasing to God, without the internal. Internal worship pleases God most, but external honours God most; for by this God is known, and his Glory held forth in the world. External worship is Gods Name. Hence the Temple was called *the place where God put his Name*, sc. *his worship*; by which God is *known*, as a *man*, by his *name*: *They that worship God, must worship him in spirit and in truth*: *In spirit*; that is, with inward love and fear, reverence and sincerity. *In truth*; that is, according to the true rule prescribed in his word. Spirit respects the inward power, Truth the outward form. The former strikes at hypocrisie, the latter strikes at Idolatry: The one opposes the inventions of our heads, the other, the looseness of our hearts in worship.

Observe further, that it is only said, *Job fell down and worshipped*; nothing is said of the Object to whom he did direct his worship, or whom he did worship. The Object is not exprest, but understood, or presupposed,

ſuppoſed: And indeed worſhip is a thing ſo proper and peculiar to God, that when we name worſhip, we muſt needs underſtand God; for nothing but God, or that which we make a god, is, or can be worſhipped. Either he is God whom we worſhip, or (as much as in us lies) we make him one. What Creature ſoever ſhares in this honour, this honour *(ipſo facto)* ſets it up above, and makes it more then a Creature.

The very Heathens thought every thing below a God, below worſhip: therefore there needed not an expreſſion of the Object. When the Text ſaith, *Job worſhipped*, that implies his worſhip was directed unto God; yet there is a kind of worſhip which is due to Creatures.

There is a Civil worſhip mentioned in Scripture, as well as Divine worſhip. Civil worſhip may be given to men. And there is a twofold Civil worſhip (ſpoken of in Scripture.) There is a *Civil worſhip of duty*, and there is a *Civil worſhip of courteſie*: That of duty, is from Inferiors to their Superiors, from Children to their Parents, from Servants to their Maſters, from Subjects to Kings and Magiſtrates. Theſe gods muſt have Civil worſhip; as, *Gen.* 48. 11. When *Joſeph* came into the preſence of *Jacob* his Father, *he bowed down to the ground*; this was a Civil worſhip, and a worſhip of duty, from an Inferiour to a Superiour. And it is ſaid of the Brethren of *Judah*, *Gen.* 49. 8. When *Jacob* on his Death-bed bleſſed the twelve Tribes, *Thy Brethren ſhall worſhip thee*, or, *bow down to thee*. It is the ſame word uſed here in this Text. *Judah*'s honour was to wield the Scepter; the *government was laid upon his ſhoulders*: now he being the chief Magiſtrate, all the reſt of the Tribes, all his Brethren muſt worſhip him, or give Civil honour unto him.

Secondly, There is likewiſe a *worſhip of Courteſie*; which is from Equals: when one Equal will bow to another, or when a Superiour (as ſometimes in courteſie he will) bows down or worſhips his Inferiour: As it is noted concerning *Abraham*, that when he came before the men of the Countrey of *Heth*, he *bowed himſelf*; now *Abraham* was the Superiour, he was a *Prince* and a *Great man*; yet coming before the men of the Countrey, *he bowed himſelf*: and it is the ſame word. Gen. 23. 12.

So then this Civil worſhip may lawfully be given unto men: But as for Divine worſhip, that is proper and peculiar unto God; that Glory he will not give to graven Images, Man or Angel, and therefore we muſt not. Hence we find, that when *Cornelius* and *John* did act their Civil worſhip a little too far, they were preſently taken off, for fear they ſhould intrench upon the Divine worſhip. Civil worſhip, when it is exceſſive, and goeth too far, is ſinful; as in *Acts* 10. 25. *Luke* relates, that as ſoon as *Peter* came in, *Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet, and worſhipped him*: the worſhip was to *Peter*; for we are not to think that *Cornelius* was ſo groſly ignorant, as to take *Peter* for a god, and to give him Divine worſhip; but the meaning of it is, that he fell down at his feet, and gave him an honour and reſpect beyond what he ought to have done, he was exceſſive in it; therefore *Peter* takes him off: *Stand up* (ſaith he) *I my ſelf alſo am a man*; I am a man as thou art, though an Apoſtle, give me ſuch reſpect as becometh a Miniſter of Chriſt; take heed that you give me no more then belongeth to a man. So the Angel, *Rev.* 22. 8. When *John falleth down at his feet and worſhippeth*, he takes him up; *See thou do it not*, ſaith he, *for I am thy fellow-ſervant*: This is too much for man, *worſhip God*, as it is in the end of the Verſe; ſuch worſhip belongeth properly and peculiarly unto God.

So much for the opening of theſe two latter actions of *Job* in reference unto God. We ſhall now give you ſome Obſervations. *He fell down upon the ground, and worſhipped.* You ſee how *Job* divides himſelf and his Affections in this time of his affliction; part he beſtowed upon his Children and Servants, and Loſſes, they ſhall have his ſorrow and tears; *He rent his mantle, and ſhaved his head*; but they ſhall not have all: God ſhall have the better part, his love, his fear, his truth, his body to bow to him, and his ſoul to worſhip him. Learn from hence,

Impendit liberis & ſervis luctum, Deo proſtrationem & adorationem Pined. in loc.

That, *A godly man will not let Nature work alone, he mixes or tempers acts of Grace with acts of Nature.*

We muſt not *ſorrow as thoſe that are without hope* (ſaith the Apoſtle) qualifie ſorrow with hope; theſe mixt, do well. A man muſt not ſorrow for outward things, as though we had nothing elſe to do, but to ſorrow; he muſt remember he hath a God to worſhip and honour. *Job* beſtows ſomewhat upon his Children, but more upon his God; while his body fell to the Earth, his heart was raiſed up to Heaven: *He fell down and worſhipped.*

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *Afflictions ſend the people of God home unto God; Afflictions draw a godly man nearer unto God*: Then *Job fell down and worſhipped.*

Afflictions are a great advantage to the ſervants of God; for when the world frowns moſt, then they beg moſt for the ſmiles of God; when the world is ſtrange to them, and will not look on them, then they get more familiarity, and cloſer communion with God, they ſeek his face. Wicked men in their afflictions, in their ſorrows, are either quite drowned in, and overwhelmed with them, ſo that there is nothing but ſorrow, as we ſay, *a la mort*; or elſe they go out to help themſelves with worldly refreſhments; trouble drives them to ſin, it may be as low as Hell, to ſeek relief. The more poor they are, the more wicked they are; ſuch are not *poor as* Job, *though they are as poor as* Job. *Job*'s poverty ſent him to God, rich in mercy. *He fell down and worſhipped.*

Thirdly, Learn, That, *That the people of God turn all their afflictions into Prayers, or into Praiſes.*

When God is ſtriking, then *Job* is praying; when God is afflicting, then *Job* falls to worſhipping. *Grace makes every condition work Glory to God, as God makes every condition work good to them who have Grace.*

Job *falleth down and worſhippeth*: Whence obſerve,

Fourthly, That, *It becometh us to worſhip God in an humble manner.*

Though God (as we ſhewed before) may be worſhipped in another poſture, yet we ſhould rather chooſe that poſture which is moſt humble, and may lay our bodies as low as our ſouls, if it may be. There were ſome lately amongſt us, who cried aloud, as great Patrons for humble poſtures in worſhip; and all were cenſured for a ſtiffe neck and an Elephants knee, who refuſed to bow with them, or to bow their way. I may well add, their way; for Gods way of bowing, was neither queſtioned, nor refuſed; all their humility in bowing, went but one way; they muſt bow towards the *Eaſt*, and towards the *Altar* at leaſt, if not to it. Some of their ſtomacks, I believe, would have digeſted that before this time, eſpecially, being a little helped with a diſtinction.

Laſtly, We may here obſerve, That, *Divine worſhip it is Gods peculiar.*

Papiſts have worſhip for Creatures, and they have a diſtinction for it, but no Scripture for it. They tell us of *Latria*, which is, they ſay, worſhip proper only to God; and their *Dulia*, which is for Saints; and then their *Huperdulia*, which is for the Virgin *Mary*, and for the Sign of the Croſs. Thus they make vain diſtinctions, which God and the Scripture make not. Vain Diſtinctions are good enough to maintain vain Superſtitions. They that invent a worſhip, muſt invent a Doctrine to maintain it by. Some perhaps may ſtumble at that Text, *Rev.* 3. 9. where this promiſe is made to the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, which ſay they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worſhip before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.*

Obj. May not worſhip then be given to a Creature?

Anſw. This worſhip may be taken for Civil worſhip; namely, for that ſubmiſſion which the Enemies of the Church ſhall be forced by the power of Chriſt to make unto her; as was promiſed by the Prophet, *Iſa.* 60. 14. *The ſons alſo of them that afflicted thee, ſhall come bending unto thee; and all they that deſpiſed thee, ſhall bow themſelves down at the ſoles of thy feet.*

Anſw. 2. If this be Divine worſhip, then worſhipping at the feet of the Church, notes worſhipping in the Church, not worſhipping of the Church. The worſhip is not terminated in the Church, but in Chriſt; who dwells and rules in the Church, who is both Head and Husband of the Church.

Church. These enemies being convinced of the presence of Christ in his Church, shall worship him. This *David* propheſies of Christ, speaking in his own person, *Ps.*18.43, 44. *Thou hast made me the head of the Heathen, a people whom I have not known shall serve me; as soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me; the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.* That of the Apostle, will more illustrate this sence; who, speaking of the great benefit of propheсying in a known tongue, concludes his Discourse thus; *If all propheſie, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all. And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will WORSHIP God, and report that God is in you of a truth.* The worship then is not given to the Church, but to God, who in such Ordinances, or other acts of his power and goodness, is evidently revealed, as present in the Church.

So much for the actions or gestures of *Job*, what he did: *He rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped.*

Now we come to his words, to that which *Job* spake, in the two last Verses.

Verse 21. **Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither.**
Verse 22. **The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh, blessed be the name of the Lord.**

Words are, or ought to be the Interpreters of the heart, and the comment of our actions. This speech of *Job*, doth indeed interpret his heart, and expound the meaning of his former actions. This speech (I say) of *Job* is the true comment of his own actions; for some seeing *Job renting his garments*, and *shaving his head*, and *casting himself down upon the ground*, they might not know the meaning of all this; they could not read his heart in these strange behaviours; they might not understand what his intentions were; probably they might judge that he was enraged and mad, that he was distracted or drunk with sorrow; that he was either desperate or impatient at the report of those losses. Therefore now to confute all such surmizes, he speaks forth *the words of truth and soberneſs*. And by that which he saith, sets so fair and true a gloss upon his actions, as might then render them, not only rational and ingenuous, but holy and gracious in the eyes of all men, as they were before in the eyes of God, who knew his heart. Satan was now like the servants of *Benhadad* before *Ahab*, watching for words; he had done his business, and now he was trying how it would work, what the event and issue would be; he hearkned when some irreverent speech should come from the mouth of *Job*; he looked presently that he should blaspheme God: he could not but smile surely, when he saw him renting his garments, and shaving his head, and falling down on the ground: O now it works! I shall hear him blaspheme and curse God presently. He that is thus distempered in the carriage of the other members of his body, will not surely be able long to rule (that unruly piece) his tongue. One undutiful or dishonourable word cast upon God, would have been musick to Satans ear, and joy to his heart; he would have catched it up as nimbly, as the men before spoken of, did *Brother Benhadad*, from the mouth of *Ahab*. But how blank look'd Satan? how was he cloathed with shame, at the fall of those words from *Job*? *Naked came I out of my mothers womb*, &c.

What *David* spake concerning the words of his Enemies, (Psal. 55.25. *Their words were smoother then butter, but war was in their heart; they were sweeter then honey, and softer then oyl, yet were they drawn swords*) we may speak of these words of *Job*, considered in reference unto Satan, and in reference unto God. These words of *Job* in reference unto God were as sweet as honey, as smooth as butter. For this breath had nothing in it, but meekness and patience, humility and holiness, in all which God delights: but in reference to Satan they were as drawn Swords, as poyson'd Arrows; Satan was hardly ever so smitten before, as he was by these words of *Job*. There is no word in this sentence, but gave Satan the lye, and refuted all his slander. And in the close *Job* gives him the deepest stab of all, it was a Dagger at the very heart of the Devil, when he heard him say, *Blessed be the name of the Lord*. No words could be utter'd upon the longest study, more eros's to Satans expectation, or more answerable to the former testimony of God; and therefore the Lord Crowns all, both his actions and his speeches with a new testimony; *In all this* Job *sinned not nor charged God foolishly.*

So much of *Job*'s words in general, I shall now examine them distinctly in the parts.

Some conceive that *Job* at that time spake out his mind more largely; but that the Holy Ghost, in the penning of this story, did gather and sum up the strength of all his speech into these two conclusions. Beza in l

Naked came I out of my Mothers womb; and naked shall I return thither.
The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

We will consider the words a little, first, in the Grammatical sence of them, and then we will consider the reason of them: For here they are used Logically, as a strong and mighty argument, both for the supporting of his own spirit under those afflictions, and for the justifying and acquitting God in so afflicting him.

Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, &c.

Naked.] There is a twofold Nakedness, there is an internal Nakedness, and there is an external Nakedness; there is a Nakedness of the Soul as well as of the body. The Nakedness of the Soul is, when it is devested of all it's gracious ornaments and endowments. When *Job* saith, *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither*; it referreth especially to the nakedness of the Body: for though it be a truth that *Job* came naked into the world in regard of his Soul, yet he knew he should not go naked out of the world in regard of his Soul. Seeing then he referreth nakedness to his going out of the world as well as to his coming in; therefore it cannot be here meant of an inward nakedness: his Soul came naked in, but he knew his Soul should go out cloathed. Neither can it be meant of a then present spiritual nakedness; for *Job* was never so richly and gorgeously attired in his Soul, never appeared in such glorious ornaments of grace, as when he was stript of all worldly comforts. Therefore the nakedness here is bodily nakedness, that which *Moses* speaks of *Gen.* 2. 25. describing our first Parents, *They were both naked*, saith he, *the man and his Wife, and they were not ashamed.* Yet that nakedness and this which *Job* speaks of (though they were both bodily and external) were very different and unlike: for that nakedness of Creation needed no covering, nakedness was then an ornament. Man was richly attired when he had no garments. The nakedness of Creation was the absence of cloathing, or a not using of cloathes, it was not the want of cloathing. But the nakedness *Job* speaks of, is the nakedness after the Fall properly; where nakedness importeth not only a not having of cloaths, but want of cloathing; and so nakedness is a part of that curse and punishment which followed sin. *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb*, that is, *I came into the world in a sad and miserable condition, weak and poor:* And so nakedness is put not strictly as opposed only to cloathing, but we may take it more largely for the want of all outward comforts whatsoever, *I came a poor destitute creature into the world, I had not only no cloathing upon my back, but I had no comfort for my body; I brought neither Sheep nor Oxen, nor Children nor Servants into the world with me, I had none of these things, nothing to help me of my own, when I first set footing into the world.*

Some Naturalists considering this kind of nakedness, have fallen out into great complaints against Nature, or indeed rather against the God of Nature; as *Pliny* in the Preface to his seventh Book of his natural History, doth as it were chide with Nature for turning man into the world in such a helpless forlorn condition; as if man were dealt with more hardly then any other creature, then any beasts of the Field or fowls of the Air. Other creatures, saith he, come into the world with Hair, or Fleeces, or Bristles, or Scales, or Feathers, or Wings, or Shels, &c. to defend and cover them; but nature casts man naked upon the naked ground. This he spake, not considering that nakedness was once no

Natura nè cerca unum hominem animantium cunctorum, a lenis velat opibus. Cæteres variè tegumenta tribuit, testas, cortices, coria, spinas, villos, setas, pilos, plumam, pennas, squammas, vellera; truncos etiam arboris cortice interdum gemino à frigoribus & calore tutata est, hominem tantum nudum, & in nuda humo natali die abjecit. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 7. in the Preface.

trouble,

trouble, but rather an honour and an ornament; and this he ſpake, not knowing whence or how that kind of troubleſom nakedneſs came into the world: And this he ſpake, not obſerving as he might, how many wayes God had provided for the help and ſupply of that nakedneſs; giving man underſtanding and reaſon, inſtead of weapons and cloathes, which alſo are a means for the procuring of all things neceſſary for the ſupporting of that naked and weak periſhing condition.

שמה h. 3.

Naked ſhall I return thither.] The difficulty that is in this lyeth only in that word *Thither*; the doubt is, what place he means, or whither? What into my Mothers womb? There is no ſuch return, as *Nichodemus* ſaid, *Shall a man that is old go into his Mothers womb, and be born again?* Some anſwer it thus, The Adverbe [*thither*] doth not neceſſarily refer to the literal antecedent: but in Scripture ſometimes Relatives refer to ſomewhat in the mind or in the thought of the ſpeaker, and not to that which was before ſpoken by him; as that of *Mary* ſheweth, *Joh.* 20. 15. when ſhe cometh into the Garden, and finds that Chriſt was riſen; *ſhe meeteth Chriſt, and ſuppoſing him to be the Gardiner,* ſaith unto him, *Sir, if you have born him hence; Him, what him?* There was no antecedent mentioned to which *Him* ſhould relate, only *Maries* mind was ſo full of Chriſt, that ſhe thought every one would underſtand, *what him, or whom* ſhe ſpake of: as if none could ſpeak of or think any thing but of Chriſt only. Therefore ſhe made the relation to that which was in her own ſpirit, and not to what was formerly expreſt. So ſome Interpreters make the [*thither*] to be God or the grave, *I ſhall return unto God, or I ſhall return to the grave, to the houſe of the grave,* as the Chaldee paraphraſe hath it. For they ſuppoſe *Job* had his mind full of thoſe thoughts, therefore he may make a relation to that.

od dicit- nudus ertar il-, intel- gitur in um ſtatum em habuit utero ma- is. Aquin. loc.

Another conſideration for the clearing of it is this, that ſuch Adverbs of place as this is, do not only ſignifie place, but a ſtate or a condition, wherein any one is, or to which any thing or perſon is brought; as it is ordinary in our ſpeech to ſay, *hither have I brought the matter,* that is, *to this ſtate or to this condition*: So when *Job* ſaith, *Naked ſhall I return thither,* that is, *I ſhall return to ſuch a condition or to ſuch an eſtate, as I was naked before, ſo I ſhall return to ſuch a ſtate of nakedneſs again.*

q; novum ut nomen ppvium n figura- eodem filo q; eadem ratione jungatur. nct.

But thirdly, that which may more clearly carry it, the *thither* which *Job* here ſpeaks of may be underſtood of the earth or the grave; *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither*; to the womb of the earth, which is the grave: and ſo there may be in the latter a reference unto the former, taking the one properly, and the other improperly; taking the earth for his Mothers womb, in an improper ſence, *ſc.* the earth which is the common Parent from whence we all came, and to which we all return; the earth ſhall receive and take in all mankind again; when man dyes, the earth opens her bowels and receiveth him in; and which makes her once more a Mother, the earth at laſt being, as it were, with Child, or rather big with Children, ſhall travel in pain, and groaning to be delivered, ſhall by the mighty power of God, bring forth mankind again. There ſhall be a mighty birth from the womb of the earth at the laſt day. In Scripture the reſurrection is called a birth, in the day of the reſurrection mankind is anew begotten by God and mankind is anew, born: that clears it, *Pſal.* 2. 7. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*; which words are applied by *Paul, Act.* 13. 12. to the reſurrection of Chriſt. God hath fulfilled the promiſe made unto the Fathers, unto us their Children, in that he hath raiſed up Jeſus again; as it is alſo written in *Pſalm* 2. *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And as Chriſt, ſo all men, but eſpecially all Chriſtians ſhall be again begotten by the power of God, and born from the womb of the earth in the day of their reſurrection.

agua pa- rs terra . Ovid.

So much for the underſtanding of thoſe words, *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither.*

I ſhall collect ſome Obſervations from them two wayes. Firſt, As they contain a general truth. Secondly, As they are an argument or a reaſon for the ſupport of a man in ſuch a ſad condition as *Job* was then reduced unto. In the former way obſerve,

Firſt, *That every man is born a poor, helpleſs, naked creature.*

The ſoul is naked of all that is good, there is not a rag of grace upon it, when we come into the world. Our bodies are naked too, ſo that we are born with nothing upon us, but only an ugly dreſs of ſin, ſuch as may juſtly make God loath us, and us a terror to our ſelves. *Naked came I into the world*: this one thought well taken in and fully digeſted, will lay pride in the duſt; this thought that we were born thus naked, will ſtrip us of all high and proud thoughts of our ſelves.

Secondly, *Naked ſhall I return.* Note,

When death cometh, it ſhakes us out of all our worldly comforts and poſſeſſions.

Death is called an uncloathing, 2 *Cor.* 5. 4. *We that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be uncloathed,* that is, *not that we would dye.* Death is called an *uncloathing*, becauſe it pulleth all outward things off from a man; it pulleth off all his rayment, his riches, his lands, his honours; yea death uncloathes the very bones, our fleſh wears off quickly in the grave. We have a uſual phraſe among us, and it is a very proper one: when a rich man dies (we ſay) *he left a great eſtate*, he leaves it indeed, for he cannot carry it with him, he muſt go out naked, how well cloathed ſo ever he was while he was here. The Apoſtle doth more then intimate, that ſome rich men do ſcarce believe this for ſound doctrine; he ſpeaks as if he would beat them off from ſome thought of carrying the world with them out of the world; while they live they are buried in their riches, and when they die they hope their riches will be buried with them, yea and riſe with them again. Such a conceit (I ſay) the Apoſtle ſeems to meet with, for in 1 *Tim.* 6. 7. having ſaid, *We brought nothing with us into this world,* he addeth in the next words, *and it is certain we can carry nothing out*; he doth not ſay, *we brought nothing into the world, and we can carry nothing out,* as *Job* here ſpeaks; but as if *Jobs* aſſertion had come into queſtion in *Pauls* time, he ſaith, *we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain,* never doubt of the truth of it, *we can carry nothing out*; we ſhall go out as we came in. *Many,* as the Prophet *Habakkuk* ſpeaks, Chap. 2. 6. *lade themſelves with thick clay*: *But,* as the queſtion there follows, *how long?* This *lading* muſt be laid down again. If riches end not before thee as thine, they muſt end with thee. Yet if any would carry riches and cloathing out of the world, it will be their wiſdom to labour for ſpiritual riches, for ſpiritual cloathing; when ſuch die, as they ſhall not be found naked, ſo they ſhall not go out naked: All your other cloathing and riches muſt be left on this ſide the grave, but get ſpiritual cloathing and riches, and you ſhall go out of the world adorn'd and enrich'd for ever; the cloathing of grace, the robe of righteouſneſs, a veſture of ſpiritual ornaments will endure to all eternity.

Thirdly, Note here further, how the *Holy Ghoſt* deſcribes the life of man, *Naked came I into the world, and naked ſhall I return.*

The life of man is nothing elſe but a coming and a returning.

Here is nothing ſaid of ſtaying or abiding; *We have here no continuing City*; while we are here, we can hardly be ſaid to continue here, and after a few dayes we ſhall not be here at all. It is but a coming and a going, it is but a flood and an ebb, and then we are carried into the *Ocean of eternity.*

We may yet conſider the words as they are an argument (and ſo I ſhall note two things from them). So *Job* uſes them as an argument both to ſupport himſelf, and to acquit God. Then Obſerve,

Firſt, *That a godly man in his ſtraits ſtudieth arguments to acquit and juſtifie God in all his dealings with him.*

Job could not have found out upon longeſt ſtudy a better argument for the acquitting of God then this is: I have as much as I brought, then what wrong is done me in all this? As wicked men when they fall into ſtraits or troubles, eſpecially when they fall into ſin, ſtudy arguments how to ſhift themſelves out, and lay all the blame upon God; as *Adam* and

and *Eve*, our first Parents in Paradise, (there it began) when they had sinned and were naked, they began to devise shifts how to put it from themselves, and to fasten the fault upon God. *David* on the other side labours to clear God, if ever he should be stript naked, *Psal.* 51.4. *I will confess my sin, that thou mayst be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest.* Weigh the reason why *David* confesseth his sin in that *Psalm*, I do it, saith he, that I may by this means acquit God, whatsoever God shall do with me hereafter, whatsoever affliction God shall bring upon me; men it may be will begin to judge God for it, and to say that he hath dealt hardly with me, notice having been taken, what an eminent servant of God I have been. *Behold*, saith he, *I confess my sin before thee, that thou maist be clear when thou judgest*; or as the Apostle *Paul* quotes the place, according to the Septuagint, *Rom.* 3.4. *That thou mightest overcome when thou art judged.* *David* knew men would be apt to judge God, if they saw him afflicted; and therefore to stop their mouths, or to give God the day against them, he confesses his sin; thereby shewing cause why God might chastise him, either for correction of sin past, or prevention of sin to come.

Secondly, As the argument referreth unto *Job* himself, we may Observe this,

> *That the consideration of what we once were, and of what at last we must be, may relieve our spirits in the greatest outward afflictions of this life.*

Art thou for the present in a naked condition? Consider thou wast naked once, and ere long shalt be naked again: Consider the two extreams, the beginning and the ending, and that will bear thee up in the middle condition. There is many a man that complains, and saith, I have nothing but the cloaths upon my back left me, and they are but rags, but mean ones neither: Why! With nothing but the cloaths upon thy back? Know O man thou wast born with nothing but thy skin upon thy back. Consider this, and leave complaining; this was one thought which helped *Job* to bear this burden, the want of all. And the Apostle *Paul* useth this argument to the very same purpose, 1 *Tim.* 6.6. having said, *That godliness with contentment is great gain*; he subjoyns presently this argument of *Job*, for saith he, *we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we shall carry nothing out.* To consider what (not long ago) we were, and what very shortly we must be, will mightily work the soul to contentation in what estate soever we are. It follows,

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.

This is the second argument which *Job* useth to both the former purposes; and it is a more spiritual and sublime argument then the former. A man who hath nothing in him but nature, may say as much as *Job* did before, though he could never say it with *Job*'s spirit; for though godly persons use natural arguments and common reasons, yet being concocted in their spirits, they become heavenly and spiritual. Natural men (I say) or Heathens have taken up such an argument as that; as when word was brought to a Heathen Philosopher, that his Son was dead, *I know* (saith he) *that I begot a Son mortal, and subject to death*; he did but look back to the common condition of man, and supported himself. But now I say this second argument is higher, it is not an argument bottomed upon the frailty of nature, but upon the sovereignty of God: this argument is grounded upon the equity of divine providence and dispensations. *The Lord* (saith he) *hath given, and the Lord hath taken away.*

Scio me mortalem genuisse.

The Lord hath given.] *Every good and every perfect gift is from above*, *James* 1.17. What gifts doth *Job* here mean? He means good and perfect gifts in their kind; but not the best and most perfect kind of gifts. The Lord once gave me those Oxen, those Sheep, all these outward things that now I am stripped of, *The Lord hath given.* A gift is any good freely bestowed; when we receive a thing which another was not ingaged to bestow, that is a gift. Now God doth not only give us those transcendents, grace and glory, faith in Christ here, and the fruition of Christ hereafter: not only are these gifts, I say, sent in from God, and undeserved by us; but outward things, riches and honour, children and servants, houses and lands, these are the gifts of God likewise; we have not the least creature comfort of our own, we have nothing of our own but sin. *What hast thou, that thou hast not received?* is a truth concerning every thing we have, even to a hoof or a shoe-latchet. We are indebted unto God for our spirituals, for our temporals, for all. We must say of all, little or much, great or small, *The Lord hath given.*

How did the Lord give *Job* all his riches and estate?

The Lord doth give either immediately or mediately. When *Job* saith, *The Lord hath given*, we are not to understand it, as if the Lord had brought such a present to him, and said, here take this estate, take these cattle, these servants; but God gave them mediately by blessing the labours of *Job*. So when the Lord prospereth us in our honest endeavours, and labours, and callings, then the Lord giveth us outward things.

The Lord hath given. *Job* doth not say, by my strength and diligence, my policy and prudence, I have got this estate; as the *Assyrian* said, *Isa.* 10.13. *By the strength of my hand have I done this, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent.* *Job* takes no notice of himself; he was not idle, yet he speaks as if he had done nothing, *The Lord hath given.*

This should teach us in the first place to acknowledge the Lord as the fountain and donor of all our outward comforts. When you get wealth, do not say, this I have gotten (such language is barbarous in divinity) but say, this, *The Lord hath given.* We find an expres caution to this purpose given by *Moses* from God, not only against the former language of the tongue, but of the heart; when the Jews should come to *Canaan*, and should grow rich and great there. *When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord. Beware thou forget not the Lord thy God, for the good land which he hath given thee, and say in thy heart, my power, and the might of my hand, hath gotten me this wealth; but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth: It is he that giveth thee power.* Many who are perswaded that God gives them grace, that God gives Heaven and Salvation; are hardly perswaded, or at least do not so well consider it, that God gives riches, *&c.* their hearts are yet ready to say, that they have gotten this wealth, they have gotten this honour. It is a sweet thing when a man looks upward for these lower things, and can say on good grounds, that his earth hath dropt down to him from Heaven, *The Lord hath given.*

Deut. 8.10, 11,17,18.

Further, when *Job* saith, *The Lord hath given*, it is an argument of his own justice and equity in getting: *Job* did not enrich himself by wrong, *by grinding the face of the poor.* If he had done so, he could not have said, *The Lord hath given. So much as we get honestly, we may look upon as a fruit of Gods bounty.* Look into your estates, and whatsoever you have got by wrong dealing, take heed of saying, this is of *Gods giving*, for so you make God himself a partner in your sins. God sometime gives when we use no means, but he never gives when we use unlawful means. What God said concerning the setting up of those Kings, *Hos.* 8.4. *They have set up Kings, but not by me*; he saith of all, who enrich themselves by wrong, *they have gotten riches, but not by me.* When men leave the rule of justice, God leaves them: And though unlawful acts are under the eye of Gods providence, yet they are not under the influence of his blessing. Wicked men thrive often, but they are never blessed; *their prosperity is their curse.*

Thirdly, It is observable, that when *Job* would support himself in the loss of his estate, he calls to mind how he came by his estate; and finding it all given in by the blessing of God upon his honest labours and endeavours, he is satisfied. Note,

> That, *what we get honestly, that we can part with contentedly.*

He that hath got his estate by injustice, can never leave it with patience. Honesty in getting causeth quietness of spirit in loosing outward things. Keep a good conscience in getting the world, and you shall have peace when you cannot keep the world. Whereas a wrong-doer and a wrong-dealer, is in such a day under a double affliction; he is afflicted with his present loss, and he ought to be afflicted for his former gain.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, These words, *the Lord hath given*, being rightly handled, will be as a sword to cut off four monsters or monstrous lusts, which annoy all the world; or as a medicine to cure four diseases about worldly things. Two of these lusts are strongest in the rich; and the other pair assault the poor. The poor pine either with discontent, because they have so little; or with envy, because others have so much. The rich swell with pride, because they have abundance, or they are fill'd with contempt of those that are in want. Let the rich seriously weigh this speech, it will cure them of pride, *Charge them that are rich* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) *that they be not high-minded.* You see how subject rich men are to this inflammation of pride. But with what doth he prick this Bladder? It is with this thought, that God gives all riches; *Let them trust in the living God, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy.* That argument of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *If thou hast received it, why dost thou boast?* is as strong and as true in regard of temporals, as of spirituals. Consider seriously that your estates are the gift of God, and down falls pride. If you come honestly by them, they are the gift of God; if you come dishonestly by them, they are the gifts of Satan; and you ought to be ashamed of them, and restore them, not to boast, or be proud of them.

Then secondly, It will cure the rich of all contempt of others. What the Apostle *James* observed and censured in the rich of those times, is found by too much experience among the rich at this day; *Ye have despised the poor*, chap. 2. 6. Consider it is the Lord who gave, and he gave as a Lord, freely; he might have given thine estate to that poor man, and have left thee in that condition thou so much despisest in thy brother: God gave him as much as his wisdom thought fit; and it seems he hath given thee more then thou art fit for: In despising him, thou dost asperse the dispensation of God, and whilst thou woundest him in his poverty, thou woundest God in his providence. Consider it is the Lord that gives, and then be unconvinced, if you can, that while you contemn man in his wants, you question God in his wisdom; busie thy self hereafter in praising him who gives All, and leave despising him who hath received less.

Then likewise let the poor look upon this Text, and it will cure them of two diseases, into which they often fall, and by which they are much endangered, even in the vitals of Grace; Discontent, and Envy. *It is the Lord that giveth*, that shapes and cuts out your condition, why then should you not be contented with his allowance, and be thankful in your lot? If your estates be proportioned from above, you ought to be content with your portion. Ignorance or Inadvertency from whom we receive, causeth murmuring at what we have. Do not think thou hast less love from God, because thou hast less allowance from God. The power of God is as much acted in making a Fly, as in making an Elephant; and his love may be as much, and is often more acted in giving a penny, then in giving a talent. Know this, thou who art a child of God, if thy portion be but a penny, it hath upon it the Image and Superscription, a Fathers love, which is better then life.

This also will cure the poor of envy: many times the poor have an evil eye of envy at the rich; they cannot bear it, that others have so much, and they so little: Consider, it is the *Lord that giveth.* This argument Christ useth, *Mat.* 15. 20. to him that was angry that they who came at the latter end of the day, had as much as he; *May not I do with mine own what I will? Is thine eye evil, because mine is good?* The envious eye is an evil eye; envy is the disease of the eyes. This Text is one of the best Medicines that ever was prescribed. Wilt thou be sick, because another is in health; and make thy Brothers happiness the ground of thy misery? Do not think that all is lost, which is not cast into thy lap; or that thy estate is less or worse, because thou seest one having a greater, or a better. Must God ask thee leave, or ask thy counsel, how, and in what measure to distribute his favours? Were all but well Catechized in this one Principle, that *God gives all*, it would soon dispel this malignant vapour, and all would rest satisfied, not because they or others have received thus or thus, but because God hath thus *disposed to all.*

Observe one thing more;

If the Lord give us all, then we should be willing to give back somewhat unto the Lord again.

And this consideration that God gives us, will make us willing to give unto God. What is the reason that many are so unwilling to give somewhat unto God? It is because they will not understand that they are beholding to God for all. If they were perswaded of their receipts from him, a little Oratory might perswade a gift from them, in the cause of God; especially when God intreats them, who may of right command them; when he is content to take it as a courtesie, who may send for it by authority, and expect it as a duty. God himself, who fills and enjoyes all things, hath sometimes (in a sense) need of your estates. Christ, who is Lord of Heaven and Earth, is sometimes in want of a penny. Christ tells you of his wants and poverty, *Mat.* 25. and shews how and when he is relieved. And as Christ wants in a Member, some particular Believer; so he often wants in his whole Body; which is the Church, or whole company of Believers. If you have any spiritual wisdom, to discern times and seasons, you may know, that now Christ *wants money* (as I have explained) now God (in his cause) hath need. He goes about (in those who solicit his cause) and asks a relief at every one of your doors. Now then do but consider, when any thing is asked for the Lords sake, that *the Lord gave all*; this will be a key to unlock your chests; this will at once untie your hearts and your purses. Will you let Christ want, shall the cause of God want, while you have it, whereas what you have, *God gave?* It is expres concerning *Nabal*, that this was the reason why he would not part with a loaf of bread to relieve *David* and his Army, 1 *Sam.* 25. 11. *Shall I take my bread and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and send them to a fellow, I know not who?* You see the man was all in his possessives, *my bread*, and *my water*, and *my flesh*; he never thought that God had any share or interest in his estate, that God gave it; therefore he would not give to a servant of God. You shall see on the other hand, how *David's* munificence, and that of the Nobles with him, 2 *Chron.* 29. sprung from this root, the acknowledgment that nothing was their own, it came in all from God; when they had offered so willingly and bountifully towards the building of the Temple, *David* shews the Mine which yielded so much treasure; even this we have digged in all this while: *All things come of thee, and of thine own we have given thee*, vers. 15. They confessed that all came of God, they were but Stewards, he was the Owner; and his own they could not with-hold from him. God giveth us the use of the creature, but he keepeth the right to them in his own hand; when we have the possession of them, he hath the property. Wherefore let the consideration, that God giveth all, make us ready and open-handed to give unto God, when he calleth and requireth it at our hands.

And the Lord hath taken away. When God gives, it is an act of bounty; and when he takes, it is an act of justice; for he is Lord, sovereign Lord in both. But why doth *Job* here charge this upon God? *The Lord hath taken.* Was it not told him by the messengers, that the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans* came and took away his cattel, plundered and pillaged his estate? They told him, that *the fire consumed his Sheep*, and the *wind blew down the house upon his Children*: Why doth *Job* say, *The Lord hath taken?* What! will *Job* charge all those robberies upon God himself? Doth not this look like the blasphemy that the Devil hoped would have come out of *Job's* mouth?

I answer, when *Job* saith, *The Lord hath taken*, it doth but set forth the supream power and sovereignty of God, in ordering all things; and (as we opened before) that God gave the commission to Satan, or leave to spoil him, or else Satan could not have touched one of the dogs of his Flock. *Job* knew that God had all men and Devils, fire and wind, all creatures in his hand. He saith, *the Lord hath taken*; because none could take, but by the will of God; and he was satisfied, that God willed that in righteousness and in judgment, which they acted with so much cruelty and injustice. *Is there any evil in the City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Amos 3. 6. Every evil of affliction or of trouble, is said to be the Lords doing, because it cannot be done without the Lord. Wicked men, in all their plots, and in all their successes, are either the rod of God, to chasten his people for their sins; or else they are as Gods furnace, to try his peoples Graces, and purge them from their sins. Thus the hand of the Lord is in all our sorrows. *The Lord*, saith *Job*, *hath taken away.*

We

We should from hence learn, *In all our afflictions to look beyond the Creature.*

In all the evils we either feel or fear, let our hearts be carried up unto God. As then we rightly enjoy outward blessings, when those blessings carry us up unto God, when, upon creatures, our hearts are raised up to heaven: So then we make a right use of afflictions, of crosses and troubles, when we are led by crosses (in our meditations) unto God. *Job* doth not say, *The Lord hath given, and the* Caldeans *have taken away; the Lord hath enriched me, and Satan hath robbed me*; but, as if he had never made any mention of Satan or *Caldeans*, of fire or wind, he saith, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken.* He doth not fall out with man, or complain of the Devil, he is not angry with chance or fortune, with stars or constellations; many, in the troublesom evils which they suffer, are apt to flie out upon all creatures, and upon all causes, rather then to cast an eye upon God; whereas indeed, we should not take either good or evil out of the hand of any creature. There were some of old, *Marcion*, and his followers, who could not relish this Doctrine, nor endure that we should carry our evils, and lay them before Gods door, and say, *The Lord hath done this:* therefore they found out two beginnings; that is, two Gods, rather then they would make the same God the author of such extreams (as they thought) of good and evil: They said, *there was one God that was a good God, and another an evil God; the one, a giving God, the other, a taking God; the one a loving God, a merciful God; the other, an angry God, a severe God.* Many of the Heathen taught better Divinity then those Hereticks: for they feigned, that their *Jupiter* had two great vessels placed at the entrance of his *Palace*, whereof the one was filled with *Good*, and the other with *Evil*: These he dispensed according to the dictate of his own will, among the sons of men. And they painted *Fortune* in two *forms*, with two *faces* of *contrary colours*, the foremost *white*, the hindermost *black*; to signifie, that *good* and *evil*, which they shadowed under *white* and *black*, come both from *Goddess Fortune:* which comes near that language in the Prophet, *Isa.* 45.7. *I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil.* And we are taught to look upon the same God, as the spring and fountain of all good, and of all this sort of evil. Though it be a truth (as the Apostle speaks) that the *same fountain cannot send forth bitter water and sweet*, take it in a natural or moral sence; yet the same fountain may send forth bitter and sweet, take it in a civil sence; that is, the same may be the author of outward *corrections*, and outward *favours*. God is not the fountain of *good* and *evil* in a moral sence, so nothing but good floweth from him; but take it in a civil sence, and so both good and evil, bitter and sweet come from the same fountain.

Consider the words, as they are an argument, and then see their strength to the purposes, for which *Job* doth especially here apply them: 1. The acquitting or justifying of God. 2. The supporting and comforting of himself: and so we may note from them,

First, That, *The absolute soveraignty of the Lord over us, is enough to acquit him from doing us any wrong, whatsoever he doth with us.*

Job saith only this, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken*: he is the sovereign Lord, therefore I have no reason to complain; he doth it, upon whom I have laid no engagement, upon whom I have no tie at all, to do this or that for me; he doth it who may resolve the reason of all his actions into his own will; *he is the Lord.* God cannot injure his creature; therefore the Apostle hath recourse to that only, in *Rom.* 9. for the answer of all cavils and objections against Gods dealing with man; *Hath not the Potter power over the Clay?* The soveraignty and supremacy of the Lord is enough to bear him out whatsoever he doth, with or to his creatures. *O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*

Then again, it is as strong for the second end; for the support of the soul in bearing evil: consider that it is *the Lord that giveth, and the Lord that takes.* The thought of Gods soveraignty over us, and over ours, may quiet our spirits in all that he doth unto us or ours. As it doth justifie God, so it doth quiet us: Hear *David*, Psal. 39. 9. *I was dumb*, saith he, *and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it:* He doth not say, I was contented because thou dealtest thus and thus with me; but, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it*; that it was the act of God, the sovereign Lord, satisfied him; he had not a word to say, because God did it. *So Job* here, *The Lord hath taken away*, is, as if he had said, I could not have born this at the hands of any creature, but at the hands of my soveraign Lord, that may dispose of me and mine, and do what he pleaseth; at his hands I not only bear it, but take it well.

Joseph had not a word of discontent to vent against his Brethren, being thus resolved; *It was not you that sent me hither, but God*, Gen. 45. And *David* layes aside all revenge against railing *Shimei*, on this ground, *So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, curse David*, 2 Sam. 16. 10. A godly man cannot be angry at the doing or speaking of that which pleaseth God, that it should be done or spoken. And it takes away all complaining, *That the Lord hath taken away.*

Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

The Septuagint, and so the Vulgar, from them, insert here another Sentence between these two; *The Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord:* reading it thus, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away* *: *as it pleaseth the Lord, so cometh things to pass, blessed be the name of the Lord*; but we have no more in the Hebrew, then our own Translation gives us.

* ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ ἐδόξασεν οὕτως ἐγένετο Sept.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord.] This is the triumphant conclusion which floweth from the former Propositions; this is the issue and result of them both: a conclusion as opposite to Satans design, (as the two *Poles* of the heavens are one against the other. Satan waited to hear *Job* conclude with *blaspheming the name of the Lord*; and now he heareth *Job* conclude with *blessing the name of the Lord.* How did this vex and sting Satan? This one word of *Job* did wound Satan more then all the afflictions which Satan procured, wounded *Job.* Though *I return naked*, though *all be taken from me, yet blessed be the name of the Lord.*

Blessed be the Name of the Lord.] The Name of God in Scripture, is taken, First, For God himself. The name of a thing, it is put for the thing named, *Psal.* 44. 5. *Through thee we will push down our enemies, through thy name we will tread them down that rise up against us.* Through *thy name*, that is, *through thee*: Through thee and through thy name, are the same. So, *Psal.* 48. 10. *According to thy name, so is thy praise*, that is, *thou art praised like thy self; as thou art in thy self, so thou art or oughtest to be praised by thy people*; the name is put for the person. You have it clearly, *Acts* 1. 15. *The number of names together, were about an hundred and twenty*; that is, the number of persons, so many persons, because numbred by their names.

Secondly, The Name of God is often in Scripture put for the Attributes of God.

Thirdly, The Name of God is put for his Ordinances or worship: *Go ye now to my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my Name at the first*, Jer. 7. 12. that is, where I first set up my publick worship; because as a man is known by his proper name, so is God by his proper worship. And therefore false worship is the setting up of a *strange god.* When we mistake the name, we mistake the person.

Fourthly, The Name of God is that reverence, esteem and honour, which Angels and men give unto God. As we know amongst us, the report and reputation that a man hath among men, is a mans name; what men speak of him, that is his name: such an one hath a good name, we say; such an one hath an ill name; that is, men speak or think well or ill of such persons. So, *Gen.* 6. 4. When *Moses* describes the Giants, he saith, *they were men of renown*; the Hebrew is, *they were men of name*, because the name of a man is the opinion he hath amongst men; as a man is esteemed, so his name is carried, and himself is accepted in the world. So the name of God is that high esteem, those honourable apprehensions, which Angels and Men have of God; such as the thoughts and speeches of men are for the celebration of Gods glory and praise, such is his name in the world. *Blessed be the name of the Lord.*

By blessing God, we are to understand, either, first, what we express in word concerning God. God is blessed by his creatures, when his goodness, and greatness, and mercy, and bounty, and faithfulness, and justice, are published with thanksgiving

thanksgiving and praise. Or God is blessed likewise, when we have high, and great, and glorious thoughts of God; when we inwardly fear, and reverence, and love, and honour God, then we bless God. The one is to bless with the tongue, the other to bless with the heart. The tongue blessing without the heart, is but a *tinckling Cymbal*: the heart blessing without the tongue, makes *sweet*, but *still musick*; both in consort, make that harmony which fills and delights Heaven and Earth. When *Job* saith here, *blessed be the name of the Lord*, we are to understand it both wayes; that *Job* speaks out the blessing of God with his mouth, and likewise he had high and reverent thoughts of God. His heart and tongue met at this work and word. **Blessed be the Name of the Lord.**

We may note from hence, That, *God is worthy of all praise and honour, not only when he doth enrich and strengthen us, when he fills and protects us; but also when he doth impoverish and weaken us, when he empties and smites us, when he gives us up to the will of our enemies, to the will of Devils and wicked men, even then God is to be blessed.*

It is a good thing, and it is our duty to bless God, when we are rich, and when we are full; as, *Deut.* 8. 10. *When thou hast eaten, and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord*: But it is a far better thing (yet but our duty) to bless the Lord when we are poor and weak, when we are empty, and have nothing to eat; then to bless the Lord, is the breathing of an excellent spirit indeed, 1 *Thes.* 5. 18. *In every thing give thanks*: Let God do what he will with his children, they have cause to thank him, *as he is God in himself, blessed for evermore.* When God thunders in judgments so loud, that he breaketh the *Cedars*, and shakes the *Wilderness*, then *to give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, and in his Temple to speak of his glory*, argues a spirit highly ennobled, and glorious in Grace, *Psal.* 29. Therefore his children should not rest in this, that they bear afflictions, but they should labour to bring their hearts to bless and glorifie God in, and for the afflictions that they bear. And a soul that thus honoureth God, shall assuredly receive honour from God. That which the Apostle speaks of the Saints suffering persecution, is true of them in any kind of holy suffering, *the spirit of Glory and of God doth rest upon them*, 1 Pet. 4. 14. The Spirit of God is spoken of, as if it were unsetled or unquiet, and knew not where to fix it self, till it had found such a soul; like *Noah*'s Dove, that went *hovering* about, and knew not where to *rest* the *sole* of her *foot*, till it came to the *Ark*; so the Spirit of God is expresst, as *hovering* about from person to person, from place to place, as if it could not rest any where, till he found a soul triumphing and blessing God in affliction; at least lying quietly under affliction, till God takes it off, and there the Spirit rests and settles it self.

Observe further, that *Job* here blesseth God in his afflictions, and that makes the difference; his afflictions now are good unto him.

If we bless God in our afflictions, then our afflictions are blessings unto us.

We have so much blessing in our affliction, as we can bless God for our affliction. There is a mighty power in this speech, *I bless God*; it changeth evil into good: here is an heavenly *Alchimy* (as we may speak) whatsoever affliction you touch with blessing God, you turn that affliction to a blessing; if you have an Iron yoke of affliction upon you, do but touch it with blessing God, it turneth it into Gold. When you have a heavy cross upon you, ready to weigh you down, do but touch the cross with this word from the heart, and it makes it as a Crown of Glory upon your heads. Thus, (I say) you may turn every evil into good, every affliction into a comfort and a blessing, if you can but touch it with *blessing the Name of God.*

We will come to the Conclusion.

In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

This testimony the Lord giveth concerning *Job*, both in reference to what he did, and what he spake. *In all this, in renting his mantle, in shaving his head, in falling to the ground, in worshipping*, in saying, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither*; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord. In all this* Job *sinned not, neither charged God foolishly.* God himself puts all the actions, and all the speeches of *Job* into the ballance, and finds not any lightness in them; he bringeth all that he hath done, and all that he hath said, to the touchstone, and finds them pure metal. The holy Ghost, the great and infallible moderator of this cause and question between *Job* and *Satan*, determines, *That in all this* Job *sinned not, neither did he charge God foolishly.*

But it will be objected, Is there any man that sinneth not? or, is there any man that sinneth not in every thing? How then are we to understand what the holy Ghost pronounceth, *In all this Job sinned not?* Is any man so holy, or can his heart be kept in so holy a frame, as to do and speak so much, without any touch of sin, without any spot of defilement? *Job*'s question, *chap.* 9. affirms, that no man can do any one act *purely pure*; *Who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean?* Now *Job* himself in his nature, was unclean, he had uncleanness in him; how then was a clean thing brought out of *Job?* Whence had he such a priviledge above his brethren, as not to sin in doing and suffering so many things?

There are some Popish Commentators, who would build the Tower of perfection upon this and other the like Scriptures; *scil. That a man may in this life be freed from all sin.* For the refuting this fence, and clearing of the Text, I will give you the resolution in a distinction or two.

First, If we consider sinful actions, they are of two sorts. There are actions sinful in the matter, when the very thing done is a sin; as, to steal, to lie, to be drunk, to commit adultery, and the like; the very thing done is a sin materially. There are other actions that are sinful in the formality or manner of doing; so a good work in the matter, may be sinful in the manner of doing. We do not assert that all the works of regenerate persons are sins, as if they were sinful actions, or that all that they do is sinful in the matter; for that were a reproach to the Spirit of Christ, that were a reproach to the Grace of Christ, by which they being regenerated, act and do these things. But we positively affirm, that to the works of regenerate persons, to their best works some defilement cleaves; so that though the action be not sinful, yet there is some sin in the action. There is a great deal of difference between a sinful action, and sin in an action: We have that difference expresly, *Exod.* 28. 38. Where the High Priest is said *to bear the iniquity of the holy things*: holy things, yet iniquity in them; holy things in the matter of them, yet iniquity in the manner of performing them.

Now when it is said here, *In all this* Job *sinned not*, we are to understand it first thus; Here were no sinful acts in the matter of them, such as Satan did promise to himself, and did undertake with God, that *Job* would speak and break out into: Satan was confident that *Job* would *blaspheme and curse God to his face*; this was an act of an high nature, sinful in the very matter of it, an act abominable. *In all this* Job *sinned not* such a sin; he was not transported by passion or impatiency to reproach and curse the living God.

Secondly, In Scripture-language we are said not to sin, when we do not commit such & such sins; as is clear in that instance about *David*, of whom this transcendent testimony is given, 1 *Kings* 15. 5. *That he turned not aside from any thing the Lord commanded him all the dayes of his life, save only in the matter of* Uriah *the* Hittite: a high expression of his holiness. What then? shall we think that *David* never sinned at all, but in that matter? No, the meaning of it is, that *David* never fell grosly or foully, but that time; in comparison of that act, all the rest of the life of *David* went for so holy, as if he had lived without any sin at all. In this sense the Apostle *John* giveth the command not to sin, 1 *John* 2. 1. *I write unto you little Children, that you sin not* (it is a possible precept in an evangelical sence) that is, that you sin not as wicked men do, who can do nothing else but sin. In this sence, *Job sinned not*; he carried himself like an holy person, like an obedient child of God, like *one born of God* (as the Apostle speaks) whose Character and priviledge it is, that he cannot sin. Such have the blessing of impotency in the unregenerate part, so that they cannot sin strongly; though as yet they have not that ability, in their regenerate part, not to sin at all. 1 Joh. 3. 9.

The

The *Septuagint* adds to this clause, *He sinned not before the Lord*, or *against the Lord*. The *Vulgar* adds those words, *with his lips*. Neither of them mend the sence of the Hebrew Text; and the latter makes it worse. For it is a higher and clearer testimony to say, *In all this* Job *sinned not*, then to say, *In all this* Job *sinned not with his lips*; for he might sin in *thought*, &c. though it be most true which the Apostle *James* speaks, *chap.* 3. 7. *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.*

Or charged God foolishly.] The Translations are somewhat different; the *Septuagint* thus, *He did not cast any folly upon God*; others, *He did not offer any thing unsavoury of God*; another, *He did not accuse* or *complain of God*: The word in the Original is, *He did not give*; we translate, *He did not charge.*

οὐκ ἔδωκεν ἀφροσύνην τῷ Θεῷ. Sept. *Non dedit insulsum Deo.* Ar. Mont. οὐκ ἐμέμψατο τῷ Θεῷ. Olym. תפלה *Proprie insulsitas.*

The word which we translate adverbially [*foolishly*] is a Noun in the Original; yet it is fully enough to the sence, *He charged not God foolishly*, or, *he charged not God with folly*, so it is rather in the Original. That word which is here translated *folly*, signifieth in the general, any thing that is *indebite dispositum*, any thing that is unduly disposed, any thing in disorder: And we find it in Scripture referred divers wayes.

First, It is put for unsavoury meat, without salt or sauce; as, *Job* 6. 6. *Can that which is unsavoury, be eaten without salt?* The word [*unsavoury*] there, is the same with this, here rendred *folly* or *foolishly*.

Secondly, It is used for *mortar* that hath not a due temper or mixture in it; as, *Ezek.* 13. 14. *I will break down the wall that ye have dawbed with untempered mortar*; mortar that is not well tempered, is unfit for use,

Thirdly, It is put for any rude, undigested or indiscreet speech; as, *Lam.* 2. 14. *Thy Prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee*; they have seen foolish and unsavoury things for thee. Hence the word is used to express madness; because madness is the height of folly, being without any seasoning, without any temper, a thing that hath no taste of wisdom or goodness in it, *Jer.* 23. 13. *I have seen folly in the Prophets of Samaria*; that is, they are unsavoury, their speeches are untempered mortar, they are foolish and vain. So then, he did not charge *God with folly*, or *charge God foolishly*, hath this sense, Job *did not speak any thing rashly, or unbecoming the Majesty of God, or charge him in the least, to have dealt unwisely or unjustly with him.* As if the Lord had said, *Satan, thou didst expect that* Job *should now at this time have charged me home, and have laid load upon me with complainings, for dealing thus with him*; thou expectedst that he should have broken out into the dialect of hell it self; such words as these, *Why, what have I done against God, that he should deal thus with me? Is this the wages that I shall receive for the work and service I have done him? Will he discourage and dishearten others from coming on to his service, by my sad example? Is it justice in God, that I, who have lived so innocently, should be thus extreamly afflicted? Could the Lord find out no swearers, no drunkards, no adulterers in the world, to let Satan loose upon, but he must needs turn him loose upon me? Had he no other Butt in the world to shoot the arrows of his indignation at, but at an innocent breast? Is this a just God, who uses his servants thus? Or, if he be omniscient and omnipotent, why then did he not protect me from Satans rage? Why did he not defend me from the violence of those evil men?* Such kind of speeches, or to this effect, Satan expected *Job* would have uttered rashly against the Lord: but he is deceived; *Job* hath no such thought, much less did he speak such words, either against the justice, or wisdom, or power of God; he charges no folly upon God, the only wise God, but gives him glory; saying, *Blessed be his Name, whatsoever he doth with me or mine.*

Learn from hence, first, what blasphemy is, or what it is to curse God:

> *To curse God, is to charge God with folly, or with doing things foolishly and rashly.*

For these expressions expound one another. Satan said *Job* would curse God; the holy Ghost saith, Job *hath not charged God foolishly*; therefore that is a definition of Gods own making, plainly declaring what it is to curse God: Yet every speech or act unbecoming the Majesty, Wisdom and Power of God, doth not presently denominate a man a blasphemer: There may be blasphemy in what is spoken, and yet the person speaking, not a blasphemer. *Job* himself spake many things afterward unadvisedly in the heat of dispute; but he blasphemed not. Blasphemy or cursing of God, properly taken, is ever joyned with an intent to cast reproach upon God. As every one is not a liar, that telleth what is not true; but he that telleth an untruth, knowing it to be an untruth, with an intent to deceive and wrong others. So he that thinks or speaks a thing unbecoming God, with an intent to reproach or slander God, and his wayes, this is blaspheming indeed.

Secondly, Observe, *Impatience under, and murmuring at the cross which God layes upon us, is a charging of God with folly.*

Murmuring against God, questions the wisdom of God. Complaints have a charge in them. We tax what is done, while we submit not to what is done. When we lie under Gods hand quietly and silently, then we speak the praise of God, then our carriage ascribes all wisdom, honour and glory unto him.

Thirdly, In that it is said by way of excellency concerning *Job*, that *in all this* Job *sinned not*, referring it to his behaviour under these afflictions; as if the holy Ghost had said, it is matter of admiration that in this, in all this *Job* should not sin. Note from hence,

> That, *It is an high act, one of the highest acts of Grace, to be composed in thought and word under great afflictions.*

In all this Job *sinned not*; as if he had said, it had not been much for *Job*, not to sin in other things; but in this affliction, in this distress, being so put to it, being thus tried, in all this not to sin, is *Grace, almost to a miracle.*

> Lastly, Note this, *What is well done by us, shall be sure to receive a fair testimony from God.*

When *Job* had carried himself discreetly, and spoken discreetly, the Lord hides not this in darkness, he shuts it not up in silence; but proclaims the innocency and uprightness of his carriage in this present passage of his life, as he had done before, concerning the whole course of his life and conversation, *that he was perfect and upright.* The Apostle publisheth, *Glory, and honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good*, Rom. 2. 10. They that carry themselves well either in suffering, or in working for God, shall have glory, and honour, and peace from God. No man needs blow a trumpet in his own praise, when he hath done well; as the *Pharisees* did, *Mat.* 6. What we do well, the Lord himself will report to all the world: *In all this* Job *sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.*

And so we have done with this third part of the Chapter, and with this whole Chapter; which contains (as you have heard) those three generals, the description of *Job*'s prosperous estate, the description of his trials and afflictions, and the description of his carriage under those afflictions. Now when he is come off from this assault without wound, without any touch of sin, Satan perceiving himself defeated and frustrated in this attempt, will not yet give it over, he is restless, he will attempt him once more. We shall find him in the next Chapter, at the Assembly again, renewing his motion for a second assault; that he may have leave to lay his siege nearer and closer to *Job*; presuming, that though he had not prevailed at first, yet he shall at the second charge; let me charge him but once more, and then see his fall, *he will curse thee to thy face.*

CHAP. II. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Again there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord, and Satan came alſo among them to preſent himſelf before the Lord.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, from whence comeſt thou? and Satan anſwered the Lord and ſaid, from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, *that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil? and ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe.*

And Satan anſwered the Lord, and ſaid, skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.

And the Lord ſaid unto Satan, Behold he is in thine hand, but ſave his life.

AS the Prophet *Ezekiel*, when in viſion he had been ſhewed one abomination, was led forward to a ſecond, and a third, and a fourth, with, *Come ſee a greater abomination then this, or thoſe.* Or as the Angel proclaimeth in the *Revelation*, *One woe is paſt, and another woe is at hand.* The ſame may we ſay concerning this Hiſtory of *Job*'s ſorrows. Having ſhewed you his firſt affliction in the former Chapter, I muſt now lead on your attentions, with, *Come behold a ſecond, a greater then that*; and having ſhewed you one woful day, I muſt now ſhew you a ſecond; **Again there was a day when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves.**

Ezek. 8.

This whole Chapter preſents us in the general with *Job*'s ſecond tryal: About which we may obſerve theſe particulars.

1. The occaſion of it.
2. The cauſes of it.
3. The manner of it.
4. The conſequents of it.

1. The occaſion of it was Satans appearing at that heavenly Seſſion, and being there queſtioned about that former affliction of *Job*, he anſwers with ſlander, and deſireth that *Job* may be brought about to a ſecond trial.

2. The cauſes of this affliction (as of the firſt) are two.
   1. God. And
   2. Satan.

1. God permitting and limiting it.

2. Satan provoking and then inflicting it. Both are laid down in the words of the context now read, to the end of the ſixth verſe.

3. The manner of this affliction, was the ſtriking and ſmiting of *Job*'s body with a ſore and noyſom diſeaſe, which you have contained in *ver.* 7, 8.

4. The Conſequents of this affliction, or what followed upon it, and thoſe are three.
   1. His Wives ſinful counſel, *ver.* 9. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw him thus ſmitten, *What* (ſaith ſhe) *doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? Curſe God and dye.* There's her counſel.
   2. His wiſe and holy reply, *ver.* 10.
   3. His Friends loving viſit, *ver.* 11, 12, 13. They hearing of the affliction of *Job*, came from a far Countrey, *to ſee him, and to comfort him.*

Theſe are the diſtinct parts of the whole Chapter.

Theſe ſix verſes decipher the occaſion and the cauſes of *Job*'s affliction; Satan inciting and provoking the Lord; and the Lord permitting and limiting Satan.

The three firſt contain the ſame matter which we have opened and explained in the former Chapter, and they are almoſt word for word the ſame; therefore I ſhall not need to ſtay long upon them: Only I ſhall enquire a little further about two things.

Firſt, About the day of this great appearance. And ſecondly, About the perſons appearing, who are ſaid to be *the Sons of God.*

To the former of theſe, the Jewiſh Doctors contend much, That this was the firſt day in the recourſe or return of the year: intimating, if not contending, that the firſt day of every year was as Gods day of general *Audit*, in which he conveen'd or called together his Angels, to give him an account of all the paſſages and diſpatches of the year paſt, and to give them inſtructions what to do the year coming; which opinion I leave under the cenſure of a learned interpreter, as groſs and groundleſs.

Nimis craſſum eſt. Merc.

Others fix it upon the laſt day of the week, affirming that this was the Sabbath day. And that this was a Convention or Aſſembly of the Church on Earth for the ſolemn worſhip of God upon that day, which is here called, *A preſenting themſelves before the Lord*; in concurrence with which opinion, *the Sons of God* muſt needs be interpreted holy men. I find ſome affirming, that men are not called the Sons of God in all the old Teſtament, but the Angels only: And ſo they take that Text, *Gen.* 6. 2. *The Sons of God ſaw the daughters of men*, &c. for the Angels, either good or bad, who being taken with the beauty of thoſe daughters, aſſuming bodies, came into them, of whom came the Giants. A conceit as monſtrous as thoſe Giants, and fitter for a Fabuliſt then a Divine. On the other extream, * *Chryſoſtom* denies that the Angels are at all called the *Sons of God.*

Conveniens videtur fuiſſe feſtum Sabbathi: quod tunc & commune erat omnium fidelium idemque celeberrimum. Bolduc.

* In his Homily on Gen. 6. 2.

We may walk ſafely in a middle way between theſe two. For both Angels and men are called the *Sons of God*: Why Angels are called the Sons of God hath been ſhewed, *Chap.* 1. *v.* 6. Men are called the Sons of God for two reaſons; either for their *power*, or *greatneſs*; ſo they, *Gen.* 6. 2. might be called the Sons of God, becauſe great and powerful on the earth. Or rather ſecondly, for their piety and holineſs, by which they reſemble God, and in which they ſerve God as a Son doth the Father. Indeed the Apoſtle affirms, that the priviledge of ſonſhip was brought in by the Incarnation of Chriſt, who is ſaid, *In the fulneſs of time to be made of a woman*, &c. *That we might receive the adoption of Sons*, Gal. 4. 5. But in Scripture a thing is ſpoken of as newly done, when it is more fully done, *Joh.* 7. 39. The Holy Ghoſt is ſaid not to be given at that time, becauſe he had not been ſo plentifully given. And the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaks, as if the way into Heaven had been but then opened, becauſe it was then more clearly opened, *Heb.* 9. 8 So we are ſaid to receive the adoption of Sons, when Chriſt came in the fleſh, becauſe then our Son-ſhip was more apparent, though before it was as real.

So then according to this Interpretation the ſence of the words is, That upon the Sabbath day, when the Servants of God, the faithful of that age and place were met together to celebrate the publick worſhip of God, Satan, (the evil ſpirit) who is ever ready to oppoſe and reſiſt us, to interrupt and hinder us, when we appear before the Lord in holy duties) came alſo among them to preſent himſelf before the Lord.

I propoſe this as an opinion to which my own inclination is not ſtrong. Theſe words with the context (as was noted in the former Chapter) ſeeming to me, rather a repreſentation of Gods providence towards man, then a deſcription of mans worſhip tendered unto God.

Again,

Again there was a day.

It may be yet further enquired how much time paſſed between the firſt and this ſecond day of appearance. Some affirm, it was the immediate day after: others, the immediate Sabbath after. A third opinion defers it to the year after; Satan cunningly delaying the buſineſs all that while, to the intent he might more fully ſee how the former affliction wrought, what effects it had or would have upon *Job*, before he attempts a ſecond.

The Text reſolveth us in neither of theſe, but leaveth it indifferent and undetermined, ſaying only, *Again there was a day.* It is moſt probable that there was ſuch a diſtance of time between theſe two afflictions, as was competent to a full diſcovery of *Job*'s ſpirit, under the firſt. As when Chriſt was tempted, and had foyled Satan in that tempta on, it is
Luke 4.13. ſaid, *The devil departed from him for a ſeaſon*; he left him probably, to ſee what effects might follow upon the former temptation: So Satan having tempted *Job*, and tempted him by a temptation, though one in the general, yet with a four-fold aſſault, four ſeveral Meſſengers, making (as it were) four charges upon him, he leaveth him for a ſeaſon, and *again when there was a day*, he returns to renew the aſſault and battery.

I ſhall paſs over the two verſes following, in all that they contain, opened in the former Chapter. But in the latter end of the third verſe, there is ſomewhat added very material, where the Lord beſpeaks Satan concerning *Job*, *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil?* (This was the Character which God gave of him before in the former Chapter, but now he goeth on) *And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe.* This is ſuper-added to his teſtimony, his commendation is enlarged. *Job* (you ſee) hath gained in this conflict: he was deſcribed before as an holy man, now he is deſcribed as a tryed man, as an approved Souldier. *Job* hath obtained this honour in the former combat with Satan, a glorious addition to his character: As the patience and other graces of *Job* did increaſe, ſo did the teſtimony of God increaſe concerning him. Note from this addition only in the general thus much,

That ſuch as honour God, God will honour.

If we do any new or further ſervice for God, God will add ſome further honour and reſpect unto us. If we do, or ſay, or ſuffer any thing extraordinary for God, God will ſay, or do ſomewhat more then ordinary concerning us. The old character did not ſerve, when *Job* had done this new ſervice. *God will never conceal any of our graces, no nor the improvement of any of our graces.* If we ſpeak but a word for God, we ſhall hear of it again; God takes it and pens it down, as it is ſaid, *Mal.*3.16. *They that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written*; God ſets it down preſently: So he recorded what *Job* had ſpoken, and gives it him in at the next meeting with Satan. *We can never looſe either by doing or ſuffering for God.* All ſhall be recompenced to the utmoſt farthing. As it is uſual with *Kings* and great men of the world, for great ſervices done them (eſpecially in wars and battels) to make additions to the titles of honour, to give ſome new motto's, or put ſome new devices in the Coat-armour of thoſe who ſerve them. Thus doth God here. *Job* having play'd the *man* (as we ſay) or rather the *Saint* in that former combat, he hath a new title of honour put into his ſtile: Now it is not only *Job, a man that feareth God and eſcheweth evil*; *but* Job *a man that holdeth faſt his integrity.*

Conſider the words themſelves,

And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity.

The words (**And ſtill**) or to this preſent time, may have a double reference. Firſt, barely to the time paſt: *Job* was not only a perfect and a ſound man in former times, but he is ſo ſtill, ſo at preſent. Or rather ſecondly, it refers to the affliction and loſſes he had ſuffered; as he was in former times, ſo he is at this time; as he was in proſperous times, ſo he is in troubleſome times: When the day was light and clear to him, *Job* was a perfect man; and now the day hath nothing but darkneſs and gloominеſs in it, *Job* is a perfect man ſtill; though wounded in his eſtate, and broken in his outward comforts, yet he is as ſound and whole in his ſpirit, as ever he was. Though Cattel, Servants, Children be dead and gone, beſpoil'd and loſt; yet grace is ſafe, and faith triumphs, *He ſtill holdeth faſt his integrity.*

Holdeth faſt. This which we tranſlate by two words, is but one word in the Hebrew. Our language is not comprehenſive enough to expreſs the fu neſs of that word, in a word. *Job* doth not only hold his integrity, but he holdeth it faſt: the word implyes a ſtrength in holding, to hold a thing firmly. And more, the word hath a further Emphaſis in it; it ſignifieth not only to hold a thing by that degree of ſtrength, wherewith formerly we did hold it; but it doth import thus much, to wax ſtronger in the holding of it, to prevail or increaſe in ſtrength. As when *David* ſent *Joab* to number the people, *Joab* was unwilling, and ſaid to the King, *Now the Lord thy God add unto the people an hundredfold; but why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing?* 2 Sam. 24. 4. Then it follows, *Notwithſtanding the Kings word prevailed againſt* Joab. That which is there tranſlated, *And his word prevailed*, is the ſame with this we tranſlate here, *Holdeth faſt*; the Kings word did take a prevailing hold upon *Joab*, or held him faſt to the doing of the Kings command, though he would have got off from the buſineſs: So we may underſtand it here, *Still he prevaileth or waxeth ſtronger in his integrity.* מחזיק

The ſame word is uſed by the Prophet *Malachi*, chap. 3. 13, 14. Where God convinceth thoſe proud ſpirits that puffed at his ſervice, *Your words* (ſaith he) *have been ſtout againſt me.* That which we tranſlate, *have been ſtout*, is the ſame with this in the Text of *Job*; *Your words have been ſtout*, that is, *they have grown ſtronger and ſtronger againſt me and my wayes*; you are confirm'd in wickedneſs; whereas your hearts ſhould have been brought down and humbled, you are increaſt and hardned in your obſtinacy and rebellion. Such is the *ſtrength* and meaning of the word in this place. *Job* by this oppoſition grows more ſtrong and ſtout in his integrity, he is ſo far from being daunted, that he is encourag'd; he is as he was, nay more then he was, he is increaſed, *Still he holdeth faſt his integrity.*

His integrity. It is a word of the ſame root with that uſed, *Chap.* 1. *ver.* 1. *There was a man in the Land of* Uz, *and this man was perfect*; and theſe words illuſtrate and expound one another; to be a *perfect man*, is to be a *man of integrity*: there, he was a perfect man; now, he is a man *holding faſt* that perfection, namely, his integrity.

From this firſt branch obſerve,

Firſt, *That Satan in all his temptations plants his chiefeſt battery againſt ſincerity.*

Hence it is here expreſt, that *Job ſtill held faſt his integrity*, as if the Holy Ghoſt would intimate this unto us, that Satan pulled more at that, then at his eſtate. Satan did not care at all to pull *Job*'s Oxen from him, or his Sheep from him, or his Children from him, but to pull his grace from him; therefore it is ſaid, *Job* held that faſt: Without queſtion Satan aſſaulted that moſt, which *Job* held moſt; the thing that Satan aimed at, was not to make *Job* a poor man, but to make him a ſinful man; and he would never have troubled himſelf to rob him of his riches, but only in ſubordination to the robbing him of his graces: That was the booty Satan look'd for. Satan look'd at his cattel, only as pay for his Army of *Sabeans*, and *Chaldeans*: but he look'd upon his grace (if he could have got it from him) as pay for principalities and powers. As grace gotten or improv'd is the joy of Angels: So if grace could be ſtoln away or deſtroy'd, it would be the joy of Devils. This was Satans hope.

Secondly, Note this,

That whatſoever a godly man looſeth, he will be ſure to lay hold of his graces, he will hold ſpirituals, whatever becomes of temporals.

He will be ſure to take faſt hold of theſe, when all is going; when riches are going, when children are going, when friends are going, when liberty is going, yea when life is going too, then he layes faſt hold upon his integrity; and ſaith (as *Jacob* to the Angel) *I will not let thee go*; and he ſaith it without exception: for he knows he cannot be bleſſed if

that go. *Integrity* is his *Benjamin*, all the Children he hath ſhall go, but this ſon of his right hand muſt not; For indeed his life is bound up in the life of grace: And if he part with that, he muſt *lye down with ſorrow in his grave.* Wherefore he is reſolved not to part with that, whatſoever he parts with. As it is with a man at Sea in a Shipwrack, when all is caſt over-board, the corn that feeds him, and the clothes that cover him, yet he ſwims to the ſhore, if he can, with his life in his hand. Or as it is with a valiant *Standard-bearer*, that carries the Banner in war, if he ſees all loſt, he will wrap the Banner about his body, and chuſe rather to dye in that as his winding ſheet, then let any man take it from him, or ſpoil him of it, he will *hold that faſt*, though he loſe his life for it. So doth *Job* here, ſo doth every one that is of *Job*'s heavenly temper and ſpiritual reſolution: in the greateſt ſtorm, in the hotteſt aſſault, he will wrap himſelf round about with his *integrity*, wind that about him, and will not let it go: Kill him if you will, deſtroy him if you will, he will never part with his integrity, though he part with life. Indeed there is nothing elſe can ſtand a man inſtead to any purpoſe; if that be loſt, all s loſt. A man that is in danger of drowning will lay hold upon any thing, upon a ſtraw, upon a ruſh, though it have no ſtrength to ſupport him: Men in danger will lay hold upon ſomewhat; they that are wiſe will lay hold upon the Rock, upon that which will do them good in an evil day; They will lay hold upon Chriſt, they will lay hold upon promiſes (in laying hold upon our integrity, all that is done) then they are ſure to live; for *Wiſdom* (that is Chriſt) *is a Tree of life to all that lay hold upon her*, Prov. 3. 18.

Thirdly, It is conſiderable, that this word is uſed for the laying hold upon our weapons, either to defend our ſelves or to offend and aſſault our Enemies, *Pſal.* 35. 2. *David* prays, *that God would take hold of Shield and Buckler, and ſtand up for his help.* We may note from hence,

That integrity is our arms.

Integrity is a Chriſtians weapon. *Job* layes hold upon his integrity as a Sword to wound his Enemy, and as a Shield and Buckler to ſave and defend himſelf.

Fourthly, From that expoſition of the word, that it ſignifieth not only *to be ſtrong*, but *to prevail*, it ſignifieth an *overcoming power*; *he doth hold faſt*, that is, *he prevaileth with his integrity.* We may Note,

That grace doth not only oppoſe, but conquer Satan and all his temptations.

He doth prevail in his integrity (ſo the Hebrew may be rendred in the letter.) Sometimes (you know) there is a war and oppoſition, when there is no conqueſt; a war may be carried on divers years in a Nation, or between Nations, when there is no abſolute victory on either ſide: as we ſee by woful and lamentable experience in *Germany*, where there hath been oppoſition, one ſide againſt another above theſe twenty years, and yet no ſide hath prevailed. But as grace makes war, ſo grace gets the better, grace gets the day, and will ſhortly make a final conqueſt; yea, there is not only a *conqueſt* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8.) *but through Chriſt we are more then Conquerors.*

In the fifth place, I told you that the word ſignifies, *to increaſe in ſtrength*; *he holdeth faſt his integrity, or he increaſeth in ſtrength in his integrity.* Note hence,

That, *True grace gains by oppoſition.*

True grace is increaſed the more it is aſſaulted. Satan comes a purpoſe to deſtroy *Job*'s graces, *Job* waxeth ſtronger in his graces. True grace will do ſo in whomſoever it is. Hypocrites (who have but a ſhew of grace, painted grace) fall off in times of trial, in times of temptation; that which only ſeemeth to be ſomewhat, cometh to nothing, but that which is ſomewhat, cometh to more.

Laſtly, Conſider the Emphaſis of the words. God ſpeaks of this in a kind of admiration; he putteth a greater Emphaſis upon this then upon the other part of *Job*'s character.

Verſe 3. **Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and eſchewеth evil? and ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity.**

God ſpeaks of it, as a matter of wonder, a rare thing. From this obſerve,

That to hold our integrity in evil times, is not only good, but admirable.

It is that which doth even (as we may ſo ſpeak) provoke God himſelf to an admiration. It is a truth, whether it be in regard of perſonal troubles, or national troubles; to hold faſt and keep cloſe to God in ſuch diſtreſſes is admirable. To continue good, while we ſuffer evil, is the height and crown of goodneſs: As it is that which putteth one of the greateſt aggravations upon the ſinfulneſs of men, that they will hold faſt their ſins in the middeſt of judgments. The Prophet *Amos*, with much elegancy of ſpeech and vehemency of ſpirit, urgeth this againſt the Jews, *Chap.* 4. *I have given you cleanneſs of teeth, yet have ye not returned unto me: I have with-holden the rain, yet have ye not returned unto me: I have ſmitten you with blaſting, yet have ye not returned unto me: I have ſent among you the peſtilence and the ſword, yet have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord.*

The Prophet *Jeremy* takes up the ſame argument, having before ſpoken of judgments ſent upon them, *Yet* (ſaith he) *they hold faſt deceit, and refuſe to return*, (Chap. 8. 5.) they held faſt deceit, though they were afflicted, that aggravated their ſinfulneſs. Now (I ſay) as it makes *ſin out of meaſure ſinful*, to hold it faſt when God afflicteth; ſo it makes *grace out of meaſure gracious*, putteth a wonderful ſplendor and glory upon it, if we hold faſt our grace, when troubles and afflictions meet us in the holding of it forth; and God will put an Emphaſis upon ſuch a one for grace, as he did upon *Ahaz* for his ſin, 2 *Chron.* 28. 22. *In the time of his diſtreſs did he treſpaſs yet more againſt the Lord; This is that King Ahaz*; that brand is put upon him. So there is an honour ſtamp'd on *Job* in this teſtimony, *That in the time of his diſtreſs, he did yet more good; This is that* Job: To ſerve, believe, and love God more in diſtreſs, this is integrity to a wonder, this draws the heart of God toward ſuch, & makes them truly glorious in the eyes of godly men.

That which follows in the text, doth yet more advance the honour of *Job* in this victory, *Still he holdeth faſt*, &c.

Though thou movedſt me againſt him to deſtroy him without cauſe.

Though thou movedſt me.] The word here uſed *to move*, ותסיתני ſignifieth more then a bare motion, it carries in it a perſwaſion, and more then a bare perſwaſion, it carries in it a vehement inſtigation: As when a man doth perſwade a thing by arguments and ſtrong reaſons; that is the force of the word; as in that place, 1 *Kings* 21. 25. *There was none like* Ahab *which did ſell himſelf to work wickedneſs in the ſight of the Lord, whom* Jezabel *his wife ſtirred up: ſtirred up* is the word in the Text, *thou movedſt me*; *Jezabel* moved *Ahab*, incited him, never gave him over, by arguments and reaſons, by this conſideration and that conſideration, to do wickedly in *Iſrael*: So here, Satan did, as it were, ply God with arguments and reaſons to inſtigate him againſt *Job*, *Thou didſt move me againſt him.* Satan is a cunning Orator, and knows how to handle a matter, that it may take with greateſt advantage.

Some may queſtion, how can this be? Will God be moved by Satan? Is not the Lord unchangeable? Have Satans words and arguments ſuch power with God, to move him to do a thing?

I anſwer it two wayes: We may clear it firſt thus; As the Saints and people of God in Prayer are ſaid to move God, and to prevail with God, they are ſaid to carry a buſineſs with God. Now you know what they do in Prayer, they do not only ſpread a Petition barely before God, but they ſtrengthen it with all the arguments they can, argument upon argument, pleading upon pleading; yet the Lord himſelf is not ſtirred, he is not changed at all by the Prayer of his people; it is not to be thought that the Lord upon the Prayers of his people, takes up any new thoughts, or puts on any new reſolutions to do this or that; for a mercy that is but a day old in regard of our Prayer obtaining it, is an eternity old in regard of God purpoſing it; therefore God is not changed at all; but he is ſaid to be moved to give or do, as or when we pray, becauſe he giveth and doth what he himſelf had purpoſed to give, when we ſhould pray: for as God from all eternity did purpoſe to give

give to his people such and such mercies, so he did purpose and decree, to give them when they prayed. Now then as it is in regard of his peoples prayer and seeking for mercy, they move God; but it is only the bringing forth of that which he had in his heart from all eternity to do for them: So here in this case, God had a purpose from all eternity to try *Job*, and likewise he did purpose the way and the means of it, that it should be done upon the motion and instigation of Satan. For although God cannot be moved by any to do a thing, which before he intended not, he is unchangeable: yet as by his eternal will and counsel, he doth produce things in time; so likewise from eternity he did order and will the manner of their producing, he purposed to do good for his Church upon the supplications of his Servants, and sometimes to afflict his Church or Servants at the instigation of Satan.

Quanquam Deus à nullo potest moveri, ad aliquid volendum de novo, cum sit immutabilis: tamen sicut voluntate æterna producit aliquid in tempore, ita ab æterno voluit modum producendi.

Secondly, This place [*thou movedst me against him*] is to be understood by a figure, very frequent in the Scripture; God speaking of himself after the manner of men; because as men usually when they do a thing, or are moved by others to do it, and by perswasions are sometime prevailed with, to do that which they intended not an hour before. So God is said to do a thing upon motion, though he intended it from eternity, often descending to expres himself by that which is common to men, though his manner of doing it be transcendent, infinitely beyond men.

From the force of this word so explained, *Thou movedst me against him:* Observe,

That Satan is an earnest and importunate solicitor against the People and Church of God.

He without ceasing provokes God against them, he bends his wit, and strains his language to the height, in pleading against them, to get them delivered up into his hands, or into the hands of his instruments.

And if Satan be thus zealous, so importunate a sollicitor against the Saints; It may teach us to be as earnest and zealous for the Saints. Satan doth not only move, but he moveth by arguments, he incites: It is not enough to pray by proposing our desires, but we must pray enforcing and pressing our desires; such a holy unquietness of spirit, is expressed by the Prophet, *Isa.* 62. 1. *For* Zions *sake will I not hold my peace, and for* Jerusalems *sake will I not rest*, &c. Such was that required of the *Watch-men set upon the walls of* Jerusalem, *which should never hold their peace day nor night: Ye that make mention of the Lord, or ye that are the Lords remembrancers, keep not silence, and give him no rest till he establish, and till he make* Jerusalem *a praise in the earth*, *Isa.* 62. *ver.* 6, 7. This duty is now doubled on us by the great afflictions and greater fears of *Sion*. When Christ was in his Agony, he prayed more earnestly, *Luke* 22. 44. And when his Church is in an Agony, we ought to pray more earnestly. At such a time we must mingle more fire with our Prayers, we must pray more fervently. At such a time we must mingle more water with our Prayers, we must pray more repentingly: We must with *Jacob*, (Hos. 12.) *weep and make supplication*. At such a time we must mingle more faith with our Prayers, we must pray more believingly. In a word, at such a time every Prayer must be a pleading, yea a wrestling with God, a wrestling with resolution not to let him go until we have got a blessing, till we prevail with God to destroy his Churches Enemies, as Satan in the Text moved God to destroy *Job*, his *servant* and his *friend*. So it follows, *Thou movedst me against him to destroy him.*

לבלעו **To destroy him.**] The word *Destroy* signifieth to *swallow up*, or to *devour*: You have it *Gen.* 41. 4. where it is said, *That the seven lean ears, and seven lean kine, did devour or eat up the seven full ears, and the seven fat kine.* And *Exod.* 7. 12. the Text saith, *That* Moses *his rod did swallow up the rods of the Magicians.* Psal. 124. 3. *Unless the Lord had been on our side, they had swallowed us up quick.* In all these places it is the same word we have here, *Thou movedst me to destroy him.*

In the former Chapter, where Satan desired God to touch *Job*, I shewed what kind of touches Satan desired to lay upon the people of God; you see it now cleared by God himself, *Thou movedst me to destroy him, to swallow him up.* Thy words were moderate and diminitive, do but touch him, but thy intentions were bloody and destructive, *Thou movedst me to destroy him*, to make an end of him, that was thy meaning.

Without cause.] But will the Lord, the wise God, do any thing without cause? A wise, a prudent man will not do any thing without cause; though Satan may be so brutish and unreasonable to move God to do a thing for which there is no cause, would the Lord be so perswaded, by his motion, to do it without cause? The Text seemeth here to speak so, *Thou movedst me to destroy him without cause*; and God hearkened to his motion before, and gave him up all his estate, to do with it what he pleased.

Briefly to clear this. *Without cause.* It is the same original word used in the former Chapter, *Doth* Job *serve God for nought, or without cause* (as was then opened): so here, *Thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause, or thou movedst me against him for nothing, or for nought.*

We may consider this phrase of speech [*without cause*] three wayes. First, in reference unto Satan. Secondly, in reference unto God. Thirdly, in reference unto *Job* himself: From each of these considerations light will shine into this point.

First, In reference unto Satan. God tells Satan, *Thou movest me against him without cause*; that is, *Job* never gave thee any cause why thou shouldest make such a motion against him; *Job* had never wronged thee, or done thee any hurt, as *David* saith of his Enemies, *They are mine Enemies without cause. I was never injurious or unjust unto them.* So Satan was *Job*'s Enemy without cause; *Job* never gave him occasion: Indeed the holiness and goodness of *Job* was Satans grief, and Satans trouble; but for any other trouble or wrong *Job* never did him; therefore without cause, it was in reference unto Satan.

Secondly, In reference unto Satan, *without cause*; that is, *Thou didst not alledge any sufficient cause, or charge him with any particular crime; thou didst only bring in a general suspition against him; there was not so much as a common fame* (as you know it was a course to accuse men upon common fame.) So saith God here, *It was nothing but a suspition raised out of thine own brain* (as indeed those common fames, that we heard of not long since, upon which many were accused, yea condemn'd, were only suspitions born in the brains of those men.) So here *Job* was charged meerly upon the suspition of Satan; there was no crime directly alledged, nor any evil report in the world against him; cause was not shew'd legally; therefore *without cause thou movedst me against him.*

Thirdly, In reference unto Satan, *without cause*; that is, *It now appeareth upon the tryal, that thou didst move me against him without cause; that which thou didst pretend to be the cause, was not found in* Job: *thou pretendest he was an hypocrite, and served me for himself; now thou seest thy self confuted; it appeareth he did serve me for nought, sincerely, and not for his own ends: He is no painted sepulcher, no rotten self-seeker.*

If we consider the words in the second place with reference unto God, *Thou didst move me against him without cause*, then we must take heed of thinking that God doth any thing without cause: No, the wise God doth every thing in number, weight and measure; he doth every thing upon great reason, upon the highest reason. God will not do the lowest thing, but upon the height of reason; he doth the least thing upon greater reason then the greatest Politicians in the world do the greatest. Therefore God had reason, important reason, to give *Job* up to be afflicted. He did it for the tryal of *Job*, he did it for the magnifying of his free grace, and the graces of his free Spirit, in his weak Creature; he did it that *Job* might be set up as an example of patience, he did it to discover the slander of the Devil; therefore he did it for strong reasons; it was not without cause, in reference unto God himself.

Lastly, If we consider it in reference unto *Job*, it was not absolutely without cause neither; for though there was not that cause in him, which Satan pretended, namely, gross hypocrisie: yet if the Lord should search and sift him narrowly (as if he should search and sift the holiest of his Servants, his pure eyes, and holy nature, would find sin enough in them, which might justifie him, or shew to his Justice sufficient cause (take the sin in it self) not only to afflict them temporally, but to lay his hand upon them for ever.) Should God (I say) have tryed him throughly, and looked upon sin in it self, he might find cause to afflict him in

regard of his ſin. So then abſolutely in reference unto *Job*, it was not without cauſe, God might have found cauſe in regard of his ſin.

But there were other cauſes in reference unto *Job*, it was to try *Job*, to exerciſe *Job*; it was that *Job* might have further honour after the tryal: There might have been a reaſon in ſin (if the Lord had marked iniquity.) And there were were many reaſons in reference to his good, why the Lord did leave him thus in the hands of Satan to be afflicted.

To wind it up: If we look upon Satan, then it was without that cauſe he pretended; it was without any direct charge, it was a meer ſuſpition, *Job* had never wronged him. But if we reſpect God, it is not without cauſe; God doth all things for weighty reaſons. And if we reſpect *Job*, God (poſſibly, yea eaſily) might have found a ſin in him (any ſin in it ſelf conſidered would do it) as the cauſe of his affliction: And he had other actual reaſons, in reference both to the being and improvement of his graces, why he left him thus in the hands of Satan.

Hence we may learn, Firſt (in that God ſaith, *Thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without cauſe*)

That pure, or rather impure malice, ſtirreth Satan againſt the people of God.

Though he alwayes pretends ſomewhat in them, yet the cauſe is in himſelf. God now diſcovers he doth nothing but out of very malice, pure malice againſt his Servants. Satan hath two names in Scripture, noting his two ſpecial works, *Temptation and accuſation*. He ſollicits good men to do evil againſt God: Hence he hath his name, *the Tempter*. He ſollicits God to conceive evil of good men; and hence he hath his name, *the Slanderer*, or *Accuſer*.

διάβολος.

Secondly, note, *That God doth afflict his people ſometimes without reſpect unto their ſins. Thou didſt move me againſt him without cauſe.*

It was not in regard of his hypocriſie, or of any thing thou didſt charge him with, why I did afflict him and lay my hand upon him. Though all men have alwayes ſin enough to be the meritorious cauſe, yet oftentimes ſin is not the moving cauſe of their afflictions. When the Diſciples put that queſtion to Chriſt concerning the blind man, *John* 9. 2. *Maſter, who did ſin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jeſus anſwered, neither hath this man ſinned nor his parents* (not as if either of them were without ſin, but to ſhew that they had not ſinned as to this purpoſe, *ſc.* their ſin was not the cauſe of this blindneſs, and therefore in the next words, he aſſigns the cauſe) But (*ſc.* he was born blind) *that the works of God ſhould be made manifeſt*. Afflictions are alwayes from ſin, but not alwayes for ſin. Neither are they at all for ſin (upon believers) by way of the leaſt ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God (that chaſtiſement Chriſt hath ſo fully born, (*Iſa.* 53.) that no Believers finger ſhall ever ake in that ſence. But they are often afflicted for ſin by way of purgation, or prevention.

Thirdly, note, *That God will at the laſt give teſtimony for the clearing of the innocency of his Servants againſt all Satans malicious accuſations.*

God himſelf gives teſtimony here a ſecond time concerning *Job*, *Thou didſt move me againſt him without cauſe*; thou didſt move me to it, but it is clear, and I give my ſentence, there was no ſuch cauſe as thou didſt ſuggeſt againſt him, why I ſhould deſtroy him.

When the Lord had thus called Satan to account concerning *Job*, whether he had conſidered him both in his radical graces, and in this additional grace, the *holding faſt of his integrity*; Then Satan comes forth to anſwer this alſo. *Haſt thou* (ſaith God) *conſidered my ſervant* Job, *that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and eſcheweth evil? And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity, although thou movedſt me againſt him, to deſtroy him without cauſe?* Yes ſaith Satan in *ver.* 4. *And Satan anſwered the Lord and ſaid, Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.*

Here is Satans anſwer, with his motion upon it.

By his anſwer he labours to blot and obſcure the glory which *Job* had gained in the former battel; and by his motion he labours to bring him about unto a ſecond tryal. As by his anſwer in the former Chapter (a little to compare him with himſelf) Satan ſlandered *Job*'s actions, ſo by his anſwer here he ſlanders *Job*'s ſufferings. There it was for ſomething that *Job* ſerved God, and here that which *Job* had ſuffered is nothing.

It is Satans trade (and he hath many children of the ſame occupation) to ſlander and to ſlight whatſoever the Servants of God, either do or ſuffer. Before he ſlandered *Job*'s active obedience, now he ſlanders his paſſive obedience. What is this? (ſaith he) tuſh, *Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life*: It is a ſlight trial that he hath paſt yet; what great matter is it if he *hold faſt his integrity*; who would not, who could not *hold faſt*, for any thing that hath been done to him yet? Let us try him again.

For the clearing of this we will examine the words.

Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life.

We ſee here that malice is ſteeped in wit, Satan anſwereth by a Proverb, *Skin for skin*, &c. A proverbial, quick, ſharp ſpeech, the general ſence of which and Satans intendments are very clear.

The general ſence of this proverbial ſpeech is this;

That life is the moſt precious treaſure; that a man will part with any thing upon theſe terms, The ſaving of his life. That all a man ſuffers comes not very near him, while that is out of danger.

Such is the general ſence; and Satans intendment in ſpeaking this, is as clear; namely, that as *Job* before had ſerved God for his wealth, ſo now he doth ſerve him for his breath; that as before *Job* kept cloſe to God, that he might enrich him; ſo now *Job* keeps cloſe to God, leſt he ſhould deſtroy him. He ſeemeth to hold faſt his *integrity* (ſo you tell me) but it is only that he may hold faſt his life; He ſerved you before for wealth, and now he ſerves you for breath. His fear of looſing that makes him humble himſelf, and give many thanks: ſearch him to the bottom, and you will find him ſtill a mercenary ſervant, holding his integrity that he may hold in with thee, and live. This is the general drift of Satan.

But to give the ſpecial meaning of his words doth ſomewhat trouble Interpreters, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.*

Firſt [**Skin for skin**] Some interpret it thus, A man will venture the skin of one member to ſave the skin of another, which being cut off, or wounded, his life is more in danger. As for inſtance, if a blow come at a mans head, he will hold up his hand, or his naked arm, he will venture the skin of his hand to ſave his head: And the reaſon is, becauſe his life is more in danger, if he be wounded in his head, then in his hand. Here is *skin for skin*; he gives the skin of a member which is further off from the ſeat of life, to ſave the skin of that member which is ſo near the ſeat of life.

Secondly, By *skin* in the former place, ſome underſtand all the outward eſtate that *Job* had. It was uſual in thoſe times to expreſs all riches by the word *skin*, and the reaſon of it was this, becauſe (as was obſerved before) their ſubſtance was Cattel, and ſo from the skin of their Cattel, they did denominate their eſtates. Or as others, becauſe their money was made of skins, and ſo they did expreſs their wealth and riches under the word *skin*. Anſwerable to which cuſtom, the Latin word for houſhold-ſtuffe, or houſhold goods, is derived from that word which properly ſignifies a *skin*, becauſe either they were wont to wrap up their goods in skins, or becauſe they did put a great value upon skins, and ſo their whole outward perſonal eſtate was comprehended under that notion. Hence that common Proverb amongſt the Ancients, *Thou ſpendeſt out of another mans skin. To be liberal out of another mans eſtate, was called a being laviſh upon another mans skin.* And then skin in the ſecond place doth ſignifie the man himſelf, or the perſon of a man: the thing containing, or that which covereth, being put for the whole, by a Synechdoche; the skin for the whole man. And it is uſual in good Authors to put the skin for the whole man; as to look to the skin, is to look to the whole body. Take it thus, that skin in the firſt place is all outward

Æs alienum habere dicitur, & qui aureos debet, & quæ corium forma publica percuſſum, quale apud Lacedæmonios fuit. Sen. de Ben. l. 5. c. 14.

Supellex à pelle. Ludis de alieno corio (i.e.) ex alieno liberalē te præſtas. Pelliculam curare jubes. Hor. l. 2. Sat. 5.

In cute curanda plus æquo operata juventus. Hor. Ep. 2. l. 1.

ward things; and skin in the second, is taken for the skin that covereth the body; and so the sence runs thus, *skin for skin*, &c. that is, *a man will give all his outward estate, to save the flesh upon his back*; that is, *to save his life*. As if Satan had said, this act of *Job*, which is so cried up, and made a matter so considerable, being examined, will be found as ordinary as the high-way. It being common, to a Proverb, for a man to part with all, that he may preserve himself.

Zanchius. There is a third Exposition much laboured by a learned Interpreter; who, by skin, in the first place, understands not generally all his estate; but more especially his apparel, his cloathing, which at the first were made of skins, and were used long after for cloathings, by Princes and great men, in divers Countries; from which the sence of the Proverb is thus given, *skin for skin*, &c. A man will part with his cloaths, cast them off willingly, easily, that he may save the skin of his body, save his life: And so he expounds it by that act of *Job* in the former Chapter, *ver.* 20. where it is said, that Job *rent his mantle*, and cast it off; as if Satan had alluded unto that; and said, no marvel if *Job* humbled himself to the dust, and renting his garment, cast that away, when he heard all was taken from him: *Job* parted with the skin, his garment, that he might move thee to compassion, and so save his other skin, the garment which cloaths his flesh; which he fear'd thou wouldst rent by wounding, and so let out his trembling soul, his beloved life.

A fourth gives this interpretation of the words, *skin for skin*, &c. The Original Preposition, which we translate (*for*) is often in Scripture likewise translated (*upon*) as, in בעדעיד בעד עוד 2 *Kings* 4. 5. The Widow went from *Elisha*, *and shut the door upon her and upon her Son*. So in other places. Then the sence is made out thus; *skin upon skin*, *and all that a man hath*, *will he give for his life*; that is, if a man had never so many skins, if it could be supposed he had an hundred skins one upon another, he would let all be taken off to save his life. That place is expounded as a parallel, *John* 1. 16. where it is said, that, *of Christs fulness we receive grace for grace*; that is, *grace upon grace*, or *abundance of grace*, *all the grace we have*; this grace and that grace, faith, and love, and patience, and humility; every grace, all grace you receive from Christ. Thus some illustrate these two places one by another. So Satan saith of *Job* here, *skin for skin*, that is, skin upon skin; a man will give all his skins, suppose he had many, he would part with all: or take skin for never so much of his outward estate, he will let all go to save his life.

There is yet another interpretation given of this, *skin for skin*, *yea*, *all that a man hath will he give for his life*; take the words comparatively, we translate it, *yea all he hath*. וכל That copulative particle, in the Hebrew, is rendered sometime *and*, sometime *yea*, sometime *so*; according to which last acception, the sence standeth thus: as a man will give skin for skin, so a man will part with all he hath for his life. We find some Scriptures wherein this particle is taken in the very same sence: To give you instance, *Prov.* 25. 3. there the Hebrew reads it thus, *The heavens for height*, *the earth for depth*, *and the heart of Kings is unsearchable*: Now this is clear, that the sense is comparative, and it is thus to be given, *as the heaven is unsearchable for height*, *and the earth for depth*, *so the heart of the King is unsearchable*: so *vers.* 25. of the same Chapter, it is thus read out of the Original, word for word, *Cold water to a thirsty soul*, *and good news from a far Countrey*; now we translate it according to the sense, and make it a comparison thus, *As cold water to a thirsty soul*, *so is good news from a far Countrey*. Thus also we interpret this place, and it carries a good sence, *skin for skin*, *and all*, &c. As a man would give skin for skin, one outward thing for another (for they take skin in both places for outward things, for the goods of this life) as a man would give or barter away one commodity for another; so a man will give all outward things for his life: Life is more valuable to all outward things, then any one particular thing is to another. It is ordinary to a Proverb, among men in danger, to say, *Spare my life*, *and take my goods*. How willingly doth the Mariner in a storm, unlade his Ship, and cast all his rich wares over-board, that he may preserve that precious Jewel, his Life? As a godly man will give life upon life, a thousand lives (if he had them) rather then lose his soul; so a natural man will give skin upon skin, gold upon gold, treasure upon treasure, that he may save his life. Let life lie at the stake, and a man will give all things he hath in the world for it, and think he hath a good bargain.

Here are five Expositions you see offered; the two latter to me seem the most clear, howsoever every one of them hath a fair sence in it; and so we are agreed upon the general; which is only to set forth the excellency and preciousness of life: there cannot be any miscarriage in pitching upon either of these interpretations. I shall give you some Notes from hence.

First, Observe what a blessing life is. *Skin for skin*, *and all that a man hath*, *will he give for his life*.

Life is the most precious treasure, the most excellent thing in Nature.

And let me tell you, life is the treasure that is now so much digged for; there are many abroad that are digging for your precious lives. Consider what lies at stake, and what will you give for the securing or reducing of it? Have we not cause to say of some of our bloody brethren, as *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 32. 12. when his brother *Esau* was marching towards him? *I fear him* (saith he) *lest he will come and slay me*, *and the mother with the Children*: loss of life was the thing *Jacob* feared. And *Hesters* speech in her Petition to the King, imports that all other losses might have been born, but loss of life, *chap.* 7. 3, 4. *Let my life* (saith she) *be given at my petition*, *and my people at my request*; *for we are sold*, *I and my people to be destroyed*, *to be slain*, *and to perish*; *but if we had been sold for bond-men and for bond-women*, *I had held my tongue*. See how she wrought for life, for her own life, and the life of her people, and thought liberty not worth the asking for, compared with life. *Moses* made many demurs and excuses; *I am not eloquent*, &c. when God gave him commission to go into *Egypt*; but we hear of no delayes at all, when once God had said, *Return into* Egypt, *for all the men are dead which sought thy life*, Exod. 4. 19. God had not spoken thus, if he had not known there was such a scruple in his mind, which would have galled him worse in his travels to *Egypt*, then any pebble in his shoe.

Secondly, If life be the most precious thing, the richest Jewel in the world; then in the next place, learn to value your lives. You see how Satan values life here, out of an ill intent, only to extenuate and undervalue all the sufferings of *Job*; he sets his life at a very high rate, that he might make all his losses of no rate, not worth the speaking of. Let our intent be good, and then it is good for us to value our lives high, and to sell them at as dear a rate as we can, if we must sell them. You know what *Solomon* saith in the person of a natural man, *A living Dog is better then a dead Lion*; Eccles. 9. 4. We read what is said of the woman in the Gospel, that had *spent all she had on Physitians*: What was it for? Only to restore her health; which is a degree below life. Certainly if she spent all that she had, to obtain health, which is only the comfort of life, shall not we spend a part of that we have, to save our lives? As ships in danger to be wreck'd in a storm, are often preserved by casting some of their rich lading into the Sea; so it is possible, yea probable, that the casting away of some of your estates in this great storm, may be a means to save both your ship and your lives; your estates kept, may sink the Vessel, and then you must sink with it, and certainly die or swim for it; and hardly live. When *Esau* (Gen. 25. 32.) was hungry, and could not obtain a mess of pottage from his brother, but upon very hard terms, the sale of his Birth-right; *Sell me thy Birth-right*, saith *Jacob*; a precious Jewel indeed, which *Esau* should have valued more then his life; he comes to his price on this ground, *Behold I am at the point to die*, *and what profit shall this Birth-right do to me?* He was *prophane Esau* for saying so; that's the Apostles stile, *Heb.* 12. 16. It was prophaneness to prefer one morsel of meat before his Birth-right; because the Birth-right was a spiritual priviledge as well as natural: but there is no meer natural blessing, but we may both in wisdom and conscience part with, to keep our lives, when we are ready to die; ye may say, what will this estate, these riches do us good? If that, your estates may be the price of your lives, ye have reason, and it is your duty to part with them willingly; give some, give all; for what will these riches do you good, when you are ready to die; or already dead?

Further,

Further, be ready to give more then your estates for your lives. Give some of your blood for your lives; that's more: *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* And which is yet more, give a limb for your lives. The whole is better then a part: And which is highest of all, venture your lives to save your lives. That which I intend, is only this; do not barter away your lives upon mean rates, upon low terms. If it comes to it (as we have great cause to fear it will, we see many have been put to it already) sell your lives as dear as you can. Indeed there are none in so great danger to lose their lives, as they that will not venture their lives. That of Christ, is true in this sence also, he that will save his life, shall lose it; such saving tends to undoing; yea, it tends to death. And whosoever will (venture to) lose his life, shall (most probably) find it, *Matth.* 16. 25. Let it not be said that you died to save charges; let it not be said, that you died to save your skins, or to save your blood; yea, let it not be said, that you died to save your lives: I mean, that you feared to hazard your lives for the securing of your lives. Give all that you have for your lives, venture life and all; your safety depends upon this hazard; by such a noble liberality, you are in the fairest way, not only to save all you have, but to gain more then you have.

Thirdly, If your lives be so much worth, what are your souls worth? What is this life, which is valued thus above all that a man hath? The Apostle *James* makes the question, and gives the answer, *It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away*, Jam. 4. 14. A mans breath it is but in his nostrils, it is gone presently; yet you see, in a true value, all the world is below that. If you are to esteem your lives so, at what price will you set your souls? To save your lives, and save your souls, are two things. A man may save his life, and yet lose his soul; yea, many labour to save their lives in doing that, which will be the loss of their souls, poor creatures. Therefore look to that, set a high rate indeed upon your immortal souls; when estates, and liberties, and lives are called for, count them all as trash, that you may save your souls; hazard not your souls: If life be more worth then all the world, the soul is more worth then a thousand lives; *What will it advantage a man to gain the world, and lose his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* The truth is, a man shall not gain much to get the whole world, and lose his life; that loss is a loss irreparable, irrecompensible from the creature. *Nature teacheth us to prize our lives above the world, and Grace teacheth us to value our souls above our lives.* Therefore how unnatural are they that prefer a little profit before their lives? but O how ungracious are they, who prefer a little profit before their souls! Some will sin (as we say) for six pence; selling their own souls (as those false Prophets did the souls of their people) *for handfuls of Barlie, and for pieces of bread*, Ezek. 13. 19. And whereas a man should give all for his life, they will give their souls for a thing of nought. Know therefore the worth of your souls. Jesus Christ thought souls worth his life, and therefore died to save souls. How much then do our souls transcend our own lives? And if Christ laid down his life to ransom souls, do you rather lay down a thousand lives (if you had them) then endanger your souls, either by acting sin, or by submitting unto errour. In that case, let estate go, let liberty go, let life, let all go; for life hath not so much preheminence over all, as the soul hath over life.

Fourthly, If your lives are worth so much, then what is the Gospel worth? If a man would give all for his life, what should he give for his Religion, to maintain and uphold that in the purity and power of it? Life is a precious thing, a thing of great value; but when the Gospel comes in competition, then life is a poor commodity; and our breath but a perishing vapour. Such was the judgment of that great Apostle, *Acts* 20. 24. when the Holy Ghost *had witnessed in every City, that bonds and afflictions did abide him*, in preaching the Gospel; he thus resolves, *But none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto my self, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received, to testifie the Gospel of the grace of God.* His life came to a low rate in his esteem; how cheap was life, when the Gospel was spoken of? *I count not my life dear*, saith *Paul*: as all other outward things are mean and low, compared with life; so life it self is mean, a low thing, in comparison of the Gospel. This life is but the life of the body, but the Gospel is the life of the soul. Many men live, but no soul lives on this side, or without the Gospel. Now if you will offer much to save your lives, will you not offer much more to save the Gospel? In and about this, we may make the best improvement of Satans argument, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, should he give for the Gospel*, for Gospel-Ordinances, for Gospel-priviledges, for Gospel-light. Where, or for what will you venture and bid high, if not for the precious Gospel?

Lastly, If life be worth all, then hereby we may take measure of the love and bounty of Christ to poor sinners, who not only spent himself in all to his life, but spent life and all, that they might not perish; the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was exceeding great towards us; *That though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor*, 2 Cor. 8, 9. *That though he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he made himself of no reputation*, Phil. 2. 6, 7. But how superabundant was his Grace towards us, that though he was the *Prince of life*, Acts 3. 15. *Yet became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross*, Phil. 2. 8. *that we might live.* If a man loves his life, so that he will give *skin for skin, and all that he hath*, to redeem it; then, O how did Christ love his Church, who gave not only his riches, and his reputation, but his life also for its redemption.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8.

But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.
And the Lord said unto Satan, behold, he is in thine hand, but save his life.
So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job with sore boyles, from the sole of his foot unto his crown.
And he took him a pot-sheard to scrape himself withal, and he sate down among the ashes.

IN this fifth Verse, Satan goeth on, and makes a motion unto God (as we observed his method in the former Chapter) *But put forth thine hand, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.* This is Satans motion. In the sixth Verse, we have a grant of this motion, bound up yet with a limitation, as it was in the former Chapter.

For the motion; **But put forth thine hand now, and touch,** &c. What it importeth, *to put forth the hand*, that was opened in the former Chapter, *ver.* 11. where we have the same expression; therefore we shall not stay upon it here. Consider now only that which is differing, a new object, upon which the hand must be put forth, and which Satan desireth might now be touched. It is the laying of his hand, not upon his Cattel, or upon his Estate, or upon his Children, but upon his flesh and his bone; **Touch his bone and his flesh**; that is, afflict his body: The *Bone* and the *Flesh* are the two chief parts, the material parts of the body; of them the whole Fabrick doth consist: the bone, it is as the timber in this house; and the flesh, it is as the lime and mortar filling it up. Touch this, saith Satan: And in that he saith, *touch his bone and his flesh*, he intends and requires a deep and a sore affliction upon his body; for if he had said only thus, *touch his flesh*, that had been an affliction upon his body: For we know often in Scripture, the *flesh* is put for the whole body, and sometimes for the whole man: therefore Satan is not satisfied with an expression general, but he putteth it in direct and express terms, *Touch his flesh and his bone*; that is, touch him so, as the pain and distemper may sink into his very bones, into his very marrow, touch him thus, and then you shall see what he will do.

The *Bone* it self is a part without feeling; yet to touch the *bone*, imports the greatest pain that can be felt. *Touch his bone and his flesh*, and then, saith he,

He will curse thee to thy face.

What it is to *curse to the face*, hath been opened already, in the former Chapter, at *ver.* 11. and I must refer you thither for the sence of this phrase; only in a word, take it thus, *He will curse thee to thy face*, is, as if Satan had said thus;

thus; Though *Job* did bless thee when he had a full estate, and though he did bless thee when thou didst empty him of his estate, and tookest all his goods from him; yet if thou do but touch his body, and afflict his bones, he will break forth into cursed language, both concerning thy person, and concerning thy service.

I will only mind you further of that which is here secretly couched in this expression, *Touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face:* here is a secret imprecation involved; he tacitly subjects himself to the curse of God, if *Job* curse not God. As if Satan should have said, If he do not *curse thee to thy face*, then do so and so to me; and think thus and thus of me: If you would have the meaning of Satan from the language of his Children, you may take the plain *English* of it thus, *Touch but his bone and his flesh*, and damn me, if he do not curse thee; send me to Hell presently. Satan indeed kept this cursed imprecation close wrapt up in that form of speaking; but now his Children speak it out: If you would have Satans heart from the mouths of the sons of *Belial*, a cursed and cursing generation amongst us, the plain *English* of it is this, God damn me, send me to Hell presently, if he curse thee not. Satan we see, was more modest then these sons of impudence and perdition; who openly imprecate upon, and devote themselves unto the wrath of God almost every word; these do not only imitate, but exceed the Copy which Satan sets them here, by bold blasphemy and horrid execrations.

And he will curse thee to thy face. We may from hence observe,

First, Satan had tried in vain to make *Job* curse God: Now he attempts a second time. Note,

That, *When Satan cannot prevail against us by one means, he doth not despair of prevailing by another.*

He gives not his cause over for lost, because he cannot carry it at first, he will try and try again. As it was with *Balak*, Numb. 23. when he sent for *Balaam* to curse the people, and saw the business did not prosper or succeed according to his malice, *Balaam could not curse them*; he brought him to another place; *Come* (saith he) *I pray thee, I will bring thee to another place, peradventure it will please God, that thou maist curse me them from thence*; though you could not do it in one place, you may in another. So Satan, if he cannot work his will one way, he will try a second or a third.

Num. 23. 27.

Satans unweariedness in a bad cause, when it succeeded not, reproves those who are so soon weary of a good one, if it succeed not: Many are ready to give up, if one means will not do it; they cast off hope, and say the cause is desperate. If one, or two, or three, or many means we use, fail, we ought to try still; never despair of the end, while the work is good, and the means are fair. *In the morning sow thy seed* (saith the Preacher) *and in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that.* I may add, with-hold not thy hand in the evening, though thou seest the morning-seed doth not prosper; this may have a blessing, though that had not.

Eccl. 11. 6.

Secondly, Observe, *Satan trieth another way, and he trieth away more probable and efficacious for his ends then the former.*

When a weaker will not do it, he provides stronger means. As God in punishing or chastening sinners, when a lesser judgment will not humble them, he sends a greater; God cometh not only with another, but with sorer judgments; *If he will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.* So Satan, when by one temptation he cannot overcome, prepares not only another, but a stronger; he assaults them more and more: he not only musters new forces, but more compleat, to foil the soul. This should teach us, when we cannot subdue a corruption in our own hearts by one means, then to seek a better: And when by one prayer we cannot obtain a blessing, then to pray again, and to pray better; to pray with more life, with more faith, with more humility; then mix more fire with prayer, more zeal and fervency of spirit; mix more water with prayer, as *Jacob*, Hos. 12. wept and made supplication; above all, mix more of Christ in prayer, go out in his name and strength. When *Balaks* first messengers could not obtain *Balaam* to come with them, *Balak* was not discouraged or put off; but (saith the Text) *Balak sent yet again Princes, more, and more honourable*, Numb. 22. 15. Let not us be discouraged if our first prayers (which are our Messengers to God) are not answered; but let us send more and more honourable, more strong cries, more spiritual desires, which may take upon the heart of God. Why should Satan do more against us, then we will do for our selves?

Lev. 26.

Thirdly, Note this for our own caution,

That, *We must not only expect continued or renewed afflictions and assaults from Satan, but we must expect greater and greater afflictions and assaults from Satan.*

He hath some assaults that are but as Footmen, he will bring out his Horsemen at the next bout; *And if having run with Footmen, they have wearied thee, how wilt thou contend with Horses?* Jer. 12. 5. Be ready then, not only to run with the Foot, but to contend with Horses; prepare your selves for other, for more violent charges then you ever felt. Satan will, if he can, lay a closer siege to thy soul, then ever he hath done: As that one evil Spirit returned into the person out of whom he was gone, *Luke* 11. 24. *with seven Devils worse then himself*, so he often returns with seven temptations, worser, and stronger then before.

Fourthly, Observe what Satan picks out to be the matter of this second and stronger temptation; it is, to pinch *Job* in his flesh, to pinch his body. Note from hence,

That, *The pain of the body is very powerful to disquiet and trouble the mind.*

Satan is very confident to trouble and vex the mind of *Job*, by casting darts and diseases into his body. Physitians have a Rule, *That the manners of the mind follow the temper of the body*; and it is a more certain Rule, *That the mind is much carried according to the distemper of the body*; when the body is distempered, the mind is seldom at rest; the body and soul are such near neighbours, that they cannot but sympathize in each others sufferings. Some interpret that place of the Apostle, *Gal.* 4. 13, 14. concerning the weakness and sickness of his body; *You know* (saith he) *how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel.* We may safely joyn it with those other troubles, afflictions and reproaches which he endured, and were so great a disadvantage to his acceptance in the world. So the meaning is, that though his body was infirm, though he had many weaknesses upon him, yet he preached the Gospel. And then it follows in the next verse, *My temptation which was in the flesh you despised not*: observe, he calleth his bodily infirmity a temptation; the afflictions of the body, are great temptations to the soul. It is very considerable to this purpose, what the Apostle *James* saith, when he speaks of the several conditions of the Saints, and their duties in them, *chap.* 5. 13, 14. *Is any man afflicted? let him pray*; (he speaks that in general) *Is any man merry? let him sing Psalms. Is any man sick?* Is he pained by sickness in his body? What shall he do then? He doth not say, *Is any man sick? let him pray*; but, *Is any man sick? let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him:* As if he should say, a sick man is very unfit to pray himself, though for himself; he hath need to call others to pray with him, and for him; he hath enough to do, to wrestle with his pain, and conflict with that affliction: In other afflictions, let him pray; but if he be sick, let him send for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him. A diseased body unfits the mind for holy duties. The prayer of sick *Hezekiah* is called *chattering: Like a Crane or Swallow, so did I chatter*, Isa. 33. It was rather chattering then praying; such a disquietness and uncomposedness was upon his spirit, through, or by the infirmity of his flesh. Pain is a piercing shaft in Satans quiver of temptations: Though *the spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity*, yet oftentimes, a wound in the body, wounds the soul; and the diseases of the flesh, make the soul sick: *A wounded spirit no man can bear*; and a wound in the body, is a burden too heavy for many men.

Pro. 18. 14.

And if it be so, then the pain and the weakness of the body is no advantage to repentance and returning unto God. How pitifully are they mistaken, who put off repentance till their bodies be in pain, till they are sick and weak; they

do

do it upon this ground, because when they are in pain, they think they shall repent with more ease. Observe, if Satan thinks to have such an advantage upon a holy man, as to make him blaspheme when he is in pain, dost thou think pain will be an advantage to thy repentance? It is said, that at the *pouring out of the fourth Vial*, Rev. 16.9. when God did smite the inhabitants of the earth, and scorched them with great heat, that *they blasphemed the Name of God* (they did that which Satan presumed *Job* would do) *and they repented not to give him glory*. It is a woful thing to put off repentance to a pained body: pain in its own nature fits us rather to blaspheme and turn from God, then to return to him. Never think to have help for the cure of your souls, by the diseases of your bodies: usually we find, that either sick persons repent not, or theirs is but a sickly repentance. At the most, pain can but restrain your lusts, it can never heal them. The actings of some sins are quickened by diseases: At the most, a disease can but abate the acts of sin, it can never destroy the life of it. Death it self cannot kill sin: The sins of wicked men live when they are dead: the grave cannot consume them, no nor the fire of Hell wast their strength: the sins of unbelievers shall remain not only in their guilt, but in their power to all eternity. So much of Satans motion. *But put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.*

Verse 6. **And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thy hand, but save his life.**

Here we have the Lords grant unto that motion of Satan, **He is in thy hand, but save his life**: Thou mayest do with his bone and his flesh what thou wilt, *He is in thine hand*. We have opened what it is to have a thing put into the hand, in the former Chapter, where the same expression is used, therefore I shall pass those words here. Note only this, that the Lord saith here, *He is in thy hand*, to prevent Satans cavil: as if he had said, Thou movest me to touch his bone and his flesh; well, lest thou shouldest say, that I have dealt too gently with him, and have smitten him with favour, I will put the rod or staffe into thine hand, do thou with his bone and his flesh what thou canst, spare him not. We know the Lord is able to strike stronger strokes, and give deeper wounds infinitely then Satan can, if he pleaseth; yet, the love of God to his children, stops his hand and breaks the blow: He corrects in judgment, and debates in measure, *Isa.* 27. 8. when he strikes his Children, he strikes them as Children, gently: Thus (2 *Sam.* 7. 14.) speaking of *David*'s family, *If he commit iniquity* (saith God) *I will chasten him with the rod of men*; the word there used is *Enosh*, which signifies a weak man; I will chasten him with the rod of a weak man, of one that hath but a weak arm or hand, the hand of a sickly frail man: A weak, a sickly man cannot strike very hard. Thus saith God, *I will chasten thy children*, if they commit iniquity: they shall rather see my care, then feel my power in their corrections. Now (I say) lest Satan should pretend partiality, God puts *Job* into Satans hand, and gives him liberty to lay on as hard as his hand, acted with utmost malice, could smite him; thou hast liberty to smite him *into the very valley of the shadow of death*; to bring him so near death, that he may look into the graves mouth, but no further.

Save his life.] Here is Satans Chain, the limitation or restraint of his power. When God puts any of his Servants into Satans hand, he keeps Satan in his own hand. And as all the Elect are in Gods hand, to keep them from taking hurt, so the Devil is in Gods hand, to keep him from doing hurt to his Elect. *Save his life.*

The word *Nepheſh* here used, signifieth properly the soul; and the soul is in Scripture often put for the life; because the soul is the spring, the fountain of life; life is derived or diffused into the body from or by the soul: and as soon as the soul is parted from the body, life departs. Hence both this Hebrew word, and the Greek word ψύχη, have their names from breathing or respiring: For life goes out when breath goes out; when we cease breathing, we cease living. Our life is but a blast, a breath; *The Lord formed man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul*, Gen. 2.7. This is that vital spirit by which all quick things move; therefore Beasts, Birds, Fish, and creeping Things, are called living souls, *Gen.* 1. 20,24. And this life is called the blood, because it is contained or carried in the blood, *Gen.* 9.4. Further, it is very observable, that the Hebrews call the body separated from the soul, or a dead corps, *Nepheſh*, *Num.* 5. 2. *c.* 9. 10. *c.* 19. 11. *Hag.* 2. 14. Though the life be quite gone out, departed from the carkass or body of a dead man, yet that dead body is called life or soul; to note that it shall live again, and that the soul shall return unto it: The mystery of the Resurrection from death was implyed in the name of the dead. We find also that the Heathens called a dead body, a soul; possibly from some glimpse of the Resurrection. We lay up a soul in the grave saith the Poet. Virg. Æn. 3 *Animampue ſepulchro condimus.*

But how is this work put into Satans hand, *The saving of his life?* What is Satan become a Saviour? what salvation can we expect from him, whose name is *Apollyon*, and *Abaddon*, Rev. 9. 11. both which signifie a *Destroyer*. Shall we send to the Wolf to save the Sheep? or to the Vulture to save the Dove? Destruction is the delight of Satan, and it is his way; as he hath no hope to be saved himself eternally, so no will to save others temporally.

Observe, *That here to save life, notes only a sparing from death; not a delivering from destruction, but a forbearing to destroy.* Satan saved his life negatively, that is, he did not take it away: he cannot save positively, or restore that which was ready to perish; he doth not save as a deliverer, but as a murtherer, who would kill his brother, but cannot. He saves, not for want of will, but for want of power: when he is forced to spare, his nature is to devour. This devouring Lyon hunts for the pretious life, even when God saith, *Save his life.* *Servat animam quia eam non perdit.* Drus.

It may be questioned here, Why Satan (for that is implyed) desired so to destroy the life of *Job*? God would never have limited and chained him up, but that Satan had a mind to suck his blood, or afflict him unto death.

These two Reasons may be given, why Satan would have his life.

The one might be this; Because it was a thing doubtful with him (though he bragged much of it) whether he should attain his end or no, to make *Job* curse God; when therefore he saw he could not overcome his spiritual life, it would have been some revenge to him to destroy his natural life. As some wicked ones, his Agents, when by all their treats or flatteries they cannot make a man sin, which is to destroy his spiritual life, their revenge breaks forth against his natural life, to destroy that: This is the method of persecution, first to attempt the death of the soul, by drawing or terrifying unto sin; and if they fail of that, then death is inflicted on the body.

Or again in the second place, he being doubtful in himself (though he made no doubt in words) whether his plot would be successful, to make *Job* curse God; he (I say) doubting this design might not draw him to sin, resolved to take away his life, that so *Job* might never have told tales of his victory, or have reported his conquest to the world. At least by his death he might obscure the business, and bury it with some slander: saying that *Job* dyed with discontent and grief; that he blasphemed God when he dyed, that he wished for death, and could not hold out any longer. Much like that device of some Jesuits, who have blown it abroad, that our most zealous opposers of Romish errors, whom they could never move, either by writing or disputing, while they lived, have yet recanted all when they dyed. Wherefore lest Satan should have drawn a curtain over the glory of *Job*'s victory, by aspersing him after his death, the Lord saith, *Save his life*, *Job* shall survive his troubles, that matters may come to light, and a true report be made and left upon record both of thy implacable malice and enmity, and of his invincible patience and sincerity.

And this may lead us yet further to consider, why God was so careful of that precious part, his life.

For some may say,

Had it not been glory to God, and honour to *Job*, (like that of Martyrdom) if he had dyed under the hand of Satan, holding fast his own integrity, blessing God even unto death?

I grant this, but yet God knew that the saving of his life would be more advantagious both to himself and his *Job*, for

for thoſe ends: wherefore he ſaith, *Save his life*, deſtroy him not.

Firſt thus, God intended to make *Job* a *Monument of mercy*, as well as a *Monument of ſuffering*; he intended to ſet him up to all the world, as one, in whom they might behold the goodneſs of God in raiſing up, mixt with his wiſdom in caſting down; that men might learn hope from *Job*, as well as patience from *Job*. Therefore ſaith God, *Save his life*, I have ſomewhat elſe to do with him; I will raiſe him up again, and in him an everlaſting Monument both of his patience in ſuffering, and of my own power in reſtoring. Indeed if he had dyed in the conflict, and left his bones in the field, he had been a wonderful example of conſtancy: but he had not been ſuch an example of mercy, if his life had not been ſaved.

There may be this in it too, *Save his life*, ſaith God, I will have him preſerved in this combat, his courage and carriage in it is my delight. God loveth to ſee his people holding out, tugging and continuing in ſuch aſſaults and temptations. If any thing in the world gives delight to God, this is the thing that delighteth him. The Heathen thought this the ſport of their Gods: *Seneca*, in his Book of Providence, ſpeaking of *Cato*, and other gallant *Roman ſpirits*, ſaith, the gods delighted to look upon them in their conflicts with Fortune. To ſee them wraſtle with ſome great calamity, with ſome great danger, was ſuch a ſpectacle, as would draw off *Jupiter* from his greateſt buſineſs. It is a moſt certain truth, that the moſt true God doth love and delight to ſee his Children wraſtling with ſome great calamity: to ſee a poor man, who is but fleſh and blood, wraſtling with principalities and powers, with the Devil and powers of darkneſs; this is a ſight God himſelf (as we may ſo ſpeak) rejoyceth in. When *Abraham* had finiſhed that great combat about ſacrificing his Son, he calleth the place *Jehovah-jireh*, the Lord will ſee, or the Lord doth ſee, the Lord doth behold; as if that had been a ſight which God himſelf came down to look upon. As when ſome great man or ſtrange ſhew paſſeth by, we go out to ſee it; ſo God cometh down upon Mount *Moriah* to ſee a ſight: And what was it? To ſee *Abraham* in that great temptation aſſaulted and overcoming. Here was a ſpectacle for the great *Jehovah*, and therefore he calls the place *Jehovah-jireh*, the Lord hath ſeen. I doubt not but this place alſo of *Job*'s tryal, might have born the ſame name. As the Lord will be ſeen in the mount of our afflictions to provide for us, ſo he will ſee us in the mount of our afflictions, to pleaſe himſelf. The Pſalmiſt deſcribeth *God looking down from Heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand, that did ſeek God*, Pſal. 53. 2. Surely then if any do ſeek God, much more if they ſuffer from him, or for him, in a holy manner, he will look down from Heaven to ſee them.

Spectant dii magnos viros cum calamitate aliqua colluctantes. Ecce ſpectaculum, ad quod reſpiciate operi ſuo intentus Deus. Sen. de Cat. c. 2. de Prov.

Gen. 22. 14.

Thirdly, I will note that as another ground why God would have his life ſpared, becauſe he had much uſe of him, when he was in that condition, full of ſores and ſcabs.

A godly man is never in ſuch an eſtate, but God hath ſome uſe of his life.

Therefore ſaith God, *Save his life*, though he be full of ſores, or rather from the crown of the head to the ſole of the foot one continued ſore: though he be a moſt lamentable creature, and cannot wag hand or foot in any ſervice of man, yet ſpare his life, for he may thus ſtand me in very great ſtead, and do me more ſervice then many thouſands, who (as we ſpeak) are found wind and limb, and have not one blemiſh upon the whole body. *A godly perſon is ever uſeful to God*; though he cannot ſtir a limb, yet his life may be uſeful to God: whereas a wicked man, though ſtrong and healthy, though furniſh'd with outward comforts and accommodations, is altogether unſerviceable; he will not do God a ſtroke of work, though he have received great pay and wages aforehand. A godly man will ſerve God in and by his poverty, in and by his ſickneſs, when diſeaſed, when diſtreſſed, when nothing is to be ſeen upon him but ſcabs and boils. Grace will work through all the defects and decayes of nature. And when the life of nature can ſcarce move one member of the outward man upon the earth, the life of grace moves all the members of the inward man toward Heaven. *Though the outward man periſh, yet the inward man is renewed day by day*, 2 Cor. 4. 16.

Laſtly, God ſaved his life, as a puniſhment and vexation upon Satan. The *Talmudiſts* are vouched to affirm, that it was not ſo grievous to *Job* to be afflicted in his body, as it was to Satan when God reſtrained him from deſtroying his life. As if a man ſhould be permitted to crack the glaſs, but he muſt not ſpill the wine. That his life muſt be kept whole in him, was Satans wound. It is a torture to malice not to do the utmoſt miſchief. So much for the clearing of theſe words, *Behold he is in thine hand, but ſave his life.*

From the Lords grant, obſerve,

Firſt, *That God doth oftentimes give up the bodies of his faithful Servants, to be abuſed and tormented by Satan and his inſtruments.*

He is in thine hand, thou mayeſt do with him what thou wilt, on this ſide death. Touch his fleſh and his bone, or touch his fleſh to the bone; ſtrike as hard, wound as deep as thou canſt. It is ſaid, *Revel.* 2. 10. *That Satan ſhould caſt ſome of them*, that is, of the Servants of God, *into priſon.* God gave up their bodies to Irons and Fetters, to the Stocks and Shackles: He permits thoſe bodies, which are Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, to be thruſt into dungeons and the chambers of death.

Therefore do not think it ſtrange to ſee the bodies of the Children of God put into cruel and bloody hands; though they are veſſels of honour, and Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, yet God may give up thoſe bodies to be defiled and polluted with the outrages of the moſt abominable wretches. Conſider what the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the Jewiſh Martyrs, *Heb.* 11. How were their bodies abuſed and mangled? *They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſunder, they were ſlain with the ſword: they wandered about in ſheep ſkins and goat ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented: of whom the world was not worthy.* Their bodies had not a houſe to dwell in, nor garments to put on, in whoſe ſouls God himſelf dwelt, and had put upon them the garment of Salvation. Who is able to expreſs, yea, to conceive what ſtrange inventions of cruelties have been brought into the world to vex and torment the bodies of the Saints? The ſtories of the Primitive times are full: but the Fathers of the Romiſh Inquiſition have exceeded them all. Satan here invents a ſtrange diſeaſe as an engine to torture *Job*'s body, in that he mixt the rack and the wheel, the ſword and the ſaw, the fiery gridiron and the boyling oyl: The pain of a thouſand deaths was heighten'd in that malignant deſtemper.

Secondly, *He is in thine hand, but ſave his life*, ſaith God. The matter wherein Satan is limited is life; thence note,

That life and death are in the hand of God.

It is truth, that all we have is in the hand of God; but God keeps our life in his hand laſt of all, and he hath that in his hand in a ſpecial manner. So *David* expreſſes it, *Thou holdeſt my ſoul in life*; though the ſoul continue, life may not continue; there is the ſoul, when there is not life; life is that which is the union of ſoul and body; *Thou holdeſt my ſoul in life*; that is, thou holdeſt ſoul and body together. So *Daniel* deſcribes God to *Belſhazzar*, Dan. 5. 23. *The God in whoſe hand thy breath is, and whoſe are all thy wayes, haſt thou not glorified.* The breath of Princes is in the hand of God; and the ſame hand holds the breath of the meaneſt Subject: This may be matter of comfort to us in ſuch times as theſe are, times of danger, and times of death; when the hand of man is lifted up to take thy life, remember thy life is held in the hand of God. And as God ſaid here to Satan, Afflict the body of *Job*, but ſave his life; ſo God ſaith ſtill to bloody wretches, who are as the limbs of Satan, The bodies of ſuch and ſuch are in your hands, the eſtates of ſuch and ſuch are in your hands, but ſave their lives. The life of a man is never at the mercy of a creature; though it be a common ſpeech of men, when they have a man under them, *Now I have you at my mercy.* Though ſome brag as *Laban* did to *Jacob*, *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt*; yet God often checks them (as he did *Laban*) from ſo much as ſpeaking hurt, *Gen.* 31. 29. *but the God of your Father ſpake unto me yeſter-night, ſaying, Take thou heed, that thou ſpeak not to* Jacob *either good or bad.* Creatures, though full of love, cannot ſpeak good; and though full of malice, they cannot ſpeak bad, if God forbid: then much leſs can they do us hurt, and leaſt of all

Pſal. 66. 9.

hurt

hurt our lives, if God with-hold. *David* triumphs in his intereſt in ſuch a God, *Pſal.* 68. 20. *Our God is the God of ſalvation* (that is, of deliverance, of outward deliverance (for that is eſpecially there meant) *and unto God the Lord belong the iſſues from death*, or the goings out from death, that is, God hath all wayes that lead out from death in his own keeping, he keepeth the key of the door, that lets us out from death; when a man is in the valley of the ſhadow of death, where ſhall he iſſue out? where ſhall he have a paſſage? No where, ſaith man, he ſhall not eſcape; but God keepeth all the paſſages; when men think they have ſhut us up in the jaws of death, he can open them, and deliver us, *To him belong the iſſues from death*: It is an alluſion to one that keepeth a paſſage or a door: And God is a faithful keeper, and a friendly keeper, who will open the door for the eſcape of his people, when they cry unto him. It is expreſt ſo in *Pſal.* 141. 7. *Our bones are ſcattered at the graves mouth: as when one cutteth or cleaveth wood upon the earth*, that is, we are even ready to die, to be put into the grave. What then? *But mine eyes are upon thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my truſt, leave not my ſoul deſtitute. Keep me from the ſnare which they have laid for me. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilſt I withall eſcape*; that is, make me a way to eſcape: As if he ſhould ſay, *Thou haſt the key of the gate*, by which we may iſſue out from death: Lord, I look that thou ſhouldeſt now open it for me.

Let it comfort us that God hath our lives, and the iſſues from death in his own hand. When Satan thought he had *Job* faſt enough lockt up in the valley of the ſhadow of death, God kept him ſafe, he opened a door and let him out.

Thirdly note, *That as God hath life in his hand in a ſpecial manner, ſo he takes ſpecial care of the lives of his people.*

Save his life (ſaith God) I will look to that: *Pſal.* 116. 15. *Precious in the ſight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.* Precious is their death; not that death it ſelf is precious; a privation hath no preciouſneſs in it: but their life is precious, therefore he will have a great price for their death; God puts off the life of a Saint at a dear rate. Woe unto thoſe who violently and unjuſtly take away that which is ſo precious in the eſteem of God; at one time or other he will make them pay dear for ſuch Jewels.

Fourthly, obſerve, *It is mercy to have our lives, though we loſe all things elſe.*

You ſee here God ſaith concerning *Job*, *Save his life*; I have given thee his eſtate, thou haſt ſpoiled that; now I will leave his body in thine hand, wound that, afflict that, but ſave his life. Here was mercy. Therefore it was a ſpecial promiſe and priviledge made and granted to ſome in times of great publick ſufferings and common calamities, as to *Ebed-melech* the Ethiopian, *Jer.* 39. 8. and to *Baruch* the Scribe, *Jer.* 45. 5. *That their lives ſhould be given to them for a prey*; as if God had ſaid, It is no ordinary favour, in times of common danger, to have your lives for a prey; you complain for this loſs and that loſs, and you have cauſe too, but think withall that you have your lives. And why is it ſaid, that they ſhould have their lives for a prey? A prey you know properly is that which we take out of the hand of an enemy, that which was in his poſſeſſion; the lives of theſe perſons were ſaid to be given to them for a prey in thoſe perillous times, becauſe God by his care and providence did (as it were) fetcht back their lives from the hand of the enemy: their lives in natural reaſon were in their enemies hands, but God undertakes to fetch them back, and recover them out of their hands, and ſo they were promiſed to have their lives for a prey. Thus God giveth to many of his people their lives for a prey, and they are to bleſs God in this behalf, whatſoever afflictions and troubles are upon them, that yet they have their lives.

Laſtly; We may hence raiſe our meditations to conſider the wonderful love of God to us in Chriſt: when God ſent Chriſt into the world to ſave ſinners, he put him into the hands of Satan and his inſtruments; yet he doth not ſay (as here) to Satan, *Save his life*: Afflict him as thou wilt, perſecute him in his cradle; deſpiſe him, ſlander him, revile him, accuſe him, crown his head with thorns, ſcourge him, buffet him, ſpit in his face, &c. but *ſave his life*: No, this bound is not ſet to the malice of Satan, or the rage of men, God gives them leave to take life and all. Concerning his Servant *Job*, God ſaith to Satan, Spare his life; but when he ſendeth his Son, he gives no order to have him ſpared, but gives his cruel enemies full ſcope. How wonderful is the love of God, who for our ſakes was ſo expenſive of his Sons life, whenas he thus ſpared the life of a Servant? If Satan had been chained up from taking the life of Chriſt, he had been at liberty to triumph over our lives, to all eternity. We had all died, if God had ſaid to Satan concerning Chriſt, Save his life.

Thus we ſee the Commiſſion of Satan againſt *Job*, and the limitation of it. Satan was not tied up ſo ſhort as he was in the former Chapter, and yet ſtill he is tied. There he might meddle with *Job*'s eſtate, but not with his body; here he may meddle with his body, but not with his life: Though God lengthen Satans chain, yet he never lets Satan looſe; though he be at more liberty then before, yet he is in cuſtody; there is a *But* of reſtriction upon him ſtill. It is our comfort, that though Satan (as Philoſophers ſpeak of liquids, water, and the like) cannot keep himſelf in his own bounds, yet he is eaſily kept in bounds by the word and power of God.

Verſe 7. **So went Satan forth from the preſence of the Lord, and ſmote Job with ſore boils, from the ſole of the foot unto his crown.**

Verſe 8. **And he took him a potſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall, and he ſate down among the aſhes.**

So Satan went forth from the preſence of the Lord. He is preſently upon execution, as ſoon as he had his Commiſſion. We have explained theſe words in the former Chapter.

See then what he doth: *He ſmote* Job *with ſore boils from the ſole of his foot unto his crown.*

He ſmote *Job*, ſaith the Text. In the former afflictions Satan had inſtruments to work by: He ſtirred up the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*: he moved the fire and the wind into a conſpiracy againſt *Job*: Here he (that he might be ſure it ſhould be done fully) doth it himſelf.

He ſmote Job. When the Devil ſmiteth, he ſmiteth throughly, he ſmiteth home. When Angels ſtrike, they ſtrike to purpoſe. It is ſaid *Acts* 12. that an *Angel of the Lord ſmote* Herod, *and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghoſt*. Spirits have mighty power.

He ſmote Job; why, he did not demand to ſmite *Job*, he did but deſire to have him *Toucht*: you heard before ſomewhat of that. Satan moves that his fleſh and his bone might be only touched; now, his motion being granted, it is ſaid *he ſmote him*. There are two things in this ſmiting:

Firſt, It notes ſuddenneſs: He did not afflict him by a diſeaſe that grew upon him by degrees; as you know boils and ſores ordinarily are long a gathering, breeding in, and breaking out of the fleſh; but he was all over full of theſe boils in an inſtant.

Secondly, Smiting intimates the vehemency of it, a killing ſtroke, a deaths wound; the Hebrew word ſignifieth to ſtrike to death. So here was a ſudden ſtroke, and a vehement ſtroke. It muſt needs at once wound both his mind and his body, on a ſudden, in a moment, to be filled with ſores, and covered with a ſcab; he ſaw no cauſe, he had no prognoſticks which might induce a ſuſpition that his body was in ſuch a diſtemper; and ſo it looked the more like an immediate ſtroke from an offended God. Every word hath its weight and emphaſis to add weight and anguiſh to this affliction.

נבה *De homine occidit, perdidit.*

It may here be queſtioned, how Satan can be ſaid to ſmite? And the ſame doubt ariſeth about this action of good Angels; one of which, as executioner of Gods wrath, ſmote of the *Aſſyrians* in one night an hundred and fourſcore and five thouſand, *Iſa.* 37. 36. and another ſmote *Herod*, *Acts* 12.

I anſwer, how Angels ſmite is a ſecret that we cannot expreſs, nor fully comprehend. For this and the like expreſſions of ſmiting, are ſuted to the nature of the Patient, not of the Agent; man being a material ſubſtance, is ſuſceptive or capable of ſmiting, or of a ſtroke: But an Angel being an immaterial ſubſtance, cannot ſmite properly, and he is therefore only ſaid to ſmite a man, becauſe we cannot ſignifie an effect or impreſſion upon a body, but by ſuch

a word. We know that in the plague or other diſeaſes, when they are immediately inflicted by Angels, man receives a ſtroak, and therefore is ſaid to be ſmitten. But how the Angel gives that ſtroak, or ſmites, is not known. Man may feel himſelf ſmitten by an Angel, but how the Angel ſmites he cannot underſtand. This word is fitted to the recipient, not to the efficient cauſe of the diſeaſe, or plague, or death.

שחן *Ulcus ortũ ex calore, ſive igne, inflammans corpus.* Schind. *Vox Hebræa ſignificat ſcabiem fœdiſſimam, qualis eſt Elephantiaſis.* Vatab. *in loc.*

He ſmote him with boyles.] The Hebrew word ſignifieth an ulcer, a burning or an inflaming ulcer, an ulcer that cometh from extream heat, or is extream hot. Satan did (as it were kindle a fire in the bowels of *Job*, inflamed his blood, and heated the humors of his body, from whence theſe boiles, theſe ulcers, theſe ſores did ariſe. The Grammarians expreſs it ſometime more generally, a filthy ſcab; ſometime more particularly, an ulcer, a boile, ſometime a leproſie; it is indeed any foul diſeaſe breaking out upon the body.

The ſame word is uſed, *Exod.* 9. 10. where it is ſaid, that God ſmote the Egyptians and the Magicians with boyles. It was one of the plagues of Egypt that was inflicted upon *Job*; we need ſay no more of it then that, to ſhew that it was a grievous plague, a moſt painful ſore: for it is added in that place of *Exodus*, that *the Magicians could not ſtand before* Moſes *becauſe of the boiles.*

בשחין רע *Ulcere peſſimo.*

Again, it is not only a ſmiting, and ſmiting with a boile; but there is an Epithite added, he ſmote him with *ſore* boiles, with an evil boile: among evils ſome are worſe, theſe were the worſt kind of boiles. There are many ſorts of boiles, ſome are not ſo bad as others, though all are bad enough. Now leſt any ſhould think *Job*'s boyles were not the moſt painful and malignant, a word is joyned to expreſs it to the height: in the kind they were boyles, and (*intenſive*, or) in the degree, they were the worſt and moſt tormenting boyles.

Further in the fourth place, we know it is painful for a man to have one boyle, eſpecially an angry burning one, a boile of the worſt ſort; but it is ſubjoyned, *he was ſmitten with boyles, from the ſole of his foot to his crown.* To be all over boyles, and to be all over-run with the moſt painful kind of boyles, what a vehement pain muſt this be? *From the ſole of his foot unto his crown*, there is the extent of this ſtroak. *Intenſive*, it was the worſt kind of boyle, and *Extenſive*, it was all over his body, no part free.

From the ſole of his foot unto his crown.] It is uſual in Scripture thus to ſignifie the whole body: as *Deut.* 28. 35. *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee in the knees and in the legs, with a ſore botch that cannot be healed, from the ſole of the foot to the top of the head, or to the crown.* And *Iſa.* 1. 6. when the Prophet would expreſs what a general blow the body politick had received from the hand of God by his judgements, (ſo it is there to be underſtood) he ſaith there were *wounds and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores, from the ſole of the foot even unto the head.* That is, the whole body politick, the whole State had at one time or other, or all at one time received wounds and blows, and ſtroaks from the hand of God. The extreams comprehend all the parts: That which extends from one extream or outmoſt part to another, is extended through all; from Eaſt to Weſt, is all the world over; and from head to foot, is all the body over. So then *Satan ſmote him from the ſole of his foot unto his crown*, is, He ſmote his whole body.

All pains and diſtempers were gathered into this one malady, and all parts of his body were ſmitten, as if they had been but one member: only his tongue was untoucht, as is commonly obſerved, That it might be free to blaſpheme God, who had thus polluted the beauty and comlineſs of his body, who had thus imbittered the comforts of his ſoul.

Job being thus ſmitten, would ſurely look out for help. Though it be exceeding ſinful (with *Aſa* diſeaſed in his feet) to ſeek to *The Phyſitians, and not the Lord*; yet it is our duty to ſeek to the Lord and the Phyſitian: To truſt in means is to neglect God; to neglect means is to tempt God. Doubtleſs holy and wiſe *Job* walkt in a path between theſe two; he neither truſted nor neglected means, but uſed them; yet alaſs it was with *Job*, as it is ſaid in the Prophet concerning *Ephraim* and *Judah*, *That when* Ephraim *ſaw his ſickneſs, and* Judah *ſaw his wound; then went* Ephraim *to the* Aſſyrian, *and ſent to King* Jareb: *yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.* Though *Job* (as they in their civil ſickneſs) ſeeing his ſickneſs and his wound, had ſent to this and that Phyſitian; their anſwer would have been, *We cannot heal you nor cure you of your wound.* His diſeaſe was of the nature of thoſe which are called, *The Phyſitians reproach*: They could not diſcover any natural cauſe of it, and therefore they could not preſcribe any artificial cure of it. Phyſitians of greateſt value, in *Job*'s caſe, were Phyſitians of no value. And therefore to ſhew that either all had in vain attempted to cure him, or that none durſt undertake the cure, the Text ſaith, *That he took a pot-ſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall, and he ſate down among the aſhes.*

Opprobrium medicorum.

2 Chron. 16. 12.

Hoſ. 5. 13.

Theſe words are a further aggravation of *Job*'s affliction. When he is in this manner ſmitten, ſmitten with boyles, ſmitten with the worſt of boyles, *ſmitten with boyles* all over, *from the ſole of his feet unto his crown*: ſurely a man in this pickle had need to have ſome good tendance and looking to; ſuppoſe the Phyſitians and Chyrurgions could not cure him, yet they might eaſe him; if they had plyed him with Fomentations and ſuppling oyles, if they had bound up his ſores with fine linnen, to mitigate and mollifie them: if ſuch applications and attendance had not been a refreſhing to him, yet they would have been a reſpect to him; if they had not been an allay to his pain, yet they would have been an honour to his perſon. But (as this 8. *verſe* ſhews us) when the man was thus nothing but ſores, he had then nothing to help him: He might ſay (as *David* afterwards in a ſad condition, *Pſal.* 142. 4.) *I look'd on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed, or periſhed from me, no man cared for my ſoul.* When thus, Lover and Friend, Phyſitian and Chyrurgion, Wife and Servant were far from him, at leaſt in duty and affection; then he is forced to be both Patient and Phyſitian, Sick and Nurſe; *he took him a pot-ſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall.* Poor man! He who was lately in health, and the greateſt man in the Eaſt, being now ſick, hath nothing left him but a piece of a broken pitcher.

There are four aggravations of his affliction in this.

The firſt is this, That he could get none to dreſs him; he was fain to do it himſelf, ſaith the Text. Neither Wife, nor Servants, nor Friends would meddle with him. A hard caſe!

Then ſecondly, Conſider what a tool he had to do it with. He was left to be his own Chyrurgion, and his dreſſing inſtrument was *a potſheard.* The word ſignifies, ſometimes a whole earthen pot, ſometimes a broken piece of it, a ſheard as we call it. Here is no mention of fine linnen and ſalves to heal, or of oyle to ſupple theſe ſoares; only a hard pot-ſheard is the tool, and ſcraping is all the Chyrurgery. A hard caſe!

Thirdly, This intimates either that his body was ſo loathſom by reaſon of the diſeaſe, that he was loath to touch himſelf with his hands: As we ſay proverbially in our Language concerning a deformed or filthy creature; *a man would ſcarce touch ſuch an one with a pair of Tongs.* So, as if *Job* had ſo abhorred himſelf, that he was loth to touch himſelf with his bare hands, he muſt take ſomewhat, and for want of a better, a *pot-ſheard* to ſcrape himſelf; he had not the heart (as it were) to touch himſelf, his diſeaſe was ſo foul, that (as we ſay) it turn'd his ſtomack. This ſome give as a reaſon why he took a pot-ſheard, his body was ſo filthy that he was loth to touch it with his hands.

Or as others give the reaſon, his boiles and ſores did ſo over ſpread and envenome his hands to the very nailes, that it was a pain for him to touch himſelf: his fingers were ſo ſore, that he had ſcarce any uſe of them; this conſtrained him to make a poor ſhift, even to take *a pot-ſheard to ſcrape himſelf withall.* What a lamentable caſe was this!

Fourthly, There follows yet a further aggravation of his affliction. If a man be ſick and full of ſores, yet if he can get an eaſie bed or ſome ſoft place to lie upon, it is a great comfort. You know how men will remove from bed to bed, from place to place, when they are diſtempered and in pain But ſee where *Job* lies, he hath no down-bed nor ſoft pillows, neither couch nor chair to ſit in, but

He ſate down among the aſhes.

There are two expoſitions concerning this; for his ſitting in the *Aſhes*, may be taken as a voluntary act, or as a neceſſary act. Some take it as a voluntary act of *Job*, and

that he did it *Elective*; when he was in that condition, he went out and choſe to ſit among the Aſhes; and ſo his ſitting among the Aſhes was a note of his humiliation and abaſement: As often in Scripture, to ſit down in aſhes, is as much as to repent and humble our ſelves deeply before God, to lie in the very duſt; as it is expreſt of *Job*, (Chap. 42. 6.) when he had ſeen God, *I abhor my ſelf*, ſaith he, *and I repent in duſt and aſhes*; alluding to that cuſtom of ſitting in aſhes when they did repent. So you find in that ſolemn humiliation of the *Ninivites*, Jon. 3. 6. that *when word came to the King of* Ninive (namely that *Jonah* had propheſied the ruine of the City within forty dayes) *he aroſe from his throne, and he layed his robe from him, and covered himſelf with ſack-cloth, and ſate in aſhes.* Chriſt upbraiding *Chorazin* and *Bethſaida*, tells them, *that if the mighty works which were done in them had been done in* Tyre *and* Sidon, *they had repented long ago in ſack-cloath and aſhes*, Matth. 11. 22. In great mournings, the Heathen uſed to ſit in or ſprinkle themſelves with aſhes. As *Homer* reports of *Ulyſſes* after a Ship-wrack, and of others, whom *Druſius* hath obſerved on this Text. *Iſa.* 61. 3. the promiſe is, *that God will give beauty for aſhes*; that is, they that humble themſelves and lie in aſhes, ſhall have a happy and comfortable reſtauration. So that this act of *Job* might be voluntary, and a geſture of repentance; ſitting down among the aſhes, to humble and abaſe himſelf before God.

The Papiſts are ſuperſtitiouſly ceremonious in this point at this day: annually obſerving a day which they affect to call *Aſhwedneſday*, on which they ſprinkle themſelves with aſhes, as a preparatory to their formal Lenton Repentance. *But we have not ſo learned Chriſt.*

Secondly, We may take it for a neceſſitated act, that he was forced to this, to go and ſit among the aſhes, (or as moſt from the Septuagint tranſlate it, to ſit down upon a dung-hill) and that in two reſpects.

Firſt, In regard of his poverty and want, as if he were ſo bereft and deſtitute of all outward things, that he had not a houſe to put his head in, nor any other conveniencies to make uſe of; but was conſtrained to go out, and ſit upon the dung-hill or amongſt the aſhes.

Secondly, Others rather conceive, that the neceſſity did ariſe from the contagion and loathſomneſs of his diſeaſe, ſo that he was forced to go out of doors, he filled the houſe with ſuch a noiſom ſmell.

Or he was forced to go out as a Leper; concerning whom the Law was afterwards, you know, that they ſhould be put out of the Camp or City; and it was a Law grounded upon reaſon, and the common light of nature, though it had a ſpiritual ſignification, as given to the *Jews*. The Septuagint ſay expreſly, he ſate upon the dung-hill without the City, as Lepers were wont to be, according to the Law of *Moſes*; and as we ſee executed in that caſe of *Uzziah* the King, being a Leper, *he dwelt in a houſe by himſelf alone, and was cut off from the houſe of the Lord*, 2 Chron. 26. 21.

But that *Job* ſate either without the City, or upon a dung-hill, is only a conjecture, and beſides the Text. Which way ſoever we take it, it is a great aggravation of *Job*'s ſorrows. Take it for a neceſſitated ſitting in the aſhes abroad, it infers, that either he was ſo poor as that he had not an houſe to be in; or that his diſeaſe was ſo contagious that he could not be endured in the houſe. Or take it for a voluntary act, that he did chooſe to ſit in aſhes, it was an aggravation of his affliction; for then it notes that he was in the loweſt, in the ſaddeſt condition that can be imagined: ſitting in aſhes, being an emblem of extream ſorrow, and never uſed but in times of greateſt calamity, publick or perſonal.

So that here every circumſtance is an aggravation of *Job*'s affliction. He was ſmitten by Satan, and he ſmote hard enough: he ſmote him, and *he ſmote him with boyles*, he ſmote him with the moſt malignant kind of boyles; he ſmote him with ſuch boyles all over, *from the ſole of his feet to his crown*; and when he was in this conditino, he had no Nurſe, no Chyrurgion, no Phyſitian to help him, he was forced to take a pot-ſheard to ſcrape himſelf: he had no ſoft bed prepared to lye on, nor (as many have thought) houſe to be in; but out of the City, or out of his houſe he muſt, and among the aſhes, upon the dung-hill. Lo, there he ſits. What one ſaid of an exact Hiſtory of a great Prince, That ſurely it was written rather in theory as a pattern or picture of a Prince, then according to the truth of a Hiſtory: So we may ſay of this deſcription of *Job*'s troubles; that ſurely it was written rather as a ſtudied pattern of man's ſufferings, then as an accompliſht Hiſtory of the ſufferings of any man: yea who almoſt can go ſo far in imagination, as *Job* went in real paſſion? But we will paſs from the deſcription of his ſorrows, to ſome Obſervations upon them.

Zenoph. Cyr. *Ad Principis effigiem quam Hiſtoriæ fidem.*

First, Here we ſee, *That Satan if he be permitted, hath a power ſuddenly to afflict the body with diſeaſes, and that is a power far tranſcending all the power that is in man.*

Man is able to wound the body of his brother with a material inſtrument, but all the Tyrants in the world cannot ſmite the body with a diſeaſe, or command a man into ſickneſs; though God ſhould ſay to them, as here to Satan, I give you leave, yet they muſt leave that to Satan: whoſe help is ſometime begg'd by envious wretches, who would kill their brethren without a Sword, and vex them unſeen. Man muſt have a weapon to ſmite, but Satan can ſmite and kill without a weapon, if God ſay the word. Man can ſpill the blood, but Satan can poiſon the blood: he can infect the humors, and taint the ſpirits more ſubtilly, more ſpeedily then the moſt skilful poiſoner in *Rome*. We ſhewed before how ſuddenly Satan can raiſe commotions in the Air, ſtormes and tempeſts there; he can do the like in our bodies: for ſuch are diſeaſes in the body as ſtorms and tempeſts in the Air. Storms make (as it were) a confuſion among the Elements, and are the diſtemper of Nature: diſeaſes make a confuſion among the humors, and diſtemper the conſtitution and ſpirits of the body. It is ſaid of the woman in *Luke* 13. 16. that Satan had bound her 28. yeares; Obſerve in that, the power Satan hath over the body, if God give him liberty to exerciſe it: as cruel men can bind in chains, and caſt the body into priſon for many years; ſo Satan can bind the body with a ſpirit of infirmity as with a chain.

Secondly, Obſerve this, *That health and ſtrength of body are a very great bleſſing.*

You ſee Satan deſires to try *Job* by taking away this bleſſing laſt, and he thought this would make *Job* curſe God: you may ſee the value of it by his deſire to deſtroy it. *Health is the Prince of earthly bleſſings.* We ſay, he lives miſerably that lives by Medicines, who to uphold Nature is in the continual uſe of Art. How miſerably then doth he live, whom Art and Medicines cannot reſtore to health, who is diſeaſed beyond the help of Phyſick?

I might mind you likewiſe from this, to remember what frail bodies we live in, even ſuch, as have in them the ſeeds of all diſeaſes. Sin indeed is the ſeed of ſickneſs and of death: And hence it is, that if the humors of the body be a little ſtirr'd, they quickly turn to a diſeaſe; and this houſe of clay is ready to diſſolve and fall. What is the ſtrength of the body, that we ſhould truſt it? or the beauty of the body that we ſhould be proud of it? We ſee in *Job*, how quickly the ſtrength of it is turned into weakneſs, and the beauty of it into blackneſs. *All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field; The graſs withereth, and the flower fadeth*, Iſa. 40. 6.

And here likewiſe note this, you that enjoy health of body, whoſe ſtrength yet continues, and your ſelves are free from the bonds of any bodily infirmity: while you hear of one ſmitten with a diſeaſe from the crown of the head to the ſole of the feet, conſider what a mercy you have, who have no pain from the crown of the head to the ſole of the feet; who have not an aking joynt, nor pain ſo much as in a finger. It is like that many of you can ſay you have this bleſſing, you do not know what pain in any one member means; look upon a man, that knew nothing but pain, upon a man that had not one member free, and prize your bleſſing.

Such likewiſe who have pain and infirmities, in one or two, or more parts of the body, may ſee in this ſpectacle cauſe to bleſs God, that they have any part free. To have but one or but a few ſores, is mercy, ſparing mercy, when we behold another nothing but a ſore. Indeed when one member ſuffers, (whether in the body natural or myſtical) all the members ſuffer with it. But compaſſion is not ſo

heavy

heavy a burden, as paſſion is. And as the ſound members ſympathize in ſorrow with thoſe that are ſmitten, ſo they that are ſmitten, ſympathize in joy with thoſe that are ſound. The eaſe of one part mitigates the diſeaſe of another; and it is an abatement of our troubles to ſee thoſe whom we love in peace. Two are better then one (ſaith *Solomon*,) for if one fall, the other may help him up; but if both fall, who ſhall help? And if every member ſuffer, there is paſſion in all, but compaſſion in none, much leſs ſupport or help.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Job in this condition was left of all.*

Do not think it ſtrange if you be brought into ſuch ſtraights, as to be left alone, when you have moſt need of aſſiſtance. *Job* was as a man friendleſs, Phyſitianleſs, wifeleſs, ſervantleſs, all forſook him. It is the comfort of the people of God, that they know how to be alone, and yet can never be alone: though they be left of all viſible friends, yet they have an inviſible friend who will viſit them, ſtay with them by day, and watch with them by night; for he hath ſaid, *I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* In the Greek there are two negatives to affirm this, that God will not leave his, *Heb.* 13. 5. *And he that hath him alone, hath infinitely more then all the world in one.* When Friends and Phyſitians will not come near, when Wife and Children take their leave or ſtand afar off, when Servants hold their noſes, being not able to bear the ſtinch and ill ſavour that cometh from the body; yea, when a man comes to be an abhorring to himſelf; yet at that time God delights in him, Chriſt at that time imbraceth him, and takes him in his arms, and kiſſeth him with the kiſſes of his lips, which are better then wine, yea better then life. *Job* was never ſo near God, ſo in the boſom of God, as when no creature in the world would ſo much as touch him; *Job* was never ſo beautiful in the eye of God, as when he had nothing but boiles upon him.

Fourthly, I may preſent you with *Job* as he was upon his Aſh-hill in want of all things; from thence be admoniſhed,

That the Children of God, his deareſt Servants may come to uttermoſt outward extremities.

When a man is among the aſhes, then he is at the loweſt: what can a man be leſs then that? The Apoſtles were made as the filth of the world, as the off-ſcouring of all things, as ſweepings and offal which are caſt out upon the dunghil; ſo was *Job* in the ſence of many interpreters. They who are of moſt worth may be uſed as if they were worth nothing. *Job* was a pearl though upon a dunghil. *They who were brought up in ſcarlet embrace dunghils*, ſaith *Jeremy* in his *Lamentation* for *Jeruſalem*, Chap. 4. 5. We may ſay, They who are brought up and clothed in better then ſcarlet, even in the robes of Righteouſneſs, and in the Garments of Salvation, may yet be brought to embrace a dunghil. There is no judging by Appearance; *No man knows love or hatred by all that is before him or (upon him)* Eccleſ. 9.

Laſtly, Look upon *Job*'s ſitting in the aſhes, as a voluntary act, and then obſerve, (which is of much concernment and uſe for us now, in regard of the preſent condition we are in.)

That as the afflicting hand of God doth increaſe upon a people, or upon a perſon, ſo ought the humiliation and repentance of that perſon or people to increaſe.

When the hand of God was upon *Job* before, *he rent his mantle, he ſhaved his head*, theſe were acts of great humiliation; but now *Job* having a nearer and deeper affliction upon him, humbleth himſelf yet more: Then he fell upon the ground, but now he ſitteth among the aſhes. Greater afflictions call to greater humiliation. We ought not only to be humbled when God afflicteth, but to be humbled in a proportion to the affliction: As it is in regard of ſin committed, great ſins call for great ſorrow; and as it is in regard of mercies received, great mercies call for great praiſes: ſo great troubles call us to great humiliations; and ſtill the greater troubles are, the greater our humiliation ought to be. This is one way of accepting the puniſhment of our iniquities, and of improving preſent evils for our everlaſting good. Conſider whether this be not the work of this day.

We have had the hand of God upon the Nation in leſſer judgments heretofore, we have had warning-pieces ſhot off amongſt us; but now we hear the report of murthering-pieces every day. Divers years God made war upon us with the ſword of the Angel, by which thouſands have fallen in our Streets, but now God hath put a ſword into the hands of men. The former ſword was a Favour compared with this; thoſe wounds, a kiſs, compared with this. Both *David* and experience reſolve it thus. Many of our dear brethren are ſlain and fallen by the ſword, their blood hath been ſpilt like water, and their bones have been ſcattered as when one cleaveth or cutteth wood upon the earth. The ſpoyled cry to us for bread, the ſick and wounded for help and healing. Many Towns have been plundered, many Matrons and Virgins have been raviſhed, many Families have been ſcattered, many Wives and Children deprived of their Husbands and Parents, many Pariſhes bereft of faithful Paſtours, ſome of our Dwellings turned to aſhes; and is it not time for us, not only to rent our garments, but to ſit in aſhes? do not theſe things call us to eat aſhes like bread, and mingle our drink with weeping. Is it not time for us not only to write, but to act a Lamentation, and to ſay, *For theſe things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water?* There is one thing yet, which may and ought to be a Lamentation to us, beyond all our own ſufferings, namely this, God is diſhonoured, his Name is blaſphemed, his people are reproached. The enemies ſtrike this ſword in their bones, a ſcornful enquiry, *Where is now your God? Pſal.* 42. 10. Should not tears be our meat day and night (as they were *Davids*) while they ſay continually, *Where is now your God? Pſal.* 42. 3. Our not ſitting in the aſhes for ſuch things as theſe will bring us unto aſhes; and if we will not ſit upon the dunghill of our ſins in humiliation, our ſins will bring us and our Land unto a dunghill of deſolation. In this day, as of old by his faithful Prophet (*Iſa.* 22. 12.) doth *the Lord God of hoſts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldneſs, and to girding with ſackcloth:* And not only to theſe, but to *Job*'s poſture of ſorrow, *ſitting in aſhes*; the voyce of the rod calleth to this; the voyce of the trumpet heard daily in our Streets, calls to this. We have cauſe to cry out as the Prophet *Jeremy*, Chap. 4. v. 19. *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart maketh a noiſe in me, I cannot hold my peace, becauſe thou haſt heard, O my ſoul, the ſound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war.* And becauſe the ſound of the trumpet among us, like that on mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* 19. 19. doth not only ſound long, but alſo lowder and lowder; it becomes us, not only to continue our mourning, and our crying unto God, but to cry lowder and lowder. If we increaſe not our humiliations, God will yet increaſe our judgments: if we will not ſit in aſhes, he will bring us to aſhes, and puniſh us yet ſeven times more for our ſins.

Wherefore receive the counſel of the Apoſtle *James*, in theſe your afflictions. *Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heavineſs. Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up.* God lifts them up who caſt themſelves down: and if (in this ſence) we be afflicted, we ſhall not be afflicted. *Chriſt* hath purchaſed, *Free Grace* beſtows deliverance; and we receive it, when we return, repent and believe. James 4. 9, 10.

VERS. 9, 10.

Then ſaid his wife unto him, Doſt thou ſtill retain thine integrity? Curſe God, and die.

But he ſaid unto her, Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the foliſh women ſpeaketh: what? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job ſin with his lips.

WE have already conſidered out of the former parts of the Chapter *Job*'s ſecond affliction: Firſt, in the occaſion of it: Secondly, in the cauſes of it: And thirdly, in the manner of it, together with thoſe aggravating circumſtances which made his ſorrows out of meaſure ſorrowful. And now we muſt look upon that Jewel among the aſhes, and conſider what befel him there: Theſe things make the fourth part of the Chapter, namely the conſequents of his affliction.

These consequents are three:
First, His Wives unseemly and sinful counsel, *vers.* 9.
Secondly, His wise and holy reply, *vers.* 10.
Thirdly, His friends visit to comfort him, *vers.* 11, 12, 13.

First, We will discuss his Wives unseemly and sinful counsel, **Then said his Wife unto him**, &c.

There are two Questions raised concerning *Job*'s Wife.
First, Who she was?
Secondly, How it came to pass that she was spared, when all his outward comforts were removed?

For the first, in a word, It is the opinion of many among the ancient Jewes, that *Job* lived in the time of *Jacob* the Patriark: And that he took to Wife *Dinah*, *Jacob*'s Daughter; but I leave the Rabbins to prove that, if they can. Why she was spared in the time of so general a calamity, may bear some further inquiry. For seeing a Wife is the chiefest of creature comforts, and the very reason why God at the first did institute that relation, was that man might have *a help meet for him*: it may seem somewhat
Gen. 2. 20. strange why Satan, going about to bring upon *Job* trouble in its perfection, should leave him that, which is the perfection of all outward comforts, *a Wife*. What were *Job*'s Oxen, and Asses, and Sheep, and Camels to a Wife? And what were his Children to a Wife? When *Adam* had not only such a number of Cattel, but all the Cattel and Riches in the world in his possession, and under his dominion, God saw him defective till he provided him a Wife, a Wife was the complement of all. How then cometh it to pass, that when Satan would afflict *Job* to the uttermost, he leaves him his Wife?

To clear this, before we come to examine the words that she spake, The Jews, which are the Authors of that aforenamed opinion, that his Wife was *Dinah*, tell us (to lengthen out the dream) that she was spared for *Jacob*, her Fathers sake. It is a truth, That Children do often fare the better for holy Fore-fathers. It is no mean priviledge to be born of those that are in Covenant. As God *visits the iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, so he shews mercy to thousands of those that love him, &c.* Exod. 20. 5, 6. but in this place we have no stock to graft this truth upon, but a mere imagination. I pass on.

Secondly, Some conceive that his Wife was out of Satans Commission, that he had nothing to do to meddle with her, she being comprehended under that clause of exception in *Chap.* 1. *vers.* 12. *All that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thine hand*; his Wife (they say) was a part of himself, according to that *Gen.* 2. 24. *And they* (*viz.* the Husband and the Wife) *shall be one flesh.* So that Satan could not smite her, but he must smite *Job* too; therefore she was exempted, say they, and set beyond the reach of Satans stroak.

Though this may have some shew of wit in it, and somewhat of reason too, referring unto the first part of *Job*'s affliction; yet there is no shew of either in reference unto the second, where Satan had a Commission to afflict his body, his flesh and his bone; for then she also (take it in the sence before) was comprehended under the Commission of Satan, being (though not as *Eve* from *Adam*, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, yet) according to the Law of marriage given to all *One flesh* with him, *Gen.* 2. 24.

Therefore in the third place, that which I conceive and agree with others in for the true reason why she was spared, is this; That she might be a further instrument of her Husbands affliction. Satan meant to make use of her for his own purpose, to drive on the main design; and whereas she should have been a help to her Husband, Satan im-
Christ. Instit. ploves her against her Husband; this was his aim, and therefore she was spared. Hence one of the Ancients calls her *the strongest* and fittest *weapon*, with which Satan did assault, the choisest Arrow in his Quiver, by which he wounded the soul and spirit of *Job*. She that should have had her hands busied in the washing, suppling, curing, and
Greg. Mo- healing of his wounds, smites him with her tongue, a peircing and a poyson'd instrument. *The rib was not smitten, that it might smite the head.* Another compares her to a Ladder, by which Satan hoped to scale this impregnable Tower, that death might creep in at the window of his ears, by hearing and consenting to her sinful perswasions.

Seeing then Satan spared *Job*'s Wife, that she might be the instrument of this additional affliction, which most conclude to be as the sting of all his afflictions;

Firſt, Note this, *That Satans mercies have alwayes somewhat of cruelty in them.*

He spareth his Wife, but it was that she might further vex the Husband. His mercies are like the mercies of wicked men, *Their tender mercies are cruel*; that is, they are no mercies at all, *Prov.* 12. 10. There is a punishing mercy, and there is a sparing cruelty among men. Such are Satans sparings ever lin'd with cruel and bloody intendments. *Planè nulla. Jun. in loc.*

Secondly, Observe, *That the greatest outward blessings may prove the greatest outward afflictions.*

A Wife is made a cross, a snare. Our greatest danger may be from our helper; and that which was given for our good, may be to us an occasion of falling.

Satan can make use of our friends to do us hurt by. He tempteth not only by himself, but by creatures: and not only by creatures that are at a distance from us, but by those who are neerest in relation, and by those, most. He can make a Servant, a Child, a Wife, instrumental for our ruine. In this sence, we may apply that caveat of the Prophet (*Jer.* 9. 4.) *Take ye heed every one of his neighbour, and trust ye not in any brother.* That also of *Micah*, *Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lyeth in thy bosom.* Yea, take heed of thy own bosom, Satan draws a party from our selves, against our selves. *Quisque etiam sibi caveat, ne fiat organum diaboli.*

Thirdly, Observe, *Satan is very subtile to make choice of such instruments as may do his work most effectually.*

Of all those that were about *Job* he could not have picked out any to have carried on his plot so powerfully and with such probability of success.

First, In regard of her nearness, she had opportunity to come unto him, and freedom to improve that opportunity. *Saul* knew what he did when he married his Daughter to *David*. *I will give him her* (said *Saul*) *that she may be a snare to him*, 1 *Sam.* 18, 21. Politick marriages are usually made for temptation, not for comfort: *snares are tied fastest with a false lovers knot.*

Secondly, The motion or perswasion of a Wife, whether to good or evil, are very taking upon a Husbands heart: We see it in the first Wife that ever was, she by perswasions overcame *Adam* unto sin, she was the Devils agent for the undoing of her Husband, and the world. *Ahab* was very wicked, but he had a tempter in his bosom. *But there was none like unto* Ahab, *who did sell himself to work wickedness, whom* Jezebel *his Wife stirred up.* Unparalell'd wickedness is ascribed to the provocations of a Wife. When a Prince hath given up his affections, and his conscience, into the hands of a malicious, wanton woman, he will quickly sell himself to such wickedness as will be his own trouble, and entitle him (like King *Ahab*) *the troubler of the Kingdom.* 1 King. 21. 25.

Thirdly, Satan knew that a wound is deeper, by how much the hand is nearer that strikes it. Afflictions press us most when they are from our friends. What thou my Son? said *Cæsar* in the Senate. What thou my Wife? Is thy hand upon me in my own house, might *Job* say? The Prophet brings in one questioning, *What are those wounds?* And Christ answering, *Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends*, Zech. 13. 6. The height of enmity is thus expresst, *A mans enemies* shall be *the men of his own house*, Micah 7. 6. This caused *David* to complain so bitterly, *Psal.* 55. 12. *It was not an enemy that had done this, but it was thou my friend, and my equal, and my companion*: The friend wounded more then the Sword. So might *Job* complain, It was not an enemy, it was not a *Sabean*, or a cruel *Chaldean* that spake this; but it was thou my equal, my friend, my companion; and which is more then all these, my Wife, my second self.

I grant that in one sence the wounds of a friend are precious: *Precious are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.* Precious are the wounds of a friend, when a friend doth wound with holy reproof; but when a friend wounds by sinful counsel, or sollicitations unto sin, those are pernicious wounds. If that which is light in us

be

be turned into darkness (as Christ speaks) *how great is that darkness?* So, if that which should be our comfort, be turned into our sorrow, how great is our sorrow? Therefore we see why Satan spared the Wife, that she might be an instrument, and a most effectual instrument, either to prevail upon him, or to vex him in case he did not prevail. Doubtless *Job* did not feel so much smart, when Satan smote both flesh and bone, as now, when his flesh and bone smote him. Thus we see the cruelty of Satans mercy: he spared *Job*'s Tongue, and he spared *Job*'s Wife; he spared his Tongue, that *Job* might have a member free for an instrument of sin, in cursing God; and he spared *Job*'s Wife, that himself might have an instrument to bid him sin, *Curse God, and die.* This was her counsel,

Matth. 6.

And his Wife said unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God, and die.

Her words consist of two parts:

First, A sharp and a scornful exprobration.

Secondly, A wicked and sinful direction.

Her scornful exprobration, in these words: *Doest thou still retain thy integrity?*

Her sinful direction, in those words: *Curse God, and die.*

Dost thou still retain thy integrity?

Tantum narrat scriptura, quæ mulieris vivus & viri antidotum continent.

Words quick and short. It is probable we have here only the *compendium*, or brief of that discourse which passed between *Job* and his Wife. We have only the poyson, and the Antidote, as a learned Expositor hints it upon this place.

The *Septuagint* have taken the boldness (if they be not falsified) to set down his Wifes speech at large, and joyn it in with the body of the Text, thus: *A long time being spent, his Wife said unto him, How long wilt thou hold out, saying, Behold, I wait yet a little while expecting the hope of my Salvation? For consider, thy remembrance is blotted out from the earth, even thy Sons and thy Daughters, the pains and travel of my womb, whom I have brought forth in vain. Thou thy self sittest here in the rottenness of worms, abiding all night in the open air. I poor hand-maid wander from place to place, from house to house, looking when the Sun will set that I may take a little repose from the pains and sorrows which now oppress me; but utter thou some word against the Lord, and die.* The Greek Authors comment upon these words, as upon the Text it self. But I shall wave them wholly. Neither shall I stay here in the Explication of the words, according to our reading out of the Hebrew, because we have handled them at the third verse of this Chapter, in the testimony which God giveth concerning *Job*, where he speaks thus to Satan, *Hast thou considered my servant* Job, *how that he is a perfect man*, &c. *and that he still holdeth fast his integrity?* God spake it to the praise of *Job*, *still he holdeth fast his integrity*; his Wife speaks it to his reproach, and upbraideth him with it, *Dost thou still retain thine integrity?* The words spoken by both are the same, but the sence and intent of the speakers is quite different. God speaks them in honour to *Job*: his Wife speaks them in contempt of *Job*, and therefore she forms them into a Question, a cutting kind of speech, *Dost thou still retain thine integrity?* As if she should say, What? art thou so senseless and so stupid, so mad and sottish, to go on in this course still? what hast thou got by it; where are thy earnings? what is the advantage of holiness, or what is the profit of integrity, that thou holdest and huggest it so fast? *Dost thou still retain thine integrity?* This I conceive is the sum of the question, it is an upbraiding, a reproaching question; and from that we may Observe,

First, *That those things which commend us most to God, usually render us most contemptible before the world.*

Luk. 16. 15.

Dost thou still retain thy integrity?] She sleighteth him and scorneth him for this, whereas God highly commends him, speaks it to his praise. *That which is highly esteemed amongst men is abomination in the sight of the Lord.* And that which the Lord esteems highly, man abominates.

Secondly this, *It is the endeavour of Satan and his instruments to perswade, that the profession of holiness is vain and unprofitable.*

Satan hath taught wicked ones, and they (like forward Schollars say it without book) say it openly, *It is a vain thing to serve the Lord*: Satan would fain infuse this cursed principle into the hearts of Gods own people, and make them believe their faith is also vain. *Dost thou still retain thine integrity?* Come take a little counsel at the last, work like a wise man, wilt thou hold a thing thou canst get nothing by? Take it on my word, thou canst not thrive this way, thou canst make nothing of it, what dost thou mean to go on madding in such a course as this? Thou shalt never get bread by it to put in thy head, no nor water to wash thy hands; all thou getteſt by it, will be a knock, a rod upon thy back, a dishonour upon thy name. And wilt thou still be so strait-lac'd, and hold fast thy integrity?

Thirdly, Observe further from Satans intendment in putting such words as these into the mouth of *Job*'s Wife;

That his great design is to take advantage from outward troubles and ill successes, to discourage the hearts, and weaken the hands of Gods people in holy duties.

That was his project, quite to discourage *Job*, and from the ill success he had in the service of God, to get him put off his Livery, and give over his service: It is the course that the world, instructed by Satan (as here *Job*'s Wife was) still holdeth with the people of God. Their language is, why are you so precise, why so hot? *&c.* Do you not observe, you get nothing by your prayers? nothing by your fasting? nothing by your holiness? All that you have got you may put in your eyes, and see never the worse. Shew us some of your gains; what have you got? where are your deliverances? where are your victories? where is your salvation? you have prayed till you are almost undone, you have fasted till all is almost lost, things are worse then they were; will you still go on in these duties of fasting and praying? of humbling and seeking? of waiting and believing? This is the language of Satan, this the Divinity of Hell: And I shall answer it in one word, *It is far better to dye praying, then to conquer blaspheming.* Such doctrine may stop up a hypocrites mouth, and weaken his heart from duty: But it will more open the mouths, and enlarge the hearts of those who are sincere. Will the hypocrite always call upon God, will he delight himself in the Almighty? saith *Job*. No, he delights in God no longer, then God gives him worldly delights; nor calls upon God any longer, then sensible blessings are sent in unto him: If God stayes his hand, he stops in duty; he quickly takes up Satans lesson, and will no longer hold his integrity. But grace shews us wages in the work: A godly man hath his fruit in holiness, and therefore though he receives no outward fruit, he still holds fast his integrity. But what would *Job*'s Wife advice him to do, in case he should let go the holiness of his life? That follows in the next words; having endeavoured to take him off from one course, she directs him to another.

Curse God, and die.

Here is the second part of her counsel, cursed counsel indeed. *Curse God, and die.* It is the same Original word which we have opened before, and met with two or three times already. In the proper signification it noteth *blessing*, and so the word is by many Expositors rendred in this place, *Bless God, and die*; Mr. *Broughton* translates it so in one entire sentence, *Dost thou still retain thine integrity, blessing God, and dying?* We must therefore examine both sides, that we may find out more fully the sence of these words.

Some take the words in a good sence, and some take them in an ill sence. Some take the words in a good sence, *Bless God, and die*; and others who translate, *Bless God, and die*, do yet expound it to an ill sence.

First, Some make a good construction out of these words of *Job*'s Wife, affirming that she gave her Husband wholsom advice, and so they render the words, *Bless God, and die*, to this sence. What? dost thou still stand upon terms with God? wilt thou not humble thy self? shouldst thou not rather *Bless God*? that is, pray unto God, humble thy self, and seek his face; so to bless, signifies to pray, to make supplication. Thou seest in what a doleful condition thou art, therefore *Bless God*, make thy humble prayer before God, *and die*; that is, desire him to take thee out of this world, to release thee of thy pain; beg that he would cut the thred of thy life, which (to appearance) is the only remedy of all thy troubles; death will be thy best friend: Thou mayest die with more ease, then live as thou doest. Thy life is a continual death; it were better for thee to die once, then to die daily.

Mr. *Beza* is very strong in this opinion, excusing, yea acquitting *Job*'s Wife, in making this motion to her Husband. He grants indeed that she being deceived and overwrought by Satan, did work strongly for him; yet denies, that either the counsel in it self, or in her intendments was evil. He layes the whole matter thus: That she observing her Husbands silence under the hand of God, in these great afflictions, suspected that he stood too much upon his own integrity; that he was too well opinionated and conceited of his own worth; or that this proceeded from searedness of conscience, and insensibleness of Gods dealing, and his own condition; and therefore she adviseth him to consider, that surely God was very angry with him; to consider that God had brought all this evil upon him, to humble him; and should he now defend his own innocency? should he either be silent and not acknowledge his sin, or stand upon terms with God in defence and justification of himself? Dost thou persevere in those high thoughts of thy self? will not all this bring thy stomack down? what? will not thy uncircumcised heart be humbled? *Dost thou still retain thy integrity?* dost thou still lean upon that broken reed, thy own integrity? *Bless God*; that is confess thy sins, and acknowledge thy transgressions. (Indeed confessing of sin is the blessing of God, it is a giving glory to God, our giving glory to God is our blessing of God: *Josh.* 7.19. *Give glory to the Lord God of* Israel, *and make confession unto him.*) Thus bless God, that is, confess thy sin, and so prepare thy self to die in a holy manner; seeing thou art past hope of life, address thy self piously for death. Thus he; and all upon these grounds: First, Because he could not be perswaded that a Wife, the Governess of such a holy family as *Job*'s was, a Wife, the companion of such a holy man as *Job* was, should be so full of the Devil, so wicked to speak the Devils words, with the Devils heart. And secondly, Because Satan himself could not be so senceless as to believe or hope, that such desperate counsel could ever take upon *Job*'s heart: and therefore he conceives that she advised him only, as any one would a dying friend, or a malefactor condemned and ready to be carried to execution, yet persisting in his sin, or unlamenting the wickedness which procur'd that sentence. Her error, saith he, was only this, that she judged him wicked, because he was thus smitten; and that he trusted upon his integrity, because he held it fast: whereas indeed *Job* looked for no good, but out of the hand of *Free-grace*, and accounted his very *Integrity but dung, to the righteousness and redemption of the promised Messiah.*

ipsum ad ortem ncte obe- ndam com- arato, cza.

But (with humble respect to so reverend an Author) there are two reasons strong against this Exposition, in my apprehension, which I shall propose, and submit to the readers judgment.

The first is this, It had been quite against Satans design, that *Job*'s Wife should give her Husband good counsel: For it had been so far from being an addition to *Job*'s affliction, that it had been a great abatement of it to hear his Wife speak so holily, and administring such wholsom counsel in the substance of it, though mistaken in the application of it to him. And surely a heart so composed as *Job*'s was under all these pressures, would have shaped out such an answer as this: My dear Wife, I thank thee for thy care and counsel, thou hast a holy jealousie over me, that I am not in such a posture of spirit as becomes a dying man. Though there be an error in thy advise as applied to me, yet I take it as an error of love, and thy reproof though misplaced, is very acceptable and precious unto me.

But (which makes my second reason;) He reproves her for it, and tells her plainly, *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh*; Whereas if that had been the meaning of her words, *she spake as one of the wise women*; like a wise woman indeed. It is an act of wisdom and of love, both to suspect ill of another, when that suspition leads us only to advise him for his good. It is an excellent thing when jealousies are improved into faithful counsels. Surely then *Job* had never numbred her with the foolish women, if that speech of hers had imported only an humble preparation for his approaching death.

In the second place, Some who translate the words, *Bless God and die*, do yet expound them as very sinful counsel; though the words sound fair, yet the sence is made very foul. These understand them as an Irony, as if his wife scoffing and jeering her husband, had said: *Dost thou still retain thine integrity? bless God, and die*; thou shalt have enough of thine integrity, take thy fill of blessing of God; thou art all for blessing God, and holding fast thy integrity; go on if thou wilt, and bless God still, and see what thou shalt get by it; thou shalt have no other reward but a wound, thou shalt receive no wages of this Master but death, *bless God, and die.* Repeat that speech now, which you used under the first affliction; Repeat again that beloved maxime, with which you seem to be so much delighted, *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord*; you shall see, it will not fright death away, or be any security from the grave: you thought when you spoke those words first, that they would have prevented a second trouble, and that God who saw you take the former stroak so kindly at his hand, would not strike you again: But you see, good words are no defence against blows: And if thou shouldst be so foolish, to fly for refuge to the same submissive language, experience would quickly teach thee, that as before it could not protect thee from this sore disease, so now it would be no protection from the arrest of death. *Bless God, and die.*

Some strengthen this sense, from the form of speaking here used, which is imperative, *Bless God, and die:* She bids him do it, I, do it and spare not. Such expressions import a mixture of scorn, as Lam. 4. 21. *Rejoyce and be glad O daughter of Edom:* Here is a grant, if not a command; a seeming direction, if not an injunction, to rejoyce and be glad; what is given as the occasion of this joy? *The Cup also shall pass thorough unto thee*; What cup? A cup of blood, a cup of trembling: And is this to be rejoyced in? Surely in such joy the heart must be heavy, and the acting of such mirth is sorrow: yet he bids her rejoyce; as if he had said, be as merry as you can, yet the the cup shall pass thorough unto thee, thou shalt not escape. So *Eccles.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee, and walk in the wayes of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes,* (do so) *but know, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgement.* Thus here, *Bless God, and die,* Go on I pray, take thy fill of blessing God, bless him as much and as long as thou wilt, yet I see the Image of death in thy face, die thou shalt. Mr. *Broughton* seems to incline to such a meaning in his Translation, *Doest thou still hold thine integrity, blessing God, and dying?* As if she had said, wilt thou be such a fool, to go on blessing God and dying, blessing God, while he is killing thee; which was indeed *Jobs* wisdom, and his resolution a little after, *Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him.*

Eia quæso! nunc cum vix respirare possis, repete tuum, Sit nomen Domini benedictum, & posthea morere.

So far of those who translate the Text, *bless God, and die,* with that two-fold exposition upon it; I shall now consider what sence we are to make out of these words as we translate them, and as they are indeed most generally translated. *Curse God, and die*: This reading of the Text, seems most answerable to Satans design, which being to provoke *Job* to curse God; it was most proper to sute his Wives spirit with such thoughts, and to put his own words into her mouth, *Curse God, and die*: This thred is of the same spinning with the former, and carries Satans plot home upon his own principles; She speaks this adversaries mind as fully as he could himself, when she bids her Husband *Curse God, and die.*

But could *Job* die when he listed, that she biddeth him *Curse God, and die*? What means this Language?

Some interpret her meaning to be this, *die by thy own hand*, destroy thy self; as sons of *Belial* use to say, go hang thy self, murther thy self, make an end of thy self: As God by these Plagues is thy Judge, so be thou (to end the matter) thy own executioner. Or as others; *curse God*, that so he may be provoked to take thee out of the world quickly. Or *Curse God, and die*, ease thy heart somewhat, and give it vent by breaking out against God in blasphemies, take this revenge upon him, and then let him do his worst, *Curse God*, though thou die for it.

Ne prius animum exhales, quam multis probris in Deum congestis dolori tuo satisfeceris. Pined.

Lastly, *Curse God*, that so the Magistrate taking notice of it, thou mayest be cut off by the Sword of Justice. We know blasphemers were sentenc'd to death without mercy, by the Law of *Moses*; and it is not improbable that the light of Nature might carry those Nations, to as high and severe a revenge, against that highest sin. We know *Socrates* was adjudged to death by the *Athenians* (as their natural

natural divinity taught them) for an injurious or diſhonorable ſpeech concerning their gods. I conceive her counſel, *Curſe God, and die*, had ſome of theſe intendments in it; the beſt of them is bad enough, and ſo bad, that it renders this Objection againſt them all.

It is Objected, That ſurely, any of theſe carry too high a ſtrain of wickedneſs for *Job*'s Wife; ſurely ſhe could not imagine, much leſs have the boldneſs to offer ſuch advice to her Husband.

I anſwer firſt in general, A good man may have a very bad Wife. A Husband cannot infuſe holineſs, or make his Wife good: Marriage doth not change the heart; Marriage with Chriſt doth, but not Marriage with a Chriſtian, or the holieſt man that ever lived. Therefore that reaſon is not cogent.

Secondly, This ſpeech, and a holy perſon, are not altogether inconſiſtent: poſſibly *Job*'s Wife was a good woman, though actually ſhe ſpake thus wickedly. Divers of the Jewiſh Doctors have an opinion, that it was not *Job*'s Wife that ſpake, but the Devil in her likeneſs, I ſhall leave that among their other dreams. It is conjectured by others (though it were not the Devil that ſpake, perſonating his Wife, yet) that it was the Devil ſpeaking in or by the perſon of his Wife, as he ſpake in or by the Serpent, *Geneſ.* 3. Or as perſons really poſſeſt of the Devil, who ſpeak Satans words, and do Satans works, not their own. Some (I ſay) carry it thus, that ſhe was for that time not only acted, but actually poſſeſt by the Devil, and ſo ſpeaks the Devils language: One of the Ancients is expreſs to this purpoſe, *Theſe are the Devils words, not the womans words:* which another illuſtrates by that in *Geneſ.* 3. where it is ſaid, *The Serpent ſaid unto the Woman*, but it was the Devil that ſpake unto the Woman by the Serpent; ſo here it is ſaid, *His wife ſpake unto him*, but the truth is, it was the Devil ſpake unto him, in and by his Wife. And if ſo, put the Language into the worſt expoſition given, or give a worſe (if truth will bear it) and it will be no wrong to ſuch an Orator. I believe we cannot expound the words to a higher ſence or ſtrain of wickedneſs, then Satan could ſpeak.

Chryſoſt. *Dixit ad eum uxor ejus; uxorem dixit dixiſſe, ſed verè diabolus dixit, Sic namque & olim ait. Dixit ſerpens ad mulierem; ſerpentem dixit dixiſſe, ſed non ſerpens dixit, ſed diabolus qui per ſerpen: ē locutus eſt*, Origen.

But we need not make Satan himſelf the ſpeaker, and yet clear the matter too; though we neither ſay as the Jewiſh Doctors, that it was the Devil perſonally, taking the ſhape of *Job*'s Wife; or as thoſe Chriſtian Fathers, that the Devil did actually poſſeſs her; yet we may ſay (and ſo ſalve the difficulty) that ſhe was mightily over-powred, and acted by the temptation of Satan, to be an inſtrument of temptation, in this groſs manner againſt her Husband: Though ſhe were not acted as the Serpent was, in whom Satan ſpake to *Eve*; yet we may well ſay, ſhe was acted as *Eve* by whom Satan ſpake to *Adam*: *Eve* ſpake the Devils mind, being prevailed upon by his temptation, to perſwade her Husband to eat againſt the command of God; and *Job*'s Wife overcome by a like temptation attempts the perſwaſion of her Husband to curſe God.

For as it is poſſible for one that is good, to fall into the groſſeſt and moſt blaſphemous temptation himſelf; ſo it is poſſible for one that is good, to be made an inſtrument of ſuch temptations unto others. We may ſee an inſtance near, if not fully reaching this aſſertion, in the Apoſtle *Peter*, who hearing Chriſt fore-telling his ſufferings, takes him aſide, and *began to rebuke him, ſaying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this ſhall not be unto thee*, Matth. 16. 22, 23. *Peter* acted Satans part, in this, againſt his Maſter, though unwittingly, yet ſo wittily, ſo to the life, that he got his name by it; *Chriſt ſaid to* Peter, *get thee behind me Satan:* It was *Peter*'s tongue, but Satan tun'd it. *Iſaac* ſaid of his Son *Jacob* in *Eſau*'s dreſs, *The hands are the hands of* Eſau, *but the voyce is the voyce of* Jacob. Chriſt perceived here Satans counſel in *Peter*'s words, he ſaw the wicked ſpirit through the cloathing of *Peter*'s fleſh; and therefore rebukes the Organ, under the title of the chief Agent, *Get thee behind me Satan.* Now as *Peter*, though a holy man and full of good intentions to his Maſter, yet ſpake the Devils mind and language ſo fully, that the Devil himſelf (as to that purpoſe) could ſcarce have mended it; ſo likewiſe *Job*'s Wife might be a godly woman in the main, though abuſed and miſled by Satan, ſhe thus excited her Husband, in the groſſeſt conſtruction thoſe words can bear, to *Curſe God, and die.*

There is ſomewhat in the Text, which may give us a hint of this: that though ſhe ſpake this, yet *Job* eſteemed her a good woman; for, obſerve *Job*'s anſwer to this advice. What doth he ſay? He doth not ſay, *Thou wicked Woman, thou abominable wretch*, why doeſt thou give me ſuch counſel; all that he ſaith is this, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh Women ſpeaketh.* Obſerve it, he doth not call her fooliſh or wicked Woman, but, *thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh Women*; as if he ſhould ſay, How now Wife? what words are theſe that I hear from thee? thou doſt not ſpeak now like thy ſelf, I uſe to hear other Language from thee; thou and I have had other kind of conference, and I have received other kind of counſel from thee then this: Whence is it that thou art ſo unlike thy ſelf? where are thy words ſeaſon'd with Salt, which have ſo often miniſtred grace unto the hearers? thou art degenerated in manners and corrupted in thy ſpeech, *thou ſpeakeſt now as one of the fooliſh Women*: Intimating, that ſhe uſed to ſpeak wiſely and diſcreetly, or as *Solomon* deſcribes the vertuous Woman (*Prov.* 31.26.) that heretofore *ſhe opened her mouth with wiſdom*; and now ſhe ſpake only as a fooliſh or wicked Woman; He doth not ſay ſhe was one: one act is enough to aſſimilate, but it is not enough to denominate. Thus much may ſerve to evince, that though we take the words in that worſt ſence, yet it doth not neceſſarily infer, that *Job*'s Wife was a wicked and ungodly Woman, which is the objection againſt that Expoſition.

Non eam ſtultam vocat, ſed in eo ſermone ſtultarum mulierum mores imitatam, quaſi à ſeipſa defecerit, & quaſi in alienos mores & ingenium abierit. Sanctius *in loc.*

From the words tranſlated, *Curſe God, and die*, and thus expounded, we may Obſerve;

First, *That Satan is reſtleſs and unwearied in this deſign, to bring the people of God to think ill and ſpeak ill of God.*

It is that he laboured for, in the carrying on of this whole buſineſs, concerning *Job*; and every ſtone is turned, every way tryed to accompliſh this propoſed end.

Secondly, In that he perſwadeth *Job* by his Wife, when he was in this woful condition to *Curſe God, and die*,

Obſerve, *That Satan would perſwade us to eaſe our ſelves of troubleſom evils, by falling into ſinful evils.*

Job was grievouſly diſeaſed; you ſee the medicine and the cure that Satan preſcribeth, Go ſin, ſaith he, *Curſe God, and die*; whereas one of the leaſt evils of ſin is worſe then all the evils of ſuffering that can befall us. All ſorrows are more elegible then one ſin. It hath been rightly taught us from Antiquity, that the loweſt degree of a lye (becauſe ſin) is not to be made or admitted (if that *medium* could be aſſured ſo noble an end) for the ſaving of a World. What a Father and teacher of lyes then is Satan, who directs many a poor ſoul to ſave it ſelf from, or help it ſelf out of a ſmall affliction, by adventuring upon ſome great tranſgreſſion? *Curſe GOD, and die.*

Thirdly, *It is ſinful to wiſh our own deaths, though we are under pains more painful then Death.*

It is ſinful to deſire death abſolutely; we may deſire it with ſubmiſſion to the Will of God: To live is an act of Nature; but to be willing to live becauſe God wills it, is an act of Grace: And as it is our holineſs to do the Will of God while we live, ſo it is our holineſs to be content to live, while we ſuffer according to his Will. On the other hand, to die is an act of Nature; but to die becauſe Gods wills it, is an act of Grace: Chriſt is ſaid to be obedient unto death, becauſe he died in contemplation of Gods Decree, and in conformity to his good pleaſure. To die thus, is the duty of a Chriſtian, and the crown of all his obedience. Satan would have us live as we will, and die when we will; he tempts us as much to die when we liſt, as to live how we liſt. Satan puts *Job* upon it peremptorily, *Curſe God, and die*, deſire or procure thy own death. To wiſh death that we may enjoy Chriſt, it is a holy wiſh; but yet we muſt not wiſh that abſolutely neither, we muſt refer our ſelves to the pleaſure of God, how long he will let us conflict with our corruptions and with our luſts, with this body of death and ſin which we bear about us. But to wiſh for death,

death, becauſe our lives are full of trouble, is an unholy wiſh; God may, yea and hath as much uſe of our lives in our troubles as in our comforts: *We may do much buſineſs for God on a ſick-bed*: We may do God as much work when we are bound hand and foot, in a priſon, as when we are at liberty; paſſive obedience brings as much glory to God as active doth: therefore we muſt not wiſh for death, eſpecially not with an abſolute wiſh, becauſe we are under troubleſom evils. And if it be ſinful to wiſh for death, how wicked is it to procure or haſten death, to pull down our houſe of clay, with our own hands, becauſe we are under troubleſom evils?

Fourthly, Obſerve further, *Satan would perſwade that death is an end, at leaſt an eaſe, of outward troubles.*

Wouldſt thou have an end of thy troubles and of thy ſorrows? *Curſe God, and die*, here is the remedy. We ſay indeed of ſome remedies, that they are worſe then the diſeaſe, but I am ſure, this is. Death to ungodly ones, it is ſo far from being an end or an eaſe of their troubles, that it is to them (as Chriſt ſpeaks in another caſe) the beginning of ſorrows, the entrance to eternal death, and the very Suburbs of Hell. Yet, how many doth Satan perſwade (when they are in *Job*'s caſe, in great extremities) that death will be the cure of all their troubles?

Fifthly, Obſerve, *That Satan would make men willing to die, when they are moſt unfit to die.*

You ſee what preparation Satan directs *Job* unto, he biddeth him *Curſe God, and die*. Would not *Job*, think you, have been in a fit poſture, in a fit frame for death, when he had been curſing God? Repent and die, pray and die, humble thy ſelf and die, believe and die; *take faſt hold of Chriſt who is our life, our way to life, and die*, are the counſels and voice of the holy Ghoſt; but Satans language is *Curſe God, and die*, ſin and die, be impenitent and die, blaſpheme and die. And it is an experienced truth, that oftentimes they ſeem moſt willing to die, who are moſt unfit, moſt unready for death; you ſhall ſee ſome men venturing, yea caſting away their lives without fear or wit; the whole viſible buſineſs of whoſe lives, hath been nothing elſe but a working out of their own damnation, without fear or trembling: They as it were give diligence all their dayes, to make Hell and reprobation ſure, and yet go out of the World as if they were ſure of Heaven. This is Satans preparation, *Curſe God, and dye.*

Laſtly, Note this, *That the holieſt perſon is lyable to the moſt blaſphemous temptation.*

One would have wondred that Satan ſhould ever have ventured to ſuggeſt ſuch a groſs thing as this, to ſo holy a man as *Job*. But Satan where he hath been often foyled, growes impudent, and will then ſuggeſt ſuch things, not becauſe he hopes to prevail, but becauſe he reſolves to vex ſuch as he cannot overcom. He troubles as much and as many as he can.

So much of the counſel which *Job*'s Wife gave him, reproving him as fooliſh and over-credulous in holding faſt (that unprofitable thing) his integrity; and adviſing him to be worſe then mad or outragious, in curſing God and dying.

Let us now conſider *Job*'s holy and wiſe reply in the tenth Verſe.

But he ſaid unto her, Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh; what? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?

Theſe words contain *Job*'s reply, wherein two things are conſidered. Firſt, A reproof. Secondly, A refutation.

Firſt, He rejects her counſel with a ſharp and wholeſom reprehenſion, and then he refuteth her counſel by ſtrong and ſolid reaſon. The reprehenſion in theſe words, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women ſpeaketh.* The reaſon of his reprehenſion in thoſe which follow, *What? ſhall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?*

אחת הנבלות

To begin with the reprehenſion, **Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women.**] In the Hebrew, *woman* is not expreſt, it is only a Feminine, *as one of the fooliſh ones*: we tranſlate it, *fooliſh women*; that word cometh from *Nabal*, which ſignifieth properly a thing fallen off like a dried leaf, or blaſted withered fruit, without life, without ſtrength, without ſap and moyſture, exhauſted and killed, thorough exceſs either of cold or heat: and ſo by a Metaphor, it noteth any one without the ſap or juyce of wiſdom, goodneſs, and honeſty; ſuch a perſon, we call, a ſapleſs perſon. Or it ſignifieth one that is vile, and baſe, and low; one that hath a baſe, withered, low, fallen ſpirit, a ſpirit fallen below all noble or holy reſolutions. *Nabal*, is ſuch a fool, as hath his underſtanding faded, and corrupted in regard of any holy principles, though he may be wiſe in regard of natural principles. Such the Prophet deſcribes, *They are wiſe to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge*, Jer. 9. 22. Hence the Latine word (*Nebulo*) which ſignifies a Knave, is by good Etymologiſts derived from the Hebrew *Nabal*; becauſe ſuch are dull-heads in goodneſs, and witty only in wickedneſs. Such was he, 1 *Sam.* 25. 25. *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*; that proper name is the ſame with the Appellative here; that's the Maſculine, this the Feminine, *Thou ſpeakeſt like a Nabaleſs*: We find the word often uſed elſewhere to ſignifie wicked, worthleſs and vile perſons, *Pſal.* 14. 1. *The fool hath ſaid*, &c. *Deut.* 32. 6, 21. at *verſ.* 6. *O fooliſh people and unwiſe, do ye thus requite the Lord?* And *verſ.* 21. *They have provoked me to anger by thoſe that are no gods, and I will provoke them to jealouſie by them which are not a people, and move them to anger with a fooliſh Nation*; by them which are not a people, by a fooliſh Nation: A fooliſh people that deſerve not the name of a people. Look upon this word in the abſtract, folly is wickedneſs; and to work folly is in the Language of the Scripture, as much, as to work wickedneſs, to work the greateſt wickedneſs. Hence it is ſometime tranſlated villany, *Jer.* 29. 22, 23. *The Lord make thee like* Zedekiah *and like* Ahab, *whom the Kings of* Babylon *roſted in the fire, becauſe they have committed villany in* Iſrael. And throughout the Book of *Proverbs*, the fool and an ungodly man, a wiſe man and a godly man, are (*Synonomaes*) words ſignifying the ſame thing. Thus *Job* reproves his Wife, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women*, like one of thoſe who have no wiſdom, no goodneſs, not any ſenſe or ſap of goodneſs in them. But who were theſe fooliſh Women, at whom he aims in this compariſon? that is not clear; ſome conceive he intends the Women of *Idumea*, thou ſpeakeſt as one of theſe heathen Women, theſe *Idumeans*; I have heard indeed ſuch Language from them when things have gone amiſs with them; I have heard them curſing their Idols, curſing their gods; I have heard them rail at fate, fall out, and wrangle with Fortune; *Thou ſpeakeſt like one of them.* Thou takeſt thy pattern in this, from the cuſtom of the Heathen, who uſe their gods courſely, when they think they have but courſe uſage from their gods. If their gods be angry, they will be angry with and revile their gods. *Thou ſpeakeſt after the rate of theſe fooliſh women*; thou didſt never hear ſuch doctrine in my family, or among thoſe who fear and love the true and ever-living God.

Job you ſee is now ſomewhat warm in his ſpeech. *Job* had indured much, and all his ſufferings hitherto hath not ſtirred any paſſion in him but that of ſorrow, as we ſaw in the latter end of the former Chapter: Not any angry poſture, not an angry expreſſion all along; but now, that God and the wayes of God are concerned, *Job* can hold no longer: this ſpeech of his Wife caſt diſhonour upon both, and now paſſion begins to ſtir, he cannot forbear her though his Wife, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh woman ſpeaketh.*

Obſerve, That, *Paſſion becometh us in the cauſe of God.*

Our Lord Chriſt teaching his Diſciples the true meaning of the Law, tells them, *Matth.* 5. 22. *He that is angry with his brother without a cauſe, ſhall be in danger of the judgment*; but he that is not angry when there is cauſe, eſpecially when there is ſuch a cauſe as this, he likewiſe is in danger of the judgment.

Secondly, *Job* is not only angry with her, but he reproves her, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh women.*

It is lawful ſometimes to expreſs holy anger and paſſion by ſharp reproofs. *Juſta ira mater eſt diſciplinæ.*

Chriſt who was meekneſs and humility it ſelf, yet when he hath to deal with *Phariſees*, he can call them *a generation of Vipers*, *painted Sepulchres*, *blind guides*, *an adulterous* genera-

generation, children of the Devil: Anger can hardly be silent, and that anger is admirable which speaks and sins not. He that knows not how to be angry, knows not how to love: And he that knows not how to reprove with love, knows not how to be angry.

You may discern love in *Job*, mingling with and moderating his reproof. *Job* rebukes his Wife, but it is with the spirit of meekness. First, He doth not speak positively or down right, *Thou art a fool*, but comparatively, *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women use to speak*; that seems one mitigation or allay of this reproof: yet I confess such speaking by way of similitude, hath often in it the force and intent of a direct assertion.

A other thing observable for the meekness of *Job*, is this; he doth not fall out with the whole Sex, and say, ye women are foolish, and ignorant, and impatient; but *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women.* He doth not charge the whole Sex, he knew there were wise women, as well as foolish; such *Solomon* describes, *Prov.* 31. 26. *She openeth her mouth with wisdom.* And we know *Abigail* the Wife was wise, and her Husband was *Nabal*, a fool. *Job* doth not lay it upon women in general, he falleth not out with all, because he knew there were some *foolish ones*, and because he saw his Wife in that act, imitating *those foolish ones.*

There is a third thing mitigating the sharpness of the reproof; *Job* doth not fall out with, or disgust the ordinance of God, because his Wife spake thus; he saith not, who would marry to be yoakt with such a one as you? It is enough to make one forswear marriage, to have or hear of such a VVife; better be in any condition then in a married condition. How often do Husbands discover this folly? if their VVives displease them, presently the ordinance of God displeaseth them, who would be married? It is very sad, when mans miscarriage makes us question or disrelish the institution of God.

In the fourth place, *Job* is not only not angry with the ordinance of God in general, but he is not angry with the special act of Gods providence, in his own particular choice. There are many will say, if their wives trouble them, I wish we had never seen the faces one of another, we may curse the hour we ever met together. *Jobs* spirit was far from this; he was indeed angry with his wife, but he was not angry because this woman was his wife: He doth not reject her because she was bad, but labours to make her better. *To convince another of folly, is the readyest way to make him wise.* Thus we see, though there were sharpness in the reproof to search the wound, yet there was none to exasperate the person: This reproof was an exact compound of love, and anger, of zeal and knowledge.

From the ground of her counsel, and this reproof compared together, we may Observe; *That it is an argument of a low and of a foolish spirit, to judge of any mans condition by Gods outward dealings with him:* For, this was it, that she grounded her counsel upon; seeing his outward condition, she thought him as a miserable man, and therefore adviseth him to *curse God, and die.* *Thou speakest* (saith he) *as one of the foolish women.* It is an argument of folly and madness, to judge a man miserable because poor, or unhappy, or unhealthy.

Again observe, *That unworthy and low thoughts of God, argue a low and a foolish spirit. Thou speakest as one of the Nabalesses?* Thou hast such low thoughts of God, and speakest so poorly of God, that at present I cannot but number thee among the fools; for as there is nothing ought to be so high in our thoughts, as God and his wayes; so we ought to have high and reverent thoughts of God and his wayes, whatsoever he doth with us: though we change, yet he and they change not; God is the same, and his service the same for ever.

Lastly, Observe, *That to do or speak wickedly, is to do or speak foolishly.* Sin is the greatest folly in the world, sin is a declining from the rule of right reason, both from spiritual reason and from natural; *Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?* Jer. 8. 9. True wisdom, is to walk by a right rule, to a right end. While we sin, lust (in some degree or other) is the rule, and self is the end; In both which we joyn hands with folly, and are the companions of fools; *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women,* &c.

From the reproof it self, we come to consider the reasons of the reproof. *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh*; **what? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?** Here is the reason upon which he grounds his reproof, *Shall we receive good at the hands of God,* &c. The Hebrew runs thus in the letter, *Shall we receive good from God?* &c. The emphasis of the words carry it thus, *shall we receive good* with hand or heart *at the hand of God, and shall we not* in the same manner *receive evil?* The word *Cabal*, whence this is derived, signifieth the receiving of a thing with the hand and with the heart; that is, to receive gladly and thankfully, as it were to kiss the hand and receive a thing: Or to receive a thing with much reverence and veneration. Hence the *Jewes* call the Doctrine which is received and transmitted from hand to hand, namely their traditional Doctrine, *Caballa*: That which the word *Tradition* imports among the Papists, the word *Caballa* imports among the *Jewes*; Then the meaning of *Job* is, *That good and evil are to be alike received and entertained as from God*; that is, they are to be received with the same reverence and chearfulness. We receive good things chearfully, thankfully, reverently, we kiss the hand and take them. *And shall we not receive evil?* The words do not refer to the act of receiving, but to the manner of receiving; We shall receive evil whether we will or no, but shall we not receive it? namely so, and so, as we receive good, chearfully, thankfully, reverently, respecting God and his wayes of providence towards us. And then the question may be resolved into this affirmative conclusion; *That look in what manner we receive good from the hand of God, in the same we ought to receive evil.* Or thus, *Where we have our good, thence we must have our evil.* One and the same hand moderates and dispenceth both. *Wherefore, shall we receive good, and not evil?*

נקבל
A radice
קבל
Accepit manibus vel animo.

Cabal'a doctrina per manus accepta & ore tenus ab aliis ad alios transfusa. Mercer.

Shall we receive good? Some interpret the *good* here to be meant of the good of the next life; shall we be in expectation of everlasting good? shall we be in expectation of enjoying Christ, and seeing the face of God for ever in Heaven? shall we be at least in hope of a crown of glory, layed up in store for us? and shall we not be willing to receive evils, and digest troubles, to bear the cross a few dayes while we are here? *I* (saith the Apostle *Paul*, Rom. 8. 18.) *reckon that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed.* Shall we have glory in the eye of our faith, and shall we not indure a little trouble in the eye of our sense?

But rather, by *good* here, we are to understand the good things of this life; *shall we receive good?* sc. outward comforts and prosperity, **and shall we not receive evil?** from whom? *Evil* from the hand of God.

What **Evil?** Sooner shall the Sun send forth a cloud, then God send forth any *evil* properly taken; therefore *evil* here, is only afflictions, as contradistinct to the *good* before-named: So the sense is, *shall we receive comforts at the hand of God, and shall we not receive afflictions?* Afflictions are evil, not moral evil, not natural evil: but they are called evil, either first, because they are usually esteemed so; or secondly, because they are so to sense; or thirdly, because they are many times abused, and so in the event they prove evil unto us: lastly, they are often evil negatively, that is, they do us no good; but they are never evil positively in themselves, or relatively, as they are received from God.

Afflictiones malæ per se non sunt, sed malæ tantum vocantur quia tales vulgò æstimantur.

We may take notice (for the further clearing of this passage) of the form of the argument. It is proposed by way of question or expostulation, as we render it. *What? shall we receive good?* &c. There is a great deal of force in the manner of proposing; questions are full of quickness and spirit. *Job* doth not only give his wife a Logical reason, but a Rhetorical reason, words with life, to convince her by; *What?* saith he, *shall we receive good?* &c. As if he had said, this were an absurd thing once to imagine; a blind man may see this, it is so plain, and a fool may understand it, the reason lies all in sight; That if we receive *good* from the hand of God, we must at least with patience receive *evil.*

From this reason in general, Observe, *That reproofs come then most strongly upon the heart, when they are backed with reason.* Some reprove with rage, and not with reason; with passion, and not with wisdom; they reprove with their wit

rather

rather then with their spirit. *Job* mixes reason with his passion, and gives her an argument, as well as a rebuke.

More particularly, from the matter of this reason, Observe first, *That good and evil are both from the hand of God. Give me neither poverty nor riches*, saith *Agur*, Prov. 30. 8. both are the gift of God. Poverty is Gods gift as well as riches. If God do not give us poverty, all the world will not make us poor. *I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things*; Isaiah 45.7. The same Prophet teacheth us that these two are equally the prerogative of God, and such a prerogative, as equally distinguisheth him from all Idols and false gods; *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods: yea, do good or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together.* No creature hath ever answered this challenge, or ever shall, *Isa.*41.23. Creatures do good and evil, as ministers of Gods will, not as matters of their own. Good of every kind, and all kinds of pœnal evil come forth from God. Indeed, God usually conveyes these to us by the hand of man; but it becomes us to receive them as from the hand of God. Much, both good and evil, comes to us at the second hand, but we ought to take it as from the first. This truth well wrought upon our hearts, will make every good we enjoy better, and every evil we feel, not so bad. This latter branch shall be cast into a second Observation,

Which may be this, *To look on evil as coming from the hand of God, will quiet the heart in bearing evil. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not evil?* And this in two respects: First, because of the soveraignty of God, he being supream Lord, may do what he will: and his will being the supream rule of Justice he can do no wrong. This notion of God assures us, that whatsoever we receive from the hand of God, is just and right; hence the inference is natural, If God send evil, I must receive it quietly, for he sends it justly. Secondly, because of the assured faithfulness, and love and goodness of God to his, even when he sends them (which are all he sends) this sort of evils. As if *Job* had said, any thing is well-come that cometh from one that loves me, and hath done me good, as God I know doth, and hath done often, and will do for ever. Will not a man take a nominal evil kindly at his hand, from whom he hath received much real good. While we look only upon creatures and what they do, the burthen of trouble is intollerable; but as it cometh from God, from a God that loveth us, we cannot but receive it in love. Afflictions coming from the creature, are as the rod of *Moses* upon the ground, a biting, a stinging serpent: but considered in the hand of God, they are as the serpent in the hand of *Moses*, a rod to correct, and a staff to comfort us. *David* we know fled from *Saul* in fear of his life; envious, bloody *Saul* had threatned to kill him. In his flight, *David* meets with his beloved *Jonathan*, and saith unto him (1 Sam. 20.8.) Jonathan, *if there be any iniquity in me, slay me thy self, for why shouldest thou bring me to thy Father?* He would die rather by the hand of *Jonathan*, then by the hand of *Saul*; death from the hand of *Jonathan* who loved him, was sweet; whereas from *Saul*, it had been a bitter cup indeed. Take another instance. *Elijah* flyeth from *Jezabel*, 1 King. 19. 4. and why doth he flie from her? *She seeks my life*, saith he, *to take it away.* Thoughts of this pressed him so hard, that when he came into the Wilderness (the Text saith) *he sate down under a Juniper-tree, and requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough now O Lord, take away my life.* But *Elijah*, if thou be so willing to die, why doest thou fly from *Jezebel?* she would have given thee thy wish presently, and satisfied at once her own malice, and thy longing: I but death from the hand of a *Jezabel* was his fear, not his desire: He could welcome it from the hand of God, but not from the hand of a spiteful woman. But you will say, death is from the hand of God, though it come by the hand of the creature. True; but as every good we receive, is so much the more sweet, by how much the more we see of the hand of God in it, and less of the creature; so every evil is so much the more bitter, by how much we see less of God, and more of man in it. If God will take away my life, I am pleased, but I beg deliverance from the hand of *Jezabel*: He fled for his life for fear of *Jezabel*, but he called upon God to die. We may exemplifie this in Christ, *Joh.*18.11. *The cup which my Father hath given me*, saith he, *shall I not drink it?* It is *poculum charitatis*, a grace-cup to poor sinners, a cup though bitter in it self, though mixt with the wrath of God as a judge, due to sinners, yet temper'd and sweetned with a Fathers love everlastingly assured unto me; I cannot but drink it, it cometh from my Father.

But it may be objected, that I lately assign'd it as one reason, why Satan spared *Jobs* wife; namely, That she who was his neerest friend, being made an instrument of his affliction, the affliction might be more afflictive and vexatious; And *David* complains most of a friend, that smote him, *Psal.* 55.

I answer, when love turns to hatred, and friendship to unfaithfulness, when former kisses (like that present one of *Judas*) are changed into treachery; this is very wounding and grievous indeed. But when God strikes his friends, he is their friend still; when he afflicts, it is in faithfulness, (*Psal.* 119. 75.) He is good to us, when he sends us evil; and he sends us evil, for our good. To be smitten by a friend whose very smiting is friendship, and who heals us by wounding, cannot be offensive. Hence *Davids* choice, *Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and not into the hand of man*, 1 Sam. 24. 14.

Hence a third observation from the strength of the argument and reason, may be thus framed; *To consider that all the good we have, descends from God, makes it both reasonable and equitable, that we should bear evil quietly when he is pleased to send it. Shall we receive good, and not evil?* saith he. It is *Solomons* advice, (Eccles. 7. 14.) *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider.* What shall we consider! Consider this, and mark it well, that as the day of prosperity was from God, so the day of adversity is from God likewise; for it follows, *God also hath set the one over against the other.* Therefore seeing God hath set one over against the other, thou must take the one well, as well as the other; at least thou must bear the latter as patiently, as thou didst receive the former joyfully. They who have shared with others in gains, think it but equal to share with them in losses; they set the one over against the other. And so must we in respect of Gods dispensations towards us. If we set our present wants, over against our former fulness; our present sorrows, over against our former comforts; our present sickness over against our former health; our present war, over against our former peace; If we thus set the one over against the other, our accounts will be ballanc'd, yea our former receits of good will be far greater, and out-ballance our present sufferings of evil. Especially if we remember, that we never deserved the least part of the good we have received, but we have deserved more then all the evil that we suffer. We may say as *Ezra* did, (Chap. 9. 13.) *Thou our God hast punished us less then our iniquities*; and we may say as *Jacob* (Gen. 32. 10.) *Lord, we are not worthy the least of all thy mercies.*

This argument may be of great use to us of this Nation, in these times of darkness and fear. What? shall not we receive evil from the hand of God, who have received so much good? we have received many years of peace from God, fourscore years of peace; shall we receive so many years of peace, from the hands of God, and shall we take it ill, if we receive some years of war? We have received many years of plenty, shall we take it ill if we should have some years of scarcity? We have had the Gospel many years, every one sitting under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree; what, if now, we hold the Gospel standing upon our guard, or marching in the Field? what if we hold it a while sitting in Tents, and standing under our displaied banners?

Fourthly, Forasmuch as the same word is applied here to express the act of the mind in reference both to good and evil, Observe, *That outward evils are to be received in the same manner, and with the same mind that good things are received with.* Yet a caution is to be given in with this. There are two sorts of outward evils or sufferings: Sin is the cause of some sufferings, and grace is the cause of other sufferings, either grace acted, or grace to be tried. Now we are not to receive the evil of suffering, whereof sin is the cause, with the same mind as we do good; joy and cheerfulness doth not become such evils. But when our sufferings are caused by grace, either of those wayes, then it becomes us to rejoyce. The Apostle saith more, *Rom.* 5. 3. *We glory*

in

in tribulation. And again, (*2 Cor.* 6. 10.) *as sorrowful, yet alway rejoycing.* The sorrow of godly men is like the joy of the wicked, only in appearance: *Paul* had only a shadow of sorrow, as sorrowful; but his joy was substantial and continual, *alwayes rejoycing*, though his outward estate cast up, amounted but to this, *poor, and having nothing.* The reason is, because God is the same in all variety of estates: God loves as well when we are poor, as when we are rich, yea as well when himself smites, as when he heals. He is as good to us when we receive evil, as when we receive good: therefore if God be the same, surely we ought to be the same too, and take it as kindly at his hands, when we are impoverisht, as when we are inricht; when we are sick, as when we are in health; when we are in prison, as when we are free. Shall present evils make us either insensible of, or unthankful for past mercies? Shall present troubles be as a grave wherein to bury the memory of all our former comforts? shall (as it was in *Pharaohs* dream) *the lean kine, and the blasted ears of corn, eat up and devour the fat kine, and the full ears?* The Heathen Philosopher censures him for a fool, who thinks there is no benefit in benefits, nor blessing in blessings, except they be present: And he brands him as unthankful, who accounts the end of a mercy an injury; or thinks he is wrong'd, when free gifts are not continued. If a Heathen saw so much obligation, in the past benefits of a man; Christians should see it much more in the past mercies and blessings of their God. Wherefore, to conclude this point, with the counsel of the Ancient, Remember the heaps of good things received, weigh the good and the evil together: Thou shalt never find any mans life, at all times alike; It is the priviledge of God alone to be without changes; but if thou grieveſt at what is present, take comfort in what is past. Now thou mourneſt, but heretofore thou didst rejoyce; now thou art in want, but thou hast had abundance. We have a saying, *It is a miserable thing to have been happy:* But a godly man is happy in the midst of all his misery; he may say with undaunted *Luther*, *Let him be miserable that can be miserable, I cannot.* He that hath not a God to loose, nor a soul to loose, cannot be miserable, whatsoever he looses; while Christ is safe, a believer hath no reason to be unsatisfied. Thus we have discuss'd *Job*'s answer, and have found it full of wisdom and of holiness; like those words of the Wise, which the Preacher saith (*Eccles.* 12. 11.) *are as goads, and as nails fastened by the Masters of Assemblies.* *Job*'s words were as goads by the sharpness of reproof, to awake and quicken lazy drones; they were as nailes by the piercing efficacy and strength of reason, to confirm and fasten wavering minds.

Ingratus est, qui injuriâ vocat finem voluptatis; stultus qui nullum fructum esse putat bonorum, nisi præsentium, qui non in præteritis acquiescit, &c. Sen. *ad* Polyb. *c.* 29. Basil. *Orat.* 11. *de patientia.*

We have the word and warrant of God for this, in that high Elogium, or commendation given him at the conclusion of all.

In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Job reproves his Wife for speaking so, and he refutes what she had spoken; in both he hits the right: Now *In all this did not* Job *sin with his lips.*

This is the same testimony for the matter, and almost the same in words, with that, given of *Job*'s victory, in the close of the first dayes battel; and having explicated them in that place, I shall but briefly touch them here, *In all this did not* Job *sin with his lips.*

We see in general, the holy Ghost gives the victory to *Job.* Satan is foiled, his plot fails, the weapons of his warfare are all broken and successless; all hi fiery darts are either quench'd or beaten back upon himself: *Job* stands like a mighty rock, or like a house built upon the rock, unshaken, unmoved: He that is hel'd up by everlasting armes, shall stand fast for ever. *In all this* Job *sinned not.*

The words refer to what was past; for *Job* afterward did fail, and sinned with his lips through vehemency of pain, and heat of disputation; he spake some things rashly, though nothing blasphemously: So he confesses, *Chap.* 42. 13. *I have uttered things that I understood not. But in all this*, so far as *Job* had gone, *he had not sinned with his lips.* As *Samuel* after many victories and deliverances, sets up a stone or pillar with this inscription; *Eben Ezer*, The stone of help, saying, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us* (*1 Sam.* 7. 12.) So here the holy Ghost (as it were) erects a pillar, raiseth a monument of *Jobs* compleat and glorious victories over Satan, thus engraven, *Hitherto, in all this* Job *hath not sinned.* Yet you may remember, that such speeches concerning the Saints, are to be understood in a qualified sence, not in an abtolute sence. For, *who can bring a clean thing out of that which is unclean?* Perfection out of imperfection? Not to sin, is here our duty, and should be our endeavour, it shall be our reward in Heaven. On earth we are said not to sin, when we desire not to sin; as hath been more at larged shewed upon those words of the last *verse* of the former *Chapter*, *In all this* Job *sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* There read the point handled more distinctly. For the opening of these words, note only this; that when it is said, *In all this* Job *sinned not*, there is more to be understood, then is expreſt; for *Job* did not only not sin, but he overcame, and triumphed gloriously over Satan: he did excellently, and he spake excellently in all this. So then, these words carry the sence not only of a bare acquittal, but of a high approbation: *In all this* Job *sinned not with his lips.*

With his lips. ¶ Some of the *Jewes* infer from hence, that he sinned in his heart; because it is said, he did not sin in words, they conceit there was some irregularity in his thoughts. Surely if his heart had been disorder'd, his tongue would have been disorder'd too; *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*, therefore it is rather an argument that his heart was free from sin, because his tongue was.

In all this Job *sinned not with his lips.* That is, he did not murmure, or repine, or blaspheme; these are the sins of the lips.

> Observe first, *Not to sin, is the highest and truest, the most honourable and lasting victory of all.*

This victory God himself applauds: the holy Ghost will cry you up for strength and valour, when you come off from a temptation untouch'd; you shall be recorded for it among Christs worthies, *In all this* Job *sinned not.*

> And secondly, *To govern the tongue under great and sore afflictions, is a high act of grace.*

It is spoken as matter of wonder; *In all this* Job *sinned not with his lips.* *Moses*, you know, was a meek man, yet he was so put to it, *that he spake unadvisedly with his lips*; He opened his lips so unadvisedly, that God shut him out of the temporal *Canaan* for it: *rash words cost him dear.* *David* was a very holy man, and very careful over his tongue, *Psal.* 39. 1. *I said I will take heed to my wayes, that I sin not with my tongue. I will keep my mouth with a Bridle:* And knowing (though as the Apostle *James* teacheth us, *We put bits into the Horses mouthes that they may obey us, we can turn about their whole body*, Jam. 3. 3.) that no bridle of his putting could keep his mouth; he puts this work into the hand of God, praying with all earnestness; *Set a watch (O Lord) before my mouth, keep the door of my lips.* Notwithstanding all this, we find him sinning with his lips more then once, *Psal.* 73. 13. *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.* And again, *Psal.* 116. 11. *I said in my haste, all men are liars.* *Job* had the prehemineence in this, *he sinned not with his lips*, no not when he was afflicted and smitten with bitter words: *He that offendeth not in words* (saith the Apostle *James*) *is a perfect man*, he is a perfect man indeed, who can rule his tongue, and so keep the door of his lips, as that he offends not either by silence or by speech. The lips do offend both wayes, negatively as well as positively, by speaking, and by not speaking: Sometimes *silence is a loud sin*; not speaking is to some, on some occasions, a crying sin; *Job* sinned not with his lips, either by being silent when he should speak, or by speaking wherein and when he should be silent. And so much concerning this second consequent of *Job*'s affliction: His Wives sinful counsel, with his prudent and gracious answer; sharply, yet moderately rebuking; strongly, yet lovingly convincing her folly: In and by both, faithfully indeavouring at once to discover and cure her error.

The third consequent of his affliction now follows, namely the visit of his friends, described in the three last verses of this Chapter, which leads us into the body of the Book, with all the debates, disputes and arguments held and maintained with much acuteness of wit, and strength of reasoning between him and these three, his friends and visitants.

VERS.

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite; for they had made an appointment together, to come to mourn with him, and to comfort him.

And when they lift up their eyes afar off, and knew him not, they lifted up their voice and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads towards Heaven.

So they ſate down with him upon the ground ſeven dayes, and ſeven nights, and none ſpake a word unto him: for they ſaw that his grief was very great.

THeſe three *verſes*, contain the third general conſequent of *Job*'s ſecond affliction. In the diviſion of the Chapter, we called it his friends viſit. In which viſit we may here obſerve;

Firſt, the number of the viſitants. They were three. *Now when* Job's *three friends.*

Secondly, We have here the names of theſe viſitants. Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *and* Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and* Zophar *the* Naamathite.

Thirdly, We have the occaſion of their viſit: and that was the report of all the evil that was come upon *Job*. *Now when* Job's *three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, then they came.*

Fourthly, We have the ground of this viſit: it was a mutual agreement, or a compact made between them; ſo ſaith the Text, *For they had made an appointment together to come.*

Fifthly, We have the end or the intendment of their coming, what they aimed at, in viſiting *Job*. And the end is expreſt in the Text to be two-fold.

Firſt, To communicate with him in his ſorrows.

Secondly, To communicate unto him their comforts.

Firſt, *To mourn with him.* And ſecondly, *To comfort him.*

The former of theſe two ends, *viz.* their mourning with him, we have largely ſet down in the two latter *verſes*; they put that end into act preſently, as ſoon as they came, they fell a mourning with him. And we may obſerve five diſtinct acts of *Job*'s friends ſolemnly condoling or mourning with him.

The firſt act is this, *They wept.* And to ſhew that it was no ordinary weeping, the Text ſaith, *They lift up their voice and wept.*

The ſecond act of their mourning was, their renting of their Mantles, *And they rent every one his Mantle.*

The third act was, the *ſprinkling of duſt upon their heads*, and *the ſprinkling of duſt toward Heaven*, which was another aggravating circumſtance of their ſorrow.

The fourth act was, their *ſitting down with him upon the ground ſeven dayes, and ſeven nights.*

The fifth act of their mourning with him, was their ſilence, *And none ſpake a word unto him.*

The Cauſe or the reaſon of this ſolemnity in their mourning, the reaſon of theſe five Acts, but eſpecially of the laſt, of their ſilence, is given us in the latter words of the verſe, *For they ſaw that his grief was very great*, therefore it muſt have great ſorrow, and great ſilence, to wait the fitteſt ſeaſon for the adminiſtring of counſel and conſolation. Thus for the parts and reſolution of the words, contained in theſe three *verſes*. I ſhall come to the opening of the particulars.

And when Job's three friends.

רע *radice* רעה *vis, tam quam ali-*

The word which we tranſlate (*friends*) ſprings from a root which ſignifieth to feed a mans ſelf, or others, or to eat together as Sheep eat together; and ſo from the ſame word, a *Paſtor* or a feeder of Sheep is derived, *Pſal.* 23. 1. *The Lord is my Shepheard and feeder.* And by a Metaphor it is tranſlated for a *friend*; becauſe friends do uſually feed together, eat and converſe together: So *David* deſcribes a *friend*, Pſal. 41. 9. *My familiar friend that did eat of my bread.* *Job*'s viſitants are thus expreſt, his *friends* or *familiars*; The word ſometimes notes only a *friend* at large, or any neighbour; ſo in the Law, *Exod.* 20. 16. *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſs againſt thy neighbour*, or (it is the ſame word) againſt thy *friend*: there it is taken in a large ſence, for a neighbour, that is, for any beſides thy ſelf, to whom offices of love are due, as Chriſt expounds it, *Luke* 10. 30. But uſually, it is put ſtrictly, for a ſpecial *friend*, as in *Deut.* 13. 6. when he ſpeaks of inticers to Idolatry, *If thy friend* (ſaith he) *who is as thine own ſoul*; there is the ſame word, and he ſhews by a circumlocution, whom he means by ſuch a friend, namely ſuch a one who is as *thine own ſoul*; one that lyeth in thy boſom, and is as near and dear to thee as thy ſelf. I ſuppoſe here in this place, *Job*'s three friends were not friends at large, but intimate and ſpecial friends, or (as we uſe to ſay) boſom friends. And therefore when it is ſaid, Job's *three friends*, we are not to underſtand it, as if *Job* had but three, as if theſe were all the friends *Job* had; but amongſt all his friends, theſe carried away the name, theſe were the chief and choice; *Job*'s three friends. As it is ſaid concerning *David*'s Worthies, 2 *Sam.* 23. *David* had many Worthies, but there was *a firſt three*, a chief three among them all. So here, *Job* doubtleſs had many friends, a large Catalogue of friends, but in theſe you have the top of his friends, the chief three, the firſt three: Theſe three ſpecial friends came to viſit *Job*, *to mourn with him, and to comfort him.*

The occaſion of this viſit, preſents it ſelf next, *When theſe three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon* Job. [**When they heard of it.**] The troubles of *Job* were noyſed all the Country over, yea into ſtrange Countries. Two things are ſwiftly carried about upon the wings of fame, and poaſted about by reports: Firſt, The ſins. Secondly, The afflictions of Godly men. If they fall into any ſin, it will be heard of all a Country, it may be all a Kingdom over: *It ſhall be told in* Gath, *and publiſh'd in the ſtreets of* Askelon. Again, if they fall into any great affliction, every one deſcants upon it, and many will paſs deep cenſures. It becomes matter of wonder, that men eminent in godlineſs, great profeſſors, ſuch as have held forth the name, and upheld the truth of Chriſt, that they (I ſay) ſhould fall into great afflictions, is reported, diſcours'd, admir'd all a Country over.

Nihil ens magis prædicabile quam boni hominis ruina.

There is nothing that is more talked of, then the trouble that befalleth godly men; *When the three friends of* Job *heard of all this evil that was come upon him.*

When this report about *Job* came to them, they came to *Job*, **They came** (ſaith the Text) **every one from his own place.** The word *Place*, is often uſed in Scripture, to ſignifie a *Country*, a *City*, or a *Region*. Now here it is conceived, that the place from whence they came, was not only the place where they dwelt, but the place where they governed. It is frequently aſſerted by the *Jewiſh* Doctors, with whom the Septuagint agree, and moſt of the Jeſuits are in it too; that theſe *three friends* of *Job*'s were Kings, either *Reges* or *Reguli*, ſuch as had the government of thoſe Countries where they lived. *Beza* rejects this as a Fable, and telleth us that this opinion hath no footing or foundation in Scripture, but is grounded only upon that uſual boldneſs of the *Jewiſh* Doctors. But whether they were Kings or Subjects, whether they came from their private dwellings, or from the places of their dominion, needs not trouble us. This is clear, that they were great men, eminent perſons in their Country: and the diſputes which follow, teſtifie that they were men of very great wiſdom and underſtanding, according to all the learning of thoſe times.

Quod autem dicunt Hebrei totidē fuiſſe reges eſt ex audacia illis familiari, Beza.

Theſe three friends of *Job*'s are here ſet forth by name, by a double name. By the name, firſt, of their perſons. Secondly, By the name of their Country, or of their Family. For that's a queſtion, whether the additional name be derived from the Country where they dwelt, or from the Family out of which they were extracted.

Eliphaz the *Temanite*, he is the firſt. We read *Gen.* 36. 11. That *Eſau* begat *Eliphaz*; that *Eliphaz* was the eldeſt Son of *Eſau*, and *Eliphaz* begat *Teman*. This *Teman*, deſcending from *Eſau*, is ſuppoſed to be the Father or the Anceſtor of this *Eliphaz*, from whom he is called *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*; and ſo *Temanite*, is a note of the Family from whence *Eliphaz* deſcended. It is uſual likewiſe in Scripture, to give ſuch additional names from the Countries or places,

Jer. 49.20. Amos 1.12 Obad. 9. Hab. 3.4. Teman *regio Principum* Edom *in terra* Gabalitica *a* Theman *filio* Eliphaz *filii* Esau *sortita vocabulum*, &c. *Sciendum etiam quod omnis Australis regio Ebræis* Theman *dicitur (paulo post.)* Theman *juxta* Ezekielem *civitas Idumeæ.* Eusebius *de locis.*

places, and so *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, may be from *Teman*, of which we read often in Scripture: *Teman* signifies the South; it was a Southern Countrey.

Further, *Teman* was a place, wherein it is observed, that the Schools of Learning were seated, *Jer.* 49. 7. *Concerning* Edom, *thus saith the Lord, Is wisdom no more in* Teman? Two things may be gathered from that Text. First, That *Teman* was in *Edom*, or *Idumea*. Secondly, That it was a place wherein there was much profession of wisdom and learning. So then, we may take the word *Temanite*, either as referring unto the Stock from which *Eliphaz* sprung; or unto the place where *Eliphaz* lived. The *Hebrews* refer it unto his Stock or pedigree: And the *Caldee Paraphrase* is for the place or Countrey.

Job's second friend was *Bildad* the *Shuhite*. All that I find for his pedigree, is, that he came from one of the Sons of *Abraham* by his second Wife *Keturah*; of whom it is said, *Gen.* 25.1. *That she bare him* Zimram, *and* Jocksham, *with others, and* Shuah: From which *Shuah* was the family of the *Shuhites*: And it is conceived, that *Bildad* was of that line, and therefore here called *Bildad* the *Shuhite*.

And for the last, *Zophar* the *Naamathite*, there is less certainty concerning him: Some will have him to be *Zepha*, mentioned *Gen.* 36. 11. who was Grand-child to *Esau* by *Eliphaz* his Eldest Son. And for his additional name *Naamathite*, the best conjecture which I find, takes it from *Naamah*, the name of a City, spoken of *Josh.* 15. 41. in the division of the promised Land to the Children of *Israel*.

Now it is said, that these three, upon the report of all the evil that was come upon *Job*, came to visit him; *For they had made an appointment together to come*; or they all agreed together; they came not by accident, but by appointment. The word signifieth, to meet by solemn agreement. Hence the place where the children of *Israel* used to meet to solemnize the worship of God, before the building of the Temple, was called the *Tabernacle of the Congregation*; because they were to congregate or meet there at set times to celebrate the Name of God, according to his own institution. And in the thirtieth Chapter of this Book, the grave is called *Beth-mogned* (*ver.* 23.) the house of the gathering together of all men, according to that Statute of Heaven, *It is appointed unto men once to dye*, Heb. 9.27. It is the fancy of *Origen* upon this place, that these three friends came at adventure, that they came all of them several wayes, unknown to, or without the privity of one another, from their several Countreys, and met, as it were by miracle, at *Job*'s house, the same day and hour. But the Text is clear, that there was a profest covenant and agreement made, by which they came together.

ועד מועד *Tempus aut locus certus ac constitutus, conventus, indictus, tempus quod unus alteri constituit.*

They came (saith the Text) **to mourn with him, and to comfort him.** In these words we have the end or intendment of their coming.

נוד

First, [**They came to mourn with him.**] The word which we translate, *to mourn*, signifieth to move the body, or to pass from place to place. *Cain* (after that sin of his in murthering his Brother, *Gen.* 4.) hath this judgment pass'd by God upon him, *That he should be a fugitive and a vagabond*; he should be *Nod*, a mover from place to place: And afterwards it is said, *He dwelt in the Land of Nod*; which some interpret for a special place, for a Country called *Nod*: but it is taken by others thus, *He dwelt in the Land of* Nod; that is, where ever he dwelt, he found the Land, as it were, moving; it was a moving, a shaking, a trembling Land to him, *He dwelt in the Land of* Nod: His conscience quaking continually, by reason of the guilt that was upon him, for murdering his Brother; the earth also seemed to quake under him, whersoever he went, or dwelt. *That only by the way.* The same word here used in the Text, by a Metaphor, signifies to mourn, or compassionate the afflictions and miseries of another. So *Nah.* 3. 6. Nineveh *is laid waste, who will bemoan her?* And *Isa.* 51.19. *These two things are come unto thee, who shall be sorry for thee?* And the reason why this word, which signifieth properly to move, is translated to signifie mourning in compassion with others, may be, either first this; because such persons will run, go, or move from place to place, to give and administer comfort to their friends, whose afflictions affect and grieve them, as we see here in these friends of *Job*; they took a long journey, they moved indeed when they came to mourn. Or rather secondly, (as I conceive) for this reason, because such compassionate sorrows and mournings when our friends are under deep and sore afflictions, are usually expresst by moving the body, or at least moving some member of the body; as many times the hand is lifted up, and we stroke our breasts, or we shake the head: It is ordinary in compassionate sorrows, thus to move the hand or the head; and so the word is used to signifie mourning, from that act which accompanies or testifies mourning. And the same word is sometimes used to signifie that trepidation, or trembling of the heart, those convulsions of the spirit, upon the approaches of our own troubles. So *Isa.* 7. 2. That fearful motion and disquietness both of Prince and people, when they heard of the invasion of their Countrey by *Rezin* King of *Syria*, *&c.* is thus expresst, *The heart of the King, and the heart of his people were moved, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind.*

ut condo-leant aut compatiuntur, solent subinde movere caput ad testandum dolorem. Merc.

Secondly, It is said they came *to comfort him.* The word which is there used to *comfort*, signifies likewise to *mourn*: and especially the mournings of repentance, or to repent for sin with sorrow: The reason is given, because true comfort doth spring from repentance: Joy often ariseth out of sorrow, and so the same word is applied to both. Worldly joy and sorrow are contraries, but godly joy and sorrow are con-causes, mutually effecting and helping one another.

נחם

We have here an excellent pattern held forth unto us of our duty, in reference unto distressed persons or Nations.

First thus, *It is both an act and an argument of true friendship, to mourn with and comfort those that are in affliction.*

A man doth then set his seal to it, that he is a friend, when he will partake and share in his friends afflictions; when he will divide with him in all estates whatsoever it is, whether sweet or sowre, joy or sorrow, he will have his part. Many friends will come and rejoyce with you, they will come to a feast with you, they will meet at a house of mirth with you; but they fall off and go back, when they must weep with you, when if they come, they must come to a house of mourning. *Solomon* (*Prov.* 17. 11.) gives us the true character of a friend; *A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.* It is the note and tryal of our love to God, when we love him at all times, whatever he doth with us: And it is the argument of true love unto our brethren, when we love and own them at all times, whatsoever they endure from the hand of God, or man: This Christ approves and commends in his Disciples, *Luke* 22. 28. *Ye are they* (saith he) *who have continued with me in my temptation.* It is an easie piece of friendship, or discipleship, to continue with Christ at a Feast, or at a full Table; but in a temptation to continue with him, speaks a Disciple indeed. Some friends are like the Swallow, they come in the Summer and sing with you; but when it is Winter, cold and frost, then farewell, they must seek a warmer Climate. These are summer friends; while the summer of comfort, the summer of riches, the summer of outward contentment lasteth, you cannot be rid of them: but if the winter come, the winter of trouble, and sorrow, and poverty, and sickness, they are gone; they will not once look on you, they pass on the other side of the way, as the Levite did, when he saw the man lye wounded and weltring in his blood, *Luke* 10. 32. *These are summer friends, not winter friends*, not they.

Secondly, Observe this; As it is an act and argument of friendship to do thus, so it is likewise a duty to do thus:

It is a duty to mourn with those that mourn, and to visit those that are in affliction.

Many look upon it only as a complement, to visit their sad friends; we must look upon it as a duty. Christ puts it (*Matth.* 25. 36.) as one of those visible acts of duty, upon which he will pronounce the blessing of that day; *Come ye blessed*; why? *I was sick, and ye visited me.* Christ is not sick in his person; he is in Heaven, where is no sin, and therefore no sickness shall ever enter: and indeed he never was sick in his person, when he was here upon the earth; Christ did not bear our personal infirmities, he bore only our natural infirmities: I know it is said, *He bore our sicknesses* (by compassion and by compensation) but he was not sick: Whereas then Christ saith, *I was sick*, he means, sick in his members: And when he saith, *Ye visited me*, he means, his

ſick diſtreſſed ſervants: He takes it ſo kindly, when done to his, that he reckons it as done to himſelf: It is an act you ſee, and an office of love, upon which Chriſt hath a ſpecial eye. The Apoſtle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 27.) doth, as it were, put all Religion in this: It is ſuch a fruit of Religion as doth evidence the truth of Religion, and therefore hath obtained not only the name of Religion, but is made the definition of Religion. *Pure Religion* (ſaith he) *and undefiled before God the Father, is this.* What is it? *To viſit the fatherleſs and the widow in their affliction.* This is a definition from the effect: It is not put in general, that *to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow*; but to viſit them *in their affliction*, is *pure Religion*; that is, this is a fruit, that which groweth up from the root of pure Religion: if pure Religion live in the heart, this will be a fruit in the life. Wherefore look not upon the viſitation of a diſconſolate friend, as a matter of indifferency, but of duty; and do it not only for love, but for conſcience.

Thirdly, The Text ſaith, *As ſoon as they heard*, or *when they heard of all the evil that was come upon* Job, *they came to mourn with him.* Then obſerve,

The very report of another's ſuffering, ſhould move us to mourn and ſuffer with him.

Report ſhould bring us, when we do but hear of ſuch a thing: It is very unwarrantable to judge or cenſure a friend upon report and hear-ſay; but a report is warrant enough to pity and pray for him, to viſit and comfort him. *Remember them that are in bonds* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *Heb.* 13. 3. *as bound with them*: Remember them. Remembrance is of things and perſons which are abſent; remember them, though you ſee them not, though abſent from you, yet make their caſe as preſent; *be as bound with them, be as afflicted with them*, yea haſten into their preſence. *Bear one anothers burthens*, Gal. 6. 2. *Rejoyce with them that rejoyce, and weep with them that weep*, Rom. 12. 5. *Be ye all of one mind, having compaſſion one of another*, 1 Pet. 3. 8. are Apoſtolical rules for, and tryals of Goſpel-love. It was a ſad condition that *David* was in; and it was a very ſinful condition that others about him were in, when he ſaith, *Pſal.* 69. 20. *I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.* But if it be ſinful not to eaſe (when it is in our power) the ſorrows of others, how ſinful is it to add to their ſorrow? Such *David* found (typing Chriſt in his ſufferings) *Who gave him gall for meat, and in his thirſt they gave him vinegar to drink.* Thus the Lord complains of thoſe Heathen by the Prophet *Zachary* (Zach. 1. 15.) *I was but a little diſpleaſed with my people, and they helped forward the affliction.*

Again, If it be a duty to mourn over the afflictions of others; how exceeding ſinful is it to rejoyce at the afflictions of others? This was *Edom*'s wickedneſs, reproved by the Prophet *Obadiah*, ver. 12. *Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy brother, in the day that he became a ſtranger: neither ſhouldeſt thou have rejoyced over the children of* Judah, *in the day of their affliction: neither ſhouldeſt thou have ſpoken proudly in the day of diſtreſs.*

We may further preſs this point, in reference unto the preſent condition of our Brethren in many places of this Nation; in reference to the whole Nation of *Ireland*, yea of the whole Church of God: Are they not all mourners? And if we are to mourn with private friends, much more then with publick, with whole Kingdoms and Churches. We may beſpeak all paſſengers in the language of the Prophet *Jeremy*, lamenting over the deſolations of *Jeruſalem*, *Is it nothing to you, all you that paſs by* England, Ireland? Is it nothing to you that travel, (though but in meditation) into the Churches of Chriſt in *Germany?* &c. We read of *Nehemiah*, *Chap.* 1. 4. when he heard the report of *Jeruſalems* deſolation, though himſelf was far off at *Babylon*, though himſelf was rich and full, and preferr'd in the Court of that *Perſian* Monarch, yet *he mourned many dayes.* And *Daniel*, (Chap. 10. 2.) *mourned three full weeks*, that is, one and twenty dayes together, over the diſtreſſed eſtate and condition of his people; *Jeremy* wiſheth, *Oh that my head were a fountain of tears, that I might weep night and day for the ſlain of the daughter of my people!* Chap. 9. 1. We have had many ſlain, choice ones ſlain; this ſhould be matter of mourning to us. Take heed of ſuch a ſpirit, as is reproved in thoſe, *Amos* 6. *Who ſate upon beds of Ivory, and ſtretched themſelves upon their couches, who eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midſt of the ſtall: Who chaunted to the ſound of the viol, and invented to themſelves inſtruments of Muſick like* David, *who drank wine in bowls, and anointed themſelves with the chief ointments, but they were not grieved for the affliction of* Joſeph. If ever that of *Solomon* were appliable, it is to ſuch a time as this, (*Eccleſ.* 2. 2.) *I ſaid of laughter, thou art mad*; of all worldly laughter and outward mirth, what do'ſt thou? if ever it were mad, now it is mad: Now ſorrow is ſobriety, and tears are in ſeaſon. No ſong ſo muſical as that which is ſet to the higheſt ſtrain of lamentation. I remember the Prophet *Eliſha*'s paſſion, when he fore-ſaw evils that ſhould be acted; he looked upon *Hazael*, ſaith the Text, (2 *Kings* 8. 11.) and wept; and *Hazael* ſaid, *Why weepeth my Lord?* He replyed, *Becauſe I know of all the evil that thou wilt do unto the Children of* Iſrael: *their ſtrong holds wilt thou ſet on fire, and their young men wilt thou ſlay with the ſword, and wilt daſh their children, and rip up their women with child.* This made him weep; he wept, becauſe he ſaw blood and fire, murders and burnings in the face of *Hazael*; what would he have done then, if he had ſeen all fulfilled with his hand? Chriſt himſelf wept over *Jeruſalem*, when he propheſied how the *enemy ſhould come, and caſt a trench about it, and compaſs the City round, and keep them in on every ſide*, &c. *Luke* 19. 43. If Chriſt wept for the evils that were to come on others, how ſhould we for the evils that are already come upon us? *Mine eye affecteth my heart*, ſaith lamenting *Jeremy* (*Lam.* 3. 51.) An eye of propheſie hath affected ſome hearts, and ſhall not an eye of ſenſe affect ours? Our ears were ſmitten long ago, with ſad meſſages out of *Germany*, out of the *Palatinate* and *Bohemia*: We were ſmitten nearer home by the reports of thoſe inhumane butcheries, exerciſed upon our brethren in *Ireland*: We are now ſmitten at home, both ear and eye, the ſword hath paſs'd the Seas, and hath ſpilt Rivers, is like to ſpill a ſea of blood out of our own bowels; for our brethren that have been ſlain, for our brethren that are in captivity, for our brethren that have been ſpoiled, let us mourn and lament with a brotherly lamentation. It is true, *they ought* (as thoſe ancient Worthies) *to ſuffer joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*, Heb. 10. 34. but we ought to grieve when they ſuffer the ſpoiling of their goods. It is an excellent ſpirit in them, to ſuffer it with joy; but it is a ſinful ſpirit in us, which rejoyceth, when they ſuffer. Some Trees keep their greenneſs and their leaves, Winter and Summer, let the time be what it will, hot or cold, they are alike freſh and green: Some ſpirits are like thoſe hard-grain trees: But the ſpirit of a Chriſtian ſhould be like ordinary trees, which when Winter cometh, caſt their leaves, put off their beauty and bravery. The ſtory ſaith of *Nero*, that when he had ſet the City of *Rome* on fire, he got him up to an high place, to behold the fire, and feed upon the flame, for there and then he ſung ſongs of the deſtruction of *Troy*: To ſing ſongs, to rejoyce in the midſt of *Sions* afflictions, argues not a Chriſtian, but a *Neronian* ſpirit. To ſhut up this point, let us prefer *Jeruſalem* above our chiefeſt worldly joy; let us even reſolve to enjoy nothing of the world, till we ſee *Jeruſalem* a quiet habitation, and the joy of the whole earth. The Wife of *Phineas*, 1 *Sam.* 4. would not enjoy her Son, (and that is the chiefeſt joy) *becauſe the Ark of God was taken*: She enquires, *Where is the glory?* As if ſhe had ſaid, you ſhew me a Son, but can you ſhew me the glory? No, *The glory is departed from* Iſrael, *for the Ark of God is taken.* There is nothing in the world to be rejoyced in, when God departs from us; and there is but little, if any thing, to be rejoyced in, when Ordinances (which are the ſigns of Gods preſence, and the means of communion with God) are taken or departing from us.

Thirdly, Theſe friends of *Job* came to mourn with him; they were not ſent for, they were not invited by letters or meſſengers, but they came of their own accord. Obſerve,

It becomes us well for the comforting of our friends, to prevent the invitation of our friends.

Some out of a kind of modeſty (that is the beſt we can ſay of it) will not come to a troubled friend, unleſs they be ſent for. I do aſſure you this, *It is good manners to be an unbidden gueſt at a houſe of mourning.*

Another thing I would offer to you from hence, is this,

It

It is said, that before they came, *They made an appointment to come, to mourn with him, and to comfort him*; you see they agreed upon their end, before they set a foot in the way. Note this then,

It is an excellent point of holy prudence, to be setled about our end, before we undertake or enter upon any action.

Some go about business, and they know not why; they visit their friends, and they know not for what. That was justly called a confused Assembly (*Acts* 19. 32.) when the most part knew not wherefore they were come together. Though no man can know the end of his action, respecting the event, yet every wise man doth and ought to know the end of all his actions, in respect of his own intendment: His end is first intended, though it be last, yea though it be not all attained. Observe further,

Wisdom doth not only propose an end, but a sutable end.

Job's three friends proposed two of the most sutable ends that could be for such a business, *To mourn with him, and to comfort him.* If a man were to visit or converse with a wicked man, it were good to say, I will go to counsel him, to convince him of his sin, to convert him from his sin. If I go to one who is full of doubts, it were best to say, I will go see, if I can settle and resolve him: A sutable end is the beauty and grace of all our undertakings.

Again, Consider the order and method of these two ends, it is said, *They came to mourn with him, and to comfort him.* Comfort is the higher and the nobler end, the last and ultimate end in regard of man; it is the end into which all actions are resolved, and all ends emptied at the last; all the acts of holiness have a tendency unto joy; all godly sorrow leads unto comfort: Therefore the Apostle writes to his *Corinthians*, that he was not glad, because he had made them sorrowful by an Epistle, but that they sorrowed so, as they might rejoyce. How was that? They sorrowed to repentance; their sorrow wrought *repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of.* But is there no more in true repentance, but only this, that it is not to be repented of? Surely yes. For if there be *joy in Heaven* (Luke 15.) *over a repenting sinner*, then doubtless, there is abundant ground of joy on earth. If Angels rejoyce when a sinner repents, much more may the repenting sinner rejoyce. So then, repentance, not to be repented of, is repentance greatly to be rejoyced in. Repentance that brings not forth joy, is to be repented of: We must mourn for all sorrows which end in sorrow; for sorrow is not good for its own sake, but for comforts sake: *Job*'s friends came not to mourn with him, that he might mourn; but they came to mourn with him, that he might be comforted: To add sorrow unto sorrow, is to be swallowed up with sorrow; he sorrows rightly, that would be swallowed up with joy: You see the ends which these men proposed in coming to *Job*, *To mourn with him, and to comfort him.* Excellent ends both, and without all question, they did propose and purpose them sincerely. They came to mourn with him, and they mourned; they came with hearts resolved to comfort him, but they did not comfort him, they did not attain that end, they could not attain it. Then observe,

That as the way of a man is not in himself, so much less is the end of a man in himself.

The way of a man is not in himself, saith the Prophet *Jeremy*, Chap. 10. 23. that is, a mans actions are not in his own power, he is not master of his own will, or of his own way. If a mans way be not in himself, much less is his end in himself, that is, in his own power, to have what end he pleaseth and proposeth: *Man proposeth, but God disposeth.* These friends came to comfort *Job*, but they did nothing less then comfort him: instead of comforting, they afflicted him; which forced him to complain, *Miserable comforters are ye all:* And yet their errand was to comfort him.

Some indeed are of opinion, that they were false friends, that they came upon him with prejudic'd and imbitter'd spirits: but the preparatory circumstances, and manner of their coming, clears the uprightness of their intentions, and confutes that slander. Doubtless they came really to comfort him, and ease his sorrows; and yet behold they doubled his sorrows, and proved a greater affliction to him then all the rest. *Job* had nothing left him, but the integrity of his wayes, and the uprightness of his heart: His estate was gone, his children were gone, his health was gone, his body was broken, he was undone quite, yet he had a heart-full of integrity. And when Satan, the enemy, could not strip him of this, he sends his Wife: First, to jeer him out of it; but he shakes her off quickly as a foolish Woman: Secondly, he sends these friends, gravely and learnedly to dispute and beat him out of it, by dint of argument. O how long did these hang upon him, with many serious and weighty, with many pious and divine (much misapplied) discourse: he could not get rid of these, whose words were as drawn swords, often making his wounded soul bleed and breath out sad complaints; and yet they came to comfort him. *A mans heart* (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 16. 9.) *deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps.* Man deviseth, but God directeth: He orders the actions, and over-rules the ends of every creature. We can neither cut out our way, nor make up our conclusions, by our own strength or wisdom. And so much for the tenth *verse*, His friends visit, *They came unto him.*

I told you before, that the two following *verses*, do but set forth the particulars of the first end, *their mourning. They came to mourn with him:* Their mourning is expressed by many of those particular circumstances, observed in *Job*'s sorrow, *chap.* 1. *v.* 20. therefore I shall not insist much upon them.

And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, they knew him not.

This is the preface to the several acts of their mourning.

And when they lifted up their eyes.] To lift up the eyes, is a frequent Scripture phrase for seeing, *Gen.* 26. 63, 64. There is a reason in nature for it, man having a special nerve in the fabrick of the eye, by the motion of which the eye turns upward. I only offer that, because the same word is used for lifting up the voice.

Afar off.] Some hence infer, that *Job* lay abroad; and they take this for a further argument, that he was put out of the City, or House, where he dwelt, as a Leper. But this *afar off*, might be within the compass of his own house, or in his Chamber; as if it had been said, as soon as they stept into the place where he lay, and espied him in such a forlorn condition, they knew him not; though it be not improbable that he was sometime abroad for the benefit of the air, by reason of the filthiness of his disease; and so his friends might find him abroad. But that he was turned out of his house, is refuted, *chap.* 7. 13. where he speaks of his bed, and of his couch. *When I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint*, &c. That is, when I thought to find ease by lying down upon my bed, or leaning on my couch. Therefore he had a house furnished with bed and couch.

When they lift up their eyes afar off, [**they knew him not.**] We need not take it absolutely, as if his disease had so disfigured him, that he could not be known to be the same man: For often in Scripture, that which is put as an absolute negative, is intended for a weak affirmative. It is said, (*John* 1. 11.) *When Christ came, he came to his own, and his own received him not*; there is an absolute negation, (yet it followeth,) *But to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.* His own received him not, yet some did receive him: Some of his own Kindred and Countrey did receive him: So that, *His own received him not*, is, as if it had been said, few of his own received him, or he had but cold entertainment among his own. So *Hos.* 9. 6. Ephraim *is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit.* There is the sound of an absolute denial, yet the sense will bear a weak affirmation; for it followeth, *Yea though they bring forth, yet I will slay the beloved fruit of their womb.* They may bring forth a few or some fruit perhaps, but I will destroy it. So here, *They knew him not*; that is, they could scarce discern him, or distinguish who he was, his disease and sores had so discolour'd or blotted out the lines and feature of his face, that they could not suddenly assure themselves, this was he. They stood as men amazed; What? Is this *Job?* What a spectacle is here? How strangely is his visage changed, and his whole body disfigured? Such kind of doubting language, doubtless past amongst them. *When they saw him afar off, they knew him not.* The Prophet *Jeremy* observes the like, after the hard

siege of *Jerusalem*, which caused him thus to lament (*chap.* 4. 7, 8.) *Her Nazarites were purer then snow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then Rubies, their polishing was of Saphire*: But see the change; *their visage is blacker then a coal, they are not known in the streets.* Famine had eaten up, not only their flesh, but their form; misery had altered their very complexion and visage; they who shined before like Rubies and Saphires, for colour and comlinesse, were now dark as a coal, or dusky like ashes; they were not known to be the same men and women. It is said of Christ in his affliction, *Isa.* 52. 14. That *his visage was so marred more then any man, and his form more then the sons of men.* Great afflictions change the very form, and utterly blast the beauty of the body. Sin doth so change the soul, and disfigure the mind; it so deforms the spirit, and defaces the image at first stamp'd upon it, that God saith, *I know you not*, you are not like the men that I made. But this is the comfort of a *Job*, of a godly man, that when his face is most deformed, his soul is most beautified; and though a disease may disfigure him, so that his neerest friends know him not, yet God knows him still; No sicknes can wear out the markes by which Christ knows thee. When thy face is blacker then a coale, he sees the face of thy soul, shining like the face of an Angel. A person or a people are then in a woful condition indeed, when God shall say to them, as he did to those hypocritical professors, *Mat.* 7. 23. *Depart from me, I know ye not.* We may be in such a woful condition, that our friends and acquaintance coming to visit us, cannot know us; yet for the main, well enough, blessed enough at that time, beautiful in the eye, welcome into the presence of a glorious God.

They knew him not. What then? **Then they lifted up their voyce, and wept.**

This is the first act of their mourning. And we may observe five acts of mourning here specified; whereof, one is a natural act, and the other four are ceremonial. The natural act was this of weeping: *They lifted up their voice, and wept.* The ceremonial acts were these; First, *They rent every one his mantle.* Secondly. *They sprinkled dust upon their heads towards heaven.* Thirdly, *They sate down with him on the ground, seven dayes and seven nights.* The fourth ceremonial act was, their silence; *And none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was great.*

First, **They lifted up their voyce, and wept.** The word is *Baca*, and from that, the place, *Judges* 2. 5. is called *Bochim*, where the people are said to lift up their voice, and weep, when the Angel reproved them. In *Psal.* 84. 6. we read of the *valley of* Baca, which some translate, the valley of weeping, or the valley of tears. Others, from *Baca*, a Mulberry-tree, the valley of Mulberry-trees, which being a dry place, the travellers to *Jerusalem*, at the solemn feasts, did so dig for water, that they made all as one well.

Further, It is said, they did not only *weep*, but *they lifted up their voice, and wept.* We may note two things in that phrase. First, The vehemency of their sorrow; as when a man doth list up his voice, and speaks, he speaks vehemently, *Isa.* 58. 3. *Lift up thy voyce like a Trumpet*, that is, speak with a loud and strong voice; so here, *They lifted up their voyce, and wept*, that is, they wept vehemently, they wept exceedingly. Secondly, To lift up the voyce, and weep, notes the easing of the mind in sorrow; for it is an ease to the mind burdened and oppressed with sorrow, to lift up the voyce, and weep; to cry out in sorrow, lets the strength of the sorrow out. We say, that sorrow which is included, strangles and stifles the spirit; sorrow kept in, is like fire kept in, more augmented; as *David* speaks, *Psal.* 39. concerning himself. *While I kept silence, even from good, my sorrow was stirred; my heart was hot within me; while I was musing, the fire burned.* His sorrow was encreased, when he had not vent for it; silent mournings are the sorest mournings: lifting up the voyce, vents the sorrow. The holy Ghost expresses great sorrow, by that of a woman in travel, crying out. To cry out, notes (I grant) great pain; and yet crying out, is a lessening or mitigation of pain. It is observed that the midwife, seeing a travailing woman hold in and conceal her pains, will bid her cry out. Some lift up their voyce, and weep, when they are not in pain, when they mourn not at all: there are Crocodiles tears, tears and voyces too of dissimulation. *Ishmael* had tears in his eyes, and revenge in his heart, *Jer.* 41. Others are in pain, and mourn, when they lift not up their voyce, nor weep; like one that hath a deadly wound, they bleed inwardly; but when there is the highest flood of sorrow in the heart, weeping will make an ebb, and you may let much of those waters (which are ready to drown the spirit) out at those sluces of the eyes. This is the first act, the natural act; *They lifted up their eyes*, and saw such a spectacle, as made them *lift up their voyce, and weep.*

There are four ceremonial acts.

First, **They rent every man his mantle.**] We have spoken of that, when we opened the twentieth verse of the former Chapter, together with the grounds of rending cloaths, sorrow, and indignation, *&c.* I shall refer you thither for further information in this point.

The second ceremonial act of their sorrow was, **The sprinkling dust upon their heads toward heaven.**] In *ver.* 20. of the former Chapter, *Job shaved his head*: Here is another ceremony, *They sprinkled dust upon their heads*; and which is yet more considerable, *They sprinkled dust toward heaven.* There were two wayes of sprinkling dust: there was first a taking the dust, and sprinkling it upon the head barely; and then there was another way of taking the dust, and throwing it up in the air, and so letting it fall upon the head: this act was significative, it typed, that all things were full of sorrowful confusion, the earth and the air were mingled, the heavens also were cloudy and darkned; therefore they cast dust toward heaven: For as by a stormy wind and tempest, the dust is raised, which thickens the air, and obscures the heavens; so by that act of casting or sprinkling dust in the air, stormie, tempestuous and troublesom times were signified. In *Acts* 22. 23. those wretched *Jews* to whom *Paul* preached, being vexed and enraged, *cried out, and casting off their cloaths, threw dust into the air*: Their action had this voyce in it; this man hath, or will, if let alone, fill all the world with trouble, and disturb the peace of Nations: This they expres (together with their own rage) by throwing dust into the air. It was a judgment, which God threatned his people with, that he would make the rain of their Land dust, *Deut.* 28. 24. And when men make it rain dust, by sprinkling it towards heaven, it sheweth great trouble or judgment upon themselves, or upon their Land. Further, the sprinkling of dust upon the head, was a *memento* of mortality; they put dust to dust, that man might remember himself to be but dust.

And they sate with him upon the ground seven dayes and seven nights.] Here is the third ceremonial act of their sorrow. In verse 20. of the former Chapter, it is said, *Job fell upon the ground*, these sate upon the ground; as falling, so sitting upon the ground, is the posture of a mourner, of a mourner greatly humbling himself under the hand of God, and the sence of his own or others afflictions. When God layes us low, he can lay us lower; and therefore it is best for us, to lay our selves as low as we can: so doth he, who sits upon the ground, if his heart sit down with him too. It is possible for the body to lie groveling upon the earth, when the spirit is nestling among the stars; not in faith, as the Saints do, but in pride, as *Lucifer* did, *Isa.* 14. 13. However, he either is, or appears to be humbled to the lowest, and emptied to the full of worldly comforts, who, with *Job's* friends, sits down upon the ground; especially, if he sit long there, as *Job's* friends did, *seven dayes and seven nights.* The time seems almost incredible. How could they hold out to sit so long? or how could *Job*, a sick and diseased man? For it is said, *They sate down with him seven dayes*, &c. I answer, We need not interpret it for seven continued dayes and nights, without any intermission; it is frequent in Scripture, to put a part, especially a greater part, for the whole; that which is often done, is said to be alwayes done; as, *Luke* 24. 53. *The Disciples were continually in the Temple, praising and blessing God.* And, *Luke* 2. 37. It is said, *That* Anna *the Propheteſs departed not from the Temple, but served God night and day*: Not that she was there without any intermission, but the greatest part of night and day, or, at the usual times both of night and day. *Paul* testifies before the Church of *Ephesus*, that by the space of three years, *he ceased not to warn every one night and day with his tears*, Acts 2. 31. Did he therefore actually preach three years, night and day, without intermission?

missiion? That had been a long Sermon indeed. Then his meaning is but this, that in those three years, he watched, and made use of all possible opportunities, both by night and by day, to preach the Gospel: So we may understand it here, *they sate down, seven dayes and seven nights*; that is, a great part of seven dayes and seven nights, or all the time of those seven dayes and seven nights, which were fitting for such a visit.

Origen will have it, seven nights and seven dayes without intermission; in maintenance of which assertion, he saith, they were preserved by miracle, without sleep, and without meat, all that time. But here is plain truth without a miracle.

Secondly, Whereas it is said, seven dayes and seven nights; we may note further, that the number seven (as other numbers) may be understood indefinitely; a certain time being put for an uncertain: as, *Jer.* 15. 9. The Prophet saith, *She that hath born seven* (that is, many Children) *languisheth.* And, *Eccles.* 2. 7. *Give a portion to seven*, that is, to many. Thus we may interpret it here, *they sate down seven dayes and seven nights*, that is, many dayes and many nights; as it is expresst of *Nehemiah*, c. 1. 4. that when he heard of the calamity of *Jerusalem*, *he mourned many dayes.*

Thirdly, We may take it strictly, for seven precise dayes and nights; and then it refers to the Ceremony of mourning for the dead: it was a custom to mourn seven dayes for the dead; *Job*'s friends looked upon him as a dead man, and so they mourned for him, according to the manner of mourning for the dead. *Joseph* made a mourning for his Father *Jacob*, seven dayes, *Gen.* 50. 10. We have the like time of mourning mentioned, 1 *Sam.* 31. 13. The time of mourning varied both in times and places. The *Egyptians* mourned for *Jacob* threescore and ten dayes, *Gen.* 50. 3. The *Israelites* mourned for *Moses* thirty dayes, *Deut.* 34. 8. Which custom of mourning thirty dayes for the dead, continued long after among the *Jews*; for *Josephus* reports, that when the *Jews* thought he had been killed, they mourned thirty dayes for him. So that we may take it here precisely for seven dayes and seven nights, and refer it to the custom of mourning for the dead, or in cases of extream sorrow among that people. It followeth,

Josephus, *l.* 1. *de bello Jud.* c. 33.

And none spake a word unto him.] This is the fourth Ceremony of their mourning, their silence. In great mourrings, silence makes up their solemnity. So, *Lam.* 2. 10. These are joyned together; *The Elders of the daughters of Zion sit upon the ground*, there is the former ceremony; *and kept silence.* Now whereas it is said, they kept silence, we need not understand it so strictly, as if for seven dayes and seven nights they never spake a word. It is usual likewise in all languages, and very frequent in Scripture, that what is but seldom done, or done but a little, is said not to be done at all; as in *Acts* 27. 33. *Paul* saith of those that were in the Ship, that *for fourteen dayes they had fasted, having taken nothing*; a thing beyond the strength of man, take it strictly, to fast fourteen dayes, taking nothing. But it is usual to say, that is not done at all, which is but a little done; *They took nothing to eat*, that is, they took very sparingly: they did eat only so much as would, according to our language, keep life and soul together. In *Isa.* 20. 3. it is said, that *Isaiah walked naked and barefoot for three years*: Now it cannot be conceived, that the Prophet walked, as we say, stark naked, for three years together; he is said to walk naked, because he had not such or so much cloathing, as formerly and usually he had worn. So here, they spake not a word to him; that is, they did not speak much, they spake very little to him. Or secondly, thus; restrictively to the matter; they spake not a word, by way of dispute or argument (which was the business they fell upon afterward) either to convince him or reprove him.

The reason of this fourth Ceremonial act of mourning, their silence, is added in the last words of the Chapter; *for they saw that his grief was very great.*

The word here used for *grief*, though it had been alone, without any epithete to heighten the sence, notes a very intensive, a deep and great sorrow. And it is put sometimes for grief and sorrow arising from the pain of the body; and sometimes, for grief and sorrow of mind. Now here I conceive, it may carry both senses; they saw that the grief and pain of his body was very great, his body was in a woful plight; and they saw that his spirit was much perplext too, his mind was troubled. But if this word alone signifies, as it were all degrees, and all kinds of sorrow, then consider both the variety of kind, and intention of degrees collected in *Job*'s sorrows, which a word so comprehensive is not sufficient to express; the aid of two other words is called in to help out our conception of his sorrows. *They saw his grief*; they saw *his grief was great*: yet you have not all; *They saw his grief was very great*, exceeding great; this aggravates his grief, and winds up his sorrow to the highest; as if now the affliction were grown to a full stature. God threatens *Babylon*, *Isa.* 47. 9. *These two things shall come upon thee, in a moment, in one day; the loss of children, and widowhood; these things shall come upon thee in their perfection.* Sometimes imperfect judgments are upon a people or a person; they are, as it were, infant-judgments, judgments beginning; anon they grow to a greater height, and anon they come to a perfect stature, to be mighty ones, giantly judgments: At that time God had even brought *Job*'s affliction to its perfection, and his grief was proportionable, very great; for this reason his friends kept silence; this reason hath an influence on all the acts of their sorrow, but especially upon this, their keeping silence; *for they saw his grief was very great.*

נראל מאד

From these ceremonial acts of sorrow, I have observed divers things heretofore. Now take one thing in general; That, *great sufferings call us to, and warrant us in solemn mournings.* *Job*'s friends do not only mourn, but they mourn, as it were, in state; there is a kind of magnificence in mourning, a pomp in mourning; I approve not a proud pomp, but an humble pomp; they mourn, you see, with all the formalities of *mourning*: so it becometh us sometimes. As great mercies call for great rejoycings, so great afflictions call for great lamentings. There is a decency in it, when our affections keep pace with the dispensations of God, whether they be mercies or judgments, comforts or afflictions.

Secondly, Forasmuch as *Job*'s friends seeing his sorrow to be thus *very great*, kept silence; observe,

> That, *In great, in overwhelming sorrows, the mind is unfit to receive and take in comfort.*

When grief is very great, words give little ease; precious words are wasted and thrown away, comfort it self is a trouble, in the greatness and height of trouble. I am sure, a mind full charged with sorrow, hath no room for comfort, is not at leisure for counsel. It is a profitable rule in visiting friends that are sick, or in distress, when you see them in extremity of pain of body, or in extremity of anguish and trouble of spirit, keep silence, wait a while: Let the waters asswage a little, and the winds fall before you meddle: Let them come to themselves before you move them. As sudden anger, so sudden sorrow is a kind of phrensie: *No wise Physitian will give a medicine in a fit*; the body must settle before it is fit for physick; and so must the mind too: silence is as good as physick in some distempers both of mind and body. A talkative comforter is another disease to a sick man; unseasonable counsel is a wound instead of a plaister, and instead of healing, tortures the patient. It is as high a point of prudence to know when, as to know what to advise a distressed friend. *Solomon* tells us in general, (*Eccles.* 3. 7.) *There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak*: Let me advise this for one particular time or season, to keep silence; namely, the extremity and height of trouble. The Prophet *Amos*, *chap.* 5. 13. speaks of a time, wherein the prudent shall be silent; and he shews us why: *In that time the prudent shall keep silence, for it is an evil time.* Some interpret this, as an addition to the common calamity of those times; they should be so evil, that wise men would hold their peace. The Apostle propheses of such times, wherein men *will not endure sound doctrine* (2 Tim. 4. 3.) *in Religion.* And such times may be, wherein men will not endure sound doctrine, in policie. Then the prudent hold their peace, and none speak but fools or flatterers; such times make the quickest market for their sophisticated wares, no other will go off: such are very evil times, and this is a sore judgment upon those times. There is hope of good when wise men speak; a word from their mouths, may cure and deliver a Nation. Yet I conceive that this Text of *Amos* may be understood as a description of a wise mans duty; at least, of his property, in some

Etiam taciturnitas ipsa medicina est. Ambr. *in* Psal. 37. *Consolator loquax novus morbus ægroto est. Velox in sermonibus magis vulnerat.*

high and great diſtempers upon a people. He ſees them uncapable of counſel; to give them good advice, is (at preſent) but the caſting of pearls before ſwine; all is loſt and undervalued, if not trampled on: yea, he ſees, that the more he labours to reform, the more he enrages them; therefore till this fit be over, prudence teacheth him to keep ſilence.

Thus alſo it is with private perſons in regard of the evils they endure; they cannot endure faithful counſel in ſuch an evil day, upon any private perſon; let the prudent keep ſilence, and wait for an opportunity, which may open a paſſage to let in their reproofs, or directions, or conſolations, with a taking advantage into the hearts of their afflicted friends and brethren. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſeeing the troubles approaching *Jeruſalem*, reſolves to take his fill of mourning; *Therefore, ſaid I, look away from me, I will weep bitterly; labour not to comfort me*, chap. 22. 4. He either thought that the beholders would faint to ſee him, and therefore ſaith, *look away from me*; or, that ſeeing him, they would ſay, he fainted, and ſo would be giving him comfort; that therefore his ſorrow might have full ſcope, he ſaith, *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me.* When a man is reſolved to mourn, let him mourn; your advice may anger him, but it will not help him: Let ſorrow have its way a while, and that will make way for comfort.

We have thus far carried on the ſad ſtory of *Job*'s viſitation; his grief is now come to the height, *It is very great.* We have have alſo ſeen his friends viſit, with a double intendment, *both to mourn with him, and to comfort him.* We have ſeen them mourning, they fully reacht that end. We leave them now ſilent, waiting for a time to attempt and accompliſh the other end; they miſerably failed in that; it was to comfort him; *but they proved miſerable comforters:* which in the progreſs and proceſs of this Book, will receive a large and full diſcovery.

CHAP. III. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

After this, Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.*
And Job *ſpake, and ſaid,*
Let the day periſh wherein I was born; and the night, wherein it was ſaid, There is a man-child conceived.

He former Chapter concluded with the aſtoniſhment and ſilence of *Job*'s three friends: This Chapter begins with an aſtoniſhing ſpeech of *Job*. We may be as much amazed at what *Job* ſpake, as we were at their ſilence; and there appears the ſame reaſon of both, *viz. the greatneſs of his grief.* They ſaw his grief ſo great, that they forbare to ſpeak; *Job* feeleth his grief ſo great, that he cannot longer forbear to ſpeak; it muſt have a vent. *After this,* (ſaith the Text) *Job opened his mouth.* Why, *Job* had opened his mouth before, he had ſpoken twice ſince he was encompaſſed with thoſe ſorrows. True; but *Job* never opened his mouth as now; he opened his mouth before, to juſtifie and to bleſs his God; now he openeth his mouth, to accuſe and *curſe his day*; and therefore the Chapter may well begin with, *After this,* Job *opened his mouth*; he never ſpake in this manner before: for he no ſooner opened his mouth, but he *curſed his day.*

The Argument and ſubject of the whole Chapter is contained in this firſt verſe, *the curſing of his day*; and concerning this, the Chapter holdeth forth three things moſt conſiderable. There are three particulars belonging unto this Chapter.

Firſt, The matter and the manner of this curſe; what it is, and how expreſt: *Job* pronounceth a curſe upon his day, and unfolds the curſe; he unfolds it with much Rhetorick, and ſtrains of eloquence: Troubles will make a man Rhetorical. *Job* (as it were) calls up all his ſpirits, whets his wit, and heightens his invention, to prepare a proper curſe for his day. This he doth from this firſt verſe, to the end of the nineteenth.

Secondly, In this Chapter *Job* holds forth to us, the ground or reaſon of his curſe; he is full of paſſion, but his *paſſion is rational*; he curſeth, but he ſhews you why. The reaſon (with ſome occaſional intermixtures) is demonſtrated from the ninth, to the end of the nineteenth verſe. If I am asked a reaſon of my anger, why I am ſo bitter againſt my day, this is the account I give; *Becauſe it ſhut not up my mothers womb*, &c.

Third'y, We have an enforcement of this curſe upon his day, by a vehement expoſtulation againſt the lengthning and continuance of his dayes. He complained in the beginning of the Chapter, that ever he had a day; and now he complains as much, that he hath any more dayes. He wonders why his life began, and he is troubled becauſe it doth not end. *Wherefore is light given unto him that is in miſery?* &c. This expoſtulation concludes the Chapter.

The nine former verſes contain the firſt diviſion of the Chapter, *Job*'s curſe upon his day; both the matter and the manner of the curſe.

We have this curſe, firſt pronounced upon his day in general: *Then* Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.*

Secondly, He fixes a curſe upon his day, in the ſeveral parts of it. Take a natural day, for the ſpace of four and twenty hours, and then it conſiſteth of two parts, of day and night, light and darkneſs. According to which diviſion, the curſe runs, *v.* 3. *Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night wherein it was ſaid, a man-child is conceived.*

Thirdly, He pronounceth a ſpecial proper curſe upon each part of his day. Take the day for the light, for that ſpace between Sun-riſing and Sun-ſet; he curſes that, *verſ.* 4, & 5. *Let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light ſhine upon it*, &c.

Then follows a curſe upon the night, in *verſ.* 6, 7, 8. *As for that night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not be joyned unto the dayes of the year*, &c.

So then, *Job* pronounceth this curſe, firſt, in general, againſt his day.

Secondly, He divides the curſe upon the ſeveral parts of the day.

Thirdly, He faſtens a ſpecial curſe upon each part.

You ſee how accurate, how exact *Job*'s ſorrows have made him.

We will begin with that which is firſt here; the curſing of his day in general, contained in the firſt verſe.

Then Job **opened his mouth**; or, **after this**, Job **opened his mouth, and curſed his day.**

Then, or, **After this**, hath a double reference.

Firſt, After the ſeven dayes ſilence, after his friends had ſate by him ſo long upon the ground, neither moving queſtion, nor adminiſtring a word of conſolation; *then* Job *opened his mouth.* Or, ſecondly,

After this; that is, After his ſorrows were (as it were) boyled up to the height, and began a little to remit, ſo as he could breath, recollect himſelf and conſider, in what condition he was.

After this; After there was ſome allay, ſome ebb and fall of his overflowing ſorrows, then he breaks forth in theſe words. Sorrow doth ſometimes not only oppreſs the ſpirit, but ſtop the mouth; *I am ſo troubled, that I cannot ſpeak*, ſaith *David*, Pſal. 77. 4. That he could not ſpeak for trouble, ſpeaks the greatneſs of his trouble. Plenty of ſorrow, makes a ſcarcity of words: Hence ſometimes the Saints

Ora leves loquuntur, ingentes ſtupent. Vehementiam doloris exprimit, quod dicit ſe non eſſe locutum. Muſc. *in* Pſal. 74. 4.

Saints in great afflictions and grief of mind, pray and cry much to God, when they speak little. Hanna *continued praying before the Lord*, (2 Sam. 1. 12.) Eli *the High-Priest marked her mouth* (saith the Text.) *Now* Hanna, *she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard.* Would you know why, in so much praying, there was no speaking; why her heart spake, and not her tongue. Her self gives the reason at verse 15. *I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit.* And verse 16. *Out of the abundance of my complaint and grief, have I spoken hitherto, &c.* not with my lips, but with my heart. All which is given us at verse 10. *She was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore.* Thus it was with *Job*, sorrow silenced him, sorrow in the height caused that high silence, but as soon as that asswaged, *Then he opened his mouth and spake.*

Altum silentium.

A man cannot speak till he open his mouth; yet to open the mouth and speak, is more then to speak.

First, To open the mouth and speak, is to speak with a loud or clear voice; as he that speaks softly, is said to speak in his throat. Or as they who have familiar spirits, or Wizards, are said to peep, and to mutter, *Isa.* 8. 9. A Witch, or Wizard, is called there, and in other places of Scripture, (*Levit.* 20. 27. *Deut.* 18. 11.) *Ob*, which signifieth a bottle, or bladder, because such being possess'd or acted by an evil spirit, spake with a hollow voice, as out of a bottle, and (as some affirm) with swollen bellies: From which manner of utterance, the Greeks call them *Belly-speakers.* And *Junius*, upon that of *Isa.* 8. 19. apprehends this as a description of those Hell-prophets, in opposition to the true Prophets, who used to speak with a clear, loud, distinct voice: Or as *Job* here, to open their mouths and speak.

ἔγγας ειμῦδοι.

Secondly, *To open the mouth and speak*, is as much as to say, he spake with his mouth: And there is an elegancy in that; as in those like expressions, *I heard it with mine ears*; that is, I did certainly hear it, or I did fully hear it. *I saw it with mine eyes*; that is, I am sure I saw it. So the Scripture saith, *We are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. A thing cannot be bought, but with a price; there must be some price or other, either money, or money-worth, somewhat answering the intrinsick value of every thing that is bought; but to shew that we are bought with a full price, that Christ did not compound our debt with his Father, but paid the uttermost farthing, it is said, *We are bought with a price.* So the Prophet *Malachy* tells the sacrilegious *Jews*, *Ye are cursed with a curse*, chap. 3. 9. A man cannot be cursed but with a curse; but to shew the greatness of the curse, he saith, *Ye are cursed with a curse.* So here, *Job* opened his mouth and spake, or opened his mouth and cursed; that is, he cursed his day greatly, even with a bitter and grievous curse. *He cursed it* (as he said) *to purpose.* Thus to shew the excellency of Christ's Doctrine, that his was *A Sermon of Sermons*, and he the Messenger, the Interpreter, *the One of a thousand*, yea, *the One of All the Thousands that ever shewed to man his uprightness*: The Gospel saith, *Matth.* 5. 1. *When he saw a great multitude, he opened his mouth and spake.* Hence,

Cum enim aliquis loquitur ex impetu passionis, non ipse aperuit os suum, sed passione agitur ad loquendū, non enim per passionem nostri actus domini sumus, sed per solam rationem; Consuetum enim est apud sapientes ut ex ratione loquantur passionum motus, quos sentiunt. Aquin. *in loc.*

In the third place, *To open the mouth and speak*, is to speak upon mature deliberation, to speak considerately, prudently, punctually, to speak elegantly, to speak orderly, *to speak the words of truth and soberness.* A fool is said to speak with an open mouth; but a wise man openeth his mouth and speaks. A wise godly man hath his tongue at his command; but a fools tongue commands him: His tongue runs faster then his wit, as we say. *A fools mouth* (as *Solomon* tells us, *Prov.* 15. 2.) *poureth out foolishness*: Their mouths are alwayes open; and therefore they cannot be said to open their mouths: A fool hath not a door to his mouth (therefore also he cannot be said to open his mouth) much less hath he a lock and a key, a bolt or a bar to his mouth: but a wise man hath a door to his mouth; yea his mouth is lockt with Wisdoms key, and that unlocks it. *I will open my mouth* (saith the Psalmist. *Psal.* 78. 2.) *in a Parable.* Parables are the speeches of wise men; yea, they are the extracts and spirits of Wisdom. The Hebrew word signifies, to rule, or have authority: because such speeches come upon us with authority, and subdue our reason by the weight of theirs. Now when he is about to speak Parables, he saith, *I will open my mouth.* When Wisdom calls for audience and obedience, *Prov.* 8. 6. she saith, *Hear, for I will speak of excellent things, and the opening of my lips shall be right things.* *David* invokes God to open his mouth, when he would shew forth that excellent thing, the *praise of God*, Psal. 51. 15. God opens not the mouth of a fool, neither doth a fool open his mouth and speak, but his speech opens his mouth.

Figuratè enim & scitè dicta Parabolæ vocantur, quia authoritatem habent & in sermone dominantur.

But did *Job* open his mouth in this sence wisely and discreetly? did he well to be so angry with his day? spake he wisely in cursing his day? I answer, Though there was much passion in this speech, yet *Job* spake out of much deliberation; he considered what to speak before he spake. A man may speak with much passion, and yet speak out of much deliberation; and so did *Job* here; in that long silence he was learning what to speak. And as there was much heat of passion, so there was much light of wisdom in what he spake.

Fourthly, *To open the mouth and speak*, is to speak boldly and confidently, to speak with freedom and liberty of speech; (as the Greek word signifies) to speak all a mans mind, without fear or favour of any man, *Prov.* 31. 8, 9. *Open thy mouth for the dumb; open thy mouth, judge righteously, &c.* that is, be bold for those that are poor, and dare not appear themselves; speak thou aloud for the dumb, and freely for those that cannot plead their own cause, or make out their own innocence. The Apostle begs of the *Ephesians*, Chap. 6. 19. that they would pray, that *utterance might be given him, that he might open his mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel*: and neither fear the faces of men, nor conceal the truth of God.

παῤῥησίαν λαλεῖν. Job 7. 26. ἐκ πᾶν omne. & φήσις dictio, quum quis omne id dicit quod ad rem pertinet, nihil veritus offensionem eorum quibuscum loquitur.

You see then by the opening of this expression, there was more then bare speaking meant, *when* Job *opened his mouth and spake*: When a wise and a holy man opens his mouth, you may look for more then words, even the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Let us now examine what treasure we can make of those words which *Job* spake, when he opened his mouth.

He opened his mouth, and cursed his day.

But is there any treasure in a curse? except that which the Apostle speaks of, as the fruit of Gods abused patience, *Rom.* 2. 5. *A treasure of wrath.* Or did *Job* deliberate for a curse? was he moulding and fashioning so deform'd an issue as this in his thoughts so long? Yes, saith the Text, *He opened his mouth, and cursed his day.*

The word here used, *to Curse*, is not the word which we have met with so often in the two former Chapters; where Satan undertook that *Job* would curse his God. That word, in its native sence, signifies to bless. But here, when *Job* curseth his day, a word is used, which hath neither name nor shadow of a blessing: And it is derived from a root, which signifieth a thing that is light, moveable, or unsetled. And so by a Metaphor, it signifies any thing, or person, which we despise, contemn and slight, or the act of despising and cursing; and the reason of it is, because those things which we despise, contemn, or curse, we look upon as light things, trivial, or vain, or hurtful: On the contrary, the word in the Hebrew for honour and glory, comes from a root which signifieth heavy, or ponderous, because that which we honour and respect, we look upon it as a thing that hath weight and substance in it: And the Apostle calls that most glorious estate of the Saints in Heaven, *A weight of glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. The opposite word which we have in the Text, is frequently translated, to despise, or contemn, and likewise to curse and blaspheme; and doth properly signifie such a cursing, as arises from the contempt, or light esteem, which we have of a thing, or person. So we have the word clearly used, *Levit.* 20. 9. *Every one that curseth his father, or his mother*: Now observe, cursing of the father, or mother, it is directly opposed to the fifth Commandment, which saith, *Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother*; thou shalt look upon thy father and thy mother as upon persons of weight and honour, whom thou art bound to reverence and esteem; so that to curse the father, or mother, is to account them vile and contemptible. The same word expresses, that villanous act of *Shimei*, 2 Sam. 16. 15. *who came forth, and cursed* David *still as he came.* That act was alike opposite both to the rule and word of the fifth Commandment, which saith, *Honour thy father*, &c. taking in the civil father as well as the natural: *Shimei*'s cursing *David*, lightly esteemed *David*; he did not look upon

קלל *Levis aut nullius ponderis fuit; per metaphoram; levis, vilis, contemptus fuit, in Piel.*

קלל *male dixit; blasphemavit.*

כבד *In Kal significat grave esse sive ingravescere; & in Piel honorare, quia quos honoramus non habemus leves aut viles, sed eorum authoritatis pondus suscipimus.* Rivetus.

on him, in or according to the weightineſs and honour of his Kingly Perſon, or of his Kingly Office; *A King is a weighty perſon, a Crown is a weighty thing*; *Shimei* deſpiſed and ſo curſed both. Sometimes the word is tranſlated directly to deſpiſe: I will give you two Texts for that. *Gen.* 16.4. *When* Hagar *ſaw ſhe had conceived, her Miſtreſs was deſpiſed in her eyes*; (it is the ſame word with that uſed here for curſing,) the meaning is, ſhe did lightly eſteem her Miſtreſs: Thus ſhe thought: now ſhall I have the honour of raiſing *Abraham*'s family; now I am at leaſt as good a woman as my Miſtreſs; thus ſhe deſpiſed *Sarah*. Again, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30. where the Lord ſaith concerning *Ely*'s ſons, *Them that honour me, I will honour*; *and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.* I will make little account of them that make little account of me, and woe be to thoſe (though all the world honour them) whom God deſpiſeth: That man looſes more then honour, whom God doth not honour: And they who deny God his honour, deny him all good, and offer him all evil; ſuch a deſpiſing of God, is a curſing of God.

Further, to curſe (if we conſider it in the nature of the thing, and not ſtrictly in the literal ſence of the word) is to wiſh evil to a thing, or perſon: This alſo is the meaning of the curſe in this place; for when *Job* explains this curſe in the parts of it, he doth (as it were) with wonderful art and skill, gather together whatſoever may be thought the evil of a day, or the evil of a night, and calls it up, to ſeize upon them. A curſe, or to curſe, vertually contains in it all evil: As a bleſſing, or to bleſs, contains in it vertually all good. Every mercy we enjoy, is a bleſſing ſpecificated: And ſo any evil that falls upon man, (as Sword, Famine, Peſtilence, &c.) is a curſe ſpecificated; howſoever poſſibly thoſe things which are in their nature evil, and in their matter a curſe, may be qualified (in reference unto ſome perſon) into a bleſſing. But take a curſe properly, and it containeth all evil, and only evil in it. Therefore as when God had given the Word an *eſſe*, a being, that he might give it, a *bene eſſe*, a well-being, he adds to the work of Creation, the word of benediction, *And God bleſſed them, and ſaid unto them, be fruitful,* &c. *Gen.* 1. 22, 28. So afterward, when man had ſinned, and the Lord intended to leave the world groaning under part of thoſe evils which ſin had brought upon it, he wrapt up all in the word of a curſe, *Curſed be the ground for thy ſake,* &c. *Gen.* 3. 17. So then when *Job* curſeth his day, he wiſheth all the evil to it, that a day is capable of. *And* Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.*

But, what was this day that *Job* was ſo angry with it? and that his paſſion doth ſo burn againſt it?

The Text ſpeaks indefinitely, Job *curſed his day.*

Some underſtand it of the day of his preſent ſuffering, he curſed the day on which ſuch troubles befel him: And we find ſometimes in Scripture, that a day put thus alone, is an evil or a troubleſome day: As in the twelfth verſe of the Propheſie of *Obadiah*, the Lord rebukes the children of *Edom* thus, *Thou ſhouldſt not have looked on the day of thy brother*; that is, the day of thy brother *Jacob*'s ſufferings, the day wherein I had him under my rod, and afflicted him. So the day of the Lord, is the day of the Lords anger, when he pours wrath and trouble upon the earth; *Iſa.* 2. 12. *The day of the Lord of hoſts ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low.* The day of the Lord, or the day of a man undetermin'd, often ſignifies an evil day.

But here we may rather underſtand it for that day which was as the occaſion, or for the occaſional day of all *Job*'s troubles, and that was his birth-day: If his birth-day had been prevented, all his troubleſome dayes had been prevented; therefore he falls out with that, as himſelf explains it, *ver.* 3. *Let the day periſh* (ſaith he here) *wherein I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid, there is a man-child conceived.* It is uſual to call a mans birth-day *his day*, ſo the Scripture is conceiv'd to ſpeak, *Hoſ.* 7. 5. *In the day of our King, the Princes have made him ſick with bottels of wine*: That is, on his birth-day, which among Princes is commonly ſolemniz'd with feaſting: As we read of *Pharaoh*, and of *Herod*. So then, the day is his birth-day, the day of his nativity: which ſome take preciſely, for the day upon which he was born; and others more largely, for the annual return of that day; as if he had laid in a curſe for a day, whenſoever or how often ſoever it ſhould return in the years of his life.

A little further to clear the ſence of this curſe, let us conſider the whole matter, as we have conſidered the words. There are two or three Queſtions, which being debated and reſolved, will give light to this context.

Job, you ſee, takes upon him to curſe: Firſt, it may be queſtioned, whether a curſe be in the power of man, or no? Can a man curſe perſons, or things?

Surely bleſſings and curſings are both in the hand of God; whether we reſpect perſons, or things. There is a miniſterial curſe, and a miniſterial bleſſing in the power of man: but it is not in the power of any man, magiſterially to make any thing, or perſon, bleſſed, or to make any thing, or perſon, accurſed. It was a great brag which *Balack* made of *Balaam*, (Numb. 22. 6.) *I wot* (ſaith he) *that he whom thou bleſſeſt is bleſſed, and he whom thou curſeſt is curſed.* He thought he had the curſe in his command, he could curſe whom he pleaſed, and what he pleaſed, and when he pleaſed; but he was deceived; he reckon'd beyond his ſtrength, and beyond the ſtrength of a creature. What the Apoſtle ſpeaks in another caſe concerning the miniſtery of the Word, Paul *may plant, and* Apollos *may water, but it is God that giveth the increaſe*, is as true in this; one man may plant a curſe, and another man may water it with a hearty wiſh that it may grow, but it is God only that giveth the increaſe of evil, and the decreaſe of good. Curſes are not in the power of any creature; if they were, we ſhould have a miſerable world quickly. How many ſhould we ſee daily blaſted with the breath of malicious execrations? *Some mens mouths are full of curſing*, Pſal. 10. 7. *They love curſing, they cloath themſelves with curſing as with a garment*, Pſal. 109. 17, 18. Curſing (as one of the Ancients complained in his time) is now made the common weapon of anger; and wrath wiſhes that evil, which (becauſe of weakneſs) it cannot work. If curſing could have done it, we had not been a people at this day. How often hath *Balack* (out of fear, or envy at our proſperity) ſent to *Balaam* (I mean the falſe Prophet that dwells on the ſeven hills) come curſe *Iſrael*, come defie *England*? how often hath that *Balaam* curs'd our *Iſrael*? We have heard of his Anniverſary *Anathemaes*, wherein this Church and State have been ſtruck with the thunder and lightning of his Papal curſe. But the curſe cauſeleſs (ſaith *Solomon*) ſhall not come. And we may ſay to *England*, as *Moſes* did to *Iſrael*, concerning *Balaam*'s curſe, *Deut.* 23. 5. *Nevertheleſs the Lord thy God would not hearken unto* Balaam: *But the Lord thy God turned the curſe into a bleſſing unto thee, becauſe the Lord thy God loved thee.* And what *David* pray'd about *Shimei*'s curſe, we have ſeen come to paſs: *The Lord hath requited us good for his curſing*, 2 Sam. 16. 12. We have far greater cauſe to fear the bleſſing of *Rome*, then the curſe of *Rome*. But to return. The reſult of all is this; *When God pronounceth a curſe, he makes it to be a curſe*; *man at the worſt, can but wiſh a curſe and pronounce it.* Man is but the Miniſter, God is the Maſter of the curſe; God can inflict it, man can but think or wiſh it.

Prima ſemper irarum tela ſunt maledicta, & quæ non poſſumus imbecilles, optamus irati. Votis malis pro armis utimur. Salvian *l.* 3. *de gubern.*

Another thing here queſtionable is, Whether it be lawful to curſe the creature? *Job* curſeth his day: The rule of the Apoſtle is, *Rom.* 12. 4. *Bleſs, and curſe not.*

In ſome caſes, to curſe is Gods Command and our duty, and then we are Gods Miniſters for wrath againſt the wicked. Many times man (though forbidden) curſes, then it is his ſin, and he is Satans miniſter for evil againſt his brother.

There are ſome caſes wherein we may curſe. When the the Patriarch *Jacob* was upon his death-bed, and bed of bleſſing, yet he pronounced a curſe upon the rage and anger of his two ſons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. 49. 7. *Curſed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in* Jacob, *and ſcatter them in* Iſrael. We may curſe the plots and counſels of wicked men, enemies of Chriſt and of his people: we may curſe the perſons of wicked men, as inplacable enemies of Chriſt, and of his people: So *David* more then once in the Book of *Pſalms*; yet it is to be conſidered, that ſome of thoſe *Pſalms* are Propheſies of a curſe, not pronunciations of a curſe. And in in all lawful curſings we muſt obſerve theſe two rules. Firſt, To aim the curſe at the deſtruction of the ſin, not of the ſinner. Secondly, Where the ſinner appears incorrigible,

ble, yet to desire the clearing up of Gods Justice in punishing, not the punishment it self. To curse any thing, or person, passionately, is infirmity: To curse any thing, or person, maliciously, is gross impiety.

There is a third doubt, the resolving of which will further clear the Scripture to us; that is, Whether a day, be an object capable of a curse, or no? It is a Question moved by the School-men, Whether a blessing and a curse do belong to any but a reasonable creature? or whether any thing else be a subject capable of a blessing or a curse? And they resolve it, That nothing is properly the subject of blessing and cursing, but a reasonable creature. Therefore a day which is a part of time, is in it self uncapable of a curse: Those things only are capable of penal evils which are capable of moral evils: A day is not, cannot be morally evil, though there be many moral evils acted in the day. The Apostle adviseth us, *To redeem the time, because the dayes are evil*, Ephes. 5. 15. Times are called evil, in regard both of troublesome evils and sinful evils: From evil men, and evil manners, dayes are denominated evil; yet dayes in themselves are not evil morally, and so not lyable to a curse, which is a penal evil.

Aquin. 22. 2æ. 76. Art. 2. q. *Benedictio vel maledictio propriè ad illam rem pertinet, cui potest aliquis benè vel malè contingere, sc. rationali creaturæ. creaturis autem irrationalibus, bonum vel malum dicitur contingere, in ordine ad creaturam rationalem, propter quã sunt.* Aquinas *ubi supra.*

Further, Those creatures which have life in them, and have no reason in them, are on the same ground incapable of a curse. Whereas it is said, that God cursed the ground, and cursed the Serpent, *Gen.* 3. 14, 17. neither the ground nor the Serpent were cursed in themselves, or for their own sakes. The Serpent, an unreasonable creature, had not the knowledge of God; and the earth, a senseless creature, could not feel the power of God; therefore the curse upon those creatures, was only in order to, and as a punishment of the sin of man. The Text is expres, *Gen.* 3. 17. *Cursed be the earth for thy sake:* The earth there comprehends all the creatures living on the face of the earth, besides man: These are cursed for mans sake. As those creatures at the first received not a being, or a blessing, for themselves, but for mans good, so they receive not any evil or curse, but for mans punishment: So we are to understand those places in *Deut.* 28. *Cursed be thy basket and thy store*, &c. God threatens a curse on these creatures, the fruits of the earth, *&c.* in order to mans disobedience: *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his Commandments*, &c. *that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee*, ver. 15. Observe, *That the curse is threatned to come on them, to overtake them:* When the basket was curs'd, when the increase of the kine and the flocks of the sheep were cursed, man was cursed: For we may say in the letter, as *David* did in a figure, when the Angel of the Lord smote his people with the Pestilence, (2 *Sam.* 24.) *Alas, what have these sheep done?* that they should be smitten with a curse. As in pulling down the house of a Traitor, the revenge is not taken against the materials of the house, but against the Master of the house. So then, for the resolution of this point, take it thus, *No creature below man, is, or can be, accursed by God, or man, properly, terminately, or ultimately:* That is, in it self, for it self, or from it self, but only improperly and relatively, namely, with respect to what man should do, hath done, or suffered. First, in reference to what man should do; so Christ cursed the Fig-tree, to teach man either the duty of fruitfulness to the glory of God, or of faith in the power of God. Secondly, in reference to what man hath done, the sin of man, thus God cursed the Serpent and the ground: The Serpent was cursed, both for admonition to man, and for a punishment on man: God to admonish man, how much he hated sin, punishes an irrational instrument of sin, and by that enmity planted in the Serpent as a curse, punishes mans too much familiarity with the Serpent. And as the enmity of the Serpent was mans scourge, so also was the barrenness of the earth: That barrenness in bringing forth good fruit, that fertility in bringing forth bryars and thorns, were both as rods for the back of man. Thirdly, the irrational or senseless creatures are cursed in reference to that which man suffers. Thus *David* cursed the Mountains of *Gilboa*, 2 *Sam.* 1. 21. because there *Saul* and his beloved *Jonathan* were slain by the sword of the Philistines, *Because there the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away, the sword of* Saul, *as if he had not been anointed with oyl.* In this sence, (as *David* cursed a place) so *Job* curses a time, *his day*; the day which either gave occasion to his sufferings, or the day in which he actually suffered such a world of evils. Thus also *Jeremy* curses his day with a vehement curse, *Jer.* 20. 14. *Cursed be the day wherein I was born; let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed:* And not only so, but he curses the man who first reported his birth, *ver.* 15, 16. *Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, a man-child is born unto thee, making him very glad. And let that man be as the Cities which the Lord overthrew and repented not: and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shooting at noon-tide*, &c. And why so bitter a curse? was it against the day for it self, or against the man himself? *Jeremy* shews it was not, *ver.* 18. *Wherefore came I out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my dayes should be consumed with shame?* To curse any thing under the notion of a creature, or as it is the work of God, is to blaspheme God; to curse any unreasonable or insensible creature in themselves, or to take revenge on them, is to be, if not senseless, yet (I am sure in that act) unreasonable. So far of this cursing his day in general. It follows,

Maledicere rebus irrationalibus in quantum sunt creaturæ, est peccatum blasphemiæ, maledicere eis in se consideratis est otiosum & vanum. Aquinas *ubi supra.*

Verse 2. And Job spake and said.

This verse is only a transition into the matter of the next, it is as if the holy Ghost had said, Job *cursed his day*: and would you know how he cursed it? He did it after this manner, or in this form of words, Job *spake and said*, thus, *&c.* Only note, that the word which we translate *speak*, is in the Original *answered*; and so often in Scripture, he is said to answer who begins to speak; *Job* answered and said.

Respondere sæpe dicitur qui orditur sermonem, etiamsi nulla interrogatio præcesserit. Drus.

We shewed you before, that this day in general was the object of this curse; now he curses it in the parts of it, the day and the night. *Let the day perish*, &c. At which words the stile alters; that which you read forward to the sixth verse of the forty-second Chapter, is sacred Poetry; *Job* breaths out his passion in verse, and in verse receives his answer. It is questioned, whether *Job* at that time opened his mouth, and vented his sorrows in verse? or whether it were after contrived so by the Penman of this Book. As I see no profit in moving this question, so I think there is no possibility of resolving it: And therefore I leave it as I found it, a quere still. Only this is observable; that writing in verse is most sutable, where the matter written is deeply steep't in, and chiefly wrought out of our affections. Hence we find, That those parts of Scripture, which set forth strongest affections, are composed in verse: As those holy flames of spiritual love between Christ and his Spouse in the *Canticles* of *Solomon*: The triumphant joy of *Deborah*, after deliverance from *Sisera*'s Army: Of *Moses* and *Miriam*, after the destruction of *Pharaoh*: The afflicting sorrows of *Hezekiah* in his sickness: And the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy*, for the captivity of the *Jews*: The Book of *Psalms*, is, as it were, a throng of all affections, Love, joy, sorrow, fear, hope, anger, zeal, every passion acting a part, and wound up in highest strains by the Spirit of God, breathing Poetical eloquence into that heavenly Prophet. So this book of *Job*, whose subject is sorrow, hath a composure answerable to the matter. Passion hath most scope in verse, and is freest when tyed up in numbers. The words follow;

Let the day perish.

What this day was, we shewed you before: It was the day of his nativity; *The day* (saith he) *wherein I was born.* How should this day perish?

To *perish*, signifies first, not to be. A thing is said to perish, when it is annihilated, when it returns to nothing: As the Psalmist speaks, *Man being in honour and understandeth not, is compared to the beasts that perish.* The perishing of a beast, is the non-entity of a beast; when a beast dieth, it perisheth, it is not: A beast is no more, but vanisheth quite, and is gone for ever. Then, such mens likeness to a beast, is not in perishing, but in the want of true understanding: He doth not say, man perisheth like a beast, but he is like a beast that perisheth. A wicked man, how honourable soever, is *a brutish man*, ver. 10. For he knows nothing spiritually; and *what he knows naturally, in that, like a brute beast, he corrupts himself*, as the Apostle *Jude* speaks, *ver.* 10. of his Epistle. But between the perishing of a foolish man and a beast, there is a vast difference: A beasts perishing is a not-being; a foolish mans perishing is a miserable being.

For

For secondly, To *perish*, signifies often a miserable being, as in *John* 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth, should not perish*, &c. *Not perish*; the meaning of it is, not that all unbelievers shall loose their very beings, become a nothing, and with their existence part from their essence. Some wicked beastly men would be glad of this, that they might live here wickedly, and afterward die like beasts, in that sence, eternally: If this were the perishing, that is threatned unbelivers, many of them would be ready to say out of love and liking to their lusts, as *Esther* did out of love and zeal to the Cause of God, *If we perish, we perish*: If this be to perish, let us perish. But that perishing is of another nature; *They that believe not shall perish*; that is, they shall live and perish; they shall be, and be miserable for ever; the wrath of a displeased God, and the sting of a polluted conscience, shall torment them to all eternity.

Thirdly, To *perish*, is to be impaired, or loose former dignity and respect. So *let the day perish*, may be taken in this sence, let not that day be solemnized, let it not be remembred with wonted joy and gladness. A day which hath usually been solemnized, may be said to perish, when that solemnity is laid down, and utterly disus'd. In ancient times (and the custom in some places remains to this day) Great men and Princes kept the memory of their birth-dayes with feasting and triumph. Thus we read, *Gen.* 40. 20. *And it came to pass the third day, which was* Pharaoh's *birth-day, that he made a feast unto all his servants.* And *Matth.* 14. 6. we read, *That when* Herod's *birth-day was kept, the daughter of* Herodias *danced before them.* It is generally conceived, that *Job* did solemnize his birth-day; and so many Interpreters take those feasts, spoken of in the first Chapter, to have been, the birth-day feasts of *Job*'s Children. *Origen* in his fragments upon *Matthew*, affirms, that the Scripture gives no testimony of any one good man celebrating his birth-day: The truth is, while we reflect upon our birth-sin, we have little cause to rejoyce in our birth-day: The new-born Infant seems to forbid this solemnity, and by his tears weeps and speaks down this joy. The birth-day of nature should be mourned over every day, much more upon the day of our birth. The birth-day of Grace is our joy and our glory, and is worthy to be rejoyced in, not only in this day of Grace, but in that of glory, and so it shall. *Eternity, which is the day of glory, is one continued triumph for our birth-day in grace.* Notwithstanding this, I see no cogent reason, why a godly man may not celebrate and rejoyce in his naturall birth-day; so he rejoyce in God, who took him out of his mothers womb, and hath preserved him ever since he was born. So then, we taking *Job*'s day for his birth-day, he saying, *Let that day perish*, means, let it be no more solemnized, let there be no more joy, no feasts upon that day.

Or fourthly, *Let that day perish*, may be thus understood, let not that be reckoned upon, let it be lost, let it not be counted in the Calender of the year. A day whereof no use is made, is called in Scripture, a lost day, a fallen or perished day. In the sixt of *Numbers*, the number of dayes is prescribed for the separation of the Nazarites, thus and thus it shall be, and so many dayes: Now, if the Nazarite had continued many dayes, according to the Law of his separation; yet if he were polluted with a dead body before the full number was accomplisht, then he must begin again, for (saith *Moses*) *The dayes that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled*; ver. 12. In the Hebrew it is, *All the other dayes shall fall*; he must not reckon upon those: So here *Job* saith, *Let the day perish*; that is, let it not be numbred or reckon'd, let it be as a day lost or fallen. So then the sum of all is this; let the joy and solemnity of my birth-day be laid aside, let it never be celebrated more in the return of the year. I could wish that day had never been, but seeing that is impossible, it having been already, yet let it be as if it had never been, let it be put out of all accounts, let it be taken off from all records; and not only not remembred with mirth and feasting, but not be remembred at all.

And the night wherein it was said, a man-child is conceived.

So we translate: The elegancy of the Hebrew speaks thus, *The night which said, a man-child is conceived*; as if the night had been the messenger, and had brought word of his conception. Some render the Hebrew word [*Hara*,] (which we translate conceived) *Born*, applying both parts of the verse to his birth, *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said a man-child is brought forth*: And the Original word will beat it, being used (as learned *Mercer* observes) for production as well as conception. So 1 *Chron.* 4. 17. *And she bare* Miriam *and* Shammai, *&c. She bare*, is the word in this Text of *Job*: We may take it either way; the sence is clear according to our translation, that *Job* sends this curse beyond his birth-day, even to the night wherein he was conceived. Or if we refer it no further back then to his birth: It is as if he had said, whether I were born by night or by day, let the time of my birth be accursed; if it were upon the day time, *Let that day perish wherein I was born*: Was I born in the night? *Let that night perish wherein it was said a man-child is brought forth*: This distribution notes a resolvedness to curse it; and least he should miss the time of the day, he curses both the divisions of time, in every day. As *Benhadad* in his charge for the taking of those young-men, that came out of *Samaria*, to shew how fully he was resolved to have them taken, saith, *Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive*, 1 Kings 20. 18. as if he had said, I'le have them taken whatsoever comes on't, or for whatsoever they come, they shall not escape. Or as *Herod*, who, that he might be sure to slay Christ in his infancy, commands all Infants to be slain: So *Job*, that the curse might not miss the time of his birth-day, curses all the time of that day, the day, and the night. For though a man be born in the night, yet that is not called his birth-night, but his birth-day: And to be born, is to come into the light, though the birth-time be the darkest of the night. Hence the Heathen called their *Juno*, whose help they invoked in time of womens travail (*Deam lucinam*) *the Goddess bringing into light.*

So much for the opening of this curse, both in the general and in the parts of it, respecting the object day and night. In the next words he cuts out, or proportions a special curse, as the portion of each part: The day hath a share, and the night hath a share, each by it self. Before I open this box of curses any further, I shall observe somewhat from the discovery thus far made.

And first I must answer a doubt arising upon the whole matter; for it may be questioned upon this you have already heard, though we carry on his complaint no further, How *Job* can be set up with so much admiration for a mirror of patience, who makes such bitter complainings, and breaks out into such distemper'd passion, cursing *his day*? May he not rather be an example of impatience? an unimitable pattern of an unquiet and uncomposed spirit? Are these the words of patience and sobriety? Is this the language of submission and humility, *Cursed be my day*? He seemeth to be so far from patience, that he wants prudence; so far from grace, that he wants reason it self and good nature; his speeches report him mad or distracted, breaking the bounds of modesty and moderation, striking that which had not hurt him, and striking that which he could not hurt, his birth-day. In this *Job* appears much like that proud Emperor *Zerxes*, of whom the Historian reports, that when the raging *Hellespont* broke down the bridge that he had made over it, he in a rage caused some hundreds of stripes to be inflicted as a punishment on those waters, and caused a pair of shackles to be cast upon those waves, to teach them subjection: was not this madness? what cared the waters for stripes? or why should *Zerxes* take revenge upon the waters? And was not *Job* as mad? what cared his day for the curse? or why should *Job* take revenge upon his day? But as the Prophet saith, *Hab.* 3. 8. *Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? was his wrath against the sea?* Should the Lord set his anger against irrational creatures? Doubtless he doth not. Therefore enquire further into the matter: So did *Job* fall out with his day? was he angry with his day? This is yet further to be enquired into and answered.

Herodotus.

There are some who on the one hand prosecute the impatience of *Job* with much impatience, and are over-passionate against *Job*'s passion. Most of the *Jewish* Writers tax him at the least as bordering upon blasphemy, if not blaspheming. Nay, they censure him as one taking heed to, and much

much depending upon Aſtrological obſervations, as if mens fate or fortune were guided by the conſtellations of heaven, by the ſight and aſpect of the Planets in the day of his Nativity; as if *Job* had obſerved ſome malignant conjunction of the Stars upon that day: As if like the ſuperſtitious Heathen, he divided dayes into lucky and unlucky, good and bad dayes; as if he had denied the providence of God, at leaſt the particular providence of God, in guiding individual perſons or paſſages of our lives here below.

There are others, who carry the matter as far on the other hand, altogether excuſing, and which is more, commending, yea, applauding *Job*, in this act of curſing his day: they make this curſe an argument of his holineſs, and theſe expoſtulations as a part of his patience; contending firſt, that they did only expreſs (which he ought) the ſuffering of his ſenſitive part, as a man; and ſo were oppoſite to Stoical Apathy, not to Chriſtian patience; to a ſtone, not to a man.

Secondly, That he ſpake all this, not only according to the law of ſenſe; but with exact judgment, and according to the law of ſoundeſt reaſon: And which is far more, that he ſpake all this, not out of impotent anger againſt his day, but out of perfect love unto his God; that he ſpake this curſe, not in his own, but in the behalf of God; pleading for the providence of God, againſt the ſurmiſes of men; for (ſay ſome) he feared leſt his friends, ſeeing him (whom they ever took for a godly man) thus afflicted, ſhould accuſe the providence of God. As if he had ſaid, I would I had never been born, or it had been better for me not to have been born, rather then I ſhould be an occaſion for any to take up hard thoughts againſt God, or that his name, through my ſufferings, ſhould ſuffer. So that the love of God, not wearineſs under, or unwillingneſs to be under the croſs, conſtrained him thus to ſpeak: And *if he was beſides himſelf* (as the Apoſtles word is) it was to God, *2 Cor.* 5. 13.

I do not ſay, but that *Job* loved God, and loved him exceedingly all this while; but whether we ſhould ſo far acquit *Job*, I much doubt; eſpecially ſeeing *Job* himſelf ſaith, *chap.* 42. *I have ſpoken, I will ſpeak no more*: If *Job* had ſpoken ſo much, from the love of God, and to the honour of God in this curſe, having ſpoken once, he ought to have ſpoken again and again: And had it been ſo, ſurely *Job* might have ſpared his repentance, as to this point, and needed not have ſaid, *Now I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes*: If *Job* had ſpoken all this according to exact reaſon, and the exactneſs of holineſs, he had no reaſon to repent; eſpecially to repent in duſt and aſhes, for what he had thus ſpoken: No man needs abhor himſelf for that, wherein he both intentionally and actually honours God.

We muſt therefore ſtate it in the middle way; that *Job* is neither rigidly to be taxed of blaſphemy or prophaneneſs, nor totally to be excuſed; eſpecially not flatteringly commended for this high complaint. I conceive, it muſt be granted, that *Job* diſcovered much frailty and infirmity, ſome paſſion and diſtemper in this complaint and curſe; yet notwithſtanding we muſt aſſert him for a patient man, yea, for a mirrour of patience; and there are five things conſiderable for the clearing and proof of this aſſertion.

As firſt, Conſider the greatneſs of his ſuffering, his wound was very deep and deadly, his burden was very heavy, only not intollerable. The ſufferings of Chriſt, being exceeding great, cauſed him to complain, that his *ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death*; Mat. 27. 38. yet in this complaint, there was not the leaſt imaginable touch of impatience. When he hung upon the Croſs, he cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* verſ. 46. yet in this cry, no impatience. To cry out for every light touch, argues indeed a vain and an impatient ſpirit; but he that ſometimes fetches a groan under a weight of ſorrow, is yet untoucht in his wiſdom, or in his patience. In ſuch a caſe, to cry out, is a diſcovery of humane frailty, but not of ſinful frailty; Grace doth not take away ſenſe; it heightens nature, but it doth not aboliſh it. Conſider how much *Job* endured, and then you will find little impatience, though he complained much.

Secondly, Conſider the multiplicity of his troubles; they were great and many: many little afflictions meeting together, make a great one; how great then is that which is compoſed of many great ones? Many pebble ſtones will make a heavy burden; how then is he burdened, who hath (if ſuch a thing may be ſuppoſed) many mill-ſtones upon his back? *Job*'s afflictions came upon him as an Army, and encompaſt him round about. He had many particular afflictions, any one of which might make a very patient man complain; then *Job* who bare them all, was not impatient though he complained.

Thirdly, Conſider the long continuance of theſe great and many troubles; they continued long upon him, ſome ſay they continued divers years upon him. We uſe to ſay, *a light burden is heavy, if the journey be long*; a man may bear any thing for a brunt, or for a ſpurt; but to have a ſad load continued upon the ſhoulders all the day, pinches ſore. *Job*'s load lay upon him day and night, day after day; yea, moneth after moneth, *chap.* 7. 3. *I am made* (ſaith he) *to poſſeſs moneths of vanity*: yea, as ſome have calculated them, his troubles continued year after year, for ſeven years. Though a man make ſome, yea, great complainings, under many, great, long laſting afflictions, an eaſie Apologie may acquit him of impatience.

Fourthly, Conſider this, that his complainings and acts of impatience were but a few; but his ſubmiſſions and acts of meekneſs under the hand of God, were very many. Now we know, that one, or a few acts, though evil, do not denominate a perſon, eſpecially when they are ballanced by many acts of good in the ſame perſon, and about the ſame thing. How often doth *Job*, in this Book, breath forth patience, humility, faith, love, and ſtedfaſt truſt in God, whatſoever he ſhould do with him; theſe ballance his complainings, yea indeed, they over-ballance them ſo much, for the ſetling of our judgments, about *Job*'s patience, that they leave not ſo much as an opinion of the contrary.

Fifthly, Take this into conſideration, that though he did complain, and complain bitterly, yet he recovered out of theſe complainings; he was not overcome by impatience, though ſome impatient ſpeeches came from him; he recalls what he had ſpoken, and repents for what he had done. See how he ſubmitteth himſelf (*chap.* 42.) how low he lies before God, *even in the duſt*; and ſaith, *I will ſpeak no more*. If I have been impatient, I will uſe no more impatient ſpeeches; if I have been impatient, I repent of it; *I repent of it in duſt and aſhes*: To repent of impatience, takes away the imputation of impatience; and to ſay, I will do evil no more, gains (through the mercy of God in Chriſt) an acceptance of us, as if we had done no evil: A man is a conqueror, though in the battel he ſuffers many foils, and receiveth many wounds, and loſeth much blood; though for a great while in the day a man be worſted, yea, though a whole Army be worſted; yet if in the evening, in the cloſe of the day, he and they keep the field, and foil the enemy, the day is won, and victory goes on this ſide. *Job* was in a great battel, in a ſore fight of afflictions; though it be granted, that he received ſome wounds, and had ſome foils, and ſometimes looks as if he had been beaten, and ſpeaks as if he had been overcome; yet in the cloſe, in the evening, in the making up of all, he went away a conqueror; the concluſion was victory and glory; *Job* had the victory, and God the glory: Therefore, as the Apoſtle *James*, chap. 5. 11. when he ſpeaks of enduring with joy, refers us to the end of *Job*'s day of trouble, to the end which the Lord made; *ye have heard* (ſaith he) *of the patience of* Job, *and have ſeen the end of the Lord*. So look to the end of *Job*, to the end which (through the ſtrength of the Lord) *Job* made, and there you ſhall ſee patience having a perfect work; or, *the perfect work of patience*. Look not alone upon all the actings of *Job*, when he was in the height and heat of the battel; look to the on-ſet, he was ſo very patient in the beginning, though vehemently ſtirred, that Satan had not a word to ſay; look to the end, and you cannot ſay, but *Job* was a patient man, full of patience, a mirror of patience, if not a miracle of patience; a man whoſe face ſhined with the glory of that grace, above all the children of men.

So much for that queſtion; I ſhall now add two or three points of obſervation.

The firſt thing then that we may obſerve from hence, is this; If we compare *Job* in the two former Chapters, with *Job* in the third, we ſhall find that the caſe is altered with him;

him; he ſcarce ſpeaks like the ſame man. Hence obſerve in the general,

That, *The holieſt perſon in this life, doth not alwayes keep in the ſame frame of holineſs.*

There is a great deal of difference between what he ſpake in the former Chapters, when he heard of, and felt theſe things firſt; and what he ſpeaks now. *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?* This was the language we lately heard; but now curſing: certainly his ſpirit had been in a more holy frame, more ſedate and quiet, then now it was. At the beſt, in this life, we are but imperfect; yet at ſome time we are more imperfect then we are at another: Faith is never very ſtrong; yet at ſome time Faith is weaker then at another: Our love to Chriſt is never very hot; but yet at ſome time it is colder then at another; we cannot keep it in the ſame degrees of heat. A man at one time can both do and ſuffer, and a while after, he can neither do nor ſuffer as he could at that time; he is out of frame, and bungles in both. Take the life of a Chriſtian all together, it is a progreſs, it is a continual growing; yet take his life apart, conſider him in every circumſtance and ſtage of his life, then there are many ſtops and ſtands in his life, yea, many declinings: As it is with a Child; take a child, and his life, from his birth to his full age, is in a growing condition; yet conſider him at ſome particular time, and the child may abate; the child may not only be ſtronger, but much weaker then he was a year or a moneth before: So it is with us from the firſt hour of our ſpiritual life, till we attain full ſtature of it in Chriſt; only this is our comfort, that in heaven our ſouls ſhall be ſet up in ſuch a frame of holineſs, as ſhall never be moved nor abated in the leaſt degree: look in what frame the hand of God ſets us up in that day, we ſhall continue ſo to all eternity; and that will be the higheſt and moſt exquiſite frame both of holineſs and of delight. But now we are up and down, one day patient, and another day impatient; now believing, and another day diſtruſting; now the heart melts and is very tender, anon it is very hard and relentleſs. How meek a man was *Moſes*, not ſuch a man for meekneſs upon the face of the whole earth; and yet at one time paſſionate, and at another ſo angry, that he ſpake *unadviſedly with his lips*. How full of faith was *Peter* at one time, how reſolved to ſtick cloſe to Chriſt; yet ſhortly after, how full of fear, and for fear, denying Chriſt. We who receive good gifts and perfect gifts, are ſubject to turns and variations; only he from whom *every good and perfect gift comes*, is without *variableneſs or ſhadow of turning*.

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *Great ſufferings may fill the mouths of holieſt perſons with great complainings.*

Job was not only afflicted, but afflicted greatly: *Job* did not only complain, but he complained greatly: You ſee what complainings *David* made in his great troubles, *Pſal.* 77. 2. *In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord, my ſore ran in the night and ceaſed not, my ſoul refuſed to be comforted.* So *Heman*, Pſal. 88. 3. *My ſoul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave:* And, *ver.* 15. *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I ſuffer thy terrors, I am diſtracted. Hezekiah*, under the greatneſs of his affliction (*Iſa.* 38. 14.) ſaith, *Like a Crane or Swallow, ſo did I chatter; I did mourn as a Dove*, &c. *Jeremy*, a holy Prophet, ſpeaks, if not out-ſpeaks *Job* in his complaint, *chap.* 20. 14. *Curſed be the day wherein I was born; let not the day wherein my mother bare me be bleſſed: Curſed be the man who brought tidings to my father, ſaying, a man-child is born unto thee.* He doth not only curſe his birth-day, but the meſſenger of his birth; and he curſes both with a word of deeper deteſtation then *Job* employed to eaſe or empty his troubled ſpirit by. *Job*'s word ſignified but his diſeſteem, and himſelf regardleſs of his day; but *Jeremy* employes that very word, through which God poured out his wrath and everlaſting diſpleaſure upon the Serpent and the Devil, *Gen.* 3. 14. in each of theſe *Jeremy* went a ſtrain of impatience beyond *Job*, and yet holy *Jeremy* ſtill. *The Lord* (ſaith the ſame Prophet, *chap.* 8. 14.) *hath put us to ſilence, and given us waters of Gall to drink, becauſe we have ſinned againſt the Lord.* When we remember our own ſins, we have reaſon to be ſilent, though the Lord feed us with waters of Gall, bitter waters. And if we be ſilent, and open not our mouths, becauſe we have ſinned; he bears with our cry, as we are pained: he knows whereof we are made, and remembers that we are but duſt. A little thing troubles our fleſh, therefore it is no wonder, if fleſh and blood cry out in great troubles, though they be ſubdued by grace unto the Spirit. And if God (in this caſe) bears with us, we ought alſo to bear with one another, and not to be ſcandalized or take offence, when we ſee good men mourning and lamenting under the evils which they endure. He that underſtands man, will compaſſionate the ſorrows, not queſtion the ſincerity of a complaining, groaning brother.

אדר

Thirdly, *Job* complaineth bitterly, and he curſeth; but what doth he curſe? He curſeth *his day*. From hence obſerve,

That, *Satan with his utmoſt power and policy, with his ſtrongeſt temptations and aſſaults, can never fully attain his ends upon the children of God.*

What was it that the Devil undertook for? was it not to make *Job* curſe his God? and yet when he had done his worſt, and ſpent his malice upon him, he could but make *Job curſe his day*; this was far ſhort of what Satan hoped. Doubtleſs, when the Devil heard the word *curſed* come out of *Job*'s mouth, he then began to prick up his ears, and triumph; ſurely now the day is mine, now he will curſe his God; but at the fall of that word, *curſed be the day*, Satans hope falls, and down goes he. That word, *day*, was darkneſs to the Devil, and as the ſhadow of death; he fails of his end, and is confounded, he goes away aſhamed, and hath not a word more to ſay; but leaves his friends to ſay the reſt. The *gates of hell* ſhall never prevail againſt thoſe who are founded on free grace, and the Rock Jeſus Chriſt.

Fourthly, Obſerve, That, *God doth graciouſly forget and paſs by the diſtempered ſpeeches and bitter complainings of his ſervants, under great afflictions.*

Job ſpake this curſe; but when God comes to queſtion with *Job*, we do not hear a word or tittle of this curſe charged upon him: God takes notice that *he had ſpoken of him the thing that is right*, chap. 42. 7. God commends him for what he had ſpoken well; but *Job* doth not hear a word of what he had ſpoken ill: When the iniquity of his ſpeeches *was ſought for, there was none; and his failings, they could not be found; for God had pardoned them*; as the Prophet ſpeaks of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, chap. 42. 20. Our Lord Chriſt ſaith, *that of every idle word you ſhall give an account at the day of judgment; and by your words you ſhall be juſtified, and by your words you ſhall be condemned*, Mat. 12. 36, 37. We had need look to our words: God writeth what we ſpeak, and keepeth a book of all we ſay. You will ſay, how then were *Job*'s diſtempered complainings forgotten, and all taken for well ſpoken, that he had ſpoken? I anſwer, Firſt, None of *Job*'s were idle words, though there was an error in his words. Secondly, His right words were more then his erring words. Thirdly, His heart was upright when his tongue ſlipt. Fourthly, He repented of thoſe ſlips and errors. And laſtly, God forgiving, blotted them out of his book for ever. Further (in a ſence) we may ſay, that God makes allowance to his people for ſuch failings; not allowance of connivance and diſpenſation; God doth not diſpenſe with any to do the leaſt evil, or expreſs the leaſt impatience in their ſpeeches; but he makes an allowance of favour and compaſſion, conſidering their weakneſs and the ſtrength of temptation, he abates proportionably, when in ſuch a condition they ſpeak impatiently; though their actions and ſpeeches want ſome grains of that weight which they ought to have, yet weighing them in the ſcale of favour, with his gracious allowance, they go for currant, and paſs in account with God, as good and full pay of that duty he expects from us, and we owe unto his Majeſty.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above; neither let the light ſhine upon it.

Let

Let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it, let a cloud dwell upon it, let the blackneſs of the day terrifie it.
As for that night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not be joyned unto the dayes of the year, let it not come into the number of the moneths.
Lo, let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful voice come therein.

WE have already given the Analyſis and parts of this Chapter: The ſubject of it is *Jobs* curſe upon his day. The firſt ſection of it in the nine firſt verſes, contains the matter and the method of that curſe.

And he curſeth his day, First, In general (verſ. 1.) *After this*, Job *opened his mouth, and curſed his day.* Secondly, He curſeth it in both the parts of it, (verſ. 3.) *Let the day periſh in which I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid, there is a man child conceived.*

In theſe ſix verſes which remain, appertaining to the firſt Section, he affixes a particular curſe to each part of his day; taking a day, for a natural day, and then dividing it into day and night, he gives a ſpecial curſe to each of theſe parts; A curſe upon the day, and a curſe upon the night.

The curſe powred out upon the day, lies in the fourth and fifth verſes of this Chapter, *Let that day be darkneſs, let not God regard it from above, neither let the light ſhine upon it; let darkneſs and the ſhadow of death ſtain it, let a cloud dwell upon it, let the blackneſs of the day terrifie it.*

Here are ſix diſtinct branches of this curſe.

First, *Let the day be darkneſs.*

Let the day.] Here we are to take *day*, not for a natural day, but for the day as it is the continent of light, the whole ſpace of time from the riſing to the ſetting of the Sun. Now ſaith he, *Let the day be darkneſs.*

Be darkneſs.] There is a great aggravation of miſery in that, as Chriſt ſpeaks, Mat. 6. 23. *If the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs?* While *Job* wiſheth that his very day, which is light, ſhould be darkneſs, how great a darkneſs doth he wiſh unto it; And if the day be darkneſs, how dark muſt the night of that day be?

Then again, *Let the day be darkneſs*, he doth not ſay, let the day be miſty, or cloudy, or dusky, or dark, he doth not wiſh it like that day deſcribed, *Zech.* 14. 6. *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the light ſhall not be clear nor dark*; but he ſaith, *Let it be darkneſs.* Both in Scripture and common language, Abſtracts are emphatically ſignificant, and carry more then an ordinary ſenſe in them. When *David* ſaith, Pſal. 27. 1. *The Lord is my light*, there is more in it then if he had only ſaid, the Lord doth enlighten me: So to ſet forth the woful condition of thoſe who are unregenerate or in the ſtate of nature, the Apoſtle tells them, Epheſ. 5. 8. *Ye were ſometimes darkneſs; not only in the dark, but darkneſs:* So here, to expreſs how great a curſe he wiſhes upon his day, *Job* ſaith, *Let the day be darkneſs it ſelf.*

Now darkneſs may be taken two wayes: Either
Properly, or
Improperly.

Proper darkneſs is nothing elſe but a privation of light, it is no poſitive creature, it hath no cauſe in nature, but is the conſequent of the Suns abſence. When *Job* wiſhes, *let that day be darkneſs*, we may underſtand it of this darkneſs: as if he had ſaid, whenſoever that day cometh about, in the recourſe and revolution of the year, let it be darkneſs, or a very dark and gloomy day. This had been a great evil upon his day. This kind of darkneſs was one of the ten plagues with which God ſmote *Egypt*. And yet there is darkneſs, which is a greater evil then this, I mean darkneſs improperly taken: and ſo frequently in Scripture any ſorrowful, troubleſome, ſad condition, is expreſs'd by darkneſs. A condition of darkneſs is a ſad condition, a dark day is as much, as a ſad day; So then, *Let that day be darkneſs*, that is, let it for ever be accounted a ſad and ſorrowful day. Thus the Prophet *Joel*, Chap. 2. 2. calls a day of great trouble, *a day of darkneſs and gloominеſs, a day of clouds and of thick darkneſs.* When *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 12. 2. would ſhew by way of Antitheſis, the ſad and evil condition of old age comparatively to youth, he unfolds it by darkneſs; *remember now thy Creatour in the dayes of thy youth*, make haſte, ſerve God betime; But what needs ſuch haſt? I tell thee why, as times change, ſo thy eſtate will change: Evil dayes will come, I therefore counſel thee to do it, *while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay, I have no pleaſure in them: while the Sun, or the light, or the Moon, or the Stars be not darkened.* A day without pleaſure, is a day without the Sun: take away the joy of a day, and you take away the light of a day. Young-men have the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, all kind of light and comfortable influences upon them; but theſe will be darkened and eclipſed when old-age cometh, that will put out or at leaſt obſcure your light, your day will be gone, and your night will have neither Moon nor Star in it; therefore work while you have light, that is, while you have health and ſtrength of body, while you have freedom and activity of ſpirits, fit for that great ſervice, *remember*, that is, know and ſerve your Creatour.

So in the Text, we may take darkneſs improperly, as darkneſs notes an uncomfortable eſtate, and it is uſed in Scripture to note a two-fold uncomfortable eſtate. First, An eſtate of ſin; Secondly, An eſtate of miſery. This latter darkneſs is the daughter of the former. The Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. 9. 2. ſpeaks of *the people that ſate in darkneſs:* which is repeated, *Mat.* 4. 16. that is, in the darkneſs of ignorance, of ſin and guilt. They had natural light enough, and they had civil light enough, abundance of outward comforts: they had health, and ſtrength, and riches, and peace, and plenty, *but they had not a Chriſt* to take away their ſins, and cleanſe their conſciences, and therefore they were a people that ſate in darkneſs. *Jobs* curſe intends not this darkneſs of ſin, but that other improper darkneſs, the darkneſs of ſorrow, the darkneſs of penal evil; As if he had ſaid, let ſorrow and ſadneſs over-ſhadow, let mourning and tears overwhelm, let calamity and trouble for ever poſſeſs the day upon which I was born.

Let not God regard it from above.] Here is a ſecond part of the curſe, and a more grievous curſe then the former.

Let not God.] We may obſerve here the Name whereby God is expreſſed, it is *Eloah.*

The learned Hebricians obſerve ten ſeveral Names of God in Scripture, three of which note his *Being: Jehovah, Jah, Ehejeh.* Three his *Power: El, Eloah, Elohim.* Three his *Government: Adonai, Shaddai, Jehovah Tſebaoth.* One his *Excellency*, or *Super-excellency: Gnelion.* The Name *Eloah* here uſed, is derived from *El*, which ſignifieth *Mighty*, and ſo by that addition to the word, there is an addition made to the ſenſe, *Eloah* is *Moſt Mighty*, or *Almighty.* This word in the ſingular number is very rare; the Name *Elohim*, which is the plural, is very frequent in holy Scripture: Chriſt upon the croſs cryes out to God by his Name in the ſingular number, *Eloi, Eloi, my God, my God*, as calling for the Almighty power of God, to ſupport and carry him through his ſufferings. *David* uſeth it in the eighteenth *Pſalm*, verſ. 31. *Who is God ſave the Lord?* Who is *Eloah* ſave *Jehovah?* that is, who is a mighty ſtrong God, ſave the Lord *Jehovah*, ſo the next words explain it, *Who is a rock ſave our God?* So *Job* being about to implead and accuſe his day, calls to the mighty God (as it were) to judge this day to his everlaſting neglect; *Let not God regard it from above.*

Regard it from above.] The word ſignifies ſometimes to inquire and ſearch after, or to take an account of a thing exactly and judiciouſly; as they that are called to reckoning or to judgement, are enquired after: and ſo it hath relation to that Name of God, *Eloah*, a powerful or mighty Judge. *Let not God regard it*, let not God take any account of it, or enquire after it, let it paſs as not worth the looking after. דרש *Simmo jam dicio inquireret*

Secondly, The word ſignifies to have a care of a thing, to have a thing or perſon in account, as well as to call unto account: to take care and be watchful over another for good, is our regarding of it. In this ſenſe the word is uſed, *Deut.* 11. 12. where *Moſes* ſpeaking concerning the Land of *Canaan*, ſaith, *It is a Land which the Lord thy God careth for.* [*Careth for*] is the ſame word with this; and this Text may well be expounded by that which follows as the meaning of it, *The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year.* So that to have regard to a thing, to a day, or to a perſon, is to make account of theſe, to take care for theſe for their good, as a part of ones charge or duty, or as an act of grace and bounty. When *Job* ſaith, *Let not God regard it,*

this may be the ſenſe, let not God take any care for it, or make any account of it; let not his eyes be upon it to do it any good, or to do any extraordinary good upon it: let it not be honoured by God with any ſpecial work of providence, which might make it recorded and remembred with honour among men.

The Apoſtle, *Rom.* 14. 6. ſpeaks of mans regarding of a day, *He that regardeth a day, regardeth it unto the Lord.* The Apoſtle treats in that Chapter about the obſervation of dayes: finding that many believers could not be taken off from ſolemnizing thoſe feaſts, which were of Gods own founding and inſtituting among the *Jewes*, he adviſes that they ſhould not be judged or hardly cenſured, for going according to their conſcience; for he that out of conſcience and according to his light *regards*, that is, doth ſolemnize or obſerve a day, *he regards it to the Lord*, that is, to the honour of God, and with a ſincere deſire to pleaſe him. But the thing I aim at in alledging this Text, is to give light to the point in hand, what it is to *regard a day*. The Apoſtle is plain, that *Mans regarding of a day*, is to have a day in ſpecial account, as thoſe dayes were, which God inſtituted among the *Jewes* for ſpecial ends, commanding them to obſerve them, and promiſing a bleſſing in their obſervation. Proportionably Gods regarding of a day, is the ſpecial eſteem he hath, or care he takes of it, & the eſpecial bleſſing he poureth down upon it. Some practical truths are hence obſervable.

Firſt, Conſider theſe two parts of the curſe, as they are placed in ſucceſſion one after another, or in conjunction one with another, *Let the day be darkneſs, and let not God regard it from above.* This may teach us, *That there is no day ſo dark, or condition ſo troubleſom, but if God regard and take notice of it, man may take comfort and rejoyce in it.* Though the day be darkneſs, Gods eye will make it light; his regarding is a bleſſing: we never looſe all, till God leaves us. If in the *hour and power of darkneſs*, (as Chriſt calls the time of his paſſion) *God do but lift up the light of his countenance upon us, we ſhall be ſaved.* *Jobs* wiſh of darkneſs, had done his day no great hurt, unleſs he had taken the eye of God off from it alſo. All the light that is in the world, the light of Sun, Moon and Stars, is but darkneſs to us, if God hide his face; but let Sun, Moon and Stars hide their faces, let all creatures withdraw their comfort, if God regard us we are well: Therefore *Job* puts the ſting of the curſe in Gods not regarding and withdrawing from his day.

Secondly, When he wiſhes that God would not regard his day, he deſires God to lay aſide or ſuſpend his continual work.

Obſerve then, *That God doth obſerve and take particular notice of every day.* As all perſons ſhall be accountable to him for their actions, ſo alſo for their time: God will inquire after every inch of time, after every moment of our lives. Many men regard not a day, they value not their precious time, they know not how to ſpend or be rid of it, how to wear it out and paſs it away: But God obſerves and regards every moment. The Apoſtle calls to *redeeming of time*, Epheſ. 5. 16. And he ſubjoyns a motive, *Becauſe the dayes are evil.* We may give in this of *Job* for a motive: God regards time, therefore let us redeem time. If a day be within Gods regarding, ſurely it may command ours.

Thirdly, *Let not God regard it.* We may obſerve,

That the bleſſing and comfort of every day, depends upon the care and reſpect of God to it. The eyes of all things look up unto God. Why do all things look up to God? It is that God may look down upon them: If God look down upon the creature, then the creature revives and is refreſhed; there are influences from the eye and ſight of God, which are able to quicken the deadeſt times, and make glad the ſaddeſt hearts. As we pray for and humbly expect every day our *daily bread* from God, ſo every day doth (as it were) expect a daily bleſſing from God, which is his regarding of our dayes.

It is the greateſt evil that can befal the creature, when God regards it not; all the bleſſings of the creature are bound up (like *Jacobs* life in the life of *Benjamin*) in that reſpect which God beareth to them, and in the care which he hath of them. The Apoſtle *Paul*, diſputing with the *Philoſophers of Athens*, ſhewes the ſtate of that time, which they accounted ſuch a golden-age, (*Acts* 17. 30.) *The time of that ignorance God winked at*, ſo we tranſlate it; the word properly ſignifieth, *God did over-look that time:* And there are ſome tranſlations which expreſs it in the very term of the Text, *The time of that ignorance God regarded not.* For we are not to think, there ever were any times, which God winked at in the matter of his Juſtice, ſo as not to call them to an account: I grant that times of ignorance are comparatively winked at in reſpect of Juſtice, God will not proceed ſo ſeverely with them as with knowing times: but God never winketh at any perſon, or at any times, how ignorant ſoever, ſo as to let them go unpuniſhed, and never call them to an account. Such connivence God hates, as being inconſiſtent both with his providence and his Juſtice. The Apoſtle is direct: *They who ſin without law* (that is, without the knowledge of the law written) *ſhall periſh without law*, namely, the written law, onely according to the ſentence of that law, which the finger of nature hath written in their hearts, *Rom.* 2. 12. Ignorance ſhall not be ſo winked at, as to be altogether excuſed. How then did God wink? There is a two-fold winking. Firſt, Of diſreſpect. Secondly, Of diſpenſation. Gods winking is his diſreſpecting. He winked at thoſe times, that is, he lightly paſſed them by, his eye was not upon them for good, he regarded them not in ſuch a manner as to provide for them and ſend amongſt them that great bleſſing, which now (ſaith *Paul*) he ſends you by my hands, the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt.

ὑπεριδὼν θεὸς.

When the bleſſed Virgin heard by that meſſage of the Angel, that ſhe ſhould be mother to the Saviour of the world, ſhe bleſſeth God in this phraſe, *Thou haſt regarded the low eſtate of thine handmaid.* When God in a way of favour doth but look towards us, our loweſt eſtate is raiſed up, *Thou haſt regarded the low eſtate of thine handmaid.* It is but a look of gracious regard from God, and all is well with man. On the other ſide, if God take off his eye, wink and diſregard, all is blaſted, yea accurſed, our high eſtate falls, our comforts are ſowred and turned into a lump of ſorrow. We may ſay of all outward excellencies as *Haman* did, *Eſther* 5. 13. of all his honour, and greatneſs and favour at Court, All this I have, *but all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee* Mordecai *the* Jew *ſitting at the Kings gate.* All his comforts were clouded, all the light of his high eſtate was eclipſed, becauſe there was a new Star, *Mordecai*, ſhining ſtill at the Kings gate. Much more may we ſit down, and caſting up all that we have and are, make the foot of our account *nothing*, without the favour of God; what do riches, what doth credit, what doth beauty or parts avail us, if God regard not? *all is nothing at all without God.* What are times, what are dayes, what is your condition if God withdraw himſelf? this aggravates the curſe, this is mournful, when God regardeth not. *Job* goes on to a third branch of the curſe. *Let not God regard it,*

Neither let the light ſhine upon it.

That which before he ſpake againſt his day, by wiſhing it darkneſs, he ſpeaks over again and more in other words, by wiſhing light might be denied and with-held from it. To have no light, is not a bare repetition or an explication of what it is to be in darkneſs, but it is an addition to, or an aggravation of it: So the Prophet, *Iſa.* 50. 10. by him that *walks in darkneſs, and hath no light*, ſets out the ſaddeſt condition of an afflicted ſoul. No light, is not only darkneſs, but pure darkneſs; as when the Apoſtle *John* would advance the glory of God, he ſaith, *God is light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all*, (1 Ep. c. 1.) God is pure light; ſo darkneſs without light, is pure darkneſs.

Let not the light.] As darkneſs, ſo light may be taken either properly for natural light, that which God firſt created: light was the firſt perfect viſible creature, light was the firſt dayes work, and by the work of the fourth was gathered into thoſe heavenly veſſels, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and there put, that it might be diſpenſed and carried about the world, eſpecially by that Chariot of the Sun. Let this light, this natural light be with-held, let it not ſhine (ſaith *Job*) upon that day. The withdrawing of natural light is a great affliction to the world: Light is the moſt incorporeal of all corporal things; the ſpiritualneſs of it, ſhews the goodneſs of it: light is the beauty, and diſcovers all the beauty of the world. As a goodly adorn'd

furniſh't

furnish't room without a window, or a candle, such is the world without light. Light is not onely the light, but the life of the world, it quickens and comforts the motions of nature; it is the instrument by which all the influences of Heaven are communicated to the Earth, which being stopt, the course of nature stops: this caused a great Philosopher to cry out (when at the passion of Christ the light of the Sun was totally eclipsed) *Either the God of nature suffers, or the whole frame of nature dissolves.* Was it not then a dreadful curse, when *Job* wishes the light (taking it for natural light) might not shine upon his day?

But further, take it improperly, then, *let not the light shine upon it*, hath this voice in it, *Let there be no comfort, no joy, no good thing in the compass of that day.* Light in Scripture expresses all good; as darkness all evil. That great blessing which was promised unto the Church in the great restauration of it, is shadowed by light, and by an increasing light, in *Isa.* 30. 26. *Moreover, the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven dayes, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.* We are not to conceive, that there shall be such an increase of the natural light of the Moon or of the Sun, but there shall be an increase of the comfort of the people of God, which shall be as if the Moon and the Sun had in one day the light of seven dayes, as if the Moon had got the light of the Sun, and the Sun had got a sevenfold light more then it had before. And he who is the chief, the choicest and most transcendent blessing of all, the joy of all our hearts, *Jesus Christ*, is called *light*, he came as *light into the world, he is the light of the world, the Sun of righteousness.* The creator of all good things, found nothing so good to shew his own goodness by, as light. *Christ is light, God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.* If then we take *Jobs* speech metaphorically or improperly, *Let not the light shine upon that day*, it amounts to a higher loss then the former, *Truly* (saith *Solomon*) *light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing to behold the Sun*; and we may say truly, all sweetness is light, and every pleasant thing is as the Sun: Though the Sun shine upon us, yet if comfort be removed from us, we are in darkness. Such a condition the Prophet speaks of, (*Isa.* 50. 10.) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light.* No light, is no comfort, none for the outward man, none for the inner man, both being benighted, both deserted. Hence observe,

That it is a greater judgement to have good things removed from us, then to have evil inflicted on us. He speaks more against the day, when he saith, *Let not the light shine upon it*, then when he saith, *Let it be darkness.* The punishment of loss is greater then the punishment of sense. He that is deprived of all good, is by that act invested with all evils. The most woful condition of ungodly men in this life, is expresst by the punishment of loss, *There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked*, Isa. 57. 21. That they have trouble is not so bad, as that they have no peace. And the worst part of that everlasting wo which ungodly men shall suffer, is a punishment of loss: *The heat of the fire shall not trouble them so much, as the want of light:* God hath fully resolv'd that their day shall be darkness, that himself will never regard it from above, nor let the least beam of the light of his countenance shine upon it. Hence the condition of the damned is called *outer darkness*, (Mat. 22. 13.) By outer darkness, Christ means darkness without any ray of light: *Outer darkness* is their portion *who are without*, Rev. 22. 15. As the greatest blessing we receive by Christ is positive, *Joh.* 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish*, (here is the removing of evil) *but have everlasting life*, here is the bringing in of good: And this is the better part of the blessing. So on the other side, to have all good, light and life removed, is the most bitter part of the curse.

Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it.

Darkness and the shadow of death.] These words are the fourth branch of the curse upon his day; he repeats the former curse, but with new additions; He had said before, *Let this day be darkness*, now he saith, *Let darkness and the shadow of death stainit.*

The shadow of death.] The word considered in the composition of it, may be translated *image of death.* And because the shadow of a body gives us the image of a body, (as in the shadow of a man, you have the image and proportion of a man; in the shadow of a Tree, you have the image and representation of a Tree) because (I say) the shadow gives the image of a body, therefore the Hebrewes by a Metonymie, call an image a shadow: So that the *shadow of death*, is such darkness as is like death, the very image of death: He was not contented in general to say, *Let darkness stain it*, but if any would know what kind or degree of darkness he intends, these words expound his meaning to be, the worst darkness that can be: Any darkness is evil, but *darkness and the shadow of death* is the utmost of evils. *David* put the worst of his case, and the best of his faith, when he said, *Psal.* 23. 4. *Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil*; that is, in the greatest evil, I will fear no evil. The estate of those men who lived beyond the line of the Gospel, (and that is a very doleful place to live in, though a paradise for outward pleasure) is thus described by the Prophet, *Isa.* 9. 2. *The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light*, (*Jesus Christ*,) *they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.* Again, The shadow of a thing in Scripture, notes the power of a thing; and to be under the shadow of a thing, is to be under the power of a thing. *The bramble* (Judg. 9. 15.) *said unto the trees, if in truth ye annoint me King over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow:* that is, trust to that help which I am able to afford you. So likewise, *to be under the shadow of the Almighty, under the shadow of his wings*, is, to be under the power of the Almighty, for safety and protection: Thus we may conceive it here, to be under the shadow of death, is to be so under the power or reach of death, that death may take a man and seize upon him when it pleaseth. *Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death*, that is, though I be so near death, that it seemes to others death may catch me every moment; though I be under so many appearances and probabilities of extream danger, that there appears an impossibility (in sense) to escape death, *yet I will not fear.*

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Thirdly, To be under the shadow of death, is to be under the influences of death; the influences of death are those fears and doubtings, divisions and vexations of spirit, those distractions and distempers of mind which fall upon man, in times of imminent and unavoydable danger. *Let the shadow of death stain it*, that is, let it be filled with those fears, and cries, and confusions, which usually accompany or prepare the way for death.

Fourthly, *Let darkness and the shadow of death stain it*, that is, such darkness as dwells with death, such darkness as fills the house of death, the grave: The grave is a dark house. We use to say of that which we would have forgotten, let it be buried in darkness. There is no work in the grave, and therefore there needs no light in the grave, neither indeed can there be.

Lastly, thus; *Darkness and the shadow of death*, that is, deadly darkness, thick stifling darkness, such as is in deep pits and mines under the earth, where vapours and noisome damps do many times strike men with death. We may here take notice, how *Job* heaps up words, words very like in sound, and all alike in sense, or concurring to make up one sense: Such amplifications in Scripture, are vehement asseverations: As *John* 1. 20. It is said of the *Baptist, He confessed and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ:* And those phrases, *Thou shalt die, and not live: I shall not die, but live; Thou shalt be low, and not above.* So *Job* of his day, *Let it be darkness, let not the light shine upon it, let darkness and the shadow of death stain it.*

The word which we render (stain,) signifies properly to redeem a thing, either by price or by power, to redeem a thing by paying for it, or to redeem a thing by rescuing of it. Hence among the Jews, he that was to redeem his deceased brothers land, and marry the widow, was called *Goel*, from this word, as we may read in the fourth of *Ruth.* So the avenger of bloud was called *Goel*, *Numb.* 35. 12. because he likewise did redeem the bloud of his brother, fetch it back again as it were by a price in the execution of justice. The learned *Junius*, with some others, translates according to that sense of the Original word, *O that dark-*

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ness and the shadow of death had redeemed that day, or fetched back that day; (he refers it to the day past upon which he was born) and so takes it for an allusion to the first state of things. We know at the first, darkness had dominion over all, over all that Chaos or rude matter which God made at first; *Darkness* (saith *Moses*) *was upon the face of the deep*, Gen. 1.2. Then God gave a command to light, saying, *Let there be light*, ver. 3. presently light went forth and rescued the creature from under the power of darkness. Now, saith *Job* here, *O that darkness and the shadow of death had redeemed that day*, or fetched again that day out of the hands of light! Oh that darkness had recovered that which in the beginning was under its power! that so my day being wrapt up in darkness, might be *without form and void.*

But the word is frequently translated, (and well here,) to pollute or to stain a thing; as *Mal.* 1.7. *Ye offer polluted bread upon mine Altar, and ye say, wherein have we polluted thee?* And that of lamenting *Jeremy*, *They have polluted themselves with blood, so that men could not touch their garments*, Lam. 4. 14. So darkness is said to stain or pollute the day, as filthiness or blood stains and pollutes, discolours and defiles the beauty of a garment: Darkness obscures and blinds the beauty of the most glorious creatures, natural darkness doth it. Suppose you should come into a room furnished with the most exquisite and costly ornaments, hung with the most curious and lively pictures, if there be no light there, the beauty of all is lost to us, darkness stains it; you may have as good a sight in a dungeon as there. Again, take it for Metaphorical, or improper darkness, that also stains the beauty of the creature; if you have never so great a stock and estate of riches, or honour, *&c.* let but sorrow and trouble, war and divisions arise, the beauty of all is stained. What is honour then, but higher unhappiness? And what are riches then, but golden thorns? What is liberty then, but freer misery? And what is strength then, but stronger pain, and an ability to bear a heavier burden of affliction? The glory and beauty of the creature is gone in dark times; when such a day comes as *Joel* speaks of, *A day of blackness and gloominess*, where's your bravery? what becomes of your fineness? But that which stains the creature most, is mystical darkness, the darkness of ignorance, and of sin; the darkness of guilt, and of Gods displeasure: O how is the beauty of the soul (which is far more glorious then all visible creatures) how is the beauty of that stained, when it lyes under any of these darknesses! Hence therefore, we see what a blessing light is, and how we are bound to bless God for light, for natural light, for the outward light of a comfortable condition, but especially for the light of his countenance, which is better then life; for the light of knowledge, for the light of grace, how should we for ever bless the Father of lights?

Let a cloud dwell upon it.] This is the fifth branch of the curse. A cloud (as Naturalists teach) is a thick vapour raised up by the heat of the Sun to the middle region of the Air, and there by the cold condensed becomes so thick, that it stops and intercepteth the light: Clouds and darkness go together, as in *Psalm* 97. *vers.* 2. If there be Clouds, there is darkness; *Clouds and darkness are round about him.* So that to say, *Let a cloud dwell upon it*, is but a further emplifying of the same thing; before it was, *Let darkness be upon it*; now, *Let a cloud dwell upon it.*

Dwelling, notes the continuance and consistency of darkness; he doth not say, let a Cloud pass over it (for Clouds properly are unfixed, Clouds move continually, and are carried on the wings of the wind;) But *Job* would have his cloud a fixed cloud, a cloud so black and so strong, as might not be dissolved, but cause a continual eclipse upon the day.

A Cloud, and the dwelling of a Cloud, imports sometime the care and protection of God over his people, *Exod.* 40. 38. We read of a Cloud that was continually over the Tabernacle, *A cloud was over it by day, and a pillar of fire by night.* In the fire there was direction, in the Cloud protection, and mercy in both. So *Isa.* 4. 5. God promiseth *to create upon every dwelling place of Mount* Zion, *and upon her assemblies, a cloud.* Which is expounded in the close of the verse: *For upon all his glory* (his Church and Saints) *there shall be a defence.* But here the Cloud, and the dwelling of it, notes continued darkness: As if *Job* should have said, If the light do shine upon that day, I wish that a curtain might be drawn perpetually between the World and the Sun, let a Cloud dwell before the face of the Sun, which may muffle it, and intercept those beams which would enlighten and refresh the earth.

Clouds are refreshings; yet Clouds you see may prove afflictions: As a Cloud is a protection at one time, so it may be an affliction at another: As a Cloud shadows us from the heat, it is a blessing; but as a Cloud eclipses the light, so it is a curse: The same creature may be employed both for a curse, and for a blessing. Yet further, *Job* would not only have it a dwelling Cloud, but a condensed Cloud. Some Clouds are so thin, that the Sun appears, and light shines through them: *Job* desires this may be thick enough, not only to cause darkness, but to cause blackness: Which is the last branch of his curse upon his day.

Let the blackness of the day terrifie it.

Job's heart was so full of passion, that his sorrows could not come out at once, he takes time and breath. Now saith he, *Let the blackness of the day terrifie it.*

Blackness is more then darkness; therefore we find blackness an addition to darkness, in the Epistle of *Jude*, ver. 13. where giving divers elegant characters of wicked men, whom he calls *spots in their feasts of charity, clouds without water, trees without fruit, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame, wandring stars*: And what is the portion of men thus qualified, but hell, wrath, and vengeance? So he tells us in the next words, *To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.* Darkness, and the blackness of darkness, is the portion of those that shall for ever lye under the wrath of God; blackness of darkness is the beauty of Hell; that fire will besoot the damned to all eternity: Then *the blackness of darkness*, is the darkest darkness that can be imagined. Blackness of darkness was *Egypts* plague; that was darkness, and thick darkness, darkness to be felt, *Exod.* 10. 21. so dark, that no man *could see another, neither arose any from his place for three dayes, ver.* 23. this was blackness of darkness; the picture of Hell, that chamber of darkness. The word in the Hebrew, signifieth heat and blackness: The reason is given, because heat makes things black and swarthy; from the same word those Idolatrous Priests spoken of, 2 *Kings* 23. 5. were called *Chemarims*, or the *black Priests*; and they were called so, either from the black vests or garments which they commonly wore; or from the heat and fire of their furious zeal, either in the defence, or exercise, of their superstitious worship; or from the smoaky Incense which they offered, fit enough to black themselves, but no way pleasing unto God.

כמר כחדירי

Gemināta postrema calores intensiores & vehementiores quales esse solent in diebus canicularibus significat. Drus.

Let the blackness of the day terrifie it.] Terrifie what? *Terrifie the day.* The day is not capable of fears, or of affrightments; but the meaning is this, let the blackness of the day make it a terrible day; or let it be a terrible day, by reason of the blackness of it: As we use to say, such a day was a terrible day, it was a black day.

Changes in the course of nature are full of terror. That which is proper and natural to the day is light; therefore to see the day covered with blackness, must needs affright us: when we *look for light*, as they in the Prophet, *and behold darkness*, that troubles; but when we *look for light*, and behold *blackness*, that terrifies. The vulgar Latine translation reads it thus; *Let* (*as it were*) *the bitterness of the day terrifie it*: The bitterness of the day, are those sad accidents and troubles which fall out upon that day. To which sence the *Chaldee Paraphrase* thus expounds it; let such bitternesses of the day afflict it, as the Prophet *Jeremy* was afflicted with, for the destruction of the Temple; or as *Jonas* when he was cast into the Sea. *Hard bondage made the lives of the* Israelites *bitter*, Exod. 1. 14. And when the Lord threatens *to turn their feasts into mourning, and their songs into lamentation*, he concludes thus, *And I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day*, Amos 8. 10. Hence afflictions are called, *gall and wormwood*, bitter things. And the *Chaldeans*, whom God made so great a scourge to his own people, are called a *bitter Nation*, Hab. 1. 6.

Vox compositā à מרירים *Amaritudines & particula* כמה *sic, sicut.*

We have opened these words, which concern the curse upon *Job*'s day. Now follows his curse upon the night.

Verse

Verſe 6. As for the night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it, let it not be joyned to the dayes of the year, let it not come into the number of the months.

Verſe 7. Lo, let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful voice come therein.

He goeth on in his former paſſionate Rhetorick, to load the night with as many evils (if not more) as he had done the day; As for that night, let darkneſs ſeize upon it.

We have heard of darkneſs before, darkneſs upon the day. What doth *Job* mean here to call for darkneſs upon the night? The night is it ſelf full of darkneſs; yea darkneſs is proper to the night. Is it any curſe to ſay, let Wormwood be bitter, or to ſay, let Lead be heavy? the natural property of a thing cannot be the puniſhment of a thing. How is it then that *Job* ſaith, *Let that night be darkneſs*; or, *Let darkneſs ſeize upon it.*

Though it be true, that darkneſs is proper to the night; yet there are degrees of darkneſs, and every darkneſs is not proper to the night. The word here uſed for darkneſs, is obſerved by Grammarians, to ſignifie an extraordinary thick darkneſs, yea darkneſs joyned with tempeſt: Let thick tempeſtuous darkneſs ſeize upon, or take hold of that night; for the word ſignifies, to graſp or take a thing in ones hand, let darkneſs graſp it. Though the night be dark, yet it may be darker; we call ſome nights light nights, in compariſon of others.

אפל *Tenebroſus turbo.* Vulg.

Note, *That there is no eſtate ſo ill, but it is poſſible it may be worſe.*

The night is dark, yet you may ſuper-add darkneſs to it: and though the condition of any perſon, or people, be as the night, dark, yet the darkneſs may increaſe more and more to a perfect night. You know what God ſaith concerning the people of the *Jews*, when he threatned them with troubles, *I will puniſh you yet ſeven times more for your ſins.* God can make ſuch a night, as that the former night ſhall ſeem a day to it: God can add darkneſs to the darkneſs of the night: God can add bitterneſs to the bitterneſs of Wormwood, and make Lead more heavy then Lead: There is no man on earth in ſo ſad a condition, but he may be in a worſe. Art thou poor? God can ſend thee ſuch poverty, as that thy former poverty was riches compared with this. Art thou weak and ſick? God can add more ſickneſs, and make thee ſo weak, that thy former ſickneſs may be accounted health, and thy weakneſs ſtrength, compared with this. In this ſence darkneſs ſeizeth upon the night. He wiſhes a ſecond evil upon that night.

Let it not be joyned with the dayes of the year.

Hieron. Septuag. Some read it thus, *Let it not be computed in the dayes of the year.* Others, *Let it not be in the dayes of the year.* This is another evil he calls down upon the night. The glory of the night conſiſteth in its conjunction to the day; hence light and darkneſs put together, come both under the denomination and notion of *day*. Night is called day, as being a part of the natural day: Now that which is the chief priviledge of the night, this curſe ſtrikes at: *Job* would have it rent and diſ-joynted from the day. *Let it not be joyned to the dayes of the year.*

Diſunion and diviſion is a great curſe, when the night is not joyned to the day, it is the curſe of the night. The *Rabbins* have a conceit, why after the work of the ſecond day was finiſhed, God (beholding what he had done) did not add any approbation to it: when he made the light, which was the firſt dayes work, he approves it, *God ſaw the light, and ſaid it was good*; but to the work of the ſecond day, God ſubjoyned no approbation, by ſaying it was good; The reaſon (I ſay) which many of the *Rabbins* give of it, was this, becauſe then was the firſt diſunion, that made the firſt ſecond, that ever was, *All before was one, (ſub unifſimo Deo) under the one-moſt God*; I ſhall leave this fancy to the *Rabbins*. But there is ſomewhat in the notion it ſelf, namely, that diviſion and diſunion are the evils of the creature. The night hath glory by union with the day; the weakeſt things, and the obſcureſt things, have an honour by being joyned with the ſtronger and more excellent.

And as theſe natural diſunions are the affliction of natural things; ſo civil diſunions, and civil diviſions, are much more the affliction of People and Nations. *Chriſt* aſſures us, *That the ſtrongeſt Kingdoms divided cannot ſtand*, *Mark* 3.24. Weak things are ſtrong by union; and that not only by union with the ſtrong, but by union among themſelves. Weak things united are ſtrengthened; joyn weak with weak, and they are ſtrong. And things obſcure, united, are honourable, eſpecially if united with that which is honourable: The glory of the Wife is in the band of union with her Husband; *She ſhines with the rayes of her Husbands honour*: Whatſoever natural, or civil excellency is in him, reflects upon her: *The woman is the glory of the man*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 1 *Cor.* 11.7.) in regard of ſubjection: It is mans glory, that God hath given him ſuperiority over ſo excellent a creature. But in another ſence, the man is the glory of the woman; ſhe communicates with him in all his dignity, how great ſoever. Thus alſo the day is the glory of the night: The night ſhines by her marriage with the day. *Job* ſues out a divorce between them, *Let it not be joyned to the dayes of the year.*

And let it not come into the number of the months.

The Original may be tranſlated, *In the number of the Moons*: The ſame word, among the *Hebrews*, ſignifieth the Moon, and a Month: as likewiſe among the *Grecians*: and the reaſon is, becauſe their Months were counted by their Moons; and the Moon is renewed every Month. Every *Lunation* made a Month; and thirteen *Lunations* made a year; their Month conſiſting of twenty eight dayes, which is a *Lunary* Month: So that when *Job* ſaith, *Let it not come into the number of the Months*, he would take away one ſpecial benefit of the night: And it is as if he had ſaid let that night be uſeleſs, and ſtand for nothing in the Calender of the year. *To every thing there is a ſeaſon, and a time to every purpoſe under the Heaven*, ſaith the Preacher, (*Eccleſ.* 3.1.) So every ſeaſon hath ſomething to do, and there is a purpoſe for every time under Heaven. A purpoſe for Summer, and a purpoſe for the Winter; a purpoſe for the day, and a purpoſe for the night. And for any of theſe to be diſappointed of their purpoſe, is (ſo far as they are capable of affliction) their affliction. We may obſerve hence;

ירח *Antiquiſſima fuit in menſibus Lunarius noctiũ & Lunationũ obſervatio, quod & ipſum menſis nomẽ teſtatur, quod apud Græcos à Luna dicitur, nam (μὴν) mẽſis eſt, & vero (μήνη) Luna,* Pined. *in loc. Summa hoc vult, deletur è Calendario.* Druſ.

That it is a great curſe upon any creature, to be made an uſeleſs creature, to ſtand for nothing.

This is to looſe the end of its being; and therefore it muſt needs looſe the happineſs of its being. Every thing was (by the Law of its creation) ordained for ſome uſe, and therefore cannot but be unhappy when it is made uſeleſs. And if it be the glory of inanimate creatures when God will uſe them, or when men make uſe of them for God; how unglorious then is the condition of thoſe men, who are, as (God ſpeaks of that King, *Jer.*22.28.) *Like a deſpiſed broken Idol*, which hath no honour, and is of no uſe; *Who are as veſſels wherein there is no pleaſure*, veſſels laid by the walls, (as we ſpeak) laid aſide, as unfit or unworthy to be lookt after, and employed in any publick ſervice.

Lo, let that night be ſolitary, let no joyful ſound come therein.

This ſolitarineſs of the night may have reſpect to the former words: He would not have it *joyned to the dayes of the year*; he would not have it *come in the number of Months*. What then? Then it muſt needs be like a ſolitary widow, all alone; *Let that night be ſolitary*. Or ſecondly, his meaning may be this, Let there be no meetings that night. The night is not ſolitary in it ſelf, but then the night is called ſolitary, when the ſociety of friends is ſtopt and interrupted. It was the cuſtom of thoſe times, and it is a cuſtom continued in many places to theſe times, for friends to meet in the night: and ſuch meetings make night as day; good ſociety is comfortable: A ſolitary condition is a ſorrowful condition. So then, *Job* compleats his curſe in this verſe, and makes up a full ſum of miſery upon his night. What can be ſaid more againſt it, then now he ſaith. He had before wiſht it dark in it ſelf, divided from the day, of no number in the months: And now he would not have friends meet to refreſh themſelves by mutual communion and loving converſe that night. Much of the comfort of our lives is brought in by the ſociety of friends. Man is

Egyptii *feſtum celeberrimũ habuerunt noctiurnũ, tum etiam noctu celebrabantur nuptiæ.* Herod. *l.* 2.

defined a sociable creature, as well as a reasonable creature; solitariness is opposite both to the nature and happiness of man. *Wo be to him that is alone* (saith *Solomon*) *two are better then one*, and especially in times of trouble. As our comforts are multiplied upon them that are near us, so our sorrows are allayed and eased by them. There is a solitariness which is the sweetest part of our lives, when we retire a while from the world, from the throng of men and business, that we may be more intimate with Christ, and take our fill in communion with him. To go alone, that we may meet with God, is Heaven upon earth; but to be so left alone and scattered, that we cannot meet with men, is (if not a hell, yet) one of the greatest afflictions upon the earth. Such solitary times are sad times.

Let no joyful voice come therein.] As if he should say, If men will meet that night, and converse together, let them meet only to mourn together, and let their conversation be made up with mutual sorrows; let them only tell each other the sad stories of their afflictions. Thus let them meet to lament together; but let none meet to rejoyce together; let there be no meeting with any joyful voice that night. He alludes again to the custom of those times, which were wont to have, as meetings in the night, so to rejoyce in those meetings: They feasted with songs and musick, a joyful voice was in their meetings. Musick is sweetest in the night: The stilness of the night gives advantage to the voice. The *Roman* History tells us, that their greatest feasts, their most luxurious banquetings, and curious musick, was in the night. The Apostle alludes to that custom when he saith, *They that are drunken, are drunken in the night*, (1 Thes. 5. 6.) Works of darkness seek times of darkness. *He that doth evil hateth the light*, John 3. 21. principally the light of knowledge, and withall the light of sense. There are two Opinions about this joyful voice, which I shall but name, and pass on. First, The *Chaldee Paraphrast* will have this joyful voice to be the voice of the Cock, *Let not the Cock crow that night*; the crowing of the Cock is a comfortable voice in the night: The Cock is a natural Cock, and by his crowing tells us the hours of the night: As if *Job* had said, instead of the chearful voice of the Cock, let that night be filled with the doleful voice of the Owl, or of the Skreech-owl. A second Opinion saith, this joyful voice which *Job* puts from, and denyes his day, was the voice of the Stars, spoken of, as they would have us to conceive, *Chap.* 38. 7. *When the morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy.* But to leave these as fancies, rather then expositions: The interpretation given is clear and sutable to the method of the curse: *Job* would have no meeting on that night; or if any were, he forbids their joy, *Let no joyful voice be heard therein.*

Monstra volant, dirae strident in nocte volucres, Nocturnaeq; gemunt striges, & feriata bubo Damna canans. Statius, l. 3.

It is a great evil upon any time, when the voice of joy is taken away from it: It is a great evil upon times, when joyful meetings can no more be observed; when if any do meet, they meet and sigh together; they meet and lament together; they meet and bemoan each others losses and calamities. The Prophet *Amos* speaks of a time, when *the songs of the Temple shall be howlings*, (Chap. 8. ver. 3.) And *ver.* 10. *I will turn your feasts into mourning, and your songs into lamentation.* It is very sad, when the songs of our private houses are changed into howlings: but much more when the songs of the Temple. Both these are pronounced against *Babylon*, as a part of that dreadful curse which God will pour out upon it, when his wrath comes to the utmost, *Rev.* 18. 22. *The voice of harpers and musitians, and of pipers and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the sound of the mill-stone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee:* That is, O *Babylon*, there shall be no joyful voice any more at all in thee: Not the voice of musick; no, not the voice of a mill-stone. We have great cause to fear, that the joyful voice may suddenly be taken away, not only from our nights, but also from our dayes; not only from our houses, but also from our Temples: For the voice of sin hath been heard from both. Darkness hath begun to seize upon our light; the seed of division is not only sown, but sprung up among us; our troubles increase; yea, our joyful voice is already changed into the sound of the Trumpet, and the Alarm of War, into the neighings of Horses, and the *confused noise* of bloody Battels, *Isa.* 9. 5. And which may afflict our hearts more, we hear the mournful voice of the Widow crying out, *My Husband, my Husband.* We hear the mournful voice of the Orphan crying out, *My Father, my Father.* It is time for us to sit solitary and alone; to mourn *every family apart, and our wives apart*, (Zach. 12. 12.) to lift up our voice in prayer night and day, least the joyful voice be utterly taken away, and for ever silenced amongst us: Lest it be said of us as of *Jerusalem*, (Lam. 1. 1.) *How doth the City sit solitary, that was full of people? How is she become as a widow? She that was great among the Nations, and Princes, among the Provinces, how is she become tributary?* As that Heathen said of the time past, *I had perished, if I had not perished:* So we may say of the time to come; We shall mourn, if we do not mourn; we shall be solitary, if we sit not alone. Our nights of sinful joy in chambering and wantonness, have bereft us, and will bereave us more of refreshing joyes. And instead of the voice of friend and brother, you may hear only the voice of the enemy, and avenger: and that is no joyful voice. When *Jacob* was informed of the approach of *Esau* his bloody brother, he puts all things in order, and presently the Text saith, *Jacob was left alone*, *Gen.* 32. 24. What, deserted? did his company run from him? No, it was an elected solitariness, not a necessitated solitariness, he desired to be alone; and he staid alone, that he might not be alone: He staid alone, that he might get God nearer in communion with him and his; that his family might not be scattered from him, and his house left desolate. So, if we would be voluntarily alone, from the world, to be with God, wrastling out nights in prayer as *Jacob* did, we might (as he did) prevent solitary nights, and prevail with God by the voice of prayer, in the mediation of Jesus Christ, and the powerful cry of his blood, to continue unto us the voice of joy.

VERS. 8, 9.

Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning.
Let the Stars of the twi-light thereof be dark, let it look for light, but have none; neither let it see the dawning of the day.

IN the former verses, *Job* himself curseth the night; in this he inviteth others, to curse it; that his sorrow might appear not only serious, but solemn, he calleth for those who made mourning their profession, and to weep for and with others, their trade: such as used to rise early, and awaken their companions to come away, and joyn in prepared and studied lamentation. This I take to be the sum and sence of these words, which yet in the letter are very full of difficulty, and have divided Interpreters exceedingly. I shall briefly touch the most of those sences given, and then more fully present you with what I apprehend as sutable to this Text, and consonant unto Truth.

First, Take a brief of the divers readings of this verse. **Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning:** So we in our Bibles.

The vulgar and the Septuagint read it thus: *Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to raise up Leviathan.*

Another renders the latter clause, *Who are ready to raise up the Dragon.* Theodot.

Mr. *Broughton's* translation runs thus; *May they curse it who do curse the day, who will hunt Leviathan.*

Junius and *Tremelius*, have a translation different from all these, *I would they had cursed thee that inlighten the day, who are ready to stir up Leviathan, or the Whale.* That which all other Interpreters I have met with, call *cursing of the day*, they call *inlightning the day.*

You see there is much variety about the rendring of these words out of the Hebrew. And there is as much diversity of opinion grounded thereupon.

First, Some apprehend, that *Job* in this verse alludes to the custom of a certain people in *Ethiopia*, called the *Atlantes*

Hi solem transcendentem exercantur, eique praeteria omnia convitia ingerunt quod torridus ipsos & regionem perdat, Herod l. 4. *ad finem.* Atlantes *diris solis ortum excipiunt,* Solin. *c.* 4. Polyhist. Atlantes *& solem Orientem & Occidentem dira imprecatione contuentur,* Plin. l. 5. *c.* 8. Pined *in loc.*

lantes

lantes, frequently mentioned in divers Hiſtories, who living under the torrid Zone, in an extream hot Climate, uſed to curſe the Sun when it aroſe, becauſe it ſcorched them with vehement heat: This made them in love with the night, and hate the day. And ſo the ſence is made out thus, Let them curſe this night, who uſe to curſe the Sun-riſing every day, whoſe pain heightning and imbittering their ſpirits, cauſed them to pour out the moſt bitter and revengeful execrations.

But I will lay this by, though ſome ſet much ſtore by it, as a ſpecial treaſure of invention: For I much queſtion, not only whether this cuſtom of curſing the day amongſt that people, was known unto *Job*, but whether he ever heard of ſuch a people, being ſo remote and diſtant from him.

Secondly, I ſhall a little open the meaning of that Tranſlation given by *Junius*, *Let them curſe it who inlighten the day; who are ready to raiſe up Leviathan, or the Whale.*

By thoſe who *inlighten the day*, he ſaith, the Stars are underſtood; *Let thoſe curſe thee who inlighten the day*; that is, let the Stars curſe thee: *And who are ready to raiſe the Leviathan*; that is, let the Winds be againſt thee; let the Winds curſe thee, or be a curſe unto thee. The reaſon he gives, is, becauſe Stars are (*Illuſtratores Diei*) the inlightners of the day: And to ſalve it, we muſt not (ſaith he) take the day ſtrictly for a day artificial, for then the Stars are of no uſe; but for that part of the day natural which is dark, namely, the night; the Stars are inlightners of the day, namely, of the dark part of the day, the night: And ſo *Job* calls here to the very Stars, that they ſhould oppoſe and trouble that night.

We read in that notable Hiſtory, *Judg.* 5. 20. *That the Stars in their courſes fought againſt* Siſera; ſuch expreſſions there are, making, as it were, the Heavens angry, the Stars to oppoſe the deſigns of men. The Hoſt of Heaven is under the command of the Lord of Hoſts, when he calls them forth to the help of his people. Thus he conceives *Job* inviting the Stars to take part with him in this quarrel againſt his night: Let the Stars curſe the day, thoſe inlightners of the day.

Then he underſtands by them that ſtir up *Leviathan*, the Winds; thoſe words (*Who ſtir up Leviathan*) are (ſaith he) a Periphraſis, or deſcription of the winds. The reaſon which he gives is, becauſe when great Winds ariſe, and blow ſtrongly, that mighty Fiſh, the *Whale*, or *Leviathan*, lying at the bottom of the Sea, by the motion of the waters is rouſed and ſtirred up, and ſo mounts to the ſuperficies or top of the water, or appears above it. Thus the Winds raiſe up *Leviathan*. His ſence from both is, that *Job* ſets the Stars and the Winds againſt this night, and bids them combine to make it troubleſome and tempeſtuous. This Opinion, for the reverence of the Authors name, deſerveth to be looked upon with reſpect; but I ſhould not (neither do I) apprehend that to be the meaning of *Job* in this place.

Thirdly, The difficulty is reſolved by making theſe words an alluſion to Fiſher-men, as if *Job* here did but deſcribe the condition of thoſe, or ſhew what by accident doth befall thoſe, whoſe trade and art is to catch *Leviathan*, or the Whale. Theſe take the word *Leviathan* in the proper ſence, for that mighty Fiſh deſcribed in the 41. of this Book of *Job*, *Canſt thou draw out Leviathan with an hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou letteſt down?* &c.

לוה
Adjunctus, ſociatus unde Leviathã triſſyllabum cum affixo. Qui hujuſmodi magnos piſces piſcantur, de nocte eos invadunt in tenebris, & ideo quando dies incipit apparere maledicunt diei, quia per hoc eorũ opus & intentio impeditur. Aquinas *in loc.*

Leviathan is derived from *Lavah*, which ſignifieth joyned or coupled together; whence (to note it by the way) the word *Levi*, or the name of the third Son which *Jacob* had by *Leah*. She called his name *Levi*, *For now*, ſaith ſhe, *will my Husband be joyned unto me, becauſe I have born him three ſons*, Gen. 29. 34. The ſame reaſon is given, why that dreadful Fiſh is called *Leviathan*. His deſcription clears this, *Job* 41. 15. *His ſcales are his pride, ſhut up together as with a cloſe ſeal; one is ſo near to another, that no air can come between them, they are joyned one to another, they ſtick together that they cannot be ſundered.* He hath his name *Leviathan*, from the cloſe-joyning or compactedneſs of the ſcales, that cover or harneſs him like an impenitrable armour of proof. Now taking the word thus properly for the Fiſh *Leviathan*, *Job* is conceived to allude to the cuſtom of thoſe who hunt for the Whale: who obſerving the night to be moſt advantagious for that work, are troubled at the approach of light; and therefore the Fiſher-men, as ſoon as ever they ſaw day begin to break, curſed the day, as an enemy to their ſucceſs in purſuing and killing the Whale. That fiſhing is a buſineſs of the night, is evident from the ſpeech of *Peter* to our Saviour *Chriſt*, (*Luke* 5. 5.) *Maſter we have fiſhed all night, and have taken nothing.* According to which alluſion, the meaning of *Job* muſt be; As if he had ſaid, I will not ſtrive any longer for words to expreſs my paſſion againſt this night; let it be blaſted with the curſe of thoſe who are moſt skilful in the dialect or language of execrations; even with ſuch a curſe as thoſe ſea-hunters, the fiſhermen, uſe to pour forth upon the day, when it breaks too ſoon for their profit, ſo that they are hindred in catching of *Leviathan*, or the Whale.

There is a Proverb amongſt us, *If you ſwear, or curſe, you will catch no fiſh*: And it ſeems theſe were wont to ſwear and curſe when they could not catch. And hence it was a Proverb in other Countries, when they would ſet out an enormious ſwearer, or one given to prophane curſing, they ſaid, *He ſweareth*, or *he curſeth like a fiſher-man*: A generation of men whom that age had branded on the tongue, whoſe mouths were full of curſings, and their ordinary diſcourſe, as much oaths as words.

Piſcatore aut nauta maledicentior.

But againſt this expoſition experience is objected; that the uſual time of fiſhing for the Whale, is in the day, not in the night. If it be ſo, then the ground of this opinion is quite overthrown. That ſome kind of fiſhing is a night work, the words and practice of *Peter* before mentioned, are proof enough: Whether Whale-fiſhing were exerciſed in the night, I ſhall not much contend to prove, ſeeing I approve but little of that interpretation which is bottomed and built upon it.

Beſides, I find others, who ſticking to this tranſlation, (*the ſtirring of Leviathan*) do yet wave and paſs by this conceit of night-fiſhing: And they ſay that the curſe here, is not to be referred to their rage againſt the light, becauſe it brings the day; but to the day, becauſe it brought them no ſucceſs. So that, day is not oppoſed to night; but a good or ſucceſsful day, to a bad or ſucceſſleſs day of fiſhing. And then the ſence is to this effect, that *Job* calls for ſuch a curſe upon this day, as prophane fiſher-men, who attempt to catch the Whale, uſually ſpend upon that unhappy day wherein they looſe their labour, and after all their hazard and coſt come home empty.

Piſcatores diei maledicunt in quo iis non accidit bonus piſcatus

And when it is objected againſt this Opinion; Why doth *Job* mention *Leviathan*, or the Whale, if that be his meaning, to allude unto the ſinful paſſion of diſappointed fiſher-men; for vain men, in that employment, are as apt to curſe and be paſſionate, when they miſs of their intendments in labouring to catch any kind of fiſh?

To this anſwer may be given in two things. Firſt, this buſineſs of fiſhing for the Whale, is a buſineſs of great charge, and greater danger: and becauſe greateſt loſſes raiſe greateſt paſſions, and the higher our diſappointments are, the higher is our language; therefore *Job*, who intended here the higheſt and greateſt curſe, wiſhes it parallel with that, which the greateſt curſers belch forth, when (as they pretend) they have greateſt occaſions, yea (as they call reaſon) reaſon to curſe: And who ſhould theſe be but ignorant, or idolatrous fiſher-men, and they at ſuch a pinch, when they have loſt the hope of their greateſt gain. As if *Job* had ſaid, let as big a curſe fall upon that night, as ever fell from the mouths of thoſe prophane fiſhers, not only when they have been ſucceſſleſs in fiſhing for a Herring, or a Sprat, but when, after all their pains and coſt, they cannot take *Leviathan*. *Micah*'s Mother curſed, when the eleven hundred ſhekels of ſilver were ſtollen from her, *Judg.* 17. 1, 2. To looſe what we hope for, vexes corrupt nature as much as the loſs of what we have. *They who have no treaſure in Heaven, and to whom godlineſs is not more then earthly gain, cannot but be enraged, when the hope of their gain is gone upon the earth.*

Secondly, We may ſay, he nameth the *Leviathan* by a Synechdoche, one principal for all, or for any: The chiefeſt of a kind is put for all the kind: And then it is appliable to thoſe ſea-hunters, whatſoever game they purſue. I ſhall touch one way more of illuſtrating the Opinion of thoſe, who take *Leviathan* in this Text for the Whale. We may conceive it thus, that *Job* doth not here allude to fiſhing for the Whale, and ſo to that ſucceſſleſs fiſhing which provokes to curſing. But take it in the general: The Whale (we know)

know) is a very formidable monster to Sea-men, and Marriners, the whole ship with the lading of it, and all their lives being endangered if a Whale strike it. So we may understand that of *Job*, speaking of *Leviathan*, Chap. 41.25. *When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are affraid.* Now the Whale being so formidable and dangerous to Seamen; they perceiving the Whale near them, or themselves at unawares ready to stir up or raise the Whale, are exceedingly afraid; And as great fear in some sets them a praying, and causeth strong prayers, so fear in others sets them a cursing, and causeth strong curses. Prophane marriners, seeing themselves in such imminent danger by the approach of the Whale, presently curse the day that ever they loosed anchor or set sail from the Harbour; the day that ever they fell within the reach of this sea-monster, now ready to sink their vessel, and overwhelm them all. Such a curse *Job* wishes upon that night, the night of his conception, as men of this rank conceive and bring forth in the day of their most pressing fears, when anguish and sorrow take hold of them, *as travail upon a woman with child, and they cannot escape.*

Thus I have given you the sum of those apprehensions which are offered for the making up of this Exposition; namely, That the word is here to be taken for that mighty fish Leviathan; And that either in respect of those who make it their business and go out purposely to catch Leviathan, or of those who unawares are ready to be catcht by Leviathan: The former disappointed of their hopes, and the latter surprized with fears, making a curse their refuge, and easing themselves by execrations.

There is a fourth opinion which giveth the sense of these words quite another way, though it retains the same translation. For passing by the allusion to fishing or customes of fishermen, they make these words as a character or description of the extreamest and vilest of wicked men; as if *Job* saying, *Let them curse thee that curse the day, who are ready to stir up Leviathan*, had said, let the worst or most wicked among the children of men curse this night; And we know, that the worst of men are most for cursing, they curse deepest; as the best of men are most for prayer, and they pray highest and holiest. So then, *Jobs* mind being to lay the forest curse upon this night, thinks or finds his own spirit too straight, his own heart not large enough to do it; therefore he doth (as it were) call in aid from those Masters of cursing, Let the most expert, the most skill'd in cursing, such as are verst in oathes and blasphemies, the very dregs and scum of men, let them poure out the dregs, the worst, the bittrest of their curses upon that night.

But how shall we make out this notion, that the vilest of men are here described? That we must consider and open further, to shew the substance and dependance of this opinion.

The worst and wickedest of men are conceived to be here meant in two expressions.

First, by them who are said to curse the day, *Let them curse it who curse the day.*

Secondly, in these words, *Who are ready to raise up Leviathan.* Both these are supposed as descriptive circumlocutions of the most wicked and vilest men.

How so?

First, *They that curse the day.* That which a man hates, he is forward enough to curse: Wicked men love darkness, and they hate the light, therefore they curse the light. Light is of two sorts, either natural, that of the Sun; or metaphorical that of knowledge. Take light either way; take light properly for the natural light: or take light improperly for the light or the day of knowledge, wicked men, and especially the worst of wicked men, will be found cursers of the day. First, They are so expresst in this book of *Job*, respecting the natural day, *chap.* 24. where having described many acts of violence committed by cruel oppressors, who know not God, *vers.* 1. he concludes, *vers.* 13. *They are of those that rebel against the light, they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the pathes thereof.* And vers. 16. *In the dark they dig through houses which they had marked out for themselves in the day time, they know not the light, for the morning is to them even as the shadow of death: If one know them, they are in the terrours of the shadow of death.* Men, to whom the morning is a terrour, and light as the shadow of death, cannot but curse the day, whose approach hinders them in their night-works, in their black designs and purposes. Secondly, Other Scriptures discover more deadly hatred in wicked men against the light of knowledge; they rebel more against the day of grace then against the day of nature, or the natural day: The former hinders only the outward practise of sin, but this opposes the inward principles of sin. We see what cold entertainment, yea what war this light found in the world, and why, (*John* 3.19, 20.) *Light is come into the world,* (that is, Christ and the knowledge of his wayes) *and men* (not men in general, but ungodly men) *loved darkness rather then light*; Why? *Because their deeds were evil,* (evil deeds, and evil doers seek covert in this darkness) *for every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, least his deeds should be reproved.* They are ignorant willingly, that they may sin more freely: For though they are resolved to sin in and against the light of knowledge, yet they had rather sin in, and with the darkness of ignorance; no man can sin with so much ease and delight in this light, as he can in darkness. A man that hath light in his understanding, can hardly sin without smart upon his conscience: Hence they who love sin hate knowledge. On this ground it is as clear as the day, that wicked men are (*Lucifugæ*) such as avoid, shun and hate the day, no marvel then if they curse the day; And to be angry with, or curse, the day, is an evidence (as clear as the day) of a wicked man. He that desires not to know the truth, hath no desire to practise it; and he who hates the knowledge of the truth, hates the practise of it; yea he therefore hates knowledge, because he hates practice: The is wickedness at the height. To commit a sin against light, is not so great an argument of an evil heart, as to be troubled at the light which rebukes or would prevent the committing of that sin. Thus we see in what sense, by those *who curse the day*, we may understand the worst of wicked men.

But for the second part, [*Who are ready to raise up Leviathan.*] How is this a description of wicked men?

To make out this, we must expound *Leviathan*, not properly for the Whale, but improperly and mystically for the Devil, that great Leviathan: Under which name, he with all spiritual wickednesses, the opposers of Christ and of his Church are comprehended by the Prophet (*Isa.* 27.1.) *In that day the Lord with his sore great and strong sword shall punish Leviathan, the piercing serpent, even Leviathan the crooked serpent, and he shall slay the Dragon in the sea.* Now they that raise up this mystical Leviathan the Devil, are surely the vilest men.

But who do thus? or how can this be done?

They are said *to raise up Leviathan*, who seek occasions of sinning, such as do not stay till Satan tempts them, but they (as it were) tempt Satan. They are so hasty, so forward to do evil, that they think the Devil comes not fast enough, and therefore they do even go out to meet, provoke and raise up the Devil, they invite temptation: There is a truth in this, All sins are not from the temptations of Satan; our own hearts are not only the soil, and have in them the seed of all sin; but they are sun and rain, to warm and water those seeds that they may grow. And as a godly man (from the new principle at first planted in him by the holy Ghost) doth often stir up the holy Ghost to come and help him, he doth not alwayes stay till the holy Ghost sensibly comes, but finding his own weakness and wants, and deadness to and in duty, he goeth and stirreth up the spirit of God, and prayeth that the holy Ghost would breath upon him, quicken and enliven him in prayer and other holy duties. So many ungodly wretches do not stay for Satan, or wait till he comes to tempt them, but they (such is their desperate wickedness and delight in sin) wish that he would tempt them ofter. They do not only keep *open house*, and *open heart* for him, ready to entertain and welcome him when he comes, but they go forth to solicit his company and his coming. This is to stir up Leviathan.

Illi parati sunt suscitare Leviathan, qui student ad suggestiones diaboli implendas, Aquin. *in loc. Qui sibi ipsis occasiones quærunt peccandi elegantèr dicuntur suscitare diabolum.*

So that the whole sense according to this exposition may be given to you thus, as if *Job* had said, Let this night be cursed with a grievous curse, even with as black and foul a curse as can be moulded and fashioned in the heart, or spit out

out of the mouthes of the vilest miscreants, even of such as are so set upon sin, that they hate the light and curse the day which either the Sun makes in the air, or which knowledge makes in their hearts, lest that should stop and hinder them in the acting of sin; yea let such a curse be upon it, as they use to vomit out, who are so set upon mischief, and engaged to their lusts, that they pray in aid from the Devil, to assist and quicken them in their wickedness; that so their natural corruptions being oyled and smoothed with his temptations, their motions to sin (and indeed to Hell) may be swifter and more violent. These are they that give diligence to make their damnation sure: These are they from whom the kingdom of Hell suffers violence, and these violent ones (rather then not have it) will take it by force. Surely their damnation sleeps not, who (least they should not sin enough) awaken the Devil to shew them sinning opportunities. To such as these (according to the interpretation now suggested) *Job* commits his night to cursing, *Let them curse it who curse the day*, &c.

Now though there be a truth in the things which are asserted in this opinion, taken abstractedly; though it be a truth that wicked men are such as curse the day of air-light, and the day of knowledge-light; though they are often so mad to be sinning, that they provoke and tempt the Devil, yet I will not give this for the sense and meaning of the words: rather you may take it and make use of it as an Allegory upon, then an Exposition of, the Text.

The last opinion, with which I shall conclude the opening of the words, is this: That *Job* in this verse, doth allude to the custom of his own countrey, and of other Eastern Countries, who had certain persons amongst them, both men and women, whom, upon solemn occasions either of joy or sorrow, they were wont to hire or call in for reward, to come and help them out either in rejoycing or in mourning. We find mention of such in Scripture divers times, who were thus called and invited or hired to mourn and lament, in times of sad and sorrowful accidents, whether personal or publick. These had (*Lacrimas venales*) tears to sell, or sale-tears, making both a profession and a profit of mourning. Such the Prophet speaks of, *Jer.* 9. 17, 18. *Thus saith the Lord, Consider ye, and call for the mourning women*, (he speaks of them as of a society or sister-hood well known, and as well custom'd) *and cunning women, that they may come*, (that is, women cunning in mourning.) *And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eye-lids gush forth with waters: for a voyce of wailing is heard out of* Zion, *How are we spoiled?* And vers. 20. *Teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour Lamentation*; (you see it was an art taught amongst them,) *for death is come up into our windows*, &c. In 2 *Chron.* 35. 25. We have a record to the same effect, concerning the lamentation for *Josiah*. *And* Jeremiah *lamented for* Josiah, *and all the singing-men and singing-women spake of* Josiah *in their lamentations to this day.* So that there were both men and women prepared and usually called forth to lament such occasions of sorrow. Again, *Amos* 5. 16. *Therefore the Lord, the God of Hosts, the Lord saith thus, wailing shall be in all streets, and they shall say in all the high-ways, Alas, Alas! And they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing.* Observe here different mourners, *they shall call the husbandman to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing.* You see he speaks of two sorts of persons, they shall call the *husbandman* to mourning; Husbandmen are such as mourn when they mourn, when they mourn, they mourn indeed, they mourn down-right; but besides these who mourned (*Ex animo*) really, there was another sort who did but personate sorrow, and act a part in grief; so saith the Prophet, *Call in some who are skilful of lamentation*, men or women who have studied the point, and know how to move a passion, and to heighten an affection beyond that which the plain husbandman can do; Let the husbandman mourn, but besides that, let there be art and solemnity in the mourning, call in those that *are skilful of Lamentation.* There was a kind of profession, trade or art of mourning; which is further evidenced, (2 *Sam.* 14. 2.) Joab *sent to* Tekoah *to fetch thence a wise woman*, (which is interpreted in the words following, to be a woman *skilful in lamentation,*) *and said unto her, I pray thee fain thy self to be a mourner*: Thou art a cunning woman, thou knowest how to act the part and postures of a mourner to the life, *Go to* David, *and fain thy self to be a mourner, and as a woman that had a long time mourned for the dead.* And it is observed to this day in many places, (and as I have been informed frequently in *Ireland*) that not only friends and neighbours are called to lament at the funeral of their friends and neighbours, but many others no way related, scarce ever known to the person deceased, who come professedly to strain for tears, and make lamentable out-cryes over the dead. To such a custome or profession *Job* here alluding, saith, *Let them curse it who curse the day.*

If it be objected, that this Text speaks of such as curse the day, and not of such as mourn upon or bemoan the day. That is easily removed, because upon those days of mourning, they were wont to mix execrations with their lamentations, and curses with their tears: crying out, oh the day! alas for the day! oh that ever such a day came! In the thirtieth of *Ezekiel*, vers. 2. The Lord saith, *Son of man, propheste and say, thus saith the Lord God, howl ye, wo worth the day.* These did curse the day: and such were hired in that sense to curse the day. As *Balaam* (who loved the wages of unrighteousness) was hired to curse the people of God, *Numb.* 22. So then the cursing here meant, was a doleful wish, that the day had not been, or that such things had not happened upon that day: And so these words, *Let them curse it who curse the day, who are ready to raise up their mourning*, are only a circumlocution, describing those mercenary cursers or mourners: As if *Job* had in more words said thus, Let this night be cursed in as high a strain, and mourned over with as enlarged sorrows, as the art and invention of those, whose trade is cursing, and who have tears at command, ever did or can put forth, when hired on purpose to mourn over the saddest spectacles and most calamitous events.

Now this being taken for a ground-work, that in those times and Countries, men and women were hired to mourn, and that an art of mourning was then profest; the difficulties that are in the Text opposing this, are further to be examined: For here still it seemeth doubtful, how this word *Leviathan* can fall in with such an interpretation, or be applied to those hired and professed mourners. Towards the clearing of which, I shall a little open three words.

The first is (*Gnatidim*) **who are ready**: which signifies a prepared and meditated active readiness; as we find in two Texts of the Book of *Hester*, *The copie of the writing for a commandment to be given in every Province, was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day*, chap. 3. 14. and again, *chap.* 8. 13. So that in *Job*, to be ready to raise up their mourning, notes more then an immediate going about a thing; As we say, I am ready to do a thing, that is, I will or must do it presently: For it notes also a studied readiness or preparedness to do a thing.

The second word is (*Gnour*) **to raise up**, which is properly to raise from sleep, as in that place, *Psal.* 44. 23. *Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, cast us not off for ever.*

The third word is (*Leviathan*) which hath two other significations, both appliable to this interpretation.

First, Divers of the *Rabbins* translate it by the Hebrew word (*Ebel*,) which signifies mourning or sorrow; and with the pronoun affixed, their sorrow or their mourning. And this is asserted by the learned *Mercer*, for the plainest meaning of the word, and so found in the writings of the Hebrew Doctors, which also directly answers our translation, **who are ready to raise up their mourning.**

Secondly, The word (*Leviathan*) is derived (according to the opinion of others) from *Lavah*, i.e. joyned or associated. Hence *Leviath*, i. e. society or fellowship: to which the same pronoune being affixed, the word *Leviathan* is made up, and according to that extraction and composition, is rendred (*societatem suam*) their society or their company. And the word in this derivation and construction of it, falls in with the sense of the former interpretation, who are ready to raise and stir up their company, namely to go forth and mourn, or their company of mourners. And the reason is two-fold, why they are, or may be, said *to raise up their company of mourners.*

First, Because those solemn mourners were usually a great many,

Solent in luctu voce flebili, & lacertis manibus verberantes ad lachrymas populũ provocare. Hic enim mos permanet in Judea, *ut mulieres sparsis crinibus nuditisq; pectoribus voce modulata omnes ad fletum concitent.* Hieron. *in* c. 9. Jerem.

Exposui cũ Hebræis Leviathan simpliciter, pro אבלם *luctum suũ, ut sit Nun pro Mem, sicut alias hæc confundi videas. Quo significatu in scriptis doctorum Hebræorum occurrit, & ex lingua Syriaca Sumptũ est vicinum nomini,* אליא *sic & Chaldæus vertit. Simplicissimum est Leviathan pro luctu exponere cum Hebræis,* Mere.

common expectation. It is noted as an aggravation of that peoples affliction in the Prophet, *We looked for peace, and behold, no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble*, Jer. 8. 15. For a people to be in expectation of ſome great mercy, doubles the ſorrow of their miſcarriage: Now in theſe times, we being in our night of trouble, and (as it were) looking when day will break, when our peace will return, when truth will prevail and be ſetled, when error and the abettors of it ſhall be overthrown: How would it augment our ſorrows, if we, looking for theſe mercies, ſhould not have them? As it is a greater affliction to be miſerable to be miſerable, when we have been happy; ſo when we have long hoped to be happy. God expreſſes himſelf, as much troubled, when he loſes his expectation from us: It provokes the Spirit of God to anger againſt us, when he looks for the fruits of his care and love in our obedience, and findeth none (*Iſa.* 5.) *God looked that his vineyard ſhould have brought forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. He looked for judgment, and behold oppreſſion; for righteouſneſs, & behold a cry*: This diſappointment provoked the Lord to lay his vineyard waſte. So in the Goſpel, when Chriſt cometh to the fig-tree three years ſeeking or looking for fruit, and findeth none: What then? *Cut it down*, ſaith Chriſt; he is very angry, thus miſſing his expectation. Now, as it provokes the anger of God to come looking upon man, his creature, for duty, and finds none; ſo it doth likewiſe exceedingly grieve the ſpirit of man, when he looks to God for mercy, and finds none. And how juſt is it, that God ſhould croſs our expectation, when we ſo often croſs his. No marvel if we look for light, and behold darkneſs; for peace, and behold trouble; for ſucceſs, and behold diſappointments: whenas God looks upon us for repentance, and behold preſumption; for faith, and behold unbelief; for patience, and behold complaining; for reformation, and behold backſliding; for fruit, and behold barrenneſs, or but leaves.

Fourthly, He ſaith, *Let it not ſee the dawning of the day*, that is, let it be quite out of hope ever to receive any light; therefore let it not ſee ſo much as a glimpſe of light. It is the ſtrongeſt denial of the whole, to deny the leaſt of the firſt part: As when the Apoſtle would have us abſtain from all evil, he exhorts us to abſtain from the *appearance of evil* (1 Theſ. 5.) So here, when *Job* would put his night quite out of hope to ſee the day, he ſaith, *Let it not ſee* (ſo much as) *the dawning* (that is, the leaſt appearance) *of the day*. And this, as it is the laſt, ſo the heavieſt ſentence upon his night. Hence obſerve,

That, *A hopeleſs condition is the worſt condition of all other.*

Let a night be never ſo dark, never ſo tempeſtuous, yet the hope of a morning is a mercy and a light. A man will bear any heavineſs, when he can ſay as *David*, *Heavineſs may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning*. *Solomon* tells us, that the *hope deferred makes the heart ſick*, Prov. 13. 12. How ſick then are they who are hopeleſs, or, who have quite loſt their hope? Everlaſtingneſs is the head of the arrow, the ſting and poiſon of all miſeries, it is indeed the ſting of Hell; that hell is ſuch a night as never ſhall ſee the dawning of the day, hath more torment and pain in it, then all the pains in hell. As the puniſhment of loſs in hell, pinches more then the puniſhment of ſenſe, ſo in the loſs, this pinches moſt that the loſs is irrecoverable: They are deprived of the glory of God, and ſhall never ſee the leaſt ray of it for ever; they are in darkneſs, and they have no hope of light at all for ever.

As that which makes heaven ſo full of joy, is, that heaven is above all fear; ſo that which makes hell ſo full of terror, is, that hell is below all hope; heaven is a day which ſhall never ſee any approaches of night, and hell is a night that ſhall never ſee any dawnings of the day. So, proportionably in any affliction of this life, to be hopeleſs of deliverance, to ſay it ſhall never have end, I am in ſuch a night as ſhall have no day. no, not the dawning of a day, this is the utmoſt evil, the extremity of affliction.

So much concerning the curſe it ſelf, which *Job* powred out with ſo much paſſion, both againſt the day of his birth, and the night of his conception. We ſhall now here ſee the reaſon of this paſſion, in the words which follow.

VERS. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of my mothers womb, nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes.
Why died not I from the womb? why did I not give up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly?
Why did the knees prevent me? or why the breſts, that I ſhould ſuck?
For now ſhould I have lien ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept; then had I been at reſt.

WE are now come to the ſecond general part of this Chapter. You may remember, the whole was divided into three Sections. The firſt ſhewed us the curſe which *Job* powred out upon his day. The ſecond, The cauſe or ground of that curſe. And the third, A vehement expoſtulation about the continuance of his life, and the lengthning of his dayes.

We have heard the curſe opened already in the nine former verſes, now followeth the cauſe of the curſe. *Job* gives an account or reaſon of his paſſion: If any ſhould check him with, *Why doſt thou thus breath out complaints againſt the day of thy birth? why doſt thou write ſuch bitter things againſt the night of thy conception?* he anſwered as *David* did his brethren, in another caſe, 1 *Sam.* 17. Why, *what have I done or ſpoken? is there not a cauſe?* Or, as *Jonah*, when God reproves him about his paſſion for the withered gourd; *Doſt thou well to be angry? Jonah* replies, yes, *I do well to be angry, even unto death*, chap. 4. 9. So ſaith *Job* here to any that ſhould rebuke him with, do you well to be thus angry with your day? yes, I do well to be angry with my day, and I ſhew you why; **becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of my mothers womb**, &c.

The reaſon of the argument ſtands thus; There is cauſe I ſhould curſe that day and that night, which not hindring my conception or my birth, brought me forth upon the ſtage of the world, to act a part in all theſe ſorrows; but the day and the night did not hinder my conception or my birth, therefore I have cauſe, I have reaſon enough to break out in ſuch complaints, and curſe them: I do it, becauſe theſe *ſhut not up the doors of my mothers womb.* This is the argument or reaſon by which he defers his paſſion; and this argument will be found to have more paſſion in it, then reaſon, if we examine it to the bottom. For he complains of that as the cauſe, which was not the cauſe of his troubles: what did the night or the day, that he thus chargeth them? they had no efficiency in bringing thoſe evils upon him; circumſtances are not cauſes: Effects are produced in time, but time doth not produce effects; only this we may ſay to help it, he doth not curſe the day, as if he could have ſhut the doors of his mothers womb, but becauſe on that day thoſe doors were not ſhut.

But leaving the reaſon of his ſpeech, we will conſider the ſence of it.

The Hebrew word for word is thus rendred, *Becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of my belly*. And that the Chaldee *Paraphraſt* renders thus by way of explanation, *becauſe it did not ſhut up the doors of my lips*; the mouth (ſaith he) being (as it were) the door or the in-let to the belly or ſtomach, every thing goeth in by that door; and ſo he carries the ſence thus, let that night be curſed, becauſe it did not ſtop my breath, and ſo make an end of me. The *Septuagint* hath it thus, *Becauſe it ſhut not up* [*the doors of my mothers belly*) which anſwers our Tranſlation, *the doors of my mothers womb*. Mr. *Broughton* to the ſame ſence; *Becauſe it ſhut not up the door of the belly that did bear me*, that is, my mothers belly.

Quia non cluſit portas maxillarum mearum, quæ ſunt oſtia ventris.

πύλας γαστρὸς μητρὸς μου. Sept.

I ſhall in ſilence paſs over that ſecret or myſtery in nature, which may be the ground of this expreſſion. There are two ſecrets in Divinity, which are the grounds of it; and of them I ſhall ſpeak.

The firſt is this, When God layes that affliction of barrenneſs upon the woman, he, according to the phraſe of Scripture, is ſaid to *ſhut up the womb*; and when he ſendeth the bleſſing of fruitfulneſs, he is ſaid to *open the womb*. We have both, *Gen.* 20. 18. When *Abimelech* had taken *Sarah*, *Abraham's* wife, *the Lord faſt cloſed up all the wombs of the houſe of* Abimelech. The meaning of it is this, he made all the women barren; or with-held the bleſſing of conception;

tion; the *Jewiſh* Expoſitors render the meaning of the very words of this Text, that the Lord had ſhut up all the doors of the wombs of the houſe of *Abimelech*. And ſo likewiſe for fruitfulneſs God is ſaid to open the womb, as *Gen.* 29. 31. *And when the Lord ſaw that* Leah *was hated, he opened her womb; but* Rachel *was barren.* Then, to ſhut the doors of the womb, notes the power of God in denying; and to open thoſe doors, the bleſſing of God in giving conception and making fruitful.

Secondly, It may refer to the birth: for, there muſt be an opening of thoſe doors, and that by an Almighty power, for production as well as for conception, and therefore *David* (*Pſal.* 22. 9.) aſcribes it to the Lord; *Lord thou art he who tookeſt me out of my mothers womb.* It was not the Midwife did it; it was not the womens help that ſtood about his mother, *But Lord thou didſt it*: The hand of God only is able to open that door and let man into the world: Unleſs he (as we may ſo ſpeak) turn the key, the poor Infant muſt for ever lye in priſon, and make his mothers womb his grave.

In either or both theſe reſpects *Job* here ſpeaks againſt the night, *becauſe it ſhut not up the door of his mothers womb*, to ſtop his conception, or ſtay him in the birth: For then, either he had not been, or he had not been brought forth as the ſubject of all thoſe calamities.

Hence obſerve, firſt, *That fruitfulneſs or conception is the ſpecial work and bleſſing of God.*

God carries the key of the womb in his own hand. From him we receive *life and breath*, (Acts 17. 25.) *yea in his book are all our members written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them: We are fearfully and wonderfully made: Our ſubſtance is not hid from God, when we are made in ſecret, and curiouſly wrought in the loweſt parts of the earth.* As the holy Ghoſt admirably and moſt elegantly deſcribes the conception and formation of man in the womb, *Pſal.* 139. 14, 15, 16.

There are four keyes in nature, all kept in the hand of God.

Firſt, The key of the Rain. The Clouds cannot open themſelves, the Flood gates of Heaven cannot be unlocked, nor thoſe ſluces opened to let down a drop of Rain, until God turn the key, *Deut.* 28. 12. *The Lord ſhall open unto thee his good treaſure, the Heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his ſeaſon.*

Secondly, The key of Nutrition, or of Food, *Pſal.* 145. 16. *Thou openeſt thy hand and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* The ſtrength of the creature is ſhut up in the hand of God, and until he unlock his hand; the creatures cannot ſtrengthen or nouriſh us, though we have our houſes and our hands full of them.

Thirdly, The key of the Grave, *Ezek.* 37. 13. *I will open your graves, and cauſe you to come out of your graves.* We are ſo faſt lockt up in death, that all the power in the world is not able to releaſe us, till God ſpeak the word, and turn the key of the Graves door. That place in *Ezekiel* is meant (I know) of a civil death: But it is as true of natural death: And the argument is ſtronger for it: If when a Nation (as the Nation of the *Jews* then did) lyes in the grave of bondage and captivity, no man can unlock that door without the key of Gods ſpecial providence; much leſs can any hand or power, but his, open the door, and bring us out of the grave of our corporal diſſolution.

There is this fourth key, belonging to the door ſpoken of in the Text, *The door of the womb:* Which was ſhadowed in that Ceremonial Law among the *Jews*, of giving their *firſt-born* unto *God*, as a thankful acknowledgment, that the beginning of all propagation and increaſe was from him.

Further obſerve, *That our birth and production is the ſpecial work of God.*

Thou art he that tookeſt me out of my mothers womb, (ſaith *David.*) And he apprehended the power of God, ſo great in his natural birth, that he from thence takes an argument to ſtrengthen his faith, that God could do any other thing for him, how hard ſoever. He knew he could never be in ſuch ſtraights, but the power of God could deliver him, when he once remembred that it was God who took him out of his mothers womb: For in the words immediately fore-going, he bringeth in his enemies laughing at, yea reproaching him, and ſaying, *He truſted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him:* They jeer him with his God, *Let him deliver him. David* anſwers, What do you think God cannot deliver me? *Lord* (ſaith he) *thou art he that tookeſt me out of my Mothers womb.* Can I ever be in ſuch ſtraights as I was then? Can I be ever in a more helpleſs condition? Can I ever be in more need of an Almighty help, then when I was ſtrugling to get into the world? There is more of the power of God put forth in bringing a poor Infant into the world, then in bringing him out of any trouble or ſtraight he can fall into, in his travels through the world: And hence the great deliverances of a people from danger, and their reformations from error, are called a birth, as King *Hezekiah* ſpeaks in his meſſage to *Iſaiah*, 2 Kings 19. 4. *The children are come to the birth, and there is no ſtrength to bring forth.* As if he had ſaid, Great things are now attempted, but nothing can be perfected: Great troubles are diſcovered, but we cannot be delivered by any humane power or policy: Therefore *lift up a prayer for the remnant that is left.* Every new deliverance and reformation of a Church is a new birth of that Church. *Who hath heard ſuch a thing? who hath ſeen ſuch things? ſhall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or ſhall a nation be born at once? for as ſoon as* Zion *travelled, ſhe brought forth her children.* That is, *Sions* mercies were ſpeedily and ſuddenly obtained. She uſes to have long travail and many throes, but now the mighty power of God opened the door of the womb, a door of hope, and *Sion* was eaſily delivered of a man-child. A glorious mercy, *Iſa.* 66. 8. You ſee how the holy Ghoſt parallels the working of great things for the Church, to the travail of a woman; whoſe Infant ſticks in the birth, if God ſuſpend his help; but if he open the door by a hand of gracious providence, ſhe brings forth, Even *before ſhe travails*, (as the ſame Prophet ſpeaks,) *and before ſhe is in pain ſhe is delivered.* I have adventured to lengthen out this notion ſomewhat further then that hint in the Text doth well bear, only becauſe we being a people now in ſtrong travail, and wanting ſtrength to bring forth, may be directed to conſider whoſe hand holds the key, which opens the womb of Nations as well as perſons, and at the turning of whoſe hand, we ſhall quickly be delivered; and being delivered, we ſhall quickly forget all our pains and pangs, for joy that a man-child, ſuch a maſculine bleſſing, is born into the world. But the Text goes on ſtill in tears. As follows.

Nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes.

The word which we tranſlate ſorrow, ſignifies more properly labour, and wearineſs, or the wearineſs that doth ariſe from labour, and ſo from thence it is tranſlated to ſignifie any kind of ſorrow or trouble.

Becauſe it hid not ſorrow from mine eyes.] By the hiding of ſorrow from his eyes, he noteth only thus much, that he ſhould have been delivered from the ſenſe and experience of ſorrow. He had miſt thoſe evils which he met with, ſince his coming into the world, if thoſe doors being ſhut, had ſhut him out of the world. When ſorrow is hid from our eyes, then all evil is removed; as in that ſpeech, (*Iſa.* 65. 16.) *Becauſe the former troubles are forgotten, becauſe they are hidden from mine eyes*; that is, as if he had ſaid, we fear no trouble, no danger, no evil hangs over our heads; now *the former evils are forgotten, they are hidden from mine eyes*: As we uſe to ſay of great dangers, that they are *imminent dangers*; they hang over our heads, or hang before our eyes; becauſe they lye ſo near, and are in ſuch readineſs to oppreſs and fall upon us.

Now when *Job* ſubjoyneth ſorrow to his birth; as if as ſoon as ever the doors were open for him to ſtep into the world, the firſt object he met with was trouble, and he was ſaluted by ſorrow as ſoon as ever he ſaw the light.

Obſerve, *That man is born to ſorrow.*

He ſees ſorrow the firſt thing he ſees. Sorrow is the firſt acquaintance. The connexion is very cloſe, *Becauſe it ſhut not up the doors of the womb, nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes. Eliphaz* tells us (*chap.* 5. 7.) *That man is born unto trouble, as the ſparks fly upward.* He is born to it; the expreſſion implyes, that trouble and ſorrow take hold of us, and we enter upon, and take hold of trouble, as ſoon as ever we enter upon the world, we are born to them; trouble and ſor-

row are a mans inheritance; as an Heir is born to his land or eſtate. Man hath a right to thoſe troubles; they are his birth-right, and all his birth-right by nature; and as ſoon as ever he is born, he takes poſſeſſion of ſorrow, or ſorrow poſſeſſes him. Many a man is born to riches, and a great eſtate, but he ſtayeth a great while for the poſſeſſion of them; man is born to trouble, and he enters upon that as ſoon as ever he enters the world; ſorrow is not his inheritance in reverſion, but in poſſeſſion; *Even as the ſparks fly upward*; that explains it to be ſo, *as the ſons of the Coal*, (ſo the Hebrew) that is, ſparks, as ſoon as ever they are born out of the coal, fly upward, and are preſently aſcending; ſo is man tending unto trouble. *Few and evil have the dayes of the years of my life been*, ſaith *Jacob*, (*Gen.* 47.9.) How few ſoever they have been, they have been evil: if his life had been but one day, that had been an evil day. If his life had not been lengthened to the leaſt number of dayes, yet his evils had multiplied to a number: in few hours we have many ſorrows.

Some make the Infants tears a preſage of theſe ſorrows, as if he wept to think upon what a ſhore of troubles he is landed: Or rather, into what a Sea of ſtorms he is lanching, when he comes into the world; ſuch ſtorms as he ſhall never be fully quit of, till he is harboured in his grave. Wherefore as the Angel ſaid unto the woman, *Luke* 24. 5. *Why ſeek ye the living among the dead?* So I may ſay to you, why ſeek ye peace in a land of trouble, and joy in a land of ſorrow? Theſe are reſerved for us in our Countrey which is above, expect them not here, *for this is not your reſt.*

Secondly, we may note from this expreſſion, *Nor hid ſorrow from mine eyes*,

That the ſight of the eye wounds the heart.

He doth not ſay, and hid trouble from my ſoul, or trouble from my ſpirit, but *hid ſorrow from mine eyes.* It is a proverbial ſpeech among us, *What the eye ſees not, the heart grieves not.* And when the Lord would ſhew how he was moved with the ſufferings, and knew the ſorrows of his people in *Egypt*, he doubles it upon this ſence, *I have ſeen, I have ſeen, or I have ſurely ſeen the affliction of my people*, *Exod.* 3.7. Your ſorrows are not hid from mine eyes. *Mine eye affects my heart*, ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*, *Lam.* 3. 51. That is, mine eye afflicts mine heart. While *Jeremy* went about the City, and ſaw many woful ſpectacles in the ruine and captivity of his people, that ſight ſmote him to the heart. It is ſaid, that when Chriſt came to *Jeruſalem, and beheld the City, he wept over it*, Luke 19. 41. And for the ſorrow of repentance, the ſight of the eye hath a great influence upon the heart, *They ſhall look on me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn*, &c. *Zech.* 12.10. As the eye doth affect, or rather infect the heart with ſin, from ſin-occaſioning objects; a ſin that is in the eye will be preſently at the heart; which cauſed *Job* to ſay, (*Chap.* 31. 1.) *I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then ſhould I think upon a maid?* He meaneth, ſinfully to luſt after her: As if he had ſaid, there is a quick, a ſpeedy paſſage from the eye to the heart, though in the fabrick of the body there ſeems a great diſtance between them: Therefore I have made a covenant with my eyes to avoid occaſions of ſin, leſt mine eyes ſhould pollute my heart with motions unto ſin. And as it is in pleaſure-provoking objects, that which is a pleaſure to the eye, will preſently be a pleaſure to the heart, a refreſhing to our ſpirits: And that pleaſure which ſhall laſt for evermore in Heaven, is from a viſion that ſhall laſt for ever. Joy ſhall for ever be before the eye, and therefore joy ſhall for ever fill the heart. The joy of Heaven conſiſts in viſion, in ſeeing God *as he is*, (1 John 3. 2.) or in ſeeing *face to face*, (1 Cor. 13. 12.) which is the viſion beatifical. So likewiſe there is an afflicting viſion. The eye affects the heart with ſorrow-occaſioning objects; if ſorrow be in the eye, it will not ſtay long from the heart. Hence when *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s Wife, was dead, *Abraham* thus beſpeaks the people among whom he dwelt, *If it be your mind, that I ſhould bury my dead out of my ſight*, &c. (*Gen.* 23. 8.) It did afflict the heart of *Abraham* with ſorrow, to ſee the body of his deceaſed Wife, or the Coffin wherein ſhe lay, whom he had ſo intirely loved, therefore *bury her out of my ſight.* It is very obſervable, that when *Joſeph* would do ſomewhat purpoſely to afflict and touch the heart of his brethren with more remorſe for their former unkindneſs unto him, the hiſtory ſaith (*Gen.* 42. 24.) *That he took from them* Simeon, *and bound him before their eyes*: He heard them in their private conference whiſper one to another, *We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us.* When *Joſeph* perceived their conſciences began thus to work, he reſolves to give them a *pill at their eyes*, (even a doleful ſpectacle, yet the lively picture of their dealing with him) to make their conſciences work faſter, with godly ſorrow: *He took from them* Simeon, *and bound him before their eyes.* And *Judah*, when he pleadeth afterward, *Chap.* 44. for the carrying back of *Benjamin*, you know what a pathetical Oration he makes; O, ſaith he, do not detain *Benjamin*, for *when I come to thy ſervant my father; and the lad be not with us* (*ſeeing that his life is bound up in the lads life*) *it ſhall come to paſs, that when he ſeeth that the lad is not with us, he will dye*, ver. 30, 31. That very ſight will kill my father: and for me to ſee my father dye, will be death to me alſo: For ſo he concludes, *ver.* 34. *How ſhall I go to my father, and the lad be not with me, leſt peradventure I ſee the evil that ſhall come upon my father.* Oh (ſaith he) let me carry him back; my father will dye if he ſee not the lad, and ſo ſhall I, if I *ſee the evil that ſhall come upon my father*: He knew that ſight would be as a ſword to his heart, and as a dagger in his bowels. The Lord threatens his people thus in caſe of diſobedience, *Deut.* 28. 31. *Thine Ox ſhall be ſlain before thine eyes, thine Aſs ſhall be violently taken away from before thy face. Thy ſons and thy daughters ſhall be given to another people*, &c. *So that thou ſhalt be mad for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee*, ver. 34. and ver. 67. He ſhews what convulſions and diviſions of ſpirit, the viſions of the eye would bring upon them. *In the morning thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were even; and at even thou ſhalt ſay, would God it were morning, for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou ſhalt fear, and for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee.* The fear of the heart, and the ſight of the eye, are nearly joyned. The ſight of the eye cauſed the fear of the heart, and both were as concauſes of thoſe diſtracting thoughts, and wiſhes, of haſtning the morning to the evening, and again ſuddenly reducing back the evening to the morning. Unleſs ſorrow be hid from the eyes, it can hardly be kept from the heart. It is an uſual cuſtom, if a man be but let blood, to bid him turn away his head, if he be faint-hearted, for the ſight of his bloud will make his heart faint: And ſo from more ghaſtly ſpectacles, men commonly turn away their faces, &c. Which is to hide ſorrow from their eyes. It follows,

Why died I not from the womb? why did not I give up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly? why did the knees prevent me, &c.

Theſe two verſes contain a further aggravation of the former reaſon by three other ſteps. Before he ſpoke againſt his conception and his birth, now, **Why died I not from the womb?** As if he had ſaid, though I were conceived, and ſecondly, though I were born, yet why did not I make my cradle, my grave, or my firſt ſwadling clothes my winding ſheet; though I were born, yet why did not I dye ſo ſoon as ever I was born? *Why dyed I not from the womb? why gave I not up the ghoſt when I came out of the belly?* Having received the diſcourteſie of a birth, death would have been a favour: It had been beſt for me, not to have been born, and next beſt to have died quickly, or as ſoon as I was born; that's the meaning in general of the eleventh and twelfth verſes. But I ſhall a little examine and enlighten the particular expreſſions.

Why did I not give up the ghoſt? The Hebrew is but one word, which coſts us five in Engliſh, *I give up the ghoſt*; the word ſignifieth, that laſt act of thoſe who are in the agony of death: In the Greek and Latine that act is expreſt by one word, *Luke* 23. 46. Where it is ſaid, *that Chriſt gave up the ghoſt.* The word is conceived to note a willing chearful reſignation of our ſelves in death; a dying without much reluctance or reſiſtance, a being active in death rather then paſſive, we call it well a giving up the ghoſt. Some apply it only to the death of the godly, (as *Gen.* 25. 8.) of *Abraham*, &c. whoſe lives are not violently ſnatcht from them, but willingly ſurrendred. When a godly man dyes a violent death, he doth not dye violently: Whereas a wicked

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ἐξέπνευσεν *Expiravit. Lenitèr mortuus eſt, ſine morbo & dolore diuturniore: quando quis facile moritur ita ut non diu decumbat.*

wicked man dyes violently, when he dyes naturally: and though ſometimes (being weary of his life, or deſpairing of relief) he drives out his ghoſt, yet in a ſtrict ſence he never gives up the ghoſt. It is ſaid to the wicked rich man in the Goſpel, (*Luke* 12. 20.) *Thou fool, this night ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee*; demanded indeed; but O how unwillingly doth the rich man pay his natural debt, who is ſo able to pay all civil debts. Yet it muſt be confeſt, that we find the word often uſed promiſcuouſly, applyed as well to the death of the wicked as of the godly: To *Iſhmael* (*Gen.* 25. 8.) as well as *Abraham*, to *Ananias* and *Saphira*, Acts 5. 10. Yea it is applied to the death of any or all living things, *Gen.* 7. 21. *And all fleſh dyed that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattel, and of beaſts, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man.*

Then again, If I had not ſo much favour to dye as ſoon as ever I came from the womb, or to dye in the very birth; yet, **Why did the knees prevent me? or the breaſts that I ſhould ſuck?**

Here are two ſteps aggravating the cauſe of his curſe againſt his day. If I had not been born dead, ſaith *Job*, or dyed naturally as ſoon as I was born, yet why was I not left to periſh? I ſhould have dyed quickly, if they had let me alone, though I were born alive into the world; that is the meaning of thoſe words, *Why did the knees prevent me?* why was there any care taken of me? why did the Midwife and the aſſiſtant women take me upon their knees? why did they waſh me, ſwathe me, and bind me up? If they had not been ſo kind, it had been a kindneſs unto me; if they had ſpared their labour, they had done me a favour; If they had omitted their care, how many cares had I eſcaped?

Why did the knees prevent me? *or* (which is a further ſtep, and the fifth ſtep by which this ſpeech aſcends) *why the breaſts that I ſhould ſuck?* As if he had ſaid, If they would needs be ſo favourable as to take me up upon the knee, to waſh me, to bind me up and cloath me, yet why was the breaſt preſented to me? why was I layed to the breaſt? If they had kept me from ſucking the breaſt, I ſhould have ſuckt but little breath, I had dyed quickly.

So that in theſe words there are five gradations, by which *Job* aggravateth the cauſe of this curſe againſt his day. Firſt, Becauſe he was conceived. Secondly, Becauſe the door was opened for him to be born. Thirdly, Becauſe being born, he did not preſently give up the ghoſt, or dye as ſoon as he came into the world. Fourthly, Becauſe there was ſo much care taken for him, as to take him upon the knee, and bind him up. Fifthly, Becauſe there was a breaſt provided, and paps for him to ſuck: If any of theſe latter acts had been neglected, *Job* had dyed, and ſo eſcaped all theſe enſuing troubles of his life, *Sorrow had been hidden from his eyes.*

And it is obſerved (eſpecially in theſe latter acts of this gradation) that *Job* alludes to the cuſtom of thoſe times, wherein unnatural women left their children upon the cold earth, naked and helpleſs, as ſoon as they were born: or caſting them out, expoſe them to miſery, or the caſual nurſery of nature lent them by beaſts, more merciful then thoſe beaſtly mothers, who would not afford them knees to prevent, nor breaſts to give them ſuck. As in that place, *Ezek.* 16. 4, 5. the woful condition of ſuch an Infant is expreſt, to ſhadow out the ſinfully polluted and wofully helpleſs eſtate of that people, and of all people by nature, till the Lord prevents them by *the knees of free grace*, and *ſuckles them with the breaſts of his conſolation. Thy father was an* Amorite, *and thy mother an* Hittite (of a barbarous people; and what then?) *In the day thou waſt born, thy navel was not cut, neither waſt thou waſhed in water, thou waſt not ſalted at all, nor ſwadled at all, none eye pittied thee to do any of theſe unto thee, but thou waſt caſt out in the open field, to the loathing of thy perſon, in the day that thou waſt born.* Now this is a certain rule, that ſuch parabolical and allegorical Scriptures are grounded upon known cuſtoms and things in uſe: It is certain there were ſome ſo unnatural to their Infants, that they would beſtow no care upon them when they were born, neither waſh, nor cleanſe, nor bind them up, but caſt them out, (as the Prophet ſpeaks) *to the loathing of their perſons.* The Heathen *Romans* had a ſpecial Goddeſs, or Deity, whoſe name imported her care and office, that Children, when they were born, ſhould be taken up from the earth, and ſet upon the knee. And for the preventing of this unnatural cruelty, (very frequent, as it ſeems, amongſt them) the *Thebanes* made an expreſs law, that Infants ſhould not be neglected or caſt out when they were born, though the parents thought they would be a burden to them by reaſon of the charge, or no delight to them by reaſon of their deformity.

Parabolæ non ſumuntur niſi ab his quæ crebro & de more fiunt.

Levana dea pro levandis è terra infantibus, Aug. de Civ. Dei. l. 4. c. 11 Thebanorum lex. de non exponendis infantibus, Apud Ælian. de Var. Hiſt. l. 11.

Now ſaith *Job*, I could wiſh, I had ſuch a father, or ſuch a mother, or ſuch friends, who forgetting natural affection, would have caſt me out when I came firſt into the world; *Why did the knees prevent me?* From hence alſo we may obſerve,

Firſt, *That an Infant, as ſoon as he liveth, hath in him the ſeeds of death.*

So *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf, *Why dyed I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghoſt when I came out of my mothers belly?* Or why was I not ſtifled in the womb? why was ever that door opened to let me into the world? I could have dyed as ſoon as I lived. Not only is man acting ſin, but his nature infected with ſin, the ſubject of, and ſubjected to the power of death: ſo the Apoſtle teacheth us, (*Rom.* 5. 14.) *Death reigned from* Adam *to* Moſes, *even over them that had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of* Adam's *tranſgreſſion:* And who were thoſe? Even little Infants; they had life, yet death reigned over them, they were under the dominion of death, and ſubject to that King of terror. Sin is the ſeed of death, and the principle of corruption. God doth Infants no wrong when they dye; their death is of themſelves, for they have the ſeed of death in them: We may affirm in one ſence, that when Infants dye, they have no loſs; and we are ſure (in every ſence) when they dye, they have no wrong: *All death* (except death to ſin) *is the wages of ſin, and therefore can be no injury to the ſinner.*

Secondly, We may obſerve concerning man in his birth, what a helpleſs creature man is. If I (ſaith *Job*) had been left a little, I had been gone quickly, there had been an end of me, I could not have helped my ſelf: if the knees had not prevented me, if the breaſts had not given me ſuck, if I had been deſtitute of theſe ſuccours, then preſently *I ſhould have been free among the dead, I ſhould have been quiet and gone into ſilence.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *That every ſtep of life ſtands in need of a ſtep of mercy.*

When the Infant is conceived, there muſt be an act of mercy to quicken it, an act of mercy to nouriſh it in the womb; an act of mercy for the birth, and an act of mercy, being born, to take it upon the knee, an act of mercy to bind it up, an act of mercy to give it ſuck. The beginning of our lives, and the progreſs of our lives, our generation, and our preſervation, call for acts of mercy, or elſe (poor creatures as we are) we quickly periſh and return unto our duſt. We owe our lives to God at firſt, and we owe them every moment; if he did not renew mercy every moment, we could not continue life one moment: As it is with our ſpiritual life, ſo it is with our natural; *Our lives are hid with Chriſt in God*, Col. 3. 3. Of and from our ſelves we cannot ſubſiſt, either in grace or nature. It follows,

For now ſhould I have lyen ſtill, and been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept; then had I been at reſt.

Theſe words are an inlargement of the former reaſon taken from a deſcription of the ſtate and condition of the dead; *For now* (ſaith *Job*) *I ſhould have lyen ſtill.* If you ſhould ask me a reaſon of my former reaſon, Why was I ſo angry with that day, or night, wherein I was conceived and born, wherein I had that (to me unacceptable) mercy to be preſerved and kept alive? This I ſubjoyn for the reaſon of it, If none of thoſe unwelcome favours or natural rights had been done me, then, *I had lyen ſtill, I had been quiet, I ſhould have ſlept, I had been at reſt:* Either I ſhould have been as one that never was, or I ſhould have been at reſt and quiet. The argument lyes thus; Reſt and quiet are deſirable things, but death, in the omiſſion of thoſe ſuccours, would have given me reſt; therefore I deſire thoſe ſuccours had been omitted. This concluſion is in the eleventh and twelfth verſes, which we heard before. The aſſumption is in this thirteenth verſe, which he further confirms in

the six verses following, by an argument which we may thus form. I will prove, saith he, that in death I should have rest, and been quiet, and lyen still, for all conditions and sorts of men are quiet and lye still in death. There (or in that estate) where all degrees and sorts of persons are at rest, there sure I should have found rest; but in death all sorts and degrees of persons have found rest, therefore I should have found rest too.

Now that all sorts of people lye still, and are at rest in death, he proves by an elegant enumeration of the several sorts and conditions of men. He makes an argument by way of induction of all or most of the ranks of men. First, He shews it in *Kings and Counsellors of the earth*; these men that make such a bustle in the world, when once they are dead, they are quiet enough. And then he shews it in *Rich men and Princes, who load themselves with thick clay*, who toil and moil all their dayes to heap up and amass much wealth; when these come to the grave, there's an end of all their labours, then they must give over all their pursuit of riches. Fourthly, He shews it in children, either abortives, born before natures time, or born in full perfection of nature, *ver.* 16. Lastly, He shews it in *oppressors and the oppressed*; *in prisoners and those that imprison them*; *in the small and in the great*; *in the servants and in their Masters*: Thus making an enumeration of all these, from thence he infers; That if all these are quiet, when they are in the grave, then surely his condition had been so too; *I should have been quiet, and lyen still, then I should have slept and been at rest.*

We must here take notice, that *Job* speaking of the state of death, speaks only in reference to an outward condition, and our resting from outward calamities and troubles; he doth not handle the point at all concerning mans eternal estate: For, death is not rest to all sorts of men in that sence: Kings, and Counsellors, and rich men, *&c.* may rest from the troubles of this world, and go to a world of everlasting troubles. Such a total rest is the sole priviledge of the Saints. Thus only *blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works follow them*, *Rev.* 14. 13. When the Saints dye, they rest from their labours, and their works follow them (through free grace) in glorious rewards. When the wicked dye, they rest from their labours, but their works follow them (through divine Justice) in everlasting punishments. And *Job* resting assured of his own eternal rest, wishes only a rest from those temporal commotions.

Apertè his verbis ostendit, se adeo de futura vita securũ esse, ut tantũ uerit solicitus de quietè & præsentibus calamitatibus.

Further, We may observe four words used by *Job* to express the same thing. First, **I should have lyen still.** **And been quiet**, there is a second. **I should have slept**, there is a third: And fourthly, **Then I had been at rest.**

I should have lyen still.] The word signifies to lye down in any kind, and it signifies to sleep, *Gen.* 19. 4. *Before they lay down*; that is, before they went to bed: It is applyed likewise to the sleep of death, 2 *Sam.* 7. 12. *Isa.* 43. 17. *They shall lye down, they shall not rise*; (they shall dye, so the next words expound it) *They are extinct, they are quenched as tow.*

שבב

And been quiet.] The word signifieth also to be silent; we may put both together, *Then had I lyen still and been silent*; and you know, death and the grave are called silence; *I had been like those that go down into silence* (saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 115. 17.) that is, like those that go down into *the grave.* And *Hezekiah* in his mourning describes that silence, *Isa.* 38. 18. *The grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee.*

שקט

Securus fuit, in pace degit, etiam siluit.

I should have slept.] Sleep is the image of death; and death is more then the image of sleep: Sleep is a short death, and death is a long sleep. *Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt*, Dan. 12. 2. *Our friend* Lazarus *sleepeth*, (saith Christ to his Disciples, *John* 11. 11.) *but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.* In the fourteenth verse, *Jesus said unto them plainly*, Lazarus *is dead.*

Then had I been at rest.] We usually say when a man goes to sleep, he goes to rest: Yet rest is more then sleep, for sometimes a man sleeps when he doth not rest, his very sleep being troubled, and he troubled in his sleep: But when rest is joyned with sleep, it is perfect sleep. The word here used, signifies a very quiet, setled and peaceable condition.

נוח

Hence *Noah* had his name, *And he called his name* Noah, *saying, this son shall comfort us, concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed*, (Gen. 5. 29.) He was rest and comfort to the old world, by preaching righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith, which alone gives rest unto the soul, and is able to refresh us in the midst of all those toils and labours which that first curse brought upon the world, both new and old. Such rest and sweet repose had I found (saith *Job*) from all my toil in the house of death, and bed of the grave.

Having thus, four words concurring in the same sence, we may here not unprofitably take notice of that elegant multiplication of words in the holy Scriptures. There, store is no sore, and variety is no superfluity, yea, there tautology is no superfluity: It is the usual rhetorick of the *Holy Ghost*, to speak the same thing in divers words, yea sometime in the same words: We find such a congeries or heaping up of words, used for the most part in some heat of passion, or vehemency of spirit: As first, when God would express a great deal of anger and wrath against a people, he speaks thus, (*Isa.* 14. 22, 23.) *I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from* Babylon *the name and remnant, and son and nephew, I will also make it a possession for the Bittern and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction.* Here are a multitude of words, and all tending to the same purpose, setting forth the fierceness of Gods anger, and the resolvedness of his judgment for the ruining of *Babylon.* The towring confused pride of the King of *Babylon*, is presented to us in such a heap of words, (*Isa.* 14. 13, 14.) hear the pure language of pride from that Kings heart; *Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the Congregation, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most High.* The manifold apostacies and backslidings of *Judah*, are described in many words by the Prophet *Zephany*, chap. 1. 6. *And them that are turned back from the Lord, and those that have not sought the Lord, nor enquired for him*: (Chap. 3. 2.) *She obeyed not the voice, she received not correction, she trusted not in the Lord, she drew not near to her God.* When our Lord Christ would shew the extream ignorance and darkness of his Disciples, in those great Articles of his sufferings, death and resurrection, having taken the twelve unto him, and discoursed of those points, he concludes, *Luke* 18. 31, 34. *And they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things that were spoken.* As if Christ had said, their ignorance in these mysteries was so great, that they had not the least glimpse or glimmerings of light about them. So here, *I should have lyen still, and been quiet, I should have slept, and been at rest*, and all to note the uninterrupted quiet and tranquillity of the grave. As if he had said, Had I dyed then, not only had not these storms been upon me, nor these waves gone over me, but the least breath of wind had never blown upon me. Hence observe,

First, *That in regard of all outward troubles, death is the rest of man.*

Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, for they rest from their labours. And they who dye out of the Lord, rest from all that labour they have had in this world. *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest*, *Eccles.* 9. 10. This life is a day of working, and death is a night of resting. *The Sun ariseth, man goeth forth to his labour until the evening*, Psal. 104. 23. When the Sun of our life ariseth, we go forth to our labour, until the evening of death. This life is a continued motion; death is a continued rest. This life is but noise and tumult; death is silence. Our life is a stormy passage, a tempestuous sea-voyage; death bringeth us to the harbour.

There is a four-fold rest which we obtain in death. First, A rest from labour and travel; no working there. Secondly, There is a rest from trouble and oppression; no wars, no bloody battels there. Thirdly, There is a rest from passion; no sorrow, no grief shall afflict us there. In the grave there is a fourth rest better then all these; a rest from sin, a rest from the drudgery of Satan, a rest from the winnowings and buffettings of Satan; a rest from the law of our members, warring against the law of our minds. When

Saul

Saul went to the Witch of *Endor* for advice with *Samuel*, that *Samuel*, or the Devil in the appearance of *Samuel*, speaks as one disturb'd being raised from the grave; *Why (*saith he*) hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?* 1 Sam. 28. 15. I was at rest, why didst thou call me up to a land of trouble? It is the observation of an ancient Father, and the resolution of an ancient Council, concerning Christs weeping over *Lazarus*, *John* 11. That not his death, but his rising drew those tears. When Christ came to the grave where *Lazarus* lay, the Text saith, that *Jesus wept*. Why did Christ weep, saith *Jerome*, in comforting a mother that had lost her daughter? It is clear, that Christ wept over *Lazarus* that was dead; but he did not weep thy tears: Christ did not weep because *Lazarus* was dead; but he wept rather, because *Lazarus* was to be raised up again; he wept to think that his friend *Lazarus* should be brought back into so troublesome a world. And it was the resolution of the third *Toletane* Council, That Christ did not weep over *Lazarus* because he was dead, but because he was to be raised up again to feel the burdens and afflictions of this life: that was their apprehension of it. And it is a truth, that whosoever lives the common life of nature, lives in trouble: But such is not the life of him who is raised from the dead: The lives of such, though here upon the earth, must needs lye out of the common course: And what their condition is, is such a secret as we cannot understand but by injoying it.

Plangebat mortuum flevit Christus, sed non tuas lachrimas fudit. Dolavit Lazarum non dormientem sed potius resurgentem. Hieron. *Ep. ad* Tryasiã *super mortẽ filiæ. Christus non ploravit* Lazarum *mortuum, sed ad hujus vitæ ærumnas ploravit resuscitandum, Concil.* Toler. tert.

Again, from that particular expression, in that he saith, *I should have slept*, we may observe,

That as death is the rest of the whole man, so death is the sleep of the body.

So you find it often in the Scripture; *Our friend* Lazarus *sleepeth*, saith Christ, when he was dead, *John* 11. And the Apostle, 1 *Thes.* 4. 13. *I would not have you ignorant concerning those which sleep*; that is, concerning those who are dead. *Lighten mine eyes* (saith *David*) *lest I sleep the sleep of death*; or as the Hebrew, *Lest I sleep death*, Psal. 13. 3. And hence the grave is called a bed, *Isa.* 57. 2. *The righteous are taken away*, &c. *they shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds.* When a righteous man dyes, or is taken away, he is but gone to bed. Therefore we call those places where the dead are laid up and buried, *Dormitories*, or *sleeping places*. Both the Greek and Latine words meet in the same signification.

κοιμητήριον *Dormitorium.*

Some of the Ancients were of opinion, that this sleep took hold of, and seiz'd upon, all man, namely, upon his soul as well as upon his body; asserting, that the soul is in a sleep, or slumber; that is, that the soul, from the time of its disunion from the body until the resurrection, lyes still without any motion or operation. I grant that many operations of the soul do cease when it parteth from the body. There are some acts of the soul which are organical; and there are other acts that are inorganical, or immaterial: The organical acts, that is, whatsoever the soul acts by the members of the body, those acts, I say, must needs cease; but the soul can act of it self without the assistance of the body; as we may collect by many experiments while our bodies and souls are joyned together. How often do we find our souls at work, when our bodies lye still and do nothing; when sleep binds up all our senses, and shuts up the windows of the body so close, that we can neither hear nor see: yet then the soul frames to it self, and beholds a thousand various shapes, and hears all sorts of sounds and voices; then the soul sees, and the soul hears, the soul deviseth, and the soul discourseth, the soul grieves, and the soul rejoyceth, the soul hopes, and the soul fears, the soul electeth, and the soul refuseth: All this the soul doth in dreams and visions of the night, when deep sleep falls upon man. So also in extasies and ravishments, the body is, as it were, laid by, as useless and uninstrumental to the soul. *I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago*, (so the Apostle *Paul* saith) *whether in the body, I cannot tell, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth*, 2 Cor. 12. 2. As if he had said, I was lost as to my body, I could not tell what I was, I did not feel my self; yet he had mighty operations in his soul, his spirit wrought strangely, and then took in such revelations of God and from God, as his bodily organs could never fashion into words, or represent by speech: He heard * unspeakable words, which is not * lawful (or possible) for man to utter. The soul hath an ear to hear such words as the body cannot find a tongue to express. So the Apostle *John* in his divine ravishments, *I was in the Spirit upon the Lords day*. As for his body, that was, as to that business, laid by and suspended, as useless in that day; and his spirit called up to that angelical work, the receiving of visions and revelations from on high. And among other things which *John* saw, *He saw under the Altar the souls of them that had been slain, for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:* These souls were not asleep, though their bodies were, for *they cryed with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood*, &c. *Rev.* 6. 9, 10. From all these Texts and experiences we may conclude, that the soul wakes while the body sleeps that sleep of death. And the death of the body is called a sleep.

* *Quæ fando explicari a quoquã homine non possint.* Beza.

* *Quæ nulla vi ne Sanctorum quidem possint explicari, nempe quia divinum est numen. Sic explicat* Clemens Alex. *Strom.* 5. Beza.

First, Because as sleep, so death brings the body to rest, as was observed in the former point.

Secondly, Natural sleep is not perpetual, we sleep and wake again; so though the body lye in the grave, yet death is but a sleep, the man shall awake and rise again.

Thirdly, As a body asleep can easily be awaked and called up by the power of man; so the body, being dead, can with infinitely more ease be raised by the power of God: It is but a call from Heaven, and we awaken out of the dust; God can beyond all comparison more easily awaken us from that dead sleep of death, then we can awaken one another from the lightest slumber.

There are two Questions which I shall propound and endeavour to resolve upon the whole matter of this context.

First, We find *Job* complaining, because things were not otherwise ordered about him; he is troubled, because he was born, or because he was not cast away in the birth; for then it had been better with him, he had been asleep and quiet; he was troubled things were with him as they were. Hence it may be questioned, *Whether it be lawful for us to wish, or to desire, that had not come to pass, which wee see come to pass?* And are we not bound to rest satisfied with the present and fore-past dispensations of God, and so be content with the things that are, or with things as they are?

For this, I say in general, such wishes or desires are not sinful. It is not absolutely sinful, to wish that not to be, which is: Nay, some things which are, ought to be wished they had not been; and it is a sin not to wish, they had not been. As those things that are displeasing to God, provocations to the eyes of his glory, things that are dishonourable to God, we ought to wish that such things had never been. God himself wisheth in that manner, *Psal.* 81. 13. *O that my people had hearkened unto me, and* Israel *had walked in my wayes!* They did not walk in his wayes; he wisheth they had; he desireth they had been better, more holy and more obedient then they were. To wish that a thing had not been, out of a tenderness that God should be offended by sin, is not only lawful, but very commendable. But to wish things otherwise then they are, as murmuring against, and misliking Gods administration, or out of a tenderness, because we suffer, is not only sinful, but abominable: When our wills rise up against the will of God, when we cannot be contented to be what God will have us to be, and to suffer what God would have us suffer; when we, who should learn to be content in every estate, are angry with our estates, and on that ground wish, O that this had never been, O that I had never seen this day, because it hath so much trouble in it; this wish hath I know not how much evil in it. So likewise when man shall (as it were) take upon him to direct the Almighty and only wise God in governing the world, secretly surmizing, or openly complaining, that things might be dispenced and manag'd with more wisdom, justice and moderation; such boldness is plain blasphemy. Some are ready to say in their hearts, about the Lord Christs governing the world, as *Absalom* did concerning his Father *David*'s government of *Israel*: Things are carried, *as if there were none deputed to hear* or redress the wrongs of men. *O that I were made Judge of the world, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come to me, and I would do him justice:* Things should not go thus if I had the ordering of them; such boldness is highest blasphemy. And yet with caution of due reverence to the Name of God, he gives us leave to debate

2 Sam. 15. 3, 4.

the matter with him, both concerning the ſtate of things in publick, and our own perſonal eſtates.

First thus, If we, while we are debating, adore his ſacred Juſtice and unſearchable Wiſdom, in that which we neither ſee, nor are able to underſtand. Thus while the Prophet *Jeremy* took liberty to plead with God about the miniſtrations of the world, he humbly premiſes, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments: why doth the way of the wicked proſper?* We may ask God the queſtion, and plead with him about his judgments, but we muſt not have the leaſt jealouſie or ſuſpition of his righteouſneſs, or of his judgments.

Vid ſemper retinter. Demiſs. ἀμεμπτον καὶ ἀμεμπτον, eſſe Deum.

Secondly, We may ſit down and bewail the ſtate of things, or our private eſtates; In that ſence we may wiſh things not to be that are, ſo as to bewail that ſuch things are; and this is it which *Job* eſpecially doth in this Chapter, he ſits down bewailing his condition: And ſo may we while we keep within our bounds, and duly regulate our lamentings. The bounds and rules may be ſuch as theſe. First, Deal not too much with the creature, either in complaining of the creature, or in complaining to the creature. Let ſecond cauſes paſs, or look upon them but in the ſecond place: pour your complaints into the boſom of God. Secondly, Conſider from whence your bewailings move; take heed they ſpring not from delicacy of ſpirit, or an unwillingneſs to lye under the croſs, becauſe it ſpoils your *fair ſhew in the fleſh*: While we bewail our own croſs, or publick croſſes, we ſhould be working our hearts to a willing and chearful ſufferance of the croſs. Though a man doth not love that which he bears, yet let him love to bear: It is an high ſtrain of ſpiritualneſs in bearing, when a Chriſtian can ſay, I love not that which I ſuffer, yet I love to ſuffer: I love not that which I bear, yet I love to bear. To bear, is the patience of neceſſity; to love to bear, is the patience of vertue: To love to bear, hath in it the higheſt affection, and the loweſt ſubjection unto Chriſt. The Apoſtles ſpirit was raiſed to this heroick pitch, and ſomewhat above it, when he ſaid, *I rejoyce in my ſufferings*, Col. 1. 24. (Joy is a degree beyond love) when he ſaid, *I take pleaſure in reproaches, in neceſſities, in perſecutions, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake*, 2 Cor. 12. 10. (Pleaſure is a degree beyond joy.) But eſpecially when he ſaid, *I glory in tribulations*, Rom. 5. 3.) *And God forbid that I ſhould glory* (in any thing elſe) *ſave in the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, *Gal.* 6. 14. To glory in a thing is more then to take pleaſure in it. Again, take heed your complaints and bewailings do not ariſe out of diſtruſt and unbelief; ſuch complainings are provocations. It was called *the provocation*, when the people of *Iſrael* made ſuch diſtruſting complaints, *Pſal.* 95. 8. *Harden not your hearts as in the provocation in the day of temptation in the wilderneſs.* And that the provocation lay in their unbelief, the Apoſtle is expreſs, *Heb.* 3. where quoting this text of the *Pſalm*, he concludes his whole diſcourſe thus, *ver.* 19. *So we ſee they could not enter in becauſe of unbelief.* If we mix faith with our tears, and while we bemoan our condition, yet believe, that God is good, and good to us; that God is all-ſufficient, and all-ſufficient to deliver us; we may wiſh that the things that are, were not; and that God, who changes not, would make a change in our eſtate.

Gal. 6. 12.

Tolerare eſt patientia neceſſitatis, amare tolerare eſt patientia virtutis.

For the cloſe of this point, I ſhall lay down theſe three Concluſions.

First, A man may deſire that, which God wills not, and not ſin in that deſire: As the deliverance of a people whom God will deſtroy.

Secondly, A man may ſin in deſiring that, which God wills: When it is the will of God that the father ſhall dye, the child ſins in deſiring it.

Thirdly, A man may, without ſin, deſire that not to be, which God wills; or which is the ſame, that not to be, which is: ſuch deſires being qualified according to the cautions before given.

There is a ſecond queſtion ariſing upon a part of this complaint: For *Job* complains not only of his troubles, but of his life: And ſeems to have been angry with his very being; while he wiſhes he had never been conceived, or that his Mother had been denyed the bleſſing of conception. The queſtion then is, *Whether an evil or a troubleſome being be worſe then no being? Or whether it be better not to be, then to be miſerable?*

I anſwer, There is a twofold miſerable being, one Temporal, the other Eternal. An eternal miſerable being is eternally worſe then a not being. But a temporal miſerable being, at the worſt, is better then a not being: And the reaſon is, becauſe our being is far more excellent then the outward comforts of our being, theſe being only accidental to our being; and therefore it neceſſarily follows, that it is better to be without outward comforts, then to be without a being. Again, life is better then all outward things, (Satan ſpake truly in the former Chapter, *All that a man hath will he give for his life.*) That which a man parts with rather then his life, is below his life. If then life be better then riches, or health, or pleaſures, then much more is our being better then all theſe. As a man may hold his life when all his eſtate and comforts are gone, ſo he doth hold his being when his life is gone: Life is brittle ware at the beſt, but mans being is of an *everlaſting make*. I know there are ſome who diſpute and conclude, that a being, even an eternally miſerable being, is better then no being: And I grant it is ſo in a metaphyſical, or a philoſophical notion; but in a theological notion it is not. A Philoſopher (keeping within the ſphere of Nature) can ſee no miſery ſo miſerable, or evil ſo bad, as not to be. But a Divine can, he ſees two things worſe. First, An everlaſting ſtain and guilt of ſin lying upon the ſoul. Secondly, The everlaſting wrath and diſpleaſure of God poured out upon the whole man. Hence Chriſt ſaith of *Judas*, who betrayed him, *Mat.* 26. 24. *It had been good for that man, if he had not been born*; becauſe that accurſed act, joyned with his impenitence and unbelief, ſubjected him to everlaſting miſery, to wrath for evermore; *It had been good he had never been born*; rather then to fall into ſuch a ſin, and from that to fall into Hell. Not to be born, is in this place, as much as not to be. And it had been good for him not to have been born, is as much as to ſay, it had been better for him not to have been born. It had been better for him not to have been, then to have committed ſuch a ſin, to lye under ſuch wrath, and to looſe ſuch happineſs for ever. Though a ſtate of damnation (conſidered abſtractedly) be better then no ſtate all, that is, then a not being; yet, in the concrete, it is not better to be damned then not to be: In it ſelf, eternal miſery is better then a non-entity; but a man eternally miſerable is worſe then a non-ens. And without doubt it will be the eternal deſire of the damned (and that deſire is both a part and an increaſe of their miſery) that they never had been, or now might ceaſe to be, rather then continue to be miſerable.

Si natus non fuiſſet ille homo, i.e. *ſi nunquam proceſſiſſet à non eſſe ad eſſe. Melius quippe fuiſſet nunquam fuiſſe quam tanta flagitia perpetrare, gratia quoque & gloria in æternum privari: ſed & appetibilius eſt homini abſolutè non eſſe, quam eſſe damnatum, propter æternam pœnatiſſimamq; miſeriam*, Dionyſ. Carthuſ. *in* Mat. 26. *v.* 24.

Now to ſhut up and reſolve the queſtion, as to the ground of it, *Job*'s complaint in this Text. I ſay, *Job* was only in the preſent feeling of temporal troubles, and he was beyond the fear of eternal: Therefore number this among his failings, that he wiſht he had never been conceived, becauſe he was thus afflicted.

VERS. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

With Kings and Counſellors of the earth, which build deſolate places for themſelves.
Or with Princes that had gold, who filled their houſes with ſilver.
Or as an hidden untimely birth, I had not been, as Infants which never ſaw light.
There the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary be at reſt.
There the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the oppreſſor, &c.

FRom the tenth verſe of this Chapter to the end of the nineteenth, we have ſhewed you, that *Job* layeth down the cauſe of his former bitterneſs and complainings againſt his day. At the tenth verſe he is angry, becauſe it hindred not his conception and his birth: And at the thirteenth he giveth a further cauſe of that cauſe; *For then* (ſaith he) *I ſhould have been at reſt*. Now being about to prove, that in death he ſhould have found reſt, he doth it by an induction of particulars. As if he had thus ſaid: Where all ſorts of perſons, even they who have been hardeſt wrought, and moſt troubled in the world, find reſt; there ſurely I ſhould have found reſt alſo: But in death, perſons that have been hardeſt wrought, and moſt troubled in the world,

world, find reſt; therefore there I ſhould have found reſt too. Now for the proving of this aſſumption, that in death all ſorts of perſons find reſt, even thoſe who have been moſt travail'd, tired, and worn out in the world: To prove this (I ſay) he gives inſtance in divers, almoſt all ranks, degrees and conditions of men.

First, In thoſe who are great, rich and wiſe, *in Kings and Counſellours of the earth, which build deſolate places for themſelves. And in Princes who had gold, who filled their houſes with treaſure*, &c.

With Kings and Counſellors of the earth.

מלך *Regnavit Conſilio & Legibus.*

With Kings.] The word here uſed, properly noteth ſuch as rule by Law, ſuch as are oppoſed to Tyrants, who rule according to the dictates of their own will. With ſuch Kings Counſellours are uſually joyned; *With Kings and Counſellours of the earth.* Great Princes have their Councils; and it is a happy conjunction when good Kings and good Counſellours meet together. Yea many times bad men are good Kings, when they are attended with good Counſellours: Whereas evil Counſellours often make a good man a bad King, and by their poiſonous whiſpers and inſtillations at the ear, corrupt the hearts, and taint the ſpirits of the beſt Princes. *In the multitude of Counſellours* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 15.21.) *there is ſafety.* The ſafety of Kings, and the ſafety of Kingdoms, doth conſiſt in *following this multitude.* Where there are good Counſellours, and a multitude of them, we may expect good, and much good, a multitude of bleſſings upon a Nation.

Now when *Job* had named theſe eminent perſons, *Kings and Counſellours*, he addeth ſomewhat further by way of their deſcription, he giveth as it were a character of them from their ſtudies and imployments, *With Kings and Counſellours of the earth, which build deſolate places for themſelves.*

חרבות *Proprie deſtructiones.*

It may ſeem very doubtful what is here meant by theſe *deſolate places, and the building of them.* The word in the Hebrew is, *deſolations*, or *deſtructions*; It comes from *Charah*, which ſignifies to *dry up*, becauſe dry places are deſolate places, as a deſolate wilderneſs for the drineſs of it, being unfit to ſuſtain man or beaſt. Hence the name of the Mount *Horeb*, Exod. 3.1. called ſo from drineſs, becauſe there was no water, *Deut.* 8.15. The ſame word alſo ſignifies *a ſword*; becauſe the ſword (as we ſee by woful experience) makes places deſolate. But what *Job* ſhould mean by this, *That Kings and Counſellours of the earth, build ſolitary places for themſelves*, is queſtionable.

First, Some take it for an expreſſion of vaſt and mighty buildings, Pallaces and houſes of ſuch largeneſs, and content, that when great Princes and Kings have their full retinue and families in them, they can ſcarce be ſeen: But I ſee no reaſon at all for that ſenſe, and therefore I paſs it; a little touch will make that opinion deſolate.

Others by theſe *deſolate places*, conceive that *Job* meaneth Forreſts and Parks, places of pleaſure, which Kings and great men uſe to build and make up for delight and recreation.

Or thirdly, That by *deſolate places*, are meant houſes built in deſolate or ſolitary places, in Woods and Forreſts. Princes and great men will have their houſes far remote from Towns and places of reſort, that they may be free from ſuitors, and retire when they pleaſe from the throng of the multitude. It is ſaid concerning *Solomon*, 1 King. 7.2. that after he had built the Temple, and his own houſe, for his Kingly reſidence, he built a houſe in the *Forreſt of Lebanon*; But this may be called a building in, rather then a building of, *deſolate places.*

Innuit loca vaſta & deſtructa deſolataq; quæ ipſi extruebant ad nomen ſibi comparandum. Druſ.

Fourthly, Rather, I conceive that Kings and Counſellours of the earth may be ſaid to build deſolate places, when finding places deſolate and ruined, they, with vaſt expences raiſe up and build ſtately Fabricks upon them, to get themſelves a name. As want and poverty, war and troubles turn a Pallace into a deſolate place; ſo riches and plenty, power and peace meeting together in Kings and great men, turn deſolate places into Pallaces. Kings and Counſellours are of ſuch wealth and power, that they can alter the moſt deſolate and ruinous places, into delicate edifices and ſtately dwellings.

Or laſtly, Which doth beſt ſuit with the ſubject of *Jobs* diſcourſe or curſe in this Chapter. He ſpeaking ſo much of death, by the *deſolate places*, we may underſtand, *Tombs and Sepulchers*, places of burial, which Kings and Counſellours build to, or for, themſelves: And ſo taken, the ſence may be given thus, as if *Job* had ſaid, if I had died, I ſhould have lien in the grave with as much eaſe and quiet, as thoſe great Princes and Kings of the earth, who build themſelves ſtately monuments to lie in; It would have been as well with me as with any of them, though interr'd under ſtately tombs. We know it was an ordinary thing for Kings and great men (eſpecially in ancient times) to prepare for themſelves coſtly monuments while they lived, as houſes for their bodies being dead: Which grew to ſuch exceſſive charge among the *Romanes*, that they were forced to make a Law to reſtrain it. The *Egyptians* beſtowed more care and coſt in building their tombs then their houſes. Even *Abraham* (Gen. 23. 16.) bought him a burying place before he built himſelf a houſe; though while he lived, he dwelt in a moveable tent, yet he would be as ſure as he could of a certain grave. And good *Joſeph* of *Arimathea* had made himſelf a ſepulcher in a rock, *Mat.* 27. 60. And it is ſaid of *Abſolom*, 2 Sam. 18. 18. *That in his life time he had taken and reared up a pillar*, (that is, he had artificially raiſed a great pile of goodly ſtones) *in the Kings dale, For he ſaid, I have no ſon to keep my name in remembrance*; *And he called the pillar after his own name.* Now as this pillar was to keep his name, ſo he intended it likewiſe to keep his body when he ſhould die; For it being related in the verſe before, how as ſoon as he was ſlain, they made no more ado with him, but *caſt him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of ſtones upon him.* The holy Ghoſt, to ſhew us the vanity of man in preparing for a dead body, while he neglects an immortal ſoul, and how God diſappoints the vain conceits of men in ſuppoſing to perpetuate their own name and greatneſs; The holy Ghoſt (I ſay) to ſhew this, preſently ſubjoyns in the ſacred ſtory, *Now* Abſolom *in his life time*, &c. As if he had ſaid, Do ye obſerve how this ambitious Prince was buried, even tumbled into a pit with a rude heap of ſtones caſt upon him. This man had prepared himſelf another kind of monument, even a ſumptuous pillar, *&c.* So that under, or by, that pillar, he had archt a curious vault for himſelf to be buried in, *called Abſaloms place*, namely, his burying place.

Noſtræ quidē legis interpretes, quo capite jubent ſumptus & luxum removere à Deorum manium Jure, Intelligunt imprimis ſepulchrorum munificentiam eſſe minuendam. Cicero. *Major apud Egyptios ſepulchrorū quā domorum cura.*

Inane monumentū quod vocatur κενο ταφιον Jun. *in loc.*

And the word which we have here *for deſolate places*, is in Scripture clearly applied to the grave, or a place of burial. We have it in *Ezek.* 26. 20. where the Prophet foreſhewing the deſtruction of *Tyre*, ſpeaks from the Lord, thus; *When I ſhall bring thee down with them that deſcend into the pit, and ſhall ſet thee in the low parts of the earth, in places deſolate of old.* There are three words in that verſe, and they are all *Synonima's*, words of the ſame ſignification; First, *The pit*: Secondly, *The low parts of the earth.* Thirdly, *The deſolate places*; and all theſe are but ſeveral expreſſions for the grave, or for a place to bury in: It is no more but this, *When I ſhall bring thee down, even with thoſe that lie buried in the grave.* So that the word which we tranſlate *deſolate places*, being alſo in other places uſed for the grave or a place of burial, we may very well expound it ſo here, that *deſolate places* are the graves or ſepulchers of *Kings, and Princes, and Counſellours of the earth*; which we may do eſpecially, becauſe *Job* treats in this place about death, and the ſtate of the dead.

Now *Tombs and Monuments* may be called *deſolate places* in two reſpects.

First, Becauſe when the body is layed in there, all company and all friends leave it; you ſhall have a mighty train following their friend to the grave, but there they leave him. *Kings and Counſellours* have ſtately Funerals, but when their ſubjects or friends, favourites or flatterers, have brought them to the tomb and opened the door of the grave, they go no further, they will not go in with them, and dwell with their bodies in the duſt of death, as much as they honour'd or ador'd them when they lived: ſo that, they are in *deſolate places.*

Secondly, Graves may be called *deſolate places*, becauſe Tombs and Sepulchres were in deſolate places, they were made in ſome high Mountain or caved Valley, in ſome place remote from the company and habitations of the living; for in former times they did not bury in Cities or in Towns, but in places where few came, till they were carried

ried, and therefore properly called *deſolate places*. It is obſerved, that among the *Romans*, the firſt Emperour that was buried in *Rome* was *Trajan*. And the law of the the *twelve Tables* did prohibit both the burial and the burning of the dead within the City. So then it is clear, that anciently Tombs and Monuments were erected in deſolate places, and that great coſt was beſtowed in building and beautifying of them; both which favour and illuſtrate the expoſition given. It follows in the Text;

Eutrop. *lib.* 8. *In Urbe ne ſepelito neve urito.*

Or with Princes that had gold, who fill their houſes with treaſure.

The word *Sar*, a Prince, in the Hebrew, as in moſt other languages, ſignifies *the chief, the head, the firſt*. Some Criticks conceive that our *Engliſh* word [*Sir*] comes from it; it is very near in ſound, and ſo is the *French* word [*Mounſier*] to this Original for a Prince or Chief.

שר

Job deſcribeth Princes thus, **they are ſuch as had gold.** noting both what the ſtudy and indeavours of Princes are, namely, to lay up gold; and likewiſe what is requiſite for them. Gold is of great uſe in a high eſtate; Treaſures are neceſſary for Princes. *Princes that had gold.* Therefore *Solomon* that wiſe Prince ſaith of himſelf, *Eccleſ.* 2. 8. And he putteth it among his Princely works, *I gathered me alſo ſilver and gold, and the peculiar treaſure of Kings.* When the *Wiſe-men* came to *Chriſt*, the firſt thing they offered him was *gold*, and they did *wiſely*, for he was a *Prince*: gold being the chief, and as it were the prince of Mettals, is a very proper offering for Princes. And howſoever wiſdom and goodneſs, juſtice and clemency are far more neceſſary requiſites in Princes then gold, yet there is ſuch a neceſſary conjunction of theſe two, that we find him in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 3. 7.) refuſing the government becauſe he was poor. *Be thou our Ruler* (ſay they v. 6.) *and let this ruine be under thine hand*, that is, be thou our Prince, and take charge of us; Not I ſaith he, *I will not be an healer, for in mine houſe is neither bread nor cloathing, make me not a Ruler of the people*; As if he had ſaid, I am but a poor man, a man of a weak eſtate, Princes muſt have treaſure and great eſtates to bear up the dignity of their places. As covetouſneſs, ſo poverty is very unbecoming in a Prince. The *Roman* ſtory tells us, that when two great Councels ſtood in competition for a great employment in the affairs of that Common-wealth, One of the Senators being askt upon which of the two he would beſtow his vote, anſwered, upon neither: And gives this reaſon, *One hath nothing, and the other can never have enough*; One was ſo poor that he had nothing to ſupport him, and the other was ſo covetous that nothing would ſatisfie him. Therefore, as before *Job* joyned Counſellors with Kings, ſo here he joyneth gold with Princes; *The next expedient for Princes to counſel and wiſdom, are gold and treaſures.* We find indeed, that God gives it in charge to the Kings of *Iſrael*, concerning their gathering of treaſures, that they ſhould not be exceſſive, (*Deut.* 17. 17.) *Neither ſhall he greatly multiply to himſelf ſilver and gold.* He doth not ſay, your Prince or your King ſhall not multiply ſilver or gold, but *he ſhall not greatly multiply ſilver or gold*, that is, he ſhall not ſet his heart upon them, or think he never hath enough, he ſhall not greatly do it, but let him be careful to do it proportionably to his occaſions either of peace or war.

Valerius Maximus. *l.* 6. *c.* 4.

Further, It is added, **Who fill their houſes with treaſure.** The word which we here tranſlate *treaſure*, is ordinarily tranſlated *ſilver*. The root from which it ſprings, ſignifieth *to deſire*, and the reaſon is, becauſe treaſure, ſilver or gold, are ſuch deſireable things, or things upon which the deſires of moſt men are ſet: therefore the *Hebrews* give ſilver a name proper to its own nature, or rather to the nature of men, whoſe deſires are enflamed after it. With this deſireable thing, *Princes fill their houſes.*

בכף *Argentum quod ab omnibus appetitur.*

What are theſe houſes?

A houſe is a place wherein man liveth, or inhabiteth while he liveth: this is the ordinary acception of the word; and ſo it may be taken here, for the ordinary dwelling houſes or Pallaces of Princes; and then it is an heightning of the ſenſe, *They had gold*, yea, they had ſo much, as they *filledthe ir houſes with it.*

Then again, (That we may keep in this clauſe to the expoſition given in the laſt, of the *deſolate places*,) we may underſtand by the houſes that theſe Princes filled with treaſure, the *graves*, the *Tombs* wherein they were buried; And it is the language of Scripture, to call the grave a houſe, mans houſe. Two Texts I will give you for it, one out of this book, *Job* 30. 23. where *Job* ſpeaking of the grave, calleth it *the houſe appointed for all living*; And *Eccleſ.* 12. 5. where *Solomon* calls it our *long home. Man dieth, and goeth to his long home*; the word in the Original is, he goeth to the houſe of his age, or to the houſe of age. God is called the *rock of ages*, becauſe he is an *everlaſting ſtrength*, Iſa. 26. 4. The grave is called an houſe of age, becauſe it is a very laſting houſe, an abiding houſe, a houſe where man muſt abide till God ſound him up by the voice of a *Trumpet* to the reſurrection. So then the grave is likewiſe called an houſe, the *houſe of all living*, becauſe thither every one that is living is travailing, man travails to the grave as to his houſe; And *a long home*, in oppoſition to our *ſhort home*, our uncertain abode in thoſe houſes wherein we dwell upon the earth.

בית עולמו *Ad domum ſæculi.*

Princes (ſaith *Job*) *that had gold*; and this is one uſe they make of it, *they fill their houſes*, that is, their graves or their tombs with this treaſure. In thoſe times (it ſeems) they did not only beſtow great coſt upon their Tombs and places of burial, but they put great ſtore of treaſure into the Tombs with them. According to this interpretation, the meaning of *Job* may be thus repreſented, *If I had died before*, and had been buried poorly and obſcurely, *yet I ſhould have done as well as Kings and Counſellours, who with vaſt expence of treaſure build ſtately Tombs for themſelves, yea as well as Princes that put their treaſure into their Tombs with them.*

That it was a cuſtom to put in much treaſure into Tombs, is obſerved by *Joſephus* in his 13th book of Antiquities and 15th chapter, ſhewing how *Hircanus* opened *Davids* Sepulcher, and took out three thouſand Talents. And in his 16th book, chap. 11. he notes, that afterward *Herod* opened the Sepulcher of *David*, and thought to have found a great deal of treaſure there, but found only ſome precious garments, *&c.* And the ſtory is famous out of *Herodotus* concerning *Semiramis*, That ſhe having built a ſtately Tomb, makes this inſcription upon it, *Whatſoever King ſhall ſucceed here and wants money, let him open this Tomb, and he ſhall have enough to ſerve his turn*; Which *Darius* in after-ages being in ſtraights for want of treaſure attempting to do, in ſtead of money found only this reproof written and laid up there, *Unleſs thou hadſt been extreamly covetous and greedy of filthy lucre, thou wouldeſt not have opened the graves of the dead to ſeek for money.* The Lord threatens by the Prophet *Jeremy*, that the *Chaldeans ſhall bring out the bones of the King of* Judah, *and the bones of his Princes, and the bones of the Prieſts, and the bones of the Prophets*, &c. *out of their graves*, chap. 8. 1. It is conceived that the reaſon why the *Chaldeans* digged up and raked in the graves of the *Jewes*, was not ſo much from cruelty as from covetouſneſs: They having heard that the *Jewes* uſed to put rich ornaments upon the dead, or riches into their graves with them. Or this might be as a juſt puniſhment of that greedineſs after gain, ſo eminent in the *Jewes*, that the Prophet in the very Chapter where this is threatned, chargeth them thus, verſ. 10. *Every one from the leaſt to the greateſt, is given to covetouſneſs.* Thus it is clear, that there was a cuſtom to put riches and treaſure into the grave with the dead, to which *Job* might allude in this place.

Joſeph. *lib.* 13. *Antiq. c.* 15. *& lib.* 16. *cap.* 11.

Herodotus, *lib.* 1.

So much for the opening of the words. From the ſenſe given,

Obſerve, firſt, *That neither power, nor wiſdom, nor riches, are any priviledge at all againſt the ſtroake of death.*

Here are Kings, men that have great power; Counſellours, men full of wiſdom; *Princes that have riches*, ſo much gold that they can ſtuff their graves with it: yet theſe cannot defend themſelves againſt death. Death will not obey the authority of Kings, nor doth it fear their frowns; the ſubtilty or policy of Counſellors is not able to defeat it; there is no eloquence, no Rhetorick can perſwade death to depart; all the gold and riches in the world cannot bribe death or ſtay its hand; I (ſaith *Job*) ſhould have found Kings and Counſellors, and rich men, even all theſe in the grave, and we ſhould have reſted together. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath*, (Prov. 11. 4.) *but righteouſneſs delivereth from death. Righteouſneſs deliver-*

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eth from death? why, shall not righteous men die? Surely *Job* might have said, *with righteous men*, with holy men should I have rested; with *Abraham*, with *Isaac*, and with *Jacob*, these are in the grave, death seized on them as well as other Princes, and Kings and Counsellors: How then doth *Solomon* say, that *righteousness delivereth from death?* Death is there either to be understood of some dangerous judgment; for, saith he, *riches avail not in a day of wrath*, that is, in a day of publick calamity; *but righteousness delivereth from death*; that is, from those troubles and dangers: God hath respect to a righteous person, and hideth him from that death. Or, *righteousness doth deliver from death*, that is, from the evil of death, from the sting of death, from the bitterness of death; the bitterness and evil of death is past to a righteous man: but riches they avail not at all; they cannot at all, as not deliver from death, so not mitigate the pain, or pull out the sting, or sweeten the bitterness of death; yea rather, riches increase all these: That is a truth, *O death! how bitter is thy remembrance to a man that is at ease in his possession?* Men may put their riches with them into the grave, but riches cannot keep them a moment out of the grave. This thought, *How bitter!*

Secondly, When *Job* speaks of *Kings, and Counsellors, and Princes*, these great men of the world, he sheweth us, what their study and business for the most part is in the world; it is about worldly things: *They build desolate places, they have gold, they fill their houses with treasure*; these are their employments, the current of their cares and endeavours runs out this way. Hence observe,

That, *The thoughts of the greatest and wisest of the world are usually but for, and about the world.*

The poor receive the Gospel, and the rich receive the world. As the godly man is described by his faith, *Abraham believed God*; by fear, by uprightness, by justice, as *Job* in the first Chapter of this Book; by *meekness*, as *Moses*, &c. by the heavenliness of their spirits and conversations; *Our conversation is in heaven*, Phil. 3. 20. so worldly men are described by their proper studies. *Kings, Counsellors, and Princes* build palaces, gather riches, heap up gold; *they buy, they sell, they build, they plant, they eat, they drink*, as the worldly world is pictured, *Luke* 17. 27, 28. In *Psalm.* 17. great men are called, *the men of the world*, as if they were for nothing but the world, or all for the world; as if all their provisions were laid in for this world; so it follows, *who have their portion in this life*, ver. 14. It is a sad thing to have received our portion. It is said of the rich man, *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things*, thou hast had thy portion. In *Psal.* 49. 11. it is said concerning such men, that *their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; and they call their Lands after their own names. Their inward thoughts are upon these things*; It is somewhat a strange kind of speaking, to say, *their inward thoughts*; for there are no thoughts but inward: thoughts are all wrought in the secret shop of the heart. But there is an elegancy in it, the Hebrew is, *their inwards, their internals*; *their inwards* are, how they may get themselves a name and riches; not only are their thoughts about these things, but the very inmost of their thoughts; the most retired thoughts and recesses of the soul are about these things; these lie nearest to their hearts: as the story saith of Queen *Mary*, when she died, *she bade them open her, and they should find* Calice *at her heart*; it was a pitiful case, that a rotten Town should lie (where Christ ought) at the heart of such a Princess: The heart is the place where Christ and the thoughts of heaven should lodge: all below heaven, should be below our hearts. But as a godly mans inward thoughts are for heaven, and the things of heaven, for grace & for holiness; so he hath thoughts upon the world, but (if I may so speak) they are his *outward thoughts*, not his *inward thoughts*; that which lies nearest his heart; his inward thoughts are for heaven; so the inward thoughts of worldly men are for the world: The Apostle might well say, *Not many wise, nor many rich, nor many noble are called.* The thoughts of wise Counsellors, of potent Kings, and rich Princes, are legible in their actions.

Internum vel interiora.

Thirdly, Having expounded these *desolate places* to be Tombs, and these *houses* Graves; observe,

That, *Some take in their life-time, more care for their Sepulchers, then they do for their Souls.*

Here are great men, what do they? *They build desolate places*; they will be sure to have stately monuments: *And they had gold*; they will be sure to fill their graves with treasure, they will be buried richly, or they will have their riches buried with them; but what care did these take for their poor souls in the mean time, where they should lie? Had they taken order what should become of their souls? When all things are disposed of, this choice piece, for the most part, is left undisposed of, unprovided for: Some will carefully provide for their children, they will provide for their families, they will provide for their dead bodies, for their carkases; but for their immortal souls there is no provision made: While their bodies are assured of a resting-place, they may say of, and to their departing souls (as that trembling Emperor bespake his) *O our poor fleeting, wandring souls! whither are you going, where is the place of your rest?* As it is said of *Absolom* in the place before cited, *He in his life-time had reared up a pillar* (a monument, or a Tomb) *for himself, in the Kings dale.* What a careful Prince was this for his body? But how careless was this Prince for his soul? He will have a pillar to preserve his name, and yet runs out in rebellion against his own father, to the destruction of his soul. The great business of the Saints on earth, is, to get assurance of a place for their souls to lodge in when they die; it troubles them not much, what lodging their bodies have, if they can put their spirits into the hand of Christ: What though their bodies be cast upon a dunghil, or trodden upon, like mire in the streets, by cruel men? A heathen said, *The loss of a Funeral, or a Sepulcher, may easily be born*: I am sure a Christian may. That loss will never undo any man, especially not those that believe: For in the person of such, the Apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* 5. 2. *We know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* All that rich worldlings, and ungodly great ones can say when they die, is, *We know when the earthly house of this Tabernacle shall be dissolved*, we have a building of man, a stately tomb made with hands, and with all the skill of the cunning artificer; we have seen it done already, or we have taken order in our wills to have it done. The believer erects his pillar in heaven, and his whole life is a preparation for his house which is above; and often he settles the business so, that he can say, *I know, that when this house of my body is taken down, I have a building*, &c. And he can say, *I know*, with far greater assurance then any worldly man, who hath sealed it in his will, that thus and thus his body shall be intombed. It is a sad thing to take care for a rotting carkass, and forget an immortal soul.

Facilis jactura sepulchri.

Job, having thus parallell'd or compared himself in death, with Kings, Counsellors, and Princes, notwithstanding all their pompous Funerals and curious Tombs, passeth, as it were, in the next verse, to the other extream.

Verse 16. **Or as an hidden untimely birth, I had not been, as infants which never saw light.**

As if he had said, if any think that I have strained too high, in making my self equal in death with Kings, *&c.* yet surely I should have been as those, that never knew themselves to be in this world; or as those that the world never knew to be, that is, *as an hidden untimely birth*; or, *as infants which never saw light.*

An hidden untimely birth.] The word [*Nephel*] in the Hebrew, for *an untimely birth*, comes from [*Naphel*] which signifieth to fall down, or to fall off, as *untimely fruit* falls off from a tree; which falling off before it is ripe, is unprofitable and useless. When the mother miscarries, her fruit is like the fruit of a tree, shaken off and falling down before it be ripe, or in the blooming. And the same word is used in the Hebrew, to signifie a *Giant*: *There were* (Nephilim) *Giants in the earth in those dayes*, Gen. 6. 4. And the reason why they are so called, is, as some apprehend, because they were *Apostates*, such as fell off from God, from true worship and Religion: Or, because they did *fall upon men*, as that phrase is applied to cruel men, *they did fall upon the poor*: So the word is used, *chap.* 1. *ver.* 15. of this Book. *The* Sabeans *fell upon* Job's *Oxen*, &c. *They who fall*

Quasi deciduus aut immaturus fructus qui ante maturitatis tempus ex arbore decidit inutilis. Bold. *in loc.*

fall from God by impiety, will quickly fall upon men by cruelty. Or, because the dread and terrour of them made men to fall down for fear before them. It is very observable, that the same word should signifie an *infant* of less then a span long, and a Giant (it may be) of more then *six cubits and a span* (1 *Sam.* 17. 4.) and both upon equal reason, and with equal significancy.

Further, We may take notice, that the Hebrews express any dead body or carkass by the same word; the dead body of the oldest man is called *Mappeleth*, from the same root and reason too in part, from which they denominate an untimely birth, that never lived a day. When the old man dies, he falls as well as the newly conceived embryon; the one falls off as a blossom from the tree, and the other as the fruit fully ripe, which (if you pull it not off) must fall off. The Greek word for a dead body, and the Latine, have the same reason of their derivation; namely from falling; so saith *Job*, I had been as one of these untimely births, that fall to the earth before their time. The Apostle *Paul* saith concerning himself (1 *Cor.* 15. 3.) *I was as one born out of due time*; I was an untimely birth. Some of the Naturalists say, that word signifies such abortions as are after the seventh, and before, or at the fortieth day of conception. Others, that it signifies those who are born the eighth moneth; which, usually as they are untimely, so they die. Now *Paul* calleth himself an untimely birth, to suit the humble thoughts which he had of himself, with an humble expression of himself; which reason he seems to give in the next words, *ver.* 9. *For I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an Apostle*, &c. Even as an untimely birth is not fit to be called a birth; or, because children that are so born, are very imperfect, they are lesser and weaker then those of full growth: So saith he, I am as a poor abortive, as a child born out of due time; *I am the least of the Apostles, and am less then the least of all Saints*, Eph. 3. 8. I am not come to that stature and growth of a timely birth. Secondly, He calleth himself an untimely birth, or one born out of due time, probably for this reason, because of the suddenness or violence of his conversion; for you know, every abortion or untimely birth comes from some sudden danger into which the mother falleth; some strain or violence causeth abortion: *Paul* in this sence was an untimely birth, his conversion was a wonderful violent conversion; Christ came upon him of a sudden, whereas the other Apostles were a great while a forming, a shaping, a fitting to an Apostleship; but *Paul* was, as it were, in a moment conceived and born, brought forth and perfected an Apostle; and so from the suddenness and violence of his new-birth, he may call himself an *untimely birth*.

But to pass on from that, to the words of *Job*, *As an hidden untimely birth, I had not been.* Here are two things distinct about this birth. First, It is called *an untimely birth.* Secondly, *A hidden birth.*

An *untimely birth* is called a *hidden birth*, because it is hid from the eyes of others; abortives are unpleasing and undesirable spectacles, therefore they are covered, and laid by; there is no remembrance of their form or likeness; therefore *Solomon* speaking of an untimely birth, *Eccles.* 6. 4. thus describes it, *He cometh in with vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.*

As a hidden untimely birth, [¶ *had not been.*]

An untimely birth is said *not to have been.* A not being is taken two wayes. First, Strictly, for that which never had any life at all; and so some interpret this; for there are abortions or untimely births before quickning, or before *there is any life.* Secondly, Not to be, is, not to subsist, or not to live: When that which hath lived, dies, it is said not to be. The Prophet brings in *Rachel, weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were not*, *Jer.* 31. 15. that is, because they were dead. *Joseph*'s Brethren, pleading before unknown *Joseph*, tell him, *Thy servants are twelve brethren, and behold, the youngest is this day with his father, and one is not*, Gen. 42. 13. that is, one is dead. So *Jacob* speaks at *ver.* 30. of the same Chapter; *Joseph is not*, &c. Hence that answer of the wise man to *Alexander*, who demanding of him, whether the living or the dead were more in number? said, *the living; for the dead are not.*

As infants that never saw the light.] This clause may be an exposition of the former clause, shewing what *Job* means by an untimely birth; even *an infant that never saw the light.* Yet all infants that never see the light, are not untimely births. Infants are often still-born, when their mothers have gone out their time to the last hour, before the pains of travail come upon them. And therefore I rather understand this as distinct from the former. In the one *Job* intending such as are born before time, which births are commonly called *abortions* or *miscarriages.* And in the other, those who die in the birth, who are commonly called *still-born.* The word which is here used for an infant, signifies properly a weaned infant; but it is likewise transferred to signifie an infant dying in the birth; which is therefore said never to see the light; so *Solomon* expresseth it too, in that place, *Eccles.* 6. 5. *Moreover, he hath not seen the Sun*: And in allusion to this, *David*, when he curseth the plots of wicked men, that though they have conceived mischief, and though they have gone with it a long time, and are ready to bring it forth; yet, in *Psal.* 58. 8. saith he, *Let them be* (that is, let their counsels and designes be) *like the untimely birth of a woman, that they may not see the sun*; that is, let them be dashed and blasted, let them never bring forth their poysonous brood, to the hurt and trouble of the world. To these, saith *Job*, I am sure, I should have been like, if not to Kings and Counsellors, and it had been as well, and all one to me. In death, untimely births, and those that go down to the grave, as a sheaf of corn that cometh in ripe, are all one; there is no difference in the grave, between the Infant that never saw the sun, and him that hath lived to see an hundred recourses of the sun.

The speech of *Job* proceeds to a third soft; he strengthens his argument of rest in death. I should certainly have had rest in death; for in death, even they who have been most vexed, who have had least rest, who have been even restless in the world, they have found rest in death; this he clears by a further induction, in *vers.* 17, 18, 19.

There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest.

There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voyce of the oppressor.

The small and great are there, and the servant is free from his master.

When he had spoken of the rest of death, concerning those great and mighty ones; and the rest of death, concerning untimely births and infants; then he speaks of the rest which poor oppressed ones, or which wicked oppressors have in death; all these have a rest in regard of outward bodily troubles, agitations and labours, in the grave, therefore certainly there I should have been at rest.

There (that is, in the grave) **the wicked cease from troubling.**] True rest and wickedness never meet; rest and the wicked meet but seldom. And it is but half a rest, and it is rest but to half a wicked man, to his bones in the grave; and it is rest to that half but for a little time, only till the resurrection.

The word which is here used for **wicked**, is considerable: Though every wicked man be a sinner, yet every sinner is not a wicked man: It is one thing to sin, and another thing to be wicked; there are divers words in the hebrew tongue, which signifie, as it were, the divers statures of sinners, and the degrees of sin; and the hebrew, which usually expresseth many things by one word, doth here use many words to signifie one thing, only differing in degree.

First, A sinner is called sometime [*Cata*] that's the lowest expression; noting one that doth miss a mark, or his way; he aimes at the mark, yet misses it; he would go in the right way, yet mistakes it, or is misled: So every man, the holiest men are sinners; they often miss the mark, the white which God sets up, though they take their aim, and carefully level at it.

vel infirmitate carnis committuntur, Moller. *in* psal. 106. v. 6.

Secondly, A sinner is called [*Peshang*] which signifieth a willingness to sin, and an unwillingness to obey; it signifieth pride in sinning, or a sinning from pride, which is plain rebellion.

Thirdly, The word here used, and in divers other places, signifieth wickedness in the height, and men most active in wickedness. So that when *Job* saith, *There the wicked are at rest*, he means, those who had been restless in sin, who could

πτῶμα à πίπτειν, cadaver, à cadendo.

ἔκπρωμα, apud Aristotelem *significat fœtum post septimum & intra quadragesimum diem conceptum; Apud* Hippocratem, *octivo mense natos.* Aristot. l. 7. *de Hist. Animal. c.* 7. *Justam temporis ordinē servavit dominus in creandis fovendis & formandis Apostolis.* Paulus *vero vix dum bene concepto spiritu vitali ex utero projectus fuerat, momento simul genitus & natus, & vir plenæ ætatis fuit.* Pined.

Esse dicitur qui vivit; & non esse, qui mortuus est.

עולל

Significat parvulum ablactatum, per Catachresin *usurpatur de infantibus in utero matris extinctis.*

רשעים

חטא

Erravit à scopo vel via, ea potissimum peccata significat, quæ vel errore, vel per ignorantiam

פשע

Peccatum ex superbia, transgressio non simplex & qualiscunq;, sed malitiosa ac temeraria, unde & ali-

quãdo rebellio vocatur. Mus. in Ps. 5. v. 10.

could not sleep, till they had done mischief, nor scarce sleep for doing mischief; he means those, who had out-run others in the sinful activity, or rather turbulency and unquietness of their spirits; such as are without peace themselves, and seek to molest and disturb the peace of others: The Prophet describes them to be like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, (*Isa.* 57. 20.) The proper signification of the word (*wicked*) in the hebrew, is the word unquiet, vexatious, or without rest, 1 *Sam.* 14. 47. *Whereſoever* Saul *turned himſelf, he vexed the enemy.* So, *Job* 34. 29. And the reason of it is given, because men of this height and stature in sin, are men of troubled, unquiet and restless spirits. As it notes a height in holiness and grace, to have a kind of unquietness upon the spirit, till we can do good, and compass holy designs and purposes; when we are not only pious, but zealous; as *David* resolves, *Psal.* 132. 3, 4. *Surely I will not come into the Tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to mine eye-lids, until I find out a place for the Lord,* &c. So unquietness upon the spirit, till it can put sin into act, and compass an evil project, notes a compleatness in the sinner. Sin wakes and works in them to purpose, who cannot sleep till they have wrought out their sin; of these, it is properly, that *Job* speaks here; these troublers of themselves, and troublers of *Israel*; these, *whom the Lord shall trouble this day*, or one day: There *so*, in the grave, *these wicked ones cease from troubling*; there they have a kind of rest, being dead, who could not rest while they lived; there, at least, they cease from raging. This word (*Ragaz*) notes any vehement motion, either of mind or body, arising from fear, or grief, or anger, or the concurrence of them all: As when *David* heard of the death of *Absolom*, the text saith, 2 *Sam.* 18. 33. *The King was much moved,* &c. He was, as it were, for a time, enraged and distracted, much troubled, I am sure, with passions, or the working of many passions together. The word, you see, in the hebrew, hath a near affinity in sound and sence, with our *English* word *raging*; and we translate it so, *Psal.* 2. *Why do the heathen rage?* It is the same word; so here, *the wicked cease from raging*, or, from troubling; that is, from that madness of rage in troubling the poor, especially such as fear God: Wicked men are not only sinful, but they are mad in their sin; as *Paul* speaks of himself before his conversion; *I punished them oft in every Synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange Cities,* Acts 26. 11. In *Paul* unconverted, see the picture of a wicked mans spirit; he could not cease from troubling, but in death he shall.

And there the weary are at rest.

Sicut prior pars de tyrannis & oppressoribus intelligitur, ita hæc secunda potest de afflictis & oppressis. Sed congruitus si tota hæc periodus referetur ad viros famosos, qui dicuntur fessi robore, mille sese objicientes vitæ discriminibus. Pined.

The weary.] Some, by the *weary*, understand those whom the wicked have wearied, by troubling them; and that is a truth, that in the grave, the wearied, those that wicked men have turmoiled and vexed, are at rest. But rather, by the *wearied*, we are to understand only the wicked themselves; *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest*, that is, there those wicked men, who weary and tire out themselves with vexing and troubling of others, are at rest; they then cease from those vexatious undertakings, which have consumed their spirits, and worn out their bodies; and the reason why I rather expound the weary to be the wicked (though the other be a good sence) is, because *Job* afterward speaks of the rest of those that are wearied, who are passive under the cruelties and plottings of those wicked ones, *There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest.* Hence observe,

First, That, *Wicked men are troublers both of themselves and others.*

There the wicked cease from troubling; as if the wicked did nothing in the world, but trouble the world. As before *Job* had given the special character of great ones and Princes, *They get Gold, build Palaces and Sepulchers, and fill them with treasure*: So, when he speaks of wicked ones, he saith, *There the wicked cease from troubling*; as intimating, that while they live in the world, they are a perpetual trouble to the world. The Prophet *Isaiah* is express, (*chap.* 57. 20.) *The wicked are as the troubled sea, that cannot rest*; they can do any thing better, then be quiet; they have not strength enough to sit still, *they cannot rest.* King *Ahab* had this apprehension of *Elijah* (1 *Kings* 18. 17.) when the Kingdom of *Israel* was full of trouble (for God did vex them with great adversity.) *Art not thou he* (saith *Ahab*) *that troubleth Israel?* No, saith *Elijah* (who could make up a better judgment then *Ahab*, in that point) *I am not he that troubleth Israel, but it is thou and thy fathers house.* *Ahab* had sold himself to work wickedness, and so had stock enough to purchase trouble for *Israel*: *Wicked ones are the troublers of all*; they are troublers of their own families, troublers of the places and cities where they live, the troublers of a whole Kingdom, troublers of the Churches of Christ, and the troublers of their own souls; they are born to trouble both *active* and *passive*, they love to trouble, and they have what they love: It is the character, and the argument of an extream wicked man, to be a troubler; even as it is a great argument of great grace, when you see one a comforter of others, or busie to help others, to do good to others: *The tree is known by its fruits.*

Secondly, Taking the latter words of this verse (*There the weary be at rest*) for those wicked men who are wearied by troubling others, we may observe,

That, *Wicked men, by troubling others, do as much weary and tire out themselves.*

And though they find, that in troubling others, they weary themselves, yet they will not give it over, they will trouble still. *Job* saith thus of a wicked man in *chap.* 15. of this Book, *v.* 20. *The wicked man travaileth with pain all his dayes*; not only doth he put others to pain, but himself is in pain: and they are frequently expressed in Scripture, as wearying themselves; sometimes, as *weary of themselves*; so *Jer.* 9. 5. *They weary themselves to commit iniquity.* And, *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels*, Isa. 47. 13. *Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way*, Isa. 57. 10. and that was but a way of troubling the Church: *She wearieth her self with lies*, Ezek. 24. 12. The sins which wicked men commit only in and against themselves, weary them; but they are most wearied, when they are persecutors of others. It is observed of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, that *famous troubler of the Church* (by him that hath written the *Itinerary of the Saints*) that he did undertake more troublesom journyes, and went upon more hazardous designes, meerly to trouble, and vex, and oppose the Church of the *Jews*, then ever any of his predecessors did about any other conquest or noble enterprize; that he travelled more miles to do mischief, then (as the Author doth compare their journies) any of the Saints did to do good; and therefore he concludes the story of him, with this general truth concerning persecutors, *All such wicked men go with more trouble to eternal death, then the Saints do to eternal life*; they toil themselves more, and suffer more, *to work out their own damnation*, then the godly do, *in working out their salvation:* To be wicked in the height, is the height of trouble. *Solomon* saith, *that a good man is merciful to his beast, but a wicked man is unmerciful to himself; he will tire himself more then a good man will tire his beast.* This is a certain truth, *he that will follow sin, and serve his own lusts* (especially the lusts of pride and oppression, whosoever serveth those lusts) serveth a hard master, a master that will make him toil and sweat, and weary himself while he lives, and at last pay him with death. The work of sin is bad enough, but (as to the sinner) the wages of sin is worse.

The last thing I shall note from it is this; *There the wicked cease from troubling. There*, where is that? At the grave, when they come to die, they make an end of their troubling, not before. Hence observe,

Wicked men will never cease troubling, until they cease to live.

In the grave they cease troubling; there they are at rest; *If they should live an eternity in this world, they would trouble the world to eternity.* As a godly man never gives over doing good, he will do good as long as he lives, though he fetches many a weary step; so wicked men never give over doing evil, until they step into the grave: And the reason of it is, because it is their nature to do evil; and that which men do naturally, they do alwayes, they never give it over. Nothing but death can suspend and stop nature.

There are indeed two cases wherein wicked men cease troubling,

troubling, while they live; one is, when they are desperate in their designs, and see they cannot by troubling themselves, trouble others sufficiently; when they cannot have their will, nor compass their ends fully; they being in despair of doing the mischief they would, will do no more: So the Historian notes concerning *Diocletian*, the most bloody persecutor that ever the Church had; at last he gave over the empire, and declined the government (not because he was weary of persecuting, but he was weary of being disappointed) *because he saw he could not hatch that which he had long brooded, or bring forth those designes he had contrived for the utter extirpation of the Christians*: Being thus out of hope to do all the mischief he intended, he puts himself out of power to do that mischief, *resignes the Empire*. A second case, wherein wicked men cease troubling, is, when they have fully attained their ends in this life; sometimes they bring their work to such a perfection, to such a period, that they think they have attained all, all their plots have taken, all's theirs; and when they have fully done the Devils work, then he gives them a play day, they have some cessation: But otherwise, except in these two cases, they never cease from troubling; therefore the Apostle *Paul*, *Gal.* 5. 12. prayeth, *that they which trouble them, might even be cut off*: As if he had said, they are such a kind of men, there is no curing of them; they will never have done doing mischief, until they be cut off by death. As God threatens death, to deter men from sin; so sometimes, he is (as it were) constrained to send death to keep men off from sin: A godly man saith, *If God kill me, yet will I trust in him*; and some wicked men say (in effect, if not in the letter) *till God kills us, we will sin against him.* The Psalmist asks the question, *Psal.* 94. 4, 5. *How long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked triumph? How long shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity boast themselves? They break in pieces thy people, O Lord.* What answer shall we give, what date shall we put to this, *How long?* The answer is given, *ver.* 23. *The Lord shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and cut them off in their own wickedness; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off.* As if he had said, except the Lord cut them off in their wickedness, they will never leave off doing wickedly. *The wicked* (saith *Hannah*, in her song, 1 *Sam.* 2. 9.) *shall be silent in darkness.* The wicked will sin while they have any light to sin by; therefore God puts out their candle, and sends them down into darkness, and there they will be quiet; *The wicked shall be silent in darkness.* They will sin against the light of the word, as long as they enjoy the light of the world; and do the works of spiritual darkness, till they are shut up in pœnal darkness. It follows,

Existimant aliqui Diocletianum etiam dolore motum fuisse, ut imperium deponeret cum perficere se non posse videret ea quæ contra Christianos molitus fuerat. Chr. Pez. Mellif. *hist. Par.* 2.

Quam mortem comminatus est Deus homini, ut à peccando illum deterreat; eandem ipsum infert ut à peccando cesset.

There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voyce of the oppressor.

Here is another sort [**The prisoners.**]. The word is, those that are bound: And these prisoners may be of two sorts. First, Slaves and captives, who are under *hard task-masters*, such as set them to hard labour; or, men that are in debt, and put into prison, by *cruel Creditors*: Prisoners, in either of these respects, are at rest, or they rest together in the grave: *When they have paid that debt to nature, all their other debts are discharged*; death is their debt to nature, and when they have paid that debt, they (saith *Job*) receive an acquittance (a *quietus est*) *they rest together*; when they have done that work, the work of dying, poor captives and prisoners have done all, and paid all.

Will It is added [**They hear not the voyce of the oppressor.**] The word which we translate an oppressor, signifieth, by violence to compel one to work or to pay a debt: So the Task-masters, *Exod.* 5. are said to compel the people with violence, to go on about the work. The same word signifieth both an *Exacter* and an *Oppressor*; an exacter of debt, an exacter of tribute, an exacter of labour; in all these wayes the word is used: and because those three (tribute, debt and labour) are demanded many times against right and equity, often with much violence and cruelty, therefore the word signifies also an oppressor: Exaction is alwayes within a step of oppression, and is often put for the same; and because oppressors use bitter words, and hard speeches, wounding with their tongues, as much as with their hands; therefore poor prisoners dying, are said to be *free from the voice of the oppressor*. Poor prisoners *hear not the voice of the oppressor* in the grave; there they are beyond the sound, and out of the hearing of those vexing, railing task-masters, or exacting creditors. Hence observe,

First, That, *An estate of bondage is a miserable restless estate.*

There the prisoners rest together. Captives and bond-men have little rest, until they rest in the grave: The language of prisoners is a sorrowful language; their speech is sighs, *Psal.* 79. 11. *Let the sighing of the prisoners* come before thee. And, *Psal.* 12. 5. *Because of the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy.* It is a restless condition, which yields nothing but sighs and groans: Indeed we read in the *Acts* (chap. 16. 25.) of prisoners that spake another language, even the language of joy; we read there of the singing of the prisoners; *Paul* and *Silas* did not sigh, but sing in the night, while they were bound in prison; but this was extraordinary: They, receiving enlargement of heart, and wonderful consolation from the holy Ghost, pray in prison, and sing praise to God; *Christ sent the Comforter* that night to them, who made them a feast in the prison, and they sung to it, they made musick, heavenly musick; *they sung praise to God.* It was not from the good chear, or any comfortable message which they had from the Jaylor, or from their oppressors; but Christ came and visited them: any place, or any estate is comfortable, when Christ is present to the soul; but in it self, imprisonment is a sad condition. Therefore the Apostle biddeth us, *remember those that are in bonds, even as bound with them*, Heb. 13. 3. And Christ takes a prison-visit as a special point of service and kindness done unto him; *I was in prison, and ye visited me*; *Mat.* 25. 36. I, in my afflicted members was in prison, and your visit was an ease to my affliction, and (as it were) a loosening of my chains. Now therefore remember the bondage and captivity, the hard usage and imprisonment that many suffer from their Oppressors. *Let the sighing of the prisoners come up before you*, even the sighing of those *Josephs*, whose feet are hurt in the stocks, and the iron enters into their souls; as some translate that *Psal.* 105. 18. When you are at your tables, and have plenty, then remember the bread of adversity, and water of affliction which many poor prisoners, are served with, and must be contented with every day, or starve in prison. When you are in your pleasant warm chambers, and soft beds, think of the cold, loathsom dungeons and hard boards, in which, and on which many of them lie. And when you hear the voice of love, and such speaking to you, who have *the law of kindness in their tongues*, Prov. 31. 26. then remember those who *hear the voyce of the oppressor.* From which, take this second Observation,

That, *The words of oppressors are wounding words.*

The voice of an oppressor is a terrible voice; and therefore *Job* puts this in, as a special priviledge, that the poor prisoners shall have in the grave, *They shall not hear the voice of the oppressor*: Who can rest where they speak, or hear their words, and not be troubled? Therefore, *not to hear the voice of the oppressor*, is a circumlocution, noting full liberty. The wild Ass is so described, *Job* 39. 7. He regardeth not the crying, or the voice of the driver; the original word is that in the text, *he regardeth not the voice of the oppressor*, or of the exacter. This is the liberty of the wild ass, which was never in hand or under burdens; whereas other asses that are in hand, and are employed to bear and travel, they must be at the voice of the driver, they hear the voice of their oppressors; and some men are very unmerciful to their beasts; it is grievous to the poor cattel to hear the voice of such drivers; and the groans of those beasts will rise up in judgment against their drivers: And if so, how then will the groans of the Saints rise up against their drivers? We have heard of *oppressors* turned *drivers*, they have driven their poor brethren as beasts or cattel, before them; and more cruel then any such driver; they have not suffered them to drink of the pudled water through which they passed: And yet more, the words of these drivers, as goads and staves, beat their ears, and prick'd them to the very hearts in their passage. The voice of these oppressors is the voice of scorn, the voice of slander and reproach; and *David* shews us from his own experience, how reproaches work (*Psal.* 42. 10.) *as*

Non audire vocem exactoris, circumlocutio est maximæ libertatis.

with

with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me: And the Apostle (*Heb.* 11. 36.) speaks of the believing, persecuted *Jews*, that they had this tryal of *cruel mockings*; their oppressors sharpened their tongues, as well as their swords, against them. The tongue wounds deeper then the sword; the tongue wounds the spirit, but the sword cannot reach beyond the flesh: And God will take as deep, if not a deeper revenge upon oppressors for their tongue-woundings, then for their sword-woundings: hard words as well as hard blows must be accounted for. And the Apostle *Jude* assures us, *ver.* 15. *That the Lord cometh to execute vengeance upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongst them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* If any shall say, when did we speak against the Lord? Christ will answer as in the Gospel, (*Matth.* 25.) *In as much as you have spoken against any one* (and you have spoken against many) *of the least of these my brethren, ye have spoken against me.* To how many of my brethren, have you said, many times, *Where is now your God?* To how many have you said, as they (*Psal.* 22. 9.) in that propheſie of Christ, *You trusted on the Lord, that he would deliver you, let him deliver you?* To how many have you said, *Where are your prayers and fastings? where are your hopes?* These are hard speeches. This voice of the oppressor cuts the heart of the poor prisoner; he can with more ease dye, then hear such blasphemies and reproaches. The wicked (*Mal.* 3. 13.) bluster and speak big against God himself; *Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord:* if wicked men will speak stoutly against God, the high God, how stoutly will they speak against a poor oppressed captive, that lyes under their feet?

Seeing then it is such a wound, and a terror, to be under the power of insulting oppressors, who will not only strike with the sword, but strike with every word: Let us pity and pray for those that are under the hands, yea, feet, and which is worse, under the tongues of such drivers; pity them, in regard of the wants which they feel, and of the reproachful words that they hear. And let us betimes hearken to another voice, that we may not at last come to hear this voice, *O that my people had hearkened unto me* (saith God, *Psal.* 81.) If we would hearken to the voice of God, we should not hear the voice of such men. It is the punishment which God lays upon a people, (and it is a sutable punishment) for not hearing his voice, that he gives them up to hear this voice: when a Nation will not hear the *voice of the Prophets*, then they must hear the *voice of oppressors:* Let us hasten to hear the voice, the sweet voice, the pleasant voice of our God in his Ministers of the Gospel, lest we be given up to hear the dreadful, grating, cutting voice of such, who are the Ministers of Gods just displeasure against a disobedient people. If we, like *the deaf adder, stop our ears at the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely,* (Psal. 58. 5.) doubtless the Lord will (yea he hath done it in part already) *send Serpents and Cockatrices among us, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite us,* (with bitter and sharp words,) *Jer.* 8. 17. Let us therefore so hear the voice of the word, that we may be delivered from this rod of the voice (which smarts worse then the voice of the rod,) and and from the scourge of tongues. And let us pray, that God would hasten the performance, either of that gracious promise, (*Isa.* 14. 2.) *They shall take them captives, whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors:* or of that (*Isa.* 60. 17.) that he would make those great and notable changes in the Church, and give us *for brass gold, and for iron silver, and for wood brass, and for stone iron:* That he would also *make our Officers peace, and our Exactors righteousness:* This will be *a time of refreshing indeed.* And as *the time of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy Prophets, since the world began,* Acts 3. 21. namely, when *our Officers shall be peace, and our very Oppressors righteousness:* When the very troublers of a people become their peace, how great is that peace? when they who were the oppressors of a people, are turned to be, *very righteousness,* how great is that righteousness? And where there is great righteousness, and great peace, how great is the joy of that people? Yet however the wise God shall order these outward dispensations, yet *His prisoners* have freedom in, though not from their captivity; and they shall hear the voice of his Spirit speaking more comfort to their hearts, then the voice of their oppressors can speak terror to their ears: and their ears shall not long be smitten with the *hard speeches* of ungodly men; death, a blessed death, will shortly lead them into the house and chambers of silence, where, as *Job* here speaks, they shall never hear the voice of the oppressor any more.

Vers. 19. **The small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master.**

The last instance which *Job* gives of rest in death, is contained in this nineteenth verse. In the words before he said, *There the prisoners rest together, they hear not the voice of the oppressor:* here he adds, *The small and the great are there, and the servant is free from his master.*

The small and the great are there.

Small and great.] There is *two-fold quantity*, in which men may be considered. There is a *natural quantity*, and there is a *civil quantity*; and in both quantities, *small and great are there.*

First, There is a natural quantity, by which men are distinguished into small and great; children, and men of full growth: In the grave such small and great are mixed: little children, *children of a span long*, mingle their dust with men of highest stature.

Again, There is a civil quantity, and so *the small* are the poor, the low, and the mean; they are small ones in a civil account: And civil greatness, is power, riches and honour; the honourable, they are the great men, and the rich are great men, in a civil quantity; so the word is used, *Chap.* 1. *ver.* 3. Job *was the greatest of all the men of the East*; he was the greatest in civil quantity, in regard of his power, honour and riches. The Prophet *Jeremy* opposes the poor and the great, (*Chap.* 5. *ver.* 4, 5.) *Therefore I said, surely these are poor,* &c. *I will get me unto the great men, scil.* the rich and honourable, the Princes and the Magistrates.

The small and the great are there. In Scripture, when we find the two extreams, (small and great are extreams in quantity) we are to understand all the middle acts, or things, or persons, that is, all that lyes between those extreams. We read such Scripture language concerning the actions of men, *Psal.* 139. 2. *Thou knowest my down-sitting and my up-rising*: Here are two extreams, the two terms of a mans actions and of his life, *his down-sitting, and his up-rising*; now when it is said, God knows these two, we are to understand, that God knows whatsoever a man doth, all his actions between his *down-sitting and his up-rising.* So in that promise of a continual blessing from God: *Psal.* 121. 8. *The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in.* Here are two extreams; between these, we are to include and suppose all that a man doth while he is abroad. *God shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in*; that is, every thing thou takest in hand (according to his will) from the time thou goest forth, or beginnest thy work in the morning, till thy coming home from work, or the end of thy work in the evening; thus it is clear about things, or actions: It is likewise clear about persons, *Psal.* 49. 2. when *David calls high and low, rich and poor, to hear, he calls all to hear*; *Give ear all ye inhabitants of the world,* ver. 1. So when it is said in this Text, *The small and the great are there,* it is not, as if those were only there; or that those of a middle quantity, either in regard of natural, or civil proportion, were not there; for death seizeth upon middle men, as well as small and great: There are graves of all imaginable sizes, and dimensions, between small and great: According to that of the Apostle, *Heb.* 9. 27. *It is appointed to men once to dye*; to men indefinitely, of what sort, or degree, or size, or quantity, or quality soever: *It is appointed to men*; therefore small and great are there; and many of all sorts are there.

There is a further elegancy yet in the original; we read it, *Small and great are there*, but the Hebrew, strictly read in the letter, runs thus, *The small and the great are there the same:* Or as Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *Little and great are there all one.* The words taken thus, yield these two points to our meditation.

First, this; *Death seizeth equally upon all sorts and degrees of men.*

Ex æquo ille sunt tam parvi quam magni, secundum illud, Mors sceptra ligoni-bus æquat. Drus.

The ſmall and the great are there; The ſmall cannot eſcape the hands, or ſlip through the fingers of death, becauſe they are little; the greateſt cannot reſcue themſelves from the power, or break out of the hands of death, becauſe they are big.

That the ſmall are there, ſhould be an admonition to young ones, *Take heed of putting off repentance until you are great, for the ſmall are in the grave:* That the great are there, ſhould be an admonition to the greateſt and ſtrongeſt, to prepare for death; for all your ſtrength and greatneſs, your honours, your ſwelling titles, your vaſt riches, cannot oppoſe, much leſs prevent, or overcome death. *The ſmall and the great are there.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *That death makes all men equal*; or, *That all are equal in death.*

As death equally takes hold of all men, ſo death makes all men equal; not only are the ſmall and the great there, but there *the ſmall and the great are the ſame:* Death takes away all diſtinctions, and the grave knows no difference among the ſons of men. While men live, they are at a great diſtance one from another. There is, and there ought to be, diſtinctions among men; and men ought to know their terms of diſtance, and to acknowledge men in their greatneſs, power, and places. As there is *one glory of the Sun, and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars, for one Star differeth from another Star in glory*, 1 Cor. 15. 41. So there is one terreſtial glory of Kings, and another glory of Nobles, and another glory of the Common-people, and theſe have not the ſame glory in common; even among them, one man differs from another man in this worldly glory; but when death comes, there is an end of all degrees, of all diſtinctions, *There the ſmall and the great are the ſame.* As the Apoſtle ſpeaks of our being in Chriſt, in regard of the priviledges of the Goſpel, *Col.* 3. 11. *In Chriſt there is neither Jew, nor Gentile; there is neither male, nor female; there is neither bond, nor free*; that is, all have a like and an equal ſhare in Chriſt, and in the priviledges of the Goſpel: the Goſpel makes no diſtinction between poor and rich, in regard of ſpiritual priviledges and benefits; ſo death takes away all diſtinctions in regard of civil priviledges: *In death there is neither ſmall, nor great, neither male, nor female; neither bond, nor free; the greateſt ſhall lye as low as the ſmalleſt; and the higheſt, as low as the meaneſt*; every one there ſhall be but as his neighbour, and as his brother in the fleſh. There is but one diſtinction that will out-live death; and death cannot take it away; the diſtinction of *holy and unholy, clean and unclean, believer and an Infidel*; theſe diſtinctions remain after death, and ſhall remain for ever; but *rich and poor, honourable and baſe, high and low, King and ſubject*, theſe diſtinctions ſhall be done away, and forgotten, as if they had never been: no difference, no diſtinction, (but that which God makes, and that which Grace makes) can ſtand out againſt the power and ſtroke of death; *There, the ſmall and the great are the ſame.*

And the ſervant is free from his Maſter.

The ſervant.] There are two ſorts of ſervants. There are ſome who are voluntary ſervants, and others who are ſervants by conſtraint. There are ſome who might be free, but they will not; and there are others, who would be free, but they cannot. Of the former ſort we read a Law, *Exod.* 21. 5. where the ſervant that loved his Maſter, and refuſed his freedom, ſaying, *I will not go out free*, muſt be brought before the Judges, and have his *ears bored through with an awl*, in token of his willingneſs to *ſerve that Maſter for ever.* Others are ſervants by conſtraint, as the people of *Iſrael* in *Egypt*; who were made *to ſerve with rigour*, Exod. 1. 14. to ſerve whether they would or no, which is ſervitude rather then ſervice.

We may underſtand the Text of both, *The ſervant*; that is, either he that doth voluntarily ſerve, and willingly puts himſelf under the command of another; or he, which is under the command of another whether he will or no: to both theſe death giveth freedom, whether their Maſters will or no; *The ſervant is free from his Maſter.*

The word which we tranſlate [*is free*] noteth that formal manumiſſion, or ſetting at liberty, which is uſed in places, or Corporations, where freedoms are either purchaſed by money, or deſerved by appointed ſervice.

And the word here tranſlated, [Maſter] is plural, *Maſters:* It is one of the Names of God, *Adonai*, which Name the Lord hath from government: That very name is given to Maſters of Families, becauſe they ought to govern and order the affairs and buſineſs of the family, with wiſdom and juſtice; *Every Maſter of a family, is a governour of the family*; he is (as it were) a King in his own family. *The ſervant is free from his Maſter.*

Tria ſunt quorum terminatio pluralis & ſenſus ſingularis, videlicet Adonim *Dominus*, Elohim *Deus*, Bagnalim, *Herus.*

Hence note, Firſt, *Sin brought in ſervility, and the ſubjection of man to man.*

I ground it thus, becauſe *Job* ſpeaks of ſervice, as of an eſtate of affliction, as of an eſtate of trouble, under which many groan, and ſets them free.

In the ſtate of innocency, there was a dominion granted to man over the beaſts, but there was no dominion granted to man over man: In the ſtate of integrity relations ſhould have continued, but ſubjection ſhould not have been found: only that natural ſubjection of Children to Parents; but as for civil ſubjection, there had been no ſuch thing in the world. Before man forſook the ſervice of God, he needed none to ſerve him; ſervice comes in by ſin, and the increaſe of it, by the increaſe of ſin: As we ſee, when *Canaan* was ſo vile as to forget the duty of a ſon, he is ſet below, or in the worſt condition of a ſervant, *Gen.* 9. 5. *Curſed be* Canaan, *a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren*; that is, the loweſt and moſt abject ſervant: As God of Gods, is the greateſt God; and Lord of Lords, is the higheſt Lord; ſo ſervant of ſervants, is the loweſt, the baſeſt ſervant: So then, as civil ſubjection came at firſt from ſin, ſo the increaſe of ſubjection, which is to be a ſervant of ſervants, came from the increaſe and progreſs of ſin.

Gen. 1. 26.

Peccatum ubi intravit, libertatem perdidit & corrupit poteſtatem naturæ datam. Chryſoſt. *Hom.* 29. *in Gen.* *Subſtantivũ ſeipſum genitivo caſu regens, ſuperlativam locutionem cum ſingulari energia denotat.* Buxtorf. *Servus abjectiſſimus.*

Obſerve ſecondly; *A ſervant is not in his own diſpoſe.*

Though he be a voluntary ſervant, yet he muſt ſerve the lawful will of his Maſter. He may, yea he ought, in every ingenuous ſervice, to ſerve willingly; but he is not at his own will, to ſerve when, or where, or how he will.

Some have thought they have freedom from ſervice, by the liberty of the Goſpel, or Goſpel-priviledge: and that is the reaſon why the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. gives that rule, *Let as many ſervants as are under the yoak, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour*, &c. He ſpeaks of believing ſervants. Some preſumed they had ſuch freedom by Chriſt, that they might caſt off ſubjection to men: No, ſaith the Apoſtle, *As many as are under the yoak*; that is, while they continue ſervants, they muſt ſubmit to their condition; yea, though their Maſters be unbelievers, as the next verſe ſhews, *And they that have believing Maſters, let them not deſpiſe them*, &c. nothing takes away ſubjection, but death; *For as he that is called in the Lord, being a ſervant, is the Lords free-man*, 1 Cor. 7. 22. So he that is the Lords free-man, being called to it, is and ought to be mans ſervant: The Centurion in the Goſpel ſhews the ſervants duty; *I ſay unto one, go, and to another, come, and he cometh, and to my ſervant do this, and he doeth it.* The ſervant is at his Maſters beck, not at his own diſpoſe, and nothing can free him but death, ſo long as he continues under the yoak, in that relation.

Hence obſerve, Thirdly, *That death concludes the ſubjection of man to man.*

In the grave, or *There, the ſervant is free from his Maſter*; there is no more ſervice due to man, when once Death, that King of terrors, hath carried us into his dominions.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life unto the bitter in ſoul?
Which long for death, but it cometh not; and dig for it more then for hid treaſures:
Which rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave, &c.

AT this twentieth verſe, the third and laſt Section of the Chapter begins, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life to the bitter in ſoul?*

In

In the former part of the Chapter, *Job* wished that death had surprized him as soon as ever he set foot into the world, yea before he came into the world, that he might have dyed in the very womb: Here *Job* begins to expostulate, why he having made so long a journey, and in his latter time so troublesome a journey in the world, why (I say) he is not (at his request) cut off and taken away, by the stroke of death; *Why is life given to him that is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul?* We may frame his argument thus, out of his words, as they are here couched; *There is no reason, or if there be, shew me a reason why his life should be prolonged, who liveth miserably, and would dye willingly: But I am the man who live miserably, and I would dye willingly: wherefore then? where is the reason, or shew me a reason why my life is prolonged?* That is the force of his argument. The main Proposition of the argument is contained in *vers.* 20, 21, 22, 23. namely, that there is no reason why a man that liveth miserably, should be denied to dye, *Wherefore is light given to a man that is in misery?* He endeavours to prove the Assumption at *vers.* 24. where he shews that he lived in great misery, which he doth amplifie in the two last verses of the Chapter. This may serve for the sum, and scope, or intendment of this last Section.

To the words themselves. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?*

Wherefore. There is a *wherefore* in Scripture, first of doubting; and secondly, there is a *wherefore* of mourning; and thirdly, a *wherefore* of complaining. In this *wherefore*, in this question, we may include all three. *Job* doubteth; and *Job* mourneth; and *Job* complaineth; *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?*

Wherefore is light.

Ad quid prodest homini in miseriis constituto, quod lucem cognitionis habeat, cum per eam consideret mala quibus affligitur. Aquin. *in loc.*

Light. Some take *light* here for knowledge; *Wherefore hath a miserable man so much knowledge to see himself, and to know himself miserable?* It is some abatement to the sense of misery, not to know that we are miserable; *Wherefore is light given?* If I did not understand the sadness of my condition, it would be less to me. There is a truth in that; and it is the thing that will so much torment and vex the damned to all eternity, that while they are in the darkness of hellish misery, they shall have so much light in Hell, (I mean the light of knowledge concerning their own condition, whereby they shall fully and clearly discern their own unhappiness;) if they were ignorant and did not know how miserable they were, their estate were far less miserable. On earth, the light of the knowledge of Gods will increases the sin of men; in Hell, the light of the knowledge of their own woe, will be an increase of their punishment. As Christ saith to the *Jews*, John 9. 41. *If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say we see, therefore your sin remaineth.* So we may say of those who are separated from Christ for ever; if ye were blind, ye should have no sorrow; but now because in that estate of *utter darkness*, ye shall have both eyes and light to see your misery, therefore your sorrow shall remain. When a wicked man *goes to the generation of his fathers, where he shall never see light*, scil. of comfort, *Psal.* 49. 19. even then he shall have light enough, (and more then he would have) to see his sorrow. And in Hell he shall be as much pained with, and hate the light of his own condition, as upon earth he hated and was pained with the light of divine revelation, *John* 3. 20, &c. So that the damned shall for ever cry out, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?*

Yet I take not this to be the sence here, *Wherefore is light?* by *light* here understand natural light, and then it is no more but this, *Why do mine eyes behold the Sun? Wherefore doth the light shine upon me, when as I am under the clouds and in the darkness of this condition?* Or by light, we may understand life; and so the sence is, *Wherefore is life continued*, (which is expressed in the next clause,) *to him that is in misery?*

עמל *Sumitur activè pro labore cum summa defatigatione & tædio, passivè pro dolore ipso &*

To be in misery, is more then to be miserable. As to be *in the flesh*, notes, a meer carnal man, and to be *in the spirit*, notes a very spiritual man; so to be in misery, notes a very miserable man. The Hebrew word properly signifies, *labour*: At the tenth verse it was translated, *sorrow*: And it notes any toilsome molestation, which either we our selves endure, (*Psal.* 25. 18.) or cause others, by guile or mischief done them, to endure. Hence it is translated *guile*, *Psal.* 55. 11. and *mischief*, (*Psal.* 94. 20.) because by these, one man troubles and vexes another, to the making of him miserable.

miseria, & sæpe utro modo sumitur sonjunctim, ut in Ecclesiaste, ubi vitæ humanæ calamitas & miseria ipso vocabulo explicatur.

And life to the bitter in soul.

Life. Is the union of soul and body: when life departeth, soul and body take leave and part. The Philosopher defines life to be the bond or colligation of soul and body together: Now (saith *Job*) why is this life? why is this bond continued to a man *whose soul is in bitterness?* While my life was pleasant, it was pleasant to live; while my soul was sweet, it was sweet to have it knit to my body; but now my soul is in bitterness, or I am bitter in soul, and what sweetness or pleasure can I find in my body?

לְמָרֵי נָפֶשׁ *Qui præ calamitate animo sunt acerbo & perpetua mœstitia;* Merc.

To the bitter in soul. Notes deep, intrinsical, or inward sorrow; the greatest sorrow, makes the soul bitter: As in Scripture, when we find *Soul* added, respecting the evil of an estate, or the good of an estate, evil and good are meant in the highest degree: As when Christ saith, *Mat.* 26. 38. *My soul is exceeding heavy, or exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*; that is, I am in the lowest deeps of sorrow: Sorrow unto death, is sorrow within one step or degree of death. *My soul is sorrowful.* There can be no sorrow but in the soul; the body (take it as distinct from the soul) is not capable of sorrow; sorrow is a passion, or an affection of the soul, an affection of the mind, and therefore all sorrow is seated in the mind; yet when our Lord Christ saith, *My soul is exceeding sorrowful*, it is far more then to have said, there is sorrow, or exceeding much sorrow in my soul. So here, this phrase, *To him that is bitter in soul*; or whose soul is bitter; notes the most bitter and grievous sorrow. When the Psalmist would set forth the great sorrow of *Joseph* in prison, *Psal.* 105. 18. One Translation saith, *That the iron entred into his soul*; and the Hebrew, word for word, is this, *His soul came into iron.* We know the soul is so pure, and spiritual, that iron cannot enter it; We know that only the body can be bound with chains. The soul could quickly slip from the most watchful Keeper, and break out from the strongest irons, were it not to keep company with the body. Whereas then it is said, *His soul came into irons*; it is only to shew, that *Joseph* was under very sore affliction, even the sorest affliction of the body. As on the other side, when *Mary* said, *My soul doth magnifie the Lord, my spirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour.* We know, nothing properly can magnifie the Lord, or rejoyce, but the spirit or the soul; yet when she saith, *My spirit doth rejoyce*; this notes a deep, pure, internal, spiritual joy, with which she was ravish'd at that time: And as they, who rejoyce in soul, would even willingly be rid of their bodies, they are above the body: So they, who are bitter in soul, are desirous to be rid of their bodies; the body is a burden when the soul is bitter. This bitterness of soul caused those bitter complaints before, and now this vehement expostulation.

Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?

Wherefore? We are apt to think there is no reason for that, for which we can see no reason. *Job* was in a dark condition, and could not see the reason, and therefore almost concludes there was none. When we are posed, we think all the world is posed too. If we cannot interpret and expound the dealings of God, we think none can; nay, in such cases, some are ready to think (at least to speak, as if they thought) that God himself can scarce give a good account of them: This *wherefore* goes through the *earth*, and reaches *Heaven.* Tell me, O my friends, shew me, O my God, *Wherefore is light given to him that is in misery?*

Why *Job*, there may be many reasons, many answers given to this, *wherefore* a man should be in light, though he be in misery; and why his life should be continued, though his soul be in bitterness. What if God should appear and tell thee, It shall be thus; and the reason of it is, because I will have it so: Is not that *therefore* answer enough, to any mans *wherefore?* The *will of God* is reason enough for man, and ought to be the most satisfying reason: If God say, I will have life remain in a man, *that is bitter in soul*, that man should say, Lord, it is reason I should, because it is thy pleasure, though it be to my own trouble. Yet it is but seldome that God makes his will his reason, and answers by his bare Prerogative: He hath often given weighty reasons

to this quæry. First, The life of nature is continued, that the life of grace may be increased. Again, Such live in sufferings, *That they may learn obedience by the things which they suffer*. God teacheth us by his Works, as well as by his Word, *his dealings speak* to us: And, *It is as great an act of holiness to submit our selves to the will of God in his works, as it is to the will of God in his word*. Another reason of this *wherefore*, may be this, *God sets up some as patterns to posterity*; He therefore gives the light of life to some that are in misery, to shew that it is no new, nor strange thing for his Saints to be in darkness: And what if God doth it to magnifie the strength of his own power in supporting, and the sweetness of his mercy when he delivers such bitter souls?

Further observe, First, That *the best things in this world may come to be burthens to us.*

See here a man, *weary of light and life*. Light, one of the most excellent creatures that God made, the most excellent next to life; yea life, the best, the most excellent thing in nature; both these become burthensome. How gladly would *Job* have been rid of light? how gladly rid of his life? Consider then, how burthensome other things (which at the best are burdens) may be unto you: If you hear a soul complaining of *light and life*; *and why are these given me, when I am in misery?* Then what comfort, think you, will honour give you? or what comfort will riches give you? or what comfort will beauty give you, in such a condition, as makes you weary of light and life? What comfort will sin give you? what ease will your lusts give you, in such a condition, as makes you weary of light and life? I never heard of any of the Saints, that were troubled at any time with their grace, or weary of the favour of God; I never heard any of them say, why is grace given to one that is in misery? or the light of Gods countenance to the bitter in soul? I never heard any say, wherefore is faith given to a man that is in misery, or hope and patience to the bitter in soul? Grace was never a burden to any man, under greatest burdens, or unsavoury to the bittrest soul; when you are weary of all other things in the world, these will be your supports. Therefore labour after those things which you shall never be weary of, even after those things which will be more pleasant to us, then ever light was, when light shall be to others more troublesome, then ever darkness was to any; let us labour after those things which will be more sweet to us, then ever life was, when life shall be to others, more bitter, then ever death was to any.

Secondly observe, *It is a trouble to possess good things when we cannot enjoy them.*

Would you know, how *Job* spake here as one weary of light and life? It was not under the notion of *light* and *life*, as if he had been weary of these in themselves, but it was because he could not enjoy these. *Solomon* assures us, (*Prov.* 25. 20.) that, *As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vineger upon Nitre, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart*. Musick to one that is in sorrow, doubles his sorrow, why? because he cannot enjoy the musick; a heavy heart can worse intend musick, then a heavy ear; only those things which we can enjoy in the use of them please in the possessing of them: Of all temporals, the possession and enjoyment may be separated; but for spirituals, the very possession of them is joy, therefore enjoyment; their presence is a pleasure, and therefore their presence shall ever please. We may distinguish between their use and their comfort, but we can never separate them.

One thing further, When *Job* saith, *Wherefore is light given, and life given?* The meaning of it is, *wherefore is light continued, and wherefore is life continued?* for he speaks of himself and others that had light and were alive, and yet he saith, *wherefore is light given?* &c. From this we may learn, That

Every act of continuance of good things to us, is a new act or deed of gift to us. Mercy is given, every moment it is enjoyed: not only is a new mercy, and a renewed mercy, a new gift, but continued mercy is a gift and a new gift; life is a new gift every hour of time we live on the earth; and glory will be a new gift, every minute of eternity we shall live in Heaven.

Which long for death, and it cometh not, and dig for it more then for hid treasures.

This 21. *verse* doth further explicate who are the bitter in soul, even such as *long for death*; when a soul (from natural principles) finds a sweetness in death, that soul is in bitterness; *Our affliction and our misery is indeed wormwood and gall*, (*as the Church complains*, Lament. 2. 19.) when death is as honey, and long'd for as the honey-comb. There is bitterness in the death of the body; and yet some are so bitter in soul, that they account the very bitterness of death, sweetness; They say not as *Agag*, (1 Sam. 15. 32.) *Surely the bitterness of death is past*, but O that the sweetness of death would come. To be rid of sin makes us long for death spiritually; to be rid of pain makes us desire death naturally; therefore he saith, *the bitter in soul long for death.*

The word which we translate [by **longing**] signifieth a very vehement desire, as you know in our tongue, *to long for a thing is the highest and hotest acting of desire, after a thing*. It signifieth properly to gape or to breath: Hence (by a Trope) it signifieth strong desire; because they who desire a thing much, are said to gape or breath after it; just as an hungry man gapes after meat, whersoever he sees it, and his mind runs upon it, when he cannot see it. That is the force of the word. Hence also the wotd is used in Scripture, to note the strong actings of faith, and vehement expectations of hope in God; when the soul is raised up mightily to believe the word of promise, then it longs after and opens its mouth wide (as it were) to receive the thing promised. As in *Isa.*8.17. *I will wait upon the Lord, who hides his face from the house of* Jacob, *and I will look for him*. The Prophet *Hosea* applies the word to robbers and thieves, who stand watching and longing for the traveller, and looking at every turning, chap.6.9. *As troopes of robbers wait for a man*. Yet further to clear this, we may take notice, that in the Hebrew there are two words which come from this root, whereof the one signifieth the *Palate* of the mouth; because the palate is the part affected with the taste of such meats, as we long for; Hence we say, the mouth waters after such or such a pleasing dish. The other word signifies a *Fish-hook*, and the reason is double, either because those hooks are pleasantly baited, which when the fish sees, he longeth after it, and greedily swallows it down: Or because when the angler hath cast in the hook, he is in great expectation, waiting and looking earnestly when the fish will be enticed, and bite. By all these uses of the Original word, we may collect the exceeding intensiveness of that desire which is here expresst by longing for death: They long for death, even as a hungry man longeth for any meat, or as a woman with child longeth for some special meat, as a fish longs for the bait, or as an angler longeth till the fish bites, or as a believer (which as it is the spiritual, so the most ardent desire of all) desires to have any promise fulfilled, upon which he hath pitched his faith, and anchors at by hope.

הַמְחַכִּים from חָכָה *Hiavit, inhiavit, ore aperto intuitus fuit, concupivit, expectavit. Notat etiã vera fide, patientiq; expectatione anhelare ad rem promissam.*

חֵךְ *Palatum, quod cibo inhiet.*
חַכָּה *Hamus, quòd in eũ pisces inhient, vel potius quod pisces expectet.*

Which long for death, and it cometh not, that is, it cometh not so soon as they would have it; for death will come at one time or other, but death doth not come at their time, or their pace. *It cometh not*, in the Hebrew it is only thus, *which long for death, and it is not*; we supply, *it cometh not.*

And dig for it more then for hid treasures.

To illustrate the greatness of this desire after death, he addes a similitude of those who seek for treasures; if there be any natural desire more strong, then that of a woman with child, or a longing woman, it is the desire of a covetous man, the desire of gain or treasure; covetousness is the strongest appetite.

Observe but what a gradation there is in this expression, to set forth the greatness of their desire after death: they do not only long for it, but they dig for it. Digging you know is no ordinary labour, it is an extraordinary work, a hard labour. As longing is a strong desire, so digging is strong labour, hard labour. And then, it is no ordinary digging neither, but digging for a treasure; men will dig hard for treasure; you see men will dig hard for a stone, for iron, for coals, how then will they dig for a mine of gold or silver? A man will dig the earth for a little money; but

when

when a man diggeth, hoping to find money in the earth, that will make him work indeed; now they dig after such a manner: and beyond that, he saith, they dig for it as for hidden treasure; that is a further degree of their endeavour after it.

מטמונים from טמן *Abscondit.*

That which we translate, hidden treasure, is but one word in the Hebrew. It signifies any hidden thing, especially treasures; because treasures use to be hid, or close laid up. And there is a twofold hiding of treasures; there is a natural hiding, and there is an industrious and artificial hiding. There is a natural hiding, so treasures are hid, that lie in the bowels of the earth, they are naturally hid. Then treasures are hid by industry and by art, when we are afraid we shall be spoiled of our treasures, or that they shall be taken away; then there is a hiding of them, and often a digging to hide them in the earth: As in any times of spoil and violence, if a rich man hear that the spoilers are nigh, he presently hides his treasure. Now either as robbers dig and search for treasures industriously hid, or as miners dig and search for treasures naturally hid, so (saith *Job*) with such earnestness do these dig for death.

There is one thing to be resolved here by way of question before we come to the Observations; namely, whether it be lawful to wish for, or to desire death? *Job* here proposeth such as long for death: Is it lawful to desire death? doth he speak here only (*de facto*) of a thing which some do, or of that which may be done.

I answer, First, That death in it self is no way desirable, and it is not an object of desire. We cannot desire that (for it self) which is an enemy, or destructive unto us. If any should desire death as death, or under the notion of death, they should desire that which is destructive, that which is their enemy; so the Apostle calls death, 1 *Cor.* 15. *The last enemy which shall be destroyed, is death.* Death is an enemy, therefore (as death) no man can desire it. Indeed, many have desired death, but still we find somewhat else at the bottom of that desire. But what bottom or ground makes the desire of death lawful? I answer,

First, It is a holy desire of death, if we desire death to be free from sin; when the soul saith thus, because I see, only the end of living will be the end of sinning, therefore I long for death, that I may sin no longer.

Secondly, It is lawful to desire death, that we may have more full communion with *Christ the Lord of life. I desire to be dissolved*, saith *Paul*; but why? not that he desired dissolution, but that he might be with *Christ*, Phil. 1. 23. Christ is life, and Christ is our life. It is better to enjoy *life*, then to live; how much better then is it to enjoy Christ, who is life, then to live?

To both these, we may refer that of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. *We that are in this Tabernacle, groan, being burdened*; they were burdened with sorrows, and burdened with sins, while they were in the tabernacle of the body; yet (saith he) it is *not that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon*; he did not groan for the grave, but for glory; not that he might be uncloathed, but cloathed with immortality; not barely that he might die, but *that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*

Under these notions we may desire death; yet with this caution, that for the time of it, we refer our selves to the good pleasure of God. For what the Apostle *James* speaks of the inordinate desires, and absolute resolves of worldly men, about gaining in that or t'other City, is by allusion, appliable to these spiritual greedy merchants, after heavenly glory, *chap.* 4. 13. *Go to now, ye that say, to day or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain*, &c. *For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will.* So I may say, go to now, ye that say, to day or to morrow I would die (*for to die, to us is gain, Phil.* 1. 21.) and go to that *heavenly City*, that *City having foundations, whose builder and maker is God*, and continue there for ever, taking in, and enriching our selves with that glory which Christ hath bought; for that *ye ought to say, when the Lord will, or now if the Lord will.* On such conditions as these, and with this caution, we may desire death, yea, long for death.

But to long for death, only to be rid of the troubles of this life, to desire to lie down to sleep in the bed of the grave, only to ease our flesh, and rest our outward man, is sinful. The Apostle saith (*Acts* 20. 24.) *I count not my life dear, so I may finish my course with joy*; but we shall account our lives too cheap, if we fear to finish our course with sorrow, if we think, that it is not worth the while to live, unless we live in outward comforts; we exceedingly undervalue our lives, when a cross in our lives makes us weary of our lives. This was *Jonah*'s infirmity, when he had taken pet about the gourd (*chap.* 4.) he would needs die; and he concludeth the matter, *it is better for me to die then to live*; and all was, because he could not have his will, because he was troubled. This also was *Elijah*'s infirmity, when he was persecuted by, and fled for his life from *Jezebel*, 1 Kings 19. 4. *He requested for himself, that he might die, and said, it is enough now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better then my fathers.* This is an infirmity at the best. We ought rather to seek to God, that he would remove the evil from us, then remove us from the evil; for God hath a thousand doors to let us out of trouble, though he doth not open the door of the grave, to let us in there, and out of the world. He can end our troubles, and not end our lives.

Periniquum est non alia relinquere Deo levandæ ærumnæ rationem quam si vitam adimat, &c. *petendũ ergo potius; ut ne vultus sui luce illustret, quam ut tenebris mortis obruat.*

Yet such a wish is much allayed, yea (in some cases) lawful, if we keep the former caution, and say, *if the Lord will.* If we refer our selves to the will and good pleasure of God, we may desire to be laid to rest by death, that we may be rid of those pains and evils which we suffer in this life. And yet I desire rather to raise the spirits of all above these troubles while they live, then satisfie them how they may desire freedom from them by death. *When* Solomon *returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the Sun, and beheld the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter: then he praised the dead, which are already dead, more then the living, which are yet alive* (Eccl. 4. 1, 2.) that is, he pronounced the dead to be in a better condition then the living. Yet know, that *Solomon* in this place, speaks the words of meer natural reason, not of divine reason: For he speaks (though with a divine spirit) yet in the person of a natural man. Natural reason saith, it is better to die, then live under oppressions; but divine reason saith, there is more honour to be gained by living under oppressions, then there is ease to be attained by dying from under them. To bear a burden well, is more desirable then to be delivered from a burden; especially, if while we are bearing, we can be doing, doing good (I mean) and I mean it especially, if we can do publick good. A Christian should be content, yea, he should rejoyce, in suffering much evil upon himself, while he can be doing any, especially if he can do much good to others. A graciously publick spirit will triumph over personal troubles and labours, so long as he sees himself a blessing or a help to the publick; and though he longs to die for himself, *and to be with Christ, which is better*; yet he is loth to die, so long as he can say with blessed *Paul, Nevertheless to abide in the flesh, is more needful for you* (or others) *Phil.* 1. 24. When an heathen Emperor, *Cæsar*, said, he had lived long enough, whether he respected *Nature* or *Honour*; *Tully*, the *Orator* answered him well; *But you have not lived long enough for the common-wealth.* Much more may we say, when we see able and godly men longing for death, because they have lived long enough, whether they respect common nature, or their own honour; *But you have not yet lived long enough for the Church of God, and for the common good of his people.* We should be willing to live so long as God, or his people, have a stroke of work to be done, which our abilities and opportunities fit us to do. In this sence, *a living dog is better then a dead lion*, Eccles. 9. 4. That is, it is better to live (though we are the meanest) working for God, then die, or be dead, though we have been the chiefest.

I enlarge this the rather, because of the present troubles, and the infirmity of our flesh, which sometimes is ready to envy those who die, because we live in sorrow; and is not satisfied with this, that *our souls are here sheltered from death, and under the covert of Christ, unless our bodies also may be sheltered in death, and lie under the covert of the grave.* So much to that question.

Let us note something from the words themselves; *Which long for death, and it cometh not; and dig for it more then for hid treasures.* Observe,

First, That, *Many afflictions, to our ſenſe, are worſe then death.*

They long for death, becauſe they are in miſery. It is ſaid, and it is a truth, *O death! how bitter art thou to a man that is at eaſe in his poſſeſſions?* And there is a truth alſo in this, O death! how ſweet art thou to a man that is bitter in his ſoul? It often falls out, that to die, is but a ſhort affliction; but affliction many times is a long and continued death, a frequent death; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of his afflictions, *in deaths often* (2 Cor. 11. 23.) That there is a bitterneſs in death, the ſpeech of *Agag* implies (1 *Sam.* 15.) *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*; yet while a man (as lamenting *Jeremy* complains, *Lam.* 3. 19.) *remembers his afflictions, and his miſery, the wormwood and the gall*, that is, his afflictions and miſery, more bitter then gall and wormwood, his ſenſe overcomes his judgment, to conclude, that there is a pleaſantneſs in that bitter thing which we call death.

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *As death finds many before they look for it, ſo ſome look for death, and cannot find it.*

How many are there, whom death ſurprizes before they are aware, and ſeizeth upon them, when they think not of it? when as others are expecting, and longing, and gaping, and gaſping after death, and they cannot meet with it, it cometh not. Indeed, it is a great deal better for a man to expect death when it cometh not, then to have death come upon him, when he expects it not. Some are calling for death, crying out for death, before they know how to die, before they know how to live, yea before they know why they lived. It were well for ſuch, if they might loſe their longing, and long for death long enough before it cometh; for upon the matter (poor ſouls) they long for hell, while they long for death; and while they are haſtning from that life and miſery, which will quickly have an end, they are plunging into that death and miſery which will never end.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *As death is a puniſhment to moſt*; *ſo, not to die, is a puniſhment to ſome.*

Job ſpeaks of it as an affliction upon ſuch; *they long for death, and it cometh not.* Death is an affliction to all; it is a puniſhment to all unbelievers, *a puniſhment with a ſting*: And as all wicked men are puniſhed with death, ſo ſome of them are puniſhed with this, that they (for the preſent) cannot die (*Rev.* 9. 6.) *In thoſe dayes men ſhall ſeek death, and ſhall not find it; and ſhall deſire to die, and death ſhall flee from them.* It is laid as their puniſhment, that they ſhould live, and as an affliction beyond all their afflictions, that then they could not die. They are in a ſad condition, who can have no remedy or cure of their troubles but death; but how ſad is their condition, who cannot obtain that remedy? It is like the puniſhment of the damned in hell, they ſhall long for death, but it will not come; and they ſhall ever ſeek for death, but ſhall never find it. No wicked man did ever part ſo unwillingly with his ſoul when he died, as he will unwillingly meet with it, when he riſeth again. And as the firſt death doth part ſoul and body unwillingly, ſo the ſecond death keepeth ſoul and body together unwillingly. They have a taſt of this miſery in this life, whoſe ſouls are truly ſaid to be impriſoned in their bodies: And O how deſirous are they to dig down theſe mud-wals, and make an eſcape, but cannot?

Fourthly, Obſerve, *It is an affliction to Nature, to be debarred of any thing it deſireth, how deſtructive ſoever it be unto it.*

It is (in one ſence) a natural deſire, to long for death; and yet death is the deſtruction of nature: A man under diſtempers of body, a diſeaſe, a Fever, *&c.* is often troubled and grieved, becauſe he cannot have thoſe things which will hurt him; he longs for ſuch meats and drinks, as given him, would kill him, and yet a denial angers him. *The hope of death deferred, will make the heart ſick*; and when the deſire (death deſired) *comes, it is as a tree of life.* Grief ariſeth from the unſatisfaction of our deſires; and therefore though the thing had, which we deſire, will undo us, yet the not having it, doth afflict us.

Which long for death, and it cometh not; and they dig for it more then for hidden treaſures. Take ſomewhat from this latter branch, *and they dig for it more then for hid treaſure.* As ſoon as ever *Job* had expreſt their longing deſire after death, you ſee preſently, he tells us that they dig for death. Hence obſerve,

That, *Where deſires are true, they preſently produce endeavors.*

He that longs for a thing, will labour for it, they are digging preſently (*Prov.* 18. 1.) *Through deſire, a man having ſeparated himſelf, intermedleth with all wiſdom*: If it be death a man deſireth, he will be endeavouring after it. There are ſome *velleities, liſtleſs wiſhings and wouldings*, which produce no endeavours; but true deſires are ever active; natural deſires are ſeconded with natural endeavours, and ſo ſpiritual deſires with ſpiritual endeavours. If a man deſire death, he will dig for it; ſurely then, he that deſires Chriſt, and longs for eternal life, will be digging for the enjoyment of them. Obſerve further,

That, *Proportionably to the ſtrength of our deſires, is the ſtrength and earneſtneſs of our endeavours.*

As real deſire cauſeth real endeavour, ſo ſtrong deſires cauſe ſtrong endeavours: It was not a bare deſire, but an earneſt longing (as was cleared in opening the words). And it is not a bare labour, but hard labour; digging is ſtrong labour. A meer natural man, whoſe deſires after ſin, are ſtrong and vehement, acts ſin with equal vehemency. The Holy Ghoſt ſaith, he doth *evil as he can*, that is, to his utmoſt *cunning* or ability; *he draws iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were, with cart-ropes. He doth evil* (ſaith another Scripture, *Mic.* 7. 3.) *with both hands greedily.* To do a thing *with both hands*, notes the greateſt endeavour. As when the *Phariſees* are ſaid not to touch the burdens which they laid on others *with their little finger*, it notes their refuſal of the leaſt endeavour, *Mat.* 23. 4. So a ſpiritual heart, having his deſires turned heaven-ward, he digs for heavenly treaſure every day, and *gives diligence to make his calling and election ſure.* They who have ſtrong deſires after Chriſt, labour ſtrongly after Chriſt. So they are expreſt (*Prov.* 2. 4.) where *Solomon* ſpeaks of *Wiſdom*, which is Chriſt, and all that is Chriſts; *If thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid treaſures*; ſuch is the ſearch and endeavour that ought to be after Chriſt, and ſuch it will be, if there be true and great deſires after Chriſt.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *They dig for it, as for hid treaſure*, we may obſerve,

That, *The beſt things are hardeſt to come by.*

If you will have treaſures, you muſt dig for them; you may have pebble-ſtones, flints, above ground; but treaſures lie deep: And in proportion, the better every thing is, the more digging it requireth; and the beſt things ought to be moſt digged for. They that will have the great bleſſing, muſt wreſtle for it; or the Crown, they muſt ſtrive for it. We muſt dig for heavenly hidden treaſure, before we have it; and yet both the treaſure, and the ſtrength to dig for it, are freely given.

Fourthly, obſerve, That, *Thoſe things which we eſteem moſt, we labour to ſecure moſt.*

It is ſaid, that they digged for treaſures, and that the treaſures were hid. I told you, in opening the words, there is a natural hiding of treaſure, and an induſtrious hiding. Take it in the laſt ſence; men that have treaſures, will labour to preſerve them: why? becauſe treaſures are much eſteemed, and the things we eſteem moſt, we preſerve moſt. In the Hebrew, the word that ſignifies *treaſure*, ſignifies the *hiding of treaſure*, or *hidden treaſure*. Among all treaſures, ſpiritual treaſures are moſt hidden; they are ſo hidden, that they are called myſteries, or ſecrets. The knowledge of Chriſt was a hidden treaſure, for ſome thouſands of years. The Apoſtle, in his time, calls it, *the myſtery which was kept ſecret ſince the world began*, Rom. 16. 25. Again, he calls it *The wiſdom of God in a myſtery, even the hidden wiſdom which God ordained before the world, unto our glory; which none of the Princes of this world knew*, 1 Cor. 2. 8, 9. And as ſpiritual knowledge, ſo our ſpiritual life, is called a hidden life; *your life is hidden with God in Chriſt*, Col.

Col. 3. 3. And as our life, ſo our ſpiritual comforts are hidden; therefore called *Hidden Manna*, Revel. 2. 17. All our ſpiritual eſtate is treaſure, and it is all hidden treaſure, ſo hidden, that the Saints dig deep to find it, and when they have found it, they hide it, as Chriſt ſhews us, (*Mat.* 13. 44.) ſpeaking of the *Kingdom of God*, which he compares to a *treaſure hid in the field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth*: He hideth it, not to obſcure it from the light, but to ſecure it from danger. *Mary* hid thoſe precious ſayings of Chriſt, her Son, and her Saviour, in her heart, *Luke* 2. 51. And *David* having found the Commandments of God, which he prized above any treaſure, *above thouſands of gold and ſilver*, he hid them in his heart. *Thy word* (ſaith he) *have I hid in my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee*, Pſal. 119. 11.

Verſe 22. Which rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave.

Having ſaid, That *they long for death, and dig for it as for hidden treaſure*. Now ſuppoſing, that they find death, he ſhews how it affects them; *They rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave*. There is little or no obſcurity in theſe words, only conſider the emphaſis of this expreſſion; the word which we tranſlate *rejoyce*, or *rejoyce exceedingly*, noteth ſuch a rejoycing as breaks forth in ſome outward geſture, as when a man doth leap for ioy: And Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates it thus, *Which joy till they skip again*; noting an extraordinary joy, and gladneſs, when they can find the grave; that is, when they dye. Yet ſome joyn the ſence of this verſe with the former, to carry on, or lengthen out the ſimilitude thus; *Which long for death, and dig for it as for hid treaſures*: And finding death, they are affected as they who (ſeeking for treaſures) find a grave: For if in digging, they did but hit upon a grave, then they thought themſelves ſure of treaſure and great riches; becauſe treaſure and riches was uſed to be put into graves, as was ſhewed in opening the fifteenth verſe of this Chapter. The ſence is fair, and comes up to the ſame point, from either of theſe expoſitions.

גיל יש ישו *Summo gaudio & incredibili lætitia etiam ſignis exterioribus prodita geſtiunt, vel præ lætitia exultant, vel lætantur ad exultationem.* Druſ.

Obſerve hence, firſt, That, *What at one time we fear moſt, in that, at another time, we may exceedingly rejoyce.*

Death is dreadful, and the grave is a place of darkneſs, yet here is joy and rejoycing, yea exceeding joy, and rejoycing, when they find the grave.

Secondly, They rejoyce in it, but why? It was that which they had longed for, that which they had long ſought for: if at another time they had been ſhewed the grave, or commanded into the grave, they would have taken little pleaſure in it. The ſame thing inflicted or threatned by another is dreadful to us, which deſired by our ſelves is pleaſant and delightful: It pleaſeth us to have our deſire ſatisfied, though the thing deſired be never ſo unpleaſant: And to be eaſed of preſent evil, makes a future evil appear in the likeneſs of a preſent good. For Joy is an affection of the mind, ariſing from the apprehenſion of ſome preſent good, even as hope ſprings from the apprehenſion of ſome good that is to come.

Further, We may conſider the iſſue of all theſe acts. After they had longed for death, and digged for death, and found death; preſently upon the finding of it, they rejoyce, and rejoyce exceedingly.

Hence obſerve, *That which any one truly deſireth and endeavoureth to find, cauſeth him to rejoyce, when he hath found it.*

If you deſire death, and ſeek for the grave, the finding of theſe will be to you as life, and as a houſe of mirth: How much more then ſhall we rejoyce, having found good things, the beſt things, after earneſt longing and digging for them. When the wiſe Merchant had found the treaſure hid in the field, the next words inform us of his joy, *Mat.* 13. 44. When the man, after long ſeeking on the mountains, had found his *loſt Sheep*; and the woman, after lighting her candle, and ſweeping her houſe, and diligent ſearch, had found the *loſt groat*; they both rejoyced, and called in their neighbours and friends to rejoyce with them, (*Luke* 15.) It troubles a man to be found of that, or him, whom he hates, or fears; *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* ſaith *Ahab* to *Eliah*, 1 *Kings* 21. 20. And it cannot but delight us, to find that, or him, whom we love and long for: *Have I found thee, O my friend?* will ſuch an one ſay. And if a miſerable man rejoyces exceedingly, when deſiring he finds death, and a grave; how will the ſoul leap for joy, when we ſhall find him, who is the *longing and deſire of all Nations, Jeſus Chriſt*! How exceeding exceedingly will the ſoul rejoyce, when we ſhall find what we have ſo much longed for; not death, but life; and life not only in Chriſt, but with Chriſt; when we ſhall find, not the houſe of the grave, but a houſe of glory, and glory in the height, an exceeding, excelling, ſuperexcellent weight of glory.

And by this effect, we may make proof of grace here. If thou haſt found Chriſt, in Ordinances, in Duties, in Meditation, in Prayer, in the Promiſes; for here, in theſe things, the longing ſoul digs after Chriſt: Joy will at one time or other fill thy heart, yea thy heart will leap for joy; thou wilt *rejoyce in Spirit, as Chriſt did, in his Father*, Luke 10. 21. For this joy is a fruit of the Spirit, (*Gal.* 5. 22.) and one of the firſt fruits. And God ſeldome miſſes to give the ſoul a taſt of this joy at the firſt, or preſently after converſion, though afterwards clouds may come over us, or at leaſt our light of joy be not ſo clear.

Further, If a man long after any truth, and digs it, how exceeding joyful will he be, when he can find that truth? When a Philoſopher had found out the reſolution of a Queſtion in the Mathematicks, he was ſo raviſhed with it, that he ran about crying, *I have found it, I have found it*: Surely the finding of one Divine truth (which is the mind of Chriſt) ſhould affect us more then the compleat knowledge of all that is knowable, or can be known in the whole courſe of Nature. Every truth is beautiful, but the Truths of God are beauty. Thus we may try our deſires in all their purſuits, by this iſſue of them, joy in finding the things which we purſue. *Archimedes.*

Laſtly obſerve, That as he doth rejoyce, ſo this joy anſwers to the deſire in the degree of it: Proportionable to our deſires and endeavours in ſeeking, are our joyes and comforts when we have found. There is not only a joy, but a proportionable joy; the deſire was very great, and the endeavour was very great, and now the joy comes up to both, that is very great too; not only do they rejoyce, but they rejoyce exceedingly; they rejoyce, ſo as they skip for joy: That is (I am ſure it ought to be) more apparent, in our regular deſires after things good for us, then in our irregular deſires, after things which are hurtful to us. If that exceeding deſire after death, will produce exceeding joy in death; then exceeding deſire after life, and ſpiritual good things, will work exceeding joy when we have found them; deſire is that which widens the veſſel to take in abundance of joy; large deſires after any thing open the heart, and inlarge the faculties to take in abundance of joy, when we have found the thing which we deſire.

VERS. 23, 24, 25, 26.

Why is light given to a man, whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?
For my ſighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like the waters.
For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me.
I was not in ſafety, neither had I reſt, neither was I quiet; yet trouble came.

AT the twentieth verſe of this Chapter, *Job* begins to expoſtulate concerning the continuance of his life; and he caſts his complaint into an argument, which was formed to his purpoſe, thus. There is no reaſon; or if there be, ſhew me a reaſon why his life is continued, that liveth miſerably, and would dye willingly: But I am the man who live miſerably, and would dye willingly: Therefore why is light, or life, continued unto me? The former part of this argument is contained in *verſ.* 20, 21, 22, 23. In which *Job* demonſtrates, that there is no reaſon; or, at leaſt, if there be a reaſon, it is ſuch, as he could not make out, why that man ſhould have his life continued, who lives in miſery, and is willing to dye. Three of thoſe verſes we have already finiſhed; and there remaineth *ver.* 23. (which

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is a part of the same reason) to be yet opened.

In this *ver.* 23. he (as it were) repeats his argument: He had said before, *Why is light given to him that is in misery?* &c. and so he doth illustrate it in the two verses following: In this *ver.* 23. he re-inforceth what he had said in other words, *Why is light given to a man, whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* He doubleth his call for a reason, or proof of this thing.

Why is light given?] Those words are not here expressly in the Hebrew, but they are supplied by our Translators, and by Translators in other Languages, from *ver.* 20. to make up the sence. The Original runs thus, *To a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in:* But the Question is implied as in the former, and here to be prefixed, *Why is light given to a man, whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* Mr. *Broughton* readeth it without the Question, (*Why is light given?*) thus: *The Wight, or man, whose way is hid, over whom the puissant casteth a covering.*

To a man, whose way is hid.] *Job* speaks not here of a way in a proper sence, the way wherein men travel, and pass in their journeys, from place to place: but *the way*, is a *way*, in a *Metaphor*: And so in Scripture, the way of a man is taken: First, for the purpose or intention of a man: Secondly, for the course and conversation of a man: and that either for the course, wherein we walk toward others, or for the course wherein others walk towards us. When it is said here, *Why is light given to a man, whose way is hid?* the *way*, is either the course wherein *Job* walked, respecting God; or the course which God took, respecting *Job*; *Why is light given to a man, whose way is hid?*

The way of man, in his walking before God, is twofold.

First, *Internal.*
Secondly, *External.*

There is an internal, and inward way, which the soul treads in converse with God; a secret path, a path which no eye hath seen. And then there is the outward way of walking. That speech of God to *Abraham* takes in both, *Walk before me, and be perfect*; that is, converse and carry thy self uprightly before me, in thy affections, and in thy actions. Now when *Job* saith, *His way was hid*, he means neither of these: for though the internal way, whether it be the way of sin, or the way of obedience, be a path so secret, as that it is alwayes hid from the eyes of men, yet *Job* knew well enough that God saw even that way, and therefore he could not complain, that his most secret way was hid from God. Yea, in another place, he comforts himself with this, that God knew the secret wayes of his heart: For when his friends accuse him, and charge him with hypocrisie, he supports himself with this, *My witness is above, and my record is in Heaven*; there is one there that knoweth the way, the secret way of my spirit with him, to be sincerity, though you charge the way of my spirit with hypocrisie. The soul hath many wayes of communion with God, which are altogether hidden from the eye of man: man cannot see, or discern, the private passages between God and the spirit; either when the soul approves it self to God, or rejoyceth and exults in God. And as concerning this way, this inward way, as *Job* knew that it was not hid from God; so (I conceive) it did not trouble him, that this way was hid from man: As there are in God certain (*Arcana Consilii*) secret mysteries, and hidden wayes of counsel, which he will not communicate to holy men; so there are in holy men (*Arcana Pietatis*) some secrets, some mysteries of godliness, which they do not communicate to the world; and therefore the complaint doth not lye in either of these respects.

The Church complained, but she was check'd for complaining, that her way was hid from God, *Isa.* 40. 27. *Why sayest thou, O* Jacob, *and speakest, O* Israel, *My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?*

Yet that place is not to be understood of a hiding from the eye of Gods inspection, as if the Church had any suspition that the Lord did not know, or did not see how matters went with them, or in what condition they were; but it is to be understood of the eye of Gods compassion: There is a seeing eye, or contemplating eye, and a compassionating or succouring eye. So the meaning of that complaint is only this, *Why sayest thou my way is hid from the Lord?* that is, why doest thou speak, as if God did not regard thee in thy troubles; as if God had no pity nor compassion on thee, no bowels toward thee; *Why sayest thou my way is hid from the Lord?* In the third of *Exodus*, when God comes to help the people of *Israel*, he telleth *Moses, I have seen, I have seen*, or *I have surely seen*; namely, with an eye compassionating their condition, as the next words shew, *For I know their sorrows.* Now when the Church complained, that *Her way was hid from God*; her meaning was, that God did not take notice, so, as to pity and deliver her. Excepting in that sence, she could not conceive that her way was hidden from God: neither is the way of the Church, so hidden from God, but as to our sense; for the Lord pities his people when he corrects them; and therefore *Jacob* is chidden for saying so; *Why sayest thou, O* Jacob, *my way is hidden from the Lord?* Therefore this Text is not to be understood of *Job*'s way, in respect of God, but of the hiding of Gods way, or the hidden dealings of God toward *Job*. *My way is hid*, saith *Job*, that, I cannot understand, nor interpret, nor expound the meaning of Gods dealing with me; I am not able to give an interpretation of it, I know not what this thing meaneth: *My way is hid.*

The way of Gods dealing with him, was a hidden way, in two respects.

First, In regard of the cause of his affliction: It was hidden from him, why God had laid so sore and so heavy a burthen upon him; and that is it which *Elihu* in *Chap.* 34. of this Book, *ver.* 31, 32. hints at, where he telleth *Job*, *Surely* (saith he) *it is meet to be said unto God, that which I see not, teach thou me.* He answers such a complaint as this. I (saith *Job*) cannot see the reason why God doth afflict me: *Elihu* tells him, *It is meet to be said unto God, that which I see not, teach thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do so no more:* Lord, if thou wilt shew me that my sin is the cause, and what sin is the cause, I do here promise, I will lay down my sin, and (through thy help) do so no more.

Or again, It was hidden in regard of the issue, or event. *My way is hid*; that is, I can see no passage out of this way; I cannot tell when these troubles will end; I see no help; I have no glimpse of light breaking out to me in this way; it is a dark, a hidden way unto me: This darkness troubles him, as much as all his troubles. And it is, as if he had said, I am so encompast with clouds, that I walk in darkness, and see no light: My life is so intangled, and wrapt up in troubles, that I see no way of deliverance, or escape. *Sunt qui viam enarrat viam elabendi.* Drus.

And this exposition seems most proper, if we take in the latter part of the verse, where he saith, *And whom God hath hedged in:* This explains the hiding of his way, to be the hedging of his way; such an encompassing of him about with sorrows, that he could not make his way out.

In the first Chapter, you may remember, that Satan was much troubled, that God had made *a hedge about* Job: And now *Job* himself is much troubled, that God had made a hedge about him: I am the man, saith he, [**Whom God hath hedged in.**] That which before was the object of Satans envy, is now become the object of *Job*'s complaint, a hedge: Sure then it was not the same *hedge*. No; that which Satan complained of, and envied at, was a hedge of mercy, and a hedge of blessings, a hedge of favour, and of protection: But this which *Job* complaineth of, is a hedge of thorny troubles, and of pricking sorrows: The former was (as we may speak) *a hedge of Roses*; and this was *a hedge of Bryars.* That was a hedge so high, and strong, that no evil could come in, or break through, to annoy him: And this was a hedge so high, and strong, that no good could come, or be brought unto him.

So then, take the sence thus, *Why is light given to a man, whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* That is, why doth God continue my life, when I am in such a condition, as that I can neither discover the reason why I came into it, nor am I able to discover any passage out of it.

And this is it which the Church complains of, (*Lam.* 3. 7.) *He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out*; and *ver.* 9. *He hath enclosed my wayes with hewen stones.* God had built up a wall (as it were) by Art, *with hewen stones*; he had set them so close together, that there was no passing by, no getting through.

Ob-

Observe hence, First, *That affliction is usually accompanied with much darkness.*

Affliction is often called darkness in Scripture. And as it is darkness without, so it often causeth darkness within. An afflicted person hath such darkness upon his person, that he cannot discern, many times, either why God doth afflict him, or when God will make an end of his afflictions. That in the Prophet (*Isa.* 50. 10.) is true of outward afflictions, as well as inward, *Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness?* There's many an afflicted person walks in a way, hidden in a three-fold darkness. First, The way is hid in the darkness of the cause for which he came into it. Secondly, The way is hid in the darkness of the event, how to get out of it. Thirdly, The way is hid in the darkness of his present duty, what to do in it. The way of affliction is often wrapt up, and hidden, in this three-fold darkness,

Further, Seeing *Job* speaks of this as an addition to all his sorrows, and as the complement of them all, that he was thus shut up and hedged in, and that his way was thus dark, in regard of the cause of it,

Observe, That, *It increaseth an affliction greatly, not to know the reason of an affliction; or to have the way of Gods dealings hidden from our eyes.*

It is a trouble, not to see the reason of things: The mind is exceedingly eased, when the understanding hath light: This made *Jeremy* inquire, *Why doth the way of the wicked prosper?* As if he had said, If I could see the reason of it, it would satisfie me; but while thou keepest me in the dark, and I can give no account to my own soul, or those that ask me, of this thy dispensation to wicked men, *This is the burthen of my soul.* It is usually said, *They are happy, who know the causes of things.* And in regard of the diseases of the body, we say, *That a disease is half cured, when the cause of it is discovered:* But when a Physitian is in the dark, and cannot find out the cause of a disease, he must needs be in the dark for the remedy of it. So it is also with a man, in regard of any affliction, when he cannot find out the cause, he knoweth not what to pitch upon as a remedy. When *Rebeckah* (*Gen.* 25. 22.) had Twins in her womb, and they strugled together within her, she was much troubled, and nothing would satisfie her, until she went to God to know the reason of the thing; *Lord* (saith she) *why am I thus?* And when God had told her, that *Two Nations were in her womb; and that two manner of people should be separated from her bowels*; she made no more complaints. So when there are such strivings, such struglings, and contrary motions of trouble in us, or about us, the soul goes to God, and inquires why it is thus? Lord, I am more troubled with the ignorance of my troubles, then with the weight, or smart of them.

Fœlix qui potuit rerũ cognoscere causas.

Thirdly, Take the words as respecting the issue, or deliverance from trouble, and they afford us this Observation:

That, *It is a great addition to an affliction, not to see, or discern, a way to escape, or get out of affliction.*

To be in an affliction, out of which there appears no passage, (unless the soul be mightily supported by the hand and power of Christ) brings within a step of despair. The Apostle speaks as much when he saith, (*1 Cor.* 10. 13.) *There is no temptation hath taken hold of you, but that which is common to man*; (and then it follows,) *but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* As if he should say, If God did not indeed discover, or make out to you some way of escaping, I must needs say, you were never able to bear it; but (saith he) God will make *a way for you to escape, that ye may be able to bear it:* Meaning, that the opening of this way, would revive their spirits, and then they would be able (through the strength of Christ) to bear it.

If so, then how shall the soul bear an affliction, when God instead of making a way to escape, doth as it were make a hedge to stop all escape? Therefore when the Lord would support his people in their troubles, he promised that they should have a door of hope opened to them, *I will give her the valley of* Achor *for a door of hope*, Hos. 2. 15. He would give her some appearance, some glimpses and openings of deliverance, in and from their present dangers. It is threatned, (*Deut.* 28. 25.) *thou shalt come out one way against thine enemies, and flie seven wayes before them*: they should flie many wayes, but they should escape no way. *Thou shalt come out one way, and flie seven wayes,* that is, thou shalt trie this, and that, and every way to escape, but thou shalt find a hedge at every wayes end, to stop and hinder thy escape. We use to say of a man in a distressed condition, *He's in a wood, or in a wilderness.* And when God entangles men in their own devises, it is said, *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way*, Psal. 107. 40. So *Pharaoh* said of the children of *Israel*, *They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in*, *Exod.* 14. 3. And when a people are as the children of *Israel* were, having a Sea before them, an Army behind them, and Mountains on either hand, then they may say (as *Job* did) *Their way is hid, and God hath hedged them in.*

Tentabis semper & diversis viis effugere, sed frustra: nusquam tibi patebit effugium.

For my sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like water.

Here *Job* takes up the former Proposition, and applyes it particularly to his own person. Before, he said only in the general, *Why is light given to him that is in misery? and why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* Now he saith in effect, it is thus with me, I am a man in misery, and I am a man, whose way God hath hid and hedged in, wherefore then is my life continued? And he proves that he was in such a condition, by the effects of it, *sighs and roarings.* So that this verse holds forth two things about *Job*'s sorrow. First, The continuance of it, in those words, *My sighing comes before I eat.* Secondly, The extremity of it, in those, *My roarings are poured out, &c.* The Argument may be thus framed: That man is in extream and continual misery, who doth not so much breath, as sigh, who, when he would speak, is forced to roar: But thus it is with me, *My sighing cometh before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like water,* therefore my misery is extream and continual.

My sighing cometh before I eat.] In the Hebrew it is word for word thus, *Before the face of my bread my sighings come.* Which Hebraism, (*Before the face of my bread*) hath a great emphasis in it: It notes the continuance of his sorrows without any intermission. When a thing is said *to be before the face of another*, it notes an equal continuance with that, before the face of which it is said to be. As in the negative, (*Exod.* 20. 3.) *Thou shalt have no other gods before me*, so we translate it: The Hebrew is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before my face*; that is, so long as I continue to be thy God, thou shalt have no other god; but I shall be thy God to all eternity, therefore thou shalt have no other gods but me, for ever. So in the affirmative, *Psal.* 72. 5. where, under the type of *Solomon*'s Kingdom, the continuance of the Kingdom of Christ is prophesied, the *Holy Ghost* saith, *It shall continue so long, as the Sun and Moon endureth:* the Hebrew is, it shall continue *before the face of the Sun and of the Moon*; that is, there shall be an equal duration of the Kingdom of Christ, and of those lights of Heaven, the Sun and the Moon: The Kingdom of Christ shall last as long as the world shall last.

לפני לחמי εἰς πρόσωπον ἄρτυμά Aquila.

So then (according to this sence) *Before the face of my bread my sighings come*, is, as if he had said, look how long I have my bread before me, look how much time I spend in eating, so much time I spend in sighing, my sorrowings are of the same continuance with my refreshings. The phrase imports the un-intermittedness (as we may so speak) of his sorrows; that he had no stop, no breathing time, which was not a sighing time, no not for a meal time; while he was eating, with every bit of meat, he had a morsel of sorrows: He might say as the Psalmist, (*Psal.* 102. 9.) *I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping*; when I drink, my tears flow into my cup; When I take in a few drops of comfort, I weep out streams of sorrow: Or my sighings come and return so fast upon me, that I have no time to eat my bread: I am so plyed and followed with these afflictions, that I have no leisure to be comforted.

A Deo perpetua est hæc calamitas, ut ne cibi quidem aut ullius necessitas causa dolores possim fallere & uno momento à gemitibus aberrare. Vel tam frequentes mihi sunt gemitus ut vix mihi tempus supersit ad capiendũ cibum.

If at any time a man gets respite from his grief, it is when

when he eats; how reſpiteleſs then was *Job's* grief, before whom ſorrow and ſighings ſate (as gueſts) continually at his table.

My roarings are powred out like water.

As the former words ſhewed the continuance, ſo this the extremity of *Job's* ſorrows. It is a great affliction that makes a man of ſpirit ſpeak, or complain: It is a great affliction that makes a man of ſpirit weep or mourn. How great an affliction then is it, which makes a man of ſpirit cry out and roar? When a man of courage roars, he is pained to purpoſe. *Job*, a man of ſpirit and courage, doth not only ſigh, but roar; ſighings are more ſecret ſorrows, but roarings muſt be heard; eſpecially, his roarings, which were *powred out like water*.

Roaring is the Lions voice, and here is an alluſion to the hungry Lion, roaring *on his prey*: Or to the troubled waves of the ſea, which alſo are ſaid to *roar*. Exceſſive ſorrow is often ſet forth by roaring. *Pſal.* 22. 1. *Why art thou ſo far from the voyce of my roaring?* ſaith *David*, typing the ſorrows of Chriſt: I do not only cry, but I roar out unto thee. Lord, why doſt thou not hear my ſtrong cries, cries like the roaring of the Lion, or the noiſe of troubled waters? So, *Pſal.* 32. 3. *David*, to ſhew his extremity of pain and trouble, while he kept in, and did not confeſs his ſin, ſpeaks thus, *while I kept ſilence* (while I ſmothered my ſin in ſecret) *I roared for the very diſquietneſs of my ſoul*. Silence in not confeſſing ſin, cauſes roaring under the guilt of ſin. Thoſe are great burdens of ſin, and great burdens of ſorrow, that cauſe roaring. *My roarings are powred out like water*.

This notes further yet, the abundance and the ſtrength of his ſorrows. *I am powred out like water* (I am, as it were, all melted into ſorrows) is ſaid of Chriſt, in that Pſalm of his paſſion (*Pſal.* 22. 14.) *I am powred out like water, my heart in the midſt of my bowels is like melted wax*. When the Prophet *Ezekiel* would ſhew how that people ſhould be affected with the tidings of their afflictions, he ſaith, *Every heart ſhall melt, and all hands ſhall be feeble, and every ſpirit ſhall faint, and all knees ſhall be weak as water*, (*chap.* 21. 7.) The hebrew is, *all knees ſhall go into water*. The ſorrows of repentance are expreſt by *the powring out of water*, to note, both the abundance of them, and the intenſiveneſs of them, in that known place, 1 *Sam.* 7. 9. *They gathered together to* Mizpeh, *and drew water, and powred it out before the Lord*, that is, they mourned abundantly, and they mourned with all their ſtrength.

How ſtrong and abundant the ſorrows of *Job* were, hath been often ſhewed before, and Obſervations drawn down from them; and therefore I ſhall need do no more then clear the words, and give the ſence. It followeth,

For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me.

For the thing which I greatly feared.] The cauſal particle in the beginning, doth not alwayes infer a cauſe. This verſe is not a reaſon of what he ſpake before; but this particle is often uſed, in Scripture, for affirmation or illuſtration, and not as cauſal, or by way of demonſtration; as, *John* 4. 17. Chriſt tells the woman of *Samaria, Thou ſpeakeſt well, I have no husband*; the Greek is, *for I have no husband*. We tranſlate it only by way of aſſertion. So, *Mat.* 7. 23. *Then will I profeſs unto them, I never knew you*; the Greek is, *Then I will profeſs unto them, for I never knew you*; we render it only as an aſſeveration: So very frequent in the Hebrew, the particle [*Chi*] which is here uſed, hath in it only the force of an affirmation; *For the thing I greatly feared, is come upon me*, that is, certainly, or aſſuredly, *the thing which I greatly feared, is come upon me*; as if *Job* ſhould make this as the concluſion and the ſum of all his complainings; this is it which now I muſt conclude, that *the thing which I greatly feared, is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of, is come unto me*.

The thing which I greatly feared.] The Hebrew word is, *I feared a fear, and it is come upon me*. And ſo fear is in the Scripture, frequently put for the *thing feared*, by a Metonymie of the effect for the cauſe, the abſtract being put for the concrete; as, *Prov.* 1. 26. *I will mock when your fear cometh*; that is, when the trouble which you feared, ſhall come upon you: As if *Job* ſhould have ſaid, this evil is that which I have fore-ſeen and fore-thought; I had ſuch miſgrievings in my ſpirit long before this, that ſuch a black day might come upon me, and I might be thus hedged in: now I ſee my thoughts are come to paſs, and my conjectures prove true; the thing which I feared, and greatly feared, is come upon me. We tranſlate well, *I greatly feared*; the Hebrew is, *I feared a fear*: Such expreſſions raiſe the ſence; as when we are ſaid *to be bought with a price*, it notes, that there was a *great price* paid for our redemption: To rejoyce with joy, ſhews the greatneſs of joy. So here, to *fear a fear*, ſhews that he was in a great fear; as we tranſlate, *I feared a fear, I greatly feared*.

Here it may be queſtioned, whether theſe fears of *Job* were lawful? doth it become us to have ſuch miſgrievings of heart, in reſpect of our outward condition? The Apoſtle biddeth us, *be careful in nothing* (Phil. 4. 6.) and was it a virtue or a grace, was it commendable, or ſo much as approveable in *Job* to be fearful in all things? Chriſt rebukes his Diſciples, becauſe they were afraid in a ſtorm; and was ir well in *Job*, that he was fearful in a Sun-ſhine, when he had the faireſt weather, and proſpered in all things? Doth it become a godly man, to be alwayes ſolicitous about his eſtate, and doubting that troubles will come? One would think there is trouble enough in troubles, when they come; a man ſhould not trouble himſelf with them before they come. Beſides, it is ſaid, *Prov.* 10. 24. reſpecting wicked men, *that God will bring that which they fear upon them*; ſo it ſeemeth, God is angry with thoſe, who are alwayes fearing, or ſtand poring upon ſuch and ſuch evils as they fear may come upon them: To theſe, God ſaith (*Iſa.* 66. 3.) *I alſo will chooſe their deluſions, and will bring their fear upon them*; becauſe you feared theſe things, you ſhall have your fear. As God gives ſome their prayers in anger, ſo he gives many their fears in anger; and it is as great a ſin, inordinately to fear, that God will take away the meat of our neceſſity or convenience, as it is to pray that God would give us meat to ſatisfie our luſts or wantonneſs.

To clear this, we muſt diſtinguiſh of fear, as to the purpoſe we have in hand. There are divers ſorts of fear.

Firſt, There is a fear of *wiſdom and caution*, and there is a fear of *torment and vexation*. That which the Apoſtle *John* ſpeaks (1 *John* 4. 18.) *Fear hath torment*, is not meant of all fear: there is a fear that is a tormenting paſſion, a fear which diſtracts and divides the thoughts about troubles which may come; and there is a fear, which only directs us to avoid or prevent the coming of trouble.

Secondly, There is a fear, which is oppoſed to comfort. It was *David's* ſin, that he wanted the fear oppoſed to ſecurity; when he ſaid, *In my proſperity I ſhall never be moved: Lord, by thy favour, thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong*, Pſal. 30. 6, 7. The fear of *Job*, in his proſperity, was oppoſed to this ſecurity; he did not ſay, *I ſhall never be moved*; he thought he might be moved: The favour of God had made his mountain ſtrong, yet he knew it had but the ſtrength of clay, and therefore might be caſt down. This was his fear; he looked upon creatures, as they are, mutable and moveable. Chriſt ſpeaks of a faith of miracles, which will remove mountains; and that fear is not contrary to ſaving faith, which cauſeth us to think, that our mountains may be removed. *Job's* fear was grounded on the uncertainty of creature-comforts; he knew wealth was *brittle ware*, and might quickly receive a crack. This fear we ought to carry about us, in regard of our ſpiritual eſtates; *though grace be everlaſting ware*, though we are high-built, and full-grown in grace; though through the favour of God, our mountain of holineſs and comforts be very ſtrong, yet we muſt not be ſecure; though we are *high-built*, we muſt not be *high-minded*. Hence the Apoſtle *Paul* warns the believing Gentiles, that they ſhould fear: I grant, ye are in a good eſtate, in compariſon of the Jews; they are caſt off, ye are graffed in; yet let me give you this caution, *Be not high-minded, but fear*. That fear which is oppoſed to preſumption and ſecurity, is a good and neceſſary fear, in the beſt of our eſtate, whether in grace or nature, whether in worldly or heavenly riches. And ſuch was the fear of *Job*. Rom. 11. 20

Thirdly, There is a fear which makes us provide for an evil day, and there is a fear which hindreth us from enjoying the comforts of a good day. The former was in *Job*; doubtleſs

less his fear in good dayes, made him diligent to provide for the evil day. As it is said of *Noah* (*Heb.* 11. 7.) *That* Noah *being warned of God, of things not seen as yet, through faith, moved with fear, prepared an Ark, for the saving of his house.* *Noah* knew the flood would come, this holy fear set him awork to provide an Ark. It is an argument both of wisdom and of grace, in a calm, to provide for a storm; in peace, to consider what to do in a time of war; in health, to lay up thoughts about our sickness; & in a day when the light of Gods countenance shines into our hearts, and we walk in the comforts of the holy Ghost, then to think, a night of desertion may come; and what shall I do, if I should walk in darkness, and see no light? Such as this, was the fear which *Job* feared.

Fourthly, There is a fear which makes us distrust God, that he will afflict us; and there is a fear, which keepeth us from doing that, which may provoke God to afflict us: This was *Job*'s fear, as was shewed (*chap.* 1. 1.) *He feared God, and eschewed evil.* He was loth to grieve and offend God, or give him any occasion to be angry.

Lastly, There is a fear, which is opposed to *hardness of heart*; and a fear, that is opposed to *courage of heart*. *Job*'s fear was opposed to hardness of heart; of this, *Solomon* speaks (*Prov.* 28. 14.) *Blessed is the man that feareth always.* And to clear what fear he means, he adds in the next words; *But he that hardneth his heart, shall fall into mischief.* Where we see, First, That there is a fear opposed to hardness of heart. And, Secondly, That to fear that fear always, even in our greatest prosperity, is not only our duty, but our happiness; that fear will not interrupt our comforts, but comfort us. Yea, this fear doth not only consist with comfort, but with courage; and though we may fall into the troubles which we thus fear, yet we shall not fall under them: Such as this was *Job*'s fear.

So then, to take up all; *Job*'s fear was a *fear* of wisdom and caution, not of torment and vexation; a *fear* opposed to security and presumption, not to joy and consolation; a *fear* that made him diligent to prepare against an evil day, not a fear that did eat out all the comforts of a good day; a *fear* which kept him from doing that, which might move God to afflict him; not a *fear* which made him distrust, that God would afflict him; a *fear* opposed to hardness of heart, not a *fear* opposed to courage and strength of heart. Such a fear as this, is a holy fear; such a fear as this, is a good companion in our best estate: this fear, and our comforts may well joyn together; this fear will not trouble, but regulate our lives; not break, but sweeten our sleep. Hence observe,

That, *Holy wisdom, sanctified prudence, biddeth us fear, and prepare for evil, in our good dayes.*

Sapienti meliora sunt in votis, deteriora verò in expectatione. Plut. *in Tranquil.*

I was afraid of these things, saith *Job*: We must not suspect, but we ought often to think of evils, before they come. A wise moral man, much more, a wise Christian, while he is earnestly praying for good, is also carefully providing for evil. Lest the Disciples should forget trouble in times of peace, Christ saith to them, *Behold* (Mat. 24. 25.) *I have told you before*; now you are at pretty good ease, it may be, you think, it will be thus with you always; but take heed of such thoughts, I have told you what will be hereafter; *Behold, I have told you before.* And again (*John* 16. 33.) *These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation.* In the peace we have with Christ, we should expect tribulation from the world. The Spirit of God often hints such things aforehand, to the spirits of his people, that they may not be surprized. *Paul* testifies (*Acts* 20. 23.) *that the holy Ghost every where witnessed that bonds and afflictions did abide him*; he lookt for trouble in all places, this made him both patient under, and victorious over all his troubles. Ungodly men feel trouble, before they see it; and are often past all hope, before they have had any fear; when they have a good day, they think their day will be an eternity, and last for ever. Those in *Amos* (chap. 6. 3.) were merry, they were singing and feasting, eating the fat, and drinking the sweet; and what do they in these their good, their only good dayes? The Prophet shews us in the next words; *They put the evil day far from them*: they would have no thought that their estate might change, when they had a mind their estate should continue. Hence the Prophet *Isaiah* (chap. 28. 15. describes them, making a covenant with death, and coming to an agreement with hell; and then they supposed themselves safe and under covert, come what would. The Prophets indeed have been talking of judgments and scourges; but what of that? we have got a protection, we have covenants in our pockets, will be our security; so they were promised, and so they believed, as their words witness; *If the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come near us.* These are the thoughts of foolish and ungodly men, they make bargains and agreements, as it were, with all troubles, that they shall not be touched; others may smart, but they have taken order for their own indemnity: *They have made lies their refuge, and under falshood have they hid themselves.* And so they call chearfully for their wine; come fetch wine, and *we will fill our selves with strong drink*; and then conclude confidently (as if all the world, and time were at their command) *To morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant*, Isa. 56. 12. When a wise man falleth into trouble, *he falleth forward*, that is, he falleth into those troubles which he did foresee; but when an ungodly man, a wicked man falleth into trouble, *he falleth backward*; he falleth into those evils, which he never thought of, much less, feared. Many of the people of God, at this day, do, and may say of the evils which are now upon us, the things which we feared are come; these storms were seen long ago in the clouds; yea, in the Sun-shine, in fair dayes; these foul rainie dayes were foreseen: and they who have foreseen them, and foreseen them with such an eye of faith and holy fear, as we have described, are in best case to grapple with them, and will be gainers by them. It is well for us, when we can say, the things we feared, are come upon us. They are in a sad condition, upon whom those evils fall, which they never feared; when troubles come, they go neerest their hearts, who have put them fartherest off, before they came. Hence observe,

Secondly, That, *The more preparing fears we have before troubles come, the less we are prest with fears, when trouble comes.*

If we consider *Job*, how unmoveable he stood the charge and assault of these afflictions, how he wrestled with all the distresses, which at once took hold of him, we are to look (next to the support he had immediately from Christ) to this wise caution of his, that he feared such a storm might overtake him, before he got to his journeyes end: He thought these things might come, and therefore laid in provision for them, against they came. Those blows wound deepest, which we expect not. Dangers unknown, do easily surprize us and oppress us; whereas those which we fear and think of, may either be prevented in their coming, or we may be provided against they come. That which the *Naturalists* say of the *Cockatriee*, that if the *Cockatrice* see a man first, the man dieth; but if the man seeth the *Cockatrice* first, the *Cockatrice* dies; is an experienced truth, respecting the point we have in hand; that if troubles see us first, we die; but if we see them first, they die; that is, their sting and strength (as to us) is much abated. Dangers are most felt, where they are not foreseen; and sometime, being foreseen, they are not felt at all; for a prepared expectation doth either weaken them, or strengthen us, make us more able to sustain them, or them less able to hurt us; whereas indeed every cross, which findeth us secure, hath an advantage to leave us desperate. When *Nabal* heard of danger past, which he never dreamt might come, *his heart died in him like a stone* (1 Sam. 25.) How then had he been astonished into a stone, if he had seen the evil falling upon him? Such can ill bear trouble, who look for nothing but comfort. It was an addition to the affliction of that afflicted people (*Jer.* 8. 15.) *When they looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble*; If they who are in trouble, are more troubled, when they cannot have the peace they looked for, then surely they must be more perplexed with trouble (when it comes) who enjoying peace, never had a thought, that trouble would come. When a people are so far from looking for evil, that they look for nothing but good, and build upon it, that they shall never see sorrow; then to see sorrow, is a killing sight, The sorrows of *Babylon* shall be mightily

Gravius est vulnus quod non expectatur, & illa agrius tolerantur, quibus homo se non prius affuefacit.

mightily increas'd and augmented, doubled and trebled upon her, because when they are coming upon her, she shall be saying, *I sit as a Queen, and shall see no sorrow*; she was fearless, and she shall be comfortless: Trouble will lie heavy enough upon us, when we look and prepare for it; but it will be intolerable to those, who never look'd for, nor laid in one thought of preparation against its coming. The fool in the Gospel, said to his soul, *take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years*: But it is best for us, when we have abundance of outward goods, to say to our souls, *these may be lost in a few hours*: Therefore say to thy self, in the time of thy fulness, what if a day of emptying should come? say, when you are rich, it may be, before I die, I may be poor; what shall I do then? Now I have a house, it may be, before I die, or within a few dayes, I shall be turned out of doors; in what posture do I find my self for such a condition? Now I am at liberty, and enjoy my friends; it may be, shortly I may be cast into a prison, and come into the hand of enemies; now I have my wife and children about me, *my vine and my olive-plants, at, and roun d about my table*; I may shortly be deprived of them; and, O my soul, how canst thou bear these changes? It is good to put these cases to our selves now; surely *Job* often tutor'd his spirit with such questions as these, and catechized his heart in them from day to day; hence he saith, *The things I feared, are come upon me.* To proceed;

I was not in safety, neither had I rest, nor was I quiet; yet trouble came.

This is both an addition to, and an exposition of the former verse. These words explain what he meant by saying, *I feared a fear*; even this, *I was not in safety, neither had I rest*, &c.

I was not in safety.] No? was not *Job* in safety in the dayes of his prosperity? Is it not said, *that he had a hedge about him, and such a hedge as the Devil could not break through, to hurt him?* and was not *Job* in safety then?

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The hebrew word, from the root [*Shalah*] doth also signifie, I was not secure, I was not in security; or, I did not sit safe in my own thoughts, in my own opinion; I did not live securely or without fear in my most flourishing dayes. And from this root, *Christ* is called *Shiloh*, Gen. 49. 10. *The Scepter shall not depart from* Judah *till* Shiloh *come*. *Christ* is *Shiloh*, that is, he, in whom all persons may securely trust; you may sit down in safety in Christ, and rest your souls for ever; he is *Shilah*, our preserver; and the *Hebrews* use that word to signifie the fleshy mantle in which the infant is wrapped in the mothers belly, because the infant lieth there quietly and securely; it is out of fear, and hath no thought of any danger, but lieth securely, *out of harms way*. So that when *Job* saith, *I was not in safety*, he means, I did not think my self safe, or beyond the reach of danger, I was not taken up in outward contentments; I did not look upon my possessions as perpetualties, or upon my house, as that which should endure for ever, or *my dwelling-place to all generations*. *Job* was not like the great Monarch of *Babylon*, (Dan. 4. 4.) who said, I Nebuchadnezzar *was at rest in my house* (it is the same word which is used in the Text) I, saith *Nebuchadnezzar*, counted my self the greatest man in the world, and I thought none could touch or molest me; *I was at rest and safe*: We have such a description made by the Prophet, of a whole Nation, as this King makes of his own person, *Jer.* 49. 3. *Arise, get ye up unto the wealthy Nation that dwelleth at ease*; or (it is the same word) to a Nation without either fear or care, a secure Nation; as it is explained by the words following, *which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone*. If you come to a mans house that hath neither lock nor key, nor door, nor bar, you may well resolve, that he dwelleth securely, and is in safety. And if you come to a City that hath neither gates nor bars, you will say, either this City hath no enemies, or else it fears none. A City without gates and bars, is the embleme of security. *Job's* temper was directly opposed to this; *I was not in safety.*

Neither had I rest, nor was I quiet.

These two latter expressions are of the same importance with the former: Both these words have been opened at the thirteenth verse of this Chapter, both being there applied to rest and quietness in the grave. There he said, if he had died, he had been at rest and quiet; but all his lifetime, he had no rest, neither was he quiet. But is this agreeable to the duty or character of a godly man, to say he hath no rest, he is not quiet? Surely a godly man ought to be quiet, when all the world is hudled together in confusion; when the mountains skip like lambs, and the little hills like young sheep, then, even then, he ought to stand like mount *Sion*, that cannot be moved: And did it become *Job*, or is it any part of his commendation, that in the times of his peace, he had no rest? When the Prophet shews the temper of wicked men, he compares them to *the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest*, Isa. 57. 20. It should seem that *Job* was like a troubled sea; for himself saith, he could not rest. I answer, by distinguishing, first, of a twofold rest; there is a rest of contentation, and a rest of confidence. *Job* had not a rest of confidence, he trusted not in his outward peace; but he had the rest of contentation, even in his outward troubles. A wicked mans conscience is like a troubled sea, when he enjoyes outward peace; but *Job* enjoyed peace of conscience while his outward estate was like a troubled sea: He was fully setled in his mind, when he had no rest; and was satisfied in spirit, when he had not this quietness: so that when he saith, *I had no rest, neither was I quiet*; his meaning is only this, I never placed my happiness in these things, I never built my hopes upon creatures, I never trusted upon them, nor expected much from them. Or, if you will more clearly apprehend the sence of this last verse, you may read it in that contrary practice of the rich man, *Luke* 12. 19. His house was full, but his heart was fuller of the creature; and he made the creature both his rock to build upon, and his pillow to sleep upon; when his ground brought forth plentifully, and he had built new barns to lay up his fruits, then he layes himself down to sleep; and that he might sleep quickly and quietly, he sings a *requiem* to his soul; *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry*; no face can be more unanswerable to a face; heaven and hell, light and darkness, are not more unlike, then these words of the rich man are unanswerable in likeness, to those words of *Job*. That rich mans words are the affirmatives of all *Job's* negatives; and may be thus rendred in full sence: I was (and I resolved I should so continue) *in safety, at rest and quiet*. *Job's* estate was as full as his, but his heart was emptied of all creature-confidence and complacence; I (said he) never thought my self the safer for these, and therefore I said to my soul, soul, take not thy rest, quiet not thy self in these: this is his intent in saying, *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, nor was I quiet.* It follows,

Yet (though it was thus with me) **trouble came**; though my heart was loose from the creature, yet I lost all I had in the creature: though I made not the world my comfort, yet I found sorrow in the world; I never expected much peace in it, none at all from it; yet trouble came: such trouble came, as might move and shake me to pieces. *Job*, you see, when he had abundance of all outward things, yet saith, he was not in *safety, and at quiet*; *he did not rest in or upon them.* Hence observe,

A godly man never setteth up his rest in Creatures.

Though he have never so much riches in possession, yet he doth not make riches his portion. He lives by that caution (*Psal.* 62. 10) *If riches flow in or encrease, yet set not thine heart upon them.* In the highest flood and spring-tide of worldly prosperity, we should keep our hearts within the channel: When riches are increased into a mountain, and (to the eye of nature) into a mountain of rocks, yet then do not set thy heart upon them, as upon a foundation, (so the Hebrew word imports) to settle thy contentments. All the creatures in heaven and earth, are not strong enough to bear the weight of a mans heart (God only can do that) who is *the rock of ages*, or *an everlasting strength*, Isa. 26. 3. All, besides him, is a foundation of sand, and so a godly man takes them. What nature looks at as a foundation of *rocks*, that grace sees to be a foundation of *sand*, and therefore will not rest upon it; neither indeed can it. A godly man, in his afflictions, is, *as having nothing, and yet possessing all things* (2 Cor. 6. 10.) and in his abundance, *he hath all things, but possesseth nothing*; for he so possesses things, as if he did not possess them; as the Apostles counsel is (1 *Cor.* 7. 31.) *He marries as if he married not; he*

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weeps

significat in quiete vel ace agere, el tranquill'è & in tio vivere. Nec multum bludit à oce Hebræa atinum sa- us. Moller n Psal. 122. 6. Shiloh non antum habet significationem passivam, quasi icas, translatum, fœlicem, cui mnia prosperè cedunt; d activam iam, ut Shiloh sit pitator, promissæ elicitatis auctor.

weeps, as if he wept not; he rejoyces, as if he rejoyced not; he buyes, as if he possessed not; because the fashion of this world passeth away. It was an excellent speech of *Luther*, concerning worldly things, *I have professed, that I will never be satisfied with the creature (this is to be a Protestant in deed, as well as in truth.)* A godly man is an *Epicure in Christ*, he would never play the *Epicure, but in Christ, and in God*: In them, and towards them, he gives his affections their full swing, and as a wicked man is said *to enlarge his desires* (after the Earth) *as Hell* (Hab. 2. 5.) So he enlarges *his desires* (after Heaven) *as Heaven*, and complains his desires are no larger. In the thoughts of Christ he sits down, and would take his fill; he saith, *I am safe in him, I am quiet and at rest; He saith to his soul, soul, dost thou see* that Christ, *and dost thou take notice of those promises? Thou hast goods laid up in him, in them for many years, yea, for eternity; soul, take thine ease, take it fully, thou hast riches, thou hast an estate that can never be spent; soul, eat, drink and be merry; his blood is drink indeed, and his flesh is meat indeed; joy in Christ is joy indeed, unspeakable joy here, and fulness of joy hereafter: In his presence there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.* Until the soul pitches thus on Christ, it is not in *safety*, much less in *rest* or *quiet*. As the *Needle* in the *Compass* is in continual motion till it points towards the *North*, where (as it is conceived) there are Rocks of Loadstone, with which it sympathizeth; so the soul is in continual motion, until it points to Christ, who (we are sure) is that living Rock, with whom all Believers sympathize; and the true Loadstone which attracts all Believers to him. A Believer, like *Noah*'s Dove, finds no rest (all the world over) for the *feet of his soul*, until he returns to *this Ark* of safety and salvation: And therefore after all his flights and flutterings among the Creatures, he saith (with the Psalmist) *Return unto thy rest* (thy Christ) *O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee,* Psal. 116. 7. Thou hast been abroad in the world, and that (like a narrow-hearted Master) deals niggardly with thee: If thou shouldest stay long, either in the service of, or dependance upon the world, the world would starve thee: Therefore return unto thy rest in the Lord; for the Lord hath dealt (and will yet deal more) bountifully with thee, O my soul.

Lastly, In that *Job* saith, *I was not in safety, neither had I rest*, &c. *yet trouble came*; we may observe,

> That, *The more our hearts are loosened from the creatures, the more assurance we may have of enjoying the Creatures.*

It is as if *Job* had said, I was not fastened to the world, my heart was not engaged to any thing on this side Christ; and this was the fairest, the most probable way for the continuance of my outward comforts; *yet trouble came.* The Redditive Particle, *yet*, supposes somewhat in reason or probability at least, that might have carried it another way. As when the Prophet *Amos*, reckoning up the judgments of God upon his people, speaks to them thus in his name (chap. 4. 6, 8, 9.) *I have sent you cleanness of teeth, yet you have not returned unto me; I have sent you the pestilence, the sword, yet have you not returned unto me.* The *yet*, shews there was great reason God should expect their return, or that he had done that, which, in all probability, might have caused them to return, when he sent those judgments. So here, when *Job* saith, *I was not in safety*, &c. *yet trouble came*; the *yet*, implies that there was somewhat even in that unquietness, which gave him hopes of settlement in his outward comforts: It seems to carry such a sence in it, as if he had in more words explained himself thus; *Had I dwelt securely, and given my self up to the contentments of my flesh, or trusted in an arm of flesh for safety, I should not have wondred at my calamity, or thought strange of my trouble; but this is a riddle which I cannot yet expound, that when my heart was no way set upon my estate, my estate should fall: That when I rested not in the creature, I should meet with such troubles in the creature.* This is not the manner of God, it is not usual for God to do thus in his dispensations toward his people and servants. *It is very rare that he takes their outward comforts from them, when they are not taken with their comforts.* Hence it is (as I apprehend) that *Job* putteth it in with a *yet trouble came. This way of God with me, is out of the ordinary course of Providence.* I confess, *Mercer*, a very learned Commentator, doth not favour this exposition of laying such a weight upon the particle *yet*, and therefore renders the Original (*Vau*) as a bare Copulative. *I was not in safety*, &c. *And trouble came.* Yet having the authority of our Translation, and the frequent use of the word to that sence in other places, we may venture upon it; yea, I think it no venture, but a certain advantage both to the Text and to our selves. And I am certain the position is true, though the exposition should not prove so: For the truth is, troubles are never so near, as when we put them furthest off; nor is the world ever so unsure to us, as when we make surest of it. God often pulls their comforts from them, whose hearts are glued to their comforts; As it is said of those in 1 *Thes.* 5. 3. *When they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them, as pain upon a woman in travail, and they shall not escape*; Mark, when they shall say, that is, conclude all's their own, when out of the abundance of their hearts, their mouths speak of nothing *but of peace and safety, all is well, and all will be well, then sudden destruction cometh*: When a man saith, I have riches, I have a full estate, I have honour, I am a happy man, I may take my rest; then poverty, want, disgrace, misery, vexations and troubles, fall upon him as an armed man. Thus for the most part, God wrests the creatures soonest out of their hands, who hold them fastest. In *Luke* 17. Christ instanceth in the *dayes of* Noah, and *in the dayes of* Lot, when they were secure, buying and selling, building and planting, marrying and giving in marriage, as if the world had been their own; and as if they meant to take the heart of it out, and leave a poor world for the next age, then the flood came, and then fire came, and they, with theirs, were swept away and consumed, as in a moment. The Master of the servant in the Gospel, *shall come in a day.* In what day? First, In a day when he looked not for him. Secondly, In a day when his heart was let out upon the creature; *When he shall be eating and drinking with the drunken, when he shall be smiting his fellow-servants*; when he shall think all sure, and the day his own; *in that day shall his Master come, even in the day that he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not aware*, Luke 12. 45, 46. To have the spirit steept and drencht in worldly pleasures or profits, endangers us to some sudden sweeping judgment: And when we value the enjoyment of the creature more then we ought, we shall not long enjoy it so much as we might. Earthly things fail us soonest, when we trust in them, or think our selves safe by them.

Non placet quod quidam putant Jobum velle hoc loco, quod non intumuerit, neque insolentior fuit rebus affluentibus, & tamen in hac mala inciderit, Mercer.

From this observe (in passage) a vast difference between God and the world, between earthly things and spiritual; the way to hold spiritual things fast, is to take fast hold of them, to cleave to them with a full purpose of heart never to let them go. If you carry loose affections towards Christ, you may quickly lose the comforts of his presence: The more we rest upon Christ, the more we trust on God, and make him our safety, the more safe we are. *Him doth God establish in peace, in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed upon him, even because he trusts upon him*, Isa. 26. 3. We have most peace from God, when we expect most; and may look for more rest and quiet, when we rest quietly in him, and say, *In God I have enough*; yea, as *Jacob* (Gen. 33. 11.) *I have all.* But if you would have rest in the world, say as the Prophet *Micah* directs (chap. 2. 10.) *This is not our rest.* Keep your hearts at a due distance from the world, and you shall (most probably) keep the world. What Christ speaks of this life, is true of the things of this life; he that will lose (that is, he who is ready) to lose the things of this life, shall save them; and he that will save, that is, he who is resolved to save the things of this life, shall lose them; put them out of your hearts, and you may hold them in your hands: you stand firmest upon the earth, when you do but touch it, and touch it (as a round body doth a plain) only in a point. You are freest from danger, when you say, we are not *in safety*; freest from motion, when you say, *we are not in rest*: And when in *Job*'s sense) you are *not quiet*, then (according to the ordinary dealings of God, with his people) you are *furthest from trouble.*

So much concerning this Chapter, containing *Job*'s bitter curſe upon the day of his birth, and his vehement expoſtulation about the continuance of his life.

His *Three Friends* ſtood ſilent all this while, much divided between compaſſion and indignation; they pitied his ſad afflictions, but they were angry (and they thought they had reaſon to be angry, in the behalf of God) with his impatience and complaint. Their zeal kindled, and their hearts waxed hot within them; while they were thus mute and muſing, the fire burned and brake forth; at laſt they ſpake (every man in his order) with their tongues: A hot diſpute enſues; *Eliphaz* begins, the reſt follow: After a long ventilation and debate, God himſelf (appearing as Moderator) ſtates the queſtion between them, determines and concludes for *Job* againſt thoſe three; *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant* Job *hath*, chap. 42. 7. *To this God the moſt wiſe, the only wiſe God, the infallible moderator of all perſons, actions, things and queſtions, both in Heaven and upon the Earth, be glory and praiſe for ever,* Amen.

TO

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH

AND SEVENTH CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

A
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practical Observations
UPON
JOB.

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER:

To those chiefly of this *CITY*, who have been the MOVERS, and are the PROMOTERS of this WORK.

SIRS,

Our continued Care and labour of Love, engages a like degree of both, for the growth of this Infant-work. *And therefore (though in the midst of manifold diversions) these pieces are ventured out. We live in an Age (O that we could live it) wherein the* hand of Providence *works* gloriously, yea, terribly: *Having then got three or four steps further into this* Book of Providence, *it will not be unseasonable to shew you the* Prints *of them: Especially seeing this History of* Job's *Affliction, looks so like a Prophesie of ours; and (almost in every Line) gives us some Lineament of our present troubles and distempers, of our hopes and fears.*

In the three former Chapters we had a Narrative *of the Case, and of those occurrences out of which the Question here debated receives its state; as also the bringing together of the* Interlocutors *or persons maintaining this Discourse; as we may alwayes observe in the writings of the* Ancients, *whether Natural, Moral or Divine, which are composed into Dialogues or Disputes.*

This great Divinity-act (*one of the greatest surely and most solemn, I think the first that ever was held out in such a formality, in the world*) *is principally spent upon that* Noble probleme, How the Justice and Goodness of God can be salved, while his Providence distributes good to the evil, and evil to the good? *A Question started and toucht in many Books of the Holy Scriptures; but is here* (ex professo) *purposely handled; First, In a very long Disputation between* Job *the* Respondent, and his three Friends Opponents; *Then in a full Determination, First, By* Elihu, *an acute and wise; then by* God himself, the most wise, and infallible Moderator.

The Method here observed is after the manner of the Schools (pro *and* contra) *every one of the four Disputants having his several Opinion, and each one his arguments in favour of his own. Which, yet, are not presented in that affected plainness of the* Schoolmen, *with their down-right* (videtur quod sic, probatur quod non) This I affirm, this I approve; this I deny, this disprove. The Pen-men *of the* Holy Ghost *never discuss Questions so; no, nor any of the* old Philosophers. *This covert carriage of their Opinions, and close contexture of their Arguments, Answers and Replies about them, render the Book somewhat dark and obscure to the Readers meditation. And therefore it will be a Design not unprofitable (if that end offered at, may be attained) briefly to draw them forth, and set them before you in a more open light. And doubtless, what they hold, and by what* Mediums *they mannage their proofs, may (by the blessing of God, upon serious thoughts, and frequent reviews) be made out to a very great plainness.*

Towards which, it is observable, that there are many threds of the same colour and substance, mixt and inter-woven by the Disputants throughout this whole Discourse. And that, though the three Opponents, with one consent, set up Job, *as their common* Mark *to shoot at; yet they take up very different standings, if not different levels, varying each from other in some things, as well as all (upon the main) from him.*

The reason of the former is this, because there are some common Principles, *wherein they all agree; which, if we abstract, with what is spoken in the illustration of them, taking in also those* Conclusions *which spring from them, as their* first-born: *Then the remainder will shew us that proper and distinctive Opinion which each of them holds about this* grand Question of Providence; *the events and distribution whereof, seem so cross-handed in giving trouble and sorrow to godly men, joy and prosperity to the wicked.*

There

There are three Principles *wherein* Job *concurs with his three friends; and a fourth, wherein they three concur against him.*

The three, wherein all four agree, are these;

First, That all the afflictions and calamities which befal man, fall within the eye and certain knowledge of God.

Secondly, That, God is the author and efficient Cause, the orderer and disposer of all those afflictions and calamities.

Thirdly, That, In regard of his most holy Majesty, and unquestionable Soveraignty, he neither doth, nor can do any wrong or injury to any of his creatures, whatsoever affliction he layes, or how long soever he is pleased to continue it upon them.

These three Principles *and such Conclusions as are immediately deducible from them, are copiously handled and insisted upon by them all. In pursuance whereof, they all speak very glorious things of the* Power, Wisdom, Justice, Holiness and Soveraignty of the Lord. *In proclaiming every of which Attributes, the tongue of* Job, *like a silver Trumpet, lifts up the name of God so high, that he seems to drown the sound of the other three, and makes their praise almost silent.*

But Job's *three Friends proceed to a* fourth Principle; *which he utterly denies; about which, so much of his answer, as is contradictory to their objections and rejoynders, wholly consists. That, their fourth Principle seems to be bottom'd upon two grounds.*

First, That, whosoever is good, and doth good, shall receive a present good reward, according to the measure of the good he hath done; and, That whosoever is wicked, and doth wickedly, shall be paid with present punishments, according to the measure of his Demerits.

Secondly, That if (at any time) a wicked man flourish in outward prosperity, yet his flourishing is very momentany, and suddenly (in this life) turns to, or ends in visible judgments: And, that (if at any time) a godly man be withered with adversity, yet his withering is very short, and suddenly (in this life) turns to, or ends in visible Blessings.

Upon these two Grounds or Suppositions, *they raise and build their* fourth Principle, *from which, they* three *make continual Batteries upon the Innocency of* Job. *We may conceive the Position in this frame;*

That, Whosoever is greatly afflicted, and is held long under the pressure of his affliction, that man is to be numbred with the wicked, though no other evidence or witness appear or speak a word against him. Hence,

The peculiar Opinion of Eliphaz *rises thus*; That, All the outward evils which overtake man in the course of this life, are the proceeds of his own sin, and so from the process of Gods Justice. *He gives us this sence, for his, in express terms*, chap. 4. 8. They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same: *Which he applies personally to* Job (*chap.* 22. 5, 6.) Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquities infinite? Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their cloathing, *&c. The whole scope of his speech bends the same way, and is, as if he had said to* Job, Though thy carriage hath been so plausible among us, that we are not able to accuse thee of sin; yet these judgments accuse thee, and are sufficient witnesses against thee: These cry out with a loud voyce, That thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, *&c.* Though we have not seen thee act these sins, yet, in these effects we see thou hast acted them: The snares which are round about thee, tell us, thou hast laid snares for others; and he that runs may read how terrible, how troublesome thou hast been to the poor, in the terrors which have seiz'd thy spirit, and in the troubles which have spoiled thee of thy riches.

Bildad *the* Shuhite *speaks second*; *His Opinion is not so rigid as that of* Eliphaz: *He grants that afflictions may fall upon a righteous person; yet so, that if God send not deliverance speedily, if he restore him not quickly to his former estate and honour, then (upon the second ground of the* Fourth Principle) *such a man may be censured, cast and condemned as unrighteous. That such was* Bildad's *judgment in this case, is clear*, chap. 8. 5, 6. If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous; though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end shall greatly encrease. *And*, vers. 20. 21. Behold God will not cast away a perfect man,

&c.

&c. till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing. *As if he had said* I cannot assent to my Brother *Eliphaz*, affirming, That every man afflicted, is afflicted for his wickedness; I (for my part) believe, and am perswaded, that a godly man may be afflicted for the trial and exercise of his Graces, *&c.* But, then I am assured, that God never lets him lie in his afflictions; for as soon as he cries and calls, the Lord awakes presently, makes his habitation prosperous again, and encreases him more then ever. I grant, the Lord may cast down a perfect man, but he will not (in this life) cast him away; no, he will speedily fill his mouth with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.

Zophar, *The third Deponent, differs from the two former, in this great controversie, affirming*, That the reason of all those afflictions which press the children of men, is to be resolved into the absolute will and pleasure of God; that we are not further to enquire about his Wisdom, Justice or Mercy in dispensing them, his counsels being unsearchable, and his wayes past finding out. *Thus he delivers his mind* (*chap.* 11.7, 8.) Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou by searching find him out to perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? Deeper then hell, what canst thou know? *Verse* 12. Vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild Asses colt. *In the rest of his speech he comes neerest the opinion of* Bildad, *vers.* 14, 15, 16. *And gives out as hard thoughts of* Job *as either of his brethren, numbring him among the wicked, and assigning him the reward of an hypocrite* (chap. 20.29.) This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.

These (*I conceive*) *are the* Characteristical opinions *of* Job's *three friends about his Case. All consistent with those four Principles which they hold in common, all equally closing in the censure and condemnation of* Job, *though in some things dissenting and falling off from one another.*

But what thinks *Job? or how doth he acquit or extricate himself from these difficulties? Very well; His sentence is plainly this:*

That the Providence of God dispences outward prosperity and affliction so indifferently to good and bad, to the righteous and the wicked, that no un-erring judgment can possibly be made up of any mans spiritual estate by the face, and upon the view of his temporal. *He declares this as his opinion, in clear, resolute and Categorical terms* (chap. 9.22, 23) This is one thing, therefore I said it. He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked; if the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent. *Which opinion hath no quarrel at all with any of those three Principles held by* Job *joyntly, and in consort with his three Friends, but only with their fourth: which he throughout refutes as heterodox and unsound in it self, as uncomfortable to the spirits, and inconsistent with experiences of the* Saints.

In the Strong-hold *and* Fort-Royal *of this holy Truth,* Job *secures himself against all the Assaults, and scatters all the Objections of his Opponents; resolving to maintain it to the very death; he will lay his bones by this Position, say his unkind friends what they can against him, and let the most wise God do what he pleases with him.*

That he was a sinner, he readily grants; that he was an hypocrite, he flatly denies.

That the Lord was righteous in all his dealings with him, he readily grants. That himself was unrighteous, because the Lord had dealt so with him, he flatly denies.

How perfect soever he was, he confesses, that he needed the Free Grace *and Mercies of the Lord to justifie him; but withal, asserts, that he was perfect enough to justifie himself against all the challenges of man.*

In these acknowledgments of his sinfulness and denials of insincerity; in these humblings of himself before God, and acquittings of himself before men; in these implorings of mercy from the Lord, and complainings of the unkindness of his brethren, the strength of Job's *Answer consists, and the specialties of it may be summed up.*

'Tis true, that through the extremity of his pain, the anguish of his spirit, and the provocation of his Friends, some unwary speeches slipt from him; for which Elihu *reproved him gravely and sharply; of which himself repented sorrowfully and heartily, all which the most gracious God passed by and pardoned freely, not imputing sin unto him.*

Thus (Christian Reader) *I have endeavoured* (*as heretofore of the whole Book, so now*) *to give a brief account concerning the Argumentative part of it; and to represent how far in this great* Controversie, *the* Answerer *and his* Objectors *agree in judgment, and where they part.*

If this Discovery administer any help, as a Thred *to lead your meditations through the many secret turnings and intricacies of this Dispute, the labour in drawing it out, is abundantly satisfied. And if any further light subservient to this end, shall be given in from the* Father of Lights, *that also in its season may be held forth, and set upon a* Candlestick.

What is now received, together with the Textual Expositions upon this first undertaking *between* Eliphaz *and* Job, *I leave in your hands; praying for a blessing from on high, to convey Truth home to every heart; desiring earnest prayers for the* Spirit of Grace and Illumination to be powred out, according to the measure of the gift of Christ, upon

April 28. 1645. Your very Affectionate Friend and

Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE FOURTH, FIFTH, SIXTH AND SEVENTH CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. 4. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Then Eliphaz *the* Temanite *anſwered, and ſaid,*

If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? But who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?

Behold, thou haſt inſtructed many, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands.

Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the feeble knees.

But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, the uprightneſs of thy wayes, and thy hope?

JOB's complaint ended in the former Chapter; in this, a hot diſpute begins. *Job* having curſed his day, is now chid himſelf; and he had ſuch a chiding, as was indeed a wounding, ſuch, as almoſt at every word, drew blood; and was not only a rod upon his back, but a ſword at his heart. *Job* was wounded firſt by Satan, he was wounded a ſecond time by his Wife, a third time he was wounded (not as it is ſpoken in the Prophet, *in the houſe of his friends*, but) in his own houſe, by his friends; theſe laſt wounds are judged (by good Phyſitians in ſoul-afflictions) his deepeſt and foreſt wounds.

Then Eliphaz **the** Temanite **anſwered, and ſaid,**

Eliphaz being (as is ſuppoſed) the elder and chief of the three, firſt enters the liſt of this debate with *Job*; concerning whoſe name, perſon and pedigree, we have ſpoken before at the eleventh verſe of the ſecond Chapter; and therefore referring the Reader thither, for thoſe circumſtantials of the ſpeaker, I ſhall immediately deſcend unto the matter here ſpoken.

If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? &c.

The whole discourse of *Eliphaz* may be divided into three general parts.

1. The Preface
2. The Body
3. The Conclusion

} of his Speech.

The Preface of his speech is contained in the second verse, *If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* &c.

The body of his Speech is extended through this fourth, and to the last verse of the fifth Chapter: It consisteth especially of two members, or two sorts of matter, in which *Eliphaz* deals with *Job*.

The first is reprehensory, by way of conviction and reproof.

The second is exhortatory, by way of counsel and advice.

First, *Eliphaz* reprehends *Job*. This work of reprehension begins at the third verse of this Chapter, and is continued to the end of the fourth verse of the fifth Chapter. And to shew that he did not reprehend him upon passion, he grounds his reprehension upon reason, and strengthens his reproof with arguments. And there are four Reasons or special Arguments, which *Eliphaz* takes up to make this reprehension convincing; the naming of them will give light to the whole, before we come to the particulars.

The first Argument is contained in the words I have read, to the end of the sixth verse: And it is taken from the unsuitableness of his present practice, to his former precepts.

Or from the unequality of the course he now took under affliction, to the counsel he had given others under affliction.

His second Argument beginning at the seventh verse, and carried on to the twelfth, is grounded upon a supposed inequality of Gods present dealing with him, in reference to his former dealings with godly men.

Eliphaz thought thus, surely *Job* is an hypocrite, otherwise God would have dealt with him, as with an innocent; *Remember* (saith he) *I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent?* I will convince thee by all examples, by whatsoever is upon record in the history of all ages, that thou art a hypocrite, a wicked person; for see, if thou canst find an instance in any Story, of an innocent person perishing. That is his second Argument.

His third Argument is continued from the twelfth verse, to the end of this fourth Chapter; and that he might make the deeper impression upon *Job*'s spirit, he brings it in with a dreadful preamble: A vision from God at once terrifying and instructing him, thus to reason down the pride of man. The Argument it self is coucht in the seventeenth verse. It is drawn from an evidence of presumption in all such as shall dare to implead Gods justice, or plead their own: as if *Eliphaz* had said, surely thou art a proud and a wicked person; for there was never any godly man upon the face of the earth, no nor any Angel in heaven, that durst be so bold with God as thou hast been: *Shall mortal man* (saith he) *be more just then God? shall a man be more pure then his maker? Behold, he put no trust in his servants, and his Angels he charged with folly.*

His fourth Argument begins at the fifth Chapter, and ends with the fourth verse; and it is taken from the unlikeness of *Job*'s carriage under his afflictions, to that which any of the Saints in any age of the world, did ever shew forth under their afflictions. He carries himself so as none of the Saints ever carried themselves, gives an evidence against his Saintship. *Call now to the Saints*, either those now living upon the earth, or search the records concerning all the Saints that ever lived; consider, and see whether thou canst observe or read any parallel of thy complaints and unreasonable expostulations. So much for the sum of his convictions.

Then *Eliphaz* turns himself to admonition and exhortation in the following part of that fifth Chapter; and there are two heads of his admonitory exhortation.

First, He admonishes him to seek unto God, and to call upon him, *ver.* 8. *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause.* I give thee no other counsel then I would take my self. If I were in thy case, I would not stand thus complaining and cursing my day, but this I would do, *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause.* This admonition is enforced by divers Arguments, to *ver.* 17.

The second head of his exhortation beginneth at *ver.* 17. and it is to prevail with him, patiently to bear, and quietly to accept his affliction or the punishment of his iniquity; in pursuance of this, he shews him many benefits and blessings, attending those who graciously comply with the correcting hand of God upon them. *Behold* (saith he, *ver.* 17.) *happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty*; he concludeth all from his certain knowledge, and infallible experience of what he had said (*ver.* 27.) *Lo this, we have searched it, so it is*; back'd with a warranty, that if he obey, his own experience shall quickly teach him this truth; *Hear it, and know thou it for thy good.*

So much concerning the Division or Parts of this first Speech or Dispute made by *Eliphaz*, in answer to the former complaint, poured out by *Job* against the day of his birth, and the night of his conception, in *chap.* 3.

The six verses (lately read) contain (as I said before) the first Argument, we have the Preface in the second verse, and the Argument it self in the four following. The point which *Eliphaz* desires to prove and clear is this; that *Job* was guilty of hypocrisie, of close hypocrisie at the least, if not of gross hypocrisie. The *Medium* or reason by which he would prove it, is the unsuitableness of his present practice, to his former Doctrine. His actions under sufferings contradict what himself had taught other sufferers: And this speaks him guilty. The Argument may be thus formed.

That mans Religion is but vain, and his profession hypocritical, who having comforted others in, and taught them patience under affliction, is himself (being afflicted) comfortless and impatient.

But Job, *thus it is with thee; thou hast been a man very forward to comfort others, and teach them patience, yet now thou art comfortless and impatient:*

Therefore thy Religion is vain, and thy Profession hypocritical.

Is not this thy fear? Here is a goodly Religion indeed, a proper piece of profession; and such is thine, this is all thou art able to make out. Thus you have the Logical strength of the Argument contained in the words. We shall now examine them in the Grammatical sence of every part, as they lie here in order. And first, for the Preface.

If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved? but who can withhold himself from speaking?

The words import, as if *Eliphaz* had said thus unto *Job*; we thy friends have all this while stood silent, we have given thee full liberty and scope to speak out all that was in thy heart; let it not grieve thee, if we now take liberty to speak our selves: and indeed a necessity lies upon us to speak. Two things *Eliphaz* puts into this Preface, whereby he labours to prepare the mind of *Job*, readily to hear and receive what he had to say unto him.

First, He tells him that he speaks out of good-will, and as a friend to him. *If we assay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?* Pray do not take it ill, we mean you no harm, we would but give you faithful counsel, we speak from our hearts, not from our spleen, we speak from love to thee, let it not be thy grief.

Secondly, He shews that he was necessitated to speak; as love provokes, so necessity constrains; *Who can withhold himself from speaking?* Either of these considerations is enough to unlock both ear and heart to take in wholesom counsel. What ear, what heart will not the golden key of love, or the iron key of necessity open to instruction? When a friend speakes, and he speaks as bound, when kindness and duty mix in conference, how powerful!

If we assay,] or try. The word signifies properly to tempt, either for good or evil; and because in temptation, an assay or experiment is made of man, how bad or how good he is; therefore the word is applied to any assaying or experimenting of things or persons. *This very word is winning*

נסה *Tentavit in bonum vel in malum, periculum fecit, expertus est.*

רכיר *Adytum quaſi Oraculum vel loquutorium dictum, quod Deus inde reſponſa daret.*

winning and gaining upon Job. We will but try a little if we can do thee any good, or bring lenitives to thy ſorrows, we will not be burthenſom or tedious; we will but *aſſay to commune with thee.* The word notes ſerious ſpeaking. The place where God communed with his people, in giving anſwers from Heaven, is expreſſed by this word, 1 *King.* 6. 19. *The Oracle he prepared in the houſe within,* &c. or the communing-place where God ſpake.

לאה *Feſſus corpore vel animo, inſanivit, furiit.*

Wilt thou be grieved?] The word ſignifies to be extreamly wearied even unto rage or fainting. Here *Eliphaz* ſeems to hint at *Job*'s former diſtempered ſpeeches. If we ſpeak, wilt thou promiſe us not to fall into ſuch a fit of paſſion as even now thou waſt in. And yet whatſoever comes of it, or howſoever thou takeſt it, I muſt diſcharge my duty and my conſcience: Therefore he adds,

Who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?] That is, no man can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking in ſuch a caſe as this: To hear thee ſpeak thus, would even make a dumb man ſpeak. Chriſt ſaith in the Goſpel, *If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would cry*; there is ſuch a ſence in theſe words: If we thy friends ſhould hold our peace, when thou ſpeakeſt thus, the very ſtones would cry out againſt thee for ſpeaking, and againſt us for holding our peace. The Hebrew word tranſlated *withhold*, ſignifies to ſhut up a thing ſo as that it cannot come out: It is applyed to the locking up of the Clouds that they rain not; to the holding in of fire that it cannot break forth, *Jer.* 20. 9. where the Prophet very elegantly fits it to the reſtraining of ſpeech, which is the very point in hand. *His word was in my heart as a burning fire was ſhut up in my bones, I was weary with forbearing.* So it implies, that the friends of *Job* had as it were a fire in their boſoms, which they could no longer reſtrain, they were as clouds full of water, full of dew and rain, they were not able to ſuſpend themſelves from diſſolving and ſhowring upon *Job*, both reproof and counſel, adviſes and exhortations. We may Obſerve from this Preamble,

עצר *Clauſit, coercuit.* 1 King. 8. 35

That, *it is wiſdom to ſweeten reproof with friendly inſinuation.*

Reproof is a bitter Pill; it is a wholſom yet a bitter Pill, and there is need to wrap it up in Gold and Suger, that pleaſing both eye and palat it may be taken down the better. It is the Apoſtles counſel to his *Galathians, Brethren, if a man be overtaken with a fault, ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs.* The word *reſtore*, is an alluſion to the Art of Chyrurgery, in ſetting a bone out of joynt; ſoft words and a ſoft hand fit the Patients mind to endure that painful operation. By falls into ſin, the ſoul breaks or diſjoynts a bone; he that will ſet ſuch a mind muſt handle it gently. We may obſerve the holy skill of ſome of the Saints in prayer, preparing God for receiving of Petitions, by Prefaces and humble Inſinuations (as it were) getting within him. Thus did *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. when he prayed for *Sodom*, *Let not my Lord be angry, if I, who am but duſt and aſhes, ſpeak unto thee.* There is ſuch a ſpiritual art in winding a reproof into the boſom and ſpirit of a man, *Let it not trouble thee that I thus ſpeak, take my words in good part, If we aſſay to commune with thee, wilt thou be grieved?*

Gal. 6. 1.

Secondly Obſerve, That, *it is no eaſie thing to bear reproof.*

To take a reproof well, is as high a point of ſpiritual wiſdom, as to give it well. When we reprove the ſin, we ſhould love the man; but there are few men who can love their reprovers. You know what is ſaid in the Prophet, *They hate him that reproveth in the gate.* Reproofs are uſually entertained with hatred, and ill taken by evil perſons; reproof is not alwayes taken in good part, by thoſe who are good. It is but need to have ſome way made for its due entertainment, by the beſt tempered ſpirits. *Wilt thou be grieved?* it may be wearisom and troubleſom unto thee, but I pray let it not.

Thirdly Obſerve from the Preface, That, *in ſome caſes it is our duty to ſpeak and reprove, whether men are troubled or no.*

How ſhould I be pleaſed, if thou wouldeſt receive my ſpeech in good part? but I cannot withhold my ſelf from ſpeaking, though thou art diſpleaſed; take it how you will, I muſt ſpeak, theſe reproofs muſt out. When we ſee plainly, that God is diſhonoured, and that the ſoul of our brother is greatly endangered, we muſt then ſpeak (as God chargeth the Prophet) *whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.* In ſuch caſes we muſt adventure to *ſave men by fear, plucking them out of the fire.* Jude 23.

Laſtly Obſerve, That, *when the heart is full, it is a very hard thing, not to give it vent at the lips by ſpeaking.*

When the heart is full of matter, the tongue will be full of words; the tongue muſt bring forth the treaſures that are laid up in the heart: *Who* (ſaith *Eliphaz*) *can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?* The Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. 20. 9. thought to ſtifle the meſſage of God in his heart, *I ſaid I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his name:* he began to take up a reſolution to withhold himſelf from ſpeaking; *but* (ſaith he) *his word was in mine heart as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not ſtay,* I could not hold it any longer. So the Apoſtles, *Act.* 4. 19. *We cannot but ſpeak that which we have heard and ſeen,* it is impoſſible for us, *the Lord hath ſpoken, who can but propheſie?* that is, who can withhold himſelf from propheſying when once the Lord bids him ſpeak. Words are the conceptions of our minds; and when our thoughts are form'd and organized, as it were, and grown to perfection, when thoſe children come to the birth, a little ſtrength will bring them forth: Or rather, great ſtrength cannot keep them from being brought forth. It is as poſſible for her that is with child to withhold the birth, as it is for thoſe that have pregnant conceptions, or an errand from God, to withhold themſelves from ſpeaking. When *David* kept ſilence (it is a ſtrange connexion) he roared, *Pſal.* 32. 3. When he held his peace from good, his ſorrow was ſtirred, *Pſal.* 39. 2. Pangs took hold on him as upon a woman in travel, which made him roar. His heart waxt hot, and the fire burned, till he ſpake with his tongue. He was then delivered. Our Engliſh phraſe of *Delivering a mans mind*, may hit this ſenſe well. *Their hearts are barren, whoſe mouths are always ſhut. Who can withhold himſelf from ſpeaking?* Amos 3. 8

But what is it that he could not forbear? He could not forbear to tell him, that (as he ſuppoſed) he acted againſt his own principles.

Behold thou haſt inſtructed many, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands, &c.

Behold,] This word is ſometime uſed in a way of deriſion, as *Gen.* 3. 22. where God ſaith concerning *Adam*, *Behold the man is become as one of us*, do you not ſee what a God he is? how like a God he looks? ſo, *Behold thou haſt inſtructed many*, (ſome make that the ſenſe) ſee now your great Teacher, your learned Doctor; he that hath been ſo forward and buſie in teaching others, ſee in what diſorder, how uncompoſed he is himſelf: he would needs Phyſick his neighbours, but knows not how to cure his own diſtempers. *Ecce doctor rē egregiū Ecce medici aliorum qui ſeipſo curare nejciat.*

But rather take it by way of aſſeveration, *Behold*, as if he ſhould ſay, This is a thing clear and certain, all that are about thee, can witneſs it; that thou haſt inſtructed many, and that thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands. But how art thou changed? thou art not like the man thou waſt.

Here are four ſpecial acts of ſpiritual Charity, ſo we may call and diſtinguiſh them. Firſt, inſtructing of the ignorant; ſecondly, encouraging of the weak and ſlothful; thirdly, ſupporting of thoſe that are ready to fall; and fourthly, comforting thoſe that are ready to faint. In theſe four duties *Job* had been very converſant. 1. Inſtruction of the ignorant, *Behold thou haſt inſtructed many.* 2. Encouragement of the weak and ſloathful, *Thou haſt ſtrengthened the weak hands.* 3. Supportation of the weak, *Thy words have upholden him that was falling.* 4. Conſolation of thoſe who were ready to faint, *Thou haſt ſtrengthened the feeble knees.*

1 *Indoctos docere.*
2 *Torpentes excitare.*
3 *Labentes erigere.*
4 *Mæſtos conſolari.*
2 Tim. 3. 16

Here you ſee the four uſes which *Job* made in his counſels; Firſt, of Inſtruction; Secondly, of Exhortation; Thirdly, of Admonition; Fourthly, of Conſolation: *Job* was a perfect Preacher, he applies the word to all the ſervices and ends of it, reſpecting the ſeveral conditions, tempers or diſtempers of thoſe with whom he had to do.

Further, ſome take the three latter to be but as explications or branches of the firſt; *Behold thou haſt inſtructed many*, namely, concerning the nature of afflictions, and their duty in the bearing affliction; yea, thou haſt inſtructed them ſo far, that thou *haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands, upholden thoſe that were falling, and ſtrengthned the feeble knees.*

I come now to the opening of the ſeveral expreſſions.

יסר *Erudivit, caſtigavit at patres & præceptores olim pueros. Reſpondet Græcum παιδεύειν docere verbis & verberibus.*

Thou haſt inſtructed many.] The word which we tranſlate *inſtructed*, ſignifieth both to correct and to teach; and the Hebrews give the reaſon of it, becauſe uſually with inſtruction correction is joyned; and ſo the ſame Greek word ſignifies both to teach and to chaſten: As there is a voyce of the Rod, inſtruction in correction; ſo a Rod ſometimes goes with the voyce, correction is helpful to inſtruction: In either or both the ſences we may underſtand it here, *thou haſt inſtructed many*, thou haſt taught and directed, thou haſt (where need was) chaſtned and corrected many.

Many.] We have heard in the firſt Chapter, that *Job* prayed for his children, for his Sons and Daughters; but now we ſee *Job*'s piety extended further then his own children. Yea, the word may well be carried out beyond his own Family. He prayed for his children, and not only did he pray for them, but alſo teach and inſtruct them; and not only them but others, he inlarges his School, he inſtructs *many*; it is an indefinite word, a word of number without a number. *Job*'s School of holy diſcipline was a large one, he ſet up his School where ever he came; he was an univerſal Teacher, an Apoſtle of the holy World; *thou haſt inſtructed many.*

And thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands.

רפה *Debilis, laxus, hinc* Rephaim *ſignificat mortuos, ex eo quod in illis omne robur & vires naturales elanguerunt. Manus laſſæ & dejecta brachia pertinent ad habitum aut molliter aut ſigniter ambulantis, aut currere non valentis. E contra vero adducere brachia, manus comprimere, fortiter jactare cubitos ſtrenuè currentis eſt.*

The word ſignifies, *Remiſs hands, or the hands that hang down*, looſe and lax. Hence by a Metaphor it notes one, that is negligent or idle; a man with his hands hanging down and his arms looſe, is the emblem of idleneſs or of ſadneſs. *Thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands*, that is, thoſe that were idle or grieved, negligent or dejected. Hence the word (*Rephaim*) is uſed, to ſignifie thoſe that are dead; and the reaſon is, becauſe all ſtrength, natural vigour and activity depart when life departeth: Giants alſo are expreſſed in the Hebrew by this word, becauſe they are ſuch dreadful perſons, that their very aſpect or ſight terrifies the ſpirit, makes the hands hang down, and the knees of beholders feeble; they called thoſe mighty men, *weak*, from that effect wrought upon others, becauſe they made others weak and terrible at their approaches. Hence, when *Goliah* the Giant challenged and defied the Hoſt of *Iſrael*, it is ſaid, that all the men of *Iſrael*, when they ſaw the man, fled from him, or fled from his face, (he overcame them with his looks) and were ſore afraid, 1 *Sam.* 17. 24.

This weakneſs of hands (as we find inſtanc'd in Scripture) ariſes four wayes. Firſt, from ſloath and idleneſs (as we noted before) ſome have ſtrong heads, but they have weak hands; they are ſufficiently inſtructed, but they cannot act, or they are unactive, and an unactive man is a weak-handed man.

Secondly, Weakneſs of the hands cometh from fear; and ſo that phraſe, *to ſtrengthen the hands*, notes incouraging of a perſon, as *Zech.* 8. 9, 13. *Fear not, let thy hand be ſtrong*, that is, let not fear weaken thy hands: and *Jer.* 38. 4. the Princes came to the King and beg'd of him that *Jeremiah* might be put to death; and they give the reaſon from this, *For* (ſay they) *he weakens the hands of the men of war that remaine in the City, and the hands of all the people*; that is, he diſcourages them, makes them believe they ſhall never be able to ſtand out againſt the King of *Babylon*, but that he ſhall certainly take the City; this is called weakning of the hands: So *Iſa.* 35. 3. *Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees; ſay to them that are of a fearful heart, be ſtrong, fear not.* So ye ſee weakneſs of the hands is cauſed by fear; when the bands of the heart are diſſolved (as it were) and looſened by fear, the hand muſt needs be diſſolved and looſened from labour; the hand is not able to work at all when fear works much upon the heart.

Thirdly, Weakneſs of the hands ariſeth from irreſolution, when a man is not reſolved what to do, not ſetled upon a buſineſs, then his hands are weak. Hence it was the counſel of *Achitophel* to *Abſalom*, that he ſhould go up upon the houſe top, in the ſight of all *Iſrael*, and abuſe his Fathers Concubines; and he gives the reaſon of it, *then* (ſaith he) *ſhall the hands of all that are with thee be ſtrong*; his meaning is, then they will be ſo reſolved to ſtick to thee, that they will do their utmoſt; he grounds his counſel upon the preſent irreſolution of the people, he doubted whether *Abſaloms* party would adhere cordially to him or no, therefore (ſaith he) do an act which may render thy ſelf and all that are with thee irreconcileable to the King; this will unite them to thee, and their hands will be ſtrong. If once they be out of hope to be receiv'd into the Kings favour, thou mayſt be out of fear that they will return to the Kings obedience. In any lawful and good deſign it is beſt to raiſe up reſolution, and ingage it to the higheſt. *Where the heart is ſtrongly reſolved, the hands will act ſtrongly.* The reaſon why men are ſlow and dull in great undertakings, is, becauſe they are off and on, full of neutrality and indifferency, in what they undertake. Unſettled ſpirits can never ſettle actions. *A double minded man is unſtable* (and weak-handed) *in all his wayes.* 2 Sam. 16. 21. James 1. 8.

Laſtly, There is a weakneſs of the hands (which is I conceive moſt proper to this place) ariſing from ſorrow and grief; from the weight and burthen of affliction, or from a ſudden ſurpriſe of trouble. As it is ſaid of *Balteſhazzar* (*Dan.* 5. 6.) who ſeeing the hand-writing upon the plaiſter of the wall, preſently *changed countenance, and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the joynts of his loyns were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another.*

Thou haſt ſtrengthned the weak hands.] That is, thoſe, whoſe hands are weak by reaſon of manifold tryals and tribulations: thou haſt ſpoken words to them, which have been as ſinews to their hands, and ſtrength unto their joynts. In this ſence the Apoſtle uſes both the expreſſions of the Text, *Heb.* 12. 6. where having treated about the nature of afflictions, together with the fruit and benefit of them, he concludes thus, *wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees*; as if he ſhould ſay, it is probable that affliction hath made your hands hang down, that ſorrow and grief have looſened your ſpirits and your loyns too, therefore now be of good cheer, *lift up your hands that hang down, and the feeble knees.* This Symptom or effect of ſorrow is elegantly deſcribed, *Ezek.* 7. 17. where the Prophet having ſhewed that many ſhould mourn, *as Doves of the Valleys*, adds, *all hands ſhall be feeble, and all knees ſhall be weak as water.*

Columbis pro cantu gemitus eſt & in amœnum murmur. Sanct. in Ezek. *cap.* 7.

Thy words have upheld him that was falling.] Some afflictions lie ſo hard and heavy upon us, that they do not only weaken, but caſt down: *Job* ſtood ready to uphold ſuch as was ready to fall. Timely advice may catch a man before he is quite down, and prevent his fall.

The word which we tranſlate *falling*, ſignifies in its firſt ſence, to ſtumble or ſtrike the foot againſt a thing, and ſo it is put for that which is the conſequent of ſtumbling, *falling*: he that ſtrikes his foot, or ſtumbles at a thing, is in danger of a fall. So *Iſa.* 40. 30. *The young men ſhall utterly fall*, it is this word, but doubled, *falling they ſhall fall*, that is, they ſhall utterly fall. There is a threefold falling mentioned in Scripture.

from כושל כשל *Impingere, & quod ſæpe conſequitur, ruere cadere.*

1. There is a falling into ſin, *Gal.* 6. 1. *If a man be overtaken in a fault*: that word (like this Hebrew in the Text) ſignifies, a fall taken by ſtumbling or by tripping upon any thing that lies in the way. In this ſence we underſtand the *fall of Adam*, the *fall of Angels*, and the *falls of the Saints.*

εἰ τινι καὶ παράπτωμα *Præcipuè ſignificat peccata actualia, à παρὰ & πίπτω, ad verbum præter cadere, cum ſcil. ultra rectam juſtitiæ lineam cadimus, ac erratis etiam levioribus uſurpatur, παρὰ in compoſitione minuit ſenſum.*

2. There is a falling into affliction, a falling into trouble: So *Prov.* 24. 16. *The juſt man falleth ſeven times a day*, that is, he meets affliction at every turn, he falls into trouble almoſt at every ſtep. Seven times a day is very often in the day, or often every day.

3. There is a falling under trouble. And of perſons falling ſo, we are chiefly to underſtand this Text. Many fall into trouble, who yet (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) ſtand firmly under trouble. Others no ſooner fall in, but they fall under it. The ſhoulders of ſome are not able to bear a light affliction, and the afflictions of others are ſo heavy that no ſhoulders are able to bear them; the back breaks, the ſpirit ſinks under the load.

To ſuch as theſe *Job* lent his hand, his ſhoulders: his

counſel

counsel was as a staff in their hands, as ligaments to their loyns and knees. *Job* was well skil'd in setting props and buttresses of holy advice to such tottering souls. *Thou hast upheld him that was falling.* We may take the words in all or either of these three interpretations, yet most properly of the latter.

ברך *Genu quod flecti solet in Benedictionibus & salutationibus.*

Thou hast strengthned the feeble knees.] The Hebrew word for a knee, signifieth (in the root) to bless or to pray, because in blessing and praying for one, or in saluting, we use to bow the knee. And here, what we translate *the feeble knees*, is word for word, *the bowing knees*; because when knees bow and buckle, or double under us, it proceeds from weakness and feebleness: hence the bowing knee is called the feeble knee, *Dan.* 6. 5. it is said of *Belshazzar*, *his knees smote one against another*; he fainted, his spirits sank within him, when his knees (as a Symptom of his fear) beat one against another. The hanging down of hands, notes a kind of despair in regard of present evils: and feeble quaking knees, seem to refer to some expected evil. Taking the words with that difference, *Job's* work of love appears more full; he not only upheld in present troubles, but labour'd to strengthen against such as were to come. *Thou hast instructed many*, and instructed them many, even all these wayes. We may Note,

First, That, *to teach, instruct and comfort others, is not only a mans duty, but his praise.*

For here *Eliphaz* speaks it in a way of commendation, though with an intent to ground a reproof upon it. *Job* himself speaks of what he had done in that kind, as a defence of his own innocence, Chap. 29. Vers. 21, &c. *Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at my counsel: after my words they spake not again, and my speech dropped upon them, and they waited for me as for the rain, and they opened their mouth wide, as for the latter rain.* This was his practise, and this was the praise of *Job*. That which the Apostle speaks as a special qualification or gift of a Bishop, 1 *Tim.* 3. 2. is an excellent, a noble qualification in any person, of what rank or degree soever, *to be apt to teach.*

διδακτικος.

Secondly, Consider who *Job* was; he was a holy man, one that had much acquaintance and communion with God. Now though his friends mistook what was in his heart, yet they hit right upon his practise; and we knowing both what his heart was, by the testimony of God: and what his practise was, from the testimony of men, may ground a second point upon it.

That, *such as know God in truth and holiness, are very ready to communicate the knowledge of God unto others.*

Quæ autem est certior eleemosyna, quod majus opus misericordiæ, quã docere rudes segnes ad bene agendũ extimulare, labentem erigere, mœstos consolori.

They who know God themselves, are desirous that others should know God too. *David* (*Psal.* 51. 13.) promiseth and professeth, that he would communicate his experiences of Gods love, in pardoning his sin, when he had tasted the sweetness of a pardon. *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee:* when my heart hath learned more of God, others shall learn more of God from my mouth. This is spiritual charity, and it is the most excellent and noblest charity of all. Charity to the soul is the soul of charity; charity to the better part, is the best charity. In this sence also, *Job was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*, by guiding them to see, and by directing their feet to walk, in the wayes of God. To give knowledge is better then to give gold. Instruction is the highest alms.

Job 29. 15.

Thirdly, If we consider *Job* (of whom all this is affirmed) as he was a great rich man, we may Note thus much.

That, *honourable and great men, lose nothing of their honour and greatness by descending to the instruction of others, though their inferiors.*

Some think it belongs only unto Ministers to instruct: What wee instruct? They resent it as a disparagement: they trust out that work wholly into the hands of others. Where shall we find an *Abraham* (a great Prince in his time) of whom God gave this Testimony, *I know him that he will command his children, &c. and they shall keep the way of the Lord*: and because he was willing to teach others, God condescends to teach him: *Shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do.* They receive most knowledge, who are most ready to impart it. And we find before this, *Abraham* so successful in teaching, that he had an Army of Scholars in his house. The Text saith, when he prepar'd for that expedition to rescue his Nephew *Lot*, that he armed three hundred and eighteen of his trained, catechized, or instructed servants. The word signifies to train in the principles of Religion, as well as in the postures of war: being the same word used in the Book of *Proverbs*, for teaching a child the first elements of holy knowledge. And that place of *Genesis* may very well comprehend both.

חניכיו Gen. 14. Prov. 22.

Gen. 18. 17, 18, 19.

Fourthly Observe, That, *charity, especially spiritual charity, is very liberal and open-hearted.*

Job instructed not only his own, but he instructed others, he instructed many; he did not confine his doctrine and his advice to his own walls, but the sound thereof went whersoever he went: he instructed many. And if *Job* who had no special, no direct calling to it, were a teacher of many: what shall we think of those, whose calling and business it is to teach, and yet teach not any at all? their trade, their profession is to teach, yet they are so far from teaching that they teach none, and which is worse, they hinder teaching: they stop the mouth of the teacher, and (if they can) the ear of the learner, *they take away the key of knowledge.* They neither open the door themselves, nor suffer those that would. This is the very spirit of wickedness.

Further, Taking those other parts of his instruction, as they respect persons afflicted, who are here described *by weak hands and feeble knees, ready to fall, unable to stand.*

Observe first, That, *sore afflictions do exceedingly indispose for duty.*

Sore afflictions make weak hands and feeble knees: the weak hand and the feeble knee, are (as I said before) emblems of one unfit for any business; unfit to work, unfit to walk: when the hand is weak and the knee is feeble, what is a man fit for? Great sufferings unfit us for action. Hence it is that the Lord moderates the afflictions of his people, sweetens the bitterness, and takes off the oppressing weight of them. God promiseth to *come with reviving, and that he will not contend for ever with his people.* Why? A principal reason is, *Lest their spirits should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* Lest the spirit should fail; that is, lest they should fail in their duties: the spirit cannot fail in the essence of it, the spirit is of an eternal constitution; but it faileth in the duty often. And if afflictions lie too hard and too long upon a people, their spirits fail, their faith fails, their courage fails, their labors cannot be laborious, to carry on and carry out their work. Therefore when *Job* saw any under afflictions, he endeavour'd to put courage into their hearts, and so strength into their hands.

Isa. 57. 16.

Secondly, In the general we may Note further,

That, *the words of the wise have a mighty power, strength, and prevalency in them.*

You see how efficacious the words of *Job* were. *Job's* instructions were strengthnings: thou hast strengthned the weak hands and feeble knees; his words were as stays to hold them up that were ready to fall: *Eliphaz* doth not only say, thou didst instruct many, and in instructing thou didst intend, it was thy design and aim to strengthen the weak hands, but he speaks of what *Job* had effected and wrought; thy words put sinews into the hands and knees of men that were weak and ready to fall, thy words were as props to hold and bear up the spirits of those that were sinking. Words wisely dispensed and followed, with the blessing of God, what can they not do? God doth the greatest things in the world by a word speaking. As at the first he made the World it self by a word speaking: so he hath done the greatest things, and wrought the greatest changes in the world, by a word speaking. When a word goes forth clothed with the authority and power of God, it works wonders. How hath it raised up sinking spirits? How hath it made the fearful, undaunted; and the weak-hearted, couragious? God by his Word in the mouth of a

weak man overthrows the strong holds of sin, and by a word brings every thought of man into subjection to Jesus Christ. By a word he stops the mouth of blasphemy and evil speaking; by a word speaking, he makes a man deny himself; by a word he opens the eyes of the blind, and makes the lame to run and leap like a Hart, in the way of holiness.

2 Cor. 10. 4. 5.

And I could wish that the word which I now speak, might (through the blessing of God) have such an effect upon your spirits. O that it might strengthen all weak hands and feeble knees! O that it might uphold all who are ready to fall! we are cast upon knee-feebling, hand-weakning, yea, heart-weakning times: The sight of those things which our eyes do see, and the hearing of those things which our ears do hear, cause many to fear, and the spirits of some to fall. Now a word invested with commission from God, to go and comfort, will master all our sorrows, and dispel all these fears. If the Lord breath upon a word, that word will breath lively activity into a very carkass. Look to those many and gracious promises made to those that mourn, and comfort will flow in. Promises are the treasures of comfort; promises hold the Churches stock, they are the patrimony of believers; it is their priviledge and their honour, to be called *heirs of the promise*. While Christ and the promise lives, how can faith die or languish, eying a promise?

Heb. 6. 17.

So much of the first branch of the minor proposition, in the third and fourth verses.

The second branch lies in the fifth verse.

Now it is come upon thée, and thou faintest; it toucheth thée, and thou art troubled.

Thou hast instructed many, thou hast strengthened the weak hands, &c. **But now it is come upon thée**, &c. That is, trouble and affliction are come upon thee.

להרי *Lassus fuit corpore vel animo, præ lassitudine nescivit quod ageret.*

And thou faintest.] The word signifies an extraordinary fainting; when a man is so wearied and spent, that he knows not what he doth, when his reason seems tired, as much as his strength. So that the words, *Now it is come upon thee, thou faintest*, may import thus much; thou art in such a case, that thou seemest to be besides thy self, thou knowest not what thou dost, thou speakest thou knowest not what. The word is translated in the first verse, by *grieved*; in other Scriptures, by *mad and furious* (Prov. 26. 18.) *As a mad man who casteth firebrands*, &c. And whereas we say (*Gen.* 47. 13.) *The Land of Egypt fainted by reason of the famine*, many render it, *The Land of Egypt was enraged or mad, because of the famine*. Want of bread turns to want of reason; famine distracts. The *Egyptians* were so extreamly pinched with hunger, that it did even take away their wits from them; and scarcity of food for their bodies, made a dearth in their understandings. So there is this force in the word, Thou who hast given such grave and wise instruction unto others, from those higher principles of grace, now it is come upon thee, thou art even as a mad man, as a man distracted, not able to act by the common principles of reason.

Insanivit terra Ægypti, nam propter famem inimiam insanit homo. Furebat terra, i.e. tumultuabantur anno quinto famis mentem illis dimente fuit. Jun. *in loc.*

It toucheth thee.] It is the same word which we opened before; the Devil desired that he might but touch *Job*; now his friend telleth him he is *touched*.

נכל

And thou art troubled.] That word also hath a great emphasis in it. It signifies a vehement amazed trouble; as in that place (1 *Sam.* 28. 21.) where, when the woman, the witch of *Endor*, had raised up *Samuel* (in appearance) as *Saul* desired, the Text saith, that when all was ended, she came unto *Saul, and she saw he was sore troubled*: think what trouble might fall upon a man in such a condition as *Saul* was in, after this acquaintance with the visions of hell; think what a deep astonishment of spirit seized upon him, such disorder of mind this word layes upon *Job*: *Now it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled*. Hence observe,

First, *To commend a man with a* But, *is a wound instead of a commendation.*

Thou hast instructed many, *But*, &c How many are there who salute their friends very fair to their faces, or speak them very fair behind their backs, yet suddenly (as *Joab* to *Amasa*) draw out this secret dagger, and stab their honour and honesty to the heart. As it is said of *Naaman*, 2 *Kings* 5. 1. He was an honourable man, and a mighty man of valour, *but he was a Leper*, &c. So, *&c.*

Secondly, Observe, *Great afflictions may disturb the very seat of reason, and leave a Saint, in some acts, below a man.*

Some acts of holiness represent the Saints as mad-men to carnal men. So *Paul* appeared to *Festus*, and so to many of his *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 5. 13. *For whether we be besides our selves, it is to God.* Workings of Grace are sometimes so far above reason, that they seem to be without reason. So some acts of infirmity represent the Saints, to carnal men, as mad-men. A gracious man works so much below reason sometimes, that he seems to be without reason.

Thirdly, Note, That, *When we see any doing ill, it is good to mind him of the good which he hath done.*

Eliphaz saw *Job* fainting, enraged as a mad-man, or as a man astonished; he tells him of the wise and grave counsel and instruction he had given before: consider what thou hast done. As in the *Revelation*, Christ speaks to the Church of *Ephesus*, (Rev. 2. 5.) *Remember from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works*; when the Church did ill, then he tells her what she had formerly *done well*. So the Apostle, *Ye did run well; having begun in the spirit, will ye end in the flesh?* When he saw them run upon fleshly Ceremonies and Ordinances, ye began in the spirit (saith he) consider that, and end as ye began. As in dispute and reasoning, a false conclusion cannot be derived from true premises, so neither can it in practice, or in living. Holy premises conclude in holiness. He never began well, that ends ill.

Fourthly, Observe, That, *The good we have done, is a kind of reproach to us, when we do the contrary evil.*

When a mans latter actions contradict his former, or when his actions contradict his professions, the former good is a stain or blemish to him. *It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, then after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment given unto them.* 2 Pet. 2. 21.

Further, take this likewise, *It is an easier matter to instruct others in trouble, then to be instructed, or take instruction our selves in our own troubles.*

Even *Job*, *holy Job* could give those counsels of patience, and meekness, and quietness under the hand of God, which he could not follow to the full, when it fell upon himself. For though he did not fail to that height, which *Eliphaz* implieth in this reproof, yet fail he did. He had set others a Copie, which he could not write by, or imitate, when his own turn came. A good man may quickly give counsel, above his own strength to practise.

Lastly, Observe, *It is a shame for us to teach others the right way, and to go in the wrong our selves.*

Eliphaz seeks to shame and convince *Job* upon this very ground; thou hast done thus and thus, thou hast taught others patience, and thou art mad thy self: art thou not ashamed to complain and cry out of thy afflictions, when thou hast bid others be quiet and chearful under them? It is an excellent thing, when our words are made visible by our actions; as he said in the Church story, *The faith which is seen, is a great deal better then the faith which is heard*; so we may say in another kind, the wisdom which is seen in bearing of affliction, is far better then the wisdom which is heard. *Physitian, heal thy self. He saved others, himself he cannot save*, say the Jews to Christ. Man may justly be reproved with, thou teacheſt others, thy self thou canst not teach. When the same fault which we reprehend in others, may be reprehended in our selves, our fault is doubled, and the act is not only sinful, but shameful. The Apostle convinces the Jews mightily by this argument, *Rom.* 2. 19. *Thou art confident that thou thy self art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructer of the fooliſh*, &c. Thou takest upon thee all this; *thou therefore* (saith he) *that teachest another, teachest thou thy self? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?* He goes on pressing it upon them, as matter of shame and blushing, that their actions ran so cross and contradictory to their own professions.

Turpe est doctorum cũ culpa re darguit ipsum.

Thus we have opened the minor proposition or assumption

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tion of the firſt argument, couched in theſe two verſes; thou haſt comforted, inſtructed, and taught many, yet when trouble cometh upon thee, thou knoweſt not how to order thy ſelf. *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, the uprightneſs of thy wayes, and thy hope?* Thus he gathers the concluſion, and from hence infers *Job* a hypocrite in Religion, or irreligious.

Is not this thy fear? &c.] As if he had ſaid, thy fear, thy confidence, thy uprightneſs, thy hope, thy religion, call it what thou wilt, is but thus much, or is but this.

Is not this thy fear?] In the firſt verſe of the firſt chapter, it was ſhewed what the fear of God is; part of *Job*'s character being thus given, *A man fearing God.* Now *Eliphaz*, by this firſt point of his Interrogatories, taxes *Job*, in the firſt Part of his character or commendation; thou art reported to be a man fearing God; Is not this thy fear?

Fear is taken either for the whole compaſs of Gods worſhip, or for that awfulneſs of affection with which we worſhip God; which we ought to mingle and mix in all our actions and duties. Therefore (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12.) *Let us have grace to ſerve him with reverence and godly fear.* And, *Pſal.* 2. *Serve the Lord with fear.* God is to be ſerved in love, and yet God loves no ſervice which hath not this ingredient, holy fear.

Fear is the moſt proper affection, which, we creatures, duſt and aſhes, who are at ſuch an infinite diſtance from God, can put forth in his worſhip. God condeſcends ſo far as to be loved by us; yea, he calleth for our love as a friend, or as a father, as a familiar, as one in near relation; but conſidered in his Majeſty, Glory and greatneſs, fear is the moſt ſutable affection in our approaches unto God. The name of God, in ſome languages, is derived from fear; and God is expreſly called *Fear* by *Jacob*, Gen. 31. in that diſpute with *Laban*; where he telleth him, *Except the fear of his father Iſaac had been with him*, &c. ver. 42. *And Jacob ſware by the fear of his father Iſaac*, ver. 53. that is, by that God whom his father *Iſaac* feared: *Jacob* was a man ſo holy, that he would take nothing into his mouth to ſwear by, but only the holy Name of God. Religious ſwearing is one of the higheſt acts of worſhipping, as vain ſwearing is one of the higheſt acts of prophaning the name of God.

כסלו *Inconſtantia levitas, per Antiphraſin conſtantia, confidentia.*

Thy confidence.] The word which we tranſlate *confidence*, ſignifies alſo, and that moſt properly, folly, inconſtancy, levity; when the Prophet *Jeremy* reproveth the idolatry of thoſe times, and ſpeaks to worſhippers of Idols, he expreſſes it by this word; *they are altogether brutiſh and fooliſh*, Jer. 10. 8. And holy *David*, (Pſal. 49. 13.) ſpeaking of wicked men, who make riches their portion, and who lay out all their endeavours in the raiſing of an outward eſtate, gives this account of their practice in *ver.* 13. *This their way is their folly*: this is the courſe that worldly men take, and they think it is a very wiſe courſe; but indeed their way is their folly. Some Tranſlators read that Text, *This their way is their confidence*; as here in *Job*: and ſo ſo they make the ſence out thus; this way of worldly men, in gathering riches, in heaping up abundance of theſe outward things, is their confidence, that is, they have nothing elſe to truſt unto; they have nothing beyond the world to truſt unto, *this their way is their confidence.* So again, *Prov.* כסל אדם 15. 26. *A fooliſh man*, or, *a man of folly, deſpiſeth his mother.* And once more, *Pſal.* 85. 8. Where the Pſalmiſt goeth up, like *Habakkuk*, to his Watch-tower, to hearken for an anſwer of his Prayer; *I will hearken what the Lord will ſay, for he will ſpeak peace unto his people; but let them not return again to folly.* So ſome read it in this Text of *Job*; *Is not this thy fear, thy folly?* that is, was it not meer folly for thee to brag and boaſt of thy fear? *ſc.* that thou didſt fear God, *&c.*

But the word is often taken in a contrary ſence, as we tranſlate, for conſtancy or confidence, and ſometimes for hope; and thus *Job* 31. 24. *If I have ſaid to gold, thou art my hope, or my confidence*; and, *chap.* 8. 14. ſpeaking of the hypocrite, *whoſe hope ſhall be cut off*; the ſame word is uſed: and, *Prov.* 3. 26. *The Lord ſhall be thy confidence, and he ſhall keep thy foot from being taken*; and (not to heap many places) *Pſal.* 78. 7. *That they may ſet their hope in God.* In this ſence it is generally underſtood here, *Is not this thy fear and thy confidence?* ſc. *all the truſt thou haſt placed in thy God?*

Fear and confidence are acts of natural worſhip. Confidence or truſt is the reſting of the ſoul upon another; here the reſting of the ſoul upon the word or promiſes of God, upon the power, faithfulneſs and truth of God, an act thus put forth by the ſoul, is confidence. Now, ſaith *Eliphaz*, *Is not this thy confidence?* Thou haſt ſpoken much of reſting and truſting upon God and his word, upon his power and faithfulneſs; is not this that which thou haſt all this while talked of? See what a godly confidence it is! Doth it look like a proper piece of grace?

Confidence is an act beyond faith; a ſoul confiding walks in a higher region of grace and comfort, then a ſoul only believing; there may be believing, where there is not this confiding. As patience is hope lengthned, ſo confidence is hope ſtrengthned. Aſſurance is the higheſt degree of faith, and confidence is the higheſt degree of aſſurance. It carries with it, firſt, Chearfulneſs, oppoſite to ſorrow: ſecondly, Courage, oppoſite to fear and deſpondency of ſpirit: thirdly, Boldneſs and adventurouſneſs, oppoſite to cowardice. Confidence, having a good cauſe, and a good call, will take a Bear by the tooth, or a Lion by the beard: fourthly, It notes boaſting, or a kind of ſpiritual wiſe bragging, oppoſite to ſinful modeſty and concealment of what God hathdone for us. Or take it thus; Confidence is the nobleſt exerciſe of Faith, which looking ſteadily upon God in himſelf, and in Chriſt, through the promiſes, raiſes the ſoul above all fears and diſcouragements, above all doubts and diſquietments, either about the removing of evil, or the obtaining of good.

Hence confidence is well called the reſt of the ſoul; therefore ſuch as attain to confidence, are ſaid to be in peace, *in perfect peace. Him wilt thou eſtabliſh in perfect peace, whoſe heart doth truſt upon thee.* And this act of confidence or truſt, is proper and peculiar to God, no creature muſt ſhare in it. This is worſhip commanded in the firſt Precept; *Thou ſhalt have no other gods before me.* Whatſoever we confide in, unleſs it be in ſubordination unto God, we make it our god. And it is one of the higheſt acts of the ſoul, not only as we reſpect the taking in, our own comforts, but alſo, the giving out, glory unto God. This confidence is well coupled with holy fear; the more we fear God ſo, the more we truſt him; ſuch fear is the mother and nurſe of confidence: But confidence is directly contrary, yea, and contradictory to carnal fear; he that truſts God indeed, leaves both ſoul and body, temporal and eternal eſtate with him, without ever ſending a fearful thought, or a jealous look after either. It follows,

Iſa. 26. 3.

And the uprightneſs of thy heart.] It is the word uſed in the deſcription of *Job*, chap. 1. 1. There it is in the concrete, *perfect*; here in the abſtract, *uprightneſs*; We may read it, *Is not this the perfection of thy wayes?* Uprightneſs is the Saints perfection in this life. Uprightneſs may have a double notion; Firſt, as it reſpects the ſincerity of our hearts towards God. Secondly, as it reſpects the juſtice and equity of our actions towards man. In both ſences we may extend it here; Thou haſt been reported for a perfect man, now if thou art perfect in thy being, thou wouldeſt be perfect in thy working; if thou wert upright in thy nature, thou wouldſt be upright in thy actions. Now conſider thy uprightneſs or perfection, is not this the uprightneſs of thy wayes? Is not this all, even lately diſcovered in thy impatient complainings?

And thy hope.] That word is derived two wayes. Firſt, From a root that ſignifieth a line, rule or meaſure; ſo in *Gen.* 1. 9. *Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place*; the word ſignifies a gathering together by rule, as if God by that act had meaſured out the water (that unruly, turbulent, wandring element) and had brought it into compaſs, by a rule or line, which it could not exceed or go beyond, without permiſſion or commiſſion from himſelf; thereby giving us a mighty proof of his almighty power and infinite wiſdom. So ſome tranſlate the word here, taking it to be derived from that root, *Is not this thy rule?* Is not this the rule that thou haſt heretofore walked by, whatſoever thou haſt pretended? Is not this the righteouſneſs of thy wayes, the courſe or meaſure, by which thou haſt directed, ſquared thy actions?

תקוה *Linea, regula, ſic veteres Hebræi deducunt. Videtur Moſes non ſine magna emphaſi hoc verbum obſervaſſe, nimirum ad exprimendã infinitam verbi Dei potentiam, qui fluxum illud & vagum elementum, totam ſuperficiem terræ occupans, tanquam ad amuſſim & perpendiculum in unum locum coegit.* Paulus Fagius *in prim. cap.* Gen.

But

קוה *Expectavit. Significat magna intentione & corporis erectione expectare, atque id est quod Paulus Graco verbo dicit,* ἀποκαραδοκεῖν. ἀποκαραδοκία.

But secondly, rather the word is derived from (*Kavah*) which signifieth to expect, hope or wait: and it notes a very vehement intention both of body and of mind, in waiting, expecting, or hoping; when a man waits (as it were) stretching forth his spirit or his mind, putting himself out exceedingly to hope or wait for a thing. *Psalm* 37. 9. & *Isa.* 8. 17. the same word is used with the same emphasis. And that Greek word which the Apostle *Paul* hath (*Rom.* 8. 19.) comes up fully to it, *The earnest expectation of the creature*, &c. So the meaning here may be thus conceived, Is not this thy hope, or thy earnest expectation? Is it not come to this now? Thou hast boasted much of thy hope, what treasures thou hadst laid up in that, beyond all thy present possessions; is not all shrunk up to this, yea, changed into despair? Thy desperate speeches give me ground to think so. Is not this thy hope? So much for the words.

There are four interpretations given of this verse. First, Some make out the sence, by a different construction of the first particle in the Hebrew, which, they translate, not (as we) *Is not*? but *where is*? So the vulgar and divers others, reading it thus, *where is thy fear and thy confidence, thy patience, and the perfection of thy wayes?* As if he had said; What's become of all those graces, of which thou hast spoken, and with which thou hast been reported to be most richly endowed? where are they at this time? in this day of thy trouble, in this day of thy trial? Taking the words in that sence, they yield us these Observations.

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First, That, *times of trouble are special times for the use of our graces.*

It is as if *Eliphaz* had said, Thou thy self, and all that knew thee, have spoken much of thy grace, but now is the time to use it, where is it? Shew it me now, *where is thy fear, and thy confidence?* If a man have been reported very skilful at his weapon, when he comes into danger, then is the time to shew his skill: and we may say to him, Where is thy skill now? Where is thy art now? So here, Now, that thou hast most need of thy graces, Where are they? Bring them forth, are they to seek now? Is thy righteousness as the morning dew, and as a cloud vanished away? Times of trouble will put every grace to a stress; and we had need look to it, that we have not our graces to seek, when we have most need to use them; that when it shall be said unto us, Where is your faith? Where is your hope? we may be able to hold them forth, and answer the question in our actions, here they are, here is my fear, here is my confidence, here is my hope, here is my uprightness; I can make proof of them, and render them visible in my life: I can (through the strength of Christ) act them, and walk according to the rule of every one of these graces.

Secondly, From the ground of this argument, which is, that true grace holds out and perseveres unto the end: For hereby (saith *Eliphaz*) I will convince thee for an Hypocrite, and that thy grace is but a shadow of grace, because it is decayed and gone. This being the ground of conviction by these words, *Where is thy fear?* Observe,

That, *false grace, or a shew of grace, fails us when we have most need of it.*

A Hypocrite seems to stand in grace, till he falls into trouble. When good is in sight, he supposes he hath a great stock of faith; he is joyful in believing any thing, when nothing pinches him: And when he enjoyeth what he desired, he hopes as much as is promised: But when outward comforts are withdrawn and eclipsed, when he must live upon a word, and relieve himself upon invisibles, when he hath nothing in the creature to support him, and must trust what he cannot see: then this phancy of faith, this vain hope, and pretended confidence disappear, and where are they? how much charity will some make profession of, until a real object of charity present it self? Then excuses are made, they have but little for themselves, times are hard, they may be suddenly cast into streights, they know not what a day may bring forth. False charity, and false hope vanish when they should act their parts, and make good what they have professed. As Christ speaks of the two houses, *Matth.* 7. One built upon the rock, the other upon the sand: these two houses were alike skilfully and strongly built in all appearance; while the Sun shone, and the weather was fair, none could discern but that the house upon the sand, was built as well, and might have stood as long, as the other upon the rock; but when the rain fell, and the floods came, when the winds blew and beat upon the house, then it fell, the foundation failed, and all the fair superstructions came down into the dust. Where is the Hypocrite with all his faith and fear in a wet windy day? Is he not like a house founded on the sand? Or is not he and his goodly outside of holy fear and hope like the Apples of *Sodom* (reported in History) which are fair to the eye, but touch them, and they crumble to ashes in your hand; so is the faith and the fear, the hope and confidence of hypocrites: Where are these? they are no where, for they never were.

Take the words in a second construction, and so they are thus rendred, *Is not thy fear thy confidence? and the uprightness of thy ways thy hope?* So Mr. *Broughton*, *Is not thy Religion thy hope? and thy right wayes thy confidence?* and then the sence is, as if *Eliphaz* had thus spoken unto *Job*, Doth it not now plainly appear, that Satan charged thee rightly, that thou serv'st God for ends of profit and outward comforts, seeing thou art thus impatient and unquiet, when the hand of God takes away thy profit and outward comforts? Is it not a clear argument, that thou heretofore didst obey God, only to gain by him, or because thou wast confident he would protect and save thee harmless, he would bless and prosper thee with encrease? Was not the uprightness of thy wayes thy hope? that is, didst thou not look to thrive by upright dealing with men, and fair carriage in all thy actions? thou hadst no love to Religion, none to Justice, thy love was to thy purse, thy profit; and thou didst believe, at least hope, that profit would come in at the door of the Sanctuary, or else thou hadst never gone so often thither. This is the second sence, predicating the first term of the second, *Is not thy fear thy confidence? and is not thy uprightness thy hope?* surely 'tis. This is a fair exposition of the words, and from it we may Observe,

That, *A Hypocrites profession of Religion is grounded on his confidence to gain by it.*

Is not thy fear thy confidence? thy Religion was nothing else but a hope to be rich. It was Satans objection, and now *Eliphaz* (resuming and managing Satans argument) makes it his conviction. And it is a truth in the general thesis, that the Religion or the fear of Hypocrites, is nothing but their confidence; they consider the word of promise, which God hath given to those that serve him; they in their thoughts survey the land of promise, and taste the milk and honey of it: they read that God *will give both grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*; therefore that they may be under the influence of these promises, or upon a confidence that they shall receive golden showers out of these precious promises, and dig aboundant treasure out of these heavenly *mines*, they *fear and worship God*, they are upright in their wayes, and honest in their dealings among men: Christ found it was love to the loaves, not to his doctrine, which brought so many after him, *Joh.* 6. They liked a miracle to feed them, more then a Sermon to instruct them: And were affected with the meat which endures to everlasting life, onely in subordination to the meat which perisheth. How many say, at least in their hearts, at this day, if I cast my self into such and such courses of holiness, shall I not have credit and custom, good acquaintance and profitable correspondence? In many men their wickedness is their confidence, that is, the very reason why they are so wicked, is, because they are confident they shall get by their wickedness; so those entisers said to the young man (*Prov.* 1. 11.) *Come let us lay wait for blood*, there was their wickedness; now at the twelfth verse, you shall find, that the rise of their wickedness was this confidence; *we shall find all precious treasure, we shall fill our houses with spoil.* Some (I confess) have such a spirit of wickedness, that they are wicked for wickedness sake: and they love the very sin it self, more then the ends of profit or pleasure, which may possibly

Ego furtum facere volui nulla compulsus egestate sed fastidio justitiæ; nec ea refrui volebam quam furto appetebam, sed ipso furto & peccato; Aug. *l.* 3. *Confess. c.* 4. *& paulo post. Eram gratis malus, amavi defectum meum, non illud ad quod deficiebam.*

poſſibly follow the ſin; but others act the ſin, out of confidence they ſhall advance themſelves by it: And ſo there are many, ſo refined in their aims, and heightned in the wayes of holineſs, that they are holy for holineſs ſake, and religious for religions ſake; yet there is a generation, whoſe Religion is nothing but this confidence; I will caſt in my lot with the godly, I will take their way, ſhall I not fill my houſe with treaſure, and raiſe an eſtate by it? The Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſuch (1 *Tim.* 6. 5.) *Men ſuppoſing that gain is godlineſs*, and they are godly only that they may gain by it. Whereas they whoſe hearts are perfect with God, love godlineſs for Gods ſake; and they are holy, not out of confidence of gaining by it, but out of a delight in acting of it; there is a beauty, an excellency in holineſs which takes their hearts: And they are above, not only this poor confidence, to be enriched by it; but alſo above that rich, that heavenly confidence, to be ſaved by it, to get Heaven by it. The fear of ſome, who are above the former, is yet but equal to this confidence; they ſee there is no other way to be ſaved, to go to Heaven, but this. Now I ſay, holineſs in the height and purity of it, keeps under the reſpect of Heaven it ſelf; it is ſo much above theſe things below, that it is above thoſe things above: That is a ſecond ſenſe.

Thirdly, The words are underſtood by divers of the Hebrew writers, for a direct and ſimple aſſertion, and they give it thus. *Will not, or would not thy fear be thy confidence? and the uprightneſs of thy wayes thy hope?* As if *Eliphaz* had thus ſaid unto him; *Job* thou haſt pretended much holineſs and Religion, fear and uprightneſs: why art thou ſo diſquieted, now, that the hand of God is upon thee? why art thou ſo amazed under theſe ſufferings? would not that fear be thy confidence? and would not that uprightneſs of thy wayes be thy hope? ſurely it would, if thou hadſt any ſuch fear as thou pretendeſt: this fear would be thy confidence, and this uprightneſs thy hope; thou wouldeſt be very bold, and by hope caſt Anchor upon the goodneſs and faithfulneſs of God, in the midſt of all this ſtorm: thy heart would be poiſed, ſettled and eſtabliſhed, notwithſtanding all theſe ſhakings. Would not thy fear be thy confidence? It would. Hence Obſerve;

> Firſt, That, *they who fear moſt in times of peace, have moſt reaſon to be confident in times of trouble.*

Timidum eſſe ad mala patranda genus eſt fortitudinis & fiducia.

They who fear moſt (in one ſence) fear leaſt; they who fear God moſt, fear creatures leaſt, and creature-troubles leaſt. We have this point in ſo many words, *Prov.* 14. 26. *In the fear of the Lord is ſtrong confidence.* The fear of the Lord is the cure of all other fears. They who are moſt fearful of the evil of ſin, are moſt couragious among the evils of ſuffering. To be fearful thus, raiſeth the higheſt acts of confidence, *Pſal.* 112. 7, 8. We read of one *that will not be afraid for any evil tidings, his heart is fixed*; Who is this confident man? this fearleſs man? It is this *divine coward* (as we may call him,) you ſhall find him ſo expreſs'd, *ver.* 1. *Bleſſed is the man that feareth God, he ſhall not be afraid for any evil tidings*, *Exod.* 20. 20. When the people of *Iſrael* were much amazed and aſtoniſhed at the giving of the Law, *Moſes* comes to cure them of that fear; but what is the medicine? *Fear not, for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye ſin not.* As if he had ſaid, when God hath put his fear into your hearts, ſuch fears as theſe will be removed and vaniſh: when your hearts are filled with this fear of God, you will have confidence to hear, and ſee the thunder and lightening of Mount *Sinai*; you ſhall not fear, no not this terrible tempeſt, in which the Law it ſelf is given. So when the people were in a fear, another time, *Samuel* thus beſpeaks them in that ſhaking fit, 1 *Sam.* 12. 20. *Fear not, only fear the Lord.* If you will be confident in ſuch a time as this (for by prayer he procured thunder and rain in that time of wheat-harveſt) *fear the Lord.* The fear of the Lord will be our confidence in the wetteſt day, in the moſt tempeſtuous and ſtormy night that ever fell upon the ſecure, ſinful world. *A man fearing God is the only dreadnought.*

Secondly, We may obſerve from the other branch, (for the ſence is the ſame) *And would not thy uprightneſs be thy hope?*

> *The uprightneſs of a mans wayes in good times, doth mightily ſtrengthen his hope in evil times.*

When a man can look back, and approve his heart to God, that he hath been upright in peace and plenty, how full of hope will he be in trouble and in wants? It was that which *Hezekiah* pleaded before God, in the day of his trouble and trial, 2 *King.* 20. 3. *I beſeech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth and with an upright and perfect heart.* This was it, when he lay upon his ſick-bed, and as he thought upon his death-bed, that put life into him, and bare up his ſpirit.

A fourth interpretation is taken from our reading: *Is not this thy fear, thy confidence, the uprightneſs of thy wayes, and thy hope?* So the words contain four diſtinct affirming queſtions, *Is not this thy fear? Is not this thy confidence? Is not this the uprightneſs of thy wayes? and is not this thy hope?* This is thy fear, *&c.* As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Job*, without doubt thou haſt ſhewed all thy goodneſs at once; or, Is not this all that thou art able to make out and ſhew; Is not this all that thou canſt ſay for, all the teſtimony thou canſt give of, thy religion and holineſs? Haſt thou not ſhewed all? Surely thy great boaſt of Religion is nothing but this. *Eliphaz* ſeems to call *Job* to make a further or clearer proof of his grace; *Is not this thy fear?* or if this be not, ſhew me ſomewhat elſe: Thou art a man very famous in the world, much talked of, and highly commended, for fear and for confidence, for uprightneſs and for hope; what haſt thou more to anſwer that report, and ſave thy own credit, with the credit of thy friends, who have been ſo large in their commendations of, and teſtimonies concerning thee? Note hence;

> Firſt, *Afflictions diſcover that unto us, which before we knew not.*

Is not this thy fear? thou didſt not know of what *make* or conſtitution thy fear was, untill now: That's *Eliphaz* his ſuppoſition; and it is a truth, That ſome hypocrites know not, that their graces are falſe, till they are brought to ſuch tryals. They carry falſe, counterfeit coin about them, and ſuppoſe it currant money, till they come to the ballance, or a touch-ſtone. Some are active hypocrites, who go about intentionally to deceive and put a fair mask over a filthy face. Others are paſſive hypocrites, who are miſerably deceived by the colluſions of Satan, and the baſe treachery of their own ſpirits. Many a man is brought to ſee (which before he could not, by reaſon of thoſe miſts of hypocriſie) what his fear is, what his faith, by thoſe changes which affliction works in him.

> Secondly thus, *We ought to make our graces viſible in our actions.*

Is not this thy fear? Shew me what thy fear is; if this be not, make proof of it. The Apoſtle bids *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 5. *Make full proof of his miniſtry.* It may be ſaid to ſome Miniſters, is not this your miniſtery; if it be not, make full proof of it: or as the Apoſtle *James*, in a caſe near this, *James* 2. 14, 18. *Shew me thy faith by thy works*; ſo we may ſay, *Shew me thy fear by thy works:* Is not this it? if it be not, make it appear what it is: *The tree is known by the fruits; do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thiſtles?* or, do men gather crabs from vines, or ſloes from fig-trees? As an evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit, ſo neither doth a good tree bring forth evil fruit. If thou ſayeſt thou art a vine, make proof of it, by the fruit thou beareſt, or elſe I muſt conclude, thou art but a thorn or a thiſtle. We may queſtion many for this grace, and for the other grace they pretend unto: For their actions have not the leaſt print or impreſſion of ſuch graces upon them. If any one ſhould hold forth much faith and confidence in God, and this man ſhould run or take unlawful courſes to help himſelf, might we not ſay, *Is this thy confidence?* Or if one ſpeaking much of confidence in God, for the accompliſhing of a buſineſs, ſhould ſit ſtill, and do nothing himſelf, might we not ſay, *Is this thy confidence?* This is to tempt God, not to truſt in him. Once more, If a man ſhould profeſs much confidence in God, and yet be taken up altogether about the creature, ſwallowed up with creature thoughts, or ſwallowing in creature delights, ſeeking to, and engaging this creature, and that creature, with neglect of God, may we

not

Heb. 6. 19. not say, *Is thy confidence?* Hope is an anchor of the soul; but thou art driven with every blast; is this thy hope? Hope makes not ashamed; but thou, either art, or oughtest to be ashamed, *Is this thy hope?* The fear of the Lord is clean, but thou art defiled, *Is this thy fear?*

Rom. 5. 5.

Then again consider this, When *Job* carries himself thus in his trouble, *Eliphaz* telleth him, what *is not this thy fear?* Thou art surely but an hypocrite, for if thy fear were true, it would have preserved thee from these impatient complainings and distempers. Hence Observe;

That, *true fear, holy fear, preserve the soul, and keeps it holy.*

Holy fear is as a golden bridle to the soul, when it would run out to any evil: It is like the banks to the Sea, which keeps in the raging waves of corruption, when they would overflow all. If thou hadst fear indeed, thou wouldst never thus break the bounds of patience. *The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil*, that's the definition of it; therefore if thou hadst any fear of God indeed, thou wouldest never have done this evil, *curse thy day*, Prov. 14. 27. *The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death*; that is, either from sin, which is spiritual death, or from damnation, which is perpetual death; the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from both these snares of death; where this fear is not, we are ready to joyn with every evil, and so to fall into the jaws of every death. *Abraham* (*Gen.* 20. 11.) argues so, *The fear of the Lord is not in this place, therefore they will kill me*; when we perceive a bent of spirit, to devise evil, and a readiness of the hand to practise it, (we may conclude) the fear of the Lord is not lodged in that heart.

Fourthly Observe, That, *trust, or confidence in God, settles the heart in all conditions.*

Is not this thy confidence? Thy confidence certainly is but a shadow, for if it had been real, thou hadst been established and upheld, notwithstanding all that weight of affliction that lies upon thee. When there was an unquietness upon the soul of *David*, he first questions his soul about it, *Why art thou disquieted O my soul?* and then directs, *trust in God*, Psal. 42. 11. So the Prophet promiseth, (*Isa.* 26. 3.) *Him wilt thou establish in perfect peace, whose heart doth trust upon thee. They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion*, Psal. 125. 1. He that is carried and tossed thus about, with every wind of trouble and gust of sorrow, shews he hath not cast out this anchor of hope, upon the Rock Jesus Christ.

But here a question must be answered, for the clearing of all, and likewise for discovering the strength or weakness of this argument brought by *Eliphaz*, in this particular case of *Job*. *Eliphaz* taxed *Job* with hypocrisie, because his graces did not act, or they did not act like themselves, like graces; he gave not proof of them at that time. Hence the doubt is, *Do a mans failings or declinings from what he was before, or what he did before, argue him insincere?* Is their sufficient strength in this Argument for *Eliphaz* to say, *Job* thou hast been a comforter of others, thou hast profest much holiness heretofore, and now thou art come to the trial, thou canst not make it out thy self; therefore thou hast no grace, therefore all thy religion is vain.

For the resolving of that, I answer first, that the proposition is not simply true, that every one who faileth or declineth or falleth off from what formerly he was, or held forth, is therefore an Hypocrite, or that his graces are false, and but pretences; there may be many declinings and failings, many breaches and backslidings, and yet the spirit upright. Indeed falling away and quite falling off, are an argument of insincerity and hypocrisie; for *true grace is everlasting grace, true holiness endures for ever.* Therefore we are here to consider, whence these failings were occasioned in *Job*, and how a failing may be expresst, and continue, so, as to conclude insincerity or hypocrisie.

First, It was from a sudden perturbation, not from a setled resolution. *Job* was not resolvedly thus impatient and unruly: an unexpected storm hurried his spirit so violently, that he was not master of his own actions; *Job* had not his affections at command, they got the bridle (as it were) on their necks, and away they carried him with such force, that he was not able to stop or stay them.

Secondly, It came from the smart and sence of pain in his flesh, not from the perverseness of his spirit. If the taint had been in his spirit, then *Eliphaz* had a ground, a certain ground to have argued thus against him.

Thirdly, *Job*'s graces were hid and obscured, they were not lost or dead; the acts were suspended, the habits were not removed; when the grace which hath been shewed, is quite lost, that grace was nothing but a shew of grace, painted fear, and painted confidence: but in *Job*'s case there was only a hiding of his graces, or a vail cast over them.

Lastly, We must not say, he falls from grace who falleth into sin; nor must it be concluded that he hath no grace who falls into a great sin: It follows not, that grace is false, or none, because it doth not work like it self, or because it doth not sometimes work at all. True grace works not alwayes uniformly; though it be alwayes the same in it self, yet it is not alwayes the same in its effects; true grace is alwayes alive, yet it doth not alwayes act; it retains life, when motion is undiscern'd. Wherefore they who do not work like themselves, or do not work at all (for a time) in gracious wayes, are not to be concluded as having no grace, or nothing but a shew of grace.

And so much be spoken concerning this first Argument contained in these six Verses, the conviction of *Job*, from his failing in the actings of his grace, the putting forth of that fruit which formerly he had born and shewed to the world.

VERS. 7, 8.

Remember I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?
Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

IN these two Verses and the three following, *Eliphaz* coucheth and confirmeth his second Argument, wherein he further bespatters the innocency of *Job*, and hopes to convince him of hypocrisie. The Argument is taken from the constant experience of Gods dealings in the world. *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent?* We may give it in this form.

Innocent persons perish not, righteous men are not cut off.

But *Job*, thou perishest, and thou art cut off. Therefore thou art no innocent nor righteous person.

The major proposition is plain in the seventh Verse; for that question, *Who ever perished being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?* is to be resolved into this Negation, *No innocent person ever perished, nor were the righteous ever cut off.* And *Eliphaz* conceiveth this to be so clear a truth, that he challengeth *Job* to give one instance to the contrary, out of his own experience; he appeals to experience (which is a strong way of arguing) *Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent?* shew me the man: and withal he professeth, that he could give many instances or examples out of his own experience, that wicked men have perished and were cut off, this he doth in the eighth Verse, *Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same*; which he enlarges in the three following Verses, *by the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed*, &c. This in general for the sum and substance of the Argument.

We will now consider the words, and examine the strength of it in particulars.

Remember I pray thee.] He handleth *Job* tenderly in words, he speaks gently and winningly to him, *Remember I pray thee. To remember*, noteth often in Scripture a serious consideration of things present, and before us, *Eccles.* 12. 1. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*; that is, seriously bethink thy self at the present, of God and his wayes, and how thou oughtest to walk holily before him. But properly, to remember, is the calling to mind of things which are past: And so *Eliphaz*, in this place, directs *Job* to search the Records; go and inquire into all the Monuments of Antiquity, look the Registers and Histories of the Ages past, and see if thou canst find any such thing as this, *A righteous man perishing.*

Memory

Memory is the Souls store-house; there we lay up observations, and from thence fetch them out, as occasion invites. Hence Christ, *Mat.* 12. 57. compareth every Scribe which is instructed for the Kingdom of Heaven, *to a housholder, which bringeth forth out of his treasury things both new and old.* This treasury is the memory; there holy truths and profitable examples are stored and reserved; *Remember, I pray thee.*

In that *Eliphaz* sendeth *Job* back to former experiences, we may note,

That, *It is our duty to lay up and record the dealings of God, whether publick or personal, whether with the godly or with the wicked.*

It is our duty to observe what God doth, *Psal.* 111. 4. *He hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*; as if the Psalmist had said, God hath not wrought such great things in the world, whether respecting persons or nations, that we should write them upon the water, or in the sand, which the next puff of wind defaces and blows out; *but he hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*; he will have them written in brass with *a pen of Iron*, and with the *point of a Diamond*, that all ages may hear the loving kindnesses of the Lord; *he hath made his wonderful works to be remembred*, or he hath made them so, as that they are most worthy to be remembred. *David* was a great observer of experiences (*Psal.* 37. 25.) he telleth us, that he had (as it were) collected notes concerning Gods dealings all his dayes; and it is to the very point in hand, *I have been young, and now am old, yet never saw I the righteous forsaken*; himself carefully observed the dealings of God, in this Psalm; and in the next (*Psal.* 37. 35, 36.) he gives the like direction to others; thus I have done, do you take the same course too, *I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green Bay-tree*; then he goes on, *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright.* I have considered the state of wicked men; let all observe the state of the godly; *mark the perfect man, & behold the upright.* The works of God expound his word; in his works his word is often made visible. That's an excellent expression, *Psal.* 111. 7. *The works of his hands are verity and judgment: The acts of God are verity*, that is, God acts his own truths. As the works of our hands ought to be the verity and judgments of God (*every action of a Christian should be one of Christs truths*) so it is exactly with God himself; the works of his hands are his own verity and judgments. When we cannot find the meaning of God in his word, we may find it out in his works; his works are a comment, an infallible comment upon his word.

Yet we must take this Caution. The dealings of God in the surface and outward part of them, appear sometimes contrary to his word, contrary unto his promise; but they only appear so, they are never so. When a man reads a promise, and finds much good stored up in it for the righteous, and then looks upon the state of the righteous, and seeth it full of evil; here is a seeming contrariety between the word and the works of God; but it is only a seeming contrariety, as we shall see somewhat further anon. Therefore in that *Psal.* 111. 2. where he saith, *The works of God are verity and judgment*, he adds, *The works of God are sought out.* If you will have the verity or judgment that is in the works of God, you must not only look upon the outside of them, but you must seek them out, study them, study them as you study the Scriptures; and then you will find out the meaning of them, and see how exactly they square with every part of the word. Why doth *Eliphaz* send *Job* to experience? The ground is this, the works of God are like the word of God; therefore if thou canst not make it out by experience from his works, thou canst hardly make it out, as a position, from his word, *that righteous persons are cut off.*

Remember now, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the righteous cut off?

Here are four terms to be opened, *perished, cut off, innocent, righteous.* We will consider, First, What we are to understand by *perishing, and by cutting off.* Secondly, Whom we are to understand by *innocent and righteous persons*: And then apply the whole sentence, by shewing wherein the truth of this proposition stands, that a *righteous man, or an innocent person, cannot perish or be cut off.*

The word which we translate *perished*, hath divers significations.

First, A returning to nothing, an utter consumption, which is to perish as a beast, *Psal.* 49. 20. The holy Ghost describing a man who is not acquainted with God in his great estate, compares him thus; *Man being in honour* and not understanding (*sc.* the things of God) *becometh like the beasts that perish*; not that he perisheth as a beast doth, but he is like a perishing beast; the similitude is not in perishing, but in his qualities who perisheth; he hath but such qualities, he is (upon the matter) even of as gross a temper as a perishing beast. אבר

Secondly, To perish, signifies to die. The dissolution of man, or the dis-union of soul and body, *Isa.* 57. 1. is thus expresst; *the righteous perish*, that is, they die; as it is explained afterward, *they are taken away from the evil to come, they rest in their beds*, sc. *in their graves*: So, *Mat.* 8. 25. *Master, save us, we perish*, say the Disciples, when they thought they should all be drowned. Lord, help us, or else we all die presently: and so we translate *Job* 34. 15. where *Elihu* speaking of the power of God, thus describes it, *If he should but shew himself, all flesh* (saith he) *shall perish together*, that is, *all flesh shall die*; they are not able to stand before Gods power and greatness: the word which he useth there, strictly taken, signifies to expire or give up the ghost; yet we translate it, *all flesh shall perish together*; that is, they shall all give up the ghost and die, if God should appear in his power and greatness. גוע

Thirdly, By perishing, we may understand outward afflictions and troubles falling upon, either godly or wicked men; these are called a perishing (*Josh.* 23. 13.) *Joshua* tells the people, *If you will not obey and walk according to the Commandments of God, ye shall quickly perish from off this good land*, that is, ye shall be removed by outward afflictions from your land, you shall go into captivity. And so, *If I perish, I perish*, saith *Esther*, chap. 4. 17. that is, if I bring trouble and affliction upon my self, let it be so, I will venture it; *A Syrian ready to perish was my Father*, *Deut.* 26. It is meant of *Jacob*, a man much verst in trouble, as he himself acknowledgeth; *Few and evil are the dayes of my pilgrimage.*

Fourthly, To *perish*, notes eternal misery; as it is put for the miseries of this life, so for the life of misery; for that life which is an everlasting death, *John* 3. 16. *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.* Perishing is opposed to everlasting life, and therefore implies everlasting death. *Omnimodam rei perditionem significat, opponitur enim generationi.*

Fifthly, To *perish*, notes utter desolation and total ruine. A cutting off, or a destroying the very name and remembrance of a person or of a people. *He that speaks lies, shall perish*, Psal. 19, 9. that is, *he shall be utterly destroyed.* In this sence the word is used for the Devil, because he is a destroyer to the utmost, as Christ is a Saviour to the utmost. He is called *Abaddon*, from *Abad* (the word here used) *Rev.* 9. 12. and *Apollyon*; his business is to destroy totally and eternally. Thus also Antichrist, *The first-born of the Devil* (2 Thes. 2. 3.) is called *the son of perdition*: take it actively, he is a destroying son, one that destroyeth bodies and souls; as in Scripture, a bloody man is called *Ish dummim*, a man of blood; and passively, he is a *son of perdition*, that is, a man to be destroyed both body and soul.

These two latter sences, namely, eternal destruction in Hell, and utter destruction in this life, are joyned together, *Prov.* 15. 11. *Hell and destruction* (or hell and perishing) *are before the Lord*; and *chap.* 27. 20. we have the same words again, *hell and perdition, or hell and destruction are never full.* So that to *perish* (in a strict sence) notes, even in this life, an utter extirpation; so some render it here *who ever saw the righteous plucked up by the roots*, so as there should be no remembrance, no remainder of them? The other word which is joyned in the Text, *cut off*, carries the same sence; though it signifies properly, to hide a thing, yet it is so to hide it, as it appeareth no more; or so to hide it, that it can neither be heard of, nor seen no more. Hence by a *Metonymie*, it signifies, to take away, or to cut off, because things that are taken away and cut off, are as things hidden and seen no more. Here then is the height of the sence, either to take it for perishing in hell, or for such a perishing בהר *Absconsit, ut amplius audiatur, vel videatur, per metonymia sublatus, deletus, succisus; sublata enim è medio non apparent amplius, sed absconduntur.*

perishing in this life, as is joyned with total desolation and desertion.

נקי Then for the terms, *innocent and righteous*. The word we translate *innocent*, signifieth empty: And it is therefore applied to an innocent person, because innocent persons are emptied of malice and wickedness, their hearts are swept and cleansed, purged and washed; there is in some sense a *vacuum*, a holy *vacuum* in the hearts of holy persons; they are freed from that fulness of evil which lies in their hearts by nature, that filth is cast out. Every mans heart, by nature, is brim-full, top-full of wickedness, as the Apostle describes the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1.29. *Being filled with all unrighteousness*; and it is a truth of every mans heart, it is a *Cage full of unclean birds; a Stable full of filthy dung*, he hath in him a throng of filthy thoughts, a multitude of prophane guests lodging in him. Now a person converted, is emptied of these; these guests are turned out of their lodgings, the rooms are swept and emptied, therefore an holy person is called an empty person; emptied, not absolutely emptied of all sin, but comparatively; there is abundance cast out; so that considering how full of sin he was, he may be said to be emptied of sin, and that his malice is cast out.

נקיון שנים In *Amos* 4. the Prophet threatens *cleanness of teeth* (it is a suitable judgment, that unclean hearts and lives should be punished with clean teeth) or innocency of teeth; for it is the word of the Text: Famine is elegantly so called. Want of bread makes empty or clean teeth.

And where were the righteous (that's the other text) **cut off?** One may put the question, where were the righteous? Surely *Job* had very good eyes, if he could find any righteous man upon the earth, he might seem to have clearer eyes then the Lord himself, if he could find any righteous; *God looked down from heaven, and he saw none righteous, no, not one*, Psal. 53. 3, 4. Yet here *Eliphaz* bids *Job* enquire about the righteous, where they were cut off. To clear that;

By righteous here, we are to understand, not righteous persons in a strict and legal sence, but in a Gospel-mollified sence; righteous with an allay, righteous by way of interpretation, and not in the strictness of the letter. And so men are called righteous, first, in reference to the work of regeneration. There are none righteous in the root or original, in their first setting and plantation in the soil of the world; but there are righteous persons as regenerate, and transplanted into the body of Christ, as wrought and fashioned by the Spirit of Christ.

Secondly, There are none righteous, that is, none exactly, perfectly, compleatly righteous, but inchoately and intentionally; so many men are righteous, and are called righteous in the language of the Scripture.

Thirdly, There are none righteous, that is, none righteous by way of merit or desert; none are so righteous, as that they can challenge any thing at Gods hand, of right; the most righteous person is an unprofitable servant; he hath nothing to plead before God but free grace, nothing to shew unto God, but Christs fulness, and his own emptiness, the riches of Christ, and his own poverty. Yet there are righteous in Gods acceptance, he accounteth and accepteth them for righteous, and honours them to be called righteous.

Lastly, We may answer it thus, there are none righteous in themselves, or from themselves, none have any righteousness of their own making; but the Scripture shews us those who have righteousness, and are righteous in another, and from another; we have the righteousness of justification in Christ, and the righteousness of sanctification from Christ: Righteousness is both imputed to, and floweth into the soul by virtue of the union which is promised in the Covenant of Grace, with Christ the righteous, with the *Lord our righteousness*. In these respects there are righteous persons, and of such we may understand this enquiry, *where were ever the righteous cut off?* The righteous by regeneration, the righteous by inchoation, the righteous by acceptation, or the righteous by imputation; where were any such righteous in all the world, of whom thou canst say, they have ever perished, or have been cut off?

Having opened the sence of the single terms, we will look to the sence of the proposition, and consider wherein we may clear the truth of it, *That innocent persons do not perish*, or, *that the righteous are not cut off*.

Take perishing or cutting off in the first sense, namely, for annihilation and returning to nothing, and so neither righteous nor unrighteous, guilty nor innocent can perish; no man shall perish so, man is of an everlasting make.

Then take perishing in the second sence, as it is put for dying and going out of the land of the living; thus all righteous and innocent persons perish and are cut off, namely, by the sword and sythe of death: we may say all. God indeed hath made some few exceptions out of the general rule; but the statute is plain, *It is appointed unto all men once to die*: *Enoch* was translated, and so was *Elijah*, and many shall be found alive when Christ cometh to judgment, who shall not die; they shall be but changed, and have a metaphorical, not a proper death; this makes some small abatement from, but doth not cross the general rule, that all must die.

Take perishing in the third sence, for some temporal outward suffering in the world, either from the hand of God immediately, or mediately from the hand of man. Thus righteous and innocent persons may perish too, that is, they may fall under sore and great afflictions; thus *righteous Abel* perished, and thus *Jacob was a Syrian ready to perish*; and thus the godly party among the Jews, in the time of their captivity, perished (*they perished from off the Land*, as it was threatned, *Josh.* 23.) with the rest of the wicked; of which the two baskets of figs, one bad, and the other good, were a famous type, *Jer.* 24. 3.

And in regard of this outward, present, temporal perishing, we find it often, that the righteous perish, while the unrighteous flourish. *Psal.* 73.12. *Behold* (saith *David*) *these are the ungodly that prosper in the world*; and at the fourth verse, *All the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning*. As sure, or as soon as I rise, I have a whipping, and my breakfast is bread of sorrow, and the water of adversity; these prosper, and I perish. And the Prophet (*Jer.* 12.1,2.) expostulates with holy submission, about this flourishing estate of the wicked, and perishing estate of the godly: *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?* &c. And in the next verse, *Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root, they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit*. What a gradation is here of the flourishing prosperity of wicked men, while the righteous seem to wither? *Thou hast planted them*. Every tree that is planted, doth not take root; but these take root. Every tree that taketh root, doth not grow up to any strength; but these take root, and they grow. There are trees that grow, yet they bring not forth fruit; but these bring forth fruit also; *yea* (saith he) *they bring forth fruit*; these were flourishing trees indeed, yet in the mean time, thousands of righteous persons perished in, and by, outward troubles.

Sometime (we find on the other hand) that the wicked perish in outward troubles, while the righteous are delivered, and have Arks provided to save them in a common deluge. God makes that difference sometime, even in this life; he pulled *Lot* out of *Sodom*, while *Sodom* perished by fire; and righteous *Noah* was saved in the Ark, while the world of the ungodly perished by water.

And lastly, Both the righteous and the wicked may be wrapped up in the very same outward perishing condition, yet alwayes with a difference; though both alike perish, yet their perishing is not alike. As it is with the righteous and wicked in regard of sin, so of sufferings: They may both commit the same sin for the matter, as it is a transgression of the Law; but a righteous man can never sin as the wicked: he sins not, with such formalities of sinning, he hath not such a heart, such a temper and bent of spirit, as a wicked man hath in sinning; to sin so, is utterly inconsistent with the new nature. Thus also it is with the perishings, afflictions and troubles which they fall into; God sometimes sends the very same affliction for the matter, as suppose poverty, want, imprisonment, captivity and the like, upon the one, as upon the other: But are the righteous smitten, as God smites those that smite them? Surely no; in measure he debateth with them, *Isa.* 27. 7, 8. They sin not against God with the same heart, or at the same rate as wicked men do: and God never strikes them with the same heart, and at the same rate, as he doth the wicked; he cannot do it, the strength of his love to them, makes this impossible for him: Therefore, though, as the Preacher resolves the case, *Eccles.* 9. 1. *No man knoweth either love or hatred,*

hatred, by all that is before him. In the matter of events, love or hatred are not visible; yet in the manner of events, there is much love and hatred visible; and the spirits of such as are under those events, may discern love or hatred, when no eye can: One seeth hatred, and another seeth love, abundance of love mixed in his cup of sorrow. God never gives his own a cup of pure wrath to drink; there are alwayes some ingredients of comfort and sweetness put into it. This is the third sence, how righteous ones may, or may not perish.

Take *perishing* in the fourth sence, as perishing is an eternal destruction; and so the proposition of *Eliphaz* is true throughout, strictly true; that no righteous ever perished, or were cut off: an innocent person is, in that sence, past perishing; a righteous man is past cutting off, *John* 10. 28. *I do give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.* Rejoyce in this, ye righteous, ye are beyond perishing, ye are past perishing, while ye live in a perishing world.

Lastly, Take it in the fifth sence, and you may have a further truth, which I conceive, is that which *Eliphaz* purposely aims at; take perishing, for outward destruction, joyned with a total desertion, and in that sence, the proposition of *Eliphaz* is true also; No righteous man, no innocent man ever perished, or was so cut off with any temporal judgment: The Apostle is direct for it (2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9.) *We are in trouble on every side* (we see trouble which way soever we turn) *but we are not distressed; we are perplexed* (we are in the briars as well as ungodly men) *but not in despair* (we are in hope still, and if there be hope for us, God is for us:) *we are persecuted, but not forsaken* (God is near us, though all the world stand aloof) *we are cast down, but not destroyed*; we shall up again. So that, while he admits of perishing, in the former sence, respecting outward affliction; yet he denies it constantly in this latter sence, so as to be cut off quite from the comforts and supports of God. That observation of *David*, may be thus understood (*Psal.* 37. 25.) *I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken* (he doth not say, in my experience I never saw the righteous afflicted; but, I never saw him left or forsaken in his afflictions) *and I never saw his seed begging their bread*: he puts in that, because begging of bread, especially in the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and in the state of the *Jews*, was a note of utter dereliction; for though God had told them, that they should have the poor alwayes with them, yet he had given an expresse law, that there should be no beggar among them; therefore, saith he, I have not seen the righteous so forsaken, that they should be forced to live by begging.

Casus transitorii non reddunt mēdicum.

If any say, that *David* himself begged, he asked bread of *Abimelech* and *Nabal*. I answer, It is a good rule, and it resolves the case; transitory cases, and sudden accidents, make no beggars: we must not say, *David* was a beggar, or begged his bread, because once he was in a straight, and asked bread of *Abimelech*; and in a second straight, sent to *Nabal*: In such sudden cases, the richest man in the world, may be put to ask a piece of bread. A good man may fall into such wants; but good men are rarely, if ever, or at all, left in them.

Now to apply it particularly to the intent of *Eliphaz* in this place. We have given three interpretations, in which we have shewed, how righteous men may perish; and two, wherein the righteous cannot possibly perish; in both which, the words here spoken by *Eliphaz*, are a truth. And concerning the fifth and last, I conceive, *Eliphaz* is particularly to be understood; for he speaks not here of the eternal estate of *Job* (though that be involved) when he concludeth him a wicked man; but he speaks of the dealings of God in temporals: he look'd upon *Job* as a lost man, a man utterly forsaken of his God; as a man of a forlorn hope, cut down, and pluckt up root and branch; when he saw his stock consumed, his children slain, his body diseased, and his spirit so distempered. And so the Minor, or the Assumption only is false, the Proposition true: Righteous men do not perish thus, innocent persons are not thus cut off; but thou *Job* perishest, and art cut off: hold there, that's false; *Job*, in the sence *Eliphaz* intended, perished not, was not cut off; for in the sequel, God gave him both comfort and deliverance; Love was mingled with the affliction, strength was ministred to bear the affliction; and at last a gracious way was made out of the affliction. The blessing of God caused him to spring out again; though his goodly branches were broken, and his fruit pluckt off, yet his roots were not pluckt up.

It will not be unnecessary, for the clearing of this Scripture, to subjoyn a reason, why in the Old Testament, or under the old Covenant, there was so much stumbling at the afflictions and troubles of the righteous; for it put even a *David*, a *Jeremiah*, and a *Habakkuk* hard to it, for an answer, when they saw such under sufferings; the reason was this, because God, in those times, made more special temporal promises to his people, in case of obedience, then he hath done in the times of the Gospel. Read *Deut.* 28. *Lev.* 27. and other places; where you shall find, how all the promises run upon things that concern the outward man; they shall be blessed in their basket and in their store, they shall have this and that, and all outward things abundantly; and the curse threatned, was the loss and deprivation of these outward blessings, in case of disobedience: For God did win and carry them on in that non-age of the Church, by outward and temporal promises; hence they were much troubled and offended, when they saw righteous men under heavy pressures and breaking afflictions. Now since the coming of Christ in the flesh, and the powring out of those special spiritual blessings upon his people, by the holy Ghost, he doth not feed us so much with these outward hopes or enjoyments. Therefore in the Gospel, we read what hard meat he giveth his people; foretelling them plainly, *If any will follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross*; there is scarce such a word in all the Old Testament as that, he which will follow me, shall find a Cross, and be sure of persecution; they were but children, such words and sights might terrifie them; therefore they were (as it were) dandled on the knee, and allured by sensible comforts, a land flowing with milk and honey, if they did obey; and they heard of rods and stripes in case of stubbornness and disobedience: *Say to the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings*; *wo the wicked, it shall be ill with him*, &c. *Isa.* 3. 10, 11. *David* saith (indeed) *many are the troubles of the righteous*, but (it is not put among the terms of their state or service) it is not said, if ye will be righteous, ye shall have trouble. *Moses* never told them, *If any will be my Disciple, let him take up his Cross*, &c. So then, Gods dealings and dispensations being most in outward things at that time, they were very apt to stumble at the Cross. And there is greater reason why they should stumble at a mole-hill, then we at a mountain of trouble; God having told us, that seeing he had given us such excellent things in Christ, such glorious mercies, and transcendent priviledges in the Gospel, we may well take afflictions and troubles into the bargain, and never shrink or strain at them, but rather take them well. So much for that verse; *The righteous are not cut off, neither do innocent persons perish.*

Eliphaz having given *Job* his turn to search his experiences, brings forth his own, in the next words: *Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same*: As if he should say, *Job*, I know you are not able to give me one instance of a righteous mans perishing, but I could give you many and many instances, I could write whole books concerning wicked men perishing, and of the ungodly cut off. This he carries under a Metaphor, and by continued Metaphors, makes up an *elegant Allegory*, in those terms of *plowing, sowing, reaping.* *Ver.* 8.

Even as I have seen.] That word notes a curious observation, not a light, transitory glance of the eye, but a critical consideration of any thing. As it is said, *Gen.* 1. 4. *God saw the light that he had made, God saw it discerningly*; for he found it was very good: and so it is said, *Gen.* 34. 1, 2. that *Dinah* went forth *to see the Daughters of the land*, that is, curiously (though vainly) to observe the manners and fashions of the people; and in the same verse, *Hamor* the son of *Sechem saw her*; he saw her so exactly, as to be taken with her beauty, his eye entangling his heart, and both entangling his life. So here, *Even as I have seen*, that is, by a diligent inspection, and judicious consideration of what I saw. And what was that? *Mystical Husbandry.*

Significat non simpliciter videre, sed curiosè inspicere.

They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

חרש *Fodit sulcum, aravit per metaphoram fodit cogitatione, vel intentus fuit rei alicui conficiendæ, sicut arator præparat terrã ante seminatorem.*

They that plow iniquity.] The word which we translate, to plow, signifies the use of any kind of art or manufacture; as the work of a Smith, or of a Carpenter, in Iron, Wood, or Timber; and as the Art, so the Artist or handicrafts-man (*Isa.* 44. 12.) is expresst by this word: *The Smith with his tongs, worketh in the coals.* And, *Zech.* 1. 20. it is put for a Carpenter; *The Lord shewed me four Carpenters*: Now here it is applied to the Plowman, and to his plowing. So, *Hos.* 10. 13. *Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lies.*

And this plowing of iniquity, or plowing of wickedness, takes in both the outward act of sin (to plow iniquity, is to commit and practise iniquity) and the inward act of sin; to plow iniquity, is as much as to devise and meditate iniquity, *Prov.* 3. 29. *Devise not* (Heb. *Plow not*) *evil against thy neighbour.* So, *Prov.* 6. 18. *A heart that deviseth*, or ploweth, *wicked imaginations.* And, *Prov.* 21. 4. *The plowing of the wicked is sin*; that is, whatsoever they devise, or whatsoever they do, inside and outside, the cloth and linings of their garments are all sin.

Likewise this word denotes, not only speculative evils, but also secresie of practice, or a plot carried and acted secretly. Thus (1 *Sam.* 23. 9.) it is said, *David knew that Saul secretly practised evil against him*; the hebrew is, he knew that *Saul* plowed evil against him. So that it may be taken, either for the meditating of evil, or for a politick close way of effecting any evil or wicked design.

And the Scripture elegantly calls the musing or meditating of sin, *plowing*, because a man in meditation (when he would accomplish any wickedness) turns up (as it were) all the corruptions that are in his heart, and all the conveniences that are in the world, to attain his end. As a man that meditates upon any holy thing, *upon Christ*, or *Free-grace*, &c. turns up all the graces and abilities that are in his spirit, he plows up his heart, that he may fetch up the strength, and enjoy the sweetness of them.

So then this plowing noteth two things chiefly; first, the pains and labour which wicked men take in sinful courses; every one that sins, doth not plow sin, or is not a worker (which is an equivalent phrase) of iniquity. Secondly, It implies the black art and hellish skill of wicked men in sinning. To plow, is a skill, and so is some kind of sinning (though to sin in general, be as natural, as to see, and needs as little teaching as the ear to hear) some men (as we may say) are bunglers in sinning, others are their crafts-masters at this plough, and can lay a furrow of iniquity so strait, do an act of filthiness so cleanly, that you can hardly see any thing amiss in it: Those words in the New Testament, *to commit sin, to work iniquity, an abomination, or a lie*, Rev. 21. 27, &c. are answerable to this in the old Testament, *a plougher of iniquity.*

Qui operantur iniquitatem.

And some translate this Text so: the vulgar reads it thus, *They who work iniquity*: All which expressions set forth, and elegantly describe such, who sin resolvedly, industriously, cunningly, curiously, such as have the art (and will spare no pains) to do wickedly. These have served an apprentiship to their lusts, and are now as Free-men of hell, yet still Satans drudges, and active engineers to plot and execute what God abhors.

Note this further, that plowing in Scripture, refers both to good actions and to bad; there is a plowing for good, the Metaphor is so applied, *Prov.* 4. 27. *Do not they err that devise evil?* (that plow evil) *but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good* (to them that plow good;) the same word is used in both; and it intimates (as before) both the pains and the skill which a godly man bestows and shews about holy things. The great work of repentance is often Allegorized by plowing, *break up the fallow ground.* And our obedience to the Gospel, whether in the profession or preaching of it, is called plowing, *Luke* 9. 62. *He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looks back*, is not fit for the Kingdom of God. Grace is as active and as accurate as lust can be.

It follows, **And sow iniquity, reap the same.** *Eliphaz* goes on with the Metaphor; after plowing, comes sowing, and after seed-time, reaping-time or harvest. Sowing in Scripture is divers wayes applied unto the actions of men.

First, There is a sowing, which is the work of charity, when we dispense and distribute to the help of the poor, especially to the Saints; so, 2 *Cor.* 9, 6. *He that soweth sparingly*, that is, he that giveth to the poor sparingly.

Secondly, Sowing is applied to the preaching of the Gospel, to the scattering of the word in at the ears, and into the hearts of men; *Luke* 8. 5. *A sower went out to sow.*

Thirdly, Sowing is applied unto the burial of the dead, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42. *That which is sown in weakness*; the bodies of men are as seed in the earth, they shall spring up again.

Fourthly, Sowing is applied to repenting tears, *Psal.* 126. 5. *They that sow in tears*, that is, they that go on repenting and mourning, *shall reap in joy*, they shall have sheaves of comfort.

And Fifthly, It is applied generally unto any action good or bad, *Gal.* 6. 8. *He that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; and he that soweth to the spirit*, &c. Sowing (as plowing) is used in regard of doing good and evil: *Sow to your selves in righteousness*, saith the Prophet; and here on the other side, *They that plough iniquity, and sow wickedness.* Here is the progress of sin; sin goeth on gradually, there is not only a plowing, but a sowing; sin is the seed, and there is a seminal virtue in every sin; it will spring up again, and bring forth an hundred fold more in misery to the whole man, flesh and spirit, then ever it gave in delights unto the flesh.

The word which we translate [*wickedness*] signifies *weariness, labour, perverseness*; because wicked persons weary and toil themselves in serving and satisfying their lusts, *Numb.* 23. 21. *I have seen no perverseness in Israel.* God did not find them laboriously and industriously wicked at that time. To do wickedly, is a wearisom employment, a hard labour. The vulgar Latine renders it by sorrow; *and sow sorrows.*

עמל *Seminant dolores.* Vulg.

Reap the same.] The Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 37. telleth us, *That the Husbandman soweth not the same body that shall be*; how then is it said, *they sow wickedness, and reap the same?* When they come to the harvest, what shall they have? The same, saith *Eliphaz.* It is true; A man that soweth, doth not *reap the same* individually or numerically, that is, the very same particular seed; but he reaps the same specifically, the same in kind: that's the meaning here; their crop or harvest shall be like their seed-time, *Gal.* 6. 7. *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*, the same in kind, not the same in number, *Prov.* 22. 8. *He that soweth iniquity, shall reap vanity.* It is not the sin it self which is reaped, but the fruit, the product of that sin, that they shall reap; the punishment of sin is the fruit of sin, and it is called *the same*: *Punishment is a visible sin. Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee, this is thy wickedness*, Jer. 4. 18. The bitter things procured by wickedness, are called wickedness; as the sweet fruits of our good works, are called our works, *Rev.* 14. 13. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them*: their works follow them, how? Not their works in kind; the very same individual works which they have done here, follow them not (for they are transient acts, and have no subsistency) but the fruits of those works, and the blessings which lie in the promise for such as do those works; these fruits, these blessings follow them: the blessings annexed to faith, obedience and holiness, these follow them. So now, when it is said of a wicked man, what a man ploweth and soweth, he reapeth the same, it is to be understood of the same thing in the issue and consequents of it, those curses, those treasures, that harvest of wrath, which lie in the threatnings against him, these are rained down upon him, and are made the portion of his cup.

Again [*the same*] that is, *the same in degree*; if he have sown much, he shall reap much; if he have sown but little, he shall reap but little, he shall have his due proportion. The justice of God doth neither commute nor compound penalties with wicked men; as it will not wrong or over-charge, so neither will it favour or spare them in their sins. God spared not his Son, when he was in the place of sinners, *Rom.* 8. 32. much less will he spare any sinner, who is not in his Son. So much for the opening of these words. We shall now observe some things from them.

Even

Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity.

Hence we learn, First, *That to be a wicked man is no easie task; he must go to plough for it.*

It is plowing, and you know plowing is laborious, yea it is hard labour. Wicked men in Scripture are called *Sons of Belial*, that is, such as will not endure the yoke; they will not endure Gods yoke, or the yoke of Christ, though it be an easie yoke: but they are content slavishly to yield their (otherwise) proud and delicate necks to Satans yoke, to tug and sweat at his plough all their days. There is a promise, in the Prophet, of a time, when *swords shall be turned into plough-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks*; that is, men shall leave fighting and go to working, they shall have peace: and there are many in the World, who would break their swords into these mystical plough-shares, and their spears into sinning hooks; they would have peace, why? that they might leave fighting and go to sinning, that they might work wickedness more quickly, and keep close to their Trade, the ploughing of iniquity without disturbance.

Belial, deduci potest à בלי *q. e. Non &* עול *q.e. Jugum, ut significetur impatientia Jugi. Hieron.*

Secondly, Observe, That, *there is an art in wickedness.*

It is ploughing, or, as the word imports, an artificial working. Some are curious and exact in shaping, polishing and setting off their sin: so the Holy Ghost intimates, *Rev.* 21.27. *Whosoever worketh abomination, and maketh a lye:* There is but one Verb in the Greek, and so we may read it full enough in our language, *whosoever worketh an abomination and a lye*; to work an abomination or a lye, is more then to do an abomination, or tell a lye. As when we say, such a man is a Clockmaker, it notes Art, as well as action. So to say, such a man is an Abomination-worker, or a Lye-maker, notes him not only industrious, but crafty, or (as the Prophet speaks) *wise to do evil.*

ποιῶν βδ. ἀσυμια καὶ ψεῦδος.

Thirdly, Note from these Metaphors, of ploughing and sowing,

That, *wicked men expect benefit in wayes of sin, and look to be gainers being by evil doers.*

They make iniquity their plough; and a mans plough is so much his profit, that it is grown into a Proverb, to call that (whatsoever it is) by which a man makes his living or his profit, *His plough.* And when we say, *there are many candles burning, and never a plough going*: It is to tax unthriftiness or careless spending, without honest care of getting. Every man tills in expectation of a crop; who would put his plough into the ground to receive nothing? The Apostle argues from this, as a dictate of nature, (1 *Cor.* 9.10.) *He that ploweth, ploweth in hope.* And *James* 5.7. *The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth*; having bestowed his labour, he doth not count it labour lost. It is even so with wicked men, when they are sinning, they think themselves thriving, or laying up that in the earth a while, which will grow and increase to a plentiful harvest. What strange fancies have many to be rich, to be great, by wayes of wickedness? Thus they plow in hope, but they shall never be partakers of their hope: yea, they shall be ashamed of their hope, their sin will deceive them. And that which will make their poverty most burthensom, is their hope of riches; the expectation they had to gain, will make their loss, their breaking, and their undoing, intollerable

Fourthly, Observe from these Metaphors,

That, *every sinful act persisted in, shall have a certain sorrowful reward.*

It shall assuredly be answered with judgment, tribulation, and anguish: Assuredly it shall. Are not plowing and seed-time an assurance of the harvest? They that go forth vainly rejoycing, bearing that poysonous seed, shall doubtless come again, and bring their sheaves of sorrow with them. That which God promised (*Gen.*8.22.) in regard of natural husbandry, he hath threatned in regard of this mystical husbandry: after the Flood he promised, that *while the Earth remained, Summer and Winter, Seed time and Harvest should not cease.* So it is here, only with this difference, the Lord useth all means to dissuade and prevent the seed-time of sin. But when notwithstanding all those threatnings, men will be sowing iniquity, he hath made an everlasting Decree (as firm in its kind, as that about the waters of *Noah*) that Harvest shall follow, and every such soul shall both reap and eat, the fruit of his sinful plowing and sowings.

Fifthly Observe, That, *the punishment of sin may come long after the committing of sin.*

The one is the seed-time, and the other a reaping-time; there is a great distance of time between sowing and reaping. The seeds of sin may lie many years under the furrowes. A man may commit a sin in his youth, and not find the harvest of it till his old age. How many (as *Job* complains, but in a worse sence then he) in their old age, are made to possess the sins of their youth, and feel that which they have forgot? *The Husbandman* (in that place before mentioned, *James* 5.7.) *waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it*: and through the long patience of God, some wicked men (though they thought their sins not sowed, but buried for ever, and never desire to see or hear of them; yet (in a sence) some wicked men, I say) wait long for the noxious fruit of their own hearts.

Sometimes indeed the seed-time and harvest of sin, are found in the same hour; and while a man hath scarce ended his sin, his punishment begins. The Prophet describing the plenty and prosperity of the Church in the latter dayes, tells us, *that the plough-man shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes, him that soweth the seed.* The returns of sin are to some as quick and plentiful, judgment rides post after them, the reaper overtakes the sower, or the man reaps as soon as he hath sowed; wrath arrests him in the very act of sinning. And we may say, as *Elisha* in another case, *Is not the sound of his masters feet behind him?* The sound of punishment is at the very heels of sin. That black Oxe comes as swift as a Leopard, treading upon his heels: And though sometimes it comes slowly as an Oxe, yet alwayes it treads hardest, when it comes slowest. *A wicked man may commit evil an hundred times, and his dayes (of peace) be prolonged*, for his harvest of wrath (like *Habbakkuks* vision of mercy) is for an appointed time, but in the end it will not lye, (though he would tarry for it) it will not tarry. The natural harvest belies (*sc.* failes) some mens hopes; but this my stical harvest shall not bely his fears (if he have any) it shall bely his presumption, how much soever he hath.

Amos 9.13

2 King. 6. 32.

Eccles. 8.

Spem mentita seges.

Sixthly Observe, That, *the punishment of sin shall be proportionable to the degrees of sin.*

He shall reap, *the same*, saith the Text, the same in degree. So the Scripture speaks, and so experience teacheth concerning natural sowing; a mans harvest is gradually such, as is his seed-time, if he have sowen much (as an ordinary course) he shall reap much: The Apostle alludes to this, where he speaks of the seed of charity, *If ye sow sparingly, ye shall reap sparingly*; on the other side, if ye sow plentifully, ye shall reap plentifully. Sometimes through the judgment of God, (which can easily break thorow the principles of nature) it cometh to pass, as it is *Hag.* 1.6. *Ye sow much, and reap little*: God makes the Harvest thin and lean, when the seed-time was thick and plentiful; but in regard of sinning (I speak of such as go on impenitently in their sins, and have not Christ to take off their sin from them) such persons as sow much, shall be sure to reap much: They shall be beaten with many stripes, who impenitently multiply their transgressions.

2 Cor. 9.6

Seventhly Observe, *Punishment shall not exceed the desert of sin.*

They reap the same; The same, equal in degree or quantity, not beyond the degree of sinning. In nature, the corn reap't is more then the corn sown; sometimes an hundred fold, sometimes sixty, sometimes thirty; as Christ speaks, in the Parable of the Sower, *Matth.* 13. But the punishment of sin reaped, is not a grain more then the sin committed. All the punishments of this life, are less then sin, as *Ezra* confesseth, *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less then our iniquity*, &c. *Chap.* 9.13.

9. 13. And in the life to come, the damned shall not be punished more then sin deserveth; yea, I may say (with reverence to his Almighty power) God cannot punish a sin, beyond that proportion which it deserveth; and the reason is this, *Infinite power, cannot inflict a punishment, beyond that which infinite justice doth require:* Infinite justice is offended, and must be satisfied (if not satisfied by Christ) then by the person himself offending; therefore, infinite power cannot lay upon a man, more then his sin doth deserve, though it may easily lay more upon him then his nature can endure. So then, all that wicked men bear in this life, is less, and all they shall bear in Hell, will not be more then the deserts of sin, or the demands of Justice.

An objection may seem to lye against this, from that
Rev. 18. 6. award of judgment against *Babylon: Double to her double, according to her works*; It may seem that her harvest of punishment must exceed in double proportion, her seed
Psal. 79. 12. time of sinning: The Psalmist speaks yet higher, *Render unto your neighbours sevenfold into their bosom, their reproach, wherewith they have reproached thee O Lord.* Render sevenfold, that is, manifold: That number in Scripture, multiplies the sence into any number; To render sevenfold, may be rendred the greatest number.

I answer, *Babylons* punishment shall be double, respecting what *Babylon* shall have acted; but not double, respecting what *Babylon* shall have deserved: *Give to her double*; if it be possible, let her have as much blood more to drink as she hath spilt, for she deserveth to drink an hundred times more. The blood of Saints is precious blood; one drop of the blood of *Sion*, is more worth then a whole ocean of the blood of *Babylon*, therefore *give her double*; though it be more in quantity, it is not so much in value. And so reward our neighbours that have reproached thee, sevenfold, it is not sevenfold beyond their deserts; for one scorn that a wicked man poureth upon a Child of God (and so upon God, for that's the meaning of the Psalm) cannot be recompensed with ten thousand reproaches poured upon wicked men. Reproach is the due of ungodly men here, and everlasting reproach shall be their portion hereafter. But the least reproach cast upon God is an infinite wrong; and the reproach of his people is so much his, that he reckons it as his own: And will therefore take away all reproach from his people, and render to their unkind neighbours, their reproach sevenfold (and that's but equal) into their bosoms.

Lastly, When it is said, *They shall reap the same:* We are taught,

That, *the punishment of sin, shall be like the sin in kind.*

It shall be the same, not only in degree, but also in likeness. Punishment often bears the image and superscription of sin upon it. You may see the fathers face and feature in the child. *Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*, saith the Apostle, *Gal.* 6. 7. If a man sow wheat, he shall reap wheat; the harvest tells you what kind of grain was sowed in every field: If a man sows wheat, he shall not reap tares; and if a man sow tares, he shall not reap wheat. Thus God often returns the sin of man upon him: sin comes to him in his own likeness, and he may read the name of it stampt upon the affliction; or by the judgment inflicted, interpret the wickedness committed: This was openly confessed by *Adonibezek*, (Judg. 1. 7.) *As I have done, so God hath requited me*, just so; and what was that? He speaks out in the former words: *Threescore and ten Kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table:* There was his sowing, his reaping was the same; *they caught him* (saith the Text) *and cut off his thumbs, and his great toes.* The very first Law that was formally made and published after the fall, was a Law of Retaliation, or of Counterpassion, *Gen.* 6. 9. *Whosoever sheddeth mans blood, (what shall he reap?) By man shall his blood be shed, he must reap the same:* The Judicials of *Moses* are plain for this, *Exod.* 21. 24. *Eye for*
Deut 32. 21. *eye, and tooth for tooth*, &c. *They have moved me to jealousie*, saith the Lord, *by that which is not God; and I will move them to jealousie, by those who are not a people. Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange Gods in your Land, so shall ye serve strangers in a Land which is not yours*, Jerem. 5. 19. God payeth them in their own coin. *Who so stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard*, Prov. 21. 13. And so concerning the preaching of the word, contemned, (*Zach.* 7. 13.) *Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cryed, and they would not hear; so they cryed, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts:* They reap as they sowed: they would not hear, that was their sin; they shall not be heard, that's the punishment; they shall see how good it *is* to be wilfully deaf, when God commands, by his being judicially deaf, when they complain. The *Sodomites* had a fire, of unnatural lust among them, and God sent a shower of fire unnaturally from Heaven (fire descending crosseth the course of nature) to destroy them. The *Egyptians* killed the *Israelitish* Children, that was the seed they sowed, they reap the same; God slew their Children, even all their first-born in one night. *Nadab* and *Abihu* offered strange fire, there was their wickedness; they reaped the same; God by fire from Heaven, in a strange manner, slew them in a moment.

Yea, we find the Lord sometimes dealing thus with his own dear servants, he will cause them to reap that which they have sown in kind; *David* had defiled his neighbours wife, *Therefore*, saith the Lord, *I will take thy wives from* 2 Sam. 12. 11. *before thine eyes, and give them to thy neighbour, and he shall lye with thy wives, in the sight of this Sun.* Again, the Lord tells him, *Thou hast slain* Uriah *with the sword of the Children of* Ammon, *therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house.* You see, here was sword for sword, and defilement for defilement, even holy *David* reaped the same which he had sowed. It is very remarkable, which is reported in the History of the Church, by *Socrates*, concerning *Valens* the Emperor, who was a great persecuter of the orthodox Christians, and a maintainer of Arrianism: The story tells us, that in his wars against the *Gothes*, he was overthrown, and hiding himself in a little cottage, the enemy came by, burnt it, and him together: Now see, how God in this, gave him to reap what he had sown: for when fourscore of the orthodox sayled from *Constantinople* to *Nicomedia*, to treat with him, about the points of Arrianism, and to settle the matter by way of dispute: The Emperor hearing of their approach, while they were in the haven, and before they could come on shore, caused the Ships to be fired wherein they were, and so consumed them all. Here was burning for burning. And it is observed (in the French History) that *Charles* the ninth of *France*, who *Anno* 1572. was the contriver of that great Massacre in *Paris*, wherein so many thousand Protestants were forced through a Red Sea, a Sea of blood, to their rest in *Canaan*: This bloody King, at last dyed himself, by a strange eruption of blood from all the passages of his body; thus he had also reaped what he had sown; he had poured out blood, and his blood was poured out. It were easie to give you plenty of instances, bearing witness of this accurate justice of God. Examples were frequent in *Job's* time, you see *Eliphaz* had store of these in his note-book, *Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.* *Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. 4. c. 3.*

VERS. 9, 10, 11.

By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.
The roaring of the Lion, and the voice of the fierce Lion, and the teeth of the young Lions are broken.
The old Lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout Lions whelps are scattered abroad.

ELiphaz having given an account of his observation, in general, that he had often seen wicked men perish, *vers.* 8. In these three verses, he illustrates his observation, by an elegant description of the manner how, or the power by which wicked men perish and are cut off; namely, by the blast of God, *ver.* 9. *By the blast of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed:* and lest any should think, that this blast of God carries away only straws and feathers, light and weak persons into perdition, he adds the weightiest and the strongest: *The roaring of the Lion, and the teeth of the young Lions are broken.* God by his blast can take away, or break, the strongest, the mightiest, Lion-like men, men fierce like Lions, and stout like the Lions whelp. Under the shadow of which allusions, he closely strikes at *Job*, who was once

a great

a great man, the greatest of all the men in the East; a fierce spoiling Lion (in the apprehension of his friends) and yet God brought him down. This in brief, is the illustration of the argument, in these three verses, *By the blast of God they perish*, &c.

Eliphaz (having in the former verse, by the metaphor of plowing, sowing and reaping, set forth the actings and expectations, the issues and successes of wicked men) here (as some conceive) continues the metaphor or the Allegory, by this expression of blasting, which (we know) is often used in reference to the seed sown: As if *Eliphaz* had said, when these men have plowed and sowed, when they are in expectation of a fruitful and plentiful harvest, then God blasteth the seed, and the seeds-man too; he sendeth forth his rough wind, which dryeth up and withereth stalk and ear, the Counsel and the Counsellors: And though blasting spoil or prevent reaping in an ordinary sence, yet blasting may be reaping (as here) in a figurative sence: They who sow iniquity, are often punished by reaping disappointments, which is the blasting of their hopes, and the consumption of their confidences.

Blasting of corn and fruits, is often spoken of in the Old Testament (as 1 *Kings* 8. 37.) *If there be in the Land blasting and mildew.* Amos 4. 9. *I have smitten you with blasting and mildew*; And a people spoiled by the sword, and consumed by war, are compared *to corn blasted before it be grown up*, Isa. 37. 27. But the word in the Original, for blasting corn, is different from this in the Text: The root of that, signifies to dry up, or cause to wither; this to breath, as a man breaths with his nostrils; *By the breath of his nostrils*, or (as we translate) *by the blast of his nostrils*: So in the description of mans Creation, *Gen.* 2. 7. *Moses* saith, *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*, or *the blast of life.*

שדפה *Herba percussa uredine est percussio fementis vento orientali ingrediente spicas; adeo ut non perficiant maturitatem suam*, Rab. David. *in lib. rad.*

This blasting or blast of God, is sometime put for a storm or mighty tempest suddenly raised up by the Power of God. Thus (*Exod.* 15. 8.) *Moses* relating the sudden destruction of the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea, saith, *with the blast of thy nostrils, the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap*, &c. that is, with the wind which God sent out, as his instrument, he gathered the waters to swallow up the *Egyptians*, and save his own people. And we find the word (*Isa.* 25. 4.) used to denote the furious blasting violence of wicked men, in the day of their rage and madness against the Church. *When the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall, thou shalt bring down the noise of strangers, as the heat in a dry place*, &c.

נשמה from נשם *Anhelavit.*

By the blast of God.] God in this act of vengeance against the powers of wickedness, is presented to us in his Name, *Eloah*, which signifies, the mighty or puissant God: So Mr. *Broughton* translates it, *By the breath of the puissant they perish.* The strong God, or God in his strength, comes armed against strong transgressors. The effect shews the strength of this blast; For,

By his blast **they perish**, saith the Text; it is the word used before: they are not only a little withered or scorched, but they are utterly consumed, they are destroyed, root and branch, head and tail, as in one day.

רוח אפו

The next words in the Text, **by the breath of his nostrils they are consumed**, are but the repeating of the same thing; yet there is a considerable difference in the expressions. **By the breath of his nostrils.**] The word (*Ruach*) which we there translate breath, signifies generally, spirit, ghost, breath or wind; sometime the Holy Ghost, who is breathed from the Father and Son: The breath of God put alone, notes the wrath of God, *Isa*, 30. 33. *Tophet is prepared of old*, &c. *the breath of the Lord*, (*sc.* the wrath of the Lord) *like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.* This phrase also, *The breath of Gods nostrils*, signifies the anger and wrath of God. And the anger of God, is called *the breath of his nostrils*, after the manner of men and other creatures; because anger breaths out at their nostrils: The Naturalists observe, that anger inflaming the spirit, and heating the heart, frequent breathing follows (as it were) to cool the fire, and to ease that inflammation; an angry man breaths quick and short: When *Saul* was enraged and mad with malice against the Saints, he is said, *To breath out threatnings and slaughter*, Acts 9. 1. therefore also, anger is called, *the breath of Gods nostrils.*

Animalia commota, spirant vehementius, & narium flatu iram indicant.

Further it is considerable, that the word *nostril*, is put alone for the wrath of God: *Psal.* 95. 11. *He sware in his nostril*, that is (as we translate it) *he sware in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest.* Likewise *Psal.* 2. 12. *If his wrath be kindled but a little*: The Hebrew is, if his nose or nostril be kindled but a little; the nostril, being an Organ of the body, in which wrath shews it self, is put for wrath it self. Paleness and snuffing of the nose, are symptomes of anger. In our proverbials, to take a thing in snuff, is to take it in anger. Again, in Scripture we find that slowness to anger, and hastiness to be angry, are expresst by the different frame of the nostrils; as namely, when the Lord is said to be slow in anger; the Hebrew is, *long of nostrils*: (Psal. 103. 8.) *The Lord is slow to anger*, or, (*Exod.* 34. 6.) *long-suffering.* In both places, the Original is, *long of nostrils*; that is, of anger, or long ere he be angry. On the other side, a passionate, cholerick man, a man ready to conceive anger, is said to have a strait or short nostril; *He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly*, Prov. 14. 17. the Hebrew is, he that hath a short or a narrow nostril, dealeth foolishly; because such men are most apt to conceive anger: So then, while *Eliphaz* saith, *By the breath of his nostrils they are consumed*, it is, as if he had said, by the wrath and displeasure of God they are consumed; and the Septuagint translate it, directly by anger; *They are consumed by the breath, or spirit of his anger*; So others in the Latine, *They are consumed by the spirit of his fury.* And both these words, *breath* and *blast*, are found together in one place, 2 *Sam.* 22. 16. *At the blast of the breath of his nostrils*; the whole verse runneth thus, *The channels of the Sea appeared, the foundations of the earth were discovered, at the rebuking of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils*, that is, at the great displeasure of the Lord.

So, we see, what we are here to understand, by the breath and by the blast of the Lord. And in this passage, *Eliphaz* seems to hint at the manner of the death of *Job*'s children, who were destroyed by the strength of a mighty wind, smiting the four corners of the house so, that it fell upon them: that wind may well be called the breath and the blast of God, both in regard of the wonder and strangeness of it, as also because (though Satan was the instrument) he had the ordering and disposing of it. Satans breath, all the wind he can raise, cannot blow away a feather, unless the Lord give and continue leave and strength to do it.

Observe First, *God can easily destroy wicked men.*

He doth it by a blast, or by a breath. Though, to themselves and others, they appear as great Mountains, yet before God they are but as dust, or chaff of the Mountains; by a blast or by a breath, he scatters and consums them: So *David* compares them (*Psal.* 1. 4.) *The ungodly are not so*, (not so? how? they are not as a tree planted by the waters side, that is the portion of the righteous; how are the ungodly then?) *they are as the chaff, that the wind scattereth or driveth away*; the best of them, the most solid of them are no better. And (*Isa.* 17. 13.) *The Nations shall be chased, as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and as a rolling thing before the whirl-wind.* Though Nations, mighty, strong, powerful Nations come out against God, and his people, *fear them not.* For if God set himself against them, they are no more before him, then a little chaff, he scatters them by the breath of his displeasure.

You know it is no trouble, for a man to breathe, or to make a blast with his mouth; and this phrase is used, to shew with what ease and facility God destroyes all the plots and counsels of wicked men; it putteth him to no pain, no sweating, no travel or labor, to do it; men are put to much expence of pains, and run many hazzards, to oppose the wickedness of men: but God doth it with a breath, (2 *King.* 19. 7.) When God sent to *Hezekiah*, to assure him that he would deliver him from *Sennacherib*, he not only promiseth to do it, but shews him how he will do it, even as in this Text, *Behold, I will send a blast upon him*: that's all I will do, I will not trouble my self much about the business; you must gather armies and make great preparations against the enemy, but I will do it with a blast.

And which is yet more speedy; Some understand this blast to note only the will and pleasure, the intent or pur-

pose of God, *by the blast of God they perish*, that is, if he do but will it, it is done; it is no more for him to act it, then intend it. The *Septuagint* translate near this sence, *by the command of God they perish*; as if *Eliphaz* had said, it is as easie for God to do it, as to say it shall, or to command it to be done. Men can command great things, and talk much what they will do; and all proves but talking and commanding: One man may command more in an hour, then a million can do in a year; but with God, it is all one, to command and accomplish. It is noted for a high speech, that of *Cæsar* to *Metellus*, who opposing him, when he came into the *Roman* Treasury, to take the money there heaped together; *Cæsar* (whose great spirit could not bear opposition) saith to him, *Let me alone, or I will lay thee dead upon the ground*; and presently, at once to qualifie that threat, and magnifie his own power, adds, *Young man, it is harder for me to speak this, then to do it.* It is most certainly so with God, he can as easily do any thing, as speak it. Yet further, we find the easiness of Gods destroying his enemies set forth, a degree higher, *he doth it by a look*; as by a blast of his nostrils, so by a cast of his eye; that's a small trouble, and that's all that it needs cost God to destroy the strongest, the vilest and violentest foe in the world: Thus he consumed the host of *Pharoah*, even with a look, (Exod. 14. 24.) *It came to pass that in the morning-watch, the Lord looked upon the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians.* If God hide his face from his people, they are troubled; and if he look upon his enemies, they are troubled. He darts out both beams of life, and beams of death from his eyes. When a godly man is afflicted, if he can but get the Lord to look upon his trouble, he is delivered. And when wicked men prosper, if God do but look upon their glory, they are withered. With such ease doth the Scripture express the destruction of wicked ones, it is by a breath, by a word, by a command, by a look: *An intimation from the eye of God is execution.*

Secondly note, *God can suddenly destroy the counsels, and the plottings, the ploughings, and the sowings of wicked men.*

In proverbial speaking, to do a thing suddenly, and to do a thing with a breath, are the same: God can as soon destroy his enemies, as a man can breath, *Psal.* 73. 10. *How are they brought into desolation in a moment!* A blast, you know, is gone in a moment, *Isa.* 42. 9. *These two things shall come upon thee in a moment, loss of Children, and widowhood.* God can with one breath, blow away both the husband and the children. So (*Jer.* 4. 20.) The Church of the *Jews* speaks thus, *Destruction upon destruction is cried, for the whole Land is spoiled, suddenly are my tents spoiled, and my curtains in a moment*: God doth but blow upon the tents, and presently the cords break, and the stakes thereof are loosned. If man be angry, he must sit down and consult, he must lay his plot and contrive a way of revenge: But no sooner is God angry, but he can revenge. *That wrath cannot want an instrument, which can make one. Infinite wisdom sees all means at once, and infinite power can use them at once.* As *the grace of God knows not long delayes*, it comes swiftly, as a sweet blast or holy breath; Grace is speedy, and upon the wing; so likewise the wrath of God knows no tedious long delayes: They who do wickedly, and stand out impenitently, shall perish suddenly. And though the Lord be slow to anger before he strikes, yet when he strikes, he can do it at once; it is but a blast of his wrath, and a breath of his displeasure, and the stoutest of the sons of men are dried like a leaf.

Thirdly note, That, *God destroyeth wicked men secretly and invisibly.*

To destroy by a breath, is a close way of destroying. So, (*Hag.* 1. 9.) his anger is expresst against his own people, for neglecting his Ordinances and Temple; *Ye looked for much, but lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it*, that is, I sent an invisible and secret curse upon it.

Lastly, We may observe from the manner of this destruction,

That, *The destruction of wicked men, the plowers of iniquity, is unavoidable.*

It is done by a breath; now *the wind bloweth where it listeth, no man can countermand or stop the wind.* The wind is swift, as well as strong; no man can out-run the storm of Gods displeasure. *He that fleeth of them, shall not flee away* (for it is a wind that followeth them) *and he that escapeth of them, shall not be delivered*; it is a blast that is gone out after them: they cannot deliver themselves by art or cunning, by wit or policy; they cannot deceive or cozen the wind; they cannot deliver themselves by power or strength; they cannot conquer or overcome this wind: it comes suddenly, invisibly, irresistably; who can stand before God when he is angry? yea, who knoweth the power of his wrath or blast? Am. 9. 1,2.

This *Eliphaz* goes on to shew, in *vers.* 10, 11. and therefore takes his instance from those creatures which are mightiest, which are strongest. *The roaring of the Lion, and the voice of the fierce Lion, and the teeth of the young Lion are broken; the old Lion perisheth for lack of prey, and the stout Lions whelps are scattered abroad.*

The expressions are very various. Here are five words in these two verses, signifying the Lion, yet with a difference and special reference to the several ages and conditions of the Lion. 1. *The Lion.* 2. *The fierce Lion.* 3. *The young Lion.* 4. *The old Lion.* 5. *And the stout Lion.* We have these five several words in our translation, and we give epithites to four of them; whereas in the hebrew they are all single terms, as we shall see in a brief touch upon them.

Leonum nomina plura sunt, & secundum ætatis gradus distinguuntur. Buxtor. *lex.* 1. *Arieh.* 2. *Shacal.* 3. *Cephir.* 4. *Laish.* 5. *Laby.*

First, The Lion (*Arieh*) which name is given the Lion, to note his power in renting and tearing; and Mr. *Broughton* renders it so, *the roaring of the renting Lion*, putting the etymologie or notation of the word into the translation. Others derive it from *Arie*, a Lion, and *Raah*, which signifieth to see, and then it is as much as the *Lion-seer*; and the reason of this derivation is given from the Lions watchfulness, he is ever intent upon his prey; and, as some Naturalists observe, sleeps with his eyes open. So that this word entitles him, either from his watchfulness, the *Lion-seer*; or from his strength, the *Lion-renter*.

אריה from ארה *carpsit, decerpsit; alii deducunt ab* ארי *Leo &* ראה *vidit, quasi leo videns, quia semper est oculis intentus ad prædam.*

The second is a primitive, signifying, sometimes a Leopard, and sometimes a Lioness, or she-Lion. We render it a fierce Lion, which may well refer to the former, because a she-Lion, especially when she hath young ones, is exceeding fierce.

לביא *Leo ferox vel immanis, mediæ ætatis.*

The third word it is (*Cephir*) a young Lion, and it is sometimes used as an epithete (*Cephir Arieh*) a young Lion roared on *Samson*, Judg. 14. 5.

The fourth word is (*Laish*) signifying a Lion, that is grown in years, which perishes for hunger, not being able to hunt and get prey. So the Text, *The old Lion perishes for lack of prey.*

And the fifth word is (*Laby*) which signifies a Lion in greatest strength and fierceness. And the Criticks tell us, it is derived from (*Leb*) which signifieth the *heart*, as noting a strong-hearted and a couragious Lion; and so Mr. *Broughton* translates, for *stout Lion, the heart-strong Laby. Judah* being compared to this Lion, by dying *Jacob*, is set forth by his majestick stoutness: *Judah is a Lions whelp*, &c. *And as an old Lion, who shall rouze him up?* Gen. 49. 9.

Quasi leonē cordatum & animosū dicas. Buxt.

These several sorts of Lions shadow out unto us, mighty, strong and powerful wicked men, or plowers of wickedness, with all related to them, they and their families, they and their wives, they and their children; all theirs are usually full of Lion-like qualities, and all these shall be destroyed and perish, by the blast, by the breath of God.

For, as the Apostle puts the question in another case, about Oxen, *Doth God take care for Oxen?* So if any should question here, is God angry with Lions? Doth he oppose himself against Lions, that he saith here, The Lion shall perish, the young and the old Lions shall be destroyed?

No, There is a further meaning in it, somewhat else is shadowed under the name or notion of Lions. First, In Scripture, the Lion signifies any one in authority, especially in Kingly authority (*Gen.* 49. 10.) The *Tribe of Judah* (which was to have the Scepter and the Rule, the Magistracy or Government being setled in that Tribe) is compared to a Lion; *Judah is a Lions whelp, from the prey my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a Lion, and as an old Lion, who shall rouze him up?* As Lions are chief, the most eminent among the beasts of the field, so

Kings

Kings and Magiſtrates are chief, the moſt eminent among the ſons of men. Chriſt is called the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*, from the prerogative of his power, and the excellency of his Kingly condition above all others, his name being *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* Secondly, The Devil is compared to a Lion, he is called a *roaring Lion*, becauſe of his cruelty and devouring nature; *He goeth about like a roaring Lion ſeeking whom he may devour.* And the Lions here in the text (how old ſoever they be) are whelps of this old Lion, the Devil: not great men in general, but wicked great men, men mighty in power, and mighty in ſin, mighty ſinners. It is frequent in Scripture, to ſhadow out powerful, wicked, tyrannical men by the name of Lions; and the reaſon is, becauſe they imitate the qualities and conditions of the Lion. *A man acts by reaſon, and a beaſt acts by ſenſe and paſſion:* Reaſon is the difference between a man and a beaſt; therefore when a man acts againſt reaſon, or without reaſon, the name of a beaſt is juſtly put upon him; and the name of that beaſt moſt fitly, whoſe qualities and paſſions he moſt reſembles. Man in regard of his headſtrong unrulineſs, is compared to a horſe and to a mule, *Pſal.* 32. 9. *Be not as the Horſe or as the Mule which have no underſtanding, whoſe mouth muſt be held in with bit and bridle:* Be not unruly. For ſubtilty, man is called a Fox; for flattery or filthineſs, a Dog or a Swine; and here, for rapine and cruelty, a Lion. Thus the Prophet *Nahum* elegantly, *chap.* 2. 11, 12. *Where is the dwelling place of the Lions, and the feeding place of the young Lions?* that is, where is the dwelling place of oppreſſors and cruel tyrants? And, *Ezek.* 19. 1, 2. *Take up a lamentation for the Princes of Iſrael, and ſay, what is thy Mother? a Lioneſs, ſhe lay down among Lions, ſhe nouriſhed her whelps among young Lions*: the tyrannical Princes in *Iſrael*, were thus deſcribed: And ſo is tyrannical *Pharaoh*, (Ezek. 32. 2.) *Take up a lamentation for Pharaoh King of Egypt, and ſay unto him, Thou art like a young Lion of the Nations.* In general, *Solomon* (*Prov.* 28. 15.) telleth us, *That as a roaring Lion, and a ranging Bear, ſo is a wicked Ruler over the poor people.* And the Apoſtle *Paul*, ſpeaking of his eſcape from the jaws of that perſecuting Emperor, ſaith, (2 *Tim.* 4. 17.) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion*, that is, out of the mouth of *Nero*, who was ready with open mouth to devour and deſtroy me; or as ſome, (taking it for a proverbial ſpeech, noting any eminent danger) I was delivered from the extreameſt hazard of death; even as a man reſcued out of a Lions mouth, and pulled from between his teeth.

And it will not be amiſs, for the clearing of this a little further, to give you ſome ſpecial things, wherein the reſemblance may be taken between the Tyrant, the oppreſſing Ruler, or any oppreſſing great one, and the Lion: we may draw the picture of a Tyrant by a Lions face, in theſe reſpects.

Firſt, In regard of his pride, ſtatelineſs, and diſtance which he affects to hold towards others. The Lion is a proud and ſtately creature.

Secondly, Tyrants reſemble Lions in regard of courage and animoſity. Couragiouſneſs in any noble or good way, (in which ſence, *Prov.* 28. 1. *(the righteous are bold as a Lion)* is the courage of Saints: But to be valiant and couragious in doing miſchief, in wronging and oppreſſing the weak or innocent, is the courage of a beaſt. Courage out of the way of truth and juſtice, is Lion-like cruelty.

Thirdly, They are Lions in regard of their ſtrength. Lions are the ſtrongeſt of creatures: *What is ſtronger then a Lion?* ſay they, in reſolving *Samſons* Riddle. And *Prov.* 30. 30. *A Lion which is ſtrongeſt among beaſts.* Tyranny muſt have ſtrength to back it. Hence they who mean to oppreſs, fortifie themſelves with titles and priviledges, with honours and relations. *Solomon* conſidering the oppreſſions that were under the Sun, obſerves tears on the one ſide, and ſtrength on the other; *On the one ſide of the oppreſſors there was power*, Eccleſ. 4. 1.

Fourthly, They are Lions in regard of their ſubtilty: The Lion is a ſubtil creature, as well as a ſtrong creature; he hath a great ſtock of policy, as well as power: though we uſually oppoſe the Lions skin and the Foxes skin, yet many times they both meet in one: Some are double-skinn'd, as well as double-cloath'd: Hence we have that phraſe, *Pſal.* 10. 9. (comparing a wicked man to a Lion) *He lieth in wait ſecretly, as a Lion in his den*; which teacheth us, that the Lion waits and watches for his prey; and ſo do theſe wicked men (*Pſal.* 17. 12.) *Like as a Lion that is greedy of his prey, and as it were a young Lion, lurking in ſecret places.*

Fifthly, They are Lions, eſpecially in their cruelty, in their blood-ſucking cruelty. The Lion is a devouring beaſt, therefore when the Devil is called a Lion, it is ſaid he *goeth about to devour.* And God himſelf (when he would be expreſt in his reſolutions of judgment, ſo as he will not have mercy upon a man, or upon a nation) is pleaſed to take upon him this name too, *Hoſ.* 5. 14. *I will be unto Ephraim as a Lion, and as a young Lion to the houſe of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away, and none ſhall reſcue him*; that is, I am reſolved to execute judgment to the uttermoſt upon him: So, *chap.* 6. 1. *The Lord hath torn*, which is (properly) the act of a Lion. And, *Job* (*chap.* 10. 16.) complains thus to God, *Thou hunteſt me like a fierce Lion.* And (*Iſa.* 38. 13.) *Hezekiah* fearing, that God would not ſhew him that mercy, to raiſe him from ſickneſs, cries out, *as a Lion, ſo will he break all my bones.* So that when the Lord would expreſs himſelf in wayes of judgment, and reſolvedneſs to go on in judgment, he takes upon him the name of a Lion. But ſuch is the very nature of wicked men: Such as the Prophet *Micah* beſpeaks (*chap.* 3. 2.) *Hear this, O ſons of Jacob, and ye Princes of the houſe of Iſrael, is it not for you to know judgment? who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skins from off them, and their fleſh from off their bones*: noting Lion-like cruelty in thoſe, who ſhould have been as ſhepherds, to feed and protect the people.

6. They are compared to Lions, in regard of their terrible roaring; the Lion roareth terribly, ſo terribly, that when the Lion roareth, the beaſts of the forreſt tremble. The Naturaliſts obſerve, that though many creatures are ſwifter of foot then the Lion, yet when he roareth, they fall down, and he overtakes them with his aſtoniſhing voice: ſo tyrannical men, with their roaring words, their loud threatnings, often affright and daunt the poor.

Animalia fortia vocē edunt gravē ut Leo & Taurus. Ar. *Tanta illi vocis inendæ natura præſtitit inſtrumenta, ut animalia longè ipſo celeriora ſolo ſæpe rugitu capiantur.* Baſil. Hexam. Hom. 9. *Leo aliquid nubis habet circa ſupercilia, ſc. aſpectum minimè ſereni.* Ariſt.

7. They reſemble Lions, in the ſowrneſs and ſternneſs of their countenance, and clowdineſs of their brows. *Much of mans heart is ſeen in his face*: Frowns are as blows; hence we call it *brow-beating.* The Love of God is expreſſed by the pleaſantneſs of his face, and the light of his countenance: ſo alſo is the love of man; and we may ſee what the intent of another is, in his very looks. Many are, in this reſpect, Lion-like men; they have (as *Ariſtotle* ſaith of the natural Lion) clouds and ſtorms hanging about their eye-brows. It was a threatning againſt the *Jews*, in caſe of diſobedience, that God would ſend againſt them, a nation of a fierce countenance, which ſhould not regard the perſon of the old, &c. *Deut.* 28. 50.

Laſtly, They are like Lions, in regard of their greedineſs after prey. *They have ſet their eyes bowing down to the earth, like as a Lion that is greedy of his prey*, Pſal. 17. 11, 12.

Thus you ſee, both who are here meant by Lions, and likewiſe, how the reſemblance or picture of a wicked man may be taken from a Lion.

Now when it is ſaid, that, *the teeth of the Lions are broken, that the old Lions periſh, and the young Lions are ſcattered abroad*; by theſe expreſſions of ſcattering, periſhing, and being broken to pieces, the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhews us, the utter, full, and final conſumption of wicked men; they are not only touched, troubled, and rouzed up out of their dens, but theſe Lions, old and young, are ſcattered and conſumed. *They periſh.*

There is an opinion currant among the Jewiſh Writers, that this Verſe is to be underſtood, as a deſcription of the means or inſtruments by which God deſtroyes wicked men, and not (as we) of wicked men themſelves, whom God will deſtroy: *Junius* agrees with this interpretation of the Jews, tranſlating the two verſes, in this ſence; *By the blaſt of God they periſh, and by the breath of his noſtrils they are conſumed; by the roaring of the Lion, and by the voyce of the fierce Lion, and by the teeth of young Lions they are conſumed*: As if, when wicked men (ſo he giveth the gloſs) are not deſtroyed immediately by the breath, and by the blaſt of God, then God ſtirs up the creatures againſt them, and will deſtroy them by Lions. We know it was a ſpecial judgment

judgment threatned in the Law against the disobedient, (*Levit.* 26. 22.) that God would send evil beasts among them: The Prophet numbers this, among Gods sore judgments: *Sword, famine, pestilence, and evil beasts, are put together.* In the history of the Kings, we have a famous Record, how the Lord sent Lions, who slew some of those Idolaters, whom the King of *Babylon* had transplanted into the Cities of *Samaria.*

ng. 27.

But I rather conceive the former exposition of the words, to be the truth, and most sutable to the context; and there is this reason to be given, because it agrees best with the purpose of *Eliphaz*, whose work was, so to describe the destruction of wicked men in general, that he might particularly intimate the destruction fallen upon *Job* and his family, with the reason of it: *Job* was a great man in his time; he was among men as the Lion among beasts, *a chief:* His friends thought him a cruel Lion too, and so he is told to his face afterward, by one of them, that he (like a greedy Lion) *had taken away the pledge and the garment from the poor*: This *Eliphaz* would hint, at least, to *Job*, and that God had found him out in his Lion-like qualities; that he being a Magistrate, and a man in authority, having dealt hardly and cruelly with others, now the Lord had measured to him, the same measure he had given others: He, the Lion; and she, the fierce Lion or Lioness his wife; they the young Lions, his children, were all broken, and either perished or perishing. So much for the clearing of the words; I shall now add some Observations from them.

First, *Wicked men, how powerful, how strong soever, shall fall before the wrath and indignation of God.*

The day of the Lord shall be against every one that is high, and that is lifted up. God desires in a special manner to be dealing with these, for they, in the pride of their spirits, think themselves a match for God: though indeed, their strength be but weakness, and their wisdom foolishness; yet in their own conceits they are stronger, and wiser then God himself. Hence (like *Pharaoh*) they send defiance to Heaven, and say, *who is the Lord?* Exod. 5. 1. When God sees the hearts of men swoln to this height of insolent madness, he delights to shew himself, and grapple with them, that the pride of man may be abased, and every one that is exalted may be laid low: that he only may be exalted, and his Name set up in that day. *David* was much troubled, at that murther of *Abner*, yet he could not take vengeance presently upon the fierce Lion that had suckt his blood. Why? his power did not reach it; *Te sons of Zeruiah* (saith he) *are too hard for me*, (2 *Sam.* 3. 39.) but there are no sons of *Zeruiah* too hard for God, no Lions so strong, but he can tear them, with infinitely more ease, then a Lion can the tender kid.

This should comfort us, when we see great and potent enemies rising up against the Church; what are these before the great Lion, the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*. If the Lord do but roar, if the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah* come against these Lions, they will run like a herd of fearful Deer: *The Kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief Captains, and the mighty men*, are described, *trembling at the presence of Christ, when he appeared but as a lamb*, Rev. 6. 15, 19. *They cry to the mountains and the rocks to fall upon them, and to hide them from his face.* If when Christ appears like an angry Lamb, the greatest in the world fall before him, what then will these do when Christ shall appear as a roaring Lion?

Secondly observe, how gradually the Holy Ghost expresses the destruction of wicked Tyrants: All is not done at once; First the roaring of the Lions doth perish, then their voice, then their teeth are pulled out, next their prey is taken away, lastly their whelps are scattered.

Note hence, That, *usually God destroyes wicked men by degrees.*

Here are five steps or degrees of Gods justice, against these Lions. First, He stops the roaring of the Lions, they shall not be able to make such a dreadful noise as heretofore; their roaring may be stopt, when their voice is not; though they can speak, yet they shall not yell.

In the second place, He breaks the very voice of the Lions; they shall not only not roar, but they shall not so much as speak, either against the lambs, or against the sheep; or for themselves; the *voice of the fierce Lion shall be taken away.* God is able to silence Lions, and stop their mouths, not only from devouring and roaring, but from speaking.

Thirdly, When their voice is taken away and their roaring, yet their teeth may remain: and there will be biting and tearing still, though they have done roaring and yelling, therefore with a third stroak God breaks out their teeth; the teeth of the young Lions are broken. So the Psalmist prayes, *Psal.* 58. 6. *Break their teeth in their mouths, break out the great teeth of the young Lions, O Lord*: that is, take away the instruments, by which they oppress, the means by which they tear and rend, as Lions with their cruel teeth.

Fourthly, Christ deals further with these Lions, he not only breaks their teeth, by which they used to hurt others; but he takes away their prey and their meat, they shall not have wherewith to live themselves; they were wont to suck the blood of the slain, and to eat the flesh of the poor; but now the Lord will pluck away their prey, they themselves shall be starved or pincht with hunger.

Lastly, Nor only shall their meat be taken away, but they themselves shall be scattered and dispersed; that is the last step of their calamity. Their dens shall be broken up, and their lurking places shall be opened; they shall run from place to place, from Nation to Nation. This is the Judgment of the Lord upon Lions, and the portion of cruel enemies from our God.

Further, It is here said in the Text, *That the old Lion shall perish for want of prey:* It is a strange expression, Lions have the greatest power to get provision, to satisfie their hunger, yea their appetites and humour, yet these shall want; these Lions, who have all their life time, preyed upon the estates of other men, even these shall want.

Note hence the justice of God, *Such as have made others want, shall at last come to want themselves, they shall perish for want of prey.*

They shall have nothing to eat: *when thou ceasest to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled*, saith the Prophet; *and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee.* We must not understand it, as if wicked men do ever give over sinning; sin and their desire of sinning is in a kind infinite; they never say, now we have done, and will sin no more; but the meaning is, when thou canst sin no more, nor deal treacherously any more; when thou hast done thy utmost, and spent thy strength in spoiling others, or taken all their spoil; so that thou hast done spoiling, because there is no more to spoil: then others shall spoil thee; and thou Lion who hast preyed upon others a long time, shalt not have a bit thy self, but shalt perish for want of prey.

It is the promise of God unto his own people (*Psal.* 34. 10.) *That the Lions shall lack and suffer hunger, but they that fear the Lord, shall not want any good thing:* He expresses it by Lions, to note, that certainly they that fear him shall not want; for if any creatures in the world can preserve themselves from hunger, Lions can; if they do but roar, the very beasts will fall down as a prey before them: but yet (saith God) these, even these shall rather perish for hunger, then any one that feareth me shall want. God provides for his lambs, for innocent persons, for those who fear him, though they have no strength to provide for themselves; but the wicked who have greatest power, and have been most active to provide for themselves, shall pine with want; they who have caused so many to be bitten with hunger, shall at last be hunger-bitten, and for want of meat gnaw their tongues.

Lastly, Where it is said, that the Lions whelps are scattered abroad.

Observe, *God will not only destroy the persons of wicked men, but their families and posterities.*

They and their whelps shall all be scattered; *he will not leave them so much as a name or remembrance*, (Psal. 36. 6.) *I sought his place* (saith the Prophet) *and he could not be found*; there was no print of him, no man could remember, that there was such a man in the world, unless to curse his memory.

I shall only give one caution respecting this, and so conclude the point. That which is here affirmed in the general by *Eliphaz*, concerning the destruction of wicked men, Lions and fierce Lions, is not to be taken as a truth in the universal experience of it; we are not to understand it thus, as if all persons, all Lion-like persons at all times perish, and are destroyed, and scattered abroad: But *Eliphaz* speaks of what is usually done, or he speaks of what God can easily do at any time, and of what God may justly do at all times. Lions, fierce Lions, Tyrants, Oppressors, he both may and can scatter when he pleaseth. Yet we find, that God hath permitted some Lions to live fully, and to die quietly; they spend all their dayes in roaring and rending, in tearing and devouring, and yet themselves are not devoured: God often suspends this justice, but it is for weighty reasons; for, in a word,

First, If God should destroy all Lion-like men, the joynts of the world would be unlooosed, and the bands of humane society broken asunder. God forbad the children of *Israel* to destroy all the *Canaanites*, least the beasts of the field should multiply, *&c.*

Secondly, If God should hunt all these Lions out of the world, his own people would live by sense, rather then by faith; and seem to be terrified by the visible actings of wrath, rather then allured by the promises of mercy, or tenders of free-grace.

Thirdly, He defers them untill they have sucked blood enough, rent enough, and done evil enough, even fill'd up the measure of their sin, and fulfill'd his righteous purpose, by their unrighteousness. As these Lions fill their own bellies, so they fulfil Gods counsells; therefore he lets them alone, that they may do his work, though they little think of it, and less intend it.

Lastly, *Eliphaz* speaks of what God did frequently, in those times of the world, wherein he lived; for then God dealt more by outward judgments, then in these Gospel-times. *As his mercies are now more spiritual, so usually are his judgments.*

VERS. 12, 13.

Now a thing was secretly brought unto me, and mine ear received a little thereof.
In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men.

THis part of the Chapter, from the twelfth Verse unto the end, containeth the third Argument, by which *Eliphaz* labours to convince and reprove *Job* of his impatient complainings. In the whole context we may observe two general parts.

1. The Argument it self by which he reproves him.
2. The confirmation or the proof of that Argument.

The matter of the Argument is contained in the seventeenth Verse. *Shall mortal man be more just then God? shall a man be more pure then his Maker?* The Argument may be formed thus.

That man carrieth himself rashly and sinfully, who would seem more just and pure then God his Maker.
But thou Job *carriest thy self as if thou wert more just then God thy Maker.*
Therefore thou carriest thy self very sinfully and rashly.

He confirms this Argument two wayes.

First, By an Argument taken from divine authority.

Secondly, By an Argument taken from reason.

His Argument taken from Divine authority lies in the former five Verses of this context, (*sc.* 12, 13, 14, 15, & 16.) I may give it thus.

That is to be received as a truth, which God from heaven immediately declareth to his servant in a vision.
But God hath declared and revealed this to me in a vision, that he who contends with God carries himself very sinfully.
Therefore it is to be received as a truth.

The first part of the Argument is unquestionable; that it is a truth which God revealeth from Heaven in a Vision. And that God had revealed this unto *Eliphaz* from Heaven in a Vision, he himself at large declareth in those five Verses, describing both the manner how, and the time when this truth was revealed to him.

His second Argument from reason is grounded upon the common logical rule, of arguing from the greater to the less, (Vers. 18, 19, 20, 21.) The sum of it may be thus conceived.

That which would be folly and sinful boldneß in Angels, if they should aspire and take upon them to do, is much more sinful in a mortal man.
But if Angels should go about to justifie themselves, or stand upon termes with God, it would be sin and folly in them.
Therefore it is much more sin and folly in mortal man, to justifie himself before God, &c.

The Major, or the first proposition, is undeniable. The second proposition is proved and illustrated to the end of the Chapter. Wherein is shewed in what condition man now standeth: how weak and how poor a thing a man is, compared unto an Angel; therefore if it would be sin and folly in Angels to compare with God, it must much more be sin and folly in man. So we see how *Eliphaz* confirms the major proposition of the first Syllogism.

The second proposition or assumption which he infers upon *Job*, *But thou* Job *carriest thy self so as if thou wert more just then God:* he proves by that sad expostulation Chap. 3. And takes that for granted. We may form it thus,

He that complaineth of God, as if he had done him wrong, makes himself more just then God.
But thou Job, *hast made such a complaint,* Chap. 3. *as if God had done thee wrong in afflicting thee, or in giving and in continuing thy life under such afflictions.*
Therefore, thou seemest to make thy self more just then God, or to say that God hath dealt unjustly or injuriously with thee.

This I take to be the Logick of the remaining part of this Chapter.

And having cleared his manner of reasoning in general, I shall descend to open particulars.

Now a thing was secretly brought unto me, and mine ear received a little thereof.

I must yet resolve a question before I explain the tearms; the question is this. Whether this were a true vision sent from God, or whether it were only feigned by *Eliphaz*, thereby to gain authority to what he spake?

There are many Expositors of great name, who are very confident that this vision was a fiction or holy fraud; a vision of *Eliphaz* his own brain, not a vision from Heaven. Some have gone further, maintaining that it was a vision sent from Hell, an illusion of the Devil, thereby to strengthen the hands of *Eliphaz*, in vexing and troubling *Job*.

It cannot be denied, but that many have pretended visions from God, when they have received none; they have belyed the Almighty with their Dreams and Revelations, when they have seen nothing. Thus (1 *Kings* 22. 11.) *Zedekiah* the false Prophet takes upon him to have had a vision from God, by which he would confirm *Ahab* in his counsel to go up to *Ramoth Gilead*. *And* Zedekiah *the son of* Chenaanah *made him horns of iron, and he said, thus saith the Lord, with these shalt thou push the* Syrians *till thou hast consumed them.* And in the Prophesie of *Jeremiah* you have *Hananiah* the false Prophet, not only speaking the language, but dressing himself in all the formalities of a vision; he comes forth with a yoke upon his neck, and breaks it before the people, and telleth them, thus will God break the yoke of your captivity, and at such a time.

The true Prophets complain often of the false, for crying up their deceivings under the warrant of visions and dreams, when all was but a dream indeed, a meer phancy or studied imposture to mislead the people, and gain credit to their lies. While a man hath nothing but ordinary humane authority for things extraordinary, he is easily rejected.

Man is subject to error, he may deceive, and be deceived; therefore when they would put *a new nothing* upon the world, as an infallible truth, and have it swallowed without chewing, received without disputing, then usually they pretended that it was (*quid Divinum*) a doctrine or message received immediately from God. And it is well observed, that this course of pretending to Divine revelation, was very frequent amongst the Heathen; when their Wise men had a mind to fasten some unwonted opinion upon the vulgar. Among the *Romans, Numa* (to the intent they might be received with greater authority) stampt his laws

laws with a kind of divinity, and told the people that he had received them from the goddess *Ægeria*: As if he had said, these laws are not such as I have coyned and fashioned by my own policy, drawn up or enacted by my own power, I had them from the goddess. So *Plato* informs us of another law-maker (*Minos* the *Cretian*) that he used to enter into Caves and solitary places, where (he told the people) he received laws and immediate dictates from *Jupiter* their god, to govern them by. This drew a great estimation and reverence upon him. *Valerius Maximus*, and *Herodotus* tell us of those other law-makers, *Licurgus* and *Zaleucus*, using the like State-stratagems to over-rule the people. *Licurgus* said, he received his laws from *Apollo*: *Zaleucus* and *Pisistratus* avouch *Minerva* for the Directress or Doctress of *Theirs*. So that both among the people of God, and among Heathens, it hath been very frequent to pretend Divine authority; that they might with the more estimation put off either such points of doctrine or such rules of policy, as themselves had invented.

Valer. lib. 1.
Herod. lib. 1.

Rem in dubio relinquimus; videtur tamen potius vera fuisse visio, etsi ea abutatur. Merc.

For this of *Eliphaz*, howsoever some charge him directly, and others leave the matter in doubt, only turning the scale with a probability [it seemeth rather that it was a true vision.] Yet I shall adventure to resolve directly, that his was a true vision, as well as a vision of truth sent from God. And the reasons which sway with me, are these three.

First, If we consider the manner of this vision. The description here made, holds exact proportion with those, of which there is no question but they were the Oracles of Heaven. *When a thing is done as God doth it, it is some argument that God hath done it.* I grant, this reason is not demonstrative or infallible, because Satan and our own hearts are very apt to make imitations of holy things, for sinful ends. Satan can transform himself into an Angel of light, and the heart can disguise or shape its own dark conceptions, by the light of divine revelations.

Take then a second reason, *Eliphaz* was a godly man. 'Tis granted on all hands, that *Eliphaz* and his friends were right in their affections, though they failed in this action. God was angry with them indeed, and told them in the close of this dispute (Chap. 42. 7.) *That they had not spoken of him the thing that was right, as* Job *his servant had*; yet *he bids* Job *pray and offer sacrifice for them*; which he would not have done, unless they had been upon good terms with him in general, and in a present capacity for mercy and acceptance. Now it being supposed that *Eliphaz* was a godly man, it is a sin not to be supposed of him, that he would make boast of a false revelation, and with such deliberate gravity put a lye upon God.

Thirdly, The matter which he professes to have received in this vision, is a great and a holy truth of God. Man never belyes God to confirm the truth of God. When any boast vainly of revelations, it is to confirm their own phancies and delusions. 'Tis rare when men are so zealous for truth, as to improve all that God hath spoken, in the maintenance of it: I have not read of any that have fained a word from God, to maintain that which is really the Word of God. We find all along in Scripture, that when visions from God were falsly pretended, they ever tended to secure the heart in false opinions, or unwarrantable practises.

The Apostle *Paul* found many who falsified the stamp of the Spirit, and forged his hand and seal to establish error, (2 *Thes.* 2. 2.) *I beseech you brethren that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled either by spirit, or by word, or by letter, as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.* That gross error was scattered in the Church of *Thessalonica*, that the day of Christ was at hand, that in those beginnings of the Gospel, there should be an end of all things. To confirm this, false teachers boasted the spirit, an immediate revelation from God: or a word immediately from the mouth, or a letter under the hand of *Paul*. How active is error to find patronage? It cares not whom it belyes, so it self may pass for truth. Thousands love errors, but none will own them by that name: and therefore (because children bear their fathers name) they would father them upon the God of truth. *Montanus* the Heretick, said he had the Holy Ghost his *Paraclete*, dictating those erroneous doctrines to him, beside his Propheteses, *Prisca* and *Maximilla*. *Mahomet*, that *Grand hellish Impostor*, often pretended visions from Heaven. And the story assures us that he cunningly made use of the disease of his body, to perswade his disciples of the soundness of his doctrine. For being afflicted with *the falling sickness*, when at any time a fit was upon him, he made the people believe that he was in an extasie or ravishment of spirit, at the appearance of the Angel *Gabriel*, who revealed many mysteries to him. And having by long use and familiarity taught a Pigeon to feed at his ear, he by art prevailed with the people, to feed at his poysonous mouth: as if his words had been the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, who (as he affirmed) came then to him, in the form of a Dove, and taught him those secrets.

Ifs. Eccles. 5. c. 14. 16.

So then, this of *Eliphaz* was a true vision, because it was the confirmation of a truth. Invented visions are in use only to gain credit to the inventions of man, or the visions of the Devil. Now for the matter and words themselves.

Now a thing was secretly brought unto me.

We translate [thing,] the Hebrew is [*word*,] *A word was secretly brought unto me*; but it is usual both in Hebrew and Greek to call *A thing*, *A word*. *Luke* 2. 15. The Shepherds said, *Let us go to* Bethlem *to see this thing*, the Greek is, *To see this word which is done*. Though here, it is proper enough, to say, *A word was brought unto me*.

דָּבָר
Τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο τὸ γε-γονός.
Factum esse verbum alicui nihil aliud significat quam factum esse revelationem in aliquo, & Deum cognitione futurorum, instar luminis mentem illustrasse, Cyril. in 1 c. Hos. v. 1.
נגב

Now a thing, or a word, was brought unto me, it was brought unto me secretly. The language of the Prophets was, *The word of the Lord came unto me*. There are two words in our translation, (*secretly brought*) but the Hebrew is one; and that word signifies to steal, or to do a thing by stealth; so it may be translated, *A thing was brought unto me by stealth, or was stole into me*: Mr. *Broughton* near this, *A speech came by stealth upon me*: We translate fully to the sence, *A thing was secretly brought to me*, as if it were whispered into the ear, and sent in closely to the spirit. And it is thus expressed, by way of opposition to another way, in which God reveals his mind unto his people. He sometimes comes openly and speaks aloud, that all may take notice, or because all ought, *Isa.* 58. 1. *Cry aloud, lift up thy voice like a trumpet*. Things are brought openly to the people, secretly to the Prophets: what the Lord speaks in the ear, or to the heart of a Prophet, that he by the Prophet speaks on the house top to all his people. *A thing was secretly brought, or a thing was whispered unto Eliphaz*. But he speaks it aloud to *Job*. This word, or this thing, is said to be stoln into him, or to be brought unto him by stealth, for three reasons, which I shall but name and proceed.

First, A thing done by stealth, is done suddenly. The theif hastens to do mischief, he makes no delayes. Then secondly, a thing done by stealth, is done secretly; a thief comes closely in the dark; stealth is committed with greatest privacie; and to say, a thing is brought by stealth, is as much as to say, a thing is brought privately. Thirdly, A thing done by stealth, is done unexpectedly. A man seldom looks for the thief, he is upon him in the way, upon him in his house, before he is aware. A thief is usually as unexpected, as he is an unwelcome guest. So this word came, or was brought in by stealth, because it came suddenly, it came silently, and it came unexpectedly to *Eliphaz*. And in these three respects, Christ himself is said to come as a thief; *Behold, I come as thief in the night*. As the word of Christ comes to many of his people now, so the person of Christ will come at last unto all, *he will come by stealth, or as a thief*, suddenly, secretly, unexpectedly, when the world shall little dream of him, and his Church scarce be awake for him. Hence note,

Rev. 16. 15.

First, That, *Divine Truths are infused into us, not born in us, or born with us.*

Every thing which is of heaven, cometh unto us from heaven; it is either stoln in secretly, or thundred in loudly. Sometimes the Prophets and Ministers of Christ, speaking aloud, carry truth into the soul; sometimes God whispers it into the Soul; one way or other, truth must be brought in, for it grows not in us. Our hearts by nature are not only like white paper, having no inscription, not a letter of Gods will written in them, but they are like paper blotted and blurred, written all over with the corrupt principles and positions of our own wills. God by his

Spirit

Spirit firſt croſſes or wipes out thoſe, and then writes down his own golden rules of holy truth and heavenly wiſdom. This he doth, firſt, in converſion from ſin to grace and holineſs, and afterward in all the increaſes of grace, and growths of holineſs. *There is not a ſyllable of the Law of God in any mans heart, till the finger of God writes it there; I will put my law in their mind, and write it in their hearts*, which is an alluſion unto the two Tables of the Law. They were firſt written by the finger of God, and then put into the Ark: So God firſt writes the Law in our hearts, and then puts it into our minds; he layes it up in the Ark of our underſtanding and memory.

Secondly, Obſerve, That, *God ſteals truths into the hearts of his people unawares.*

As they often expect and wait long for knowledge, ſo they ſometime know before they expect. A truth either in whole or part, in the matter or clearer light of it, comes like a thief into the heart, ſuddenly, ſecretly, unlooked for; in which caſe it is ever true, that *truth unexpected, is doubly welcomed.* The way of the Spirit of God is alwayes undiſcernable to fleſh and blood. The ſoul receives a thing, and the man knows not how; he can ſcarce (poſſibly not at all) tell where, by whom, or which way it came to him; it was brought, ſecretly brought; and with a moſt bleſſed, gracious ſlight of hand, conveyed into his heart. Yet ſometime truth enters in *State*, and may be ſaid to make its paſſage viſibly into the heart of a man. The Word comes, not as a company of thieves, but as a band of Souldiers, with weapons drawn, and terrible ſhouts, tearing open the ſoul, and breaking open the iron gate of the heart, locked and barred with unbelief, to ſecure that curſed crew of luſts garriſon'd within it. *The weapons of our warfare* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *are mighty through God*, 2 Cor. 10. 4. The word is mighty, wonderful in ſtrength, it comes upon the ſoul as an armed man, to ſpoil it of all ſinful pleaſures, yea, of the very life of ſin. Sometimes the Lord proclaims war, as by a Herald of Arms, againſt a man, and openly prepares for his ſiege and battery. He ſurprizes another, and ſteals him into a happy captivity to himſelf. *A thing was ſecretly brought unto me.*

And mine ear received a little thereof.

שמץ *Particula, pars, modicum.*

Mine ear caught ſomewhat of it; ſo Mr. *Broughton*. The word ſignifies a part or a portion. *Mine ear received a little*; yet we are not to underſtand this, as if *Eliphaz* had taken in only ſome fragments or imperfect notes of what God delivered, or had heard to the halves. For doubtleſs *Eliphaz* received all that was brought, he turned nothing back; he ſaid not, a little is enough, I need not the reſt: that he received but a little, was not from neglect of the reſt, but from inability to receive more, or to receive it more perfectly. And though he had not all of every part, yet he had a part of all; it was not a little of this, and none of that: little reſpects ſomewhat of every truth, not ſome one truth. He received, though not all, yet a perfect model of all that was brought.

Further, This ſpeech may have reference unto our preſent condition; concerning which the Apoſtle ſaith (1 *Cor.* 13.) *We know but in part*; Now when he ſaith, *we know but in part.* it is not as if we had but a part of Gods will made known unto us. The word of God and the works of God are perfect. And the Apoſtle aſſures the Church of *Epheſus*, that *he had not ſhunned to declare unto them the whole counſel of God*, Acts 20. 27. The whole (which concerns man) is declared, but we know that whole but in part. Such is our weakneſs and infirmity, that we cannot take in All of All; no, nor any part of all, in the full latitude and extent of it: Thus *we know but in part.* So ſaith *Eliphaz*, when this was brought to me, mine ear received but little of it; my narrow ear could drink in but ſome drops of that Ocean, which was poured out upon me. All that man apprehends, is but little, in reſpect of what God offers now, or of what hereafter he ſhall apprehend. *Eliphaz* ſpeaks modeſtly and humbly of himſelf; God brought a thing unto me, and I am ſuch a poor ſtreightned veſſel, that I could receive but a little of it; yet ſomewhat I caught hold of, which I am about to make known unto thee. We may note from this,

Modeſtè loquitur, quaſi non plenè acceperit, quod ſciendum eſſet de hâc re. Quod optimum eſt & eximium comprehendere non poteſt mortalis homo. Merc.

First, *Holy truths are very pleaſant to the ear of a holy perſon.*

A thing was brought unto me, and mine ear caught a little of it. As when meats pleaſant to the taſte, are brought to a man, he puts forth his hand, and takes them; or when pleaſant muſick ſounds, the ear catches it, or we drink it in greedily at the ear; ſo when holy truths are revealed, a holy heart catches them: The ear is not more affected with pleaſant muſick, or the palat with pleaſant meats, then the underſtanding ſpiritualized, is affected with ſpiritual truths. The ear of a holy man takes in holy things with pleaſure, and therefore he is ſaid to catch them, or drink them in, as with much deſire and raviſhing delight: *David* found more ſweetneſs in the truths of God, *then in the honey or honey-comb.* The ſpirit of a regenerate man doth ſo much catch *heavenly doctrine*, that in the hebrew, the word which ſignifies ſuch *doctrine*, ſignifies alſo *catching* or *receiving*; and a word from the ſame root, ſignifies the *palat of the mouth*; which may hint us thus much, That *heavenly doctrine pleaſes the palat or taſte of a heavenly mind:* And the reaſon of it, is, becauſe there is a ſuitableneſs in the heart of every godly man, with every truth of God. All delight ariſes from proportion and ſuitableneſs between the object and the organ, in ſenſitives; between the object and the underſtanding, will, affections, in ſpirituals: That which makes delight to the eye, is the ſuitableneſs of *viſibles* to the eye; and that which makes delight to the taſte, is the ſuitableneſs of *edibles* to the palat; and ſo that which makes delight to the ſoul, is the ſuitableneſs of *intelligibles* to the underſtanding. Hence the reaſon is clear, why wicked men will not receive the things of God, but inſtead of catching them, catch at them, ſnarl and murmure at them, ſpeak, yea, rail and fight againſt them; their hearts are unſuitable to thoſe truths, therefore they diſtaſte them, therefore they reliſh them no more then the white of an egg, or a dry ſtick: nay, not only have they no pleaſant taſte, but they have a bitter taſte in their mouths; they are as gall and wormwood to them, they are a vexation and torment to them. The truth which the two Witneſſes publiſh, torments them that dwell on the earth; and then no marvel, if inſtead of catching thoſe truths to embrace them, they catch the witneſſes and kill them.

Vide Buxt. Lex. *in verbo* לקח

Rev. 11.

Secondly, obſerve, That, *The ear and heart of man in this ſtate of corruption, are veſſels too narrow, to take in, or hold all the truths of God.*

I have many things to ſay (ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples) *but ye cannot bear them now*, John 16. 12. Nor could they ever fully bear ſo much as Chriſt had to ſay. *We have line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little*, Iſa. 28. 10. becauſe it is but here and there a little, ſome few lines or precepts which we are able to learn and digeſt into our ſpirits. Whole ſhowers of divine truths are often rained upon us (*Heb.* 6.) yet we drink in but a drop or two; we ſwim, as it were, in a whole ocean, a ſea of holy revelations, but we are narrow-neck'd bottles, and how little is it which bubbleth in! *Mine ear received a little thereof.* The truth of God is like God himſelf, infinite: *Truth is nothing elſe but the mind of God*, and that is infinite; therefore we, who are not only finite, but ſtreightned, cannot poſſibly comprehend it.

Thirdly, *Mine ear received a little thereof*: It was but a little he received, yet he received a little; all did not fall beſide his ear, all did not ſlip away, he caught ſomewhat: Hence note,

That, *The ear and heart of a godly man ever receive ſomewhat, when the truths of God are revealed.*

I cannot get in all, my heart will not receive all, my memory will not retain all; but a little it will hold, ſomewhat it takes in at every Sermon, and from every viſion of God. (Sermons are the viſions of God, and ſomewhat of Gods mind is brought to you in every holy Sermon.) Natural men are like ſieves, like veſſels without a bottom, or full of holes, into which theſe truths being put run out every drop: the beſt in this life, are leaking veſſels, much drops out: *Eliphaz received a little*; how many hear much, and receive nothing! they come empty to the Ordinances, and they return empty; their ears have been filled with a ſound,

but

but their hearts have not caught a syllable, not a word of truth is written in their hearts, not a letter laid up in their minds, and that's the reason, why not a word is to be seen in their lives: How can they hold out the word in a pure conversation, who have not received it into a pure conscience?

In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men.

The former verse shewed us the manner how that thing was brought to *Eliphaz*; *a thing was secretly brought to me*: this shews the time when it was brought; it was (saith he) *in thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men.*

In thoughts from the visions of the night.] Some read it, *in the thoughts which I had, after the visions of the night*; so, *Hos.* 6. 2. *From two nights. Heb.* After two dayes; or, *in thoughts which I had in the visions of the night*; or, *in thoughts of the visions of the night*: the Original bears any of these readings.

Vel post visiones nostis, sicut dicimus à cœna, à prandio; sic Hos. 6.2. *vel in cogitationibus visionum noctis, ut* Mem *Genitivum indicet.* מחשבות לילה שעפים

In thoughts.] The Hebrew word signifies properly *the boughs of a tree*; and so some translate, *In the boughs, sprigs or branches of the visions of the night*; but we render it well, *in the thought*: And thoughts are called *boughs or branches*; First, Because thoughts grow from the mind, sprout and shoot up from the mind, as branches from the stock of a tree: From the root and stock of a mans understanding, a branch of thoughts grows up, sometimes like a tall Cedar of *Libanus*, as high as heaven. Secondly, The boughs and branches of a tree are many, thick, interwoven, and crossing one another; such are the thoughts of a man; he hath many, even multitudes of them: *In the multitude of my thoughts*, saith *David*. The mind puts forth many branches and twigs, they sprout and shoot forth every way; thousands of various thoughts are moving, upon various objects, and to various ends; some are earthly, some heavenly. The branches of some minds are but briars and thorns, others bear the *Lilie and the Rose*, their root is in heaven, and they grow heaven-ward. Thirdly, Thoughts are called branches, because the branch or the bough brings forth and bears the fruit; the stock or the body of a tree brings forth fruit at the branches; so all the fruit of our souls is born upon, or from our thoughts: our actions are the fruits of our thinkings. Thoughts are possible actions; look what a man thinketh, that he doth, or would do: And such as our thoughts are, such our actions are, or would be. Thoughts are the first-born, the blossoms and blooms of the soul, the beginnings of our strength, whether for good or evil; therefore the Hebrew word is elegantly translated from a bough or a branch, to a thought.

שיח *Strips, frutex, quia sermo è corde, ut arbor è terra nascitur.* Shin. *Elegans metaphora sumpta à supereminentibus arborum ramusculis (& est primigenia hujus vocis significatio) ad phantasmatum extremitates, ac velut tenuias cogitationum summitates notionem suam extendit.* Bold.

The Hebrew word for speech, prayer and meditation, springs from a root of the same signification; because speech, prayer and meditation spring up from the spirit, as a stalk or branches from the stock of a tree.

There is one thing further to be observed from this word, (for it is a very elegant word, and therefore I spend a little the more time upon it) *In thoughts from the visions of the night*: The word signifies, not only a bough, but the highest bough, the top bough of a tree. A tree hath some under-boughs, and some top-boughs, as the Prophet speaks, (*Isa.* 17. 6.) *Two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough*: it is the same word, which here in the text, we translate *thoughts*; as if *Eliphaz* should say, *In my very uppermost or highest thoughts, in those very top-branches of my highest fancy, which I had from the visions of the night.* The highest, the top branches which grow from the soul of a godly man, are for, or about the highest mercies, top-mercies, for heaven and heavenly things. A wicked mans highest and uppermost thoughts are for the earth; his thoughts for the earth out-grow all his other thoughts: but a godly mans thoughts for heaven and spirituals, out-grow all his other thoughts; his thoughts for heaven, are the highest and uppermost branches of his soul. We have this word used in 1 *Kings* 18. 21. *How long* (saith *Elijah*) *will you halt between two opinions?* That word which we there translate *opinions*, is here translated *thoughts*; hence some render that in the *Kings* thus, *How long do ye halt between two top-thoughts, or high thoughts?* As if this were the thing which *Elijah* reproved in that people, that they had high thoughts both of *God and of Baal*, top-thoughts of both; and they (as it were) set *Baal*, a dumb Idol, as high in their thoughts, estimations and opinions, as the living God. Why do ye halt between two uppermost opinions, highest thoughts, or thoughts of equal height concerning *God* and *Baal?* Your thoughts of your Idol are as high as of God himself. What! will you make an Idol equal with God? An Idol is a base thing, a low thing, a thing below upon the dunghil (therefore called a dunghil-god.) The true God is on high, he is in the highest heavens, he is higher then the heaven of heavens; and do you debase him thus by halting between two thoughts of equal height, concerning him and *Baal? They who set up an Idol, make it equal unto God. All false worship is a setting of our posts by Gods posts, and of our threshold by his threshold*; a making both of equal height and worth.

populum, quod duas eminentias sibi constituerent; Deũ & Baalem quasi æquales, inter quas nulla est comparatio. 2 Cor. 6. 15. Bol.

And to clear it yet further (*Psal.* 119. 113.) the same word is used by *David*, when he professes, *I hate vain thoughts*; or as some read it, *I hate vain things.* He calls Idolatrous thoughts vain thoughts, because they are wavering, inconstant or unsetled thoughts, in further allusion to the boughs of a tree: As the topmost and highest boughs of a tree are shaken with every puff of wind, and waver to and fro with every blast, so are the thoughts of Idolaters: or because (as before) Idolatry sets up *too high thoughts*, adoring an Idol as much, or in competition and rivality with the ever-living God. The higher our thoughts are of God, the more excellent they are; and to have as high thoughts of an Idol, as of the living and true God, are the vainest thoughts of all; those high thoughts are low thoughts, the lowest thoughts, thoughts most hateful. *I hate vain thoughts.*

Quasi dicat Idololatriã odio habui, quæ plura eminentia supremo cultu reveretur, cum sit unum.

From the visions of the night.] As I have opened that word about the thoughts somewhat largely, so this of the visions, requires more enlargement; yet I shall do it as briefly as I may.

Visions were a special way of Divine Revelation: *Heb.* 1. 1. *God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake to our Fathers by the Prophets*, saith the Apostle. God spake at sundry times, and he spake in divers manners. Now amongst those divers manners of speaking, speaking by or in visions was one. The Jewish Doctors observe four degrees of divine revelation. The first they called *Prophecy*, which included vision, and any apparition whereby the will of God was made known. They had a second way of divine revelation, which they called, *The inspiration of the Holy Ghost*, whereby the party was inabled without vision or apparition to prophesie: either as prophecying is taken for the foretelling of things to come, or for the resolving of things in doubt: The Rabbins give us the difference between these two, *prophecy and inspiration*: In *prophecy* (though it was from the Holy Ghost) a man was cast into a trance, or brought into an extasie, his senses being taken away; but speaking by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, was without any such change in, or impressions upon the body: So *David*, and other Pen-men of the Scriptures, wrote by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, yet without visible apparitions to them, or visible change upon them. Thirdly, God revealed himself by *Urim and Thummim*, which was an answer given by the *Ephod*, or by the stones that were on the brest-plate of the *High Priest*. These three wayes of *divine revelation* (as they observe) ceased in the *second Temple*. The Jewish Writers having this tradition, that after the latter Prophets, *Haggai*, *Zechariah* and *Malachy*, *the Holy Ghost departed from* Israel; meaning, the Holy Ghost (not in the ordinary work of sanctification, but) in those extraordinary wayes of Prophesie, Inspiration, and of *Urim* and *Thummim*, went up and departed from them. There was yet a fourth way of divine revelation, which they call *Bathcol*, the daughter of a voice, or eccho, declaring the will of God immediately from heaven; such some conceive to be, the voice heard from heaven, *Mat.* 3. 17. proclaiming the testimony of God concerning Christ; *A voice was heard from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*

πολυμέρως καὶ πολυτρόπως.

Paulus Fagius, in Ex. 28. *Goodw. Heb. Antiq.*

But to pass from these traditions of the *Jews*, we shall give you the doctrine of divine revelation more distinctly from the Scriptures. We find (*Numb.* 12. 6, 7, 8.) three distinct wayes, in which the Lord revealed himself of old unto his people: *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord*

Quousque è judicatis inter duas prominentias. Merc. *Quasi* Elias *vel jungeret*

Lord will make my self known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream; my servant Moses *is not so, who is faithful in all mine house, with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.* This is an illustrious Text, describing three distinct wayes or degrees of holy revelation. First, By Vision, which we have here in *Job.* Secondly, By a *Dream*, which was, when God presented somewhat to them sleeping: This kind of revelation God vouchsafed, not only to his own people and Prophets, but to Heathens also, and strangers from his Covenant. *Pharaoh* had a revelation by a dream (*Gen.* 41.) concerning the seven years of famine; and *Nebuchadnezzar* had a wonderful revelation by a dream (*Dan.* 2.) concerning the state of the four Monarchies. The wise men of the East were warned in a dream, to return into their Countrey another way, *Mat.* 2. But with the Saints, these revelations by dreams, were very frequent; *Jacob* (Gen. 28.) in a dream, as he slept upon a stone, *saw a ladder*, &c. *Joseph*, *Jacob*'s son, had so many dreams, that his brethren jeered him with it, and called him the *Captain-dreamer, the dreamer, a master of dreams*, Gen. 37. 19. *Joseph* the husband of *Mary*, was twice warned in a dream; first, that he should not forsake his wife, *Mat.* 1. and then, that he should go into *Egypt*, Mat. 3. Many other the like revelations by dreams, might be instanced in; but I forbear. There is a third way spoken of in this Text, and that is, *speaking mouth to mouth*; *my servant* Moses *is not so, with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently.* This is a more eminent way of heavenly manifestations then the former: *Moses* had a priviledge above the ordinary Prophets. For, to *speak mouth to mouth*, is expounded by (*apparently*) *I will speak plainly*, or *apparently*, not in a vision or in a dream. When a man speaks mouth to mouth to his friend, or (as the Scripture phrases our communion with God in heaven) *face to face*; this is opposed to a more remote or obscure communion. As our seeing God face to face in heaven, so his speaking to us mouth to mouth on earth, notes the cleerest and fullest revelation; it is to give us his mind nakedly, without any figure or shadow; or (as Christ is said once in the Gospel) to *speak plainly, and not in parables.* And these speakings *mouth to mouth*, were of two sorts; either immediate, as himself did unto *Moses*, or as to others, by the ministry of Angels: God often employed Angels in this service, to declare his mind, and bring messages to his people: This was a kind of speaking *mouth to mouth*; but *Moses* had an honour beyond this, *with him will I speak mouth to mouth*, I by my self, not I by a created Angel.

בעל חזון רמות

Visions (to keep the term in hand) were (you see) a principal means, by which God broke his mind, and unlock'd the secrets of his counsels. *If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make my self known unto him in a vision.* And to clear this point about visions, yet more fully; we may distinguish of divers sorts of visions. First, A vision is sometime put for an ordinary dispensation of the will of God to his Prophets or Ministers, who as from God, dispense it to his people; (*Prov.* 29. 18.) *Where vision faileth, the people perish*, that is, where there are none to publish and declare the mind of God (no, not in an ordinary way) to a people, that people are in a ready way to perdition. *Without the visions of Grace there is no ordinary way to the visions of Glory.* Secondly, By a vision, we understand *an extraordinary work of God, manifesting his mind to his Prophets, either to assure future successes, or to resolve future Queries.* And these were called *visions*, because by them, things were made so manifest, as if they had been seen before their eyes; and in some of these revelations, a visible representation was made to the eye: visions were often attended with apparitions. In reference to both these sorts of visions, that is appliable, 1 *Sam.* 9. 9. *Before-time in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake; Come let us go to the Seer: for he that is now called a Prophet, was before time called a Seer.* Prophets were called Seers, because in visions, they had either an ocular, or an intellectual sight of the mind of God.

Visio est omnis doctrina divinitùs revelata; quia Deus quibuscunq; visum est revelare, res ipsas quodammodo videndas & spectandas oculis servorum suorum exhibet ad obsignandum earum certitudinem. Jun. *in Isa.* cap. 1.

Secondly, Visions may undergo this division: There was an open vision, and there was a private vision. In 1 *Sam.* 3. 1. we have the ground of the distinction; *In those dayes there was no open vision*: Open is opposed to private or secret; the word imports a vision appearing in publick; and the meaning of the text is this; there were no Prophets sent openly, and (as it were) *in State*, invested with commission, and furnished with messages from heaven unto the people; *there was no open vision*: yet at that time there were private visions, as to *Manoah*, Judg. 13. God revealed himself in those dark times to some of his special servants; and so he hath and will at all times. While he hath a Church upon the earth, he never shuts himself quite in heaven. Open vision may fail, but all visions shall not fail. So open profession may fail in the reign of Antichrist, in his hour, and in the power of darkness; as it did in the time of *Elijah*; yet all profession of the truth shall never fail: *The Lord hath alwayes his thousands in secret, who never bowed their knee to Baal.* In many places, since Christ came in the flesh, there hath been no open vision, no holding forth of the truth of Christ, and yet even in those places there have been private visions; and a remnant reserved, to whom God hath made known the mysteries of the Kingdom of Christ. *When darkness covers all in appearance, there may be light which appears not; and candles under a bushel, when there are none in the candlesticks.* A *Goshen* hath light, while *Egypt* is plagued with darkness; and when the Prophets are benighted, it may be day with many of the people.

Fuerùt quidem singulares & privatæ visiones cum piis communicatæ, ut cum Manoah, *Jud.* 13. *Sed publicè Prophetarum omne munus jacebat.* Jun. *in loc.*

Thirdly, Some visions were without any trance or ravishment (*Gen.* 15. 1.) *The word of God came in a vision to Abraham*, speaking to his ear, and bidding him look up to heaven with his eyes, *ver.* 5. But often we find, that visions were accompanied with trances: 'Twas so with *Balaam* the false Prophet (*Numb.* 24. 16.) *He hath said, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open:* And it was so with some of the true Prophets; *Daniel* saw a vision, and when he heard the voice, *Then* (saith he) *was I in a deep sleep upon my face*, (Dan. 10. 9.) *Peter* was in a trance, when he had the vision of a sheet let down from heaven, *Acts* 10. And the Apostle saith (2 *Cor.* 12. 1.) *I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord, whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth.* His soul had so much acquaintance with God, that he became a stranger to his own body; his soul was so busied in receiving knowledge from God, that he was fain to put off the knowledge and care of his body wholly to God: What the state of my body was, I know not, *God knoweth.*

Fourthly, Some visions were presented only in bare naked words, others were cloathed in types and figures, in the shapes of beasts of the earth, and fowls of the ayr, of trees and stones, &c. As to *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* in their Prophesies, and to *John*, in the book of *Revelations*. These figures were as an Alphabet of sacred Letters, which put together and spell'd, made the mind of God legible to his servants.

Lastly, The Scripture in hand hints us a fifth difference about visions. *In thoughts from the visions of the night*; that's considerable. There were visions of the day, and visions of the night; thus it is said (*Dan.* 2. 19.) when *Daniel* expounded *Nebuchadnezzar*'s dream, that God made it known to him *in visions of the night*, opposing it to *visions of the day.* Usually the night was the time for visions; hence (*Numb.* 22. 18, 19.) *Balaam* the false Prophet (when the messengers of *Balak* came to him) saith, *tarry this night, and I will shew you in the morning*; he thought to have a vision in the night: So it is observable, that when *Saul* and his servant came to *Samuel* (1 Sam. 9. 19.) to enquire about the stray'd Asses, he tells him, *Ye shall eat bread with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart*: he desired a night, intimating, that God used to reveal secrets unto him in the night.

So much concerning visions, with the kinds and differences of them.

From this Doctrine of visions, we may take notice of our priviledge under the Gospel. The Apostle saith, *at sundry times, and in divers manners, God spake unto our Fathers by the Prophets*; but he hath spoken unto us one way, which exceeds them all, *even by his Son, who is the brightness of his Glory, and the express image of his person*, Heb. 1. 2, 3. We have a vision which out-shines all the visions which ever the Prophets or Patriarchs had from the begin-

ning of the world. Their light was darkness, at most, but a shadow; their visions were obscurities, and their revelations, concealments, compared with ours. Our vision is *Christ, God manifested in the flesh*: *Mine eyes have seen thy salvation*, saith old *Simeon*; he had a vision of Christ in person. The Land of *Judah* was called the *valley of vision*, because God revealed himself to that people more frequently and clearly then all the world beside. Where-ever the Gospel is preached, that Land is a *valley of vision*, a valley of vision far more lightsom and glorious then the Land of *Judah* was; the very darkness of the Gospel is clearer then the lightness of the Law. *That which was more glorious, had no glory, by reason of that glory which excelleth*, 1 Cor. 3. 10. Only remember, that as our priviledge is greater then theirs, so is our duty; *A clearer light should be answered with a holier life*: And we who have more evidence of what God would have done, should make more conscience to do it. Now we are not taught by dreams and visions of the night; *we ought to walk as children of the day*. Not only is darkness gone, but the shadows are fled away. The true light now shines, even he who enlightens every one that comes into the world. We need not dreams or visions now. Why should we call for Candles when the Sun is up? We need not Star-light, when we have Day-light, or when the promised *Day-star is risen in our hearts*, 2 Pet. 1. 19.

Sopor est somnus profundior, somnium est plus quam dormitatio, & inpor plus quã somnus.

Here is one circumstance more in the Text about this vision, very remarkable; it was not only in the night, but in *the night when deep sleep falleth on men*; or, *on sorrowful man*, man wearied with labour and travel. This is a more distinct description of the time then the former. It was in the night, and in that part of the night, *when deep sleep falleth upon men*; that is, in the former part or beginning of the night; for *the first sleep is the deep sleep*: and we use to say, that a man, especially a weary hard-wrought man, is in a *dead sleep*, when he is in his *first sleep*. The word signifies an extraordinary sleep. It is used (*Gen.* 2. 21.) where it is said, that *God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam*, when he took out his rib, and formed the woman. The Seventy translate it, *Extasie*. Some compare it to a *Lethargy*; a man in a *Lethargie* can hardly be awakened. Such a sleep as *Saul* was in, 1 *Sam.* 26. 12. when *David* came into the Trench, and took away the Spear. and the Cruse of water from his bolster. Such a one as *Jonas* was in, while the Ship was almost sunk with the tempest, *Jonah* 1. 5. In both places we have this original word. At the time when such sleep falls on wearied man, *Eliphaz* had this vision. And he speaks very elegantly, *that this deep sleep falleth on men*; because such sleep seems to oppress the spirits, as a heavy weight the body; it falls as heavy as Lead upon all a mans senses, and overcomes them: we say ordinarily, *a man falls asleep*; and it is true of sleep, that it falls upon man, and falls with such a weight, that a man is not able to stand under it. We say also, a man is heavy to sleep; for sleep, like a heavy thing, comes down upon him, and then down comes he. Heathen Poets tell us, that at this time they had visions, or delusions rather. *Satan imitates God in what he can, that he may deceive with better success.*

תּוּרְדֵמָה *Significat gravem somnum, imo plus quam somnum profundum, somnum & quasi lethargum.* ἔκστασιν. *Tempus erat quo prima quies mortalibus ægris incipit, & dono Divum gratissima serpit.* *In somno ecce ante oculos mœstissimus Hector visus adesse mihi.* Virg. 2 Æneid.

We may observe from hence, *Seeing* Eliphaz *had this vision when deep sleep falleth upon men*;

First, That, *The power of Gods Spirit works through all natural impediments.*

When tired Nature is willing to fall, or cannot stay it self from falling into a deep sleep, then God can awaken us with his visions, and make us see, when we cannot hold open our eyes. When God will reveal his mind to the soul, he overcomes the imperfections of the body. Sleepiness is an imperfection; if a man be sleepy, he is unfit to hear: While the eye is thus shut, the ear cannot be open. That sleeper in the *Acts*, fell down dead while *Paul* was preaching. Yet when God comes by his mighty power and Spirit, though a mans ear be shut, he can break through and get into his heart. *The Word hath taken some napping and nodding.* Yea, God breaks in by his almighty power in revelations of his will, not only when men are in a dead natural sleep, but when they are in a sleep of spiritual death. The Word breaks open the bars of the grave, and looses the bands of death. *Joh.* 5. 25.

Secondly, Forasmuch as *Eliphaz* had this vision *when deep sleep falleth on men*, himself being kept awake, or waking. Observe,

That, *When we are most retired from the world, then we are most fit to have, and usually have most communion with God.*

If a man would abridge himself of sleep, and wake with holy thoughts, when deep sleep falleth upon sorrowful labouring men, he might be entertained with visions from God, though not such visions as *Eliphaz* and other Saints have had, yet visions he might have. Every time God communicates himself to the soul, there is a vision of love, or mercy, or power, somewhat of God in his nature, or in his will, is shewed unto us. *David* shews us divine work when we go to rest. The bed is not all for sleep; *Commune with your own heart upon your own bed, and be still*, Psal. 4, Be still or quiet, and then commune with your hearts; and if you will commune with your hearts, God will come and commune with your hearts too; his Spirit will give you a loving visit, and visions of his love. When *Jacob* fearing the rage of his brother, had put himself into the best posture of defence he could, and had sent his wives and children, his servants and his flocks over the River, the text saith, (*Gen.* 32. 24.) *that Jacob was left alone*; which is not to be understood, as if his company had left or deserted him: *Jacob's solitariness was not passive, but elective.* He having disposed of all his family, withdrew himself, and stayed alone; and what then? then he had a vision indeed, *then there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day*; he spent not the night in carking and caring what should become of him the morrow; no, he retires to pray for a blessing upon his former cares, and a blessing he obtains. It is observable also concerning *Isaac* (Gen. 24. 36.) that he went out into the fields *to meditate* (or as others read it) *to pray*. Some foolishly gloss upon it, that *Isaac* being delighted in Astronomy, went out to contemplate on the stars. But I believe the walk of *Isaac*'s spirit was above the stars. It is a sweet expression of *Bernard*, If thou wouldst meet Christ in special communion, do thou oftentimes retire thy self; *O chast and lovely soul, dost thou not know thou hast a modest spouse, that will not come to thee in the throng of worldly company and employment. Come my beloved* (saith the Spouse, *Cant.* 7. 11.) *let us go forth into the fields, and lodge in the villages*; let us get from the tumult of the creature. He loves to find his Spouse alone, retired into a Chamber, or into a Closet, or in the Fields and Groves, in the Gardens and shadie Walks, or in thoughts upon thy Bed, having the Curtains drawn, and all the world shut out. Some have visions in the night when deep sleep falleth upon men; but what are their visions? surely they are visions of darkness, not of light, visions of hell, rather then visions of heaven. The Prophet complains of such, *who devise evil upon their beds*; they plot and contrive evil upon their beds, or they have visions of uncleanness, visions of covetousness, visions of oppression, black infernal visions. How much better is it to be blind, then to have such visions? to be asleep, then have such waking thoughts? But to be awake in our beds with thoughts of Christ, is far more sweet then the sweetest sleep. And in the day, could we make more vacations from the world, we should have more business in heaven. Most men are mudding in the earth all day, aud if they wake in the night, earthly care keeps them awake. There are many thousands whom love unto the world keeps awake; but how few are there, whom love to Christ keeps awake?

O sancta anima sola esto, ut soli omnium servet tesipsam, quem ex omnibus tibi eligisti. An nescis te verecundum habere sponsum? &c. Bern.

It was an harsh, and (in one sence) an ignorant speech of a wise man amongst the Heathen, who said, *There is no man who may not more holily be in company, then with himself alone*; and yet there is a truth in it: for if a man be by himself alone, and deal only with his own heart, probably, he might be as profitably with any company, as with himself; one mans heart in it self, is as bad as anothers, and usually it is worst, when it is by it self: *Some, like* Nebuchadnezzar, *being secluded from men, converse only with beasts, these most beastly beasts, lusts in their own bosoms.* But to be alone from men, to converse with God; to be alone from men, to converse with Christ, is infinitely better then the society of men. The reason why many receive but little of Christ, little of heaven, is, because they are so much in the crowd of the world, so long upon the wrack of earthly care, they seldom let their hearts settle. The ballances must stand at an even poize, before you can weigh aright. If you desire to know which bears most weight in your

Nemo est cui non sanctius sit cum quolibet esse quam secum. Sen.

Dan. 4. 3.

Pietas periclitatur in negotiis.

your hearts, Earth or Heaven, Chriſt or the Creature, let your hearts ſtand ſtill. That in the *Pſalm* 4. v. 4. reaches this ſence fully; *Commune with your own hearts upon your bed, and be ſtill.* Our hearts will not be ſpoken with, unleſs we be quiet. And as the Picture-drawer cannot take the features of the face, to the life; ſo neither can we of our hearts, or lives, unleſs we have the patience to ſit for it.

VERS. 14, 15, 16.

Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to ſhake.
Then a Spirit paſſed before my face, the hair of my fleſh ſtood up.
It ſtood ſtill, but I could not diſcern the form thereof; an Image was before mine eyes, there was ſilence, and I heard a voice, ſaying.

WE have already given the Logical dependance of this whole Context, from Verſe 12. unto the end of the Chapter, and therein ſhewed how *Eliphaz* confirms the principal Propoſition (lying in Verſe 17.) *by Divine Authority, A viſion received from Heaven. A thing* (ſaith he) *was ſecretly brought to me, and my ear received a little thereof, in thoughts from the viſions of the night, when deep ſleep falleth on men.* Thus, the manner of the viſion is deſcribed in general. The effects of the viſion upon *Eliphaz*, and the particular manner how the viſion appeared, are now further deſcribed and ſet forth. This Verſe 14. contains one eminent effect of the viſion, with the conſequents of it; as ſoon (ſaith he) as I was in that heavenly rapture and extaſie, *Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to ſhake.*

It was very uſual, for Prophets and holy men, to be ſurprized with fear, at the appearance of *Jehovah* in his meſſages by Angels, or other Viſions. It is natural unto man to fear at the ſight of an Angel: and it is a received opinion among the Jews, that whether God or an Angel did appear, it was preſent death; which they collect from divers Scriptures (*Exod.* 33.20.) When *Moſes* deſired to ſee the face of God, the Lord anſwered, *there is no man can ſee my face and live.* Thoſe words of *Gideon* import as much (*Judges* 6.22.) *When* Gideon *perceived that he was an Angel of the Lord*, he ſaid, *Alas, O Lord God, for becauſe I have ſeen an Angel of the Lord, face to face*; as if he had ſaid, alas, wo is me, I ſhall certainly dye: and *Judges* 13. 21. *Manoah* concludes it, *we ſhall ſurely dye, becauſe we have ſeen God*, when an Angel appeared to them. Hence alſo *Jacob* (*Gen.* 32. 30.) after his wraſtling with the Angel (which was Chriſt) called the name of the place *Penuel*, which is, *The face of God*, for ſaith he, *I have ſeen God face to face, and my life is preſerved*; as noting, that it was a wonderful priviledge not to dye at ſuch a ſight; the very appearance of God, is death to the creature. And that which *Hagar* ſpake (*Gen.* 16. 13.) may well be interpreted to this ſence; when flying from her Miſtris, God came to her in the wilderneſs, ſhe called the name of the Lord that ſpake unto her, *Thou God ſeeſt me*; the reaſon is added, by way of admiration, for ſhe ſaid, *have I alſo here looked after him that ſeeth me?* Which words may be well tranſlated thus, *Do I live after him* (ſc. God) *that ſeeth me?* for here one act of life is put for the whole, looking or ſeeing, for living; *Have I ſeen, or have I beheld the light, after God hath ſeen me?* that is, *am I alive after God hath ſeen me?* How wonderful!

Ex Hebræo ita reddi poteſt. Etiamne ja video ſeu lucem hanc aſpicio & vivo, poſt videntē me. Pareus.

The effect of this viſion upon *Eliphaz*, was not death, but fear, yet no ordinary fear, but fear which looked almoſt as pale as death; it was fear joyned with trembling, and no ordinary trembling, but ſuch a fit of trembling as ſhook his very bones. We have often ſpoken of fear, both in this and in the former Chapters; but ſuch a fear as met *Eliphaz*, we have not met with before.

Eſt homini naturale conſpecto angelo etiam bono timere. Bold. ex Beda, Origin, & Chryſoſtō.

That before was the grace of fear, ſpiritual fear, but this is the paſſion of fear, natural fear. And it is natural to man (as ſome of the Ancients have obſerved) to fear thus at the appearance of God by Angels. *Fear is cauſed by the apprehenſion of ſome evil imminent or at hand*; that's the definition of natural fear. Now when God manifeſts himſelf, though the greateſt good be at hand, yet the ſoul hath ſome miſgivings and apprehenſions of evil; and hence comes fear: the foundation of this fear is laid in guilt, ſin is in the ſoul, and guilt may be upon the ſoul; thence natural fear works, when God, who is all holy, manifeſts himſelf. And in ſpecial, there is much unbelief remaining in the heart, this fear is ſtrengthened by unbelief, *Wherefore do ye fear*, ſaith Chriſt, *O ye of little faith?* Where there is little faith, there is much fear; and as unbelief prevails, ſo fear prevails too. Thirdly, this fear ariſes from the ſuddenneſs and unexpectedneſs of the thing. God (as you may obſerve in all thoſe revelations of himſelf) comes ſuddenly: that which comes before we ſee it, cauſeth fear when we ſee it: ſudden motions without us, work ſtrange commotions within. And fourthly, the over-powering Majeſty and ſuper-excelling Excellency of God, in any ſuch revelation, cauſeth aſtoniſhment of ſpirit: a little appearance of God, makes the creature diſappear. One drop of the Divine Ocean, ſwallows up all man; and one ray of the Eternal Light, dazles him. From any or all theſe conſiderations, it may be, that fear and trembling took hold upon *Eliphaz* like an armed man, as ſoon as the viſion appeared, *fear met him* (ſaith the Original) or (as the *Septuagint*) *fear came out* and (as it were) ſtood in the way to ſurprize and apprehend him.

קראני
μοι συνήντησε. Sept.
Occurrit, obviam factus eſt mihi.

Neither was this bare fear, but fear heightened, fear accompanyed with trembling. Trembling of the body is a ſymptom or ſign of great fear; when fear works outwardly, manifeſting it ſelf by ſad effects upon the body, then fear is in its reign and greatneſs. There are four ſpecial effects which fear works upon the body, and we have three of them here in this Text. The firſt is, The quaking or the ſhaking of the members of the body; the ſecond is, The ſhaking of the bones; the third is, The ſtanding up of the hair; and the fourth is, the paleneſs and wanneſs of the countenance. All except the laſt appeared upon *Eliphaz*, at the appearance of this viſion.

Firſt, He trembled in this Verſe 14. **Fear came upon me and trembling**: theſe two go often together in Scripture; you ſhall find trembling coupled with godly fear, as well as with natural fear, *Pſal.* 2. 11. *Serve the Lord with fear* (with reverential, filial fear) *and rejoyce before him with trembling*; that is, let your fear be an exceeding great fear, even ſuch, as fills you with an awful trembling at the preſence of the Lord. The Apoſtle *Paul* (*Phil.* 2. 12.) puts them together again; *work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling.*

The ſecond effect is ſhaking of the bones, **It made all my bones to ſhake**; as if he had ſaid, this fear ſtayed not in my fleſh, but deſcended, and entred into my bones, I was deeply affected with it. We tranſlate, *Which made all my bones to ſhake*; the word in the Hebrew is, it made *the multitude of my bones*, or, *my bones, how many ſoever they are, to ſhake.* The Hebrews have this rule, that the major part is uſually taken for the whole, therefore the multitude of his bones, or many of his bones, is well tranſlated, *all his bones.* And the Verb which we render *ſhake*, is of the ſame root with fear, *fear came upon me*; ſo that according to the letter we may read it thus, *Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to fear.* A bone is in it ſelf ſenſeleſs, and therefore fearleſs; but to ſhew how extream and deep this fear was, he ſaith, it made fear enter into that which is without fear, and hath of it ſelf no feeling; it made my very bones to fear, as well as my heart to fear, or my fleſh to tremble. *Habakkuk* in the third of his Propheſie, being before God in his prayer-viſions, deſcribes the rapture of his ſpirit, by this and other ſymptoms upon his body, *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entred into my bones*, v. 16.

Quaſi dicat tremor non fuit ſuperficialis, ſed vehemens & intimus, qui etiam oſſa concuterit. Aquin. *Gelidus[que] per ima cucurrit Oſſa tremor.* Virg. 2. *Æneid.*

The third effect follows; **Then a ſpirit paſs'd before my face, and the hair of my head ſtood up.** *A Spirit ruſh'd upon me*, ſo the *Seventy*. Some tranſlate it, *a wind paſs'd before me*; a gale or breath of wind, as (*1 Kings* 19. 11.) when God appeared to *Elijah*, it is ſaid, firſt there came *a mighty wind, which rent the mountains, and brake the rocks*; and ſome conceive that a wind paſſed before *Eliphaz*; but the context will not bear it; thoſe words which follow, are not compatible with a wind; v. 16. *it ſtood before me, it ſtood ſtill*; this cannot be underſtood of the wind, for wind is alwayes in motion: and then it is ſaid, *I had an Image before my face*; now there is no form or image of the

wind; the wind hath no shape or likeness, therefore it was a Spirit or Angel, not an Aerial wind. And if you say, how hath a Spirit a form or an image, or how can that be seen? I answer, it was not a Spirit abstracted and naked in it self, but a Spirit joyned with a form and shape, as is generally agreed: so Angels or Spirits did usually appear to the Ancients, taking a body or some form upon them: and those apparitions, when a body was assumed, were called Spirits (*Luke* 24. 37.) it is said, that the Disciples were afraid at the appearing of Christ, *thinking they had seen a spirit*: the Apostles were not so absurd, as to believe, that a Spirit in it self, a Spirit abstracted, could be seen; but they call'd it a Spirit, because they thought it only the representation of Christs body, and not the true body: and therefore though an outward shape appeared, they call'd it a Spirit. So here, *a spirit pass'd before me*, which yet might have some outward shape, in which it was clothed to the eye.

הלם *Non significat proprie motum progressivum, qualis est animalium, sed motum levem & fluxum, qualis est cœlorum vel venti vel crescentis arboris. Numina venientia ad nos in homines &c. si transformant; Ex oculis autem notari possint, cum continuo obnutu intueantur & palpebras nunquam concludant. Et magis ex incessu, qui non ex dimotione pedum neq; transpositione existit. Sed quodam impetu aerio & vi expedita, findentium magis auras quam transeuntium. Quamobrem tatuas quoque Deorum Egyptii ponunt, conjungentes illis pedes & quasi uniextes. Heliodor. in Æthiopicis, l. 3. pedes vestis defluxit ad imos. Et vera incessu patuit Dea. Virg. l. 1. Æneiad. de Venere.*

A spirit pass'd before me] forward, backward, up and down, which is opposed to the words in the 16 Verse, *it stood still*: here it was transient or in motion. The word used for *passing*, signifies rather such a motion as is of the Heavens, or of the winds, then that which is properly progressive, or the motion of the living creatures. And thence some observe, that the motion of Spirits clothed with bodies in their apparitions, is not like the motion of men, who move, lifting up their feet one after another; but it is a passing as a ship moveth with a gale of wind, rather a gliding, then a going: Among the Heathen, this was made the chief difference, to distinguish a *Numen*, or Spirit coming in any shape, from a natural body: The steadiness of their eyes was one, the not transposing their feet was another, and a clearer evidence.

This Spirit passing thus before him, produces the third effect;

The hair of my head stood up.] Shaking of the bones went before, and now standing up of the hair. *A spirit pass'd before me, and the hair of my head stood up.* The Original is, *the hair of my flesh*, or the hair of my body; flesh is put for the body, as in *Gen.* 2. 24. *They two shall be one flesh*, that is (as it were) one body, speaking of man and wife. And *Psal.* 119. 120. *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee*, saith *David*, it is the same word. As if *Eliphaz* had said, I am so much affected with thoughts of God, that the very hair of my flesh (as in extraordinary fear it useth to do) stood up. The natural reason, why the hair stands up in time of fear, is this; when sudden fear falleth upon us, the blood goes, or hastens rather to the heart, and so the outward members wax cold: and the skin, in which the hair is rooted, is prest more together, which causeth the hair to stand up, though of it self it be a weak and unstable excrement.

So we see the general effect of the vision, which was fear, and those three concomitants or symptoms of fear, The trembling of his flesh, The shaking of his bones, And the standing up of the hair of his flesh. From all, take these Observations.

First, Forasmuch as *Eliphaz* falleth into such a fit of fear and amazement, at this manifestation of God to him; we learn,

That, *man is not able to bear the presence of God.*

Weak and frail man falls before the greatness, power and majesty of God: Dust and ashes crumbleth away, if the glory of the great God do but shine forth, even in those lesser manifestations of himself. Hence it was, that *Job* seems to capitulate with God, that he would speak with him, upon two Articles or conditions granted, *Chap.* 13. 21, 22. First, *Withdraw thy hand far from me*: Secondly, *Let not thy dread make me afraid: Then call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me.* As if he had said, so dreadful is thy presence, that unless thou be pleased to sweeten it to me, fear will presently seize upon me, and disable me to speak. *Moses* who was *a favorite of Heaven*, and one who shortly after had communion with God, above all that ever lived: yet when *Jehovah* appeared in that *flaming Bush*, the Text saith, *Exod.* 3. 6. That Moses *hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God*; holy *Moses* could not bear that glory. *Daniel* a man *greatly beloved* of God, and honoured with glorious visions, was yet greatly astonished at those visions, *Chap.* 10. 8. *There remained no strength in me, for my comeliness was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength*: and vers. 16. *O my Lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength*: Vers. 17. *Neither is there any breath left in me*, I am ready to dye, I am not able to bear thy majesty, in these mysteries of thy will, made known to me. How doth *Habakkuk* cry out in the place afore-quoted, of his trembling belly, quivering lips, and of rottenness entring into his bones. We find in the New Testament, the Saints swallowed up with the like amazements. *Zechariah*, of whom the Holy Ghost had given such an excellent testimony a little before, for a man that had *walked blameless in all the ordinances of God*; yet as soon as the Angel appeared, the Text saith, *he was troubled, and fear fell upon him*, Luke 1. 12. Yea the blessed Virgin (*ver.* 29. of that Chap.) *when she saw him* (that is the Angel) *she was troubled in her mind.* Lastly, *John* the beloved Disciple, seeing Christ walking in the midst of the seven golden Candlesticks, *&c. Fell at his feet as dead*, Rev. 1. 17.

How should this humble and abase us in our selves! we that are not able to stand before the gracious manifestations of God, when he comes to reveal himself to us in mercy; how shall we be able to stand before the wrathful manifestations of God? The Apostle tells us, (1 *Cor.* 15. 50.) *Flesh and blood cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; by *flesh and blood*, we are not to understand, the sinful nature of man (as flesh and blood often signifie in Scripture, being opposed to spirit) but the constitution of nature, or that estate wherein we stand, as men; this flesh and blood is not able to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, that is, it cannot bear the majesty, glory and excellency of Heaven, where God clearly manifests himself unto his Saints; and where we shall *see God face to face*; and therefore the Apostle argueth all along, as by divers other arguments, so by this; to prove the necessity of a resurrection, a raising and a new-moulding of the body into a spiritual condition: Why? because our natural bodies are not able to stand under such a weight of glory, as is prepared for the Saints in that Kingdom: *Corruption* (nature subject to corruption) cannot inherit incorruption; hence it was, that when but a little of God broke forth, the holiest and best of men in the world, fell a shaking and trembling, as not being able to bear that transcendent Majesty shining out in those weaker refracted beams of glory.

Secondly, Seeing God coming at this time to instruct *Eliphaz*, and reveal a great truth to him, was pleased to deal thus with him, to make him shake and tremble; we may Note,

That, *God usually humbles a man, and layes him very low, before he exalts him in the manifestations of his truth or power. Humiliations prepare and posture the heart for revelation.*

The reason is, because God delights to have a man humbled, before he be instructed. *Paul* (though as humble a soul as lived (was in danger to be *exalted above measure, through the abundance of revelation*, (2 *Cor.* 12.) even divine knowledge (through our corruption) is apt to puff up, and therefore we had need to have the bladder prickt, and our spirits laid flat, for the receiving of knowledge: *Only humble ones are fit to be Gods Schollars*; he will teach none else, he refisteth a proud man, then surely he will never teach a proud man; *The meek he will teach his way*; He breaks our will, before he trusts us with the secrets of his will: When the spirits of men lie in the dust, when they tremble and shake, when all their bones are afraid, and rottenness enters into them, then they are prepared vessels, to receive and take in the dew and influences of divine revelation. When God made that most memorable manifestation of himself, to the ancient Church, in giving the Law, we read how he terrified them, how he humbled and abased them: How dreadful was the preparation to the giving of the Law? The Apostle describes it, (*Heb.* 12. 18, 20, 21.) by *blackness, and darkness, and tempest, so that they could not endure that which was commanded; and so terrible was the sight, that* Moses *said, I exceedingly fear and quake.* I confess the Law in it self, was a terrible, a *killing letter*, and that which might well make the world shake, and men to tremble: *If* (as *Luther* saith) *but one precept or sentence*

Psal. 25. 9.

of

of the Law should be left in its full power and strength (mans sin) it would destroy mankind, and make all the world (because guilty) tremble and fall before it: yet it was not barely the matter of the Law revealed, which caused this trembling; that was written in the heart of man before, and was published to the *Jews*, with gracious, with Gospel-intentions; but it was the manner and circumstances wherein the Law was revealed, which were so terrible. And this terror had this great use, even the humbling of their souls to a willing subjection and obedience to the will of God. When God revealed the Gospel to *Paul* (as well as when he revealed the Law to *Moses*) he made *Paul* tremble (*Acts* 9.) *Paul* was smitten down to the ground; God laid him along, unhors'd him, when he came to manifest his Christ to, or (as himself speaks, *Gal.* 1. 16.) *to reveal his Son in him.* And this was to abase him, *to break his heart*, that he might be made up *a chosen vessel, to carry the Name of God unto the Gentiles.* And howsoever such humiliations are not of absolute necessity, yet they have been very usual, and are very useful. When the Lord hath laid the will and wisdom of man in the dust, when he hath made the strongest and stoutest to become as a child or a babe, to quake before him; then he takes him into his School of Instruction, and shews him such things, *as none of the wise men, or Princes of this world ever knew; even such things as eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have they entred into the heart of man.* This made our Lord Jesus break out into that mixt rapture of gratulation and admiration, *Mat.* 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes.* Be as babes before God, and he will give you the wisdom of men; yea, of Angels. They who are high-built, and pinacl'd in their own conceits, seldom have the foundation or first principles of saving knowledge laid in them savingly.

Acts 9. 15.

Thirdly, From this effect of the vision, observe,

That, *Fear is a strong and powerful passion.*

Fear comes upon a man like a Giant: *Fear* (saith *Eliphaz*) *came upon me*, it came upon me violently. A man were as good meet a Bear robb'd of her whelps, as this Fear: The strongest man in the world cannot shake your bones as fear alone will, if that take hold of you. Some of the *Greeks* had such amazing thoughts of fear, it was so terrible to them, that to appease it, they worshipped it for a god; as some worshipped *Sorrow* among the *Romans* for a Goddess, under the name of *Dea Angerona. The true God is called Fear* in Scripture. And Fear was made an Idol-god among the *Heathens*: And if we consider these effects in the Text, *trembling of the flesh, shaking of the bones, standing up of the hair*, all which this sudden surprize of fear wrought upon *Eliphaz*, we must needs acknowledge and conclude it to be a very potent passion. In *Prov.* 1. the Lord threatens those who would not fear him, thus; *I will laugh when your fear cometh*: Then he shews how such fear cometh, *when your fear cometh as desolation*, Prov. 1. 27. We cannot well take fear in this place, for the object of fear, for that is desolation it self, and therefore cannot be said to *come as desolation.* Then, taking it properly, for the passion of fear, we see, that the fear of trouble is like the trouble we fear. Fear is even as bad as desolation: Fear pulls all down within, and makes a man like a desolate place, before his place is made desolate. And therefore in times of trouble, we had need take care that we add not strength to our fear. We should pray much that the power of natural fear may be subdued; especially, that our natural fear may be turned into godly fear: godly fear is the proper cure of natural fear. *Sanctifie the Lord God in your hearts, and make him your fear*, or else the fear of man will quickly Lord it over your hearts. Such a fear is more dangerous then all our dangers. Trembling joynts, and shaking bones, will make small resistance; and while natural fear is strong, natural strength is but weak or useless. *When from the onset or assault of this fear, a mans hair stands, himself will run.*

Aug. *de civ. Dei.* l. 4. c. 8.

Fourthly, Consider this by way of consequence, That if a time when God cometh to reveal his will to man, be so dreadful, what will that time be (and that time is coming) when God cometh to reckon with man for the disobeying of that will? Here a truth was but shewed *Eliphaz* in an extraordinary manner, and behold him shaking, fearing and trembling: Now when God shall come to require an account of man, for resisting or imprisoning the truth; when he shall come (2 *Thes.* 1. 8.) *to take vengeance on all those that have not obeyed the Gospel of truth*, what terror, fear and trembling will fall upon the stoutest of sinful men! There must be an appearing of all, but there can be no standing for such before the dreadful Throne of Christ. *The ungodly* (of what sort or size soever) *shall not stand in judgment*, Psal. 1. 5. Impenitent unbelievers shall not be able to hold up their heads in that day. Captains and mighty men, who have often convers'd with dangers, and knew not what it was to be afraid; men who (like the horse, described, *Job* 39. 72.) *used to mock at fear, and would not turn back for drawn swords, or the glittering of shield or spear*, shall at that day shake with fear, and hide themselves like little children. So much for the effects of the vision. Now follows a further description of the vision.

Verse 16. **It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof, an Image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voyce, saying.**

This verse containeth a second gesture of this Spirits appearing in the Vision to *Eliphaz*. The Spirit was *passing* before, here *standing*, as if he would present himself more fully to his view and observation. *It stood still, an Image was before mine eyes*; but though the Spirit gave *Eliphaz* this fair advantage, yet he made little use of it; for he saith, *I could not discern the form of it*, that is, I could make nothing of it distinctly; but when his eye gave him no help, his ear did; though he could not discern or distinguish the form of the Spirit appearing, yet he could distinguish the voyce of the Spirit speaking; *there was silence, and I heard a voyce, saying.*

It stood still.] To stand, in Scripture, imports, not alwayes a setled posture of the body; but it is taken sometime in a larger sence, to note our presence in any place, whether it be sitting, standing, or walking; as, *Mat.* 16. 26. Christ saith, *There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom.* Yet here the posture is conceived to be, an erect, setled, fixed posture; to the intent *Eliphaz* might have his eye more setled and fixed upon it, and likewise that his heart might be better prepared and fitted for the receiving of that message, which should be delivered unto him by it. When a man speaks, he usually makes a stand: *An ambulatory speech*, a speech in motion, is not so audible, nor so comly. In apparitions, this posture is frequently mentioned. When our Lord appeared to the Disciples after the Resurrection, *Luke* saith, *he stood amongst them*, chap. 24. 36. *Zachary saw the Angel standing on the right side of the Altar*, Luke 1. 11. And while the Apostles were looking up stedfastly to heaven, at the Ascension of Christ, *Behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said*, &c. *Acts* 1. 10. Therefore also this Spirit being to speak, stood still.

I could not discern the form of it.] *The face of it*, so some read; *the countenance or aspect of it*, so others. They who rise from the dead, are not easily known by them that knew them living. When Christ arose (*John* 20.) it is said, that *Mary*, who was very well acquainted with him in his life, (though he stood by her) *knew not that it was Jesus, but thought it had been the Gardner.* When Christ walked with the Disciples to *Emmaus*, they knew him not; and there is a reason given, *their eyes were held that they should not know him*; a special act of Gods providence suspended their eye-sight, and took away (though not the power of seeing, yet) the power of discerning. God hath every sense so exactly in his own hand, that he can let it out, or call it back in any degree, as himself pleaseth; he can give a man so much power, as to see another, and not so much power as to discern him; which, by the way, is an argument of the wonderful exactness of Gods providence over us; he holds our senses in his hand, as well as our reason or our wills; and saith, thus far you shall see or hear, and no further; therefore it is said, *ver.* 31. *that their eyes were opened*; they were opened before to see him, but now they were opened to know him. And at other times when Christ appeared after his resurrection, his Disciples were at a stand whether it was he or no: *Thomas*, though he saw

Christ before him, yet he would not believe it was he, until he had put his finger into the hole which the Spear made in his side; until he had assurance from another sense, he would not believe his eyes. If then a body arising from the grave, though it be seen, yet can hardly be distinguished by mortal eyes; how much less is the eye of man able to discern Angels and Spirits, cloathed in humane forms? The impressions of glory and immortality, which appear upon bodies assumed by Spirits, especially in sudden apparitions, do exceedingly master, if not astonish sense. The Heathens thought it absurd to say, that their gods could be known by face: for though they were so gross, as to satisfie themselves with bodily gods, yet they believed those bodies were so refined, had such a kind of Majestick Divinity stampt upon them, that a meer mortal could not comprehend them. Their doctrine shines a little into this text. A Spirit passed before *Eliphaz*, he had a sight of it, for it stood still, yet he could not make out what it was, or who it was; *he could not discern the form thereof.*

Ethnicis semper absurdum fuit, ut faciem deorum agnoscerent homines quam Deorum ἀοεγσίαν; Posteriores poetæ ab Homero, Homerus *ab Ægyptiis, vel potius ex sacris sancti* Moysis *libris sumpsit.* Bold.

An Image was before mine eyes.] The word *Themounah*, which we translate *Image*, is taken either for a visible or intellectual Image. Sometime it is taken for the form of a thing, which is apprehended visibly by the eye; so in *Deut.* 4. 15, 16. *Take ye therefore good heed to your selves (for ye saw no manner of similitude, in the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire) lest ye corrupt your selves, and make the similitude of any figure,* that is, lest you make a visible image of the invisible God.

תמונה *significat speciem vel sensibilem, vel mentalē.*

Secondly, The same word signifies an image in the mind. Thus God himself, who said in *Deuteronomie, that they saw no similitude*, and thereupon bade them take heed of making any similitude, saith of *Moses, that the similitude of the Lord he shall* behold, *Numb.* 21. 8. The word similitude in *Numbers*, is the same for Image in the text, an *intellectual Image*, a representation to the understanding. *Moses* had this priviledge, the similitude of God revealed to *his understanding*; but when he saith in *Deut. ye had no similitude*, the meaning is, no corporal, no visible similitude, no object of sense. This Image in the text, was not intellectual, for it was before his eyes: Nor was it the image of a Spirit gross'd into a body; but it was a Spirit in or with the imaginary form of a body.

Spectrum & visum vocant Latini quicquid corporea apparet forma licet corpus non sit.

There was silence, and I heard a voice, saying,] That is the last thing which the Text holds forth about this Vision.

There was silence.] The Hebrew thus, *Silence, and I heard a voyce*; we supply, *there was.* The readings are various, yet the sence one. *I heard the voyce, as it were, of a gentle gale; I heard a gale, and a voyce, I heard a silent murmur.* Our Translators put in the margin, *I heard a still voyce*; which comes near to that, *I heard a silent voyce* (by a usual figure) *silence and a voyce*, for *a voyce of silence.* If any should say, these two are so opposite, that they cannot be predicated or affirmed one of another. Silence is the direct contrary to a voyce, therefore to say there was a silent voyce, seemeth to be a contradiction in the adjunct: I answer, it is frequent to affirm contraries one of another, in an inferiour and remiss degree. Though we cannot say *light is dark*, yet we may say, *this is a dark light*; that is, a glimmering, imperfect, obscure light (*Zech.* 14. 6.) *The day shall be neither clear nor dark*; it shall be, as it were, *a dark light.* So a low voyce may well be called a silent voyce; *I heard a silent voyce*, that is, I heard a low or a still voyce speaking to me. Thus it suits well with what he said at *ver.* 12. *Now a thing was secretly brought unto me.* And we may further clear it by that, 1 *Kings* 19. 12. where the expression is of the same importance; here we have *silence and a voyce*; there, after the noise of a great wind, and an earthquake, it is said, that *Elijah* heard (as some render it) *the voyce of a subtil, fine, slender, attenuated silence*; or as we translate, *a still small voyce*, a sweet ravishing whisper, a voyce without a sound. Hence we have a kind of musick, which in our common language we call *still musick.*

רמה וקול *Silentium & vocem per hyppalagen, vocem silentii, i. e. vocem tacitam & submissam audiebam.* Merc. *Et vocem quasi auræ levis audivi.* Vulg. Αὔρην λεπτὴν φωνῆς ὑπαρχούσης. Sept. *Silens murmur.* Ar. *Mont.*

קול רמה דקה *Vox subtilis silentii, dulce susurrum, vox sine sono.*

A twofold reason may be given why the Lord spake (as it were) in silence. First, That the secret manner of speaking might be an argument, that the matter spoken was a secret, a mystery, not common or ordinary. Secondly, To dispose the hearer to receive it with more care, reverence, and attention. *A man must set himself to hear with diligence, while another speaks with silence.* A loud voyce finds us out, comes to us; but we must come to a low voyce, and find that out. When the Speaker takes least pains with his tongue, the Hearer must take most pains with his ear.

And this manner of speaking was used by the ancient heathen in their *mysterious Oracles and Revelations.* As when God revealed a secret, he spake secretly, and as it were, whispered those truths in the ear (whispering is speaking within one degree of silence;) so the Devil (who imitates God in what he can, that he may draw credit unto his own deceivings) is described in his instruments, to speak thus, *Isa.* 8. 19. *When they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto Wizards that peep, and that mutter*: They speak, as it were silently, they only whisper their diabolical incantations, and lying impostures. And, *Isa.* 29. *Thou shalt be brought down, and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy voyce shall be as of one that hath a familiar spirit, out of the ground, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.* The Prophet in this alludes to the manner of Witches and Enchanters, who had familiar spirits; which he here applies in a threat unto the people: The time shall come, that you shall be brought down by your enemies, that you shall speak out of the ground, you shall lie at their feet like poor captives, that cry submissively and pitifully for quarter, *Oh mercy mercy, spare my life*: That is the the thing aimed at by the Prophet, that God would abase them so before their enemies, that they should whisper out of the ground to their enemies for pity, as a Witch whispers from the ground to her miserable Clients who come for counsel. *Tertullian* in his *Apologetick*, describes the heathen *Magicians* thus, they speak *belching and gasping, humming and hawing*, rather then speaking. The old Poet calls this *Poppysm*; by which word he shews how their Idol-Prophets answered the deluded people, their miserable Clients, when they came for counsel. To which the Hebrew word *Tsiphtsaph*, used by *Isaiah*, chap. 8. before-cited, is very like, both in sound and sence.

—*Sortes ducent, frōtemque, manumque. Præbebit vati crebrū poppysma petenti.* Juvenal. *Auruspices* צפצף *de circo ex oris pressi sono, quod Poppysmà dicitur, futura colligebant.*

There is yet another interpretation of these words, more proper and answerable to our translation. *There was silence, and I heard a voyce, saying.*] This refers the silence to *Eliphaz*, as a preparation to his hearing the voyce; *there was silence*, that is, I stood still, and spake never a word, but waited to hear what should be spoken; I was silent, and all things about me were husht and silent too: Then I heard a voyce; & so *Junius* glosses, because (saith he) compos'd and strengthened a little, after my former fear, I attended silently to the Spirit, that I might hear what should be spoken unto me.

Me continebam tacitus expectans revelationē.

We read, *Rev.* 8. 1. that *there was silence in heaven for half an hour*; and *ver.* 5. we read of *voyces and thundrings*; before those great voyces, there was great silence: Usually before great speaking, there is great silence; *I was silent*, and all were husht; *then I heard a voyce*: silence prepares for audience. In Congregations, before the Preacher begins, all hold their peace: In Courts of Justice, when the Judge is to speak, the Crier calls for silence. It was an usual word amongst the Rites of the Heathen, *Favour your tongues*, or *spare your speech*, when the mysteries of their superstitions were revealed: We may take the present Text in this sence; that *Eliphaz* set himself in a silent posture, to attend the message which was to be revealed unto him: *There was silence, and I heard a voyce, saying.*

Favete linguis.

If we take the former interpretation, then, forasmuch as *Eliphaz* after those terrors and tremblings, the shaking of his bones, and standing up of his hair, the confused form of a Spirit, and an amazing image before his eyes; forasmuch (I say) as after all these, he hears *a still silent voyce*, we may observe,

That, *God, after terrors, usually sends in comforts and refreshings.*

God, having terrified *Elijah*, by a mighty rushing wind, (in the vision before-noted) by an earthquake which brake the Rocks, and by a fire; then comes (as here in the text) *a still small voyce*, a voyce of silence, *and God was in that voyce.* It is put as a principal distinction amongst the Ancients,

cients, to know, whether a revelation were from a good Angel, or from a bad Angel. When a revelation was made by a good Angel, though he fill'd the heart with fear, at the beginning of his ſpeech, yet he gave comfort in the end, and cloſed with conſolation. We may obſerve in thoſe revelations, ſuch heartning, cheering language as this, *Be not afraid, be of good cheer*; ſo to *Daniel*, ſo to *John*, ſo to *Zachariah*, ſo to *Mary*, ſo to *Gideon*. But when a revelation was made by an evil Angel, or by a Witch, as it filled the hearers with fear, ſo it left them full of fear; it wounded them with terrors, and it applied no cure, no plaiſter, nothing medicinable to heal thoſe terrors. We find indeed (1 *Sam.* 28.) that when *Saul* conſulted the Witch of *Endor*, as ſoon as the Spirit appeared, it is ſaid, that the Witch her ſelf was afraid, and there is no mention made of *Saul*'s being afraid at the firſt; ſo that *Saul* falls a comforting the Witch, and ſaid to her, *Be not afraid*: She was afraid, not of the Spirit that appeared, but of *Saul*, becauſe he had made a Law againſt Witches; and hence *Saul* comforts her, in aſſurance of impunity, notwithſtanding that ſin, both againſt the Law of God, and his own. But you ſhall find in how ſad a condition *Saul* himſelf was, before the Devil had done with him; for, as ſoon as *Saul* heard the tidings delivered by that *perſonated Samuel*, he fell into a ſhaking fit, and was as one aſtoniſhed and dead; hanging upon the rack of theſe torments, the Devil left him; there was no word of comfort, no ſweet ſtill muſical voyce to revive and fetch him again, but away packs the wicked Spirit, and leaves him overwhelmed with ſorrow. And then (in ſtead of a better, ſurely he could not have a worſe) the poor Witch comes to comfort and counſel him. *They who refuſe counſel from the Prophets of God, may at laſt be forced to receive all their comfort from a Witch, a Prophet or Propheteſs of the Devil.* But to the point in hand; we ſee, when the Devil and wicked Angels ſpeak terror, they leave terror; whereas, if God, by good Angels, ſpeaks terror, or affrights his people with the tokens of his preſence, he with a ſweet and ſtill voice refreſhes and comforts them before he departs.

And we may in that general apply it to our ſelves: That when God aſtoniſhes and terrifies us, when he makes our bones to ſhake, and rottenneſs to enter into them, we may expect comfort and refreſhing are at hand; and we may build upon it, that the more we tremble, the more we ſhall be refreſhed: *Habakkuk* in the place before-cited, is expreſs in this faith, *I trembled, that I might have reſt in the day of trouble*: to which he adds, *when he cometh up to the people (he will invade or cut them in pieces) with his troops.* As intimating, that they who will not tremble, ſhall be made to tremble; but when we actively labour to make our hearts tremble, or when God makes us tremble in ſuch a way as this, we may build upon it, that we ſhall reſt in the day of trouble, at leaſt we ſhall reſt in the end of that day: God never leaves his people under a cloud; he takes off trouble, and brings in a ſucceſſion of comfort, or conquers the trouble by mingling a prevailing portion of comfort with it.

If we take the Text in the latter ſence, we may note,

That, *Silence becomes man, when God ſpeaks.*

Speak Lord (ſaith *Samuel*) *for thy ſervant heareth.* Hear, O ſervant, for thy Lord ſpeaketh.

Silence prepares the heart to learn: *Pythagoras* commanded his Scholars to keep ſilence five years. And the Papiſts impoſe ſilence, as a part of Diſcipline, upon their Novices. Let Superſtition be avoided, and then *ſilence is fitteſt for learners, unleſs their voyce be an enquiry after learning.* That which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, reſpecting women in the Church, is true of all in the ſence I now ſpeak of, 1 *Tim.* 2. 12. *Let the woman learn in ſilence*; ſo let the man learn in ſilence. *Silence is good as a preparative to learning, but wo to that which is an hinderance to inſtructing.*

VERS. 17.

Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? ſhall a man be more pure then his maker?

IN this Verſe we have the Argument it ſelf, or the matter revealed in the former Viſion: *There was ſilence, and I heard a voyce, ſaying*: What that voice ſaid, we have in theſe words, *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God?* This is the Theme or Subject, upon which *Eliphaz* argued; and it is the main *Propoſition* of the whole Context. The proof of this Propoſition was given from divine authority, in the foregoing words; and we have a proof from reaſon, in the following part of this Chapter.

Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? Or, *Shall man be juſtified in compariſon of God?* Or, *Shall man be juſt before God?* The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe is yet more quick; the Spirit cried out, and ſaid, *Can it poſſibly be, that man ſhould be more pure then God?*

Numquid homo Dei comparatione juſtificabitur? Vulg.

ἐβόα τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἔλεγεν τίς; Sept. *Clamabat & dicebat, fierine poteſt ut homo quam Deus purior ſit?* Chald.

The words are propounded by way of queſtion; we may reſolve them into this negative propoſition, *Mortal man is not more juſt then God, man is not more pure then his Maker.*

We tranſlate **Mortal man**, the Hebrew is but one word; yet in the propriety of that Language, it contains both, noting man with an addition (ſuch as it is) of weakneſs & frailty, the meaneſt & loweſt eſtate of man; *Enoſh*, a poor, ſick, weak, dying creature, a creature of ſo little hope, that ſome derive this name, in the Hebrew, from deſperation; a creature ſo unworthy to be remembred by God, or ſo ready to forget God, that others derive it from a word which ſignifies forgetfulneſs, or to forget.

אֱנוֹשׁ *Miſer ærumnis & peccatis obnoxius.*

אֱנוֹשׁ *quaſi* נִיאֵשׁ *in qua ſenſu deſperandi* Euſebius *a* נָשָׁה *deducit, quod oblivioſi ſignificat, & interpretetur, quaſi animal oblivioſum dicas.* Druſ.

Shall man, this mortal man, this weak creature, be *more juſt*, or, *be juſtified rather then God?* Such a ſence the words carry. When man and God are compared together, ſhall God be eſteemed leſs juſt, or leſs pure then man? (*Luke* 68. 18.) it is ſaid of the *Publican*, that *he went down juſtified rather then the other*; put the *Phariſee* and the *Publican* in the ballance together, and the *Publican* was the weightier in righteouſneſs, or the more juſt of the two. That in *Luke*, is an *Hebraiſm*, and it is the ſame with this. Put weak man and the mighty God (the word *Eloah*) which is here uſed for God, noteth the ſtrong God, or the mighty God) put him in the ballance of conſideration with weak man, will he not be infinitely more weighty in juſtice, more ſhining in purity, more glorious in holineſs.

Min eſt cõparandi particula; comparatio exprimitur per præpoſitionem ultimi caſus, juſtificatus ab illo, i. e. præ illo. Luk. 18.14.

גֶּבֶר *Vir, quaſi validus, ut & Latini à viribus dictus.*

Yea, not only if you take man in his obſcureſt notion, or in this term of extenuation, *Enoſh*, for a weak man, a poor cripled creeping creature; but take him in his beſt eſtate, as he is (*Geber*) a ſtrong man, a powerful man, a holy man; yet as it follows in the Text, *Shall man be more pure then his Maker?* that is, ſhall ſuch a mighty man, a wiſe man, a learned man, a gracious man, a man accompliſhed in all natural, in all acquired endowments, the chiefeſt and choiceſt, the cream and flower of all the men upon the face of the earth, a Worthy of the firſt three, the firſt of all the Worthies, a man of the firſt magnitude, of the higheſt elevation, both in parts, gifts and graces, *ſhall he be more pure then his Maker?* Chriſt (as incarnate or made man) is called the *Mighty God* (Iſa 9. 6.) *God made a mighty man, or man becoming the mighty God.* The *Chaldee* calls all Giants, *Gibbaraja*; and *Nimrod*, the firſt of the Giants, was called by this name, *a mighty hunter before the Lord*, Gen. 10. 8. So then, let man be never ſo excellent, his excellency is baſeneſs; let him be never ſo ſtrong, ſo wiſe, ſo holy, he is but weak, fooliſh, filthy, compared with him who made him. Leave your *Enoſh*, your weakling, your poor ſick creatures; bring forth your *Gebers*, your beſt, they are as nothing, yea, leſs then nothing before the Lord. *Shall mortal man be more juſt then God? Shall man (the beſt of men) be more pure then his Maker?*

We are to mark the double oppoſition of the Text. Here is, firſt, mortal, weak, ſick man, ſet in oppoſition to the ſtrong, the mighty, the all-powerful God. And then in the ſecond place, the oppoſition is between the ſtrongeſt, the beſt, the holieſt, the wiſeſt of men, and the maker of all men. *Shall mortal man, or ſhall the beſt of men be more juſt, more pure then God their Maker?* There is a threefold ſence, which we may give of the words joyntly.

Firſt, They are a denial of all compariſon between God and man. No man may compare himſelf with God. *Shall*

mortal

mortal man? that is, mortal man ought not to be so bold and daring as to venture upon such a thing as this, to stand upon terms of equality with the mighty, the great, the glorious God, the Maker of all, as the Apostle resolves in his own case, (1 *Cor.* 4. 4.) *Though I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified at all*; much less, though a man know nothing by himself, will this justifie him in this comparison, *that he is just, as God is just.*

But secondly, *Shall mortal man be more just then God?* It is as if he had said, God who is infinite in justice, would never do that which a just man will not do; God who is infinite in power, would never do that which a weak man would not do, *shall weak man be more just then God?* And so we may form the Argument, thus:

No man, no Judge is more just or incorrupt then God, who is the supream and Lord chief Justice of all men. But there is no just Judge amongst men who will punish an innocent man; therefore God doth not punish any one that is innocent. The consequence or inference is plain and clear, for God himself should either be unjust, or he should be less just then man is, if he should do that which a just man upon true grounds would refuse to do. Therefore in *Gen.* 18. *Abraham* pleads with God under that title of a just Judge, *Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?* As if he should say, faithful Judges upon the earth will do right, therefore surely he that is the Judge of all the earth will do right. So *Eliphaz* here to *Job*, never complain as if God had done thee wrong, for certainly the just God will not do that which a just man would not do: The word, whereby God is expresst (*Eloah*) doth well comply with, and answer this sence, it being properly attributed to God as a judge, the great Arbitrator and Determiner of all the causes and cases of all men in the world. *Shall mortal man be more just then God?*

Eloah *derotat judicem, & æquissimum verum arbitrum.*

Thirdly, The sence may be taken thus, If any man should come to implead God, or to plead with God, if any should dare to tax the Justice of God, or be so hardy to put in a bill of complaint against him; shall this man, this weak man be found more just in his complaining, then God hath been in sentencing? Shall his bill of complaint be better grounded then the Lords award of Judgment? It is an allusion to those, who supposing they have wrong, complain against the Judge, and say, that he hath erred in, or perverted judgment; That word (*Justified*) here used, *shall man be justified before God?* Is a *Judiciary word*, a *Court* or *Law term*; The same word, which the *Holy Ghost* uses, in that great work of Free Grace, the *justification* of a sinner before God; and that imports the declaring and setting forth of a man to be righteous, and his cause good in Jesus Christ, whereupon he is cleared and acquitted. When Satan accuses or pleads against us, laying such and such sins to our charge; thus and thus this man hath offended: then God is said to justifie a man, that is, to declare him to be just, his sins being covered, and himself accepted in Jesus Christ. Hence that divine challenge to all accusers, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect, it is God that justifieth*, Rom. 8. 33.

צדק *Verbū forense spectans ad innocentiæ absolutionem.*

So now, if man should accuse and complain against God, he hath done thus and thus in the world, *afflicted a* Job, troubled a righteous person; *shall mortal man be more just then God?* Shall this man in his complaint be justified? Shall not God rather be justified, against whom he complains? Certainly he shall. God shall be declared just, yea, he shall be declared just by man. A man un-ingaged and rightly principled, *Such a man shall say, verily there is a God that judgeth the earth.* In the judgment of man, that judgment shall speak a God; and all shall be forced to *Daniels* mourning acknowledgment, *O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face*, Dan. 9. 7, 9. We may enlighten it further by that of *David*, (*Psal.* 51. 4.) where he professes thus, *I will confess my sins*, &c. *that thou mayest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest:* As if he should say, if hereafter thou shalt afflict me, and lay thy rod upon me, I know many will be ready to complain, and say, why doth God thus, why doth he afflict *David*, *David* a holy man, a man after his own heart; a man of whom he hath given such a large testimony, of whom he hath said, I have found *a man after my own heart?* Now to the intent all these may be cast in their suits, and answered in their complainings, I here acknowledge before all the world, that I have sinned greatly; and therefore, though thou hast pardoned my sin, and so wilt never charge it upon me to condemnation, nor punish me for it in a way of satisfaction; yet hereafter thou mayst in thy fatherly wisdom, see it needful to chastise me, to prevent and purge out sin, or to help me against the weakness of my nature, and the strength of temptation for the time to come. So here in the Text, *Shall man be justified before God?* If *Job*, or any of his friends for him, should complain against God, why he being one commended and approved from the mouth of God, for a man *perfect and upright*, should be thus afflicted; what? *Shall weak* Job *be justified before God?* Yea, though *Job* be considered in his greatest flourishings of grace, and highest pitch of his prosperity, as he was *Geber* indeed, *the greatest, the mightiest man in the Eastern world, yet shall he be more pure then his Maker?* No, cease your complainings, God is just, and his honour must be vindicated, in what he doth, or in what he shall do against the weakest, or against the mightiest, against the meanest or against the best of men. *God will be found just, and man a lyar.*

Either of these three sences are fair from the construction of the Text, and may be profitable for us; I shall therefore draw them down into five or six conclusions, which will be at least a portion of that marrow and fatness, which this Scripture yields us to feed upon.

First, We may Observe, That, *man naturally preferreth himself not only above other men, but even before God himself.*

A *principle* of pride dwels in our hearts by nature, which at some times, and in some cases, breeds better thoughts in us of our selves, then of God himself. And it is this height of spirit, which the heavenly vision here would level to the ground. We know it was the first sin of man, that man desired to be like God, *Gen.* 3. The first temptation was baited with a parity to Divine powers, *Ye shall be as Gods knowing good and evil.* This also was the language of *Lucifers* heart; *Thou hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God, I will ascend above the heights of the Clouds, I will be like the most high*, Isa. 14. 13, 14. And the practise of *the man of sin*, is thus propheſied, *That he shall exalt himself above all that is called God*, 2 Thes. 2. 4. But the heart of man is yet more mad, and hath out-grown those sinful principles. For in troubles and temptations, when things go not according to his mind, he sometimes hath thoughts, not only that he is like God, but that he is more just then God; and if he had the ordering of things, he would order them better then God: he sometime thinks himself juster then God, and if he had the punishing of offenders, justice should proceed more freely and impartially then it doth: which is upon the matter, not only to exalt himself (as the Man of Sin doth) above *Nuncupative Gods*, or all *that is called God*, but to exalt himself above him *who is God by nature, above the only one-most God:* Even to speak in this Dialect of highest blasphemy, that he is *more just then God, more pure then his Maker.*

Secondly, Take this Conclusion, That, *it is a most high presumption, not only for low weak man, but for the best, the highest of men, to compare themselves with God, or to have any thoughts concerning his wayes, as if they could mend them.*

When God calls us to amend our wayes, for us to presume we could amend Gods wayes, is the very top branch, the highest tower, yea, the most towring Pinnacle of presumption. We say amongst men, that *comparisons are odious*; but this is the most odious comparison of all, for a man to compare himself with God, *his thoughts with Gods thoughts*, what he hath done or would do, with what God doth.

If you consider the terms of opposition that are in the Text, this conclusion will be more clear unto you. Consider how *Enosh*, weak mortal man is opposite to *Eloah*, the mighty, the strong God: it is presumption for a weak man to compare with a strong man; what presumption is it then, for a weak man to compare with the mighty God? For a Reed to compare in strength with a Rock? For darkness to compare with light? For a Cloud to compare with the

the Sun? For death to compare with life? For folly to compare with wisdom? For uncleanness to compare with holiness? For nothing to compare with all, how presumptuous? *Will ye provoke the Lord?* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 10.) *are ye stronger then he?* It implies, that some such thoughts lodge in man, as if he could make his party good with God, or might be stronger then he. And it is equal folly in us, and provocation against the Lord, to think our selves juster, as to think our selves stronger then he.

And then mark the other terms of opposition; **Man and his Maker**: *Shall the great man, compare with,* or be *more pure then his Maker?* As if he should say, How great and excellent soever this man is, he was made, and made by God, with whom he thus compares, then whom he thinks himself more pure. And shall the thing formed stand upon terms with him that formed it? Shall the potsheard or the pot contend with the Potter? What though it be an excellent vessel, a vessel determined for the most excellent ends and uses? Yet whatsoever it is, it was made to be, and made to be by God, both in its constitution and uses: Shall it then boast it self against its maker? The Lord made *Geber* as well as *Enosh*, the strong man, as well as the weak: the wise and learned man as well as the foolish and ignorant, the Noble as well as the base, the holy and righteous, as well as the wicked and prophane: In a word, the *vessels of honour are as much, yea more of his making* then the vessels of dishonour; shall they then *be more pure then their maker?* Hath the Lord given more to others then he hath in himself? Hath he made a creature his Superiour, or his Peer? Hath his bounty impaired his own stock, or hath he made man more then God? That God hath made the best out of the dust, is enough to lay all our pride and boasting as low as the dust. That, what we are, we are from another, should ever keep us humble in our selves.

Thirdly, Take this Conclusion, That, *God in himself is most just and pure.*

Shall mortal man be more just then God? The question hath this position in it, that God is infinitely just, infinitely pure, therefore he is perfectly pure, perfectly just. God is essential Justice, essential purity; Justice and purity are not qualities in God, but they are his very nature: A man may be a man, and yet be unjust; but God cannot be God and be unjust: A man may be a man, and yet impure; but God cannot be God, and be impure; so that Justice and purity are not qualities or accidents in God, but his very essence and *being*; destroy or deny the purity and justice of God, and you put God out of the world, as much as in you lies: for he cannot be God, unless he be both just to others, and pure in himself.

Fourthly, Take this Conclusion, *The best men compared with God are evil, and the holiest are impure.*

Not only is it presumption, but a lie, for men to compare with God; *shall mortal man be more just then God?* It is as if he should say, man hath no justice at all compared with God, *shall man be more pure then his Maker?* Man compared with his Maker, hath no purity at all, not so much as a name or a shadow of justice and purity, compared with God: though it be somewhat in it self, yet it is nothing before him: *In thy sight, or before thee, shall no flesh living be justified, or be just.* All that righteousness and purity which God hath put into the creature, is but as the light of a candle, to the light of the Sun: *the candle hath no light in it, compared to the Sun*; the candle enlightens the night, but a thousand candles cannot a day, or make the day lighter then it is; Sun-light overcomes and swallows up candle-light: The Stars help us to see in the dark, but in the bright day time the Stars themselves cannot be seen: so all creature purity disappears and vanisheth, when once we look upon the purity of God, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all. The Apostle *Paul* hath a parallel expression (2 *Cor.* 3. 10.) speaking of the administration of the Jewish, ceremonial, earthly shadows, and the administration of light in Gospel heavenly ordinances; *Even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth:* I do not deny (saith he) but there was great glory in the Jewish Church; *Gods institution stampt excellency upon the worship of the Jewes; their Ceremonies were made glorious*; but if you will compare Jewish worship to Christian worship, it hath no glory in it all; *that which was made glorious, had no glory, by reason of the glory that excelleth*, this is Gospel glory. So we may say, man who was made glorious, man who was made gracious and just, hath no grace, no justice, no glory in him, in comparison of that glory which doth excel; namely that justice and purity which is in God. *God is so true, that all men are liars,* Rom. 3. 4. *So righteous, that all mens righteousnesse are a filthy rag,* Isa. 64. 6. Man, who is just by participation from God, is not just in comparison of God.

Humana justitia divinæ comparata injustitia est; quia & lucerna in tenebris fulgere cernitur, sed in solis radio posita tenebratur. Greg.

Cujus participatione justi sunt, ejus comparatione nec justi sunt. Aug. lib. ad Orosium. c. 10.

The fifth Conclusion is this, and it is the principal point, which we are to receive and attend from this Text.

God is so just, so pure in himself, that he neither doth nor can do wrong to any creature.

In this truth, *Eliphaz* aimes to instruct *Job* chiefly; for he supposed, that *Job* had complained of God, as if he had done him wrong, wherefore he speaks reprovingly and chidingly, *shall mortal man be more just then God?* as if he should say, art thou so gross as to charge God with doing thee an injury? It is impossible that God should do any man wrong; (*de Facto*) he doth no man wrong, and (*de Posse*) he cannot wrong any man. *The power of God is seen most in this, that he cannot do any evil*; *This impotency* (if we may so call it) *is the strength of God*; *yea the omnipotency of God consists in this, that he can do no wrong.* We have a *Maxime* of State amongst us, (and it is the glory of the Kings of this Nation) we say, *The King can do no wrong*; but it is not to be understood as this, *God can do no wrong*; we know Kings are men, and that's enough to prove they may do wrong: As to say, the Lord is God, is enough to prove, that he cannot. Princes have a *natural power* to do evil; but which is his glory, God hath not. The meaning then is, the King hath not any *civil power* to do wrong; the Law hath so bounded, ordered, and directed him; the constitution of the Kingdom hath given him the advice of Parliaments and Counsellours, the assistance of Judges and Officers, he acts all by others: so that *the failings of his Ministers do the Subject wrong, the regal power doth it not.* But when we speak thus of God, we mean it of his natural power, which being essentially and infinitely just and good, as well as soveraign and supreme; there is not the least imaginable seed in him, which would be procreative of the least injustice: Therefore the Scripture describes the Lord, just and holy, not only in his nature, but in all his works and wayes, *Psal.* 145. 17. *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his workes.* And this implies, not only that all the wayes wherein the Lord walks, are righteous; and the works he doth, *holy*: but that he can go in no way but a righteous way, nor do any work in the creature, but a work of holiness. *Not only is that just and holy, which the Lord doth, but let the Lord do what he will, that will be just and holy.*

And here give me leave, somewhat to enlarge this, and plead for God against some objections, which are made by the men of the world, and some temptations which Satan will urge strongly upon the hearts of those, who fear God; by which (possibly) they may be so entangled and gravel'd, that they know not how to extricate themselves, or make out the Justice of God in his administrations towards men.

For first it will be objected, Is God so just, that he neither doth nor can do injustice to the creature? How comes it to pass, that both the righteous and the wicked fall under the same judgment: if the judgment be right upon a wicked man, surely it cannot be right upon the righteous man: Is God righteous and just, when they who differ as much as Heaven and Hell, as light and darkness, do yet meet (as it were) under the same act of God, and are wrapt together in the same sentence? If it be Justice upon the wicked, if it be their portion, how can it be the portion of the righteous, or an award of Justice upon them? As *Abraham* pleaded with God (*Gen.* 18. 25.) *Shall the righteous be slain or perish, with the wicked? that be far from thee to do in this manner; shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* as if he should say, if thou doest involve a just man and a wicked man in one and the same judgment, this is not to do as a righteous Judge, far be it from thee to do such

such a thing. Yet we see in frequent experiences, that the same judgment falleth upon the righteous and the wicked; By Sword, Famine, Pestilence, by Storms at Sea, and Enemies at Land, both are overtaken and fall together. Is this unerring Justice?

Justitia est suum cuique tribuere.

Justice is to give every one his portion, his due: And God hath given this exact distribution in charge to the Prophet, he must say so, and will not the Lord do so? (*Isa.* 3. 10, 11.) *Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings; woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him:* But how do the dispensations of God answer this direction to man, when his providence seems to huddle up all together, to make the same portion serve, both to the righteous and the wicked?

I Answer it first in the general, and then in some particulars. In the general, the troubles of the righteous are good for them, and therefore they have that which is promised; God saith, *say to the righteous it shall be well with him:* when a righteous man is troubled, it is well with him; therefore he hath that which God promised him: and when a wicked man prospereth, it is ill with him; therefore he hath that which God threatneth against him. Outward mercy is judgment to wicked men, and their prosperity is their undoing: therefore, do not think that God varies a tittle from the tenour of his word, when he saith, it shall be ill with wicked men, and yet you see them prosper; for it is never worse with them, then when they prosper, then when they think it is best, and when the world thinks so too; *the prosperity of fools shall destroy them*; and what prosperity is there in destruction? *The meat in their mouthes is as a sword in their bowels.* If you saw the Lord formally sending a Sword to devour wicked men, you would think it justice: the prosperity of wicked men is as sharp as a Sword; that can but destroy, and so doth this; *It is their judgment that they are without judgments, and not to be smitten, is their scourge.*

Prov. 1.

Now more particularly to answer this objection about the justice of God; and it will be but needful, considering the times we live in, threaten us with a common deluge, or an overflowing scourge, which may sweep away both good and bad together.

First, In reference to the godly. Are they in a sad estate outwardly? are they in great afflictions? I answer, though they are afflicted, yet they prosper. When they are impoverished, they are enriched; when they are as *having nothing, they possess all things.* What is there? what can there be, even in their saddest estate, which doth not conduce to their good, which will not be a benefit unto them?

For first, Their troubles are but trials; now is there any hurt in a trial, or perturbation in a probation? Troubles try their graces, and their corruptions too. Trouble tries grace that it may be honour'd, and corruption that it may be mortified; there is no hurt in all this, rather it is a most happy condition, which makes grace conspicuous, whereby a mans best side, his inside (wherein his glory lies, *The Kings Daughter is all glorious within*) is turned outward. That Scripture (*Dan.* 11. 33, 34, 35.) is very pregnant to the point in hand; where the Prophet foretelling troublesome times, saith, *They that understand amongst the people, shall instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, and captivity, and by spoil many dayes:* They that understand, that is, godly men, shall fall by these judgments, some of them by the sword, they shall utterly be cut off; some by flame, they shall be burnt to ashes: others by captivity and by spoil, their estates shall be plundred, their persons imprisoned. How doth this answer the Justice of God (will carnal reason object) that it shall be *thus ill with the righteous, to whom the Lord promiseth it shall be well?* Yes, well enough. For it followeth, *Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help, and some of them of understanding shall fall* (that is by captivity, and by spoil) *to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white.* Here are two remarkable ends, why they of understanding fall into these evils. First for probation, *to try them.* Secondly, for cleansing and purgation, *to purge them and make them white.* Gold is never wrong'd by being tryed. A spotted garment, a distemper'd body are not damnified by washing or by purging. To be freed from filth without, and bad humours within the body, is more then a common favour. How high an act of favour then is it, to have ill humours and filthy spots washed, purged out of the soul? Such base humours a good man may have, as call for these strong working pils, Spoiling and Captivity, to cast them out. Now those *men of understanding* have no more hurt intended them by God, when they fall into spoilers hands, then when a diseased body falls into a Physitians hand, or when a defiled garment fals into a Fullers hand; *sc. to purge and make them white.* *Affliction is a cleanser.* Christ is the only Lavatory, and his blood the only Fountain to wash away the guilt of sin; yet God hath other Fountains and Lavatories, to wash away the pollution of sin: That blood cleanses in this sence also, principally; and all the waters or fires of affliction have no efficacy at all, to refine or cleanse, but in vertue of that blood. *A Cross without a Christ, never made any man better: But with Christ, all are made better by the Cross.* We may then say at least, that *it is well with the righteous in affliction, forasmuch as* (through the blessing of God) *they are bettered by affliction.* When you see a godly man cast out into the open air, and having the waters of sorrow powred continually upon him, know that he is only laid out a *whitening*, and will appear shortly more resplendent then ever.

Secondly, Afflictions are sent to humble. *Pride is such a weed, as often grows in the best soyle:* Now that which humbleth us, cannot hurt us; we lose nothing by the abatements of our Pride: no, the more pride loses, the more we gain. And we seldom or never lose any thing, but by pride. Now saith God, *Deut.* 8. 1. If you would have an account, why I brought my people about in the wilderness, through so many difficulties, know, this was my design, *it was to humble them.* God resists pride whersoever he finds it; (they in whom pride totally prevails, are Gods enemies, and he resists them) they in whom pride hath some, yea great prevalency, may be Gods friends, and God will resist pride in them; the difference is observable between resisting of pride, and resisting the proud; the resisting of the person, and the resisting of the sin. The great resistance which God makes against the pride of mans heart, is by the rods of affliction; he whips them into humility, and by taking away carnal comforts, takes them off from carnal confidence. *And O blessed affliction which makes us less to our selves, and all creatures less to us.* We are never so much in Gods eye, as when we are least in our own: nor have we ever so much of God, as when we expect little, or least from man; say therefore it is *well with the righteous*, when they are in the deeps of affliction; for it is but to bring them off their Mountains of pride, that they may be exalted in the strength and love of God, even upon the Mountain of his Holiness, and their glory for ever.

Thirdly, Afflictions bring the Saints nearer to God. *Troubles abroad cause the soul to look inwards and homewards.* Is there any hurt in being brought nearer to God? *It is good for me to draw near unto God*, says *David*; and it is good for us to be drawn near unto God, if we will not come of our selves: It is a desirable violence, which compels us heaven-ward. *Heaven is but our nearest being unto God*; and by how much we are nearer God on earth, so much the more we have of Heaven, upon earth. Afflictions (as in the prodigals example) put us upon thoughts of returning to God; and the more we return, the nearer we are unto him; returning thoughts will not rest, but under our fathers roof: yea, returning thoughts will not rest, till we are got into our fathers armes, or under the shadow of his wing, and this is a happy condition indeed; as it was with *Noahs Dove* (*Gen.* 8. 9.) when she was sent forth of the Ark, she could find no place for the soal of her foot to rest on; she knew not whither to go, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth; therefore she returneth back, and comes hovering about the Ark, as desiring to be taken in: but after the waters were asswaged, he sent out a Dove, which returned to him no more. So when it is fair weather in the world, calm and serene, *even Doves* keep off from God; and though they go not quite away from him, yet they are not so desirous of coming to him; but when we find a deluge in the world, such storms and tempests of trouble, that we know not where to fix our souls for a day, then we come as the Dove fluttering about the Ark, and cry to our *Eternal Noah*, that we may be near him, yea, within, with him. Wicked

men

men (like the Raven, which *Noah* sent out first, *ver. 7. and returned not again*) care not for the Ark of Gods presence in the greatest troubles; to be near God, is more troublesom to them, then all their troubles. But Believers, like the Dove, will look home (at least) in foul weather: God is their chief friend at all times, and their only friend in sad times. Is there any harm in this? Christ sends a storm, but to draw his back to the Ark, *that, at the last, where he is, there they may be also.*

Lastly, We may say it is well with the righteous in their worst condition of outward trouble, because *God is with them: It can never be ill with that man, with whom God is.* It is infinitely more to say, *I will be with thee*, then to say, peace is with thee, health is with thee, credit is with thee, honour is with thee. To say, *God is with thee*, is all these, and infinitely more: for in these you have but a particular good, in God you have all good. When God sayes I will be with you, you may make what you will out of it; sit down and imagine with your selves whatsoever good you can desire, and it is all comprehended in this one word, *I will be with thee.* Now God who is with the righteous at all times, is most with them in worst times; then he saith in a special seuce, *I will be with thee. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt*, &c. *Isa.* 43. 2. When *a mighty wind* passed before *Eliah*, it is said, that *God was not in the wind*; and when the *Earthquake* shook the hills, and a consuming fire appeared, it is said, God was not in the earthquake, nor in the fire. God joynes not with outward troubles for the terror of his people, but he joynes with outward troubles for the comfort of his people. So he is in the fire, and in the wind and in the Earthquake, and his presence makes the fire but as a warm Sun; the stormy wind, a refreshing gale, and the earthquake, but a pleasant dance.

So much for the removing of this objection, and clearing up the justice of God, respecting the afflictions of the righteous.

If any shall look on the other hand, upon wicked men, as if God came not home in his justice, while he suffers them to prosper.

First, I answer, Their prosperity serves the providence of God, and therefore it doth not cross his justice. That was *Nebuchadnezzar's* case (*Isa.* 10. 6.) *I will send him* (saith God) *against an hypocritical nation*: so then he must prosper, while he goes upon Gods errand; but mark what follows (*ver.* 12.) *It shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed his whole work upon Mount Zion*, &c. by *Nebuchadnezzar's* power, (who was but doing the just work of God, while he thought ambitiously of doing his own) now it is no injustice for God, to give an instrument power to do his work (and when his bloody lust hath performed the holy work of God, you shall see the Lord will take an order with him speedily; for) then, saith the Lord, *I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks.* God let him alone to do the work he had set him about; and it was a righteous work of God upon his people, though *Nebuchadnezzar* went about it with a proud and malicious spirit against his people.

Secondly, The prosperity of wicked men serveth them, to shew how wicked and vile they are, to act and publish the seven abominations of their own hearts. Now as it is one of the greatest mercies under heaven, for a man to have his lusts quite mortified, so it is a very great mercy, for a man to have his lusts but restrained. It is a mercy, for a man to have that fewel taken away from his corruptions, upon which they feed; therefore it must needs be wrath and judgment upon wicked men, when God, in stead of restraining their lusts, giveth them opportunity to enlarge their lusts, and layes the reins on their neck, to run whither and which way they please, without stop or control. This is wrath, and high wrath, a sore judgment, the sorest judgment that can fall upon them: Wherefore when we think they are in a most prosperous condition, they are in the most dreadful condition; they are but filling themselves with sin, and fitting themselves for destruction. Many Many a mans lusts are altogether unmortified, which yet are chill'd and over-awed by judgments. And there is more judgment in having liberty to commit one sin, then in being shut up under the iron bars and adamantine necessities of a thousand judgments. *He that is Satans treasury for sin, shall be Gods treasury for wrath.*

Thirdly, Their prosperity is the judiciary hardning of their hearts: and *a hard heart is the greatest judgment on this side hell*: As there is a naturally inbred and sinfully acquired hard heart, so there is a judicially hardened, or a divinely inflicted hard heart. When to a natural hard heart, and an acquired hard heart, which men get by many repeated acts of sin, the Lord adds a judicially hardened, or inflicted hard heart, then *wrath is heated to the hottest, and judgment is within one step of hell.* Especially if we consider, that every hour of such prosperous impenitence, and hardness of heart increases punishment, and adds to the treasury of that wrath, which is stored up against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Who thinks that man happy, who is let alone only to gather a mighty pile of wood, and other fewel of flames, to burn himself? While ungodly men seem to the world to be gathering riches, honour and pleasure, they are but gathering a heap of wrath, and a pile of fire; which, at the last, will flame so bright, that it will make a revelation, of the (formerly secret, but) ever righteous judgment of God.

Lastly, To shew that God is just in all his dealings, both the righteous and the wicked learn from the end of both. That we may fully discover the justice of God, we must look upon all his works together; while we look only upon some particular piece of Gods dealings with a godly man, he may seem to deal very hardly with him: or if we look but upon some particular piece of his dealings with wicked man, God may seem very gentle and kind toward him; but take all together, and the *result is exact justice.* It was a good speech of a modern Writer, *We must not judge of the works of God before the fifth Act*, that is, the last Act or Conclusion of all. This, and that part may seem dissonant and confused; but lay them all together, and they are most harmonious and methodical: Hence *David* (Psal. 37.) after he had a great dispute with himself, about the troubles of the righteous, and the prosperity of the wicked, and was put hard to it, how to make out the justice of God, resolves all in the close with this advice (*ver.* 37.) *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* Though a righteous man die in war, yet, his end is peace, whereas though a wicked man die in peace, yet his end is war. It is said (*Deut.* 8. 16.) that all which God did to his people in the wilderness, was, *that he might do them good at the latter end.* Come to the end therefore, and there you shall find *justice visible.* We often lose the sight of justice; in our travels and passage through the world, mountains and hils interpose, which we cannot see over or through; but when we come home, and arrive at the end of our travels, Justice will appear in all her *state* and *glory, rendring to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.*

Joshua concludes the story of the people of *Israel*, in their passage to *Canaan*, with the highest testimonies of Gods justice and faithfulness; though God dealt with them so variously in the wilderness, that they often murmured in their tents, as if he had done them wrong; yet in the close, you shall find, how exact and punctual the Lord was with them (*Josh.* 21. 45.) *There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel, all came to pass:* And in that other Text, *Josh.* 23. 14. *Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth, & you know in all your hearts & in all your souls, that not one thing hath faild of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* How admirably just was God in his word? If a man promise many things, we take it well, if he perform some of the chief, and them in the chief, though somewhat may fail. God promised many things, and performed all; and which is more, all of every one of those many things promised. The texts compared, make this out; the one saying, That *not one thing failed of all the good things which God spake concerning them*, and the other, That *not ought of any good thing failed.* So then, they had every good thing in kind, with each particular part and degree of every good thing: And for the truth of all this, *Joshua* makes his appeal to themselves, and to that in themselves, which was best able to

determine

termine it, *all their hearts, and all their souls*; which words do not only refer to every person, as if the meaning were, *the hearts and souls of you all*; but rather to all that is in every person, *all their hearts and all their souls*, that is, understandings, memories, consciences, affections; yea, senses, their eyes and ears, their hands and mouths, could bring in witness from their several operations, to this great truth. And surely God in the end, will deal as well with every *Israelite*, as he did with all *Israel*: A time will come, it will come shortly, when every *Saint* shall say, *in all their hearts and in all their souls*, that not one thing, nor ought of any good thing, which the Lord hath said concerning them, hath failed. I shut up this in the words of Christ to his Disciples, when they were amused about that act of his, the washing of their feet (*John* 13. 7.) *What I do, ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter.* Stay but a while, and all those *mysteries and riddles of providence* shall be unfolded. *Though clouds and darkness are round about him, yet judgment and justice are the habitation of his Throne*, Psal. 97. *Mortal man never had, and at last shall see he had no reason to complain of God; mortal man shall not be more just then God, nor shall man be more pure then his Maker.* And so much for the fifth Conclusion, That God neither doth, nor can do any injustice to the creature, he is just in nature, just and holy in all his wayes.

Just or fit oportet qui immerito affligitur, quia quis immerito affligit.

The sixth or last Conclusion is this, That *to complain of Gods dealing with us, is to make our selves more just and pure then God*; or, when any person or people complain of Gods dispensations toward them, they (though not formally, yet by way of interpretation) make themselves more just and pure then God. This was the point wherein *Eliphaz* labours much, to convince *Job*, supposing that he had thus exalted himself against God, by these grievous complainings of his present state, in the foregoing Chapter: There is a truth in the Proposition, though not in the Application, as hath often been hinted. *Job*'s complaints were bitter, from the sence of his pains, not from any prejudice in his understanding: *He ever preserved high and holy thoughts of God.* The least suspition of whose righteous dealings, is to make our selves, by so much more righteous then he. The reason is clear; for, he that complains thus, thinks some wrong is done him; *Now he that complains of wrong, would be thought more just, then he of whose wronging him he complains.* Whosoever murmurs or repines at what God doth, secretly saith (this voyce is in it) that he could do better, or that God ought: He that speaks against the rod, speaks against him that smites with the rod; *He that swears by heaven, swears by the Throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon*, saith Christ; and so he that accuses the rod of God, accuses the work God, and God that wrought it: He thinks himself more pure then his Maker, who is displeased with God as a corrector. To disapprove any thing which God doth, is to approve our selves before God. It is seasonable for us to look to our hearts in such a time as this; it is a time of temptation, let us not by our murmurings, make it a time of provocation. Possibly we may often see cause to complain of men, but we can never have cause to complain of God. There is but little good got by complaining of creatures; but how much guilt and misery gets he, who complains of his Creator? For a man to complain to man, is in some cases necessary; but it is best in all cases, to complain to God, and the worst of any case, to complain (though silently) of God. So then, complain of man to God, rather then of man, to men; complain often to God, but never of God; complain before God, and tell him, that such have dealt negligently, such falsly, such unjustly, such cruelly: But always say, *Lord, thou hast done justly, even by those who are unjust; Lord, thou hast done graciously, even by those who are wicked; Lord, thou hast done holily, even by the hand of those who are unholy; and thou hast dealt faithfully, though these have been treacherous.* Thus let us complain to God, but not of God. Every complaint of God will be interpreted, a secret justification of our selves, and a condemnation of the righteous God. Man is then worse then a Devil, when he would make himself better then God: *Nothing pollutes man so much as his thought, that there is unrighteousness in God: Nothing debases the creature, so much as that thought, desire or act, wherein he prefers and exalts himself above the Creator.*

Quisquis de persecutione murmurat, quid aliud quam judicium ferientis accusat, puriorem ergo se vir factore suo existimat, si contra flagellum querelam parat, eumque sibi proculdubio postponit, cujus judicium de sua afflictione redarguit. Greg.

Thus we have opened the general Proposition: The probation of it, from the vast difference between men and Angels, is prosecuted at large in the latter part of the Chapter.

VERS. 18.

Behold he put no trust in his servants, and his Angels he charged with folly.

ELiphaz having laid the dignity of man (comparing with God) in the dust, by those humbling questions, in the former verse; *What is man that he should be just? and shall man be more pure then his Maker?* He now strengthens it further, that there is no comparison between *God and mortal man*, by a direct assertion, that there is no comparison between *God and immortal Angels. Behold he put no trust in his servants, and his Angels he charged with folly.* As if he had said, If Angels are not able to stand before God, and justifie themselves upon his enquirie; then certainly man, the best of men, who dwell but in houses of clay, cannot: But Angels cannot justifie themselves before God, therefore much less can the best of men. That Angels are not able to justifie themselves before God, he proves in these words; *Behold he put no trust in his servants, and his Angels he charged with folly:* They that cannot be trusted by God, cannot be justified by God; and they that are chargeable with folly, are not able to stand in judgment before the most wise, the only wise and holy God. Angels are excellent creatures, yet because creatures, they are in and of themselves, frail and weak: they have no strength to stand longer then upheld; no stedfastness to obey, longer then confirmed; no faithfulness to be loyal, longer then over-ruled; no wisdom to discern, further then they are enlightned; what then will become of man, if he stand alone, or stand in competition with *God his Maker?* This is the sum and general sence of the words, as they are an argument. We will now consider them as they lie here in order.

Behold he put no trust in his servants.

The Particle [Behold] in the Original, as it often notes wonder in other texts, so it may much more in this; *Behold* a wonder! *Angels are foolish, Angels are not to be trusted.* Yet in this place, *Behold*, is put by way of affirmation, rather then of admiration. *Behold he put no trust in his servants*, is as much as *verily and indeed, certainly and without controversie, he put no trust in his servants*: So (*Deut.* 13. 14.) *Thou shalt enquire and search, and ask diligently, and behold if it be true*; in the Hebrew thus, and *behold true*, or *behold truth*; that is, if upon enquiry it appear, that such and such things are certainly so, then they must proceed according to the Law provided in that case. Again, (*Deut.* 19. 8.) *The Judges shall make diligent inquisition, and behold, if the witness be a false witness*, so we translate; but the Letter is, *Behold the witness, a false witness*, that is, if it be affirmed, and do appear that it is a false witness or testimony which is brought, then the Judges shall proceed so and so, &c. Thus here, *Behold he put no trust in his servants*, is a vehement affirmation, that God searching into those his servants, finds them such as are not to be trusted.

But who are these untrusty *servants?* First, The *Chaldee Paraphrast* understands by *servants*, the *holy Prophets*. Prophets (I grant) sometimes have, and ofter would have proved unfaithful; some of them discovered much, and others would have discovered more unfaithfulness, if God had not mightily supported them. Secondly, One of the *Rabbins* understands it in general of any, or of all the faithful; *Behold he put no trust in his servants*, that is, not in any of the holiest and faithfullest of the children of men.

But the connexion of the Text carries it clearly, that by servants, we are to understand the *Angels*, who are called *ministring spirits*, Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all ministring spirits* (or servants) *sent out for the good of those that are the heirs of salvation?* And so the words in the close of this verse, are *exegetical*, expounding who are intended by those servants; *Behold he put no trust in his servants, and his Angels he charged with folly*; that is, he trusted not those servants, the Angels, but charged them with folly. But there is a further reason, more fully evidencing, that

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it must be understood of Angels, in *ver.* 19. where the persons standing in equal opposition to these servants and Angels, are men; *How much less* (saith he) *on them that dwell in houses of clay?* Now a dwelling in a house of clay, is a *Periphrasis*, or description of mankind in general, good or bad, one or other, high or low; all mankind dwells in a house of clay. Seeing then the term of opposition is mankind in general, we must take somewhat, which being a rational creature, is not man, for the other term, which cannot be any except Angels; we cannot set any sort of men in opposition to others upon this ground, because they dwell in houses of clay; for the Saints on earth, dwell in houses of clay, as well as men of the earth: therefore to make the opposition clear, it necessarily follows, that by *Servants*, in the first clause of the verse, *Angels* are implied, as well as in the latter, where Angels are expresst.

אמן
Nutrivit, in Hiphil, credidit, fisus est, à fide quæ in nutriendo requiritur.
אמן
nutritius dictus est cujus fidei puer est cõmissus, quasi fidum aut fidelem dicas, sæpe etiam accommodatur ad œconomum & dispensatorem propter fidelitatem eorum.

But if these servants be Angels, how is it, that *he put no trust in*, or that (as we may render it word for word out of the Hebrew) *he did not believe in these his servants?* I shall answer that, when I have a little opened the word here translated *to put trust*. We find it used two wayes in Scripture; sometime *passively*, and sometime *actively*. It is taken *passively* to be *faithful, trusty* and *true*, in word or promise. From this Root the Hebrew takes the name of a *Guardian*, or *Foster-father*, or *Steward*, because such, to whose care children or families are committed, ought to be most faithful in the discharge of so great a trust.

The Apostle (*1 Cor.* 4. 1, 2.) speaking of that heavenly Stewardship, the Ministry of the Gospel, expresseth it thus, *Let a man so account of us as of the Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the mysteries of God*; *moreover* (saith he) *it is required in a Steward, that a man may be found faithful.* And (*Num.* 12. 7.) where *Moses* is spoken of as a servant, he is thus described, *My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all my house*; he is a man whom I may trust or give credit to; for he is trusty and faithful, (*Heb.* 3. 2, 5.) The Apostle comparing Christ and *Moses*, saith of Christ, That *he was faithful to him that appointed him, as Moses was faithful in all his house.* So that here is an elegant *Antithesis*; his servants, who according to their duty and office, ought to be constant, faithful, trusty; he found unconstant, unfaithful, not to be trusted.

לא יאמין בעבדיו
A verbi proprietate non recedamus, qua significat eum ב *credere & fidere alicui* Merc. *Verbum de verbo, in servos suos credidit.*

Yet the word being in *Hyphil*, is of an active signification, and when it is construction with *Beth* (as *Grammarians* observe) it imports to give credit unto, or confide in a person; and so here, *he put no trust*, that is, he did not credit or confide in those servants, or he did not believe on them. He saw somewhat in them, which might betray them to disloyalty, if himself, withdrawing his assistance, should make an experiment, or try what was in their hearts. And this sence is most suitable to the state and office of a servant: trusting, or not trusting, faithfulness, or unfaithfulness, are acts proper to that relation, *Lord and Servant.* So then, the Lord *put no trust*, that is, he could not confide in his servants, they being such, as he found not perfectly sure and loyal unto him. We say commonly of a man whom we cannot trust, *We will not give our word for him, and we will not take his.* Our Lord Christ is therefore called *a faithful High Priest*, because his *Father* trusted him with the whole business of our salvation, without the least misgiving thought of his faithfulness, or the miscarriage of the work. Thus *Solomon* describes a faithful wife, and a confiding husband, *Prov.* 31. 10, 11. A rare couple indeed, and as rarely found: Therefore he makes proclamation for such a woman; *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above Rubies, the heart of her Husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil*; there's confidence to the height; *the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.* A husband that hath such a Jewel to his wife, knows, she will order the family with discretion at home, when he is abroad; he knows she is faithful to him body and goods: Her chastity or her frugality never came in question before his thoughts; therefore (saith he) *I shall have no need of spoil*; which some interpret thus; her care and wisdom in providing for the family, will make it like an Army which hath overcome the enemy in the field, or won a wealthy City, where the Soldiers have spoil and pillage enough, they need no spoil. Or as others, *He shall have no need of spoil*, that is, he shall have no need to spoil or oppress others, to help his family. All things shall be so ordered by his wives prudence, that he shall not need to take any unjust way, to provide for, or supply his household. Thus *the heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.* Such trust the heart of God could not put in those servants, his Angels, he knew they might come short in their accounts. Such trust Christ could not give some, who seemed to trust or believe on him (*John* 2. 23.) Many, seeing Christs miracles, believed on him, yet *Christ would not believe on them*; we translate, *he would not commit himself to them*: the Grek is, he did not believe or trust himself unto them; Christ believes in, or may trust them all the world over, who truly believe in him; but these believed so falsly upon him, that he could not believe fully upon them; and the Text gives the reason, *for he himself knew all men*; he knew, they were not metal of a due temper, and therefore not to be trusted. So God knew all Angels, the uttermost perfection, power and virtue that was in Angels, therefore he would not commit all to them, he would not believe upon them. We find the word belief thus used (*Exod.* 14. 31.) When the Children of *Israel* saw the great work that the Lord had done in destroying the *Egyptians*, it is said, *The people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses*; he puts God and *Moses* as the joynt object of their faith, as they had formerly been of their unbelief. *Except the servants of the Lord be believed, the Lord himself is not: And when they are believed, the Lord is. Believe in the Lord your God, believe his Prophets*; saith good *Jehoshaphat* to his people, 2 *Chron.* 20. 20. *Moses* had told them enough of the power of God before he had undertaken they should be delivered; but they would not trust *Moses* upon his word, nor would they trust the word of God; yet now when they saw this great deliverance, present sight wrought faith for the time to come: they perceived by this miracle, that the Lord and *Moses* were to be credited, and they doubted not to credit them another time. *Though that faith which comes in at the eyes only, seldom goes down so low as the heart, or sees further and longer then the eye.* Thus we may understand the first part of the Verse, *He put no trust*, no belief in his servants; he gave no credit to them, as knowing perfectly what their nature and power was, what both could do; that if left by God, they would quickly leave God, and prove unfaithful.

οὐκ ἐπίστευεν ἑαυτὸν αὐτοῖς.

I shall observe one Point, before I come to the latter part of the Verse (for there the suspition of disloyalty upon the Angels, comes more fully to be considered) from the title here given to the Angels, his servants; *he put no trust in his servants.*

Angels are the servants of God.

They are his servants, as being altogether at his command; and they are his servants, as being fully conformable to his commands. These great and glorious Spirits come under the same denomination with men, who dwell in houses of clay, *servants of God.* To serve God, is not only the duty, but it is the honour of the highest creatures. *It is more honour to serve God, then to rule the world.* The stile of the good Angels, is, *Ministring Spirits*, Heb. 1. But the stile and title of the evil Angel, is, *Prince of the power of the air, God of this world*; you would think these were weighty titles, *Prince of the air, God of the world*; but the additions diminish their weight; yea, make them lighter then vanity, or rather, heavy only with misery: *There is more glory in being a servant to God, then in being a god of the world, or a Prince of the power of the air.*

I might here enlarge my enquiry into the services of Angels, in what they are servants, and what their offices and duties are; but I shall only touch. Their service may be considered, either in respect of the Church, or the enemies of the Church. Respecting the Church and people of God, they have such services as these:

1. They are as messengers to carry and reveal the mind of God; they are as Tutors and Instructors of the Churches, *Dan.* 8. 9. God sent his Angel to teach *Daniel* the mystery of those visions. And, *Rev.* 1. 11. an Angel was sent to instruct *John*, chap. 22. 16. *I Jesus have sent mine Angel to testifie these things in the Churches.*

Secondly, They are sent as Guardians and Protectors of the people of God, to take their part, and to be on their side, *Psal.* 34. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him.* Psal. 91. 11. *He giveth his Angels*

Tam circumfluit bonis omnibus familia ejus quam milites spoliis expugnata urbe, aut hoste superato.

gels a charge over them, lest at any time they should dash their feet against a stone. Gen. 32.2. When *Jacob* journeyed, it is said, *the Angels of God met him*; an army of Angels was his convoy, Gods Host coming out for his protection and safeguard, and therefore he called the name of that place *Mahanaim*, that is, *two Hosts or Camps*; either because the Angels appeared in two bands, and so made, as it were, a guard for *Jacob* to pass between them; or because the great Angelical Royal Army quartered and marched with *Jacob*'s little army; and so two confederate Armies appeared in the field together. Angels are called Chariots, *Psal.* 68.17. *The Chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of Angels*: that is, God useth Angels for defence of his people, as Chariots in war. The ancient Prophets were called the Chariots of *Israel* (2 *Kings* 3.13.) And the Angels are the Chariots of God. *Our strongest Militia is of Spirits, or of men spiritualized.*

Thirdly, Angels suggest good things, holy thoughts to us. If the Devil, who is an evil Angel, a wicked Spirit, can suggest evil, sinful, filthy thoughts, and help on the heart in wickedness; then doubtless a good Angel can help on the heart in holiness, in heavenly thoughts and meditations. Christ speaks of *Judas*, that *Satan had put it into his heart to betray him*, John 13. and *Peter* to *Ananias* (Acts 5.) *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?* The nature of a good Angel is as fit, his power given as great, to deal with our spirits, as either the nature or the power of an evil Angel. That of the Apostle (2 *Cor.* 11. 14.) gives a hint, if not a proof of it, where he tells the *Corinthians, That deceitful workers transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ*; *and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an Angel of light*; and when is Satan in this change, from an *Angel of darkness* to *an Angel of light?* Even when he suggests *good, for evil ends, or evil, for good ends.* And if he is called *an Angel of light* for this reason, then *Angels of light, good Angels*, suggest good, for good ends; otherwise, Satan could not be said to imitate them, in suggesting good for ill ends, and under specious pretences of bringing glory to God, tempting to transgress the will of God.

Fourthly, Good Angels comfort, strengthen and support in times of distress, anguish and trouble. An Angel comforted *Hagar Gen.* 21. And (*Mat.* 4.10.) after Christ had finished his terrible combat with that wicked Angel, the good *Angels came and ministred unto him.* Again, when he was in that most bitter *Agony in the garden* (Luke 22. 43.) *an Angel appeared to him from heaven, strengthening him.* That which they do to Christ the Head, they do to his members in their proportion.

Their fifth service is to convey and carry the souls of departed Saints to heaven; they are *Heavenly Porters* (Luk. 16.22.) *Lazarus died, and was carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom.*

Lastly, They shall convocate and gather all the elect together at the last day, *Mat.* 24. 21. Their services against the wicked, and all enemies of the Church, have been many and great. *Angels assist Saints*, and oppose the opposers of *Sion.* Two Angels were sent upon a message of destruction to *Sodom*; an Angel defeated the host of *Senacherib*; an Angel smote bloody persecuting *Herod*; Angels (by name, if not by nature) poure out the seven vials of Gods wrath in the *Revelation.* And at the last day Angels shall hurry the wicked to Christs Tribunal; they are *heavenly Pursivants*, and they shall bundle the Tares up together, as fewel to be thrown into everlasting burnings, *Mat.* 13.41,42.

And it may be a great comfort to us, that God hath such servants. When visible dangers are round about us, we should remember, God hath invisible servants round about us. *There are more with us, then against us*, as *Elisha* told his fearful servant, 2 *Kings* 6. And in that low estate of the Church, *Zech.* 1.8. the Prophet is shewed Christ in a vision, *standing among the Myrtle trees in the bottom* (the Myrtle trees in the bottom, noted the Church in a low estate) *and behind him, there were red horses, speckled and white*, that is, horsemen speckled and white. These diverse-coloured horses were Angels appointed for several offices, as the learned *Junius* (with others) interprets it: the *red horses* being appointed for judgment, the *white* for mercy, and the *speckled* (as he conjectures) for mixt actions, being sent out, at once, to protect and help the people of God, and to execute wrath and judgment upon the Adversary. Thus we see the services of the Angels; they are servants, yet such as *the most wise God put no trust in*; therefore we have *an Angel better then* Angels, even the *Angel of the Covenant*, the Lord Jesus, into whose hands our safety is committed, to whose care the Church is left, in whom God puts the whole trust, knowing that this *great Angel* is, and for ever will be faithful in and over his house, to his highest delight, and the Churches compleatest welfare.

And his Angels he charged with folly.

There are very different readings of this part of the Verse. Some (as Mr. *Beza*) read it thus, *He trusted not his servants, though he had put light into those his messengers.* Others read it with a negation in both parts, *He put no trust in his servants, neither hath he put light in his Angels.* Another thus, *Neither hath he put perfect light in his Angels.* Mr. *Broughton* differs from all these; *Behold, he holdeth not perfection to be in his own servants, and in his Angels he judged no clear light to be.* Another sort read it to these sences, *He charged or put madness in or upon his Angels, he put or charged vain boasting in or upon his Angels, he found vanity in or amongst his Angels, he observed some evil amongst his Angels.*

Nec in Angelis suis ponet lumen. Pagn. *Nec in Angelis suis posuit lucem exactissimā.* Vatabl. *Angelis suis posuit vesaniam.* Tyg. *In Angelis suis ponet gloriationē.* Bibl. Reg. *In Angelis suis reperit vanitatem.* Sym. κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Ἀγγέλων αὐτῆς σχολαστὰς τὴν ἀπώνοιαν. Sept. תהלה à radice הלל *Splenduit, luxit, claruit, Metaphoricè in* Piel, *splendidum, illustrē, clarum reddidit, laudavit, prædicavit. Per* Antiphrasin, *inglorius, insanus, furore actus fuit, insanivit.*

Now that which hath given occasion to this variety of translations, is, the different sences which the Original yields us. The Hebrew word is very fruitful of significations, and hath (as the Oracle told *Rebekah* concerning two contrary Nations) two contrary meanings in the womb of it, and that makes the strugling amongst interpreters. The word in its proper sence, signifies to *shine forth with a resplendent brightness*: so, *chap.* 29.3. *Job* wisheth, *O that I were as in moneths past, when the Candle of God shined upon my head:* It is a Verb, of which the word *Folly* in this text of *Job* is a derivative. And (*Isa.* 14.12.) *Hielel* signifies the *Morning-star*, whose shining brightness hath obtained the name *Lucifer, Light-bringer*, or *Light-bearer. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning? How art thou fallen from Heaven,* Hielel, *thou shining day-star?* Thus the word properly signifies shining or brightness, or to shine and be bright; and hence by a *Metaphor*, to be *famous* or renowned, or to make one renowned or famous, or to paint out a man with praises; because a man is (as it were) decked with light, and hath rayes of brightness cast upon him, when he is honoured and adorned with praises. Due commendations are to a man as a robe or vesture of light, which makes him shine to all about him. And hence the word *Halelujah* is derived, *praise ye Jah*, or the Lord; used frequently both in the beginning and end of the Psalms: in the beginning of the Psalms, by way of exhortation; and in the end, by way of acclamation, crying up the honour and glory of God. And (to note that in passage) it is well observed, that this word *Halelujah* is first used in the Old Testament, *Psal.* 104.35. where the utter consumption of sinners is mentioned; and in the New Testament it is first used, *Rev.* 19.3,6. where the utter consumption of *Antichrist* is prophesied. *Judgment on the wicked, is matter of high praise to God.* Thirdly, The word signifies (by the figure *Antiphrasis*, or *contrary speaking*) to boast and brag vainly, foolishly, or vain foolish boasting. *To commend or extol our selves, is pride running mad, and arrogance distracted.* It is the highest dotage to be in love with our own wisdom, and folly to publish our own works. There may be wisdom (though oftentimes there is a great deal of folly) in commending others; but in commending our selves, there can be nothing but folly; therefore the very same word which signifies to boast and commend our selves, signifies both the concrete, to be mad, vain, or foolish; and the abstract, madness and folly: thus, in *Eccles.* 2.2,12. the word is used; *I said of laughter, thou art mad. I turned my self to behold wisdom, and folly, and madness.* And, *Psal.* 75.4. *I said unto the fools, deal not foolishly*, or to the mad-men, do not play the mad-men, that is, do not exalt your selves; for so he clears his meaning in the fifth verse, *Lift not up your horns on high, speak not with a stiff neck*, that is, a neck stiffened with pride, and a horn lifted up with vain-glory or self-confidence.

From this variety of significations, the variety of translations before-toucht, ariseth. First, They who read it,

He

He put light into those his messengers; Take the words in a proper strict sence, making out the meaning thus; That God, having put the light of excellent knowledge into the Angels, could not yet trust them: all their speculative knowledge, and high-raised illuminations, were not enough to make them steadily and stedfastly holy: That is the intent of Master *Beza*'s interpretation, *He trusted not to his servants, though he had put light into those his messengers.* For those who retained the word, *Light*, translate negatively, *neither hath he put light in his Angels*, or, *neither hath he put perfect light into his Angels*; Or as Master *Broughton, In his Angels he judgeth no clear light to be*, putting a negative particle in both branches of the Verse, whereas in the Hebrew there is no expres negation in the latter. These, I say, are led by this reason or rule. It is frequent in Scripture, when there is a negative in the former clause of a Verse, then to understand a negative also in the latter clause, though none be expres't. For instance (*Psalm* 9. 18.) *The needy shall not alway be forgotten, the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever*; so we read: but in the Hebrew the latter clause is, *the expectation of the poor shall perish for ever*: There is no Negative in the *Original*; but our *Translators*, and not only they, but all that I have seen upon the place, render it so, supplying the negative particle of the former in the latter clause of that sentence. And without that negative, the sentence is not only imperfect, but untrue. Thus, *The needy shall not alwayes be forgotten, the expectation of the poor shall perish for ever*, this were a contradiction: but reading it, the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever, makes the whole a truth, and congruous in it self. Again (*Prov.* 17. 26.) *To punish the just is not good, to strike Princes for equity*, so the letter of the Hebrew; but we read it thus, *To punish the just is not good, nor to strike Princes for equity.* I might give you other examples, but a taste may suffice. Thus in the Text before us, when it is said in the first clause, *he put no trust in his servants*, we take up the negative, and say in the second, *Neither hath he put light into his Angels*, or *he did not put light in his Angels*, or *he put no perfect light in his Angels*, or *he judged not clear light to be in his Angels*.

Secondly, They, who (according to our Translation) render it *madness or folly, vain boasting or vanity*, these take the Original in that figurative sence before given. When a man from a reflection upon his own worth, boasts out his own praises, which, because it is a point of extream vanity and folly, therefore the word is elegantly applied to figuifie *folly*, &c. *He charged his Angels with folly, He put or laid folly upon, or to his Angels*; He put, for so the Hebrew word bears. Not, that the vanity which is in Angels is of Gods putting; but the folly that is in them, he *puts to them, or chargeth it upon them, or layeth it to their charge.* As we say, *Such a one put it home upon him*; that is, he charged him soundly, or fully, with such a crime or offence. To charge, is a judicial or Law-term, implying, that the Lord sitting in judgment to examine the estate of Angels, charged them by way of accusation, and upon trial found them (in a sence) guilty of that, which, though they had not formed into any one sin, yet might be formed and shap'd into any sin, *Folly, or vain-glory.*

ישים מתהלה

Having given some account of those terms, *Charging* and *Folly*, *He charged his Angels with folly*, it grows to a great doubt what Angels we are here to understand: what Angels did God thus charge with folly? The quere or doubt lies, whether we shall lay this charge at the door of the good Angels, or of the bad, or of both?

Many of the ancients restrain it to the evil Angels, to the *Apostate Angels*; God put no trust in them, he saw folly in them; taking it for confessed, that the Angels which stood, the good Angels, are trusty servants, discreet and wise, far from either unfaithfulness or folly; such as God hath put trust in, and they never deceiv'd his trust; such whose obedience is made the pattern of ours, by Christ himself in his pattern of prayer, *Thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.* And would the Lord regulate us by them who are themselves irregular? or make them our copy in doing his will, whose folly renders them unfit to be trusted with the doing of his will? Therefore (say these) such a charge suits not the state and condition of the good Angels.

Others call it upon the good Angels, that God put no trust, no, not in them. I conceive, from either, there may be a good sence, though I incline to the latter. For in the Apostate Angels (take it in the broadest sence) God saw no light, no goodness, no faithfulness at all; they have plainly discovered themselves, and shewed, not only weakness and unfaithfulness, but wickedness and utmost folly. But to confine it to the evil Angels, or to understand it chiefly of them, is too narrow for the Text; especially, seeing this is but a light, a too easie charge for *those Apostate Spirits*, to say only thus, that God found unfaithfulness in them, and charged them with folly: for in them rebellion was found, and they stand charged to this day with High Treason against the Crown and dignity of the King of Heaven: and are therefore committed to prison, and reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day. As for the good Angels, God may be said to charge them with folly without any wrong, either to the holiness of their nature, or the stedfastness of their obedience. For upon examination (or intimation rather) he finds they have no wisdom or stability, but by divine bounty and establishment. As the Apostate Angels were positively full of folly and unfaithfulness; so the good Angels might be charged with folly, negatively, namely, that they had no faithfulness, but as assisted and propt up.

Angeli boni ex se nihil habent nisi infirmitatem negativè, i. e. nullâ ex se sapientiam, nullam veritatem, bonitatem nullam.

But we may take the Angels in a third or middle consideration, neither for the fallen or Apostate Angels, nor for the good and confirmed Angels as distinct, or since this distinction: But by Angels we may understand the *Angelical nature.* The whole complex nature of Angels in their creation and constitution was such, as God could not trust fully unto, such as he saw folly in. We may demonstrate this plainly, because a great part of the Angels (and it is questioned whether or no the greater part, but it is clear, that a great part of the Angels) a whole Regiment at least, proved disloyal, and fell together: therefore the Angelical nature (in that abstracted notion) is subject to folly and unfaithfulness, as well as man, although they are of a more excellent make and constitution then man. God looking upon Angels in general, saw they were not to be trusted; the event also shewing many of them (who were as good by nature as they who stand) falling from him, discovering their folly and nakedness to all the world.

But it may be questioned yet, how there could be folly in the Angelical nature; for as much as God viewing and reviewing all the works which he had made, *saw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good?*

I answer, first, God charged them with folly *comparatively*, respecting himself. As (1 *Tim.* 6. 16.) the Apostle saith of God, *that he only hath immortality*; that speech is exclusive, shutting out all other creatures from a participation of Gods immortality. Yet we know Angels are immortal, Angels dye not, therefore also they are opposed to men (in the next Verse to the Text) *Who live in houses of clay, whose foundations are in the dust, and are crushed before the moth.* Angels are not crushed, they dye not, yet God only is immortal; because the immortality of Angels compared with the immortality of God, is but mortality. And the Reason is this, because Angels are not immortal in themselves, or of themselves, they have not original or absolute immortality, their immortality is dependant and derivative; God only is independently and originally immortal, and hence *he only* is said *to have immortality.* As it is in the point of life, so also of righteousness, wisdom and faithfulness. God only is faithful, *he only is wise*, that's the Apostles phrase, *To God only wise*: Men, yea Angels are unfaithful, unwise, foolish, compared with God. He is wise of himself, and in himself, in his own compass: creatures have only what they borrow or receive from him. To this sence one of the Ancients speaks fully, *In comparison of the Justice of God, if the holy Angels in Heaven be called unjust, I see no hurt in the assertion, not because they have faln from justice, but because they are creatures, and not God.* All is resolved into this, *they are creatures*, that's enough to prove their folly and unfaithfulness. And if a man that hath not only some smattering of learning and knowledge, but is a professed Scholar, be looked upon as ignorant, compared with the *Beu-clerks* and great Scholars of the world; is it any wonder that Angels should be called fools, in reference to the infinite wisdom of God? *The foolishness of God is wiser then men, and the weakness of God*

In comparatione justitiæ Dei, si nec sancti in cœlis Angeli justi esse dicantur, non mihi videtur importuna sententia, non quia ut hoc essent à justitia lapsi sunt, sed quia facti sunt & Deus non sunt. August. contr. Prisc.

is stronger then men. And it is as true of Angels, the foolishness of God is wiser then Angels, and the weakness of God is stronger then Angels. Angels are called *Principalities and Powers*, but yet it is only because they act in the Power of God, and go forth in his strength; that's the first Answer. The whole nature of Angels is unfaithful and foolish, weighed with God.

Secondly, I answer, although in the Angels there is no actual unfaithfulness or folly, yet there is possible folly and unfaithfulness in Angels; and this potentiality is the thing here meant or aimed at. The Holy Angels that now stand are wise and faithful altogether, yet considered in themselves (not as confirmed by Christ) they may fall; their condition is altered, but their constitution is the same. It is otherwise with man, (which makes a wide difference between Angels and men.) Man not only hath a potentiality to be foolish and unfaithful, but man is actually foolish and unfaithful; yea man in himself is nothing else but a bundle of folly and unfaithfulness. Whereas Angels in themselves, or considered in their natural constitution, have no folly actually in them at all. *The nature of man is nothing but sin, and Angels have no sin at all in their nature*; they only have a potentiality, a possibility in their nature to sin. So then we must understand this charge of folly with two cautions concerning Angels. First, There was not any folly concreated with them, their nature is *purely pure*. Secondly, They have not contracted any folly into their nature. The folly of the good Angels is but like the folly of man in the state of innocency, when he had only a power to sin: which possibility of Angels to sin is by the mediation of Christ (wherein these Angels have a share, though not to redeem or raise them from their Fall (as man) yet to confirm and keep them from falling) I say, by the mediation of Christ that possibility is removed. Christ hath changed their possiblity to sin, into an impossibility of sinning. This is a glorious priviledge indeed, and that which all the Saints shall have in glory. Redemption hath not only bettered the condition of man, but the condition of Angels. Now *they all excel in strength, doing the Commandments of God, and hearkning to the voice of his word for ever*, Psalm 103.20.

Cuicunq; creaturæ hoc convenit, ut peccare non possit, hoc habet ex dono gratiæ, non ex conditione naturæ. Aqui. p.1.quæst.63. art.1.

We may hence learn, First, *What the sin of Angels was.*

God charged his Angels with folly; The possible sin, which God saw and still sees in the nature of Angels, was the actual sin of Angels. Pride and self confidence were the sins of Angels, and these are the most proper sins of Angels; Angels cannot fall into every sin. The Schoolman questions, *Whether the first sin of Angels was pride?* He argues and concludes, that howsoever in regard of guilt, the Devils, or fallen Angels, have all sins upon them, because they tempt man to every sin, (*For he that tempts another to a sin which himself commits not, or is incapable to commit, is as guilty as if he had committed it,*) yet in regard of the act it self, evil Angels can only commit those sins which are sutable to a spiritual nature.

Aquin. par. 1. q.93. art. 2.

Now a spiritual nature is not affected with those sins which belong to a corporal or sensitive nature: Devils are not adulterers, they are not drunkards; theirs are spiritual sins, and their chief spiritual sin was pride: Their first sin consisted in not submitting themselves to that condition wherein God placed them, and whereunto they were appointed. All agree it was pride, though there be different opinions about what this pride shewed it self; whether in affecting a higher degree then God created them in, refusing the work and office God set them about, (which some conceive, was the ministration to, or the guardianship of man, which trust they deserted or scorned) or whether it were in affecting a further condition upon their own strength, not looking to the strength and grace of God; whatsoever the particular was, the general is plain, *They abode not in the truth, they kept not their station: Pride and ambition swel'd them, till they brake and fell.*

Secondly, Observe, *Angels (as creatures) are mutable creatures.*

Though they are the best of creatures, yet they are changeable creatures; though they are the most perfect creatures, yet there is somewhat in them of imperfection. Look upon Angels in their creation, they were created blessed; Blessed (as the Schools determine) with a natural blessedness, not with a supernatural, which consists in the vision of God; for, if they had been created in a supernatural blessedness, then they had never fallen; they were created only in a natural blessedness, and from that they might fall, and did. Now, indeed, the good Angels have obtained by Christ a supernatural blessedness, from which they cannot fall; and so by grace are become immutable, which by creation they were not. Though Christ be not a Redeemer (as was toucht before) yet he is a confirmer, a supporter of the holy Angels. In reference whereunto, Christ is called the *Head of all things* (Ephes. 1.22.) *And of him the whole family in Heaven and in earth is named*, Ephes. 3.15. And *by him* (Col. 1.20.) *God hath reconciled all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in Heaven.* Some understand that place in the *Colossians* of men only, because of the word *reconciling*; yet we may well take in Angels also, because that place takes in all things, both in Heaven and earth. And howsoever Angels needed not such a reconciliation as supposes a breach of peace, or a falling out before: Yet they needed such a reconciliation as consists in the continuance and strengthning of that peace which was before.

Angeli fuerunt à Deo creati beati, beatitudine naturali, non autem beatitudine supernaturali, quæ in visione divinæ essentiæ consistit. Aquin. par. 1. q.62. art 1.

Further, We learn by way of Corollary, from the former point,

That, *there is no stability in any estate out of Christ.*

The Angels themselves could not be trusted out of Christ; folly is in them not considered in Christ, how much more in man? When *Adam* fell, if God should have repair'd him again, and set him up (*in statu quo*) in the same condition wherein he was, yea, in a better (if a better could be had) without a Mediator; and so have tried his obedience once more; or should every particular man have stood for himself, and not one for all; certainly, as we fell at first in a lump all together, so we should have all fallen single (as it were) by retail, one after another: *There is no assurance in any estate on this side Christ:* Nor man, nor Angel can hold out without a Surety: Christ is called *the Surety of the Covenant*, Heb. 7.22. because he undertakes for us that we shall do our parts, that we shall be faithful and believing, that we shall be holy and humble, that we shall do what God expects from those whom free grace shall save. Christ undertakes for all the grace, and holiness, and faithfulness, which is required in believers; He gives no command but what himself helps us to fulfil, nor calls he for any duty but what himself works in us, and for us.

Fourthly Observe, That, *God sees imperfection in creatures, whose natures are most perfect.*

Man looking upon the Angelical nature, or upon mans nature in innocency, could see no fault or folly in either; but God saw both possibly faulty, though not actually faulty. And, as it is with the nature of men and Angels, so with their works: when we can see nothing amiss in a work, God can: As the Apostle acknowledges (*1 Cor. 4.4.*) *I know nothing by my self:* I profess, when I look into the course of my ministery (for he speaks to that particular) when I look how I have discharged my Apostleship, my conscience bears me witness, I know of no unfaithfulness or neglect, but yet, *though I know nothing by my self, I am not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me is the Lord:* as if he should say, when God comes to look over my work, he may find faults, many faults in it; there is no standing for creatures before God in any creature-purity: Angelical perfection is imperfect in his sight. Angels have not the least spot or tincture of sin in their nature, ye the nature of Angels is potentially sinful. The best creature (in regard of pure naturals) may be wrought to evil, only God cannot. And the reason is, because every one may err, who hath not the rule of righteousness within him: and therefore it is impossible God should err, because his own will is the rule of his own actions: He is every way a law unto himself. The Apostle speaking of the Gentiles (*Rom. 2.14.*) saith, *These having not the Law, are a law to themselves.* Not, that their nature is a law,

(which

(which is the tranſcendent priviledge of God) but that they have the law of Nature, or the law printed in their nature, though not publiſhed to their ear; *They have the Law written in their hearts: but the heart of God is his Law, both written and unwritten.* Creatures how perfect ſoever in their nature, have the will of God for their rule and law: which though it be within them, yet it is not *Them*, and ſo they may act beſide it. The hand of the Artificer often fails in cutting or faſhioning the work he is about, becauſe his hand is not the rule by which he works: his hand works by a rule or line, his hand is not that rule or line: Therefore he ſometimes ſtrikes right, and ſometimes he ſtrikes wrong; but if the hand of a man were the rule by which he works, then it were impoſſible that ever he ſhould work amiſs. Thus it is with God, the very will of God which acts, is the rule by which he acts, hence it is impoſſible for God to fail; Angels and men act by a rule preſcribed, their will is one thing, and the rule is another; the power by which they work is one thing, and the direction by which they work is another; and therefore (to ſhut up this point) the moſt perfect creature may poſſibly ſwerve and err in acting; *Only he cannot err in any thing he doth, whoſe will is the perfect rule of all he doth.*

Solum illum actū à rectitudine declinare non contingit, cujus regula eſt ipſa virtus agentis. Aquin. *par.* 1. *q.* 63. *art.* 1.

Fifthly, Foraſmuch as God beholding Angels, ſees folly in them; Learn,

That, *God hath no need of any creature, no not of Angels.*

The Reaſon is clearly this, becauſe Angels themſelves in themſelves are unfaithful, Angels themſelves in themſelves are fooliſh, therefore what need hath God of ſuch as theſe? As King *Achiſh* ſaid (1 *Sam.* 21. 15.) when *David* changed his behaviour before him, (ſtudiouſly acting the fool and madman) ſcrabling on the doors of the gate, and letting his ſpittle fall down upon his beard: What, ſaith *Achiſh* unto his ſervants, *Have I need of mad-men, that you have brought this fellow to play the mad-man in my preſence?* So God may ſay when he looks upon the beſt of creatures, Angels or men, have I any need of mad-men, any need of fools or of their folly? Foraſmuch then as there is nothing in any creature, barely as a creature, but what may be reduced to folly and unfaithfulneſs, and would certainly end there, therefore God hath no need at all of any creature. Men will ſay, we need not the help of diſloyal or untruſty men, we need not the help of fools to counſel us, or of unfaithful ones to act for us.

Beſides, Creatures are no help to God: For the truth is, God and the creature are no more then God alone; I ſay, God and the utmoſt perfection of all creatures put together are no more then God alone: The Reaſon of it is, becauſe, if there be any perfection in creatures, it is but what God himſelf hath put into them. What a man gives to another is no addition to himſelf; much leſs is that which God gives man or Angel, any addition to God. God is infinite, and no addition can be made to infinite: When the creature doth moſt for us, the creature (of it ſelf) doth nothing for us, *God doth all in all and by all.* The creature doth you no more good at one time then at another; all the good that is done at any time, God doth it: So then, every way God hath no need of creatures. And it is our comfort, I am ſure it ought to be, that he hath not. He ſaith to *wiſe men*, I have no need of your *counſels*; to *rich men*, I have no need of your *purſes*; and to *great men*, I have no need of your *power*; he ſees all is vanity.

Laſtly, If God truſt not Angels, let not us truſt in man; if he charges his Angels with folly, let not us adore the wiſdom of man. This diſcovery of imperfection in Angels ſhould lay all creatures low before us, and take us off from confidence or boaſting in any arm of fleſh. To this ſence *Eliphaz* proſecutes the Argument in the following words to the end of the Chapter. If Angels, the chiefeſt and choiceſt of creatures, be thus weak, what then is man, *who dwels in a houſe of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt, and who is cruſhed before the moth?*

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

How much leſs on them that dwell in houſes of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt, which are cruſhed before the moth?

They are deſtroyed from morning to evening, they periſh for ever without any regarding it.

Doth not their excellency, which is in them, go away? they dye, even without wiſdom.

THeſe three verſes contain a deſcription of man in oppoſition to the Angels. The form of the Argument was given before to this effect; That if Angels, thoſe excellent creatures, cannot ſtand before God, or be juſtified in his ſight; then much leſs man, a weak creature; *Man who dwels in a houſe of clay, and whoſe foundation is in the duſt.*

Two things this Context holds forth to us, concerning the weakneſs of man, in oppoſition to Angels.

Firſt, It ſhews that man is a *material ſubſtance*, ſo are not Angels, *Angels are ſpirits, ſpiritual ſubſtances.*

Secondly, It ſhews that man is a *mortal ſubſtance*, ſo are not Angels, *ſpirits dye not.*

That man is a material ſubſtance, is proved in the beginning of the 19. verſe, from thoſe words, *He dwels in a houſe of clay, whoſe foundation is in the duſt.*

That man is a mortal ſubſtance, is implied in the former; That which is made of clay and duſt muſt needs be brittle ware. But beſide that his mortality is implied in thoſe words, it is proved expreſly, and in terms, in the words following to the end of the Chapter. And this mortality of man is ſet forth by divers adjuncts or circumſtances.

Firſt, By a ſimilitude, ſhadowing the quickneſs or the ſuddenneſs of mans death, *They are cruſhed before the moth.*

Secondly, By the ſhortneſs of life; *They are deſtroyed from morning to evening.*

Thirdly, By the everlaſting power which death hath upon us (reſpecting this world;) *They periſh for ever.*

Fourthly, By the common and general inſenſibleneſs and inconſideration of this frail life, of this long-laſting death; *Man* (ſaith he) *is deſtroyed from morning to evening, he dyeth quickly, periſheth for ever*; he lies, as long as the world laſts, in his grave: yet ſuch is the ſtupidity of man that none regardeth all this, *he dyes without any regarding.*

Fifthly, And leaſt any ſhould ſay, ſurely, man is not ſuch a pitiful creature, as this ſad deſcription repreſents him; man was the moſt excellent part of the inferiour Creation; God planted many noble endowments upon man: and is there no more to be ſaid of him but this? *He is cruſh'd like a moth, and dyes, no man regarding?* That objection is taken away in the laſt verſe; as if the Holy Ghoſt had ſaid, I grant that man, beſides *duſt and clay* (which are his materials) hath many heavenly, yea *divine endowments*, he hath the impreſſions of *Gods Image* in reaſon and underſtanding ſtamped upon him; but, though he be thus qualified, yet *all his excellency* (all which may be accounted the choiceſt and the beſt in him) will not *keep him ſweet*, or protect him from death and rottenneſs: *Doth not* (ſaith he) *their excellency which is in them go away?* As if he had ſaid, If you alledge, that man is more then *duſt and clay*, then weakneſs and corruption; 'tis granted: But what then? *Doth not their excellency that is in them go away?* Doth it not vaniſh, and where is it? and where is he? All natural perfections (whatſoever man hath under the notion of a reaſonable creature) be they never ſo high and raiſed, quickly paſs, wither and decay: They have no abiding excellency in them, *Doth not their excellency that is in them go away? They have wiſdom, but they dye without wiſdom*, even as bruit beaſts; either their wiſdom decayes while they live, or it is not able to keep them alive: wiſdom, parts and learning ſtand them in no ſtead to prevent death. Now if their excellency go away, they muſt go too; if wiſdom cannot keep them alive, dye they muſt; as we ſhall ſee further in opening the ſeveral parts, having thus given the ſence in general.

Theſe things conſidered, we may ſee the ſtrength of the Argument in Verſe 19. *How much leſs on them who dwell in houſes of clay*, &c. As if he ſhould ſay, Foraſmuch as Angels cannot ſtand in competition with God, or approve themſelves in his ſight, certainly much leſs can man, how great thoughts ſoever he hath of himſelf; much leſs can man be juſtified in his ſight, who comes ſo many degrees

short of Angelical perfections; for his soul which is within him, though it be a noble and a spiritual substance, and that wherein he is most like to Angels, yet this soul of his sojourns, dwells and acts in a body composed of corruptible clay, and hath no better a foundation (in a natural capacity, then the very dust: And so subject is this man to mortality, thus composed of dust and clay, as, what through the inward distempers of his body, what through outward accidents and casualties, he is as transitory, and as subject to death, as the meanest worm, as the poorest creature in the world; *he is crushed before the moth.*

How much less on them that dwell in houses of clay?

Particula אפס *pro quo est simpliciter* אלא *hoc loco ut transeat, de- signat,* &c. *vel quanto minus vel quanto magis.* Drus.

The Hebrew bears a double rendring; either, *how much less* (as we) or, *how much more*: If it be rendred *how much less*; then it refers to the first clause of the former verse; thus, *if he puts no trust in his Angels, then much less doth he put trust in men, who dwell in houses of clay.* If it be rendred, *how much more*, then it refers to the latter clause of that verse; thus, *If he charged his Angels with folly, then how much more may he charge them with folly who dwell in houses of clay?* Which words are a description of man, either in his civil condition, or in his natural constitution. Some take these words in the very letter, *the house*, for that which we ordinarily call a house, the house wherein man ordinarily inhabits; as if *Eliphaz* had thus said, Angels dwell in heaven, they have everlasting *mansions*; but man dwells in a house of clay: the best and goodliest houses are but clay and dust, a little refined and sublimated by art or nature; brick and stone, all these materials are but dirt concocted by the heat of fire and Sun: So that, if the allusion were to the very houses in which mankind dwells, in opposition to the habitation of Angels, these set them far inferiour to, and below the Angels. As these take it for the house wherein man lives, so some understand it, of the house where man lies, being dead, namely, the *Grave*. The *Chaldee* is expres, paraphrasing thus, *How much more the wicked, who dwell in a Sepulcher of clay?* That the grave is called a house, the Prophet helps us, *Isa.* 14. 18, 19. *All the Kings of the Nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house*, that is, in the grave, as the next words prove; *But thou art cast out of thy grave*, &c. But I rather take it (as was before intimated) to be an expression of mans natural constitution; *He dwells in a house of clay, whose foundation is in the dust*: And so the Apostle is expres (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *If our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved*; the earthly house is the body; and (2 *Cor.* 4. 7.) the body is called *an earthen vessel, we have this treasure* (namely the precious promises and truths of God in the dispensation of the Gospel) *in earthen vessels*. We, dying men, preach eternal life; we have death in our faces, while the word of life is in our mouths. The word here used, signifies clay, either wrought or unwrought, either natural slimie dirt, or dirt made up for use by art: So, *Gen.* 11. 3. When they attempted the building of that Tower, it is said, *they had slime for morter*; it is the word of the Text, which is used for both slime and morter; *they had slime* (which is natural) *for morter*, that is (by art & industry) they made *morter* of *slime*: The body of man is a house of clay, but not of rude natural clay; the power, and (if I may so speak) the art of God hath wrought it beyond it self, and refined it for this goodly building, the body of man.

חמר *Turbidus, lutulentus, mixtus, ut cum aquæ turbantur, & in eis lutum ita commiscitur, ut confundantur & in unum misceantur, ut in cementum digerantur.*

The body of man is called a house, or a building, in two respects. First, Because of the comely fabrick; it is set up by line or by rule; there is admirable architecture, admirable skill in building and raising up the body of man, story after story, room after room, and contrivance after contrivance, in all so compact and set together, that the most curious piles in the world are but rude heaps compared to it; so then in respect of the frame and structure, it is fitly called a house.

Hoc corpus lutum domus animæ dicitur, quia anima humana quantum ad aliquid est in corpore, sicut homo in domo, vel sicut nauta in navi, in quantum scilicet est motor corporis; anima autem non unitur corpori accidentaliter sed forma iter, ut forma materiæ, dicitur enim materia fundamentum formæ, eo quod est prima pars in generatione, sicut fundamentum in constitutione domus. Aquin.

Secondly, The frame of the body is called a house, in respect of the soul; the soul dwells in or inhabits the body, as the whole man inhabits or dwells in a house; the soul guides and orders the body, as the inhabitant orders the affairs of the house; or, as the Mariner and Pilot steer and direct the motions of the Ship: Not that the soul is in the body accidently (we must not strain the similitude so far) as a man is in a house, or a Mariner is in the Ship: there is a formal union between the body and the soul; only the soul is said to dwell in the body, and the body or the matter is after called a foundation, because there is the beginning. Man was begun at his body, as the house is at the foundation. First, *God formed man* (that is, the body) *out of the dust of the earth, and then he breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul.*

corpus humanum lutũ dicitur, quod ex terra & aqua gravioribus elementis abundantius constat. Aq.

Thus the body is a house, and it is a house of clay, or a house of earth, so called, chiefly in two respects.

First, Because of the matter of it; it is made of earth. Though all Elements (as Naturalists teach) meet in mixt bodies, yet earth is predominant in gross or heavy bodies.

Secondly, Because of the continuance of it, or the means by which it is supported; for as it was at the first framed out of the earth, so it is still supported and maintained by earth; earthly creatures, meat and drink, with such like accommodations, continue and repair this house from day to day, until at last, it be laid down in the dust, and return to earth again. So then, it is called an earthly house, not only from the matter of which it is made, but also from the means by which it is kept in repair, earth and earthy all.

Whose foundation is in the dust.

These words aggravate the weakness of mans condition. Suppose man were formed out the dust, and were but clay, yet, had he a strong foundation, that would support and strengthen him. The strength of a building is in the foundation, and that building whose walls are but weak, may stand long, being firmly founded. The Church of Christ is weak of it self; but because the Church hath such a mighty foundation, *Christ the Rock, a living and unmoveable Rock*: (that confession of *Peter, Thou art Christ the Son of the living God*, is the Churches foundation-rock) therefore *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* But when the building is weak, and the foundation weak too, in how tottering a condition is such a building? Mans foundation is but sand or dust; and the word signifies flying, light, unstable, moveable dust, such as lies on the surface of the earth, and is plaid about with every puff of wind, though some (I confess) take the word not strictly, for this flying dust, but for slimie dust, or dust moistened, which is slime. This was the matter out of which God created man (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *dust out of the earth, or out of the dust of the earth.* That dust which can hardly be collected or kept together, to make a subsistence, that is laid together as the foundation of man; *His foundation is in the dust.*

עפר *Pulvis propriè rarior & tenuior, qualis in superficie terræ.* Merc. *in* Gen. *Significat non simpliciter pulverem, sed pulverem cœnosum & limosum.* Fag. *in* Gen. 2. 7. *Pulvis levissimus, ex quo nihil firmum aut diuturnum compingi potest.*

Hence we may observe first, what the pedigree and original of man is; what treasure soever he carries about him, yet he is an *earthen vessel*; or as the Apostle speaks of the first man, 1 *Cor.* 15. 47. He is of the *earth earthy*. Earth is the original of man, and man himself is no better, *earthy*; yea the earth is called *his earth*; as if he had propriety in nothing but earth, *Psal.* 146. 4. speaking of the greatest Princes, *Trust ye not in Princes, nor in the Son of man, his breath goeth forth, and he returneth to his earth.* Our bodies can challenge no alliance with, or propriety in any thing but earth; it is *our earth.* The Wise man (*Eccles.* 12. 7. calls the body only an Allie to the dust, or a-kin to dust, but plain *dust*; *Then* (speaking of Death) *shall the dust return to the earth as it was*; it came from the earth, and in death it returns to the same point from whence it set out.

A second thing we may take notice of from mans Original, which exceedingly advances the infinite wisdom, and the almighty power of God;

That, *Dust and Earth are the matter out of which we are formed.*

But doth the countenance of man represent dust and earth? Could any one say, who had nothing to judge by, but the eye, that man was made of such mean materials? what characters of Beauty and Majesty sit in his visage? how unlike is he to his own parent the Earth? Man hath received from God, not only an excellent fabrick or composure

ſure of body; but if you conſider it, the very matter of which the body is compoſed, is far more excellent then earth or duſt. Take a piece of earth, or a handful of duſt, and compare them with the fleſh of man, that fleſh is earth indeed, but that fleſh is far better then meer earth. This ſhews the power of the Creator, infinitely exceeding the power of a creature. A *Goldſmith* can make you a goodly Jewel, but then you muſt give him Gold and precious Stones, of which to make it; he can put the matter into a better form, but he cannot make the matter better. The *Engraver* can make a curious Statue, exactly limb'd and proportion'd to the life, out of a rough piece, but the matter muſt be the ſame you put into his hands; if you give him Marble, it will be a *Marble Statue*; but he cannot mend the matter. Mans work often exceeds his matter, but mans work cannot make the matter exceed it ſelf. Now God took up a rude lump of earth, or ſubtil duſt, and he did not only put that into an excellent form, but he mended the matter alſo. Man is earth, but he is earth ſublimated and refined: *Not only doth the form exceed the matter, but the matter formed exceeds the matter unformed.*

Materiam ſuperabat opus.

Thirdly, *As this lifts up the wiſdom and power of God, ſo it ſhould humble and lay man low.*

Eliphaz improves this principle as an argument to take down the ſpirit of *Job* from his ſuppoſed heights and ſelf-conceits. Surely thou art great in thy own thoughts, when thou preſumeſt to enter a conteſt with God: but, *look to thy Original*; ſuch towring, lofty, and aſcending thoughts would quickly be abated, if thou wouldſt remember that thou art but a *clod of earth*, a little *refined clay*, *moving ſlime*, *enlivened duſt*, *breathing aſhes*; did we ſpiritually look upon the matter of our bodies, it would take down the ſwelling of our ſpirits; when our ſpirits are like *Jordan*, in the time of harveſt, overflowing all the banks of humility and moderation, this thought ſpiritualized, will bring us into our chanels again, and recall us to our own bounds and banks. Some *Naturaliſts* obſerve of the *Bees*, that when they are up and angry, do but throw a little duſt upon them, they are quiet, and hive again. Certainly, when our imaginations are *buzzing and humming* in the air, when they are flying and mounting up to heaven, not in holy aſpirings to God (which we ever ought) but in bold aſpirings againſt God, which we ſhould never dare, in ſuch a diſtemper of our ſpirits, if we could but caſt this duſt upon them, it would quiet and bring them in again.

Hath not man cauſe to lie as low in his thoughts, as that from whence he was extracted? ſhould not he be humbled to the duſt, who is the duſt? Eſpecially this earth ſhould be abaſed in all addreſſes to heaven, in all our approaches unto God; as *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 27. *I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, who am but duſt and aſhes.* We ſhould never be ſo low in our own thoughts, as when we make uſe of our higheſt priviledges. And the nearer we are admitted to come to heaven, the more ſhould we (for the magnifying of free Grace, which makes this admiſſion) remember that we are but earth.

Fourthly, If the Body be but clay, and hath but a foundation of duſt; then,

Do not beſtow too much care and coſt upon your clay, upon your duſt.

How many are there who beſtow much pains to trim up a vile body, and neglect a precious ſoul? Moſt uſually they who beſtow moſt pains upon this *mortal houſe* of clay, beſtow leaſt about that *immortal inhabitant*. *In an over-cared-for body, there ever dwells a neglected ſoul.* You ſhall have a body cleanly waſhed, and a ſoul all filth; a body neatly cloathed and dreſt, with a ſoul all naked and unready; a body fed, and a ſoul ſtarved; a body full of the creature, and a ſoul empty of Chriſt; *theſe are poor ſouls indeed.* That complaint of the *Moraliſt* againſt *Heathens*, may be renewed againſt ſome *Chriſtians*; they are buſied moſt *between the Comb and the Glaſs, and troubled more at a diſorder in their hair, then at a diſorder in the Commonwealth*, (he ſaid, I ſay) *then at a diſorder in the Church, or in their own hearts.* It is a ſad thing that any who bear the name of a Chriſtian, ſhould ſpend much time between *the Comb and the Glaſs*, and but little between *Ordinance and Ordinance, between the Bible and the Pulpit, between reading and hearing, between both, and holy meditation*; the body is but a houſe of clay, it is but duſt, therefore be not ſo induſtrious for it. We uſually laugh at children, when they are making houſes of clay, and Pies of dirt. They whoſe care is thus over-active for the body, are but *children of a greater ſtature*, and ſhew, they have ſo much more folly in their hearts, then they, by how much they have more years over their heads; and are fooliſh about more ſerious matters then they. *There is no Child to the old Child.*

Fifthly, Seeing this houſe of clay is founded alſo in the duſt, obſerve,

That, *Man is a very frail, an unſteady, and an unſtable creature; every puff muſt needs ſubject him to ruine.*

Look upon his foundation, it is nothing but duſt. When Chriſt (*Mat. 7. ult.*) had finiſhed his Sermon upon the Mount, he compares his hearers to ſuch as build either upon the Rock, or upon the Sand; *They that hear and do not, are like a houſe built upon the ſand*: and what becomes of that houſe? when the rain deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, *that houſe fell, and the fall thereof was great.* A foundation of duſt or ſand cannot ſtand out one ſtorm. The houſe of a mans body is walled and rooſed with clay, and bottomed upon no better then duſt; the ſtrength of the Church (as was touch'd before) is deſcribed by the matter of its foundation, a Rock, *Mat.* 19. And the new *Jeruſalem* (which, as it is conceived, to be the moſt pure ſtate of the Church here on earth, ſo it muſt be the ſtrongeſt) is ſet forth having twelve fonndations, and they all of ſtone, and all thoſe ſtones moſt precious, and therefore moſt durable, *Rev.* 21. 19. The ſtrength and ſtability of that eſtate which the Saints ſhall inherit, when theſe houſes of earth are by death levelled to the earth (the ſtability (I ſay) of that eſtate) is deſcribed under the notion of a *City which hath foundations* (Heb. 11. 10.) He, namely, *Abraham*) *looked for a City which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God.* When the holy Ghoſt ſaith *foundations*, who can tell how many they may be? we can eaſily tell the feweſt they can be; *two* is the loweſt number; ſo that at leaſt this City hath a foundation upon a foundation. The foundation of Chriſts perfect righteouſneſs is laid upon the foundation of Gods eternal free love; here is foundation upon foundation. The City above hath theſe foundations, and therefore we receive *a City that cannot be ſhaken.* I note theſe things, to ſhew by conſent of Scripture, that the ſtability of any condition, in alluſion to a building, is expreſt by the ſtrength of its foundation. Now all our outward glory and excellency, our life, and all the pomp of it, hath ſcarce ſo much as deſerves to be called a foundation: a foundation of duſt hath only the name of a foundation. That *Image* in *Daniel*, which typed out all the deſcents of worldly greatneſs, had *a head of Gold, the breaſt and arms of Silver, the thighs of Braſs, and the legs of Iron, but the feet were part of Iron and part of Clay.* The feet are the foundation, and the feet of this Image ſpeak thus much to all the world, that all worldly pomp and greatneſs, all worldly power and Majeſty muſt fall; for the Image ſtands upon clay; and though it have a mixture of iron in the feet, which is ſtrong, yet it ſhall not ſtand by the iron which is ſtrong, but fall and be broken by the clay, which is weak. As it was in thoſe great Monarchies, into which the outward power of Nations and Kingdoms was contracted; ſo if you look upon any particular man, though you may conceive him to have a head of gold, arms and breaſt of ſilver, thighs of braſs, and legs of iron, yet when you come to the feet, the foundation of the whole body, it is but duſt, which a ſmall ſtorm will diſſipate and blow away. The body of man hath ſo weak a foundation, that it is ſome time compared to that which hath no foundation, *a Tabernacle* (1 Cor. 5.) *If the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved*, ſaith the Apoſtle) Now a Tabernacle hath a roof or a covering, but no foundation: The Tabernacle of the body hath a covering, but hardly any foundation, only a foundation in the duſt.

Teſtum habet, fundamentum non habet.

Laſtly, Conſider the form of ſpeaking in this Scripture; *How much leſs on them that dwell in houſes of clay?* He ſpeaks of the whole man, as dwelling in a houſe of clay: Now we know that a body cannot properly be ſaid to dwell in a body, the houſe doth not dwell in a houſe; yet he

ſpeaks,

speaks, as of a compleat person dwelling in a house of clay, which yet is to be understood of one part of the person, *The soul; that dwels in a house of clay*, that is, it acts and officiates in a body composed of clay. Hence observe, seeing the whole man cometh under the notion of the soul,

That, *the soul of man is the man.*

Non quod anima sit homo, ut quidam posuerunt, dicentes hominem nihil aliud esse quam animam inditam corpori; sed quia anima est principalior pars hominis, unumquodq; autē consuevit appellari id quod est in eo principalius. Aquin. *in loc.*

The soul goes away with the name of the whole person: The soul is not the man in a natural consideration, (as some have Philosophiz'd, asserting that man is nothing but a soul cloathed with a body) for, man is man by the union of soul and body; and the perfection of man as man, consists in that union; but the soul is the man in a moral consideration, because it is the more noble and excellent part of man: and it is usual to denominate the whole from that part which is more excellent. The body is but as the Cabinet, the soul is the Jewel; the body is but as the sheath or the scabbard, the soul is as the knife or the sword: You know when a man buyeth a sword, he buyeth a scabbard too; or when he buyeth a knife, he buyeth the sheath too; yet he saith, this knife cost me so much, or I gave so much for this sword; he makes no mention of the scabbard or of the sheath: now the body is the sheath or scabbard of the soul, (*Dan.* 7. 15.) you have it expresst so, *I was grieved* (saith the Prophet) *in my spirit in the midst of my body*, so we translate it, but the Chaldee is (and so we have in some Margents) *in the midst of my sheath*; *The soul is the blade, a blade of admirable metal and temper*; *the body how beautiful soever by nature, or gay by art, is but a velvet, or an embossed sheath and scabbard:* Therefore at first, when God formed man out of the dust of the earth, and had breathed into him the breath of life, the result of all is, *and man became a living soul*; it is not said man became a living body, though life was breathed into the body, and the body stood up and lived; yet the best part is named for all, the dust and the clay are (as it were) quite forgotten in the story, *man became a living soul.* And that may be a reason, why the fear of God and keeping his Commandments (*Eccles.* 12. *ult.*) is called *all man*, because the things chiefly concern that part of man, which (upon the matter) is all man. The fear of God and keeping his Commandments, are *soul work*, and tend to the eternal welfare of the soul; and though the body shares in all the blessings, and assists in most labours of the soul; yet the soul labours most for, and is the chiefest seat of blessedness. How strangely have some departed from this point of truth, which the Scripture every where writes as with a *Sun-beam?* who instead of making the soul to be the chief part of man, deny that man hath any such part. And whereas some (toucht at before) err'd on the right hand, saying that *man was nothing but a soul*; these go astray more, and more dangerously on the left hand, saying, that *man hath no soul at all:* An opinion, howsoever lately drest in some fineness of wit and subtilties of Philosophy; yet in it self, so gross, so dishonourable to man, so contrary to this Text and the whole tenor of the word of God, that I hope *it is very mortal, and will shortly find a grave in every heart, but theirs, who have more reason to wish it, then to maintain it.* I intend no dispute about it, beyond the Argument before me; which if it be not demonstrative (as many others from Scripture are) yet it carries (at least) a fair probability aud an ingenuous ground: For how can man be said to dwell in a house of clay, if he himself be nothing else but a house of clay? or how can the inhabitant and the house be in all, but one, and the same?

בלי יראים

But I shall dwell too long upon these houses of clay, in which man cannot dwell long, for it follows;

Which are crushed before the moth.

לפני עש *Ad faciem tinea, contra errorem, in quodā tinea, Sept. Pro tinea, Vulg. Contra.*

What strength is there in houses *which are crushed before the moth?* or as others read it, *which shall be consumed after the manner of a moth?* Mr. *Broughton* thus, *Beaten to powder as a moth be they*; that is, they are crushed as soon, or as speedily as a moth. Another, *They are consumed as it were with a moth.* A fifth translates differently from all these, *which are crushed and consumed before Arcturus.* *Arcturus* is a constellation in Heaven about the *North Pole*; we read in the 9. Chapter of *Job*, ver. 9. *Which makes Arcturus, Orion and the Pleiades*, &c. The same word here, signifies a moth, and sometimes a constellation, a knot or company of Stars: The sence of this reading is made out thus; *they are crushed before the face of Arcturus*, that is, they are crushed as long, or whilest *Arcturus* doth continue; in plain English, as long as there is a Star in Heaven, man will be a mortal man; or man will never change this condition of mortality, while the world stands. We may thus expound it, by that (*Psal.* 72. 17.) where the Prophet describing the Kingdom of Christ in the extent both of place and time, saith, *His name shall be continued as long as the Sun*; the Hebrew is *His name shall continue before the face of the Sun*; to continue before the face of the Sun, is to run in a line of equal continuance with the Sun; so here, they are crushed before the face of those Stars, that is, they shall be in such a crushing, perishing condition, as long as those Stars continue, which is, as long as the course of this world continues. Our own translation, which comes clear to the letter of the Original, is further to be looked into. *They are crushed before the moth.* It may have a three-fold interpretation. First, Before the moth, that is, before in time, or sooner then the moth. How quickly is a moth crushed? man may be crushed before it, sooner then it is crusht. Secondly, *Before the moth*, may be as much as, in presence of the moth; as if he should say, man thinks he is able to stand it out against a potent Adversary, yea, against God himself; but, alas poor creature, he is not able to stand before a moth, or contend with a fly, if God arm any of them against him. Thirdly, *They are crushed before the moth*, that is, man is crusht and torn, vext and worn out by a thousand miseries and troubles which attend his life, before ever the moth hath to do with him, before ever he lyes down in the bed of death, before the moth, that is, for the moth to fret on, or as a companion for the worms.

לפני עש *Ad facies tinea.*

All these rendrings, though they differ in words, come near and meet in the same general sence, namely, *An illustration of mans frailty.* Take them first by way of similitude, *Man is crushed, as it were, with a moth*; it notes thus much to us, *That death consumes us without noise*, secretly and silently: To do a thing as a moth, is to do it silently and without noise, *Hosea* 5. 12. God himself saith, *That he will be as a moth unto* Ephraim, *and as a Lion*, vers. 14. When he saith, he will be as a Lion, it implieth open judgments, which come violently and visibly, which come in like thunder, roaring as a Lion upon them: But when he saith, *I will be as a moth to* Ephraim, the meaning is, I will send silent and secret judgments upon you, which shall eat out your strength, corrode your power, and blemish the beauty of your garments, and you shall not perceive it: Ye shall be undone, consumed, and (as we speak Proverbially) *ye shall never know who hurt you.* The open enemies of the Church are threatned with secret judgments, under this notion of a moth, *Isa.* 50. 9. *Lo they shall wax old as doth a garment, the moth shall consume them.* Again, Chap. 51. 6, 7. *Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their reviling. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool:* that is, whereas your enemies have made a great noise and clamour with their revilings against you; I will come against them without noise, they shall perish with as little clamour as a garment doth, that is eaten with moths. And thus the life of man is ordinarily consumed (as it were) by a moth; sicknesses and diseases enter secretly, into his house of clay, they lye in the frame, and between the rafters of this house, sucking up the spirits, and wasting the strength, spending the heat, and drinking up the natural moisture of the body; we know not how we consume, but we consume; we know not how we decline, but we decline; we dye, we know not how, but we dye: Is it not then as with *a moth*, creeping upon us, yea, feeding upon us without noise?

Again, Take it by way of similitude, not as before, *actively, or instrumentally*, they are *crushed as by a moth*, or as a moth crushes; but *passively* or *subjectively*, *They are crushed as a moth*, that is, they are crushed as a moth is crushed, alluding to the easiness of crushing a moth: A moth is dust as soon as you crush it, the least touch kills it: Man in his house of clay is so weak, that if God do but touch him, he dies and falls to dust; the Lord needs not bring his great Artillery,

Artillery, and make batteries against the body of man; the body of man is no such *strong Fort or Bulwark* to stand out a long siege, or endure much assaulting and opposition; he is crushed as *a moth between your fingers*: Hence *David* most humbly deprecates the stroak of God, which he saw coming, or felt as come, because he was not able to bear it, *Psal.* 39. 10. *Remove thy stroak away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thine hand,* (Lord if thou strike me thus, I shall quickly consume.) And lest you should think that *Davids* flesh (he being a King) was tender and delicate, and so less able to bear any hardship, therefore in the following words, he puts the case in general concerning *man* or *man-kind.* Take the man *whose strength is as the strength of stones, and his flesh as brass*; yet this man breaks and vanishes under the hand of God, so he affirms, *ver.* 11. under this passive consideration of *a Moth, When thou with rebuke doth correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a Moth*; (And then closes with that common axiome of mans mortality) *surely every man is vanity,* Selah.

Further, Man may well be said to be crushed, or dye even as a moth, for as the garment breeds the moth, and then the moth eats the garment; so (besides that power of God, or the out-ward stroak of his hand, of which *David* spake) mans own distempered body breeds ill humours, they diseases, and these breed death: As it was with *Jonas* gourd, so it is with us, we give life and suck to a worm in our own roots, which sucks out our life, causing our leaves to fall, and our goodly branches suddenly to wither.

Thirdly, From that sence, he is *crushed before Arcturus,* or as long as the Stars continue, Observe;

That, *as mans state is frail and weak, so it will be, the for ever of this world.*

Do not look that ever there shall rise up a generation of men, that shall have better houses then houses of clay, or houses stronger built then our present buildings. As we are risen up in our fathers stead, a generation of *sinful men*; so we are risen up in our fathers stead, a generation of *weak mortal men*: and our children will arise in the stead of us their fathers, a generation of men, as mortal as we their fathers. Till the whole compages and course of nature be changed, man shall not exchange the infirmity of his nature, *He shall never be without crushing sicknesses, till he is above them.*

The said story of man holds on still, and grows yet more sad; before it was *crushing*, now it is *destroying.*

Verse 20. **They are destroyed from morning to evening' they perish for ever without any regarding it.**

We may understand the former verse of natural death, and this of casual and violent death. Destruction and perishing, import violence; though I conceive natural death be here also intended. *They are destroyed from morning to evening, they perish for ever without any regarding it*; or as Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *between a morning and evening, they are wasted without any regarding,* or without any thinking upon it.

A mane ad vesperam, i. e. per totum diem, quippe mane & vespera sunt partes diei. Drus.

They are destroyed.] That is, they are subject or liable to destruction: That phrase *from morning to evening*, notes the whole day: it is as much as to say, they are destroyed continually, or all the day long, as the Apostle speaks out of the *Psalm*, Rom. 8. 36. *For thy sake are we killed all the day long*: the morning and the evening are the parts of a natural day, *Gen.* 1. 5. or the two terms of a civil day, and these include and take in the full compass of the day.

This sence teacheth us, That, *man is destroyable every moment.*

He wastes in one sence, while he grows; and dyes, from the morning of his birth, and coming into the world, to the evening of his return, and going out of the world: And not only so, but he is obnoxious to the violent assaults of death every day, and all hours of every day: From the morning when he rises, to the evening when he goes to bed, he walks among armies of dangers, and within the Gun-shot of destruction. The Apostles Catalogue of perils is true to this day, 2 *Cor.* 11. 26. *In perils of Waters, in perils of Robbers, in perils of mine own Country-men, in perils by the Heathen, in perils in the City, in perils in the Wilderness, in perils in the Sea, in perils among false Brethren*: Every place is a peril, and every person a peril. Where can we go, with whom can we meet, and not go among or meet with perils? And do not all these perils speak destruction *from morning to evening? Pauls* experiences, both in regard of a natural, but especially of violent death, brought forth these conclusions, which come full up to the point, *I dye dayly,* (1 Cor. 15. 31.) *in deaths often* (2 Cor. 11. 23.) *we are killed all the day long* (Rom. 8. 36.)

Secondly, Take the words as a *proverbial speech*, by which the shortest time is signified. As (*Isa.* 38. 12.) *Hezekiah* complaining, sets forth his mortal sickness, threatning present death and cutting off, thus, *Mine age is departed and removed from me as a shepherds Tent; I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining sickness, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me*; that is, either continually or suddenly: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me, I am wasting perpetually: or *before night*, within the compass of this day thou wilt destroy and make an end of me: these were the thoughts of my heart, when I was in the hands of that *acute* dispatching disease. The Psalmist (*Psal.* 90. 5, 6.) describes man as grass, *In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth*; that is, man continueth but a very short time: His life is but a span long, or but as a day long. *Jonahs* Gourd came up in a night, and perished in a night; and man cometh up in the morning, and perisheth in the evening. The Naturalists speak of a Fly, they call *Ephemeron*, a creature of one day, which comes forth in the morning, is very active about noon, but when the Sun declineth, it declines too, and sets with the setting of the Sun. Man is an *Ephemeron*, a creature of one day; for howsoever his life consisteth of many days, and is often lengthened out to many years; yet between morning and evening, or from morning to evening, he is destroyed. The first step he sets upon the stage of the world, is a going out of the world; his ascending to the height of his natural perfection, hath in it a descent. One part of his life compared with another, is an increase; but the whole, in reference to his end, is a decrease: his life is but a breathing death, life shortning as fast as it lengthens; his life is death hastning upon him continually. A hand breadth is quickly measured; *Behold* (saith *David*, *Psal.* 39. 5.) *thou hast made my dayes a hand breadth*; nothing needs no time to pass it in: mans age, in it self, is but little, and comparatively it is *nothing*; it falls under no calculation before the face of Eternity. *Mine age is nothing before thee.*

But though the life of man be thus short, and himself be destroyed between a morning and an evening; yet death lasts long, *they perish for ever without any regarding.*

They perish for ever.] Death it seems is everlasting. *They perish*; the word is often used in this book for the dissolution of soul and body, not for the annihilation of either, as perishing properly imports: to perish, is here but to dye, for thus even the *righteous perish, and no man lays it to heart*, Isa. 57. 1.

But doth man *perish* thus, dyes he for ever? Shall there not be a return, a resurrection, shall not soul and body be re-united? How is it said then, they perish or dye for ever? εἰς χρόνον αἰώνιον.

For ever,] is sometime put for an infinite time, and sometime for an indefinite time, 1 *Chron.* 23. 25. *The Lord God of* Israel *hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in* Jerusalem *for ever.* And yet the Jews are now so far from dwelling in *Jerusalem*, that they have scarce rest or dwelling among any people. The like sence of *for ever*, read 1 *Kings* 2. 33. *Psal.* 132. 12, 14. Yet further, *for ever* is put for the finite time of one mans life, 1 *Sam.* 27. 12. *He shall be my servant for ever*, that is, *as long as he lives*; Psal. 23. 6. *I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever*; that is, as long as I live. In the Text before us, *for ever*, is as long as this world lasts; it notes the utmost term of time, not (which is without term) eternity. *They perish for ever*, that is, they shall not live in this world any more; as (*Job* 14. 14.) *If a man dye, shall he live again?* As if he had said, man can dye but once; he cannot live again, that is, in this world; shall he any more re-

return to his house, to his wife and children, to his riches or honours, and shall he here again enjoy such an estate as he had before? That (*Psal.* 103. 16.) explains it so, *As for man, his days are as grass, as a flower of the field so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more*; that is, he shall never return to that local place, or civil place in which he lived; he shall not return to that place of Magistracy or Ministry, to that place of merchandizing or trading, of husbandry or handicraft, where he convers'd before. Thus his place will know him no more. Man dyes but once, and therefore when he dyes, he is said to dye for ever. There is a *second death*, but it is only a *second condition of life*. Some shall so live for ever, that they shall be dying for ever. The misery of all men here, is, that they are dying while they live; the misery of the damned hereafter, will be, that they are living while they dye. We see then, that as life is a continual going out of the world; so from death there is no returning to the world, *they perish for ever*; when once you dye, you are dead for *good and all* (as we say;) there's an end, in respect of any work proper to this world, whether Natural, Civil, or Spiritual. A dying man perishes for ever from eating and drinking, from any outward content or pleasure. When *Barzillai* was (as it were but) upon the borders of death, and confines of the grave, (2 *Sam.* 19. 25.) he be speaks *David* thus, who had invited him to Court, *Can I taste what I eat and drink?* (and it follows) *Can I any more hear the voice of Singing-men and Singing-women? Can I any more*? As if he had said, I am now nigh unto death, these delights are gone, they are perished for ever, I can hardly taste any thing I eat or drink; the pleasant Voice or musical Instrument, can I any more hear? Much more then in death it self are all these outward comforts perished, and will perish for ever.

Again, In respect of civil works, he that dyes perisheth for ever; no more buying, or selling, or trading, or dealing, all these things are past, and past for ever. Yea, death puts an end to all spiritual works, such as were the Saints exercise and duty upon the earth; at the grave, there's an end of them also; a dying man perishes for ever, in respect of repenting or believing, in respect of praying or hearing the word. These are heavenly works, but the time for these is, while you are upon the earth, none of these labours are in Heaven or Hell, no, nor in the grave whither thou goest, as the Preacher concludes (*Eccles.* 9. 10.) Therefore (*Isa.* 38. 18.) *Hezekiah* in his sickness, makes it one part of his suit to God, that he might be spared, *For* (saith he) *the grave cannot praise thee, they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth; the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day*. To praise God shall be the work of Saints for ever; and yet the Saints dying are truly said to perish for ever, from praising God. All that praise shall cease in death, which belongs to the ways of grace; and then such praise begins as suits with glory, which is our end. That *Hezekiah* means it of such praise, and not of all praise, is clear from his own words, Verse 20. *We will sing my songs to the stringed Instruments, all the days of our life, in the house of the Lord*; that is, in the ordinances of thy publick worship. They that are in the house of the grave, cannot praise the Lord in his house. And though the praises of the Lord in Heaven are transcendent, and more perfect then those in his house on Earth; yet it is a higher act of grace to desire to live to praise God, then to be willing to dye that we may praise him, because in this we deny our selves most: *Praising God on earth is a work as well as a reward; but praising God in Heaven is a reward rather then a work*. And we put forth the most spiritual acts of grace, when we cheerfully go on with a work which we know stands between us and the best part of our reward. But I return to the Text.

They perish for ever without any regarding,] or without any laying it to heart. The word *heart* is not in the *mouth*, but it is in the *heart* of this Scripture. For the sence is parallel with that, *Isa.* 57. *The righteous perish, and no man lays it to heart*. The *Chaldee* gives a strange gloss, *They perish or dye because no man giveth them medicine*; as if he had said, there is no Physitian can give an *Antidote* against death, or by any medicines prolong mans life. It is a truth, that the decayes and ruines of Nature, will at last exceed the repairs of Art: but this gloss hath little regard to the Text, which we translate well, *They perish without any regarding it*, that is, *none or very few regarding it*. The *negative* is not absolutely universal, excluding all, as if there were none in the world who take notice of the shortness and frailty of mans life, or of his for ever perishing condition. So in that place of *Isaiah*, *The righteous perish, and no man layes it to heart*; that is, there are very few, scarce any to be found who lay to heart (in comparison of the number which neglect) the death of righteous men.

Observe hence, *Few of the living regard how suddenly others do, or themselves may dye.*

Till we see a friend gasping and dying, till we see him bedewed with cold sweats, and rackt with Convulsions, till our *eye thus affects our hearts*, our hearts are seldom affected with the sense of our mortality. It is one Reason why *Solomon* advises to go to the house of mourning, *Eccles.* 7. *It is better to go to the house of mourning, then to the house of mirth; for* (saith he) *that is the way of all men* (all must dye) *and the living will lay it to heart*, or the living will regard it. As if he had said, the living seldom lay death to heart, till they come to the house of death: he seems to promise for the living, that then they will: yet his undertaking is not so strict, as if every man that goes to the house of mourning, did certainly lay it to heart: but he speaks probably, that if living man will at any time lay death to heart, then surely he will when he goes to the house of mourning. When will a man think of death, if not when he sees death? And looks into that dark chamber of the grave? There are many who lay it to heart only then: for a fit at a Funeral, they have a passion of the heart about mortality. And very many have gone so often to the house of mourning, that they are grown familiar with Death, and the frequency of those meetings take off all impressions of mortality from their hearts. As we say of those Birds that *build and roost in steeples*, being used to the continual ringing of the bells, the sound disquiets them not: or as those that dwell near the fall of the River *Nylus*, the noise of the water deafens them so, that they mind it not. Many have been so often at the grave, that now the grave is worn out of their hearts; they look upon it as a matter of custom and formality, for men to dye and be buried; and when the solemnity of death is over, the thoughts of death are over: as soon as the grave is out of their sight, preparations for the grave are out of mind. It is storied, (2 *Sam.* 20. 12.) that when *Amasa* was slain by *Joab, and lay wallowing in his blood*, in the midst of the high way, every one that came by him *stood still*; but anon *Amasa* is removed out of the high way into the field, and a cloth cast upon him, and then (the Text saith) *all the people went on after* Joab. It is so still, we make a stop at one that lies gasping and groaning, at one that lies bleeding and dying; but let a cloth be thrown over him, and he drawn aside, put into the grave, and covered with earth; then we go to our business, to trading and dealing, yea to coveting and sinning, as if the last man (that ever should be) were buried. Thus men perish for ever, without any regarding. If this kind of perishing were more regarded, or regarded by more, fewer would perish. *Thoughts of death spiritualiz'd have life in them: thoughts of death laid to the heart, are a good medicine for an evil heart.* It follows,

Verse 21. **Doth not their excellency which is in them go away? They dye, even without wisdom.**

This Verse (as I noted in the beginning) prevents an objection which might be made, as if man had wrong done him: and that it were too great a diminution to his honour, whom God made the chief creature in the inferior world, and but little inferior to Angels themselves, that he should be looked upon only as a *heap of dust, or a lump of clay*, as a mortal momentany perishing creature, therefore he grants that man hath an excellency; but all the excellency that he hath, whether natural or artificial, bred in him, or acquired by him, as a man, when he goes, goes too; **Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?** Or *journieth not their excellency with them?* As Mr. *Broughton* translates, alluding to our passing out of the world, as in a journey; when a man dyes he takes a journey out of the world.

יובלו בושים *Abſq; apponente. Pereunt & quod nemo apponat eis medicinam.*

world, he goes out for ever; and (saith he) doth not his excellency journey along with him? Yes, the question affirms it; when man goes, his excellency goes too. The word (*jether*) which we translate excellency, signifies primarily, a *residue*, or a *remain*, and that two wayes. First, a residue of persons, *Judges* 7. 6. *But all the rest of the people bowed down on their knees to drink water.* So the Vulgar understands it here. *They who are left after them, shall be taken away from them*; namely, their heirs or posterity.

Secondly, It signifies a residue of things, *Psal.* 17. 14. Where describing worldly men, who have their portion in this life, he saith, *Their bellies are filled with hid treasure, they are also full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.* Thus others take it here, Doth not the wealth and riches which men leave when they die, die also, and go away? as their persons are mortal, so are their estates; there is a Moth will eat them both. And as the word signifies a *quantitative remainder*, or overplus, both of persons and things; so also a *qualitative* excess or remainder, or that which exceeds in quality; any excess in the goodness of a quality, is called excellency. Thus *Jacob* calls *Reuben*, in regard of his primogeniture, *the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power*; yet blots him in the next verse, because of his sin; *thou shalt not excel*, Gen. 49. 3, 4. This sense of the word suits well with the scope of the Text in hand. *His excellency*, that is, whatsoever doth excel, or is best in him. But what is that? Some by his *Excellency* understand the *Soul*; as if he had said, that best part of man, the Soul, which may be opposed to clay and dust before spoken of, *that noble guest, that royal inhabitant* of this house of clay, goeth out when Death enters. Death dissolves the union between soul and body.

Jather, *quod est superesse, non solum excessum quantitatis significat, sed etiã qualitatis dignitatis, sicut verbum Latinum* supero, *non solum superesse, sed etiã vincere, & excellere.* Pined. חבם בם

Or rather, we may take excellency for any special endowment; first of the body, as beauty or strength. Secondly, of the mind, as wit and knowledge, learning or skill. Thirdly, We may take it for those worldly excellencies of riches, honour or authority; when a man goeth out, all these excellencies which are in him, or which are about him, go out too. This excellency is the same which is called the *goodliness of man*, by the Prophet (*Isa.* 40. 6.) *The voyce said cry; what shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field*; not only is the flesh, but the goodliness thereof fading also. So here, not only the house of clay, and the foundation of dust, but the excellency of it, all the adorning and polishing, the guilding and painting, the rich hanging and precious furniture of this house go away.

Taking excellency here for the soul, then we see wherein our excellency consists.

As man was the principal part of the Creation, so the Soul is the principal part of man.

The constitution of the Soul is mans natural excellency, and the conversion of the Soul is mans spiritual excellency.

Secondly, Observe, *Death is the going away, or the departure of the soul from the body.*

Death is called sometime *a departure* of body and soul out of the world. *Now letteſt thou thy servant depart in peace* (saith old *Simeon*, Luke 2.) *Man goes to his long home*, Eccles. 12. 5. *I go the way of all flesh*, saith *Moses*; and, *I go away*, saith our *Lord Christ* of his death. Death is also called a departure of the soul from the body. The death of *Rachel* is thus described, *Gen.* 35. 18. *And it came to pass, that as her soul was in departing (for she died.*

From the other interpretation, which I rather insist upon; observe,

That, *In death all a mans natural and outward excellency whatsoever, leaves him, and departs from him.*

Psal. 49. 16. *Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house increases*; why, *For when he dieth, he shall carry nothing away with him; his glory shall not descend after him.* Though a man have an excellent outside, a great stock of riches, beauty and honour, though he hath excellent *linings* of wisdom and knowledge, yet all ends, as to him, when he ends; and therefore *David* concludes (*Psal.* 39.) *Man at his best state*, or, *in his best estate, is altogether vanity.* The excellencies that are in him go away, *in that day all his thoughts perish*; his counsels and his projects perish with him. One of the Ancients standing by *Cæsar's Tomb* (who was one of the most accomplish'd men in the world, for natural, civil and moral excellencies, learned, valiant, noble, rich and powerful) he (I say) standing by *Cæsar's Tomb*, wept, and cried out, *Where is now the flourishing beauty of* Cæsar? *what is become of his magnificence? where are the Armies now? where the honour of* Cæsar? *where are now the victories, the Triumphs and Trophies of* Cæsar? All's gone, all's departed, the goodliness of them is as the flower of the field; his excellency which was in him, is gone away. And thus it will be said of all those, (who without grace) are most excellent in any thing below. Though your clay be curiously wrought, and stampt with such beauty, as renders you almost Angelical to the eye of others; though your bodies are strongly joynted, and blessed with such health as renders your lives most active and comfortable to your selves; though your minds are stored with variety of learning, and you know as much as is *knowable* in the whole circle of nature, or of times; yet when Death comes, all these excellencies go away. Nothing will stay by us then, and go (not from us, but) with us, *but the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, for whom* (*Paul* did, and) *we ought to suffer the loss of all things, and count them but dung, that we may win Christ* (Phil. 3. 8.) For notwithstanding all other knowledge and wisdom, we shall die, and conclude (as this Chapter concludes of man) without wisdom. *They die even without wisdom*, or word for word *They die not, and in wisdom.* We may understand it two wayes. First, (as if he had said) though men are excellent in wisdom, yet they die, their wisdom is to them in death, as if they had no wisdom; they have no more priviledge or defence against the stroke of death, by all their wisdom, learning and knowledg, then fools or brute beasts, who have no wisdom, no knowledge at all. *They die even without wisdom*, or, *even as if they had no wisdom. Died Abner as a fool dieth?* said mourning *David*, 2 Sam. 3. 33. yea, *Abner died as a fool dieth.* And so, in one sence, do the wisest of men. He was the wisest of all the children of men, and he spake it by the wisdom of God, who asking this question, *How dieth the wise man?* answers, *as the fool*, Eccles. 2. 16. Let not any man pride himself in the excellency of his wisdom; for that he dwells in a house of clay, whose foundation is in the dust: his frailty is not curable by his excellency, nor his mortality conquerable by his wisdom; he shall die as if he had no wisdom. And some who have most worldly wisdom, die with least; yea, they die with the greatest folly. *Not in wisdom*, may be an extenuation, or a more gentle, easie expression, for, *in abundance of folly.* I remember, it is observed concerning *Paracelsus* (a great Physitian, a man exceedingly vers'd in *Chymical experiments*) that he bragg'd and boasted, he had attained to such wisdom, in discerning the constitutions of men, and studying remedies, that whosoever did follow his rules, and keep to his directions, should never die by any disease; casually he might, and of age he must; but he would undertake to secure his health against diseases? a bold undertaking! But he who by his art promised to protect others to extream old age, from the arrest of death, could not, by all his art or power, make himself a protection in the prime of his youth, but died even as one without wisdom, before, or when he had seen but *thirty.* Secondly, *They die without wisdom*, that is, they cannot carry their wisdom away with them; as not their worldly riches and pomp, so nor their worldly wisdom and knowledge, *chap.* 36. 12.

ולא בחכמה

Ubi nunc pulchritudo Cæsaris? quo abiit magnificentia tua?

Nulla est sapientia quæ mortem effugiant. Mer

Non in sapientia, extenuatio est i. e. in magna stultitia. Pined.

Thirdly, **They die even without wisdom**, that is, they prepare not wisely for death. This is the condition of most men, their excellency goes away with them, and they die without wisdom; they have had wisdom, but they die as if they had none, that is, they apply not their wisdom while they live, to fit themselves for death; they die before they understand what it is to live, or why they live. This wisdom is wanting in most men; and of all such the Psalmist concludes to this sence of the place, *Man being in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish, Psal.* 49. 20. That is, he perishes foolishly, and without wisdom, like a beast, though in his life a man of honour and excellency. He that dies unpreparedly, dies foolishly. It is the wisdom of man to live in the world, in the medi-

Moriuntur insipientes vel insipienter. Drus.

Prius mori-ri quam quicquam intellexerint de divina sapientia. Merc.

meditation of, and preparation for his departure out of this world. And it is such a wisdom as is above man; therefore *David* prayes, *Psal.* 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my dayes, what it is; that I may know how frail I am*: As if he had said, Lord, I have been considering this and that thing (haply *David*'s thoughts were in the dust, and he had been handling the clay out of which he was made) yet saith he, by all those considerations of my natural constitution, I cannot bring my heart to be so sensible of my frailty, as I ought to be; therefore he turns himself to God, *Lord make me to know this thing*. Here is our wisdom, when we seek to God to spiritualize natural considerations, and make them effectual for the attaining of this wisdom, the knowing of our end, and the measure of our dayes.

But is it not some ignorance of our duty to petition for the knowledge of our end? May we desire to know what God hath no where promised to reveal? To petition for the literal knowledg of our end, that is, what year or day our lives shall end, is a sinful curiosity, and a presumptuous intrusion into the secret will of God: but to petition for a spiritual knowledge of our end, that is, how we may end well any day of the year, or any hour of the day, in an holy duty, and an humble submission of our selves to the revealed will of God; thus to know our end, how *soon ceasing* (as one translates) short-liv'd and brittle ware we be; thus to know, how defective we are (as the Greek renders it) or what we lack, namely, to the end of our dayes, is above the instruction of any creature. We may preach, and you hear of death, as long as you and we live, and yet not know the frailty of our lives, till God makes us know it; therefore (saith he) *Lord, make me to know how frail I am*; none could teach him this Lesson, but God himself. The same holy desires are breathed out, *Psal.* 90. 12. *So teach us to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*; as if *Moses* had said, Lord, I have been numbring my dayes my self, and telling over my life; I can tell no further then three or four score, and yet, though I can tell no further, I cannot apply my heart unto wisdom; we need but little *Arithmetick to number our dayes, but we need a great deal of Grace to number them.* And a child may be wise enough to number the dayes of an old man; and yet that old man a child, in numbring his own dayes, that is, not able to number his own dayes so, as to apply his heart to wisdom. To number them so, is a very special point of wisdom; the true *Christian Philosophy*; *perfectly to meditate on death, is the perfection of life.* And it is therefore our wisdom to die well, because we can die but once: *A man had need do to that wisely, which he can do no more.* An error in death, is like an errour in war, you cannot commit it twice. We have most reason to look to it, not to err at all, where it is not possible to err again. *Actually to err twice, is more sinful; but not to have a possibility of erring twice, is most dangerous.* We transgress the Laws of living, over and over a thousand thousand times; but as for *the Laws of dying, no man ever transgressed them a second time. That we so often transgress the law of living, is an aggravation of sin upon all men. And that we can transgress the law of dying but once, is the seal of misery upon most men. Let us then cry unto God, to be taught this great wisdom, how to die, and not without wisdom.*

Meditatio mortis vita est perfecta. Greg. *Mor.* 13. *Summa Philosophia.*

CHAP. V. Vers. 1, 2.

Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn? For wrath killeth the foolish, and envy slayeth the silly one.

The five first verses of this Chapter, contain the fourth Argument, by which *Eliphaz* goes on to convince *Job* of sinful hypocrisie. And the conviction is made two wayes, from a twofold comparison. First, He compares *Job* to the Saints, and finds him unlike to them. Secondly, He compares *Job* to the wicked, and finds him like to them; if so, then *Job* must needs be a hypocrite, who had carried it fair all the while in the world, for a *great Professor*, and yet, when he comes to the trial, was unlike all the Saints, and most like the wicked of the world. The first Argument may be thus framed;

He is not a just or a holy man, who in his affliction is altogether unlike holy and just men.

But Job, *thou in thy affliction, art altogether unlike holy and just men:*

Therefore thou art not a holy or a just man.

The Proposition is implied: the *Minor* or the Assumption is in the first verse; *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* As if he should say, Enquire as much as thou wilt, thou shalt find none among the Saints like thy self; they who have been somewhat like thee (of whom thou shalt find but few) in the troubles which thou hast born, even those thou wilt find altogether unlike thee, in bearing those troubles. Scarce any of the godly ever suffered such things as thou hast done, but none of the godly ever did such things in their sufferings.

As he argues him, in the first verse, of hypocrisie, by his unlikeness to the Saints; so in the next words, he argues him of hypocrisie, by his likeness to the wicked: His first Argument for this, lies in the second verse; and in the three following verses, there lies a second Argument to confirm the same point: He attempts to prove *Job* like a fool or a wicked man, two wayes.

First, In his manner of suffering.

Secondly, In the matter of his sufferings.

First, (saith he) Thou art like a fool, or like a foolish man, like the worst of men, in the manner of thy carriage under sufferings: The Argument may be framed thus;

He that behaveth himself like a fool, or like a wicked man while he is in trouble, is a man either openly wicked, or grosly hypocritical.

But Job, *thou behavest thy self like a foolish or wicked man in thy troubles:*

Therefore thou art wicked, &c.

The Assumption or *Minor* Proposition is in the second verse; *Wrath killeth the foolish, and envy slayeth the silly one.* As if he should say, Thou pinest, ragest, and vexest thy self under thy sufferings, after the rate of foolish and silly ones, that is, sinful and wicked ones.

Secondly, He would prove *Job* to be a hypocrite, because his sufferings, for the matter of them, were like the judgments which God uses to pour forth upon wicked and ungodly men; and that Argument may be thus framed:

Wicked men flourish a while, and then sudden destruction cometh upon them; they and their children, and their whole estates are swallowed up in a moment.

But Job, *thou having flourished a little while, wast suddenly surprized and swallowed up by judgments; thou, thy estate, thy children, all devoured and consumed:*

Therefore thou art a wicked man, a very hypocrite; God hath dealt with thee as he uses to deal with his enemies, and therefore thou art not his friend.

This is the Logick of the Context, or the Reasons couched in them, whereby *Eliphaz* would convince *Job* of sin: By this a general light is let into the whole Context.

Now we will consider the words, and open their sence distinctly.

Call

Call now, if there be any that will answer thee; and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?

Interpreters varie much about the meaning of these words.

First, Some of the Jewish Writers look upon these words as proceeding from height and pride of spirit in *Eliphaz*; as if he disdained to talk with *Job* any longer about the business; as if he looked upon *Job* as no match for him, in point of argument; bids him look out an *Angel* or a *Saint* to grapple with him in these disputes, and see if he could find any one of those, who would undertake for him as an *Advocate*, or be his *Second*, forasmuch as himself was so unable to defend his cause, or justifie what he had done; *Call now, if there be any that will answer thee*, that is, *answer for thee*; or, to which of the Saints wilt thou turn for help, to patronize or plead thy cause? but I shall pass that.

Nemo tibi prave corruptéque de his rebus judicanti patronus aderet? nemo qui tibi respondeat, tibi accinat, tuam sententiam tueatur.

Secondly, Others of the *Jewish Writers* make the sence out thus, as if *Eliphaz* had said with *Paul*, in the point of the Lords Supper (1 *Cor.* 11. 24.) *That which I have delivered unto you, I have received of the Lord*; so, that which I have delivered unto thee, in my former argument, I received from the Lord in a vision; it was revealed unto me from heaven: Now, do thou try whether thou canst learn any thing from heaven, or from the Saints upon the earth, (who are instructed to and for the *Kingdom of heaven*) which may answer my arguments, or confute the reasons which I have brought against thee. I had a vision from heaven, now call thou to heaven, and see if thou canst have any answer from thence; turn also to the Saints, to any Saint upon the earth, and see what they will answer thee; I believe thou wilt not find one amongst them all, differing in judgment from *me*, or from that *Oracle* with which I have now acquainted thee. They will all agree with me in these great Principles, about the providence, power and justice of God, about the sufferings, sinfulness and weakness of man. That's a second sence.

Thirdly, Others take the words as an *Ironie*, as a derision or scorn put upon *Job* by *Eliphaz*; as if *Eliphaz* had mocked him thus; Thou hast handled the matter well, thou hast carried thy self so, in the dayes of thy peace and prosperity, that now, when thou art in trouble, thou maist call long enough, and cry till thy throat akes, and thy spirits be spent, and yet have none to answer thee, none to speak a word to thee, or to do thee any good; though thou cry to all the Saints, and send to all thy friends round about thee, yet in this day, none will hear or regard thee: Thou wilt find thy self forsaken of all, no man will give thee any assistance, or take any care of thy condition. Just as *Elijah* brake forth in holy scorn against the Prophets of *Baal* (1 Kin. 18. 27.) when they were crying out to their *Idol* for help, and a sign by fire; *Cry aloud* (saith he) *cry aloud*; he bad them cry aloud, yet he knew the Idol was deaf and dumb, and could neither hear their cry, nor give them Answer: So *Eliphaz* seems to speak to *Job*; *Cry aloud* now, to this, to that Saint, with whom thou art acquainted here on earth, or cry to Heaven, cry to God himself; call this way, call that, if any will answer thee, either *God* above, or *Saint* below; thou shalt not find here or there any to assist, any to relieve thee. And so he seems to allude to that just retaliation of God, who usually turns his ear from their cry in a day of trouble, who have turned their ears from his counsels, in the dayes of comfort; as (*Prov.* 1.) Wisdom threatens, *They shall call, but I will not answer; they shall cry, but I will not hear.* Why? *Because they have refused instruction, and have not chosen the fear of the Lord.*

Vox in tribulatione cum non invenit quem mens in tranquillitate contempsit. Gre. *in loc.*

In the fourth place, Most of the Popish Writers busie themselves much, to ground invocation of Saints, and the intercession of Saints for us, upon this Text: As if *Eliphaz* had directed *Job* to cry to the Saints departed; *Call now, if there be any that will answer? and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* What Saint wilt thou chuse for thy Patron or helper in this sad condition? So they teach and practise, having appointed a particular Saint in the *Kalendar* of the year, to the help of every particular affliction in their lives, and to these they turn themselves in every distress: They have a Saint for the Sea, and a Saint for the Land, a Saint for the fire, and a Saint for the water, a Saint for each disease of the body, and for each disaster in the family: To some of these they suppose *Job* was advised to have recourse for succour and comfort in his troubles. And yet they are divided in opinion, and give a double sence about it, First, As if *Eliphaz* had thus bespoken him; *If thou dost not give credit unto me, nor believe what I have spoken, was revealed from God, then call thou thy self upon God, and try whether he will not give thee some answer, and resolve thy doubt. Or if by reason of thine own unworthiness, thou canst not obtain an immediate answer at the hand of God, then turn thee to some of the Saints, that by their mediation thou maist receive light from God, to assure thee about my vision, whether it were sent from heaven or no.* Secondly, Others interpret it more largely, as if *Eliphaz* perceiving *Job* to be brought to some sight and acknowledgment of his sins, and now to thirst after the pardon of them; he, in these words, exhorts him to call upon, and cry unto God for pardon, if perhaps he himself would vouchsafe to answer; but in case shame did so cover his face, and guilt so stop his mouth, that he could not speak unto God immediately, then he adviseth him to pray in aid from some of the Saints departed, who might manage this suit, and intercede for him at the throne of Grace. The grosness of this interpretation, is such, as carries a self-reputation with it, and therefore I shall not need to stay long about the refuting of it. Neither will I stay to argue against that groundless, useless doctrine in general, *The invocation of Saints departed*; which finds no letter of command or direction, no letter of promise or acceptation, no letter of example or practice for our imitation, in the whole Book of God: but it is a reproach to the Saints, and a dishonour to God, whose Name and incommunicable Title is, *The God hearing prayers, and therefore to him shall the desires of all flesh come*; and if all to him, then who to Saints or Angels? Only *He* can be the object of our prayer, who is the object of our faith, *Rom.* 10. *How shall they call on him on whom they have not believed?* To whom we pray, upon him we must believe. Saints departed are not to be believed upon, how then shall they be called on?

Aqu. *in*

But to leave the question, I shall only touch two things, to shew how wide they are in this exposition.

First, The confessed Doctrine of *Popery* tells us, that before Christs coming in the flesh, & his resurrection from the grave, all the Saints departed were in *Limbus*, a place, which they have framed and built up in their own fancies, as the common receptacle of all those who died in the Faith of Christ, before Christ died; therefore they tell us (to eek out the story) that as Christ went down into *Hell*, the place of the damned, to strike terror into the Devils, so he went into this *Limbus*, thence to deliver the Fathers from that prison, and carry them up, with himself into glory. Now this being their Tenet, how senceless is it for them to ground their opinion of invocation of Saints, upon any Scripture of the Old Testament? And therefore it is so, to ground it upon this.

Secondly, If we consider these words, we may as well seek for fire in the bottom of the Sea, as for the invocation of Saints in this Text, for here is no such thing spoken of; and if any thing sounds that way, it is rather to condemn praying to Saints, then any confirmation of it; for *call now, if there be any that will answer thee*; carries this sence rather; call now, for there is none to answer thee, and to which of the Saints wilt thou turn? that is, none among all the Saints (if thou turnest to them) can give thee any help: As *Mercer*, a moderate Papist, gives the meaning of this Scripture, against the current of their interpreters.

Vóca si quis est qui tibi respondeat, q. d. nemo tibi respondebit. Merc. *Quod qui-*

dam nostrorum hunc locum ad sanctorum mortuorum invocationem, quam veteres ne agnoverunt quidem, referunt, merum delirium est, Idem *paulo p. st. Nihil hic de sanctorum mortuorum invocatione.* Tho. Aquin. *& Lyranus eò quidem referunt, sed aquè ineptè, ne dicam impiè.* Idem *in loc.*

And this will appear more fully in opening the Grammatical sence of a word or two, which also will give the clear meaning of the whole passage. *Eliphaz* (as was hinted in drawing out his Arguments) calls upon *Job* to call to remembrance former times, to search the records of Antiquity, and see whether he could find an example of any one among all the Saints, who either had such troubles as his, or in his troubles spake and behaved himself as he had done; he bids him name one, if he could.

Call now.] or, *Call I pray thee.* What we translate, now,

now, is sometime a particle of insulting, but most usually of perswading or intreating. We render it as an Adverb of time, but it rather imports a request. So, *Gen.* 12. 13. *Abraham* intreats *Sarah*, *Say I pray thee, thou art my Sister.*

The word (*Kara*) which we translate *call*, signifies first to cry aloud by way of preaching or proclamation, *Isa.* 58. 1, *Cry aloud, lift up thy voyce like a Trumpet*: Secondly, By way of prayer or invocation, as, *Psal.* 50. 15. *Call upon me in the day of trouble*; but it rather signifies, and that more properly, to call by appellation, or by way of nomination, as, *Ruth* 1. 20. *Call me not Naomi, but call me Marah.* So here, *Call now*, that is, look over the names, or call over the names of all the Saints, as we use to say, when many should meet together, and we would know whether they are all met; or as Stewards, when they pay many hired servants their wages, take the Bill, and call over their names, and so pay them one by one, *Mat.* 20. 8. In the evening, the Lord of the Vineyard saith unto his Steward, *Call the Labourers*, that is, call them by their several names, and give them their hire. Thus we may understand the phrase in this place, read the Catalogue of the Saints; call every one by his name, and put the question to them, ask them whether ever they had such afflictions as thou hast? or ask them whether they behaved themselves under their afflictions as thou hast done? I believe thou wilt find none to answer thee. To this sence Mr. *Broughton* translates, *Call now if there be any that will defend thee*, that is, be thy Patron or Advocate, in word, or in example of their lives.

קְרָא־נָא
Na, licet insultantis aliquando sit, ut plurimũ tamen suadentis & exhortantis est, ut sodes amabo Latinis.

If there be any that will answer thee.] For, the word which we render *answer*, signifies not only, answering unto a question, but an answering to a condition, or a correspondency in practice. There is an answering by likeness of works, as well as by fitness of words. A *real* answer, and a *verbal* answer. Take it so, and then, *Call now to the Saints*, call them all by their names, intends only thus much, see if there be any that are like thee, or suite either thy spirit or thy condition, if there be any to whom thou mayest parallel thy self, either in the matter or manner of thy sufferings. Thou art more like a *Heathen*, who knows not God, then any of the *Saints*, in these complainings. And seeing, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks, these words speak thy heart abounding in sin, but empty of grace. *Face answers face in the water*; but neither thy face nor heart, will answer either heart or face of any of the Saints, in these waters of affliction. We find this word signifying similitude or comparison, or the equivalence of one thing to another, in that instance, *Eccles.* 10. 19. *Money answers all things*; the meaning of it is, that money in a proportion or value, suits, parallels and fits all things: There is nothing in the world, but you may suit it with a proportion of money, money will answer it; money answers, or is like all things, by an equivalency, though not in the formality.

Verbum respondere, in hoc loco significat potius similitudinem vel comparationem quam responsionem. Bold.

And to which of the Saints wilt thou turn?

εἴ τινα ἀγγέλων ἁγίων ὄψῃ.

The *Septuagint* read it, *To which of the Angels wilt thou look?* And the learned *Mercer* adheres to that translation, as thinking, that by Saints, are meant Angels; though he be so far from laying any bottom in the words for the Popish opinion of the mediation of Angels, that he expresly condemns it: but he gives the sence thus, as if *Eliphaz* had reproved *Job* of pride, for contesting with God, whenas, if he did turn himself to Angels, he should find himself far below, and much over-matcht by them: What! *Thou dust and ashes, more righteous and just then God?* Though he charged his Angels with folly, yet, even they are too wise and holy for thee to deal with. If thou wert put into the ballance with Angels, how light wouldst thou be? then, how much lighter then vanity art thou, being weighed with God? But the Hebrew is better translated, *Saints*. The word signifies a thing or person, separated and set apart from common, and dedicated to a special, especially, a holy use. Holiness (in the general nature of it) is nothing else but a separation from common, and dedication to a divine service, such are the Saints, persons separated from the world, and set apart unto God: The Church in general (which is a company of Saints) is taken out of, and severed from the world: The Church is a fountain sealed, and a garden inclosed; so also, every particular Saint is a person severed and enclosed from the common throng and multitude of the world: *Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you*, 2 Cor. 6. 17.

Turn thee.] It is both a witty and judicious conceit that *Eliphaz*, in these words, alludes to Painters and Picture-drawers, who when they are drawing the picture of a man, or of any other thing, frequently turn their eyes upon the *Proto-type*, upon that which they are to draw by. When a man sits (as they speak) to have his picture taken, the Artist turns his eye often upon him; so here, to which of the Saints wilt thou turn thee to see thy picture, or to see any one like thee? where wilt thou look now, and by looking, observe a Saint of thy complexion, a holy man like thy self? *If the Pictures of all the Saints were lost, none of them could be found in, or copied out from thee.* The word which we translate *turn*, doth not signifie simply to look about or turn the eye, but to turn the eye about with much intention, or curiosity of observation, to make a discovery, and find out somewhat. Sometime it signifies to look in compassion, *Psal.* 25. 16. *Turn thee unto me* (saith *David*) *and have mercy upon me, for I am very low.* To look in compassion, notes a strictness of observation, to find out what charity or mercy should supply: such a look or view of his estate, *David* desired, that God would turn his eye upon him; to what end? that he might consider and find out all his necessities, and in mercy succour him.

Alludere videtur ad pictores, qui frequenter ad prototypum & exemplar, quod imitari conantur, oculos dirigunt & ad illud convertuntur.

Verbum פָּנָה *non simpliciter respicere significat, aut aliquid intutri, sed cum quadam animi intẽtione & ad aliquem finem.*

So then, *To which of the Saints wilt thou turn?* sounds thus much; upon what Saint wilt thou fix thine eye, to find thine own likeness, a representation of the sufferings thou beareſt, or of thy bearing these sufferings? Take the sum and sense of the whole verse thus, *Call over the Roll or Catalogue of all the Saints, which either ever were, or at this day are upon the face of the earth. See if there be any whose condition or actions will answer in proportion unto thine; turn thine eye upon all the holy ones, see if thou canst observe any like thy self, in the matter or manner of thy afflictions, in the dealings of God with thee, or in thy complainings against God. Job, thou standest alone for all the Saints; go to the fools of the earth, and to the prophaner Infidels; among them thou maist haply meet thy pattern, and among their records read the story of thine own impatience and miscarriage: For* (as it follows) *wrath killeth the foolish, and envy slayeth the silly one. How like a fool and silly one art thou, who hast thus almost vext thy self to death at thy own troubles, and pinest with envy at the prosperity of others?* Such seems to be the connexion and dependence of the second verse, with, and upon the first, which I shall presently descend to open, when I have added an Observation or two from the former already opened.

It was good advice which *Eliphaz* gave *Job* in that condition, namely, to take view of the Saints, and to compare himself with them. Thence observe,

> *It is profitable for us to look to the example of the Saints, either those departed, or those alive, and by them to examine, both what we do, and how we suffer.*

God hath given us, not only his Word for a rule, but he hath given us examples as a rule, to walk by. He hath given us his own example, that we, looking unto him, should *be holy, as he is holy, in all manner of conversation; Be ye holy as I am holy: God, who is the holy one, is the highest pattern of holiness.* And he hath given us his Son, *who is the expres image of his person, and the brightness of his glory*, to be our example. The life of Christ is a fair copy indeed, a copy without any blot, or uneven letter in it: for he also is *the holy one.* Christ is not only the *Principle of holiness*, but also *the Pattern of holiness* to his people; *they that say they abide in him, must walk even as he walked.* His works (excepting those that were miraculous, and works of mediation between God and us) are our rule, as well as his word, *Heb.* 12. 2. *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him*, &c. words of near importance with those in the Text, *To which of the Saints wilt thou turn thee?* Look to Jesus; when you are in sufferings, and have a race of patience to run, let your eye alwayes be upon Christ, and draw the lines of your carriage, both in your spirits and outward actions, according to what you see in him. *Look to him*: And, *ver.* 3. *Consider him that endured such contradiction*

diction of sinners. Which the Apostle *Peter* (1 *Pet.*2.21.) give us in plain termes, *For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving an example that we should follow his steps.* We must follow his steps both in the matter and in the manner of our sufferings: Therefore Christ saith, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me*, Matth. 11.29. Christ calls it his yoke (it is a yoke of affliction, as well as a yoke of instruction.) And he calls it *his yoke*, not only because, he, as a Lord layes it upon the necks of others, but because, he, as a servant bore that yoke himself; therefore he saith, *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me*; that is, not only take my yoke upon you for the matter, but learn of me for the manner, how to bear that yoke. Besides these grand leading, unerring examples of God and Christ, the examples of the Saints are also commended to our imitation, both in doing and in suffering. *Whatsoever things were written* (and examples were written) *aforetime, were written for our instruction.* Why hath the Holy Ghost set so many pens a work, to write the lives of the Saints? Why hath he kept a record of them in his own book, but for direction to his people in after-times? The Lord hath not registred any one act of the Saints, but is useful for us. The acts of *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *Samuel*, *David*, *are full of practical Divinity.* The sufferings and troubles of these, and many others, are full (if I may so speak) of *pathetical Divinity.* As the Apostle *James* his counsel doth more then intimate (*James* 5.10.) *Take, my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the Name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience:* Hence those ancient Saints and believers (*Heb.* 12.1.) are called *a cloud of witnesses*; A cloud, because there is a directive or a leading vertue in them. As there was a cloud that went before the children of *Israel* in the day to lead them, so this cloud of witnesses, leads us up and down the wilderness of our sorrows, and in the dark night of our sufferings. Turn you to the Saints, to that cloud of witnesses, eye them, and see what becomes you in sad times. They have suffered joyfully the spoiling of their goods; suffer you likewise, if you come into the hands of spoilers. They lived by faith in the midst of a thousand deaths; live you likewise by faith in death, when ever you come into the hand of that King of terrors. And when at any time your own hearts, or the wayes of others are out of course, check and chide them for and from those disorders, by sending them to the practise of the Saints. *Look to the Saints:* from which of the Saints have you learned to be proud and high minded? From which of the Saints have you learned to be earthly and covetous? From which of the Saints have you learned to seek and set up your selves, or to be impatient under the hand of God? *That man hath reason to suspect he hath done ill, who doth that, which a good man never did, or ever repented the doing of it.*

Observe further, *When God forsakes a man, all the Saints on earth forsake him too.*

Eliphaz looks upon *Job*, as a man forsaken of God, and then he bids him get help, if he could, among the Saints. He that opposes God, shall be opposed by all who are God's. There is the same mind in the servants of Christ, which is in Christ their Master. They love where and whom he loves, they hate whom he hates, they are ashamed of those of whom Christ is ashamed; If God reject a man, the Saints will not undertake or answer for him. So much of the first Argument, ranking *Job* with the wicked, because (as *Eliphaz* thought) he could not find any in the rank of Saints like himself.

The second Argument rises to a like conviction, because (in the same mans opinion) he might easily see himself so like the wicked.

For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.

Here are two sinful passions, *wrath* and *envy*; and here are two sorts of sinful persons, *The foolish man*, and *The silly one*, producing two sad effects, (which yet in effect are but one) the one kills, and the other slayes, both are deadly and destructive; *Wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.* There are several sins and lusts which accompany, as the several ages and degrees, so the several tempers of men. Rashness and intemperance hurry and inflame young men, ambition blows up riper years, and covetousness often tyrannizeth over old age: Wrath takes hold of fools, and envy seizeth the silly one. These worms strike the root of such men, and make them wither. As there is a special worm killing special trees, and consuming their fruits; so there are special lusts, which like worms, eat out, and destroy the life of man; *wrath killeth the foolish man.*

Omne pomū omne grani omne frumē tum, omne ligñ habe vermē suū & alius vermis mali, alius pyri, alius Tritici. August.

The foolish man. He is *A fool*, who hath not wisdom to direct himself; but *The fool*, is he, who will not follow the counsel and direction of the wise. The word signifies, not so much a fool, who hath no knowledge; as a fool, who makes no use of the knowledge which he hath: such a one is a foolish man indeed. Or it notes a man hasty, bold, inconsiderate, rushing on, hand over head, without fear or wit: A man, who either is master but of little knowledge, or that which he hath (be it little or much) masters him. It agrees fully in sence, and is the same to a letter in sound, with our English word *Evil*; Such the Prophet (*Zech.* 11.15.) describes: *Take* (saith he) *the instruments of a foolish shepherd*, he doth not mean, the instruments of a rude and merely ignorant shepherd, a man that hath no knowledge or learning; but of a rash and imprudent shepherd, or of a lazy and idle shepherd, who, though he hath knowledge, yet knows not how (or hath no heart) to improve his knowledge for the good of his flock. The Prophet *Ezekiel* gives us the character of such, *Chap.* 34. 4. *The diseased have ye not strengthened, nor have ye healed that which was sick, nor bound up that which was broken*, &c. *But* (will ye know what work they made?) *with fury and with cruelty have ye ruled them:* ye have been moved with fury, not with pitty, and acted by passion, not by reason, much less by grace: So in this place, the foolish man, whom envy slayes, is not a mere ignorant, one that hath no brains, but one hare-brain'd and uncompos'd. *Eliphaz* hints at *Job* secretly in this word, whom he knew reported for a man of great knowledge and learning, according to the learning of those times, yet he numbers him with fools; because he conceived him wrathful, rash, intemperate, not having any true government of himself. *Anger resteth in the bosom of fools*, Eccles. 7.9. A fool is not able to judge of the nature of things, or times, or occasions, and therefore he is angry with every thing that hits not his nature or his humour. He will be angry with the Sun, if it shine hotter then he would have it; and with the winds, if they blow harder then he would have them; and with the clouds, if they rain longer then serves his turn. They that are emptiest of understanding, are fullest of will, and usually so full of will, that we call them *wil-ful*. Hence, unless every thing be ready to serve their wills, they are ready to dye by the hand or judgment of their passions.

Non his solū, sed calamo irascimur in scribendo, eumque colli dimus & frangimus, & pictores penecillo & alcatores tesseris, & cuicunque instrumento quilibet, ex quo difficultatem sepati arbitratur. August. *Ira stultitiæ comes.*

Wrath kills the foolish man. *Wrath* may be taken here two wayes, either for the wrath of God, or for the wrath of man. In the former sence, the meaning is, That the *wrath of God kills foolish men*; which is an undoubted truth: but I rather adhere to the latter, which gives the meaning thus, That the *wrath of a foolish man, kills himself*; his own wrath is as a knife at his throat, and as a sword in his own bowels. The word which we translate *wrath*, signifies indignation, anger, teastiness, or touchiness: Properly *wrath* is anger inveterate; anger is a short fury, and wrath is a long anger; when man is set upon it, when his spirit is steeped and soaked in anger, then it is wrath. *Esau* raked up the burning coals of his anger in the ashes, till his Fathers Funeral; *The time of mourning for my Father will shortly come, then will I slay my brother.* But our word rather notes, a fervent heat and distemper of spirit presently breaking forth, or an extream vexation fretting and disquieting us within: As *Psal.* 112.10. *The wicked shall see it, and be grieved*; (that is, he shall have secret indignation in himself to see matters go so.) *He shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away.* Gnashing of the teeth is caused by vexing of the heart: and therefore it follows, *he melts away*; which notes (melting is from heat) an extream heat within. This sence is very futable to this of *Eliphaz*, *wrath slayeth the foolish*, or wrath makes him melt away; it melts his grease with chafing, as we say of a man furiously vext: Hence that deplorable condition of

אויל *Temerarius, audax, imprudens, pertinax ira.*

the damned, who are cast out of the presence of God for ever, is described by *weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth*; which imports not only pain, but extream vexing at, or in themselves. Those fools shall be slain for ever with their own wrath, as well as with the wrath of God.

Wrath killeth, &c.] But how doth wrath kill a foolish man? His wrath sometimes draws his sword and kills others: but is his wrath as a sword to kill himself? Many like *Simeon* and *Levi*, in their anger have slain a man; but that the anger of a man should slay himself, may seem strange. The passion of wrath is such an engine, as recoyles upon him that uses or discharges it. As *the desire of the sloathful killeth him*, Prov. 21. 25. So, the wrath of a foolish man kills him: that place enlightens this; how comes desire to slay the slothful? Thus; A man slothful in action is full of desires, and quick in his affections after many good things; he would fain have them, he longs for them: but the man is so extream lazy, that he will not stir hand or foot to get the things which he desires; and so he pines away with *wishing and woulding*, and dies with grief, because desire is not satisfied. So, in like manner, wrath is said to slay a man; first, because it thrusts him head-long upon such things as are his death; he runs wilfully upon his own death, sometimes by the dangerousness of the action, whence casual sudden death surprises him; sometime by the unlawfulness of the action, which brings him to a legal or judiciary death. Secondly, his wrath is said to kill him, because his wrath is so vexatious to him, that it makes his life a continual death to him, and at last so wearieth him out and wastes his spirits, that he dyes for very grief: and so at once commits a threefold murder; First, He murders *him*, *intentionally*, against whom he is wroth: Secondly, He, *really*, murders his own body: And thirdly, He, *meritoriously*, murders his soul for ever, except the Lord be more merciful then he hath been wrathful, and the death of Christ heal those wounds, by which he would have procured the death of others, and hath (as much as in him lies) procured his own.

And envy slayeth the silly one.] These two expressions meet near upon a fence. *Envy is the trouble which a man conceives in himself, at the good which another receives.* This disease gets in at the eyes and ears, or is occasioned by seeing or hearing of our neighbours blessings. In the 1 *John* 2. All the lusts in the world are reduced to three heads, *The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life*; Envy is the chiefest lust of the eyes, and it is properly called the lust of the eye; because a man seldom envieth another, untill he sees some good he hath above himself. This passion is a murderer also, it begins at the eyes, but it roots down into the bones.

פתה *Suasus, persuasus, deceptus, seductus fuit, hinc πείθω suadeo, apud Græcos.*

Envy slayeth the silly one.] There is not much difference between the nature of these two, the foolish man, and the silly one; But the Original words by which they are expressed, are very different. The root signifies to perswade, to intice or allure: And it is taken sometime in a good sence (as in *Gen.* 9. 27.) where the Holy Ghost speaks with admirable elegancy, *God will perswade the perswasible*, we translate it, *God will perswade* Japhet. *Japhet* had his name from being perswaded or perswadable; God shall intice or perswade *Japhet*: which was a prophesie of the calling of the Gentiles, who are descendants from *Japhet*, as the Jews are from *Shem*. So, that word is applied to Gods drawing, or alluring men by the sweet promises and winning enticements of the Gospel. God doth (let it be taken in holy reverence) tole men on by promises, and deceive them graciously into the Gospel (*Hosea* 2.14.) *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness.* And because by perswasions men are often deceived and seduced to evil, therefore the word signifies also to deceive and beguile, as well as to perswade; and in the passive, to be beguiled and deceived; Hence the word in the Text is derived, which we translate *a simple one*, or a man that will easily be perswaded and led by another, a sequacious or easie man, whom you may carry with a mouth full of good words, and fair promises, whither you will. Yet, we find this word (*Psal.* 116. 6.) used in a good sence, for a man without sinful guile and craft, a simple, honest, plain-hearted man, *The Lord preserveth the simple.* But here, and often else-where, it is taken in an ill sence, for a man without sence and reason, without heart and spirit; a man that cannot in any competency judge of things, or make out his way, but is merely led, and lives upon the opinion and judgment of another: To such *wisdom cryeth without, and uttereth her voice in the streets; how long ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?* Prov. 1. 20, 22. *This silly one envy slayeth*, He is out of his wits already, and a little matter will put him out of his life: *Envy slayeth him*, that is a simple man looking upon the prosperity and blessing of God upon his neighbour, will needs afflict himself: he looks upon himself, as having lost all, if that man gain: he falls, if his brother stands; and *can with more ease die miserably, then see another live happily.* In this sence it is, *That envy kills the silly one.*

Exiguo animo & abjecto spiritu.

Now the reason why *Eliphaz* speaks of these two, the foolish and the simple one, and characters them, as dying by the hand of these two lusts, *Wrath and Envy*; is because he conceived all *Jobs* troubled and (as he thought) muddy complaints in the third Chapter, arose from these two impure and filthy springs, *Wrath and Envy*; from proud Wrath, and impotent Envy: he looked upon him, as angry and displeased, yea, as enraged, because God had dealt so ill with him; and he supposed he saw him pale and wan, eaten up and pined with envy, because others were so well, because his friends enjoyed health, and lived in prosperity round about him. As if he had said, *Thou art wroth at thy own poverty, sickness and sores; and thou art envious at our plenty, health and ease.* And may not *folly and simplicity*, challenge that man for *Theirs*, whose spirit thus resents, either his own evils, or his neighbours good?

> Observe hence, First, *Every wicked man is a foolish, a silly man. Sin is pure folly.*

In the *Proverbs* all along, wickedness is the Interpretation of foolishness. It is folly to take brass Counters for gold, and to be pleased with Bugles more then with Diamonds. When an *heir* is impleaded for an *Ideot*, the Judge commands an apple, or a counter, with a piece of gold, to be set before him, to try which he will take; if he takes the apple or the counter, and leaves the gold, he is then cast for a fool, and unable to mannage his estate, for he knows not the value of things, or how to make a true election. Wicked men are thus foolish, and more, for when Bugles and Diamonds, Counters and Gold are before them, they leave the Diamonds and the Gold, and please themselves with those toyes and bables; when (which is infinitely more sottish) Heaven and Hell, life and death are set before them, they chuse Hell rather then Heaven, and death rather then life; they take the mean, transitory, trifling things of the world, before the favour of God, the pardon of sin, a part in Jesus Christ, and an inheritance among the Saints in light. All the wisdom of wicked men, is wisdom in their own conceits. And *Solomon* assures us, that *there is more hope of a fool then of such*; that is, of those who are sensible of their own failings, and are willing (as the Apostle directs) *to become fools that they may be wise*, 1 Cor. 3. 18. Opinion in it self is weak, but self-opinion is very strong; even the strongest of those strong-holds, and the highest of those high Towers, which the spiritual war, by those weapons which are mighty through God, is to oppose and cast down: which, till they are cast down, these fools are impregnable, and will not be led captive unto Christ.

יפת ליפתי *Japheth le Japheth.*

> Secondly, Observe, That, *to vex and to be angry at the troubles that fall upon us, or at the hand which sends them, is a high point of folly and of ignorance.*

Wrath and discontent slay the foolish; such are at once twice slain, slain with the wrath of God, and with their own.

To die thus, is to die like a fool indeed. For first, this wrath of man springs from his ignorance of God: Man would not be angry at what the Lord doth, if he knew he were the Lord, and may do what himself pleases, *The ground of anger is a supposition of wrong.*

Secondly, This wrath of man springs from ignorance of himself. He cannot be angry with any cross, who rightly knows himself.

First, to be a creature.

This

This notion of our selves teacheth us that lesson of humility, to be subject to the will of our Creator. The law of our creation calls us to all passive obedience, as well as unto active, as much and as quietly to suffer, as to do the will of God; but especially, if a man did fully know himself to be a sinful creature, he would not be angry; yea, he would lay a charge upon his mouth, not to utter a word, and a charge upon his heart, not to utter a thought against what the Lord doth with him. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him*, saith the Church, *Micah* 7. 9. As if she had said, the remembrance of my sin takes away all pleading, much more all quarrelling, in how angry a posture soever the Lord sets himself to afflict me: And therefore my spirit is resolved, that because my flesh hath sinned, my flesh shall bear the indignation of the Lord. *He that knows what it is to sin, knows that all sufferings less then hell, are less then sin.* If a man were convinced of this, that, what he bears is less then his sin deserves, he would bear it, with thanks, not with complaints. Yea he would say, that, as he hath deserved all these and more then all these strokes, so he hath need of them. The bundle of folly in his heart, calls for a bundle of rods upon his back, and he sees want of correction might have been his undoing. Therefore to be angry with affliction, argues a man ignorant of himself as a creature, much more as a sinful creature. Once more, the foolishness of such wrath appears to the eye of nature and common reason, because this wrath brings no ease or remedy at all to those wounds, but rather makes them more painful, if not remediless. It is an argument of folly to do a thing, whereby we cannot help our selves; but it is folly and madness to do that which hurts, which makes our wound fester and our disease grow desperate. Did any man ever ease himself by fretting or raging under the cross? How many have made their cross more heavy upon them, by raging at it? A mans own wrath is heavier to him then his cross. *A stone is heavy, and sand weighty, but a fools wrath is heavier then them both*, Prov. 27. 3. A fools wrath is very heavy to others, but it is heaviest to himself. The Text is express for it, which may be a third Observation.

Trascitur, quia omnia sibi dēberi putat.

To be angry and discontent at Gods judgments, is more destructive then the judgments themselves.

The wrath and judgments of God afflict only, but your own wrath destroyes; wrath slayes the foolish. Probably God came only to correct you, but wrath kills you. The wrath of man is a passion, but it is very active upon man, and eats up the spirit which nurses and brings it forth: Frowardness and anger are at once our sin and our torment. He that is angry when God strikes, strikes himself, whereas humble submission to the blow turns it into a kiss or an embraces and they that sit down quietly and believingly under any evil, bear it at present with more ease, and in the end, find it in the inventory of their goods. *David, It is good for me that I have been afflicted.*

Fourthly, Note, That, *to envy another mans good or prosperity, is an argument of the worst simplicity.*

Envy slayeth the silly one.] Envy is a common theam, I will not stay upon it; but shall only give you two reasons to demonstrate the silly simplicity of an envious person.

First, The good of another is not thy hurt; thou hast not the less, because another hath more. *Leah's* fruitfulness was no cause of *Rachels* barrenness. Thy portion is not impaired by thy brothers increase; thou hast thy share, and he hath but his; how silly a thing then is it to envy him that hath much, when as, his having much is not the cause why thou hast little? Again, this troubling thy self that others have more, will not get thee any more; Envy never brought in earnings or increase.

Secondly, A man of wisdom will make all the good of another his good. Take away envy, and that which is mine, is thine; and if I take away envy, that which is thine is mine. To have a heart to bless God for his blessings upon another, is it self a great blessing, and gives thee likewise a part in those blessings. Thus we may enjoy all the joys and comforts, the favours and deliverances, the health and peace, the riches and plenty, the gifts, yea, and the very graces of all those, in whose graces and gifts, plenty and riches, peace and health, &c. we can really and cordially rejoyce. Whereas an envious man ever standeth in his own light, and cannot rejoyce in his own mercies, for grieving at his Brothers.

Tolle invidiā, & quod meū est, tuū est; & si ego tollam invidiam, quod tuū est meū est.

So far of the second part of the argument, whereby *Eliphaz* would convince *Job* of wickedness, his likeness to the wicked in bearing of, or rather fretting against his troubles.

VERS. 3, 4, 5.

I have seen the foolish taking root, but suddenly I cursed his habitation.
His children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.
Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of the thornes, and the robber swalloweth up their substance.

TWO parts of the fourth argument were cleared in the two former Verses. In these three *Eliphaz* argues further, to the same effect. His argument is grounded upon his own experience, which had shewed many examples of foolish men, like *Job* (as he supposed) both in his rising and in his falling, in his good dayes and in his evil. *I have seen the foolish taking root, and suddenly I cursed his habitation*, &c. The Argument may be thus framed,

Foolish men flourish a while, and then come to certain and sudden destruction; they, and their children, and their estates, are all crushed and swallowed up.

But thou didst flourish a while, and grow up like some goodly tree, yet sudden destruction came upon thy children and upon thy estate, the robbers have consumed and swallowed all up.

Therefore thou also art foolish, &c. *I have seen the foolish taking root, but suddenly I cursed his habitation:* I have seen thee taking root, and I observe thy habitation cursed; Thy outward condition is so parallel with theirs, that I know not how to distinguish thee, from them, in thy inward and spiritual condition.

I have seen the foolish taking root.

Eliphaz urgeth experience. He urged experience in *Chap.* 4. *vers.* 8. *Even as I have seen, they that plough iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same*, &c. He urgeth experience here again, and this superadded experience seems to answer an objection which might be made against that former experience: For some might say, many wicked men plow iniquity enough, and sow wickedness abundantly, yet they reap comforts and the contentments of this world; they have what their hearts desire, a full harvest of riches, pleasures and honours.

It is true (saith *Eliphaz*) I grant it, I have observed the like also, *I have seen the foolish taking root*; yea, but I can answer quickly and remove this objection: it doth not at all weaken my former assertion, grounded upon that experience; for as *I have seen him take root, so, suddenly I cursed his habitation, his children are far from safety*, &c. He flourisheth, but he withers quickly; he takes root, but he is soon pull'd up by the roots.

I have seen.] *Experience is the mistress of truth.* Truth is called the *daughter of time*, because experience bringeth forth many truths; and the word of God is made visible in the works of God. *I have seen*, (saith he) *This truth hath run into my eye.* In experiences the promises of God stand forth, and in experiences the threatnings of God stand forth, and shew themselves: all the experiences that we have in the world, are only so many exemplifications of the truths contained in the promises or threatnings of the word.

The foolish.] I shall not stay to open that term; for we met with it in the former verse, *wrath slayeth the foolish one.* Only in a word, this foolish man is one, who acts without counsel, and whose will is too hard for his understanding. He hath no reason for what he doth, but because he hath a mind to do it. A foolish man is a wicked man; and here the foolish man is a wicked man at ease, a wicked man in his fulness and abundance of outward comforts: *A fool is*

Levē hominem notat, qui sine consilio agit, vult & facit, nullamq; facti rationem habet, nisi quia it venit in animum.

ever worst, when he is at ease. And as he more abounds in comforts, so, he abounds more in sin. All mercies are to him but fuel to his folly, and meat and drink for his madness. That rich man who pleased himself so in his worldly successes is call'd a *fool, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be taken from thee, and then whose shall all these things be which thou possessest?* (Luke 12. 10.) All wicked men are foolish, and wicked rich men have ever the greatest stock of folly. And they are therefore more foolish then others, because they think themselves wiser then all. If a man can get riches, if his root be well settled in the earth, and his branches spread fairly out, he accounteth himself very wise, and so do many others account him too. *A thriving sinner is a foolish and an unprosperous man; but he that plots how to thrive by sin, is the most foolish man in the world,* and therefore in all his prosperity most unprosperous. As *the foolish take root,* so, that by which they take root is oftentimes their folly.

Taking root.] Wicked men under the outward curse are compared to trees not taking root, *Isa.* 40. 24. *He bringeth the Princes to nothing, yea they shall not be planted, yea they shall not be sown, yea their stock shall not take root in the earth.* And *Psalm* 129. 6. *Let them be as grass upon the house* (having no earth to take root in) *which withereth afore it groweth up, whereof the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth up the sheaves his bosom.* Wicked men prospering, are compared to a tree well rooted. *I have seen the foolish taking root*; that is, confirmed and setled in their outward prosperity. A root is to the tree as a foundation is to the house, the establishment of it; when a tree is well rooted, it takes in the moisture of the earth freely, then the body or trunk grows big, the branches spread forth, the leaves are green, and it abounds with fruit. So that with the well-rooting, we must take in all that concerns the flourishing of a tree. Hence, other Scriptures expresse the men of the world by trees, not only secretly taking root in the earth, but putting themselves forth and appearing in their visible beauty and vertue. (*Psal.* 37. 35.) *David* produceth his experience, *I have seen the wicked in great power* (how? *taking root*, yea) *spreading himself like a green bay-tree.* They are described by their boughs, branches and leaves. And in *Isa.* 2. 11. *The day of the Lord shall be upon the Cedars of* Lebanon, *that are high and lifted up*; not only upon the Cedars of *Lebanon* that are deeply rooted, but upon the *Cedars of* Lebanon *that are high and lifted up, and upon all the Oakes of* Basan. In *Hosea* 14. *v.* 5. The prosperous estate of the Church (under the dew and influence of heavenly blessings) is held forth to us under the notion of a tree taking root. *I will be as the dew to* Israel, *he shall grow as the Lilly, and cast his roots as* Lebanon (*that is, as the trees in* Lebanon) *his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive-tree, and his smell as* Lebanon.

In the fourth of *Daniel*, the state, glory, and magnificence of the Kingdoms of this world are shadowed by a tree. *Nebuchadnezzar* in a vision hath a tree presented before him, he knew not what to make of it, and therefore calls for the wise men to expound the vision, which he thus relates, *ver.* 4. *I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, the heighth thereof was great; and the tree grew, and was strong, and the heigth thereof reached unto heaven, and the sight thereof to the ends of the earth, and the leaves thereof were fair.* When *Daniel* comes to interpret it, (*ver.* 22.) he sayes to the King, *Thou art this tree,* &c. *Nebuchadnezzar* in all his worldly pomp, is set forth by a goodly tree. In the 53. of *Isa. v.* 2. Where the birth of Christ is propheſied, it is said, *That he shall grow up before him, as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground.* As a very flourishing estate, whether in spirituals or temporals, is expresst by a tree *planted by the water side*; So a mean, low estate, is signified by a tree in a dry ground. Our *Lord Jesus*, in regard of any outward glory, was like a tree in a dry ground, as the words following expound it, *He hath no form nor comelineſs; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.* His Kingdom was not like the Kingdom of those great Monarchs, strong, and high, and beautiful with any created lustre.

Hence Observe, First, *That wicked men may flourish in great outward prosperity.*

I have seen the wicked taking root. The Prophet *Jeremiah*, in the twelfth of his Propheſie (a Scripture touched before, *chap.* 4. 7. to this purpose) being somewhat scandalized at the prosperity of treacherous dealers, describes them thus, *ver.* 2. *Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root; they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit.* Here are four degrees: First, They are planted; there is many a tree planted that takes not root: but (saith he) *thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root.* There are some trees, which are both planted and have taken root, yet they do not grow; especially not to any height or greatness: though they live, yet they do not thrive. These are planted, and they take root, and they grow; but there are many trees planted, rooted and growing, which yet are fruitless; these have all, they are planted, they take root, they grow, and they bring forth fruit: And who are these? Surely, the worst of men, as the very next words evidence; *God is near in their mouths, but far from their reins.* God is near in the mouth of such, that is, they may speak of him sometimes, but he is far from their reins; there is nothing of God in their hearts: and surely, they that have nothing of God in their hearts, have nothing of goodness in their hearts, or in their lives.

This present glory and prosperity of wicked men lifts up the glory of Gods patience. How is the glory of the patience of God exalted, in letting them have ease, who are a burden unto himself? in letting them prosper, who are (as God can be pained) a pain unto himself; in suffering them to flourish, who vex his people? in suffering them to laugh, who make his people mourn?

Further, He gives them leave to take root and flourish, (whom he could blast and root up every moment) that all may see what is in their hearts. If God did not permit them to take root, yea, and sometime to grow up and flourish, we should never see what fruit they would bring forth; we should never see those grapes of gall, those bitter clusters, if these vines of *Sodom*, and fields of *Gomorrah*, were not water'd with the dew, and warm'd with the Sun of some outward prosperity.

Lastly, The prosperity of wicked men, is a great trial of good men; *The flourishing of the ungodly is as strong an exercise of their Graces, as their own witherings.*

Secondly Observe, That, *Wicked men may not only flourish and grow, but they may flourish and grow a great while.*

I ground it upon this; the Text saith that they take root, *I have seen the foolish take root*; and the word notes a deep rooting. In the Parable of the Sower (*Mat.* 13. 21.) it is said, that the seed which fell into stonie ground, withered, *because it had no root*; noting, that the cause of a sudden decay, or withering in any plant, is the want of rooting; whereas a Tree well rooted, will endure many a blast, and stand out a storm. Some wicked men stand out many storms, like old Oaks, like trees deeply rooted, they stand many a blast, yea, many a blow. Spectators are ready to say, such and such storms will certainly overthrow them, and yet still they stand; but though they stand so long, that all wonder; yet they shall fall, that many may rejoyce, *and take up this proverb against them* (as of old against the King of *Babylon*) *How hath the oppressor ceased? The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the scepter of the Rulers: He who smote the people in wrath, with a continued stroke, he that ruled in the Nation with anger, is persecuted, and none hindreth. Therefore many shall break forth into singing, yea, the fir-trees shall rejoyce at him, and the Cedars of Lebanon, saying, since thou art laid down, no feller is come up amongst us,* Isa. 14.

משרש

Thirdly, Observe, *Outward good things are not good in themselves.*

The foolish take root. The worst of men may enjoy the best of outward comforts. *Outward things are unto us, as we are.* If the man be good, then they are good. And though the Preacher tells us, *Eccles.* 9. *That all things come alike unto all*, yet all things are not alike unto all. There is a great difference between the flourishing of a wise man, and the flourishing of a fool; all his flourishing and fastning in the earth, is no good to him, because himself is not good. Spiritual good things are so good, that though they find us

not

not good, yet they will make us good; we cannot have them indeed, and be unlike them: But worldly good things find some really good, and make them worse; others who had but a shew of goodness, they are occasions of making stark naught: *Rooting in the earth never helpt any to grow heaven-wards. Many deeply rooted in the earth, have grown down, and gone down to the depths of Hell.*

Fourthly, observe, as a consequence from the former;

That, *The enjoyment of outward good things, is no evidence, can be made no argument that a man is good.*

I have seen the fooliſh taking root. And yet how many ſtick upon this evidence, bleſſing themſelves, becauſe they are outwardly bleſſed? Yea, though they meet with a diſcovery of their ſins, and ſinful boſomes, in the word, though they find thoſe ſins threatned, yea curſed with a grievous curſe in the word, yet they bleſs themſelves, and ſay, we are rich and flouriſh, we have a good eſtate and credit, we take root and ſtand; but they forget that all this may be the portion of a fool. *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root.*

And ſuddenly I curſed his habitation.

ואקוב *deducitur vel à* נקב *vel à* קבב *ſedit, perfodit, terebravit, & per metaphoram, maledixit, exoratus eſt, eſt metaphora tranſlata ab his qui gladio aut pugione aliquem transverberant, tanquam ſi aliquis Dei aut hominis maledictione trajiceretur,* Cartw. *in* Prov. 11. 26.

The word here uſed, *to curſe*, ſprings indifferently from two roots, which yet meet, and are one in ſignification; namely, to ſtrike through or pierce, as a man that is ſtruck through with a ſtaff, or ſword, or ſtabb'd with a dagger; thus, *Hab.* 3. 14. *Thou didſt ſtrike through with his ſtaves the head of the villages.* And, *Iſa.* 36. 6. The piercing of a reed into the hand of him that leans upon it, is expreſt by this word. So then it carries a metaphorical alluſion to the effect of a curſe; the curſe of God alwayes, and the curſe of man upon due grounds, is as a ſword or a dagger, piercing a man through and through; through both ſoul and body. *I have curſed his habitation*, that is, I have ſmitten his habitation quite through with a curſe.

Pium non decent diræ.

I curſed his habitation.] Some read, I abhorred, or I abominated his habitation. I was ſo far from envying this flouriſhing, ſpreading tree, or from being in love with his goodly ſeat and brave habitation, that I loathed, and could not abide it. The cottage of an honeſt man was more delightful to me, then the tents or palaces of wickedneſs.

But the word bears rather *to curſe*; which is firſt to wiſh evil unto another: And ſecondly, to foretel, to pronounce, or denounce evil againſt another. Often in the *Pſalms*, *David*'s curſes upon his enemies, are predictions from the ſpirit of God, not maledictions or ill wiſhes from his own ſpirit; good men know not how to wiſh evill; their curſings are propheſies, not prayers; they foretel or foreſee evils, but they deſire them not. *I have not deſired the woful day, Lord, thou knoweſt*, ſaid that Prophet, who had denounced many woful dayes, *Jer.* 17. 16.

Id fieri ab aliquo dicitur in Scriptura quod faciendum denunciatur.

In Scripture, many are ſaid to do that which they declare to be, or foretel that it ſhall be; as (to give an inſtance or two) *Lev.* 13. in the caſe of the Leper, the Text ſaith, that when the Prieſt makes up his judgment concerning the Leper (having found the tokens of Leproſie upon him) *he ſhall defile him* (v. 3, & 8.) *or make him unclean*; ſo the Original gives it; which we tranſlate, *The Prieſt ſhall pronounce him unclean.* In that ſenſe, the Miniſters of the Goſpel (whoſe buſineſs it is to cleanſe) defile many; yea, one way to cleanſe men, is thus to defile, and pronounce them Lepers. So *Iſa.* 6. 8. The Lord ſends the Prophet againſt the people, and ſaith to him, *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes*: Now, the Prophet did not act this himſelf, he did not deafen their ears, or blind their eyes; but only fore-told or denounced that this judgment ſhould fall upon them: becauſe they had ſo long ſtopped their ears, at laſt their ears ſhould be ſtopt and made heavy enough: and becauſe they had ſo long winked and ſhut their eyes, at laſt they ſhould be blind, and their eyes ſhut faſt enough: *How faſt are thoſe eyes and ears lockt up, which are thus double lockt?* Once more, *Jer.* 1. 10. The Lord gives the Prophet a ſtrange commiſſion, *See* (ſaith he) *I have this day ſet thee over the Nations and over Kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to deſtroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant.* One would think this commiſſion, more fitting for a *Cæſar* or an *Alexander*, for great Commanders attended with numerous Armies, then for an unarmed Prophet; what could he do? could he root out Kingdoms, and deſtroy Nations? Yes, by denouncing the deſtroying judgments, and conſuming wrath of God, due unto them for their rebellions and provocations: Thus a poor weak Prophet can overturn a whole Kingdom, and root up the ſtrongeſt Nations. And the truth is, that, *never was any Nation or Kingdom rooted up by the ſword, but it was firſt rooted up by the word*; firſt, God hewed them to pieces, and ſlew them by his Prophets, and then let in Armies of cruel enemies to do it.

Prædic excæcandos oculos, & aures aggravandas.

So here in the Text, *I have ſeen the fooliſh taking root, but ſuddenly I curſed his habitation*; The clear meaning is, I foretold a curſe, I knew what would ſhortly become of his habitation. It was not anger againſt his perſon, or envy at his eſtate, that moved me to curſe him; but it was an eye of faith which ſhewed me him markt with a curſe in the juſt threatnings of God: I ſaw a curſe hanging over his family and dwelling, over his riches and honours: And though he then flouriſhed, that, yet he ſhould quickly wither and be deſtroyed root and branch. *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked*, Prov. 3. 33. Man doth but ſee it there, the Lord ſent it there.

Non per invidiam & iram dirè imprecaretur, ſed animum præſagiret male ipſi fore. Coc.

The word is conſiderable which we tranſlate Habitation; נוה It ſignifies *a quiet, a ſetled, a peaceable, a beautiful habitation*: And ſo carries an aggravation of the judgment upon the fooliſh man; his judgment is worſe upon him, becauſe he thought himſelf ſo well, ſo well ſeated, ſo well ſetled, ſo ſecured and accommodated, that he ſhould never be removed: They are moſt troubled with removings, who thought themſelves ſetled; *troubles afflict them deepeſt, who ſuppoſed themſelves beyond trouble.* When *David* thought God had made his mountain ſo ſtrong that it could not be moved, how was he troubled, as ſoon as God hid his face? *Pſal.* 30. 6, 7. And if they are ſo troubled with ſhakings, who look upon their eſtates as ſettled by the favour of God, how will they be troubled to meet with totterings and ſhakings, much more with ruinings and deſtructions, whoſe eſtates at beſt, are bottomed only upon their pollicies, often, upon their ſins?

Obſerve hence, Firſt, *the eſtate of ſome wicked men, is out of the prayers of Gods people.*

When they go by their dwellings, they cannot ſay, *The bleſſing of the Lord be upon you, we bleſs you in the name of the Lord*, Pſal. 126. 8. It is a great mercy to ſtand under the influences of prayer, and for a man to have his eſtate, land, dwellings, watered with ſhowers of bleſſings and hearty good wiſhes from the mouthes of Saints. Their bleſſings or their curſings, are next to the bleſſings and curſins of Chriſt, nay, they are his: It is an argument that Chriſt hath bleſſed or curſed a man, when the ſpirits of his people generally are carried to either. It is one of the ſaddeſt preſages in the world, for a man to be caſt out of the prayers of the Saints, or to be caſt by their prayers; that is, when their prayers are againſt him, and he preſented naked to the diſpleaſure of Chriſt: It ſhewes that the ſin of a man is a ſin unto death, when the faithful ceaſe praying for him, *1 Joh.* 5. 16. What can it prognoſticate then, but approaching ruine and deſtruction, when they bend the ſtrength of prayer againſt him? There was never any habitation of wickedneſs, ſo firmly founded or ſtrongly fortified, but that *Great and Holy Ordinance* hath or may ſhake, and batter it to the duſt. The fair Towers and Walls of *Babylon*, the ſeat and ſtate of Antichriſt, have long been under this curſe: All the Saints, whoſe eyes God hath unſcaled and brought out from *Egyptian* darkneſs, have ſeen *That fooliſh man* taking root, *and have curſed his habitation.*

Obſerve, Secondly, *A wicked man in proſperity is under the curſe of God.*

He is often under the curſe of man, but ever under the curſe of God. *Eſau have I hated* (ſaith God, *Rom.* 9. 13.) yet even at that time *the fatneſs of the earth was his dwelling, and of the dew of Heaven from above*, Gen. 27. 39. *While the meat was in the mouths of the murmuring* Iſraelites, *the wrath of God was upon them.* They did at once eat their luſt and their death, wrath was mingled with their meat; and *while he gave them their requeſt, he ſent leanneſs into their ſouls*, (Pſalm 106. 15.)

15.) This is the most dreadful curse of all, *To have a fat estate, a well fed body, with a lean starven soul.*

Thirdly, Observe, *A vast difference between godly and wicked men, between the foolish and the wise.*

When a godly man withers in his outward estate, and is pluckt up by the roots, yet God loves him; when a godly man is poor, God loves him; when he is sick, God loves him; when he is in prison, God loves him; when he is in disgrace, God loves him; and when the world hates him most, then God usually shews, that he loves him most: *The world cannot cast a godly man into any condition, but he meets with the love of God in it:* his estate may vary and vary, change and change a thousand times, but the love of God towards him is unchangeable. On the other side, we see in the Text, when a wicked man takes root, and the branches of his outward estate bear fruit abundantly, God curseth him; when he is at ease, God is angry with him. That place is very observable (*Zech.* 1. 15.) *I am very sore displeased with the Heathen, that are at ease*; the Heathen were at ease, yet God was extremely displeased with them. When a wicked man is in health, God curseth him; when he is rich, God curseth him; when all men honour, admire and flatter him, God abhorreth, hates and detests him; he can be in no condition, but he is sure to meet with the curse of God. As a foolish man, a wicked man, gives God many things, but he never gives God his love, or his affection: A wicked man may give God prayers, but he doth not give him his love; he may give him praises, but he never gives him any love; he may give God his purse, but he gives not his love or his heart; whether such a fool praiseth God, or prayeth to God, or giveth unto God, he hateth God. So likewise, whatsoever God gives to a wicked man, he hates him; whatsoever he bestows on him, he curseth him: This should awake men rooted in the earth, to consider whether they are under the influences of Gods eternal love, as well as under the influence of temporal blessings. This is the ground of *Davids* conclusion, *Psalm* 37. 16. *A little that the righteous hath, is better then the riches of many wicked:* the reason is this, because many ungodly ones, swimming in a full Sea of riches, have not so much as one drop of the love of God, nor one beam or ray of the light of his countenance shining upon them; but a godly man, if he have but a small estate, he hath much love mixed with it; if he have but a little purse, he hath a large portion of the favour of God in it, and this makes it so out-worth and out-value a wicked mans estate, this puts the price and stamps an excellency upon his little. The love of God doth so far exceed the farness of the earth, in the esteem of Saints, that they in rating their estates, reckon not upon earthly things at all, they see nothing to value themselves by, but their interests in the love of God. As when God gives his people their portion, he looks upon outward things, as mere additionals, or as an overplus given in by way of vantage. *All other things shall be added* (*Matth.* 6. 33.) When a man casts in a handful of wheat after the bushel is full, or gives a fingers breadth after the due measure of the cloth; so it is in the case of all temporals bestowed upon the Saints.

Then fourthly Note, *Outward good things, are no argument of the favour of God.*

As we shewed before, that, they are no evidences of the goodness of a person, so neither are they any evidences of the grace and favour of God unto a person. *A man cannot find an evidence of Gods love in his purse, in his land, in his honour, in his credit:* Yea, a man may flourish in better things then these I speak of, and yet have no evidences of Gods love to him; a man may flourish in knowledge, be deeply rooted in learning, may have extraordinary branches of parts, and wonderful fruits of gifts; yet notwithstanding all this while, his habitation and his person too under a curse. And therefore, be sure that you look for your evidences of the love of God in the right box, do not look for evidences of the love of God in your chests, or in your purses; but look into your hearts, and see what Christ hath done there; look into your lives, and see what light shines there from the Spirit of Christ: Look whether grace flows from the Spirit of Christ, and is rooted in your spirits. If grace be rooted in thee there, if it spring up and bring forth fruit in thy life, this is an evidence indeed. They that are thus rooted, God never curseth: Grace and holiness were never under any curse.

Observe one thing further, As these words hold forth the judgment or opinion of a godly man, concerning the wicked in prosperity. *I have seen the foolish taking root, and presently I cursed his habitation.*

A godly man sees the wicked of the world to be miserable in their best and most flourishing condition.

When thousands stand about the great ones of the earth, admiring, applauding, making *little gods* of them, envying their happiness, and thinking none happy but they, or such as they are; then a godly man pitties them, mourns over them, sees them, and all such as they are, miserable: He looks through all their outward glory and beauty, riches and honours, and sees them curst through all, hated of God through all: He sees nakedness through their cloathing, emptiness and want through all their plenty and abundance: neither is this unhappiness confined to their own persons, but derived to all, to whom they derive life, or stand related. So it follows,

His Children are far from safety, and they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them, &c.

These words contain a further effect of this curse. *I cursed his habitation?* and what then? was it an ineffectual curse? was it but wind and words, returning and doing nothing? or did it spend all its strength upon this foolish man, in his own person? No, *His children are far from safety, they are crushed in the gate,* &c. One of the Rabbins conceives that these words and the verse following, are the form wherein the curse was pronounced upon the habitation of the foolish man; as if *Eliphaz* had said, *I cursed his habitation,* thus, *Let his Children be far from safety, and let them be crushed in the gate, neither let there be any to deliver; as for his harvest, let the hungry eat it up, and let the robbers swallow up their substance.* And we find such a form, *Psa.* 109. *David* pronounces the curse upon those wicked enemies, in language very sutable to this (*vers.* 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.) *Set thou a wicked man over him, and let Satan* (an adversary) *stand at his right hand. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. Let his Children be fatherless, and his Wife a widow; let his Children be continually vagabonds and beg, let them seek their bread also out of desolate places, let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the stranger spoyle his labour.*

Secundum genus calamitatis quod Deus improbis immittit, posteritatis exitium deploratum, & quidem acclamante publico consensu. Rabbi Solomon, formam maledictionis esse vult.

But we may rather take it, as the matter, then as the form of a curse. *I cursed his habitation,* and the curse brake forth upon his Children, and upon his estate, upon the branches, and the fruit of that goodly tree: much like that in the vision, *Dan.* 4. 13, 14. *I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and behold a watcher, and a holy One came down from Heaven. He cried aloud and said thus; Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit,* &c. This Allegory may be rendred in the plain words of *Eliphaz, I cursed his habitation, his Children are far from safety.* The Master of the Family is the tree, his Children are either fruit or branches, his leaves are riches and honour, the beauty and pleasantness of his habitation.

Some things in the letter of the Text are to be opened, but I shall first observe one thing in the general, from the connection of this fourth verse with the third, *I suddenly cursed his habitation* (verse 3.) Then follows, *his children are far from safety.*

Observe from it, That, *Creatures cannot stand before the curse of God.*

How strongly soever they are rooted, the blast of the breath of Gods displeasure, will either blow them down, or wither them standing. The curse comes powerfully, suddenly and secretly, it is often an invisible stroak. When we see neither ax nor spade at the root, nor storm at the top, yet down it comes, or stands without leaf or fruit. When Christ in the Gospel curst the fruitless fig-tree, his Disciples passing by that way, wondred saying, *how quickly is this fig-tree withered!* it was but onely a word from Christ, *Never bear fruit more,* and the fig-tree which had no fruit, lost its life. Some are such tall Cedars, such

mighty

mighty Oaks, that men conclude there is no stirring of them, no Ax can fell them, or blast loosen them; yet a word from the Lord will turn them upside down: or if he do but say to them, *never fruit grow* upon your actions, or out of your counsels, presently they wither. *The curse causeless shall not come*; but when there is a cause, and God speaks the word, the curse will come: Neither power nor policies, neither threatnings nor entreaties can hinder or block it up. It is said of the *water of jealousie* in the book of *Numbers*, that when the woman drank that water, if there were cause of her husbands suspition, presently *her belly swell'd, and her thighs did rot*, the effect was inevitable. So, if God bid judgment take hold of a man, family or Nation, it will obey. A word made the world, and a word is able to destroy it. *There is no armour of proof against the shot or stroak of a curse.*

Suddenly I cursed his habitation, and the next news is, *His Children are far from safety.* If God speak the word, it is done as soon as spoken; as that mysterious Letter said of the Gunpowder plot, *As soon as the paper is burnt, the thing is done.* Surely God can cause his judgments to pass upon his implacable enemies, such horrid conspirators against Churches and Common-wealths, truth and peace, with as much speed, as a paper burns; with a blaze and a blast they are consumed. That, in the general from the connexion of these two verses: As soon as he was cursed, his Children and his estate, all that he had went to wrack, and ruine. I shall now open the words distinctly.

His Children are far from safety.] Some read, *Were far from safety*, (and so the whole passage in the time past) because he speaks of a particular example, which he himself had observed in those dayes, as is clear, *v.* 2.

Having shewed the curse upon the root, he now shewes the withering of the branches.

Some of the *Rabbins* understand, by **Children**, the Followers or Imitators of wicked men, such as assisted them, or such as were like them; these are moral children. But take it rather in the letter, for natural children, such as were born to them, or adopted by them, these come under their Fathers unhappiness: *They are far from safety.*

The Hebrew word is commonly rendred, *salvation. His Children are far from salvation.* But then we must understand it for temporal salvation, which our translation expresses clearly by safety. *His children are far from safety.* It is possible that the children of a wicked man, may be near unto eternal salvation; Though godly Parents have a promise for their seed, yet grace doth not run in a blood, neither is the love of God tied or entail'd upon any lineage of men. Election sometimes crosses the line, and steps into the family of a reprobate Father. Therefore, it is not said, *His Children are far from salvation*, in a strict, but in a large sence. We find the word *salvation*, frequently used for safety (2 *Kings* 13. 17.) when *Elisha* bad *Joash* the King of *Israel* shoot the arrow, he called it *the arrow of the Lords Salvation*, which we render, *the arrow of the Lords deliverance.* So *Moses* bespeaks the trembling *Israelites* at the Red Sea, *Stand still, and behold the salvation of the Lord*; that is, behold what safety the Lord will give you from all these dangers, what deliverance from the hand of *Pharaoh.* The Prophet represents the Jews thus bemoaning their outward judgments; *We roar all like Bears, and mourn sore like Doves; we look for judgment, but there is none, for salvation, but it is far off*, Isa. 59. 11.

They are far from safety.] To be far from safety, is a phrase importing extream danger; As when a man is said to be far from light, he is in extream darkness; and when a man is said to be far from health, he is in extream sickness; and when a man is said to be far from riches, he is in extream poverty: So here, *His Children are far from safety*; that is, they are in extream danger and peril, they walk (as it were) in the regions of trouble, in the valley of the shadow of death continually. That phrase is used also, respecting the spiritual estate of unbelievers, *They are far off from God, far off from the Covenant*, Isa. 57. 19. *Ephes.* 12. 13. that is, they have no benefit by the covenant, no interest in, no favour at all or mercy from the Lord. To be far off from mercy is to be near wrath, and to be *far from safety* is to dwell upon the borders of danger.

And they are crushed in the gate.] In Chap. 4. *Eliphaz* describes man, as *crushed before the Moth*, to shew how suddenly, how easily man is destroyed. This mans Children are crushed in the gate, as a man would crush a flie or a moth between his fingers.

They are crushed in the gate.] That notes two things.

First, The publickness of their destruction, they shall be destroyed in the sight of all men; for the gate was a publick place (*Prov.* 31. 31.) *Her works praise her in the gates*; that is, she is publickly known by her good works. To do a thing in the gate is opposed to the doing of a thing secretly. To suffer in the gate is to suffer publickly.

Secondly, *To be crushed in the gate*, is to be crushed or cast in judgment; for *The gate* was the place of old, where justice was administred and judgment given; and for a man to be crushed in the gate, is as much as for a man to be overthrown in his sute, when he hath any controversie or tryal before a Judge, whether for his estate or for his life. So this phrase, *They are crushed in the gate*, implies that all business shall go against them; if they have any controversie in law, or if they be charged with any crime, they shall certainly be condemned.

In portis judicia exercebantur. Merc.

I need not stay to prove that judgment was given in the gate; only take a few Texts. First, In this book (*Chap.* 29. 7.) *Job* describes his own prosperity thus, *When I went out to the gate*, that is, to sit in judgment; And *Chap.* 31. *v.* 21. the word is used in the like sense; So *Gen.* 23. 17. *Chap.* 34. 20. *Ruth* 4. 1. *Isa.* 29. 11. Those words of the curse, *Psalm* 109. 7. *When he is judged, let him be condemned*, are the full Exposition of this, *They are crushed in the gate.*

And the reason given by one of the Ancients, why justice was usually administred in the gate, is the accommodation and convenience both of strangers and Citizens: For strangers, who lived far off in the Countrey, that they might have justice, before they entred into the City, whose pomp and throngs of people might possibly occasion either some terror or diversion in the minds of poor Countrey men. And then likewise, that the Inhabitants of the City, might not be either charged or tired with long journies into the Countrey; to which we may add, that judgment was therefore administred in the gate, because gates are places through which all pass in and out, and therefore the declaring of judgment there, was the making of it more publick; that all might take notice of what passed, in such and such cases, as the sentence and resolution of the Judges.

Ne agricolæ litis causa veniens, civitatis frequentia & nova terreretur conspectu; nec urbis habitator, longè ab urbe properaret & subvectionē quæreret judicantorum. Jeron. *in* Amos 5. 9. *v.* 10.

Neither is there any to deliver them.

This is the third degree of evil falling upon the foolish mans Children. Though a man be brought to and cast in judgment, yet he may have a friend to help and deliver him; but these shall have no help, none to speak a good word for them, none to mediate either for reprieve or pardon. Some give the sence thus, *His Children shall neither find a judge to give a favourable sentence, nor an Advocate to plead for them, and make the best of their cause.* This also answers another part of another curse, *Psal.* 109. 12, *Let there be none to extend mercy to him, neither let there be any to favour his fatherless Children*; None shall be found either able or willing to rescue or pluck them out of the hand of danger.

In summis malis neminem habebūt assertorem. Ut injusti confundebuntur & contundebuntur in judicio publicè coram tribunalibus

Hence Observe, First, That, *a wicked man and his Children are often wrapt up in the same destruction.*

I cursed his habitation, and his Children are far from safety, they are crushed in the gate. A godly man is a defence for his Children; it is a great blessing to be born of holy parents, and it is a curse to be born of oppressing wicked parents. As the blessing of God descends from the Father, upon the Children; so, the curse of God many times descends from the Father, upon the Children, and they inherit their judgments, as well as their Lands. Though the justice and goodness of God, will make that Proverb cease in all the families of the world for ever, which was once taken up by the Jewes, Ezek. 18. 2. *The Fathers have eaten sowre grapes, and the Childrens teeth are set on edge.* The Naturalists observe, and experience teacheth, that when a man eats very sowre grapes (and so makes a sowre face) another standing by is affected with a sympathy, and

Liberi parentum pœnis sæpe implicantur.

and his teeth are set on edge or pained with the very sight or grating of anothers teeth, though himself taste not the grape. The present *Jews* thought themselves but bare lookers on upon their Fathers sin, and yet they suffered. But the Lord found the sowre grapes in their mouths also, or them risen up in their Fathers stead, an encrease of sinful men to fill up the fierce wrath of the Lord against them. Now (I say) though the Lord will make that proverb cease, in their sence: For no child is punished merely in contemplation of his Fathers sin. Yet when a son is wicked, the wickedness of a father, whether immediate or further off, may come in remembrance against him, and at once aggravate his sin, and encrease his sorrow.

Secondly, Note, *Whom God will destroy, no creature shall be found able to deliver out of his hands.*

God can take away the help, and stop up the pitty of all creatures, *None shall deliver them.* And though themselves should endeavour to escape, they shall not escape, (*Amos* 9. 1.) *They that fly shall not fly away, and they that escape shall not be delivered*; that is, by endeavouring to escape, they shall not be delivered, they shall attempt it in vain. If God will not deliver, none can. If a *Lot* be taken prisoner, *He* bids *Abraham arm and rescue him. If a* Paul *be in the mouth of a Lion, the Lord will deliver him.* It needs not trouble us, who is our enemy, if God will be our deliverer: nor can it avail what friends so ever we have, if God saith, ye shall not be delivered. *A wicked man* (when the Lord appears against him) *either hath none to deliver him, or none shall.* Salvation is far from the wicked, for they keep not thy statutes, *Psal.* 119. 155.

From the Children, judgment proceeds to the estate of this wicked man.

Verse 5. **Whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and fetcheth it even out of the thornes, and the robber spoileth all his substance.**

Whose harvest the hungry eateth up.] By his **Harvest**, we are to understand not only the return of that which he hath sown, as corn and other fruits of the earth; but all the goods or provisions, which he hath gathered or laid up for his support and accommodation. A mans harvest is the improvement of his whole estate. And this mans harvest is all he hath gotten, by right or wrong; by industry or by injury; by sweat or by deceit; by secret practises or open violences. To eat up a harvest, is as much as to *devour a house*, with which Christ charges the hungry Scribes and Pharisees (*Matth.* 23. 14.) who made Beggars as fast as they made prayers; *Ye devour widdows houses and under pretence make long prayers.*

The greatness of his affliction is set forth by the loss of those things, which cost much pains to get. A harvest is not had with idleness: The earth must be broken, plowed and sowed, before we reap. The Law of Nations (I am sure of this Nation) is very tender in this point, providing, that they who till and sow the Land, shall also enjoy the crop. But this wicked man shall not reap what he sowed: The labour shall be his, and the benefit another mans. *The hungry shall come and eat up his harvest.*

Whence Observe in general, *It is a great evil when we cannot enjoy the thing we labour for.*

What greater disappointment to the husband-man, then to deprive him of his harvest? Poets have sung this in mournful verse. And we find this threatned in the law, as the very sting of those evils, which should come upon a disobedient people, *Deut.* 28. 33. *The fruit of thy land and all thy labours, shall a Nation which thou knowest not, eat up: All thy labours*, that is, The fruits for which thou hast laboured, shall be eaten up by strangers. And (*Levit.* 26. 16.) *Ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your Enemies shall eat it.* *The sloathful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting*, so we translate, *Prov.* 12. 26. But it seems not so proper to the sence of this proverb: A sloathful man is not usually a hunter. That sport requires an active spirit. And usually men that are slow at work, are quick at meat, and will not lose their Venison for the roasting. Therefore more properly (I conceive with others) to the original, and fully to the point in hand, it may be translated thus, *Deceit or the deceitful man shall not roast his hunting*, or that which he hath taken in hunting: That is, he shall not take pleasure in that, which he hath got by extream pains (as all hunters do) or by craft and stealth, as some hunters do. Somewhat comes between his mouth and his morsel, his cup and lip; either he cannot get his meat to the table, or he rises hungry from it. Therefore *Solomon* puts a great blessing in this, when a man enjoyeth his labour, *Eccles.* 2. 10. *My heart rejoyced in all my labour, and this was my portion of all my labour*; namely, the fruit and benefit which God gave me by my labour; I enjoyed it, and this was my portion. Again, (*Eccles.* 3. 13.) *And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour; it is the gift of God:* He puts the Emphasis upon this, when a man hath taken pains to lay in provisions for a comfortable subsistence, that then he may sit down quietly and enjoy it, *It is the gift of God.* Therefore on the other hand, not to eat and drink, and enjoy the good of our labours, but to have all violently snatcht from our mouths, *It is the judgment of God.* This judgement the Prophet also threatens (*Isa.* 1. 6.) *Your land. strangers shall devour it, in your presence*; when you are looking on, strangers shall devour it. *Thou preparest a Table before me in the presence of my enemies*, said *David*, Psal. 23. 5. As it is one of the greatest outward mercies, to eat at a Table, prepared in the presence of an enemy; so, it is one of the greatest afflictions, to have an enemy eat up what is prepared for our Table, in our presence, (Mic. 6. 15.) *Thou shalt sow, but thou shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the Olives, but thou shalt not annoint thee with oyl; and sweet wine, but shalt not drink wine.* Observe how he puts in their labour to aggravate their sorrow. If they had not sown, it had not been so troublesom not to reap; if they had not trod the Olives, it had not been so grievous to have had no oyle; but this was their calamity, they sowed, but reaped not; they trod the Olives, but had no oyle to annoint themselves. The misery of that rich man (*Luke* 12.) is thus described, when he had made larger barns, and got in his harvest; when he had made provision for many years, then the question is, *Whose shall all these things be that thou hast provided?* The rich man was not unprovided of an answer to the Query long before: *Whose shall they be?* My own I warrant you: I am not such a fool to take pains for others. Little did he think his grave was a making while he was making his barns: Or, that all his providence and care should redound to strangers. How will it cut the heart to see all those things taken away, in and about which, a man hath laid out his whole strength, and laid up his whole heart? This *Job* imprecates as the extremity of all outward evils, in case he were an hypocrite, and dealt falsly with God (*Chap.* 31. 8.) *If any blot hath cleaved to my hands*; that is, if this blot of insincerity (*Job* did not think himself to be without all blot of sin, but, if such a blot as I am charged with) cleave to my hands, *then let me sow, and let another eat.* This judgment which *Eliphaz* hints at in another person, as already fallen on *Job* for his hypocrisie; *Job*, in his own person calls for, if he were an hypocrite. *Let me sow, and let another eat, yea let my off-spring be rooted out.*

The hungry.] There is some difference in opinion, who are to be understood by the *hungry*. Some take this *hungry one* for the *Devil*; he is a *hungry one* indeed: but his hunger is not after our riches, but after our souls; 'tis them *he goes about like* (a hungry) *roaring Lion, seeking to devour* (2 Pet. 5. 8.). It is a truth also, that Satan goes about as a *hungry* one, to devour our Estates, so he did *Jobs*, *His harvest that hungry one did eat up*; but, it was not because he desired *Jobs harvest*, but because he gaped for *Job himself*. He thought if God would but give him leave to rob *Job* of his riches, *Job* would quickly let his soul lapse into his hands. A foul is the dainty morsel, which *That hungry spirit* waits for. *The most delicate things in the world are meat too gross for a spirit, though an unclean one.*

Others, by the *hungry one*, understand the *Heir* of this rich worldling; his heir whom he had kept low, and bare, and short, as long as he lived; now, when he is dead and gone, comes hungry to the estate, and quickly consumes it; he eats it out, drinks it up, and lavisheth it away. It is often seen that the heirs of great, rich men, come very hungry

Non aduret fraudulentia (sive vir dolosus) venationem suam. Aries Mont. Pag.

Oscitantia dicitur à Philosophis. Aristot. §. 5. prop. quest. 7.

cessus none parata ita omnia intelligunt condendo & reponenda in nos plures.

ius hæc culta alia mihabebit? harus fugites? meis consecrinus Virg. 1.

gry to their inheritances, and as quickly swallow them down. They have been kept so short, that like empty and sharp set stomacks they waste all, when they come where they may have their fill. *That estate which is got by the oppression, and kept by the base covetousness of parents, is usually spent out in riot and luxury. A hungry heir devours the harvest.*

Thirdly; *The hungry* may be taken for those poor oppressed ones, whose estates those *Nimrods* of the world had unjustly and cruelly ravisht from them. They, whom wicked men make hungry and lean by their exactions and cruel dealings, come at last (though unbidden and unwelcome guests) to eat the bread from their tables. And these poor *hungry ones* are conceived by some, to be *Wisdoms children*, the people of God, whom those *wicked fools* had stript of their estates, and would have eaten them too like bread, *Psal.* 14. So the *Septuagint* renders it; *The just or the godly shall eat up or devour the harvest of this rich worldling.* Put both these together, and this may be the sence, *The hungry eateth up his harvest*, that is, the godly poor, whom this man had unjustly oppresst, and even put to starving, God, by his just judgment shall send in, to take free Quarter, to eat their fill of his harvest, and never reckon with their Host. From that sence take this Note.

Δικαιοι ἐσθιουσι. Sep.

That, *God doth sometimes give the riches of wicked men to poor godly men whom they have oppresst.*

Job himself, *chap.* 27. *v.* 16. gives us this truth in expres terms; where speaking of a wicked man, he saith, *Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it* (let him prepare it, let him scrape it together as fast as he can) *but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver*, that is, those just and innocent persons whom he had wronged, shall by a divine retaliation enter upon his estate. The wicked grind the faces of the poors to make themselves bread, but at last the poor shall make bread of their corn and grist.

Fourthly, We may take the hungry yet more largely, for any that are low and poor, whom God stirs up and sends in judgment, *as his teeth*, to consume and eat up, to devour and destroy the portion of such fat ones. Every spoiler is *a hungry one*; spoilers devour as if they had never eaten in their lives, they sweep all away: The word which we translate *to eat up*, signifies the most fierce kind of eating; when a man eats as if he could never have enough. And therefore it is applied to the eating of fire, which we know is the most hungry thing in the world; nothing will satisfie the appetite of that hungry Element; the more it eats, the more hungry and devouring it is. Hence that adjunct of fire (*Isa.* 29. 6.) *A flame of a devouring fire*, or, *the flame* (it is the word of the Text) *of an eating fire*; a fire whose stomack is able to digest all the material creatures in the world. So (*Job* 1.) it is said, that *the fire of God, or a great fire did eat up the sheep*, the fire came hungry and consumed them; such is the force of the word here used: and secondly, it is applied in Scripture, to the eating of the sword; which (*alas!*) we know is very hungry too, *My sword shall devour flesh*, Deut. 32. 42. Thirdly, it is applied to savage beasts (*Gen.* 37. 33.) when *Jacob* bewaileth the loss of his son *Joseph*, he saith, *an evil beast hath devoured him.* Fourthly, The cruelty of persecutors (in whom wild beasts, and sword and fire are all met, if not swallowed up) the cruelty, I say, of persecutors is expressed by this word, *They eat up my people like bread*, Psal. 14. 4. *Wild beasts, and sword, and fire, and above all, the persecuting spirits of men, are the most hungry and speedy devourers, such a devouring shall consume the harvest of those foolish men; the hungry shall eat it up.* Hence we may observe,

In communi quicunque raptor & deprædator famelicus appellatur. Pined.

אכל *Est activus quam nostrũ comedere, significat enim comedẽdo consumere; ingẽtem aviditatem comedentis præ se fert, adeo ut de igne quæ omnia avidè deposit utatur.*

That, *They who consume others, shall at last be consumed themselves.*

Such as have raised themselves upon the ruines of others, shall raise others by their own ruine: God will send devourers to eat up the estate of those, who have devoured the estates of their brethren; especially, if they have devoured the estates of his own people. The Apostle, *Gal.* 6. 7. gives this general law, *whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*; he that sows oppression, or makes his seed-time to be the reaping of his neighbours harvest, may find reapers which he hired not, in his field at harvest. The Prophet *Isaiah* denounceth a wo against those that joyn house to house by oppression; and what is the wo? *their houses shall be made desolate*: So, *Zeph.* 3. 19. *I will undo all that afflict thee.* And, *Jer.* 30. 16. *They that devour thee, shall be devoured; and they that spoil thee, shall be a spoil; and all that prey upon thee, will I give for a prey: It is just with God* (2 Thes. 1. 6.) *to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you.* The rich man who hoards up that for himself and for his children, which he hath pulled out of the bellies of others, shall have his meat devoured from his table, and pull'd from between his teeth.

The hungry eat up his harvest. But where doth he find it? [He takes it even out of the thorns.]

There is some difficulty in that expression. Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *The hungry shall eat up his harvest which he had gotten thorough the thorns.* And others thus; *He shall fetch it out from among the arms or weapons.* The Hebrew word which we translate *Thorns*, gives occasion of these various readings, which some derive from *Tsinnah*, which signifies a Shield, and so by a Trope, it notes any kind of arms or weapons.

ינים *Spinæ, a qui dedi cunt à unde scutum, peus.*

If we take the word in the first sence, for thorns, a threefold interpretation may be given of this clause.

First, As Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *which he had gotten thorough the thorns.* This refers to the manner how a worldling obtains his estate; he hath a great harvest, and how came he by it? *he got it through the thorns*; that is, he got it through vexing pricking cares: for so (*Mat.* 13.) in the Parable of the Sower, when Christ expounds the meaning of the *thornie ground*, he shews, that the *thorns* are *cares*, the cares wherewith men are vexed in getting riches, or compassing the things of the world. Hence a man is said to get riches through the thorns, when he gets them through overmuch care and vexation of spirit.

Secondly, As the word signifies *thorns*; some conceive, that *Eliphaz* closely describes the persons who should take away his estate, as he did in the former branch; there he said, *the hungry eat up his harvest*: now he describeth another sort of men, that shall eat it up, namely, *men of thorns*, or, *men coming out of the thorns*; this rendring is not easily made out of the Original, though it hath learned abettors, and therefore I am not confident of it; yet it may yield some advantage to our meditation upon the words. The meaning is this; Mean or contemptible men shall take it away: As in our language, when we would express a vulgar person, a man of low birth, we say, *he was born under a bush, or under a hedge*, that is, he is a man of a low pedigree, none of the *Gentry*; and so it is, as if he should say, this great, rich, mighty man, who hath so much honour and riches about him, and thinks himself safe, shall see a man coming out of the thorns, some obscure person, and take all that he hath from him. This exposition may yield us a profitable Observation.

Homo ex spinis ex ens, &c. jectus & contempt eum rapi Homo ig bilis qui spinis na tur. Me

That, *When God reckons with the greatest of wicked men, he can humble and pull them down by the meanest and poorest of men.*

A very shrub, a man that comes out of the thorns, may pull down the tallest Cedar: It encreases affliction, to be overcome by a weak, despised, inconsiderable Enemy. It troubled *Abimelech* more to be slain by a woman, then to be slain; and therefore (upon the matter) he would have the pain to be twice killed, rather then the disgrace to be kill'd by a woman; for having received his deaths wound by her hand, yet, *he calls hastily to the young man his Armour-bearer, and said unto him, draw out thy sword now, and slay me, that men say not of me, a woman slew him*, Judg. 9. 54. The Lord threatens it, both as a just retaliation for the sin, and an aggravation of the punishment of his people, *I will move them to jealousie with those that are not a people, I will provoke them to anger with a foolish Nation*, Deut. 32. 21. The Gentiles (as *Paul* expounds this place, *Rom.* 10. 19. & *Peter*, 1 *Per.* 2. 10.) whom the *Jews* slighted as a foolish people, as no people, came in, and eat up the harvest of the Gospel, and were invested with greater priviledges then they. This made the *Jews* mad with anger, as you may read in that famous record of it, *Acts* 22. 21, 22. They could not bear it, that, Those *men of the thorns, should partake of the fatness of the Olive*; as *Jotham* spake in his Parable (*Judges* 9. 15.) when the question was, which of the trees should be King,

King, the Olive or the Vine? *&c.* at last it fell to *the Brambles lot*, or *to the Thorn*. That Parable gives some light to this exposition; for those several sorts of trees shadowed out the several sorts of men, and the Bramble shadowed out the meanest sort of men, a man of thorns, or a man coming out of the Thorns. And he adds (which further answers this sence) *Let fire come out of the Bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon*; which in plain English is, let there come power from a powerless man, who is but as a bryer, or as a thorn, and consume the greatest and the mightiest.

And it may support us (while we see so many great Cedars and strong Oaks, with whom we have to do) that God can send a man out of the thorns to subdue their pride; and can cause a Bramble to consume Cedar, when himself pleaseth. The Prophet *Amos* puts the question, *By whom shall Jacob rise? for he is small*; the only answer is, *Jacob* hath a great God, a God that can do great things. If we should question, *By whom shall the wicked fall, for they are very great?* I answer, haply, *they shall fall by him that is very small.* A man out of the bushes, a man of thorns, some poor shrub, armed with the power of God, shall shake and overthrow them in the height of all their wickedness and worldly glory.

Thirdly, Take it according to our reading; *He shall fetch it out of the thorns.* Which some interpret, to be thorns growing naturally in or among the corn; according to that general curse upon the earth, *Gen.* 3.18. *Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.* But rather (if not alone) these are thorns platted together industriously, and wrought into a hedge, to save corn-fields, or corn-stacks from spoil. So the meaning is, that when the hungry man comes with a commission from God, to eat the harvest of the foolish, he will have his estate, whatever it cost him, or what danger soever he incurs for it. For, as a man is said to fetch a thing out of the fire, or out of the Lions mouth, when he gets it with much peril and hazard; so, what a man gets with much difficulty and labour, he is said to get it out of the thorns: And the reason is this, because men were wont, when they had gathered in their harvest, (take it especially about that, and in proportion about any thing else) they were wont (I say) to secure it with a thorn-hedge, or to lay bushes about their stacks, to keep off cattel or any other annoyances. We read among the Laws given by *Moses*, somewhat answerable to this practice, *Ex.* 22.6. *If fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or standing corn, or the field be consumed therewith, he that kindled the fire, shall make restitution.* This Law intimates it for an ancient custom, to make fences of thorn about corn brought home or stackt up; and that fields while the corn was standing, were hedged about with thorns. To either of which, the allusion may be made by *Eliphaz*; so that, to fetch his harvest out of the thorns, is to fetch it through the fences made to secure his harvest, to fetch it, though it cost (as we speak proverbially) *a scratch'd face, or scratch'd fingers.* We say, *hunger breaks through stone-walls*; certainly then those hungry ones will break through a thorn-hedge.

When the Lord would keep his Church from wandring in sinful paths, he resolves thus, *Hos.* 2.6. *I will hedge up her way with thorns*; there are pleasures that she would go fetch; but as men fence their ground and pastures with thorns, so will I do with her; I will hedge up her way with thorns, *she shall pay dear, she shall smart for pleasures, ere she come at them.* And therefore, as it shews the extream intensiveness and resolvedness of a man to sin, when a man will sin, though God hath hedged up his way with thorns; that is, when a man will break through many dangers, and run hazards to satisfie his lusts; so here in this place, the hungry mans taking it out of the thorns, notes a resolvedness and eagerness of spirit, to have the estate of this rich man, let him secure it by all the power and policies he can.

From this Exposition, we may observe first, the practice of worldly wise men.

When they have gotten riches, they do not leave them loose and open to surprizal, they keep them among the thorns.

They will secure their estates as much as they can. As they get riches with thorns, so they will keep riches with thorns, that is, they will bestow care to keep, as well as to get. A godly man takes great care to get more of Christ, more riches of Grace; he improves all means, and makes this his business night and day; these spiritual cares are his *thorns*, and when he finds his stock of holy things increasing, his next care is to preserve his stock, to maintain communion with Christ, and to keep up his graces to their height: *The care of a godly man, is as much to preserve grace and comforts from the power of that hungry one the Devil, as it was to fetch them in.* And Satan is so hungry after our spiritual harvest, that he would fetch it out of the thorns and fences of all our prayers and holy cares, were it not that Christ himself keeps it for us; his care over his peoples spiritual welfare is such a *thorn-hedge*, as the Devil can never break through: We are kept by the power of God as with a Garrison, 1 *Pet.* 1.5.

Such also is the wisdom of that generation, about worldly things, they fence in and fortifie their riches, so that if any man will have them, he must have them through the thorns, or come upon the Pikes.

Secondly, Though he lay up his estate within the thorns, yet the hungry man will fetch it out. Hence note,

That, *All the care of worldly men, all the thorn-hedges they make about their estates, shall never secure them from spoil and ruine.*

The hungry will press and venture through the thorns to take them.

Further, As the word signifies a *Buckler* (or any kind of arms, whether offensive or defensive) as the text is by some translated, *He shall fetch it out of their Arms, or from among their weapons.* And then the sence may be thus conceived (which agrees fully with the former Observation.)

Though this wicked man in his high estate, should get many armed men together to defend it, yea, though he should get an Army of men, with sword and buckler, with pike and shot to defend it, yet none of them shall be able. The wrath of God, by the man out of the thorns, the meanest instrument of his wrath, shall break through all. And in allusion to this, the *Vulgar* (more truly then as a Translation) reads it,

The armed man shall take him away, that is, he shall carr him away prisoner, and spoil him of his harvest: Which, though it doth not comply with the letter of the Original, yet it implies the sence of it; for when armed men come to take any thing away, it intimates, that the thing was, or was supposed to be protected with arms. The *Chaldee* Paraphrase saith the same; *Souldiers with weapons and warlike instruments shall carry them away.* This word is in other places rendred *an Army*, in the *Chaldee*. So, *Josh.* 23.15. That which we translate, *They shall be thorns in your eyes*, the *Chaldee* glosseth thus; *They shall be an army besieging or compassing you round about.* And so much for the second Branch of this Verse, *He taketh it even out of the thorns.*

There is a third branch; **And the robber swalloweth up their substance.**

It is the same in substance with the former; and we may say here, as *Joseph* about the dreams of *Pharaoh*, *The dreams are the same, and they are doubled, only to note the certainty of the thing*: The matter here is the same, only the words are doubled (as the Holy Ghost often doth) to note the certainty of this thing, that the foolish mans estate shall be consumed.

Yet there is somewhat very considerable in the phrase here used; and therefore I shall open it a little: *The robber swalloweth up his substance.*

The robber.] Some translate, *The thirsty shall drink or swallow up their substance*; Mr. *Broughton*, *The thirsty shall swill up their wealth*; and it suits fairly with the former words, there, *the hungry shall eat up his harvest*; and here, *the thirsty shall swill up their wealth*; so you have both the hungry and the thirsty to make riddance of all; neither his corn, nor his wine, his bread, nor his drink, neither wet, nor dry, shall scape, where both hungry and thirsty come to consume.

We render it, *The robber swalloweth up their substance*; The reason of this difference is from the original word, which

Et spinis, hoc est, è magno periculo sustinis dicimus ex ore leonum. Drus.

Quamvis inter spinas abdita sit, & forsan ut tutior sit. Merc.

De armis tollet eam; sc. messem.

Et ipsum rapiet armatus Vulg.

Quod juxta textum Hebraicum extaret, de armis rapiet, vertit Vulgaris Biblia, rapiet armatus; non enim nisi armatus posset de medio armorum eam rapere. Bold. *Milites armis sive instrumentis bellicis abducent eos.* Chald. *Erunt exercitus vos cingentes.* Chald.

Bibent sitientes divitias ejus, Vulg.

צים *vel à* צמה *sitire, vel à* צמם *quod est capillus aut cæsaries. Prædo sic dictus, quod more ferino capillos nutriit, ut mos est in terra* Ismael. Rab. Dav. Kimchi, *in lib. Rad.* Ysammim, *prædo, quem sic appellatum existimant, à coma, quam alit, vel quod sanguinem humanum sitiat.* Drus. *Absorbeat pilosus divitias eorum,* Rab. Mordoch. *Horridus, Hispidus.*

שאף *Propriè attraxit per nares aut os: per Metaphoram, inhiavit, ardenter cupivit; qui enim ardenter aliquid cupiunt, præ desiderii magnitudine, ad os aërem frequentius trahunt seu respirant.*

חיל *Non magis ad corporis quam ad ingenii vires pertinet: & tres fere virtutes continet, fortitudinẽ, justitiam, prudentiam.*

אנשי חיל

Aristoteles *divitias appellat vires rerum, quia per ipsas omnia possumus.* l. 1. Pol. c. 8.

which may have a double derivation; first, from a root, signifying to thirst, or to be thirsty: Secondly, from a root which signifies the hair of the head, or the locks, or extraordinary Ruffian-like long hair and locks. And the reason why we translate *Robber*, is given from both; from the first, because robbers and spoilers are commonly tosspots and drunkards, men that love their liquor, a thirsty generation in that sence: and they alwayes thirst for a prey, they thirst for the estates or lives of others: From the latter, because robbers, plunderers and spoilers, usually wore very long hair, either to disguise or make themselves the more terrible; so that a robber may be denominated, both from his unnaturally natural thirst after the pot, and from his uncivil civil thirst after a purse, or from his long, shaggie, bushie hair: To this latter sence one of the *Rabbins* translates, *The hairy man, or the man with long hair, shall swallow up their estates.* Hence some expres him by a Latine word, which signifies a man all over-grown with hair; this Ruffian or Robber *shall swallow up his substance.*

Swallow up.] The word notes an utter exhaustion, he shall exhaust his substance: As we say, when a spender or an unthrift is described, he hath exhausted his estate, he hath, as it were, suckt it up, guzl'd or swallow'd it down his throat; the radical word may import, drawing or sucking up with a pipe; properly it signifies to fetch wind, or draw breath; and by a Metaphor, to swallow down, to sup or suck up; as also, with fervency and pleasure to desire; because vehement desires are often expresst by quick breathings; yea, to breath after a thing, is to desire it: or it notes a mind to swallow it up, either from the delight we have in it, or hatred of it. In which latter sence *David* applies it to his enemies (*Psal.* 56. 2.) *Mine enemies would daily swallow me up.* They breath after me to devour me, So then the meaning is, this robber, this hairy spoiler or thirsty one, will be so *dry*, that he will swallow all up, he will soop and drink up the foolish mans estate to the very bottom; he will draw it down to the very dregs or lees, and not leave a drop behind him.

The robber swalloweth up **their substance.**] In the first Chapter we read *Job* described, A man of a very *great substance*; *Job*'s *substance* in cattel was thus and thus: Here also it is said, *The robber shall swallow up his substance*; but the word in the Hebrew, is very different from that in the first Chapter; there the word signifieth properly *substance in cattel*; but here it signifies substance in any kind of wealth and riches whatsoever: And it notes three things.

First, and most properly, Strength; either strength of body or of mind, namely, valour, activity and courage; also wisdom and industry to get or defend our substance; so *Gen.* 47. 6. *Pharaoh* tells *Joseph*, that if among his brethren, *there were any men of activity, he should make them Rulers over his cattel.*

Secondly, It notes riches and wealth, or any worldly substance; because much activity, wisdom and strength, is usually employed in obtaining them; or because wisdom and strength are requisite for the keeping and retaining of them (*Prov.* 11. 16.) *Strong men retain riches*; as if he should say, though a man have abundance of riches, yet if he have not strength, he shall hardly hold them, they will be wrested out of his hands. Once more, Riches are thus expresst, because men usually account their riches to be their strength; a man naturally puts confidence in his riches, *Pro.* 13. 15. *The rich mans wealth is his strong City*: Riches are called strength, from that corrupt opinion which the world hath of them, making them Idols, and trusting to them, as they should unto God alone. Though yet, there is a truth in it, that riches have much strength in them; a rich man, and a powerful man, are mutually put for each other.

Thirdly, The word signifies an Army of men, *Psal.* 33. 16. *There is no King saved by the multitude of an host.* We may take it either way; this hungry man, this robber, shall come and swallow up his substance, his riches, his strength; or, he shall come and swallow up his very Army, by which he thought to defend his substance: All shall be lost, neither the estate, nor the means used to protect the estate, shall stand before this hungry, thirsty, hairy robber. In this description of a total desolation brought upon the estate and family of the foolish man, together with the character of the persons, who shall make him desolate, questionless *Eliphaz* would represent to *Job*, the desolation brought upon his estate and children, by those troops of hungry, hairy, thirsty robbers, the *Caldeans* and the *Sabeans*, who swallowed all his substance at one morsel, soopt up his estate at one draught. Whence observe,

> *It is a great point of wisdom, to shew a man his condition in anothers, and to seem only relating the History of our foreign observation, when we mean the person to whom we speak.*

What is proposed as seen in others, works the heart to see it self; and doth at once mitigate the sharpness of the reproof, and open the spirit to let it in. As we see in the instance of *Nathan*'s Parable to *David*, 2 Sam. 12. *Eliphaz* said only, *I have seen the foolish taking root*, &c. He doth not lay it boisterously and directly upon *Job*, *I saw thee taking root*, &c.

Thus we have opened the context of these five verses, wherein *Eliphaz* argues *Job* guilty of wickedness and insincerity, because God had dealt with him as he usually doth with the wicked and insincere, whose habitations are cursed, their children crushed, their substance swallowed up by thirsty, and eaten up by hungry robbers, who take it out from the very thorns of their own cares, in getting, or means in securing what they have gotten.

VERS. 6, 7, 8.

Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.
Yet man is born unto trouble as the sparks flie upward.
I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause.

THus far *Eliphaz* had spent his discourse in reproof and conviction; and you have had it out of the fourth Chapter, and the precedent part of this, four heads of reason, or arguments, by which *Eliphaz* labours to reprove *Job* for, and convince him of close sin, or of gross hypocrisie. Now *Eliphaz* turns himself to another stile, and falls to counsel and exhortation, directing and advising *Job* what becomes him, what he ought to do in his condition. His exhortation consists of two distinct branches.

The former whereof begins at the sixth, and is continued to the seventeenth verse of the Chapter. The sum of this exhortation is, That, *forasmuch as he had found him so distempered in his speech and carriage, he now earnestly beseeches and intreats him, that he would seek unto God, beg favour, and believingly commit himself and his cause unto God.*

The second branch of exhortation begins at *v.* 17. and is continued to the end of the Chapter: The scope whereof is, *That* Job *would humbly and patiently submit himself unto, and under the correcting hand of God; quietly waiting the time of his deliverance.*

The matter of the former exhortation lies in the words of the eighth verse, *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause.*

He strengtheneth his exhortation by two arguments; whereof,

The first is taken from the cause of his afflictions, and that either the efficient, or the meritorious cause of his afflictions; both which we find in the sixth and seventh verses.

The second argument by which he strengtheneth his first exhortation, is continued in the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth verses following; and it is grounded upon the power, wisdom and goodness of God: As if he should say, *Who would not seek unto a God who is of infinite power, able to deliver? Who would not seek unto a God, and commit his cause unto him, who is gracious, and pitiful, merciful, and ready to deliver? Who would not seek unto a God, and commit his cause unto him, who is of infinite wisdom to find out wayes and means for the contriving of deliverance, though mans condition (to the eye of sense or humane reason) seem altogether desperate and remediless?*

These three verses contain the first exhortation, together with the first Argument: And we may form it thus, both respecting the efficient, and the meritorious cause of his afflictions.

First, Reſpecting the efficient cauſe, the Argument ſeems to lie thus;

He is to be ſought unto in our afflictions, who is the principal efficient cauſe or ſender of our afflictions.
But, God is the principal efficient cauſe and ſender of our afflictions:
Therefore, he is to be ſought unto, and, to him our cauſe is to be committed.

The *Major* or *firſt Propoſition* is not expreſly in this text, but it is plainly ſuppoſed, and logically to be underſtood. The *Minor*, or the *Aſſumption* lies in the ſixth and ſeventh verſes, where he proves that God is the efficient cauſe or the ſender of afflictions; and his proof is grounded upon a denial, or a removal of all other efficient cauſes. As if he ſhould ſay, there muſt be ſome efficient cauſe of affliction, but no efficient cauſe can be aſſigned or named, except God: therefore God is the efficient cauſe, the ſender and orderer of afflictions. That no other efficient cauſe can be aſſigned, he proveth plainly in the ſixth verſe, thus; *Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*; *yet man is born to trouble*, &c. As if he ſhould ſay, our eyes teach us, we ſee plainly man is full of trouble; man is no ſooner born, but he is afflicted; theſe afflictions muſt have ſome efficient cauſe; ſome hand or other doth frame, form and faſhion them, they come not alone; and if they come not alone, then we muſt find out this cauſe either in earth or in heaven: we muſt find it, either in the Creator, or among the creatures; but from the earth or from creatures, they come not: *Affliction cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*, that is, it riſes not by or from the creatures in themſelves, and alone conſidered; and if ſo, it muſt needs come from heaven, from the hand of God, who dwelleth above, and diſpoſeth all things according to the pleaſure of his own will. It is ſuch a kind of ſpeech, as often falls from us, when a thing is loſt; we ſay, ſome body muſt have it; *ſure it is not gone into the ground, you* or *you* muſt have it, for there were none elſe in the place. So *Eliphaz* ſeems here to argue about the afflictions which he ſaw upon *Job*: here are heavy afflictions upon thee, theſe afflictions muſt come ſome way upon thee; *They come not forth of the duſt, neither do they ſpring out of the ground, they come not up alone:* Either then they muſt come from God or man; and from man they come not, they ſpring not out of the earth; therefore he leaves it, as a clear inference, that God is the efficient cauſe or ſender of affliction.

Again, if we conſider this Argument, as it ſtrengtheneth the exhortation from the *meritorious cauſe* of his afflictions; it may be formed thus.

If the ſin of man be from himſelf, and the ſufferings of man be for his ſin, then in his ſufferings for ſin, he ought to ſeek unto God, and commit his cauſe unto him.
But the ſin of man is from himſelf, and the ſufferings of man are for his ſin:
Therefore, he ought in ſuch a condition to ſeek unto God, and commit his cauſe unto him; for remedy is no where elſe to be had.

This ſecond Argument is grounded rather upon the expoſition, then the letter of the text, as ſhall be further cleared in purſuance of the words.

Thus you ſee how the *Minor* or ſecond Propoſition is confirmed, both, as it reſpects the efficient cauſe, and the meritorious cauſe of mans affliction. The Concluſion lies in the eighth verſe, which *Eliphaz* pronounces in his own perſon; *I would ſeek unto God*: therefore ſeek thou unto God: he ſpeaks in his own perſon, thereby more freely to inſinuate his counſel, and make way for his exhortation. As if he had ſaid, *Were I in thy caſe, I would do ſo*; therefore do thou ſo likewiſe; *Seek unto God, and commit thy cauſe unto him.*

So much of this context in the Logick of it, as it contains an exhortation, with an argument to ſtrengthen and back that exhortation. Now for the clearing of the words.

Although afflictions come not forth of the duſt.

The Hebrew particle, which we tranſlate *Although*, may be taken three wayes, and ſo I find it rendred upon this place.

First, (which is its moſt proper ſence) it is taken cauſally, and then the text is read, *For, affliction cometh not forth of the duſt.* So Mr. *Broughton*, *for ſorrow iſſueth not from the duſt.*

Secondly, It may be taken *adverſatively*, as we read it, *Although affliction or ſorrow comes not forth of the duſt.*

Thirdly, It may be taken *affirmatively*; according to which acception, the text is thus carried, *Certainly, affliction cometh not out of the duſt*, or, *Surely, affliction cometh not out of the duſt.*

Either of theſe wayes the ſence is good; yet to me our tranſlation by the *Adverſative Although*, doth a little obſcure the ſence: And to ſay, *Surely, or certainly, affliction comes not forth of the duſt*, ſeems to carry it more clearly.

Surely affliction cometh not out of the duſt.] It is conſiderable, that the word by which affliction is here expreſt, bears a double ſignification in Scripture, and I conceive it may alſo in this text; properly it ſignifies, ſin, iniquity, iniquity of all ſorts, but eſpecially, *That ſin of Idolatry*; as (*Hoſ.* 4. 14.) when the *houſe of God* (*Bethel*) was polluted with Idolatry, the name is changed, and it is called *Bethaven, the houſe of an Idol*, or, the *houſe of iniquity*; or of that ſpecial iniquity, namely, of Idolatry; *Sin alters the nature of man*; *no marvel then, if it alter the names of things*, *Hoſ.* 10. 15. and often in the old Teſtament we find this word added, to ſet out the worſt of men, *the workers of iniquity*, Pſal. 5. 5, *&c. Iniquity comes not out of the duſt*: the ſoil where it grows, or the ſhop where it is wrought and formed, is mans heart; *Eliphaz* would carry us to the well-head, our ſinful natures, or our birth-ſin.

Secondly, The word ſignifies affliction or ſorrow, calamity or miſery, becauſe ſin is the cauſe of affliction, the mother of ſorrow: and therefore by a *Metonymie* of the effect for the cauſe (which is frequent in Scripture) the ſame word notes both ſin and ſorrow; the mother and the daughter are called by the ſame name. We tranſlate by the effect, *Surely, affliction cometh not out of the duſt*; many by the cauſe, *Surely, iniquity cometh not out of the duſt.* And for the full underſtanding of the Text, we muſt take in both; where the effect only is mentioned, the cauſe is ſuppoſed, *Affliction ſprings not out of the duſt, becauſe ſin ſprings not out of the duſt.*

Now this form of ſpeaking (*Iniquity or affliction ſprings or cometh not forth of the duſt*) is proverbial; and no doubt was well known, and often uſed in thoſe times. When they would *remove chance or fortune* (as we ſay) or deny any event to be without a certain directive power, they ſpake in this language, *This came not from the ground*; thereupon the Vulgar tranſlates it ſo in terms, (*a*) *There is nothing in the world without cauſe*, alluding (it is probable) to the Proverb. Hence, a man obſcurely born, whoſe Parents and Original are unknown, is called (*b*) *A Son of the earth*: Which imports, that no man can tell whence he is, or how deſcended. *They whoſe original cannot be aſſigned, are uſually aſſigned to the common Original, or* (*c*) *parent of us all, the earth.* And as in regard of perſons, ſo of things, when no man can tell how or which way they come, they are ſaid to come out of the ground. We ſpeak alſo (in the other extream) affirmatively, *Such a thing comes out of the clouds*, that is (we know not, but) *God knows how it comes.* So then, here is a denial of chance or fortune; as if *Eliphaz* ſhould ſay, reaſon may be found and aſſigned for theſe things, they come not out of the duſt.

Further, For the clearing of this, *The duſt and the ground* ſtand in a twofold oppoſition. Firſt, Unto God; and ſecondly, unto our ſelves. Firſt, In oppoſition to God, thus, *Affliction ſpringeth not from the ground*, that is, it comes from the wiſdom, power, and diſpoſition of God, as the efficient cauſe. Secondly, In oppoſition to our ſelves, and then the ſence may be thus conceived, that, the material and meritorious cauſe of our affliction, is not without us, it is not in the ground, or in other creatures, but in our ſelves: Every man in himſelf hath the ground which bears, the ſource, or fountain, which bubbles out his ſorrows and his ſufferings. Man hath no reaſon to accuſe or charge heaven or earth, as the Authors of his ſorrow, he carries the reaſon about with him, *The ſinfulneſs or ſink of his own polluted nature.* And therefore (to allude to that of the Apoſtle in the point of Juſtification, *Rom.* 10. 6, 7. *Say not in thy heart, who ſhall aſcend into heaven? that is, to bring thy troubles*

און *Iniquitas, vanitas, moleſtia, labor, quia iniquitas laborem afflictionemq; parturit.* Sept. *vertunt per* κόπον *&* πόνον. Schind. פעלי און *Aſcendit* Eliphaz *ad communem & naturalem ſortem hominis quod omnes in peccato & ad miſeriam naſcimur, damnati in Adamo.* Coc.

Proverbialis quædam ſententia eſt, qua tollat caſum, aſſeratq; divinam erga res humanas & impiorum ſupplicium providentiam. Pined. Sanct.
(a) *Nihil in terra ſine cauſa fit.* Vulg. *Quaſi diceret non caſu mala nobis accidunt, neq; ex terra germinas ut ſolent herbæ nullo jacto ſemine.*
(b) *Terræ filius.*
(c) *Magna parens terra eſt.*
Non exit à pulvere iniquitas. q. d. ab hominibus iſt, non è terra vel pulvere, nam terra non profert iniquitatem, ſed homines, ea eſt natura eorum corrupta proin & proclives ad eam feruntur. Druſ.

troubles down from above? or, who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up thy troubles from below; for the cause is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is, the corruption of nature, which we preach.

עסל *Terrâ nata dicuntur illa, quibus nulla ab agricolis impensa est opera, ut sunt herbæ quas ultro terra fundit in pratis & locis incultis.* Sanct.

The latter branch of this verse, **Neither doth trouble spring out of the ground**, is of the very same importance with the former, therefore I shall not need to stay upon it. The word which we translate *Trouble* signifies properly, toylsom labour, or any laborious toyl accidental to man in this life, as a fruit of sin. This doth not spring out of the ground. It is an allusion to plants or herbs, which grow in the open field, without the work or care of man, and so are opposed to plants or herbs in a garden: As if he should say, thy troubles are not like those herbs, that grow wild, in the fields, without the labour and pains, the care or art of man. There is some hand or other, that both plants and waters them.

We may ground some observations as the Text is read, *Iniquity comes not forth of the dust.* And then as it is read, *Affliction comes not forth of the dust.* And it is necessary to give it this latitude; the word equally bearing both sences. As it is read, *Iniquity comes not*, &c.

We learn, First, *The material cause of sin is in our selves.*

We bring forth the fruit at our tongues or fingers ends, and the root is in our hearts. Our sins spring not out of the dust, but out of the dirt and filth of our own corruptions, *Gen.* 6. 5. *Every thought of the imagination of mans heart it is evil, and only evil, and that continually*; the Hebrew is every *figment or every creature* in the heart of man, whatsoever a man moulds and fashions within himself, naturally, is evil, and nothing but evil, and it is alwayes so. The natural births of mans heart have all one common face and feature; they are all of one common constitution, *Evil all.*

Secondly, We may Observe, That, *the meritorious cause of mans suffering is from his sin.*

Iniquity springeth not from the ground, neither doth trouble come out of the dust. As iniquity springs from our selves, so we may resolve it, that misery springs from our sin. It is a truth (as hath been touched upon the second Chapter) that, God, in many afflictions laid upon his dear children and servants, respects not their sin, as the cause procuring and drawing on these afflictions. And very many are afflicted by the world, not for sins sake, but for righteousnes sake. As Christ, so some Christians may say in their sphear, *We have done many good works, for which of them do you stone me.* Yet this is as clear a truth, that the sin of any man is in it self a sufficient meritorious cause of any, yea, of all afflictions. A creature cannot bear a greater punishment, then the least of his sins deserves. Man weaves a spiders web of sin out of his own bowels, and then he is intangled in the same web; the troubles which insnare, and wrap about him, are twisted with his own fingers.

Thirdly Observe, *Naturally every man seeks the reason of his sorrows and afflictions out of himself.*

When man is afflicted, he is not willing to own himself, as the cause of his afflictions, or acknowledge that they spring from his sin; and, that may be the reason, why *Eliphaz* speaks thus to *Job*, as if he had said, thy thoughts are wandring abroad, thou little thinkst that thy afflictions were bred in thy own bosom: Thou art fastning the cause of them upon this, and t'other thing; thou art complaining of the day wherein thou wast born; but thou shouldest rather complain of the sin, wherein thou wast born; Thy birth-day hath not hurt thee, but thy birth-sin. Thy birth-sin hath given conception, to all the sorrows of thy life.

The *Jews* in the Prophet *Isaiah*'s time were in great distress, and could get no deliverance: The ports and passages of mercy were all obstructed. Now, whither went their thoughts? And what did they look upon, as the reason of those abiding lingring evils? we may read their thoughts in the refutation of them; we may see what the disease of their hearts was, by the medicine which the Prophet applies unto them: he labours to purge them from that conceit, as if either want of power, or want of love in the Lord, were the stop of their deliverance. *The Lords hand is not shortned that he cannot save, neither his ear heavy, that he cannot hear*, Isa. 59. 1, 2. As if he had said, I know what your apprehensions are in these afflictions, you think the reason is in God, that either he cannot, or he will not save you: You think the hand of Gods power is shrunk up, or the ear of his mercy shut up; but, you reflect not upon your selves, nor consider, that *Your iniquities have separated between you and your God*: Your sin does hurt you, and you touch not that with a little finger, but lay the weight of your charge upon God himself. So (*Hos.* 13. 9.) *Thy destruction is from thy self, in me is thy help*; God is forced to tell them so, that their destruction was from themselves, they would not believe it: they supposed it was from the cruelty or malice of the creature, from the wrath and rage of enemies, from some oversight or neglect of their friends; therefore the Lord speaks out, in expres terms, *Thy destruction is from thy self.* It springs not forth of the dust, neither is thy destruction from me; *In me is thy help*: in both the heart of man fails equally: we are ready to say, that the good we have comes from our selves, that our help and comforts are from our own power and wisdom, and so offer sacrifice to our own nets, *as if by them our portion were fat*: but for evil and destruction we assign it wholly over, sometime to men, and so are angry; sometime to God, and so blaspheme. *We naturally decline what reflects shame upon our selves, or speaks us guilty.*

From our translation, *Although affliction*, &c.

Observe, First, *Every affliction hath a cause.*

The Proverb carries that sence, in every common understanding. Our afflictions have a cause, a certain cause, they come not by hap hazzard, or by accident. Many things are casual, but nothing is without a cause. Many things are not fore-seen by man, but all things are fore-ordained by God. The Prophet *Amos* (*Chap.* 3. 6.) sets forth this by an elegant similitude, *Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him?* As if he should say, is a bird taken in a snare by chance, where none have prepared, set, or industriously laid a snare or gin to take him? The bird saw not the snare, but the snare was set for the bird. Snares fall not on the ground at adventure, they grow not out of the earth of themselves: but the Fowler, by his art and industry, invents and frames them on purpose to catch the bird: Thus the calamity and troubles in which men are caught and lime-twig'd, insnared, and shackled in the world, come not out of the ground; *They are not acts of chance, but of providence*: The wise and holy God sets such snares, to take and hold foolish, unruly men, like silly birds, gaping after the baits of worldly pleasures. Which meaning is clear from the scope and tendency of the whole Chapter; but the next question resolves it in the letter, *Is there any evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* Those words are both the conclusion and explication of the former similitude.

Secondly Observe, *Affliction is not from the power of any creature.*

As it comes not by chance or without a cause, so not by the power of creatures, they are not the cause; *dust and the ground*, are opposed to Heaven or to a divine power: Creatures in this sence, can neither do good, nor do evil. *The world would be as full of trouble, as it is of sin, if sinful men could make trouble*: It is not in the compass of a creature, no not of all the creatures in Heaven or earth, to form or to make out one affliction, without the concurrence and allowance of God himself. *Men alone, can neither make staves of comfort, nor rods of affliction.*

Whence thirdly, A consectary from both may be, That,

Afflictions are from the Lord as from the efficient cause, the directer and orderer of them.

These evils are from a creating, not from a created strength. *I* (saith the Lord) *form the light, and create darkness*, Isa. 45. 7. Natural darkness hath only a deficient cause, but pœnal darkness hath an efficient cause. *Darkness is created.* As in the first creation God said, *let there be light*, so in providence (which is a continued creation) he saith, *let there be darkness.* If afflictions come not forth of the earth, then they come from Heaven. That wicked King preacht very good doctrine, when he said of an ex-

treame devouring famine, *This evil is from the Lord*; though he failed utterly in the use or application, while he murmured out, *Why should we wait on the Lord any longer*, 2 *Kings* 6. 33. For the reason holds strong to the contrary, This evil is from the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord for ever.

Verse 7. **Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.**

Yet man, or but man is born to trouble.] Some read, *Man is born to sin*, that is, he is born with a nature ready and prone to sin, because *he is born in sin*, *Psal.* 51. 5. And so by consequent he is born to trouble, which is caused by, and is the fruit of sin. These two, sin and trouble, are so near in blood and kindred, that still one word includes them both; the former word which signifies sin properly, is translated affliction; and this word which signifies affliction properly, may be translated sin. When it is said, That *Man is born to trouble or sin*; it notes two things.

First, A right to them, a right to sin, and a right to sorrow. That which a man is born to, is duly his, it is his inheritance, or his birth-right; that is the common understanding of the phrase: As some men are born to a great estate, to lands and honours, *&c.* so all men are born to trouble and sin; they are ours by a lineal right, derived from our next, yea first parents, so they descend to us as land descends.

Secondly, It implies a readiness, or a fitness to commit sin, or to fall into trouble: When a man is said to be born to a thing, it notes him exceeding apt and forward to take it: He needs little teaching and instructing, little cultivating or manuring. As when a man makes verses readily, we say he was born to Poetry; or when a man gets wealth easily, we say, he was born to be rich. So in the present case; a mans understanding, will, and affections, need no manuring or dressing to bring forth sin, or the fruit of it, sorrow. He is born to sin.

The latter clause of the verse clears the sence fully, *Man is born unto trouble, or unto sin, as the sparks fly upward*; the meaning is, as the sparks have a principle in themselves, by which they ascend, they need no directing; when a spark comes out from the fire, no man bids it fly upward, or shews it the way, it will fly upward alone, it knows no other way, but upward; so, it is a natural course for man, as soon as he is born, to sin and work his own sorrow. This he can do, the first thing he doth, and before he can do any thing, well, he can do this, but, too well; *He needs no Tutor for these, sinning and sorrowing, are not his art but his nature:* Though he should have neither rule nor example in the world, he would find out the mysteries of iniquity, and do enough quickly to make himself miserable.

The particle, *As*, is a copulative in the hebrew: So divers render it in this Text, *Man is born unto trouble, And the sparks fly upward*; that is, mans trouble and sparks flying upward, are alike natural. We, as in divers other places, translate it by way of similitude; *Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward*: So *Job* 34. 3. *The ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth meat*; we translate the copulative by a comparative; *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.* Again, *Mark* 9. 49. *Every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt:* The sence lies in the similitude, *Every one shall be salted with fire, as every sacrifice is salted with salt*; It is an allusion to the old sacrifices, wherein salt was continually used. So here, *Man is born unto trouble, and the sparks*, that is, *as the sparks fly upward.*

As the sparks.] The Hebrew is, *The sons of the coal*; the sons or children of the coal, are sparks; blow a coal, and presently a spark is begotten and born; therefore the Hebrew elegancy calls sparkes, *The sons of the children of the coal.* And it is observable, that by a metaphor this word signifies in the Hebrew, the Head of an arrow heated with motion, as also, a bird flying in the air; and the reason is, because birds fly up in the air, they ascend naturally, they fly about and flutter, like sparkes of fire in the air. Hence the vulgar and some others translate the words, *Man is born unto trouble, as the birds fly upward*; The Septuagint, *as the young Vultures fly upward*; others, *as the young ones of the Eagle fly upwards*: *Aben Ezra* a learned Rabbin, makes use of that sence also, and gives the gloss thus, *As it is natural and innate for birds to fly, so it is natural for man to suffer trouble.*

Hence Observe, First, *Sorrow and sin are the portion and all the portion that man hath by nature.*

He is born to these.

They who are ascended to the greatest heigths, and have got the greatest stock, either of spiritual or outward comforts, were born to nothing, but a cup of sorrow, to the bread of affliction, and to the waters of adversity: And these we are instated in, yea possessed of, as soon as we are born; we need not wait the death of our parents for this inheritance, they divide it all to every child, and yet keep it all to themselves: All our real comforts are from our second birth, and have their pedigree from the blessing and love of God. Therefore the Apostle puts that general question, *What hast thou, that thou hast not received?* that is, what good hast thou? Thou hast all thy evil from thy self, but whatsoever good thou hast, was received from above; all our good is founded in free Grace.

Secondly Observe, That, *All sins and sorrows are contained virtually in the nature of man.*

Though a man doth not formally commit or bring forth every sin, though a man doth not formally bear evey affliction, or taste every cup of sorrow; yet virtually and radically a man hath every sin in him, or it is possible for any sin to be formed and shaped out of the nature of man: Radically also every man hath every affliction, all sorrows in him; and the justice of God, may form the most dreadfully shap'd afflictions out of his sins: And as the sparks lie closely in the fire, or in the flint, till you smite or blow them up; so sin lies secretly in our hearts, till some temptation or occasion smites and brings it out.

Again we may Observe, That, *Man can sin without a teacher.*

You need not instruct him, or teach him to do evil; he doth that by a natural instinct, since his nature was corrupted. He sins as the sparks fly upwards, or as a bird flyes in the air, whom no man directs how to use her wings, *Nature is her rule.* There needs much teaching against sin, and it is the business of all the Ordinances, to bridle us from acting our corruptions: But man walks in the wayes of wickedness, without guide or precept.

It was the ancient error of the *Pelagians*, that the sin of man came onely by imitation: they denied that man had a stock of corruption in his nature, or that his nature was corrupted; but, seeing others sin, he sinned; an opinion which carries its condemnation in its own face, as well as in our hearts. And though similitudes are no proofs, yet, the reason of a similitude is: mans sinning is therefore compared to a sparks flying, to shew how naturally he sins. A spark flies upward without any to lead it the way; and a bird would fly, though she should never see another bird fly: And if a man could live so, as never to see any one example of sin all his dayes; yet that man, out of his own heart, might bring forth every sin, every day. Example quickens and encourages the principles of sin within us, but we can sin without any extrinsick motion or provocation, without pattern or president from without.

Lastly Observe, *To sin, is no burden, or labour, to a natural man; For it is his nature.*

It is no pains to the spark, to fly upwards: what we do naturally, we do easily. Holy duties are no burdens to a godly man, because, through grace, he doth them naturally; he hath an inward principle, which dictates the law of holiness to him, though he should want outward teaching: *He hath an unction from the Holy Ghost, and knoweth all things*, 1 Joh. 2. 20. Not that a godly man becomes like God, Omniscient, or knowing all, for at most we know, here, but in part: but he knows all things necessary, and so far as necessary, his new birth teacheth him: He lives not meerly upon the outward teaching, he hath both light and liberty in himself; and so hath a tendency to these things

Νεοσσοὶ δὲ γυπὸς τὰ ὑψηλὰ πέτονται. Sept. Νεοσσοὶ δὲ δέτων. Complut. *Non secus ad arumnas & miserias hic perferendas natus est homo, quâ innatæ est & naturale scintillis & volatilibus omnibus ut in sublime attollantur.* Merc.

things in his own ſpirit, as there is a tendency in fire to aſcend.

We ſhould wonder and rejoyce, to ſee how grace conquers the courſe of ſinful nature. The new man is born to mercy and holineſs, to grace and glory, as the *ſparks fly upward*. Hence it is ſaid, *He that is born of God cannot commit ſin, for the ſeed of God remaineth in him*: As, the ſpark cannot fly downward, becauſe the heat of fire remains in it. The Apoſtle affirms it, of himſelf and his Fellow-labourers in the Goſpel, *We can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth*, 2 Cor. 13. 8. The poſſibilities and impoſſibilities of a regenerate man, are directly oppoſite to thoſe of a natural man: The one cannot ſin, the other cannot but ſin; the one can do nothing againſt the truth, the other can do nothing for the truth: gracious acts become as natural, as ſinful, when nature is changed from ſin to grace. What a bleſſed change is this, that man ſhould do good as readily, as once he did evil; that, he who was born free to iniquity, ſhould be re-born free to righteouſneſs, as the ſparks fly upward. *A godly man is an heavenly ſpark*: He hath a fire in his nature, which carries him upward for ever.

Thus having opened theſe two verſes, being the grounds of the following exhortation; let us now examine the matter of the exhortation it ſelf, contained in the eighth Verſe.

Verſe 8. **I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe.**

אולם Our Tranſlation omits one word in the beginning of this ſentence, which though it may be underſtood in our reading, yet the expreſſion of it betters the ſence. *Surely*, or *truly I would ſeek*, &c.

There are two opinions about the meaning of theſe words; ſome conceive, that *Eliphaz* ſpeaks in high contempt of *Job*: and I may give you their ſence, by that proud Schooling, which the Phariſee gave the poor Publican, *Luke* 18. As that Phariſee inſulted over the Publican, thus, *I thank God, I am not ſuch a one as thou art*, &c. *but I faſt, and I pray*, &c. So, they repreſent *Eliphaz* here inſulting over *Job*, *I thank God, I am not ſuch an impatient perſon as thou art, no ſuch rude curſer of my day, or complainer of my trouble*; *I am not* (*I thank God*) *ſo diſtracted, and ſo diſtempered as thou art*; *and if I had been in thy caſe, I ſhould have ſhewed more wit, and grace too, then, to do, as thou haſt done*; *I ſhould never have been ſo vain and fooliſh, ſo forgetful of my own duty, or the Lords Soveraignty, as, to cry out againſt and accuſe his providence and dealings with me, to lay about me like a mad man, as thou haſt done*; *no, I would have ſought unto God, and committed my cauſe unto him, this ſhould have been my courſe, ſuch and ſuch the frame and temper of my ſpirit.*

But I rather take theſe words in a good ſence, implying much ſweetneſs and meekneſs of ſpirit in *Eliphaz*. And ſo this verſe is as an application of the Doctrine, contained in the former two: As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *Seeing matters ſtand thus in themſelves, and theſe are undoubted truths, that afflictions come from our ſelves, and that our ſins are our own: and ſeeing thy caſe ſtands thus, that now thou art under great afflictions and troubles*; *I do aſſure thee my loving friend* Job, *were I in thy condition* (*I will give thee faithful counſel, and tell thee my heart, what I would do*) *I would no longer ſtay complaining againſt my day, curſing creatures, diſtempering my head, and diſquieting my heart with theſe paſſions*; *but, I would even go and addreſs my ſelf unto God, I would apply my ſelf to Heaven, I would ſeek for remedy there, earth affords it not.* I have ever found this the way to eaſe my heart, when burdened; to aſſwage my ſorrows, when encreaſed; to compoſe my ſpirit, when diſtracted; to ſtrengthen my reſolutions, when unſetled: I can give thee this rule with (*a probatum eſt*) an aſſurance from mine own experience, in the uſe of it, and with clearneſs of conſcience, that it is my purpoſe in ſuch caſes to uſe it ever.

דרש *Significat quærere diligenter & cum cura, ſed interrogatione & verbis ut plurimum.*

I would ſeek unto God.] The word ſignifies a very diligent ſearch; I would ſeek exactly and enquire laboriouſly unto God. It ſignifies to ſeek by asking queſtions or by interrogating: And it imports ſeeking with much wiſdom and skill; a curious or a critical enquiry; So *Eccleſ.* 1. 13. *I gave my heart* (ſaith *Solomon*) *to ſeek and ſearch out by wiſdom.* And this ſeeking implies four things.

First, A ſuppoſition and a ſenſe of our wants; no man ſeeks that which he hath already, or, but thinks he hath it. He that is full loaths a hony comb.

Secondly, A ſtrong deſire to find that which we want; it notes not a bare deſire only, or woulding, but a kind of unquietneſs or reſtleſneſs, till we find: ſuch a deſire took hold of *David*, Pſal. 132. 4. *I will not give reſt to mine eyes, nor ſlumber to mine eye lids, untill I find out a place for the Lord, or, untill I find the Lord.*

Thirdly, A care to be directed about the means which may facilitate the finding or recovery of what we want, and thus earneſtly deſire. A ſeeking ſpirit, is a careful ſpirit, after light and counſel.

Fourthly, A diligent and faithful endeavour, in or about the uſe of thoſe means, to which counſel directs us. *Through deſire a man having ſeparated himſelf, ſeeketh and intermedleth with all wiſdom*, Prov. 18. 1. That is, he is very induſtrious in purſuing thoſe advices, which wiſdom ſhews him, or, which are ſhewed him, as the wayes of wiſdom. *A lazy ſpirit is unfit to ſeek.*

I would ſeek unto God, **and unto God would I commit my cauſe.**] In the former clauſe, the word for *God*, is *El*, and in the latter, *Elohim*; both names note the power of God. *El*, notes power or ſtrength to act and execute; *Elohim*, power or authority to judge and determine. *I would ſeek unto* El, *The ſtrong God*: I would commit my cauſe to *Elohim, the mighty God*: As if he had ſaid, Thou art in a weak and low condition, now therefore ſeek unto God, *the ſtrong God, the mighty God*, who is able to deliver thee: Thou wanteſt the help of ſuch a friend as he.

The Hebrew, word for word, is thus rendred, *Unto God would I put my words, or turn my ſpeech*; We reach the meaning fully, rendring, *Unto God I would commit my cauſe, or put my caſe.*

The term which we tranſlate, *cauſe*, ſignifies any buſineſs or cauſe, but moſt properly a *word*; *Explicite prayer in the turning of our thoughts into words, or the putting of our caſe to God.* It is a ſpeaking to, or a pleading with the Lord. The Septuagint is clear in this ſence, *I would deprecate the Lord, I would call upon the Lord, the governour of all things.*

Both theſe ſignifications of the word, are profitable for us, and congruous with the ſcope of the Text, *I would turn my ſpeech and prayer, or I would commit my cauſe unto God.*

The committing of our cauſe to God, notes a reſignation of our ſelves, and of our condition into the hands of God: It is as much as to ſay, Let God do what he will, or determine what he pleaſeth concerning me, I will not ſtrive or contend about, queſtion or diſpute his deciſion or judgment of my cauſe: I will lay my ſelf down at his feet, and tell him how the caſe ſtands with me; then, let him do with me, what ſeems good in his eyes: This is the committing of our cauſe and condition unto God. And the Original word here uſed for God, doth very well ſuit and correſpond with this ſence; *I will commit my cauſe unto God, unto Elohim*, the great and impartial Judge of Heaven and Earth; the God who loves Judgment, and the habitation of whoſe Throne is righteouſneſs: The God who knows how to diſcern exactly between cauſe and cauſe, perſon and perſon, and will undoubtedly give a righteous ſentence concerning every cauſe and perſon, that comes before him. Unto this *Elohim* would I commit my cauſe, and refer my ſelf to his arbitration.

Obſerve, firſt, in the general; *Eliphaz* having reproved *Job*, turns himſelf to counſel and exhortation: From which we may learn,

That, *As it is our duty to reprove a fault in our brother, ſo it is our duty to adviſe and counſel him how to amend, or come out of that fault, for which we reprove him.*

It is not enough to eſpy an error, but we muſt labour to rectifie it; or, to tell another that he is out of the way, but we muſt endeavour to reduce him. Many can eſpy faults and failings in others, who either know not how, or care not to reform and help them out.

Secondly Obſerve, That, *It is a duty to exhort and excite our brethren to thoſe duties wherein we find them ſlack or negligent.*

Eliphaz conceived, that *Job* was much behind in the duty of prayer and self-resignation unto God, and therefore he quickens him up to it. The Apostle calls us to this Christian inspection (*Heb.* 3. 13.) *Exhort one another daily, lest any of you be hardned through the deceitfulness of sin*; sin growing and getting strength, hardens the heart; it is best to oppose it betimes, and therefore he bids them do it at all times, *Exhort one another daily*. Though the Apostle *Peter* (2 *Pet.* 1. 12.) was perswaded of the Saints establishment *in the present truth, yet* (saith he) *I will not cease to put you alwayes in remembrance of these things*. It is a dangerous error (which some hold) that the Saints in this life may out-grow counsel and exhortation; as if there were no need to bid a godly man pray, and seek unto God; no need to bid a godly man to repent, or humble himself, or believe: he cannot but do these things (say they) these are connatural to him: they are indeed to the new man, within him: but let them withal remember, that the neglect of all these duties, is as connatural to the old man, within him. While there are two men within us, we had need every man to look, not only to one, but to one another. It may go ill with the better part, *the new man*, if while he hath an enemy within to oppose him, he hath not a friend without to help him. On this ground (besides the command of Christ) the holiest man on earth, may be exhorted to look to his holiness: none are in more danger then they, who think they are past danger. And, as it is a certain argument, that a man was never good, if he desires not to be better; so, it is a great argument, that a man was never good, who fears not that he may be worse. They who are truly assured they cannot fall from grace, are assured also that they may fall in grace, and fall into sin: The foundation of God stands sure, but the footing of man doth not; and therefore, *Let him that stands, take heed lest he fall*: And let them who see their brethren heedlesly falling, lend them the right hand of exhortation to raise them up again: and when they are careless of, or wandring from the Lord, lead them by the hand of counsel, into wayes where he may be found. *I would seek unto God.*

Observe in the third place, That, *We ought to manage our exhortations with meekness and tenderness.*

This of *Eliphaz* is a mild and tender expression; and to make it more easie, he puts the exhortation (as was noted before) in the first, not in the second person; he doth not say, seeing afflictions come not from the ground, and that man is born unto trouble, therefore do thou seek unto God, and do thou commit thy cause unto God; but seeing thy case is thus, truly brother, I advise thee as I would advise mine own soul, *Seek unto God*. It moves strongly and gains upon the affection of another, to tell him, we would do the thing our selves which we desire he should, and we wish him as we do our own souls.

Fourthly Observe, That, *It is both our wisdom and our duty in all our afflictions to seek unto God.*

I would (saith *Eliphaz*) if I were in thy case, seek unto God. Unto whom should we go, but unto God? He is our best friend, when it is best with us; and he is our only friend, when it is ill with us: all other friends will be Physitians of no value, as *Job* himself found them, therefore *seek unto God*. As the Disciples said unto Christ, when Christ asked them, *Will ye also go away? Whither shall we go* (say they) *for thou hast the words of eternal life?* So saith the soul in afflictions, To whom shall I go? Unto this creature or that creature, unto this friend or that friend? No, I will seek unto God, That is the wisest and shortest course: all other courses are about, if not in vain. Other wayes may be used as helps, but this must; *pitch mainly upon God.*

When we are directed to seek unto God in afflictions, it speaks four things.

First, To seek unto God about the cause of our afflictions: desire that God would inform us, what his mind is in sending such an affliction, or what it is he aims at, in sending it. *Afflictions are the Lords messengers, and we should never be quiet, till we know their errand.* This is it which *Job* complained of in *Chap.* 3. *That his way was hid*, which was expounded, that he knew not the cause of his afflictions, the cause was hidden; and so was the issue, he could neither tell how he came in, nor how he should come out; If our way in afflictions be hid, we must seek unto God for the opening of it.

Secondly, *To seek unto God* for strength and patience, to bear the affliction. As the affliction comes from God, so doth the strength by which we stand under it, or, get victory over it.

Thirdly, *To seek unto God* for the sanctifying of affliction to our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. Afflictions are the good creatures of God, and they (as all other creatures) are sanctified to us, by the word and prayer. We have as much reason to seek unto God for a blessing upon our *daily Rod*, as upon our *daily Bread*.

Fourthly, *Seek unto God* for cure and ease, for the removing or mitigating of them. *In their affliction they will seek me early*, saith the Lord, *Hos.* 5. 15. But, for what will they seek? even, for medicine and healing. *Come and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up*, Hos. 6. 1.

Observe from the other branch, *And unto God would I commit my cause*,

That, *It is a very great ease unto the soul in affliction, to commit our cause unto God, and to put our affairs into his hand.*

Man is not able to stand alone, under the weight of his afflictions. Both sin and sorrow are burdens too heavy for us to bear: if you would have ease, lay both upon Christ; it is no unbecoming boldness to do so, for, he calls us to it, and bids us do it; *Psal.* 55. 22. *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.* Christ is willing to bear a part; and put his shoulder under these burdens; yea, it is his strength that bears the whole. The committing of our cause to God, is at once our duty, our safety, and our ease. Thus *David* did, *Psal.* 142. 2. *I powred my complaint before him, I shewed before him my trouble. David* brought out his evils, and set them (as it were) one by one, in the sight of God, and told him, thus it is with me. We may see *David* acting this rule, to the life, when *Absalom* had fomented a most unnatural rebellion against *Him*: He hastens out of *Jerusalem*, *All the Country wept with a loud voice*, and the Priests with the Ark of the Covenant of God came with him also. In what posture was *Davids* spirit, in the midst of these commotions? His words to *Zadok* shew (no doubt) the true picture of it. *And the King said to* Zadok, *carry back the Ark of God into the City; if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation*: but if he say thus, *I have no delight in thee, behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him* (2 Sam. 15. 25, 26.) As if he had said, I am uncertain what God will do with me: but I am resolved to let the Lord do with me what he will, I am willing to be what God will have me; I lay my cause and leave my busines at his foot-stool, if he will have me dethron'd and unking'd, I am content my honour should lie in the dust. If he say, I shall never come again to *Jerusalem*, or see the Ark of his strength and presence, I am content for ever to be banisht *Jerusalem*, never to see the Ark (which to me is the most beautiful and desirable sight in the world) any more. Here was self-resignation, and cause-committing to the height. And when *David* had brought his heart to this, his heart was unburden'd, he (doubtless) found the weight and stress of the whole business lying upon God himself. His cause was with God, and his cares were with God; and therefore, *though his throne shak'd, yet his heart was fixed.* Nor do I find, that ever his heart was more fixed, then in this stress, while his Throne and Crown were tottering. *Hezekiah* did the like with like success. In the day of that great and publick calamity, he went and spread the letter of *Rabshaketh* before God; he, as it were, desired God to read it, to observe the blasphemous contents, and see in what condition he was. *He that commits his cause to God, breaths a composed spirit, when the greatest storms and distractions are upon his body or estate, upon Church or State.*

Only take this caution, be sure the cause you commit to God, be a good cause. The committing of a sinful cause to God, is a dishonour to, and a high strain of presumption against God. We may commit a doubtful cause to God,

God, desiring, that he would try, and examine, whether it be good or bad. But we must not commit a doubtful cause to God, desiring him to protect it, or us in it, whether it be good or bad. And if (in this sense) we may not commit a doubtful cause to God; what shall we think of those, who shall dare to commit an openly unjust and wicked cause to God? A wicked mans prayer is alwayes sinful; but, how abominable is it, when he prayes to be prospered or directed in acting his sin, or to be strengthned in suffering (impenitently) for his sin? There is no gracious act, but a wicked man, at one time or other, will imitate it. He will pray, and repent, and forgive, and commit his cause to God; and when he dyes, commit his soul to God. There is no trusting to a mouth full of good words, while the heart will not empty it self of wickedness. It is good alwayes to commit our cause and our souls to God: but a cause or a soul are not therefore good, because committed unto God. The language of *Israel* is often spoken by the men of *Ashdod*; and many who never had the least part of holiness in them, can yet set themselves (when there is no remedy) to act a part in it. The Apostle *Peter* gives us this rule, (1 Epist. 4. 19.) *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him, in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* Except we suffer according to the will (or from the hand) of God, and, also, do well in our sufferings, Christ will not admit this Feoffment; though we commit our selves to him, he will not accept the trust. But he that suffers according to (or by) the will of God, and doth well in suffering; that is, hath a good cause, and a good conscience: He (I say) may commit all to God, and (in the mercy of the most High) he shall not miscarry.

Lastly, Whereas *Eliphaz* saith, I would *seek unto God*, were I in thy case,

Observe, That, *It is a wise course in advising others, to shew our selves ready to follow the same advise.*

It wins exceedingly upon others, to take our counsel, when it appears we are ready to follow the same counsel our selves. *We ought to do nothing unto others, but what we would have done unto our selves; and we should advise nothing to others, but what we our selves would do: It puts strength into a rule, when he that gives it, is ready to enliven it by his own practice.* As a Physitian, for the encouragement of his Patient to take a nauseous medicine, will say to him, Sir, you seem unwilling to drink it, but if I were sick and distempered, as you are, I would drink it readily; and that you may see there is no hurt in it, I will taste a little my self; his tasting sweetens it, and the Patient likes it well. Thus when either Minister or private friend offers advise or counsel, and shall say, thus I would do, this I would follow; this takes upon the heart: whereas it disparages prayer or any duty, to say to another, *Seek unto God*, put your case unto him, fast and pray, when he that gives the counsel neglects all these duties, and is careless of communion with God.

Christ saith of the Pharisees, that they bound heavy burthens upon the shoulders of others. These burdens were counsels and directions, rules, and canons; they would have men do thus and thus, in the manner of Gods worship, or daily converse with men. But, *They themselves would not touch them with one of their fingers*; (Matth. 23. 4.) That is, they would not practise them in the least degree. As to do evil with *both hands*, (Mic. 7. 3.) notes the highest degree both of desire and endeavour, in doing evil: So not to touch that which is good with a finger, notes a total neglect of doing good. A finger is the least member, and a Touch is the least act; then these Pharisees not touching with a finger, imports they did not act at all. It is good to act a rule privately by way of experiment, before we put it upon others: but it is most necessary to act it by way of example, when we have published it to, and prest it upon others. It was a speech of one of the Ancients, *I never taught my people any thing, but what I had first practised and experimented my self.* Doctrine is sooner followed by the eye, then by the ear; he that (like the Scribes and Pharisees *Matth. 23. 3. saith and doth not, shall find but few to do what he saith.* No man ought to teach any thing which he is not willing (as he is call'd) to do and observe himself. It is very sinful to give counsel, which we will not take. *Our works ought to be the practise of our words, and as practicable as our words.* Wo unto those of whom it may be said, as Christ of the *Pharisees*, Matth. 23. 3. *Whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works.*

VERS. 9.

10 Which doth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number.

THis context unto *verse* 17. contains the second Argument, by which *Eliphaz* strengthneth his former exhortation, *To seek unto God, and to commit his cause unto him.* The Argument may be thus formed.

He is to be sought unto, both in duty, and in wisdom; and unto him our cause is to be committed, who is of absolute,
20 *infinite power, wisdom and goodness.*
But God is of absolute, infinite power, wisdom and goodness.
Therefore it is our duty and our wisdom to seek unto God, and unto God to commit our cause.

That, God is infinite in power, wisdom and goodness, *Eliphaz* proves by an enumeration or induction of divers effects and works, which call for infinite power, wisdom and goodness to produce and actuate them.

These effects are laid down, first in general, *verse* 9. *Who*
30 *doth great things and unsearchable; marvellous things without number.*

Then, these works or effects are given in particulars; and the first particular instance of Gods mighty power, is in natural things, or his preservation of the world, at *verse* 10. *Who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields.*

The second instance is given in civil things, or his administrations in the world, at *vers.* 12, 13, 14. And that we may consider two wayes.

40 First, In destroying the counsels and plots of the wicked, in *vers.* 12, 13, and 14. *He that disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprise*, &c.

Secondly, In delivering those who are in trouble, *vers.* 15. *He saveth the poor from the Sword*, &c. These are works of Power.

Further the goodness of God shines forth in two things:

First, By the present intendment, or end aimed at, in these mighty works, *vers.* 11. *To set up on high those that be*
50 *low, that those which mourn may be exalted to safety.*

Secondly, By the future benefit of these works, and that in two respects, *vers.* 16.

First, The raising up of their spirits who are oppressed, *So the poor hath hope.*

Secondly, The confounding and shaming of their oppressors, expresst in their silence, at the latter end of *vers.* 16. *And iniquity stoppeth her mouth.*

Thus you have a brief account of the several points contained in this argument, and the disposition of the whole
60 context. For the better understanding thereof, we will first consider what might be the aim or scope of *Eliphaz*, in making so accurate and large a description of God, in his great and marvellous works, and then survay these works in order as they are digested.

To the former, we may take notice of a four-fold aim, which *Eliphaz* might have in describing these works of God.

First, Plainly to assert the providence of God, in ordering or disposing all actions and events here below: and so
70 it is in prosecution of what he had said in *vers.* 6. *Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.*

Or secondly, His intent might be, to humble *Job*, to bridle and take down his spirit, which he conceived overbold with, and too much heightned towards the Almighty; a discovery whereof himself made in his extravagant speeches before noted, in *Chap.* 3. *The remembrance of God in his greatness, is one of the readiest means to humble man:* And God himself took this way to humble *Job*, in the latter end of this book, even, by a large discourse of his own
80 power,

power, exemplified in many great acts and pieces of the creation.

Or thirdly, The intent of *Eliphaz* might be, to ſupport and comfort *Job* in his afflictions, by ſhewing him a God that had done ſuch wonders, and therefore able to work another wonder in delivering and raiſing him up again: A God, who could provide medicines for all his diſeaſes, heal all his breaches, repair all his loſſes, ſupply all his wants, and reſolve all his doubts. *To conſider God in himſelf, and in his works, who he is, and what he doth, is a mighty encouragement to ſeek unto God in our greateſt extremities, in the ſaddeſt and cloudieſt day of our afflictions.* Neither can we do any thing more prevalent, for the ſupport and relief of our own ſpirits, in a time when we are loweſt, then to ſpread before the eye of our own thoughts, the power, greatneſs and goodneſs of the high God, in his works and wonders.

A fourth intent in probability was to ſtop *Jobs* curioſity, in enquiring ſo much into the reaſon of Gods dealing with him; which *Eliphaz* it ſeems obſerved in the complaints of *Chap.* 3. where *Job* expoſtulates, *Why is light given to a man whoſe way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* *Job* was troubled, becauſe he could not ſee the bottom of Gods dealings with him; he could not ſee through them, either what the cauſe was, why he came into thoſe troubles, or by what iſſues and out-lets, he ſhould eſcape thoſe troubles. Now, to ſtop *Jobs* curioſity in prying too far, or too boldly, into the ſecret workings of God; *Eliphaz* tells him, *That God doth great things, and unſearchable:* no marvel therefore, if his wayes were hid; *That he doth marvellous things without number,* no marvail then, if he could not meaſure his dealings, by the line of humane underſtanding, or ſum up their account by the beſt of his Arithmetick.

This in general, for the common tendency of his diſcourſe, about thoſe noble acts of divine Providence in earthly things. I come now to open the words in particular.

Which doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.

Which doth.] He ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe, he ſayes not, *which hath done great things*, or, *which will do great things*; but *which doth great things.* And that notes not only a preſent act, but a continued act, or an everlaſting act; or, as if the workings of God were but an act, paſt, and to come, all included in the preſent, *He doth.* As in his *Nature and Eſſence*, though God was from all eternity, and ſhall be unto all eternity, yet his Name is, *I am.* So in his works, though he hath done great things, and ſhall no great things for ever, yet all are comprehended in this, *I do, or He doth great things.* Chriſt (*John* 5.17.) ſpeaks this language, *My Father worketh hitherto: worketh*; All that which God had done, and all that he ſhould do, is to be looked upon as his preſent act, *My Father worketh hitherto.*

Again, there is ſomewhat to be conſidered in the natural emphaſis of the word it ſelf, as well as in that circumſtantial of the time. The word which we tranſlate, *Doth*, ſignifies more then an ordinary *Doing*; *which doth great things.* The Criticks obſerve, that in ſtrictneſs and propriety of the Hebrew, it ſignifies to do a thing compleatly, perfectly and exactly, or (as we ſay) *the ſetting of our laſt hand to a work.* Hence *Eſau* (*Gen.* 25.25.) had his name. When *Jacob* and *Eſau* were born, *Eſau* came forth firſt, and the Text ſaith, *they called his name* Eſau; and why? becauſe he was born, *made up, in greater perfection*, then an ordinary child. *Eſau* ſignifies, *adorned and perfected*, becauſe he came into the world hairy, or with hair upon him, which is both a natural ornament, and an argument of natural ſtrength, activity and *heat* of ſpirit, *&c.* Hence they call'd him, *Eſau:* So then, the word [*doth*] imports doing, not by way of eſſay or inchoation, but doing compleatly, or to carry a thing on, or up to an extraordinary degree of perfection. I ſhall give one Scripture to illuſtrate that ſignificancy of the word, *Iſa.*43.7. where the Lord by the Prophet, ſhewing the abundant increaſe of the Church, ſpeaks thus, *Bring my ſons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him, yea I have made him.* Obſerve, here is a plain gradation in thoſe three words, *Created, formed, made*; *I have created*, ſignifies the bringing of a thing from a not-being, to a being. But, ſaith God, I have not only given him a being, but, *I have formed him*; which notes the limming, proportioning and poliſhing a thing: And not only have I done ſo; but, in the third place, (which is the word of the Text) *I have made him.* There is more in this word, then in the former two, and therefore we tranſlate it with an emphaſis; *yea, I have made him*; that is, I have not only given him a being and a ſhape, but I have put upon him all the perfections of nature; yea, and the perfections of grace, the impreſſions of my ſpecial love and favour; I have lifted him up to the top of all, and ſo ſome render the word, *I have magnified or made him great*; I have exalted and ſet him upon the higheſt pinnacles of perfections, and mountains of holineſs.

ברא *Producit ad eſſe*
יצר *Conſtituit rem in forma ſua.*
עשה *Perficit, diſpoſuit.*

Hence Obſerve, *When God begins a work, he compleats it and carries it thorough.*

He doth not only *Create*, and give a being; *Form*, and give proportion: but *He doth*, or *He makes*, giving beauty and exactneſs to his works. Whether we conſider the works of God as Natural, Civil, or Spiritual; in this ſence God *doth them*, Deut. 32. 4. *Moſes* ſpeaks in generall concerning all the works of God; *He is a Rock, and his work is perfect:* The works of Creation are admirable to the eye; the works of providence, how often do they fill the heart with admiration! That which he ſpake to *Samuel* concerning the houſe of *Ely*, is appliable both to his works of Mercy and of Judgment; *When I begin, I will alſo make an end*, 1 Sam. 3. 12. that is, I will do it fully, there is nothing ſhall take me off, or ſtay me in the mid way; I will not work to halves, I will alſo make an end. And ſo it is in ſpirituals, when once God hath begun, he carries on his work of grace; when once he hath laid the *foundation ſtone* of mercy, he never leaves, until he hath ſet up the *top ſtone, the higheſt ſtone of Glory.* Hence the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12.) entitles Chriſt, *The author and finiſher of our Faith*; that is, the beginner and ender, *Alpha* and *Omega*, firſt and laſt about our faith. It ſhall never be ſaid of any work of God (as *Luke* 14.) *That he began to build, but could not finiſh it.*

And as he finiſhes, ſo he beautifies: all his works are full of order and comelineſs: He doth his work exquiſitely (or as we ſay) artificially; yea, thoſe works that we look upon as full of confuſion, are full of order; and thoſe works in which we ſee no form, or nothing but deformity, even theſe will one day appear (now they are) admirable in beauty and comelineſs. That which the Apoſtle ſpeaks in his exhortation to *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 15. bidding him *do the work of an Evangeliſt*, bidding him *ſhew himſelf a Workman that needeth not to be aſhamed*; is moſt true concerning the great God of Heaven and Earth: He ſhews himſelf a workman, or a worker that needeth not to be aſhamed: When he works, *he doth the work of a God*; *He works like himſelf*: Man cannot ſo much as be ſuſpected to have done ſuch things: The Name, that is, the wiſdom, power and goodneſs of God, is written upon them in ſo fair and clear a letter, that it muſt be ſaid, by way of aſſertion, *This hath God wrought:* And by way of admiration, *what hath God wrought!* Numb. 22. 23. *A man* (*ſc.* a meer natural man beholding theſe things) ſhall ſay, *verily he is a God that judgeth the earth*, Pſal. 58.11. Man cannot judge, or do like this. The Lord needs not engrave or ſubſcribe his Name to his works; His works, like ſo many Capital letters, ſpell, and like ſo many Heraulds, proclaim his Name.

Which doth great things.] To paſs from the act or manner of doing, we will conſider the object; *He doth great things.* Some men with a great deal of pains do nothing; and others with a great deal of Art do a thing of nothing, a trifle, a toy, a meer fancy; at moſt, ſome mean or inferior work takes up their time, skill and ſtudy: But when God goes to work, we may expect a noble work, *He doth great things.* *The works of God, anſwer the ſtile or Attributes of God.* He is a great God, and His are great works. The works of God ſpeak a God. And here are four things ſpoken in this one verſe, of the works of God, which ſpeak aloud, *This is the finger of God.* I will firſt bundle

עשה *Apte, congruè, & exquiſitè, fecit. Eſau vocatus, quia cū naſceretur fuit actus & perfectus pilis. Eſau ſonat perfectū & ornatū, nam perfectior pueris, i. e. influctus pilis in lucem ventrit.* Jun. *in loc.*

bundle them together, and then, both take and weigh them asunder.

He doth { First, Great things. Secondly, Unsearchable. Thirdly, Wonderful. Fourthly, Innumerable; or, without number.

No works of man or Angel, are capable of such a four-fold *stamp* as this; no, nor any one work of all the creatures put together, could ever be stamped with any one of these characters, in any comparison, with the works of God. Some, in a sence, have done *great things*, but none have done things *unsearchable*: Man may fathome the works of man, his closest wayes are not past finding out. As there was never any thing made so strongly by the strength of man, but there was some other strength in man, that could match, yea overthrow it; so there was never any thing so wisely, so artificially or mysteriously contrived, by the skill, knowledge and deepest understanding of a man; but that the skill, knowledge and understanding of another man, hath, or might have ridled and searcht it out. The works of most men are wrought above ground, and their intentions flote and swim upon the face of their actions: And although some, as the Prophet speaks (*Isa.*29.) *work deep to hide their counsels* (as they hope, not only from men but) *from God*; yet God gives other men a light, to discover the very lowest Hell of those counsels; even all the *depths of Satan*, *The Master-Engineer* of those mines and subterranean contrivances. Further, Though some men do that, which makes other men (especially fools, or men weak in knowledge) wonder, yet no (*Thaumaturgus*, or) wonder-worker ever did that, which makes all men wonder. Or, if it should be granted, that any have done things great, unsearchable, wonderful, yet I am sure, none have done these things *without number*; one great, unsearchable, wonderful work, is task enough for one mans life: And a little skill in numbers will serve the turn, to cast up, and give us the total sum and number, of all the works of all men, which deservedly bear (as mans may) the title and superscription of great, unsearchable, wonderful.

More directly. First, *He doth great things.* There is a greatness upon every thing God doth: The great God leaves (as it were) the print of his own greatness, even upon those things which we account little; little works of Nature, have a greatness in them, considered as done by God; and little works of Providence, have a greatness in them, considered as done by God: If the thing which God doth, be not great in it self, yet it is great, because he doth it. As there is no sin of man little in it self (though comparatively it be) because committed against a great God: So there is no work of God little (though comparatively it be) because acted by the great God. Further, if God doth a thing, which in it self considered, or considered according to the line and rule of the creature, is unjust; yet because God doth it, or commands it to be done, his very doing or commanding stamps justice upon it; as is clear in the case of *Abrahams* call to sacrifice his son, and the *Israelites* carrying away the jewels of the *Egyptians*. If then the Act of God (whose will is the supreme law) makes that lawful, which according to the common rule, is unlawful; how much more doth the act of God make that great, which in ordinary proportion is accounted small.

Again, When it is said, *God doth great things*, we must not understand it, as if God dealt not about little things, or as if he let the small matters of the world pass, and did not meddle with them: *Great* in this place, is not exclusive of *Little*, for, he doth not only great, but small, even the smallest things. The Heathens said, their *Jupiter* had no leisure to be present at the doing of small things, or it did not become him to attend them. God attendeth the doing of small things, and it is his honour to do so: the falling of a Sparrow to the ground, is one of the smallest things that is, yet that is not without the providence of God; the hairs of our head are small things, yet as not too many, so not too small for the great God to take notice of; Christ assures us this, *The very hairs of your head are all numbred*, Matth. 10. 29, 30. We ought highly to adore and reverence the power and inspection of God about the lowest, the meanest things and actions. Is it not with the *great God*, as with *great men*, or, as it was with that *great man Moses*, who had such a burthen of business in the government of that people upon his shoulders, that he could not bear it; therefore his father in law adviseth him, to call in the aid of others, and divide the work: But how? The great matters, the weighty and knotty controversies must be brought to *Moses*; but the petty differences and lesser causes, are transmitted and handed over to inferior judges; *And it shall be, that every great matter, they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge*; *Exod.* 18. 22. But God, the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, hath not only the great and weighty, but small matters brought unto him; the least motions of the creature, are heard and resolved, disposed and guided by his wisdom and power.

Non vacat exiguis rebus adesse Jovi.

You will say, What is this greatness, and what are these great things? I shall hint an answer to both, for the clearing of the words.

There is a two-fold greatness upon the works of God. There is (so we may distinguish) First, the greatness of quantity. Secondly, the greatness of quality or vertue. That work of God which is greatest in the bulk or quantity of it, is the work of Creation: How spacious, huge and mighty a fabrick is Heaven and Earth, with all things compacted and comprehended in their circumference! And in this work, so vast for quantity, what admirable qualities are every where intermixt! Matter and form, power and order, quantity and quality, are so equally ballanced, that no eye can discern, or judgment of man determin, which weighs most in this mighty work.

Yet among these works of God, some are called *Great*, in regard of quality, rather then quantity. As it is said (*Gen.*1.16.) That *God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night.* (Sun and Moon) these are great lights, not that there are no lights great but these, or that both these are greater then all other heavenly lights; for many Stars are greater then the Moon, as the doctrine and observation of Astronomers assures us; but the lesser of these is great, in regard of light and influence, excellency and usefulness to the world.

And as these works of creation, so the works of providence are great works: When God destroyes great enemies, the greatness of his work is proclaimed. When *great Babilon*, or *Babylon the great*, shall be destroyed, the Saints song of triumph shall be, *great and marvailous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy wayes, thou King of Saints*, (Rev. 15. 3.) Great and marvellous works, why? Because thou hast destroyed great *Babylon*, and hast executed great judgment, and powred out great wrath. So, great works of mercy and deliverance to his people, are cried up with admiration, *And hath given us such a deliverance as this*, saith *Ezra*, *Chap.* 9. 13. When the Jews returned from their captivity out of *Babylon*; that mercy was a kind of miracle, that deliverance a wonder, and therefore he mentions it in terms of admiration, *Such deliverance as this!* How great? So great, that he had neither words to express, nor example to parallel it; but lets it stand nakedly by it self, in its native glory: *Such deliverance as this.*

The spiritual works of God, are yet far greater; the work of redemption, is called *a great Salvation*; the conversion and justification of a sinner, the pardon of our sins, and the purifying of our nature, are works as high above creation and providence, as the Heavens are in comparison of the earth. Take two or three Corolaries or Deductions from hence;

As first, *It is the property of God to do great things: And because it is his property, he can as easily do great things as small things.*

Among men, *Great spirits count nothing great*: A great spirit swallows and overcomes all difficulties: Much more is it so with the great God, who is a Spirit, all Spirit, and the Father of spirits; *To the great God there is nothing great*: He can as easily do the greatest as the least: 1 *Sam.* 14. 6. 2 *Chron.* 14. *There is no restraint to the Lord, to save with few or by many*; or, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: It

Animo magno nihil magnum.

is not ſo much, as the duſt of the ballance with God, to turn the ſcale of victory in battel, whether there be more or leſs: *Seeing all Nations before him, are but as the duſt of the ballance, as nothing, yea leſs then nothing.* So that whether you put him upon any great work or ſmall work, you put the Lord to no more ſtreſs, to no more pains in the one, then in the other, *for he doth great things*; and to do them, is his property, not his ſtudy; his nature, not his labour. He needs not make proviſions or preparations, for what he would have done; the ſame act by which he wills the doing of a thing, doth it, if he wills. What great things hath the Lord done in our dayes? We may ſay as the Virgin (*Luke* 1.49.) *He that is Mighty, hath done to us great things, and Holy is his Name*; and as they, *Act.* 2. 11. *We have both heard and ſeen the great things of God done amongſt us*; and I believe greater things are yet to be done. It was a great work at the beginning of time, *to make Heaven and Earth*: and will it not be a great work, *to ſhake Heaven and Earth?* That God hath ſaid, he will do, before the end of time. *Yet once it is a little while, and I will ſhake the Heavens and the Earth, and the Sea, and the dry Land*, Hag. 2.6. The words following, ſeem to interpret this *Earth-quake, and Heaven-quake*; *I will ſhake all Nations.* Again, It was a great work to make the old Heaven and Earth: and will it not be a great work to make a new Heaven and a new Earth? That is the buſineſs which God is about in theſe latter dayes, as he promiſed, *Iſa.* 65.17. *Behold I create a new Heaven and a new Earth*; what is that? *Jeruſalem a praiſe, and her people a joy.* When God reformeth the face of his Church, and ſettles the affairs of Kingdoms and Common-wealths, he makes new Heavens and a new Earth.

Τὰ μεγαλεῖα τοῦ Θεοῦ. *Magnalia Dei.*

And if it be the property of God to do great things, then it is a duty in us, to expect great things. We ought to look for ſuch things, as come up to, and anſwer the power and greatneſs of God; we diſhonour, and as it were, humble God, when we look only for low and mean things; *Great expectations from God, honour the greatneſs of God.* As the Lord expects to receive the greateſt ſervices from us, becauſe he is a great King, *Mal.* 1.14. So we ought to expect, that we ſhall receive the greateſt mercies from the Lord, becauſe he is a great King; *It diſhonours God as much and more, when we believe little, as when we do little.* A great King thinks himſelf diſhonoured, if you ask him a petty ſuit; he looks more what becomes him to give, or do in bounty, then the petitioner to ask in neceſſity. The Great *Alexander* could tell his ſuiter (whom he had more aſtoniſh'd then reliev'd with his favour) that though the thing might be too great for him to receive, yet it was not too great for *Alexander* to give. *If duſt and aſhes can ſpeak and think at this rate; O how large is the heart of God!* Then, it is not only our priviledge, but our duty to ask and believe great things; we ought to have a great faith, becauſe God doth great things; Is it not unbecoming to have a *great God*, and a *little Faith?* to have a God that doth great things, and we to be a people (his people) that cannot believe great things? nay, to have a God who can eaſily do great things, and we a people, that can hardly believe ſmall things? How unbecoming! If ſome ſmall thing be to be done, then uſually faith is upon the wing; but if it be a great thing, then faith is clogg'd, her wings are clipt, and we at a ſtand; why ſhould it be ſaid unto us, as, Chriſt ſaid unto his Diſciples. *O ye of little faith? It may be as dangerous to us, if not as ſinful, not to believe the day of great things, as to deſpiſe the day of ſmall things.* Why ſhould not our faith in a holy ſcorn, baffle the greateſt difficulties, in that language of the Prophet (*Zech.* 4.7.) *Who art thou O great Mountain? before* Zerubbabel *thou ſhalt become a plain.*

There is another uſeful conſequence from this truth.

He that doth great works, ought to have great praiſes.

As we ought to have great faith, that he will do great things; ſo he ought to have great acknowledgments, when he hath done great things. Shall God do great things for us, and ſhall we give him ſome poor, lean, ſtarven ſacrifices of praiſe? It is very obſervable, that, as ſoon as the Prophet had deſcribed the Lord in his greatneſs (*Iſa.* 40. 15.) he adds in the very next verſe, *And* Lebanon *is not ſufficient to burn, nor the beaſts thereof ſufficient for a burnt Offering.* That is, no ſervices are great enough, for this great God. *Lebanon* abounded in ſpices for Incenſe and perfume; it abounded with cattel for Sacrifice and Burnt-offerings; to ſay that *Lebanon* had not ſpice enough to burn for Incenſe, nor beaſts enough to burn for Sacrifice, ſhews the Lord far exalted in greatneſs, above all the praiſes and holy ſervices of his people.

Laſtly, *Seeing God doth great works for us, let us ſhew great zeal for, great love unto the Lord.*

We ſhould aim at the doing of great things for God, ſeeing God indeed doth great things for us. So much of the firſt Attribute of the works of God. *Who doth great things,*

And unſearchable.] The Hebrew is, *and no ſearch.* The word imports the ſearch of thoſe things which are moſt abſtruſe and ſecret. As the heart, which the Lord only can ſearch, *Jer.* 17.15. The heart lies too low, not only for the eye, but for the underſtanding of man. Hence it is uſed, *Pſal.* 95.4. to note the *Foundations*, or deep places of the earth, becauſe they cannot be known, but by deep ſearchings, or rather, becauſe they are beyond the deepeſt ſearch of man. And the ſame phraſe we find, *Pſal.* 145.3. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praiſed, and his greatneſs is unſearchable*; or according to the letter, *of his greatneſs no ſearch.* As when the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of the greatneſs of God, in his nature and eſſence, preſently he adds, *and of his greatneſs there is no ſearch*; ſo here, when *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of the greatneſs of God, in his works, the next word is, *they are unſearchable.* As God in himſelf is great, and of his greatneſs there is no ſearch; ſo many of the works of God are ſo great, that of their greatneſs there is no ſearch; that is, you cannot find out their greatneſs by any ſearch. God is in working (and ſo are men, the hand cannot act beyond the head) as he is in underſtanding. *There is no ſearching of his underſtanding.* (Iſa. 40. 28.) Therefore there is none of his working.

ואינרקר

Penetralia terræ, ut Aben Ezra *explicat, quæ ſcire nequeunt, niſi exquiſita perſcrutatione, vel potius quòd homini minimè ſunt perſcrutabilia, Deo antè in propatulo.* Buxtorf.

This unſearchableneſs of the works of God, may be conſidered two wayes.

Firſt, As that, which cannot be found by enquiry.

Secondly, As that, which ought not to be found or enquired.

There are ſome works of God, which are not to be ſearched into; they are to be adored by believing, not to be pryed into by ſearching; and in that ſence they are called unſearchable (*Rom.* 11.33.) *O the depth of the riches, both of the wiſdom and knowledge of God! How unſearchable are his judgments!* Many of his judgments, that is, his works of judgment, are ſo unſearchable, that it is not induſtry or duty, but preſumption, to ſearch into them. As thoſe *unſpeakable words*, which *Paul* heard in the third heavens, were ſuch as (2 *Cor.* 12.4.) *it is not lawful for man to utter*; ſo unſearchable judgements may be interpreted ſuch, as it is not lawful for a man to ſearch. Great Princes will not have all their actions ſcann'd, at leaſt, not by all, *They keep ſtate in their works.* If all a mans actions be level to the loweſt, his perſon will be ſo too. The reaſon why the works of *Antichriſt* were to be ſo myſterious and miraculous, is, becauſe he was to be adored and *Godded, to be exalted above all* (in man) *that is called God, or that is worſhipped*, 2 Theſ. 2.4. They who aſpire to divine honour, have, or at leaſt pretend to have many ſecrets. Becauſe *ſecret things belong unto God, things revealed unto man*, (Deut. 29. 29.) And as the Angel at once anſwers and reproves *Manoah* (Judges 13. 18.) *Why askeſt thou after my name, ſeeing it is ſecret, or, wonderful?* As if he had ſaid, thou muſt not enquire after my name, for it is a ſecret. Such prying into the works of God, is as dangerous, as *prying into the Ark of God* (1 Sam. 6. 19.) *It were more profitable for us, and more honourable to God, if we did ſearch our own ſecret wayes more, and Gods leſs.*

Arcana imperii.

There are other works of God, which cannot be ſearched, yet we may and ought to ſearch them; it is our duty to ſtudy them, though we cannot find them. We may ſearch and find many of the works of God, with our ſenſes; there are others which we cannot find, though we ſearch for them, with our reaſon and underſtanding. As ſome parts of the word of God (2 *Pet.* 3. 16.) So ſome parts of his works are ſo *hard to be underſtood, that unſtable men wreſt them to their own deſtruction.* The mind of God is very

very legible in many of his works, and we may read them without a Comment or Interpreter. Other of his works are mysterious and enigmatical, very riddles, in so much, that if an ordinary man looking on them, should be questioned, *Understandest thou what thou seest?* he must answer, as the *Eunuch* did *Philip, How can I, except some man teach me?* And these works are unsearchable, two wayes.

First, In regard of the manner of doing: we cannot find out the wayes and contrivances of Gods work. *His wayes are in the deep, and his footsteps are not known,* saith the *Psalmist*; that is, the wayes which God goes to the accomplishing of his ends, are oftentimes like steps upon the water, which leave no impression or track behind him.

Secondly, His works are unsearchable in their causes or ends; what it is which God aims at or intends, what moves or provokes him to such a course, is usually a secret. He doth such things as no man can give an account of, or render a reason why. *Peter* knew not how to construe or expound that work of Christ, *John* 13. when he took a towel with a bason of water, to wash his feet: therefore Christ tells him, *What I do thou knowest not* (that is, thou knowest not what moves me to do this; for his eye taught him what Christ did) *but thou shalt know hereafter.* In due time this shall be interpreted to thee, and thou shalt know the reason why I did this.

But it is said (and that may be an objection against both Text and Exposition) *Psal.* 111. 2. *The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all those that have pleasure therein.* To seek out, notes a full discovery. And in *Psal.* 106. 7. *Failing* in this, is charged upon the Fathers, and confessed by the Children, as a fault; *Our Fathers understood not thy wonders,* that is, the great things which God did for them in *Egypt.* How then is it said here, *The works of the Lord are great and unsearchable?*

To clear this, First, I say there are some great works of God, which are easie and plain; and it is our duty to be acquainted with, and learned in these works of God, as well as in the word of God.

Secondly, Those works whose Text is hard, we must search and labour to expound them, so, as to further duty, but not to feed our curiosity; we may search them with submission to the mind of God, not for satisfaction only to our own minds. We may search with desire to honour God, but not to humour our selves. We may search them to make us more holy, though not barely to make us more knowing. Take two Corollaries from this.

First, If the works of God are unsearchable, then how unsearchable are the counsels of God, the deep and secret counsels of God? *The works of God are the counsels of God made visible.* Every work of God is the bringing of some counsel of God to light. Now if we are not able to find out his counsels, when they are made visible in his works; how shall we find out his counsels, when they lie hidden in his breast?

Secondly, If the works of God are unsearchable, then, we are to submit unto the dispensations of God, whatsoever they are; though we are not able, according to reason, to give an account of them; though we cannot search out either the manner how, or the cause for which they were done, yet we must reverence them: and what we cannot believe by knowing, we must know by believing. It is our duty, not only to *wink and believe, shut our eyes and believe,* or believe when we cannot see; but we must often believe where knowledge is shut out, *believe when we cannot understand. Abraham* by faith followed the call of God, *not knowing whither he went,* Heb. 11. 8. It is dangerous to follow men blindfold (how seeing soever those men are) but it is safe, and our duty to follow God blindfold, how seeing soever we think our selves to be. We must not be displeased (as *Joseph* was at *Jacob* his father, *Gen.* 48. 17.) when we see God laying his right hand upon *Ephraim,* and his left upon *Manasses,* doing things cross to our thoughts; much less may we take upon us to direct the hand of God, as *Joseph* would *Jacob's*, where we please. The Lord knows (as *Jacob* answered *Joseph*) what he doth, and it becomes us to acquiesce in what he doth, though we know it not. Some *Romish Parasites* have said of the *Pope, That if he should carry thousands to hell along with him, there is no man must say to him, Sir, why do you so?* They adore him so in the unsearchableness of his wayes and doings, that it is enough for them, if he doth them.

This abominable flattery of that *Man of sin,* is a sober truth concerning the *holy God*; *Though God cast thousands of souls into hell, no man may say to him, what dost thou?* And though God turn Kingdoms upside down, though he send great afflictions upon his own people, and make them a reproach unto the heathen, though he give them up unto the power of the adversary, and make all their enemies to rejoyce, yet no man may say unto God, why do you thus? His works are unsearchable. It is beyond the line of a creature, to put any question, *a why, or a wherefore,* about the work of the *Creator. Shall the thing formed say to him that forms it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power over his clay?*

Some think they could do things better then God hath done, or at least, that God might have done better; if they had the power in their hands, things should not go thus and thus: What an insufferable indignity is this to the wisdom and power of God, that He, whose works are unsearchable, should be made accountable for his works? That of *Augustine,* when he was in a deep meditation about the Nature of God, may well be applied to the works of God, who walking by the sea-side in deep thoughts of God, either heard this voyce, or was filled with this thought, *That he might as soon empty the Sea with, or comprehend the Ocean in one of those little Cockle-shells which lay on the shore, as with the narrow vessel of his Spirit, comprehend the infinite greatness of the God of Spirits.*

Marvellous things. Unsearchable things and marvellous, differ thus: Those things are unsearchable, which lie hid, and cannot be found: that is a marvel, whose cause cannot be found, though it self be not hid. This is the third adjunct or attribute of the works of God. The word is derived from a root, which signifies, *separated, disjoyned or divided.* And marvellous things are expresst by that word, because *marvels* or *wonders* are separated or removed from us three degrees at least.

Inscrutabil & mirabil differunt; Inscrutabil est quod la tet & perquiri non potest: Mirabile est, quod ipsum quidem ap-

paret, sed causa ejus perquiri non potest. Aquin. *in loc.* נִפְלָאוֹת from פָּלָא *Separatus, disjunctus. Hinc significat mirabilia, quia talia sunt à nobis separata, & captum superant, ita ut ratione quis assequi, aut re præstare nequeat.*

They are separated,

First, From our knowledge or reason.

Secondly, From our sense; not that marvels are invisible, marvels and miracles are wrought to be seen, and the use of them lies in this, from the sense to confirm faith, or to convince of unbelief. Which (by the way) quite overthrows the Popish refuge of a miracle, in their supposed transubstantiation of Bread at the *Eucharist,* who tell us of a miracle, but can shew us none. But though in all miracles and marvels the thing wrought is plain to the senses, yet both the power and manner of doing it, are removed from the senses: *The marvel wrought is seen, but the working of the marvel is not seen.*

Thirdly, *Marvels* are separated or removed from our imitation; we cannot do such things. The Lord stands alone working wonders. They are a separated part and portion for God himself. The *Egyptian Sorcerers* seemed to do by their deviliish enchantments, what *Moses* did by the command and power of God; but at the best, they did but seem to do like *Moses*, and presently they could not so much as seem, *Exod.* 8. 18. *And the Magicians did so:* (that is, they attempted to do so) *but they could not. They that work by the Devils art or power, cannot work long,* they will quickly be at *A could not.* Both their Religions and their *miraculous works* are at best but in appearance; at last they will not so much as appear. In these three respects *Marvels* are rightly called, *separate.*

Further, The word also signifies sometimes, *a hard or a difficult thing*; because those things that are very difficult, have somewhat of wonder in them, and cause us to wonder at them, *Deut.* 17. 8. *If a matter come which is too hard,* the word is, *which is too marvellous and wonderful for thee,* &c. And, *Gen.* 18. 14. *Is any thing too hard for me?* (saith God) the word is, *Is any thing wonderful to me? Nothing is wonderful to us, but that which is too hard for us. There is nothing wonderful to God, who doth all wonders, and is himself all Wonder.* It hath been said concerning those lovers of, and searchers after secret wisdom, called *Philosophers,* that it *doth not become a Philosopher to wonder*; for admiration

admiration is uſually the Daughter of Ignorance: We marvel at moſt things, becauſe we know the cauſes of few things. It was therefore a ſhame for a Philoſopher to wonder, becauſe it betrayed his ignorance, who would be thought ſtudied in, yea, a maſter of all cauſes; and able to give a reaſon of all things in Nature. But it is moſt certain, the great God never marvelleth at any thing; For, *is any thing too hard for me?* ſaith the Lord. Wonders are things too hard for us, and the ſame word ſignifies a *Wonder*, and a *thing too hard*.

אות מופת נפלא

There are three words of near alliance in the Hebrew, *Signs*, *Miracles*, and *Marvels*: And they may be diſtinguiſh'd thus; a *Sign* is the repreſentation of a thing preſent, or before us: A *Miracle* or *Portentum* (as contra-diſtinct from the former) ſhews forth ſomewhat future, or, that is to come. A *Marvel*, as differing from both, is any act of providence, ſecret or ſeparate from us, in the manner of doing or producing it; a thing to us *unſearchable*: ſo (*Exod.* 33. 16.) *Wherein ſhall it be known, that I and thy people have found grace in thy ſight* (ſaith *Moſes*) *Is it not in that thou goeſt with us? So ſhall we be ſeparated, I and thy people*; ſo we tranſlate it, or *made wonderful*; that is, if thou goeſt along with us, thou wilt do ſuch marvels for us, a will make a difference between us and all the people in the world; we ſhall be a people marvell'd at all the world over, or, a *ſpectacle to the world, Angels and Men*. The preſence of God with a people, is their difference, or will make them differ from all people with whom God is not (under the *Notion* of *Favour and Protection*) preſent.

Again, *Marvels* are taken ſometimes for *Miracles*, which are meerly and purely ſupernatural. For in ordinary acceptation of the word, a *Marvel* is only the heightning and ſublimating of Nature, or acting in the higheſt ſphear of Nature; but a *Miracle* is a croſſing or a contradicting of Nature; a work altogether above, yea, againſt Nature. Now we are not to take *marvels* here in that ſtrict ſence for *miracles*; for the great works of God are called *marvels* or *wonders*, which yet are but either the ordinary conſtitutions of Nature, or the extraordinary motions of Nature; as, *Pſal.* 136. 4. *O give thanks to the Lord, to him, who alone doth great wonders*: What are theſe? In *verſ.* 5, 6, 7. inſtances are given in natural things, as making the heavens, and ſtretching out the earth above the waters; the making of thoſe great Lights, the Sun and Moon (*a*). One of the Ancients diſcourſing upon that Miracle in the Goſpel, *The multiplying the Loaves*, obſerveth, that in natural things, there are very great wonders, though we lightly paſs them by; they were aſtoniſhed to ſee the loaves multiplied while they were eating: To ſee bread grow upon the Table, or between their teeth, made all wonder: but there is as great a miracle wrought every year, and no man takes notice of it; that is, when Corn caſt into the ground, multiplies thirty, ſixty, a hundred fold; It is (ſaith he) a greater miracle for corn to multiply in the earth, then for loaves to multiply on the table. And he makes a like concluſion in his *Book of the City of God*, *Whatſoever is wonderful in the world, is not ſo great a wonder as the world*; yet men rarely wonder at the making of the world, the *Earth*, *the Heavens*, *the Sea*, *the Air*, every creature in them, exceed in wonders, the things we wonder at. Ordinary works of Nature are marvellous; Firſt, Becauſe they proceed from a divine power. Secondly, Becauſe man is poſed to give a reaſon of moſt of them; *Canſt thou tell how the bones grow in her that is with child?* ſaith the Preacher. The bringing of an Infant alive from the womb, is a wonder, as well as the raiſing of a man from the dead: and the budding of a *Tree*, as well as the budding of *Aaron's Rod* (*b*). The uſualneſs of the one, and the rareneſs of the other, is, though not the only, yet the greateſt difference. *And as the ordinary works of Creation, in making, ſo of Providence, in governing the world, are full of wonders*, though they paſs unobſerved. Such *Eliphaz* takes notice of in the words following; *The diſappointing of crafty oppreſſors, and the deliverance of the poor.* When God ſhall deſtroy *Babylon*, the Song prepared is, *Great and wonderful are thy works*: And (*Exod.* 15. 11.) from whence that is taken, *Who is like unto thee, O God! who is like unto thee, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, doing wonders!* The wonder was, a deliverance, the wonderful deliverance of his people from *Egypt*, and through the *Red Sea*. Works of judgment are often called works of wonder (*Deut.* 28. 59.) *I will make thy plagues wonderful*; and, *Iſa.* 28. 21. *The Lord ſhall riſe up as in Mount* Perazim, *he ſhall be wroth as in the valley of* Gibeon; *that he may do his work, his ſtrange work, and bring to paſs his act, his ſtrange act*: What act was this? an act of judgment upon his, and his peoples enemies; as is clear, 2 *Sam.* 5. 20. & *Joſh.* 10. 12. Where we may read, what God did in Mount *Perazim*, and in the Valley of *Gibeon*; ſtrange works indeed! And theſe works of God are called marvellous, not only, when God is in them alone, and acts without the intervention of the creature, but when he acts with the creature, above the ſtrength of a creature, ſo that little of the creature appears in the act, this alſo is a marvel. *What God doth more by a man, then man can do, whether in ſtrength or wiſdom, ordinarily aſſiſted, ſo much of a wonder ſhews it ſelf, in what man doth.* And therefore no man is ordinarily to attempt any thing beyond his ſtrength, for that is to tempt God, and to call him to work a miracle, at leaſt a wonder for us. *Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 131. 1.) *mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exerciſe my ſelf in great matters, or in things too high for me*: The word is, *in things too wonderful for me*, that is, I do not ordinarily put my ſelf upon things which are extraordinary, or beyond my ſtrength and parts. I meaſure my undertakings, and my abilities together, and would keep them even. I do not put God upon doing wonders every day; therefore I ſet my ſelf to thoſe things which are according to the line of man. If God call us to it, we may expect a miracle, but we muſt not call God to work miracles for us, or with us. *I do not exerciſe my ſelf in matters too high for me. Miracles or marvels are not every dayes exerciſe.* We ought rather to be above our work, or any of our deſignes, then below them; but we muſt be ſure they are not above us. *It is the ſafeſt and the holieſt way for man, in all his actions, to be upon a level. We cannot but diſpleaſe God, and hurt our ſelves, by clambering.* It is but ſometimes, that the Lord will work wonders to relieve our neceſſities, and help our faith; but he will never (unleſs in wrath) work wonders, to pleaſe our humors, or comply with our ambition. Hence obſerve,

Non me extuli ad ea quæ meas vires aut ingenium ſuperarent. Eliganter Theodoretus, *Meipſum metiabar, & quæ me excedũt, non aggreſſus ſum.*

First, When we ſee marvels done, we muſt acknowledge the hand of God.

Marvels are proper unto God, *Pſal.* 75. 1. *In that thy Name is near, thy wondrous works declare.* Wondrous works are an Argument that God is near. When wonders are among us, we may know God is among us. We may well apply that of the Pſalmiſt, to our ſelves, *Marvellous things hath the Lord done in our ſight*, *Pſal.* 78. 12.

Secondly, If God work marvels, and we believe him not, hath he not reaſon to marvel at our unbelief? Chriſt having wrought miracles to gain the belief of his Countrey-men, *marvelled at their unbelief*, Mark 6. 2, 6.

Unbelief is a great ſin at all times, but in a time when marvels are wrought for the cure and healing of it, unbelief is a marvellous ſin.

Will not Chriſt, think you, marvel at our unbelief, if we believe not after all theſe marvels? *Ye will not believe*, (ſaith Chriſt, and he rebukes the *Jews* for it, *John* 4.) *except you ſee ſigns and wonders*: Surely, if they were ſo charged, becauſe they would not believe, except they ſaw ſignes and wonders, how ſhall they be charged, who will not believe, when they ſee ſignes and wonders? eſpecially when God ſeems to work a wonder on purpoſe, that they might believe? *God loves and prizes the faith of man ſo highly, that ſometimes he bids a miracle for it, rather then go without it.* And ſurely now, as God hath done marvels, to abate the marvellous pride of the Adverſary, ſo, to overcome the marvellous unbelief of his own people: As hath been obſerved concerning the Lords ſwearing, *As I live, I deſire not the death of a ſinner*, &c: O happy man, for whoſe ſake the Lord ſwears! but O moſt unhappy, who doth not believe the Lord, when he ſwears! So we may ſay of the Lords wonder-workings; O happy people, for whom the Lord works wonders! but O moſt unhappy people, who believe not the Lord, when he works wonders!

(*a*) *Mirabilior eſt grani in terra multiplicatio, quã illa quinque panum.* Aug. tract. 24. *in* Johan. *Quicquid mirabile fit in mundo, profectò minus eſt quam totus hic mundus. Quamvis i[n] [illegible] miracula viſibilia naturarum videndi aſſiduitate vileſcunt, tamen cum ea ſapienter intuemur, inveſtigatiſſimis variſſimiſq; majora ſunt.* Aug. l. 5. De Civ. Dei. c. 12.

(*b*) *Permulta ſunt quæ admirari non ſolemus, propterea quod vulgò quotidièque fiunt. Re nova & inſolita commovetur animus.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *When God works extraordinary things for us, let not us stay in ordinary duties.*

Let our works have somewhat of a marvel in them too; let our repentance, and the change of our lives be marvellous; let our zeal and courage for Christ be marvellous; like that of the Apostles, who carried themselves with such heroical magnanimity, in the work of the Gospel, that when the High-Priest and Council (who had convented and threatned them) *saw their boldness, they marvelled*, saith the Text, *Acts* 4. 13. Let our love and thankfulness be marvellous, let us pray marvellously, and believe marvellously; Marvels done by God, should ever work faith in man; and faith in man, doth sometime work marvelling in God. Christ speaks with a kind of admiration to the woman of *Canaan*, *O woman, great is thy faith*, Mat. 15. 28. O that his people in this Nation, would set *Him* thus a wondring once more! *O* England, *great is thy faith in me! O* England, *great is thy love to me! O* England, *great is thy zeal for me! O* England, *great is thy repentance, exceeding glorious thy Reformation!*

I will close this Point with this one word. God hath begun to do so many marvels amongst us, that I verily believe, the work he is about, will end in a marvel too; and we in the close, shall be made either a *wonder of mercy, or a wonder of judgment to all the Nations round about.*

The fourth Attribute of the works of God, raises the glory of them all. They are innumerable.

He doth marvellous things **without number.**] The Hebrew, word for word, is, *Until there be no number*: *Without number*, may be taken three wayes.

First, Strictly and absolutely, for that which is without number; and thus there is no number innumerable. Things absolutely without number, would be infinite; but there cannot be two infinites: *As God is so one, and without number, that he is infinite; so, whatsoever could be so many, that it were without number, would be infinite too.*

Secondly, *Without number*, is that which man cannot reckon or cast up the sum of it (*Rev.* 7. 9.) *John* speaks of *a great multitude which no man could number*; as a small number is said to be such *as a Child may write*, Isa. 10. 19. So such a multitude as a man cannot write, notes the greatest number. And, *Heb.* 12. 22. There is mention made of *an innumerable company of Angels.* So God calleth *Abraham* out, and saith, *Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them*, Gen. 12. The Stars are innumerable, that is, beyond mans Arithmetick.

Thirdly, Things are said to be without number, or innumerable (in a more common sence) when they are a very great number; and so we find it frequent in Scripture; as that which is very high, is said to be as high as heaven: Thus the discouraging Spies describe the Cities of the *Canaanites*, to be *Cities walled up to heaven*, Deut. 1. 28. And when Seamen or Mariners are tossed upon the waves and billows of the Sea, they are said, *to mount up to the heaven, and go down again to the depths*, Psal. 107. 26. So here, a very great number is said to be innumerable or without number: In this third, and in that second sence, the great works of God are innumerable: God hath done so many marvellous things, as are impossible for man to reckon. His mighty works are not only beyond the writing of a child, but of the wisest men: The man who numbers most dayes, cannot number the wonders of God.

I shall note but one or two Instructions from this, That the works of God are innumerable.

First then, *What God hath done, he can do it again a second time, yea, a third, a fourth time, ten times, yea, ten thousand times over, if our necessity and his good pleasure meet together; for his works are innumerable.*

Eliphaz speaks not only of what God had done, but of what he can do; yea of what he is doing; *he doth innumerable marvels.* Some men can do great things, many have done great things, but they cannot do them without number; even a child may write all that any man can do, and at most, it needs but a man to reckon all the great things which all men have done. The hand of God shortens not in an eternity; but the hand of man shortens every day, sometimes in a day; and therefore he cannot do things innumerable: Man cannot do that to day which he could yesterday, whether we respect his civil abilities, or his natural. As old *Barzillai* said unto *David*, 2 Sam. 19. When the King invited him home with him, and offered him all the pleasures of the Court, *Can I any more hear the voyce of singing-men and singing-women? or can I any more taste what I eat and what I drink?* As if he should say, It is true, Sir, I have known the time when I could have made use of this Royal Favour, and have taken in the pleasures of your Court; I once delighted in Musick, and my ear could taste a sweet voice; I once delighted in rich fare, and my palat could taste meat and drink; but can I any more do thus? My natural strength is gone, my senses cannot renew innumerable acts of pleasure: *If Grace doth not wean us from the abuse, yet Nature will tire in the use of worldly comforts.* But the civil abilities of man wither sooner then his natural; you may see a man that hath done great things in a State or Commonwealth, come to him a while after, and he may say, *Can I any more do those things?* I am not what I was, my power is gone: But come to God, after he hath done this or that, and a thousand great things, he will not say, *Can I help you any more?* can I deliver you any more? can I destroy your enemies, can I discover their plots and counsels any more? Yes Lord, as thy works are unsearchable, so they are innumerable, and thou canst do them for evermore. The Lord saith sometime to a people, as he did to *Israel* (Judg. 10. 13.) in anger, *I will deliver you no more*; but he never saith to any of people out of weakness, *I can deliver you no more*, Psal. 78. The people provoked God, by making a question of this (*ver.* 20.) *Behold* (say they) *he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed* (we acknowledge that God hath done a marvel) *but can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?* surely, he cannot do this marvel also: what saith the Text? *The Lord heard this, and was wroth, so a fire was kindled against* Jacob, *and anger also came up against* Israel: What do you think, that I can do but one great thing? that I have but one blessing, but one deliverance, but one wonder? Know, that I who smote the rock, can provide you flesh; I, who gave you water, can give you bread; I, who have discovered one wicked plot of the enemy, can discover all; I, who have given you one victory, can give you a thousand; I, who have given you one deliverance, can give you innumerable deliverances; therefore take heed of setting bounds to God, *of limiting the Holy one of* Israel: *Men love not to be limited, but God ought not.* We at once provoke and dishonour the Lord, by thinking, that our wants can renew faster then his supplies; or that our innumerable evils shall not find innumerable good things to balance, or remove them, from the hand of God. We weary men, when we come often to them, to do great things for us; yea, to come often for small matters, will weary men: But we never weary the Lord by coming often; we weary God only, when we will not come often. How doth the Prophet, not only complain, but expostulate, because that unbelieving King *wearied God* (take it with reverence) *by not setting him awork*, and that about the hardest and most knotty piece of work that can be, the working of a miracle, and that, as hard a one as himself would ask, either *in the depth beneath, or in the height above. Is it a small thing with you to weary men, but will you weary my God also?* Isa. 7. 13. It is no weariness to God to do innumerable miracles for us; but he is weary when we will not believe he can do them. *To be distrusted the doing of one, is more laborious to God, then to do a million of miracles.*

To conclude this, take heed above all, that you limit not God in works of spiritual mercy; as, to fear to ask pardon of sin, because ye have asked it often. His great works of forgiveness are as much without number, as any of his works. *He multiplies to pardon*, saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 55. 7. And when the people of *Israel* had committed a new sin, it is admirable to read, by what argument *Moses* moves the Lord for pardon: It is not this (as usually with men) Lord, this is the first fault, Lord, thou hast not been often troubled to sign their pardon: But, *pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt until now*, Numb. 14. 19. As if he had said, Lord, because thou hast pardoned them so often, therefore I beseech thee pardon them now. It is a most

wicked argument to move our hearts to ſin, becauſe God will pardon often; but when we have ſinned, it is a holy argument to move God to pardon again, becauſe he hath pardoned often before; for he pardons without number.

Secondly, Seeing God doth innumerable great things for us, let us not be ſatisfied in doing a few things at the command, and for the glory of God; let us continue in acts of holineſs, charity, humility, zeal and thankfulneſs, without number; let us never ſtand reckoning our duties, when we hear the mercies of God are beyond reckoning. It is a noble rule in our friendſhip with men, *That Curteſies muſt not be counted*: I am ſure it is a holy rule in our obedience to God, *That duties muſt not be counted: God hath no need of any one of our good works; but he will not bear it, if we think we have done enow, or can do too many.* Let our hearts be like the heart of God, as he doth great things for us, let us do (in what we are able) great things for God, and good things for one another, without number.

So much in general of the proof of Gods power, by the *Greatneſs*, &c. of his works.

VERS. 10, 11, 12.

Who giveth rain upon the earth, and ſendeth waters upon the fields.

To ſet up on high thoſe that be low, that thoſe which mourn, may be exalted to ſafety.

He diſappointeth the devices of the crafty, ſo that their hands cannot perform their enterprize.

THis Context, from *v.* 9. to *v.* 17. contains the ſecond Argument, by which *Eliphaz* ſtrengthens his exhortation upon *Job* to ſeek unto God. The Argument ſpeaks to this effect; *He is to be ſought; and unto him our cauſe is to be committed, who is of abſolute power, infinite in wiſdom and goodneſs; But ſuch is God: Therefore ſeek to him, and commit thy cauſe unto him.* That God is of infinite power, wiſdom, &c. was proved in general at *v.* 9. by thoſe four adjuncts of his works, *great, unſearchable, marvellous, and without number.* And now, at *v.* 10. he begins his proof, by an enumeration of the particular effects of Gods power, wiſdom and goodneſs. The firſt inſtance is in natural things; *God doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.* And would you know what thoſe things are? You need not go far to enquire; there are things very near unto us, and very common among us, which yet, if they be well looked unto, will advance the power, wiſdom and goodneſs of God; *every ſhower of rain drops down this truth, that God doth great things; He giveth rain upon the earth, and ſendeth waters upon the fields.*

There is not any difficulty about the meaning of theſe words, which calls for ſtay in opening of them. Therefore in brief; The Hebrew word for *Rain*, in our Letters (*Matar*) is ſo near in ſound to our Engliſh, *Water*, that ſome think it a derivative from it.

By the Rain, we are to underſtand, not the ſhowers only which fall from heaven, but all thoſe bleſſings and benefits for the ſupport of our natural life, which are the fruits of rain: *He ſendeth rain* (as it were) on his errand, to bring or carry the bleſſings of plenty, and to drop fatneſs on the earth. He giveth rain to the earth, and then the earth giveth her encreaſe. The *Rabbins* have a ſaying, that *Rain is the Husband of the Earth*, becauſe thoſe ſhowers fœcundate the Earth, and make that *great Mother* of plenty, fruitful, in bringing forth all things uſeful and comfortable for the life of man.

He giveth Rain upon the face of the Earth (ſo the Letter of the Original) that is, upon the Earth; as the *face of Heaven*, and *the face of the Sea*, ſo the face of the Earth, is an Hebraiſm, for the Earth it ſelf.

It is ſaid in the latter clauſe of the verſe, that *he ſendeth waters upon the fields*: we muſt diſtinguiſh theſe waters from the rain, taking them for rivers and ſtreams of water, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *He cauſeth the Rivers to run among the hills*; and the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *Thou cleaveſt the earth with the Rivers.*

The word is of the *Dual Number* in the Hebrew, and therefore by ſome applied to thoſe two ſorts of waters; or to the waters above, and to the waters that are beneath; ſo the waters are diſtinguiſh, *Pſal.* 104. 3. We read of the upper waters; *Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, who maketh the clouds his chariot*; and of the inferior or lower waters, *Gen.* 1. 9. *The Lord ſaith, let the waters under the earth be gathered into one place*: and both are put together, *v.* 7. *God made the firmament, and divided the waters that were under the firmament, from the waters that were above the firmament.* So that the waters above, and the waters below, may both be here underſtood.

tur aquæ duplices, ſuperiores in cœlo, ut nubes, & inferiores in terra, ut mare, fontes & flumina.

It is added further, *He ſendeth waters upon the fields.* The word we tranſlate [*fields*] ſignifies any place without doors, as ſtreets and high-wayes; and becauſe *fields* are are without (*ſub dio*) covered only with the Canopie of the heavens, therefore we tranſlate, *He ſendeth waters upon the fields.* And it taketh in all ſorts of fields, whether till'd or untill'd; though ſome conceive, that here *Eliphaz* means, thoſe fields eſpecially which are untill'd, unſown, or unmanur'd; fields where men come not; namely, deſarts and wilderneſſes; as if he ſhould ſay, there is no place but God ſends waters to it: Hence the Vulgar read, in ſtead of *fields*, *all places*: *He moiſtens all places with waters.*

Nomen propriè eſt, ſed ſumitur ſæpe adverbialiter, pro foris & in univerſum pro loco exteriori. Merc. *Deſerta, horrida loca & mortalibus inacceſſa.* *Irrigat aquis univerſa.* Vulg.

Here firſt, Foraſmuch as an inſtance of Gods greatneſs, power and unſearchable wiſdom is given in the rain, a natural thing we may note,

That, *The common bleſſings of God are not diſpenſed without a ſpecial providence: Nature works not without the God of nature.*

He doth great things: And what? *He ſendeth rain.* The whole courſe of Nature moves, as it is turned by the hand of God, and directed by his counſel. It is not in the frame of Nature, as in many artificial frames, which being once ſet up, will ſtand, or go alone. When the Artificer hath made a Clock, and put it in frame, and hung on the weights, let him go whither he will, the Clock will go, and if there were room for the weights to deſcend, the Clock (continuing in frame) would go perpetually, though no hand helped or toucht it: But it is not ſo, in the frame and workings of natural things; God hath ſet all creatures in a frame, and curiouſly ordered them one within another, but there is no motion of the leaſt wheel, much leſs of the whole fabrick, without the ſpecial hand of God: When *Rain* comes, God ſaith, *go*; Rain is his gift, not the Clouds; the Cloud receives a Commiſſion from God to diſtill and diſſolve upon man: The moſt full, ſpongie Clouds diſtill no more then the Rock did in the wilderneſs, till the Lord ſpeaks to them. As, *When he uttereth his voyce, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he cauſeth the vapors to aſcend from the ends of the earth*, Jer. 10. 13. So, till he uttereth his voyce, not one ſingle drop of all that multitude of waters, falls from heaven, nor will thoſe vapours deſcend and return again to the earth, except he bid them.

Cum plenæ ſunt nubes, effundunt pluviam, non tamen abſque Dei juſſu. Druſ.

He giveth rain upon the earth.

Rain is the ſpecial gift of God. Special, not in that ſence as Grace is a ſpecial gift; for rain is a common gift; but ſpecial, becauſe it is that, of which, and about which, God takes ſpecial notice; as we read, *Amos* 4. 8. *I cauſed it to rain* (ſaith God) *upon one place, or upon one City, and not upon another.* There is a ſpecial diſcriminating work about the rain; it rains by appointment, not accident, upon one place, rather then another. And, *Iſa.* 5. 6. When God expreſſes diſpleaſure againſt his Vineyard (he ſaith) *I will command the Clouds, that they ſhall not rain upon it:* The Clouds are as vaſt Bottles full of rain, but they cannot unſtop themſelves, or let out one drop, until God himſelf commands them: *He melteth the clouds* (as it is ſaid in *Job*) *and then the rain falleth down. Thou, O God, didſt ſend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt confirm thine inheritance when it was weary*, Pſal. 68. 9. *How weary or dry ſoever the Earth is, unleſs God by a word broach thoſe veſſels of rain, the very inheritance of God cannot have a draught, no, nor a drop, to quench its thirſt.*

Therefore though rain be a common bleſſing in reſpect of all places and perſons; yet we ought to acknowledge a ſpecial hand in giving it. And this checks that natural Atheiſm, which reigns in their hearts, who think that they

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are beholding only to the motions of the winds, or change of the Moon for rain: And hence in times of drought, they look most when the wind will turn, or when the Moon will change. To confute this, the Prophet tells us by way of question, That as Idols cannot, so neither can the Heavens give rain, *Jer.* 14.22. *Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? Or can the Heathens give showers?* They cannot. Indeed the holy Prophet *Elias* speaks such language, as if he had carried the keyes of the Clouds at his girdle, or had been master of the rain, 1 *King.*17. 1. *As the Lord liveth, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.* But the Apostle *James* shews us what word this was, namely a word of prayer, not of command, *Chap.* 5. 17. Elias *prayed, and it rained not; again he prayed, and it rained.* All the power of man cannot prevail with the Heavens to rain, but the prayer of faith can prevail with the God of Heaven. *To send rain was the work of God, though it were at the word of a man.* They, who deny God in one work, will quickly deny him in another. And if we deny him in lesser, yea, the least of his works, in a drop of rain, we are in danger to deny him in the greater. *And they who deny God in his working, have but an easie step to the denyal of his being.*

This should teach us to walk in dependance upon God for all natural comforts, *He giveth rain.* All creatures drink from Heaven, that they may have their eyes and their hearts in Heaven. And if we must walk in dependance upon God for natural comforts, how much more for spiritual; if for the rain of the Clouds, how much more for the dews of his Spirit, and the rain of grace upon our hearts?

Further Observe, *It is a great, wonderful, and unsearchable work of God to send rain.*

For we must put the stamp of those four characters upon all these works; and so the rain is a great, a wonderful, and an unsearchable work of God: so great and wonderful, that (as hath been proved) no creature can communicate with God, or share in the honour of this work. The *Rabbins* have a saying, that upon every (apex or) *Tittle of the Law* there hangs a mountain of sence and holy Doctrine. We may say, that in *in every drop of rain there is an ocean of wisdom, of power, of goodness, and of bonnty.* If we study the ordinary works of God, we shall learn somewhat extraordinary in them; common things are full of wonder: And among all common things, none fuller of wonders than the rain: To illustrate this a little, in some particular considerations.

In ea mira Dei in suas creaturas spectatur benignitas, clementia simul & potentia, undè passim Prophetæ, et præsertim in hoc libro, quàdo focii Job, aut Job ipse, admiranda Dei opera proponunt, pluviam inter ea primo loco ponunt. Merc.

First, There is marvellous power seen, in causing and giving rain. Is it not marvellous power, which raises the vapours and holds (as we may so speak) *a Sea of water above the earth?* That such mighty Seas and floods of water hang in the Air, and thence are distill'd and sprinkled down (as *Job* speaks) in small drops, are acts and arguments of the wonderful power of God.

Secondly, Behold in the rain the wonderful goodness of God: who by this means cools and refreshes, nourishes, and suckles all earthly living creatures. When the ground is chapt and gapes, as it were with open mouth, the Lord opens these bottels, and gives it drink. And a miracle of goodness is seen in this, forasmuch as when his very enemies hunger, he thus feeds them; when they are naked he thus cloaths them; when they thirst, he thus gives them drink: *Matth.*5.45. *He sendeth rain upon the just, and upon the unjust:* They are maintained in life by the goodness of God, whose lives maintain a continual war against his Justice.

And as there is a wonder of goodness in giving rain for the use of evil men: So there is a wonder of bounty in sending rain upon those places, which are not of use to any man; *He sendeth waters upon the fields*, that is, all over the world. Hence when *Elihu* would set forth he marvellous power and bounty of God, he exemplifies it in this (*Job* 38.25.) *Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters, to cause it to rain on the earth where no man is, and on the wilderness, where there is no man?* Such an open and bountiful house doth the Lord of Heaven and Earth keep, that rather then any shall want, he will (in a sence) let the water run waste. God will not have so much as an herb or a plant to want: though there be no man to come there, yet the grass and shrubs shall have drink, and taste of his bounty.

And so legible is that goodness of God, which is written with drops of rain, so wonderful his power and bounty in giving rain, that the Prophet wonders at the stupidity of those men, who are not convinced of, and taught obedience by it. *They have not said, let us fear the Lord that giveth the first and the latter rain in his season* (Jer. 5.24.) As if he should say, what a strange thing is it that sweet showers of rain have not softened the hearts of men, into the fear of God, and made them blossom with, and bring forth abundantly the fruits of holiness? Hereupon it is very remarkable, how *Moses* makes this a motive to perswade the children of *Israel* to obedience in *Canaan*; because that Country stood in much need of rain, which *Egypt*, from whence they came, did not, *Deut.* 11. Therefore shall ye keep all the Commandments, which I command you this day, *vers.* 8. *For the land whither thou goest in to possess it, is not like the land of* Egypt, *from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, like a garden of herbs.* That is, *Egypt* being a flat plain Country all upon a level, when the land wanted moisture, thou didst not stay for, or depend upon the rain, to moisten it; but with thy foot, thou diggedst drains and madest sluces or water-courses, from the River side (meaning *Nilus* that famous River, which ran quite through *Egypt*) and that refreshed thy lands, and made them fruitful. *But* (*Canaan* is another kind of Country, *vers.* 11. 12.) *the Land whither thou goest in to possess it, is a Land of hills and valleyes, and drinketh water of the rain of Heaven. A Land which the Lord thy God careth for, his eyes are upon it,* &c. As if he had said, *Canaan* is not a Country capable of being watered by the foot, it is so mountainous and uneven. All the labour of hand or foot, cannot bring the streams upwards, to give thy thirsty land drink; it must drink from Heaven, or be burnt up and parcht with thirst: and if so, then, that must be the Lords care, his eye must observe, when thou wantest rain, his hand must make water-courses in the Heavens, and open the sluces and cataracts of the clouds for thee. *And wilt thou not serve this God in duty, who in bounty thus serveth thee,* and gives thee such a sensible evidence of his care over thee? The Apostle *Paul* preaches thus to the *Gentiles*, as *Natural Theology*, to leave them inexcusable, *Though he suffered all Nations to walk in their own wayes* (in that he gave them not either the light or restraint of grace, yet he did give them light and restraint too in nature) *nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from Heaven.* As if he had said, though ye have not had the rain of the word, yet the rain of the cloud, is such a Preacher of Gods power and goodness, as will leave you for ever without excuse. The Lord himself seems to glory in this, as one of the chiefest of his works: (*Job* 38.37.) *Who can number the clouds in wisdom? Or who can stay the bottles of Heaven?* I challenge all creatures to a competition with me in this. And again in his book (*Chap.* 36. 26.) *Elihu* lifts up the greatness of God in this act of his providence, *Behold God is great, and we know him not*; (wherein doth he instance his greatness?) it follows, *vers.* 27. *For he maketh small the drops of water, they pour down rain according to the vapour thereof.* Read parallel Texts, *Jer.* 10. 13. *Psal.* 65. 10, 11. *Psal.* 147. 8. So much of this first work of God, the *rain*; and of his power, wisdom, goodness, bounty, visible and apparent in it. Act. 14.

The second instance of Gods power and wisdom, *&c.* is in civil things, both in setting up and pulling down: First, in raising and setting up.

Vers. 11. **To set up on high those that be low, that those which mourn, may be exalted to safety.**

As if he should say, will you see another way, wherein God shews himself in his power, wisdom and goodness? It is in looking thorough the world, for such as are low, that he may lift them up: in espying out mourners and weeping eyes, that he may wipe them; and more, *exalt them to safety.*

Some of the Jewish Writers connect this verse with the former; making this as an effect of Gods bounty and wonderful work in sending rain. He sendeth rain and

showers upon the earth with such plenty of blessings; that by this means, many who were poor, low, mean and sad-hearted, may be set in high estate, and exalted unto safety. And there is a truth in it, Gods blessing upon the earth hath exalted many, that were low, to an high estate, to riches and prosperity.

But rather, we shall take it in a more general sence: And so *Eliphaz* in these words seems to comfort *Job* by giving him a hint, that though his estate was now very low, yet if he would apply himself unto God, as he had advised, *vers.* 8. *By seeking unto and committing his cause to him*, as low as he was, he might be *set high again*; and though he was now a mourner, sitting in dust and ashes, *He might be exalted to joy and safety*; for in this the power, wisdom and goodness of God are usually put forth and exalted.

The words carry an allusion to that custom of Princes and Magistrates, who sit in high places, upon erected thrones. As (*1 King.* 16. 19.) it is said of *Solomon*, that he built a magnificent Throne, or chair of State, which had an ascent of six steps to it, *he sate on high*. And the Prophet *Isaiah* (Chap. 6. vers. 1.) described the Lord in the same manner, sitting in state; *I saw the Lord* (saith he) *sitting upon a Throne, high and lifted up*. The pride and arrogancy of the *Assyrian* is thus expresst (*Isa.* 14. 13.) *He hath said in his heart, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars, I will sit also upon the Mount of the Congregation.* So that to *sit on high*, is as much as to be preferred or advanced, whether we respect honour or riches, dignity or authority.

To set on high those that be low. The word may note either those that are low in their own eyes, or those that are made low by others, active or passive lowness. Grace in our own hearts, causes the former lowness; and sinful oppression from the hand of others, causes the latter. The former are humble, the latter are humbled; the Lord sets both these on high. And,

Those which mourn. The Hebrew word signifies to be *black, dark* or *obscured*. And the reason why that word is borrowed to note *mourning* or *sorrow*, is, because sorrow causeth blackness, or darkness of habit and countenance; *mourning* and *blackness* usually go together (*Jer.* 4. 28.) *For this cause shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above shall be black*. And usually *Mourners* go in black, it is the die and dress of *Mourners*; as white is the colour of joy. *Let thy garments be alwayes white*, saith the Preacher to him, that is to eat his bread with joy, *Eccles.* 8. 8. Yea the very beauty of the face is obscured, the light of the countenance shadowed or clouded with tears and sorrow. Hence the *Seventy* render it, *They whose faces are sad or sowre*. It is the word used, *Matth.* 6. 16. *When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance*; It implies an affected, studied sadness, severity, austerity, grimness, gastliness, unpleasantness of countenance, proceeding from art, rather then from nature, much less from grace, as the words following imply: for they disfigure, vitiate or discolour their faces; corrupt or abolish their native complexion, so as it appears not what it is, that they may appear what they are not. *Hypocrisie can paint the face with black, as well or rather worse then pride with red and white*; and so doth real sorrow sometimes, whether for sin or outward affliction. *True passion in the heart, will dim the brightness and stain the beauty of the face.*

These Mourners shall be exalted to safety. The word which we translate *Exalted*, signifies to set in a high place, and in a place so high, that a man so placed, is beyond the reach of danger or the power of an adversary; it is to be set upon a place impregnable: Hence the word is used for a *Fort*, *Tower*, or *Castle*, because Forts and Towers, being places of defence, were for the most part built upon some high place, upon some rock or *precipice* (Prov. 18. 10.) *The name of the Lord is a strong Tower*; That is, we are as safe under his protection, as in a strong Tower founded on the steepest rock. And the Prophet describing the safety of him who walks uprightly, gives it in this word; *His place of defence shall be the munition of Rocks*, Isa. 33. 16. So *Jer.* 48. 1. *Misgab is confounded and dismayed*; that is, the high place or Castle of defence is dismaied: That word which is common to all places of safety, being supposed by our translators, as the proper name of some one place of more eminent safety.

Further, although this word (*Exalted*) implies safety, yet in the Original, we have two words, *They are exalted to safety*. He that is exalted (according to the sence of that word) is safe: But to shew the compleatness of their safety, safety or salvation is expressed: *He is exalted to safety with salvation*, or *he is safely exalted in safety*. It is a full and a perfect safety, to which God exalts his mourners and oppressed servants: They are as safe as salvation it self can make them. That's the force of the Hebraism. Εν δὲ Σω. ὁιν. Ενδυαδὶ.

From the former clause of the verse, we may Observe,

First, That, *advancement is the gift of God.*

He setteth on high those that are low, *Psalm* 75. 6, 7. *Promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South* (neither this way nor that way, nor any way of man) *but God putteth down one, and setteth up another*. When a man is advanced by the favour of a Prince, it is God that setteth him up. If a man be advanced by the vote of the people, yet it is God that setteth him up. Though a man be advanced by that, which may seem to have most contingency in it, *by a lot*, yet it is God that setteth him up, *Prov.* 16. 33. *The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. The Lord gives special direction to mans peradventure, and certainly determines, what we call contingent.*

Secondly Observe, *They that are low and mourning, are nearest to exaltation and safety.*

To be very low, it is to be (as it were) in a due posture and readiness to be exalted very high; *He setteth the low on high* (Luke 1. 51.) *he hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek*; or, hath exalted the lowly and the meek. We are not to understand it only of those, who are low, that is, lowly in mind (that frame of heart which is wrought above in the highest Heavens (is in this sence) lowest upon the earth) but we may understand it likewise of those, who are low in their estates; (many that are low in mind, may be high in place; a man may have abundance of humility in the height of outward eminency) therefore (I say) we must take in both; *Before honour goes humility, as a high mind before a fall*, Prov. 15. 33. And (*Psal.* 113. 6, 7.) *he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil, that he may set him with Princes*, &c.

And as it is in reference to particular persons, so to the Church and people of God in general; when they are low, then look for their raising up. The Scripture is frequent in this, *Deut.* 32. 36. *Psal.* 126. *Psal.* 102. 13. And in that notable place, *Isa.* 33. 9, 10. *The Ambassadors of peace weep bitterly, the earth mourneth, and* Lebanon *languisheth, and* Carmel *shakes off her fruit*, &c. All places, every creature is brought in, mourning with that mourning people. When it was thus with them, *Now will I arise*, (saith the Lord) *now will I be exalted, now will I lift up my self.* There are three *Nows* for it, to note *That* the special *Now* of their exaltation. But the Text saith, God would then be exalted. Was he brought low? God is alwayes alike exalted in himself, but he is not alwayes alike exalted in his people; therefore when he saith, *Now will I be exalted*; the meaning is, I will exalt this people who are low, that my name may be exalted and lifted up in the sight of all people.

Therefore our low estate should be so far from sinking, that it should lift up our faith in believing deliverance and exaltation. A low estate, is a great advantage for faith; faith hath surest-footing when we lie prostrate upon the ground: There faith stands firmest, because there faith meets with most promises: Promises are the foundation of faith. *The people of God have never so much of the word about them, as when they have least of the world about them.* The covenant sits closest to us, when we are divested of the creature. When the river is at the lowest ebb, we are sure the tide is coming in: the night is darkest a little before day breaks: when the dayes are shortest, and the winter sharpest, then the spring of mercy is at hand. As the highest flourish of ungodly ones, is the immediate forerunner of their downfal (*Psal.* 92. 7.) *When the wicked spring as the grass*, what then? would you know the meaning of it? The next words are a comment upon the former: *It is,*

that

that they shall be destroyed for ever: So, the lowest downfal of the godly, is usually the immediate forerunner of their advancement. *When the godly wither as the grass*, the interpretation of it is, *That they shall flourish for ever.*

Observe in the third place, from that word, *exalted to safety.*

That, *God can set his people on high, beyond the reach of all their Enemies.*

Beyond the reach of their heads or counsels, and beyond the reach of their hands and swords; *Isa.* 33.16. *The munition of rocks shall be their place of defence*: He setteth them so high, that no ladders can be found long enough to scale these rocks, nor any Artillery or engine strong enough to batter them down; and least any should say, but we will hold the siege, till we starve them out; it follows in the Text, *Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.* I remember a story in *Alexanders* wars, that when he came to besiege the *Sogdians*, a people who dwelt upon a rock, or had the literal munition of rocks for their defence, they jeered him, and asked him whether his Souldiers had wings or no? Unless your Souldiers can fly in the Air, we fear you not. It is a most certain truth, when God exalts a people, he can set them upon a rock, so high, that unless their adversaries have wings, and those more then Eagles wings, to soar higher then God himself, they are beyond annoyance. He carries his own upon Eagles wings; what wings then must they have, who get above his people?

There are these two things, about which the thoughts of men are most conversant: The one is, to be set on high; the other is, to be set in safety. They both meet in the mercy here promised: *He setteth on high those that are low*, that's their honour: *He exalts them to safety*, that's their comfort. The first thoughts of men are spent to get a great estate, but their next thoughts are to keep and protect it. Experience hath often shewed us the men of the world, rolling riches and Titles together into a mountain; but it hath been a mountain of snow, one hot day hath melted all down. The mountain of outward blessings, upon which God raiseth his people, shall be, if he pleaseth, like a mountain of Adamant, which cannot be melted, or like mount *Sion*, which cannot be removed. A high place is seldom a safe place: *All high things are tottering, and the more high, the more tottering.* Then how unsearchable is the wisdom, how great the power of God, who can set his people very high, and yet very safe? who can make a man stand as firm and steady upon the highest pinacle of honour, as upon a level ground, or in a valley of the lowest estate and condition. *He exalts to safety.*

Nutare solent excelsa omnia.

And hence we may draw down a difference between Gods exaltation of his own people, and the exaltation of his enemies and wicked ones. Wicked men are oft-times exalted, and God exalts them, though they know it not: but how? He exalts them to a high place, but doth he exalt them to a safe place? No, the Psalmist, after a long temptation, concludes, *Thou hast set them in slippery places, thou castest them down into destruction; how are they brought into desolation, as in a moment!* Psal. 73. 18, 19. *Haman* was exalted high, but not in safety: Many are exalted, as *Jezabel* exalted *Naboth*, high among the people; but it was to stone him rather then to honour him. It is said of *Pharaoh*, he lifted up the head of his chief *Baker*, he lifted up his head, out of prison indeed, but he lifted up his head to the gallows also; he lifted him out of prison, but it was unto his death. Such is the lifting up of wicked men, they may be set on high, but they are never set in safety. How many have we seen suddenly advanced, and as suddenly depress'd? *We are never safe, but where God sets us, or while God holds us in his hand.*

Fourthly Observe, *It is a wonder, a wonderful work of God, to exalt those that are low, and set mourners in safety.*

The 107 *Psalm*, is a Psalm recounting the wonderful works of God; *O that men would praise the Lord for his wonderful works!* is the burthen of that holy song. And all those wonders conclude in this, *vers.* 39, 40. *Again, they are minished and brought low, through oppression, affliction and sorrow:* what then? *He powreth contempt upon Princes, &c. yet setteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock.* How wonderful is this, that the Lord will give Kings for the ransom of his people, and to raise his poor, will pour contempt upon Princes? the highest must down, rather then his low ones shall not be set on high. There are four things which encrease this wonder, and make it exceeding wonderful. First, These poor have no strength (*Deut.* 32. 36.) *He sees that their strength is gone.* Secondly, Many times they have no hope, no faith; *When the Son of man comes, shall he find* (among low ones) *faith* (this faith to be exalted) *upon the earth? Luke* 18.8. Thirdly, They have many enemies, subtil enemies, powerful enemies, confident enemies, enemies (above hope) arrived at assurance, that they shall keep poor ones at an under for ever. *Lord* (saith *David*) *how many are they that trouble me?* So many they were, that he could not tell how many. Fourthly, They are supposed to have no friends, none to appear for them. *Let us persecute and take him* (say they) *for there is none to deliver him.* Psal. 7. Not a man, no nor God, as they conclude; *They say of my soul, there is no help for him in his God.* I need not say, it is a wonder to exalt a people, upon all these disadvantages; the fact speaks: should you see a man trod upon the ground, and many there holding him down, one by the arm, another by the leg, a third laying a great weight upon his breast; were it not a wonder to see this man to rise up, and rescue himself from them all? Thus it is with the Church and servants of God, when they are low, all the world is upon their backs; the world of wicked ones hang about them, one with his power, another with his policy, all with their utmost endeavours to hold them down; yet the Lord sets them on high, who were thus low, and exalts them to safety, who were thus in danger. *Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare his wonderful works to the children of men.*

And this is further cleared in the twelfth verse.

He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hand cannot perform their enterprise.

As if *Eliphaz* should say, Would you know, how God exalteth his people, and setteth them in safety? 'Tis true, they have many enemies, many that plot and devise evil against them, but the Lord breaks their plots, he out-plots them; **He disappointeth the devices of the crafty**, &c. And as this is a proof of the former, so it is a further instance of Gods wonderful works. The first was in natural things, *sending rain*; the second and third were in civil things; first, *exalting his own people*; and secondly, in defeating the policies and power of their adversaries: so then, this twelfth verse, may be taken either as it hath reference to the former, or as a further instance of Gods wisdom and power.

He disappointeth the devices of the crafty.] Or, *he defeateth the purposes of the subtil* (so Mr. *Broughton* readeth it) *that their hands can bring nothing soundly to pass.* The Apostle in 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. sets the holy stamp of divine authority upon this whole book, by quoting this or the next verse, as a proof of his doctrine: *For it is written* (saith he) *He takes the crafty in their own counsel; He disappoints the devices of the crafty*, (saith *Eliphaz*) and, *He takes the wise in their own craftiness.*

He disappointeth.] The word signifies to break, to break a thing to pieces: and by a metaphor, to disappoint or to defeat; because if an engine or instrument, with which a man intends to work, be broken, he is disappointed of his purpose, and cannot go on with his work: So here, *He breaks the devices of the crafty*; the crafty frame very curious engines and instruments, they lay fine plots and projects; but the Lord breaks them, and then they are defeated or disappointed. The word is often used for breaking or making void the law, as *Psalm* 119. 126. *Ezra* 9. 13. because wicked men, as much as in them lies, would defeat and disappoint the holy purpose and design of God, in giving those laws. They would repeal and abrogate the laws of God, that they might enact their own lusts. They would do that by the will of God, which the Lord doth with their wills, *Null and disappoint it.*

The devices.] The word which we translate, *devices*, signifies, not barely *cogitation*, or *thinking*, but *excogitation*, or, *studied thinking*; not only a natural thought, but an artificial thought, or thoughts made up and formed after long debate of a business in our own breasts: This is properly expresst by *devising*. Those Pools of water in *Cant.* 7. 4. are called from this word, *The pools in Heshbon*. Some take *Heshbon* for a City (*Numb.* 21. 26.) and so it notes the place where those pools were. Others translate it thus *, *Pools artificially made*: And we may observe much skill and curiosity used in making pools and water-works. So (*Exod.* 28. 8.) the holy Girdle which was made for the High-Priest, is called a *curious girdle*; it is from the same Root; because that girdle was made of cunning work, and exquisite embroideries. So that this word notes, the very *spirits and quintessence* of sinful wit, drawn out for the devising of evil. In *Psal.* 119. 59. *David* useth this word, to shew the accurateness and holy curiosity which he used, in surveying his own life, *I thought on my wayes*, that is, I studied my self and my works with greatest exactness, to find out every error or failing, or to frame my wayes to a hairs breadth (if it were possible) according to rule; which answers the Apostles phrase, *Eph.* 5. *of walking circumspectly or exactly. Grace will vie it with sinful craft, for exactness; that will make as curious works or devices in holiness, as the other can in wickedness.*

Of the crafty.] Here the workmen are described as well as their work; their works are *devices*, and the workmen are *crafty*. *As the man is, so is his employment; we are in working as we are in being; Devices are the proper trade of crafty ones.* The Original word sometimes imports holy wisdom, and sometimes corrupt and sinful wisdom. We read it in a good sence (*Prov.* 1. 4.) & (*Prov.* 22. 3.) *The prudent man* (a man that hath holy craft and skill in him) *foresees the plague, and hideth himself.* Again, *Prov.* 8. 12. *I Wisdom dwell with Prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.* But usually the word is taken in an ill sence, for subtil and sinful craft, for craftiness and subtilty to do mischief; therefore the Vulgar translates it, *He disappointeth the devices of the Malignants*; noting, that it is not any honest craft, but a malignant craft, by which the counsels and devices of these men are contrived or acted (*Psal.* 83. 3.) that word is used, *They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones*: And, *Gen.* 3. 1. *Now the Serpent was more subtil then any beast of the field*; The word properly signifies to be *naked*; and by a Metaphor, to be subtil, crafty, nimble; because men, who (as tumblers, racers, rope-dancers) are to do a thing nimbly and speedily, subtilly and slily, often strip themselves of all, but will never cumber themselves with many cloaths. We know that craft always puts a cloak or veil upon actions, and walks in a disguise; yet because the crafty man is so nimble to turn and wind, and varie himself a thousand wayes, both for the plotting and acting of his designes, therefore he is elegantly named from *nakedness*. Hence also in the Greek Language, the word which signifies any nimble acting or exercising the mind or body, as also places and Schools where those exercises were performed and taught, is derived from nakedness, or being naked. And it is observable, that our first parents *Adam* and *Eve*, before they sinned, are called (*Gen.* 2. 25.) *naked*. And the Serpent in the very next verse (being the first of the third Chapter) is called *subtil*, by one and the same word. Our first Parents were naked outwardly (*Innocency needed none, and Glory shall need no cloathing*) they were also (in opposition to evil) naked inwardly; they were simple, plain-hearted, without any cloak of malice or wickedness. But the serpents nakedness, notes only a fitness, slyness, readiness or activeness to do evil; for he was double-cloath'd with craft, cloak'd and hooded with subtilties, to act mischiefs unseen. The naked crafty ones of the Text, are the seed of the Serpent, his children, and therefore they bear their Fathers name. The *Chaldee Paraphrast* tells us, that the crafty ones here meant by *Eliphaz*, were especially the *Egyptians*, who when they would oppress the people of God, said, *Come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply*, Exod. 1. 10. *A crafty man is one, who hath not alwayes more understanding then his neighbour, but ever less conscience: Yea, how great soever his wit is, his conscience is so little, that it never stands in his light, whatsoever he is doing. He takes measure of his actions, not by what he ought to do, but by what he would have done*; and yet he can seldom do what he would, for the Lord disappoints the devices of the crafty so, that as it follows in the Text,

Their hands cannot perform their enterprize.

To every business, two things are required, Invention and Action; or, the electing of means, and the pursuing of the end: The former is *Head-work*, and the latter is *Hand-work*. The hands are the instruments of action, as the head is the instrument of invention and consultation. These crafty heads were at work before, now their hands go to it; What they devise craftily, they would act industriously; but they cannot, *Their hands cannot perform their enterprize.*

The word which we translate *Enterprize*, signifies *Being*, as also reason, wisdom and virtue; because wisdom, virtue, and reason, are, as it were, the being, stability and permanency of things; and therefore, as in the Hebrew, this word signifying wisdom and virtue, is derived from a root which notes *Being*. So the word signifying wickedness and folly, is derived from a root (as some Criticks observe) which notes only a negative, or a not *being* of any thing; because wickedness is nothing, or it is good for nothing: *Those things which want wisdom and reason, are as if they were not, and shortly will not be at all.* Hence some render the words thus, *Their hands cannot perform their wisdom*, that is, they cannot bring to pass that enterprize, which they had determined and laid (as themselves conceived) with so much wisdom and strength of reason. Mr. *Broughton* to the same sense; *Their hands bring nothing soundly to pass.* And the *Chaldee* exemplifies it in the *Egyptians* before-mentioned, who as the holy story informs us, could not effect that which they had consulted with those depths of policy, and principles of sinful wisdom, the destruction of the children of *Israel*. Here then we may observe,

תושיה *a radice* אש *ut* אין *ab* און *denotat essentiam, rationem, sapientiam, virtutem semper permanentem aliis rebus in mundo transeuntibus. Hinc significat, omne quod cum intellectu & ratione fit; & hic specialiter pro eo, quod quis sibi statuit ut faciat quo finem optatum assequatur, etiam in malum.* Mer.

First, That, *The wisdom of natural men is nothing but craft or wit to do wickedly.*

The Prophet *Jeremy* gives us this character of them, *They are wise to do evil* (Jer. 4. 22.) And to be wise to do evil, is very ill wisdom, the worst wisdom, indeed meer folly; *better to be a fool, then to be but so wise*: And these have it from their father, it dwells and is derived in their blood, *They are the seed of the serpent* (as was toucht before) and his subtilty was made the instrument of the greatest evil, the tainting of that first created innocency, and the overthrow of man. Now, they are called the serpents seed, because they are like the Serpent; the Serpent was the subtilest of all the beasts of the field, and *these* (as Christ speaks of the men of the world) *are wiser in their generation then the children of light*; yet it is but in their generation, and their wisdom lasteth but for their generation, if it last so long: *Elymas* (Acts 13. 10.) being charged to be *full of all subtilty and mischief*, is called at the next word, *child of the Devil*. Subtil to do mischief, is the *Genius* or disposition of the Devils children; and they shall have the Serpents, the Devils portion: For as the Serpent, who was once the subtilest of all the beasts of the field (applying his subtilty to mischief) became the most cursed of all the beasts of the field; so they, who are thus the subtilest among the children of men, shall be the most cursed of all the children of men, *Jer.* 18. 18. We find crafty men in consultation, and under a curse; *Come* (say they) *let us devise a device against* Jeremiah, *and let us smite him with the tongue. Let us devise devices*; it is the same word in the text, but doubled for greater *emphasis*: These were their crafts-masters. To *devise devices*, notes more then ordinary skill in that *black art*; as to *work a work* (John 6. 28.) notes great industry and intention of the mind in working. Some play their works rather then work their works: *I must work the works of him that sent me*, saith our Lord Christ, *John* 9. 4. None ever laboured as Christ laboured, therefore his was *working a work*. As (I say) *to work a work*, notes great industry in working; so *to devise a device*, implies much cunning and skill laid out in devising. Now as these men would be witty above others, in devising evil, so they are cursed above others in bearing evil. The Prophet gives them their load, *v.* 21, 22. *Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and*

and pour out their blood by the force of the sword, and let their wives be bereaved, &c. And it is most just, that they should be deepest in the curse, who are deepest in such craft: for the truth is, that, *Every sinful act, the more skill there is in it, the more sin there is in it, it is best to be a dull-head, a very bungler in doing mischief: Wit commends and sets off other things, but it makes sin the more sinful and deformed.*

Secondly Observe, That, *Satan makes use of subtle, crafty men, and abuseth their parts for his own purposes.*

He disappointeth the devices of the crafty. God never disappointeth those whom he sets a work: If God disappoint the devices of men, these devices were not of God: Satan sets those a work, whose work God spoils. The Lord loves to break Satans engines, tools and instruments. Christ came to destroy the works of the Devil, both his works within us, and his works against us. All Satans works and workmen shall rue it, when Christ pleases. And here we see whom Satan sets a work, even men of the finest wits, of the most reaching brains, of the deepest judgments and richest endowments; these he draweth into his pay, and makes serviceable for his ends; that's Satans design; such as are amongst men, as the Serpent amongst the beasts, the most subtil of all, these Satan makes use of: The deep policy of an *Achitophel*, the *Great Oracle* of his times for counsel, he desires to improve against a *David*; the high parts and learning of a *Julian*, he desires to improve and boyle up against the Christians; such a one will not only *Fire and sword, but set hard to jear and wit them out of the profession of the Gospel.*

Philosophi hæreticorũ Patriarchæ. Tert.

And it is observable, that the seeds of the greatest heresies and errors, that ever poyson'd the spirit of man, or vext the Church of God, have been sown in that rank soyl, the wits of Philosophers. Which gave *Tertullian* occasion to call Philosophers, *The Patriarks of Heretics*, or *The Patrons of Heresies*: They were men of high conceits and apprehensions; and in those fertile and rich grounds, Satan with great success cast the tares of error. When Christ came into the world, he had most opposition among the crafty *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; and *Herod* the Fox (as Christ himself calls him for his subtilty) was a notorious instrument of Satan, to hinder the receiving of Christ. Our Lord Christ sometimes chooseth the simplest, the meanest, the plainest men, fisher-men, to do his work. But Satan chooseth the subtilest he can find in *learned throngs*, to send of his errand. The reason of this difference between Christs choice and Satans, is, *Satan cannot make a* Mercury *out of every block*; he is not able to give a man understanding, wisdom or abilities for his work: neither can he increase or improve any mans parts and gifts; he must have instruments ready to his hand, he can but put them forward and tempt them on. He will give such as are strong and crafty, many motives to serve him, but he cannot furnish them with strength or craft to serve him. But Christ can give gifts to men, which they have not, and raise the parts which they have. *He can make himself a Mercury, a messenger out of any block. Christ can send a fool of his errand, and cause him to do it wisely*; he can cause the stammering tongue to speak plain, and the plainest man to speak the highest Rhetorick. When a *Moses* complains of a *slow tongue*, he can say, *I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say*, Exod. 4. 12. If he finds us not fit to do his business, he can make us fit. If Christ please, he can make a man Master of his trade, before, or as soon as ever he is a servant to it. Thus, without the wisdom of the world, Christ overcomes the wisdom of the world: And *by the foolishness of preaching* (as men count foolishness) *saveth those that believe* (1 Cor. 1. 21.) *The foolishness of God is wiser then man*; that is, those instruments which Christ imployes, how foolish soever men account them, shall foil all the wisdom of man.

Therefore let no man boast of his natural *parts*, unless they be spiritualiz'd, and resign'd up (for such Christ commonly uses, though he can make use of others) to the service of Christ. Consider to whom you are instrumental, with your parts and knowledge. All wit out of Christs work, degenerates into craft, and wisdom into wickedness. It is Satans work to solicite the learning of men (even as an Adulterer sollicites the beauty of women) that he may commit folly with it, and beget some monstrous birth of mischief and villany.

For, when such appear on Satans side, they are a great credit to his cause, and by the reputation of their learning and parts draw others to it. Do ye not see (will he suggest to inferior ones) such and such wise, learned men, go this way; such learned Divines, such learned Lawyers, such deep Politicians, and do you scruple? and how many have been caught in this snare, and led aside by the noise of their abilities, whom Satan abuseth to his own side? what, such wise men, such learned men, think thus, and do you simple ones stand off? Hath he not reason then to say of wise men, (as it was once said of one) *Seeing ye are such, I wish you would come over to me*: and to brag of them, as much as ever that *Persian* Monarch did of *Themistocles*, whose revolting to him from the *Græcians*, transported him so, that he broke suddenly out of his sleep with these words, *I have* Themistocles *the* Athenian. I remember what *Augustine* observes (it is a very remarkable passage) in an Epistle to a young Noble man of great learning, who it seems had been sometime his Schollar. *Augustine* having received from him a Poem or copy of accurate verses (but perceiving that he abused his wit to wantonness or useless curiosity) returns him answer to this effect, *I have read this Poem, and I know not with what verses, or with what lamentation to mourn over it; because I see an excellent wit sparkling in every line, but such an one, as I cannot dedicate unto God.* A little after he thus exhorts him, *Give thy self unto my Lord, who hath given thee this excellent wit: if thou hadst found a golden Cup, what wouldst thou have done with it? Wouldst thou not have given it to some good publick use? God hath given thee a golden wit, thy understanding is a golden Cup, and wilt thou let thy lusts drink out of it, or wilt thou drink thy self to the Devil in it? I tell thee thus much, the Devil would fain make thy wit his ornament, and thy parts, the credit of his Court and Cause.* Satan serves himself of the best wits, and his is the worst service of wit: Such shall be paid at last with crying, *We fools. Of all fools, the knowing wise fools will be in the saddest condition.*

Cũ talis sit utinã noster esset.
Habeo Themistoclem Athenienſem.
Auguſt. Ep. 39. *ad Licentiũ Juvenẽ nobilem & doctum.*
Da Domine meo te, quia tibi illud donarit ingeniũ, &c.
Accepiſti à Deo ingeniũ ſpirtualiter acutũ, & mentem niſtiras in libidinibus & in illo Satanæ propinas tecum? Ornari abs te abolus quivit.

Observe Thirdly, *The crafty are full of hopes, that their devises will succeed; and full of trouble, because they succeed not.*

Otherwise it could not be said, that *God disappointeth the devises of the crafty*; *Disappointment implies expectation*: And it is no affliction affliction to miss of that which we never looked for. These thought all sure. These doubted not to over-wit and over-power all, at last. This brought them somewhat beyond hope, even to the borders of assurance; at least it so endeared them to their hopes, that they would rather hazzard their souls, then lose their plots; they were burthened to be delivered. Having *conceived mischief, they were in travel with iniquity*, Psal. 7. 14. As the Lord suffers his own people to fear much, that when deliverance comes, their joy may be full: so, he suffers wicked men to hope much, that their sorrows may be full, when they cannot be delivered. A woman forgets the pains of her travel, for joy that a man child is born into the world; and these men shall remember the pains of their travel, for sorrow that a monster (such are their designs) is not born into the world: *That their mischief comes not (in their sense) to light, leaves them in desperate darkness.*

Fourthly Observe, *What such plot and devise, they labour to act and effect.*

Their hands cannot perform their enterprise; which intimates, that they put their hands to the work, as well as their heads; as soon as they have laid their plot, they fall to acting. We should in this imitate our enemies, not to stand devising and consulting, this is a good way, and t'others a good way, and then do neither, or then sit still and moulder away in expectation; love to, and zeal for Christ, and his truth, should render us as full of action, as of invention; of execution, as of design.

Fifthly, Though they did attempt it with their hands, yet they could not effect it with their hands, *their hands did not perform their enterprise.*

Hence

Hence note, That, *Crafty men may deviſe ſtrongly, but they have not ſtrength ſufficient to accompliſh their devices.*

The *Phariſees* after all their confederacies againſt Chriſt were forc't (without any rack, but that of their own conſciences) to make this confeſſion, *Joh.* 12. 19. *Perceive ye how we prevail nothing.* At this day they have many fine devices and *Idæas* ready framed in their heads, but the hand ſhakes, *They cannot perform their enterpriſe.* They want not counſel, nor craft, nor skill, nor will, nor deſires, nor endeavours, only they want God with them. Hence it is, that though they gather very proper materials, and lay very ſtrong foundations, yet they cannot rear up their building. And in the iſſuei (*Luke* 14. 29.) *All that behold it ſhall mock, ſaying, Theſe men began to build, and were not able to finiſh*; it is the main work of God to ſtop evil men in their works: what they would do, he ſaith they ſhall not; and what they would not do, he ſaith they ſhall: *Pharaoh* deviſed a deviſe againſt the children of *Iſrael*, but his hands could not perform his enterpriſe. *Haman* deviſed a deviſe againſt the Jews, but his hands could not perform his enterpriſe. *Achitophel* gave crafty counſel againſt *David*, but his hands could not perform his enterpriſe. *Herod* the Fox plotted againſt Chriſt, to hinder the courſe of his *Miniſtery* and *Mediatorſhip*, but he could not perform his enterpriſe: Tis ſo all along, therefore (*Pſal.* 2. 1.) it is ſaid, *Why do the Heathen imagine a vain thing*; a vain thing, becauſe a thing ſucceſleſs, their hands could not perform it; it was vain, not only becauſe there was no true ground of reaſon, why they ſhould imagine or do ſuch a thing; but vain alſo, becauſe they laboured in vain, they could not do it. And therefore it follows, *verſ.* 4. *He that ſitteth in the heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord hath them in deriſion.* The Lord ſees what fools they are, and men (yea themſelves) ſhall ſee it. The Prophet gives us an elegant deſcription to this purpoſe (*Iſa.* 59. 6.) *They weave the ſpiders web, but their webs ſhall not become garments, neither ſhall they cover themſelves with their works.* As if he had ſaid, they have been deviſing and ſetting things in a goodly frame to catch flies; they have been ſpinning a fine thread, out of their brains, as the Spider doth out of her bowels, ſuch is their web: but when they have this web, they cannot cut it out, or make it up into a garment. They ſhall go naked and cold, notwithſtanding all their ſpinning and weaving, all their plotting and deviſing. *The next broom that comes will ſweep away all their webs, and the Spiders too, except they creep apace. God loves and delights to croſs worldly proverbs, and worldly craft.*

How many viſible demonſtrations hath there been of this in all ages! How many cunning, but ruining devices have been unacted! They went thorough the *Head-work*, but they could not get through *their Hand-work*. We may ſay, as in the Pſalm (76. 5.) *None of the men of might have found their hands:* The men of craft found their heads, but the men of might (bleſſed be God) have not yet found their hands, to execute up to the height of the deviſers, either, wit or malice.

In this we ſee the glorious prerogative of God. How many thouſand, thouſand, thouſand thoughts do men looſe! The thoughts of many years are loſt in a moment: *God never loſt, nor never ſhall looſe one thought.* And therefore *David* put theſe two together in a breath. Having ſaid (*Pſalm* 33. 10.) *The Lord bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought, he maketh the devices of the people of none effect:* In the next verſe, he ſubjoyns, *The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.* And as the counſel of the Lord ſtands, ſo he cauſeth the counſel of thoſe to ſtand, who conſult for him: *He confirmeth the word of his Servants, and performeth the counſel of his Meſſengers*, Iſa. 44. 26. So that their hands ſhall perform their enterpriſe, as the Lord encouraged his ancient people; (*Zach.* 4. 9.) *The hands of* Zerubbabel *have laid the foundation of this houſe, his hands ſhall alſo finiſh it:* And again, *Chap.* 8. 13. *Fear not, let your hands be ſtrong.* As if he had ſaid, *Fear not, go on with your work; for your hands ſhall perform their enterpriſe*; you ſhall not be beaten from your work, neither ſhall ye work in vain. *The Lord himſelf hath no barren counſels, and he makes all the counſels which are for him, bring forth in their due time, deſired fruit, the longed for and beloved iſſue.*

Laſtly, Obſerve, That, *It is a great and wonderful work of God, to diſappoint the devices, and ſtop the enterpriſes of crafty men.*

Eliphaz put this among the wonders of God. This is reported in a way of admiration concerning God (*Iſa.* 44. 25.) *He fruſtrates the tokens of the lyers, and maketh diviners mad; he turneth wiſe men backwards, and maketh their knowledge fooliſh.* The wiſdom of God is moſt ſeen, in defeating the wiſe; as the power of God is moſt ſeen, in overthrowing the ſtrong. While we conſider that *Theirs*, are ſecret devices, and that they are ſubtil devices; that they have many devices, and that they have many wayes to bring theſe devices to paſs; it cannot fall below a wonder in our thoughts, that their thoughts, or devices are not accompliſhed. Therefore the Pſalmiſt concludes (*Pſalm* 124.) *Unleſs it had been the Lord, who was on our ſide, &c. we had been ſwallowed up quick, and taken in their ſnare.* As if he had ſaid, if we ſhould have had any leſs then God, to help us, we had been gone; all the world could not ſave us. To paſs through a place full of gins, and ſnares, and pits, ſet and made on purpoſe to take a man, and that man not taken, is marvelous in our eyes. Thus it is with the people of God, they walk among ſnares and traps; *The trade of moſt wicked men, is to be Trap-makers, Snare-makers, if not Sword-makers againſt the Saints of the moſt High.* They meet with devices upon devices, and plots upon plots; now that God ſhould diſappoint all theſe, and exalt his people to ſafety, in the very face of death and dangers, how admirable!

But ſome may object, Yet we ſee that, at leaſt ſome of theſe plots are not diſappointed, at leaſt ſome of theſe devices take, and we have ſeen bloody hands performing their enterpriſe.

I anſwer, in a word, Firſt, this Text and the obſervation bottom'd upon it, are to be underſtood of what is often done, not ſtrictly of what is alwayes done. The Lord very frequently *diſappoints the devices of the crafty.*

But ſecondly, Their very ſucceſs is a diſappointment, and their proſperity is their curſe. For their cauſe is under a curſe, and ſo are their perſons, when both ſeem moſt ſucceſsful. If outward judgments ſlay not wicked men, *Their proſperity ſhall*, Prov. 1. 32.

Thirdly, All the ſucceſs, which the devices of wicked crafty ones have, tends to the fulfilling of Gods counſels, more then their own: So that, though it be to the eye, or in the letter, ſucceſs to them; yet in truth, and upon the matter, it is ſucceſs to the cauſe of God: Craft prevails no further, and no longer on earth, then ſerves to accompliſh the counſels of Heaven, and fulfil what infinite wiſdom hath deviſed. Therefore when you ſee any devices of the crafty thrive, know, that God is ſerving himſelf upon them, and that they are but acting, *What his hand and counſel hath determined before to be done*, Act. 4. 28. As Chriſt himſelf overcame by dying, ſo do they who are Chriſts, they have ſucceſs in all their diſappointments; and theſe are diſappointed in all their ſucceſſes, and die while they overcome. No ſinful deviſe of man ever did, or ever ſhall prevail, beyond a contribution to the juſt and holy purpoſe of God. All their prevailings are diſappointments, who intentionally oppoſe, though they really accompliſh the good pleaſure and purpoſe of God.

VERS. 13, 14, 15, 16.

He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs; and the counſel of the froward is carried headlong.
They meet with darkneſs in the day time; and grope in the noon-day as in the night.
But he ſaveth the poor from the Sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.
So the poor hath hope; and iniquity ſtoppeth her mouth.

IN theſe four verſes *Eliphaz* proceeds in, and finiſhes the former Argument, by a further and fuller clearing of the power and wiſdom of God, in catching and over-matching crafty ones, in their wayes and counſels. Having ſhewed before (in *verſ.* 12.) that their devices are diſappointed; he ſheweth now, that they are intangled in their devices. There, we ſaw they could not perform their enterpriſes,

priſes, and here we ſhall ſee them ruined in their enterpriſes. *It is a ſore trouble to ungodly men, when they cannot do the miſchief, which they intend to others; but it is a far ſorer trouble, when their counſels recoyle, and when their own projects promote their own ruin: when their own actions effect that, which they had rather die, then ſee done; when that miſchief falleth upon their own heads, which they intended others:* That's their calamity in this Text.

He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs.

These wiſe men, are no better then the crafty, before mentioned, for we ſee their wiſdom is but craftineſs. We had the *Crafty* in the former verſe; and here we have their *craft* or *craftineſs*. The Apoſtle in *1 Cor.* 3. 19. quotes this Text of *Eliphaz*; *The Wiſdom of the world is fooliſhneſs with God*; for it is written, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs*. The Greek word there uſed hath ſomewhat more in it, then the Hebrew word, opened at *verſe* 12. For it notes a fitneſs for all purpoſes, a dexterity to ſerve any turn, be it never ſo ſiniſter or evil. Such a man can be on any ſide, and is for any purpoſe, you will turn him to. A godly man hath but one work, and he can do but one work, that is, one work in kind; every work he doth (as a godly man) hath a ſtamp of goodneſs, or godlineſs, of holineſs, or juſtice upon it. But theſe crafty ones are for any work; for various works, you may turn them looſe to any ſervice; they are ready to do good for a need, to ſerve their own ends, and they will not ſtick at any evil, for their own ends; their bias is not within them, but upon them, and they can clap it to which ſide they pleaſe, or may be moſt pleaſing to, or taking with others; yet this *Turn-coat Craftineſs* ſhall not ſerve their turn; for ſaith the Text, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs*.

παγουργία ἀπὸ παγοῦργος, *quaſi dicas, ad quodlibet opus promptus, qui dexteritate ingenii valet ad quodlibet agendū.*

The word which we tranſlate [He taketh] is very ſignificant. It imports a taking by force or ſtrength, and it imports a taking by ſkill or ſtratagem. God will have them both wayes: If theſe cunning men work by their wits, *He can take them:* The Lord hath more ſtratagems to take them, then they have had to take others: Or if they work by power and by plain ſtrength, *he can take them.* The Lord hath more ſtrength to take them, then they have had to take others.

לכד *cepit, apprehendit de loco aut urbe, expugnavit inopinata & violenta expugnatione.*

The word is applied to the taking in of Cities or Forts, places ſtrengthned both by Art and Nature, and to the taking of them (which includes both ſences) either by ſiege or ſudden ſurpriſal. Read *Numb.* 21. 32. *Joſh.* 6. 2. *Deut.* 2. 34. And ſo the ſence may be, that, although theſe men think, they have ſo intrenched and fortified themſelves by their wits, policies and counſels (as it were in a ſtrong City or Caſtle) that they ſeem impregnable, and laugh at all oppoſite power: Yet, then God beſieges, batters and takes them preſently; he takes in, and ſlights their works with eaſe; he levels to the ground their great thoughts, even the high Tower of their imaginations: That may be the force of the word [*He taketh* them.] For as every natural man labours to ſecure himſelf and his luſts, againſt the power of the word of God, by carnal reaſonings and pleadings for them: All which the Apoſtle calls *ſtrong holds* (2 Cor. 10. 4, 5.) *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty through God to the caſting down of ſtrong holds.* Now (I ſay) as natural men ſecure themſelves (as it were in ſtrong-holds) by their carnal reaſonings; ſo wicked Politicians think to ſecure themſelves, and fortifie their deſigns by plots and platforms of crafty counſel. But as God in the miniſtry of his word, caſteth down all the arguments, which a man frames in his heart, to protect his luſts: ſo the Lord in the adminiſtration of his providence, throws down all the fortifications, which crafty men frame in their hearts, to protect their lawleſs practiſes, *and takes them in.*

Secondly, The word may imply the taking and binding of a man in bonds or in fetters. *He takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs*, that is, he takes and binds them as with a chain, or he fetters them in their own craftineſs. So the word is uſed (*Prov.* 5. 22.) *His own iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelf, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſins.*

Thirdly, The metaphor may be carried in alluſion to Hunters of wild beaſts, or to bird-takers; who ſet nets and gins, traps or toyls to take them: Theſe wiſe, crafty men, are cunning hunters; their trade and buſineſs is, to ſet nets to catch, and toyls to intangle; they dig pits, and lay ſnares, for others to fall into: So the Prophet deſcribes them (*Jer.* 5. 26.) *They lay wait as he that ſetteth ſnares, they ſet a trap, they catch men:* But at laſt, *God takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs*; that is, the pits they have digged, and the ſnares they have laid, and the nets they have ſet, ſhall catch themſelves.

Fourthly, The word is applied in Scripture, to a taking or a diſcovery by lot: So (*Joſh.* 7. 15.) the rule was thus given, *He that ſhall be taken with the accurſed thing, ſhall be burnt*; and verſ. 18. *Achan was taken*, that is, taken by a lot, the lot diſcovered and catcht him. *Achan* had hid the Babyloniſh garment, and the wedge of gold ſafe enough, as he thought: and one would have thought, that in ſuch a multitude, in ſuch an huge hoſt and throng of people, he might have been hidden too; but God ſends a lot, and takes out *Achan* from the midſt of all the multitude; he calls him out by name, this is the man. There may be a like meaning and uſe of the word in this place, *He taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs*; that is, men who think to ſhelter themſelves amongſt the multitude, or to walk in the clouds of craft: men who hide and ſhadow themſelves from the eye of the world, as if none ſhould ſee who they are, or what they do, even theſe God will take; he will direct a *divine lot*, one time or other, to apprehend and lay hold on them; he will diſcover *Achans, the troublers of his* Iſrael, in their wicked counſels; and bring to light their *ſtoln wedges of Gold, and their Babyloniſh garments.*

There is one thing further conſiderable, from the ſence of that Greek word, which the Apoſtle uſes (*1 Cor.* 3. 19.) *He taketh the wiſe*, &c. The Apoſtles word ſignifies properly to take, or a taking with the hand, a laying hold upon one that is flying: as in a battel, when the enemy flies and runs, the purſuer takes hold of him, and will not let him eſcape. And ſo the ſence is, that though theſe crafty ones think to make an eſcape, when they have done miſchief, to out-run the juſtice of men, yea, to get out of the reach of God; *yet he taketh them*, as flying enemies or malefactors, that would make an eſcape; he catcheth them by the back, takes them by the ſhoulder, layes faſt hold on them, ſo that they ſhall not be able to get away. *He takes the wiſe in their own craftineſs.*

δεσμεύω ἀπὸ δεσμοῦ, *Manu capio & firmiter teneo; fugientē in cursu deprehendere manuq; injecta capere ita tenere quicquam nō elabatur unde δεσμὸς manipulus pugillus.* Eraſ.

Laſtly, It is obſervable, that the Propoſition [in] he takes them [*in*] their craftineſs, may be underſtood inſtrumentally: and ſo it is as much as the Propoſition [*by*:] He takes them in, that is, he takes them by their devices; that Prepoſition is often put inſtrumentally (*Gen.* 32. 10.) *Jacob* ſaith, *In my ſtaff I paſſed over this* Jordan; we tranſlate, *with my ſtaff, or, by my ſtaff I paſſed over this* Jordan. And ſo *Heb.* 1. 1. *God who at ſundry times, ſpake in time paſt to the Fathers* [*in*] *the Prophets*, ſo the Greek; we tranſlate, *by the Prophets*, becauſe they were the means or the inſtruments, which God employed to ſpeak by. Thus here, *He takes the wicked* [*in*] *their craftineſs*; or [*by*] their craftineſs; their craftineſs is the very means and inſtrument by which God apprehends and takes them. So much for the opening of this firſt clauſe.

Pleroſq; aſtus illorū facit Deū inſtrumentū ad arcendū ab iis quæ cogitans. Rab. Lev.

We may Note hence, Firſt, That, *No wiſdom or craftineſs of man, can ſtand before the wiſdom and power of God.*

He not only takes them in their fooliſhneſs, but in their craftineſs; he ſtayes not till they begin to dote and do weakly, before he takes them; but when they are in their height of wit, and in the depths of worldly wiſdom and policy; when they put forth the quinteſſence of craft, and give counſel like *the Oracle of God* (2 Sam. 16. 23.) then God takes them; *He takes them in their craftineſs.* (Prov. 21. 30.) *There is no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the Lord.* No counſel againſt the Lord. How is it then ſaid in *Pſalm* 2. *The Kings of the Earth ſet themſelves, and the rulers take counſel together, againſt the Lord, and againſt his anointed?* There are many counſels oppoſed againſt the Lord, but there are none prevailing againſt the Lord. The meaning of that holy Proverb, is, That no wiſdom, not the moſt ſublime and refined wiſdom; no counſel, not the moſt *Machivilian* or *Achitophelian* counſel can prevail againſt the Lord. Men, uſually catch others, when they are at a fault, or take them upon ſome ad-

advantage and error in their counsels. *Most successes of men, are made out of the slips and defects of their adversaries*: They take, upon mistakes, either in advising or acting; but after the most deliberate and grave debates, the choicest and best grounded resolves, the Lord takes them. For (1 *Cor.* 1.25.) *The foolishness of God is wiser then man*: And if the wisdom of man cannot match the foolishness of God, how shall it contend with the wisdom of God? as the Prophet *Jeremiah* speaks in another case, *If I have run with footmen, and they have wearied me, how can I contend with horses?* So, if these men are not able to deal with the foolishness of God, how shall they deal with his wisdom? Not, that there is any, the least imaginable foolishness in God; for as *God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all*; *so God is wisdom, and in him there is no foolishness at all*: but the Holy Ghost speaks thus, to put God as low as the foolishest thoughts of man can put him, which is to think there is foolishness in God; yet in that, or then, he is wiser then they.

Secondly Observe, That, *God turneth the counsels of wicked men against themselves.*

He taketh the wise, not only in, but by their craftiness; He beats their own weapons against their heads; He wrests their weapons out of their hands, and with them wounds their hearts. Those counsels and contrivements, by which they thought to secure themselves, are their destruction. He destroyes them in their counsels, and by their counsels.

Qui scripserunt de arte militari, dicunt summũ genus dimicandi, quoties calcato umbone adversarii, se in hostilem clypeũ erigit miles & ita contrastantis vulnerat terga. Serv. *in Virg. Æn.* 11. * *Rem meditandã summè.* Jun. *in loc.*

This wonderfully magnifies and commends the wisdom of God: He doth not trouble himself to devise some new way or stratagem to take these men, but he makes use only of that which they have devised. It is the noblest way of conquering, to conquer our enemy with his own weapons; such was that victory of *David* over *Goliah*; and that was a type of Christs victory over the Devil and all spiritual wickednesses. And such will his victory be over all the wickednesses of this world. *The Lord is* (*and shall ever be*) *known by the judgments which he executeth*; *the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands*, Higgaion Selah *. Mark and meditate, *Psal.* 9. 16.

It was the plot of Satan, to tempt man, who was made in the image of God (for the doing of good and a voiding evil) to desire to be as God, knowing good and evil; he tempts man to affect *a Deity, or a Godship*; and this plot was, to ruine man below the beasts, by aspiring to an equality with God; or to make man less then he was made, by seeking to be as much as his maker. Now the Lord takes (as it were) this weapon out of Satans hands, and destroyes him by it. Satan would have man aspire to be a God, that he might be ruined; and God becomes man, to ruine Satan: *This was the greatest counterplot that ever was.* God took the Devil in, and by his own craftiness. As if God had said, *Satan, Thou shalt see what a fine device thou hast devised, I will meet thee in thy own way, and turn it upon thee. Thou wouldst have man become God, so to ruine him; now God shall become man, and by that I will at once ruine thy counsels, and repair the broken condition of man.*

Joseph's brethren, had a device to hinder his Prophecies, and make his dreams but phancies; *Joseph* dreamed that his brethren should worship him; they sell him for a captive into *Egypt*: what more opposite to honour among his brethren, then captivity among strangers? yet this device effected what they opposed; *Joseph* was exalted in *Egypt*, and his brethren press'd with want, worshipt or bowed unto him for bread.

The *Jews* took counsel to kill Christ, and what was the motive? A wise man among them suggests this fear; *If we let him thus alone, the* Romans *will come and take away both our place and Nation* (Joh. 11.48.) But the Lord took the wise in this craftiness; for that cruel act in killing Christ, brought the *Romans* upon them: *The time cometh* (saith Christ, he foresaw what would come) *that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side; and they shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation*, Luke 19.43,44. And thus as the Psalmist (*Psalm* 64. 8.) prophesied of his enemies; *They made their own tongues to fall upon themselves.* A strange thing, that the fall of a mans tongue should oppress his body, and whole estate; yet so it is, the weight of a mans tongue falling upon him, crushes him to powder. The seventh *Psalm* is the paraphrase of this point (*vers.* 14.) *He travelleth with mischief, and hath brought forth a lie*; (that answers *vers.* 12. *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty*:) *He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made*; *his mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealings shall come down upon his own pate*: Here is *vers.* 13. made good, *He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.*

How doth this aggravate the sorrows of crafty men? It is sad enough with the crafty, when they are taken by the craftiness of other men; *That any man out-wits them, is enough to put them out of their wits*: How then will they live, being taken and ensnared by their own wit; when they see themselves accessary to their own undoing; when they see they have pull'd down their estates with their own hands, and have put fire to their own houses? As it greatens the sin, so it greatens the punishment, when a man falls by his own hand; self-murder is the most sinful and most bloody murder. Neither is their sin or punishment less, who die by the craftiness of their own heads, then theirs, who die by the violence of their own hands.

This is a visible truth among us, and he that runs, may read it in the book of Gods latter providences: I believe our age will be able to make as fair a record of this point for posterity, as any that hath passed, if not as all that have passed for many generations. *He takes the wise in their own craftiness*: *And*, as it follows in the Text.

The counsel of the froward is carried headlong.

The counsel.] There is somewhat further in that: not only are their devices disappointed, but their counsels; Counsels are the results of serious and sad debates: *Craft is of one, counsel of many heads laid together. Counsel is the extract of reason, both about what we are to do, or leave undone*: These counsels God carries head-long: there is nothing more opposite to counsel then precipitation. Long deliberation should go before determination, but their counsels shall be carried head-long: They shall either be overhasty in counsel, or their counsels being solemnly enough setled, shall be over-hastily acted: *Rash, headlong execution may be as dangerous as rash, headlong resolutions.* But whose are these counsels? The same mens still, though under another notion. *The counsel of the froward.* Before we had, *the devices of the crafty*; and again, *the craftiness of the wise*; now here, *the counsel of the froward.* The Spirit of God varies words, but the men are the same. *There is scarce variety enough of words in all languages, to express the variety of wickednesses, which one heart speaks.* The Hebrew word in the root, signifieth to wrest or to writhe a thing, or to wrest and turn a thing as wrastlers their bodies. Hence by a Trope, it is translated often to wrastle; because a cunning man in wrastling, turneth and windeth his body, and works himself in and out every way, to get an advantage of his adversary any way; therefore your cunning-headed men, your crafty men, are fitly presented under this word; they are like wrastlers, who turn and wind themselves in and out, and lie for all advantages; or, as we speak, *they lie at catch.* A man knows not where to have them, or what they mean, when they speak plainest, or swear solemnest: when we think we see their faces, we see but their vizards; all their promises and performances too, are under a disguise. Such cunning gamesters or wrestlers are here intended. One of the Patriarchs had this name (*Gen.* 30. 8.) *Naphtali*, and the reason is there given, for (saith his mother) *with great wrastlings have I wrastled with my sister, and I have prevailed*; *and she called his name* Naphthali: The Hebrew is, with wrastlings of God, that is, divine and vehement wrastlings; as if she had said, I have used great and earnest endeavours, both with God in prayer, and all other means, as a wrastler, by might and slight, to obtain these blessing (given before to my sister) and now I have prevailed. And it is observable, that the Hebrews call an extraordinary *cunning wrastler*, *Pethalthol*, which is this word doubled in the lat-

Consilium est aliquid faciendi non faciendive excogitata ratio, Cicer. *l.* 2. *de Invent.*

נפתלים *è radice* פתל *Et in niphal* Niphtol, *tortus, distortus per Metonymiam, luctatus fuit; qui enim luctatur cum aliquo, eũ varie torquet donec eum vincat & prosternat. Notatur hic vel talis versutia, qua quis facilè alium aliumq; habitum induet, ut nec facile caveri, nec facile teneri possit in actionibus suis: vel ad luctatores alluditur.* Cocc.

פתלתל *Nomine litterisque geminatis, ut insignis vastities, & quasi duplicata caliditas significetur. Consortuplicatio.*

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ter syllable; because he is a man of double or extraordinary skill in wrestling, the word is doubled; and so it expresses one that is *double witted, or that hath craft enough for two or three, though not honesty enough for one.* And this word is applied to the Lord himself (*Psal.* 18. 26.) *With the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward*; that is, if men will be winding and turning, and thinking to catch others, or over-reach the Lord himself, with tricks and turnings of wit, the Lord will meet and answer them in their own kind, he can turn as fast as they, he can put himself into such intricate Labyrinths of infinite wisdom and sacred craft, as shall entangle and ensnare the most cunning wrestler or tumbler of them all. He will *Cretize the* Cretians, *supplant the supplanters of his people.*

Utitur hoc verbo, ut indicetur maxima quædam & invicta Dei quasi distortio, implicatio, & sacra callidi as adversus pravos, callidos, distortos, q. d. *adversus* Cretenses *cretizat Deus, cum vafro luctatore, vafrè luctatur Deus, supplantatores supplantat.*

Olympiodorus *vertit* πολυπλόκους, *homines varios, nodosos, implicatos, intricatos.*

Some of the Greeks interpret this elegantly by a word in that Language, noting a thing that hath many knots, folds or twists, wreaths or plaits in it, as plaited hair, or a folded garment, thereby shadowing out men like a Serpent, of knotted, twisted, enfolded spirits, men who wreath and plait their actions so closely and artificially, that few can understand or tell what to make of them, or where to find them: The counsels of these cunning, intricate, froward men,

Are carried headlong.] It is very observable (*Isa.* 44. 25.) how the Prophet threatneth, that the *counsels of the wise shall be turned backward*; and here, their *counsels shall be carried headlong*, that is, forward. God hath wayes of all sorts to cross ungodly policies; he turns them sometimes backward, and sometimes forward; by both, or either they are disappointed: Counsels are turned backward, when the event is quite cross to the design; or the motion of things, to the resolutions of the mind: As if a man purposing to go Eastward, should be turned about (he knows not how) with his face into the West: Counsels are carried headlong, when they go too fast forward, and make so much haste on in their way, that they tire and are out of breath, or stumble, and break themselves, before they can attain their journeyes end.

Omne consilium captum in festinatione est stultitia. Rab. Sol.

נמהרה *à radice* מהר *accelerare, festinare, atque inde præcipitem esse, imprudentem, stultum; nam prudentia tranquilitate & deliberatione gaudet. Bruta impetu ruunt in suam pestem.* Coc.

The Original word signifies to hasten, and thence to be precipitate, rash or foolish in counsel; *Prudence uses to go softly, wisdom keeps a kind of state in her pace, and loves to go step by step, not headlong.* A prudent man sets his head before his feet; his head goes before his feet in consultation, but he loves to go upon his feet, not upon his head, in action. It is the curse of the froward, their counsels are carried headlong; when they should go steadily upon their feet, they run upon their heads, or run their heads against the next wall. The meaning (in a word) is, *They shall make more haste then good speed*; or, they shall go so fast to their ends, that their end shall be their undoing. As the Lord (in mercy) makes the *rash understand*, so (in judgment) he makes the *understanding rash.* As this is here threatned, so the former is graciously promised (*Isa.* 32. 4.) *The heart of the rash shall understand knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerer shall speak plainly.* When the Prophet would shew, how great a blessing God poures out upon his people by Christ, he thus expresses it; *Christ, who is the wisdom of the Father, causeth the heart of the rash to understand knowledge*; it is the word of the Text, the heart of those who naturally *run headlong* upon businesses, who have no steadiness nor stableness in their understandings, shall be stayed and balanced with wisdom and gravity from above. Christ will take them off their hurrying pace, and teach them to go and do, to advise and act with sobriety and deliberation. The latter clause of the promise joints fitly with this; *And the tongue of the stammerer shall speak plainly*; such as stammering is to speech, the same is rashness to counsel: A man that stammers, huddles his words; he that hath an impediment in speech, speaks fastest; and and because he cannot speak one word well, he speaks many words at once. This haste is his hinderance; in making so much haste to speak, he cannot speak at all; therefore we usually advise stammerers, to take heed of speaking hastily, that they may speak plainly. The Prophet joines these sweetly, to note the compleat abilities of a Christian, *The rash shall understand, and the stammerer shall speak plainly*; that is, he shall advise judiciously, and speak elegantly; depth of wisdom, and sweetness of elocution shall meet in him, though before, rude and rustick. But the counsels of the froward, though men of great parts, and filed speech, *shall be carried headlong.* Hence observe,

Ut blæsitudo linguæ accelerationem habet cum hæsitatia, ut nihil expeditè pronunciare possit, & quo magis properat eo minus profecit, citata illa lingua volubilitate. Ita qui intelligentia festinus est, nullum profert utile & integrum consilium, sed manca omnia & inutilia. Bold

Hasty counsels are successeless counsels.

Haste in counselling, alwayes makes waste; and so doth hastiness in acting. Haste in either, may hurt, as much as sloth; though usually we may divide the miscarriages that are in the world, between hastiness in counsel, and slowness in action. I know not which is the greater prejudice to any honest design, to be quick in concluding, or to be dull in executing. *They who will not take time to consult about what they do, may have time enough to repent of what they have done. And they who will not take the time for doing what they consult, lose all the time they took for consultation.*

Secondly note, That, *God disappoints evil counsels, as by stopping them, so by putting them forward.*

The Princes of Zoan *are become fools* (saith the Prophet) Why? *The Lord hath mingled a perverse Spirit* (or a headlong, vertiginous spirit) *in the midst thereof, and they have caused* Egypt *to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit,* Isa. 19. 13, 14.

Verse 14. They meet with darkness in the day-time, and grope at noon-day, as in the night.

Here is a further aggravation of the misery upon crafty froward Counsellors, *They meet with darkness in the day-time.* Some understand this for the darkness of trouble, falling upon these men suddenly in the day of their prosperity; as if the Holy Ghost had said, *In the day-time of their greatest glory, when they think their Sun at the height, then they are clouded and overcast, they meet with the darkness of sorrow,* and are benighted in a moment, *Amos* 8. 9. *I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day*; (it is meant of great afflictions, as the next words interpret) *And I will turn your feasts into mourning.*

Diurnæ tenebræ ignorationem denotant rerum clarissimarum.

But rather by *darkness in the day-time*, we are to understand the *ignorance of those things which are very plain and clear. They meet with darkness in the day-time*, that is, they are puzled to find out and discover those things which are as clear as the light. God often sends such a spirit of giddiness and blindness upon the counsels of his enemies, that easie things are hard, plain things, obscure; and common questions, very riddles to them.

They meet with darkness in the light.

There is a double light necessary to the seeing or discovery of a thing. First, An external light. And secondly, An internal light. External light is of the *Medium* or place in which we see; the air must be enlightned: Internal light is of the Organ or instrument by which we see; the eye must be enlightned. Though there be much light in the air, a blind eye sees nothing. So the meaning of these words may be explained [*They meet with darkness in the day-time*] though these men have outward light, though the business they are about, be plain, a *clear case* (as we speak) yet they are so darkned in their understandings, that they cannot apprehend or make it out. The Idol-Shepherd is threatned with this wo, *Zech.* 11. 17. *The sword shall be upon his arm* (his power shall be broken) *and upon his right eye* (his understanding shall be darkned). *The Idol-Shepherd shall be like an Idol, having eyes, but seeing not*; he was before a *blind Seer*, sinfully, and now he shall be a *blind Seer* judicially. As that *wicked Priest*, so these *wicked Politicians* in the Text, shall have a sword upon their right eye, a wound in the best of their understandings, which shall make them also *blind Seers*, and make the light to be darkness round about them. The latter clause clears it farther.

They grope at noon-day, as in the night.

Palpare in meridie, cæci periphrasis. Cæcus tentat & palpat manibus an tequam pedem figat.

To grope at noon-day.] is the description of a blind man. For what the eye is to a man that sees, the same is the hand to a man that cannot see. A man that sees, looks his way, but a blind man feels it; his hand is instead of an eye, to direct his way. They, as it is said in the Text, *grope at noon-day, as in the night.* When the *Sodomites* were smit-

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Prabent manus cæcis oculorum usus & ministeria. San. *in* Isa. 59.

ten with blindneſs, *they wearied themſelves to find the door of* Lot's *houſe*, Gen. 19. 11. And when the *Philiſtines* had put out *Samſon's* eyes, and he was brought to make them muſick at their Feaſt, he ſaid to the Lad that held him by the hand, *Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the houſe ſtandeth, &c.* He could not ſee them, but he could grope ot feel them out. *Groping* infers either want of light, or want of ſight. Theſe in the Text had light enough, therefore the failing was in their eyes; *They grope at noon-day.* This fearful judgment the Lord threatens againſt his own people, *Deut.* 28. 29. *Thou ſhalt grope at noon-day, as the blind groperh in darkneſs.* And it was brought upon them, as themſelves lamentably complain, *Iſa.* 59. 10. *We grope for the Wall like blind men, and we grope, as if we had no eyes, we ſtumble at noon-day, as in the night.*

In that it is here added as a further aggravation of the judgment of God upon theſe, who thought themſelves Eagle-eyed, all eye, and all the world blind, *That they ſhall meet with darkneß in the day time*; we may obſerve,

Firſt, *It is a ſore judgment not to ſee when there is light.*

It is like ſtarving at a full Table, or periſhing with thirſt, in the midſt of a Fountain. It is a great judgment not to have light to ſee by; but it is a greater judgment not to ſee by the light. It is a great judgment to a people, when they have not the light of the Goſpel; *when Chriſt, who is the light*, is not ſhiningly preached among them; but if light ſhine, if Chriſt be preached, and a people ſee it not, this is a far greater judgment. The poor Gentiles, before the light of the Goſpel came to them, *ſate in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death*; and in that eſtate, they could only (like blind men) grope after God; as the Apoſtle elegantly expreſſes it, *Acts* 17. 27. *He hath made of one blood all Nations of men, &c that they ſhould ſeek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him.* The Gentiles were inexcuſable, if they did not find the Lord by feeling after him in the dark: what then are they, who find him not by ſeeing in the light? The Apoſtle ſhews us them as *as loſt men, and blinded by Satan, to whom the light of the glorious Goſpel doth not ſhine, when it ſhines* (2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.) To grope in Goſpel-light, to be in darkneſs, when truth is at her high-noon, is as the ſhadow of death. It is the worſt of ſins to ſin againſt the light; and it is the worſt of judgments, not to ſee the light, by which we may avoid ſin. The heat of divine wrath breaks out in this, when abuſed light is puniſhed with want of ſight, or when light is ſent, and eyes taken away (*Iſa.* 6. 9, 10.) When the Prophet brought killing light to the *Jews*, he ſaith, *See ye indeed, but perceive not*, that is, becauſe ye have had light, and would not ſee believingly; now ye ſhall have light which ye ſhall not ſee, perceivingly, or diſtinctly; as the man in the Goſpel ſaw, but he did not perceive; when he ſaw men walking as trees, he had not a diſtinguiſhing eye, or a *diſcerning ſence*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 5. 14. But why ſhall they not perceive, when they ſee? The Prophet tells us, becauſe the Lord had ſaid, *Shut their eyes, leſt they ſee.* The work of a Prophet is to open eyes; but when men wilfully ſhut their eyes, then God ſhuts them judicially, and blinds them with light. The Apoſtle quoting this text, *Acts* 28. 27. expounds it ſo, *Their eyes have they cloſed, leſt they ſhould ſee*; for this, God cloſed them, that they could not ſee. *Paul* was preaching, and he preached *Chriſt* the true *light*, *the Son of righteouſneſs*: Behold the miſery ſpoken of in this Text, *They met with darkneſs in the day-time. This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs rather then light.* Why love they darkneſs? becauſe they ſee not the light; And becauſe they ſee not the light, therefore they cannot love it. It is impoſſible to ſee the light, the beautiful face of the Truth, as it is revealed in Chriſt, and not to love it. A Heathen ſaid, if virtue (much more if Goſpel-truth) were ſeen, every eye would be taken, and every heart led captive by it. A great part of the world hath not this light to ſee, and the greateſt part of thoſe, who have this light, ſee it not. They muſt needs meet with darkneſs, who are darkneſs, in the day-time; and they muſt grope at noon-day, as in the night, who are in the night. If men hear the Law and the Teſtimony, and neither ſpeak nor do according to that wotd, it is (as the Prophet gives the reaſon) becauſe there is *no light in them*; or as the Hebrew, *No Morning in them*, *Iſa.* 8. 20. Till the *day-ſtar ariſes in our hearts*, the day before our eyes, is night.

Secondly obſerve, *Plain things are often obſcure to the wiſeſt and moſt knowing men.*

They grope at noon-day, as in the night.] That which a man may ſee with *half an eye* (as we ſay) theſe men, who think themſelves *all eye*, cannot ſee. Men of acute and ſagacious underſtandings, men quick-ſighted like Eagles, prove as dull as Beetles. Owles and Bats ſee in the dark, better then in the light; and (in a ſence) it is true of theſe, they can ſee about the works of darkneſs, but the light of holineſs and juſtice, they cannot ſee. The reaſon is given in that of Chriſt, *The light that in them is darkneſs*; no wonder then, if the light without them be darkneſs, if the inward light, the light that is in them, be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs? ſo great, that it quite darkens the outward light. *Inward darkneſs is to outward light, as a great outward light is to a ſmall one* (in regard of our uſe and benefit) *it extinguiſhes and overcomes it.* Hence theſe men cannot ſee the plaineſt object in the cleareſt light. *Light ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehendeth it not*, *John* 1. 5.

Chriſt breaketh forth into a vehement gratulation to his Father (*Mat.* 11. 25. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto Babes.* The wiſe and prudent could not ſee ſo much as children. They were ſo wiſe in their own conceits, that the could not conceive the things of God. As it is in ſpiritual's, ſo likewiſe, in regard of civil counſels. God hides wiſdom from the wiſe, and underſtanding from the prudent. They ſhall not be able to do or ſee, what a child might have done or ſeen; they ſhall do ſuch things, and ſo abſurdly, that a child would not do them. Myſteries are plain, when the Lord opens, and plaineſt things are myſterious, when he ſhuts the eyes of our underſtanding.

Thus far *Eliphaz* hath ſet forth the power and juſtice of God againſt ſubtil, crafty counſellors. Now he ſhews the oppoſite effect of his power and goodneſs.

Verſe 15. **But he ſaveth the poor from the ſword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.**

But he ſaveth the poor.] It is very obſervable in Scripture, that uſually, if not alwayes, after the mention of judgment and wrath upon the wicked, the mercy, goodneſs and love of God unto his own people, are repreſented; leſt any ſhould think, that judgment is a work wherein God delighteth, he quickly paſſeth from it, and concludes in what *he delighteth*; *Mercy. As he retains not his anger for ever towards his own people*, ſo he ſtayes not long upon the deſcription of his anger againſt his enemies, *becauſe he delighteth in mercy*, Mich. 7. 18. *A ſubject of mercy is moſt pleaſant both to the hand and pen of the Lord. He wiſhes rather to write in honey then in gall, and to draw golden lines of love, then bloody lines of wrath.* Satan is a Deſtroyer, and he doth nothing but deſtroy and pull down. The Lord deſtroyeth, and he pulleth down; he defeats and diſappointeth, but he hath another work beſides; he ſaves and delivers, he builds up and revives the hopes of his people.

He ſaveth the poor.] Theſe *poor are Gods poor.* Some may be called the *Devils poor*, for they have done his work, and he hath given them poverty for their wages. Satan will give all his hirelings full pay, when they die; *the wages of ſin is death*; while they live, many of them receive only the *Earneſt* of it, poverty and trouble; all that are poor, and not under the rich influences of this promiſe, *He ſaveth the poor.* Wicked poor are no more under Gods protection, then wicked oppreſſors or wicked rich men are. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard*, Pſal. 34. 6. Not every or any poor man. Some *poor men may* cry, and the Lord hear them no more then he did the cry of *Dives, the rich man in hell*, Luke 16. *Forget not the Congregation of thy poor*, Pſal. 74. 19. *Thy poor*, by way of diſcrimination; There may be a greater diſtance between poor and poor, then there is between poor and rich. There are many *ragged Regiments, Congregations of poor, whom the Lord will forget for ever: But his poor ſhall be ſaved.* And theſe poor

are

are of two sorts; either poor in regard of wealth and outward substance, or poor in regard of friends or outward assistance. A rich man, especially a godly rich man, may be in a poor case, destitute and forsaken, wanting patronage and protection; God saveth his poor in both notions, both those that have no friends, and those that have no estates.

אביון *à radice* אבה *quod est desiderare, quasi pauper omnia desideret, cum nihil habeat; inde Æbion hæreticus, quasi mentis & intelligentiæ inops.* Schind. *Quia omnibus indiget, omnia cupit, & grata habet* Rab. Dav.

The Hebrew word for *Poor*, springs from a root signifying desire; and the reason is, because poor men are commonly rich in desires. They that are full of sensible wants, are full of earnest wishings: *They that are emptiest of enjoyments, are fullest of hopes and longings.* And the reason why *poverty of spirit*, in our spiritual estate, is pronounced a blessing, is, because the poor in spirit are full of desires after spiritual riches. They are ever craving and seeking to be filled with that fulness which is in Christ, with *grace for grace*; they would have the image of every grace in Christ, engraven upon their souls. Or (in a holy covetousness) they would be as rich in grace as Christ is, *grace for Grace*; as a covetous man would have penny for penny, pound for pound with his richest neighbour; or as an ambitious man would have honour for honour, title for title, with his greatest Neighbour. That Christian who sees his estate lowest, usually sets his desires highest; his affections are ever upon the wing for supplies from Christ. Both the civil poor man, and the spiritual poor soul, would fain be enriched.

He saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

Some read this by apposition, *he saveth the poor from the sword, their mouth*, making the latter to be but an exposition of the former, *from the sword their mouth*, that is, their mouth is the sword, from which God saveth his poor. So taken, it is a truth; for the mouth is a sharp sword, as killing as any instrument or engine of war. Hence others, who keep this sence, read it thus, *He saveth the poor from the sword of their mouth*; or, *from the killing stroak of their mouth*: making the particle *Mem*, in the Original, to govern the Genitive Case, *The Sword of their mouth*, or, *the Sword coming out of the mouth.* There are two Swords of the mouth, two coming out of the mouth, or one double-edged. 1. Slander. 2. False-witness: by which, often the reputation, and sometime the person of a man is murdered.

A gladio oris eorum. Vulg. *Ab occisione oris eorum.* Chal. *Ut Mem indicet Genitivum.* מחרב מפ הם *Gladius oris est ipse lingua mala* i. e. *calumnia falsa, qua homo tanquam gladio necatur. Sed melius à gladio qui ex ore ipsorum*, i. e. *à falsis testimoniis.* Dru.

But I conceive that the clearest meaning of the Original (though both are good) is, to read these as distinct evils, from which *He saveth the poor*; namely, 1. *From the sword.* And, 2. *From their mouth.* 3. *From the hand of the mighty.* That is, From *Nimrods, mighty hunters*, oppressors of the poor, or from the violent man. *I returned* (saith the Preacher, *Eccles.* 4. 1.) *and considered all the oppressions that are done under the Sun, and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter*; *and on the side of the oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter.* Oppressors are alwayes cloathed with power, and the oppressed seldom find so much pity from men, as to be their comforters. *Therefore for the oppression of the poor, and the cry of the needy, the Lord arises, and he saves his poor.*

From the { Slaying Sword. / Slandering Tongue. / Oppressing Hand.

These three wayes, crafty, powerful men seek to destroy the poor. First, By the Sword, to cut off their lives. Secondly, By Slander, to blemish and blot out their good Names. Thirdly, By strong Hand, to captivate their persons, or oppress their estates and liberties. *To be saved from all these destructions, is compleat salvation.* Let the wicked attempt as many wayes as they will or can, to destroy, the Lord both will and can find out as many wayes to save. *The malice of man shall never out-act or overmatch the mercy of God. He saveth the poor from the sword*, &c.

I should here more distinctly open these great evils, *the Sword, the Mouth, and the hand of the mighty, with the goodness of God in saving his poor from them*: But these particulars occur again, *v.* 20, 21. Where you may find a more distinct explication of them. From these words thus far opened, Observe,

First, *To what all the Devices and crafty Counsels of ungodly Politicians tend.*

Here we have the issue or English of their counsels, the meaning of their State-mysteries is interpreted, *Oppression.* Their craft concludes in cruelty, and their witty devices, in drawn Swords, slandering Tongues, or the Hands of violence. We may say of them as *Jacob* of his Sons *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. 49. 5, 6. *Instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my Soul, come not thou in their secret, for in their anger they will slay men, and in their self-will dig down a wall.*

Secondly, Observe their method. First, here is the bloody Sword.

They will cut them off, and rid their hands of them, if they can.

They could wish (as that bloody *Roman* Emperor) that the heads of their supposed enemies (possibly their best friends) were set upon one shoulder, and that they might cut them all off at one blow. But if God save his poor from the mouth of the Sword, then the next weapon is the sword of their mouths; slanders and defamations, lies and false accusations shall reach them, whom Iron and steel, pike and shot cannot. *The tongue is a little member, but it is a world of iniquity, and boasteth* (often acteth) *great things*, *Jam.* 3. 5, 6.

But if God saves his poor from both mouth and sword, so that their enemies cannot prevail at *sharps*; then they try at *blunts*, by a heavy hand, to over-load, oppress and keep them down, in their Estates, Liberties and Prividelges.

Thirdly Observe, That, *Salvation is of the Lord.*

The Faith of *David* grasped this, as his richest treasure, *Psal.* 68. 20. *He that is our God, he is the God of salvation.* The Lord is called the God of salvation, as the God of comfort, both affirmatively and negatively. Salvation is to be had in him, and there is no salvation to be had without him. *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains* (from Armies, from counsels, from the power and policies of men) *in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel*, Jer. 3. 23.

Fourthly, It is observable *Against whom these crafty cruel men muster up and levie the united forces of Sword, Tongue and Hand.*

They are the poor. He saveth the poor. Why, will not God save the rich? will he not save the mighty, the Princes of the earth? Yes, God will save all that fear him, both high and low, rich and poor. Why then is it said, *He saveth the poor?* As it were, determining salvation upon them. The reason is, because, as the poor are most easily oppressed, so usually they are most oppressed: *Where the hedge is lowest, men go over fastest.* And because, for the most part, Gods people are poor, comparatively to others; they are the vallies, the lower part of the Earth, and wickedness is commonly advanced upon the mountains of wealth, honour and greatness; therefore the denomination is taken from them: *He saveth the poor: They whom God loves most, the World loves least, they have least of the World.* The World gives most to its own; and God hath given his own so much beyond the world, that, the loss of a world is not discerned in their Estate, and worldly gains are not often discernable in their Estates; therefore, though in Christ, they are *heirs of all things, and all is theirs*, yet their rank and titles are among the poor.

Fifthly observe, they are poor ones; yet what devising and plotting is here against them? Crafty counsels, drawn swords, envenom'd tongues, strong hands lifted up, Against whom are all these? *Against the poor.* Hence note,

That, *Wicked men plot against the people of God, how poor and low soever they be.*

As *David* said unto *Saul* (1 Sam. 24. 14.) *After whom is the King of Israel come out? after a dead dog, after a flea?* As if he had said, whom dost thou pursue? thou dost that which is unworthy, and much below so great a King;

wilt thou set thy strength against my weakness? *Why dost thou arm against him, by whose conquest thou canst get no honour?* Alas, I am but a poor man, a mean subject, no match for thee; I wonder you trouble your self so much in following or opposing me: I am (in comparison) but as *a dead dog, or as a flea. A dead dog cannot bite*; or if I bite, it is but a *flea-bite*: *A dead dog can do no hurt, and a living flea can do but little. The people of God (as such) never have any will to do wrong, and it is seldom that they have any power to do wrong*; and yet the world is all up in pursuit against them: What's the reason of it? what's the matter? The truth is, how poor and low soever they are, yet there is an eye of jealousie awake upon them. The world looks upon them as a *suspected party*: the world hath secret misgivings, that one time or other, they must rise upon their ruines; and therefore they will keep them down (yes, that they will) as long as they can. What a distance was there between *Haman* and *Mordecai*? the one sate in the gate, and the other stood at the Kings elbow, and had his ear, yea, and his signet (upon the matter) at his command: yet this *Haman* must needs oppress *Mordecai*, because he would not bow: *Haman* had a jealous eye upon him, he was a suspected person; though he cou'd not reach *Haman*, yet *Haman* fear'd he might undermine him.

Again, There is a continual *Antipathy between the two seeds*; and *Antipathy* is incurable: *To oppose the godly, is not so much the disease, as the nature of wicked men*: And we know, *Antipathies* are against the whole kind; revenge against this, or that *Individual*, is no *ease* to it; *Antipathy* is not spent, but in the consumption of the whole kind. It is not this or that sheep which the Wolf hates, but every sheep, fat or lean, shorn or unshorn, that's all one to the Wolf; he will suck the blood of a sheep that hath not a *lock of Wool* on his back, as greedily as if that sheep had a *Golden Fleece*. Let a godly man be poor or rich, low or high, their sword shall be unsheath'd, and their mouth opened against him: the old hatred and quarrel is against all. *Haman thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, wherefore Haman thought to destroy all the Jews*, Esth. 3.6. He hated those whom he never saw, those who had never wrong'd him, haply had bowed to him; yet, because *Jews*, die they must.

Sixthly observe (*But he saveth the poor.*)

God delights to help the poor: He loves to take part with the best, though the weakest side.

Contrary to the course of most, who when a controversie arises, use to stand in a kind of *indifferency* or *neutrality*, till they see which part is strongest, not which is justest. Now if there be any consideration (besides the cause) that draws or engages God; it is the weakness of the side. He joynes with many, because they are weak; not with any, because they are strong; therefore he is called, *the helper of the friendless, and with him the fatherless* (the Orphans) *find mercy*: By fatherless, we are not to understand such only whose parents are dead, but any one that is in distress; as Christ promiseth his Disciples, *John* 14.18. *I will not leave you Orphans*, that is helpless, and (as we translate) *comfortless*; though ye are as children without a Father, yet I will be a Father to you. Men are often like those clouds, which dissolve into the Sea, they send presents to the rich, and assist the strong; but God sends his rain upon the dry Land, and lends his strength to those that are weak. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. Forget not the Congregation of thy poor for ever.* The truth is, *he never forgets them: They are graven upon the palms of his hands; such poor are his treasure, his Jewels, as the Signet upon his right hand*; therefore alwayes in his eye, yea, alwayes in his heart, though they lie in the dirt, or be trodden under foot, like mire in the streets. The Prophet makes this report to God of himself (*Isa.* 25.4.) *Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm*, &c.

Thus far *Eliphaz* hath given instance of the great, marvellous and unsearchable works of God, in a double reference: First, to wicked crafty oppressors. Secondly, to poor helpless innocents. He shuts up this Narration with a double effect of these works upon those two sorts of men. First, shewing what effect they produce in the poor; namely, *Hope*. Secondly, what in the wicked; namely, *shame and confusion of face.*

Verse 16. **So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth.**

Here is the conclusion or result of all, the *Epiphonema* or exulting clause, in which *Eliphaz* perfects the story of those admirable acts of judgment and of mercy; *So the poor hath hope.*

This original word for [poor] varies from the former, though the persons and their estate be the same: That word noted them full of desire, and this (which is the cause of it) empty of comforts: Properly it signifies one that is *exhausted or drawn dry*. Poor persons are exhausted persons; exhausted of their strength, exhausted of their estates, exhausted of friends and credit in the world. It is a Metaphor taken from Rivers, Ponds or Pools, that are drawn dry, when we would take the fish, or take away the defence which they give to Forts or Cities, *Isa.* 19.6. *And they shall turn the Rivers far away, and the Brooks of Defence shall be emptied and dried up*: Which also enlightens that Text, *Isa.* 33.21. *There the righteous Lord will be unto us a place of broad Rivers.* A River which shall not be drawn dry or sluced out (as *Euphrates* was by *Cyrus*, when he took *Babylon*) but shall fill its banks and shores perpetually; that is, the Lord will be there a perpetual defence; a River that shall never be impoverished, but shall keep a full stock and treasure of streams and waters.

דל
à radice
דלל
Exhaustus, de humore proprie, per metaphoram de viribus corporis & opibus, attenuatus, tenuis fortunæ homo.

Delilah had her name from this root, and it carries an elegant allusion to the qualities of all *Delilahs*, or insinuating lascivious women; they drain the strength, exhaust the purses, dry up the credit, waste the *All* of the mightiest *Samsons*, whose hearts are entangled by their flatteries, or ensnared by their beauties.

The poor have hope.] The word hath been opened at the sixth verse of this Chapter, to note strong and earnest expectation: The poor man observing the wonders which God doth in the world, cannot be out of hope, though he be out of possession; and though his own strength be gone, yet he lives upon the strength of Christ; he hopes strongly (that's the force of the word) when he feels no strength. *When I am weak* (saith the Apostle *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12.10.) *then am I strong*; that is, I am strongest (through hope) in Christ, when I am weakest, through sense, in my self.

More distinctly, this hope may be taken two wayes.

1. For the Object, or thing hoped for.
2. For the Act or Grace of hope.

In the former notion of hope, the sence runs thus; God having taken the wise in their own craftiness, and disappointed the devices of the crafty, having delivered the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty, now the poor hath the thing he looked for, the thing he prayed for, the thing for which he hath been seeking and waiting upon God: *So the poor hath hope*, that is, he hath the mercy he expected, *salvation from the sword*, &c. he is made *partaker of his hope*, by those glorious administrations of the justice and mercy of God. Hence observe,

First, *God's poor hope for good in the worst times.*

When deliverance comes, these poor have but that which they looked for; they looked for light when they were in the darkest condition. When they were exhausted, they knew God was not exhausted; and when they were drawn dry, they knew the Lord was not; though *their treasure was spent, yet they were assured the treasury of Heaven was full*: When strength is gone, and Money is gone, and Friends are gone, yet God is not gone; and therefore they know the good may come which they hope for. *Turn ye to the strong holds, ye prisoners of hope*, saith the Prophet, *Zech.* 9.12. The people of God (though prisoners) are yet prisoners of hope, that is, they have hope of deliverance and enlargement, in their greatest streights: The power of God is never imprisoned, and while his people can make this out, their spirits are not.

Secondly observe, *It is no vain thing to hope in God.*

The

The poor hath his hope. The Prophet brings in the *Jews* thus triumphing in God (*Isa.* 25. 9.) *And it shall be said in that day:* What day was that? The former verse points it out, *A day wherein death shall be swallowed up in victory, wherein tears shall be wiped away from off all faces*, &c. And in that day, the people of God shall thus boast of God, and (as it were shewing him to the World) shall say, *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoyce in his salvation*; vain hopes fill our faces with shame; but hopes fulfilled, fill our hearts with rejoycing. *The poor hath his hope*; he can shew his hope, 'tis visible: As *Hannah*, when she came to present her son unto *Eli*, *For this child I prayed*, as if she should say, *Sir, here is my prayer*; you could not *hear my prayer*, when I was in the Temple, you thought I was drunken; but now you may *see my prayer*, here it is, *for this child I prayed, and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him*, 1 Sam. 1. 27. So the soul saith, In such a time of trouble, Personal or National, I was praying and seeking God, I was believing and hoping; men knew not, understood not the workings of my soul toward Christ, yet now they may see them; here is the thing I prayed for, here is that I hoped for; *So* (first) *the poor hath hope.*

Secondly, *The poor hath hope*, that is, the grace of hope or the gracious actings of hope; and taking it so, the sence rises thus: *So* (that is) *God having done such great things, in disappointing the devices of the crafty, and in saving his poor*, by this means, *the poor come to have hope*; the grace of hope strengthned and confirmed in them.

> Hence Observe, That, *the experience we have of Gods power and mercy, in saving us out of former troubles, breeds and nourishes hope, against future times of trouble.*

So the poor hath hope. Though the poor man was in a hopeless condition before; yet now seeing the works of God, he hath hope laid up for ever, *Psalm* 64. 9, 10. *All men shall fear and declare the Works of God, for they shall wisely consider of this thing:* And what follows? *The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and trust in him*; that is, if they have fail'd in their trust heretofore, and not given God honour by confiding in him; yet these wonderful works of God (of which he speaks in that *Psalm*) work this hope; *Rom.* 5. 4. *Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. Graces have a generation one from another, though all have but one Generation from Christ at once. We have here the genealogy of hope in three descents.* Experience is the next, or immediate parent of hope. *So the poor hath hope.* Thus it is begotten, 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. *God who hath delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in him we trust, that he will yet deliver us.* An Armed daring *Goliah*, should be looked upon, as vanquisht already, when we can but remember a vanquisht Lion and a Bear.

Again, *The poor hath hope:* He doth not say, God having thus destroyed the ungodly, and saved his own people from the sword, *&c.* Now they have liberty, now they have peace, now they have abundance of riches and prosperity; but he makes this the issue, *now they have hope.*

> Whence Note, That, *hope is a greater and better possession unto the people of God here, then all the great and good things which they possess.*

Put as much into their hands as you can, there is more then that put in their hearts by hope. *The poor hath hope:* he looks over all his possessions, and pitcheth upon expectation as his Portion. The estate which a believer hath in the promises, is more then the estate he hath in possession: Riches in the promise, is better then riches in the chest. And so the deliverances and protections which are laid up for the Saints in promises, are more then all the deliverances and protections received and enjoyed: There is no enjoyment but that in Heaven (where we shall enjoy all that ever was promised) so good as hope, for what is promised. *Alexander* an Heathen, had such a notion about an *earthly hope*, which had no ground neither, but the great things his own ambition promised him: for when one seeing him give away all his present inheritances, said, *What Sir, will you make your self a beggar? No* (saith he) *I will reserve hope for my self.*

And iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

Here is the opposite effect, iniquity; the abstract is put for the concrete, *iniquity, for men of iniquity; wicked men, these stop their mouthes.* And it is observable, that as before God made them active in their own destruction, so here he makes them active in their own silence; he saith not, *God stoppeth their mouthes, but they stop their own mouths*; that is, the wicked seeing those wonderful works of God, have not a word to say, nor a counsel to give more against the godly; *they are as mute as fishes, as dumb as dogs*, they know not how to slander, or of whom to complain, and therefore they suspend, and enjoyn silence upon themselves. As that word of Christ, *Friend how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment* (Matth. 22. 12.) so these works of Christ shall make his enemies *speechless. Iniquity stoppeth her mouth.*

Perspectâ hac Dei providentiâ erga pauperes & humiles, maligni & nocendi studiosi retrahent se, neq; inter se apliuineant prava & iniqua adversus pios consilia. Aquin.

This *stopping their mouths*, is caused two wayes; First, from shame; A man is sometime silent, because he is ashamed to speak; disappointments (especially such as theirs before noted) produce shame naturally, and shame makes silent. *A man that blushes much, speaks little*; and he that dares not lift up his head, will not be forward to lift up his voice, *Mich.* 7. 16. *I will shew marvellous things* (saith the Lord, and what then?) *The Nations shall see and be confounded; they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf: They shall see it, and be confounded*, that is, they shall be greatly ashamed; confusion of face is but shame heightned, and the Holy Ghost puts shame and confusion of face together in divers places. Now this great shame layes their hands upon their mouths, and puts their fingers in their ears; they are resolvedly both dumb and deaf, at the sight of those marvellous things.

Secondly, *Admiration and amaizment silence them:* The works of God being marvellous, they shall stand admiring and wondring at them, till they cannot speak. Read the like, *Isa.* 52. 15. & *Psal.* 107. 42. where, when the Prophet had reckoned up many wonderful works of God, he concludes as in the Text, *vers.* 42. *He setteth the poor on high*, &c. *the righteous shall see it and rejoyce, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth*; while the Lord seems to do nothing, or to do but little, *iniquity will do nothing, but talk*, or it talks very much, it is very talkative; but if once God begin working, iniquity has done speaking, you shall hear no more of them, till the next success on their side.

> Then Observe, First, *Wicked men will never cease slandering and censuring, bragging and boasting, till some eminent judgment stops their mouths.*

So iniquity stoppeth her mouth, they will never stop their mouths before: *Isa.* 26. 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see; but they shall see and be ashamed for their envy at thy people*: I will make the judgment bigger and and greater; write my wrath in fairer, or rather bloodier Characters, that they may see them: As small judgments will not open the eyes of wicked men, so small judgments will not stop their mouthes; but when God begins to work wonders, they are dumb, they have done.

> Secondly Observe, That, *God will do such things for his people, as shall put the crafty to silence.*

The Saints ought to live so holily, *That by well doing they may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men*, 1 Pet. 2. 15. The Lord will do so justly and gloriously, as shall put to silence the malice of the wisest men: *These two, the holiness of the Saints, and the Justice of God, are stopples in the mouths, or the stop-mouths of ungodly men.* As they by unrighteous acts have stopped other mens mouths, and silenced them, so God *by terrible things in righteousness*, will stop their mouths, and silence them for ever: They shall have nothing to say at last, either against the justice of God, or against the innocency of his People; *against both these their mouths chiefly open.* They impute and fasten unrighteousness on God: you talk of God, and boast of his promises; where is he? where are they? The Prophet brings them in, belching out such blasphemies (*Isa.* 5. 19.) *They say, let him make speed and hasten his work, that we may see it; and let the counsel of the holy One of* Israel, *draw nigh*

and come that we may know it. Words filled with as high a ſence of ſpiritual wickedneſs, as wit and malice can infuſe. They jeer the patience of God as ſlackneſs, and as if Juſtice it ſelf were tired, or too ſlow-pac'd, they ſpur it on, to ruine themſelves. You have often told us of the *Holy One of* Iſrael, *and what he would do, but threatned men live long we ſee.* You are nimbler of your tongues, then your Holy One of *Iſrael* is of his hands. Therefore *let him make ſpeed* (if he can) *and haſten his work, that we may ſee it.*

Will not the jealouſie of the Lord awake, at the noiſe of this helliſh blaſphemy? will he not ſtop the mouth of this iniquity? ſurely he will: And the Prophet aſſures us he will at *verſ.* 24. *Therefore as the fire devoureth the ſtubble, and as the flame conſumeth the chaff; ſo their Root ſhall be rottenneſs, and their bloſſoms ſhall go up as duſt.* But how doth the fire devour the ſtubble? how doth the flame conſume the chaff? even in a moment; fire needs no blowing, to make it take hold of dry ſtubble: *Stubble is at once flame and aſhes.* So ſpeedy ſhall the conſumption of theſe men be, who called the Lord to make ſpeed; then (I believe (they'l no more bid him make haſte. The mouth of this iniquity will be ſtopt for ever. *Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence. A fire ſhall devour before him,* Pſalm 50. 3. *And then the wicked ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs,* 1 Sam. 2. 9. The fire of wrath is all heat, no light.

Laſtly, All the ſlanders againſt the innocency of the Saints ſhall be ſo confuted, that the adverſary ſhall have nothing to ſay againſt them. *Their innocency ſhall be made as clear as the light, and their juſtice as the noon-day:* Yea God will ſo order it, that theſe crafty oppreſſors ſhall carry a juſtification of God, and of his people in their own hearts. Their conviction ſhall be ſo ſtrong, and their light ſo clear, that iniquity it ſelf ſhall not be able to gain-ſay, but muſt ſtop it's mouth for ever.

VERS. 17, 18.

Behold happy is the man, whom God correcteth; therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty.
For he maketh ſore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

WE have finiſhed the firſt branch of Exhortation, begun *verſ.* 8. wherein *Eliphaz* moves *Job, to ſeek to God, and unto God to commit his cauſe;* with the ſeveral arguments and reaſons, ſtrengthning that Exhortation. At this *verſ.* 17. *Eliphaz* begins a ſecond branch of Exhortation, and it is continued to the end of the Chapter. We have the Exhortation (or Dehortation rather, for it is expreſt in the negative) in the latter clauſe of *verſ.* 17. *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty.*

The firſt Argument by which he quickens *Job* to receive this counſel, lies in the former part of the ſame verſe; *Behold happy is the man, whom God correcteth:* The Argument may be framed thus, *That condition is not to be deſpiſed, wherein a man is truly happy; But under the correcting hand of God a man is truly happy: Therefore that condition is not to be deſpiſed. Behold* (ſaith he) *happy is the man, whom God correcteth; therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Almighty.*

Behold, happy is the man.

To **behold,** calls here both for attention and admiration: For here is a ſtrange ſight, *An afflicted man, a bleſſed man.* Natural ſence and reaſon cannot agree about this conjunction. They know not how happineſs and correction ſhould meet, and kiſs the ſame perſon: Therefore raiſe up thy attention (ſaith *Eliphaz*) to conſider this wonder. *When the Angel of the Lord appeared unto* Moſes *in a flame of fire out of the midſt of a buſh; he looked and behold the buſh burned with fire, and the buſh was not conſumed. And* Moſes *ſaid, I will now turn aſide, and ſee this great ſight, why the buſh is not burnt,* Exod. 3. 2, 3. Such a great ſight, this Text ſhews us: *A buſh burning,* and not *conſuming*; yea a *buſh burning,* and yet *flouriſhing*; a buſh on fire, and yet a fruit-bearing buſh; a buſh blooming and bloſſoming with the pleaſanteſt and ſweeteſt fruit on Earth, or rather with the fruit of Heaven; fruit upoh which we ſhall feed for ever in Heaven; fruit, the taſte of which, makes a Heaven here on Earth, *Happineſs.* Well then, is this ſtrange ſight preſented to us, with *A Behold.*

Happy is the man whom God correcteth.

Happineſs is the enjoyment of good commenſurate to all our deſires. That's perfect happineſs. Happineſs is the ſum of all our deſires, and the aim of all our endeavours: and when we have attained perfect happineſs, we ſhall be at a full point, both of our deſire and endeavours.

But though all men have happineſs in their Eye (to be happy is their end, and this happineſs is but one.) Yet the wayes, which men have chalked out, as leading to happineſs, have been, not only various, but almoſt infinite. Some of the learned have reckoned up two or three Centuries, or hundreds of opinions, concerning this one point. And it is well obſerved, that men varied thus in opinion about happineſs, becauſe they thought the enjoyment of that, wherein any of them was defective, would make them happy. He that was poor, ſaid, I ſhould be happy, if I had riches, and thence grew his opinion, that happineſs conſiſted in riches: The ſick man ſaid, I ſhould be happy, if I had my health, and thence grew his opinion, that hapineſs conſiſted in health: Another was obſcure, mean and low, *O* (ſaid he) *how happy were I, if I were honourable*; and thence grew a third opinion, that happineſs conſiſted in honour: Thus they varied according to their particular neceſſities and intereſts. But amongſt all thoſe *Opinioniſts*, we meet not with any one, who pitcht upon this in the Text. This is a *Paradox* to them all; a natural man cannot place happineſs in correction: No Philoſopher or pure Moraliſt ever ſaid, Happy is the man, that is ſore; happy is the man, that is ſick; happy is the man, that is diſgraced; or happy is the man, that is in priſon: Theſe are riddles, ſuch as nature is not able to expound or make out; the Philoſopher would as ſoon place light in darkneſs, the Sun in a cloud, heat in coldneſs, the Element of fire in the water, as bleſſedneſs in ſufferings. Therefore no marvel if *Eliphaz* uſher it in, with *a Behold*; *Behold happy is the man, whom God correcteth.*

The word, **Happy,** is of the *Plural* number, or rather of the *Dual* in the Hebrew. Some tranſlate it in the *Abſtract, Behold the bleſſedneſs of that man, whom God corrects:* But it is fully rendred by the *Adjective,* as we; *Behold happy is the man,* &c.

אשרי *Beatitudines, conſtat indeclinabile eſſe, & formam habere non tã pluralis quã dualis.*

There is much contention amongſt the *Grammarians* about the word, whether it be *abſtract or concrete; a Noun, or an Adverb*: But I will not ſtay on thoſe, only conſider a little what accounts is given, why the word is uſed *plurally* or *dually.*

First, It is to increaſe the ſignification, and heighten the ſence; as noting the confluence of many good things in happineſs. *Happineſs is not a ſingle good*; happineſs conſiſts in the concurrence or meeting together of many good things: God, who is infinitely happy, infinitely bleſſed in himſelf, and an infinite bleſſing, all bleſſing to his people, is not a ſingle good, or a particular good, but he is all good, both to himſelf, and to his people. A godly man is happy in the largeſt ſence, in all ſences; becauſe his, is not this or that particular good, but all good. And he is not happy only at this or that particular time, but at all times. He is as happy, when he is ſuffering under the hand of God, as when he is ſerving God; as happy in his paſſive, as in his active obedience. And therefore the ſame word expreſſes his condition, both in the one, and in the other.

Beati beatitudo in multis bonitatibus conſiſtit. Rab. D.

Secondly, Becauſe there is a two-fold happineſs: Firſt, the happineſs of this life: And ſecondly, the happineſs of the next; Temporal happineſs, and Eternal happineſs; Corporal hpapineſs, and Spiritual happineſs, To note a complication of all theſe, the word may be given in the *Dual* or *Plural* number; he that is thus corrected, loſes not temporal happineſs, but he gains in ſpiritual, and toward eternal happineſs. The preſent and future happineſs of the Saints, the happineſs of grace and of glory, differ but in degrees: *It is the ſame ſtate in a higher ſtature: The ſame book in a more correct edition and fairer letter.* Theſe differ as a child from a man, or as the morning light from the light at high-noon; ſo then, this word includes all kinds and degrees of happineſs: yet, here it is properly to be underſtood of the happineſs of this life, which only is conſiſtent with correction: *There are no rods in Heaven,*

and

and we shall be past children, before we come thither.

Simplex & genuina responsio est, quod nomen ipsum quo Hebræi beatitudinem notant, est plurale tantũ, ut Latinis opes, Divitiæ. Ames *in* Psal. 1.

Thirdly, We may answer plainly, that the word in the Hebrew is only *Plural* or *Dual*, being never read in the singular number: As in the Latine we have many the like words.

It is further observable concerning this word, that it is alwayes applied unto man, whereas the word (*Barac*) blessed, is applied both to God and man. This happiness is a special and peculiar happiness of man: *The Lord being infinitely above, both obeying and suffering.*

Happy is the Man.] *Enosh*, the Hebrew word for *Man* (of whom happiness under correction is predicated) is very sutable to this business of correction. *Enoch* signifies a sickly, weak, miserable man: We might render the full sence of the word thus, *Happy is that miserable man, whom God corrects.* That is, look upon a man according to the ordinary account of the World, and calculation of reason, he is a miserable man, a weak, sickly man; yet happy is this weak, sickly, miserable man in the account of God, and by the calculation of faith. *Grace makes that good sence, which is a contradiction, both in nature and in reason: A miserable man, and a happy man, one and the same.*

In *Psalm* 1. the word *Ish* is used, *Blessed is the man*, that is, *Blessed is that excellent man, that holy man, that strong man, walking and delighting in the law of the Lord. Yea blessed with the same blessedness is that miserable man* (smarting under the rod of the Lord) *whom God correcteth.*

And yet Blessedness is joyned with all the words, by which man is expressed. It is joyned with *Adam*, Psalm 32. 1. *Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven.* *Adam* is the general word for Man, and is therefore most fitly joyned with Blessedness in pardon of sin, because all men are sinners, and no man can be blessed, except he be pardoned. Blessedness is joyned also with *Geber*, a strong, powerful and mighty man, *Psal.* 94. 12. *Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy Law*; Blessed is (*Geber*) the great man, the honourable man, the highest by birth or place, whom thou chastenest.

Beatus Abrahã vir pius quem corripuit Deus. Chal. Parap.

The *Chaldee Paraphrase* restrains the word [Man] to an *individual*, to *Abraham*, as if *Eliphaz* had put the instance in *Abraham*, and said, *Behold, happy was that holy man* Abraham *whom God corrected; therefore despise not thou the chastning of the Almighty*: I can give thee a famous example of a godly man corrected; *Abraham* (thy Ancestor) met with afflictions, as well as thou, and yet he was a most happy man: therefore *despise not thou the chastning of the Lord.* But the word is general, and so we are to understand it; though this be a truth, in any or every instance among the servants of God.

I must yet put in a caution for the right understanding of this proposition, *Blessed is the man, whom God corrects.* The meaning is not, as if happiness were the portion of every miserable man, or of every man that is afflicted; do not think so; many are at once, corrected and cursed, troubled and miserable in trouble. To many, their present sorrows, are but the fore-tasts of eternal sorrows. As Christ spake in a common case, *These things are but the beginning of sorrows:* So we may say to the particular cases of many groaning under sickness, poverty, disgrace, &c. Alas, poor souls, ye are so far from being happy in these, that these are but the beginnings of your unhappiness; God doth but begin to call for some arrears, due to his justice, which ye must be a paying and satisfying to all eternity.

There is no happiness in affliction naturally considered; it is accidental to afflictions, that happiness is associated with them. Affliction in it self is grievous, and it would be only so to us, did not the over-ruling, admirable dispensations of God, temper, order, dispose, and work it to an end above its own nature; it is the art and wisdom of the Physitian, which corrects poysonous simples and ingredients, so, as to make them medicinable. And did not the wisdom and goodness of God, *correct our corrections*, they would not be medicine to us, but poyson; it is not correction, but the hand of God with it, and in it, which makes us happy.

Happy is the man, whom God correcteth.

יכח *Argut, redarguit, corripuit,*

The word, which we translate correct, signifies to reprove or to convince, by arguments or dispute; to argue a man down from his error, by the strength and clearness of reason or divine authority. So *Levit.* 19. 19. *Thou shalt not suffer sin upon thy brother, thou shalt surely rebuke him. Thou shalt rebuke him*, it is the word here used, that is, thou shalt bring such arguments, as may convince him of his sin, and lay his wickedness open before him. This word is applied to corrections and afflictions in Scripture, because with convictions, we feel corrections frequently joyned; the Lord argues the matter, and (as it were) disputes with some very long, who yet will not let in divine truth, nor be perswaded, though they are perswaded; What doth he then? Then he sends correction with his redargution, he cloaths his words with blows, disputes with a rod in his hand, and brings an argument from feeling, when reasoning prevails not. In this book of *Job*, *Elihu* shews it, *Chap.* 33. 16, 19. *Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction: he is chastened also with pain upon his bed.*

Verba contra aliquẽ, disputando & ostendendo jus. Quod etsi verbis plerũq; fiat, pertinet tamen ea vox ad severiorẽ disciplinam & verbera, quæ cujuspiã peccati reprehensionem comitari solent. Pined.

Hence Observe, First, That, *afflictions to the children of God at forest, are but corrections.*

Blessed (or happy) *is the man whom God corrects.* You will say, but what is a correction? And how (in a strict sence) differenced from judgments and punishments, and wherein do they agree?

They agree, first, in the efficient cause. God layes his hand on man in both.

Secondly, They agree in the matter; the same evil, the same trouble to one man is a correction, to another a judgment.

Thirdly, They may agree also in the degree; a trouble or an affliction may fall and lie as heavy, and be as painful to sense upon a child of God, as upon the vilest wretch in the world; he may be as poor, as friendless, as sick, as sorrowful in his outward man, as any wicked man; he may lie in the same dungeon, and be bound with the same chain, he may be slain with the same sword, burnt at the same stake, eaten up with the same famine. So that both in the materiality, and likewise in the graduality of it, it may be the same on both, yet, upon one it is a correction, upon the other a judgment.

What then is this correction? And where will the correction and the judgment part?

I conceive, that the infirmities of the Saints, and the sins of the wicked differ, as judgments and corrections differ. Now look upon those sins, which we call the infirmities of the Saints; they may be the same in the matter, the same in kind, yea (possibly) the same in the degree (I mean respecting the outward rule given by God, and the outward act committed by man) with the sins of those who know not God, or who, in sinning, go against their knowledge.

Then, where do they part?

Surely, where corrections and judgments part: And where is that? Especially in two things.

1. In the manner how; 2. In the end why, they are inflicted.

First, The Lord never corrects his children with such a heart, as he carries in laying trouble upon the loyns of wicked men. The heart of God is turned toward his children, when he corrects them; but his heart is turned from a wicked man, when he punishes him. The Lord is even pained (that I may speak as the Scripture often doth in this point, after the manner of men) I say the Lord expresses himself as pained, as grieved, as if every stroak went to his own heart, when he strikes his children. When he is about to strike, he is (as it were) unresolved whether he shall strike or no; and as soon as he hath stricken, he (as it were) repents that he did strike them. All which motions of his heart the Lord shews us in the highest strains of passionate Rhetorick, *Hos.* 11. 8, 9. But when he takes the wicked in hand to punish them, we read of no passion ascribed to him, but these, delight or joy, and the effect of them, laughter: hatred or indignation, and the effect of these, mocking at them, *Prov.* 1. 26. *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh.* And when he resolves upon the destruction of his enemies, he speaks, as if then he had unburden'd himself, and his heart were lighter then before, *Isa.* 1. 24. *Ah I will ease me of my adversaries, and avenge me of my enemies.*

Secondly, The difference is as broad about the end. When God layes the rod of correction upon his child, he aimes at the purging out of his ſin, at the preventing of his ſin, at the revealing of a fatherly diſpleaſure againſt him for his ſin: The Lord would only have him take notice, that he doth not approve of him in ſuch courſes. When theſe ends are propoſed, every affliction is a correction. But the afflictions of the ungodly are ſent for other ends. Firſt, To take vengeance on them. Secondly, to ſatisfie offended juſtice; juſtice cries aloud againſt them, and they have nothing to interpoſe, but their bare backs or naked ſouls. The Lord comes as a ſevere Creditor, and bids them pay that which they owe, or ſuffer, and to priſon, becauſe they cannot pay.

Secondly obſerve, *A Child of God is in a happy condition under all corrections.*

As man (in a natural or civil capacity) *at his beſt eſtate, is altogether vanity*, Pſal. 39. 5. So, in a ſpiritual capacity, he is altogether happineſs, in his worſt outward eſtate: *Happy is the man whom God corrects*; he is a gainer by correction: If he loſeth any thing, it is but the droſs of his corruptions; *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin.* Iſa. 27. 9. Corrections are not ſent to take away his comforts, but to take away his corruptions. That fire which God kindles upon his children, ſhall burn only (as it did the material bonds of the three Children in *Daniel*) the ſpiritual bonds of their iniquity that they may be more free to righteouſneſs. Again, Corrections are not manifeſtations of wrath, but an evidence of his love, and of their Son-ſhip. *Whom I love, I chaſtize*, Rev. 3. 21. *And if ye endure chaſtening, God dealeth with you as with ſons*, Heb. 12. 7. The love of God is better then life; and to be a ſon of God, is the higheſt priviledge of his love. Where ſhall we be happy, if not in that which aſſures us of ſuch love, and of love in ſuch a relation? Hence the Apoſtle concludes (2 *Cor.* 4. 12.) *So then, death worketh in us; death*, that is, our daily ſufferings and endurings. He ſpeaks (indeed) eſpecially of ſufferings for the truth, from the cruel hand of man; but it is true likewiſe of all ſufferings under the correcting hand of God: Thoſe ſtroaks which are deadly to our bodies, may yet work for us. And what work they? The ſeventeenth verſe anſwers the queſtion; *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding & eternal weight of glory.* The ſufferings of the Saints are active, and their paſſions operative; But how do they work? Not by way of merit or earning (*Our blood cannot oblige God*) but by way of preparation. The Lord ſends afflictions, to faſhion and cleanſe our hearts, as fit veſſels to hold an exceeding weight of glory: our bearing the heavieſt afflictions, doth not weigh ſo much as the leaſt grain of glory, yet they fit our hearts for an *exceedingly excellent weight of glory.* We cannot ſay properly, that they work any glory; but by an *Hyperbole in ſpeech*, we ſay, they work towards an *Hyperbole in glory.*

καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς περιβολήν

And if any doubt, can a man be happy when his outward comfort is gone? Doubtleſs he may: *For a man is never unhappy, but when he hath loſt that wherein happineſs doth conſiſt.* The happineſs of a godly man doth not conſiſt in his outward comforts, in riches, in health, in honour, in civil liberty, or humane relations; therefore in the loſs of theſe he cannot be unhappy. His happineſs conſiſts in his relation to, and acceptance with God, in his title to, and union with *Jeſus Chriſt*. While he keeps theſe priviledges (and theſe he ſhall keep for ever) what hath he loſt, if he loſe all beſides theſe? He hath not loſt any thing diſcernable, out of his eſtate. Suppoſe a man were worth a million of money, and he ſhould loſe a penny, would you think this man an undone man? No: his eſtate feels not this loſs, and therefore he hath not loſt his eſtate. If a man ſhould buy a thouſand meaſures of Corn or Cloth, and ſhould loſe the given handfuls of the one, or inches of the other, would ye ſay, that this man hath loſt either his corn or his cloth? All the things of the world (and they only are looſable) which a godly man hath, are not ſo much to his eſtate as a penny to a million; they are indeed no proper part of his eſtate, they are but an additional overplus to his eſtate; as the handful of grain, or inch of cloth, are no part of the meaſure agreed or bargained for; only ſo much that ſpeech of Chriſt imports, *Mat.* 6. 33. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God, and the righteouſneſs thereof, and all other things ſhall be added or miniſtred to you*; your kingdom is whole and ſafe to you, though you have not theſe: Theſe things are extrinſecal and foreign to all that, which I reckon upon as your eſtate; *God having given us Chriſt, caſts us in the creatures*, as not coming upon any account in that vaſt act of his free love and bounty: And ſhall we account him unhappy, who hath loſt theſe things, which were never brought to account as any part of his happineſs? Then happy ſtill, though corrected. And which is yet more, correction takes nothing from the ſtock, but it addeth ſomewhat; correction brings in a revenue of profit with it. *They* (ſaith the Apoſtle, meaning our earth-parents) *chaſtened us after their own pleaſure, but he for our profit.* What profit? Do Houſes and Land, Gold and Silver, bloſſom from the correcting rod? Surely they may: But he means better profit then theſe, and a far more noble merchandize: Gold and Silver are poor and baſe, to the profit which comes in by chaſtenings; Grace and holineſs come in this way: *He for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holineſs*, Heb. 12. 10. *We want nothing of the happineſs in heaven, but ſo much holineſs as we ſhall have in heaven.* Surely then whatſoever affliction takes away, it cannot take away our happineſs, forasmuch as it makes us greater ſharers in, and partakers of holineſs.

And the corrected children of God are unhappy only in the opinion of other men, not in their own: When did you ever hear any of them ſay, they were unhappy, becauſe they were corrected? I do not remember, that I ever read or heard any of them ſay, *O unhappy we, who are thus afflicted!* *Salvian* anſwered this Objection well, when he ſaw many ſcandalized at the afflictions of the godly, thinking theirs a very ſad and pitiful condition: *Do you hear them complaining* (ſaith he) *or did they ever complain to you? No man is to be accounted miſerable in another mans ſenſe, but in his own. You make the complaint, not they.* The truth is, a holy heart can bear trouble with more eaſe, then a carnal heart can ſee it. *Paul* (whoſe whole life, after converſion, was but one continued affliction) was ſo far from complaining and ſaying, *O unhappy man that I am!* that *he rejoyced in tribulation, and was but as ſorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing.* I confeſs, it becomes us to be more ſenſible of corrections, then of perſecutions; the former being uſually, ſufferings upon our defects in Grace, and the latter upon our higheſt actions and puttings forth of Grace. It becomes the Saints to be humbled under corrections; but who hath heard them (when they were themſelves) complaining of corrections? I have often heard them bleſſing God for corrections; I have often heard them ſay, it was, and it is good for us, that we have been corrected; And while the Saints write their afflictons upon the Inventory of their goods, we have no reaſon to put them to account, or caſt them up among their evils.

Quamvis ſanctli videantur ignorantibus eſſe miſeri, non poſſunt tamen eſſe aliud quam beati. Nemo alieno ſenſu miſer eſt, ſed ſuo. Nulli enim beatiores ſunt quàm qui ex ſententia ſua & voto agunt. Humiles ſunt religioſi, hoc volunt: Pauperes ſunt, pauperie delectatur. Lugent, tugere geſtiunt, &c. Salv. *De gub. Dei. l.* 3.

Laſtly, A godly man cannot be unhappy while he enjoyes God: And he uſually enjoyes God moſt, when he is moſt afflicted. A wicked man is never unhappy in his own thoughts, till he hath loſt his god, ſuch a one as he is, his riches, his pleaſure, his credit; theſe he makes his god, inſtead of a better; indeed, inſtead of him who is *beſt of all*: Theſe are loſeable gods, and ſo his happineſs may ſoon be loſt; but he that once enjoyes the true God, can never loſe him, and therefore can never loſe his happineſs.

That of *Saul*; is one of the ſaddeſt ſpeeches in all the Book of God, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. *I am ſore diſtreſſed, for the Philiſtines make war againſt me, and God is departed from me.* When trouble comes, and God departs, when ſickneſs and poverty make war upon a man, and God be departed from a man, O how unhappy! What words can expreſs the unhappineſs of ſuch a man? But they who can take liberty, and eſtate, and life from us, cannot take God from us; and if God ſhould take all theſe from us, he will not, he cannot (becauſe he hath promiſed he will not) take himſelf from us: *I* (ſaith the Lord) *will never leave thee nor forſake thee*, Heb. 13. 5. And if God forſake us not, happineſs cannot; for he is our happineſs.

A Heathen could ſay, it was unbecoming a *Roman* ſpirit, to cry out (in his loſſes) I am undone, while *Cæſar was ſafe*. It is infinitely below a Chriſtian ſpirit to ſay, I am undone, while *Chriſt is ſafe*: ſuch language is groſſeſt Barbariſm

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in all the Churches. They who cannot loſe either their ſouls or their Saviour in the worſt condition, cannot be unhappy in any condition, much leſs then under the fatherly correcting hand of God.

Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects, is a truth which no ſtorms of trouble ſhall ever ſhake or weaken.

Therefore deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Almighty. That's the inference.

The word which we tranſlate [deſpiſe] hath various ſignifications, and they will all be profitable for the clearing of this point; therefore I ſhall open them diſtinctly: and give ſome brief Notes upon every one in order.

מאס *Significat ſpernere, faſtidire, reprobare vel rejicere aliquid cum faſtidio, tanquam vile & contemptum.* Sept. *reddunt aliquando per* ἐξουθενέω, *& hic per* ἀπαναίνω, *ne renuas aut averſeris.* * *Ut ſicut faſtidio illis fuiſſet Deus optimus, ita etiam faſtidio illis ſint creaturæ, & ſua ipſorum voluptates.*

First, It ſignifies to reject a thing, or caſt it off with loathing; when a mans ſtomack turns againſt ſome meats, or they go againſt his ſtomach, loathing ariſes from it. So the word is uſed, *Numb.* 11. 20. When the people murmured becauſe they wanted fleſh, God threatneth them with ſatisfying their deſires: Fleſh would you have? *You ſhall have fleſh:* It is a threat; But how ſhall they have it? *You ſhall not have it one day, nor two dayes, nor five dayes, neither ten dayes, nor twenty dayes; but you ſhall have fleſh even a whole moneth, until it come out of your noſtrils, and it be* * *loathſom unto you, or till you your ſelves deſpiſe it. It is moſt juſt with God, that they who loath his will, ſhould at laſt loath their own deſires*; and that the creatures ſhould not long pleaſe them, who take no heed to pleaſe the Creator. The leaſt mixture of Gods diſpleaſure ſowres our ſweeteſt contents, and makes our very pleaſures loathſom.

Where alſo (by the way) we may obſerve the great difference between earthly and ſpiritual things: The beſt of earthly things, uſed too much or too often, grow loathſom. Angels food (Manna or Quails) will not go down long with us. But Chriſt, the ſpiritual Manna, and all heavenly things, the more we have of them, and the longer we are dieted with them, the more we ſhall delight in them: Theſe will not loath us, after two, or five, or ten, or twenty dayes, or after a whole moneths feeding on them: No, we ſhall feed on them dayes without number, or the whole day of eternity, without any loathings; uſe and delight ſhall never ceaſe or abate; appetite ſhall renew every moment, though our enjoyment be but one and the ſame. Yea, the Saints ſhall be ſo far from loathing the pleaſant cup of glory, that they ought not to loath, and (Chriſt ſtrengthning them) they ſhall not loath the bitter cup of ſorrow: their ſtomachs ſhall not turn, though dieted more then two, or five, or ten, or twenty dayes with the bread of adverſity, and the water of affliction. That is the firſt ſence of the word, in alluſion to nauſeating at the ſight or long uſe of meat: *Loath not the chaſtening of the Lord.*

Or the word may ſeem to carry a reference to phyſick or medicines, as well as meat, which you know is many times given in a bitter pill, or in a diſtaſtful potion: the ſick man is apt to loath the potion brought him, and turn his head away from it; what, he take it, no not he. He had rather die, then drink ſuch a draught; he is ready to throw it againſt the wall, and ſpill it on the ground rather then drink it: But then his Friends or the Phyſitian perſwades with him; be not angry, though it be loathſom to your ſtomach, yet it is wholeſom for your body: it is an enemy only to your diſeaſe, therefore loath it not. So here *Eliphaz* (as it were) brings in God ſtanding like a Phyſitian or a Father, or a tender Mother at the beds ſide, where a ſick Child or a friend lies, uſing many intreaties or perſwaſive reaſons to take a bitter potion; my child, or my friend, do not loath, do not deſpiſe, no nor diſtaſte this medicine, do not caſt it away; though it be bitter in your mouth, yet take it down, and the effects of it will be ſweet to your whole body. We find in Scripture, afflictions compared to a cup: Our Lord Jeſus calls all his ſufferings for our ſalvation, a *Cup*, and it was a cup tempered with the venom and poiſon, with the gall and wormwood of all our ſins; it was a loathſom potion indeed, and ſuch as would have turned the ſtomachs of all Men and Angels to *have drunk it.* So much of the firſt ſence of the word, as it ſignifies loathing, whether in reſpect of meats or medicines.

Now foraſmuch as here is a charge given under this notion, not to loath chaſtenings; We may obſerve,

There is, or poſſibly may be an averſneſs in the beſt of Gods children for a time, from the due entertainment of chaſtenings.

He ſpeaks as if moſt were loth to take them down, and therefore he exhorts, not to loath them: Even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt (ſo far as he was partaker of our nature) ſeemed to loath the bitter cup of ſufferings. Hence he prayed hard, once, and again, yea a third time, *Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me*, (Matth. 26. 39.) Yet at another time, he ſpeaks as if he had been athirſt for that Cup, and angry with *Peter* who would have hindred his draught, *The Cup which my Father giveth me, ſhall I not drink it?* Joh. 18. 11. and ſhortly after, he indeed drank it up to the bottom. Affliction is alſo a bitter Cup to the Saints, and they (as Chriſt) pray again and again, yea thrice againſt it; becauſe to ſenſe, *no chaſtening ſeemeth joyous but grievous*, Heb. 12. 11. though grace perſwades them to drink it, and faith gives them a taſte of much ſweetneſs, when they have drank it: As a ſick man is backward to take a diſtaſtful medicine, till his reaſon hath overcome his ſenſe; ſo a godly man is unwilling to bear afflictions, till his faith hath overcome his reaſon: nor can he quietly endure the troubleſom ſmart of the rod, till he is aſſured of the *peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs*, which grow from it, to thoſe who are *exerciſed by it.* When the Apoſtle is carried upon thoſe Eagles wings of aſſurance, to ſee a houſe not made with hands eternal in the Heavens, then he groans earneſtly under the burden of his earthly tabernacle, and deſires to die; yet looking upon death, he ſaw no form or comelineſs in that, why he ſhould deſire it; and therefore he ſeems to correct himſelf, at leaſt to draw his mind plainer with the next drop of his pen; *Not for that we would be uncloathed, but cloathed upon, that mortality may be ſwallowed up of life.* He ſpeaks ſomewhat like a man, who in a time of heat, haſtily ſtrips himſelf to go into the water, but putting a foot in, and finding it cold, calls for his cloaths again. The Apoſtle in a true holy heat of ſpirit had in his deſires almoſt ſtript himſelf of his body, but putting a foot into the grave, he found that ſo cold, that he had no great mind to it, and therefore had rather keep on the cloathing of his body, and have a ſuite of glory over it, then lay it down. The Saints deſire to live with Chriſt; but in it ſelf, they deſire not to die: They had rather their mortality ſhould be ſwallowed up of eternal life, then their temporal life ſhould be ſwallowed up of mortality. *They that have grace, like not the diſ-unions of nature.* Now as it is in the caſe of death (which is to the Saints the laſt and greateſt affliction) ſo likewiſe in the caſe of all afflictions, which are as renewed and leſſer deaths: Though they embrace and kiſs them (both in a holy ſubmiſſion to the will of God, and in an aſſured expectation of their own good) yet they have nothing pleaſing in them; much, which creates ſo much loathing, that the beſt do but need counſel and encouragement to take and digeſt them.

And then if there be ſome averſneſs even in the beſt from theſe potions of affliction, tempered with the mercy and goodneſs of God; no wonder if there be an abhorrence in wicked men, from thoſe deadly potions, mixt only with his wrath and juſtice. The Pſalmiſt preſents the Lord to us, with a cup in his hand (*Pſal.* 75. 8.) *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, the wine thereof is red* (which notes fierce wrath) *and it is full of mixture:* (This mixture, is of judgments, plagues, and puniſhments, this is the portion of their cup, *Pſal.* 11. *ult.*) But what will the Lord do with this mixed cup? who ſhall ſip at the top of the cup, he tells us not; but he is expreſs, whoſe the bottom is, *He poureth out the ſame* (ſome drops are ſpilt here and there) but the dregs thereof, *all the ungodly of the Earth ſhall wring them out and drink them.* Alas they loath it, their ſtomachs turn at it: They have not been brought up to drink dregs, they have had their wine well refined, and ſparkling with ſpirits in chriſtal glaſſes; and how can they get this down? They who have drunk ſo willingly and freely of the cup of ſin, ſhall be forced whether they will or no to drink the cup of judgment. And it is not a ſip or two ſhall ſerve their turns, they muſt drink all, dregs and all; they ſhall drink it to the bottom, and yet they ſhall never come to the bottom; they have loved long draughts, and

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now they ſhall have one long enough, there is eternity to the bottom: If a cup of affliction, which (in the effect) is a cup of ſalvation, be ſometime or for a time, nauſeous to the godly, how deadly ſick will the ungodly be, who muſt for ever drink a cup of wrath and death?

Secondly, The word which we tranſlate *deſpiſe*, notes the rejecting of a thing as unprofitable or unuſeful: That which a man deſpiſeth, he thinks he ſhall have no good by it: *Things which are unprofitable are deſpicable:* So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 118. 22.) *The ſtone which the builders refuſed or deſpiſed, is become the head ſtone of the corner.* There were maſter builders in the Church, who (when they ſurveyed all ſorts of materials or ſtones for their fabrick of faith) looking upon the perſon of Chriſt, thought him fit only to caſt out among the rubbiſh, as altogether unuſeful; they layed him by, as a refuſe-ſtone, who is the *head corner ſtone*, both the ſtrength and beauty of the whole building. Thus the word is very appliable to the preſent Text: refuſe not corrections, as unprofitable and uſeleſs: Say not (as the Jews of Chriſt, *Can any good come out of Nazareth?* ſo) can any good come out of chaſtenings? *Deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Almighty.*

And from this notion of the word, we may obſerve a ſecond prejudice againſt the rod: Even the Saints are ready to conceive afflictions to be unuſeful, and that they could well enough ſpare, and be without their troubles. A natural eye never ſees nor finds any thing but dammage by affliction; and a ſpiritual Eye doth not alwayes ſee the advantage that comes by them. Yea, he may ſometime ſay of an affliction, it will be my undoing, and the ruine of my houſe, and yet afterwards find it *as a corner ſtone*, the choiceſt outward means, which (through the bleſſing of God) hath united the walls both of his ſpiritual and civil building, the frame both of grace within, and comforts without. The Apoſtle *Peter*, hath a ſtrange Parentheſis (1 *Pet.* 1. 6.) For having told them of their rejoycing in the ſafety of their ſpiritual eſtate, being kept (or ſecured as with a Garriſon from Heaven) *by the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation. Though now for a ſeaſon (if need be) ye are in heavineſs through manifold Temptations*, or afflictions. Obſerve how he puts an *If need be*, or a ſuppoſition of neceſſity upon the afflictions of believers. As if he had ſaid, ye who are the *Candidates of eternity*, and heirs of ſalvation, may judge your ſelves paſt the *rod* or the *ferula*, and think, now ye have need of nothing but comfort or rejoycing in the hope of that ſalvation, ready to be revealed; but I tell you, you may have need of heavineſs yet, before you come to Heaven: and of manifold temptations, for the removing or ſubduing the corruptions of your hearts, before you enter upon your *incorruptible inheritance*. We are apt to conceive chaſtnings to be of no uſe, when they are as neceſſary as our daily bread; therefore *deſpiſe not chaſtnings*, as uſeleſs or unprofitable.

Thirdly, The word is applied often to the rejecting of a thing or perſon, as low, diſhonourable and diſgraceful: In this ſence alſo it is appliable here. *Deſpiſe not chaſtning:* That is, do not think thy ſelf diſgrac'd when thou art chaſtiſed: The heart of man is naturally full of pride, *Man is a proud piece of fleſh.* Nor doth he reſent any thing more, then his diſhonour; many can bear the pain of the croſs, better then the ſhame of the croſs. It is very obſervable to this purpoſe, how the Apoſtle deſcribes the Lord Chriſt in his ſufferings, *Heb.* 12. 2. *He endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame*: as noting, that his being above the ſhame of the croſs, bore up his ſpirit under the croſs. *To deſpiſe ſhame*, is to look upon that, which the world accounts ſhameful, not only as deſpicable in it ſelf, but as not hurtful to us: When a man deſpiſes an enemy, as *Goliah* diſdained *David* (1 *Sam.* 17. 42.) he preſumes himſelf above his enemies power to hurt him: So to deſpiſe ſhame is to make nothing of it, or to think our ſelves no whit the worſe for it; yea rather to think our ſelves honoured by it. And until in this ſence we can *deſpiſe ſhame*, we ſhall deſpiſe correction and the croſs. Who is it almoſt, that finds not this the hardeſt Text in all the Chapter of afflictions? *Zedekiah* was more afraid to be mocked by the fugitive Jews, then to be a priſoner to the King of *Babylon*, *Jer.* 38. 19. If a man be poor, preſently he thinks he is diſgraced: if he be weak, he doubts he ſhall be contemned: if he looſe his eſtate, he fears he ſhall looſe his credit in the world: he was a man of place, ſome-body among his neighbours, but now he ſhall be ſlighted. *Suffering for well doing, is our crown; ſuffering for evil doing, is our ſhame; but it is no ſhame to ſuffer.*

Fourthly, *To deſpiſe* a thing, notes the ſlighting of it, as if we did not think it worth while, to take any notice of it; and ſo this will be the ſence, *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtnings of the Lord*; that is, do not ſlight the chaſtnings, do not lightly paſs them by, do not look upon them as inconſiderable, as not caring what God doth with thee or thine. *When God layes his hand upon us, he would have us lay it to our hearts.* As it is our duty to be affected with mercies, ſo likewiſe with chaſtnings. If a malefactor ſhould ſay to the Judge, do what you will with me, I care not; or a child to the Parent, correct me as long as you will, I care not; how unnatural were this? This is properly to deſpiſe afflictions. Some are like *Leviathan* in this ſence (*Job* 41. 27.) *They eſteem Iron as Straw, and Braſs as rotten Wood*: They make nothing of the acts or inſtruments of Gods diſpleaſure. This is groſs deſpiſing. But beſides every undervaluing, or inadvertency of the correcting hand of God, hath a degree of this deſpiſing it. That exhortation ought never to be forgotten, which ſpeaketh to us, as unto children, *Heb.* 12. 5. *My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* The Greek word imports, the *Littling, or thinking of them little.* Do not think the chaſtnings of God little, do not little, or ſlight them in thy thoughts. *Neither faint when thou art rebuked*, that is, do not think thy afflictions ſo great, that thou muſt needs ſink and faint under them. Theſe are the two extreams, into which our hearts uſually run when chaſtnings are upon us. Some err by neglecting the hand of God, as light; and others by fainting under it, as too heavy. As a good heart takes notice of, or will not deſpiſe a little, the leaſt comfort; ſo it will take notice of, and not deſpiſe a little, the leaſt croſs. When a man hath a ſmall loſs in his eſtate, if he ſay, this will not undo me, I can bear this, I will fare as well, and go as fine as ever for all this, ſuch ſpeeches or thoughts are a deſpiſing of the chaſtening of the Lord. We are to obſerve the hand of God taking away, as well as giving a penny. So when a man hath a little fit of ſickneſs, if he ſay, I ſhall rub out this well enough, this is to deſpiſe the chaſtning of the Lord: We are to bleſs God for every hours health, and to be ſenſible of his hand in every hours ſickneſs, or aking joynt.

μὴ ὀλιγωρεῖ παιδείας κυρίου.

Every affliction is a meſſenger from God, it hath ſomewhat to ſay to us from Heaven; and God will not bear it, if his meſſengers be deſpiſed, how mean ſoever: If you ſend a child with a meſſage to a friend, and he ſlight and deſpiſe him, you will take it ill. I remember what the ſtory relates of *Galienus* the Emperor, who, when the report came to him, that *Egypt* was loſt, what then (ſaid he) cannot I live without the flax of *Egypt*? And when the report was brought that a great part of his Dominion in *Aſia* was waſted: Cannot I live (ſaid he) without the delicacies of *Aſia*? To ſpeak thus from a principle of mortification toward the creature, is the character of an excellent ſpirit; but to ſpeak thus from a contempt of the providence of God, is the character of a proud, or of a ſtupid ſpirit. When we hear of the loſs of a child, of a friend, or of a loſs in our eſtate; to ſay, what then? I can bear that well enough, I have more children, other friends, eſtate enough beſides that, this (I ſay) is a high deſpiſing of affliction.

There is one thing further, in the fifth place, obſervable in this word, *Deſpiſe not thou the chaſtnings of the Lord.* The word is an extenuation or a leſſening of the ſence. The Holy Ghoſt intends more then is expreſſed; for the truth is, when he ſaith, *Deſpiſe not*, &c. His meaning is this, ſhew reverence, highly prize and eſteem the chaſtning of the Lord. As (for inſtance) when the Apoſtle ſaith, in 1 *Theſ.* 5. 20. *Diſpiſe not prophecying.* Do you think this is all that is due unto an Ordinance of God, that a man ſhould not deſpiſe it? Surely no, he means then, prize prophecying highly, have it in great eſteem: So in 1 *Tim.* 4. 12. and *Tit.* 2. 15. when he ſaith, *Let no man deſpiſe thy youth*, is that all the Holy Ghoſt means? That *Timothy* a godly Paſtour ſhould only not be deſpiſed by his people? No, his meaning is, that they ſhould honour, reſpect and reverence him, as one that watched over them

Extenuatio eſt, nã plus ſignificatur quã dicitur ſc. maximi facito diſciplinã Domini, nihil tibi antiquius aut potius ſit, quã ut illius correctionẽ æquo animo accipies.

in

in the Lord. I might give you divers other Scriptures, where, when the Holy Ghost only forbiddeth the sin, he intendeth the duty or grace in strictest opposition to that sin. So here, *Despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty*, layes this charge and duty upon us, highly to esteem the chastening of the Lord; we must put afflictions amongst our comforts, and rank them with our blessings. Not to despise, is but the first step beyond sin, but that includes the last and furthest step of duty, which becomes us under chastenings.

מוּסָר *à radice* יסר *Vincivit, ligavit, & per Metaphorā, castigavit, erudivit verbis aut verberibus, ad disciplinā vel pœnā transfertur. Sicut vox Lamad, quæ doctrinā significat etiam aliquando stimulū sonat.*

So much of the act forbidden, *despising*. Now, for the object, **chastening**. The original verb signifies to instruct, or to teach; so it is translated, *Chap. 4. vers. 3. Thou hast instructed many.* Instruction is both by words and blows. The wisdom of God mixes a rod with his word, and chastening with teaching: Therefore it is promiscuously used in Scripture, sometime for teaching, and sometime for chastening. Chastening belongs properly to children, who are wanton and ungovern'd, who have a bundle of folly in their hearts, which the rod of correction driveth out. *To be chastened*, hath a double aspect upon us; First, upon our priviledge: Secondly, upon our weakness. To be chastened, notes our priviledge and relation, as children, unto God our Father. He hath revenges for his enemies, but chastenings are a part of his childrens portion; yet in that we are chastened, it taxes us of weakness; we are but children, foolish, unruly, wanton, and therefore we go almost all our dayes, with a rod at our backs. Though the Saints on Earth, compared among themselves, are some children, and others men; yet all the Saints on Earth, compared with those in Heaven, or with what themselves shall be in Heaven, are children, and therefore they have what fits their state, *chastening and correction.* This *chastening* is sometime put for revenge, or the exactest and severest retribution of justice; thus it is said, *Prov.* 7.22. That the foolish young man caught by the subtil harlot, *went after her as a fool to the correction of the stocks*; that is, as a wicked man goes to punishment. And when the Prophet describes the sufferings of Christ, which were vindictive in the highest degree, he expresses it in this word, *The chastisement of our peace was upon him* (Isa. 53.5.) Though Christ were the infinitely and most entirely beloved Son of his Father, yet he did not chastise him as a son, but as an enemy or malefactor; for he chastened him in our stead, and under the same notion, that we must have been chastened, who were enemies and malefactors. So then, the word signifies sometimes judiciary chastening, but here fatherly chastening; which will yet appear more clearly, in opening the last term of this verse, which shews us the efficient cause of this chastening. *The Almighty.*

Despise not the chastening of the Almighty.] The chastening rod is in the hand of *Shaddai*, the Almighty. This is one of the glorious names of God.

שַׁדַּי *Variè derivatur; Primò à radice* שָׁדַד, *Vastavit, spoliavit, populatus est, perdidit, quasi vastatore dicas, i.e. invictū & potentem cui nemo resistere possit. Et volunt nonnulli Deum hoc nomen transisse à vastatione mundi facta in diluvio. Græci reddunt* παντοκράτωρ, *& Latini, Omnipotens.*

And he is so called, First, from his power, to go thorough with what he takes in hand: His work never sticks in the mid-way for want of strength to bring it to the end. Despise not the correction of an Almighty hand. Further, the word notes not only power enough to correct, but power to destroy, spoil and lay all waste before him. God hath gained this Title or Attribute, from destroying or wasting his enemies. Some of the Rabbins design the Original of it, to that special act of his destroying power, *The drowning of the old world*; he shews his Almighty power in destroying and pulling down, as well as in making or setting up this goodly frame. To this the holy Prophets are well conceived to allude, when they say that, *Shod, scil.* Destruction, commeth from *Shaddai*, *The Almighty.* We have it in two expres Texts, *Isa.* 13.6. *Howle ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand, it shall come as a Destruction from the Almighty*; it shall come as *Shod* from *Shaddai.* So (*Joel* 1.15.) *Alas for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come.* It will be profitable for us to consider, under what name God is expressed, when he is chastening his own children.

Nonnulli putant שַׁדַּי *esse ex verbo* שָׁדַי *sufficit, & litera* ש, *quæ supplet locum & sensum relativi* Ascher, *& ita denotat Deum sibi sufficientem, & qui omnibus largitur sufficientiam, respondens Græco* αὐτάρκης Drus.

Secondly, Others derive this name from the conjunction of two Hebrew words, whereof the one (*Dai*) signifies, it *Sufficeth*, or is sufficient: and the other, though it be but a letter (*Shin*) yet it supplieth the part or place of the Relative (*Ascher*) *which*, and so the word put together sounds thus much, *Who is sufficient, or who is all-sufficient; Despise not the chastening of him that is all-sufficient.* Thou art under his correction, who doth not take from thee, because he wants himself; who doth not let thee want, because his own store is spent, out of which he used to supply thee. He alone hath sufficiency in himself, and he is at all times *all-sufficient* for all others, and gives sufficiency to as many, as he pleaseth. That of the Apostle fills this signification of the word, *Act.* 17.25. *Neither is he worshipped with mens hands, as if he needed any thing; for he giveth to all, life and breath, and all things.*

Alii deducunt שַׁד à שָׁדַי *Quod Mammam significat, quasi māmosū dicas, quod omnia alat.* Drus.

Thirdly, The word is conceived to come from *Shad*, which in the Hebrew signifies a *breast*, the mothers *breast or pap*, by which she suckles her child. And answerable to this notion, in most of those places, wherein God is expressed in that act of his providence, making fruitful, and giving increase, he hath this name, *Shaddai*: as noting, that he hath the *Great Milky Breast*, which nourishes and suckles, which feeds and strengthens all creatures: that is, the word, his blessing, not only makes fruitful and multiplies, but preserves and keeps alive. Thus, *Gen.* 49.25. the Patriarch, old dying *Jacob*, blesses his son *Joseph* in this form, *And by the Almighty* (Shaddai) *who shall bless thee with blessings of Heaven above, blessings of the deep that lies under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb.* His Father *Isaac* had sent him to *Padan-Aram* under the influences of the same blessing, almost in the same words, (*Gen.*28 3.) *God all-mighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee.* And the Lord himself speaks thus to *Jacob*, when he appeared the second time to him, after his coming from *Padan-Aram. I am* (El-Shaddai) *God Almighty, be thou fruitful and multiply*, Gen. 35.11. that is, I can make thee fruitful, and multiply thy posterity, and I can feed them, as fast as they multiply, and give thee fruit for thy family, as well as make thy family fruitful. *Thou shalt not over-charge me with the greatness or numerousness of thy house. Trouble not thy self, let thy children be my care, at my finding, how many soever they are, let my purse pay for all: I am* El-Shaddai, *God Almighty.* So then, as the justice and exact wisdom of God are set forth in the former branch under the title *Elohim, Happy is the man whom God,* (Elohim) *corrects*; so (least we should think of God under that notion only) his power and all-sufficiency, his goodness and tenderness are set forth in the next branch, *Despise not the chastening of the Almighty.* You are under the rod of *Shaddai*, an *All-powerful*, an *All-sufficient*, an *All-nourishing God.* The verse following seems to joynt in with, and suit this fully, *He makes sore, and he bindeth up; he woundeth and he healeth*; one part shewing us God, as a Judge, *wounding and making sore*; the other, as an all-sufficient Friend, and Father or Physitian, *healing and binding up.* Take two or three Notes, from the consideration of the name, under which God is here expressed.

First, *The lightest chastenings come from a hand that is able to destroy.*

When the stroak is little, yet a great God strikes. Although God give thee but a touch, a stripe which scarce razes the skin: yet he is able to wound thee to the heart. Know, it is not because he wants power to strike harder, but because he will not, because he is pleased to moderate his power; thou hast but such a chastening, as a child of a year old may well bear; but at that time, know, thou art chastened with a hand able to pull down the whole world; the hand of *Shaddai*, *The Almighty* gives that little blow. Men seldom strike their brethren, less then their power; they would often strike them more, their will is stronger then their Arm. But the Lords arm is stronger (in this sence) then his will. He doth but chasten, who could destroy. And this carries a mighty perswasion with it, not to *despise the chastening of the Lord*, how little soever; for he can strike harder, if thou slightest this. He can break thy bones, who hath not yet broken thy flesh. *Fear him* (as our Lord Christ argues, who, though at the present he hath made thy head only to ake a little, yet) *can kill thy body, and after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell.*

Pondus est in voce שַׁדַּי *noli spernere clementiam ejus in quo vivis, qui te uno momēto potest comminuere.* Coc.

Secondly,

Secondly, In that afflictions come from *Shaddai*, a God all-sufficient, God would have us conceive in all our troubles;

That, *when he takes away any or all created comforts from us, yet he is himself all-sufficient for us.*

When we are chastened by the loss of any good things, *Shaddai* doth it, who hath the power of all good things in his hand. When he takes away riches, or health, or relations, if he doth not take away himself from us, we cannot be comfortless, for all-sufficiency stands by us.

Lastly, He dealeth with us, but as a tender nurse, or mother in all his chastenings. The mother strikes the child a little blow with one hand, and gives it the breast with the other; she gives it a little tap with one hand, and a spoon with the other. Consider your chastenings, they are the chastenings of *Shaddai*, who, as a tender mother, hath a breast ready to nourish, and a spoon to feed, while he chides or chastens. And if by greater afflictions, he wounds or makes you very sore, you shall not want careful dressing and assured healing.

Vers. 18. **For he maketh sore, and he bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.**

This verse contains an exemplification of the former ground, why we should not despise the *chastening of the Almighty*: For if it should be objected against the former assertion (*Happy is the man whom God correcteth.*) Where is this happiness? Is there happiness in sores and wounds, in sickness and weakness, in poverty and in wants? Who cannot easily want this happiness, and not complain? *Eliphaz* seems to answer for God in this Text. If your faith cannot come up to believe this, stay but a while, and your sense shall teach it you. Who would not be glad of a wound when he knows he shall have *Shaddai* for his Chirurgion. If you will not allow a man is happy, when he is sore; will you not allow him happy, when his sore is bound up by such a hand? If you will not grant a man is happy, when wounded; you cannot deny him happy, when he is thus healed. The Almighty will not leave them in their sores, in their wounds: As he hath a rod, so he hath a swath; as he hath a sword, so a salve. His plaister is ready for your wound, and his medicines for your diseases. It is true of God above all others, *One and the same hand smites and cures.* Thus of the general meaning and connexion of this verse.

He maketh sore.] The word is used in the second Chapter of this book, *vers.* 13. of *Job*'s friends, that they stood silent, for they saw his grief was great, or his soreness was very great. It notes the grief and soreness, either of mind or body; some translate, *He woundeth:* But the next clause bears that distinctly, or we may joyn both, the one, as the cause, the other, as the effect, *He maketh sore by wounding.*

And bindeth up.] The word is appliable to any kind of binding. First, To the binding of captives in prison with chains. Secondly, To the binding of ornaments upon the head, *Ezek.* 29. 9. Thirdly, It is used metaphorically for binding to obedience or punishemt, *Job* 34. 17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* The Hebrew is, *shall he bind*; because Governors bind their subjects or servants, either to do what they command, or to suffer what they inflict. Fourthly, It is also applied by a metaphor to the binding up of those civil breaches or ruines, which are upon a people, *Isa.* 3. 6, 7. *A man shall take hold of his brother*, &c. *saying, be thou a ruler, and let this ruine be under thy hand. In that day shall he swear, saying, I will not be a Healer, or a Binder up.* Fifthly, It is used for the applying of ligatures, with which the medicine or plaister is bound upon the wound or sore; and this word doth therefore also signifie the healing of a wound, because the due binding of the wound is one half of the patients cure, and a very great part of a Chirurgions skill, as the learned Physitians observe in their Discourses about wounds and Chirurgery; Ligature contributes so much to healing, that the same word serves for both, or either. Now (*Shaddai*) the Almighty is admirable at this, when he hath made a sore, he can make an exact *Ligature.* We often find these two together, *Psal.* 147. 3. *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.* The Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 34. 4.) complains of the false Prophets, *Because they did not heal, that which was sick, and bound not up, that which was broken.* They had neither skill nor conscience, either spiritually to break hearts, or when they found them broken to bind them up. They knew not how to fasten Gospel promises and holy counsels upon the heart, that the wounds of it might be closed, and were therefore Physitians of no value.

There are two interpretations given of these words, *He maketh sore, and he bindeth up.*

First, Some expound them by an *Enallage* of the Participle for the Verb, thus, *He maketh sore, and he bindeth up*; that is, *He making sore, bindeth up*; as if the very act, by which God smites, had an influence upon the healing and a tendency to the restoring of his afflicted ones, *He making sore, bindeth up.* We find such constructions frequent in Scripture, *Isa.* 65. 22. *They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat:* That is, *They building, another shall not inhabit, and they planting, another shall not eat.* The negative is not fixed upon their building, &c. but upon other inhabiting. And so, *Deut.* 22. 4. *Thou shalt not see thy brothers Ass, or his Ox fall down by the way, and hide thy self from them:* That is, *Thou seeing thy brothers Ass or Ox fall down, shalt not hide thy self from them:* A man sometimes could not but see his brothers Ass or Ox fall down: but he seeing, must not at any time, hide himself from them, that is, not succour them; so (by the way) that phrase of hiding may be interpreted, by that of the Prophet (*Isa.* 58. 7.) *Thou shalt not hide thy self from thy own flesh.* But to the point, here we see, *He maketh sore, and bindeth up*; may congruously to other Scripture speakings, be rendred, *He making sore, doth bind up*; as if the wound were a part of the cure, and the sore a plaister. We know that a wound in nature is sometime a part of the cure: it is a common and a necessary practise in Chirurgery (and to that the Holy Ghost may allude in this place) when they perceive a wound or a sore, to which medicines cannot well be applied (and so unfit for healing) either to make a new wound in the whole flesh, or to make the first bigger. The murderer wounds to kill, and the Physitian wounds to cure. He comes, as it were, arm'd with instruments of cruelty. The patient whose flesh is to be launced cries out, but yet he launces him. The patient whose flesh is to be seared, cryes out, but yet he sears him. He is cruel to the wound, while he is most kind to the wounded.

An ignorant man would wonder to see a Chirurgion, when he comes for healing, make the wound wider, yet so he must do, and he doth it upon urgent reasons. As when the orifice is not wide enough to let in the medicine, or to let out the corruption, or cannot admit his searching instruments to the bottom; in such cases, he saith, *Unless I increase your wound, I cannot cure it.* Thus often times the Lord is compelled to wound, that he may heal; or fit our wounds for healing. Our wound is not wide enough, to let out the sinful corruption of our hearts, to let in the searching instruments and corrasives of the Law, or the balm and comfortable applications of the Gospel.

We may Observe from this sence of the words,

That, *The woundings and smitings of God, are preparatories for our cure and healing.*

It is said (*Isa.* 53. 5.) of Christ, *that with his stripes we are healed:* and it is in this sence a truth, that we are healed with our own stripes: We are healed with the stripes of Christ *meritoriously*, and we are healed by our own stripes *preparatorily*; the stripes of Christ heal us naturally, our own stripes heal us occasionally: or his in the act, ours in the event. (*Prov.* 27. 6.) *Faithful are the wounds of a friend*, his wounds are faithful, because he wounds in faithfulness: The healings of many are unfaithful. *They heal the hurt of the daughter of my people deceitfully*, is the Lords complaint by the Prophet, they skin over the wound, but they do not cure it. *Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oyl which shall not break my head*, Psalm 141. 5. Much more may we say, *Let the righteous Lord smite me, and it shall be a kindness to me; let the righteous Lord reprove and correct me, it shall be as an excellent oyl, which shall not break mine head*; it shall heal my

Vulnerat & medetur i. e. *vulnerans medetur, vulnerando sanes.*

Illa est vox Domini, percutiam & ego sanabo; hoc faciunt medici. Ferum gestant & curare veniunt. Clamat secandus & secatur; sævitur in vulnus ut homo sanetur. Aug. *in Psa.* 50. *Chirurgus sæpe vulnus infligit, & ferro sibi spacium ad commodam curationem aperit.*

my heart: How healing then are his salves, whose very sores are a salve?

Secondly, Take the words in the plain rendring of them, noting only thus much, that God makes sore, and bindeth up; so we have two distinct acts, often ascribed to God in a figure, to set forth judgment and mercy, the afflictions and deliverance of his people (*Hos.* 6. 2.) *Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.* (1 Sam. 2. 6.) *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive.* (Deut. 32. 39.) *See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make alive, I wound, and I heal.* Hence observe,

It is the property of God to take care of all the sicknesses, sores or evils of his people.

As God is the great corrector and instructer of his people, so he is the great Physitian of his people: If he make a wound, he will take care for the healing of it; he doth not make sores, and leave others to bind up. Mighty men wound, but they take no care for healing; they can impoverish and spoil, but they care not to repair; they can pull down and root up, let who so will build and plant. *Shaddai, the Almighty God* doth both; if he break thy head, come to him, humble thy self before him, and he will surely give thee a plaister, which will cost thee nothing but the asking. And whereas *he doth not willingly afflict or grieve*, he doth most willingly comfort and heal the children of men, *Lam.* 33. 3. He speaks of it as a pain to himself to make us sore; but to make us sound, is his delight and pleasure. Satan is the *Abaddon*, the destroyer, and he only destroyes; he makes wounds, but he heals none; he kills, but he makes none alive.

The second Branch of the Verse [**He woundeth, and his hands make whole**] is but a repetition of the same thing, yet with some addition, or heightning of the sence. To *make sore*, and *bind up*, are not so deep either in judgment or in mercy, as to *wound* and *make whole*.

מחץ *Transfodit, transfixit, vel cruentavit.*

The word used for wounding, imports a dangerous and deadly wound, or to make a man all *gore blood*. It signifies to strike quite through; and it is divers times applied, to note that stroak which God gives his worst enemies, *Psal.* 68. 21. *But God shall wound the head of his enemies*, or, *he shall strike them quite through the head.* ver. 23. *He shall dip his foot*, or *make it red in the blood of the ungodly.* And, *Psal.* 110. 5. *The Lord shall strike through Kings in the day of his wrath.* Hence observe,

That, *God sometimes makes very deep and great wounds in his own servants.*

Such wounds, as by the sight of the eye, you cannot distinguish them from the wounds of his mortal enemies. He strikes through both heads and hearts of his own people: Or as *Simeon* said to the blessed Virgin *Mary*, Luke 2. 35. *A sword pierceth through their soul also.* But then lastly note,

God never makes a wound too great for his own cure.

The power of God to save, is as great as his power to destroy; his healing power and his wounding power, are of the same extent; his justice cannot out-act his mercy; both are infinite.

And not only doth he heal the wounds which himself makes, but he can heal the wounds which men make; even all the wounds which the utmost power and malice of man can make. He is able to do more good, to shew more mercy, then all creatures are able to do hurt or mischief. We find the state and condition of a people sometimes so wounded and sick, that men have despaired of recovery; being consulted, they may answer, your sore cannot be bound up, and your wound cannot be healed, your estate is gangreen'd and past cure: *Lo*, he said, as was toucht before, (*Isa.* 3. 8.) *In that day shall a man swear, saying, I will not be an healer, for in my house is neither bread nor cloathing.* Alas, I heal you! I cannot heal you; your troubles are past my skill to remedy or redress. Thus man is sometimes at a stand, he cannot heal what men have wounded; but God is never at a stand; your old festered sores, and rankled wounds which have taken wind, discourage not his Chyrurgery. When a people are in such a pickle or pitiful plight, as the Prophet *Isaiah* describes the Kingdom of *Judah*, in *chap.* 1. 56. *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint: from the sole of the foot, unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores; they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with oyntment.* When (I say) the case of a people is thus, and they can get no healer: yea, though a people (like the woman, *Mark* 5. 25.) *have had an issue of blood* (in bloody battels, which is now almost *Englands* case) *many years, and have suffered many things of many Physitians, and have spent all that they have, and are nothing bettered, but rather grow worse; yet if Christ do but touch such a sick, diseased, bleeding people in mercy, and they touch him in faith, they shall be healed, and their fountain of blood will immediately dry up.* Or if their condition requires some longer operation, he can effectually take such a course for their cure; he is abundantly furnished with all instruments and abilities for the making of a perfect cure.

It is well observed, that three things are necessary for a Chyrurgion.

First, He must have an *Eagles eye*; one that is good at healing, had need be good at seeing.

Secondly, He must have a *Ladies hand*, soft and tender, to handle the sore gently.

Thirdly, A *Lions heart, a stout strong heart*; for if he faint, how shall his Patient keep up his courage?

These three are exceeding necessary in Chyrurgery about natural bodies; but much more in Chyrurgery about Civil and Ecclesiastical bodies, the healing of Churches and Kingdoms. And where shall we find, whither shall we send for Physitians, qualified with this *Eagles eye*, to look into all our sores and sickness? with this *Ladies hand*, to deal gently and tenderly with our wounds? with this *Lions heart*, stoutly and couragiously, without fears and faintings, to go through with the work? Well, if men should not be found thus furnished, the Lord is: He hath an *Eagles eye*, an all-seeing eye, seven eyes of providence and wisdom, to look through our sores, and into all our distempers: He hath (as in allusion we may speak) a *Ladies hand*, soft and tender, to deal gently and graciously with a people; he can dress our wounds, and pain us little, scarce be felt while he doth it. And he hath the *Lions heart*, infinite courage and strength of spirit, to undertake the most gastly wounds, or swoln putrified sores. Let us therefore rest our selves assured, that whatsoever our personal or our National sores, our personal or our National wounds be, be they what they will, or what we can call them, desperate, incurable, such as have discouraged many from medling with their cure, or sham'd those that have; yet our *Shaddai*, the almighty God, can bind them up and heal them, fetch the core from the bottom, and close the skin upon the top, so tenderly dress, and so perfectly cure them, that a scar shall not remain, unless it be to mind us of his infinite skill and goodness, or of our own duty and thankfulness.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.
In famine he shall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the sword.
Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue; neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

ELiphaz still prosecuteth his former Argument, to take *Job* off from despising the *chastenings of the Almighty* spoken of at the seventeenth verse. And having shewed, first in general, that they are happy whom the Lord corrects: And secondly, That the Lord heels as well as wounds, is as ready to bind up, as to make the sore; he illustrates this by giving,

First, An assurance of deliverance from evil, and that,
1. In the general, at the nineteenth verse.
2. By an enumeration of particular cases of greatest dangers and outward evils.

And secondly, To shew the happiness of those whom God corrects, he gives an assurance of positive blessings, which shall in due time be heaped upon their heads, whom God had before wounded with sorrows, and loaded with afflictions.

The nineteenth verse is a promise of deliverance from evil.

evil. He shall deliver thee from six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

נצל *Spoliavit, rapuit, eripuit tanquã ab hoste aut malo. Eripere præda.*

To deliver, notes here, the snatching or pulling of a man out of the hand of an enemy, out of the mouth of danger.

צר *Angustia, interdum significat hostem, quasi angustiatorem dicas.*

The Hebrew word for [trouble] comes from a Root, which signifies to straighten or to narrow a thing up in a little compass; and so by a Metaphor, to vex and trouble; because they who are straightned in any kind, are pained and troubled. And when we hear of any trouble, we usually say, such are in straights. And this word is often translated *a straight* (2 Sam. 24. 14.) *I am in a great straight*, saith *David*, when he was put upon that hard election, between Sword, Pestilence and Famine. So, *Judg.* 11. 7. & 1 *Sam.* 13. 6.

The holy Language expresses an Enemy or Adversary by this word, because an Enemy puts upon straights, and so, to much trouble.

And to raise the force of this word to the highest, it is used to signifie the pangs and throws of women in childbearing, in which the mother labours in grievous straights, while the infant labours for enlargement. Troubles ever meet us in, or bring us into straights; they may well change names, which are so near in nature; I find the word so translated here, in some Books, *He shall deliver thee in six straights, and in seven*; when thou art so encompast about, shut in and encircled by evils on every side, that thou knowest not which way to move or turn, much less to go out; then the Lord will give enlargement, and either find a way out for thee, or make one, as he did for *Israel* at the red Sea, through those mighty waters.

In six, yea, in seven.] This phrase of speech is very considerable: Some numbers in Scripture, have a kind of eminency or excellency in them: I intend not any large discourse about numbers; only in brief. Those three numbers, *Three*, *Six* and *Seven*, are applied to a special signification by the Holy Ghost. A great number, a perfect number is expressed by any one of these three numbers; *A threefold cord* (that is, a cord of many or sufficient folds) *is not easily broken*, Eccles. 4. 12. *Three times thou shalt keep a feast to me in the year*, Exod. 23. 14. *Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord*, ver. 17. The Candlestick had three Branches, *Exod.* 25. 32. And *three cubits was the height of the Altar*, Exod. 27. 1. *Three Cities of refuge* were appointed for the man-slayer, *Deut.* 19. 7. And the addition made is of another *three*, v. 9. *Three witnesses* gave the compleatest evidence requirable; as *Two*, the least admittable in the Law, *Deut.* 17. 6. That (besides a rule) there was a mystery in most of these, I think no man doubts; though what the mystery was, may be presumption in any man to determine. Of this we are sure, that the highest mystery and perfection of all *numbers* and *things*, is found in *One Three*, *That Three in One*, *The sacred Trinity*: And in the common speech of most, if not of all Languages, *Thrice happy*, *Thrice great*, *Thrice honourable*, note a man advanced to the very pinacle of *Happiness*, *Greatness* and *Honour*. *The Number Three, or the Numeral Thrice, imply a compleatness in all Numbers.*

That the number six notes perfection, may be seen in the work of Creation: The Lord could as easily have made the world in six, or in one moment, as in six dayes; but the Lord saw it good, to take a compleat number of dayes, for so compleat a work. God threatens *Gog*, his perfect and compleat enemy, with a compleat punishment, or with judgment in perfection, (*The Justice of God can be as compleat in punishing, as the malice of man can be in sinning*) Ezek. 39. 2. *I am against thee, O Gog, the chief Prince of Meshech and Tubal, I will turn thee back, and leave but the sixth part of thee*; so we translate: yet in the Margin of our Books, we find the Hebrew thus, *I will strike thee with six plagues*, or, *I will draw thee back with a hook of six teeth.*

Seven is a famous number, implying, First, Multitude. Secondly, Perfection: *The barren hath born seven* (saith *Hannah* in her Song, 1 *Sam.* 2. 5.) that is, many, she is a compleat mother, she hath a flourishing family, many children. And in opposition to this (*Jer.* 15. 9.) *She that hath born seven, languisheth*, that is, she that hath had many children, now hath none. Seven Devils were cast out of the woman (*Luke* 8. 2.) that is, a multitude of Devils: So the *seven Spirits*, *the seven Churches*, *the seven Trumpets*, *the seven Seals*, *the seven Vials*, &c. in the *Revelation*, speak the compleatness and perfection of each in their kind, whether good or evil: And that is appliable to the particular sence of the Text (*Prov.* 24. 16.) *The just falleth seven times a day*; that is, he falleth often, almost continually into trouble, and yet *he rises again, God delivers him.* The Hebrew word *Shebange*, is near in sound to our English *seven*; and to note that seven is a compleat full number, the same Hebrew word signifies *seven* and *full*; *seven* and *satisfied* or *compleat*. And the word to *swear*, is of the same extraction in that Language, with the word *seven*; the reason is added, because in or about an Oath, many and important causes and grounds are required.

שבע *Septẽ* שבע *Saturatus, impletus, abundavit.* נשבע *Juravit, inde juramentum, à Septenario numero, ut quidam putant, quod juramenta fieri debeant multis adhibitis & idoneis multumque confirmatis testibus & causis.*

But to pass from single numbers, I shall consider them in construction or conjunction, as here six and seven. *He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.* Some understand this strictly and precisely of those two numbers six and seven; and expound the Text by the enumeration of those six or seven particular evils made by *Eliphaz* in the following verses: For having said in general, that God will deliver his in six troubles and in seven, he reckoneth up several troubles, and gives us (as it were) a Catalogue, or a particular of those evils by name, amounting to six or seven; as, 1. Famine. 2. War. 3. Scourge of the Tongue. 4. Destruction. 5. Evil Beasts. 6. Hurtful Stones. Here are six; and if a seventh evil come upon thee, *in seven no evil shall touch thee.*

But I rather take this expression, *six, yea seven*, to be a fixed number put for an unfixed, a certain number for an uncertain; and that uncertain number to be a great number, the greatest number, any number imaginable. We find this kind of speaking frequently in Scripture: In the thirty third of this Book of *Job*, v. 29. *Lo these things God works twice and thrice*; which we translate, *these things God works oftentimes. When numbers are doubled with an encrease in the latter, it notes a mighty growth of the whole number. Twice and twice* (we know) is but four times; but *twice and thrice*, may be more then five times; *twice and thrice is oftentimes, no man knows how often.*

We find the number next above this in the same signification; *three and four*, are put for many, very many (*Amos* 1. 3.) *For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four*: Some understand it of three or four special sins, of which *Damascus* was chiefly guilty; namely, 1. Idolatry. 2. Incest. 3. Luxury. 4. Oppression. Or, Three may be taken for a *Cardinal* number, and Four for an *Ordinal*, for the *Fourth*, as if some fourth sin were so sinful, and had such a malignity in it as the Lord would not pardon. Thus *Four* is put for the fourth, *Prov.* 30. 15, 18, 21, 29. *Three things are never satisfied, yea, four things say not it is enough.* That is, a *fourth thing* (sc. *fire* being the most unsatiable of all the rest) saith not it is enough. The copulative particle (*and*) is often in Scripture taken comparatively, for *much more*, Psal. 125. *The Mountains are round about Jerusalem, and the Lord is about his people*; so the Hebrew: we translate by *a comparative of similitude*; *As*, *So*: but more emphatically to the scope of the place, by a *comparative of excess*. Thus, as the Mountains are about *Jerusalem*, sc. to fortifie and defend it; so *much more* is the Lord about his people to fortifie and defend them. In this sence we may take the copulative *And*, in *Amos*. For *three transgressions*, the Lord would not turn, &c. but much more *for a fourth*, would he not turn away the punishment thereof. The former *three*, were enough to provoke the Lord to destroy you; but for this *fourth*, he is resolved to be irreconcileable, and will destroy you. Others add *Three* to *Four*, which make seven, as if the Holy Ghost had said, for seven (that is, manifold) transgressions of *Damascus*, I will not turn away, &c. But rather take the numbers distinct for *Three* and *Four*, that is, for the many, for the multitude of transgressions committed in *Damascus*, *I will not turn away the punishment thereof.* Not that the mercies of God are exceeded by any number; or that, because they had gone on to sin three and four times, that is, very often times; therefore the mercy of God was at a stand, and could go on no further; but these numbers three and four, note the boundless impenitency of those *Syrians*, or their malicious persecutions of the people of God, dayes and times without number. They turn not from their transgressions, theirs are

three

O terq; quaterq; beati. Virg. *lib.* 1. Æn. *Terq; quaterq; manu pectus percussa Deorum.* Id. *l.* 4. *Vbi septenario numero octenarius additur, ingentem exprimit & prope infinitam multitudinem.*

three and four, they will never have done; therefore I will begin to punish, or I will never have done punishing; *I will not turn away the punishment thereof.* Such forms of speech are frequent in heathen Authors, when they would enlarge or multiply the sence.

Again, The Numbers Seven and Eight, have a greater *Emphasis* in Scripture (*Eccles.* 11. 8.) *Give a portion to seven and also unto eight.* That is, Give much, and give to many; give (yet discreetly) to all comers: We must not stint nor bound our charity; *Give a portion to seven*, give to many; and if there come more, give to more, *give also unto eight. Charity prefers some, but she refuses none, who are meet objects of charity,* And when the Lord would shew what choice and store of able men, both for counsel and action, his people should have in times of dangers and invasions, he propheſies by *Micah*, that the people shall speak thus (*Chap.* 5. 5.) *When he* (sc. the *Assyrian*) *shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men*, that is, we shall muster multitudes of wise, valiant, faithful men, every one of which may be fit to command or direct in chief; *Seven shepherds, and eight principal men.*

So then, *He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven*, &c. is as if the *Holy Ghost* had said by *Eliphaz*, O Job, *The Almighty Shaddai, of whom I have spoken to thee, is of such power, and hath such an unwearied arm, that he is able to deliver thee, not only in one, or two, or three, or many troubles, but he can deliver thee in six, yea in seven, in all thy troubles; let the number of thy afflictions be as great as thou canst imagine. The power and malice of men cannot multiply thy troubles faster, then the power and goodness of God can multiply thy deliverances; yea, if he pleases, he could perfect seven deliverances for thee, before they can lay the plot of one trouble against thee.* Observe hence in brief,

First, *Deliverance it is of the Lord.*

He shall deliver thee.] Whatsoever the instruments are, by which deliverance is brought to you, or in whose hand soever deliverance is put; know, that the work and procurement of it, is from above. It is the priviledge of God, and of God alone to be a *Deliverer*; and he hath deliverance at his command, *Psal.* 44. 4. *Command deliverance for Jacob.* Man must humbly petition for, and beg deliverance: But God stands not intreating the creature, or debating the matter with Kings and Princes, with the strongest and most hard-hearted *Pharaohs*, to deliver his people; but he sends forth a *Writ of Deliverance*, and authoritatively commands deliverance, when it is his pleasure a person or a people shall be delivered.

Secondly observe, *The Lord can deliver as often as we need deliverance: In six troubles, yea, in seven.*

This should bear up our hearts in the returns, the multiplied returns of trouble. Though (as *rheumatick old age* is described, *Eccles.* 12. 2.) *The clouds return after rain.* That is, though one evil follows upon, or treads on the heels of another, though as soon as one black cloud is dissolved, and we begin to say (as in nature) this was a rainy day, but sure the next will be fair, yet the next proves more overcast and lowring then that; even in such a case, know, God hath a *wind in his fist*, which he can let out to scatter those clouds, before they dissolve; or if they dissolve, he hath a Sun at command, to dry up the fallen rain. *The Lord hath a succession of mercies for our succession of sorrows.* Say not then, we have got off this trouble, but what if another come? *If another come, you have the same God, and he can give you another deliverance.* Have we not been delivered *in six troubles, yea in seven?* Our straights have not been single; we may say (as she in *Genesis*, at the birth of her son) *Behold a Troop.* Not once only, but *many a time, may our* Israel *now say, If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side, when men rose up against us, they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us.*

The Lord spake once to his people, as if he were weary of delivering, or would not deliver (*Judges* 10. 10.) There we read the people of *Israel* in a great straight, crying to the Lord for deliverance, but he answers, *ver.* 11. *Did not I deliver you from the* Egyptians, *and from the* Amorites, *and from the children of* Ammon, *and from the* Philistines? *The* Zidonians *also, and the* Amalekites, *and the* Moabites *did oppress you, and ye cried unto me, and I delivered you out of their hand.* Here are seven troubles in which they found deliverance. But, as if *six* or *seven* deliverances (which we have expounded for boundless deliverances) were now the utmost bound of deliverance, he resolves, *ver.* 13. *I will deliver you no more.* And at *v.* 14. he turns them off to their Idols for help: *Go* (saith he) *and cry unto the gods, which you have chosen, and let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation*: But what was the reason of this refusal? The reason was this, not because God was weary of delivering that people, but because that people were weary of their God. *Ye have forsaken me, and chosen other gods*, ver. 13. *If we chuse our selves another god, then we chuse our selves another deliverer*; so long as we look upon God, as our God, so long we may look upon God as our deliverer. God would never have turned them off for deliverance to any thing below (what was in their conceit) a God.

How sad will it be, now that we are in great troubles, and crying daily, *Lord deliver us out of these straights*, for thou art he, whose name is, *The Deliverer in six troubles, yea in seven.* How sad (I say) will it be, if we have put God to read the Chronicle, and repeat the History of his deliverances given us, as he did to *Israel*, and say, I delivered you in 88. from the *Spaniard*; I delivered you in 1605. from the *Gunpowder-Treason*, &c. I will deliver you no more. Will not such speakings from Providence, be a plain conviction, that we have *forsaken the Lord, and chosen other Gods? God hath sometime* (*what a miracle of mercy!*) *chosen those who forsook him, but he never* (*so stedfast is he in faithfulness*) *forsook any, who chose him to be their God.* If he keep not such, from, yet he will certainly preserve all in such trouble, as it follows.

Yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.

Non dicit à sex, sed in sex; non quod ab illis nō possit, sed quod cū acciderint, ab illis liberet, ut in illis non succumbat.

He saith not, *He shall deliver thee from six troubles, and from seven*; as if troubles should only threaten, but never come upon us; or as if all our deliverances should be preventions; but, he *shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven, there shall no evil touch thee.*

[**Evil**] signifies sometimes the evil of sin, and sometimes the evil of punishment. We may here take it either way. The Lord will so keep up thy spirit, and direct thy way in trouble, that thou shalt not defile thy self with the evil of sin; thy troubles shall purge, not pollute thee. And he will so keep thee, that thou shalt not be annoyed by any evil of punishment. If fatherly displeasure should appear against thee, wrath shall not. Love shall be mixed with thy correction; with thy wormwood and gall (as the Church speaks in the *Lamentations*) thou shalt have a temperament of honey and of sweetness; though troubles press thee, yet evil shall not touch thee.

Ita explic ut nullum malum attingat, etiā si tentari & conflictari sinat ad t pus, nocum tum tame non cap Coc. *in*

Not touch thee.] This notes exact deliverance; we think our selves well many times, if we can come off from dangers with a *scratcht face*, with a wound, or with the *loss of a limb*; but to come off without the *loss of a hair*, or which is less, without a touch, speaks a compleat deliverance. It astonisht *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 3. 27. to see the three Children come out of the fiery furnace, without *a hair of their heads singed, without any change of their coats, or the smell of the fire.* So much this imports, thou shalt pass the pikes, through *six, yea seven*, a whole army of troubles, and *no evil shall touch thee.* When the woman told the tempting Serpent, *God hath said, ye shall not eat of the fruit of the Tree in the midst of the Garden, nor touch it*, Gen. 3. 3. She implied a charge of total abstinence. And when the Lord saith, *No evil shall touch thee*, it implies a promise of total deliverance. In the first and second Chapters of his Book (and it is the same Original word) Satan begs leave of God, that he might *touch Job*, and *touch all that he had.* Now here *Eliphaz* seems to touch that string, *No evil shall touch thee*; as if he had said, God will not let his servants be overwhelmed (as thou art) with evils; no evil shall so much as touch them. And the truth is, though Satan obtain leave of God, to afflict the body of *Job* with pains, and he made it all over as one wound, yet *no evil touched him*, in the sence here intended: Though *Job* was all over evil sores, yet there was not so much as the least scar of an evil upon him: *Troubles toucht him, but evils did not. And troubles may touch the servants of God, but evil shall not.*

Hence observe, *God saves and delivers his people from all evil, even while they are in the midst of trouble.*

He delivers as well in trouble, as from trouble; while trouble is continued, good may be enjoyed. While *his* are in the water, and in the fire, God is with them, and his *presence is more then deliverance* (Isa. 43. 2.) If God be with us, though all evils are upon us, yet *no evil touches us. The presence of the chief good, is banishment to every evil.* As a wicked man may be loaded with good things, and yet none of them *touch him*; that is, do him any good: So a godly man may be loaded with evils, and yet none of them touch him, that is, do him any hurt. And thus we may understand that of the Apostle (*1 Cor.* 10. 14.) *God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also, make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* Temptation you shall have; but with the temptation, even while the temptation is upon you, or while you are in the temptation, *the Lord will make a way for you to escape* the evil of that temptation. Thus with or in trouble, we have deliverance. *To be kept from the evil of trouble, is a deliverance from trouble, while we are in trouble.*

Thus far of the general Promise.

Now *Eliphaz* goes on to particulars, in *ver.* 20, *&c.* As if he had said, lest thou shouldst think, I deal only in general Notions, that I may more easily elude and deceive thee; therefore I will now give instance in the point, and name what troubles I mean: I will descend with thee to particulars, and reckon up the greatest outward evils, the most pinching straights that befal the sons of men, or the children of God; and out of all these, I affirm *the Lord will deliver thee.*

Verse 20. **In famine he shall redeem thee from death, and in war from the power of the sword.**

Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the Tongue, &c. *Famine* leads the *Van of this great Army of evils* here mustered up.

He shall redeem.] But what is it *to redeem from Famine?* To redeem, properly is, *to take a man out of the power of another, by price, or by greater power.* Redemption is an act of special favour, and it notes a special distinction by favour. When God threatned *Pharaoh* and his people with swarms of Flies, and promised, that his own people should be free; *I will sever in that day the Land of* Goshen, *in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there, ver.* 22. This act of divine discrimination is called redemption, in the next verse. *And I will put a division* (*Heb.* a redemption) *between my people and thy people*; that is, those Armies of Flies, which invade thy people, shall not meddle with my people. To see one perish with, and our selves saved from the sword, is redemption in war. To see others hunger-starved, and our selves still fed, is redemption from famine, though our selves were never in the hands, or between the teeth of famine. *A people divided from the troubles of others, are redeemed from those troubles.* Such a redemption our Saviour speaks of, *Mat.* 24. 40, 41. *Two shall be in the field, the one shall be taken, and the other left; two women shall be grinding in the Mill, the one taken, the other left.*

In Famine.] Famine is the want of Bread, and Bread is the stay and staffe of life (*Lev.* 26. 26. *Isa.* 3. 1. *Psalm* 105. 16.) when this stay is gone, our lives fall quickly, or slip away. When this staff is broken, the thred of life breaks too. *Man goes by the Bread in his belly, more then by the staff in his hand*; except Bread hold us by the arm, and stay us up, down we fall. Famine is so like, or so near, or so certain a harbinger of death, that the Text puts them together. *In Famine he shall redeem thee from death.* Famine is numbred among the sore judgments of God, if it be not the sorest judgment, *Ezek.* 6. 11. *Jer.* 24. 10. And therefore redemption from it, is one of his choicest outward mercies. We may collect how sore a judgment Famine is, by the effects of it.

First, It causeth faintness and madness, *Gen.* 47. 13.

Secondly, *Hunger burneth*, Deut. 32. 24. That word is not used in the Hebrew except here. Famine kindles a fire in the bowels: *When the natural heat hath no fewel put to it, to feed upon, it feeds upon Nature.* Suitable to this, is the description of lamenting *Jeremy* in the famine of *Jerusalem*, *Their faces are blacker then a coal*, Lam. 4. 8. *&* chap. 5. 10. *Our skin was black like an Oven, because of the terrible famine.* Both the Coal and the Oven contract their blackness from burning heat.

Thirdly, It causeth pining and languishment, *Lam.* 4. 9.

Fourthly, Shame and howling, *Joel* 1. 11.

Fifthly, Rage and cursing, *Isa.* 8. 21.

Lastly, It breaks all the bonds of Nature, and eats up all Relations: Read that dreadful threatning, *Deut.* 28. 53, 54. and that dreadful example, *Lam.* 4. 10. Tender Mothers eating their Children. Famine eats up our bowels of compassion, and then it eats our bowels by relation: And, which comes yet nearer, Famine is such a devourer, that it causeth man to devour himself. The Prophet describes man in a fit of Famine, snatching on the right hand, and yet hungry; eating on the left, and yet unsatisfied; when he cannot fill his belly abroad, he comes home to himself, and makes bold with his own flesh for food; *Every man eating the flesh of his own arm*, Isa. 9. 20.

We read of many great Famines in Scripture, and withall of Gods care to redeem his people from them. *Abraham*, *Gen.* 12. who (at the call of God) denied himself, and came out of his own, into a strange Land, was presently entertained with Famine. One would have thought, God should have made him good cheer, and have spred a plentiful Table for him, causing his cup to overflow, while he was in a strange Land, and a meer stranger there; yet he met with a Famine, but the Lord redeemed him from that Famine, by directing him into *Egypt*, that famous storehouse for his people. *Jacob* and his Sons were redeemed from Famine in the same *Egypt*, afterward their *house of bondage.*

It is a precious comfort to have bread in such a promise as this, when there is none upon the Board. God takes care for the bodies of his people, as well as for their souls; he is the Father of both, and the provider for both. And while we remember what sore afflictions have been upon many Nations and People by Famine; while we remember *Samaria's Famine*, 2 Kings 6. *Jerusalem's Famine*, Lam. 4. And that storied by *Josephus*, in the *Roman* siege of that City; while we remember the late Famines in *Germany*, and the present one in many parts of *Ireland*; while we consider that the Sword threatens *this Nation* with Famine; surely we should labour to get under such a promise as this is, that we may plead with God in the midst of all scarcity and wants; Lord, thou hast promised to redeem *Thine in Famine from death: There is no dearth in Heaven: And whatsoever dearth is on Earth, the plenty that is in Heaven, can supply it.* How sad would it be, if your poor children should come about you, crying for Bread, and you have none to give them? How much sadder would it be, if your poor children should be made your bread, and ground to pieces between your teeth, as in the Famine of *Jerusalem?* In such a time, to look up to God in the strength of this promise, will be a *feast to us*, though we should perish in the Famine.

But how doth God redeem from famine?

First, The Lord can make the barrel of meal, and the oyl that is in the cruze, though but little, yet to hold out and last, while the time of famine lasts; such a miracle redeemed the poor widow from death, in that great famine, *1 King.* 17.

Secondly, He can redeem by lengthning one meal, to many dayes. *Elijah* went forty dayes in the strength of one dinner. *Man liveth not by Bread without God, but man may live by God without Bread.*

Thirdly, Not only are the stores of the creatures his, and the fruitfulness of the Earth at his command, but if he please he can open the windows of Heaven; he can bring Bread out of the clouds; he can make the winds his Caterers to bring in Quails and abundance of provision for his people. Thus also he can redeem his from death, in the time of famine.

Or, fourthly, He can do it in a way of ordinary providence, by making the Land yield it's natural increase, and by giving strength to the Earth, to bring forth plentifully, for the use of man.

Fifthly, While the common judgement lasts, he can make some special provision for his, and make a redemption

on

on of division, as he did in another case for his people, *Exod.* 8. 22.

And lastly, We may improve this promise, not only for redemption from death in famine, but for plenty of consolation, though we should die in famine. When the bread is quite taken away from your Table, your hearts may feed upon such a word as this, as upon marrow and fatness. Christ can feast your souls, when your bodies are ready to starve, he can fill your spirits with joy and sweetness, when there is nothing but leanness in your cheeks: Thus the Prophet *Habakkuk* triumphs in God (*Habak.* 3. 17.) *Though the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* He was feasting upon God, while he imagines the World starving; he sees all things in God, though the World should afford him nothing. That soul is well fed and taught, which can be rejoycing, while it's own body is starving.

And in war from the power of the sword.

מלרסה *bellum, à radice* לחם *vesci, edere, per Metaphorā pugnare; quia gladius in bello devorat hominū corpora. In bello se mutuò homines devorant & absumunt.*

War is the second evil. Famine and war go often together, yea they two seldom go without a third; the Pestilence, 2 *Sam.* 24. *Jer.* 18. 22. And though in the order of the words, famine be set before war, yet usually war is the fore-runner of famine. The sword cuts off provision, and when it self hath *devoured much flesh*, it leaves no bread for those who survive. It is observable, that the original word for war here used, comes from a root signifying to eat or to devour, and so by a *Metaphor* it signifies to fight, or to strike with the sword. And the reason, why the same word, which signifies war, signifies to eat, is, because the *Sword* is such an *Eater* or rather a *Devourer*, and it eats two wayes.

First, The sword eats up the bodies of men, drinks up their blood, dispeoples a Land. And then,

Secondly, It eats up and consumes the fruits of the Earth; and hence War is the mother of Famine. Therefore we find, that when the great peace, and so the plenty of the Church of Christ is propheſied of, and described, *Isa.* 2. 4. and in *Micah*, it is thus expressed, *They shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks.* As if he should say, while the sword is abroad in the field, the plow-shares will do little there; for the most part Justice is silent in the time of War (*the sound of the trumpet and drum, is too lowd for the Law*) and when the Law stands still, the plough stands still; therefore when the sword is in motion, both are at a stand. Hence the promise, that *swords shall be beaten into plow-shares, and spears into pruning-hooks*; that is, with peace, you shall have Bread and Wine, which note the abundance of all other things. The ancients emblem'd peace by *Ears of Corn*, and *Concord* by (a *Cornu-copia*) *a horn of plenty*; riches are the fruit of peace: And safety is the priviledge of the Saints in times of War; *In War they shall be delivered from the power of the Sword.*

Inter arma silent leges.

The Hebrew is, *They shall be delivered from, or out of the hand of the Sword:* Sometimes in Scripture we read of the *face of the Sword*, which notes the Sword coming and approaching to a people: And sometimes we read of the *mouth of the Sword*, which notes the Sword come, devouring and eating up a people: And here we have the *hand of the Sword*; they shall *be delivered out of the hand of the Sword*; which notes (as we translate) *the power of the Sword*: Or, that form of speaking may be understood by an *Hypallage*, *From the hand of the Sword*, that is, *from the Sword in the hand*, which phrase imports present danger; when the Sword is unsheathed and drawn out, when it is in the hand ready to strike, then the enemy is ready to charge, and then the Lord delivers: He shall deliver from the Sword in the hand, or out of the hand of the Sword. So *Psalm* 127. 4. *Children of the youth, are as Arrows in the hand of the mighty*, that is, as Arrows ready to be shot. And *Psal.* 149. 6. *Let the high praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged Sword in their hands*; noting actual revenges taken on the enemies of God, and actual praises given to the name of God, at the same time.

Gladius manu apprehensus & elevatus, symbolum est extremi discriminis & præsentis hostis: Quasi diceret etiā in ipsa pugna vel inter tot manus gladios agitantes & contra te vibrantes salvaberis.

So then, the meaning of these words, *He shall deliver thee from the power of the Sword; or out of the hand of the Sword*, is this; suppose thou art in such a condition that the Swords are drawn about thy ears, and thou art in the midst of a thousand deaths and dangers, in the very heat of a battel, yet, then the Lord God can and will deliver thee.

And this likewise is a comfortable promise, for us to lay hold on, in these times. It is a time of War to us all, and there are many of our friends and brethren (as it were) in the very hand of the sword: Desires are often sent to the Congregation, by one for a husband, by another for a brother, by a third for a servant, by many for their friends, gone forth to meet the power of the Sword. Here is a promise, to comfort and to support such; the Lord in time of War, can deliver out of the very hand of the Sword, or, when Swords are in hand; when thousands of Swords are drawn together, preparing for, or smiting in the day of battel, know, then God is a deliverer. *In the most present dangers, God shews the most present help.* (Psal. 23. 5.) *Thou shalt spread my Table, and cause my cup to overflow, before the face of my enemy*; even then when my enemy is nearest and looketh on. As when the Sword is in the hand of the Angel, so when it is in the hand of man; *A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee* (*Psalm* 91. 7.) Not nigh thee? what? when they die on this side and on that side, on every hand of a man, doth it not come nigh him? Yes, nigh him, but not so nigh, as to hurt him: *The power of God can bring us near to danger, and yet keep us far from harm:* As good may be locally near us, and yet virtually far from us, so may evil; the multitude throng'd Christ in the Gospel, and yet but one toucht him, so, as to receive good; so Christ can keep us in a throng of dangers, that, not one shall touch us, to our hurt.

Yet, we are not to take this or the like holy *writs of protection*, as if God would deliver all his people, from famine and from the Sword; we know many precious servants of his have fallen by these common calamities; the Lord knows how to distinguish his, when Sword and famine do not. Neither doth this word fail, though they do: If the servants of Christ are not delivered from these troubles, they are delivered by them; and *while they are overcome by one trouble, they conquer all.*

Vers. 21. **Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue, neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.**

This verse contains a second pair of evils: First, *The scourge of the tongue.* Secondly, *Destruction.*

Two things are here to be enquired into, about the former.

First, What is meant by *the scourge of the Tongue?*

Secondly, What it is *to be hid from it?*

The scourge of the Tongue.] Mr. *Broughton* reads it thus, *Thou shalt be delivered (or thou shalt be hid) when the Tongue whippeth.* And another to the same sence, *At what time the Tongue shall be scourging of men, thou shalt be secured from it.* And that word (*Leshon*) the Tongue, *in Piel*, signifies to *detract, to traduce or slander*; the same word is used both for the instrument, the Tongue, and one of the worst acts of the Tongue, calumniation; or we may render it according to the exact letter of the Hebrew elegancy; to *Betongue a Man:* We use such a kind of speaking in our Language, as, to strike a man with a cudgel or a Cane-staff, is to *cudgel or cane* a man; and if a man be shot with a *Pistol*, we say he was *Pistol'd*; so a man smitten with anothers Tongue, is said in the Hebrew, to be *Betongu'd*, or such an one hath *betongu'd* him.

Quo tempore lingua flagellabit homines. Drus.

בשוט לשון לושן *In Piel est detrahere vel nocere linguâ.*

We leave the *Verb*, and translate by the *Noun*; *From the scourge of the Tongue.* In construction (*Beth*) *In*, is often rendred by (*Min*) *From*, as Grammarians know. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God in all thy heart*, or from thy whole heart, or from the *heart-root*: So here, *Thou shalt be hid in the scourge*; that is, *Thou shalt be hid from the scourge*; when the Tongue is lashing and whipping, thou shalt be hid from the lash and scourge of *Tongues*.

ב *Sæpe redditur per* Min בכל לבו ἐξ ὅλης καρδίας.

But what may we understand by this scourge of the Tongue?

First, Some take it for publick accusations before a Judge or Magistrate. Many scourge their brethren at the *Tribunal of Princes*, Revel. 12. That accuser of the brethren,

that traducer, the Devil, is conceived to make those accusations by his agents, in those times, before the *Heathen Emperors*, against the Christians; the Christians in that age, were extreamly scourged by malignant and malevolent Tongues, *Tongues set on fire of Hell*, as the Apostle *James* speaks, *Chap.* 3. 6. And so the scourge of the Tongue may be that punishment, which they by false accusations obtained against the innocent; their Tongues got judgment against them sometimes to be scourged or whipt; therefore also, that very work of the Tongue, is well called *scourging*. Our *Lord Jesus* was crucified upon the *Tongues of the Jews*, before he was crucified upon the *cross by the* Romans. The Jews cried out first, *crucifie him, crucifie him*, here was the cross of the Tongue. The conspirators against *Jeremiah*, advise thus (*Chap.* 18. 18.) *Let us smite him with the Tongue*; that is, let us accuse him to the King, that he may be smitten by a publick sentence. In this sence a man is imprisoned by the Tongue, banished by the Tongue, hang'd and burn'd by the Tongue, that is, the Tongue doth all these *vertually* (or *vitiously* rather) by false accusations, causing these things to be done *actually* and *formally*.

Accusemus eum apud vigem & omni industria & ratione efficiamus, ut publica sententia vapulet.

Flagellum linguæ est pœna in judicio constituta, & postulata civi à calumniatoribus.

Secondly, Others interpret the scourge of the Tongue, to be those terrible and dreadful reports which amaze, lash and afflict the spirit about the approach of dangers. As, when a report is rung in the ear, that an invading enemy, spoilers and plunderers, arm'd with power and malice, are at hand to take away Estates, Liberties and Lives: How many have been beaten about the Ears, and scourg'd with such *Alarums*? (Jer. 50. 43.) it is said, *The King of* Babylon *hath heard the report of them*: what report was it? and of whom? A spy rides in, and kills the King with his Tongue, strikes him through with his Tongue, before he was toucht with the sword of the *Medes and Persians*: How? He brought him a sad report, that the Enemy was upon his march, then it follows, *The King of* Babylon *hath heard the report of them, and his hands waxed feeble, anguish took hold of him, and pangs as of a Woman in travel.* We find the like expression, *Isa.* 28. 18, 19. They who had slighted the judgments of God, and said, *when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it should not come near them*; even these (saith God) shall be vext, when they do but hear of a scourge coming near: *I will send a report, and it shall pass over morning by morning, and it shall travel by day and by night*; and what shall be the effect of it? *It shall be a vexation* (saith the Lord) *only to understand the report.* You shall not only be vexed when the enemy is come, and thrusts a sword into your bowels, and fire into your houses, but you shall be vext at the noise of his coming; *it shall be a vexation to you, to hear the report.* It is a great mercy to be delivered and hid from this scourge of the Tongue, and this is promised him who fears God, (*Psal.* 112. 7.) *No evil tydings shall make him afraid. A heart which hath trembled at the voice of God instructing him, shall not tremble at the voice of men reporting evil to him.* Many a man is more afraid then hurt, and more perplexed with the *hearing* of evil tydings, then others are with seeing or feeling the evil. The Lord threatens *Ely*, to do such a thing in *Israel*, and against his house, *that, both the ears of him that hears shall tingle* 1 Sam. 3. 11. But,

Quidam, cū vagabitur lingua, ut sit יהלך *pro* יהלך Druſ. Merc.

Thirdly, Some translate thus, *He shall be hid when the Tongue wandreth or walketh about*; for the same word which signifies a *scourge*, by the alteration of a point in the Hebrew, signifies to *run to and fro*. It is the word used in the first Chapter, where Satan reports himself, *A goer to and fro about the Earth.* There is an expression (*Psalm* 73. 9.) sutable to this sence, though the Original word be not the same; *They set their mouth against the Heavens, and their tongue walketh thorow the Earth. The tongues of many take long journies, while themselves sit still: Kings are said to have long hands, but many of their subjects have long tongues*, and strike their brethren with them many hundreds of miles off; the tongue travels from Town to Town, from City to City, and scourgeth one here, and there another. And, while these men send their tongues about a wandring, to wound here and there, this and that mans credit, *He is a happy man that can be hid from them.*

Sunt qui per linguam hic intelligunt nationes q. d. quū grassabuntur longè latèq; gentes & populi omnisque depopulabuntur, &c. Druſ.

Fourthly, Some of the Hebrew Doctors, retaining the fore-going sence of the Verb, say, that by *tongue*, is meant *Nations and people: When the tongue*, that is *when a Nation shall go about*, or march from place to place to destroy and over-run a Land; then, at such a time, thou shalt be hid: It is frequent in Scripture to put *tongues* for *Nations*, or Tongues and Nations for the same, *Rev.* 7. 9. *Chap.* 17. 15. And there is a comfortable truth in the matter of this interpretation; that when all Tongues or Nations shall be gathered to destroy us, yet *we shall be hid*: As if it should be said (like that, *Psal* 83. 6.) Though the *Tabernacles of* Edom *and the* Ishmaelites, Moab *and the* Hagarens, Gebal, *and* Ammon, *and* Amalek, *the* Philistines, *with the inhabitants of* Tyre, be confederate against thee: or, to take modern names and Nations, though *Irish and Spanish, French and Danes*, &c. should at any time, wander from their own Lands to invade thee; yet thou shalt be hid when these *tongues rove and wander spoil and pillage.* The matter, I say, of this interpretation is a truth, and a very comfortable one, but I would not charge it upon this Text.

Fifthly, And most generally, and I conceive most truly, by the scourge of the tongue, is meant all, and all manner of calumnies and slanders, cursings or evil speakings, false witnesses and accusations; and from these (the promise is) *thou shalt be hid.* It is said, *Prov.* 14. 3. That, *In the mouth of the foolish is the rod of pride*; not, that a foolish man will scourge pride, he loves it too well; but, because the pride of a fool sets his tongue a scourging the wisest and the best: (*a*) Evil words are the same to the credit of a man, that a scourge is to his back. When slanderers speak openly, then their tongue is compared to a sword, or an arrow by day; when secretly, then to a trap, or an arrow by night, to a Serpent which comes behind, *Gen.* 49. and as here, to (*b*) a scourge which is prepared for the back, and is called in our Language *back-biting*, or we may call it back-beating. The scourge of the tongue, is all that ill which the tongue can speak: And the (*c*) Latin word for a word, agrees well to this sence; being derived (as Criticks observe) from a word which signifies a stripe; or the word which signifies a stripe from that which signifies a word: And we find, that they who defame or over-severely reprove others, are called (barely) (*d*) *strikers.* And this (as some of the Ancients note) according to Scripture Language, in those two Apostolical directions (1 *Tim.* 3. 3. and *Tit.* 1. 7.) where the Apostle gives the rule concerning *a Bishop*, that he must be *no striker*; this may be understood of striking, not with the hand (the Apostle could hardly think that quarrelsom spirits and sons of violence should be so much as admitted to a probation about that office) but *striking* with the tongue, by an undue, an over-hasty, or an angry reproof and censure. The great instrument of a Bishop or a Minister, is his tongue: but he must use his tongue, rather to heal then to wound; or if at any time, he useth it to wound, it should be in tendency unto, or in a preparation for healing: Therefore, *Let not a Bishop be a striker, a striker with his tongue in passion, much less in spleen or for self-ends.*

(*a*) *Maledicentia est famæ hominis, quod flagellū corpori; nam lædit eā & interdū occidit, hinc Græcè μαστιξ.* Druſ.

(*b*) *Flagellum dicitur quod in scapulas impingitur, & à tergo ladit, ut non videas — Metuentes patruæ verbera linguæ,* Hor. 3. *Car. Od.* 11. *Nam patrui multo quam patres incorruptiores esse solēt in judicandis & objurgandis fratris filiorū pectatis.*

(*c*) *Verbera à verbis, aut verba à verberibus dicta sunt: quod aures vox verberet.* Nonius.

(d) *Qui detractoriis verbis, famam alterius verberant, percussores appellantur etiam suppresso nomine linguæ.* Pined. 1. *Sermone inutili conscientiam percutit infirmorum, nec contumelioſus & garrulus, perdat eum quem potuit modestia & lenitate corrigere,* Hier. *in* Titus 1. 7.

Thus we see what we are to understand by the stroke or scourge of the tongue. But what is it to be hid from that scourge? A word of that, Thou shalt be hid.

Not as (*a*) *One*, Thy actions shall be hid, which might be as matter for slander to work upon; nor as (*b*) Another, though such actions appear, yet slanderers shall want proof, or sufficient witness shall not appear against thee. But,

(a) *Latebūt detractorem tua facta, de quibus possit detrahendi materiam sumere.* Aquin.

First, We may take it thus; *Thou shalt be hid from the scourge of the tongue*, that is, the tenor of thy actions shall be so fair, and thy life so blameless, that malice it self shall not find, where to fasten an accusation.

(b) *Deficient detractorē firma probationes & sufficientia indicia.* Cajet.

Or secondly, When other men are slandered and reproached, thou shalt be free.

Or thirdly, *Thou shalt be hid*, that is, though occasion should be given to malice (and that our noblest and holiest actions use most to give) yet malicious men shall not be able to come at thee, thy person shall be secured in a chamber of secrecy, and covered with a mantle of providential darkness, while the light of thy good works dazles and troubles the eye of the World.

But

But rather fourthly, *Thou shalt be hid*, that is, Thou shalt be patroniz'd and defended, thou shalt be set right, and vindicated from all calumnies and false aspersions. The Lord will so take care of thy credit and reputation, that though many go about to blemish it with lies and slanders, yet thy honour shall be saved, or the wounds of it healed; *by causing thy righteousness to break forth as the light, and thy just dealing as the noon day.* Some charitable medicinable tongue shall lick thee whole, after all the stripes of those scourges or envenom'd scorpion-tongues: Thus, thou shalt be healed if smitten, or else thou shalt not be smitten, (*Psal.* 31. 20.) *Thou shalt keep them secretly in thy pavilion, from the strife of tongues.* The words of the Psalmist are an allusion to Kings, who being resolved to *protect their Favourites*, against all the clamours and accusations of men, take them, as it were, into their own *Pavillion*, into their Bed-chamber and bosom, where none may touch them. *God also hath a pavillion, a secret hiding place for his Favourites*, where he preserves their credit and reputation untoucht, against all the blots and causeless blemishes of malignant spirits. Thus they are *hid from the strife of tongues.* Hence his Saints and people are called, *His stored, or his hidden ones*, Psal. 83. 3.

Ad similitudinem regiæ defensionis loquitur, qua se illi qui regibus chari sunt cerâ, in ipsis aulæ penetralibus & in ipso regum conspectu versâtes, defenduntur & securi vivunt. Musc. *in Psal.*

Observe, First, *The Tongue is a scourge.*

The Tongue is a *terrible Engine:* The Scripture gives us variety of comparisons to set forth the evil of an ill tongue. It is here called a scourge of many lashes or knotted cords, or rather stinging Scorpions; scoffing is one, slander a second, false accusations a third. The former strictly taken, is a lie told any neighbour, and the latter is a lie told the Magistrate. The tongue (*Psal.* 52. 2.) is called *a sharp rasor.* Psal. 57. 4. it is compared to *Spears, and Arrows, and a sharp Sword*; and if at any time with much using, this sword be blunted in the edge or point, the Scripture speaks of *whetting the tongue*, Psal. 64. 3. It is as the *sharp Arrows of the mighty man, and coals of Juniper*, Psal. 120. 4. *They bend their tongues like a bow*, Jer. 9. 3. *Their tongue is as an Arrow shot out*, vers. 8. In a word, *It is a fire and a world of mischief*, James 3. 6. (*Jer.* 18. 18.) we read of smiting with the tongue, and *of devouring words*, Psalm 52. 4. As there are *devouring opinions*, opinions which not only hurt the judgments of men, but devour their consciences, and eat up truth (as it were) at a bit; so there are *devouring words*, words that eat up a mans reputation, and devour his good name as *Bread. Slanderous mouthes love the whitest Bread, the finest of the Wheat; a mans credit which hath not a bran in it, how sweet a morsel is it to such mouthes?* Though, the truth is, every name, by how much more pure and spotless it is, by so much more deadly will it be in the stomachs of these devourers. *A good name swallowed by an ill man, will* (as *Jonas* did the Whale) *make him* (one time or other) *stomach-sick, if not conscience-sick, and he shall be forced to vomit it out safe again.*

It is a sad thing when (thus) the people of God are wounded and scourged by the tongues of wicked men; but I will tell you of a sadder scourging, that is, when the people and servants of God scourge one another with their tongues: I beseech you leave this work to wicked men, take not the scourge of the tongue out of their hands; let us, not only not slander, but, not speak hardly one of another. The *ancient Christians* in the Primitive times, were deeply wounded by the scourge of the tongue, what strange things did ungodly men feign and then fasten on them? They reported them as black as Hell, as if their holy meetings were not to worship God, but to defile themselves with incest and uncleanness; but among Christians themselves, we read not of this scourge, at that time. No, Christians loved one another to the amazement of Heathens: They were so far from this scourging or wounding of one another, that they were ready to be scourged, to be wounded, to be burned, to die one for another. This caused their Pagan persecutors to cry out, *Behold how the Christians love one another!* We are scourged by wicked ones, as *They*, O that we could love one another as *They*. Sons of *Belial* have revived the ancient reproaches and accusations against the brethren; O, that we could revive the ancient imbraces and most endeared affections of the brethren.

Observe, Secondly, *It is a great mercy to be delivered from the Scourge of the Tongue.*

The Apostle speaks of it, as a wonderful mercy, that he was delivered out of the *Mouth of the Lyon* (2 Tim. 4. 17.) Surely it is no ordinary mercy (though lying be very ordinary) to be delivered out of the *Mouth of a Lyar.* This is joyned in one promise, with deliverance from the most deadly instruments of War, *Isa.* 54. 17. *No weapon formed against thee shall prosper*, that is, no weapon of War, neither Sword nor Spear shall hurt thee. Then follows, *And every tongue that shall rise up against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.* The tongue of a *Ziba* or of a *Tertullus* will devour and destroy, as bad as the Sword of a *Cæsar* or a *Pompey.* The holy story tells us, what woful work the tongue had made upon *Joseph* and *Mephibosheth*, if the good providence of God had not spoken a good word for them.

Lastly, Let me add one seasonable word of admonition, to these tongue-scourgers; as the word is, They that smite with the sword, shall perish with the sword; so, they that smite with the tongue, shall perish with the tongue. The tongues of the Saints are in some sence, sharper and sorer scourges, then the tongues of wicked men. The word of God in their mouths, is a *Two-edged Sword*, yea *sharper then any Two-edged Sword.* A Prophet or a Minister of Christ, can strike as hard with his tongue, as (and infinitely harder, then) any prophane wretch, or railing *Rabshakeh* in the World. *Truth will set home, will wound deeper, then slander can. I* (saith the Lord, *Hos.* 6. 5.) *have hewed them by my Prophets, and slain them by the words of my mouth.* In *Revel.* 11. it is prophesied, *That fire shall go out of the mouthes of the two Witnesses, and devour their enemies*, v. 5. That is, the word of their mouths, shall be as a fire to scorch and consume the gain-saying World; and with this instrument their tongue (for that only is sutable for the work of Witnesses) they are said to have *tormented those that dwell upon the Earth*, vers. 10. Some indeed are *Sermon-proof* and *Word-proof*; they at present do even laugh at all our spiritual Artillery; let whole volleyes of threats be discharg'd upon them, let them be hackt and hewed all day long with the Sword of the Word, they feel it not, it may be they jeer at it, at least they regard it not. As they, *Jerem.* 18. 18. conspiring against the Prophet, *Come let us devise devices*, &c. *let us smite him with the Tongue.* And least any should say, if we smite him with the Tongue, he will smite us again, *For these Prophets are notable at their weapons*; to secure themselves they resolve thus, *Let us not give heed to any of his words.* As if they had said, we know he will speak big words, and threaten us terribly, with Sword, and Pestilence, and Famine, and Hell, &c. But let's arm our selves against him, and make no more of all, then of a *Squib or a pot-Gun*, then of a stab with a *wooden Dagger*, or a charge with a *Bull-rush*; *Let us not give heed to any of his words.* But let these know, though now they are hardned against the spiritual scourge and sword, in the mouth of Christs Ministers; yet at the last, *Christ himself will smite them with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*, Isa. 11. 4. He once made a *scourge of cords*, and whipt the buyers and sellers out of the Temple; he will at last make a *Scourge of words*, which shall whip all impenitents and unbelievers out of his presence into Hell, where they shall gnash their teeth, and gnaw *Those tongues*, which have scourg'd his faithful servants with many stripes, only for doing or speaking his, their Masters will.

Neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction, when it cometh.

The word **Destruction** signifies a confluence or meeting together of all kinds of evil; when evils break in together, as thieves and robbers into a house to spoil and take away all, *Isa.* 60. 18. *Jer.* 48. 3.

שוד *a radice* שדד *more prædonũ & impetu Hostili stari & depopulari.*

When such destruction comes, thou shalt have this priviledge, *Not to be afraid of it. Not afraid*, the word signifies any kind of fear, holy fearing as well as natural; here it is used for excessive distracting fear: It is not meant, that a man shall be secure or senseless, when destruction

cometh, *So to be fearless, is worse then to be reasonless.* But this is the meaning, *Thou shalt not be afraid*; that is, thou shalt not be dismayed with fear, thou shalt not be amazed or astonished with fear, thou shalt not be at thy *wits end*, much less at thy *Faiths end*, when destruction cometh. Fear is good in its kind, yea it is an excellent grace; some fear in time of destruction is the daughter of faith, (*Heb.* 11. 7.) *By Faith Noah being warned of God, of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house; He fears destruction savingly, whose fear moves him to prepare due means of safety.* Such preparatory fears are holy fears, and well become the Saints, when destruction cometh. (*Exod.* 9. 20.) He that heard of the destruction coming, and *feared the Word of the Lord, made his Servants and Cattle flee into the houses.* God would not have his people, when they hear destruction is coming, stand at the door in a daring manner to meet it, and lay themselves open to it; no, he would have them flee into the house, and *enter into the Chamber, and shut the door about them, hiding themselves, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past*, Isa. 26. 20.

The fear which God promiseth his people protection from, is unbelieving fear, or fear which is the daughter of despair: Such as that, *Isa.* 7. 2. where, when a report came of destruction coming, it is said, *That the heart of the King, and the heart of his people, was moved as the Trees of the Wood are moved with the wind.* They were so afraid, so unsetled and disorder'd within, that they knew not how to settle and order their affairs without. Such a fear the Prophet *Jeremy* threatens upon *Pashur*, Jerem. 20. 3. *The Lord hath not called thy name* Pashur, *but* Magor-missabib; *for thus saith the Lord, Behold I will make thee a terror to thy self, and to all thy friends:* Fear round about, and fear within; this fear God promiseth to deliver his people from, in times of danger.

Observe hence, *The power and presence of God is able to uphold his people in the face of dangers, and in the presence of destruction.*

They shall not be afraid of destruction, when it cometh: Suppose God doth not keep the destruction off from them, yet he will keep sinking fears off from them. How terribly soever men look upon them, they shall not be a terror to themselves, neither will God be a terror to them. *Many a Man is his own Bug-bear. And there is nothing can be so terrible to us, (except an angry God) as we may be to our selves.* But he, to whom God is not a terror, and to whom himself is not a terror, will not be afraid of the *King of terrors.* So long as we are at peace with God and our selves, destruction cannot come so fast, as consolation will. And destruction cannot carry that away, wherein consolation lies. The best part of the Saints estate, is out of the reach of destroyers. They can destroy houses and goods, they can carry away gold and silver, but they cannot destroy faith and hope, they cannot carry away grace or holiness; they may burn your writings, and the evidences of your Lands and Tenements, but they cannot burn your evidences for Heaven, or weaken your tenure and interests in Jesus Christ. Upon the wings of this assurance the Saints are carried beyond the borders of fear when destruction comes into their borders, or death is breaking open their doors, and climbing up unto their windows. Yea this assurance, (which carries them beyond the confines of fear) sets them down in a very comfortable place, in the Land of joy, or upon the mountains of light. It is too little to say, *They shall not be afraid, when destruction comes, for at destruction they shall laugh*: as *Eliphaz* undertakes with his next breath.

VERS. 22, 23.

At destruction and famine, thou shalt laugh; neither shalt thou be afraid of the beasts of the earth.
For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

IN the former words, we had a promise of redemption from famine, and from fear at the coming of destruction. Here both the mercy and the promise are heightned, or the promise is made yet more merciful; *At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh.* It is a high priviledge to be redeem'd from famine, and not to be afraid of destruction, but to laugh at these is the highest priviledge. But is it not a sin to laugh at these? And if so, how will it be any priviledge at all? *I* (saith the wise man, *Eccles.* 2. 2.) *said of laughter, it is mad; and of mirth, what doth it?* And is not this mad laughter, to laugh at destruction, and to be merry in famine. The Prophet vehemently reproves joy in sad times, (*Isa.* 22. 12, 13.) and brands it for an iniquity, that shall not be purged from them, till they die. And can it then be commendable to rejoyce in famine, &c. Is it comely for man to be merry, when God is angry? And to be rejoycing, when the Lord is destroying? To clear this I shall open the sence of the Text, and shew, that this *Laughter is neither sin nor madness, but the holiness and sobriety of the Saints.*

At destruction and famine thou shalt laugh.] The word is ordinarily used for *laughing*; whence *Isaac* hath his name. The son of the promise was called *Isaac*, because *Abraham* laughed, or because he rejoyced at the promise or birth of his son; especially at the promise of *His birth, who was to be the joy and desire of Nations, the Lord* Jesus Christ; who, referring to this act of *Abraham*, tells the Jews, *John* 8. 56. *Your Father* Abraham *rejoyced to see my day, he saw it and was glad. To laugh* in Scripture is taken two wayes.

שחק *Idem quod* צחק *Sumitur in bonâ vel in malâ parte, pro loci ratione: risus gaudii, risus contemptus.*

Sometimes in a good sence; and
Sometimes in an ill sence.

In a good sence, and so, *To laugh is an outward expression of sound inward joy and true comfort*; *To laugh* is an act proper to man. There cannot be true and sollid joy (and so, not this effect of it, laughing) where there is not true sollid reason. Even passion (strictly taken) is founded in reason. In *Chap.* 29. *v.* 24. *Job* describing the great prosperity of his former dayes, saith, *If I laughed at them, they believed it not. Job* was a man of that esteem and veneration, that though he expressed in his gesture or countenance, a kind of familiarity, and how well he was pleased; yet the people did so much reverence him, and his piety and unspotted justice did so over-awe them, that they suspected still he might observe somewhat amiss in them.

Secondly, *To laugh*, is used for scorning and deriding. In *Job* 39. *v.* 7. Laughter is ascribed unto the wild Ass, *improperly*; *He* (sc. *the wild Ass*) *scorns* (*or laughs at*) *the multitude of the City.* And (*Psal.* 2. 4.) when the Princes and the people gather themselves together, to take counsel against the Lord and against his Christ; *He that sitteth in Heaven shall laugh, and the Lord shall have them in derision.* That is, the Lord (in a most holy manner) scorns or derides the counsels and practises of wicked men. *Man is never in so sad a condition as when God laughs at him.*

Again, Laughter proper to man, is either sinful and reproveable, or holy and commendable. Sinful laughter is that which arises,

First, From unbelief or weakness of faith: Such was the laughter of *Sarah* (Gen. 18. 12.) when the Angel brought his message that *Sarah* should have a son, *Sarah* heard it, as she was in the Tent-dore, and the Text saith *Sarah laughed*: The ground of her laughter was unbelief; she thought it an impossible thing, for her to have a son (as a man will laugh at a thing you tell him, when he thinks it impossible to be done.) That her laughter was from unbelief, is plain, from the Angels reproving question in the next words; *Wherefore did* Sarah *laugh, saying, shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* As if he had said, surely *Sarah* thinks the Lord hath out-promis'd his own power to perform.

Secondly, Sinful laughter ariseth from contempt, or slighting of counsel, and carnal security in times of danger, (2 *Chron.* 30. 10.) when *Hezekiah* sent messengers to *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* to warn them to come up to the house of the Lord to keep the Passover, it is said, That *they laughed the messengers to scorn, and mocked them*; they laughed, slighting and contemning this admonition, thinking themselves safe and well enough, though they came not up to that solemn Passover.

Thirdly, Sinful laughter arises from pride and self-confidence (*Hab.* 1. 10.) The Prophet describes the proud *Chaldeans*, invading *Judah*, thus, *They shall scoff at the Kings,*

Kings, and Princes shall be a scorn unto them, and they shall deride every strong-hold. They shall come up with such an Army, with such an arm of flesh, as all flesh must fall down and yield unto.

Lastly, There is a sinful laughter, springing from sensuality, and excess of creature contentments. Such laughter Christ threatens, *Luke* 6.25. *Wo to you that are full, wo to you that laugh now*: That is, wo to you that laugh, because of your creature fulness.

Laughter, which is good and commendable, hath such roots, as these.

First, It springs up from faith, such was the laughter of *Abraham* (Gen. 17. 17.) When he heard the promise, that he should have a son, the Text saith, *Abraham fell upon his face and laughed*: That the laughter of *Abraham* was from faith, is clear from the Apostle, *Rom.* 4. 19. affirming, that, *He not being weak in faith, considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of* Sarahs *womb*; *he staggered not at the promise of God, through unbelief*, &c. *Abraham* laughed out his faith, not (as *Sarah*) his unbelief. Therefore also Christ saith (as was toucht before) *Abraham rejoyced to see my day, he saw it and was glad*: In the promise of his son, he saw the *Promised seed*, in whom all the Nations of the earth should be blessed. This sight of the day of Christ, in that *prospective of the promise*, drew it in near to the old-mans heart (though it were far off) and made him glad.

Secondly, Commendable laughter comes from holy courage, and well grounded confidence; well temper'd magnanimity and Christian heroicalness of spirit, lifts us so far above dangers and fears, that we laugh at them.

And then, there is a laughter in dangers grounded upon assurance of deliverance from, or support in dangers. A man that sees a great storm coming, laughs at it, knowing where to go to shelter presently, where to get a warm house over his head. The Pilot knowing he hath a strong Ship, and good tackling, laughs at the winds. In that sence [*not to fear*] is used (*Prov.* 31.21.) where it is said of the wise woman, *She is not afraid of the snow for her household*; If the snow and cold weather come, she doth not fear it, she can laugh at the snow; Why? *For all her household are cloathed with scarlet, or double cloth*; she hath made such provision against cold weather, that she fears neither frost nor snow.

Ridebis vetos hoc munere tectus & imbres. Mart.

Now, the Text (when it is said, *At famine thou shalt laugh*) is not meant of laughter, springing either from unbelief, or pride, or self-confidence, or sensuality, or senslesness; as if he should not care what God did in the world, let God do what he would, he would laugh. As that proud Emperor said (not only as one before him, when I am dead, but) while *I live, let Heaven and Earth be mingled together, I care not*; scorning and contemning what could come. But this laughter comes from strength of faith, from holy courage, and well-grounded confidence; from an assurance of shelter, safeguard and protection from, or support in the greatest dangers, even in famine and destruction: He fixes on such a promise as this, *Psal.* 37. 19. *They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the dayes of famine, they shall be satisfied.* The soul of a believer sees salvation in destruction, food in famine; he hath *wine well refined to drink, marrow and fatness to feed upon*, when the world knows not how to give him (or will not give him) a dry crust, or a cup of cold water. He sees a hiding place, when all others lie open to the danger; he sees a place of refuge, a covert from the rain and from the storm, when others stand naked under them. The sum of all is, A godly man sees himself so protected in dangers, so provided for against all wants; he sees in the promises such a Magazin of arms, such store of bread, that he fears no weapon form'd against him, and feeds, when no Table is spred for him; Danger secures, destruction saves, and famine fattens him, that is, in danger, destruction and famine, he knows whither to go for food, savation and safety; even unto God, who is all this to him, and will be more, if he need it. Upon these grounds it is, that the Text saith, *At Famine and destruction he shall laugh.* Hence observe,

ἐμοὶ ζῶντι θαῦμα μιγήτω πᾶν. Ignat.

In vastitate ita eris munitus, ac de tua salute securus, ut videre possis, etiâsi famescas, nõ te enecabit fames, verũ Deus suo te consolationis papulo ita reficiet, ut videre possis. Ipsa te fames reddet saturum; & contabis, nõ secus ac si tibi plenus esset venter. Pined.

A godly man, a true Believer, is not only not afraid of outward evils, when they come, but through Faith, he is above, and triumphs over them.

Not to be *afraid of famine and destruction when they come*, is too low for his spirit, *He shall laugh when they come.* Hence the Apostles exulting language, *We glory in tribulation, we are exceeding joyous in all our tribulations.* And to this sence we may interpret that of *Peter*, speaking of the sufferings of the Saints, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. *The Spirit of glory resteth upon them*; that is, a spirit of glorying and holy rejoycing, whereby the soul is carried up (as it were) upon Eagle-wings, above and beyond reproaches. *All evils lie below a Believer, when he is lifted up with this Spirit of glory.* Tis spirit of glory resting upon us through him that loved us, makes us *more then Conquerors over tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril or sword*, Rom. 8. 35, 36. *More then Conquerors!* Who can express how much that is? No tongue can tell what it is to be more then a conqueror. When Christ would advance the exceeding greatness of that reward which *Givers* shall receive, *Luke* 6. 38. He saith not barely, *Give, and it shall be given you in good measure*; but you shall have it *pressed down*; and yet more, *shaken together*: that is not all neither; but you shall have it *running over*. Now a measure will run over, as long as you will pour; there is no stint, no bounds to that gift, which shall be given running over: A Vessel will run over continually, pour as long as you will: So here, you shall not only have a conquest, but more then a conquest; and what that is, is as much and more, then all our thoughts are able to comprehend. Hence also the Apostle speaking of that great enemy, the last enemy, *Death* (1 *Cor.* 15. 55.) brings in the believing soul in a kind of holy triumph, laughing at, and even jeering Death, in the sence of the Text, *O Death, where is thy sting?* As if a man having disarmed his enemy, should say, now Sir, where's your sword? where's your pistol? *Christ hath disarmed Death*, taken away its sting; now the Believer may laugh in the face of Death, *O Death, thou thoughtest to make us all smart, where is thy sting? thou thoughtest thy self a conquerour, able to devour and subdue us all, but where is thy victory?* Such is the Laughter here meant. And in the same sence, *Leviathan* the mightiest of living creatures, that Sea-monster (*to whom upon the Earth there is not the like, he is made without fear*, Chap. 41. 33.) is said to *laugh at the shaking of the spear* (Job 41. 29.) He is so armed with impenitrable scales, that, shake a spear at him, he laughs at you; it is an allusion to those, that are armed with *proof*, they fear neither sword nor shot: The truth is, a believer is shot-free, shake the spear at him, shake famine, shake destruction at him, threaten him with this or with that, he laughs at all, because he hath *armor of proof*, wherein he may safely trust; he hath a shield, a shield of faith, which will quench even the fiery darts of Satan, much more then the fiery dangers of the world.

The Histories of the Primitive Church, are full of this holy laughter, and heroical magnanimity of the Saints, grapling with the greatest evils. How did those renowned Martyrs, even *baffle death*, and deride their torments (from this principle of faith in Christ) conquering them, not slighting them (from a principle of self-neglect.) When *Polycarpe* was threatned to be torn in pieces with the teeth of wild beasts, *Let them come*, saith he, *and grind me, I shall make very good bread*; so that the very tormentors were more tormented with the holy scorn and laughter of suffering Christians, then the Christians were with the torments which they suffered. In 2 *Sam.* 2. 14. When *Abner* and *Joab* the two *great Generals* met, *Abner* saith unto *Joab*, *Let the young men arise and play before us*; the sport was to fight, and fighting unto death, and yet these stout Souldiers being above fear, call it playing one with another: It is the word here in the Text (*let them come and laugh together before us*) As if these young men were of such courage, that they could laugh at death, and go to killing one another, as if they were to go to play with one another. Surely there is little reason for such courage; *killing of men is no laughing matter, no matter of sport*; for as *Abner* said unto *Joab*, not long after (*vers.* 26.) *Shall the sword devour for ever, knowest thou not, that it will be bitterness in the end? There is little cause to account the beginning of that a sport, which*

which will be bitterneſs in the end: But when the Saints are to joyn in the deadlieſt battel, or to meet with the *deadlieſt death for Chriſt*, or from the chaſtening hand of Chriſt, they have reaſon enough to account it a ſport, and to laugh at deſtruction (in this ſence cleared) becauſe they know it will be ſweetneſs and comfort in the end: *Valour ſometimes laughs at danger, much more may faith.* (Pſalm 68. 12, 13.) *Though we have lyen among the pots, yet ſhall we be as the wings of a Dove covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold:* This is the confidence of the Saints, when they lie among the pots, or among the pot-ranges (as ſome interpret it) where the ſcullions lie, and are beſooted and black'd over, at the fire of afflictions, till they look like very ſcullions, that yet they ſhall be gilded over ſoon after. Or it may be underſtood of the bounds and limits of the enemies Country: and ſo it is a deſcription of great danger; for they who lie upon the borders of an enemies Country, are in a continual fear of an aſſault; this the Greeks ſeems to favour, rendring it thus; Though we have *lain between the inheritances, or the lots, &c.* our own and the enemies; either way the ſence reaches this point fully; though believers lie among the pots, or neareſt dangers, yet they are aſſured that they ſhall have wings, as the wings of a Dove, which are covered with ſilver, and her feathers with yellow gold. There is gold and ſilver in the eye of faith, while there is nothing but blackneſs and death in the eye of ſenſe; yea, faith aſſures them, that they ſhall be *white as ſnow in* Salmon (as it follows in that Pſalm) that is, they ſhall have whiteneſs after blackneſs, or light in the midſt of darkneſs. *Salmon* ſignifies dark, duskiſh or obſcure; for, it was a hill full of pits, holes and gins, very dark and dangerous for paſſengers; but when the ſnow was upon it, it was white and gliſtering; now ſaith he, they ſhall be like *Salmon* in the ſnow, though black in themſelves, yet white, lightſom and glorious, either through pardon of ſin, or victory over their enemies, to both which, *whiteneſs* hath reference in Scripture.

εἰνὰι μέσον τῶν κλήρων Sept. Ainſworth.

Again, In that it is ſaid, *At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh*; as from that word, *laughing*, we ſee what ſpirits the Saints have in troubleſom times; ſo, in-as-much as he gathers together and rally's all the ſcattered troops of afflictions, to charge at once upon a believer; and yet concludes, *At deſtruction and famine thou ſhalt laugh*,

Non ſolũ ſingulas rerumnas ſuperabit, ſed omniũ illorum in unũ coactiũ agmen. Integrum ex omnibus exercitũ fugabit

Obſerve, That, *A godly man laughs at, or is above all evils, though brought againſt him at once.*

It hath been ſaid, That *Hercules* could not match two: here are two, *Deſtruction and Famine*, overmatcht by one; bring whole legions and armies of troubles to encounter a Saint, he overcomes them all: *He famiſhes famine, and deſtroyes deſtruction it ſelf.* The Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8.35. muſters up (as it were) all evils together into a body, and dares any or all to battel, with a believer; *Who ſhall ſeperate us from the love of God? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword?* which of theſe ſhall undertake the challenge, or will you bring any more? then, come *life, or death, Angels, or principalities, or powers, things preſent, or things to come, height or depth, or any other creature: none of theſe ſingle, nor all of theſe joyned, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* Every heightned Saint is a ſpiritual *Goliah*, who in the name of the living God, bids defiance to this huge hoſt, and they all run and tremble before him. *Rejoyce* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Jam.* 1. 2.) *when you fall into divers temptations:* A believer hath joy, not only when he grapleth with a ſingle temptation; but let there come many, divers temptations, variety of temptations, variety for kind, and multitude for number, yet he rejoyceth in the midſt of all.

Neither ſhalt thou be afraid of the beaſts of the earth.

Having thus lifted a godly man above the afflicting reach of thoſe two great evils, famine and deſtruction, want of good things, and ſpoiling of his goods; he proceeds to inſtance another great evil, wherein a godly man is exempt from, and ſet above fear; *Neither ſhalt thou be afraid of the beaſts of the Earth.*

Beaſts of the Earth. The root of that word ſignifies life, and ſo any living creature, eſpecially a wild beaſt; becauſe they are ſo active and full of life, therefore they are named from life.

חיה *à radice* חיה *vita, vivēs, beſtia fera.*

And theſe are called, *The beaſts of the Earth*;

Firſt, Becauſe beaſts are produced from the earth, and the earth received a charge to produce them, *Gen.* 1. 24, 25. *And God ſaid, let the earth bring forth the living creature, after his kind, and God made the beaſt of the earth after his kind.*

Or ſecondly, Becauſe beaſts have nothing but earth to live upon; as men whoſe portion is only in creatures, are called *men of the world*, or men of the earth.

The word for (*earth*) ſignifies the whole earth, habitable or inhabitable: And though the earth ſtand ſtill, yet this word is derived (ſay ſome) from running, either becauſe the Heavens run round about the earth, with a continual rotation or motion; or becauſe all creatures, men and beaſts, move or run upon the face of the earth. Though others deduce it from a word which ſignifies to* *deſire, wiſh, or will a thing*; becauſe the earth is perpetually deſirous of bringing forth fruit, for the uſe and help of man. But it is not agreed on what we are to underſtand, by *the beaſts of the Earth.*

אֶרֶץ *Complectitur totũ terrarum orbẽ, tum habitabilẽ, tũ qui non eſt habitabilis, deductũ voluntà verbo* רוּץ *currere, vel quia cœlum perpetuo rotatu circa terram currit, vel quòd omnia animalia currant ſuper faciem terræ.* * *Aliũ à verbo* רצה *i.e. voluit, concupivit, deductum volunt eo quod terra jugiter appetat afferre fructum.*

Firſt, Some take the words improperly, and ſo *the beaſts of the earth*, are interpreted men; a company or ſociety of men, and theſe in a double ſence. For the word notes ſometimes a company of men in a good ſence, and ſometimes a company of men in an ill ſence. I ſhall give you an inſtance of both, for the clearing of this Text.

It ſignifies men, or a company of men in a good ſence, *Pſal.* 68. 10. where ſpeaking of *that rain of liberalities*, (that is, bleſſings of all ſorts) which God ſent upon his inheritance, to confirm and refreſh it, he ſaith, *Thy Congregation hath dwelt therein.* Thy Camp or Leagure, thy Hoſt or Troop dwelt there; (ſo 2 *Sam.* 23.13.) which the vulgar tranſlates, *Thy beaſts*; and the Greek, *Thy living creatures dwelt therein:* The ſame word is uſed (and ſome apprehend in alluſion to this Pſalm) *Rev.* 4.6. *Chap.* 5. 8, 9. in thoſe myſtical deſcriptions of Chriſt and his Church: in this ſence it ſuits not at all with the promiſe of the Text. *Theſe beaſts are not to be feared, but honoured and loved; mans greateſt ſpiritual comforts on earth, are found in the ſociety of theſe beaſts.*

Animalia tua habitabunt in eis, Vul. Sept. Syr.

But commonly this word, referred unto men, ſignifies an aſſociation of wicked men; *men of the earth*, worſe (many of them) then the *beaſts of the earth:* Theſe are ſpoken of in the ſame *Pſalm* ver. 30. *Rebuke the company of ſpear men, (or Archers) The rout or crue of the Cane*, that is, men that bear reeds, or canes, whereof ſpears and arrows were wont to be made; therefore the company of Spear-men or Archers, are called a company with reeds: the word by us rendred company, is, *the beaſts of the reeds*; thoſe men that are like beaſts, ſavage, cruel and bloody, theſe are as bruits and beaſts of the earth; ſo they are decipher'd in the next verſe, *The multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people.* And we find the word ſignifying, a company of wicked ones, and a company of Saints in the ſame verſe, *Pſal.* 74. 19. *O deliver not the ſoul of thy turtle Dove unto the multitude of the wicked*; the Hebrew is, unto the company of the beaſts; *Forget not the Congregation* (or the beaſts) *of thy poor for ever*; there the ſame word is taken (as in *Pſal.* 68. 10.) for a company of Saints, or the poor people of God. In the Scripture of the New Teſtament, it is frequent to ſhadow wicked men under the names of beaſts, beaſts of the earth: ſo that of *Paul* hath been taken (1 *Cor.* 15.32.) *If I have fought with beaſts at* Epheſus *after the manner of men*, with beaſtly men, cruel men, men like unto beaſts in their qualities and diſpoſitions: though others underſtand it of his being caſt unto the beaſts, to fight with them, which was a cruelty thoſe perſecuting times exerciſed againſt the Chriſtians. So (1 *Tim.* 4.16.) *Paul* ſaith, *he was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion: Nero* that cruel Tyrant, is ſuppoſed to be the Lion, the beaſt of the earth he aimeth at. And the Apoſtle, *Titus* 1. 1. gives this

חיות קנה

this *character of the Cretians*, they are *evil beasts*. If we take it here in this sence, it is a truth, and a very comfortable truth, that godly men shall be delivered from the fear of beastly and cruel men, or as the Apostle calls them, *unreasonable or absurd men, who have not faith.*

But rather understand here *beasts of the earth* properly, for those fierce and ctuel creatures hurtful to man. Once, man had power and dominion over all the creatures; the wildest beasts were tame to him in his state of innocency; till he rose up and rebelled against God, the creatures were subject unto him; but man rebelling against God, the creatures rebelled against man: hence it is, that man naturally is surprised with fear, at the approach and sight of strong and cruel beasts, and therefore it is here spoken as a special mercy and priviledge of the godly, that they *shall not be afraid of the beasts of the earth.*

The beasts of the earth are hurtful to us three wayes.

First, Naturally, many beasts by nature are very dreadful to man, as the Lion, the Bear, the Wolf, and such other fierce, strong and bloody beasts.

Secondly, Tame beasts, such as we daily use and subdue to our service, are often by accident hurtful to us; the Horse and the Ox, have many times been destructive to their owners.

Thirdly, (Which I conceive is the thing chiefly aimed at here) beasts hurt judicially, in a way of wrath from God: There are divers places in the Book of God, wherein God threatens to arm creatures, against those, who sin against him, and that when people should forget their duties, the beasts should forget their subjection. *Deut.* 32. 24. *I will send the teeth of beasts upon them.* And *Jer.* 15. 3. *I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the Lord, the Sword to slay, and the Dogs to tear, and the Fowls of the Heaven, and the beasts of the Earth, to devour and destroy.* You see God can have an army any where if he pleaseth, an army of Dogs to destroy, an army of Fowls of the Air, an army of the beasts of the Earth, to subdue a rebellious people. And *Ezek.* 14. 21. This is one of the four sore judgments that God denounceth against *Jerusalem, The Sword, and the Famine, and the noysom Beasts, and the Pestilence.* Thus in a judicial manner they were very terrible and dreadful, and so were numbred among the soreſt evils or judgments which God sent upon a Nation for their wickedness. To all or any of these wayes, this promise may be enlarged. Thou shalt not be afraid of the natural cruelty, the casual hurtfulness, or the judiciary rage of beasts, when sent by God with commission to punish the beastliness of men.

How this cometh to pass, that beasts of the Earth hurt not godly men, is laid down in the next verse, which I shall a while open, and then give you some notes and observations from both together.

Vers. 23. **For thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.**

This verse contains the reason, why he should not be afraid of the beasts of the field; and here is somewhat more got into the reason, then was before in the promise; the ground of the promise is higher, and carried farther then the promise it self. The promise was, to be delivered from the fear of beasts; and that thou mayest be certain of it, know God will not suffer so much as a stone to do thee hurt: *Thou shalt be at league* not only with the beasts of the Earth, but with the stones of the field.

בְּרִית *à radice* בָּרָה *Elegit, quia eliguntur personæ inter quas, & res & conditiones propter quas fœdus initur.* Buxt.

Thou shalt be in league.] The word is frequently used in the Old Testament, to signifie that solemn gracious covenant of reconciliation between God and man, established in the blood of Christ.

A league or covenant is a very solemn act, an act of reason, and of the highest reason, an act of judgment and deepest deliberation: therefore it may be doubted how a league can be entred with stones, which have no life, or with beasts which have no reason. We read (*Gen.* 39. 49.) of a league or covenant made at or upon an heap of stones, between *Jacob* and *Laban*; but this is very strange and unheard of, to make a league with a heap of stones.

For the clearing of this, we must enquire into two things;

First, What these stones are.

Secondly, What this league doth import.

First, *For the stones:* There are divers opinions about them, and many interpreters have exceedingly stumbled at these stones: Some change these stones into men, strong men, or the strongest of men. That of *Job* in the next Chapter, hath some allusion to it, *vers.* 12. *Is my strength the strength of stones?* A strong man is strong, as a stone.

The *Chaldee Paraphrast understands by stones, the Law, which was written in stones. Thou shalt be in league with the stones,* that is, the Law written in *tables of stone* shall never hurt thee. But that (as to the Text) is a meer conceit, though (in it self) a great truth, and our greatest comfort, that believers are at league with those *Law stones*, which left in power and hostility, would have broken all man-kind to pieces, and ground them to powder. Christ hath made peace for us with the Law; the Law had a quarrel at us, and the Law would have been upon us with an everlasting war, if Christ had not setled our peace by satisfying the Law; *Stoning to death, had been the death of us all, if Christ had not made a league for us with these stones.*

Thirdly, Others interpret these stones by a Metonymy of the thing contained, *Thou shalt be at league with the stones of the field*, with the rocks or rocky places, that is, thou shalt be at league with those creatures, or with those beasts, which lie among the stones, and have their dens about hollow rocks: and so they make the latter branch [*and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee*] to be exegetical, giving us the exposition of the former, or shewing, what is meant by being at league with the stones of the field; *Thou shalt be at league with the stones of the field*, that is, with the beasts who make their dens, and their holes, and their hiding places, among the stones of the field. This is a good sence of the words.

But leaving the former, with some other apprehensions about these stones, I shall take these stones properly, and so they will fall under four considerations, all which give light to the clearing of this Text, and the manner of our league with stones.

First, As naturally scattered upon the face of the earth, so hindring Travellers, or endangering a man in haste upon his way. One part of *Arabia*, was called *Arabia Petræa*, or the stony, because it was full of stones, and so uneasie, either for tillage or travel.

Stones are so dangerous to the foot, that the Latine word is derived from *hurting the foot*; hence those Scripture expressions. *A stumbling stone and a rock of offence*, because men are so apt to stumble at stones. And both these are applied to *Christ* in a figure, he is called *a stumbling stone, and a rock of offence. Christ in himself is the most precious and elect foundation-stone to build on, but he is the most sore and dangerous stone to stumble on: To be in league and covenant with that living stone, is the highest mercy.*

Lapis à lædendo pede nomē habet.

Secondly, These stones as they lie naturally hidden in the bowels of the earth, or under the earth, are a trouble to the Husband-man in tilling the ground, in plowing and sowing, and they often endanger the breaking of his plough, and hinder the rooting and growth of the seed sown.

Thirdly, Consider these stones as artificially laid together for the making of a wall or mownd to fence and part field from field, or both from the common fields and high-wayes.

Fourthly, Consider these stones as artificially and industriously placed for *marks and boundaries*, to distinguish private mens lands, or the precincts of such and such Countries, which are commonly called (*a*) *Mark-stones*, or *boundary-stones*; as also stones set in the roads or high-wayes, for the direction of Travellers pointing which way to go, to eminent Towns or Cities. Of such a stone we read (*1 Sam.* 20. 19.) when *Jonathan* bad *David* stay at the stone *Ezel*, that is, as we put in the *Margin* of our Bibles, the *stone that sheweth the way*, or *the* (*b*) *way stone.* These *boundary stones*, or *way-stones* to direct Travellers, were famous in Antiquity: insomuch that among the (*c*) Heathen, *They* were worshipped as a *god*, or *Numen*, as divers of the Christian Fathers have observed in their learned reports of Heathenish idolatry. Which also their own (*d*) Poets have ele-

(a) *Lapides terminales.*

(b) *Lapides viatoris. Lapis itiōis.*

(c) *Romani Deum habebant quem Terminum vocabant.*

Deus saxum erat. Aug. *l. de Civ. Dei, cap.* 23. Lact. *l.* 1. *c.* 20. (d) *Termine, fi. lapis, sive es defossus in agro, Stipes, ab antiquis, tu quoque numen habes.* Ov. *primo Fa*

—— *Omnis erit sine te litigiosus ager*——

gantly

gantly described, both in their constitutions and uses; giving those stones a charge faithfully to testifie, (*e*) *This is your land; and this is yours.* And they break out into the commendation of the *integrity* of these witnesses, whom no threats could terrifie, or bribes corrupt to speak a lie, or conceal the truth.

Now consider the other term, what it is to be in league with stones, in any of, or in all these acceptations.

In general we know, that, to be *league with stones*, is an improper or allusive speech: *Stones* are not capable of the formalities of a *league*; when we are in *league* or *covenant* with God or man, so with stones; these two things are made out to us.

First, That God or man will do us no hurt; a covenant or league takes off the actings of hostility. Whatsoever a man is in covenant with, he fears no dammage from. *Presumptuous sinners having made a covenant with Hell, and an agreement with death, build their confidence of indemnity upon the strength of it. When the over-flowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come near us,* Isa. 28. 15. A man that is in league with the Devil, believes the Devil will do him no wrong.

Secondly, A League imports, that we may expect to receive good, protection, benefits and blessings either from God or man, according to the Articles of covenant agreed to, and sealed respectively. These two assurances we have by a *league*. And when it is said here, that a godly man is in *league with the stones of the field*, both these are to be understood; It is as much, as to say, *The stones of the field shall not annoy him*; yea, *the stones of the field shall be a benefit or a friend to him.* Man is said to be in *league with stones*, when he receives the effect of a *league from stones*. Taking it in this general sence, we may apply it unto those four particular sences of senseless stones before mentioned.

First, As stones are naturally scattered upon the face of the earth, the promise imports thus much: that, such stones shall not hurt or annoy him in his walks or travels. This promise we have expresly (*Psal.* 91. 11.) *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes; they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* This is the *league with stones*. Stones shall not annoy thee in thy way, thou shalt not stumble or fall to break thy bones, or bruise thy body upon these stones. The Devil in his combate with Christ, misapplieth this promise of a *league with the stones* (Matth. 4. 6.) Tempting him to cast himself down from a pinacle of the Temple; for it is written, *He shall give his Angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone:* As if he had said, a godly man hath this assurance from his league with the stones, that he shall receive no harm from them; therefore trust God, and in confidence of this promise, *Cast thy self down.* So, here is the first sence, *Thou shalt be at league with the stones of the field:* that is, thou shalt not be hurt by those *stones*, as thou travellest or walkest.

Secondly, Take the stones as they lie hidden in the Earth, then to be at league with them, hath this sence; First, That in tilling the Earth, stones should not trouble or hinder that work. God shall so order it, that, though thou plowest among stones, yet thou shalt till thy ground successfully. The stony ground shall be fruitful ground. In that parable of a Vineyard (*Isa.* 5. 1.) God is pleased to manifest his care of making it fruitful, by this act among others, *I gathered out the stones thereof*; vers. 2. noting that stones are naturally great impediments to fruitfulness. We read (*Matth.* 13. 5.) how the seed, which fell upon the *stony-ground*, sprung up quickly and withered as quickly; stony ground naturally cannot feed or bring forth fruit to maturity. It is then a great priviledge, thus to be in *league with the stones of the field*; that, though we sow among stones, yet we shall have a plentiful *Harvest*. When *Job* described the dayes of his prosperity (*Chap.* 29. 6.) he saith, *The Rock poured him out Rivers of Oyl*: To have Oyl out of Rocks, is like having Corn out of the Stones; both noting things succeeding beyond their natural principles, and our common expectation. When the *Baptist* would shew how God can work beyond all the possibilities of nature or reason, he saith to the Jews, *Even of these stones God can raise up children unto* Abraham (*Matth.* 3.) There is somewhat of a miracle in it, to raise up bread to a man out of stones: that is, to make a rocky Land a fertil soil. God threatned his people, that he would make the earth to be iron under them; that is, the earth which was ordinarily fruitful, shall yield you no more fruit, then iron. And on the other side he promises, *That they shall suck Honey out of the Rock, and Oyl out of the flinty Rock,* Deut. 32. 13. *Honey out of the Rock*; that is, Honey of Bees, hiving themselves in Rocks; or (as others) Honey-fruits, as Dates, *&c.* which grow on Palm-trees (as Oyl on Olive-trees) in rocky places. Hereby the Lord assured his people of abundant plenty; for whereas Rocks and Stones are usually barren, he would make those places fruitful to *Israel*. They should have Oyl out of the Rock in *Canaan*, as well as water out of the Rock in the wilderness. We are surely in league with those Rocks and Stones of the fields, which send us such *Presents* as these, Bread and Water, Honey and Oyl.

Ainsw. on Deut.

Thirdly, Take these *Stones* as artificially laid together, and so, *Thou shalt be in league with them*, is thus to be understood; those walls and mounds of stone, shall be as the keepers and watch-men of thy field, they shall preserve thy corn and thy cattel from annoyance. To this sence some joyn the former words with these, *Thou shalt not be afraid of the beasts of the Earth*, for the *stones of the field*, which lie in the walls and fences, shall be-friend thee, and keep them out. When God would shew his intendments to destroy and lay waste his vineyard, he expresses it by pulling down the wall, as before he had expres'd his care to protect it, by building of a wall, *Isa.* 5. 2. *I fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof*; which we may understand thus, *I gathered out the stones* (and as it is usual) *made a fence of them*; and had the Vineyard brought forth fruit, it had also been in league with these stones, that is, the stones of the wall had kept out the wild beasts, or any annoyance from them; but being fruitless, the league with stones was broken: *I* (saith the Lord, *vers.* 5.) *will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be troden down.* So that, in this sence, to be *at league with the stones of the field*, is, as much as to say, that *stone-wall*, or the *stone-fence* which is made about thy field, shall stand to protect and maintain thy Land, thy fruits and cattel, stand the incursions of wild beasts from spoyling and treading down by any.

Nunquam dissolvetur materia, nõ diffiliet lapis ex sepe, nemo furabitur, nemo insiliet in agros tuos.

Fourthly, Take these *Stones* for *Land-marks* or for *Way-marks*, for *boundary-stones*, or for *directory-stones*; and the fence may be thus conceived, *Thou shalt be at league with the stones of the field*, that is, no man shall come within thy bounds, none shall remove thy *Land-marks*, or invade thy *Estate*; those Stones shall firmly distinguish thine inheritance; thou shalt have no controversie arising, which is thine, or what is thy possession. As if an argument had formally been made with these *stones*, to keep off all intruders upon their Masters inheritance, and accordingly the stones in pursuance of that agreement (like so many hired servants) should faithfully witness for their Master, and chide away all who would do him wrong (1 *Sam.* 7. 12.) *Samuel* set up a *stone* as a boundary of the conquest and victories which the Lord had given the children of *Israel* against the *Philistims*, *He set up a stone, and called it Eben-Ezer*, or *stone of help.* Adding the reason, *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us*; As if he had said, here is a *Stone of remembrance*, how God hath helped us; and that Stone seemed to speak thus much to *Israel*, *Keep and hold what ye have gotten, let not the* Philistims *set a foot* (unrevenged) *over or beyond this stone.* So then, in this sence, to *be in league with the stones of the field*, is a promise of keeping our inheritances free from invasion and confusion, that we shall know what is ours, and that no enemy shall take it from us.

Facere pactum cum lapidibus agri, est pacificè vivere cum proximo, item securus esse, quod nullus terminos agri sui transiliturus sit, acsi cum lapidibus terminalibus pepigisset: ipsique lapides pactum initum servarent, nec aliter acsi ratione valentes incursores, aut transgressores etiam verbo fugarent. Pined. *Termini agrorum tuorum à nemine violentur; nemo transgrediatur.*

It was a great sin to remove the *Land-marks* and *Boundaries*, and a great punishment was threatned against any, who should alter or remove them, *Prov.* 23. 11. *Deut.* 19. 14. *Deut.* 27. 17. And when the Prophet *Hosea* would shew, how extreamly wicked the Princes of *Judah* were, he saith (*chap.* 5. 10.) *The Princes of Judah were like them that remove the bounds*; as if he had said, we account those the worst of men, who remove Land-marks; how vile then are these Princes, who are as bad as they? Just as the wickedness of the people is aggravated, *chap.* 4. 4. *This people are as they that strive with the Priest*, To strive with the

the Priest, is to strive with God; that's a sad strife. Strivers with the Priest, are the worst of people; how vile then are this people, who are as bad as they? But to the present point, if it be so great a sin to remove the *Land-stones*, it must needs be a great mercy to have those stones preserved. So then, to *be in league with the stones of the field*, may have this good sence also; the *boundary-stones* shall be preserved, none shall remove them, and they shall preserve thy estate, that none shall invade or waste it. Hence observe,

God can do us good by any thing, if he pleaseth; and nothing can do us good without God.

Though we have carefully set up bounds, though we have made strong fences, yet these will not keep out evil or annoyance, unless there be a league, a league of Gods making for us; and God can produce our comforts out of improbables, yea, impossibles to Nature: He can fetch us bread and a blessing from stones. It was a temptation upon Christ when he was hungry, *to make bread of stones. If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread*, Mat. 4. 2. But it is our comfort, that God can turn stones into bread, that he can make those things which are most improbable to do us good, very good unto us. It is a sin for us to turn stones into bread, or to expect stones to be turned into bread, that is, to put God upon miracles for us, when means or endeavors may help us; but God out of the superabundance of his power and goodness, alwayes can, and sometimes will work miracles: turning stones into bread for us. Then we turn stones into bread, when we live upon sin; whosoever eateth a bit of bread out of the hand of sin, turneth stones into bread. Then God turneth stones into bread for us, when out of his infinite power and goodness, he gives us supplies by unusual means, and comforts us by that, from which we can expect no more comfort, then we do bread and water out of stones.

Further, When stones seem to be most angry with a godly man, then he is in league with them. Stones (in a proper sence) flew about the ears of *Steven*, and killed him; yet *Steven* was in league with the stones, even while they took away his life: God turned these stones into bread for him, and every stone was as a glorious Diamond in his Crown of Martyrdom.

There are two Interpretations of this *league with stones*, (which some make great store and treasure of) different from all these; the former is grounded upon a custom in *Arabia*, where, or near which it is supposed *Job*'s friends dwelt. It was (saith the learned Author) a very capital offence in that Countrey, if any man did cast or carry heaps of stones into his neighbours ground; for that action had this signification or meaning in it, the man, who afterwards ventured to plow or till that ground, should surely dy by the hands of those who cast in those Stones. So that, the sight of such stones was terrible and ominous to the owner of the Land, as speaking death and ruine to him, if he medled with it. Hence 'twas often left unus'd and untill'd. Against this barbarous custom (it being an occasion of murders and bloodshed) a very severe Law was made; *That whosoever should be discovered to have cast such stones into his neighbours ground, should have judgment of death by the Magistrate.* In allusion to this Law or custom, the interpretation of this promise (*Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field*) is made out thus. The ordinary stones of the field shall be so far from hurting, that, even those stones, which speak anger and malice shall not hurt thee. God will reconcile or subdue the rage of thine enemies, and though they have cast these stones of defiance into thy Land, yet they shall desire a league of peace with thee, or fall before thee.

The second is grounded upon a custom in war, of which we read (2 *Kings* 3. 25.) that when the *Moabites* fled before *Israel*, *the pursuing* Israelites *beat down their Cities, and on every good piece of Land, cast every man his stone, and filled it*, &c. *Eliphaz* might have an eye to this; as if he had said, thy Land shall not be buried under the heaps of stones, thrown there by a conquering hand; that is, thou shalt have a league of amity with, or victory over all that are round about thee.

And the Beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

That is, they shall (through the power of God) be made peaceable to thee. *To be at peace with the beasts*, is the same in proportion, with *being in league with stones.* It was mans priviledge by creation, to have power over the beasts of the field, and it is the priviledge of redemption, *to be at peace with them.* This is the ordinary priviledge of every Believer: But there is a more transcendent priviledge of the Church, in the most flourishing estate of it here on earth, represented under this notion, *Isa.* 11. 6, 7, 8, 9. *The Wolf shall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard shall lie down with the Kid, and the Calf, and the young Lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them*, &c. *And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the Asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the Cockatrice den; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.* This *peace with beasts*, is within a degree of glory with God, whether we understand it in the letter, of beasts in kind, or in the Allegory, of men symbolizing in rage and fierceness, in power and poysons, in stings and teeth, with beasts and serpents.

The Text before us, goes lower then this promise; *And to be at peace with the beasts of the field*, is only a gracious assurance that they shall not hurt us, or that they shall be useful to us. In the firmnss of this promise of *peace with the beasts*, the fearlesness of a godly man is founded; *He shall not be afraid of the beasts of the earth, for the beasts of the earth shall be at peace with him.* Hence observe,

The courage and fearlesness of a godly man is grounded on divine reason, not on humane presumption.

When we see a man stout in the midst of danger, fearless amongst wild beasts, we may wonder where the spring of his courage lies: This promise sheweth you the springhead, *He is at peace with them.* It is not conceit and fancy, or desperateness of spirit, that caused him to deride and slight danger; but he hath a solid ground; there is a peace and a league ratified in heaven, for him; even with the Stones and Beasts of the earth. As a godly man can give a reason of the hope that is in him, so he can give a reason of the courage that is in him; he knows why he is so stout and venturous.

Secondly, Observe from both, in that man is here said to be in league with the stones, and at peace with the beasts;

That, *Every creature, by sin, is made dangerous and hurtful unto man.*

For, in that there is a league and peace made with these, it notes, they were in a state of hostility, ready to rise up against us, and annoy us. As the creature, by reason of mans sin is subject unto vanity, so man is subject unto fear, by reason of the creature. *Sin hath made the creature vanity in it self, and sin hath made the creature vexation unto us.* When the beasts rebel against us, we should remember how we have rebelled against God; and, that until God renews a league, and makes peace for us, with the creatures, there is not a creature upon the earth, but may quickly be destructive to us. If God speaks the word, and gives a call or a commission to a Flie, against the strongest, the swiftest man; flight shall perish from the swift, and power from the strong, neither of them shall escape.

Thirdly, *Thou shalt be in league with the stones, and with the beasts*; he reckons up all those wayes by which evils may come in upon us; and assures a man, to whom God is reconciled, that these evils shall not come. Hence observe,

That, *When God is once a friend to us, he can quickly make all other things friendly to us also.*

Every godly man (of such *Eliphaz* here speaks) is at peace and league with God, therefore God makes all creatures at peace and league with him. Though usually, they who are in neareſt league and covenant with God, are most warred with, and opposed by the world; yet this stands sure, that when God is our friend, he can make our enemies our friends, or their enmity shall befriend us; Stones and savage Beasts shall be helpful to us. *When God is at peace with us, he makes all things at peace with us.* *Daniel* was at peace with God, and he was at peace among the Lions. The Apostle (*Rom.* 8.) gives it in general, *If God be with us, who can be against us?* No creature hath power in it self to maintain war and enmity against those, on whose side God appears.

Pined. *crimen hoc appellabant σκοπέλισμον, cujusrei admissum, tale est; pleriq; inimicorum solent prædiũ inimici σκοπελίζειν, idest, lapides ponere indicio futuros, quod si quis eum agrum coluisset, malo letho perituros esset infidiis eorum qui scopulos posuissent. Quæres tãtum timorẽ habet, ut nemo agrum accedere audeat; crudelitatem timent eorũ qui scopelismon fecerũt.* Id. ex Ulpiano.

Qui dominũ habent adjutorem, habebit & omnes creaturas adjutrices; ille si favet, favent omnes, ait, aiunt; negat, negãt, Qui Dominum habet, custodem habebit, & lapides cãpi custodes. Brent *in loc.*

Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia.

appears. If God love us, *All things work together for good to us.* He that hath help from God, ſhall not want help from any creature; for all creatures are at the call and command of God; if he ſaith, *go, they muſt go; if he ſaith, come, they muſt come; if he ſaith to a Stone, do ſuch a man good, the Stone muſt do it; if he ſaith to a Raven, go carry* Elijah *his dinner, the Raven will haſten; if he ſaith to a wild beaſt, ſave ſuch a man, deliver ſuch a man, ſpare ſuch a man, he muſt go of Gods errand.* In our friendſhip and league with God, we have a virtual league of friendſhip with the moſt unfriendly creatures.

And if God pleaſe, he can make men, who have as little ſence as Stones, and leſs reaſon then Beaſts, to be helpful and uſeful, and peaceable to his people. There is a generation amongſt us, a ſtony generation, a hard-hearted generation of men, you may as well move a Stone, as move them with what you ſay; a beaſtly generation of men, when you deal with them, you deal with beaſts; yet the great God (if he pleaſe) can make a league for us with theſe Stones, he can make theſe beaſts of the earth, brutiſh and unreaſonable men, *to be at peace with us.* Further obſerve,

It is from ſpecial providence, that the Stones, and the Beaſts of the earth do not hurt or deſtroy us, but ſpecially that they help and do us good.

There is providence towards all, but a ſpecial providence to the people of God, that the creatures hurt them not. If God did not bridle the rage and reſtrain the power of Beaſts, man could not comfortably ſubſiſt with them. The reaſon is given (*Deut.* 7. 22.) why God deſtroyed the *Canaanites* by little and little, before his people; namely, *Leſt the beaſts of the earth ſhould encreaſe upon them.* Here was a ſpecial providence, as all leagues and peace-makings are, all the leagues and peace which believers have, are branches of that *great League*, of that *grand Covenant*, which God hath made with Chriſt on our behalf. And therefore (*Hoſ.* 2. 18.) his promiſe is made in ſpecial to the Church. *And in that day I will make a Covenant for them, with the beaſts of the field.*

Fifthly note, *A godly man enjoyes common comforts for ſpecial favour.*

Wicked men are ſeldom hurt by the beaſts of the field, but they are never at peace with them.

Laſtly obſerve, *Peace is a great mercy.*

By how much God makes more peace upon earth, by ſo much, man hath more of heaven upon earth. Man ſhould deſire peace with beaſts, much more with men, moſt of all with God.

VERS. 24, 25, 26, 27.

And thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace, and thou ſhalt viſit thy habitation, and ſhalt not ſin.
Thou ſhalt know alſo that thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thine off-ſpring as the graſs of the earth.
Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in his ſeaſon.
Lo this, we have ſearched it, ſo it is, hear it, and know thou it for thy good.

AT the Nineteenth verſe of this Chapter, we had a promiſe of deliverance from evil, *in ſix troubles, and in ſeven.* In the Verſes following, we had a ſpecification of ſix or ſeven troubles, from which deliverance is promiſed. In theſe words, we have the reſult of all, a well-grounded ſecurity, in aſſurance of a fourfold bleſſing. Firſt, Of a quiet and happy life. Secondly, Of many proſperous children, *v.* 25. Thirdly, Of a long life. Fourthly, Of a ſweet and comfortable death, *v.* 26. Every one confirmed and ratified as a truth in it ſelf; and by way of application brought home to *Job* in *v.* 27. or the laſt verſe of the Chapter.

Verſe 24. **And thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.**

Thou ſhalt know it.] Knowledge is ſometime put for preſent ſence; *He that keeps the Commandments, ſhall feel* (*Heb.* ſhall know) *no evil*: and ſo *Job* is promiſed to know, his Tabernacle ſhall be in peace, that is, he ſhall ſee and feel it to be in peace. And,

Secondly, Knowledge is put for experience; as we ſay of a rich man, *he never knew poverty*: And in that ſence, *Chriſt is ſaid not to have known ſin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Thus, alſo, the godly man knows his Tabernacle ſhall have peace, even by the peace which he hath had: From the former dealings of God, he gathers concluſions what God will do with him for the time to come; Thou ſhalt not find me a falſe Prophet, or that I have fed thee with wind: *Thou ſhalt know from experience*, that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.

Non ego vanus augur, experieris & cognoſces reipſa. Coc.

And there is a third way by which this might be known, *ſc.* by debate and reaſoning; *Thou ſhalt know it*: if thou doſt but conſider, what the eſtate of a godly man is, and what God hath ſpoken about that eſtate, thou maiſt make out ſuch a concluſion, that certainly thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.

There is a fourth way of knowing, and that is, upon the teſtimony or word of another; this is properly called *Faith*; *Thou ſhalt know it*, that is, by looking into the word of God, or conſidering the promiſes made to godly men, thou ſhalt aſſent to and believe this thing, that *thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.*

Fifthly, To know, is as much as to be aſſured or certain of a thing; and to know ſo, is oppoſed not only to ignorance and opinion, but it is oppoſed to the lower degrees of Faith: *I know that my Redeemer lives*, &c. (ſaith *Job*, *chap.* 19. 25.) that is, I am ſure he lives. And the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 14. *Knowing that he which raiſed up the Lord Jeſus, ſhall raiſe us up alſo by Jeſus.* Knowledge is often put for aſſurance, and it may riſe to that pitch here; *Thou ſhalt be aſſured that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace.*

Thy Tabernacle.] Tabernacles were of two ſorts. There were Tabernacles for civil uſes, and the Tabernacle for Church-uſes; they dwelt in Tabernacles, and God was worſhipped in a Tabernacle; and therefore (*Ezek.* 23. 4.) *Iſrael* and *Judah* are called *Aholah* and *Aholibah*. *Iſrael*, the ten Tribes, is called *Aholah*, that is, a *Tent*, or or a *Tabernacle*; noting, that they had been the Tent and the Tabernacle of God, wherein he was worſhipped; but *Judah* is called *Aholibah*, that is, *My Tent is in the midſt of her*; becauſe God at that time continued the outward Ordinances of his worſhip to *Judah*, though the ten Tribes had been long in captivity. That only by the way: Here by Tabernacles, we are to underſtand civil Tabernacles; for in thoſe Eaſtern Countries, their ordinary habitations and dwellings were in moveable Tents or Tabernacles, becauſe of their frequent removes. And hence afterward amongſt the *Latines*, the word for a Tent or Tabernacle, ſignified a houſe, or any place wherein men dwell and frequent. Further, By a Trope, a Tabernacle ſignifies all a mans eſtate, or all his goods; ſo that, when it is ſaid, *Thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace*, the meaning is, thy whole eſtate and family, whatever thou haſt, *ſhall be in peace.*

Shall be in peace.] That is, it ſhall be peaceable or in ſafety: Peace may be conſidered two wayes, either ſtrictly or largely; ſtrictly, and ſo peace is oppoſed to war; either firſt, Foreign; or ſecondly, Civil; or thirdly, Domeſtical war (as we may call it) namely, ſtrife and contention in Families. Thus, *Thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace*, may take in all theſe; thou ſhalt neither be invaded by Foreigners, neither ſhalt thou have any inſurrection and ſedition in thy own borders; neither ſhalt thou have unkind contentions in thy particular family, or within thy private walls.

Solent frequentiſſimè abſtracta ob Emphaſin, pro concretis prædicare.

Secondly, Take the word more largely (as it is very frequently in Scripture) and then peace ſignifies all manner of bleſſings and good things, the confluence and gathering together as it were of all comforts; and peace in this large ſence, is oppoſed to any kind of trouble or adverſity; and to ſay ſuch an one hath peace, is as much as to ſay, he proſpers. Peace and proſperity are terms of the ſame ſignification. And then the meaning is this, *Thou ſhalt know that thy Tabernacle ſhall be in peace*, that is, that thy whole eſtate ſhall proſper, and that thou ſhalt have good ſucceſs. Note hence,

First,

First, *Peace is a choice and a special blessing.*

Outward peace is the choicest of outward blessings, and inward peace is the choicest of spiritual blessings. Peace gives sweetness and beauty to all our blessings; without peace, riches are but guilded thorns; honour is but higher misery, health but stronger affliction.

So, without inward peace, Grace gives no present comfort; and therefore in the wishes of perfect spiritual mercy to the Saints, we find these two in conjunction, *Grace and Peace.* The highest promises made to the Church, are promises of setled peace in the Church, *Isa.* 32. 18. *My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places*; There's the top of their outward felicity: Again, in *Isa.* 33. 20. *Look upon Zion the City of our solemnities* (that is, where the worship of God was solemniz'd) *thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a Tabernacle that shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken*: Pure Ordinances, and a peaceable Habitation, are *Jerusalems* perfection on earth; yea, some look upon it as a perfection too perfect for earth, and therefore interpret the Prophesie of the heavenly *Jerusalem.*

Secondly, He saith not only, thou shalt have peace in thy Tabernacle; but *thou shalt know it.* Hence observe,

To be assured of a mercy, is better then the enjoyment of a mercy.

Doubts of losing a mercy, eat out the heart of a mercy; and a man in that case, is as much troubled with the fear of wanting, as he can be comforted with the sense of enjoying.

There are three steps of blessedness. To be delivered from evil, is but a part of blessedness, negative blessedness: to receive good, is the better part of blessedness, positive blessedness: But to be assured that we shall hold and retain all this, is the perfection of blessedness. The first part of that great blessing we receive by Christ, consists in our deliverance from evil; or in a freedom from perishing. The second consists in the conveyance of good to us, as pardon of sin, grace and glory. But the third (which is the height of all) consists in our everlasting assurance to enjoy all this. *Adam* had a good estate, but he was not assured of it: The blessings we have by Christ, are built upon a foundation, which can never be shaken. In this method; temporal mercies are promised in this Scripture: First, Deliverance from Sword and Famine. Secondly, Peace with the Creatures. Thirdly, An assurance that this peace shall be continued.

Lastly observe, *All outward blessings are in themselves fading and perishing.*

Though a man be assured that he shall enjoy outward blessings, yet he can enjoy them but in the nature and condition of outward blessings. Though he be sure to use and enjoy them, yet he looks upon them as perishing in the using. All outward things are here (as frequently in other Scriptures) implied under the notion of a Tabernacle; a Tabernacle is a moveable habitation. It is a piece of a miracle if a Tabernacle stand long: that promise (*Isa.* 33. 20.) imports somewhat extraordinary: A Tabernacle that should not be taken down, not one of the stakes thereof removed, nor any of the cords thereof be broken: It is as if the Holy Ghost should say, Thou shalt be a Tabernacle, priviledg'd above all Tabernacles; they are moveable, unfixed, easie to be taken down; but it shall not be so with thee. The Apostles conclusion takes in all creature-comforts; *The fashion of this world passeth away,* 1 Cor. 7. 31. The Scheme, the beauty of the best earthly things pass, while we enjoy them, and moulder away between our hands, while we are using them.

And thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.

This clause of the Verse compleats mercy yet higher: It is better not to sin in our habitation, then to be assured of a habitation. *To have quietness in our habitation, is very good; but to have holiness in it, is best of all. Thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.*

The word which we translate *habitation*, signifies not only a *house*, but a *wife*, or a *housewife*: Hence some render, *Thou shalt visit thy beauty, or thy fair and beautiful wife, and shalt not sin*: The reason is, either, because a good wife is the beauty and ornament of the house; or because the knowledge, wisdom and diligence of the wife is a means to furnish and adorn the house; or lastly, the business of a wife is so much in the house, that she shares names with the house; she is, or ought to be like a Snail, living with her house upon her back. The Apostles rule also being, *I will that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house.* 1 Tim. 5. 14. And *exhort them to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home,* Tit. 2. 5. Hence also probably, the same word in the Hebrew, signifies a beautiful wife, and a beautiful house. We read it in that sence (*Psal.* 68. 12.) *Kings of Armies did fly apace, and she that tarried at home, divided the spoyl. She that tarried at home,* or the beauty of the house (*sc.* the wife) divided the spoil. The meaning is, such victory shall be obtained over the enemies of the Church, that the wives and weak women shall be filled with those spoils, which their triumphant husbands shall bring home to them.

נוה *Habitatio, & in fœminino genere significat Habitatricem mulierem, sc. habitantem in domo, & exornantem eam.* Moller. *in* Psal. 68. 13.

נוה בית

But here we may rather take the word in the ordinary sence, only with this emphasis, signifying (not bare walls, or a numerous Family) but a beautiful, a well furnished, a well ordered house. And so we have the word at the third verse of this Chapter, where *Eliphaz* saith, *I saw the wicked taking root, and presently I cursed his habitation,* or, his goodly, beautiful, flourishing house: So here, *Thou shalt visit thy habitation*, that is, thy house in all the beauty, order, riches and furniture of it.

פקד *Visitavit.*

Thou shalt visit.] The word signifies more then to see and look upon the buildings and furniture: To visit, notes in Scripture these three or four things.

First, To overlook or take care of the house; to visit the house, is to provide for the house, *Psal.* 8. 4. *Lord, what is man that thou visitest him!* that is, that thou takest so much care of him, and hast such waking thoughts about him.

Secondly, To visit the house, notes an enquiry of what is done in the house, how things go in the family.

Thirdly, It imports a calling of all to an account and reckoning, about what is done in their discharge of family-duties.

Fourthly, To visit, is to order and direct, to command and give precepts for what shall be done. Hence frequently in the Old Testament, the Commandments of God are expressed by this word, *his Precepts.* So then, *Thou shalt visit thy house*, or, thy habitation, may take in all these; thou shalt, as a Master, view, and oversee, direct and call to account thy house and family. In this sence, the word is commonly used amongst us: That act of the Bishops calling their *Dioceses* to an account, and over-looking them, was called *their Visitation.* And over Colledges, Hospitals, and such publick Foundations, *Visitors* are appointed, to see and take an account, how the Rules and Statutes of those places are observed. *Thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not sin.*

But how is it said, he shall do this, **and not sin?** Doth not sin mingle with all we do?

חטא *Erravit vid vel scopo.*

The word here used, signifies, 1. Tropically, to err, fail or miscarry in the general. 2. Properly, to miss a special mark or way, to shoot awry, or wander in stead of walking; as (*Judg.* 20. 16.) it is said of those seven thousand *Benjamites*, that they could shoot at an *hairs breadth, and not sin*; so the word is, or not miscarry, not miss the mark. And because every transgression is a wandering out of the way of Gods Commandments, or a shooting beside the mark of his word, therefore that word in Scripture, is commonly used for sinning.

Here the word admits a twofold interpretation.

Non officietris pœna pro peccato. Fag. *Non lædetis, non accipies damnum aut detrimentum,* Targ. *Curabit res tuas, & domum tuam,*

First, For the fruit or effect of sin; thus, thou shalt order and overlook thy family, with such wisdom and discretion, that thou shalt not err, or do things beside the rule of prudence, and so bring miscarriage and troubles upon thy affairs by sin. Mr. *Broughton* translates to this sence, *Thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not misprosper.* And so *Eliphaz* may hint at *Job*'s former losses, at the overthrow of his Estate and Family; as if he had said, heretofore thou didst visit thy habitation, and didst not prosper; but if thou shalt now humble thy self, thou shalt visit thy habita-

tion, and all ſhall proſper; things ſhall go well with thee, thou ſhalt not labour in vain, or loſe thy end in the care thou takeſt about thy family.

at eas procuraas non fruſtraberis ipe tua, cedentibus tibi rebus omnibus pro voto, & ex animi ſententia. Mer. *Non aberrabis, ſc. à ſcopo & fine deſiderii tui.* Coc.

Secondly, The ſence may be this, thou ſhalt order and viſit thy family with ſo much juſtice, equity and holineſs, that thou ſhalt not ſin. Not that *Eliphaz* undertakes his abſolute freedom from ſin, but he ſhould not ſin as (he ſuppoſed he had) before, thou ſhalt not run into ſuch errors, or ſplit thy ſelf upon ſuch rocks as have wrack'd thy former greatneſs. And thus he ſecretly reproves *Job*'s former carriage in his family, as irregular and ſinful.

There is a further expoſition, joyning both theſe together; *Thou ſhalt viſit thy houſe, and ſhalt not ſin*; namely, by conniving or winking at the ſins and diſorders of thy family, and yet thou ſhalt have peace; thy ſtrict and faithful carriage in overſeeing thy family, ſhall not provoke either ſervants or children to contention and complainings, to anger and paſſion; thy holy ſeverity ſhall not fill thy houſe with quarrels and troubles; but God ſhall ſo over-aw the ſpirits of thoſe under thee, that they ſhall willingly and chearfully ſubmit to thy purer diſcipline. Hence obſerve,

Domeſtici correpti non ſuccenſebūt. Vatabl.

First, *It is a great and a ſpecial point of godly wiſdom, well to order and viſit a Family.*

Families are the principles or ſeeds of a Commonwealth. As every man is a little world, ſo every houſe is a Kingdom. *A Family is a Commonwealth in a little Volume.* And the Rules of it are an *Epitome* of all Laws, by which whole Nations are governed. The Apoſtle makes it a ſpecial Character of *his Biſhop*, That he muſt be *one who rules his own houſe well*; and ſubjoynes the reaſon, *for if a man know not how to rule his own houſe, how ſhall he take care of the Church of God?* 1 Tim. 3. 4, 5. And therein wraps up this truth, that he who knows how to rule his own houſe well, is in a good poſture of ſpirit for publick rule. The ſame wiſdom, and juſtice, and holineſs for kind, only more enlarged and extenſive, acts in either ſphear, and will regularly move both.

Secondly, *A Family well viſited and ordered, is uſually a proſperous Family.*

Sin ſpoiles the comforts, and cankers the bleſſings of a Family.

Sin brought into a houſe, rots the timber, and pulls down the houſe; or it undermines the foundation, and blows up the houſe. *The ſin of Families, is the ruine and conſumption of Families.* Hence obſerve,

Thirdly, *To be kept from ſin, is a better and a greater bleſſing, then all outward bleſſings.*

When *Eliphaz* had reckoned up all the comforts which repenting *Job* is promiſed; Thou ſhalt be delivered in ſix troubles and in ſeven; Sword and Famine ſhall not hurt thee, peace and plenty ſhall dwell within thy walls, and lodge in every chamber: Yet (ſaith he) I will tell thee of a bleſſing beyond all theſe, *thou ſhalt not ſin*: It is more mercy to be delivered from one ſin, then from ſword and famine; grace is better then peace, and holineſs then abundance; riches, and honour, and health, are all obſcured in this one bleſſing, a holy, a gracious, an humble heart.

There is more evil in one ſin, then in any or all troubles; therefore there muſt needs be a greater bleſſing in being kept from ſin, than in protection from any or all troubles. Sin is the greateſt evil; therefore to be kept from ſin, is one of the greateſt goods. Chriſt took upon him all ſorts of outward evils, *he became poor for our ſakes*; he had not ſo much as an houſe to lie in; he came in the form of a ſervant for our ſakes, and he was a man of ſorrows; he was acquainted with grief all his life, at laſt, with death and a grave: yet, he would not admit of the leaſt ſin: he was content to bear all our ſins, but he abhorred the thought of acting one. *Not to ſin, is the next priviledge to God, and the utmoſt priviledge of man.* When, in a full ſence, man ſhall not ſin, man will be arrived at fulneſs of joy; and as we daily empty of ſin, ſo we proportionably, fill with joy.

Verſe 25. Thou ſhalt know alſo that thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thy off-ſpring as the graſs of the earth.

From preſent bleſſings upon the family, he deſcends to thoſe which concern poſterity; as if he had ſaid, thy comforts ſhall not be confined to thy ſelf, neither ſhall they be ſhut up within the limits of one generation: Mercies ſhall be tranſmitted to thy children, thy heirs ſhall inherit bleſſings.

רב גדל

Thy ſeed ſhall be great.] The word *Great*, ſignifies both multitude and magnitude: Thou ſhalt have a *great ſeed*, that is, a numerous ſeed, a multitude of children: and thou ſhalt have a *great ſeed*, that is, honourable and wealthy children; *Job* himſelf was called, *chap.* 1. 3. (though by another word, yet in the ſame ſence) *the greateſt man in the Eaſt*: This greatneſs is promiſed his children, and they ſhall receive additional further bleſſings: For the word [*Rab*] ſignifies *greatneſs*, in a continual motion to more eminent greatneſs; and therefore it is ſometime tranſlated by *encreaſing*: So (*Iſa.* 9. 6.) Where the Prophet ſets out the flouriſhing greatneſs of the Kingdom of Chriſt: *Of the encreaſe of his Kingdom and Peace, there ſhall be no end*; or, *Of the greatneſs and greatning of his Kingdom, there ſhal be no end.* So that, to ſay, *thy ſeed ſhall be great*, notes, not only ſome ſtanding greatneſs, but growing greatneſs: they ſhall ever be upon an encreaſe, till they come to their full in glory.

And thy off-ſpring as the graſs of the earth.

Both clauſes of the Verſe mean the ſame thing. The word which we tranſlate [off-ſpring,] ſignifies properly *that which goeth forth* or iſſues, becauſe children ſpring or go forth from their parents, and are therefore called *their iſſue*. And the word is uſed for the bud of the Olive or of the Vine; hence the Pſalmiſt puts them both into a ſimilitude. *Thy children ſhall be like Olive-plants round about thy Table.* They are as the Olive-bud in their birth, and as the Olive-branch in their growth.

צאצים *Germina ſicut ex vite palmites.*

Thy off-ſpring ſhall be [as the graſs of the earth.] To be as the graſs of the earth, is a *proverbial ſpeech*; and it ariſes to the ſence of thoſe proverbials ſpoken to *Abraham* concerning his ſeed; *Thy ſeed ſhall be as the ſtars of heaven*: And, *thy ſeed ſhall be as the ſand upon the Sea-ſhore.* The graſs of the field is as innumerable as the ſtars, or the ſands. *Thy off-ſpring ſhall be as the graſs of the field.* Thou ſhalt not only have a numerous, but thou ſhalt have (as it were) an innumerable off-ſpring.

Proverbiale multitudinis, talia ſunt ſicut arena maris, ut ſtellæ cœli. Druſ.

Mankind in general, is compared unto graſs, *Iſa.* 40. 6. *All fleſh is graſs.* Graſs, in regard of its ſudden withering, he is ſuddenly cut down; *the goodlineſs of man is as the flower of the field.* Wicked men are compared to Graſs, not only becauſe they wither, but becauſe they wither ſuddenly, or are cut off by ſome hand of Juſtice. The off-ſpring of a godly man are compared to Graſs, but in another reference. To Graſs, firſt, becauſe of their mutitude; and ſecondly, becauſe of their beauty; they ſhall flouriſh and be green as the graſs, which is very pleaſant to the beholders eye.

And in this alſo *Eliphaz* aimes at the death of *Job*'s Children; Thou haſt loſt thy children, they periſhed miſerably; but if thou return, that bleſſing ſhall return, *Thy ſeed ſhall be great, and thy off-ſpring ſhall be as the graſs of the earth.*

Hoc dicit quia Job filios amiſerat. Merc.

The bleſſing of Children hath been ſhewed in the firſt Chapter; therefore I ſhall but name a Point or two now.

First, That, *The poſterity of godly parents ſtand nearer then others, under the influence of heavenly bleſſings.*

As Grace doth not run in a blood, ſo neither do bleſſings infallibly run in a blood; yet the children of thoſe who are bleſſed, are neareſt a bleſſing, and their poſſibilities for mercy, are faireſt. Many promiſes are made to them, *they are heirs apparent of the Promiſes in their parents right*; others to appearance, are ſtrangers to the promiſes; though we know free Grace chuſeth often out of the natural line: The mercies of God are his own, and it is his prerogative, *to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will, he hardneth.*

Secondly, When he ſums up the bleſſings of a godly man, the bleſſings of his Children are caſt into the account. Hence note,

That, *The bleſſings of the Children are the bleſſings of the Parents.*

As the Parent is afflicted in the afflictions of his Children, ſo he is bleſſed in their bleſſings. *Relations ſhare mutually both in Comforts and Croſſes.* Children are their Parents multiplied; and every good of the Child is an addition to the Parents good. *A flouriſhing, and a numerous Poſterity is a great outward bleſſing.* Some have the choiceſt of ſpiritual bleſſings, who want this (*Iſa.* 56. 3.) God comforts thoſe that have no Children. *Do not ſay that thou art made a dry Tree; for I will give thee in mine houſe, a place and a name better then of Sons and Daughters:* As if he had ſaid, the name of Sons and of Daughters, is a very great Comfort, but it is not the greateſt Comfort, the beſt bleſſing: thou ſhalt have a name and a place, better then of Sons and Daughters.

Verſ. 26. **Thou ſhalt come to thy grave in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in his ſeaſon.**

From perſonal preſent bleſſings of this life, and the bleſſings of poſterity, *Eliphaz* deſcends to ſhew the bleſſing of a godly man in death: A happy death is the cloſe of temporal happineſs, and the beginning of eternal. A happy death ſtands between grace and glory, like the *Baptiſt* between the Law and the Goſpel, and is the connexion or knitting of both: And as it was ſaid of *John*, *That among them who are born of women, there aroſe not a greater then he; nevertheleſs, he that is leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, is greater then* John: So we may ſay, that among all the bleſſings of this life, there is none greater then a bleſſed death; nevertheleſs that which is leaſt in eternal life, is a greater bleſſing, then a bleſſed death. It was an obſervation among the Heathen, *That no man is to be accounted bleſſed, until he die.* But when life is ſhut up with a bleſſing, then man is fully bleſſed; as in reaſoning, ſo in living, the concluſion lies in the premiſes. *A happy death is the reſult of a holy life.*

Thou ſhalt come to thy grave.] That phraſe notes two things.

Firſt, A willingneſs and a chearfulneſs to die. *Thou ſhalt come,* thou ſhalt not be dragged or hurried to thy grave, as it is ſaid of the fooliſh rich man, *Luke* 12. *This night ſhall thy ſoul be taken from thee.* But *thou ſhalt come to thy grave*, thou ſhalt die quietly and ſmilingly, as it were; *thou ſhalt go to thy grave*, as it were upon thine own feet, and rather walk, then be carried to thy Sepulcher.

Secondly, It notes the honour and ſolemnity of burying. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave with honour*, as it is ſaid of *Abijah* the ſon of *Jeroboam*, 1 King. 14. 12, 13. When Meſſengers were ſent to the Prophet to inquire whether he ſhould recover, the Prophet tells them, *The child ſhall die, and all* Iſrael *ſhall mourn for him, and bury him: For, he only of* Jeroboam *ſhall come to the grave, becauſe in him there is found ſome good thing toward the Lord God of* Iſrael, *in the houſe of* Jeroboam. He onely ſhall *come to the grave*, the reſt ſhall be thruſt into the grave, or lie unburied; but he ſhall come, that is, he ſhall be buried with honour; others ſhall have reproach caſt upon them, when the earth is caſt upon them. *Thou ſhalt come to thy grave*

כלח *Senium, ſenectutis tempus.*

In a full age.] So we tranſlate. The word is expounded two wayes.

In a full age, that is, in an age, when thou ſhalt be full: full of eſtate, full of wealth and honour, thou ſhalt have abundance when thou dieſt. And ſo it points at *Job*'s preſent poverty; though thou haſt nothing now, ſcarce a rag to thy back, or a ſheet to wind thee in, if thou ſhouldſt die, yet ſeek unto God, and thou ſhalt die in a full age, in a *golden Age*, thy wants ſhall be ſupplied, and thy loſſes repaired to the full.

But rather a *full age*, notes here a fulneſs of dayes, though the other (fulneſs of eſtate) be not excluded. The Prophet puts the ſame difference, between aged men, and men full of dayes, as is between children, and young men (*Jer.* 6. 11.) *I am full of the fury of the Lord, I will pour it out upon the children abroad, and upon the aſſembly of young men together: The aged, with him that is full of days.* That is, all ages ſhall feel the fury of the Lord. A full age, is an age full of dayes or compleat to the utmoſt time of life. Some of the Jewiſh Writers obſerve, that the *numeral letters* of this word (*Chelad*) make up threeſcore, which they conceive is the age here meant; but threeſcore is not a full old-age, it is rather the beginning of old-age. Therefore *fulneſs of age*, is by others interpreted, to be ſtrength of age; thou ſhalt die in an old-age, yet thou ſhalt have ſtrength and comfort in thy old-age; thine old-age ſhall not be a troubleſom age, thou ſhalt not be weak and crazy, diſtempered and ſick, a burden to thy ſelf or friends; thou ſhalt dye (as ſome tranſlate) *in a good old-age*; or as Mr. *Broughton*, *thou ſhalt die in luſty old-age*; time ſhall not wither thee, nor drink up thy blood and ſpirits, *Thou ſhalt have a ſpring in thy Autumn, and a Summer in the winter of thy life.* As it was with *Moſes*, *Deut.* 34. 7. who dyed when he was an hundred and twenty years old, yet ſaith the Text, *His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*: This is to die in a full old-age, full of dayes, yet full of ſtrength and health. It is a great bleſſing, when a man is (in this ſence) youthful in old-age: when others ſee with four eyes, and go with three legs, he uſes neither ſtaff nor ſpectacles, but renews his ſtrength like the Eagle.

Or we may take the ſence more generally, for any one that liveth long, and liveth comfortably; as it was ſaid of *Abraham*, Gen. 25. 8. *That he dyed in a good old-age, an old man, and full of years.* He dyed in a good old-age; the young-man is councel'd, *To remember his Creator in the dayes of his youth; before the evil dayes come*, Eccleſ. 12. 1. What are thoſe? Thoſe evil dayes are the dayes of old-age: The words following being an Allegorical, elegant deſcription of old-age: Old-age in it ſelf is the evil day: The lives of many old-men are a continual death. They live as it were upon the rack of extream pains or ſtrong infirmities; therefore it is a ſpecial bleſſing for a man to be old, and yet to have a good old-age, that is, a florid comfortable old-age; *To have many years and few infirmities* is a rare thing. In ſome *old-age flouriſhes*, and in others *old-age periſhes*. *Job* gives us this difference in the uſe of this word, *Chap.* 30. 2. *Yea whereto might the ſtrength of their hands profit me, in whom* (Chelad) *old-age was periſhed.* As if he had ſaid, ſome old-men are active and ſtrong; but theſe, who were faded and flatted in all their abilities, in what ſtead could they ſtand me? They were a trouble to themſelves, and therefore could be no comfort unto others.

This *full old-age* is explained further, by way of ſimilitude, *He ſhall die in a full age, like as a ſhock of corn cometh in, in his ſeaſon.* When a young man dies, he is as green corn. The *Pſalmiſt* imprecates that ſome might be like the *graſs* or *corn on the houſe top, that withereth before it is cut down; whereof the Mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth up the ſheaves, his boſom.* The life of a man ſometimes is like corn growing upon the houſe-top, that withereth: Or (as it is in the Parable of the ſower, *Matth.* 13.) like the corn that fell on the high-way ſide, or among ſtones and thorns, which came not in, in its ſeaſon; it never ſtaid the ripening or reaping, but was eaten up, or dryed, or choaked before the harveſt. Now here, man is compared unto corn ſowed in good ground, well rooted and continuing out its ſeaſon, and is brought in ripe at harveſt. *Old-age is the harveſt of nature.* Some divide mans life into ſeven parts, comparing it to the ſeven Planets: Some into five, comparing it to the five acts of an interlude; but commonly the life of man is divided into four parts, and ſo it is compared to the four ſeaſons of the year. And in that diviſion old-age is the winter quarter, cold and cloudy, full of Rheums and Catarrhs of diſeaſes and diſtillations, But here, old-age is the harveſt; though thou art a very old-man, thou ſhalt not die as in winter, but thou ſhalt die, as it were in harveſt, when thou art full ripe and ready, as a *ſhock of corn* that is laid up in the barn: The general judgment of the world is compared to a harveſt, and death (which is a particular day of judgment) is a harveſt too.

Pſal. 129. 6, 7.

Thoſe words, *He ſhall come to his grave as a ſhock of corn*, are further conſiderable; the Hebrew is, *He ſhall aſcend as a ſhock of corn*; and that, referring to death, is ſometimes tranſlated by *cutting off, or taking away*, Pſal. 102. 25. *Cut me not off in the midſt of my days*: The letter is, *Let me not aſcend in the midſt of my dayes*: Whether it have any alluſion to that hope or faith of the Saints in their death, that, they do but aſcend, when they die, or to their diſ-

בכלח *In numeris notat 60 ea*

prima ſenectus eſt, non natura. Quidam Hebræorum viridem ſenectam nomine כלח *putant ſignificari, ut Caph ſit ſimilitudinis* לח *autem virtutem & humidum ſonat.* Euyneda *Senectutem itaq; pollicetur, non quidem moleſtã & morboſã, ſed vegetam & felicem.*

עלה *Aſcendere ſignificat evaneſcere, velut in auras tolli vel medio tolli*

appearing to the eye of ſenſe, when they die; becauſe things which aſcend, vaniſh out of ſight, and are not ſeen: In either ſence, when the Saints are cut down by death, they aſcend. And they are elegantly ſaid, *To aſcend as a ſhock of corn*; becauſe that is taken from the earth, and reared or ſtack't up; and ſo by a *Metaphor* it ſignifies a Tomb or a Monument erected or high-built over a dead Corps, much after the manner of a ſhock of corn: So the word is uſed, *He ſhall remain in the Tomb or Heap*, Job 22. 32.

נרש *Propriè ſignificat acervũ frugum, qui in area exigitur. Metaphoricè tumulum ceu tumulum terræ vel monumentũ ſepulchro impoſitum.*

So then, the ſum of this verſe, is a promiſe of comfort and honour in death: He ſhall die in a full age, when he is ready and ripe for death. Yet this is not to be taken ſtrictly, that, every godly man dies in ſuch a full old-age; in an age full of dayes, or full of comforts. Many of Gods beſt ſervants have had evil dayes in their old-age; their old-age hath had many dayes of trouble and ſickneſs, of pain and perplexity. But thus it is with many in old-age, this is ſpecially to be look'd upon as an *Old-Teſtament promiſe*, when the Lord dealt more with his people, in viſible external mercies. Yet in one ſence it is an univerſal truth, and ever fulfilled to his people; for whenſoever they die, they die in a good age; yea though they die in the ſpring and flower of youth, they die in a good old-age; that is, they are ripe for death, when ever they die; when ever a godly man dies, it is harveſt time with him: though in a natural capacity he be cut down, while he is green, and cropt in the bud or bloſſom; yet in his ſpiritual capacity, he never dies before he is ripe. God ripens his ſpeedily, when he intends to take them out of the world ſpeedily. He can let out ſuch warm rayes and beams of his Spirit upon them, as ſhall ſoon maturate the ſeeds of grace, into a preparedneſs for glory: whereas a wicked man living an hundred years, hath no full old-age, much leſs a good old-age; *he is ripe indeed for deſtruction, but he is never ripe for death*; he is as unready and unripe for death, when he is an hundred years old, as when he was but a day old. He hath not begun to live, when he dies; or he is at the end of his natural race, before he hath ſet one ſtep in his ſpiritual. Gray hairs are the ſhame, and ſhould be the ſorrow of old-age, when they are not found in the way of righteouſneſs. From the former branch of this Verſe,

Obſerve, Firſt, *To have a comely burial, to come to the grave with honour, is a great bleſſing.*

It was threatned upon *Jehoiakim*, the ſon of *Joſiah*, as a curſe, *That he ſhould have the burial of an Aſs, and be drag'd and caſt out, beyond the gates of the City*, Jer. 22. 19. That man ſurely had lived like a beaſt, whom God threatned by name, that when he died, he ſhould be uſed as a beaſt. Though we know the bodies of many of the ſervants of God, have been ſcattered and may be ſcattered, upon the face of the earth, like dung; *The dead bodies* (as the complaint is, *Pſal.* 79. 2.) *of thy ſervants have they given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven, the fleſh of thy Saints to the beaſts of the earth*: Yet to them (even then) there is this bleſſing reſerved, beyond the bleſſing of a burial, they are ever laid up in the heart of God, he takes care of them, he imbalms them for immortality, when the remains of their mortality, are trodden under foot, or rot upon a dung-hill.

Secondly, Obſerve, *A godly man is a volunteer in his death; he cometh to the grave.*

A wicked man never dies willingly; *Though he ſometime die by his own hand, yet he never dies with his own will.* Miſerable man is ſometimes ſo over-preſt with terrors, and horrors of conſcience; ſo worn out with the trouble of living, that he haſtens his own death. Yet he *Comes not to his grave willingly*, but is drag'd by neceſſity. He thruſts his life out of doors with a violent hand, but it never goes out with a cheerful mind. He is often unwilling to live, but he is never willing to die. *Death is welcome to him, becauſe life is a burden to him.* Only they come to the grave, who by faith have ſeen Chriſt lying in the grave, and perfuming that houſe of corruption, with his own moſt precious body, which ſaw no corruption.

Thirdly, Obſerve, *To live long, and to die in a full age, is a great bleſſing.*

Old *Eli* had this curſe pronounced upon his family, 1 *Sam.* 2. 31. *There ſhall not be an old man in thy houſe.*

Gray hairs are a crown of honour, when they are found in the way of righteouſneſs. It is indeed infinitely better to be full of grace, then to be full of dayes; but to be full of dayes and full of grace too, what a venerable ſpectacle is that? To be full of years, and full of faith, full of good works, full of the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Chriſt; how comely and beautiful, beyond all the beauty and comlineſs of youth, is that? Such are truly ſaid to have filled their dayes. Thoſe dayes are filled indeed, which are full of goodneſs. When a wicked man dies, he ever dies empty and hungry; he dies empty of goodneſs, and he dies hungry after dayes. That place before mentioned of *Abraham* (*Gen.* 25. 8.) is moſt worthy our ſecond thoughts, *He died in a good old-age, an old man, and full*, ſo the Hebrew, we read, *full of years*. As a man, that hath eaten and drunk plentifully, is full, and deſires no more: So, *he died an old man, and full*, that is, he had lived as much as he deſired to live, *He had his fill of living, when he died.* And therefore alſo, it may be called a full age, becauſe a godly man hath his fill of living; but a wicked man (let him live never ſo long) is never full of dayes, never full of living; he is as hungry, and as thirſty (as a man may ſpeak) after more time and dayes, when he is old, as he was when he was a child, fain he would live ſtill; *He muſt needs think it is good being here, who knows of no better being, or hath no hopes of a better.* It is a certain truth, *He that hath not a taſte of eternity, can never be ſatisfied with time.* He that hath not ſome hold of everlaſting life, is never pleaſed to let go this life; therefore he is never full of this life. It is a moſt ſad thing, to ſee an old man, who hath no ſtrength of body to live, yet have a ſtrong mind to live. *Abraham* was old and full, he deſired not a day or an hour longer. *His ſoul had never an empty corner for time, when he dyed.* He had enough, of all, but (of which he could never have enough, and yet had enough, and all, as ſoon as he had any of it) eternity. In that great reſtitution promiſed, *Iſa.* 65. 20. this is one priviledge, *There ſhall be no more there an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not fill'd his dayes.* There is much controverſie about the meaning of theſe words; the digreſſion would be too long to inſiſt upon them. Only to the preſent point thus much, that there is ſuch a thing, as an Infant of dayes, and *an old man that hath not fill'd his dayes.*

Impii quã-vis diu vivant, tamen non impleat dies ſuos, quia ſpem in rebus temporariis collocantes perpetua vita in hoc mundo perfrui vellent.

An infant of dayes, may be taken for an *old child*, that is, an *old man childiſh*, or a man of many years, but few abilities: A man whoſe hoary head and wrinkled face ſpeak *fourſcore*, yet his fooliſh actions and ſimple carriage ſpeak under *fourteen*. *An old man that hath not fill'd his dayes*, is conceived to be the ſame man, in a different character. An old man fills not his dayes, Firſt, When he fulfils not the duty, nor reaches the end for which he lived to old-age. That man who hath lived long, and done little, hath left empty dayes upon the record of his life; and when you have writ down the dayes, the months, and years of his life, his ſtory's done, the reſt of the book is but a *continued blank*, nothing to be remembred that he hath done, or nothing worth the remembrance.

Now as an old man fills not his dayes, when he ſatisfies not the expectation of others: ſo in the ſecond place, his dayes are not fill'd, when his own expectations are not ſatisfied; that is, when he having lived to be old, hath yet young freſh deſires to live; when he finds his mind empty, though his body be ſo full of dayes, that it can hold no longer, nor no more. He that is in this ſence, an *infant of dayes*, and *an old man not having fill'd his dayes*, though he be an hundred years old, when he dies, yet he dies (as the Prophet concludes in that place) accurſed; he comes not to his grave under the bleſſing of this promiſe in the Text, *in a full age.*

Laſtly Obſerve, *Every thing is beautiful in its ſeaſon.*

He ſhall come to his grave like a ſhock of corn that is brought in, in his ſeaſon. Even pale death hath beauty in it, when it comes in ſeaſon. *Eccleſ.* 7. 17. *Be not wicked over much, why ſhould'ſt thou die before thy time?* No man can die before Gods time, but a man may die before his time; that is, before he is prepared by grace, and before he

he is ripened in the course of nature. These two wayes a man dies before his time: First, When he dies without any strength of grace: Secondly, When he dies in the strength of nature. In this sence the Prophet describes the hand of God upon him, *Psal.* 102. 23. *He weakened my strength in the way; he shortned my dayes:* and therefore prayes in *vers.* 24. *I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my dayes:* That is, in the strength or best of my time, according to the line and measure of nature. A godly man prayes that he may not die out of season; but a wicked man never dies in season: That threatning is ever fulfilled upon him, in one sence, if not in both (*Psal.* 55. 23.) *The blood-thirsty and deceitful man shall not live out half his dayes.* A wicked man never lives out half his dayes, for, either he is cut off before he hath lived half the course of nature, or he is cut off before he hath lived a quarter of the course of his desires; either he lives not half so long as he might, or not a tenth, not a hundreth part so long as he would; and therefore let him die when he will, his death is full of terror, trouble and confusion, because he dies out of season. He never kept time or season with God, and surely God will not keep or regard his time or season.

Vers. 27. **Lo this, we have searched it, so it is; hear it, and know thou it for thy good.**

As *Eliphaz* began his dispute with an elegant preface, so he ends it with a Rhetorical conclusion; as if he had said, *Job* I have spoken many things unto thee, hear now the sum and upshot of all, *Lo this, we have searched it; so it is; hear it, and know it for thy good:*

Two things he concludes with; First, With an assertion of the truth of what he had spoken, *So it is.* Secondly, With a motion for his assent to what was spoken, *Hear it.*

Or the words may fall under a three-fold consideration.

As the { 1. Conclusion / 2. Confirmation / 3. Application } of his speech.

And this application is strengthened by a three-fold Motive.

By a Motive, first, from experience, *Lo this, we have searched it,* we have found the thing to be true.

Secondly, By a Motive from the truth of the thing in it self, *so it is:* we have searched it, we have experience of it, *so it is,* the thing is certain. And then,

Thirdly, From the fruit and benefit of it, if he submit unto and obey the truth delivered, *know it for thy good,* thou shalt reap the profit of it. These are three Motives, by which he strengthens his exhortation, in applying the truth he had beaten out, in his former discourse.

חקר *Scrutatus, perscrutatus est, remota aut abstrusa.*

We have searched it.] As if *Eliphaz* had said, we have not taken these things upon trust, or by an implicite faith; we have not received them by tradition from our Fathers, but we have searched, and tryed, and found out, that thus the matter stands in Gods dispensations, both to a wicked man, and to a godly man, in all the particulars run thorough in this Chapter. Or *we have searched,* that is, we have learned these truths by experience; that, God punisheth not the innocent; that, man cannot compare in justice with God; that, hypocrites shall not prosper long; and that, mans afflictions are the fruit of his transgressions. The word signifies a very diligent and exact scrutiny (*Deut.* 13. 14.) *Thou shalt enquire, and make search, and ask diligently.* It is to search as Judges search and enquire about any crime, or question in Law determinable by their sentence; and as we search to find the meaning of a riddle. (*Judg.* 14. 14.) The word is also applied to the searchings and enquiries of a Spie (*Judg.* 18. 2.) sent to bring intelligence; a Spie is an exact inquisitor, into all affairs, given him in charge for discovery. So here, *we have searched out,* we have spied out and tryed this thing to the utmost, we have as it were, read over all the records of divine Truths, we have examined all experiences and examples, and this is the result, the sum of all, *Lo thus it is.*

Diligenti inquisitione & veritatis scrutatione nec non reconditorum divinæ providentiæ judiciorum consideratione rem ita se habere comperimus.

A question arises here, how *Eliphaz* can say, we have searched it, when as *Chap.* 4. he saith, *A thing was secretly brought to me?* It seems these were matters attained and beaten out by study, not sent in by divine revelation; and so are rather the opinions of men, then the oracles of God. Men inspired by the Holy Ghost, speak another language; as, *Thus saith the Lord, or this we have received, not this we have searched.* Scripture is given by inspiration from God, not by the disquisitions of men.

Ex quo intelligimus hanc Eliphæ dissertionem non oraculi fuisse, sed studii, nec ad Dei revelantis responsa, sed ad humani ingenii inventa pertinere. Janson *in loc.*

Some have hence concluded this speech of *Eliphaz* Apocryphal, as being rather matter of humane invention, then divine inspiration: Or the work of mans wit, rather then of Gods Spirit.

But I answer, First, The Apostle *Paul* hath sufficiently attested the Divine Authority of this Discourse, by alledging a proof out of it, 1 *Cor.* 3. 19.

Secondly, That which was secretly brought to *Eliphaz,* was that one special Oracle, *Chap.* 4. 17. *Shall mortal man be more just then God? shall a man be more pure then his Maker?* The other part of his discourse, to which these words (*Lo this we have searched*) refer, were grounded upon the experiences which himself and his friends had observed in, and about the providence of God, in all his dealings both with the godly and the wicked, all agreeable, to that *grand principle* received by *immediate revelation.* And therefore as he told *Job* before, that the general position was brought him in a vision; so all ages, and the records kept of them (in all which he had made a diligent enquiry) came up fully to the proof of it; as if he had said, The Lord told me so, and all he hath done in the World proclaims that it is so. His Word is enough to assert his own justice, but his Works witness with it, *Lo, This we have searched, so it is.*

We have searched. He speaks in the plural number; he begun his speech in *Chap.* 4. and he concludes it here in the plural number. Yet, we are not to think, that this was a discourse pen'd by them all together, or debated first in private conference, and agreed on, that thus *Eliphaz* should speak, because he saith, we *have searched it.* But the meaning is only this, I suppose I have spoken the sence of my two friends, who stand by, and I believe they are ready to subscribe to, or vote every word I have uttered, therefore *behold we have searched, and thus it is.*

Hear thou it.] To advise thee, was our part; to hear and hearken is thy part; therefore *hear it.*

But had he not heard them all this while? why doth *Eliphaz* now bid him hear it?

It is true, he had heard; but, there is more required then the hearing of the ear, when such a Sermon as this is preached; To hear, is more then the work of the ear. It is,

First, To believe and give credit to what is heard. (*Joh.* 9. 27.) *I told you before, and you would not hear* (saith the blind man) *wherefore would you hear it again?* That is, I have told you already, but you would not believe, nor give credit to what I spake.

Secondly, To hear, is to hearken, that is, to yield and consent to what is spoken. (*Gen.* 3. 17.) *Forasmuch, as thou hast hearkned to the counsel of thy wife:* Barely to hear a temptation to sin, is no act of sin; as barely to hear an exhortation to good, is no act of grace. *Therefore because thou hast hearkned,* is, because thou hast yielded and consented to that which she hath spoken.

Thirdly, To hear, is to obey. *Isa.* 55. 3. *Hear and your soul shall live.* It is not every hearing of the ear, that bringeth life to the soul; obedient hearing is enlivening hearing.

So here, *we have searched it, so it is, hear it,* that is, believe what we have spoken, submit unto, and consent to what we have spoken, obey and practise what we have spoken.

To hear, is both an act of sense, and an act of reason; an act of nature, and an act of grace. To hear one requesting and praying is to grant: and to hear one counselling and commanding, is to obey. When God hears man, he grants; and when man hears God, or hears men speaking in the name of God, he yields and obeyes.

It follows, **And know thou it for thy good.** The Hebrew is, *know it for thy self.* Now, because that which a man knows for himself, is for his profit; therefore we translate *know it for thy good;* that is, know it as that, whereby thy self mayst receive good. The meaning of, *know it for thy self;* is not this, know and keep it to thy self, let none partake with thee of it; it is against the use of knowledge, that a man should so know for himself, though a mans self hath or may have good by all he knows. So, we must understand that of *Solomon,* Prov. 9. 12. *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy self;* that is, thou shalt be advantag'd by thy wisdom: Wisdom brings in a fair revenew: though many know much and seem very wise, who know nothing

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for themselves, and are not wise at all for their own good.

There are three sorts of *knowing men.*

First, Some know only to know. They know, but they propose no end to themselves, beyond knowledge: They know not for the good of others, no nor for their own good. As it is with riches and honour, so with knowledge: covetous men gather riches that they may be rich, they propose not any other end of having riches, but only to be rich. An ambitious man, desires honour that he may be honourable; he proposeth to himself no other end of his desiring honour, but to be honourable, So, many are covetous and ambitious of knowledge; they read from Book to Book, and from Point to Point, from Science to Science, and what do they with all this knowledge? onely this, that they may know; to know thus, is not to know for good; *To know, only to know, is no better then not to know.*

Secondly, Others know, that they may be known to know: this is their end, that other men may know that they are knowing men, that they are great Schollars, great read-men, men of great abilities and boundless studies. Even as some desire riches, that they may be accounted rich; and honour, that they may be fam'd for honourable. *To know only that we may be known, is worse then not to know.*

But thirdly, That which is the right way of knowing, is to know that others may know; or, to know that our selves may practise. These are the true ends of knowing, to communicate knowledge, and to obey knowledge. The great end of knowing, should be our own profiting in holiness and obedience. And so here, *Know it for thy good*, is, know it so, as to make an advantage of thy knowledge. *To know for our good, is the only good knowledge.*

Hence Observe, First, *Truth deserves our most diligent search.*

We have searched it (saith *Eliphaz*) The promise of finding truth, is only to such as search for truth (*Prov.* 2. 4.) *Thou shalt find wisdom*, &c. *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures.* There are two places, two veins especially, where truth is to be found; *There is the book of Gods word, and the book of Gods works; the book of Scripture, and the book of Providence:* In these two books, we are to search, in them, to study out truth, for our own practice, and for advice to others.

Observe Secondly, *That which we offer to others for truth, we ought diligently to make tryal of our selves*; or, *we should make truth our own, before we distribute it to others.*

We have searched the thing out (saith *Eliphaz*) we know the truth to be thus, we are masters of what we teach. They who hear aright, search (as the *Bereans*) those things which are taught them; and they who instruct aright, ought to search the things which they teach: If there must be after-searchings of those things we hear, certainly there must be fore-searchings of the things we teach. *Truth (ordinarily) is not worth the having, unless it be come in by our own searching.* They who receive that for truth which they never searcht, will not hold any truth when themselves are searcht. Truths meerly borrowed and taken upon trust, are no stock, no abiding treasure of knowledge; and yet most can only say of all the truth they have, as he of his *ax-head*, (2 *King.* 6. 5.) *Alas master, for it was borrowed*; they snatch up one truth from this hand, and another from that; they take it upon the credit of this, and that learned man; very few are able to say (as *Eliphaz* here) *Lo this, we have searched it:* The more pains we take to find truth, the more pleasure we take in it: That is sweetest to us, which we sweat most for, in Praying and Studying: Morsels of Truth dipt in that sawce, fatten and strengthen the soul most.

Observe Thirdly, *What a man knoweth by search and disquisition, he is confident of.*

We have searched it; and what follows? so it is; he speaks with authority, not timerously, as if he doubted, whether it were so or no; but *so it is*, we will bide by it, we have it upon enquiry and diligent search.

Observe Fourthly, *The truths we know our selves, we should communicate unto others.*

Here it is, we have searched it, but we will not put the light we have found, under a bushel; we shall not hide the talent we have, in a napkin: Here it is, make what use of it thou canst, *know it for thy good.*

Observe Fifthly, *Truth may challenge credit, and command the ear.*

Hear thou it. Truth needs not stand begging audience, or creep upon the ground with flattering insinuations, or humble submissions to gain acceptance. Truth is a great Prince, and may speak in the language of Princes; *We will, We require:* It commands rather then entreats, or all its entreaties command, every word a law or a charge; *Hear thou it.*

Observe Sixthly, That, *it is needful to make special application of general doctrinal truths.*

Eliphaz had delivered a doctrinal truth, and here he makes application; and though he failed much, in the application of it to *Job*, yet, there were general truths very appliable, in the things he delivered. Therefore he stayes not in generals, nor leaves his doctrine hovering in the Air, but brings it home to the heart, and layes it close to the conscience; *hear it, and know it thou for thy good.* And not only are National and speculative truths to be brought home and applied, but even common experimental truths; such were these discussed, and handled by *Eliphaz.*

Observe Seventhly, *A man may know much, and yet get no good by it.*

Know this for thy good. The Devil is a great Schollar, he knows much, but he knows nothing for his benefit, but all for his hurt. Many a man knows almost all that is knowable; but he knows nothing which is (to him) profitable: *Nothing gains by his knowledge but only his pride*; he is puffed up with Knowledge, not built up; and *that knowledge which puffs up, will at last puff down, or cast us down.*

Observe Eighthly, *A godly man may make a profitable use of any truth.*

You see what truths *Eliphaz* spake; many of them were ordinary common Doctrines, and many of them sore threatnings and judgments upon wicked men; yet *know thou this for thy good.* There is no vein of Doctrine in the book of God, but a man may make use, yea treasure of it. All truth is so symbolical to the regenerate part, that it cannot but more sublimate and spiritualize a spiritual heart, though it self be a truth about things earthly and temporal.

Observe Lastly, *All truths, especially truths contained in the promises, are the portion of a godly man.*

Know thou it for thy good, saith he; as if he should say, If thou art a godly man, then all the good things I have here spoken of, belonging to godly men, belong to thee, they are thy portion also. While a believer reads the book of God, he sees great riches, many precious things in the promises; and whatsoever good he finds there, there is nothing of it too good for him; he may know it all for his own good; those sweet delicious promises of the pardon of sin, of the love of God, of the freeness of grace, of the glory to come, the promises of Christ, and of all that is Christs, all these things are his; when he reads them, he may set his mark upon them, and know them for his good, know them as his own proper goods. Unbelievers are strangers to the promises, and the promises are as strange to them; they know not the promises, and the promises will not know them; they know not a letter of Scripture for their good. The very promises are threatnings to them, and the very blessings of the book of God, are their curse. As the clouds pass over this and that piece of ground, and then dissolve upon a third, by the directing and all-disposing providence of God: So the promises (which are full of blessings, full of comforts, as the clouds are of showers) pass over a wicked mans head, and let

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not down one drop of mercy or comfort upon him, but leave him like the *dry hearth, or barren wilderness, which seeth not when good cometh*, Jerem. 17.6. But then the cloud moves a little farther, and meets with the family or person of a godly man, there it dissolves and poureth out a *plentiful rain* (both of temporal and spiritual blessings) *to refresh and confirm that inheritance of the Lord*, Psalm 68. 9.

And so much for this fifth Chapter, wherein, with the fourth, we have handled the first part of the dispute, undertaken against *Job*, by *Eliphaz*, the first of his three friends; the whole discourse consisting of divers Arguments, to convince and humble him under the hand of God: of divers counsels and motives to perswade and direct him to seek unto God, and submit to his correcting hand: All he was to speak, being let in, by a loving Preface; and all he spake, being ratified, with an assuring conclusion, that, all he had spoken was for his good, if he would hear, believe and obey. In the next Chapters, we shall hear *Job* making his defence, scattering the charge thus brought against him, stiffly maintaining, and importunately renewing his first complaint.

CHAP. VI. Vers. 1, 2, 3.

But Job *answered, and said,*

O that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the ballances together!

For now it would be heavier then the sand of the Sea: therefore my words are swallowed up.

THis sixth Chapter begins *Job*'s replication, which is continued to the end of the seventh. He replies exactly to the several parts of the charge, given by *Eliphaz*; who, in the two fore-going Chapters, undertook both to reprove the impatience of *Job*, and to advise him a more holy and better temper'd carriage, towards God, under his afflictions. In this reply, *Job* shapes and forms up answers unto both: I shall endeavour to give you a brief of the whole, and then to particulars.

First, *Job* enters with a refutation of those reproofs of impatience, which *Eliphaz* had heap't upon him; and with that subjoyns a refusal of the counsels (in his sence) which he had given him. In this work, seven verses of the Chapter are spent.

Secondly, We have a renovation or a re-inforcement of his grief and desire to die, from the eighth, to the end of the thirteenth verse, *O that I might have my request, that God would cut me off*, &c. As if he had said, I am so far, from being satisfied, with what thou hast spoken against me, or from recanting and recalling, what I have spoken, in those my breathings after death, that I will be bold to make the same suit to God again; *O that I might have my request, and that God would cut me off*, &c.

Thirdly, He proceeds to a charge of rash censure, of uncharitable, yea of deceitful dealing upon his friends, from the thirteenth, unto the twenty fourth verse. *To him that is afflicted* (saith he) *pity should be shewed from his friend; my brethren have dealt deceitfully, as a brook*, &c.

Fourthly, He yet submits himself to their judgment and direction, if they would speak reason to him at last, and come home to his case indeed: or, if they could fully and candidly discover to him any error, he was willing to be rectified; this he professes (and it is a most ingenuous profession) in *vers.* 24, & 25. *Teach me* (saith he) *and I will hold my tongue, and cause me to understand wherein I have erred*, &c. As if he had said, all that you have spoken hitherto, doth not reach my condition, ye have quite mistook my case; yet, you shall see, I do not stand out against you, because I will stand out; it is not my will that opposes what you have spoken, but my understanding; therefore, if you can shew me better reason, I lay down the bucklers, and yield my self a Prisoner to your selves, and unto truth. I delight not to lengthen out contentions, nor am I resolved to have the last word, *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue.*

Fifthly, He adds an expostulation, mixed with an aggravation. An expostulation about, and an aggravation of their high jealousie, and low opinion of him, in *vers.* 26, 27. *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?* As if he had said, Do you think, that you have had to deal with a man, that only makes a noise, or speaks a great many words, which have more sound then sence? Do ye think I am out of my wits, and in stead of arguing with you, do only rave like a mad man at you? Ye have had not vain, windy words from me, but words full of weight and matter, words of truth and soberness, wherefore then do you speak thus? *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate?* Do ye think I speak like one, who knows not what he speaks? Or that, I have at once lost my hope, and my understanding.

Sixthly, He gives them advice and admonition to take better heed to what they should after say, if they intended to say any more, or to continue their counsel and discourse with him; in the three last verses of this sixth Chapter. *Now therefore be content, look upon me, for it is evident to you, if I lie: return I pray you*, &c.

In the seventh (which concludes his speech) he offers three things, especially to be observed.

First, A renewing of many Arguments and considerations, by which he confirms the equity of his request, to have his life cut off; upon which sad subject he insists, from the beginning of the Chapter, to the end of verse 17. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth? Are not his dayes, like the dayes of an Hireling?* &c.

Secondly, After all his high strains of contest with man, we have an abasement of himself, as unworthy, that God should take notice of him, either by mercies or judgments, in *vers.* 18, 19. *What is man that thou shouldst magnifie him, and that thou shouldst visit him every morning?* &c. A godly man will stand (when he sees cause) upon his terms with men, but he ever falls low before, and hath not a word to reply against God. He is sometime angry, when men villifie him; but he ever admires, why God should magnifie him. *What is man?* &c.

Thirdly, He concludes his speech with an humble acknowledgment of his own sinfulness, and with an earnest request for the pardon of his sin. *Lord* (saith he) *I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?* vers. 20, *&c.* After all this heat and passion, after all these complainings, *Job*'s heart lay level before the Lord; yea he abases himself to exalt and give glory to God, with humble confession, and an earnest supplication for the pardon of his sin. Thus we have the general parts and substance of his answer to that charge of *Eliphaz*, in the two former Chapters.

But Job answered, and said.

In these words, and the three following verses, *Job* gives us the refutation or rejection of that reproof, given him by *Eliphaz*; and he refutes it by shewing the reason why *Eliphaz* (as he supposed) was so sharp and bitter

Amicos tavat, quod antequā ipsū reprehenderent, non expendissent suā miseriā. Cocc.

bitter in reprooving him: And further, he shews cause why he rejects his Councel or Consolation: The reason upon which he puts off those reproofs, is this, because *Eliphaz* had not duly considered his sorrows, or was not so sensible of them, as a man should be, that undertakes a friend in his condition. The sum of this Argument, against what *Eliphaz* had spoken, may be thus formed.

He cannot duly reprove or convince another of impatience in complaining, who hath not fully weighed those calamities, which are the cause and ground of those complaints.

But Eliphaz, *thou hast not fully weighed and considered my case and condition, my troubles and calamities, which are the ground and cause of my complaints.*

Therefore thou canst not duly reprove or convince me of impatience.

The Assumption or second Proposition of this Argument is couched in *vers.* 2. *O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and that my calamity were laid in the ballances together!* As if he had said, I had never received such harsh censures, such a judgment or reproof, if thou hadst duly weighed my sorrows: if thou hadst faithfully studied my case, thou thou hadst never rebuked me thus.

The weight of his calamity, himself expresseth two wayes.

First, *Comparatively*, at *vers.* 3. by putting it into the ballance with the sand of the Sea; *For now* (saith he) *it would be heavier then the sand of the Sea.*

Secondly, He sets forth the greatness of his calamity, *Demonstratively*, by declaring in what manner he had been afflicted: My affliction is not an ordinary affliction, *I am wounded with the arrows of the Almighty, and those poysoned arrows, and those arrows drinking up my spirits.* I have not only some single great affliction, or many small ones upon me; but, *I have terror, and terrors; yea, I have an army of terrors, yea an army of terrors alwayes incamping about me, and charging me continually*: why Eliphaz, *thou didst never clearly consider these things, much lesse hast thou had a sympathy or fellow-feeling of them. Thou hast not been afflicted in my afflictions: Thou hast not sorrowed my sorrows, nor wept my tears*; Therefore it is that thou hast so sharply reproved me, and put so much gall and worm-wood into thy discourse.

So then, the sum of this first part may be thus given, taking it out of those high and hyperbolical strains, in which his passion was carried; as if *Job* had thus answered *Eliphaz*, *It is an easie matter to slight that which a man doth not know, and to think others complain too much, when we our selves feel nothing; but is it any wonder to hear a man groan, that hath a burden upon his back, as heavy as the sand of the Sea? Is it any wonder to hear a man cry out, whose flesh is filled with poysoned arrows, shot from a bow, bent and drawn by the arm of omnipotency? Is it any wonder, if that man fear, who is incompast about with terrors? Is it any wonder, if that man be troubled, who hath the terrors of the Almighty incamping about him? Why* Eliphaz, *thou wouldst not think, that an Ox or an Ass were reprovable, if the one should low, when he hath no grass, and the other bray when he hath no fodder; if it be so, that the very irrational creaturts do according to reason, when they complain upon their wants, doest thou think me desperate or irrational in complaining of mine? Alas all my fodder and my grass, all my comforts and refreshings are taken from me. Doest thou not see, how upon a due consideration of my estate, all thy reproofs may be wiped off from me, or retorted upon thy self? what great matter is it, if thou dost not complain, who sittest at ease, and knowest no sorrow? Thou art in green pastures or full barns, thou hast grass and fodder in abundance, and therefore hast no cause of complaint.* Thus in the general.

But Job answered, and said.] *To answer*, is here taken properly; he answers to a charge, reproof, or argument. At *Chap.* 3. *vers.* 1. when *Job* began to speak, it is said, *Job answered, and said.* In Scripture language answering is often put for speaking, though none have spoken a word or made any proposal before. But here answering is taken in a strict sence, as it notes a reply to somewhat before spoken; *Job answered, and said.*

Note this from it, *It is the duty of a man to answer when he is questioned or charged.*

It is the Apostles rule (1 *Pet.* 3. 15.) *Be ready alwayes to give an answer to every man, that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.* As a man in duty ought to give a reason of the hope that is in him; so in duty he ought to give a reason of the sorrows, that are in him, and of the complaints that proceed from him: *We must answer for our passions, as well as for our speeches; we must answer for our sorrows, and for our joyes, and for our fears, as well as for our hope, or for our faith.* These must all be answered for; and when any shall charge us about any of these, we must be ready to give a reason of them (as the Apostle advises there, in the case of our hope) *with meekness and fear.*

It is our duty to answer thus, both in reference to our selves and others.

First, It is our duty in reference to our selves, that we may vindicate that which should be more precious to us then the *Gold of* Ophir, our own credit or sincerity; *No man ought to despise his own integrity or reputation, so, as not to stand up for it.* Therefore *Job* grows resolute in that point, professing *that he would hold his integrity, till he died*; he would never let that go, but answer stiffly for it: It is justice to dis-asperse our selves, and give witness to our own wronged innocency. A man is more bound in duty to stand up for himself, then for any other, by how much he is nearer to himself, then to others.

Secondly, It is our duty to answer in respect of others; (and that *Job* might have an eye unto) namely to satisfie those, who are scandalized, by what we have either done or spoken: Suppose it be not a scandal given, suppose it be only a scandal taken, as this of *Job* was: *Job* did nothing purposely to scandalize them, nor any thing, which upon a due consideration, was a scandal; but his friends had taken scandal at what he spake, his impatient complainings: therefore he was bound in duty to satisfie them, and to shew further grounds wherefore he so complained. *Silence when we are charged, either makes a full conviction, or strengthens suspition:* And in this case, if *Job* had held his peace, he had either yielded the cause, and confessed himself guilty, or at least his friends should have had cause to grow higher in their jealousies of his sincerity. *To right our selves is not a point of indifferency, but of duty. Self-love is the rule of our love to others. He who neglects his own wronged honour, will not be very careful (which yet he ought) of his neighbours.*

Si accusatus non respondeat, aut criminis convictus aut certè suspectas videatur. Pined.

O that my grief were thoughly weighed.

Grief may be considered two wayes, either *Passively* or *Actively*. Grief taken *Passively* is the thing which we suffer, or which is grievous to us; affliction it self is called Grief. Take Grief *Actively*, and then it is the sorrow we express, under the pressures of grievous afflictions. The word in the Hebrew is translated sometimes anger, sometimes indignation, sometimes wrath. It is the same which *Eliphaz* useth, *Chap.* 5. *v.* 5. where he saith, *Wrath killeth the foolish man. Eliphaz* began his speech with that word, hinting at *Job*, as if his wrath and impatience towards God had discovered him for a fool, or a wicked one: Now *Job* returning answer, begins with the first word of *Eliphaz* his speech; as if he had said, *You told me that wrath kills the foolish man; but O that my anger, or the wrath which you conceive to be in me, that grief which I have expressed, were fully weighed, you would quickly see, that it is not the anger or wrath of a fool, you would find reason for my passion; and that, not the want of wisdom, but the plenty or weight of my grief hath wrought out these complaints.* Therefore my desire is, *O that my Grief*, O that my sorrows poured forth in my former lamentation were throughly weighed; you have but guessed at them yet, you have not weighed them (which you ought) as you would weigh gold to a grain, or to the turning of a scale; or if so, your beam is not a true one, nor your ballance the ballance of the Sanctuary; you have weighed me, but by a common beam, or (I fear) by *false ballances, and a bag of deceitful weights.*

כַּעַשׂ *Ira, indignatio, hoc loco, ira est querimonia valdè iracuoda vel molestia, quam ex morbi & ulceris gravitate concipiebat.* Merc. *Notat dolorem quem quis capit, ex re adversa & difficili.* Cocc.

O that my Grief.] The Vulgar Latin translates, *O that my sins*, namely for which I am thus afflicted, were throughly weighed; as if the meaning of *Job* were to lighten his sin, and to aggravate his sufferings: But doubtless, that was none of *Job's* mind or meaning; neither will the origi-

Vtinā peccata mea. Vulg.

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nal bear ſuch a tranſlation. When our ſins are put into the ballance with our ſufferings, all our ſufferings, the heavieſt we can feel or go under in this life, are but as a feather to a talent of lead. As all the afflictions of this life are light, in compariſon of that *exceeding weight* of glory, prepared for us in the next life: So all the ſufferings of this life are light, in compariſon of the exceeding weight of one ſin committed by us. Therefore *Job* makes ſuch compariſon here, as if he had been afflicted more then he deſerved. That of *Ezra* concerning the Church of the Jews, (*Chap.* 9. 13.) *Thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs then our iniquities deſerve*, is true of every puniſhment; put any puniſhment of this world, Spiritual or Temporal, in one ſcale, and the leaſt ſin, in another, that lighteſt ſin outweighs our heavieſt puniſhments. Only in Hell ſins and ſufferings ſhall be of equal poyſe. God will then pour and meaſure our puniſhments, which ſhall come up to the proportion and dimenſion of our ſins; and what the creature cannot bear at once in weight, ſhall be weighed to him in eternity. But to paſs that rendring, as unſafe.

שקל *Libravit, ponderavit, olim moneta libravatur et expendere habebatur ſumma pecunia, ut mini ex numero nummorum.* Ulpian.

O that my grief [were throughly Weighed.] Our Engliſh word, *Scale*, which is the inſtrument, by which we Weigh, is well conceived to come from the Hebrew word here uſed (*Shakal*) ſignifying to Weigh any thing; but eſpecially to Weigh Coyn or Money, to Weigh Gold and Silver; as *Gen.* 23. 16. *Abraham* upon the purchaſe of that field, which he bought of the Children of *Heth*, for a burying place, *Weighed to* Ephron *the Silver which he had named.* It was the cuſtom of thoſe times, inſtead of telling, to Weigh their Money, and that was the moſt exact and ready way of payment: And from that word (*Shakal*) ſignifying to Weigh Money, comes the Hebrew word for one ſpecial ſort of Money, the *Shekel*; becauſe they Weighed by the ſhekel, that being as their Standard or a ſpecial Coyn, of ſuch a known Weight and value, that all other Coyn was Weighed and valued by it. So in the Latine, and likewiſe in our Engliſh, we call one ſpecial ſum of Money *A pound*, which is a Weight, and by which Money is commonly accounted and paid. And hence by a Metaphor, this word ſignifies to judge or to conſider of a thing exactly and fully; becauſe of all matters that men Weigh, they will Weigh Gold and Silver moſt exactly; if a man Weigh Gold, he Weigheth it to a grain; if Gold want but the turning of the ſcale more then due Weight or allowance, it will not paſs, *Iſa.* 33. 18. *Where is the Scribe, where is the Receiver*; the Hebrew is, *Where is the Weigher*; that is, either the *Spiritual Weigher*, he that uſes to be exact in Weighing every tittle of the Law: Or, the *Civil Weigher*, becauſe they uſed to Weigh all the Money they received. So then, *O that my grief were throughly Weighed*; is as if he had ſaid, O that my grief were Weighed, as Gold and Silver is Weighed, Weighed exactly, to the leaſt, to the utmoſt, that you might fully know what it is.

Siclus moneta certi ponderis & omnium ponderũ regula.

Ubi legis verba ponderans. Sanc. *Queſtor præfectus ærario militari.* Jun.

The word ſingle by it ſelf, notes an exact examination by Weighing; but when (as here) the word is doubled, or (by an Hebraiſm) repeated, *O that my grief in weighing were Weighed*, it heightens and increaſes the ſence exceedingly: Hence we tranſlate, *O that my grief were throughly Weighed*; Weighed ſo as that there might be a clear diſcovery, how much my ſorrows Weigh. The doubling of a word, to this ſence, is very frequent in Scripture, I ſhall not need to inſtance: Take only that (*Gen.* 2. 17.) *Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eateſt thereof, in dying thou ſhalt die*, (that is) *thou ſhalt ſurely die*; So here, O that in weighing it were Weighed, that is, *O that it were throughly and exactly Weighed.*

Lay all together and it imports thus much; as if *Job* had ſaid, I would not have my ſorrows Weighed at a vulgar beam, or in ordinary ballances, I would not have the ſound or letter only of what I have ſpoken conſidered; but I deſire that you would take my complaints together, the words and the matter, and that you would Weigh all impartially, that you may come to a full underſtanding, what my condition is; and then ſurely you would give up a better judgement, and make a fairer interpretation of my words, then as yet you have put forth: Thus he ſpeaks alſo *Chap.* 31. 6. *Let me be Weighed in an even ballance, that God may know my integrity.* Uneven ballances will not make a perfect diſcovery: That which is falſe, cannot give a true report: Things and perſons act as they are; therefore *Job* deſireth to be Weighed in an *even ballance*, ſuch a beam will ſpeak the truth of my eſtate, both to God and man: God needs no means to make him know, he knows all immediately, and he Weighs by his eye, not one thing by another, but all things in themſelves: *Job* ſpeaks of God after the manner of men.

And my Calamity laid in the Ballances together.

הוה *à radice* הוה *fuit eventus malus, in fortunium* מאונם *Trutina, ſtateræ quod duas ſc. habeat lances, velut aures.* Pagn.

My grief and my Calamity. Grief cauſed by my Calamity, and Calamity the cauſe of that grief.

My Calamity. The word ſignifies any troubleſom evil, ſad event or accident, vulgarly called *a miſ-fortune*; *O that this ſad eſtate and condition wherein I am, were put into the Ballance.*

The original for **Ballances**, is very obſervable: As there is much elegancy in the word by which the action, ſo, in this, by which the inſtrument of Weighing is expreſſed. It is found only in the *Plural* or *Dual* number, as many of that nature are: The ſame word in Hebrew, ſignifies alſo the Ears, which are the organ of hearing: and the reaſon of it is thus given, becauſe as the *Tongue* of the Ballance ſtands like a judge between the two ſcales, inclining to neither, till the weight be laid in: ſo ſhall the Ear of a Judge by Office, or of any man by Deputation, called to hear and determine of things in difference, ſtand indifferent to both parties, till he hear the matter debated, and the reaſons brought forth on either ſide. The Moraliſts embleme this, by the place of that *Sign* in the *Zodiack*, which they call the *Virgin*, ſtanding (according to the doctrine of Aſtronomers) between the *Lion and the Ballances*: The Lion bids *Virgin Juſtice*, be ſtout and fearleſs; the Ballances adviſe her to weigh the matter on both ſides, with moderation, and be cautious, neither inclining one-way nor other, but as the merit of the cauſe, fully heard, ſhall ſway her judgment.

Job deſires, that his Calamity might be laid thus in the Ballances before his ſentence: *Laid*, the word is, *O that my Calamity might aſcend in the Ballances*; and that manner of ſpeaking is uſed, either becauſe in weighing, the lighter ſcale of the Ballances doth aſcend, or becauſe when things are weighed, the Ballances aſcend or are lifted up. A man takes up the Ballances in his hand to weigh; ſo it is, as if he had ſaid, *O that theſe*, might be poiſed together and *lifted up*, to ſee which way the Scales will turn.

נשא *à radice* נשא *Levavit, ſuſtulit, nã qui appendit aliquid tollit lancem in altum.* Druſ.

Together. There is ſome difference in opinion about the word *Together*, whether he meaneth thus; *O that my grief and Calamity were Weighed*; you conſider things to halves, and leave out thoſe points which are moſt weighty and material; you ſhould take in all together: Or whether his deſire be, that his grief and Calamity, both together, might be put into one Ballance, and the Sand of the Sea into another; and ſo an experiment be made, whether his grief and Calamity, or the Sand of the Sea were heavier. Or thirdly, Whether thus, that his grief ſhould be put into one Ballance, and his Calamity into another, and then trial be made which of theſe two were heavier, his grief and ſorrow, or his calamity and trouble. A learned Interpreter conceives, that *Job* wiſhes his Grief and Calamity might both together be put into one Ballance, and all the Sand of the Sea (if it were poſſible) in the other, ſuppoſing that his Grief and Calamity would out-weigh that vaſte ponderous aggrevated body. His opinion is chiefly ſtrengthned by ſome difficulties in the Grammatical conſtruction, unleſs this be admitted; and yet if it be, a greater difficulty is ſhewed by a ſecond, and therefore I rather take it thus; *O that my Grief and Calamity were laid in the Ballances together*; that is, O that my Grief were put, one into one Ballance, and my Calamity into another; or, O that my Grief might be weighed with my Calamity, and it would appear (notwithſtanding your judgment of me) that yet, there is nothing ſo much weight in my Grief, as there is in my Calamity; that is, I have not yet grieved or complained up to the height or weight of thoſe Calamities which are upon me: ſo that if my ſorrow were laid in one Ballance, and my affliction in another, my affliction would out-weigh my ſorrow, and it would appear, that I have complained, not only, not without a cauſe, but not ſo much as I had cauſe.

יחד *Pariter vel potius ſimiliter. Nulla ejus parte prætermiſſa.* Mercerus.

Bolduc.

And

And to prove that his calamity was heavier then his grief, he adds in the next words; *It* (namely his calamity thus weighed) *would be heavier then the sand of the sea*: as if he had said, it is possible that in trying all heavy things, somewhat might be found heavier then my grief or my complaint hath been; but I am sure nothing can be found of equal weight with my calamity; for my *calamity* (which is the immediate antecedent) *would be heavier then the sand of the Sea*, then which nothing can be found more heavy.

That of *David*, Psal. 62. 9. is parallel to this expression in *Job*; *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balances, they are altogether lighter then vanity.* The meaning is, that if men of all degrees, high and low, were put in one Scale, and *vanity* in another, vanity it self would be weightier then the graveſt and moſt weighty men. Hence ſome read, *They together are lighter then vanity.* Others to this ſence, *men and vanity being weighed together*, vanity will not be ſo light, as vain men. As *David*, to ſhew mans lightneſs, makes him lighter then the lighteſt thing, *vanity*. So *Job*, to ſhew the heavineſs of his calamity, makes it heavier then the heavieſt thing. Hence obſerve,

First, That, *It is a duty to weigh the ſaddeſt eſtate, and afflicted condition of our Brethren thoroughly.*

But (you will ſay) what is it to weigh them throughly? I anſwer, It is not only to weigh the matter of an affliction, to ſee what it is which a man ſuffers; but to weigh an affliction in every circumſtance and aggravation of it; *The circumſtance of an affliction is often more conſiderable then the matter of the affliction.* If a man would confeſs his ſins, and confeſs them throughly, he is to confeſs, not only the matter of them; as ſins are the tranſgreſſions of the *Law*, and and errors againſt the *Rule*; but he muſt eye the manner, in which ſin hath been committed, the circumſtances with which it is cloathed, theſe render his *ſin out of meaſure, and out of weight ſinful.* Likewiſe, would a man conſider the mercies and favours received from God, would he know them throughly, and ſee how much they weigh; let him look, not only what, but how, and when, and where, and by whom he hath received them. *There may be (and often is) a great wickedneſs in a little evil committed, and a great mercy in a little good received.* As relations, ſo circumſtances have the leaſt entity, but they have the greateſt efficacy. Now, as there is often more in the circumſtances, then in the matter of a ſin, or of a mercy; ſo, there is often more in the circumſtance, then there is in the matter of an affliction; therefore he that would throughly weigh the afflictions of another, muſt conſider all thoſe accidents, as well as the ſubſtance of it: As namely, the time when ſent, the time how long endured, whether a ſingle affliction, or in conjuncture with other afflictions, the ſtrength of the Patient, and the dependencies that are upon him.

Secondly, He that would weigh an affliction throughly, muſt put himſelf in the caſe of the afflicted, and (as it were) make anothers grief his own: He muſt act the paſſions of his brother, and a while perſonate the poor, the ſick, the afflicted man: He muſt get a taſte of the wormwood and of the gall upon which his Brother feedeth: In a word, he muſt lay ſuch a condition to heart. The Prophet *Malachy* threatens a curſe upon thoſe, who laid not the word and works of God to heart (*chap.* 2. 2.) *I will curſe your bleſſings* (ſaith the Lord) *becauſe you do not lay it to heart*; that is, ye do not conſider, what I ſay or do, throughly: God curſed them throughly, becauſe they would not throughly conſider his Laws and Judgments: So then, to weigh the affliction of another throughly, is to put our ſouls, as it were, in their ſouls ſtead. Hence, that we may be aſſured, Chriſt hath throughly weighed all our afflictions, he is ſaid to *be afflicted in all our afflictions.* He doth not only intuitively conſider or contemplate them, but he is (though above enduring) as actually enduring them, He is afflicted in all our afflictions, that is, he conſiders our afflictions as his own, and is affected with them, as if himſelf were pained with all our pains; and therefore it is ſaid, that *himſelf took our infirmities, and bear our ſickneſſes*, Mat. 8. 17. The meaning, is, he weighed the grief of his people fully. In theſe two points, this holy art of weighing grief, conſiſts; conſideration of circumſtances, and ſympathy of the ſmart. Meer ſpeculation moves little. We have no feeling of anothers ſuffering, till we have a fellow-feeling. The bare Theory of affliction affects no more, then the bare Theory of fire heats.

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, *O that my grief were throughly weighed*; we may obſerve,

That, *It is an addition to a mans affliction, when others are not ſenſible of his affliction.*

For it is, as if *Job* had ſaid, This makes me cry out ſo much of the weight of my ſorrows, becauſe my friends weigh them ſo little. The Church (*Lam.* 1. 12.) complains thus, *Is it nothing to you all ye that paſs by? behold and ſee if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow.* Is it nothing to you? as if the Church had ſaid, My affliction is ſomething to me, and this afflicts me above all my affliction, that paſſengers and beholders ſlight my calamities, and think my affliction no affliction, that is, not ſo great, as indeed it is: Or, it is nothing to them (they are not toucht with it) how great ſoever they ſee it is to me: That which wounds and breaks my heart, doth not prick their little fingers. And becauſe man is ſo ready to afflict his brother with this negative affliction, a not being ſenſible of his afflictions, therefore the Apoſtle aſſures us (*Heb.* 4. 15.) That *we have not an High Prieſt that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are.* This is ſpoken to comfort the Saints in their extreameſt ſufferings: What though men will not take notice and be ſenſible of your condition? what though men will not weigh your grief? *Yet Chriſt will*: Our high Prieſt is none of your ſenſleſs Prieſts, who care not what weather the people endure, ſo they be warm and at eaſe.

Thirdly obſerve, *We can never rightly judge, till we throughly weigh the condition of an afflicted brother.*

For *Job* conceived that *Eliphaz* proceeded to judgment, before he had been in conſideration. This is the reaſon why thou haſt judged me uncharitably, becauſe thou haſt not weighed me ſeriouſly. To ſhew, that conſideration muſt go before judgment, God himſelf is expreſt to us in Scripture, conſidering the ſtate of things, before himſelf judges. So, *Gen.* 11. in the caſe of the builders of *Babel*, and *Gen.* 18. in the caſe of the men of *Sodom*, it is ſaid, that *the Lord came down to ſee whether they had done altogether according to that cry which was come up unto him*; Not, as if the Lord moves from one place to another, from heaven to earth; for he filleth all places: not that the Lord needs come down to receive information, or to examine his own intelligences, to ſee whether things are, as they are reported; but it is only an alluſion to the manner of men; or to ſhew, that he doth not cenſure or judge any man, or men, or Nations, till he hath taken a full cognizance of their condition. Now, if God who is infinite in knowledge and wiſdom, repreſents himſelf coming down, and by degrees deliberating about, and weighing the eſtates of men, before he cenſures them; what need then have blindfold men, ignoant men, men, who at beſt, have much darkneſs mixed with their light; what need (I ſay) have they to examine, weigh and try every mans eſtate, before they ſentence or determine it?

Fourthly obſerve, *A man, who hath not been, or is not afflicted himſelf, can hardly apprehend what another endures, who is under affliction.*

As there are comforts, eſpecially ſpiritual comforts, which no man knows or can know, but by the enjoying of them: The *white ſtone* (promiſed *Rev.* 2. 17.) *hath a new name written in it, which no man knows, ſaving he that receiveth it.* A man that is a ſtranger to Chriſt and his wayes, is not able to make any judgment what the comforts and refreſhings of a Chriſtian are. He admires to hear men ſpeak of ſpiritual comforts and conſolations, he knows not the meaning of thoſe things. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. It is ſo (proportionably) in all ſorrows and afflictions, eſpecially in ſpiritual ſorrows and afflictions, which lie off from ſenſe; yea, which lie quite beyond the reach and borders of reaſon: ſpiritual ſorrows, the hidings of Gods face, the withdrawing of aſſiſtance, few pity in others, becauſe few

have

have had experience of theſe things, in themſelves. They think men are mad, when they complain of ſuch afflictions; when they cry out of their ſins, of the want of the favour of God, and the ſhining of his love, of deadneſs and coldneſs in duty, of unbelief and hardneſs of heart, &c. And therefore our Lord Jeſus, to aſſure our hearts, that he hath a full ſenſe of all our ſorrows, taſted himſelf of our ſorrows. There is not any ſorrow that can be upon any ſoul, or any affliction that can be upon the body, but our Lord Jeſus hath had (ſome way or other) an experience of it: This makes him (to our apprehenſions) moſt fit to judge and compaſſionate the diſtreſſes of his people. As all the ſins of his people were laid upon him, ſo all their ſorrows were laid upon him too; therefore the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribeth him thus, *Chap.* 53. 3. *A man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief*; grief and he were no ſtrangers; while he was here upon the earth, grief was his Acquaintance and Familiar (as it were) that went up and down with him, all the while he travelled here below. Therefore ſeeing it is ſo, the whole Church and every particular Believer, have ſtrong conſolation in their ſorrows, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth throughly weigh their condition, and knoweth fully what it is; *We have not* (as was toucht before) *an High Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities*; Why, what aſſurance have we of this? It follows, *He was tempted in all things like unto us, yet without ſin*, Chriſt had temptations unto ſin, yet without ſin; therefore he knows how to ſuccour us, when we are tempted unto ſin: Chriſt was tempted by manifold ſorrows, therefore he knows how to ſuccour us, when we are under manifold temptations: If we had a Mediator in Heaven that had not been tempted on earth, we might doubt whether he would be toucht with the feeling of our infirmities. whether ſinning infirmities, or ſorrowing infirmities. And were it not, that ſome of the Saints have been tempted and tried, they, who are under trials and temptations, would find none on earth to ſuccour them. *As God doth comfort ſome in all their tribulations, that they may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, with the ſame comforts wherewith they themſelves are comforted of God*, 2 *Cor*, 1. 4. So he afflicts them, that they might pity and help others, as being under the ſame troubles, with which themſelves have been afflicted. A man that hath only travelled in Geographical Books and Maps, is not able to give you ſuch lively deſcriptions of, or directions about foreign Countreyes, as he hath travelled to, and been upon the places; ſo, they who have read and ſtudied much about afflictions, can never give ſuch enlivening, ſtrengthening, heartning counſel, as they who have been afflicted, and have dwelt ſometime upon the Land of ſorrows. To paſs on,

For now it would be heavier then the ſand of the Sea.

That is, it would be moſt heavy. Who can tell how heavy that is, which is heavier then the heavieſt?

If my calamity (ſaith *Job*) were weighed, it would have been found heavier then the ſand of the ſea, that account would be given of it; though you (my friend *Eliphaz*) ſeem to account it as light as a feather.

The ſand of the Sea is applied three wayes in Scripture.

Firſt, To ſet forth an exceeding great number (*Gen.* 22. 17.) *I will multiply thy ſeed as the Stars of the Heaven, and as the ſand which is upon the Sea-ſhore*: That is, I will exceedingly multiply thy ſeed, thy Children ſhall be not only numerous, but numberleſs; though a Book of *Numbers* be written concerning *Abraham*'s poſterity, yet their total number is not written. So (*Pſal.* 78. 27.) *He rained fleſh upon them as duſt, and feathered fowls like as the Sand of the Sea*, that is, he rained abundance of feathered Fowls.

Secondly, The Sand of the Sea is uſed to expreſs the largeneſs, the mighty extent or capacity of a thing; the ſand of the Sea is of a vaſter extent then the Sea it ſelf, as being the outward line or bound of it; therefore (*Jer.* 33. 22.) it is ſpoken of, as a thing impoſſible, for the ſand of the Sea to be meaſured; *As the hoſt of heaven* (*ſc.* the Stars) *cannot be numbred, neither the ſand of the Sea meaſured, ſo will I multiply the ſeed of my ſervant* David. Meaſure is taken both of the content and extent of things: The ſand of the Sea is immeaſurable both wayes; it cannot (as we ſpeak of humane impoſſibles) be meaſured by the Pole, or by the Veſſel. And in 1 *Kings* 4. 29. it is ſaid, *God gave* Solomon *wiſdom and underſtanding exceeding much, and largeneſs of heart as the ſand of the Sea*, that is, as the ſand encompaſſes and takes the Sea in its arms; ſo *Solomon* had a heart comprehending all the depths and oceans of knowledge; he had the compaſs of all learning in his underſtanding. Hence, when a man attempts a thing impoſſible, we ſay to him proverbially, *Thou meaſureſt the ſand*.

Thirdly, The ſand of the Sea is applied in Scripture, to note the exceeding weight and heavineſs of a thing: That inſtance is pregnant for it (*Prov.* 23. 7.) *A ſtone is heavy, and the ſand is weighty, but a fools wrath is heavier then both*; when *Solomon* would ſhew us how intolerably burdenſom the manners of a wicked man are, he compares them to a ſtone, and to the ſand: The wrath of a wicked man is very weighty, but (by the way) the wrath of God is incomparably more weighty. *Wrath proceeding from extream folly, is weighty; but wrath proceeding from infinite wiſdom, is infinitely weighty*. The wrath of a fool upon his brother, is heavier then a ſtone, or then the ſand; how heavy then will the wrath of the moſt wiſe God be upon that fool?

It is further conſiderable, that, he ſaith not barely, *heavier then the ſand* (any ſand is very heavy, but) *heavier then the ſand of the ſea*. Rivers have ſand, and dry pits have ſand, but ſea-ſand is the vaſteſt and the heavieſt ſand.

Again, He ſpeaks not in the ſingular number, *Heavier then the ſand of the ſea*; but (the Hebrew is plural) *heavier then the ſand of the Seas*: as if *Job* had ſaid, if thou ſhouldeſt ſhovel up all the ſand that is upon the ſhores of all the Seas, together on a heap, it would not be ſo heavy as my calamity: In ſuch *Hyperbolies* or high ſtrains of eloquence, *Job* rhetoricates about his ſad condition, as if he reſolved to put more weight into his expreſſions, as he found more weight put into his afflictions.

Hence obſerve, *Afflictions are heavy burdens*.

The judgments of God upon wicked men, are frequently in Scripture called burdens; and they are heavy burdens, *Iſa.* 15. 1. We read of the *burden of Moab*; that is, the judgment and calamity that ſhould fall upon *Moab*. &, *Iſ.* 17. 1. *The burden of Damaſcus*. &, *Iſa.* 19. 1. *The burden of* Egypt. & *Iſa.* 21. 1. *The burden of the Deſart of the Sea*. And afterwards, *The burden of the valley of Viſion*, that is, of *Jeruſalem*. &, (2 *Kings* 9. 25.) When *Jehu* had killed *Jehoram*, he ſaid to *Bidkar* his Captain, *Take him up, and caſt him in the portion of the field of* Naboth *the* Jezreelite; *for remember, how that when I and thou rode together after* Ahab *his Father, the Lord laid this burden upon him*, that is, that he ſhould be ſlain, and thrown out in this manner. As afflictions upon wicked men are burdens, ſo, afflictions upon the godly are burdens too; they are alſo heavy burdens (Their ſins are burdens upon them; *My ſins* (ſaith *David*) *are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavy for me to bear*, Pſal. 28. 4. Their ſins are burdens, and their ſorrows are burdens. Sin doth not only burden man, but it burdens God: *I am preſſed under your ſins, as a cart is preſſed that is full of ſheaves*, ſaith God; *Amos* 2. 13. As man, by ſin burdens God, ſo God, by affliction burdens man. But of all afflictions, inward afflictions are the greateſt burdens: As the ſpirit of a man is ſtronger than his fleſh, ſo the afflictions which are upon his ſpirit, are weightier then thoſe that are upon his fleſh: The Spirit hath wonderful ſtrength; all ſpirits are ſtrong; Angels are mighty in ſtrength: *One good Angel is an over-match for all men*. And the Devils (who are Spirits) are called not only *Principalities*, but *Powers*; becauſe of their ſtrength. Proportionably, the ſpirit of a man hath a mighty ſtrength it; and ſo the afflictions, which are upon the ſpirit, may have a greater weight in them. The affliction which *Job* complains of, as heavier then the ſand, was not ſo much the calamity that preſſed his fleſh, or the pain that tormented his body (as is plain in the next verſe) but it was the calamity of his ſpirit, the affliction lying there; *A man can ſuſtain his infirmity, but a wounded ſpirit* (that is, when a man hath got a blow, a wound, an affliction upon his ſpirit) *who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. As if *Solomon* had ſaid, I challenge all the world to find me out a man, that can bear a burdened, wounded ſpirit; unleſs Chriſt put under his hand, no ſtrength of mans ſpirit can bear

bear the burden of a wounded ſpirit: A ſpirit hath no weight at all, only fleſhly and material ſubſtances are ponderous; but a wounded ſpirit is heavier then wounded fleſh. The ſpirit is ſtrong enough to bear the burdened fleſh, but nothing in fleſh can bear a burdened ſpirit.

In the cloſe of the verſe, we have the effect of this heavy weight of affliction, both ſpiritual and corporal.

Therefore (ſaith he) *my words are ſwallowed up.* That is, I want words to expreſs my grief. (*a*) All Language is too narrow for the vaſtneſs of my ſorrows.

Some read it (*b*) *Therefore my words are bitter*; or, therefore my words are ſteeped in bitterneſs; as if he had ſaid, I my ſelf feed upon bitter things, I feed upon Gall and Wormwood, therefore no wonder if my words taſte of them.

The Vulgar goes farther from the Letter of the Text, rendring (*c*) *Therefore my words are full of ſorrow*; as if he had ſaid, the ſorrows which are in my mind, flow out upon my Tongue.

The *Septuagint* yet further off (*d*). *Therefore it ſeems my words are evil, or ill taken.* My grief renders my words more liable to exception or miſ-interpretation.

(*a*) *amara.* Symmach. (*c*) *Propterea verba mea ſunt dolore plena.* Vulg. (*d*) Διὰ τοῦτο τὰ ῥήματα μὲ δεῖ φαῦλα. *Sept.*

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Therefore my words come ſhort*; there is a weight upon me heavier then the ſand of the ſea; *Therefore my words come ſhort*, or my expreſſions come not up to my intention. We tranſlate near that ſence, and anſwerably to the Original, *My words are ſwallowed up.*

The Hebrew word ſignifies *to lick up*, or *to ſwallow down*, and by a Metaphor to deſtroy or conſume; in the Propheſie of *Obadiah*, v. 16. the word is uſed to that purpoſe, *They ſhall drink, and they ſhall ſwallow down*: And, *Prov.* 20. 25. *It is a ſnare to the man, who devoureth that which is holy*, or who ſwalloweth down that which is holy; ſo here, *Therefore my words are ſwallowed up*; that is, when I would ſpeak, my words are, as it were, half-eaten before ſpoken; or my words are ſnatcht down in the ſpeaking, by the ſharp teeth and devouring ſtomach of my grief and ſorrows.

Others from the Letter read, *Therefore my words are corrupted, wearied, loſt, blotted, blubbered*, ſo cut off, that I cannot ſpeak diſtinctly, alluding unto thoſe that ſtammer. A ſtammerer is in ſuch haſte to ſpeak, that he *eats his words*, and (as we uſe to ſay proverbially in our Language) *he clips the Kings Engliſh*, he ſwalloweth up half his mind, when he would bring it out in words; ſuch is the meaning of *Job*, *My words are ſwallowed up*, I cannot ſpeak all; my grief takes me off, and cuts me ſhort. And ſo he ſeems to excuſe himſelf.

Firſt, In caſe he had ſpoken abruptly and brokenly, my pain hath been ſo great, that I can hardly ſpeak, therefore take no advantage of the abrupt language and broken ſentences, which have fallen from me; for the truth is, my grief hath ſwallowed up my words. I have rather ſighed, then declared my mind; real ſorrow, as well as poetical paſſionate imitation of ſorrow, makes many an (*Apoſtopeſis*, or) ſudden ſtop and breach, when the tongue is upon its ſwifteſt ſpeed, and quickeſt motion.

And ſecondly, He ſeems to excuſe himſelf for the matter of his ſpeech; I have not yet ſpoken all my mind, I have not yet given you my full ſence, about my condition; for through grief, I was forced to ſwallow up my words, and to ſuppreſs what I had further to ſay. Therefore ſuppoſe my ſpeech hath been imperfect, yet be not ſcandalized at it; for if you will have patience to ſtay, I ſhall anon bring up the words again which my ſorrows have ſnatcht from me, and ſwallowed down. Stay a while, and you ſhall hear more, you ſhall hear all; I will ſpeak more largely and more diſtinctly then I have done. One of the *Rabbins* takes the word actively, and refers the act of ſwallowing to *Job*'s Friends: as if he had ſaid, *Ye, my friends, have ſwallowed down my words*; ye have not leiſurely fed upon and digeſted them, but ſwallowed them in ſuch haſte, that ye have not taſted them. As a man that ſwallows down a morſel greedily, without chewing, never taſtes either the ſweetneſs or the bitterneſs of it. It is a uſual Metaphor to expreſs hearing by eating; and we have it (as many interpret) at the ſixth verſe of this Chapter, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?* It is a truth, that when words are thus ſwallowed or gobled down, we take not out the ſtrength or intent of them. But I ſtay not upon this expoſition, becauſe it ſtrains too hard upon the Grammatical conſtruction, and other circumſtances of the Text.

Obſerve out of the former meaning,

Firſt, *Great grief interrupteth ſpeech; and makes broken Language.*

Therefore my ſpeech or my words are ſwallowed up. As ſometimes our words devour, ſo ſometimes our words are devoured; ſome men ſpeak ſwallowing words, and others ſwallow their words (*Pſal.* 57. 4.) *Thou loveſt all devouring words; or thou loveſt all ſwallowing words, O thou deceitful tongue!* There are ſwallowing words, as well as ſwallowed words. Malice makes a man ſwallow the integrity of another with his words; and grief will make a man ſwallow down his own words, ſo that he cannot ſpeak to maintain his own integrity.

Secondly obſerve, That, *Some afflictions exceed all complaints, and are too big for expreſſion.*

That Note reaches Mr. *Broughton*'s ſence, *my words come ſhort* of what my condition is; there is no language large enough, no Oratory eloquent enough to deſcribe or make known my ſorrows.

Laſtly obſerve, *Not to be able to expreſs our grief, is an encreaſe of our grief.*

Therefore my words are ſwallowed up. This is an addition to my ſorrows, that I cannot make known my ſorrows. It is a great part of my trouble, that I can tell you but a part of my trouble. Let a man be hindered from expreſſing his grief, either through want of power, or through the reſtraint of power; both wayes grief encreaſes. Some, who have been dying upon cruel Racks, or under bloody tortures, have yet eſteemed this beyond all their tortures, that they might not freely ſpeak out their minds and ſorrows: to have their mouths ſtopt, was worſe to them, then to have their breath ſtopt. *It is a pain to be kept from ſpeaking.* To command a man to ſwallow or eat down his words, is next to the command of eating and ſwallowing down his own fleſh. *The cruelty of a diſeaſe may gagg a man, as well as the cruelty of a Tyrant; ſuch is my grief, that my words are ſwallowed up.*

Apud Sophoclem Electra fœlicem vocat Niobem, cui lugere filiorum interitum permiſſum eſt, cum id ſibi matris crudelitas negaverit.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit; the terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.
Doth the wild Aſs bray when he hath graſs? or loweth the Ox over his fodder?
Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt? or is there any taſte in the white of an egg?
The things that my ſoul refuſed to touch, are as my ſorrowful meat?

JOB continueth his Reply and his Complaint. He had expreſt the greatneſs of his calamity, by comparing it with the ſand of the ſea for weightineſs; now he proceeds in the ſame ſad aggravation, by comparing it to an arrow for ſharpneſs, and to an army for terribleneſs: *For the arrows of the Almighty are within me; the terrors of the Lord ſet themſelves in array againſt me.*

We are in this verſe to open a quiver full of poyſoned arrows, and to marſhal an Army full of divine terrors; *The arrows of the Almighty*, &c.

An arrow is a deadly engine, ſo called in the Hebrew, from its effect, cutting or wounding. Being taken properly, it is an inſtrument ſhot out of a Bow, of wood or iron, either for ſport or fight: But here figuratively. And arrows in Scripture, are taken in a figure divers wayes.

חץ *Sagitta, a* חצץ *dimidiavit, diſcidit, quòd ſcindit rem percuſſam.*

Firſt, For the Word of God, *Pſal.* 45. 5. *Thine arrows are ſharp in the heart of the Kings enemies, whereby the people fall under thee*: That is, thy words are ſharp and piercing, whereby thou convinceſt and beateſt down ſin and ſinners, either converting or deſtroying them. The Rider on the white Horſe, going out conquering, and to conquer, (who

(who is conceived to be Truth, or the Word of God triumphing) is described, with a Bow in his hand, *Rev.* 2. 6.

Secondly, Arrows are put for the bitter and reproachful words of men, *Psal.* 64. 3, 4. & *Psal.* 120. 4. *They bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words.*

Thirdly, For any evil or mischievous purpose, which a man intends or aims to the hurt of his brother, *Psal.* 58. 7. *When he bendeth his bow to shoot his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.* Bending of the bow, notes the preparing and setting of mischief: The arrow shot out of this bent bow, is the mischief acted and finished (*Psal.* 2.) *The wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string*; that is, they prepare mischiefs against their neighbour.

Fourthly, For any kind of affliction, judgment or punishment, *Zech.* 9. 14. And *the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning.* Particularly,

1. For Famine, *Ezek.* 5. 16. *When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine.*

2. For Pestilence, *Psal.* 91. 5. *Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that fleeth by day.* What the terror and the arrow are, is explained in the next verse; which is not an addition of other evils, from which safety is promised, but an explication of the same. *The pestilence that walks in darkness, and the destruction* (being the same pestilence) *wasting at noon-day.* The meaning of all is, Thou shalt be kept or antidoted against the Plague both night and day.

3. Those Thunder-bolts and hailstones, which God sends out of the Magazine of heaven, and discharges in his wrath against wicked men, are called the arrows of his indignation, 2 *Sam.* 22. 15. *Psal.* 144. 6. & *Hab.* 3. 11. compared with *Josh.* 10. 11.

Further, The arrows of God signifie inward afflictions, troubles of the mind and spirit; God often shoots an arrow, which pierces into the very soul. It was said of *Joseph, The Iron entred into his soul.* And it is (in this sence) very usual for the arrows of God to enter into the souls of his people (*Psal.* 38. 1, 2.) *O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath,* &c. *For thine arrows stick fast in me*: Where stuck they? He means it not of his body haply; the skin of that was not razed. There is an arrow, which touches not the sides, but sticks fast in the soul of a Child of God.

Understand it here of the arrows of affliction; and those either external, outward calamities, fastning in the flesh of *Job*; or internal, galling him to the soul and spirit. Therefore he saith, *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poyson whereof drinketh up my spirit.*

He vel latèri lethalis arundo.

These Arrows are described in the Text two wayes.

1. From the Efficient cause. *The Arrows of the Almighty.*
2. From the Effect. *They drink up my spirit.*

They are the arrows of the Almighty, Shaddai. Of which word we have spoken in the former Chapter, *ver.* 17. at large, it being one of the names of God, noting out his power and omnipotency; there he calls them the chastnings of (*Shaddai*) the Almighty; and here, *The Arrows of* (*Shaddai*) *the Almighty.*

First, Because they are sent out from him. His arm bends and draws the Bow. And,

Secondly, Because of the mighty force and strength, in which they are sent home to the mark. The strength in which these arrows come, and the depth of the wound which they make, speak an Almighty arm to draw the Bow. None but an almighty arm can shoot an arrow thus deep, up to the feathers in the soul and spirit. It is not in the power of all the tyrants in the world to strike or shoot thus deep. The soul of a Saint hath such armour upon it, as no bodily weapon can enter. And therefore the Martyrs, when all was wound in their flesh, spoke and triumphed, because their spirits were whole and untoucht. Only a Spirit can shoot Arrowes in our spirits.

Pottæ deos arcu, jaculis, sagittisque armant, intelligentes quas inferunt mortalibus clades quæ ferium eminus quod proprium Dei viderur Bold.

We find it frequent among Heathen Poets and others, to describe their gods armed with bows and arrows. And in that they shadowed their power to wound the minds of men, and to wound them suddenly and secretly. The Scripture describes the true God thus, furnished with his quiver of arrows, and his bow (*Psal.* 7, 13.) *He ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.* God hath an arrow for the wounding of his enemies, and an arrow for the wounding of his friends. He hath arrows for both, and both are wounded, with poysoned fiery arows; yet, with a vast difference: these are wounded and poysoned that they may be healed, and they are wounded and poysoned that they may be destroyed.

Arrows are { 1. Swift, 2. Secret, 3. Sharp, 4. Killing } Instruments.

I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (Deut. 32. 42.) They are instruments drawing blood, and drinking blood, even unto drunkenness; afflictions are like arrows in all these properties:

First, Afflictions often come very speedily, with a glance, as an arrow, quick as a thought.

Secondly, Afflictions come suddenly, unexpectedly; an arrow is upon a man afore he is aware, so are afflictions. Though *Job* saith, the thing he feared came upon him, he looked for this arrow before it came; yet usually afflictions are unlooked for guests, they thrust in upon us, when we dream not of them.

Thirdly, They come with little noise; an arrow is felt, before, or as soon as, it is heard; an arrow flies silently and secretly, stealing upon, and wounding a man, unobserved, and unseen.

Lastly, All afflictions are sharp, and in their own nature killing and deadly. That any have good from them, is from the grace of God, not from their nature.

The poyson whereof drinketh up my spirit.

There's the effect of his afflictions. Some read it, *The fury or anger whereof drinketh up my spirit.* It may be called the fury and anger of an arrow, because the arrow is often sent in fury and in anger. We read also of the fire of an arrow, or of a fierie arrow (*Psal.* 76. 4.) *There breakest thou the arrows of the bow.* Arrows even firing themselves by the swiftness of their motion.

Quarum ira dignatio. Vulg. *Furor.* Sept. *Fervor*, Tygur. *Plurimi venenum*

רשף

Sagitta ignita, incalescens motu

חמת

a radice יחם *Caluit, incaluit ira. sic dicta quod irati incalescunt.*

The word of the Text is derived from a root, signifying to *wax very hot*, and in the Nown, *heat.* Hence by a Metaphor it signifies anger, because angry men wax hot; *Anger is breathed fire* (Isa. 42. 12.) *Therefore he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel, and it hath set him on fire round about.* Fire and fury are near in name and in nature. When fury burns within, fire quickly burns without; and so by a Metonymie the same word signifies poison; the reason is, because poisons heat and enflame; poisons enflame the flesh, and (as it were) set the body on fire, or; because an angry man (like an angry Serpent) seems to breath out fire, or spit poison. *Paul*, before his conversion, *breathed threatnings*, fire and sword, against the Church, *Acts* 9. 1. And therefore, either way, the word is well rendred, *The anger whereof*, or, *the poyson whereof drinketh up my spirit.* And in the Greek, the same word signifies anger and poison; because of that inflammation which is about the heart of a man throughly angry.

Pfal. 58. Θυμὸς pr. Sept.

Venenatis gravida sagittis pharetra Hor. *Qui mortiferis sævo gemine nent ut vaginera cassa. Omnia vipereo spicula felle linunt.* Ovid. *l.* 1. *de Pont.* 6.

In these words, *Job* seems to allude to the custom of cruel savage men, who, when they pursued their enemies with deadly hatred, and would wound them to death, used to dip the head of their arrows, the top of their spears, or the point of their swords, or whatsoever weapon they fought with, in poison, that so every wound might be a death; the poison of such an arrow, spear or sword, drinks up the spirit, and corrupts the blood presently. Some poison strikes the heart, almost as soon as the weapon strikes the arm. *Job* compares the arrows which God shot into him, not to ordinary arrows, which kill only by piercing, but, to poisoned arrows, which kill by infecting; as if God had set himself to the utmost, to pour out the fiercenes of his indignation upon him; not only shooting an arrow, but an arrow dipt in poison, such an arrow, as the most barbarous and cruel men shoot at their most professed and mortal enemies.

Mos erat Persarum ut ponerent venenum in sagittis suis. R. Solom. רוחו

Drinketh up my spirit.] Poison gets quickly to the spirit, and there drinks; poison is subtle and spiritful, and therefore (if I may so speak) incorporates with that which is most subtle in man, his spirit. Flat, pal'd, grosse, or dreggish liquor will not quench the fiery thirst of poison; it drinks

drinks nothing but pure spirits; yet some read, *It drinketh up my blood*; but this amounts to the same sence, for the spirit of a living creature is in the blood: the spirits swim in the blood.

There are different opinions about this spirit, or what we are to understand by it.

First, Some take spirit here, for the breath, or for the act of breathing; as if he had said, I have received so many wounds by these poisoned arrows, that I begin to faint, and cannot draw my breath; these arrows sup up my spirit, and by wounding, stop my breath.

Secondly, Others understand it more generally, taking spirit for his strength and vigor; spirits are so strong, that they are put for strength. *The Egyptians are men, and not God, and their horses flesh, and not spirit* (Isa. 31. 3.) that is, they are not strength, but weakness. So here, *It drinketh up my spirit*, that is, the strength that is in me, all the powers and abilities of body and soul, are wasted and consumed; these calamities spend upon my spirit, where the stock of my strength is laid up, or which is the lock wherein my strength lies.

A third apprehends, that by spirit, he means his judgment, reason and understanding; as if he had said, shower, and arrows and troubles come so thick upon me, that, they even darken my mind, and drink up the strength of my understanding; hence I may seem to speak distractedly, unadvisedly, weakly: I have not that spirit to quicken, that strength of reason to judge, which formerly I had; the pains of my body disable and distemper my mind; and therefore if I have spoken any thing below what I ought, it is, because I am cast below what I was.

The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

Arrows and terrors are the same thing, in a different cloathing of words; or the arrow is the affliction it self, and the terrour is the effect or consequent of it. The word here used for *Terrour*, notes the most terrible terrour or affrightment. *Terrour is the extream of fear, or fear confused into amazement and astonishment:* Death is therefore called the King of terrors, because there are so many powerful terrors in death, *Psal.* 55. 4. That vexation which *Saul* felt, when God sent out an evil spirit with commission to vex him, is expresst by this word, 1 *Sam.* 16. 14. *An evil spirit from the Lord, troubled, or terrified him*: Such terrors, for the matter, such for the manner and present workings of them, seized upon upright-hearted *Job*, and false-hearted *Saul*. A believer, a child of God, an heir of heaven, may feel himself haunted and pierced with hellish terrors.

These are called the *Terrors of God*, either, first, By a common *Hebraism*; because great and strange terrors. In that Language, *God* is often put as an *Epithete*, to shew exceeding greatness, himself being the *greatest*. So *chap.* 1. 16. *Fire of God*, &c. Secondly, *Terrors of God*, because he sent and commanded that army of terrors. When *Jacob* journeyed with his little Army, *Gen.* 35. 5. It is said, *The terror of God was upon the Cities round about, and they pursued them not*; that is, the Lord sent an army of terrors to oppose the Cities, lest they should arm against *Jacob*. The terror of man is very terrible, and therefore the Apostle arms the Saints against it, 1 *Pet.* 3. 14. *Be not afraid of their terror.* The terror of God is infinitely greater; and therefore upon the Apostle argues, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perswade men.*

Those terrors of God may be taken two wayes; either *actively* or *passively*; actively, for that work of God, in terrifying and troubling. *Thy terrors*, that is the terrors which thou didst afflict me with; or passively, for those afflictions which oppress the mind; when God leads that army against us, sets it in array to charge, and commands it to encamp about us; in either sence we may take this of *Job*, as also that of *Heman*, Psal. 88. 15. *While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted.*

Further, There is a twofold terror; First, caused by outward imminent danger. Secondly, caused by inward guilt. Or, Terror comming from the wrath of man, and terror coming from the wrath of God. Thus it was threatned, *Lev.* 26. 16. *I also will do even this unto you, I will appoint over you terrors*, Deut. 32. 25. *The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin*, that is, fear shall kill those who escape the sword. A people cannot stand before an Army of men, who are once surprized with an army of terrors. Hence, *Josh.* 2. 9. *Your terror is fallen upon us*, saith *Rahab*, to assure the spies, that the *Canaanites* could not stand before the people of *Israel*.

Again, The terrors of God afflict the soul, First, When sin is set openly (to the eye of Conscience) in array against us. *An Army of sins are an Army of terrors.* The Church is called, *Terrible as an army with Banners*, Cant. 6. 10. when she is strengthened and armed for the exercise of all that power which Christ hath given her; and when our sins stand before us, are in all that strength which the Law hath given them, they also are *terrible as an army with banners.*

Secondly, When God hides his face from us, an army of terrors quickly faces us; though an army of sins come out in array against us, yet if God appear to us, in the fulness and freeness of his Grace; if Christ our Captain will but lead us on against this army, we shall quickly overcome them, or they will flie before us: But an army of sins is exceeding terrible, when Christ appears not in the field for us, or when God hides his face from us, and leaves us in the dark. It is usual in Scripture, to set forth terrors, as the effect of that darkness, and the hidings of the face of God. Naturally, terror accompanies darkness; children are afraid in the dark, and not only children, but men. Histories tell us of great Emperors, who durst not be in the dark for fear. And as natural terrors meet us in natural darkness, so spiritual terrors, in spiritual darkness: *When the light of Gods countenance is clouded, and* (as it were) *benights the soul*, then terror takes hold upon us. Under either of these notions we may understand the terrors of this Text; *The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.* It was true in respect of outward troubles, they were very terrible; but especially in regard of inward troubles; when God sets his sins in array before him, or hid his face, and obstructed the course of his wonted communion.

Set themselves in array against me.

The Original imports, a very exact, curious, artificial ordination and disposal of things; as if the Lord had even studied to be exact and exquisite in afflicting *Job*, he puts his sorrows into a method, and his troubles into order. The Providence of God observes a rule, and is harmonious in those things which appear to us a chaos, a heap of confusion.

ערך *Ordinavit, ratione & proportione disposuit, instruxit.*

The word is applied, First, To the ordering of speech or disputations: There is a kind of embattelling in disputation, when it is regular and artificial (*Job* 32. 14.) *Now he hath not directed his speech against me* (saith *Elihu*) concerning *Job*; As if he said, *Job* hath not marshalled his Arguments against me, but all the charge hath been upon you.

Secondly, I find the word used in reference unto prayer: Prayer ought to be full of holy order and composedness (*Psal.* 5. 3.) *In the morning will I direct my prayer to thee, and look up.* In the morning will I put my prayer in array, I will posture my prayer in a gracious order, my heart in order, and my words in order; every petition shall (as it were) keep rank and file, when I am seeking unto God: *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*, is the counsel of the holy Ghost by *Solomon*, Eccles. 5. 2.

But properly, the word is applied to the marshalling and embattelling of an Army (*Jer.* 50. 9.) *Lo, I will raise, and cause to come up against* Babylon, *an assembly of great Nations from the North-Country, and they shall set themselves in array against her*, &c.

So then, whereas *Job* saith, *The terrors of God are set in array against me*, he would intimate, that God afflicted him, both orderly and resolvedly. It was not some confused terror, or sudden surprizal; but the Lord God, like some great Commander or General, mustered and marshalled his Army, and led it up exactly form'd to a pitcht battel against him.

Observe from hence, First, *Afflictions come sometimes by multitudes.*

You

Bellum atq; virum.

You shall have a whole Army of them together: Sometime we see a duel or single combate, one man match with one trouble; here a man and an affliction, there a man and an affliction; but another time we may see, a man and an Army (as he spake in the story, when one made good a *pass* against a whole host of the enemy) in the spiritual War, one soul grapples with a multitude of troubles and conflicts with a thousand temptations: As there are legions of evil spirits, so legions of spiritual evils assaulting at once.

Observe Secondly, *God sometimes appears as an enemy to his own servants.*

The terrors of God, and the arrows of God (saith *Job*) God shoots the arrows, and sets the terrors in array; *Job* expected favour and succor from God, but he finds terrors and arrows: Those wounds make our hearts bleed most, which we apprehend given us from his anger, whom we have chosen as our only friend. The Church had that apprehension of God (*Lam.* 3. 3.) *Surely against me is he turned, he turneth his hand against me all the day.* The Church speaks as if God were quite changed, as if he having been her friend, were now turned enemy. So *Job*, I that was wont to have showers of sweet mercies, shot and darted into my soul, now feel deadly arrows there, shot from the same hand; my spirit was wont to drink in the pleasant influences of Heaven; but now poyson drinks up my spirits. I was wont to walk safe, under the guard of divine favours, but now divine terrors assault me on every side.

Observe Thirdly, *When God appeareth an enemy, man is not able to hold out any longer.*

See, how *Job* (poor soul) cries out as soon as he found, that these were Gods arrows, and Gods terrors. *Job was a man at arms*, a man of valour, and of an undaunted courage; a man that had been in many skirmishes with Satan, and had often, through the power of God, foiled him, and come off with victory, *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, were (indeed) too hard for his servants, and conquer'd his cattel, yet the spirit of *Job* beat those bands of robbers, and triumphed over them; but he was never in battel with God before, and perceiving now God himself to appear as an enemy in the field, he cries out, *O the terrors of God, O the arrows of the Almighty. When God is angry, no man can abide it*; (2 Cor. 5. 11.) *Knowing the terror of the Lord, we perswade men:* We (saith the Apostle) who have felt by experience, or by faith have understood the terror of the Lord: we knowing it experimentally, or knowing it believingly; we being fully perswaded, that the terror of the Lord is most terrible, perswade men; O take heed you put not your selves under the terror of the Lord, or provoke the terror of the Lord against your selves. Those terrors of the Lord which come from pure wrath, are altogether intollerable: And those which come from love, and are set in array by the infinite wisdom, and gracious providence of God, ordering all things for good (to his) in the issue, even those are very dreadful; no man, not the holiest of men (and they are the strongest in this war) are able to stand before them; *Psal.* 38. 2. *Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore, there is no soundness in my flesh by reason of thine anger:* that is, I am as a man, who hath not a whole piece of skin all his body over, all is a wound; or I am as one, whose flesh is all rotten by reason of his wounds. As *Ely* speaks to his sons, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *If one man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?* So, we may say on the other side, if man contend with man, some one may help him, he may have a *Second* to relieve him; but if once a man be contending with God, who will be his *Second?* who will undertake for him? who can come in, to the rescue, when God is fighting and contending with us? *We wrastle not against flesh and blood* (saith the Apostle, *Ephes.* 6. 12. when he would shew, what a terrible thing it is to wrastle with the Devil) *but against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickednesses in high places.* Flesh and blood is no match for a Spirit, though a created Spirit, though an unclean Spirit, a Devil; how then shall flesh and blood be able to wrastle with the creating Spirit; with him, who is a most holy Spirit; with God, who is *The Principality, The Power, The High, The Strong, The Almighty, Shaddai.* In other battels it is man with man, or at worst, man with Devils; but here it is man with God, weakness and frailty, contending with Omnipotency: and therefore when once God appears against the soul, the soul can hold out no longer; *His anger, who is the Spirit, quickly drinks up our spirits.*

Observe Fourthly, *Inward wounds and terrors are most terrible.*

Do not think that the soars upon *Job*'s body, fetcht all these complaints from him. He shews you now, what it was that made him complain indeed; *The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the terrors of God set themselves in array against me.* As the joyes and exultations of the spirit do infinitely exceed all the pleasures which come in from the senses, all bodily pleasures: so the troubles and afflictions, which are upon the spirit, infinitely exceed all the troubles and afflictions which fall upon the body. As God hath such comforts, such joyes to bestow upon his people, as the world can neither give nor take away; so likewise, he hath terrors and troubles, which all the world is not able to remove or mitigate: *There are no medicines in the whole circuit of nature, that can heal a wounded spirit*; All your friends, all your relations, all your riches, yea all your natural wisdom, will be but as the white of an egg to your taste, in the day when God smites the heart with these terrors.

Tanto pœna intolerabilior, quanto spiritus corpore subtilior.

These arrows and terrors, are often preparatory to conversion; when some men are over-come to receive Christ, an Army of terrors is sent out, to take them captive, and bring them in. There are many (I grant) whom God wounds with love, he shoots an arrow of favour into their hearts, and overcomes them with Troops of mercies. Again, an Army of terrors is sent out to try the holy courage of those, who are converted, as well as to conquer the unholy enmity of persons unconverted. That was *Job*'s case here, and these second Armies may be as terrible to the soul as the first, and often are more terrible. And (we have such cases) a man that was converted without an Army of terrors, may have an an Army of terrors sent against him after conversion. *The dispensations and methods of God are various, though both his rule and end be ever the same:* But whether this Army of terror comes before conversion, or after conversion; whensoever it comes, it must needs distress the soul exceedingly. *A broken spirit is very comfortable, but a wounded spirit is very dreadful*; Of a wounded spirit we may say, as I remember the Moralist speaks, concerning those barbarous naked fights, among the *Romans*, when men fought naked with men, or naked with beasts; surely (saith he) all the former fights and battels, were sports and mercy to these: So all other troubles, all other terrors, are pleasures and recreations to these: When you come to this bout, when God sends these arrows, and arrayeth such an Army of terrors against you, Fire and Sword, Stone and Gout, are, yea Hell it self, (to present apprehension) is a pleasure: Many under those assaults, have thought they should gain by the exchange, and have wished to be in Hell, so they might be out of those terrors.

Quicquid ante pugnatum est, mi serecordia fuit. Sen.

Few believe this, but they who have had experience of it. *As the joyes of the spirit, so the terrors of the spirit, are secrets unto most:* As the Prophet speaks concerning those carnal ones in his time. *If one propheste unto them of wine and strong drink, he shall even be the Prophet of this people. To propheste, or to speak unto some of riches, and of honour, and of pleasure, they find some taste in these things, this is wine and strong drink unto them.* There is some relish in these things, they understand what you mean; but if you speak unto them of joy in the Holy Ghost, of peace of Conscience, of the refreshings which are had in communion with Christ; they understand not the language, they know not what is meant. So, on the other side, if you would be a Prophet, or speak, or preach to some of Fire and Sword, of spoiling and plundering their Estates, preach to them of Plague and Pestilence, preach to them of the Gout, and of the Stone, of burning Fevers, and languishing Consumptions, they understand these and are afraid, they even tremble to hear you speak of these things: but preach to them of the arrows of the Almighty, shot into the spirit, and

of the terrors of God set in array against them; preach to them of trouble of Conscience, and the hiding of Gods face; they smile at these things, they wonder what you would have, they know no such matters. *Spiritual good or evil, is seldom known till felt, yea neither of them is known* (to purpose) *till it is felt*: Spiritual troubles are as little known, till felt, as spiritual joyes are: The natural man perceives none of the things of God, he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned: And there is as much spiritualness evidenced in discerning spiritual sorrows and afflictions (our own or others) as there is in discerning our own or others spiritual joyes and consolations.

I shall add a word here to those, who live securely, in, or dally with their sins: Surely, if *Job* here in the Text; if *David* often in the *Psalmes*, and *Heman* (Psal. 88. 15.) cryeth out, *While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted*; If these cryed out thus of the terrors and arrows of God, then (I say) *Sinners and secure ones*, what will you do, when God bends his bow, opens his quiver, and shoots his arrows at your naked breasts? What will you do, when God shall bring up Armies of terrors to charge upon you, when you hear a *Job* thus crying out of terrors? How sad will it be with you, who shall be a terror to your selves, as *Pashur* was threatned, *Jer.* 20. 4. and God a terror to you likewise? What will you do, when there is fear round about, and fear within? *The sinners in* Zion *are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33. 14. If they who have a shield of faith to keep off these arrows, and a rock of salvation, Jesus Christ, to hide themselves in, when these Armies come to battel against them, are thus afraid; what will become of you, that are unarmed? of you, naked ones? of you, who have no shield, no shelter, no faith, no Christ?

Major Misnabæi.

One thing more. Forasmuch, as there are such arrows and terrors sent by God, even against his own, for their trial; take heed of making arrows against your selves; take heed you be not found to raise and prepare an Army of terrors, against your own souls. All the while men sin, knowingly and presumptuously, they shoot arrows against God, and God may take those arrows and shoot them back into their breasts; he can make their sins recoyl upon themselves, and pierce their own hearts with the works of their own hands. Men muster (as it were) whole Armies of terrors, and levy a bloody war against themselves by wilful sinnings. That Text, *Psal.* 50. 21. telleth us, that God will bring the sins of wicked men, as an Army against them; *I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thine eyes*; It is the same Hebrew word, we have in the Text, *I will set thy sins in array before thine eyes*; as if he should say, thou thoughtest all thy sins were scattered and dispersed, that, there was not a sin to be found, that they should never be rallied, and brought together; but I assure thee, I will make an Army of those sins, a compleat Army of them, I will set them in rank and file before thine eyes, and see how thou canst behold, much less contend with such an host as they. Take heed therefore you do not levy war against your own souls; that's the worst of all civil or intestine wars. If an Army of divine terrors be so fearful, what will an Army of black hellish sins be? When God shall bring whole Regiments of sins against you, here a Regiment of oaths, there a Regiment of lies, there a third of false dealings, here a Troop of filthy actions, and there a Legion of unclean, or prophane thoughts, all at once fighting against thy life, and everlasting peace?

ignificat ursus di- inctio or- line bellico pparatu atalogum rmium sce rum pro- onere.

Lastly, You that have never felt these arrows, nor seen any of these Armies, and yet God hath been pleased to discover to you his love in his Christ, see what cause you have to bless God: Or if you have at any time felt them, and are now again at peace; and if those terrors are removed, and the poyson of those arrows sucked out, and the heads of the arrows drawn out; bless God. Do you not hear how *Job* complains of arrows and of terrors? *The arrows of the Almighty are within me, poyson whereof drinketh up my spirit; the terrors of God, do set themselves in array against me.*

Vers. 5. Doth the wild Ass bray when he hath grass? Or loweth the Ox over his fodder? &c.

The three verses following contain similitudes, taken from nature, by which *Job* tells on the story of his sorrows, and justifies his complaint. The sence in general is this, as if he had said, I do not cry out without cause; I should be more unreasonable then bruit beasts in so doing, *The wild Ass doth not bray, when he hath grass*, &c. Or thus, *We blame not beasts, if they complain, when they have cause: take away grass from the Ass, and fodder from the Ox; Pinch them with hunger, and they will tell you of it in their language, they will low and bray, till you understand they want meat*: Therefore surely you have no reason thus to find fault with me, or to charge me so heavily, because I have complained, when my grass and fodder, my comforts and my necessaries are taken from me: Nor is it any wonder, if you complain not, who have contentments to the full, and know not (by experience) what sorrow meaneth.

Doth the wild Ass bray, when he hath grass?

The Hebrew word for a wild Ass, comes from a root, signifying, *To bring forth*: and the reason is given, because wild beasts usually are more fruitful, and bring forth more plentifully then the tame. The word also notes *wild* in general; and is applied to wild and savage men, who delight in wild beasts, or wild places, Forests and Wildernesses. So (*Gen.* 16. 12.) God speaks of *Ishmael*, whom *Hagar* bear unto *Abraham*, that he, should be *A wild man*, that is, *wild among men*; or as a wild Ass among men, strong and active, delighting in Fields and Forests.

פרא *Fera, Onager, à* פרה *Fructificavit, fructum fecit, quod feræ Domesticis animantibus sint fœcundiores.* Shin.

Doth the wild Ass (saith *Job*) *bray, when he hath grass?* When the Ass hath meat, he is quiet; you hear not of him: but if he wants grass, he brayes, and makes a dismal noise, (*Jer.* 14. 6.) *The wild Asses did stand in the high places, they snuffed up the wind like Dragons, their eyes did fail, because there was no grass*; speaking of a time of drought and famine; the wild Ass is very impatient, both of hunger and of thirst. And therefore the Rivers are (by name) assigned to them for drink, *Psal.* 104. 10, 11. *He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills: they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild Asses quench their thirst.* Hence wild Asses are observed by natural Historians to delight in, and frequent Rivers and Springs.

פראארם *Onager inter homines, subaudito* כ *erit inter homines sicut Onager, robere prævalens.*

To which that prophane fiction of the *Roman* Historian (in abuse of the Jews) hath relation; who speaking of the travels of the *Israelites*, through the wilderness, tells us (to obscure the miracle, which God wrought for them) that they being ready to die with thirst, at last espied a company of wild Asses upon a rock: which advantage *Moses* took, and presently followed them, knowing that they would lead him to the waters, if any were to be had in those parts. In pursuance of which Lie, *Plutarch* affirms, that the Jews worshiped an Ass, as a Deity, which they had in special honour and veneration, for that famous deliverance. Upon this stock of Lies, the *Heathen* grafted that usual scorn against the Christians, *That they worshipped the head of an Ass*; as that great *Assertor* of the Christians honour against *Heathenish* cavils and hellish imputations, hath observed.

Cornelius Tacitus, *l.* 21.

Plutarch, *l.* 14. *Convivaliũ Quæstionũ. quæst.* 5.

Tertul. *adverſ. Gentes, cap.* 16.

But, that is a harmless and a witty observation (how solid I leave the Reader to judge) which hath been hinted from this natural thirstiness of the wild Ass: namely, that the Lord gave *Samson* water out of the *jaw-bone of an Ass*, *Judg.* 15. 19. thereby advancing the miracle, that a dead bone of that thirsty creature should be made a spring of water to revive him, who was ready to dye with thirst.

The intendment of this digression, is only to clear up the Text, by shewing that the wild Ass is most fitly instanced in, to shew the great cause which *Job* had to cry out as he did, of his afflictions; forasmuch as the wild Ass (who is so greedy of grass and thirsty after the waters) will not bray for either, till he is afflicted with the want.

Or loweth the Ox over his fodder?

This carries the same meaning with the former instance; that being in wild creatures, and this in tame: as if *Job* had said, look amongst all sort of cattel, wild or tame, you shall find they are content, when they have food convenient for them. And hereupon grounds his argument, that if brutes

brutes led only by ſenſe and appetite, complain not without reaſon, then ſurely he at leaſt a reaſonable creature, had reaſon to complain, or elſe he had not complained.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *Brute beaſts complain not without cauſe.*

They complain not till want provokes them. Surely, men are more then bruti∫h, who complain when they have no want: But moſt of all, *They*, who are not content with abundance. Some are diſcontent, not only, though they have *daily bread*, and (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) *Food and raiment* (wherewith all ſhould be content) but though they have ſtore of bread and cloathing *laid up for many years.* Shall not the Ox or Aſs condemn theſe, who bray and low not when they have graſs and fodder plenty, when they ſtand continually at rack and manger? By whom ſhall theſe men be accuſed think you? We ſhall not need to ſend for the Angels out of Heaven, to witneſs againſt them; no, we may call the wild beaſts and bid them be witneſs: we may empannel *a Jury of Aſſes and Oxen to paſs a verdict upon ſuch men.* As God upbraids his people in caſe of their ingratitude for mercies, *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib*; and (*Jer.*8.7.) in caſe of their neglect of judgments, *The Stork in the Heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Crane, and the Turtle, and the Swallow, obſerve the time of their coming, but my people doth not know the judgment of the Lord.* As if the Lord had ſaid, whither ſhall I go to fetch witneſs againſt this people? ſhall I go up to Heaven for Angels? or call in men out of other Nations? No, I need go but to the Air for birds, for *the Turtle the Crane, and the Swallow; any thing in nature will ſerve to condemn them, who act againſt, or below the dictates of Nature. Men are worſe then beaſts, when they do worſe.* Their preheminence of conſtitution is loſt in the baſeneſs of their actions; and they put themſelves by ſo much inferior to beaſts, by how much they were placed above them. The Pſalmiſt charges it ſadly upon himſelf, that he walked in the ſphear of a beaſt, *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee* (Pſal. 73. 22.) How ſadly then ſhall they be charged, who walk in a ſphear below beaſts, who are more fooliſh and ignorant, then a beaſt? Take heed of complayning without cauſe; if beaſts are ſatisfied with what is agreeable to nature, man ſhould be ſo, much more; *When Nature hath not enough, Grace hath all.* Grace will not bray or low, when there is no graſs, no fodder: ſurely then they have a ſcarcity of grace in their hearts, who bray and low over their graſs and fodder. Spiritual accommodations will make a good heart forget temporal incommodities; and it is reaſon they ſhould. God promiſeth (*Iſa.* 30. 20.) *Though I give you the bread of adverſity and the water of affliction, yet thy Teachers ſhall no more be removed into a corner, but thine eyes ſhall ſee thy Teachers.* As if had ſaid, though your bodies are courſely fed, yet your ſouls ſhall be feaſted; Good chear ſhall daily be ſerved into them, both at your eyes and ears, *Thine eyes ſhall ſee thy Teachers and thou ſhalt hear a voice behind thee.* Thy ſight and thy hearing ſhall be refreſhed with heavenly Meſſengers, and good news from Heaven. Now beſides this promiſe expreſt, there is a duty implyed in the Text, namely, that becauſe their ſpirits were ſo well fed, therefore they muſt not complain, though their fleſh come ſhort in feeding; *The bread of affliction ſhould be pleaſant to us, while we eat Goſpel-dainties.* In theſe times God gives more plenty of ſpiritual food then formerly, yet many complain, becauſe their natural bread is ſhortned; remember beaſts complain not, when they have what is ſutable to nature; then let not Chriſtians complain, when they have what is ſutable to grace, though nature have but ſpare diet, and ſhort commons.

Verſ. 6. **Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt.**

He proceeds to another ſimilitude. It is, as if *Job* had ſaid, Nature will complain, when it wants meat; yea oftentimes Nature will complain, when it wants pleaſant meat. Nature is not pleaſed, if it want a grain of ſalt; if it have not ſauce, it is not ſatisfied. Therefore, ſurely I am to be born with, and not to be charged thus deeply, who complain, when you offer me that which is unſavoury, when you give me meat without ſalt, without ſauce, without any thing to render it either pleaſing to my palat, or eaſie to my diſgeſtion: Unleſs I were ſenceleſs like a ſtock or a ſtone, how ſhould I not diſ-reliſh and diſguſt ſapleſs, ſaltleſs, how much more, bitter things?

Can that which is unſavoury. The word, which we render *unſavoury*, is the ſame uſed, *Chap.* 1. *verſ.* 22. which we there opened at large; Job *did not charge God with folly or fooliſhly*, or he ſpake not unſavourily of God.

There is a Three-fold application of that word in Scripture.

First, To unpleaſant meats.

Secondly, To untempered morter.

Thirdly, To indiſcreet ſpeeches, which want the ſeaſoning either of wit, wiſdom, or of truth, *Lam.* 2. 14. *Thy Prophets have ſeen vain and fooliſh things for thee*; Lying viſions without truth, vain words without wiſdom. So here, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?*

Seaſoning makes unſavoury things ſweet; *As ſalt gives a reliſh to meat, ſo wiſdom and wit to words.* And therefore the Latines expreſs wiſe, witty ſpeeches, pleaſant diſcourſe, a good grace in ſpeaking, and *ſalt*, by the ſame word.

תפל
Eſt quod debito condimento & temperamento caret, ſive in defectu, ſive in exceſſu.

Sales, pro facetiis, quod ſint quaſi condimentum ſermonis, Literæ Sparſæ ſale humanitatis. Cicer. *ad Attic.*

There is another Interpretation of that word, which we render *without*: for ſome underſtand it, not as a Prepoſition, governing the word *Salt*, but as a compound word, noting the oldneſs or ſtaleneſs of meat, wherein the very Salt it ſelf is putrified; and ſo whereas we ſay, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?* They tranſlate thus, *Can that which is unſavoury th,ough the corruption of ſalt be eaten?* Or, can that meat be eaten, which having been ſalted, is now putrified? *Salt which keeps meat from corruption, may in time be overcome with the corruption of the meat.* And a learned Interpreter gives the reaſon why he rather chuſeth this Interpretation of the word, becauſe (ſaith he) it carries a ſtronger *Emphaſis* with it; *Job* ſpeaks as of a thing, (in a manner) unpoſſible to be done; now, it is very poſſible to eat unſavoury meat without ſalt? A good appetite will down with unpleaſant food, and hunger will diſpence much with Cookery. But when ſeaſon'd or ſalted meat corrupts and putrifies, whoſe ſtomack doth not loath and abhor it? Therefore it is a fuller and a more flat denial to ſay, *Can that which is unſavoury through the corruption of ſalt be eaten?* then to ſay, *Can that which is unſavoury be eaten without ſalt?*

מבלי
Eſt præpoſitio abſque, ſine. Sed quidam accipiunt pro nomine expoſito ex Min, quod eſt, ex & Beli, à Balah, quod eſt vetuſtas. Hinc locum reddunt Infatuatum} ex vetuſtate ſalis, potius quam inſipidum abſq; ſale. Bold. *Job rem præhorrore prorſus impoſſibilem vult ſignificare; Numquid comedi-*

dtur, &c. At impoſſibile omnino non eſt comedere inſipidum ſine ſale, carnes autem corruptæ ex vetuſtate ſalis manducari nullatenus poſſunt. Bold.

Or is there any taſte in the white of an Egg?

These words are much obſcured, by moſt Tranſlators, and have found almoſt as many expoſitions, as Expoſitors. Some tranſlate thus, *Is there any taſte in that, which being taken, brings death?* So the Vulgar; doubtleſs a man hath but little pleaſure to taſte that, which taſted, will be his death: So the words are an aggravation of the unſavourineſs of thoſe things, which were offered him by his friends; to touch or take them, was to take poiſon, or to drink in a deadly cup.

To clear up this Expoſition, they make the Hebrew word (*Challamuth*) which we tranſlate, *Egg*, a compound from *Muth*, ſignifying to die, whence *Maveth*, death, and *Chala*, ſignifying froth or foam, or from *Chali*, ſignifying infirmity; as if the word having theſe parts put together, had this ſence, *The froth and foam of death*; Or, *The infirmity of death*: That is *deadly froth* or deadly infirmity, as if he had ſaid, is there any pleaſing taſte, in the ſpittle of dying men, who, we know often foam and froath at their mouths, when they *lie drawing on.*

Others thus, *Is there any taſte in the ſpittle of a healthy man.* The word (*Rir*) which we tranſlate *white*, ſignifies ſpittle or froth. As when *David* acted the mad-man before the King of *Gath*, it is ſaid, that he *let his ſpittle fall down upon his beard*, 1 Sam. 21. 13. And the word which we tranſlate, *Egg*, ſignifies *Health*, and the Verb, *to be healthy*, Chap. 39. 4. of this book, *Their young ones are in good liking.* So *Iſa.* 38. *verſ.* 16. But I leave this, as a very diſeaſed and ſickly interpretation.

I ſhall therefore paſs from theſe, to our own rendering,

בריר חלמות
An poteſt aliquis guſtare quod guſtatum affert mortem? Vulg.

חלם
Sanus, confirtatus, convaluit.

In albumine vitelli.

Is there any taste in the white of an Egg? The word signifies strictly, but *the yolk of the Egg*, so Mr. *Broughton*, *Is there any taste in the white of the yolk?* And in the root, to wax fat or strong; and it is therefore taken for the yolk of the Egg, because that is the fatter, grosser, and more condense part of the Egg. As the white being the thinner, and much like spettle, is therefore expresst by a word, which also signifies spettle.

The white of an Egg, is an emblem of things without taste or savour. And so the sum of all is, that *Job* in this place by a *Proverbial speech* (for so I take this to be) intends only thus much, that he had very insipid tasteless things presented to him; such as he found no relish at all in, such as no way raised his appetite or quicken'd his stomach to receive them; all were unseasoned and flat. In the next word he goes yet higher, even to the highest Antipathy against them.

Vers. 7. **The things which my soul refused to touch, are as my sorrowful meat.**

Animus, το ὀρεκτικον, partem, scilicet animæ, qua concupiscimus, notat hoc loco.

Here is the Application and Explication of both the former similitudes, *The things which my soul refused*; that is, the things which I exceedingly refused or abominated: (The soul is here taken for the Appetite) as to desire with the soul, notes a strong intention of desire (*Isa.* 26. 9.) *With my soul have I desired thee in the night, yea with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.* That is, I have most vehemently desired, and in my most retired thoughts sought the Lord; *When the soul is expressed to do that, which nothing can do but the soul, it imports the highest actings of the soul in doing it.* To desire with the soul, implies the sweetest delight; and so to refuse with the soul, implies the bitterest aversation, a refusal to the uttermost. The word, *refuse*, is proper to the nauseating of the stomach, at the sight of any filthy thing (*Isa.* 30. 22.) *Thou shalt defile the covering of the graven images*, &c. *Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth, thou shalt say unto them, get ye hence.* So here, the things which my soul *refuseth*, as a man refuses a filthy clout, or, as he should refuse that which is more loathsom then any filthy clout, an *Image*, or an *Idol*.

These things (saith he) *are now my sorrowful meat*, or, *the meat of my sorrow.* The terms of this latter clause are at farthest distance from, and opposition with that which went before. Not to touch a thing, notes the greatest aversation from it; and to have a thing given us as meat, notes our greatest communion with it. That which a man will not touch with his finger, how far is he from chewing it between his teeth, or letting it down into his stomach, and digesting it into himself? So that *Job*'s meaning seems to be this, that, what he desired to be the greatest stranger from, was now offered to his nearest familiarity and acquaintance: He was now (as it were) to eat, what before he would not touch. This we call *sorrowful meat.* Psal. 127. 2. We read of the *bread of sorrow*, that is, bread gotten with sorrow, bread eaten with sorrow, or, course bread; as *bread of pleasure* (Dan. 10. 3.) is *fine bread*: here sorrowful meat is either unpleasant meat, or any meat eaten in that time of his sorrow.

That relative (**the Things**) is not in the Hebrew, and so we may render word for word thus, *My soul refuseth to touch them as my sorrowful meat*: Or as another, *My mind refuses to touch them; these are plainly the very sickness of my meat.* As if he had said, I am so far from being refreshed with these things, that (the truth is) they make my very meat, and so my whole life unpleasant to me.

Mr. *Broughton* varies the latter clause, *Those things which I have loathed to touch, are now the very sickness of my flesh.* The word (*Lechem*) which we translate *meat*, or *prepared flesh*, signifies also *living flesh*, in the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Languages, as the learned Grammarians observe: Besides, we render the word (*Lechem*) *flesh*, Zeph. 1. 17. *Their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung.* Hence he translates, *These things are to me as the sickness of my flesh*; that is, the things which my soul refused to touch, are now brought very near, and laid close upon me, as sickness or sores cleave unto, and are in the flesh, or they trouble me as much as the sickness of my flesh.

The right application of these words, is as difficult as the translation of them; there are divers wayes to make out the sence; I shall reduce them unto two: Either, First, That all these unsavoury, tasteless, sorrowful meats which *Job* speaks of, are but the shadows of his afflictions and troubles, received from the hand of God. Or, Secondly, That they are shadows of the councels and reproofs, which he had received from the mouth of his friends.

First, Some refer and apply all to the troubles which were upon *Job*: and so these words are a fuller justification of himself, that he had great cause to complain, because his grass and fodder, that is, comforts sutable to mans nature (as they to a beasts) were taken from him, and he was now fed and dieted with unsavoury meat, meat without salt, the white of an egg, distastful, grievous afflictions, very gall and wormwood; *The things which heretofore my soul refused to touch, are as my meat*; I am put (as it were) to feed upon that, which I would not willingly come near: poverty and soars, sorrows and worms are my companions, and my cates.

Nauseabam ego quondã ad cujusmodi ærumnas movebant mihi stomachũ squalor paupertas, vilior cibus ulcera, sanies, vermes nunc vero his ipsis ab unde pascor. Pined.

From that sence Note, *What at one time we loath, at another time may be our diet.*

We have a saying, *What is one mans meat, is another mans poyson*; but it may fall out to the same man, that what he disgusted and avoided as poison, he shall be constrained to receive for his meat and portion, *Lam.* 4. 5. *They that did feed delicately, are desolate in the streets; they that were brought up in scarlet, embrace dunghils?* When those gallants were in scarlet, how did their souls loath to touch a dunghil? they loathed to touch it with their feet, but now they must hug it in their armes, and lay it in their bosoms; *they embrace dunghils.* How many have been brought from faring deliciously, from wearing purple and fine linnen every day, to scraps and rags, to hunger and nakedness every day. The Lord threatens the nice delicate dames of *Jerusalem* with such things, as their proud spirits and haughty souls refused to touch, *Isa.* 3. 24. *It shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell, there shall be a stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of well set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding with sackcloath; and burning instead of beauty.* Take heed of coyness and curiosity: many a dainty tooth hath been taught by hunger, to knaw bones, and wait for a crust of bread.

Secondly Observe, *That which makes afflictions most grievous to us, is the unsutableness of our spirits to afflictions: Delight and content, consist in sutableness of the object to our affections and desires.*

God offers spiritual food to the natural man, but his soul refuses to touch it: he loaths Angels food, and is weary of the Manna of the Word; the precious Gospel, the bread of life, is an affliction to him, because his heart is unsutable to it; how will such be afflicted at the last, when they find, *That*, as their sorrowful meat for ever, which their souls will for ever refuse to touch. They, who loath Christ and his wayes, shall find nothing in the end to feed upon, but what is most contrary to their appetite, even fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; these shall be the portion of their cups, and the meat in their dish for ever. How sorrowful will that meal be?

But we may rather apply all to the words of *Eliphaz*, in the two former Chapters: and *Job*'s ready submission in the first and second Chapters, to the afflicting hand of God, argues for him, that afflictions, how grievous soever, were not the things which his soul refused to touch. And the apprehension of a learned Interpreter satisfies me in it; *This sence* (saith he) *is too low for a man afflicted with troubles far above these, which concern'd his outward man.* The Septuagint are expresly for this opinion, who translate those words, *Is there any taste in the white of an Egg?* thus, *Is there any taste in vain words?* they are so far off the judgment that these unsavoury things, the things which *Job*'s soul refused to touch, and the white of the Egg, in the Text, are all meant of vain words, that they put it into the very Text. It is a usual boldness with them, and a very unwarrantable one, to vary so from the words of the Original, and make their gloss the Text; but it shews us, how strongly they were engaged to that sence: Most of the Greek Writers concur with them in it, *viz.* that *Job* aims at the counsels and speeches of *Eliphaz*, which wanted the

Sensus humilior est, quã hominẽ deceat gravioribus malis exagitatum. Pined.

οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔστι γεῦμα ἐν ἐμπλαστῳ κακοῖς.

the ſeaſoning of wiſdom and prudence, yea of truth and ſoundneſs, as applyed to the ſpirit of ſo ſick a man, as *Job* was.

And beſides, many Modern writers are clear in the ſame apprehenſion, giving the ſum of all plainly, to this effect, as the mind of *Job* in thoſe fore-going paſſages; *I would not have complained of the things which ye have ſpoken, if they had been meat for me, but I aſſure you, your counſels are not nouriſhing: I can find no food, much leſs any ſweetneſs or fatneſs in them; your counſels want the due ſeaſoning of wiſdom, and the right temperament of holy zeal: They are either unſavoury, or taſteleſs, ſapleſs ſtuff; ſuch, as I am ſo far from being refreſhed with, that indeed they are a burden to me; and the remedy you preſcribe me, is worſe then my diſeaſe. How can you expect, that I ſhould ſubmit or ſubſcribe to what you have ſpoken, or that I ſhould reſt and acquieſs in your reproofs or advice, ſeeing I aſſure you, they are not for me, they hit my ſtate or ſpirit no more, then unſavoury meat doth my pallate; or that which I abhor to touch, can pleaſe my taſte. And therefore, with my ſoul, I refuſe and reject what you have ſpoken; and you have not only not ſatisfied me all this while, but you have vext or tyred me, and in ſtead of mitigating my ſorrows, have added to them.*

Tantũ abeſt ut ſermonibus veſtris recreor, aut eorum condimento reficiatur vita mea, ut è contra cibũ ipſum mihi amariorem vitamq; injucundiorem reddunt. Jun.

Abſit ut vir ſanctus, aliquando amicorum ſuorũ dicta deſpexerit, qui & humilis ſervus fuerit. Greg.

But an objection ariſes againſt this; and one of the Ancients is very angry with thoſe, who make this application to the counſels of *Eliphaz*, as if *Job* had rejected them as unfit food, and unſavoury meat. *Let no man* (ſaith he) *think that this holy man deſpiſed the counſel of his friend, who himſelf was humble, as a ſervant.*

To which I anſwer, That the counſels of *Eliphaz*, are to be conſidered, either in the doctrine, or in the uſe. His counſels, in the doctrine of them, were good and ſavoury, he ſpake wholſom food; but as to *Job's* caſe, he was quite miſtaken in their uſe, and ſo in ſtead of eaſing, troubled him. A Phyſician may give his ſick Patient, that which is good in it ſelf, very cordial and ſoveraign, and yet it may kill him in ſtead of curing him, if it be not proper for his body, and his diſeaſe. Thus it is alſo in giving counſel: what we ſpeak, muſt be fitted to the perſon, and to the ſeaſon; there are many good counſels, of which we may ſay, as *Huſhai* did of *Achitophels* ill ones, 2 *Sam.* 17. 7. *They are not good at this time.* That which is good counſel to a man at one time, may be, or might have been, ill, to the ſame man at another. *I have many things to ſay*, ſaith Chriſt, *but ye cannot bear them now*, Joh. 16. 12. And that which one man can bear, another cannot at the ſame time. And therefore the Apoſtle *was made all things to all men*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 2. And accounted himſelf debtor, both to the wiſe, and to the fooliſh, to the learned and unlearned, to the weak, and to the ſtrong; that is, he looked upon it as his duty, to ſpeak truths, ſuiting the ſtate of every degree and ſort of men; which is the meaning of his rule to all the diſpenſers of holy myſteries, that they *divide the word aright*: The rightneſs reſpects, not only, or not ſo much the ſubject or word divided, as the object, or perſons to whom the diviſion is to be made, in giving every one his portion, or food convenient for him. One man may ſurfet with that which another digeſts kindly; what fattens a ſecond, may ſicken or ſtarve a third. This plainly is the meaning of *Job*; what *Eliphaz* had ſaid was not ſavoury food for him, nor dreſt for one in his condition: His ſoul did even refuſe to touch, what he ſpake, becauſe his ſoul was not of that temper, for which *Eliphaz* had fitted his ſpeech; he was a Phyſician of no value to him, becauſe he brought a wrong potion, and miſtook his caſe; his was good ſearching Phyſick for the foul ſtomach, and groſs ſpirit of a hypocrite: but it is enough to kill the heart of *an upright-heart*, when God ſeems angry with him, and appears againſt him, when he is ſmitten without, and ſmitten within, by ſore afflictions of mind and body; then for his comforters to ſmite him with their tongues, to lay at him with hard words, and wound him with their unreaſonable jealouſies, then for his councellours and helpers to be angry with, and oppoſite againſt him too.

2 Tim. 2. 15

Obſerve hence, That, *not only words untrue, but words miſapplied, are unſavoury, and may be dangerous.*

They are no food, and they may be poyſon: *Prudence in applying, is the ſalt and ſeaſoning of what is ſpoken.* As a word ſpoken in the right ſeaſon is precious, and upon the wheele, ſo is a word right placed: When that faithful Prophet (*Ezek.* 13.) reproves the falſe prophets, he ſaith, *They daubed with untempered morter*, ver. 10. It is the word of the Text: and why was theirs untempered morter? even, becauſe they applied the word of God wrong. *They made ſad the hearts of thoſe, whom God would have refreſhed; and they cheared the ſpirits of thoſe, whom God would have ſadned; they ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not die, and ſave the ſouls alive that ſhould not live.* This was untempered morter: The Apoſtle adviſes all, *Col* 4. 6. *Let your ſpeech be alwayes with grace, ſeaſoned with ſalt.* And ſpeech muſt be ſeaſoned, not only with the ſalt of truth, but with the ſalt of wiſdom and diſcretion: and therefore the Apoſtle adds, *that ye may know how to anſwer every one*; that is, that you may give every man an anſwer, fitting his caſe, and the preſent conſtitution of his ſpirit. *Of ſome have compaſſion* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Jude ver.* 22.) *making a difference, and others ſave with fear.* This ſhews the holy skill of managing the word of God, when we make a difference of our patients, by different medicines, and not ſerve all out of the ſame box. Hence our Lord calleth thoſe great Teachers of the Goſpel, and Diſpenſers of his Oracles, *Light and Salt*; *Ye are the Light of the world, and ye are the Salt of the earth*; becauſe they were to ſpeak ſavoury things to every perſon, to every palate, as well as to enlighten them with knowledge, and prevent or cure the corruption of their manners, and keep their lives ſweet. As there is an unſavourineſs in perſons, when they are miſ-imployed; ſo there is an unſavourineſs in ſpeeches, when they are miſ-applied. The Hiſtory of the Church, ſpeaks of one *Eccebolius*, who changed religion ſo oft, and was ſo unſetled, that at laſt he caſt himſelf down at the Congregation door, and ſaid, *Trample upon me, for I am unſavoury ſalt.* And that word (though in it ſelf a truth) which is unſeaſonably delivered, or unduly plac'd, may be caſt at the doors of the Congregation, to be *trampled on, for* (in this ſence) *it is unſavoury ſalt*: Such corrupt the word, and theirs is but corrupt communication, ſuch as cannot miniſter grace unto the hearers, and often grieves the Holy Spirit of God. Theſe work-men, for their ill diviſion of the word of God, have reaſon enough to be aſhamed; and the Lord may juſtly reprove them, as he did *Job's* friends, *Chap.* 42. 7. *Ye have not ſpoken of me* (nor of my wayes) *the thing that is right.*

Conculcate me ſalem inſpidum. Niceph.

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

O that I might have my requeſt! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!
Even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let looſe his hand and cut me off.
Then ſhould I yet have comfort, yea, I would harden my ſelf in ſorrow; let him not ſpare, for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.

IN the former part of this Chapter, we have had *Job* defending his former complaint of life, and his deſire of death. In this Context, from the 8. *verſ.* unto the end of the 12. he reneweth and re-inforceth that deſire. He not only maintains and juſtifies what he had done, but doth it again; begging for death as heartily and importunately, as he did in *Chap.* 3. *O that I might have my requeſt! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for.*

The requeſt it ſelf, is laid down in *verſ.* 8, 9. and the reaſons ſtrengthning it, in *verſ.* 10, 11, & 12. So theſe 5. verſes are reduceable to theſe two heads.

Firſt, The renewing of his deſire to die.

Secondly, An inlargement of reaſons confirming that deſire.

O that I might have my requeſt!

It is ſuch a vehement deſire, and ſo expreſt, as *David's* was, 2 *Sam.* 23. 15. *And* David *longed, and ſaid, O that one would give me drink of the water of the well of* Bethlem, *which is by the gate.* *David* did not more long to taſte a cup of that water, then *Job* did to taſte the cup of death.

The ſum and ſcope of *Job's* thoughts in this paſſage, may be conceived thus. He would aſſure his friends, that his faith was firm, and his comforts flowing from it, very ſweet; that, it was not impatience under the troubles of this

this life, but aſſurance of the comforts of the next; which cauſed him ſo often to call for death. That, theſe comforts cauſed his heart to triumph and glory in the very approaches of the moſt painful death, and made him deſpiſe, and lightly to eſteem all the hopes of life. That, he was gone further then the motives which *Eliphaz* uſed, from the hopes of a reſtitution to temporal happineſs: he now was pitcht upon, and lodg'd in the thoughts of eternal happineſs. That, he call'd for death, not, as that, with which he had made any Covenant, or was come to any agreement with; but only, as that, which would bring him to *his deſired home*, *The one Thing he deſired.* That his comforts had not their foundation in a grave: where *all things are forgotten*, but in the Covenant of God, *who remembers mercy for ever*; and therefore it ſhould not trouble him, to die, before he was reſtored to health, riches and honour (which his friends propoſed to him) as a great argument of comfort and of patience. For in death he ſhould have riches and glory; and hence it was, that he had rather endure the extreameſt pains of death, then ſtay to receive any outward comforts in this life. His deſires to be diſſolved, were not ſo much, from the ſence of his preſent pain (for he would harden himſelf to endure, yet more) as from the apprehenſion of future joy; this, was not a phanſie or a dream, but he had good proof, and real evidence of it in the whole courſe of his life, which had been as a continued acting of the word of God, and ſo a fitting him for neareſt communion with God. This in general.

The letter of the Hebrew runneth thus, *Who would give me, that my requeſt, or that my petition might come?* He had ſent up a requeſt, a prayer, a prayer for death, and he thought his prayer too long gone, upon that meſſage; Prayer was not quick enough in its return from Heaven, every hour was a year till he heard of it; therefore (ſaith he) *O that ſome body would give me, that my requeſt might come back again unto me:* The word whereby he expreſſes his requeſt, notes a very ſtrong deſire, a ſtrong cry, a ſtrong prayer; implying, that *Job* had ſent up mighty requeſts, or ſtrong cries about it. As it is ſaid of our *Lord Chriſt*, Heb. 5. *That in the dayes of his fleſh, he ſent up ſtrong cries unto God, who was able to deliver him*; Chriſt ſent up ſtrong cries to be delivered from death, and *Job* ſent up ſtrong cries for death. A word of the ſame root, ſignifies the grave; the grave is a craving, a begging thing; the grave is never ſatisfied, as it is in the *Proverbs*; *The grave ſaith not, it is enough*: And the grave is therefore expreſt by a word that ſignifies to deſire, or requeſt, or to ask a thing importunately; becauſe the grave, hath a mouth, as it were, continually open to ask, and beg, and cry out for more morſels, it conſumeth all, and is never full; ſuch a deſire *Job* put forth for death.

ת֣וֹא

And that God would grant me the thing that I long for.

It is a repetition of the ſame deſire, in other words. What it is to *long*, hath been opened in *Chap.* 3. *verſ.* 21. *Who long for death*: Here *Job* reneweth the ſame ſuit again, *O that I might have the thing that I long for*, or the thing which I expect with great expectation and vehemency of affection! I ſhall not ſtay upon it: But only give you the general ſence a little varied.

In this paſſage, *Job* ſhews himſelf aſſured, that his comforts ſhould not end, though his life ended, before he was reſtored to earthly comforts. And he thus ſeems to anſwer *Eliphaz*, who had made large promiſes of outward felicity. *I am not ſtayed at all in my deſire to die, becauſe I may poſſibly live in greater worldly honour and fulneſs, then ever I enjoyed: All that is in the creature, is below my longing, I have not a ſweet tooth after worldly dainties: I ſhall not envy any, who out-live me to enjoy them; let them divide my portion, whatſoever it may be, among them alſo: The thing which I long for, is death (not for it ſelf) but as that, which will bring me to the laſt of my ill dayes, and the firſt of my beſt.* *Job*'s thoughts were in a higher form then his friends: They thought a golden offer of riches, would have made him agogg to live. But *Job*'s heart lived above theſe, even upon the riches of eternal life: To enjoy which, he even longs for temporal deſtruction, and cutting off.

Job expectationem proximam facit mortē tanquam eā, quæ patiendi ultimam & quietis ac fœlicitatis primam repræſentet lineam.

I have ſpoken at large in *Chap.* 3. concerning the lawfulneſs of ſuch a requeſt, and how far *Job* might be approved in it; therefore I need not diſcuſs it here.

Only Obſerve in general, That, *A praying ſoul, is an expecting ſoul.*

Job had prayed, and prayed earneſtly, and though it was but a prayer to die, yet he lived in the expectation of an anſwer. When prayer is ſent up unto God, then the ſoul looks for its return. Prayer is as ſeed ſown: After this ſpiritual husbandry, the ſoul waits for the precious fruits of Heaven. *Pſal.* 62. 1. *My ſoul waiteth upon God*; and (*Pſal.* 85. 8.) *I will hearken what the Lord God will ſay*; *Job* had ſent up his requeſt, and now he was hearkning for an anſwer, *O that I might have the thing I look for! Habbakkuk* in the ſecond of that Prophecy, *verſ.* 1. having prayed about the great concernments of thoſe times, reſolves, *I will ſtand upon my watch, and ſet me upon the Tower, and will watch to ſee, what he will ſay unto me.* They who ſend Embaſſadors to forraign Princes, wait for a return. Thus it is with the ſoul, having put up its requeſt and ſent au Embaſſie to God.

Obſerve Secondly, *Anſwer of our prayer is the grant of God.*

Nothing ſtands between us and our deſires, but his will. If he ſign our Petition, no creature can hinder us of our expectation.

Obſerve Thirdly, *God often keeps the Petitions of his ſervants, by him unanſwered.*

Obſerve Fourthly, *The return of prayer is the ſouls ſolace and ſatisfaction.*

As cold water to a thirſty ſoul, ſo is good news from that far countrey, Prov. 25. 25. *O that my requeſt might come, and O that I might have the thing that I long for!*

Would you know what his requeſt was? He explains that in *verſ.* 9. And a man would wonder, that one ſhould be ſo very earneſt to have ſuch a requeſt. Many have prayed to God to ſave and deliver them, but how unnatural doth this prayer ſeem, to be cut off and deſtroyed? Yet the thing which *Job* doth more then pray for, long for, is this, *That it would pleaſe God to deſtroy him, and that he would let looſe his hand and cut him off.*

That it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me.

Some read, *that he who hath begun, would make an end in deſtroying of me*; For the word ſignifies both to be willing to do a thing, and likewiſe to begin to do a thing; therefore they make out the ſence thus, *That he who hath begun thus to deſtroy me, to tear and conſume me, would finiſh his work, and make an end of me*; As if *Job* had ſaid, I am already near unto deſtruction, a borderer upon the grave. God hath begun to deſtroy me, I would have him to go on and perfect that work. As in works of mercy, *Deut.* 32. 4. *He is the Rock, and his work is perfect.* When he begins to deliver, he will make an end. So likewiſe when he begins to deſtroy, he can make an end too; *Job* deſires, that his afflictions might be perfected, to the deſtruction of his dying body, and that mercy might begin in the triumph of his ſoul.

אבא *Significat libere velle, inchoare, acquieſcere in re quapiā eamq; totā voluntate ampleƈti*

But rather, take it in the other ſence, as we render it, *To be willing to do a thing*; *Even that it would pleaſe God, or, even that God would be willing to deſtroy me*: As if he had ſaid, *I find as it were a kind of unwillingneſs in God, to make an end of me, his bowels ſeem to yern over me, he ſeems yet to be upon the diſpute, whether to cut me quite off, or no: now I even deſire that God would lay aſide that his tenderneſs and compaſſion, that he would determine and reſolve to deſtroy me, that he would acquieſce, and fully reſt ſatisfied in that reſolution.*

רכא *Contulit, contrivit, comminuit.*

The word here uſed, *to deſtroy*, notes to beat a thing to powder, or to beat a thing to pieces, *Pſal.* 143. 3. *He hath ſmitten my life down to the ground*, that is, he hath beaten me as it were to dirt. So *Job* here, I would have the Lord even beat me to duſt or dirt. The word is uſed for contrition of ſpirit, *Iſa.* 57. 15. *I dwell with him that is of an humble heart, and of a contrite ſpirit*; that is, with him, that hath a ſpirit beaten to powder, or all to pieces, as any hard thing is with a hammer or peſtle; *A hard heart is a heart all in a lump, condenſate, and cloſed together*; but an humble, a repenting heart, is a heart beaten ſmall and ground to powder; Thus *Job* deſires here, *O that it would pleaſe God to beat my life down to duſt, and break me all to ſhatters!*

shatters! that he would *crush me* (as *Eliphaz* spake in *Chap.* 4. *vers.* 19.) *as a Moth.*

Observe then in how sad a contrition, *Job* was, who not only makes, but renews, such a request, as this. Some upon a sudden pang, wish to die, and hastily call for death; yet are willing it should take it's own time, and come leisurely: and as soon as death appears, they are crying as hard for life. *It is rare for any mans second thoughts, to keep up, to such desires.* *Job* spake once, and he speaks it over again; O that I might die! yea, he wooes destruction, and is an importunate suiter for the grave. *How sad is a mans outward condition, when he hath only this complaint left, that he cannot die? when a man hath no help, but in destruction, or healing, but in a deeper wound?* *Job* in this appears like a man (that is to be pressed to death) lying under a heavy weight, yet the weight not heavy enough to crush him to death, he cryes out, *more weight, more weight.* It will be a kindness to crush out my breath and bowels; the greatest favour I expect in this world, is, but to have more weight laid upon them, that I may die. Some of the Martyrs, when the fire was scant, have cried out, *more fire.* The cruellest flame was their friend, and the more the fire raged, the more merciful it was to them. The Book of our Martyrs reports of *reverend Latimer*, that when he was giving witness to the truth, and glorifying the Name of Christ in the fire; he cried out, *Oh, I cannot burn!* the fire came not fast enough upon him. Such, this expression of *Job* seems to be, *Oh, I cannot die, I cannot die, I cannot be destroyed, I cannot perish yet; O that the hand of God would lay more weight upon me, that I might die!* He seems to ask such a curtesie, as that *Amalekite* said, King *Saul* craved of him, 2 *Sam.* 1. 9. *Stand I pray thee upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.* This is the favour, the only favour, that remains for me. I am capable of no worldly comfort, but a quicker dispatch out of the world.

And that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off.

נתר *Loco movit, evulsit, excussit.*

Here is the same Petition, though other language, *That he would let loose his hand.* That's an elegant expression; the word signifies to loose the bond, that a man may have use of his hands or feet: As prisoners are loosed, *Psal.* 146. 7. *The Lord looseth the prisoners:* So that, it is, as if *Job* had said, *Lord, thou hast been smiting and wounding me, but I see thou hast not given thy hand the full scope, thy hand is as it were bound or tied behind thee:* As you know, a man that hath great advantage of another, or is much his overmatch, will say to him, I will fight with thee with my hand tied behind me. The truth is, God is able to contend with all the creatures, with his hand bound behind him, with his hands fast bound, that is without putting forth the least part (to speak on) of his power; he can overcome with speaking: *Job* observing here that God contended with him (as it were) with his hands bound or tied up, desires now, that, God would give himself full scope, and put out his strength, and not strike, as if his hand were a prisoner. And he may have a respect in speaking thus to the restraint or binding up of Satans power; *In this work Satan was Gods hand*; God put power into the hand of Satan, *All that he hath, is in thy power, or in thy hand, Chap.* 1. 12. First, God loosned Satans hand, to take away his estate. Next, he let loose his hand a little further, to the afflicting of his body; but saith God, spare his life; there he bound up his hand again. Now *Job* alluding (probably) to that restraint; Lord (saith he) loosen thy hand a third time, do not only loosen it, to take away my estate, to take away my health and strength; but O that thou wouldst loosen it, to take my life too! enlarge I pray thee, Satans Commission, who is thy hand, let it quite loose, that he may make an end of me, and cut me off.

Transfatio ab his qui manū vinctam habent.

Non se gerat erga me, instat hominis colligatam habentis manum.

בצע *Inexplebilē cupiditatem atq; immanem aviditatem vulnerandi, & humani sanguinis perfundendi significat.*

The word here used to *cut-off*, comes up to heighten *Job*'s sence still, signifying to cut off, with an unsatiable appetite of revenge; as if he should say, *cut me off, spare me not*, spare not my blood; do it, as they who are most greedy of blood, and thirst most vehemently for revenge. Let Satan that blood-sucker, come with as great revenge (thy hand being loosened from restraining his) as ever the greatest Tyrant hastned with, to suck the blood of innocents; *Let him greedily cut me off*, even as it were to have some great gain, or get some rich booty by my blood; *What profit is there in my blood?* (saith *David*, *Psal.* 30. 9.) Let him make what profit he can of my blood, saith *Job*. The word signifies to covet or desire gain; and it notes the worst kind of covetousness, covetousness of filthy lucre, or covetousness of bloody lucre. Hence *Job* saith, *Let God cut me off*, as if he were to have profit, or raise himself a revenew out of my blood; or let Satan come upon me, and take his peny-worths out of my blood; let him murder me, as if he were to find all manner of treasure in my bowels, and could thence fill and adorn all his chambers of darkness with spoyl. We may Note from hence,

Avidè me absumat, quasi ex med morte ingens lucrū reportaturus Pined.

First, That, *God dispenceth and acteth his power as he pleaseth.*

He looseth his hand gradually, as to him seemeth good. First, To the estate, then to the body, and when he will, he can reach the life.

Secondly Observe, *If God put out his power, no creature can stand before it.*

If God do but let loose his hand, man is cut off presently; it is but as a little twig, or as grass before the sithe, or before a sword, there is no more in it. As when *God openeth the hand of his mercy, he satisfieth the desire of every living thing*, Psal. 145. 2. *So when God looseth the hand of his judgments, he takes away the life and comforts of every living thing.* God hath a hand full of blessings and mercies; if he please but to open that hand, all things are filled with comfort: God hath another hand full of judgments and afflictions; if he open or loosen that, all creatures fall before him, like a withered leaf. The reason why the enemies of God live and are mighty, is, because God doth not fully loosen his hand against them: if he would but unprison his power, and let out his hand, he can with ease destroy, and cut them off in a moment. Therefore the Prophet prayes but for this one thing, *Psal.* 74. 11. *That God would pluck his hand out of his bosom; Why with-draweſt thou thy hand, even thy right hand? pluck it out of thy bosom:* Lord (saith he) this is the reason, why enemies yet prevail, thy hand is tied up; that is, thine own act hath tied up thy hand, thy will stayes thy power, or thy power is hid in thy will. *Gods power kept in by his will, is his hand in his bosom.* Among men, a hand in the bosom, is the emblem of sloth, *Prov.* 19. 24. Man hides his hand in his bosom, because he will not be at the pains to work: God is said to hide his hand in his bosom, when it is not his will and pleasure to work; therefore he saith, Lord, if thou wouldst but let loose, and put out thy hand, all mine enemies shall be consumed. And that's the reason, why there are such various dispensations of providence in these times; when the enemy prevails, God with-draweth his hand, he keepeth his hand in his bosom. And when at any time, his servants have victory, it is, because his hand hath liberty. If God holds his hand, men stretch forth theirs in vain.

Thirdly Observe, *Assurance of a better life will carry the soul with joy through the sorrows and bitterest pains of death.*

It was not any Stoical apathy, or ignorant regardlesness of life, which raised the heart of *Job* to these desires. He did not invite his end, like a *Roman*, or a Philosopher, or by the height and gallantry of natural courage, set the world at nought, and bid defiance to destruction: But he had laid up a good foundation against this day; upon this he builds his confidence. He knew, as *Paul*, that he had Christ, while he lived, and should have gain, when he dyed. The joy which was set before him, made him over-look the cross, which was before him. So much of his request, now he tells us the consequence, or effect, it would have upon him, in case it were granted.

Vers. 10. **Then should I yet have comfort, yea, I would harden my self in sorrow; Let him not spare, for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One.**

Then should I yet have comfort.] If I had but this suit granted, I were refreshed, notwithstanding all my sorrows, the very hope of death would revive me. Nothing doth so much refresh the soul, as the hearing of a prayer, and the grant

grant of a desire; *When desire cometh, it is as a tree of life,* (saith *Solomon*) therefore *Job* might well say, when my longing comes, I shall have comfort; and lest any should think, that as *David* would not drink the water, he so longed for, when it was brought unto him; so, when the cup of death should be brought to *Job*, he might put it off somewhat upon those terms, which *David* did, and say, I will not drink it, for it is my blood, my death; therefore he adds,

Yea, I would harden my self in sorrow.

As if he had said, though some call hastily for death, and repent with as much haste, when death comes, yet not I, *I would harden my self*, &c.

חמר *significat, 1. Solidare & corroborare. 2. Calefacere, urere. 3. Orare, suppliciter precari.*

The Hebrew (*to harden*) hath a threefold signification among the *Jewish* Writers, though it be used but this once only in all the Scripture. And hence there is a threefold interpretation of these words, I would harden my self in sorrow. It signifies,

1. To pray or to beseech.
2. To heat or to warm; yea, to scorch and to burn.
3. To harden or to strengthen; strengthning is hardning in a Metaphor.

According to the first sense, the Text is rendred thus, *Then should I yet have comfort; yea, I would pray in my sorrow*, that is, I would pray yet more for an encrease of my sorrow, that I might be cut off: If I had any hope, that my request should be granted, this hope would quicken my desire, and I would pray yet more, that I might obtain it.

Secondly, As the word signifies to warm or to heat, the sence is given thus, *Then should I have comfort, yea, I would warm my self in my sorrow.* And so it refers to those refreshings, which his languishing soul, his soul chilled, as it were, with sickness and sorrows should receive, upon the news of approaching death. This news (saith he) would be as warm cloaths to me, it would fetch me again, out of my fainting, to hear of dying. But, besides a warming or a refreshing heat, the word also notes scorching, burning heat: Mr. *Broughton* takes that signification of the word; I shall touch that, and his sence upon it, by and by.

Hac spe certissima moriendi incalescerem, reficillarer.

We translate according to the third usage of the word. *I would harden my self*; and so the construction is very fair, *I should yet have comfort; yea, I should harden my self in sorrow*, that is, I would now set my self to endure the greatest sorrows and afflictions which would come upon me, for the destroying and cutting off the thred of my life. And so, he seems in these words, to prevent an objection before hinted; Why *Job*, dost thou desire to be cut off, and to be destroyed? thou hast more pain upon thee already then thou art able to bear; thou criest out of what thou hast; thou must think, when death comes, thy wound will be deeper, and thy pain sharper: *Job* seems to answer, I have considered that before, I know there will be a hard brunt at parting; I prepare for it, and I am thus resolved, *I would harden my self in sorrow*; that is, I would set my self to bear the pangs and agonies of death, if I had but this hope, that my misery were near expiring. The Apostle useth that phrase (2 *Tim.* 2. 3.) in his advices to young *Timothy*, *Thou as a good Souldier of Jesus Christ, endure hardness, or bear evil.* As if he had said, thou dost not know, what hardship thou shalt be put unto in thy Ministry; I, who am a Veterane, an old beaten (though never conquered) souldier, in this warfare of Christ, have been put to much hardship in my time; and from my own experience I advise thee, to enure thy self to hardship, to lie hard, to fare hard, to work hard, to hear hard words, and receive hard usage. A tender spirit, and a delicate body, which must have *warm*, and *soft*, and *fine*, and *sweet* continually, is unfit for the warfare of the Gospel. Such a sence is here, I know I must endure more then now I do, but I would harden my self against that time, and resolve to endure it; let come what could come, I am resolved, and have forethought the worst.

Further, For the clearing of these words, it is considerable, that some learned Interpreters put the two middle expressions into a *Parenthesis*, and read the whole thus; *I should have comfort, (though I should scorch with pain, and though God should not spare me) for I have not concealed the words of the holy One.* One thus; *This yet is my comfort, even while I scorch with pain, and God doth not spare me, that I have not concealed the words of the holy one.* Mr. *Broughton* (as I touched before) comes near this sence and translation. So *I should yet find comfort, though I parch in pain, when he would not spare; for I kept not close the words of the most Holy.* That is, when the long expected hour of my death shall come, though God, to take away my life, should heat the furnace of my affliction seven times hotter then hitherto, so that I must parch in pain, yet, I should have comfort. Or, take it in Mr. *Broughton's* own gloss, *In all these pangs, if God would make an end of me, it should be my comfort, and I would take courage in my sickness, to bear it, by my joy, that I should die, because I professed the Religion of God.* So that the strength of *Job*, to bear the hand of God, was from the conscience of his former integrity, in doing the will, and maintaining the truth of God.

Junius.

Let him not spare.

Job having taken up this hope, that he should have comfort; and this resolution, that he would harden himself in sorrow, speaks now as if he were at a point; let God do what he pleaseth, let him not spare; as if he had said, what course soever the Lord shall see good to take for the cutting me off, I am content he should go on with it, *Let him not spare.* The word signifies, to indulge or shew mercy to him, whom, by all right, a man might justly destroy, (Ezek. 5. 11.) *Because thou hast done thus and thus*, saith God, *therefore will I also diminish thee, neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity: Job* seems to invite, what God threatens others; *Let him not spare, let him not have any pity, let him take his full swinge in destroying of me.*

חמל *Pepercit, clementia usus fuit.*

In this sence it is said, Rom. 8. 32. *That God spared not his own son*; that is, he abated not any thing which Justice could inflict; Christ therefore saves to the uttermost, because he suffered to the uttermost. He was not spared one blow, one drop, one sigh, one sorrow, one shame, one circumstance of all, or any one of these, which Justice could demand, as a satisfaction for mans sin. Yea, though (in a sence) he cried to his Father, that he might be spared, yet he was not.

There is a threefold mercy in God. There is a preventing mercy, mercy that steps between us and trouble; and there is a delivering mercy, mercy that takes us out of the hand of trouble: There is a third kind of mercy, coming in the middle of these two, and that is called sparing mercy; and that is twofold: First, Sparing for the time, when God delayes and stayes long ere he strike. Secondly, Sparing for the degree; when the Lord moderates and mitigates, abates and qualifies our sufferings, not letting them fall so heavy upon us as they might: This sparing mercy stands (I say) in the middle of the two former; it is not so much as preventing mercy, stopping trouble that it come not; neither is it so much as delivering mercy, removing it, when it is come. Now, *Job* did not only, not ask delivering mercy, that he asked not sparing mercy; let him not spare me in the time, let him not delay or lose time, let him come as soon as he will; and let him not spare me in the degree and measure; let him strike me as hard, and lay his hand as heavily upon me as he will. *David* (Psal. 39. 13.) makes this his request; *O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more*; That is, abate and mitigate my sufferings, that I die not; but *Job* desireth not to be spared at all. He rather saith, take away all my strength, that I may go hence, and be seen no more. Hence observe,

That, *The hope troubles will end, comforteth, yea, hardneth in bearing present troubles.*

Then will I comfort my self, then will I harden my self, let him not spare, if I may have my request, and die. The sharpest sting of trouble is, that it is endless: and that it is next to that, when we cannot look to the end of it, nor see any issue or way out of it. That which discourages the damned in bearing their sorrows, and softens both their flesh and spirit, to receive home to the head every arrow of wrath, and dart of vengeance, is, they see no end, and are assured there will be none. They know, they cannot be cut off, and therefore they cannot harden themselves to sorrow; no, that very consideration, makes their hearts,

which

which have been hardnend to commit sin, tender to receive punishment, and exactly sensible of their pains; could they see, that at last they should be cut off, even they, would be hardened to bear the torments of hell; in the mean time, though that time should be very long, yea, as long as time can be, only not endless. The pain it self doth not afflict so much, as the thought that they shall be afflicted for ever. As the assurance that the glory of heaven shall never end, infinitely sweetens it; so the assurance that the pains of Hell shall never end, infinitely sharpens them: And not to see the ending of worldly troubles near, puts us further off from comfort, then the bearing of those troubles; therefore, saith *Job*, if I might be assured, that God would cut me off, I would harden my self in sorrow, and let not God spare; I would not desire him to hold his hand, to mitigate or abate my pains *. Yea, I would account every blow an embrace, and every wound a reward.

* Et hæc mihi merces esset ejus seu pro ea, quod non occultavi unquam, sed diligentissimè observavi & quam commendatissima habui verba Domini, Opin. no nullorum Hebræorum apud Merc.

For not concealing the words of the holy One.

In these words, *Job* gives the reason, or an account of his renewed prayer and request to die. As the desire of *Job* was strong and passionate, so likewise it was well-grounded. He had a very high reason, an excellent ground, upon which he bottom'd this request to die: His reason was spiritual, and therefore strong. He begs to be delivered from the troubles of his life, though by a painful death, because he was clear in himself, that he had led a blameless life. That which set him above the pains of bodily death, was the tranquility of his spirit in this testimony of his conscience. *I have not concealed the words of the holy One.* As if he had said, *You may wonder why I should be so forward and ready to die, why I seem so greedy after the grave, why I am such an importunate suiter for my dissolution; the account I give you, is this, I have the testimony of a good conscience within me, notwithstanding all the troubles which are upon me, notwithstanding all your harsh, unfriendly accusations, jealousies and suspitions of me, yet my own breast is my friend, my heart speaks me fair, and gives me good words, even these; it tells me that I have not concealed the words of the holy One, that I have not smothered any light he hath sent me; that I have not refused any counsel he hath given me; that I have not wilfully departed from any rule he hath prescribed me; that I have been faithful to God, to his Cause, and to his Truth; that I have declared his will, and spoken his mind to others; that I have not hidden any thing that he hath given me in charge to declare, or committed to my trust; the word of God hath appeared in my life, and therefore I am not afraid; yea, I have boldness to die, and to appear before God.*

Mirum est ut mihi non parcat, quæ illius verba non celarim, neq; dissimulaverim. Aben Ez.

כחד Significat abscondere, ne videatur vel audiatur ne amplius appareat.

I have not concealed.] The word signifieth to hide a thing, so as it be neither heard or seen.

But may we not conceal the words of the most High? It is said of *Mary*, that *she hid the words of Christ in her heart*; and of *David*, that *he hid the Commandments of God in his heart*, Psal. 119. 11. Did not the *wise Merchant hide the treasure*, namely, Gospel-truth (*Mat.* 13. 44.) *as soon as he had found it?* It should seem all these concealed the word of God; how then is it that *Job* improves this, as a special point of comfort, that he had not *concealed the words of the holy One?*

There is a double hiding or concealment of the truth. There is first, a hiding from danger. Secondly, a hiding from use. There is a hiding to keep a thing safe, that others shall not take it from us; and there is a hiding to keep a thing close, that others may not take the benefit of it, with us. When it is said that *Mary* and *David*, and the wise Merchant hid the word of God, it was, lest they themselves should lose it, lest any should deprive them of it, they hid it from danger; they laid it up as a treasure in their hearts; but they did not hide it from the knowledge, or use of others: and that is it which *Job* affirms of himself; *I have not concealed the words of the holy One.*

And there are four wayes by which the word of God is sinfully hid or concealed, from all which *Job* seems to acquit himself.

The first is, When we conceal the word of God by our own silence; when we know the word and truth of God, and yet we draw a vail over them, by not revealing them: The Apostle *Paul* (*Acts* 20. 27.) acquits himself in this, to the Church of *Ephesus*, *I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God*; and, *v.* 20. *You know how I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you. Silence to what is spoken, is consent; and silence when we should speak, is concealment.*

There is a second way of concealing the word of God, and that is by silencing others. Some conceal the words of the holy One themselves, and they cannot endure that others should publish them. The chief Priests and Rulers, (*Acts* 4. 18.) *charged* Peter *and* John, *that they should not speak at all, nor teach any more in the name of Jesus.* They would stop the Apostles mouths from speaking the words of the holy One. These keep the truth lock'd up (as Christ chargeth the Lawyers, (*Luke* 11. 52.) *by taking away the key of knowledge.*

Thirdly, There is a concealing of the word of God, under false glosses and misinterpretations, or a hiding of it under errors and misconstructions. This is a very dangerous way of concealing the words of the holy One. The Pharisees made the Law of God of none effect by their expositions, as well as by their traditions; by the sence they made of it, as well as by the additions they made unto it.

Fourthly, The word of the holy One may be concealed in our practice and conversations. The Apostle exhorts (*Phil.* 2. 16.) *To hold forth the word of life in a pure conversation.* The lives of Christians should publish the word of life. The best way of preaching the word, is by the practice of the word. *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness*, that is, who by their unrighteous practices, and ungodly conversations, imprison, fetter, restrain and keep in the word. *Mans holy life is the loudest proclamation of the word of God; and a sinful life is the concealment of it.*

Job here acquits himself from all these concealments; *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*, either by my own silence, or by imposing silence upon others; I have not concealed the word of the holy One, by my own corrupt glosses or interpretations, nor by a corrupt practice or conversation; I have desired and endeavoured, that the whole word of God might be visible in my actions, and audible in my speeches, that I might walk cloathed, as it were, with the holy counsels and commandments of my God.

There is a reading of the words, different from this. Whereas we say, *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*, that gives it thus, *I would not conceal the words of the holy One*; and so the word of the holy One, is taken, not for the truths of God in general, but for that special word of decree or sentence which God should pass out against him; As if he had said, *Let not God spare me, let him write as bitter a sentence against me, as he pleaseth, for my part, I would not conceal the word of the most high, but I would publish his judgment and sentence against me; yea, I would praise him and extol him for it.* The Vulgar Latine to this sence, *I would not contradict the word of the holy One*; Let him not spare me, for as for my part, whatsoever God shall determine and resolve, whatsoever word God shall speak concerning me, I will never withstand or open my mouth against it. This is a truth, and carries in it a high frame of holiness; when we can bring our hearts to this, that let God write as bitter things against us as he pleaseth, we will never contradict his word or decree, but our minds and spirits shall submit wholly and fully to his dispositions of us, and dispensations towards us. *It is as clear an evidence of Grace to be passive under, as to be active in the word of God; not to contradict his writ, for our sufferings, as not to conceal what he speaks for our practice.* But I rather stick to the former interpretation, *Job* giving this as a reason of his great confidence in pursuing his petition for death, because he had been so sincere, holding forth the word of God both in doctrine and in life. And so we may observe from it,

Malo potentialiter exponi omnia, utinam inquit, non parceret: Neque enim occultarem dicta sancti sed ejus in me sententiã prædicarem & laudarẽ. Merc.

First, That, *The testimony of a good conscience is the best ground of our willingness to die.*

That man speaks enough for his willingness to die, who hath

hath lived ſpeaking and doing the will of God; and he is in a very miſerable caſe, who hath no other reaſon why he deſireth death, but only becauſe he is in miſery. This was one, but not the only reaſon, why *Job* deſired death; he had a reaſon tranſcending this, *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*, and I know if I have not concealed the word of God, God will not conceal his mercy and loving kindneſs from me. *David* bottoms his hopes of comfort in ſad times upon this, *Pſal.* 40. 9, 10. *I have preached righteouſneſs in the great Congregation, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord thou knoweſt* (he was not actively or politickly ſilent) *I have not hid thy righteouſnes within my heart*, (it lay there, but it was not impoiſoned or ſtifled there) *I have declared thy faithfulneſs and thy ſalvation; I have not concealed thy loving kindneſs and thy truth from the great Congregation.* Upon this, he falls a praying with a mighty ſpirit of believing, *ver.* 11 *With-hold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord; let thy loving kindneſs and thy truth continually preſerve me: for innumerable evils have compaſſed me about.*

The remembrance of our active faithfulneſs to the truth of God, will bear up our hearts for hoping in the mercy of God. He that in *David's* and in *Job's* ſence can ſay, *I have not concealed the words of the moſt High*, may triumph over innumerable evils, and ſhall be *more then a conqueror over the laſt and worſt of temporal evils, Death: God cannot long conceal his love from them, who have not concealed his Truth.*

Secondly obſerve poſitively, That, *The counſels of God, his truths, muſt be revealed.*

God hath ſecrets which belong not to us, but then he puts them not forth in a word, nor writes them in his book; he keeps his ſecrets cloſe in the cabinet of his decrees and counſels; but, what he reveals either in his word, or by his works, man ought to reveal too. It is as dangerous, if not more, to conceal what God hath made known, as to be inquiſitive to know, what God hath concealed. Yea, it is as dangerous to hide the word of God, as it is to hide our own ſins. And we equally give glory to God, by the profeſſion of the one, as by the confeſſion of the other. *Paul* with much earneſtneſs profeſſes his integrity about this, as was even now toucht, *Acts* 20.

Fourthly obſerve, That, *The ſtudy of a godly man is to make the word of God viſible.*

I have not concealed, that is, I have made plain, I have revealed, or I have publiſhed the words of the holy One; Much of *Job's* mind is concealed under that word, *I have not concealed.* For in this negative there is an affirmative; as if he had ſaid, this hath been my labour and my buſineſs, my work in the world, to make known ſo much of the will of God as I know. This was the work of Chriſt here below; *Father, I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finiſhed the work which thou gaveſt me to do*, John 17, 4. What this work was, he ſhews, *ver.* 6. *I have manifeſted thy name unto the men which thou gaveſt me out of the world.*

Laſtly obſerve, That, *It is a dangerous thing for any man to conceal the word of God, either in his opinion, or in his practice.*

For it is, as if *Job* had ſaid, if I had ever concealed the words of God, I had been but in an ill caſe, at this time: God might now juſtly reveal his wrath againſt me, if I had concealed his word from others; or, God might juſtly hide his mercies from me, if I had hid his word from men. *Smothered truths will one time or other ſet the Conſcience in a flame*; and that which *Jeremiah* ſpake once, concerning his reſolution to conceal the word of God, and the effect of it, will be a truth upon every one, who ſhall ſet himſelf under a reſolution to do, what he under a temptation did, Jer. 20. 9. *Then I ſaid, I will not make mention of him, nor ſpeak any more in his name:* What follows? *Then his word was in my breaſt, as a burning fire ſhut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing.* If a gracious heart hath taken up ſuch a ſudden reſolution to conceal the word of God, he quickly repents of it, or ſmarts under it: He finds that word as a burning fire in his bones, he is not able to bear it; *I was weary with forbearing* (ſaith the Prophet) *Nothing in the world will burden the conſcience ſo much as concealed truth.* And they who have taken a meditated reſolution that they will not reveal the word of God, may be ſure, that word will one time or other, reveal it ſelf to them, in the light and heat of a burning fire, feeding upon their conſciences.

I have not concealed the words. Whoſe words? *The words of the holy One.* Who is that? *The holy One* is a *Periphraſis for God.* When you hear that Title, *The holy One*, you may know who is meant. This is a title too big for any but a God: All holineſs is in God, and God is ſo holy, that properly he only is holy; hence the Scripture ſets God forth under this, as a peculiar attribute, *The holy One*: The Prophets often uſe this addition or ſtile, *The holy one of Iſrael.*

The holy One, is *One ſeparate or ſet apart from all filthineſs and uncleanneſs.* No evil dwells with God, none comes near him; therefore he is *The holy One.* He is ſo ſeparated from evil, *that he cannot behold evil, or look on iniquity*, (*Hab.* 1. 13.) except with a vindictive eye. *Sin never got a good look from God, or ever ſhall.*

קדש *Separatus.*

Further, God is called *The holy One*, in three reſpects. First, Becauſe he is all holy in himſelf. Secondly, Becauſe we receive all holineſs from him. Thirdly, Becauſe we are to *ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs all our dayes. A holy God muſt have a holy ſervice.* God *is the holy One.*

Deus vocatur Sanctus Iſrael, vel Sanctus ſimpliciter, vel quod ſanctè à nobis colendus eſt, vel quod ipſe ſolus verè ſanctus eſt.

First, In his Nature; his eſſence is purity. Or, he is eſſential purity.

Secondly, He is holy in his Word: Thoſe are frequent adjuncts of the Word of God, *holy, pure and clean.*

Thirdly, He is holy in his Works: there is not the leaſt imaginable ſtain or defilement upon any thing he hath done.

Theſe three put together, lift up the glory of God in this Title, *The holy One.* He that is holy throughout in his Nature, holy in his Word, holy in his Works, *is the holy One*; yea, he is, as *Moſes* ſtileth him in his triumphant Song, *Exod.* 15. *Glorious in holineſs, a glorious holy One.*

Or again, We may conſider God, *The holy One*;

First, Radically and fundamentally, becauſe the Divine Nature is the root and original, the ſpring of all holineſs and purity. All holineſs is in God, and there is no holineſs to be had, but in God alone.

Secondly, God is *The holy One*, by way of *example* and pattern, or in regard of the rule and meaſure of holineſs, (1 *Pet.* 1. 16.) *Be ye holy, as I am holy*; the holineſs of God, it is the exemplar and pattern of all the holineſs that is in the creature.

Thirdly, God is *The holy One*, by way of *motive*: He is, as the rule of holineſs, ſo, likewiſe the reaſon of our holineſs; therefore another Scripture ſaith, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*; I am *The holy One*, and that is the reaſon, why you muſt be holy too.

Fourthly, God is *The holy One* effectively, becauſe he works, conveyes and propagates all holineſs to, and in the creature. *Nothing can frame a heart to holineſs, but the finger of God.* Man can no more make himſelf, or another holy, then he can redeem another or himſelf.

Fifthly, He is called *The holy One* by way of eminency or ſuper-excellency; becauſe his holineſs is infinitely beyond all the holineſs of men and Angels. *Angels are holy*, and God is pleaſed to ſay of *men*, that they are *holy*; but nor man nor Angel can be called *The holy One.* His ſuper-eminency in holineſs ſhines forth in ſuch beams and rayes as theſe.

First, Holineſs in God is not a quality, but his eſſence. Holineſs in Angels is a quality; the eſſence of many Angels continues, though their holineſs be loſt and vaniſhed; the lapſed Angels, who are now Devils, keep their nature, but their holineſs is gone; therefore holineſs was but a quality, or accidental to them: So, in the Saints, holineſs is an infuſion, a quality, a grace; moſt men never had any holineſs, and the man would remain though his holineſs ſhould be loſt. But in God, his eſſence and his holineſs are the ſame. *The holineſs of God is the holy God*, as the wiſdom of God is the wiſe God; and the power of God, is the powerful God. *The Attributes of God, for our learning, are diſtinguiſhed from his Nature, but in him they are the ſame.*

Secondly, God is *The holy One* eminently, above men

and

and Angels, becauſe he is *abſolutely perfect* in holineſs. Abſolutely perfect; Firſt, Becauſe he is holy, extenſively (if we may ſo ſpeak of God) in all parts, he is holy *throughout*, and then he is holy *intenſively*; as he is holy in all parts, ſo he is altogether holy in every part. Holy men have holineſs in every part, yet they are holy but in part; and though Angels be holy in every part extenſively, and have alſo a perfection of holineſs, yet they have not an abſolute perfection of holineſs; therefore Angels themſelves are *chargeable with folly*, compared with God, *chap.* 4. 18. God is ſo *light*, that in him there is no darkneſs at all; he is ſo holy, that in him there is no unholineſs at all. But men, the beſt of men, all the Saints upon earth, have darkneſs with their light, and unholineſs mixed with their holineſs.

Therefore in the third place, the eminency of God in holineſs, appeareth in this, that, God is ever equally holy, ever in the ſame degree and frame of holineſs; Angels are ſo too, becauſe they are confirmed; and though at the preſent, the Saints are not, yet, when Chriſt ſhall ſet them up in that glorious eſtate, they ſhall keep the ſame frame for ever. But the Saints upon earth are unequally holy, ; for firſt, they are growing, their eſtate here is an encreaſing eſtate; they are more holy one year then another; as they grow more in knowledge, ſo in every grace: And then, in regard of the exerciſe, they are more holy at one time then at another. Which of the Saints hath not found, or doth not find much variety in his ſpirit? Now a heart enlarged in prayer, and anon ſtraightned, now a heart believing, and anon doubting; now humble, anon lifted up with pride, *&c.*

But as *the holy One* is perfectly and abſolutely holy, ſo, he is ever equally in the ſame degree and tenor of holineſs, not the leaſt variety or ſhadow of turning in him. Put all theſe together, and the title is clear, how God by an excellency, is called, *The holy One.* As he is ſo ſtrong, that all the power of the creature, compared with his, is weakneſs; and ſo wiſe, that all the wiſdom of the creature, compared with his, is folly; ſo he is ſo holy, that, compared with him, all holineſs is unholy, and he alone, *The holy One.* Hence obſerve,

First, That, *The holineſs of man conſiſts in his conformity unto God.*

Sanctitas dicitur per quam mens ſeipſam & ſuos actus applicat Deo.

Holineſs is our likeneſs to God, or the application of our minds and actions to God, as the Schools define it. God, *the holy One*, is (if we may ſo ſpeak) the ſtandard, the pattern, and the object of all holineſs. There is a twofold conformity to God in holineſs.

First, A conformity to the Nature of God.

Secondly, A conformity to the will of God, or to that which God wills. Theſe make up the total holineſs of the Creature.

First, Holineſs is our conformity to the Nature of God. And therefore Believers are ſaid to be *partakers of the divine Nature* (2 Pet. 1. 4.) This participation is our analogical reſemblance unto the Divine Nature; First, In his Attributes. Secondly, In his Affections. In his Attributes, when we are patient, merciful, juſt, faithful, true, loving, as God is. Theſe are the Image of God in us, and by theſe God becomes (as it were) viſible in man. As thoſe inviſible things of God, even his eternal power and God-head are ſeen in the things which are created; ſo, thoſe other inviſible things of God, even his eternal holineſs and purity, are ſeen in thoſe who are ſanctified. And in the ſame ſence that God ſpeaks of Magiſtrates, in regard of his power depoſited in their hands, *I have ſaid ye are gods*; we alſo may ſay of all the faithful, in regard of his holineſs infuſed into their hearts, *ye are gods*; and as to live or do ſinfully, is (as the Apoſtle phraſeth it) to walk (καὶ ἄνθρωπον) as men; ſo to live and do holily, is, in our ſphear to walk (κατὰ Θεὸν) as God. And as this holineſs ariſes from a reſemblance of God in his Attributes, ſo in Affections; when we love what God loves, when we hate what God hates; when what pleaſes God, pleaſeth us alſo; when what provokes his Spirit, provokes ours. This is holineſs.

Secondly, Holineſs is our conformity to the will of God. That is, to whatſoever God wills us either to do, or not to do. *The will of God is the rule of holineſs, as his nature is the patern of it.* His internal will, called by the School-men, *The will of his good pleaſure*, is the firſtly-firſt rule (as they ſpeak) his external will, or his will expreſſed and ſignified by his word, is the ſecondly-firſt rule of holineſs. Every action of man is holy or unholy, according to his conformity with, or variation from this will. There is no more holineſs in any work, then there is of the will of God in any work. To do holily, and to do the will of God, are the ſame. *David*, a holy man, is deſcribed by both theſe, *Acts* 13. 22. *I have found* David *the ſon of* Jeſſe, *a man after mine own heart*; there's conformity to the nature of God; which ſhall fulfil all my will; there's conformity to the will of God; the reſult of both is holineſs.

Voluntas bene placiti. Voluntas ſigni.

Sicut impuritas naſcitur ex contactu inferiorum, ut cum faties aut veſtis luto aſpergitur, vel cum anima, per affectus inferioribus inordinatè inhæret; ita puritas oritur ex contactu ſuperiorum, cùm affectus ad ſublimiora & nobiliora aſſurgit, & iis adhæret. Leſſ. *De Perf. Div.* l. 8. c. 1. *Summa puritas conſiſtit in adhæſione cum Deo; nam Deus eſt ratio objectiva & menſura ſanctitatis.* Leſſ. *ubi ante.*

Unholineſs and impurity ariſe from our conformity or adheſion to thoſe things, which are unclean and unholy: In externals and corporals, if a mans hand or his garment touch an unclean thing, he hath the mark or impreſſion of of that uncleanneſs upon his hand or upon his garment; and this likeneſs to an unclean thing, makes his hand or garment unclean: So for inward uncleanneſs or defilement, when the ſoul inordinately cleaves, and the mind drenches it ſelf in filthy things, or drinks in filthy objects: when our thoughts are ſteeped in puddle-waters, this defiles the mind, and makes our thoughts unclean; *Our thoughts are ſuch, as the things they are familiar with*: If they converſe with filthy and unclean things, with worldly and baſe things, the image and impreſſion of ſuch things is ſealed upon our thoughts, and the ſpring of them, our ſpirits. On the other ſide, by our converſing and reverend familiarity with Chriſt in holy Ordinances, we receive ſtamps and impreſſions of holineſs from him. When our hearts and affections are raiſed up and pitcht upon God, this makes them holy.

God is the *Objective cauſe* of holineſs; looking upon him, we become holy (2 *Cor.* 3. 18.) *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord* (that is, we looking upon that glory, holineſs and excellency which is in the Lord) *are changed into the ſame image*; that is, we are made conformable unto him: we receive (as it were) the engravings of holineſs upon our ſouls, by beholding the *Holy One*. The eye of faith (as well, yea more, then the eye of ſence) affects the heart. *Laban's* ſheep conceived according to the colour of the rods which lay before them in the water-troughs. *Viſion aſſimilates both in Nature and in Grace, yea, and in Glory too.* In heaven we ſhall be perfectly holy, becauſe we ſhall perfectly (in Chriſt, who is the expreſs image of his perſon) ſee God, and ſo be like him; that's the Apoſtles argument, 1 *John* 3. 1. *We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* And proportionably here, ſuch as our viſions of God are, ſuch is our likeneſs unto God.

Secondly obſerve, *They who want holineſs, muſt go to God for it; for he is the holy One.*

Are any of your hearts unholy? whither will you go? To *what Coaſt will you trade for holineſs?* Or, where ſhall you find the merchadize of it? Go whither you will, go to what holy Ordinance, to what holy Duty, to what holy Miniſter you will, your veſſels will return unfraight and empty of holineſs, if you trade not to the holy God. We muſt deal with Ordinances, and by Ordinances; but, if we only have to do with them, neglecting to meet with God, we ſhall make nothing of them; we ſhall not traffique in them, to any ſpiritual enriching or advantage. Ordinances have a relative holineſs, or a holineſs paſſing through them; but they have no inherent holineſs, or holineſs paſſed by them; *They are Conduit-pipes, not Springs, or the Well-head.* Therefore, as when you would have mercy you go to the *merciful God*; as, when you would have pardon of ſin, you go to the *ſin-pardoning God*; as, when you would have wiſdom and light to direct your way, you go to *the wiſe God, and the Father of lights*: So, when you would have holineſs, and be made pure, whither will ye go, but to the pure and holy God? Be diligent in holy duties and holy ordinances, but ſtay not in them, paſs through them, and never reſt till you come to God in Chriſt, who is the *Holy One*; and he only can, and he hath ſaid he will make you holy.

Thirdly obſerve, *All ſin and unholineſs are contrary to the very Name and Nature of God.*

As Contrary

Contrary to the name of God, *He is called holy*; and contrary to the nature of God, *He is the holy One.* And in this, we ſee the reaſon, why God hates ſin with a *perfect hatred*; man hates that, which is contrary to his nature, and contrary to his name. And in this alſo we ſee the reaſon, why God is ſuch a ſevere avenger of ſin, *He is the holy One:* Can he (think you) take part with, or ſpare that which is contrary to himſelf? Sin, as much as in it lieth, puts God out of the world, therefore ſin is called *God-murther*, as being that, which would murther God: *Sin would not allow him a being in the world, who gave the world its being.* Sin (in the nature of it) is, *The unholy thing*, and God is, *The holy One*; theſe two muſt contend for ever: ſo far as things or perſons are unholy, they directly ſtrike at the being of God; *Sin would put down all rule and all dominion but its own.* Obſerve,

Deicidium.

Fourthly, *They who deſpiſe holineſs, deſpiſe God himſelf.*

They who deſpiſe holineſs, deſpiſe the very glory of God; *God is glorious in holyneſs*, and this is his glorious Name, *THE HOLY ONE.* Some of the prophane, wretched *Jews*, derided and blaſphemed God, under this title; the Prophet had long threatned judgment, and had told them, that *the holy God* would be avenged on them for their filthineſs and profaneneſs, for their hypocriſie and idolatry. But when theſe wretches ſaw God delaying to come out, and bring forth the treaſures of his wrath againſt them, they fall a jearing, and they jear at God, under this title (*Iſa.* 5.19.) *Let him make ſpeed, and haſten his work, that we may ſee it*; as if he had ſaid, God is too ſlow, let him make more haſt, *and let the counſel of the holy One of* Iſrael *draw nigh, and come that we may know it*; him, that you have ſo often told us of, *The holy One*, let him make haſt and bring on his work. Without queſtion God came ſpeedily upon thoſe, and he will come ſpeedily upon all thoſe unclean ſpirits and tongues who blaſpheme that holy Name, *The holy One.* Hence we learn,

Laſtly, *Why none can ſee God, why none have any fitneſs for communion with God, but* holy Ones, *holy perſons.*

The reaſon is, becauſe *God is the holy One.* That great Law is gone out from the mouth of God, *Levit.* 10. 3. *I will be ſanctified in thoſe that come near me*; why ſanctified? Becauſe *God is the holy One*; unleſs we ſanctifie God, we cannot draw nigh to God. As holineſs is a ſeparation from evil, ſo it is an approximation to the chiefeſt good. But ſome may demand, how can man ſanctifie God? God ſanctifies us, but can we ſanctifie him? We cannot ſanctifie God, as he ſanctifies us. We do not ſanctifie God by adding or communicating any holineſs unto him; but we ſanctifie God by acknowledging his holineſs, or by acknowledging that he is, *The holy One*; *drawing nigh unto God with a holy heart, with holy affections, is the ſanctifying of God.* For this is the language of ſuch preparation, I have a holy God to go unto, therefore I muſt have a holy heart to come unto him with; this is ſanctifying God: And that's the reaſon why none can ſee God, but they that are holy, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Without holineſs, no man ſhall ſee the Lord*; becauſe God himſelf is holy, therefore they cannot ſee God, who are unholy. There muſt be an inward holineſs, holineſs in the Organ, to take in the holineſs of the object; God firſt works holineſs in us, and then we behold him, *the holy God:* And that was the reaſon, why the Prophet (*Iſaiah* Chap. 6. When the voice proclaimed that thrice holy Name of God, *Holy, Holy, Holy*) cried out, *I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips*; I have an unclean heart, and how ſhall I ſtand before this *holy, holy, holy God*; this made his ſpirit recoyl, though he was a holy Prophet: *If the remainders of unholineſs in him, made his ſpirit faint, when there was an appearance of the holy God: How will they that are nothing but corruption, or a lump of uncleanneſs, lying ſtill in the dregs of nature, be able to ſtand before God, The holy One, that holy, holy, holy One?*

This is the ſum of the firſt reaſon, upon which *Job* grounds his requeſt to die, it was not the miſery he ſuffered, but the integrity in which he had lived. He had not concealed the words of *the holy One*, therefore as his affliction made his life troubleſom to him, ſo the goodneſs of his cauſe and conſcience, made death welcome to him.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14.

What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope? and what is mine end, that I ſhould prolong my life?
Is my ſtrength of ſtones? Or is my fleſh of braſs?
Is not my help in me? And is wiſdom driven quite from me?
To him that is afflicted, pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend; but he forſaketh the fear of the Almighty.

JOB (as hath been ſhewed) in this context from *verſ.* 8. renews his former requeſt and deſire of death, confirming it by divers arguments: Some of which were opened in *verſ.* 10, eſpecially, that, from the clearneſs and integrity of his own conſcience, in that, *he had not concealed the word of the holy One:* He hath dealt faithfully in the cauſe of God, and therefore he was not afraid to appear before God. And his deſire did not hang about his lips, as if it would return and deny it ſelf: Therefore in *verſ.* 11. he puts forth two reaſons further, why he moves or re-enforces his motion to die. The firſt is grounded upon the ſmall hope he had to live long, if he ſhould deſire it, *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope?* The ſecond is grounded upon the ſtrong hope, yea, aſſurance which he had, that it ſhould be well with him in death, or that death could be no dammage to him. *And what is my end, that I ſhould prolong my life?* Put theſe two together: And then conſider, is it any wonder, that a man in much miſery deſires to dye ſpeedily, when he hath no hope, no ground of hope, that he can live long, and when he hath no fear, no ground, no nor ſhadow of fear, that it ſhall be ill with him when he dies? This I conceive is the ſum and ſtrength of his reaſoning, contained in *verſ.* 11.

I ſhall now open the words diſtinctly.

What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould hope?

Some render it, *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould bear?* I ſhould be able to ſuſtain this weighty burthen, this mighty load of affliction, preſſing my wounded ſoul, and wearied body? Thus it refers to his preſent ſufferings, to the enduring and ſtanding under, which he found his own ſtrength altogether inſufficient. And ſo the [כֹּחַ] in the Text, *What is* [*my*] *ſtrength*, ſeems to be oppoſed to ſome other ſtrength? As if *Job* had ſaid, *Eliphaz* you adviſed me (in the former Chapter, *verſ.* 8.) *to ſeek unto GOD, and to commit my cauſe unto him, to ſeek help at his hands. Why, do you think I have not done that all this while? Do you believe that I have ſtood out theſe aſſaults in My own ſtrength? What is My ſtrength, that I ſhould bear? That I ſhould bear this burthen ſo long, as I have born it? Surely I have been held up by the power of God and prayer all this while; GOD hath put his everlaſting arms under me, otherwiſe I had fallen before this day, had I not prayed in aid from Heaven, I had not lived thus long upon the earth; for what is my ſtrength compared to theſe burthens which are upon me.*

His ſuſtinendis impar ſum; hæc mea vita miſeriis obnoxia ſuſtentatur non meis viribus, ſed divina gratia, fide, dilectione in filium Dei. Pined.

This is a good ſence; for, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Gal.* 2. 10.) *The life which I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God.* So *Job* ſeems to ſay, the life which I have lived, ever ſince the afflictions have encompaſs'd me, I have lived by the power of God, and the ſtrength of faith in him, *What is my ſtrength, that I ſhould bear; We have this treaſure* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7.) *in earthen veſſels, that the excellency of the power, may be from God, and not from us*; as he ſpeaks there, reſpecting the burthen of the Miniſtry: So we may, in reſpect of any burthen of trouble, or weight of affliction, *We have theſe afflictions laid upon our earthen veſſels* (and one would wonder, that an earthen veſſel ſhould not crack and ſhatter to pieces under them) *but it is, that the excellency of the power might be from God, and not from us; when we are weak, then are we ſtrong, ſtrong in God, and in the power of his might. God loves to ſhew the world, what his ſtrength can do in a weak creature, as well, as what his grace and mercy can do for a ſinful creature.*

This (I ſay) is a good ſence, but the word rather ſignifies to hope; and yet theſe two are not at any great odds: for

יחל *Moratus, præſtolatus,*

for hope is the strength, the bearing strength of the soul: *What is my strength, that I should hope?* That I should wait and tarry, that I should expect and stay for such and such changes, as thou hast promised? *Psal.* 130. 5. we have these words put together, *I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait; and in his word do I hope. The soul which is in a hoping condition, is also in a waiting condition*; waiting and hoping ever attend the same thing. No man will wait at all for that of which he hath no hope, and he who hath hope, will wait alwayes. He gives not over waiting, till he gives over hoping. The object of hope is some future good, but the act of hoping is a present good, and that is present pay to bear our charges in waiting. So then, the word implies both a patient waiting, and a hopeful trusting. So Christ expounds it, *Matth.* 12. 21. rendring that of the Prophet, *Isa.* 42. 4. *The Isles shall wait for his Law*, thus, *In his Name shall the Gentiles trust.* *Noah* (after the strength of the deluge was spent) opened the window of the Ark, and sent forth the Dove, and she returned; then saith the Text, *He waited seven dayes, and again he waited, yet other seven dayes*, hoping at last the flood would be dryed up, and the waters return into their ancient channels. Now (saith *Job*) what is my strength, that I should hope or expect deliverance, and therefore, why should I wait for it. The waters of my afflictions are so deep, and swoln so high, that I have no hope to see dry ground again.

vel significat anxia spe potiendi volo rē aliquā expectare, & ægrè ferre protractionem rei expectatæ. Chemn. *Spes, est, cum præparatio ad boni futuri & promissi susceptionem, tum patientia moræ ex intuitu illius boni.* Gen. 8. 10, 12.

And in this passage he seems to answer, what *Eliphaz* spake in *Chap.* 5. *vers.* 16, & 25. (for doubtless *Job* applies himself exactly to what *Eliphaz* had spoken, and the truest interpretation of his answer will be in finding out, and suiting the references to what the other propounded) *Eliphaz* in *Chap.* 5. *vers.* 16. (where he makes a report of the wonderful works of God.) had said, *So the poor hath hope, and iniquity stoppeth her mouth*; and at *vers.* 25. he tells *Job* that a godly man (notwithstanding all his afflictions) *may know that his tabernacle shall be in peace, and that his seed shall be very great.* *Job* in answer to those words, replies; *What is my strength, that I should hope.* As if he had said, *Eliphaz you speak of great hopes, that the poor may have; and you speak of a peaceable Tabernacle, of a flourishing off-spring: Alas, my condition is such, I am so worn out with pain, with sicknesses, with diseases, with distempers, with griefs, that I have no hope left, in regard of my strength in me, ever to enjoy such promises. What is my strength that I should hope? What is my strength that I should expect to live to see such good dayes, as you speak of; that my Tabernacle should be in peace, that I should have plenty, that I should have a numerous Issue? Alas, my strength is gone; what is my strength that I should look after these things.* Not that *Job* measured all his hope by his own strength; but here he expresses the grief and pain, which was in his sensitive part, or upon his outward man, thereby to answer the sowre reproofs and sweet promises of *Eliphaz*: For we find *Job* himself in *Chap.* 13. *vers.* 13. resolving thus; *Though he kill me, yet will I trust* (or hope) *in him*; he would trust or hope in God, though he died; therefore he did hope while he lived. And it is the property of that grace (and where it is in strength, it shews as much) *to hope against hope*: Rom. 4. 18. *Who against hope believed in hope*; when there was no strength in *Abraham*, no possibility in nature, yet against hope, he believed in hope: So at this time there was such a grace in *Job*, he had a hope, by which he could hope against hope; but when he looked into his own stock of strength, *What is my strength, that I should hope?* I know the strength of God, is a rock sure enough for my hope to anchor in: *Abraham* said in effect, *what is my strength, that I should hope to have a child?* for he looked upon himself as a dead man, but, saith he, there is power in God; he knew his own weakness, but *he considered it not, waxing strong in faith, and giving glory to God.* So here, while *Job* saith, *What is my strength that I should hope?* my strength is dryed up and withered, and so is my hope in my own strength: The strength of God is vigorous and green, and in him my hope is also green and vigorous: Though all the earth about us be like a dry heath, and barren wilderness; yet our hope buds and blossoms like a plant, while it is rooted by the springs of heavenly promises.

Quæ fortitudo mea, ut sperem libenter. Vatab. *Quid in longiorem spem me adducitis quū spe vando non sim, jam propè mortuus videar.* *Hoc à Jobo dicitur, ut consilii importunitatem, expresso sensitivæ partis affectu, retunderet, non quod de divina potentia diffideret.*

And what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?

The letter of the Hebrew is, *That I should prolong, or lengthen out my soul*, that my soul should inhabit longer in the tabernacle of my body: The word *prolong*, is indifferently joyned to life, or dayes, *Deut.* 5. 16. *Honour thy father and thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, that, thy dayes may be prolonged*, &c. Ezek. 12. 22. *Son of man, what is that proverb that you have in the Land of* Israel, *saying, The dayes are prolonged, and every vision faileth?* To prolong dayes, and prolong life, are the same. Yet here the word (*Nepheſh*) soul, which we translate, life, may be taken for *desire*, which is a vehement act of the soul. The soul expresses it self so much in desires, that the same word may express both. And so we may render *Job*'s sence, thus, *What is my end, that I should lengthen out, or extend, my desires any further after the things of this world: or that I should defer, and put off my desires after the things of the world to come: Is there any thing in this life worth my studying for it, or any thing so worthless in the next, that I should not wish presently to enjoy it?* In this sence the word (*Nepheſh*) is often used, as *Gen.* 23. 8. *Abraham* speaks to the children of *Heth*; *If it be your soul or your desire*, we translate, *if it be your mind, that I should bury my dead.* So *Prov.* 23. 2. *If thou be a man given to thy appetite*, or whose desires are thy Lord and Master, as the elegancy of that place bears. And again, *Psal.* 27. 12. *Psal.* 41. 2. *Eccl.* 6. 9. The word is applied, to signifie the will or desire. So here,

אאריך נפשי

What is mine end, that I should prolong my life, or my desire of life?

His [End] may be considered two wayes.

First, His End, may be taken for the latter part of his life, which *Eliphaz* promised would be very comfortable. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in a good old age, as a stock of corn cometh into the store:* As if *Job* should say, you are promising me good dayes, and a happy old age; but, what is mine end? what's the latter part of a mans life, that he should desire to prolong his dayes, to take it out? Why should I desire to prolong my life, I am now well stricken in years, and as for the end, the latter part of a mans life, it is nothing (for the most part) but trouble and sorrow? As old *Barzillai* (2 *Sam.* 19. 35.) when *David* offered him the pleasures of the Court, answers, I am thus old, and can I taste my meat, and taste my drink, and hear musick? What is the Fag-end of mans life, that one should hunger after it? The sweetest comforts of this life are in the fore-part of life, in the spring of youth, in the strength and flower of age; as for the the winter of life, what is that but wet and cold, but clouds and darkness? *What is my end*, (of old age) that I should desire my life to be prolonged or eeked out to that.

But rather, we may take this *End*, First, for the end of his troubles; as if he had said, *What end so gainful or comfortable can I have of these evils, that should recompence my pains in bearing them, till I receive it?* No worldly comforts can answer my sorrows; and therefore why should I desire to prolong my life for them.

Secondly, Take *End*, for the very last term of life, not that latter part or condition of a mans life, *troublesom old age*, as before; or a renewed estate as here. But take *End*, for the *ending*, the termination, the period of life; *What is my End, that I should so prolong my life?* and so *End* is as much as death, *What is my death, that I should so desire to live?* I know no evil in death, that should make me afraid of the end of my life; I know no such trouble in dying, that I should be desirous to spin out this troublesom life longer; surely the trouble and pain of death is not so much as the present trouble and pain of my life; and as for any other trouble, I fear none: then what is my end, that I should prolong my life, that I should not desire death, or that you should be so angry with me for desiring it? Hence Observe,

First, *There is no strength in man, that may give him assured hope of long life.*

What is my strength, that I should hope? No, though man be in the flourish of his age, the greenness of his years: yet what is youth, or strength, or beauty? what all those fair leaves and fruits which hang upon, and adorn this goodly tree, that he should hope to stand long? *Man*

in his best estate, is altogether vanity, Psal. 39. 5. He that hopes to live upon any of these things, hopes in a vain thing, and trusts, but in a shadow. Our hopes to live this natural life as well as the spiritual, and eternal, must be in the living God. The Image of death sits upon the best of our strength and beauty; while we grow, we decline, and we flourish, we wither. The lengthning of our dayes, is the shortning of them, and all the time we live, is but a passage unto (and should be but a preparation for) death. We are most miserable, if in this life only we have hope; and we are most foolish, if our hopes of this life, be in our own strength.

And because there is no strength in nature, which may give us hope to live long; it is our greatest wisdom, to consider what provision we have in grace, to maintain our hopes, that we shall live for ever. They are in an ill case, who when they cannot hope to live long, care not to settle their hopes of living eternally. It is a most sad spectacle, to see a languishing body, and a languishing hope meet in one man. Some have a *Kalender in their bones*, shewing them, they have but few dayes here, and many distempers upon the whole body, crying in their ears with a loud voice, *What is your strength, that you should hope to live?* who yet prepare not at all to dye. They are both unready and unwilling to be dissolved, when they see no hope to keep up their Tabernacle from dissolution.

Secondly, (Taking the word in the last sence, which I conceive rather to be the mind of the Holy Ghost in this place) Observe,

> That, *there is no evil in the death of a godly man, which should make him unwilling to dye, or which should make him linger after this life.*

What is the end of a godly man, that he should prolong his life? All the bitterness of death is removed, or sweetned by Christ. Death the King of terrors, is made a servant, to let us in, to our comforts, by the power of *Christ, that Prince of life*, who hath aboliſhed death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. *A believer buries all his fears of death in the grave of Christ.* He looks upon death as the funeral of his sorrows, and the resurrection of his joyes. When the Psalmist had described the troubles and stormy conflicts of a godly man, together with the flourishing outward pomp of the wicked, he concludes with this advice, *Marke the righteous man* (observe him well, take special notice of him) *the latter end of that man is peace*; if his end be peace, there is nothing in his end, which can make him affraid of it, or put it off. All desire peace, they especially, who are wearied out with war. The life of the holiest man is a warfare, and his end is peace. Then what is his end, that he should prolong his life?

Patem te poscimus omnes.

When a worldly man looks upon his end, he saith, O what is my end, that I should desire to dye? His end is such, as makes him justly affraid to die. There is nothing in the end of a wicked man, but matter to feed the fear of death, and the desire of prolonging life, as long as he can. This is the reason, why, when God calls him to die, he is deaf at the call; yea, that call is death to him, before he dies. *Lot* had a mind to prolong his time in *Sodom*, it was a goodly City, and he was not well assured, whether to go, or how he should be lodged next night. This caused him to linger so long, till the Angels came and thrust him out: Natural men have all their portion and estates in the *Sodom* of this world. And if they hear a message of departing or going out, they linger and make excuses, they run behind the door, or hang about the posts, till God thrusts them out of the world, and pulls them from their pleasures by head and shoulders, as we say. They would never leave the world, if they might enjoy it, because they have nothing to enjoy beyond it.

A worldling groans, because he must be uncloathed of his house of earth; and the Saints *groan earnestly, that they may be cloathed upon with their house from Heaven:* Who would not be willing to exchange a suit of flesh, a suit of sack-cloath and sorrow, for a suit of glory, for a cloathing of immortality, and garments of everlasting praise.

Vers. 12. **Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh of brass?**

These words may refer to the former part of *vers.* 11. *What is my strength, that I should hope?* What is it? Let us seriously examine and consider what my strength is, *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh of brass?* Am I made of such hard mettle, think you, that I am able to endure any thing? Only a body of brass, and sinews of iron, are strong enough to endure this trial. Stones and brass are hard bodies, and heavy bodies, they can bear blows and knocks without breaking; they yield not easily to the hammer; it is hard to make an impression upon them, with many, and those violent stroaks. To say a man is strong, as stones, or that he hath a body of brass, is to give him strength, which is not mans, and to set him two degrees below himself. Beasts are stronger, and can endure more hardship then man. Trees are stronger, and can endure more than beasts. Stones are yet stronger, and can endure more then trees. Therefore, while he asks, whether his strength be not only, like that of beasts, who have no reason; or like that of trees, which have no sence; but like that of stones and brass, which have no vegetation or growth, he puts it to the utmost: As if he had said, *If a man had as much strength as a beast, or a tree, he must needs fall at these stroaks and troubles; but it seems, ye put me lower then beasts, or sensless trees, and that I can stand it out against all storms and batteries, like a stony rock, or a brazen wall.* I confess, though the Ox loweth, when he wants fodder; and the wild Ass brayeth, when he hath no grass; yet the stone complains not, when ye give it no food; nor doth brass cry out when ye melt it in a furnace: unless you can find, that I am in nature like stones or brass, you have no reason to find fault with me. Allow me to be either man or beast, and you must allow me to be sensible of my sorrows, and destroyable by them. Only stones can be thus trampled on, and brass thus hammer'd without pain and dying.

Deficio, Saxeus aut Calybeus non sum. Lapides corpora sunt non solum gravia, sed robusta & dura, quæ non facilè cedunt aliis corporibus, unde robur lapidum pro duritia.

As when man (in his spiritual capacity) is said in Scripture to have a *heart of stone, an iron sinew, a brow of brass.* It notes him resolved, against all threats, and strong, against all oppositions of the word, to commit the evil of sin. So in this natural capacity, to say his strength is the strength of stones, notes him a man able to bear all the evils of trouble, and to stand against all the storms of tribulation.

Such kind of speaking is frequent among the ancient Writers, who, when they would express a man of undaunted courage, a man whose strength would not easily be broken, or his spirit be taken down: a man insuperable, whom no difficulties could overcome. Of such an one they say, he hath, *an heart of brass*, and *a back of steel, he is a man made up of stones, born of a rock*; he is a man of Adamant, he hath *treble brass about his breast*; as he was described, who first ventured in his ship to Sea. The common use of the word hath made it proverbial in all languages: for a man of more strength then is commonly found in man, or for a Master of dangers and extremities.

Homines Adamantini, ferrei, saxii, nati à scopulis. Illi robur & es triplex circa pectus. Hor. *Graci vocant, ἀδαμαντίους & ἀδηλοφόρους.*

Job's question denies, *Is my strength the strength of stones? Or is my flesh of brass?* No, it is not: As if he had said, I am made of flesh and blood as well as others, I must shortly yield to these stroaks, I am not able to hold out and contend everlastingly with afflictions, I cannot stand against these assaults and batteries for ever; I am made of the same mould whereof your selves are, I am sensible how it is with me, I feel what I endure, and I cannot long endure what I feel, my strength is not the strength of stones. Note hence,

> First, *Mans natural constitution makes him sensible of affliction, and subduable by it.*

Mans body is no impregnable castle. We are not made of stones and brass, but of *flesh and blood*; *I will not contend for ever* (saith God, *Isa.* 57. 16.) *neither will I be alwayes wrath. For the spirit should fail before me,* &c. The Spirit of a man (that is his courage and resolution) is far stronger then his flesh, (namely his natural temper and constitution) and yet that cannot hold out for ever. The Spirit will come down whether we will or no, if God contend long with us: how then must the flesh wither like a leaf before him? And therefore, the bodies, the flesh and blood of the damned, who are to bear the wrath and contendings of God for ever; their flesh and blood (I say) are (in a sence) made spiritual, that is, they have more strength

strength given them, then flesh and blood yield naturally, otherwise it were impossible for them to hold out for ever under the wrath of God, and the torment of their accursed condition. Their strength is made the strength of stones, and their flesh as brass, they are made immalliable: their sense of pain shall be admirably quickned, and yet they shall continue, as if they had no sence at all: they shall be for ever wounded, and never die of their wounds. As it is in reference to that everlasting misery, so in proportion to those temporal miseries, there is no strength of man, no flesh and blood, able to endure and hold out, if God lets out his hand to afflict, and put not under his hand to support.

Vers. 13. Is not my help in me? And is wisdom driven quite from me?

Locus difficilis si quis alius in hoc libro, & quem ego adhuc non intelligo. Drus.

This and the verse following, are of a very difficult construction and understanding, which caused a learned Interpreter to say, *If there be any hard Text in the whole book, this is one*; and after all his thoughts about it, he concludes with this ingenious acknowledgment, *I do not yet understand the meaning of it.*

First, As we read it, the Text seems to carry an harsh connexion with the words fore-going. There *Job* queries, *Is my strength the strength of stones?* And yet immediately to say, *Is not my help in me?* sounds incongruous. For if he had help in him, he had strength in him, and such as might well be called, the strength of stones, extraordinary strength. So then, *Job* having said with his last breath, *that he had no such strength*; how is it, that here he should say, and more strongly affirm, that he had such strength, so much this question implies; *Is not my help in me?* As if he had said, do not I know which way to help my self? How to extricate my self out of this condition?

Besides, how is this a truth? For there is no man that hath his help in himself, not help enough in himself for any natural work, much less for any spiritual work, and most of all less for the holy carriage of their heart under affliction, or to deliver himself from it. Man hath no help in himself. The voice of the Church is, *Our help standeth in the Name of the Lord*; and the voice of *David* was, *The Lord is my helper*; how then doth *Job* say, *Is not my help in me?* Mans ruine is of himself, but how unlike is this to the voice of truth, to say, *My help is in my self*? We can undo our selves fast enough, but we cannot repair and make our selves up again.

Nor can any creature be our help, no Man, no Angel can be our help. God reproveth the Jews, *Isa.* 31. *For going down to* Egypt *for help*, though they were a strong people: *Certainly it is as bad, for a man, to make himself his help, as to make another man his help.* How then shall we give a wholsom understanding of these words, *Is not my help in me? And is wisdom driven quite from me?*

Nonne auxilium meum in me? sc. fuit. Vatab. *Nonne quoad potui me juvi, minimè fui pusillanimus, me quoad fieri potest & erigo & sustento.*

For the clearing of it. Consider the divers readings. Some thus, *Was not my help in me*? And so they make the meaning to be this; Did not I help my self, as much as I could? Was I faint-hearted and cowardly? Did I sink as a man of a poor spirit under the burden? Did not I put my self forth to the uttermost that I could, to stand under these troubles and afflictions? There is much in that, for some men do not help themselves as they might, but their own spirits sink, and their hearts fail; yea, their hearts fail before their strength fails. *Job* disclaims this, I did not so, I helpt my self while I was able, I put out the utmost of my power, to bear and set a good face on't, as long as ever I could, *Was not my help in me*?

Nonne in ipso confidebam, sed adjutorium a me recessit, negavit me misericordia & visitatio Domini despexit.

The *Septuagint*, with the *Greeks* in general, refer these words to God, making *Job* speak thus, *Did not I trust in him? But my help is departed from me, and the mercy of the Most High hath with-drawn it self from me.* As if he had said, *I never put my trust in my self, nor did I promise my self great matters, as from my self; for, alas! What is my strength? I am acquainted well enough with mine own frailty, but that which I only trusted to, hath left me; I trusted unto God, and unto his help, now he seems to forsake and withdraw his assistance from me.* But I leave this with the Authors, it hath little authority with me, or sutableness to the course and tenour of *Job*'s spirit under these afflictions.

The *Vulgar* translates the whole verse negatively, and so it makes a plain and good sence. Whereas we read it interrogatively, *Is not my help in me?* &c. He reads it thus, *Behold, my help is not in me, and my friends who should help me, are departed from me*; That which we translate wisdom, *Is wisdom departed from me?* He translates friends, *my friends, who should be my helpers, are departed from me.* And so the meaning of all is, as if *Job* had said, *I cannot help my self, and they who should, have deserted me.* And so connects or joyns it with that, which went before; *What is my strength, that I should hope? my strength is not the strength of stones; there is no help in me, and they who should help me, are departed from me*; I was once an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame (*Chap.* 29 15.) *When a man hath no help in himself, he may have it in another*; If a man want an eye, he may have an eye of his neighbour; and if he want a hand, his friend may be a hand to him; but (saith *Job*) they that should be *eyes and hands*, helpers unto me, are gone and departed from me.

Ecce non est auxilium mihi in me & necessarii quoque mei recesserunt à me. Vulg.

There is yet another rendring, which makes a very clear sence; *What though I have not help in me, is wisdom driven quite from me?* Though I have no strength, and so no help in my self, wisdom is not therefore driven quite from me. As if he had said, *Will you conclude that I am a wicked man, an hypocrite and a fool, because I am not able to help and deliver my self out of these troubles?*

An non auxilium meum in me quo me tueri possim ac defendere, innuit innocentiam suam ac vitæ integritatem, quâ nunquam destitutus fuit, aut rectam rationem & sapientiam quâ postea Tubal Appellat. Drus. *An judicio & ratione destituor ut dignoscere nequeam recta ab insulsis qualia sunt verba vestra, non sine mentis inopia?*

Fifthly, Consider the words as we translate them, with which most of the Rabbins and Jewish Writers concur, only they usually express the Text affirmatively, we interrogatively, yet both equivalent, and meet in the same meaning. Our Question, *Is not my help in me?* is to be resolved into this affirmation, *My help is in me*; and the latter branch, *Is wisdom departed from me?* into this negation, *Wisdom is not departed from me*: *Job*'s sence may be taken thus; *Have not I that in me, which is, and will be a help unto me, notwithstanding all the objections and assaults which you make against me? Have not I that in me, which may furnish me with wisdom to answer all the exceptions which you have taken at my complaints?* Mr. *Broughtons* translation favours this sence very much, *Have not I my defence? and is judgment driven away from me?* Though I thus complain, and desire death, yea renew my desire; *Have not I my defence? Have I nothing to say, why I made this request? Have I no Argument to help my self, and bear up my spirit under the weight of these calamities? Is wisdom quite departed from me? Do you take me for a man deserted of God, deserted of his spirit, and deserted of my own wisdom and understanding too; because I am deserted of the world, and destitute of outward comforts?* And so *the help* which *Job* knew he had in store, was the innocency and integrity of his heart, *Is not my help in me?* I have no help, no strength, no comfort in my flesh? what is my flesh? *My flesh is not of brass*, but have I no help in me neither? my outward man is destroyed, my house of clay is almost battered down, tottering, falling it is; but have I nothing within to help at a dead lift? have I no grace, no hope, no testimony of a good conscience, no witness in my self? Do you think me clean disrobed and stript, and emptied of all wisdom and comfort? *Hath the Devil, think you, robbed me of my grace? Have the Sabeans plunder'd and spoyled me of my understanding? Is not my help within me*, notwithstanding all the troubles that are upon me? Thus the interpretation is fair and clear, that when all his outward comforts were gone, when the strength of his flesh could hold no longer; yet then he had help within him; and his spirit could bear, though his flesh could not. Grace can hold out beyond Nature; and when bodily strength can do no more, wisdom comes in with her *Auxiliaries*.

Is not my help in me? and is wisdom departed from me?

The word [Wisdom] in the Hebrew, is of various significations, as was touched, *Chap.* 5. 12. Here one renders it, *The Law is not departed from me.* As if his meaning were, I never forsook the Law of God. Another thus, *Was my duty driven from me?* As if his meaning were, I ever kept close to the rule of my place and calling. A third, *Is my substance driven from me?* So a fourth, *Is my ability of subsisting gone from me?* As if he had said, Cannot I live, because I have not the world to live upon? To

תושיה *Significat legem, sapientiâ substantiam. Et lex repulsa est à me?* Bagn. *Numquid officium impulsum fuit à me?* Vatab. *Num subsistentia impulsa est à me?* Regia. *Quid facultatis subsistendi mihi distituit?* Tygur.

which ſence thoſe words of Chriſt are appliable, *Luke* 12. 15. *The life of man conſiſts not in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſeth:* All which Interpretations meet to make up a compleat Apology of *Job*'s piety, conſtancy, patience, and flouriſhing reſolutions in his dying, withering condition. The *Sabeans* drove away his cattel, but they could not drive away his underſtanding; they offer'd violence to his ſubſtance, but his reaſon and his graces were untoucht. Hence Obſerve,

First, *Then when all outward helps depart from a godly man, he hath ſomewhat abiding in him, to help and ſtay up his heart.*

As when the outward glory and ſtrength of the Church is utterly decayed, *Yet* (the Prophet tells, *Iſa.* 6. 13.) *in it ſhall be a Tenth, as a Teyle-tree, and as an Oak whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves, ſo the Holy Ghoſt ſhall be the ſtrength thereof.* Thus alſo, when the outward glory and ſtrength of any true member of the Church, is utterly decayed; even then, he ſhall be as an Oak, his ſubſtance ſhall be in him, the ſeed of holineſs ſhall be his ſubſtance. *Is not my help in me?* I know my eſtate is gone, my beauty is gone, my ſtrength is gone, the ſtrength (I mean) of my fleſh, yet I have inviſible ſupports, ſomewhat unſeen to truſt unto. It is the comfort of believers, that they have an eſtate, riches and poſſeſſions, lying as far beyond the reach of mens power, as their eye; and as far beyond the reach of Satans malice, as either. When they feel nothing but pain in the fleſh, when nothing but weakneſs inhabits the *houſe of clay*, the outward man; then the *inward man* is renewed with ſweet refreſhings, and ſtrong conſolations *day by day*. *The ſpirit of a man* (of a godly man) *will bear his infirmities, when his body cannot.* The ſtrength of nature is not *the ſtrength of ſtones, nor is it the fleſh of braſs*; but the ſtrength of grace is ſtronger then the ſtrength of ſtones, and the ſpirit is more durable then braſs: Grace wears not out by uſing, nor doth it ſpend by imploying: *Afflictions are but the higher ſervices and employments of Grace.* A ſtock of grace is an inexhauſtible treaſure, and a good heart aſſures us better then the bars of a Caſtle. Faith and a good conſcience, are (under Chriſt) our beſt helps in trouble; they are friends that will never forſake us: They are to us as their Author, who hath promiſed that he will not. Grace is our participation with the *Divine Nature*, and grace participates with the Divine Nature in this, it is an unchangeable good, an everlaſting comfort.

And yet we muſt take this warily, grace and holineſs, faith and a good conſcience, are not to be truſted upon, no more then riches or any outward means. *We may make an idol of our faith, and a vain thing of a good conſcience.* The meaning then is, faith and a good conſcience are our beſt helps and friends, becauſe faith carries us unto Chriſt who is our beſt help. Faith pitches upon Chriſt, and a good conſcience feaſts us in the favour of God. Faith alone is no help, but faith is our help, becauſe it is not alone: Grace left alone, would be our ſtrength, but little more then nature is; and our ſpirit little more then the fleſh: And therefore our comforts are not to be reſolved in this; That we have grace in our hearts: but into this, That we and our graces are in the hands of Chriſt. Faith can live no where but upon Chriſt; that which faith reſpects as our help, is Chriſt, in whom we believe, not the act of believing. We are helped by the grace within us, but the grace within us, is not our help. Obſerve,

Secondly, *A godly man in the darkeſt affliction or night of ſorrow, finds a light of holy wiſdom to anſwer all the objections of his enemies, and the ſuſpitions of his friends.*

Is wiſdom departed quite from me? Do you think I have nothing to ſay? nothing to reply by way of apology for what I have done or ſpoken?

Though *Job* had many afflictions upon him, and friends againſt him, yet ſee how he recollects himſelf, *Is not my help in me?* He makes out the goodneſs of his cauſe in the midſt of a thouſand evils, and can plead his own integrity in the throng of many jealouſies and contradictions. *Is not my help in me?* Do you think you have ſo daunted me, that I am not able to make out my own eſtate? or that I know not what I am? The truth is, ſometimes God leaves his ſervants in ſo much darkneſs, for their trial and exerciſe, that they cannot ſee their own eſtates, but cry out, they are loſt and undone; many a good ſoul cannot reflect upon his graces, or get his heart into any communion with Chriſt in promiſes. *This is walking in darkneſs, and ſeeing no light. As our ſins are ſometimes ſecret to us, ſo alſo our graces may.* But let a man be encompaſſed with never ſo many afflictions, yet if his ſpirit be free, he is able to judge of his own intereſts, through all the black clouds which hang over him, through all the diſtractions and confuſions that are about him. *The eye of faith is uſually quick in a dark night. And while trouble is near at hand, beholds Chriſt near at hand. He can never be without help, who carries his help about him, or within him.* Nor can he utterly want counſel to direct him, whoſe heart is a Counſel Table, where Chriſt (the wiſdom of God) is ever Preſident in the Chair. My worldly comforts are quite driven from me, but wiſdom is not: I am afflicted, and therefore ſhould not be thus ſuſpected, but pitied.

Verſ. 14. **To him that is afflicted, pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend; but he hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty.**

This verſe begins the third Section of the Chapter, wherein *Job* draws up a ſtrong charge againſt his friends, for their uncharitableneſs. See the progreſs and links of this Diſcourſe.

First, He refuted and anſwered their objections againſt him, from the firſt to the eighth verſe.

Secondly, He renewed his complaint, which was the ground of all their objections, from the eighth verſe unto the end of the thirteenth.

Here at the fourteenth verſe he begins a charge againſt his friends of unkindneſs, indiſcretion, yea of cruelty in managing this diſpute againſt him. He giveth it firſt in general, or by way of preface; *To him that is afflicted, pity ſhould be ſhewed from his friend. But he hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty:* As if he had ſaid, *You ſhould have dealt otherwiſe with me then you have, in this caſe; though (bleſſed be God) I find help within me, God hath given me the light of his Spirit, and wiſdom to diſcern my own condition, yet it is no thank to you: I have found no help in my friends, you have dealt unfriendly with me: you ſhould have pitied me, but you have oppoſed me, and ſo forſaken that duty which the fear of the Almighty teaches.* He proceeds to illuſtrate this more particularly, by way of ſimiltude, comparing his friends to a brook, whoſe waters fail when we are a thirſt, or when there is moſt need of water.

To him that is afflicted.] The word ſignifies, *Him that is melted:* And the reaſon is, becauſe affliction diſſolves the ſpirit of a man, and (as it were) melts his heart, therefore it is called the *fire of affliction*: To be diſſolved or melted, and to be afflicted, are the ſame. And that effect is aſcribed to fear, and trouble of ſpirit, ariſing from affliction, *Pſal.* 22. 15. *My heart* (ſaith *David*, a type of Chriſt) *in the midſt of my belly, is like melting wax*: By reaſon of the heat and greatneſs of his trouble, and the anguiſh of his ſpirit, he was as mettle melted in a furnace. At the defeat of the *Iſraelites* before *Ai*, it is ſaid, *the hearts of the people melted, and became as water*, Joſh. 7. 5. And in *Pſal.* 6. *verſ.* 6. *David* cryes up the exuberance of his ſorrows, by this word, *I melted or watered my couch with tears.* Thus the Prophet threatning a day of great fear againſt *Jeruſalem*, tells them, *They ſhall be, as when a ſtandard-bearer fainteth*, Iſa. 10. 18. When the battel waxes hot, and a vanquiſht army is running and crying for quarter, the *ſtandard-bearer* is in greateſt danger, all make up to him, and then he *fainteth*, or *melteth* away with fear. * Tributes and taxes are expreſt in the Hebrew by a word coming from this root, becauſe if heavily impoſed, they melt away the eſtates of a people. † It is a witty obſervation, that whereas ſome of the Papiſts conceive their word [*Maſs*] was derived from this Hebrew word [*Maſſas*] which ſignifieth to melt; one of ours anſwers, let it be ſo: It ſuites this ſence of the word exactly, and the effect of that abominable Idolatry; for the *Maſs hath diſſolved and melted away truth and piety out of the Popiſh territories.*

מסס *Solvit, diſſolvit, liquidum & fluidũ reddit. Sic mea perpetuis liqueſcant pectora curis.* Ovid. Pont.

* *Tributum ſic dictum, quia paulatim liqueſcere facit facultates, maxime ſi nimium imponatur.* Buxtorf.

† *Quidam pontificii eam-ſcilicet voluntſuam Miſſam hac voce Hebraica fuiſſe appellatam; Recte quidem per pietas omnis liquefacta eſt & diſſoluta.* Rivet.

To

חסד *Pietas, bonitas, benignitas, & per Antiphrasin impietas, crudelitas ex Chaldaicæ linguæ usu.*

To him that is afflicted [pity should be shewed.] That word *Pity* in the Hebrew, signifies a sacred sweet affection of mercy, benignity, goodness and piety: And by *contraries* (in which sence words are often used in that language) it notes, First, Reproach, *Prov.* 14. 34. *Sin is* (*Chesed*) a reproach to any people: Secondly, Impiety and cruelty, harshness and severity: Thirdly, It signifies any abominable wickedness (*Levit.* 20. 17.) where *Moses* speaking of incest, incest between brother and sister, calls that abomination by this word (*Chesed*) *A wicked thing. That may have a good name, the nature whereof is so ill, that it is not to be named.*

Further, the word, as we translate, imports more then a bare act of pity or commiseration; as suppose a man see his brother in misery, compassionates him, but relieves him not; this is no pity. Such the Apostle *James* describes, in *Chap.* 2. *vers.* 15. *If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and you say unto them, Be filled, be warmed, be clothed:* Poor creatures, ye are hungry, ye are naked, I pity you, I am sory to see you thus; be filled, be cloathed, I wish it were otherwise with you; and yet in the mean time, he gives them nothing wherewith either to cloath or feed them. Is this fulfilling the law of love? Is this charity? Nothing less. The pity here spoken of, is not a verbal pity; our saying to a brother in trouble, be comforted, or, I would course were taken for you, I wish you well with all my heart, ; and so we bestow a mouthful of good words, but not so much as a morsel of bread, or a cup of cold water. Good words alone are cheap charity to a mans expence, and they are so cheap in Gods esteem, that they will not be found of any value at all in the day of reckoning: good words, not realized, if they be found any where, will be found in the treasury of wrath. This is not the pity *which* (*Job* teacheth us) *should be shewed to him that is afflicted.* The Apostles question shakes such out of all claim to this Grace, 1 *John* 3. 17. *Whosoever* (saith he) *hath this worlds goods, and seeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how doth the love of God dwell in him?* Though a mans mouth be open with good words, yet if he shut his bowels from good deeds, there's no love to God or man hous'd in that mans heart. *It is no pity* (*to speak of*) *only to speak pity*; and therefore the Apostle adds, *ver.* 18. *My little children, let us not love in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth*; that's the true meaning of this word, *To him that is afflicted pity should be shewed*; but you (my friends) have not given me so much as the sound of pity; you have not bemoaned me, much less have you relieved me, which is the substance of pity, real pity: you have not loved me in tongue, giving me good words, much less in deed and in truth. Deed-pity is both the duty and the disposition of a godly man; therefore this word (*Chesed*) in the concrete, is often used in Scripture, to signifie a godly man; he is one that hath obtained much grace and pity from the Lord, and he is kind, gracious and pitiful unto men. The holy Proverb assures us, *That a good man is merciful, pitiful to his beast*, but much more to a man; and most of all to a godly man who is his brother in the neerest bond. And it is considerable how this word was used by way of distinction among the *Jews*, who cast their whole people or nation into three ranks, (and it is grounded upon *Rom.* 5. 6, 7. Where the Apostle alludes to those three sorts.) First, There were (*Reshagnim*) ungodly men, the prophane rabble. Secondly, There were (*Tsadikim*) *righteous men.* And thirdly, There were (*Chasidim*) *good men*, or pitiful men. *Scarcely* (saith the Apostle) *will one die for a righteous man*, for a man fair and just in his dealings? peradventure (for one of the *Chasidim*) for *a good man some one may chance to die*: He that had been pitiful, might (haply) find pity; and having done so much good in his life, all would desire he should live still. But *herein God commended his love to us, that while we were yet sinners* (*Reshagnim*) in the worst rank of men, *Christ died for us.* No man had either love or pity enough to die for them who had so much impiety. The farthest that the natural line of mans pity can reach, is to do good to those who do him good, or are good.

Pity, notes out such a sort of men, and such a sort of actions as are fullest of love, of bowels of brotherly kindness and compassion; hence the *Stork*, which by divers of the Ancients was put for the *Emblem of love and benignity*, is expresst in the Hebrew by this word, *Lev.* 11. 19. The Stork is very tender toward her young ones, and her young ones are as tender of her when she is old, as Naturalists have observed. So then, this word imports the height of all offices and affections of love from man to man, especially from Christian to Christian, in times of trouble, and cases of extremity. *This pity you should have shewed me*, saith *Job*.

Antiqui vocant Ciconiam pietatis cultricem. Ciconiis pietas eximia est. Sol. 2

But he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.] That is, he forsakes all godliness, goodness and religion; fear takes in all that's good; and so it is conceived, that *Job* retorts the words of *Eliphaz* in the fourth Chapter, *Is this thy fear?* or, *where is thy fear, thy religion?* Now *Job* saith, *Is this your fear? You have forsaken the fear of the Almighty. Is this your Religion, to deal so harshly with a distressed friend, or to give him such cold comfort? Surely you have forsaken that fear of the Almighty, which you have charged me with.* Have not I reason to ask, *Is this thy fear?* or to conclude, *You have forsaken the fear of the Almighty.*

These words are diversly rendred. Some thus, *He that takes away pity from his friend, hath forsaken the fear of the Almighty.* And that's a truth, and a good sence; though not so clear to the letter of the Text.

Qui tollit ab amico suo misericordiam, timorem Domini derelinquit. Vulg.

Mr. *Broughton* joynes this with the former verse, *By him whose mercy is molten toward his friend, and who leaveth the fear of the Almighty.* So referring this (*melting*) to mercy, and not to the man, joyning it to the former thus, *Have not I my defence, and is judgment driven away from me, by him whose mercy is molten away toward his neighbour, and who leaveth the fear of the Almighty?* As if *Job* had said, *Eliphaz, dost thou think thou hast driven away all wisdom from me by thy dispute? dost thou think that I have lost my reason, as thou hast lost thy pity? Thou thinkest wisdom and understanding have forsaken me; but it appears by thy dealings, that thou hast forsaken the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom.*

An dissoluto à sodali suo convitium, & quod timorem omnipotentis deseruerit? An hoc amicitiæ jus? &c. *ut nunc ego à vobis audio.* Merc.

Thirdly, It is rendred in the contrary sence. The word (*Chesed*) being taken for reproach and harsh dealing, and so the meaning is made out with a kind of admiration, thus; *Should reproaches be cast upon a man that is afflicted, from his friend? should he be told that he hath forsaken the fear of the Almighty, and that wisdom is driven from him? Do you think I am not able to discover your dealings? should you go about to reproach me in this condition? should you tell me thus harshly, that I am departed from the fear of God? Is this think you, a fair carriage towards me, when you saw me melted and afflicted, you should have given me sweet and comfortable words, not reproachful words.*

Job (according to this sence) found his friends dealing with him as the *Jews* with Christ, to whom being athirst, they gave vinegar to drink; or, as *David* in the type speaks, *They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink*: here seems to be a like meaning; you have given me reproaches in stead of comforts, slandered me in stead of refreshing me; and is this the course you should take? As *Absolom* said to *Hushai*, 2 Sam. 16. 17. *Is this thy kindness to thy friend?* when he seemed to fall away from *David* unto him. So *Job* might speak to *Eliphaz*, *Is this thy kindness to thy friend, to load him with reproaches, when you see him overladen with afflictions?*

Qui tabescit ab amico suo probro, etiam timorem omnipotentis relinquet? Fœlices sortes videntur sapere, miseri desipere.

A fourth thus, *Shall he that consumes by reproaches of his friend, forsake the fear of the Almighty?* The meaning whereof is this, Do you think that all men, whose riches and comforts are lost, have lost their reason and judgment? And do you think that they who are reproach'd by men, do not fear God? The world commonly judges none wise but those that are rich; and that they fear God most, who rejoyce most. But my practice and example (I doubt not) shall confute that opinion, and give all the world to know, that a man consumed and spent by the reproaches of men, and the stroaks of God, may yet fear God, and keep up his stock to the full in holiness and wisdom.

Fifthly, This melting is referred, not to the pity of his friends, but to *Job* melting or consuming, by that which they called pity; thus,

Contabescens charitas, non tam dicitur ergà quem socii charitas contabescit, quam qui per socii charitatem præpositam (scilicet) & sine scientia exercitam contabescit. Cocc.

Shall he be charged to have forsaken the fear of the Almighty, who consumes by the charity of his friends? that is, who is more afflicted by the counsels which his friends

(in

(in love) give him, then by all his other afflictions. As *the mercies of the wicked are alwayes cruel* (Prov. 12. 10.) ſo ſometimes the mercies of the godly are; eſpecially when they give prepoſterous and indiſcreet counſel; and this interpretation ſuits well with the title which *Job* gave his friends, *Miſerable comforters are ye all*, Chap. 16. 2. That is, you have done your good will to comfort me, but God hath not ſhewed you the way, nor given you the tongue of the learned, that ye might know how to miniſter a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary; and ſo notwithſtanding all your good intentions, ye have added to my miſeries.

Hunc diſſolutũ (præ doloribus) ab amico ejus (exhibenda) miſericordia (derelinquit) & (eundem diſſolutum) timor Saddai derelinquit.

A ſixth thus, That pity which friends ſhould ſhew this man melted with afflictions, hath forſaken him; but hath the fear of the Almighty forſaken him alſo?

Horum duorum verſiculorum terminos ita digerimus, ut in poſteri, vox diſſolutus ſit maſculini generis, & accuſativi caſus, regaturque à verbo derelinquit: cujus duo nominativi ſint, miſericordia & timor Saddai, illa vero diſſolutus ſit Job *loquens de ſeipſo in tertia perſona, Apparet ex hac explicatione* ל *cum nominativo, ut in* ולשרים Iſa. 31. 1. & Ezra 1. 5. Coc.

The meaning whereof may be made out to this effect, as if *Job* had ſaid thus, You plainly ſee, that there is no help in me, for my pains and unceſſant troubles have quite bereaved me of all that ſtrength, upon which I ſhould naturally ſubſiſt; and as for you (my friends) that pity and compaſſion which you ſhould afford a man thus melted with ſorrows, is quite fled and gone from your hearts and lips. But what then? Is the fear of God departed alſo from this ſorrowful ſoul? It is confeſs'd, ſtrength is gone from my body, and I ſee pity towards me is gone from your ſouls. O how miſerable then were I, if I ſhould go from my God, and forſake his fear! You ſhall ſee, that though the pity of men hath forſaken me, a melted man, yet (as you object) the fear of God hath not.

Diſſoluto à ſocio ejus benignitas eſt, ſc. impendenda, alioqui timorem Omnipotentis deſerit. Druſ.

Vau apud Hebræos variè ſumitur, & interdum pro alioqui.

A ſeventh reading, varying from ours only in a word, gives the ſence very fair and eaſie. *To him that is afflicted, or melted, pity ſhould be ſhewed by his friend, otherwiſe he forſakes the fear of the Almighty.* Whereas we ſay, [*but he forſaketh*] this tranſlation ſaith, [*Otherwiſe he forſaketh*] *the fear of the Almighty*; that is, if a man do not ſhew pity to his friend in affliction, that man ſheweth that he hath forſaken the fear of the Almighty. Thus, as I hinted at the entrance of this paſſage, Interpreters are much divided about the Grammatical conſtruction of theſe words; there is a truth in every ſence given, and their variety may teach us to adore the fulneſs of the holy language, which leads our thoughts ſo many wayes, as alſo to be humbled for our own blindneſs of mind, and narrowneſs of heart, to ſee or comprehend the mind of God fairly written to us.

But I take the laſt to be the cleareſt meaning of *Job* in this paſſage, and that, to which moſt of the former are reducible, and therefore ſtaying upon this ſence, I ſhall give two or three Obſervations from it.

Firſt, *It is the common duty of friends, and the ſpecial duty of godly friends, to pity and help one another in affliction.*

I ſay, to pity and help (for that's the compaſs of the word) we have not done our duty in pitying the diſtreſſed, unleſs we come to real aſſiſting them. We ſatisfie not our obligation to the bond and law of love by giving comfortable words. As that faith, which is alone without works, doth not juſtifie us; ſo that pity which is alone without works, doth not juſtifie our faith; ſuch empty pity will go for little better then cruelty, and not to help, will be interpreted oppreſſion. *Word-pity is but the leaf of love, Deed-pity is the fruit of it.* As we ſhould *labour to be filled with all the fruits of righteouſneſs, which are by Chriſt*; ſo with all the fruits of love, of compaſſion, and of tenderneſs, for theſe alſo are by *Jeſus Chriſt, unto the glory and praiſe of God*, Phil. 1. 11. Obſerve,

Secondly, That, *the fear of God is ever joyned with love to our brethren.*

True religion (that we mean by fear) hath a double bond in it, a bond of obedience to God, and a bond of love to men. The Apoſtle puts ſo much of religion in the latter, that in one place he makes it all religion, the very definition of religion, *Jam.* 1. 17. *Pure religion and undefiled before God* (what is it?) *It is this, to viſit the fatherleſs and the widow in their affliction.* This is religion and pure religion, that is, this is a great branch of religion, and a ſpecial fruit, which ſprings from that goodly tree, Religion. To viſit the fatherleſs, is more then to look upon them, and to ask them how they do: To viſit them is to help them: It is like that viſit (in its proportion) which Chriſt made into the diſtreſſed world. He viſited and redeemed his people, or he viſited his people to redeem them. And the fatherleſs, to whoſe viſit religion leads us, are not only poor children, or Orphans, whoſe parents are lately dead, and they not able to ſhift for themſelves; but the fatherleſs are all the afflicted, who want our help, or patronage. Every helpleſs and comfortleſs ſoul is as an Orphan without parents, as a widow without an husband, *To relieve ſuch is pure religion.* In the 1 *Joh.* 4. 20. the Apoſtle makes that an everlaſting conviction againſt any man, that he loves not God, if he loves not his brother; *If a man ſay he loveth God, and hateth his brother,* (there is no *medium* in this point, between hating and not loving, or between hating and not helping, if it be in our power) *he is a lyar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath ſeen, how can he love God whom he hath not ſeen?* *Job* puts it ſo here, you ſhould ſhew pity to your friend in affliction, but you forſake the fear of the Almighty; and where the fear of God is not, the love of God is not. *Love to God is viſible in love to man.* And in affliction the love of man to man is made moſt viſible. *A true friend can hardly be diſcovered in proſperity, and a falſe friend can hardly be hid in adverſity.* Obſerve,

Laſtly, *It is not enough, not to be cruel to, or to grieve the afflicted.*

We muſt ſhew them favour, and do them good. The light of nature condemns the oppreſſor, and the light of Religion condemns them who ſhew no pity.

VERS. 15, — 22.

My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook, and as the ſtream of brooks that paſs away;
Which are blackiſh by reaſon of the Ice, and wherein the Snow is hid.
What time they wax warm, they vaniſh: when it is hot, they are conſumed out of their place.
The paths of their way are turned aſide; they go to nothing, and periſh.
The Troops of Tema looked, the Companies of Sheba waited for them.
They were confounded, becauſe they had hoped; they came thither and were aſhamed.
For nowye are nothing; ye ſee my caſting down, and are afraid.

JOB having in the former verſe begun to charge his friends with unkindneſs, proceeds in this context to illuſtrate his charge by a ſimilitude, to make their unkindneſs yet more notorious and viſible, he ſets it out by things which are viſible: that ſo their own eyes or experiences might convince them, as well as his diſcourſe. The whole ſimilitude is extended from *verſ.* 15, to 21. The ſum of all is this, That *Job* had found his friends like thoſe brooks which hold leaſt water when there is moſt need, and greateſt enquiry for water; they gave him no comfort when he was nothing (to the eye) but ſorrow. He was parcht and ſcorcht in thoſe hot regions and fiery climates of affliction; and they gave him not to his (taſte) ſo much as a drop of water to cool his tongue, to eaſe his complaints. That in general.

For the better underſtanding of this elegant ſimilitude, we may obſerve the parts of it.

We have here { 1. The *Protaſis* or propoſal; 2. The *Exegeſis* or explication; 3. The *Apodoſis* or application } of this ſimilitude.

Or more plainly, we have four things conſiderable in it.

1. The

1. 2. 3. 4. } The similitude is { Proposed. Explained. Confirmed. Applied.

It is, First, Proposed, *vers.* 15. *My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a brook*, &c.

Secondly, Explained, *vers.* 16,17,18. *Which are blackish by reason of Ice, and wherein the Snow is hid; what time they wax warm, they vanish*, &c.

Thirdly, Confirmed, *vers.* 19,20. *The Troops of* Tema *looked, the Companies of* Sheba *waited for them, they were confounded, because they had hope*, &c.

Fourthly, Applied to them, *vers.* 21. *For now ye are nothing; ye see my casting down, and are afraid.*

So much for the parts, now to the opening of the words

Vers. 15. **My brethren have dealt deceitfully, as a brook, &c.**

אח *Frater, propinquus, vel qui eadem professione, gente, moribus vel amicitia frater est. Etiam tribuitur inanimatis, quæ similitudinem quandã invicẽ habent.* Chem. *in Harm. Evang.* *Vera amicitia est quædam fraternitas & animorum æqualitas.*

My brethren.] The words signifie, first, a brother of the same bowels (so brother is taken in the strictest sence) a natural brother.

Secondly, A brother of the same blood, any kinsman.

Thirdly, It signifies any one that is knit to us in affection, or like us in manners and disposition.

Fourthly, It notes all those, who are bounded with us in the same Nation, or associated in the same profession, though scattered all the world over. As in Scripture that relative word *Father* is taken, not only for a natural father, but for any leader, guide, or director of others in Spiritual or Civil respects; so they who are near one to another in Civil or Spiritual respects, are called brethren, though they be never so far distant in blood or place.

And it is observable, that this word likewise is attributed to things inanimate, or without life, when they have a similitude or likeness one to another. So *Exod.* 25.20. *The Faces of the Cherubims shall look one to another.* The Hebrew is, *Each man to his brother.* And *Exod.* 26. 3, 5. The Curtains of the Tabernacle, the loops, and (*vers.* 17.) the Tenons, are all called *woman and sister*, because they were all to be of the same materials and dimensions.

אח *Frater cognationem habet cum* אחד *unus, vel* יחד *pariter, quoniã similes sunt, vel in uno conveniunt; fratres dicuntur.* אחי שנם יחד

Some Criticks observe, that the Hebrew word for a *Brother*, is of near brother-hood or alliance, with two other words, whereof the first signifies *One*, and the other *Alike*, or *Together*, to shew that brethren ought to be as *One*, and *Alike*, or *Together*: which latter is by an elegant *Paranomasia*, joyned with it, *Psal.* 133. 1. *Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*, or as we put in the margin, *To dwell even together.*

So then, the very word, whereby brethren are expressed, notes, that there ought to be a *Nearness*, a *Similitude*, a *Oneness* (if I may so speak) between them in their affections and actions. Yet (saith *Job*) these men, whose relation thus obliges them, have laid themselves out to my greatest disadvantage.

בגד *Perfidus fuit, perfidè egit, violavit fidem, vel fœdus.*

My brethren [**have dealt deceitfully with me.**] The word imports, dealing perfidiously, or treacherously in any kind, *Isa.* 21.3. *The Treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously.* And it is applied to that treachery or perfidiousness, which is the highest in civil relations, the treachery of the wife to the husband, *Jer.* 3. 20. *Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so you have departed from me*; Idolatry is the violation of our faith to Christ, and therefore often called adultery.

Fortè quod vestimentũ sit primæ hominis contra Deũ perfidiæ tegumentũ & testimonium, cum antea homo nudus fuerit, Ruæus.

This word (to note that by the way) as it signifies to deal perfidiously, in the *Verb*, and perfidiousness and treachery, in the *Nown*; so also a *garment*, or *vesture*, made up of any kind of matter or stuff. And the reason is thus given by a learned Hebrician, *Because a garment is both the cover and the witness of mans first perfidiousness and treachery against God.* Our first parents in innocency had no garment, but innocency: they were without cloathing, and wanted no cloathing; they were naked, and did not perceive their nakedness; but as soon as they departed from God treacherously, their sin told them, that is, made them feel, that they were naked; therefore they put themselves on aprons of leaves, but God clothed them with skins, and that clothing he vested in a word of that Language, which should ever mind man of the reason, why cloaths were first put upon him, namely, his perfidious and treacherous dealing with God. *That* (take it in passage) *which now so many make a matter of their pride, is a witness of their shame, their shameful rebellion, and falling away from God.*

Put these together, *My brethren have dealt deceitfully with me.* *Job* meaneth it of his three visiting friends, these (if not brethren of his blood, yet) were of great familiarity and correspondence with him; therefore he at once titles and reproves them thus, *My brethren have dealt deceitfully with me.* Hence Observe,

First, That, *there is no obligation so near, but an evil heart will break thorough it.*

My brethren have dealt deceitfully. Though I suppose *Job* here charged his brethren too deeply, if so deep as their hearts: who, notwithstanding they failed in the business they came about, yet I believe, had no intention to wrong or to deceive him: yet many have been intentionally deceived by brethren; and it is a truth in position, *That brethren will deceive.*

Secondly, Whereas he puts such an Emphasis upon it, *My brethren have dealt deceitfully with me.* As if he had said, you are not enemies, you are not strangers that speak these things, but my brethren. Note from it,

That, *as it is ill for any to deal deceitfully, so worst of all for brethren.*

It is a trouble to be deceived by any, and a sin for any to deceive, but it is worse to be deceived by those we trust. And when a brother deceives, the sin of the deceit is doubled, whether he be a brother in the flesh, or a brother in friendship, or a brother in the profession of the faith. Deceit from a brother is exceeding bad in all, but worst of all in the last. *Deceit from a brother in the faith, is more then double unfaithfulness.* *David* complains (*Psalm* 55. 12.) of the wrong he had received from such a brother, *It was not an enemy that reproached me, for then I could have born it* (the reproach had not been half so heavy or grievous unto me, if an enemy had reproached me; the wound had not been half so wounding, if an enemy had smitten me) *But it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and my acquaintance, we took sweet counsel together, and we walked to the House of God in company*; to be reproached and wronged by thee, this is the thing that lies heavy upon my spirit. God himself complains most, when they deal perfidiously with him, who are near him, his own people; he cannot expect any other of Heathens and Strangers; but when his children deal deceitfully with him, he complains of this, as much with admiration as with anger. *I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me*, Isa. 1. 2. He calls *Heaven and earth* to bear witness of this unfaithfulness. *Men are wicked beyond all reason* (not that there is reason in any wickedness, but so we speak of all excesses) *men* (I say) *are wicked beyond all reason, when God appeals against them, to things without all sence.* *David* satisfied himself in the evil measure he received from a stranger, because he had received evil from a son. As greater benefits and favours swallow up the thought of lesser; so do greater afflictions, and unkindnesses. A man hath no leasure to think of his discurtesie, who gives him ill language, when another assaults him to cut his throat. When *Shimei* railed on *David*, (2 *Sam.* 16. 10, 11.) *Abishai* heats his spirit to revenge; *What*, saith *David*, *my son which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life, how much more now may this Benjamite do it?* This stranger, one of another Tribe and Family: As if he had said, I have no reason to be much troubled, to hear a stranger speak hard words against me, when my son is up in arms against me: to hear the one curse me, when the other would kill me. *Moses* uses this argument to umpire between the two Hebrews, *Sirs, ye are brethren, why do you wrong one to another?* Acts 7. 26. It will be a mighty aggravation of sin, when God shall say, *My children have dealt deceitfully with me:* Or man, my bowels, my brethren have dealt deceitfully with me.

My brethren have dealt deceitfully, [**as a brook.**] Here is the shadow of their deceit, *Job* explains himself by a similitude, *They have dealt deceitfully.* But how? I will tell you how, *They have dealt deceitfully, as a brook, and as the stream of a brook they pass away.* I can go to the streams, and to the brooks, and shew my friends the face of their hearts to me (I am sure of their dealings with me) in those waters.

They

נחל *Significat hæreditatē, deinde fluvium, & quoniam torrens plerumque in valle labitur, accipitur aliquando pro valle.* Merc.

They are as a brook.] The word signifies both a *Brook* and a *Valley*; because brooks usually run in valleys, therefore one word expresseth both. The same word signifies also to *inherit*, and an *inheritance*: Hence some joyn all the three sences together in this one word, *A brook, a valley*, and *an inheritance*; because valleyes inherit the brooks which descend to them from the mountains; valleyes are the heirs or inheritresses of the streams which issue from the hills, *Psal.* 104. 10. The Holy Ghost describes a spring or a brook, thus, *He sendeth springs into the valleyes, which run among the hills*; hills are the original of rivers, and they *run among the hills*; hills send them down as a portion to the valleyes.

But the *Brook* here spoken of, is not such a brook as hath a spring in a hill, mountain or rock, but a brook or torrent caused by rain, or melted snow; the Text clears that meaning: *My friends have dealt deceitfully, as a brook*; a brook springing from a hill will not deceive, such a brook being fed with continual supplies of water, will give us drink continually; but a brook falling from a hill, fails quickly: such a brook the next words expres more clearly, *And as the stream of brooks they pass away.*

אפק *Aqua impetuosa & violenta quæ fluit cū vi & impetu.*

As a stream of brooks.] That is, as those torrents and overflowings of brooks; a brook hath a constant channel, and it hath an accidental channel: We see many streams running into a brook in a time of rain, and that brook swoln above its banks, sending out many streams: So that to say they are like the stream of *brooks*, is to say they are like brooks when they stream forth, or to those streams of brooks which, by waters from the clouds, are suddenly increast: These streams of brooks usually called *Land-floods*, have their spring or fountain in the clouds; which sometimes distil in soft, soaking, deawy showers, and often pour out in strong, violent stormy rains, whence these streams (which in the Hebrew are denominated from their impetuous violent strength) run violently, and spend their strength as quickly. *That which is violent cannot be permanent, much less perpetual.* We have the word, *Psalm* 126. 4. where the Church prays, *Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the South*; which some render, *As the mighty waters in the South.* Why would they have their captivity turned like those mighty floods in the South? The reason is this, because the South is a dry country, where there are few springs, scarce a Fountain to be found in a whole desart. What then are the waters they have in the South, in those parched Countries? They are these mighty strong torrents, which are caused by the showers of Heaven: So the meaning of that prayer in the Psalm, is, that God would suddenly turn their captivity. Rivers come suddenly in the South: where no spring appears, nor any sign of a river, yet in an hour the water is up, and the streams overflow. As when *Eliah* sent his servant toward the Sea (in the time of *Ahab*) he went and looked, and said, *There is nothing*; that is, no shew of rain, not the least cloud to be seen, yet presently the heavens grew black, and there was a great rain, 1 *King.* 18. 44. Thus let your captivity be turned, thus speedily and suddenly, though there be no appearance of salvation, no more then there is of a fountain in the sandy desart, or of rain in the clearest heavens, yet bring salvation for us. We use to say of things beyond our supply, Have we a spring of them Or can we fetch them out of the clouds? So though no ground appears whence such rivers should flow, yet let our salvation be as rivers in the South, as rivers fetched out of the clouds, and dropt in an instant immediately from the heavens. *Job* compares his brethren and friends to those streams of *brooks*, they came suddenly, but they are quickly down again. The comparison in the *Psalm* is made only with respect to the sudden appearance of those rivers, but *Job* applieth it to the sudden passing away of those rivers; *as the stream of brooks they pass away.* Their coming so suddenly is a great refreshing, but their sudden departure is as great a disappointment.

Nullum violentum perpetuum. Tanquam aquas validissimas. Jun.

בער *Ast præterire et penitus evanescere, quia quæ præterierunt non amplius exiſtunt.*

The word notes two things; First, motion: and secondly consumption. In both sences violent torrents *pass away*. First, they pass away with a strong motion; and then they pass away with a sudden consumption, they run so fast, that they run themselves off their legs, they come to nothing; their motion spends them, whereas the motion of a river doth not. So the word is used, *Psal.* 37. 36. *He passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.* Those things that pass away, are many times said to lose their being and their use; *He passed away, and lo, he was not.* So *Job* meaneth here, these streams pass away, and lo, they are not.

Having thus proposed this similitude, that his friends dealt deceitfully as a brook, and shewed what kind of brook he meant, those violent torrents which *pass away*; now he gives a further description of those brooks.

Vers. 16. **Which are blackish by reason of the Ice, and wherein the Snow is hid.**

Qui timet pruinam irruet super eum nix. Vulg.

The vulgar Latine puts a strange sence upon this passage, rendring it thus, *He who fears the frost, shall be overwhelmed by snow.* Which seems to be a proverbial speech, to set forth those, who shifting from one danger or extream, run into another more dangerous, like that of the Prophet *Amos*, Chap. 5. 19. As if a man did flie from a Lion, and a Bear met him, or went into his house, and leaned his hand on a wall, and a Serpent bit him. But as their translation is a corruption of the Text, so their ordinary gloss corrupts their translation. * *I feared smallest sins, but now I am punished after the rate of great sins,* Whereas indeed *Job* was ready to acknowledge that the least sin he ever committed, deserved a greater punishment then the greatest pain he felt; and yet never lookt upon any of his pains, as the punishment of his sins. But to pass that:

Elegans dictum in socios Jobi, sed minus concordat cum hebraica veritate. Drus.

* *Timebam peccata minima, nunc punior quasi pro magnis sceleribus.* Gloss.

Take the mind of *Job*, as pursuing his similitude in more words to this effect; These mighty streams are but for a while, *they pass away*: or if at any time they continue, it is not from any quality or fitness they have in themselves to continue; but as their coming is extrinsecal (not out of the ground, but from the air) so is their continuance; I grant, these great land-floods sometimes stay with us a while, not because they have any ordinary natural supply or stay, *they are only blackish by reason of the Ice*: after a great rain in Winter, a great frost comes, and then your water courses, or brooks, swelling above their channels, are surprized by cold, and cannot get away; the cold condenseth the waters, and freezeth them up, and the snow is kept close from melting: then these torrents, or streams, seem to be lasting fountains, and treasures of water.

Or take it thus, He compares those friends, who administer no comfort in trouble, to brooks, which in time of rain, when we have no need, overflow with water; but in cold Winter-weather, are lockt up with frosts, or in hot Summer-weather, are exhaled and dried up by the Sun. As it follows:

Vers. 17. **What time they war warm, they vanish; when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.**

These streams you might think living, lasting streams, or standing, fixed waters, when you saw them frozen into great mountains of Ice and Snow compact together: but stay a while, and you shall see what becomes of them; at the next thaw they are consumed out of their place: *Such friends have I*, and such is the friendship of man-kind, unless God renew the heart, or restrain it from its natural baseness.

זרב *Diffluere, diffundi.* Buxt. *Dissipari.* Vulg.

The word which we translate, to **war warm**, is used but this once in Scripture: it signifies also, *scattered*, or *dissipated*. And the reason is, because heat or warmth, dissipates and separates those things which were united or congealed. The Sun warms the streams, and then the waters, which stood on a heap, scatter and disperse. The sum of all is: These streams in winter have nothing to stay their consuming, but their hardening; and as soon as heat comes, they dissolve, and are gone, in Summer these brooks are dry. This is yet further illustrated.

Vers. 18. **The paths of their way are turned aside, they go to nothing and perish.**

What he had said before in those words, *They vanish and are consumed out of their place*, he saith again in these, *The paths of their way are turned aside, they go to nothing and perish.* That is, these streams are as if they had never been, you cannot find them in their former channels; these waters are quite spent, the Sun at a few draughts empties these vessels, and draws them dry; so that there is not a drop left, either for man or beast.

Inclinavit, percelluit.

The word which we render, **Turned aside**, signifies *to gather up or contract into a narrow compass*, as when a man of

of courage gathers or shrinks up himself; or, as we say, *buckles to a business*, that he may put out the uttermost of his strength; so *Judg.* 16. 29. When *Samson* came to the pillars on which the house stood, the text saith, *He turned himself with all his might*. It is the word of the Text) as if *Samson* would collect all the power he had into one place, to pull the pillars out of theirs. He that would do a great service, will have all his outward strength about him, or near at hand. And at such a time a man will have all his inward strength close together, and therefore puts his body into less room, if he can, that all his members may act as one. We shrink up our bodies also in sudden fear. The word is so used, *Ruth* 3. 8. When *Boaz*, that good man, awakening, found *Ruth* at his feet, and perceived there was a woman on the floor, he gathered or shrunk up himself, as a man that is afraid in his bed, will gather up his limbs nearer together, and lies in less room. In such a manner the heat gathers or shrinks up the waters.

Thus the paths of these waters (saith *Job*) are shrunk up or gathered together, as it were, into one channel, or they creep under the banks, to shelter themselves from that *great drinker, and river-drinker the Sun*; but all their subterfuges are in vain; the Sun dries up all, nothing remains; so it follows in the next words.

תהו *Vacuitas.*

They go to nothing and perish.] It is the word used, *Gen.* 1. 2. *The earth was without form and void.* There was a *nothingness* upon that confused heap before a second creation stampt a form upon it: that which is useless, is but as good as nothing. The *Jews* express an *Idol* by this word, 1 *Sam.* 12. 21. Which suits excellently with that of the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 8. *An Idol is nothing in the world.* So these streams, these rivers which seemed such goodly pleasant streams, such as might have relieved the thirsty traveller at all seasons, come to them in summer, they are gone to nothing, they are like that rude mass when the world lay undigested into parts, void and without form.

Before I come to the general Observations from the whole similitude, observe, from this description of passing streams,

That, *Things or persons cannot hold long, which are not supplied from an inward principle.*

Metaphora in signis & Hieroglyphicum clarissimè exprimens, vanitatem magnæ speciei, pietatis & charitatis quæ non ex vera fide provenit. Coc.

Job describes streams, having no spring to maintain them, the rain filled them, the cold froze them, and the warmth of the Sun emptied them. As it is in things, so in *persons*, no man can hold out either in gracious and spiritual, or just and honourable civil acts, unless he have a principle within, answerable to what he undertakes (*Job* 27. 10.) *Will the hypocrite always call upon God?* Not always; why? because he hath not a spirit (or spring) of prayer: Therefore hypocrites are well compared to such brooks, as *Job* here describes. *A failing brook is a clear embleme of a false heart, both to God and man.*

And that is the reason why regeneration is set forth by the gift of a new principle, of a new heart, or of a new nature. It is to no purpose to work a man by some extrinsecal motive, by hopes, or by fears, by threats, or by promises, by rewards or punishments, to do, or forbear good or evil: unless he have a new heart, all vanishes and comes to nothing. A regenerate person hath a *new heart, a new spirit, is a new creature, a new man*; all which notes *a lasting principle*, an everlasting frame of holiness in the main; though it may sometime decline and need repairs. *It is far better to be a rivulet, a little spring, then to be a great torrent; it is better to have a little spring of grace, then a great loud stream of profession.* It is reported by *Geographers*, in their descriptions of *America*, that in *Peru*, there is a River called the *Diurnal River*, or the day-river, because it falls with a mighty current in the day, but in the night is dry. This may seem to be a fabulous report, but the reason given (which is direct to the point in hand) makes it not only probable, but very plain; for they tell us, that this River is not fed by a fountain or spring, but is caused meerly by the melting of the snow, which lies on the mountains thereabouts; in the day-time, when the Sun is up and warm, the Snow melts; but when night comes and the Sun goes down, the Snow freezes, and so the channel dries. Thus it is with those who have not an inward principle of holiness, they may have a great flood of profession, when the Snow melts down into their bosoms, by the shine of outward prosperity; but when night and and cold, when troubles and dangers come, their waters freeze up, or pass away, and go to nothing. So much of the causes, why these streams, these water-brooks vanish, they have no spring to maintain and feed them: Rain and frost, and snow (uncertain all) are all they have to trust to.

Job having thus explained his similitude, and shewed what he means by brooks, and what kind of brooks he means; he now confirms all by an experiment. You shall see it thus, these brooks will yield nothing at a time of need, many have dried them; who are they? *The troops of Tema looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them.*

ארח *Semita, semitæ thema, cœtus hominum sive turmæ viatorum.*

The troops of Tema.] That is, the travellers who came in great companies from *Tema*, and passed through those desart Countries, where they had observed in the winter, streams and floods of water frozen, and full of snow; now in their summer travels, being parcht with heat, and distressed for want of water, they expected relief from those brooks which they had markt out for themselves, and of which they had said, These will be watering places for us, and refreshings in extreamest heat. We read often in the Old Testament of such travellers, *Gen.* 37. 25. *Behold a company of* Ishmaelites, *came from* Gilead, *with their Camels, bearing spicery and balm, and myrrhe, going down into* Egypt. Such are now called a *Caravan*. The letter of the Hebrew is, *The paths of* Tema; the path or road in which they travelled, is put for the travellers. So, *Isa.* 21. 13. *O ye travelling companies of* Dedanim! the Hebrew is, *O ye paths of* Dedanim! that is, O ye who travel in the paths of *Dedanim!* Thus here; *The wayes of* Tema, *or the troops of* Tema; *and the companies of* Sheba, waited and looked in these places for water, and (as it followeth) *they found none.*

Hos torrentes tentes designaverunt, sive pro statione ad refocillationem. Coc. *Itinera, sc. homines iter facientes.*

The troops of Tema **looked.**] Why did they look? why did they wait for those streams? They had seen plenty of water there, and therefore being thirsty, they looked and waited for water. Hence note,

First, That, *The sense of want carries us out to look for a remedie.*

The troops of *Tema* looked; After what? after the streams of brooks; why? because they were parched with thirst. They that are thirsty, will be looking for a stream, for a river; they that are hungry, will be enquiring after bread. As it is in natural, so in spiritual things; when once the soul is parched and thirsty, Oh how it longs for the rivers of mercy, for the streams of consolation! it looks and waits for them too. *As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God! my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God*, Psal. 42. 1, 2. That's the reason why *Job* instances in *Tema* and *Sheba*, because they were often distressed in their travel for want of water.

Secondly observe, That, *Probability of speeding, is ground enough of seeking and endeavouring.*

These troops of *Tema* looked, and as they looked, they searched for waters; they waited, because it was probable that they should find water where they had observed water. As (*Mat.* 21. 19.) *Christ himself when he was an hungry, saw a fig-tree afar off* (saith the Text) *having leaves upon it*: A fig-tree having leaves, in probability hath fruit also; because the fig-tree (as Naturalists observe) puts forth her fruit as soon as her leaf; therefore when Christ saw leaves upon the fig-tree, it was an argument that there was fruit too. And whereas *Mark* saith, *For the time of figs was not yet*; he means the time of in-gathering figs; so that, the tree having leaves, shewed it might have fruit growing, and the time of gathering figs not being past, both these were ground enough for the Lord Christ to go and seek fruit upon it; for in this he acted according to the rule of humane reason, not of Divine omniscience. Many object against seeking God, and humbling themselves before him: It is a thing doubtful, whether ever they shall speed, whether ever they shall find or no; they know not whether God will be merciful unto them or no; he will be merciful to some (they know) but whether they be the men, is very doubtful. I may answer such from the point, *A probability of speeding, is ground enough for seeking.* If Christ sought for fruit when he saw leaves, because it was a thing

thing probable to find it; and if these of *Tema* and *Sheba* would seek for water, because they had observed water in those places; surely then, there is ground enough of seeking unto God for mercy, though we suppose there is but a probability of having mercy. The Prophet perswades that afflicted people to fast and humble themselves, upon this ground; *who knoweth if he will return and repent?* (Joel 2.) that is, it is very probable he will return and repent. Heathen *Nineveh* is carried by the same argument, *Jonah.* 3. 9. *Who can tell if God will return?* &c. No man is sure he will not, and though we are not sure he will, yet let us venture. *A peradventure from God, is better then a promise, or an assurance from the creature: And if probability be ground enough, what ground is there in assurance and certainty?* and that is the ground we have of seeking God; if we seek to him, and wait upon him in faith, we shall be sure to find, Psal. 9. 18. *The expectation of the poor shall not perish.* The companies of *Tema* found no water, but God is a living fountain, whose waters fail not; his banks are alike filled, summer and winter; Christ is not a water-brook, but a spring of waters: We shall never miss water of life, if we seek to, and wait upon him for it; and if we believe on him, *out of our bellies shall flow rivers of living waters*, John 7. 38.

We have seen the endeavour of these troops of *Tema*: Now see how they speed.

Verse 20. **They were confounded, because they had hoped; they came thither and were ashamed.**

The sum is, they hoped to have found water there, and it grieved and repented them, that ever they had hope to find water there, because there was none to be found.

בוש *Puduit rei vel facti.*

They were confounded.] The word signifies indifferently to be ashamed or to be confounded, and to be confounded in regard of events or actions. The word is very near in sound to our English *Abashed*: It notes also a waxing pale and wan, when the colour failes and withers, *comes and goes.* If a man be failed much in what he much hoped, his countenance failes too, his visage changes, as his thoughts change, and he waxeth pale. Therefore we translate it well, *confounded.* And it is expressed by confounding, for two reasons.

First, Because the complexion is confounded at such a time, shame and blushing make a kind of confusion upon nature.

Secondly, The spirits are confounded, the heart is troubled; *Disappointment of our hope perplex a man both within and without. He is disordered quite through.* And because long delayes cause shame, therefore by a Metonymie of the cause for the effect, this word signifies to delay time (*Exod.* 32. 1.) *And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down*, &c. that is, when the people saw, that *Moses* made them *ashamed* by his long delay, *they gathered themselves together*, &c. They waited for *Moses* forty dayes, and now *Moses* had stayed so long, that they were ashamed of his stay; that is, they expected, but he came not as they expected; this troubled them. We read the word in the same sence (*Judg.* 5. 28.) *The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?* Why is his chariot ashamed? that is, why doth his chariot stay so long, as to make us ashamed of our stay? We have long looked what Trophies *Sisera* would bring home, why doth his chariot by delayes make us ashamed? Thus in the Text, these travellers are said to be confounded, because they had great hope to find water, but were disappointed; *They were confounded because they had hoped*; the latter clause carries the same sence, *They came thither and were ashamed.*

Ainsw. on Exod.

חפר *Fodit, effodit, per Metaphoram traductam à fodientibus, erubuit; nam qui erubore perfusi sunt à peccato, caput in terram demittunt, ita stat eorum in terram defixum.* RLW.

Yet there is a special elegancy in the word, *ashamed*; which signifies to dig, to dig that we may hide a thing; as it is said of the evil servant, who received but one talent that *he went and digged, and hid his Lords money*, Mat. 25. 18. And so by a Metaphor this word is translated to signifie being ashamed, because a man that is ashamed, would hide his head in a hole (as we say) if he could, he would run his head into the ground, and rather be at the pains in digging of a hole in the earth, to hide himself, then to endure the shame of shewing himself. No man loves that should appear, or to appear in that, which is his shame.

These two things, to be ashamed and confounded are often owned by the Saints in their repentance. It is best not to do any thing whereof to be ashamed; but when we have done evil it is good to be ashamed; *To hide our sins for shame, and not to be ashamed of them when they are not hid, are equal aggravations of sin.* Hence when the holy Ghost would set forth men impudent or shameless in sinning, who sinned and cared not who saw them, he saith (*Jer.* 2. 34.) *Also upon thy skirts is found the blood of innocents, I have not found it by secret search*; so we translate it, the Hebrew is, *I have not found it by digging*; as if he had said, some men are so ashamed of their sins, that when God comes to find them out, he must dig for them, because they have digged into the earth, as it were, to hide their sins; but others are so impudent in sinning, that God needs not dig to find out their sins; they are so shameless, that they let their sins lie above ground; or as the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 3. 9.) *They declare their sins like Sodom*, that is, openly. *Truth and holiness never seek corners, and sometimes sin and wickedness do not.* And as the doing of evil forbidden, causeth or should cause shame; so doth the not receiving of good expected; hence when the Lord would assure his people that they should undoubtedly receive all the good he had promised, and which they on that ground could expect, he concludes with them thus, *And my people shall never be ashamed.* Why? The reason is plain in the Text; *Ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied*, Joel 2. 26. Which is directly opposite to this in *Job.* The *Temanites* were ashamed, because being thirsty, they were not satisfied. And because Jesus Christ shall so abundantly satisfie all the hunger and thirst, and supply all the wants and weaknesses of every believing soul, therefore it is expresst under this word and notion, *Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed*, Rom. 9. 33.

Foderunt puteos, sc. ad aquam inveniendam.

Such a meaning the word bears in this text [**They were ashamed.**] That is, when they saw there was no water to be had, they would have hid themselves in the earth, or digged holes to hide themselves in for grief and shame.

And some render this word here (though to another sence) *They digged*; that is, when they saw that there was no water in the streams, then they fell a digging, to see if they could find any springs. That's a good sence. But rather take digging as before; to shew what shame would have us do, when we have done amiss, or when we miss what we would find, then we seek covert and hide our selves. Hence these two are often joyned in Scripture, *Shame and hiding, with the disappointment of hope.* Read a Text of near compliance with this in the letter (*Jer.* 14 3.) *Their Nobles have sent their little ones to the waters, they came to the pits, and found no water* (it was in a time of drought) *they returned with their vessels empty*: What followeth? *They were ashamed and confounded, and covered their heads.* Again, *v.* 4. *Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth; the plough-men were ashamed, they covered their heads.* And, *Joel* 10. 11. *The corn is wasted, the new wine is dried up*: What followeth? *Be ashamed, O ye husbandmen; howl, O ye Vine-dressers, because the harvest of the field is perished.* So that in the common language and current of the Scripture, shame is an effect of disappointment, and hiding the face, or covering the head an effect of both. Hence observe,

First, That, *Deceived hopes trouble us as much if not more then present wants.*

A present want is a present smart; but deceived hopes are a perpetual smart; and that's the reason why the burden of sorrow is so heavy, and the drought of the damned (who as *Dives* in the Parable, shall never have a drop of water) so intollerable. They (to allude to the Text) hoped to come to the overflowing streams of their former earthly delights: But alas, the *paths of the way of those brooks are turned aside for ever, they are gone to nothing and perished.* All the while they travel (and that will be an eternity) through that howling Wilderness and fierie Desart shall not meet with one Rivolet, nor taste one drop of comfort to cool their parched tongues, or refresh their enflamed bowels. *Hopes delayed, trouble; but hopes deceived, confound.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Observe from this passage, That, *Deceived hopes fill with shame. Deceived hopes make a man hide his head.*

Shame arises two wayes, either from doing a thing against common principles; or from losing a thing against common expectation. The Lord threatens the Idolatrous *Israelites*, That *they shall be ashamed of the Oaks which they have desired, and confounded for the Gardens which they had chosen*, Isa. 1. 29. Why ashamed of Oaks and Gardens? because in gardens and under shady oaks they set up and worshipped Idols, in which they trusted for deliverance and protection; therefore when destruction should overtake them, they must needs be ashamed of oaks and gardens, because their hopes were so foully deceived by them. In the same sence the Lord foretels them by the same Prophet, that they *shall be ashamed of* Ethiopia *their expectation, and of* Egypt, *their glory*, chap. 20. 5. because they had hoped for so much help from confederacies with these Nations, who in the issue would delude their hopes, and give them no help at all. Thus also he speaks historically, *chap.* 30. 5. *They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be a help.* All they who hope in any thing, save the Lord, shall as (these troops of *Tema*) be ashamed, because they have hoped, for they shall be deceived of their hopes.

And this is the reason, why hypocrites, at the last day, when Christ comes to judge them, shall be filled with shame. The reason (I say) is, because they have been so full of deluding hopes. It appears they had great hopes, because they speak great words, and make great boasts. They presume if any are to be saved, they are the men; they shew fair for heaven, *Mat.* 7. 22. *Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name, and in thy name cast out Devils?* &c. They shall say, Lord, we have done thus and thus; what doth this repetition of their great works intimate, but the greatness of their hopes? Now when Christ shall say, *I know you not*, how will shame cover their faces for ever? and how will they cover their faces for shame, wishing they might never be either seen or known. When *Jacob* had served a full apprentiship in order to his marriage with beautiful *Rachel*, and at last, through the guile of *Laban*, was put off with blear-eyed *Leah*; the holy Ghost expresseth him in a kind of passionate amazement, *And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold it was* Leah; *and he said unto* Laban, *what is this thou hast done unto me?* As if *Jacob* had been in such a distraction, that he could not tell how to express himself: and therefore saith, *What is this thou hast done unto me?* I know not by what name to call such a usage or disappointment as this. Oh, in what a case will they be at the last day, who have served out (as it were) an apprentiship in hopes of *Rachel*, the beauty of heaven and salvation; and yet when they awake at the resurrection, *Behold it will be (infinitely worse than* Leah) Hell and Damnation; how will shame and confusion of face take hold of such for ever?

So much for the letter of this similitude; the failing of those streams, exemplified in the sad experiences of the troops of *Tema*, and the companies of *Sheba*, as often deceived and ashamed as they came to them for water.

Now follows the application of the similitude, as if *Job* had said, *I have spoken in the clouds, and told you stories of foreign concernment. I tell you, my friends, I must even apply all this to you, and leave it at your doors.* As *Nathan*, when he had told *David* the parable of the poor man, and his little Ewe-lamb, which his rich neighbour took away to dress for the way-faring man that was come unto him; he (I say) brings it home to *David* in the close, saying, *Thou art the man.* So after *Job* had told a story in the general, or in a third person, about deceitful brooks, and travellers deceived by them, now he applies it to his friends, Ye, my friends, are the men I mean by these brooks; ye are they, I have all this while delineated and set forth by these unfaithful and unconstant streams of water.

חיתם לא *Fuistis non. Estis mihi nihili & vanissimi, & ut torrentes descripti.* Merc.

Verse 21. **For now ye are nothing, ye see my casting down, and are afraid.**

For now ye are nothing.] What! nothing? Ye are nothing at all unto me. Ye are no more to me in any way of refreshing, then those streams of the brook, which I even now described, were to the troops of *Tema*, for now ye are nothing. *As out of nothing comes nothing, so that is as nothing unto us, out of which nothing comes.* *Ex nihilo nihil fit. Et quo nihil fit nihil est.*

If we render it word for word according to the Hebrew, it is, *Ye were not*; you are unto me as if you had never been, or ye have deceived me in what I took you to be; I hoped for floods of comfort, for rivers of joy, and streams of consolation from you, but now I cannot find a drop, *Ye are not unto me. That man is indeed, who doth that, for which he is, or that which is expected.*

The *Chaldee* translates *Ye have been as if ye were not.* And there is a difference in the Hebrew word; for some read it with the Pronoun *Them*, most with the Adverb *Not*; but though the translation differ, yet it comes to the same sence; *Ye are them*, that is, *like to them*, like to those streams, or, *Ye are not*; that is, ye are nothing to me; as those streams were nothing, or were not to the Travellers. The phrase, *Ye are not*, imports the deceivableness of those men; *Job* thought they would be something to him; yea, they thought they would be very much to him, even as much as waterbrooks to a thirsty man; but they proved nothing at all to him: For as the word [Yea] in Scripture notes assurance, constancy, fidelity and faithfulness; so the word [*Not* or *Nay*] both in the *Hebrew* and in *Greek* signifies unconstancy and unsetledness, especially when these two are joyned together: And so it hath a clear sence with that (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) where the Apostle speaking of Christ and of his faithfulness, saith, *The Son of God was not yea and nay, but in him was yea*, that is, he was not various, inconstant and uncertain, but he was the very same; look what you have found Christ at one time, you shall find him a second and third time, yea, the same for ever: He will not start from you an inch; so *ver.* 17. of the same Chapter, *When I was minded to come, did I use lightness? or the things that I purpose, do I purpose after the flesh, that with me there should be yea, yea, and nay, nay?* that is, that with me there should be *I* and *No*, something and nothing. It is of a near importance with the words of *Job*, *Ye are no to me*; ye promised to be *I* to me, to be *yea, yea*, but now it comes to the trial, ye are *No, No* to me, that is, ye are nothing to me; ye are no such thing as I expected you would be.

Vos fuistis, quasi non essetis, Chal. לא pro ללא & est idem quod לאין *In textu Hebraeo scribitur* לא, *sed in margine notatur legendum esse* לו *ei. q. d. fuistis ei similes*, &c. *torrenti.* Drus. *Qui respondet expectationi* etiam *dicatur* etiam, & non *qui varius & inconstans.*

For ye see my casting down, and are afraid.

Ye see my casting down.] That is, *my affliction*; To be cast down, and to be afflicted, are the same. The word signifies dejection & consternation of spirit, to be *heart-falter'd* the falling of a mans mind, as well as of his estate, *Deut.* 1. 21. *Fear not, neither be discouraged*, let not your spirit or courage fall, *Job*'s casting down was in his body and goods, his spirit and courage stood upright upon their feet: Ye (saith *Job*) see my outward casting down, the casting down of my estate abroad, ye see how all is broken and lost; and now what is the help ye give me? Do ye stand to me, or lift me up now I am thus cast down? Do ye supply me with comfort, and prop me up with counsel? No, *ye are afraid your selves*: ye are so far from removing my trouble, that you your selves are troubled.

חתת *Dejectus, metaphorice territus fuit mente jacuit.*

Ye are afraid.] Their fear may be referred to his person, or to his condition; ye are afraid to come nigh me, ye are afraid I will infect you; or ye are afraid some such evil will fall upon your selves; I had thought ye had come as friends, to deliver me from my fears, and now ye are fallen into fears your selves: Thus, *Ye are not*, ye are no such thing as ye promised me; ye promised to comfort, at least to pity me, but ye do not: So the *Septuagint*, *Ye visit me, but ye are not moved with any compassion towards me.* I had been as well without your company; or, if no such men had been in the world.

Vos me visitis nulla misericordia moti. Sept.

Observe first from these words, **For now ye are nothing.**

He that is not what he ought to be, or what he promised to be, is nothing.

To be useless is (in a sence) *to be essenceless.* To be useless in the world, is to be as out of the world: A man who lives only to eat, and drink, and sleep, may be said not to live at all. What we say in our English Proverb, is true, both in persons and of actions, *As good never a whit as never the be; as good not to be, as do no good.* The Apostle *Jude* speaking of unprofitable persons (*ver.* 12.) calls them *trees without fruit*; and what then? *Twice dead, plucked up by the roots*; as if the Apostle had said, I look upon fruitless per-

ſons, as dead perſons, yea, as doubly dead, that is, *dead ſure enough*. As a man can be born but once, in one kind (*Nicodemus* argued from a truth, though not to a truth, becauſe he could not diſtinguiſh natural from *ſpiritual*, *John* 3. 4.) ſo a man can die but once in one kind. Theſe men of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks, were alive naturally, though dead ſpiritually; how then is it ſaid, that they were twice dead? They were judged *twice dead*, either, becauſe a ſpiritual death is ſo great a death, that it may well go for two; yea, one ſpiritual death is worſe then a thouſand natural deaths;

Or ſecondly, they are ſaid to be *twice dead*, becauſe they were dead both in regard of the truth of grace, and in regard of any outward actings of grace; for ſome hypocrites who are indeed dead in ſin, yet act grace in many outward fruits, as if they were alive: but of theſe perſons it is ſaid, *their fruit withereth*, and they are *without fruit*; they were not ſo much as externally active, they had no life of union with Chriſt, and they did no good with the life of their profeſſion in Chriſt, and therefore are juſtly ſaid to be twice dead. They who have leaves, and look freſh and lively, as if they had more then one life in them, yet, if *uſeleſs*, *are called liveleſs*, *and they who do nothing in the world*, *are to be reckoned no-bodies in the world*. In the Parable of the Prodigal, the concluſion is, *This my ſon was dead, and is alive*; why dead? becauſe he was unanſwerable to thoſe purpoſes, to thoſe ends for which he received life. He was a prodigal, and had deſerted his fathers ſervice, therefore his father looked upon him, as if (all that while) he had not been at all. That's the deſcription of the dead, as *Jacob* ſaid of *Joſeph* (when he concluded him torn by a wild beaſt) *Joſeph is not*; and *Rachel would not be comforted for her children, becauſe they were not*; ſo ſaith the father of the prodigal, *This my ſon was dead*, or, *he was not*; he was no help nor comfort to me. We no longer deſerve the name or reputation of *any thing*, than we do thoſe things for which we are. If we leave our duty (upon the matter) we loſe our nature, and are as if we had no being, while we reach not (at leaſt, while we reach not after) the end of our being. A heathen concludes of ſuch a man, *He hath only been, he hath not lived*. But we may from the warrant of *Job*'s Rhetorick, go a degree further, and deny that he hath been; *for he is as if he had never been, a meer nothing*.

Fuit, non vixit.

From thoſe words, *Ye ſee my caſting down, and are afraid*; Note,

That, *Some man is able to bear more then another is able to behold.*

The ſight of fearful things cauſeth fear. Further obſerve,

A fearful man will never be a helpful man.

Courage in a day of trouble, either of our own or others, is a great cure of trouble, yea a victory over it. There is one fear very good when we ſee the caſting down of our friends, *To be afraid of provoking God to caſt us down* (Deut. 17. 13. *they ſhall hear and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly*. What ſhall they hear? They ſhall hear how God hath caſt men down, or caſt down a Nation by his judgments, they ſhall hear of this and fear. How ſhall they fear? They ſhall fear to do preſumptuouſly, fear to provoke that God, who can thus caſt down men and kingdoms. *It is good to be thus afraid.* But there is a ſinful fear, when fear diſorders or unfits us to put our hands to the help of thoſe who are caſt down, and to adminiſter comfort to thoſe who are in ſorrow; ſuch was the caſting down and the fear here meant: They were ſo afraid, that they could not lend *Job* a hand, or give him adviſed counſel to ſupport his ſpirit.

I ſhall add one Obſervation from the general ſcope of the ſimilitude.

That, *An unfaithful friend fails us moſt, when we have moſt need of him.*

That's the ſum of all. In Winter, when there is water in every ditch, thoſe brooks abound with water; but in Summer, eſpecially in a dry Summer, when the *rain of the Land is duſt* (as *Moſes* ſpeaks) theſe brooks are duſt too, they vaniſh and are conſumed out of their place, they afford no refreſhing at all. When the man that went down from *Jeruſalem* to *Jericho*, and fell among Thieves, (*Luke* 10. 30.) lay in the way ſtript and wounded, even half dead, *A certain Prieſt came that way* (ſaith the Text) *and when he ſaw him, he paſſed by on the other ſide*; *and likewiſe a Levite, when he was at that place, came and looked on him, and paſſed by on the other ſide*; *but the Samaritan went to him* (not from him) *and had compaſſion on him.* *Job* ſpeaks very near this language, but fully this ſence, of his friends. They, like the uncharitable Prieſt and Levite, *paſſed by him*, as the ſtreams of *brooks they paſs away*; whereas they ſhould have been like the good *Samaritan*, a fountain, a river of ſetled, ſpringing comfort to him.

This is the great difference between the love of God, and that of moſt men; *God* is the beſt friend to us at all times, (he is beſt to us in the beſt times; if we had not him to our friend, it would be very ill with us when we have moſt friends.) But God is beſt of all to us in the worſt times, a beſt friend to us, when we have no friends; he is our ſpring when the rain falls; but he is our ſureſt, ſweeteſt ſpring, when there is neither rain nor dew upon the face of the earth. Therefore he is compared (as *Jer.* 2.) ſo in other places, unto a living fountain, where you may be ſure to find water in the hotteſt ſeaſon. This infinitely commends the love of God beyond that of men, who at the beſt, are but broken ciſterns, which leak out the comforts they are truſted with, and for the moſt part, are but like *Job*'s brooks, that turn aſide, and paſs away when we have moſt need of them.

It is obſerved of the *Samaritans* in *Joſephus*, that whenever the *Jews* affairs proſpered, they would be their friends, and profeſs much kindneſs; but if the *Jews* were in trouble, and wanted their aſſiſtance, then they got them far enough off, they would not have to do with them, or own them. *The rich hath many friends* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 14. 20.) *but the poor is hated even of his own neighbour. Worldly friendſhip ends with riches, and he that wants money, ſeldom abounds with friends.*

Ubi deficit pecunia, labaſcit & amicitia.

But conſider how far this is from the very nature of a brother, and from the Law of friendſhip. *Solomon* (Prov. 17. 17.) deſcribes a true friend, to be one who *loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity.* As if he had ſaid, This is the reaſon God hath raiſed up relations, and made men near one to another, becauſe himſelf orders there ſhall be times of adverſity, when they ſhall have need of one another. Some render the place, *A brother is born in adverſity*; as if the meaning were, that, when a man is in trouble, God raiſes up a brother to help him; or, as the *Septuagint* hath it, *A brother is born for this end and purpoſe, to help in adverſity.* Therefore a brother loſes the very end and purpoſe why he was born, if he refuſe to help thoſe who are in adverſity. *Ruth* was a true pattern of a faithful friend and brother, though a daughter; *I went out full* (ſaith the Mother-in-law) *but the Lord hath brought me home empty*; but though ſhe was emptied of the world, yet *Ruths* heart was full of love to her; *I will not leave thee, God do ſo to me, and more alſo, if ought but death part thee and me.* So ſaith faithfulneſs in friends, eſpecially in Chriſtian friends. It is one of the greateſt duties and commendations of Chriſtian profeſſion, to ſtick to, and ſtand by one another, be it foul weather, or be it fair, blow the winds high or low, let it be ſtormy or calm, ever to be the ſame. The Heathens wondred in the primitive times at the great love of the Chriſtians one to another. Let us take heed we do not put heathens, natural, carnal men to wonder, *Oh how little do Chriſtians love one another!* Let us not give them occaſion to ſay, *Oh how the Chriſtians hate one another!* How like are they at beſt, to ſtreams of brooks, who fail when their friends and brethren need the benefit of their aſſiſtance?

Let me only give you this caution, God ſuffereth men to be thus unfaithful unto men, yea ſometimes a Chriſtian brother to fail a Chriſtian brother (which is their ſin, and ought to be their ſorrow;) I ſay, God leaves them to this evil of their own hearts, that we may have a greater good out of it, then the higheſt actings of their love and faithfulneſs could eſtate us in: Namely, that we may learn to truſt upon God alone, and may better know what creatures are. *Truſt not in a brother* (Jer. 9. 4.) ſo as to let out your hearts upon him, think not you are ſafe in the love of a brother, no, not of a godly brother: The Apoſtle (1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) to draw off rich men from truſting in their riches,

Talia patitur Deus ſuis accidere, ne hominibus nimis fidant, ſed omne ſolatium, ſpem & fiduciam in ipſo ſolo vivo & vero Deo ponant. Layat.

riches, useth this argument, *Charge them that are rich, that they trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God.* Why should they not trust in riches? He giveth the reason in the Epithite, *uncertain*; they are *uncertain riches*, therefore trust them not. So we may say of men, Trust not in men, no, not absolutely in godly men; for the best of men are uncertain, possibly they may be as these streams of brooks, whose waters failed, *Psal.* 146. 3. *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Son of man, in whom there is no help.* Why not? *For his breath goeth forth* (that's one reason, he must die, he must return to the earth,) therefore trust him not. But besides that, we may say, Trust not in Princes, &c. while their breath tarrieth in them, for it is possible their help and faithfulness may go forth, though their breath doth not. Therefore trust only in the living God, he will never leave us, though men do; *God only is unchangeable*, he only hath preserved this honour without touch or stain, *Never to forsake those who trusted in him, how forlorn and forsaken soever their condition was.*

VERS. 22, 23, 24, 25.

Did I say, Bring unto me? Or give a reward for me of your substance?
Or deliver me from the enemies hand, or redeem me from the hand of the mighty?
Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.
How forcible are right words? But what doth your arguing reprove?

JOB having shadowed out his friends unfaithfulness by an elegant similitude in the context fore-going; now aggravates their unfaithfulness to him in his wants, by his own modesty, in seeking to them for supplies. *Did I say, Bring unto me? or give a reward for me of your substance?* As if he had said, I have not been burthensom or troublesom to you, I have not called for your contributions and benevolences, or sought to have my estate made up out of your purses? Why do ye charge me with impatience at my loss, as if that were it which pinches and presses me? did I ever charge you for my reparation or redemption? That (indeed) might have been, either burdensom or dangerous to you. All that I expected from you, was your comfort, and your counsel; these would not have put you to much expence; or if you could not have reacht so far as to comfort me, yet you might have forborn to contribute so largely to my sorrows, by overtaxing me with impatience, and charging me with hypocrisie.

Did I say.] I was not clamorous or importunate, no, I did not so much as open my mouth to move you in that point; I have been so far from begging, that ye have not heard me, saying, *Bring to me.*

Bring unto me?] The word is, *Give unto me*, Hos. 4, 18. *Their Princes love, Give ye*, or *Bring ye*, so saith *Job*, I did not say, Bring ye, or give ye, my spirit was not set upon money, or the repair of my losses out of your estates; I did not either write or send for your charity; you were not invited to visit me, that you might contribute to my necessity.

שחד *Propriè munus quod datur ad corrumpendū Judicē, à* חד *unus, quod unam facit dantem scilicet & accipientem.*

The word here used for a **reward**, properly taken, signifies that which is given to a Judge, to corrupt or turn him aside in judgment. One of the Rabbins gives this reason, why it notes a *Bribing reward*, because it is compounded of a word signifying *One*; and a bribe makes the giver and the receiver, the Judge and party One, or of one mind; a Judge should ever stand indifferent between both parties, till the cause be heard, but a bribe makes him One of them.

Yet ordinarily, this word is put for any gift, or help, subsidy or supply of anothers wants.

כח *Humor nativus in quo vigor corporis consistit, & opes, nam in opibus consistit potentia hominum.*

Of your substance.] The word implies, the native, natural strength, which supplies the wants, or supports the weaknesses of the body; as also the sttength of the earth, by which it puts forth fruit, *Levit.* 26. 20. And because riches are a mans civil strength, therefore the same word expresses both.

Vers. 23. **Or did I say, Deliver me from the enemies hand?**

The enemies.] Or the hand of those that have brought me into straights: for the original imports, the shutting of man up in a narrow compass, so that he knows not how to get out; he that is in the hand of an enemy, is in a straight hand. *Ahab* commands, (1 *King.* 22. 29.) *Go carry Micaiah back, and feed him with the bread of affliction*, or with the bread of straights, such bread as an enemy provides. The Greek word used by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 8. reaches this fully, *We are troubled but not distressed*, or straightned. Now saith *Job*, did I say, deliver me out of the hand or power of mine enemies, who have brought me into these straights? alluding, as is conceived, to those *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, who had spoiled his estate, and slain his servants. στενοχωρέομαι.

Or redeem me out of the hand of the mighty.

Redeem me.] That is my goods which they have carried away captive. To redeem, signifies the fetching back of a thing by price or force. Christ is a Redeemer in both sences, he redeemed or fetcht back captivated man, by compact and by price, in respect of God his Father. *We are bought with a price*, 1 Cor. 6. 20. that is, bought with a full price. Christ did not compound with the justice of his Father, but satisfied it, to redeem us; And he redeemed us by force, out of the hands of Satan, *Spoyling Principalities and Powers, and making a shew of them openly*, Col. 2. 15. As in Triumphs, the *Romans* used to do with their spoiled, captivated enemies. *Job* had not begg'd redemption of his friends, from the power of his enemies either way: Did I desire you, by compact, and by price, to ransom me? Or did I desire you to levy an Army, with power and force, to recover my estate out of the hands of those mighty oppressors.

The word [Mighty.] signifies also *terrible*; the hand of the *terrible one*: It is often applied to God, when he shews himself in terror to wicked men, *Psal.* 89. 7. *God is greatly to be feared*, Isa. 2. 19. *He shakes terribly the earth.* But most commonly, to cruel, powerful men, who make no other use of their strength, but to be a terror to innocents. The Apostle, *Phil.* 1. 28. explains this word, while he saith, *and in nothing be ye terrified by your adversaries*; that word in the Greek, answers this in the Hebrew, your adversaries are *terrible men*, men who think to beat down all with their great looks, but be not ye terrified by these terrible ones. So here, *Did I call unto you, to redeem me out of the hand of the mighty*, the terrible? out of the hand of those cruel plunderers, the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*. עֹרֵץ *Terribilis, sua potentiâ formidabilis*

Further, Some understand by the *hand of the mighty*, not the persons afflicting him, but the affliction it self, which was upon him: Trouble is sometime compared to a mighty enemy, *Prov.* 6. 11. *So shall thy poverty come, as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.* Want strips us: but is it self, not only cloathed, but arm'd; *Evils have so much life and strength in them, that they are compared to the strongest, who live, armed men.* Hence Observe, *De manu Tribulationis.* Vatab. *Puto eum Allegoricè tam graves & vehementes calamitates intelligere.* Merc.

First, *It is an aggravation of unkindness, to those, who are in want, not to be kind to them, when they are modest in asking a supply of their wants.*

Love ought to prevent asking, and should be moved to give most to them (who being in need) complain least.

Again, He speaks this to wipe off that aspersion, as if the loss of his estate were the thing which grieved and pinched him so sore. *Did I say unto you, bring me a reward*, &c.

It is an argument that a man over-loves that which he hath lost, when he is over-importunate to have his losses repaired.

If you had seen me call out unto you for an estate, then you had reason to think that the loss of my estate, was the loss of my patience.

Thirdly, Observe the temper of a gracious heart under losses and afflictions.

A gracious heart under losses: is not forward to complain to creatures, or to ask help of men.

Did I say, bring unto me, or give me a reward of your substance? He complains to God, and sheweth him his trouble, he opens his wants to God, and asketh supplies of him;

but he is very modeſt and ſlow in complaining to, or in ſuing for help at the hand of creatures.

It is not unlawful for thoſe, that are in want, to make their loſſes and wants known to men; it is a duty, rather ſo to do: only it muſt be done with caution, leaſt, when we ask of creatures too importunately, we give an argumen againſt our ſelves, that we are too much in love with creatures.

As it is reproved in thoſe Rulers before ſpoken of, *Hoſ.* 4. 18. that *they did love, give ye*; it is a crime in the rich, to love, *give ye*; and certainly it is a ſin, at leaſt an infirmity in thoſe that are poor and in want, to love, *give ye*, or to ſay as *Job* here had not, *bring to me*. *Solomon* ſpeaks of the daughters of the *horſe-leach*, that they are alwayes crying *give, give*, noting their inſatiable thirſt after blood. Some poor are alwayes crying *give, give*, which notes a very inordinate deſire after riches. *Job* is very careful to take off the ſuſpition of ſuch a blemiſh from himſelf, *I did not ſay, bring ye, or give ye me of your ſubſtance.*

It is the duty of thoſe that are full, to give to their empty brethren, it is their ſin if they give not; and it is their ſhame, if they are not moſt free in giving to thoſe, who are moſt modeſt in asking; but when God hath emptied us, we ſhould not be eager in filling our ſelves. When God takes creatures from us, we ſhould take heed of purſuing them: we ſhould not do any thing, which may argue our hearts glued to them, when the Lord hath looſen'd them out of our hands. It is an honour to a poor Chriſtian, when in his greateſt ſtraights he can approve himſelf to God and men, and can ſay as the Apoſtle (*Acts* 20. 33.) *I have coveted no mans ſilver, or gold, or apparel. It is as ſinful to covet in our wants, as it is in our abundance.* And it is as bad (if not worſe) to be greedy of the creature, when we are empty, as when we are full. *A poor man oppreſſing the poor*, Prov. 28. 3. *and coveting from the rich, are ſights of equal abomination.*

Verſ. 24. **Teach me, and I will hold my tongue: and cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred, &c.**

This and the next verſe, contain the fourth branch of *Job's* reply; and the general ſence of them, is a ſubmiſſion of himſelf to his friends, if yet they ſhould ſpeak reaſon, or diſcover his error. *Teach me and I will hold my peace*; as if he had ſaid, *Though I have to the beſt of my underſtanding, thus far acquitted my ſelf, and cleared mine own innocency; though I have, as I think, with truth and juſtice, laid this charge of uncharitableneſs and unfriendly dealing with me upon you; yet you ſhall ſee I am ready to hear you, I am teachable: if you can yet teach me, I will keep ſilence, and if you cauſe me to underſtand wherein I have erred, I ſhall do ſo no more.*

ירה: *Fecit, projecit, per metaphoram* הורה *rigavit quando transfertur ad pluviam quæ lapidũ & ſagittarũ inſtar ex cælo deſidit in terram eamq; ferit, rigat, & fœcundat. Hinc per metaphoram, ſignificat etiã docere. Quod doctrina veluti inſtilletur animis diſcentium & imbuat.*

Teach me.] The Original word notes in ſtrict ſence, to caſt a thing forth, to throw a thing as a dart or ſtone is thrown, either downward or upward, or in a direct motion forward. Hence by a Metaphor, it ſignifies *rain*, becauſe rain is (as it were) darted forth from the clouds, and caſt down upon the earth: And from hence (yet one remove further) the Metaphor is carried to ſignifie *teaching*; hence the holy Prophet is commanded to drop his word, *Ezek.* 20. 46. & 21. 2. *Son of man, ſet thy face toward the South, and drop thy word towards the South. Son of man, ſet thy face toward* Jeruſalem, *and drop thy word toward the holy places:* And the reaſon is this, becauſe Doctrines, Truths, and wholſom inſtructions, are inſtilled and caſt down among the people, or dropt into their ſpirits, as rain is caſt or dropp'd from Heaven upon the Earth: And ſo we may read the words out of the Metaphor thus, *rain down upon me*; do ye, O my friends, like clouds full of water, diſſolve and ſhowre down inſtructions upon me, and ſee if I do not receive and drink them in. And from this word, all doctrine and inſtruction in the Hebrew is called *Torah*, *Prov.* 13. 1. and *Pſal.* 1. 1. And the *Jews* by way of eminency, call the five books of *Moſes* (as alſo all the books of the Old Teſtament) the *Torah*, that is, the Law or rule of holy Doctrine, which God rained down from Heaven, and diſtilled graciouſly upon his people, for their growth in knowledge and in holineſs: And ſo a *Teacher*, from the ſame root, is called *Moreh*, Job 36. 22. *Who teacheth like Him?* who raineth like him? *there is no man can diſtil truths, as God doth. Moſes* (Deut. 32. 2.) elegantly ſets forth his preaching, by an allegory of rain and dew. *My doctrine ſhall drop as the rain; my ſpeech ſhall diſtil as the dew, as the ſmall rain upon the tender herb, and as the ſhowres upon the graſs.* And the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Heb.* 6. 7, 8. compares a taught people to ground that is well watered with rain; *For the earth which drinketh in the rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth fruit, is bleſſed; but that which beareth thornes and bryers, is rejected, and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned.* A people well inſtructed, are like that ground which is under continual ſhowres and dews.

And doctrine is fitly compared to rain, and teaching to raining; Firſt, becauſe all true and holy doctrine comes from God, as the rain doth. The rain is Gods proper gift, (*Jer.* 14. 22.) *Can any of the vanities of the Gentiles give rain?* All the men in the world, are not able to make one drop of rain; ſo we may ſay of this figurative rain of truth and holy doctrine, *Can any of the vanities of the Gentiles?* yea, can any of the moſt learned among the ſons of men give this rain? Can any man make any one truth, which hath not firſt been made above? Truth like rain comes from Heaven, it drops from beyond the clouds. *Art not thou He? O Lord our God? therefore we will wait upon Thee*, ſay they of the natural rain, *Jer.* 14. 22. and ſo we muſt in regard of the ſpiritual. Hence the word which *Moſes* uſes (*Deut.* 32. 2.) for doctrine, dropping as the rain, ſignifies *a received learning*: Holy truths are ſo called in that language, becauſe the doctrine of Religion is received from God, not deviſed by men. So the Apoſtle phraſes it (1 *Cor.* 11. 23.) *I received of the Lord, that which I delivered unto you.* And Chriſt himſelf, *As my Father hath taught me, ſo I ſpeak theſe things*, John 8. 28. That which *Nicodemus* ſaid of Chriſt, is true of every one that teacheth truth, *Joh.* 3. 2. *Thou art a Teacher come from God.* As truth it ſelf, ſo the teachers of it are from God: as a lie, and the tellers of it are from the Devil, *Joh.* 8. 44.

Accipere eſt diſcipuli, ſicut dare præceptoris לקחו:

Secondly, Like rain (as in regard of the original whence it comes, ſo) in regard of the effect: rain refreſheth the earth, when the earth is weary and faint, when the earth gaſpes and is parched, how doth a ſhowre of rain revive it? When the Pſalmiſt had ſpoken of the rain coming down upon the earth, he preſently adds this effect, *The little hills rejoyce on every ſide, they ſhout for joy, they alſo ſing.* Thus alſo a people wearied, and languiſhing, and fainting in ignorance, when they receive truths and holy inſtructions, how do their hearts rejoyce, how do they *laugh and ſing?* In the parable, *Matth.* 13. Some are ſaid to *receive the word with joy*; even they who are but formaliſts and hypocrites (for it is ſpoken of them) rejoyce and are refreſhed for a ſeaſon with the word. Truth is ſuch a gracious ſhowre, that they ſometimes receive it with joy, who have no grace. And if truth refreſh men, who are but nature, or move in ſpiritual works, but upon natural principles, how will it refreſh thoſe who have grace, and ſpiritual principles ſutable to it. *Thou, O God* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 68. 9, 10.) *didſt ſend a plentiful rain, whereby thou didſt refreſh thine inheritance when it was weary.* That's a truth in the letter, and ſome underſtand it of natural rain; but others interpret that plentiful rain in a figure, for the rain of doctrine which God ſent down upon his people, when he gave the Law and dropt thoſe heavenly Oracles from Mount *Sinai* upon his people *Iſrael*, that ſhowre of the Law came indeed in a ſtorm, Thunder and Lightning, and a terrible tempeſt accompanied it; But though the thunder terrified, yet the ſhowre refreſhed; and the Saints have ever delighted in the matter of thoſe inſtructions and holy counſels given there, though *Moſes a chief among the Saints*, feared and quak'd exceedingly at the manner of giving them.

Thirdly, As rain, ſo teaching makes fruitful. The Prophet *Iſaiah* makes out this part of the ſimilitude expreſly, *Chap.* 55. 10, 11. *As the rain cometh down, and the ſnow from Heaven, and returns not thither, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater: So ſhall my word be that goeth out of my mouth*, &c. Hence alſo the people of God are compared (*Deut.* 32. 2.) to graſs and tender herbs which grow and flouriſh, which are fed and bring forth fruit, when watered with the rain. It cannot be denyed, though it be much to be lamented, that many ſouls upon whom

whom much of this rain falls, are altogether barren and unfruitful. But, Oh! How barren are those souls, upon whom not a drop of this rain ever fell! They that are deprived of these showres are under a grievous curse, even such a curse as *David* imprecates upon the Mountains of *Gilboa*, 2 Sam. 1.21. *Ye Mountains of* Gilboa, *let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you*, &c. When God saith unto a people, let there be no dew, no rain upon you, no *Moses* to drop doctrine upon you, no *Paul* to plant, no *Apollo's* to water you with the Word, this is the saddest showre of curses that can fall upon a People; as without rain, so without the Word, ordinarily, there can be no fruitfulness. You see at this time how upon a little with-holding of the natural rain, we presently fear barrenness and famine; the want of spiritual rain brings in a worse barrenness, though there are not many who fear it, or are sencible of it.

This was preach'd in a time of drought

Fourthly, The Word taught is like rain in regard of the dispensing of it. The rain comes not down alike, at all times; showres are very various; sometimes it rains softly, then we call it a still, soaking rain; sometimes we have a strong mighty rain; at another time rain is accompanied with Thunder and Lightning, while the showres descend, the great Ordnance of Heaven discharge from the clouds, and fill the Air with terror. Thus also it is, or should be in teaching: Many souls require a still, soft, quiet rain: Others must have stronger showres, mighty rains you must *pour down* upon them. A third sort must have thunder joyned with rain, they need a *Boanerges*, a son of thunder, a mixture of terror with instruction to bore their ears, and break their hearts. Those teachers mistake their work, who in stead of raining are alwayes Thundering and Lightning. As if their Pulpet were set upon Mount *Sinai*. And I believe, it is as great a mistake to think Teachers need never thunder. The word of God in all parts of it, and in all manner of dispensations of it, is exceeding useful. A Minister without teaching, is (as *Jude* speaks) *a cloud without water*; and he shall do but little good upon some, if he have nothing but *water in his cloud*. Fire sometime must mingle with the rain, and a Tempest come after or before the dewing, distilling, still voice. The word of God is compared to fire, as well as unto water. Only it must be the wisdom, and it is the duty of every Teacher, to know how to give every one his portion, or as the Apostle *Jude* counsels, *vers.* 22,23. *Of some to have compassion, making a difference, and others to save with fear, pulling them out of the fire:* A difference must be made, some are to be dealt with compassionately, and gently rained upon; others must be saved with fear, that is, they must be made affraid with Thunder and Lightning, with stormy and tempestuous doctrine. *Some spirits will not be kept out of the fire, but by casting them into the fire*; so much that Text in *Jude* imports. *Others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire*; as if he had said, your terrifying them with the fire, will be as pulling them out of the fire. A shower of spiritual brimstone (such as God rain'd on *Sodome* in the letter) is best for them, if you spare them, you destroy them.

חרש *Fodit terrã, per Metaphoram, fodit cogitatione, siluit.*

Teach me, [and I will be silent.] Or, *I will hold my tongue.* The word properly taken, signifies to dig or to plough: And sometime improperly to meditate or think, and it implies much thoughtfulness; because a musing, meditating, thoughtful man is ever digging into matters, he rests not in the outside and face of things, but puts in his plough deep, turning them up to the very bottom. From whence, by one step further into the Metaphor, it is translated to signifie silence, or to hold our peace; because they who have many thoughts, have fewest words; *Musing men are no great talkers*; when the mind is much at work, and very busie, the tongue usually doth little. *Job* promises silence, as if he meant to sit down and consider fully, what they should further say unto him.

This promised silence or holding of his tongue, may have a threefold reference.

First, in general to the duty of a learner, *Teach ye me, and I will keep silence*, I will learn.

Or secondly, To his former complaints, *Teach me, and I will be silent:* That is, I will give over complaining, I confess I have made a bitter complaint in the third Chapter: but if you will teach me better, I will complain no more.

Thirdly, It may have reference to that which they should speak to him in their next advices. Teach me aright, and I will hold my tongue, that is, I will reply no more, I will not gain-say your counsels, but rather (if I have offended) acknowledge my error, and sit down in silence, I will not wrangle, when I cannot answer, *I can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.* From hence we may Observe,

First, That, *a gracious spirit is a teachable spirit.*

A gracious heart calls for teaching. Teach me, and I will hold my tongue. As a gracious heart calls for strengthning from Christ, so it calls for teaching from Christ, and from any who can teach the truth, *as it is in Christ.* A weak soul saith, *Lord draw me, and I will run after thee*; an ignorant soul saith, *Lord instruct me, that I may understand thee.* Give me the wisdom of the prudent, that I may understand my way, and I shall walk therein. A godly man loves not to be at his own disposing, nor at his own *Tutoring*; *He that will learn of none, but himself, hath (sure enough) a fool to his Master*; *And there is more hope of a fool then of him, that is (thus) wise in his own conceit*, Prov. 26. 12. Observe,

Secondly, *A teachable spirit is an excellent spirit.*

A man that is willing to be taught, is in a better condition then many who are able to teach. It argues a holier temper of the heart, to be willing to be taught, then to be able to teach. And it is far worse to be unwilling to learn, then not to be knowing; *Unteachableness is more dangerous then ignorance.* It is sad to consider how unteachable many are, they will not be taught, or they think they have learned all, they have devoured all knowledge, they are full and need no more: Some deceived souls (and they most) carry it, as if they had a spirit of infallibility: what? teach them? they are above teaching. It is a sweet frame of spirit, when a man sees he may be out of frame. He is in a fair way to truth, who acknowledge that he may be in an error. And he who will not acknowledge that he may be in an error, is certainly out of the way of truth. The Apostle resolves it, 1 *Cor.* 8. 2. *If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know*, Not as if the Apostles meaning were, that all knowledge must be special or uncertain, all in queries and nothing in conclusions, that we should halt between two opinions, and hang like meteors in the Air. Nor doth he commend to us that proud modesty, which will not let us acknowledge we know what we know; but his mind is to meet with those who think they know any thing so well, that they need not or cannot know it better, and abound so in their own sence, that they have no room to admit the sence of others. As he who thinks himself so good, that he cannot be better, was never so good as he should; so he that thinks he knows so much, that he can learn no more, knows nothing as he ought. It is best to be fixed in judgement, but it is very ill to be fixed in opinion. *It is to be feared that man is much divorced from right reason, who is so married to his own, that he resolves nothing but death shall part him and his opinion.* What if this man have espoused a fancy of his own, not any truth of God? To be so fixed, that a man may be fixed in evil, is as dangerous, as to be so unfixed, that he may be unfix'd in good. It was a high breathing of holiness, when *David* said, *Psalm* 57.7. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed:* While we are upon a known duty, or have a known truth on our side, our hearts cannot be too much fixed and set upon them. To be of an unfixed, moveable, wavering spirit in goodness, is within one degree of falling into evil; but to say, *I am fixed, I am fixed, I am resolved, resolved*, when yet things are doubtful, and under difficult dispute, is actually to be in an error, though possibly the thing we fix on be a truth. The Apostle cautions his *Ephesians*, and us in them, *Chap.* 5. 14. *That they, and we, be not henceforth children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine*; and yet they are under a rebuke, who will not be moved by any wind of doctrine; that is, let never so powerful and forcible a wind of Truth, breathe and blow upon them, they will not be carried or moved in judgment by it. Observe,

Thirdly, *Silence becometh learners.*

Yet not all silence. There is a speaking helpful to learning. To move doubts is the way to be resolved, and to ask the question, the readiest means for instruction. But he that will have all the talk, shall have but little profit. The ear is the Organ of discipline; Hearing is the sense of Learning, and the seasonable stopping of our own mouths, a ready means to open our understandings. To be *swift to hear, and slow to speak* (Jam. 1. 19.) is the speediest way to attain wisdom. Observe,

Fourthly, *He that is shewed his error, should speak no more, but sit down convinc'd.*

Teach me (saith *Job*) *and I will hold my tongue*; that is, I will reply no more upon you, I will never stand up in maintaining an error; I will be no patron of evil, though my self am in the fault. Error shall not be excused, or a mistake apologiz'd for by me. Some wits are able to make a fair cover for, and put a gloss upon the most deformed and grossest errors. There was never any opinion in the world, but some have seconded it, and undertaken it's protection. *When Conscience hath never a word to say, wit will be very talkative*; and when they have ended reasoning, some can wrangle everlastingly. When wit and learning undertake a cause, and leave conscience out of the *Commission*, there must either be a very ill end of it, or no end. A subtil Sophister will dispute any thing, and bring probable Arguments (where Reason alone sits Judge) against the most undoubted truths. It is an ill office to be an Orator for our own or others errors, for our own or others sinful practices, *Prov.* 30. 32. *If thou hast done evil in lifting up thy self, or if thou hast thought evil* (or maintained evil) *lay thine hand upon thy mouth*; speak no more, never be an Advocate in a bad cause, though it be thine own; when our faults are shewed us, we should not open our mouthes, unless it be to renounce and disclaim them. A sad account will be given of that time, and of those parts, which have been laid out in the patronage of our failings and mistakes. It is as sinful to sew fig-leaves, or make fair pretexts to cover the nakedness of our opinions, as of our practices.

And cause me to understand, wherein I have erred.

As if *Job* had said, When once you bring me to see clearly, that I am in an error, and cast light into my conscience, you shall find me readily submitting to you.

Confessio est quâ Quintilianus dicit esse cum aliquid iniquum videmur causæ fiducia pati. Apud eum dicitur confessio nihil nocitura. Quint. l. 9. c. 2.

A question arises here in the general, whether *Job* doubted his cause, or whether or no there were an hesitancy in his spirit, about what he had done or spoken?

I answer, this speech implies not, that he had any doubt of himself, or an admission that he had erred. *Job* speaks like Orators or Disputants, who when they are sure of a point, will yet grant a little doubtfulness, or raise doubts about what they are able to maintain and confident to carry. It is ordinary to put things by way of supposition, of which we make no question. When *Job* saith, *Cause me to understand, wherein I have erred*; it is not an acknowledgment that he had erred; but a submission in case he had, or a concession that he might; *Job* was not lifted up with an opinion of his own infallibility; he knew to err was common to man, and therefore he speaks of himself under the common notion of all men: not from any consciousness of his own error.

Non submittit se errasse, sed humiliter se submittit amicorum sententiæ. Bold.

Cause me to understand.] It is but one word in the Original, and it signifies to convince by Reason or Argument. *Cause me to understand*, that is, do not think to force my opinion, or to offer violence to my judgment; do not think to club me down with great words and clamorous threats, but do it by solid Arguments, by evident demonstration of Reason: Do it by savoury advices and counsels, not by bitter reproaches and invectives. Deal with my understanding, not barely with my affections, *Cause me to understand*

הבין *In Hiphel, intelligentē fecit, erudiit.*

My error.] It signifies *local, corporal wandrings and errors*, and *bodily erring* or *wandring*; and sometimes it signifies the *wandrings* of the mind, judgment and affections, *Prov.* 5. 19, 20. *Solomon* bids the Husband, *Rejoyce in the Wife of his youth, let her be as the loving Hind and pleasant Roe, let her breasts satisfie thee at all times, and be thou ravished alwayes with her love.* The *Hebrew* (as our Translators put in the Margin) is, *err thou alwayes in her love*; that is, *Let all thy wandring, erring thoughts and affections be reduced and brought whom to the Wife whom God hath given thee.* The next words seem to interpret so, *for why (my Son) wilt thou be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?* That's dangerous *erring* in love: Therefore (saith he) let all thine *errings* and *wandrings*, all thy *delights* and *ravishments* be (chaste and conjugal) *towards the Wife of thy youth.*

Further, It signifies *erring* or *wandring* out of mere ignorance. This word is often used in *Leviticus* for the sin of *Ignorance*, Chap. 4. 2. & 5. 18. & 22. 14. *If any man hath sinned through ignorance, or committed an error, then he shall offer these and these Sacrifices and Oblations.* So *Psalm* 19. 12. *Who can understand his errors?* That is, those sins which he commits out of ignorance and inadvertency. Hence he concludes with this prayer, *Cleanse thou me from secret faults.* He doth not mean faults which he committed privately, and so were *secrets* to others; but faults which he had committed ignorantly, and so were *secrets* to himself: that is, they were sins of ignorance. And I conceive he means not only such sins as he had committed ignorantly, but then knew they were sins, but even such sins as he was ignorant whether ever he had committed them or no; that is, he prays for the pardon of all those sins which possibly he might have committed, though to him as yet altogether unknown and undiscovered.

The Title of *Psalm* 7. is, *Shiggaion of David*; it is the same Original word we have in the Text, and some translate it, *A wandring Song*: and the reason for it, is either because of the variable and wandring Poetry, or because of the variable or wandring tune in which that *Psalm* was sung, and to which it was set for greater delight; others make the Title (suitable to the translation of the word here) *The Psalm of David's Errors*; because it sets forth his fears and dangers, which made him wander in body, and sometime also to go a little astray in mind. This *Psalm* was sung to the Lord, concerning the words or the business of *Cush* the *Benjamite*, that is, of *Saul* who was of *Kish* and of *Jemini* (1 *Sam.* 9. 1.) called here *Cush*, that is, *Ethiopian* or *Black-moor* (figuratively) from his black and ill conditions, his heart not being changed, as the Black-moor changeth not his skin. *Saul* was a bitter enemy to *David*, and made him flie and wander, and sometime go a stray in his speeches and actions, upon a sudden gust of temptation. And so a *Psalm* of that subject may well bear this stile, either from his corporal or spiritual errors. There is a third apprehension upon *Shiggaion*, taking it for delight or ravishments of mind, and so the *Psalm* is superscribed, *David's delight or solace*; that is, the *Psalm* which he composed and sung to the Lord, to comfort himself in all his troubles with *Saul*; his soul wandred Heaven-ward in holy ravishments and delights in God, while his body wandred about the Earth in astonishment and sorrows, caused by a bloody-minded man.

Cantio erratica.

The very same Title is given to the prayer of *Habakkuk*, Chap. 3. 1. *A prayer of* Habakkuk *upon Sigionoth*, which some interpret to be so called because of the strange variety or variableness of the Song and tune, the Prophet being in a holy rapture, ravished in spirit, and swallowed up in the contemplation of Gods Power and Majesty, soars up and wanders (like *Paul* in another case) he knows not whither, or how.

But the Vulgar renders it, *A prayer for ignorance*, or a prayer for error; which translation is surely an error, if not of ignorance, as to the scope of that prayer; though the letter of the original word (as in the former instances, and in the Text before us) bears that sence.

Oratio pro ignorantia.

When *Job* saith, *Cause me to understand my error*, his meaning is, that his errors (whatsoever they were) in that business, were secret to him, he had not gone against the light of his own conscience, nor as yet had they brought any light to convince his conscience; he had been charged with errors, extravagancies and wandrings; but he understood not what they were, and, therefore desires them to cause him understand his error. Observe hence,

First, *Man is subject to error.*

To *error* in speech, to *error* in practice, to *error* in judgment. Man by nature can do nothing else but *err*, *All his*

his goings, are goings astray, and all his knowledge is bottom'd upon an heap of false principles. *All his works (by nature) are errata's, and the whole edition of his life, a continued mistake.* Observe,

Secondly, *That man is in a fair way to truth, who acknowledgeth he may err.*

Cause me to understand wherein I have erred, saith *Job*; he thought he had not *erred*: but he grants it was possible for him to *err*. That which hath fastned so many *errors* to the *Popes Chair*, and from thence scattered them all over the world, is an opinion, that he in his Chair *cannot err*; his supposed spirit of Infallibility, hath made him *the great Deceiver*, and deceived him. He that thinks *he cannot err, errs in thinking so*, and seldom thinks or speaks, or doth any thing, but it is *an error*. He is most secured from *error*, who suspects he hath erred, and humbly acknowledges that he may.

We may here Observe what an *Error* is.

Thirdly, *An Error strictly and properly taken, is that which we hold or do, out of bare ignorance of the Truth.*

It is an *Error* in practice, when we are ignorant of what is better to be done. An *Error* in opinion is, when we are ignorant of what is better for us to believe or hold. Heresie is an *Error* and more, for Heresie hath these three things in it.

First, In regard of the matter, it must be in some great and fundamental truths. The word *Heresie* is by some derived from *choosing*; by others from *taking away*, because it takes us off from Christ, or from the foundations of saving knowledge.

Secondly, *Heresie* is accompanied with pertinacy and obstinacy, after clear light offered: It is possible one may have an *Error* about things which are Fundamental, and yet be no *Heretick*: *An Heretick is condemned of himself*, *Tit.* 3. 10. But he will not be convinced by another. Not that he doth formally and in terms, give sentence against or condemn himself; but equivalently he doth, as the Apostle (*Acts* 13. 46.) speaks to the unbelieving Jews, *Seeing ye put the word from you, and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting life*, &c. These men did not judge themselves such formally, they came not to the Apostle and said, we willingly submit our selves to Hell and wrath. No, they thought very well of themselves, and judged themselves worthy of eternal life. But their practice judged them, and gave a real sentence against them, while they acquitted themselves. Thus also an Heretick (who ever hath a very high opinion of himself and his opinions) is condemned of himself.

Thirdly, In Heresie there is taking of pleasure and delight: therefore Heresie is numbred among the *lusts of the flesh, adultery and fornication*, &c. *Gal.* 5. 20. Hereticks desire to disperse and vend their opinions. A man alone in an error, will weep over his opinions, and it grieves him that he dissents and goes contrary unto others: But he that stifly maintains an error, insults over others, and delights to maintain his opposition: he triumphs and boasts of his war, though he can never obtain victory (Truth only is victorious.) And some learned Criticks observe as much from the form of the Greek word, *Tit.* 3. 11. So then, Heresie is not only an error in judgment, but a pertinacy in the will, and it takes in delight at the affection.

Observe from these words, *Cause me to understand, wherein I have erred*,

Fourthly, That, *an erring brother, or friend, must not be importuned barely to leave his error, but he must be made to understand his error.*

Error should not be left, nor truth received blindfold; a man may sin in leaving an error: they do (without question) who lay it down thinking it to be a truth; and there is little question but they do, who leave it before they understand it to be an error. *It is much alike to reject an opinion as an error, which we do not understand, and to practice an opinion for a truth, which we do not understand.* If a man practice or believe a truth, not convinced that it is, or not conceiving it to be a truth, that truth is but an error to him; because he doth not believe or practice it under the notion of a truth; and so, if he leave an error, which he is not convinced to be an error, his leaving it is not much better (and in some cases it may be worse) then his holding it; because he leaves it not under the notion of an error. We must not dance after other mens pipes, or see with other mens eyes: Except we know it is good we do, and evil which we leave undone, our not doing evil, is not good to us, and our doing good is (to us) no better then evil.

Hæreticus est cui voluptas est falsas tueri opiniones, ea enim est nominum Græcorum in ύδος desinentiũ proprietas, ut ad qualitatem designandam non adhibeantur modo, sed etiam ad innuendã delectationem, quam in ea capit, cui illa qualitas inest. Camer. Myroth. Evang. in cap. 2. Epist. ad Titum.

Vers. 25. **How forcible are good words! But what doth your arguing reprove?**

Job speaks by way of admiration, **How forcible!** I cannot tell how forcible. It is an elegant way of expressing the highness of our thoughts, as *Psal.* 84. 1. *How amiable are thy dwelling places, O Lord of Hosts!* He admires in stead of speaking: they are so amiable, as I cannot tell how amiable they are. Put your thoughts to their utmost conceptions of beauty, and that beauty is in the dwellings of the Lord: so saith *Job* here, *How forcible are right words!* they are so forcible, as I know not how forcible they are, I must admire and be silent.

In Hebræo Admirationem est elegans & patheticum. Bold.

How forcible are right words! The Chaldee Paraphrase reads it, *How sweet are right words!* interpreting it by that, *Psal.* 119. 103. *O how sweet are thy commandments unto me! they are sweeter then the honey and the honey comb.* But the originals differ, though that be a good sence.

We read, **How forcible!** The word signifies any thing that is strong, potent, or mighty; it notes also acrimony, sharpness or smartness, and so it is often applied to words either good or bad, 1 *King.* 2. 8. when *David* lay upon his death-bed, giving his last advice to *Solomon*, *Thou* (saith he) *hast Shimei with thee, who cursed me with a grievous curse.* In the Hebrew it is this word, who cursed with a sharp, strong, forceale curse, he cursed me with all his heart, with all his might he laid load upon me. *Evil words are strong, right words are strongest.* *Job* had before at *vers.* 6. of this Chapter, called the discourses of *Eliphaz* unsavoury, in this he taxes them for flat or weak: right words have a pleasing acrimony upon the palate of the soul, and a power upon the judgment, to sway and carry it; but yours are dull and feeble.

מֹרֶךְ *Acrimoniæ notionem habet.*

Some render it after the letter of the Hebrew, *words of right, or truth:* Others in the concrete, *How forcible are the words of a right, or upright man!* But take it as we translate, *How forcible are right words!* Words are right three wayes;

אִמְרֵי יָשָׁר *Eloquia rectitudinis* Mont. ἀληθῶς ῥήματα. Sept. λόγοι εὐθεῖς. Aquil.

First, In the matter, when they are true.

Secondly, In the manner, when they are plain, direct, and perspicuous.

Thirdly, In their use, when they are duly and properly applied; when the arrow is carried home to the white, then they are right words, or words of righteousness. When this three-fold rightness meets in words, how forcible, how strong are such words?

But what doth your arguing reprove? I confess there is great strength in right words, and in the words of the upright; but you have been long disputing the matter with me, and what have you got? where are your gains? The word signifies, to rebuke with conviction and argument, to shew what is right, and to refute that which is contrary; *Job* 13. 3. the word is so used, *Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God*, to reason it out as it were by force of argument with God. The word is answerable in sence to that in the Greek, used by the Apostle *Heb.* 11. 1. *Faith is a conviction, or the evidence of things not seen*, that is, an evident conviction: Faith gives a stronger evidence then any reason, yea then sence: therefore though faith be of things that fall not under sence, and are above reason; yet faith is an evidence or a conviction, fuller then any Logical conviction or demonstration. The Argument from such authority as faith grounds upon, is stronger and more convincing then any, or then all the reason in the world.

יָכַח *Arguit, redarguit, præparavit verba contra aliquem disputando & ostendendo jus.*

What doth your arguing reprove? Word for word, *What doth your disputation dispute?* Or, what do your Arguments argue? as if he had said, Your arguing is no arguing, your reasons are no reasons; that which you have been arguing all this while with me, doth not so much as deserve the name of an argument (in my case) it hath no power or strength

Quid disceptando conficiet disceptatio vestra, q. d. quod vos redarguitis, redarguendi verbo non est donandum.

strength in it: *Job* layes a charge upon his friends by this opposition; *Right words are forcible, but your arguments are not right*, or, *you are not right who argue; therefore what force, what power is there in what you have spoken? I can blow it all off as easily as a man can blow off a feather.* Mr. *Broughton* varies somewhat from this sence. *And what can your blame soundly blame?* That is, you shall find nothing blame-worthy, or reprovable in me. Observe hence,

First, Words rightly spoken are very forcible.

Take it in the general. What mighty things have words, words duly spoken, done? *Abigail*, a weak woman, by a few right words overcame the strength and wtath of mighty *David*, and turned his whole army back: *David* with all his men, were in the heat of resolution, and upon a hot march to destroy *Nabal*, yet she stops them; and that woman speaking to *Joab* (when *Sheba* fled to the City) with a few right words prevailed to save the City, and stay the fury of war.

Take the Point more strictly; the words of truth, are full of power, full of strength.

Naked truth is too hard for armed error.

Truth hath the strength of God in it, therefore that must needs prevail. The Apostle professes, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. *We can do nothing against the truth*; he means it in regard of the bent of his spirit, his heart could not move against truth; but we may use it in another sence, *We can do nothing against the truth*, that is, let us put out the uttermost of our power, we can never prevail against the truth. Look upon truth in the promises, that will conquer all; look upon truth in the threatnings, that's forcible to overcome all, *Jer.* 1. 10. God gives the Prophet a commission, *I have set thee over the Nations, and over the Kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build and to plant*: Here's a strange commission for a Prophet; how could *Jeremiah* plant or root up, build or pull down Nations? He never drew Sword, yet he performed this commission fully by his Word: he pulled them down, and rooted them up by the Word of threatning, and he planted them and built them with the Word of promise, *Zech.* 1. 16. *Your fathers are dead, they are gone, but my words* (saith the Lord) *which I spake by my servants the Prophets, did not they take hold of your fathers?* Your fathers are dead, and the Prophets are dead, but my words live still, and did not they take hold of your fathers? you esteemed my words as wind, but they were a strong wind, they blew down the power of your fathers. The Apostle gives this honour to all the Word of God (which is all right) that it is *mighty, or forcible, through God, to bring down strong holds, and to bring every thought into subjection unto Christ.* And *Heb.* 4. 12. *The word of God is mighty in operation:* The energy of it is such that nothing can stand before it, no lust can stand before it, no error can stand before it, it bears down all with fine force.

Therefore take heed of standing in the way of right words. Truth comes with such a force, that no man is able to bear up against it. *It is better to have all the men of the world against us, then to have one Word of God against us.* One word of Truth will do more against us, then all the Armies in the world; no force can stand against this force, the force of the Word will destroy the force of the Sword. *Truth will be the great Conqueror at last.*

Take it in the Concrete, in reference to the speaker, *How forcible is the word of an upright man!* Then Observe,

Thirdly, The words of one that is upright-hearted, carry great strength and power with them.

Truth looses by the patronage and defence which some give it. Truth gets little by the tongues of those men who have no grace in their hearts. Truth in the mouth of a wicked man is weakned by the falsness of his heart and filthiness of his life. Sometimes precious truths are spoken by vilest men, but what force have they? they are not received or owned. Christ could not abide to hear the Devil speak truth. A godly man speaks *with authority*, as it is said of Christ, *He spake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*; the Scribes taught that which was truth sometimes, and the Scribes had alwayes authority to teach; the *chair of* Moses *was theirs*, they were not intruders upon an office they had no call to. When Christ saith, *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in* Moses *chair* (Mat. 23. 2.) He speaks not only (*de facto*) of what they did, but (*de jure*) of what they had right to do; they were not usurpers, or actors beyond their line. But though the Scribes had the right of authority to teach, yet their teaching had no force of authority, it was but talk. And it appears plainly, that the words of that hypocritical generation, the Scribes and Pharisees bare no weight with the people; because Christ gives them a charge, *to observe and do what the Scribes and Pharisees bid them:* As intimating that the doctrine of those Scribes (though true) was low-priz'd, and lay much unpractis'd, *Matth.* 23. 3. We must not shorten the hand of God, as if he might not use those who have no truth to publish a truth; he may imploy what instruments he pleases, and he can make those that are evil, instruments of good. But look upon it ordinarily, thus it is, the word of truth hath most power, strength and force, from the lips of those who are upright in heart and holy in life. *How forcible are their words?* The words of the wise are like goads, or like nails, fastned by the Masters of the Assembly, *Eccles.* 11. But the words of wicked Masters in the Assembly, are like nails without points, they will not drive, or take hold, there's no fastning of them; or the words of wicked men are like weak nails, which break in the driving: What do you arguing, reproving, teaching, you that carry your selves thus, what force have your words? Truth looses both strength and credit in your mouths: *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy self? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?* &c. are the Apostles chiding expostulations with the Jewish Doctors, *Rom.* 2. And upon this he charges them with dishonouring God, and causing his Name to be blasphemed among the Gentiles, *vers.* 23, 24. But what was the blasphemy? Surely this, The Gentiles grew to have a low esteem of the word of God, his Law was of no force with them, because those Teachers were so false to it, and unspoke with their lives whatsoever their Tongues had spoken. That which hath no force upon the speakers heart, hath seldom any upon the hearers. What do your teaching teach, or your comfortings comfort? what do your arguings argue, or your reprovings reprove? *Shall vice reprove sin?* as we speak proverbially: or if it doth, sin is not much hurt with these reproofs. Words spoken from the heart, go to the heart; and words read in the life, are most forcible to reform the life: *Then the word goes first cloathed with life and power, when the Preacher can read his Sermon in his own heart, and the people in his life. He that speaks only out of books, does much after his rate, who (as we say) speaks without-book: And he that lives not what he speaks (what in him lies) kills what he speaks. And how shall such a dead letter ('tis almost a miracle if it doth) conveigh a quickning spirit?* Such arguings seldom reprove any but the arguer, and him they alwayes reprove.

VERS. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.

Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?
Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and you dig a pit for your friend.
Now therefore be content, look upon me, for it is evident unto you, if I lye.
Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity, yea return again: my righteousness is in it.
Is there iniquity in my tongue? Cannot my taste discern perverse things?

IN the two former verses, *Job* made an humble submission of himself unto the better counsel and instruction of his friends, if they could yet shew him wherein he had errred. In these five verses, he doth two things further.

First, He expostulates with his friends about their former speech and carriage toward him.

Secondly, He admonishes them to be better advised, more moderate and considerate, in what they had yet to say unto him.

The

The former of these is contained in *vers.* 26, 27. And there are two branches of it.

First, He taxes them for making so light of what he had said, *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?* vers. 26.

Secondly, He taxeth them for laying such heavy load upon him, in what they had said, *Yea, ye overwhelm the fatherless, and you dig a pit for your friend*, v. 27. As if he had spoken plainly thus, *You have carried the matter hitherto with me, as if I had spoken nothing but bare empty words, words without any weight; yea, as if I were raging mad, distracted, desperate, not knowing, nor caring what I did, or what I spake; as if my whole discourse were no better, then meer vapouring, a puff of wind, a nothing; and ye your selves rage against me with such violence, as a cruel hard-hearted Tyrant is enraged with, against a poor, helpless, innocent and forsaken, friendless Orphan; or at best, ye deal with me, as cunning Sophisters and subtil disputants, seeking to catch me in your intricate discourses and doubtful debates, you make a pit for your friend.*

This for the general sence of those two verses, containing an expostulation about his friends unfriendly dealing with him. Now to the particulars.

Do ye imagine to reprove words?

חשב *Ad crepandum tantum verbis concinnatis.* Vulg.

The word we translate [Imagine] notes a very curious, exquisite and elaborate invention of any thing. The Vulgar refers *imagining* to the words with which they did reprove, not to the act of reproving. *Ye make a neat frame of words to reprove me*; and so the sence rises thus, you artificially imagine, mint and coyn eloquent speeches and subtil arguments, to reprove and convince me with; as if you came hither to shew your selves Logicians and Orators, rather then loving friends. This is your dealing, *You imagine words to reprove with.* Others thus, *Do you think that words reprove?* That great words shall overcome me, without weight of reason? This sence refers also to the speech of *Job*'s friends; as if he had said, *Do you stand devising words against me, or wording it with me? Do you think that your fine phrases and elaborate polisht language will carry the matter with me, will words reprove me?* And so we may connect it with the sence immediately foregoing, *How forcible are right words? But what doth your arguing reprove?* Your arguings that are slight arguings? Your words are meer words, a sound and a noise; *words set alone, are often taken for words only, for naked words, words without any due cloathing of comliness and moderation, and without any ballast or weight of reason and discretion. And do you (my friends) imagine to gain me, by such a parcel of words as these?

Num verba nuda putatis arguere, q. d. putatisne verba satis esse ad arguendum & disceptandum sine ratione. Planior fuerit sensus, si ב *ante* מלים *subaudias, an cogitatis arguere* במלים *meris verbis.* Merc.

* *Verba nuda & sola. Ut mulier, mulier bona, Lana, lana alba, & si quæ alia Gramaticis observata.* Drus.

But according to the sence touch'd before, *Job* rather refers to the opinion, which his friends had of his words; *Do ye imagine to reprove words?* That is, do you think that you have nothing to answer, or reprove, but a company of empty sillables; have I not spoken reason or sence all this while? Do you think you dispute with some idle-headed fellow, who cares not what he saith, or saith he knows not what? Do you think, that your words are strong and full of reason: that yours are irrefragable arguments, and mine, but idle talk or a frothy discourse? That's a second Interpretation, and that which I conceive more clear to this place. It followeth,

And the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?

We must understand or repeat the first branch, *And do ye imagine to reprove the speeches of one that is desperate, which are as wind?*

נואש *à radice* יאש *Diffidit, desperavit, spē omnem rei alicujus efficiendæ aut consequendæ abjecit seu amisit.*

The speeches of one that is desperate.] The word signifies a person that is quite without hope, who thinks his estate past remedy or redress, his wound incurable, his loss irreparable, and his breaches such as can never be made up or heal'd. So *Jer.* 2. 25. where the Prophet counsels the Church to return and repent: but, *Thou saidst there is no hope*; or as we read it in the margin, *thy case is desperate*; what do you talk of repentance, and of returning now, all's lost, all's gone, I am undone, my estate can never be recovered, *Do ye imagine to reprove the speeches of one that is desperate?*

Some refer this also, to the friends of *Job*, thus: Do ye think that bare words are answer enough for me, and that the speeches of a desperate mad man, which are nothing but wind and sound, are sufficient to refute me. And therefore you rise up against me in this storm and fury, speaking any thing, without study or premeditation.

But we may rather understand it of *Job* himself, and that as before, he gave their sence of his words, that they were but wind; so here he gives us their apprehension of his person, that sure he was mad or desperate.

Do ye imagine that I am desperate or distracted, because I have little or no hope to be restored? Because I have lost my estate, my strength, my children, do ye also think I have lost my wits, my reason and understanding. I confess I am even worn to pieces, and brought to nothing, I am spent and consumed with sorrows, that's my condition, but am I therefore desperate, and regard not what I speak? It is an easie and a compendious way of refuting all a man can say, to say he is mad. His words must needs be but wind, without weight, who is himself without reason. *Do ye think to reprove the words of one that is desperate, that are as wind?* Or, as Mr. *Broughton* reads, *Do ye hold the terms of the forlorn, a wind?* That is, do ye think, because I am in such a sad condition, and in appearance in a desperate condition, that therefore my words are light and vain, such as are no more to be regarded or heeded, then a puff of wind? And so it is, as if he had said, ye ought not to slight what I speak, because I am in such a low forlorn condition. That of *Solomon* comes to this sence, *Eccles.* 9. 16. *The poor mans wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*

Haud sanè ita convenit, ut pro futilibus, verba mea habeatis, eo quod afflictionibus attritus sum & tabefactus. Merc.

It is common in Scripture to put light, vain, and unprofitable words under this expression, *they are but wind.* In *Job* 15. *v.* 3. *Should he reason with unprofitable talk, or with speeches wherewith he can do no good? Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the East-wind?* That is, should a man talk nothing but that which is vain and unprofitable? And so, *Jer.* 5. 13. *The Prophets shall become wind*; that is, their propheſies shall become wind; whatsoever they speak (said that unbelieving people) shall be but as a vain thing, it shall be as nothing, it shall pass away, and the place of it shall be known no more; thus they undervalued the Prophets in those times, when they spake the truths of God, and brought them immediate messages from Heaven. Hence Observe,

First, *That words without reason, meer vain words, are no words, they are but wind.*

Hence those prophane ones in *Jeremiah*, who said the true Prophets had belied the Lord, *and were but wind*, add presently, *And the word is not in them:* That is, the words of these Prophets are no words. Indeed the Lord answers for his Prophets, at *vers.* 14. telling the people, because they had thus dishonoured his messengers, that they should find those words, which they accounted wind, to be a fire, *Thus saith the Lord, because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.* Whosoever esteems the Word of God to be wind, shall find it to be a fire: and they who will not be taught by it, shall be consumed by it. But to the point in hand, we see in that Scripture, vain words are windy words, and windy words are as no words: *The Prophets* (as they supposed) *were wind*, and thence they infer, *the word is not in them:* That is, their words have no substance, strength, or power at all in them. So, *Hos.* 12. 1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the East-wind*; what was the wind that *Ephraim* fed upon? Some vain words, some promises he had from the creature to be delivered, some hopes raised by the word of man, who is a wind; therefore his feeding upon those hopes, was but a feeding upon wind, there was no ground or strength to make those words good: So the next words interpret, *He daily encreaseth lies.*

Bullatas nugas. Pers. Sat. 5. utpote similia bullis vento plenis.

Such words are (by the Learned) called *bubbles*; and why bubbles? Because a bubble upon the water is only fill'd with wind, touch it and 'tis nothing. These words have nothing in them, but the breach of the speaker.

Unless the spirit of reason fills our mouths, we speak nothing but our breath, or as we phrase it in our Language, *we do but vapour.* The Apostle *Peter* describes such (2 Epist. 2. 8.) *They speak great swelling words of vanity*; and the Apostle *Jude* uses the same expression in *vers.* 16. of his

Epistle.

ὑπέρογκα ματαιότητος φθεγγόμενοι.

Epiſtle. Their *mouth ſpeaketh great ſwelling words*; that is, words greatly ſwel'd with vanity. Or ſwel'd, as the fleſh ſwells, by the gathering of corruption, and ill humors. The greatneſs of theſe words was their diſeaſe, and not their nature. *Wiſe men ſpeak great things, and fools ſpeak great words.* Obſerve,

Secondly, *That windy, empty words, will never either convince, or convert.*

Such words do no work: they are wind, and they paſs away like wind without any impreſſion upon the hearers. They trouble the ear, but touch not the heart. When the noiſe of them is paſt, all is paſt. They are a ſound, and beſides that, a nothing. Windy meats are not nouriſhing for the body, neither are windy words for the ſoul. Some knowledge doth not build up, but puff up, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. and that's all the knowledge which ſuch words can breed, when they breed any. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *We are apt to judge the words of thoſe that are greatly afflicted, to be but vain windy words.*

And we are ready to conclude, they complain more then they need. When the *Iſraelites* groaning under the preſſures of that bondage, ſent to *Pharoah* for ſome abatements of their burdens: we will not diminiſh the tale of the bricks, only let ſtraw be given us: no ſaith *Pharoah*, Exod. 5. 17. *They are idle, let more work be laid upon the people, that they may labour therein, and let them not regard vain words.* He reſolved to deal wiſely with them, and therefore muſt count them mad; their perſons were near *Job's* condition, and their words were fully under the ſame cenſure. Hence note,

Fourthly, *That it is very ſinful to eſteem the words of the afflicted to be but wind.*

It was great uncharitableneſs in *Job's* friends, thus to expound and gloſs the Text of his complaints. We ſhould hear a man in affliction, as if every word were drenched and ſteeped in the ſorrows of his heart; and take every ſentence, as coming bloody from his wounded ſpirit.

Obſerve how *Job* deſcribes his own eſtate, he was as a man deſperate (not utterly deſparate, for in another place he profeſſes in higheſt confidence, that though God kill him, yet he will truſt in him) yet deſperate he was in regard of outward help, or temporal ſuccor.

Laſtly, *A godly man in affliction may ſometime think his caſe deſperate and remedileſs.*

Wicked men reſolve in the Pſalm, *There is no help for him in his God*; and a good man under a cloud of temptation may ſay, *Surely there is no help for me in my God*; that is, I ſee not which way I ſhall be helped, I have no aſſurance, no evidence that God will help me: Not that he doubts the power of God to help him: But the providence of God ſeems to ſpeak that he will not, *I ſhall one day periſh by the hand of* Saul, ſaith holy *David*. *Heman* looked upon himſelf, as a *man that had no ſtrength, free among the dead*, Pſal. 88. 5. As if he had got a diſcharge from the ſervice of this world, and was enfranchiz'd a Citizen of the grave, where all are free. As (to note that only in paſſage) it is ſaid of *Azariah*, being ſmitten with Leproſie, and ſo put from the exerciſe of the Government, which was a civil death; that he dwelt in a ſeveral houſe, or in a houſe of freedom, 2 *King.* 15. 5.

Verſ. 27. **Yea, you overwhelm the fatherleſs, and you dig a pit for your friend.**

After he had convinced them of their uncharitableneſs in accounting his words light and windy, he ſhews them how they dealt with him, what kind of words theirs were towards him: their words were as ſwords, their words were blows, every expreſſion of theirs to his ear, was an oppreſſion upon his ſpirit; *Ye overwhelm the fatherleſs*; he ſets forth their (as he conceived) cruelty againſt him, by two things, very odious both;

Firſt, The undoing of a fatherleſs child.

Secondly, The digging of a pit (not for an enemy, but) for a friend.

Ye overwhelm the fatherleſs.] The Original is full of Emphaſis, word for word, it may be tranſlated thus, *You throw your ſelves upon the fatherleſs*; and ſo it is an alluſion to hunters, either to men when they hunt wild beaſts, or to wild beaſts, when they hunt their prey; as ſoon as the hunter can reach the game, he overwhelms it, he caſts himſelf down, or layes all his ſtrength upon it. A dog having caught the hare, falls upon it, and keeps it under. Some conceive that expreſſion, *Gen.* 49. 9. concerning *Judah*, compared to a Lion, reaches this ſence, *Judah is a Lions whelp, from the prey my ſon thou art gone up, he ſtooped down, he couched as a Lion, and as an old Lion, who ſhall rouze him up?* As if that crouching and lying down were when he hath taken his prey; who dares to ſtir up a Lion, when he hath his prey under him: if any dare, the Lion will make them a prey too. We ſee in daily experience, how angry a dog will be, if you ſtir him up, when he hath but a bone under him. Such a violence is noted in this expreſſion, you throw your ſelves down upon a poor fatherleſs one, a man in a low condition, as if you would tear him to pieces, and eat him up at a morſel. Our tranſlation comes near the ſignification of the word, *Ye overwhelm the fatherleſs.*

The word ſignifies to run upon one with violence, and hence Giants are called *Nephilim* in the Hebrew, which is as much as to ſay *Oppreſſors*, becauſe they overwhelm the weaker with force and violence.

נפל *Ruit, irruit.*

Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates the word to another ſence, as noting, not an open violent way of oppreſſing, but a ſecret ſubtil way of circumventing, *To lay a ſnare for the Orphan*: The word may bear that ſence, namely, *to ſet a trap, or to lay a ſnare*: And he parallels it with that word uſed often in the New Teſtament, *To ſcandalize* or offend a brother, which properly ſignifies to lay a trap or a ſnare, to ſet ſomewhat whereby to entangle or catch a man, that he may be ſtopt and hindred in his way. Thus *Job*, of his friends, you ſet a trap to enſnare, and make a pit for me to fall into, or you lay a block to cauſe me to ſtumble in, or turn out of the wayes of holineſs, while you would perſwade me, that he who walks uprightly in that way, ſhall never meet with any rub of outward trouble. What is this but to diſcourage me in the way I walk, becauſe therein I have met ſo many troubles. Thus you lay a ſnare for

σκανδαλίζω *Scandalum eſt impedimentum in via, ut quis vel collabatur & ruat, vel ab inſtituto curſu impediatur.*

The fatherleſs.] The word ſtrictly taken, notes a child whoſe parents are dead. Some of the Ancients ſay, the word *Pupill*, which is from the Latine, ſignifies one without ſight, or wanting the apple or Pupill of his eyes; becauſe being deprived of his Parents, he wants the light of counſel and direction, to carry him on in his courſe through the world. What *Moſes* ſpake to *Hobab* his Father in law, is a truth of all good Parents to their Children, *They are to them inſtead of eyes*, Numb. 10. 31. But here by fatherleſs, we may rather underſtand any one that is deſtitute of help, though himſelf be a Father. He that hath many Children may (in this ſence) be an Orphan, that is, friendleſs and comfortleſs. So *Pſal.* 10. 14. *Thou art the helper of the fatherleſs*; that is, Thou art the helper of all thoſe who want help. That's the meaning of Chriſt's promiſe to his Diſciples, *I will not leave you comfortleſs*; the Greek is, *I will not leave you Orphans or fatherleſs*; Orphans and fatherleſs are uſually full of ſorrows, therefore to be left fatherleſs, and to be left comfortleſs are the ſame. In this larger ſence take *Job's* mind, *You overwhelm the fatherleſs*; that is, you overwhelm me, who am a poor, deſtitute, helpleſs man, who have no friend, ſuccor or ſupport.

Pupillus juxta Auguſtinum & Iſidorum ita dicitur, quaſi ſine oculis, quæ pupillæ dicuntur, i. e. parentibus orbus.

And you dig a pit for your friend.

Word for word thus, *You dig for your friend.* And this is on all ſides agreed on, to intimate the ſecret circumvention or ſubtle practice (as *Job* apprehended) of his friends. For in Scripture, *to dig a pit*, is a proverbial ſpeech, and imports the laying of ſecret plot to circumvent another either in word or deed. So, *Pſal.* 7. 15. *He made a pit and digged it, and is fallen into it himſelf*; that is, he deviſed ſome miſchievous device to entrap his brother, and the miſchief is fallen upon his own head, *Pſal.* 64. 5. *They commune of laying ſnares privily*; & *Iſa.* 29. 21. The Prophet deſcribes evil workers thus, *They dig deep to hide their counſel from the Lord:* Wicked Politicians are diggers and underminers; ſometime this is true literally (as in our Powder-plotters) but myſtically and myſteriouſly every one that layes a plot (though he never breaks ground) is ſaid

Velut laqueũ & decipulã ſtruitis ad eum capiendum, i. e. captionibus & cavillis eum nitimini circumvenire. Merc.

to

to dig a pit for his neighbour. In the old Law (*Exod.* 21. 33.) a provision was made, that whosoever digged a pit, should cover it, because pits were dangerous, both for men and cattel. To dig a pit for a friend, is to endanger a friend.

In this sence, the latter part of the verse agrees with Mr. *Broughton*'s translation of the first, *Ye lay a snare for the Orphan, and ye dig a pit for your friend.* False and fallacious arguments are traps and pits, in which the innocent are entangled. And *Job* supposes his friends intended to cast him down into the pit of despair, by charging him with hypocrisie and rottenness of heart in his profession.

כרה *Significat fodere, & convivium instruere. Epulamini super socium vestrum.*

There is a further apprehension concerning this word, *You have digged a pit*; Some of the Hebrew Doctors translate thus, *You make a feast upon your friend.* The word signifies not only to dig a pit, but to feast and banquet; and it notes a sumptuous exquisite banquet, 2 *Kings* 6. 23. *And he prepared great provision for them.* In this Book, *chap.* 41. 6. The word is used in that sence, where *Leviathan* is described too big for a banquet, *Shall thy companions make a banquet of him?* that is, are the fishermen able to catch and eat *Leviathan?* As if *Leviathan* scorned the fishermens engines, their nets and hooks.

Taking the word so, the meaning of the clause may be thus conceived, *You overwhelm the fatherless, yea, you are not contented with that, but you feast upon your poor friend*, that is, you rejoyce in his misery, and make your selves merry with his sorrows, as the *Philistines* dealt with *Samson* when they had put out his eyes; *Come, let us bring him out, and make sport with him*: So, saith *Job*, you deal with me, you oppress me, and then you make your selves merry with my sorrows. The tears of an oppressed poor man are as wine to the oppressor, he drinks them down; the groans of a poor man are as musick to a wicked oppressor, and his flesh is as meat to him.

Hence observe, First, *To be fatherless, is to be in a sad condition.*

They who are fatherless, are friendless, and so most subject to oppression. They who have least help in themselves, have usually least help from others, and often receive most hurt from others. Hence we find (*Psal.* 10. 18.) the oppressed and the fatherless put together; as if the fatherless were to expect oppression for their portion, and they who needed most protection, should be sure to find most vexation. We use to say, where the hedge is lowest, there men go over; it is so in every dayes experience. The mighty *Nimrods* ride over the backs of the poor; and where the hedge is low, they make lower gaps to pass over more easily to their own designs. This spirit of oppression is described raging against those who are under heaviest pressures, Psal. 69. 26. *They persecute him whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded.* When wicked men see a man afflicted by the hand of God, they afflict him more; when they see God hath wounded him, they will kill him. The trouble he is in, makes their victory more easie: As when the *Philistines* fell before *Jonathan*, (1 *Sam.* 14.) his Armour-bearer slew after him; so do these, they slay those who are fallen before the afflicting hand of God.

Observe secondly, That, *It is a great aggravation of the sinfulness of oppression and wrong doing, to oppress or do wrong to the fatherless.*

Commonly the poor are most oppressed, but alwayes there is more sin in oppressing the poor, though to oppress or wrong the rich be a sin, and a very great one. What a stock of wickedness do they gather who take from those to whom they are bound to give; who make them naked and hungry, whom they should cloath and feed; who are straightned in justice towards them, to whom they ought to be enlarged in charity? It is a sin to deny them justice, who need not your charity; but to be unjust where we should be charitable, how sinful is that! It is a great sin to take away from him who hath abundance, but to take away from him who is in want, is an abounding sin. Therefore we find that given, not only as a rule, but as a charge, Prov. 22. 22. *Rob not the poor because he is poor*; make not poverty your advantage for robbery. There is much baseness in it (besides the sinfulness) to trample upon those who cannot resist, and perhaps dare not complain. God is most resisted in wronging those who cannot resist others, or right themselves. When we help a poor man (especially a godly poor man) God himself gains, and (in a sence) is enriched by it; because God receives glory, and is paid (which is his greatest revenue from man) in honour and in praise, for all the help we give such poor. In our almes, we perform Gods promises for him, and they who receive promises, cannot but return praise. On the other side, when we wrong the poor (especially the godly poor) God himself loses, and (in a sence) is impoverished; because not only his praise (as much as we can do) is with-held, but his truth and faithfulness are questioned. Mans uncharitableness would make void the promises of God; and when promises lie unfulfill'd, praise lies unreturn'd. Hence that threatning prohibition, *Prov.* 23. 10, 11. *Enter not into the fields of the fatherless*, that is, make not a forcible or violent entry. Why is it more dangerous to enter into his field, then into anothers? Or, is there any licence here to enter into the field of a rich man, or to trespass upon him? No, there is no licence to trespass upon a rich man, or to enter upon his field; but take heed you enter not into the fields of the fatherless; why? *For their Redeemer is mighty, he shall plead their cause with thee*: Though poor Orphans and Fatherless have no might, no help, they cannot plead themselves, and they have no friend to help or plead for them, they cannot get an Advocate or Counseller speak in their cause, *yet their Redeemer is strong, he will plead with thee*; he will plead with thee for the wrong done the fatherless, as for a wrong done himself; because thou hast oppress one whom he undertook to protect, and so (as much as thou canst) hast brought up an ill report upon the Lord, as if he were either forgetful of his word, or unable to accomplish it. *We vex and tear the promises of God every time we vex and tear the poor of God.* How sinful then is this sin, by which at once we break the command which God gives us, to relieve the poor, and weaken the promise which God hath given the poor, that they shall be relieved.

Observe further, from that expression of their cunning dealing with him, *you dig a pit for your friend.*

Deceitful words are as pits and snares to catch men in. The tongue is a great ensnarer.

The tongue teacheth to lay a snare. *Balaam taught Balak to lay a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, Rev.* 2. 14. He taught him how to dig a pit, and set such a snare as catcht the people into adultery and idolatry: The tongue is a great Engineer, a trap-setter to catch and entangle both the estates and souls of men,

And we may note another Point, from the relation of the person for whom this pit was digged; *You dig a pit for your friend.*

It is a great aggravation of unkindness to endeavour their hurt, to whom we are bound by many names and obligations to do good, or to whom we have made profession of our readiness to do them good.

The more duty or respect we owe any man, the more is our sin when we neglect him.

The three remaining verses of this Chapter contain *Job*'s admonition to his friends, wherein he advises them to deal better or more moderately with him, and so he makes a *transition* to the latter part of his speech, in the seventh Chapter, wherein he returns to the old matter, the justification of that complaint made against his life, and the equity of his desire to die,

Verse 28. **Now therefore be content, look upon me, for it is evident unto you, if I lie.**

Now therefore be content, &c.] Some read it, *Now therefore begin to look upon me, or to look more favourably upon me*; as if he had said, all this while ye have hardned your faces, and clouded your brows against me, therefore now begin to be more benign in your aspects towards me. The word signifies, to begin, or take a thing in hand willingly; as also, to be well pleased, content or satisfied, the sence of all comes to one point. We translate in the latter, *Now therefore be content*, do this thing freely, be satisfied, and acquiesce in it; as we use to cool and calm an angry

יאל *Acquiescere in re quapiam, eamq; tota voluntate amplecti. Significat etiam inchoare.* Deut. 1. 5. Gen. 18. 17.

angry friend, who disputing or speaking to a business, grows hot and passionate, *I pray, sir, be satisfied,* let us go on meekly and moderately.

Look upon me.] Which notes either his desire of their friendly compliance with, and respect to him, as Mr. *Broughton* reads; *Now therefore be content, regard me*: or it notes the strength and firmness of *Job*'s resolution, in this contest with his friends, *I am not afraid to look you in the face, or to speak face to face*; look upon me, you shall not read either fear or falseness written in my forehead; the lines and characters of my countenance shall shew you nothing but soundness and integrity of my Conscience. *For it is evident unto you, if I lie*; you will anon read the lie in my face, if there be a lie in my heart; therefore break not off with me, turn not away in discontent, let us discourse a little more about this business, and the truth will appear.

על פניכם

It is evident unto you, if I lie.] The Hebrew is, *It is before your face if I lie*, that is (as we translate it) it will quickly be evident, and appear unto you by a little sober debate of this business, whether I am right or no.

Et in facie meam mentior; sc. despeream vel moriar, vel non sit mihi propitius Deus, vel tale quippiam. Merc.

Some think, there is a kind of secret imprecation in this Speech, *It will be evident to you, if I lie.*: As if he had said, *Let not the Lord be merciful or gracious unto me, let not the Lord pity or spare me, if I am false-hearted and lie unto you.* It is frequent and familiar in the Hebrew to give such expressions of an oath; as in that oath of God, *Psal.* 95. 11. quoted *Heb.* 3. 11. *Unto whom I sware in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest*; which we translate by a plain negative in both places; *They shall not enter into my rest.* And, *Psal.* 89. 39. *Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto* David; or, *if I lie unto* David, then let not my word be taken any more: So *Job* here; *It will be evident to you, if I lie*; and if I do, let me not have help, or strength, or support from God any more.

Mentiri est contra mentem ire.

To lie, may be taken two wayes; either strictly, as to lie, is to speak that which is false, with an intent to deceive. To speak against clear knowledge, is the proper, strict sence of a lie: or to lie, signifies to fail, or to come short in that which is expected from us by others: to frustrate any of their hopes, is to lie to them; and so it is applied oftentimes to the fruits of the earth (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the labour of the Olive shall fail*; the word is, *though the labour of the Olive should lie*, that is, though you coming to find fruit of the Olive, should find none there. The Olive whose fair leaves promise and speak you fair, as if you should have fruit, if when you come, it yields none, this Olive lies to you. So (*Hos.* 9. 2.) *The new wine shall lie*, we translate it, *the new wine shall fail*, that is, the Vines which speak thus much, that you shall have new wine shortly, if when you come, there is none, *the Vines lie.* In either of these sences we may understand it; *If I lie*, that is, if I speak any thing against my mind, wittingly or willingly; or if I fail in this business, if I am like the Vine, or like the Olive, when they give no fruit according to expectation, it will be evident unto you, you shall see if we discuss this controversie a little further, the truth will out, whether I shall fail or belie your expectation, or no. That place (*chap.* 24. 25.) will expound it so; *Who will make me a liar* (saith *Job*) *and make my speech nothing worth?* as if he had said, my words shall be made good, and I will not fail in that which I have undertaken, or taken upon me.

Sæpe mentita fides. Her.

Totus hic versus eleganter insinuat remforensem, nempe judicis strictissimum examen, quo fontes & testes interrogat, non solum verbis, sed etiam nutibus oculorum & intuitu. Bol.

There is a further apprehension about these words, *Look upon me, it is evident unto you, if I lie*, as if they were an allusion to the carriage of Judges and Magistrates towards offenders, in publick judiciary trials: when an offender, or one accused for an offence is brought before a Judge, and stands at the Bar to be arraigned, the Judge looks upon him, eyes him, sets his eye upon him, and he bids the Offender look up in his face; look upon me, (saith the Judge) and speak up; guiltiness usually clouds the forehead, and cloaths the brow; the weight of guilt holds down the head; *The evil doer hath an ill look*, or dares not look up; how glad is he, if the Judge look off him. We have such an expression, *Psal.* 11. 4. speaking of the Lord, the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, *His eye-lids try the children of men*, as the Judge tries a guilty person with his eye, and reads the characters of his wickedness printed in his face: hence we have a common speech in our language, such an one *looks suspitiously*, or, *he hath a guilty look.* At that great Goal-delivery described (*Rev.* 6. 16.) all the prisoners cry out to be *hid from the face of him that sate upon the throne.* They could not look upon Christ, and they could not endure Christ should look on them; the eye-lids of Christ try the children of men. That of *Solomon* may help this sence, *Prov.* 20. 8. *A King that sitteth in the Throne of Judgment, scattereth away all evil with his eyes.* Wickedness cannot endure to be under the observation of any eye, much less of the eye of Justice. Hence the Actors of it say, *Who seeth us?* It is very hard not to shew the guilt of the heart in the face, and it is as hard to have it seen there. *Job* seems to offer himself to the view of the severest Judge, *Be content, look upon me*, if I am guilty it will quickly appear unto you; my hypocrisie will break out in my face, and you may read my conscience in my countenance. It is noted of *Paul*, Acts 13. 59. That when he had to deal with *Elymas* the Sorcerer, *he seth his eyes upon him, and said, O full of all subtilty!* The Apostle beat him down, as it were, with a cast of his eye; *Job* bids his friends look upon him as long and as critically as they pleased, he was not afraid of their looks.

Heu quam difficile est crimen non prodere vultu. Ovid. *Secund. Met.*

Lastly, thus, look to me, that is, attend well what I say, for I will explain my mind so fully and clearly to you, that it will quickly be evident to you whether I am right or wrong.

We may observe from this passage, First, That, *Uprightness hath much boldness.*

He that hath a good cause and a good conscience, is not afraid to be searched to the bottom; he cares not who looks upon him, or who looks into him. *David* in regard of the uprightness of his heart, calls unto God himself, *Search me and try me, if there be any way of wickedness in me*, Psal. 139. 23. *David* was so assured of his own integrity, than he was not afraid to put himself upon the highest trial in that point. A holy heart is willing that God and men should search it, even search it with candles, as God threatens he would the corrupt and false-hearted *Jews.*

Secondly, note this from it, *Where a lie is, it will not long be hid.*

A lie will break forth one time or other; ye may cover and hide a lie, you may keep it close, and sit upon it, as *Rachel* upon her fathers Images, but at last it will be evident, a lie will out. We say, *Truth is the Daughter of Time*, and so is a Lie too; a little time will bring that work of darkness to light.

Take the word in the other sence, for failing, and it yields us this instruction,

That, *He who hath uprightness of heart, is stedfast for ever.*

Truth is uniform; which way soever the wind and the world turn, his posture is the same; Christ will not fail him, and therefore he cannot. Such a man is as Mount *Zion*, that never shall be removed; where the heart is sound, the actions are steady, and he that moves upon a right principle, moves regularly, and in all changes of events, changes not his way; try him, and try him again, it will be evident unto you he will not lie. Grace is ever the same, and renders them who have it like him (in their degree) from whom they have it, *without variableness or shadow of turning.* He that is not (for the substance) what he was, was never what he ought to be, sincere. He that is upon a good ground, and knows his ground, will stand to it; trust him (as a creature may be trusted) and he will not fail.

Verse 29. **Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity, yea return again; my righteousness is in it.**

He goes on to bespeak his friends to hear him better.

Return.] The word signifies,

First, A local return, or returning from a place.

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Redire significat, sed sæpe transfertur ad animum; estque à proposito abstinere, institutum vitæ mutare, & pœnitentiam agere.

Secondly, It is used Metaphorically, to return from anger, or to turn anger away, *Isa.* 5. 25. *His anger is not turned away, the Lord did not turn from his fierce wrath.* Some understand it so here, *Return I pray you*, that is, I beseech you be not so angry, be not so hasty and cholerick with me.

Thirdly, To turn or return, notes desisting from our purpose, or the change of our resolutions. And thus it is the same with repentance; the Scripture abounds with the word in this sence, I shall not need to quote Texts. Thus most understand

derstand it here, *return*, that is, *Reform, repent of your former hard dealing with me*, perſist not in it, perſevere not in your uncharitableneſs.

Vbi redieritis, & rursũ redieritis, id est, ubi iterum atque iterũ omnia diligenter discusseritis, eodem subinde redeuntes, & eadem accuratius reputãtes, meam cognoscetis justitiam.

Or lastly, *Return*, that is, weigh the matter better, return, look it over again, let it have your second and more setled thoughts; consider whether I speak not as one constrained to this seeming impatience, from real sorrow, rather then from a professed hypocrisie. So he bespeaks his friends again, *chap.* 17. 10. *But as for you all, do you return and come now* (that is, be better advised, as the next words expound his meaning) *for I cannot find one wise man among you.* As if he had said, you have not shewed any great treasures of wisdom in all your disputations against me hitherto; and therefore he tells them (*chap.* 19. 28.) what counsels became them to take. *Ye should say, why persecute we him?* let us give over such hard censures and wounding language. Say to your selves, *Let us return*, as here he saith to them, *return, I pray you.*

Let it not be iniquity.] Some understand it thus, let not the thing which is objected against me, be iniquity, object not unrighteously against me. Or thus,

Secondly, in this disputation, as it shall be carried on again, deal not so unequally, so unjustly and hardly with me as before, deal fairly, uprightly, candidly and friendly with me; *Return I pray thee, let it not be iniquity*; let there not be such wrangling and hard speeches between us as hitherto there have been. Mr. *Broughton* agrees to either sence, *Change your mind now*; *let not unrighteousnesse be objected.*

Particula ℞ *non semper prohibet, sed aliquando simpliciter negat. Non erat iniquitas in verbis meis scilicet.* Merc.

Yet the Hebrew particle (*Al*) doth not alwayes forbid, but often notes simply to deny; and some translate it here, for a plain denial, rather then a forbidding. Not as we, *Let it not be iniquity*; but, there shall not be iniquity, that is, in my words, or in that which I shall speak: and we may connect it with the latter part of the verse, *my righteousnesse is in it.*

Yea, return again.] He advised them to return before, now he doubles his advice, *yea, return again.* Such repeated doubled speeches in Scripture, note,

First, A vehemency of spirit in the speaker.

Secondly, A necessity of obedience to the thing which is spoken, by the hearer. It is surely a weighty and necessary point, which is spoken and spoken again. *That's a double duty, and calls for double diligence, which we are doubly called unto. Return, I pray you*, do not think that this is a small matter, a matter of indifferency, *return again.* (As *Cant.* 6. 13.) *Return, return, O Shulamite, return, return.* There was great necessity for the *Shulamite* to return, when he was so often cried after to return. So, *Rejoyce, and again I say, rejoyce*, saith the Apostle, to note the vehemency of his spirit, and the necessity of the Gospel-duty, or how exceeding becoming it is for Christians to walk chearfully and rejoyce: Here then, *Return, yea, return again*, is, as if he had said, there is great cause you should return, and be better advised, that you should consider otherwise of my case, then hitherto you have done.

My righteousnesse is in it.] That is, I am righteous in this matter, in this business; or upon such a further consideration and returning to the question, *My righteousnesse* (by a true stating of these differences) will appear unto you. *Job* was no Justiciary, no boaster in, or of his own righteousnesse; but he speaks of the righteousnesse of his cause, and of the uprightnesse of his Conscience; according to that of (Psal. 73. 6.) *Thy righteousnesse shall appear as the light*, that is, the righteousnesse of thy cause: so saith *Job*, *My righteousnesse is in it*; when you return, and return again, to consider diligently and seriously of this business you will find the result of all will be, that my righteousnesse is in it, that is, that I am in the right, or free from blame in this business, that I have not broken the rules of iustice, or departed from a good conscience.

Forte indignabundi discessum parabant, aut jam surrexerant discessuri, quare illos invitat ad promovendã disputationem. Pined.

Further, Others conceive *Job* bespeaks his friends in this quick language, *Return, yea, return again*, to recal his friends, who were ready to go away in a pet, or in a fume, as we use to say; they were rising to be gone, and *Job* hastily calls them back, *Return, I pray return*; as a man in discourse growing so hot, that the house cannot hold him, but he will break away, is usually re-invited, *Pray stay, Sir, return again*; so *Job*, return again, *my righteousnesse is in it, you shall see I will make the matter good.*

Hence observe (taking the return in a Metaphorical sence)

First, That, *A passionate or inconsiderate man goes from himself, and from the matter.*

Passion carries as from the business before us. An angry mans discourse runs wild, he had need to be reduced. Consideration is the returning of a man unto himself, or his coming home. As the passions of the concupiscible appetite, and intemperancies of youth, carry a man beyond his bounds (and therefore the prodigal repenting, is said to come to himself (*Luk.* 15. 17.) so likewise do the passions of the irascible appetite. Anger disorders and discomposes the spirit, as much as Luxury.

Secondly observe, *To persist in evil, is worse then the committing of evil.*

The one is common to man, the other peculiar to the Devil and his peculiars, who know no repentance. It is bad enough to do ill, but not to return from evil, is inexcusable; therefore the Lord often by his Prophets layes this as the heavieſt charge of all, upon his people. He taxes them with their departures from him: but especially with their refusals to return unto him; *yet have ye not returned unto me:* this is more sinful then all the sins you have committed, you have not returned, you go on and persevere in evil. The sword of God proclaims a like voice in our ears at this day, *Return, return again.* We have departed and gone away from God, let us not draw that ancient charge upon our selves, *I have smitten you, yet have ye not returned unto me.* It is not sinning, but not returning, which brings final condemnation. *Impenitency seals the stone of destruction upon persons and nations.*

Thirdly, Whereas these words, *Return, let it not be iniquity*, are referred to *Job*'s friends, as if he had said, *Let not this your passion make your sin fouler and greater:* you have sinned already, but if you return not, your sin will be iniquity shortly.

Note, *He stops his sin from being an iniquity, who hastens his returning from sin.*

Every sin, the least sin is sin, as the least drop of water is water; but every sin in a (strict sence) is not iniquity. The nature is the same, but the degree varies. As many a child never comes to be a man, so many a sin comes not to be an iniquity. *Happy is he that taketh those little ones, and dasheth them against the stones*, That returns before their sin be an iniquity.

Fourthly observe further, how *Job* calls upon his friends, when he sees them transported (as he thought) with passion; he leaves complaining of his own sorrows, and gives them good counsel; he, for that present forgets his own ruines, that he might amend them.

It is our duty to reclaim and to appease those by gentle entreaties, who we suppose have wronged us, or gone astray from the truth.

Job doth not rail upon or revile his friends, but beseeches them to be better advised, and consider what they did.

Fifthly, In that he saith, *Return, yea, return again*, taking this for a call to a more serious consideration of the business, we may note,

That, *A mans cause and condition must be considered, and considered again, twice, that is, fully considered, before he be condemned.*

We must give account of every idle word, much more then of every unjust sentence or censure: It is but wisdom to consider that strictly, about which we must give so strict an account.

Sixthly, In that he saith, *My righteousnesse is in it*, observe,

That, *A good cause, the more it is searched into, the better it will appear.*

The deeper you dig into it, the more truth and holiness you will find in it. Search a godly man, and the lower you go, the better he proves, the nearer you come to his heart, the richer treasures of grace and uprightnesse will be discovered. Whereas take an hypocrite, and you may have a little good metal at his tongue, or his lips may be gilded over with good words, but search him to the bottom, and there is all rottenness, even seven abominations in his heart.

A godly man is not gilded, but gold. Search a *Job* quite thorow, try him to the center, righteousnes is in all his wayes, the further you search, the better he is, and he will be best of all at last.

Verse 30. **Is there iniquity in my tongue? Cannot my taste discern perverse things?**

Formula est seipsum compellantis, & animum suum scrutantis, facta examinantis. Coc.

Thus he concludes his directory to his friends, and his preparatory for what himself intended to pursue in the next Chapter; *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* Doth my tongue speak unequal or evil things? Hath any thing been spoken by me against common right, or against the divine rule? Hath my tongue uttered any iniquity from my heart? Hath the sinfulnes of my heart broken forth at my lips? or hath it appeared that I have done wickedly by what I have said? When my words are duly weighed, I shall not appear the man you make me.

Verba per stultitiam & temeritatem prolata latentis pravitatis indices.

The word signifies calamity or misery, as well as iniquity, and so we may take it here, *Is there calamity in my tongue?* that is, do my words bespeak or invite my afflictions? We find the word used in that sense, *Psal.* 52. 2. *Thy tongue deviseth mischief*, or calamity; *Iniquity devised or framed by the tongue is often a scourge upon the back*, Micah 7.3. *The great man uttereth his mischievous desire*; the mischievous evil words of his soul. Is there (saith *Job*) any such mischievous device in my tongue? Have I spoken poyson to infect you, or blasphemy to dishonour God?

Dober Havoth Nappshi.

Cannot my taste discern perverse things?

חך *Palatum, eleganti Metaphora, à sensibus externis, ad interiores translata, appellat illam animæ facultatem, qua justa ab injustis, vera à falsis, & æqua ac recta ab iniquis & perversis dignoscuntur, non secus ac palato cibi dulces ab amaris, &c.* Merc. *Habet & anima unum palatum*

Palatum; **Cannot my taste?** The Hebrew is, *Cannot my palat?* And because the palat is exquisite in tasting, therefore by a trope the organ is expressed for the act? Cannot my taste discern? cannot my palat? Or as others, *Cannot my mouth discern perverse things?* That faculty of the soul, whereby we discern or distinguish just from unjust, truth from falsehood, as sweet is distinguished from bitter by the palat, is elegantly called the palat of the soul.

בין *Scriptura sæpe linguæ faucibus; manibus tribuit quod mentis, & intellectus proprium est, sc. meditari & intelligere.*

Cannot my taste [**discern?**] The Hebrew is, *Cannot my taste understand perverse things?* It is usual in Scripture to ascribe understanding, not only to the senses, but also to the tongue, and sometimes to the hand. Understanding is ascribed to the tongue in the place before named, *Psal.* 52. Where the tongue is said to *devise mischief*: The tongue pro perly cannot devise, the tongue doth but utter mischief, it is the mind or heart that deviseth. The shop is within, where mischief is forged and framed; yet the contrivance of it, is in that text, given to the tongue. There is a twofold reason of it, why the holy Ghost attributes the work of the understanding to the tongue, hand or senses.

Magna est rationis & orationis cognatio.

First, There is a great affinity between reason and speech, and therefore the tongue, which is the instrument of speech is honoured with the work of the understanding: And so great is the affinity between reason and speech, that no creature void of reason can speak. Speech is a peculiar property of the rational creature. *Speech is or ought to be the immediate issue or birth of Reason.* Words are conceived in the mind, and born at the tongue. And words are the image of the mind. We may see what work is wrought in the mind, by that which is spoken by the tongue. The shape of mans heart (when he speaks himself) comes out at his mouth. And therefore before he speaks, he meditates. Meditation is the conception of words, as speaking is the production of them. Thus the Lord charges *Joshua* (chap. 1. 8.) *The Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night.* One would think it should rather have been said, *The Book of the Law shall not depart out of thine heart, but thou shalt meditate therein, or if, not out of thy mouth, then thou shalt speak of it.* Meditation is too high a work for the mouth; yet, because there ought to be much meditation about the Law of God, before a word of it comes out of the mouth, therefore the Lord saith, *The Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night*; that is, as oft as thou shalt speak, thou shalt meditate, thou shalt not speak rashly, it shall not be the work of thy tongue alone, but of thy mind and tongue together.

Ita meditaberis ut ex ipsa cogitatione mentis effervescente redundent, & ebulliat, in ore verba.

There is a second reason why acts of the understanding are ascribed to the tongue, or to the senses; because when a thing is well spoken or duly acted by any sense, Reason is the guide, and the bodily Organ is under the dictates of the mind or understanding. So, *Gen.* 48. 14. When old *Jacob* in giving the blessing unto *Joseph's* children, *Manasseh* and *Ephraim*, laid his right hand upon the younger, and his left upon the elder, the text saith, he made *his hands to understand*; we translate, *He guided his hands wittingly*; there was so much reason, such divine reason in that act of *Jacob's* hands, in laying his right hand upon the younger, that the Hebrew gives it with this elegancie, he made his hands to understand; which one of the Jewish Writers learnedly expounds thus, *He ordered his hands wisely, as if they had been made acquainted with that great mystery of Gods counsels, that the greater blessing was the portion of the younger son.* And so the Psalmist (*Psal.* 78. 72.) speaking of *David's* reign and government, saith, *He governed them by the skilfulnes of his hands.* The Hebrew is, *by the understanding of his hands*; and more, *the understandings of his hands*: Or, as one renders it, *The discretions of his hands, or the prudency of his palms*, ascribing all kind of political knowledge and understanding unto *David*. *David*, in the outward administrations of the Kingdom, acted with so much reason and justice, that his very hands are said to understand. *His hands understood more then the heads of other Princes.* As *David's* hands, so *Job's* palat or tast, had an understanding; *Cannot my palat understand*

Prudenter egit manibus suis, acsi ipsæ manus mysteriorum conscia erāt Onkel.

בחבונות כפיו *In intelligentiis manuum, vel velarum.*

Yet further, it is frequent in Scripture, Metaphorically to translate things which are only acted or apprehended by the inward senses, to the outward. Taste, properly is of meat or drink; the humour or moisture, which is in meats, suitable to the salival humour in the mouth, causeth pleasantnes of taste. Here *Job* speaks of doctrines or of actions; *Cannot my taste discern perverse things?* If a thing be perversly or properly, truly or falsly spoken, cannot I taste it quickly? And hence the Word of God is compared to those things which are the object of taste, as to *milk and to strong meat*, 1 Cor. 3. 2. *I* (saith the Apostle) *have fed you with milk and not with meat*, that is, with easie and common truths, not with the more mysterious parts of Gospel-knowledge, because ye were not able to bear it. The taste of such mysteries was too strong for your palats. The same Metaphor is enlarged by the Apostle, *Heb.* 5. 12, 13, 14. And in this Book we find it more then once, *Doth not the ear try words, and the mouth taste his meat* (Job 12. 11, & 34. 3.) That is, doth not the ear try words, as the mouth tastes meat? *Cannot my taste discern?*

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Perverse things. [That is, words ill spoken, or wrong placed. The word signifies also any calamity or sad accident. And so Mr. *Broughton* renders it. *Cannot my palat declare any kind of heavy sorrow?* Do ye think I have lost my judgment of things, and that I cannut tell when I am pincht or pain'd?

First, In that he saith here *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* observe,

The tongue oftentimes discovers the iniquity of the heart.

If there be iniquity in the heart, it will one time or other break forth at, and blister upon the tongue. He that is rotten at his heart, is commonly rotten in his talk, *Mat.* 12. 34. *Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.* And when there is abundance of iniquity in the heart, there is seldom a dearth or scarcity of it in the mouth; especially in times of trouble, that iniquity and corruption, that disease and plague of the heart, will break forth at the lips. As *evil words corrupt good manners*, so evil words discover, that our manners are corrupt. There are few men, but, as the Damosel spake to *Peter*, *Their speech bewrayeth them*, and you may smell the filth of their hearts by their breath.

Secondly, Observe from these words, *Is there iniquity in my tongue?*

He whose heart is upright, may know that he is upright.

When *Job* questions, *Is there iniquity in my tongue?* He resolves *There is no iniquity in my tongue*; none of that iniquity that you charge me with. I grant a believer hath not always a sight of his own integrity and uprightnes; many a soul bears false witnes against himself, and oppresses his own innocency; yet for the most part, sincerity hath a witnes in it self, and holines carries a light, by which it is seen to him that hath it. An upright heart may know his own uprightnes.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, In that *Job* is thus stiff in maintaining his own uprightness, and in denying any iniquity to be in his tongue, Observe,

It is a duty to maintain our own integrity and uprightness.

Job was upon it before, and is now upon it again, and he will be upon it afterward; he never gives over justifying of himself against man, though he had not a word to plead for himself against God.

Fourthly, From the latter clause, *Cannot my taste discern perverse things?* Observe,

Reason distinguishes truth from falshood, as the pallate distinguishes bitter from sweet.

Reason it is the souls-taster. Princes have their tasters before they eat, least there should be poison in the dish. God hath given unto man a taster for his spiritual meat. The Pope will not suffer the meat he provides and cooks to be tasted, but will have it swallowed whole, or else he will thrust it whole down their throats. *It is a like spiritual tyranny, to starve souls, and to cram them.* It is our duty, when meat is set before us, and we are at a full table of Knowledge, where variety of Doctrines and Opinions are served in, then to call for our taster; We may be surfetted else, if not poyson'd. There may be a wild gourd among good herbs in the pot, and so death in the pot too; therefore first taste, then eat, and digest. A Christian hath a taste to discern error from truth, why then should he be denied the use of it? A wo is pronounced against those who offer unwholsom Doctrine, *Isa.* 5. 20. *Wo to those that call evil good, and good evil; that put light for darkness, and darkness for light; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.* A like wo is due to them, who will not give others leave to discern for themselves, what is good or evil, light or darkness, bitter or sweet; as good let another live for us, as another taste for us. And their misery will be little less, then the woes of these men, who cannot, or will not take pains to distinguish; when evil is called good, and good evil; when light is put for darkness, and darkness for light; when bitter is put for sweet, and sweet for bitter; or (as *Job* speaks here) *whose taste cannot discern perverse things.* There are some whose taste is so far from discerning perverse things, that it is easie to discern their taste is perverse; for bring them wholsom, true and savoury doctrine, they say it is bitter, or false doctrine; bring them false doctrine, a lie, a dream, a fancy, a meer humane invention, dish out such provision before them, that's excellent chear. This was the heaviest curse which God sent upon the Gentiles. *Rom.* 1.28. God gave them over to *a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient:* That is, to a mind void of judgment, a mind that could not taste or distinguish things; therefore the issue or effect was, *They did things which were not convenient;* as if a man not being able to judge of meats, eats poison, or meats most contrary to his health and constitution. It is a fearful judgment to be given up to an unapproving mind, to a mind that cannot discern truth from false-hood, the Oracles of God, from the forgeries of men, superstition, from holy worship. *It is a sad thing to loose our spiritual senses.* Such as play the wantons with the Word of God, and walk below the truths they know, are at last given up to a reprobate mind, to a mind not able to know the Word of Truth; and then they swallow down error for Truth, and suck in deadly poyson, like sweet pleasant wine. The Apostle speaking of the difference of doctrines, under the metaphor of meats, saith, *Milk is for babes, but strong meat is for them of full age, even for those that by reason of use, have their senses exercised to discern good and evil:* That is, their spiritual senses exercised to taste this from that doctrine, and not to swallow every doctrine alike. It is a great blessing, when a people have *senses exercised*; and it is a blessing we have much cause to pray for in these times. That many pallats are out of taste is too apparent by the multitude of heterodox opinions, which go down without distelish. Some which would even make a man tremble to name them, are entertained with delight. Some which dissolve our comforts, and break us off from comfortable communion with Christ: Some which shake, if not overthrow the very foundations of faith, are swallowed as pleasant morsels. Doth not this convince, that there's a want of *Job's* taste among us *to discern perverse things.* Therefore get your senses exercised, be established in the present truth, that, ye, as this holy man in the midst of all bodily distempers, and outward troubles) which usually put the natural pallate out of taste) may yet even then, as he, have your inward senses exquisite, and your spiritual pallate exact to discern right from perverse things. Note,

Lastly, False doctrine, or true doctrine falsly applied, is a perverse thing.

False doctrine perverts, First, Reason; Secondly, Scripture; Thirdly, The Souls of men. The Apostle (*Act.* 20. *vers.* 30.) prophecies to the Church of *Ephesus*, and with them to all Churches; *That out of themselves men should arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.* Holy doctrine draws men to God, and false doctrine draws men to man. *As itching ears heap teachers to themselves* (2 Tim. 4. 3.) So false tongues heap disciples to *themselves.* That which is perverse in it's nature, is perverting in it's effect.

CHAP. VII. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his dayes also like the dayes of an hireling?
As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:
So am I made to possess months of vanity; and wearisom nights are appointed to me.
When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? I am full of tossings too and fro, unto the dawning of the day.

WHere the knot of connection, between this and the former Chapter lieth, is not so discernable; which hath given occasion for much diversity of conjecture about it.

First, It may be conceived, that *Job* in this discourse, refutes that tenet of *Eliphaz*, that he was punished and scourged for his wickedness: by shewing that to be afflicted is the common condition of man, and therefore no such judgment of any mans wickedness or sinfulness could be made from his afflictions. Or,

Secondly, That *Job* here confutes that promise, which *Eliphaz* made about *Chap.* 6. 20. concerning outward prosperity, *He shall know that his tabernacle shall be in peace, and he shall be delivered*, &c. by proving it inconsistent with the present estate of mortals to look for such uninterrupted happiness, or fair dayes without any clouds and storms, as *Eliphaz* seemed to undertake he should, *Is there*

not an appointed time to man upon earth? are not his dayes also like the dayes of an hireling, &c.

Or thirdly, the connection may be made with those words, which himself had spoken at *vers.* 24. of the former Chapter, *Teach me* (saith *Job*) *and I will hold my tongue, and cause me to understand wherein I have erred*. In which words we shewed, *Job* makes an humble submission of himself: and in case his friends could instruct him better, he was willing to learn, he was not wedded to his own opinion, or resolved never to be removed from it.

In pursuance of which promised teachableness, he in this Chapter grants what was grantable in the former discourse of *Eliphaz*. *Eliphaz* had said, *Chap.* 5. *vers.* 7, 8. *That man was born to labour as the sparks fly upward*, and thereupon presently infers, *I would seek unto God*, &c. both these, *the Doctrine and the Use*, *Job* seems to prosecute in this seventh Chapter; as if he should say, what thou hast rightly spoken, I will grant thee; thou hast said, *Man is born to trouble*, I say so too, *Is there not an appointed time unto man* (of trouble?) *and are not his dayes as the dayes of an hireling?* And thou adviseſt me to seek unto God, and apply my self to him; it is good counsel, and therefore I will follow it: As we read he doth, at *vers.* 17, & 20. of this Chapter, *O remember that my life is wind, what is man that thou shouldst magnifie him; I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Why doest thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?* Language full of humility, and sounding out the brokenness of his heart.

But lastly, rather thus, *Job* having in the former Chapter refuted those arguments by which *Eliphaz* would convince him, and having renewed his request to die, expostulated with his friends about their unkindness toward him, and admonished them to a more equal dealing with, and hearing of him: he now proceeds to the confirmation of his first request to die, which he doth from divers grounds.

First, From the general condition of mans life, *vers.* 1. *Is there not an appointed time to man*, &c.

Secondly, From the condition of some particular men, *A servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and a hireling looketh for the reward of his work*; may not I therefore desire death, which only will be a shadow to me, till when I shall not have my reward? And

Thirdly, From his own special condition at the third verse, and so forward to the seventh, therein expressing how sad, how restless, how troublesom his life was to him, which (as he apprehended) nothing could give remedy to but only death: *My disease appears curably only by a grave, and my only medicine, is a mouth full of earth*: Therefore the matter standing so with me, have I not rightly and reasonably desired, either that I had not lived at all, or that I may quickly die, and that God would cut off my life.

Having by these arguments confirmed that former desire, in the next place, he again renews his former complaints from *vers.* 11. of this Chapter, unto *v.* 17. Thirdly, he abases himself before God, as unworthy that God should take any notice of him, or bestow a thought, a visit, a smile or a chastisement upon him. *What is man, that thou doest magnifie him? that thou doest visit him*, &c. Lastly, he concludes with confession of his sin, and earnest desire of pardon, at *vers.* 20, 21.

Thus in general, both for the dependance of the latter part of his speech upon the former, and the principal parts contained in this.

Vers. 1. **Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? And are not his dayes also like the dayes of an hireling.**

The question affirms, there is an appointed time to man upon earth, and his dayes are like the dayes of an hireling. From whence, we may from his argument thus infer: He that hath a certain term of life appointed him to serve in, doth not sin in desiring an end of his service: But there is an appointed time, *&c.* Therefore it is not sinful to desire it.

צבא *Militia, per Metaphorã, tempus ordinatum, determinatum, constitutum: ipsum militiæ tempus.*

Is there not an appointed time?] The Hebrew thus; *Is there not a warfare to man upon earth?* So you find it in the margine of your Bibles: Our Translators put *warfare* there, and *appointed time* in the Text. The word signifies both, because wars of all other actions have their seasons, and their appointed times; and the life of man is well described under both, or either of those notions.

Consider it first under the most proper signification, and so many read it, *Is there not a warfare to man upon the earth?* Isa. 40. 1, 2. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord, speak comfortably to* Jerusalem; Why? *Tell her, her warfare is ended.* In that place our Translators put *appointed time* in the margine, and *warfare* in the Text; as here they put *appointed time* in the Text, and *warfare* in the margine: The sence in both is the same. *Tell her that her warfare is ended*, that is, *the time appointed or constituted for her trouble is ended*: So here, *Is there not an appointed time?* That is, is there not a set, determined time of the troubles, or troublesom warfaring life of man?

Græci μετάνοιον, quasi tentationis officinam, ubi homo varia experiatur, variisq; eventis & periculis sit expositus, ut miles in bello.

The Greek Translators interpret it, *Temptation*, *Is there not an appointed temptation to man upon the earth?* And that gives us the same meaning; for temptation is a warfare; temptation is our spiritual war, the exercise and probation of a Christian. There are three things in which the greatest exercise of a Christian life consist, *Prayer*, *Meditation* and *Temptation*. First, Prayer, wherein man is seeking unto, and working his heart towards God: Secondly, Meditation, wherein he is preparing himself, by holy thoughts and divine considerations, for his nearer addresses unto God in prayer, and how to walk in every duty towards man: Thirdly, Temptation, wherein he wrastles and strives with those enemies opposing prayer, meditation and the whole course of holy obedience. The life of man is a continued temptation, and that's a spiritual warfare, a continual bickering with a world of enemies; and though they without stand still, yet a soul can scarce pass one hour, but he shall have many fights and bouts with his own heart. In this sence, *Is there not an appointed time of warfare, or temptation to man upon earth?*

Our life is a warfare in divers respects.

First, It is a warfare, because Christians do or ought, to live under the greatest command of any in the world; they ought to stand armed at a call. A Souldier is under absolute command, he must not dispute the Orders of his General, but obey them; the Centurion in the Gospel saith, *I have Souldiers under me, and I say to one go and he goeth, to another come and he cometh, and to a third do this and he doth it*: which he speaks not as commending the special vertue and good disposition of his own Souldiers, but as describing the duty of all Souldiers: therefore souldiary is well defined, *To be the obedience of a stout and valiant mind, out of his own disposal*. A Souldier moves upon direction, so must a Christian: he is in a warfaring condition, he must have a charge or a word from his Commander for every step he treads, or action he undertakes.

Militia est obedientia quædam fortis & invicti animi, arbitrio carentis sui.

Secondly, It is a warfare, in regard of perpetual motions and travels: A Souldiers life is an unsetled life; while he is in actual service, he hath no rest, he is either marching, or changing; and when he comes to his Quarters, his stay is but little, he cannot build him a house, he can but pitch him down a Tent for a night or two, he must away again. Mans life hath no stop, we have here no abiding City, we dwell in Tents and Tabernacles, waifaring and warfaring out our dayes.

Thirdly, A warfare, because of continual watching. It is the *watch-word* which Christ gave his followers, *I say unto you, watch*; that's the Souldiers word and work too; warring and watching go together: The Souldier stands Centinel, fearing the enemies surprise: A Christian should stand upon his guard and his watch at all hours, is not that a warfare?

Fourthly, A warfare, because Christians ought to keep their rank and file, that is, the places and relations wherein God hath set them. A Souldier commanded to stand such a ground, must not stir though he die for it, and if he stirs (by Martial Law) he shall die. There is so much keeping of order in War and Battels, that whatsoever keeps order, is said to fight or war. The Stars are said to have fought against *Sisera* in their courses, *Judg.* 5. 20. The Stars are embattailed or encampt in their spheares, out of which they move not, and are therefore often called the *Militia*, or host of Heaven.

Fifthly, A warfare, because so full of hazzards, troubles and

and labours, or because so much hardship is to be endured. A Souldier converses with dangers, and dwels in the territories of death continually: This caused *Deborah* to begin her *Triumphant Song*, with praise to the Lord, *because the people offered themselves willingly*. Many are forc'd and pres'd to the wars; and most who are not pres'd by the Authority of others, are pres'd by their own hopes of gain, or desire of vain glory and renown. *A true Voluntier in war, is a rare man*: There is so much danger in it, that there is seldom much of the will in it.

The whole life of man, is full either of visible or invisible dangers; he passes the pikes every day. The Apostle reckons eight distinct perils in one verse, which met him which way soever he turned, 2 *Cor.* 11. 26. *He was in deaths often.* And though there are but few such *Heroes* as he, yet 'tis seldom but any of us are in deaths: Especially while we remember the mighty spiritual enemies and oppositions which encompass and beset us every day. *We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers*, &c. And are therefore advised to take to us the whole armor of God; never to stir without our Sword.

Sixthly, A warfare, in regard of the issue; victory and triumph, or slavery and death, is the issue of our lives. Either we overcome, and are *more then conquerors* (that's the Apostles language, *Rom.* 8.) or else we are conquered, and more then captives; that's the Apostles sence too, (both in allusion) *They are taken captive by the Devil at his will*: To be led captive by the Devil, is the lowest captivity: lower then any captivity unto men. In reference to the spiritual part of our warfare, there's no coming off upon equal terms: we must be victors or slaves, conquer or die. Only this is the Saints assurance, that as the *Captain of their salvation was made perfect by sufferings*, and conquer'd by dying, so (at the worst) shall they; spiritual death (as sinners) hath no power over them at all; and when they die (as men) naturally, or by men violently, they shall receive fuller power: Thus our life is a warfare upon earth.

2 Tim. 2. 26

But take the word as we translate, *for an appointed time*; *Is there not an appointed time to man upon the earth?* And the reason why it bears that sence, is grounded upon these two things:

Non significat tempus simpliciter; sed tempus certum ac constitutum, eâ analogiâ, quod determinato anni tempore exerceri solet militia. Militia ideo tempus determinatum dicitur, quia non quævis ætas bello apta est, sed determinata & certa.

First, Because there is a special season of the year, most fit and suitable for war, 2 *Sam.* 11. 1. *And it came to pass at the return of the year, when Kings go forth to battel.* The time for war, is such a known appointed season, that the same word signifies warfare, and any appointed season.

Secondly, Because men go out to war, at a special time of their age: There is an appointed setled time of mans life, wherein he is fit to bear arms. Every age is not fit for arms: Old men and children are not fit for the field: Hence we find, *Numbers* the first throughout, that the muster of the children of *Israel* is thus made, *vers.* 3, 20, 22, &c. *From twenty years old and upward; all that are able to go forth to war.* The *Roman* and *Greek* Histories are distinct in this; in some Common-wealths, from Fifteen to Fifty; in others from Twenty to Sixty; and in ours the appointed time is, between Sixteen and Sixty, so men are pres'd and listed for war: And because there is such an appointed, or a set time of life in all States to go out to war, therefore that word is elegantly applied, to signifie a set or an appointed time for any business. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?*

Upon earth.] In Heaven our time knows no bounds, there are no terms or distinctions in eternity; seasons and variety of of times vanish and shall not be heard of in Heaven. Eternity is time fixt. *But there is an appointed time.*

Singulis diebus sua certamina præsto sunt, adeo non nisi cum ipsa vita terminantur labores vitæ, ac proinde secundũ naturam finem vitæ expete. Jun.

To man upon earth.] The word is *Enosh*, miserable, weak, frail man; is there not an appointed time to this man upon earth? That is, while he walks in this lower region of the world, and lives on mould. The sum of all may be thus conceived, as if *Job* had said, *Every day hath evil annexed, some affliction or other waits upon every hour, so that there is no period of mans sorrow, but the period of his life; and therefore I walk by the rule of sound reason, when that I might see an end of my trouble, I call for the end of my dayes.* Observe hence,

First, *The life of man, is limited out by the will of God.*

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? There is, As God hath set out bounds and limits to the Sea (*Hitherto thou shalt come and no further*) by a perpetual decree, so he hath also set out bounds and limits to the life of man, his life is an appointed time: Thus far the line of thy life shall reach, and no further. We live not at adventures, neither can our care lengthen out our own dayes. As all our care cannot add one cubit to our stature, so not one minute to our glass or hour. And as we cannot lengthen, so we cannot shorten our own dayes in respect of this appointed time: They who die in a time when God forbids, yet die when God appoints: *And they live out all Gods time, who wickedly shorten their own*: They cut their thread of life, but they cannot cut the thread of Gods decree; we live not at our own will, but at the will of God; we are Tenants at his will, in these houses of clay. He is the maker of time, and the measurer of our dayes; he gives us the lease of our lives for what years he pleases; and it is most fit that he who created time, should dispose of time. *God is the Lord of time, and farms it out, as, and to whom he thinks good.* Christ might do what he pleased upon the Sabbath, *for* (saith he) *the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath*; God is the Lord of time, and therefore hath power to appoint, to one more, to another less. *My times* (saith *David*) *are in thy hand*, Psal. 31. v. 15. Thou mayest lengthen or shorten, continue or break them off, as thy pleasure is.

Some live as if they were masters of time, and could appoint out their own term: as if they lived at their own discretion, and could make a covenant with the grave, and agree with death, when to come for them. They article with it, for this year and the next; they say to the grave, thou shalt not take me yet, thou shalt spare me yet, I have such ends to drive, such pleasures to take before I would die. They (*Isa.* 56. 12.) speak, as if their tongues and their time were their own, and they knew no Lord of either; *To morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant*; they speak of the next day, as if they could command it, and bid it come to serve their lusts. That wretched rich man, *Luke* 12. could say, *Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years*; see how liberal he is to his soul, out of anothers right; and because he had got a great stock of riches, he gives himself a rich stock of time, *many years*. He resolved to make his life larger, as he had done his barns; and because they were full of corn, he also will be full of dayes; whereas the word came, *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be taken from thee*: And he could not live till next morning, who resolved upon many years to live. Observe,

Secondly, *That the decrees of God concerning our lives, must not lessen our care to preserve our lives.*

Non in absurdum trahenda est hæc Jobi sententia, ut temere se quispiam periculis objiciat, quia spatiũ vitæ æquitũ est.

Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth? Yes, that there is; man lives at Gods appointment: but he must not live upon that appointment; that is, withdraw himself from means of his preservation, and say, God hath appointed how long I shall live, therefore what need I take care how to live? Or what need I take care for the preserving of my life? As it is in spirituals, so also in temporals. God hath determined and appointed the portion of every man, all comes under a decree, under an everlasting and unmoveable decree; yet the decree which is past concerning us, must not take us off from our care about our selves. *Though only the elect are saved, yet none are saved by their election*; Infants who attain not the use of reason, much less the actings of grace, yet are not saved barely by election; what they cannot do, is done for them, they are saved as elect in Christ, not precisely as elect; how they are united to Christ, we know not, but we know they must be united, or else they could not be saved. But they who grow in years, must also grow in the graces of sanctification, otherwise they are not saved by the grace of election: The decree of God appoints us to salvation, but the decree of God doth not save us; we must run through all the second causes, and wayes which the word of God hath chalked out to eternal life and glory. Thus also our temporal life, passeth under a decree, it is by appointment: but wo unto those that shall say, God hath appoin-

ted how long I shall live, therefore what need I take care about my life? This is to walk contrary to one part of the decree, while we seem to submit unto the other, For God who appoints life, appoints all the means which concern the preservation of life. It hath no shadow of a warrant, for any man to cast himself upon needless dangers, or to forbear necessary helps for the sustaining of his life, because he hears his time is appointed, and that his dayes on earth are all reckoned and numbred to him from heaven.

Thirdly, Forasmuch as there is an appointed time, we should learn patience, and wait quietly upon God. It is not in creatures (be they never so angry) to prolong the time of our sorrows. The same word which shews us, that our life is a warfare, shews us also that it is an appointed time. Men cannot appoint you one moments trouble, or lengthen this war, when God will shorten it. Our hairs are numbred, much more our dayes. Honour God, and have good thoughts of him; for whether your times be fair or foul, calm or stormy, they are appointed times. The whole life of man on earth is ordered in heaven.

Fourthly, If our lives are for an appointed time, we should be willing to die when God calls. All the time we would live beyond that, is of our own appointment; and we should be willing to live till God calls, for all thats appointed time. As it is sinful not to be willing to do (though it be burdensom) what God appoints; so is it likewise not to be willing to live what time God appoints, though it be painful and troublesom.

And are not his dayes like the dayes of an hireling?

שכיר *Marci Varius, à* שכר *Conduxit. Mercenarius est qui in certum tempus conducitur, & sæpe in diem, quem ideo Græci vocant ἀνθημέρευον μίσθιον. Sicut in unico die operario, quamdiu lucet Sol, non est ulla requies mercenario constituta, ita dum luce hujus vitæ fruimur, nulla nobis requies expectanda est.*

An hireling is he, who works a set time, for a set reward: And so this latter clause of the verse is the same in sence with the former. *Is there not an appointed time to man, and are not his dayes like the dayes of an hireling?* that is, are not his dayes set as an hirelings, with whom we agree for so many dayes, or for such a day.

An hireling.] We may take him either for a hired souldier, a mercenary in war; or for an hired servant, a mercenary in work. An hireling in either notion, is called to labour, sorrow and sweat: Such is the common condition of man, *His dayes are as the dayes of an hireling*, God threatneth *Moab* by the Prophet in this language (*Isa.* 16. 14.) *Within three years, as the years of an hireling, and the glory of Moab shall be contemned*; that is, within three years, which shall be like the years of an hireling, troublesom years, laborious years, vexatious years, wearisom years, and then the glory of *Moab* shall be contemned, and utterly despised; as if he had said, *Moab* is now in great glory, but near great desolation. You shall see three years trouble will stain all the glory of *Moab*, and wither all her beauty: we feel this truth. England *was a Nation of great glory, you see how two or three years, like the years of an hireling, troublesom years, years of affliction, years of hard labour and travel, have almost spoil'd the glory of it.*

And yet here *Job* makes a general description of the life of man: It is not the lot only of some poor afflicted, hard-wrought servants, that their dayes are as the dayes of an hireling; he speaks of mankind, of the master as well as of the servant; *His dayes are like the dayes of an hireling.* We may note from it,

First, That, *Except we labour, we ought not to eat.*

For the dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling; the hireling shall not have his meat except he work for it; neither ought he that hires, or sets him a work. The Master is in this sence an hireling. The Saints are (in this sence) *Hirelings.* The Apostle speaks to Believers, and reproves them (2 *Thes.* 3. 12.) *There are some who walk among you inordinately, working not at all; now them that are such, we command, that they work and eat their own bread*: and *ver.* 10. *If any man work not, let him not eat*; even they whom Christ hath made free, are to account themselves as hired servants, that is, they must not eat the bread of idleness; we steal all the bread, which (one way or other) we labour not for; and therefore the Apostle bids the *Thessalonians* work, that they might eat *their own bread.* It is not our own bread which we buy with our money, unless we pay (in what we can, and are called to) labour for it also. As we eat that bread pleasantly, so we come by it honestly, which is dipt in our sweat.

Secondly, We are hence taught, That, *We ought to take our travels well, we must not murmur at our labours, or complain over our work, and say, what a weariness is it?*

As the Lord cannot bear it, that any should murmur at spiritual work, or say with them, in the Prophet, *what a weariness is it?* so it is very displeasing to him, to say of our callings and the burdens of them, *What a weariness are they?* Why? It is the common condition of man, why then should we quarrel with that law of labour, which is become the portion of our mortality? The corruption of our Nature hath led us into this condition, and made us all as hirelings. Mans innocency had business, but sin hath brought him to sweat, and changed his labour into toil. Man was put into the garden, *as Lord of it*, to dress and till it; but now he is put there, *as an hireling*, to sweat and toil at it. There is a stamp of servility and drudgery upon all the labours which the children of men take under the Sun. That argument which the Apostle uses, to support us in the bitterness of affliction, hath a like strength in it to comfort us in the toilsomness of our labours. *As there is no temptation hath taken hold of us, but that which is common to man*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. So there is no labour laid upon any of us in our lawful callings, but that which is common to man. Even the Saints whom Christ hath made free, and separated from the world, are not freed from service while they are in the world. And while Christ would not have them careful in any thing, he would have them industrious in every thing. That Canon of the Apostle is clear for it (1 Cor. 7. 20.) *Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called*; that is, your spiritual calling doth not void your civil. When you have learned to drive a trade for heaven, you must still drive your trade on earth. *While there is any thing of sin in us, there must be somewhat of the hireling in us.* There is not the most ingenious, no, nor the most spiritual labour we go about, but there is somewhat of the hireling in it; in the duty of prayer, in the duty of preaching, there is somewhat of the hireling, that is, there is bodily pain and weariness, a waste upon our strength, and expence of our spirits. Though in these things the Saints work not for wages, but their very work is their wages, and their labour their reward, though there be nothing mercenary in their spirits, yet they feel the effects of a mercenary work upon their bodies, even weariness and waste of natural strength and spirits.

Thirdly, *Seeing the dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling*, Observe,

There is a reward or wages, somewhat follows the labour and travel of this life.

The hireling labours all day, but at night he hath his reward, *Mat.* 20. Christ compares Believers, even in their spiritual capacity, unto Labourers in a Vineyard, to hirelings, who wrought for a penny a day, and at night they had every one their pay: It is so in reference to the whole course of this life, we are hirelings; in the evening we shall have our penny; verily, *There is a reward for the righteous, their labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. And as the righteous have a reward, so the wicked shall have wages. Satans hireling shall have full pay, though no content, for all their works: *The wages of sin is death*; there's pay, such as it is, woful pay, a black penny. The dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling, there is an issue and a reward for every work.

Fourthly, Note from the Metaphor, *While an hireling is doing his Masters work, he doth his own too.*

That is, his own profit comes in by those acts in which he labours for another. It is thus also in the general state of man; above all, Christs servants and hirelings gain by the duties of obedience they perform to Christ, their own profit comes in with his honour. A godly man cannot do a stroke of work for God, but he works for himself too; the servants of God must not be self-seekers and self-workers, they may not make themselves their end; but as it is with an hireling, let him be never so upright-hearted toward the master he serves, let him lay *self* by in all he doth, yet he hath a share of profit in all his labours. God hath so espoused and married

married his own glory and the good of man together, that whosoever really promotes the one, promotes both. It is so likewise with those who work the works of darkness, and do the lusts of the devil. While his slaves are doing his work, they are gaining toward destruction, and their own wages encreases daily, they are treasuring up wrath and judgment against the day of wrath. As the measure of their sin fills, so doth the measure of their punishment. Thus also *the dayes of man are as the dayes of an hireling.*

There are two general Observations which I shall but name, because they will occur again.

First, *The life of man is short; as the dayes of an hireling.*

The servant doth not abide in the house for ever, a hireling is but for a time. And it is good for a man that it is so. Some complain exceeding much, because their lives are so exceeding little. But let them weigh it well, and they shall see cause to rejoyce much, because they live so little. In some respect it is good for wicked men, that their lives are so short; if their lives were longer, they would be wickeder, and so heaping up more sin, they would heap up more wrath against themselves. And it is very well for the Saints, that their lives are so short. Their corruptions and temptations, their weaknesses and infirmities, their troubles and afflictions are so many, that it is well their dayes are so few. If they should have length of life added to heaps of sorrows, and perpetuity with outward misery, how miserable were they! Christ promises it as a point of favour to his, that the dayes of trouble should be shortned; *Except those dayes should be shortned, no flesh should be saved* (that is, kept or preserved alive in those tribulations) *but for the Elects sake those dayes shall be shortned*, Mat. 24. 22. It is a favour also to the Saints, that their particular dayes are shortned, that theirs are but as the dayes of an hireling, forasmuch as their present dayes are dayes of trouble and travel. *The dayes of the best are so full of evil, that it is good they are not fuller of days.*

Secondly, *It is good they are so evil or full of trouble.*

It is well for wicked men that their dayes are full of trouble; the sweeter their lives are to them, the sinfuller they are against God. Their outward comforts are but fewel and encouragement to their lusts; and while their lives are calm and quiet, they do but sail more quietly down into that dead Sea of everlasting misery. And the Saints have this advantage by the troublesomeness of their lives, to be kept in continual exercise, and more dependance upon God; they would love the world too well, and delight in the creature too much, if God did not put bitterness into their cup.

Job having thus shadowed the state of man, seems to make out his intendment or scope thus, *There is no reason why I should be charged so deeply for desiring death; for what is the life of man? Is it not a life full of travel, and of trouble, full of dangers and temptations, is not the time of his life short and set? Is it not a speedy passing time, and yet a firmly appointed time? Why then should not I think the period of my life to be at hand? Why should not I think my appointed time is come? Forasmuch as I have so many evidences and symptomes of death before me, and have heard so many messages and summons to the grave. Death sits upon my lips, ready to come in while I am speaking. Death hath taken possession of me already, and seiz'd my ports. Death is in my face, I am the very picture of death, and images of death stand round about me.* Therefore Eliphaz, *why should I not call to have my dayes summed up, that I may see the end and sum of these troubles; Or, wherefore wouldst thou stay my complaint against my life, or stop my desire of death, by giving me hopes of many dayes, and of a flourishing estate in this world?*

That's his first argument, from the general condition of mankind. Now he proceeds to consider somewhat more special in that condition.

Plurima mortis imago.

Verse 2. **As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow, and as a hireling loketh for the reward of his work.**

Verse 3. **So am I made to possess moneths of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.**

שאף *Traxit aerē ad os, per Metaphorā, ishiavit, ardenter cupit, qui enim vehementer aliquid cupiunt, præ desiderii & expectationis magnitudine ad os aeren trahunt seu frequentius respirant.*

As a servant earnestly desireth.] *To desire earnestly*, is but one word in the Original; it is so full of sence, that we cannot empty it into any one word in our language. The Letter is, *As a servant breaths after the shadow*: And because a man that hath an earnest longing desire for a thing, pants, breathes and gaspes after it, therefore that word, which signifies to gape and draw in the air pantingly, signifies also to desire, or to desire earnestly, *As a servant earnestly desireth.*

The shadow.] Some understand it of the night, when the servant comes to rest himself after his labour all the day. *Night is but a great shadow.*

Secondly, We may take it for the *shadow* of the day: A servant that is heated in labour abroad in the open field, earnestly desires a shadow, to get under a tree or a bush; a little to refresh himself. Or,

Thirdly, The shadow may be taken for the house; to come into a mans house, or under a mans roof, is called a coming under his shadow, *Gen.* 19. 3. *Therefore are they come under my shadow*, saith *Lot* to the men of *Sodom*, that is under the covert of my roof.

Umbra id significat quod protegendo & custodiendo obumbrat.

The shadow is used often in Scripture to note protection and mercy; *Shadows are substantial mercies, and the promise of a shadow is a real favour*, Isa. 4. 6. The Church hath a promise under this notion; *There shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heat.* Isa. 25. 4. *A refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat.* And, *Isa.* 32. 2. The Lord promises that he will be *as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land unto his people.* And *David* flies to this shadow for safety. *Under the shadow of thy wings shall be my refuge, till these calamities be overpast*, Psal. 57. 1. So, *Psal.* 17. 8. *Psal.* 91. 1,

So that in these words, *As a servant earnestly desireth the shadow*, *Job* means that which is most refreshing and desirable by a servant: And in those Eastern hot countries, shadows were very refreshing and much desired. *Jacob* reporting his labours in keeping *Laban's* sheep, saith, *In the day time I was consumed with heat, or parched with heat.* Therefore a servant hath reason to desire the shadow.

And as an hireling loketh for the reward of his work.

There are two things which a servant or an hireling desires much, *rest* and *reward*; *shadow* and *pay*. When he is hot, the shadow refreshes him: and when he is hungry, his pay refreshes him; while his hand is at work in the day, his heart is upon the wages he shall receive at night. Hence the Lord in compassion to servants, made a gracious provision for them by a Law, *Deut.* 24. 14, 15. *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant*, &c. *at his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it, for he is poor and setteth his heart upon it, lest he cry against thee to the Lord, and it be sin unto thee.*

Job puts the instance in both, *As the hireling looks for the reward of his work*, &c.

He loketh.] The word signifieth to expect a thing with an eye toward it; what we earnestly expect, our eyes move after it. *David*, in his waiting upon God, saith, *Mine eyes are towards thee*; I lift mine eyes and my heart to God; the same word is here used, *The hireling looks.*

For the reward of his work.

So we translate it. The Hebrew is, *He looks for his work*: Why? He had work before, he had his work all day long, his Master shewed him his work, he needed not look for that; then his work is the reward of his work. In the Scripture, the word *work* signifies three things.

First, The very act of labour.

Secondly, The effect of labour, the thing wrought, or that which is the product of labour. When a man hath laboured, what he laboured about is visible, and that we call his work, as well as the act of his labour.

Thirdly, The reward or the wages which a man receives for his labour, *Lev.* 19. 13. We read a plain Text for it. *The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night, until the morning.* The Hebrew is, *The work of him that is hired shall not abide with thee.* So, *Psal.* 109. 20. *Let this be the reward of mine adversaries from the Lord*; The Hebrew is, *Let this be the work of mine adversaries from the Lord.* And, *Jer.* 22. 13. We have the word in the same sence, work for wages. As it is usual to put prayer for the thing prayed for, a petition for the thing petitioned, or for the thing obtained by petition; *The Lord hath given me my petition* (saith *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 27.) That is, the child for whom I did petition. It is usual also in Scripture, to put sin for the punishment or reward of sin,

Opus est fructus seu merces operis, quæ pro labore datur, per Metonymiam.

Gen.

Genes. 4. 13. *My sin is greater*, that is, my punishment is greater *then I can bear.* And the Master is forbid to detain the servants wages, *least it be sin to him*, Deut. 24. 15. That is, least he be punished for detaining it. Thus also it is usual to put the work for the reward of the work, *The hireling expects his work*, that is, he earnestly looks that he shall have wages in the evening for his work. Now (saith *Job*) as these wait, the servant and the hireling, for the shadow in the day, and for their wages at night; so *I am made to possess months of vanity*, &c.

I shall Note a point or two in passage from the words, as they contain a general truth, before I examine them in this application.

Take the words as they are a direct proposition, *A servant desires the shadow, and an hireling looks for the reward of his work.* Hence observe,

First, *The condition of a servant is a very laborious and wearisom condition.*

He longs for some rest, he earnestly desires the shadow. Observe,

Secondly, *The servant must have a reward.*

There's all the reason in the world he should. Observe,

Thirdly, *The hireling hath earnest thoughts upon his reward.*

His reward is in his eye. It is the reason given, why the wages of the hired servant should not be with-held, *Deut.* 24. 15. The Lord the righteous judge between Masters and Servants, gives this account or ground of his Law, *Thou shalt not detain his wages, for he setteth his heart upon it*; Poor man he hath been working all day, and he hath had his heart upon his wages; the hopes of that gave him some relief and ease in going through his hard task and service, therefore thou shalt not keep it from him, his heart is set upon it.

But it may be questioned: is not this a sin in the servant, to set his heart upon his wages? A charge is given, *Psal.* 62. *v.* 10. *If riches increase, set not your hearts upon them*; and is it approveable in a servant, to set his heart upon his wages or encrease?

There is a great difference (and it is worthy our notice) between those two Scriptures. The word in *Deutronomy*, (speaking of the poor servant) notes the lifting up of the Soul: *He hath lifted up his soul unto it*, so we read in the margin of our Bibles; But in the *Psalm* (where he speaks of the covetous rich man) the word imports, the letting down or setling of his heart upon it. A poor man hath but a little, and his wages (it may be) is above him, his wages (possibly) is more then he is worth, therefore he lifteth up his mind to it, as a mercy and a blessing from God, for the relief of himself and family; take heed (saith the Lord) that thou detain not his wages; for the poor man lifteth up his soul to it, as a thing he reacheth upward for; *It is very dangerous to take that out of the hands of a man, which he is taking (as it were) out of the hand of God.* But a rich man, who hath aboundance, lets his heart down, he croucheth and broodeth upon the creature. A godly poor man, looks up to his reward, and fetches his bread from Heaven; a covetous rich man looks down to his reward, and takes his bread from the Earth; a godly man is above all earthly things, and yet he lifts up his mind to receive them. A meer natural man is below earthly things, and yet he descends that he may receive them: The things which both receive, are the same, but the conveiance and derivation differ alwayes, as much as Heaven and Earth, sometimes as much as Heaven and Hell. But to the Text. Observe,

Lastly, That, *it is the property of an hireling* (take it strictly) *to eye his reward.*

This is the description of an hireling, *he is one who looks to his reward, whatsoever he doth to his work.* Christ, *Joh.* 10. 13. confirms this character, *The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep*; he cares much for the fleece, and for the flesh, but he cares little, if at all for the sheep; that is, how or whether the sheep be fed and prosper. He that works for Christ, finds his reward in his work, and his eye is upon his work, as a reward, as well as upon the reward of his work; he is pleased as much, yea far more with his business, then he is with his wages: Did he not take content, and pay himself in this, that he is in a work acceptable to Christ; he could take no content, he could not be pleased at all, that he is in a work profitable to himself.

Now *Job* applies this general, about the nature of a servant and an hireling, to his own condition.

So I am made to possess months of vanity, and wearisom nights are appointed to me.

So am I made.] It looks like a strange, and a very unlikely similitude; *As a servant desireth the shadow, so am I made to possess months of vanity:* Therefore to clear it, we must remember, that this is a similitude with a dissimilitude: The similitude is conceal'd, the dissimilitude is exprest; we may make it out thus, *As a servant desireth the shadow, and an hireling looketh for the reward of his work; so I, who am labouring in the heat of these afflictions, do earnestly desire a shadow; and I who am at work as an hireling, would have a reward; that is, I would see the end and issue of these troubles; But* (here's the dissimilitude) *I am made to possess months of vanity, and wearisom nights are appointed to me*; as if *Job* had said, *When the servant hath wrought all day, and is weary, he can lie down at night quietly and rest himself; but alas! the night is as troublesom, and as laborious to me as the day; When the hireling hath laboured and taken pains, he receives his reward at evening; but my wages are months of vanity, and my rewards are nights of trouble; I am paid in ill coyn, months of vanity, wearysom nights are appointed for the reward of weary dayes.* Thus the sence is plain. *Similitudo dissimilis.*

I am made [to possess.] The word signifies possessing by inheritance and descent. Two things are implied in that phrase: יחל *Et jure hæreditario aliquid acquirere & possidere.*

First, That troubles and afflictions belong to us by right, they are possest as an inheritance, which we receive from our Parents and Progenitors. *I am made to possess.* And

Secondly, It notes the continuance of troubles upon us: We have not only an ill lodging for a while, or we stay not with trouble, as travellers for a night, but we possess and inherit them as our own. *Job's* troubles, were not to him as an hired house, or a lodging, but as an inheritance wherein he was setled and estated: *I am made to possess months of vanity*; as if he had said, you see what the patrimony and inheritance is which descends to me: I have waited for comfort, and have been in expectation of good dayes, but I possess months of vanity, that's all I have found and felt, as the issue of my labours.

Months of vanity,] Some read, *Empty Moons*, (the word bears that sence) as if *Job's* Moon were alwayes in the wane, or ever in the Eclipse. The word signifies any kind of vanity, whether in word or in deed, personal vanity, or real vanity, falshood or deceit, any thing that is trivial or light. Such months have I appointed to me. ירחי־שוא

But some may say, *Months of vanity?* Why doth *Job* complain of this? Hath any man in the world any other then months of vanity? Why then doth *Job* take it so ill, that he possesseth months of vanity, when no other fall to the lot or possession of any man? *David*, Psalm 39. 5. affirms, *that man at his best estate is altogether vanity*; what reason then hath *Job* to complain of months of vanity in his worst estate? It was with him as well as with any of his neighbours, we know not who hath any other then months of vanity. The Preacher makes this the preface of his Sermon, *Eccles.* 1. 2. *Vanity of vanities* (saith the Preacher) *vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

I answer, It is true, our whole life is a life of vanity; but yet there is more vanity in some mans life, or in some part of the same mans life then in another. Vanity is gradual. There is a vain, and a vainer vanity, and there is the vainest vanity. Months of vanity may be understood two wayes.

First, *Months of vanity*, that is, months empty of comfort, fruitless months, months bringing me no refreshing or content. As *Gen.* 1. 2. it is said, *The earth was without form and void: void*, that is, it had neither man, nor beast, nor plant upon it; there was nothing but emptiness upon the face of the earth, as it lay in that rude mass; so *Job* saith here, mine are months of vanity, void months, that is, *Inanis & vacua, quia erat vacua hominibus, jumentis & plantis.*

is, months not filled up with any comfort, with any refreſhing, with any joy, with any light or content; all theſe which are as the filling up of our months, and the beauty of time, are taken away from me; mine are empty months, my dayes are all Dog-dayes, or at beſt, the dayes in the Kalendar of my life are blanks.

Vacuum tempus eſt, quod nullam nobis affert utilitatem.

Secondly, *Months of vanity*, becauſe he had not what he expected, or the iſſue which he waited for: *Job* expreſſes himſelf in a poſture of waiting, by the former ſimilitudes: The hireling looks for his wages, and I look for ſomewhat, but it is in vain I cannot enjoy it. So the word is uſed, *Pſal.* 78. 33. where the Pſalmiſt deſcribes the ſinful diſtempers of the people of *Iſrael*, and Gods anger towards them; *They believed not his word*, &c. What then? *Therefore their dayes did he conſume in vanity, and their years in trouble.* The dayes of all men are conſumed in vanity, as we ſaid before; but here was ſomewhat more judicial and penal; it is a ſore judgment to conſume our dayes in vanity, as that people did: As ſoon as they came out of *Egypt*, they were in a fair way to *Canaan*; but God leads them about by the wilderneſs, and there lets them wander out forty years, expecting and waiting for *Canaan*, but no *Canaan* came, or they came not to *Canaan*; this was the *ſpending of their years in vanity*, becauſe they were travelling to their deſired reſt, but enjoyed it not; they went toyling up and down the wilderneſs, as in a maze, finding no way out, but at the door of the grave; their carkaſſes fell in the wilderneſs; thus their dayes were conſumed in vanity. So ſaith *Job*, *I poſſeſs months of vanity*, that is, months wherein I am tyred out in continual troubles, and they are fruitleſs, iſſuleſs troubles; I have no ſenſible benefit by them, I ſee no end of them, my hopes are fruſtrate, and put far off from me. And are not theſe months of vanity? Obſerve hence,

Firſt, *Troubles will prevail upon us, whether we will or no.*

I am made to poſſeſs, &c. As if *Job* had ſaid, I would fain have got over theſe months of vanity, or worn them out, but whether I will or no, I am made to poſſeſs them. *The bands of affliction are too ſtrong for the creature to break*: when the Lord ſends trouble, he will make a man poſſeſs it, how diſpleaſing ſoever it is; *It is beſt for us to ſubmit, where we cannot remedy, and to yield quietly to that which we cannot avoid.* Obſerve,

Secondly, *Troubles come to us, as our natural inheritance.*

I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity, they are as mine inheritance, and I would wave my right but I cannot. There are two parts of our natural patrimony, *ſin* and *ſorrow*; both theſe deſcend to us, and we are made to *poſſeſs them*, till we come to our purchaſed inheritance, reſerved in Heaven for us. Obſerve,

Thirdly, That, *though every mans life have vanity in it, yet ſome men have more.*

That is, more troubles and trials, more diſquietments and diſappointments. The common condition of all men, in their beſt eſtate is, *that they are altogether vanity*; but the vanity of ſome men is more vain, their afflictions more afflicting, their troubles more troubleſom, and their ſickneſs more ſick then their brethren. *Job* ſpeaks as if he had ſpoiled all the world of this inheritance, and had engroſs'd all vanity to himſelf; *I am made to poſſeſs months of vanity*: That vanity which is the portion of all men, ſeems ſometimes to be the portion of one man alone. *I am the man that hath ſeen affliction*, ſaith the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Lam.* 3. 1. why, is that ſuch a ſtrange ſight, who hath not ſeen affliction? True, but *Jeremiah* had ſeen more then moſt, and therefore he ſpeaks, as if he only had ſeen affliction, *I am the man.*

And wearisom nights are appointed to me.

Noctes plenæ vigiliis & anxietatibus.

Wearisom nights.] Or nights of labour and wearineſs; at if *Job* had ſaid, though the ſervant be wearied all day, yet the night is not wearisom to him, he reſts at night, but

Noctes laboris, i. e. *laboriosas, Menses habeo omni solatio vacuos, ut nec in noctibus quidem liceat mihi quiescere. Adagio ad servi & mercenarii nostri non quietem.* Pined.

I am wearied in the day, and wearied in the night: *wearisom nights are appointed to me*; the night which is given unto others for reſt, is meaſured out to me in watchings and in ſorrows. And this is a great aggravation of his ſad condition; it is ſaid before, that he had moneths of vanity, yet it might be ſuppoſed his nights were comfortable intervals of refreſhing: as a man may ſay, I have had ſeven years of hard labour, yet it is ſuppoſed he reſted all the nights of thoſe years; ſo when *Job* ſaith, I had months of vanity, it might be conceived, he had at leaſt ſometimes a good night; therefore he adds *wearisom nights are appointed to me*, I ſpeak not after the rate of ordinary men, whoſe months labor, is a month of dayes, my labouring months include the night alſo.

A ſtrong healthy *man goeth forth to his labour and to his work, until the evening*, Pſal. 104. 23. But a ſick, weak man, goeth forth to his labour in the evening. The night is moſt laborious to ſick men, then they revolve their troubles, and being free from viſits of friends, they viſit their own afflictions, and ſtudy their own diſtempers freely.

Nox ægris maximè infeſta eſt, toti ſunt in cogitandis malis ſuis.

Are appointed to me.] The Hebrew is, *are numbred, or reckoned to me*; as if he ſhould ſay, God ſets down my nights by tale, or by ſcores; It is an *Arithmetical word*, it notes to number by art and skill: And ſome obſerve, that it notes *Arithmetick* in that operation of it, which we call *Subſtraction or Subduction*: not that which we call *Addition or Multiplication.* Wearisom nights are numbred or appointed to me, in a kind of Subſtraction, that is, God takes or ſubſtracts the nights out of the months, and makes them as wearisom and as troubleſom to me, as the dayes are. And becauſe thoſe things which are thus numbred by way of ſeparation or ſubſtraction, are uſually appointed or appropriated to ſome ſpecial uſe, therefore the word is well tranſlated, to appoint or conſtitute: if you ſee a man ſeparate or ſubſtract one thing from another, it is an argument that he hath a reaſon for what he doth, and intends it to ſome extraordinary purpoſe: The word is ſo taken here, to note a ſpecial end to which theſe nights, being ſubſtracted from the reſt of his time, were appointed, namely, they were to be as *Job's pay and reward*; He was troubled all day, and if he looked for his reward or comfort in the evening, this was given him, *A night as wearisom as his day*, or he had an ill nights reſt given for his hard dayes labour. The Prophet gives us the word in ſuch a ſence, *Iſa.* 56. 11, 13. He tells the *Jews* their ſin in the former words, *Ye furniſh a drink-offering to that number*; Some underſtand his meaning to be a reproof of that wicked and ſuperſtitious cuſtom, wherein the *Jews* (it ſeems) did ſymbolize with the Heathens, who were wont to drink to their *Idols by number*, to ſuch an *Idol* they would drink ſo many cups, and that was called a *drink-offering to that number*; Now ſaith God, becauſe you have done thus, namely, *furniſhed a drink-offering to that number, therefore I will number you to the ſword*, or therefore I will appoint you to the ſword; I will ſubſtract and take you out, and you ſhall be the men ſeparated for the ſword to deal with and deſtroy; I will number you to the ſword, that ſhall drink your blood, becauſe you have been ſo accurate in wickedneſs, to drink by number. The word is applied to Chriſt (*Iſa.* 53. 12.) *He was numbred amongſt the tranſgreſſors*; that is, he was taken aſide, and ſeparated from the innocent, and ranked amongſt tranſgreſſors; which notes him appointed, or ſet apart to that end, that ſo he might be the Saviour of tranſgreſſors, and a deliverer of the wicked from their ſins. In *Daniel* 1. *v.* 10. when thoſe children of the *Hebrews*, deſired to be ſpared from eating the Kings diet, I dare not do it, ſaith the Steward, *for I fear my Lord the King, who hath appointed your meat and your drink*; as if it ſhould be ſaid, *he hath numbred out to you ſo many diſhes of meat, he hath numbred out to you ſo many flagons of wine*; he hath ſubſtracted ſuch a proportion, and appointed it to you, and I dare not alter it. And in the Propheſie of *Jonah*, *chap.* 1. *verſ.* 17. it is ſaid, *God prepared a great fiſh to ſwallow up Jonah*, ſo we tranſlate: the Hebrew is, *God numbered a great fiſh to ſwallow up Jonah*; That is, God did ſeparate or ſubſtract a fiſh from all the reſt of the fiſhes of the Sea, for that end and purpoſe to ſwallow up *Jonah*. From all which inſtances it is clear, that the word notes an appointment, by way of deſign, or the draw-

מנה *Numeravit, ſupputavit, unde, מנין menſis, quod juxta lunæ curſum menſes numeramus. Non quancunq; rationem numerandi denotat, ſed artificialem & Arithmeticam; neq; illam quam vocant Additionē, ſed ſubſtractionem. Quod in hac ratione numerandi quædam ſubducuntur, & quaſi ſeparantur, ideo ſignificat ſeorſim deſtinare ad aliquem ſpeciale uſum.*

drawing of a thing to some special use and service. When *a Party* is drawn out of the body of an Army, they are numbred or appointed to some design; such a meaning is in *Job's* words, these nights are subtracted or drawn out, and then appointed to be my reward and wages. The sum of all is, *Job* comparing his estate with that of hirelings, servants and souldiers, finds his far worse then theirs, they have rest in the night, at least some nights they rest, but he had none. Observe here the law of nature,

Night is the time of rest.

Sleep is the parenthesis of our troubles: it puts a stop to our sorrows, and gives intermission to our labours. Observe,

Secondly, *That the troubles of every night, and how many troublesom nights any one shall have, are determined by God himself.*

I have wearisom nights (saith *Job*) but they come not by accident, they are appointed and exactly numbred to me. *It is matter of great comfort, to remember that God is thus accurate about our sorrows:* He gives his people a cup of sorrow, and he appointeth how many drops shall be in their cup, all the world cannot put in one drop beyond his measure: He appointeth out our trouble for the kind, and for the degree, and for the time and continuance of it; how many wearisom nights, how long every night shall be, are all calculated and set down in the Kalender of his heavenly counsels.

I shall add but a word of the next verse, which is only the description of a wearisom night: *Job* having said, that wearisom nights were appointed or numbred out to him: now resolves us what he means by a wearisom night, or when he accounts a night wearisom.

Vers. 4. **When I lie down, I say when shall I arise, and the night be gone? And I am full of tossings to and fro, unto the dawning of the day.**

This is a wearisom night, and it is a most exact description of a wearisom night; when a man as soon as he goes to bed, desires to rise; as soon as it is night enquires for day; this man hath a weary time of it.

ערב *Miscuit, advesperascit, unde* ערב *vespera tempus illud cũ tenebræ misceantur luci.*

When shall I arise, and the night be gone?] Master *Broughton* translates, *the duskie time be gone?* The word signifies evening, and the verb, to mingle or mix; because the evening is a time wherein there is a mixture (as it were) of light and darkness. Evening, is light and darkness mingled, hence we call it *twilight*; And though all the night be (in this sence) mixed, because in nature there is *no pure darkness*, yet in the evening this mixture is more discernable; therefore it is rather appliable to the former part of the night, because afterward the light is more fully overcome and conquered.

מדד *Mensuravit hinc* מדה *mensuram quantitatis continuæ denotat, sicut* משמורה *discretæ.*

When shall the night be gone?] The Hebrew is, *When shall the night be measured out?* There is an elegancy in that; it signifies to measure a thing, as we measure cloth by a yard, or as ground is measured by a rod or pole; it signifies likewise to measure time, to tell, count and observe the hours: As if *Job* had said of himself (as many times sick men do) *I lie a bed all the night and tell the clock.* The clock is the measure of the night: now, saith he, *when shall the night be measured out?* As if he had (with sorrow) counted the tedious hours, oh when will this time be measured out! What a long night is this! As come to a sick man in a morning, and you shall have him say, What a long tedious night was this? As long as two or three nights.

He adds yet another part of the description, *I am full of tossings too and fro unto the dawning of the day.* He lay measuring the night, and was unquiet all the while, *full of tossings too and fro.* The word signifies to be filled with meat and drink; I have my fill of troubles, my fill of torture, I have unquietness enough, as much as I can hold of sorrow.

שבע *Saturatus.*

נדדים *a radice* נדד *motus, remotus, elongatus. Celerem agitationum deno-*

Tossings to and fro.] The word is understood by some of inward tossings. *I am full of tossings too and fro*, that is, *I have great agitations in my heart, my thoughts are very unsetled.* One of the Rabins to that sence, *I am full of wandring thoughts*; thoughts will tos up and down, forward and backward; a mans thoughts will tos him from one end of the world unto the other, while he is a prisoner in his bed: They tos him from business to business, while he is unfit for any business. A sick man is full of inward tossings, of wandring thoughts, his thoughts run fastest, when himself is bed-rid, or confin'd to his bed; all the night is spent in the travel of his mind, while his body cannot stir a foot.

tat. Saturatus sum vagis cogitationibus. Rab. Let.

But rather understand it of corporal tossings. A sick man full of pain removes from one side of his bed to another, from one corner to another, sometimes from the head of the bed to the foot. The Morallst expresses it excellently, *Sick men use changes as if they were medicines*, they hope by changing their place to loose their pain by the way, *I am full of tossings too and fro.*

Ægrotantes mutationibus ut remediis utuntur. Sen.

Till the dawning of the day.] Till the day break, that is, the whole night through. Some understand this for the evening, the word signifies both the evening and the morning. And these interpret this latter part of the verse for his troubles in the day, having complained before that wearisom nights were appointed to him, *When I lie down, I say, when will the night be gone?* There is an end of the night; but when the night is gone, have I any ease in the day? No, I am full of tossings too and fro until the evening; and so it is an amplification of his troubles in regard of both parts of the natural day, light and darkness. But we may more properly keep it to the description of a wearisom night, and that word which may note the evening is here to be appropriated to the dawning of the day, when darkness begins to depart, and give way to the prevailing light.

נשף *Crepusculum vespertinũ, vel matutinum.*

This was a great aggravation of the afflictions of this holy man, he had no rest, no ease, in any part of the night, he could not so much as get a nap towards morning.

The night is the time of our truce with troubles, though a man be in conflicts with business all day long, yet there is a cessation at night, all is laid by till morning. Hence the night and sleep are well called *The Conquerors of evil, and Victors over sorrow*; because in the night a man gets rid of them. Christ saith, *Matth. 6. ult. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof:* if there be evil enough in the day, who is able to stand before the evils of day and night too? When our very sleep becomes our fight, what can flesh and blood do any more? Sleep is a medicine for all diseases, and Physitians often give a sleepy potion for a medicine, that the body may have a little refreshing, after it hath been worn and tired out with a wakeful sickness.

Malorum Domitrices.

Observe from the Text, as it is the description of a sick man.

That a man in pain looks upon every time as better to him then the present time.

When I lie down, I say, when shall I arise? I hope it will be better with me anon, I hope the day will be better to me then the night: and when the day comes, then he wisheth for night, hoping the night will be better then the day. An afflicted troublesom time is so described, *Deut. 28. 67. In the morning thou shalt say, would God it were even; and at even thou shalt say, would God it were Morning:* They shall think any thing, or time to come better to them then the present; therefore when they had night, they call'd for day; and when they had day, they sent a messenger for the night; ever thinking the next change of time would be-friend them with a change in their condition. Observe,

Secondly, *Change of place giveth no ease of pain.*

I am full of tossings too and fro to the dawning of the day; he had changed, and changed, and changed, but could not change his pain for ease, that continued still. Some travel to other Countries to mend their estates. Some go from Kingdom to Kingdom to ease their minds, and some to better their manners; but as he that runs to another country changes his air, but not his heart, alters place, but not his manners, the same is the same still: So it brings no health to the sick, no ease to the pained to change place.

Cœlum non animam mutat, qui trans mare currit.

As a man sin-sick, before he comes to rest and healing in Christ, tosses from place to place, from this duty to that duty, from this means to that means, to get a little ease for his wounded spirit and aking conscience; he hopeth this will do him good, and that will do him good, but all in vain. And as worldly men hope their pleasures and their riches

riches will do them good, and so they toss from one pleasure to another, from creature to creature; but all failes, there is no settlement, no composednes, no peace, no redress till the soul fixes upon Christ. So in bodily pains, there is no ease, no refreshing but in God: it is not this or that place of the bed, it is not the bed or the couch, it is not the Countrey or the City, a sharp or a temperate air can do it, God can alone, and he can command any creature to do it.

You that have moneths of comfort, and to whom refreshing nights are appointed, bless God; it is not your bed that gives you rest, but his blessing.

Remember this description of a sick man; present the conditions of a sick man to your thoughts, think what a wearisome thing it is to lie all night telling the clock, calling for the day, and tossing to and fro, praise God for quiet nights, and pity those to whom wearisome nights are appointed.

VERS. 5,6,7,8.

My flesh is cloathed with worms and clods of dust, my skin is broken, and become loathsome.
My dayes are swifter than a weavers shuttle, and are spent without hope.
O remember that my life is wind, mine eye shall no more see good.
The eye of him that hath seen me, shall see me no more; thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

WE have seen *Job* in this Chapter confirming his former desires of death.

First, From the general condition of mankind, *v.* 1.

Secondly, From the condition of some particular men, *v.* 2.

And Thirdly, From his own present condition, which he draws forth in *vers.* 3, 4, 5, 6.

The third and fourth verses have been already opened.

In this fifth, he gives us a farther description of himself, and such a one, as might well assure us, that his restless nights were not without reason; *My flesh is cloathed*, &c. As if he had said, if you think I am thus unquiet without cause, then behold my body, look upon me, and see what a pitiful spectacle I am, *My flesh is cloathed with worms, my skin is broken and become loathsome.*

These words give us *Job's picture*; here is his delineation and pourtraicture as he was under the hand of God. They who would take *Job's* picture, as in the day of his afflictions, must draw him thus, *A man cloathed with worms and clods of dust; there's his garment; his skin scabby and discoloured, full of chaps and running sores, angry biles and enflamed ulcers, his posture, lying on the ground, scraping himself with a potsherd.*

My flesh is cloathed with worms.

בשר *caro, per Synechdochē corpus, in Piel Bisser, significat Evangelium.*

My flesh.] That is, my Body, by a *Synechdoche*; and the word which we translate *flesh*, springs from a root, or hath near relation to it, which signifies to bring and publish good tidings or welcome news; and therefore the Gospel is expresst by it (*Evangelium*) is the same in Latin, or, (εὐαγγέλιον) in Greek with this in the Hebrew; and some Criticks give the reason why *flesh* is expresst by this word, which signifies to publish or bring good tidings, because there should be a taking of flesh, or making of flesh, namely the *Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ*, which should be the best tidings, and the most joyful news that ever the world heard of.

Is cloathed with worms.] In the first Chapter of this Book, at *ver.* 21. *Job* describes himself thus, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return*; but now it seems *Job* had got cloathing, and being ready to lie down in the grave, he had a vesture put upon him; now (it seems) *Job* should not go naked out of the world. for he saith, *My flesh is cloathed*; but what is this cloathing? *My flesh is cloathed with worms and clods of dust*, that is a suit of cloaths very fit and suitable for the grave, but it is usually put on in the grave. *Job* is in his grave-cloaths before he dies; or he speaks this to shew that he accounted himself dead while he lived, or as *Heman* mourns (*Psal.* 88.) *Free among the dead*; a member of that Corporation, a brother of that Society already. For he was now in that Habit or Livery; *A Gown of worms, set or embroidered with clods of dust.*

Quavis re vestiri dicimur, cujus accessione vel dedecoramur, vel ornamur.

My flesh is cloathed with worms.] It is frequent in Scripture, when the holy Ghost would heighten the sence of what we are and enjoy, or would note the abundance of a thing, or how man is adorned, or defiled with it all over, then to expres it under the notion of cloathing; God himself is expresst *cloathed with Majesty*, because he is Majesty all over, and there is nothing but glory upon him: God is also described cloathed with judgment and with justice; why? Because these are his honour and his ornament, he is justice and judgment all over; we find *Job* in the twenty ninth of this Book, at *verse* 14. speaking thus of himself in his state of Magistracy. *I put on righteousnes, and it cloathed me, my judgment was as a Robe and a Diadem*; that is, I was full of righteousnes, I was altogether righteous in dispensing rewards and punishments, in exercising my power among the people. To be cloathed with humility, to be cloathed with the Spirit, to be cloathed with Christ, are phrases of the same importance. So on the other hand, to be cloathed with pride, with shame, with dishonour; *Let mine enemies* (saith *David*) *be cloathed with shame*, Psal. 109. 29. *Let them be cloathed with dishonour*, Psal. 35. 26. that is, let them be ashamed and dishonoured all over, or, exceedingly ashamed or dishonoured. And so a great desolation is called a cloathing with desolation, *Ezech.* 7. 27. *That which strips a man naked is in this sence called his cloathing*, cloathed with desolation.

Thus we are to understand *Job*, when he saith, *That his flesh was cloathed with worms*; his meaning is, he had many worms crawling upon his flesh; or lying within his flesh, and so were as a lining to his upper garment of nature: These worms spread themselves all over him, as a filthy and loathsome garment covering his whole body.

And besides this figure, *Job* spake properly, while he was thus full of sores and botches and biles, to say, he was cloathed with worms; worms are proper to sores; many sores breed worms, and worms are a disease in the flesh, as well as within the bowels, and such diseases are accounted the foulest and filthiest diseases of all other: Such was *Job's*, his sores and biles corrupted and bred worms, which made him an abhorring to himself. *Putrefaction is the soil out of which worms grow.* Rotten flesh breeds worms, and a rotten Conscience breeds a worm, *Isa.* 66. 24. *Their worm shall not die.* Why doth the holy Ghost say of those men who were never washed, nor healed of their sin-sores, of their soul-sicknesses and pollutions, that when they die, they have a worm that dieth not? It is in allusion to this, because as a corrupt body, or corrupt putrid flesh, breeds noisome worms, so a corrupt Conscience, a soul full of filthines and uncleanness, which was never washed or healed in the fountain of the blood of Christ, this Soul, this Conscience breeds worms, even that gnawing worm which shall live with it, feed upon it, and cloath it for ever. Both the natural and the spirituall worm arise from rottenness, and derive their pedigree from sores, sicknesses and putrefaction.

And clods of dust.] *Worms and clods of dust.* Here are strange materials, course stuff for *Job's* cloathing, *clods of dust.* Some conceive that *Job* sate in the dust, and so the dust gathered about him as a garment. Others, that these clods of dust were the scrapings of his sores; for the word signifies the filings of any metal, or the scrapings of an unclean thing. It is said expresly in the second Chapter, that *he took a potsherd to scrape himself*; those clods of filthy dust, or scales scaped from his putrifying sores, these with the crawling worms bred in them, covered his whole body like a garment. and therefore he complains, *I am cloathed with worms and clods of dust.* גוש

You see what his garment was (to carry on the allusion) his skin, upon which this garment was put: **My skin** (saith he) **is broken, and become loathsome.** The skin is the immediate garment of the flesh, his sickness had worn out his skin, he had many holes and rents in that garment, which needed mending, and it was all over so filthy, that it needed washing: *My flesh is broken and become loathsome.* Sores break the skin, and defile the skin; *Job's* skin was so broken and chapt, so defiled and filthy, that he was loathsom to all beholders, and to himself.

This is the picture of *Job*; a few dayes before, you might have

have pictured or drawn him thus, *Job cloathed with silk and scarlet, his garments set with precious oriental stones, his skin smooth and beautiful, his face chearful and manly, his eye quick and piercing; but now* Job *is cloathed with clods of dust, his skin is broken and become loathsom.*

We may hence learn what our own bodies are. The Apostle (*Phil.* 3.21.) calls the body *a vile body*; not that the work of God was vile: The work of God was noble and honourable in all he wrought, especially in that Master-piece of it, the fabrick of mans body; but as the body is come out of the hands of sin, so it is a vile body, that is, it is a body subject to corruption, and will quickly corrupt, be vile and loathsome, 1 *Cor.* 15. 53. *This corruptible must put on incorruption.* The body of man is but one remove from worms and corruption, *chap.* 17. 4. *I have said to corruption, thou art my Father, and to the worm, thou art my Mother.* We shall quickly bear the image of our parents, worms and corruption.

Then be not proud of your bodies, nor of your beauties; they who are now the fairest and goodliest to look upon, may quickly have a broken and a loathsome skin; a disease, one fit of sickness will spoil all thy beauty, deface and blemish thy excellent feature; and if a disease doth not, old age will: time will draw furrows in thy face, and make wrinkles in thy brow. Strength and beauty of body are no matches for time. All things were made in *time*, and *time* will mar all things, So long as generation continues, corruption must.

Again, Take heed of pride in cloathing. The two externals, of which man is most subject to be proud, are beauty and apparel. Cloaths are a flag of vanity, and pride sits upon the skirts. But remember how fine soever your cloathing is this day and hour, God can put you on another suit before to-morrow. We see what change of apparel *Job* had, a godly man, an humble man. That which God did to try the grace of one, he can quickly do to punish and chastise the sin of another; he can quickly put you on such cloathing, as you shall have little cause to be proud of. *He can make you wear cloaths of worms and clods of dust.*

And if we consider it, we have little reason to be proud of our cloaths; for if we follow the best of them to their original, they will be found to be but a cloathing of worms, and clods of dust: what are silks, sattins and velvets, but the issue of worms? And what is your gold and silver, what your pearls and precious stones? are they any thing (if you will resolve them into their principles) but *clods of dust?* They are indeed better concocted by the heat of the Sun, refined and polished by the art of man, but if you search their pedigree, they also are but clods of dust. In your most glorious array, you are but cloathed with dust and worms, and if you be proud of such cloathing, God can cloath you with *worms and clods, not only of unrefined and unpolished, but of putrified and filthy dust.*

Thus we see the first thing, the picture or description of *Job*'s body; his friends at first sight, might be convinced, that a body in such a case, could take little rest day or night. He carries on his complaint a degree further at the sixth verse.

Verse 6. My dayes are swifter then a weavers shuttle, and are spent without hope.

ὁ δὲ βίος μου ἐγένετο λαφροτέρας λαλιᾶς.

My dayes are swifter.] She Seventy render it thus, *My dayes are swifter or nimbler then a word or speech.* Nothing moves faster, or passeth away more lightly then a word; a word is gone, and it is gone suddenly: Hence the similitude is used proverbially, *Psal.* 90. 9. *We spend our dayes as a tale that is told,* or, *as a meditation* (so some translate) suddenly or swiftly; a discourse is quickly over, whether it be a discourse from the mouth, or in the mind; and of the two, the latter is far the more swift and nimble of foot, a discourse in our thoughts outruns the Sun, as much as the Sun out-runs a snail; the thoughts of a man will travel the world over in a moment; he that now sits in this place, may be at the worlds end in his thoughts, before I can speak another word. So that the translation or gloss, by speech or meditation, aggravates the sence, and extends it to the highest.

אֹרֶג But the word properly signifies (as we translate) *a weavers shuttle*, which is an instrument of a very swift and sudden motion. And the word which we render [swifter] signifies that which is fitted for the swiftest motion, *any light thing*, because those things which are light, move swiftest; and we call a good runner a man *light of foot*, Hab. 1. 8. The horses of the *Chaldeans* are thus described, *Their horses are swifter (or lighter of foot) then the Leopards*; so, *swifter or lighter then the weavers shuttle*, which passeth the loom or web with such speed, that it is grown to a proverb, for all things which are quick and transient. The Latines express it by that word which signifies a ray of the Sun, which is darted in a moment from one end of the heavens to another. *Radius textoris, dictum proverbiale, radio velocius.*

But a question rises; *Job* in the third Chapter, and so in the fifth, complains that his life was so prolonged, and slow-paced, that it was very tedious to him; and in this verse, by a repeated request, he spurs and hastens his life to his journeys end; he thought (it seems) his time not winged, but slow-footed; how is it then that in this place he complaineth of the swiftness of his dayes? *My dayes are swifter then a weavers shuttle.*

I answer in a word; By his dayes here, we are to understand his good dayes, his dayes of comfort and prosperity; the dayes of my peace and plenty are slipped away and gone, even as a *weavers shuttle.* But when he complains that his life is slow-footed, and requests that his dayes might move faster, he means the dayes of sorrow and trouble which had overtaken him in his journey; the former were too swift, and the latter too slow: It is as if he had said, *Alas, all my fair dayes of prosperity are gone, they are slipt away as a weavers shuttle, they are as a tale that is told, nothing remains of them but the remembrance, which is an addition to my sorrow; but now I have dayes that seem long, very long, they hang upon my hands, I cannot get them off, my sorrows clog my time, and make every hour seem a year.* *Hezekiah* in his complaint upon his sick bed, useth this allusion, *Mine age is departed and removed from me as a shepherds tent, I have cut off like a weaver my life,* Isa. 38.12. As the weaver cuts of the thred when the web is finished, so it is with me; *I have cut off as a weaver, my life*; not that *Hezekiah* was active in his own death, we are not to understand it so, for he prayed that God would spare him, and he spake this upon the promise of God to lengthen out his life, and to tie the thred of his dayes again, according to which the web was woven on for fifteen years more: but this speech of *Hezekiah*, *As a weaver I have cut off my life*, is like that of the Apostle, *I have finished my course.* He compares the passing of his life to a shuttle, and the conclusion of it to the cutting off of the thred; nights and dayes pass this shuttle forward and backward, too and again; the night casts it to the day, and the day to the night; between these two time quickly wears off the thred of life. The Heathen Poets had a fiction answering this allusion of the *Holy Ghost*; they tell us a story or a fiction rather, of three Sisters, whereof, the one held the wheel or the distaffe, the second drew out the thred, and a third cut it off: In this they shadow the state of mans life; our ordinary phrase for living long, is *spinning a long thred*; and for dying, the *cutting off the thred of life.* *Tres Parcæ Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos.*

And they are spent without hope.] Some translate, *They are spent so, as that there is no hope left.* The word which here we english *spent*, signifies both *consumption* and *consummation*; or sometimes in a good sence, the end or perfecting of a thing; and sometime in an ill sence, the end or consuming of a thing, *Gen.* 2. 1. *So the heavens and the earth were finished*; it is this word, *they were ended*; God ended his work by way of perfection and consummation, he made his work compleat. But here, and often in Scripture, it notes ending by way of consumption, or as we translate the spending of a thing, *Jer.* 14. 12. *I will consume* (or, make an end of) *them by the sword*: And, *Exod.* 33. 3. God commands *Moses*, to go with the people into the wilderness, *for* (saith he) *I will not go up in the midst of them, lest I consume them in the way.* ἀπώλοντο ἢ ἐν χερσὶν ἐλπίδι. כלה

And to shew how deep an expence and consumption of time was upon him, *Job* tells us, it had devoured and eaten up all his hope. It is worse to have our hope spent, then to have our dayes spent; now (saith he) *my dayes are spent*; and that is not all, *my hope is spent.* Some translate so, *My dayes are spent, and I have want and penury of hope*; as I have spent my dayes, so I have spent my hope. And his hopelessness may refer two wayes; *I have no hope*, or, *Cum inopia spei, vel defectu spei, sc. longioris vitæ.*

my

my hope is spent; first, in regard of long life; I see I am so afflicted with this disease, that there is no hope I should hold out under it. Secondly, *without hope*, that is, without hope of being in a better condition, that is, of having my estate restored unto me again, if I should have health restored, and a longer life continued. In both these sences, as he saw the thred of his dayes cut off, so he saw the thred of his hope cut off; he was near death, and *his hope was dead. My dayes are spent without hope*, or, there is no hope remaining. This also is a negative to both parts of *Eliphaz* his promise, either of longer life, or of a better.

We may observe hence, first, a common truth (which I shall not insist upon) about that precious commodity, a commodity more precious then the gold of *Ophir*, *Time*.

All time is short, and we have a very short estate in time. Man is not master of one day, and a servant but of few dayes.

The holy Ghost gives us very many remembrances of this, which is an argument that we are very apt to forget it. Man is slow to take notice of the swiftness of time, and very dull in apprehending the speed of his dayes. It is a wonder that such a plain common doctrine should be handled so often, and that the holy Ghost should, as it were, labour for similitudes, and fetch in all things that are more then ordinarily transitory in nature, to teach us the transitorines of our condition: We meet with many in this book, all hinting at the sudden invisible motion of time: This is a point easie to be known, but very hard to be believed; every man assents to it, but few believe it. And surely the holy Ghost would not spend so many words about it, nor gather up so many illustrations of it from sence, if it were not of much importance to our faith. We usually slight the hearing of common principles, and a Sermon preacht upon this subject, the shortness of our lives, and the speed of time, is judged a needless shortning of time; and the hour seems very long which runs out upon the speed of time: we think it an easie doctrine, and a theme for Boyes: But the truth is, if the heart did well digest how few our dayes are, we should have better dayes; and men would live holier, if they knew indeed their lives were no longer. Therefore though I only touch this subject, yet do ye dwell upon it, and stay long in your thoughts upon the shortness of your lives. *Common truth neglected, cause a neglect of every truth.* Had we more serious thoughts of heaven and hell, that these are, and what these are; that there is a God, and who he is; that there will be a judgment, and what it will be, we should more profitably improve and trade our time and talents.

Secondly note, *Time passeth irrecoverably.*

When the weavers shuttle is once out of his hand, 'tis gone presently; there is no hope time past should be recalled, or time in motion stopt: To consider time under that notion, should make us very good husbands of our time; or (as the Apostle advises) *to redeem the time.* Redemptions are made by purchase; to redeem a thing, is to buy it with a price; the price we redeem time with, is our labour and faithful travel. *It is matter of mourning to consider that so little care is taken in spending that, which when it is gone, we have no hope it can be restored to us again.*

Thirdly, In that *Job* complained before that his life was so long, and now complaineth of the shortness or swiftness of his life, we may note,

That, *Man thinks good dayes end too soon, and that evil dayes stay too long, and will never have an end.*

We love the company of good dayes, and are therefore sorry when they depart. When the Disciples were upon the Mount, and had such a good day of it, how desirous were they to have continued there, and sorry they were the day was at an end? *Master* (saith *Peter*) *it is good for us to be here. The sudden passing of our comforts is our trouble.* Time is alwayes of the same pace; no creature keeps his pace more evenly then time doth, it alwayes moves at the same rate, neither faster nor slower; but man thinks this time short, and that time long; this time speedy, and that time slow, according to the several objects he meets with, and to the conditions wherein he is.

Fourthly observe, That, *Hope is the last refuge of the soul.*

My dayes are spent without hope, my hope is spent too; if I had hope left, I had somewhat left, but my hope is gone. It is so in natural things, it is so in spiritual things. The Apostle, *Heb.* 6. tells us, that hope *is the anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast*; while hope holds, comfort holds; and when hope is gone, all is gone.

Lastly observe, That, *Sometime a godly mans hope may lie prostrate.*

My dayes (saith he) *are cut off without hope*: *Job* thought (as I have noted from some passages before) that his case was desperate, his hope lay in the dust, as well as his body or his honour. Every godly man is not an *Abraham*, of whom it is said, *Rom.* 4. 18. *That against hope he believed in hope*: Nay *Abraham* is not alwayes *Abraham*; he that hath such a strong hope, hath it not alwayes, even his hope may sometimes possibly be hopeless. There are weaknesses in the strongest, and imperfections may come upon those who are most perfect, ebbings after the greatest flowings, and declinings after the greatest heights of graces and gracious actings. *My dayes are spent without hope.*

Job having thus complained of his condition, and asserted his own desires of death, now turns from his friends, with whom he had discourst all this while, and betakes himself to God, to speak a while with him: The next words are generally understood, *as an Apostrophe to God.*

Verse 7. **O remember that my life is wind, mine eye shall no more see good.**

O remember that my life is wind.] To remember, is not here taken strictly, for to God all things are present: Remembrance is the calling of that to mind which is past; when the act of remembrance is applied to God in Scripture, it hath one of these three sences.

First, It notes a resolution or setled purpose in God, to act his justice, or inflict punishment upon his enemies, *Psal.* 137. 7. *Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom*: that is, Lord, bring forth that decree of thine, for the ruine and destruction of these bloody *Edomites*, who have been cruel against thy people.

Secondly, It signifies an affection in God, ready to help and relieve his own people, *Psal.* 74. 2. *Remember thy Congregation which thou didst purchase of old*, that is, do good to thy Congregation, bless thy Congregation.

Thirdly, To **remember**, imports an act of present consideration; to remember, is fully to weigh, observe and take notice of the estate of things or persons, *Psal.* 78. 39. *He remembred that they were but flesh, a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again*; that is, he considered and weighed the estate of man: So in that place, *O remember that my life is wind*, that is, consider and weigh it well; Lord, put my condition into the ballance, observe what a weak creature I am, how short my life is; therefore deal with me as with a weak short-liv'd creature: thou needest not lay any great stress upon me, thou needest not trouble thy self much to make an end of me, my life is but wind, it is but a puff, which quickly passes away.

O remember that my life is wind. This is a proverbial speech like that before of a *weavers shuttle*. The word translated *wind*, signifies the *Holy Ghost*, *the third person in the blessed Trinity*; as also a Spirit in general. And because the wind is of a spiritual nature, invisible, swift, powerful, therefore it is applied to that celestial or elementary Spirit; and the operation of the holy Ghost is shadowed by wind or breath, *Christ breathed upon his Disciples, saying, receive the holy Ghost*, John 20. 22. And the *holy Ghost* came *as a mighty rushing wind*, Acts 2. 2.

Vita ventus Elegans proverbiale.

Quasi ventus Targum.

When *Job* saith, *remember that my life is wind*, he means, *my life is like the wind*: It is a similitude, not an assertion The life of man is like the wind in two things. First, The wind passeth away speedily, so doth mans life. Secondly, The wind when it is past, returns no more; as you cannot stop the wind, or change its course, so all the power in the world is not powerful enough to recall or divert the wind, which way the wind goes, it will go, and when it goes, it is gone, *Psal.* 78. 34. *He remembred that they were but flesh, wind that passeth away*; in this sence *Job* calleth his life a

wind, it paſſeth away, and ſhall not return by any law or conſtitution of nature, or by any efficacy of natural cauſes.

רוח *Flare, πνεῦμα à πνέω Spiritus, à ſpirando; Animum quaſi ἄνεμον quidam dictu exiſtimant. Græci pro reſpiratione ſeu ſpiritu quem ducimus accipiunt, primò quod vita noſtra reſpiratione indigeat; ſecundò, quod flatu videatur humana vita in prima ſua origine conſtitiſſe.*

Yet here obſerve, *Job* ſaith not, *his ſoul was a wind*, but *his life was a wind*. Some have *Philoſophiz'd* the ſoul into a wind, a blaſt or a breath; and tell us, that it goes as the ſoul of a beaſt, that life and ſoul are but the ſame thing; when the life is gone out of the body, the ſoul is gone from its being: They acknowledge a reſtoring of it again with the body at the reſurrectiion, but deny it any exiſtence when ſeparate from the body. How diſhonourable this is to the noble conſtitution of man, and how diſſonant to Scripture, is proved in mentioning it; we acknowledge, that life which is the union of ſoul and body, is a wind, and paſſeth away. In all the learned Languages, *Hebrew*, *Greek*, *Latine*, the word which ſignifies ſpirit or life, hath its original from reſpiring; and when we ſay, my wind was gone, or my wind was almoſt beaten out of my body, our meaning is, my life was almoſt gone, in the Creation (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *God breathed into man the breath of life, or of lives*, implying the many faculties and operations of life. And in as much as the body of man was firſt formed, and this life brought in after, to act and move it, this is an abundant proof that the ſoul of man is not any temperament of the body, the body being compleated (as a body) before it, and yet no life reſulting. Whereas beaſts (to whom that beaſtly opinion compares man in his Creation) had living bodies as ſoon as bodies, their total form being but an extract from the matter.

Solomon, Eccleſ. 3. 19, 20, 21. brings in the Atheiſt drawing this concluſion from thoſe confuſed oppreſſions which he obſerved in the world; men carried themſelves ſo like beaſts, preying upon and devouring one another, that he (who had nothing but carnal reaſon to judge by) preſently reſolves, *That which befalleth the ſons of men, befalleth beaſts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, ſo dieth the other, yea they have all one breath; ſo that a man hath no prehemínence above a beaſt, for all are vanity, all go to one place, all are of the duſt, and all turn to the duſt again.* And whereas the Atheiſt heard ſome ſpeak of the aſcent of mans ſpirit after this life, he puts it off as but talk and gueſſing, *ver.* 21. *Who knoweth the ſpirit of man, that goeth upward, and the ſpirit of a beaſt, that goeth downward to the earth?* That is, who can tell that there is ſuch a difference between the ſpirit of a man and of a beaſt? who ever ſaw the one aſcending, or the other deſcending? or from what Anatomy was this learned? Thus the Atheiſt derides the doctrine of the ſoul, and will therefore laugh and be merry with his body while it laſts, that's his portion; *for who ſhall bring him to ſee what ſhall be after him?* ver. 22. Is it not ſtrange, that any who are called ſober Chriſtians, ſhould plant their opinions in this ſoyl of Atheiſm, and make that a proof of their faith, which *Solomon* brings only as a proof of ſome mens infidelity? The Preacher in this Book perſonated thoſe whom he abhorred, and ſometimes ſpeaks the practices of other men, not his own opinion. There is no more reaſon to ground this Tenet of the ſouls mortality upon thoſe Texts, then there is encouragement to intemperancy in that, *chap.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thine own heart*: Or in that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 32. *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we die.* If any would learn *Solomon*'s own ſence about this point, let him read it as plain as words can make it (*Eccleſ.* 12. 7.) *Then* (namely, when man dies) *ſhall the duſt return to the earth as it was, and the ſpirit ſhall return unto God, who gave it.*

Hujuſmodi ſententiæ regreſſum animarum in corpora minime negant, ſed neceſſitatem moriendi confirmant & celeritatem.

So then (to the text before us) the ſoul is not a wind, but the life; and all thoſe Scriptures where life is compared to wind and dying, to the paſſing of it without returning, deny the regreſs or returning of the ſoul to a natural, not to an eternal life: and imply the ſhort ſtay of the ſoul in the body, and certain departure from a not-being, when it parts. Theſe two muſt part, and ſo part, never to return to that eſtate again. Thus *Job* expounds himſelf in the words following.

Videre bonum pro frui nota locutio eſt.

Mine eye ſhall no more ſee good.] Or as the Hebrew, *I ſhall not return to ſee good* (anſwerable to the Metaphor of a wind.) it paſſeth away, and returns no more.

To ſee,] In this place, as often elſewhere, is to enioy, *I ſhall not enjoy good*, Pſal. 4. 6. *Who will ſhew, or who will cauſe us to ſee any good?* It was not the bare ſight of good, which they deſired, but the enjoyment of it. So, *Jer.* 17. 6. The man whoſe heart departeth from God, is threatned, that *he ſhall not ſee when good cometh*, that is, he ſhall not enjoy good when it comes; *for, though to ſee good, be a mercy, yet to ſee it, and not taſte it, is a curſe.* Therefore at the laſt day, they who thought themſelves high in Gods favour, but were indeed under his wrath, are told, that *they ſhall ſee Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, and themſelves ſhut out*; they ſhall ſee what they cannot enjoy, and that ſight ſhall add to their ſorrow. The Prophet cries out, *Lam.* 3. 1. *I am the man that hath ſeen affliction*, that is, I am the man that hath felt and had experience of afflictions. And, *Pſal.* 16. 10. The great promiſe of Chriſt is, that though he took a corruptible body upon him, *yet he ſhould not ſee corruption*, that is, *partake of corruption*; corruption ſhould have no communion with, much leſs power over him: And we have the ſame uſe of the word in this Book, *chap.* 20. 17. Where *Zophar* tells the hypocrite, that God will deprive and ſtrip him of every good thing: *He ſhall not ſee the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.* It is a Rhetorical expreſſion, comparing the affluence of outward things to floods, and rivers and brooks, which ſend forth their ſtreams plentifully; as if he had ſaid, though there be great ſtore of honey and butter (thoſe two are ſpecified for the reſt) though there be rivers, brooks and ſtreams of theſe commodities, yet he ſhall ſee none of them, that is, he ſhall not enjoy or taſte a drop of them. That unbelieving Lord is told by *Eliſha*, that he ſhould ſee plenty in *Samaria* the next day, *but ſhould not eat thereof*, 2 Kings 7. 2. Not to ſee, is not to eat; and he that ſees, but eats not, is not relieved, but troubled at the ſight. Luk. 13. 28.

Mine eye ſhall not ſee [good.] What good? When a man dies, ſhall he ſee no more good? We ſee but little good while we live, and the greateſt good is to be ſeen when we die; or rather, while we live, what do we ſee but evil? and when the Saints die, what have they to ſee but good? How is it then, that *Job* ſaith, *when I die, mine eye ſhall not ſee good?* What miſerable creatures were we if there were no good to be ſeen beyond the line of this life? our richeſt ſtock of comfort lies in the good we ſhall ſee hereafter, which is therefore called the *bleſſed-making viſion*; and *Job* knew well enough that his eyes ſhould ſee good after death; for he ſaith (*chap.* 19. 27.) *with theſe eyes ſhall I ſee God*; he knew alſo his ſoul had an eye to ſee good (and a better good then ever he ſaw in the world) while his body lay in the grave. Then his meaning of *Mine eye ſhall no more ſee good*, is, no more worldly good, none of theſe good things which I have ſeen; I ſhall be above the ſmart of earthly ſorrows, and above the ſence of earthly joyes. Good is either natural, or civil, or ſpiritual. When God created the world, he looked upon all that he had made, and he ſaw that all was very good: Civil good is the order, peace and proſperity of the world, death ſtops the ſight of all this good. As for eternal or ſpiritual good, death cannot cloſe or dim the eye againſt thoſe objects.

טוב *Sicut Græci καλὸν, & Latini bonum, aliquando pro pulchro, commodo & utili uſurpat, Ita ſubinde Hebræi vocabulum*, Tob. Fagius, *in Gen.* 2. 18.

Then here is no plea for Atheiſts againſt the reſurrection, nor any againſt the ſouls *Being*, *or being alive*, till the reſurrection. *Job* ſpeaks only about the ſphear and courſe of nature; when man dies naturally, and is in the ſtate of the dead, he enjoyes nothing, he acts nothing according to the ſtate of the living *, *Pſal.* 115. 17. *The dead praiſe thee not*, &c. *There is no work, device or buſineſs at all in the grave*, Eccl. 9. 10. The hand works not, the tongue ſpeaks not, *The eye ſhall no more ſee this good.*

* *In his & ſimilibus locis, Scriptura intelligēda eſt de ſtatu mortuorum, in morte quis confitebitur tibi? poſt reſurrectionem pii laudabunt Deum, ſed ante illam, quamdiu erunt in ſepulchro, nemo confitebitur ei, anima & corpore ſimul.* Dmſ. *Juxta naturæ curſum hic loquitur, negans crediturum hominem ubi hinc exceſſit. Reſurrectio mortuorum divinum & ſupra naturam opus eſt, quo hic non reſpicit, naturæ tantum conſuetum ordinem afferens, quomodo intelligenda ſunt quæcunque talia in hoc libro, in Pſalmis, & aliis Scripturæ libris, occurrunt.*

Job expreſſes himſelf by an act of the eye, which carries the greateſt ſtrength for refreſhing to the whole man. All the joy and pleaſure we ſhall have in heaven, comes in by ſight, *we ſhall ſee him as he is.* The beholding of God in Chriſt, is the *beatifical viſion*, much of the good of which we have in this world, comes in by the ſence of ſeeing; and all the good of the next is placed in ſeeing; therefore he doth not ſay, I ſhall no more taſte good, or no more feel good, but

Per analogiã ad ſummi boni poſſeſſionẽ, quæ in viſione conſiſtit aliorum bonorum, poſſeſſio rectè dicitur videre bona.

no more ſee good; becauſe the chiefeſt good, eternal good, conſiſts in viſion, therefore proportionably our preſent good doth ſo likewiſe.

Sick *Hezekiah* ſpeaks in the language of ſick *Job*; *I ſaid, I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I ſhall behold man no more, with the inhabitants of the world*, Iſa. 38. v. 11. When *Hezekiah* thought he ſhould die, he deſcribes the ſtate of the dead by a deprivation of all thoſe comforts which are taken in by the ſight of the eye. But you will ſay, how ſaith he, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord?* He doth not ſay abſolutely, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord*; but with a modification, thus, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living.* But did *Hezekiah* ſee the Lord in the land of the living, or while he lived? Yes, as *Moſes ſaw him that was inviſible*, ſo did *Hezekiah*: God makes himſelf viſible to the Saints in this life. Though God cannot be ſeen in his eſſence in Heaven, much leſs on earth; yet he is ſeen in his works, in the acts of his providence, and in his ordinances; we may *ſee the goings of God in the Sanctuary*, and behold the beauty of the Lord, while we enquire in his Temple, *Pſal.* 27. 4. So that when *Hezekia* ſaith, *I ſhall not ſee the Lord in the land of the living*; his meaning is, I ſhall not behold God in his great works and in the ordinances of his holy worſhip, and in the Congregations of his holy people. In all theſe God is viſible, and moſt in the laſt; and therefore he ſaith, *I ſhall behold man no more, with the inhabitants of the world*; God is viſible in all creatures, but moſt in man, and among men; moſt in his Saints, and among his Saints; moſt when they meet in the comely order of his houſe and worſhip; the ignorant and unlearned coming into ſuch a ſacred throng, ſees ſo much of God, that he is convinced and goes away reporting, that God is in them of a truth. *In Chriſt is ſeen the brightneſs of his Fathers glory, and in the Saints much of the beauty of it is ſeen. Chriſt is the expreſs image of his perſon, and in the Saints ſo meeting, much of his image is expreſſed.*

Firſt, In that *Job* betakes himſelf to God, *O remember that my life is wind*, &c. Obſerve,

That, *In our diſtreſſes it is better to cry to God, then to complain to creatures.*

God is uſually the laſt, but he is alwayes the beſt refuge, when we have told over the ſtory of our ſorrows and ſad condition, and powr'd our wants into the boſoms of our moſt faithful friends; yet this *Apoſtrophe* is ſweeteſt to the ſoul, when we can turn unto God, *O remember me.* It is ſaid of *Hezekiah* in his ſickneſs, that he *turned himſelf unto the wall and prayed*; he turned from the people, from thoſe that were about his bed, unto the wall; why what was the wall to him? Or what could the wall do for him? ſurely nothing. As good turn to an Idol for help or eaſe, as to a wall, yea ſuch a turn to the wall, turns the wall into an Idol; Good *Hezekiah* had no thought of the wall, nor had he any meſſage to any Image hanging there. But as 'tis probable, many of his loving Subjects and ſervants were weeping about the bed of their ſick King, and he had been diſcourſing of his diſeaſe, and telling them of his ſickneſs, *but at laſt he turns to the wall*; that is, he leaves ſpeaking to the company, and turns away from them, that he might have communion with God; and his firſt word of prayer, is the ſame with *Job's*, *Remember now O Lord*, &c. *Iſa.* 38. 2. Creatures are but creatures, and when they have done their beſt for us, it may be they can do no good for us; when they have tryed all their skill, and all their ſtrength, and ſtirred the utmoſt of their abilities, to give us counſel and eaſe, we muſt ſay to them all, ſtand by, and come to *Job's Turn, O Lord remember. That man is moſt to be bemoaned, who can make his moan to man only.* He who knows not how to complain to God, or to ſpeak out his ſorrows, and his griefs in the ear of Chriſt, ſhall gain little (though he receive much) by complaining to the creature. But ſo long as we have a God to turn to, and ſpread our caſe before, though men turn from us, yea, though they turn againſt us, and forget us, yet it is enough that we have ſaid, *O Lord remember.*

Secondly, From the matter which *Job* puts God in mind of, namely his natural frailty and fleeting condition, that he was a *paſſing wind.* Obſerve,

It is an argument moving the Lord to compaſſion, to mind him of the frailty of our condition.

There is no argument from our ſelves ſo effectual, to draw out the bowels of Gods compaſſions toward us, either in regard of our ſpiritual or temporal eſtate, as this, to tell him how frail we are; the Pſalmiſt ſhews this the motive of mercy often to that ancient people the Jews, *Pſal.* 78. 38. *He being full of compaſſion forgave their iniquity, and deſtroyed them not, yea many a time turned he his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath.* But what moved the Lord to deal thus with his people? What was it out of himſelf? We know the inward moving cauſe was his own free grace, but what did he look upon abroad in the creature? *He remembred that they were but fleſh, a wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again.* *Job's* argument to a letter. He conſidered how eaſily and quickly they might be deſtroyed, and therefore he deſtroyed them not, *Pſalm* 103. 4. *Like as a father pitieth his children, ſo doth the Lord*, &c. Why, what ſtirs up this pity? *For he knoweth our frame, and he remembreth that we are but duſt*; Now, that which God himſelf makes the argument, all the argument in us of his turning to us in mercy, that we ſhould mannage, eſpecially as our argument when we turn to him in prayer. Should we plead before God our perfections, and ſay, Lord remember our holineſs, our zeal, our prayers, our tears, our faſtings and humiliations; could any of this move God, or be any attractive of his compaſſions toward us? If we will plead our perfections, God will deſpiſe our prayer. Our ſtrongeſt argument is to ſay, we are weak, and to tell God we are ſinful, prevails more then to tell him we are righteous: We ſhall gain moſt by ſaying, we are unprofitable ſervants.

But did not *Hezekiah*, entreat the Lord to *remember that he had walked before him in truth, and with a perfect heart, and done that which was good in his ſight?* Iſa. 38. 3. And doth not *Nehemiah* uſe the like plea, *Chap.* 13. 14, 22.

I anſwer, Firſt, that theſe were the beſt, the moſt ſpiritual and powerful pleadings with God is not proved, becauſe uſed by good men. Grace doth not act alwayes at the height, nor bring out it's choiſeſt treaſures at all times.

Secondly, They move the Lord to remember what good they had done, but they do not move the Lord by that remembrance to do them good. *Hezekiah* was ſo far from rejoycing in his own righteouſneſs, that the Text ſaith, *He wept ſore.* And *Nehemiah* with the ſame breath, deſires the Lord to remember what he had done, and to ſpare him, according to the greatneſs or multitude of mercy. He, that when he hath done beſt, begs a multitude of mercies to ſpare him, is far enough from challenging juſtice to reward him.

Men that are but ingenuous, will be moved moſt with a ſight or report of anothers weakneſs. The begger ſpeaks moſt effectually by his rags and ſores. The woman, 2 *Sam.* 24. 14. who was hired to move *David* for the bringing back of *Abſolom*, uſeth this argument; *For we muſt needs die, and are as water ſpilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again*: As if ſhe had ſaid, Sir, will you contend with your ſon, thus, alas, his life is but water, and he will die, for this is the common condition of mankind; therefore be compaſſionate and pittiful to him, fetch home your baniſhed. This motive takes much upon the heart of God, as in regard of particular perſons, ſo of a people in general, *Deut.* 32. 36. *The Lord ſhall repent himſelf for his ſervants.* But when will he repent himſelf? *When he ſeeth that their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left.* When they have no power or ſtrength, and there is none ſhut up, that is, when they have no fort, no ſtrong places to defend themſelves in, but even lie open to the rage and malice of the adverſary, and are ready to ſinck utterly; then the Lord takes this, both as an argument and ſeaſon for him, to repent of the affliction of his people; that is, to change the way of his adminiſtrations towards them. This promiſe was in part made good to *Iſrael* in the dayes of *Jeroboam*, ſon of *Joaſh*, 2 King. 14. 26. *The Lord ſaw the affliction of* Iſrael, *that it was very bitter, for there was not any ſhut up, nor any left, nor any helper in* Iſrael.

Thirdly, Speaking of the world, he saith, *Mine eye shall no more see good.* Observe then,

That worldly things are good things.

In their sphear and proportion, they are good. *Abraham* minds the rich man, *Luke* 16. *Son remember, that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things.* Therefore we are to use the world, and all the creatures in it, as the good things of God, and the goodness we see in creatures should raise us up to admire the goodness of the Creator; if goodness be stamped upon present and temporary things, how good are things eternal?

Fourthly, *Mine eye shall no more see good.* Observe,

After this life there is no more use, or enjoyment of wordly things.

The things of the world are but for the world; *Mine eye shall no more see*, I shall no more enjoy or use these good things. Consider what it is you lay up, when you lay up the things of this life, you lay up those things which after a while your eyes shall see no more; you lay up those things, which after a few dayes, you shall have no more use of; you shall have no use at all of your gold, no use at all of your silver, no use at all of your apparel, no use at all of your goodly houses, no use at all of your rich furniture, no use at all of your lands, you shall have no use of all these good hings Consider then what it is you lay up: a time is coming, when you shall say of them all, I shall no more see, I shall no more use and enjoy any of these good things. Therefore be so wise as to improve this time, which passes like a Weavers shuttle and a blast of wind, to lay up such good things as your eyes shall see, when you are laid down in the grave: lay up spiritual good things, lay up your portion in Christ, make him yours, and then when you die, and lie down in the grave, you may say, we have good things yet to see; our best sight is to come, even such a sight as eye hath not seen. Such a sight as to which the glory of all the Princes of the world is a meer Pageantry. And so much of *Job's* Apostrophe to God.

The next verse is a further description of the state of the dead.

Vers. 8. **The eye of him that hath seen me, shall see me no more; thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.**

In the former verse, *Job* had said his own eyes should see no more good, now he saith, that the eyes of others shall see him no more; *The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more.* It is a great part of the glory and comfort which men take in the world to be seen of men. As we take in our comfort by seeing, so by being seen. No man would put himself into goodly cloathing, were it not that he goes abroad in company to be seen, and knows others will be looking upon him. Now as *Job* sets forth the vanity of the creature and of this life, because he should see none of it when he died, so because when he died, others should see him no more: all his beauty, riches and good things must be buried with him. There is an elegancy in putting these two together, *to see and to be seen.* Death stops both, it takes us from seeing, and it takes us from being seen. As all the good we have will be hid from our eyes, so all our glory and excellency will be obscured from the eyes of others in the dark chambers of the grave.

Ponit hic duo, ut significet quod non revertetur ad conversationem humanam, quæ maximè consistit in videre & videri. Visus cum sit subtilior sensuũ principatum tenet in vita civili. Aquin.

Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.

Job speaks of a three-fold eye; First, Of his own eye, *Mine eye shall see no more good,* vers. 7.

Secondly, Of the eye of Men, *The eye of him that hath seen mee shall see me no more.*

Me quærent quem aspiciant; humanitus dictum.

Thirdly, Of the eye of God, *Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.* He doth not say, *Thine eyes are upon me, and thou shalt not see me:* Gods eye looks into the grave, and can see there; when we are out of the eyes of men, we are in the eye of God; therefore he saith, *Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not*; as if he had said, Lord, if thou shalt defer a little to help me, and then shouldest come to look for thy *Job*, I shall be dead, I shall be laid in the grave, I shall not be capable of remedy, if my remedy be deferr'd: it is too late to give a man a cordial when he is dead: *Thou shalt not have a* Job *to help, if thou doest not help him quickly.* Some understand it in a spiritual sence, *Thine eyes are upon me*; as if he should say, *Lord thine eyes are upon me, to search me, and try out my wayes, and alas I am not, I am not able to stand before thy justice, before thy pure eyes, which can behold none iniquity.* But rather take it as an appeal to God, whether or no he were not near death. Thou Lord seest I am as a dead man; as a man not to be numbred among the living. Therefore if thou wilt deliver me, let thy loving kindness speedily prevent me, for I am brought very low. As a sick man in some acute disease, hastens his Physitian, sir, give me somewhat presently, or I am gone, you cannot but see I am a borderer upon death. *Thine eyes are upon me, and.*

Thuorum beneficiorum, si fortè cupias (humanitus loquitur, cũ occulto quæstu neglectus sui) non ero capax. Coc.

I am not.] That is, I am not alive, I am not among the children of men. *Not to be, doth not import a not being, but a not appearing. I am not as I was, nor can I long be at all.* *Rachel* wept for her children, because they *were not*; *Joseph's* brethren said to their Father, *Joseph is not*; and *Job* himself in this *Chap. v. 21.* explains this to be his sence, *Thou shalt seek me in the morning, and I shall not be*; Death is a great devourer, it sweeps all that appears of man into the grave. The world shall no more enjoy him, nor he the world; this is mans *not being* when he dies, as the two following verses further explain by an elegant similitude.

Vers. 9. **As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more,**

10. **He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.**

Job having moved the Lord to take notice of, and compassionate his transitory condition, his life being but like the hastening wind, gives us another comparison to the same sence and purpose: there his life was but a wind, and here it is but a cloud, *As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more,* &c.

The Cloud] in a natural notion, is a thick and moyst vapour, drawn up from the earth, by the heat of the Sun to the middle region of the Air, and by the coldness of that heavenly Country (where Snow and Hail, *&c.* are made and stor'd up) is further condens'd, congeal'd and thickn'd, and so hangs or moves partly from natural causes, the Sun and Wind, but especially by supernatural, the mighty power and appointment of God, like an huge mountain in the Air. To this cloud *Job* compares the vanishing estate of this life.

כלה חלך

Ambulavit, ivit, & per metalepsin de rebus evanescentibus, intereuntibus, &c.

As the cloud (such a cloud as you see hanging in the Air) **is consumed**, or spent: The same word is used at *vers. 6. My life is spent without hope.* A cloud comes to it's height, and then 'tis quickly dispersst *and vanisheth away*; the letter of the Hebrew is, *It goeth or walketh away.* The walk of the clouds is according to the walk of the winds, we call it the *Rock of the clouds.* When the Heavens are (as it were) all masked with clouds, and a black vail or curtain drawn between us and the Sun, the Winds in a little time dissipate and scatter them.

It is usual in Scripture to compare those things which are vanishing and suddenly consumed to clouds; In which sence (*Isa.* 44. 22.) the sins of the Saints are compared to a cloud, and the pardoning of their sins to this consuming and scattering of the cloud, *I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.* A cloud is but a kind of a blot in the pure parchment roll of the skies; I am sure a cloud of sin is a foul blot in the roll of our lives. Blot a fair writing, and you cannot read it, but blot out the blots, and then 'tis legible again: yet, the blotting out of sin, intimates it fair written, as an evidence or a record against us, till a pardon blots it out. In which sence Christ is said to *have blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was against us*, Col. 2. 14. Thy sins (O *Israel*, so the Lord seems to speak in the Prophet) are as a cloud to hinder the shining of the light of my countenance upon thee: like blots they hinder thee, from reading the evidences of my favour, or they stand like evidences of guilt against thee. But I have blotted out this cloud, that is, I have pardon'd thy sins, and by the breath of my favour and free-grace, scatter'd thy transgressions, with all the evils and sequels which they naturally bring forth. So that now the light

light shines fair and warm upon thee; the evidences which were against thee cannot be read, and thou mayest read the evidences of my love and mercy towards thee. *The sins of the Saints are but vanishing clouds*, whereas sin in it self, and the sins of all those who are out of Christ, are an abiding cloud; they are a cloud firm and immoveable, like a mountain of brass or a rock of stone. Sins make such a cloud, as no power in Heaven or Earth is able to consume, but the power of mercy, and a gale of love, breathing through the covenant of Grace.

And as the life of man is compared by *Job* to a cloud, so to that which is the matter of the cloud, by the Apostle *James*, Chap. 4. vers. 14. where he puts the question, what's the life of man? *Is it not* (saith he) *even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away?* A vapour is exhaled from the Earth by the heat of the Sun, and is the matter out of which the cloud is made. Mans life is not only like a cloud, which is more condense and *strong*, but like those thin vapours sometimes observed arising from moorish grounds, which are the original of clouds, and more vanishing then clouds. Even these are but vanishing enough, to shadow the vanishing, decaying, quickly disappearing life of man. As the cloud consumes and vanishes (the next words speak out the mind of the comparison.)

So he that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more.

The grave is a descent; and the word which is here used for the grave is *Sheol*, about which many disputes are raised among the learned: The root of it signifies to desire, or to crave with earnestness, and the reason given is, because the grave is alwayes craving and asking; though the grave hath devoured the bodies of millions of men, yet it is as hungry as it was the first morsel, still it is asking and craving: The grave is numbred among those things which are not satisfied, *Prov.* 30. 16. In the Greek of the New Testament, it is translated *Hades*, which by change of letters, some form out of the Hebrew *Adam*, and *Adamah* the Earth, unto which God condemned faln man to return, *Gen.* 2. 19. We find this word *Sheol*, taken five wayes in Scripture.

שאול *Tã infernus quam sepulchrũ ἅδης.* Sept. *Status mortuorum vel sepulchrum, nam ut anima de corpore, ἅδης de sepulchro usurpatur,* Pl. 16. Drus.

First, Strictly and properly for the place of the damned, *Prov.* 15. 11. *Hell and destruction are before the Lord, how much more then all the hearts of the children of men.* God looks through the darkness of hell, which is outer darkness.

Secondly, It is put Metaphorically, for great and extream dangers, or miseries which seem irrecoverable and remediless; these are figuratively called *Hell*, because Hell properly taken, is a place from whence there is no recovery; there's no release from the chains of darkness; all changes are on Earth, Heaven and Hell know none: When *David* praises the Lord (*Psal.* 86. 13.) *for delivering his soul from the lowest Hell*; he meaneth an estate on earth, of the lowest and deepest dangers imaginable; Mercy helpt him at the worst. To be as low as Hell, is to be at the lowest.

Thirdly, The word signifies the lower parts of the earth, without relation to punishment. *Psal.* 139. 8. *If I go down into Hell thou art there.* He had said before, *If I ascend up into Heaven thou art there*; by Heaven he means the upper region of the world, without any respect to the estate of blessedness; and Hell is the most opposite and remote in distance, without respect to misery. As if he had said, let me go whether I will, thy presence finds me out.

Fourthly, It is taken for the state of the dead, whether those dead are in the grave or no, *Psal.* 30. 3. *Isa.* 38. 18, 19. *Gen.* 37. 53. In all which places, to go out of the world, is to go to *Sheol*. *Jacob* in the Text alledged, *Gen.* 37. 35. said, *He would go down into the grave to his son, mourning*; yet *Jacob* thought his son was devoured by a wild beast, he could not go down into the grave to his son, for the bowels of a wild beast was his supposed grave; but he meaneth only this, I will even die as he is dead. So *Num.* 16. 33. where that dreadful judgment of God upon *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* is storied, it is said, that *they, their Sheep and their Oxen, and their Tents, and all went down into Sheol*, that is, they were all devoured and swallowed up. But,

Fifthly, *Sheol* signifies the place where the body is laid after death, namely, the grave, *Prov.* 30. 16. Man hath a dimension of Earth, fitted to the dimension of his body; this portion or allotment is his *Sheol*. Yet it signifies the grave only in general, as it is natural to man-kind, not that grave which is artificial and proper to any particular man, this the Hebrew expresses by another word: He that goeth down to the grave, goes to his *long home*, to a house out of which he is never able to see or make his way, and therefore it follows;

קבר Ainsw. *in* Gen. 37.

He shall come up no more.] No? that's sad news indeed to go down into the grave and come up no more. Are all the hopes of man shut up in the grave? And is there an utter end of him when his life ends? *Shall he come up no more.*

Many of the Greek writers tax *Job*, as not acquainted with the doctrine of the Resurrection, as if he either knew not that mystery, or doubted at this time of it: And some of the Rabbins say plainly, *he denied it*: But he is so clear in *Chap.* 19. that we need not think him so much as cloudy here: And if we look a little farther, himself will give us the comment of this Text: When he saith, *he shall come up no more*; it is not a denial of a dying mans Resurrection to life, but of his restitution to the same life, or to such a life as he parted with at the graves mouth: They who die a natural death, shall not live a natural life again; therefore he addeth in the next verse,

Hic abnegat Job resuscitationem mortuorum. Rab. Sol. *Non negatur resurrectio ad vitam, sed ad similẽ vitã.* Pined

Verse 10. **He shall return no more to his house.**

He doth not say absolutely, he shall return no more, but he shall return no more to his house; he shall have no more to do with this world, with worldly businesses or contentments, with the labours or comforts of the creature, or of his family; *He shall return no more to his house.*

But some may say, how doth this answer the comparison, *That as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave, shall come up no more*; for we find another description of clouds, *Eccles.* 12. 2. where the Text saith, that, *the clouds return after rain*; So that it seems though clouds vanish and are consumed, yet they return and come again. The clouds are like bottles full of rain, or spunges full of water; God crushes these spunges, or unstops these bottles, and they are emptied, and in emptying vanish away: but yet *Solomon* affirms, *the clouds return after rain*; how then doth *Job* say, that as the cloud vanisheth, so man goeth down to the grave and returns no more?

In that place of *Ecclesiastes*, *Solomon* is only giving us a description of old age, and the sad condition of man in it; he calleth it the *evil day*, and wisheth men would be wise to consider their *latter end*, remembring their Creator, and laying up a good foundation, before those *evil dayes* overtake them, *before the light of the Sun and Moon and Stars be darkned, and the clouds return after the rain*; In old age, the clouds return after the rain, thus: as in some very wet time, when we think it hath rained so much, as might have spent and quite exhausted the clouds, or drawn those bottles dry, yet you shall see them return again; it will rain day after day, as fast as ever; so in old age, when Rheums distill so freely, that you would think an old man had emptied himself of all, yet the clouds will return again, and floods of watery humors overflow. Thus the clouds of old age return; and in this sence the clouds of the air return, after they are consumed and spent into rain: But how doth a cloud return? not the same cloud numerically, that cloud which was dissolved doth not return; the same Sun goes down, and vanisheth out of our sight in the evening, and returneth again the same individual and numerical Sun in the morning; but that numerical cloud which vanished comes not again: Thus man vanisheth, and returns as the clouds return after the rain, that is, after one generation of men are dead, they return again in their children, another generation springs up: other return to life there is none, till all shall return at the general judgment of quick and dead. As now we are, who never were, so shall all return, who were, but are not. It was a witty answer of a Learned *Jew*, disputing with a Heathen Philosopher, who opposed the Resurrection: *If that* (saith he) *which never was in the world, now is; is it strange, that, that which now is should be again, after it is*

Si id quod nunquã fuit nunc est, quomodo quod nunc est, posse iterum desinere fore negatur? Nam si hoc mirum, illud magis mirum videtur.

not in the world? If this be a wonder, the other is much more wonderful.

Neither shall his place know him any more.

His place.] May be taken three wayes. First, For the calling and condition of a man in this life, that's the place of a man, a mans calling is his place. Or secondly, Locally for his house or inheritance where he dwelt; he shall come to that place no more. Or thirdly, Place is taken for dignity, Magistracy, for the eminency of a mans callings; therefore we say of a Magistrate or a man in honour, he hath a *great place*, or he is a man of *place and rank*, in all these sences, *his place shall know him no more.*

His place shall not know him.] That is an elegancy of the holy language. Places are without life and without sense, much more without knowledge; knowing is an act of reason, how is it then said, *his place shall know him no more? Did it ever know him?* There is a double figure in it: some understand it by an *Hypallage*, or transmutation of the words, *his place shall know him no more*, that is, *he shall know his place no more.* So that is expounded (*Psal.* 103. 16.) *The place thereof shall know it no more*, speaking of man passing away like a wind. So *Psal.* 37. 10. *Thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be*; his place shall not be; places continue while the world continues: Then his place shall not be, is, *he shall not be in his place.* Or secondly, Understand it by a *Prosopopeia* (frequent in Scripture) which is the imitation of life, by things without life: when a place takes upon it the person of a man, or when a place acts or imitates the speech of a man: sence and reason are often ascribed to things without life, and so the meaning of *his place shall know him no more*, may be conceived thus: When a man lives and comes home to his house, his house (as it were) welcoms him home, and his place is glad to entertain him; as in the *Psalm, the little hills* are said to *rejoyce* at the showers, so when a man comes home, his house and all he hath, have as it were, a Tongue to bid him welcom, and open Arms to receive and embrace him; but when he dies he shall return no more, and then *his place shall know him* (that is, receive him) *no more.*

Quasi diceret, ipsæ res inanimæ quæ serviunt & parent ad nutum mortalibus, mortuis tamen nulli usui sunt. Illos non agnoscunt dominos. Ea enim est vis verbi cognoscendi & non cognoscendi.

Observe from this briefly (because it is a similitude of the same importance with that opened in the former words)

First, *That death is the conclusion of all worldly comforts and relations.*

As the cloud vanisheth and returneth not, so (in that sence) there is an utter conclusion of man, he is gone and there is no returning; God by his Almighty power hath fetched back some, and the vanishing clouds have been brought again: so *Lazarus* (and others at the death of Christ) was raised from the grave; but in a natural way, death seizeth all fast for ever: your places, your relations, your credits, your friends shall know you no more, or give you farther entertainment. Observe,

Secondly, *That God hath given us not only the book of Scripture, but the book of the creature, therein to learn and read our own frailty and mortality.*

The creatures preach what man is, and that is a reason why the *Holy Ghost* spends so much time, and is so frequent in giving us the measure of our selves by creatures; these are every hour in our eye, we meet with, and see, and handle, and feel them continually: The wind, the vapors, the clouds, set forth what we are, *When I consider* (said *David*, *Psal.* 8. 3, 4.) *the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* To consider the greatness of the works of God should abase man; it should amaze us, to remember that God hath made such things for our use, who are our selves so useless (in comparison of what we ought) to God. And when man considers the Heavens and the Earth, and weighs how many things there are in them, which set forth his frailty, he hath reason to cry out, *O Lord what is man?* Man is but a wind, a cloud, a vapor, even such a thing as I see most perishing and vanishing in the whole compass of the Creation. *Psal.* 19. 1. *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work:* The Heavens are excellent creatures, and full of glorious wonders, they speak the power and wisdom of God, they shew forth his handy work; they can be the work of none but of God only: The clouds also shew forth the handy work and power of God, *Psal.* 147. 8. *Who covereth the Heavens with clouds*: The hand of God draws those curtains, and puts that mask upon the face of Heaven.

But as the Heavens declare the glory of God, so they publish and declare the weakness of man, the vapors and the winds shew forth how frail he is: *As the invisible things of God, to wit, his eternal power and Godhead are seen in the things which are made; God is* (as it were) *visible in the creatures:* so likewise the frailty and mutability, the weakness and inconstancy of man is visible in the things which are created; we may read a lecture of our own transitoriness, in the most transitory Texts of nature: And that is an admirable contrivance and complication of things, that out of the very same Text of the creature, where the infinite wisdom and power of God may be learned, man also may learn his own frailty: *He that studies the creature much, shall find much of God and of himself.* Some conceive when *Isaac* (*Gen.* 24. 63.) went forth into the field to meditate, that he studied the book of the creatures, probably the holy man did so, but we are sure he might. How will it shame those men at last, who know not God nor themselves, when they have or might have had (without cost or travel) so many tutors and instructors.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

Therefore I will not refrain my mouth, I will speak in the anguish of my spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul.

Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou settest a watch over me?

When I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint.

Then thou skarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions.

So that my soul chuseth strangling, and death rather then life.

I loath it, I would not live alwayes, let me alone, for my dayes are vanity.

IN the context of these six verses, we may take notice of four things.

First, *Job's* violent resolution to complain, *vers.* 11.

Secondly, His vehement complaint, *vers.* 12.

Thirdly, An amplification of his sorrows, *vers.* 13, 14.

Fourthly, A renovation of his often repeated desires to die, and the tediousness of his life, *vers.* 15, 16.

Therefore.] *Job* having in an apostrophe to God, shewed his weak condition, takes up a fresh resolution of complaining to God; *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth*, &c. as if he had said, *The consideration of these things, is so far from putting me to silence, that it doth rather enlarge my heart, and open my mouth to speak and complain once more; seeing death is by Gods appointment, the certain end of all outward troubles, and perceiving my self upon the very borders or brink of death, my body past cure, my estate irrecoverable and remediless, therefore I will complain yet again, I will yet farther lay open my misery before the Lord, and press him to hasten me through the confines of this land of sorrow, that I may accomplish my dayes, and see an end of these troubles, for my soul is in great bitterness.*

I will not refrain my mouth.] The word signifies to stop, inhibit or prohibit: Those *Writs* which stay the process of inferiour *Courts*, are called *Prohibitions*, and then no man may open his mouth more in that business, until the Prohibition be dissolved or taken off: I (saith *Job*) will not give my self a prohibition, I will not silence or suppress my sorrows: I will give my heart full liberty to meditate, and my tongue to speak out my sufferings: Being emptied of all my comforts, I will surely take my fill of complainings. It will be some ease to me, to make known how I am pained. *I will not refrain my mouth.* That word is used (*Isa.* 38. 1.) *Cry aloud spare not*; when the Prophet is commanded to tell the people of their sins, the Lord sets his tongue at liberty, *spare not*, thou art not silenced or limited, therefore *cry aloud*; theirs were crying sins, and crying

חשך

Propriè est continere, prohibere, & cum ad linguam & orationem refertur affert suppressionē quandam & cohibitionem eluctantis spiritus, & sermonis, conantis se aperto ore effundere.

ing ſins muſt have crying reproofs, loud ſinners muſt not be whiſpered to, therefore, *Cry aloud, ſpare not. I will not ſpare my mouth* (ſaith *Job*) or *refrain*, as we tranſlate.

בצר i.e. *in anguſtiis ſpiritus mei; coarctat me ſpiritus pectore incluſus, pateſaciam liberum illi aditum:* אשיחה *à radice* שוח *Proprie meditari, vel ex meditatione interius animo concepta aliquid exterius agere loqui, orare, conqueri. Vocem edam querulam, muſſitando & meditando.* Merc.

But I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit.] Or in *the ſtraightneſs of my ſpirit*; I am in a ſtraight, I am pent in my ſpirit, and unleſs I let my ſpirit out, my heart will break; I muſt give it vent and Air. *I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit.*

I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.] The word render'd *complain*, ſignifies to meditate, and ſo to ſpeak upon meditation, or to ſpeak deliberately. It implies, firſt, a forming and faſhioning of what we would ſay in our thoughts; *Thoughts are the moulds of our words. Job* intends not raſh ſpeaking: what he intends to ſpeak, ſhould be moulded, ſhap'd and wrought in his heart, before brought forth by his tongue. Prayer is expreſt by this word, becauſe prayer ought firſt to be formed in the heart: *Prayer is the manifeſtation of our deſires to God*; If the tongue ſpeaks before the heart, before the heart makes up our requeſts, we take Gods name in vain. *Hannah* takes up this word (1 *Sam.* 1. 16.) *Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of* Belial, *for out of the abundance of my complaint* (*or meditation*, ſo the word is rendred) *and grief, have I ſpoken. Hannah* was praying, her voice was not heard, only her lips moved, which cauſed *Eli* to ſuſpect and cenſure her for drunk or diſtracted; but ſhe anſwers in words of truth and ſoberneſs, *O my Lord, count not thine handmaid a daughter of* Belial, for though my voice hath not been heard, yet I have been ſpeaking out of the aboundance of my complaint, that is, out of the aboundance of my meditation; my complaints are not the work of my tongue, but of my heart, and my lips moved not, until my heart moved, my complaint is my meditation. Hence likewiſe that phraſe of pouring out prayer, *Pſal.* 142. 2. *I poured out my complaint before him*; He that pours out, muſt have ſomewhat, yea much within, where there is a conſtant ſtream, there alſo is a fountain, *I poured out my complaint*, or my complaining prayer; it is the ſame word here, I have gathered the bitter waters of ſorrow into my own heart, and now I pour them forth in complainings.

Amarũ non ſolum dulci opponitur, ſed etiam jucundo. Amariorem me fecit ſenectus, i. e. *aſperiorem.* Plaut.

I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul. What the bitterneſs of the ſoul is, hath been expounded already in *Chap.* 3. therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it: It notes only the height or extremity of affliction. Bitter is oppoſed to unpleaſant, as well as to ſweet: *In the bitterneſs of my ſoul*: The affliction appeared moſt upon his body, but it afflicted him moſt in his ſoul. He ſpeaks little of the pain of his body, in compariſon of the trouble upon his ſpirit, he inſiſts principally upon that, *I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul*; not in the pain of my fleſh, or ſufferings of my body; and yet that form of ſpeaking, excludes not his ſence and ſenſibleneſs of bodily pains, for a man may well ſay, his ſoul is in bitterneſs by reaſon of the pains of his body.

Being in this condition, we ſee what his remedy was, he falls a crying and a complaining before God, telling how it was with him.

Job's complaints have been ſpoken of in former paſſages of the Book, and why he complains hath been ſhewed. *An afflicted ſoul finds ſome eaſe in complaining of affliction*; To complain out of impatience, diſtruſt and hard thoughts of God is very ſinful; in that ſence we muſt be ſilent, as *David*, *Pſal.* 39. 9. when the hand of God was heavy upon him, *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*; in reference to the dealing of God with him, *David* had not a word to ſay; Our Lord Chriſt (the great pattern of ſuffering) *was as a ſheep before the ſhearer, dumb, and opened not his mouth*, no impatient ſpeech came from him. Though the grief of *Job* was very great, and ſo it might ſomewhat (as hath formerly been cleared) excuſe the greatneſs of his complaint, yet in this *Job* ſhewed himſelf *a man ſubject to like paſſions as we are.* Man thinks to get cure by complaining, but uſually he gets a wound: *What poor ſhifts are we poor creatures often put to? How often do we entangle our ſelves, becauſe we are ſtraightned?* Though *Job's* heart kept cloſe to God in the main, though his ſpirit was preſerved untoucht of blaſpheming, yet we find him touching too often, and too loud upon this ſtring of complaining. He cannot be excuſed from ſome motions of impatience, while we hear him ſetling upon theſe reſolutions to take his fill of, or to let looſe the reins of his paſſion to complain; *I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul. Anguiſh is a very ill guide of the tongue. It muſt needs be troubled matter, which paſſion dictates.* Obſerve further,

Dotemur quanta ſint hominis vires, ſibi à Deo derelicti. Merc.

That when ſorrow continues and hangs long upon us, it grows boyſterous and reſolute.

We have *three wills* in the Text, as if *Job* had turned all his reaſon into will, and his will into paſſion, *I will not refrain, I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul*; He was grown to a kind of reſolvedneſs in his ſorrow. *It is as unſafe for man* (in this ſence) *to will what he doth, as to do what he will; we ought to will the will of God, but we muſt ſubmit our own.* We ſhould not mourn over our afflictions, nor rejoyce over our comforts, but as God wills. Yet in this the will of *Job* was rather ſtrong then pertinacious. He was not a man of that *rough make*, to oppoſe his will againſt the will and good pleaſure of God, though that were a pain to him.

Nec tamen is fuit Job, qui quod ſibi liceri non putaret protervè ac procaciter vellet aggredi. Merc.

Having thus reſolved to complain, he complains in this very high language.

Verſ. 12. **Am I a Sea, or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?**

Theſe are his firſt words, words full of deep complaint, like the Sea, which whether he was or no, he would be anſwered. *Am I a Sea? Tell me.* His queſtion is of like like importance with that, at *Chap.* 6. *verſ.* 12. *Is my ſtrength the ſtrength of ſtones, or is my fleſh braſs?* He expoſtulates with God, why haſt thou laid ſuch trouble upon me? Am I ſtone or braſs that I ſhould be able to bear it? And here (like a Sea ſwoln with bitter waters) in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, he begins to break the bounds again, *Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou ſetteſt a watch over me?*

A Sea, or a Whale.] The Sea and the Whale are often joyned in Scripture, *Pſal.* 104. 25, 26. *O Lord how manifold are thy works, &c. the Earth is full of thy riches, ſo is the great and the wide Sea; there go the Ships, there is that Leviathan, whom thou haſt made to play therein.* Again, *Pſalm* 74. 13, 14. *Thou diddeſt divide the Sea by thy ſtrength, thou breakeſt the heads of the Dragons in the waters, thou brakeſt the head of Leviathan in pieces.*

But why doth *Job* ſpeak this language? In brief, the meaning is this, The Sea, you know, is a mighty boiſterous and unruly creature, and the Whale is the ſtrongeſt, mightieſt and moſt dreadful creature in the Sea; the greateſt of the creatures whether upon Sea or Land. The Sea is the moſt boiſterous of all the inanimate creatures, and the Whale is the moſt boiſterous of all living creatures: So that here *Job* gives inſtance in two creatures, which are the moſt head-ſtrong, violent and out-ragious in the whole creation, *The Whale and the Sea.* And he ſets forth his own weakneſs, by the Antitheſis of theſe two creatures, ſurpaſſing all in ſtrength, with which God only is able to grapple and encounter. And in asking, *Am I Sea or a Whale?* he may be conceived to ſpeak thus, *Lord thou ſeemeſt to deal with me in a way beyond all thy dealings with the children of men; thou carrieſt thy ſelf towards me, as if I were more proud, heady, hard to be reclaimed, then any man in the world; thou ſeemeſt to take ſuch a courſe with me, as with the unruly Sea, and with the boiſterous Whale, to keep me in compaſs.* He ſpeaks as if God laid too heavy an affliction upon him, and took too ſtrong a courſe to tame him, or as if he might be more gently dealt with, and that God needed not prepare ſuch bonds and fetters for him, or lay ſuch law upon him, as upon the mighty Sea, and the monſtrous Whale.

But for the words in particular.

Mare barbarum & indomitum elementũ

Am I a Sea? There are three things in the Sea, ſpecially conſiderable, at which *Job* might have an aim here.

First, The turbulency of the Sea; the Sea is ſtormy and turbulent, ſo ſtormy and turbulent, that it threatneth to over-whelm all; to over-whelm the Ships ſailing upon it, to over-whelm the dry Land encompaſſing it, and it would do both, if God did not bound it, if he had not ſaid,

Hitherto

Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid; did not God put an everlasting law upon it, it would be lawless, *Gen.* 1. 10. the Text saith, *That the gathering together of waters, God called Seas*; God gathered them together, thrust them together into one place, and there set a watch upon them, put them in prison, bound them in chains, for he saw what an unruly element it was, and how soon it would disturb all, if left to its own guidance. So, *Job* 38. 10. *He hath set bounds to it, bars and doors to keep it in.* He locks and bolts it in by his mighty power. And then *Job's* meaning may be this. Am I an over-whelming Tyrant or Oppressor, a swallower up of the poor, *&c.* that thou dost thus imprison and restrain me?

Visus est Deus conjecisse mare in carcerem, atq; illi pedes ac manus constrinxisse propter quã exquisitam Dei providentiam dicitur, Psal. 95.4.

Secondly, There is a wonderful capaciousness in the Sea: the Sea is so big and broad, so extensive and vast, that it takes in all the waters that come of the Land into its bosom, and yet feels no access. And then his meaning may be thus conceived, *Am I able to drink in all these floods of sorrow, and rivers of affliction, which are let out and unburthen themselves upon me?*

Thirdly, The Sea is of mighty strength, though we say, *weak as water*; water is a weak element in one sence, yet in another water is a strong Element, so strong that it bears all dowh before it, and bears all the storms that rage upon it. And so his meaning is, am I able to bear continual tempests, perpetual tossings and agitations. Wilt thou ever let loose the winds and gusts of trouble to blow thus furiously upon me?

תנין
Vasta sive stupenda quævis animantia significat, sive terrestria, sive aquatilia, sive aëria. Quidam Thinnorim nomen hinc deducunt.

Or (am I) a Whale?] The word signifies any great and terrible creature, any monster whether of Sea or Land, but frequently *the Whale*; so *Gen.* 1. 21. *God created great Whales*; and *Lam.* 4. 3. *The Sea monsters draw out their breasts*; which some interpret the *Sea calf*. It is taken also for the *Dragon*, which lives partly upon the Earth and partly in the Water (*Deut.* 32. 3.) *Their Wine is the poyson of Dragons*; and so *Jer.* 51. 37. But place it either at Land or Sea, it notes the most fierce, devouring and cruel of all living creatures. Our Translators understand it of that huge stupendious Sea-monster, the *Whale* or *Leviathan*, *Am I a Sea, or a Whale.*

That thou settest a watch (*or guard*) **over me?**

משמר
à radice שמר
Custodire, servare, significat] custodiam undiq; circumclusam unde nullum patet effugium.

The word signifies to watch a thing so narrowly, that it can neither escape nor do hurt: for upon these two reasons, watches and guards are set; we are afraid some will run from us, that others will hurt us, therefore we set a guard upon them. In this last sence, *Job* specially meaneth it, *Thou settest a watch over me, as thou dost over the Sea and the Whale.* Why doth God set a watch over these? It is that the Sea should not hurt the Earth, that Whales and Sea-monsters should not hurt man, sayling upon the Sea, or destroy the lesser fishes swimming there.

In *Psalm* 39. 2. the word is used for setting a watch upon the tongue, *I have set a watch* (saith *David*) *upon my lips*, &c. A man sets a watch upon his lips, lest he should speak amiss, or lest he should do hurt or wrong in speaking, so (*Psal.* 141. 3.) the Psalmist desireth God to *set a watch before his mouth, and keep the door of his lips.* The Tongue is a hurtful instrument, as the Apostle *James* describes it, a little member which hath a world of iniquity in it: Therefore the Tongue being so hurtful, it is a great part of grace to keep a watch over it, and a great part of our duty to beg of God to set a watch upon it that it may do no hurt, that it may not as a Sea or a Whale, swallow up our neighbours good name. *Nehemiah* (Chap. 4. 23.) *made his prayer* (a sweet conjunction) *and set a guard or a watch*; why was it? To keep off his wicked enemies from hurting him, and hindring the good work he had in hand.

Circum dedisti me carcere. Vul. *Sicut carcer latinis à coercendo, sic Hebræis à custodiendo.*

Some translate it thus, *Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou shouldest inclose me in prison?* It comes to the same sence, and the word signifies a prison in divers Texts of Scripture: prisons are places of watch and guard, from whence there is no escape or getting loose. *Job* thought himself a man kept in prison, as offenders are. The Sea is a prisoner shut within banks and walls: as a man in prison cannot go where he will, so neither can the Sea. And the Whale of whom it is said, *He takes his pastime in the Sea*, is yet Gods prisoner there. And the truth is, all creatures are in the *prison of providence*, the limits whereof they can no more go beyond, then a man that is bound (as *Peter*) with two chains, and all the doors lock't upon him. Especially afflictions are imprisonments, sickness is an imprisonment. A disease is sent like a Sergeant to attach a man: that shuts a man within his house, confines him to his chamber, and then binds him upon his bed, not to stir till God give a release: sorrow is often called a *Cord*, Psal. 18. 4. *The sorrows of death* (the cords of death, as the Hebrew is) *compassed me about*; and *Psal.* 116. 3. *The sorrows of Hell* (or the cords of Hell) *were about me.* And in that sence *Job* speaks of himself, why dost thou arrest and cast me into prison, binding me with the cords of these sorrows and sicknesses. So he complains, *Chap.* 13. 27. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly to all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.* It is said of the woman (*Luk.* 13. 16.) *that Satan had bound her eighteen years*; she was bound with the cords of that infirmity, and kept as a poor prisoner those many years. From all we may collect the sence formerly hinted, that *Job* expostulates with God for using him after the manner of a Whale or a Sea, as if he were a man so unruly, that nothing could tame and quiet him, but such a severe course as is used with beasts, or as if he were a vexer and a devourer of his brethren, a very enemy to man-kind. Observe from hence,

הבלי שאול

First, In that *Job* saith, *Am I a Sea or a Whale, that thou settest a watch over me?*

The providence of God watches over all his creatures.

All their motions are by his permission or commission; they stir not but by his leave. The providence of God is his watch, and therefore it is called the *eye of providence*; and providence hath such an eye as never sleeps nor slumbers; and therein lieth our security, that we have a *providential eye* open for us, when ours are shut and we asleep. Observe,

Secondly, *God expresses most care to keep those creatures from hurting man, which are most apt to hurt man.*

We see *Job* instances in these two by name, the *Sea and the Whale*, and tells us, that God puts a guard upon them; he watches the least creatures; but it speaks most security to man, to hear that these are under a *watch.* The Lord watches over all wicked men that they should not hurt his people; but such of them as are most harmful, who are very *Seas* and *Whales*, men who would swallow and drown his people with a deluge of rage and malice, over these the Lord watches in a special manner. His eye of jealousie (which is alwayes awake) is surely wakeful upon these. As the Lord hath a special eye upon the Saints to do them good, so he hath a special eye upon the wicked, that they do no hurt, or no more then shall turn to good. Hence the Psalmist admonishes all, and it may have a particular application to wicked men, *Psal.* 32. 9. *Be ye not as the Horse, or as the Mule which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.* If the Lord sees men so brutish, that they will not be ruled by reason, he will rule them by rigor, *He hath a whip for the Horse, a bridle for the Ass, and a rod for the fools back* (Prov. 26. 3.) A rocky shore for the Sea, and a prison for the Whale, rather then they shall come near to hurt his beloved people. Note,

Secondly, That, *man in the passion, and distempered sinfulness of his nature, is like the Sea or the Whale.*

A cruel man is as hurtful, as the most hurtful creature. In the place before noted, while man is warned, *Not to be as the Horse, or as the Mule, which have no understanding*, it is intimated that many men are; and it is a truth, that all men left to themselves would be like unto a Horse or a Mule, yea like unto a Sea or a Whale in doing mischief. The Prophet (*Is.* 57. 20.) compares wicked men *unto the troubled Sea that cannot rest.* There is not in the whole compass of nature, a clearer shadow of mans nature, then the Sea.

First, The Sea is very vast, and would (if let alone) be boundless. Man is naturally vast and boundless in his desires, he is never satisfied.

Secondly, The Sea is unstable, alwayes fleeting and moving, *Genes.* 49. 3. Dying *Jacob* characters *Reuben* thus, *unstable*

unstable as water: The heart of man is a moveable thing, ebbing and flowing forward and backward, tumbling up and down, as the vast Ocean.

Thirdly, The Sea is often provoked with storms and tempests, it is the great stage where the winds act their parts, and strive as it is expresst in the *Revelation.* There are many winds striving upon the Sea of mans heart continually, and therefore he is so boisterous and so stormy; he hath winds within him, and winds from without him: The winds in his own bowels make the greatest commotions. The Apostle *James* questions (Chap.4.1.) *Whence come contention, and wars, and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts, that war in your members?* Lusts are as boisterous winds in the soul, which make it unquiet and unruly: strong lusts and desires like strong winds; and contrary lusts and desires, like contrary winds, contend upon this Sea. Most men are (*Tit.*3.3.) *serving divers lusts and pleasures*; not only many, but divers, or divers not only in number but in nature; one lust as a contrary wind striving with another, and so making a storm in the heart. And this stormines is caused also by an outward blast; Satan blows upon the heart, and the world blows; so that, till the Holy Ghost breaths heavenly gales to overcome and blow down those storms raised by the blast of strong lusts and temptations, the soul will be ever like a Sea tumbled up and down, or as the Apostle *Jude* speaks (*vers.*13.) like *a raging wave of the Sea, foming out it's own shame.*

And this is further considerable, that as the Sea is most turbulent and tempestuous, most loud and roaring about the banks, where it is restrained; so man is most boysterous, where he is kept in and stopt; if God do but set bounds to him by afflictions, he begins to rage at those bounds. It is that which *Job* (in a degree) complain'd of, he thought God would bind and bound him in by afflictions, and he began to be somewhat unquiet in his shacles. But when God sets bounds to wicked men by afflictions, and hedges up their way with thorns, they are angry indeed and their corruptions break forth the more, by how much the stronger banks are made against them. The great bank and bound, which God hath set to keep the lusts of men from over-flowing all, *is his Word and Will, his Laws and Ordinances*, by which he speaks to man as to the Sea, *Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further*; Against these banks, the hearts of men naturally rage most. How do their lusts roar and rise up against the holy and righteous will of God, there the some of their corruptions is most wrought and cast up. As *Paul* himself acknowledged of his natural condition, *Rom.*7.8. *Sin* (saith he) *taking occasion by the Law, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence*; my lusts and corruptions were more mad, because they were more restrained, I was like the Sea, which makes most noise at, and most assaults the banks which stay it. So *v.*13. *Sin that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good*; there was a good, a holy, and a righteous Law set before me, but the baseness of my heart was such, that I was the worse, for that which taught me what was good, and should have made me better.

Further, Man is as a Sea in this, he ever casts up mire and dirt: when he is moved, corruption moves, every stirring stirs up the puddle of his heart. As he is a Sea for largeness, so he is a very sink for filthiness, *Isa.* 57.20. *The wicked are like the troubled Sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.*

Lastly, Covetous oppressors have a near resemblance to the Sea in three things. They (as the Sea) suck in all the rivers and streams of profit, which flow in to them from any part of the world, and yet are not filled.

Secondly, They (as the Sea) wrack and over-whelm thousands, and are not at all moved with their out-cryes.

Thirdly, They (as the Sea) have huge treasures in their houses, yet all satisfies not their desires, they are as greedy as if they were not worth a groat.

Look upon man, in the other comparison, He is a Whale, a devourer. In the worst of bruits, you may see the picture of mans nature. They who have power to do what they will, and will do (when their advantage is in it) to the utmost of their power: These are your Leviathans upon dry Land. *Senacherib* was a mighty Whale, gaping to swallow up the people of God, and therefore the Lord expresses his dealing with him in a word very sutable table to this sence (2 *King.*19.28.) *Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips*, &c. See how God uses him, *Senacherib* came raging and threatning to swallow all up; God uses him like an unruly beast of the Earth, or like a devouring fish of the Sea, *He puts a hook in his nose.* It is said of Leviathan, that he scorns the hook and the angle, *Job* 41. *Canst thou draw out Leviathan with an hook?* implying that no hook, no tackle is strong enough to hold this Sea-monster, but God hath a hook can hold him. Some men are like this Sea-monster, no takling of mans making will hold them, no power under Heaven can stop them; then the Lord prepares his engines and instruments, he can make a hook will catch *Senacherib*, the *great Whale*, as if he were but a *sprat, I will put my hook into his nose, and turn him about, or pull him up.*

What devouring enemies have alwayes come out against the Church, threaning to swallow, or as the Moabites said of the Children of *Israel* (Numb.22.4.) *To lick up all that were round about, as the Ox licketh up the grass of the field.* Yea, they thought (as it is said of Leviathan) *That they could draw up Jordan into their mouths*, that is, remove the greatest difficulties, and overcome all opposition. But how often hath God put a bridle into the lips of the Horse, and a hook into the nose of these Whales?

Further, If we consider the words, as *Job's* question, in application unto himself, *Am I a Whale? Am I a Sea?*

Observe, *Man is apt to have good thoughts of himself.*

Job would not be the Whale, or the Sea. Note,

Secondly, *Man is apt to judge that God layes more upon him then there is need.*

Am I a Whale, or a Sea? As if *Job* had said, Lord thou needest not deal thus strictly and severely with me, or bestow so much care to watch me. I would have come in at a call, thou needest not have bounded me with these afflictions, and put such a hook in my nose, a nod, or a beck would have fetched me in: Wise men sute their preparations to their occasion; we carry not out a piece of Ordinance to shoot at a flye, which we can kill with a phillup; so saith *Job*, Lord I need not all this, a little admonition, a little chastning, or a check should have reduced me; such are mans thoughts. But the most wise God, never layes more upon man then he hath need of: when God streightens us with such afflictions, he seeth there is somewhat of the Sea in us, he must bound us; somewhat of the Whale in us, he must watch and bring us under. If we see God bestow more rods and blows upon us, we must conclude we could not be without them; some apprehend that such is *Job's* meaning in *vers.* 16. *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him?* As if he had said, it is too great an honour for man to be afflicted by thy hand. If we see a King make great provisions of war, to go out against an enemy, we say he magnifies the enemy. *It is an argument they have great strength, against whom we prepare great strength.* So *Job*, Lord thou magnifiest me, thou makest me to be look'd at, as some powerful creature, a Sea, a Whale, against whom thou actest so much of thy power.

Job having, as he resolved, begun to complain of his sorrows, now amplifies them.

Vers. 13. **When I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint,**
14. **Then thou skarest me,** &c.

He amplifies his sorrows upon this general ground, because they were such as he could not find any ease or abatement of, no not at any time, no not by any means; As if he had said, my grief and my pain is so remedilesse, that neither artificial nor natural means give me any ease; those things which have the greatest probability of refreshing, yield me none. He instances in those ordinary wayes, which give sick and distempered bodies some abatement or intermission of their pains; *Lying down upon their bed or couch; When I say, my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint*; As if he had said, while I was wrastling all day, and conflicting with my sorrows, I yet had some hope to find comfort at night, and that I should meet with rest in my bed, but my hope fails me ever; or while in the day time my thoughts are overburthened,

and

and my spirit overwhelmed within me, I think sometimes to deceive my pains a little, by taking a nap or a slumber upon my couch; but alas, my pains will not be deceived; *when I say, my bed shall comfort me, and my couch shall ease my complaint (I find in stead of ease, further trouble, and in stead of comfort, terrors; For then) thou scarest me with dreams.*

When I say my bed shall comfort me.

נחם *Doluit, pœnituit, per antiphrasin dolere desiit, consolationē invenit.*

The word signifies to mourn and repent, as well as to comfort; because comfort usually follows holy mourning and repenting. Godly sorrow is the mother of spiritual joy.

In the words, we have either that ordinary figure *Prosopopeia*, the fiction of a person, when acts of life and reason are ascribed to things without life; and so *Job* brings in his bed, as his friend speaking to him, *when I say my bed shall comfort me*, my bed and I will confer together, I am perswaded that will afford me a word of comfort: Or, we may rather undestand it by a *Metonymie* of the effect, *when I say my bed shall comfort me:* Comfort is the common and usual effect or benefit of lying down upon the bed: The bed is said to comfort, because ordinarily we find comfort in resting upon the bed; that being a means or instrumental cause of comfort, is called a comforter.

My couch shall ease my complaint.

The words are indifferently translated in Scripture, either for a bed, or for a couch; but if we take them distinctly, then the bed is the place, where we rest in the night, and the couch by day: When *Job* saith,

נשא *Levavit, evexit, sustulit.*

My couch shall ease [my complaint]; it notes his complaint or sorrow lay as a heavy burden or weight upon him; for the word signifies to *ease*, or *to lift up*, or *to ease by lifting up*; if a man have a burden upon him, the way to ease him, is to lift it off from him; so *Job* here, *I lie down upon my couch, with a burden of heavy sorrows upon me, God knows*, hoping my couch will be a means to take off that burden a while, that I may have a little breathing, but (to my grief) I find it doth not. The use of sleep is to unburden the spirit, and take off the load of cares: The word is used in that sence, *Gen.* 4.13. about the sin of *Cain*, which lay upon him as a heavy burden, *My sin* (saith he) *is greater then can be forgiven* (so some translations) or *greater then I can bear*; word for word thus, *my sin is greater then can be taken off.* Forgiveness is the taking sin off from us; it is the word here used for *easing*: my sin is greater then I can be eased of; as if *Cain* thought his sin a burden which the arm of mercy could not lift from his shoulders: Pardon is the easing of the conscience, sin the burdening of it; sin is a burden, and so is sorrow. *My couch* (saith he) *shall ease my complaint*, by taking off, or at least, intermitting the troubles which cause me to complain; or, my couch shall ease me in my complaint, when I am meditating, revolving, and rowling my troubles up and down in my thoughts, then my couch and I am discoursing together, and reasoning out the matter, but no ease comes. We may observe from hence,

Magnum est peccatum meum præ tollendo, vel majus quam ut tolli possit, Sept. τὸ ἁμάρτημά μου πρὸς με, quā ut remittatur mihi, quam ut sustinere possim. Jun. בשיחי *In retractione sive meditatione miseriæ apud animū. Loquens mecum.*

First, That, *A man in pain, expects ease from every change.*

My bed (saith *Job shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint*) every thing he sees, raises his hope; every man that comes to him, he looks upon him as a messenger of good news, I said, this shall help me, and that shall help me; surely if I had such a thing (saith a sick man) it would do me good; if I had such meat, I could eat; if I had such drink, my palat would relish it; if I were in such an air, it would restore my health, and I should get up again. As a Bee goes from flower to flower, to suck out somewhat, so man from instrument to instrument, from means to means, from bed to couch, still hoping to find relief or mitigation, at least, for his troubled mind, or pained body.

Secondly observe, That *The most probable or proper means are unable of themselves to give us any ease or comfort.*

What is fitter to give a man rest then a bed? What is more proper to give one refreshing then a couch? But *Job* goes to his bed in vain, and goes to his couch in vain, nor this, nor that, nor t'other administred him any help. Creatures are not able of themselves to give out the comfort committed to them: Their common nature must be assisted with a special word of blessing, or else they do us no good. If God will command a bed to comfort us, it shall comfort us; if he will say to a couch, ease such a mans complaint, it shall ease his complaint; *Job* saith it, and his saying could not effect it: Nay, if God will say to a hard stone, give such a man rest, he shall rest and sleep sweetly upon it, when another shall not get a wink of sleep upon a down-pillow; if God say to a prison, give such a man rest, he shall find rest there; if God speaks to bonds and fetters, give such a man content and pleasure, he shall find not only contentment, but pleasure in bonds and fetters; if God say to flames of fire, refresh such as are cast into your arms, the fire will obey him, and refresh them. The most probable means cannot help us of themselves, and a word from God will make the most improbable means helpful to us, yea, that which is destructive, shall save us. For as God can create that good for us which is absent, so he can (as it were) uncreate the evil that is present. Providence can take away or suspend that hurting and destroying power which creation gave; no creature is able to help or to hurt if God forbid and lay his restraint upon it. Bread cannot nourish, or cloaths warm us, if he say they shall not; poyson shall not kill, or fire burn us, if he say, they shall not. *Mans saying is but saying, Gods saying is doing.* Man may say to his bed, comfort me; to his riches and honours, content me; to his wife and children, please me; to wine and musick, make me merry; he may lay his command, or send his desires to all creatures, and yet remain comfortless, contentless, mirthless. Pleasure it self will not please him, nor having of his will, satisfie his mind at his own saying or bidding.

Fourthly observe, That, *Rest and sleep are from the especial blessing of God.*

When I said to my bed, do it, the bed could not; sleep is not from a soft bed, or from an easie couch, *Psal.* 127.2. *For so he giveth his beloved sleep*, that is, sleep with quietness, or extraordinary quiet refreshing sleep; which some have noted in the Grammar of the Text; the Hebrew word *Shena*, for sleep, being with (*Aleph*) a quiet or resting letter, otherwise then is usual in that language. He giveth sleep to his *Jedidiahs*, as the word is there alluding to one of the names of *Solomon. The Lord gives sleep sometimes as a love-token to his beloved.* The connection is somewhat obscure, the words before run thus, *It is in vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrow, for so he giveth his beloved sleep*: How is sleep a consequent of fruitless labour, and eating the bread of sorrow? These rather hinder sleep. Some refer it to the words of the first verse, *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain, for so he giveth his beloved sleep*; the Lord watches and takes a care of a City and family, and thus gives his people rest and quiet sleep; they are not awakened with alarms or surprizes of the enemy. Others read it thus, for *surely he will give his*, &c. that is, notwithstanding the ungodly are eaten up with cares to provide bread for themselves and families to eat; yet without fail, the Lord of his meer mercy, will give food convenient to his people by their labours, and quiet sleep (which includes all inward contentments) with it. So, *Prov.* 3.24. *Thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.* And, *Psal.* 41.3. There is a special promise made to the sick man, or to him, who hath been a comforter of the sick, *The Lord will make all his bed in his sickness*, that is, God will make his bed easie and comfortable in his sickness. When we cannot sleep, we use to complain of our servants, and say, sure this bed was not made to night, or it was ill made; no man complains his bed was ill made when he hath slept well. That his people in such a case, may be sure of rest, the Lord condescends to that low office, the making of their beds. Therefore we are to receive sleep as a matter of special blessing, coming from the hand of God; he makes the bed in sickness and in health too: then bless God for rest, and not your beds. Though we know sleep is the portion of mankind,

kind, and many times the worst of men have quiet and refreshing sleep, yet no wicked man ever slept upon the pillow of this promise, nor will God make the bed of the greatest Prince in the world, as such, which yet he is ready to do for his meanest servant; *common comforts are to some special mercies.* As some enjoy riches and honour by common providence, while others enjoy them by virtue of a special promise, so it is with sleep; *He giveth his beloved sleep.*

But what found *Job* upon his bed? In stead of sleep and rest, he found skaring dreams and terrifying visions; as it follows.

Verse 14. **Thou skarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions.**

As if he had said, I find my self altogether disappointed and deceived, in stead of being comforted, I am skared; in stead of being eased, I am terrified, my bed is to me as a very rack, and my couch my torment, or a *little-ease.*

Thou skarest me.] The word signifies to be cast down prostrate to the ground with fear, or to be ground to powder with fear; and it is often rendred by that word *contrite*, which notes breaking of the heart by godly sorrow; such a breaking is upon me through the dreams which fall upon me in, and break my sleep: If I have any sleep, it is terrifying, and not refreshing sleep.

חתרת *Stratus, prostratus, contritus, per Metaphoram, territus, consternatus, mente jacuit, & velut animi deliquium importat.*

Thou skarest me [**with dreams.**] That word springs from a root signifying thick vapours; because sleep is caused by thick vapours ascending from the stomach to the brain, and closing up the senses; dreams usually come in that sleep, and the stronger and thicker the vapour is procuring sleep, the more we are subject to dream.

חלם *Spissus, crassus, per Metalepsin, somniavit quia ex vaporibus crassis provenit somnus, quē somnia consequuntur.*

And terrifiest through visions.] In the fourth Chapter I had occasion to speak at large concerning visions, therefore I shall not here insist upon that point, but refer the Reader thither; I shall only say thus much, that these were not visions as those before treated of, for the revelation of any divine secrets, to enlighten the mind of man, but only visions of hellish horror, to darken and vex the mind of man. The Hebrew word signifies to see, whence the ancient Prophets were called (*Chozim*) * *Seers.* Our English word *Gaze*, hath near affinity with it. And we call Star-prophets (who pretend skill in predictions from the visions of the Heavens) *Star-gazers.*

Visiones istæ quibus percellebatur Job erant terriculamenta, lemures, species, umbræ, spectra, manes, simulachra, & alia hujusmodi à dæmone procurata, quamvis ipse Job sibi à Deo inferri asserit. Cassia *Col. 7. cap. 32.* * חזה ינוח *à radice* חזה. *Hinc Prophetæ* Chozim videntes *dicti.*

Job had both dreams and visions; for in every dream there is somewhat of a vision: There are many visions without a dream, but there cannot be a dream without a vision. An image or similitude is alwayes represented to, or formed in the fancy, or else there can be no dream. *Jacob* dreamed (*Gen.* 28. 12.) *and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reaching to heaven.* The vision here spoken of, was (I conceive) the vision of his dream, though some understand it of day or waking vision.

There is a twofold cause of dreams; there is an inward cause, and an outward cause. And,

The inward cause of dreams is twofold.

First, The accidental motions of the fancy, of which a man can give no reason from any precedent agitation of mind or body.

Secondly, The setled natural temperament and constitution of the body.

The external or outward causes are usually according to the objects with which or about which we are conversant in the day-time, the impressions of these kept in the fancy, are formed into dreams at night; such as the desires or distempers of the mind are, such often are our dreams.

Or take it thus, Dreams have a five-fold cause.

First, The natural temper of the body, and so from the variety of constitutions, variety of dreams are shaped; Cholerick, or Melancholy, or Flegmatick, or Sanguine, produce their special dreams.

Secondly, Dreams are caused by the distempers of the body, either from intemperate drinking or eating any kind of meat, or from the very eating (though moderately) of some meats, or from the diseases and sicknesses of the body; from this latter *Job*'s dreams were much encreased, and Satan took the advantage to raise fumes, and stir the pudled humors of his body up into his brain, out of which his fancy formed terrible representations to his mind. As Melancholy is said to be the *Devils Bath*, so are other diseased sickly humors; in them he sports himself, and vexes man.

Thirdly, There is a moral cause of dreams, such as the studies and businesses, labours and employments, cares and disquietments of a man are in the day, such often are his dreamings. As he works in the day, his fancy works in the night,

Quæcunque mentis agitat insessus vigor ea per quietem sopitum cernit & arcanus refert veloxq; sensus, Sen. in Oct.

Fourthly, Dreams have a divine cause, and are immediately from God. The Scripture is full of instances, I need not stay upon them: *Jacob* had such a dream, *Gen.* 28.16. And *Joseph* had many dreams from God; hence his brethren called him in scorn, *The Dreamer*, or a *Captain-Dreamer*, Gen. 27. 19. And not only have godly men dreams from God, but heathens also, *Pharaoh* and *Nebuchadnezzar*, men of the earth, received from heaven things of high concernment, revealing the counsels of God, concerning their own Kingdoms, and the latter about the state of all Kingdoms and Monarchies, till all the Kingdoms of the earth shall become the Kingdom of *that One, Sole, Supream Monarch, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Fifthly, There are diabolical dreams, dreams which are from the Devil: Not that the Devil of himself is able to cause a dream, he cannot stir the fancy in the night, or tempt in the day, but as he hath a power given him; but permitted, he causes sometimes sinful and filthy dreams; as *Augustine* bewailes in the tenth book of his Confession; sometimes terrible and troublesome dreams, sometimes treacherous and deluding dreams. It is by some conceived, that the dream of *Pilates* wife, *Mat.* 27. 19. was from the Devil; she came to *Pilate*, and desires him to have nothing to do with that Just man; *for* (saith she) *I have suffered many things this night in a dream because of him.* The reason why some conceive that dream was from the Devil, is this, because thereby Satan would have hindred the work of mans redemption, if Christ had not died; and so by saving him, would have destroyed us all. I will not assert this; but it is clear to the point in hand, that there are dreams from the temptations, motions and suggestions of the Devil, who hath a power over us, as God lengthens out his chain both day and night. *Aug. Con. l. 10. c. 3*

But when it is said, *Thou skarest me with dreams*; what dreams were these, *Divine or Diabolical? Job* speaks unto God, *Thou skarest me with dreams*: doubtless divine dreams had an influence upon his spirit, and left terrifying impressions there. But Satan having power to afflict *Job* which way he pleased, was instrumental here; and yet *Job* saith to God, *Thou skarest me.* As before, when Satan by his instruments took away all from him, he said, *The Lord hath taken*; so here, when Satan vexed him with visions, representing horrid and fearful spectacles, yet he saith, *Thou skarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions*; as pointing still unto the power and providence of God, who hath all second causes, Satan and all, at his own disposé. Hence observe,

First, That, *Even our dreams are ordered by God.*

Though Satan be the instrument, yet we may say, *Thou skarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions. Job* was not ignorant that second causes had a great power upon the body, to produce dreams and nightly fancies; he was not ignorant, that the strength of a disease might do very much in this, and that Satan, his former enemy was busie to improve the distempers of his body for the trouble of his mind; yet he overlooks all these (as he did before) and saith, *Lord, thou skarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions.* Dreams are in the hand of God; as our waking times are in the hand of God, so are our sleeping-times; when we are sleeping, we are in the arms of an ever-waking Father; Satan hath no power to touch us sleeping or waking, without leave.

Secondly, *God can make our sleep an affliction.*

Job's were skaring and terrifying dreams: Some dreams are for warning and admonition; *The Lord warned Joseph in a dream*: Some are for counsel and instruction; he revealed great things in dreams: Others are for comfort

and

and conſolation. Many a ſoul hath taſted more of heaven in a night-dream, then in many dayes attendance upon holy Ordinances. As the luſts of wicked men have dreams attending them, ſo alſo have the graces of the Saints. *Job*'s dreams were for terror and afflictions.

Secondly obſerve, *Satans deſire of troubling poor ſouls, is reſtleſs.*

It is reſtleſs indeed, for he will not give them leave to reſt, they ſhall not ſleep in quiet, their very dreams ſhall be diſtractions, and their nightly repreſentations a vexation to them. Note further,

That (*If God permit*) *Satan can make dreams very terrible to us.*

He can ſhew himſelf in a dream, and offer ugly ſights, extreamly perplexing to the Spirit. He is able to caſt himſelf into a thouſand ill-favoured ſhapes, into horrid and dreadful ſhapes, he can cloath himſelf with what habit he pleaſes, if God give him a general commiſſion. And hence the Devil terrifies, not only by temptations to the mind, but by apparitions to the eye, and is ſeen, at leaſt, conceived to be ſeen (eſpecially by ſuch as labour under ſtrong diſeaſes) like a Lion, a Bear, a Dog, gaping, grinning, ſtaring; whence we ſay of any terrifying ſight, it looks like a Devil. We depend upon God, as for ſleep, ſo for the comfort of ſleep. Many lie down to ſleep, and their ſleep is their terror. As that evil Spirit (in the Goſpel) *went about ſeeking reſt, but found none*; ſo he hinders ſome, (and would more) from finding reſt when they ſeek it. Therefore bleſs God for any refreſhing you have by ſleep: Bleſs God when your dreams are not your ſcares, nor your beds your rack. See the effect, what deep impreſſions dreadful dreams made in *Job*'s ſpirit; he was ſo affrighted with them, that he profeſſes with his next breath,

Verſe 15. **My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling, and death rather then life; I loath it, I would not live alwayes.**

So that my ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling.] He renews his former often repeated motion, but with a greater ardency; he not only prefers death before his troubled condition, but a violent death (and in the opinion of ſome) the worſt of violent deaths, *ſtrangling*; which, though it be not the moſt painful of violent deaths, yet it is looked upon as the moſt ignominious of violent deaths.

Some refer theſe words to the terror which *Job* had in his dreams and viſions, as if they were ſo violent upon him, that they almoſt diſtracted him, and made him mad, that they even put him upon deſperate thoughts of deſtroying himſelf; *My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling*, that is, I am often tempted, and almoſt prevailed with to make my ſelf away, The learned Phyſitians tell us, that their Patients have often attempted to deſtroy themſelves through the terrors of dreams and viſions.

Ab hujuſmodi ſpectris multos ſe jam ſtrangulaſſe, & proſiliiſſe in puteos aſſerit. Hipp.

Yet we may underſtand the word [**ſtrangling**] only of natural and ordinary death. Every death is a kind of ſtrangling, and ſome diſeaſes ſtop and choak a man, even as ſtrangling doth; ſo that *my ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling*, may be taken in general, *My ſoul chuſeth death rather then life.*

My ſoul chuſeth.] He puts the ſoul (as it is often in Scripture) for the whole man; and the ſence of all is, as if he had ſaid, *If I might be my own chuſer, if I might have my election, I would even take the worſt of deaths rather then the life which now I live. My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling,*

And death rather then life.] If we take ſtrangling for a ſpecial death, then here *death* is put in general; as thus, if ſtrangling be too eaſie a death, let me die any kind of death, *Death rather then life.*

מעיהם עצם

Os à robore dictum, nihil in ipſo tam forte & firmũ, quod vi doloris non debilitarat & confringat. Aquin.

The Hebrew in the Letter is, *And death rather then my bones*, which ſome render thus, *And death rather then to be with my bones*; To be with our bones, is to live. Others make this chuſing an act of his bones; *My ſoul chuſeth ſtrangling, and my bones death*, that is, every part of me chuſeth death, all vote for the grave; I have not a diſſenting member, no, nor a diſſenting bone; when *David* prayes, *Pſal.* 6. 2. *Heal me, O Lord, for my bones are vexed*; His meaning is, I am vexed quite through. And when he promiſeth (*Pſal.* 35. 10.) *All my bones ſhall ſay, who is like unto the Lord?* &c. His meaning is, that he will praiſe God quite through, ſoul and body. Again (*Lam.* 1. 13.) *From above hath he ſent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth againſt me*; that is, he hath utterly conſumed me. So here, the whole man is expreſſed by parts, ſoul and bones, or body and ſoul, that is, whether I conſider the anguiſh of my ſoul, or the pains of my body, I deſire to die.

Thirdly [*Death rather then my bones*] becauſe he had ſuch ſore, putrified and afflicted bones, painful bones; for when Satan deſired a Commiſſion to afflict him, he words it thus, *Touch his fleſh and his bone, and he will curſe thee to thy face*: Doubtleſs Satan had gone as deep as his commiſſion; he had liberty to touch his fleſh and his bone, and he did it: *He vexed his very bones* (as we ſay) my bones are even rotted and conſumed, the ſores and the putrefaction is ſunk down into my marrow, *I had rather have death then my bones*, that is, then a body thus conſumed and putrified even to the very bones.

Magis optarem mori, quam talia oſſa & mẽbra putrida, & ulceribus diffluentia. Merc.

Yet further, ſome of the Hebrews give it thus, [*Death rather then my bones*] becauſe *Job* had nothing left him but bones, he could not ſay, my fleſh, for his fleſh was conſumed; as we ſay, *ſuch a man is nothing but skin and bones, a meer Skeliton*: I am nothing but bones, and I had rather die, then live ſuch an Anatomy.

Oſſium meminit quod dolor ad intima uſque oſſa penetravit. Jobo *vix aliud quam oſſa ſupereſſet.*

Verſe 16. **I loath it, I would not live alway; let me alone, for my dayes are vanity.**

He cloſeth up his complaint, as he had often done before, with the *tedium* that was upon him, and the nauſeouſneſs of his life; *I loath it*, I am nothing but skin and bone, nothing but ſores and biles, my life is a burden to me, *I would not live alway.*

מאס

I loath it.] The word ſignifies the greateſt averſation poſſible. God expreſſeth his greateſt diſplicency of that, wherein the *Jews* were commanded to take their greateſt pleaſure under this notion, *Amos* 5. 21. *I deſpiſe your feaſts*; you think you keep ſolemn feaſts, wherein I delight as much as your ſelves, but *I loath them*, my ſtomach turns at every diſh. The ſtomach cloſes with wholeſom meat, and turns to it; that which is unwholeſom, the ſtomach turns againſt, the ſight of it cauſes loathing. Their feaſts were of Gods own appointment, and he uſed (in a ſence) to feaſt with them, but their hypocriſie ſpoil'd the banquet. *Job* ſpeaks of his own life, what the Lord ſpake of their feaſts, *I loath it*, even as that meat which is moſt burdenſome to the ſtomach. So, *Pſal.* 53. 5. *Thou haſt put them to ſhame, becauſe God loathed them*, or, *becauſe God deſpiſed them. They who are loathſome to God, cannot long be honourable or acceptable among men.*

לא לעלם

I would not live alway.] The word is, *I would not live to eternity*, or, *I would not live for ever.* Why, who can, if he would? Why ſhould *Job* deprecate that which was not attainable? *I would not live alway*; he needed not trouble himſelf about that (for he ſpeaks of a natural life) it being impoſſible that he ſhould. There is no fear of living alwayes in this world, nor is there any hope of avoiding it in the next. Why then doth *Job* ſay, *I would not live alway?* To live alway or for ever, is often uſed in Scripture for a long time. The Ceremonies and Inſtitutions of the *Jews* were ſaid to be for ever, becauſe they were long-liv'd, yet we know they are vaniſhed and gone: *That which continues as long as it ſhould, continues alwayes.* So here, *I would not live alway*, that is, I would not live long, or I would not live out my full time, I had rather be cut off in the midſt of my dayes, or in the midſt of my years, then live to the end of them.

חדל huic חדל *Mundus, tempus, hoc nomen non tam humanæ vitæ terminum quam totum vitæ curriculum & tempus humanæ vitæ præfinitum denotat, quod cito deficit & ceſſat.*

Let me alone, for my dayes are vanity.

Let me alone.] Or ceaſe from me; which is taken two wayes, either, leave off to prolong and protract my dayes, ceaſe from me ſo, do not ſtand by me with thine aſſiſting power to keep my life whole within me; I am ready to die, give me no ſtrong-water or cordial, rather pull away my pillow, let me go: Or, *Ceaſe from me*, that is, ceaſe afflicting me, take off thine afflicting hand from me, do not any longer hold me in this woful and ſad condition; *Ceaſe from me*, The world and time, while they continue, are alwayes ceaſing, and therefore have their denomination from this word, which ſignifies to ceaſe.

For my dayes are vanity,] That's the ground of his prayer,

prayer, why he requests God to cease from him, *My dayes are vanity*; why shouldest thou stay me longer in a vain shadow? If we take, *Cease from me*, or, *let me alone*, for the ending of his affliction, it is, as if he had said, my life is vanity, there is trouble enough in it; if thou givest me the greatest ease that ordinarily a life can have, yet it is but a vain life, I need not have this super-addition or accumulation of sorrows upon me: Or, *let me alone, my life is vanity*; why should I converse further any longer with vanity?

חבל *A verbo* Habal, *quod est evanescere. Rem denotat quæ non est quidpiam, aut citò desinit, aut flatus, qui exit ab ore, sic enim halitum infantium appellant* Pag.

My dayes are vanity. He saith not, *My dayes are vain*, but they are *vanity*. *My dayes are Hebel*, which signifieth a vain, light thing, a bubble on the water, or a breath of the mouth; my dayes are but a breath or a puff. The root imports vanishing or disappearing, the still, almost unperceivable breath of a little infant, which will scarce move a feather. Alas! my dayes are fleeting and vanishing, vain, yea, vanity; they have no consistency in them, O then cease from me, and let me do what vanity must, vanish out of sight. Hence observe,

First, *That which a man loatheth, he longs to be rid of.*

I loath it, I would not live alway. When a man loaths his sin, then he saith, *I would not sin alway*, I would be eased of this burden of corruption; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* When a man delights in sin, he would sin alway, he thinks he can never have enough of sinning; it is so in any other instance: where once affection is alienated, we would be estranged and taken off from conversation: We care not to be with that from which our hearts are departed. Assoon as ever *Amnon* had defiled, he loaths his sister; and as soon as he loathed her, he turned her out of doors; *And Amnon said unto her, arise and be gone*, 2 Sam. 13.15. He that loaths his life, is glad when a door opens for its departure.

I loath it, I would not live alway.

Secondly observe, *Trouble makes a little time seem long.*

He had said before, that his *life was swifter then a Weavers shuttle*; now, *I would not live alway*. O how long is my life, how tedious! He looks upon it, as if it were a kind of eternity, as if his life would never have an end, never be done, *I would not live alway*. Pain makes every hour a day, and every day a moneth, and every moneth a year, yea, an age. *He thinks his life will never end, whose affliction doth not*; he thinks he shall never die, because his troubles live. Every man is ready to say, he lives too long, when he lives not as he would. The souls under the Altar, cried out (*Rev.* 6.10.) *How long, Lord, how long, Lord, wilt thou cease to avenge?* &c. Of our good dayes we complain, *How short, Lord, how short?* And of our evil dayes, we cry out, *How long, Lord, how long?* This is a long day, and this a long night indeed; this is a long fit, this a lasting affliction. *As the eternity which we shall have in heaven, is the longest, so it is the shortest*; *Eternity is longest in regard of duration, but it is shortest in regard of apprehension.* The eternity of heaven shall be no more tedious then a minute or a moment. Eternity is so full of pleasure and satisfaction, that it breeds no fulness of it self; living at the well-head of comfort, in immediate communion with God by Jesus Christ, our comforts renew as much as they continue; whence freshness of appetite, and fulness of satisfaction are perpetually interchangeable. The joyes of that estate are so many, that the years seem but few. Eternal joy makes eternity but as a moment, as eternal pain will make every moment an eternity.

Thirdly observe, Forasmuch as *Job* saith, *I would not live alwayes*; he intimates, that there is such a desire in some men; for he speaks of a life in this world.

There is a principle in man drawing out his heart in desires to live alway in the world.

I (saith *Job*) *would not live alway*; let others make that their choice if they will, I will not. Most are very greedy of that commodity, and would not part with it upon any terms; and no wonder, for (as the Psalmist describes them) *they have their portion in this life*: He that hath his portion in this life, would ever have this life; he that hath nothing beyond this world, would never go beyond the world. *Such must needs be all for life, all for the world, because these are their all.* You shall never come to a worldly man, and find him in a mind to die. Let others take heaven, he is contented with his earth; let others make their best of the next life, the present shall serve his turn.

From the reason of this request, *My dayes are vanity*; observe,

The life of man is a vain life.

Vanity hath two things in it, whereof the one may seem quite contrary to the other; it hath emptiness in it, and it hath fulness in it; it hath emptiness of comfort, and fulness of vexation; that's the right vanity, *Vanity with vexation of spirit*; *My dayes are vanity*, they are empty of good, and full of evil.

Four wayes the vanity of mans dayes may be demonstrated.

First, They are vain comparatively; so our dayes are more then vain, or less then vanity, for they are nothing, *Psal.* 39. 5. *My age is nothing before thee.* As in comparison of God (*Isa.* 40. 15, 17.) *The Nations are as the drop of a bucket*, &c. *they are vanity, yea, they are nothing, yea, they are counted to him less then nothing*: So our dayes are vain, they are nothing but vanity, they are less then vanity, or nothing; *Nothingness is the substance of vanity, and all troublesomness is the accident of it.* We cannot form up an apprehension of our life, so little as it is, we cannot reach so low in our thoughts as the bottom of mans vanity, in either notion. As we are not able to raise our hearts so high as the excellency of that estate which we have by Christ; no mans thoughts are big enough, or can be, to comprehend or take in that: So we cannot little our thoughts enough to consider the estate sin hath brought us into; therefore it is said to be as nothing, and less then nothing, and how little that is, which is less then nothing, no man can proportion.

Secondly, Our dayes are vanity, because they are so unconstant and changeable, so subject to motion and alteration. That's a vain thing which is ever upon its change. That which sets the glory of God highest in opposition to the vanity of the creature, is, *That with him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning*, Jam. 1. 17. or, *shadow by turning*; some translate it so, no shadow by turning, because the Tropick or turning of the Sun makes the shadow; while the Sun is in the *Zenith*, that is, directly over our heads in the highest point of the heavens, we cast no shadows. Now the Lord never turneth, he is ever fixed at a point, and so makes no shadow; or thus, as we render it, *no shadow of turning*; that is, not only is there no turning in God, but there is not so much as a shadow of it, not so much as the least imagination of a shadow. This sets up the glory of God highest; and in opposition to this point of highest perfection in God, lies the lowest point of the creatures vanity, that in them there is nothing but turning, in them there is nothing but variableness, and the substance of turning. The fashion of the world passeth away, it is ever passing, never standing at a stay. It is more then passing, it is posting from stage to stage, night and day. As the nature of man contains the seeds and principles of all things in the world (and is therefore called a *little world*.) So his nature contains the seeds and principles of all the changes in the world. Therefore his dayes are vain.

Sicut homo omnes in se ipso res velut mundus quidam, ita omnium mutationum semina continet.

Thirdly, The vanity of these dayes appears in this, because they are unsatisfying dayes. That's a vain thing, which doth not satisfie; for vanity is emptiness, and emptiness can never fill; our dayes are but as a dream. And what is spoken in *Isaiah* (chap. 29. 8.) concerning the dreamer, is verified of a meer natural life. It is, saith the Prophet, *As when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or, as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold he is faint*: neither hunger nor thirst can be appeased by dreams; satisfaction comes not in at the door of imagination. Our dayes of themselves can give us no more satisfaction, no better a breakfast, then a dream of meat and drink doth to a hungry or a thirsty man. *All creatures are not able to fill one.* There's a satisfaction which comes to us through the creature, but the creature doth not satisfie;

God can make any thing satisfie, the least of all his creatures shall fill the greatest. He can give us as much as we expect from them, that is, look what satisfaction a man would have from a creature, that God can give when he pleaseth; but the dayes of man are vanity in this, because we cannot take this satisfaction our selves from the creature, neither is any creature able to give it us. When creatures have done their best, we are hungry and restless still, empty and unsatisfied still. *There is no rest till we return to God, or till God turn his face to us.*

Fourthly, The vanity of our dayes appears in this, that they are *deceivable dayes*; that's very vain to us, which deceives us. And in this the great vanity of the creature consists; it promiseth much, and performeth nothing. Great promises are made, and hopes are raised very high; riches will tell us what they will do for us; and honours will tell us what they will do for us, and how happy they will make us; and the wine will tell us, O that will refresh us; and the sweet and fat will tell us how they will fatten us. All these make golden promises, but leaden performances. They cannot make good what they promise, unless they can with evil. As Satan said to Christ, when he had not so much as a *shooe-latchet* to dispose of, *All this will I give thee*; so the creature joyning with our hearts, makes wonderful promises of high content, and then leaves us most discontented; *This is vanity and vexation of mans spirit.* If the creature were not so free to enter bond and give us security for the payment of that great good, it would not be so ill with us. If the creature would say directly to us, *It is not in me*, as *Job* brings in the creatures disclaiming wisdom (*chap.* 28.) *The sea saith, it is not in me; and the earth saith, it is not in me*: So if creatures would speak plainly, comfort is not in us, help is not in us, satisfaction is not in us, and so tell us how vain they are, their vanity were less to us, though the same in it self. *It is worse to be deceived of good, then to want it.*

Quasi nihil habeat humana vita verum & solidum, sed apparens umbratile, imaginarium.

Surely (saith *David* of this life) *every man walketh in a vain shew*, Psal. 39. 6. There is a shew of this, and that, and the other thing, a promise of it, but it is a vain shew; it is but like a Pageant, which feeds the eye, and delights the fancy, or pleases the ear, but passeth away, and leaveth you as empty as before. In the fifth verse of that Psalm, the inventory of mans temporal estate is summed up, and the total amounts but to this, *Every man at his best estate is altogether vanity*; and lest any should think he had miscounted, an affirmation is prefixt; *surely every man at his best estate is altogether vanity*: Every man is vanity, and every man is vanity at his best estate; not only in his afflictions and in his losses, in his troubles and in his sorrows, such as *Job* now was in; but take a man in the height and perfection, and accomplishment of all creature-comforts and accrewments; take the cream, the pith, the marrow, the sweetness of all, extract a quintessence of all that can be had in creatures, all is vanity. *Man at his best estate is vanity, yea, altogether vanity.*

When *Cain* was born, there was much ado about his birth; *I have got a man-child from God*, saith his Mother; she looked upon him as a great possession, and therefore called his name *Cain*, which signifies *a possession*; but the second man that was born into the world, bare the title of the world, *vanity*; his name was *Abel*, which is the word here used: *They called his name Abel*, that is, *vanity*; a premonition was given in the name of the second man, what would or should be the condition of all men, *Psal.* 144. 4. There is an allusion unto those two names; we translate it, *Man is like to vanity*; the Hebrew is, *Adam is as Abel*; *Adam* (you know) was the name of the first man, the name of *Abel*'s father; but as *Adam* was the proper name of the first, so it is an appellative, or common to all men; now *Adam*, that is, man, or all men, are *Abel*, vain, and walking in a vain shadow.

Abel *vivetium omnium typus & representatio.* Pined.

Tempus & aetas ejus dies. Pined.

And this word is by some translated *nothing*; *his dayes are nothing*; Idols are nothing; time is but the Idol of eternity, and things temporal but the Idol of things eternal. This word signifies in the Hebrew, an Idol, and a vain thing, *Deut.* 32. 31. *Jer.* 2. 5. The word *Abel* is translated *Idol*; and the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 8. 4.) tells us, that *an Idol is nothing in the world*, that is, an Idol is the vainest thing in the world, or the greatest vanity; so that upon the matter, our estate and our dayes here, are but an Idol, that is, the representation of a thing which is not; so much vanity and folly, so much trouble and sorrow, so much affliction is mixed with the dayes and life we now lead, as *a nothing is all* it can justly be called, or an Idol, a shew of what is not.

And therefore we may well make it an argument (as *Job* here) to take us off from the world, and to chide worldlings with, as *David* did (*Psal.* 4.) *O ye sons of men, how long will ye love vanity!* or as *Solomon*, about that adored Idol of the world, riches (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *Wilt thou set thine eyes* (or as the original) *wilt thou cause thine eyes to flie upon that which is not.* An Eagle will not catch flies (that's no game for her) much less will she make a flight at nothing, when there is no game sprung at all. And wilt thou make a flight with thy heart (for the eye, which *Solomon* chiefly intends, is the eye of the soul) when nothing springs before thee, but *that which is not?*

To close this point, if the creature be so vain, and the dayes of man be vanity, let us set our eyes and hearts upon that which is somethiug, upon that which is all, upon that which is lasting, upon that which is everlasting, upon that which is true, upon that which is truth, upon that which will not deceive, upon that which cannot deceive, upon that which will be more in fruition then ever it was in expectation.

The excellency of that estate we have in spirituals, consists in this, that as it promiseth much, so it performeth much, and rather more then it promiseth; a believer finds himself satisfied in Christ beyond expectation; the soul did not expect so much as it finds: As the Queen of *Sheba* coming to *Solomon*, had satisfaction beyond report and promise, so shall all who come to Christ; he makes us large promises and if we believe, we shall find larger performances: We shall at last say, *that the half of those good things which we now enjoy, were not told us in the promises.* God hath laid up all good in his word, but our thoughts are not able to take out the extent of those good things: Hence it is said, that when Christ appears, *He shall come to be admired in his Saints*; things shall be so far beyond their apprehension, that they shall be all in admiration.

VERS. 17, 18, 19.

What is man, that thou shouldst magnifie him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?
And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?
How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone, till I may swallow down my spittle?

THese three verses contain a farther argument, whereby *Job* strengthens his complaint. The sum of the argument is taken from a comparison of the Power, Majesty, and greatness of God, with the meanness and misery, with the lowness and poverty of man; *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him, and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him?* Why should the great, the wise, the powerful, the glorious God contend or have to do with weak, miserable, vain man? How unequal is this match?

Paria paribus congaudent.

What is man? The word is, *What is miserable man? Enosh*, man encompast about with sorrows? What is this sorrowful, miserable man? *Job* concluded in the former verse, *man is vanity.* And yet here he questions, *What is man?*

מה אנוש

The question relisheth of contempt, rather then of ignorance; and carries with it a low estimation of man, let him be what he will; not a want of information what man is: *What is man?* As we use to say to, or of those we slight, *Who are you?* or, *What is he?* It imports the vanity and deficiency of the creature. Or the words are a diminutive admiration; he admires the smalness, the littleness, the meanness, the nothingness of man. Questions in Scripture often abate the sence, *Zech.* 4. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain?* thou lookest very big and very great, *but who art thou?* tell me who thou art, or I will tell thee, thou art now but a mole-hil, thou shalt be a nothing shortly, *Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain*; it is a contemptuous undervaluing question against the proud opposers of the Church. *Who am I, O Lord, and what is my house* (saith *David*, 2 Sam. 7. 18.) His question extenuates. On the other side, questions often encrease the sence, and raise it to the highest, *Ex.* 15. 11. *Who is a God like unto thee?* where is there such a God as thou art? So, *Mic.* 7. 18. *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning*

pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin? The queſtion puts the brighteſt glory upon God, in pardoning ſin. Hence man is abaſed in a queſtion, *what is man?* How low, how poor a creature is he?

Or take the queſtion, barely for a deſire of reſolution; as if this were a piece of a Catechiſm about mans frailty, *what is man?* He had told us in the words immediately foregoing the Text; that *man is vanity*, why then doth he enquire in theſe words, *what is man?* It is not to learn what man is, but to teach us the wonder, that man being ſuch ſhould be thus regarded: As if he had ſaid, *Foraſmuch as man is vanity, what is vanity that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie it?* Will any one eſteem vanity, and prize a thing of nought? *Man is vanity*; that's the anſwer to the queſtion.

The Scripture gives many anſwers to this queſtion: Ask the Prophet *Iſaiah*, what is man? And he anſwers (*Chap.* 40. 6.) Man is graſs, *All fleſh is graß, and the goodlineß thereof as the flower of the field.* Ask *David, what is man?* He anſwers (*Pſal.* 62. 9.) *Man is a lie*, not a lyar only, or a deceiver, but a lye and a deceit. All the anſwers the Holy Ghoſt gives concerning man, are to humble man: man is ready to flatter himſelf, and one man to flatter another; but God tells us plainly what we are.

תגדלנו גדול *Magnus quantitate vel qualitate, annis, honore, exiſtimatione, authoritate.* Shind.

That thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him?] Or make him great? There is a three-fold ſence of that word [magnifie] uſed in Scripture.

First, It implies only a manifeſtation or declaration of anothers greatneſs, or an opening of his intrinſical worth and dignity; in which ſence, man is often ſaid to magnifie God, he declares and publiſhes the infinite, internal worth and dignity of God, *Luke* 1. 46. the Virgin beginneth her Song thus, *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord.* It is impoſſible we ſhould give the leaſt addition to the greatneſs of God: Then magnifying of God, is only a declaring that God is great: So *Pſalm* 34. 3. *O magnifie the Lord with me*, that is, let us joyn our hearts and our tongues in this great work, to lift up the honour and Name of our God.

Secondly, To magnifie, is to eſteem or prize greatly: So the Apoſtle ſpeaking of his office, ſhews how highly he priz'd it, by breaking forth into this holy boaſt, *Rom.* 11. 13. *I magnifie mine office.* I eſteem this as my greateſt priviledge and honour, that God hath called me to be an Apoſtle: And *Act.* 5. 19. when the Phariſees were ſo angry with the Apoſtles, and many were afraid to joyn with them, the Text ſaith, *the people magnified them*, that is, the people had high thoughts of them, and eſteemed them greatly.

But thirdly, (which is chiefly intended in this place) to magnifie, is to make great, or to give ſome real addition of worth and reſpect. Thus the Lord magnifies man, he magnifies him, by adding ſomewhat to him, by giving glory and luſtre to man, who in himſelf is vile, and mean, and contemptible. And thus God magnifies man four wayes.

First, He magnifies man in the work of creation; of that we read, *Pſal.* 8. 4. where this queſtion is put, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt be mindful of him, or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him*; The third verſe ſhewes us, what it was which raiſed the Pſalmiſt to this admiration of the goodneſs of God to man; *When I behold the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt made? Lord what is man?* God in the work of creation, made all theſe things ſerviceable and inſtrumental for the good of man. What is man, that he ſhould have a Sun, a Moon and Stars planted in the Firmament for him; What creature is this? When great preparations are made in any place, much proviſions layed in, and the houſe adorned with richeſt furnitures; We ſay, *What is this man that comes to ſuch a houſe?* When ſuch a goodly fabrick was raiſed up, the goodly houſe of the world adorned and furniſhed, we have reaſon, admiring to ſay; what is this man that muſt be the tenant or inhabitant of this houſe? There is yet a higher exaltation of man in the creation, man was magnified with the ſtamp of Gods Image; one part whereof the Pſalmiſt deſcribes at *verſ.* 5. *Thou haſt given him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; Thou haſt put all things under his feet, all Sheep and Oxen, yea, and the beaſts of the field, the fowl of the Air, and the fiſh of the Sea,* &c. Thus man was magnified in creation. What was man that he ſhould have the rule of the world given him? That he ſhould be Lord over the fiſh of the Sea, and over the beaſts of the Field, and over the fowls of the Air. Again, man was magnified in creation, in that God ſet him in the next degree to the Angels; *Thou haſt made him a little lower then the Angels*; there is the firſt part of the anſwer to this queſtion, man was magnified in being made ſo excellent a creature, and in having ſo many excellent creatures made for him. All which may be underſtood of man, as created in Gods Image, and Lord of the world; but ſince the tranſgreſſion, it is peculiar to Chriſt, as the Apoſtle applies it (*Heb.* 2. 6.) and to thoſe who have their blood and dignity reſtored by the work of redemption, which is the next part of mans exaltation.

Secondly, Man is magnified or made great by the work of redemption. That exalts man indeed. Man was laid low, and his honour in the duſt, notwithſtanding all that greatneſs which he received in creation: Though Sun, and Moon, and Stars, the Fiſh of the Sea, and the Fowles of the Air, *&c.* were made his ſervants, and himſelf a companion of Angels; yet by ſin he fell below all theſe priviledges, and was made a companion for Devils, a Citizen of Hell: Therefore the ſecond magnifying of man, was by the work of redemption. And, *what was man that thou ſhouldeſt redeem him*, when he was a captive? raiſe him when he was down, build and repair him when he was ruined, when he was loſt ſeek him, and when he was bankrupt and undone, give him a better ſtock and ſet him up again? What was man that thou ſhouldeſt do all this for him? How did the mercy of God magnifie his ſervants, when he gave his Son to pay their debt to his own juſtice? If man was magnified when the Sun, and Moon, and Heavens were made for him; how was he magnified, when God was made man for him? How was he exalted, when the Son of God was humbled for him?

Thirdly, Man is magnified or made great in the work of regeneration, wherein God re-ſtamps his Image upon him, in thoſe ſhining characters of holineſs and knowledge; The firſt creation being ſpoiled, occaſioned redemption, and redemption purchaſed a ſecond creation. *Every one that is in Chriſt is a new creature*; 2 Cor. 5. 17. Our dignity is far greater in being new creatures then in being creatures.

Laſtly, Man is magnified by thoſe ſeveral acts of favour and grace, which God caſts upon him every day: ſmiling upon him, embracing him in his arms, admitting him to near communion with himſelf, watching over him, tending him, guarding him with Angels, directing him, counſelling him, comforting him, upholding him by his Spirit, till he bring him unto glory, which is the higheſt ſtep of preferment that mans nature is capable of. What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him in all theſe things? Obſerve hence,

First, That, *All the worth and dignity of man is out of himſelf.*

What is man? As if he had ſaid, man hath nothing of his own, to commend him to or to ingratiate himſelf with God. God hath put ſomething upon him, he hath magnified man, and given him a real worth, becauſe he would. Free-grace exalts man. Hence (*Pſal.* 90. 20.) the Pſalmiſt prayes, *Let the Heathen know themſelves to be but men*: As if he had ſaid, man who is high in his own eſteem, conceits himſelf to be ſomewhat above man, he judges of himſelf beyond his own ſphear and border: Therefore Lord bring their thoughts within the compaſs of their own condition, *Let them know that they are but men*; A man that is acquainted with himſelf, will be humble enough; *A mear man is but mear earth.* The Prophet tells him ſo thrice over with one breath (*Jer.* 22. 29.) *O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the word of the Lord.* Man is Earth, in the conſtitution of his body, that was framed out of the Earth: he is earthly in the corruption of his mind, that muds in the Earth: The Apoſtles ſtile is, *earthly minded men*: And he will be Earth in his diſſolution; when he dies he returns *to his Earth.* A natural man is earth all over; Earth in his making, earthly in his mind, his ſpirit is earthly, Earth gets into his Heaven, his upper regions: and the body, his lower region, ſhall moulder to Earth

again: Then, *what is man?* Hence (I say) it is, that when man at any time would exalt and lift himself up, he thinks himself above man, he hath some notion or apprehension of an excellency, beyond the line of a creature: He conceits he hath or is a piece of a deity. The first ground of hope upon which man raised himself against God, was, that he might be a god; hs was not satisfied in being made like unto God, he would be (*which was the highest robbery*) Gods equal, and stand by himself: this thought was his fall. There is such a principle of pride in the hearts of all men by nature. They are not contented in the sphear of a creature, they would be somewhat beyond that. The truth is, all the true worth and dignity of man, is in what he hath beyond himself, his excellency is in Christ, and his glory, in being made a partaker of the divine nature. It abased man, when he aspired to take a divine nature to himself, but it exalts man, when God inspires him with a participation of the divine nature. *What is man that thou doest thus magnifie him?* Christ makes us very great and glorious, by the dignity which he puts upon us: as he tells the Church (*Ezek.*16.14.) *Thy beauty was perfect, through my comliness which I had put upon thee*; thou hadst no comliness, no beauty of thine own, but thorough my comliness thou art very beautiful. The worth of man is out of himself; the Church shines by those rayes, by that lustre, which Christ casts upon her.

Secondly, Observe from this question, *What is man?* &c.

Man hath laid himself so low, that he is not worthy of one thought from God.

What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him, and set thy heart upon him? It is a wonder that God should vouchsafe a gracious look upon such a creature as man; it is wonderful considering the distance between God and man, as man is a creature, and God the Creator; *What is man*, that God should take notice of him? is he not a clod of Earth, a piece of clay? But consider him as a sinful and an unclean creature, and we may wonder to amazement; what is an unclean creature, that God should magnifie him? Will the Lord indeed put value upon filthiness, and fix his approving eye upon an impure thing? One step further, what is rebellious man, man an enemy to God, that God should magnifie him! What admiration can answer this question? Will God prefer his enemies, and magnifie those who would cast him down? Will a Prince exalt a Traytor, or give him honour, who attempts to take away his life? The sinful nature of man, is an enemy to the nature of God, and would pull God out of Heaven; yet God even at that time, is raising man to Heaven; *Sin would lessen the great God, and yet God greatens sinful man.* Observe,

Thirdly, *Though man be low in himself, yet God bestows many thoughts and cares upon him.*

Though there be no reason at all in man, why God should magnifie him, yet God doth and will. Free-grace overlooks all the distance that is between God and us, as we are creatures, and it overlooks that greater and vaster distance which is between God and us, as we are sinful creatures. Many a man is ready to think himself so good and so great, that his brother is not worthy one of his thoughts, or a cast of his eye; he thinks it too much to look towards a man, that is of the same make with himself, because he is a little lower statur'd in estate or degree. A great rich man thinks he doth a poor man a very great favour, if he turns about and speaks to him: We may well cry out with admiration, O the pride of man to man! and O the love of God to man! one man hath scarce humility enough to speak to another, who in nature is equal to him, and yet God (who is infinitely above us) hath love enough to magnifie and set his heart upon him.

The language of the Holy Ghost is very gradual about this point.

First, *What is man that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son of man that thou visitest him?* Phil. 8. 4. To be mindful of a man is not so much as to visit him, we may be mindful of those whom we go not to see, or to whom we send no help.

Secondly, *What is man that thou takest any knowledge of him? Or the Son of man that thou makest an account of him?* Psal.144.3. It is much that God will take knowledge of a man, or cast an eye upon him; but it is a great deal more, that God will make account of him. But the third and highest step of favour, is this of the Text, that the Lord will magnifie man, and set his heart upon him, as if he could not be without him? Observe,

Fourthly, *The true apprehension of the greatness of Gods mercy and goodness to us, makes us little in our own eyes.*

I ground it thus, when *Job* had considered how the Lord exalts and greatens man, he then abases and diminishes man; *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him?* Nothing should draw man so low in himself, as to think how high God doth, and how much higher, yet God intends to raise him. In the 1 *Chron.* 17. 16. When *David* enquired of God by *Nathan*, whether he should build him an house, God answered no, he should not, but his son after him should; But though the Lord would not have *David* build him an house, yet the messenger, who was to carry this report, must tell *David*, *That the Lord would build him an house, and establish his sons upon the Throne after him*, vers.10,11. Assoon as *David* had this answer brought him of Gods wonderful goodness toward him, and of those large promises to his family, he breaks out into this diminutive admiration, *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is mine house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And yet this is a small thing in thine eyes, O God: for thou hast also spoke of thy servants house for a great while to come, and hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree, O Lord God.* We hear not of such an humble speech falling from *David's* lips, till God sent him that message of advancement. And so (2 *Sam.* 9. 8.) when *David* out of that abundant love he bare to *Jonathan*, enquired, *Is there any that is left of the house of* Saul, *that I may shew him kindness for* Jonathan's *sake*? *Mephibosheth* was found; and when *David* told him, I will take care for thee, *Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually*; This favour astonisheth *Mephibosheth*, *what is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?* He spake of himself below man, when he heard *David* speak so highly of him. A living Dog is better then a dead Lion; but what is worse then a dead Dog? The like impression *David's* excessive kindness made upon the spirit of *Abigail* (1 *Sam.* 25.41.) when he sent messengers to her, after the death of her husband *Nabal*, to assure her that he would be her husband. This honour (that *David* anointed King over *Israel* should desire her to be his Wife) abases *Abigail* in her own eyes, *Let me* (saith she) *be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord. David's* wife! (said she) it is too much preferment for me, to be *David's* servant; I shall be honoured enough to be his servants servant, and that in the lowest service, to wash their feet. As ingenuous spirits, when they hear messages of great favours tender'd them, fall low in their own thoughts: So much more will gracious spirits. Those magnifying offers of Christ, and pardon of sin by him, of a crown of life, and an exceeding weight of glory purchas'd by him; these magnifying promises (I say) bring the soul upon the knee, upon the meditation and acknowledgment of it's own meanness and vileness; *What am I that the Lord should respect me, that the Lord should redeem me, that he should regenerate me, that he should set his love upon me, prepare Heaven and glory, a Crown and a Kingdom for me? What am I? There is nothing doth more empty us of self-conceit and high thoughts, then duly to consider what high thoughts God hath of us.*

Note one thing further from these words, *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him?*

If God magnifie man, one man should not vilifie and debase another; one man should not contemn and slight another.

Who art thou that contemnest thy brother? Thou canst not (really) magnifie thy brother, and wilt thou debase him? It is a most dangerous attempt to abase those whom God magnifies, to despise those whom God honours. That, on whom God sets his heart against him, man should set his heart, or tongue, or pen. God seeks occasion to magnifie us, though we give him advantages every day to cast dishonour upon us. Let man take heed how he dishonours those

thoſe whom the great God now doth, and intends to honour more. When *Pharoah* magnified *Joſeph*, he cauſed the people to cry *Abrech*, that is, *bow the knee before him*, Geneſ. 41. 43. And when *Ahaſuerus* intended to advance *Mordecai*, he commanded him to be arrayed in Royal apparel, &c. and proclamation to be made *Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom the King delighteth to honour*, Eſther 6. 11. Princes expect that all ſhould favour and honour thoſe whom they honour and make their favourites. Surely then the great God will not bear it, that they ſhould be deſpiſed, whom he delights in, and caſts honour upon.

But here a Queſtion ariſes, How this is appliable unto *Job*? Why doth *Job*, who lay upon a dung-hill, and was caſt into ſo low a condition, ſpeak of *magnifying*? Was *Job* magnified? Doth *Job* wonder at his preferment and exaltation, when he was brought down to the duſt? Poor *Job*! Thou waſt almoſt nullified, and made no body, and doſt thou ſpeak, as if thy honour were too big for thee, *What is man that thou ſhouldſt magnifie him?* We may anſwer.

First, By connecting this word [Magnifie] with the words that follow; *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, and that thou ſhouldeſt ſet thine heart upon him?* As if he had ſaid, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, by ſetting thine heart upon him?* And ſo ſetting the heart upon man, is an explication of what is meant by magnifying man. And that is a clear truth; when God ſets his heart upon a man, he magnifies him ſure enough; that act of God is the exaltation of the creature: Man needs no greater honour then this, that God ſets his heart upon him; he that knows that, knows himſelf high enough. Whatſoever man ſet his heart upon, he (as man can) exalts and magnifies it. If a man ſets his heart upon another man, he magnifies that man. Yea if a man ſets his heart upon a beaſt or a ſtone (he in a ſence) deifies that beaſt, that ſtone. If he ſets his heart upon any creature, he makes that creature a god to him: for nothing ſhould have the heart but God alone. And the reaſon is, becauſe ſetting the heart upon any thing is the higheſt exaltation we can give it. Therefore nothing ought to have the heart ſet upon it, but God, for he is Lord over all. And the Lord calls us to ſet our hearts upon him, becauſe that is the higheſt honour creatures can give him. Now as our ſetting our hearts on God magnifies him, ſo the ſetting of his heart on us doth wonderfully magnifie us. And he therefore ſets his heart upon us, that we might at once ſee and admire how much he honours us. If a King ſet his heart upon a man, that man is greatly magnified; he is magnified in the opinion of others, and not only in the bare opinion of others, but there is a real dignity put upon that man, on whom a King puts his heart. How much more if God ſets his heart upon a man, is man really magnified. That God ſets his eye upon a man is a magnifying of him. It was the priviledge of *Solomon's* Temple, that the Lord promiſed his eye would be upon that place: and it was a high honour to the Temple, that God would look upon it continually, 1 *King.* 8. 29. If it be a condeſcenſion in God to eye the creature, *He humbleth himſelf to behold the things that are in Heaven and in the Earth*, Pſal. 113. 6. How great is his condeſcention in ſetting his heart upon the creature. So there is a truth in this ſence, and we may make a comfortable improvement of it, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him, by ſetting thine heart upon him?*

Secondly, *Job* may have reſpect to his former greatneſs, when God magnified him, and made him the greateſt man in the Eaſt; and is now bemoaning his own change, in the changeableneſs of mans condition; who when he is lifted up to the higheſt, fairly built and adorned, yet in a moment may be caſt down and ruined. Therefore *Job* comes with his wonder, *Lord, what is man!* What is the ordinary ſtate of man, that thou ſhouldeſt take care to make him great! As if he had ſaid, why didſt thou magnifie me, to make me the greateſt man in the Eaſt? Why didſt thou ſet thine heart upon me to bleſs my family, and provide for me, as if thou hadſt none elſe to provide for? Thou ſeeſt mans beauty is blaſted in the twinckling of an eye, and then all thy work is loſt. *It is not worth the while to do that which may be undone ſo ſoon.* Would any one be at coſt to build a houſe, to beſtow a great deal of charge and pains upon it, and it may be ſpend ſome years about the adorning and furniſhing of it; and when all is done, it is ſuch a houſe, that the next breath of wind may level with the ground. What is ſuch a houſe that a man ſhould build it? When man is raiſed up and built, a puff of wind, a blaſt of affliction blows him down, and brings him to the duſt; what is this man that he ſhould be magnified? This is a good ſence of the words; that *Job* reflecting upon his former greatneſs, and honour, now defaced and overthrown, breaks out into this expoſtulation; what is man? Why ſhould God in his providence lay out ſo much to magnifie and ſet a man up, who may be ſo quickly down, as you ſee I am at this day.

Quorſum in me locupletando tam operam poſuiſti, tam providentiâ oſtendiſti, quare me ad eum ſtatum evexiſti in qua perſiſtere non poteram.

But thirdly, rather take it thus, *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt magnifie him?* Namely by dealing with him thus in chaſtnings and afflictions by diſciplining and tutoring him with the rods of thy correction.

But you will ſay, Is it a magnifying of a man to afflict a man?

Yes, It is a magnifying of man; man is magnified two wayes by affliction.

First, In that God who is ſo great will deſcend to chaſtiſe and correct, or to order the chaſtiſments and corrections of man. Man is magnified, when God deals or contends with him. That God wraſtles and ſtrives with man, is an honour to man. *David* (1 *Sam.* 24. 14.) ſeems to look upon it as too great an honour (though it were a burthenſom one) that *Saul*, a King, one ſo much above him, would follow and purſue him; *Againſt whom is the King of* Iſrael *come out? Againſt a dead Dog, or againſt a Flea?* Alas, I am no match for thee, thou putteſt too much weight upon me, in that thou contendeſt with me. To make great preparations, and to ſend out a great Army and skilful Commanders againſt an enemy, magnifies that enemy, that is, it begets an opinion, that ſurely he is ſome great and potent enemy againſt whom ſuch great preparations are made. In this ſence you may underſtand it, that affliction is a magnifying of a man, becauſe the great God comes forth to battel againſt *him, who* is but duſt and aſhes, but as a dead Dog, or a Flea The Heathens had ſuch a notion, they looked upon it as no ſmall priviledge for a man to be ſlain by ſome famous great Commander; Comfort thy ſelf in this miſerable death (ſaid one) *thou falleſt by the hand of great Æneas*, thou art magnified enough in this, that thou haſt ſuch a man as *Æneas* to fight with thee. And another, *To die by the arm of* Hercules, *a mighty favour and alwayes to be remembred.* Some kind of trouble is an honour, as well as a trouble: The magnifying of man, as well as an afflicting of him. Man is ſo far from deſerving any favour from God, that as a creature, he is not worthy a blow, though as a ſinner, he is moſt worthy of death from God.

Indignus ſit quem vel percutias, contemptior ſum quam ut adverſus me manum exa tindas.

Hoc tamen infœlix miſeram ſolabere mortē. Æneï. magni dextrâ cadis, Virg. l. 10. *Occumbens, Is nunc Herculis armis. Donum ingens ſemperque tuis memorabile factis.* Valer. Flac. l. 3. Argon.

But ſecondly, we may anſwer it, that man is (not only thus notionally, but) really magnified by afflictions, and that two wayes.

First, In this life, the very humbling of the Saints are their exaltations: their afflictions are their glory. There was never any ſo famous for greatneſs, for riches, for honours, as ſome have been for ſufferings. Who is there upon Record throughout the whole book of God? Who is there in any Hiſtory of the world ſo famous for greatneſs and riches and high atchievements, as *Job* a ſufferer? All the victories of *Alexander* or *Cæſar*, yea of *Joſhua* and *David*, have not rendred them ſo famous to poſterity, as the conflicts of *Job*. His afflictions have magnified him more, then all his other greatneſs, or then the greatneſs of other men hath magnified them. If *Job* had only been the richeſt man in the Eaſt, I believe we ſhould never have had a word of any of his acts, or ſo much as mention of his name in Scripture. That which gave him the honour to have a whole book written of him alone by the pen of the Holy Ghoſt, beſides the often mention of his precious name in other books, is this, that he endured ſo much. *That man is magnified really, who is thus afflicted, and comes off holily.*

Secondly, Afflictions have an influence upon the life to come. The Apoſtle is expreſs in that, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. where he exhorts, not to be troubled with our preſent afflictions, for they *work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory.* That which works for us an exceeding weight of glory, magnifies

us. It is not said any where in Scripture, that a mans honours, or his riches, or his greatness in the world, work for him a far more exceeding weight of glory: There is no such thing ascribed or attributed to outward comforts and priviledges; but our afflictions work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory. Not (as Papists abuse that Scripture) as if afflictions did merit glory; but as the way and course wherein God sets men, and through which he will exalt and lift them up to greatest glory. Glory is the purchase of Christ, and all the heaviest sufferings of the creature are not able to purchase one grain of glory, not the least imaginable weight of glory, much less an exceeding weight of glory; but God brings his people to glory, and makes them (as he did the Lord Christ) in their degree perfect through sufferings. Hence observe,

Duntaxat significatur, quo itinere ad gloriam perveniatur.

That, *Afflictions are (if rightly improved) the exaltations and magnifyings of the Saints.*

The rod of Discipline in Gods hand, becomes a Scepter of honour in ours. This crosses the common thoughts of the world. The truth is, there is scarce a soul in the world under affliction, but he thinks himself abased by it, and saith, that God hath laid him low. Yet the right use and improvement of affliction is the best preferment. The Apostle, *James* 1. is express, *Let the brother of low degree rejoyce in that he is exalted.* The low have an exaltation; yea, their lowness is their exaltation; yet, we are ready to have undervaluing thoughts of our selves, when the hand of God is upon us; when God takes away that for which men set a price upon themselves, they scarce think themselves worth any thing. But this especially reaches that sinful contempt of others, a man afflicted is esteemed by most as a man abased. They who have prized a man, and had great thoughts of him, when he had a great estate, *&c.* let him once fall in temporals, though he continue the same in spirituals, yea though he encreases in them, and his Grace shines as much or more then ever, yet he is disesteemed and laid low in their thoughts. So much for those words, *what it is to magnifie*, and likewise how they may have a sutableness with *Job*'s condition, he being so afflicted and emptied when he spake them.

And that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him.

To set the heart, notes four things in Scripture.

First, Great care and intention of spirit, *Prov.* 27. 23. *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds*; the Hebrew is, *set thy heart upon thy herds*: The heart is set upon the herds in providing and taking care of them, in looking to the welfare of the herds and of the flocks, *Samuel* uses that language to *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 9. 20.) when he came seeking his fathers Asses; *As for the Asses* (saith he) *set not thine heart upon them*, that is, take no care for them, never trouble thy self more about that business, that care is over, they are found. In this sence God sets his heart upon man; *What is man that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?* that is, that thou shouldest take so much care of him, and watch over him: As the Lord speaks of his Vineyard (*Isa.* 27. 3.) *I the Lord will keep it, lest any hurt it; I will keep it night and day:* He set his heart upon the vineyard to watch it, lest any should, touching, hurt it. God in this sence takes so much care for man, that he seemeth (as it were) careless of all other creatures, 1 *Cor.* 9. 9. *Doth God take care for Oxen?* God doth take care for Oxen: The Apostle having shewed the goodness of God to beasts, providing by a Law, that they should not be muzled, presently he questions, *Doth God take care for Oxen?* As if he had said, surely there is somewhat more in it; *or saith he it altogether for our sakes?* Not altogether, doubtless God had regard to Oxen; *But for our sakes no doubt it was written*, that is, chiefly for our sakes, *That he which ploweth, should plow in hope, and he that threshеth in hope, should be partaker of his hope.* So when Christ speaketh of the Lilies, *Mat.* 6. *If God so cloath the Lilies of the field, how much more will he cloath you?* You shall have the strength of his care to provide for you, to feed and cloath you. Thus God sets his heart upon man, he looks to his people as to his houshold, to his charge; he will see they shall have all things needful for them. And so not laying to heart (which is the contrary) signifies carelesness, *Isa.* 47. 7. It is reported of *Babylon, Thou saidst I shall be a Lady for ever, so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart*, that is, thou didst not regard these things, to take care about them. And, *Ezek.* 40. 4. The expression is very full, where God calls the Prophet to attention, and he calleth him all over; *Behold* (saith he) *with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart on all that I shall shew thee*: He awakens the whole man; see, and see with thine eyes; hear, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon it; the sum of all is, be thou very intentive and diligent about this business to the utmost.

Secondly, To set the heart, notes an act of the affections and desires. A man sets his love upon what he sets his heart; that is the meaning of *Psal.* 62. 10. *If riches encrease, set not your heart upon them*, that is, let not your love, your affections, your desires close with these things: when riches abound, let not your desires abound too. It is an admirable frame of heart to have narrow, scant affections in a large plentiful estate. *He is the true rich man, who loves his riches poorly. Set your affections on things that are above*, Col. 3. 2.

Thirdly, To set the heart, notes high esteem and account, this is more then bare love and affection, 2 *Sam.* 18. 3. When a Council of war was held by *David*'s Commanders, about going out to battel against *Absalom*, they all vote against *David*'s personal undertaking, upon this ground, *They will not care for us, they will not set their hearts upon us, or value us*, their hearts are set upon thee, thou art the prize they look for, and therefore the heat of the battel will be against thee. Again, 1 *Sam.* 4. 20. When the wife of *Phineas* was delivered of a son (a son is the womans joy and glory, yet) the text saith, when the women that stood by, told her that a son was born, *she answered not, neither did she regard it*, she did not set her heart upon it, because the glory was departed from *Israel*.

In either of these sences, the Lord sets his heart upon man, he greatly loves man; the love of God to man, is the spring of mercy to man; yea, love is the spring of love, love acted, springs from a decree of love (*Deut.* 7. 7.) *The Lord thy God did not set his love upon you*, &c, *because ye were more in number then any other people, but because the Lord loved you.* Love also led in that highest work of mercy, the giving of Christ: *So God loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son*, John 3. 16. As love is the spring and root of all the real duty which man performs to God, and is therefore called *the fulfilling of the Law*, our love fulfilleth the will of God; so the love of God is the root of all that good we receive; his love fulfilleth our will, that is, whatsoever we will or ask according to the will of God, the love of God fulfils it for us. Our love fulfils the law of Gods command, and Gods love fulfils the law of our wants and lawful desires. His heart is set upon us, and then his hand is open to us.

Further, God doth not only love man, but his love is great, and his esteem of man very high; and he realizes the greatest love by bestowing the greatest mercy: How did God set his heart upon us, when he gave his Son, who lay in his bosom, for us? *He set his bosom upon us when he gave us his Son, who came out of his bosom.*

Hence let us see our duty. Should not we set out hearts upon God, when God sets his heart upon us? The Soveraignty of God calls for our hearts; he, as Lord, may use all that we have or are: And there is more then a law of Soveraignty why we should give God our hearts; God hath given us his heart first: he who calleth for our hearts, hath first given us his. What are our hearts to his heart? The love of God infinitely exceeds the love and affection of the creature. What were it to God if he had none of our hearts? But wo to us, if we had not the heart of God. This phrase shews us the reason why God calls for our hearts; he gives us his own; it is but equal among men, to love where we are loved, to give a heart, where we have received one; how much more should we love God, and give him our hearts, when we hear he loves us and sets his heart upon us, whose love and heart alone is infinitely better then all the loves and hearts of all men and Angels?

There is yet a fourth consideration about this expression, the setting of the heart. Setting the heart is applied to the anger and displeasure of God; so the phrase is used (*Job* 34. 14.) *If he set his heart upon man, all flesh shall perish together*; that is, if God be resoved to chastise man, to bring judg-

judgments upon him, all flesh shall perish together; none shall be able to oppose it. As it is the highest favour to have God set his heart upon us in mercy and love, so it is the highest judgment to have God set his heart upon a man in anger and in wrath, to set his heart to afflict and punish. The Lord answers his own people, *Jer.* 15. 1, 2, 3. that notwithstanding all the prayers and motions of his beloved favourites in their behalf, *his heart could not be towards them.* Then his heart was strongly set against them, or upon them in extream anger; therefore he concludes, *they that are for the sword, to the sword, and they that are for destruction, to destruction,* &c. If God set his heart to afflict; he will afflict, and he can do it. And there may be such a sence of the text here. *What is man that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?* that thou shouldst come so resolved to contest and contend with man who is but dust and ashes? The words following (though I adhere rather to the former interpetation) carry somewhat toward it.

Verse 18. **That thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?**

Here are two acts more about which the question is put. *What is man that thou shouldest visit him every morning?* And, *what is man that thou shouldst try him every moment?*

That thou shouldest visit him every morning?

פקד *Visitavit in bonum & in malum.*

To *visit*, is taken three wayes, and they may all be applied to this text.

To *visit*, is first, to afflict, to chasten, yea, to punish; the highest judgments in Scripture come under the notion of visitations, *Exod.* 34. 7. *Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children*, that is, punishing them. And in the Prophets, *Jer.* 5. 9. *Shall not I visit for this? shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this? Jer.* 48. 44. When God came against *Moab* with those terrible judgments, it is called *the year of their visitation: I will bring upon it, even upon Moab, the year of their visitation.* And it is a common speech with us, when a house hath the Plague, which is one of the highest stroaks of temporal affliction, we use to say, *Such a house is visited.* Hence observe,

Afflictions are Visitations.

They are called so, because then God comes to search our hearts and lives; *Afflictions are Gods searchers and examiners. Jerusalem* is threatned to be searcht with candles, and that was the time of *Jerusalems* visitation. To search with a candle, notes the most accurate searching; as the woman when she had lost her groat, *lighted a candle, and sought diligently till she found it*; she visited every hole to find it out. When you see the Lord afflicting, then he is visiting; he lights a candle to search every corner of your lives.

And if afflictions be Gods visitations, it is time for man to visit himself when he is afflicted. We should visit our souls when God visits our bodies, our estates, our families, or the Kingdom where we live. Wo to those who do not visit themselves when God visits them. The Prophet calls to this duty in a time of saddest visitation, *Let us search and try our wayes*, Lam. 3.

Yet further, if God in affliction visit us, let us visit God; let us answer his visitation of us with our visitation of him. *Lord, in trouble have they visited thee, they powred out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them*, Isa. 26. 16. Would you know what the visiting of God is? It is praying unto him; *They visited thee, they powred out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.* We visit heaven in our afflictions, when we pray much in our afflictions. When God visiteth us, let us visit him, and never give over visiting him, till he remove his visitation from us, or sanctifie it to us. That's the first sense.

Secondly, To visit, in a good sence, signifies to shew mercy, and to refresh, to deliver, and to bless, *Ruth.* 1. 6. *Naomi heard how the Lord had visited his people, and given them bread.* Gen. 21. 2. *The Lord visited Sarah, and she conceived*, &c. Exod. 3. 16. *The Lord hath surely visited his people*, when they were upon dawnings of deliverance out of *Egypt*: That greatest mercy and deliverance that ever the children of men had, is thus expressed, *Luke* 1. 68. *The Lord hath visited and redeemed his people.* Mercies are visitations, when God comes in kindness and love to do us good, he visiteth us. And these mercies are called visitations in two respects.

First, Because God comes near to us when he doth us good: Mercy is a drawing near to a soul, a drawing near to a place. As when God sends a judgment, or afflicts, he is said to depart and go away from that place; so when he doth us good, he comes near, and as it were applies himself in favour to our persons and habitations.

Secondly, They are called a visitation because of the freeness of them. A visit is one of the freest things in the world. There is no obligation but that of love, to make a visit; because such a man is my friend, and I love him, therefore I visit him. Hence, I say, that greatest act of free grace in redeeming the world, is called a *visitation*, because it was as freely done as ever any friend made a visit to see his friend, and with infinite more freedom; there was no obligation on mans side at all, many unkindnesses and neglects there were. God in love came to redeem man.

Idiotismus est, elegans apud Hebræos pro eo quod est diligentissimè & exactissimè rem investigare. Bold.

Thirdly, To visit, imports an act of care and inspection, of tutorage and direction. The Pastors office over the flock, is expressed by this act, *Zech.* 10. 3. *Acts* 15. 36. And the care we ought to have of the fatherless and widows, is expreſt by visiting of them. *Pure Religion* (saith the Apostle *James*) *is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction* Jam. 1. 27. & Mat. 25. 34. Christ pronounceth the blessing on them who, when he was in prison, visited him; which was not a bare seeing, or asking how do you; but it was care of Christ in his imprisonment, and helpfulness and provision for him in his afflicted members. That sence also agrees well with this place, *What is man that thou shouldest visit him?* that is, that thou shouldst take care, have such an inspection over him, look so narrowly to, and provide for him? *That thou shouldst visit him every morning?*

לבקרים *Singulis manè, quotidie manè, manè autem fieri dicitur quod quotidie fit, ac diligenter sedulòque.* Drus. *Latini vocant diluculum, quasi diei lucula, i. e. parva lux.*

Every morning.] The Hebrew is, *in the mornings.* And the word here used for morning is considerable: There is a twofold morning, which the *Jews* distinguished exactly by their watch. One morning was that which they accounted from an hour before Sun-rising, from the very first breaking of the day, till the sun appeared above the Horizon, which is about the space of an hour. And the word which they use for it is *Shachar*, which signifies to be darkish or blackish, because that first morning is somewhat dark; and so the Latine word (*diluculum*) which is for the first morning, is by the Criticks called *a little of the day*; but their other morning was the space of an hour after Sun-rising, and the root of that word signifies to seek or enquire, to enquire diligently. And the reason why they expres the second morning so, is, because when the Sun is up, we may seek and search about our business, or go on in our callings and affairs. The height of the day they call the body or strength, we, the heat of the day; either morning may be here meant, though the word bears the latter properly: *Thou dost visit him every morning*, that is, as soon as the Sun is up, yea, as soon as day breaks, or there is any light, thou art visiting. Mans visits are usually in the afternoon; it is an extraordinary thing to visit one in the forenoon, more extraordinary to visit in a morning, and most, early in the morning. Gods visits are extraordinary visits. they are visitings in the morning, and visitings every morning, as often as the morning returns, so often doth God come to visit; not a morning that we miss him.

Reliquum diei tempus, quasi ob majorem lucis intensionem vocant. עצם חיום *Ghetsem Hajom, i. e. corpus, robur diei.* Bold.

To do a thing *every morning*, notes, first, the doing of it alwayes; or secondly, the certain doing of it; *Thou dost visit every morning*, that is, as surely and as certain as the Sun riseth, and the morning cometh, so certainly doth God visit man. Or thirdly, it notes the speed the haste that God makes to visit; *he visits in the morning*, that is, betimes, God delayes not until noon, much less stayes till it be night; but he cometh in the morning, *Psal.* 46. 5. *God shall hear her, and that right early*; the Hebrew is, God shall hear her in the morning, betimes, speedily. The late coming in to work in the vineyard, is expreſt by coming at the eleventh hour, they came speedily, who came in the morning, at the first hour. And to shew that we ought not to continue in wrath, and keep up our anger, it is said, *let not the sun go down upon your wrath*, that is, do not continue all day angry, let your anger go down speedily, even before the Sun.

In

Hoc ad conservationem & generalē providentiā pertinet. Metaphora à pastoribus singulis matutinis oves suas recensentibus. Coc.

In this sence, *Job* saith, that God visits man every morning, as a shepherd his flock, lest any should be hurt or straid, we may apply it, as before in the several sences of visitation, either to Gods visiting of us in afflictions, or in mercies, he afflicts (if he pleases) continually, speedily, certainly. And as sure as the Sun riseth, and the morning cometh, so sure God visiteth his with mercies; therefore his mercies are said *to be renewed every morning*, Lam. 3. 23. or fresh every morning. Unless God bring new mercies every day, the old would not serve: we cannot bring the mercies of one day over to another. The mercies of a former day will not support us the next, therefore they must come every morning; *sufficient for the day, is the evil thereof*, Matth. 6. and, but sufficient for the day, is the good thereof. As we are therefore commanded to pray every day for our dayly bread: the bread you had the last day, will not serve this day, you must pray for the bread of this day, and for a blessing upon it, that God would visit your bread, and your store in mercy. So if need require, God afflicts every day: And the hearts of some men want as much the rod every day, as bread every day; they could not be without affliction every day, to keep them in order, and *God will be as careful to correct his children, as to feed them.* If a man be watchful over his own wayes, and the dealings of God with him, there is seldom a day, but he may find some rod of affliction upon him: But, as through want of care and watchfulness, we lose the sight of many mercies, so we do of many afflictions. Though God doth not every day bring a man to his bed, and break his bones, yet we seldom, if at all, pass a day without some rebuke and chastning, *Psal.* 73. 14. *I have been chastned every morning*, saith the Psalmist: Our lives are full of afflictions; and it is as great a part of a Christians skill to know afflictions, as to know mercies; to know when God smites, as to know when he girds us; and it is our sin to overlook afflictions, as well as to overlook mercies.

Secondly, Take the word as it imports care and inspection: Then Observe,

The care of God is renewed every morning.

The eye of God is alway upon us: *He visiteth so as he telleth all our steps, he tells our very wandrings*: he visiteth us so, that we can turn no way but he is with us; his eye of inspection, as a Tutor, as a guide, is ever upon us; he looks to his people as a shepherd to his flock, who knows their wandrings.

And try him every Moment.

בחן *Periculum fecit, experitus est, tentavit. αὐτὸν κρινεῖ.* Sept.

It is of the same sence with the former. [Try him.] The word signifies an exact and thorough trial: Some take it to be an allusion to the practise of those who set the watch in Armies or Garison Towns; who lest their Centinels or Watchmen should sleep, use to come suddenly upon them (possibly) divers times in a night, to try whether they are faithful and wakeful; The Prophet *Isaiah* hints at such a custom (*Chap.* 21.) The watchman is set, *v.* 6. *Go set a watchman, let him declare what he seeth*: The watchman is tryed, *v.* 11. *He calleth to me out of Seir, watchman what of the night? Watchman what of the night?* And it is observed in Forraign parts, that their watchmen in Frontier Towns are tryed every hour of the night, the token being, their giving so many tolls with the Bell hanging in their Watch-tower, as the great City-clock strikes. This is a good sence of the place, the Lord visits us every morning, and tryes us every moment, that is, very, very often, as often as may be, to see whether we keep our watches, and stand duly upon our guard.

But secondly, It may note a trial, as a Schollar is tried, by examination: We call it *Probation day*, when the proficiency of Schollars is examined; God cometh to examine and make probation of mens proficiency; what have you gotten? How have you improved such times, such opportunities for the gaining of spiritual knowledge? What have you learned, what know you more of your selves? What more of God and Jesus Christ, whom to know is eternal life?

1. κρίμα. 2. πειρασ. 3. πάθημα.

Thirdly, It may note tryal by affliction: There are three words which signifie the troubles which God brings upon man: They are, First, strictly, Judgments which he sends in wrath upon enemies: Secondly, Chastisements, and corrections: Thirdly, Temptations or tryals: these are proper to his children. Hence Observe,

Afflictions are tryals.

The Lord proves what grace there is in the heart, and he tries what corruption there is in the heart by affliction. There are many graces in the heart of man untried, and there are some that cannot be tried, till God bring him to an hour of trouble. There are many corruptions in the heart of man which he takes no notice of, nor can till he is afflicted; many a good soul would not believe that he had such an unbelieving heart, such a proud heart, till God tried him and then corruption discovered it self. The reason why God brought his people such away about in the wilderness, was (*Deut.* 8. 2.) *to prove them, to try them, to know what was in their heart.* God knows what is in the heart of man intuitively, and he needs not go about; he can go the neerest way into every mans heart; he proves it only to make it known to others, and to make a man know himself. They could not think their hearts were so rebellious, so full of murmuring and unbelief, if God had not taken them about to prove and try them those forty years.

Prosperity and comforts are trials too: whatsoever God doth with a man, he some way or other tries him. Look not only upon your afflictions as trials, your mercies also are trials: God gives you them to see what you will do with them; he gives riches, and honour, and credit, to see how men will use and improve them: as by afflictions, so by outward comforts he tries both what grace and what corruption is in our hearts. He gives comforts, to see how we can live upon God in Christ, when we have the creature: and that we may shew how much we make of him, without whom we cannot live, when we have all things besides him. Prosperity tries corruption, then pride and creature-confidence break forth, which before were undiscerned: We say, *Magistracy shews a man*, nature when it is exalted shews it self, as much as when it is vext.

לרגעים *ad momentas*

He trieth every moment.] A moment is the least part and division of time: To *try every moment*, is to try not only frequently, but continually: Hence Observe,

The temper and state of mans heart is so various, that there needs new experiments of him every moment.

Why doth God try us every moment? Because we are one moment in one temper, and the next moment in another: The acting frame of a mans heart this hour, cannot be collected, from the frame it was in an hour before; therefore there is a continual trial. Some things if they be tried once, they are tried for ever; if we try gold, it will ever be as good as we found it, unless we alter it: as we try it to be, so it continues to be. But try the heart of man this day, and come again the next and you may find it in a different condition; to day believing, to morrow unbelieving; to day humble, to morrow proud; to day meek, to morrow passionate; to day lively and enlarged, to morrow dead and straightned; pure gold to day, and to morrow exceeding drossy. As it is with the pulse of a sick man, it varieth every quarter of an hour, therefore the Physitian tries his pulse every time he comes, because his disease alters the state of his body: so it is with the distempered condition of mans spirit, God having tried our pulse, the state of our spirit, by crosses or by mercies this day, next day he tries us too, and the third day he tries us again, and so keeps us in continual trials, because we are in continual variations: That sickness, and disease within us, alters the state and condition of the soul every moment. Our comfort is, that God hath a time wherein he will set our souls up in such a frame, as he shall need to try us, but that once. Having set us up in a frame of glory, he shall not need to try our hearts for us, or to put us to the trial of our selves any more, we shall stand as he sets us up to all eternity.

I must yet come down from the thoughts of this blessed eternity, and shew you *Job* tired out with his time, and earnestly calling, but for a minutes respite from his pains and sorrows, in the voice of *vers.* 19.

Vers.

Verſ. 19. How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone, till I may ſwallow down my ſpittle.

In this verſe *Job* makes application of the two former to himſelf; as if he had ſaid, ſeeing man is a creature ſo weak and unworthy in himſelf, and I am ſuch among the reſt, why doeſt thou viſit me, and try me every moment? *How long ſhall it be ere thou depart from me?* or, *how long wilt thou not look away from me?*

שעה *Quando conſtruitur cum* אל *ſignificat aſpicere, reſpicere cum delectatione,* Gen. 4. 5. *ſed cum* מן *ſignificat avertere, recedere.*

The word under another conſtruction, ſignifies to look upon a man with reſpect and complacency. So *Geneſ.* 4. 5. *The Lord had reſpect unto,* or he looked graciouſly upon, *Abel and his offering.* But here to look away, and ſo *Iſa.* 22. 4. *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly.* And becauſe they who with-draw their eyes from us, are ready alſo to with-draw their preſence from us, therefore it ſignifies to depart. *How long wilt thou not depart from me,* &c.

But is this the voice of *Job?* Is he burthened with the preſence of God? Or doth he think the time long, till God be gone from him? The wicked *ſay unto God depart from us,* (Chap. 21. 14.) And the Lord threatens this as the ſoreſt judgment againſt his own people, *Jerem.* 6. 8. *Be inſtructed O* Jeruſalem, *leſt my ſoul depart from thee;* And by the Prophet *Hoſea* (*Chap.* 9. 12.) *Wo alſo unto them, when I depart from them.* The promiſe of ſtrongeſt conſolation to the Saints, is this, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee,* Heb. 13. 5. And the very offer of a departure, did ſo afflict *Moſes,* that he was ready to throw up all. *Lord, if thy preſence go not along with us, carry us no further* (Exod. 23. 15.) How earneſtly do the ſervants of God deprecate the hiding of his face, how bitterly have they complained upon thoſe hidings: how importunately have they prayed, that he would return, look on them, behold them, cauſe his face to ſhine, and lift up the light of his countenance upon them? And is *Job* ſo weary of Gods company, that he begs of him to depart? Is this the voice of *Job?* Will a man that is in darkneſs, bid the Sun go from him? Or will a man that is thirſty, ſay to a fountain, turn away from me?

I anſwer, the Lords preſence may be conſidered two wayes.

Firſt, As his pleaſed comforting preſence.

Secondly, As his angry afflicting preſence. When *Job* ſaith, How long, wilt thou not depart from me? His meaning is, How long, wilt thou not with-draw thine afflicting hand from me? We may expound it by that of *David,* Pſal. 39. 10. *Remove thy ſtroke away from me, I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand.* Hence ſome tranſlate, *How long doeſt thou not ſpare me?* And another gloſſes, *Turn thine anger away from me.* Or as himſelf ſpeaks of a third perſon (*Chap.* 14. 6.) *Turn from him, that he may reſt, till he ſhall accompliſh, as a hireling his dayes.* This ſence is given us fully in the next clauſe of the verſe.

Uſquequò non parcis mihi. Vulg. *Iram aliò converte.* Jun.

Nor let me alone, till I may ſwallow down my ſpittle.

Accipienda ſunt hæc de Deo affligente non providente, & curante.

This is not a refuſal of ſupport from God in the way of his providence, by which he upholds every creature: For the truth is, if God ſhould ſo let us alone, we of our ſelves are not able to ſwallow down our ſpittle. We are inſufficient barely of our ſelves, not only for ſpiritual acts, but alſo for natural. We can, not only not pray, and hear, and believe, and repent without the ſtrength of Chriſt, but we cannot go, nor walk, nor eat, nor drink, nor ſpit, nor ſwallow down our ſpittle without an aſſiſtance (ſutable to thoſe acts) from him, for *in him we live, and move, and have our being.* This letting alone, is like the departing before ſpoken, in the firſt clauſe of the verſe. As we uſe to ſay to a man aſſaulting or ſmiting us, *Pray let me alone;* Such is *Job's* meaning, pray give over theſe bitter chaſtenings, leave off to wound or ſmite me any more.

רפה *Dimittere illud quod tenet ligatum, laxare dolores, diſſolvere funiculos cruciatuum.*

The word ſignifies to looſen or unty that which is bound or ſtraightned, and ſo to deal more gently and tenderly then before. The word is uſed ſometimes in a good ſence, to note, that the Lord keeps cloſe and ſtraight to his people, as being knit and bound to them by the tie and knot of his own love and free-grace (*Joſh.* 1. 5.) *I will never leave thee,* or let thee looſe from me. And as it is applied in the negative to the cloſe-keeping of God to us in love; ſo in the affirmative, to our departure from God by unbelief, *Prov.* 24. 10. *If thou fainteſt in the day of adverſity,* or art looſned from God, by fear and want of faith, *thy ſtrength is ſmall.* If thou fainteſt thus in the time of ſtraights and poverty, it argues thou haſt a very ſtraight, narrow, poor ſpirit. That's the elegancy of the original.

Si remiſſus fuiſti in die anguſtiæ, anguſta fortitudo tua. Mont.

When *Job* deſires to be let alone or looſened, his meaning is, looſen the bonds of my affliction, take me off from the rack of theſe tortures and troubles. As we are girded with ſtrength, ſo alſo we are girded with weakneſs. *Job* ſpeaks of God in this word (*Chap.* 12. 21.) *He weakneth the ſtrength of the mighty*; The Hebrew is, he looſeth the girdle of the ſtrong. The ſame God, who looſeth the girdle of our ſtrength, looſeth the bands of our infirmity: and therefore *Job* prays, *O depart from me,* looſen me, let me alone, let me go. Hence Obſerve,

First, *The Lord can make his own preſence grievous to his own ſervants.*

In his preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at his right hand there are pleaſures for evermore (Pſal. 16.) Yet he can make his preſence to be the fulneſs of ſorrow, and give us pains with his right hand. As he can be to his people like a Sun to warm and comfort them, ſo like a fire to conſume and burn them; as like a ſhield to defend, ſo like a ſword to wound them. The Lord is a Sun and a ſhield (*Pſal.* 84. 11.) yea, and he is ſometime as a fire, and a ſword, even to thoſe who walk uprightly. *The ſinners in Sion are afraid, fearfulneſs hath ſurprized the hypocrites. Who among us ſhall dwell with devouring fire; who among us ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings:* That is, who ſhall be able to bear the diſpleaſed preſence of God, which makes him to ſinners as a devouring fire, *Iſa.* 33. 14. And thus the Saints in *Sion* are ſometimes afraid, and fearfulneſs ſurprizes the upright in heart: Even they cry out, how ſhall we dwell with this devouring fire, with this everlaſting burning? They eſpecially who have ſlighted the preſence of God, may quickly feel the burden of it. Not only do they ſo, who ſay formally and in plain terms, *depart from us*; but they alſo do it in a great meaſure, who do not prize the preſence of God, who do not welcom and entertain him in all his approaches to them. If a friend come to your houſe, and you will not look upon him, or ſpeak to him, you bid him be gone, and your ſilence interprets his non-acceptance with you. Then take heed of neglecting the comfortable and ſanctifying preſence of God, leaſt you fall ſpeedily into his afflicting preſence. The angry preſence of God is never ſo terrible to us, as it is after our undervaluings of his gracious preſence. Note,

Secondly, *If the preſence of God chaſtening, be ſo grievous, what will his preſence be puniſhing and tormenting.*

If afflictions which are but for trial, and are all ſteeped in love, be ſo grievous; what will thoſe terrors be, which are all ſteep'd in pure everlaſting wrath? If his chaſtnings be ſo intollerable to ſome of his deareſt friends, what will his revenges be to all his profeſſed enemies? Wicked men are now burdened with the preſence of God becauſe he is ſo holy; they ſay depart, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy law; but hereafter they ſhall find the preſence of God burdenſom to them, becauſe he is ſo juſt; O how will they cry out, *How long, ſhall not thy wrath depart from us! How long wilt thou be angry for ever, and ſhall thy jealouſie burn like fire for evermore?* Yes, that it ſhall, They who have ſo often ſaid in their hearts to God, *depart from us,* ſhall hear his voice ſaying unto them, *Depart from me ye curſed,* &c. Ye who have not loved my preſence, ſhall be baniſhed from it for ever. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *Troubleſom times are very tedious times to us.*

How long? The Pſalmiſt under ſome hidings and eccliples of divine favour, thought himſelf in an everlaſting night, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious,* &c. *Will the Lord caſt off for ever?* Pſal. 77. 8. Obſerve from the latter branch,

Fourthly, *That afflictions are bonds.*

First, They ſhould bind and hold us faſt from ſin, and to our good behaviour. It is better to be bound faſt with the cords of affliction, then to be looſe and at liberty in the wayes of ſin.

Secondly,

Secondly, They will bind us from taking in our worldly comforts; and sometimes they do (which they ought not) bind us from taking in spiritual comforts. Observe,

Fifthly, *That man cannot rescue himself out of the bands of affliction, till God please to loosen him.*

If he bind none can unty; if he imprison, none can set free; we cannot break his bands, nor cast away the cords of his afflictions from us. *He opens and no man shuts, he shuts and no man opens,* Revel. 3. 7. *Be ye not mockers,* saith the Prophet, *lest your bands be made strong* (Isa. 28. 22.) that is, stronger then they were. So I may say, be ye not strivers or struglers with God, for your bands are made strong. It is said, *Exod.* 4. 25, 26. That the Lord met *Moses* in the *Inn, and sought to kill him.* The Lord is never *to seek* to do what he pleases; but thus he speaks after the manner of men, who offer or assay at any business, *They seek to do it.* But *Zipporah* having circumcised her son, *He let* Moses *go.* It is this word, *He slacked or loosened,* having before as it were arrested and attached him, or clapt him in prison for making that great default, the neglect of circumcision.

Sometimes we find the Lord himself speaking, as if he were at the mercy or under the power of man, and therefore calling (in this word) to be loosened or let alone, *Deut.* 9. 14. *Let me alone that I may destroy them.* The prayer of faith is as a band upon Gods hand, holding him so fast, that he seems as one that cannot strike or destroy, till a *Moses* will give him leave by ceasing to pray unto him. To be sure we are at Gods mercy, and under his power so, that nothing but the prayer of faith can loosen us. And therefore *Job* doth not attempt to break the cords, or cut them asunder, nor seeks he to unty their knots, but desires God himself to do it, let me alone, loosen me: I will be a prisoner, till thou openest the door for my deliverance.

As *Jephtah's* daughter said to him (*Judg.* 11. 37.) when he had bound himself and her in the bands of a rash vow, *Let me alone for two months,* or loosen me from the engagement of my vow for two moneths, as if she had said, I will not loosen my self by a wilful refusal, but do thou give me a willing dispensation. So a godly man bespeaks the Lord in his streights, *Loosen me Lord.* Unless God be pleased to loosen him, he will be contented, and (when in a good frame of heart, and freeness of spirit) well-pleased with his bands. In some sence he speaks, as *Paul* and *Silas,* when they were in prison (*Act.* 16. 37.) *Let the Lord himself come and fetch us out.* That is, let us see such means of our enlargement and freedom from trouble, as may assure us that the Lord hath loosened and enlarged us. *A godly man had a thousand times rather be put into a prison by God, then put himself into a paradise.* He had rather be bound by Gods hand, then loosened by his own. That place touch'd before, may reach this sence (*Prov.* 24. 10.) *if thou faintest* (so we) or loosnest thy self in the day of adversity, *Thy strength is small*; that is, the strength of thy faith and patience is small. There is nothing discovers our weakness more then striving to break the cords of our afflictions. The stronger we are in faith, in love, in humility, the more quietly we lie bound. Faith seeks ease and release only in God: to say Lord loosen me is a duty, to loosen our selves is both our sin and our punishment.

Till I may swallow down my spittle.

רק *Saliva, undè quidã deducunt* Raca, Mat. 5. 22. *quod* κατάπτυστον *interpretantur, i. e. conspuendũ vel dignum qui conspuatur. Alii à* ריק *vacuus quasi cerebro vacuus & judicio carens.* Drus.

Some conceive, that from this Hebrew word (*Rak*) which we translate spittle, *Raca* is derived (*Matth.* 5. 22.) as if to call a man *Raca,* were as much as to say, he is worthy to be spit upon, or that one should spit in his face: though others spring that word from *Rik,* which signifies empty, as if it were as much to call a man an empty fellow, without wit or brains, or within one degree of a *fool,* which is the next word in *Matthew.*

But what is *Job's* intendment, in desiring God to let him alone, *Till he might swallow down his spittle.*

First, Some refer it to a bodily distemper, as if *Job* were troubled with a * squinsie or sore throat, which hindered the swallowing of his spittle.

* *Inter cætera mala Synanchen habuisse se perhibet.* Hieron.

Another takes it in a Philosophical notion; as if *Job* had said, Lord let me have some ease, that I may at least taste once more, what it is to live or how sweet life is. For that sence of taste works by the salival humor or spittle in the mouth, which mixing with the juyce or sap that is in meats, affects and delights the pallate. *Dimittet me, ut gustum aliquem hujus vitæ capiam.* Alber.

Thirdly, These words are taken as the description of a man ready to die, who is disabl'd either to swallow his spittle or to void it. As if he had said, I am now even at the point of death, let me alone a little; *David's* Prayer comes near this sence, *Psal.* 39. 13. *O spare me that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more.*

Fourthly, It may be taken proverbially, and that two wayes.

First, To note the shortest time, even so much as may serve a man to spit. As if he had said, O let me have a little intermission, a little respite; such is the sence of that phrase, *Chap.* 9. 18. *He will not suffer me to take my breath.* And the like are those used in some Countries, *I have not leisure or time to scratch my ear, or to pare my nails,* My sorrows know no interim: my feaver is one continued fit, I have no well dayes, no nor a good hour; therefore let me at least have so much time of ease, as I may swallow my spittle, let me have the shortest time, that I may once more know (though but for a moment) what it is to be without pain. To which interpretation that also subscribes, which makes these words to be *a circumlocution for silence.* For while a man is swallowing his spittle, his speech stops: he cannot bring up his words, and let down his spittle at the same time; so his meaning is, I am forced to complain continually, I would be silent and forbear speaking, but my grief will not suffer me. *Sermo proverbialis talis est, neq; ad sculpendas aures mihi otium est.* *Ne tantillũ quidem temporis est quo non tenter à te.* Con.

The second Proverbial understanding of the words, is that they import a very strict watch held upon another in all his motions: so that he cannot stir a finger, or move his tongue (silently) in his mouth un-observed. If I do but stir my tongue, to swallow my spittle (which is one of the most unperceivable acts of man) thou takest notice. O do not hold so strict a hand, and so curious an eye upon me. Let me have a little liberty, do not examine every failing, do not question me upon the least infirmity. *Elegans proverbialis loquutio ad denotandum diligentem in alium intuitum quo minimas in alio discernet actiones. Saliva fere imperceptibiliter absorbetur.*

From the former Proverbial exposition. Observe,

First, *Afflictions are continued upon some without any intermission.*

Job had not so much whole skin, as one might set a pin on, nor so much whole time, as a man might spit in. Every hour brought a wound with it, and the renewing of every moment, renewed his affliction. Observe,

Secondly, *A short refreshing may be a great mercy.*

Dives in Hell desires not a large draught, but a drop of water, which alas! could not have eased him so long, as a man is swallowing down his spittle. The eternity of pain in Hell shall not find so much abatement, as that either in time or in degree. Every affliction in this life, by how much it is with less intermission, by so much the more like it is to Hell; and every comfort by how much the more it is unbroken, and without stops, by so much it is the more like to Heaven. Consider then your mercies, who have un-interrupted mercies, dayes and years of ease, and not pained so long as a man is swallowing down his spittle: your mercies are like the glory and the joy of Heaven.

From the latter Proverbial exposition. Note,

That God observes the least, the most secret motions of man.

He tels our steps our wandrings; and those not only corporal, but moral and spiritual. He knows how many steps our hearts fetch every day, and how far they travel, *Thou hast searched and known me* (saith *David, Psal.* 139. 1, 2.) and this search is not made in the out-rooms only, but in the inner parlor and closest closets, *Thou understandest my thoughts,* and those (not only present, or produced, but to come and unborn) thou knowest them *a far off.* What can scape that eye, which a thought cannot? And he that sees man swallowing down his spittle, how shall not he both hear and see him, coughing up and spitting out the rottenness and corruption, the filth and flegme of his sinful heart?

VERS.

VERS. 20, 21.

I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men! why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf?

And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity? for now ſhall I ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, but I ſhall not be.

JOB having in the former part of this Chapter conteſted with his friends, and expoſtulated the matter with God; now turns himſelf into another poſture, even to humble his ſoul, and make confeſſion of his ſin. He had juſtified himſelf againſt the accuſations of men, but now he accuſes and judges himſelf in the preſence of God; He will a while forget his ſorrows, and bethink himſelf of his ſins, *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men!*

The words may be taken two wayes.

1. As a Confeſſion or a Prayer.
2. As a Conceſſion or a Grant.

I ſhall firſt open them under the notion of a repenting prayer and confeſſion of ſin.

I have ſinned. As if he had ſaid, Lord, if thou holdeſt me thus long upon the rack of this affliction, to gain a confeſſion of me, to make me confeſs, here I am ready to do it, I do it; *I have ſinned.*

חטא *Significat errare, aberrare, declinare, deflectere à via vel ſcopo.*

The word ſignifies to miſs the mark we aim at, or the way wherein we would walk. And ſo it is put ſtrictly for ſins of infirmity, when the purpoſe of a mans heart is (like the Archers, when he draws his Bow) to hit the white, or (like the honeſt travellers in his journey) to keep the right way, and yet he miſcarries, and is drawn aſide.

I have ſinned. But is this a ſufficient confeſſion? What! to ſay only in general, *I have ſinned.* Did not hard-hearted *Pharaoh* (Exod. 9. 25.) falſe-hearted *Saul* (1 Sam. 15. 24.) and traitor-*Judas* (Mat. 27. 4.) make as good a confeſſion as this. Every one of theſe ſaid *I have ſinned*; and what doth *Job* ſay more? It is ſurely no great coſt nor pain to ſinful nature, to bring up ſuch a confeſſion as this.

I anſwer, Firſt, A general confeſſion may be a ſound confeſſion: It is one thing not to expreſs particular ſins with the circumſtances of thoſe ſins, and another thing purpoſely to conceal them. I grant, *Implicit confeſſion may be as dangerous as implicit faith.* And to dig in the earth, and hide our ſins in the Napkin of our excuſes, is worſe then to hide our talents in the Napkin of our idleneſs: And as it is moſt dangerous knowingly to conceal ſin from God, ſo it is very dangerous to do it through ignorance and inadvertency; ſome confeſs ſin in general terms only, becauſe they know not what their ſins are, or have quite forgot them; as *Nebuchadnezzar* called the Aſtrologers, and Sorcerers, and *Chaldeans*, and told them he had dreamed a dream, but he could not tell what it was; *for the thing was gone from him*, Dan. 2. 5. Some ſuch there are, who can or will only ſay, *they have ſinned, they have ſinned*; but what, they cannot tell, or they do not remember, *Thoſe things are gone from them.* That which is written of the learned *Bellarmine*, a great Cardinal, and a champion for *auricular, particular confeſſion of ſin to man*, ſeems very ſtrange, that when he lay upon his death-bed, and the Prieſt, after the Popiſh manner, came to abſolve him, he had nothing to confeſs; at laſt he thought of ſome ſlight extravagancies of his youth, which was all he had to ſay of his own miſcarriages: We ſee a man may be a Scholar in all the knowledge of the world, of nature, and of Scripture, and yet not know his own heart, nor be ſtudied or read himſelf. He that is ſo in a ſpiritual notion, can never want particular matter in his moſt innocent dayes to confeſs before the Lord, and to ſhame himſelf for. What though he hath eſcaped the pollutions of the world, and is cleanſed from the filthineſs of the fleſh? yet he knows that ſtill in his fleſh there dwells no good thing, and that in his ſpirit, there are, at the leaſt, touches of many ſpiritual filthineſſes, as pride, unbelief, *&c.* beſides his great deficiencies in every duty, and in his love to Jeſus Chriſt, which is the ground of all. So then, in any of theſe ſences, to confeſs ſin only in general, is a ſinful confeſſion. And yet *Job* made a holy confeſſion here, and ſo did the Publican (*Luke* 18.) when he ſmote his breaſt, and ſaid only thus, *God be merciful to me a ſinner.*

For ſecondly, Though to ſpeak a general confeſſion, be an eaſie matter, and every mans work, yet to make a general confeſſion is a hard matter, a work beyond man. As no man (in a ſpiritual ſence) can ſay, *Jeſus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt* (1 Cor. 12. 3) ſo no man can ſay (in a holy manner) *I have ſinned, but by the holy Ghoſt*; good and bad, believers and unbelievers, ſpeak often the ſame good words, but they cannot ſpeak the ſame things, nor from the ſame principles; Nature ſpeaks in the one, in the other Grace. The one may ſay, very paſſionately, he hath ſinned, and ſometimes almoſt drown his words in tears; but the other ſaith repentingly, *I have ſinned*, and floods his heart with godly ſorrows.

Thirdly, To clear it yet more, the general confeſſions of the Saints have theſe four things in them.

Firſt, Beſides the fact, they acknowledge the blot, that there is much defilement and blackneſs in every ſin; that it is the only pollution and abaſement of the creature.

Secondly, They confeſs the fault, that they have done very ill in what they have done, and very fooliſhly, even like a beaſt that hath no underſtanding.

Thirdly, They confeſs a guilt contracted by what they have done, that their perſons might be laid liable to the ſentence of the Law for every ſuch act, if Chriſt had not taken away the curſe and condemning power of it. Confeſſion of ſin (in the ſtrict nature of it) puts us into the hand of juſtice; though through the grace of the new covenant, it puts us into the hand of mercy.

Fourthly, Hence the Saints confeſs all the puniſhments threatned in the Book of God to be due to ſin; and are ready to acquit God, whatſoever he hath awarded againſt ſinners: *O Lord, righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee, but unto us confuſion of face, as at this day, to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem*, Dan. 9. 7.

And as in this confeſſion, for the matter, they acknowledge the blot, the fault, the guilt, the puniſhment of ſin; ſo for the manner (which ſets the difference yet wider between the general confeſſion of wicked and godly men) they confeſs,

Firſt, freely; Acknowledgments of ſin are not extorted by the pain and trouble which ſeizeth on them, as in *Pharaoh*, *Saul* and *Judas*. But when God gives them beſt dayes, they are ready to ſpeak worſt of themſelves; and when they receive moſt mercies from God, then God receives moſt and deepeſt acknowledgments of ſin from them. They are never ſo humbled in the ſight of ſin, as when they are moſt exalted in ſeeing the ſalvations of the Lord. The goodneſs of God leads them to this repentance, they are not driven to it by wrath and thunder.

Secondly, They confeſs feelingly; when they ſay they have ſinned, they know what they ſay. They taſte the bitterneſs of ſin, and groan under the burdenſomeneſs of it, as it paſſes out in confeſſion. A natural mans confeſſions run through him as water through a pipe, which leaves no impreſſion or ſcent there; nor do they (upon the matter) any more taſte what ſin is, then the pipe doth of what reliſh water is. Or if a natural man feels any thing in confeſſion, it is the evil of puniſhment feared, not the evil of his ſin committed.

Thirdly, They confeſs ſincerely; they mean what they ſay, and are in earneſt both with God and their own ſouls, *Bleſſed is the man in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile*, Pſal. 32. 2. The natural man caſts out his ſin by condition, as Seamen caſt their goods over-board in a ſtorm, which in the calm they wiſh for again. They ſo caſt out the evil ſpirit, that they are content to receive him again when he returns, though it be with ſeven worſe then himſelf. Even while they confeſs ſin with their lips, they keep it, like a ſweet bit, under their tongues, and wiſh it well enough, while they ſpeak it very ill.

Fourthly, They confeſs believingly; while they have an eye of ſorrow upon ſin, they have an eye of faith upon Chriſt: *Judas* ſaid he had ſinned in betraying innocent blood (*Mat.* 27. 4.) but inſtead of waſhing in that blood, he defiles himſelf with his own, he goes away and hangs himſelf. No wicked man in the world (continuing in that ſtate) did ever mix faith with his ſorrows, or believing

ing with confessing he had sinned. So much for the clearing of the words, and the sence of this general confession.

Hence observe, First, *While a godly man maintains his innocency, and justifies himself before man, he willingly acknowledges his infirmity, and judges himself before God.*

Job had spent much time in wiping off the aspersions cast upon him by his friends, but he charges himself with his failings in the sight of God.

Secondly observe, *God speaks better of his servants then they do of themselves.*

When God speaks of *Job*, we find not one blot in all his character, all is commendation, nothing of reproof. He saith (*c.* 1.21.) *In all this Job sinned not*; but for all that, *Job* saith, *I have sinned*: A hypocrite hath good thoughts of himself, and speaks himself fair; *He flatters himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful*, Psal. 36. 2. A godly man thinks and speaks low of himself, he accuses himself in his own eyes, though his integrity be found very acceptable with the Lord.

Thirdly observe, *The holiest man on earth hath cause to confess that he hath sinned.*

Confession is the duty of the best Christians. First, The highest form of believers in this life, is not above the actings of sin; though the lowest of believers is not under the power of it. And if the line of sinning be as long as the line of living, then the line of confessing must be of the same length with both. While the ship leaks, the pump must not stand still. And so long as we gather ill humors, there will be need of vomits and purgings.

Secondly, Confession is a soul-humbling duty, and the best have need of that, for they are in most danger of being lifted up above measure. To preserve us from those self-exaltations, the Lord sometimes sends the messenger of Satan to buffet us by temptations, and commands us to buffet our selves often by confession.

Thirdly, Confession affects the heart with sin, and engages the heart against it. Every confession of the evil we do, is a new obligation not to do it any more. The best in their worst part, have so much freedom to sin, that they have need enough to be bound from it in variety of bonds.

Fourthly, Confession of sin shews us more clearly our need of mercy, and endears it more to us. How good and sweet is mercy to a soul that hath tasted how evil and how bitter a thing it is to sin against the Lord? How welcome, how beautiful is a pardon, when we have been viewing the ugliness of our own guilt?

Fifthly, Confession of sin advances Christ in our hearts. How doth it declare the riches of Christ, when we are not afraid to tell him what infinite sums of debt we are in, which he only, and he easily can discharge? How doth it commend the healing virtue of his blood, when we open to him such mortal wounds and sicknesses, which he only, and he easily can cure? Wo be to those who commit sin abundantly that grace may abound; but it is our duty to confess sin abundantly, that grace may abound.

Lastly, Though we need not confess sin at all to inform God: he knows our sins, though we will not make them known; and hath an eye to see, though we should not have a tongue to confess. Though (I say) we confess not to inform God what we are, or what we have done, yet we must confess to glorifie God. While we shame our selves, we honour him. *My son* (saith *Joshua* to *Achan*, *c.* 7. *v.* 19.) *give I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him.* Every attribute of God receives this gift of glory by mans confession. Justice is glorified, and mercy is glorified, patience is glorified, and holiness is glorified. Holiness is glorified in opposing sin, and patience in sparing the sinner; mercy is glorified in pardoning sin, and justice in receiving satisfaction at the hand of Christ for the pardon of it.

Fourthly observe, *Holy confession of sin, leads the way to gracious pardoning of sin.*

Job begins the next verse with a vehement prayer for pardon. *And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?* Sin concealed and kept close, grows upon us: And it grows three wayes. First, In the strength of it. Secondly, In the guilt of it. Thirdly, In the terror and vexation of it, *Psal.* 32. 3, 4. *When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long.* Confession is a means to obtain the abatement of sin in all three. The strength of it is weakned, the guilt removed, and the terrour overcome. Then hear the counsel of the Prophet (*Isa.* 43.26.) *declare that thou maist be justified.*

Thus far of the words as they are a confession of sin. I shall now handle them as they are a concession or a grant that he had sinned; and so the sence may be given thus; *I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee?* As if he had said, *Let it be granted, or suppose that I have sinned, and sinned as deeply as my friends have charged me; suppose I have been as wicked as they imagine, what then? if this were my case, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?*

The latter words plainly import a question, *What shall I do unto thee?* But the sence of the question is not so plain: The question may be taken two wayes; either affirmatively, or negatively. Take it affirmatively, and so the sence is, *What shall I do?* that is, Lord direct me, counsel me, order me, teach me what becomes me to do in such a case, in such a sinful condition as I either confess my self to be in, or am supposed to be in. That's the affirmative sence.

What shall I do?] The word which we translate [do] signifies working or doing, under a twofold qualification.

First, Working with great willingness and readiness of mind; and hence it is applied to the workings of sin in natural men, who work with the greatest freedom that can be. Man sins naturally, and therefore freely; he is carried on with a full swing, with tide and wind; he sins, nothing in himself contradicting or giving a contrary vote; he is a true worker of iniquity, *Psal.* 5. 5.

Secondly, Working with energie and success, and the doing of a thing not only effectually, but willingly, *Num.* 23.23. *What hath God wrought?* When God works, he works throughly, he doth not his business to halves. So, *Isa.* 26. 12. *Thou hast wrought all our works in us*, that is, thou hast brought them to pass, they have succeeded through thy help, and the influences of thy blessing.

The word being taken in this height of sence, and the question for an affirmation, *what shall I do?* that is, shew me, direct me what to do; we may observe from it,

First, That, *What to do in case of sin, is a point of the highest consideration.*

I have sinned, what shall I do? If ever we have need to go and ask counsel, to sit down and debate the matter with our selves or others, it is, when we have sinned. Such is the nature of sin, and such the consequences, that it calls us to highest consideration what to do about it. Matters of great consequence are matters of great consultation: Sin hath an influence upon an eternity. If any thing be more worthy your thoughts then that, let it have them.

Secondly, Look upon the question as following *Job's* confession: Whence observe,

That, *Sincere confession of sin, makes the soul very active and inquisitive about the remedies of sin.*

I have sinned; The very next word is, *What shall I do?* Many make confession of sin, who are never troubled about the cure and redress of sin; *Lord, what shall* I *do?* is not the next question to *Lord, I have sinned.* Nay, it may be, the next action is to sin over the same sin they have confest. As soon as those *Jews* heard of the foulness of their sin in crucifying Christ, and of the sadness of their condition their question is like this of *Job*, *What shall we do? What shall we do that we may be saved?* As Christ speaks to the woman of *Samaria* (*John* 4. 10.) when he offered her the water of life, *If thou didst know the gift of God, and who it is that speaks unto thee, thou wouldest have asked*, &c. That is, if thou wert sensible of the excellency and virtue of this water, and thy need of it, thou wouldest be very inquisitive how to get it, how to have a taste of it. As in regard of Christ, and the benefits we have by him, so of sin and the evils which come by it: When a man hath confest and acknowledged his sin, we may say to him, if thou didst but know what thou hast confest, if thou didst but know what thou hast acknowledged, thou wouldest presently be asking, how shall I get free? how shall I get clear of

these

אעשה
A radice Pagnal, *respondet Graco*, ἐργάζομαι, *est agere cum energia & effectu.* Pisc.

these sins which are so deadly, poysonous, destroying and condemning? He that is but sensible what the wound of sin is, will never be at rest, never give over enquiring, till he hath found a plaister or a medicine for it. He that knows what he saith, when he saith *I have sinned*, will resolve as *David* in another case, that his eyes shall not have a wink of sleep till he sees where to have help against it.

Thirdly, In that he saith, *what shall I do?* observe,

That, *A soul truly sensible of sin, is ready to submit to any terms which God shall put upon him.*

What shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? Put what terms thou wilt upon me, I am ready to accept them. That was the sence of their question (*Acts* 2. 32.) *What shall we do?* shew us the way, let it be what it will, we will not stand making of conditions, we will not pick and chuse, this we will do, and that we will not do; this we will submit unto, and that we will refuse; no, let the Lord write what Articles he pleases, we intend not to debate, but yield and subscribe unto them. When the Jaylor found himself in the bonds of his iniquity, he was ready to enter into any bonds of duty, *Acts* 16. 30. *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

Lastly, From the question in the affirmative, observe,

That, *God is to be consulted and enquired after in all doubtful cases, especially in our sin-cases.*

I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? He calls upon God to know what he should do, and to learn what course he should take. Though, when we have opportunity to speak to men, that's good and a duty; yet we must not rest in the counsels of men, what to do in sin-cases: God must be consulted. After the people had committed Idolatry in making the Calf, *you have sinned* (saith *Moses*) *and now I will go up unto the Lord, that I may make an atonement for you*: I will go up to the Lord, that I may understand from him what course to take for the removing of this sin. Though we have not such a Mount to go up unto as *Moses* then had, to speak to God; yet there are wayes for the soul in all sin-cases, to make addresses unto God: A sinner may say, I will go to the Lord, and make my atonement; whatsoever advice and direction we receive from men, we must enquire whether it be an advice and counsel established in heaven. And the reason is clear, God is the person offended in every sin, and therefore he must be consulted about the remedy of sin. Again, God only can resolve us what will please him; we may pitch upon a wrong course, and take a wrong way; we, in stead of pacifying God, may provoke him; in stead of satisfying, further displease him: therefore we must say, when we have sinned, Lord, what wilt thou have us to do? His advice will lead us to Christ for ease and peace.

So far for the question taken in the affirmative sence, *What shall I do unto thee?* shew me what I shall do, and I will readily submit unto it.

Secondly, Take the question negatively, *What shall I do unto thee?* And so I find two sences of it.

Quid tibi nocui, aut quid te læsi? Olymp.

First, Some render it thus, *What have I done against thee?* And then the meaning is this, I have done nothing against thee, or I have not hurt thee by sinning: *What have I done against thee?* Wherein have I injured thee, that thou layest thy hand thus severely upon me in these grievous afflictions, both upon my soul and body? I am hurt, what have I hurt thee? There is a truth in this, though I take it not for the truth of this place. A man when he saith he hath sinned, what hurt have I done unto God? and yet all the hurt and wrong which God receives, he receives by sin. Our sins are no hurt unto God, by abating any thing of his happiness or fulness, or intrinsecal essential honour; take it thus, and our sins cannot hurt God: All the darts of our sins fall infinitely short of God, they cannot reach him, so as to annoy him. And we have that language expresly in *Job* 35. 6. *If thou dost sin, what dost thou against him?* (that is, thou dost nothing against God, as a real dammage to him) *or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him?* Sin as many sins as you can, you cannot impair the happiness of God, or diminish his greatness; he is out of the reach of the creature in that sence. As on the other side, if a man be never so holy and good, or do never so many acts of righteousness, yet God hath no good or gain by it; we cannot advantage God by our holiness, and that is the language of this Scripture too, *Job* 35. 7. *If thou be righteous, what giveſt thou him, or what receiveth he of thine hand?* We make no addition to the happiness of God by all our holiness, *Job* 22. 3. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or any gain unto him that thou makest thy wayes perfect? That which is infinite cannot encrease, neither can it be encreased.* God is above all gain and loss, above all accesses of pleasure and pain. When the Scripture saith, he is delighted in the services of his Saints, and takes pleasure in his people, we must understand them in the same sence as those Scriptures, which describe him displeased with the sins of men, angry and grieved, because of their provocations. All the motions of Gods delight or grief, pleasedness or displeasure, are only expressions towards the creature, not any impressions upon himself. But I shall let that sence pass.

Secondly, In the negative, take the question thus, *what shall I do unto thee?* Or, as the Septuagint reads it, *what can I do unto thee?* That is, I can do nothing to thee. Lord, I have sinned, and if thou seekest for satisfaction at my hands, I am able to make none. And so he speaks like a poor, undone, broken man to his rich Creditor arresting him for a debt which he is unable to pay. The poor man falls down at his feet, and saith, Sir I confess I owe you a great Sum, you have my Bonds, I confess my Hand and Seal, but what shall I do unto you? I cannot pay you a penny, I have nothing, I have lost all, I am not worth a groat, what will you have of me? This sounds such a kind of melting pitiful language, *I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?* Lord, when I look into my stock, into my treasure and revenues, I see I have nothing to satisfie this debt of sin I have run in and stand engaged to thy Majesty for; what can I pay thee? and so the word [*do*] signifies a retribution or recompence; so it is used in the second verse of this Chapter, where he speaks of the hireling, waiting for his work, that is, for the reward or recompence of his work, the payment of his wages. What shall I do? is as much as, what shall I pay, or, what shall I render? This is a due debt, but I have nothing to pay, no way of making satisfaction for all the dammage I have put thy holy Majesty to by my sins.

Εἰ ἐγω ἥμαρτον τί δυνήσομαι σοὶ ποιῆσαι. Sept.

Or thus, there may be a threefold negation in the Question, *What shall I do unto thee?*

First, I can do nothing to escape thy power. I cannot get away from thee, I cannot rescue my self from under thy hand.

Secondly, I can do nothing to satisfie thy Justice.

Thirdly, I can do nothing to pacifie thine anger. I cannot only not pay the debt, but I cannot appease thee, or turn away thy displeasure in the least degree.

From the Question taken in this sence, we may observe,

First, That, *The holiest man on the earth by all his sufferings and doings, cannot satisfie the justice of God for one sin. I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee?*

When the Angels had sinned, what could they do unto God in this respect? These three negations lay upon them, and do lie to this day, and shall to all eternity. They sinned but once, yet could they not escape out of the hand of God. Though Spirits and Powers, yet they could not maintain their state against the power of God, and are therefore cast into prison, and *reserved in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day.* They could not pacifie the wrath of God towards them, God is as highly displeased, and his wrath burns as hot against them as ever. Now if sinning Angels could do nothing to God, what can sinful man do? The Question is put, *Micah* 6. 6. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord? and bow my self before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oyl? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?* These Questions are denials; come not before God with any of these. Then what is it that God doth require? *He hath shewed thee what is good, to do judgment and righteousness, to walk humbly with thy God.* But why these things? What though I cannot make a price for my sin with calves and rams, and rivers of oil, though my children will not

Peccata nostra beatam illam naturam labefactare non possunt.

be accepted as a ransom for my transgressions, yet can I make a price for them out of justice and righteousness and humble walking? No, not out of these neither. The The Lord doth not require these for the payments of our debt, as we are sinners, but for the payment of duty, as we are creatures. There is a double debt to God; a debt to the justice of God for sins committed, and a debt to the Law of God for duties enjoyned. The former no man is able to pay but with eternal sufferings. The latter, the Saints (through grace) do pay by their daily holy actings.

There is a threefold deficiency in all that man can do, to satisfie the justice of God.

First, All is imperfect and defiled, our services smell of the vessel through which they pass, and taste of the cask into which they are put. There is a stamp of our sinfulness even upon our holy things. And can that which is sinful satisfie for sin?

Secondly, Whatsoever we do is a debt before we do it. All our duties are owing before we perform them. And can we pay the debt of sin by those duties which were due though sin had never been committed.

Thirdly, The greatest deficiency is this, our works want the stamp of Gods appointment for that purpose. *God hath no where set up mans righteousness, as satisfaction for mans unrighteousness.* Hence, if it should be supposed, we had performed perfect righteousness according to the whole will of God commanded, yet we could not satisfie the justice of God offended, unless God had said, that he would accept that way of satisfaction; it is the appointment and institution of God which renders what we do acceptable unto himself. Surely all that Jesus Christ did or suffered for us in the flesh, had not satisfied the justice of God, if God had not appointed that Christ should do and suffer those things for the satisfying of his iustice. It was the compact between Christ and his Father, which made him a Sacrifice, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire.* Sacrifices were refused by God, it being impossible that they should purge sin (*Heb.* 10. 4.) *Then the ear of Christ was opened or bored*, as a servant, according to the Law in that case, *Exod.* 21. 6. to receive and do the will of his Father. Or, as the *Seventy* interpret, which the Apostle follows, *God prepared him a body.* Then Christ undertakes the work; *And said, Lo I come to do thy will, O God. Why? In the Volume of the Book it is written of me.* That is, thou hast decreed and ordained from everlasting; the record is clear for it, that I am he whom thou hast ordained to do thy will. Hence the Apostle concludes at *ver.* 10, *That we are sanctified* (that is, saved) *by that will through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all*; as inferring, that the very offering of the body of Jesus Christ could not save us, but by the will and ordination of God. His hanging and dying on the Cross had not delivered us from death, unless it had been written in *the volume of the Book.* There is nothing satisfactory but what the Law, or the will of the Lawgiver makes or agrees to accept as satisfactory. In the volume of the Book there is nothing written which appoints man such a work, and therefore he cannot do it.

There is somewhat to be done by way of thankfulness, but nothing can be done by way of payment. That question (*Psal.* 116. 12.) affirms as much, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?* We must render unto the Lord for his benefits; but we cannot render to the Lord for our sins. We ought to take up the cup of thanksgiving; but Christ hath, and he alone was able, and he alone was ordained to take and drink the cup of satisfying.

Secondly, Observe (which depends upon the former.)

That, *Pardon and forgiveness of sin come in at the door of free-grace.*

Free grace doth all. *What can I do?* I can do nothing, *O thou preserver of men*; I can only (nor that without thy help) acknowledge my sin: it must be thine infinite goodness to pardon it. When a man hath travelled through all duties and doings, he must at last sit down in Gods love, and rest in this, that God is merciful to poor sinners, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Come unto me, O all ye that are thirsty, come without money or without price.* There is nothing in the creature that God requires as a price of his favour; his milk and his honey, his bread and his water, are all gifts and bounties unto his people. He calls us to buy these, because we shall have them as willingly from God, as any things from man for our money; and he calls it a buying without money, because no value can be set upon it high enough, nor any heart receive it freely enough. *To offer money*, that is, to think to obtain any of that favour by what we do, is the most dangerous offer in the world. We read how dreadful the issue was to *Simon Magus*, when he offered money *for the gifts of the Holy Ghost*, and yet those gifts were such, as a man man may have, and go to hell with them; for they were but gifts of miracles and of healing, and the like: But this gift of the favour and love of God in the pardon of sin, is such a gift, as whosoever hath it, is sure and safe for ever; and therefore (the gift being much more precious then that of *Simon Magus*) take heed of offering this kind of money for it, your works and doings. *To do so, is the worst Simonie in the world.* Better offer literal money for those gifts of the holy Ghost, then this figurative money for the favour of God in the pardon of sin. What *Peter* threatned *Simon Magus*, may be affirmed of them, *Their money must perish with them*, that is, their prayers and tears, their sorrows and their humblings, their almes and good deeds, forasmuch as they have thought that this gift of pardon may be obtained by such money, they have neither part nor lot in that mercy, for their hearts are not right in the sight of God. *A good work trusted to, is as mortal as a sin unrepented of.*

Again, There is somewhat to be done when we have sinned, but nothing to be paid. That's Gospel-language, when a man hath sinned, to say, *What shall I do?* Those Converts in the *Acts*, who enquired, *What shall we do?* were told by the Apostles of somewhat to be done; *Repent and be baptized, believe and thou shalt be saved.* These are wayes wherein salvation is tendered, not works for which it is bestowed. It is as dangerous an errour so to lift up the grace of God, as to deny the industry of man through Grace: and because he can do nothing by way of satisfaction, that therefore he must do nothing. The Apostles gave Gospel-counsel, yet when men asked them, *What shall we do to be saved?* They said not, ye must do nothing, God will save you by his free Grace; no, they called them to repent and believe, *&c.* Take heed, when ye have sinned, to say we need not mourn for sin, we need not be humbled, we need not repent; for, Lord, what can we do unto thee, O thou Saviour of men? These are the inferences of our own spirits, not of the Spirit of Christ. They who lift up the grace of Christ, to lessen the necessity of gracious actings in themselves, shew they know not the meaning of his Grace, and have not indeed tasted how gracious the Lord is. To deny our own righteousness, and to be very active in the wayes of righteousness, is the due *Gospel-temper.* The Apostle. *Phil.* 3. 8. *counts all things but loss and dung*; all duties and humblings, all legal righteousness and obedience; not that he refused righteousness, or neglected duties, but he would not mingle them with Christ, or bring them in as contributions to the purchase of blessedness. Our righteousness and holy duties are dung and dross in justification, but they are Gold and precious things in sanctification; without these we cannot walk worthy of our holy calling, or as it becomes the Gospel of Christ.

So much for these words, *What shall I do unto thee?*

O thou preserver of men!

Here is the compellation, or the title under which *Job* bespeaks the Lord (and it is a *royal one*) *The Preserver of men.* The word signifies both to preserve and to observe; and hence it is applied to our keeping the Law of God, *Psal.* 119. 22. *I have kept thy testimonies*, I have kept them by observation, that is, I have obeyed thy Commandments. The word is often applied to God, in reference to mans protection and preservation, *Deut.* 32. 10. *Moses* describes the care of God over his people *Israel*, *He found them in the wilderness* (as a people wandring and going astray) *and he kept them as the apple of his eye*, that is, he looked to them, and had a continual tender care over them. So, *Psal.* 17. 8. *Keep me as the apple of thine eye.*

נצר הארם Natsar *conservavit, observavit, custodivit, defendit, de qualibet custodia dicitur, & significat etiam seris vectibusque claudere, licet proprie custos.* שומר *dicitur, sed confundit scias.* Drus.

The

ὁ ἐπισκοπῶν τὸν νῦν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, qui perspectam habes mentē hominum. Sept.

The Septuagint render it, *O thou observer of men; What shall I do unto thee, O thou who art the observer and looker into the very hearts of men?* Lord, saith he, what wilt thou have me to do? Thou lookest quite through me, and seest all that is in me, I need not declare my self unto thee, thou knowest me altogether, *Thou who art the searcher of the heart, and the trier of the reins;* Thou who art a most vigilant watcher over all my wayes, what have I done or spoken, but thou knowest and canst easily observe. Thus *Job* speaks at *Chap.* 14. *vers.* 16. *Thou numberest my steps:* A man observes another curiously, when he tells how many steps he treads, it is an expression, noting the exactest observation. *Salomon* joyns the Act of keeping with observing, *Prov.* 24. 12. *If thou sayest, Behold, he knoweth it not* (this is the refutation of an Athiest) *Doth not he that pondereth the heart, consider it, and he that keepeth thy Soul, doth not he know?* He that preserveth us in our wayes, must needs see us in all our wayes.

Again, Preserving or keeping may be understood two wayes.

First, There is a preserving or keeping of Man, that he shall not escape. And,

Custos hominum, sc. qui hominem talibus malis quasi quadā custodia includit, ut non sit effugium.

Secondly, A preserving or keeping of Man, that he shall not take hurt. Some understand it in the first sence, *O thou preserver of men!* that is, *O thou, who art so strict a keeper and watcher over men, that they cannot escape thine hand.* A man is said to be in *safe custody*, when he is a prisoner, and so the sence is thus given, *Lord, thou hast me fast enough, I cannot break away from thee, I am lockt up within iron-gates and bars, what wouldst thou have me to do unto thee? Thou mayest put what conditions thou pleasest upon me, I must submit.* Such language we have (*Lam.* 3. 5, 7.) which may illustrate this. *He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travel, he hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out, he hath made my chain heavy.* You see he speaks of God (as we may speak with reverence) as of the Master of a Prison, who saith to his under Officers, there is such a one, look to him well, make his chain heavy, that he may not get away, put him in a place where there is a strong wall, least he break prison. This sence of the word makes *Job* speaking like *Jeremy*, *He hath builded against me, he hath compassed me about, he hath made my chain heavy upon me.*

But the second sence, according to the letter of our Translation, is most clear and apt, *O thou preserver of men!* Thou who keepest man, least he take hurt or fall into danger; As if *Job* had bespoke God thus, Thou art the Saviour and Protector of men, thou hast not only given man a being, but thou provideſt for his well being: thou art a preserver of our outward estates, and a preserver of our spiritual estates. A God in whom we live, move, and have our being, as well as we receive being, life and motion from thee; and therefore seeing such is thy nature, and this thy office, to be a preserver of men, what wouldst thou have me to do unto thee? Why dost thou thus destroy me, and break me to pieces? Why dost thou follow me with affliction upon affliction, till I am utterly ruin'd and undone? Thus *Jacob* (Gen. 28. 15.) *If thou wilt keep me in the way that I shall go*; he makes a vow to God, and indents or articles with God to be kept and preserved by him. The word there is *Shomer*, but that and this are used promiscuously, as *Psalm* 121. 4. *The keeper of Israel.* In the word of the Text, and *Psalm* 31. 23. *The Lord preserveth the faithful*; he preserveth them from the reach of dangers and troubles, incompassing them on every side.

So then in this title, we have the work and office of God held forth, the second act of his power. The first is the act of Creation, the second is this act of Preservation or providence. Preservation or providence is a continued Creation. Observe from this title,

First, *Man wants a preserver.*

If God having made man, and set him in the world, had left him to his own keeping, what would become of him? When God trusted man to go a little alone, and did not hold a special hand of preservation over him, to keep him from, or in temptation, how quickly did he fall and lose himself? Man like a little child (which if the mother or the nurse leaveth alone unwatched or uneyed) runs into dangers and deaths every moment. Man is a weak creature, therefore he needs a preserver. Again, man (as fallen especially) is a fooliſh creature, he hath no understanding to guide himself, he is as ignorant as a child (if God leave him) how to dispose of his own wayes, and order his goings; *The way of man is not in himself, neither is it in him that goeth to direct his own steps.*

Lastly, Man walks in the midst of enemies. He is beset with dangers, therefore he needs a Protector; what would become of a man, living in a throng of adversaries, were it not that he hath a God, whose Name is, *the Preserver of men?*

It is good for us to know God by this Name in every letter of it, in the full extent of it.

Mirus sanè Dei amor in populū suū, mira providentia Sanct. in Zech. 2.

First, Immediately, his own hand and out-stretched arm is our safety, *Zech.* 2. 5. *I will be unto* Jerusalem *a wall of fire round about*; If you want a wall, I will be your wall, my immediate providence shall be your defence, rather then you shall not be defended. *Is my strength the strength of stones, or is my flesh brass?* Was *Job's* question, *Chap.* 6. 12. We may resolve it, the strength of God is more then the strength of stones, and he, *The Spirit* is more firm then brass. The *Romans* in their Wars used to call out the *Tutelar gods* of those Cities they besieged, *&c.* as believing them a stronger defence to those places, then walls or forts. And yet our God is more then a wall of stone and brass, he promised to be a wall of fire. Now who can batter down a fire, that is it's own fewel, or who can set up ladders to scale the flames?

And as the Lord is a wall of fire, so a wall of water for the safety of his people, *Isa.* 33. 21. *There will I be a place of broad rivers, and of streams*; that is, I will be their preservation; the broad rivers preserves a place from the invasion of enemies: Waters are stronger then Bulwarks of stone. And least any should object, though broad rivers keep off Foot or Horse, yet they give advantage to Ships: therefore it is added, I will be such a river to thee, *as wherein shall go no Galley with Oars, neither shall gallant Ship pass thereby.* But if any shall venture their Navies upon these streams to thy annoiance, then know (as *vers.* 23. intimates) *Their tacklings shall be loosed; they shall not well strengthen their masts, they shall not spread their sails*; They shall be so ruffled and entangled, *that the lame shall take the prey*, that is, the weakest resistance shall subdue them and make prize of their whole Fleet, even of their Invincible Armado's. *I love the Lord my strength, my rock, my tower, my fortress, my buckler, the horn of my salvation*; *Psal.* 18. 1, 2. all these titles meet in this one, *The preserver of men.*

Secondly, God is a preserver of men mediately by instruments: he preserves man by man, and man sometimes by the beasts of the Earth, and fowls of the Air, but chiefly he preserveth men by Angels; *Are they not ministring spirits, sent out for the good of those that shall be heirs of salvation?* (Psal. 91.) *He shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy wayes; they shall bear thee up in thy wayes, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* A promise so full of sweetness for faith to feed on, that the Devil hath no way to elude it, but by tempting us (as he did Christ) to over act it, and surfet faith into a presumption, by a wilful needless throwing our selves into danger.

And there is a necessity that God himself should thus take upon him the preservation of men: This necessity is three-fold.

First, None are strong enough to preserve us without him, our enemies would break through all strength below God: so that, if he were not our preserver, none could: *In vain is salvation hoped for from hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of* Israel, *Jer.* 2.

Secondly, None are wise enough to preserve us, except the Lord. As evil spirits are *powers*, for strength; so likewise *Serpents*, for policy and craft; this craft of Hell cannot be discovered, much less disappointed, without wisdom from Heaven.

Thirdly, None but God are patient enough to be the preservers of men, I believe if the Angels left to their natural temper, were set to be keepers of men, they had all given over this charge long before this time; as it is supposed, they who fell refused to undertake, or take it up at first: Angels have not the patience to keep such a froward piece

as man. It is a wonder God doth not give over that care, and in ſtead of preſerving, daſh him in pieces. When the Lord told *Moſes, he would ſend an Angel before him, and drive out the Canaanite* (Exod. 34. 2.) *For I will not go up in the midſt of thee, for thou art a ſtiff necked people leſt I conſume thee in the way.* The Text ſaith, *when the people heard this evil tidings, they mourned, and no man did put upon him his Ornaments.* Why what was it that troubled them? Was it that the Angel is ſent now to conduct them to *Canaan?* That was told them (*Chap.* 23. 20.) and they well ſatisfied with it, *Behold, I ſend an Angel before to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.* I anſwer, the Angel in *Chap.* 23. is by all (that I meet with) agreed to be the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the great Angel of the Covenant; but the Angel, *Chap.* 33. appears to be a created Angel, and rather threatned them then promiſed them. And though the Lord is pleaſed to ſignifie a reaſon of ſending this Angel in favour to them, namely, leſt *He himſelf conſume them in the way for their ſtubbornneſs.* Yet the people are not ſatisfied with this tidings; ſurely they thought if the Lord was not able to bear their provocations, much leſs could an Angel; and therefore if he ſhould ſend an Angel, and withdraw his own preſence from them, they muſt periſh; A mere Angel could not have bore their manners as the Lord did; receiving provocations from them, and continuing preſervations over them this fourty years.

It is yet further obſervable, that the Hebrew is not only ſingular, but a particular: *The preſerver of Adam*, or of *that man*, which hath ſome ſpeciality in it: We tranſlate in general, *the preſerver of men*, but the *preſerver of man*, or of *that man*, is more emphatical. God preſerveth all, but he hath a ſpecial eye of preſervation upon ſome, *Thou preſerveſt Man and Beaſt*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt; the beaſts of the earth are preſerved, but man is preſerved more: And among men, ſome are more preſerved. It is a truth, the great God preſerveth his greateſt enemies: a wicked man were not able to lift up a hand or a tongue againſt him, if God did not uphold him: but God is the ſpecial preſerver of *that man*, that is, the preſerver of *a godly Man*, or of godly Men. As Chriſt is *the Saviour of all Men, but eſpecially of thoſe that believe*; *ſo the Preſerver of all Men, but eſpecially of thoſe that believe*; he hath a care of them, beyond the care he hath of the world. The care which God hath of the reſt of the world, compared with that towards his own, is but careleſneſs, and he as it were neglects the whole world to look to his own People. As it was ſaid of *Conſtantine*, that for the love he bare to *Conſtantinople*, he undreſſed and unadorned all the other Cities of the Empire, to beautifie and adorn that: God ſeems to take off from all men in the world to lay it on upon his people; the very gleanings of thoſe mercies which his people have, are better then the whole vintage of the world: And the Lord is therefore a ſpecial Saviour to his people, becauſe,

Firſt, They are more precious then the reſt of the world: and that calls for moſt care, which hath moſt worth. A man takes more care of his jewels, then of the lumber in his houſe; *Theſe are my Jewels*, ſaith God (*Mal.* 3.) A man carries his jewels about him, or keeps them in a ſafe cabinet.

Secondly, Nearneſs of relation calls for that care; will not a man preſerve his Wife, his Spouſe? The Church is the Spouſe of Chriſt. Will not a man preſerve his Children? If his houſe be on fire, bring my Children out ſaith he: The heart of God is towards his Children, he muſt provide them a portion. Yea they are his portion, he makes a revenew of them (*Deut.* 32. 9.) A man will preſerve his revenew, that wherein his eſtate lies: All that God hath on earth (though he hath ſuch a fulneſs in himſelf, that he needs nothing from his Church, yet, all that he hath) he is pleaſed to ſay, he hath it from his Church: and therefore God is ſaid to be *great in Zion*; he is the ſame great God all the world over, but it appears not ſo, what he is to the men of the world, as to the Saints in *Zion* it doth: yea he is little in the eye of the world, in compariſon of what he is in *Zion*, therefore he takes great care to preſerve his *Zion*. Obſerve,

Laſtly, *The preſerving care of God over man, eſpecially over that man, over his own people, is a perpetual care.*

Preſervation is a continued act, if God ſhould leave us one moment, and ſtop providence, Creation would be diſſolved: This continuance of his care, is eminent towards his Church; *Iſa.* 27. 3. *Leſt any hurt it, I will keep it night and day.* Night and day divide all time between them: to do a thing night and day, is to do it continually, *Pſal.* 121. 4. *He that keepeth* Iſrael, *neither ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth.* A ſlumber is leſs then ſleep; but God will not ſo much as ſlumber in his thoughts towards as, all his are waking thoughts. Further, his love is without intermiſſion, that knows no ſtops nor breaches, therefore his care is ſo too. His peoples dangers are without intermiſſion, therefore his preſevation is ſo too. Enemies oppoſe his people without intermiſſion, therefore he protects them ſo too. *The Devil goeth about like a roaring lion*, he is ever in motion, *he goeth about* as an *Abaddon* or *Appollyon*, the deſtroyer and devourer of men: The care of Chriſt prompts him to a like vigilancy, *He goeth about preſerving*; his act of preſervation runs parallel with that of the enemies oppoſition: God watches that his people may have ſome quiet reſt and ſleep. As the ſtory reports of *Alexander the Great*, that he told his Souldiers, *I watch more then any of you all, that you may ſometimes have quiet ſleep:* his care diſpenſed with ſome of their careleſneſs. It is moſt true of God, he wakes for ever, and he watches for ever, to preſerve us that we may ſleep in quietneſs and confidence. *Solomon* reproves ſome ſecure ones, who are as they, *who ſleep on the top of the maſt* (Prov. 23.) But the Saints may ſleep (in regard of fear, though not of indeavour) on the top of the maſt, while they remember that both the helm and the winds are in Gods hands. As our ſpiritual eſtates, ſo our temporal are kept (as with a garriſon in their degree) by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation. So much for the Title, *O thou preſerver of men.*

certo ſcio me plus vigilare quam vos, ut ipſi ſomnos quietos capere poſſitis. Arian. l. 8.

Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf?

Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?] The word ſignifies to meet one, to come the oppoſite way; Hence ſome tranſlate this, *why haſt thou ſet me contrary to thy ſelf?* Becauſe he that meets another, comes the contrary way, the way oppoſite to him: *why haſt thou put me as an object againſt thee?* or, *as an enemy to thee?* the object ſtands directly before us, and we deſire to have an enemy right before us. And the word may be taken ſimply for an enemy, or adverſary, who ſtands oppoſite to us, both in his actions and deſigns, and againſt whom we direct both ours. We render, *wherefore haſt thou ſet me as a mark?* And that ſuits the ſence of the word fully, becauſe a mark at which a man aims, is ſet in direct oppoſition to him; we level our arrows or bullets at the mark right before us: *Job* thought himſelf thus placed, *why haſt thou ſet me as a mark* to meet with, or intercept thy ſhot, thy arrows, thy bullets, thy blows upon my breaſt? Wilt thou make the boſom of thy ſervants, like the breaſt of an enemy, a *Butt* to receive all thy arrows? A mark is as a ſtanding enemy; and an enemy is a moving mark to ſhoot at: a mark is a liveleſs enemy, and an enemy is a living mark: his meaning then is, Thou haſt ſet me againſt thee, as if I were an enemy, as if I were one againſt whom thou reſolveſt to direct all thine arrows, and aim every ſtroak: ſo the word is uſed, *Judg.* 8. 21, where *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, two Kings taken captive by *Gideon*, ſaid to him, *riſe thou and fall upon us*; it is this word, ſet us before thee as a mark for thy victorious ſword: So the Prophet (*Amos* 5. 19.) tells us that a man in hopes to eſcape the hand of God, *ſhall be as if a man did flee from a Lion, and a Bear met him*, ſuch a man is but a mark for a Bear, who thinks to out-run this Lion. That expreſſion (1 *King.* 5. 4.) is very clear to this ſence, where the peace-fulneſs of *Solomons* reign is deſcribed, thus, *there was neither adverſary nor evil occurrent*; the word we tranſlate, *evil occurrent*, it is that in the Text, no evil met or befell them. So then the ſum of all is, That *Job* expoſtulates or complains before God, that he was as it were the man choſen out amongſt all the men in the world, to be as the mark and butt againſt which God ſhot his afflictions, and level'd all his arrows: As if he had ſaid, There are many more about me, and thou doeſt not ſo much as touch one of the hairs of their head, there are men that receive not ſo much as one ſhot from thee, but I

מפגע פנע *Occurrit, obviam factus fuit. Quare poſuiſti me contrariũ tibi.* Vulg. *In occurſum tibi.* Pagn. *Objectum tibi.* Tyg. *Offendiculũ in quem ſemper impingas* Vatab.

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am made thy standing mark, why is it thus Lord? So he expresseth himself in other words, but to this very sence, *Chap.*19 11. &. 13.24. *Wherefore holdest thou me for thine enemy?* Or (according to the Letter of the Hebrew) among those who straighten thee, as an enemy straightens a City, in the time of a siege; and this he doth to move God to pity and compassion; Lord, saith he, I am set as a mark against thee. You would be much moved (a tender heart would) to see a man bound fast to a post, and another standing off with his bow bent, and his arrow on the string, with his gun or pistol cock'd, aiming at his breast: *Job* presents himself in such a posture, as if the Lord had bound him fast to a post or to a tree, and were pouring vollies of shot, and sending showers of arrows upon him continually.

Observe, First, The manner of the language, which is by way of a vehement question, or expostulation, *Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee?*

Man is very inquisitive to know the reasons of Gods dealings with him.

That's one thing. And secondly, which is near the same

It is some satisfaction and ease to the mind smitten by the hand of God, to know the reason why he wounds, why he smites.

Why hast thou set me as a mark? As if he had said, if I could but learn this, and see the reason of it, surely I should receive thy wounds as kisses, and take thy stroaks as embraces. When *Gideon* saw so many evils and troubles upon *Israel*; *Judg.*6. and the Angel told him, *the Lord was with him*, Then *why is it thus* (saith he) Can you give me a reason, why God being with us, it is thus with us? *To know the reason of our pain, is a great ease, and almost the cure of it.* If the people of God did but know what infinite reason he hath (reason of the highest temperament of wisdom and goodness) why he layes affliction upon them, and makes them as his marks, they would be abundantly satisfied with it. What is the reason why the Saints coming out of great affliction, are willing to confess, *It is good for us that we were afflicted, and blessed be God that we were chastned.* It is, because then they see more clearly the reason why God afflicted them, and they then begin to taste the fruit of those afflictions. If while the affliction is upon us, we knew what good God meaneth us, what honour he intendeth us, we should bear it not only with courage and with patience, but with joy. If *Job* had been fully acquainted with this, that God therefore set him up as a mark to shoot at, that he might be to all the world a mirror of patience: that God intended him this honour, that his name should be upon record in his Book so long as there was a Church; surely he would have born all with more patience and ease then he did: But he was groping in the dark, and therefore enquires, *Wherefore hast thou set me as a mark against thee?* The words are not only, or not so much, an expostulation, because he was set as a mark, as an Inquisition, why he was set as a mark. Note,

Thirdly, *God sometimes seems an enemy to his faithful servants.*

For one to be before God as a Butt continually shot at, what other interpretation can sence make of it but this, that God looks upon him as an enemy? *Jacob* saith of *Joseph* (Gen. 49.23.) *the Archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him.* *Joseph* was as the common mark of his brethrens envy. But in this case, as it is said of *Joseph* (Gen. 42.) when his brethren came to him, *He made himself strange to them.* (*Joseph* strained himself, and used his Art, to overcome his nature, *He made himself strange: Joseph* was of a meek and loving disposition, and therefore like a Player upon a stage, he only acted the part of a rigid master or governor.) Thus many times the Lord takes upon him the posture of an enemy, and forces a frown upon a poor creature, whom he loves and delights in with all his heart; he makes him as his mark to shoot at, whom he layes next his own heart. Thus the Church speaks, *Lam.* 3. 12. *He hath bent his bow, and set me as a mark for his arrows*; And (*Job* 16. 13.) that you may see how his language agrees with our Scriptures: *His archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare. He poureth out my gall upon the ground.* How exactly he speaks! A man shoots at a hairs breadth that shoots thus: when God sends his archers, their bows shoot so true, that they cleave the reins asunder: the reins are in the midst of a man, and to cleave the reins is to shoot level: as pouring out the gall, or unbowelling, imports to shoot dead.

Fourthly, Observe this, *Why hast thou set me as a mark?*

God takes the most eminent and choisest of his servants, for the choicest and most eminent afflictions.

He makes a *Job the white.* Why hast thou chosen me? There was great reason, God should choose him, he was the most eminent in holiness and grace of all about him: he was the most remarkable man for grace and goodness, therefore he must be the mark. They who have received most grace from God, are able to bear most affliction from God. God doth this in infinite wisdom: as the Apostle, *Rom.* 14. 11. gives an excellent advice in reference to weak brethren, *such as are weak receive, but not to doubtful disputations*, take heed how you ingage your weak Brethren in doubtful disputes, you may loose them so; take those that are strong and able, such as are well ballasted for a storm, take these men if you will to doubtful disputations, but do not take weak brethren. If God will not have us take a weak Christian to a doubtful disputation; surely then he calls such to sufferings, of whose strength he is well assured: A man under great affliction, is brought to a very doubtful disputation; therefore the Lord will not bring a weak one, one low in grace to it, but he takes out the strong: As the General of an Army chuses out the valiantest and most experienced veterane Souldiers, to put them upon hard adventures, it is not wisdom to venture a fresh-water Souldier upon difficult services. God will not put new Wine into old bottles: as it is in acting duties, so in sufferings. And as Christ orders the word in such wisdom, that he will not have counsel given to any soul, who is unprepared to receive it, or unable to bear it. *John* 16. 12. *I have many things yet to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now*; therefore I will defer until you have got more strength: So God saith of a young Christian, one that is newly come in; thou hast great afflictions to undergo before thou dies't, but thou art not fit to bear them yet, I will defer thy trial till thou art grown more hardy, through more communion with me, to fit thee for that encounter. As our Lord Christ told *Peter* (Joh. 21. 18.) *When thou wast young, thou girdest thy self, and walkedst whether thou wouldest*; *but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whether thou wouldst not.* That is, when thou wast young and unexperienced, thou enjoyedst thy liberty; but when thou shalt be grown older in years, and stronger in grace, thou shalt willingly stretch forth thy hands, and quietly suffer thy self to be bound to the Cross (*Peter* was not nailed as Christ, but tied to the Cross) and there die in witness of my truth; *For this Christ spake, signifying by what death he should die, and glorifie God*, ver. 19.

Fifthly, In that he saith, *Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee? Why dost thou run thus against me?* Observe,

Man in sinning, runneth contrary to God; and God in afflicting, seemeth to run contrary to Man.

Every act of sin is a direct opposition unto God: we set God as a mark, and shoot arrows of disobedience against him; sin is a missing the mark of duty, but it aims to hit the Lord as a mark, who charges us with that duty. In affliction God runneth upon us, and makes the transgressor his mark. *Moses* (Levit.26.41.) speaks both wayes; *If your uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and ye acknowledge that ye have walked contrary unto me, and that I have walked contrary unto you*; that I have made you a mark, and shot at you by my judgments, and that you have made me a mark, shooting at me by your sins; then *I will remember, &c.* So that our sinning is a walking contrary unto God, and Gods corrections are his walking contrary to us: There is an excellent expression, noting how sin strikes, and (as it were) shoots at God (*Job* 15.25,26.) *He stretcheth out his hand against God* (speaking of a wicked man) *and strengthneth himself against the Almighty:* (here this word is used) *he runneth upon him, even on his neck,*

upon the thick boſs of his bucklers. See how he deſcribes a wicked man in his natural courſe; what doth he? He runs upon God, he runneth upon him, even upon his neck as a man that encounters an enemy, runs upon him, and ſets his feet upon his neck; he runneth upon the thick boſſes of his bucklers: a warrior hath boſſes upon his arms, both for beauty and defence. The enemy runs upon the very boſſes, and fears nothing; ſuch is a wicked man: He runs againſt God; and will not God run upon him? He will certainly be upon the boſſes of their bucklers, and upon their necks too one time or other, till they ſhall be forced to cry out, that as they have been burdens unto God, ſo now they are burdens to themſelves. Thus *Job* concludes in his own caſe.

So that I am a burden to my ſelf.

נשׂא משׂא *Tulit onus à tollendo ac ferendo dictum.*

The former words are the cauſe, and theſe are the effect. *Thou haſt ſet me as a mark*: what follows? *Oh I am a burden to my ſelf!* The Septuagint read thus, *ſo that I am a burden unto thee*; or, *ſo that I am burdenſome to thee.* And then his meaning may be conceived thus; *Lord, thou ſetteſt me as a mark, ſo that I become burdenſome unto thee; I have ſuch a weight of afflictions upon me, that I am forced to complainings and expoſtulations, wherein I am afraid I am burdenſome to thee*; as poor ſuiters, when they cry long in the ears of a Judge or Magiſtrate, he ſaith, forbear, you are very troubleſom, very burdenſom to me.

Sum ſuper te onus. φόρτιον. *alii vertunt* φορτικόν. *onerioſus, moleſtus, quo alludit ur ad importunos peccatores, qui auribus Iudicum perſtrepunt.*

The *Rabbins* obſerve, that this was the ancient reading of the Text, *I am a burden unto thee*, and that the Scribes, who wrote out the Bibles in Hebrew, made this alteration, *a burden to my ſelf*; becauſe they conceived it was unbecoming the Majeſty of God, that *Job* ſhould ſay, he was a burden to him. There is a general truth in that Tranſlation, *a burden unto thee:* The ſins of man are burdenſome to God, the frowardneſs and impatience of men are burdenſome unto God; But I conceive our tranſlation carries the ſence fairer, in a reflection upon his own tired ſpirits, *So that I am made a burden to my ſelf*, that is, thou doſt even throw me upon my ſelf, whereas heretofore thou waſt wont to bear me, and take my burden upon thy ſelf. Alas, I faint, I cannot ſtand under my ſelf, I am weary of my life, becauſe I am left alone to bear it, I know not what to do with my ſelf, I am ſo burdenſome to my ſelf. Hence obſerve,

עליך *tibi quod Scribæ mutarunt in* עלי *mihi, quod indignum divina majeſtate arbitrarentur, ut homuncio ſi oneri eſſet.* Ab. Ez, Druſ.

First, *Outward afflictions, poverty, ſickneſs, want, &c. are burdens, and they make a man burdenſome to himſelf.*

It is a great burden to have our comforts taken away from us. The removing of comforts lies like a heavy weight upon the ſpirit; the removing of health from the body is a weight upon the ſoul; fear is a burden, care is a burden, and ſo is pain. Therefore God calls us to caſt all thoſe burdens upon him, *Pſal.* 55. 22.

Secondly obſerve, *Man left to himſelf, is not able to bear himſelf.*

Man is much born down by weight of natural corruption. Hence the Apoſtle calls it a *weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us* (*Heb.* 12. 1.) or dangle about our heels to burden us, as long garments do a man that runneth. Our ordinary callings and affairs, left upon our own backs, preſs us to the earth, much more do our extraordinary troubles and afflictions. And therefore he adviſeth, *Caſt thy burden upon the Lord* (he aſſures in the next words) *and he ſhall ſuſtain thee.* As implying, that man cannot ſuſtain or bear his own weight. And though it ſhould ſeem we have ſtrength to ſpare for others, and are therefore commanded to bear one anothers burdens (*Gal.* 6.) yet no man of himſelf, no not the holieſt *Atlas*, nor the ſpiritualleſt Porter on earth, is able to bear his own ſelf, unleſs Chriſt be his ſupporter, who is alſo therefore ſaid to *uphold all things by the word of his power*, Heb. 1. 3. Becauſe no creature in a natural, or man in a ſpiritual capacity, can bear his own weight.

Thirdly, From the connexion between theſe two phraſes, *Thou haſt ſet me as a mark againſt thee, ſo that I am a burden to my ſelf*, what is it that makes my life to be ſo burdenſome to me? It is this, becauſe I am ſet as a mark before thee, that is, becauſe thou ſeemeſt to be an enemy to me: And ſo the Note from the connection is this,

That which preſſes and burdens the ſoul above all, is the apprehenſion that God is againſt us.

Job in many things looked unto God under theſe temptations with ſad thoughts, as if he were his enemy; ſo he expreſt himſelf in the ſixth Chapter, *The poyſon of his arrows drinks up my ſpirits, he ſetteth himſelf in battel array againſt me.* In theſe temptations and deſertions, this was the burden of his ſpirit, that God appeared as an adverſary; *Why doſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?* Let the *Sabeans* and the *Chaldeans* ſhoot at me as much as they will, let fire and winds contend with me, and make me the mark of their utmoſt fury, I can bear all theſe. *Job* was light-hearted enough when he thought he contended only with creatures, and that creatures only contended with him, but in the progreſs of the trial, he finds God againſt him, withdrawing comforts from, and ſhooting terrors at him; now he is a burden to himſelf, he can bear this no longer. As *Cæſar* ſaid in the Senate, when he had many wounds given him, yet this wounded him moſt, that he was wounded by the hand of his ſon; *What thou my ſon?* So when a Believer looks this way and that way, and ſees many enemies, Satan and the creatures all in arms againſt him, he can bear all their charges and aſſaults; but if he apprehend God oppoſing and wounding him, he weeps out this mournful complaint, *What thou my Father? what thou my God?* Thou who haſt ſo often ſhined upon me, doſt thou darken thy face towards me, and appear mine enemy? Theſe apprehenſions of God, will make the ſtrongeſt Saint on earth a burden too heavy for himſelf to bear. That which cauſeth the moſt burdenſome thought in the Saints, is the inevidence of their pardon. Sin unpardoned is in it ſelf a burden, and our not knowing ſin to be pardoned, is a greater burden; but our jealouſies and fears that it is not pardoned, is the greateſt burden of all, and that which adds weight, yea an intolerableneſs to all other burdens. Hence *Job* in the next verſe, and with the laſt breath of his anſwer, points directly at that which pincht him.

Verſe 21. **And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion, and take away mine iniquity? for now ſhall I ſleep in the duſt, and thou ſhalt ſeek me in the morning, but I ſhall not be.**

In the former verſe, we found *Job* humbly confeſſing his ſin, and earneſtly enquiring of the Lord a reaſon of his ſorrows, why he had ſhot him ſo full of arrows, that now he was not ſo much wounded as loaded, *and become a burden to himſelf.*

In this verſe he ſues for the pardon of thoſe ſins, and ſo for the removal of thoſe ſorrows; that the bow might ſpeedily be unbended, and not a ſhot more made at his bleeding breaſt. In the anſwer of which ſuit, he deſires ſpeed and expedition, leſt help being retarded, come too late; for he profeſſeth that he cannot hold out this ſiege long, he muſt needs make his bed in the grave, and then being ſought for, he ſhall not be found.

And why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſions?

We may conſider the words two wayes.

In the { 1. Form / 2. Matter } of them.

In the form they are a vehement expoſtulation; *Job's* ſpirit hath been heated all along with the fire of his ſufferings, and here he ſpeaks in the heat of his ſpirit, and with fiery deſires after mercy: He keeps up his heart to the ſame height and tenour ſtill. There it was, *Why haſt thou ſet me as a mark againſt thee?* Here's another *why*, *and why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion?* As before he was grieved to be ſet up as a *mark* for afflictions to aim at; ſo now he deſires to be made a *mark* for mercy to aim at.

I ſhall note one thing from hence, before I come to open the words; *They who are ſenſible of the evil of ſin, will pray heartily for the pardon of ſin*, Expoſtulation is earneſt prayer; expoſtulation is a vehement poſtulation, a vehement enquiring after, or deſiring of a thing; *Why doſt thou not pardon my ſin?* may be reſolved into this, *O that thou wouldſt pardon my ſin!* Or, *wilt thou not pardon my ſin?*

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The matter of this Prayer requires ſuch a form, ſuch a vehemency of ſpirit in him that prayes. If there be any petition in the world, about which the ſpirit ſhould be fired, it is in this, when we pray for pardon of ſin.

Will not a man whoſe body is defiled by falling into the mire, call haſtily for ſome to cleanſe and waſh him? will he not ſay, if it come not ſpeedily, why do you not bring away the water there? ſin is the defiling and bemiring of the ſoul, and pardon is the cleanſing of it.

If a man be deeply and deadly wounded, will he have only ſome few feeble deſires, or make cold requeſts for a Chirurgeon? will he not call and call aloud? call and call again for help and healing? Sins are the wounds of the ſoul, and pardon is the only cure of it.

If a man hath broken his bones, will he not be very very earneſt to have them ſet again? Sin is the breaking of the bones, and pardon is their ſetting. How doth *David* cry to the Lord (*Pſal.* 51. 8.) *That the bones which he had broken might rejoyce*: Sin had broken his bones firſt, and the hiding of Gods favour from him, was a ſecond breaking.

If a mans peace, or the peace of a Nation be diſturbed, is there not earneſt crying (as at this day) to have it repaired and re-eſtabliſhed? Sin troubles our peace, the peace of the ſoul, and the peace of Kingdoms; *Sin is the great make-bate*, and pardon is the returning of our peace, and quieteth all again, and therefore no marvel if we cry out, *Why doſt thou not pardon our ſins?*

He that is greatly in debt, and fears every hour to be arreſted and caſt in priſon, is trying all friends to get ſecurity and protection. Sinning is a running in debt with God, and it brings us under the danger of his arreſt every moment; forgiveneſs cancels the bond: when the ſin is pardoned, the debt is paid, and the ſoul diſcharged; and therefore no wonder if in this caſe, we hear or make ſtrong cries, *Why doſt thou not pardon our ſins? My ſon* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 6. 4. ſpeaking about ſuretiſhip) *if thou be ſurety for thy friend* (if thou haſt engaged thy ſelf for another) *give not ſleep to thine eyes, nor ſlumber to thine eye-lids, deliver thy ſelf as a Roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.* Not to give reſt to the eye, nor ſlumber to the eye-lids, notes the hotteſt purſuit and greateſt intention of ſpirit about a buſineſs: Thus buſie *Solomon* adviſes a man to be who becometh ſurety for another. Then what ſhould we do, who have contracted huge debts our ſelves? How ſhould we in this ſence, give our eyes no reſt, and our eye-lids no ſlumber, till our ſouls be delivered, as a Roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler, that is, from all the power and challenge which the Law without us, Conſcience within us, Satan purſuing us, and the Juſtice of God threatning us, can any way make or have againſt the peace of our ſouls. That's the firſt thing, from the manner or form in which *Job* ſues for the pardon of ſin, his ſpirit doth not fall, he grows not flat upon this point, but is as high and earneſt here for the pardon of ſin, as in any of his requeſts for the eaſe of his pained body, or the diſſolution of it.

Why doſt thou not pardon my ſin, and take away mine iniquity? I ſhall firſt ſhew what is meant by *pardoning* and *taking away*; and then, what by *tranſgreſſion and iniquity*, and ſo put the ſence of all together.

Why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion?

Διὰ τὶ οὐκ ἐποιήσας λῆθην τῆς ἀνομίας μου, accipiunt נשא tanquam à נשה oblitus fuit.

The Septuagint reads it, *Why doſt thou not forget my tranſgreſſion?* or bury it in the grave of oblivion, and the word may ſignifie to *forget*, as well as to *take away*. But generally it imports the *lifting up*, or *taking away* of that which lies heavy upon us, either in a moral, or in a natural notion, *Hoſ.* 11. 4. *I was to them as they that take off the yoke*; and becauſe pardon is the taking away, or lifting off of ſin, therefore it is often put for the act of pardoning.

נשא Tollere, levare, per Metaphoram donare id quod munera & dona in altum elevari ſolerent, ſicut ſacrificia cum Deo offerebantur.

Hence alſo it is applied to that geſture of the Prieſts, when they received gifts and ſacrifices, becauſe they were wont to elevate and lift them up. Hence Chriſt, the ſubſtance of all the Sacrifices, is ſaid to be lifted up; himſelf ſaith, *As Moſes lifted up the Serpent in the wilderneſs, ſo muſt the Son of man be lifted up* (John 3. 14.) We may ſay, as *Aaron* lifted up the Sacrifices at the Altar, ſo the Son of man was lifted up. This lifting up noted alſo the acceptance of thoſe Sacrifices, and the favour of God to thoſe who brought them. When *Pharaoh* beſtowed a great favour upon the chief Butler, *Gen.* 40. 30. according to his dream, he lifted up his head: *Joſeph* expounded it ſo, *After three dayes, Pharaoh ſhall lift up thine head*, that is, *he ſhall freely pardon thy offence*, and beſtow ſome great honour, gift or reward upon thee. And in this ſence it is proper to the Text, when ſin is pardoned, a mans head is lifted up, himſelf is advanced indeed.

The Lord proclaims his name in this tenour (*Exod.* 34. 7.) *The Lord, the Lord, forgiving* (or lifting up) *iniquity.* And, *Pſal.* 32. 1. *Bleſſed is the man whoſe tranſgreſſions are forgiven*, or lifted up.

Further, this word ſignifies, not only to take or lift off a burden from another, and lay it down; but ſo to lift it off from another, as for a man to take it upon himſelf, and bear it in his ſtead, from whoſe ſhoulders it was taken. And in this ſtrict ſence we are eſpecially to underſtand it in the point of pardon; for pardon is not the taking away of ſin from a man, and laying it none knows where; but ſin being taken off from a man, ſome other ſhoulders are prepared to bear it, even the ſhoulders of our Lord Chriſt, on him our ſin is laid; *All we like ſheep have gone aſtray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all*, Iſa. 53. 6. When the burden of debt was taken off from us, it was charged on Chriſt. He did not take or lift the burden of ſin from us, and throw it by, but he bare it himſelf; nothing but this could compleat the work of pardon; therefore it was alſo propheſied, *Iſa.* 53. 4. *Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows.* And (1 *Pet.* 2. 22.) *Who his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body on the tree*, that is, in his humanity or humane nature, while he dwelt with us in the body. Body is not here oppoſed to ſoul, but includes it; as ſometime the whole work is laid upon the ſoul of Chriſt, not excluding his body, *Iſa.* 53. 10. *When thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin.* By the whole man this offering was made, and the whole man bare our ſins on the tree. That paſſage, *Mat.* 8. 17. (where the firſt Propheſie of *Iſaiah* is quoted, is very emphatical) when Chriſt had healed many of their outward diſtempers, this reaſon is added, *That it might be fulfilled which is written* (ſc. *Iſa.* 53. 9.) *himſelf took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes.* Now Chriſt took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes, when he took and bare our ſins; when he took ſin, he took that which was the neceſſary fruit of ſin, our ſickneſſes and our ſorrows; for as in Scripture Chriſt is ſaid to be *made ſin for us*, that is, with the ſin he bare thoſe afflictions and ſorrows which are the conſequents of ſin; ſo here, when it is ſaid, *he bare our ſorrows and our ſickneſſes*, it takes in the bearing of thoſe ſins, which procured and produced thoſe ſorrows.

Τὰς ἀσθενείας ἔλαβε καὶ τὰς νόσους ἐβάστασεν. Aſſumpſit ſecum, atque recepit quaſi ad ſe trahendas ſtulit.

The Greek words uſed by the Evangeliſt, are full with this ſence, *He took them to him*, he received them upon himſelf; he (as it were) tranſlated them from poor ſinful man, to his own body.

The word alſo imports his taking our ſins and ſickneſſes upon him, as a veſture or garment, and ſo wrapping himſelf in them. We know our ſins by nature cloath us as a garment, ours is not only a burden, but a cloathing of ſin and filthineſs, *Take away his filthy garments* (ſaith the Lord concerning *Joſhua* the High-Prieſt) then follows, *And unto him I ſaid, I have cauſed thine iniquity to paſs from thee, and I will cloath thee with change of raiment. Man ſaw not his own nakedneſs till he was cloathed with ſin*, Gen. 2. Chriſt to anſwer that, cloaths and wraps himſelf with our ſins, as we our ſelves were wrapped about and cloathed with them; he cloaths himſelf with our ſorrows, as we our ſelves were cloathed with ſorrow. In which ſence (among others) Chriſt may be called a *man of ſorrows*; as we may call a man cloathed with rags, *a man of rags*; and a man cloathed with ſilk, *a man of ſilks*.

ἐβάσταζεν

The ſecond word of the Evangeliſt, *Mat.* 18. 17. ſignifies to bear as a *Porter bears* a great burden; Chriſt took up that burden under which all the Angels in heaven would have ſunk; he took it up like a mighty *Samſon*, and carried it out for us. The *Scape-Goat* was a type of this, *Levit.* 6. 22. *And the Goat ſhall bear upon him all their iniquities into a Land not inhabited*; of a Land cut off and ſeparated from other Lands and people, figuring hereby the total aboliſhing of our ſins, which being carried into a Land, where no man dwells, ſhall be as loſt and gone for ever, not to be found when they ſhall be ſought for;

who

who can find that, which is where no man ever was? Pardon'd sin is carried and (as it were) hid out of the sight both of God and man, for it is not; and that which is not, is not (according to man) to be seen. In allusion to all which, Christ (*Joh.* 1. 29.) is pointed at by the Baptist, with, *Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world*; he takes sin off from the world, upon himself, and carries it away no man knows whither. That for the first word, *pardon*, Why dost thou not pardon my sin?

ὁ ἄιρων.

עבר *Est*, 1. *Simpliciter præterire.* 2. *Interire, perire, evanescere, mori.*

The second word is rendred by our Translators, *Take away*, Why doest thou not take away mine iniquity? Others thus, *Why doest thou not cause mine iniquity to pass away?* Or; *Why doest thou not put away mine iniquity?* So we translate, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. where assoon as *David* confest his sin, saying, *I have sinned*, *Nathan* answers, *and the Lord hath put away thy sin*; he hath made it to pass away.

The word signifies, first simply, to pass away or to pass by.

Secondly, To die, perish or vanish away, that which passes by us is vanished, as to us: So the word is taken, *Psal.* 37. 36. where *David* speaking of the flourishing estate of wicked men, saith, *I have seen the wicked in great prosperity, flourishing as a green bay tree, yet he past away, and loe he was not:* A man unpardoned, sees, or should see, his sins growing up as a mighty tree: sin unpardoned, flourishes like a green bay-tree, it roots in the soul, and guilt nourishes it; but when pardon comes, sin passes away, and it is not, because that which gave it sap is not.

Quando dicitur de mandato, pacto, juramento significat transgredi, violare, peccare.

Further, this word (which is very considerable) is applied to the committing of sin, as well as to the pardoning of sin: For when it is joyned with those words, *The Commandments of God, the Statutes of God, the Word of God*, or the like; it signifies to violate, to break the bounds, to transgress: for in sinning a man passes by the word and commandment of God, the precepts which God hath given, and the charge God hath laid upon him, he goeth away from all; when man sins, he passeth by the Commandment of God, and when God pardons, he passeth by the sin of man, or he causeth his sins to pass away.

Transire facis, i.e. *impunitum relinquis, condonas.*

So that this word, *Take away, put away*, or *cause to pass*, notes the removing of sin, both in the guilt and punishment; When sin is past by, all the punishments due to sin are passed by, the sinner shall never be toucht, or feel the weight of Gods little finger in judgement; when God comes with his revenges, he passeth such by, as in that Plague of *Egypt*, of the slaying of the first born, which was therefore called the Lords *passover*, in memorial whereof that great Ordinance was appointed the *Jews*, of keeping the *passover*, and eating the *Pascal Lamb*, Exod. 12. 13, 14. In this sence the word is used, *Amos* 7. 8. when God was resolved to punish and charge the sins of that people upon them, he saith, *Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midest of my people* Israel, and what follows? *I will not again pass by them any more.* God came before, once and again, armed to destroy them, but when he came, he past by them, he put up his sword, he unbent his bow, he stopped up the vials of his wrath; when a cloud of blood and judgements hung over their heads, he sent a breath of mercy, and caused it to pass over them; but now (saith he) *I will not again pass by them any more*; that is, I will surely punish them, so the next words interpret, *the high places of* Isaac *shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of* Israel *shall be laid waste.*

Verbum Ebraicum העביר *quoties in scripturis sanctis ex persona Dei ponitur, pro pœna accipiendum est, ut nequaquam apud eos maneat sed pertranseat.* Hieron. *in* Amos. παρελθέτω. *Non ultra dissimulabo ei scelera sua* Pagan Mer.

Some translate that in *Amos*, *I will not any more dissemble your wickedness or your sin*; and that carries a fair sence, for when a man pardons or will not punish an offence, he seems to take no notice of it, for that (properly) is to dissemble a thing (as simulation is to pretend that which is not, so dissimulation is to take no notice, or not to hold forth that which is;) God passeth by and dissembles the sins of men in a gracious way, when he will not observe or look upon them to question or punish them.

The Greek word (*Matth.* 26. 39.) answereth this Hebrew, where our Lord Christ prayeth earnestly about the removal of the cup, *Father* (saith he) *if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me*; In the same sence that sin is said to pass away, the cup of Gods displeasure and wrath passes also away, when sin is pardoned: therefore Christ prayed thrice, that *the cup might pass away from him*, that he might not be dealt with as a sinner, but that there might be a course found out to spare him, and save the glory of his Fathers justice: *Yet* (he submits) *not my will, but thy will be done, if it must not pass away, I am contented it should not pass.* Thus far we have seen, what is meant by *pardoning* and *taking away.*

A word upon those two terms, *Transgression and Iniquity* (which are the objects on which pardoning mercy works) *Why doest thou not pardon my transgression, and put away mine iniquity? Transgression and Iniquity*, are words of great significancy: for in them all manner of sins, especially sins of a greater stature are comprehended.

פשע *Propriè rebellio, peccatum ex superbia. Non simplex & qualiscunq; sed malitiosa & temeraria transgressio.*

The former, Transgression, notes a violation of the commands of God with a high hand, or a rebellion of the mind, when pride of spirit shews it self very much. There is a spice of pride in every sin: *Because of pride* (saith *Solomon*) *cometh contention*; all the contentions we maintain against the word and will of God, rise from the pride of our own hearts, because we cannot submit to the will of God; but in some sins, pride holds up her head more proudly. Such sins, this word notes, it is not (simply) any sin, but sin very proudly and rebelliously committed.

עון *Incurvationem declinationem à recta via, & ad animum translata significat perversitatē & malitiā. Curvi mores.*

The latter word Iniquity, imports the crookedness and inequality of a thing; when it turns this way or that way, and extends not in a strait and right line. Hence it is applied to the vitiosity and perversness, to the crookedness and inequality of mans nature. *Our nature is a crooked piece*, and that makes all the crookedness in our lives. The Latines speak so, in a moral sence they call ill manners, and ill manner'd men, *crooked men, and crooked manners. David*, *Psal.* 51. 5. bewailed his birth sin under this notion, *I was born in iniquity:* And he that was first born in the world, applied this word to himself, saying, *my iniquity* (the perverseness, the crookedness of my wayes) *is greater then can be forgiven*, or made straight, *Gen* 4. 13. So that this word also (take it strictly) implies more then a bare act of sin, arising from infirmity, weakness or inanimadvertency; it rather notes those sins which are committed from a crooked purpose, from an ill or false bent of the heart: when the mind sees that which is right and good, just and straight, and yet turns to crooked paths, and follows that which is perverse and worse.

Peccata denotat quæ fiunt ex προαιρέσεως & destinata malitia seu proposito, cùm sc. mens videt quod æquum est, & tamen indulgens cupiditatibus sequitur deteriora. Moller. *in* Psal. 106. 6.

Take one thing further, This word in Scripture, signifies not only the act of such sins; but secondly, the punishment of them, *Psal.* 31. 10. *Gen.* 19. 15. And thirdly, it is put for the means of expiation or pardon, *Hos.* 4. 8. *They eat up the sin of my people, and they set their hearts on their iniquity.* But how did the Priests eat up the sin, and set their hearts on the iniquity of the people? Sin can make us but a hungry banquet. The Text bears variety of interpretations. But to the point in hand, sin is here put for the sacrifices offered up for sin, out of divers of which the Priests had a portion for themselves to eat; so that the Prophet here describes the horrible prophaneness of those degenerate Priests, who set their hearts upon the sacrifices, because themselves were fed by them; not because the people came to seek the favour of God, and make their peace by them when they had sinned. As Physitians may be said to eat the diseases of the people, and set their hearts upon their sicknesses, when they (because their own gain is in it) are pleased to hear of spreading sicknesses, *&c.* Or as Lawyers, eat the contentions and quarrels of the people, when they are glad to hear of Suits, *&c.* because they grow rich by it. So those base-spirited Priests were said to eat the sins of the people, and set their hearts on their iniquities, because they were glad to hear of a multitude of sacrifices, their provisions being enlarged by them. So that then iniquity is the sacrifice for iniquity, in which sence also Christ is said *to be made sin for us*, namely a sacrifice for sin, 1 *Cor.* 5. 21.

From the words thus opened, we may Observe,

First, To whom *Job* addresseth himself for pardon, is it not unto God? *And why doest not thou pardon my transgression?*

God only can pardon sin.

Pardon is his act, his proper and peculiar act, he can

do

do it, and none can but he. We read it among his Royal titles (*Exod.* 34. 7.) the Name of God is proclaimed in this stile. *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and in truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.* Pardoning sin, is put the last of those seven Attributes in which the Lord manifested himself to *Moses*, as being that wherein all the former are summ'd up, and into which they conveigh their several blessings, to make man compleatly blessed; or to shew that none can be a pardoner of sin, but he who is vested with all those fore-going glorious titles, and therefore none but God alone. Hence the Prophet *Micah* (Chap. 7. 18.) puts the question, and challenges all the world; *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity?* Shew me one if you can, there is no sin-pardoning God besides thee. *Who is a God like unto thee? Pardoning*; As if the Prophet had said, some will be or have been offering at this work, but they all have been or will be found meat bunglers at this work; None can pardon as thou doest. None can pardon, 1. So freely. 2. None so fully. 3. None so continually. 4. None so eternally. 5. None so indifferently, whether in respect of sinners or sins as thou doest. It is all one to thee what the sins are, and all one to thee whose the sins are, so they come to ask thy pardon. And that which is a disadvantage to ask pardon of man, is an encouragement to ask it of God, the greatness of our sins. The Psalmist did, and any man may make that his plea, *Lord pardon my sin, for it is great.* Dare any be a competitor with God in this work? The Pharisees put the question right, if they had not mistook the person to whom they put it, *Mark* 2. 7. *Who is this that forgiveth sins? none can forgive sin but God alone.* Again, sin (in one sence) is committed only against God, and for that reason also God only is the pardoner of it, *Psal.* 51. *Against thee only have I sinned.* Only the creditor can remit the debt, and he the offence to whom we have done the wrong. God is wrong'd in all sins chiefly, and the wrong is so much his, that it may well be called only his, therefore without him no pardon.

But man is charged to forgive his brother, *Luke* 17. 4. *Forgive thy brother seven times*; and Christ hath taught us to pray *for the forgiveness of our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us*, Matth. 6. 12.

I answer, there are two things in all Second-table sins; First, Disobedience against God; Secondly, Injury to man; That which man can, or is required to forgive and be a pardoner of, is only the injury done unto himself, so as not to revenge it; he cannot take off the sin against God, or stay him from taking vengeance.

But other Scriptures speak of a power committed to man, to remit and forgive sin, *Joh.* 20. 23. *Whose sins ye remit are remitted, and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

I answer, This power is not authoritative and magisterial, but ministerial and declarative: God hath set up such an institution, that man should pardon man, because many men, yea most men are not competent judges of their own estates, whether they be fit for pardon or no: Many wicked men would remit and loosen themselves when as their sins are to be retained; they see not their sins, as another man may and doth see them: The Apostle *Peter* could say to *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. 23. *I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity*; *Simon Magus* did not perceive it, he did not know his own condition, he flatter'd himself, and thought all well, because lately sprinckled with the water of Baptism; therefore some must declare these men bound, and hold them still under sin.

Again, there are others whose hearts are upright and sincere, such as are indeed reconciled to God, and all whose sins are pardoned; but they are not able to make it out, and they cannot clear up this thing from the word to their own hearts: therefore they need a helper, to declare them pardoned, for they cannot speak or declare it to their own souls: in such cases both for the conviction of presuming sinners, and the help of upright hearted, yet weak and doubting Christians, God hath left this power with his Ministers; *Whose sins ye remit they are remitted, and whose sins ye retain they are retained.* As in the case of Leprosie, *Lev.* 15. The Leper was brought to the Priest, and set before him as a Judge in that point; many were not competent Judges of their own diseases, they could not resolve it whether they had the Leprosie or no; some perceiving a scab or a sore rising upon them, thought (presently) it was the Leprosie, when indeed it was not, and so wronged themselves; Others who were indeed infected, would not be perswaded that they were, therefore the Priests office was to determine these cases, to bind and restrain, to loosen and let them go as he saw cause: In which ceremonial practice, we have the shadow of this Gospel practice, in the power of remitting or retaining, of binding or of loosing sin, according to the various conditions of men. Yet all this while God keepeth the great work in his own hand, he is *the pardoner*, and therefore *Job* (as the whole tenor of the Scripture rules it) made his address to him, *Why doest not thou pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity?*

Secondly, From these expressions about the pardon of sin, we may learn what the pardon of sin is; *Pardon of sin, is the removing or the lifting off, the passing away of sin from the sinner*; that properly is pardon of sin. Scripture language is very various and copious about this thing, and yet all runs into this general; I shall instance some of them.

First, Pardon is often expressed by a metaphor from paying of a debt, 1 *Joh.* 2. 12. *I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven you*; the word notes your sins are paid, your debts are satisfied; the same word the Apostle useth, *Rom.* 8. 32. in reference to the sufferings of Christ, *God spared not his Son*; He did not spare him the debt, that is, he neither forgave the whole, nor compounded with him to take half, or a part, and remit the rest; no, he made him pay all fully down. So to be pardoned, notes the sparing of the debt, letting the debt pass, without calling us to account about it.

Secondly, Pardon of sin is the removing it out of sight, (*Isa.* 38. 17.) *Thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back*, saith *Hezekiah*, that is, thou hast put them out of thy sight. As when man is said, *to cast the word of God behind him*; Psal. 50. 17. *or behind his back*, Nehem. 9. 26. The meaning is, he regards it not at all to obey it; so when God casts the sin of man behind his back, the meaning is, he will not regard or see it at all to punish it. That phrase used by the Prophet *Micah*, is of the same importance, though of a deeper sence, *Chap.* 7. 19. *Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the Sea.* Who can dive thither to fetch them up? But may they not rise up or swim out of themselves? Surely no; our sins are not cork or wood, but they are iron or lead, they are like stone, or like a mil-stone. To shew how irrecoverably the *Egyptians* were destroyed in the Red-sea, it is said, they *sank like lead in those mighty waters* (Exod. 15. 10.) and to shew how irrecoverably *Babylon* shall be destroyed, the Holy Ghost saith, that *Babylon shall be like a great Mil-stone cast into the Sea by a mighty Angel* (Rev. 18. 21.) The casting of a stone, iron or lead into the Sea, was anciently the Emblem of everlasting forgetfulness, or of a resolution never to recal that which was resolved. * A learned Hebrician observes, that it was a custom among the *Jews*, to take those things which they abominated as filthy and unclean, and cast them into the Sea; which act noted either the purging of them, or the overwhelming them out of sight for ever: And a like usage, is noted by † a reporter of the manner of the *Americans*, that those barbarous people either desciphering some wicked thing upon a stone, or making a symbole or sign of it, used to throw it into a River which should carry it down into the Sea, never to be remembred.

Thirdly, Pardon of sin is noted by washing and purging, to shew that the filthiness of it, is removed from us, *Psal.* 51. 2.

Fourthly, By covering, *Psal.* 32. 1. and by not imputing, *ver.* 2.

Fifthly, By blotting out, *Isa.* 43. 25. and bloting out as a thick cloud, *Isa.* 44. 22. All these notions of pardon concur in this one, that sin passes away, is lifted up and taken off from the conscience of the sinner when it is pardoned: The sum of all which is read in that one Text, *Jer.* 50. 20. *In those dayes, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of* Israel *shall be sought for, and there shall be none*, &c. (why?) *For I will pardon them, whom I reserve.* So that pardoned

ἀφίεσιν τῶν

Phocenses ferreâ massam in mare demerserunt & jurarunt non prius se in Phocæam reversuros; quam hæc massa è fundo maris emergerit; atq; in summa aqua extaret. Herod. l. 1.

* Mont. ex bb. Misna: cap. de phase.

† Joseph. Acosta. l. 5: de Histor. Natur. & Moral. Novi orbis.

pardoned ſin in Gods account is no ſin, and the pardoned ſinner, is as if he had never ſinned: Forgiveneſs deſtroyes ſin, as forgiving a debt deſtroyes the debt, and cancelling a Bond, deſtroyes the Bond. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *When ſin is pardoned, the puniſhment of ſin is alſo pardoned.*

Both words ſignifie both the puniſhment and the ſin; and *Job* having complain'd that he was ſet up as a mark, and wounded by ſharp afflictions, now ſeeks eaſe in the ſureſt and ſpeedieſt way, the pardon of ſin. *Why doeſt not thou pardon my tranſgreſſion*, &c.

There are three things in ſin; The inward matter, the foul evil, the ſtock, the root of ſin, which is natural corruption dwelling in us, and flowing out by actions. Secondly, The defilement and pollution of ſin: Thirdly, The guilt; when we ſay ſin is pardoned or taken away, it is not in the former (though in pardoned perſons corruption is mortified, and the actings of it abated) but in the latter, the guilt is taken away which is the obligation to puniſhment, and ſo the puniſhment is taken away too: nothing vindictive or ſatisfactory to the juſtice of God, ſhall ever be laid upon that ſoul whoſe ſin is pardoned: Hence *Iſa.* 33. 24. the Prophet fore-ſhewing, how happy a pardoned people ſhall be, aſſures them, *The Inhabitant ſhall not ſay, I am ſick, the people that dwell therein, ſhall be forgiven their iniquity*; When iniquity is forgiven, our infirmity is cured: When the ſoul is healed, the body ſhall be recovered, both the body natural, and the body politick. Plague, and ſword, and famine, and death, all theſe evils go away, when ſin goes; Judgments are nothing elſe but unpardoned ſins; ſin unpardoned is the root which giveth ſap and life to all the troubles which are upon man or Nation: And as ſin committed, is every judgment radically, that is, there is a fitneſs in ſin to produce and bring forth any evil upon man; ſo pardon of ſin is every mercy radically; when you have pardon, from thence every other particular mercy ſprings; you may cut out any bleſſing, any comfort out of the pardon of ſin, particular mercies are but pardon of ſin ſpecificated or individuated, brought into this or that particular mercy; of all bleſſings you may ſay, *This is pardon of ſin, that's pardon of ſin, and t'other is pardon of ſin.* Forgiveneſs deſtroyeth that wherein the ſtrength of ſin lies, it deſtroyeth our guilt, and to us aboliſheth the condemning power of the Law: in theſe the ſtrength of ſin lies. Hence when the people of *Iſrael* had committed that great ſin in making the golden Calf, the firſt thing *Moſes* did, was to pray for the pardon of ſin, and he did it with a ſtrange kind of *Rhetorick*, Exod. 32. 32. *Oh, this people have ſinned a great ſin, and have made them gods of gold. And now if thou wilt forgive their ſin*; what then *Moſes*? There's no more ſaid; *Moſes* is ſilent in the reſt, it is an imperfect ſpeech: a pauſe made by holy paſſion, not the fulneſs of the ſentence. Such are often uſed in Scripture, as *Luk.* 13. 9. *And if it bear fruit*, what then? Our own thoughts are left to ſupply the event: our Tranſlators add, *well.* The Greek Tranſlators ſupply that in *Exodus*, thus, *If thou wilt forgive them the ſin, forgive them:* We may ſupply it with the word in *Luke*, *If thou wilt forgive them, well.* As if *Moſes* had ſaid, Lord forgive them, and then though they have done *very ill*, yet, I know it will be *very well* with them; God cannot withhold any mercy, where he hath granted pardon, for that with the antecedents and requiſites of it, is every mercy. *Moſes* knew what would follow well enough if they were pardoned, and what if they were not: therefore he adds, *And if not, blot me I pray thee out of thy book which thou haſt written*; If their ſins muſt ſtand upon record, *Moſes* would not; he knew if they were an unpardoned people, they were an undone people, all miſeries would quickly break in upon, yea overwhelm them, and he deſired not to out-live the proſperity of that people. If *Iſrael* muſt bear their ſins, they muſt alſo bear the wrath of God, and if their ſins be but taken off, then his love is ſetled on them: *God gives Quailes ſometime, but he never gives pardons in anger.* Obſerve,

Fourthly, *The greateſt ſins fall within the compaſs of Gods pardoning mercy.*

The words in the Text are of the higheſt ſignification; *Job* ſpeaks not in a diminutive language, he is willing to lay load upon himſelf; they whoſe hearts are upright will not ſtand mincing the matter, and ſay they have ſins, but theirs are ſmall ones, ſins not grown to the ſtature of other mens. As the ſins of a godly man may be very great ſins, ſo (when they are) he acknowledges that they are. I know not where to ſet the bounds in regard of the nature or quantity of ſin; what ſin is there which a wicked man commits, but a godly man (poſſibly) may commit it, excepting that againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*? Theſe *Job* did, and the Saints may put to God in confeſſion: and as he did not, ſo they need not be diſcouraged to ask pardon for them, becauſe they are great. *The grace of the Goſpel is as large as any evil of ſin the Law can charge us with.* The grace of the Goſpel is as large as the curſe of the Law; whatſoever the Law can call or ſhew to be a ſin, the Goſpel can ſhew a pardon for it; what ever the Law can bind us with, the Goſpel can unlooſe. *The Mercy-ſeat covered the whole Ark*; The Mercy-ſeat noted the forgiveneſs of ſin; and if you read the deſcription of it (*Exod.* 25.) you ſhall find that it was exactly, to a hairs breadth, of the ſame dimenſions with the Ark, wherein the Law was put; intimating that there was mercy and pardon for ſin, let it come out of any part of the Law, laid up in that Ark. *As the leaſt ſins muſt of neceſſity have a pardon, ſo the greateſt ſins are in a poſſibility of pardon:* And the truth is, there is no ſin, as it is an *Anomy*, a tranſgreſſion of the Law, without the compaſs of pardon. It is not the malignity of the ſin, but the malignity of the ſinner, that makes it incurable; the ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* is not unpardonable, becauſe there wants mercy large enough to pardon it, but becauſe it refuſeth the mercy which ſhould pardon it, and the medicine that ſhould heal it.

Fifthly, Obſerve who it is that here preſſeth thus for pardon; it is *Job*, and was *Job* never pardoned till now? Or was this (think you) the firſt time that ever *Job* prayed for pardon? Had not *Job* thought of this buſineſs before? Without queſtion he had; he was one of whom God gave this teſtimony, that he was *a juſt and an upright man, one that feared God and eſchewed evil*; He that did all this, and was all this, muſt firſt be in favour with God, and yet *Job* crieth out, *Why doſt thou not pardon my tranſgreſſion?* Whence Obſerve,

They whoſe ſins are pardoned, muſt yet pray for the pardon of ſin.

Yea, they who upon good grounds, have aſſurance, that their ſins are pardoned, muſt yet pray for the pardon of their ſins, 2 Sam. 12. 13. When *Nathan* told *David*, *God hath put away thy ſin*; he aſſured him that he was pardoned, and doubtleſs the heart of *David* opened by faith to let in that gracious meſſage; he was not faithleſs, but believing. Yet *David* in his penitential *Pſalm* penned afterward, prayes (O how earneſtly!) for pardon, again and again? That which a man is aſſured he hath, he may pray to have and injoy; make it ſo high, which ſome make the grand objection againſt this point. Why ſhould we pray (ſay they) for that which we have already? I ſay, a man may pray for that which he hath already, and is aſſured he hath. Chriſt himſelf was aſſured of the love of his Father, and that his Father would ſtick to him for ever, and he knew God was near unto him, yet he cries (*Matth.* 27. 46.) *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Which Queſtion may be reſolved into this petition, *My God, my God, do not forſake me.* When *David* had received a meſſage by the Prophet concerning a great temporal mercy, the eſtabliſhing of his houſe, that God would ſettle him and his poſterity in the Throne for ever, the Text ſaith (2 *Sam.* 7. 15.) he preſently went in, and ſate before the Lord, and there makes a moſt earneſt prayer; and what is it about? He prayeth that God would ſettle and eſtabliſh his Kingdom, verſ. 25, 26. *And now O Lord God, the thing which thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy ſervant, and concerning his houſe, eſtabliſh it for ever, and do as thou haſt ſaid*, &c. *And let the houſe of thy ſervant* David *be eſtabliſhed before thee.*

Might not the Lord anſwer (according to this Objection) why doeſt thou trouble me about this? Did not I ſend thee a meſſage even now, that I would eſtabliſh thy Kingdom? Doſt thou think I have forgotten my promiſe, or will be unfaithful to it? We find not *David* thus chidden for praying thus. Nay at *verſ.* 27. you ſhall ſee how *David*

vid makes this the very ground of his prayer, *Lord* (saith he) *thou hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee*, &c. Even because thou hast revealed this unto me, that thou wilt build me an house, therefore upon this very ground I make this prayer, that thou wouldest build it. And to shew that he was full of faith the thing should be done, before he prayed it might be done, he adds, *ver.* 28. *Thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant. Now therefore let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant.* No man could be fuller of assurance, or fuller of prayer then *David* was. Likewise Christ knew and was assured, that his sheep, his elect people should continue for ever, and that none should be able to take them out of his hand, yet how abundantly doth he poure forth his spirit in prayer about these things? *John* 17. Again, Christ was assured he should be delivered and upheld in death, yet *in the dayes of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears to him that was able to save him from death, and he was heard in what he feared*, Heb. 5. 7. He was not afraid of the event, whether he should hold out and prevail or no, whether he should conquer and obtain the victory or no, he doubted not the success of this war, though it were with *principalities and powers*; his fear was only a natural passion, which he took upon him, when he took our nature upon him. He was certain of the issue, and knew he should carry the work through against all the armies of hell, he would never have undertaken it else; yet he prayeth with strong cries that he might be strengthened. So then it is no argument, because a Believer knoweth his sin is pardoned, that therefore he should not pray for pardon; for many things of which there was clear and certain evidence that they were or should be, have been prayed about; it is our duty, for it hath been the practice both of Christ and of his people to pray in such a state.

Further we may answer, matters of faith are of two sorts.

First, Such as as are fully accomplished, acted and compleated in all the parts and circumstances of them; for, and about such things we are not to pray. No man is to pray for the redemption of the world; for that is a thing past, and yet it is a matter of faith; but the pardon of sin though it be compleat in it self, and a matter of faith too, yet it is compleating and perfecting every day more & more. Pardon given us, yet we feel not all which pardon gives: It is a setled act on Gods part, yet it is in motion on ours, that is, in a perfective motion; therefore, though we are assured that our sins are pardoned, and shall stand pardoned for ever, yet we may pray about the pardon of them.

Thirdly, Suppose a man know his sins are pardoned, yet he may pray to know it more, and that his evidences may be known yet clearer to him; for though sin cannot be more pardoned in respect of God at one time then another; yet in regard of man, it may. He apprehends the pardon of his sin more now then before, and may hereafter apprehend it more then now: And it is worth the while to bestow pains in prayer for pardon, to have the pardon a little more enlightned: The degrees of any grace or favour, as well as the matter and substance of them, are worthy all our seekings and most serious enquiries at the Throne of Grace.

Fourthly, He that hath assurance of the pardon of sin, is to pray for the pardon of sin, because he continueth still to sin: And though it be a truth that sin uncommitted is pardoned in the decree and purpose of God, yet we must not walk by the decrees of God, but by his commandments and rules. His decree pardons sin from all eternity; but his rule is, that we should pray for pardon every day, as we pray for the bread we eat every day, *Mat.* 6. 11, 12. We must not say, God hath pardoned all sin at once, therefore no matter to ask it again; or I have once had the sight of pardon. and therefore the sight of sin shall never trouble me; seeing we are directed to search our hearts for sin, and to seek to God for pardon continually. So long as we sin, it becomes us to be suitors for the pardon of sin. He that hath ceased to sin, may cease to ask the forgiveness of sin, till then, I know neither rule nor promise that gives a dispensation for this duty.

To close this point, there are two cases wherein Believers are especially to renew their suits about the pardon of sin.

First (which though it be lamentable, yet it is possible) in the case of falling into scandalous and gross sins: These not only weaken assurance, and benight the soul, but exceedingly dishonour God, and grieve the holy Ghost. This caused *David* to pray and cry for the pardon and purging of his sin as freshly and as strongly, as if he had never received a pardon, or any evidence of Gods love (of which yet he had great store) before that day, *Psal.* 51.

Secondly, In times of great troubles and trials, whether personal or national, the Saints re-inforce prayer about pardon. This was *Job*'s case, his personal afflictions occasioned to beg the remission of sins; and not only remission for sins then committed, but for all the sins he had committed either before or after conversion. Even our formerly pardoned sins need pardon; when we lose the sight of pardon, and when the soul hath no visions, but visions of terrour, it must seek visions of peace in the free grace of God, renewing and sealing pardon in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Job having thus breathed his spirit in arguings, complaints and prayers, moves the Lord for a speedy end and gracious answer; otherwise he sees no way but he must breath back his spirit into the hands of the Lord who gave it, and lay his body in the dust from whence it was taken.

For now shall I sleep in the dust, and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be.

לעפר אשכב
Propriè ist cubare, hinc mortui שכבים *vocantur, ut etiam* ישנים
Nunc in pulvere dormiam. Vulg. Lat. ἐν γὰρ χώματι λεῖος ἔσομαι.

Now shall I sleep in the dust.] What he means by this sleep hath been handled (*chap.* 3. 13.) where it was shewed that death is called a sleep, why and in what manner death is a sleep. The word here translated *to sleep*, signifies properly to lie down; but the sence is the same, because men lie down when they compose and fit themselves to sleep. And the dead are called *down-liers* as well as *sleepers* in the Hebrew. The Septuagint reads it, *Now shall I go to the earth. David* speaks near this language, *Psal.* 22. 15, *Thou hast brought me to the dust of death.*

Observe hence whither we are travelling, and where we must take up a lodging for our bodies ere long. They whose heads are highest, they who lie in beds of Ivory, must lie down in a bed of earth, and rest their heads upon *a pillow of dust*. Most sleep in the dust while they live, but all must sleep in the dust when they die: Earthly men have earthly minds, and they cannot rest but in earth, for it is their center. Only he who hath laid up his heart in heaven, can comfortably think of laying down his head in the dust.

Further it is remarkable in how pleasing a notion *Job* speaks of death when his life was most unpleasant to him. He complained of restless nights in *vers.* 3, 4, 13, 14. of this Chapter; yet he could think of a time when he should lie quietly in his bed, and not have so much as a waking moment, or a distracting dream. And when he was once gone to *this bed*, the curtains of darkness being close drawn about him, he should open his eyes no more till the eyelids of that eternity-morning opened; therefore he concludes,

Thou shalt seek me in the morning (*sc.* of time) but I shall not be.

שחרתני
Si diluculaveris me, fiet ellipsis verbo.

In the Hebrew, Thou shalt seek me in the morning is but one word; and some cut out a Latine word fit to serve it. We may English it strictly to the Letter, *If thou morning me*, that is, if thou comest to seek me (as the force of this word hath been formerly given) with never so much diligence and care, I shall not be found, thou wilt not have *Job* alive upon the earth to bestow thy mercies upon;

For, I shall not be.] The Hebrew is, *And not I*, that is, I shall not be alive, I shall not be to be had, he means a *non-existence*, not, *a non-essence*; a being he should have, but he should not appear. It is as if he had said, *Lord, I shall not be a subject capable of outward deliverances, and bodily comforts unless they come speedily; Lord, if thou wilt give me any help, give it, for death hastens upon me, as if it hoped to be too nimble for, or to out-run thy succours.*

ואינני
Non ego, subaudi sum, vel ero.

Mr. *Broughton*'s translation seems to intend another sence, which other of the learned Hebricians favour too. He renders the latter part of the verse thus, *Whereas I lie now in the dust* (referring it to his present condition; I am now lying in the dust, *to be pitied of the keeper of men*, so he himself expounds, Lord, I lie in the dust, a pitiful object, then) *why dost thou not quickly seek me out, that I should no more be?* which he

cum jam in isto pulvere decumbam? aut quid non tempestivè requisiisti me, ut non essem? Jun.

he interprets, *I would by a quick death be rid from these pains*, As if in these words *Job* had again renewed his former desire of death; concerning which, many things have been spoken from preceding passages of his reply, I will not double upon them here.

But I take the former reading and meaning of the words, as most proper to the coherence and conclusion of *Job*'s discourse; and so they are but a repetition or re-inforcement of what he spake at vers. 7, 8. There he said, *O remember that my life is wind, mine eye shall no more see good, the eye of him that hath seen me, shall see me no more. Thine eyes are upon me, and I am not.* Here he speaks the same thing in some variety of words, *Thou shalt seek me in the morning, and I shall not be.* The severity of my sickness threatens to prevent thy earliest preparations for my relief.

Thus (through the strength of Christ) some discoveries have been made about this first congress or charge between *Eliphaz* and *Job*. But *Job* hath not yet done; behold a second and a third Combatant ready to enter the List against him: And when these three have once tried their skill and strength upon him, they all three charge him afresh a second time, and two of them a third. *Was ever poor soul held so hard to it as he?* How much doth the life of Grace make him exceed man, when he (as a man) could scare be reckoned among the living? Truth and Grace will triumph and prevail, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of flesh and nature, Is it not strange, that a man should not be weary with arguing, while he often professes he was wearied with living? That while he could scarce fetch his breath for pain, he should do so much work (in a manner) without a breathing. For as the messengers of his troubles gave him no rest; *But while one was yet speaking, there came another also and said*, &c. *And while a second was yet speaking, a third came and said*, &c. So neither did these Disputants about his troubles. While *Eliphaz* and *Job were* yet speaking, *Bildad answered and said*, &c, While *Bildad* and *Job* were yet speaking, *Zophar answered and said.* What *Eliphaz* said, and *Job* answered in his first undertaking, you have heard: The opening of what *Bildad* had to say, and *Job* to answer, waits (till the Lord shall be pleased to vouchsafe it) a further oppertunity. What is now (as himself hath pleased to inable his unworthy instrument) offered, waits upon him for his blessing. To him all blessing is for ever due; on him let praises ever wait for all his blessings, *Amen.*

AN

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

EIGHTH, NINTH AND TENTH

CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

JOB

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER:

To those chiefly of this CITY who have been the MOVERS, and continue the PROMOTERS of this WORK.

I Am your Debtor; and because my Stock cannot pass out great Sums at once, therefore I am constrained to discharge my Credit by the smaller Payments. I need not call upon you for Acquittances or cancell'd Bonds: I know your Ingenuity will confess more received then I have paid. I have paid you in the Book now Presented, as much as I intended for this time: But Time will not suffer me to pay you what I intended and had projected for an Epistle. And I believe your selves will easier excuse a short Epistle, then a longer stay for the whole Book. Accept both with your wonted Candor, and let these Labours on your behalf, be the return of your own Prayers to the Father of Lights, by the help of the Spirit of Grace in Jesus Christ, for

Jan. 12. 1646.

Your very Affectionate Friend and

Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE EIGHTH, NINTH, AND TENTH CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. VIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then anſwered Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and ſaid,*
How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like a ſtrong wind?
Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?

THE anſwer of *Eliphaz* to *Job's* firſt complaint, hath been opened in *Chap.* 4. 5. together with *Job's* reply, in the 6, & 7. In which he labours to diſ-aſperſe and vindicate himſelf from what *Eliphaz* had raſhly taxed him with, *Hypocriſie, The name of an Hypocrite (like that of a Heretick) is ſuch, as no man ought to be patient under.*

But while *Job* endeavours to clear himſelf in the opinion, or from the imputations of one of his friends, he runs into a further arrere of prejudices with a ſecond: Some of thoſe Arguments which he had framed to pay his debt to *Eliphaz*, and ſave his own integrity, being again charged upon his account by his friend *Bildad* the *Shuhite*; who preſents himſelf (a duty very commendable) as an *Advocate for God*; and he conceived there was but need he ſhould. *Job* in his reply having (in his ſenſe) wronged the juſtice of God, he takes himſelf obliged to ſtand up and clear it, to ſhew *Job* his ſuppoſed ſin, and provoke him to repentance, both by threatnings of further wrath, and promiſes of ſpeedy mercy. Thus in general.

More diſtinctly, there are four parts of *Bildads* ſpeech.

Firſt, A confutation of *Job's* reply to *Eliphaz*; and he gives it us ſhadowed by an elegant ſimilitude in *verſ.* 2. *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be like the ſtrong wind?* There's a cenſure upon all that he had ſpoken.

Secondly, He gives us an aſſertive Queſtion, concerning the juſtice of God; to clear it from, and ſet it above, whatſoever might ſeem to ſtain it in the eyes of men. This we have at *verſ.* 3. *Doth God pervert judgement? Or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice?* Not he.

Thirdly, In the body of the Chapter he urges divers Arguments to confirm this concluſion, that, *God is juſt*; and there are three heads of Argument, by which he confirms it;

Firſt, From the example of *Job's* Children, and from his own preſent, with the poſſibility of his future condition, in caſe he repent, from *verſ.* 3, to 8.

The ſecond Argument is drawn from the teſtimony of antiquity, and that's laid down in *verſ.* 8, 9, & 10.

The third Argument appears in the ſimilitudes;

Firſt, Of a *ruſh* or *flag*, in *verſ.* 11, 12, & 13.

Secondly, Of a *ſpiders web*, in *verſ.* 14, 15.

Thirdly, Of a *Tree flouriſhing* for a time, but anon plucked up, in *verſ.* 16, 17, 18, and 19. Theſe are the Arguments and Illuſtrations of his grand aſſertion.

Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert juſtice? No he doth not. *And thou mayeſt learn this leſſon from thy own experience, from the example of thy Children, from the teſtimony of antiquity, yea the withering ruſh, the ſpiders-web, the luxurious roots and branches of a tree may all be thy Maſters and inſtructors to teach thee this truth, That God is juſt.*

The fourth and laſt part of the Chapter, ſets forth the favour of God, to thoſe who are faithful and ſincere: for having maintained the juſtice of God, and ſhewed how terrible he will be to hypocrites who deal falſly with him; he now mitigates and mollifies his diſcourſe, by proclaiming the goodneſs of God to ſinners repenting, yea (who are the worſt of ſinners) to hypocrites if they repent, pluck off their masks or diſguiſes, and truly humble themſelves before him. This is the ſubject of the three laſt verſes of the Chapter, *Behold God will not caſt away a perfect man*, &c. As if he had ſaid, *Though God be juſt to deal with hypocrites, as he hath dealt with thee and thy Children, yet he will not caſt away the perfect and upright; ſhew thy ſelf ſuch, and he will receive thee.* This he quickens by ſubjoyning the further ſeverity of God, to thoſe that ſhall perſiſt in their hypocriſie, *verſ.* 20. and in the cloſe of the 22. *Neither will he help the evil doers, and the dwelling place of the wicked ſhall come to nought.*

Thus you have both the general ſcope, and likewiſe the ſpecial parts of *Bildad's* diſcourſe, which will give us ſome help towards a more clear diſcovery of particulars.

Verſ. 1. **Then anſwered Bildad the Shuhite, and ſaid.**

The ſpeaker is *Bildad*; I ſhall not ſtay upon the perſon; who this *Bildad* was, of what line and pedigree, was touched in opening *Chap.* 2. *verſ.* 11. and therefore I ſhall paſs to the matter about which he ſpeaks.

Verſ. 2. **How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? And how long ſhall the words of thy mouth be as a ſtrong wind?**

He begins very chidingly, **How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?**] The words import either, firſt, admiration, *How long!* As if he had ſaid, *Could any man have believed that thou wouldſt have ſpoken ſuch things as theſe, and theſe ſo long! How ſtrangely haſt thou forgot thy ſelf, to twiſt ſuch a thred, and ſpin out a diſcourſe ſo ſinfully, ſo frowardly, ſo long?*

Secondly, The words may carry a ſence of indignation in the ſpeaker, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* As if he had ſaid, *I am not able to bear thee any longer, I cannot endure ſuch language, it grates harſhly upon mine ear, and is a burden to my ſpirit; for ſhame give over, hold thy peace, enjoyn thy ſelf ſilence, lock up thy lips, How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?*

Thirdly, The charge of an accuſation may lie under theſe words, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* That is, *How long wilt thou ſpeak vain and fooliſh words, indiſcreet and falſe words, dangerous and blaſphemous words, imputing injuſtice unto God? Art thou obſtinate and pertinacious? Wilt thou not yet hearken to the admonitions and wholſom counſel of thy friends? How long!* Thus he taxes and cenſures him. *How long wilt thou ſpeak?* We have the like ſence in that Queſtion, *Pſal.* 4. 2. where *David* conteſts with his hardned enemies, *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into ſhame? How long will ye love vanity, and ſeek after leaſing?* How long, and how long? It is matter of admiration to think that reaſonable creatures ſhould be ſo unreaſonable to love vanity, and to love it long. His ſpirit riſes and boyls ſo high with holy indignation, to ſee men ſo fooliſh, that his mouth muſt run over in cenſure and accuſation, How long! The Text of Wiſdoms expoſtulation, *Prov.* 1. 22. (*How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity?*) bears the ſame gloſs, one interpretation fits both. *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?*

Interrogatio ex adjuncto tempore aculeos addit reprehenſioni. Sanct.

Theſe things.] The demonſtrative particle may have reference to the words immediately fore-going, and only to them, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* That is, the things which thou haſt ſpoken in *Chap.* 6, 7. The language is undervaluing and contemptuous, *How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things?* Such poor ſtuff. How long wilt thou trouble thy Auditors with ſuch matter, ſuch fruitleſs, frothy, crude, and undigeſted matter; matter ſo injurious, ſo diſhonourable to God, ſo unſavory, and unedifying to man.

Taking *Job* (under *Bildad's* apprehenſion) as having failed and erred in his diſcourſe, Obſerve,

First, *Perſeverance in evil is worſe then the doing of evil.*

How long wilt thou ſpeak theſe things? If thou having ſpoken once amiſs had'ſt recall'd thy ſelf, and ſtopped there it had been more excuſable; *To outlaſh ſometimes in a word, may be a wiſe-mans caſe:* but to make ſuch a continued ſtudied oration as this, and be out in all, and all to be an invective againſt Heaven, who is able to bear it? *To ſpeak or do ill, though but once, is too often by once; To act evil often, is to double every act.* The ſhorteſt time is too long to ſerve any luſt in. When the Apoſtle *Peter* (1 Pet. 4. 3.) ſaith, *The time paſt of our life may ſuffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*; his meaning is, *the time paſt is too much:* our luſts have got too much of our lives, as the world hath got too much of our loves. One minute is more then we owe to the ſervice of ſin. The ſufficiency here ſpoken of is an exceſs; the time paſt of our lives is too much to work the will of the *Gentiles.* We may not make an equal diviſion of our lives between our luſts and Chriſt, ſo much to Chriſt, ſo much to luſt. Nothing is more unequal then this equality. We can never ſerve Chriſt too long, nor ſin too ſhort a time. We can not beſtow too much of our breath in holy ſpeeches and conferences; nor can we beſtow two little in thoſe which are vain and ſinful. We may juſtly take off thoſe who are moſt conciſe and laconical in uſeleſs diſcourſes, with, *How long will you ſpeak theſe things? Frothy words are the waſte of time as well as of breath.*

Secondly, Note, *Bildad* rebukes *Job* for his laviſh language.

It is our duty to be watchful over our words.

How long wilt thou ſpeak thus; we muſt obſerve our own words, and know what we ſpeak. We ſhould ſtop our own mouths, and put our ſelves to ſilence, when the tongue grows unruly. *It were very happy that ſome had power as well as authority over their own mouths, and knew how to put that bridle* (ſpoken of in the Pſalm) *upon their own lips.* It is better for a man to ſtop his own mouth by prudence, then that another ſhould ſtop it by reproof.

Thirdly, Taking *Bildad's* ſuppoſition ſtill, that *Job* was in the wrong. Note,

It is our duty to give check to fruitleſs and frothy ſpeeches, much more to blaſphemous and wicked ſpeeches.

Bildad thought it high time to ſilence *Job*, ſeeing *Job* would not ſilence himſelf. The Apoſtle repreſents to *Titus* the tongue-folly of the *Cretians*, *There are many unruly and vain talkers among you, eſpecially they of the circumciſion*; and what muſt be done with theſe, who cared ſo little what they ſaid? He is counſell'd how to deal with them in the next words, *Whoſe mouths muſt be ſtopped, who ſubvert whole houſes*, &c. It is a ſin in the hearer to let another ſpeak ſinfully, without a ſignification of his diſtaſte. The word which the Apoſtle uſeth to *Titus*, is a metaphor taken from the *muzling of barking howling dogs*, when they open unſeaſonably and are unquiet; *Rational conviction is a Goſpel-muzle, and an effectual ſtop-mouth for unruly talkers.* And it is obſervable, that the Apoſtle uſeth this ſimilitude of muzling a dog, when he ſpeaks of thoſe of the circumciſion, concerning whom he had given caution in a very ſutable character (*Phil.* 3. 2.) *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the conciſion*; that is, of thoſe who ſtood for circumciſion. Writing to the *Philipians*, he calls them dogs; and his adviſe to *Titus* is, they muſt be muzl'd. The noxious iſſues of the tongue muſt either be cured or ſtopped, *Evil words corrupt* (which is worſe then the corrupting of good air) *good manners.* An infection taken in at the ear, hath often poyſon'd the heart.

ἐπιστομίζειν.

Fourthly, Taking *Bildad* as miſtaken (and ſo he was) in this reproof and cenſure upon *Job*, Obſerve,

Reproofs are often grounded upon miſtakes.

It is eaſie to reprove, what we do not apprehend. *Bildad* perceived not the reach and drift of *Job*, and he falls heavily upon him with reproofs. A due underſtanding of his ſcope, would have given a fair comment upon his words. But *Bildad* clothes the ſpeech of *Job* in a ſence which he abhorred; and having put it in that ugly dreſs, he reproves and cenſures it accordingly. Many diſ-figure the opinions and doctrines of others with conceits of their own, and preſuming they hold or mean thus and thus, they diſpute not againſt the real opinion of the oppoſite party but their own diſguiſe. As the perſons of the *Primitive Chriſtians* were often put into Lions, or Bears-skins, by their barbarous and heatheniſh perſecutors

persecutors, and then baited with Dogs; so are the opinions of many *later Christians* debated.

And how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?

רוח כביר *Spiritus sumitur pro halitu & per Metonymiam pro verbis*, i.e. *pro aere articulato, & per loquelæ instrumenta in verba formata.* Bold.

The Hebrew, word for word, runs thus; *And the words of thy mouth a strong wind:* we resume in this latter clause, *How long*, and add, *be like*, to supply the sence. There is no tearm of comparison expressed in the original, yet the strength of one is implied, and therefore to fill up the meaning, we render, *And how long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?* Mr. *Broughton* translates it without a note of similitude, *How long wilt thou talk in this sort, that the words of thy mouth be a vehement wind?*

Words are air or breath formed and articulated, by the instruments of speech. Hence breath and words are put for the same in divers Scriptures (*Psal.* 33. 6.) *By the word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. Breath* in the latter clause, is no more then *word* in the first, for it was a powerful word, which caused all the creatures to stand out in their several forms. So *Isa.* 11.4. *He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips (or with the wind of his lips) shall he slay the wicked*; It is not blowing upon wicked men that will slay them, but it is speaking to them; there is a power in the word of a Prophet, when spoken in the Name of Christ, which destroyes those who will not obey it, *Hos.* 6. 5. *I have hewed them by my Prophets, I have slain them by the words of my mouth.*

Græci & Latini Prophetas quosdam ex Hebræo Cabiros *cognominarunt, ob insignem eorum ad extra gravitatem & loquacitatem idem dicti Corybantes.* Bold.

Secondly, *Bildad* is conceived to allude to a certain sort or sect of men. For from *Cabir* here translated **strong**, the name of certain Poets or old Prophets is derived, whom the *Greeks* and *Latines* called *Cabirs* or *Cabirims*. These men had an affected outward gravity, yet were full of words, and much given to *Battology*, repeating the same thing over and over. *Bildad* ranks *Job* (say some) with those Prophets, *How long shall the words of thy mouth be like those roming Cabirs*, who by a needless multiplying of words, grated the ears, and burdened the spirits of all the hearers? Why doest thou speak, as if thou couldst carry the matter with empty words, and bare repetitions.

Quos Authores Latini Divos potes, seu potentes vocant Græci κάβειρους *dicuntur ab hac voce, quæ potem sive potentem denotat.* Drus. *Ad magnanimitatem referri potest, quod corpore attenuato exhaustisq; viribus fortiter tamen persisteret in loquendo & respondendo.* Cajet. *Jobi oratio non fuit frigida & languida sed vehemens & concitata.* Pined.

Thirdly, The word **strong wind**, may note the stoutness of *Job's* spirit, or magnanimity he expresst in his words. *Job's* language was not cold and chill, as if his breath were frozen, but he spake with height and heat; *The spirit and courage of a man, breathes out at his lips*; *How long shall the words of thy mouth be a strong wind?* When wilt thou yield to God, and lie humbly at his feet? What a heart hast thou? Thou speakest as big, as if thou hadst never been touched, as if God never laid one stroke upon thee; thou hast a weak body, but a stiff spirit: Thou speakest as if thou wouldst bear all down before thee, and by thy boldness, storm and bluster those out of countenance, who are here to give thee counsel.

Fourthly, Take in the similitude, *How long shall the words of thy mouth be as a strong wind?* That is, how long wilt thou speak so much, and speak so fiercely. For the word *Caber* is more then *Gadol*, which signifies barely *great*. Grammarians note, that it signifies both *continued quantity* and *discreet quantity*, multitude and magnitude. How many words wilt thou speak? and how great words wilt thou speak? Shall thy words be as a great, various, unfolded wind? (so the Vulgar) Wilt thou blow all the points of the compass at once, and like a whirle-wind, invade and circle us on every side.

Spiritus multiplex sermones oris tui. Vulg. πνεῦμα πολυρρήμων. *Spiritus multiloquus.* Sept.

Such words are like a strong wind.

First, Because of their blustering noise. There are stormy and tempestuous words. *The tempest of the tongue is one of the greatest tempests in the world.* Passionate language troubles both the air and the ear, makes all unquiet, like an enraged angry wind.

Secondly, In such words, as in stormy winds, there is great strength to bear all down before them, or to sway all to that point they blow for. As all the trees in a Forrest look that way which the wind sits: so all the spirits in any Assembly, are apt to turn that way, which words bearing a fair shew of reason direct. How often are the judgments and opinions of men, carried by words either to good or evil, to truth or error. And unless a man have good abilities of judgment and reason, to manage what he knows or holds, and to make himself master of it: It is a hard thing upon a large wind of anothers discourse, not to have his opinion turned. Hence the Apostle (*Tit.* 1. 11.) speaking of *vain talkers*, saith, Their words *subvert whole houses*; as a strong wind, so strong words blow houses down, *They subvert whole houses*; as that subverts the frame and materials of the house, so this the people or inhabitants of the house; when Christ breathed graciously towards *Zacheus*, he said (*Luk.* 19. 9.) *This day is salvation come to this house*; when false Teachers breath erroniously, *subversion comes to many houses*. The Apostle (*Ephes.* 4. 14.) using this similitude about the doctrines of men, adviseth us to look to our ground, and that we be well rooted; *That we be no more children, tossed too and fro, and carried with every wind of doctrine*; as if he had said, The wind that blows from the lips of seducers (unless you be well established) will carry you to and fro like children, or wave your tops up and down as trees, yea endanger the pulling you up by the roots.

Thirdly, Strong words are as strong winds in a good sence, for as many strong winds purge and cleanse the air, making it more pure and healthy; so those strong wholsom winds from the mouths of men, purge the mind of error, and cleanse the soul of sin: This is the special means which Christ hath set up to cleanse his people from infectious and noisom opinions. These he disperses and dispels by the breath of his Ministers, in the faithful and authoritative dispensation of the Gospel.

Fourthly, There are ill qualities in strong winds; some are infectious winds, they corrupt the air, conveying ill vapors to the places on which they breathe: So there is a strong, unwholsom wind of words, which carries unto sin or error. How often are the spirits and manners of men infected and poison'd by such a breath?

Fifthly, They may be compared unto strong winds, in regard of the lightness of them; the wind hath little solidity in it, and that's it which *Bildad* especially reproveth in *Job*; here are a great many words, much of the tongue, but here's little matter, *Words without weight are but wind:* when you gather them up, weigh and consider them fully, you can make nothing of them, there's no tack in them. Wind will not feed, no more will such words; but wholsom and faithful words are meat and drink, strength and nourishment to the soul: Sound discourse yields a well-tempered understanding, many refreshing morsels.

Lastly, They are like strong winds for the swiftness of them; words pass speedily, and fill all quickly; *Their line is gone out thorow all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*, Psal. 19.4. Another Psalm speaks as much of wicked men, *Their tongue walketh through the earth*, Psal. 73.9. As the wind runs from one part of the world to another; so do words, when they are sent upon an errand, either to do good, or to do hurt; therefore God chose the Ministry of the Word as an Instrument to save his people. And it is the fittest Instrument, running swiftly into the ears, and so conducting truth into the hearts of thousands at once. Upon the day of Pentecost (*Acts* 2. 2, 3.) when the Disciples met together, the Text saith, *Suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting:* first comes a rushing wind; what followeth? *There appeared unto them cloven tongues with fire.* These represented the manner how the Gospel should be conveyed through the world: The Holy Ghost is sent in tongues, to shew, that by tongues tipt and inspired, acted and moved by the Holy Ghost, the word should be subdued to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The tongue is the chief Organ of speech. And observe, with the tongues there comes a wind, a rushing wind, implying that words spoken by those tongues should be as a mighty rushing wind, and like that wind, which filled all the house where they sat, should fill the world, even all Nations with the sound of the Gospel; that, like a strong wind they should bear down the errors, sins and lusts of men before them, and like a wholsom wind, purge and winnow out all the filthiness and uncleanness, the chaff and dust of mens spirits. By cloven tongues,

and a rushing wind, wonders have been wrought in the world. *As those unruly talkers* (Tit. 1. 11.) *subverted, so those who talk by rule have converted whole houses*; The wind of words blows both good and evil to the world; and we may as much encourage holy tongues, *Let your words be long and long, a strong wind:* as check a vain talker in the language of *Bildad*, *How long shall thy words be a strong wind.*

From this general reproof, *Bildad* descends to a special charge against *Job.*

Vers. 3. **Doth God pervert judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert justice?**

ἀδικήσει κρίσιν. *Injuste agit judicans.* Sept. *Thesis est diendorum.*

As if he had said, *Job, thou hast spoken words which like a strong wind pervert all things, and turn them up-side-down.* But, *Doth God pervert? Doth he turn things up-side-down? This blasphemy is the interpretation of many of thy complaints. Thou seemest to lay this aspersion upon God but (with indignation I speak it) doth God pervert judgment.*

The Question is resolvable into a vehement negation, *God doth not pervert judgment, neither doth the Almighty pervert justice.* He gives it with a question for greater emphasis, *Doth God pervert judgment?* Dost thou think he will? Far be it from thee to think so; Injustice lies far from the heart of God, Justice lies at his heart, *He loveth judgment*, Psal. 37. 28.

To clear the Text, I shall briefly touch upon the single terms; 1. *God.* 2. *Almighty.* 3. *Judgment.* 4. *Justice*: And then shew what it is to pervert judgment and justice; from all it will appear, how extreamly opposite it is to the very nature of God to pervert either.

אל *Fortis potens.* Shaddai *notat robustum & sufficientem ad omnia perpetranda & executioni mandanda quæ facienda judicaverit, aliqui vertunt, invictum.*

Doth God.] The word is, *El*, signifying the *strong God*, the *mighty God*, the *powerful God.* In the second clause, *Doth the Almighty pervert justice?* We have the word, *Shaddai*, which name of God was largely opened at *Chap.* 5. *v.* 17. I shall not stay upon it here, but only as it respects the point in hand, and so there are three interpretations of that Title observable.

First, It notes God all-sufficient to do what he pleaseth, or to effect what he designeth: if he gives direction for any judgment to be executed, he is *Shaddai*, It shall be done. As he is *El*, a powerful Judge to give sentence, so he is *Shaddai*, an Almighty God to execute the sentence: There is no resisting his power, no getting out of his hands, his name is *Shaddai.*

Alii vertunt uberrimum, abundantem copiosum, cujus virtus, & munificentia, per omnia permeat, & cujus uberibus & bonitate omnia alantur & nutriantur, qui nullius indiget, qui bonorum nostrorum nulla cupiditate tangitur. Pined. ὁ τὰ πάντα ποιῶν. Sept. *Quod sic explicant, qui cunctarum rerum naturas summo ordine & equitate constituit, is in te affligendo, quod justum est, non subvertet.*

Secondly, The word signifies, *one who hath all abundance, plenty and fulness in himself*; As also whose power, goodness, and bounty, flow out to the supply of others, himself having no need to receive from any other. He is a *fountain of all for all.* Hence *Shaddai* cannot but do justice; He that hath abundance in himself needs not take bribes to pervert justice; *Needy Judges are often covetous Judges; they who have not a fulness of their own, are under a great temptation to wrong others, to supply their wants.* But he that gives to all, needs not receive from any. This consideration sets God infinitely above one of the strongest temptations to Injustice.

Thirdly, The word *Shaddai*, is rendred, *The maker of all things.* Will the Almighty, the maker of all things, who hath set the world in such an exquisite form and order, who hath given so much beauty to the creature; will he put things out of order, or do such a deformed act as this, *pervert justice?* He that is the maker of all things, and hath made them in number, weight and measure, will he turn the world up-side-down, or make confusion in the world? It is not possible he should.

So then the name *Shaddai*, in these three senses, is aptly applied to God, in opposition to the perverting of justice. As *Abraham* debates the matter with him (*Gen.* 18. 25.) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?* It is impossible for God who judgeth all men, to do an act of injustice unto any man. He that judgeth all can do injustice to none. God takes no advantage to be unjust, because none can call him to account for injustice. They should be furthest from doing wrong, who need not fear any appeal from them, or complaint against them, if they do wrong. The Judge of the whole earth hath none to judge him. He will do right to all, who cannot be judged by any.

Further, Consider those two words, **judgment and justice.**] Judgment and justice are often put in Scripture for the same, and when put together, the latter is as an epithite to the former, *Psal.* 119. 121. *I have done judgment and justice:* that is, I have done judgment *justly*, exactly, to a hair. Sometimes they have a distinct signification.

Facere legē & præceptū est facere judicium. Deus ideo leges suas judicia vocat, quod æquissima sunt, quæ præscribit.

First, Judgment signifies, that right which every man ought to do at all times (*Psal.* 106. 3. *Isa.* 56. 1.)

Secondly, The Law or rule it self, according to which every man is to do right, *Levit.* 26. 26. *Psal.* 19. 10. God calls all his Laws *judgments*, because they are all most just and equal. Judgment hath a three-fold opposition, by which we may understand the nature of it.

First, Judgment is opposed to anger, rigor and severity, *Jerem.* 10. 24. *Correct me, O Lord, but with judgment, not in thine anger:* That is, Correct me mercifully, moderately, and in measure: suffer not thy whole displeasure to arise; do not exact the utmost farthing. In which sence the judgments of God upon wicked men in Hell shall be without judgment: And thus to do a thing without judgment, is all one, as to do it without mercy. Ezek. 44. 24

Secondly, Judgment is opposed to folly, or to foolishness: Judgment is Wisdom; when we say, Such an one is *a man of judgment*, we mean, he is a wise man. Thus judgment is an ability to judge.

Thirdly, Judgment is opposed to injustice and wrong, which is the vulgar and common meaning.

We may take it in any of these senses here. As judgment is opposed to anger, so it is moderation in justice, *Will the Lord pervert judgment?* That is, Will not he be as moderate in executing judgment, as equity can admit? *Hos.* 11. 9. *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger. I will not return to destroy* Ephraim, *for I am God and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the City.* As an enemy having taken a City, to shew them some favor, saith, I will not enter your City with my Army, to spoyl and plunder you: so God speaks here, *Though men be as wicked as they can, yet God will not be as angry as he can.*

Again, Will he pervert Judgment, as it imports Wisdom? No, He walks exactly by the rule of Wisdom, of the highest and purest Wisdom. There are no mists or clouds of ignorance before the eye of his understanding. And as he hath no darkness, so no false lights.

Lastly, Take it as opposed to injustice; *Will the Lord pervert judgment?* Will he wrong any man? Carries he a matter sinisterly or partially? He will not do it.

משפט *Judicium, jus & mos seu modus in judicando.*

Again, As judgment and justice are taken precisely or distinctly.

Judicium est in vero absq; errore cognoscendo, justitia in tribuendo cuique quod suum est.

First, Judgment signifies due order in trying and finding out the state of a cause: And Justice the giving of sentence upon that tryal.

Secondly, Judgment is a clear knowledge of what ought to be done: And Justice is the doing of that which we know. Justice is an evenness and uprightness of Conscience, in passing every thing according to received light.

Judicium pœnam respicit, justitia compensationem bene actorū. Drus.

Thirdly, Some distinguish them thus: Judgment is in condemning those that are guilty; and Justice is in absolving and acquitting those that are innocent, or rewarding those who have done well.

Fourthly, Thus, Judgment respects capital causes, which are for life; and Justice respects civil causes, which are for estate or liberty.

Take them in any of these senses, or under whatsoever other distinction they are considerable. The Lord God *El-Shaddai*, is no perverter of either. He never disturbs or clogs the order of tryal: He is no hinderer of the sentence from due execution. He exactly understands every cause, and he awards what is due to every person. He wrongs no man in life or limb, in estate or liberty.

Thus we see what Judgment and Justice are: I shall now open what it is to pervert Judgment and Justice. The same word is used in both. *

**Ista repetitiones divina eloquia multum commendant, sive eadem verba alta sententia sive aliis verbis eadem sententia repetatur, illa enim ejusdem rei resumptio, moram quandam in meditando & ponderando requirit, quod in Psalmis frequens.* August.

Doth

שות *Pervertit, ſubvertit, detorquet, à recto & æquo, ſupplantat.* Vulg. *Eſt autem in verbo (ſupplanto) perbella Metaphora, proprie eſt objecto, vel ſuppoſito pede aliquē ad caſum impellere.*

Doth God pervert?] Some tranſlate it, ſupplant Juſtice. And ſo it imports, ſecret, cunning wayes of injuſtice; for to ſupplant, properly is to come behind a man, and to ſtrike up his heels, and caſt him down, or to lay ſomewhat in his way, upon which he may trip or ſtumble, and then fall. God doth not ſupplant Juſtice, he layes no plots, he ſets no ſnares, to entangle or overthrow a man in his cauſe.

More largely, The word ſignifieth, *To make crooked*, and ſo it very well anſwers the point in hand. Judgment and Juſtice are both carried by a ſtraight line: They are the rectitude of our actions. To pervert Judgment, is to make crooked lines: So we have the word (*Eccl.* 1. 16.) *That which is crooked cannot be made ſtraight.* He means it of civil, not natural things, whoſe crookedneſs is often cured by art; but who can cure all civil evils? Man is not able by all his diligence to turn the courſe of things which God hath determined, though to him there appear much crookedneſs, and many diſtortions. *Solomon* himſelf makes this interpretation (*Chap.* 7. 13.) where he ſhews, that it is beſt to ſubmit to God, becauſe his will is irreſiſtible, and the effects of it unavoidable; *Conſider the work of God, for who can make that ſtraight which he hath made crooked?* So then, to pervert judgment is to make judgment crooked; or to make judgment (to which all things and perſons ſhould bow) to bow it ſelf down, as the word is alſo uſed, *Eccleſ.* 12. 3. In the deſcription of old-age, *The ſtrong men ſhall bow themſelves*; the legs and knees in old-age bow and double under us. *To pervert juſtice is to creeple juſtice, to make it lame and halt.* This word is tranſlated, *to overthrow* (Job 19. 6.) *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compaſt me in with his net.* *Job* ſpeaks in a great paſſion, as if God had come upon him violently in judgment, and caſt him: We ſay a man is overthrown or caſt in his ſute. God overthrows men and Nations; but he never overthrows Juſtice. A man who overthrows his adverſary, may ſettle Juſtice. *Job* looked upon himſelf, as one againſt whom God had entred his action, and overthrown him in the ſute. Lamenting *Jeremy* cries out (*Lam.* 3. 59.) *O Lord thou haſt ſeen my wrong* (it is this word) Thou haſt ſeen how I am vexed, and wreſted by the hard dealings of men, *judge thou my cauſe*; Thou wilt judge me aright, and ſet me ſtraight again.

Judgment is perverted two wayes.

First, By Subtilty.

Secondly, By Power.

First, Some pervert judgment by ſubtilty; They are wiſe to do evil. The Lord hath infinite wiſdom, and ſo is able to go beyond and over-reach all creatures; he is wiſe enough to befool all the world: but he is not wiſe to do evil; His wiſdom is not a trap or a ſnare to others, but an unerring guide and light to himſelf.

Secondly, Some pervert judgment by violence and force: if they cannot untye the knot by craft, they will cut it aſunder by power; and if they have not law for it, they have will for it, and an arm for it, and it ſhall be done. The Lord can do what he will, but he hath no will to do what is evil. He can put forth as much ſtrength as he deſires, but he hath no deſire to pervert juſtice, or to act his power to over-aw and maſter it.

Further, To pervert judgment and juſtice, hath theſe two things in it.

First, *To darken and obſcure the rule of judgment.*

Secondly, *To torture or miſ-interpret the rule of judgment.*

First, Judgment is perverted by darkning and obſcuring the Law or rule of Juſtice. God doth not do ſo: He never caſts a miſt before his Word, or a vail over it, that he may act againſt it.

Secondly, Neither doth he miſ-interpret his Law. A good Law ill expounded is made the warrant of an evil Judgment. A gloſs corrupting the Text of the Law corrupts Juſtice. *Where tongue and conſcience are ſet to ſale, the wit muſt find out ſomewhat to help the market.*

The words opened invite theſe Obſervations,

First, That *God is moſt exact in judgment, God is a juſt God.*

It is a high truth, and we ſhould adore it, that whatſoever God doth, he is juſt in doing it. When Reaſon cannot reach, or make it out, yet Faith muſt; and we muſt honor God in what we cannot underſtand: The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, though his wayes are paſt finding out. For,

First, He hears every cauſe before he judges: He doth not judge one ſide before he knows the other, or judge any man before he hath heard him fully out: We ſee both (*Gen.* 11. & *Gen.* 18.) in thoſe two great acts of Juſtice, when God confounded the builders of *Babel*, and when he deſtroyed *Sodom*, *I will go down and ſee whether it be altogether according to the report that is come up unto me.* God needs no Intelligence to be brought him unto Heaven; neither doth he that fills all places go to any place to inform himſelf: but he ſpeaks thus, to note how exact he is in point of Juſtice; to ſhew that he deals with the Children of men, as a man: who hearing a report of ſuch a thing done, ſaith, I will not judge of it by what I hear, but I will go to ſee whether it be ſo or no. Without evidence of the fact, the ſentence cannot be juſt, though it may be right.

Secondly, He examineth and takes confeſſion, which is another point of Juſtice. So he proceeded with our firſt Parents (*Gen.* 3.) propoſing Interrogatories unto them, and then the Judgment is pronounced according unto what was confeſt; he judgeth them out of their own mouths, *verſ.* 17. *Becauſe thou haſt done this, and harkned unto the voice of thy Wife, therefore,* &c.

Thirdly, God proceeds by the evidence of the Law, as well as by the evidence of the fact; and this alſo ſets forth the exactneſs of his judgment: Theſe two things make judgment perfect; you muſt not only have the evidence of the fact, that ſuch a thing is done, but you muſt have the evidence of the Law condemning ſuch a deed. Though God himſelf be an everlaſting Law, and he may judge all from his own breſt, yet he hath given out a Law, which gives the knowledge of ſin. It is ſaid, *Rom.* 2. *They that have ſinned without the Law, ſhall periſh without the Law*; as if ſome ſhould be judged without Law: but he means without a Law formally publiſhed, not materially enacted. For he ſpeaks of the *Gentiles*, who were not within the hearing of Mount *Sinai*, and had not ſeen that formality of a *Law written in Tables of ſtone*; yet they had *a Law written in their hearts:* They that have not heard the Law publiſhed or ſeen it written in a Book, ſhall be judged by the *Law written in their hearts, their conſcience bearing them witneſs, and their thoughts accuſing, or elſe excuſing one another.*

Fourthly, God is impartial in giving judgment: He doth not ſtrike one and ſpare another, who is under the ſame condemnation; nothing can ſway or byas him, nothing can preponderate the ballance of Juſtice in his hand; you cannot put in any conſideration to ſway his beam, beſide the right.

There are three things which uſually cauſe men to pervert juſtice, the Lord is free from them all.

First, *Fear of greatneſs:* Some would do juſtice, but they dare not; the buſineſs concerns a great man, and to do juſtice upon ſuch, is, *To take a Bear by the tooth*, (as we ſay) *or to play with the paw of a Lion.* Now the Lord is not turned away for fear, nor defers he Juſtice for any mans big looks, *The day of the Lord* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 2.) *ſhall be againſt the high Oaks.* He is *El-Shaddai*, the Almighty, the all-powerful God, and therefore cares not for the might or power of man.

Secondly, *Hope of reward*; that's another thing which cauſeth many to pervert judgment. With ſome their hope is ſtronger then their fear: They care not for the greatneſs of men, but they hope for gain. A bribe taken or promiſed clogs and obſtructs the courſe of Juſtice (*Hoſ* 4. 14.) *Her Rulers with ſhame do love, Give ye*; the Hebrew is, *Her Shields*; Magiſtrates ſhould be as Shields to the people to protect them; but what did they? *They love, Give ye*; that word pleaſed them. They were more pleaſed with receiving rewards, then with doing right. The Lord is above all gifts, he is *Shaddai*, he hath all in himſelf, and needs not that any ſhould give unto him; and he tells them expreſly (*Ezek.* 7. 19.) *That their ſilver and their gold ſhall not be able to deliver them in the day of his wrath*; offer thouſands of ſilver and gold, he will not ſtay judgment a minute for it; *Prov.* 11. 4. *Riches profit not in the day of wrath*; In the day of mans wrath they ſometimes will, but never in the day of Gods.

Thirdly, *Affection and neareneſs of relation pervert judgment.* Many have clean hands, free from bribes, and ſtout hearts free from fears, yet they are overcome with affection and relations; theſe put out the eye of juſtice. The

Lord is above all relations. As he commands us in our cleaving unto Christ, not to know Father or Mother, *Yea to hate Father and Mother, Wife,* &c. (and those are nearest to us) that we may keep close unto Christ; So himself doth not know the nearest relation, to pervert judgement or do wrong in favor of it. Hence he saith of *Coniah* (*Jer.* 22. 24.) *Though* Coniah *be as the signet upon my right hand, yet will I pluck him thence:* Let him plead nearness (as men do, such a man is of your blood or alliance, pray spare him) God will not spare the signet on his right hand, that is, he will not stop justice upon any pretence of nearness or usefulness.

Etiamsi fuisset Jeconia mihi charissimus quem semper in oculis ferrē. Jun.

Fifthly, God is exact (take them distinctly) both in judgment and in justice. He is as curious in searching out the cause, as in sentencing the person. As ready to acquit the innocent, as to condemn the guilty: as careful to relieve the oppressed, as to chasten the oppressor: as zealous in rewarding those who deserve well, as in punishing those who do evil. Not to reward is as great injustice, as not to punish. What God hath promised shall be performed, and what he threatens shall be inflicted. He will neither discourage goodness by neglecting it, nor encourage sin by winking at it. He hath bread in one hand, and a sword in the other.

Pervertit jus, qui non punit improbos; pervertit justitiā, qui non remunerat justorum bona opera. Drus.

Thus we see the Lord is most exact in justice (*Psal.* 48. 10.) *The right hand of the Lord is full of righteousness.* His power and might are his right hand; and that right hand hath nothing but righteousness in it. Few men come to that of *Laban, It is in the power of mine hand to do thee hurt,* but I will not: most do as much hurt as is in their power. God hath all power in his hand, but he wrongs no man. As none have now any cause to say, that they have received wrong from the hand of God: so at last all shall confess they have not.

Further, *Bildad* speaking upon supposition, that God was wronged in justice, teacheth us,

That, *It is a duty to vindicate the justice of God, whensoever we hear it wronged.*

When we hear any wounding God in his faithfulness, truth, or justice, we should presently stand up to plead for him; What, will God be unfaithful? Will God pervert judgement? Will God be untrue? *&c.* Thus we should plead for God. When *Jeremy* could not make out the justice of God, he is an advocate for his justice, *Lord, thou art righteous, yet let me plead with thee.* He would not have the matter once questioned, though the manner was enquired. Observe,

Lastly, That, *the judgments of God may be secrets to us, but they are never injuries to us.*

Justice is in all the dealings of God, but his justice is not alwayes visible. His judgments are founded upon reason, when upon his will, for his will is the highest reason. God cannot be unjust, and he ever punishes those who are. He is so far from subverting judgment, that he subverteth Kings and Magistrates, yea, Nations and Kingdoms for subverting judgment; *To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not,* Lam. 3. 36. The Hebrew is, *The Lord seeth not*: That is, He doth not see it, to approve it; but he doth see it to punish it. He is an avenger of those who will not avenge the oppressed. And as he looks for judgment in all places, so especially among his own people, upon whom he bestows most mercy (*Isa.* 5. 2.) When the Lord had done so much for his vineyard, *He looked for judgment, and behold oppression: for righteousness, but behold a cry.* God makes privy search thorow a Nation to find this jewel: Judgment between man and man in commerce, which is, *commutative justice*; judgment from Magistrates to the people, which is, *distributive justice*: for these God is searching at this day; one of the greatest sins among us, is the perverting of judgment: And until judgment return to man, how can we expect mercy should return from God? (*Jer.* 5. 1.) *Run to and fro thorow the streets of* Jerusalem, *and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that loves the truth, and I will pardon it.* A Land is seldom fill'd with the judgments of God, till it is emptied of judgment among men. What a sad thing is it that there should be so many cries against injustice on earth, in a time when there is so much crying out for mercy from Heaven: That in such a time when the Judgments of God are upon our selves, we should not learn righteousness to act it among our selves! I am perswaded the *Sword of War* had been rusting in its sheath to this day, if the *Sword of Justice* had been used as it ought, both to punish offenders, and protect the innocent. And when the Sword of Justice shall be both wayes imployed, I doubt not but the Sword of War shall be sheathed again, and imployed no more, but be *beaten into plow-shares, and our spears into pruning hooks. Keep ye judgment* (saith the Lord by his Prophet, *Isa.* 56. 1.) *for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed.* God hath done terrible things in righteousness among us, and we hope he will do comfortable things in righteousness among us: seeing the righteous destructions of God have been upon us, and his righteous salvations (we hope) are near us, let not our righteousness be far off.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

If thy Children have sinned against him, and he have cast them away for their transgression.
If thou wouldst seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty.
If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy Righteousness prosperous.
Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly encrease.

THese four verses contain the first confirmation of the former general Position, *That God is just:* which is resolved out of those Questions, *Doth God pervert Judgment? Or doth the Almighty pervert Justice?* He doth not. Then, *God is just*, there's the Position. And as that Position consisteth of two parts, so also doth this proof or confirmation of it.

First, That God doth not pervert judgment (taking judgment under that strict notion for punishing of offenders) he proveth by the example of *Job's* Children, whom God punished because of their transgression, as he conceived.

Secondly, That God doth not pervert justice (taking justice under that strict and distinct notion of rewarding and relieving the innocent) he proveth by the readiness of God to do *Job* good in case he should humble himself and repent, in *vers.* 5, 6, 7.

His Argument for the former may be thus conceived.

He doth not pervert judgment who punisheth those who have sinned against him.
But God hath punished thy Children for their sin.
Therefore he doth not pervert judgment.

His Argument for the latter may be thus formed.

He doth not pervert justice, who is ready to pitty as soon as an offender humbly seeks, sues and submits unto him.
But God is ready to help thee as soon as ever thou humbly seekest unto him.
Therefore God doth not pervert justice.

Thus you have the general sence of these four Verses, as Arguments brought for proof of the former point, that God doth not pervert judgment or justice. I shall now open them distinctly.

If thy Children have sinned against him.

There may be a two-fold sence given of these words.

First, Thus, *Although thy Children have sinned against him, and he hath cast them away for their iniquity; yet, if thou wilt seek unto him, he will do thee good.* Which translation makes the sence more clear then ours, *If thy Children have sinned against him,* &c. The one is a supposition of what might be; the other a concession of what was.

Secondly, By way of proportion, thus, *As thy Children have sinned against him, so he hath cast them away for their transgression.* And so *Bildad* argueth with *Job* upon the same principle that *Eliphaz* had done before, *scil.* that his sons and himself had exceedingly provoked God, and that therefore God had sent that judgment, and laid that heavy stroke upon them, *If thy Children*, or, *although thy Children have sinned.*

Against

חטאו לו

Against him.] That word is to be opened a little. The Hebrew is, *Have sinned to him.* Which is indifferently Translated, either *before or against him*; we take the latter.

Every sin is committed against God; that's the first. Sin is most opposite to God. It is against God in his Nature: against God in his Will: against God in his very Being. Sin would thrust God out of the world, if it were possible; and therefore it is rightly translated, *They have sinned against him.* No marvel if God do so much against sinners, when sin doth so much against him; but it is not a miracle, that God should do any thing, especially such great things for sinners, when sin doth so much against him? *David* (*Psal.* 51. 4.) saw his sin was so much against God, that he overlooks all others against whom it was; *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*; which some mis-interpret, as if, because he was a King, he could do no injury to his Subjects, and therefore saith, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned.* But, *They who rule men, may sin against man*; and *David* sinned in that act against man: First, By doing private wrong: Secondly, By giving publike scandal. The reason then why *David* spake thus, was because the sin he had committed was so much against God, that though he had grievously offended against man, in taking away the life of one Subject, the chastity of another, and by endangering the whole Army to compass a cover for his sin, yet in this, his sin exceeded in sinfulness, that he sinned against God; and therefore he saith, *Against thee, thee only*; or take it comparatively, the sin is so much against thee, that what is against any other is not worth the naming. *God is not only wronged, but he is chiefly wronged in every sin.* As, because in the wrong done to the life or estate of a Subject, the King is chiefly wronged, therefore all Inditements run in this stile, *Against the peace of our Soveraign Lord the King, his Crown and Dignity.* Lastly, That place may be understood in the second sence of, *Against thee*, that is, *Before thee*; and so it seems to be expounded in the latter part, *Against thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight*; that is, though others took no notice of this, though it was done in secret (2 *Sam.* 12. 12.) yet it was committed clearly and plainly before thine eyes, thine eyes which are ten thousand times brighter then the Sun, beheld me in the darkness of that folly; and therefore against thee have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; as noting, that though it were conceal'd and hidden from men, yet it could not be conceal'd and hidden from God. *If thy Children have sinned against him.*

לך לבדך
Tibi, tibi soli.

And he have cast them away for their transgression.

Bildad's position is true in it self, but false in the application, *If thy Children have sinned against him.* It is a truth, that godly parents may have wicked Children. Grace doth not always run in a Blood. But it was unevident unto *Bildad*, that *Job's* Children had sinned against God in his sence. It is not the common sinner whom *Bildad* meaneth; by sinning against God, he intends not the inevitable actings of sinful nature, but the voluntary studied improvements, heightnings, and provocations of sinful nature.

Further, In that he concludes, *They were cast away for their transgression:* He faileth again. It is a truth, that sin is the meritorious cause of punishment, *Thy destruction is from thy self*, saith the Lord, *Hos.* 13. 9. *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee*, Jer. 4. 18. Sin will help us to sorrow enough. Yet this is not a truth, that every man is afflicted for his sin. As no man knows the love or hatred of God; so no man knows the sin or holiness of man by all that is before him: we cannot argue every one is cast away for his transgression, because he is cast away.

ישלחם ביד פשעם

He hath cast them away for their transgression.] The Hebrew is very elegant, *He hath sent them away in the hand of their transgression:* or, *He hath put them into the hand of their transgression.* Mr. *Broughton* translates it so: *As thy Children have sinned against him, so he hath sent them into the hand of their trespasses. Into the hand*, that is, into the power, as (*Chap.* 5. 20.) *the hand of the Sword*, is, the power of the Sword: and (*Psal.* 63. 10.) *They shall fall by the Sword:* the Hebrew is. *They shall fall by the hand of the Sword.* Then, *He hath delivered them into the hand of their transgression*, is, into the power of their transgression.

There are two things considerable about this expression of sending or giving up into the hand of transgression.

שלח
Simpliciter mittere aut ejicere significat, quasi cum recto tramite aberrassent, aberrandi copiam pro libidine fecisset.

First, It may Note, That God had delivered up *Job's* Children unto the raign or dominion of their own sinful hearts, or had laid the reyns in their necks, suffering their lusts to hurry them whither they would, to carry them captive unto every sin, and rush them head-long into every evil. The word —— here used, signifies either simply, to send, or violently to cast, or to put a thing away from us: and so, it is as much as if *Bildad* had said, *For as much as thy children would sin against God, he suffered them to sin their fill; they being wicked, he gave them up to do all wickednesses: They loved to wander from him, and he let them wander.* We have this sence of the word (*Prov.* 29. 15.) *A Child left unto himself brings his Mother to shame:* The Hebrew is, *A Child sent away, sent to himself, or put into his own hands*; A Child sent away to himself, or left alone, bringeth shame, that is, will certainly run into vile and enormous courses, to the shame of her that bare him. A Child left, or sent to himself, is one that hath no guide, no governor, no instructor, but himself. *A man that will learn't only of himself, hath but a fool to his master*; How much more then a weak Child, what a Master, what a Tutor hath a Child, if he have none but himself? To be *left or sent out to themselves*, is, to have none to counsel or advise them in a right way, or to give them any stop and check in an ill way. The character that *Paul* and *Barnabas* gave of the former times, when they preached to the Heathens at *Lystra*, was this (*Act.* 14. 16.) *We exhort you to turn unto the living God that made Heaven and Earth, who in times past suffered all Nations to walk in their own wayes.* He let them go, and never staid them at all, they had no bridle of restraint, not so much as a word to bring them back; *He suffered all Nations*, as if he had said, *He left them in the hand of their transgression*, that their own evil hearts should do what they would with them. In which sence we may also understand that place (*Act.* 17. 30.) when *Paul* at *Athens* disputed with the Philosophers, he tells them that now God began to look towards them, and had sent them the knowledge of Christ, *The times of that ignorance God winked at; but now he calleth all men every where to repent.* The words undergo a two-fold interpretation: Some thus, to note the indulgence of God, *The time past of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, he did not deal severely and strictly with them, when they sinned, because they had no means, or so little means to keep them from sin. And there is a truth in it, for though ignorance doth not totally excuse sin, yet it doth abate the degree and measure of sin. But there is another sence, which I rather embrace, *The times of that ignorance God winked at*; that is, in those times wherein there was so much darkness and blindness in the world, God let men go on in their sin: they sinned, and he never called upon them, he never opposed them, or sent any to teach them better. God did not manifest his will to them as unto the Jews, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. *He sheweth his word unto* Jacob, *his statutes and judgments unto* Israel; *he hath not dealt so with any Nation*, &c. So that this winking is opposed to favor, rather then to justice. To have the eye upon a place, or upon persons, is to shew them favor, 1 *King.* 8. 29. The later branch clears this meaning, *But now he calleth all men every where to repent:* now he doth not leave men in the hands of their transgressions: He doth not wink and let them do what they list: now Gospel-light is risen to the world, and there are many sent out to call in and reclaim wandering prodigals, many to cry, *Return, return.* He speaks of it as of the mercy and priviledge of that age, beyond what the former ages had enjoyed. That of the same Apostle hath a paralel sence (*Rom.* 1. 20, & 26.) where describing the dealings of God with the *Gentiles*; who sinned against the light of nature, he concludes, Therefore God left them in the darkness of nature, in the worst of nature: they came not up so high as the principles of nature might have led them in the worship of God, therefore he left them below the principles of nature in the things of man, *He gave them up to vile affections*, which is as much as to say, *He put them in the hands of their transgressions.* And ver. 28. *He gave them over to a reprobate mind*, to a mind that could not judge aright, which

Nihil aliud sibi volunt Pauli verba quam cæcitati additos fuisse homines, donec se illis Deus patefaciat. Calv.

which had not a true understanding of any thing: Hence they elected the worst, reprobated the best things. The like we have (*Psal.* 81. 11.) of Gods own people the Jews, *So I gave them up unto their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels.* The Hebrew is, *I sent them into the pertinacy of their hearts*, because I had so often called upon them, and they would not hearken, nor return unto me, Therefore I said, forasmuch as you will not hear, you shall not hear; because you will not obey, you shall have none to call you to obedience; follow the counsels of your own hearts, as long as you will. This is *the first sence, of putting or sending them into the hand of their transgression*, scil. a leaving them to the raign of their lusts.

Expulit eos è mundo propter prævaricationem. Pagn. *Permisit eis pervenire, quod scelus eorum postulabat.* Tygur.

Secondly (Which is the sence our translation holds out) *Thou hast left them, or sent them into the hand of their transgression*; that is, Thou hast left them in those evils, which their transgressions did deserve and call for. Our reading carries that meaning, *He hath cast them away for their transgression:* Others thus, *He hath thrust them out of the world for their transgression*; *He hath suffered that to befall them which their transgression called for.* According to these, the sence is, *Thy Children sinned against him, and he hath let those evils which their sin deserved fall upon them*; *He hath rewarded them according to their iniquity* (Isa. 64. 6, 7.) *Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away: Thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed* (or melted) *us, because of our iniquities.* The Hebrew is, *Thou hast consumed or melted us in the hand, or in the power of our iniquities.*

Allisisti nos in manu iniquitatis nostræ. Vul.

And somewhat parallel to this sence, is that (*Gen.* 4. 6.) *If thou doest ill* (saith God to *Cain*) *sin lies at the door*; As if he had said, Thou shalt be given into the hand of sin presently, thy sin shall arrest thee, and bring those evils upon thee which it deserveth, thou shalt not need any other punishment then thy own wickedness.

Hands and power are ascribed to sin, because God gives men over to those punishments which their sins challenge at his hands. Some sins have a louder voice then others; but every sin unpardoned (the mouth whereof is not stopt by the blood of Christ) cries to God for vengeance, till God put the sinner into the hand of sin, that he may at once receive pay for, and from his own folly. Observe from the former interpretation,

First, That, *the Lord doth often in judgment give man up to the power of his sinful lusts.*

This is a general truth, though we cannot draw it down to the instance of *Job's* Children: The Lord in wrath leaves man to himself. Every man by nature sins freely, and many are left by God to a judiciary freedom in sinning. He cannot restrain himself, and sometimes God will not restrain him, but lets him take his fill of sin, and be as wicked as he will (*Rev.* 22. 11.) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.* This permission is the highest and sorest affliction. This liberty is worse then any bondage. Thus also the Church leaves those to their ignorance, who obstinately refuse instruction (*1 Cor.* 14. 38.) *He that is ignorant let him be ignorant still.* Those souls are in a desperate condition, who are put out of the care either of God or of his Church. Observe,

Secondly, That, *sin is a punishment.*

Tu, Domine, dixisti, & ita est, ut omnis malus animus sibi ipsi sit pœna. August.

Sin is the punishment of sin: Thy Children sinned against him, and he gave them into the hand of their sin; he never goes unpunished for sin, who sins and repents not. Thou, Lord (saith one of the Ancients) hast decreed it, and so it is, That every evil mind is it's own scourge. The Apostle tells us (*Heb.* 10. 31.) that *it is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God:* it is indeed; and it is as fearful a thing to fall into the hand of deadly sins, or dead works. How dreadful a thing is it to be under the power and tyranny of our own hearts. The committing of sin is worse then the enduring of trouble? The Lord doth not only punish men according to their sins, but he makes their sin their punishment, yea, their sins are their punishers. He puts them into the hand of sin, as into the hand of a tormenter.

Ulciscentur eum mores sui. Cicero ad Attic.

A Heathen could threaten a wicked man, thus, *His manners shall be his revenge.* Holiness carries its reward with it, and though no creature will recompence the good we do, yet doing good is a recompence. In keeping the Commandments of God, there is an exceeding great reward, *Psalm* 19. 11. The act of keeping them is a reward, as well as the issue. *A good work is pay enough to the worker.* So also is an evil work, *Prov.* 1. 32. *The turning away of the simple shall slay him.* A simple Child, that will not be ruled, counsel'd or ordered (such *Solomon* speaks of, *Ye simple ones, how long will ye love simplicity?* That is, your own foolish, vain wayes) *The turning away of such* simple ones from the counsel of the wise, shall slay them. The way of sin is death, as well as the end or wages of it. *As saith the Proverb of the Ancients* (they are the words of *David* concerning *Saul*, 1 Sam. 24. 14.) *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand shall not be upon him.* *David* knew that *Saul* was a man so wicked, that he needed no other revenger but his own self, his own sin would bring misery enough upon him: therefore, saith he, *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked*, that is, the punishment of wickedness proceedeth from the wicked man himself. Observe the occasion of those words, it was, when some about *David* advised him to slay *Saul*; not I, saith he, *my hand shall not be upon him*; I know he is a man so given up to sin, so enslaved to his own vile affections, that there's enough upon him already, and in a short time more will be upon him; *Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked, but mine hand shall not be upon him*; I will leave him to the hand of his sin, which is his Plague already, and which in a little time will attach him, and do me right, though he never would. When God took up a resolution against his own people, that he would not hear or be intreated, and protested his mind could not be towards them, he saith (*Jer.* 15. 2.) *Let them go forth, such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.* This was a dreadful sentence; but for God to say to a people, Let them go forth in the wayes of their sin; he that is for drunkenness, to be drunk; he that is for uncleanness, to be unclean; he that is for pride, to be proud; he that is for swearing, to oaths; and he that is for envy, to be envious; and he that is for Idolatry, to his Idols. O how unconceivably miserable are such a people! To be left in the hand of these sins, is a spiritual judgement; and these sins will quickly bring in temporal judgements, and not long hence eternal.

From the latter interpretation, Observe,

Sin shall not always go away unpunished by outward, sensible evils.

God will sink and cast men away for their transgressions. If sin be in the house, punishment lies at the doors, and will turn the lock and open it, or break it open upon the sinner. And though he hide himself in vaults or secret corners, yet his iniquity will find him out. *He that will not cast away his transgression, shall be cast away for his transgression*, whether he will or no.

So much for these words, wherein *Bildad* sets before *Job* the sinfulness of his Children, thereby to vindicate the justice of God in giving them up to the dominion of their sin, or to destruction for their sin. In the next words he advises *Job* to take heed by their harms, and assures him of happy success, in case he do. As if he had said, Though they perished in their transgression, yet do not thou despair. For,

Vers. 5. **If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty, &c.**

God hath been just in punishing thy Children, and he will be merciful in pardoning thee, in accepting thy person, in prospering thy estate, if now at last thou apply thy self to seek him diligently; *Though thy Children have fallen into the hand of their transgression, yet there is hope that thou mayest escape.* Thus he deals with him in a way of counsel, as *Eliphaz* had done before, *Chap.* 5. 8. *I would seek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cause*; this is the counsel I give thee, and the course I would take my self, *Bildad* speaks the same in effect, and almost in the letter; *If thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication unto the Almighty*, &c. *He would awake for thee.*

There are two parts of *Bildad's* counsel.

First,

First, To humble himself in prayer, *verſ.* 5.
Secondly, To purge himself by repentance, *verſ.* 6.

Or, we may look upon this counſel as a pattern of repentance, and turning to God in three things.

First, To ſeek unto God.
Secondly, To acknowledge our own unworthineſs to receive any mercy from God.
Thirdly, To be ſincere and upright-hearted with God in both.

If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes.

שחר *Eſt quaſi aurorare aut diluculare Deũ Diligenter, ſedulo, & magno ſtudio quærere. Qui mane ſurgit precandi cauſa, dicitur manicare Deũ.* Drus.

We have met with the word more then once before; and in ſtrictneſs of tranſlation it ſounds thus much, *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God in the morning*; or, *If thou wouldeſt morning God*, be with him early in the morning, that is, If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto him diligently: they that come in the morning about buſineſs, are diligent in their buſineſs. The Apoſtles rule is (*Heb.* 3.) *To day harden not your hearts*; but here *Bildad* adviſeth, *Whileſt it is morning*, which is the firſt part or beginning of the day, pour out thy heart to God. So then, it may be taken for ſeeking God either at the firſt of the day, the morning; or, for any earneſt, diligent and fervent ſeeking unto God in any part of the day; To ſeek God diligently, though in the night, is according to this Hebraiſme, a ſeeking him in the morning.

It was an ancient cuſtom to ſeek God in the morning (take it in the letter) early in the morning. *David* profeſſes this, *Pſal.* 5. 3. *My voice ſhalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord, in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* And Heathens by the light of nature, took this courſe in their profane and ſuperſtitious worſhip. *Herodotus* in his tenth book, tells us of the *Perſian Magi*, who addreſſed themſelves early in the morning to ſeek their falſe gods. And the Primitive Chriſtians were wondred at for their early devotions. *Pliny* in an Epiſtle to *Trajan*, and *Tertullian* in his Apologeticks for the Chriſtians, report their Aſſemblies before day-break to pray and call upon God. And there hath been and ſtill is a ſuperſtitions abuſe of this among the Papiſts, who call their morning prayers, their *Mattins*, becauſe they begin early in the morning. Hence Obſerve,

Herodot. l. 10. Plin. Ep. 57. ad Trajan. Tertul. Apol. cap. 2.

First, *Prayer is our ſeeking unto God.*

That's the general deſcription of prayer. When we pray, our work is to get near to God, to find God; every ſoul that prayes indeed, feels it ſelf at a loſs for ſomewhat that God only can beſtow. In God all that we want is to be found, and therefore he invites us to ſeek him. In this life the Saints are a generation of ſeekers: in the next, they ſhall be a generation of enjoyers; when God is fully found, there's nothing more to be ſought: Having him, we have all. The work of Heaven is to bleſs God for what we have found, not to ſeek him for what we want.

Secondly, *God muſt be ſought unto without delay.*

As it is with vows, ſo with prayers, *Defer not to pay them*; defer not to pray, *Iſa.* 55. 6. *Seek him whileſt he may be found*, Matth. 6. 33. *Seek firſt the Kingdom of God*; firſt in time, not only chiefly, but early, put not God behind in the latter end of the day, or in the latter end of your buſineſſes. It is beſt to begin with him who is beſt.

Thirdly, *God muſt be ſought unto with diligence.*

We muſt lay our ſtrength and ſpirits out in ſeeking God. It is not a ſleight enquiry which finds out God. We read that he is found of ſome who ſeek him not at all, but that he is found of any, who ſeek him negligently, we read not. Free-grace prevents thoſe who have no ability to ſeek him, but it meets not thoſe who will not lay out their abilities in ſeeking him. *If thou wouldeſt ſeek unto God betimes,*

And make thy ſupplication to the Almighty.

Verbum חנן *denotat gratuitam illã commiſerationem, quæ ſine ullo merito impenditur.*

The word which we tranſlate [Make thy ſupplication] is very ſignificant of the manner how we ſhould ſeek unto God, namely, bottoming our ſelves upon free-grace alone. A thought of our own worth is inconſiſtent with a *ſupplication*; *Call upon the Almighty for pity*, ſaith Mr. *Broughton*, when we ſupplicate, we deſire that to be done for us, for which there is no reaſon in us why it ſhould be done. *To make ſupplication:* is to ſeek help and relief freely or *gratis*; acknowledging there is nothing in us worthy of love. That *adverb* uſed in the firſt, and repeated in the ſecond Chapter, where the Devil objects, *Doth* Job *ſerve God for nought*, that is, without reſpect of good pay for his pains from God, that *adverb* (I ſay) comes from this *verb*. As we ought to ſerve God (in this ſence) for nought, and not like mercenaries for our hire: So God helps us for nought, without looking to any thing in us, or from us, as an hire of his help. The *Baptiſt* had his name (*John*) from this Word, either becauſe he preached the Free-grace of God in Chriſt, then exhibited; or, becauſe God beſtowed him upon his Parents in their old-age, as a ſpecial grace and favour: *The poor* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 23.) *uſeth intreaties*; ſome render it thus, *The poor maketh, or ſpeaketh ſupplications*; a poor man hath nothing of deſert to plead, why he ſhould receive your charity, but he lies at your feet and begs ſomewhat, becauſe he is in want, becauſe miſery hath arreſted and taken hold upon him: *The poor uſeth entreaties*, he doth not call for any thing of right, and he will not wreſt any thing from you by force; he only ſupplicates your favour. We in our drawing nigh unto God ſhould pray for grace and favour, as a poor man, begging an alms, who makes this his plea, that he is poor. So then, *Bildad's* counſel to *Job* is this, *Stand not upon thy terms with God, plead not thine own integrity and good works*, but caſt thy ſelf at his feet for mercy, *Make thy ſupplication unto him.* The word is uſed by *Moſes*, *Deut.* 3. 23. when he deſcribeth his own unbelief, for which God ſaid he ſhould not go into *Canaan*. *And I beſought the Lord at that time, ſaying*, &c. When *Moſes* perceived God was angry, he did not reckon his former good ſervices to ballance this failing, but he ſought unto God for mercy, as one that had never done him any ſervice at all. And as man expreſſes his deſires of Free-grace by this Word, ſo doth the Lord his higheſt actings of it, *Exod.* 33. 19. *I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious.* To ſhew, that to *make ſupplication*, is, to deſire the Lord to be gracious: and to be gracious is to do that, which is deſired *by a ſupplication*; the ſame word in the Hebrew ſignifies both an act of loweſt humility in us, namely the making a ſupplication, and an act of the higheſt grace in God, namely the granting of a ſupplication. Hence Obſerve,

First. *In ſeeking God we muſt look to receive all from his Free-grace and undeſerved favour.*

Seek unto God, and make thy ſupplication to him. Mercy in God is the ſpring of all the mercies received by man. What can a beggar, who comes to a King, ask upon deſert? That's the condition of every one that comes to God: we are a company of beggars, the riches both of temporal and ſpiritual bleſſings are treaſur'd up in God. *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit*, they who look upon themſelves as mean and low, as not having a rag of goodneſs about them, as emptied of themſelves, are the veſſels which God will fill, *He that is full loatheth a honey-comb*, and he that thinks he is full, is loathed ſo much by God, that his real emptineſs ſhall never be filled. When *Jacob* held God ſo faſt, that he would not let him go without a bleſſing, he had quite let go all hold, yea, or opinion of his worthineſs to receive a bleſſing, *I am leſs then the leaſt of all thy mercies* (Gen. 32. 10.) Then we are fit to receive great things from God, when we are little, and then fitteſt, when we are leaſt in our own eyes. Yea, we muſt ſupplicate God, not only as a beggar, but as a Traitor or a Rebel doth a King: who hath not only nothing in him to commend him to his acceptance, or procure his favour, but much to provoke his wrath, and incur the weight of his diſpleaſure. Every ſin in it ſelf renders us rebels againſt God. And though his own people, coming unto him in Chriſt, are under another notion, they are his ſons, yet, even they ought to have ſuch apprehenſions of themſelves for ſin. *Abraham believed in him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, Rom. 4. 5. Even *Abraham* after he was juſtified in the ſight of God through faith, looked upon himſelf as ungodly, in reference to his own works. In all our approaches to God, we ſhould reflect upon our ſelves, not only as having many wants, and no worthineſs, but as having many ſins, and (of our own)

no goodness. God (in justice) visits iniquity upon them that hate him (*Exod.* 20.6.) *and he sheweth mercy unto thousands of them that love him, and keep his Commandments*; They who love God and keep his Commandments, receive all from mercy. Justice punishes those who break the Commandment, but mercy doth them good who keep the Commandments. *We have at any time sin enough to merit the wrath of God, but we never have goodness enough to merit his favour.* And as no objection from our sinfulness can obstruct the way of Free-grace from moving towards us: so no argument from our holiness can open the way, for Free-grace to move towards us. In all our duties we are to lie in the dust, yea, we are to lay our duties in the dust, and to seek all of God in humble supplications.

Consider this verse in connexion with the former, and then two points are observable from it. *Bildad* assuring *Job*, that though his sons had fallen by their sin, yet, if himself would seek unto God, and make his supplication, it might be well with him, teacheth us,

First, *That the falls of others, whether into sin, or under judgment for sin, should be warnings to us.*

Thou seest what is become of thy sons: let them be as a looking-glass for thee. Children may teach their Parents, Parents are often whipt upon their Childrens backs. The hand of God upon others points towards us, and while they are smitten, we are instructed. The Apostle sums up the most remarkable judgments which fell upon the Jews in their passage from *Ægypt* to *Canaan*, and closeth all with this application to Christians, *These things happened unto them as ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, &c. to the intent that we should not lust*, 1 Cor. 10. 11. As if he had said, God let them fall into the hand of their sins, and their falls may help us to keep our feet. Their falls were *types* (so the word is) these things happened unto them *typically*, in them we may see what God will do with us, if we take their course, and go their way.

τύπος, proprie significat notam insculptam pulsatione seu percussione effectam, Beza. in Joh. 20. 25. τύπος παρὰ τὸ τύπτειν, percutere. Unde Ars Typographica.

The Greek is very elegant and expressive of this sence. For a *type* is such a form or representation of a thing, as is made by hard pressing or striking of it, such as we see in stamps and seals. It is the leaving of a mark with a blow; implying, that the Lord by those stroks upon his ancient people, left marks upon their bodies, or printed letters there (the Greek word for a Printer is a Type-writer) which were legible to their posterity, and are to this day. Hence the scar which the nails made in the hands of our blessed Saviour upon the Cross, is called, *The print of the nails*, or, *The type of the nails*, Joh. 20.25. Such a type or print sufferings leave behind them. How many such *types* have we this day? Where can we go; but we see the print of the Sword, and thrust our hands into wounded sides, *Let us not be faithless, but believing?* The Apostle *Peter* (2 Epist. 2. 6.) brings the apostate Angels, the old world, filthy *Sodome*, as admonitory examples unto those that should live ungodly. They made themselves evil examples by committing sin, and God made them good ensamples by punishing them for their sin.

Secondly, From the connexion, Observe,

That they who are equal in sin, may be unequal in punishment.

Job was (in the judgment of his friends) as deep in sin as his Children; but though he had sinned like them, or more then they, yet he might be unlike them in suffering, or suffer less then they. God (saith *Bildad*) hath taken them quite away, he hath but wounded you, and if you seek unto God he is ready to heal you. The same sinners for matter, are in Heaven and in Hell, that is, take two who have committed the same sins for matter, and for degree also (as sin is a transgression of the Law) and the one of these may be found in Heaven, and the other in Hell at the last day. Yea, I believe, there are many in Heaven that have committed greater sins then some that are in Hell. It is not the matter of sin committed, but the obstinacy, impenitency, or unbelief of the sinner, which binds on the guilt, and seals up the sinner to judgments temporal, and to condemnation eternal.

Vers. 6. If thou wert pure and upright, he would awaken for thee, &c.

Bildad counsels *Job* to seek God, yet he puts in a caution, *If thou wert pure and upright*: As if he had said, I advise thee to seek unto God, and to make thy supplication to him; but take heed of doing this with a purpose to continue in thy sin, *If thou wouldst seek unto God, and make thy supplication to him in purity, and uprightness of heart, He would awaken for thee.* Holy prayers awake God. Be holy, and thou shalt be sure of audience and acceptance when thou prayest.

In the former verse he gave advice for the duty to be performed, here he gives advice in reference to the person who is to perform the duty. Thy duty is to seek unto God, and to make supplication to the Almighty, but look thine own heart be pure and upright. Take heed of coming to a holy God in thine unholiness.

Pure and upright. The word signifieth to shine or glister, as glass or crystal, noting, that the purity of our lives in holiness shines as light, *Matth.* 5. *Let your light so shine before men.* The works of the Saints should be clear as crystal: The word is used (*Lam.* 4. 7.) to set forth the exactest beauty, *Her Nazarites were purer then snow, they were whiter then milk, they were more ruddy in body then Rubies, their polishing was of Saphyr.* The oyl (*Lev.* 24. 2.) and the frankincense (*Exod.* 30. 4.) appointed for the use of the Sanctuary, are both thus expressed, *pure oyl, pure frankincense*, shining oyl, or shining frankincense, transparent oyl, *&c.* such as you may look thorow, not obscure or dark. The oyl and frankincense were a type of their purity, who had communion with God in holy things. The same word is used by *David*, complaining under a temptation (*Psal.* 73. 15.) of lost labour, or labour in vain in washing himself. Some wash in vain, because they are still unclean, and get not out their spots; others think they wash in vain, because though clean, they cannot obtain their comforts. Thus *David* thought he washed in vain, *I said, Verily I have cleansed mine heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency, for I am chastned*, &c. *David* by cleansing got the sin-spots out as well as most men, but he could not get the affliction-spots out, this was his temptation. Sin is a blot, a spot, an uncleanness, a filthiness; holiness is purity, beauty, honour, light; things which have the greatest excellency and lustre, are but the shadows of holiness.

זַךְ ה֣וּא est lucere in modũ vitri atq; crystalli.

Thus lucidissimum, pellucidum.

Peccatum vocatur macula, & sanctitas mundities, quod quæ maculata & infecta erant habebantur profana & divino conspectu indigna.

There is a two-fold purity: First, The purity of our natures, which is received at conversion. Secondly, The purity of our conversations, which is renewed by repentance; we may understand both, or either in this place.

And upright. It is the word used in *Chap.* 1. *v.* 1. *Perfect and upright.* Here *pure and upright*: we may thus distinguish them; purity refers to outward acted holiness, or holiness of life; and uprightness, to inward sincerity, or holiness of the heart; and so his meaning is, If thou wert pure in thy wayes, and sincere in thine ends; If thy outward man, and inward man were washed and reformed, *Then he would awake*, &c. Observe hence,

Purus ad cor pertinet, rectus ad actiones, ut dicat purus corde, rectus opere. Drus.

First, *Holy persons are fit for holy duties, and onely they.*

Sin is our separation from God, and holy duties are acts of communion with him: how then shall sin and duty stand together?

Make thy supplication, seek unto God, but be thou pure and upright. What have unholy persons to do about holy things? God cannot like the services of those who are unlike him. Prayer purifies, yet purifying must be a preparative to prayer. *Psal.* 66. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart* (if I lodge filthiness there) *God will not hear me*; he will not regard my prayer. The blind man saw this truth, *John* 9. 31. (it seems this was a received maxim among them) *God heareth not sinners.* We are commanded to pray, *lifting up pure hands*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 8. An Heathen being at Sea in a great storm, and perceiving many wicked wretches with him in the ship, calling upon the gods, *O* (saith he) *forbear prayer, hold your tongues, I would not have the gods take notice that you are here, they will sure drown us all if they do.* If an Heathen by the light of Nature, could say this, much more may we by the light of Scripture, *That God heareth not sinners*, Isa. 1. *When you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of blood.* As he speaks out of the fulness of the grace of God, (*Come*

Silete (inquit) nequos hic navigare dissentiant. Bias.

let

let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, &c.) So also the necessity of gracious purity in man, *Wash ye, make ye clean,* &c. Observe,

Secondly, *The prayers of the pure and upright are prevailing prayers.*

In the next words God awakes, *Jam.* 5.16. *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.* Fervency of prayer effects nothing, unless the person praying be righteous; God is not melted into compassion by the heat of our words, but by the holiness of our hearts. In the prayer of a righteous man there is strength, prevailing strength, such as God himself yields to. *As a Prince thou hast power with God, and hast prevailed,* saith he to *Jacob* when he wrestled with him. Observe,

Thirdly, *It is no way contrary to the doctrine of Free-grace to say we must be holy, if we desire to be heard.*

Bildad's doctrine is an excellent piece of Divinity; though he said before, Thou must seek unto God, and make supplication to him, that out of his Free-grace he would bestow a blessing upon thee, yet he adds, *If thou wert pure and upright.* Though we are not heard, because we are pure and upright, yet none can come with a warrantable confidence to be heard in their impurity and hypocrisie; if they do, God will reject their confidences, and they shall not prosper in them. It is impudence, not confidence, to make supplication to God with a reserve, or a resolve in secret, to go on in sin. The greatest sinners in the world may come to God, they that are most impure and filthy may find favour; yet every man that cometh unto God, must come with this desire, to have his impurities removed, and his backslidings healed; *Unto the wicked, saith God, What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or to take my Covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee,* Psal. 50. 16. It no way crosses the doctrine of Grace, when with the same breath we say, God will do us good freely for his own names sake, and that we must be pure and upright who come to God; *With the pure thou wilt shew thy self pure, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thy self upright, and with the froward thou wilt shew thy self froward,* Psal. 18. 25, 26. But doth the Lord take colour from every one he meets, or change his temper as the company changes? That's the weakness of sinful man, he cannot do so, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of changing. God is pure and upright with the unclean and hypocritical, as well as with the pure and upright, and his actions shew him to be so. God shews himself froward with the froward, when he deals with them, as he hath said he will deal with the froward; deny them, and reject them. God shews himself pure with the pure, when he deals with them as he hath said he will; hear them and accept them. Though there be nothing in purity and sincerity, which deserveth mercy, yet we cannot expect mercy without them. Our comforts are not grounded upon our graces, but our comforts are the fruits or consequents of our graces.

Bildad having shewed *Job* his duty, shews him a promise of mercy, *If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he would awake for thee.* There is a three-fold gradation of mercy in this promise.

That God would
1. Awake for him.
2. Prosper or pacifie his habitation.
3. Abundantly encrease and multiply him in his latter end.

The first step of mercy, is, *That God would awake for him.* Surely now he would awake for thee. And there are three things observable about this.

First, The certainty of it, in the word [*Surely*] without all doubt, or, peradventure if thou wouldst thus seek to him, *He would awake.*

Secondly, The speediness of it; *Surely now* he would awake [*Now*] without delay or demur; thou shouldst no sooner seek to God, but find an answer of mercy from him.

יעיר עליך Thirdly, The benefit of it to *Job*, *He would awake for thee.* For *Job* might say, I may awaken a sleepy Lion to rise up against me; God may be angry with my prayer, and in stead of blessing pour out some further judgment upon me: No, saith *Bildad*, I assure thee, if thou thus seek to him, *He will awake for thee,* not against thee.

God sometimes awakes against us, *Jer.* 31.28. *It shall come to pass, that as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy, and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build, and to plant, saith the Lord.* As the Lord would watch to do them a good turn; so he had watcht to do them (as we speak) a shrewd turn. He threatens them with such a watchfulness, *Chap.* 44. 27. *I will watch over them for evil, and not for good.* When we are dull and sleepy in doing the Will of God, he will be watchful and active to afflict us. And when men cannot sleep till they do evil, God will not sleep till he brings evil. So, *Daniel*, in the ninth of that Prophecy, and *vers.* 14. having humbled himself before God in prayer and fasting, and confessed the sins of the people, concludes, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us.* God not only awakes, but watches to do a people evil, who have long abused his goodness. As men in maliciousness of spirit watch for advantages and spy out opportunities to revenge themselves, *All my familiars watch for my halting,* saith *Jeremy*, Chap. 20. 12. So the Lord in abundant holiness and exactness of justice, though with a great deal of wrath and severity, watches to revenge himself of a wicked people. He takes all opportunities and advantages against them, *Thou hast watched evil, and brought it upon us.* His love to a returning people is as vigilant, as his anger against a backsliding people.

Surely now he would awake for thee.

Awake.] The word signifies both to awake, and to arise. There are two interpretations of this awaking.

Some take the words transitively, thus, *He will awake good for thee.* Not, of *Job* awakening God by prayer, but of God awakening prosperity, or stirring up blessings for *Job.* As if *Bildad* had said, *Job, now blessings are (as it were) asleep, but if thou pray, God will awaken them; He will stir up mercies for thee, he will cure thy broken condition, he will restore that which is fallen; repair that which is ruined; and fetch thee out of the grave of thy desolate estate.* As a mans spirits, gifts, yea graces are sometime asleep, and need awakening; so also are, and do our outward comforts. It is frequent in Scripture to call the repairing of a mans estate, or the bringing of good to him, the raising of him up, *He raiseth the poor out of the dust*; he awakens them out of that low condition. *Job* was in the dust, and his Children in the grave, God made a resurrection of both for him. That's a good sence.

Suscitabit super te bonum. Transitive accipitur; excitabit super te, sc. bonum quod nunc in te sopitum est.

But rather understand it (as our translation reads) of *God awakening. He will awake for thee.*

He will awake.] The Psalmist assures us (*Psal.* 121.4.) *He that keepeth* Israel *doth neither slumber nor sleep.* God never sleepeth: How is it then said, that God awakes?

For the opening of this Metaphor; First, As, the Church confesses and professes (*Cant.* 5.2.) *I sleep, but my heart waketh*; when the Church is asleep, yet her heart is awake towards God: So much more, when in regard of outward providences God seems to be asleep, his heart is awake toward his Church, his heart (*scil.* his affection, *&c.*) never slumbereth nor sleepeth.

Secondly, God is said to sleep, when he doth not answer our prayers; and when he hears prayer, then he is said to awake. Hence the Septuagint render this Text, not as we, *He will awake*; but, *He will hear thy prayer for deliverance.*

Ἀκούσεται σου. *Deprecationem exaudiet tua.* Sept.

Thirdly, God sleeps, not in regard of the act, but the consequents of sleep. Natural sleep is the binding or locking up of the senses. The eye and ear of God is never bound. But to mans apprehension the affairs of the world pass, as if God did neither hear nor see. When men are asleep, things are done which they can take no notice of, much less stop and prevent. The Parable tells us, (*Matth.* 13.) *While men slept, the envious man came and sowed tares:* While the housholder slept, the thief brake the house; and the Pharisees direct the watchmen to say of Christ in the Sepulchre, *While we slept his Disciples came and stole him away.* So now, when things are so carried in the world, as if the God of Heaven did not regard or take notice of them; when he doth not prevent or hinder evil, when he doth not stop or restrain the rage and malice

Dormire videtur cum te relinquit in his calamitatibus. Drus.

malice of men; this retiring of himself in the way of his providence, is called his sleep.

The complaint runs high, *Psal.* 44. 9. &c. *Lord, thou goest not forth with our Armies, we are become a reproach unto our enemies; Thou sellest thy people for nought, we are killed like sheep all the day long.* There's a description of the confusion of things; then followeth (*Vers.* 23.) *Awake why sleepest thou, O Lord? Arise, cast us not off for ever; wherefore hidest thou thy face, and forgettest our affliction and our oppression.* Such a time was accounted the sleeping time of God.

Hence when God, in the workings of his providence, searcheth out the wicked, and brings them to destruction; when he breaks their designs, and turns theis counsels backwards; when he turns their wickedness upon their own heads, and catches them in the snare which they have laid for others, then he is said to awake, *Psal.* 78. 65. *He gave his people over to the sword, and the fire consumed the young men; then the Lord awakened as one out of sleep, and like a Giant refreshed with wine; He smote his enemies in the hinder parts, and put them to a perpetual shame.* Such a time was accounted Gods waking time.

So then, sleeping and awaking, note only the changes of providence. Hence also the providence of God is described by *an eye* (2 Chron. 16. 9.) which is the proper organ of sleeping, or waking; and the exactness of providence, is set out by *seven eyes*, Zech. 3. 9. The Scripture speaks this language in reference to our soul-sleep and awakening. When we sin and let things go which way they will in our hearts, without taking any care, or keeping our watch against temptation, then we are asleep in sin: And when we begin to consider our estates, and return to our selves, when we take notice how it is with us, and ask our hearts the question, *What have we done?* This in a spiritual sence is our awakening, *Awake thou that sleepest*, Ephes. 5. 14. Our spiritual sleeping and waking are the decayes or quicknings of soul-endeavors. And Gods providential sleeping and waking are the seeming stops and visible motions of his power, mercy and justice in the world. This is the awaking which *Bildad* promises; *If thou wouldst seek God*, &c. *Surely he would awake for thee.*

The words opened teach us,

First, *That holy prayer shall certainly be heard.*

If thou make thy supplication to him, surely he will awake. God cannot sleep when a poor believing soul cries in his ears, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear my prayer.* (Psal. 66. 18.) *But verily God hath heard me, he hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.* What, God turn prayer away? No, he cannot lie still (as I may so speak) when prayer knocks at the door, he must arise and open presently. Note,

Secondly, *Prayer shall be heard presently.*

What presently? Yes, presently heard, though not presently answered; *Surely now he will awaken for thee, even now.* Holy prayers are never deferred the hearing, no not a minute, *Isa.* 65. 24. *Before they call I will hear, and while they are yet speaking I will answer.* In the very act of praying the answer came forth; yea, the answer sometimes antedates our asking, and the grant cometh before the petition. The giving out of the answer may be defer'd, but the answer is not defer'd. We may be heard, and heard graciously, and yet not presently receive the thing we ask; but every prayer is heard and laid up, as soon as put up; he hangs it upon the file, he hath it safe by him. Prayer receives an answer in Heaven, as soon as spoken upon Earth, though the answer be not returned to us on Earth. *God sleeps not at the prayer of those who are awake in prayer.* Observe,

Thirdly, *Prayer is the best means to awaken God.*

God hath many wayes to awaken man; and he hath directed man a way to awaken himself. When we are asleep, he awakeneth us chiefly two wayes: First, By the voice of his word: Secondly, By the voice of his Rod. He now awakens us by the loud sounding Trumpet, and the alarms of War: when God awakeneth us by judgments, it is time for us to awaken him by prayer. We find two things in Scripture which awaken God. First, The prayers of his own people. And secondly, The rage and blasphemy of his enemies, *Psal.* 78. 65. The Prophet having described the cruelty and rage of the enemy, adds, *Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine: David* makes this an argument in prayer, (*Psal.* 7.) *Because of the rage of mine enemies awake for me to the judgment which thou hast commanded.* As if he had said, Lord, shall mine enemies rage, and wilt thou sleep? Wilt thou not awake for me? Arise, I pray thee. The noise of blasphemy, and the cry of violence from wicked men, stir up God when he seems to lie asleep. The noise of prayer, the cries and calls of faith in his own people, will not let him sleep. A man whose heart is drenched in the world, and drowned in rivers of earthly pleasures, prays himself asleep, and his prayers bring God asleep too; he sleeps when he prays, and God sleeps at his prayers, that is, God regards not his prayer; he is as one that sleepeth, as if he heard not what was said. A worldy man doth not hear what he speaks, he knows not what his own requests are. God sleepeth when men are thus asleep; But when we (as the Apostle directs) *watch and pray*, then God awakes at our prayers. As in the former verse *Job* was counselled to awake to pray to God, so now he is promised, That the Lord will awake when he prayes.

Fourthly, Seeing the Lord is awakened by prayer: We learn,

That, *Prayer ought to be very strong and fervent.*

As men are gradual in their sleep, so is the Lord in his. A man is sometimes slumberingly asleep, that the least noise will awake him, you cannot stir, but he will hear it. At another time a man is so dead asleep, that though you hollow in his ear you cannot awake him, thunder cannot stir him. Sometimes God departs so little, that the least voice calleth him again, he comes at the first word; at another time he is gone so far, that (as to a man in a deep sleep) you must cry and cry again, call and call again, cry aloud before he hears. And we may (in a safe sence) apply that to the true God, which *Elijah* did to that false god, *Baal*, when his Priests were calling to him from morning to night. *Elijah* mocking, bids them *cry aloud, it may be* (saith he) *he sleepeth:* We may say (with reverence) thus, when any pray to God, and he doth not hear, pray aloud; not in regard of the voice and outward sound, but pray with louder desires of heart, with more fervency and zeal of spirit, *Peradventure God sleepeth*; peradventure he is in a deep sleep at this time, and he will not suddenly be awakened, therefore cry aloud. When God seemed to depart far from the Church of the *Jews*, with how much fervency do they cry after him (*Isa.* 51. 9.) *Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord, awake, as in the ancient dayes?* &c. They double and treble it upon him, and cry with an outstretched voice, *Art not thou he that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon?* What a clamor, what a holy stir was here to awaken God? God himself sometimes seems (as it were) willing to take his rest; as when he said to *Moses, Let me alone*; he spake like a man that is in bed, or very sleepy; *Do not trouble me, let me alone*; as he in the Gospel (*Luke* 11. 7.) when he was awakened in the night to come and give bread unto his neighbour, *Do not trouble me* (saith he) *the doors are shut, and I am in bed with my Children, I cannot rise and give thee, let me alone.* Thus in some sence the Lord expresses himself to his people, I am now in bed, do not trouble me, *Let me alone.* What must we do in this case? We must knock harder at the door, as he in the Gospel did, *For whom, though his neighbour would not rise and give him, because he was his friend, yet because of his importunity he rises and gives him as many loaves as he needed.* We must be the more importunate to awake God, by how much he seems more unwilling to hear us; our modesty (in this case) pleases him not: we must call and call again: He will take it well at our hands if we do so. We must give our selves no rest, and let him take none; so the Prophet resolves (*Isa.* 62. 1.) *For* Jerusalem *sake I will take no rest*, I will never give over praying; and at *vers.* 6. *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O* Jerusalem, *which shall never hold their peace day nor night, you that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make* Jerusalem *a praise in the Earth.* If the Lord should carry it in the present answers of his providence,

dence, as if he were willing to reſt, and deſired not to be troubled in this buſineſs; be not you ſo put off: but with a holy boldneſs and confidence come to him and awaken him; take no anſwer, till ye have an anſwer. He is beſt pleaſed, and moſt at eaſe, when (in prayer) we give him no reſt.

Laſtly obſerve, *If God do but awake for us, all is preſently well with us.*

If the eye of God be upon us for good, that brings us in all good; therefore (*Zech.* 2. *ult.*) when the Church was in her return from *Babylon*, the Prophet concludes with an exultation of ſpirit, *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord, for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*; it is this word, *He is awaked out of his holy habitation, now be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord*: All fleſh, ye that are the wicked of the world, ye that are enemies, be ye ſilent, leave your boaſting, your reproaching and blaſpheming, for the Lord is awaked, now he begins to ſtir for his people, he will ſtop your mouths ſhortly: *All fleſh*, takes in the Church and People of God too; *O be ye ſilent*, in regard of your fears and doubtings, murmurings and diſtracted complainings, ſilence all theſe, why? *The Lord is awaked, he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation*, that is, he that ſeemed before to confine himſelf to thoſe higher regions, and as the Atheiſt ſpeaks in *Job*, to walk in the circle of the heavens, not intermedling with the earth: This God is now awaked, he is raiſed out of his holy habitation, and now ye ſhall know that he orders all things here below; therefore be ſilent, O all fleſh. When Chriſt was aſleep (*Matth.* 8. 25.) *A grievous tempeſt aroſe* (ſaith the Text) *in ſo much that the Ship was covered with waves.* When ſtorms and tempeſts are upon the Church, God is then aſleep, though even then he directs the ſtorms, and gives law to the proud waves; But what did the Diſciples in this ſtorm? *They awoke Chriſt, Maſter, ſave us, we periſh*; and as ſoon as ever Chriſt was awakened, *he rebuked the ſtorm, and there was a great calm.* Thus when we are toſt up and down with contrary winds, and in danger to be ſplit and ſunk, if God once awake, all is calm; *How quietly may they ſleep for whom God wakes?* I do not ſay they ſhould ſleep careleſly, but confidently they may. God doth not wake for us to the intent we ſhould ſleep in ſecurity; but we may ſleep quietly when *He* ſhews himſelf awake for us, *who* (indeed) *never ſlumbreth nor ſleepeth.* And if God awake not for us, all our watchfulneſs is as uſeleſs to us as our ſleepineſs. *The watchman waketh but in vain except the Lord keep the City.* Except he awake, our watching can do no good; and if he awake, good will come though we be aſleep. It is our duty to be careful, and it is our comfort that the care of God is enough for us. *The eye of divine Providence helps us in many humane improvidences.* What their happineſs is for whom God awakes, ſee in the next words.

He will make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.

This is the ſecond degree or ſtep of mercy promiſed; when the Lord awakes, he will awake to purpoſe. We ſay of ſome men, *Early up, and never the near*; they awake, and do little work; but if God awakes, ſee what he doth.

Anima eſt juſtitiæ & omnium virtutum domicilium. Aben Ezr.

He will make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.] Some of the *Rabbins* underſtand theſe words as a deſcription of the ſoul; **The habitation of thy righteouſneſs**, that is, *thy ſoul ſhall proſper*, becauſe the ſoul is the proper ſeat of righteouſneſs and holineſs. Righteouſneſs belongeth to the inward man. Righteouſneſs being a ſpiritual thing, is houſed and lodged in the ſpirit, that's the habitation of it.

There are others of the *Jews* who take this *habitation of righteouſneſs* for the body, becauſe the body is the habitation of the ſoul, in which righteouſneſs is ſeated, and ſo the *habitation of righteouſneſs* by a ſecond remove, is the outward man. The Lord ſhall bleſs thy body, which now lieth in a woful plight, diſtempered and diſfigured with ſores and ſickneſſes.

But rather take the word *habitation* in thoſe two ordinary Scripture-ſences, either ſtrictly for the place where *Job* dwelt, or more largely, for all that did belong unto him. The habitation of a man is all his eſtate, and all that appertains to his eſtate; *He will make thy habitation*, that is, thy children, thy ſervants, thy fields, thy cattel, thy ſtock, thy all, to be proſperous.

The Chaldee Paraphraſe readeth, *He will make thy beautiful place to be proſperous.* The word ſignifies *beauty*, as well as an *habitation*, as was ſhewed upon *chap.* 5. 3. Thither I refer the Reader. Then, *habitation* is the ſeat of a mans outward eſtate, and his eſtate, the ſhell and the kernel, the outſide and inſide of all he hath.

נוהו *Significat domum vel ſpeciem, ſplendorem juſtitiæ tuæ.* Tur.

The habitation of thy righteouſneſs.] That is, the habitation where righteouſneſs doth flouriſh, or wherein thou liveſt righteouſly.

Quaſi nihil aliud quam æquitatem & juſtitiam redoleant bona juſtè acquiſita. Merc.

But what is righteouſneſs?

Righteouſneſs is a very comprehenſive word, The Philoſopher tells us, it takes in all other virtues whatſoever; *It is not a part of virtue, but all virtue.*

Δικαιοσύνη ἐκ ἔστι μέρος ἀρετῆς, ἀλλὰ ὅλη ἀρετή. Ariſt. Eth. l. 5. c. 1.

When righteouſneſs is ſet as diſtinct from holineſs and piety, then it is reſtrained to our dealings with men. *Righteouſneſs relates to men, and holineſs to God*, Luke 1. 75. *Tit.* 2. 12. Goſpel-Grace teaches us to live *ſoberly*, in oppoſition to the intemperance of our bodies; *righteouſly*, in oppoſition to wrong in our actions; *godly*, in oppoſition to all impiety and prophaneneſs of our minds.

But righteouſneſs here takes in our whole duty, whether to God or man; *The habitation of thy righteouſneſs*, that is, the place where thou exerciſeſt all manner of holy and righteous duties toward God and toward man. Righteouſneſs toward man, firſt, in diſtributive juſtice, giving every one his due in judgment, as thou art a Magiſtrate. Secondly, Righteouſneſs towards man in commutative juſtice, giving every one his due in commerce, as thou art a neighbour.

The habitation of thy righteouſneſs.] It is an elegant expreſſion. The Church is ſometimes called ſo, *Jer.* 31. 23. *Thus ſaith the Lord God of hoſts, the God of Iſrael, as yet they ſhall uſe this ſpeech in the Land of Judah, and in the Cities thereof, when I ſhall bring again their captivity, The Lord bleſs thee, O habitation of righteouſneſs, and mountain of holineſs*, This ſpeech they ſhall uſe: It ſeems it had been an ordinary ſalutation thus to beſpeak *Judah, O thou habitation of juſtice or righteouſneſs, and mountain of holineſs.* Every particular Member of the Church is named *A tree of righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 61. 3, *They ſhall be called trees of righteouſneſs, the plantation of the Lord.* Each Saint is a tree of righteouſneſs, and all of them together are an habitation, a plantation of righteouſneſs

God himſelf is ſtiled *The habitation of righteouſneſs*, becauſe he (in a way of higheſt excellency, or in the moſt moſt ſuperlative degree) is the ſeat of righteouſneſs; all righteouſneſs is (as it were) houſed, and dwelling in him. The Prophet (*Jer.* 50. 7.) deſcribing the unkind uſage which the true worſhippers ſhould find in the dayes of which he propheſieth, ſpeaks thus, *All that found them have devoured them, and their adverſaries ſaid we offend not, becauſe they have ſinned againſt the Lord.* They thought their brethren had ſinned againſt the Lord, and that therefore they might trouble them without ſin: *They have ſinned againſt the Lord, the habitation of juſtice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.* It is but juſtice (ſay they) for us to puniſh thoſe who ſin againſt the habitation of juſtice. *Men* (take it in paſſage) *do evil ſometimes out of conſcience, and think they do God good ſervice, while they really wrong their brethren.*

שלים *Pacificabit, pacatum reddet, i. e. integrum, perfectum, omnibus bonis redundans, qualia affert pax.* Συποκατασήσει σε θεὸς Sept.

He ſhall make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.] That is, he ſhall make it peaceable and quiet, ſetled and eſtabliſhed. The word ſignifies peace, plenty and proſperity. He ſhall pacifie or quiet the habitation of thy righteouſneſs. The Septuagint thus, He ſhall reſtore it to, or repair it for thee.

There are three things in that word. It may note,

1. The quietneſs of all within his family. There ſhall be peace and a good agreement in thy habitation.

2. The abundance, the fruitfulneſs, the great encreaſe of all within his family, he will make thee thrive.

3. The peaceable holding or enjoyment of all thoſe good things, free from foreign invaſion or oppreſſions. Do thus, and then neither *Sabeans* nor *Chaldeans* ſhall any more come upon thee and plunder thee. Thus he will make the *habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.*

The ſum of all is, as if *Bildad* had ſaid unto *Job*, *Thy habitation hath heretofore been an habitation of unrighteouſneſs, of impiety, of tyranny, thy houſe hath been filled with ſpoil and oppreſſion, thy Tabernacle hath been a Sanctuary for*

wickedneſs, a lodging or rendezvouz for all manner of riot and intemperance, of rapine and injuſtice; but now Job, *if thou wilt make thy ſelf pure and upright, thou ſhalt ſee the caſe will alter; whereas before troops and armies of miſeries have invaded thee, and ſpoiled all thou hadſt within and without, if in thy houſe, where wickedneſs formerly dwelt, righteouſneſs ſhall enter and dwell, thou ſhalt ſee that with righteouſneſs peace will enter too; troubles will depart when wickedneſs departs, and evils of puniſhment will diſlodge with the evil of ſin; when thoſe gueſts, righteouſneſs and holineſs come into, and are welcomed at thy houſe, then thy houſe ſhall be better; when thy heart and thy life change, thy eſtate ſhall change; and thoſe comforts which have been ſo long ſtrangers from thee, ſhall return; thy baniſhed mercies ſhall come home again, adorn thy walls, and ſtrengthen thy family.*

Ubi facta fuerit morum & ſtudiorum, fiet etiam magna fortunæ converſio.

This is the ſum of what he promiſeth in theſe words, *He will make the habitation of thy righteouſneſs proſperous.* Hence obſerve,

First, *Proſperity is in the power of God.*

If he awakes, he can make us proſperous and peaceful. If he do but ſpeak the word, our captivity ſhall return. He ſaith to a dry ſtick, flouriſh, and to a green tree, wither; his word is cloathed with power to do good or evil.

Secondly obſerve, *A righteous habitation ſhall be a proſperous habitation.*

Whether we reſpect perſons, families or Nations, thus it is in the ordinary diſpenſations of God. As in regard of our ſpiritual and eternal eſtate, *The work of righteouſneſs is peace* (Iſa. 32. 17.) ſo, in regard of our temporal and outward. Chriſt, who is the *Prince of righteouſneſs*, is alſo the *Prince of peace*: He brought righteouſneſs into the world, and then peace came into the world. If he had not made an habitation of righteouſneſs in the world, there had never been an habitation of peace in the world; in that work of his the foundation of our proſperity was laid. Jeſus Chriſt, who as a Prieſt, purchaſed our peace, is alſo the *King of righteouſneſs*. Bleſſings crown the head of a righteous people (*Jer.* 31. 23.) *They ſhall ſay, The Lord bleſs thee, O habitation of righteouſneſs.* If thou art a habitation of righteouſneſs, a bleſſing ſhall reſt upon thee: *The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs and peace, and joy in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. As the ſpiritual Kingdom of God is righteouſneſs, peace and joy in the holy Ghoſt: So the joy and peace of worldly Kingdoms is not meat and drink, but righteouſneſs. When Kingdoms are holy habitations, they will ſoon be quiet habitations. In *Iſa.* 26. 2. *Open ye the gates, that the righteous Nation which keepeth the truth may enter in; thou ſhalt keep him in perfect peace.* God will give and preſerve the peace of the righteous. Righteouſneſs is the pillar of a State, and the parent of peace. *The mountains* (Pſal. 72. 3.) *ſhall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteouſneſs.* Plant righteouſneſs upon barren hills and mountains, and peace will flouriſh there.

I might hence infer a Corollary by the rule of contraries, That, *Unrighteouſneſs makes unproſperous and unpeaceful habitations.* An habitation of Idolatry and falſe worſhip, an habitation of cruelty and hard dealing ſhall be an habitation for owls and ſhreech-owls, a dwelling-place for every unclean bird and beaſt; theſe ſhall take up their lodgings within ſuch walls, and make their neſts in ſuch chambers.

Whilſt we are fill'd (as the Apoſtle characterizeth the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1.) *with all unrighteouſneſs*; it is no marvel if we are filled with all trouble. The Prophet *Malachi* brings in *Edom* thus reflecting upon himſelf (*chap.* 1. 4.) Whereas *Edom* ſaith, *I am impoveriſhed*, &c. *Edom* began to be ſenſible all was not well with him. Hereupon he adviſes upon a way to help himſelf, and concludes thus, *We will return and build the deſolate places.* This was their reſolve; but what ſaith God to it? Even this, will ye build? ye ſhall build, I will give you leave to build, *but I will throw it down again.* I will ſpoil your work. Why would the Lord be thus ſevere? The next words give a reaſon; *They ſhall call thee the border of wickedneſs, the people againſt whom the Lord hath indignation for ever.* Wickedneſs is a large word, and takes in all unrighteouſneſs towards man, as well as impiety towards God. *That building cannot ſtand long, where unrighteouſneſs lies between the timber and the ſtones. God will pull down by night what ſuch men build by day.* If then we would have buildings ſtand, and our habitations proſperous, let us labour to build with juſtice, and make ours the habitations of rigtheouſneſs. Look upon it in families, that which withers the comfort of a family, in children, in ſervants, is the unrighteouſneſs found in a family; if there be unrighteouſneſs there, no wonder if there be decayes and diſcontents there too. If there be unrighteouſneſs in Cities; *If* (Pſal. 55. 11.) *deceit and guile go not out of our ſtreets, no marvel if complainings go not out of our ſtreets.* We call for peace and proſperity, O that peace would come! but if our hearts were ſet upon this, if we laboured every one with himſelf, and every one with his brother, and every one with the publick to the uttermoſt of his line, that we may in our perſons, in our families, in our policies, be an habitation of righteouſneſs; how ſoon ſhould we all be a proſperous habitation, an habitation of peace.

Two things make a Nation an habitation of righteouſneſs.
First, When right is done ſpeedily.
Secondly, When right is done impartially.

Tedious delayes make Courts priſons of righteouſneſs, not habitations of righteouſneſs. Partial diſtributions throw a place to be a market of righteouſneſs (where he ſhall have it that bids moſt for it) not an habitation of righteouſneſs, where every one ought to have it that comes for it; *Ye ſhall do no unrighteouſneſs in judgment* (ſaith the Law, *Lev.* 19. 15.) How ſhall they avoid it? The next words give direction, *Thou ſhalt not reſpect the perſon of the poor, nor honour the perſon of the mighty.* Righteouſneſs takes not notice of the perſons of men, but of their cauſes. we muſt not do unrighteouſly in charity to the poor, as well as not in hopes, or for gifts from the rich.

Again, The Hebrew ſignifies a beautiful habitation. Righteouſneſs loves to dwell in a fair houſe. It is ſo, when firſt ſwept from bribes, theſe are filth in the houſe, and the corrupters of righteouſneſs.

Secondly, A beautiful houſe hath ſtore of lights in it. Juſtice and Truth love, not corners and cloſe cells. Juſtice muſt act clearly; men cannot bear it, that what falls upon their ſenſes, ſhould not be in the light of their underſtandings. God hath ſecret judgments, but man muſt not. One potſherd muſt ſhew another why he forms or breaks him thus in judgment.

Laſtly, The beauty of the houſe of Juſtice ariſes from good Laws, and good men to execute them. Righteouſneſs cannot act without a rule; and rules cannot act themſelves. Good Laws without good Magiſtrates, never make any people a habitation of righteouſneſs. It is not good Laws, but good men which make a Kingdom happy. Now, as unrighteouſneſs makes a ſtrong people weak, a rich people poor, an honourable people baſe, a great eſtate to decreaſe and come to nothing; ſo righteouſneſs makes a weak people ſtrong, a poor people rich, a mean people honourable, a little eſtate encreaſe and come to much. Thus *Bildad* aſſures *Job* with this next breath.

Verſe 7. **Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhould greatly encreaſe.**

This is the third gradation. God will not only awake for thee, and make thee proſperous, but he will greatly encreaſe thee. Thou ſhalt not only be ſet in as good a condition as thou waſt, but in a far better.

רשית *A quo quid incipit.*

Though thy beginning were ſmall.] Though the head of thy eſtate (ſo the Hebrew) though the firſt of thy eſtate were ſmall.

The word *ſmall* notes a ſmalneſs either in quantity or in quality; and it is oppoſed to a double greatneſs (*Gen.* 25. 23.) *Jacob* and *Eſau* are thus diſtinguiſhed, the one ſhall be *great*, the other *ſmall*; which we tranſlate, the *elder ſhall ſerve the younger*; the greater ſhall ſerve the leſs.

Though thy beginning was ſmall. The City that *Lot* deſired (*Gen.* 19.) is called *Zoar*, from this word, *Is it not a little one?* Though thy eſtate were but a *Zoar*, a little one, yet it ſhall be built of a larger compaſs.

The *Septuagint* raiſes the ſence of the latter clauſe, *Though thy beginning was ſmall, yet thy latter end ſhall be ineffable, ſuch as none ſhall be able to tell over or deſcribe.* Thy eſtate ſhall be beyond account.

Τὰ ἔσχατα σὺ ἀμύθητα. Sept.

A Queſtion ariſes how we are to make this compariſon between

between *Job's beginning and later end?* Whether we are to refer it to the estate he had before his affliction, compared with what he should have after his affliction; or, whether we are to understand it of the augmentation and encrease of his estate after his affliction, which at the beginning should be but small, but afterwards should receive a mighty augmentation. The sence is good either way.

First, If we understand it of his estate before and after his troubles compared together, Though thy beginning or the first estate which God gave thee were small, yet thy later end, or the estate which God will give thee, when these storms are over-blown, shall wonderfully encrease.

Against this it may be objected, how can the former estate of *Job* be called *small*, when as it is said (Chap. 1.) that *Job* had a very vast estate? We have heard the inventory of his goods, the total sum or apprizement of all, being given in by God himself, *That* Job *was the greatest of all the men in the East.* How then can it be said, that his first estate was small? *Though thy beginning were small.*

I answer, comparatively it may be called small. An exceeding exceſs of greatness, lessens and littles any other greatness. The Moon is a great light, but the light of the Sun makes that light darkness. That which is glorious hath no glory, by reason of the glory that excelleth; he that is rich or great hath no riches or greatness, by reason of riches and greatness which excel. *Job* had a fair estate before, and was the greatest man of all the men of the East; but his estate is promised to be such as shall obscure the former, and render it inconsiderable. Accordingly, it is said, in the story of his restoring (Chap. 42. 10.) *That the Lord turned the captivity of* Job; *also the Lord gave* Job *twice as much as he had before.* Half is but a little to the whole. And at *vers.* 12. *The Lord blessed the latter end of* Job *more then his beginning.* Which words are a good exposition upon the Text in hand. When *Joseph* sent for his Father and Brethren to come into *Ægypt* (Gen. 45. 20.) he saith, but *as for your stuff, do not regard that, for the good of all the land of* Ægypt *is before you. Joseph* knew his Father was a rich man. *Jacob* was no beggar: but let all that go for nothing, leave it to those that will take it up, all the good of *Ægypt* is before you, what is all you have to the *riches of* Ægypt? That's the first sence. Observe from it,

That, *the Lord is able to repair all our losses with abundant advantages.*

We complain of losses; I have lost a great estate, saith one; but the Lord is able to give thee such an estate, as that the greatness of the former shall not be remembred.

Secondly, *They who lose much, usually have great repairs.*

Job was great above all others in the East, but now he shall be made greater then himself. As in spirituals, they that have, to them more shall be given, and they shall have more abundance; so they that lose much in temporals, to them more is given sometimes then they have lost, and they shall have abundance.

There is a second sence, to which the letter of the original doth rather incline, which makes both parts of the verse look only to his second estate, namely, his restauration: and so the sence is this, *Though thou doest not presently thrive and grow up to a great estate, yet afterward thou shalt*; Though after this breaking and undoing thou shouldest set up (as it were) but with a little stock, one friend bringing thee a piece of silver, another, a piece of gold, a third, a jewel, all making a purse for thee: and so thou beginnest but upon alms and charity, yet thy later end shall greatly increase. As if *Bildad* had said, Though God should now begin to comfort, and restore thee but with small matters, yet do not think he will so conclude with thee, he hath enough in store. The letter of the Original is most clear for this, the words being assertive, rather then suppositive, *Thy beginning shall be small, and thy later end shall greatly encrease:* which refers to the time future, not past, as we and others translate. Hence observe,

Cum dicat, erit satis indicat se loqui de iis bonis, quæ habiturus est, & respuerit, non de iis quæ habuit, ante hanc tempestatem. Drus. *Sic solet Deus ditare suos, non uno tempore sinul, sed paulatim & ut Itali dicunt, poco à poco. Galli* peu à peu. *Idem.*

That, *the Lord doth usually raise his people by degrees.*

They do not receive all at once. It is true of persons, families and Nations. We must not look for all in a day. Outward mercies may come too fast upon us, there may be a glut of them. We may have more then we know how to order and take in, it may do hurt to receive all together. As it is with men that have been long pined with famine and hunger, and are grown out of their ordinary course by reason of their necessitated abstinence. We do not presently give them all manner of good chear, or bring them to a full table, and let them eat as much as they will; but we give them a little and a little at a time, and so by degrees bring their stomachs on, till they be wrought for plenty. So when the Lord brings persons or Nations very low, he doth not bring in a glut of mercies at first, this would be more then they are able to bear, as they may be undone, if they have all at one receipt; but he gives as they are able to take them in, and make a right use of them. As *Jacob* said to *Esau* his brother, when he invited him to march with him; no, saith *Jacob*, I cannot march thy pace, I must consider what my train is, I have flocks here that are great with young, *And if I should over-drive them one day, they would all dye: therefore* (saith he) *I will lead on softly, according as the cattel that are before me, and the Children be able to endure.* So it is in this case, the Lord in infinite wisdom gives, as men are able to receive. *We may be over-mercy'd, as well as over-afflicted; over-laden with comforts, as well as with sorrows.* And therefore as the Lord doth correct in judgment and in measure: So also doth he restore. We have not full tyde in a moment, or in a quarter of an hour: it would be terrible, dangerous, and troublesom: if when it is low water we should have full tide in a moment, but it comes in stealing by degrees, and at last it swells all over the banks. Such a stealing flood of mercies the Lord gives his people.

Therefore be caution'd. In the returns of mercy do not despise small things. Your beginnings may be inconsiderable, this is but a little, and that is but a little, but do not despise the first, or second little. So the Prophet counsels (*Zech.* 4. 10.) *Despise not the day of small things:* The beginnings of mercy were scarce discernable, and they looked upon them as nothing, they thought they would never come to any thing. Take heed (saith the Prophet) do not despise small things, there's more a coming. Hast thou but a little? Doth God make but some little repairs of outward comforts? Do not slight these, look upon them as the beginnings of greater things. When *Elijah* sent his servant to go, and look towards the Sea, whether he saw any sign of rain, he at last brought him word that he saw a little cloud arise out of the Sea as big as a mans hand: would any one think that a prognostick of great rain? *Elijah's* servant might despise this, and say this is no sign of rain; but *Elijah* knew better, that little assured him there was a mighty showre at hand, he knew how it would work presently: Go, bid *Ahab* prepare his Chariot, and get him down, that the rain stop him not. Thus it is, respecting dayly providences; if you see a mercy coming but as big as a mans hand, be perswaded that the Lord sends it as a fore-runner, as that which shall usher in large and extensive mercies. If we see the glimmering light of day break, we are not angry, because it is not presently high noon, or, because we have not full light, we know the light will come by degrees; *Thy beginning shall be small, but thy latter end shall greatly encrease.*

VERS. 8, 9, 10.

For enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thy self to the search of their fathers.
(For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing; our dayes upon Earth are a shadow)
Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and utter words out of their heart?

WE have opened the first Argument, by which *Bildad* confirms his proposition laid down at *vers.* 3. *that God is just*; both from the example of Gods dealing with *Job's* Children, *vers.* 4. and from what, God was ready to do for him, in *vers.* 5, 6, 7.

The context now read contains a second general Argument to prove the former assertion, and it is grounded upon

the testimony or Authority of the Ancients; as if *Bildad* had said thus, *I will not press thee with my own bare sentence, and say so, with my own reason and authority, but I wish thee to search the records of former times, to consult the wisest and the holiest men that ever were in the world, and let them judge in this case. Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy self to the search of their Fathers.*

It is here observable that *Bildad* manages his counsel by the same Arguments which *Eliphaz* had used before him: *Eliphaz* bid *Job* (*Enquire who ever perished being innocent,* (*Chap.* 4.) and promises him peace upon repentance (*Chap.* 5. 23, 24.) *Bildad* runs the same strain, *If thou wert pure,* &c. and here, *Enquire of the former age,* &c.

The strength of his Argnment may be cast into this form.

That is true which the holiest and wisest in all antiquity with one mouth and one consent agree in.
But the holiest and wisest in all antiquity agree in this, that God is just.
Therefore this is a truth.

Hereupon he inferreth, that God had dealt justly with *Job* in consuming his estate, in destroying his Children, and in afflicting his person. That's the Logical meaning or Argument of these three verses.

שאל *Significat petere, postulare & quidem cum precibus. Etiam scisciscitari in dubiis.*

Enquire I pray thee.] The word notes a very earnest, and a diligent search or enquiry: To enquire with industry, yea, with importunity. The *grave* hath its name in Hebrew from this word, and so hath Hell: because the grave (as it were) calls for, or enquires after all flesh; and Hell with much earnestness gapes for wicked men, *Eccles.* 2. 10. *Whatsoever mine eyes desired.* The eye is a strong asker.

De personâ, sic consulere; de rebus sic petere. Merc.

It is applied sometimes to persons, and then it signifies, to enquire or consult what is to be done. Sometimes it is applied to things, and then it signifies, to ask that a thing may be done. Prayer is an enquiry after God, and the things of God, 1 *Sam.* 1. 17, 20, 27. This word is used about *Hannahs* prayer to God for a Child, *Hannah conceived and bare a son, and called his name* Samuel, saying, *Because I have asked him of the Lord.*

Further, the word is applied to God when he enquires after or asks somewhat of us, as if he made his request and sute to us (*Deut.* 10. 12.) *And now,* Israel, *what doth the Lord thy God require of thee?* Or, what doth he enquire after in thee? It is this, *To fear the Lord thy God,* &c.

Here, *to enquire,* is to use all endeavours and means to find out the best informations and resolutions, which the Fathers in those former ages were able to give *Job* in the controversie then a foot between him and his friends, *Enquire, I pray thee,*

Of the former age.] By the former we are not to understand those that were immediately preceding only, or those that were preceding for some few generations past, but as the Septuagint well renders it, by former generations, we may understand *the first generation*; begin at the first, and so come down all along, begin as high as thou canst. Enquire not only of those who lived since the floud, but of all who have been since God created man upon the Earth; draw the line of thy search thorow all ages, and thou shalt find the pedegree of this truth from age to age, from generation to generation, *Enquire I pray thee, of the former*

γενεὰν πρώτην.

Age.] The word age, is taken three wayes.

דור *à radice* דור *Continuit & successive vixit, duravit; sensu & sono idē quod vox Latina duro.*

First, For the whole space of mans life; which, when it is doubled, signifies a very long life, *Psal.* 61. 7. *Thou shalt prolong the Kings life* (or, according to the letter of the Hebrew, thou shalt add dayes to the dayes of the King) *and his years as many generations*; or, as generation and generation, age and age, long and long, that is, very long; Two lives, or two mens ages, being (as it were) laid into one.

Secondly, For some special part of mans life. Mans life is divided into several ages. Some divide it into four, alluding to the four parts of the year. Some, into five, infancy, childhood, youth, mans estate, and old-age; comparing them to the five acts of an interlude, the Prologue whereof is infancy, and the Epilogue, decrepid old-age. Others into seven, in allusion to the seven Planets.

Thirdly, It is taken for an age of men, or the state of the time present. So in the Gospel, Christ calleth the Scribes and Pharisees, *A generation of vipers, and an adulterous generation.* As if he had said, You of this time and age of the world, are a viperous and an adulterous brood. So *Psal.* 14. 5. *God is in the generation of the righteous:* That is, he favours that generation, or sort of men; God is in all generations, but such he delights in most; the wicked have cause enough to fear those, in whom God delights.

Ætatem vocant Hebræi genus hominum simul viventium, sic ætas prava adultera. Apud Græcos γενεὰ, significat intervallum septē annorum, unde medici vetant duas ætates habenti, i.e. annos quatuor decem nato venam incidi, quod sanguine egeat. Suid.

That of the Prophet (which Text hath variety of interpretations) is taken in this sence (*Isa.* 53. 8.) *Who shall declare his generation?* It is the word of the Text, *Who shall declare his age, or the generation of Christ?* Some understand it of his eternal generation. Others, of his temporal generation, when he was incarnate, the mystery whereof was beyond words. A third, of that eternity which followed his passion. As if it were an Antithesis to those words, *He was taken from prison, and he was cut off, but who shall declare his generation?* You may quickly write up the dayes that Christ lived here upon Earth, they were but few, even *his pilgrimage* was short on Earth, but who can declare his generation? Those infinite and eternal ages and revolutions, thorow which he shall pass, though now you have quickly cut off his life? Others, by his *generation* understand the holy seed and issue, the Children of Christ. His Cross was fruitful, and his sufferings productive of an infinite generation, *Who can declare it?* Though you cut off the Father, yet this Father by dying will give life to an innumerable posterity, *Who can declare his generation?* So (vers. 10.) *He shall see his seed.* But besides all these we may with good probability interpret the word *generation* for the time when Christ sojourned in the flesh, *Who can declare this generation?* That is, who can describe the time or the age wherein Christ lived? As if he had said, you see here in this glass of prophecy how they will use Christ, how bloodily and cruelly they will deal with him, he shall be imprisoned, he shall be cut off and numbred among transgressors, *Who can declare his generation?* What pen is able with lively colours to paint out the several wickednesses and Tyrannies of that age, acted against, and inflicted upon that holy and innocent lamb *Jesus Christ*, who came to dye for the sins of the world? Surely his generation, or the story of his age will be such, as no pen is able to draw out, or fully to delineate, *Who shall declare his age?*

Quis cogitare aut dicere potest quam perversi fuerint homines, qui tempore ejus victuri sint. Pined.

The age which *Bildad* calls *Job* to enquire into, is not a part of mans life, or the whole life of a man, or one age of men, or state of times, but the whole space of time from the very beginning with all things done or suffered, and the persons who have been active or passive, doers or sufferers in those times. *Thus enquire of the former age.*

The reason why he called him to enquire of the former age, was, because in those times the will of God was not reduced to writing. The divinity of the first ages was traditional; the Scriptures were not composed for more then two thousand years after the creation, but the mind of God was either immediately revealed, or carried from father to son, from generation to generation; being preserved, not in paper and ink, or other formal records, but in the memories and hearts of the faithful, until the giving of the Law. Hence it was that *Bildad* refers *Job* to those revelations, or to the experiences of the Fathers concerning the dealings of God in former ages.

Berosus in his eighth book of Antiquities, reports that the Fathers after *Adam* set up two great pillars, upon which some affirm they inscribed many Divine Truths: but he tells us that those pillars (of which some monuments were seen after the flood) were filled rather with Astronomical observations, Mathematical scheams of the Heavens and figures of the Stars; we cannot put much value upon either of these opinions. The former cannot warrant us that any thing was registred and written by Gods appointment, till the writing of the Law. And therefore *Bildad*, according to the usage of those times, sends *Job* for information to the traditions and reports of the Fathers. For after the Law was written, the Prophets, in case of emergent doubts and controversies, sent the people, not to the traditions or experiences of former ages, but, *To the Law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there*

Columnæ duæ inscriptæ à nepotibus Adami characteres quosdam & figuras Mathematicas, pro siderum observatione potius quam ullam historiam, aut exquisitā de Deo & ejus providentiæ doctrinam habuisse dicuntur. Berosus. l. 1. c. 1.

there is no light, or no morning in them, Isa. 8. 20. The word once written was the rule, and though it cannot speak, yet it must teach us how to speak. If we speak not according to this, there is no light in us. But the word not being written, *Bildad* advises *Job* well, *Enquire of the former age,*

And prepare thy self to the search of their Fathers.

כון *Fundare, aptare, parare, ordinare, stabilire significat.*

Having counsel'd him to *enquire of the former age*; he addeth, *Prepare thy self to the search of their Fathers*; as if he had said, though I bid thee enquire, yet I would not have thee rush hand over head upon this enquiry, *Prepare thy self.* The word signifies to lay a good foundation; *Due preparations are the foundation of action.* Hence it signifies also to establish; because a matter is established and confirmed by wise preparations, and considerate addresses to it. Those things stand fastest about which we make not too much hast. Further, the word signifies the fixing of the mind, *Fix thy heart upon this work*: keep thy spirits intent (*Psal.* 108. 1.) *My heart is fixed* (saith *David*, which some render, *My heart is prepared*) *I will sing and give praise. Prepare thy self*

To the search of their Fathers.] Before he advised him to enquire of the former age, here, *To search their Fathers*; as if he had said, Do not confine thy self to the immediately fore-passed times, but go as high as thou canst: The former age (as was touched upon that passage) may include all times past: but here to avoid all mistakes, he gives it in expressly. The Fathers of the former age, are the Fathers of every age. All that have lived before us, come under the relation of our Fathers. The Fathers were dead, but they lived in their monuments and works: these he must search, so far as any mark or remembrance of them could be found. Hence Observe,

First, *That as it is a duty in all, so it was a custom, in ancient times, carefully to record the dealings of God with them, for the use of ensuing generations.*

To what end should *Job* search, if nothing were to be found; The Jews were commanded to remember the works of God for their learning, after the word was written, *Psal.* 78. 5. He established a testimony in *Jacob*, &c. *That they should make them known to their Children.* God hath alwayes had a book of his acts and monuments, as well as of his Laws and Institutions. Names given to Children and yearly feasts, to stones and pillars, have been the preservatives and memorials of his wonderful works. The works of God are his holiness, justice, power, mercy, truth made visible. The administrations of God in one age, are for the instruction of all ages. God spake with *Jacob* only in person at *Bethel*, yet there the Scripture saith, he spake with all his posterity, *Hos.* 12. 4. *He found him in* Bethel, *and there he spake with us.* It is then a debt to posterity, to shew them what *God* hath done for us. Observe,

Secondly, *That it is our duty to enquire into the dealings of God in all ages.*

It was their duty before the word was written, and it is a duty still. The works of *God* are to be studied and read over as well as his word, *Deut.* 4. 20. & 32. *Ask now of the dayes that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon Earth; and ask from one side of Heaven to another, enquire every way to see whether ever God dealt with a people, as he hath dealt with thee, whether God did ever assay to take to himself a Nation from the midst of an other Nation by temptations, and by signs, and by wonders,* &c. Enquire this of all the former times. So *Deut.* 32. 7. *Remember the dayes of old, consider the years of many generations, ask thy Father and he will shew thee, thy Elders and they will tell thee.* The Psalmist promises to rehearse what these were enjoyned to record, *Psal.* 78. 3, 4. *I will open my mouth in a parable, I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known, and our Fathers have told us.* Our speaking of, and enquiring into, what *God* hath done, shews the harmony between his word and works. And the former providences of *God* are food for our faith, as well as the promises of *God.*

Thirdly, That which I shall rather insist upon, is this,

True antiquity ever gives a testimony to the truth.

Quod antiquissimum verissimum.

Hence the Prophets send the people back to antiquity, *Jer.* 6. 16. *Enquire for the good old-way.* Every old way is not a good way, but in every good old way we may walk safely and see the foot-steps of truth. It is a received rule, *That is truest which is ancientest.* It is certainly so, for truth is not only ancient, but eternal. Truth is as old as *God* himself, for truth is nothing else but the mind of *God*, truth was with *God* from everlasting. Truth is commonly called the daughter of time, yet (in a sence) it is the mother of time, for it was before time was; and therefore (no question) that which is ancienteſt is truest.

Yet there is a great abuse of this principle. Look back to antiquity and consult with your Fathers (say many) and see what they did, how they believed. But what is the antiquity they call us to consult with? It is not (as *Moses* spake in that place of *Deuteronomy*) antiquity, *since God created man upon Earth*, or since Jesus Christ was upon the Earth, and gave out his Gospel laws: but it is the antiquity of some later ages and editions, an antiquity far short of what is indeed the ancient time. The Apostle (1 *Joh.* 2. 7.) gives us the definition of an old commandment, *This is the old commandment which was from the beginning.* Our sinful nature is called the *old man*, and yet is a *corrupt man.* It is called the *old man*, not that it is older then the *new man*; the *new man* is not of a younger house, or later date then the *old man.* Holiness was before corruption. And the image of *God* upon man, elder then sin, the image of the Devil. There are many corruptions in doctrine, in opinion, in worship, in practice, which go for very old: And there are many doctrines which we call *new truths*; Is it because those corruptions are older then these new truths? No, new truths are elder then the oldest corruptions. That which we call the *new world*, was created in the beginning, though discovered but yesterday. So new truths were given from the beginning only they were unknown till of late; and we may well conceive that some goodly regions of truth are still (*terra incognita*) undiscovered; *God* having reserved them for the honour and industry of some *divine Columbus*, who may give us an exacter Sea-card, of divine Mysteries, then the world hath yet seen, though enough hath been seen from the beginning, for the safe steering of our course to Heaven. He that would enquire and make a diligent search for truth, must go to the first institutions, *That's the old commandment which was from the beginning.* The Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 23. 43.) speaks of some who were *grown old in adulteries*; that is, old in adulterating and corrupting the truth, and worship of *God*, *That which is old may be old in evil, and fuller of errors then it is of dayes.* We find when the good Kings of *Judah* reformed, they did not search only into what was done in the ages immediately before them, or what their next Fathers had done; but they search'd what was done in the times of their godly Fathers, how many removes soever distant from them. *Hezekiah* (2 *Chron.* 29. 6.) tells the *Levites* that their Fathers were in an error, that they had trespassed, and done that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and had forsaken him; and *Chap.* 30. 5. speaking of the observation of the Passover, he saith, *They had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written*; therefore *ver.* 7. he dehorteth them saying, *Be not ye like your Fathers which trespassed against the Lord God of your Fathers*; he doth not mean that they should not be like their first Fathers, who had the truth purely committed to them, and so worshipped God purely; but be not like your immediate fore-fathers, or your corrupt fore-fathers, how many descents and generations so ever, ye can number from them. And this was a thing so strange, that when *Hezekiah* sent the Posts from City to City thorow the Countries of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, with this message, that he would have a reformation according to the first institution or pattern, and would not have them stay in what their fore-fathers had done; It is said, *vers.* 10. *That they laughed the messengers to scorn, and they mocked them*; what must we now be wiser then our Fathers? Yes, saith he, you have done evil a long time, you and your Fathers, therefore I must bring you back to your first Fathers, in comparison of whom, the Fathers you claim by were but Children, and those degenerate Children. It is said of *Josiah's* reformation, (2 *King.*

23. 22.) That *there was not the like from the dayes of the Judges, nor in all the dayes of the Kings of Iſrael and Judah*; he went to the very beginning of all, there had not been ſuch a thing done before. So that if any ſhould have objected, why may not ſuch a reformation ſerve us as ſerved thoſe Kings and Judges? No, ſaith *Joſiah*, I will ſearch beyond their times into the remoteſt antiquities. The Church makes humble confeſſion (*Pſal.* 106. 6.) *We have erred with our fathers*; let not any turn this into a ſtubborn reſolution, and ſay, *We will err with our fathers*: if that be an errour which our fathers believed and practiſed, we will erre with them. So thoſe rebellious *Jews* pleaded (*Jer.* 44. 17.) *We will do as our fathers.* They who will do as their fathers, may ſuffer with their fathers; they who will needs err by their fathers copy, may go to hell too by their fathers copy. *Jerom* once deſired leave of *Auſtin* to err with ſeven fathers whom he found of his opinion. I ſhould not deſire that leave, nor envy any one the priviledge. The Fathers are but Children when they err, and they who will err with their Fathers, are worſe then Children.

Conſider then to what Antiquity, and to what Fathers you appeal. Many practices are very old, yet very erroneous. Many old ſayings and old doings muſt be unſaid and undone, or we ſhall be undone for ever. How many old ſayings of the *Jews* doth Chriſt gainſay? (*Mat.* 5.) *Ye have heard that it hath been ſaid by them of old time*, thus and thus, *But I ſay unto you*, &c. And (*Mat.* 19.) Anſwering the Queſtion about divorce, *Moſes indeed for the hardneſs of your hearts, ſuffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not ſo.* Beſides, ſome (like the *Gibeonites*) feign antiquity, they can put a gray beard upon a green head; and their opinions will be found fennowed and mouldy with errour, not with age. As we muſt take heed of novelties, ſo we muſt be cautious about antiquities. Some antiquities of old men are no better *then old wives fables*, of which the Apoſtle bids us beware; unlearned old wives fables are as authentick as many learned mens antiquities pleaded for. To have an itch after novelties, and to dote upon antiquities, are alike vain and dangerous. Old fables and young fancies are with me at the ſame rate; *No man having drunk old wine* (ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 5. 35.) *ſtraightway calls for new, for he ſaith the old is better.* Old is better then new, if it be as good as new. But any new truth is better then the oldeſt error; and every errour, the elder it is, the worſer it is.

Again, *Bildad* adviſes *Job* to prepare himſelf to the ſearch of his Fathers, Hence obſerve,

We muſt not preſume to find truth with eaſe, or to come ſlightly by it.

Prepare thy ſelf (Prov. 2. 3.) *If thou crieſt after knowledge, and lifteſt up thy voyce for underſtanding; if thou dig for it as ſilver, and ſearch for it as for hid treaſures, then thou ſhalt find*; &c. A man that will find ſilver, muſt prepare and fit himſelf to ſearch for ſilver. That lies not upon the ſurface, but in the boſom and bowels of the earth. There are four things wherein this preparation conſiſts.

Firſt, Humility. God doth not teach, but reſiſt the proud, he gives more grace (humility is much grace) to the humble. A lowly minded man ſhall know the mind of the moſt high God.

Secondly, Holineſs. Submitting to, and practiſing the truth we know, prepares us to receive more of truth. He that doth the will of Chriſt, ſhall know his doctrine, *Jo.* 7. 17.

Thirdly, Prayer. *Doth any man want wiſdom? let him ask of God*, Jam. 1. 5. Truth is the daughter of God, and he will not beſtow her in marriage upon our minds, unleſs we ask him.

Fourthly, Love unto Truth. *Truth is a beauty, and deſerves our love*; to love truth, is not a civility, but a duty; to ſearch for truth, without love to truth, is a diſhonour to truth; and as the not receiving the love of the truth, is the cauſe why many apoſtatize and fall from it, ſo it is a reaſon why many are ſtill ignorant and cannot come at it. As God, the Father of truth, muſt be askt his good will before we can have her; ſo truth, the daughter of God ſhall be loved before we have her.

Bildad having thus adviſed *Job* to ſearch antiquity, giveth him a reaſon of his advice, a modeſt reaſon, reflecting upon himſelf and upon his friends.

Verſe 9. **For we are but of yeſterday, and know nothing, our dayes on earth are a ſhadow.**

As if he had ſaid, the reaſon why we refer thee to the former ages, is, becauſe we are able to ſay little of our ſelves, and from our own experience, *we are but of yeſterday*, that is, the time we have lived is very little, our dayes have been few upon earth. Truth is the daughter of time, and we are ſcarce ſons of time, *we are but of yeſterday.*

Yeſterday.] Taken in our common ſpeech, ſignifies only the day immediately going before. 2. It is put for the time a little before, and is as much as *lately*, 2 Kings 9. 26. *Surely I have ſeen yeſterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his ſons*, That is, It is not long ſince *Naboth* and his ſons were ſlain, and their blood is as freſh in my memory, as if it were in my eye. 3. It is put for all time, how long ſoever paſt (*Heb.* 13. 8.) The Apoſtle Hebraizing, ſaith, *Jeſus Chriſt the ſame yeſterday, to day and for ever*; yeſterday is not put for the day immediately before, or for many dayes before, but for all dayes before, even from the beginning of the world; yea, not only are all dayes paſt included in yeſterday, but the eternity which is paſt.

Yeſterday and the day before, are often tranſlated *before*, or heretofore, *Gen.* 31. 2, 5. *Exod.* 40. 10. *Ruth* 2. 11. 2 *Sam.* 5. 2. Noting time not much paſt the preſent.

In this place by *yeſterday*, we are not to underſtand all time paſt, nor the time immediately paſt, but ſmall time paſt; *We are but of yeſterday*, that is, we have lived but a while in the world (yet they were old men) the dayes which we have ſeen are as nothing; he expreſſes their lives by the leaſt compleat time paſt, to ſhew that they had lived but a little time paſt.

So, in Scripture, this phraſe, *to morrow* (oppoſite to yeſterday) ſignifies not only the day immediately to come, but any time to come indefinitely (1 *Sam.* 28. 29.) The Devil anſwers *Saul*, *To morrow thou and thy ſons ſhall be with me*; he did not know exactly and preciſely, that it ſhould be the very next day, but he uſeth a word which would ſave his credit, if it ſhould have fallen out many dayes, or ſome few years after. *To morrow* may be any time to come. As then *to morrow* ſignifies the immediate day coming, or all time to come, ſo *yeſterday* ſignifies the immediate day paſt, or all time paſt. Thus one of the Ancients ſpeaks of *Matthew*, *Yeſterday a Publican, to day a Preacher*, that is, he was heretofore a Publican, and now a Preacher.

For we are but as yeſterday.] *Bildad* ſtileth himſelf and his friends *yeſterday*, to ſhew they had been but ſhort-liv'd, though they had lived long. Some have given us the date of their years, or an account how old they were. They reckon *Bildad* an hundren and forty, *Eliphaz* an hundred and fifty, and *Zophar* an hundred and twenty years old. In what Records the years of their nativities were found, I know not; but probable enough it is, that they were ancient men; and (*chap.* 15. 10.) *Eliphaz* ſpeaks as much, *With us are both the gray-headed and very ancient men, much elder then thy father.* Yet *Bildad* calleth himſelf and them but as of yeſterday, either abſolutely, becauſe the life of man is ſhort, or comparatively to the lives of the fathers in the firſt age of the world, who lived much longer. His meaning then is, we will not bound thee to our experiences, who have lived but a while, but inform thy ſelf from them who lived many years ago, and lived many years, ſome of them nine hundred years and more; enquire of *Methuſelah*, and his contemporaries, who are able to give thee a better account then we. Therefore he addeth,

And know nothing.] The particle [And] is here cauſal, *We are but of yeſterday, therefore we know nothing*; in which ſence we read it often. Take an inſtance (*Ezek.* 13. 31.) *Thou haſt walked in the way of thy ſiſter, therefore I will give her cup into thine hand*; The Hebrew is, *And I will give her cup into thy hand, thou ſhalt pledge her in the ſame cup of affliction.* So here, *We are but of yeſterday, and know nothing*, that is, *We are but of yeſterday, therefore we know nothing.*

Know nothing.] The negation is not abſolute, but comparative, *We know nothing*; that is, we Neotericks know but little in compariſon of thoſe who lived long ago, and lived ſo long, even many centuries, gathering knowledge, and making up their obſervations; for (*ch.* 12. 12.) *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of days underſtanding.* Hence obſerve,

The ſhort life of man is not ſufficient to gain much knowledge.

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חמול *Heri dicitur de die præterito, tam de propinquo, quã de longinquo, quaſi diceres antea.* Rab. Dav. *Apoſtolus Hebraizans, ſic utitur vocabulo,* χθὲς. Heb. 13. 8. *Heri & nudius tertius, dum ſimul junguntur, proverbialẽ conficiunt hyperbolem tempus nuper actum ſignificantem. Sic etiam apud Græcos,* χθὲς ἢ πρώην. Bol. χθὲς uſurpatur indefinitè de tẽpore præterito, ut cras de futuro. Druſ. ὁ χθὲς πολίτης νῦν σήμερον διδάσκαλος. *Senſus eſt antea nunc.* Naz. de *Mat.*

Hiſterni quaſi unius diei homines ſunt novi & recentes.

We are but of yesterday, and we know nothing; we cannot know much who live but little. The great Physitian complained long ago, *Life is short, and art is long*; natural life is not long enough for the journey of natural knowledge, how much less is it for divine knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which is the art of all arts, and science of sciences? Those mysteries are very long, and our lives very short; therefore at our best, we come short in the knowledge of them. Hence the Apostle (*1 Cor.* 13.) speaking of the most perfect knowledge we have in this life, concludes, *we know but in part*; there is a vast ocean of truths in the Gospel, but we are straight-necked vessels, we take in truths but by drops; we are long a taking it in, and we have not long to take it in; hence the emptiness of those that are fullest. He that hath much to learn, and but a little to live, cannot learn much. And as our time is little, so we lose a great deal of our time. Our losses of the time we have, hinder more then our having but little time. Our dayes are few, but if we could number them, we should apply our selves to, and gain to our selves a sufficient stock of holy wisdom. *The greatest reason why we profit no more in knowledge, is, because we improve our time no more*, though that be a reason also, because we have no more time.

Ars longa, vita brevis, Hipp.

Non parum temporis habemus, sed multum perdimus. Sen.

Secondly observe, how modestly *Bildad* speaks of himself and of his friends, *We are but of yesterday, and we know nothing.*

It becometh us to have humble thoughts of our own knowledge, how much soever we know.

These were neither children nor fools who had to do with *Job*, they were the wisest of that age, *Oracles of wisdom, yet we know nothing*, saith *Bildad*. The best of our knowledge here, is to know our imperfections, it is as much knowledge as we can reach, to know wherein our knowledge cometh short; the Apostle (*1 Cor.* 8.2.) is direct, *He that thinketh he knoweth any thing knoweth nothing as he ought to know*: He would not have us think that we know any thing, though he had said in the former verse, *We know that we all have knowledge*; the Apostle *knew it*, but he would not have them *think it*. His meaning is, I grant there is knowledge abroad in the world, I have some, and you have some. We know that we all have knowledge; which yet some understand, as if he spake in a secret *Ironie*, against those who bragg'd so much of their knowledge; yea, *we know you have knowledge, but let me tell you thus much, you who stand so much upon your knowledge; he that thinketh he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.* How can that be? Is not a man to think that he knows what he knows? Must a man think himself ignorant, or otherwise he must be accounted ignorant? Surely no. There are very many that know much, and they may think that they know something, yea, that they know many things; but observe the word there, *He that thinketh*: the word doth not signifie a simple apprehension of a thing, or a bare and naked knowledge, for so a man may reflect upon his own knowledge, and *know that he knows, as well as what he knows*; but it imports *thinking* with a kind of insolency and pride of spirit, with affectation, boasting and vain-glory in that knowledge. *He that thinketh he knows any thing*, that is, he that vaunts and stands upon his knowledge, who conceits he hath so much knowledge, such a head-piece that he can carry all before him by the strength of his wit and parts, such a knowing man *knows nothing. That mans wisdom is but conceit who is wise in his own conceit.* In this sence we have the word (*Mat.* 3.9.) Where the Baptist bespeaks the Pharisees, *Think not to say within your selves, we have Abraham to our father; Think not*; it was not a sin for them to think that *Abraham* was their father, and that they were descended from him; but, *think not*, that is, do not think of this, and so be proud of it. Be not lifted up upon an outward priviledge which will stand you in no stead at all if you stand upon it. *Except you be changed and born again of the Spirit, it will not avail you, that you are born of Abraham's flesh; if Abraham's faith be not in your hearts, it shall be no advantage to you that* Abraham's *blood runs in your veins.* The word is so used again (*Phil.* 3.4.) *If any one thinketh he may be confident, I much more.* If any one may have an opinion of himself in regard of outward priviledges, surely I may, but I will not. So then an opinion, or a conceitedness of our knowledge, blasts all our knowledge; such a man *knoweth nothing as he ought to know*; he knoweth somewhat *by rote*, but he doth not know any thing (as a Christian ought) *by heart*. By how much we have the more true knowledge of the highest objects, by so much we have the lower thoughts of our knowledge. *It is best to know as much as we can of the best things, and to think as little as we can of our selves.*

Οὐδὲν ἴσμεν, geminatio negatis particulæ vehementius negat. Bez.

Δοκεῖ, non significat simplicem aliquam persuasionem, sed quæ cum superbia & insolentia conjuncta est, alioquin nihil magis repugnat fidei, quam Academica dubitatio. Bez.

Our dayes upon earth are a shadow.] But were not the dayes of all the fathers a shadow? Yes, the longest life is but a long shadow; he means comparatively, our lives are shorter by much then theirs were, and therefore but a shadow.

There are three sorts of shadows: 1. Natural. 2. Civil. 3. Spiritual.

First, A natural shadow is a dark light caused by the coming of some thick body between us and the Sun. This is a shadow in a proper and strict acception.

Secondly, Besides the natural, there is a civil shadow, *Protection is a shadow*; and to be under a shadow, is to be protected: We translate (*Num.* 14.9.) *Their defence is departed from them*; the Heb. is, *Their shadow*. So, *Isa.* 4.5. & 25.4.

Thirdly, A shadow is taken for a dark or imperfect representation of things spiritual; so all the ceremonies of the old Law are called shadows (*Heb.* 8.5. & 10.1. & 9.9. *Col.* 2.17.) Ceremonial worship is expressed by a shadow, because it was but an obscure representation of the truth; the ceremonies were interposed between Christ the true light, and us, and so cast a shadow of him. Or, as a Painter, who is to draw the lively figure or shape of a man, at first makes an obscure draught, or some imperfect lines of the body, but afterwards gives it beauty and lustre to the life. The *Mosaical* rites were such a shadow of heavenly things. Yet further, a shadow (which comes neerest the meaning of this text) notes the least imaginable sign or semblance of a thing. So (*Ja.* 1.17.) When the Apostle saith, that with God *the father of lights, there is not so much as a shadow of turning*, he means, there is not the least sign or token of turning with God.

When *Bildad* saith, *Our dayes upon earth are but as a shadow*, we may understand it, either of the time past, and so our life is but as a shadow that is gone. Or, it may be meant of the whole life of man taken together. The life of man (take it from the beginning to the ending, from the *Alpha* to the *Omega*, from the first to the last of it) is a shadow. The comparison is frequent in Scripture, I shall not need to stay upon it. See two or three particulars of the resemblance.

First, The life of man is a shadow, because it hath little in it that is substantial, a shadow is opposed to a substance; our life rather seems to be then is, it is so quickly gone.

Umbra est quid inane, & nihil habens solidæ substantiæ, Umbra denotat materiam stationem & protectionem fugacem, nunquam sub umbra dormit, proditur statim, atque traditur radiis solis. Pined.

Secondly, A shadow (though sometime put for protection and safety, yet) implies unsetledness and uncertainty; if a man stands or rests under a shadow, the shadow will leave him, it will be gone from him, and betray him to the scorching Sun-beams; a shadow never keeps long in one place, but varies with the motion of the Sun, and when it is high-noon the shadow goes quite up, and is not. There is such an uncertainty in the life of man, it holds not one tenour, it stayes not in any state, there is a deceitfulness in it, changes are upon it. The greatest certainty of our lives is, that they are uncertain.

In general, the life of man being compared to a shadow, teaches us, that it is short, moveable and unconstant, there is no hold or tack in it, *Psal.* 102.11. *My dayes are like a shadow that declineth.* The encrease of our dayes hath a declension in it, *1 Chron.* 29.15. *We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our Fathers; our dayes on the earth are as the shadow.* How doth he explain that? *There is no abiding in our dayes, as there is no abiding in a shadow.* Many of the Ancients have represented the life of man, not only as a shadow, but less then a shadow; *A dream of a shadow, a shadow of a shadow, an Idol of a shadow*; which is the lowest expression that can be, as much as to say, a nothing of nothing. *An Idol is nothing in the world.* God made no such thing in the world. And though our dayes be made by God in world, yet they are no such thing as *God* made, or as the world makes them. We have met with points about the shortness and transitoriness of mans life often in this book, I shall therefore only add a word here.

Homo vocatur σκίας ὄναρ. Pin. *κατὰ σκιᾶς* Soph. *εἴδωλον σκιᾶς.* Æsc.

It is our wisdom, forasmuch as our life on Earth is as a shadow, that we improve this shadow to gain assurance of eternal light: *Life here is but a fleeting shadow, that to come*

is

is an abiding substance. Shall we for the pleasures and comforts of a life, which is no more enduring then a shadow, hazard the pleasures and comforts of a life, which endures for ever. A man hath not a shadow of reason, not a shadow of true wisdom and understanding, who will spend out a shadowish life in those things which are but a shadow, neglecting that which is the true light, and will bring us to eternal light?

Attendat igitur homo in diebus umbræ suæ, ut faciat aliquid dignum desideratæ lucis suæ. Aug. *in* Psal. 143.

Bildad having put in his parenthesis, as a reason why he sends *Job* to the Fathers, gives him an encouragement at *vers.* 10. to make this enquiry, he tells him what he shall get for his pains in consulting with those former ages, and with the Fathers.

Vers. 10. **Shall not they teach thée, and tell thée, and utter words out of their heart?**

As if he had said, *Thou shalt not lose thy labour by enquiring into those ancient times, shall not they teach thee?* Certainly, they shall, thou shalt not come away empty, undirected, uncounsell'd.

Shall not they teach thée?] How could they teach? They were dead and gone, they were past many ages before. *Bildad* may be conceived to answer, *Though the Fathers are dead, yet they will speak to thee and counsel thee, as well as if they lived and stood before thee with our selves. They shall teach thee, and they shall instruct thee.* And more then that, they will not only teach thee in a complement, and speak words to thee, but they will speak their very hearts to thee: thou shalt find that they will give thee cordial counsel. They will utter words to thee out of their heart.

Utter words out of their heart.] The meaning of that is, either: First, In general, they will give thee the real conceptions of their minds about these points, they will speak sincerely, they will not speak to thee from the teeth outward, but from the heart inward. Secondly, They will speak wisely and judiciously to thee about these things; they will utter, not so much words as oracles to thee out of their heart.

Eloquia ex corde proferre, est sapienter loqui, sapiens cordatus dicitur; stultus excors. Cor loquitur, quæ animus præmeditatus est os loquitur sine meditatione.

The heart is the seat of knowledge and understanding, and a wise man is (*homo cordatus*) a hearty man, a man with a heart; and the fool in Scripture is said to be a heartless man, *a man without a heart*; he cannot utter words from his heart, who wants a heart, he utters them from his mouth, or from his tongue. *A fools heart is in his mouth, and a wise mans mouth is in his heart*; he speaks that which lies in the in-most receses and closets of his spirit: he speaks from meditation, he brings what he speaks to his heart, and from his heart utters what he speaks. Christ assures us, *That a good man out of the good treasures of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil things.* Every heart is a treasury. When a good man speaks evil, he speaks not from his heart (though he hath a stock of sinfulness in him) but from his lips; and when an evil man speaks good, he speaks it not from his heart, but from his lips: for he hath no stock or treasury of good within. An hypocrite speaks good with a heart and a heart, with a double heart. A fool speaks without a heart, yet of the two, it is better to have no heart then two.

Or we may take the meaning of the words, as a secret reproof of *Job*; If thou wilt look after these Fathers, and search them, they will not speak as thou hast done, rashly, unadvisedly and indiscreetly, but they will speak from their hearts, they will utter things of weight and serious consideration. From hence observe,

First, *That old men are presumed to have a great stock of knowledge.*

Go to the Fathers, they will certainly teach thee. Every man should labour to have a proportion of knowledge to his proportion of years, we should not be Children in understanding, when we are men in time. The Apostle reproves such as are so (*Heb.* 5. 2.) *When* (saith he) *for the time you ought to be teachers* (look upon the years that are gone over your heads, and you ought to be teachers; you should have much in your hearts for the instruction of others, yet so it is) *you have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and you are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Secondly, Observe, *They who are dead and gone, yet speak to us as if they were living.*

Bildad sends *Job* to the ancient Fathers, go they will teach thee and utter words out of their heart. Whilst we consider what they have spoken and done, it is as if they now spake, *Heb.* 11. 4. Abel *by faith offered a better sacrifice then* Cain, *and being dead he yet speaketh.* They who are dead speak by their works, and they speak by the words which they spake, while they were alive. The records which they have left, give us counsel to this day. When the rich man (it is the scope of the Parable) I say when the rich man (*Luke* 16. 7.) desired that *Lazarus* might go from the dead to speak to his brethren, *Abraham* answers him, *They have* Moses *and the Prophets, let them hear them,* &c. *If they hear not* Moses *and the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded though one rose from the dead. They have* Moses *and the Prophets*; but *Moses* and the Prophets were dead and gone; how have they *Moses* and the Prophets? they have not the men before them, but they had their writings and records: they who read the Prophets writings, hear their speakings. *Books are silent voices.*

If *Moses* and the Prophets may be heard when dead and gone, then much more may we hear Christ, since he died and rose, and his Apostles who are dead. And whereas some have an opinion that they do not know the mind of Christ, or that they cannot reform the Church, or their Churches, till Christ himself come from Heaven to do it, or till there be Apostles sent personally to do it (they wanting an Apostle, cannot order the worship and ordinances of *God*, and therefore conclude against a present Church-state) I say to such, if that be your ground that you must have Christ and his Apostles to settle all for you; you have your desires. Look into the works and word of Christ, into the writings and practices of his Apostles, both for your rule and patern. If *Abraham* could say, they have *Moses* and the Prophets, they may hear them: surely, we may say much more, we have Christ and his Apostles, whom we may hear and consult about all the institutions and orders that concern the frame of his Church. We need not stay till Christ come down in person from Heaven, or till new Apostles are sent and furnished with instruction for this work, for we have Christ and his Apostles already, we hear what Christ spake, we read the rules which he gave concerning the wayes of his worship and government of his Church (in all the essential and constitutive parts of either) to the end of the world. Observe,

Thirdly, *They that teach others should teach their own hearts to speak.*

It is best speaking to others with the heart. The heart will teach better then the tongue, yea better then the understanding, *The word which comes from the heart of the teacher, goes soonest to the heart of the hearer.* Observe,

Fourthly, *The heart is the true repository or treasury of holy truths.*

You may see where the Fathers, the holy men in ancient time laid up truth: they utter words out of their heart, then, truth was lay'd up there. Truth is (as it were) the heart of God, and therefore we must put it into our hearts. *David* hid the Commandments of *God* in his heart: *Mary* laid up the words of Christ there. To have the word only swimming in our *brains*, is to as little purpose, as to have it only in our *Note-books*. To have truth only in our brains, or in our books, will do us as little good as water in our shoes. It is a sad thing to consider how many thousand Sermons are written almost word for word in books, and scarce a letter of them written in the heart. The promise of the new Covenant is, that God *will write his law in our hearts:* Let not any rest satisfied in having the word written in their books. Observe further,

Holy men of old did highly esteem the word and truths of God.

You may know the esteem they had of these by the place where they laid these; the heart is the best place, the fairest room in man. To put a thing into the heart, notes highest esteem and approbation. When we say a thing is in our hearts, we cannot say more to express our esteem of it.

When

When the Apostle (*Phil.* 1.7.) professes to the *Philippians*, *I have you in my heart*; his meaning is, you are most dear and precious to me. When we see a man preparing a special place, a safe place, a convenient place to lay a thing in, we conclude that the thing he would lay up is of value and account with him: when we are preparing and fitting our hearts to put the word and truths of God in, hereby we give a real testimony, that we honour the Word of God. For the most part the truths of God (as we say of things we neglect) are cast at mens heels rather then laid up in their hearts. We may know the esteem a Queen of *England* had of the City of *Calice*, when she said, *It was in her heart, and there they should find it, if they opened her.*

So much concerning these three verses, containing an argument from antiquity, and the testimony of tha first ages, by which *Bildad* confirms his former position, *That God is just.*

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Can the rush grow up without mire? Can the flag grow up without water?
Whilst it is yet in his greenness and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.
So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope shall perish.
Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web.
He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

THis context from the eleventh to the twentieth verse, contains an illustration (for so are similitudes) of the former argument; and it is taken from a three-fold similitude. First, Of a *rush*, which is explained, *vers.* 11, 12. and applied in *vers.* 13. The second is, Of a *spiders web*, explained and applied, *vers.* 14, 15. The third, Of a *luxuriant flourishing tree*, explained, *vers.* 16, 17, 18. applied, *vers.* 19. *Behold, this is the joy of his way*, &c.

The sum of all may be given in this brief;

That it is as equal and ordinary in the course of divine justice to destroy wicked men; as it is in the course of nature, for a rush to wither when it wants water; or, for a spiders web to break when it is leaned upon; or for a tree to be hewen down, when it either under-grows or over-grows its owners house, when casting its roots under the foundation, it loosens the stones, and weakens the ground-work; or, when it spreads its boughs and grows so high that it drops upon the roof, or darkens the windows of it.

Vers. 11. Can the rush grow without mire?

גמא *Juncus à* גמא *bibit, ingurgitavit, quia juncus est aquæ immersus, & eam semper imbibens. Conseritur bibula Memphytis cymba papyro.* Luc. l. 4. *Perque papyriferi septemflua flumina Nili.*

It cannot. The original word for a *rush* speaks its nature; the root signifying to suck and drink in, or alwayes to be guzling down. The rush lives in liquor, and is alwayes drinking. These abounded near the banks of *Nilus* in *Ægypt*. There *Moses* was put into an *Ark* or *skiff made of bulrushes*, Exod. 2. 3. The Prophet (*Isa.* 18. 1, 2.) tells us of a land, *sending Ambassadors by the Sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters.*

אחו *Elatus eminuit, est mediæ significationis, sumitur pro vitiosa elatione, quæ est superbia, etiam pro magnificentia & decore.* Riv. *in* Hos. 5. 5.

Can the rush grow?] In strength, lustre, and beauty. The word implies growing with a kind of pride, so plants do in a rich or proper soil, they lift up their heads, and carry it highly.

Limosus juncus, palustres junci amphibia.

Can the rush grow [**Without mire?**] Which is as much as to say, can a man live without food? Mire is the rushes meat and drink. It loves and delights in a moorish soil, and by the rivers side. A rush upon the dry land, is like a fish upon the dry land. At most the rush among vegetables and plants, is like those fowls and beasts among sensitives, which live part upon the water, and part upon the land.

אחו *Locus graminis ubi aſcuatur pecora, forsan ab* אח *frater quod ex una stirpe veluti multi fratres gignantur, quasi herbarum quædam fraternitas.*

Can the flag grow without water?] The word signifies any fertile place for grass, a medow, *Gen.* 41. 2. *Pharaoh* saw in his dream seven welfavoured kine, and fat-fleshed, *and they fed in a medow.* Some render it so here, *Can the medow grow without water?* Both flags and medows are such drinkers, that they quickly wither, if they want water: which *Bildad* gives us plainly in the next verse.

Vers. 12. Whilst it is in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

Whilst it is yet in his greenness.] Or, shooting up in stem. Some derive the Hebrew word from *Ab*, *Father*; and so it may be rendered from the letter of the Hebrew, though the expression be somewhat uncouth. While it is yet in its paternity, or fatherhood, that is, while it is flourishing and procreative. Others derive it from *Abib*, which signifies an ear of Corn, or the ear with the stalk. Hence the month *Abib* among the Jews had its name, because in those climates, corn was then eared and began to be ripe; it was the first moneth to the *Israelites*, because of their coming out of *Ægypt*, and answered to part of our *March*, and part of *April*, Exod. 13. 4. Chap. 23. 15. *This day came ye out in the moneth Abib, this moneth shall be to you the beginning of moneths.* So then this greenness of the rush implies the strength and best of it, the goodliness and beauty of it.

אביו *Abib est spica maturescens, vel spica cum calamo, inde Ibo virgultum aut lignum virens in eo, sc. tempore quo est parens novarum frugum & frondium. Vel ab* אב *pater, q.d. in paternitate sua.*

And not cut down.] That is before it is cropt and pulled up by the hand, or is fully ripe.

It withereth before any other herb.] That is, sooner or more speedily then any other herb of lesser shew, but better rooting. There are two causes why trees wither, both which are here removed from the rush, and yet it withers.

First, *Age*, but the rush withers, while it is young in its greenness.

Secondly, *Violence*, when it is pulled up or cut down by force of hand: but the rush withers, while it is not cut down. Both argue enough, the little subsistency which the rush hath in it self; to seek any further account about it, were but to seek a knot in a rush.

Vers. 13. So are the paths of all that forget God, &c.

Bildad having explained his similitude, now applies it. The comparison may be made out three wayes.

First, That hypocrites are kept in life and lustre, by outward, earthly supplies only, as the rush is by mire and water; and therefore when these fail, they fail also.

Secondly, As the rush dies, because it hath no water; so an hypocrite declines and wastes, because he is not watered by the blessings of God, and hath no rooting in grace. The *seed cast on the stony ground* (Matth. 13. 6.) *withered, because it had no earth.* The lack of earth to the one, is the same with the lack of water to the other.

Thirdly, In the general, that as a rush flourishes a while, but quickly withers; so the best estate of an hypocrite, his greenness, is of no long continuance; his seeming graces, like his joyes, are but for a moment. Hence observe,

Natural things are shadows to us of spiritual.

We may learn many lessons from speechless creatures. While we turn the leaves, and peruse the contents of this great volumn, the book of Nature, we may find much of the *God* of nature. *David* took instructions from it dayly, (*Psal.* 8.) *When I consider thy Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* I say likewise, when we behold the grass and flowers of the field, the flag, the rush in the water: we may not only put the Question, *What is man?* But we may resolve the Question, what the man is: when we look upon the meanest creatures, we may see pieces of our selves, they are as we are in many considerations, and we as they; what is man? Man is as grass. What is a wicked man an hypocrite? *He is a rush, he is like the chaff which the wind drives away.* What is a godly man? *He is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.* The Spirit of God from things sensible and visible, raiseth us up to things spiritual and invisible.

* *Præmisit Deus naturam magistram, submisſarius & prophetiam, quo facilius credas prophetiæ discipulus naturæ.* Tert.

The Ancients were very frequent in this kind of study, perusing the book of Nature, and taking helps to better the understanding by every object of the eye. It is well observed by one of them; * *That God sent us the book of Nature, before*

before he sent the book of Scripture. The mind of God was written upon the things which he had made, before he made Tables or Books to write his mind in. The Fathers had many revelations from the beginning, but they had not Scripture from the beginning. Some conceive that *Isaac* going out into the fields to meditate, meditated upon the Text of the creature, and used to raise his heart by those steps of earth to heavenly contemplations. It is said of *Solomon*, (1*King.* 4. 32, 33.) *That he spake three thousand Proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five, and that he spake of trees, from the Cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the Hyssop that springeth out of the wall*; which * *Josephus* expounds thus, *Solomon* applied his three thousand parables or similitudes unto those trees or plants about which he discoursed, drawing some divine moral from every plant, whose nature as a Philosopher he had described.

Familiare est Syro & maxime Palestinis ad omnem sermonem suum parabolas jungere, ut quod per simplex præceptum teneri non potest, per similitudines teneatur. Hier. *in* c. 19. Mat.
* *Cuilibet speciei plantarum suam adhibuit parabolam.* Joseph. *in loc.*

More distinctly for the spiritualizing of this similitude, consider wherein a wicked man or an hypocrite is like unto a rush; the rush may be of good value to us, being thus improved.

First, The rush is very spungy, hoven, hollow substance, it is not solid or close-grain'd: An hypocrite hath no solidity, we call him a hollow-hearted man.

Secondly, Hypocrites are well compared to a rush or a flag, because in windy weather they sit which way soever the wind sits. They take no harm by a storm, because they yield to every turn: let the wind blow which way it will, the rush breaks neither body nor branch. Let things turn which way they will, hypocrites can shift, and bend, and yield with them. And therefore when storms arise, which pull down and destroy many goodly trees of Gods own planting, these rushes continue. Hypocrites keep their standing, because they never stand. A great man being asked how he kept his honour and preferment in so many changes of wind and weather, of times and Princes, answered, *By being a willow and not an oak.* He that can sway, seldom breaks. Hypocrites in the Church and State, live by the same principles.

Thirdly, A bulrush or a flag in time of a storm hangs down the head, but when the storm is over, it holds up the head, and stands upright again. This resemblance between the hypocrite and a bulrush is given by the Prophet, (*Isa.* 58. 5.) *Is this the fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush? &c.* The bulrush in a storm seems to be humbled to the very ground, but in fair weather it is as high as ever. Hypocrites in times of publick humiliation, hang down their heads, and seem to lay their mouths in the dust, but when the day is past, they quickly forget their sorrows. *If I* (saith the Apostle, *Gal.* 1. 18.) *build again the things which I have destroyed, I make my self a transgressor.* Hypocrites are the worst sort of transgressors, for they seem to destroy their sins one day, but they indeed build them again the next.

Fourthly, The rush and the flag grow only in miry places, where they may have abundance of water and moisture, which notes a kind of sensuality in them, and therefore they have their names from *drinking.* So hypocrites seem to be heavenly, but are indeed earthly: they are like the rush, they cannot live without store of water, they are sensual, they must please their appetites, and delight their palates. The Apostle describes them so, *They serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies*; they must be supported with the affluence of outward things, else they cannot hold out in profession. Whereas the godly and true believers can live, when the water is drain'd or dry'd away, when outward things fail and are gone. So the Prophet *Habakuk* professes, *Chap.* 3. *ult. Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, though the fields shall yield no meat, and there be no herds in the stall; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, and will joy in the God of my salvation.* A godly man will grow, when all the world decaies to him; he will rejoyce in God, when all outward comforts fail him; hypocrites must have sensual supplies, or they are lost. *A feigned love of spiritual things is ever joyned with a true love of worldly things.* Christ speaks of some who followed him more for the loaves then for the word. And *Judas* followed his Masters bag, more then his Master.

Fifthly, Bulrushes or flags yield no fruit at all, they only make a fair shew; hypocrites how green soever they are, what shew or profession soever they make, yield no fruit of holiness.

Sixthly, A bulrush or a flag withers sooner then any other herb, that is, then other herbs that are not seated so near the water. And this agrees well with the hypocrite, for when the hypocrite begins once to wither, he withers quickly. He never had any true life, and he will not long appear to have any. When one that hath made a fair profession begins to decay, he decaies sooner then a meer civil man; a civil man will hold out in honesty and justice a great while, but a hypocrite gives over holiness and godliness presently. Besides, God blasts and withers an hypocrite sooner then any other man, because he hath abused and wronged *God* more then any other man. When judgments come, they fall first upon hypocrites, *The hypocrites in Zion tremble, Isa.* 33. Trembling will take hold upon the prophane and openly wicked, but trembling takes hold soonest upon hypocrites; they have most cause to tremble, who were confident without a cause. False hope is the parent of real fear; and they who believe without repenting, shall repent without believing.

Vers. 13. **So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrites hope shall perish.**

Sic sane illis accidit & usu venit, talis est eorum conditio. Drus.

So are the paths.] So, that is, thus it comes to pass, this is the way, and the end of all those who forget God.

The path of a man is taken two wayes.

First, For his state and condition, *Psal.* 1. *The way of the wicked shall perish*; that is, the whole state of a wicked man shall perish.

Secondly, For his course and conversation, *Job* 33. 11. *He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths*, that is, takes notice of the whole course of my life; all my conversation, all my tradings and dealings are before God. This path of mans course and conversation is two-fold. There is an internal, and there is an external path. The internal is that of the mind; the mind hath its course, the heart hath a way, *Isa.* 57. 17. *He went on frowardly in the way of his heart.* The external path is that of outward actions; That which we usually do, is our path. Thus the actions and works of God are called the paths of God, *Job* 40. 19. *Behemoth is the chief of the wayes of God*, Prov. 8. 22. *The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old*; Psal. 77. 13. *Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary*; that is, thy actings and doings are seen there.

Our actions are compared to a path in two respects. 1. Because we are frequent in them, that which is a mans course he treads every day. 2. They are called our paths, because they lead us to some end; every path leads us to some place or other. Some actions lead to life, and some to death, some lead to Heaven, some to Hell, some to Christ, and some to Satan; to one of these ends, we are travelling and journeying all the dayes of our lives.

Of those that forget God.] To forget God imports these four things.

First, Not to think of God, we forget that which we mind not. The first act of remembring is thinking. The thief on the cross prayed, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom*; that is, think of me for good. *God* is not in all the thoughts of a wicked man to obey or honour him, and a wicked man is not in all the thoughts of God (in this sence) to bless or pardon him.

Secondly, To forget God, is to disobey God, or not to do the will of God, *Deut.* 8. 11. *Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God in not keeping his Commandments.* As to remember God, is to do the will of God, *Eccl.* 12. 1. *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*: that is, do the will of thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth: so to forget God, is to disobey God, not to do his will. God is said to forget us when he doth not our will, that is, when we in prayer propose our desires to God to do them for us, the not doing of those things for us, is to forget us. *David* expostulates, *Psal.* 77. 9. *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* He had prayed much at the beginning of the Psalm with success, *I cried unto God with my mouth, even unto God with my voice, and he gave ear unto me.* He puts up other requests, which finding no present answer, or sensible acceptance, he cries out, *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* Now, as when the Lord doth not our will, he is said in Scripture to forget us, so when we do not the will of God, we indeed forget him.

Thirdly,

Oblivio aſſert contemptum.

Thirdly, To forget, is lightly to eſteem, to ſlight the Lord. That which a man highly eſteems, he keeps in his memory, and treaſures it up there; and when a man forgets a thing, eſpecially when he wilfully forgets it, he diſreſpects it, he ſlights and contemns it, *Jer.* 30. 14. *All thy Lovers have forgotten thee*, that is, thy Lovers care not for thee, they ſlight and eſteem lightly of thee. When a man comes not at one whom he loves, he is ſaid to forget him, *Jer.* 2. 32. *Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a Bride her attire?* A Maid hath a great eſteem of her ornaments, eſpecially of her wedding-ornaments; aud therefore ſhe is often thinking of them: it may be ſhe can hardly ſleep the night before, for thinking of the rich garments, yea the Bracelets and Bables ſhe is to wear upon the wedding day? *Can the Bride forget her attire?* Will ſhe throw theſe by the walls (as we ſpeak) or caſt them at her heels? Yet, ſaith the Lord, *My people have forgotten me dayes without number.* They have lightly eſteemed me, I am not ſo much to them as new cloathes, who am indeed their life, I am not ſo much remembred as unneceſſary curioſities, from whom they receive all things neceſſary, and whoſe favour is the one thing neceſſary.

Fourthly, To forget God, is to depart from God. We ſtay with God no longer then we remember him; as we cannot have communion with truth, ſo not with the God of truth, without an act of memory (*Heb.* 12. 5.) *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which ſpeaketh unto you as unto children, My ſon, deſpiſe not thou the chaſtening of the Lord, &c.* A word forgotten is to us of no more uſe then a word never ſpoken. We are without all the good we forget; and to forget God, is (*Epheſ.* 2. 12.) *to be without God in the world*; or to live on earth as if there were no God in heaven, either in regard of mercy to be received, or of duty to be performed. Hypocrites forget God all theſe wayes; though their natural memory may be good, yet ſpiritual memory (and that only holds ſpiritual things) they have none.

Hence obſerve, That, *The Hypocrite is a forgetter of God.*

Every wicked man is forgetful of God. Hence we find theſe put together, *Pſal.* 9. 17. *The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the Nations that forget God.* But this is the ſpecial character of an hypocrite, he is a forgetter of God. Conſider this (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ye that forget God*, that is, ye hypocrites conſider this (*Pſal.* 50. 22.) for he ſpeaks of ſuch as had taken the Covenant of *God* in their mouths; *What haſt thou to do* (verſ. 16.) *to take my Covenant in thy mouth?* As if he had ſaid, Thou profeſſeſt to be in Covenant with me, to have an intereſt in me; *Yet when thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſentedſt with him, and haſt been partaker with adulterers, thou giveſt thy mouth to evil*, &c. Hypocrites take the Covenant of God in their mouths, but caſt it out of their lives; *God is near in their mouths, but far from their reins* (*Jer.* 12. 2.) If the hypocrite did not forget that God is about his bed, and about his path, and eſpieth out all his wayes, he could not be ſo falſe with God, ſo polluted in his wayes, ſo rotten in his inward parts. If an hypocrite did not forget that God being a Spirit, delighteth to be worſhipped in ſpirit, he would never be ſatisfied in worſhipping him with his body. If he did not forget that God is jealous, that he will not hold them guiltleſs who take his name in vain, he durſt not (which is his every dayes work) take the name of God in vain.

Secondly obſerve, That, *Forgetfulneſs of God (howſoever it ſeems no great matter, yet) is exceeding ſinful, a wickedneſs of the higheſt ſtature.*

Forgetfulneſs of God is therefore a great wickedneſs, becauſe God hath done ſo many things to be remembred by. What could the Lord have done more to make himſelf remembred then he hath done? *Have I been a wilderneſs to Iſrael, or a land of darkneſs?* (ſaith the Lord, *Jer.* 2. 31.) The words are an aggravation of their forgetfulneſs. As if the Lord had ſaid, I have been a light to you whereſoever you go, and whereſoever I go, my ſteps drop fatnes for you, and am I forgotten? Where can we ſet a ſtep, but we tread upon a remembrance of God? Every creature holds forth God unto us. He hath left his remembrance upon every Ordinance: *Do this in remembrance of me*, ſaith Chriſt in that great Ordinance of the Supper; yea, all the works of his providence are remembrancers of him. He leaves an impreſſion of his wiſdom, holineſs, juſtice, power upon all he doth. Now for us to forget God, who hath (as it were) ſtudied ſo many wayes to faſten himſelf in our remembrance, muſt needs be extreamly ſinful. Further, It is very ſinful to forget God, becauſe God doth ſo abundantly remember us. He hath not only done that which may cauſe man to remember him, but he hath man alwayes in his remembrance, eſpecially his own people. *He hath graven them upon the palms of his hands, and they are continually before him.* They who deſire to preſerve their friends freſh in memory, get their pictures in their houſes, or engrave them upon Rings and Jewels which they wear alwayes about them: But he that cuts the image of his friend in his fleſh, or draws it upon his skin, how zealous is he of his friends remembrance? Pictures and Annulets may be loſt, but our hands cannot fall off. When the Lord would ſhew how mindful he is of his Church, he aſſures her that he carries her picture alwaies about him, not drawn upon a Tablet, or engraven upon the ſignet of his right hand, but upon the palms of his hands: as if he ſhould ſay, I muſt loſe my ſelf before I can loſe the ſight or memory of thee (*Iſa.* 49. 16.) He remembers her ſo, that he cannot forget her. And becauſe the characters and ſtamps of nature are more abiding and indelible then thoſe of art, therefore he ſaith (*ver.* 15. *Can a woman forget her ſucking child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion on the ſon of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.* A woman may break the bonds of nature, but God will never break the bonds of his own free grace. May not all this raiſe us into *David's* rapture of holy admiration, *Pſ.* 8. *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the ſon of man, that thou viſiteſt him* with ſuch remembrances? What is a wicked man, that God ſhould give him bread to eat, and cloaths to put on? And what is a godly man, that God ſhould give him Chriſt to eat, and cloath himſelf withal? That God ſhould remember us, is a wonder of mercy, but what a wonder of unthankfulneſs is it, that we ſhould not remember God? What, or *who is God, that man ſhould be ſo mindles of him?* Is not God worthy of all our remembrance? Is it loſs of time to call God into our thoughts? Do we ever, or in any thing remember our ſelves ſo much, as when we remember God moſt? It is a wonderful favour that God ſhould be mindful of us at all; and is it not a wonderful ſin that man ſhould be ſo unmindful of God?

Thirdly obſerve, That, *Forgetfulneſs of God is a mother ſin, or the cauſe of all other ſins.*

It is the cauſe of this ſin of hypocriſie, *Bildad* puts it as a fruit of forgetting God. Forgetfulneſs of God is threefold.

Firſt, A forgetfulneſs that there is a God.

Secondly, A forgetfulneſs who, or what manner of God he is; *Thou thoughteſt that I was ſuch an one as thy ſelf* (*Pſal.* 50.) Thou forgetteſt what manner of God I am; thou preſumeſt that will ſerve my turn which ſerves thine, or that every thing will pleaſe me which pleaſes thee; thou ſaiſt, becauſe it is no great trouble to thee to ſteal and lie, *&c.* therefore it is no great trouble unto me neither.

Thirdly, To forget God, is to forget what God requires; this forgetfulneſs of theſe three ſorts is productive of any, of every ſin.

Laſtly obſerve, *They that forget God, ſhall quickly wither, how great and flouriſhing ſoever they are.*

The reaſon is, becauſe the forgetting of God is a departing from God; and he that departs from God, departs from the fountain of life. If the ruſh go out of the water, it quickly withers, and if men will depart from God, they ſhall quickly decay; neither grace nor comforts can hold out ſeparated from Chriſt. Why is the godly man compared *to a tree planted by the river ſide, which brings forth fruit in his ſeaſon, whoſe leaf ſhall not wither, and whatſoever he doth ſhall proſper?* Why is the man that truſts in the Lord compared to *a tree planted by the waters, that ſpreads out her roots by the river, and ſhall not ſee when heat cometh?* Jer. 17. 7, 8. Is it not becauſe the Saints alwayes

keep

keep close to God, by Jesus Christ, who is as an ever-living fountain of water to them, refreshing and moistning them so with continual supplies of the Spirit, that they *shall not see when heat cometh?* that is, they shall not be afflicted with those evil effects of heat, drought and barrenness. They who keep covenant with God, may possibly feel some decayes, but die they shall not, they shall revive and sprout up again; they shall again put forth their leaves as a plant, and their fruit as the garden of *Eden*; they shall bring forth fruit in old age, they shall be fat and flourishing.

And the hypocrites hope shall perish.

חנף *Simulavit, dissimulavit occultè peccavit, per Metaphoram pollutus, contaminatus.*

The word which we translate **Hypocrite**, comes from a root that signifies close and covered, and by a Metaphor, polluted, defiled, contaminated, because an hypocrite, though he be outwardly covered, and beautifully painted over, yet his paint is a spot upon him. All painting is but a spot in comparison of natural beauty. An hypocrite is not so much painted as polluted. Hence he is called a *vile person* (Isa. 32. 6.) *The vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity to practise hypocrisie, and to utter errour against the Lord.* We have the character of hypocrites, *Isa.* 58. 3. *They dayly call upon my name, as a people that would know the Lord: As a people*; An hypocrite doth but play a part in religion, he doth but personate another; like an Actor upon a Stage, who puts forth the several postures and gestures of a King, when as himself is some mean fellow. An hypocrite is described acting a double part; the one is simulation, he labours to appear what he is not; he would seem to have some good which he hath not. And the other is dissimulation; he labours, not to appear what he is, he would hide and cover the evil that he hath. *An hypocrite is one who seems to be what he is not, and would not seem what he is.* He is a *Jew outwardly*, and his Religion *Circumcision outward in the flesh*, Rom. 1. 18. *He seems to be religious* (Jam. 1. 26.) *He is a whited Sepulcher* (Mat. 23. 27.) Stately on the outside, within nothing but rottenness and dead bones. The hypocrite hath a *divided heart*, Hos. 10. 3. and a *double mind*, Jam. 1. 8. He is not half enough for God, and too much for himself.

Externa facie internâ sanctitatem mentitur.

Hypocrites are of two sorts, some in a large, others in a strict sence. Most wicked men are hypocrites in a large sence, though some are above hypocrisie, they are arrived at impudence. The Prophet speaks of such (*Isa.* 3. 9.) *The shew of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not.* They declare it not as the mourners in *Zion* declare their sin, who are ashamed of it; but they declare it as *Sodom* her sin, that they may delight in it. But though there are some such as these, yet the greatest number of wicked men fall under the notion of hypocrisie in a large sence, because they keep their sins close and hide them. Hence the works of sin are called works of darkness. Wicked men usually hide their wickedness, and shew that which hath but a shew, their goodness: But in a strict sence, he is an hypocrite that seems to be very religious, who hath nothing but God, and Christ, and Heaven in his mouth, but in his heart and secret practices nothing but Earth and Hell. The Hypocrite is like the Onyx-stone, of which Naturalists write, that it is clear and bright in the Superficies, but the center is dark and earthy. This generation is pure, not only in their own eyes (*Prov.* 30. 12.) but in the eyes of many men, possibly in the eyes of all men, *yet they are not cleansed from their wickedness.*

The hypocrites hope shall perish.] That is, the time shall come when he shall give over the hope which he hath hoped, or the thing shall fail him wherein he hoped. First, The object of his hope shall fail him, that is, those benefits, blessings, accommodations and comforts which he looked for in the profession of Religion, these shall fail him and prove false hopes. Hypocrites (*Mat.* 7.) plead with Christ for heaven, *Lord, we have propheſied in thy name, and in thy name cast out Devils*, &c. But their hopes perished; *Depart from me* (saith Christ) *I know you not.* His hope perisheth when he cannot have the things he hoped for. Secondly, The act of his hope shall fail, his hope shall be so long deferred, that his hope shall die; he never had any true ground of hope, and at the last he shall not have a shew of hope. *His hope shall perish.* Observe from the name given hypocrites,

First, That, *Hypocrites are filthy and polluted persons.*

None are so ugly in the eye of God as they who paint for spiritual beauty. Pretended holiness is more unlovely then professed unholiness to them that can discern it. As it is said of *Nabal* (1 *Sam.* 20.) *Nabal is his name, and folly is with him*: So we may say of an hopocrite, *filthiness is his name, and filth is in him. Nabal* had his name from folly, and hypocrites have theirs from filthiness.

Secondly observe, *Hypocrites may be full of hope for a time.*

They have somewhat (though it be unsound) upon which they build, they think what they do and are, will serve the turn, and go for currant with God. This raises up their spirits. Some hypocrites will be full of hope, even while they are descending to the pit of despair. Some hypocrites are not convinced of their hypocrisie to the very last; such die in peace while they are going down to eternal wat; they go (as we use to say) like lambs, when their souls are among lions, and they are tumbling into the place of dragons.

Thirdly observe, *The hope of hypocrites will deceive and fail them.*

God rejects their confidences, they shall not prosper in them, Jer. 2. 37.

Lastly observe, That, *To lose our hope, is the utmost of evils.*

Bildad doth not say that the hypocrite is damned, and shall go to hell, and endure the wrath of God for ever: This one expression, *Their hope shall perish*, amounts to all this and more, if more can be. Do but sit down and imagine in your thoughts, and contrive the utmost of all evils felt by men, yea, the utmost (were it possible) of all the evils of punishment that are in the thoughts of God, and all are wrapped up and comprehended in this one word, *Their hope shall perish.* Hell, and wrath, and fire, and brimstone, and the worm that never dies, meet in this one word.

Bildad goes on to illustrate this by a further instance.

Verse 14. **Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be as a spiders web.**

Verse 15. **He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.**

The hypocrite clings about the object of his hope, as a man that is ready to drown, takes hold on any thing, upon a straw or a rotten stick; but though he lean upon his house, it shall not stand, *&c.*

These words contain the second similitude, which is both a confirmation and a further illustration of the former; for having concluded in *ver.* 13. with these words, *The hypocrites hope shall perish*; he (as it were) doubleth and resumeth it here again, *Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spiders web.*

The Original beareth different interpretations, and from that, several sences have been given of these words.

כסל

The word here used for [hope] is not the same in the Hebrew, which we had in the last clause of the former verse, *His hope shall perish.* This word was opened at large in the fourth Chapter at the sixth verse, where we translate it *confidence*; *Is not this thy hope, thy confidence, the uprightness of thy wayes?* Now, besides that the word signifies *hope or confidence*, it signifies also folly, inconstancy, frowardness of spirit, vanity and levity of mind. And thus some render it here.

קוט *Debilitatus, languefactus fuit, per Metaphorâ, mœstitia, dolore, tædio affectus fuit, propriè tanquam βδέλυγμα, i. e. rem putidam, & quæ nauseam parit, aversari, & eam abhorrere. Non enim placebit ei vecordia ejus.* Vulg.

Whose hope shall be cut off.] That word also beareth different interpretations.

First, To be weakned, to languish; and because those things which languish and are weak, either are cut off, or are ready to be cut off, therefore it signifies likewise cutting off.

Secondly, Further the word imports gradually, 1. Displeasing. 2. Loathing and abominating. 3. Chiding or contending.

The words yielding these sences, receive different translations and interpretations. First,

First thus, taking the former for *inconstancy or folly, his folly shall displease him*, or, *his folly shall not please him.* So the Vulgar. *Hypocrites never please God, and at last they shall not please themselves.* The wayes and works of hypocrites are ever displeasing to God, and they shall at last be displeasing to themselves. That's the sence of their translation.

And not only shall the wayes of an hypocrite be displeasing, but a loathing, an abhorring to him; the Lord loaths him now: *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination*; and he shall loath himself hereafter. There is a double loathing. There is a loathing of repentance, and there is a loathing of despair. The former (though it be unpleasant, yet) it is a happy loathing of our selves. Such loathing of our selves is pleasing to God in the act, and will be pleasant to us in the fruit (*Ezek.* 6.9.) *They shall loath themselves for the evils they have committed.* And again, *Ezek.* 16.47. & 20.43. The word is taken for this loathing of repentance. But the hypocrite shall have another kind of loathing. What? a loathing of despair, seeing himself utterly lost, and his hopes quite cut off, he shall be an abhorring to himself.

Hæc displicentia cum fastidio quodam & tabescentia conjuncta est.

There is yet a third step or degree of sence in this word. He shall not only be displeased with himself, and loath himself, but he shall fall out with himself; his hope shall displease or vex him into self-anger. Some render the word by contending or chiding; as a man that is displeased with another, falleth out with him, wrangleth and contendeth with him; so an hypocrite, at last shall chide, contend and wrangle with himself, he shall contend as much with himself at last, as ever the Word of God contended with him before. An hypocrite never cometh to a Sermon, but God chides him, the word of God contends with him, and the Spirit of God hath a controversie with him; this man will not be warned by the chiding of God, nor take that to heart, he still goes on in his hypocrisie. But when no reproofs nor chidings can prevail upon his heart, he is left to the reproofs and chidings of his own heart; which will read him such a Lecture, and give him such a schooling as he never had in all his life. Conscience may be long silent, and it may long flatter, but when once it begins to speak, and to speak right, it is the most terrible Preacher in the world. There is no *Boanerges* or son of thunder hath so dreadful a voyce. Mount *Sinai* it self did not thunder so loud as Conscience will. And as conscience speaks loud, so it speaks long. An hypocrite shall reprove and chide himself for ever, what a fool was I? what a beast was I thus to flatter my self, thus to mask mine own filthiness, and to dawb over the rottenness of my heart with the fair covering of a verbal profession? Why did I wilfully deceive my self into irrecoverable perdition?

Secum ipse litigabit, vexabitur, quæ omnia ad mentis commotionē & animi cruciatum pertinent. Pined.

Again, observe from, *Whose folly shall displease him.*

That, *The whole course of hypocrisie is nothing but foolishness.*

Of all fools the hypocrite is the greatest; and the reason is, because he takes a great deal of pains in profession, and hath no good at all by profession; he ventureth himself many times in the world to persecution; he runs the hazard of his credit, of his estate, of liberty and life. What a fool is this to take so much pains, and subject himself to so many dangers in the outward profession of Christ, & yet at last to lose the fruit and benefit of all? *This folly must needs displease him*: he shall at last see what an extream fool he hath been to trouble himself about that which bringeth him no real good, but will really double and encrease all evil upon him. *No man sins at so dear a rate as the hypocrite.*

A second translation takes the *Noun* (as we) for hope, and not for folly, and retains the former sence of the *Verb*; and so the words are thus, *Whose hope shall loath him*, that is, the thing which he hoped for shall loath him; how loath him? It shall loath him, not formally, but equivalently; because it shall do that which man doth when he loaths any thing: when we loath a thing, we flee or turn away from it; so, *His hope shall loath him*, that is, the thing which he hoped for, shall flee far away and quite depart, it will not come near him. Good shall remove from the hypocrite when he expects and makes after it. An hypocrite at once loaths true grace, and hopes for true comfort; but comfort here, and glory hereafter shall loath him, heaven shall shut against him.

Quem fastidit spes sua. Jun.

Eum quasi fastidius fugit id ipsum quod sperat. Jun.

Or take it for the act of hope (as others) *he shall loath his hope*, that is, the very hope which he hath had shall be grievous and vexatious unto him; nothing shall grieve him more then this, that he hath hoped so much. His hope shall grieve and afflict him as bad as all his afflictions. *Raised expectations disappointed, prove our greatest sorrows.* That man sinks lowest in grief, whose heart was highest in hope. How extreamly shall the hypocrite be grieved who falls as low as hell, when his hopes were raised up as high as heaven? The hypocrite both in his way and in his end is like the King of *Babylon, He saith in his heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most high, yet he shall be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit*, Isa. 14.13,14.

Spes si molesta erit, quod illa excidat, nec id consequatur quod expectarat. Merc.

Take the words as we translate, so they yield a clear sence, and very agreeable to the original, *Whose hope shall be cut off.* The word is rendred *cut off*, by a Metaphor, because when a man is exceedingly displeased and vexed (as the word properly signifies) he many times tears his garments, and even cuts his own flesh, like the idolatrous Priests of *Baal*, who were so angry because they could not get an answer, that *they cut themselves after their manner, with knives and lancers, till the blood gushed out upon them*, 1 Kin. 18.28. *Grief cuts the heart always, and sometimes causes cutting of the flesh.* The Lord complains (*Psal.* 95. 10.) *Forty years long was I grieved with this generation*; it is this word, *forty years long was I vexed and cut with this generation*, with their murmurings, backslidings and unbelief. They did (as it were) cut the Lord to the heart; as in another place, *They broke him with their whorish hearts*, Ezek. 6.9. God speaks there as a man whose patience is almost spent, or as a husband grieved with the disloyalties of an adulterous wife.

Sumitur Metaphoricè, quod ii quos tædet sese torquēt & vestes, & sese membra, quæ sua dicendant ac lacerant, & velut dissecent. Merc.

And thus we may joyn it with hope, either as hope imports the act of hope, or the object of hope, *Whose hope shall be cut off*; the expectation which the hypocrite hath had shall come to an end. Or, a time is at hand when an hypocrite shall be past hoping. Hence observe,

Despairing is the cutting off of hope.

And such is the condition of an hypocrite. To have hope cut off, is the greatest cut in the world. *Will the hypocrite pray always?* No, at last his prayer shall be cut off; *Will the hypocrite hope always?* No, at last his hope shall be cut off. The Saints in heaven have (in a sence) their hope cut off, because they are above hope; and at last all wicked mens hope shall be cut off, because they are below hope. It is better to have all our professions cut off then our hopes. Better have the thread of our lives cut off then the Anchor-cord of our hope cut off, and so we left to the rage and tempest of despair. Again, Joyn it with the object of hope, thus;

All that an hypocrite hopeth for or expects, shall be utterly taken away, and cut off from him.

His worldly comfort will be gone, and heavenly comforts will never come. He shall find that he hath been in a golden dream, that he hath been as one that is hungry, who dreameth that he is eating, but when he awakes, his soul is empty; or as a thirsty man, that dreams he is drinking, but he awakes and behold *he is faint*, Isa. 29. 8. *When dreams satisfie hunger and thirst, the hypocrites hope shall be satisfied.* Hypocrites shall have as good as they bring. They bring God nothing but words and empty professions; and they shall have nothing from God but air and empty expectations; their real hopes, or the thing they hoped for, shall be cut off. When Hypcrites awake out of their sleep, their hopes vanish as a dream. Not only doth the world, but the Christ on whom they hoped, prove a shadow, a fancy, an image, an idol of their own making; their hearts were filled with leaves in stead of gold, as the Devil cozens his greedy votaries; *Their hope shall be cut off.*

And whose trust shall be a spiders web.

As hope before, so here trust, may be put either for the act or object of trust; and both (by a Synecdoche) for the whole profession of an Hypocrite.

Hope and trust are often taken promiscuously. There is a gradual difference between them, not an essential. Trust is the strength of hope, or the acting of a strong faith. The original word signifies a very quiet, secure, setled trust; when a man trusts upon or about a thing, without casting so much as a jealous thought after it. Thus the Hypocrite trusts, he never suspects himself; his heart saith all is well,

בטח

Lev. 25. 18. *Ye shall dwell in the Land in safety*; the word is, *Ye shall dwell in the Land in trust*, because an opinion of safety is the companion of trust; when we trust our condition is good, then we think our selves safe.

There are two things noted by this word.

First, Boldness and confidence.

Secondly, Security and peaceableness. The hypocrite feels no trouble, and he fears none: The languishing of his heart is like that of *Babylon* the mother of whoredoms and *hypocrisie*, *who saith in her heart, I sit a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow*, Rev. 18. 17.

This trust, where it is true, hath a double effect. The want of which discovers the falseness of it in the Hypocrite.

First, It confirms and strengthens the heart against all oppositions. And,

Secondly, It encourages the heart against all dangers. He that trusts in God, will walk through the valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil. He dares take a bear by the tooth, or a lion by the beard: In both these the trust of the hypocrite faileth. He will work and go on boldly till he meets with opposition; he will work in a fair day, till he meets with a storm, and dangers threaten; but there he gives over. *He that is not acquainted with the assurance-Office of heaven, will seldom, if at all, run hazards here on earth.* True trust brings God and the soul together, but the hypocrite never comes near God, and then no marvel if he be afraid to come near danger.

Note from it before we put the words together, thus much.

That, *An Hypocrite hath a trust of his own, a trust like himself.*

Whose trust.] An Hypocrite doth most things which the upright and sincere hearted do, and he seems to have every thing which the upright and sincere hearted have. Do they pray? so doth he. Do they hear? so doth he. Do they fast? so doth he. Have they faith? he hath a faith too. Have they the fear of God? he also hath a kind of fear. Have they zeal? so hath he; yea, the zeal of hypocrisie burns hotter for a blast, then the zeal of sincerity. He hath Grace proper to his state; false grace for his false heart; he hath trust, such as it is, a trust which belongeth to all of his rank; see the character of it in the next words.

עכנש *Tam animal quam rete ejus, quod solet contexere significat.*

It shall be a spiders web.] The Hebrew is, *It shall be the spiders house*; the web is the house of the spider. We have the same word, *Isa.* 59. 5. *They weave the spiders web. Isaiah* speaks of such pretenders, *They trust in vanity, and speak lies.* These were the spiders web which they weaved.

But why is the trust of the hypocrite compared unto the spiders web? I shall clear that in four or five particulars, which will be as so many notes upon this text.

First, Because the profession and all the works of an hypocrite are very weak and unstable, as the spiders web is. There is a kind of curiosity in them, but there is no strength or stability in them: The spider works very curiously, But her house will not bear any stress of weather, much less force of battery. The spiders web is no match for a broom or a whisk. Thus is the profession, the trust of hypocrites; you may see a neat spinning, a fine thread of profession, accurate weavings and contrivances, but when it comes to a push, it is not able to stand; if you do but touch it, 'tis gone. Some will stand out longer then others, yet all fall, as Christ assures us (*Mat.* 7. *ult.*) it is the hypocrite who buildeth his house upon the sand; to have a house built upon the sand, is no better then to have a house built in the cieling; when the storm comes, that house falls; and when the broom comes, this must down.

Secondly, The trust of an hypocrite is called a spiders web, because he fetches and formes it (as it were) out of his own bowels; that whereunto he trusteth, is wrought out of himself. That's the nature of the spider, she hath no extrinsecal materials to build her house with; she doth not hew her stones out of any quarry, or fetch her timber from any forest (as we may allude) the materials which she hath, she fetcheth out of her bowels. The Bee makes an honse, and fetcheth the materials from this and that flower; so the Bee makes a comb for a house; but the spider sucks no flowers. Thus it is with hypocrites, their trust and hope is as the spiders web, made out of their own substance; they eviscerate themselves, they fetch all out of themselves. The meaning is, all their trust is in their own strength, in their own stock, in their own gifts, upon these they build, these are their house. We find the Pharisees trust thus grounded; such was his house (*Luke* 18.) *I fast twice a week, I give alms, I pay all men their due.* He was very exact in righteousness according to the Law, upon this, and out of this he makes his house; this is to make an house like a spider. *Though it be our graces we trust upon, our trust will be a spiders web.* The Believer is well compared to a Bee; the Bee hath an house and honey, but the Bee fetcheth all from abroad, from herbs and flowers: Believers have their house to dwell in, and their honey to feed upon; but they suck all from the promises of Christ; yea, they suck it from Christ himself: they rest not in the letter of the promises, but they go to Christ, who is the matter promised, and the accomplisher of all the promises. Here they build their house, and hew out the pillars of it.

Thirdly, **Their trust shall be a spiders web**, in the issue it shall perish like a spiders web. How is that? As soon as the house comes to be cleansed, down go the spiders webs; when the house is swept, the cob-webs are first swept away. Thus it is with the trust of all hypocrites; when God sweeps his house, his Church, he quickly sweeps out these spiders webs (*Isa.* 14. 23.) The Prophet speaks of the *Besom of God*; the judgments of God are the besom of God by which he sweepeth his house. God hath a double besom, or a double use of his besom; he hath a besom of destruction, and a besom of purgation. It is a besom of destruction to hypocrites, and it is a besom of purgation to his Saints. When either the besom of destruction, or the besom of purgation is in hand, the trust of hypocrites is swept away. When the Prophet describes the Lord in his great and terrible judgments (*Isa.* 33. 14.) The Text saith, *The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness surprizeth the hypocrite, who shall dwell with devouring fire?* God provoked is a devouring fire. How shall stubble and spiders webs stand before him? When trouble comes, the trust of hypocrites goes to wrack; they tremble then, for their trust is but a spiders web, it cannot stand one stroak, or endure the flaming heat. The hope of a godly man grows strongest in times of trouble, he is purified in the fire; and the hope of an hypocrite weakens till it be none at all, in times of trouble, it is cast out of doors amongst the rubbish, or is consumed with the fire.

Fourthly, Take this parallel between the spiders web, and the profession of hypocrites; the spider makes his web to catch and ensnare others, to catch the poor flies. She hath a double use of her house, to lie in it, and to entrap flies in it. Her house is a snare. The profession of an hypocrite is a spiders web in this notion; he makes it to catch flies with, to ensnare and deceive the simple, that he may prey upon them: He would count godliness a poor thing, did he not make a gain of godliness; that brings him in food and cloathing, he lives upon it. This his deceitful web is so fine spun, and fairly woven, that you cannot easily discern any thing but truth and beauty in it: Hypocrites cannot be distinguished by the outside of what they do; their lewdness is under a covert. Some tell us that the Hebrew word for an hypocrite, may be derived from another, which signifies a cloud; the wickedness of such is wrapt up in a cloud; whence the Latine word for a crafty, dishonest man, imports one who casts a cloud or a mist before his dishonesty; so that it is hard to make this discovery, till effects and issues make it. Only God looks quite through all clouds and coverings, he sees what is in the heart, though man cannot. God sees his contrivances are only to serve his turn, and attain earthly ends.

Nebulo à nebula, qui mendacius suis nebulâ quandam & tenebras objicit.

Fifthly, The hypocrite, like the spider, thinks himself safe and out of harms way, when once lodged in this profession. He is ready to boast that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. So much for the similitude.

Animalculum illud valde imbecillum & malicioſum atque meditabundum, potius quam prudens, domicilium ædificat, in quo ſe tutum exiſtimat. Bold.

Now follows the application of the similitude in the fifteenth verse.

Verse 15. **He shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall take hold of it, but it shall not endure.**

Bildad

Bildad goes on to bring down his similitude to this particular.

Thus the spider doth, and thus the hypocrite: the spider leans upon his house, there he dwels; and so the hypocrite he leans upon his house, there he dwells and rests himself.

שען *Nixus, innixus est, reclinatus fuit, incubuit totis viribus, per Metaphorã confidet.*

The word which we translate *lean*, is often used in the Old Testament, to note the *vital act of faith*, the act of recumbency; Faith in the vital act of it is a resting upon another. Now false faith imitates true faith, that will be resting and leaning. Faith whether true or false cannot stand alone, it must have a *lean-to*.

He leaneth upon his house.] It noteth leaning upon a staff, or upon any stay (1 *Sam.* 1. 6.) *Saul leaned upon his spear being weary in the battel.* And *Prov.* 3. 5. *Lean not to thine own understanding.* Wise men, men of deep reach and judgment, lean to their own understandings, their wits are their props (*Isa.* 10.20.) *The remnant of* Israel, *shall no more stay themselves upon him that smote them, but they shall stay upon the Lord*, or, *they shall lean upon the Lord, the holy One of* Israel *in truth* (2 Sam. 22. 19.) *They prevented me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my stay.* God prevent his people with mercy, and their enemies prevents them with unkindnesses, but the love of God outruns the malice of man; his love staies up those whom malice would cast down. The Lord was my stay. And hence, the *Noun* of this *Verb* in the Hebrew signifies a *staff*, because we use a staff to lean and rest the body upon (*Isa.* 3. 1.) *Behold, the Lord of hosts doth take away from* Jerusalem *and from* Judah, *the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water. The stay of bread*, or, *the staff of bread*; because bread is that upon which the life of man leans or depends, as we depend or lean upon a staff. Bread is elegantly called a staff, because bread supports the life of man, as a staff doth the body. It implies this also, that the power, vertue and strength by which bread doth sustain us, comes from without; *The staff of bread*; he doth not call the bread it self a staff, but he saith, there is a staff of bread, the bread must have a staff (of blessing from God) or else it cannot be a staff (of strengthning to us) as the bread is the immediate staff of our bodies: so the blessing of God is the immediate staff of the bread: the bread leaneth upon the blessing of God, as we lean upon the bread. As an hungry man leans upon his bread, so an hypocrite leans upon his house, *He shall lean upon his house.* That's his stay.

Scita est Metaphora, cum fulcimentũ panũ usurpat pro pane fulcimentẽ, significans fortis vim illã panũ accedere. Ut enim gressus senũ reguntur baculo, ita panis dicitur habere baculum. Mol. *in* Isa. 3. 1.

But, what is his house? *He shall lean upon his house.*

The house of this hypocrite it is two-fold; or he hath two houses. He hath a worldly house, and he hath a spiritual house. He hath one house made out of earthly materials, and another made out of heavenly materials.

Domũ impii vocat bona & facultates ejus quibus homines se fulciant, juxta illud, opes divitis urbs ejus validæ. Drus.

He hath an house made out of worldly materials, and so some interpret this place, *he shall lean upon his house*; that is, upon his riches, upon his relations, upon his greatness upon his friends, upon his correspondencies, upon the estimation that he hath abroad in the world, upon his reputation with his neighbours at home.

These framed and put together are a house which the hypocrite builds for himself, upon these he rests: and that's a truth, the world is an hypocrites support, the house upon which he leans. The money in his chest upholds him, not faith in his heart; his goods please him more then goodness. He easily believes that he is in the favour of God, because he hath so much favour among men. That's one house.

Bildad might aim at this, because *Job* was a man of a full and vast estate, the richest and greatest of all the men in the East; as if he had said, *Job, thou hast leaned upon thy outward abundance, upon thy sheep and oxen, upon thy children and servants, and now thou findest all but a spiders web, swept away in a moment.* Yet (I conceive) he means rather a house built of heavenly materials. And there are three sorts of heavenly materials, out of which the hypocrite build his house.

First, Gifts; he hath knowledge and understanding in the Word and wayes of God, the gift of prayer, the gift (it may be) of Tongues of Prophecy and Preaching. These are excellent materials, and upon these he builds his trust, that he is in a good estate.

The second sort of materials, are holy Duties, he prayes, he hears, he fasteth, and he gives alms, and the like; These he doth, and out of these materials he builds his house, very strongly he hopes.

Thirdly, He hath finer stuff then all this to build his house of, he buildeth upon supposed graces; he can tell you, he hath faith, he hath love, he hath patience, he hath humility, and he hath sorrow for sin; he can count all these things, and out of these he buildeth himself an house of special confidence, such a house as he doubts not will stand all winds and weathers: he hopes to stand safe in judgment, under the roof and goodly fabrick of this house.

Out of these three sorts of materials, spiritual gifts, spiritual duties, and supposed spiritual graces; upon all these, and out of these he buildeth, and thinks he hath made an house that shall stand for ever.

The point I shall give you, taking in those three sorts of materials, is,

That gifts, duties, and supposed graces are the stay and the staff, the house, and the strength of hypocrites.

Upon these they lean, and in these they secure themselves; they rest upon this bottom for eternity. Hence they even dare to plead with God himself about it (*Matth.* 7.22.) *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and done many great wonders?* They trusted upon, *Have we not prophesied? Have we not prayed? Have we not done wonders?* They thought those sufficient materials to build them a Tower which should reach Heaven it self; who can doubt, but they who do such things as these shall do well? The gift of prophecy, the power to cast out Devils, and work miracles, sound high, and make a great noise. Yet at last, this Tower of their confidence proves but a Castle in the Air, or a spiders web. How confident were they, who could plead thus with God: He hath opened the secrets of Heaven to us, and do you think he will shut the gates of Heaven upon us? We have preached, we have been instruments of saving others, and shall not we be saved our selves? We have cast out Devils, and shall we be cast to the Devil? We have not walked in an ordinary tract of Profession, but we have traded in wonders, and done miracles, we have amazed the world with reports of the great things we have done, is all this nothing? Thus they plead with Christ, as if he were bound to save them by the law of these services: yet Christ tells them, *Depart from me, I know you not:* Surely, thought they, God will fetch his fewel for those everlasting burnings from among the rude Heathens, or debauched drunkards, adulterers, *&c.* not from among us. Were it not a wonder greater then any we have wrought, if we who have wrought great wonders should not be admitted? One of the Ancients represents them in such amazements, *What means this strange unexpected answer from Christ, Depart, &c.* Must we depart who lived so near thee? Must we be damned, whom thou hast thus honoured?

τί βάλλεται τὸ ξένον τῆς παραδόξου τούτου ῥήματος &c. Chrys.

The Apostle *Paul* (*Rom.* 2. 17.) speaking of hypocritical Jews, discovers such a confidence, *Thou restest in the Law*, as a man resteth in his house, there he sleeps and is quiet, so these in the Law, there they were quiet; that is, in the priviledges and outward profession of the Law, or in a litteral and outward obedience to the Law. The Jews built their house upon, or with legal righteousness, *Thou restest in the Law*; he speaks both by way of narration, and likewise by way of redargution. He tells what they did, and how ill they did in doing so. *Paul* rejects this as refuse stuff, as hay and straw, as drosse and dung, as *confidence in the flesh* (Phil. 3. 3. *&c.*) are flesh. So Prayer is flesh, ordinances are flesh, the righteousness of the Law is flesh; yea, *Grace it self trusted to, is flesh.* The duties which Christ hath appointed are the house of the hypocrite; but Christ himself is the house of the upright; He would be *found in him* (Phil. 3. 9.) not in duties or inherent graces. Saints desire that much grace may be found in them, but they dare not be found in grace; they would ever be acting graces, but never trusting to them. Observe,

Tibi applaudis quod legem scriptam acceperis, quod frequens es in lectione & auditione legis.

Secondly, *An hypocrites hope is high and strong, that his estate is good now, and that he shall receive good at the last.*

He leaneth upon this house. Some are without hope in the world, of whom we may speak as the Apostle of an Heretick (*Tit.* 3. 11.) *they are condemned of themselves.* Some men have the sentence of condemnation in their own hearts. But there are others, as you see here, who have great and strong confidences in themselves, who live and die with this confidence too; This they do upon the former witness. As the Apostle *John* speaks concerning the witness which the Saints have for Heaven, *There are three which bear witness*, &c. *and these three are one:* So there are three which bear witness to the hypocrite, and these three are one; they agree in one to deceive, as the other to give assurance.

First, The world that giveth many a man a witness and letters testimonial, that his estate is good, his neighbours say so, they flatter him, and cry peace, peace to him.

Secondly, Satan applauds him, the Devil gives him his good word, and tells him that certainly his estate is very good.

Thirdly, His own heart will seal to all, he shall have *the witness in himself*, as it is spoken of the true believer. So that the hypocrite having such witnesses, a witness within himself, a certificate under the hand of Satan, and letters commendatory from the world, all this must needs give him strength of hope, that his house shall stand for ever.

But see the issue, *He leaneth upon his house*, what then?

עמד *Stetit, subsistit, mansit.*

It shall not stand.] The word signifies to stand firmly and strongly, or to continue standing. He thought that the materials which he had brought together, and the hopes which he had raised upon them, would have been as Mount *Zion*, that cannot be removed, but he leaneth upon it, *and it shall not stand.* Whence observe,

All that an hypocrite trusteth unto shall deceive him at the last.

It shall not stand. Their webs shall not become garments, *Neither shall they cover themselves with their works*, Isa. 59. 6. The language is proverbial, importing highest disappointment: Who would weave a web, if he knew he should never have a garment by it? Or work hard, when himself must go naked? *Jer.* 7. 1, 2. The Lord sends to the people by his Prophet, *Say to this people, Trust not to lying words*; that is, words which will deceive and fail you, you trust and lean to them, but they will fall away from you: What were those words? Even that they had a goodly house to lean to, they cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*: but I hope that's a strong house, as well as a beautiful, a man may lean upon that, upon the Temple of the Lord, and do well. No, *The Temple of the Lord leaned upon, will be but a spiders web*; God gave the Jews a Temple to worship him in, and many of them worshipped the Temple. We adore every duty we depend upon, and give the Ordinances of God the honour of God. We can stand no more by such trust-to Ordinances, then we shall by the neglect of them.

These, and all the materials before mentioned, will be found too weak, they shall not stand. Gifts cannot commend to God. If a man had the tongue of men and Angels, if all the knowledge that ever was scattered in the world were brought together into one head; this cannot commend him unto God. The Devil is as full of knowledge as he can hold, and yet he is as full of wickedness as he can hold. Duties cannot commend to God.

And there are two special reasons why the hypocrites duties cannot.

First, He is not at all changed in duties. He prayes and sins, hears and sins, professes and continues wicked closely, if not openly.

עמרי *Deducitur à* Gnamad, *mulier quæ dedisti mihi, ut adstaret, juvaret, effetq; vicarium auxilium, ipsa author hujus mali extitit.* Fagi. *in loc.*

Secondly, He leans upon his duties. Could we suppose true grace leaned on, that could not stand. *Nothing is a sufficient strength for us to stay upon, but the free grace of God, and Jesus Christ:* Lean to these houses, for they will stand for ever. Of all other houses you shall say as *Adam* did of his wife, *Gen.* 3. 12. (and it is the word here used in the Text) *The woman which thou gavest to be with me*, to stay by me, to be a helper and a support to me, this woman hath given me, and I did eat, she hath been the cause of my ruine. The same will be said of all the gifts, and duties, and graces, which we stand upon. God hath given them us, and he hath given them us as meet helpers, but they will deceive and ruine us, if we lean on them. We shall fall by them, if we hope to stand by them (*Psal.* 23. 4.) *Thou art with me in trouble* (saith *David*) *therefore I shall not fall*; it is this word, *Thou standest with me.* Christ will stand by us at all times, *Thou standest with me*, or *by me:* When the world faileth, and when gifts fail, yea, when graces fail, in degree and activity, then Jesus Christ and free grace will stand by us, *Isa.* 26. 7. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staied on thee. Christ is the only lean-to.*

עמדי *Quasi apud me stans.*

There is one clause further,

He shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

This clause is of the same importance with the former, only the sence is somewhat heightned. It notes, that the hypocrite shall not only lean upon his house, but he shall take strong hold upon his house, *He shall fasten on it*; so Mr. *Broughton.* A man may lean to a thing, and have no hold of it; he that takes hold of a thing would make it firm to himself, and himself firm to it. Thus the hypocrite leans upon his house, and takes fast hold of it; if it would fall from him, if any attempt to pull him away from it, or he sticks to it, he will not let it go.

יחזק בו *Eam mordicus tenens, se in ea stabilem & firmum semper fore putans.* Merc.

The word signifies to hold fast, strongly and prevailingly. *Job's* wife (*Chap.* 2.) speaks thus, *Doest thou still hold fast thine integrity?* And God himself speaks in the same language concerning *Job*, *Doest thou not see, though thou hast moved me to afflict him without cause, how he holdeth fast his integrity?* The hypocrite (after his manner, *Mordicus tenet*) holds his duties, performances, gifts, toughly, or (as it were) with his very teeth; he will hold them to the very death, and not let them go, the hypocrite will not give over, will not be beaten off from trusting to these false and weak props, here he sets up his rest, he will die by his gifts, his duties, his outward profession, and go no further.

It is our glory to hold integrity fast, to hold grace fast, yea, and duties in point of practice and obedience; but it is our sin and danger, to hold them fast in reliance and confidence.

It is a sad use which some make of this truth, when they hear that hypocrites hold fast upon duties, *&c.* they let go their duties; they let prayer go, repentance, and sorrow for sin go; they say, it is no matter for duties, they need not trouble themselves, Christ doth all. This is to turn the grace of God into wantonness. We must let go both our graces and our duties in point of justification, but hold them we must as our lives, in conversation, and the tenour of our lives. Prayer, hearing, fasting, repenting, must not die, while we live; Do them we must, but glory in them we must not.

לא יקום *à radice* קום *Surrexit, ad standū erectus, stabilis, solidus mansit, perseveravit.*

He holdeth them fast, but (yet) it shall not endure.] That's the last thing. We see as often as the hypocrite rises to take hold of his hopes, so often his hopes fail him: (before) *It shall not stand* (now) *it shall not endure.*

The word signifies, it shall not be established to him, he would establish this house to himself, but it shall not be established, his worldly estate shall not be established, his duties, his graces, his gifts, shall not be established.

The word notes that establishment which is made by a politick Act or Edict. It is the Jews operative word, in which they enact Laws, *Esth.* 9. The word is used three times (*ver.* 29, 31, & 32.) for a political establishment of that decree about the deliverance of the Jews from the conspiracy of *Haman*, they established or made a Law for it. Laws are for continuance, therefore they are *established* and *setled.* An hypocrite would do so too, he would enact and establish what he doth, *but it shall not endure*, it will be null'd and repeal'd quickly.

The word also signifies, that which is *substantial* (*it shall not endure*) that is, it shall not be as a substance, it shall appear at last to be a shadow, *Gen.* 7. 23. *Every living substance was destroyed*; it is this word, that is, every thing that stood up and subsisted. So, *Deut.* 11. 6. the word signifies the substance and outward estate which *Korah, Dathan*, and *Abiram* had, *They and their substance went down into the pit.* The hypocrite thinks his estate is a substantial estate, yet both his worldly house, and his spiritual house, builded as was before described, shall moulder away

away and rot, they shall not endure, 1 *King.* 7. 21. *Solomon* set up two pillars in the Temple, and an hypocrite in his building sets up two pillars, and he calleth them after the name that *Solomon* called his, the Text saith, *The one he called* Jachin, *and the other* Boaz; *Jachin*, he will establish, and *Boaz*, strength. Which may note that the people of God, who worship him in his Temple, have two pillars, two everlasting pillars, they have *Christ, and the free grace of God to trust upon*; these are the two pillars of the Temple, that support our hope, and the one is truly called *Jachin, established*, and the other *Boaz, strength*. The hypocrite hath a Temple, an house, and two pillars, upon which he makes these inscriptions, *Upon his worldly estate he writes* Jachin, *Established*; *Upon his spiritual estate he writes* Boaz, *Strength*; but he will be deceived in both, *They shall not endure. When a wicked man begins to fall, nothing shall support him.* As it was said of *Haman* in regard of his outward honour, *If these men be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt fall utterly:* So, though when an hypocrite sees his house falling, he takes fast hold of it, and endeavours to support it, *yet it shall not stand*, fall it shall. *The righteous falls and rises again, he falls seven times in a day, and yet is raised up again*, Prov. 24. 16. but when an hypocrite begins to fall, he falleth down, down for ever. It is said of the righteous (*Psal.* 37. 24.) *Though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast off, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand*; but when the hypocrite falleth, he shall be utterly cast away, for his duties only hold him by the hand, he hath only somewhat of himself to support himself with, therefore though he take hold of it, *It shall not endure.*

Ubi semel corruerit impius non evigetur. Merc.

VERS. 16, 17, 18, 19.

He is green before the Sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.
His roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.
If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.
Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.

THE Context of these four Verses holds forth to us the third similitude, by which *Bildad* illustrates the condition of an hypocrite.

The similitude is explained in *vers.* 16, 17, 18. and applied in *v.* 19.

The hypocrite was first, compared to a *rush, or a flag.* Secondly to a *spiders web.* But now to a *goodly tree.* This third similitude grants the hypocrite the best of his condition, and puts him in the fairest posture that can be imagined, and yet all proves nought; his root is but rottenness, and his blossom shall go up as the dust; or his branches shall be cut down, and his root stubbed up. It is as if *Bildad* had said, *If you think I have spoken too little and too low, or have debased the hypocrite more then was meet, by comparing him to a poor rush or a flag, and his estate to a spiders web; then take him in his highest notion, let him be looked upon as a green flourishing tree before the Sun, fastning his roots, and spreading out his branches, yet you shall see, at the last, destruction is his end. Behold, this is the joy of the hypocrite.*

That's the sum, and the general sence of the words.

Three things are held forth in this similitude concerning the hypocrite.

First, His outward and flourishing estate in *vers.* 16. *He is green before the Sun, and his branch shooteth forth in his garden.*

Secondly, His hurtfulness, or the annoyance which he doth to his neighbours and brethren, shadowed out in *vers.* 17. *His roots are wrapped about the heap, and he seeth the place of stones.*

Thirdly, We have his ruine or cutting down, his destruction or pulling up, in *vers.* 18. *If he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.*

His flourishing estate begins in *vers.* 16.

He is green before the Sun.

The word [Green] signifies moist, juicy, or sappy, proper to trees: So Mr. *Broughton* translates, *He is juiceful before the Sun.* And others, *He is full of sap.* In which sence the word is used, *Chap.* 24. 8. of this Book, *They are wet with the showres of the mountains*, or *moist*, and *sappy*, receiving many showres from the mountains.

רטב *Madere humidum lucosum esse.*

A tree green, juicy and full of sap, is in the height of his strength and beauty: Juice and sap is to the tree, as blood to the veins, and marrow to the bones of a man; and therefore as a young man in the prime and strength of his age is described by having his veins full of blood, and his bones full of marrow; so a tree is described in it's greatest verdure, by having his root and branches full of sap and moisture. The hypocrite may be such a flourishing tree, *He is green before the Sun.*

Before the Sun.] The Hebrew is, *Before the face of the Sun.* The word *Shemesh* (*the Sun*) signifieth a minister or servant, because the Sun is the great servant of the world, and ministreth those benefits of light, heat, and influence. This (by the way) should have kept the Nations from adoring it as a God, which both in name and nature was their servant. But what means this, *Before the Sun?*

לפני שמש

First, Some take, *before the Sun*, to be only this, openly, conspicuously, and in the sight of all; for to do a thing *before the Sun*, is to do it without covert or secrecy, 2 *Sam.* 12. 12. Thus the Lord threatneth *David*, after that sin of privacy committed with *Bathsheba*, *Thou didst it secretly, but I will do this before all* Israel, *and before the Sun:* So the hypocrite, *is green before the Sun*; that is, he flourisheth in the eye, view and sight of all men. He hath fair leaves and branches of outward profession in the Church, and of outward prosperity in the world.

Ante solem, i.e. palam in oculos omnium.

Secondly, *Before the Sun*, that is, as a tree in Summer, when the Sun returns to us, or turns upon us. In the beginning of the Spring the Sun returns: having travel'd furthest off from us, it comes to the Vertical point and turns about to us again. So that *before the Sun*, or the Sun looking towards us, is a description of the Spring. And so it is, as if he had said, *As a tree when the Sun cometh towards it in the Spring, and shines hot upon it in the Summer, makes a fair shew:* So the hypocrite is very green, joyful; full of contentment, whilst he hath the Sun of prosperity shining upon him, whilst those warm rayes of outward comforts, heat and nourish him, *so long he is green and flourishing.*

Thirdly, *Before the Sun*, that is, (according to others) before the Sun shines too hot upon him, before the Sun scorches and withers him; as if he had said, the hypocrite is a green tree, till the heat comes upon him, till the Sun ariseth in his strength; but assoon as the heat of the day, or the year comes, this tree withers. An hypocrite cannot abide the extream heat of the Sun, whereas the godly have such an everlasting supply of moisture and sap, that let the Sun shine as hot as it will upon them, they are green still. The ordinary heat of the Sun is put for prosperity: the extream heat of the Sun, is put for persecution. So, the meaning may be this, *He is green before the Sun*, that is, before the Sun of trouble and persecution ariseth, or (as some render it) before God looks angerly upon him and scorcheth his leaves, till then, *He is green and flourishing. Before* refers both to *time*, and *presence.*

Antequã sol veniat. Bibl. Reg. *Ante exortũ & ardorem solis*, i. e. *antequã sol inardescens eum aduret*, q.d. *priusquã a Domino puniatur & vastatur. Ardor est ira Domini.* Merc.

Fourthly, Others take it as a description of the hypocrites outward flourishing, which may be such sometimes as *holds out before the Sun*, that is, when the Sun is very hot upon him; and then this clause stands in opposition to the rush, which *whilst it is yet in his greenness withereth before any other herb.* If the Sun rise hot upon the rush, it withereth presently, where it wants outward moisture. But here *Bildad* seems to grant, or at least to suppose, that the hypocrite may possibly rise to such a flourishing estate, that he holds his greenness, even before the Sun, in a great deal of heat and trouble. Thus *Before* notes presence.

Ante solem, i.e. in ardore solis arboris more, quæ pulchre adquandiu succrescens æstum non timet, imo calore solis moderato adjuvatur & alitur. Merc.

Either way the sence is good, *He is green before the Sun* cometh with his heat, that is, he cannot endure the scorching time of trouble: or *he is green before the Sun*; that is, before some trouble or scorching, before some heat of persecution, this hypocrite may stand, *He is green before the Sun.*

יונק *Significat lactentem seu infantem ac sugentem per Metaphoram sumitur pro ramusculo aut tenero ramo qui sugit arborem. Similitudines ramusculi lactantibus pueris sunt similes.*

And his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

Branch.] The word which we translate *Branch*, is derived from a root which signifies a little sucking child, or an infant; and the reason is, because branches which come from a tree, draw moisture and sap from the tree, as an infant doth milk from the mothers breast; therefore we elegantly in our language, answering the Hebrew, call such branches *Suckers*, and we cut them off where we see many sprouting from one fruit-bearing tree, because they draw too much from the tree, and hinder the fruit; that's the meaning of the Hebrew word, *His suckers*: So Mr. *Broughton* translates, *His suckers sprout out over his orchard.* By these branches we may understand either his children, or his honour, his relations, or his reputation, these shoot forth and shew themselves as branches from a tree, *His branches shoot forth in his garden.*

Hortus נן *a radice* Ganan, *velavit, metaphoricè protexit, quod septo protegi solet.*

In his garden.] That is, in that place which he hath fenced or taken in for himself; a garden is a plat separated and inclosed from those places which lie open and in common. So much the Hebrew word imports, coming from a root which signifies to protect or to fence a thing about, because gardens are places fenced, hedged or walled in, *Cant.* 4.12. *A garden enclosed is my beloved*, Eccles. 2. 5, 6. *I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all (kind of) fruits, I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees.*

Per hortum intellige omnes rationes, quibus sua tuetur & augit magnitudinem, Merc.

His branches shoot forth in his garden.] That is, he appears very beautiful and glorious, very green and flourishing in his state or condition, in his dignity and honour. He lives as in a garden or paradise: So the word is translated (*Gen.* 2. 8.) *And the Lord God planted a paradise, or a garden of delight.* The hypocrites garden is all that by which he preserves and keeps his worldly comforts, as we do plants and flowers of profit or delight in gardens. Thus the hypocrite grows as a goodly tree, and shooteth forth his branches.

This is the first dart of the description of his flourishing estate. Hence note a point or two.

First, In general (which hath heretofore been observed, therefore I shall but touch it.) *viz.*

That, *A wicked man, an hypocrite may abound exceedingly in outward prosperity.*

He is a tree green before the Sun, and shooting forth his branches in his garden.

Secondly Note, That, *The thriving of hypocrites, their greenness and flourishing is only outward.*

The tree is green before the Sun, but he is withered in his soul. Hypocrites do all before the Sun, to be seen, or in the sight of men. They are of those who rebel against the light, which would keep them from sin, and they say, *No eye sees us*, while they are sinning. But they love the light which shews any good they do; then they say, O that all eyes did see us. Pharisees pray in the markets, and blow a trumpet when they give alms, that the ears of all, as well as the bellies of the poor, may be filled with their charity. *Come see my zeal*, saith *Jehu*. *Moses* was faithful, but he never said, Come see my fidelity. *Joshua* was valiant in the battels of the Lord, yet he never said, Come see my fortitude. The upright heart cares not to be thus before the Sun; he delights in secret holiness. His goodness is not less prized, or less pleasing to him, because it is hidden. He takes infinitely more content in being and doing good, then in being known to be or do good.

Thirdly, Taking *Before the Sun*, to note the extream heat of the Sun, we may observe thus much from it,

That, *An hypocrite may endure trouble and persecution for his profession.*

He is not like the rush, which presently withereth, but he is sometimes like a tree that standeth out before the Sun a great while. We know that many have not only performed outward acts of holiness, but they have sometimes suffered in a holy cause; they can be passive in obedience, as well as active, and yet have fallen away at the last. Before the Sun of prosperity the hypocrite will continue green very long; and before the Sun of persecution he may continue green a while. It is conceived by most, that *Alexander* the Coppersmith, spoken of by *Paul* (2 *Tim.* 4. 14.) as as a man very grievous to him, *Alexander the Coppersmith did me much evil*, he opposed the Apostle, yet I say, this *Alexander* is conceived to be the man of whom we read (*Acts* 19. 32.) that stood to *Paul* when he was in that danger at *Ephesus*; there he had like to have lost his life for appearing on his side; the text saith, *They dragged him out of the multitude to the market-place.* It is possible for an hypocrite to be green before the Sun of persecution, at least before some scorching beams of that Sun, though he is not able to bear it when it comes to the utmost trial, to the extream heat of the day.

Thus we see the hypocrites greenness in his branches, yet that is not all, for in the next verse we find his roots also, he is seemingly setled below, as well as beautiful above. And when a tree hath flourishing branches and firm roots, what can be desired more? For as when a tree is cut down root and branch, it is then utterly taken away; so when a tree flourisheth root and branch, it is in best estate and highest perfection. Both these meet here; not only doth he shoot forth his branches in his garment, but *he wrappeth his roots about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.*

His roots are wrapped about the heap.

Radices sunt divitiæ, liberi, amicitiæ, dignitates, honores.

The root of this hypocritical tree is that by which he fastens himself: any accomodation or strength which he hath in this world, credit, riches, friends, whatsoever strengthens a man, that's his root; it is as necessary to fasten a tree, as to moisten and feed a tree. Now (saith *Bildad*) he spreads his roots, he hath not only excellent branches outwardly, but he layes his matter so, that he hath rooting also in the world; yea, he seems to have rooting in the Church too.

גל *à radice* גלל. *Volvit & summo ad imum.*

His roots are wrapped about the heap.] The word in the Hebrew, signifies to roll, or bring things together, to put them up in a heap. Hence the Verb is used for that act of the soul in believing, whereby a Christian gathers himself together, and all that he hath, and layes it upon the Lord, *Psal.* 22. 8. *He trusted in the Lord*; the Hebrew is, *He rolled himself upon the Lord.* Hence it is translated to signifie, First, A tempest wherein the winds roll and are enfolded together. Secondly, A wave of the Sea, which is a rolling water. Thirdly, As here, a heap, because in a heap a great many stones are gathered or rolled together. As, *Gen.* 31. 47. After that contest and debate of *Laban* with *Jabob*, about his departure, *Jacob* said, *Let us gather stones together, or roll stones together, and make an heap*; and *Laban* gave it a a name, he called it *Jeger-shahadutha*, which is to say, *A heap of witness*, because these stones were rolled together for a witness.

Lastly (which sence is applied by some interpreters to this Text.) The word signifies a spring or a fountain, *Josh.* 15. 19. because springs and fountains are as the gathering together of waters: The sea is called the gathering together of waters (*Gen.* 1.) There waters are rolled and laid as upon a heap; and so proportionably every spring, fountain and river, is a place wherein the waters are rolled or wrapped together. Some translate the word thus, *His roots are wrapped about the water, or about the fountain.* And that further sets forth the seemingly sure and stedfast estate of the hypocrite; as he hath goodly green branches above, so his roots are wrapped about the fountain, he looks as if he were planted by the waters side, as the flourishing tree described, *Psal.* 1. A godly man *is as a tree planted by the rivers side*; so the hypocrite seems to have his roots wrapped about the waters, as if he had an ever-living supply from an everlasting fountain, as if his leaves should not wither, or his fruit fall off from him. That's one sence.

But most go with our translation, *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, they are intricated and folded about the heap of stones; and so the meaning of it may be given three wayes.

Impius aliquando floret inter varia impedimenta.

First, In that it is said, *His roots are wrapped about the heap, the heap of stones*, it notes his thriving against all opposition, here shadowed by heaps of stones. Heaps of stones are hinderances to the growing of a tree, to the rooting of it; therefore we set or plant trees in places free from stones: but to shew that he may even overcome, conquer, and subdue those difficulties which hinder his growth, he saith, *His roots are wrapped about the stones.* The seed that was cast in stonie ground, could not take root, the stones hinder-

hindered it from a due depth of earth, *Mat.* 13. 15. So that *Bildad* according to this sence magnifies the hypocrite, and speaks high of him; *He wrappeth his root about the stones*, he grows in places of greatest disadvantage. A wicked man may conquer oppositions, and prevail against the pullbacks which hinder his worldly, yea, his seeming spiritual estate; he may encrease when he wants encouragements and means of increase; yea, he sometimes increases against steps and discouragements, he thrives among stones.

Ita latè radices diffundat ut fundamenti firmem offendat in ædibus Domini sui. Jun. *In aliorum damnum propagatio denotatur.* Idem.

Secondly, *His roots are wrapped about the heap*, notes, that he thrives, or will thrive, if he can, though it be to the hinderance and dammage of others; for by the heap some understand the foundation of an house, where stones are artificially heaped or laid together, not a natural or accidental heap. Trees that grow near a house shoot their roots under or about the foundation of the house, and so may be dangerous to the whole structure. Thus the hypocrite will grow if he can, though he inwraps himself about the foundation of another mans house, raising or securing his estate upon his neighbours wrong or ruine.

Hypocrites care not whom they injure, so themselves may thrive, though they undermine the foundation of another mans house, and loosen his estate, to fasten their own.

Thirdly, *His roots are wrapped about the heaps*, may note the firmness, and the seeming strength of his standing. He is rooted, not in some loose and sandy earth, or in tougher clay, but his roots are wrapped about a heap of stones. As (*Matth.* 7.) The house founded upon the sand, could not continue when the storms came, but the house founded upon the rock did; so a tree that is rooted only in loose, slight ground, cannot stand against a great tempest, we see such trees blown down; but that which is rooted among the stones, and wrapped about their heaps, that which interweaves and incorporates it self (as it were) with a rock, this hath strength against all storms. Thus hypocrites pretend to Christ, and say they have wrapped themselves about that rock; they will speak great words, and bid defiance to all the world can do, professing they have laid up a good foundation, and that the munition of rocks is their defence.

Domum lapidum cernet, i. e. *inter lapides feliciter provenit.* Ἐν μέσῳ λίθων ζήσεται. Sept. *Inter lapides commorabitur.* Vulg. *Domum lapidum oculis vidit.* Drus.

And seeth the place of stones.] The words may be translated, *He dwelleth and he stayeth in the place of stones*; or, *He plants himself among the stones*; and then it carries the same sence with the former clause: So Mr. *Broughton*, *He platteth about the house of stones.* And the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, *He shall see with his eyes the place of stones.* We are near that sence, *And seeth the place of stones*; that is (for all these rendrings of the Hebrew will come to a fair agreement, and the result is this) he lives, abides, converses, or dwells even where there seems to be the least probability of his stay, he stayeth in the place of stones.

בירה *Domus vel generaliter sedes, vel locus quo aliquid capitur vel continetur.* קרן חזות *Cornu aspectus est cornu conspicuum & eminens quod supra alia cernatur. Alii cornu perplexitatis*, i. e. *perplexum & intricatum.* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *house of stones*; and house is taken either for that special place wherein men dwell, or generally for any place; so that, *the house of stones* is either an house naturally built; Nature useth a kind of art: or an house artifically built; Art is but an imitation of Nature. *He seeth*, that is, he seems to abide or continue in that house of stones, he is very eminent or glorious in that place. The same word is read (*Dan.* 8. 5.) Where *Daniel* speaking of his Vision, saith, *The Goat which he saw in the vision had a notable horn.* The *Chaldee* is, *a horn of sight*; he had a horn of sight, that is, a conspicuous, or a notable horn; or, as others render it, he had a perplexed, enfolded, or enwrapped horn, a wreathed horn. So that the word signifies both the conspicuousness of a thing, and likewise the infoldedness and complication of it.

A learned interpreteter gives yet another sence, *He looks into the house of stone*, that is, he hinders the light, or darkens the house by perking up so proudly by, or near the windows; as if he had said, he annoyes his Masters house both below and above, at the foundation, and at the windows.

The state of the hypocrite thus setled and made firm among stones, is yet a tottering one, it will not be able to stand; the eighteenth verse shews this.

Verse 18. **If he destroy him from his place, it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.**

There is much difficulty in giving a clear sence of these words.

If he destroy him from his place, &c.

If he] Who is that? Who is the Antecedent to this *he*? There is no antecedent expresst in the Hebrew. Some understand it thus, *If he*, that is, if the Lord, if God come to take vengeance of this man who seems to be a tree, so highly grown, and so deeply rooted.

Secondly, We may carry on the similitude thus, *If he destroy him*, that is, if the Gardener or the husbandman, if the master or owner of that ground or place, seeing a tree thus luxuriant, growing so near the foundation of his house, and so wrapped about the place of stones, hindering the windows of his house; if he come to destroy or cut him down, it shall deny him.

Or, Thirdly, *If he destroy him*, that is, if the Sun destroy him: So Mr. *Broughton* translates, *If the Sun root him up from his place.* But can the Sun root a tree up from his place? Yes, the Sun roots up a tree, when the Sun, before which a tree flourishes a while, casts his beams so hot upon it, that it is scorched. Extream heat draws out all the moisture of a tree, and kills it. In that sence the Sun may be said to root up a tree, the Sun killing the tree, causeth it to be rooted up. Thus we see divers Antecedents answering the *he*, the agent in the Text.

If he destroy him from his place.

בלע *Absorbuit, devoravit; Metaphoricè corrupit destruxit, consumpsit, quia quod deglutitur, perditur, absumitur.* Pereleganter qui vini multum deglutiunt, a vino absorberi dicuntur. Pined.

The word which we translate **destroy**, signifies properly to swallow down as a man swallows down meat and drink; and it signifies to swallow as a man swallows when he is very hungry; a man that is very hungry, eats his meat greedily, he throws it down whole into his throat, rather then chews it. Now, because when meat is swallowed down, the meat is consumed and spent, and is destroyed and comes to nothing, therefore the Hebrews elegantly translate that word, which properly signifies to swallow up, to destroy; to destroy is to swallow up; and in that sence (*Isa.* 28. 7.) wine is said to swallow up a man, that is, to destroy and consume him. *Intemperate men swallow up wine, and at last wine swallows up them*: The wine drinks up their estates, their wits, their healths, their lives, their all at last. It is a Metaphor taken also from cruel and savage beasts, who devour men: as *Jacob* saith of *Joseph*, *Surely a wild beast hath devoured* or *swallowed him up*: And (*Psal.* 35. 25.) We have that word applied to wicked men conspiring against the Saints, they say, *We have swallowed him up, ah! so would we have it*; that is, we have utterly destroyed him, this pleases, this goes well on our side.

Then the meaning is, Though the tree be in this state, yet if the husbandman come, he can quickly destroy it from his place; yea, though it be thus fairly grown, and firmly rooted, the Sun is able to kill this tree, and to draw out all its moisture, and so leave it dry and feared, fit only to be stubbed for fewel. Or take it for an hypocrite, to whom the similitude referreth. If God come to destroy him out of his place, to swallow him up, there's an end of him quickly; *It shall deny him, saying, I have not seen him.*

From this consideration, that the destruction of the tree is spoken of so immediately after the flourishing of it, that word *He is gren*, &c. is no sooner out, but he adds, *If he destroy him*, &c. we may note,

That, *The destruction of hypocrites and wicked men cometh often upon them, in the height of their prosperity.*

Even in the time of his greatness he shall be destroyed, and when his roots are wrapped about the heap. Trees stand so long sometimes that they wither of themselves, and then we cut them down for the fire, but this man shall be cut down like a tree in his prime, in his flourishing, when affliction and withering seem fartherst off, when he thinks least of destruction, then it shall come upon him; when his estate is like *Jonah's* gourd, a very pleasant plant, and a great rejoycing to him, a worm smites the roots and kills it.

That of *Job* (*chap.* 20. 22.) is full to this point; *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straights*, A strange thing that a man should be in straights when he is in his greatest enlargement, that a man should be emptied when he is full, that a man should be nothing when he hath all sufficiency about him, yet thus it shall be, *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.* As a godly man hath a sufficiency in his

his wants, yea, a fulness of sufficiency in his wants: So on the other side, an hypocrite whose heart is false with God, hath want in his sufficiency, yea, want in the fulness of his sufficiency. Which may be understood two wayes: either that his fulness in the greatest sufficiency of it, is unsatisfying; or that his fulness in the greatest sufficiency of it, is upon decaying and abating. (*Psal.*78.13.) *Whilst the meat was in their mouths, the wrath of God fell upon them*; while meat is in the mouth, rich clothes upon the back, while store of money is in the purse, while the land brings forth abundance of encrease, even in all these sufficiencies a man may be in straits. As it was with *Agag* (1 *Sam.* 15.) *Surely* (saith he) *the bitterness of death is past*; he thought himself safe, and that the storm was quite blown over, but then, in that nick of time comes *Samuel*, and cutteth him in pieces. The Apostle *Paul* saith (2 *Cor.* 1.9.) *I had the sentence of death in my self*; that is, I concluded, I could not survive those sufferings, I thought my self a lost man: yet the Lord delivered him, and fetched him from the grave. But when hypocrites (like *Agag*) have the sentence, yea, the sweetness of life in themselves; When they say peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes, as pain upon a woman in travel, and they shall not escape: God cuts them off. It follows,

If he destroy him from his place; what then?

It shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

Here is the further aggravation of his misery, when he is destroyed, *It shall deny him*; What shall deny him? Some read it thus, *his place shall deny him.* Can a place speak, affirm, or deny? No, it cannot; but it is usual in Scripture, by a *Prosopopeia*, a fiction of a person, to ascribe speech to beasts, to trees, and places too, things not only without reason, but without life. Such an elegancy is here, *It shall deny him*; that is, when he is destroyed, if any man shall ask the question, where is the man? Where is this goodly tree that stood here before? The place shall answer. *He is not here now.*

כחש *Mentietur ei ὁ τόπος ἐψεύσατο αὐτόν.* Sept. *Per prosopopeiam tribuit sermonem & mendacium rei inanimæ; quod insolens non est in his libris. Ita è loco suo excidetur & interibit, ut nullius jam agnoscat ea ibi unquam fuisse.* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *The place shall lie*; the place shall feign and say, we have not seen him; we know not what is become of him: So men use to answer, when they are either afraid or ashamed to own one that is asked for.

Some understand it of a person, *Then one may deny him: I see them no more*, so Mr. *Broughton*. Suppose a traveller, who oftentimes past by, and saw this goodly tree, when he cometh to the place again, sees it no more, the tree is down: So he, who hath past by such a mans house, and beheld his goodly seat, when he comes another time, there is no such man there, the man is gone, *It*, or, *he shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.*

I have not seen thee.] We have near the same words, *Psal.* 73. 35, 36. where the flourishing estate of a wicked man is shadowed under the notion of a tree, *I have seen the wicked flourish like a green bay tree*, &c. (yet) *he past away, and he was not*; as much as to say, if it be asked, what's become of him? A man shall answer, he hath not seen him; yea, *I sought him, but he could not be found.* Such a sence hath been shewed (*Job* 7.18.) upon those words, *The place thereof shall know him no more*; A clear riddance shall be made of all men out of the world, especially of wicked men. In that description (*Dan.* 2.35.) of the four Monarchies, under the similitude of a *great Image, whose head was of gold, his brest and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet of iron and clay*; The Text saith, *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them*; or, as the Chaldee, *They were found in no place*: A time will come when all Monarchies and worldly Kingdoms, which have stood up in so much lustre, which have dazled the eyes of all the beholders with their splendor, and kept all their neighbour Nations under by their power (a time shall come) when this clay, and iron, and brass, and silver, and gold shall be all beaten to pieces, so that if a man ask, where are the *four Monarchies*? What's become of the pomp and state of those great Empires? *The places of them shall know them no more*; no man can tell where they are. There is such a meaning here, this green tree, this hypocrite shall have his branches so pull'd off, his roots so stubbed up, that it will be hard to give an account what's become of him.

We find the happy and flourishing estate of the Church and people of God described, as if no place were large enough for them to dwell in (*Zech.* 10.10.) *I will bring them again out of the land of* Ægypt, *and gather them out of* Assyria, *&c.* that is, I will gather my Saints, my Church, together from all parts of the world where they have lived, (while they could not live, but sculking in corners) I will bring them together, so conspicuously, *that there shall be no place found for them*; that is, no place capacious enough to receive them and their families. We have the same promise of enlargement (*Isa.* 49.) *They shall say, The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell.* Now, as the Saints shall be gathered together so eminently and abundantly, that no place shall be found big enough to hold them; so the hypocrite with all his greenness and verdure shall be so blasted and rooted up, that the place where he was shall not be visible, as his: he shall be so far from filling all places, that he shall fill none, *The place where he dwelt shall spue him out, and by any remaining symptom it shall not be known where that man was.*

So then, the sum of all may be given thus, taking the comparison from the tree to this wicked man;

That as a tree highly grown and deeply rooted, may be so cut down and stubbed up, that it shall not be known whether ever it grew upon that place or no; so a wicked man, though for a while he flourisheth and overcometh all impediments that hinder him, in the eye of the world, yet at last himself and his family shall be so clean removed and swept away, his name and memory so blotted out, that there shall not be any print or foot-step of his being upon the face of the earth.

Whence note, *That the memory of wicked men shall perish for ever, none shall own them.*

If they be asked about them, they shall say, *We have not seen them. Peter* in his temptation denied Christ, *Matth.* 27. when they asked him, saying, *Art not thou one of his Disciples?* No, saith he, *I know not the man.* As the Saints under temptation, and as hypocrites in their dayly conversation deny Christ: so the time will come when hypocrites and wicked men shall be denyed themselves, their places shall say, *We know them no more.* They shall be remembred only as *Pilate* is remembred in that, which is called the Apostles Creed, who stands there upon record for his wickedness, cowardize and injustice in condemning Christ, whom he knew to be innocent. *Wicked men are either forgotten, or else remembred with a brand of disgrace. They who have been adored and flattered, and crept to like little gods, shall not be owned by the meanest men.* Even their parasites who have hung about them, will fall off from them, and say, Who, we know them? We know no such men. It is prophesied (*Zech.* 8.23.) of the Jews, who are now a despised and scattered people (yet still a people in the heart of Christ) that God will bring them forth at last, and they shall be a people so much honoured, that *ten men out of every Nation shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.* The despised Saints, such as the world hath cast out, and said, We will not see or take notice of them, shall be honoured or envied of all. Men will be glad to take hold of their skirts, and say, *Come, let us go with you*; O that we might have a part and a portion with you, for we know that God is with you! O that we had lived the lives, and might die the deaths of the righteous! O that our beginnings had been, and that our latter ends might be like theirs! Likewise a time will come, when hypocrites and wicked men shall be despised by their admirers, and cast out, as not worth the looking on by their grossest flatterers. It was a great honour which the *Orator* gives *Homer*, a Heathen Poet, who was a man of such reputation, that many great Cities strove for him. One said, he was born here; another said, he was born there; a third, among us was the place of his birth. All desired to own him, because he was a man highly honoured for his learning in those times: So on the other side, every place shall be ashamed of some men; this place shall say, we have nothing to do with him; and that place shall say, we have nothing to do with him; one shall disclaim him, and another shall disclaim him, all shall refuse him. *It shall be the*

Cic. *in Orat. pro Arch. poet.*

the honour of Saints to be desired of all; and it shall be the shame and punishment of wicked men, to be cast out and disregarded by all. They who despise God, shall at last be lightly esteemed among men.

Bildad having thus enlarged his similitude, in all the parts of it, and at last laid the hypocrite as low as forgetfulness, so low that no man will own him, as he is always so low that God will not own him, he concludes triumphantly against him.

Vers. 19. **Behold, this is the joy of his way, and out of the earth shall others grow.**

Here's his conclusion.

משוש "Dicitur quando gaudio gestimus, ut canes solent quando peregre advenienti Domino adulantur. Et hæc est exultatio væ ejus ironicos dictum. Hæc est lætitia qua sibi placebit in magnitudine sua. Viam appellat statum in quo erat, q. d. in quo redeat ejus gaudium dū ita se efferet. Merc.

This is the joy.] The word which we translate *joy*, signifies the highest joy, a kind of leaping for joy. It is an allusion to dogs or spaniels, who (you know) when their Masters come home, leap about them for joy, and in their language bid them welcom. Such a joy is here meant, a joy lifting up the heart, a leaping, an exulting joy. The word is often applied to the joy of the Saints, they rejoyce, and (as it were) leap about Jesus Christ, they triumph in the favour of God. The leaping, the exulting joy, the best joy, all the joy which an hypocrite hath, is but this, which hath been described; Is it not a desirable joy? A goodly joy sure? The words are ironical, *This is the joy of his way.*

Of his way.] Way is taken for the course, purpose, and institution of a mans life, for the tenour of his conversation, which he holds in the world, *This is the joy of his way: This is it.* The particle is demonstrative, This is it which I have told you, as if he had said, cast up all the comfort and happiness of that flourishing tree, of the hypocrite, this is all that it comes to, his end is to be rooted up and not so much as to be owned by those that knew him before.

There are three things which I should observe from this, *This is the joy of his way.*

First, *That an hypocrite may have much joy in his way.*

He may rejoyce much in his condition, and thinks all's well. *False hopes can produce false joyes.* False faith brings forth a comfort like it self, a fading comfort, a shadow of comfort, as that is but a shadow of faith. The fancy of faith is usually fuller of joy then true faith. Satan helps forward this joy, and God for a time will not hinder it. Faith (though feigned) gives the soul a sight of such things as are worth the rejoycing in, and a supposed title to them will move joy, as well as a real title doth. The stony ground received the word with joy. The promises are delicious to the sensitive and rational part, as well as to the spiritual and regenerate part. Hence (*Heb.*6.) they that fall away are said to have had tastes of the *joyes of the world to come.* An hypocrite may think himself in Heaven sometimes, and then like one in Heaven, he cannot but rejoyce. *He may have a glimpse of Heaven upon Earth, all whose Heaven is Earth. This is his joy.*

Secondly, *This*, may be demonstrative, and answers the question; what is his joy? It is this, His worldly comforts, his flourishing outward condition is his chiefest joy. Then note,

The joy of hypocrites is chiefly bottomed upon outward things.

It is not the joy of the Lord, no, not joy in the Lord, *Rejoyce in the Lord, and again, I say, rejoyce*, is the Gospel-command. An hypocrite cannot rejoyce thus. When he rejoyces in the Lord, somewhat besides the Lord causeth his joy. He rejoyces in his green boughs, in his goodly branches, in his supposed strong root; but to rejoyce in God, as God, he knows not how. *David's* joy was the opposite of this (*Psal.*4.6.) *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me, and that will put gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their corn and wine encreased.* Let me have the Sun-shine of thy love, and then though I have nothing but darkness and clouds from the world, I shall rejoyce. But what saith the hypocrite? Let my corn and wine encrease, let the Sun of outward prosperity shine warm upon me, let me have my greenness of creature-contentments, let me have credit and fair repute among men, these will put gladness in my heart. These glad his heart, when he hath not a dram of grace or goodness there.

Thirdly, *The joy of an hypocrite is but for a moment.*

It is a perishing joy. *This is the joy of his way*; you see what it amounts to, how well it lasts. His greenness is turned into withering, his root rots, and his fruit falls off. *This is his joy.* He is like those spoken of in the Epistle of *Jude*, (vers. 14.) *Trees twice dead, and plucked up by the roots.* That's the conclusion of the hypocrite: he hath a name to live, but he is dead, *twice dead*, naturally dead in sin, and judicially dead under wrath: he was born spiritually dead, and his whole life is a passage to eternal death. He hath rejoyced a while, but he must mourn for ever. *The portion of hypocrites is weeping and gnashing of teeth*, (*Matth.*24.51.) Their joy is but for a morning, or a day, weeping comes at night, and that night hath no morning after it.

And out of the earth shall others grow.

Some read, *Out of the earth shall somewhat else, some other thing grow.* We, out of the Earth (when these are removed) other persons shall grow, who shall inherit the place, and possess the dwelling of these prosperous trees. For he follows the similitude of a tree, when, or where one is pulled up, another is planted and grows up in its room. Or, others shall possess what he hath gotten. In which sence *Job* speaks (*Chap.* 27. 16, 17.) *Though the heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay, he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver.* Which words may be a Comment upon these, *Out of the Earth shall others grow*; that is, others shall rise up. God will bring a new generation to enjoy his ill-gotten substance, and eat the sweet of all his labours. *Solomon* (Eccles. 2. 18.) was much afflicted, because he knew not who should grow up after him. *I hated* (saith he) *all my labour which I have taken under the Sun, because I shall leave it to a man, and I know not what he shall be, whether a wise man or a fool.* It is a part of the vanity which lies upon man-kind, that after all a mans labour and pains, he must leave all unto some body, he knows not certainly who. But there is a greater and sorer vanity upon the hypocrite; he seldom stayes to take his part, *He shall not rost that which he hath taken in hunting* (Prov.12.) that is, he shall not have the benefit himself of what he hath, but others (unthought of) shall come out of the ground and grow in his place, *This is the upshot or sum of all his misery, he hath laboured for others in temporal things, and he hath got nothing for himself in spiritual things.*

Alii, qui alieni erunt ab eo, & quasi è terra alia germinabunt, in bona ipsius succedentes juxta illud, repositæ sunt justo opes peccatoris. Drus.

Further, the words may carry this sence. That,

When wicked men are taken away, the righteous shall grow in their room.

Pull up the bryars and thorns, and then vines and fig-trees, lillies and roses will grow the better. When wicked men are removed, good men will prosper.

Again, *Out of the earth shall others grow*; they were not worth the ground they went upon, though they were worth a great deal of ground, therefore out of the ground shall others grow. God will raise up a generation which shall be more faithful and serviceable unto him.

There is a fourth sence of this expression, *Out of the earth shall others grow*; that is out of the meanest and lowest condition others shall grow: and so it carries an opposition between the condition of an hypocrite, and of a godly man. The hypocrite in his flourishing greenness shall be cut down to the ground, but they whose hearts are sincere and upright, though they are as low as the ground, though they are upon the Earth, and are trodden down as mire in the streets, yet they shall grow up, they who were growing high shall be cut down, and they who were below shall grow up; such as they feared not, nor suspected, shall prevail over them. *They who are lowest, even as low as the earth, shall be raised, built up, and set on high in the world, when God speaks the word.*

There is an Exposition of this whole context, about which (because many close with it) I shall give a brief account. Divers of the learned understand this third similitude, not as describing the state of an hypocrite, but as an instance in opposition to the state of an hypo-

crite,

crite, set forth by the rush and by the spider in the former Verses.

Hence it is that the *Italian* version begins *vers.* 6. thus, *But the perfect man is green before the Sun*, &c. And so the sence may be given to this effect. As if *Bildad* had said, *Though hypocrites wither like a rush, or like a flag, though they are suddenly swept down like a spiders web, yet a godly man is a green tree before the Sun; he is not like a rush without water, but like a tree planted by the rivers side, which is able to endure the heat of the Sun, yea the hottest Sun of persecution:* [*His branches shoot forth in his garden*] *he is no wild tree, no tree of the forest, or of the wilderness, he is a tree of the inclosed garden. which if it want the water from the clouds, the Gardener will take care to water it with his hand.* Or [*his roots are wrapped about the heap, about the fountain*] *he is strongly set, and he hath water continually to feed and supply his branches*; Thus the Church is so described by *Balaam* (Num. 24. 6.) *How goodly are thy tents, O* Jacob, *and thy Tabernacle, O* Israel! *as the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the rivers sides, as the trees of Lign Aloes, which the Lord hath planted, and as Cedar trees besides the waters. Thus the godly mans roots are wrapped about the fountain, and there he is fruitful; though the Sun shine hot upon him, yet it cannot exhale his moysture faster then the river can supply him with more. And he seeth the place of stones, he will live upon a flint, having a lively root of faith continually sucking in refreshings from Christ, under whose protection and favour he remains strong and abounding in the work of the Lord* [*But if he destroy him from his place, it shall deny him*] *that is, if the wicked of the world attempt to root the godly man up: the place, that is, the men of the place shall take part with him, own him, and deny to give him up into the hands of those who would destroy him. But if the place should not secure him, if the power and violence of the enemy destroy and pluck him up, yet this is his joy, a godly man may be destroyed, but none can destroy the joy of a godly man.* [*This is the joy of his way*] *he delights in persecution, he is as sorrowful, but alwayes rejoycing, even in death it self.* [*And out of his earth shall others grow.*] *He shall have a blessed posterity to stand up in his stead, in whom he shall live, when he is dead. Or, if the power of the adversary root him out of this earth, in which he lived, and drive him from this ground, from house and home, he shall grow in an other Earth* (The original may bear that sence.) *If he be removed from this place, he shall grow in another place; if you take him from his own Country, he can grow in any Country, and if he be plucked from all Countryes he will grow up too, and in Heaven.*

De terra alia germinabunt. Pagn.

Thus the whole Context may be made out as a similitude of a godly man, in opposition to the hypocrite. But I rather acquiesce and settle in the interpretation before, that it is a third description of the condition of an hypocrite. The original and our translation fairly carry it so.

Bildad having thus far prosecuted the point, vindicated the justice of God, and illustrated his former proof by a threefold similitude, shuts up and states the point for God, that *He is just, For he will not hurt the innocent, neither will he help the evil doers*, &c.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers.
Till he fill thy mouth with laughing and thy lips with rejoycing.
They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

THese three verses are the Epilogue or close of *Bildad's* discourse with *Job*: having in the former parts of the Chapters asserted, and with great clearness illustrated the justice of God in his dealings against impenitents and hypocrites; he now concludes in a mollifying language, with the assurance of his favour and goodness unto those who return and humble themselves. Yet this he interweaves with threats of the displeasure of God seen in the effects of it against the wicked, in *vers.* 20, 22.

It is, as if *Bildad* had thus said, *Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man.* Job, *thou mayest perceive by what hath now been spoken, that God is no enemy to the righteous, nor no friend to wicked men: Thou seest what the portion of a wicked man is from God, and how just God is in giving him such a portion; yet know, that mercy shall act as gloriously in the hand of God, as justice doth; as God is not unjust to favour hypocrites, so neither will he be unjust to forget the righteous and the perfect man; the hypocrite shall perish, but he will fill the mouth of a godly man with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.*

Or, if we consider his speech more distinctly, we may see two negative acts of justice, one toward the perfect, the other toward the hypocrite, with the effects of both.

His justice acts towards the perfect man, in that, *He will not cast him away.* The effect whereof is, *The filling of his mouth with laughing, and his lips with rejoycing.*

His justice acts against the hypocrite, thus, *He will not help the evil doers.* The effect whereof is, That *evil doers shall be cloathed with shame, and that their tabernacles shall not be.*

We may cast all into a form of Argument. First, To the general; and then to the particular case of *Job.*

He that doth not cast away a perfect and a good man, is just and righteous in his dealings and administrations.
But God doth not, will not, cast away a perfect and a good man. Therefore he is just and righteous in his dealings and administrations.

Then to the particular case of *Job.*

He that doth not cast away any perfect man, will not cast thee away, if thou art perfect.

Therefore, *Job*, return, make thy way perfect before God, and *He will not cast thee away.* Or take this inference. God will not *cast away a perfect man*: therefore surely thou hast a great deal of imperfection or insincerity in thee, because God hath thus cast thee off, and laid thee aside.

The like Arguments may be framed upon the other part of his justice, in his dealings with the wicked.

From the general sence of the Context thus given, I come to open the particulars, as they here lie in order.

Behold, God will not cast away a perfect man.

Behold.] Is here a strong affirmation. This is a certain truth.

God will not.] The strong God, or the puissant, *will not cast away a perfect man.* God hath infinite power, but he puteth none of it forth, to this purpose: he never layes out himself in opposing those who are perfect and righteous, *The powerful God doth not cast away a perfect man.*

אל *Deus fortis non abutitur potentia sua ad conterendum simplicem.* Fined.

Cast away.] The word which we translate, *cast away*, was opened at *vers.* 14. of this Chapter, and in *Chap.* 5. *vers.* 9. There it was translated by despising, *Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord*, cast not away, or cast not off the chastening of the Lord. And in *vers.* 14. of this Chapter, *The hypocrites hope shall be cut off*, he shall cast away his hope, or his hope should cast away and abhor him, for so the word bears. The *Seventy* translate it to that sence, *He will not cast off*; that is, he will not reprobate, or disapprove, he will not reject or discountenance *a perfect man.* And Mr. *Broughton*, *Loe, the omnipotent will not loath the perfect.* Either of the sences are full enough to the Text.

מאס *Fastidivit, reprobavit.*

Non Reprobabit innocentem, 70.

Only take notice that in the words there is a figure; for when it is said, *That God will not cast away a perfect man*; this is not all the meaning, as if God made no other reckoning of perfect men then thus, that he would not cast them away; more is intended then expresst, namely, that the Lord doth highly esteem and prize righteous men, he layes them as it were in his bosom and next his heart: thus the Lord deals with the righteous, *His not casting away, is a near imbracing.*

Meiosis.

There is a two fold casting away; First, Temporal. Secondly, Eternal: and in neither of these sences doth God cast away a perfect man. Not only shall he not perish eternally, but not temporally. He doth not reject or cast him away for a moment; his love is an everlasting love, and there can be no breaches or gaps made in it, so as to cut off his love to the person, although he often signifies displeasure against his sin.

The

The perfect man.] The word we had in the first Chapter, where it is used to express *Job*'s compleatness in spirituals; a compleatness, not in degrees, but in parts; sincerity filled up his soul, and so perfected all the limbs and members of his inward man. Hence observe,

First, *A gracious soul shall never be rejected of God.*

Whatsoever God doth in the world, he will never do this, *Heb.* 13. 5. *He hath said, he will never leave thee nor forsake thee.* If God doth not leave a perfect man, he will not cast him away. The Apostle puts the question (*Rom.* 11. 1.) *Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.*

Perfect men are Gods Jewels, not the rubbish or offscowring of the world, though the world count them so. A wise man will not cast away Jewels.

Perfect men are Gods servants, his faithful servants; all the willing service he hath done him in the word (on this side Angels) is done by these men. A wise man will not cast away such as are truly serviceable unto him.

Perfect men are Gods children; they are born of God, and sons of the most high. Natural love will not cast away a child.

Perfect men are Gods portion, the lot of his inheritance, his revenue comes in, he hath his incomes of glory by them, A man will not despise his own glory, he will not reject his own inheritance.

Further, They who are perfect come to him in his Son, and he hath pawned his truth for it (*John* 6. 37.) *He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out*: As if he had said, this thing is furthest from my heart of any thing in the world. God calls after many who go away from him, but he casts away none who come to him. None comes to him till he draws them, therefore he will not drive them away who come.

Again, Perfect men have the Spirit of God, God cannot cast away or stop his ears at the voyce of his own Spirit. They have the earnest of his Spirit; if God should go about to put them off or lay them aside, they will shew God those tokens and pledges of his love, the earnest he hath given them to assure their hearts.

Lastly, He hath tied himself to them in the bond of a Covenant, they are fast to him in the everlasting bonds of his own love; therefore they cannot be cast off. So he promises his people (*Lev.* 26. 44.) though they should provoke him to afflict them, yet he would not reject them utterly; he might put them into the hands of their enemies, but he would never cease to be their friend; *for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away.* (Many think when the Saints are cast into trouble, that *God* had cast them away; no, there is no such matter; when they are in their enemies hand, God holds them still in his hand. yea, in his heart.) *I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and break my Covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God.* The Covenant holdeth God and his people so fast together, that they shall never part.

We find the Church complaining grievously, as if she were cast away (*Psal.* 44. 9.) *Thou hast cast us off and put us to shame, and goest not forth with our Armies*; and, *ver.* 23. The Church prayes, *Arise, O Lord, cast us not off for ever.* So (*Psal.* 60. 1.) *O God, thou hast cast us off*; and, *ver.* 9. *Who will bring me into the strong City? Wilt not thou, O God, who hadst cast us off?* God (to sense) casts off his own people, when he casteth them into dangers; but even then their faith takes hold of God, and Gods love takes hold of them. *Though all this be come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, nor dealt falsly in thy Covenant* (Psal. 44. 17.) Neither had God forgotten them, or dealt falsly in the Covenant; they were his people still, and as near unto him, as when they were furthest from those troubles.

God casts away some indeed, but they are such as he never had within the bonds of his Covenant. He casts away wicked men as rubbish, as filth and dirt; such the Prophet speaks of (*Hos.* 9. 15.) *My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him.* These were imperfect, not perfect men. God cast these away, not from any interest they had in him, but because they never had any. Such as will not hearken unto the word of God, God will cast away; why? They cast God away, when they cast the word of God away. They cast the Covenant behind their backs (*Psal.* 50.) no wonder God casts them behind his back; he throws them out of doors, when they throw his truth out of their hearts. Perfect men love the truth of God for ever, and the God of truth loves them for ever.

Secondly (For, as we said, these words express less then is meant.) observe,

That, *Perfect men are highly esteemed by God.*

He prizes them greatly, he delighteth in them, *They that honour me, I will honour*, saith God; not only will I not cast them away or abhor them, but I will honour them. God esteems and prizes them, though the world disesteem and reject them. There is many a soul which the world tramples under their feet, as the mire in the streets, which at that time God layes in his bosom. Christ embraceth some in his arms, whom the world, yea, whom their brethren hate, and smite with their tongues (*Isa.* 66. 5.) *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake, said, let the Lord be glorified.* (Not only the wicked world may do this, but brethren, even those that are brethren indeed in the main, may possibly hate a perfect man, and cast him out) *your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my Names sake*; but the Lord at that time loved them, as it follows, *But he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.*

And if God doth not only not cast away perfect ones, but esteem them, then take these three cautions.

First, Ye that are perfect, be sure ye keep close to God, do not cast him off, do not cast away the word, any one truth or command of God. Cast not the wayes of God away, for he will never cast you away.

Secondly, Ye that are perfect, *cast not away your confidence*, Heb. 10. 35. The Apostle had shewed how close God would stick to his people; now, saith he, if it be so, if he will bring his promises to pass, *then cast not away your confidence.* There is a great strength of engagement in it, when we read that God will not cast away his people, that they should not cast away their confidence in God, *which hath great recompence of reward.*

Thirdly, To all, take heed of casting off, or slighting any perfect man; we should act towards men, and think of them as God doth. It is best to love where God loves, and to love most where God loves most. *Negative promises and negative threatnings have greatest force in them.* God holds them fastest, and loves them dearest, of whom he saith, *I will not cast them away. God will not cast away a perfect man.* There's a negative promise. Now see the portion of the wicked; that's given out in a negative threatning: God saith not what he will do against them, but what he will not do for them, *Neither will he help the evil doers.*

He will not help them.] Some read it, *He will not put forth his hand to evil doers.* So the Letter of the Hebrew imports. And there may be a threefold sence given of that reading. *Putting forth the hand*, notes, first, our taking men into *society*, *fellowship* and *familiarity* with us; when we would shew a man how we love him at our hearts, we put forth a hand, and take him by the hand. Now (saith he) *God will not take an evil doer by the hand*, to welcome or entertain him, to countenance and respect him, *Exod.* 23. 1. *Put not thy hand with the wicked, to be an unrighteous witness*: Be not of the same side, *communion* and *fellowship* with him in giving witness.

Non porriget manum malis. Vulg. *Ad amicitiæ fœdus pertinere videtur.*

Secondly (As the *Septuagint* gives the sence) *He will not put forth his hand*, that is, *to receive a gift or an offering from wicked men.* When a gift or a present is brought, the receiver (if he would testifie his liking and acceptance of it) puts forth his hand and receives it. Now (saith *Bildad*) *God will not put forth his hand to receive any offering or gift from wicked men*; the oblations of wicked men are an *abomination* unto the Lord: *The good deeds of evil doers are evil in his sight. He had no respect to Cain and his offering.* He did not put forth his hand to receive *Cain*'s offering; but he put forth his hand to receive *Abel*'s offering. This is a profitable sence.

Nec illum munus impii accipiet. Sept. q. d. *Non porriget manus, accepturus munus, impiorum dona non sunt Deo grata.* Pined.

Thirdly, It rather refers to Gods not assisting wicked men. So Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *He will not maintain*, the

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Denotat fortiter apprehendere, aut potius apprehendendo confortare & roborare, hoc est, præstare auxilium. Improbis nō favet, nec eos juvat. Merc.

the hand of the mischievous. To put forth or stretch out the hand, according to this Hebrew phrase, implies strong holding; or the taking of strong hold upon any thing, so as by taking hold of it to strengthen and confirm it, to give it help and assistance. A man that would give assistance to another in any business or work, puts forth his hand to him. When we want help, we usually bespeak a friend, *Pray lend me your hand.* Now here, *the Lord will not put forth his hand to evil doers*; that is, the Lord gives them no assistance or help in their wickedness. If wicked men say, Lord, *lend us thy hand*; no, saith he, I will not lend you my hand. We find this phrase frequent in Scripture. That (*Gen.* 19. 16.) illustrates it fully; where *Lot* being warned to go out of *Sodom* (verse 16) *While he lingred, the men* (that is, the Angels) *laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him forth, and set him without the City.* They laid hold upon their hands: It is the word of the Text. When the Lord sees wicked men in any distress or danger (as *Lot* was in *Sodom*) or when they want help or assistance in any business, he will not be merciful to them in taking them by the hand, or in laying his hand strongly upon them, either to pull them out of danger, or to give them help in difficulties. The sin of *Jerusalem* is charged upon her in this language by the Prophet, in a parity with that of filthy *Sodom* (Ezek. 16. 49.) *Neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy*, that is, she did not relieve, comfort or help them. The sin opposite to this, is charged upon the false Prophets, by *Jeremy* (chap. 23. 14.) *They strengthen the hands of evil doers* either by counsel, or by countenance, by flatteries or connivance. We read (*Nehem.* 6.) how often the enemies sent false alarms to *Nehemiah* and the people that were with him, to terrifie and affright them; *Nehemiah* shews the enemies, design in it, *ver.* 9. *They all made us afraid, saying, their hands shall be weakned from the work that it be not done*; therefore in the close, *Nehemiah* prayes, *Lord, strengthen mine hands* (it is this word) as if he had said, *Lord, help me, put thine hands to mine.* So, *Isa.* 35. 3. *Strengthen the weak hands*, put your hands to their hands, *Psal.* 73. 23. *David* acknowledging how he had almost fallen at the rising of the wicked, shews yet what kept him up; *Nevertheless, I am continually with thee, thou hast holden me by my right hand*; the hand of providence is the power of God upholding our being, as the hand of creation was the power of God giving us our being, *Isa.* 42. 6. *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand and help thee.* So, *Isa.* 41. 13. That is, by holding of thine hand I will help thee. The same word in the original is used for

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hardning the heart (*Exod.* 9. 12.) because hardness of heart strengthens it to do evil. A hard heart is armed for any sin.

So then we see, when the Lord refuseth to put forth his hand, or to take strong hold (as the word imports) upon the hand of evil men, the meaning lies in one of these three things;

First, That he bears no favour to them, he doth not approve their cause or business.

Secondly, That he gives them no assistance or encouragement in their business.

Thirdly, That he will not deliver or rescue them out of their distresses; when they are sinking or falling, he will not put forth his hand to hold them up, or keep them from sinking. God is not a patron or a protector, an adjutor or aider of evil doers.

מרעים
Evil doers.] We must not take these *evil doers* for all and every one that doth evil; for *then whom would God help?* We may then say (with reverence) *God help us indeed:* What a miserable condition were we then in if God would not put forth his hand to help any that do evil? The evil doer is a man notoriously, professedly, studiously wicked, one that acts and devises evil against God and his wayes. Every one who doth evil, is not to be reckoned an evil doer. A man doth evil in any one act; but one act doth not make him an evil doer. A Magistrate must count him an evil doer who doth evil; and therefore he must take vengeance (in many case) *of him that doth evil* (though but once) *Rom.* 13. 4. and though he repent. The Angels were cast as evil doers for one act, and so was man in innocency; but now the evil doer is one who multiplies and continues in evil deeds; to such as these the Lord will not put forth his hand, or give them his help. Observe then,

First, That, *God is no friend, no assistant unto men in sinful wayes.*

He will not strengthen the hands, or help forward the work of wicked men. God is the punisher and Judge of evil doers, and therefore not their helper.

Evil doers oppose not only *Gods Law*, but his *Nature*, therefore he will not help them. He cannot exercise one Attribute against another; his *Power* will not *work* against his *Holiness*, or against his *Will.*

There is a *twofold* help which *God* giveth.

First, A *common* help.

Secondly, A *special* help.

We grant that *God* strengthens the hands even of *evil doers* in regard of *common help*; for no man could put forth his hand to any evil, as a sinner, if God did not give him a general assistance as a creature. In this sence the strength by which men rebel and sin against God, comes from God. But he doth not strengthen their hands, or give them help by any special assistance. In the doing of good, we have a *common assistance* to the act, as there is a natural motion in it, which God gives his people with the rest of the world; but this will not carry them out to *do good compleatly.* To bring forth any *gracious act*, they must have a special assistance. Hence Christ saith, *without me ye can do nothing*; he means it not of that general *support* which Christ gives to man, by which *all live, and move, and have their being in him* (in that sence no man is able to do any thing without Christ, for in him all things consist) but when he saith, *without me ye can do nothing*, he means, without my special *assistance* and *strength* ye cannot perform holy and spiritual duties, acceptable unto God. So the *Apostle, We have no sufficiency of our selves, so much as to think a good thought.* We have no sufficiency to think any thought without some assistance; but to think a *good thought*, we have not any sufficiency without a special assistance. Wicked men are not able to do evil without a *common assistance*, but they have no *special assistance* from *God to do evil.* He doth neither stir up and excite their lusts to the act, nor supply their lusts while they are acting. Wicked men have assistance enough in both from their own hearts, and from Satan. Though man hath no sufficiency in himself to think *one good thought*, yet he hath a sufficiency in himself to think all evil thoughts; as he is a creature, he acts, and as he is a *corrupt creature*, he sins. Man hath *full power* and *free will* to do evil, *therefore the Lord doth not put forth his hand to help the evil doer.*

But it will be necessary for the understanding of this and other like Scriptures, to consider somewhat more distinctly, what God doth in reference to *evil acts*, or the *acts of evil doers.* He concurs, but not with such concurrence as amounts to the helping of evil doers, or the strengthening of their hands.

The first help which God gives evil doers is privative or negative, the calling in, or not giving out of that power, by which they might do good, or avoid evil. Thus he departed from *Saul*, and then *Saul* went on worse and worse against *David.* God hath somewhat to do with evil doers when he withdraws that help from them by which they may be kept from doing evil: Or, when he doth not assist them against the evil of their own hearts, and the pollutions of the world. This deserting and leaving them unto themselves, layes them open to sin; yet the sin which a man thus deserted commits, can no more be charged upon God, then the darkness of the night can be charged upon the Sun for going down; sin follows divine desertion, not as the effect doth the cause, but as a consequent doth the antecedent.

Secondly, He delivers or gives them up, first, to Satan; and secondly, to their own counsels, to a reprobate mind and vile affections, *Psal.* 81. 12. *Rom.* 1. 24, 26. This tradition is an act beyond desertion; there is a greater spiritual judgment in it, when God makes a mans own wickedness active against him, then when he doth not make his Spirit or Grace active in him. It were better to be put into the hands of all the tyrants in the world, yea, better be put into the hands of the Devil, then into the hands of our own lusts and passions. *God doth not give a reprobate mind or vile affections, but he gives up to them.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Evil doers, in their doing evil, are ordered by God. Wicked men (in every sinful act) run beyond the line of obedience, but they cannot run beyond the line of providence. God limits and circumscribes the acts of wicked men, for otherwise every wicked man would be a *monster*, a *non-such* in wickedness, if he could; every one would be a *Cain*, an *Ahab*, a *Nero*, a *Caligula*, &c. The sinfulness of men would be, not only out of measure sinful *intensive*, in regard of the quality of it, but out of measure sinful *extensive*, in regard of the quantity of it, it would break all bounds, carry all down before it, did not the Lord order and direct the disorders and confusions of it. There is a Sea of wickedness in the heart of a wicked man, which is as boysterous and unruly as the natural Sea; and if the Lord did not set bounds to that Sea of wickedness, and say, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further*, it would overwhelm all. Thus far also God hath to do in the sinfulness of men, to limit and stay them, to restrain and keep them in compass, while they sin. Every sin goes without the compass of that law which God hath given, but no sin can get beyond the compass of that leave which God gives.

Fourthly, We may say, *God assists the motions of sin, but not the motions to sin, or the sinfulness of the motion.* The strength of a wicked mans hand, while he sins, is from the Lord, but the Lord doth not strengthen his hand to sin. A sinner hath natural help from God, but he hath no moral help from God; he hath all that from himself, from his own wicked heart, or from Satan. To eat, was a natural act in our first parent, this was from God; but to eat against the command was a moral act, and that was from man, and the Serpent. As suppose that a Musitian should touch or play upon a Lute that is out of tune, his touching the Lute is an artificial act, but the sounding of it comes from the nature of the instrument: the sounding of the instrument is from the hand of him that playes upon it, but, that it sounds untunably, is, because the instrument is out of tune. So the Lord by natural assistance puts the hearts and hands of wicked men into motion, but that they move irregularly, that they make such harsh musick, that there is so much discord in their actions, that's from the disorder and untuneableness of their own spirits, not from the hand of God. They have not any moral assistance from God in sin, but a natural only.

Or, take it negatively, *God doth not help the evil doers.*

First, He doth not help the evil doers, by instilling the least motion of evil into them. He casts in, or infuses holy thoughts and motions into the hearts of his own people, to prepare them for holy performances; but he never dropt the least motion of evil into the heart of man, to fit him for wickedness.

Secondly, The Lord doth not excite or stir up that natural inherent corruption that is in wicked men; he doth not provoke or blow up their lusts. He excites the graces of his own people, when they are to do any good: they have a principle of grace in them, and this God breaths upon, moving and acting it by fresh assistances. Neither of these wayes doth the Lord assist evil doers.

Further, Taking the words (as they must) in a figure, when it is said, *God doth not help the evil doers*; the meaning is, he doth oppose and resist them. Hence observe,

Wicked men are resisted and opposed by God in their evil doings.

God is so far from giving them any help, that he sets himself against them. Understand this with a distinction.

There is a two-fold resistance or opposition that God makes against the evil doings of men. There is,

1. A moral
2. A natural

} opposition.

Or there is,

1. A declarative
2. An operative

} resistance.

When it is said, that God doth resist (as this phrase imports or suppoeth) wicked men in doing evil, we are to understand it, that he ever opposes them morally; that is, he ever layes a moral impediment in their way, and he ever opposes them declaratively, he declares his opposition in his Word. He never shews the least liking of wicked men in their wayes. For when he saith, *He that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is unjust, let him be unjust still* (Rev. 22. 11.) he doth not at all approve, but threatens these sinners. This seeming admission is the highest rebuke of sin. But take it for a natural opposition, which is the bringing out of strength and power to stop men in the wayes of sin: Thus the Lord doth not alwayes resist evil doers. For if he did, it were impossible that any wicked man should move one hairs breadth in doing evil; if God would put forth his power against man, he could not stir to sin against God: but God doth not so, neither is he bound to lay a natural impediment in the wayes of wicked men. It is enough to acquit him in his holiness, that he ever layes a moral impediment in their way. He declareth his Law against, and his dislike of their sins: and in this sence he alwayes resists them. All the sin of man is against the will of God, yet no man sins whether God will or no. The declarative will of God is often resisted, but his operative will cannot be resisted. As (which may illustrate this) in the civil State, the Laws of this Kingdom lay a moral impediment in the way of thievery and robbery, *&c.* It is perpetually declared by the Law, that no man ought to take another mans estate from him violently; but yet the Kingdom doth not ever set a natural impediment against robbers, *&c.* That is, we do not place a power of men to guard all high wayes or houses, to see that no passenger shall be robbed, or house broken open: So the Lord layes a moral impediment in the way of wicked men alwayes, but he doth not alwayes set his power against them, whereby he is able (if he please) to disable wicked men from doing evil. Thirdly observe,

When wicked men are going down, down they shall.

Why? God will not put forth his hand to help them; they, whom God will not assist or help, cannot stand long. They in the Psalm thought they had got the godly man at an advantage, *Come* (say they) *let us persecute and take him, for God hath forsaken him, and there is none to deliver him.* Now we may have our wills of this man, for God stands by, and doth not own him. If God be a neuter, his friends cannot stand long, how then shall his enemies stand, when he is their opposer? We may conclude against wicked men, that they shall be destroyed, for God hath forsaken them, he will not own them; and as *Hamans* wife told him sadly, *Esth.* 6. 13. *If* Mordecai *be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt surely fall before him.* When a man is going down, nothing can stay him, if God do not: his hand must support a sinking and tottering person or Nation, or else either falls. When wicked enemies begin to fall, they shall fall and perish, for God will not put forth his hand to help the evil doers.

Now follows the effect of all. The effect first of Gods gracious helping of the righteous, *He will not cast away the righteous man*; and is that all? Shall a righteous man be only not rejected? As mans duty ought not, so the mercy of God doth not stay in negatives. The Lord hath positive blessings in store for his people; the latter part of the promise affirms this, *He will not cast away the righteous man,*

Vers. 12. **Till he fill thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing.**

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.] And is it but just till then? Will the Lord, when he hath set his people a laughing, leave them, and help them no more? Will he, when he hath given them cause of joy, cast them off? His people had better never laugh at all, then laugh upon those terms. No man can laugh long, nor at all (upon any due ground) if God leave him.

Particula donec non significat posteà projiciendum esse à Deo simpliciter, sed quod immutabiliter servabitur à Deo.

We are not to understand this [Till] to be a *terminative*, or a *determinative* particle, as if the Lords care and favour towards his people, should be only till he put them in a good estate, and then they must shift for themselves: God puts no such limits to his love. *It cannot so much comfort the soul to know God loves us now, as it would trouble the soul, to think a time may come when he will not love us.* The [*till*] here notes a continued act; it is as much as to say,

ſay, *He will never caſt them off.* The word [*until*] both in the Hebrew and Greek, often notes everlaſtingneſs. God makes a promiſe to *Jacob* in this form (*Gen.*28.19.) *I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have ſpoken to thee of.* And would he leave him then? No, the meaning is, I will never leave thee (*Pſal.* 110.1.) *Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy foot-ſtool.* Chriſt ſhall not be put from the right hand of God, when his enemies are ſubdued under his feet, Chriſt ſhall ſit there for ever.

Till he fill thy mouth with laughing.

Thy mouth.] Obſerve here the change of the perſon: he ſpake before in the third perſon, *The Lord will not caſt away the perfect man.* Now he brings it home and applies it unto *Job*, *Till he fill thy mouth with laughing*; as if he had ſaid, that which I ſpake in the third perſon, I meant it as appliable unto thy ſelf, that general truth may be made good to thy perſon, *Till he fill thy mouth.* I do not ſpeak ſpeculations or fleeing notions of things that ſhall never come to paſs; If thou follow my counſel, thy own experience will quickly teach thee, *That God will not caſt thee off, till he fill thy mouth with laughing.*

Hoc quod dixi in tantũ verũ eſt, ut in te ſentiẽs. Aquin.

Laughter is an act of joy flowing from reaſon. To *fill the mouth with laughing* notes great joy, ſuch an income of joy, ſo much matter of joy, that the heart cannot hold it, but out it muſt at the mouth: joy begins at the heart, there's the ſeat of it: and when the heart is ſo full of it that it cannot hold, then it runs over at the mouth and lips; that is, we expreſs the inward joy of the heart, by ſome outward ſign or token, ſpeech or geſture. So then to ſay, *I will not caſt thee away, till I have filled thy mouth with laughing, and thy lips with rejoycing*; is as much as to ſay, I will not leave thee, till thou haſt more comfort then thine heart can hold, ſo much, that thou muſt give it vent at thy lips, and be ſpeaking of it.

Os impleri dicitur riſu, cum aliquis tanta animi hilaritate perfruitur, ut illa cordis hilaritas per vociferationem, conclamationem, riſum, aut hujuſmodi exteriora ſigna valde appareat. Bold.

The word for *laughter*, ſignifies as well inward as outward joy, heart-laughter as well as face-laughter. Beſides there is a two-fold laughter.

Firſt, A laughing of joy. And

Secondly, A laughing of ſcorn, called *ſubſannation.* With both theſe laughters the Lord will fill the mouths of his people.

Firſt, With laughing for joy: for joy at their own comfortable and good eſtate, for joy that the Lord hath glorified himſelf in their deliverance. Theſe things are great matter of joy to them. And then he will fill their mouths with a laughing of deriſion, they ſhall ſcorn their enemies who have ſcorned at them. God laughs at the proud oppoſers of his truth and people, *Pſal.* 2. *He that ſitteth in the Heavens ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion.* When the Lord hath confounded the plots of his enemies, he laugheth at them; his people alſo ſhall laugh, not inſulting in the ſins and miſeries of men, but in the vengeance and diſappointments which God poureth upon them. *The deriſions and ſcorns of the Saints have more holineſs in them, then the devotions and prayers of wicked men.* The word in the next clauſe is conſiderable.

תרנעה *à radice* רוע *Perſonavit, vociferatus eſt, vocem magnã edidit.* ἀλαλάζειν eſt lætũ clamorẽ tollere, ut ſolent hominis fiducia præditi & ſpe erecti ut milites ante prælĩ. *Latini* Barritũ *vocant; clamor quẽ* Barritum *vocant, non prius debet attolli quam acies utraq; ſe junxerit.* Veget.

And thy lips with rejoycing.] We tranſlate *rejoycing*, but the word properly ſignifies, *a joyful ſound.* So it is uſed (*Pſal.* 89.15.) *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound.* And it ſignifies to make a joyful ſound, either with the mouth, which is a natural inſtrument, or with a trumpet, or any other artificial inſtrument. *Bleſſed are the people that know the joyful ſound*, that live within the ſound of the ſilver trumpet which congregated the people of God, and gave notice of their ſolemn meetings for publick worſhip. This word is applied ſometimes to that rude ſound or confuſed noiſe, which Souldiers make when they come on to charge in battel; they commonly make a great clamor, to ſtrike the adverſary with terror and amazement, and to encourage and raiſe their own ſpirits. The Greeks and Latines have their ſpecial terms to expreſs it by, noted by the learned in the proprieties of thoſe languages.

Again, That word is uſed for the confuſed noiſe of worſted or conquer'd enemies, when they flee and run away. So (*Judg.* 7.31.) when *Gideon* had diſcomfited the hoſt of the *Amalekites*, all the hoſt *ran and cryed*, they made a doleful ſound: ſo the word bears, as well as a joyful ſound.

Thirdly, The word is chiefly uſed to note the ſound or acclamation of Souldiers after victory is obtained; a prevailing army ſhouts when the adverſe forces are routed and overcome. Thus, in that famous inſtance (*Joſh.* 6.5.) *Joſhua* gives command, that when they make a long blaſt with the rams horns, and when they heard the ſound of the trumpet, all the people ſhould *ſhout with a great ſhout*, which ſhout is expreſſed by the word of the Text: and *verſ.* 10. he charges that they ſhould not ſhout or make a noiſe with their voice till the ſeventh day, becauſe that was deſigned for the day of victory, the day when the wall ſhould fall: *You ſhall not ſhout or make any noiſe with your voice, neither ſhall any word proceed out of your mouths, till the day I bid you ſhout, then ſhall ye ſhout.* *Baalam* (*Numb.* 23.21.) confeſſes he could not curſe *Iſrael*, becauſe *the ſhout of a King was amongſt them.* It is this word. That the ſhout of a King may be underſtood three wayes.

Firſt, That it was ſuch a ſhout as Kings uſed to have in their reception and coronation; Such a ſhout, ſaith he, there is among this people, as if a King were to be received and crowned. Thus when *Samuel* brought *Saul* out, whom he had anointed for King, and ſaid, *See ye him whom the Lord hath choſen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people ſhouted, and ſaid, God ſave the King*, 1 Sam. 10.24.

Or ſecondly, It noteth ſuch a ſhout as is in an Army, where a King in perſon is leader or victor.

Thirdly, The ſhout of a King is amongſt them, becauſe the voice of a King ſhould be as the ſound of a trumpet, or ſome loud inſtrument, to enform and direct his people, as alſo to encourage them.

From all, we ſee this rejoycing is no ordinary joy; It is a high, a triumphant joy, *I will fill thy lips with rejoycing, till thou ſhalt ſing VICTORIA over all thine enemies and calamities.*

ἐξομολογήσεως, i.e. confeſſione laudis & gratiarum actionis pro accepta reſtitutaque fœlicitate.

Further, This alſo is in it, a rejoycing with praiſe: not a bare rejoycing in the bleſſings and deliverances, but a rejoycing in the praiſes of God, who hath given thoſe bleſſings, and wrought thoſe deliverances. The Septuagint tranſlate it by rendring of thanks, or a confeſſion of praiſe, *I will not caſt thee away, till I have filled thy lips with rejoycing*; that is, with my praiſes. Thus *David* prayes (*Pſal.* 71.8.) *Let my mouth be filled with thy praiſe, and with thine honour all the day long.* Praiſe filling the heart fills the mouth; joy as well as ſorrow pent up, ſtifles the Spirit. Hence we may obſerve,

> Firſt, *That as joy is the portion of the people of God, ſo in good time they ſhall receive their portion.*

He will not caſt off a perfect man, till he fill his mouth with joy, and his lips with rejoycing. Joy is their due, and joy they ſhall have. Hereafter they ſhall have their *Maſters joy*; *Enter into your Maſters joy*, will Chriſt ſay at laſt. Now they ſhall have ſuch a joy as befits them, whilſt they are in their Maſters ſervice. And as rejoycing is the portion, ſo the proper portion, the peculiar of godly men. Though laughing, as it is a natural act, is common to all men, yet in the ſence we ſpeak of, laughter is appropriated unto godly and perfect men: *They only can laugh indeed, who have mourned indeed.* A wicked man doth but feign a laugh. *He laughs to thee, and to me, but he doth not laugh to himſelf:* He hath no true laughter, while he laughs. His laughter is madneſs, and proceeds from his ignorance, not from his reaſon. Beſides other marks of difference which ſhall be put between the ſervants of God and their enemies, this is one, *My ſervants ſhall rejoyce, and ye ſhall be aſhamed* (*Iſa.* 65.13.) This joy ariſes two wayes.

Tibi videt & mihi, non ſibi.

Firſt, From the greatneſs of the bleſſing, which they receive for themſelves. We muſt rejoyce in the leaſt mercy, how greatly then in the greateſt? Our joyes take their meaſure by our mercies. When *Sarah* had a Son, ſhe ſaid, *God hath made me to laugh, ſo that all that hear me ſhall laugh with me*, Gen. 21.6. Her mercy in receiving a ſon was ſo great, that it would ſerve a whole world to make merry with. The man that had found his loſt ſheep, *laid it on his ſhoulders, rejoycing* (it was a pleaſant burden to him) *and when he came home, he called together his friends and neighbours, ſaying, Rejoyce with me* (Luke 15.6.) As ſome afflictions are ſo big, that all our own ſor-

row

rows are not large enough to weep and mourn over them: so some blessings are so big, that they call out more then our own affections to rejoyce over them.

Secondly, This overflowing joy arises from the greatness of those judgments, which are poured out upon the enemies of the Saints. The overthrow of *Pharaoh* at the red Sea, of *Jabin* and *Sisera* at the brook *Kishon*, filled all hearts and mouths with laughter, and so shall the overthrow of *Babylon*, Rev. 15.

Thus, when God doth great things for his people, and great things against his enemies, then it is time to rejoyce greatly (*Psal.* 126. 1.) *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we rejoyce*, say the captive Jews in the morning or first dawnings of their deliverance from *Babylon*; and more then so, *Then was our mouth fill'd with laughter, and our tongue with singing.* And there is cause of great rejoycing in those great things, because then God fulfils his promises, and makes his Name glorious in his providences. Then God is greatly honoured, when his people are greatly delivered; then the blasphemies of wicked men are unanswerably confuted, and their mouths for ever stopped. From all these considerations the hearts of the Saints are filled with laughter, and their mouths with rejoycing, in a day when God works great things. At such times joy, and this degree of it, is not only our priviledge, but our duty. When we carry a message of thanks to God, we must not come with unchearful countenances, or sowr faces. It is a comely thing, when our affections keep time and proportion with the dispensations of God: when we cannot sing the songs of *Sion*, or use our harps by the waters of *Babylon*; and when we cannot but sing either in the restoring of *Sion*, or in the ruines of *Babylon*.

Some may object those Texts, *Wo to them that laugh*, &c. (*Luke* 6. 25.) It seems laughter is the portion of wicked men, for wo (we are sure) is their portion. It's true, worldly laughter, a laughter in corn, and wine, and oil, a laughter in riches, and honours, and carnal pleasures, as such, is laughter with a wo annexed. But to laugh in the sence of the goodness of God giving us outward good things, to express our selves joyfully, when God expresses himself graciously, is not only comely, but holy. When Gods heart comes out at his hand, and is seen in his actions, our hearts should come out at our mouths, and be heard in our exultations.

Thus we have seen the effect of the goodness of God upon his own people. See the effect of his justice upon wicked men.

Vers. 22. **They that hate thee shall be cloathed with shame, and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.**

God resists, or will not put forth his hand to evil doers, then follows, *They shall be brought to shame.* Shame is opposite to laughing: he that rejoyceth, usually holds up his head, and cares not who sees him; but he that is ashamed, holds down his head, and endures not to be seen. Some men laugh in their sleeves (as we say) but all men would be ashamed in their sleeves.

שנא *Odio habuit contempsit. Dicitur etiam aliquando per comparationem alterius, quod magis amatur, non quod propriè odio habeatur.* Rab. Dav. in l. Rad.

They that hate thee. The word hath a double signification.

First, It imports the putting forth of bitter hatred, when a man sets himself maliciously against his brother.

Secondly, It is taken comparatively for a lesser and more remiss putting forth of love. He may be said to hate, who wants a due heat and height of love. In that sence *Jacob* was taxed for hating *Leah*, Gen. 29. 31. *When the Lord saw that* Leah *was hated*, &c. Take hatred in the common notion, and then surely *Jacob* was not a man so forgetful of a Husbands duty, as to hate his Wife: the meaning then is only this, *The Lord saw that* Leah *had a less portion of love then* Rachel *had, or less then her conjugal relation called for. Jacob* did not love her with that strength of affection with which he loved *Rachel*. Which exposition is clear, (*vers.* 30.) *and he* (namely *Jacob*) *loved* Rachel *more then* Leah; then *Leah* was loved, yet *Jacob's* loving of *Rachel* more then *Leah*, is called, hating of *Leah*. *Not to love another in that degree we ought, is a degree of hatred.* And in this sence we may take it here; for though such maliciously and professedly set themselves against the righteous are chiefly intended and fitted for this vesture of shame; yet it is cut out also for them, who do not love and esteem the righteous, who do not prize and rejoyce in them, as the beauty and dignity which Christ hath put upon them, invites them to do. These haters *shall be cloathed with shame*; according to the degree of their hatred shall be the degree of their shame.

בשת *à radice* יבוש *Puduit aliquem rei vel facti.* Our English word *abasht* is as near in sound as in sence.

They shall be cloathed with shame. To be ashamed at all is a great punishment; what is it then to be cloathed with shame? To be cloathed with shame is a great punishment, and most proper for those who are proud of their cloathing.

Shame is the fruit of sin. When there was no sin in the world, there was no shame in the world, *The man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.* Innocency knew no shame, and glory shall know none. It is good to be ashamed when we have done evil, but it is best to do no evil whereof to be ashamed. *Shame is a perturbation or trouble of mind, expressed outwardly by holding down the head, or by blushing in the face.* And it ariseth three wayes.

First, From doing somewhat against common light: though every act of evil hath matter of shame in it, yet a man is not naturally ashamed of it, unless it be done against the light of Nature. Not to be ashamed of such sins, is to put out the light of Nature. Such men are grown down into beasts. The impudence of *Jerusalem* is set forth in sinning against the light of Scripture without blushing, *Isa.* 3. 9. *Were they at all ashamed?* Some are so modest, that they are ashamed to hear of, much more to be praised for the good which they have done; Others are so impudent, that they are not ashamed to hear of, no, nor to be reproved for, the evil which they have done, *Were they at all ashamed?* As if he had said, what a boldness or impudence is this people come to; they are not ashamed of those things, which are clearly forbidden in the Word. *A good man is ashamed of any thing he hath done against the light of Scripture. Every man is ashamed of what he doth against the light of Nature.*

Secondly, Shame arises from long delay, or detainments much beyond expectation. When *Moses* staid long in the Mount, *the people were ashamed* (*Exod.* 32. 1.) So *Judg.* 3. 25. when *Eglon* staid long in the inner parlour, the Text saith, his servants, who waited without, *were ashamed.*

Thirdly, Shame ariseth from utter disappointment. If hope deferred causeth shame, then much more hope destroyed. When a man sees his hopes quite cut off, so that he can no way reach the thing he looked for, shame takes hold of him strongly. *David* prayes (*Psal.* 119. 116.) *Uphold me according to thy word, that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my hope*; that is, let me not lose my hope, for then I shall be ashamed; my enemies will rejoyce and hoot at me, where's the word upon which you trusted to be upholden? Read *Isa.* 12. 9. *Psal.* 27. 6. *Psal.* 119. 116. In all which Scriptures we find shame following the total frustration and disappointment of hope.

Evil doers shall be ashamed upon these three grounds. They have done things against common light. They shall stay waiting and gaping long for what they desire. They shall see themselves totally disappointed and defeated in their desires; hence shame shall fill their faces, and they shall be covered with it as with a garment.

Here is more then bare shame waiting upon them, the Text saith, *They shall be cloathed with shame.* To be cloathed is applied both to ornament and dishonour. There are three degrees of expression in Scripture about shame.

First, Barely to be *ashamed*, that's the lowest.

Secondly, To have the face covered with shame; *Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake. Because for thy sake I have born reproach, shame hath covered my face*, (Psal. 69. 6, 7.) The Prophet complains, that his face was covered with shame; his enemies endeavoured to blot and asperse him, they poured contempt and reproaches upon his face, that is, upon his reputation in the world, (to do so, is to cover the face with shame) therefore he prayes, *Let not those*

that wait on thee be confounded for my ſake. Lord, they have covered me with ſhame, but do thou vindicate my reputation and mine honour; let not them that wait on thee be aſhamed for my ſake, becauſe I have had ſhame upon me for thy ſake: that is, let not any be diſcouraged in thy ſervice, through my ſufferings. The Apoſtle feared ſome would faint, becauſe of his tribulations, *Epheſ.* 3. 13.

Indui confuſione eſt Hebraiſmus quo exprimitur omnimoda & undiq; confundens verecundia. Bold. *Veſtimenta dicuntur abominari, quaſi maculam contrahere timentes.*

Thirdly, *To be cloathed with ſhame*, which implies the whole man under a covering of diſgrace. Some are ſo cloathed with ſin, that their very cloathes are aſhamed of them, being unwilling to touch or hide ſuch ſins. *Job* ſpeaks that ſence in *Chap.* 9. (*verſ.* 31.) concerning his own righteouſneſs in juſtification, *If I waſh my ſelf with ſnow water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloathes ſhall abhor me*; that is, if I ſhould ſet my ſelf up in my own righteouſneſs; my own cloaths would be loath to cover ſuch a piece of ſpiritual pride, as that act would witneſs me to be.

To be cloathed with ſhame, notes four things.

First, The extent or abundance of it. To be cloathed with honour, is to have much honour. To be cloathed with humility, is to be very humble (1 *Pet.* 5. 5.) He that is cloathed is covered all over with his cloathing.

Manifeſte confundentur. Aq.

Secondly, The publickneſs of it, that ſhame cannot be hid. A man cannot go abroad but cloathing is ſeen: the filthineſs which lies underneath may be hid, but his cloathing cannot. Their ſhame ſhall cloath them, they ſhall not put their ſhame under their cloaths, their ſhame ſhall be in ſight.

Eſt quaſi præmium peccati, mercedis enim nomine Syndones olim dabantur.

Thirdly, They *ſhall be cloathed with ſhame*, may be underſtood thus, *Shame ſhall be their reward.* They have been doing the buſineſs of Satan, he ſet them a work, now ſee what livery they ſhall have at laſt, into what ſuit the Devil will put them. They ſhall go in a livery of diſhonour. Servants are cloathed by their Maſters; Satan clothes his ſervants, and this is their cloathing, they ſhall be cloathed with ſhame. *Sampſon* was to give thirty change of garments to the *Philiſtines* for a reward, if they could declare his riddle (*Judg.* 14. 12.) Satan gives liveries and garments of ſhame to thoſe who ſtudy out his riddles, and do his drudgery.

Natura pudore tacta ſanguinem ante ſe pro velamento diffundit & obtendit. Macr. *l.* 7. *c.* 11.

Fourthly, If we take the letter of the Hebraiſm, *to be cloathed with ſhame*, implies thus much, that when a man hath done a thing of which he is aſhamed, he (as it were) ſends forth blood into the face, in a buſh, to cover that foul act, he puts out a red garment, or a ſcarlet vail to hide his filthineſs. Thus he is cloathed with ſhame. Modeſty commands nature, and (where it is but honeſtly natur'd) prevails with it to caſt this covering over all uncomlineſs in ſpeech or practice; and though this bluſh appears only in the face, yet the whole body is dipt and dyed with the ſame colour.

Solent qui erubeſcunt manum faciei, quia opprobrium ac dedecus timent, admovere. Bol.

Hence alſo they who are aſhamed, either hold their hands before their faces to cover them, or hold their heads down that they may not be diſcovered. Obſerve,

That which evil men glory in, will be matter of their abaſement.

The Apoſtle ſaith, *They glory in their ſhame* (Phil. 3. 19.) not formally, but materially. No man can glory in any thing under the notion of ſhame, but many glory in that which is in it ſelf ſhameful, and will be their ſhame. The Hebrew expreſſes an Idol, by a word that ſignifies ſhame, or a ſhameful thing (and it is the root of that in the Text) becauſe Idols, firſt or laſt, make their worſhippers aſhamed, *Jer.* 11. 13. *According to the number of thy Cities were thy gods, O* Judah, *ye have ſet up altars to that ſhameful thing.* Idolaters ſhall ſee at laſt how fooliſh they have been in worſhipping a ſtock or a ſtone, in adoring the invention of their own brains, which can do them no good in an evil day: every Idol is a ſhameful thing, becauſe it deceiveth its worſhippers: ſo every ſinful act will be like an Idol, matter of ſhame, becauſe every ſin is a deceit, Iſa. 26. *They ſhall be aſhamed for their envy at my people:* They ſhall ſee their envy againſt the people of God was unreaſonable, groundleſs and fruitleſs, therefore they ſhall be aſhamed; and if they ſhall be aſhamed of their envy againſt the people of God, how ſhall they be aſhamed of their oppoſition and injuries, of their oppreſſion and injuſtice, *Iſa.* 41. 11. *Behold all they that were incenſed againſt thee ſhall be aſhamed.* The Churches enemies glory in their own ſhame, and the Church ſhall glory in the ſhame of her enemies; therefore ſhe is called to behold it, as a piece of her glory. Obſerve further,

בשת *Idolũ cujus pudet cultorem, poſtquã ab eo in periculis deſtitutus, nec adjutus fuerit.*

They that hate thee ſhall be clothed with ſhame, then, wicked men are haters of the righteous.

They are haters of God, therefore they muſt be haters of thoſe who have the Image of God upon them. As he that loves, ſo he that hates him that begets, hates him alſo that is begotten. Natural men are ſuch haters of holineſs, that they hate that which is but the Image, the Idol of holineſs, *hypocriſie*; they cannot endure a man who doth but ſeem religious. It is ſaid of the *Panther*, that he bears ſuch hatred againſt man, that if he ſee but the picture of a man, he will tear it to pieces. Many men have ſuch an hatred againſt true, real goodneſs, that they cannot abide the ſhadow or appearance of it.

And the dwelling place of the wicked ſhall come to nought.

We have met many paſſages to this purpoſe. *Dwelling place*, in the Hebrew, is a Tabernacle, becauſe they were wont to dwell in Tabernacles. And when he ſaith, *His Tabernacle ſhall be brought to nought*, the meaning is, *His whole eſtate ſhall be brought to nought*, not only the walls of his houſe ſhall be overthrown, but all his goods, his riches, his honours, his titles, his children, his relations, whatſoever is dear to him ſhall be *brought to nought*; the Hebrew is, *It ſhall not be*; it ſhall be, as if ſuch a thing had never been in the world. God will at laſt make an utter *conſumption* of wicked men. None who have Tabernacles in the world, ſhall long have a Tabernacle in the world. But the fall of theſe mens Tabernacles ſhall not be according to the condition of mortality only. As *Moſes* ſpeaks of *Corah*, *Dathan*, &c. Theſe men ſhall not die the common death of all men, a remarkable judgement ſhall overtake them. Some take *Tabernacle*, to note their religious duties, their worſhip and ſervice of God, and ſo their ſpiritual eſtate. Wicked men will ſerve God outwardly, they have their Tabernacles as well as the Saints, they pray, and hear, *&c.* But, be it a civil, or be it a religious Tabernacle, down it muſt, all their riches and all their religion ſhall come to nought.

Olim in tentoriis habitabant, unde factum ut tentorium, pro quælibet domo accipiatur. Per domum innuit familiã totam cum omnibus rebus domeſticis. Druſ.

אינגנו *ex verſ. 22. ad verbum, non ipſum, ſubintelligitur eſt, vel erit.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IX. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Then Job anſwered, and ſaid,

I know it is ſo of a truth: but how ſhould man be juſt with God?

If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.

He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength: who hath hardned himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?

IN the former Chapter *Bildad* gave a threefold advice to *Job*.

Firſt, To think aright of the juſtice and judgments of God.

Secondly, To humble himſelf, and ſeek unto God.

Thirdly, (which is implied in both the former) To forbear complaining of his own troubled life, or deſiring the end of it by death.

To theſe three heads of *Bildad's* advice or reproof, *Job* ſhapes his anſwer in *Chap.* 9, 10.

Firſt, He opens his thoughts about, and highly magnifies the Juſtice of God, *verſ.* 21.

Secondly, He renounces his own righteouſneſs, and proves that no man is to be judged by the preſent dealings of God with him, from *verſ.* 12. to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He renews and juſtifies his complaint againſt his life, and his wiſhes for death, by many arguments, in *Chap.* 10.

In moſt of theſe points he anſwers exactly, according to the ſtrict laws and rules of diſputation.

Firſt, Repeating his Opponents argument, and then yielding what was true, denying what was falſe, and diſtinguiſhing about what was doubtful. Which he doth with ſo much acuteneſs and vigour, with ſo much ſtrength and clearneſs both of reaſon and judgment, that one of the Ancients cries out upon the whole matter of his anſwer in theſe Chapters, *O how much Phyloſophy (I may ſay, how much Logick) hath* Job *ſhewed in this reply to the argument of* Bildad!

Quantum verba hæc præ ſe ferunt philoſophiæ. Chryſ.

Bildad's argument ſpeaks to this effect; *God who hath puniſhed thee is juſt, therefore thou art unjuſt.* *Job* in anſwer, grants the antecedent, but denies the conſequent. His grant of the antecedent appears in the two firſt verſes of the Chapter, *I know it is ſo of a truth* (I yield this) *but how ſhould man be juſt with God?* He proves and confirms that God is juſt, in *verſ.* 4. by a double *medium*.

Firſt, From his wiſdom, *He is wiſe in heart.* And

Secondly, From his power, *He is mighty in ſtrength.* What force there is in theſe two Attributes to hold up the juſtice of God, we ſhall ſee afterwards.

The fourth verſe is likewiſe a conceſſion unto the ſecond part of *Bildad's* advice, namely, that *Job* ſhould humble himſelf. As if *Job* had ſaid, *Thou adviſe me to humble my ſelf, and to ſeek unto God, it is moſt becoming I ſhould do ſo, for, he is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength; who hath hardned himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?* There is no ſtanding out againſt God, and therefore I yield, I fall down and abaſe my ſelf before him.

That God is thus powerful and wiſe, he goes on to prove in the following parts of the Chapter to *verſ.* 22. by the enumeration of many particular acts and effects, both of his power and wiſdom.

The other part of his argument, namely, the conſequent, that therefore *Job* was unjuſt and wicked, he denies, and more, refutes it ſtrongly. His negation and refutation begin at *verſ.* 22. *This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it, He deſtroyeth the righteous and the wicked.* As if he had ſaid, *This is no argument that I am a wicked man, becauſe God hath deſtroyed my eſtate, and my children; for God (in this ſence) deſtroyeth both the righteous and the wicked. It cannot be proved that I am wicked, becauſe God hath afflicted me, or, that God hath afflicted me for my wickedneſs: I know another way how to acquit the juſtice of God, and to declare him righteous, though I do not joyn with you in condemning and judging my ſelf (in your notion) unrighteous.*

This is the ſum of his anſwer contained in *Chap.* 9.

In the tenth he renews his complaint, as before in the ſixth, and ſheweth (after he had given God glory under all his ſufferings) what great reaſon he had to be ſenſible under the pain and ſmart of his ſufferings.

Verſ. 1, 2. **Then Job anſwered, and ſaid, I know it is ſo of a truth.**

Thus he grants the antecedent, [*I know it to be ſo of a truth*] or, *truly I know it to be ſo.* The word hath a double force in it. Sometime of a bare, yet ſtrong aſſeveration, and ſometimes of an Oath. *I know it to be ſo of a truth,* I affirm or aver the thing, or truly and indeed, or verily I know the thing to be ſo. As if *Job* had ſaid, this is ſo much a truth, that I dare ſwear it is a truth, *that God is juſt,* I durſt take my oath of it, if I were called to it; I would ſwear for the juſtice of God, above all things in the world. *As we ought to ſwear in truth* (Pſal. 89. 49.) *ſo to affirm a thing to be ſo in truth, is ſwearing.*

אמנם *Aſſeveratio quædam eſt rei ſibi bene exploratæ. Radix* Amen, *fidelem, ſtabilẽ, veracẽ eſſe, unde* Amen.

Further, the word is taken either in way of affirmation, or in way of confirmation. In way of affirmation, it refers to that which is to be ſpoken; ſo frequently in the New Teſtament, *Amen, Amen, verily, verily,* is a vehement affirmation of what was afterwards to be ſpoken, *Verily, verily, I ſay unto you.* But here rather it is a note of confirmation of the truth already ſpoken: The *Syriack* of the New Teſtament uſes it commonly for an affirmation; the *Hebrew* in the Old, for a confirmation.

Amen *duplicem habet ſenſum, 1. Ut ſit affirmatio eorum quæ dicturi ſumus. 2. Ut ſit confirmatio eorũ quæ jam dicta ſunt. Hebraicè innotare ſolet confirmationem. Syriacè in* N. T. *affirmationem.* Bold.

So then, it is here a ſealing to the former truth delivered, both by *Bildad* and *Eliphaz*, about the juſtice of God; *Eliphaz*, in *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 17. and *Bildad*, in *Chap.* 8. *v.* 3. *Doth the Almighty pervert judgment?* No (ſaith *Job*) *I know it of a truth, that he doth not.* And ſo the ſence runs thus.

Bildad, *doeſt thou ſurmiſe, by what I have ſpoken, that I have ill or hard thoughts of the juſtice of God? Did I ever think that juſtice was perverted, becauſe I was afflicted? I acknowledge thou haſt truly ſaid, that God doth not pervert judgment; and I acknowledge thou haſt faithfully counſelled me to ſeek unto God, and make my ſupplication to the Almighty; for alas! who am I that I ſhould contend with God? What am I that I ſhould diſpute it out with him concerning my troubles, and his dealings with me? Or, if I ſhould be ſo raſh, ſo fool-hardy, and adventurous, to attempt ſuch a thing; alas! I could make nothing of it, I could not anſwer him one argument of a thouſand, whereby he might maintain his own juſtice; or to one charge and article of a thouſand, whereby he might impeach mine. I am no match for God. Therefore I yield thee the whole matter, ſo far as concerns the honouring of God in that great attribute of his juſtice, and the duty of weak man in humbling himſelf before that great God. I know it to be ſo of a truth.* Note hence,

> Firſt, *That in all diſputes and controverſies it is a note both of an ingenuous and of an holy heart, to yield as much as without wrong to truth may be yielded unto.*

It is good to agree as far as we can, if we cannot agree in all. We ſhould walk with an adverſary one mile (when it lies in our way) though we cannot walk twain. Aſſoon as *Job* hears a truth, he falleth down before it. He hath not a word to ſpeak againſt the truth of God, though it come

Jobus *veritatis fidiſſimus aſſertor, qui omnia ratione, non affectionis ſenſu, metitur; tam ingenuè fatetur & commendat vera quæ ab impugnatoribus promuntur, quam generoſè falſa depellit, quod hoc præſertim capite liquidò demonſtrat, dum verum duorum diſputatorum aſſertum, non admittit modo, verum elegantiſſimè & deſertiſſimè integro ferè capite amplificat & exornat.* Pined.

from erroneous men. He will be a friend to truth, though brought by them who ſeem'd his enemies. If this law of diſputation were well obſerved, many diſputes would be ſooner ended. As ſome out of love to men, are apt to entertain their very errors; ſo ſome out of hatred to men reject their truths. Errors cannot be really adorned, nor truths ſoiled by thoſe who hold them. Our judgment about both muſt be carried by reaſon, not ſwayed by affection. Willingly to embrace and receive a truth from thoſe, whoſe errors we moſt zealouſly oppoſe, is the due temper of a champion for the truth.

Secondly, *I know it to be ſo of a truth*, ſaith *Job*, Obſerve,

A godly man is a knowing man.

He is eſtabliſhed in truths, eſpecially in great and neceſſary truths, in the vitals and fundamentals of religion, *Job* had been long acquainted with this principle, that God is juſt, and that every man muſt abaſe himſelf before him, how juſt ſoever any man is. Light is the firſt thing which God makes in the new creation of Grace, as it was in the old creation of Nature: He caſts in a beam, a ray into the ſoul, whereby we may diſcern of things that differ. There may be darkneſs in a godly man, but he dwells not in darkneſs: bring a truth to him, and as there is ſomewhat in his heart that anſwers and is a kin to it, ſo that apprehends and makes out his acquaintance with it, often at firſt ſight, alwayes after conſideration, unleſs he be under clouds and temptations. In thoſe caſes we may bring truths to holy men, which they do not *know to be ſo of a truth*, yea, which they may refuſe for errors. But uſually a good man knows truth, having learnt it before, or as having a likeneſs to other truths he knew before.

Thirdly, *I know this to be ſo of a truth* (ſaith *Job*) in the midſt of his pains, in the greateſt troubles of his fleſh, he forgets not to honour God. Hence obſerve,

A gracious heart gives teſtimony to the righteouſneſs of God, though ſeverely chaſtened under the hand of God.

When God deals moſt hardly with the ſoul, or with the body, or with ſoul and body, a holy heart hath not a hard thought of God, *I know it to be ſo of a truth*; He doth not only acknowledge that *God was juſt*, when he puniſhed others, but when he afflicted him. The common argument which the friends of *Job* took up to prove *God* to be juſt, was this: *God* is righteous, for he deals with men according to their deſerts: but *Job* argues thus, *God is righteous*, however he deals with men, and whatſoever thoſe men are, let men be wicked or upright, holy or prophane. When we ſee *God breaking the wicked, and making gall and worm-wood, fire and brimſtone the portion of their cup*; this argues his juſtice, becauſe he hath threatned ſuch with his wrath and vengeance. But the Saints go further, they proceed upon purer and ſublimer principles, maintaining that *God is juſt*, though he afflicts the *juſteſt* and *holieſt* man upon Earth. The righteouſneſs of *God* ſhines forth to them throw the darkeſt ſufferings of righteous men. The righteouſneſs of God is not grounded upon the object about which he dealeth, whether righteous or unrighteous, but upon the act of his own will, yea upon the pleaſure of his own will. His righteouſneſs proceedeth from himſelf, and he is a righteous act, what ever the object be upon which he acts. We need not ſay, *God is juſt*, becauſe he puniſhes the guilty; *for God is juſt, though he afflict the innocent.* We may at once maintain our own innocency, and the *juſtice of God*, while we bleed under his hand, or ſmart under his ſevereſt ſcourges. *I know it to be ſo of a truth*;

But how ſhall man be juſt with God?

Illud cum Deo vel ante Deum erit aliquid ſecundum & judiciale.

Mr. *Broughton* reads, *And how can man be juſt before the Omnipotent?* And ſo the ſence runs more clear, taking the firſt particle for a pure copulative, whereas we read it as a *diſcretive, but how ſhall man be juſt before God?* Namely, in your ſence, as if he had ſaid, you diſcourſe of juſtice under ſuch a notion as renders it impoſſible *for any man to be juſt before God*; in one ſence a man may be righteous before *God*, but in yours no man can. Would you not have a man know himſelf to be juſt, unleſs he know himſelf to be without ſin? If you take juſt, to be the ſame as without in-dwelling ſin, then it is impoſſible for any man to appear juſt before God: but man may be juſt and righteous before God, though he have ſin dwelling in him, and that's my notion of juſtice in this diſpute.

Juſtice is either inherent or imputed. By inherent juſtice no man is juſt before God: according to imputed juſtice, man may be juſt, and is before God. So theſe two propoſitions are reconciled, *No man is juſt before God: every believer is juſt before God.* Our tranſlation uſing the diſcretive, *But*, ſeems to carry this intendment, that no man can be juſt before *God* by inherent juſtice, which the next verſe implies, *For if he contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*

The words taken in this ſence are the ſame with *Chap.* 4. *verſ.* 17. *Shall mortal men be more juſt then God?* There *Eliphaz* ſpeaks comparatively, in a way of exceſs, *more juſt*, or *juſt rather then God:* He cannot exceed God in any thing. Here *Job* ſpeaks comparatively in a way of equality, *How ſhould man be juſt with God?* He cannot compare with God at all. Yet the ſence is the ſame, and the denial of mans perfect inherent righteouſneſs is the ſubject of both. A juſt man comparing with God deprives himſelf of all his juſtice. He is not ſo much as man may be, by aſpiring to be what God is. But I need not ſtay in any further clearing, how man is not juſt before God, or in any obſervations from it, but ſhall refer the Reader back to *Chap.* 4.

Quiſquis ſe authori bonorũ comparat, bono ſe quod acceperat privat, ea ipſa ratione, qua quis ſe componit Deo juſtus eſſe deſinit, quãvis juſtus fuerit. Greg.

Only take this from it, *How ſhall man be juſt with God? With God*; that is looking upon, or comparing himſelf unto God; as if he had ſaid, It will take down all the proud and high thoughts of man, in regard of his own juſtice and righteouſneſs, if he will but caſt his eye upon God, and duly conſider how juſt and righteous God is. Hence obſerve,

The way for us to humble our ſelves for our own ſinfulneſs, is to look up and to conſider the purity and holineſs of God.

If we ſet our ſelves before him, we ſhall ſee how vile and corrupt we are. His fulneſs will convince us abundantly of our emptineſs, his purity will ſhew us our ſpots, and his all-ſufficiency our nothingneſs. If we bring a courſe piece of cloth before a fine, we ſhall ſee what courſe ſtuff it is: if we lay a better in any kind by a worſe, the worſe will appear worſer then before. For the moſt part we who are courſe ſtuff our ſelves, compare our ſelves with thoſe who are as courſe as our ſelves. While ſome men compare themſelves with men, they begin to think they are like God himſelf. A man looking upon his neighbour is juſt before him, or ſees him no better then himſelf, of no purer threed, of no better die in his life then he; I have faults, and ſo have others; I have failings, and ſo have my neighbours; if you charge me with my ſinnings, who is it that is without ſin? As our uſual phraſe is, *If the beſt mans faults were written in his fore-head, it would make him pull his hat over his eyes.* Thus uſually men compare themſelves with men: but if they would look up to God, O how would the thoughts of their hearts fall, and be abaſed before him. The Phariſee could pride himſelf in his compariſons with men (*Luke* 18.) *God be-thanked I am not as other men are, nor as this Publican.* But Phariſee, art thou as God? Pure, and holy, and juſt as he? *Look upwards, and pride will down.* The holy Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* 10. 12.) ſpeaking of thoſe falſe Apoſtles, ſaith, *They meaſuring themſelves by themſelves, and comparing themſelves amongſt themſelves, are not wiſe.* So we may ſay to men in general, while ye take a ſcantling of your own wayes, by your own rules, and meaſure your ſelves by your ſelves, or while ye meaſure man by man, and compare creature with creature, ye are not *wiſe*; while we go this way to work pride will not down. Man hath ſome reaſon to ſay, I am as good as man, I have ſinned, and ſo hath he, ſuch a man hath as many ſins as I. But if we look up to God, we ſhall quickly find that he hath no ſin at all in him, and that we have no goodneſs at all in us. The beſt of Saints muſt not only confeſs, with *Paul*, *I know that in me (that is, in my fleſh) dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. 7. 18. but he muſt confeſs alſo, *I know that in me, even in my ſpirit dwells no good thing, in compariſon of the goodneſs of God.* Though man in regeneration is made *a partaker of the divine nature* (2 Pet. 14.) yet his nature cannot bear the perfections

fections of the divine nature. *How ſhall man be juſt before God?*

Verſ. 3. If he will contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.

This is a confirmation of the former grant. I (ſaith he) acknowledge no man can be juſt, by inherent righteouſneſs before God. For, *If he would contend with him, he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.*

רפץ *Voluit, optavit.*

If he would contend.] The word, *If he would*, is, *If he have a mind, or delight to contend*, if any man takes pleaſure in *contending with God*, he ſhall quickly (as we ſpeak) have his hand full, and his belly full of it.

From this word the Church is called *Hephzibah*, that is, my pleaſure is in her (*Iſa.* 64. 2. & *Pſal.* 16. 3.) *David* profeſſes of the Saints (*Hephzibam*) *my pleaſure*, or, *my delight is in them.* So here, if any one hath a pleaſure, or a delight, or would take upon him to contend with God, or (as the word ſignifies) to chide, to argue and plead with God. The word may be taken either for an angry chiding, or a rational chiding, which is diſputing. The place where the *Iſraelites* did contend or chide with *Moſes*, is called *Meribah*, from this word, *Exod.* 17. 7. And after *Gideon* had pull'd down *Baal's* altar, a great controverſie or contention, a pleading or arguing enſued, therefore he was called *Jerubbaal*, a contender or pleader with *Baal*, Judg. 6. 21.

רוב *In foro & extra litigavit, diſceptavit, cauſam egit, ſeu dixit, etiam jurgavit, de verbali tantum contentione ſeu actione dicitur.* Merc. *Contentio hæc, eſt rationibus, objectionibus, reſponſionibus, argumentationibus cum Deo agere.* Pined.

Now (ſaith *Job*) if a man take delight to contend, plead or argue with the Lord, What will be the iſſue of it? He is like to have a cold pull of it, *He cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand*, poor creature! Before I open that, take this obſervation,

Man naturally loves to be contending.

Some cannot live but in this fire, and in troubled waters, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16. *If any man ſeems to be contentious*, or as the Greek carries it, *lover of victory.* Contentious ſpirits love victory more then truth, *and to overcome more then to teach or be taught.* Beſides the *Verb*, which we (in the Text of the Apoſtle, tranſlate *ſeems*, doth rather ſignifie, *is to be, deſires, or hath a will to be contentious*, yea, boaſts and prides himſelf in it. So the word (δοκῶ) is uſed, *Matth.* 3. 9. & *Gal.* 6. 3. *If a man think himſelf to be ſomething*, &c. That is, if he boaſt and take upon him as if he were ſome great man. Thus ſome glory to be medling and contending in all Queſtions. Yea, though it be upon as unequal terms, as *Jehoaſh* the King of *Iſrael*, by his parable, ſuppoſed *Amaziah* King of *Judah* would War with him, (2 *King.* 14. 9.) *The thiſtle that was in* Lebanon, *ſent to the Cedar that was in* Lebanon, *&c.* Thiſtles will ſometimes challenge Cedars; whom we may counſel as he doth, *tarry at home, why ſhouldſt thou meddle to thy hurt?* It argues folly enough in any man to love *contention with man*, and pride enough *to love contention with men above him.* Then how mad are they both with folly and pride, *who attempt to contend with God?* Whom, as it follows, *They cannot anſwer,*

Vilem hominum conditionem judex contemnet. Polyc. *Tantum non eſt homo, ut Deus eũ ſua reſponſione dignetur.* Vitabl. *Illud non poterit, idem erit quod nolet, vel per tranſpoſitionẽ verborũ,* poterit non reſpondere.

אלף *Pædagogus, dux quod alis præire ſolet, ſicut* Aleph *prima litera reliquas omnes præcedit hinc* Eleph, *mille numerorum princeps.*

One of a thouſand.] A thouſand is a great number, a full number, and therefore it is put for all great numbers. It is a leading number, therefore the word in Hebrew for a thouſand cometh from a *root* which ſignifies to lead, and the *Noun*, a *Duke or a Captain*, who is a chief and a leader of men, *Gen.* 36. *The Dukes of* Edom, or the leaders of *Edom*, As alſo a maſter or teacher, becauſe he goes afore, and is a chief over thoſe he inſtructs. And hence the number *thouſand* in the *Hebrew* hath it's name, becauſe a *thouſand*, is (as it were) a Prince among numbers, a chief number, a Captain number; and is therefore put for all great numbers, or for the greateſt number that can be imagined: to ſay, *One of a thouſand*, is as much as to ſay, *One amongſt all. One* is not a number, it is but the ſeed, principle or beginning of number; a unity hath a ſeminal vertue in it; all numbers are made out of *ones*, but *one* it ſelf is no number. So that to ſay, *one of a thouſand*, is to put the greateſt and the leaſt *number* in oppoſition, it is as much as to ſay, a man cannot anſwer God in any thing that ever he did in the *whole courſe of his life* (2 Pet. 3, 8.) *One day is with the Lord as a thouſand years, and a thouſand years as one day.* When he ſaith a thouſand years, he means *all years*, all time put together, is but as one day to the *Lord.* A day was the firſt diſtinction of time; the firſt perfect time that was created, was a day: now put a thouſand *years* together, *it is but as one day to the Lord*; *All times and one time are all one to him who inhabits eternity.* In *Pſal.* 90. 6. it is, a thouſand years are but as yeſterday, which notes all time paſt, as *Peter* notes, all time to come, is but as one day.

Unitas huic numero oppoſita pro nihilo habetur.

One of a thouſand, referred to a perſon, notes a choice, excellent man, among all men (*Job* 33. 23.) *If there be an interpreter, one among a thouſand*, one choiſe man amongſt many, or amongſt all. He that rightly expounds the Text of a troubled conſcience, and interprets the mind of God to ſuch a ſoul, is a chief, the flower of a thouſand, a man of men. *Chriſt* (Cant. 5. 5.) is called *the chiefeſt of ten thouſand*, the Hebrew is, a Standard bearer, ſuch are choiſe men, elect of the multitude, Chriſt is the elect of all the multitudes in the whole world; bring all Armies of men together, or an Army of man-kind, choſe amongſt them all, and you cannot find ſuch an other as Chriſt is, he is the choice of ten thouſand, that is, the choiſe of *all the thouſands* that are in the world.

He cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.

He cannot anſwer.] Some refer it only to the perſon. *He*, that is, *one man of a thouſand men*, is not able to anſwer God.

Secondly, We may refer it to the matter, to the objections or charges, that ſhall be brought againſt him, he cannot anſwer to one thing of a thouſand. So Mr. *Broughton*, as if he had ſaid, *If God brings many charges*, or layes many articles againſt him, he is not able to ſatisfie God, or give a good account in one.

Thirdly, Some refer it to *God* himſelf, *If he* (that is, man) *ſhould contend with him, he would not anſwer him one of a thouſand*; that is, *God* would not anſwer him one of a thouſand: as if he had ſaid, the matters will be ſo trivial and ſo ſleight, the charges that a man can bring againſt *God*, or the objections he can make, will be ſo eaſie, that the Lord will not vouchſafe to anſwer one word of a thouſand. Some men will plead priviledge to ſome charges, and all their anſwer ſhall be, they may chuſe, or it is at their liberty whether they will anſwer or no. Here *He would not* (referred to *God*) is as much as he need not, he is no way obliged to anſwer, he may claim priviledge. Further, when arguments are poor and empty, a man will ſay in diſpute, *Theſe things are not worth the anſwering*; or of a book, there is not one page that is worth a confutation, it carries its own confutation. Such a ſence may be made out here, *God* will not diſhonour himſelf by contending with ſo weak an adverſary as man, or by anſwering ſuch ſimple arguments.

Rogatus homo in judicio divino, hæſitabit, æſtuabit obmutescet.

But rather (as before) refer it to man, *He cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand*; that is, if *God* come to queſtion man, to lay ſuch and ſuch matters to his *charge*, or object againſt him, *poor creature*, he muſt ſhut his mouth, put up his books, he hath nothing to ſay, he muſt hide his face, *For he cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand.* So in *verſ.* 14. of this Chapter. *How much leſs ſhall I anſwer him, and chuſe out my words to plead with him?* Hence obſerve,

First, *That there is in man a ſpirit ready to contend againſt God himſelf.*

If he contend with him, or, if he plead with him, which ſuppoſes that there is ſuch a principle of pride in the heart of man. The heart of man is very full of quarrels and contentions with man, but fuller of quarrels with God himſelf. The great controverſie between God and man, is, whoſe will ſhall ſtand, Gods will or mans. God directs man one way, and man contendeth he will go another way. There is a natural unanſwerableneſs between the heart of man, and every thing that God doth or ſpeaks; hence it is that man calls God ſo often to anſwer. There is a contention, firſt, about that work of God, the foundation-ſtone of all the works of God, his decrees and counſels. While the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 9. 20.) ſtops ſo much mouths, he ſhews how ready they are to open, *O man, Who art thou that replyeſt againſt God? Thou wilt ſay, wherefore doth he complain?* Thus man begins to contend. But, O man, who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt dare to reply upon God?

Wilt

Wilt thou be venturing to queſtion the righteous God? Muſt he be accountable to thee for what he did before thou hadſt a being?

Secondly, What contentions are there continually about the rules which God gives man to order his life by? Man thinks this is an unreaſonable rule, that's a hard rule, and a third is an unprofitable rule; how many riſe up againſt the Law, to which they ſhould ſubmit, and would ſhift off obedience to the rule, by complaints againſt it? *The carnal mind* (or, *the minding of the fleſh*) *is enmity againſt God, it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be* (Rom. 8. 7.) Words importing higheſt oppoſition, and that, irreconcilable. It is not, it cannot be ſubject; the mind is never ſubject to the Law, till it be changed into the Law. Chriſt ſaith, that one *iota* or tittle of the Law ſhall not paſs, till all be fulfilled; it is as true, that not one *iota* or tittle of the Law can be fulfilled by us, till our carnal minds paſs away. *Paul* found juſt as much ſtubbornneſs and contrariety againſt the will of God remaining in him, as there was of a carnal mind remaining in him (*Rom.* 7.) As man deſires not the knowledge of the will of God (*Job* 21. 14.) and ſecretly wiſhes, that he were ignorant of what he knows, ſo he wiſhes there were no ſuch thing to be known; and that the revealed will of God were leſs by ſo much, as it ſpecially oppoſeth his will.

Thirdly, The conteſt about providence grows as high in the hearts of men, as that about predeſtination to life, or the rule of life. The Saints ſometimes (modeſtly) enter this controverſie, *Let me plead with thee*, ſaith *Jeremy*, Chap. 12. 1. *He* doth it, we ſee, with a great deal of trembling and ſubmiſſion; he ſeems to ask leave before he doth it. Hypocrites contend with God proudly about their own good works (*Iſa.*58.3.) *Wherefore have we faſted, and thou ſeeſt not?* As if they had done ſo well, that God himſelf could not mend it. Carnal men plead with God profanely about his works; as if he had done ſo ill, that they could mend it. *Ye ſay, the way of the Lord is not equal: hear now, O houſe of* Iſrael, *is not my way equal? Are not your wayes unequal?* Ezek. 18. 25. They charged God with ill dealing, becauſe he puniſhed them who did evil. *Wherefore will ye plead with me? ye all have tranſgreſſed againſt me, ſaith the Lord* (Jer. 2. 29.) they began to plead with God about his diſpenſations, as if he had been unrighteous or rigorous; *Wherefore will ye plead with me? I will plead with you, ſaith God*, verſ. 9. God may plead and contend with man, but ſhall man plead and contend with God? Ye have all ſinned and tranſgreſſed againſt me; that's enough to ſtop your mouths; I can anſwer you with one word, *Ye are a company of ſinners*, then plead not with me. *Plead with your mother, plead*, Hoſ. 2. 2. let man plead with man, man with his neighbour. The wit of one man may compare with the wit of another, and their juſtice may hold plea with one another. But neither the juſtice, nor the wit of man, will ſerve him to plead with God. That is a ſecond obſervation,

Man is not able to maintain his cauſe, and hold plea, either againſt the works of God, or for his own.

If he diſpute with God in the Schools, or Fee an advocate to implead him at the bar, he is not able to anſwer him *one of a thouſand* (Iſa. 45. 9.) *Woe be to him that ſtriveth with his maker*; it is this word, *Woe be to him that contendeth with his maker*, for he ſhall not be able to make out one argument, or prove any thing againſt him; ſuch a man is in a ſad condition, wo unto him. *David* prayes, *Pſal.*143.2. *Enter not into judgment with thy ſervant, for in thy ſight ſhall no fleſh living be juſtified*; As if he had ſaid, Lord, if the holieſt and pureſt, if the beſt of men ſhould come and ſtand before thee in judgment, or plead with thee, they could not be juſtified: therefore *David* was ſo far from contending with God, that he deprecates Gods contending with him, enter not into judgment with thy ſervant: ſuch a charge is laid upon *Job* (Chap. 33. 13.) *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? for he giveth not an account of any of his matters.* And if he ſhould condeſcend to give an account, can any man gain by it? The Lord argues ſo convincingly, *That every mouth muſt be ſtopped, and all the world become guilty before God*, Rom. 3. 19. Every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, when God opens his. When God ſpeaks, man hath nothing to ſay againſt him, *Every mouth is ſtopped*, with this one word, *Man is a ſinner.* The Apoſtle points at ſome (*Tit.* 1. 11.) *Whoſe mouths muſt be ſtopped*, he means, with reaſon to convince them that they are in an error. By this one argument, *That all men are ſinners*, God ſtops their mouths for ever.

Thirdly, By way of corollary, we may give you that general truth,

That no man can be juſtified by his works.

If we contend with him, we cannot anſwer him one of a thouſand: He that mixeth but one ſin with a thouſand good actions, cannot be juſtified by his works; how then ſhall he be juſtified by works, who hath not one perfectly good action amongſt a thouſand ſins? Man is not able to anſwer for one thing he doth of a thouſand, no not for one thing he doth of all that he hath done. He that would be juſtified by his works, muſt not have one ill action amongſt all his actions. One flie in the box of ointment corrupts all, one defect makes a ſinner, but many good actions cannot make one righteous: *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our heart* (1 Joh. 3. 20.) Should man contend with his own heart, that will condemn him, his own heart would bring a thouſand witneſſes againſt him ſooner then one for him. *Conſcience is a thouſand witneſſes*; man cannot anſwer before that tribunal; how much leſs can he anſwer God, *Who is greater then all our hearts, and knoweth all things!* That's the argument *Job* goes on with, to prove that man cannot be juſtified before God.

Verſ. 4. **He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardened himſelf againſt him, and hath proſpered?**

Which words are a further illuſtration both of the juſtice of God, and of mans duty to be humbled and abaſed before him.

He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength.

Here is a double proof in theſe words.

A proof, firſt of Gods juſtice; why? *He is wiſe in heart*, therefore he knows how to do right: *He is mighty in ſtrength* or power, therefore he needs not pervert judgment, or do wrong for fear of man. *Fear of a higher power uſually biaſſeth thoſe who are in power.* Here are two Attributes which keep the balances of divine judgment in a due poiſe, *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power*, therefore there is no turning of him out of the path of juſtice. *Integerrimus judex cui nec ſapientia ad judicandũ, nec potentia ad exequendum deeſt.*

Secondly, It is a proof or a confirmation of the other point about which *Bildad* adviſeth *Job*, namely, that he ought to ſeek unto God, and humble himſelf before him, it would be dangerous to contend or conteſt with God. Why? *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power.* As if he had ſaid, Shall ignorant, fooliſh man contend with the wiſe God? Shall weak man contend with the mighty God? Alas! man is no match for God, *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength*, who can enter ſuch a controverſie and proſper in it?

There are two wayes to carry on a controverſie.

Firſt, By wit and policy.

Secondly, By ſtrength and power. If man will take up the former weapon againſt God, if he work by wit, and diſpute againſt God, God will be too hard for him, *For he is wiſe in heart.* If man will ſet his ſhoulders, or take up weapons againſt God, poor creature, what can he do? *The Lord is mighty in ſtrength*; from both we ſee there is no dealing with him.

Theſe two attributes render God at once the moſt dreadful adverſary, and the moſt deſirable friend. It is a hard choice whether to have wit or power in an enemy? And who would not have both wit and power in his friend? *God* is here repreſented under theſe two notions, both meet in him, either of which in an enemy render him dreadful. Will any man enter the liſts, or meddle with an adverſary (who would not rather humble himſelf, and make him his friend?) *Who is wiſe in heart, and mighty in power?* *Dolus an virtus quis in hoſte requiret?*

He is wiſe in heart.] It is ſpoken after the manner of men; the heart natural is a principal organ or part of the body, it is the ſeat of life, thither the ſpirits have their recourſe, there they have one ſpecial ſeat of reſidence; the *Humanitus dictum, cor in Hebræo ſumitur pro judicio & intellectuali potentia, ita homo vel Deus ſapiens corde dicitur, qui præſtat ſapientia.* Pined.

heart

heart is chief in man. To say, *God is wise in heart*, is to say, *He is most wise*, because the heart is the seat of wisdom. As when we say of a man, he is holy in heart, or he is humble in heart, or upright in heart, or he obeys *God* from his heart, we report such a man for exceeding humble, holy, upright, and obedient. So when *God* is said to be wise in heart, it imports that he hath infinite wisdom; his, is not only wisdom in the tongue, or some flashes of wit, but deep, solid, rooted wisdom: He is wise, yea, he is wisdom at heart. A foolish man is without an heart. As an hypocrite hath two hearts, a double heart, an heart and an heart; so a foolish man hath never an heart. Hypocrites will be found at last to have no hearts, they are the greatest fools of all. *Ephraim* (Hos. 7. 11.) is called, *a silly Dove without heart*. Silliness is heartlessness. Therefore in *Chap.* 12. of this Book, *vers.* 3. the heart is put alone for understanding, *I have an heart as well as you* (saith *Job*) we translate it, *I have understanding as well as you*. Heart alone notes wisdom, but a wise heart notes abundance of wisdom. Hence observe,

God is infinitely wise.

He is wise in heart, wisdom it self. The Lord ingrosses all wisdom, and therefore stiled by the Apostle, *God only wise*. (1 Tim. 1. 17.) he is only wise, because all wisdom is his; the creature hath none but what he gives out; he hath it all locked up in his own treasury, and as he dispenseth it, so man receives it.

There is a two fold act of wisdom, and both most eminent in God. The first is, knowledge in the nature of of things. The second is, knowledge how to order and dispose of things. The former is properly called *Science*; and the latter *Prudence*. Where there is much of the former, and a want of the latter, man in that case is like a ship that hath a very large sail, but wants a rudder to order its course, and ballast to poise it. Both these meet in the Lord: he hath (as we may say) a vast sail, infinitely extending to the knowledge of all things: and hath a most exact rudder, and ballast of prudence, to order and to manage all things. The knowledge of some men is too hard for their wisdom, they are not master of their knowledge, though they may be masters in their art. The Lord knows all, and he rules all his knowledge.

And mighty in strength.] It is much for man, to be stiled *strong or mighty*; but *mighty in strength*, is the stile of God. These in construction note the Almightiness, the All-powerfulness, the All-sufficiency of the Lord; he is not only strong or mighty, but mighty in strength.

כוח *Differt à* חיל *quod strenuitatem ad gesta præclara significat, idem quod Gracè δύναμις, quæ se foras exerit in opera.* Merc.

The word which we translate *strength* (referred to man) imports that natural power, and lively vigor which in man is the principle of strength, which nurses and feeds man with continual supplies of activity. The Lord is mighty in this strength, he hath an infinite, an everlasting spring of strength in him, he spends no strength at all, how much soever he uses. His lamp consums not with burning. His strength is ever vigorous, he knows no decayes or faintings, *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary?* (Isa. 40. 28.) As if he had said, where hast thou been bred, that thou seemest to be a stranger to this truth? Man cannot do much, and he faints in doing a little. God who can do all things, never faints, how much soever he doth.

Strength may be considered two wayes. There is Civil strength, and there is Natural strength. Civil strength is authority and power to command. A man is armed and strengthened by Laws and Commissions. These put authority into his hands. The Lord is mighty in his strength, he hath all authority, all command in his hand, not by commission from others, but original from himself. Natural strength executes and exercises the former; a man may have much Civil strength, but if he want Natural strength, to put it in act, he can do little or nothing. As God by his Soveraignty is above all creatures; so by his power he is able to bring all creatures under him, and subdue them to his command. Thus God is *mighty in strength*. He hath a right of authority, by which he may, and an arm of power, by which he can make all stoop to him.

Nexus Stoic.

Hence observe: *The power of God is an infinite power.*

There is nothing too hard for the Lord. *If he will work who shall let it?* Isa. 43. 13. No creature can *supersedeat* or stay the works of God, God can *supersedeat* all creatures; when creatures are in their full carreer, he can let them: *The power of God is as large as his will*; yea, he can do more then he wills. If the power of men were as large as their wills, what work would they quickly make in the world? If infinite strength were not mannaged by infinite wisdom, what a woful condition were we in? Both these are joyned in God. Therefore we can fear no hurt from his power: he can do what he will, but he will do nothing which is hurtful to his people; he will not wrong any creature, much less his servants. The Lord (if I may so speak) is only weak about those things, which proceed from weakness. There are some things which he hath no strength to do, because to do them argues a want of strength: he cannot deny himself, he cannot lie, he cannot do any evil, he cannot sin. These things import impotency, therefore the Lord cannot do them. But whatsoever is for the good of his people, for the glory of his Name, for the executing of justice, for the fulfilling of his counsels, whatsoever is for the making good of promises, for all these the Lord is mighty in strength. Never fear either a defect of power in God, or a defect in mannaging that power. Sometimes power overthrows it self by its own bulk and greatness; but mighty strength ordered with equal wisdom, is dreadful to enemies, and comfortable to friends. *A rude rout, an undigested Chaos of men, though very great, never did any great thing.* But suppose a very numerous Army of men, and every man in that Army having as much wisdom as would fit a General to lead and command them all, what could stand before them? Thus it is with God (and how admirable is the union and marriage of these two together!) he hath all power and all wisdom. Every degree of power in God is acted with a sutable degree of wisdom; therefore there can be no miscariage.

Vis consilii expers mole ruit sua.

Note further, how this Attribute runs through all the Attributes of God, *He is mighty in strength*; he is mighty also in truth, mighty in love, mighty in mercy, mighty in faithfulness; a mighty strength is in whatsoever God is.

Again, Take this general concerning all the Attributes of God, when it is said, *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength*, &c. These are not qualities in God, they are in men. Wisdom is to them an accident, and so is strength, whether civil strength or natural, it may be severed from them, and they still keep their being; but the wisdom of God is the wise God, and the power of God is the powerful God, and the knowledge of God is the knowing God. These Attributes are not accidents, but his essence; not qualities, but his nature.

From both these Attributes laid together, *Job* draws down his great conclusion, which he puts by way of question,

Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?

Shew me the man: Having described the Lord in his wisdom and power, he chalengeth all the world, and sends defiance to all creatures in heaven and in earth, to meet with this God. As if he had said, *Friends, Do ye think I have any thought to contend with God? No, I know not one who hath accepted this chalenge, or hardened himself against God and prospered. If my own conscience would not, yet their harms who have attempted it, might warn me from such presumption.*

Hardened himself.] Hardening, under a natural consideration, comes by withdrawing the moisture out of any substance, whence the parts of it are condensed, grow stiff and unyielding to the touch: So Philosophers define it. That is hard which doth not easily submit to impressions from without.

קשה *Indurare aut obdurescere. Metaphorice à tactu ad alios sensus transfertur, & denotat crudum, difficile, quod durat difficile.*

In a moral sence, to harden, is to settle the spirit, or immoveably to resolve upon the doing or not doing of a thing; when a man doth purposely resolve and resolvedly purpose to carry on a design, he hardeneth himself to do it. The word is used both in a good sence, and

Durum est quod in se per superficiem non credit. Arist. l. 4. Met. c. 4. *Durities est qualitas densas & bene compactas habens partes, difficulter cedens tactui.* Arist. l. 2. de Gener.

in an ill sence. In a good sence, when a man is resolute to do the will of God, that is, when he grows so resolved, that he will not be removed by hopes, or fears, by promises, or by threats; When a man hath not a soft, sequacious spirit, to be swayed this way and that way, but stands fixed and firm like a rock, such a resolute spirit in goodness, is a spirit hardened to do good.

When the Lord had told *Ezekiel* that he should find the ears of *Israel* lock'd against his messages, and their hearts hardened; he gives him assurance of a sutable ability to deal even with such (*Ezek.* 3. 8, 9.) *Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy fore-head strong against their fore-heads, as an adamant harder then flint have I made thy fore-head.* The words seem to carry an allusion to Bulls or Rams, who use to run head against head, when they are enraged against one another. And so the sence is, as if the Lord had said, *I know this people will be mad at thee, and run upon thee like furious beasts; but trouble not thy self, I will (through my grace) make thee as strong in declaring my will, as they (through pride and unbelief) are strong in opposing it. Thou needest not fear to encounter these Bulls and Rams: holiness shall make thy fore-head, that is, thy purpose to perform my command, harder, then wickedness shall make their fore-heads, that is, their purposes to disobey what I command.* As to be hardened in sin is worse then sinning, so to be hardened in doing good, is better then doing good. Sin and grace act most like themselves, when they act against all opposition. *As an adamant have I made thy face.* The adamant is insuperable, as the notation of the word imports. A heart thus hardened in holiness overcomes all the fears and terrors which the world can raise against it. Heroical *Luther* was thus hardened, when he said, he would go to *Worms*, though the tiles upon every house in that City were match'd with a like number of Devils, ready to resist him and the truth of Christ. But usually hardening is taken in an ill sence: and so to harden the spirit, noteth,

Adamas ejus creditur esse naturæ, ut domet omnia neq; ipse ab ulla vi sive arte domari possit. Unde nomen traxit; ἄδαμας, sonat indomitũ. Sanct. *in Ezek.* 3.

Obdurare cor est Deũ loquentem nolle audire, contemnere, pervicaciter resistere, nec se ejus verbo subjicere velle. Par. *in Heb.* 3. *v.* 8.

First, A resolving to sin, whatsoever God saith or doth. To sin against the word and works of God, that's hardening of the heart against God: when a man will go on in his way, though a threat be sounding in his ears, and a judgment appear terribly before his eyes; such a man is hardened indeed, he is grown valiant and couragious in wickedness.

Secondly, A man hardens himself against God, when he speaks stoutly against God: the hardness of the heart appears in the tongue (*Mal.* 3. 13.) *Your words have been stout against me.* Stout words are a sign of stout spirits. Our language is usually the image of our minds. So the word of the Text is used (2 *Sam.* 19. 43.) *The words of the men of* Judah *were fiercer then the words of the men of* Israel: Their words were harder then the words of the men of *Israel*; they spake more resolutely and manly. When a man sets himself to speak boldly against God, the wayes or the works of God, he hardens himself against God fearfully.

Thirdly, We harden our selves against God, when we are displeased with what God doth; that man makes a bold adventure, who dares pass but an unpleasing thought against the wayes or works of God.

Fourthly, Not to be satisfied with what God doth is a degree of hardening our selves against God: discontents and unquietnesses upon our spirits are oppositions.

Fifthly, Not to give *God* glory in what he doth, hath somewhat in it of hardening of our selves against *God*.

And lastly, He that will not give *God* glory in what he commands, is in a degree hardened against *God*. We may see what it is to harden our selves against *God* by the opposite of it (*Prov.* 28. 14.) *Blessed is the man that feareth always, but he that hardeneth himself shall fall into mischief.* Hardness is contrary to holy fear; holy fear is a disposition of heart, ready to yield to God in every thing: A man thus fearing, quickly takes impressions of the word, will, and works of *God*; and therefore whosoever doth not comply with God in holy submission to his will, hardens himself in part against *God*.

That which is here chiefly meant is, the grosser act of hardness, when men either speak or go on in their way acting against God; let him say what he will, his word stops them not; or do what he will, his works stop them not. They are like the adamant, the hammer of the Word makes no impression upon hard hearts, but recoyls back again upon him that strikes with it. More distinctly; this is either a sensible hardness of heart, of which the Church complains (*Isa.* 63. 15.) *Wherefore hast thou hardened our hearts?* &c. Or an insensible hardness, which in some arises from ignorance, in others from malice and obstinacy.

Further, We read of Gods hardening mans heart, and sometimes of mans hardening his own heart. There is a three-fold hardness of heart.

First, Natural, which is the common stock of all men; we receive the stone of a hard heart by descent; every man comes into the world hardened against God.

Secondly, There is an acquired hardness of heart. Men harden themselves, and add to their former hardness. *He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty*, Job 15. 25. There is a growth in sin, as well as a growth in grace; many acts make hardness more habitual (2 *Chron.* 36. 13.) *He stiffened his neck, and hardened his heart from turning unto the Lord. I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck*, Deut. 31. 27.

Thirdly, There is a judiciary hardness of heart, an hard heart inflicted by God, as a judge, When men will harden their hearts against God, he agrees it, their hearts shall be hard, he will take away all the means which should soften and moisten them, he will not give them any help to make them pliable to his will, or he will not bless it to them. He will speak to his Prophets, and they shall make their hearts fat (that is, senseless) and their ears heavy, that is, heedless under all they speak, *Isa.* 6. 10. Thus also God hardened the heart of *Pharaoh*, and of the *Ægyptians*, by the ministery of *Moses* and *Aaron*.

So then we having hardness of heart by nature, do by custom acquire a farther hardness, and the Lord in wrath inflicteth hardness, then the sinner is pertinacious in sinning. All these put together make him irrecoverably sinful, *His neck is an iron sinew, and his brow brass*, Isa. 48. 4. Observe,

First, *There is an active hardness of heart, or man hardens his own heart.*

Exod. 5. We read of *Pharaoh* hardening his heart, before the Lord hardened it; *Who is the Lord* (saith he) *that I should let* Israel *go?* Here was *Pharaoh* hardening his heart, and steeling his spirit against the command of God; God sent him a command to let *Israel* go; he replies, *Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord*; who is this that takes upon him to command me? Am not I King of *Ægypt*? I know no Peer, much less Superior Lord. It was true indeed, poor creature! he did not know the Lord; *Pharaoh* spake right in that, *I know not the Lord*; if he had, he would never have said, I will not let *Israel* go, he would have let all go at his command, had he known who the Lord was that commanded. Thus *Sennacherib* (2 Chron. 32. 14.) blasphemes by his messengers, *Who was there among all the gods of those Nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand?* These are hard words against God, and hardening words to man.

Every act of sin hardens the heart of man, but the heat of blasphemy at once shews and puts it into the extremity of hardness. Man hardens himself against God, four wayes especially.

First, Upon presumption of mercy; many do evil, because they hear God is good; they turn his grace into wantonness, and are without all fear of the Lord, because there is mercy so much with the Lord.

Secondly, The patience of God, or his delayes of judgement, harden others; because God is slow to strike, they are swift to sin. If the sound of judgment be not at the heels of sin, they conclude, there is no such danger in sin; *Solomon* observed this (*Eccl.* 8. 11.) *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*, or, *it is full in them to do evil.* They have not some velleities and propensions, some motions and inclinations, some queries and debates about it, but the matter (upon this ground) is fully stated and determined, they are so full of it, that they have no room in their hearts for better thoughts or counsels: the sum of all is, they are hardned and resolved to do evil.

Thirdly, Gross ignorance hardens many. First, Ignorance of themselves. And secondly, Ignorance of God: he that knows not what he ought to do, cares not much what he doth. None are so venturous as they, who know

know not their danger. *Pharaoh* said, *I know not the Lord*; he knew not the Lord, nor himself, therefore he ran on blind-fold, and desperately hardened himself against the Lord.

Fourthly, Hardness of heart in sinning is contracted from the multitude of those who sin. They think none shall suffer for that which so many do. The Law of *Moses* said, *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil* (Exod. 23. 2.) There is a special restraint upon it, because man is so easily led by many. The heart is ready to flatter it self into an opinion, that God will not be very angry when a practice is grown common; this is the course of the world, this is the way of most men; therefore surely no great danger in it. And examples harden chiefly upon three considerations.

Ego hominem non facerem. Ter.

First, If great ones go that way; the Heathen brings in a young man, who hearing of the adulteries and wickednesses of the gods, said, what! Do they so, *and shall I stick at it?*

Secondly, If some wise and learned men go that way, ignorant and unlearned men conclude they may.

Thirdly, If any godly men, such as make more then ordinary profession, do such things, then who may not? The failings of the Saints are a countenance to wicked men in their follies. They are apt to follow the dark side of the cloud, and to approve those in what they do ill, whom they scorn in what they do well. They imitate their falls and sins, whose repentance they never think of imitating.

How many harden their hearts by their doing what is evil, whose hearts have been broken because they did evil; from the sin which a holy man commits against his purpose and resolution, many purpose and resolve to commit it.

Upon these, and the like grounds, the heart of man is hardened against God. Take a brief of the degrees of this hardness; see by what steps the heart rises so high in sinning. Man doth not grow hard at once, much less hardest; but when once he begins to harden himself, where he shall make an end he knows not.

The first step is, the taking time and leave to meditate upon sin, and roll it up and down in the thoughts. A hard heart lets vain thoughts dwell in it. A holy heart would not let them lodge with it.

A second step is, some tastes of pleasure and delight in sin. It proves a sweet morsel under his tongue. As the heart grows more delighted in sin, so more hardened in sin. Nothing should be so bitter as sin in the act; for nothing would be so bitter as sin in the issue: but when the act is pleasant, the issue is seldom suspected.

Improbè Neptunum accusat, qui iterum naufragium facit.

The third step is, custom in sinning. It argues great boldness to venture often. One said of him that had escaped danger at sea, if you go again, you have no reason to complain, though you be wrack'd. Mariners are fearful of storms at first, but through custom they play with them. When a man comes off once safe from sin, he will venture again, and so often, till at last he thinks there is scarce any venture at all in sin. He grows bold and hardy.

By the fourth step of hardness he comes to defend and maintain his sin. He hath spoken so long in his heart against the word, which forbiddeth him to sin, that now he can speak against it with his tongue. He hath a plea ot an argument to make the evil he doth, good. He appears a Patron, an Advocate for sin, who was before but a practiser of it.

Fifthly, The hard heart grows angry and passionate with those who give advice against sin; he is resolved; and a man that is resolved in his way, is angry if he be desired to remove out of his way. He that is resolved to sleep, loves not to be awakened; A touch or a jog from him that sits by, provokes him, he prayes to be let alone. We should love the man, while we hate and reprove his sin. But he that loves his sin, will hate his reprovers.

Sixthly, Hard hearts grow too hard for the Word, they are *Sermon-proof*; they can sit under the Preacher, and hear from day to day, but nothing touches them. A man in armour fee's not the stroak of a sword, much less the smart of a rod. This hardness of heart is a steel armour to the heart; it makes the man past feeling, till he be past healing. *Some being often reproved, harden their hearts* (Prov. 29. 1.) till their hearts are too hard for all reproofs.

And then seventhly, The heart is so hard, that the sword of affliction doth not pierce it; the man is *judgment-proof*: let God strike him in his person or estate, let God set the world afire about his ears, yet on he goes. He is like the man of whom *Solomon* speaks (*Prov.* 23. 34.) who lies sleeping in a storm upon the top of the Mast.

Eighthly, The hard heart sits down in the chair of the scorner; he derides the Word, and mocks at the Judgments of God. When *Lot* spake to his Sons-in-Law about fire and brimstone ready to fall upon *Sodom* and consume it, the Text saith, *He seemed as one that mocked unto his Sons-in-Law.* What, tell us of judgments? of fire descending from Heaven? *When the Skie falls, we shall have Larks.*

Lastly, The hard heart gets up to the Tribunal of the persecutor, and from scorner, *commences opposer of good men*, and *of the good wayes of God*; he will do them the uttermost mischief he can, who would do him all the good they can. *Get thee from me* (saith *Pharaoh* to *Moses*, Exod. 10. 28.) *Take heed to thy self; see my face no more; for in the day that thou seest my face, thou shalt die.* *Pharaoh's* hard heart spake hard words, and was preparing to give hard blows; he had only so much of honour and ingenuity left, as to warn the Prophet to avoid the blow: Which yet is more then hardness of heart leaves to all. Many an hard heart uses the hand before the tongue; and instead of saying to his reprover, See my face no more lest thou die, calls him before his face that he may die, or seek his death behind his back, and lies in wait for revenge. And here *hardness of heart is at hardest: It is now a fit cushion for Satan; he sits softest upon this stone.* The Devil is never so much pleased, as when man is most hardened; the seed of his temptations takes root and prospers best in this stonie ground.

But shall man prosper too? Shall any man thrive or make gain by hardening himself against God? Shall he come off with honour or with profit? *Job* answereth, *Who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?* Which may be resolved into this negative proposition, *No man ever hardened himself against God, and prospered.*

The Hebrew thus, *Hath any man hardened himself against God, and had peace?* Mr. *Broughton* renders near it; *Hath any man hardened himself against God, and found quietness?* To have peace or quietness, and to prosper, are the same in the language of the *Jews*, and in a hundred Texts of the Old Testament.

שָׁלֵם *Et pacatus fuit, vel in pace abiit* (i. e.) *feliciter & bene cesserit.* Merc.

We may understand *Job* either of these three wayes.

First, No pertinacious hard-hearted man could ever glory that he got the better or the day of God, and so prospered into a peace by war; that's a way of prosperity in which he shall never tread. *Gideon* told the men of *Pennel*, *When I come again in peace*, that is, when I have conquered, and return prosperous, then, &c. No man ever conquered God, and so returned in peace. Peace was never the Trophy of a war with him.

Nemo pertinax gloriari potest quod post consecutam victoriam pace potitus fuerit. Pin.

Secondly, *Who ever hardened himself against God, and prospered?* That is, Did ever any man so weary out God by lengthening this war, that God was (as it were) forced at last to offer him terms of peace? So it happens sometimes with men, with Nations and Kingdoms: They not getting peace by victory, but being spent and tired out with war, begin to think of treating. Did ever any one put the Lord to offer a treaty with articles of peace, to save himself from further trouble? They who have not strength enough to overcome, may yet have power enough to vex and weary their adversary. But God can neither be vanquished by force, nor vext with our policies into a peace with man.

Nemo cum Deo pugnas, sic eum assidua pugna fatigavit, ut pacem accipiat ultro à Deo oblatã. Idem.

Thirdly, Others give this sence, Who ever held out, or was able to persist in a war against the Lord? The wicked shall not stand before God in the day of judgment, much less in the day of battel; *Who would set the briars and thorns against me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together* (Isa. 27. 4.) The most steely and flinty spirits in the world can no more stand before God, then briars and thorns can before a flaming fire. The Lord soon breaks and destroyes all opposing power. And so there is a figure in the words; for man doth not only not prosper, but he is undone and crusht for ever, by contending with God. Shall man prosper in a war with God? No, it shall end in his own ruine and utter destruction.

Ab æquipollente pacem aliquis pugnando obtinere potest, licet enim eum superare non possit, tamen assiduitate pugnæ eum fatigat, ut ad pacem reducatur. Aquin.

Quis permansit aut perstitit, unquam? Sep.

Hence

Hence observe, That, *Nothing can be got but blows by contending with God.*

Hoc est signum evidēs, quod fortitudo Dei omnem humanam fortitudinem excedit, quia nullus cum eo pacem habere potest resistendo, sed solum humiliter obediendo. Aqr. *Virtus* Galilæe.

The greatest Monarchs in the world have at one time or other found their matches, but the great God never found his match. Pharaoh contended with him, but did he prosper in it? You see what became of him at last, he was drowned in the Red Sea. *Julian* contended with Christ, he scoffed at him (he came up to the highest degrees, he sate in the chair of the scorner, and in the tribunal of the persecutor) but what got he at last? When he was wounded, and threw up his blood toward heaven, said he not, *O Galilean, thou hast overcome*; I acknowledge thy power, whose name and truth I have opposed. Christ, whom he had derided, and against whom he hardned himself into scorns and scoffs, was too hard for him. All that harden themselves against God shall be worsted. *Gather your selves together, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces* (Isa. 8. 9.) Gather your selves together; against whom? Gather your selves together against the people of God, and ye shall be broken in pieces; why? *Emanuel*, the Lord is with us. If no man can prosper by hardning himself against the people of God, because the Lord is with them, how shall any man prosper by hardning himself immediately *against God?* If *Emanuel* will not let any prosper against his people, certainly he will not let any prosper against himself. Therefore (*Prov.* 28. 24.) *Solomon* layes it down directly; *He that hardneth his heart, shall fall into mischief*; & (*Prov.* 29. 1.) *He shall be destroyed, and that without remedie*; there is no help for it, all the world cannot save him. A hard heart is it self the sorest of all judgments, and it brings all judgments upon us. *A hard heart treasureth up wrath against the day of wrath* (Rom. 2. 5.) *As a hard heart is Satans treasury for sin, so it is Gods treasury for wrath.* The walls of that *fiery Tophet* are built up with these stones, with their hard hearts who turn themselves into stones against the Lord.

Then take heed of hardning your selves against God. You know the counsel which *Gamaliel* gave, *Acts* 5. 39. *Refrain from these men, and let them alone*, &c. (See how tremblingly he speaks) *lest you be found even to fight against God*; as if he had said, take heed what you do, it is the most dreadful thing in the world to contend with God; he speaks as of a thing he would not have them come near, or be in the remotest tendency to. Man will not meddle with a mortal man if he be too hard for him; how should we tremble to meddle or contend with the immortal God? Christ, *Luke* 14. warning his Disciples to *consider aforehand what it is to be his Disciples*, gives them an instance of a King: *What King* (saith he) *going to make war against another King, sitteth not down first and consulteth, whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?* Now I say to you (if any such be here) that have hearts steeled or hardned against God, who challenge God the field, and send defiance to heaven, O sit down, sit down, consider whether you with ten thousand are able to meet God with his twenty thousand, that's great odds, half in half; but consider whether one single, simple man can stand against his twenty thousand; whether a man of no strength can stand against infinite strength; whether you who have no wisdom, are able to stand against him who is of infinite wisdom. Can ignorance contend with knowledge, folly with wisdom, weakness with strength, an earthen vessel with an iron rod? O the boldness and madness of men, who will hazard themselves upon such disadvantages. *He is wise in heart, and mighty in power: who hath hardened himself against him, and hath prospered?*

And as God is so powerful, that no wicked man in the world can mend himself by contending with him; so neither can any of his own people. If they harden themselves against God, they shall not prosper. To harden the heart against God, is not only the sin of a *Pharaoh*, of a *Senacherib*, and of a *Julian*, but possibly it may be the sin of a *Believer*, the sin of a *Saint*. And therefore the Apostle, *Heb.* 3. gives them caution, *Take heed lest any of your hearts be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*; and whose heart soever is hardned against God, that man, good or bad, shall not prosper, or have peace in it. It is mercy that God will not give his own peace, or let them thrive in sin. Grace prospers not, when the heart is hardned; joy prospers not, nor comfort, nor strength, when the heart is hardned; the whole state and stock of a *Believer* is impaired, when his heart is hardned.

And if Saints harden their heart against God, God (in a sence) will harden his heart against them, that is, he will not appear tender-hearted and compassionate towards them in reference to present comforts; he will harden himself to afflict and chasten, when they harden themselves to sin and provoke.

When God afflicts his people, he hardens his heart against them; and it is seldom that he hardneth his heart against them, till they harden their hearts against him. And the truth is, if they who are dearest to him, do harden their hearts against him, if they quarrel and contend with him, if they rise up against his commands, or neglect his will, he will make their hearts submit, or he will make their hearts ake, and break their bones. If they harden their hearts against his fear, they shall feel his rod upon their backs and spirits too. Which of the Saints *ever hardened himself against God, and hath prospered?* No man, whether holy or prophane, righteous or wicked, could ever glory of a conquest over God, or triumph after a war with him?

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Which removeth the mountains, and they know not; which overturneth them in his anger.
Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.
Which commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the Stars.
Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.
Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.
Which doth great things past finding out, yea, and wonders without number.

JOB having in general asserted the power and wisdom of God (he must have infinite power and wisdom against whom no man ever prospered by contending.) Having, I say, asserted this in general, he descends to make a particular proof of it; as if he had said, I will not only give you this argument, that God is mighty in strength, because no man could ever harden his heart against him, and prosper; he hath foyl'd all that ever medled with him; but besides, I will give you particular instances of it, and you shall see that the Lord hath done such things, as speak him mighty in strength, and prove him as powerful as I have reported. These particulars are reported in *vers.* 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. all closed with a triumphant Elogie in the tenth, *Which doth great things past finding out; yea, wonders without number.*

Subjicit Job confirmationem proximè præcedentis. Syllogismi ab effectis potentiæ & sapientiæ Dei, quæ amplissima oratione describit. Mer.

The Argument may be thus formed,

He is infinite in power and wisdom who removeth mountains, and shakes the earth, who commands the Sun, who spreads out the heavens, and disposeth of the stars in the firmament.

But the Lord doth all these things, he removeth mountains, he shakes the earth, he commandeth the Sun, &c.

Therefore he is mighty in power, and infinite in wisdom.

The first part of this argument is here implied. The Assumption, or the *Minor* is proved in *vers.* 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. by so many instances. Here then is an evident demonstration of the power of God, from visible things, from acts apparent to the eye; as if he had said, *If you have not faith to believe that God is infinite in power, let your senses teach it you; for he removeth mountains, and they know it not; he overturneth them in his anger*, &c.

He removeth mountains.

That's the first instance. The word which we translate *to remove*, signifies to wax old and strong, because things

עתק *Senescere, quia quæ sic invetterascunt fortiora & robustiora cum tempore solent evadere, ideo idem verbum significat roborari.*

as they grow in age, grow in strength. There is a declining age, and an encreasing age. Things very old impair, and things growing older, encrease in strength; we have the word in that sence (*Job* 21. 2.) *Wherefore do the wicked become old? yea, they are mighty in power*; he putteth these two together, growing old and mighty in power. The *Septuagint* render, *Who maketh the mountains wax old*, because *that which waxeth old is ready to vanish away* (Heb. 8. 13.) or to be removed and taken away, as the Ceremonial Law was, of which the Apostle speaks in that place.

Ὁ παλαιῶν beg. Sept.

And because growing old implies a kind of motion, therefore the word also signifies motion, even local motion, a moving from, or out of a place, *Gen.* 12. 4. *Abraham departed*; removed from the place where he was. This local motion is either natural, or violent; of this latter understand the Text, *Which removeth the mountains.*

The mountains.

There are Natural mountains, and Metaphorical or Figurative mountains; it is an act of the mighty power of God to remove either.

Some understand this of Metaphorical or Figurative mountains, and so mountains are great men, men of eminency, or of pre-eminency, the Kings and Princes of the world. The Chaldee is expres for this sence, *He removeth Kings who are as strong and high as mountains.* For as God hath ordered the superficies of the earth, and made some parts of it plain, others mountains, some vallies, and some hills; so he hath disposed of men; some men stand as upon level ground, men of an ordinary condition; other are as the low vallies, men of a poor condition; others are as high mountains, over-topping and over-looking the rest. The word is used in this Metaphorical sence, *Isa.* 41. 15. *I will make thee* (saith the Lord to the Prophet) *a new threshing instrument having teeth*: And what shall this new threshing instrument do? *Thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.* Here is a Prophet sent with a flail or threshing instrument, and his business is to thresh the mountains, and to beat the hills; the meaning is, thou shalt destroy the great ones of the world, the hills, the mountains, those that think themselves impregnable or inaccessible. But how could the Prophet thresh these mountains, and what was his flail? *Gideon* (Judg. 8. 7.) threatens the men of *Succoth*, that he will *tear or thresh their flesh with the thorns of the wilderness, and with briars.* And *Damascus* is threatned, because *they threshed* Gilead *with threshing instruments of iron*, *Amos* 1. 3. That is, they put them to extreamest tortures. Our Prophet could not thus torture men. His threshing instrument having iron teeth, was only his tongue, the instrument of speech; with this he beat those proud mountains to dust, that is, he declared they should be beaten and destroyed. Of such a mountain, the Lord by his Prophet speaks (*Jer.* 51. 25.) *Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth. Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and will roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain.* This mountain was the proud state of *Babylon*, which was opposite to the Church of God, this *devouring mountain* shall at last be a *devoured mountain*, devoured by fire, therefore he calls it a *burnt mountain.* Thus (*Zech.* 4. 7.) *Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain.* The Prophet is assured that all the power and strength which opposed it self against the reformation and re-edification of *Jerusalem*, should be laid level with the ground. So we may interpret (*Psal.* 144. 5.) *He toucheth the mountains, and they smoke*; the meaning is, when God doth but lay his hand upon great men, upon the mightiest of the world, he makes them smoke or fume, which some understand of their anger, they are presently in a passion, if God do but touch them. Or we may understand it of their consumption. A *smoaking mountain* will soon be a *burnt mountain.* In our Language, to make a man smoke, is a proverbial, for destroying or subduing.

Chaldeus *per montes intelligit reges*; Qui loco movet reges fortes, ut mōtes. *Targ.*

Per montes intelligit reges, qui sicut montes firmitate & robore persistant. Rab. Dav. *in Ps.* 144. 5.

And besides, there are mountains (in this figurative sence) within us, as well as without us. The soul hath a mountain in it self, and it is an act of the great power of God, yea, of an higher and greater power of God, to remove inward, then it is to remove outward mountains, *Isa.* 40. 4. The Prophet fore-shewing the coming of Christ, and the sending of the Baptist to prepare his way, tells us, *Every mountain and hill shall be made low.* Christ did not throw down the outward power of men, who withstood him; he let *Herod* and *Pilate* prevail: but mountains and hills of sin and unbelief in the soul, which made his passage into them impassible, he overthrew. These mountains of high, proud thoughts, the Apostle describes (2 *Cor.* 10. 14.) *Casting down imaginations, and every high thing, and bringing into captivity every thought* (every mountainous thought) *to the obedience of Christ.*

These are Metaphorical mountains, the power of sinful men without us, and the power of sin, the pride of our own hearts within us. It is a mighty work of God to remove these mountains.

But these are not proper to the Text, for the instances which follow, being all given in natural things, shew, that those here intended, are natural mountains.

Taking mountains for earthly, material mountains, it is doubted how the Lord removes them.

There are different opinions about the point. Some understand it of a natural motion. Philosophers disputing about mountains and hills, conclude, that they are subject to generation and corruption; by the addition of many parts they are generated, that is, kneaded or gathered together, and become one huge heap of earth; and by the detraction, falling and crumbling off, or taking away of these parts, they are removed again. Thus we may expound that (*Job* 14. 18.) *And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought.*

Montes natura sua generabiles sunt & corruptibiles, additione partium generantur, & detractione partium corrumpuntur. Aq. & Cajet.

Minime mirandum est, si quas terræ partes quæ nunc habitantur, olim mare occupabat, & quæ nunc pelagus sunt, olim habitabantur, sic campos & montes par est invicem commutari. Strab. *l.* 17.

Yet this cannot be the meaning of *Job* here. For though we grant that Doctrine of the Philosophers, that there is a generation of mountains, and so a corruption of them; yet that corruption is so insensible, that it cannot be put among those works of God which raise up the name of his glorious power. *That which falls not under observation, cannot cause admiration. Slow and imperceptible motions make small impressions, either upon the fancy or understanding.*

Divina potentia in tā longa & segni montium remotiones non se præbet valde mirabilē, cum removere sit qui eam rem videat. Pined.

That here spoken of, is quick and violent, and by its easie representation to the eye, causeth wonder and astonishment in the beholders.

And so it imports a removing them by some violent motion.

Thus the Lord is able to remove, and hath removed mountains, sometimes by earthquakes; sometimes by storms and tempests; sometime those mighty bulwarks are battered with thunder-balls discharged from the clouds (*Psal.* 97. 5.) *The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord.* Hills melt down when he appears as a consuming fire (*Psal.* 104. 32.) *He looks upon the earth, and it trembleth, and he toucheth the hills, and they smoke.* Those rockie mountains are as ready to take fire, as tinder or touch-wood, if but a spark of Gods anger fall upon them. God by a cast of his eye (as we may speak) can cast the earth into an ague-fit, he makes it shake, and more, tremble with a look; he by a touch of his mighty arm, hurls mountains which way he pleaseth, as a man doth a Tennis-ball. We read (*Isa.* 64. 1.) how earnestly the Prophet prayes, *O that thou wouldest rent the heavens and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence*; where he is conceived to allude to Gods coming down upon Mount *Sinai* at the giving of the Law, *Exod.* 19. which is said *to melt from before the Lord God of Israel*, Judg. 5. 3. Some understand it of *that day* of Christ, when he shall come to judge the world; others, of that day when Christ came in the flesh to save the world; then the mountains were levelled according to the preaching of the Baptist; but rather the Prophet being affected with the calamitous condition, which he foresaw the Jews falling into, intreats the Lord to put forth himself in some notable works of his providence, which should as clearly manifest his presence as if they saw the heavens (speaking as of solid bodies) renting, and God visibly coming down; then, those difficulties which lay in the way of their deliverance, and looked like huge mountains of Iron or of Adamant, would presently dissolve like wax, or ice before the Sun or fire. The Prophet

Micah describes the effects of Gods power in the same stile (*chap.* 1. 3, 4.) *Behold, the Lord cometh forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth, and the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, and as the waters which are powred down a steep place.* So, to remove mountains, is used proverbially, *Job* 18. 4. *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, or shall the rock be removed out of his place?* that is, shall God work wonders for thee? or, God will alter the course of nature as soon as the course of his providence. To say God can remove mountains, is as much as to say, he hath power to do what he will; and the reason is, because mountains are exceeding great and weighty bodies; mountains are firmly setled: now, to remove a thing which is mighty in bulk, and strongly founded, is an argument of greatest strength. The stability of the Church is compared to the stability of mountains, *Psal.* 125. 1. *They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but standeth fast for ever.* The righteousnes of God is compared to a great mountain (*Psal.* 36. 6.) because his righteousnes is firm and unmoveable; *Thy righteousnes is like the great mountains*, or the mountains of God. And (*Ps.* 46. 2.) the doing of the greatest things, and the making of the greatest changes that possibly can happen in any Nation, or in the whole world, are expresst by the removing of mountains; *Though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea, yet will we not fear*, &c. That is, things which carry the greatest impossibility to be done, or which are seldomest done, shall be done before we will do this. As men when they would shew how far they are from submitting to such a thing, say, We will die first, *&c.* So here, Who! we fear? No, mountains shall be removed first. He breaths out the highest confidence of the Church, in the lowest, not only of her present, but possible dangers. As faith can represent to us better things then any we enjoy, to raise our joy; so it can represent to us worse things (and put us harder cases) then any we feel, and yet carry us above fear. A faith removing mountains, is put for the strongest faith; *Though I had all faith, so that I could remove mountains* (1 Cor. 13. 2.) that is, though I had the strongest faith, the faith of miracles. When Christ (*Mat.* 21. 21.) would shew to the utmost what faith can do, he saith, *If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the Sea, and it shall be done.* As if he had said, if you have faith, you may do the greatest things imaginable or desirable; ye shall remove mountains. A mountain is immoveable by the meer power of a creature. Faith takes that in hand, because faith acts the power of the Creator. And as the faith of man removing mountains, notes a faith of miracles; so the power of God removing mountains, notes a miraculous power.

Ex quo & hoc loco nō absurdè colligitur fuisse proverbiū ad significādum maximam soliq; Deo convenientem potentiam. Bold.

Isa. 54. 10. *The mountains.*

So then, taking this speech either for the removing of natural mountains, or taking it proverbially, as it noteth the doing of the greatest things, and putting forth of the greatest power, it proveth the point which *Job* hath here in hand, *viz.* That *God is mighty in strength*; why? He is able to remove mountains. Hence observe,

> First, That, *The Lord, if he pleaseth, can alter and remove the parts of the earth, and change the frame and fabrick of nature.*

He that made the mountains unmoveable to us, can himself remove them. The Histories and Records of former times tell us how God hath miraculously tossed mountains out of their places. *Josephus* in his ninth Book of Antiquities, *cap.* 11. mentions the removing of a mountain; and *Pliny* in the eighth Book of his Natural History, *cap.* 30. A latter writer reports, that in *Burgundy*, in the year 1230. There were mountains seen moving, which overthrew many houses, to the great terrour of all the Inhabitants of those Countries. *Josephus* also reports the like done by an Earthquake. And another tells us of Mount *Ossa* joyned to *Olympus* by an earthquake. So that take it in the letter, the Lord is able to remove mountains.

Mons in Burgundia à proximo monte dehiscens, valleſque proximas coactas multa agricularū millia oppressit, &c. Uvern. *in fasciculo.* Josephus, *Ant. l. 9. c. 12 Vide* Senec. *l. 5. c. 15.* & *l. 6. c. 15.* Nat. Quest. *Plin.* Nat. Hist. *l. 8. c. 38. Cum in agro Mutinensi montes duo inter se concurrebant crepitu maximo assultantes*, &c. *Eo concursu villæ omnes illisæ sunt*, &c.

It should make us fear before the Lord, and give him glory, while we remember that even the outward frame of the world is subject to sudden changes; there is no mountain, no rock, but the little finger of God can remove or pull it down. As *David* spake of his Metaphorical mountain, his great outward estate, *Lord, thou hast made it stand strong, yet thou didst hide away thy face, and I was troubled*, *Psal.* 30. 6. His mountain began to shake, and became a very molehil, useless to him, when God was displeased. If the Lord withdraw himself from our civil mountains, we are troubled, and if he touch the natural mountains, they are froubled. *Our mountains will skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs* (Psal. 104. 4.) *when he is displeased.*

> Secondly observe, That, *The power of God is made visible to us in the changes which he works in the creature, as well as in the constitution of the creature.*

The power of God made the mountains and created the hills; the same power removes mountains, and turns them upside down. *It argues as great a power to destroy the world, as to settle the world.* As the Apostle shews what divinity the *Gentiles* might have learned in that great Book of the worlds creation (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The invisible things of him from the Creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* So we may say on the other side, *The invisible things of him from the confusions which are in the world, are clearly seen; or, they may be understood by the things which are removed and changed: in these you may read his eternal power and Godhead.* When God breaks the Laws and course of nature, he shews his power as well as when he setled the laws and course of nature. He shews his power when he lets the Sea out of his place to overflow the earth, as well as when he bounded the Sea that it shall not overflow the earth. Some things are with far less power destroyed then made, removed then setled; but no power can destroy the world, but that which made it, or suddenly remove a mountain, but that which setled it. The power of God must be acknowledged in altering, as well as in ordering the natural course or constitution of the creature.

And if we look to the change of Metaphorical Mountains, it is a truth, an illustrious truth, that the Lord displayes his mighty power in removing and overturning the great estates and establishments of Men and Kingdoms. When God removes the Mountain of our peace, of our riches, the Mountain of outward prosperity, and of civil power, it becomes us to say, *He is mighty in power* who doth all these things.

God hath given great tokens and testimonies of his power in this. How many Mountains, *great Mountains*, men who were Mountains, and things which stood like Mountains; how many (I say) of these hath the Lord removed? The power of God and the faith of his people have wrought such Miracles, *He removeth the Mountains.*

And they know it not.

They.] Who? Who or what is the antecedent to this *They?* Are the Mountains? So some understand it; and then the word [know,] or the *act of knowing* is by a figure ascribed (as many times in Scripture, to creatures *without reason*, so) to *creatures without life*, Psal. 58. 1. *Before your pots can feel the thorns*; the Hebrew is, *Before your pots can understand or know the thorns*, that is, before they are sensible of the heat of the fire to make them boil, *&c.* An act of sense, and is ascribed to *pots*, which are things insensible.

Nec sciunt, sc. *montes, tribuitur res inanimatæ sensus.* Merc.

Puto esse modum loquendi indeterminatum, cui supplendum est subjectum homines. Bol. Vatablus *suppositum verbi ne scierent, ita supp et, nec agnoscunt* (sc. *homines imperiti*) *quis subvertit eos furore suo.*

But others take the antecedent to be *man*; *He removeth the mountains, and they know it not*, that is, men know it not. So Mr. *Broughton* translates, *He removeth the mountains, that men cannot mark how he hath removed them out of their place, in his anger.*

Supposing men to be the antecedent, there is yet a difference about the interpretation. *Men*, that is, say some, unskilful men, ignorant men, they know not the meaning of this, they cannot give a reason why or how mountains are removed; if God doth it, *they know it not.* Others restrain it to men inhabiting the mountains, they were secure, and thought their dwellings so safe, that God removed their mountain before they dreamed of, much less feared any such thing; they had no thought that God would remove

Locus sive ab arte, sive à natura munitus, reddit hominēs ab omni bellorū aut ruinæ suspitione securos. San.

move their mountain. Places strongly fortified, either by Art or Nature, make men secure, and dangers unsuspected. The deluge in *Noah*'s time, prevailed over the highest mountains; but his sinful posterity hoped to make an artificial mountain, wherein they might even dare a second deluge. *Come, let us build us a City and a Tower, whose top may reach to heaven*, Gen. 11.4. And then (except the stars and firmament be flouded) we shall be dry, how much or how long soever it rains. Such towring thoughts as these, were (surely) laid in the foundation of that intended Tower.

Take the Text either of natural or of figurative mountains; and to remove them, so, that man knows it not, may have a double meaning.

First, *That it is done with great speed.*

Secondly, *That it is done with great secrecy.*

God is able to do great things in a little time, in so little time, that men shall not know he is doing them, till they are done. He can do great things secretly, so secretly, that the way of their dispatch shall not be visible to the eye, or open to the understanding of man, till they are dispatch'd.

Again, this clause [**And they know it not.**] notes not only the security of men before the hand of God is upon them, but their stupidity, while it is upon them. So *Prov.* 23.35. *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not*; the Hebrew is, *and I knew it not.* Hence observe,

The works and judgments of God, are often unsuspected and unobserved by men.

He removeth mountains, even their mountains, and they know it not.

'Tis true in reference to natural, but especially to civil mountains. The rich, the mighty are cast down from their seats, or their seats are cast down before they saw any hand touching them. The whore of *Babylon*, and mother of fornications, who sits upon *seven mountains* (Rev. 17.9.) saith in her heart, *I sit a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow* (Revel. 18.7.) *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine*, &c. (*ver.*8.) If her plagues come in one day, she (doubtless) thought not of them a day before. *Babylons seven mountains* shall be removed, she not knowing it; and as *Babylons* mountains shall be removed, when she shall not know, that is, suspect it; so, which is more strange, *Jerusalems* mountain was removed, and she did not know, that is, perceive it. The Prophets are express (*Isa.* 42.25.) *Therefore he hath poured upon him* (namely, *Jacob* or *Israel*) *the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel, and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.* They were unobservant of those terrible things the Lord did among them. Some little anger passes often without notice, but here was the *fury of anger*; some sleight skirmishes make no great noise, but here was *the strength of battel*; and not some few drops of both these, but either of them poured upon him, by whole bucket fulls, and these buckets of burning fury set him on fire, and that not in some one corner or out-house, but round about, *yet he knew it not.* Which is expounded in the next words, *It burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*

The Prophet *Hosea* (Chap. 7.9.) speaks as much of *Jerusalem*, under the name of *Ephraim*; *Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not.* Strangers devour his strength, that is, according to the language of *Job*, the mountains wherein his strength did consist, were devoured and overthrown by strangers, and yet he knew it not, he did not observe the hand of God in the hand of man against him. *Gray hairs are here and there upon him*; gray hairs are a great change; gray hairs note the most discernable change of a mans life. There are two states of a man, easily distinguished, youth, and old-age, and gray hairs make the most visible distinction between these two; so that to say, *Gray hairs are upon him*, is to say there is such a change upon his estate, as is between a young man and an old man, and yet he knows, he observes it not. Of all things a man is most apt to take notice of his own natural gray hairs; and many are so troubled at the first sight of them (because they tell us we begin to be old) that they will pick them out: but such is the sensleſness of many about the dealings of God with them, that when great changes are upon them, *changes like that of youth into old-age*, they are not affected with it; *providential or judiciary gray hairs, are not often known.*

Surely many of these *gray hairs* are upon us at this day: it will be sad, if *England* be like *Ephraim*, and know it not. It is worse, *not to know we have gray hairs, then to have them.* The one is but *our affliction, the other is our sin. Gray hairs are upon us*, strangers have devoured our strength: If we know not what God hath done, he can quickly do enough to make himself known. *They who will not see the hand of God, when it is lifted up* (that they may be humbled) *shall see it and be ashamed*, Isa. 26.11. If the removing and shaking of our mountains do not awaken us, the overturning shall: That's the next act of divine power in this noble description.

And overturneth them in his anger.

The word signifies to *overturn a thing, so, as to change the form and fashion of it, yea, to bring it to nothing*; not only to remove a thing out of its place, but to take away the *very being* of it, and to remove it out of the world. He not only turns mountains into mole-hils, but into plains, yea, into pits, they shall not be mountains any longer, nor any thing like a mountain.

הפך *Vertit, subvertit, significat versionem, vel in nihilum, vel in formam, aut qualitatem alium, vel in locū alium.*

It is much to remove a mountain, and set it in another place: but more to crumble it in a moment all to dust, that you shall not find a piece or a clod of it. The Prophet threatens the obstinate *Jews* in such a language, *Isa.* 30.13, 14. *Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddainly at an instant, and he shall break it as the breaking of the potters vessel*, &c. *So that there shall not be found in the bursting of it, a sheard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.*

He overturneth them in his anger.] *Anger in man is a mixt affection made up chiefly of these two ingredients; sorrow and revenge.* Some call *anger* the boiling of the blood about the heart, or the boiling of the heart in blood; the fumes whereof rise so fast into the brain, that anger sometimes dislodges reason, and is therefore called by others a *short madness.*

Ira furor brevis.

The word in the Text signifies the *Nostrils*; and the Scripture frequently applies that to anger, because anger is seen and made visible in the *nostrils.* Quick breathing is a sign of *anger.* *God* is without parts and passions, he is not angry as man: but is said to be angry when he doth like man in his anger. The Lord is not moved or stirred by anger; but he is angry, when he makes motions and stirrings in the *creature*; he lets out the effects of anger, but himself hath not the affections, much less the *perturbation of anger.* Hence observe,

אף *Ira, inde transfertur ad nasum, qui est instrumentum iræ, & in quo ira præcipuè apparet. Fames & mordacitas in nasum coniciant.* Plaut.

That the troubles and confusions which are in the creature, are tokens and effects of the anger of God.

As the setling and establishment of the creature, is an effect or sign of his goodness, or, as these tell us, that God is pleased; so when the Lord hurls the *creature* this way and that way, when he tosses it up and down, as if he cared not how, this is an argument of his anger; when *Moses* came down from the Mount, and saw what the people of *Israel* had done, how they had made a golden calf and poluted themselves with idols, such a passion of anger came upon him, that he threw the Tables of the Law out of his hand, and brake them. So, when the Lord would signifie his displeasure, he throws the *creature out of his hand, and breaks man against man, Nation against Nation (as a potters vessel) one against another.* The comfort and well-being of the *creature*, consists in this, that God holds it in his hand; if he do but let it go out of his hand, it perishes, much more when he casts it with violence out of his hand. The Prophet (*Hab.* 3.8.) describing the great confusions which God made in the world, questions thus, *Was thine anger against the Rivers? Was thy wrath against the Sea, that that thou didst ride upon thine horses, and thy chariots of salvation?* God being angry with the enemies of his people, made strange work amongst them; *Rather then his people shall not be delivered, the world shall be confounded. Was the*

Lord angry with the Sea? When he compelled the Rivers to change their courſes, and diſcover the bottom of their channels, as in the paſſage of his *Iſrael* through the red Sea? No, God was not angry with the Sea, but with *Pharaoh* and his hoſt, with the oppreſſors and troublers of his *Iſrael*; and when he was thus angry, he check'd the courſe of nature and turned things upſide-down. When *David* was in a diſtreſs, and his enemies encompaſt him round about: what then? *Then the earth ſhook and trembled, the foundations of the hills were moved and were ſhaken, becauſe he was wroth* (Pſal. 18.7.) That, God might reſcue *David* out of the hand of trouble, he troubled the foundations of the earth; he made the world ſhake, and Kingdoms tremble, that his *David* might be ſetled upon his throne. The Lord threatneth (*Hag.* 2.6.) that he *will ſhake the heaven and the earth, the ſea and the dry land*; he will move all creatures, why ſo? He ſhakes them for the ſetling of his *Zion* (verſ. 7.) *I will ſhake all Nations, and the deſire of all Nations ſhall come, and I will fill this houſe with glory, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* When the Lord comes againſt the ſuperſtition, and idolatry, and profaneneſs, and wickedneſſes of the world in anger, no wonder if Kingdoms ſhake: yea, he therefore ſhakes Kingdoms, that he may eſtabliſh *Jeruſalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that ſhall not be taken down, not one of the ſtakes thereof ſhall ever be removed, neither ſhall any of the cords thereof be broken,* Iſa. 33.20. We are waiting when God will ſhake *Babylon*, and in his anger overturn the ſeven mountains thereof; *Babylon* is built upon mountains, upon ſeven mountains, to note the ſtrength and power of it, yet the Lord will remove *Babylon* out of her place, and overturn thoſe mountains in the fierceneſs of his anger, and in jealouſie poured out, *Then every Iſland ſhall flee away, and the mountains ſhall not be found,* Rev. 16.20. That is, the remoteſt and ſtrongeſt places which owned and maintained *Babylon*, ſhall either be converted or confounded; they ſhall appear no more under that ſpiritual notion, though in a natural and civil they do remain. *That which is not as it was, is ſpoken of, as if it were not: A great change in our condition, is called a change of our very being.* The anger of God overturns things, as if it did annihilate them. *Job* goes on.

Tanta extitit divinæ iræ vis pro Davide contra hoſtes defendendo, ut videbatur orbem invertere, omnia miſcere, &c. Pined.

Verſ. 6. **Which ſhakes the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.**

This is a ſecond inſtance, but in higher expreſſions of the ſame power of God.

Which ſhakes the earth out of her place.

He had ſaid before, God removes mountains. Mountains are great bulky bodies, but no mountain ſo great as the *Globe* of the whole earth. Now (ſaith he) the Lord doth not only ſhake mountains, ſome great parts of the earth, but if he pleaſeth he can take up the whole earth, and throw it out of its place, as a man would take up a little ball, and throw it into the air, *He ſhakes the earth out of her place.*

ὁ σείων τὴν ὑπερκειμένην ἐν σεισμοῖς, i.e. *terrâ univerſâ.* Sept.

The word which we tranſlate to *Shake*, ſignifies a violent motion of the mind, cauſed either by fear (*Deut.* 2.25.) or grief (2 *Sam.* 18.33.) We read of a trembling heart from both (*Deut.* 28.25.) It is alſo applied to civil ſhakings and commotions by the troubleſom ſpirits of men, (*Prov.* 30.21.) *For three things the earth is diſquieted.* And to unnatural ſhakings of the earth by the power of God, (2 *Sam.* 22.8, &c.) So in the Text.

רגז *Non ſignificat motum naturalem, ſed commotionẽ quandã ex metu, trepidationẽ, tremorem.*

Some expound this of a natural motion. Thoſe men have (ſurely) a motion and turning in their brains, who tell us that there is a continued motion of the earth, that it turns and never ſtands ſtill; they would ground the motion of the earth upon this Scripture, tranſlating thus, *Which moveth the earth in her place.* But the Text tells us, that the earth hath pillars, and not wheels. Pillars are made for reſt, not for motion.

Didacus aſtunica putat hunc locũ illuſtrari poſſe ex ſententia Pythagoricorũ exiſtimantiũ terram moveri naturâ ſua. Copern.

Further, This Text ſpeaks of it, as of an act of Gods anger, therefore no ordinary act appointed in nature; and the word notes a violent motion, not a natural. But we need not ſtand to refute this motion. As when ſome denied all motion, a Philoſopher to prove it, roſe up and walked: So when any affirm or give reaſon for this motion, we may ſhew their ſenſes that the earth ſtands.

This ſhaking then is extraordinary, the Lord who made the earth firm upon pillars, can make the earth move, as if it went on wheels.

This he doth, firſt, by earth-quakes, theſe ſhake the earth (as it were) out of her place, and make it tremble. Hiſtories are full, and many mens experiences can give inſtances of ſuch terrible ſhakings of the earth. This earth-quake is not meant here, for there is a reaſon in nature, for that Philoſophers diſpute much about it, and tell us, when there is a ſtrong vapour included or impriſoned in the bowels of the earth, that vapour ſeeking vent maketh a combuſtion there, and ſo the earth ſhakes. This, indeed, ſhews the mighty power of God, but it is in a natural way; whereas the Text ſeems to imply ſomewhat more, ſomewhat beyond the learning of Philoſophers and Naturaliſts.

Beſides, the Text ſaith, *He ſhaketh the earth* [out] *of her place.*

Whereas an earthquake ſhakes the earth in her place, and cauſes it to tremble upon the pillars thereof.

But did God ever ſhake the earth out of her place? We muſt underſtand the Text conditionally. We have not any inſtance that the Lord hath actually done ſo, but this ſuppoſition may be put. *The Lord can remove mountains and ſhake the earth*, not only in, but out of her place. We find ſuch conditional expreſſions often put in *Scripture*, not as if the things ever had been, or ever ſhould be done, but if the Lord will, he is able to do them (*Amos* 9.5.) *The Lord God of hoſts is he that toucheth the land, and it ſhall melt*; that is, *if the Lord do but touch the land, he can melt it.* As the three children caſt into a fiery fornace, had not ſo much as a garment, or a thread about them touched with it, becauſe the Lord forbad the fire to burn: So, if the Lord bid a ſpark but touch us, it ſhall melt and conſume us, as if we were caſt into, and continued in a fiery fornace. As a word made, ſo a touch ſhall mar the world, when God will; yet he hath not done thus unto this day. So in the Text, *He ſhakes the earth out of her place*, imports what God can, not what he hath or will do. Note from it,

Terrificam capitis concuſſit terque quaterq; Cæſariem cũ qua terram mare ſidera movit. Ovid. *Met.*

That the Lord is able to do greater things, then ever he actually hath done.

He hath not put the *earth out of her place*, the *earth* is where it was, but he can diſplace it. God hath never acted any of his attributes to the height, for they are infinite; he never acted power ſo high, but he is able *to act it higher*: He hath never acted mercy in pardoning ſo far, but he is able to act it further; a greater ſinner then ever yet was pardoned, may be pardoned. A greater enemy then ever was overcome, may be overcome. He hath run with foot-men, and they have not wearied him, and he is able to contend with horſes: in a land of peace he was never wearied, and he knows how to wade through the ſwelling of *Jordan*. It is comfortable to conſider, that the Lord cannot only do the ſame things again, which he hath done, but he hath never done to the utmoſt of what he is able to do: he can out-do all that he hath done, as much as the ſhaking of the whole earth out of her place, is more then to remove a mountain, yea, or a *mole-hill* of earth.

And the pillars thereof tremble.

We have *the pillars of Heaven*, Chap. 26.11. here of the Earth.

עמדי *Columnæ erectæ à ſtando dictæ.*

The word in the original ſignifies to ſtand upright, to be erect, becauſe pillars do ſo. There are two ſorts of pillars, upon which there is a different interpretation of the word.

There are, firſt, *Supporting pillars.* And

Secondly, *Supported pillars.* Or, there are *pillars for ornament*; and *pillars for ſtrength.* We ſet up pillars or pinacles upon the tops of great buildings for ornament, and they are ſupported pillars. We may call mountains ſuch pillars: for as when ſome ſtately Palace is built, great pillars or pinacles are ſet upon the towers and battlements: ſo the Lord having framed the earth, hath ſet up mountains, as great pillars for the adorning of it. *He ſhaketh the earth, and the pillars thereof tremble*; it is true of theſe upper pillars, the mountains they tremble. But I take it rather to be meant of ſupporting pillars, under-pillars, which bear the frame above, and are as the baſes or under-props of the earth (*Pſal.* 105.) *Who laid the foundation of the earth?* the earth hath a foundation: the Hebrew is, *He hath founded the earth upon her baſis*, alluding to a building. Moſt

buildings

buildings have their foundations in the earth; but ſome upon it, being raiſed upon pillars. So *Hannah* (1 Sam. 2.8.) in her Song, *The pillars of the earth are the Lords, and he hath ſet the world upon them.*

What are theſe pillars that the Lord hath ſet the world upon? Or where ſhall we find them?

David ſhews us (*Pſal.* 24.1,2.) *The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein: for he hath founded it upon the Seas, and eſtabliſhed it upon the floods.* It is ſtrange that pillars of liquid water ſhould bear up the maſſie earth; the earth ſeems rather to be the pillar and foundation of the waters. Some interpret (*ſuper*) which ſignifies *upon*, by *prope* or *juxta*, *near*; he hath founded it upon the ſeas, that is, he hath founded it by or near the ſeas. But take it in the letter, and it is a truth; for the Sea is as much the pillar of the earth, as the earth is the pillar of the Sea; earth and ſea being a globe and round, the ſea is as much under the earth, as the earth is under the ſea. Thus the pillars of the earth are waters; *And the earth is eſtabliſhed upon the floods.*

Further, If you would know what theſe pillars are, hear what *Job* ſaith (*chap.* 26.7.) Where he aſſures us that God *hangeth the earth upon nothing.* We are not to think that the Lord in framing and building the earth, did firſt ſet up pillars, and then ſet the earth upon them; for the earth hangeth as a ball in the midſt of the air, without any pillars under it. Hence *Job*'s Philoſophy teaches us, *That he hangeth the earth upon nothing*; there are no material or viſible pillars to ſuſtain it.

What is then the pillar of the earth? What is it that ſupports and bears it up? *The real pillar of the earth it is the power of God.* But the power of God cannot tremble, how then doth he ſay, *When he ſhaketh the earth, the pillars thereof tremble?*

Terræ columnæ infimas terræ partes ſignificant, quæ reliquam terræ molem impoſitam ſuſtinent; hæc ſunt veluti fundamenta & fulcra terræ.

In this place therefore we may expound the pillars of the earth for the lower parts of the earth, and ſo, though the whole globe of the earth taken together, be neither higher nor lower, yet in the parts of it from any point, ſome are higher, and ſome are lower, ſome above, and ſome beneath; upon what *ſuperficies* ſoever we are, the under parts thereof are (to us) the pillars of the earth. So the meaning is, *He ſhaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble*; that is, he ſhaketh it ſo terribly, that if it had any outward viſible pillars, thoſe pillars muſt need tremble.

Quo pacto terra firma & immota conſiſtit? quidnã pro vehiculo habet? cujus rei adminiculo ſulcitur? rationi nihil occurrit cui innitatur, ſi divinam voluntatem exceperis. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 34. *Suis librata ponderibus fixa manet.*

In this we may obſerve the great power of God in upholding the earth. We ſee what the pillars of the earth are; the ſuppoſed pillars are no other then the lower parts of the earth, and the true pillar of the earth is no other then the power of God: There are no other buttreſſes or pillars upon which the earth is ſet, or by which it is ſuſtained: This huge weight of the whole earth and ſeas is born up by the thin air. Is not this an argument of the mighty power of God, that the air which is a body ſo weak, that if you throw a feather up into it, it will not ſtay there, but deſcend, yet the whole maſs or globe of earth and waters hang there? God poyſeth it meerly by its own weight; *for he weighed the mountains in ſcales, and the hills in balances*, Iſa. 40.12. He upholds all things by the word of his power; *and hath built this great Caſtle in the Air.* Could we enter into the ſecrets of nature, and ſet our faith awork by our ſenſes, about theſe things, we ſhould be raiſed above all fears in the greateſt difficulties. If we ſaw but a bullet, or a piece of lead of a pound, yea, of a penny weight, lifted up and hang in the air without any thing to ſupport it, we would conclude it a miracle. What think you, when all the lead and iron, and braſs, and ſtone that is in the world, hang in the air without any viſible ſtay?

I find ſome interpreting this clauſe as the former, in a figurative ſence, *He ſhaketh the earth*, that is, States, Kingdoms and Common-wealths; *And the pillars thereof tremble*, that is, they who ſeemed to be their ſtrongeſt ſupporters tremble and ſhake. This is a truth, and a profitable one for our meditation. To clear this;

First, We find the earth in Scripture often put for States and Kingdoms (*Iſa.* 24.20.) *The earth ſhall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and ſhall be removed like a cottage, and the tranſgreſſion thereof ſhall be heavy upon it, and it ſhall fall, and not riſe again.* The earth ſhall do this: what earth? He doth not mean the natural earth upon which men tread, but the people who tread upon the earth, or that Common-wealth wherein people are united and governed, theſe ſhall reel to and fro, and be removed like a cottage: As if he had ſaid, you thought your ſtate and Kingdom was ſetled like a ſtrong Caſtle, but I will take it down as a man takes down a little cottage, raddled only with a few ſticks and reeds. Or the meaning of it is, your Commonwealth that hath been founded by the wiſdom of ſo many Lawgivers, and is eſtabliſhed in ſo much riches and power, ſhall be removed as a poor cottage, through which every puff of wind finds a paſſage. The ſtrongeſt Kingdoms and Bulwarks of the earth are but as thatcht cottages when God takes them in hand. *Fundavit legibus urbes.*

Secondly, Pillars are often taken in a political ſence, *Pſal.* 75.3. *The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are diſſolved.* How comes it then to paſs that they are not utterly deſtroyed? It follows, *I bear up the pillars of it*, that is, I maintain Governors and Magiſtrates, ſome in places of power and authority, by whom ſhaking, tottering Kingdoms are upheld.

Further, There are *Church-pillars* as well as *State-pillars*; men of eminency in knowledge and learning, in parts and piety; theſe are pillars of the Church of God. So the Apoſtle calls *James* and *Peter*, Gal. 2.9. As the Church it ſelf is *the pillar of truth*, ſo ſome particular members are *pillars of truth*, bearing it up and holding it forth, as pillars do the Laws or Edicts of Princes and Commonwealths. As theſe pillars are of Gods ſetting up, ſo of Gods bearing up. In great ſhakings of the earth, Common-wealth-pillars tremble, and Church-pillars tremble; yea, they would fall, did not the Lord ſuſtain them with his hand. Οἱ δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι

From all, learn the inſtability of the creature. If that which is the baſis or foundation of all outward comforts be ſo eaſily ſhaken and toſt up and down, what are the comforts themſelves? If Kingdoms and Commonwealths totter, who can ſtand faſt? When the Saints feel the world ſhake and tremble under them, their comfort is; *They have received a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken.* Neither men nor devils have any power to ſhake it, and God will not ſhake it; nay, with reverence we may ſpeak it, the Lord cannot ſhake that Kingdom, for it is his own: he cannot do any thing to his own wrong or diſhonour. Earth may, but heaven ſhakes not, neither ſhall any of the pillars thereof tremble for ever.

We have ſeen two acts of the mighty power of God; firſt, In removing thoſe mountains, thoſe great maſſie parts of the earth. Secondly, In ſhaking the whole maſs of the earth.

Now the thoughts of *Job* grow higher, and he aſcends from earth to heaven, and brings an inſtance of the power of God there, in the ſeventh verſe.

Verſe 7. **Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not; and ſealeth up the Stars.**

Sicut de ſ tura terr eſt immo litas & qnies, it natura ut ſempe moveatu Aquin.

And the inſtance which he makes in the heaven, ſtands (as heaven doth to earth) in a direct line of oppoſition to that which he gave about the earth. The earth in all the parts of it, is a fetled, fixed body, and therefore the power of God is clearly ſeen in cauſing it to move; but the Sun is a moveable body, a creature in continual motion; and therefore the power of God is clearly ſeen in checking and ſtopping the motion of it. It calls for as ſtrong a hand to make the Sun ſtand ſtill, as to ſhake and remove the earth. The ſtaying of that which naturally cannot but move, and the moving of that which naturally cannot but ſtand ſtill, require a like power; and that which ſtands as the earth doth, or moves as the Sun doth, requires an Almighty power to move or ſtay it.

Which commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.

Which commandeth the Sun.] He deſcribes *God* in the poſture and language of a King, giving out commands. *He commandeth. God is the Soveraign of the Sun.* Yet the word in the Hebrew is no more, but, *he ſaith*, or, *he ſpeaks to the Sun*; ſo Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *He ſpeaks to the Sun, that it riſeth not*: We, clearly to the ſence, *He commandeth the Sun*, becauſe the word of God to the Creature, is a Law or a Command upon the Creature. אמר *Dixit, i dicere e poteſtat perandi.*

He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not.

The phrase implies an ordinary or a common event. But when was there such a thing as this? How rare are such events? I may ask, Did the Lord ever command the Sun that it should not rise? Or did ever any day appear when the Sun did not appear? we may answer four or five wayes.

Non ad factum, sed ad Dei potentiã refertur, qui si velit, possit vicissitudinem ortus & occasus solis tollere. Olymp.

First, Some conceive *Job* speaks only of what *God* can do (as in the former instance) not what he ever did: He never actually gave out his command to the Sun that it should not rise; but he hath power to do it if he pleaseth. Many things are spoken of the power of *God*, as presently done, which only are things possible for him to do. That's a good interpretation of the place.

Non oritur sol, tantum est non appareat, nam & ortus solis apparitio quædam est. Bold.

Secondly, We may carry it further; for when he saith, *It riseth not*, we need not take it strictly, as if the Sun were staid from making day at all; but, it may note any stop or sudden disappearing of the Sun. The Suns rising is the Suns appearing; and when it disappeareth, or is hidden, it is to us as if the Sun were not risen. Thus God hath actually, more then once, given out a command to the Sun not to rise. *Lavater* (in his comment upon this place) reports, that in the year 1585. *March* 12. such a darkness fell upon the earth, that the fowls went to roost at noon, as if it had been Sun-setting, and all the common people thought the day of Judgment was come. That of the Prophet is true in the *letter*, as well as in the *figure* (Amos 4. 13.) *He maketh the morning darkness.* And (*chap.* 5. 8.) *He turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night.* The holy story records one famous act of God commanding the Sun to stand still (*Josh.* 10.12.) When *Joshua* was in pursuit of his enemies, he prayed that the day might not hasten down; *Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon; and the Sun stood still*, &c. *Joshua* speaks as if himself could command the Sun. *Sun, stand thou still*; he talks to the Sun, as to his servant or child, *stand still.* It was indeed at the voyce of *Joshua*, but by the word and power of God, that the Sun stood still. So the Text resolves; *There was no day like that before it or after it* (no day so long as that) *that the Lord hearkened to the voyce of a man.* So then, the Lord hearkened to the voyce of a man, and then the Sun hearkened to the voyce of a man. First, the Lord hearkned, and then the Sun hearkened, that is, by a command from God at the request of a man the Sun stood still.

Thirdly, It may be understood of ordinary Eclipses, which are disappearings of the Sun; and though they come in a course of nature, and are by natural light foreseen many years before they come, yet there is somewhat in them which should fill us with high thoughts of the power of God. And though an eclipse of the Sun be no miracle, yet God once made, and can again make a miraculous eclipse. When Christ *the Sun of Righteousness* was shamefully crucified, the Sun in the heavens (as ashamed to look upon that act (as from man) of prodigious cruelty and injustice) hid his face; *and from the sixth hour* (that is, from high-noon) *there was darkness over all the Land unto the ninth hour*; that is, till three in the afternoon, *Mat.* 27.45. This eclipse was miraculous; first, because it was the full of the Moon. Which (as we receive from *Antiquity*) caused a great Philosopher (not knowing what was doing, or who was suffering at *Jerusalem*) to cry out, *Either the God of Nature suffers, or the frame of Nature dissolves.*

Dionysius Areopagita.

Secondly, Because it was universal (as some affirm) over all the world; or as others (which makes it more strange) that it was only in the Land of *Judæa*, all the world besides enjoying the light of the Sun at that time. Which Miracle stands opposite to that in *Egypt*, which was plagued with darkness, when the *Israelites* in *Goshen* enjoyed light; whereas then *Judæa*, where the *Israelites* dwelt, was covered with darkness, the rest of the world enjoying light.

Fourthly, Some refer this speech of *Job's* to that particular plague of darkness for three dayes in *Egypt* (last mentioned) which they conceive was then fresh in memory; and so *Job* had reference especially unto that, when he saith, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not.* For though God at that time did not give a command to stop the Sun from rising upon all parts of the earth, yet he commanded the Sun not to arise upon that part; when his own people had light in *Goshen*, the Lord commanded the Sun not to rise upon the *Egyptians.* This is a more distinct act of the power of God. For, as he speaks, *Amos* 4. 7. (to note the accurateness as well as the power of God in his judgments) concerning the rain, *I commanded the clouds* (saith he) *and I caused it to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City:* So the Lord can cause the Sun, if he please, to rise upon one Countrey, and not upon another; upon one Nation, and not upon another: upon one City, and not upon another. Thus we may understand it, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not* upon one people, though it shineth upon others, according to the manner of that *Egyptian* plague.

Lastly, We may interpret it of an extraordinary tempestuous time, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not*; that is, he makes such storms and tempests, and causeth such vapors and clouds in the air, that the Sun is muffled up, and is as if it did not rise. Such a day (he means of any troubles and afflictions) we have described in the Prophet *Joel* (chap. 2. 2.) *A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning upon the mountains.* But how is a day of darkness as the morning? &c. The speech intends thus much, that this darkness shall spread it self as suddenly as the morning-light spreads it self upon the mountains, which being highest, are blest and gilded with the first issuing rayes of the rising Sun. God is said to command the Sun not to rise, when he vails and makes the face of the Sun with sudden clouds, as if there were no Sun at all but clouds. *Paul*, in his voyage to *Rome*, was under such a tempest, and the Text saith, *That neither Sun nor Stars for many dayes appeared* (Acts 27. 20.) They were as if the Sun had not risen for many dayes. Such stormy, gloomy weather God can make (*Ezek.* 32. 7.) *When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark, I will cover the Sun with a cloud*, that is, I will put a black vail or cloak upon the heavens, that the Sun shall not put out any light, when I put them out; when I extinguish thee, I will (for a time) extinguish the Sun also. The constellations of heaven are often expressed sympathizing with the dispensations of God on earth, *Isa.* 13. 10. *Joel* 2. 31. *Mat.* 24. 29. *He commandeth or speaketh to the Sun.*

Hence observe, First, *The bare word of God is a command.*

Os in Scriptura pro voluntate sæpe accipitur, significat enim locutionem, locutione enim homines quid volunt manifestat. ἐπος.

He speaks to the Sun, and it riseth not. The Apostle useth that word about the creation of light, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. *The Lord who commandeth light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts.* The Greek is, *The Lord who spake light out of darkness*, which we translate, *The Lord who commanded the light out of darkness.* The words of God are Laws, and therefore the *ten Commandments*, that part of the word which carries the name of commands from all the rest, is yet called *The ten words of God.* The Greeks call the ten Commandments the *Decalogue*, or the *ten words*; so many words, so many commands. The Devil seems to acknowledge this great power of God (only that he might abuse it) in Christ, that his word was a command. *If thou be the Son of God* (Mat. 4. 3.) *command that these stones be made bread.* The Greek is, *If thou be the Son of God, speak to these stones that they become bread*; or, *speak these stones into bread*; he would take that as a proof of his Divinity; *If thou be the Son of God, do this:* God can do this, his word is a command to all creatures; for whatsoever he imposeth upon them, they must submit to it, therefore do thou so likewise, speak to these stones, or command these stones to become bread.

It should be matter of comfort to us, while we remember that every word of God is a command upon all creatures; *He hath made a decree which shall not pass* (Psal. 148. 6.) The Hebrew is only, *A word which shall not pass*; his word is a decree which none shall reverse.

Secondly, As from the former clause [He commandeth the Sun.] we learn, That every word of God is a command; so, from that which followeth [And it riseth not] we may learn,

That, *Every creature obeys the command, and submits to the will of God.*

Men

Men often ſpeak, and ſpeak in the higheſt language of commanding, and yet the thing is not done; but whatſoever the Lord ſpeaks, is done. Every thing hath an ear to hear his voyce, who made both voyce and ear, *Pſal.* 148.8. *Fire and hail, ſnow and vapour, ſtormy wind fulfilling his word.* Senſleſs *creatures* act at Gods command, and go upon his *errand*; *They fulfil his word.* The Lord ſent a meſſage unto *Hezekiah*, to aſſure him that his ſickneſs was at his command, becauſe the Sun was, 2 *King.* 20.9, 10. *Shall the ſhadow go forward ten degrees, or go backward ten degrees in the dial of* Ahaz? Either way (ſaith the Lord) I can do it; either way, as thou ſhalt aſk a ſign, it ſhall be done. And *Hezekiah* anſwered, *It is a light thing for the ſhadow to go down ten degrees, but let the ſhadow return backward ten degrees.* Yet he knew the Lord did not offer him a light thing in either, when he ſaid, *Shall the Sun go forward or backward?* The Suns going *forward* was within a *degree* as great a matter as its going *backward*; but *Hezekiah* calls it a *light matter*, in regard of common *apprehenſion* and *obſervation*. The Suns motion is naturally forward, and though it ſhould mend its pace, many would not much regard it; but all would ſtand and wonder at a *retrograde motion*, or at the Sun going backward. Hence *Hezekiah* calls it a *light matter* for the Sun to go *forward*, comparatively to its going *backward*. And from either the Lord doth teach *Hezekiah* that his *creatures* will do what he bids them; even the Sun will move miraculouſly at his word. How great a rebuke will it be to man, if he move not at the command of God, and as God commands? Shall the Lord ſay to the *Sun, riſe not*, and it *riſeth* not; and ſhall he ſay to man, *ſwear not*, and he will *ſwear*; *pray*, and he will not *pray?* Shall the Lord have better obedience from his creatures without life, then from man, who hath not only *life*, but *reaſon?* or from Saints, who have not only *reaſon*, but *grace?* They who have grace, give not ſuch univerſal obedience as things without life; for though there be a part in them active to obey, yet there is a part backward to all obedience. Let it ſhame us that there ſhould be any thing in us (who have *life, reaſon and grace*) reſiſting, or not readily complying with all the commands of God, when the *Sun*, which hath not ſo much as life, obeys his voyce; *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not.*

Thirdly, Obſerve from the manner of this ſpeech,

That, *The Lord hath a negative voyce upon the motion of all creatures.*

He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not. It is a Royal Prerogative that the Lord commands the *Sun to riſe*, but that the Lord hath a power to ſtay the Sun from riſing, lifts up his Prerogative to the higheſt. In all diſputes about power, his is reſolved to be greateſt, who hath the negative voyce, which checks and ſuperſedeates all others. This is the Prerogative of God, he can ſtay the motion of the Sun and of man. The Sun dares not do his office to the day, nor the Stars to the night, if the Lord ſay no. The Sun is deſcribed, *Pſal.* 19.5. like a Bridegroom coming out of his chamber, dreſt and prepared; and as a Giant rejoycing to run his race: but though the Sun be thus prepared and dreſt, and ready, yet if the Lord ſend a writ, and a prohibition to the Sun to keep within his chamber, he cannot come forth, his journey is ſtopt. Thus alſo he ſtops man in his neareſt preparations for any action. *If the Lord will work, who ſhall let it?* Iſa.43.13. That is, there is no power in heaven or earth which can hinder him. But if the Lord will let, *who ſhall work?* Neither Sun, nor Stars, nor Men, nor Devils can work, if he forbid them. The point is full of comfort. God tells *Abimelech* in the caſe of *Sarah*, *Abraham*'s wife, whom he took into his houſe, *I know thou didſt it in the integrity of thy heart, but I with-held thee, and I ſuffered thee not to touch her*, Gen. 20. 6. And when *Laban* purſued *Jacob* with hard thoughts againſt him, and ſtrong reſolutions to deal harſhly with him; the Lord gave a negative voyce (*Gen.* 31.24.) *Take heed that thou ſpeak not to Jacob either good or bad.* *Laban* had not the uſe of his own tongue; *He could not ſpeak either good or bad.* Not good or bad! Was there any hurt for *Laban* to ſpeak good to *Jacob?* And the ſtory tells us, That *Laban ſpake many words, and ſome bad enough to Jacob, charging him with a double theft; Firſt, for ſtealing himſelf away*, verſe 26. *Wherefore didſt thou ſteal away from me?* Secondly, *For ſtealing his Idols*, verſe 30. *And now though thou wouldſt needs be gone, becauſe thou longeſt ſore after thy fathers houſe, yet wherefore haſt thou ſtoln away my gods?* Foul language all, though God charged him not to ſpeak a bad word to *Jacob*. For anſwer, know, We muſt reſtrain that reſtraint to the point of bringing *Jacob* back again, *Thou ſhalt not ſpeak either good or bad to him*, to ſtop or turn him from his way, thou ſhalt uſe no threatnings to bring him back to thee; no, nor any promiſes or allurements; thou ſhalt make no offers of better entertainment to win him to thy ſervice, which was the thing he ſo much deſired. *Good and bad* are the two terms of all that can be ſpoken; and where the utmoſt extreams of ſpeaking are forbidden, all ſpeaking to that purpoſe, is forbidden. When the ancient people of God *were few in number, yea, very few, and ſtrangers in the Land, when they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdom to another people*, one would think, that all the world would have been upon them; but here was their protection, God had a negative voyce, *Pſal.* 105.15. *He ſuffered no man to do them wrong.* Many had (as we ſay) an aking tooth at the people of God, their fingers itcht to be dealing with them, and the text ſhews four advantages the world had againſt them. Firſt, *They were few.* Secondly, *Very few.* Thirdly. *Strangers.* Fourthly, *Unſetled.* What hindered their enemies? It was the Lords negative voyce. *He reproved Kings for their ſake, ſaying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.* We ſee an inſtance of this, *Gen.* 35.5. When *Jacob* and his family *journeyed, the terror of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, and they did not purſue after the ſons of Jacob.* They had a mind to purſue after them, to revenge the ſlaughter of the *Sichemites*, but God ſaid, *Purſue not*: and then they could not purſue, they muſt ſtay at home. And when his people the *Jews* were ſafe in *Canaan*, he encourages them to come up freely to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*, by this aſſurance, No man ſhall deſire the Land, when thou ſhalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year, *Exod.* 24.34. God can ſtop not only hands from ſpoiling, but hearts from deſiring. Our appetite, whether concupiſcible, or iraſcible, is under his command, as well as our actions. The Prophet aſſerts this by way of queſtion (*Lam.* 3.37.) *Who is he that ſaith, and it cometh to paſs, when the Lord commandeth it not?* That is, if the Lord doth not concur, if the Lord vote againſt the ſaying or command of any man in the world, what he ſaith, ſhall never come to paſs.

We ſhould conſider this to help our faith in theſe times. God hath a negative voice upon thoſe counſels and concluſions which are carried with one conſent of men; *And the wrath of man ſhall either turn to his praiſe, or all that is beyond that*, he will ſtop, *the remainder of wrath* (namely, ſo much as remaines over and above what turns to the praiſe of God) *ſhalt thou reſtrain*, Pſal. 76.6. The ſword is in motion againſt us, even as the Sun; and the ſword ſeemeth to have received a charge to paſs from one end of the Land to the other; yet a countermand from God, will ſtop this ſword from going on. If he ſpeak to the ſword, the ſword ſhall wound no more. We may intreat the ſword to wound no more, as they (*Jer.* 47.6.) cried out, *O thou ſword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put thy ſelf into thy ſcabbard, reſt and be ſtill.* The anſwer was, *How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt Askelon?* &c. Our anſwer might be (changing place) the ſame, *How can it be quiet, ſeeing the Lord hath given it a charge againſt* England? A word from God draws, and a word from God ſheaths the ſword. He that commands the Sun, and it *riſeth not*, can command the ſword, and it *ſmiteth not*; the fire, and *it burns not*; the water, and *it drowns not*; the Lions, and *they devour not.* How happy are they who ſerve the Lord over all!

Fourthly obſerve, Seeing *He commandeth the Sun, and it riſeth not*,

That, *The dayly riſing of the Sun is an act of grace and favour to the world.*

The Sun doth not riſe alone of it ſelf; it is the Lord (as we may ſay) that helps us every morning. Therefore it is ſaid (*Mat.* 5.45.) *He makes his Sun to riſe: His Sun*, Mark how Chriſt ſpeaks of the Sun, as Gods own, that

Sun

Sun which he can either cause to rise or not to rise, cause to rise upon one people, *and not upon another*; *He maketh his Sun to rise*; there is an act of common grace in making it to rise upon all, *upon the evil, and upon the good*, Mat. 5. 53. That God makes the Sun to rise to give them light, who use their eyes only to rebel against the light, how admirable is it?

Lastly, As to the special aim of *Job*, we see what a proof we have of the omnipotency of God, *He is great in power, and mighty in strength*; Why? Because he can stop the Sun. He that can stay the Sun, what can he not do? We say to men that attempt impossibilities, *Climb up to the Moon*; it is more to stay the Sun, then to climb the Moon. And if the Lord be able to overcome this difficulty, what difficulty can he not overcome? Here's a clear proof of the infinite power and wisdom of God, *He speaks to the Sun, and it riseth not.* And,

He sealeth up the Stars.

Qui effecit noctem & diem, nam donec ortus sol est, nox & adveniente die, quasi obsignatæ occultantur stellæ Jun.

The Sun is the light of the day, the Stars the light of the night; *He sealeth up the Stars.* Some take it to be a *Periphrasis*, or a description of night and day, because till the Sun riseth, it is night, and when the day appears, the Stars are sealed up, or disappear: The Sun riseth, and the Stars are obscured, we see them not. So the former clause, *He commandeth the Sun, and it riseth not*, is a description of the night; and this latter, *He sealeth up the Stars*, is a description of the day. *The plain sence of both being this, He maketh both night and day.*

Pro stellis signavit (sc. solem) signaculo, quasi in favorem stellarum Deus continet solis splendorem in altero Hemisphærio. Cajet.

Secondly (say others) this seal is set upon the Sun, in behalf of the stars, *He sealeth up the Sun for the stars*, that is, in favour of the stars; that the stars might sometime appear in their lustre and glory to the world, he keepeth the Sun from appearing.

But (as we translate) we may better keep the seal upon the stars, *He sealeth up the stars.*

Annulos nō tam ornatus quam custodiæ gratia olim inventos dicit. Macrob. *l.* 7 Satur. *c.* 3. *Clausa videntur, cum non videntur.*

And so, sealing may import either of these two things.

First, The safe custody of the stars, *He sealeth up the stars*, that is, *he preserveth the stars in their Orbs*, in the places where he hath set them, they shall never drop out. Sealing is often used for assurance and safe keeping. *Darius*, Dan. 6. *sealed the stone upon the Den of Lions, that so* Daniel *might not be rescued or fetcht out from the danger.* The *Jews*, that they might keep Christ fast enough, *sealed the stone of the Sepulcher wherein his body was laid*, Mat. 27. And in a spiritual sence, the sealing of the Spirit is to make the soul safe in the love and favour of God. A soul that is sealed by the Spirit of God, is secured of the love of God, and shall never drop out of his heart. So, *He sealeth up the stars*, is, *He makes the stars firm and fast in their spheares.* But rather,

Stellæ & omnia cœli lumina, velut characteres quidā efficiunt librum. Pin.

Secondly, Sealing is for secresie, or for the hiding of a thing from the sight of others: So in the sealing of Letters, that they may not be seen, and of treasures, that they be not stoln or taken away, *Deut.* 32. 34. *Job* 14. 17. Thus the Lord seals up the stars, when he clouds or obscures the stars, and will not let them be seen. Some make it an allusion to a Book. The Heavens are a great volume, wherein many Truths of God are written, his Name is there, and the stars are so many Characters or Letters of his Name. He often seals up this great volume, and so blots these Letters, that no man can read or distinguish them.

Thirdly, The meaning of *He sealeth up the stars*, may be taken thus, *He keeps in, and closes up the virtue and influences of the stars*; he stops those treasures which usually come down from the stars upon the earth. Natural Philosophy teaches us, that all the fatness and fruitfulness of the earth is conveyed from the heavens. Heaven nurses and suckles the earth; and if the Lord please, he can dry up those breasts, seal up those influences, stop those secret workings which the heavenly bodies have upon the earth.

Hence observe, That, *The influences of the Heavens are in the hand of God, to let them out, or stay them when he pleaseth.*

As he can seal up the spiritual treasures of heaven, that the soul shall receive no light, comfort or refreshing from them in Ordinances, so he seals up the natural influences of the heavens, that the earth and the fruits of it here below, shall receive no quickning, no refreshing from them. And the earth languishes when the Lord suspendeth and sealeth up the natural influences of heaven; as the soul languisheth, when the Lord stops up the spiritual influences of heaven, when he seals up the Star of *Jacob*, that day-star from on high, *Jesus Christ*,

What we hear of God in natural things, should keep us in continual dependance upon him for spirituals; he seals with the comforts of his own Spirit, and he seals up all comforts from our spirits.

Verse 8. **Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.**

This verse gives us a further argument of the mighty power of God. See how *Job*'s discourse moves from earth to heaven, and from the heavens down to the sea. He searches for the wonders of Gods power and wisdom, in heaven, and earth, and in the waters. Before he shews God stopping the course of the Sun, and sealing up the stars; now spreading out of the heavens, and treading upon the Sea.

He spreadeth out the heavens.

The heavens in reference to the earth, are the upper part of the world. The heavens are (as it were) the *roof of the great house* which God made, or as a spangled canopy over our heads. *He spreadeth out the heavens*: The word is of the *Dual Number* in the Hebrew, and hath divers derivations, which are considerable to enlighten us in this point.

שמאיים a שם *Nomen, gloria, decus, quia cœlum est ornatissima pars mundi.* Mar. *in Lex Philos.* Anshi Hashem.

He spreadeth out the heavens.] Some derive it from *Shem*, which signifies a name, a name of honour and dignity; *Men of name* are men of *renown*, Gen. 6. 4. The heavens are the most glorious, beautiful and renowned part of the Creation, their name is above every name of inanimate creatures.

Others, because there are waters above in these heavens, derive the word from (*Sham*) which is an adverb of place, and (*Majim*) which signifies *waters*; as much as to say, *there are waters*, or there is the place where God hath *fountains* and *stores of water.* All his waters are not upon the earth, he hath Waters and Springs in heaven.

Paulus Fagius *in Gen.* 1.

A third takes it from a simple, not a compound word, being near the *Ishmaelitish* word *Shama*, noting only *superiority* in place, high or above.

שמאיים a שמם *Obstupuit, propter insignem vastitatē ipsius corporis, quæ ipsa nos aspicientes, in stuporem rapit.* Pisc. *in Gen.* 1.

A fourth opinion derives it from *Schamem*, which signifies, *to be amazed, or to make one at a stand with wonder*: And the reason is given, *because the heavens are such a vast stupendious body, that if a man look upon them exactly, they will amaze him.* Who can observe the *Sun*, *Moon* and *Stars*, and not *wonder* and be *transported* at their vastness and beauty, at the swiftness and regularity of their motions; it is above the reach and apprehension of natural reason, how the Lord should fashion and *spread* out such heavens.

But, *What are these Heavens which he spreadeth forth?* Heaven is sometimes expressed with an addition, *The highest heavens*, *the third heavens*, in 2 *Cor.* 12. 12. *The heaven of heavens*, 1 Kings 8. 27. *Paul was rapt up to the third heavens*, that is, in visions and *revelations* he was brought as near to God himself as a *creature* possibly can. Of this heaven we are to understand that, *Gen.* 1. 1. Where *Moses* saith, *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and the earth was without form and void.* He doth not say, the heavens which God created at first, was without form and void, but the earth was without form and void; for that heaven was a perfect creature. We read further, of the creating of those heavens which we see, of the visible heavens, which are the continent of the Sun, Moon and Stars. But, *In the beginning God created the heaven*, that heaven, which by way of eminency is called, *The habitation of his holiness and of his glory*, Isa. 63. 15. This was created in the beginning, and then, it is conceived the Angels were likewise created; but the earth which was then made, was an imperfect creature, and all other corporeal creatures with their several forms and fulness, were extracted out of the earth, which was *without form and void.* The very heavens (which we see) were made out of that first earth; the *Sun*, *Moon* and the

Stars,

Stars, yea, the very *light* it ſelf was made out of that *earth*, that general heap of matter which the Lord created at firſt, and is ſaid to have been *without form and void*. But the heaven which we call *the heaven of heavens, the third heaven, or the higheſt heaven*, was a perfect creature the firſt day, made without any pre-exiſtent matter whatſoever by the power of God. This *heaven* is the largeſt of all the *heavens* which God ſpread out.

Secondly, Take *heavens* for the viſible *heavens*. I intend not to ſtay upon Philoſophical conſiderations, only what the Scripture holds forth; we find *heavens* put, firſt for the *ſtarry heavens*, or the firmament where the ſtars have their motion, that's the *heaven* meant (*Gen.* 1.17. *Pſal.* 8. 7. *Pſal.* 19. 1.). This, according to the doctrine of Aſtronomers, is diſtinguiſhed into ſeveral orbs and *ſpheres*, in *ſeven* of which *ſeven* ſpecial ſtars are ſaid to *move*, and all the reſt to be fixed in the *eighth*.

The Apoſtle *Jude* ſeems to give a hint of thoſe planetical orbs (*Jude, verſ.* 13.) where he juſtly reproacheth unſetled ſpirits by the name of *wandering Stars or Planets, to whom is reſerved the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever.*

Thirdly, *Heaven* is taken in *Scripture* for *a nearer heaven*, for all that which is below the *Moon*, for the *air* and the *clouds*. Hence the birds are ſaid to fly in the *heavens*; and (*Gen.* 8. 2.) the rain from *heaven* was reſtrained, that is, the rain from the clouds, for there is no rain in that *heaven* above the clouds.

Triplex eſt cœlum aerium ſidereum, ac aliud hiſuperius inviſibile & divinũ. Dam. *l.* 2. *de orthodox. fide.*

Heaven is a building of *three ſtories*. The *firſt ſtory*, is the *air and clouds*, up to the Moon. The *ſecond ſtory* reaches all the *Planets* and *Stars*. The *third story* is alſo called, *the third heaven, or the heaven of heavens*, the place of his moſt glorious reſidence, *who filleth heaven and earth.*

All theſe heavens the Lord ſpreadeth out.

There is a *threefold* ſpreading forth of a thing.

Firſt, By contuſion or beating with hammers, as a maſs of *Gold* or *Silver*, *&c.* is ſpread into thin plates and leaves.

Secondly, By way of *rarefaction* or *attenuation*; water is *rarified* by *fire*, and ſo are metals, when they are melted or cauſed to run with extream heat. In alluſion to which *Elihu* ſpeaks in his challenge to *Job* (Chap. 37. 18.) *haſt thou with him ſpread out the ſky which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking-glaſs.* The ſky is of a weak, ſleight matter, not hard, maſſie, or elemental, yet *it is ſtrong*; the nature of it being incorruptible, the figure of it round and indiſſoluble. And it is compared to a looking glaſs, for the clearneſs of it; thoſe inſtruments were made, ſome of glaſs, ſome of ſteel or braſs, molten and poliſht for that purpoſe.

נטה *Extendit, diſtendit, ſicut tentorium.*

Thirdly, A thing is ſpread forth by unfolding the parts, as a tent or a curtain is ſpread, and thus the ſpreading of the heavens is deſcribed, *Pſal.* 104. 1, 2. *O Lord, thou art cloathed with honour and majeſty, thou ſtretcheſt out the heavens like a curtain.* God took the vaſt matter folded together, and ſpread it as a curtain, Tabernacle or Tent. And the Latine word which carries the interpretation of this in the Hebrew, is frequently applied by ancient Authors, to the pitching of Tents in War. In this third ſence we are ſpecially to underſtand the Text, *Alone ſpreadeth out the Heavens.*

Hîc Dolapũ manum, hîc ſævus tendebat Achilles Virg. 2. *Æneiad. Juxta horros tendebat.* Suet. *in* Galb. *c.* 12. *de* Germanorum *cohorte. Et milites tendere omnes extra vallum juſſit.* Pac. *l.* 13.

And ſo this ſpreading is either an expoſition of the nature of the heavens (*Gen.* 1. 8.) *The Lord ſaid, Let there be a firmament*; the Hebrew is, *Let there be an expanſion*, or a ſtretching forth. Theſe heavens are ſo much ſpread forth, that they are called, *a thing ſpread forth*; and ſo the Text is a deſcription of the heavens in their firſt Creation. Or, it may refer to the words going before, and ſo theſe are a reaſon to ſhew that God can command the Sun, and ſeal up the Stars, why? *He ſpreadeth forth the heavens*; that is, the heavens are all of his making, and at his diſpoſing; he ſet the Sun there, and put the Stars there, he faſhioned the orbs in which they are placed, and therefore he can ſtay the Sun, and ſeal up the Stars.

Cœlum ſive firmamentũ vocatur רקיע *eo quod eſt expanſum & extenſum ſuper terrã.*

And as he thus ſpreadeth out the heavens, ſo, which is more obſervable, *He ſpreadeth them out alone.* When a piece of hangings, or the like of a large extent is to be ſpread forth, one man cannot do it, many hands are put to that work. It is an axiom in Divinity, *That no creature can be an inſtrument in Creation*: this ſtretching forth of the heavens is an act of Creation, therefore *he alone* doth it, there is none to help him.

Inſtrumentũ creationis creatura eſſe non poteſt.

Yet we find that God had ſome other with him, when he ſtretched out the heavens, though it be here attributed to him alone: and though *Elihu* expoſtulates with *Job* in this point (*Chap.* 37. 18.) *Haſt thou with him ſpread out the ſky which is ſtrong, and as a molten looking-glaſs? Elihu* would bring down the thoughts of *Job*, which he conceived were too much lifted up, by ſhewing that God did this alone; *Job* (ſaith he) didſt thou hold one part of this great Curtain or Canopy of heaven in thy hand, and God another; and was it ſo ſpread out between you? No, neither man nor Angel was his helper; who then was with God in this work? *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 8. 27.) *When he prepared the heavens I was there, when he ſet a compaſs upon the face of the depth.* Who was that? *I wiſdom was there. Jeſus Chriſt was there.* Chriſt was he by whom God prepared and ſtretched forth the heavens. No creature was there, only the uncreated creating Son of God. God created alone, that is, without the help of any creature; but he created all things by the *Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* Obſerve from hence,

Solus, qui nemo extra ipſum cum ipſo, ſed unum cum ipſo ille qui in ipſo per identitatem ſubſtantiæ ſunt verbo enim Domini firmati ſunt cœli & ſpiritu oris ejus omnis virtus eorum. Solum enim divinitas facit, quæ una ita ſola.

First, *The heavens are as the royal tent and pavilion of the Lord.*

He ſpreadeth them out.] The Lord is often expreſt coming out of the heavens with warlike preparations: There his tent is pitcht, and he ſitteth there, as a great Commander in his pavilion, to give out orders to his Armies. He hath an hoſt in heaven, and therefore he hath a tent in heaven; or rather heaven is his tent. *The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind, and in the ſtorm, and the clouds are the duſt of his feet*, Nah. 1. 3. God pitches his battel in heaven; *The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt* Siſera. *He fought from heaven*; from thence he diſcharged his great Artilery, his Cannons thundered and lightened againſt the enemies of his people. He hath alſo his ſtore houſes for ammunition, his Magazines there (Job 38.22.) *Haſt thou* (ſaith God to *Job*) *entred into the treaſures of the ſnow? Or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail, which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, the day of battel and war?* He ſpeaks of heaven as of a great ſtore-houſe, where he hath his arms, his powder and ball, all his warlike proviſion laid up againſt the day of battel. Heathens have ſpoken ſuch language, calling ſtorms and tempeſt, hail and thunder, *The weapons and engines of the Armory of heaven.*

Eſt alluſio ad armamentaria publica ubi armorum machinarum & tormentorũ ingens apparatus reconditus Bol. *Quiſquis habent telorum armamentaria cœli.* Juv. *Sat.* 13.

Secondly, In that he ſaith, *He ſtretcheth out the heavens alone*, Obſerve,

That the Lord needs not the help of any creature to do his greateſt works.

He hath power, and he hath power in himſelf to do what he hath a will ſhould be done; let all the creatures in the world ſtand ſtill, yet God can carry his work forward. What work is like this, the ſtretching forth the heavens: There cannot be a work of ſo much difficulty under heaven, as the ſpreading forth of the heavens. He who did that alone, what can he not do alone? Though men will not, though men cannot help, the Lord can and will alone. *Iſa.* 59. 16. *He ſaw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no interceſſor*; no man to do, no man to ſpeak in that buſineſs, not a man appeared: what then? Doth the Lord ſay, Well, ſeeing there is no man to do, I alſo will let it lie? No, *Therefore his arm brought ſalvation unto him, and his power ſuſtained him*; he did it alone. *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf, that at his firſt appearing before *Nero*, all men forſook him, not a man would own him, but (ſaith he) *The Lord ſtood by me* (2 Tim. 4. 15.) This is a great encouragement to us in great affairs and buſineſſes, in the greateſt ſtraits and difficulties of the times; if men forſake and deſert, the Lord alone can do all for us; if men have not power to do what they have will to do, nor will to do what they have power; then remember, *He that ſtretcheth out the heavens alone*, can order our works alone,

Solus ſine cujuſquam auxilio.

alone, compoſe our differences alone, conquer our enemies alone. God alone is infinite, greater, ſtronger, wiſer, then all creatures together. God can be now as he will be hereafter, *all in all unto us.* God is enough for us without any creature; yea, God and all that he hath made cannot do more then God without any thing that he hath made.

And treadeth upon the waves of the Sea.

The Sea is a fluid body; to ſail or ſwim in the waters is ordinary, but to tread upon the waters, that's another act of wonder, *He treadeth upon the waves of the Sea*; or he walks on them as upon a pavement.

Verbū Darac aliquando eſt ducis præliantis & debellantis hoſtes. Quaſi jure belli ſubjicere.

To tread upon the waves.] Imports, that God hath a command over the Sea, and the waves of it. To tread upon a thing is to have it under our power, or in ſubjection to us (*Pſal.* 91. 13.) the promiſe is, *Thou ſhalt tread upon the Lion, and upon the Aſp*; that is, thou ſhalt prevail and triumph over the greateſt evils, over enemies as ſtrong and fierce as Lions, as poiſonous and ſtinging as the Aſp, *Pſal.* 108. 9. *Over* Edom *will I caſt out my ſhoe.* Which notes either contempt of them; as if he had ſaid, I look upon them as worthy only to ſcrape and make clean my ſhoes. Or ſecondly, Conqueſt over them; I will walk thorow *Edom* and ſubdue it. *Deut.* 11. 24. *Every place whereon the ſole of your feet ſhall tread ſhall be yours*; that is, yours ſhall be conquering feet, you ſhall tread as Lords upon all lands. Yours ſhall be all the ground you go on, that is, it ſhall be ſubject to you. *Judg.* 5. 21. *O my ſoul, thou haſt troden down ſtrength*; and *Mic.* 1. 3. *The Lord ſhall tread upon the high places of the earth*; that is, the Lord ſhall ſubject the higheſt things that are upon the earth to his power. That place is very obſervable, *Numb.* 24. 17. Where *Balaam* propheſying of Chriſt, ſaith (as we tranſlate) *A Star ſhall come out of* Jacob; the Hebrew is, *A Star ſhall tread out of* Jacob, noting Chriſt a victorious, a triumphing Star, who ſhould come treading and trampling upon the world as conqueror; though the world, in regard of his out-ſide, trod and trampled upon him: So it is explained in the latter words of the verſe, *He ſhall ſmite the corners of* Moab, *and deſtroy all the children of* Sheth. *A Star ſhall tread out of* Jacob. *A treading Star is a triumphing Star.*

Calcabit ſtella è Jacob.

במתי *Excelſa maris Ambulat ſuper altitudinē roboris maris.* Tar. *Robur maris dicit vehementiā maris, quando à ventis turbatur & commovetur. Dorſum immane ſummo mari attribuit.* Virg. *Æneiad. l.* 1

The Hebrew is, *He treadeth upon the high places of the Sea*; the word (*Bamoth*) is uſed frequently for the places where idolatrous worſhip was ſet up, *their high places.* Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *the high waves of the Sea*; becauſe Sea-waves riſe high, ſo high, that the Pſalmiſt deſcribes them, *mounting up to the heaven* (Pſal. 107. 26.) When theſe high waves threaten to ſwallow all, then the Lord treads upon them, that is, his power is above them, and he makes them ſubmit to his command. *As to ride upon the high places of the earth* (Deut. 32. 13. Iſa. 58. 14.) is to have higheſt command, and to be a *chief* upon the earth, or to dwell ſafely and free from annoyance upon the earth: So to tread upon the high places or high waves of the Sea, implies Gods Empire or Soveraignty over the Sea. Hence obſerve,

First, *That the Sea in its higheſt rage is at the beck, and under the treadings of God.*

When the waves are moſt ſtirring and raging, he ſpeaks them quiet, *Pſal.* 89. 9. *Thou ruleſt the raging of the Sea, when the waves thereof ariſe, thou ſtilleſt them.* As to walk upon the Sea, is an argument of a divine power; ſo to command the Sea. When Chriſt (*Matth.* 8. 26.) rebuked the Sea, and ſaid, as another Goſpel hath it (*Mark* 4. 38.) *Peace and be ſtill*, as if one ſhould huſh a child; *The men marvelled, ſaying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the Sea obey him?* Winds and waves ſeem the moſt diſobedient, ſtubborn and unteachable creatures in the world; yet a word from God calms the one, and ſmooths the other. When the old *Egyptians* would by their *Hieroglyphicks* expreſs an impoſſibility, they did it by the picture of a man treading upon the waves; as if they ſhould ſay, this is as impoſſible as for a man to walk upon the waves. The Heathen Poets deſcribe *Neptune* their Sea-god, ſwimming, not walking upon, or treading the waters. To tread upon the waters is ſo much above man, that meer Naturaliſts thought it too much for God. Man ſhews his pride and arrogancy to the height, when he pretends to Lord it over the waves of the Sea. When the *Helleſpont*, a Streight of the Sea, by a ſudden ſtorm riſing upon it, broke the bridge of Boats, which *Xerxes* had made to paſs into *Greece*, and ſo oppoſed the project of that *Perſian Monarch*; he caſt fetters into it, as if he would teach it to know it's Lord, and cauſed it to be beaten with three hundred ſtripes, to chaſten it's former diſobedience. It is recorded in the Hiſtory of this Nation, concerning *Canute* an ancient *Daniſh King*, that when a mighty ſtorm of flattery roſe upon him, he appeaſed it by ſhewing he could not appeaſe the ſtorms of the Sea. One of his Courtiers told him in his progreſs, as he rode near the Sea ſide, that he was Lord not only of the Land, but of the Sea, and that all thoſe Seas which he ſaw, were at his command. Well, ſaith he, we ſhall ſee that by and by, and ſo walketh down to the ſhore, and pulling off his upper garment, wraps it together, and ſits upon it near the flowing of the waves, and with a loud voice ſpeaks thus, *O ye Seas and Waves come no further, Touch not my feet*, &c. But the Sea came up, notwithſtanding his charge, and confuted that flattery. God only hath this Prerogative, *He treadeth upon the high waves of the Sea.*

Ægyptii ut rem prorſus impoſſibilem demonſtrarent, hominem pedibus ſuper aquas ambulantem pingebant in ſuis Hieroglyphicis depingebant. Veteres cum ſuum Neptunum ſuper aquas ambulantem pingere non auderent, à nando ei nomen dederunt. Herod. *l.* 2.

Delectat Canuti regis Anglorum exemplum, qui aſſentationis procellam, procella maris in ſe admiſſa compeſcuit. Bold. *ex* Camb. Brit. *Ex alto incitatum fluctum, ita alloquutus eſt, unda tibi jubeo, utne pedes meas tangas*

There are alſo myſtical waves, which the Lord treadeth upon: people and Nations are called waters, and many waters, in the Book of the *Revelation.* The waves of the Sea cannot be in a greater rage, then the Nations of the earth ſometimes are. And the ſame Hebrew word by which the rage of the Sea is properly expreſt, expreſſes alſo the rage of men (Pſal. 2. 1.) *Why do the Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* Why are the *Gentiles*, the great waters up, as high waves, threatning a deluge to the throne of Chriſt? The power of Chriſt is as eminent in ſtilling the rage of the myſtical, as of the literal waters; yea, we find theſe two matcht together (*Pſal.* 65. 7.) *He ſtilleth the noiſe of the Seas, the noiſe of their waters, and the tumult of the people.* Hence the Apoſtle *Jude* (verſ. 13.) calls wicked men, *raging waves of the Sea, foaming out their own ſhame. The Lord ſitteth upon theſe floods; yea, the Lord ſitteth King for ever*, Pſal. 29. 10.

There are other myſtical waves, even waves within us, which will not be trodden upon by any foot, but Gods. There is a Sea of wickedneſs in every mans heart by nature. Every wicked man is nothing but a Sea, he is a Sea of wickedneſs. *The wicked* (Iſa. 57. 20.) *are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt.* And as the winds blow from all quarters of the heavens, and ſtrive upon the Seas: So there are divers luſts, which as winds ſtrive upon the face of mans heart; the luſt of pride, the luſt of covetouſneſs, the luſts of ambition, of envy, of malice, theſe enrage and ſwell the waters. The Lord treads upon the high waves of this Sea alſo, he reſtrains and keeps luſt down by his power, it would drown all elſe. Theſe raging waves ſwell too high in his own people; it is the work of his Spirit to tread theſe down; and when the winds of ſeveral temptations raiſe thoſe waves, he it is that commands them down. Who amongſt us is there, that one time or other finds not corruption raging, as the high waves of the Sea? How mighty and powerful is the Lord in that great work of his effectual grace, treading upon the waves of this Sea, remaining corruption in his ſervants and children!

Verſ. 9. **Which maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades, and the chambers of the South.**

In aſtrorum pulchritudine, ſitu, ordine, vi, ſtupendiſq; in hac inferiora operationibus, admirabilis prorſus creatoris magnificentia & magnitudo plurimum elucet. Bold.

In the verſe immediately before, we heard of the power of God in ſtretching out the heavens; and in this we have his excellent skill, and infinite wiſdom diſplayed in adorning, decking and beautifying thoſe heavens which he had ſtretched forth. He hath not only drawn out a vaſt piece of work, like a large Canopy (ſuch are the heavens) but he hath embroidered this Canopy, and ſet it with rich ſparkling ſtones; he hath made ſeveral engravings, images, figures and repreſentations upon it.

Or we may make the connexion with the latter clauſe of the former verſe. *Job* having ſaid that the Lord *treadeth upon the high waves of the Sea*; that when the Seas are moſt

most stormy and tempestuous, they are at his command, and that their confusions are under his empire and order; he adds this verse by way of answer to a possible objection. For some might say, the motion of the seas is from the power and influences of the stars, from the rising and setting of the Moon, with other Planets and Constellations. True, saith *Job*, yet the Lord is he that treadeth upon the waves of the sea, it is the Lord that orders them, and not the stars: Though the stars and constellations have a dominion over the seas in their ebbings and flowings, motions and revolutions, yet there is a Lord who hath power, not only over the seas, but over that which overpowers the seas, even over the stars of heaven. *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South*; which stars, according to the doctrine of Astronomy, have a special power upon the seas.

Cum multa sint astra hominibus & fluctibus infensa, eorũ præcipuè meminit, quorum vis ad ciendas tempestates hominibus magis est explorata. Sanct.

Either of these wayes we may make the connexion.

First; That *Job* would express the adorning of the heavens, after he had spoken of their making and stretching forth.

Or secondly, He would teach us, that though the heavens work upon the seas, yet God works upon the heavens. *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South.*

I shall endeavour to speak of these distinctly: The holy Ghost giving us such a Text, it is not lightly to be passed by; and though here are strange words and uncouth expressions, yet we may (I hope) bring them down to an easie meaning, and fit them to the understanding of the simplest.

I shall touch a little in the general, before I come to every one in particular.

Stella est densior pars orbis; ideo lucent astra, non cœli; quia hi diaphani sunt, & rari, astra autem densa, eoq; lucem retinentia & reflectentia. Magir. *Phys.*

Job under these names couches many of the stars of heaven. A *Star* (according to Philosophy) *is the thicker part of his Orb or Sphear*; it is thicker then other parts of the heavens; for otherwise as it could not hold the light, so it could not reflect and send forth the light; it could not be a vessel for light, or a conveyance for light. Light was created the first day (*Gen.* 1. 3.) but the Lights were created the fourth day (*Gen.* 1. 14.) that is, certain vessels were created to hold the light. *And God said, Let there be Lights in the firmament of heaven*, that is, let the light which is now scattered through all, be gathered in certain receptacles, fit to keep, and yet fitted to transmit and disperse it into all parts of the world; *Let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven to give light*, vers. 15.

Of these Lights or Stars, some are called moving, and others fixed. That's the doctrine of Astronomers, and it is the doctrine of the Scripture. The Apostle *Jude* (verse 13.) calling some *wandring stars*, seems to admit of that distinction of the stars, into wandring and fixed. The unfixt or wandring stars are seven, known by their names and motions. These in the Text are none of them, these are placed above them.

The seat of these *Asterismes* is in the eighth spear (to take that doctrine for granted, though many dispute it) or story of the heavens (so the Prophet *Amos* speaks, *chap.* 9. 2. *He buildeth his stories in the heavens*; we put in the Margin, *spheares*; *He buildeth his spheares in the heavens*, which being one above another, are elegantly called the stories of heaven.) And in the eighth sphear innumerable stars are fixed; some of which fall under special observation and numeration. Astronomers give us a Catalogue of a thousand three and twenty stars, which they exactly distinguish; which is the ancient account. And since that, we have had many more discoveries by those noble Navigators, who have made *thorow-lights to the world*, that the East might look into the West, and the South into the North: The travel, study and experiments of these Masters in Navigation, have brought us in an additional number of three hundred stars more. And so we reckon a thousand three hundred and twenty three fixed stars, known by name; of which, these in the Text are a part.

The other stars are both innumerable and un-nameable, beyond number, and without name. Hence, when the Lord shewed *Abraham* how great his seed should be, he carries him out, and bids him look towards heaven, and tell the stars, if he were able to number them, *Gen.* 15. 5.

The stars (to come a little nearer to the text) observed and numbred by *Students* in this great volume of the heavens, are distinguished into *forty and one images or representations*, whereof some (for Learnings sake) are fancied the images of men and women, others the images of Beasts and Fishes, others the images of things without life. Of these images, twelve are in the *Zodiack*, commonly called the *twelve Signes*. In the Southern part of the Sphear eleven of those Signes are placed, and in the Northern eighteen, which added to twelve in the Zodiack, make up the number of forty one.

Omnes hæ stellarum [illegible] magines nõ tantum ordine & situ rum etiã certis nomi nibus inter se distincti sunt.

Now, when it is said in the Text, *That God maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South.* We are not to take them for so many distinct and particular stars, but for constellations or configurations, because they stand in such a form or figure; and so for the better knowledge of them, they are called by the names of such creatures as they seem to represent.

We have three of those special figures here in the Text, and one more general. *Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades* are three figures or starry representations in the eighth sphear, I will open their Hebrew names; as also the Latine and Greek names used commonly in translations, by which we shall get a clearer understanding in the nature of the things themselves.

Which maketh Arcturus.

The word *Gnesh* in Hebrew, signifies a meeting or congregating of many things together; because in that one, many stars are joyned. *Arcturus* in Greek, is as much as to say, *The tail of the Bear*, because the stars called *Arcturus*, stand in a figure like the tail of a Bear.

עש
Congregavit conglobavit huic respondet Græcum verbum σείω, vibro.

quod est, commeat, vel undiquaq; convenire. Arcturus *stella est in cauda minoris Ursæ, & Septentrio dicitur, παρὰ τὴν τῆς ἀρκτου ὄψιν, ab ursinæ caudæ similitudine.*

The second *Asterisme*, which we translate *Orion*, is called in Hebrew (*Cheſil*) and that signifies either constancy or inconstancy (the sence runs both wayes) setledness or variableness. And it is applied to this star or constellation in either sence.

כסיל
Constantiæ robur, vel inconstantiæ significat, quod ejus ortu tempestates orbem varie turbat. Bol.

First, For constancy or setlednes, because there is much strength in the influences of that constellation.

Or secondly, For inconstancy and unsetledness, because it is observed, that upon the rising of this star, there is much variety, changeableness and unsetledness in the weather. Hence the *Jews* call that Moneth which answers to our *November*, of the ninth Moneth, *Chisiu* (Zech. 7. 1.) because that Moneth was usually very stormy, and the weather changeable, *Orion* then arising in their *Hemisphere*. The *Arabick* word (*Algeuse*) by which this *Asterisme* is named, signifies a *Warrior*; and the *Chaldee* (*Algebar*) a *Giant*, all aiming at the furious, boisterous winds which usually attend the appearing of this constellation. And so the Greek word from which *Orion* cometh, signifies, to trouble or to disturb. And its usual Epithetes are *bold, vehement, impetuous Orion*, all betraying its unquiet and various temper.

Algebar; *i. e. Gigas:* Ὠρίων, *Audax, vehemens, ardens* Orion. *Pro l.* 18. *c.* 25. Ὠρίων, *Græcis est turbo, concito.* Pagn. *in Thes. Dum pelago desæ hyems & aquosus* Orion.

The third starry association we call *Pleiades*; the Hebrews, *Chimah*. This is a very cold constellation. The Greeks express winter by this word, because it brings in frost and cold with it. The derivation of the Hebrew name is very obscure. Some professedly acknowledge their ignorance, that they cannot tell how to derive it; yet some dig the root of it in *Chaldee*, signifying *firm*: Others, in the Hebrew, signifying *to desire*, or *earnestly to wish for a thing* and the reason of it is (say they) because these stars (the *Pleiades*) the seven stars we often speak of, are much desired by Sea-men; for seeing them, they have a perfect rule to guide and steer their course by. And it is an observation among some of the *Rabbins*, that *Noah* had a little window in the top of his Ark, that from thence he might (when the waters began to assuage, and the stress of the deluge was over) look up to the heavens, and know by those stars what course his Ark made. Thus much we

Quidam Pleiades dicta putant quasi πολλὰς, plures, quia nunquam singula apparent. Pleiades, à τὸ πλεῖν navigare. Cur vocat Chima, *benter for me re.* Bold. *Quidam dicunt à*

קים
Chaldaicum, quod denotat rem elevatam stabiliter & in sublime firmiter erectam, quæ est instar cardinis, quasi polus aut vertex mundi. Alii à כמה *quod est desiderare rem aliquam tenere, quia Nauta affectant videre hoc signum.*

know,

know, that the stars are the Sea-mens night-guide, and the rising of some of them falls under their more special observation.

חדרי תימן *Interiora Austri. Nam Deus ex ipsis promptuariis, quasi de thesauris suis quosdã educit ventos, & per ipsos mirabiles siderum illorum influxus, intelligit æstiva sidera, ut est canicula, &c. Quæ quia ad Polum Arcticum spectant (qui velut inferior subest Horizonti nostro) penetralium Austri sidera vocantur quæ sit in penetralibus mundi à nobis abscondita.*

The fourth title of the stars is, *The Chambers of the South.* And why *The Chambers of the South?* The Continent is put for the things contained. The word which we translate *Chambers*, signifies any thing that is very inward or retired, and therefore translated a chamber, *Judg.* 15.1. & *Cant.* 3.4. Mans spirit is thus expressed, because it lies so far inward (*Prov.* 24.4.) *By knowledge shall the chambers be filled*; that is the most secret parts of the soul shall be filled by knowledge, *Prov.* 18.8. *The inward part of the belly.* Prov. 7.27. *They go down to the chambers of death*, that is, to the inmost and most retired wayes of death, the grave. Here, *The chambers of the South*, are the most remote, hidden and secret parts of the South. And the reason why after he had exprest the other constellations by special names, he gives us these only in general [The chambers of the South] is, because the stars which are under the southern pole, are hidden from us, and are enclosed and lodged as in a chamber: God locks them up in his treasury, and they are secrets to this part of the world; the Southern Pole being under or below our Horizon. In the artificial Sphears of heaven we find few Asterisms or descriptions of the stars about those parts; there are many, but we perceive them not. And the virtue and operation of these chambered, hidden stars, is as strong as of those which appear in greatest lustre and beauty.

Again, When he saith, *Which maketh* Arcturus, &c. His meaning is, *Which makes them appear*, or do their office. These stars were made when the heavens were made, and *Job*'s discourse is not about creation, but providence. So that to make *Arcturus*, &c. in the sence of this Text, is only this, to order the times of their rising and setting, to distinguish the seasons of the year, and to produce their several effects in every season, which providential acts are here especially aimed at. Thus *he maketh Arcturus* to rise, about the middle of *September*, which is the time of the *Equinox*, when the civil day and night are even, and share the hours of the natural day equally between them. Or, as others account, this star rises about eleven dayes before the *Equinox*. So, by *Arcturus*, we may understand that season of the year. *And he maketh Arcturus*, is, he orders and disposeth of the season, commonly called *Autumn*. *Orion* shines forth in our *Hemisphear* about the moneth of *December*, and by that winter is designed. The *Pleiades* begin at the Spring, therefore called *Vergiliæ*, because they arise (*vere*) in the Spring, and disappear or go down toward Winter. *The chambers of the South* are fiery stars, which have their chief influence upon us in heat of Summer.

And so we may put the Text into these plain expressions, *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the chambers of the South*, that is,

First, He makes and orders *Summer and Winter, Spring, and Harvest*, because these stars divide the four seasons of the year.

Or secondly, thus, *He makes hot and cold, wet and dry, storm and calm.*

Or thirdly, As these four constellations are assigned to the four chief points of heaven. *Arcturus* is known by all who know any things in the heavens, to be seated about the Northern Pole, whose opposites are those stars in the *Chambers of the South*. *Orion* dwells in the East, and the *Pleiades* in the West.

So the plain English of the words is this, *That the Lord by his mighty power and wisdom ordereth and appointeth the motions of heaven, from East to West, from North to South.*

Lastly, To clear up the sence of this Text, we must understand these four constellations *Synecdochically*, these being put for all the rest; for as God orders these, so every star in the firmament; the least are under his eye, and at his dispose, as well as the greatest. But because these are the most eminent, useful and efficacious in their appearances, motions and influences, therefore these are named; *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades, *and the Chambers of the South.*

We may observe from the words thus opened, divers profitable instructions.

First, *All the stars are placed in the heavens by the special designment of God for the use and good of men.*

Moses (*Deut.* 4.19.) gives a caution to *Israel* from the Lord, that they should take heed of imitating the Heathens in their abominations, and this is one particular, *Lest thou lift up thine eyes to heaven, and when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the host of heaven, shouldst be driven to worship them, which the Lord thy God hath divided unto all Nations under the whole heaven.* Observe that, *The Lord thy God hath divided them unto all Nations under heaven*; therefore take heed that thou do not worship them.

They are the work of God, they are creatures; and worship, which is proper to the Creator, must not be given to them. It is a remarkable Text, *Lest* (saith he) *thou shouldest be driven to worship them.* How driven? Not by external force and power, but driven by the strong inclination of thine heart, ravished with such beautiful objects. The excellency that is in the works of God, hath power to draw, yea, to drive the heart of man to commit Idolatry. *Job* shews this, while he acquits himself so industriously from it (*Chap.* 31.26,27.) *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth had kissed my hand, this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judg*, &c. Some translate that (*Deut.* 4.) in this language of *Job*, *Lest thou be deceived to worship the Sun, Moon and Stars, and host of heaven.* This is very considerable; but the thing I chiefly note in that Scripture, to the point in hand, is this, That the Lord hath made and appointed the stars to the several parts of the heavens, he hath divided them to all Nations under the whole heaven. Some stars are the portion of one people, others of another. As the earth is an inheritance divided among the children of men, so also are the stars and heavens. We seldom consider what riches we receive from that part of our inheritance; most think they live by the earth only: No, saith *Moses*, *The Lord hath divided the heavens, the Sun, Moon and Stars unto all Nations under heaven.* He hath setled it, what star such a Land should have, and in what seasons, as also, what proportions of the Sun and Moon, for light, heat and influence. He hath made them for the children of men. Man is fed and cloathed, warmed and cherished from heaven more then from earth; and the lot and divisions which we have of the earth are naturally and usually good or bad, rich or barren, pleasant or unpleasant, healthy or unwholesome, according as the Aspects of the heaven and stars are more or less benign or favourable unto them. *Moses* (Deut. 29.26.) reproves the ingratitude of the *Jews* by this argument, *Because they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given to them.* So we translate. But the Letter of the Hebrew gives it thus; *Who had not given to them, or divided among them any portion.* As if *Moses* had said, The Lord divided and gave the heavens and the stars among you, and these base dunghil-gods never gave you so much as a clod of earth, and will ye depart from *Jehovah* to serve them?

Per hanc divisionem intelligit ordinem & motum Planetarum, qui in suis orbibus ita disponuntur, ut unaquæq; regio suo tempore eorum gaudeat influxibus. Pined.

Secondly observe, *God knoweth the number, the names and the nature of all the stars.*

He gives them special names. These in the translation, are names of mans imposition. Yet the holy Ghost uses Heathenish names in the New Testament (*Acts* 28.11.) We read of a Ship in which *Paul* sailed to *Rome*, whose sign was *Castor* and *Pollux*, two *Pagan* Sea-gods. It is said, that God brought all the beasts of the earth to *Adam*, that he should give them names; but he brought not the host of heaven to *Adam*, that he should give them names; he named them himself, *Psal.* 147.4. *He telleth the number of the stars, he calleth them all by their names.* Men are not able to tell the number of the stars; they tell distinctly but to a thousand three hundred, or a few more, and they are not able to tell all these by distinct names, but they are constrained to reckon them by constellations, where a whole family of stars are called by one name. The Lord hath made it his special priviledge to tell the number of the stars, and to call them all by their names. And these are named in the Text for all the rest. Hence observe,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Some stars are more excellent, of greater virtue and name then others.*

When these are named, it is for special reason. The Lord nameth these as stars of more then ordinary dignity. These are in degree next to the Sun and Moon: when a few are named for many, we usually name the chiefest; as the whole people of the *Jews* are set forth by the Heads of their Tribes, by the Chiefs; and when a Nation is spoken of, it is by those greater names, *the Magistrates and the Ministers.* These are named, because they have most to do, and the greatest business in a Nation. So these stars are here named, because they are of special use and influence. The Apostle gives us this clearly (*1 Cor.* 15. 41.) *There is one glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another glory of the Stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory.* One star hath a more honourable name then another. Some stars God doth not vouchsafe to name particularly to us, when others, which are of greater glory, are. As in building, some parts of it are chief, *The foundation, the top-stone, the corner-stone*; the strength and beauty of the whole building are comprehended under these. God hath made differences and degrees in all creatures, in the heavenly as well as the earthly. The name of most stars are concealed, as being of a lower degree. And we find that whensoever in Scripture stars are spoken of, scarce any are named but these, and these are often named, which implies their superiority and dignity. The Prophet urges this as an argument of humblest addresses unto, and dependance upon God (*Amos* 5. 8.) *Seek him that maketh the seven stars* (that is, *Pleiades*) *and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning*, &c. He doth not say, Seek him that maketh all the stars; the Lord made all. But because he hath given so much virtue and excellency to these, these only are reported as of his making. Here, *Which maketh* Arcturus; there, *Seek him which maketh the seven stars*; as if he had said, In those stars God hath laid out much of himself, and made his power and wisdom most visible: How much hath God in himself, who hath communicated so much to one senseless creature?

And though stars differ thus one from another, yet they envy not one another. Which lessons us to be content, though God make our names less named in the world, then the names of many of our brethren; though he trust more talents to, or put more light into others, then into our selves. One star differs from another star in glory, but no star envies anothers glory.

Fourthly, *Job* being about to declare the power and wisdom of God, gives instance (among other things) in this, *He maketh* Arcturus, Orion, *&c.* Hence observe,

The power and wisdom of God shine eminently in the stars.

The power and wisdom of God shine in every grass that grows out of the ground, yea, in every clod of earth; much more then in the stars of heaven. Much of God is seen in those works of God; yea, so much, that many have been drawn to make them gods. There is so much of God seen in the heavens, that not only Heathens, who had not the true knowledge of God; but his Covenant-people, who knew him, and whom he knew above all the families of the earth, have been drawn away to worship the Host of Heaven. That place before-cited (*Deut.* 4.) hinteth as much, *Take heed lest when thou lifteſt up thine eyes to heaven, and seeſt the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the host of heaven, thou shouldeſt be driven to worship them and serve them.* If thou lift up thine eyes to the stars, and not higher, even to God who made the stars, thou wilt quickly mistake the stars for God, or make the stars thy god; the heart of man is mad upon Idolatry. Read how often the *Jews* are taxed with this sin, 2 *King.* 21. 3. & in 2 *King.* 17. 16. & in *Amos* 5. 26. Which clears this truth, that much of the power and wisdom of God is stamped upon the stars; if God did not much appear in the stars, so many had not taken the stars for God, or given them, which is proper and peculiar to God, religious Worship.

There are five or six things which shew the power of God, and his wisdom in making of the stars.

First, *The greatness of the Stars*; such vast bodies shew an infinite power in their constitution. It is incredible to ordinary reason (unless men have skill and learning to make it out, and to lay the course of Nature together) that the stars are so great. The Sun is reckoned by Astronomers to be one hundred sixty six times bigger then the earth: the Moon indeed, which is called a great Light, is thirty nine times less then the earth, yet that magnitude is far beyond common apprehension. Some other of the Planets are almost an hundred times bigger then the earth. And whereas the fixed stars are distinguished into six magnitudes or differences of greatness; those of the first magnitude (which are many) are conceived to be one hundred and seven times bigger then the whole earth. We look upon a star, as if it were no bigger then the blaze of a Candle, and the Countrey-man wonders if the Moon be bigger then his Bushel, or broader then his Cart-wheel. If the most judicious enter the consideration of these things, they may soon come to amazement, that so many stars in heaven should be more then an hundred times bigger then all the earth. And if there are such vast bodies in heaven, what a vast body is heaven? That Continent must needs be exceedingly exceeding vast, which contains so many exceeding vast bodies in it. If we get but a nook or a corner of the earth for our portion, we presently think our selves great men; yet what is all the earth to the heavens? And what are the heavens we see, to that heaven which is unseen, to which these are but a Pavement? The heavens which are to us a roof, are but a floor to the highest heavens.

A second thing which shews the mighty power and wisdom of God in the stars, is *the multitude of them*; they are innumerable: Man cannot tell them (only God can) they are like the sand of the sea for number. A multitude of little sands make a huge body; then how great a body do a multitude of great bodies make?

Thirdly, *The swiftness of their motion.* That these mighty vast bodies should be carried about every day, so long a journey, and never tire or wear, shews infinite power and wisdom.

Fourthly, this is more admirable, the exact order of their motion. That innumerable stars should move continually in the heavens, and yet not one of them move out of course: this regularity of their motion is setled by an *Ordinance of heaven* (Jer. 31. 35.) Where the Lord, to assure his people that he would be steady and stedfast in the wayes of his love to them, and that he would not cast them off, tells them that he would be as firm to them in his Covenant, as he is in the Ordinances of heaven: *Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the Ordinances of the Moon and of the Stars, for a light by night*, &c. As if he had said, I have made a statute and a decree which is irrepealable and irrevocable concerning the the motion of the stars. There is an ordinance of heaven for it; so that as the celestial bodies cannot but continue the course I have assigned them for the enlightning of these inferior parts, while the world lasts: So the Covenant which I have made with you, shall not fail to give you light. Thus he infers in the next verse, *If these Ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then shall the seed of Israel also cease from being a Nation before me for ever*; but that cannot be, I have established these stars by a firm and perpetual decree, therefore you are much more established.

And such is the exactness of their order and motion, that the stars of heaven are frequently in Scripture called an host or an army: Now an army, as it consists of many persons (which is one reason why the stars are called an host) so an army rightly marshalled, is cast into an exact form, and so regular for motion, that it is one of the goodliest sights in the world. Now the stars are the host of heaven, they stand (as it were) in Battalia, they *keep rank and file*; there is not so much as one of that great multitude out of place; therefore, *Judg.* 5. 20. Where they are said to fight against *Sisera*, they are described fighting in courses; *The stars in their courses fought against Sisera*; as if the stars had been drawn up, now one Regiment, then another Regiment of them, to charge upon *Sisera* and his host: the heavens fought, and the stars fought, that is, the Lord by an heavenly power and influence of the stars confounded *Sisera*, and all the enemies of *Israel.*

Fifthly, *There is a most efficacious virtue in the Stars.*

It is a ſecret virtue, and it is a ſtrong irreſiſtible virtue, no power in the creature can ſtop it: Therefore God challenges *Job*, in *chap.* 38. 31. *Canſt thou bind the ſweet influences of Pleiades, or looſe the bands of Orion?* There are influences in the ſtars, and canſt thou bind them? ? Is it in the power of any creature to ſtop the iſſues and out-flowings of the ſtars? Their influences are ſo effeacious, that none can bind them, but he that looſeth them; none can bind them but the hand and power which made them; there is ſo much efficacy in them, that if God let them go on in their natural vigor, their effects are wonderful. *I* (ſaith the Lord, *Hoſ.* 2. 21, 22.) *will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall hear* Jezreel: As if he had ſaid, the heavens are next in power to me, they are ſecond to my ſelf in working; *therefore I will hear the heavens*: the heavens cannot do it unleſs I give them a commiſſion; but *I will hear the heavens*: I will leave a power in the heavens, *and the heavens ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn*, &c. There is a gradation, a deſcent from God to us, and the heavens are the next receptacle, the immediate veſſel, receiving and taking in power and virtue from God to diffuſe and ſend down upon the creatures here below; *I will hear the heavens, and they ſhall hear the earth.*

πρῶτον δεκτικον.

Sixthly obſerve, That, *The ſtars and conſtellations of heaven can do nothing of themſelves, but as they receive order and commiſſion from the Lord.*

עשׂה *He maketh* Arcturus *and* Orion, *&c.* They have great power, but it is the Lord that maketh them. That word [he maketh] doth not ſo much ſignifie the Creation, as the providential diſpoſition of the ſtars, as was noted in the Expoſition of it. *He maketh them*, that is, he orders and diſpoſeth them, or he acts the ſtars, he trims up thoſe lamps of heaven; the word is ſo uſed (2 *Sam.* 19. 24.) *Mephiboſheth*, while *David* was in trouble, *had not dreſſed his feet*; the Hebrew is, *He had not made his feet*, that is, he had neglected his body; now (ſaith *Job*) the Lord is he that makes, dreſſes, or trims up thoſe lamps of heaven; though they have a natural virtue, yet that virtue is quickned by providence. *Providence is a continued creation. He maketh* Arcturus, Orion *and* Pleiades.

Non tantum facere, ſed etiam aptare, diſponere, dirigere, & præparare ſignificat.

The ſtars are the ſervants of God, they receive orders and directions from him for all they do. And the reaſon why the Lord did ſo often call his people off from *gazing upon the ſtars*, and reproved *ſtar-gazers*, was, becauſe they looked no further then the ſtars; they thought the ſtars did all, they did not eye God that made *Arcturus*, *Orion*, &c. but they only eyed *Arcturus*, &c. Therefore he threatens the *Star-gazers and monthly Prognoſticators*, who took upon them to reſolve future events by the conjunction of Planets and Planetary Aſpects; placing an uncontroulable power in the hands of the heavens and ſtars, whereas *I* (ſaith the Lord) *make* Arcturus: I made him, and I make him do what I command, not what you foretel. Therefore (*Iſa.* 44. 24, 25.) the Prophet ſpeaking of Gods work in making the heavens and the ſtars, preſently adds, how he befools men that will propheſie from the ſtars, as if they could tell infallibly what ſhall come to paſs. *I am the Lord that maketh all things, that ſtretcheth forth the heavens alone, that ſpreadeth abroad the earth by my ſelf.* What follows? *That fruſtrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad.* I ſtretch out the heavens: ſome will needs propheſie out of the heavens. I have ſet the ſtars in the heavens, and they are for ſignes (*Gen.* 1. 14.) but I have not ſet them for Prophets: If any preſume to declare or reſolve what ſhall be done, I reſolve to puniſh their preſumption. I take delight to fruſtrate men who delight in this, and to befool them who would be thus wiſe. This is my name. *The God that ſtretcheth out the heavens alone, and that maketh Diviners mad.* Great diſappointments enrage; and ſome men loſe their reaſon, when they loſe the credit of doing things above reaſon. Becauſe they cannot be as Gods to foretel good or evil, they will not be ſo much as men; *He makes the Diviners mad.* The Law was peremptory and ſevere againſt them (*Deut.* 18. 9.) *There ſhall not be found amongſt you any one that uſeth divination, or is an obſerver of times.* Why not an obſerver of times? May we not obſerve times and ſeaſons? May we not look up to the heavens and conſider their motions? Yes, we may obſerve times holily, but not ſuperſtitiouſly, as if ſome times were good, others bad, ſome lucky, others unlucky; as if the power of God were ſhut up in, or over-rul'd by his own inſtruments and inferior cauſes, this is diſhonourable unto God, and thus the *Jews* were forbidden to *uſe any divination or to obſerve times.*

The Heavens and Stars are for ſignes, but they are not infallible ſignes. They are ordinary ſignes of the change of weather, *Mat.* 16. 2, 3. They are ordinary ſignes of the ſeaſons of the year, Spring and Summer, and Harveſt and Winter; they are ordinary ſignes of a fit time to till and manure the ground, to plow, ſow and reap. The earth is fitted and prepared for culture by the motion of the heavens. The heavens are at once the *Alphabet* of the power and wiſdom of God, and of our works: We may read there when to do many buſineſſes, *Gen.* 8. 22. *While the earth remaineth, ſeed-time and harveſt, and cold and heat, and ſummer and winter, and day and night ſhall not ceaſe.* Thoſe ſeaſons ſhall continually return according to the time of the year, meaſured by the Sun, Moon and Stars. Thus, they are ſignes of ordinary events. And God ſometimes puts the ſign of an extraordinary event in them, *Mat.* 24. 29. *Immediately after the tribulation of thoſe dayes ſhall the Sun be darkened, and the Moon ſhall not give her light, and the ſtars ſhall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens ſhall be ſhaken*; which ſome underſtand allegorically, others literally, of ſtrange apparitions and impreſſions in heaven, either before the deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, or the day of Judgment. So *Acts* 2. 19, 20, *&c.* Thus God puts a ſign in them of extraordinary events.

But ſhall man from them prognoſticate and foretel extraordinary events? as when there ſhall be famine and peſtilence, war and trouble in Nations: This the Lord abhorreth. The counſels of God about theſe things are written in his own heart; what is man that he ſhould tranſcribe them from the heavens? But if men will ſay, they are written there, God will blot out what they ſay, and prove theirs to be but humane divinations, yea, that they were received from hell, not written in heaven (*Iſa.* 47. 13.) *I will deſtroy the ſignes of them that divine*; *Let now the Aſtrologers, the Star-gazers, the monthly Prognoſticators ſtand up and ſave thee from theſe things that ſhall come upon thee; Behold, they ſhall be as ſtubble, they ſhall not be able to deliver themſelves. It is good to be a Star-beholder, but a wicked thing to be a Star-gazer*; that is, to look upon the ſtars ſo, as if we could ſpell out the ſecret providences of God, and read future events in the Book of thoſe Creatures. It is our duty to look upon the heavens, as they declare the glory of God; but it is a ſin to look upon the heavens, as if they could declare the deſtinies, fates and fortunes of men. All which vanities are largely and learnedly confuted by Mr. *Perkins*, in his Book, called *The reſolution of the Countrey-man about Prognoſtication.*

Now that the ſucceſs of every creature is in God, not in the Stars, we may ſee, firſt, In the order of the Creation; God created the earth, and commanded it to bring forth fruit upon the third day, but the Lights in the firmament were made the fourth day: The earth can bring forth without the Midwifry or help of the heavens. God himſelf made the earth fruitful without, yea, before the Stars were made. Upon which, one of the Ancients gives this obſervation, *Surely* (ſaith he) *the Lord in his providence made the earth fruitful in all its Glory, before he put the ſtars in the heavens, to the intent to make men ſee, that the fruitfulneſs of the earth doth not depend upon the heavens or ſtars.* God needs neither the rain of the clouds, nor the warmth of the Sun, to produce theſe effects. He that made all ſecond cauſes to work in their ranks, can work without the intervention of any ſecond cauſe. And becauſe the Lord foreſaw men would doat much upon ſecond cauſes, and venture to prognoſticate by the heavens the fates of men, and the fruitfulneſs of the earth, therefore he made the earth fruitful before *he made Arcturus*, or placed thoſe Conſtellations in the heavens.

Philo Judæus, *de opificio mūdi.*

Secondly, The providence of God works under the decree of God. *His providence is the execution of his Decree.* Therefore we muſt not bring the decrees down to providence, but we muſt raiſe providence up to the Decrees.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The heavens, and thoſe heavenly bodies, *Arcturus*, &c. are but general cauſes, there are ſpecial cauſes beſides of the earths barrenneſs or fruitfulneſs, of tempeſts at Sea and troubles at Land; and the Lord is able to invert all cauſes, to work beyond cauſes, without cauſes, and againſt cauſes: So that nothing can be infallibly fore-told from the poſitions, conjunctions or revolutions of thoſe heavenly bodies. Obſerve,

Laſtly, *That it is our duty to ſtudy the heavens, and be acquainted with the ſtars.*

In them the wonderful works of God are ſeen, and a ſober knowledge in nature may be an advantage unto grace. Holy *David* was ſuch a ſtudent (*Pſal.* 8. 3.) *When I conſider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and Stars which thou haſt ordained.* Conſideration is not a tranſient or accidental, but a reſolved and a deliberate act. Shall we think that God hath made thoſe mighty bodies, the Stars, to be paſt by without conſideration? Shall men only pore upon a lump of earth, and not have their hearts lifted up to conſider thoſe lamps of light? Shall man make no more uſe of the Stars then the beaſts of the earth do, namely, to ſee by them? *When I conſider thy heavens*, ſaith *David*. Heaven is the moſt conſiderable of all inanimate creatures, and more conſiderable then moſt of the animate: and, *David's when, when I conſider the heavens*, notes not only a certainty, that he did it, but frequency in doing it. Some of the *Rabbins* tell us, that when *Iſaac* went out into the field *to meditate* (Gen. 24. 63.) The ſubject of his meditation was the Stars, or the heavens. It is good to take field-room ſometimes to view and contemplate the works of God round about. Only take heed of the former folly, of *Aſtrological curioſities*, confining the providence of God to ſecondary cauſes; avoid that, and the heart may have admirable elevations unto God, from the meditation of the works of God. (*Pſal.* 19. 1.) *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work*; if the heavens declare the glory of God, we ſhould obſerve what that glory is which they declare. *The heavens preach to us every day. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world*, Pſal. 19. 4. Sun Moon and Stars are Preachers, they are univerſal Preachers, they are *natural Apoſtles*; the world is their charge, *their words*, ſaith the Pſalm, *go to the ends of the earth*. We may have good doctrine from them, eſpecially this doctrine in the Text, of the wiſdom and power of God. And it is very obſervable that the Apoſtle alludes to this Text in the Pſalm, for a proof of Goſpel-preaching to the whole world, *Rom.* 10. 18. *So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I ſay, have they not heard? Yes verily, their ſound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.* The Goſpel like the Sun caſts his beams over, and ſheds his light into all the world. *David* in the Pſalm ſaith, *Their line is gone out*, &c. By which word he ſhews, that the heavens being ſo curious a fabrick, made (as it were) by line and level, do clearly, though ſilently, preach the skill and perfections of God: Or, that we may read divine truths in them, as in a line formed by a pen into words and ſentences (the original ſignifies both a meaſuring line, and a written line.) Letters and words in writing being nothing but lines drawn into ſeveral forms or figures. But the Septuagint, whoſe tranſlation the Apoſtle citeth, for (*Kavam*) *their line*, read (*Kolam*) *their ſound*; either miſ-reading the word, or ſtudiouſly mollifying the ſence into a nearer compliance with the latter clauſe of the verſe, *And their words into the ends of the world.*

קו *Significat lineam, non modo extenſam, hoc eſt, funiculum, ſed etiam ſcriptam, hoc eſt ſcripturâ* Par. *in* Rom. 10. *Pro* קולם קום

Thus I have endeavoured to make thoſe things plain, which are here repreſented (to vulgar ears) under ſtrange, unuſual, and hidden expreſſions.

Job is full of Philoſophy and Aſtronomy, he was a great ſtudent in the heavens, doubtleſs, and a holy ſtudent. *Job* having given theſe ſeveral inſtances, gathers them all into a general concluſion in *verſ.* 10.

Verſ. 10. **Which doth great things paſt finding out, yea, and wonders without number.**

Theſe words are repeated from the diſcourſe of *Eliphaz* in *Chap.* 5. *v.* 9. *I would ſeek unto God, and unto God would I commit my cauſe, which doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.* I will not ſtay in a particular diſcuſſion of them, but refer the Reader to the place before cited, where the Text is opened at large, and particular obſervations given from it. Take only this obſervation in general.

That, *A godly man labours to exalt God, both in his thoughts and in his words, with heart and tongue, when God depreſſes and humbles him moſt.*

Mark in what a condition *Job* was, when he ſpeaks thus honorably of the name and power of God; one would think *Job* had little reaſon to extol the power of God, which he felt to his own ſmart. *Job* was ſtript of all he had, his outward comforts were taken from him, and the Arrows of the Almighty wounded his very ſpirit. Now when he had wounded *Job* thorow and thorow, thorow fleſh and thorow ſpirit, even at this time, when God appeared, making no uſe of his power but to undo *Job*, *Job* is in his *Encomium*, all in the praiſe and commendation of God. He indites a Chapter on purpoſe to ſet forth the power and wiſdom of God, while he employed both to make his afflictions both great and accurate. This ſhews the admirable frame of his ſpirit; in all his diſtempers his heart ſtood right, and he would ſpeak good of God, what evil ſoever befel him from Gods hand. Let God afflict with his power, yet a gracious heart rejoyces in it. A gracious heart will lift up that power which weakens and throws it down. Let the Lord imploy his wiſdom to undo, to impoveriſh ſuch a man, to bring him into ſuch ſtraights that he cannot get out; yet he hath enlarged thoughts of that wiſdom, *He ſees God is as wiſe in troubling us, as he is in delivering.* That language of *Spira*, is the right language of Hell (I judge not his perſon, but his ſpeech) who in a great temptation ſpake thus, *I would I had more power then God, or, O that I were above God.* He was angry that God had ſo much power, becauſe God uſed his power againſt him. A carnal man would be above God: eſpecially, if God at any time puts forth his power againſt him. *When he is hard beſtead and hungry, he frets himſelf, and curſes his King and his God, looking upward* (Iſa. 8. 21.) to murmur at God, not to pray unto him, or ſpeak good of him. It is obſerved by one of the Ancients concerning the Heathen, *That if God did not pleaſe them, he ſhould be no longer God.* Such are our hearts by nature, if God do not uſe his power, wiſdom, mercy for us, we preſently wiſh he had no power, wiſdom, nor mercy for any in the world; we would be above God, unleſs God will ſerve us: but an holy heart ſaith thus, Let God improve his power and wiſdom which way he pleaſeth, if to afflict and chaſten me, yea to deſtroy and caſt me to Hell, his be the power for ever, I extol his power. Nature can only praiſe God, and ſpeak good of him, when he is doing of us good: But grace prompts the heart to indite a good matter, and bids the tongue be as the pen of a ready writer to advance God, when ſenſe feels nothing but ſmart, and ſees nothing but ſorrow round about. *Then grace is in her heights, when ſhe can lift up God higheſt, while he is caſting us down, and laying us loweſt:* When we can honour God frowning, as well as ſmiling upon us; ſmiting and wounding, as well as kiſſing and imbracing us, then we have learned to honour God indeed.

Tertullian. *Illud eſt impiorum ingenium, ut Deum non ulterius colant, quam bene facit.*

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

Lo, he goeth by me, and I ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not.
Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who ſhall ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?
If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do ſtoop under him.

JOB having in the former context exalted the power and wiſdom of God in many inſtances, and cloſed all with an admiring ſentence, *He doth great things and unſearchable, marvellous things without number.* He, in theſe words ſeems to give a proof of thoſe attributes of Gods works, that they are innumerable and unſearchable, *&c.*

Verſ. 11. **For lo, he goeth by me, and I ſee him not; he paſſeth on alſo, but I perceive him not.**

As if he had ſaid, I am not able to reckon how often he

worketh, for I cannot alwayes perceive him when he worketh, I am not able to search out all his great and wonderful actings, for I cannot see him in many of his actings.

He goeth by me, and I see him not.

The Lord is said to *go by us*, not in regard of any local motion: for, he that filleth all places, moves to none, *Do not I fill heaven and earth?* Is the Lords query of himself to those who thought to play least in sight with him. And he convinces them that they could not be hid from him in secret places, because he fills all places. There is no place to be found beyond the line of heaven and earth, both which God fills (*Jer.* 23. 24.) Then his motion is not local, but providential; *God doth not move to act, but his acting is his moving.* He goeth by us, doing marvellous things for us, and we see not when he is doing, or what he is doing.

חלף *Mutavit, variavit, rē vel locum, denotat mutationē conditionis vel loci.* Mol. *in* Psal. 90. 6.

The other word here used [He passeth on] is of the same sence, yet more peculiar and proper to the motion of spirits: we had it in *Chap.* 4. 15. *A spirit passed before me*, saith *Eliphaz*, when he speaks of the vision that appeared. It signifies to change and vary, either place or condition. The transitory changeableness of the creature, is expressed by it (*Psal.* 102. 27.) *Thou doest change them, and they shall be changed*; the creatures pass on, as from place to place, so from condition to condition, *The fashion of them passeth away* (1 Cor. 7. 31.) They have not only a perfective change, but a corruptive change; but of the Lord he saith, *Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.* The word is used for changing by oppressive destruction, (*Prov.* 31. 8.) *Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction*, or *death.* Such as are appointed to that great change, are called, The Sons of change or destruction: Thus the Original. So that the word signifieth any change or motion, whether perfective or corruptive. The Lord (saith *Job*) *passeth on*, he maketh changes, he worketh sometimes to perfect, sometimes to destroy, *but I perceive him not*, I am not able to make out what he doth.

בני חלופ *Filii excidii, i. e. qui tradantur excidio.* Jun. *in loc.*

Here are two words, one referring to sense, the other to understanding, *He goeth by me, and I see him not*; that is, my senses cannot find him: *He passeth on also, and I perceive him not*; that is, he destroyeth, he buildeth, he planteth, he rooteth up, but I am not able to apprehend him, or unriddle the meaning of his wonderful works, *He doth great things, and things unsearchable.*

Non est una interpretatio hujus divini accessus & recessus. Pined

There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of these words. Though I think the meaning is clear in that general I have now given, yet I will touch a little.

Multa sunt naturalia quorū supremū auctorem Deum, vel opus inchoantem, vel ab opere cessantē non observamus, atq; ita præcedenti sententiæ hæc innectitur, tanquā illius subjecta ratio. Id. *Quemadmodum sit in omnibus extra omnia sciri non potest.* Olymp.

First, Some interpret *Job's* discourse conversing still, in and about the natural works of God, the earth, the heavens, the waters and the air (of which he had spoken before) as also about the body of man (*Act.* 17. 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being.* God is about us, he is ever with us, and yet we observe not, either when he begins to work, or resteth from working. How he is in all things, without all things, and above all things, is not known.

Deum venire miserentis est, discedere punientis. Phil. *Presb.* Aquinas *ad beneficia præstita vel denegata refert.*

Secondly, Others take his *going and passing* for the acts of his favour or dis-favour, *He goeth by me* in bestowing favours, and *He passeth on*, in taking them away: his accesses or recesses in mercy or judgment, his love and his wrath are often indiscernable, *He goeth by me, he passeth on*, he varieth his workings, and I perceive him not. *To pass by* is taken sometimes for sparing, pardoning, or shewing mercy. The Lord by his Prophet (*Amos* 7. 8.) reports several judgments, from a full execution of which he was taken off, yet at last he resolves, *I will not pass by them any more* (it is the word here) that is, I will not have mercy on them any more, I will not spare them any more, the next time I come with my drawn sword in my hand, I will be sure to smite and wound before I put it up, *I will not pass by them any more.* So [*He passeth by me*] may note the sparing mercy of God. The Lord spareth man many times, and pardons him, not suffering his whole displeasure to arise, when man takes no notice, but is insensible of it. The word is used in this sence (*Prov.* 19. 11.) *It is the glory of man to pass by an offence*; that is, to spare a man that hath offended, not to punish him or take revenge: and it is ordinary in our phrase of speech to say, *I will pass you by* for this time, that is, I will not take any severe notice, or strict account of what you have done. And we find in the same prophecy of *Amos*, that *to pass thorow*, notes judgment and wrath, in the opposite sence; In *Chap.* 5. 17. *In all vineyards shall be wailing; Why? For I will pass thorow thee*, or I will pass into thy bowels or inwards: So the letter of the original; that is, I will come to judge thee, I will pass thorow thee as a revenger, and wound thee deeply, insomuch that in all *vineyards there shall be wailing*; why in all vineyards? When he saith, There shall be wailing in all vineyards, it implies there should be wailing every where: for if there were joy in any place, it would be in the vineyards; vineyards are places of mirth and refreshing; grapes make the wine, which makes glad the heart of man. Therefore when he threatens, *That in all vineyards there shall be wailing*; it is as much as if he had said, There shall be sorrow in those places where usually the greatest joy was found, or there shall be sorrow in every place. Joy shall dislodge and give place to sorrow, *for, I will pass thorow thee, saith the Lord.* So that as the work of providence in sparing, and the work of providence in punishing, may be understood by this word, with a little varying of the construction. He passeth by me in the wayes of mercy, and I see him not; and he passeth thorow me in the wayes of judgment, and I see him not. I cannot see or understand him as I ought, either in wayes of judgment, or of mercy.

Transit eum, quē impunitum relinquit. Drus.

בקרבך *In interiori tuo.*

Deus simplicissimus est spiritus & invisibilis, itaq; neq; nos adorientem cum venit, neq; cū abit pedem referentem sentire possumus.

Thirdly, We may take the words, as they are an argument to prove the power and wisdom of God, to be such, as man is no way able to match or to deal withal, which is the subject *Job* is upon. He would set the Lord infinitely above all that is in the creature, and he doth it here by an argument drawn from his nature. What is his nature? Why, he is most simple, he is a spirit without any mixture, without any composition, without any materiality, he is invisible, bodily eyes cannot behold him, therefore certainly bodies are not able to overcome him. Man being a material substance, is not able to see the Lord, then surely he is not able to contend with, much less to conquer the Lord; What then doth he medling with him? It was said at *vers.* 4. of this Chapter, *Who ever hardned himself against him, and hath prospered?* is flesh and blood any match for a spirit? If man would strive with God, where should he have him? *He goeth by me, and I see him not; he passeth on also, and I perceive him not*; I know not where to meet him, he can come upon me on every side, he may take me at all advantages, and destroy me, for I know not how to guard or defend my self. If a man were to fight with an enemy, whom he could not see, and yet his enemy saw him; what an advantage had his enemy against him? Doth any man harden himself against God? *He goeth by, and we see him not*; How then can we deal with him, or stand against him? Thus (I say) it may be an argument to make good that great assertion, *That there is no contending with God*; flesh and blood are too weak for a spirit. It is the argument which the Apostle uses, to shew that the Devil is too hard for man, *We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with spiritual wickednesses*, &c. *Ephes.* 6. They pass by us, and we understand it not, they are now here amongst us, and we take no notice of it. We are no matches for evil spirits, much less are we able to match the most holy Spirit. *Spiritual wickednesses are strong, but spiritual holinesses are stronger.* This third interpretation renders the words a description of an invincible enemy.

Est invicti hostis descriptio.

Significatur hic summa distantia inter Deum homines: Deus omnia videt, & rebus omnibus præsentia & efficacia sua intervenit, homo suo affixus loco Deum non videt nisi in effectis. Coc.

Fourthly, It may be understood in the general, to note the infinite distance which is between God and man, or the dignity of God above man. The Lord is omnipresent, he is going by, and he is passing on, he is in all places, and he acts his power and wisdom where he pleases. Poor man is confined to a place, to a spot of earth; when he is *here*, he cannot be *there*; but God is every where: And though God be every where, yet he cannot be seen any where, where he is. God sees all, himself being unseen, and fills all places, his presence being unperceived; nothing is hid from him, yet he is hid to every thing, but the faith of his own people. Thus *He goeth, and we see him not; he passeth on, and we perceive him not.*

And so the whole is a confirmation or proof of the general

ral assertion, that the Lord is infinite in power and wisdom, and that man is an ignorant narrow-room'd and narrow-hearted weak creature compared unto him. We may form up the Argument thus:

He is weak and ignorant in comparison of God, who cannot see or comprehend where God is, or what God doth.

But man is not able to comprehend or see where God is, or what God doth.

Therefore man is weak and ignorant in comparison of God.

Si quod documentū potentiæ & sapientiæ suæ edat Deus ob oculos meos, non sum is qui id pervestigare possim, adeo inscrutabilia sunt judicia ejus Jun. *Transeundi & transmeandi verbis concinnè significat ea documenta sapientiæ quæ Deus exhibet, quasi, præsens præsentes erudiret.* *Ita significat, ex operibus Dei vix centissimum quodq; ut par est ab hominibus expendi.* Pined. *Nemo potest scire an Deū habeat in se habitantem & in se monentem.* Jac. Janson. *in loc.* *Alienissimè hunc locum citat* Bellarminus *ut probet nullum fidelem scire an justificatus sit.* Coc.

The ground is this, He that cannot comprehend or see what another doth, is not able to hinder or match him in what he doth: But such is the state and condition of man, he is so far from being able to equal God in dignity, or hinder what he doth, that he cannot find out or know what God doth.

Yet this is not to be taken strictly, as if man did not at all perceive or understand what God doth. *Job* in the former context gave us a large account of the works of God, what wonders he had done. The Saints find out some of Gods doings in the world, though the blind world see not any thing he doth. But he speaks comparatively; *The Lord passeth on, and we perceive it not*; that is, it is little of God that we perceive; it is little of the workings of God that we see at the best. * There are many persons who do not see him at all, and many works that are not seen at all by any person. And they, the eyes of whose understandings are annointed to see most clearly, are not able to see all that God doth. None can see all, some will not see what they may (*Isa.* 26. 10.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see it*; and in the former verse, *In the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the Majesty of the Lord.* That which good men see is but little, and evil men see nothing. So that, as the Lord goeth altogether invisibly in his essence, so mostly in his actions; man sees but few things of the many, and little of the great things which God doth.

I meet with a gross exposition of this Text given by some Papists. *No man* (saith one of them) *can know whether God dwell or abide in him or no.* And *Bellarmine* in his Book 5. and Chap. 5. concerning Justification, citeth it to prove, *That a believer cannot know that he is justified, but must believe blind-fold, or take the work of justification by grace, in the dark, For* (saith he) *God goeth by us, and we see him not; he passeth on, and we perceive him not:* That is (as his gloss speaks) God cometh in favour to justifie, or he leaveth under wrath, and yet man remains ignorant both of the one, and of the other state. Surely he was at a great pinch to find a proof for his point, when he was forced to repair to this Scripture to seek one. Providence toward man-kind (not the justification of a sinner) is the proper subject of this Text. And as there is nothing for a blind-fold justification here, so many other Scriptures are expresly against it. To say that a man cannot know when God loveth him, or shineth upon him, is to contradict what our Saviour asserts, *John* 14. 17. *I will send the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. Ye know him,* saith Christ to his people; the Saints see God in a spiritual sence, or in his workings upon their spirits. And though God works much upon our spirits, which we know not, yet we have a promise of the Spirit, by whom we know God in his workings. Few know when God is nigh, or when he is afar off, what his goings-away mean, or what his comings. But when he cometh to the Saints, they know he cometh; and when he hideth or departeth from them, they know his hidings and departures. Hence their joyes and over-flowings of comfort, when he manifests his presence; and hence their bitter complainings and cryings after him, where he seems to absent himself and hide his face: yet this Text hath a truth in it, in reference to the inward and spiritual, as well as the outward and providential dealings of God, that sometimes, *He goeth by us, and we see him not; he passeth on also, and we perceive him not.* Hence learn,

First, That, *God is invisible in his essence, and incomprehensible in many of his actions.*

Mans eye cannot see him: Mans understanding cannot comprehend what he doth.

But why speaks *Job* this, as a matter of wonder, if it be the common condition of man-kind? *Behold, he passeth by, and I see him not*; who can see him? Who can perceive or comprehend him? When *Moses* (Exod. 33. 20.) desired to see his face, the Lord answers, *No man can see my face and live*; God spake to *Moses face to face*, that is, familiarly, as a man speaketh to his friend, yet *Moses* did not, could not see the face of God. No man can see God in his essence or nature: A sight of God would astonish, yea, swallow up the creature, *It is death to see the living God*; and man must die before he can see God so fully as he may, and know as he is known. But (though the face of God be invisible) yet his *back-parts* may be seen. *Behold* (saith the Lord to *Moses*) *there is a place by me, stand thou there upon a rock, and thou shalt see my back-parts*; thou shalt see much of my glory shining forth, as much as thou canst bear, as much as will satisfie thy desire (were it a thousand times larger then it is) though not so much as thou hast (not knowing what thou askest) desired of me. My Name shall be proclaimed, *Gracious and merciful*, &c. the back-parts of God may be seen; the invisible God discovereth much of himself to man; and shews us a shadow of that substance which cannot be seen.

Some may object that of the Prophet *Isaias*, crying out; *Wo unto me, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*, Chap. 6. 5. Seen him? could *Isaias* see him, whom *Job* and *Moses* could not? *Isaias* did not see him in his essence and nature, but in the manifestations and breakings forth of his glory. *His train filled the Temple*, saith the Text (*vers.* 1.) or his skirts. It is an allusion to great Kings, who when they walk in State, have their trains, or the skirt of their royal robe held up. 'Twas this train, which *Isaias* saw. He saw not God who was present, but he saw the manifest signs of his presence. That speech of *Isaiah* seemed to savour of, and border upon highest blasphemy, and was therefore charged as an article of accusation against him; he was indited of blasphemy for speaking those words, *I have seen the Lord*; his enemies taking or wresting it, as if he had made the Lord corporeal and visible with the eye of the body. And it is conceived he was put to death upon that, and one other passage in his prophecy, *Chap.* 1. 10. calling the Princes of *Judah*, *Princes of* Sodom, *and the people thereof, the people of* Gomorrah.

But though God be thus invisible in his essence, yet there is a way by which the essence of God may be seen. And of that *Moses*, to whom the Lord said, Thou canst not see my face, the Author to the Hebrews saith (*Heb.* 11. 24.) *That he saw him who was invisible*; the letter of the Text carries a contradiction in the adjunct, it is as much as if one should say, *He saw that which could not be seen.* The meaning is, He saw him by the eye of faith, who could not be seen by the eye of sense; faith sees not only the back-parts, but the face of *Jehovah*: the essence of God is as clear to that eye, as any of his attributes, yea his essence is as plain to faith, as any of his works are to sense. Thus he is seen, *Whom no man hath seen nor can see* (1 Tim. 6. 16.) not the Saints in Heaven: they are not able to see the Lord in his essence, *He passeth by them there, and they see him not*; in Heaven we are promised a sight of him, yet not that sight; *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall see God*: and *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, then holy men shall see him: the state of the Saints in glory is vision, as here it is faith (2 *Cor.* 14. 12.) *We shall see him face to face, and as he is* (1 Joh. 3. 2.). These Scriptures which speak of the estate of the Saints, beholding God in glory, are not to be understood, as if the nature and essence of God could be seen, for no man hath seen that, nor ever shall; but they are meant of a more full and glorious manifestation of God; *We shall see then face to face*; that is, more plainly, for it is opposed *to seeing him in a glass*; we see him now in a glass, that is, darkly, in ordinances, in duties, in his word, and in his works, but there shall be no need of these glasses in Heaven. We shall have so direct and full manifestation of God, that these glasses which reflect him shall be out of use. The Saints on earth have sometimes a sight of God without a glass, that is, out of all ordinances, promises and works either wrought in them or for them. God comes near to their spirits, and lifts them above means, and shews them his love, and their interest in him by an immediate witness of the Spirit (1 *Joh.* 5. 8.) For although the water

and the blood (justification and sanctification) never witness without the Spirit; and though the Spirit never witnesses against them, or where they are not, yet the Spirit doth often witness above them and without them, that is, they not being called forth to give their witness. This is next door to heaven; only, the vision in heaven will be exceedingly heightned and raised, not only above our vision by ordinances, but above our vision by immediate revelation or witness.

Further consider, The sight we have of God is in Christ. God is seen in every creature (*Rom.* 1.) much more in Ordinances; but Christ is *the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory*, Heb. 1. 3. He is the *Medium* by which we see God now, and some have thought we shall see him only in Christ for ever. But it is out of doubt that in this life God is seen only in Christ savingly. We of our selves are so far off from God, that we cannot see him. There must be a due distance between the organ and the object; we are afar off from God, until Christ bring us near; we come to, and see *the Father through the Son*. And how near soever we are to any object, we cannot see it without an eye. We are naturally blind, the eyes of our mind must be enlightened before we see him; Christ cleareth our understandings, and cures our blindness, *He is made to us of God wisdom* (to see our need of him to be made) *righteousness to us, and sanctification and redemption*, 1 Cor. 1. 30. Again, the *Medium* must be light; if the eye be clear, yet while the air is dark, we cannot see. There must be an outward light, as well as an inward light to see by; that Jesus Christ makes also: for, *He is the light of the world, as well as the enlightner of every one that cometh into the world.* He sends the means of knowledge, as well as gives an ability to know. He sends light to the eyes of our mind, and he is light in the eyes of our mind. What we ought to know comes from him; and how to know as we ought, comes from him. Without him, God goeth by us in the Gospel, and we see him not; he may pass on for ever, and we never perceive him.

Secondly observe, That, *As the Lord in his nature cannot be seen at all; so (such is the weakness of man, that) we cannot see him fully in his word or works.*

How little is it that we see, that we know of God in either? What admirable alterations are there in the course of natural things, in the Sun, Moon and Stars, in the growth of herbs & plants, and in our own bodies, which we see not? What admirable administrations are there in the course of civil things? The beginnings, growths and declinings of Common-wealths, the transplantations of people from Countrey to Countrey, their oppressions by injustice, their confusions by war, their establishments by peace, their consumptions by plague and famine, their encrease by health and abundance, are little minded by the most of men. How doth God turn Nations upside down, and hurl Kingdoms together, and we perceive him not? Some take no notice at all of God, as doing such things; none taking such notice as they ought. We observe creatures, what this man did, and what the other, such men were malicious and unfaithful, such were valiant and wise, such were self-seekers, such self-deniers, such constant Patriots, and such were Apostates. Thus we see men, but we seldom see God in the great transactions and motions of Kingdoms. And we see him least of all in the course of spiritual things, in his working upon our hearts; God works wonders in us, and we perceive him not. We regard not his comings or goings, his comfortings or withdrawings, when our spirits are heated, or when they are cold; when we are strong, or when we are weak: There are continual varieties and changes in our spirits, had we a clearness to make observation. The work of God in the heart of a Believer, moving it, ordering it, preserving it, comforting it, purging it, is as wonderful, and more, then any of his works in the whole world.

Thirdly note, *Man is not fit to sit as a Judge upon the works and dealings of God.*

Shall we judge God in what he doth, when we cannot apprehend what he doth? A Judge must have the full cognizance of the matter before him, how else can he pass sentence about it? Shall man be so bold as to get up into the Throne, and pass sentence upon what God doth, when he cannot apprehend or take in evidence of what he doth? *He goeth by thee, and thou seest him not; he passeth on also, and thou perceivest him not*; and wilt thou censure what thou canst not perceive?

Fourthly, Which is *Job's* scope,

It should be matter of great humiliation to us, that we see so little of God.

God works round about us and in us, and yet we know little of him. Our blindness should abase us in our own eyes: God is all eye and all hand, and we so blind that we cannot see what God doth. It must lay man low in his own sight to consider how little he sees of God.

Verse 12. **Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? who shall say unto him, what dost thou?**

This and the next verse contain a proof of mans weakness, as the former doth of mans ignorance and blindness; *He passeth by, and I see him not.* There is mans blindness. *He taketh away, and who can hinder him?* There is mans weakness. Suppose a man should see God in his works, and apprehend what he is about, yet though he hath so much light as to see God, he hath not so much strength as to hinder God: Is not this an argument of mans weakness? What, contend with God! God doth many things, and thou canst not see *him*; or if thou seest *him*, yet it is not in thy power to stop him; *Behold, he taketh away, and who can hinder him?* Yea, man is so far from being able to stop or hinder God in what he is about to do, that man hath not right to question God, or to ask him what he is about to do. Man is neither strong enough to stop him from what he will do, nor righteous enough to question him for what he doth. This is the total denying of any possibility in man to deal with God. How can he stop God in what he doth, who cannot so much as ask him what he doth? *Who shall say unto him, what dost thou?*

Behold, he taketh away?

The word signifies to take away by violence and force, to take away as a robber takes, to steal away. As if he had said, suppose the Lord comes by open violence to take a thing from thee, or secretly, and as it were by stealth, to bereave thee of thy estate, or of thy life, if he take all from thee, and strip thee naked, *what canst thou do?* So the word is used (*Prov.* 23. 28.) Speaking of a wicked woman, of an harlot, *She lieth in wait as for a prey*; the Hebrew is, *She lieth in wait as a robber*, to take away the estate, yea, and the life of those whom she shall entangle. Some understand this more specially of taking away life. If he will stop thy breath, and deliver thee up to death; so *Augustine* upon the place: or as the *Chaldee*, *If he take one out of the world, who can hinder him?* As if *Job* had said, The Lord may not only take away so much as he hath taken from me, but more, without wrong to me. He hath taken away my goods, and my estate, my children and friends, he hath fetched away my health and strength, my beauty and outward comforts; if he come and take away my life also at next bout, I cannot hinder him; I can neither compel him to restore, nor call him to an account; I can neither urge him to restitution, nor charge him with oppression. He plainly intimates the rapine of his goods by the *Chaldeans*, &c. Of which he spake positively (*Chap.* 1. 21.) *The Lord hath taken*; and here by way of general supposition, *If he take away,*

חתף *Rapuit more latronum. Significat velocitatem rapinæ.* Rab. Mord. *Raptim auferre.* Tigur.

Si rapuerit hominem è mundo. Tar. *Si morti tradiderit.* August. *Quoties ipse ejum fuerit (ut mihi nunc evenit) quempiam vel bonis ipsis spoliare, quis illum ut raptorem ad restitutionem coget? imò quis illum jure in disquisitionem vocarit? voluntas enim ipsius est justitia norma.* Bez.

Who shall hinder him?

Mr. *Broughton* translates, *Who shall make him restore?* So he carries it in allusion to men, who violently take away the goods and estates of another. If a man come with force and take away my goods, I may make him restore them again by a greater force; but if the Lord take away and ask me no leave, I cannot make him restore. The word signifies to stop or turn a thing, and because in recovering of a prey, or in making a man restore, we stop and stay his course, therefore the word is indifferently applied to both.

ישיבנו *à radice* שוב *Vertere aut reducere, quis restituere eum faciet, quis recuperabit aut reducet prædam?*

Others

Others understand it in this sence, *If he taketh away, who shall hinder him?* That is, who can turn him from his purpose? who can stop him in the thing he hath a mind to do? The vulgar translation varies much; *If he suddenly ask a man a question, who shall be able to answer him?* The Hebrew word which signifies to return, signifies to answer; answering is the return of a word (*Prov.* 8. 13.) *He that answereth (or returneth a word) before he heareth a matter.* But I shall lay that by, though the abettors of the Vulgar make great store of it; interpreting their meaning thus, If the Lord cite a man to judgment, and bring him to trial, man is not able to answer him, or to plead his own cause. Man cannot stand before the Lord. Hence observe,

Quidam nō de prada, sed de ipso Deo intelligunt. Quis revocabit eū à proposito? Si repentè interroget, quis respondebit ei? Vulg. *Vel quòd respondens cōvertit se ad interrogantem; vel quod responsum regeratur, restituaturq; tanquam debitum interroganti.*

First, That, *All our comforts are in the power of God.*

If he taketh away,] supposeth he can take away, and he can take all away, and do us no wrong. It is no robbery if God rob us; his robbery is no wrong: Why? Because he comes not as a thief, but as a Lord and Master of our Estates; he may come and take them away as he pleaseth, and when he pleaseth.

Secondly, Note this from it, *He taketh away.*

That which God doth by the hand of the creature, is to be reckoned as his own act.

He taketh away when creatures take away. It is seldom that God dealeth immediately with us in these outward providences; he sends men, stirs instruments to do what is done. But that which man doth, the Lord doth (*Isa.* 42. 24.) *Who gave Jacob to the spoilers, and Israel to the robbers? Did not I the Lord?* Men spoiled and robbed them, yet it was the Lords act to send those spoilers; *Did not I the Lord?* As that which man doth in spirituals, is the Lords act; when man converteth and saveth, it is the Lord that saveth and converteth; when man comforteth and refresheth by applying the promises, it is the Lord that comforteth and refresheth; when man gives resolution in doubts, it is the Lord that resolveth doubts; mans act is the Lords. So here when man robbeth and spoileth us, the act is from the Lord, though the wickedness of the act is from the man. The Lord suffers men to spoil and undo us; yea, the Lord orders them to spoil us: It is done not only by his permission, but by his commission; not only with his leave, but by his appointment; *I will send them against an hypocritical Nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give them a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets,* Isa. 10.

Thirdly observe, *What the Lord will do either by himself, or by instruments, no man can stop or prevent.*

If he taketh away, who shall hinder him? The Lord hath absolute power; if he will overthrow men or families, or whole Kingdoms, none can stay him. There have been four great Monarchies in the world, and the Lord coming in judgment against them, hath taken all away. The united strength of all creatures cannot stand before him when he is angry and resolved. The *Babylonian* could not say and perform it, I will keep my Throne. The *Persian* could not say and do it, I will keep my State: The *Grecian* could not say and maintain it, I will keep my glory: The *Roman* could not say and make it good, I will keep my Empire. When the Lord had a mind to it, he came and fetcht away the power and glory, the crown and dignity of those Monarchs, he threw down their thrones, brake their states, darkened their glory, dissipated their Empires, no man could hinder him. *How are ye fallen from heaven, O Lucifers, sons of the morning? how are ye cut down to the ground, which did weaken the Nations? Though ye said in your hearts, we will ascend into heaven, we will exalt our thrones above the stars of God; We will ascend above the heights of the clouds, we will be like the most high; yet how are ye brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit? All that look upon you, say, Are these the men that made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms?* Thus the Lord hath taken away the *Thrones of Princes*, and none could hinder; he hath also removed the *Candlesticks of Churches*, and none could hinder. Christ threatned the seven Churches in *Asia*, that he would come and take away their Candlesticks; which of these hindered him? Both Crowns and Candlesticks must down, if he speak the word. It is said, when *David* kept his Fathers sheep, there came a Lion and a Bear, and took a Lamb and a sheep out of the Flock; but he arose and went out after them, and rescued both Lamb and Sheep, taking the prey out of their teeth: When the Lord Christ, the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*, will come and tear and take away, no *David* can rescue out of his hand. The five Kings that came against *Sodom*, took away *Lot*; *Abraham* went with his Army and made them restore, made them bring back again; it is ordinary with man, when one hath robbed another, for a stronger to make him restore and vomit up the sweet morsels which he hath swallowed. It is not thus with God.

First, Power cannot do it; though the instruments which he useth to take away from us, be weak, yet the strong shall not be able to make the weak restore. A weak Nation may destroy a strong Nation, and the stronger shall not be able to make the weaker restore, if the Lord send them. When the *Babylonians* encamped about *Jerusalem*, he warns them by his Prophet, *Do not think you shall deliver your selves by your great strength*, I have sent them to take your City and your State. *And though they were all wounded men, yet they shall rise up and take your City* (Isa. 43. 13.) *I will work* (saith the Lord) *and who shall let it?* Who shall let it? Why, they might say, We will have some that shall let it: No (saith the Lord) none shall let it; *Behold, I have sent to Babylon, and destroyed all their Princes*: those that sought to hinder me in my work, by their power and counsel, are broken, though they seemed as strong as iron bars (so the word is) these bars of iron cannot keep me from entring, I will break all opposition raised against my work.

Secondly, As power cannot hinder him, so policy cannot; no counsel shall stop him: They (*Isa.* 7. 6.) took counsel and resolved strongly, *We will go up against Judah, and destroy it, and set a King in the midst of it, even the Son of Tabeal*; the Lord answereth in the next words, *It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.* You resolve to do it; you make it out in your counsels, how to hinder mine, but it shall not be, it shall not come to pass. As no counsel against us shall stand, if the Lord be with us (*Isa.* 8. 10.) so no counsel for us shall stand, if the Lord be against us.

Thirdly, When the Lord is resolved to take away the peace and glory of a Nation, or of a Church, he will do it; and no spiritual means shall hinder him, prayer it self shall not hinder him. If any thing in the world can move the Lord to restore, when he taketh away the peace of a people, it is prayer, and the cry of his people. Prayer hath often met the Lord, as *Abigail* did *David* (1 Sam. 25.) and prevailed with him to put up his sword, which was ready to destroy. At the voyce of prayer the Lord hath restored that which he took away, and hath stayed from doing that which he seemed fully resolved to do, *Psal.* 106. 23. *The Lord would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach.* Did *Moses* out-power the Lord? did he out-wit or out-policy the Lord? No, but *Moses* prayed, and prayed so strongly, that the Lord was hindered, that is, he, as if he had been hindered, did not effect the thing; he restored their comforts again, when he had arrested but some of them, and seemed to come armed with resolution to take all away. Yet sometimes we find the Lord will come and take away, and prayer it self, prayer and fasting, cries and tears shall not hinder, God will trample upon all these. *God was resolved to take away the glory of* Israel; and to assure them that he would, he takes away that wherein their chief assurance lay, that he would not (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Thus saith the Lord, though* Moses *and* Samuel *stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people, &c.* As if he had said, Ye think to hinder me now, ye will stop me, ye will send out prayer, your old friend, which hath helped you heretofore at many a dead lift. And if you cannot pray enough your selves, you will procure prayers, and pray in the aid of prayer from all the Favourites that I have in the world, ye will get *Moseses* and *Samuels*, such as they, to pray for you; ye may do so if ye will, but it shall not profit you; they and ye shall lose your labour, even these labours will not quit cost, or be worth the while to the end ye aim at; for, *though Moses and Samuel*

Samuel *stood before me, and intreated for this people, yet my mind could not be toward them: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth, such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for death, to death; and such as are for captivity, to captivity.* Thus, I say, sometimes the Lord is resolved to take away life, riches, glory, peace, the all both of persons and Nations, that nothing shall help us, or hinder him; no, not the prayers and cries, not the supplications and tears of his own people, which are the strongest stops of all in the way of provoked justice. If prayer cannot stay destruction, and obtain a reprieve from death; if the prayers of a *Moses* and a *Samuel* cannot, nothing can; it is, as if God had said, The best means shall fail you, therefore all means shall fail you: if when prayer cannot hinder God, we resort to other means; it is as if we should think to fasten an Anchor with a twined threed, which hath broken a cable; or to conquer an enemy with a pot-gun and a bull-rush, whom we could not with Sword and Cannon. And as God will not sometimes be entreated, so he ought not at any time to be questioned; which is the next point.

Supremus judex est à quo non potest esse provocatio.

Who shall say unto him, What doest thou?

That's further considerable; man is not only not able to stop the Lord from what he would do, but he hath no right to put in a plea against what he hath done, no nor to ask him what he hath been doing, or why he did it. The superior may ask the inferior, and call him to an account: Every inferior Judge and Court, is accountable to those above; that is the highest Court, and he the highest Judge, to whom no man can say, *What doest thou?* The *Parliament of England* is therefore the highest Judicatory in this Kingdom, because their actions are not questionable in any other Court; one *Parliament* may say to another, What hast thou done? This *Parliament* hath said to *Parliaments* that have gone before, What have ye done in making such and such Laws? No power of man besides their own can question some men, much less can any man question God, and say to him, *What doest thou?* He is supreme, there is no appeal to any other higher Judge, or higher Court. Hence observe,

Whatsoever God resolveth and determineth concerning us, we must bear it, and quietly submit.

Quicquid de nobis Deus statuit libenter ferendum est.

No man may say unto him, *What doest thou? Why do ye sit still* (saith the Prophet, *Jer.* 8.14.) *Assemble your selves, and let us enter into the defenced Cities, and let us be silent there, for the Lord hath put us to silence, and given us waters of gall to drink, because we have sinned against him. The Lord hath put us to silence*; that is, the Lord hath done these things, and we are not to question him about them, or to ask him what he hath done, or why he hath done thus? Therefore let us be silent, say they. Let us not murmur at, and complain over our own sufferings, much less tax and charge God for his doings. It becomes us to obey Gods suspension; to be silent, when he puts us to silence. The Lord never silences any (unless in wrath to those who would not hear) from speaking in his Name, and publishing his word. But he hath silenced all from speaking against his works; and it will be ill with us, if our passions (how much soever God seems to act against us) shall take off this suspension. The Lord is uncontrollable in all his works. When *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan. 4. 35.) came to himself, and began to think and speak like a man, after he had been among the beasts, see what an humble acknowledgment he makes concerning God: *All the inhabitants of the earth* (saith he) *are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* Here, we have both parts of *Job's* speech; none can stay his hand, which is the former; and none can say unto him, *What doest thou?* which is the later. That great Monarch acknowledged he had no power to question God, though he at that time had power to question all the men upon the earth. *Nebuchadnezzar* speaks like *Job*. A wicked man may make a true report of God. Many speak right of the Lord, whose hearts are not right with him. *Nebuchadnezzar* was converted from beastliness, but I find not that he was converted to holiness. He came home to his own Court, but I see no proof that he came home to the Church of God; yet, see how divinely he speaks, and how humbly he walks, not so much as offering to ask God (who had chang'd him from a Commander of men, to a companion of beasts) *What doest thou?*

We may ask the Lord (in one sence) *what he doth?* Yea, the Lord doth nothing in the world, but his Saints and servants are enquiring of him about it. He invites them to petition for what they would have, *Ask of me things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me* (Isa. 45. 11.) Though man cannot order or enjoyn the least thing upon God, yet at the entreaty of his people, he is as ready to do, as if he were at their command. And as we are thus invited to ask things to come, so we are not totally denied to ask about things already done. We may ask him in an humble way for information, not in a bold way of contradiction. We may in zeal to his glory, not in discontent with our own condition, expostulate with him about what he hath done. So *Joshua* (Chap. 7. 7, 8.) *Alas O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over* Jordan, *to deliver us into the hand of the* Amorites *to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side* Jordan, *&c.* but how durst *Joshua* speak thus? What if God would destroy them, was it not his duty to bear it, and let God alone? Yes doubtless, and such I doubt not was the frame of *Joshua's* spirit. If *Israel* only had been to suffer, *Joshua* had held his peace, at least from such language; but he saw a further matter in it; the glory of God was like to suffer in their sufferings: the close of his prayer betrayes this holy disposition of his heart, *vers.* 9. *And what wilt thou do unto thy great name?* As if he had said, Lord, the matter were not much, though the name of *Israel* were blotted out from under Heaven, so thy Name were written in fairer characters. But I fear a blow to *Israel* will be a blot to thy Name, and therefore I have taken upon me to pray this prayer unto thee, and I have prayed rather for thee, then to thee. All prayers are made to God, and yet some are made for him. Not that he hath any want, or is in any the remotest possibility of any danger, but only for the promoting of his glory; and that the world may not have occasion of a dishonourable thought of him, whose honour never abates in it self, or in the eyes of his own people. Thus we may ask him what he hath done, and why he hath brought such desolations upon his people. But we may not ask him what he hath done, either to question his right to do it, or to question his righteousness in doing of it. No creature may put the question upon either of these terms, *What hast thou done?* much less conclude, Thou hast done that which thou hast no right to do, or, thou hast been unrighteous in doing it. Either of these is highest blasphemy: for, whatsoever the Lord doth, he hath right to do, and whatsoever the Lord doth, he is righteous in doing it.

Hence it followeth by way of Corollary,

That, *The Lord is of absolute power.*

He is the *Sovereign Lord, Lord over all*; there is no appeal from him, no questioning of him. *Solomon* speaketh of the power of a King, in this language (*Eccles.* 8. 4.) *Where the word of a King is, there is power, and who may say unto him, What doest thou?* But is there nothing which a King doth, about which it may be said unto him, What doest thou? And what is this word of a King? The word of a King, is the Law of his Kingdom: all that a King doth or speaks besides the Law, he speaks as a man, not as a King; and that's the meaning of *Solomon's* Text; which Court-flatterers have corrupted with their unsound glosses, as if every word of a King were of absolute power, and must have peremptory obedience. A King is for his Kingdom; and while he commands according to the rules and Laws of his Kingdom, no Subject may question him, or say unto him, What doest thou? There is no power above his power, as he is armed with the power of his Laws. And because whersoever the Word of God is, there is his Law; therefore whersoever the Word of God is, there is power; and no man may say unto him, What doest thou? Every word of direction, spoken by God, is a Law; because his will is the Law of all things and persons. As the will of man by nature is not subject (by obeying) to the righteous Law of God, neither indeed can he; so the will

of

of God by nature is the subject, containing all righteous Laws, neither indeed can it not be: for though God be voluntarily, and with highest freeness righteous, yet he is righteous necessarily, and with greatest undeclinableness; as he is freely what he is, so it is impossible for him not to be what he is. And therefore no man ought to say to God, What doest thou? Seeing God can do nothing, but what he ought. In vain then is God either attempted by power, or sollicited by prayer against his own mind; For,

Vers. 13. **If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stop under him.**

Though, *If God taketh away, none can hinder him; though none ought to say unto him, What doest thou?* whatsoever he doth: yet possibly some will be venturing upon this hard task, and undertake this impossible adventure, attempting to recover Gods booty, and his prisoners out of his hand: but see the issue, *If God will not withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him.* Suppose any should come to help, protect and patronize those whom God hath a mind to take away and destroy, shall they prosper or speed? No, not only they themselves whom the Lord hath taken away, but their assistants, and their second, all that appear for them (except God call in his anger) shall fall before him.

לא ישיב אפו

Non revocabit nasum, non redibit à furore.

Avertit nasũ suũ, quasi se vinci permittat, & ab humiliante se peccatore fugeret. Ipsamet victoria vinci nescit.

If God will not withdraw his anger.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *If the Lord will not turn away his nostrils, or his face.* Nostrils or face are taken here, as in many other Scriptures, for anger, because there is such an appearance of anger in the face and nostrils; acted passion is seated there, as was noted (*Chap.* 4.9.) Therefore to turn away the face or nostril, is to turn away from anger, *Psal.*78.38. *Many a time turned he away his anger*; it is this word. When the Lord is angry, the turning of his face towards a man sheweth he is reconciled; and when he is angry, the not turning away of his face, shews that he is unreconciled, or resolved to continue angry. And while God is so resolved, man is in a sad case, his helpers must stoop. *The strength of* Israel *will not lie or repent* (1 Sam.15.29.) The Hebrew is, *The victory of* Israel. The Lords strength is victory. Victorious persons can hardly be overcome, but victory cannot; therefore except himself will withdraw, except himself overcome himself, it is not in the power of all creatures to overcome him (*Job* 23.13.) *He is in one mind, and who can turn him?* As if he had said, except the Lord will turn himself, and alter what he himself hath determined, it is not in men to cause him to alter, *He is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doth*; which is the highest expression of power imaginable. How many things do our souls desire which we cannot do? We are desiring and desiring, yet our hands are not able to bring it to pass, *The desires of the slothful* (alwayes) *slay them*, because (saith *Solomon*, Prov.21.25.) *their hands refuse to labour*; *and the desires of the diligent slay them*, sometimes, because they cannot compass the thing desired, with all their labour; but as for the Lord, *What his soul desireth, even that he doth.* And as his desires are irresistible, so is his anger, his irascible appetite is as victorious as his concupiscible, *unless God withdraw his anger.*

רהב

Invaluit robore, insolens fuit. Freti superbia. Pagn. *Auxiliatores superbiæ.* Reg.

The proud helpers do stop under him.] The word is, *Helpers of pride*, that is, such as think themselves most powerful and able to help, *The helpers of pride*, or the strong helpers. The same word (note that by the way) signifies strength and pride, because we are so apt to be proud of our strength. If a man have a little strength in the world, strength of friends, or of riches, strength of body or of mind, strength of understanding, strength of memory, strong parts, he is under a strong temptation to pride. *Pride is one of the greatest weaknesses of man, but it is alwayes grounded upon supposed strength.*

But who are these proud, these strong helpers?

Some understand it of the good Angels, who are the strongest, the highest of created helpers; Angels stoop under the power of God as well as men.

Others expound these strong helpers to be Devils, who are evil Angels, to whom evil men seek sometimes for help. If the Lord will not turn away his anger, though men seek to the Devil for help (as *Saul* did) that helper shall stoop under him. *Saul* consulted with a witch (the Devils oracle) yet he could not be delivered by a witch.

Others understand by these *strong helpers*, godly men; if the Lord will not turn away his anger, the righteous shall stoop under him, that is, they shall not be able to rescue a person or a Nation from the anger of God by prayer, or by the utmost improvements of their interest with God. Some places have fallen, because they wanted godly men to support them; and some places have fallen, though they had godly men to support them. The Vulgar Latine translation renders, *They that bear up the pillars of the world, shall fall.* Godly men bear up the pillars of the world. Though the Hebrew will not bear their translation, yet the sence is good. Godly men are the worlds supporters. It is said (*Revel.* 12.16.) *That the earth helped the woman*; that is, worldly men for carnal ends helped the Church, when a flood of persecution, cast out of the mouth of the Dragon, was ready to swallow her up. But the Church continually helps the world, and swallows up many of those floods of Gods displeasure, which else would drown the world. And because the Church was so thin, and there were so few godly men in the old world, therefore it was drowned, *Gen.*7. And because ten righteous persons were not found in *Sodom*, fire from heaven consumed it (*Gen.* 18.) God seeks for Saints many times to stand in the gap, and save a Kingdom, (*Ezek.* 22.30. *Jer.* 5.1.) and yet sometimes Kingdoms are not saved, though many such stand in the gap. Except the Lord turn away his anger, *these Porters of the world* shall not support it, these spiritual *Atlasses* shall faint and fall under him. The Heathens had a fiction of a mighty Gigantine man, whom they called *Atlas*, him they fancied bearing up the frame of nature: it is most true in a spiritual sence, the Saints bear up the world; yet if the Lord turn not away his anger, the world must totter and fall too, notwithstanding these helpers. For the Saints do not bear up the world, or save Kingdoms from wrath, by giving the least satisfaction to the justice of God (that's the sole Prerogative of Jesus Christ) but only by imploring the mercy of God. Or they are therefore said to turn away the wrath of God from a people, because God will not pour out his wrath upon that people, while his Saints are mingled with them. The tares are let grow, least in pulling them up, the wheat should be pulled up also. It is good for the worst to have the neighbourhood of those who are good.

Qui portant orbẽ. Vulg.

Further, More generally these proud helpers are supposed to be Kings and Common-wealths, joyned in strongest confederacies; and then the sence is, If God come against a Nation, though it joyn with other Nations, though hand joyn in hand, the hand of one King in the hand of another, yet it shall not escape or go unpunished.

Rab. Sol. Ei succumbent conspiratores potentissimi. Illi scilicet qui cæca arrogantia & superbia aliis auxiliũ pollicentur. Vatab. *Superbi & eorũ patroni appellatur Ægyptus hoc nomine propter summam suam perbiam.*

The proud helpers shall stop under him.

There is yet another interpretation, which restrains and limits the word *Rahab* particularly to *Egypt*, *Unless the Lord turn away his anger, helpers out of* Egypt *shall stoop under him*, or *Egypt helping shall stoop under him.* We find frequently in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, that *Egypt* is called *Rahab*. And that name did well suite with *Egypt*, which was both a strong and a proud Kingdom, *Psal.*87.4. *We will remember* Rahab *and* Babylon, that is, *Egypt* and *Babylon*. *Egypt* and *Babylon* are matcht together for pride, and for oppression, persecuting the people of God. And *Isa.*51.9. *Art not thou it that hath cut* Rahab, *and wounded the Dragon?* That is, art not thou (O Lord) he that didst cut *Egypt* in pieces, when they opposed thy people, and woundedst *Pharaoh* in the midst of the Red Sea. In *Job* 26.*vers.* 12. some translate *Rahab*, *Egypt*: we render the Text thus, *He divideth the Sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth thorow the proud*; so we, *By his understanding he strikes thorow* Rahab, that is, thorow *Egypt*, say others. And so they make that Text and this an argument, that the book of *Job* was penned after the deliverance of the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and that in these passages *Job* had reference to the mighty work of God, in destroying the *Egyptians* at the Red Sea. Taking the word thus, the Text is, *Unless the Lord turn away his anger,* Egypt *shall stoop under him*; as if he had said, *Do you not remember a late instance of Gods power?* Egypt *thought to contend with God, to hold his people in bondage*

Ex circumstantiis hoc locorũ non valdè incongruũ est hanc vocem sumi pro Ægypto & pro Pharaone in mari demerso. Bold. & Rab. Sol.

whether

whether he would or no, when he had a mind to bring them forth; but you know Egypt *stooped: God brought down the pride, and abated the strength of it.*

Loquitur prophetice. Bold. *Adjutores Ægypti, i. e. angeli ejus gentis. Ut in prophetia Danielis, princeps Persiæ.* Drus.

And that other place (*Chap.* 26. 12.) may be glossed thus, *He divided the Sea by his power*, that is, the Red Sea, *and by his understanding he struck thorow* Rahab; that is, when the *Egyptians* pursued his people, he destroyed them. Which interpretation carries a very clear proof that *Job* alludes to the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and therefore lived after the time of that deliverance; though others who grant the exposition, deny the inference, maintain that *Job* spake this prophetically, not historically. This we know, that *Egypt* was a place much sought to for help, and therefore it is elegantly said, *If the Lord turn not away his anger*, Egypt *shall stoop*; that Nation which hath been so often called out to help and relieve other Nations, that Nation which hath so often helped and relieved other Nations, shall not be able to help, *Isa.* 31. 1. *They go down to* Egypt *for help*, as if *Egypt* had been as a City of refuge, or the place of common resort for help. And *Isa.* 30. 7. *The Egyptians shall help in vain*; the Text is very appliable to this point; we read it thus, *The Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose, therefore have I cried concerning this, their strength is to sit still.* Their strength shall not deliver you, they shall help in vain, therefore I have warned you (saith the Prophet) to sit still, to be quiet with your own strength, and it is better to do so then to go down thither for help. But the word which we translate *strength*, is that in the Text, *Rahab*; and we may render the whole thus, *The Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose; therefore I cryed to them in this thing, They are proud, or only pride, Therefore sit still.* As if he had said, Will ye go to *Egypt* for help? Ye go but to a proud people for help, and ye had better have no helpers, then proud helpers; ye had better be quiet and sit still at home, for they shall help you in vain. So it is an elegant allusion to their nature and disposition. The truth is, proud helpers are very unsafe helpers, for the Lord resisteth the proud; and I wonder how they can help us to resist our enemies, who are resisted by the Lord himself? They will prove but ill friends to us, who have the Lord for their enemy.

Superbia tantum est, quiesce: fortasse vult dicere, nihil aliud esse in ea quam superbiam.

שחח *Est valde dejici & penitus humiliari, hoc loco servilē potissimum conditionem designat.*

They shall stoop under him.] The word is often used for worshipping, it imports likewise any casting down or abasement, because we in the worship of God ought to be exceedingly abased and humbled before him, *Psal.* 38. 6. *I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly.* So *Habak.* 3. 6. *The perpetual hills did bow*, that is, the power (for it is conceived to be a continued Allegory) of the great Monarchs, who were as the mountains and hills of the world, bowed under the Lord. The word is used to the same sence (*Isa* 49. 23.) where the Lord promiseth his people, *That Kings shall be their nursing Fathers, and Queens their nursing Mothers, they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick the dust of thy feet.* The Church shall have the honour to be honoured by the Kings and Princes of the world, they being converted shall bow down so low to the Scepter of Jesus Christ, held forth by the Church, as if they would lick up the very dust, and shall employ their power and authority for the good and protection of the Church. The speech of *Israel* (Gen. 27. 29.) in his prophetick blessing upon *Jacob*, *Let thy mothers sons bow down to thee*; and of *Jacib*, in his, upon *Judah* (Gen. 49. 8.) *Thy fathers children shall bow down before thee*, note greatest honour and subjection to them both.

The meaning of all is plainly this, *That except the Lord himself suspend his own act, and restrain his anger, no power in heaven or earth, how strong, how proud, how confident of success soever, is able to force him, or to alter him. Helpers shall not help themselves, much less those to whose help they come, against the mind and purpose of God.* Observe here,

First, *Those passions which are ascribed to God, are fully under the command of God.*

The passion of anger is ascribed to God, yet the anger which we say is in God, hath no power over God: Mans anger usually *masters* him; but God is always *master of his anger*; that is, he can turn and withdraw his anger when he pleaseth. There is no perturbation in God; when he is offended, he is not moved; his motions are all without upon the creatures, he hath none in his own bosom. The passions of the Lord are his most serious counsels and determinations; and we therefore say, he is angry, because those counsels of his acted, look like the effects of anger. Observe,

Secondly, That, *It is not in the power of man tō turn away the anger of God.*

He doth not say, except men by prayer or other means stop the anger of God, but, *Except the Lord withdraw his anger, all help is vain.* Prayer is said to appease the wrath of God, and to stay his anger; *Moses* stood in the gap, and *Aaron* came out with incense to turn away his wrath; yet it is an act of Gods will, which turns away his anger, not the force of our prayer; prayer therefore prevails with God, because he hath said, it shall. He is infinitely free when himself acknowledges that we lay the powerfullest restraint upon him: when the Lord is turned by prayer, it is his will to be turned; it was his counsel, and is his command that prayer should be made as a means to turn him; and it is his promise, that he will turn to us when we pray. Then it appears to us that the Lord hath decreed to do a thing, when he stirs up the hearts of his people to pray for the doing of it; and that he is purposed to withdraw his anger, when he draws out their hearts strongly to entreat his favour. Observe,

Thirdly, That, *until God be appeased towards a person or a people, there is no remedy for them in the world.*

The proud helpers shall stoop under him. If the helpers themselves fall, who can rise by these helpers? If they are cast down, how shall we be upheld by them? What if the people of a provoking Nation associate themselves together, or associate themselves with other Nations, or call in help and aid from all that are round about them, shall they therefore escape in their wickedness? they shall not escape. Unless God help our helpers, they are helpless to us. When many companies, and great Commanders repaired to *David* at *Ziklag*, *David went out to meet them*, (1 Chron. 12. 17.) *and said, If ye be come peaceably to help me, mine heart shall be knit to you; but if ye be come to betray me*, &c. *Amasai* who was chief of the Captains, answers (*v.* 18.) *Thine are we*, David, *and on thy side, thou son of* Jesse: *peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers, for thy God helpeth thee.* Our helpers cannot give us peace, unless God give them peace; our helpers must be helped by God, before they can give us help. The anger of God breaks all the staves we lean on, and makes them as reeds, which wound rather then support; till God is quiet all is unquiet, and when he is unpacified, men shall be unpacified, or their peace shall be to our loss. As, if he withdraw his anger, enemies shall oppose in vain: so except he withdraw his anger, friends shall help in vain.

Lastly, *They who strive to deliver those whom God will destroy, shall fall themselves before God.*

If God be resolved upon the thing, not only they that are helped, but the helpers also shall stoop under him: helpers cannot help themselves when he is angry; they shall be like Idols, which have eyes and see not, hands and cannot act, either to save themselves, or those that trust upon them. The greatest strength in the world without God, it is no better then an Idol, which is nothing in the world. Strength cannot be strong for it self, and help cannot help it self. Our help stands in the Name of the Lord, which made heaven and earth, and not in the name of any creature under any part of heaven, or upon the face of the whole earth.

VERS. 14, 15.

How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?
Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer, I would make supplication to my Judge.

JOB having in the former passages of this Chapter lifted up the glory and majesty of God, in his power and justice, and shewed the utter insufficiency of creatures to implead his

his Justice, or to rescue themselves out of the hand of his power; he now draws his speech nearer home, and calling his thoughts from those remoter journeyes up to the heavens, and among the stars, over the mountains and hills, down to the depths of the sea, and foundations of the earth, about all which he had discourse; I say, calling his thoughts from these remoter travels, he comes now closer to the matter, and from all those premises, deduces a conclusion in the words of the Text, to vindicate himself from that charge which his friends laid upon him, as if he were a contender with the power, or an accuser of the wisdom and justice of God. From the folly and blasphemy of both which imputations, he disaspersseth himself in these two verses, by an argument taken from the greater to the less; and we may form it up thus.

He who is so strong, wise and just, that all the powers in heaven and earth are not able to oppose or stay him; surely I alone, or single I, a poor, weak creature, am not able to oppose or stay him.

But (as I have cleared by those former instances) *God is so strong, wise and just, that all the powers of heaven, the sea, the mountains, and the pillars of the earth, the Sun, Moon and Stars, together with the greatest and mightiest of all the children of men, are not able to resist him.*

Therefore I, a poor, weak creature, lying here in this sad condition, am not able (nor have I any design) to do it.

Cum robustissimæ illæ creaturæ, montes, mare, cœli, ei cedant; & quæcunque robore efferuntur & præstant, quàto minus ego? Merl.

Only the conclusion of this Syllogism is expresst, in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, the premises are couched in the foregoing context.

Here take notice in general, that *Job* falls in the conclusion somewhat below the premises. There the intendment was to demonstrate the strongest creature unable to resist the power of God; but *Job* speaks lower of himself, I am so far from being able to set my strength against the strength of God, that I acknowledge I am not able to hold discourse with him, or speak with him about these things; I have not only no power to oppose, but I have no words to oppose him.

Verse 14. How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?

Si robusti nihil valent contra illum quanto minus ego debilis & infirmus homuncio? Drus. Nunquam animo finxi quod vos de me fingitis, me posse aut velle illi ex æquo respõdere. Pined.

How much less.] The word is used in the fourth Chapter; *How much less in them that dwell in houses of clay?* Both Texts bear the same sence. *If he charge his Angels with folly, and put no trust in those his servants, then, how much less in them who dwell in houses of clay?* So the argument lies here, If those mighty and powerful creatures, and the mightiest of the children of men are not able to contend with God, *how much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him?* As if he had said, It never so much as came into my thoughts to contend with God; I confess I have complained grievously about my troubles, and have spoken some things unadvisedly, but it never entred into my heart to quarrel with God, or stand in battel array against him, no not so much as in a battel of words.

How much less shall I answer?

Shall I answer.] There is a twofold answering, both appliable to this Text.

First, There is an answering by way of fact, a real answer, or answering to a condition. Thus one man answers another that is of equal power and strength, of the same measure in abilities and gifts with him. Thus also, as *Solomon* speaks (*Prov.* 27. 19.) *Face answers face in the water*, that is, the face seen in the water, is of the same feature and complexion with that which looks upon the water. Thus bodies and buildings answer one another, when they carry the same dimensions; and thus money answers all things, because it bears value with every thing.

Secondly, There is answering by words, which is twofold. First, Contradictory. Secondly, Satisfactory. The former is that which the Apostle forbids servants to use (*Tit.* 2. 9.) *Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again.* Servants cannot please their masters unless they answer to what they are demanded; and they cannot please their masters if they oppose what is duly commanded; this answering again is unseemly in servants.

The latter kind of answering is that which the Apostle *Peter* charges upon all Christians (*1 Pet.* 3. 15.) *Be alwayes ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.* To answer thus is every mans duty, both to God and man. To answer by contradicting the command of God, is rebellion. To answer by satisfying the demands of God, is a duty. To answer by a proportion to the power or wisdom of God, is infinitely beyond mans ability. *Job* abhorred the first, he was ready (as well as he could) to perform the second; and therefore *Job* is chiefly to be understood of the third; *How much less shall I answer him?* That is, I do not look upon my self as a match for God, as if I had strength proportionable to his strength, or wisdom suitable to his, as if I could thunder like him. I do not think that I am able to answer his reason by my reason; no, I am so far from an ability to answer him with reason, that I know not how to chuse out words to reason with him; *How much less shall I answer him?* &c.

From the whole observe, before I come to particulars,

A godly mans thoughts are lowest of himself.

Job had gone through the several series of the Creatures; and finding them unable to contend with God, concludes himself more unable then they. Doubtless he might have answered God as well as any. If any are able to contend with God, godly men are, they have the greatest strength; such of them especially as *Job*, a man of that height and elevation of spirit in holiness, of whom God hath given his word, That there was none like him in the earth. What creature (except an Angel) came so nigh the Creator as *Job*? and yet when he had looked over them all, he saith, *How much less shall I?* He thought any one might enter the lists, and contend with the Lord better then he. Man (having reason) is more able then all the irrational creatures; and amongst men, godly men; and among godly men, they who reach the highest degrees of godliness, are most able, and yet *Job*, a man set upon the top and pinacle of all perfection attainable in this life, saith, *How much less shall I?*

They of whom God hath the highest thoughts, have the meanest thoughts of, and put the lowest rates upon themselves.

No man ever received a fairer or more valuable Certificate from God then *Job* did, and yet no man could speak more undervaluingly of himself then *Job* did.

Secondly observe, *The more we know God, the more humble we are before him.*

Job having much knowledge of God, quickly found out his own utter insufficiency to deal with God; *How much less shall I answer him?* Not that he had less ability to answer God then others, but being more acquainted with God, and living nearer God then others, he saw his own insufficiency more then others. The more communion we have with God, the more knowledge we have of God, the less and the lower we are in our own eyes. The reason why men are so full of pride, is, because they are strangers from God, they know nothing of him as they ought. And proportionably, as any one is further distant from, or more ignorant of God, the more doth pride prevail upon him, even as humility grows more humble in proportion to his nearer approaches. When *Job* was yet brought nearer to God, he was more humbled, *chap.* 42. 5, 6. *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee*; that is, I have a clearer and more glorious manifestation of thee to my soul then ever, I now perceive thy power, thy holiness, thy wisdom, thy faithfulness, thy goodness, as if they were corporeal objects, as if I saw them with mine eye; *Wherefore I abhor my self in dust and ashes*: he could not go lower in his thoughts of himself then this expression laid him. Abhorrence is a perturbation of the mind, arising from vehement dislike, or extreamest disesteem. Abhorrence, strictly taken, is hatred wound up to the height. As exulting is the highest act of joy, and delighting the highest act of love, so abhorring is the deepest act of hatred; and to *abhor, repenting in dust and ashes*, is the deepest act of abhorrence. Thus low *Job* goes, not only to a dislike, but to the furthest degree of it, abhorrence of himself, when he saw the Lord. So *Isaiah*

(in

(in the sixth of his Prophesie) when God came near him, and he saw so much of God, cries out, *I am undone, for I am a man of polluted lips*; but did not *Isaiah* know he was a sinful man, a man of polluted lips till then? Yes, but he was never so sensible of it, as then. He saw his own pollution more then ever by the light of the glory of God that shone round about him. He never saw himself so clearly, as when the Majesty of God dazel'd his eyes. When the Sun shines bright into a room, we may see the least mote in the air; so when the glory of God irradiates the soul, we see all the motes and atomes of sin, the least spot and uncevenness of our hearts or lives; this brings the soul low, and will keep it so: *The more we know of God, the more we honour him, and our selves the less.* These two are eminent effects of knowing God. As God rises in our thoughts, so we fall. *Paul*, who had been rapt up into the third heavens, and had a multitude of divine revelations, calls himself *The least of the Apostles* (1 Cor. 15. 9.) and *less then the least of all Saints* (Eph. 3. 8.) Not that any thing can be less then the least. The Apostles holy Rhetorick doth not cross *Aristotle*'s Philosophy. But (the original being a double diminutive) his meaning is, he was as little as could be, therefore he puts himself down so little as could not be, *less then the least*. *Job* speaks near him, *How much less shall I answer him?*

The Question imports an inability in him for resolution. He thought himself so much less able to answer then they, that he could not tell how much less; and therefore leaves others to cast it up, and take the account how short he was of that business; he knew it was much, but how much it was, he knew not: *How much less shall I answer him?*

And choose out my words to reason with him?

The word signifies choice upon exact trial; it is used in that sence, *Exod.* 17. 9. *Moses* biddeth *Joshua* choose out men to go and fight with *Amalek*; he did not take them as they came to hand, or lay his hand violently upon them to press them, but he advisedly took his choice; he had pickt men for that service. *David gathered all the Children of Israel*; he had a select company to fetch up the Ark (2 *Sam.* 6. 1.) And when he undertook the Duel with *Goliah*, the Text saith, *he went to the brook, and chose him out five smooth stones*; they were choice stones, fittest for his sling. As it is among persons and things, so among words; there are choice words: Some are but rubbish, refuse words; others are precious, wise, suitable words: *How should I choose out my words to reason with him?* Shall I think by setting words in a curious frame, to prevail with God? or shall I by speaking rhetorically and elegantly, overcome him? There is much power in Oratory, in choice of words, and therefore the holy Ghost forbids the Ministers of the Gospel to speak with choice words, in that sence, namely, with rhetorical and artificial strained eloquence, which naturally pleaseth the ear, and takes the heart; which kind of speech is called *wisdom of words* (1 Cor. 2. 17.) *and the enticing words of mans wisdom* (chap. 2. 4.) They, having an aptness in them to entice or perswade, are called enticing or perswasive words. And because he would have little or nothing of the creature seen in winning souls, therefore the Apostle professes he used not such eloquence of words. Great Orators have carried whole Assemblies by the ears. And lest it should be thought that the Ministers of the Gospel convert men with Oratory, therefore they must not use such *choice words*. It becomes them not, like Rhetoritians and Orators, to polish their stile with an affected curiosity and exactness of Language. But as affected language is sinful, so neglect or rudeness of speech is not without blame. We should labour to speak properly and weightily; so it becomes us to choose our words, and not to speak till we have heard what our selves would say. And thus *Job* knew he ought to choose his words, when he spake to God; but he knew also he could not make any such choice, either of rhetorical and perswasive words, or of logical and argumentative words, as might fit him to answer God, or reason with him. He was assured that neither the eloquence of his stile could perswade him, nor the strength of his arguments convince him; *How shall I choose out words to reason with God?*

In the Original, the word [reason] is not found; only thus, *Shall I choose out words with him?* To choose out words with another, bears this elegancy, as if *Job* had said; If I should set my self to chuse words with God, he would chuse better words then I, more forcible words then I; he is more able infinitely to make choice of words and matter to convince me, then I to convince him: For the word which we translate [words] may signifie not only words with which matter is cloathed, but the matter it self cloathed with those words. The sum of all is, I can neither choose matter nor words to discourse and argue with God, his invention and judgment about both, infinitely exceeds mine.

דבר *Significat causam aut rationem, & sic eligere verba, id est novas invenire rationes vel argumenta ad suam causā fulciendum.*

Mr. *Broughton* refers the word [chusing] to *Job*, and not to words, thus; *Shall I choose to word it with God?* to plead and debate the business with God? Surely of all elections, I would not make that; I will not choose to make any words with God: silence and submission becomes me better. That's a good sence.

But here a doubt may arise from a passage (*chap.* 13. 3.) Where *Job* speaks thus, *Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and desire to reason with God*; how then doth he here say, *Shall I choose out words to reason with God?* As if he had said, by no means, I will not do this thing; and yet there he seems very ambitious of the attempt, and confident of the success; *I desire to reason with God.*

I answer, There is a twofold reasoning with God. There is a reasoning of declaration, and a reasoning of contestation. When *Job* saith, *I desire to reason with God*, his meaning is only this, I desire to declare and set forth my case and condition before him. We may reason with God by way of narrative; he allows us to tell him how it is with us.

Further, *Job* speaks in *chap.* 13. comparatively, shewing how much he had rather declare his case to God, then to his friends: God was a better friend to unbosom himself to, then any of, or all his three friends; for he saith of them in the very next words, *Ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Physitians of no value*; to what purpose would it be for me longer to make known my case, and shew my grief to you? I had rather reason with God then man. But as for that other reasoning by way of contestation and quarrelling with the providence and works of God, *Job* professeth in this place, he had no mind to it; he would never choose that task, or set himself to choose out words for that end; it was too high for him. He saw it was neither wisdom nor duty to deal with and undertake God, either with an open, or a closed hand; either with Logical subtilties, or Rhetorical flourishes.

Again, Whereas *Job* saith, he would not reason with God; it will be queried, May we not reason with God at all? The Lord himself saith (*Isa.* 1. 18.) *Come, let us reason together.* If the Lord calleth us to reason with him, may we not then reason with him? Is it not sinful modesty to refuse what God offers? To clear that,

I answer, There are two wayes wherein we may not reason with God.

First, We must not reason with him in our own strength.

Secondly, We must not reason with him upon our own worth.

And that is the full meaning of *Job*, *I would not choose to reason with God*, that is, to reason with God in my own strength, as if I had power to deal with him. Or secondly, I would not reason with God upon my own worth, as if there were any thing in me upon which I were able to make it out that God ought not to deal thus with me; and that's clear by the words which follow, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not answer*; that is, I would not at all speak with God standing upon this bottom, or under the title of my own worthiness. In either of these wayes it is sinful to reason with God: But we may reason with God in the way of declaration, before spoken of.

In prayer there is a reasoning with God; and the reasonings and pleadings that are in prayer, are the life and strength of prayer. Prayer is not only a bare manifestation of our mind to God, by such a suit or petition; but in prayer there is, or ought to be a holy arguing with God about the matter which we declare, which is a bringing out and urging of reasons and motives, whereby the Lord may be moved to grant what we pray for. The prayers of the Saints recorded in Scripture, are full of arguments.

I shall shew it in one example, as a taste for the rest; *Jacob*

cob in his distress at the approach of his brother *Esau*, flees to God in prayer (*Gen.* 32.) And he doth more then speak in prayer, he argues, yea, he wrestles with God in prayer. The sum of it is set down (*v.* 11.) *Deliver me, I pray thee*: To the undertaking of this deliverance, he urgeth the Lord by no fewer then seven arguments. First, From Gods Covenant with his Ancestors, *O God of my Father Abraham*, &c. As if he had said, remember those names with whom thou madest solemn Covenant of protection, both to them and their posterity. The second is from Gods particular command for this journey; *Thou saidest unto me, return*: I departed not on my own head, but by thy direction; and therefore thou canst not for thy honour, but free me from danger, seeing at thy word I am fallen into it. Thou O Lord, art even engaged to give me defence, while I yield thee obedience. Thirdly, He puts him in mind of his promises; *Thou saidest, I will deal well with thee*; and that includes all other promises made unto him: these he makes as a Bulwark to defend him, or as his Anchor in the storm. This Anchor must fail, and this Bulwark be broken down before the danger comes to me. If thy promise stand, I cannot fall. The fourth is the confession of his own unworthiness. Faith is alwayes humble, and while we are most confident in Gods word, we are most distrustful of our own desert; *I am not worthy of the least of thy mercies*. Though I am thus bold to urge thy Covenant, yet I am as ready to acknowledge my own undesert: Thou art a debtor by the promise thou hast made to me, not by any performance of mine to thee. Fifthly, He seeks to continue the current of Gods favour, by shewing how plentifully it had already streamed unto him, which he doth by way of *Antithesis*, setting his former poverty in opposition to his present riches; *With my staff I passed this* Jordan, *and now I am become two bands*; that is, thou hast blessed me abundantly, and shall my Brothers malice blast all? Am I encreased only to make him abound? The sixth Argument is, the greatness and eminence of his peril, *v.* 11. *I fear lest he will come and slay the mother upon the children*; a proverbial speech in the holy Language, like that of cutting off branch and root in one day, both denoting total excision, or an utter overthrow. Seventhly, He shuts up by renforcing the mention of the promise, which he urgeth more strongly then before; there it was only, *Thou saidst, I will deal well with thee*; but here it is, *Thou saidst, in doing good, I will do thee good*, that is, as it is rendred in our translation, *I will surely do thee good*; and therefore let not my Brother do me evil. We see *Jacob's* praying was reasoning with God, and himself in the issue got not only a new blessing, but a new name, *Israel, a Prince with God, a prevailer both with God and men.*

And thus we may reason with God in the strength, and for the sake of Christ in all our prayers. For as when God calls for our obedience, he usually adds perswasion to his precept, and reasons with us, as well as directs us; his commands are not alwayes barely authoritative, and the resolves of his prerogative: so when we call upon God for audience, we should add perswasions to our petitions, and reason with him, as well as intreat him. Only we should be careful to reason from right Topicks and heads of argument, such as these;

First, From the freeness of the Grace of God.

Secondly, From the firmness of his Promise.

Thirdly, From the greatness of our need, or of the Churches misery.

Fourthly, From all the concernments of his own Glory, *&c.* Thus we may reason with God for the doing of any thing we ask according to his will; and in these reasonings, the spirit, life and strength of prayer consists.

So then, the only thing which *Job* declineth as sinful and unbecoming, is, to reason with God as a contender; he might humbly reason with him as a petitioner, or as a remembrancer; *Put me in remembrance* (saith the Lord, *Isa.* 43.26.) *Let us plead together; declare thou that thou maist be justified.* We may declare our cause, and we need not fear to declare our sins, that God may justifie us; but we must not presume to declare our righteousness, that we may justifie our selves; this *Job* disclaims.

How much less shall I answer him, and chuse out words to reason with him?

Towards the further clearing of these words, we may take notice that *Job* puts himself under a double relation. In the former part of the verse he puts himself in the Respondents place; *How much less shall I answer him?* And in the latter part of the verse he puts himself in the Opponents place; *And chuse out words to reason with him?* His meaning is, If the Lord will object against me, I am not the man who dares, or is able to answer him. And if I should take upon me to object against the Lord, the Lord may, and can easily answer me. From which notion of the words, two points may be observed.

First, *No man can answer what God hath to object against him.*

The Lord hath a thousand arguments which we are not able to give him satisfaction in (as was touched in the beginning of this Chapter, *vers.* 3.) *We cannot answer him one of a thousand.* If God should cast a man to hell, what hath he to say for himself, as from himself, when God objects, *Thou hast sinned.* If God afflict a man, and lay him low, giving him this argument for what he doth, *I am thy Creator, I formed and made thee; if I break thee to pieces*; what canst thou say against me? If the Lord should say, *I am thy Sovereign*, I have supream power over thee, may I not do with thee what I will? what hath man to answer? Man must be silent, and lay his hand upon his mouth; he hath not a word of reason or holiness to reason against God in any of his dispensations.

Let man (on the other side) gather as many arguments as he can to object against God, he is able to wipe them all off presently, to blow them away with a breath. All the shifts and apologies, the excuses and arguings which any make for their sins, or which they make for themselves against the justice and wisdom of God, are answered with a word; so that, put man in the Opponents, or in the Respondents place, he can make no work of it.

Secondly, Observe from this phrase, *Shall I chuse out words to reason with him?*

God is not taken with words.

Fine phrases and eloquent speeches will not carry it with him; *If we would prevail with God, we must speak our hearts to him rather then our words*: yet we ought to chuse out words (as was touched before) when we speak to God. As we must take heed how we hear, while he speaks; so we have need to take heed what we speak in his hearing. That's *Solomon's* advice, *Eccles.* 5. 2. *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.* That is, speak not vainly and unadvisedly, thy tongue running before thy wit. Let wisdom guide thy tongue, and let thy heart shew thee wisdom; *Let not thy heart be hasty to utter*, when its office is to conceive, not to utter. But how can the heart be hasty to utter? Utterance is the business of the tongue. The heart is then hasty to utter, when it suffers the tongue to utter what it self hath not throughly concocted by meditation, and made its own. As in the body, so in the mind, the third concoction is that which nourishes and assimilates. So then *Solomon's* meaning is, Let not raw, unboiled, undigested thoughts pass out into discourses, or be stampt into words before the Lord. As there is a sin of curiosity, so there may be a sin of neglect. *Extreams are equally dangerous.* The distance that is between God and us, proclaims this duty of our most reverent addresses to him. *He is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few*; and yet the fewness of words pleases God no more then the multitude of them doth. We say, *In many words there can hardly be a scarcity of errors*; and in a few words there may be not a few errors, possibly more errors then words. *Fewness*, simply taken, is not the grace of words: But because they who speak but little, do usuall think the more, and so their words are steep'd long in their hearts, therefore few words are usually *choice words.* It is a sin, if we are well conceited of our words; and it is a sin, if our words be not our best conceptions. *How shall I chuse out words to reason with him?*

Verse 15. **Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer; but I would make supplication to my Judge.**

אם־ צדקתי

This brings the matter to the height; Who, I reason and plead with God? I answer him? No, *Though I were righteous, yet would I not answer him.* The strength of the argument lies thus; as if *Job* had said, *I am so far from entring a contest with God, that I profess I would not do it, though I had the greatest advantage and fitness to do it of any man in the world; though I were righteous, I would not do it. I do not say, that the reason why I would not plead with God, is because I am wicked, sinful and abominable, more guilty and unrighteous then my neighbours, or then you, my friends; but how righteous soever I were, I would not do it.* *Job* speaks as a man who would shew how much he dreads the power and strength of another; *What, I fight with such a man? I contend with such a man? No, I profess I would not fight with him, though I were as well weapon'd, arm'd and prepar'd as any man in the world, I would not come near him.* If there be any armour or weapon, any furniture or preparations which may enable man to contend with God, it is the *armour of righteousness*, and the furnitures of Grace. Now, saith *Job*, though I had that armour, *though I were righteous, I would not contend with him.* The Apostle argues much after this rate, 1 *Cor.* 13. about that great point of Gospel-charity; where he telleth us, that all things are as nothing without charity; and he instanceth in those things which stand highest in the thoughts of man, to commend him to the acceptation both of God and man, *vers.* 2, 3. *Though I have the gift of prophesie, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains; and though I should give my body to be burned, and have not Love, what would it advantage me? Though I should give all my goods to the poor, and have not Love,* &c. It is possible for a man to give abundance to the poor, and yet have a dearth of love, both to them and to God, in his heart; all the love that moveth him, may be love to himself: therefore (saith he) *Though I give my goods to the poor, it profits me nothing*; he puts all these suppositions, which are the greatest advantages for heaven (except Christ) imaginable, and yet concludes all but as sounding brass or a tinckling Cymbal, nothing but noise without Charity. So here, to shew how impossible a thing it is for creatures, in their own strength, to contend with God, he puts a supposition upon that which is most probable to carry us thorow it, *Righteousness*; *Though I were righteous, I were not able to answer him,* no not I.

Though I were righteous.

It is, as if *Job* had further expresst himself to this sence; *I am so far from justifying my self in all my complainings* (which was the thing his friends taxed him with) *as if God could find nothing amiss in what I have spoken, that I freely confess there is not the most considerate, righteous or holy action that ever I did in my life, which I durst bring to the touch-stone, to the balance, to justifie my self before God by; no, but instead of that, I would fall down and abase my self, as knowing that I am before him whose eyes (being ten thousand times brighter then the Sun) are able to see unrighteousness, where I see nothing but righteousness: Do not think I am justifying my self as a righteous man, in what I have spoken or done; for though I were righteous, yet I would not (upon that ground) go about to plead my cause, or stand it out with God.* Or thus, *I know I am unrighteous and unclean, but if I were righteous, I would not answer him.*

Here a Question or two must be resolved: As,

First, *Was not* Job *righteous?* He puts the Question, *Whom, though I were righteous*: Was *Job* an unrighteous man? Doth not he himself say (*chap.* 29. 14.) *I put on righteousness, and it cloathed me.* Why then doth he here only make a supposition of it? *Whom, though I were righteous*; when as there he makes it a position, that he was cloathed with righteousness.

I answer (to clear this Scripture) Man is righteous in a double opposition: Righteous, First, In opposition to the wicked; and these may be taken in three ranks; either, First, The abominable and prophane: Or secondly, Hypocrites and unsincere: Or thirdly, Oppressors, and such as are unjust in their dealings toward men. As righteous is opposed to wicked in these three, *Prophane*, *Hypocrites* or *Oppressors*, so *Job* was a righteous man. *Job* was not prophane, he feared God; *Job* was not an hypocrite, he was perfect and upright; *Job* was not an oppressor, the loins of the poor blessed him. And that's the peculiar sence of *chap.* 29. *I put on righteousness*, that is, righteousness in all my dealings with men.

Secondly, Righteous is opposed to imperfect, or that which hath any failing or want in it. And in this sence *Job* was not righteous; and that's his meaning here, *Though I were righteous*, that is, though I had the uttermost perfections which a creature is capable of, yet I would not stand upon them, and plead it out with God. The testimony which the Lord gave concerning *Job* (chap. 1. 1.) is in words of an inferiour sence; this in the text is above them both. The Lord there certifies, that *Job* was *perfect* and *upright*. But though he was perfect and upright, yet he was not *righteous*. He was perfect in opposition to insincerity, and he was upright in opposition to injustice; but he was not righteous in opposition to imperfection, *If I were righteous*; as I know I am not.

Justus in judicio opponitur improbo reo, qui causa cadit. Drus.

Further, Righteousness is twofold. There is a righteousness of the person, and a righteousness of the cause, *Though I were righteous*: *Job* doth not forsake the righteousness of his cause, he only disclaimeth the righteousness of his person. I acknowledge I am not righteous in my self, and I will not yield that my afflictions and sufferings argue me unrighteous.

Here another question arises, if we take *Job*'s supposition of a man righteous, it will be demanded, May not a righteous person answer God?

Cum hic justitiam sibi tribuit, non de ea agit quæ ad legis normam posset subsistere: Solum enim Dei tribunal severissimum Christi justitia non reformidat, sed agit de de justitia inchoata, quæ quantumvis Deo grata sit, non tamen ad amussim respondet perfectioni illæ quam lex requirit. Merl.

I answer, There is no created righteousness can answer God. *God chargeth his Angels with folly*; he saw evil in them, compared to himself. A righteous Angel cannot stand it out with God, much less the most righteous man. God indeed would have accepted man in the righteousness of works, had he continued in innocency; and yet he might have seen folly in man abiding in innocency, as he doth in those Angels which continue innocent. No created righteousness can answer God.

But there is a righteousness in which we may answer God; *Job*'s supposition excludes not that; namely, the righteousness of faith which we have by Christ. Man righteous by faith, or by imputed righteousness, may answer God; but man righteous by works, or inherent righteousness, cannot. He that is righteous by the righteousness of faith, hath to answer God, because hath somewhat of God to answer God with; Faith doth not bring man to answer God, but God to answer God; Christ answers God for every Believer: and Christ can answer God fully to all the demands of justice, without abatement. Christ hath not compounded with our Creditor for our debts, but paid them to the utmost farthing. A believer is able to answer God, and doth answer him every day; when he asks the pardon of sin, he offers the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And that which he offereth by faith, he will stand to, and plead with God upon; God hath what he can desire, or his Justice expect; the believer bids him try to the uttermost, if there be any imperfection or flaw in it, he will venture his soul upon it. In this sence man answers God. But *Job* speaks about inherent personal righteousness, the righteousness of his wayes. Upon this he will not venture a hair of his head, much less his soul and everlasting peace.

Though I were righteous, I would not answer him.

There is somewhat further considerable, for as [*righteous*] is a judiciary word, so likewise is [*answer.*] And it implies, that *Job* would not only not answer God objecting or reasoning, but that he would not answer him accusing or charging him, judging or sentencing him. I must acknowledge my self to be what God judgeth me to be, and that I am worthy to suffer what he judges me to suffer.

Respondere, verbum est forense, &c. Sanct.

audebo illi respondere aliquid objicienti, aut in me pronuncianti; me enim rationibus obruet, & sua opprimet Majestate. Merc.

Si ille me arguet, aut in me sententiã feret, etsi causa mea justa sit, non audebo illi respondere aliquid objicienti, aut in me pronuncianti; me enim rationibus obruet, & sua opprimet Majestate. Merc.

Hence observe, First, *Job* having shewed the weakness and ignorance of the creature in his former discourse, here you see whither it tended; namely, to prove man to be sinful and unrighteous. This teaches us,

That, *All the failings, infirmities and weaknesses which are in man, are the issues and effects of the sin of man.*

Man

Ex effectis causam declarat, unde enim tanta in mentibus hominum caligo & insciti, unde tanta infirmitas corporum & animorum, nisi ex peccato? Merl.

Man is an unrighteous creature, therefore a weak creature. *Job* argues from the effect to the cause, from the fruit to the root: man hath infirmities upon him, therefore he hath sin in him. Where there is no sin, there is strength; and where there is no sin, there is knowledge. Perfect holiness scatters all the clouds of darkness and ignorance.

Secondly, *Though I were righteous, I would not answer him*; then it follows,

Unrighteous men cannot answer God.

If a righteous man cannot, can an unrighteous? No marvel if *David* saith in *Psal.* 1. *The wicked shall not stand in judgement*, for (in a sence) the righteous cannot stand in judgement, that is, they cannot plead their own righteousness before God. Wicked men have nothing to help them, no help without, and none within, they have nothing but sin in them, and they have no Saviour without them. Hence the Apostle *Peter* argues (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?* If *Abel* be not able to answer God, how shall *Cain?* If *David* cannot, how shall *Saul?* They who have not the righteousness of Christ, have nothing but unrighteousness of their own. Observe,

Thirdly, *The vast difference that is between the spirit and temper of a godly man, and of a wicked man.*

O the humility of *Job's* spirit! *Job* will not justifie his own righteousness, or justifie himself in his righteousness. A wicked man will justifie his sin, or justifie himself in his sin. A *Saul* will justifie his disobedience, but a *Job* will not justifie his obedience. *Job* will not take upon him to be a righteous man; though God had told him he was perfect and upright. A wicked man will take upon him to be righteous, though God tell him to his face a thousand times, that he is vile and filthy. How do wicked men seek for pleas and covers to make themselves appear righteous! How do they gild the base metal of their hearts, and paint over those rotten posts to make them appear beautiful! Christ tells the Pharisees that they were like filthy sepulchres, full of dead mens bones, yet they would be painted over with the notion of a righteous generation. *Job* who had much righteousness and faithfulness in him, would not own them, and modestly blushes at the praise of God, *Though I were righteous, yet I would not answer.* Observe,

Fourthly, *The righteousness of man is not pleadable before the righteous God.*

Though I were righteous, yet I would not answer him. The Apostle (1 *Cor.* 4. 4.) gives a parallel testimony, *Though I know nothing by my self, yet am I not hereby justified. Paul* knew nothing by himself, that is, he had not any guilt upon him that he knew of; he did not allow himself in any sin, but kept his conscience void of offence, both toward God and toward man; yet (though it was thus with him) he disclaims all opinion of himself, *I am not hereby justified*, this is not the plea I have to make before God; he is able to find out failings where I find none, he knows better then I, what I am. Observe,

Fifthly, *A godly man looks upon his own righteousness as no righteousness.*

Whom though I were righteous, I would not answer. His supposition hath a negation in it, *I am not righteous.* Job did not deny the work of the Spirit, or the grace of God in him; but he would not own them in his pleadings with God. He could stand upon his terms with men, and let them know who he was, and what he had done (and it was reason he should) but before God he had nothing to mention but Christ: In reference to the higher degree of grace, for sanctification we must *forget all that is behind*, and press *on to that which is before*: And in reference to the whole grace of justification, we must forget all our sanctification. The less we remember our own righteousness, the more righteous we are in Christ. As we abate in our selves, we encrease in him. Christ draws the picture of an hypocrite to the life (*Luk.* 18.) in that Parable of a *Pharisee and a Publican*, going up to the Temple to pray; and the design of Christ in that Parable, is held forth at *vers.* 9. to be the conviction of such *as trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* Now what did this Pharisee? *He thanks God he was not as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or as that Publican; and then he minds God that he gave tithes, and kept fasts twice a week*; and so makes a goodly report of himself, both in the negative and in the affirmative, what he was, and what he was not. Never did any good man tell God such a story of his own life, as the Pharisee told. The Saints love to do well, more then to hear well from others, much more then to hear well from themselves; they love to do good, more then to receive good, much more, then to speak good of themselves. When Christ is represented sitting in judgment (*Matth.* 25. 35.) he tells the faithful of all their good deeds, or acts of charity, *I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye cloathed me*, &c. Hear how the Saints answer, as if they had done no such thing; *When was this Lord? When saw we thee hungry, and fed thee*, &c. We have forgot the time. They did so little mind the good they had done, that they remembred not they ever did it. The Lord keeps a faithful record of what his people do, but themselves do not. It is our duty to remember to do good, but let God alone to remember the good we have done. *The Lord is not unrighteous to forget our labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10.) but we lose our righteousness, unless we forget it. If we much remember what we do, God will remember it but little: The servants of God know well enough when they do good (to do good ignorantly, is a degree of doing evil.) They know when they do good, and they know what good they do; but when 'tis done, 'tis to them as unknown.

Hezekiah (Isa. 38. 3.) put God in mind of his good deeds, *Lord* (saith he) *remember how I walked before thee with an upright heart*, &c. *Hezekiah* desired the Lord to remember his *uprightness*. So *Nehemiah* in divers passages of that book (*Chap.* 13. 14, 22, 29, 31.) puts the Lord in remembrance of his righteousness. But it is one thing to put the Lord in remembrance of what we have done *historically*; and another thing to plead what we have done *legally*. It's one thing to shew to the Lord the work of his own grace in us; and another thing to mind the Lord of our works to obtain his grace. *Hezekiah* would have God to take notice of what he was, to pity him in his sickness, Lord, I am thus, remember the work of thy hands, as I am thy creature; remember the work of thy Spirit, as I am a new creature, as I am thy servant. And *Nehemiah* puts all upon the score of mercy: He did not say, Lord, remember me for what I have done, answer me according to what I have done, but, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy* (Chap. 13. 22.) If Saints at any time remember God of their works, it is not to ground an argument of merit upon their works, but to shew God the workings of his grace and spirit.

Though I were righteous, I would not answer him; What then? What will *Job* do? What course will he take for himself, if he will not answer the Lord? What? This course he takes, and it is the best.

I would make supplication to my Judge.

The Septuagint render it thus, *I would deprecate his judgment*; that is, I would sue for mercy. As if he had said, I am not without hope, because I have none in my self: I am not lost, because I am lost to my self: I have a sure way yet left, *I will make supplication to my Judge*; or as Master *Broughton* reads it, *I would crave pity of my Judge*: As if he had said, Though justice cast me, yet mercy will relieve me. Mercy will help me as well, and honour God more.

τῷ κελ… τοῦ ἀντ… ἀνθρωπ… Sept.

The word notes humblest submission, as when a man begs for his life. *Jacob* (Hos. 12. 4.) *wept and made supplication.* The brethren of *Joseph* (Gen. 42. 21.) were exceedingly afflicted at the remembrance of their hard usage toward him their brother, when they sold him to the *Egyptians*, *We would not hearken when he besought us*; it is this word, Think with how much submission *Joseph* being ready to be sold unto strangers, supplicated his brethren for pity; Or how a man will lie begging at an enemies feet, who is ready to kill him. With such submissive language *Job* resolved to crave pardon and pity at the hands of God.

Adl fac… tem judi… me. Mon… Eum qu… judicare… cit. Pag…

Thus he obeyes the counſel of *Bildad* in *Chap.* 8. *If thou ſeek unto God, and make thy ſupplication unto him betimes.* *Job* ſeems to anſwer, Your counſel is good, friend *Bildad*, *Though I were righteous, I would not anſwer him*; but (according to your advice) *I would make ſupplication to my Judge.* The prayers of the Church in greateſt ſtraights and and diſtreſſes, are uſually expreſſed by this word [*ſupplications.*] *All petitionary Prayer is ſupplication*; but becauſe we are much abaſed, and laid very low at ſuch times, therefore prayer then put up, is ſpecially called ſupplication. Hence *Solomon* at the dedication of the Temple, putting caſes and ſuppoſitions of many afflictions incident to that people, ſtill concludes, *At what time they ſhall confeſs their ſins, and pray, and make ſupplication, then,* &c. (1 *King.* 8.) And (*Eſth.* 4. 8.) *Mordecai* ſends to *Eſther*, charging her to go in to the King, What to do? *To make ſupplication unto him.* The lives of the Jews being given away to ſatisfie the malice of *Haman*, it was time for her to ſupplicate in the lowlieſt poſture. Thus *Job* had it in the thoughts of his heart *to make ſupplication to his Judge*; as if he had ſaid, *If I were to ſtand at the tribunal of an earthly Judge, I would not ſupplicate, but plead; I would not petition his favour, but ſtand upon my right; I would not crave his pity, but expect his juſtice; I would bring forth my reaſons and arguments, my proofs and witneſſes, this courſe would I run with an earthly Judge: but my cauſe being with God, I will only put a petition into the Court, and ſubmit unto him, let him do with me what he pleaſeth.* Hence we may obſerve,

Firſt, *That there is no weapon can prevail with God, but only prayer and ſupplication.*

Eſt opus virtutis exercere ad vitam, non ex meritis, ſed ad veniam convaleſco. Precitaq; intendũ eſt cũ recta agimus, ut omne quod juſtè vivimus, humilitate condiamus. Greg.

Job's thoughts had travel'd thorow all the creatures, and found not one of them could ſtand before God; therefore he reſolves to fall down before him: I will make ſupplication. *Prayer overcometh when nothing elſe can.* Chriſt conquered by dying, and we conquer by ſubmitting. And yet it is not ſupplication as an act of ours, but ſupplication as it is an ordinance of Gods that prevails with him: he looks upon prayer as having the ſtamp of his own inſtitution; otherwiſe our greateſt humblings could prevail no more then our proudeſt contendings. The Word preached prevails upon the heart, not as it is the act of a man, who diſpenſeth it (there is no ſtrength in that) but as it is an ordinance of God, who hath appointed it: So humble ſupplication obtains much with God, becauſe he hath ſaid it ſhall.

Secondly, *To make ſupplication is to crave pitty.*

As prayer prevails, ſo no plea in prayer can prevail, unleſs we plead *pity, pity, mercy, mercy*; a ſuppliant looks for all good at the hand of Free grace. We at any time have ſin enough to procure us evil (*Jer.* 4. 18.) *Thy ſins have procured theſe things unto thee*; But we never have goodneſs enough to procure us any mercy. Mercy comes for mercy's ſake.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *I would make ſupplication to my Judge.* Obſerve,

God is the Judge of all our actions and intentions.

Job was in a great conteſt with men, but (ſaith he) men are not my Judges, God is my Judge, *It is a comfort to the Saints to remember that God is their Judge.* *Job* was not afraid of God in that relation: no, it was a rich conſolation to think that God was his Judge. He is a righteous Judge, a merciful Judge, a pitiful Judge; we need not be afraid to ſpeak to him under that notion. *Job* ſaith not, I will make ſupplications to my father (which is a ſweet relation) but (which is moſt dreadful to wicked men) he conſiders God as a Judge: The Saints are enabled by faith to look upon God as a Judge, with aſſurances of mercy.

Laſtly obſerve, *The whole world ſtands guilty before God.*

Rom. 3. 19. *Every mouth muſt be ſtopped: Job* will only make ſupplication, he had nothing elſe to do or ſay. *We do not preſent our ſupplications unto thee for our righteouſneſs, but for thy great mercy* (Dan. 9. 8.) We can get nothing from God by opening our mouths in any other ſtile, or upon any other title then this, of an humble acknowledgment of our unworthineſs: the lower we go in our own thoughts, the higher we are in the thoughts of God; and we find the more acceptance with him, by how much the leſs acceptance we think we deſerve. *Nothing is gained from God, either by diſputing or by boaſting. All our victory is humility.*

VERS. 16, 17, 18.

If I had called, and he had anſwered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice.
For he breaketh me with a tempeſt, and multiplieth my wounds without cauſe.
He will not ſuffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterneſs.

THis holy man having abaſed himſelf in the ſenſe of his own inability and unrighteouſneſs before the Lord, and diſclaimed the leaſt intendment of contending or diſputing with him (as was ſeen in the former context) now confirms it by a further ſuppoſition, in *verſ.* 16, 17, 18. and ſo forward. As if he had ſaid, Ye ſhall find I am ſo far from wording it with God, or ſtanding upon mine own juſtification with him (though I have pleaded mine integrity before you my friends) that I here make this hypotheſis or ſuppoſition, *If I had called, and he had anſwered, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice.*

There is much variety in making out the ſence of theſe words. The Septuagint read it negatively, *If I had called, and he had not anſwered me, I would not believe,* &c. Moſt of the Hebrew writers fall very foul upon *Job*, and tax him harſhly for this ſpeech. *What? Would he not believe that God hearkned unto him, when he had anſwered him?* Is not this unbelief a plain denial of providence, or at leaſt of ſpecial providence? *I would not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice,* is (in their ſence) as if he had ſaid, *I think God takes no care, or makes no account of particulars, he looks not after this or that man, what he ſpeaks, or for what he prayes. I can ſcarce believe that my condition is under the care of God, or that he will take notice of me; if I ſhould call upon him, or if I plead before him, what ſhall I get by it? Do ye think he will deſcend to the relief of ſuch a one as I am? Why then do ye move me to call upon him?* &c. *If I ſhould pray, and if he ſhould anſwer me, I can hardly be perſwaded that he will pity me, and do me good.*

ἐὰν τε κεκλήκω, καὶ μὴ ὑπακούσῃ. Sept.

Atræ loliginis ſuccum hic aſpergit Rab. Lev. *Aſſerens* Jobum *negare providentiam ſive curam particularium.* Coc.

A ſecond opinion caſts him into the deeps of deſpair; as if *Job* had altogether laid aſide hope of receiving any favour by calling upon God, or of comfort, by putting his caſe to him.

Verba diffidentis deſperantis de divina miſericordia. Opinio Rab. Moyſes & Rab. Levi, *apud* Mer.

But all theſe aſperſions are unworthily caſt upon *Job*, a man full of humility and ſubmiſſion to the will of God: his frequent prayers and applications of himſelf to God do abundantly confute all ſuch unſavoury conjectures. But the Jewiſh Commentators carry on their former ſtrain, being all along very rigid towards this holy man, very apt to put the worſt conſtructions upon doubtful paſſages, and ſometimes ill ones upon thoſe which are plainly good.

Judaicum commentum, atq; Jobi ſanctitate indigniſſimũ Pined.

More diſtinctly.

There is a difficulty about the Grammatical meaning of one word in the Text, which carries the ſence two wayes.

If I had called, and he had anſwered me.

The Hebrew word, which we tranſlate [**Call**] ſignifies ſometimes to *pray*, and ſometimes to *plead or challenge*: An act of invocation, or an act of provocation: it is rendred both wayes here. By moſt, as we, *If I had called upon him*; that is, If I had prayed or made my ſute unto him. By ſome, *If I had ſent in my plea* (as to begin a ſuit of Law with him) *or my challenge*, as to enter the combate with him, *&c.*

קרא *Alii invocare, alii provocare vertunt.*

As it is taken for a challenge, ſo the ſence lies thus, If I ſhould ſtand upon terms with God, and call him to an account to make good what he hath done; *And he had anſwered me*; that is, if he had condeſcended to give me an account of his wayes; yet I would not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice, that is, that he had yielded to me, or acknowledged that he had done me wrong. Shall I, who am but duſt and aſhes, prevail in my ſuit, and get the day by pleading and contending with the great God of Heaven and Earth?

Take

Take the word as it signifies invocation, or calling by way of petition (*Psal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.* And so two or three interpretations are offered.

Tam infirma est caro, ut etiam propositis divinis promissionibus nolit credere. Isidor. Clar.

First, Some in favour of *Job* conceive that he speaks this only through the infirmity of his flesh, that it was sin within him that spake, and not *Job*; according to that of the Apostle, *Rom.* 7. *Not I, but sin that dwelleth in me:* So *Job* speaks, as if he did not believe that God would hear him when he prayed; but whose voice was this? Not *Job's*, but his sins; the corruption, the infirmity of *Job* gave out such language, not he. As we may say in reference to an action, *I did it not, but sin that dwelleth in me*, so to a word, *I spake it not, but sin and corruption that dwelleth in me, gave out such language.*

Plerique Latini ad eas conditiones referunt quas oratio efficax requirit; quarum defectu non exaudimur, atque ea ratione sibi timere Jobū

Secondly, *I would not believe that God had hearkned to me, though he had answered me*; may refer to the manner of his prayer or invocation, as not coming up to the height and measure of the duty, as not fulfilling that Law of prayer which the Lord requireth; and so, because his prayers were imperfect and weak, therefore he would not believe that ever God had taken notice of him, or hearkned to his voice: As if he had said, *You bid me make my supplication; if I do, yet I will not believe that God takes notice of my prayers.* Why? because mine are but cold and unbelieving prayers, weak and distracted prayers, the prayers of a distemper'd heart, the prayers of a confused spirit, such I confess mine are; therefore I cannot believe God will hearken to my voice.

Videtur hoc esse animi mirabiliter demissi, atq; sibi suæq; orationi diffidentis, fidentis vero de sola divina bonitate. Pined.

But rather in the last place, take the sence thus, that *Job* in these words, breaths out the humility of his spirit; as if he had said, *I am so far from standing upon my terms with God* (as was shewed before) *as if I had hopes to carry it with him by contending, that though I come in the humblest manner to invocate and call upon his Name, and I find him so gracious and merciful to me, as that he doth answer me in my requests, and grant the thing I desire; yet I will not believe that he hath hearkned to my voice*, that is, *that he hath done this for any worthiness in me, in my services, or prayers, I will not believe that the answer I receive from heaven is obtained by any value which my person hath with God.*

Such is the coldness and deadness, the languishment and unbelief of my heart in prayer, such are my prayers, that the truth is, I cannot believe I am heard, when I am heard, I cannot think my petition granted, when I see it is granted.

Non ex diffidentia hoc dicit, sed ex timore, Dei reverituis judicium. Drus.

Thus it sets forth the exceeding humility and lowliness of his spirit, he would give all the glory unto God in granting his petitions, and take nothing at all to himself in making those petitions, *I would not believe that he hath hearkned to my voice.*

What voice was it then that he believ'd God hearkned unto? He hearkned to the voice of the Mediator, to the voice of Christ: He hearkned to the voice of his own free grace: He hearkned to the sounding of his own bowels. He hearkned to the motions and intercessions of his Spirit in me; to the motions and intercessions of his Son for me. It is not my voice that hath got the answer; he alone that hath granted it of his good pleasure in Christ.

I would not believe that he had hearkned to my voice.

אמן *Credere, stabile esse.*

The word signifies both believing and establishing, or to believe and establish; and the reason of it is, because faith settles the heart, *Faith is the establishment of the soul.* An unbeliever hath no bottom, he is built without a foundation, his spirit is unfixed.

And that act of believing [I would not believe] is the general act of Faith, namely, a firm assent to the truth of what another speaketh. An assent to the truth of it two wayes. To the truth of it, First, Historically, that such a thing was spoken or for done; and then Logically, that the thing is true which is spoken. When he saith, I would not believe that God hath done this, his meaning is, I would not assent to it, as done for my sake, or for my voice; not that he would not believe the thing was done at all. He assented to the word and answers of God, when he did receive it; but in that restriction, he would not believe it, namely, in reference to himself, that he hath hearkned to his voice.

האזין *Crassè ενω ἐδω. Auscultare,*

To hearken] Is more then to hear; it notes the inclination of the mind rather then the attention of the ear. As to stop the ear notes the shutting of the heart against obedience, rather then of the ear against audience. To tell a tale to a deaf man, is to speak to one hears, but will not grant.

inclinationem animi denotat ad alterius dicta. Cujus oppositū est, aures claudere & obturare ad alicujus sermonem. Hinc proverbium, Surdo narras fabulā. *Hæc verba exactam demissi animi significationem continent. Tunc cum arriserit gratia, time, cum abierit, time* Bernard. *Providentiā Dei sæpe nobis benevola est, cū nulla benevolentiæ externa præbet argumenta, imo aliquādo quem exandet turbine conterit malorum.*

From all it appears,

First, That, *Job* speaks very highly of the goodness of God, namely, that God answers prayer, though he hath not respect to the voice of him that prayeth; *Though he had answered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned to my voice.*

Secondly, That, he speaks exceeding humbly and submissively of himself, *my voice*; what am I, a poor creature, that I should think I had carried the matter with God?

Thirdly, That, he speaks very wisely and understandingly concerning the nature and efficacy of prayer, and the means procuring answers of prayer. When man prayes, God answers; but he doth not answer because man prayes.

Fourthly, That, he speaks very highly and gloriously of the providence of God, though providence act darkly towards man. We pray, God answers, and doth us good, yet things may go quite contrary in appearance, *If I had called, and he had answered me, yet would I not believe that he had hearkned unto my voice*; Why? *He breaketh me with a tempest. God was breaking him, and hearing him at the same time.* God may be doing us good, when the signs he gives speak evil; he hears and answers us praying to him, when we think we hear him thundring terribly against us. Hence we learn,

First, That, *Prayer is calling upon God.*

Then the heart should be very attentive upon God in prayer. How can we expect God should hear us, when we do not hear our selves! In prayer we call upon God, therefore we should call upon our selves to consider how and what we pray.

Secondly note, *Prayer granted, is prayer answered.*

If I had called, he had answered me. The Lord from heaven speaks to us in every act of his providence; his speaking to us, is in doing for us. The works of God are answers to man. God doth not answer audibly or sensibly; there is a voice in his dispensations. As men, (*Prov.* 6. 13.) So the Lord speaks to us with his feet, and answers our prayers with his fingers, that is, his works and wayes are demonstrations of his will in answer to our prayers.

Thirdly, In that *Job* tells us, *He would not believe*, &c. we are taught,

That faith is a necessary ingredient in prayer.

This negation of his faith in prayer, implies the need of faith in prayer. When I pray I should believe, but as my case stands I cannot believe, clouds and darkness are upon me. Faith is the strength of prayer, *What soever you ask in prayer believing, you shall receive*, Matth. 21. 22. Prayer without faith, is like a Gun discharged without a bullet, which makes a noise, but doth no execution. We may put out a voice in speaking, but except we put out faith in speaking, we do but speak, we do not pray. As the Word of God coming upon us doth us no good, prevails not upon our hearts, unless it be mixed with faith (*Heb.* 4. 2.) *The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.* So the word that goes out from us, the word of prayer, prevaileth not at all with God, obtaineth nothing from him, unless it be mixed with faith. All the promises are made to believers, *All things are possible to them that believe* (Mark 9. 23.) *Ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea, driven with the wind and tossed* (Jam. 1. 6.) To ask in faith, is to ask, resting upon the power of God, whereby he is able; upon his truth, whereby he is faithful; and upon his goodness in Christ, whereby he is ready to make good his promises. He that asks thus doth not wave. Few are without doubting, but all sound believers are without wavering. The Greek word signifies to question, or dispute a thing, a degree beyond doubting; as when a man is at no certainty with himself, being sometime of one mind, sometime of another; the judgment being so carried, that the man is at variance with his own breast, or is between two wayes,

not knowing which to take. We translate the word (in *Rom.* 4. 20.) by staggering. *Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.* The similitude which the Apostle *James* uses, illustrates this sence, *He that wavereth is like a wave of the Sea*, which by tempestuous winds is sometimes carried up to heaven, and anon down to the deep. A man who is tossed with such waves of unbelief, staggers like a drunken man, in his practice and profession; he is now on this side, to morrow on that; he doth not only stagger or halt in his way, but he staggers and halts between two wayes; and is therefore called (*vers.* 8.) *A double-minded man*: The prayers of such a man are faithless prayers, and therefore fruitless prayers; *Let not that man think he shall receive any thing* (unless a rebuke and a denial) *of the Lord* (*vers.* 7.) There are no promises made to such, and therefore no mercies conveyed to such. Believing prayer is gaining prayer; yet they who believe least, presume most. Hence the Apostles check, *Let not that man think*; as if he had said, I know such will flatter themselves into a perswasion of great matters, they will have high thoughts, but they shall receive nothing.

Fourthly observe, That, *How strongly soever a godly man acts faith for the answer of his prayers, yet he hath no faith that his prayer deserves an answer.*

I would not believe that he had answered to [my] *voyce.* Christ calleth the Spouse to prayer (*Cant.* 2. 14.) *Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voyce, for sweet is thy voyce, and thy countenance comly.* Christ loves prayer. *The prayers of the Saints upon earth, are musick in heaven.* That invitation to the Spouse, *let me hear thy voyce*, seems to be an allusion to those, who loving Musick, call upon a friend who hath a good voyce, or exquisite skill to play upon an Instrument, *Come, sing us a song, play us a Lesson, let us have a fit of mirth.* Thus, I say, Christ speaks to the Church, *Come, let me hear thy voyce, 'tis sweet, I know thou hast a sweet one*: But the Saints judge their own voyces harsh and unharmonical, they are apt to think their prayers jarrings and discords, at the best, but a rude noise, not a composed air in the ear of God. Faith makes our prayers melodious, because it carries us out of our selves. A believer lives not in the sound of his own prayers, but of Christs intercession. What are we that we should expect any acceptance upon our own account? or say, this *we* have gained, this *we* have obtained, thus God hath heard *us*, or thus *we* have wrestled it out with God? As when we have performed all our duties, we must say, *We are unprofitable servants*; so when we have obtained all our suits, we must say, *We are unprofitable petitioners*; I will not believe that God hath hearkened unto *my* voice. What's a mans voice, that God should hear it?

Fifthly observe, That, *A godly man sometimes cannot believe his prayer is heard, when it is heard.*

Though he calls, and God answers, yet (like *Job*) he believes not that God hath answered to his voice; he cannot think his prayer is heard, though one should come and tell him it is heard. When the *Jews* returned from *Babylon*, the mercy was so great, that they could not believe they had it, when they had it; *When thou didst turn our captivity, we were as them that dream* (Psal. 126. 2.) The deliverance was incredible, they could not think they were delivered. Their return to *Jerusalem* was suspected for a dream of it in *Babylon*. The Church prayed without ceasing for *Peter*, when he was in prison (*Acts* 12. 15.) yet when the Lord brought him out of prison, and he was knocking at the door of the house where they were assembled, while they were knocking at the door of heaven for his deliverance, yet they would not believe the report of the Damosel, who said he stood before the gate. They tell her she is mad; and when she affirmed it with sobriety, as well as vehemency; then they have another help for their unbelief, *It was not* Peter, *but his Angel*. Thus it is to this day with the Saints in their great personal suits and petitions, both about spiritual things and temporal, they are so overcome, astonished and amazed at the goodness of God, that though they see the thing done, yet they can scarce believe it done. As if a Prince should send a message to a poor man by some great Lord, and tell him he hath bestowed honour and favour upon him; the poor man is ready to say, I cannot believe it, the blessing is too big for him to digest and let down in his narrow heart: No, saith he, sure it is not so. Though the people of God ever preserve a high respect and esteem of the works of God towards them, yet their faith is often below his workings, and they cannot receive or take in mercy so fast as it cometh. Faith widens the vessels of the soul to receive much, but God can powr in faster then faith can widen the soul to receive.

Forsan hoc dicit, quia sæpe præ nimia lætitia non credimus verum esse quod maximè verum esse optamus. Rus.

Sixthly observe, *Faith hath its decayes.*

Faith doth not keep up alwayes at the same height, in the same plight and degree: There is a faith which believes that God doth answer before he answers; and there is a faith that cannot believe that God will answer, when he hath answered. Faith in strength prevents the answer of God. As God in answering, sometimes prevents our askings (*Isa.* 65. 24.) *Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear*: so faith saith, *Before the Lord giveth, I know I have it; before the Lord doth this thing, I see it is done.* Faith in its strength, realizes the mercies of God before they have a being, and is an evidence to us of what we see not. When mercies are but in their principles, in their conception and birth, or at most, when they are but in their cradle and swadling-clouts, faith speaks as gloriously of them, as if they were fully acted and grown up before the eye. Strong faith in God (like God himself) quickens the dead, and calleth those things which be not, as though they were. Weak faith deadens the quick, and calleth those things which are, as if they were not. The *Israelites* were no sooner over the red Sea, but they believed themselves in the Land of *Canaan* (Exod. 15. 13, 14, 15.) And in their Song tell the story of the submission and fears of the uncircumcised Nations round about, which yet their after-unbelief kept off forty years.

There is a further understanding of the words, which I shall clear in connexion with that which followeth.

I would not believe that he had hearkened to my voyce; for he breaketh me with a tempest:] As if the reason why he doubted his [voyce] was not heard, lay in this, because of those continual breakings which were upon him; *I would not believe that he had hearkened to my voyce; for he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without a cause*: As if *Job* had said, the dealings of God are such towards me, that I know not how to make it out that I am heard; for though the Lord in some things carries it so graciously towards me, that I have great assurance I am heard, yet many things appear, reporting that I am not heard. Afflictions continued are no evidence that prayer is not heard, yet usually it is very inevident to an afflicted person, that his prayer is heard.

Etiamsi Deus me precatem exaudierit, minimè credo cum malorum nimbo me obruat.

I shall now examine *vers.* 16, 17. as holding a reason why *Job*'s faith was thus weakened.

Verse 17. **For he breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplieth my wounds without cause.**

שער *Turbo.*

Job's sorrows put him to his Rhetorick still, *He breaketh me with a tempest.* An expression raising his afflictions to the height, yet not beyond the reality of them; *He breaketh me with a tempest.*

שוף *Contudit, contrivit, obtrivit.*

The word we translate [breaks] signifies an utter confusion, or the total ruining of a thing or person, the dashing of either to pieces. The word is used reciprocally of Christ and the Devil, in that great promise of Christ, *The seed of the woman* (*Gen.* 3. 16.) *It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.* Christ having infinite power, utterly destroyed the Serpents power; he spoiled and ruined him for ever: The Apostle phrases it so (*Col.* 2. 15.) *He spoiled principalities and powers*; he took away the prey or booty of souls which they had got, and led them disarm'd like prisoners of war: And the Devil did what he could to ruine and spoil Christ, to break Christ to pieces. Thus Christ and Satan strove and contended one with another. And the word (*Shuph*) hath an elegant hearness in sound to our English. We call that noise which is made by the ruder motion of the feet, *shuffling*; and when men contend much, we hear the shuffling of their feet. *Job* was striving and shuffling with God in prayer, and God was striving and shuffling with *Job* in storms and tempests.

He

He breaketh me with a tempeſt.

Chaldæus *legit, uſq; ad filum lineũ, vel ad fila pilorũ ſubtiliter diſputat mecũ.* שערה *Filum ſignificat.*

The word ſignifies not only *ſtorms and tempeſts*; but likewiſe, *a little hair or twined thread.* So the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* tranſlates it here, *He diſputes or contends with me to a hair, or to a thread*; making the ſence out thus, *I will not believe that God hath anſwered me*; why? *He ſtandeth with me upon the ſmalleſt matters; he diſputes with me to a hair, and debates every thing to a thread.* As *Abraham* ſaid to the King of *Sodom* (Gen. 14. 23.) *I will not take any thing that is thine, from a thread, even to a ſhoe-latchet*; that is, I will not make the ſmalleſt gain by thee: So, to diſpute to a hair, or to a thread, notes contending upon or about the ſmalleſt differences.

But generally the word is rendred a *Tempeſt*; and thus God is often deſcribed contending with man (*Nahum* 1, 3.) *His way is in the whirlwind, and in the ſtorm, and the clouds are the duſt of his feet*, that is, he ſends ſtorms and whirlwinds, by theſe he afflicts the children of men; and as an army of horſemen raiſes clouds of duſt from the earth with their feet, ſo the Lord raiſes the duſt of clouds with his; *Behold, a whirlwind or a tempeſt of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it ſhall fall grievouſly upon the head of the wicked*, Jer. 23. 19.

To break with a tempeſt or with a whirlwind, implies two things.

Firſt, A ſudden and an unexpected affliction. Tempeſts are never welcome, and but ſeldom looked for. When the ſea is ſo calm and ſmooth that you may throw a Die upon it, a ſtorm ariſeth in a moment, and the veſſel is in danger of a wreck.

Secondly, It noteth the fierceneſs and violence of an affliction. Tempeſts are the moſt violent motions, they come with power. A Tempeſt is irreſiſtible, who can ſtand before it? Who can contend with ſtorms and winds? When the Lord made total conqueſts of his enemies, he contended (in the letter) by ſtorms and tempeſts. As in *Joſhua* 10. and in (1 *Sam.* 7. 10.) *When the Philiſtims drew near to battell againſt Iſrael, the Lord thundred with a great thunder that day upon the Philiſtims, and diſcomfited them.* The Story is famous of a Legion of Chriſtian ſouldiers, called the *thundering Legion*, becauſe by prayer they obtained a refreſhing rain for the Army in which they were commanded, and a terrible ſtorm of Thunder and Lightning, *&c.* upon the enemy. The word is uſed figuratively in war, when beſiegers coming to a Town or Fort, are reſolved to carry it preſently whatever it coſt them, they are ſaid to *ſtorm the place, or get it by ſtorm.* The Prophet alludes to this (*Iſa.* 25. 4.) *When the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a ſtorm againſt the wall*; that is, when their rage ſhall be at the higheſt, moſt violent and impetuous, then the Lord will be a *refuge from the ſtorm.* The ſame God who ſaves many from the ſtorms of man, did himſelf ſtorm *Job*,

He breaketh me with a tempeſt.

Job was ſtormed, yet ſuppoſes his prayer was anſwered. Hence obſerve,

Prayers may be heard and anſwered when greateſt afflictions are upon us.

Quædam nõ negantur, ſed ut congruo tempore dentur, differuntur. Aug. *Exaudit ſæpe ad profectum, licet non ad votũ.* Aquin. *in loc.* *Sævitur in vulnus, ut homo ſanetur.* Aug.

Do not think your prayers are loſt, becauſe your afflictions are not removed, or that God hath not heard you, becauſe he doth not preſently relieve you. God forbears, when he doth not deny. He anſwers to our profit, when he anſwereth not to our feeling. He anſwereth to our ſpiritual intereſt, when not to our corporal. The ſick man calleth to the Phyſitian to take away the bitter, loathſome potion; and the wounded man calleth to the Chirurgeon, to take away thoſe corroding plaiſters, and to forbear thoſe torturing operations; but the one gives him his potion, and the other lances his ſores, and layes corroſives to his fleſh; both theſe, while they vex the Patient, anſwer him; for what's the reaſon why the Patient would have his bitter potion taken away? Is it not becauſe he would be better? And why would he have thoſe painful operations forborn? is it not becauſe he would have eaſe? Now for both thoſe very reaſons, the Maſters of thoſe Profeſſions keep him to both; neither could they give him his deſire, but by doing contrary to his will. Thus alſo the Lord is healing us, when we think he is only wounding us; and fulfilling our deſires, while we cry out he is croſſing them.

Secondly obſerve, *Even while we are praying, the Lord may be thundering; he may be breaking us when we are beſeeching him.*

We muſt learn to keep to our duty, whatſoever the dealings of God be; whether it be foul weather or fair, pray ſtill; whether it be ſtorm or calm, go on in prayer ſtill. Pray ſtill, though God break ſtill. It is our duty to pray, and it is Gods priviledge to break.

Thirdly, Obſerve from the loftineſs of the language,

That, *The Lord layes very ſore afflictions upon thoſe that are very dear to him.*

Job expreſſeth his afflictions by *breaking with a tempeſt. Stroaks from the clouds are moſt terrible.* The ſame afflictions and ſcourges which he layes upon his enemies, he layes (in the matter, yea, and often in degree) upon his beſt friends? What can the Lord do to his greateſt enemies, but break them with a tempeſt? He doth not only chaſten with a rod, but ſometimes ſcatter with a ſtorm: He hath not only a ſword, but a thunderbolt for his ſervants: He hath terrible ſtroaks and blows for them who lie in his arms, and live in his embraces. Therefore we cannot diſtinguiſh men by the matter, no, nor by the meaſure of their afflictions; that which is a judgment to one, is but a chaſtening to another; with the ſame weapon he wounds a friend, and deſtroyes an enemy.

Fourthly obſerve, That, *Afflictions continued, cauſe us to ſuſpect that our prayers are not anſwered.*

Why doth *Job* think that God hearkened not to him? *I would not believe* (ſaith he) *that God hath hearkened unto my voyce*; why? *becauſe ſtill he continues to break me.* Faith is put hard to it at ſuch a time; and this is the thing which ſtumbled *Job*, he could not tell how to make it out, that God had heard his prayer for him, becauſe he heard ſo great a noiſe of tempeſts and ſtorms againſt him. It is very difficult for faith to ſee mercy through clouds of trouble. It is a hard thing for faith to look upon the pleaſed face of God through a lowring tempeſt, or to believe the calmneſs of Gods heart to us in troubleſome diſpenſations. Therefore he ſpeaks here as if his faith were even maſtered. The providences of God are often too hard for man. And with this temptation Satan helps on unbelief. If he come to a ſoul in affliction, which keeps cloſe to his intereſts in Chriſt: *Yea* (ſaith he) *you may do ſo though afflictions were upon you, but yours are more then afflictions, yours are tempeſts and ſtorms: God dealeth with you as with an enemy, yours are no ordinary matters, yours are like the portion he gives to thoſe he hates; I would not weaken your faith becauſe of a chaſtening rod, but you are beaten with Scorpions, and will you ſtill believe?* Can God love you, and deal thus with you? Thus the Serpent whiſpers in thoſe louder tempeſts of affliction.

Licet Deus verè exaudiat, tamen homo in miſeriis conſtitutus ſe exaudiri non credit. Aqu.

Fifthly obſerve, That, *Afflictions continued, cauſe us to ſuſpect that our prayers ſhall not be anſwered.*

And ſo I find ſome rendring the former verſe in connexion with this; *If I have called, and he hath anſwered me, yet will I not believe that he will hearken to my voyce*: As if he had ſaid, I know God hath heard me heretofore, but I fear he will hear me no more, becauſe I find his hand ſo heavy upon me. Surely then, he hath forgottten to be gracious, and hath ſhut up his tender mercies. *Former experiences can hardly keep Faith whole, while we are under preſent breakings.*

Laſtly, If we take the words, as importing a calling to God for anſwer in a way of provocation (as was ſhewed before) then the ſence is, *If I had an ambition to contend with God, and he had anſwered me by condeſcending to that courſe, yet I could not believe he had hearkened to my voyce*; that is, I could not believe that he had yielded the cauſe to me: Why? Becauſe he goes on ſtill to break me with tempeſts; he follows me with trouble ſtill; he ſhews he hath done me no wrong in my former afflictions, by his going on to afflict me ſtill; he is ſo far from acknowledging the leaſt injuſtice in what is paſt of my ſufferings, that I ſuffer more; *He breaks me with a tempeſt, and,*

Multiplies

Multiplies my wounds without cause.

חנם *Gratis.*

But is not this injustice, to multiply wounds without cause? Is not this a charge of blasphemy upon God? May we not think that now Satan had his wish, and that *Job* cursed God indeed?

Vulnera sine causa sunt mala & flagella, quæ non ob aliquod mittuntur peccatum.

The Hebrew word which we translate, **Without cause**, hath been opened, *Chap.* 1. 9. & 2. 3. and it hath occurred elsewhere. Here, *He multiplies my wounds without cause*, is not a charge of injustice upon God, *Job's* heart was far from the least thought of that, as you may see in all the dispute: But it is an acknowledgment of the soveraignty and power of God, *Though he hath wounded me already, yet he may wound me still, without giving me a reason; or, though I have given him no cause.* What? Do you think God would yield to me, if I should contend with him? *He multiplieth*, or, *He hath multiplied my wounds without cause*, that is, without giving me any account hitherto; and do you think that now I shall have liberty to call him to an account, or that he will give me one? *He wounds without cause*, is, * without cause manifested. God hath not told me the reason of his chastenings; and I do not perceive the reason; I know not why he contendeth with me. And so he expounds what he spake at *vers.* 12. *Lo, he passeth by me, and I see him not.* There are mysteries in providence. Mans eye is not clear enough to see all that God doth before his eyes. *Job is his own expositor.* This latter expression gives us a comment upon the former. And it is observable, that both in this book, and in the whole body of the Scripture, easier Texts may be found to interpret the harder, and clear ones to enlighten those which are darker and more obscure. *The word of God is not only a light and a rule to us, but to it self.*

* *Sine causa manifesta, & ab homine afflicto perceptibili.* Aquin.

His verbis evidenter exponit, quæ supra occultè dixerat, si venerit ad me, non video. Hoc enim ubiq; ferè in dictis Jobi *observandū, quod obscurè dicta per aliqua consequentia exponuntur.* Aquin.

Or, **He multiplieth my wounds without cause.**] Is, as if *Job* had said, I know the Lord deals not with me as with a guilty person, nor doth he judge me as a malefactor; mine is a probation, not a punishment: God doth only try me, to see what is in my heart, and how I can stand in an evil day. *He multiplieth my wounds without cause*; that is, without the cause which you have so often objected against me, namely, that I am an hypocrite and wicked. I know God looks upon me as a child, or a friend, not as an enemy. Therefore I have no cause to multiply words with God, though God go on *to multiply my wounds without cause.*

Hæc à Job dicta sunt, quod intelligat se non tā flagellari quā probari.

Animus in Deum præclarè affectus, sed tamen affectus dolore. Sanct.

To multiply wounds] Notes, numerous and manifold afflictions; many in number, and many in kind. *Job's* were deep, deadly wounds, and he had many of them, he was all over wounds, body and soul were wounds, he was smitten within and without; *as to multiply to pardon*, is to pardon abundantly (*Isa.* 55. 7.) So to multiply wounds, or to multiply to wound, is to wound abundantly.

Here a question would be resolved, How the justice of God may be acquitted, in laying on and multiplying afflictions *without cause?*

I shall refer the Reader for further light about this point to *Chap.* 2. *vers.* 3. where those words are opened; *Thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause*; yet take here three considerations more, by way of answer to the doubt.

First, Whatsoever the Lord wounds and takes from any man, he wounds and takes his own. *He is Lord over all.* Our health and strength are his, our riches are his; *The world is his and the fulness of it* (Psal. 50.) *If he be hungry, he needs not tell us*; he can go to his own store. It is no wrong to dispose what is our own, wheresoever we find it. That rule is as true in revocations, as distributions: *Friend, I do thee no wrong* (Matth. 20. 15.) *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Though there were no sin in man, yet there were no injustice in God, because he takes nothing from us, but what he gave us, and hath full power to recal, and take away.

Secondly, Suppose man could say, that, what he had were his own; that, his riches were his own, that, health and strength of body were his own, yet God may take them away, and do no wrong. It is so among men, *Kings and States* call out their Subjects to war, and in that war their wounds are multiplied without any cause given by them: They gave no occasion why they should be appointed to such hazards of life and limb, to such hardships of hunger and cold; yet there is no injustice in this. When God casts man into trouble, he calls him out to his service, he hath a war, some noble enterprize and design to send him upon. *To you it is given to suffer for his sake* (saith the Apostle, *Phil.* 1. 29.) he puts it among the special priviledges, which some Saints are graced with, not only above the world, but above many of the Saints, *To whom it is given* (and that's a royal gift) *only to believe.* Now, if in prosecuting this suffering task, whether for Christ, or from Christ, a believer layes out his estate, credit, liberty or life, he is so far from being wronged, that he is honoured. Thousands are slain in publick imployments, who have given no cause to be so slain. If according to the line of men, this be no injustice, much less is it injustice in God, who is without line, himself being the only line and rule to himself, and to all besides himself.

Thirdly, I may answer it thus, Though the Lord *multiply wounds without cause*; yet he doth it without wrong to the wounded, because he wounds with an intention to heal, and takes away with a purpose to give more; as in the present case, God made *Job* an amends for all the wounds, whether of his body or goods, good name or spirit. Now, though it be a truth in respect of man, that we may not break anothers head, and say we will give him a plaister; or take away from man his possession, and say we will give it him again, yet God may. Man must not be so bold with man, because he hath no right to take away and wound, nor is he sure that he can restore and heal; but it is no boldness, but a due right in God to do thus, for he as Lord hath power to take away, and ability to restore. And he restores sometimes in temporals, as to *Job*, but alwayes to his people in spirituals and eternals. Hence the Apostle argueth (2 *Cor.* 4. 7.) *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us an eternal weight of glory.* Afflictions work glory for us, not in a way of meriting glory, but in a tendency to the receiving of glory, and in preparations for it. *There is no wrong in those losses by which we are made gainers: Those losses being sent that we may gain, and the sender of the loss being able effectually to make us gainers.*

He multiplieth my wounds without cause.] Hence observe,

First, *Afflictions are no argument that God doth not love us.*

As the Lord hath a multitude of mercies in his heart, so a multitude of afflictions in his hand; and a multitude of afflictions may consist with a multitude of mercies. At the same time when we are visibly encompast about, and besieged with an army of sorrows and opposers, an army of invisible comforts and protectors may be encamping round about us: As *Elisha* assured his servant, 2 *King.* 6. 17.

Secondly, (Which I shall but only name, because I have met it heretofore.)

The Lord is not accountable to any creature for his actions.

He multiplieth my wounds without cause, or, *He multiplieth my wounds without shewing cause.* God is the only Judge, who may give sentence without hearing parties, or shewing cause. It is unrighteous in an earthly Judge to do so: he must not judge a man to any suffering, and not shew reason of his judgment. But the first cause needs not shew second causes. God hath the reason of all things in himself, and therefore we cannot call him to give his reason. Where the will of the Agent may lawfully be all the reason of his actions, there is no reason he should give any account of his actions, but what himself wills.

The next verse is of the same tenor in sence with the former, the difference is only in expression.

Vers. 18. **He will not suffer me to take my breath, but filleth me with bitterness.**

He not only breaks me with a tempest, and multiplies my wounds, but *He will not suffer me to take my breath.* This implies the unintermittedness of afflictions; as if he had said, *I have not only many afflictions, and great afflictions, but continual afflictions.* The Hebrew is, *He will not give me to draw back my breath*, or, *suffer my breath to return:* The words are of the same importance with those of *Chap.* 7. *vers.*

Non dedit mihi retrahere spiritū.

verſ. 19. *How long wilt thou not depart from me? Nor let me alone till I ſwallow down my ſpittle?* That is, wilt thou not give me ſo much reſpite as to *ſwallow down my ſpittle?* Here (which is more) he affirms, *He will not give me ſo much as a breathing time.*

Quidam ad morbum referunt, qu ſi Job Aſtmate laboraſſet. Beda.

Some interpret this of a bodily diſtemper or diſeaſe: that God had brought a ſickneſs upon him, which did even ſtop his breath, as if *Job* had been troubled with hardneſs of breathing, with the *Tiſſick* (as Phyſitians call it) or a ſtopping in the lungs. But we may rather take it figuratively, my ſorrows put me out of breath; the Lord doth not only afflict me without giving me any account, but I have unceſſant afflictions which cannot be accounted. *No man can tell how often he doth or ſuffers that which he alwayes doth or ſuffers.* I am ſo far from ſeeing a period of my troubles, that I have not ſo much as any pauſe or ſtop. He ſpeaks in that high ſtrain of Rhetorick, called *hyperbole*; for in ſtrictneſs of the letter, not to ſuffer a man to take his breath, is to kill and quite deſtroy him; but when he ſaith, God will not ſuffer me to breathe, it noteth the continuation of his ſorrows, not the expiration of his dayes.

Fortaſſe proverbiũ erat, ad ſignificandũ facere aliquid indefinenter & abſq; ulla vel minima morula aut intermiſſione Una ſaliva. Hieron. *in ep.* ἄπνευστι, i.e. *uno ſpiritu aliquid facere, eſt diligenter facere.* Theoph. *in Charact. Clivum iſtũ uno ſi potes ſpiritu exupera.* Sen. * *Va preſto, & non fietare,* q.d. *uno halitu egreſſum & regreſſum perfice.*

Again, Not to ſuffer a man to take his breath, before he hath done ſuch a thing, is a Proverb for ſpeedy doing. Like that uſed by ſome of the Ancients, to do a thing *with one ſpit*, that is, in as little time as a man may ſpit. When the * *Italians* would expreſs acting without delay, they ſay, *Go about this buſineſs, and do not fetch a breath till you are here again, go and come with a breath.* That direction given by *Eliſha* to his ſervant *Gehezi*, when he ſent him to reſtore the *Shunamites* ſon (*2 King.* 4. 29.) *Take my ſtaff in thine hand, and go thy way; if thou meet any man, ſalute him not; and if any ſalute thee, anſwer him not again*, &c. And that of Chriſt to his Diſciples, when he gave them their Commiſſion to preach the Goſpel (*Luke* 10. 4.) *Salute no man by the way*, are of the ſame intendment. Chriſt did not mean that his Diſciples ſhould be uncivil (nor *Eliſha* his) he did not forbid them to uſe common courteſies to men, when they went to call men to ſpecial grace. No, but his meaning is, Go ſpeedily about the work, do not ſtand complementing and talking, with *How do you, and how do you?* by the way: do not entertain the time, or trifle it away with Ceremonies, having an imployment of ſuch infinite concernment put into your hands. So he ſeems to allude to, and reprove that ill cuſtom of idle ſervants, who when they are ſent forth upon buſineſs, will yet ſtand and talk with every one they meet. Now, as not to ſuffer a man to talk a word while he is upon a ſervice, imports ſudden diſpatch: ſo when *Job* ſaith, *He will not ſuffer me to take my breath* in theſe my ſufferings, his meaning is, mine are no lazy, dull ſufferings, I am forced to be active at them, I cannot ſtand breathing and cooling my ſelf, I have no leiſure, no vacation at all from this paſſive ſervice: *He will not ſuffer me to take my breath.*

But (or, for) he filleth me with bitterneſs, or with bitternesſes.

* *Sicut dulcedo omnia jucunda & amica naturæ ſignificat ſic nomine amaritudinis, graviſſimaq; afflictiones intelliguntur.* Bold. *Vicit iræ non dulcuerunt*, Hoſ. 9. 4.

I have opened this word before, *Chap.* 3. 10. As in Scripture, ſweetneſs implies all comfort: ſo bitterneſs all trouble and ſorrow. When God complains about the ſervices of his people (*Jer.* 6. 20. *Hoſ.* 9.) he ſaith, *Your ſacrifices are not ſweet to me:* So the Original; that is, your Sacrifices are not acceptable to me, or pleaſing to me. Sweet things are pleaſing things, bitter things are unpleaſing. Afflictions are unpleaſant to fleſh and blood, (*Heb.* 12. 11.) *No affliction for the preſent is joyous, but grievous.*

Bitterneſs] is put for the extreameſt affliction, and in the plural (as here) for all afflictions; *Surely the bitterneſs of death is paſt*, ſaith *Agag* (1 Sam. 15. 32.) that is, I have eſcaped bitter death at this time; the Souldier ſpared me in the heat of the battel, ſurely then a Prophet will not ſlay me in cold blood: *To be filled with bitterneſs* notes abundance of afflictions. As to be *filled with the Spirit, to be filled with the fulneſs of Chriſt*, &c. note the plentiful receiving of the Spirit, and of the grace of Chriſt. To taſte of a bitter cup, to ſip a little of it is unpleaſant, but to drink large draughts, to be fill'd with bitterneſs, who can abide it? When Chriſt was come to *Golgotha*, *They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall*; but (though he drank up that cup of his fathers wrath to the very bottom, though he drank up all the gall and wormwood of ſin, for the ſalvation of men, yet) when he had taſted thereof, *He would not drink* (Matth. 27. 34.) If it be grievous to taſte but a little of a bitter cup, then judge how grievous *Job's* ſufferings were, who was filled with bitterneſs; he had his belly full of trouble, his belly full of gall and wormwood, his ſtomach could hold no more, bitterneſs was both his meat and drink. Note,

First, *Afflictions may come unceſſantly.*

Not ſo much as a breathing time between. Then while thou art aſſaulted prepare for freſh aſſaults. Obſerve,

Secondly, *The Lord ſometimes mixes a very bitter cup for his own people.*

Yea, They have not only a bitter cup, but bitterneſs is their cup; and they have not only a taſte of it, but are filled with it. The Pſalmiſt ſhews us a bitter cup, which is the proper portion of wicked men; *There is a cup in the hand of the Lord, and it is full of mixture, the wine is red, and the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them* (Pſal. 75. 8.) The Lord hath a cup of red wine, that is, a cup filled with wrath, fury and indignation. Wicked men (how much ſoever their ſtomachs loath it, and turn againſt it) ſhall drink it up to the bottom, or, he will pour it down their throats, whether they will or no. *They ſhall be filled with bitterneſs* after all their ſweet morſels and pleaſant draughts. The Saints are filled with bitterneſs from God, but not with the wrath of God; many ſorrows may be mingled in their cup, but everlaſting love is ever mingled in it. *Saints never drink pure wrath, as wicked men never taſte pure love.*

To conclude, we may obſerve here a *Climax*, or *gradation* of four ſteps.

First, (*Verſ.* 14.) *Job* acknowledged that he was unable to anſwer the Lord.

And ſecondly, He profeſſed that if he could, he would not, no, he would humble himſelf (*Verſ.* 15.)

Thirdly, If in mercy God ſhould anſwer his petition, yet he would not be confident at all (in regard of himſelf) that God had heard *him*, or hearkned unto *his* voice.

Laſtly, He acknowledged that God might go on to afflict him ſtill; for ſome read this Text in the *future tenſe*, *He will multiply my wounds, and afflict me without cauſe; He will fill me with bitterneſs.* A godly man reckons up his afflictions as well as his comforts to the praiſe and honour of God. And the more God afflicts him, the more he abaſes himſelf, though he doth not think the worſe of himſelf, becauſe God doth afflict him.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

If I ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong; and if of judgement, Who ſhall ſet me a time to plead?
If I juſtifie my ſelf, mine own mouth ſhall condemn me; If I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.
Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own ſoul, I would deſpiſe my life.

JOB goeth on to lay himſelf yet lower before God: and having in the three former verſes proved that weak man is not able to contend with the Almighty; he giveth an additional proof in *Verſ.* 19. from the conſideration of a twofold adjunct in God. First, His *ſtrength*. And ſecondly, His *juſtice*. From both he concludeth according to the former argument given upon the whole matter in *Verſ.* 10. ſeeing God is ſo ſtrong and juſt, *Surely, if I juſtifie my ſelf, my own mouth ſhall condemn me; and if I ſay, I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.*

If I ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong.

There are two wayes whereby a man makes his part good againſt another man.

First, By the ſtrength of his arm, and dint of his Sword.

Secondly, By the equity of his cauſe, and the goodneſs of his conſcience. *Job* declareth his inability to deal with God in either, *If I ſpeak of ſtrength, lo, he is ſtrong*, &c.

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates thus, *As for force, he is valiant*; if I think to carry it by force with God, He is a God of valour,

valour, or, as *Moses* in his Song (*Exod.*15.3.) describeth him, *The Lord is a man of war*, I cannot deal with him upon that point.

In originali indifferens est, quam tantùm habetur, si ad potentiam: ut suppleri possit, venero, aut respexero, vel aliquid simile.

The original speaks only thus much, *If of strength, he strong*; we supply the word, *speak*. If men talk of strength, or boast of strength, or shew forth their strength (we may supply it with any of those words) *Lo, he is strong*. As it is usual with us when we would set a man up, in the perfections of any quality, we say, What do ye speak of knowledge, why, *There's a learned man!* What do ye speak of riches, why, *There's a rich man!* &c. Such an emphasis is carried in this expression, *If I speak of strength*, why, *here's one that is strong indeed!*

אמץ *Prevalens, vincens, invitto quodam & obfirmato animo præditus dici solet de eo qui viribus superior est.*

There are five words in the Hebrew which signifie strength. The first, notes strength in general: The second, strength to endure labour: The third, efficacy: The fourth, vigour: The fifth, which is that of the Text, superiority of strength, or prevailing strength. It is one thing to be strong, and another thing to prevail. *The Lord is not only strong, but strongest:* he hath a strength above all strength, he is strong overcomingly, strong prevailingly. Christ in the Gospel speaks of a *strong man* (he means the Devil) that kept the house; but he was not *strong prevailingly*, for there came a *stronger then he*, that spoil'd him, and took away all his armor from him, wherein he trusted (*Luke* 11.22.) but when the Holy Ghost saith, That the Lord is strong, the meaning is, that he is stronger then all: and so generally the positive is expounded by the superlative, *If we speak of strength, lo, he is strong*, that is, he is most strong. Thus we find the word used, 2 *Sam.*22.18. *He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me, for they were too strong for me:* they were prevailingly strong for me, and therefore unless I had found a supply of help, unless some Auxiliaries had come from Heaven to take my part, they had been too hard for me, I had been overmatcht, they were prevailingly strong, or too strong for me. We have the word in the same sence (*Gen.*25.23.) in that resolution which the unerring oracle of Heaven gave *Rebekah* enquiring about the children striving in her womb, the Lord answereth thus, *Two Nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people*; and then addeth, *The one people shall be stronger then the other people*; it is this word, the one people shall be prevailingly strong, and shall overcome the other; both people shall be strong, mighty and potent, but there is one of them shall have the rule, and shall conquer and subdue the other. *If I speak of strength, he is strong.* The sum is, *If the Question be about strength and power, then the Lord carries the day and the honour, he is most powerful, he is strong above all.* Hence observe,

חזק *Est durabilitas in agenti & actione* גבורה *Efficaciam,* חיל *Vigorem significat.* Coc.

Regnum regno prævalebit, sci. populus præ populo robustior.

That, *God is of infinite and insuperable strength.*

He hath strength: Many have malice and wickedness, boldness and presumption enough to oppose, but none have power enough to overcome him. He hath force which none can subdue; and he hath authority which none ought to resist. These two must concur wheresoever there is full determining power. A man may have authority or right to do a thing, and yet have no strength to execute and effect it. And many have strength to do those things (as to oppress a man, to take his goods or his life from him) for which they have no authority: both meet in the Lord, therefore he is the *Soveraign Lord*; he hath authority to do as much as he can, and he hath strength to do as much as he will. Some men would make strange work in the world, if they had strength sutable to their authority: and others would make a good world by their works, if they had authority sutable to their strength: both these meet in God, who can contend with him? *If we speak of strength, lo, he is strong.*

There are three things wherein this insuperableness of the strength of God appears.

First, He hath strength to do whatsoever he will, *There is nothing not feible, or too hard for him.*

Secondly, He hath strength to do what he willeth not, the Lord is able to do more then ever he will do; he could presently take vengeance upon all the wicked, but he will not; he is patient and good toward them, who look not at all towards repentance, to which his goodness and patience leads them, *Rom.* 2. 5.

Thirdly, He is so strong that he can do whatsoever imports strength, because he only doth what he will do. *To do that which is not our will to do, is a note of disability.* It argues a want of power to be forced to do a thing, as well as not be able to do it. *He that doth what he would not, is not able to do what he would.* God is therefore able to do whatsoever he wills, because he never did, nor can be drawn to do any thing against his will. It follows then, That the Lord is so strong that he can do whatsoever names him strong, and only cannot do those things, which if he did, he must be weak, as was further shewed at *vers.* 4. of this Chapter. Hence it appears,

Secondly, That, *No creature is able to grapple with God.*

He is strongest. The Apostle gives that admonition, (1 *Corinth.* 10. 22.) *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousie? Are we stronger then he?* Surely, except man thought he were able to match God, he would not be so fool-hardy, so vain, to throw down the Gauntlet, or enter the lists with God: *The weakness of God is stronger then men* (1 Cor. 1.25.) not that there is any weakness in God: but take that which men conceive to be weakness, or weakest in him, that's stronger then man. Or, *The weakness of God*, that is, the weakest instruments which God useth, are stronger, *scil.* in their effects, then the strongest which men use. God can do more with ten men, then man can do with an hundred. The most stammering tongue and flattest language shall perswade more, if God speak with it, then the most fluent tongue and sparkling Oratory spoken meerly by man, *If I speak of strength, lo, he is strong.*

And if of judgment, Who shall set me a time to plead?

If I cannot by force and power, may I not by subtilty and wit, by reason and argument, by Eloquence and Rhetorick prevail against him? No, *If of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead?* As I cannot deal with God at the sword, or in the field; so neither can I deal with him at the bar, or at the judgment seat.

There are two words in the Hebrew which are used for judging, The first is, *Dan*, the name of one of the twelve *Patriarchs*, and from him of a Tribe in *Israel*: Dan *shall judge his people* (Gen.49.16.) And that word (in strictness) signifies to give doom or sentence in a cause. The other word is that in the Text, *Shaphat*, which signifies more especially the doing of right, or the righting of a man in any controversie. The Greek word takes in both. Now, while *Job* saith, *If of judgment*, or *if we speak of judgment*, the Question is, What judgment doth he mean?

משפט *Judicium, jus, ratio.*

κρίνω.

Judgment is taken three wayes.

First, For the rule of judging, or for the Law whereby we judge. It is said (1 *Sam.*10.25.) that *Samuel* (after he had annointed *Saul* for King) *told the people the manner of the Kingdom, and wrote it in a book. This manner of the Kingdom* was not the common practice and custom of the Kingdom, but (it is the word of the Text) the *judgments of the Kingdom*, that is, those rules and laws by which the Kingdom ought to be governed and judged.

Secondly, Judgment is put for an ability or fitness to judge, to discern and weigh things, to scan a cause, and try out the uttermost truth of every circumstance: judgment is the ability of the person judging. And

Thirdly, Judgment is taken for the sentence given upon the person judged, after the evidence of his cause is heard and taken. Judgment in this third sence is the result of the former two. For when by judgment, as it is the rule of judging, and an ability to judge, the Judge hath wrought and tried out what the merit of a mans cause, and the truth of a business in controversie is, then the issue of both is, *Judgment in this third sence*; that is, an act which is passed, or a sentence pronounced upon the person that standeth in, or the cause which is brought to judgment.

So, *If of judgment*, is, If I bring forth my cause to be tried by the abilities of the Judge, and by the rule of the Law, this will be no relief to me, I shall be in as ill a case, as if I were to deal with God by plain strength.

There is an opinion that takes in a fourth sence about this word *Judgment*, as if judgment were not *a forensical, or a judicial term* in this Text, but signified only afflictions

Judicium sumitur hoc loco pro divinis operibus, humanum captum excedentibus, non pro forensi & judiciali actu. Oly.

or

or punishments upon a people or person. These are called the judgments of God, *Rom.* 11. 33. *How unsearchable are his judgments, and his wayes past finding out?* That is, the several acts which he passes upon men, his providences and outward dispensations (for he speaks of casting off of the *Jews*, and laying them aside for so long a time, which is one of the greatest, if not the greatest judgment which God ever burdened his own Covenant-people with) *These* (saith he) *are past finding out.* And then, *If I come to speak of judgment*, is, If I speak with God about his judgments shewed in those terrible providential acts upon others, or upon my self, and cite him to answer for what he hath done towards me or them, Who is able to plead? Who will undertake this cause against the Lord?

Who shall set me a time to plead?

יעד *In suo Kal* conducere, convenire & tempus certè tuere, propriè significat. *In* Hiphil (*sicut hic*), convenire facere.

It is but one word which we translate [*To set a time to plead*] but the sence is very large and various; it signifies to appoint, constitute or prescribe either time, place or persons, any or all the circumstantials of action. It is here translated by divers in reference to the time, and by some in reference to the place. And because the people of God are to meet at appointed times and places for solemn and publick worship, therefore this word signifies the Church or the congregation, which is alwayes to meet by publick appointment at such a time, or in such a place, lest there should be scatterings and confusions amongst those who should be most unanimous and harmonious. It is taken also for any meeting, *Psal.* 48. 4. *Lo, the Kings were assembled or gathered together.* And, *Amos* 3. 3. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* That is, except they be friends. *They who have not one heart, seldom have one way.* Or, *except they be agreed*, that is, upon time and place; two men cannot converse or have any business one with another, unless they consent and appoint *where and when*; if one be for this time and place, and the other for that, they can never walk together. It is put for a set time, 2 *Sam.* 24. 15. The Lord having sent the pestilence upon *Jerusalem* for the sin of *David* in numbring the people, it is said, the pestilence destroyed *from the morning, even to the time appointed*; the Lord had set the pestilence a time, it wrought to that time and no longer.

עֵרָה *Conventus* status locis & locis aggregari soliti, cœtus, collegium, ecclesia, congregatio.

Further, The word is applied to any covenant, pact, or mutual agreement: Hence the Tabernacle is indifferently called *The Tabernacle of the Testimony*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Congregation*; because there God confirmed and setled his Covenant, and made an agreement with his people, and his people resorted to the Tabernacle, to have the Articles of that Covenant made good to them by his own appointment. Hence (I say) it was called *The Tabernacle of witness*, *The Tabernacle of the Testament*, or, *The Tabernacle of the Covenant.* Upon this ground also all the solemn feasts of the *Jews* were exprest by this general word, they being all observed at set times and places. And for this reason the word is used for the *Grave.* So in *Job* 30. 23. Which we translate thus, *The house appointed for all living*; there is a time when, and a place appointed where all that live shall be laid down when they die, or where their bodies shall be housed after they are dissolved, therefore it is called *The house of appointment*; the house which the Lord hath setled both for time and place where it shall be made, and when we shall be carried to it. No man goes to his grave by accident; the Lord hath appointed man his place, and bounded his habitation, when he is dead, as well as while he lived.

Obel. Magned. Tabernaculum testimonii, i.e. publicæ fidei in Deum & homines contestatæ, &c. Pined.

Beth Magned.

Again, For a clearer understanding of this, it may have an allusion to that course which is observed in *Courts of Justice*, where, when either *Plaintiff* or *Defendant* wants Council to plead for him, the *Court assignes Council*; and it is observed by the Learned, that among the *Romans*, the *Prætor* would say, *What, is there none to plead for him? I will appoint one to take his cause into consideration, and to plead for him.* It is ordinary with our Judges to appoint Council, as also time and place, when and where to hear causes. The words may have an allusion to this course of Judges; *If I come to judgment*, who will assign me council? where shall I get any one to plead this cause, and to stand up for me against the Lord?

Prætor dicere solebat, Si advocatũ non habet, ego dabo.

There is yet another understanding of the word; as having reference to the testimony or witness which is brought in. So the Vulgar reads it, No man will be so bold as to give in evidence for me, or to be a witness on my behalf.

Nemo audet pro me testimonium dicere. Vulg.

Take all these sences, *If I come to judgment, who?* &c. *I shall get none to give in evidence for me, none to plead for me; I shall get none to assign counsel for me, none to appoint time and place for a hearing*; therefore I may as well contend with God by strength, as by judgment. The sum of all is, *Job* confesses, in case he had a mind to go this way, he should not find any in the world to assist or help him in it.

We have had divers passages of like nature with this, wherein *Job* declared his utter inability to plead with God; therefore I shall but briefly note one thing from it.

There is no standing before God in judgment by the help of any creature.

Who shall set me a time to plead? Or, Who shall be my pleader? One man cannot do it for another; all the Angels in heaven are not able to do it for any man. If man enter into judgment with God, men and Angels cannot help him. As the Apostle speaks in another case, about the want of love, *If I speak with the tongue of men and Angels, and have not charity, it profits me nothing:* So, if we should speak for our selves, or others for us, with the tongues of men, that is, with the tongues of the most excellent Orators or Pleaders; yea, with the tongues of Angels, with tongues that exceed all that men can speak, yet in judgment with God these will be but *sounding brass and tinckling Cymbals.*

Job goes yet a step further. If I should undertake to manage my cause my self (some Clients will desire their Counsel to stand by, and they will argue their own cause) why, saith *Job*, if I should do so, if I should be my own Advocate or Attorney, and appear my self in my own cause, it would be all one; *If I justifie my self, my own mouth shall condemn me*; I shall be as bad, if not worse then before. I can get none to plead for me, and if I plead for my self, I am sure to be cast; I cannot mend my self by speaking in my own cause: That's the meaning of this twentieth verse, which is but a continuation, with a further illustration of what he had spoken before, therefore I shall but touch upon it.

Verse 20. If I justifie my self.

That is, If Witness fail, and Counsel fail, if all help and succours fail me, and then I resolve to go to work with my own strength and wit, if I go about to make or declare my self just before God (for so the word is to be understood, as in the doctrine of Justification) what shall I gain? The profit will not countervail the charge or pay for the expence of one breath; For,

Mine own mouth shall condemn me.

Os meum condemnabit meum testimonium, &c. Pisc. Ex hoc modi judicio condemnatus, &c. Piscat. oratio non fiet in peccatum.

My tongue would cut my own throat; the sentence or words which I should bring forth to plead my cause before God, would be found against me; the Lord would turn all my arguments back upon me, and wound me with mine own weapons. I should go out condemned, and my plea should be turned into sin. I shall certainly spoil my cause, if I handle it. As, if I should put it into the hands of Angels or men, they could make nothing of it, so, neither can I make any thing of it if I manage it my self.

There are three things which evince that if man undertake the matter with God, he shall be condemned by his own mouth.

First, Man is insufficient. How can he who is ignorant, weak and unrighteous, plead his cause with God, who is infinite in wisdom, righteousness and holiness? And therefore mans own mouth will condemn him, his words will speak him guilty while he pleads, *Not guilty.*

Secondly, He that justifies himself, must appear in his own commendation, he must bring forth all his good works, and shew the Lord how he hath fasted, prayed and mourned, how humble, how liberal he hath been, what alms he hath given; he must (as it were) paint and adorn himself in all his excellencies, and stand before the Lord in this array. Now mans own mouth must condemn him, if he do thus. The Heathen could say by the light of nature, *That a mans praises are sullied by passing through his own lips. To*

Ut laus, testimonii proprio sit deficit in

sound

sound our own praise, sounds our shame. If a man have never so much worth in him, he dishonours himself by being the trumpet of it.

Thirdly, A mans own testimony is not legal in his own cause. *The same person must not be a witness and a party.* He that justifies himself, condemns himself; for his very justification is an accusation. If a mans own witness may be taken, who shall be condemned? Who will not acquit himself? The witness of our own hearts is much (1 *John* 3.21.) but not enough; *If our own hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God.* But the reason of this confidence is not in the bare, single witness of our own hearts, but in the co-witness of God with our hearts. Conscience is therefore a thousand witnesses, because God who is more then a thousand Consciences, joynes with Conscience, both in accusing and in acquitting. The Pharisees said unto Christ, *Thou beares record of thy self, thy record is not true* (John 8.13, 16.) They spake upon a legal ground or Maxim; Christ answereth, *Though I bear record of my self, yet my record is true.* Christ doth not deny the Rule, but shews that he was above it; and therefore adds, *It is said in your Law, that the testimony of two men is true, I am not alone, for the Father is with me*: As if he had said, I alone bear not witness of my self, *I have another, even the Father that sent me, he beareth witness of me*; therefore mine is not a single testimony: in that case indeed I were to be reproved, and my witness were insufficient; *My own mouth would condemn me*, if there were no mouth to testifie for me, but only mine: If I were but as an ordinary man, I might be kept to the ordinary rule. *God only is a sufficient witness to himself.*

Mine own mouth shall condemn me. But of what? Surely of folly (2 *Cor.* 12.21.) *I am become a fool in glorying*, saith *Paul* to his *Corinthians*; but I am not a fool of my own making; *ye have compelled me, for I ought to have been commended of you.* That is, ye ought to have given a testimony of me; if ye had been just to me, I had been condemned in justifying my self. Then it is a duty to witness for our selves, when others neglect that duty.

The Original word which we translate *condemn*, is directly oppolite to that which we translate *justifie*; and some render it by a new-coyn'd word in Latine, which we cannot put literally into English, but by coyning a word for it, thus; *If I justifie my self, my own mouth would ungodlifie me, or declare me to be ungodly.*

Here two Questions arise; the one is, Why may not *Job* justifie himself? The Lord hath justified him, the Lord said that he was a perfect man (that's the next expression, *If I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse.*) The Lord had said of *Job*, chap. 1. *That he was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eschewed evil*; why may not *Job* say as much of himself as the Lord had done?

Solomon resolves this Query (*Prov.* 27. 2.) *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth, a stranger, and not thine own lips.* Man must not speak the evil he knows by others unless called, nor the good he knows by himself. To speak good of our selves with our own mouths, is much like doing good by other mens hands. We must not act things praise-worthy by *proxie*, but it is best to be praised by *proxie* for our good acts. Now as man may not praise himself, though other men may praise him, so he must not praise himself, though God praiseth him. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but he whom the Lord commendeth*, 2 *Cor.* 10. 18.

Secondly, Why doth *Job* say here, I will not justifie my self, I will not say I am perfect, Whereas in other places he justifies himself, and saith that he was perfect? If you read the twenty ninth and thirtieth Chapters of this Book, you shall find them to be but a continued justification of himself, or a *Manifest of his own innocency.* There he proclaims how holy he had been, and how righteous in all his wayes, that he had *put on judgment as a Robe, and justice as a Diadem*; that he had delivered the oppressed, and distributed of his fulness to the necessities of the poor. Those two Chapters being a professed Catalogue of his good deeds, why is he so shie and modest here?

I answer, In this and the like expressions, while *Job* saith, he will not justifie himself, or say he is perfect, he declines the plea of personal righteousness or perfection in the sight of God, as hath frequently appeared in this Argument.

But in those Chapters, and in other places where he is upon his defence, he speaks only in reference to the charge of his friends; as if he had said, *Ye accuse me for an hypocrite, and censure me deeply, I can justifie my self, and plead my innocency with you, though I have not a word to say for my self before the Lord; I will bear any thing at his hands, let him say of me, and do with me what he pleaseth, I will take shame to my self, and give him glory; but as for you, my friends, I will justifie my self in your sight, I am not the man ye take me for.*

nunc peccatum suum dimisse confitentis, nunc justitiam suam acerrimè defendentis. Merl.

These speakings are not cross to each other, but help us to understand *Job*'s sence in this Argument. He stands much upon his integrity, but it is to his friends; he humbles himself in the sight of his own vileness, but it is to God. *Paul* (Rom. 7. 24.) bewailes his sinfulness; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and of death! I find a law in my members rebelling against the law of my mind*: Yet, when he answers false Apostles about his personal carriage, and the discharge of his Apostleship, then he saith, *I know nothing by my self* (1 *Cor.* 4. 4.) I am charged thus and thus, I am slandered so and so, but my conscience acquits me, *I know nothing by my self*: The sinfulness of his Nature made him groan and sigh out, *O wretched man that I am!* The sincerity of his heart made him boast and sing out like *a happy man, as sorrowful, but alwayes rejoycing. A man may be conscious of his own natural corruption, and yet confident of his own practical integrity.*

Mominis innocentia duobus testibus constare debet. 1. Deo, 2. Conscientia. Ergo si tibi vides habere bonum conscientiæ testimonium, bene quidem sed divinum adhuc de tua innocentia expectandum est.

If I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.

These words in strictness of sence refer to the inward purpose of his heart or bent of his mind, as the former did to the outward way of his life; *If I say I am perfect*, that is, if I say there is no meditated obliquity in my heart, no intended goings astray or wandrings, no close hypocrisie or falseness there; If I should say, I am perfect in the bent and purposes of my heart, yet this is not such as I dare appear before God in; as if I justifie my self by the actings and puttings forth of my life, *my mouth will condemn me*, so, if I say I am perfect in the thinkings and secret motions of my spirit, *it will prove me perverse.*

רשע & צרק *ad facta*, חם & עקש *ad animum referuntur.*

The word which we translate [perverse,] signifies to wander, as a man uncertain of his way (*Prov.* 28. 18.) *Whoso walketh uprightly* (having the frame of his inward man right) *he shall be saved*; *but he that is perverse in his wayes* (having a wandring, vagrant mind, going sometime this way, and sometime that, holding somewhat of this, and somewhat of that, but nothing to purpose or steadily of any thing, this man) *shall fall at once*; *a man of an uncertain spirit shall have a certain downfal.* But was *Job* thus perverse? No, *Job* was perfect, and not perverse; yet a boast of his perfection, had been a proof of his perverseness: *Nothing discovers an evil heart more then a profession of its own goodness.*

חם *Qui certo est proposito.* עקש *qui vago & diverso, qui se dividit & distorquet in duas vias.* Coc. *In Hebræo simplex est, perversicavit me.*

It shall prove me perverse.] What shall prove me perverse? Some refer it to the former clause, *My mouth* (or the speaking of those words, *I am perfect*) *shall prove me perverse.* Others refer it to God; *God will prove me perverse*, if I justifie my self. The Seventy leave it without restriction to any antecedent; *If I say I am perfect, I shall go away perverse*, or I shall appear perverse.

Perversus evadam.

Observe hence that famous Gospel-doctrine, *No man can be justified before God by the works of the Law.*

It is as noble a proof of *free justification* in the Old Testament, as any in the New. The Saints have been acquainted with this truth from the beginning, That man is nothing in himself, and that free grace doth all. The doctrine of *Free Grace* is no new doctrine: the doctrine of *Free Will* is (*Prov.* 20.9.) *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* And that he must say, who justifies himself before God. Every Legal *Justiciary* takes up this language, *I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin.* It is a task too hard for men, yea, for all the Angels in heaven to make one heart clean; only Jesus Christ is able to fetch out the filth and rubbish that lodgeth in, and pollutes our spirits. *To be a heart-cleanser is the peculiar work and honour of Christ.* A man that knows himself, and sees his face in the glass of the Word (which flatters no man) will never say, *I am clean*: nor will he say,

Nobilis locus clarissimè ostendens neminem ex lege justificari. Coc.

Plus sensus pulchrè expressus in hac Jobi disputatione

הרשיע *Propriè sonat impiificare, ut* צדק *justificare.* Merc. *In forma Hiphil non effectionem denotat, sed declarationem.*

Quot tenebræ, quot nubes, quot maculæ? quem non pudebit si fidem suam & innocentiam ad illustre illud legis speculum contempletur? Coc.

say, I can cleanse my self. How many spots and blots, how many defects and deformities will that glass represent unto him, which he is not able to heal or fetch out? Every mans face will blush, who sees his heart or his life in that glass, unless he, *Who beholding himself, goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was* (Jam. 1. 24.)

Secondly observe, *Job* had received testimony from He could produce *Letters testimonial, subscribed by the hand of heaven, that he was a just and a perfect man, one that feared God and eschewed evil.* Yet this *Job* (let God speak as well as he will of him) he will not speak well of himself to God: Let God report him perfect to men, he will not report himself perfect before God. Though *Job* had a free and a full Certificate of his innocency (not one bought, begged, or got with flattery) yet he forbears in this case to bring it forth and read it to his friends.

They who have most real worth and holiness in them, are least in their own eyes, and lowest in their own thoughts.

They of whom God gives the fairest testimony, give the meanest of themselves; he cares not much to appear to be, what God assures him he is. God was positive (*without Ifs or Ands*) in his opinion of him; *Thou art perfect*, but he puts it into a supposition, and concludes with an *If, If I were perfect*, &c.

In *ver.* 21. *Job* carries on the same business, and bewraies a more humble and self-denying frame of mind then before.

Though I were perfect, yet, &c.

There is a contention among Interpreters, to which part of the Chapter this verse 21. belongs, whether to that which went before, or to that which follows after. I shall open it first, as the sence of it may be connected with the matter preceding.

Verse 21. **Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my own soul; I would despise my life.**

Though I were perfect.] Observe the gradation. He had said before, If I plead with God, and justifie my self, I shall be condemned and proved perverse. But put my case at the best, that I justifying my self, the Lord should accept my justification, and should concur with my vote that I am perfect, yet I could take no joy in this. If the Lord should condescend to know me under that notion, I would not adventure to know my own soul under the notions of my perfections. The thing is an abhorring to me.

I would not know my soul.

Why not? There are two senses given: First, thus; *If I were perfect*, that is, if upon debate and pleading with God, I should come off perfect in my own judgment, certainly then I did not know my own soul. That's one sense, and so it falls in well with the former words; *If I should justifie my self, my mouth would prove me perverse.* And so the point that I shall note from it, is,

That, *Ignorance of our selves is the cause of proud and high thoughts of our selves.*

He that knows himself, must know himself to be imperfect, seeing our greatest perfection in this life, is, to know our own imperfections. When we see any standing upon their own bottoms, and crying up themselves, poor souls, how they are benighted? How little do they know of their own hearts and lives? How little do they know of God? They are in darkness, therefore they see not their own spots. If a man, whose face is foul or deformed, should boast of his beauty, would you not say, this man knows not his own face; or, surely he hath not look'd in a Glass to day. May we not much rather say to him who justifies himself, and saith he is perfect, sure you never saw your face in the glass, in the pure Crystal glass of the Word. He that is in Gospel-light, sees himself, and as light encreaseth, so doth his sight of himself: And the more he sees himself, the more evil he sees in himself. In a cloudy day we think the air is clear, but the shining of the Sun shews us millions of motes in the air: if a man sees no motes in his life (some see not beams there) it is, because he walks in darkness, and hath not the light, *he doth not know his own soul.* That's a useful interpretation of the words, and the first sence.

Secondly, *If I were perfect*; If it should be told me I were perfect, I would not know my own soul, that is, I would not take notice of my self as perfect, I would be a stranger to my self under that title, I would shake the thoughts of such a perfection out of my mind, as much as I would shake the thoughts of sinful corruption out of my mind. It is as dangerous to lodge or nourish thoughts of our own perfection, as to lodge thoughts of the most sinful corruptions. *A holy heart loves good thoughts, but it loves not thoughts of its own goodness.*

Talem de me cogitationē non admittam, sed omnino contemnam, & de mente mea penitus excutiam.

So then, *I would not know my soul*] imports not affected ignorance, but elected knowledge. *Job* was no stranger to his own soul, he had studied himself, and was well vers'd in his own bosom. *Self-knowledge is a duty, and self-knowledge may be a sin.* Christians should read themselves more then Books, and yet they may pore too much upon themselves. Heathens gave us this Lesson, and they say it came from heaven, *Know thy self.* *Augustine* is quick upon it, *Lord, I know MEE, and I know THEE.* To know God and our selves, is the sum of all knowledge. God doth not know him who knows not himself. There is a double knowledge of our selves.

Quamvis bene recleq; vixerim, hoc penitus despiciam. Eol.

Admirabili & omni acceptatione dignissima doctrina, ac si effet ex purissimis evangelii fontibus hausta. E cœlo descendit, Nosce teipsum. Noverim me, noverim te. August.

First, Of *sinful self*, or of our sins and failings.

Secondly, Of *renewed self*, or of our virtues and graces. Not to know how frail we are, how sinful we are, to what corruptions and temptations we are most subject, is a sinful and corrupt ignorance. To know our imperfections, is a part of our perfection.

Talis ignorans à Deo ignoratur.

Secondly, Not to know our Graces and Virtues, what the work of the Spirit, and the new Nature within us is, this also is a sinful ignorance. *It is no honour to be what we do not know our selves to be; it is to be in the state of a beast, not to reflect upon our own estate.* The new creature is light, and carries a light for its own discovery. The reproveable knowledge of our own souls is not the *knowledge of intuition*, whereby we apprehend what we are, but the *knowledge of ostentation*, whereby we are proud of, or trust upon what we are. We have an ordinary saying amongst us, which reaches this sence fully, *Such a woman is beautiful, and she knows it; such a one is a proper man, and he knows it; such a one hath many good parts, a very fine wit, and he knows it*; that is, such persons pride and lift themselves up in their perfections. You shall have a soul that will know it self into I know not how much pride; many stand reflecting upon their own perfections; either external, how proper, strong and beautiful they are; or internal, how witty and eloquent they are, what excellent parts and gifts, what a nimble tongue, what sound judgments they have, till they lose Christ in this crowd of themselves. This is a dangerous knowledge, a knowledge worse then ignorance. *Better be without knowledge, then know our knowledge thus.* As to reflect upon sin, to know our selves in our unbelief, vanity and passions, &c. humble us; and a soul in confessing of sin before God, looks long upon his dark part, upon his wants and failings for this end, that he may be humbled; so to reflect upon our good deeds or graces, to know our selves in those adornings of love, patience, humility, faith, &c. hazards us upon pride, and some stand gazing so long upon these excellencies, that they are lifted up, and become very proud.

Non noscere animam, phrasis est Hebræa, quantum rei despectum præ se ferat, ut illam etiam respicere aut aliquo modo no, cere quis renuat.

Thus all men who are proud in spirituals, *know their own souls.* So *Job would not know his own soul.* Hence note,

That, *A gracious heart rejoyceth in nothing but in the righteousness of Christ alone.*

He will not know his soul in his own perfections. A godly man would have God know him in the worst, but he will not know himself in the best. He would not have a sin hid from God, but he would hide all his goodness from himself. He will know every good thing before he doth it, but when tis done, he cares not to know it any more. So the Apostle (*Phil.* 3. 8, 9.) *I account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the Law*, &c. *Paul* the Apostle would not know *Paul* the Pharisee. Legal righteousness was loss to him, when he had found Christ. Legal righteousness was dung to him, when he had a sight of righteousness by Christ. The Pharisee, *Luk.* 18.

had all upon account, and he hoped to make good gain upon his accounts: he knew how many alms he had given, how well he had paid his tithes, and how often he had fasted. He made a stock of those things, and put them among his treasures, which *Paul* made his loss, and put among the dung. He that thus knows his own soul, hath no true knowledge of Jesus Christ.

So much of this *vers.* 21. as it is a supposition, and hath connexion with the words foregoing; as it refers to what follows.

The words are rendred in the form of a position, *I am perfect, I know not my soul, I despise my life.* And so divers interpretations are given of it.

Non novi animam pra integritate mea, i.e. ea integritate sum, ut nunquam anima aut vitæ meæ ratione abduci potuerim ab integritate mea.

First, Thus, *I am perfect*, &c. that is, my heart is upright, and I have ever prized and valued mine own integrity at such a rate, that in comparison thereof, I have not at all regarded or prized my own life or soul, that is, the greatest comforts and sweetest enjoyment of my life. *My life is but a trifle to my conscience.* And so the meaning is, like that (*Deut.* 33. 9.) where the word *know* is used in this sence, concerning *Levi*, *Who said to his Father and Mother, I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his Brethren, nor know his own Children. Levi* slighted all relations, when they stood in competition with the discharge of that duty which the Lord called him to, he knew neither father nor mother, nor brother nor child, one nor other, he had no regard at all to them, so he might do the will of God. This was the commendation of *Levi*, and the priviledge of the Priesthood was assigned to that Tribe upon this Service. Grace will not hearken to the cry of Nature, when it hears the call of God. *Job* is conceived to speak here at the same rate as *Levi* did, or higher; *I am upright and perfect in heart toward God, and such hath my perfection and uprightness been, that I have not known my own soul, I have not regarded any self-interests which have stood in the way of my obedience unto God, or justice toward man.* His friends charged him as if he had been a corrupt Judge, or an oppressor of the poor; I (saith he) am so far from valuing worldly goods or riches beyond my own integrity, that I do not value my life to my integrity. The Apostle *Paul* makes a like profession (*Acts* 20. 24.) His spirit was never so free and royal, as when he was going bound in spirit to *Jerusalem: The Spirit witnessing to him, that bonds and afflictions did abide him in every City. None of these things* (saith he) *move me, neither count I my life dear* (I will not know my life, let it go which way it will) *so I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus. Paul* was none of your poor Merchants, who are afraid of their skins. *Paul*'s life was cheap in his thoughts, when he was to make an adventure for Christ; he (as *Job* here) would not know his life for the omission of a necessary known duty, or the commission of a known sin.

This first sence yields this profitable meditation,

He whose heart is upright, prefers his uprightness before all worldly commodities, and before his own life.

Christ calls his Disciples to this height of resolution (*Luk.* 14. 26.) *If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and children, yea, and his own life, he cannot be my Disciple*, that is, the service of Christ, and his life into the balance, life must be a light thing weighed with the service of Christ.

חסם אני *Absumor dolore, & sic* חם *aliter sumetur quam priore versiculo* Nescio animam, *i.e. meipsum præ dolore, ideo averfor vitam meam.* Rab. Levi.

A second interpretation gives this sence, *I am perfect, yet I know not my own soul*; that is, I am so pressed and overwhelmed with these afflictions, that I cannot feel my self, I scarce know whether I am alive or dead; I know not where I am, my soul doth not act its offices, my soul is (as it were) benum'd in me, or asleep; there is not that vigor or activity in my spirit which I have found heretofore: I despise such a life as this is; who would live a life which is a continued death? There is a truth in this. For as extream and excessive joyes carry a man so far beyond himself, that he scarce knows whether he be alive or no (some have had experience of such raptures and extasies of joy in communion with God) 'twas so with *Paul* in a case somewhat like (2 *Cor.* 12. (*Whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell* (saith he) for my part, I could not tell what to make of my self, or what became of my body: As (I say) it is thus in the excesses of spiritual joy and consolation, so sometimes in the excesses of anguish and sorrow, a man scarce knows whether he be alive or dead, what his state is, whether in the body or out of the body; he regards neither hot nor cold, friend or foe, wife or children, he forgets to eat his bread.

A third expounds the words as an admiration, *I am perfect, and do ye think I know not my own soul?* Do ye think I am not acquainted with my self? Am I a stranger at home? Have I so despised my life (think ye) that I take no notice of it, and am either careless or insensible how things go with me? As if he had said, *I am perfect, and this is the work of a man, whose wayes are perfect before the Lord, he knows and considers his own soul, and grows assured how matters are with him: Ye, my friends, charge me with these and these failings, and will force them upon me whether I will or no; though I deny your charge, yet ye re-join and re-affirm it upon me, as though I knew not my own soul, or as if ye knew me better then my self: But I am perfect in heart, and I know my own soul, I do not so despise my life, as if it were not worth the looking after, or as if I were not worth the ground I go upon.*

Integer sum, nec scio animam meam, i.e. quicquam perversi in anima mea.

Lastly, Others understand it thus (which appears the fairest and most sutable interpretation of these latter ones) *I am perfect, neither do I know my own soul*; that is, I am not conscious of any evil in my soul, I know of no secret guilt or corruption hidden there; and so *science* is put for *conscience*; *I know not*, is, I am not privy to any evil that my soul delights in and keeps close, either against God or man, yet such evils are upon me, that I despise my life. *The spirit of a man* (saith *Solomon*) *will bear his infirmity.* Then what a load or infirmity presses that man whose *life is a burden to him, though no sin burden his spirit?* Troubles of conscience do often make the most peaceable outward estate of this life troublesome. And troubles in the outward estate may make those who have great peace of conscience weary of their lives. What it is to despise life, and that afflictions make this life burdensome, hath been shewed in the third and sixth Chapters, and will come more fully to be considered at the first verse of the tenth Chapter, whither I refer the Reader, and forbear to insist upon it here.

Ingreditur in alteram sua responsionis partem qua justitiæ suam defendit à gravi & libera integritatis suæ & animi bene conscii assertione. Mere.

I shall only add, that *Job* makes these words as a transition to the second part of his answer to the charge of *Bildad*. For having before given glory to God, by acknowledging his Justice, Wisdom, Power and Soveraignty in all his actings, he passes to an apology for himself, or a defence of his own integrity against the insultations, suspitions and accusations of his friends: As if he had said, *I have desired to save the honour of God from the least touch of an uncomely thought, much more then do I abhor proud and rude contendings with him; but as for you, my friends, ye must give me leave to be plain with you, I am not the man you take me for, I have none of that baseness of spirit with which ye charge me, I am no hypocrite, I am perfect in heart with God, and upright in my dealings with men; and yet I cannot but complain of my sad afflictions, and renew my desires, that the Lord would give me ease by death, and acquit me from the hand of these calamities, by cutting the thread of my life. I know ye judge these outward evils as the brand of a wicked man, of a man hated by God: but Ile maintain a Proposition contradictory to that your Opinion; ye shall never prove me wicked, because afflicted; for thus I hold, and will hold it against you all, as long as I am able to speak, That the Lord destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.* The Argument may be formed up thus;

That cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety, which falleth alike upon good and bad.
But great and destroying outward afflictions fall equally upon good and bad.
Therefore great and destroying afflictions cannot be made a clear proof of mans impiety.

The proof of the *Minor* Proposition or Assumption is contained in the three verses immediately following. The discussion and opening of which will give both light and strength to this Argument.

VERS. 22, 23, 24.

This is one thing, therefore I said it, He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.
If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

The

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked: he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where, and who is he?

Videtur hic locus impietatem includere, quasi apud Job unum & idem sit piorum & improborum judicium, quodq; Deus hæc inferiora non curet. Iſid. *Clar.*

THis ſpeech of *Job* cauſed a Learned Interpreter to tremble, when he read it, conceiving, that it ſavoured ſtrongly of impiety and blaſphemy, as if *Job* had mingled the ſtate of the wicked and of the righteous in one; or, as if his mind were, that the Lord did not diſtinctively order the affairs of the world by the dictates of his wiſe providence, but left them to be huddled together by inexorable fate or blind fortune; therefore he concludes that *Job* rather perſonates a man void of the true knowledge and fear of God, then ſpeaks his own opinion. Thus he cenſures: but let *Job* be well weighed, and his diſcourſe will appear full of truth and holineſs.

This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it.

This is one thing.] As if he had ſaid, You have ſpoken many things to me about the power, greatneſs, juſtice and wiſdom of God, in all which I agree with you, ye, and I have no difference about thoſe points, I have alwayes thought highly of God, and I deſire to think humbly of my ſelf: but *here is one thing*, wherein I muſt for ever diſagree from you, here we muſt part.

Hoc unum eſt meæ aſſertionis caput.

So that this verſe is as the *limit-ſtone* between *Job's* opinion, and that of his friends. Here he ſpeaks out the *ſpecial tenet* which he holds in oppoſition to them. As if he had ſaid, I yield and ſubſcribe to your judgment in all but this one, and *in this one thing* I muſt be your adverſary, though I will not be your enemy. *I ſay it, and ſay it again,*

He deſtroyeth both the righteous and the wicked.

This is one thing.] *This is uniform*: So Mr. *Broughton* reads it, and in this thing I am uniform, or of the ſame mind and judgment, I am not at all moved from my hold, or ſhaken by any thing ye have ſaid.

Therefore I ſaid it.] That is, becauſe I am of this opinion and judgment, therefore I will not conceal; but bring it forth, and tell you plainly what my thoughts are. The manner of ſpeech, *I ſaid it*, ſignifies a vehement aſſeveration, a liberty and boldneſs of ſpeech, or a conſtant adhering and ſticking to what hath been aſſerted, I will abide by this poſition as long as I live, I cannot be beaten from it, not becauſe it is my opinion, but becauſe it is a truth.

Before I come to the aſſertion it ſelf, obſerve from the preface, *This is one thing*,

That truth is ever the ſame, and we ſhould be the ſame in maintaining truth.

When a man ſpeaks a thing, of which he is very ſure, and reſolved to hold, he ſaith, in our language, *That's once*, that is, I have ſaid it, and I will not unſay it, or eat my words. As *Pilate* when he was deſired to change the inſcription which he had put upon the croſs of Chriſt, anſwered, *What I have written, I have written*, I will not alter a letter or a tittle: So a confident aſſertor anſwers, *What I have ſaid, I have ſaid; This is one thing, therefore I ſaid it.* Truth changes not, why then ſhould I, who have born witneſs to this truth? *Truth muſt be ſtood to.* We have reaſon to ſtick to truth, for truth will ſtick to us; we may ſay it, and ſay it again, for it will do us good again and again. The declarative truth of God is like Chriſt the eſſential truth, *The ſame yeſterday, and to day, and for ever.* Though it be very old, yet, *it waxeth not old.*

And becauſe this in the Text was a great truth, the very hinge upon which the whole diſpute between *Job* and his friends turned, therefore he is ſo reſolute in it. Whence note further,

That great and fundamental truths are to be maintained with much boldneſs and ſtrength of reſolution.

As it is a good bargain to buy a little truth with the expence of much peace: So it is our wiſdom, as well as our duty, to maintain it with the expence of our peace. They are the worſt ſort of cowards who render up the *Holds of truth* upon compoſition. No terms honourable enough can be given for the giving up of that. I grant that our peace and lives are richer commodities, then ſhould be hazarded about *trifling nicities, and the crochets of Schoolmen*: but we ought to *contend earneſtly* (and we cannot contend too reſolutely) *for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints.* Jude *v.* 3. Obſerve,

Thirdly, *A man that hath got one ſound principle about any point, will from that refute and repel all objections that can come againſt him.*

Super hoc axioma tanquā ſuper firmiſſimum fundamentū quicquid ad ſuæ innocentiæ contra eos defenſionem allaturus eſt, ſtabiliat. Bol.

Job bottoms himſelf upon this principle, That God *deſtroyes both good and bad alike with outward deſtruction.* This is his *great Axiome*, the very foundation upon which he buildeth all he holds contradictory to his friends; the *Fort-Royal* in which he defends himſelf againſt all their oppoſitions and aſſaults. One truth well mann'd and mannag'd ſcatters and foils a whole Army of errors. One Text thorowly underſtood, gives anſwer to all objections, and unites all the knots of a controverſie.

But what's this *one thing* upon which *Job* makes his boaſt, and cries *victoria?* 'Tis this, *He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked. A harſh doctrine, yet a good one. God is to be honoured deſtroying, as well as ſaving, killing as well as making alive.*

כלה

Propriè delet, diſperdit, frequenter ad extremam conſummationē & conſumptionē refertur.

The word which we tranſlate to deſtroy, ſignifies an utter blotting out or conſumption of a thing; noting that the outward diſpenſations of God may be ſevere and terrible to the perfect, as well as to the wicked. He doth not ſay, the Lord afflicts the one, and deſtroyes the other; chaſtens the one, and conſumes the other; but he conſumes and deſtroyes the one as well the other, *He deſtroyes*

The perfect.] Who is a perfect man in the language of Scripture, and wherein this perfection conſiſts, hath been opened more then once already, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it here. Only in general, The *perfect man* is the man in the higheſt form of holineſs; a man full of knowledge, faith and good works, one of the *firſt three in grace*, yea, he may be the *firſt of the three*: yet all this is no ſecurity againſt the ſoreſt affliction, againſt affliction to deſtruction temporal, *He deſtroyeth the perfect*,

תם

And the wicked.] Or the unquiet and tumultuous man. Every wicked man is an unſetled and an unquiet man. *He hath no where to reſt, who hath not Chriſt to reſt upon: He is alwayes out of the way, who is not in him, who is the way.* Wicked men reſt only in doing evil, they are never quiet but in motions unto ſin. God ſhews us their nature in their name. *Unquiet is their name, and unquietneſs is with them. Wicked men trouble and vex others as much as they can, but they trouble and vex themſelves moſt of all.*

רשע

Inquietum per multas hujus ſeculi curas ſolicitudineſq; vagantem.

By theſe wicked ones the Septuagint underſtand *mighty and rich men.* Riches are ſo often got by wickedneſs, and are occaſions to ſo many of making them wicked, that *wicked and rich* may ſometimes change names, or ſignifie the ſame perſon.

LXX. *Impium propotente & locuplete ſumunt.*

One of the Greek Expoſitors underſtand the Text, of thoſe who are great in goodneſs, and ſtrong in faith, *He deſtroyes the perfect*, and he deſtroyes him that is moſt perfect, even the moſt eminent in holineſs, *the talleſt Cedars in grace.* As if the words implied only a gradation of good men, and not a diſtinction of good and bad.

Qui pietate inſignis & vita clarus. Polychr. Olymp.

But the letter of the Text hath no ſhew of reaſon at all for ſuch an interpretation, and therefore I ſhall paſs it by, and take the words as our tranſlation renders them, holding forth that grand dichotomy of mankind, *He deſtroyeth the perfect and the wicked.*

This *Job* affirms againſt *Bildad's* aſſertion (*Chap.* 8. 20.) who there gives his judgment thus. *God will not caſt away a righteous man*: which (though it may have a true ſence, yet *Bildad's* meaning being, that God will not caſt a godly man away in this life, or totally deſtroy him in temporals) *Job* denies, affirming that a godly man may not only be afflicted, but afflicted all his life, and die under that affliction, which in *Bildad's* ſence is *to be caſt away.* For though *Bildad* did not hold (as *Eliphaz*) that every man who is afflicted, is afflicted for wickedneſs (he thought a good man might be afflicted for the trial and exerciſe of his graces) yet he was very confident, that God never ſuffered a righteous man to be overwhelmed with affliction: but after ſome ſhort, though ſharp aſſaults, reſtored him again. And therefore *Bildad* numbred them alſo with the wicked, who were deſtroyed as well as afflicted. This *Job* refutes and argues againſt all along, conſtantly holding the contrary principle, that a godly man may be ſo afflicted, as to be deſtroy-

ed, that he may be utterly and for ever ſtript of worldly comforts. Hence obſerve,

Good and bad, righteous and wicked are often involved in the ſame outward evils.

The ſpiritual eſtate of a righteous man is ſo ſtrong, and ordered in all things, that he can neither totally nor finally fall from it, or loſe it. *Grace is above theſe hazards.* But the temporal eſtate of a righteous man may be loſt, both totally and finally. Riches, and health and honour, are like themſelves, whoſoever is their maſter, fading and periſhing. A righteous man hath a higher tenure of things below, and holds them upon better terms then a wicked man doth; yet he holds them but for a term, they are not enduring ſubſtance to him, as not to others. *A little that a righteous man hath is better then the riches of many wicked,* (Pſal. 37. 16.) But the righteous may be deprived of what he hath, as ſoon as any of the wicked (*Eccleſ.* 1. 9.) *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked; as is the good, ſo is the ſinner, and he that ſweareth as he that feareth an oath.* Externals diſtinguiſh not internals. No mans ſpiritual eſtate is knowable by the view of his temporal. *Say to the land of* Iſrael, *Thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I am againſt thee, and I will draw forth my ſword out of his ſheath,* (Ezek. 21. 3.) And what will the Lord do with it? Will he not bathe it in the blood of his enemies, and ſheath it in the bowels of wicked men? he will: but ſhall it be bathed in the blood of none elſe? The next words reſolve the doubt, *And I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked.* It is a terrible ſentence; ſword, famine, peſtilence, make no difference of men or manners; they know neither *faces nor hearts.* The beſt in a Nation may taſte the bloody cup, and feel the cold iron in their bowels, together with the worſt. The *green tree, and the dry tree* may be devoured by the ſame fire, as the Prophet ſhadows good and bad; or, as ſome think, good and better, falling into the ſame calamity (*Ezek.* 20. 47.) with which that of Chriſt (*Luke* 23. 31.) ſeems more agreeable. The basket of good figs goes into captivity with the basket of evil figs, under which the good and bad among the Jews were typed, *Jer.* 24. 1, 2, 3.

Pœna ſatisfactoria, & medicinalis.

But though they fall under the ſame deſtruction, yet their caſe under it is as different, as the perſons are. Faith and holy Reaſon diſtinguiſh where ſenſe cannot.

Judgments upon the wicked men, are for ſatisfaction to the juſtice of God. They who are heirs of eternal death receive part of their inheritance in this life. *All their puniſhments are payments,* the fore-taſtes and beginnings of further ſorrows. Theſe judgments upon the Saints are only corrective or purgative. Their hopes are not deſtroyed, when their bodies or eſtates are. Their afflictions are medicinable, and heal while they kill. We muſt not wrap up the diſpenſation of God to different perſons in the ſame apprehenſions; though his act be the ſame to both, yet his meaning is not. How the afflictions of the wicked and righteous differ, the Reader ſhall find more diſtinctly opened, *Chap.* 5. 17.

Job goes on to confirm his opinion by a further Argument, in *verſ.* 23. For if any ſhould deny his minor propoſition, That the Lord deſtroyes the righteous and the wicked, he proves it thus, *If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the trial of the innocent,* that is, he carries himſelf (ſo far as the eye can judge) toward the innocent in their trials, as he doth toward the wicked under greateſt judgments: *He laugheth* at the one, and *he laugheth* at the other; which words are at once a confirmation and an aggravation of what he ſpake before.

Verſ. 23. **If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, he laugheth at the trial of the innocent.**

Nullum eſt verbum hac ſententia & illa, elegit anima mea ſuſpendium darius alias apperimin hoc libro. Philip.

The former words gave offence to ſome minds, conceiving them inconſiſtent with grace and holineſs. Others are more offended with theſe. And in the letter it is ſtrange language to ſay, *The Lord laughs at the trial of the innocent.* This verſe, with the fifteenth of *Chap.* 7. *So that my ſoul chooſeth ſtrangling,* are concluded by a learned Writer, the ſharpeſt and moſt queſtionable paſſages in the whole book. Hence his conceit, that in *Chap.* 40. *ver.* 5. *Job* aims at theſe two ſpeeches, *Once have I ſpoken, but I will not anſwer;* that is, I will never ſpeak ſuch a word again, that, *I chuſe ſtrangling; yea twice, but I will proceed no further*: I ſaid alſo, *That thou laugheſt at the trial of the innocent,* but I will never ſay ſo any more. I am aſham'd that ever I opened my lips ſo unadviſedly; 'tis too too much that I have ſpoken twice ſo ſinfully, I will not ſpeak ſo thrice. The conceit is witty, but the charge lies too heavy. The ſence of the former hath been made out fair for *Job*, and I doubt not but his meaning may be ſo cleared in this latter, that he will need neither reproof nor apology for ſaying,

If the ſcourge ſlay ſuddenly, &c.] The *Verb* ſignifies to encompaſs or incircle a thing, to twine round about it. And ſo it alludes to the faſhion of a ſcourge, which begirts the offender, and at every blow winds about his body.

שוט *Flagellum a circumeundo vel circumdando dicitur, quod videatur circumcingere hominē.*

The ſcourge in Scripture is put for any affliction: Plague, Sword or Famine, are called ſcourges, *Iſa.* 10. 26. *The Lord of hoſts ſhall ſtir up a ſcourge for him*; what ſcourge? the next words expound it, a ſcourge, not of cords or wiers, but of Swords and Spears; a ſcourge, *according to the ſlaughter of* Midian *at the rock* Oreb, that is, the Lord will ſend a Sword upon him: So *Gideon* ſlew the *Midianites*, *Judg.* 7. commanding his Souldiers to make that terrible ſhout, when they fell on upon their Camy, *The Sword of the Lord and of* Gideon. That great warrior *Attila* King of the *Hunnes*, who haraſſed a great part of Chriſtendom with Fire and Sword, was called, *Flagellum Dei*, The ſcourge of God. The unbelieving Jews having made a Covenant with death, and an agreement with Hell, were very full of faith, ſuch as it was (*Iſa.* 28. 15.) *When the over-flowing ſcourge ſhall paſs thorow, it ſhall not come unto us.* An *over-flowing ſcourge* ('Tis an elegant metaphor taken from waters) is a common, ſpreading, ſweeping judgment, which like an over-flowing river encompaſſes, circles about, and fetches in all.

Flagellum inundans, i. e. omnes ſine delectu involvens et proculcans.

Slay ſuddenly.] Every ſcourge doth not ſlay, and many which ſlay do not ſlay ſuddenly. We uſually hear the claſhing of the ſcourge before we feel the ſmart of it. The Lord ſhews the ſcourge, and threatens it before he ſmites with it; he lets judgment hang like a black cloud over the heads of ſome, long before it falls upon them. But others *He ſlayes ſuddenly.*

פתאם *Subito, ſtatim, ita ut non ſentiatur donec res fiat.*

Some take this ſuddenneſs of the ſcourge in ſlaying, for a mitigation of the judgment, and others for the heightning of it. In the former ſence ſuddenneſs doth not imply the ſudden coming of it, but the ſudden killing of it, a ſcourge which doth it's work quickly; ſo that a man doth not hang long as it were upon the rack of an affliction. The Church of the Jews (*Lam.* 4. 6.) complains of their afflictions, as if the judgment of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* had been more eaſie and eligible then that which the Lord brought upon *Jeruſalem*; not that they thought God had dealt worſe with them then with *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, but as to this particular, becauſe *Sodom* was overthrown in a moment, but *Jeruſalem* was pined away by degrees with famine. *A ſudden ſcourge is a kind of mercy.* Better die once then die alwayes: Or, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning the afflictions of the Saints (*Rom.* 8. 36.) *To be killed all the day long.* When one under torture petitioned *Tiberius* the Roman Emperor, a bloody cruel Tyrant, that he might be quickly diſpatcht, he deſired not life or pardon, but a ſpeedy death: the Emperor ſent him word, *That as yet he was not reconciled to him, or become his friend.* His cruelty would neither ſuffer the man to live longer, nor die ſpeedily. And ſome obſerve, that as the Prophet expreſſes his trouble at the proſperity of the wicked in their lives, ſo at this kind of proſperity in their deaths, *There are no bands in their death, but they are luſty and ſtrong,* (Pſal. 73. 4.) that is, when they die, they die in their ſtrength, they are not pined away with long and tedious ſickneſs: *They live in pleaſure, and die with eaſe.* They are not bound to their beds, and tied down with the cords of chronical, lingering diſeaſes. It is ſome favour (if the ſcourge muſt ſlay) to be ſlain, in this ſence, *ſuddenly.*

Nondum tecum in gratiā redii

Non ſunt nodi in morte eorum.

But here the ſcourge ſlaying ſuddenly, is a judgment coming unexpectedly, *They who ſleep in ſecurity ſeldom dream of ſcourges.* Obſerve hence,

God can ſend death and affliction in a moment.

When they ſhall ſay, Peace and ſafety; then ſudden deſtruction

struction cometh upon them, as travel upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape (1 Thes. 5. 3.) Wicked men are never so near destruction, as when they are most secure. And that (by the way) is the reason why we have least cause to fear those men, who fear God least: Security springs from infidelity, and both from sleighting, if not contemning the Word of God; no marvel then if the Lord hasten his wrath to justifie his truth, and slay them on a sudden, who would not believe, no not at leisure. But to the point. The Prophet describes it elegantly (*Isa.* 30. 13.) *This iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall*; that is, this iniquity shall produce a judgment, which shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, *Swelling out in an high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.* If once a high built wall do but swell, down it comes. *Such a swelling wall fell upon, and slew twenty and seven thousand of* Benhadads *scattered army* (1 King. 20. 30.) *And such a tower in* Siloe *fell upon eighteen, and slew them* (Luk. 13. 4.) The Prophet *Jeremy* at once imprecates and foretels a speedy scourge upon the gain-saying Jews, *Let a cry be heard from their houses, when thou shalt bring a troop suddenly upon them*, Jer. 18. 22. This hath been the case of many among us, who thinking of no danger have been surprized by a troop, themselves made prisoners, and their houses spoil'd in one hour. Such was the condition of our *Brethren in Ireland*; it is almost incredible how suddenly that scourge slew them: there was scarce a Protestant that had so much as a suspition of the danger; nay, some would not believe it, when a great part of the Country was on a flame, and the enemy had butchered thousands. That scourge (if ever any) slew suddenly the perfect and the wicked. As mercies may come so suddenly to our senses, that they overcome our faith, so may judgments. Some have been surprized with mercy, (*Psal.* 126. 4.) *When the Lord turned our captivity as the streams in the South*: that is, *gave us sudden deliverance*, (Rivers in the South, rise not from a constant spring, but from accidental rains, which make violent land-flouds on a sudden.) At the approach of this sudden mercy, the Jews were like to them that dream. So when the Lord sends sudden judgments, rivers of calamity, rivers of blood, as *rivers in the South*; when he brings in captivity, *as rivers in the South*, then are we in a dream too, and are not only destroyed, but distracted and amazed. But how fast soever judgments come, they come not suddenly upon them who are awake, much less on them who are watching for them when they come.

If the scourge slay suddenly; What then?

He will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

לטבח *Vel a radice* נסס *dissolvit. Vel a* נבח *tentavit.*

Mr. *Broughton* reads it thus, *He scorneth at the melting away of the innocent.* The reason of the different reading is, because the Hebrew word may spring either from a root, signifying to tempt and try; or from another, *To melt and dissolve*; *He scorneth at the melting away of the innocent.* Afflictions are melting, *They dissolve our comforts, yea, our very hearts*; in the same sence that godly sorrow breaks our hearts. *Pity should be shewn to him that is melted*, Chap. 6. *but ye forsake the fear of the Almighty.* So Mr. *Broughton* translates there, *The Lord tempted* Abraham (*Gen.* 22. 1.) that is, the Lord tried his faith, to find out of what strength it was, and how much he could trust him in that great business of sacrificing his son.

לעג *Ridere est irridere, subsannare, ut sit ab hostibus, cū eos quos captivos detinent diuturnis malis conficiunt.* Pined. *Significat derisionem quæ fit externo corporis gestu* LXX. *vertunt per* μυκτηρίζειν Vide *in* 1 Cor. 14. 21.

He will laugh at the trial of the innocent.] At their melting or trying by afflictions. The difficulty is, How God laughs at this trial? The word notes derision or scorn, (*Psal.* 2. 4.) *He that sitteth in Heaven will laugh*, there he useth the ordinary word for laughter, *and he will have them in derision*, that's the word in the Text. So that properly and strictly it signifies to scorn and deride, and that either by words or gestures, as *putting forth of the finger, shaking the head, or gnashing the teeth*, which are Scripture expressions of highest scorn by gesture.

But how shall we fit this to the business in hand? Will the Lord thus scorn and deride at the trial and probation of the innocent?

The Vulgar was it seems so much straitned to make out the sence, that he reads it negatively, *If the scourge slay suddenly, he will not laugh at the trial of the innocent.* Others, though they put not in a negation formally and in terms, yet they do it equivalently, and therefore they render it by an interrogation, *If the scourge slay suddenly, will he laugh at the trial of the innocent?* No, he will not, that's their meaning: the Lord will not sleight or neglect the trial of the innocent: though he destroyes them, yet he will not deride them. But we, and most of the learned Hebricians, keep close to the affirmative; *If the scourge slay suddenly, he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.*

Suppositum verbi ridet di dæmon est, qui gaudet videre homines diuturnis malis cruciari. Caje.

There is a dispute, *whom* we are to understand by this *He*; for some taking this laughing and deriding in the broadest sence, think it too low and dishonourable to be ascribed unto God, and therefore they carry it down low enough, ascribing it to the Devil, *If the scourge slay suddenly, then the Devil laugheth to see the upright tried.* He makes merry with the sorrows of the Saints: the Devil hath no great cause (how much mind soever he hath) to laugh, considering his condition; but the meaning is, that which gives the Devil most content, is to see righteous persons vexed. And that's a truth. *As there is joy in Heaven, when good men sorrow for sin; so there is a kind of joy in Hell, when good men are enwrapt with the sorrows of suffering.*

Impius judicium subsannat malis implicitum.

Others make the antecedent to *He*, a wicked man (such are within one degree of Satan, his children) *If the scourge slay suddenly*, then the *ungodly*, who yet thrive and prosper, rejoyce and make sport at the trial of the innocent; *See what these good, honest, innocent men have got, they thought by their prayers and fastings, by their zeal and strictness to exempt themselves from these common afflictions, they presumed they should be spared, though all the world were consumed: but see they are destroyed as well as others, they smart under the lash, as well as we their neighbours, whom they looked upon as the only whipping stocks, when a scourge should come.* That wicked men laugh and deride the innocent under affliction, and jeer them with, *Where is your God now? What's become of all your praying and fasting? Where are the hopes and confidences, the priviledges and protections ye talked of?* is a truth.

But thirdly, We need not ease the Text thus, nor relieve it out of this difficulty, by fastening the interpretation upon wicked men. Let us take the relative to be God himself, and see how we can make the sence out, *with a saving to his honour. If the scourge slay suddenly, He*, that is, the most holy and gracious God, *laugheth at the trial of the innocent.* How so?

First, I premise this, God doth not laugh or deride properly at the afflictions of his people. No, the Lord is a tender, a gracious and a merciful Father to his people at all times; and most tender of them, when they are in their afflictions, when they are in their soreness, and in their sorrows: he is more tender then the most tender-hearted Mother (*Isa.* 49. 15.) *Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.* Will a mother laugh and deride a poor infant, when it lies sprawling and wants her help? No, much less will God laugh at his people: therefore as laughing noteth hard-heartedness, or unnatural harshness of spirit, the Lord doth not laugh at his afflicted Saints, it is against his nature, against his practice and all experience.

What is it then he laughs at?

First, Positively thus, *Job* would here express that the Lord carries himself in outward things, with an equal hand both to the good and to the bad, as was touched before. The Lord laugheth at, and derideth the wicked (*Prov.* 1. 28.) *I will laugh at their destruction, and mock when their fear cometh.* The carriage of God to his own people is such, as if he did mock and laugh at them also. He that laugheth and derideth at a mans affliction, doth not regard what he suffers, he gives him no help, nor delivers him out of his sufferings. Nay, a man that laugheth at another in affliction, will lay more affliction upon him. Even thus in regard of outward dispensations, God deals with his own people; that is, when innocent ones are in affliction and cry unto him, he makes as if he did not hear or regard them, but let them lye crying, it may be day after day in their pains and wants; yea, sometimes in stead of easing them, he layes more afflictions upon them; poor souls, since they sought the Lord they found an increase of their sorrows. God seems to deal with them, as *Pharaoh* did with the *Israelites* in *Egypt*, who crying to him for release of their burdens, are answered only with, *Ye are idle, ye are*

Dicitur ridere, quia sic judicat hominum vulgus.

Ridere dicitur, cum contemnere videtur orationem postulantis opem.

idle; let more work be laid upon theſe men, Exod. 5. Or, like *Rehoboam*, who threatned his people to make their yoke heavier, while they petitioned he would make it lighter; and told them of ſcorpions, while they complained of whips. *David* gives us this in his own experience (*Pſal.* 77. 2, 3.) *In the day of my trouble I ſought the Lord, my ſore ran in the night, and ceaſed not* (or, my hand was ſtretched out in prayer, and bedewed with tears) *my ſoul refuſed to be comforted* (*David* ſought for comfort, but his troubles encreaſing, he could not take in the comforts adminiſtred) *I remembred God, and was troubled; I complained, and my ſpirit was overwhelmed.* If any thing in the world can eaſe a troubled heart, thoughts of God can. Thus *David* once relieved himſelf; *When the people talked of ſtoning him, he encouraged himſelf in the Lord his God* (1 Sam. 30. 6.) Yet ſometime God ſeems to think of us leaſt, when we think of him moſt. A ſoul complaining may be overwhelmed, inſtead of being helped. Now he that layes on further afflictions, ſlights and laughs at the former. And this is the firſt way in which it may be made out, how God laughs at the trial of the innocent. When they complain he doth not preſently relieve them, nay, he layes heavier burdens of affliction upon them, and makes them more matter of complaining, before they have any matter of rejoycing.

Poſt orationes meas, ita me ſemper in miſeriis reliquit, acſi me deriderit.

Deus ex virorum fortium, ſc. piorum conflictu non levē capit voluptatem.

Secondly thus, The Lord is ſaid to laugh, in regard of the pleaſure he takes in the fruits, effects and iſſues of thoſe troubles wherewith his people are exerciſed: *He laugheth*, not at the affliction it ſelf, but at the effects and ſucceſs of it; he knows the iſſue will be matter of high contentment to himſelf, and benefit to the Saints. He laughs at their trial, becauſe he knows they will honour him in their trials. He laughs not becauſe they are pained, but becauſe himſelf is glorified. As a Father, who puts a child upon a very hard task, which yet he is aſſured the child is able to go through with, takes content to ſee him ſweat at it, to pant and blow at it: Or, as a Commander in war, rejoyceth when he puts a *Party*, of whoſe valour and skill he is confident, upon ſome dangerous ſervice; though he knows many of them muſt bleed for it, and ſome of them (perhaps) die for it, yet it pleaſes him to ſee ſuch engaged in it. Thus God laughs at the trials and moſt deſperate adventures of the innocent; for he ſees they are men who will bide a trial; nay will *neither ſhrink in the wetting, nor will their ſpirits conſume in the burning.*

And thus a Believer is exhorted to laugh at his own trial; *My brethren* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, chap. 1. 2.) *count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations or trials.* The more trials, the more joyes. And thus one Believer may laugh and rejoyce at the trial of another, becauſe he knows *that the trial of our faith, being much more precious then of Gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, ſhall be found unto praiſe, and honour and glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Hence obſerve,

First, *The Lord may bear himſelf toward his own people in their affliction, as if he mockt at their afflictions.*

As he laughs at wicked men in earneſt, and hath them in deriſion; ſo he puts out an appearance of deriſion in what he doth to his own people.

Secondly, *To ſee good men tried, is a delight unto God.*

Laughter is an expreſſion of our inward content and joy. Though the word of the Text is ſcarce uſed for laughter in a good ſence, yet here it may. The Propheſie ſaith of Chriſt (*Iſa.* 53. 10.) *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*; God the Father was delighted to bruiſe his Son. Not that he delighted in afflicting or ſtriking him, he was tender and dear to him as the apple of his eye: But with reſpect to the iſſue and fruit of it, the Lord was pleaſed; *His father laughed to ſee him caſt down and ſuffering, whom he foreſaw conquering and triumphing:* So it is here. A man delights to ſee wreſtlers ſhew their ſtrength, as alſo to behold men ſtriving for maſteries in fencing or running a race, which are but trials of activity, and contendings for honours. Thus when the Lord bringeth his innocent ſervants into affliction, he doth but bring them to a wreſtling, to a running or a fencing, to ſee how they can make uſe of their hands and legs, how they can make uſe of their ſpiritual armour, how they can wield the ſword of the Spirit, how they can defend themſelves with the ſhield of faith, how they can bear a knock upon the helmet of ſalvation, how they can walk upon thorns and ſharp ſtones, himſelf having before ſhod their feet with the *preparation of the Goſpel of peace.* This is the ſpectacle which God delighteth in and laughs at, and it is a glorious ſpectacle. The *Roman* triumphs were but childiſh playes to theſe of the Saints, called out and clad with the armour of righteouſneſs, which makes them more then conquerors, over tribulations and diſtreſs, over perſecution, famine, nakedneſs, peril and the ſword, yea, over principalities and powers, over things preſent and to come: The Saints in their trial, conquer not only all preſent evils, but all that are poſſible. They are real victors over thoſe evils which they ſhall never feel or ſee. As in doing, ſo in ſuffering, all is reckoned to us which we are willing to engage in, though actually we do not; no marvel if God laugh at the trial of ſuch Champions and Chriſtian Heroes. It is the obſervation of *Seneca*, a *Roman* Moraliſt and Philoſopher, in his Book of Providence, ſpeaking of ſome of the ancient Worthies of *Rome*, *I ſee not* (ſaith he) *what* Jupiter *hath on earth more contentful to him, or to which he would rather turn his eye, then to behold* Cato *ſtanding firm in the midſt of publick ruines, and that, though (after all his wreſtlings, as a noble Patriot, for the ſaving of his Countrey) he found both his honeſt counſels broken, and his unwearied labours loſt, yet he did not loſe his ſpirit, nor was his heart broken.* Now, if an Heathen could ſay, that to ſee ſuch a man conteſt with all manner of troubles, was, he thought, a delight for *Jupiter*, and laughter to the Idol-gods; may not we, changing the perſons, make his ſence the comment of this Text, and a proof of this Obſervation? It is a holy delight to the holy God to ſee his faithful ones, his *Abrahams* in a trial, to ſee his *Jobs* in a trial, his *Pauls* in a trial, to ſee thoſe *Grandees in Graces*, ſhew ſuch admirable skill, ſuch courage, ſuch zeal, ſuch faith, ſuch patience, ſuch ſubmiſſion of ſpirit, to ſee Saints play the men thus in ſuch ſpiritual trials and hotteſt ſervices, is not this juſt matter of laughing and rejoycing to the Lord?

Non video quid habeat in terris Jupiter *pulchrius ſi convertere animum velit, quàm ut ſpectet* Catonem, *jam partibus non ſemel fractis ſtantem hiliominus inter ruinas publicas rectum.* Sen. *l.* 1. *Di Provid.*

And if the Lord take a kind of pleaſure in the trials of his Saints, then ſurely the Saints ought not to be diſpleaſed at their trials. Hence the holy Ghoſt bids the Saints laugh as well as the Lord laugheth, *Jam.* 1. 2. *My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.* Chriſtians, never look upon a trial with ſuch ſad and ſowr faces, the face of God is full of ſmiles to ſee you at it: Shall that make you ſad, which makes God rejoyce? *Never grieve, but when you fear you have grieved God.* Further note,

That, *The afflictions of the Saints are trials of the Saints.*

They are occaſions to ſhew forth their virtues and their graces. They give proofs both to God and the world, what manner of men they are. Tried ones are precious ones: many others are ſo, but theſe appear what they are, they have ſhewed their metal. All true faith is good, but tried Faith is beſt (1 *Pet.* 1. 9.) *That the trial of your faith* (that is, that your tried faith) *being much more precious then of gold that periſheth, may be found unto praiſe*, &c.

Beſides theſe two interpretations, I ſhall add for a cloſe, two more, which may further illuſtrate the meaning of this laughter aſcribed to God, at the trial of the innocent. Firſt, or,

Thirdly, He laughs at the fears and ſad forecaſts of his people, who not being able to look through ſecond cauſes, and ſee the ends of things in their beginnings, preſently judge all's loſt, the Church muſt be ruined, and the Saints undone, becauſe thus tried. Now God knowing the end of all actions, not only at their *beginning*, but *from the beginning* (yea, from eternity) he looking through the blackeſt clouds and darkeſt nights, upon the iſſues of all things, derides the ſimple conjectures of men about them. The very Heathens have given us ſuch a notion of God in laughter.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum caliginoſa nocte premit Deus, ridetque ſi mortalis ultra fas trepidat &c. Horat. *l.* 3. *Car. Od.* 29.

Secondly, or fourthly, God laughs at the laughter, and derides the joyes of wicked men, who ſee his innocent ones tried. For they ſay in their hearts, and it may be with their tongues, *Happy we who have ſcaped ſuch a ſcowring, we would not have been in their coats for a world, better die then live to bring our ſelves into ſuch troubles.* Or thus, *Now the day is ours, we have prevailed, theſe men men are catcht and entangled, we ſhall do well enough with them now.* The Lord hearing ſuch language at the trial of the innocent, laughs, to think how

how thoſe wretches ſhall ſee themſelves deceived, when they ſee theſe who are fallen riſing again; or, God by their fall raiſing others, and ſetting his King upon his holy hill of *Sion*.

Laſtly, As God laughs at the trial of the innocent; ſo let the nocent and impenitent remember and tremble at it, that God will laugh at the approach of their torments, and mock when their fear cometh, when their fear cometh as deſolation, and their deſtruction as a whirlwind.

Job having thus ſhewed how the innocent are afflicted, ſhews in the next verſe how the wicked are exalted, from both he infers that there can be no judgment made of any mans inward ſtate, whether he be *innocent or wicked*, upon his outward ſtate, whether he be *proſperous or afflicted*: The innocent are under the ſcourge, and the wicked are upon the throne, and who doth theſe things but God himſelf? that's the ſum of this twenty fourth verſe.

Verſe 24. **The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, he covereth the faces of the Judges thereof; if not, where and who is he?**

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.

The earth.] Earth may be taken ſtrictly for the Element of earth, as it is oppoſed to fire, water and air. Not ſo in this place: But more largely, *earth* is put for all earthly things, *Pſal.* 115. 6. *The heaven of heavens is the Lords, but the earth hath he given unto the children of men*, that is, he hath divided all earthly comforts as a portion or inheritance among men; their lot falleth there.

Thirdly, Earth is put for the inhabitants or people of the earth, *Pſal.* 100. 1. *Praiſe him all ye earth*; ſo the Hebrew, which we tranſlate, *Praiſe him all ye people of the earth*. Iſa. 24. 4. *The earth mourneth and fadeth away*, that is, they who dwell on the earth.

Fourthly, By the earth we may underſtand ſpecial Countries or Nations, Tracts or Parts of the Earth.

Fifthly, The Earth is put for earthly minded men, and for the falſe Church, *Rev.* 14. 3. The Saints are *redeemed from the earth*, that is, God hath fetcht them out from amongſt falſe worſhippers and impure ones, he hath reſcued them from the world of Idolaters, and from the ſuperſtitious multitude.

In this place *Earth* is to be underſtood in the ſecond, third or fourth notion, namely, for all earthly comforts; or, for the Provinces and Kingdoms of the earth; or, for the Inhabitants and People of the earth. *Theſe are given into the hand of the wicked.*

Given.] The Lord makes (as it were) *a deed of Gift* of theſe things unto wicked men. So in the fifteenth of this Book, *ver.* 19. *Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no ſtranger paſſed among them*; which ſome expound of the righteous, *No ſtranger paſſed among them*, that is, none came in to invade them; or, as others render it, *No ſtrange thing*, that is, no unjuſt thing came in amongſt them, they had the earth in their own power and rightful poſſeſſion.

Nihil eſt alienum, ſc. injuſtum. Juu.

To be given, noteth two things; or there is a double act of giving.

There is a gift by providence, and a gift by promiſe. When the Lord is ſaid *to give the earth into the hand of the wicked*, we are to underſtand it of that common providential gift, whereby he diſpoſeth of all things to all men; no man hath any thing but by the gift of God. Thus wicked *Jeroboam* had the Kingdom of *Iſrael* given him, and ſo had hypocritical *Jehu* for four generations: *They ſerved the providence of God, and the providence of God exalted them.* (Acts 17. 26.) *He hath made of one blood all Nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation*, that is, he hath (as it were) chalked out, and drawn a line where the bounds and habitations, whither the dominions and poſſeſſions of ſuch men ſhall be extended, and where they ſhall be confined. That's a gift of providence.

There is a ſpecial gift of promiſe peculiar to Believers (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *He that ſpared not his own Son, but gave him to die for us, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* that is, all worldly things; or we may take in whatſoever elſe concerns our ſpiritual eſtate beſides Chriſt: All the things of Chriſt, yea, and all worldly things come in to the Saints, as a gift by Chriſt, *who is himſelf the greateſt gift that ever man received*, or that God could beſtow. *How ſhall he deny us any thing, when he hath given him who is above all things?* 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. *Whether* Paul *or* Apollos, *or the world, all is yours (for ye are Chriſts.* Believers enjoy earthly things by an heavenly title. *Chriſt is their conveyance.* In this ſence the earth is not given to the wicked; the Lord gives them nothing in Chriſt, or for Chriſt as a Saviour, in the Covenant of Grace: *Chriſt, as a Lord, hath bought the wicked* (2 Pet. 2. 1.) and he gives them what they have, as they are his creatures; as he hath given them a ſubſiſtence and a breathing in the world, ſo he allots them maintenance in the world.

So then, to receive by donation from God, may note any way of poſſeſſion. What wicked men inherit by ſucceſſion and deſcent from their Anceſtors, is a gift of God.

Yea, what they get and hold by violence and oppreſſion, is a gift of God. The earth which wicked men tear out of the hands of the godly, the earth which they ſtain with the bloud of lawful owners, that they may enjoy it; even this is ſaid to be given unto them by God, in that common way of providence. *Nebuchadnezzar* was a cruel oppreſſor, yet he had the earth given him by God, *Jer.* 27. 6. *Now have I given all theſe Lands into the hands of* Nebuchadnezzar *the King of* Babylon *my ſervant, and the beaſts of the field have I given him alſo to ſerve him.* God gave him the Land, yet *Nebuchadnezzar* invaded it and got it by violence; God ſent him, *Iſa.* 10. 6. but he went of his own errand, *v.* 7. He had no thought of ſerving the will and commands of God, but of ſerving his own ambition and covetouſneſs; yet of this cruel oppreſſor the Lord ſaith, *I have given him all theſe Lands*, &c. Thus *the earth is given.*

Into the hand of the wicked.

There is a queſtion, whom we are to underſtand by theſe *Donees*, or the receivers of this gift? Some expound the text (with a ſpecialty of the *Devil*) *The earth is given into the hand of that wicked one*, who is, as *the Prince of the air*, ὁ πρέσβυς Θ. ſo, *the Prince of this world*, and hath great power upon the earth. But take it of wicked men, who are the ſervants and heirs of Satan; as the Saints are the heirs of Chriſt, and receive all thing from him, ſo wicked men are the heirs of Satan, his children, and what they receive as a common gift from God, they receive by a ſpecial gift from Satan. The Devil boaſted to Chriſt (*Mat.* 4.) *All theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me.* Though the Devil be a very beggar, and hath not a ſhoe-latchet of his own to give, yet for ſuch ſervices and homages he gives out large poſſeſſions of the world (common providence ſo ordering it) to wicked men, his vaſſals.

Hence theſe words are interpreted as a reaſon of that confuſion before ſpoken of. No wonder if innocent men are under the ſcourge, for *the earth is given into the hand of the wicked. When they have moſt power, who have leaſt honeſty*, things muſt needs be turned upſide down, and all put in diſorder. What can be expected from ſuch a tyrannous Prince as Satan, from ſuch wicked inſtruments as rule under him, but continual diſturbance amongſt the children of men; eſpecially that good men ſhould go by the worſt. Godly men are like to have but little peace while theſe have the preheminence. The Devil clouds the underſtandings, and vailes the eyes of thoſe Princes and Judges, whom he (in this ſence) advances: *And juſtice is equally wounded and diſtorted, when Judges cannot ſee Things, as when they ſee Perſons in judgment. The bounty of God to the wicked is an occaſion of their injury to the righteous.*

Si flagellatur innocēs, quid mirum, cum mundi judices corruptiſſimi ſint? Terræ poteſtas permiſſa eſt impiiſſimo dæmoni, qui dicitur mundi rector, ille efficit ut reges, principes, judices, quaſi obvelatos habeant oculos, cæcè & ſine diſcrimine de rebus judicantes. Eugub.

But rather take the words (which was hinted before) as an argument whereby *Job* further proves, that there can be no ground of judgment upon any mans ſpiritual eſtate, by the appearances of his temporal; for as righteous and innocent perſons are under the ſcourge, and laid low in the world, ſo wicked men have the earth given them, and are exalted.

I find ſome reading the text as an expoſtulation; *Wherefore is the earth given into the hand of the wicked? Wherefore doth he cover the faces of the Judges?* As if *Job* did chide with God about this unequal carriage of things in the world, and called him to give a reaſon of it. But we have found *Job* (in other places) acquitting himſelf from the ſuſpitions of ſuch a charge, and therefore I cannot joyn with theſe in laying it upon him here.

Job doth not complain, but affirm, *That the earth is given into the hand of the wicked.*

Hence

Hence observe, First, *Wicked men may abound in earthly things.*

They may have the earth and the fulnes of it; The earth, and all that is earthly; their bellies are filled by God himself with *hidden treasure* (Psal. 17. 14.) Precious things are usually hidden, and all that's named treasure (though it be but earthly) hath a preciousnes in it. Hidden treasures of the earth fill their bellies who sleight the treasures of Heaven, and whose souls shall never have so much as a taste of heavenly treasures: riches and honour are the lot of their inheritance, who have no inheritance among those *whose lot is glory. They have the earth in their hands*, who have nothing of Heaven in their hearts: they bear sway in the world, who are slaves to the world: they govern and order others at their will, who are led captive by Satan at his will. Be not offended and troubled to see the Reins of government in their hands, who know not how to govern themselves; or to see them rule the world, who are unworthy to live in the world. *Remember the earth is given into the hand of the wicked.* We must submit to the judgment of God, though it leave us under the injustice of men. And we have little reason to envy them a great portion in this life, who have all their portion in this life.

The most wise God, who hath all things to dispose, disposes them with infinite wisdom: He gives good things to those that are evil, but he gives better things to those who are good; He hath a *Benjamins mess*, a rich portion for his own children, after all these disbursements to the children of disobedience. Their portion lies not in earth and dust, or in the rubbish of the world: *Heaven is given into the hand of the Saints: Spiritual blessings in heavenly things are given into the hand of the Saints:* The pardon of sin, the love and favour of God, the blood of Jesus Christ, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, are gifts worth the having; These are *given into the hands of the Saints.* As for the earth, *he gives that into the hand of the wicked*; and yet all that is not given into their hands. Wicked men have not all the earth, and some wicked men have none of the earth. The Lord often makes the portion of his own people fat and plenteous, and the portion of his enemies lean and poor. *Heaven hath not all the earthly poor, nor Hell all the earthly rich.* God doth not give wicked men all the earth; but all the earth which they have, is of his giving. Most of the earth is given to be their possession; and all the possession which is given them, is of earth; therefore it is said, *He giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked.*

And seeing *God giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked*, we may observe also,

That wicked men have a just title to the earthly things which they enjoy.

They are not *meer usurpers*, neither shall they be dealt with as *meer usurpers.* They have no spiritual title, no title by Christ, they claim not by promise, which the Saints do: They have forfeited their title by sin, all is lapsed and escheated into the hand of the great Land-Lord. Their goods are forfeited, and so are their lives into the hand of God, and he gives both back for a while into their hands. He gives them their lives back, and reprieveth them; for which time of their reprieve, he giveth them the earth to live upon, or to maintain their lives: and so far as they use earthly things for the continuance of life, they shall not be accounted or reckoned with as usurpers. They shall not be charged for using the creature, but for abusing it; for making the earth serve their lusts, not for making it a support of their lives. And seeing as the Lord hath given them back their forfeited lives, so also their forfeited lands by a deed of gift, sealed with general providence: this is enough to secure them in those worldly possessions (which they have neither got nor hold by injustice) from the brand of usurpation, and from the violence of dispossession. *As what God hath joyned, no man may put asunder; So what God hath given, no man must take away. Neither riches nor rule are founded in grace. He hath given the earth into the hand of the wicked.*

Dominium non fundatur in gratia.

He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.

He covereth. There is some Question *whom* we are to understand, as the Antecedent to this Relative, *He*: *who is he that covereth?* Some make the Antecedent a wicked man. Others say 'tis God, *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked, and he*, that is, the wicked one *covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* Or, *He*, that is, *God covereth the faces of the Judges thereof.* I shall a little open this expression, it needeth some uncovering, for it is dark in both relations.

Tegit ne videant quod æquum & justum est. Drus.

First, Look upon that interpretation, which refers it to wicked men. *He covereth*; namely, *That wicked man*, who is preferred and exalted, *covereth the faces of the Judges*; that is, he stops the course of justice. And there are four wayes by which wicked men cover the faces of the Judges.

First, By gifts and rewards. Bribes vail, yea, put out the eyes of a Judge, that he cannot see to give every one his due. Hence that charge (*Exod.* 23. 8.) *Thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.*

Munera cæcos reddunt judices.

Secondly, The faces of the Judges are covered by threatnings; fear of loss blinds as well as hope of gain. Some send terrible messages to the Judge; Will not you do as we would have you? Will not you give your sentence and opinion thus? At your peril be it. Now the Judges face is covered, his eyes are put out by a threat; the mist and cloud of a Princes displeasure, of a great mans indignation is before his eyes, *His face is covered.*

Thirdly, The Judges faces are covered by actual putting them to shame, by casting them out of favour, and clouding them with disgrace, by taking away their commissions, or sending them a *Quietus est*, laying them by as unfit for service; any of these is a covering of the Judges face.

There is a fourth way of covering the Judges face, to which the second and third are often made a preparatory; And that is, by putting the Judge to death. So much that expression implies in *Job* 40. *vers.* 13. where the Lord with infinite wisdom and holiness, insulting over *Job* to humble him, bids him arise, and do some great thing, somewhat which might speak him a man of might. *Deck thy self now with majesty and excellency, and array thy self with glory and beauty; cast abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud and abase him; look on every one that is proud and bring him low, and tread down the wicked in their place; Hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret*; that is, cover their faces as men prepared for death, as men ready to go out to execution. We may expound it by that (*Esth.* 7. 8.) where as soon as ever the word went out of the Kings mouth, *They covered* Hamans *face.* And by that (*Mar.* 14. 65.) where when Christ was judged worthy of death, the Text saith, *They spit on him, and covered his face:* The covering of the face was a mark of a condemned man, held as unworthy to behold and enjoy the light of the Sun, or the light of the Princes countenance. Thus to cover the faces of the Judges is to condemn the Judges, and to take them out of the world by sufferings, rather then suffer them to do right. I find that of *Elihu* (Job 34. 29.) interpreted to this sence, *When he giveth quietness, who can make trouble?* That is, when the Lord doth absolve and acquit a man, giving him a discharge, then he is free, no man can sue him or trouble him, much less condemn him; but *if he hide his face, who can behold him?* So we translate it, meaning thus, If the Lord hide his own face. But this exposition saith, *If the Lord hide the face of that man*, that is, If the Lord condemn that man, or pass sentence of death upon him (of which covering or hiding the face was a symbol) then, *who can behold him?* That is, who then can see his face, or have society with him, whom God hath separated to death? It was a custom also among the *Romans*, when sentence was pronounced upon a malefactor, thus to command the executioner, *Take him away, bind his hands, cover his face, hang him up.* And usually with us, malefactors, who are ready to suffer the pains of death, put a covering upon their faces. This also may be a good sence of the words, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, that is, a wicked Prince oppresseth and putteth the Judges to death. And whereas good Princes say, *Let justice be done, though the world perish*: he saith, *Let the Judges perish, rather then justice should be done.*

Quis rei faciem poterit amplius videre, quasi absolutus sit. Bold.

I Lictor, colliga manus, caput obnubito, infœlici arbori suspendito. Cic. *in orat. pro* Rabir.

Yet further, the word Judges, in the original, notes not only such as are in actual office to determine controversies,

שפטים *Judices vel officio, vel aptitudine.*

Nomen judicis apud Hebræos latius patet quam apud Latinos, non enim ille tantum vocatur judex qui controversiu vacat, sed etiã qui rempublicam armis tuetur. Bol. *Vidi servos, i. e. servire dignos, & principes, i. e. dignos imperio.*

sies, whether criminal or civil; but any man that is worthy to be a Judge, or is fit to govern and mannage publick affairs, whether in peace or warr. And so it implies a suppressing and keeping down of those that are most able, and best qualified to undertake any service for States and Kingdoms (*Eccles.* 10.7.) *I have seen servants upon horses, and Princes walking as servants upon the earth*; that is, I have seen men who are worthy no better imployment then that of a servant to rub horse heels, or do the meanest offices, such as these I have seen in the saddle, and in their trappings. And, *I have seen Princes walking upon the earth on foot*; that is, men who deserve to bear rule and to govern Kingdoms, who both for ability and integrity, are worthy to have the reins of Authority in their hand, and to sit at the helm, these I have seen walking upon the earth, or tugging at an oar, as common men: that's an evil which *Solomon* saw under the Sun: So here, *He covereth the faces of the Judges*, may have this meaning, Evil Princes keep down and hold in obscurity men of parts and gifts, of spirit and courage, of honesty and uprightness, and prefer only those who are base and corrupt, who will serve turns, and comply with times.

Hence note, *That it is the policy of wicked Princes to corrupt and blind Judges, or to employ such as are blind and corrupt.*

They take away power from those who would use power well, and give power to them who are slaves to their wills.

Secondly, *It is the character of a wicked man to bribe a Judge, to put out the eyes, and cover the face of a Judge with gifts.*

A good cause fears not the eye of the Judge, and a good man had rather lose his cause, then pervert the Judge.

So much of mans covering the faces of the Judges: now see how God covers them. He who opens the eyes and uncovers the faces of the Judges, that they may discern between cause and cause, doth also cover the faces of Judges, that they cannot discern between cause and cause. As the Lord hardens the heart and blinds the eye in spiritual things, so also in civil, not by taking away the sight which man had, but by withdrawing or denying his own light. The Lord covers the faces of the Judges, when he doth not give them light, nor shew them the path of justice. If God suspend his light, the greatest lights are presently in darkness: God doth not hood-wink or muffle up the Judges by putting any thing before their eyes, but by hiding his own eyes from them. The Psalmist speaks of Judges thus covered (*Psal.* 62. 5.) *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness, all the foundations of the earth are out of course.* We have here the character of evil Judges, and what the consequents of it are. *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness* (these three expressions explain this Text) and what follows? *Then all the foundations of the earth are out of course*; Law and justice are out of course, no man knoweth where to have right, or by whom to be protected against wrong.

Tegit, ne videant quod bonum & æquum est. Drus.

Hence observe, *Ignorant and evil Judges are sent by God as a scourge.*

Hinc elicimus malos judices etiã à Deo esse. Drus.

I gave them a King in mine anger, Hos. 13.11.

Lastly, (for the clearing of this) The covering of the faces of the Judges notes three things.

First, Ignorance and blindness, or an inability to judge.

Judex oculatissimus esse debet.

Secondly, Inhumanity and cruelty, *The faces of the Judges being covered*, they will not look upon the case of a poor man. It is usual for an oppressed petitioner to say to the Judge, *Look upon me, good my Lord, cast an eye upon me*; the Judge who will not see, is covered with incompassion.

Solebant judices intra cortinas se continere cũ contra reum capitis sententiam pronunciabant. Pined.

Thirdly, Covering of the face imports the affected partiality of Judges; many do as if they could not see, as if their faces were covered. Affection blinds the judgment, and none are so blind as they that will not see. The reason why the Heathen pictured their *Fortune* blind, was, because she distributed things, as if she affected blindness, giving good to those that were evil, and evil to those that were good. When Judges give rewards to those that should be punished, and punish those that should be rewarded, their faces are covered, they are blind. Judges were anciently pourtray'd or pictur'd *without hands and without eyes*; without hands, as noting that Judges must not receive or take gifts: And without eyes, because they must not see friend or neighbour, great or small, kinsman or stranger; they were to distribute justice according unto every mans cause, and not with respect to any mans state or relation. It is said of Christ (*Isa.* 11, 3.) where his Kingdom is described, that he *shall not judge after the sight of his eyes*; that is, by what appears to the eye, *but he shall judge righteous judgement.* In this sence, it is the Judg's duty and honour to have his face covered. But the covering here meant, is either of ignorance and inability, or of corruptness and partiality: All which hinder the Judge from doing his duty, and are blemishes of his honour.

Antiqui fortunam cæcam pingebant, quòd malis bonas, mala bonis indiscriminatim conferrentur.

But some may object, Shall we attribute this to God? Doth he cover the faces of the Judges? God is pure from all sin, while he leaves men in their impurity. He is just in giving man over to his own injustice. So we answer, and the next words challenge all to make another answer.

אם לא פאי

Si non, ubi ille? Pagn. *Si non, ergo Quis ille? lingua sancta concisa valde. Si non (supple, Deus qui hoc faciat) ergo quis est? supple, qui faciat.*

If not, where, and who is he?

If it is not the Lord who doth this, tell me who is it? as if he had said, Some may be offended and scandalized at my doctrine, that I assert, *The earth is given into the hands of the wicked, that he covereth the faces of the Judges*; If any man shall deny or scruple this, let him shew me whence these things are, and who is the cause of them.

There is a three-fold understanding of these words: Some make the Antecedent to be the *wicked*; As if he had said, *Who but a wicked man will cover the faces of the Judges, and hinder the execution of justice?* And so they acquit God, accounting it blasphemy to attribute the act of covering unto him: The Lord is a God of justice, he loves judgment; he opens the mind, and clears the eye, he doth not cast clouds and mists before it. It's true, so far as the act is sinful, God forbid we should ascribe it unto God: But (as was shewed before) we need not use this *subterfuge*, least we should lay any aspersion upon his justice and holiness. God can leave men to their injustice without any thought in, or touch of injustice in himself.

Others interpret this Question as a *challenge*; *It is thus, If it be not, where, and who is he?* Who and where's the man that will argue or implead me of falshood in what I have asserted? Who is it that undertakes to convince me of error in the doctrine I have delivered? This is my opinion; these positions I have laid down for truth, *That the Lord destroyeth the perfect and the wicked, that he laugheth at the trial of the innocent, that he gives the earth into the hand of the wicked, that he covereth the faces of the Judges*; If it be not thus, if any one hold otherwise, Let me see the man, Let him appear as my *Antagonist*, or *Opponent*. *Where, and who is he* that dares charge me with error? I am ready to answer him.

Sinon, ubi est, scil. qui mè falsi arguat? prodeat si quis me possit falsi arguere Merc. *Ubi est, qui mentiri me censet?* Pagn.

But rather take it in the sence before given, If it be not the Lord who doth this, then shew me who it is, *Where, and who is he?* There is an elegant conciseness in the Hebrew, which speaks only thus, *If not, where he*, or, *who he?* The sence is, If it be not God who doth this, shew me, tell me, Who is it? And so the words are an exclusion of any other power, ordering and disposing the things of the world. When old *Isaac* was disappointed in his intention of giving the blessing to *Esau*, he trembled exceedingly, and spake in the language of this Text, *Who, where is he?* (Gen. 27.33.) As if he had said, *I thought thou my son Esau hadst brought me venison before, and if it was not thou, I know not who it should be, I was never so deceived in my life, if it was not thou.* Such a broken speech *Job* uses here, *If it be not God who doth these things, I am much deceived, for I know not any in the world to whom I might probably assign them, but only unto him. You must be wiser then I, if you find any thus powerful besides God. If not, where, and who is he?* Whence observe,

First, That, *the greatest confusions in the world are ordered by God.*

What greater confusion then this, to see the earth given to those who deserve not to live upon the earth? that they should

ſhould rule the world who are unworthy to breathe in the world? Yet even theſe things are diſpoſed of by the Lord, and are the iſſues of his counſels. *That wherein we ſee no order, receives order from the Lord.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *The very confuſions that are in the world are an argument of the power of God.*

For ſeeing the world continues in the midſt of ſuch confuſions, it ſhews there is a mighty power, ballancing theſe confuſions ſo exactly, that they cannot ruine the world. *If there were not an over-ruling power in God, wicked men ruling would ſoon ruine all. There are myſteries of providence, as well as of faith.* And many are as much puzzl'd to interpret what God doth, as what he hath ſpoken. I find Heathens often ſtumbling at this ſtone, and ungodding their Idol gods at the ſight of ſuch diſtributions among men. When evil takes away good men, this is my next thought (ſaith one of them) *I am ſollicited to think there are no gods.* Another obſerving how unequally men were buried, buries God in that obſervation. *Licinus* a cruel oppreſſor lyes interred in a ſtately monument. *Cato*, a ſober, grave, wiſe, and juſt Senator hath a mean and poor Sepulchre, ſcarce looking above the ground. *Pompey the Great*, that famous Commander and Conqueror had no Tomb at all, he was buried no man knoweth where. *When we ſee* (ſaith he) *things go thus, who would think that there are any gods?*

Cum rapiunt mala fata bonos, ignoſcite faſſo, Sollicitor nullos eſſe putare Deos. Ovid.

Marmoreo Licinus tumulo jacet, & Cato parvo, Pompeius nullo, quis putet eſſe Deos?

Thus they ſtumbled at the ſuppoſed uneven diſpenſations of their Idol gods. And we find great offence taken, and an horrible blaſphemy belched out againſt the true God, upon the ſame occaſion, and almoſt in the ſame terms (*Mal.* 2. 17.) *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words, yet ye ſay, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye ſay, Every one that doth evil is good in the ſight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, or where is the God of judgment?* Though they fell not directly into the former blaſphemy, to conclude that there was no God, becauſe wicked men proſpered; yet they fell into a blaſphemous opinion, that God delighted in, and loved wicked men, becauſe they proſpered. *Wherein have we wearied the Lord?* Yes, ye have: Not that the Lord is at all moved or troubled in himſelf with the contumelious ſpeeches of men: but thus, if any thing would tire, and weary him, this may, to hear himſelf arraigned and judged by the world, as a lover of evil men, becauſe he doth not preſently ſmite them with the viſible marks of his diſpleaſure; that becauſe the earth is given into the hands of the wicked, therefore the Lord muſt needs be a friend to the wicked.

Thirdly, Obſerve, That *no creature is maſter of his own wayes or ends.*

The Lord giveth the earth into the hand of the wicked. Man cannot get the earth into his own hand, let him be as wicked as he will: *The Lord covers the faces of the Judges:* If he enlighten them, no man can cloud them; if he open, no man can ſhut.

No creature can do good without the directing and enabling hand of God.

No creature doth any evil without the ſupporting and over-ruling hand of God (*Iſa.* 41. 23.) *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods; yea, do good or evil, that we may be diſmayed, and behold it together.* Let us ſee you do any miſchief, if ye can. Man is ſet upon miſchief, but he cannot act miſchief, unleſs God (at leaſt) permit. *We were in an ill caſe, if man could do all the evil he hath a mind to.*

It is matter of comfort, to conſider that the wayes and iſſues of good and evil, are in his hand, who is good, and doth no evil.

VERS. 25, 26.

Now my dayes are ſwifter then a poſt, they flée away, they ſée no good.
They are paſſed away as the ſwift ſhips, as the Eagle that haſteth to the prey.

THeſe two verſes are a confirmation of *Job's* former argument: As he had ſhewed in general, that the wicked are exalted, and the innocent afflicted; ſo now he ſhews the latter branch from his own experience or example.

Verſ. 25. **My dayes are ſwifter then a poſt, they flée away, they ſée no good, &c.**

We have here three ſimilitudes, by which *Job* ſets forth the uncertainty of his proſperous eſtate, and how ſoon the time wherein he enjoyed it was blown over.

1. 2. 3. } The ſimilitude of a { Poſt. Ship. Eagle.

As in *Chap.* 7. he uſed three ſimilitudes, *viz.*

1. 2. 3. } Of { A Weavers ſhuttle. The Wind. A diſſolving Cloud.

So here he bringeth in three more to clear the ſame point.

Job's thoughts travel'd thorow all parts of the world to find out illuſtrations of mans frailty. In theſe two verſes three of the four elements are enquired into. The Earth, the Air, and the Water. A Poſt upon the Earth, a Ship upon the Water, an Eagle in the Air, are called in as witneſſes to this truth.

Now my dayes are ſwifter then a Poſt, &c,

Now my dayes.] That is, my proſperous dayes, ſo Mr. *Broughton* gloſſes. Troubleſom times are all night and darkneſs, yet we may take it of dayes in general; They *are ſwifter then a Poſt.*

The word which we tranſlate **Swifter**, ſignifies any thing that is light, becauſe light things are quick in motion. We call a man that is *ſwift of foot, light of foot.* And here it is joyned with that which among men is moſt ſwift and paſſing, *a Poſt*, who rides or runs without any ſtop or ſtay, without the leaſt conſiderable ſtop or ſtay: So that it is grown into a Proverb, *To run Poſt*, or, *To ride Poſt*, is as much as to be in haſte: To ſay, *You are in Poſt haſte*, is to ſay, you are in great haſte. *My dayes* (ſaith *Job*) *are ſwifter then a Poſt*, they out-run thoſe curreers ſent out upon the moſt important meſſages. The Poſt, whether ſent to carry news good or bad, or intelligence for the diſpatch of buſineſs, publick or private, is engaged to ride hard; he muſt not ſpare horſe-fleſh, or (as we commonly ſpeak) *ſuffer the graſs to grow under his horſe-heels.* Hence Obſerve,

קלל *Levitas & velocitas, tã ex Græco quam Hebræo etiam Latino pro eodem accipiuntur. Levis armaturæ milites celeriter ſubveniunt.*

רץ *Curſor, quâ, ex una urbe in alteram, &c. proficiſcitur cum liberis aut nunciis.*

Firſt, *Time is very ſwift, 'tis gone ſuddenly.*

My dayes are ſwifter then a Poſt.] We ſeldom conſider' or conſider as we ought, this common truth. We live, for the moſt part, as if we could not tell how to get rid of our time; or, as if we were weary of our time, and knew not how to ſpend it out, as if time were rather chained to a *ſtanding poſt*, then were like a *running Poſt*. The Ancients emblem'd Time with wings, as if it were not *running*, but *flying*.

The next word in the Text comes near that ſence, **They flée away.** My dayes (ſaith *Job*) *flee away.* The word doth not ſignifie flying, as a fowl with wings, but flying as a fugitive from hard bondage, or as a man from ſome imminent danger, which, becauſe 'tis done with ſpeed, therefore the word imports any ſpeedy motion, eſpecially that of a Poſt. A Poſt riding or running, is an excellent embleme of Time. There are many conſiderations in *Poſt-riding*, which ſhew how exceeding ſpeedy time muſt be, to which it is here compared.

Firſt, A Poſt rides upon fleet or ſpeedy Horſes.

Secondly, He rides his Horſes upon their ſpeed; a man may have ſpeedy Horſes, and go ſoftly; but a Poſt ſpurs on.

Thirdly, A Poſt hath change of Horſes at every ſtage, that he may keep them upon their ſpeed.

Fourthly, He hath Horſes ſtanding ready for change; they are not to fetch out of the field, or to make ready when he comes to his ſtage, it is but leaping into the ſaddle and away.

Fifthly, He that rides Poſt, makes no long meals, much leſs feaſts, he takes a bit and away.

Sixthly, He lies not long a bed, he ſcarce goes to bed till he comes to his wayes end.

Seventhly,

Seventhly. A Post hath extraordinary pay for his service, and that will cause him to make speed.

Eighthly, Sometimes he rides upon pain of death, with a halter about his neck. No man will loiter, when his life lies on it.

Ninthly, If a man rides post, all must give him way, he picks and chooseth his path, and no man must hinder him.

Tenthly, He stayes not to salute, much less, like other Travellers, to gaze and view the Countrey, the Towns, Buildings, Gardens, *&c.*

All these things laid together, evince that the Post makes speed. Yet saith *Job*, *My time outrunneth the Post*, my time goes faster then he; the Post must stay a little sometimes, but time will not stay at all: The Post must stay for change of horses, but the Chariot of the Sun never stayeth to change horses (the Sun is the measure of time) and that makes no stop, hath no stages or baiting-places; *Our dayes are swifter then a Post.*

Further, Experiences speak this most true of that special time, the time of prosperity. The best things of the world are in a moveable, in a passing, posting condition. They scarce abide with us long enough to learn what they are. If a man ride post, we can hardly discern who he is; the good things of the world, the pleasures and profits, the *form and fashion of it pass away* so fast, that none can perfectly report what they are, excepting this, *Transitory and Vain*: As the artificial fashions of the world, the fashions in building and in apparel, pass so speedily, that few know what the fashion is before tis gone; a new one is abroad, before the greatest number are in the old; so the natural fashions of worldly things (some in themselves, all as to our enjoyment) the excellency and dignity, the lustre and beauty of the creature are out of sight, before we can well say of what colour and shape, or what manner of things they were. When the Painter takes the perfect feature of a mans face, or the lineaments of his body, he must sit. The world sits not so long with any man, as for him to take the picture of it. *Creatures perish in their using*, while they are in our hands we know not what they are, for even then they are perishing and declining from what they were. One said, when a creature-comfort was taken from him, If I had it again, methinks I could enjoy it; we seldom enjoy what we have. And what we have, is alwayes *in transitu*, passing from us while we have it; it is in motion while in possession. We can scarce be acquainted with it, because it stayes so little with us. Hence *Job* concludes this similitude;

They see no good.

My good dayes run so fast, that I cannot see the good of them. *Not to see good*, is, not to have the least experience of good. For the eye takes in its objects, and judges of them (so much Philosophers teach) sooner then any other sense. The eye is not long about its business: It is the sense of quickest dispatch. So that it is, as if *Job* had said, The good things of this life are so transient, that I am so far from feeling or tasting them, *&c.* that (which is done with the least delay and expence of time) I have not time enough to see them. When men ride upon speed, or when any thing passes swiftly before us, we have but a glimpse, scarce a sight of those objects.

Omnia mihi præcepta sunt priusquam tangerim. Bez.

Besides, *To see good*, is to enjoy good, as was shewed. *chap.* 7. 7. And when he saith, they (*scil.* his dayes) *saw no good*, his meaning is, that he saw no good in his dayes. Till there is a consistency or a fixedness of good, there cannot be a full enjoyment of good. The reason why in heaven we shall have so much happiness, is, because all the good in heaven is a fixed good. *Time passes, but Eternity stands. Eternity is a fixed Now.* The things of heaven shall not perish in the using, nor shall the fashion of them pass away. In heaven vision will be everlasting, we shall ever see good, and that ever seeing shall be an ever enjoying of good. Here on earth we see God through a glass darkly, and we see all good in such post-haste, passingly, that we rather see it not, then see it; especially while we remember that good passes by us in the company, yea, in a crowd of evils, our sight of it (as when we are called to behold one man riding speedily among many) must needs be hindered. Yea oftentimes evils stand so thick about us, while good posts by us, that we cannot look through them to the good which is before us. In heaven, as good stands to our eye, so it stands alone; there's no interposition of evil to eclipse the beauty, or darken the sight of it. There we shall see, and see nothing but good. Here we see much besides, yea, see either none at all, or very little good, and that but a little.

They flee away, they see no good.

From the Post, who runneth upon the Land, *Job's* next comparison carries us to the motion of a Ship at sea, and anon to that swifter motion of an Eagle in the air.

Verse 26. **They are passed away as the swift ships, as the Eagle that hasteneth to the prey.**

They are passed.

That is, My dayes are passed, and with them all the contents and comforts which I had in those dayes: we are to take dayes, as cloathed with with all their contentful occurrences and circumstances.

They are passed away.] Or, they are glided away insensibly. נלף

As the swift ships.

Not only as the ships, but *as the swift ships.* A ship is a fabrick for the sea, a house upon the sea, a moveable house; and as it moveth variably, so it moveth swiftly: The inconstancy of the winds makes the motion of the ship unconstant; and the strength of the winds makes the motion of the ship swift. So that to say, His dayes passed as a ship, is an aggravation of their sudden passage. A ship passeth without any stop from it self: The ship needs not stay to bait, to sleep or rest while it is upon its journey; whatsoever they do who are within the ship, the ship moves on, if they prepare it for motion.

אני *Navit, ab* אנה *In* Pihil, *obvenire, occurrere fecit, qua sic dicta est, quod remigum aut velorum impetu impellatur & feratur.*

Job puts an *Emphasis* upon this comparison; His dayes were not only as a ship, but as a *swift ship*; there is much in that addition.

The Hebrew is, *My dayes are as the ships of Ebeh*, which is diversly rendred.

First, Some take the word *Ebeh* to be the name of a River in the *Eastern* part of the world, about *Arabia*, near the place where *Job* lived. A late Traveller hath observed a River of very swift motion, near *Damascus*, and not far from the Sepulcher of *Job*. Now a ship that moveth in a swift River, besides that it may have the wind, hath also a great addition to the speed of its motion, from the force and strength of such a current. Thus saith *Job*, *My dayes* move as the ships upon *Ebeh*, as ships upon the streams of that fierce, swift River, which go down with speed, as we see Boats with the Tide, and so proportionably greater Vessels, where there is a River and a Current proportionably to bear and carry them.

Ebeh, *flumen rapidissimum in Arabia.* Rab. Sol. Bold.

Secondly, Others conceive the word, not as a proper name, but as signifying *desire*, from *Abah*, to desire with earnestness; and then the sence is rendred thus, *My dayes are passed away as ships of desire*, that is, as ships, which being laden with rich commodities, the Master and the Pilot desire earnestly to bring the ship speedily to her Port, that so they may put off the commodities, and make sale of the rich lading that is in her. The wind doth not so much fill the sails of such a ship, as desire doth the minds of her Mariners. Thus *Daniel* was called a man of desires, because he was a man so precious and desirable. A ship richly laden is much desired; such a ship is a great charge to the Owners and Merchants, they therefore send to speed the ship home as fast as they can. Thus (saith *Job*) *My dayes pass as a ship that hath the most desired commodities.*

אבה *Desideravit Naves voluntaria, vel desiderii sc. summo desiderio ad portum properantes. Vir desideriorum.*

Thirdly, The *Chaldee* and others give a further note upon it, deriving the word from *Abah*, whence *Ebib*, which signifies a stalk growing up early from the earth, and bringing forth the first ripe fruit of any kind; and so it is put for any early-ripe Summer-fruit, for early Plums, Apples, Cherries, *&c.* And then the sence is, *My dayes are like to a Ship which carrieth early fruit*: So the Vulgar, *Like a Ship carrying Apples.*

Fructus primitivus.

Naves poma portantes.

Now a Ship that carries such fruit, makes great haste, because the fruit will spoil and rot, if not speedily put off. Ripe fruit is a commodity that will not keep, unless they have

Pertransiêrunt cum navibus.

fructus delicatos portantibus. Targ.

have a quick passage, all is lost. *My dayes* (saith *Job*) *pass even as a ship* that carries ripe Summer-fruit, which are hasted away with all speed, lest they perish before they come to the port.

Fourthly, There is another sence given by those who derive the word from a root which signifies, *to hate and oppose, or to be an adversary*; and then it is thus rendred, *My dayes pass away as a Pyrates ship*, or as a ship that goes to take a prey, as a Ship that goes out to take prizes upon the Sea. Now we know, when ships go out either upon piracy, which is robbery at Sea, or upon any lawful way of taking prizes by publick authority; these ships of all others are the swiftest, they are prepared on purpose to make way and overtake other ships; their lading is not burden, but ballast, that they may be swift of sail; so saith, *Job*, *My dayes pass away like a swift ship*; not like some great Merchant-ship deeply laden, which can make no great way in the Sea, but as a ship of pyracy, that hath nothing in her but Weapons, Artillery and Ammunition, to oppose those they meet, such are as your nimble Frigats, Fly-boats and Catches, which sail with every wind, or Gallies which pass without wind, carried with strength of arms and oars, all being Vessels used to run in upon, and surprize a booty. This also is a good interpretation; and so Mr. *Broughton* translates it, *My dayes do fleet away as the Pyrates ships*. That's the second similitude, *My dayes are passed awas as the swift ships*.

Piraticani, piratarum naves, quæ ornatariæ non sunt, sed tantum ad capiendam prædam.

And as an Eagle hasteneth to the prey.

This is the third similitude. A ship moveth swiftly, especially a ship upon a swift River; or a ship laden with desirable commodities, or a ship laden with Summer-fruit, or a Pyrates ship, a man of war. But here is an instance implying greater speed then that of the most speedy ship; *As an Eagle hasteneth to the prey.*

An Eagle of all the fowls in the air, is the swiftest and strongest of wing: An Eagle is the chief of Birds. We find in Scripture, swiftness expressed by this similitude of an Eagle (*Hab.* 1. 8.) The *Chaldeans*, who invaded the people of *Israel*, are thus described, *Their horsemen shall come from far, they shall flee as the Eagle that hasteth to eat.* See the like instances, *Jer* 48. *Jer.* 49. *Ezek.* 17. And in *Isa.* 40. 31. *They shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles*, &c. Noting the exceeding swiftness of the Saints in the wayes of God, the speed they shall make in the wayes of holiness; though the youths faint, and the young men utterly fall, yet they that wait upon the Lord, shall mount up with wings as Eagles, that is, they shall be swift and strong.

But here is more expressed then the natural swiftness of the Eagle, here is somewhat occasional, which adds wings to her wings. We had four interpretations of the ships swiftness. Here is one expression exceeding all those four; *An Eagle hastening to the prey.*

Quoniam avidissimè appetit, ideo perniciissimè volat. San.

An Eagle is a greedy Fowl. Hence that of Christ (*Matth.* 24.) *Where the Carkass is, there the Eagles gather together*; that is, look where ever there is any prey, there you shall have Eagles; if there be a carkass to be had, the Eagle shall be sure to make towards it. *My dayes* (saith *Job*) *are passed away, as the Eagle hasteneth to the prey.* The Naturalists observe, that the Eagle soars aloft in the air, so high, that the eye of man cannot discern her; yet the Eagle is of such a piercing eye (Eagle-eyed is a proverb for quick-sighted) that she can discern her prey upon the earth, yea, in the water; and as soon as the Eagle espies her prey, she powrs or sowces down upon it like a Thunder-bolt, like a Bullet out of a Gun, or an Arrow out of a Bow. Thus *Job*'s dayes passed as an Eagle in her flight, and not in her ordinary flight, but as an *Eagle that hasteneth to the prey*, when hunger adds swiftness to her wings; such was the passage of his dayes.

Tanquam fulmen se è sublimi in terram jaculatur.

Numquid est navibus vestigium viæ, aut aquilæ volantis? Sept.

There is somewhat further observable in this, from the Translation of the Seventy, who render it thus, *Is there any sign or mark in the way of a Ship, or of an Eagle?* So the meaning of *Job* should be, that his life in respect of former comforts and contentments, was past away, and had left no mark, no sign behind it. The ship in the Sea passeth away, and there is no rode, no tract left; and the Eagle in the air passeth, and you cannot see where the Eagle made her flight, the air closeth presently, there is no way to be seen: *Solomon* useth those Similies, *Prov.* 30. 19. *There be three things which I know not, the way of an Eagle in the air, the way of a Serpent upon a rock, and the way of a Ship in the Sea:* And it is frequent in Authors to express those things which pass away, not leaving any tract or print behind them, by the motion of a Ship in the Sea, and of an Eagle in the Air. Hence note,

Quæ nullum sui cursus signum relinquant per avium volatum & navium trãsmissionem significantur. Sanct.

That, *The best worldly things when they are gone, are as if they had never been.*

There are two motions which will certainly leave a mark behind them: First, Motions in sin. Secondly, In holiness. Every step we tread in the wayes of sin, or of holiness, leaves a print, a remembrance behind it; but when the riches and honours, the pleasures and contentments of this life are past, nothing remains of them. It is said, *Dan.* 8. 5. (which may serve for the illustration of this place) in the vision of the *He-goat*, that *he touched not the ground*; that *He-goat* was a type of *Alexander the Great*, who set up the *Grecian* Empire; and he is compared to a *He-goat*, which did not touch the ground, because of his speedy conquests. When man or beast runs upon the ground with extream speed, we say, they do not touch the ground. When the Hare leaves a deep tract, the Hunter knows she runs slowly, and is almost spent. *Alexander* conquered the world sooner then a man could well travel over it. And as *Alexander* came in, so he passed out, both in his person and posterity; for within a short time no man could tell what was become of the *Grecian Monarchy*; the conquests of *Alexander* could not be found, no more then the way of a Ship in the Sea, or of an Eagle in the air, or of a man running so fast, that he leaves no print behind him.

Secondly, Taking both these similitudes in the ordinary notion, as they import the swift passage of *Job*'s prosperity, 'tis questioned, how *Job* can be excused for speaking thus slightly and undervaluingly of his temporal estate, which was so raised, and so enriched, that he was an eye-sore to the Devil. Satan envied him, because of his abundance: And doth he now make nothing of it? Was it nothing to be the greatest man in the East? Is he not very unthankful for, or very forgetful of the goodness and bounty of God to him? Should he not rather have said, I have had my dayes of prosperity, my worldly comforts, and I enjoyed these a long time?

Jobus̃q; *ad Satenæ invidiam, benedictam domum, benedictã familiam habebat.*

I answer, *Job* speaks not this to obscure the favours of God to him, or ungratefully to pass by his blessings; but he answers the objections of his Friends, and maintains the argument he brought against them. His argument was, That the estate of a godly man in this life, is as transitory and as brittle as the estate of a wicked man, and that therefore there can be no distinction made of men by outward dispensations: To clear which, he saith, *Look to my good dayes, they are past away swiftly*, and there is nothing remaining of them. Hence observe,

That, *The outward estate of the best men in the world, is as transitory and fading as that of the worst in the world.*

My dayes (saith *Job*) my comfortable dayes are passed away: *Every man at his best estate is altogether vanity, Psal.* 39. 5. It is not only a wicked man, whose outward estate is vain, but every mans: *David*'s Crown and Scepter were fading, vanishing flowers. *Abraham* and all the Patriarchs said (*Heb.* 11.) *We have here no continuing City*; neither City nor Citizens have long continuance here. The Apostle (1 *Cor.* 7. 31.) speaks to the Saints, and bids them take their hearts off from the world, and not to drench or steep their spirits in things here below; why? *The fashion of this world passeth away*, the fashion of the world in your hands; if you have the world in your hands, the fashion of it will perish there, as soon as in the hands of other men. Do not think that the world is put into an abiding state, or into an unalterable fashion for your sakes. A godly man and a wicked man (though made of the most different fashion) live in a world, and possess worldly things of the same fashion.

Secondly,

Quemadmodum qui navigat, sive flet, sive sedeat, vadit, quia impulsus navis ducitur: ita & nos, sive vigilantes, sive dormientes, sive tacentes, sive loquentes, sive nolentes sive valentes, per momenta temporum quotidie in finem tendimus. Greg.

Secondly, As from the first similitude, so from these we learn *how transitory our time is.* See how *Job* multiplies comparisons, That if we will not learn by the first, we might yet be convinced by a second and a third. Go to the Land, see Time upon the spur, in the swift riding Post. Go to the Sea, see Time upon the winds, in the swift-sailing Ships. Go to the Air, see Time upon the wing, in the swift-flying Eagle. These all preach the speedy passage of Time. How sad is it to see men live as if their dayes were *Snail-pac'd*, not *Post-pac'd*? As if Time lay alwayes at an Anchor, or were wind-bound, and could not use her Sails? As if it had leaden heels, and not wings, or were bound hand and foot, and could not stir? The Apostles caution is, *Redeem the time*; and now we have the Apostles argument to enforce it, *The dayes are evil.* If time go out of your hand, you cannot fetch it back again; there is no Rhetorick can recal it, or Price redeem it. Time is such a commodity, as all the power in the world cannot recover, if lost and let slip. If all the Crowns and Kingdoms of the world should be laid down as a reward for the bringing back of one hour, yea of one moment of time, they could not obtain it. Therefore improve the present time: No time is yours but the present: the time that's gone, comes no more; the time that is to come, may find you gone before it comes; your time is only the present time, and that is past as soon as present.

But not to stay upon that which moveth so swiftly, our dayes and time; I will pass to the other Branch, wherein *Job* further clears the point in the five following verses.

VERS. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.

If I say I will forget my complaint, I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort my self;
I am afraid of all my sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.
If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?
If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean;
Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me.

THese words contain a proof of the latter part of *Job*'s Assumption. He had affirmed, That an innocent and righteous person may quickly lose all his outward comforts; which he illustrated by three similitudes: now he proves that he may be entangled and lime-twigg'd with afflictions beyond hope of escape. This he doth in the twenty seventh, twenty eighth, and twenty ninth verses. Which he amplifies with Hyperbolical strains, in the thirtieth and thirty first verses. The highest Rhetorick of his sorrows being let out, to shew how remediless his sorrows were. *If I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my self never so clean; Yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me*: Things are ill with me, and I see not which way to mend my self. I am so far from any probability of help by contending and striving with God, that I have no hope of it by washing and cleansing my self. As carnal and earthly succours fail me, so these heavenly and spiritual duties will not succour me. I will give you the sum and substance of these five Verses in a few words together, and then open the Particulars.

The general sence of the Context may be thus conceived; as if *Job* had said,

I poor man in this condition, study to forget the troubles which are upon me; and laying aside all anger, passion and discontentments with which ye charge me, I labour to refresh and revive my self with hopes of some dawning or near-drawing deliverance; but while I am essaying to do this, my sorrows assault me afresh, and even overwhelm my Infant-hopes, my beginning, budding comforts, with mighty terrors; so that now I even despair of recovery out of the hand of my affliction, and am perswaded that I shall not only not be delivered that I may appear or be accounted pure and innocent, but if continued afflictions be an argument of wickedness (as you affirm) I shall have the bonds of my present troubles so fastened upon me, and such new ones, it may be, stronger ones, added, than I shall still look in your eyes, and viewed in the glass of your opinion, like a wicked man; Wherefore then should I deceive my self with hopes that I shall be delivered? Or that God will awake for me, and make the habitation of my righteousness prosperous? Whenas I believe and am very confident that how pure and righteous soever I am, or (by further washing and cleansing, believing and repenting) shall appear to be, yet the Lord hath an intent to try me further, even to the uttermost; and will cast me into the ditch, mire and dirt of further afflictions; so that they who make up their judgments by your rule, though they were as near to me as the cloaths upon my back, must yet abhor and loath me (as ye my Friends now do) as a wicked person. He seems to speak as the Apostle doth, 1 *Cor.* 4. 9. *I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were men appointed unto death, for we are made a spectacle to the world, and to Angels, and to men.*

This is the sum and general sence of these five Verses. The words are full of difficulty, and there is much variety of judgment about them; but I hope in the close to make out a sence upon every particular, which shall be matching and suitable with this which hath been given in general.

If I say, I will forget my complaint.

If I say.] In this *Job* answereth directly to the charge of *Bildad* at the eighth Chapter, *vers.* 2. *How long wilt thou speak these things, and shall thy words be like an East-wind?* To which *Job* answers *Bildad*, *If I should cease speaking (as thou seemest to chide me into silence) If I should say, I will not complain any more, I will give over these mournful discourses, and bite in my strongest pains, What then? Will the event prove what thou hast promised? Surely no, I am afraid of all my sorrows, and almost assured that they will return upon me If I say, I will forget my complaint.*

I will forget.

The word which we render [forget.] may signifie a threefold forgetfulness.

שכחה *Est oblivisci ut* זכר *Recordari cum cura & diligentia.*

First, Forgetfulness coming from the neglect of our natural abilities; when we are careless and take no heed to remember.

Secondly, Forgetfulness arising from the weakness of our natural abilities; when though we are careful, yet we cannot remember.

But *Job* means neither of these, he intends a third kind of forgetfulness, even a studied and affected forgetfulness; when how able soever we are, yet we will not, or would not remember. *If I say, I will forget my complaint*; that is, If I purposely set my self, or labour to forget my sorrows, yet I cannot get off their remembrance. As the Hebrew (*Zachar*) signifies not only the natural act of memory, but diligence in remembring; so doth the Hebrew (*Sachah*) to forget. It is sometimes as hard a work to forget, as it is at any time to remember. How do the damned in hell strive to forget their pains and complaints? They would count it a happiness, if they could put their misery out of mind and memory one hour; but they cannot. And they can no more forget what they have felt, then not be sensible of what they feel: *If I say, I will forget*

My complaint.

שיח *Sapit hoc verbum meditabundum quendā fermonem, & anxium intellectus vocisq; discursum. Miseriæ memoriam omnem deponam.* Drus.

The word notes Meditation; and here, *a mournful Meditation*, a breathing forth in mournful expressions. The same word is used, *chap.* 7. 13. *When I say my Bed shall comfort me, and my Couch shall ease my Complaint* (or, my mournful meditation) *then thou scarest me with dreams.* So then *Job*'s meaning is, If I should set my self with greatest intention to forget, that is, to lay aside the thought of my troubles and sorrows, and say, I will leave off my heaviness, and complain no more, I will not pore upon my afflictions, but resolve to be above them; yet it will not be. I find no ease; Forgetfulness is a medicine for some diseases and pains, but I find no cure, no remedy that way for mine. Hence observe,

There are some things which man can very hardly forget, or get out of his mind.

We may study their forgetfulness, and yet not be able to forget them. And they are of two sorts. First, Worldly pleasures. Secondly, Worldly sorrows. These will not fail to mind us. We need the art, or rather the grace of forgetfulness, to lay these aside. And there are two things which we are slow to remember. First. Our own Duties. And secondly, The Mercies of God. About these we need the art, or rather the grace of memory. And usually they who have most neglected to remember duty, are most afflicted with the constrained remembrance of their own sorrow. And they shall not be able at all to forget the wrath of God, who would not remember the mercies of God. *If I say I will forget my Complaint,*

I will leave off my heaviness, and comfort my self.

פני *Notat faciem, iram etiam & tristitiam.*

Leave off my heaviness.] The Hebrew word for word is, *I will lay aside my face*; for that which strictly, and in the Letter of that Language, signifies the face or countenance of a man, doth also signifie, First, Anger and wrath; Secondly, Sorrow and heaviness. 'Tis put for anger, *Psal.* 34. 16. *The face* (*or anger*) *of the Lord is against such as do evil.* So (*Lam.* 4. 16. *Levit.* 17. 10.) *I will set my face*, that is, I will shew my anger, and manifest my displeasure against them.

And the reason why that word which signifies the countenance or face, signifies also anger and wrath, sorrow and heaviness, is, because both anger and sorrow break forth in the face. If a man be very angry, you shall see his anger scribled in the uneven character of his countenance: If a man be very heavy and sorrowful, you shall see the lines of sorrow drawn in his face. Therefore it is said of *Hannah* (1 *Sam.* 1. 18.) When she received a refreshing and a reviving answer from the Lord in prayer (the poor soul sate drooping and mourning, as much as praying, but as soon as she had a hint of audience and acceptance, it is said) *She went away and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad*; the sadness of her heart appeared no more in her countenance, there was fair weather in her face, and Sun-shine in her forehead, the rain and showers of her tears were blown over and dried up. As in some sinners, *The shew of their countenance doth testifie against them* (Isa. 3. 9.) that is, they are so grosly wicked, that you may see sin in their faces; whereas others can keep sin close enough in their hearts, they can keep the disease in, and shut themselves up, when they are sick of the plague in their hearts (1 *Kings* 8.) Nothing but holiness is discernable in the face of their conversation, when nothing but rottenness and corruption lies at the bottom of their spirits. But as the corruption of many a mans heart breaks forth in botches upon the face of his actions, and the rottenness of his spirit blisters upon his tongue in unsavoury speeches; so those passions and affections of the heart, joy and sorrow, anger and heaviness appear in the face, and we may read the distempers of the heart in the disguisedness of a look. The face is the *Index* of the heart, that tells you how things go within. Therefore *Job* saith, *If I leave off my face*, meaning, as we translate, *If I leave off my heaviness*, which is so evident in my face, or which is as easie to be seen as my face: If I resolve to appear chearful and merry, and will not let clouds darken my countenance any longer, yet, &c. The face is put generally for the appearance or outside of any thing; as we say, the face of the earth, the face of the heavens, the face of the Church or Common-wealth. So that, *To leave off heaviness or the face*, is to leave off all shew of heaviness. As *Joseph* left off his tears of joy, (*Gen.* 43. 30, 31.) who, having eased his heart of his joyful sorrows, by weeping secretly in his Chamber, *washed his face, went out and refrained himself.* Thus *Job* would have washed his mournful tears from his face, he attempted to refrain himself; but he could not, his sorrows were too strong for him; and as he could not remove so he could not dissemble them. For this *leaving off*, is to be taken as the precedent act of *forgetting*, for an affected, resolved laying aside. If I make it my business to be chearful and leave *off my heaviness, yet*, &c. Hence observe,

Cordis index vultus, totusque homo est in facie. Nomen faciei in Scriptura significat externum habitum, sicut facies terræ, cœli, reipu. Bold. *Latina vox facies significat non solum os, oculos, genas, sed formam omnem, modum & faciem totius corporis, à faciendo dictam.* Aul. Gel.

Sorrow is not easily shaken off.

Sorrow sticks close. It is very hard for a man to play the hypocrite with his sorrow, or dissemble the sadness of his heart, but is far harder to be really delivered of it. Sorrow is a companion that will not be cast off with a word. A man may more easily cover his sin then his sorrow. Many can put a vizard of holiness upon their faces, when nothing but wickedness is in their hearts; but it is not easie to make a shew of comfort, when nothing but sorrow is in the heart. Grief will out. Heaviness in the heart is like *the Ointment in the right hand*, of which *Solomon* speaks (*Prov.* 27. 16.) *That it bewrayeth it self.* One said of a merry *Atheist*, *He laugheth to thee and to me*, that is, he seems to laugh, but he mourns to himself, the mans heart is heavy. If it be not so, yet it may be so with all wicked men, when they are merriest in the face, they have reason to have sorrow even unto death in their hearts: It is a hard thing (I say) to put sorrow out of the face, much more to get it out of the heart; when it is lodged there once, it will not soon be dispossessed. The Apostle (*Heb.* 12. 1.) exhorts, *To lay aside every weight, and to cast off the sin that doth so easily beset us*; he means it of the sin of nature, which we bear about us; this sin (saith he) doth easily beset us; but let us cast it off, that is, let us study and strive to lay aside this heaviness of sin, which is the truest cause of the heaviness of sorrow. One would think that a man needs not much perswasion, when he hath a heavy burden upon his shoulders, to lay it aside; yet (so it is) man can hardly be perswaded to lay aside this burden; and it is the business we have with your souls every day, to perswade you to lay it aside: *It is a weight that easily besets us.* Now as we need much exhortation to cast off the weight of this sin, which is so pleasing, so also of sorrow, though it be unpleasant. When sorrow besets us, it leaves us without ease; but sorrow easily besets us. *Job* found it a hard task to lay aside his burden. Because his Friends thought he fed too much upon his afflictions, therefore he tried what he could do, but it would not do. *If I say, I will leave off my heaviness, I will comfort my self*, &c. See the issue by and by.

I will comfort my self.

Comfort is the very life of our lives, the Spring of our Year, the Light of our Day, the Sun in our Firmament, the complement of mercy; and therefore Christ gives his Church the sum of all mercy, in that one promise of sending the Comforter. The Hebrew word signifies to strengthen, because when a man is cast down with sorrows, his spirit is weakened: *Comfort is the repair of strength. If I say, I will comfort*, that is, corroborate and strengthen my self (*Psal.* 39. 13.) *O spare me* (saith *David*) *that I may recover my strength*; or, that I may a little comfort my self: The *Septuagint* renders it, *That I may get my life again*; that I may be enlivened, and re-insouled, or fetch back my soul again. Here, if I say I will comfort my self, *take heart at grass* (as we say) and play the man, then my sorrows renew upon me.

כלן *Roboravit, confortavit, vires collegit.* Sept. ἀναλύσω.

But some may object; How is it that *Job* takes upon him to *comfort himself?* Is it any wonder if *Job* come short of comfort, when he went to himself for comfort?

Comfort is not a commodity to be found in the hand or power of any creature; the great God hath all in his own hand; if any man will have comfort, he must trade to heaven for it. It is the honour of God to be called, *The God of all comfort* (2 Cor. 1. 3.) that is, the God who hath all comfort at his dispose. As some Kings have a denomination from the great staple-commodities of their Kingdoms. Our King is called, *The King of the Wool*, because Wool is the chief commodity, and more plentiful here then in any Countrey of the world. Another is called, *King of the Wines*; and another *of the Flax. Comfort is the Staple-Commodity of Heaven*; and God is called, *The God of all comfort*, not only because the chiefest and best comforts are in his hand, but because there is not the least imaginable comfort to be had out of his hand. He hath the monopoly of comfort, or rather the sole gift of comfort. We can trouble and perplex our selves, but God only can comfort us. And *he is the God of all comfort*, of all sorts and of all degrees of comfort: the God, not only of spiritual,

tual, but of worldly comfort; of temporal comfort, as well as of eternal. As the joyes of the Holy Ghoſt are in his hand, ſo are the joyes of civil relations; the joy of meat and drink, the joy of riches and honour are in his hand alſo; How then ſaith *Job, I will lay aſide my heavineſs, I will comfort my ſelf?* It is a hard thing to comfort others (*Luther* ſaid, *It is as eaſie a work to raiſe the dead, as to comfort the conſcience*) but it is harder for a man to comfort himſelf. *Eliphaz* gave teſtimony to *Job* in (*Chap.* 4. *v.* 3, 4.) that he had *upholden him that was falling, and had ſtrengthened the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt, it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.* Thou, who haſt holpen others, canſt not help thy ſelf. Yet here *Job* was upon a reſolve to comfort himſelf.

I anſwer, Though it be a truth, that no man is able to comfort himſelf, no more then he can convert himſelf; and that a man is no more able to change his heart from ſorrow to joy, then he is able to change his heart from ſin to grace; yet a man may attempt or aſſay, he may uſe means to comfort himſelf. When *Job* ſaith, *I will comfort my ſelf*; the meaning is, I will do the utmoſt I can, I will not be behind in my endeavours, I will take the beſt courſe, and improve all opportunities to get out of theſe dumps, whoſoever will preſcribe me a way, or direct me to a remedy of theſe ſorrows, I will ſubmit to it; *I will comfort my ſelf.* From whence note,

That, *What a man really endeavoureth to do, that he may be ſaid do.*

I will comfort my ſelf; Why? Becauſe though he were not able to attain ſuch an end; Joy and comfort lieth beyond the line of the creature, yet he reached at it, he attempted and aſſayed all means to comfort himſelf. Thus the ſalvation of a man is aſcribed to himſelf; A man is ſaid to ſave himſelf, though ſalvation belongeth to the Lord, even temporal ſalvation, but eſpecially eternal ſalvation; yet, a man may be ſaid to ſave himſelf: As the Apoſtle exhorts *Timothy* (1 *Epiſt.* 4. 16.) to walk by a holy rule, to ſettle himſelf in his ſtudies, to read the Scriptures, and to meditate in them, to be faithful in diſpenſing of the Goſpel, aſſuring him, *If thou doeſt theſe things, thou ſhalt both ſave thy ſelf, and them that hear thee; ſave thy ſelf.* No man can be his *own Saviour*, he may be as well his *own Creator*; *Timothy* was thus encouraged, becauſe in ſo doing, he did all that a man ought, who expects ſalvation. That was the way to, though not the cauſe of ſalvation. *Salvation is all Chriſts; yet he who doth his beſt to ſave himſelf, may be ſaid to ſave himſelf.* Thus alſo a man comforts himſelf, converts himſelf, inſtructs himſelf, when he putteth himſelf out to the utmoſt of gifts, graces, and opportunities to do or attain duties and bleſſings. *No man* (ſaith the Prophet) *doth ſtir himſelf up to take hold of the Lord.* The word in the Prophet, ſignifies, to awake, or to watch; no man wakes or watches his opportunity to take hold of the Lord. It notes alſo that action of old birds, who flutter with their wings, and beat up their young ones, to urge and provoke them to uſe their wings, and flie abroad. Thus he complained, becauſe the lazy, dull-hearted Jews did not raiſe up and waken their hearts to do what they could, though to do it was more then they could.

Secondly, Obſerve, *That a man in affliction may help on his comforts or his ſorrows.*

I will comfort my ſelf, I will leave off my heavineſs. Some add to their afflictions, and are active to aggravate and increaſe them: they make their night darker, and obſcure the light of counſel that is brought unto them: they joyn with Satan their enemy, and by the black melancholy vapors of their own hearts, ſtifle the conſolations that are adminiſtred them by faithful friends. Like *Rachel* (Jer. 31.) *they refuſe to be comforted*; when reviving Cordials are offered, they ſpill them upon the ground, and will not take in a drop: they are ſo far from comforting themſelves, that they will not receive comfort from others. The Prophet ſeems to be reſolved upon the point, he would go on in ſorrows; *Look away from me, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me* (Iſa. 22. 4.) As ſometimes a man under great affliction beſpeaks comfort from others: O, I am in a ſad caſe, come, comfort me, ſhew me how I may get eaſe from theſe ſorrows. Many beg prayers, and ſend bills of their afflictions, deſiring to have them ſpread before the Lord in the Congregation, that ſome comfort may be dropt from Heaven into their diſeaſed bodies, or wounded ſpirits. Others ſlight prayers, and care not to be comforted, as if it were an eaſe for them to mourn, and a refreſhing to be in heavineſs. There is a twofold ground, upon which comforts are thus put off.

First, Some put off their comforts upon ſullenneſs of Spirit; black and dark ſpirits love to bathe themſelves in ſorrow. *Sorrow is the bath of drooping ſpirits*, and it is Satans bath too; Melancholly is commonly called, *The Devils bath*; he takes delight to waſh in the ſtreams of our unneceſſary tears. Sorrow for ſin puts the Devil to the greateſt ſorrow. Godly grief is a grief to Satan: but he delighteth in our worldly ſorrows, as the Devil may be delighted: if he have delight in any thing, this is one thing he delights in, our forbidden ſorrows. Some ſorrows are as much forbidden as any pleaſures. The Devil is as much pleaſed with our unlawful ſorrows, as he is with our unlawful pleaſures. And he labours as much to make us pleaſed with them.

Secondly, Others help on their own ſorrows, and leſſen their comforts through forgetfulneſs or ignorance; they (as the Apoſtle chides the Hebrews, *Chap.* 12. 5.) have forgotten the exhortation, which ſpeaks unto them as unto children. Now, as wicked men rejoyce, becauſe they forget or know not their ill condition: So godly men are, when they forget or know not how good their condition is. Yet *Job* ſuppoſes the review of his good eſtate, would neither check his ſorrows, nor eſtabliſh his peace; *If I ſay, I will forget my complaint, I will comfort my ſelf, I am afraid of all my ſorrows.*

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Man is not able to comfort himſelf.*

We can make our ſelves croſſes, but we cannot make our ſelves comforts. A man may ſay, as *Job* did (*Chap.* 7 13.) to his bed, comfort me; or to his riches, comfort me; or to his wine and good chear, comfort me; or to his friends, comfort me: He may ſay to all outward acts of pleaſure, to merry company, and muſick, comfort me; Yea a Saint may ſay to his graces and holineſs, comfort me; and yet none of theſe can comfort him, or, they comfort him in vain. To ſeek comfort any where but in Chriſt, is to ſeek the living among the dead. Chriſt is comfort cloathed in our fleſh, and he is the comfort of our ſpirits. Till he gives comfort, every man muſt conclude as *Job*, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows.*

I am afraid. The word ſignifies ſtrong trembling and ſhaking fear.

Of all my ſorrows. The root hath a double ſignification. First, To afflict with grief (*Iſa.* 63. 10.) *They vexed his holy Spirit.* Secondly, To faſhion or form a thing (*Job* 10. 8.) *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me round about.* The ſame word by a Metaphor ſignifies both to grieve and to faſhion, to vex and to form, becauſe a man that forms and faſhions a piece of wood or ſtone, ſeems to put it to pain by cutting and hewing. And he that forms wax, vexes and chafes it in his hands. Thus I ſay, becauſe in the faſhioning of a thing a man doth bruiſe, cut, and (as it were) put it to pain; therefore the ſame word ſignifies both to vex or grieve, and to form, or faſhion. And this word is applied unto the ill uſage of words (*Pſal.* 56. 5.) *Every day* (ſaith *David*, ſpeaking of his enemies) *they wreſt my words*; or they put my words to pain and grief, or they painfully and grievouſly wreſt my words. *David's* enemies took up what he ſpake, and put a new ſhape upon it, and this they did ſo vexingly, that they are ſaid to wreſt his words; a thing is vexed when it is wreſted, or wrought quite out of the form it before had. The ſame Metaphor the Apoſtle *Peter* uſeth in reference to Doctrine, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16. ſpeaking of the Epiſtles of *Paul*, in which *are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which they that are unlearned and unſtable, wreſt*, or put upon the rack; they painfully form his words, and repreſent them in a meaning which he never intended. What is ſpoken may be right, both in the matter and intendment of the ſpeaker, yet another wreſts, forms, and faſhions it in his own mould, and makes it bear a ſence which the ſpeaker never dream'd of.

יגר *Timuit, expavit, præmetu ſe abſtrahere, timorem denotat imminentis calamitatis.*

עצב *Significat dolore afficere, & interdum figurare. Qui materiâ aliquam, ut lutum vel ceram figurat manibus & digitis, in illam premendo quaſi dolore afficit.* Bold. *Eſt elegans metaphora; verba alicujus figurare, nam qui verba detorquet, aliam figuram, i.e. ſignificationem iis tribuit.*

In this Text we have the *Noun* only, which importeth either the labour or pains, which a man taketh, or the pain and grief, which a man feeleth. Hence in the Hebrew this word ſignifies an *Idol*, and both acceptions fall into the reaſon of it.

Firſt, Becauſe Idols are made, faſhioned and formed up curiouſly, with a great deal of art and labour: the wax, or clay, or ſtone is put to pain; you muſt cut it and carve it to make an Idol.

Secondly, Becauſe Idols are ſerved, attended and worſhipped with much pain and grief. Falſe worſhip, or the worſhip of Idols, is alwayes more ſervile and painful then true worſhip is. Falſe worſhip is a painful ſervice, a ſervile ſervice, a toil rather then a worſhip; but the ſervice of the true and everliving God, is an holy, an ingenuous, a noble and honourable ſervice. Idols are troubleſom, both in their making, and in their worſhipping. From this two-fold interpretation of the word, I find a two-fold tranſlation given.

Verbar omnia opera mea. Vul.

Firſt, Thus, *I am afraid of all my works*, as if *Job*, having a deſign to comfort himſelf in a reflexion upon his good works, and former holy walkings, feared they would not ſerve his turn or bear up his ſpirit in the evil day, which was come upon him. As if he had ſaid; *I have lived as exactly by the rule of the Word as I could; I have had reſpect to all the Commandments of God, that I might not ſin againſt him. Yet I am afraid of all my works, the anger of God will ſurely ſoak thorow them all, or find holes and breaches in them to come in upon me at.*

Thus he is conceived reaſoning with himſelf. But doubtleſs it was not *Job's* meaning to look to the innocency or holineſs of his life paſt, as the ground of his preſent comfort; he that would do ſo, may juſtly be afraid of all his works. When we ſee the beſt of our ſelves, we have more reaſon to be afraid, then to be comforted. As we muſt work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling: ſo we have cauſe to fear and tremble at our works.

But rather as we tranſlate, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; that is, I no ſooner endeavour to comfort my ſelf, but preſently my ſorrows throng about me, they appear before my face, and make ſuch a gaſtly apparition, that I am afraid. Sorrows charge and aſſault me afreſh, when I am purpoſing to make an eſcape from the hands of ſorrow. When I think of leaving of my heavineſs, or of getting out of the ſight of it, ſorrows come upon me with greater violence then before. While a priſoner is quiet and content with his reſtraint, the Keeper layes no great reſtraint upon him; but if he perceive him meditating an eſcape, or attempting to break priſon, and ſet himſelf at liberty, preſently more irons are clapt upon him, and an advantage taken even to load him with chains. Such hard uſage this poor priſoner feared at the hand of his ſorrows, *If I ſay, I will leave off my heavineſs, I will throw off my bolts and fetters, and get out of theſe troubles, I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; I ſhall have all the Keepers and Jailers about me, they will lay more load upon me, and watch me more ſtrictly then before: You tell me I am in love with my ſorrows, but the truth is, fears of ſorrow incompaſs me round about, *I am afraid of all my ſorrows.*

Note hence this general truth,

Firſt, *That affliction is the matter of fear.*

Natural fears ariſes from the apprehenſion of ſome approaching evil; and as fear grows more boiſterous and inordinate, ſo it repreſents us with ſadder (though but ſuppoſed) evils.

Secondly obſerve, *A godly man may be much oppreſt with the fear of afflictions.*

When I would comfort my ſelf, I am afraid of all my ſorrows: It is terrible to me to think that they ſtill encreaſe upon me, and that whileſt I hope to eſcape, I am more enſnared. Chriſt himſelf, when he was in our nature, and clothed with our fleſh, was afraid of all his ſorrows: he was *a man of ſorrows*, and he was afraid of his ſorrows too, *Matth.* 26.38. He ſaid, *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful even unto death; and he offered up prayers and ſupplications with ſtrong cryes and tears unto him that was able to ſave him from death, and was heard in that he feared* (Heb. 5.) His were extraordinary ſorrows indeed, ſuch as no creature ever felt or taſted. The Cup of ſorrow which he drank was mixed and tempered with all our ſorrows, and with the cauſe of them, our ſins. This was it he feared, being in our nature; though as that nature was hypoſtatically united unto the divine nature, it had infinitely more power to bear all thoſe ſorrows, then we have in our nature to bear the leaſt ſorrow. Now if Chriſt himſelf in our fleſh was afraid of his ſorrows, which yet he knew he ſhould overcome, how much more may the fear of ſorrows overcome us, while we are in the fleſh?

Laſtly obſerve, *That the fear of afflictions aſſaults and oppreſſes ſome moſt, when they ſet themſelves moſt to conquer and overcome them.*

I, ſaith *Job*, *would comfort my ſelf, but I am afraid of all my ſorrows*; I fear they will be doubled and trebled upon me, therefore I had rather ſit ſtill, then, by ſtriving to unlooſe, ſtraiten the cords of my affliction faſter upon me. The next clauſe ſeems to hint this as a reaſon, why his ſorrows hung ſo cloſe upon him.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.

לא תנקי *à radice* נקה *purus, mundus, per Metaphoram innocens, inſons.*

But how did *Job* know this? As God ſaid to *Adam*, (Gen. 3.11.) *Who told thee that thou waſt naked!* So I may ſay to *Job*, Who told thee that God would not hold thee innocent? Or, where hadſt thou this aſſurance of thy condemnation? The Saints may know, or be aſſured that God will pardon them; but a wicked man cannot know or be aſſured that God will not. This knowledge of *Job* was but a ſuſpition, or at the moſt a conjecture. And the giving out of this conjecture was but the language of his fear, his faith could ſay no ſuch thing, for God had no where ſaid it, *The beſt men ſpeak ſometime from their worſer part.* Their graces may be ſilent a while, and leave corruption to have all the talk. When the fleſh is under great pain, the ſpirit is hindered from acting its part, and then ſence gets the maſtery over faith. Had it not been upon ſuch a diſadvantage, *Job* had never offended with his tongue, by ſaying he knew what he could not know.

I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent.] The word which we tranſlate *innocent*, cometh from a root which ſignifieth pure and clean, and in the Verb to cleanſe, and make pure: And becauſe innocency is the purity or cleanneſs of a perſon, therefore the ſame word ſignifies to cleanſe, and to hold or make innocent: In which ſence it is uſed frequently, *Exod.* 20. *Thou wilt not hold him guiltleſs* (or innocent) *that taketh thy Name in vain.* The counſel that *David* gave upon his death-bed unto *Solomon* concerning *Joab*, was, *Therefore hold thou him not innocent*, or guiltleſs (1 *King.* 2. 9.) that is, let the blood which he hath ſhed be upon him, let his honour and his name continue ſtained and blemiſhed in thy thoughts and judgment, *Hold him not innocent.*

Here the Queſtion is, To what Antecedent we are to refer the Relative *Thou*, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent*; Thou, who?

There are two opinions about it. Some refer it to God, and ſome to *Bildad*, to whom *Job* maketh anſwer in this place.

Adverſus illud quod amici ſtatuunt, probos, videlicet etiam caſtigatos nunquam ſuccidi, hoc pro certo ſtatuã ô Deus, nunquam eſſe me ab iſtis quibus totus ſcateo fœdiſſimis ulceribus ac vermibus repurgandum. Bez.

They that refer it unto God, make out the ſence thus, Either, firſt, taking the word properly for cleanſing and healing the ſores and wounds which were upon his body; *I know thou wilt not cleanſe my body from this filthineſs, from theſe diſeaſes that now annoy me:* And ſo it is an anſwer to the words of *Bildad*, telling *Job*, that in caſe he ſought unto God, and humbled himſelf before him, he would awaken for him, and remove thoſe judgments. No, ſaith *Job*, when I think of eaſe and deliverence, all my fears return upon me, and I know God will not yet cleanſe, eaſe or deliver me from them.

Novi quod non ſit me liberum dimiſſurus, Coc.

Again, Taking it tropically (as we render it) for a judicial cleanſing or purification; ſo, *Thou wilt not hold me innocent*, is as much as this, Lord, ſuch ſorrows and troubles are upon me, that I fear thou wilt not declare, or pronounce, or give teſtimony concerning me to the world, that I am an innocent perſon. Becauſe the ſores and troubles upon him, were as an evidence againſt him in the judgement of his friends, that he was a wicked perſon, therefore (ſaith he) Lord, I am afraid, *Thou wilt not hold me*, that is, *Thou wilt not declare me to be innocent* by taking away

away these evils, that so this opinion of my friends concerning me may be removed or confuted. From this sence Note,

Non mundadabis, i. e. *parum, justum, vel etiam innocentem non declarabis.*

First, *That even a godly man in deep afflictions may have misgiving thoughts of God.*

The soul mis-gives sometimes about the pardon of sin, and is even swallowed up with despair, concluding, *I know God will not hold me innocent*; he will not be reconciled unto me, or blot out my transgression.

But especially (which is rather the mind of *Job*) the soul misgives about release from punishment. Some being hamper'd in the bands of affliction, conclude, God will never let them loose, or set them at liberty again. Such a conclusion *David's* unbelief made against himself, *I shall one day perish by the hand of* Saul (1 *Sam.* 27. 1.) When *Jonah* was cast into the deep, in the midst of the Seas, when the flouds encompassed him, and all the billows and waves passed over him, then he said (*Chap.* 2. 4.) *I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes.* Indeed *Jonah* began to recover quickly, his next words being a breath of faith, *Yet I will look again toward thy holy Temple.*

Secondly observe, *That until fear of guilt be removed, fear of trouble will not remove.*

Job was not very clear about the pardon of his sins, somewhat stuck upon his spirit, while he was under the clouds and darkness of this temptation; therefore, saith he, *I am afraid of all my sorrows.* Till the soul is setled in the matter of pardon, or freedom from guilt, it can never be setled about freedom from punishment. Hence the Apostle (*Heb.* 2. 10, 15.) speaking of the Saints before the coming of Christ, calls Christ, the Captain of our salvation, and assures us, he took flesh, that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, and *deliver those who through fear of death, were all their life time subject unto bondage.* The language is very near this of the Text, *I am afraid of all my sorrows.* As *Job* was in bondage under his affliction through the fear of his returning sorrows, So, *they were all their life time subject unto bondage* through the fear of approaching death. All the Saints before the coming of Christ, were under such a bondage: for the Apostle speaks as of a general state, *That he might deliver those, who through the fear of death, were all their life time subject unto bondage.* The reason hereof, was, because they had not so manifest and convincing a light concerning the pardon of sin, the freeness of grace, and the abundance of that mercy which was brought in afterwards, and revealed by Jesus Christ, when he actually made our atonement by the blood of his cross: For howsoever it is undeniable, that the faithful under the Old Testament, had knowledge of that satisfaction which was to be made by the Mediator for the removing of sin, and the taking away of guilt (every sacrifice spake this, shewing that there was an atonement to be made by some other blood, which the blood of the sacrifice typified) yet notwithstanding there was not a clearing and a quieting of their hearts, because Christ (though in the promise slain from the beginning of the world) was not actually slain, nor offered up for sinners. The Apostle (*Heb.* 10. 1, 2.) argues upon the same point, That the Law, with *those Sacrifices, could not make the comers thereunto perfect*, that is, it could not assure the heart that sin was taken away, *for if it could, then* (saith he) *the sacrifices should not have needed to be offered up so often.* What needed any repetition, seeing they who were once so purged should have had no more *conscience of sin*, that is, sin should never have troubled and vexed their consciences any more? But *now Christ by one offering hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified* (vers. 14.) that is, he hath made a perfect satisfaction for them; and compleated the peace of their consciences. So then, while there remaineth any scruple about sin, fears of evil will hang upon the spirit. And we find that the old Saints were very fearful of outward afflictions, because they had as it were a relish or taste of the disfavour and displeasure of God in them. And in proportion, as any of them had more or less of free grace appearing to them, so they were more or less enthralled with these fears. We may observe throughout the Old Testament, that there was not such a spirit of rejoycing in sufferings and afflictions, as we find breakings forth in the New: *Paul* never saith, *I am afraid of all my sorrows*; No, he saith, *As sorrowful, yet alwayes rejoycing.* You never hear him complain of his afflictions. He indeed complains of his corruptions, *O miserable man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death!* But he never said, *O miserable man, how am I afflicted, I am in deaths often, who shall deliver me from this death of the body!* We find the Saints under the Gospel clothed with a spirit of exultation and rejoycing, of which we hear little, if any thing at all under the Law: The want of which we are to ascribe to their want of a clear light about the removing of guilt, and the pardon of sin, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

Thirdly observe, *That God often deals with his best servants, in regard of outward troubles, as if they were guilty.*

I know thou wilt not hold me innocent; that is, thou wilt not deal with me as with an innocent person. As the Lord dealt with his Son, so he deals with his servants. God the Father dealt with Jesus Christ as with a guilty person (*Isa.* 53. 9, 12.) He was *numbred among transgressors, and made his grave with the wicked.* The Lord reckoned him as a sinner, while he was satisfying his justice for sin, and making an atonement for sinners. *Job* is no where called a type of Christ, but he was like him, and their parallel might be drawn in many things, especially in this, that both were numbred with the wicked, and in that both were used, as if they had been guilty. The dispensations of God to his own beloved Son once did, and to his faithful servants often do look like those to the greatest transgressors. His son was handled so that he might redeem sinners; his servants are so handled, sometimes to prevent, often to purge them from sin; sometimes to try their graces, alwayes to make them fitter vessels for glory. Though we cannot make any earnings toward glory by the weightiest afflictions, yet *these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.*

I shall pass from this reference of the word, *Thou*, when I have briefly vindicated the Text from the corruptions of some Papists, who urge it to prove the uncertainty of our justification. *Job* (say they) doubted whether God would declare him just or no. I answer, Justified persons may have doubts, yet that doth not argue the uncertainty of justification. Justification is a sure act in it self, and we may be sure of it, though some are unsetled about it. This Scripture gives no shelter, much less support to that doctrine of doubting. The Vulgar reading, grosly varying from the original, is all the shadow it hath in this place. For as that Translator mistakes the former clause, which he renders, *I am afraid of all my works*: So this latter, which he renders, *Knowing that thou wilt not pardon or spare him that offendeth.* He that seeks to be justified by his works, shall not want fears about his justification: And if this be a truth, which their translation seems to hold forth, that God will not pardon him that offendeth, the best and holiest men in the world have reason, not only to fear whether they are justified, but to resolve they can never be justified in his sight. If every man that sinneth must doubt of the pardon of sin, all men must doubt. In that common acception of the word *offend*, it is false, that God will not pardon him that offends: whom should he pardon but such as offend? They who are above sin, are above pardon. *Job* never thought God would not pardon him, because he had sinned, it being one of the royal titles of God, *The God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin.* But if we take sinning or offending in a stricter sence, as it imports a man obstinate and still engaged with delight to sin (in which sence the next title of the Lords great name, after, *Forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin*, is to be understood, *and that will by no means clear the guilty* (Exod. 34. 7.) The Hebrew is, *And that clearing will not clear.* We supply the word *guilty*; which the *Chaldee* well explains by this Periphrasis, *Him that will not convert, or turn to the Lord*) such offenders the Lord will not pardon. But to say that the Lord will not spare and pardon such guilty persons, such delinquents as will not return unto him, but go on to add one wickedness to another, is no denial of the Saints assurance of pardon, they being already turned and converted to the Lord. So much

Bellarm. *l.* 5. *de justific. cap.* 5.

Sciens quòd non parceret delinquentis Vulg.

much for that clause, as the antecedent refers unto God, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent.*

But rather take the *Antecedent* to be *Bildad*. *I know, thou* Bildad, *wilt not hold me innocent*; as if *Job* had said, *When I think of comforting my self, my wounds bleed afresh, and my sorrows present themselves to my thoughts again, by the sight of which I am assured I shall not be judged innocent by thee, but rather more wicked, as my sorrows appear to be more; for seeing thou art resolved to conclude the multitude of my sins from the multitude of my suffering, in vain shall I labour to shew and approve my self as an innocent person before thee, whenas I shall still be an afflicted person before thee: I know thou canst not hold me innocent, while abiding afflictions leads thy judgment to conclude that a man is wicked. How shall I being in trouble, gain any credit of integrity in thy opinion, so long as outward troubles render me a hypocrite in thy opinion?*

In vanum laborabo ut ostendam tibi afflictum simul & innocentem me esse posse. Bold.

I shall only note this from it,

He that judgeth of a mans innocency by his outward estate, may for ever condemn an innocent,

Bildad judged so of *Job*, this caused *Job* to say, *I know thou wilt not hold me innocent*, or think me good, seeing evils are still upon me, and are like to continue upon me still. *Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment*, is the rule of Christ (*John* 7.24.) As if they could hardly judge what is right, who judge by what appears. We must not judge of things till they appear; nor may we judge of persons by their appearance. As oftentimes in holiness, so sometime in sinfulness, men are not what they seem to be. All is not Gold that glisters, and some Gold doth not glister. Many are not that in holiness which they seem to be by their actings toward God, and some are not in sinfulness what they seem to be by Gods acting toward them. It is easier to do do good then to be good; and usually they who are good, suffer that which is evil.

Verse 29. If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain?

These words may be connected with either of the interpretations given upon the former verse, *I know, thou* (O God) or thou (O *Bildad*) *wilt not hold me innocent*. Now then,

If I be wicked, &c.

אנכי ארשע *Ego impius. Impius hoc loco non qui sit, sed qui ut improbus tractetur, vel qui impius videatur, & liquet* Jobum *suis amicis impium fuisse visum ut qui in hoc Christum præferret, qui cum impiis reputatus fuit.* Fr Joh.

The original word hath been heretofore opened. Only note, that the Hebrew is absolute, and not by way of supposition; plainly thus, *I am wicked*, or, *I shall be accounted wicked, why therefore labour I in vain?* Or, now therefore I labour in vain. When *Job* saith, *I am wicked*, it is not as if he gave the cause, and assented to his friend; Ye have as had an ill opinion of me all this while, now I begin to have ill an opinion of my self, *I am wicked*. No, he means it only thus, I am handled or accounted as a wicked man; *I am wicked* in your thoughts, and the providence of God seems to give you occasion of thinking so; ye look upon me as if I were a wicked man, and I look like one; *Why then labour I in vain?*

Why labour I in vain?

יגע *Laboravit, defatigatus fuit, Græco* κοπιάω *respondet, & notat ex labore summâ molestiam.*

The word signifies hardest labour? why do I travel so painfully to vindicate my self, and to stand fair in your eyes? It is labouring with toil, or moiling labour, answerable to that Greek word (κοπιάω) which signifies sore and extream labour. It is too much to bestow any labour in vain (that is, without fruit and success) much more to bestow hard and sore labour.

But what was this sore, hard and painful labour? He means all those labours which he bestowed, either to extricate himself from his sufferings, or to clear himself from their prejudice of his sinfulness, because he suffered: As if he had said in particulars,

להכל *pro* להכל *μάτην. Aquil.*

Why do I labour in Apologues to excuse my self? Or in Arguments defend my cause? Why do I labour in prayer to deprecate these troubles, and get out of the bands of my afflictions? Pleading for our selves with men, is hard labour; but especially pleading for our selves with God. Prayer is strong labour, therefore it is called *wrestling*. *Bildad* advised *Job* to pray unto God, in the eighth Chapter: here *Job* seems to answer, *Why labour I in prayer*, and in seeking unto God, seeing all's in vain and lost labour? to what end should I labour in any of these duties? *for I am wicked* (in the opinion of man) or, *if I am wicked* in the sight of God, or seeing God hath cast me into such a condition, as appearingly and visibly casts me among the wicked?

For the better understanding of this, we may consider the words as an argument by way of *Dilemma*, *If I be wicked, why then labour I in vain? If I wash my self with snow-water*, &c. As if he had said, Either I am wicked, or I am clean and pure; if I am wicked (as you say I am) I deserve more punishment, then I labour in vain to be eased of this. If I am pure and clean, as washed with snow-water, what will the issue be? God will yet cast me into the ditch of affliction; so that I am between two walls, hemmed in on both sides; *Wickedness would certainly ruine me, and my righteousness will not deliver me, why therefore do ye feed me with vain hopes that I should be delivered if I were righteous?* So *Bildad* assured him in the former Chapter.

More particularly, *If I am wicked, why then labour I in vain?*

Si vita præterita laboribus & pietatis studio sanctitatem non comparavi, neq; coram Deo justus habeor, certè labor meus inanis fuit. Aquin.

First, Some interpret his words as a contest with God; thus, If by my study of holiness, and care to walk circumspectly in thy wayes, I have not yet gained the reputation of holiness; If I cannot yet pass in thy account for a godly man, surely I shall still labour in vain about that point, as hitherto I have done.

But secondly (for I lay this aside) Others thus, *If I am wicked*, it is a vain thing for me to seek the Lord, as you advise me. Why will you put me upon a business which will be fruitless and without success? It was the word of God in *Job*'s time, though no Scripture, *That God heareth not sinners*: Not such sinners as *Job*'s friends challenged him to be. So *Job* seems to compare their opinion of him, and counsel given him, thus together; your opinion of me, is, that I am a wicked man; your counsel to me, is, tha tI should seek unto God: Surely your opinion of me, and your counsel to me, can never agree: for if I am wicked (as you hold me to be) I labour in vain, while I obey your counsel.

Si autem & sic impius sum frustrà laboravi, i.e. si impius sum ut vos de me dicitis. Vul.

There is a sence, wherein it is in vain for a wicked man to seek unto God, and a sence wherein it is not in vain for a wicked man to seek unto God. We must distinguish of this interpretation.

If a man be wicked, it is in vain for him to seek unto God, while he loveth his wickedness, and delighteth in it, *Psal.* 66.2. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayer.* He that is so wicked as to love wickedness, prayes in vain, fasts and humbles his soul in vain. *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, that is, the Lord abominates his sacrifice; but, *The prayer of the upright is his delight.* *Solomon* describes an hypocrite in the former words; he is one that will pray and offer sacrifice, and yet puts the *stumbling block of his iniquity before his face* (Ezek. 14.4.) So they (*Jer.* 7.4.) cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these*; The Prophet discovers who these *zealous Templers were*, vers. 9. *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsly, and then come and stand in this house which is called by my Name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?* Some mingle prayer and fasting with stealing and murdering; such praying and fasting are as unacceptable to God, as stealing and murdering are: Such labouring to please the Lord, is displeasing to the Lord. *What hast thou to do* (saith God to the wicked) *to take my Covenant into thy mouth* (Psal. 50.16.) Doth God say to the wicked, What hast thou to do with my Covenant? For whom is the Covenant made, but for the wicked? If men were not wicked or sinful, what needed there a Covenant of Grace? The Covenant is for the wicked. And the Covenant brings Grace enough to pardon those who are most wicked: why then doth the Lord say to the wicked, *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant into thy mouth?* Observe what follows, and his meaning is expounded; *Seeing thou hatest to be reformed*: As if God had said, Thou wicked man, who protectest thy sin, and holdest it close, refusing to return, and hating to reform; what hast thou to do to meddle with my Covenant? *Lay off thy defiled hands. He that*

that is resolved to hold his sin, takes hold of the Covenant in vain; or rather he lets it go, while he seems to hold it. Wo unto those who sue for mercy, while they neglect duty. Thus a wicked man labours in vain.

But there is a sense in which a wicked man doth no labour in vain, how wicked soever he is. What else means the Prophets invitation? (*Isa.* 55. 5.) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Let him forsake his wayes, and then no matter what his wayes have been; let him return to the Lord, and then his former departures shall not hinder acceptance. *Christ died for the ungodly,* *Rom.* 5. 6. And *God justifieth the ungodly,* Rom. 4. 5. It is not in vain for an ungodly man to come to God indeed, and when he doth, he ceases to be ungodly. They draw nigh only with their lips, whose hearts are not changed, and they draw nigh in vain. *As God hath not said to the seed of Jacob* (real Saints) *Seek ye me in vain*; so he hath not said in vain to wicked men, *Seek ye my face.* For with the word which bids them seek, he gives them power to seek, and the mercy they seek for. The Grace of God prevents us that we may seek him, and blesses us when we do seek him. If all who are wicked, labour in vain, then all had laboured in vain, forasmuch as all were wicked.

Si adhuc mecum agit Deus tanquam cum impio, quorsum frustra laborem? Philip. *Hæc sunt verba hominis à Deo derelicti.* Vatabl.

Thirdly, You may take the meaning of it thus, *If I am wicked,* that is, if I am reputed by men, and still afflicted by God, as a wicked man, then why should I labour in vain, or trouble my self any further to so little purpose? if this sense may be admitted, 'tis a passionate speech, proceeding from impatience and distemper of spirit; much like that of *David*, and very near it in words, *Psal.* 73. 13. *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.* *David's* afflictions wrought as hard conclusions in him, as *Job's* did. *Grace acts and speaks ever like it self, but a gracious man doth not.* *David* shewed there was vanity and remainders of defilement in his heart, by saying, *I have cleansed my heart in vain.* Mr. *Broughton* renders to this sence, *I shall be holden as wicked, now why do I labour in vain?* Hence observe,

That, *Where hope faileth, endeavour faileth too.*

I have no hope, saith *Job*, to get out of these afflictions which fall upon wicked men, or to get one step beyond a wicked man in your reputation, my labour is in vain, why then do I labour? When the heart sinks, the hands hang down. Where the one gives over believing, and hoping, the other gives over acting and working. Hence the afflicted are called upon by the Apostle, *to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees* (Heb. 12. 12.) Hands and knees are the instruments of action and motion; and the hanging down of these, imports both retarded or stopt: Those afflicted *Hebrews* saw little or no hope of deliverance, therefore they gave over endeavouring and moving after deliverance.

In vanum laboravem, si coram Deo justificare me tentarem ut falsò me hoc velle præsupponis

Taking the words (as in the original) absolutely, without any supposition, *I am wicked, why then labour I in vain?* As if he had said, *I am wicked not only in the opinion of men, but I acknowledge my self to be wicked indeed, considered with the most holy God*; and then his sence is, Lord, if thou art pleased to go this way to work with me, to set the rigor of thy justice a work, to find out my sin, and to judge me according to what thou findest, then in vain do I seek to comfort my self; for in thy sight no flesh can be justified: I (as well as others) *am wicked.* In which acknowledgment, he seems to meet with, and confute that supposition of *Bildad*, chap. 8. 6. *If thou wert pure*; pure, saith *Job*, alas, I can never be pure before God. When the Lord examines my purity, he will find it impurity. You tell me, if I were pure, the Lord would awaken for me; I shall never be pure in your sence, I am as pure as ever I shall be, that is, I am impure, and shall be at my best; which sence falleth in directly with the two verses following: *Though I wash my self with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clean; yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths shall abhor me.* Taking up that interpretation, I shall connect it with these two Verses, and open them in order.

Verse 30. *If I wash my self with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean.*

Washing is an act proper to the cleansing of the body or of bodily things; and in Scripture-Story we find travellers had water provided for them at their journeyes end, to refresh and cool their bodies. These were civil washings. But besides these, we find many ceremonial washings of the body, or bodily things, which implied the removing and taking away of sin, and so were a token of internal purification. Therefore the Apostle (*Heb.* 9. 10.) describing the Jewish worship, and shewing the several parts of it, saith, *It stood* (we supply that word, but it suits the Text well; for the substantials, the pillars upon which their worship stood, were shadows, consisting *in meats and drinks, and divers washings.* In allusion to which the Lord promises (*Ezek.* 36. 25.) *I will sprinkle you with clean water*: And the Apostle *Peter* speaks of *the sprinkling of the blood of Christ* (1 Pet. 1. 2.) And *Paul*, of *the Laver of regeneration,* Tit. 3. 5. The Saints who came out of great tribulation, are said to have *washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb* (Rev. 7. 14.) Sanctification, which is cleansing from the filth of sin, and justification, which is cleansing from the guilt of sin, are set forth by washing, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. *But ye are washed.* Thus the Prophet counsels the polluted Jews (*Isa.* 1. 16.) *Wash you, make you clean*; which he expounds by a moral duty in the next words, *Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil; learn to do well.* It was usual among the Heathen to wash, as a sign of purification, especially before they went to worship their gods, or after they had defiled themselves with some grievous crime. One of the Poets gives them a reproof; *O ye who are so credulous, or easie of belief, to think that the bloody sin of murdering the bodies of other men, can be taken away by washing your own bodies!* They had a great opinion of a cleansing virtue in the Sea; to which some think the Prophet *Micah* alludes (*Chap.* 7. 19.) *He will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*

In lege multæ erant purificationes quas Deus fortè instituit ut populum alienarum gentium talibus cæremoniis a suetum facilius adduceret ad cultum veram. Pin.

Antiquissimum fuit uti balneo aut corporis ablutione, ad detergendas animi sordes. Ah nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis, Fluminea tolli posse putatis aqua? Romani noluerunt parricidas nudos (sed in culeum insutos) in flumen abjicere, ne cum delati essent in mare, ipsum pollue-

The ancient Christians, using to wash before they prayed, shewed a little touch at least of Judaism, or of their old Gentilism. Some have given this for one reason, why the Lord appointed so many washings among his people, that the Heathens might be the easier gained to the Religion of the *Jews*, when they found somewhat symbolizing with their customs among them: which, if it were so, yet it cannot bear out those who have mixed Christian Worship with Heathenish Observations, thereby to facilitate their conversion. But doubtless *Job* had reference to those Rites either of the *Jews* or *Gentiles*, when he said,

rent, quo cætera quæ violata sunt, expiari putantur. Cic. *in Orat. pro Resc.* *Christianus lotus erat.* Tert. *De Orat. c.* 10. Clem. *l.* 8. Const. *c.* 88.

Though I wash my self with Snow-water.

Why with *Snow-water*; That is (say some) with the most pure water, with the clearest springing fountain-water, or in the most crystall streams, not in the water of melted snow, but in water like snow for purity and orient clearness.

Aliqui ex Latinis legunt aquis vivis, non aquis nivis. Pined.

Others conceive it an allusion to that peculiar Rite in those times, when they took Snow-water to wash with, rather then Spring, or River-water, because that came from the Heavens, not from the Earth here below, and was therefore (in their opinion) more excellent in its nature, because it had a more excellent Original.

Thirdly, *Job* is thought to specifie *Snow-water*, because in those Countries the Fountain, or River-water was not pure; and therefore they preserved Snow, and took that water to wash and cleanse with. As the custom still is in those places where good water is a rare commodity.

Or lastly, He may say, *If I wash in Snow-water*, because he would express the cleanest washing, such as makes the body look like snow, white and pure. *White as snow* is proverbial (*Isa.* 1. 18.) for the most resplendent whiteness.

And

In Scriptura talibus aliquis dicitur lotus, qualium referre videtur ſimile Chriſt. Sanct.

And we find in Scripture, a thing is ſaid to be waſhed with that, the likeneſs of which after waſhing it repreſents: Thus the Church glories in Chriſt, *That his eyes were as the eyes of a Dove by the rivers of water waſhed with milk*, (*Cant.* 5.12.) that is, his eyes were white as milk, after waſhing. So here, *Though I waſh my ſelf with ſnow water*, that is, though I waſh my ſelf, till I become as white and pure as ſnow, &c. We read a like phraſe (*Pſal.* 51.9.) *Purge me with Hyſop, and I ſhall be clean*, in alluſion to the Levitical Law, which appointed the Prieſt to ſprinkle both things and perſons with a bunch of Hyſop (*Levit.* 14. *Numb.* 19.) So the Chaldee Paraphraſe expounds the Pſalm, *Cleanſe me, as the Prieſt ſprinkling with Hyſop cleanſed the people. Though I waſh my ſelf with ſnow-water*,

And make my hands never ſo clean.

The Hebrew Text is very emphatical, *Though I waſh my hands in purity*; which ſome expreſs by that which is the inſtrument of purifying the hands, *Though I waſh my hands with ſope*; So Mr. *Broughton*, Though I waſh my hands with waſh-balls, to make my hands clean and ſweet. We tranſlate, though not to the letter of the Hebrew, yet to the ſence, *Though I waſh my hands never ſo clean, yet*, &c.

As the former expreſſion referreth to internal holineſs; ſo this latter to external. The hands in Scripture note our outward works. Hands are the executive part, the inſtruments of action. *Your hands are full of blood*, Iſa. 1. that is, your actions are cruel and bloody: there is not only blood in your hearts, but in your hands too (*Pſal.* 26. 6.) *I will waſh my hands in innocency, ſo will I compaſs thine altar*; that is, I will make all my outward converſation pure and holy. The Lord hath *rewarded me according to the purity of my hands*, (Pſal. 18.20.) Again (*Pſal.* 73. 13.) *I have, in vain, waſhed my hands in innocency*, that is, I have lived innocently in vain. The Apoſtle *James* calls for the holineſs of the outward man in the ſame language, *Cleanſe your hands, ye ſinners*; *and purifie your hearts, ye double-minded*, Chap. 4. 8.

Beſides, it was uſual to waſh the hands, as an emblem or token of innocency, and freedom from guilt. The Law of *Moſes* appointed, in caſe a man were ſlain, no man knowing how, that the Elders of the neareſt City ſhould waſh their hands over the Heifer that was offered in Sacrifice, ſaying, *Our hands have not ſhed this blood, neither have our eyes ſeen it*, Deut. 21.6,7. So *Pilate*, when he would make it viſible unto all the world (as he thought) that he was free from the blood of Chriſt, called for a baſin of water to waſh his hands: all the water in the Ocean could not waſh *Pilates* conſcience from the guilt of Chriſts blood, yet he called for a baſin of water, and waſhed his hands, ſaying, *I am free from the blood of this juſt perſon, ſee ye to it*. So then, the meaning of *Job* is, *Though I be clean within and clean without*, though my heart be as clean, as waſhing can make my hands, though (as the Apoſtle taught long after) *I lift up pure hands in prayer, without wrath and doubting*, yet

Scio quod quantumvis diligentiſſime vitæ candorem & morum integritatem comparare ſtudeam, tamen non ideo dolorum & pœnarum expers ſim. Pined.

Verſ. 31. Thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes ſhall abhor me.

טבל Tinxit, intinxit, ita lavit ut res non mundetur, ſed tantùm attingat humorem.

The word which we tranſlate **Plunge**, ſignifies a dipping or immerſion, rather to die or ſtain, then to cleanſe, *Ezek.* 23.15.

There are two interpretations of theſe words, *Thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch.*

Futura apud Hebræos ſæpe debitum indicant.

They may be underſtood either, firſt thus, that God would adjudge him ſinful, notwithſtanding all his purifyings: and ſo it anſwereth the expreſſion of the latter clauſe of the former verſe; As if he ſaid, *Though I make my ſelf as clean as clean can be, and thereupon judge my ſelf never ſo clean, yet thou mayeſt account me unclean; yea the more I labour to juſtifie my ſelf in my cleanneſs, the more unclean mayeſt thou judge me to be*; Yet, *Thou wilt plunge me in the ditch*; For we are to underſtand the words, *Thou wilt plunge me*; not as of that which the Lord would do, but as of that which the Lord might juſtly do. As if he had ſaid, Thou mighteſt have greater cauſe to plunge me in the ditch, when I am ſo fine and clean in mine own eyes, then before. When I think I have waſhed my ſelf as white as ſnow, thou mayeſt look upon me, as drawn thorow a dirty channel, or as wallowed in the mire. After all my cleanſing and rinſing, and purifying, thy pure eyes can eaſily ſee a ſinner in me, and diſcover that I am polluted, though I am waſhed.

Phraſis Hebræa eſt, qua famæ nominiſq; nitor pollui dicitur. Bold.

This Phraſe of plunging in a ditch, notes the greateſt defilement, it imports a man all over defiled: The Jews ſay of a man that hath loſt his credit and is exceedingly blemiſhed in his reputation, That he is caſt in the *dirt, or thrown in the mire.*

שחת Corruptio interitus illas igitur ſordes intelligit, quas affert ſqualida mors, me demerget in locum putredinis. Varro *l.* 4. *de Ling. Lat.*

Again, The word which we tranſlate **Ditch**, ſometimes ſignifies corruption only (*Pſal.* 16.10.) *Thou wilt not ſuffer thine holy One to ſee corruption.* And ſecondly, it ſignifieth a pit digged and prepared, wherein dead and corrupting carcaſes are laid (*Pſal.* 94.13.) *Till the pit be digged for the wicked*; that is, till they be deſtroyed and put into the pit.

Beſides, We learn from Antiquity, that they had ſpecial pits or graves for offenders, who were *ſlain by the Law* (as ſome ſpeak) or cut off by the hand of juſtice; who being enemies to humane ſociety while they lived, were not admitted ſociety with the bodies of honeſt men, when they died. The Prophet *Iſaiah* (Chap. 14. 18, 19, 20.) deſcribing the ruine and ignominious down-fall of the King of *Babylon*, ſaith, *That all the Kings of the Nations, even all of them lie in glory, every one in his own houſe* (that is, in their Fathers Sepulchres) *But thou art caſt out of thy grave like an abominable branch: and as the raiment of thoſe that are ſlain, thruſt through with a ſword, that go down to the ſtones of the pit: Thou ſhalt not be joyned to them in burial.*

And hence, to be caſt into a ditch notes any great humbling or affliction, reproach or contumely.

We may take it here in either ſence, *Thou wilt plunge me into filth and corruption*, or ſhew me to be filthy and corrupt, though I cleanſe my ſelf; or thou wilt caſt me into the greateſt afflictions, notwithſtanding all my purifications. I ſhall give a note, ſuting this laſt ſence, at the cloſe of the whole verſe.

From the firſt, here Obſerve,

They who would make themſelves moſt holy, appear moſt unholy before God.

Thoughts of our own purity, render us impure. We are never ſo black before God, as when we are whiteſt in our own eyes. We find the Phariſee (*Luke* 18.) waſhing himſelf in *ſnow-water*, and making his hands very clean, he tells us that he had Faſted and Prayed, and given Alms, and paid Tithes (this is to waſh our ſelves in ſnow-water, and to make our hands very clean) but the Lord plunged this Phariſee in the ditch, he caſt him for a wicked man. The poor Publican plunged himſelf in the ditch, and judged himſelf fit to be thrown into the mire; But *he went home to his houſe juſtified, rather then the other.* The Lord tells his people (*Jer.* 2.22.) *Though thou waſh thee with nitre, and take thee much ſope, yet thine iniquity is marked before me.* The ſpeech is of the ſame importance in the letter with this of *Job*; yet there the Holy Ghoſt rather intends an hypocritical waſhing, by excuſing or denying our ſins; or (as ſome gloſs that Text) by ſhewing images or imaginations, fancies or forgeries of holineſs. If thou ſhalt put thy ſelf in theſe dreſſes of holineſs, as if thou wert waſhed with nitre, and cleanſed with much ſope, yet thou canſt not avoid mine eyes, *For thine iniquity is marked before me*, I can ſee thy ſin through all the daubings and paintings, through thy deckings and coverings put upon it. Now, as God ſees iniquity through all the masks and coverings of hypocrites; ſo he can ſee ſpots through all the waſhings and cleanſings of the moſt ſincere. And if we waſh our ſelves to juſtifie our ſelves, our very waſhing is our defiling. *God will not only ſee, but mark their iniquity, who think they can put all their iniquity out of his ſight.* And ſuch ſhall be made ſo vile, that not only God, but their own clothes ſhall abhor them, as *Job* expreſſes himſelf in the next words.

Eſt ſe accuſare, culpam abnegare ſimulamenta pietatis oſtentare.

Mine own clothes will abhor me.

We have the word at *Chap.* 8. *verſ.* 14. *Whoſe hope ſhall loath him*, which we render, *Whoſe hope ſhall be cut off. Clothes* may be taken either properly or figuratively. Taken properly, the words may import, firſt, his degradation from

from all former dignities. I ſhall be deprived of all honour and eſtimation, and ſo the cloaths which I wore in the dayes of my proſperity, will ſo much unbecome me, that they will abhor me. Or ſecondly, Taken properly, they are conceived to be a circumlocution of death.

Thou wilt plunge me in the pit, that is, *I ſhall die, and mine own cloaths will abhor me.* The dead are ſtript; garments do not become a dead carcaſe. Mr. *Broughton's* paraphraſe upon his own tranſlation intimates this; *Mine own cloathes ſhall loath me*; namely, ſaith he, *When I go naked to the grave, as though my cloaths did loath me.*

Others underſtand it figuratively, *Mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me*, that is, Firſt, Thoſe that are my deareſt friends ſhall abhor me, Thou wilt make them flee from me, who are as near to me, as the cloaths on my back.

Or ſecondly, In a figure, *Mine own cloaths*, that is, mine own works *ſhall abhor me.* Hypocrites are ſaid to come in *ſheeps clothing* (Matth.7.) that is, doing the works of thoſe who are ſincere, appearing like them in practice. And when we are warned to *keep our garments* (Rev.16.15.) the meaning is, that we muſt keep faith and a good conſcience in every act of our lives.

Thirdly, It may have reſpect to lepers, whoſe cloaths did abhor them, becauſe they wore ſome mark of difference upon their garments, ſhewing that they were to be ſhunned, and their company avoided.

Tam ſqualidus ero ut ea quibus nullus eſt ſenſus tantũ ſqualorem ſentiri & abominari videantur.

But rather in general, *Mine own cloaths ſhall abhor me*, notes extreme pollution. If I juſtifie my ſelf before God, I ſhall be ſo unclean that my cloaths will be loth to touch me. We ſay of one that is very filthy, *A man would not touch him with a pair of tongs.* And it is uſual in Scripture (to give you that rule for the underſtanding of this, and other the like forms of ſpeaking) when a matter is ſpoken of in a way of exceſs, that things inſenſible have ſence, yea reaſon and underſtanding aſcribed to them: abhorring, is an act beyond ſence, it hath a mixture of reaſon and underſtanding; now to note his exceeding lothſomneſs to God and man, who attempts to juſtifie himſelf before God, the Text ſaith, *His cloaths* (which have neither life nor ſence) *ſhall abhor him.* When the Phariſee, envying the acclamations which the multitude of Chriſts Diſciples gave him at his entrance into *Jeruſalem*, deſired that he would rebuke and ſilence them: Chriſt anſwered, *I tell you, if theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out*; importing how juſt an occaſion there was, why his Name and glory ſhould be lifted up; Do ye think much that reaſonable men ſpeak? If theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones that have neither life nor ſenſe would ſpeak. Thus (*Gen.* 4. 10.) to note the foulneſs of *Cain's* ſin, and his cruelty towards his brother, God ſaith, *The earth hath opened her mouth to receive thy brothers blood from thy hand*, as if the earth had been ſenſibly affected with the cruelty of *Cain* towards his brother; thou wouldſt not let his blood ſtay in his body, therefore the earth in kindneſs opened her mouth, and took in his blood from thy hand, and that cries up unto me. So here, I ſhall be ſo foul, that if my cloaths had ſenſe, life and reaſon, and could diſpoſe of their own actings, and ſet themſelves upon what body and limbs they pleaſed, ſurely they would put themſelves off from my body, and ever come on again, they would abhor me; I ſhould be as filthy before God in ſoul, as he is in body, who muſt be waſhed before he is fit to have his cloaths put on him: *As to be clothed with ſhame, ſo to have our cloaths aſhamed of us, notes the greateſt diſhonour.*

Ubi aliquarum rerum exceſſus eſt dicuntur aliquando in Scripturis ſentire inſenſibilia. Sanct.

Job ſummã fœditatem animæ per ſummam fœditatem corporis indigitat. Tam fœdus à judicio tuo diſcederem, ut is corpore eſt ſordidus quem veſtes ſuæ horrent. Coc.

Laſtly, This caſting into the ditch, and the abhorring of his cloaths, may refer to the continuance of his afflictions; though I ſhould make my ſelf never ſo pure, yet the Lord would caſt me again into the ditch of affliction, he will put me into the pit of trouble, till (like a man drawn out of the mire) Mine own cloaths abhor me, or make me an abhorring to all that ſee me. I know the Lord will make further trial of me. Hence note,

God caſts his ſervants again and again into the miery ditch, as refiners caſt gold again and again into the fiery furnace, to make them more pure.

That which defiles the outward man, may be cleanſing to the inward: And the abominable clothing of the body, may be a means to put the ſoul into the moſt handſom dreſs. Hence obſerve,

Quamvis ego mundus ſum à culpa, tamen pœnis atq; dolorũ & ægritudinam ſordibus & ſqualore obſoloſcam.

Secondly, That, *After purgings and cleanſings, the Lord often goes on with further chaſtenings.*

Though I waſh my ſelf, &c. yet thou wilt caſt me in the ditch, and mine own cloaths will abhor me. Ye our purgings and cleanſings are ſometimes ſo far from cauſing God to take off our afflictions, that they do but fit us for more affliction: For the Lord will not truſt an impure ſpirit, or an heart defiled under many corruptions, under great afflictions. He therefore cleanſes many, and makes them more holy, that they may be more fit to bear afflictions. No certain argument can be grounded upon this, that a man ſhall come out of affliction, becauſe he is cleanſed, for God chuſes (in ſome caſes) to afflict ſuch moſt, who are moſt cleanſed. The Lord hath as much ſervice from us, while we ſuffer, as while we do his will; Paſſive obedience is higher and harder ſervice then active, and an unclean heart is of the two (though it be fit for neither) more unfit for ſuffering then for doing. Therefore *Job's* friends could not groundedly affirm, that he ſhould be delivered, if he were cleanſed. Indeed if Gods thoughts were like mans thoughts, or if he were tied by ſuch rules as we, we might make ſuch concluſions; but (*Job* concludes) *He is not a man as we are.*

VERS. 32, 33.

For he is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment.
Neithe is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

JOB doth two things in the cloſe of this Chapter.

Firſt, He again renounceth all thought or intendment of anſwering God by any worthineſs or goodneſs in himſelf. A point he had often touched before, it being the grand objection, which his friends brought againſt him, as if his ſpirit were heightned up to the preſumption of a trial or conteſt with God himſelf. *'Tis a duty to clear our ſelves moſt, where and in what we are moſt ſuſpected.*

This he doth in *Verſ.* 32, 33.

He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment.
Neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.

In which words *Job* offers two things to aſſure them that he was far enough from ſuch on engaging with God.

Firſt, From the diſparity of their condition (*verſ.* 32.) *He is not a man as I am.* God is not like me, I am no match for God; and I will not be ſo fool hardy, as to contend with one, who is infinitely above me.

Secondly, Leſt any ſhould think, that though himſelf hand to hand (as we ſpeak) would not venture upon God, yet he might (poſſibly) get ſome friend or ſecond, to interpoſe and umpire it between them, or to determine whether Gods dealings with him were juſt and equal, or no: And ſo (though not alone, yet) by a friend, or a third party to them both, he would try out the matter. No (ſaith *Job* in *verſ.* 33.) not ſo neither, as I alone will not undertake him; ſo *neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both.*

In the two laſt verſes *Job* makes a petition to the Lord deſiring a favourable condeſcenſion, that he would be pleaſed to abate of the preſent height and extremity of his pain, and then he hoped yet that he might anſwer him, though he would not contend with him, anſwer him in reference to his own integrity, about which his friends had charged and wounded him, though not in reference to his own righteouſneſs, about which the Lord might charge and condemn him, *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me, then would I ſpeak and not fear him; but it is not ſo with me.* He concludes with the difference of his ſtate, from what he deſired of God it might be: And he begins with the difference of his perſon from what God himſelf is. It is not with me as I could wiſh, and God is not ſuch an one, nor can be, as I am, and muſt be,

Verſ. 32. For he is not a man as I am, &c.

He doth not ſay, God is not ſuch a man as I am, but God is not a man as I am. One man may ſay unto another man, Thou art not ſuch a man as I am: Every different degree or endowment among men, may bear a man out in ſaying ſo, and pride will prompt a man to ſay ſo, when he is not in degree better, but in kind worſe then other men. Such was the language of the Phariſee (*Luke* 18. 11.) *God I thank thee, I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even as this Publican*: yet no man can ſay to another man, *Thou art not a man as I am.*

But ſeeing God is not a man at all, what is there in this aſſertion of *Job*? *He is not a man as I am.*

The words import a double difference; Firſt, A difference in qualification. Secondly, In nature: here *Job* chiefly intends the difference of quality (which yet in God is his nature) that he was not wiſe, and juſt, and holy, and pure as God.

Non tam eſſentiæ ad eſſentiã quã qualitatis ad qualitatem i. e. ſuæ ad divinam paritatem collatio fit & denotatur. Bold.

Moſes in his ſong (*Exod.* 15. 3.) after the overthrow of the *Egyptians* in the Red Sea, ſpeaks thus, *The Lord is a man of War*; that phraſe intends not a humane nature to God; when he ſaith, *God is a man of War*, he meaneth only this, *God is a great Warrior*. We call a *Ship of War*, a *Man of War*. As a *man of words* ſignifies *an eloquent man*, though with ſome only a *talkative man*: So a *Man of War* ſignifies a famous *Warrior*, or one trained up for War; in which ſence *Saul* ſaith of *Goliah*, that he had *been a man of war from his youth* (1 Sam. 17. 33.) God is a great Warrior, the moſt potent Commander, *The Generalliſſimo of all the Armies in heaven and earth*, *The Lord of hoſts is his Name*, *He is a man of war*, though he is not a man.

Ratio eſt omnium ſuperiorum, etſi juſtus ſim, cum Deo tamen contendens proſonte habeor, quia non eſt par utriuſq; noſtrum conditio. Merc.

Further, when *Job* ſaith, *He is not a man as I am*, he gives us the reaſon of all he had ſaid before, eſpecially of what he had ſaid immediately before, *Though I waſh my ſelf with ſnow-water, and make my hands never ſo clean, yet thou ſhalt plunge me in the ditch*; *For he is not a man as I am*, that is, though I by waſhing my ſelf ſhould think I were all white, and not a ſpot to be ſeen upon me (as hypocrites by covering themſelves, think they are all hid, and not a ſin to be found about them) yet he would throw me into the ditch again, as like to like, dirt to dirt, for he is not a man as I am, he hath other eyes, and thoughts, and wayes then creatures have.

Secondly, As they contain a reaſon, why the Lord would judge him impure, though he ſhould waſh himſelf with ſnow-water; ſo alſo, why the Lord would afflict him, though he ſhould waſh himſelf with ſnow-water, *He is not a man as I am.* As if he had ſaid, Should I ſee a man without ſpot or ſpeck, without blame or fault, yet full of wounds and ſtripes, full of troubles and ſorrows: Should I ſee him afflicted, of whom I could not ſay, He had ſinned, it were beyond my reaſon. But though I cannot, yet the Lord can ſee reaſon to afflict a man in whom I ſee no iniquity. He knows why and wherefore; he may and doth caſt them into the fire in whom I can ſee no droſs. *He is not a man as I am.* God exceeds man in his actings, as much as he doth in his nature; as he is what man is not, ſo he can do what man cannot. *Every thing is in working, as it is in being.* God alwayes works like himſelf, and infinitely above man.

As to the preſent buſineſs, he works above man chiefly in two things.

Firſt, Man cannot juſtly commence a ſuit againſt, or contend with another man, except he be able to charge him with ſome wrong that he hath done him, or lay ſome crime to his charge.

Secondly, A humane Judge cannot condemn or caſt a man, unleſs he firſt legally convict him of his crime. Thus it is with men in their judicial proceedings. He that contends muſt know ſome crime; and the Judge paſſes ſentence as he ſees the crime proved and made good againſt him; but *God is not as man*, he may proceed to judgment without an accuſation, and he may give judgment before the crime be proved; *Job* was ſmitten without cauſe truly alledged, much leſs atteſted. God afflicts, that grace may be proved, not becauſe ſin is proved; *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him.*

Reſpondere, hoc loco, poteſt eſſe verbum forenſe.

Anſwer [im.] It is a judiciary word, or anſwering in judgment; *To juſtifie* is a *Law-term*, and ſo is *to anſwer*; one puts in his Bill, and another his Anſwer; ſome Courts proceed by Bill and Anſwer. If the Lord (ſaith *Job*) ſhould put in his Bill againſt me, I would not put in my Anſwer; *He is not a man as I am that I ſhould anſwer him.*

Or we may take the word [Anſwer] in general, for the returning of ſatisfaction to a queſtion. If the Lord demand a reaſon or an account of me, I could not ſatisfie him. Many, who can give a reaſon of the hope that is in them, cannot give a reaſon of the ſufferings which are upon them: But though they know no particular reaſon why they ſuffer, yet they believe it is not without reaſon. Some holy Martyrs have ſaid to their cruel Perſecutors, urging them with Sophiſtical Queſtions, *We can die, but we cannot diſpute.* And ſo the Saints, under the moſt difficult providences of God, are reſolved to ſay, We can die under them, but we will not diſpute them. He is not a man that we ſhould anſwer him in what he ſpeaks or doth. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *The conſideration, that God is above man, is enough to humble and ſilence man.*

No man is proud in the preſence of another whom he thinks to be his better. The ſight of greater beauty, keeps down pride of beauty. *Pride cannot live in the eye of that which is above the reaſon of it in our ſelves*: Yea, he that finds he is but equal, or upon even ground with others, can hardly be proud of any thing in himſelf. While we ſuppoſe our gifts or knowledge, but like thoſe of other men, we are not lifted up in the opinion of them. Now, If equality check pride, a thought of ſuperiority muſt needs kill it. And if the common ſuperiority of a man kills our pride, how much more doth the knowledge of that ſuper-excellent ſuperiority which is in God? Doth not the beauty and dignity of God, obſcure the luſtre and darken the beauty of all creatures? Is the ſhining of the Stars any thing, when the Sun appears? Much leſs is the holineſs, ſtrength, and goodneſs of man any thing, when the goodneſs, holineſs, and ſtrength of God ſtand forth or appear: we muſt ſay we are nothing, when we ſee what God is. The ſight of him, in whom nothing of our imperfection can be found, cannot but humble us in the ſight of all our perfections. Hence, when the Lord would abaſe man, and extol himſelf, he removes all of man from himſelf, (1 *Sam.* 15. 29.) *God is not a man that he ſhould repent*; Men are full of repentings, and that they are ſo, ſhews them to be men. There is a repentance which is a grace of God, and there is a repentance which is an infirmity in man. By the former, men turn to God from that ſin, in which they were, or have done. By the latter, men turn both from God and man in what they promiſe or purpoſe either to be or do. They are this day of one mind, and to morrow of another; to day they love, and to morrow they hate; now they will, and anon they will not. They are in and out, no man knows where to find them; but God is ever the ſame, he changes not. *Elihu* ſends a challenge to all teachers in the name of God, *Who teacheth like him?* (Chap. 36. 22.) God himſelf challengeth *Job* in his own name, (Chap. 40. 9.) *Haſt thou an arm like God? Or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him? To whom will you liken me* (ſaith God, when he would bring down the pride of the creature) *To whom will you liken me, and make me equal, and compare me that we may be like?* (Iſa. 46. 5.) Why do ye exalt your ſelves? Why have ye ſuch high thoughts of your ſelves? Can ye find out any to compare with me? Or can ye make a parallel of me among all my creatures?

All the unevenneſs of man towards God, ariſes from preſumptuous thoughts of his unevenneſs with God. Take a taſte in two or three particulars.

Firſt, Man grows into a boldneſs of ſinning againſt God, becauſe he thinks God is but ſo holy as man is; he conceits that which ſuits his ſpirit, ſuits Gods Spirit alſo: This cauſeth him to do many things moſt unſuitable to the Spirit of God (*Pſalm* 50. 18.) *When thou ſaweſt a thief, then thou conſenteſt with him, and thou haſt been partaker with the adulterer: thou giveſt thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit*, &c. *Theſe things haſt thou done.* And what encouraged or hardned him to do theſe things? The next words give us an account of that, *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf*; that

that is, thou didst frame conceptions of me according to the *Idæa* of thine own brain, or the model of thine own heart. Thou wast well pleased with such filthiness and abominations, therefore thou didst conclude, I would not be displeased with them. The true reason why most men make nothing of evil, is, because they make God nothing in goodness (as to that point) beyond themselves; this doth not trouble our spirits, we see no hurt in what we do: Surely then God sees no hurt in it, neither is his Spirit troubled with our doings.

Secondly, Boldness in pleading with, and complaining against God, when he doth what likes not us, arises from thoughts that we are like him. None would quarrel what God doth in cutting out and proportioning their own estates to them; or in casting down the humble and meek, in exalting the proud and vile, if they did fully believe God had as much right and reason as they see he hath power to do what he doth. Man draws God into his own compass, and then wonders to find him work so out of compass. If I were as God, saith one I would do thus and thus; surely, God is as I am, he hath such thoughts as I have, saith another, then why doth he thus? Till we have fully studied this Point, *That God is not as we are*, we shall never rest fully satisfied in what God doth, if he doth what we would not.

Thirdly, Unbelief springs from the same muddy fountain; unbelief of the power of God to deliver us when we are in outward straights and dangers; and unbelief of the mercy of God to pardon us, when we are in spiritual straights and desertions. What's the reason why, when great dangers encompass us, we cannot believe deliverances? Do we not make God like to our selves? Do we not shorten his hand to our own measure, and think it cannot be done, because men cannot do it? And for mercy about the pardon of sin; man being awakened, sees how he hath provoked God, sin stares upon his face, and he finds out many aggravations upon his sin; then he begins to collect thus, certainly if a man had so provoked his neighbour, he could never pardon or forgive him; can then such sins as these be forgiven by God? Mans mercy cannot reach so high as this, therefore surely the mercies of God will not. We have a very gracious promise, backt with a caution, to prevent these jealousies (*Isa.* 55.6,7.) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Now, as when God calls upon man to obey his will, and do his Commandments, he is apt to say, at least in his heart, the duties are too many, and the burdens too great to be born: So when the Lord calleth upon wicked men, the worst of wicked men to repent or turn unto him, and he will abundantly pardon, or he will multiply to pardon (as it is in the original) they are ready to object, what, pardon such as we are? we are too filthy and vile for washing, Surely he will not pardon us: These mercies are too many for us, and these favours too great for us to receive. Well (saith God) I preconceive your conceits of me, ye are measuring me by your selves, ye think it cannot be done, because ye cannot do it; your hearts are too narrow to pass by so many, so great provocations; therefore ye say mine is too narrow also. Do ye thus measure me, the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? I would have you know, *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your wayes my wayes; for as the heavens are higher then the earth, so are my wayes higher then your wayes, and my thoughts then your thoughts*, vers. 8, 9. As if he had said, your thoughts are as much below my mercy, as your wayes were below my holiness. Cease then from doubting what I have promised, as I would have you cease from doing what I have forbidden. Your unbelief that I will not pardon your sin, dishonours me as much as your disobedience did in committing sin. Till we believe God is holy above us, we fear not to sin; and till we believe God is merciful above us, we cannot believe he will pardon our sin.

Thus we see how the lifting up of our selves in our thoughts to an equality, or to some similitude with God, or the drawing down of God to an equality, or some similitude with our selves, is the ground and cause of all our unequal carriage towards God, of our boldness in sinning, of our boldness in pleading with, and complaining against him, of our extream unbelief in the point of deliverance from troubles, or of the pardon of our sins.

Secondly observe, *There is no comparison between God and man.*

He is not a man as I am. Man is like to man, face answers face, and heart answers heart, strength answers strength, and wit answers wit. *Solomon* concludes this (*Eccles.* 6.10.) *That which hath been, is named already, and it is known that it is man.* A man is but a man, be he never so great in worldly wealth or honour; as he bears the name, so he hath the nature of man still: *Nor can he contend with him that is mightier then he, i. e.* with God. If he venture beyond his line, or move out of the sphear of his activity, if he would act more then a man, he shall quickly find that he is but man; *He cannot contend with him that is mightier then he.* Man was indeed made in the likeness of God, *Gen.* 1.27. *In the image of God created he him*; yet we must not say God is like man; he is not in our image. God put some impressions of himself upon man, but he took no impressions of man upon himself; *He is not a man as I am.* He hath given us some of his own excellencies, but he hath not taken upon him any of our weaknesses. God hath honoured man to give him somewhat of himself, but God should dishonour himself to take any thing of man. Thus man is in the likeness of God; but God is not in the likeness of man. Take heed of such thoughts. *It is as dangerous to frame a likeness or a similitude of God to our hearts, as to frame a likeness or a similitude of God upon a wall* (Exod. 15. 11.) *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the gods?* That is, there is none like unto thee: None amongst the gods, neither among those who are falsly called gods, the Idols of the Heathen, or among those who are truly called *gods* (for God calls them so) the Angels in heaven, and Magistrates here upon earth: among these truly called *gods*, there is none like the true God, much less is there any among the meer pure mortals, like unto the immortal God. *Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?* So (*Micah* 7. 18.) *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? Who is a God like unto thee?* Not only is there no man that can pardon as God, but there is no god that can pardon like God; he puts it upon that: *Who is a god like unto thee?* Not as if he granted that there were any other gods besides the Lord, but to meet with the thoughts of men, with those sinful principles and conceits which lodge in man, and make other gods. To say of God only this, *He is God*, is to say all; we cannot say more good of God, then to call him God; as we cannot say more evil of sin, then to call it sin; when we have called it sin, we have called it all. The Apostle (*Rom.* 7. 13.) puts that upon it, as the worst he could say of it, *Sin that it might appear sin.* We cannot represent it in a worse likeness then its own. All men say they sin, but *sin appears sin* to very few. And when the Apostle would put a disgraceful title or epithete upon sin, he invests it with its own name, *sinful sin.* Thus to the point in hand, we cannot call God more, then when we call him God: Nothing can be predicated of him better then himself. When God appears to be God, all excellency appears. All men (almost) acknowledge God, but God appears to very few. 'Tis but little of God that can be known; and there are not many who know that little; very many know but little of that little, and most know nothing of it at all.

Thus also to say that man is man, is proof and aggravation enough of his depraved condition (*Hos.* 6.7.) *They like men have transgressed the Covenant*; they have done like themselves. When we see men vain, and wicked, and sinful, and covetous, and earthly, we may say of them, they have done like men; and how wondrous and glorious things soever God doth, we can but say, *He hath done like God.*

As a consectary from the whole, take this caution, *If God is not a man as we are, then God must never be measured by the rule and line of man.* Man hath not line enough to measure God by. The Lord exceeds man in all; he is not only above mans infirmities, but he is above all his perfections. The Lord is not only not weak as man is weak, or unholy as man is unholy, but the Lord is not strong as man is strong, nor holy as man is holy, nor just as man is just,

nor

nor wiſe as man is wiſe: Then, man muſt not venture to judge of the wiſdom of God by his own wiſdom; or of the juſtice, holineſs and ſtrength of God by his own ſtrength, holineſs and juſtice. Man is not able to meaſure God in any of his Attributes; and in three things eſpecially man ſhould take heed of meaſuring God in his actings.

First, In the great work of election. In this man is very apt to be medling and to be meaſuring God by the line of natural reaſon, or of civil juſtice: The Apoſtles diſpute beats down this preſumption, *Rom.* 9. We read there how man begins to buſtle and ſtartle at that great concluſion (*verſ.* 18.) *Therefore he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.* If it be thus, ſaith he, if every mans ſtate be peremptorily determined by the will of God, if he loves and hates before men have done either good or evil, *why doth he find fault? for who hath reſiſted his will?* What need any trouble themſelves about the way, when their end is under an unmoveable decree? Why ſhould any ſtrive to forſake evil and do good on earth, ſeeing it was reſolved in heaven what ſhould become of them before they had done either good or evil? Thus the pride and ignorance of man cavils at the decrees of God. But ſtay (ſaith the Apoſtle) *O man, who art thou that repliеſt againſt God?* He is not a man as thou art: he hath done what he hath done by virtue of his juſt Prerogative, and therefore he is not unjuſt in doing it. Beſides, if ye will needs argu from reaſon, then ſee how common reaſon confutes this Blaſphemy: *Hath not the Potter power over the clay, of the ſame lump to make one veſſel unto honour, and another unto diſhonour?* What if God hath done thus, and what if he will do thus? What haſt thou to do with it? Know thy place, and keep thy rank; art not thou clay in the hand of the Potter?

Secondly, Meaſure not God by your own line in his providential diſpenſations: He may have a method of his own in giving or taking away, in pulling down or building up, in wounding or healing, in abaſing man; or in raiſing him, becauſe all is is own. *He who hath a right to all, can wrong none; and he who poſſeſſeth all, is debtor to none.*

Thirdly, Meaſure not God by your own line in the matter of your ordinary Approvings: And that two wayes.

First, Do it not in your approving of things. And,

Secondly, Do it not in your approving of perſons. Take heed firſt of meaſuring God by your ſelves in your approving of things; as if becauſe you approve it, therefore God ſurely doth: This miſconceit hath been the cauſe of almoſt all, and almoſt all the cauſe of all the Superſtition, Idolatry and Will-worſhip rhat ever was in the world. Man thinks God muſt needs like any thing which is done to his honour; hence becauſe the adorning and adoring of Images, are directed to the honour of God, therefore man concludes, ſurely God likes them. Whereas he is never honoured but when he is obeyed. As no man hath been his Counſellor, to direct him what to do with us; ſo no man can be his Counſellor, to direct him what to require of us. *Not that which we commend is approved, but that which the Lord commends.*

Secondly, Take heed of this in your approbation or eſtimation of perſons: *Not he whom you commend is approved, but he whom the Lord commends.* We ſhould judge of men as we believe God judges. Or (to come nearer) let no man think himſelf is approved of God, becauſe he is approved by himſelf. *Many flatter themſelves in their own eyes, till their iniquity is found to be hateful* (Pſal. 36. 2.) Chriſt intimates this, ſpeaking to the Phariſees (*Luke* 16. 15.) *Ye are they that juſtifie your ſelves*; ye have high thoughts of your own worth, and glory in your own excellencies, and ye think God hath high thoughts of you, that he glories in you too; but let me tell you, *That which is highly eſteemed amongſt men, is an abomination in the ſight of God.* We are the men, ſaid the Phariſees, ours are excellent gifts; thus they admired and doted upon themſelves: but the Lord found them out, and what they highly eſteemed, he abominated. Some write and ſubſcribe their own Letters teſtimonial, and get no hand to them but their own. *Not he who commends himſelf, is approved, but he whom the Lord commends:* Such ſhall find, that their own good word will do them no good; *He is not a man as they are. He,* ſaith *Job, is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him.*

And we ſhould come together in judgment.

It hath been ſhewed what *Judgment* is at the nineteenth verſe of this Chapter, and at the third verſe of the eighth Chapter, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it, only as to the matter in hand, *Judgment* may be taken three wayes.

First, For pleading, which is but preparatory to Judgment, the opening and arguing of the caſe or fact under trial. *1. Diſceptatio & mutuus λογος & rationum.*

Secondly, For the deciſion and determination of the caſe according to Law, or the award of Judgment. *2. Juris definitio.*

Thirdly, For the inflicting and executing ſentence according to the judgment awarded. *3. Exactio caſtigationis & debiti.*

Here *Job* chiefly intends the firſt; *He is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment,* that is, that I ſhould plead, argue and debate my matters with him before any other Judge: God and man cannot come together to be judged; for all mankind muſt receive their judgment from God. Or nearer the Hebrew (which ſuits the former clauſe better) *He is not a man as I am, that we ſhould come alike to judgment*: No, we ſhould be very unlike, very unequally matched in judgment. Man and man, who are upon even terms in their nature, may yet be upon ſuch uneven terms in their condition, that they cannot come alike to judgment. A poor man cannot grapple with a rich man, nor a mean man with the honourable. Now, if they who are of the ſame nature, cannot come alike in judgment, becauſe of a diſparity in their condition, how ſhall they who differ not only in condition, but in nature? Can God and man, can poor, wretched and miſerable man, come alike in judgment with the great and glorious God? And ſo the meaning of *Job* may be thus conceived, *If I had only a man (like my ſelf) to deal with, then I would venture a trial with him at any ſeat of Judgment or Court of Juſtice; but he is not a man as I am, much leſs ſuch a man as I am. How ſhall I ſet my ſelf with him to be judged, whenas himſelf is the Judge of all, and is himſelf judged of none?* *Ut veniamus pariter in judicium.*

Hence obſerve, *Man is not able to contend with God in judgment.*

Who is like me, and who will appoint me a time? or (nearer the Letter) *Who will convent me in judgment? Who is that Shepherd that will ſtand before me?* Iſa 49.14. Man muſt come before God in judgment. *We muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt* (2 Cor. 5. 10.) None ſhall eſcape his Tribunal. But man cannot ſtand before God in judgment. The wicked cannot ſtand at all before him in judgment, becauſe they ſtand upon their own bottom. The righteous dare not ſtand before him in judgment upon their own bottom; if they ſhould, themſelves and their cauſe would quickly fall together.

There are ſeven conſiderations which tell us, that we cannot come together, much leſs alike together with God in judgment.

First, He is of ſuch ſtrength, that none can wreſt themſelves out of his hand: No power can daunt him.

Secondly, He is of ſuch ſincerity, that bribes cannot corrupt him, nor can gifts put out his eyes.

Thirdly, He is of ſuch wiſdom, that none can over-reach him, nor can our wit entangle him.

Fourthly, He is ſo knowing, that none of our ſins or failings, no, not the leaſt of them, are ſecrets to, or hidden from him.

Fifthly, He is ſo holy, that he cannot bear with the leaſt ſin, and ſo juſt, that he cannot but puniſh it, unleſs he receive ſatisfaction for it.

Sixthly, He cannot be a party in judgment, for he is the ſupream Judge, and there is no appealing from his ſentence.

Seventhly, He is the laſt, yea, an everlaſting Judge, and therefore there is no repealing of his ſentence. Who is able to contend with him whom no power can daunt, no bribes corrupt, no wit over-reach, who knows all our ſins, and will ſpare none of them, from whoſe ſentence there is no appealing, and whoſe ſentence cannot be repealed? There is no Judge above God, therefore we cannot appeal from him; there is none to come after

ter God, therefore what he hath judged, cannot be repealed.

Job having thus waved and profeſſed againſt contending with God in judgment, proceedeth in the thirty third verſe, to ſhew that there is none to whom his caſe might be referred for arbitration. There are two wayes by which controverſies are ended.

Firſt, By the Legal Sentence of the publick Judge.

Secondly, By the moderation of a private Friend. This latter *Job* means, when he ſaith,

Verſe 33. **Neither is there any Dayeſ-man betwixt us, that can lay hand upon us both.**

Ἦθ ἦν ὁ μεσίτης ἡμῶν καὶ ἔλεγχων. Sept.

The *Septuagint* render theſe words as a wiſh, or as a prayer; *O that there were a Dayeſ-man*, or *a Mediator betwixt God and me, that might lay his hand upon us both!* But the Original bears it clearly in the Negative.

Neither is there any Dayeſ-man betwixt us.

מוכיח אין ביננו *Arguens*: Heb. *Non eſt arguens inter nos, vel increpans.*

The word which we tranſlate [Dayeſ-man,] cometh from a root which ſignifieth to argue or reprove, and ſo ſome render it here; *Neither is there any Arguer or Reprover*; none to ſet the matter right between God and me; none to ſtate the queſtion between us, none to reprove the Lord, if I ſhould ſay, or if by the common rule of Juſtice it ſhould appear he hath done me wrong. The word is uſed in that ſence (*Gen.* 31. 24.) Where *Jacob* tells his Uncle *Laban*, *The Lord rebuked thee yeſternight*; the Lord himſelf came as an Umpire, as a Dayeſ-man betwixt *Jacob* and *Laban*, and rebuked *Laban* for his hard and unjuſt thoughts of, and intentions concerning *Jacob*: *Take heed* (ſaith God) *thou ſpeak not unto* Jacob *either good or bad*, that is, do not threaten or perſwade him to return, thou wilt repent it if thou doſt. Thus alſo the Lord appeared, as a *Dayeſ-man* between his people of old and the great ones of the world (*Pſal.* 105. 14.) *He ſuffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he rebuked Kings for their ſakes.* God is alwayes able to, and often doth interpoſe for, and vindicate his people from the oppreſſions of men. *'Tis coſtly medling with the Saints, Kings may get a rebuke for it: Yea, Kings may ſmart, and Kingdoms ſhake for it.*

Fere omnes interpretes hunc verſum de Mediatore ſeu Arbitro, quem juriſconſulti vocant Sequeſtrem, intelligunt; quaſi Job optaſſet ordinarium judicem præcedenti verſiculo, mediatorem verò ſeu arbitrum hoc verſu.

What a *Dayeſ-man* is, is ſo plain and well known by the cuſtom and uſage of moſt places, that it needs little explication. We in our Language, ſometimes call him an *Umpire*, ſometimes an *Arbitrator*, ſometimes a *Mediator*, ſometimes a *Referree*; and in ſome Countreyes with us, when a queſtion ariſes between Neighbours, concerning which they are unwilling to ſpend money and time in Suits of Law, they ſay, *We will refer it unto men*; which kind of ſpeaking ſeems to allude to the Title of Magiſtrates and Judges, whom the Scripture calleth gods; and when a buſineſs is brought before them, it may be ſaid to be referred or put to God. In oppoſition to which, when it is taken up by the Umpirage of friends, it is ſaid to be referred or *put to men*. We in our Engliſh Tongue, call ſuch *Dayeſmen*, either becauſe they beſtowed a dayes pains upon the ending of a buſineſs, or becauſe they were obliged to end it by a ſet day; whereas Judges may take more liberty to themſelves. Yet ſome of the Greeks expreſs all mans judgment by this word, *Mans-day*, becauſe certain dayes were appointed for Judicature. The Apoſtle *Paul* uſes the ſame phraſe (1 *Cor.* 4. 3.) in oppoſition to the *Lords-day*, the great day of Judgment, to which he there appeals, from all the dayes ſet for mans judgment in this world. The Latines call *Dayeſ-men*, *Sequeſtres*; and Criticks tell us, that as the *Dayeſman* is expreſſed by a word in the Hebrew, whoſe root ſignifies to rebuke, becauſe a *Dayeſ-man* had power to rebuke and reprove him that had done the wrong; So he is called *Sequeſter* in the Latine, from a word that ſignifies to follow, becauſe of a power committed to him, that which way ſoever he ſhould ſtate and determine the buſineſs between the parties, they were bound to follow and ſubmit to his award; or, becauſe he was ſuppoſed a man of ſuch wiſdom, faithfulneſs and integrity, that both parties might ſafely follow him. Hence he was called *Sequeſter*, that is, one whom they muſt or might follow and abide by his ſentence. To aſſure which, the parties uſually engaged themſelves under penalties (of valuable dammage to the buſineſs in queſtion) to ſtand to his arbitration.

Ideo Sequeſter appellatur quod ejus qui electus ſit, utraque pars fidem ſequatur. Gel. *l.* 20. *c.* 10. *Sequeſter eſt qui errantibus medius intervenit, qui apud Græcos μέσος dicitur, apud quem pignora deponi ſolent, à ſequendo dictus, quod ejus fidem utraq; pars ſequatur.* Iſid. *l.* 10. *Etym.*

There are five things (by which we may more diſtinctly underſtand *Job*'s meaning) belonging to a *Dayeſ-man*, or an *Umpire*.

Firſt, He muſt be agreed upon and choſen by both parties; for unleſs he be accepted by both of them, he can have no power to determine for or againſt either of them.

Secondly, He muſt hear both ſides ſpeak, and alledge what they can for themſelves, before he determines.

Thirdly, He muſt beat out the matter by interrogatories and queſtions; he muſt not ſtay upon the bare narrative of the perſons.

Fourthly, He muſt have power to conclude and determine of the differences betwixt them.

Fifthly, Both parties muſt be bound, at leaſt by promiſe, to ſtand to the determination which he ſhall make. Such an one is a *Dayeſ-man* among men; who is alſo called a *Compromiſer*, and his work, the *Compromiſing* of a matter, becauſe as he is elected by the mutual conſent, ſo confirmed by the mutual promiſe of thoſe who are at variance, to reconcile them, and take up their differences. Now, ſaith *Job*, as there is no *Judge*, ſo there is no *Dayeſ-man* betwixt me and God,

Talis Judex vocatur Compromiſſarius quaſi ex compromiſſo à litigatoribus ſumpto.

That might lay his hand upon us both.

Some underſtand the words [*upon us both*] of *Job* and his Friends; *There is not a Dayeſ-man betwixt me and my Friends*, not one that can judge and conſider of my innocency and their charge: As if he had ſaid, *Though I will not plead it out with God, yet I dare refer the controverſie betwixt you and me to an equal Umpire, I dare go to the trial of my innocency with you, but I ſee no Dayeſman; you are all parties in the buſineſs, and I know none of that will ſtand between us indifferently and unprejudiced.*

But the Text refers clearly to God, *There is no Dayeſman*, none to arbitrate the matter between God and me, *None to lay his hand upon us both.*

To lay on hands is diverſly uſed in Scripture. The hand ſignifies all power: Hence, to lay the hands, is to put forth power; and to do ſo, is taken ſometimes in an ill ſence, and ſometimes in a good ſence.

Firſt, In an ill ſence; and ſo to lay the hands, is to ſtrike or ſmite even to death, *Gen.* 22. 12. *Lay not thine hand upon the Child, upon Iſaac*, that is, do not ſlay him. We have the ſame expreſſion (*Gen.* 37. 22.) when *Reuben* pleaded for *Joſeph*, that he ſhould not be murdered; *Shed no blood; but caſt him into this pit, and lay no hand upon him*; that is, do not deſtroy him. This laying on of the hands notes a violent act, either proceeding from holy zeal or juſtice, as in *Nehemiah*, who threatens the prophaners of the Sabbath, *If ye do ſo again, I will lay hands on you*; or from malice, as in the chief Prieſts, *who ſought to lay hands on Chriſt the Lord of the Sabbath* (Luke 20. 19.) And Chriſt propheſying what the condition of his Diſciples and of Believers ſhould be, what uſage they ſhould find in the world, tells them (*Mat.* 21. 12.) *They ſhall lay their hands upon you, and perſecute you.* Thus *Haman* thought ſcorn *to lay his hands on* Mordecai *alone* (Eſth. 3. 6.) He had a deſign to take revenge upon the whole Nation of the *Jews*.

Secondly, To lay on the hands, is taken in a good ſence; and ſo I find it uſed three wayes.

Firſt, In Benedictions, *Mark* 10. 16. *Chriſt took up the young Children in his arms, and laid his hands upon them, and bleſſed them.* As under the Law, *Lev.* 1. 4. & 4. 15. The people or the Elders laying their hands upon the Beaſt, which was to be offered in Sacrifice, intimated the laying of all their ſins by faith upon Chriſt, of whom that Sacrifice was a type. So Chriſt laying his hands upon thoſe Children, implied the beſtowing and powring out of mercy upon them, in the pardoning of their ſins, and the furniſhing of them with the Graces of his Spirit. The ſame action uſed by the Apoſtles, in the name of Chriſt, had the ſame ſignification and effect. When *Peter* and *John* came to *Samaria*, and ſaw what work the Word had made among that people, *They laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts 8. 17. *Paul* likewiſe laid his hands on the Diſciples at *Epheſus*, and they received the holy Ghoſt, *Acts* 19. 6. It was uſed alſo as a ſign of healing,

Mark 16. 18. *They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.* And (*Mat.* 9. 18.) the Ruler saith unto Christ, *My Daughter is sick, but come and lay thy hands on her, and she shall be healed.* Some interpret the Rulers desire of this sign, to be as a sign he had faith, so also that his faith was weak. The Centurion (concerning whom Christ testified, *I have not found so great faith, no not in* Israel) *desired Christ but to speak the word only, and his servant should be healed* (Mat. 8. 8.) As a word is the proper object of faith, so faith acts most properly, when it rests and lives upon a *word only*. Signes are mercies to the weak, and they are witnesses of our weakness. *Signes are but Crutches and Spectacles to help the lameness and dim-sightedness of faith.* But to our Text.

Secondly, Laying on of hands was used in the ordination or solemn setting of a man apart unto an Office, *The Children of Israel*, that is, some of the chief of them (under the Ceremonial Law) *laid their hands upon the Levites* (*Num.* 8. 18) Which was either a testification that they gave up all carnal and worldly interests in them, and bequeathed them wholly unto God; or an approbation of their Office, and of the Levites ministration in it on their behalf. The same Ceremony (for the matter) was continued in the sending forth of Gospel-officers. *Neglect not the gift which is in thee, which was given thee by propheſie, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*, was *Paul*'s counsel to *Timothy*, in reference to himself (1 *Tim.* 4.14.) And in reference to others (1 *Tim.* 5.22.) *Lay hands suddenly on no man*, And *Paul* and *Barnabas* being immediately designed by God for a special work of the Ministry, to which they wer called before, were sent away with *fasting and prayer, and the laying on of hands*, Acts 13. 3.

Impositio manuum potestatis signum, q. d. *quæ nunquam nostrum valet manu imposita coercere.* Mer. *Tenere nemo est ille componere, & controversia abhorres ad fœdus concordiamque adducere. Pacificatoris effigies delineatur ad alternatum litigatium manum alternatim extendens, ut junctis dextris pacis fœdus iniretur.* Quintil. *Quibus nulla fœderis servati fides mendacem dextram habere dicuntur.*

Thirdly, The hand specially signifies civil power, *Psal.* 89. 25. *I will set his hand also in the Sea, and his right hand in the floods*, that is, I will give him power over them who dwell by the Seas. And then *laying on of hands* implies the authority which one man hath over another, to determine or resolve a Case, or to settle a business between them, and that is the intendment of it here; *There is no Dayesman that might lay his hand upon us both*, that is, who may authoritatively decide and make an end of this controversie. To impose the hand, was to compose the difference. I find a threefold posture of the Dayes-man observed in the action of his hand.

First, He put forth his hands towards the parties, desiring them to join hands, or (as we speak) to shake hands and be friends. Joining hands signifies consent (*Exod.* 23. 1.) *Thou shalt not put thy hand with the wicked*, that is, thou shalt make no agreement with him. Some of the Ancients describe the *Pacificator* or *Dayes-man*, having his hands closed into the hands of those between whom he was to make peace: Hence they who are unfaithful in covenant, are said to have a *lying* or a *deceitful right hand.* The Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of a false worshipper, who had engaged his faith to serve Idols, concludes, *He feedeth of ashes, a deceived heart hath turned him aside that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?* (Isa. 44. 20.) or (as other translate) *Is there not a lie at my right hand?* Noting, that the Idol to which he had given his heart and hand, would deceive him most, when he trusted most to it.

Secondly, The *Dayes-man* eying the temper or distemper, both of the Complainant and Defendant, laid his hand gently now upon one, and then upon another, using his best Rhetorick to perswade, yea, to conjure them to peace and quietness: Sir, said he to one, I beseech you to accept of these terms and conditions; 'tis you that have done the wrong, and trespassed against your neighbour: and presently he bespake the other, that he would pass by the offence, heal the breach, forget the injury, or take reasonable satisfaction for his dammage.

Cum quadam attentione, studio & industria ponere. Arbiter medius inter litigantes benignè manum super hunc nunc super illum ponere solebat, dicens, Tum hoc hallucinatis tu vero bene egisti, sed hoc & hoc facere non debuisti. Bold.

Thirdly, The *Dayes-man* giving sentence, laid his hand upon the head of him whom he found faulty and to have done the wrong, in token of condemnation. Among the Ceremonies of consecrating the Levitical Priests, this is given in command (*Exod.* 29. 10.) *Thou shalt cause a Bullock to be brought before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and* Aaron *and his Sons shall put their hands upon the head of the Bullock:* And in the Rules given concerning the Burnt Offerings of the people, it is directed, that the *bringer shall lay his hand upon the head of the burnt offering*, &c. (*Lev.* 1. 4.) Now this laying of the hands upon the head of the Sacrifice, implied the laying of their sins upon the head of the Sacrifice, and that, the laying of their sins upon the head of Christ, on whom the Prophet assures us, *the Lord hath laid the iniquity of us all* (Isa. 53. 6.) And as the laying on of the hand upon the head of the beast, transferred their sins upon him, so likewise that sentence of death and condemnation which was due to their sin, and was presently executed by slaying of the Beast; which was a lively type of Christ (the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world) dying under a sentence of condemnation in the stead of sinners.

Lastly, The laying on of the hand notes the keeping of the parties in compass; for contenders use to be very violent one against another.

Thus to the present Text. The laying on of the hand signifies only the composing or compounding of a difference. When *Job* complained or affirmed only, *There is no Dayes-man betwixt us*, his meaning was, that there was no man who could take up the matter betwixt God and him, there was none such to be found; for he speaks not only (*de facto*) that there was no *Dayes-man*; but (*de impossibili*) as of a thing which was impossible to be: As if he had said, *I would gladly refer this matter to arbitration; but the Lord, who is engaged with me, is above the arbitration of men or Angels: Creatures may not meddle with any of his matters further then they are called, and I know not of any whom God hath called to, or appointed over this matter.*

Non potest dari Deo mihique simul litigantibus arbiter: quasi in Deum eque ac in me potestate exercendo.

Hence observe First, *When Controversies arise, the rule of Love bids us refer our differences to the determination of Brethren.*

Job speaks according to the usage of those dayes; men did not presently run to Law, and call one another before the Judge, they had *Dayes-men* and *Umpires* to determine matters between them. Thus *Jacob* bespeaks *Laban* (Gen. 31. 37.) *Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy houshold-stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.* The Apostle (1 *Cor.* 6. 1, 5.) is very angry with the *Corinthians*, because they were so hasty to go to Law; *Verily there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to Law one with another.* What! is there not a *Dayes-man* among you? Is there not a man among you fit to be an *Arbitrator?* *I speak to your shame* (saith *Paul*) *Is it so that there is not a wise man among you, no not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to Law with brother, and that before the unbelievers.* The sin of these *Corinthians* was the greater, because the Judges were heathen; yet such contendings bear a proportion of sinfulness, though Judges be Christians. To bring every matter to the Judgment-Seat, when (possibly) a Brother or a Friend might take up the matter, is a transgression against the Law of Love. We should rather labour after reconcilements, then Suits in Law, which are a cause, not only of trouble and expence, but of great breaches and heart-burnings among Friends and Brethren. We have a proverbial speech among us, *A lean Arbitration is better then a fat Judgment.* It is better to the Parties, they shall get more by it; the charge of obtaining Right by Law, many times eating out all, and sometimes more then all, alwayes a considerable part of that which the Law gives us as our Right. We use to say to dissenters, *Be friends, the Law is costly.* 'Tis very costly to most mens purses, and to some mens Consciences. *'Tis rare if a man wrongs not his soul by seeking the rights of his Credit or Estate.*

In proverbio est, potiores esse iniquas pacis conditiones optima judicis sententia.

Secondly observe, That, *No creature can umpire the business betwixt God and man.*

There is a twofold reason of it.

First, He that is our Umpire is supposed wiser then our selves. They who cannot agree, need more wisdom then their own to work their agreement. But there is no creature wise as God, yea, there is no creature wise but God; who is therefore called *The God only wise.* God is best able to judge of his own actions. No man hath been his *Counsellor* (Rom. 11. 34.) much less shall any man be his Judge: Men sometimes abound too much in their own sence; but God must abound in his. His will is the rule of all, much

Oportet ut in judice sit altior sapientia, quæ sit quasi regula, ad quam examinantur dicta utriusque partis.

much more his wisdom; or rather his wisdom is the rule of all, because his will is; his will and wisdom being the same, and of the same extent, both infinite.

Oportet ut in judice sit major potestas, quæ possit utrãq; partem comprimere.

Secondly, He that is a *Dayes-man* or *Umpire*, must (according to the rules before spoken of) have power to compel the parties to submit or stand to what he shall determine. But as we cannot lay any restraint upon God, from doing what he will; so we cannot lay any constraint upon him to do what we will. Who shall force the Lord? To whom hath he given an *assumpsit*, or ingaged himself under a penalty to perform what he shall award? The Lord doth whatsoever he pleaseth both in Heaven and Earth, and he will do no more then he pleaseth. Perswasion cannot move him, much less can power compel him. He that is above all in power, cannot be dealt with any way, but by perswasion. And he who is above all in wisdom, cannot be perswaded by any against his own will.

There is indeed a *Dayes-man* betwixt God and man, but God himself hath appointed him. God hath referred the differences betwixt himself and man, unto *Jesus Christ*; and (his own good will and free grace moving him thereunto) he stands engaged in the bonds of his everlasting truth and faithfulness to perform what *Jesus Christ*, as Mediator, should ask for us: unto him we may safely commit our cause and our souls, with that assurance of the Apostle (*2 Tim.* 1. 12.) *I know whom I have believed, and am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* Christ, God-man is Umpire between God and man; what we trust him with shall not miscarry: he will make our Cause good, and our persons acceptable before God at that great day. It is infinite mercy, when we were neither able to manage our own cause, nor to find out any in Heaven or Earth who could, that then God himself should find out one, in wisdom and power like himself, one who *thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, to be our *Dayes-man*. Many of the Ancients interpret this Text, either as *Job's* desire and prayer, that Christ would come in the flesh, *O that there were a Dayes-man betwixt us*: or as a prophesie of Jesus Christ, to come as our *Dayes-man* in the flesh, *There is no Dayes-man yet, but a Dayes-man shall come.* The sence is pious, but the context will not bear it: In *Chap.* 16. *v.* 21. and *Chap.* 17. *v.* 3. We shall find *Job* speaking clearly of the Mediator Jesus Christ, and of his great work of atonement between God and man. But here he seems to keep to the present controversie, about the business of affliction, not of salvation.

Take two or three consectaries flowing from the whole matter.

First, *Job* at the lowest speaks highly of God, and humbly of himself.

The greater his afflictions were, the purer was his language.

He was not able to grapple with God, and there was none to be found who could umpire the matter betwixt them. *The will of God is the supreme Law.* What he will do with us, we must be content he should. The secrets of his providence are beyond our search, and his judgments above our reach.

Secondly, *The greatness and transcendency of God should keep us low in our own thoughts.*

Our knowledge of God is the present cure of our own pride. The knowledge of God causeth us to know our selves; and that which makes us know our selves, cannot but make us low in our selves. Though a proud man is commonly said, *To know himself too much*, yet the truth is, he doth not know himself enough, no, not at all, as he should know himself. *Many are proud of, and with their knowledge, yet pride is the daughter of ignorance.* Some pride lodges in every mans heart, because more then some ignorance doth. *Job* had some of both, in his; why doth he lay the thought of the infinite glory and soveraignty of God so often to his heart, but to keep down or to cure the swellings of his heart.

Thirdly, *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God.*

He is not a man as we are (we are not able to match him) *and there is* (among men) *no Dayes man betwixtus. David* made it his election (*2 Sam.* 24.) *To fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of man.* And it is best for us to fall into the hands of God (as *David* put himself into his hands) with respect to his great mercies. But wo unto us, if we fall into his hands, as contenders with his great power. Shall we thus provoke the Lord? Are we stronger then he? It is our duty, when we do, and our priviledge that we may, cast our selves into the hands of God, when the hand of man oppresseth us; for (as one of the Ancients speaks sweetly and feelingly) *If thou doest deposit thy injuries with him, he is able to revenge thee; if thy losses, he is able to repair thee; if thy sickness, he is able to heal thee; and if thy death, he can raise thee up, and estate thee in life again.* Thus (I say) it is best to fall into the hands of God, in expectation of mercy, through the Mediator; but it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, upon contempt of mercy obtained by the Mediator: So the Apostle argues (*Heb.* 10. 26.) *If men sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation*, &c. Thence concluding (*vers.* 31.) *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* They who sleight the blood of Christ, and neglect the great salvation tendered to sinners by him, can have no more sacrifice for sin. Wicked men *crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame* (Heb. 6. 6.) But God will not crucifie his Son, or put him to open shame again for them. God will not make another Gospel for them (as he must, if they be saved) who contemn this. No, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, these men who once (with all man-kind) fell into the hands of God by transgressing his Law, are now (under another notion) fallen into his hands, even by the contempt of the Gospel; and now God saith, I will deal with them alone, for they have refused the Dayes-man whom I sent, and who was ready to *lay his hand upon us both.* It had been inconceivably sad with us all, if, as in the case of *Job's* temporal lost estate, there was no *Dayes-man* between God and him on earth; so in the case of our spiritual lost estate, there had been no *Dayes-man* between God and man in heaven: but it will be unconceivably more sad with those, who having had the tender of such a *Dayes-man*, shall be found contemners of him. *Greatest love neglected, breaks forth and ends in greatest wrath.*

Satũ idoneus est patientiæ sequester Deus, si injuriam deposueris juxta eum, ultor est; si damnum, restitutor; si dolorem, medicus; si mortem, resuscitator est. Tertul. l. de Patient.

VERS. 34, 35.

Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me.
Then would I speak, and not fear him: but it is not so with me.

WE have shewed (in the two former verses) *Job* renouncing and protesting against all thought of contending at all with God; *He is not a man as I am, that I should answer him*, &c. In these two he desireth God not to contend with him: as if he had said, *Lord, I will not plead or dispute with thee; and I know* (such is thy soveraignty) *thou mayest do what thou pleasest with me; Yet, oh that thou wouldst be pleased to abate of the severity of thy proceeding, and to remit the fierceness of that wrath, wherein thou appearest against me, that I might have liberty to spread my condition in thy presence. I have no friend to take up the matter for me; but I would open my case in a few words my self, if I might obtain a cessation but for the time of treaty, if thou wouldst forbear fighting, while I am speaking. Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me. Then would I speak*, &c.

Exploratum est me non posse Deum, coram superiore aliquo judice sistere: quocirca superest, ut ipse sit supremus judex, apud quem ego pro me dicere paratus sum, si contrahet flagellum calamitatis quo me cædit, & exteniet formidinẽ majestatis quâ concutior. Pined.

Let him take his rod away from me.

The **Rod** hath divers acceptions: The word *Shebet* in the Hebrew, is taken sometimes strictly for a branch, bough, or sprig, growing forth from the stock of a tree: and because a rod or a staff is made of the branch of a tree, therefore the same word signifies both.

שבט *Virga, baculus, qui ascitur ex arbore aut radice arboris.*

Secondly, It signifies a *Scepter*; the Scepter of a King, which emblems the power of a King. *Ahasuerus* held forth his golden Scepter to Queen *Esther*, in token of acceptance (*Esth.* 5. 2.) And because in ancient times (as the Learned observe)

obſerve) they were wont to make Scepters of ſuch rods, and all Scepters have the form or ſhape of a rod, therefore the original expreſſes the rod and the Scepter by the ſame word (*Gen.* 49. 10.) *The Scepter* [Shebet, *the rod*] *ſhall not depart from* Judah, *nor a Law-giver from between his feet. Thy Scepter, O God, is a Scepter of righteouſneſs* (Pſal. 45. 6.) that is, thou uſeſt thy Scepter righteouſly. The Scepter notes two things; Firſt, Authority to judge or command. Secondly, Power to correct or puniſh; both are included in that propheſie of the Kingdom of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 110. 2.) *The Lord ſhall ſend the rod of thy ſtrength out of Sion*; that is, he ſhall inveſt thee with power to govern, as the next words expound it, *Rule thou in the midſt of thine enemies.* Commanders in war direct with a rod or *leading ſtaff*; and Magiſtrates puniſh with a rod in times of peace.

Sceptrum quod priſci reges majeſtatis & ſeveritatis gratia, manu tenebant, baculus erat.

Sceptrum ſignificat regium Dominium, cujus ſignum erat ſceptrũ. Tribus quæ ex uno patre tanquam baculus ex una arbore nata eſt. Percuſſio, punitio, plagâ, quæ fit baculo.

Hence thirdly, By a Metonymy the Scepter imports dominion, rule and government it ſelf, *Amos* 1. 8. *I will cut off him that holdeth the Scepter*; that is, who hath the government in his hand.

Fourthly, The word is often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie a *Tribe*, or a family of perſons, becauſe a Tribe is as a branch ſprung from one ſtock; ſo the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael* (like twelve branches) ſprung from that great and ancient ſtock, the *Patriarch Jacob.*

Laſtly, The word ſignifies puniſhment or correction; correction is often given with a rod, therefore *to be under the rod is to be under puniſhment.* Thus the Lord threatens to viſit the tranſgreſſion of the houſe of *David* with *a rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes*, Pſal. 89. 32. *The rod and reproof give wiſdom* (Prov. 29. 15.) The rod hath a voice, *Hear the rod* (ſaith the Prophet, *Mich.* 6. 9.) but 'tis beſt when a voice is joyned with the rod, and inſtruction mixed with correction.

Quinq; apud Hebræos ſunt nomina pro baculo

משען
מקל
משענה
שבט
מטה

Bold. *in loc.*

There are in the Hebrew (to note that by the way) five words, which ſignifie a rod or a ſtaff. Some reſolve that ſeeming contradiction which is in the two Evangeliſts, *Matthew* and *Mark*, by the different ſignification of theſe words. When Chriſt (*Matth.* 10. 10. as alſo, *Luke* 6. 3.) ſent forth his Apoſtles to preach the Goſpel, among other inſtructions and directions given them for their journey, this is one, *Take no ſtaves.* But (*Mark* 6. 8.) *Chriſt commanded them that they ſhould take nothing for their journey ſave a ſtaff only.* One Evangeliſt ſaith, they muſt not take ſtaves, and in the other they are bidden to take ſtaves. Now (ſay theſe) in *Matthew* and *Luke*, where he forbids his Diſciples to take ſtaves, he expreſſeth himſelf by the word in the Text, *Shebet*, which ſignifies a correcting or ſmiting ſtaff: Take no ſtaves to ſmite and ſtrike with, ye go out with a meſſage of peace in your mouths, let there not be ſo much as an inſtrument of contention in your hands. But in *Mark* he uſeth the word *Miſnan*, which ſignifies a ſtaff to lean upon; Take a ſtaff to reſt or eaſe your ſelves upon, or to help your ſelves on in your travel; *A walking ſtaff, but not a ſtriking ſtaff.* Thus they reconcile the difference. But though this interpretation be good, yet this ground of it apppears not, either in the Syriack, which in both Texts hath the word *Shebet*, or in the Greek, which expreſſes both by (ῥάβδος) So then we muſt rather ſay, that the ſame word ſignifies a ſtaff for both uſes, and that when Chriſt forbids his Diſciples a ſtaff, he means a ſtaff to ſtrike with (*Preachers muſt be no ſtrikers*, according to the Apoſtles rule in *Timothy*) and that when he bids them take a ſtaff, he means a walking ſtaff. *Itineriant Preachers might be wearied with travelling, as well as with ſpeaking.*

שבט
Baculus vel virga ad percutiendũ
משען
Virga vel baculus ad ſuſtentandũ.

Nihil aliud poſtulat Job *quã ut Deus vel mitigaret, vel penitus auferret ab eo flagella, ſc. morbos, & dolores. Non agat pro jure, ſed gratia & moderationi faciat locũ.* Coc.

But to the Text. The rod which *Job* deſires might be removed, is, that ſore affliction which the ſoveraign power of God laid upon him, and exerciſed him with. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou dealeſt with me upon the height of thy prerogative, and I acknowledge thou mayeſt do ſo: But my humble ſuit and prayer is, that thou wouldeſt afflict me leſs then thou haſt, though thou haſt not afflicted me more then thou mayeſt. Thou haſt not injured me at all, but O that thou wouldeſt relieve me.*

He ſpeaks to this ſence with a little variety of words, (*Chap.* 13. 20, 21.) *Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee; withdraw thine hand from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.* And in a language not unlike this, he deſcribes the peace and proſperity of wicked men (*Chap.* 21. 9.) *Their houſes are ſafe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.* We find alſo that *Elihu* (who undertook *Job*, and debated the matter with him, when *theſe three* had no more to ſay, or would ſay no more) He, I ſay, perceiving what it was which *Job* had complained of as an impediment of ſpeaking unto God, promiſes that himſelf would give him no ſuch impediment or cauſe of complaint (*Chap.* 33. 7.) *Behold, my terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee*; As if he had ſaid, The Lords hand hath been heavy upon thee, and his terror hath made thee afraid, but (take my word) I will deal gently and mildly with thee, *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid, neither ſhall my hand be heavy upon thee.* So that, *Job's* deſire is only this, that he might have eaſe or releaſe from his preſent ſorrows. And 'tis (not improbably) conceived, that he alludes to the cuſtom of the Judges in thoſe Eaſtern Countries, who laid a rod upon ſome offenders in token of condemnation, and took it off from others in token of abſolution, of grace and favour. *Take thy rod away from me.*

Affliction is called a rod in a three-fold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe of the ſmart of it. *Afflictions are grievous and painful to fleſh and blood.* They grieve and pain the outward man, while the inward man takes pleaſure in them. *I* (ſaith *Paul*) *take pleaſure in infirmities, in reproaches, in perſecutions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes for Chriſts ſake* (2 Cor. 12. 10.) that is, my ſpirit doth, for no affliction (not that for Chriſts ſake) is joyous for the preſent, but grievous to the fleſh. For, as the Spirit would not do thoſe evils of ſin, which the fleſh would and doth (*The evil which I would not, that I do*, was *Paul's* cry, *Rom.* 7. 19.) So the fleſh would not endure thoſe evils of ſorrow, which the Spirit would and doth. And as a believer delights in the Law of God, after the inward man, when corruption is vext and troubled at it; ſo a believer delights in the rod of God, after the inward man, when corruption is moſt impatient and unquiet under it. Hence the Apoſtles counſel to the diſperſed Jews, *Rejoyce when ye fall into divers temptations* (James 1.) that is, into divers afflictions; the fleſh hath its ſenſe, and feels ſmart; but the Spirit is armed with faith, which overcomes the ſmart. Affliction were not ſo much as a rod, if it did not make us ſmart; and we are not ſo much as Chriſtians, if we cannot bear the ſmart with patience, or overcome it with faith.

Secondly, Affliction is called a rod, in regard of the hand that uſeth it. A ſword is in the hand of a Judge, and a rod in the hand of a father. God deals with his people as a father with his children in afflicting them. When we moſt provoke his Fatherly diſpleaſure againſt us, he doth not wiſh (as *Balaam* when his Aſſe offended him) that there were a ſword in his hand to ſlay us; he only takes up a rod to ſcourge us. Hence

Thirdly, Affliction is called a rod, in regard of the end for which it is ſent. A rod is not prepared to kill, nor is it an inſtrument of cruelty. A rod is not for deſtruction, but for correction. There are indeed deſtroying rods, which God will deſtroy, and ſave his people who are deſtroyed by them; *I will deſtroy the rod of the oppreſſor* (Iſa. 9. 4.) *Nebuchadnezzar the rod of Gods anger*, was a deſtroying rod, yet they among the Jews, who feared God, were only corrected, while they were deſtroyed. *The Lord means no hurt to thoſe who are good, when he makes them ſmart and die under the rod of thoſe who are evil.* If ever any man might think he had a ſword in his bowels, rather then a rod upon his back, *Job* might; yet even he calls it a rod, while he calls to God, for the removing of it, *Remove thy rod away from me.* And ſeeing he calls to have it removed, we may Obſerve,

That it is lawful to pray againſt affliction.

We may pray to be eaſed of that, which we muſt be patient under. To be diſcontented with affliction is ſinful, but it is no ſin (it is a duty) to deſire the taking of it away. For

Firſt, We may pray for the preventing of afflictions, therefore we may pray for the removing of afflictions, we may pray, *Lord, keep thy rod off from us*; therefore we may pray, *Lord, take thy rod off from us.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Afflictions themselves are evil. There is no good in them, nor can they do us any good of themselves. The good cometh from a superior work, from those admirable influences and concurrences of God upon; and with corrections. The rod is an evil in it self, and will make us worse, unless the Lord make it a blessing to us. Some are stubborn under the rod: and their hearts are hardened, while themselves are melted in the fire of affliction. As man lives not by bread alone, so man mends not by the rod alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 'Tis little less then a miracle that this dry rod (as that of *Aaron* did natural) should blossom and bring forth spiritual fruit, the fruit of righteousness.

Thirdly, We may pray for the removing of afflictions, because the Lord often sends afflictions upon this message, to bespeak prayer. Many a soul is sluggish in prayer till awakened by the voice of the rod. When the rod makes the flesh smart, then the Spirit (in whom any thing of the Spirit is) cries mightily unto God, and among the many things about which the soul exercises prayer under afflictions, this is one, that the afflictions may be removed. As they always sin, who murmur at and quarrel with God, because he corrects them; so also do they, who say, they care not how long he corrects them, or let him correct them, as long as he will. It is as ill a sign when a child will not pray his parent to spare him, when he is about to chasten him, or to stay his hand when he is chastening of him, as it is to resist his chastisement. *There may be greater contempt of God in lying under affliction, then in resisting it.* Now, as it is our duty to pray for deliverance out of trouble; so it is one end why the Lord casts us into trouble, that we may be engaged to pray for deliverance.

But take it with a caution, we must not pray absolutely for deliverance, or the removal of afflictions, but at least with an implicit limitation. While we are striving earnestly for the taking away of the rod, we should be ready to submit, if the Lord will not take it away. A believer may say to the Lord (as wrestling *Jacob*) *I will not let thee go except thou bless me*; but he must not say, I will not let thee go, *except thou now deliver me.* Time, and means, and manner must all be laid at Gods feet, and submitted to his wisdom. And we must honour God, though he will not remove the rod, even while we are praying that he would remove it.

For the close of this point, consider, the rod may be removed, not only by a total release from affliction; But

First, By an abatement of the affliction. As we are said to leave off those graces, from the degrees and lively actings of which we fall and decline: *He that lacketh these things* (that is, who aboundeth not, as he hath heretofore, in the exercise of them) *is blind*, &c. (2 *Pet.* 1. 9.) *Thou hast left thy first love*, saith Christ to the Angel of *Ephesus*, when the heat of his former love was cooled: So the Lord may be said to remove our troubles, when he remits the extremity, and cools the heat of them.

Secondly, The rod is removed, when it is sanctified to us, when the Lord (who is excellent in workings) causeth it to do us good. The Saints die, yet *death is abolished*, as to the Saints, by the death of Christ (2 *Tim.* 1.10.) because Christ hath pluckt out the sting of their death, and made it a gain to them. Thus while Christ makes temporal losses or sufferings an advantage to the spiritual estate of his people, he takes them away. And as outward blessings are taken away, from wicked men, while they possess them; riches are not riches to them, nor is their honour an honour to them, because they are ensnared by them: So the outward cross is taken away from the godly, while they suffer, because they are bettered by the cross.

Thirdly, Affliction is removed from us, when Christ gives us strength to bear affliction. Nothing grieves us, either in active or passive obedience, but what is either against our wills, or above our power. It is all one to have a burthen taken off our shoulders, or to have so much strength given as makes it easie to us. While the Saints have trouble upon their backs and loins, they have no trouble in their hearts and spirits, when their spirits are carried above those troubles. *To conquer an enemy is more noble then to have none.* Much more (which is promised the Saints in the throng of forest enemies) to be more then conquerors. In all, or any of these wayes *Job's* prayer may be fulfilled, *Take away thy rod from me,*

And let not thy fear terrifie me.

There was somewhat more upon *Job* then a rod, or it was an extraordinary rod, a rod like a Scorpion.

אמתו
à radice
אים
Formidabilis, terribilis Emathah.

Let not thy fear terrifie me.] The word which we translate [*Fear*] comes from a root signifying that which is very formidable and terrible. *Fear and dread shall fall upon them* (Exod. 15. 16.) that is, they shall be extreamly afraid, even dead with fear, as the next words import; *They shall be still as a stone*, &c. there is a letter added (as the Hebricians observe) to the word used by *Moses*, implying the excess of fear. Giants are called by this name *Emims* (Deut. 2. 11.) because they are of a dreadful aspect. The whole host of *Israel* trembled at the sight of *Goliah*, (1 Sam. 17. 14.) An Idol is expresst by this name *Emim*: And there is a double reason of it. Either because Idols are a terror to their worshippers: we hear how at this day poor *Pagans* who worship Idols, are extreamly oppresst with slavish fear of displeasing them. *The true God is terrible to his despisers: but false Gods are terrible to their worshippers.*

μὴ με ἐφοβέτο. *Ne me transversum agat* Sept. *Alius, ne me consternet.*

Or Secondly, They were called *Emims* in a way of contempt; *Yours are terrible Gods sure: They have hands, and handle not; feet, and walk not; eyes, and see not.* Here are terrible gods. So then, Idols are *Emims*, either because they are really to be feared so little; or because they are superstitiously feared so much.

Job's fear was no needless fear, he was not terrified with a fancy, though his fancy was ready enough to over-act upon his afflictions, and so encreased his fear; *Let not thy fear*, that is (say some) fearful thoughts or sights *terrifie me.* So (*Chap.* 7. 14.) *When I say, my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions.* There is an humbling and a cleansing fear; *The fear of the Lord is clean*, not only in the nature of it, but in the effects of it (*Psal.* 19. 9.) There is also an amazing, and a terrifying fear: such the letter of the original imports this to be, even a fear bordering upon madness, as if he were rather frighted then afraid, and scared, rather then troubled.

Ex vi verbi originalis ejusmodi terror est qui hominē exagitat & quasi extra valde distrahit.

Others expound this fear with reference to the two former verses, especially to the verse immediately fore-going. There *Job* desires a *Dayes-man*, or complains that there is none; here he tells us what he might have expected, if he had one. As if he had said, *Had I a Dayes-man, then I know he would take away the rod from me, that is, he would give judgment that I should be eased of this affliction; and his fear should not terrifie me, that is, he would never give a sentence which should be a terror to me.* That's a fair sence in reference to what he spake before; but I rather keep his meaning within the compass of what he is speaking here.

And then by fear we may understand,

First, Those rayes and beams of Majesty, which the Lord letting out a little upon *Job*, he was not able to bear them. We find when in those ancient times God appeared, the beholders were terrified. *Manoah's* wife tells her husband, *A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of an Angel of God very terrible*, (Judg. 13. 6.) And when God appeared to *Abraham*, *an horror of great darkness fell upon him* (Gen. 15. 12.) In what a woful plight was *Daniel*, receiving the visions of God? (*Dan.* 10. 8.) God who is the joy of his people, is also a terror to them. Things which are not what they seem to be, are not so terrible near hand as at a distance. God who is infinitely more then he can seem to be, is more terrible near hand then at a distance. Hence it is, that when God, who is always near us, shews himself to be so, our spirits fail within us. In that presence of God which we shall have in glory, there will be fulness of joy. And in that presence of God which we have in the ways of grace, there is abundance of joy. But if while we are here in a state of grace, some little of that presence of God which is proper to the state of glory falls upon us, we are more distressed then comforted with it. How much more then when God cloaths himself with terror, and (as he did to *Job*) so reveals himself unto us?

Pavoris nomine intelligendū putarem fulgorē, splendorem, vel majestatem nimiam; qua prisci illis temporibus nonnunquam Deus, vel Angelus pro Deo servis suis apparebat. Bol.

Secondly, We may interpret this *fear* (by the former part of the Verse) the *rod*; his afflictions were terrible, the hand of God lifted up to smite him, made him afraid. But whether it were this or that, the Majesty of God overawing him, or the Rod of God chastening him, the sence is plain, *Job* was oppresst with fear from the Lord, yea, with terror from the Almighty, causing this vehement deprecation, *Let not his fear terrifie me.* Hence observe,

First, That, *God sometimes appears terribly to those he loves entirely.*

Job was one of Gods darlings, and God was embracing him while he was scourging him. *Job* had kisses from heaven, when he felt nothing but lashes here upon the earth. The heart of God was full of love, while his hand was filled with a rod; his bowels yearned upon *Job*, and his face terrified him at the same time. That precious man *Heman* was followed with terrors and visions of amazement all his dayes; *I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: while I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted* (Psal. 88. 15.) The terrors of God, even terrors to distraction, may be the present portion of those whose portion is everlasting mercy. Observe,

Secondly *Man is not able to bear the anger of God.*

Though he be but correcting us, yet we cannot bear his anger toward us. This caused the Prophet to cry out (*Jer.* 10. 24.) *Correct me, O Lord, but not in thine anger.* The words are not a Prayer for correction (I know no warrant for that) but a submission to it; as if he had said, Lord, I am willing to bear thy correction, but I cannot (and who can?) bear thine anger. The Church complains (*Psal.* 90. 7.) *We are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath we are troubled.* The fatherly anger of God is as a consuming fire, and we are but as stubble before it: What then is the fierceness of that anger, which he will powr out upon wicked men for ever? *Who knoweth the power of thine anger:* (Psal. 90. 11.) Man cannot understand how powerful the anger of God is, much less stand before the power of his anger. As man cannot comprehend the love of God (*Eph.* 3. 18, 19.) The Apostle exhorts, *To know the love of God which passeth knowledge*, that is, to know so much of it as is knowable (the love of God is past the knowledge, not only of Nature, but of Grace, because it is infinite) So we should labour to *know the anger of God, which passeth knowledge*, that is, to know it so far as it is knowable. The anger of God cannot be fully known, because it hath an infiniteness in it, as well as his love. And as the one shall never be fully known, but by enjoying it; so neither can the other, but by feeling it. Upon this consideration, the Lord makes that gracious promise to his people (*Isa.* 57. 10.) *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wrath, for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.* But is not the spirit or soul of *man* of an everlasting make? And shall not the damned endure the contendings of Gods wrath for ever, and not fail? The substance of the soul cannot fail, and the spirit is incorruptible: The spirit is full of moral corruption, but it is not subject to natural corruption, or the corruption of its nature. How glad would the damned be if their spirits might fail, and their souls return to nothing? The failing of the spirit under the wrath of God, is the failing of its hope and courage. Thus the spirit sinks, and the immortal soul dies away under the sense and weight of Gods displeasure.

But what if the Lord should take away his rod, and change his terrors into smiles? what will *Job* do then? when this is granted, see what he will do.

Verse 35. **Then would I speak, and not fear him; but it is not so with me.**

Καὶ οὐ φοβηθῶ ἀλλα λαλήσω. Sept.

But is this the use which *Job* would make of the mercy he begs? Doth he entreat the Lord to take his terrifying fear away from him, and then resolve not to fear him at all? Whose voyce is this? Is this the voyce of *Job*, *I will speak and not fear him?* *Job*'s character in the first Chapter was, *A man fearing God*; and dares he now say, *I will speak and not fear him?* As the fear of God ought to be the seasoning of all our works and actions, so it ought to be the seasoning of all our words and speeches: why then doth he say, *I will speak and not fear him?*

To clear this, I answer, Fear may be taken two wayes: Either for the grace of fear, or for the perturbation of fear. When *Job* saith, *I would speak and not fear him*, his meaning is not to lay down that fear of God, which is a bridle to the soul, keeping it from sin, or that reverential affection which fits us for, and should act us in every holy duty we perform to God: When *Job* prayed to be free from the fear of God, he resolved thus to fear God. 'Tis only the perturbation of fear, distracting fear, not sanctifying, humbling fear, which *Job* would lay aside, when God should please to withdraw his terrifying fear. And so his mind is plainly this; *If the Lord will be intreated to remit the extremity of my affliction, and remove those terrors wherewith I am affrighted, then I would speak boldly and chearfully to him, I would set out the truth of my case, and declare the innocency of my person. Vehement passions hinder my reason; 'tis uneasie to speak, till I am eased of my pains: I cannot tell how it is with me, so long as it is thus with me.* Hence observe,

Qui in judicio consternatur non potest rectè agere causam suã, seq; ita ut oportet defendere ac tueri, terror enim impedimento est ei. Pined.

That, *Extremity of fear is an interruption to Speech.*

While Sense is much troubled, Reason cannot act much. *When* Ephraim *spake trembling, he exalted himself in* Israel, (*Hos.* 13. 1.) There, to speak trembling, is, to speak humbly. Our words to God should be accompanied with low thoughts of our selves. *Ephraim*'s trembling is opposed to pride and hardness of heart. They who thus tremble at the Word of God, are fittest to speak to God: yet excessive trembling hinders us in speaking. And until the Lord quiets and composes our hearts by a word from heaven, till he speak to our distempered minds, as once to the raging sea, *Be quiet and still*; we cannot utter our hearts, or declare our minds unto him. When God sends a gracious message to poor sinners, and invites them to a conference, as he did his ancient people (*Isa.* 1. 18.) *Come, let us reason together:* then they come boldly to the Throne of Grace, notwithstanding their crimson and scarlet sins. Then they are not afraid to speak, they may speak and not fear him.

But (saith *Job*) **it is not so with me.**

There is much diversity of opinion about these words. Mr. *Broughton* translates, *I am not so with my self*; and gives this Note upon it, *I am not such with my self as Gods scourge seemeth to make me, or such as your words would make me.* The *Septuagint* renders it, *I am not so conscious to my self, or I am not so self-guilty.* The Hebrew word for word runs thus, *For not so I with my self.* Some difference arises from the first Particle; we read [*But*] most [*For*] the original is rather causal then exceptive; *I would speak and not fear him, for it is not so with me.*

בילא כן עמדי אנכי *Quia non sic ego mecũ.* ὅτι οὐχ ὅτω συνεπίσταμαι *Non enim sic conscius sum.*

But the word which causes the greatest difference, is that which we translate [*So*] *It is not so with me.* The Hebrew is *Chen*, and that hath two principal significations. It signifies sometimes *right* or *just*, and is applied both to persons and to things.

Particula Chen *propter variam quam habet significationem, varias quoque interpretationibus ansam præbet, est enim vox æquivoca, plura significans.* Bol.

First, Unto things, *Jer.* 8. 6. *The Lord hearkened and heard, and there was no man that spake* (Chen) *aright*, or things which were right. *Jer.* 23. 10. The word is opposed to evil; *Their course is evil, and their force is not right*, that is, the force, might or power which they have, is not set upon or employed about that which is right, but wholly bent to do wrong; or they commit evil with all their might.

Secondly, The word [*Chen*] is applied unto persons; noting a man that is upright-hearted, faithful and honest, both in conscience and conversation. When *Joseph*'s brethren (*Gen.* 42. 11, 19, 31.) pleaded for themselves, they say unto him, We are (*Chenim*) *right men, we are no spies.* We are not come to find out the weakness of the Land, but to get a supply of our own wants. *Joseph* said, *Ye are spies*, ye come to circumvent us, to put tricks upon us, to work your own ends, by discovering what we are; No, say they, pray, Sir, do not misunderstand us, we are (*Chenim*) honest, right-hearted, plain-meaning men.

Qui bonam habet συνείδησιν, est (כן) *rectus apud seipsũ: testatur igitur se bonam habere conscientiam & inde παῤῥησίαν apud Deum, si non pro jure suo agere, vel gratia uti velit.* Coc.

Secondly, The word is used adverbially; *It is not so with me*, that is, *It is not so as you imagine.* In which sence you find it, *Gen.* 1. 7. *The Lord said, Let there be light, and it was* (Chen) *so*; as the Lord commanded, so it was, *Eccl.* 8. 10. *I saw the wicked buried who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were strangers in the City where they had done so.*

Upon

Upon both these considerations of the word, different interpretations of the whole are grounded.

First, Taking the word to note an upright-hearted man, *Job* is conceived to speak interrogatively, as if he put this Question, *For am I not right in my self?* As if he had said, *If you think it too much boldness that I have said, I would speak unto God, and not fear him; Am not I right in my self? Am not I sound and true at heart?* Thus he seems to allude unto that testimony which God gave of him at the first verse of this Book, a man perfect and upright; As if he had said, *I am no Turn-coat or Apostate, I am as I was, and I doubt not but I shall be what I am, still perfect before God, and upright with men. And if so, why may not I have boldness to come unto God, and speak freely with him? They who are sincere with God, may have great boldness in coming unto God.* Uprightness hath boldness with men, and uprightness hath boldness towards God; though no uprightness or righteousness in man can give him boldness in himself, yet it may give him boldness in another. He may be assured, that though he cannot be *accepted for his righteousness, yet being upright, he shall be accepted.*

Secondly, Others read it negatively; *I would speak and not fear him, for I am not right in, or with my self.* And so the sence may be made out thus, *I have not gone about to justifie my self all this while, I have not stood upon my own righteousness pleading with God; if my righteousness were in my self, then I might fear to speak with God, though his fear should not terrifie me, and though he should take away his rod from me; but I have a better bottom then my own, I am not right in my self, I am right only in the free grace of God, and in the righteousness of my Redeemer.* According to this exposition, he returneth to his first proposition, laid down in the second verse of this Chapter; *How should man be just or righteous with God? I am not right in my self.* As I said in the beginning of my answer, *Man is not righteous*; so I now conclude in my own particular case, *I am not righteous in my self*; and being righteous in another, if God would but give me a little respite from these sorrows, I would speak, and not be afraid. This teaches us,

First, That, *The confidence and the holy boldness which the Saints have in coming unto God, is grounded upon the righteousness of Christ, not upon any worthiness in themselves.*

Secondly observe, *He that is most upright in heart, is most forward to acknowledge, most constant in acknowledging his own unrighteousness.*

They who are most proud, are most empty. And they who have least, usually speak with the most. Sincerity rates it self low; *I am not right*, that is, *righteous*, saith upright *Job*.

Thirdly (say others) *I am not right in my self*, that is, I am at present uncomposed and unsetled in my own spirit: As if *Job* had said, *I desire that the Lord would remove his fear, and mitigate my afflictions, that I might speak with him, and not fear; for as yet I am not right in my self, my spirit is so overwhelmed, and my thoughts are so troubled within me, that I have not the free use of my own understanding, nor can my Reason do its office, much less my Grace. I am scarce in my right mind, but rather as a man distracted* (so was *Heman*) *with the terrors of the Lord; I know not how to manage Faith under such fears, the Majesty and dreadfulness of God oppress my spirit; as I am, I am not my self.* The Vulgar gives this interpretation instead of a translation; *For I cannot answer while I am afraid.* Hence note,

Quia non sic sum apud me; ut nunc sum, sc. *in hac afflictione ut me nunc tractat & exagitat Deus, sum velut extra me, animi impos.* Merc.

Neque enim meo nutu possum respondere. Vulg.

A godly man in sore temptations, may for a while appear less then a man.

Fears hinder him from shewing the best of his natural self, much more any thing of his spiritual self.

Further, note two things, experienced by many of the Saints in the day of their distress.

First, *A godly man under greatest afflictions, keeps to the opinion of his own integrity, yet builds his comfort upon the free Grace of God.*

He can, according to the first interpretation of these words, challenge all with this Question, *Am I not right in my self?* Is there not integrity in my spirit? and according to the second, he is ready to make this negative confession, *I am not right in my self*, I stand not upon my own integrity.

Secondly, *The Saints in great afflictions, are often so overwhelmed with the Majesty of God, that they are not able to express their interest in God, much less make out the comforts of that interest.*

The former of these arises from that seed of holiness and stock of Grace abiding in them. The other ariseth from the natural weakness of flesh and blood, in which they abide, and from the moral corruption of nature abiding in them.

Thus we see how the sence of the Text rises, as the word [*Chen*] is understood nominally, for *right* or *just*. We translate it adverbially, *But it is not so with me*; or, *For it is not so with me.* This reading bears a threefold interpretation.

First, In construction with the former words, thus: *Let him take away his rod,* &c. *then will I speak and not fear him; for it is not so with me*, that is, I am not so fearful, or of so low a spirit, I am not such a stranger, or of so little acquaintance with God, that I should not know how to speak unto him, or that I should be afraid to speak to him. If the Lord would but hide that brightness of his own glory, which dazles me, and ease me of my own pains, which distract me, I should sure enough speak unto him, and declare my cause.

But secondly, We rather refer it to the false and unkind opinion of his friends, who judged him a wicked man, or an hypocrite, which he here denies; *It is not so with me*: As if he had said, *If the Lord would be pleased to grant what I have petitioned, I would speak unto him without fear or doubt of being heard; for it is not so with me, namely, as you have suspected and imagined all this while, or as you think it is. I am not the man you take, or rather mistake me to be; if I were, then though the Lord should take all his afflictions from me, and withdraw his terrors, yet I should be afraid to speak unto him, yea, I should be afraid to pray unto him: every prayer (were I wicked) would be a praying down judgment upon my self: But seeing I can boldly affirm, my Conscience also bearing me witness, that though I sin, yet I love not to sin, that though I am weak, yet I am not wicked, as ye have charged me; my heart being thus clear before God, I cannot fear to open my mouth, and report my cause before God.*

Non sic impius ego apud me. Pag. *Non sum talis qualem me putatis.* Vatabl. Merc.

Hence observe (which hath been offered from other passages in this book, and therefore I shall only observe it.)

That, *A godly man standeth to, and knoweth his own integrity in the midst of all the clamors and slanders, the misapprehensions or aspersions of friends or enemies.*

Whosoever loads and charges him with studied or approved hypocrisie, he will (and he ought to) unload and discharge himself (at least) with *Job*'s plain denial; you suspect me thus, but I am sure *it is not so with me.*

Thirdly, The words may bear this meaning, I have sought and earnestly intreated the Lord to abate my afflictions, and to remove his terrors; *But it is not so with me*: Alas, I do not find that the Lord hath done any of these things for me. His rod is still upon my back, and his terrors stand as thick about my soul as ever: was ever poor man in such a plight as I? 'Tis not (alas) with me as I have prayed, or as I would have it. The rod smarts, and terrors amaze me still. Hence note,

That, *A godly man may pray in affliction, and not presently be relieved in or from his affliction.*

Many a soul can say, It is so with me as I have prayed, I have the wishes and desires of my soul; yet many (and I believe many more then can) cannot say so. The Lord lets precious prayers lie unanswered to our sense. We may pray long before we find it so with us as we have prayed, and yet those prayers are not lost, but laid up; not buried, but sown. And it becomes us to have patience till the harvest, though it be a late one.

Lastly, There is an opinion which gives this verse connection with the first of the next Chapter. As if *Job* had thus resolved, upon the Lords not answering his petition, *Had the Lord condescended to take away his rod, and remove his terror, as I requested, then I had somewhat to say, and I would*

Quia non ita est (sc. quia à me terrorem suum non eximit) ego mecum, sc. loquar mecum, ipse querar & omnem acerbitatem animi effundâ apud me, ut facit in sequenti capite.

would have spoken it unto him, but because it is not so, or because I am not answered, therefore I with my self (the word [Speak] is not in the Text: but such supplies of a word are frequent, not only in the Hebrew, but also in other languages) *Seeing I have not liberty to speak to the Lord, I will powr my complaint into mine own bosom, and commune with my own heart.* He pursues this tacite resolution in *Chap.* 10. which begins thus, *My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my self.*

CHAP. X. Vers. 1.

My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my self, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

JOB having in the former Chapter justified God in afflicting him, and maintained his own integrity, notwithstanding those afflictions, now returneth to that work, about which he had been too busie before; yet that, wherein it seems he only found (as the case stood with him) some little ease and refreshing; *The breathing out of his afflicted spirit in sad complainings*; He resumes his former lamentation, and renews afresh what he had been more then large enough in, at *Chap.* 3, 6, 7. of this Book. Here, as there, he shews how ill it was with him, and what cause he had to be in heaviness, under the pressure of so many evils.

Afflicti sæpe se exonerari putant, si laxiùs habenis de suo dolore queruntur & suas enumerent calamitates uberrima oratione. Merc.

And here, more then there, he remonstrates that he conceived himself more hardly dealt with, then stood not only with the goodness of God in his nature, but with that goodness which he had formerly acted both towards others and himself: This encouraged him about the close of the Chapter (*vers.* 20, & 22.) to petition again, that he might have a little refreshing before he lay down in his grave: and that God would (after these storms) return him some of those fair dayes he had enjoyed, before he returned to the earth, and should be seen no more.

Argumentis, utitur à natura Dei & ante accepta ipsius beneficiis, quibus mala hæc quæ immisit Deus magnopere repugnare videantur. Merl.

His complaint is very rhetorical and high, yet with an allay or mixture of modesty. Indeed his spirit brake out, and passion got head, at *vers.* 18, 19. where he expostulates with God, in the language of *Chap.* 3. *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* &c. But abating that excess of his tongue and spirit, his *complaints* are knit up with solid arguments, and his *Queries* put the point resolutely, yet humbly, home to God himself: that he would be pleased to shew the reason of his present dealings, and why he varied so much from what he had done in former times.

Vehemens quidem partibus omnibus & gravis est querimonia, sed modesta, si unum illud excipiatur exemplum. ver. 3, 19. Merc.

The first verse gives us a general ground of this and of all his sorrowful complaints; the wearisomness of his life.

My soul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my self.

The Argument may be formed thus,

He hath reason to complain of his afflictions, whose afflictions are so heavy upon him, and so bitter, that he hath reason to be weary of his very life.
But thus my case stands, my afflictions are so bitter to, and heavy upon me, that I am weary of my life.
Therefore I have reason to complain.

The assumption of this Syllogism is contained in the first words of the verse, *My soul is weary of my life.* And the conclusion, in the latter; *Therefore I will leave my complaint upon my self; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*

My soul is weary of my life.] Life and soul are often in Scripture put promiscuously for the same, but here they differ. The soul may be taken two wayes,

First, Strictly, as it is opposed to the body.

Secondly, In a more large sence (by a *Synechdoche* of the part for the whole) for the whole man consisting of body and soul: If so here, then the meaning of *Job* in saying [*My soul is weary of my life*] is no more then this, *I* (Job) *am weary of my life*; that is, of the marriage or union of my soul and body, O that this band (which I (though most are grieved at the weakness of theirs) find too strong) were broken, or a bill of divorce granted for their seperation. Life is the bond or tie by which soul and body subsist together: And when that bond is broken or cut asunder by the stroke of death, the body goes to the grave, and the soul or spirit returns to God who gave it.

Again, When *Job* saith, *My soul is weary of my life.* Life may be taken either for the act of life, and so the sence is, *I am weary of living*; or it may be taken for the manner of life, and so the sence is, *I am weary of that course or state of life wherein I am.* Life is often put (not strictly for the act of living, but) for the state or condition in which a man lives, or with which life is cloathed; The circumstances and concomitants of life are called life. Thus in our common speech, when a man is in misery, another saith, *I would not have his life*, or, *what a life hath he?* The Apostle's character of all natural men, is, that they are *alienated from the life of God* (Ephes. 4. 18.) that is, they cannot endure to live such a life as God lives, or as he commands them to live; they cannot endure to be holy, as he is holy, or holy, as he calls them to be holy, in all manner of conversation. Thus *Job* was alienated from his own life; *I* (saith he) *am weary of my life*; that is, of a life thus imbittered, thus afflicted.

My soul is weary.] The word which we translate [weary] varies the understanding of this sentence. It signifies properly to be *weakned*, as also to be *melted* or *molten with heat*; because a man that is extreamly heated or melted by heat, is weakned, his spirits and strength being drawn forth and dissipated. But it is most commonly applied to that weariness which arises from the displeasedness or irksomness of our minds. All burdens upon the body are light, compared with those which reach the soul. Three things weary and load the soul.

קוץ Debilitatus, languefactus, per metaphoram tædio affectus, offensus fuit.

First, The filth and guilt of our own sins. *I will sprinkle you* (saith the Lord, *Ezek.* 36. 31.) *with clean water*, &c. What's the effect of this? It follows, *Then shall you remember your own evil wayes, and loath, or be weary, of your selves* (it is this word) *because of all your abominations.* As if the Lord had said, before I change your hearts, ye sin, and are not wearied of your sins; nay, ye make a sport of, and dally with them: But when I shall work that great change upon your hearts, your opinion and apprehensions of sin will change too: nothing will be so bitter or burdensom, so unpleasant or wearisom to your souls as sin. *Fools make a mock of sin; they who are truly wise, mourn and groan under the sense and weight of it.*

Secondly, The unsuitableness and perverseness of other mens manners or dispositions weary the soul. *The righteous soul of* Lot *was vexed from day to day, in seeing and hearing the unrighteous deeds of the debauched* Sodomites (2 Pet. 2. 8.) The soul of God is said to be wearied by such courses of the sons of men (*Psal.* 95. 10.) *Fourty years long was I grieved, or wearied, with that generation.* The Lord (as we may speak with reverence) was even weary of his life, he had such a troublesom people to deal with; they grieved him at the heart (as the old world did, *Gen.* 6.6.) and were a heavy burden to his Spirit. That's the Apostle's language, in his description of that peoples frowardness, and of Gods patience towards them (*Act.* 13. 18.) *He suffered their manners fourty years in the wilderness*; which some

ἐτετροφοφόρησεν forte pro ἐτεροφορησεν.

some render, He bare them as a burthen; the continual murmurings and unbelief of that people were to the Lord (who is yet above all passion) as a heivy weight is to a man, or as the peevishness and unquietness of a sucking child is to the nurse, as our Translators conceive the Greek word should rather be. Thus also he reproves the same people by the Prophet (*Isa.*43.24.) *Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.* And Christ (though by another word) speaks the same thing of his own Disciples (*Mark* 9.19. when the man possest with an unclean spirit being brought to them, they could not cast him out) *How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?* I am wearied with your unbelief, *O ye of little faith.* The Disciples were still so slow of heart, and came so short of a Gospel-spirit, that Christ professeth, He was burthened even with them; *How long shall I suffer you? The ill manners of all, are a weariness to the good, but theirs most who are nearest to them.* Which is also the reason, why a godly man is wearied most of all with the corruption of his own heart, for that is nearest to him of all.

ἀνέχομαι *Tolero, ἀνέχεσθαι autem dicuntur translatitiè qui volentes onus subeunt, & sub eo perdurat.*

Now, as our sins, and the ill manners of others weary the soul: so

Thirdly, The pains and troubles which are upon the body often cause such grief of mind, as is an extream weariness to the soul: That's the meaning of this Text [*My soul is weary of my life*] That is, my life is filled with such outward troubles, as fill my inward man with trouble, and weary my very soul.

Secondly, The word is translated by divers of the learned Rabbies, *To cut, yea to cut off*, as with a sword, or any other edged instrument: These render *Job's* mind thus, *My soul is cut off in me*, or *My soul is cut off from my life*; As if he had said, My dayes are at an end, I am ready to die, the threed of my life is cut, I am but a dead man. While life continues, soul and body are as it were one piece, but death divides them; or the recourse of night and day, runs the threed of time through our lives, till our web (longer or shorter) be finished, and then the threed is cut. To which similitude *Hezekiah* alludes in his mourning death-bed song, as he supposed (*Isa.* 38. 10, 12.) *I said in the cutting off of my dayes,* &c. *Mine age is removed from me, as a shepherds tent, I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining sickness or from the thrum*, which being woond about the beam, the Weaver having finished his work, cuts the web off from it. The same word in the Hebrew signifies pining sickness, and a thrum, because of the thinness and weakness of it. My life (saith *Hezekiah*) is spent, I am at the very last cast, the yarn of time is all wrought off, therefore my life is ready to be cut off. I am a borderer upon death, and to be numbred among the dead, rather then among the living. Such a sence this reading gives the Text of *Job*, *My soul is cut off from my life.*

Verbum קוט *ex sententia* R. David, & R. Mardoc. *significat excidere aut succidere. Excisa est anima mea in me.* Pag. Vatab. &c. *Actum est de vita mea, en morior, vel perinde ac si mortuus planè sim.*

Thirdly, The word signifies a reluctance or displicency of spirit, arising from the sight and sense of that which is very loathsom, filthy, and of an evil savour. It answers the Greek word rendered *Abomination* (Matth. 24. 15.) *The abomination of desolation*, he means the *Romans*, who being Idolaters, their worship was abominable; and who being Lords of the world, their power was formidable, and laid all Countries waste and desolate, which opposed them, or which they had a mind to oppose. And so when *Job* saith, *My soul is weary of my life*; his meaning is represented thus; My soul refuses to inhabit, or to act so filthy a body as mine; My soul loaths to dwell, or stay any longer in this nasty lodging. As *David* (*Psal.*120.5.) speaks of his weariness in dwelling amongst wicked men, because of their moral filthiness, or the pollution of their minds and wayes. *Wo is me that I sojourn in* Meshec; *that I dwell in the tents of* Kedar; So *Job* seems to speak, in reference to the natural pollution and filthiness of his own body. *Wo is me that I sojourn in such a diseased body, and dwell (which yet will not die) in such a dying carcase. The noble tenant, my soul, is weary of staying in such a stinking and filthy habitation, and I perceive (for I have moved him hitherto in vain) the great Land-lord will neither repair it, nor as yet let it fall.* As then a man, who lives in an ill or incommodious house, saith, *I am weary of dwelling in it*; or as a man that hath a filthy garment, saith, I am weary of wearing it: So saith *Job* here, My soul is weary of my life, were I well rid of it, I should be well.

Denotat displicentiam qua homo interius tabescit præ doloris sensu. Propriè significat δυσλογια, i.e. *rem putidā & quæ nauseam parit aversari.*

Fourthly, Many of the Jewish Doctors tell us, that the most strict and proper signification of this word, is, *To contend or strive, to chide or wrangle* (we may give it in that homely language.) As if the meaning of *Job* were, *My soul doth even contend, chide and wrangle with my life; my soul contests and disputes the matter with my life, why it will not end, that I may get out from this body of mine, and go beyond the reach of these afflictions.* The 95. *Psalm, vers.* 10. is so translated, *Fourty years long did I contend, chide or contest angerly with that generation*: The Lord did often chide with the people of *Israel*, and they used to chide with *Moses*; whence one place was called *Meribah*; yea, through their unbelief they did chide with God himself, and (there is no reason dust and ashes should have the last word) God also gave them their chidings, and told them plainly their own, more then once. Thus the soul of *Job* chid his life; what's the reason that I am held in this condition, why wilt thou not be gone that I may be at rest? Carnal men chide with their lives for hastening so fast away, because they know of no rest, or have hope of none hereafter. A godly man may be brought to chide with his life for making no more haste away, because he finds none, or so little rest here. *Elihu* (Chap. 33. 19.) describing the method in which God uses to humble proud man, adds, *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pains*; He is chastened, the word signifies also reproving or convincing by arguments, and that in a quick and passionate, as well as in a rational and solid way. Now, while afflictions chidingly smite us, we are apt to chide them, and give them at least a word for a blow. *Job* did not only chide with his afflictions, but with his life, because it would not depart and be gone, being so unkindly used and imbittered by afflictions. His soul did even chide his life out a doors.

R. Moyse cum aliis Hebræis doctoribus, existimat propriam vocis significationem esse, litigare aut contendere. *Litigavit anima mea in vita mea. Litigavi.* Pag.

The Chaldee paraphrast gives the meaning yet higher, *My soul is grown cruel against my life*; As if he had said, I am so exceedingly afflicted and pained that my soul begins to rage against my life, I can hardly hold my own hands off from my life, and I would not have God hold his. Let not my life be spared; how glad should I be to see it poured out? *Anguish is come upon me* (as the *Amalakites* reports of *Saul*, 2 Sam. 1. 9.) *because my life is whole in me. O that God would stand upon me and slay me*; my soul is hardned against my life (like the Ostrich against her young ones, *Chap.* 39. 16.) as if it were not mine. Let me die, and that shall be a favour, smite me, and that will be to me as a precious ointment, though it break my head, and let out my troubled spirits. Then we are cruel to our lives, when we care not what's done to us, or how we are used, so we may be rid of our lives.

Crudelis effecta est anima mea. Chald. *Homo qui sibi-ipsi mortem precatur adversum se sævire videtur.*

But (to pass this) our translation is clear and significant, [*My soul is weary of my life.*] I am so weary of the pains wherein I live, that I had rather my life should end, then my pains should continue.

Job complained in *Chap.* 3. he complained at *Chap.* 6, 7. he erred twice, yea, thrice upon this point before, yet now we hear him complaining, as if he had not complained at all. This was *Job's* infirmity: though somewhat hath, and more may be said to take off those aspersions which his friends cast upon him for complaining, yet no doubt it was his sin to complain; especially to break out so often, and in such bitter complainings.

Hence observe, *A godly man may (possibly) fall often into the same sin.*

Where grace taketh hold of the heart, it breaks the custom and spoils the trade of sin; yet a godly man may sin over the same sin, and renew the same transgression. The trade of sin is spoiled, when the soul leaves devising, plotting, contriving sin, which Acts denominate a worker of iniquity. The custom of sin is broken, when though the same sin be committed again, yet the soul puts in it's plea and complaint against it. 'Tis here as in civil things, if we make our challenge or demand, the custom is gone, though the acts be renewed by the power and prevalency of the opposite party; yet, when I say a godly man may fall into sin often, I mean not of gross and scandalous sins; God doth not let his people fall often into the mire. *Noah* was not often drunk, nor did *David* commit adultery often, or more then once. The grace of God which bringeth salvation, teacheth

teacheth us to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts. And if a godly man fall often into any the leaſt ſin, yet he lies not in ſin, becauſe he renews repentance, as often as he ſins, and riſes as often as he falls: he reſolves (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) never to ſin; when through his own weakneſs, and the violence of temptation, he is ſoon after over-taken or ſurpriz'd with ſin. *David* profeſſeth (*Pſal.* 119. 30.) *I have choſen the way of truth*: His election was *Truth*; truth of heart, which is oppoſed to hypocriſie; truth of judgment, which is oppoſed to error; and truth of ſpeech, which is oppoſed to lying; yet he ſlipt with his tongue, more then once; and told an untruth, more then one. He cannot be acquitted from this failing, when he anſwered *Abimelech* the Prieſt, *The King hath commanded me a buſineſs, and hath ſaid unto me, Let not any man know any thing of the buſineſs whereabout I ſend thee, and what I have commanded thee; and I have appointed my ſervants to ſuch a place* (1 Sam. 21. 2.) He again faulters with his tongue, and ſpeaks either falſly or doubtfully, when the King of the Philiſtines asked him, *Whether have ye made a rode to day? And* David *ſaid, againſt the South of* Judah, &c. (1 Sam. 27. 10.) *whereas his invaſion was againſt the* Geſhurites, *and the* Gezrites, *and the* Amalekites (*verſ.* 8.) He that overcame the Bear, the Lion, and *Goliah* the Giant, is overcome by fear, and the mother of it, unbelief. *David's* example ſhould be no encouragement, ſhall be no excuſe to thoſe who willingly fall often into the ſame ſin. A good man is not priviledg'd from doing it, but no man is priviledg'd to do it. Such examples muſt not teach us to ſin, but they teach us how unable we (alone) are to keep our ſelves from ſin: they teach us alſo, what need we have to depend upon, and look up to Chriſt, that we may be kept from ſin: if he leave us but a little unto our ſelves, the fleſh will diſcover much of it ſelf, and we ſhall quickly ſhew what our natures are, though we are renewed by grace. *We muſt truſt to the ſupplies, not to the receipts of grace.*

Secondly, When *Job* ſaith, [*My ſoul is weary of my life.*] We learn,

That, *Soul and life in man are two diſtinct things.*

For howſoever (as was toucht in explication) the ſoul is often put for the whole man, and ſo the ſence of *my ſoul is weary*, may be but this, I am weary of my life: yet the Holy Ghoſt would never denominate all man by that, which is not, not a part of man. That's a brutiſh opinion which makes the ſoul nothing, or nothing elſe but life, and this life no more in entity then the life of a beaſt, which vaniſheth, when it dieth. That theſe Opinioniſts tell us, they believe the body ſhall riſe again by the power of God, cannot ſatisfie for this fall, which their opinion gives the ſoul: neither doth the immortality of the ſoul at all contradict (which was threatned for, and is the wages of ſin) the death of the whole man. For death conſiſts not (if we may ſay a privation doth conſiſt) in the annihilation, but in the ſeparation of thoſe parts of man, ſoul and body, which by life are united and kept cloſe together.

Thirdly, When *Job* ſaith, *My ſoul is weary of my life*, we learn,

That the life of man may grow to be a burthen to him.

In *Chap.* 3. *Job* wiſheth for death; his wiſh was examined there, about the lawfulneſs of it; I ſhall now only examine (a touch about which was given lately) whence this wearineſs of life, cauſing wiſhes to be rid of life, doth ariſe. There is a wearineſs of life incident only, and proper to wicked men; And there is a wearineſs of life, which may grow upon the beſt of men. Take a brief account of the uſual grounds of both.

First, Carnal men are often ſick with diſcontent, and die of a humor: If the Lord will not give them their luſts, they bid him take their lives. Neceſſaries and competencies will not ſatisfie them, they muſt have ſuperfluities; they languiſh, if they have not Quails to their Manna, as *Iſrael* once deſired and had. Was it any thing but this, which made *Ahab* go home ſullen and ſad? Sullen ſadneſs is a degree of this wearineſs. *Ahab* had a Kingdom, and yet he could not live without a vineyard. *He that takes away another mans life to obtain what he deſires, thinks his own life ſcarce deſireable, unleſs he may obtain it.* There was a ſpice of this diſtemper in *Jonah*, though a good man, and a Prophet (*Jonah* 4. 8.) becauſe the Lord did but kill his Gourd, kill me too, ſaith *Jonah, He wiſhes himſelf to die, and ſaid* (his Gourd being dead) *It is better for me to die then to live.* It is an exceſs of deſire, when we deſire any outward thing (much more when we deſire things unneceſſary, things not to ſupply our wants, but to ſerve our luſts:) as *Rachel* did children (who are the beſt and nobleſt of outward things) *Give me them, or elſe I die* (Gen. 30. 1.)

Secondly, Some wicked men are wearied of their lives by the horror of their conſciences. A Hell within, makes the world without a Hell too. They who have a ſight of eternal death (as the wages of ſin) without the ſight of a remedy may ſoon be weary of a temporal life. As much peace of conſcience and ſoul-joy in believing, makes ſome of the Saints wiſh themſelves out of the body; ſo alſo doth trouble of conſcience, and grief of ſoul make many of the wicked. A man who is not at all weary of committing ſin may be weary of his life, becauſe he hath committed it. And he, who was never troubled that his wickedneſs is an offence againſt God, may feel his wickedneſs extremely offenſive againſt himſelf. To ſuch a ſoul the evil of ſin is ſo great an evil of puniſhment, that he is ready to cry out with *Cain, My puniſhment is greater then I can bear.* Yea, what his guilty conſcience feared, comes to be the deſire of many under the ſame guilt, *That every one that findeth them would ſlay them:* And ſome are ſo weary of their lives at the ſight of ſin, that they make away their lives themſelves, hoping to get out of the ſight of ſin. There are ſins which cry to God for vengeance, and ſome cry to the ſinner himſelf for vengeance. This cry was ſo loud and forcible in the ears of *Judas*, that it cauſed him to go away and hang himſelf. And what made *Ahithophel* weary of his life, but his wickedneſs? The rejecting of his counſel was not ſo much the reaſon of it, as the ſinfulneſs of his counſel: A good man may be troubled at others, when his good counſel is not accepted, but he grows not unacceptable to himſelf; nay, he is well-pleaſed that he hath given honeſt counſel, though none will take it, though all are diſpleaſed at it. But they who aim not at the pleaſing of God in what they do, think themſelves undone (and dye they will) if they pleaſe not men.

Thirdly, Inordinate cares for the things of this life, make others weary of their lives. He that cannot caſt his care upon God, may ſoon be caſt down himſelf. Chriſt (*Luke* 21. 34.) cautions his Diſciples, *Take heed leſt your hearts be over-charged with the cares of this life.* That which Chriſt would prevent in the Saints, falls often upon carnal men, their hearts are over-charged with cares; cares are compared to a burden, and they are compared to thorns, they do not only preſs, but vex and wound: Their weight preſſes ſome to death, their ſharpneſs wounds others to death: and not a few would go out of the world, becauſe they cannot get ſo much of it, as they would.

Theſe things (among others) make wicked men *weary of their lives.* There are other things which make godly men weary of their lives; ſuch are theſe,

First, The violence of Satans, and the worlds temptations. The ſoul would gladly be rid of the body, that it might be beyond the reach and aſſaults of the Devil, and his aſſiſtants. There's a Serpent every where, but in the heavenly Paradiſe. *Only they complain not of temptation, who are willing ſlaves to the tempter.* The Apoſtle (*1 Cor.* 10. 13.) aſſures the *Corinthians, There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to bear it.* As if he had ſaid, Temptations are ſore burdens, and although yours hitherto have been but ordinary temptations, ſuch as uſually befall the Saints; though yours be moderate afflictions, and of a common ſtature, ſuch as in the eye of reaſon any man may deal with by a common aſſiſtance of grace; yet there are temptations, which (if God, the faithful God ſhould not come in with greater aſſiſtances then uſual) you are not able to bear. *They who wreſtle with more then fleſh and blood, alwayes need more then the ſtrength of fleſh and blood to help them in their wreſtlings.*

wrestlings. And because they are often assaulted with greater strength, therefore they are assisted with greater strength. For if God do either withdraw his help from the Saints, or leave them to wrestle with Satan alone, and to fight single with his Armies, or if he do not proportion the aid he sends to the temptations he permits, they are sadly overcharged though they can never be totally overcome; and 'tis possible to grow weary of the battel, though we are assured of the victory. *It is the honour of the Saints to conquer when they are tempted; but it is their happiness to be above or without temptation.* How many poor souls put up Bills of complaint, and beg prayers against temptations. *Paul prayed thrice;* that is, often and much, *when the messengers of Satan buffeted him;* whether his were an inward or an outward temptation, is doubted; but without doubt that temptation made his life burdensome to him, till he received that answer from God, *My Grace is sufficient for thee.*

Secondly, The Saints are wearied with the weight of their sinful hearts. Inward corruption burdens more then outward temptation; and were it not for corruption within, temptation without could not be very burdensome. The Devil tempted Christ, but because he found *nothing at all in him,* complying with, or suitable to his temptations, therefore Christ threw them off with ease. That enemy without could do us no hurt (he might put us to some trouble) if he found no correspondence within. The traitor in our own bowels opens our ports, and lets in the adversary. His sparks could never enflame us, if he found no tinder in us. The baseness and unbelief, the lusts and vanities of our minds are apt to take fire at every injection. *A gracious soul cannot live here without sin, and yet can easier die then sin.* *Paul* (Rom. 7. 24.) cries out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death,* or, *from this body of death!* That is, *from my body which is subject to death by reason of these remains of carnal corruption or from my carnal corruptions, which are the remains of my spiritual death, and are worse to me then any death.* All the afflictions of his life, and the pains of his body were but a play, and a kind of sport, compared with the trouble which this body of death put him to. He rejoyced in tribulation, but he could not but mourn under corruption. Many poor souls are so vexed with these mystical *Canaanites,* that their spiritual *Canaan* (the state of Grace) is to them like *Egypt,* the Land of their captivity. And when they are commanded to rejoyce, they answer, if we could not sin, we could rejoyce; *How shall we sing the Lords song in a strange Land?* O that we might go home!

Thirdly, The Saints grow weary of their lives through the wickedness of other mens lives; not only do their own corruptions burden them, but (which shews the holiness of their hearts more) the corruptions of others. The sinfulness and pollutions of the times and places wherein they live, especially of persons they are related to, makes their lives grievous, and imbitters all their comforts. *Rebekah,* that good woman, tells her husband *Isaac* (Gen. 27. 46.) *I am weary of my life because of the Daughters of* Heth; *for if* Jacob *take a wife of the daughters of* Heth, *such as these which are of the daughters of the Land, What good shall my life do me?* The sweetness of my life is gone if this son miscarry, as his Brother hath done before him. The Prophet *Jeremy* cries out, O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them: What made him so weary of living among them? (and that was but a step on this side being weary of his life.) The next words shew us; *They be all Adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men* (Jer. 9. 2.) Better be in a waste wilderness among wild beasts, then in a populous City, among beastly men, 'Tis a part of our compleat happiness in heaven, that we shall have no ill neighbours there. They who are evil, can take pleasure in those who do evil. *But the more holiness any one hath, the more is he burdened with the unholiness of others.* And that's the reason why God himself is expresst to be so exceedingly burdened with the sins of men, to be wearied and broken with them, to be laden with them, as a Cart with sheaves, *He is infinitely holy.* *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God* (Eph. 4. 30.) The Spirit is so holy that sin (which is unholiness) grieves him presently. And in proportion, look how much any man is more holy then others, by so much is he more afflicted with the impurity of others. As the holy Spirit of God, who is all holy, so the spirits of holy men (who yet have a mixture of sin) cannot but be afflicted with the sins of men.

Fourthly, Some of the Saints would part with this life, because they have got such assurance and evidence of a better life. When much of eternal life appears to a godly man, he is weary of a temporal life. Natural things are but burdensome trifles to those who are stored with spiritual. Christ saith (*Luke* 5. 39.) *No man having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith the old is better:* He that tastes what is better then he enjoyes, is unsatisfied with all he enjoyes. We can hardly be perswaded what we have is good, when we see better of the same kind. How much more hardly is this perswasion wrought in us, that earthly things (which differ in kind from heavenly) are any great good, when heavenly things are open before us? When the Disciples (at the transfiguration) had but a glimpse of Glory, they say, *It is good to be here; let us build three Tabernacles.* They do not speak comparatively, as if now they had met with somewhat better then ever they had before; but positively, as if they had never met with any good before. When the Spirit carries the Saints into his Wine-cellar, and gives them a draught of everlasting consolations, the wine of worldly comforts will not down; they begin to distrelish the dainties and delicacies of the Creature. A true sight of heaven makes the earth scarce worth the looking after, or the living in. Such live, because God will have them live to do him service, not because they desire to live to serve their own ends. *Paul* was in a great straight betwixt two (*Phil.* 1. 23.) whether he should depart or abide in the flesh: but the straight was not in reference to himself, he was assured dying would be to him but a travelling to *Christ,* and therefore death was to him an easie election. His straight was only this, whether he should not abide still in the flesh, to supply the needs of the Church, and forbear Glory a while, that he might prepare others for Glory. The same Apostle (2 *Cor.* 5. 4.) saith in the first verse, *We know that if the earthly house of this Tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house made without hands, eternal in the heavens.* When their Faith was thus upon the wing, soaring up to the assurance of *an house made without hands;* they grew weary of their smoakie cottages presently: they could not endure to live in those poor Lodges, corruptible bodies, having a view of such glorious Palaces; therefore he adds, *In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloathed upon with our house which is from heaven.* The word signifies groaning, as a man that hath a weighty burden lying upon him, which makes him fetch his wind even from his bowels. The body is the burden, rather then the house or the cloathing of the soul, when once the soul knows it shall be cloathed with an house which is from heaven. As (I said before) much of hell in this life, makes wicked men weary of this life, so also doth much of heaven. The *Roman* Orator tells us, that a young man, who lived in great prosperity, having read *Plato* about the Immortality of the Soul, was so affected, that he threw himself violently from a high wall into the Sea, that he might have a proof of that Immortality, by his experience of it. The Gospel forbids such haste, and knows no such wayes to happiness. As Christ (not we) hath purchased that estate; so Christ must lead us (we must not thrust our selve) into the possession of it: but yet the earnests, the fore-tastes and first-fruits of heaven, which the Saints find in this life (though they be such as eat the marrow & fatness, such as may have the very cream and spirits of the Creature to live upon) make them groan often and earnestly for the next life. *This is good, but heaven is better.*

Στενάζομεν.

Cic. *in* Tusc. Quæst. *de* Cleombroto.

Lastly, Which is the case of this Text, The Saints may grow weary of their lives from the outward afflictions and troubles of this life. Sickness and pains upon the body, poverty and want in the estate, reproaches and unkindnesses put upon our persons, with a thousand evils to which this life is subject every day, cause many to wish and long for an end of their dayes. And though they are ready to submit to the will of God, if he hath appointed to them a longer conflict with these evils, yet they cannot but shew their willingness, yea their gladness to part with their lives,

lives, that they may part with such troubles accompanying their lives.

And as the afflictions of the body natural, so of the body politick, may make them weary of their lives. How many in *Germany* and *Ireland* have been so wearied with hearing the voyce of the Oppressor, that they have wished themselves in their graves, only to get out of their hearing? And with us, since these troubles began, have not many been tired with living? Have they not cried after death, and wooed the grave, as being weary of the world? The Prophet (*Isa.* 32.2.) speaks of a weary Land. *A man* (meaning Christ) *shall be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary Land.* The Land it self (being insensible) could not be weary; but he calls it a *weary Land*, because the inhabitants living in the Land, were wearied with the troubles and continual vexations which they found there. In these cases the soul of a Believer stands (like *Abraham*, when the Angels passed by) at the Tent-door of his Body, ready to come forth, looking when God will but call; yea, he cries out that he may be called (in the language of *Job*) *My soul is weary of my life.*

I will leave my complaint upon my self, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

I will leave, &c.] That is, I will carry my complaint no further, it shall trouble none but my self.

The Original signifies also to strengthen or fortifie (*Neh.* 3.8.) *They fortified* Jerusalem *unto the broad wall*; we put in the Margin, *They left* Jerusalem *to the broad wall*: so the sence of *Job* may be this, My pain does not abate, but encrease, why then should I remit or abate my complaint? I will strengthen my complaint as long as my sorrows are strengthened.

My complaint.] That word hath been explained before; it signifies an inward, as well as an outward complaint, and that most properly. Some translate it so here; *I will groan in silence with my self.* But the Text requires, rather that we interpret it of an external complaint formed up into words. The Septuagint are express, and so is *Austin*, *I will leave my words upon my self:* both interpreting it of a vocal declaration of his mind and meaning.

Permittam mihi mussitationem. Tygur. *Silentio egomet ingemiscam & Philosophabor.* Polych. *Deponam à me querimoniam meam.* Jun.

The greatest difficulty lies in those words [*upon my self*] One renders, *I will leave my complaint off*, or *lay it aside from my self.* As if *Job* meant to give over this work of complaining, and to compose his heart to quietness, how unquiet soever his estate continued. But his following practice seems to confute this interpretation, and to deny any such intention.

Others give this sence, I will speak at my own peril, and if any danger or inconvenience come of it, I will bear it my self, I will run that venture. *Job* uses such language (chap. 13.13.) *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may speak, and let come on me what will.* We may gloss it with that Heroical resolution of Queen *Esther*, (Est. 4. 16.) *So will I go in unto the King, which is not according to the Law, and if I perish, I perish.* The Hebrew Preposition hath various acceptions.

Præpositio ב *frequenter per super, nonnunquam per cum, & aliquando per adversus redditur. Nihil contra Deum, in me tantum desaviam.* Pin.

First, (as we) It is translated *Upon.* Secondly, *With.* Thirdly, *Against.* Fourthly, *Concerning or about.*

We may take in any of, or all these translations. And from all, the meaning of *Job* seems to rise thus, *I intend not to speak a word against God, I will not charge the Almighty with injustice, or with rigor, to do which, were highest wickedness; I purpose indeed to complain, but I will complain only upon or with my self, concerning or against my self, I will not utter a word against the wisdom of God, or accuse his Providence; I will not shoot an arrow against Heaven, or send out a murmur against the most High.*

There are two wayes of leaving our complaints upon our selves.

First, When we let them lie wholly upon our selves, and will not go to God for strength or patience to bear them. Who can sufficiently mourn over them, who leave their complaints in this sence upon themselves? It is sinful and foolish to leave our complaints thus upon our selves. 'Tis a duty to leave them upon God, and to powr them into the bosom of *Christ*, who can, and who only can either ease us of them, or make them easie to us; who can, and who only can take off our burdens, or enable us to carry them. The burden of our ordinary cares will break our backs, if left upon our selves; how then shall we in our own strength stand under the burden of extreamest sorrows?

Secondly, We leave our complaint upon our selves, when we make no excuses or evasions, but plainly charge the fault upon our selves. Thus we ought to leave all our complaints upon our selves. It is sinful and foolish to charge any of them wholly upon the Devil, or at all upon God. An honest heart takes them home, and saith, God is righteous, but I am a transgressor; what he hath done, he may do, and he hath done justly in all that he hath done. This is the sence of *Job*'s resolution, *I will leave my complaint upon my self.* Hence observe,

Whatsoever a godly man suffereth, he will not charge God with it, but himself.

He is more careful of the honour of God, then of his his own peace; and had rather die, then the glory of God should suffer. *O Lord* (saith *Daniel*, chap. 9 7.) *righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of face:* And (*vers.* 14.) *The Lord is righteous in all his works which he doth, for we obeyed not his voyce.* When the Angel was smiting *Israel* with the Plague of Pestilence, *David* bespeaks the Lord in reference to the people, *Lo, I have sinned, and done wickedly; but these sheep what have they done? Let thine hand I pray thee be against me,* &c. (2 *Sam.* 24. 17.) I take the blame to my self, Lord, upon me let thy stroak be, even upon me, not upon *Israel*: So saith the soul in reference unto God; upon me be the blame of all the troubles and afflictions which I feel, not upon God; What hath God done? All that he hath done is right, and just and good. *It is an argument of a holy frame of heart, to be often judging our selves, and alwayes acquitting of God,* to be often complaining of our selves, and to be ever exalting God; to be alwayes thanking him for our comforts, and alwayes saying, we may thank our selves for our sorrows. Whatsoever the Lord saith or doth concerning us, we should not only say with *Hezekiah* (when a sad message was brought him, 2 *Kings* 20. 19.) *Good is the word of the Lord*; but also, good are the works of the Lord. Many men are ready to lay their sins (much more their sorrows) upon God. So the Apostle represents them (*Rom.* 9. 19.) *Thou wilt say unto me, why doth he then find fault?* Why doth God complain of us? We have more reason to complain of, and charge our faults on God. If he hardeneth whom he will, why are we blamed for being hardened? *For who hath resisted his will?* Thus they question God, who hath resisted thy will? whose lives are nothing else but a continued war against, and resistance of his will. They who strive most to comply with the will of God, complain often of themselves for resisting it. And though they know God hardeneth whom he will, yet they will not leave the hardening of any upon God, as his fault, but as his prerogative. They confess it to be as great an act of holiness in God, to harden some men in sin, as it is to soften others by his Grace: Mercy appears in the one, Justice appears chiefly in the other, but holiness equally in both.

I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

A bitter soul bringeth forth bitter words. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. If there be abundance of joy in the heart, the mouth will speak joyfully; and if there be abundance of sorrow in the heart, the mouth speaks sorrowfully. As when there is abundance of filth in the heart, the mouth speaks filthiness. We may see the Lines and Image of a mans mind drawn upon his words. One man speaks in the anger of his soul, and he speaks eagerly; another speaks in the pride of his soul, and he speaks proudly. A third speaks in the prophaneness of his soul, and he speaks prophanely. Again, one speaks in the courage of his soul, and he speaks couragiously. Another speaks in the patience of his soul, and he speaks patiently. A third speaks in the faith of his soul, and he speaks believingly. There is a nearness to this sence, in that of the sixtieth Psalm (*ver.* 6.) *God hath spoken in his holiness*: and we are assured he cannot but speak holily, who is *all holy.* I (saith *Job*) *will speak in the bitterness of my soul,* and he spake bitterly; his soul was bitter, and so was his speech too.

Loquar quicquid mihi afflictio suggesserit.

What

What he means by the bitterness of his soul, hath been opened heretofore in the third Chapter, and in the seventh Chapter, *v.* 11. Thither I refer the Reader.

In brief, *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, is either this, I will let out the sorrow of my heart at my tongue, and it shall appear by what I say, what I feel. Or,

Non tam mea futura sunt verba quam meæ amaritudinis; hæc enim imperat & extorquet orationem.

Further, *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul*, may be taken as an Apology for what he spake. As if he had said, *Do not charge my complaint upon my own account; If I speak bitterly, it is not I that speak, but the bitterness that is in me.* As *Paul*, when *he did what he would not*, pleads in the seventh of the *Romans*, *It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* It is not I *Paul*, an Apostle, nor I regenerate *Paul*; but the remains of unregenerate *Paul*, of *Paul* a Pharisee, which rebell against the Law of God. In the same manner saith *Job* here, and so say the Saints; Are we at any time impatient, and complain more then becometh us? know it is not we that speak, but the *bitterness of our hearts*; the thing which we would not, that speak we; and therefore it is not we that speak, but the sorrow that dwelleth in us.

So then, speaking in the bitterness of the soul, notes either the excess or greatness of a complaint, or the cause and spring of a complaint. The complaints of *Job* came not from the ordinary temper of the spirit, but from the troubles of his estate, distempering his spirit, he desired rather to be praising and glorifying God for his receipts, then complaining over his own wants. But his wants were such, as he could not refrain from complaining; *I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.*

But what speaks he?

As when he first spake these words (*chap.* 7. 11.) he presently turned his speech to God, desiring him to deal more sweetly with him; and puts the question, *Am I a Sea, or a Whale?* &c.

So here, after he hath set forth his resolvedness to complain, he presently turns his speech to God, imploring favour, *I will say unto God, do not condemn me* (verse 2.) and he puts the question (*verse* 3.) *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?* As if he had said, *Lord, I cannot but complain of my condition, and I must take the boldness to complain to thee; but I will not complain of thee, as if thou wert mine enemy; nor will I contend with thee, as if thou wert a party; my meaning and scope is only this, to supplicate thee as my Judge; I will say unto God, Do not condemn me,* &c.

VERS. 2, 3.

I will say unto God, Do not condemn me, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

IN the former verse *Job* resolved to complain; in this second he begins his complaint; *I will say unto God*, &c. He complains to God, not against God. He leaves his complaint upon himself, but he rendereth and presenteth it before the Lord; *I will say unto God.*

What he saith, may be cast into a double request.

First, That God would not condemn him.

Secondly, That he would instruct or convince him; as if he had said, *Lord, do not use thy absolute power to destroy me; do not reject me, because thou wilt: Shew me the reason of thy proceedings, that I may either sit down contented with what is amiss in my state, or reform and amend what is amiss in my life.*

Do not condemn me.

Μὴ μὲ ἀσυβῆν δεῖξαι. *Noli me docere impium esse.* Sept. *Fortè graviore aliqua tristitia obrutus, impiam aliquam vocem emittam, q. d. Noli occasionem quærere mei lapsus.*

The *Septuagint* hath a very different rendring of this clause, *I will say unto God, Do not teach me to be wicked*, or to do wickedly; but is it not wickedness as black as hell, to suppose that God teaches any man to be wicked? The Lord hates wickedness, and can he teach it? The Lord punishes wickedness, therefore he cannot teach it.

The mind of the Greek Translators is not that God doth formally teach any to be wicked, but that some learn wickedness, or are ensnared in sin by that which God doth unto them: As if *Job* had said, *Lord, do not encrease and heap affliction upon me: Do not over-grieve and burden the spirit of thy poor creature, lest he should even be forced through impatience, to speak unadvisedly, or to do any thing unbecomingly: Lord, do not occasion me through the extremity of my afflictions, to say or do that which I must repent and be ashamed of.* Which is also the sence of that Petition in the Lords Prayer, *Lead us not into temptation. Great afflictions lay us open to great temptations.* And as great calamity is an occasion for our Graces and Virtues to shew themselves; so also for our Lusts and Corruptions. Some never appear so holy; and others (I mean of those who are really godly) never shew so much unholiness, as in affliction. Hence that request of *Agur* (Prov. 30. 9.) *Lord, feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.* Such is the meaning of the *Septuagint*, when they say, *Lord, teach me not to be wicked.* God teaches man to be holy, both by his word, and by his works; yet some of his works may occasion the flesh to learn wickedness, and to act wickedly.

Verba sunt hominis se excusantis, & quasi præcastigatis liberiorè suam orationem, Æqu.

Secondly, These words may be understood as a Preface, or a Rhetorical introduction to prepare the ears of the Lord to receive the *Bill of Complaint*, which *Job* was about to put up unto him: As if he had said, *Lord (possibly) through the tediousness of my pain, and the continuance of my sorrows, words may slip from me, of which I shall not be able to give a good account, or others make a fair construction; yet, Lord, do not condemn me: Do not censure me; I speak only to excuse my self, not to accuse thy Majesty, to speak only in my own defence; let not what I speak be an offence to thee.* Lord, I have so great a weight of affliction upon me, that I cannot but hope thou wilt give my words some grains of allowance, if they should want their due weight of wisdom and of holiness. As *Abraham* when he was about to pray for *Sodom*, makes his apologies and preparatory speeches unto to God; *Let not my Lord be angry, and I will speak; and I will speak yet this once* (Gen. 18.) So here, *I will speak*, &c. But I will first say unto God, *Do not condemn me.* If (my infirmities prevailing over me) I speak amiss, Lord, be not critical with me, examine not every word strictly. Strong passions make an unruly Orator; and when the Speaker bears much, he may expect to be much born with by his Hearers. That's a second, But rather,

רשע *Verbum condemnandi ferè semper ad culpam pertinet. Noli me peragere reum aut sontem pronunciare. His suppliciis videris me velut impium, sceleratumq; palam declarare.* Pin. *Ne quæso me ita affligas ut omnes qui hoc vident, & judicent me propter peccata gravissima talia pati.*

Thirdly, We may take the words as a plain deprecation, *Do not condemn me*; the Hebrew is literally thus rendred, *Do not wicked me*, that is, *Do not count me, or cast me for a wicked man.* But did the Lord account *Job* as a wicked man? Or had *Job* an opinion that the Lord did account him so? Surely *Job* had good (yet humble) thoughts of himself, though he endur'd so many evils; yea, he was perswaded that the Lord (who laid those evils on him) had good thoughts of him too: and when he saith, *Do not condemn me*, doubtless he had hopes, possibly he had assurances that the Lord had justified and acquitted him: Why then resolves he, *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me?*

First, We may expound him thus, Lord, Do not that against me which may give the world occasion to condemn me; or, Lay not thy hand so heavily upon me, lest they that understand not the reason of thy dealings, should be occasioned to adjudge me wicked: though *Job* had a witness above, and a record on high, though he knew his reputation was unblemished before God in the midst of all these breaches upon his Family, and botches upon his Body, yet he knew men would condemn him as guilty of the most notorious evils of sin, when they saw him languishing under such unparallell'd evils of punishment. This moved him to pray, Lord, Do not condemn me, by making me an Object of the worlds condemnation.

Permitto rerum aliarum jactu-ram, sed non possum non dolere vehementer læsâ meæ sanctitatis & innocentiæ existimationem. Pin.

Again, The words (*Do not condemn me*) may have this meaning; Lord, Do what thou wilt with me, only do not condemn me. His earnest deprecation of this, may carry in it a willing submission to any thing besides this. And 'tis very usual with men to do so; we think we could bear any affliction but that, or better then that which is upon us. Yet *Job* had great reason to chuse any affliction rather then this. He might well say, I can (through thy Grace enabling me) bear these or any other pains of my body, and losses in my estate, but I know not how to bear the loss of mine innocency, or the reproach of being thrown out of thy favour. The world and these my friends will be confirmed in their misapprehensions of me, if thou dost not speedily deliver me, and confute their rash judgment by some eminent mercy.

Condemnation hath three things in it which make it grievous.

First, The penalty of the sentence.

Secondly, The disfavour of the Judge.

Thirdly, The stain of his integrity who is condemned.

To have but so much as a suspition or jealousie of the displeasure of God, afflicts the spirit of a godly man, more then all his other afflictions. Though *Job* had a sure interest in the favour of God, and was freed from the penalty of condemnation, by his union with Christ; yet sometimes clouds and darkness came over him, and terrours of the Lord did fight against him, which caused those sad lamentations in the sixth Chapter: but here he is chiefly troubled at the stain of his integrity in the eye of the world, who beholding his afflictions. blotted him as a wicked man, and esteemed him forsaken of God, even utterly discarded and cast out of his sight. Hence observe,

First, That, *Great afflictions carry a charge of wickedness upon the afflicted.*

Paul having escaped death in a wreck at Sea, could not escape a hard censure at Land, when a Viper was seen upon his hand: *This man* (say those *Barbarians* of *Melita*, among themselves) *is no doubt a murderer, whom though he hath escaped the Sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live* (*Acts* 28. 4.) We find also that those exemplary judgments which befel the *Galileans*, whose blood *Pilate* had mingled with their Sacrifices (it seems he caused them to be slain while they offered Sacrifice) and those upon whom the Tower of *Siloe* fell, left them all under a charge of highest wickedness; else Christ had not taken it off, saying, *Suppose ye that those* Galileans *were sinners above all the* Galileans, *because they suffered such things? or those eighteen upon whom the Tower of* Siloe *fell, think ye that they were sinners above all that dwelt in* Jerusalem? As if he had said, I, who know your thoughts, know ye are ready to think so. It is a very ill, but it is a very common thing, to judge both of persons and of causes by success. Doth a man gain and thrive in the world? here's a man sure whom God loves, saith the world. Though a *Jeremy* can say, *Why doth the way of the wicked prosper?* He can see them to them to be wicked through all their prosperity; yet, how often are they accounted righteous who prosper? and good, who enjoy good? But doth a man wither and go down the wind in the world? He is a man sure, whom God hates, saith the world. Man is apt to think them the worst, who suffer worst, and that they have sinned most, who have most sorrow. The Prophet (*Isa.* 53. 4, 5.) foretels that Christ himself, *while he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows, should be esteemed stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.* Christ was esteemed a great sinner, when God gave him up to be smitten for sinners; therefore he adds, *But he was wounded for our transgressions*, &c. Hence observe,

Secondly, *The displeasure of God is more grievous to the Saints, then all other pressures and sorrows whatsoever.*

Job saith not, Lord, do not afflict me, do not chasten me, lay not thine hand upon me more; but, *Lord, do not condemn me:* It is infinitely worse to be condemned, then to be chastened, yea, then to be killed. Condemnation carries in it an argument of disfavour, and that makes it so burdensome. As the love of God is better to us, then all the good things of this life (*Psal.* 4. 6.) *Many will say, who will shew us any good?* This is the great Query of the world: but what saith *David? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us; thou hast put gladness in my heart, more then in the time that their Corn and their Wine encreased.* And as the favour of God is better to us then the good things of this life, so then life, which is better then all earthly goods (*Psal.* 63. 3.) *Thy loving kindness is better then life.* Now, I say, as the Love of God is better to us then the best things in the world; so the displeasure of God is worser to us then the worst things that are in the world: all the Torments and Racks, all the Sicknesses and distempers, all the Reproaches and Contempts of men have not so much evil in them to us, as one Frown from God. Hence, as when two sore Diseases (suppose the Gout and the Stone) both very painful, yet one much exceeding, at once afflict the Body, the Patient forgets the less; so it is, when inward and outward sorrows at once seize upon one man, when the Arrows of God are fastened in his spirit, he forgets his Arrow in his flesh. *The wounds of the Spirit heal all the wounds of the flesh*; they make them as if they were no wounds, or not worth the complaining of.

Thirdly observe, *To be accounted wicked, is a sore affliction.*

It is an affliction to have an ill name, though we deserve it not, and to be accounted wicked, though we are not; it is, I grant, far better to be censured, then to be flattered. It is very ill when others count us, and worst of all, when we account our selves better then we are; yet it is no small evil to be accounted worse then we are, especially to be accounted evil, when we are good, A wound in our honour is not a wound to be slighted. It was no small part of the sufferings of Christ, that he was numbred with the transgressors in his death, and called *Beelzebub*, a friend of Publicans and sinners, while he lived.

Fourthly, Observe from this, *Do not condemn me.*

That, *Condemnation is the adjudging of one to be wicked.*

Condemnation supposeth a man guilty, and leaveth him under a penalty. As *Justification* is the adjudging and declaring of a person to be righteous, or the accepting of him for righteous in another, *who* is not righteous in himself; so *Condemnation* is the adjudging, pronouncing and declaring of a man to be wicked, who in himself is wicked. That's *Job*'s first Request, I will say unto God, *Do not condemn me*: As if he had said, *Seeing thou art the God and Father of all who call upon thee in Faith, and fear thy Name; therefore in Faith and Filial Reverence I beseech thee to acquit me of my sin; yea, because I know thou hast acquitted me, therefore deal not with me as if I were condemned for sin. Make it appear that thou art my God, either by removing these stroaks (which represent me to the world as thy Enemy, rather then thy Son) or by removing the dread and terror of them, that they may appear as exercises of my Grace, not as revenges upon, or punishments of my sin; that while my Body is pained with thy Rod, my Soul may rejoyce in thy Love; and that while I am under this Cross, I may triumph over it. Or if thou art resolved still to detain me at this rate of suffering, then I have another humble Suit:*

Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

That's his second Request.

Shew me.] The word signifies to make a matter intelligible or plain to the understanding: *If I must feel these pains, then make me to understand them also: Let not the whole weight of my sorrows lie upon my Sense, manifest them to my Reason; the more I know of them, the better I shall manage and endure them.* חודיע *Fac scire me.*

Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.] The Word which we translate *contend*, signifies properly contention between party and party, not the Sentence of the Judge. The Parties to a Suit, contend, but do not condemn. The Judge condemns the delinquent party, but he doth not contend. His Office is, to hear the Cause, and upon full evidence on both sides, to pass his Sentence. *Job* speaks in the stile of both, desiring the Lord not to condem him as a Judge, and to shew him why he contended with him, as a Party. Thus the Lord is said in *Hosea*, to have a *controversie with the Inhabitants of* Israel (*Hos.* 4. 1.) And it seems by another Prophet, that he had continued a long one with them, and therefore promised, *I will not contend for ever*, Isa. 57. 16. ריב *Partium est non judicis, partes litigant, non condemnant, judex condemnat, non litigat.* Dru.

Further, *Cause me to know*, or, *shew me wherefore thou contendest with me*, is, as if *Job* had said, *Lord, my troubles and*

Oportet omnibus notam fieri causam mearum ægritudinum, nequis ex re manifesta ad occultiorem aliam causam investigandam temerè dilaberetur. Pined.

and sorrows are very well known, they run into every eye, they are apparent enough to the world; all see that thy hand is lifted up, and I feel it: but the reason of it I do not understand, much less do they; there is a curtain drawn between the world, and the reason why I am troubled; yea, there is a curtain drawn between me, and the reason of my troubles: Now therefore, Lord, draw back the curtain, or unvail my eyes; let me see clearly, and let the world see why I am thus afflicted; for though I know I am a sinner and have many failings, yet I know nothing my self: I am not conscious of any wickedness, or close hypocrisie, much less of any prophaneness or apostacy, which should cause thee to pour out such full viols of thy indignation upon me; Then, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

This [Wherefore] may have a three-fold reference;

First, *Shew me*, whether it be for sin or no?

Secondly, If it be for sin, Shew me for what sin it is?

Thirdly, If it be not for sin, Shew me for what else it is? What is the thing thou aimest at and intendest? What's the end thou proposest to thy self in these my unheard of afflictions?

But is it lawful to put such queries, or to desire such resolutions from the Lord? Ought not *Job* to have prayed for wisdom how to bear his cross, rather then have asked knowledge, why it was laid upon him?

Job desired a reason, first, Not to satisfie his curiosity, but his conscience; not that he would be prying into Gods secrets, or unlocking the cabinet of his counsel to see what was there; but that the secrets of his own heart might be opened, and a discovery made to him of what was hid there. He desired a reason, not doubting the justice or goodness of God, but as suspecting some evil in himself, as yet unseen.

Or, secondly, He desired a reason, not so much to satisfie himself, as that the world might be satisfied; that they who judged and condemned him, as an hypocrite, might have their rash judgment confuted and answered by a determination from heaven. As if he had further said, *Lord, if thou wouldest but shew me this thing, it would either stop the mouthes of those who have been so forward to censure me; or stop my mouth from any further complainings to thee: I cannot rescue my self out of thy hand, nor dare I accuse thy wisdom, in laying thy hand upon me. But, Lord, deal not with me by the strict rule of thy soveraignty, which is to act above all rules, and to do what thou wilt, because thou wilt, without giving a reason to thy creature. I cannot charge thee with injustice, if thou shouldst resolve to keep me still unresolved. I know thou art not obliged to give me an account of any of thy matters; but Lord, condescend so far to dust and ashes. Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.* If it be for sin, a sight of that (through thy grace) will humble me for it, and cause me to return to thee from it. If it be for trial, I shall undergo it with more patience, and my friends will behold me under it with more charity. Let all or some of these considerations prevail with thy majesty, to open this secret to me, and expound the mystery of my afflictions; *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.* Observe hence,

First, *An afflicted soul is very sollicitous about the reason of his affliction.*

He that knows what it is to be in the dark, loves not to be in the dark. As natural, so moral light is sweet, and spiritual light is sweetest of all. Man would not be under concealments, or have all about him mysteries and riddles. Evil men love not that light which shews them a rule against their sins, but any man would have light to shew him the reason of his sufferings. To be troubled we know not why, is an aggravation of our troubles. *That is more then felt, which is only felt.* As to know the cause of a disease, leads and lets us into the way of a perfect cure, so to know it is half a cure. *Job*, as here he doth, so heretofore he had complained that his way was hidden (*Chap.* 3. 23.) and here as before, he solicites that his way might be cleared to him.

Secondly observe, *A godly man may be long in the dark about the reason of Gods dealings with him.*

He labours alwayes to give an account of his own heart and wayes to God, but he is seldom able to give an account of the wayes of God toward him. The way of God both in mercy and in judgment is in the Sea, and his foot-steps are not seen. As there is much of the Word of God, which a sincere heart after many prayers and much study, is not able to give a reason of: so also are there many of his works. The Text of both is dark to us, till God make the Comment, and he sees it best sometimes to make us call and call, wait and wait before he makes it. There was famine in the Land of *Israel* three years, year after year, and yet *David* knew not the cause; doubtless he did often examine his own heart, and look into the Kingdom, to see what might be a provocation there, but saw nothing, till (after three years) he enquired of the Lord, who answered, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the* Gibeonites (2 *Sam.* 21. 1.) It is more then probable that *David* had enquired of the Lord before that time. A holy heart, especially one so holy as *David* was, can hardly let personal affliction be a day or an hour old, without enquiring of the Lord about it: And shall we think that *David* let this National affliction grow three years old, before he enquired of the Lord about it? Surely, then this enquiry after the end of three years, was that grand and most solemn enquiry by *Urim* and *Thummim*, appointed as the last refort to God in cases of greatest difficulty and concernment; till *David* used this means, he found no resolution of that case, why the Lord contended with his Kingdom by famine, year after year. Neither had *Job* got resolution (when he thus complained) why the Lord contended with him, by sore diseases and mighty terrors, day after day.

But because it might yet be wondered at by some, how he durst adventure to put up such a request to God; he argues further, in the next verse, that the state wherein he was, seemed to necessitate him to it, and to prompt or put that request into his mouth; As if he had said, *My condition cries aloud to me, that I should cry aloud to God, Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. For, far be it from me to think that the Lord delighteth in oppression, in breaking the work of his own hands, or in maintaining the works of wicked men: wicked Judges use to do so, whom God will never encourage (as with a light shining from heaven) by his example. Far be it from me to think so dishonourably of God, and therefore I am thus importunate to know the reason of his dealings with me, and what his thoughts are concerning me.*

Ne cui mirũ videatur istud à me postulari, res ipsa huc me adegit, absit enim à me, ut tibi placere posse existimem violentam cujuspiam oppressionem. Bez.

Vers. 3. Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress? that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked.

Nequaquam probat aliorum iniquã vim multò minus ipse alios opprimit. Sanct.

Is it good, &c.] I am sure it is not, it is not pleasing unto thee to oppress, to despise the work of thy hands, thou delightest not to shine upon the counsel of the wicked: Thou canst not endure any of these evils acted by man, much less wilt thou act them thy self: Thou who art just, even justice it self, canst not love oppression; thou who art merciful, even mercy it self, wilt not despise the work of thine hands: thou who art holy, even holiness it self, how shouldest thou delight in wicked men? Thou art of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, and approve of it. What blasphemy then is it to imagine that thou dost practise it. Thy justice, thy mercy, thy holiness, are such as cannot admit the taint of these aspersions.

Omnes vias injustitiæ quibus terreni judices corrumpi & jus pervertere solent à Domino conatur amoliri. Mer.

So then, in *vers.* 3, 4. *Job* reckons up those wayes, by which earthly men corrupt or pervert justice; and he removes them all from the Lord. Some men do, but God doth not oppress: Some men do, but God doth not destroy the work of his hands: Some men do, but God never doth shine upon the counsel of the wicked.

Interrogatio sensum reddit omnino contrariam, nequaquam probat, &c. Sanct.

Is it good to thee that thou dost oppress? &c.

Ab absurdis argumentatur, quæ in Deo minimè sunt, tamen cogitari possunt ab infirmitate humana. Jun.

These interrogations (we see) are vehement negations, they flatly and peremptorily deny, what they seem doubtingly to enquire. The sence is, It is not good unto thee; yea, it is evil in thy sight to oppress, &c. Thou hatest oppression, wrong dealing shall not dwell with thee. *Job* puts these questions, not as if he questioned, whether it were good to the Lord to oppress, or good to destroy the work of his hands, and to shine upon the counsel of the wicked; These were no points of controversie with him, nor did he

seek resolution about them. Yea, he therefore begs a reason of the Lord, wherefore he was so oppressed, because he knew it was not good unto *Him* that he should oppress.

טוב *Bonum triplex denotat.* 1. *Utile.* 2. *Jucundū.* 3. *Honestum.*

Is it good unto thee?] The Hebrew signifies three things.

First, That which is profitable.

Secondly, That which is pleasant.

Thirdly, That which is just, right, or honourable, any thing tending to reputation. And there may be this threefold sence of it in this place.

Numquid tibi proderit? Vatab.

First, *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Comes there any advantage unto the Lord by oppressing? Surely none, What profit is there in our blood?

Secondly, *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Is it pleasing or delightful? Is the Lord taken with the afflicting of his people? I know he doth not willingly afflict the children of men.

Thirdly, *Is it good unto thee?* that is, Dost thou reckon it thine honour to lay thy hand severely upon thy poor creatures? No, it is thy glory to pass by a transgression. Now seeing it is not good unto thee any of these wayes, seeing thou hast no gain or profit by it, no joy or delight in it, no glory or honour from it. Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me; That's still the burden of this mournful Song, *Is it good unto thee?*

עשק *Significat opprimere aliquem verbis aut factis. Nunquid bonum tibi videtur, si calumnieris me?* Vulg.

That thou shouldst oppress?] The word which we translate to *Oppress*, signifies a double oppression. First, An oppression by our words. And secondly, An oppression by our actions, the oppression of the tongue, and the oppression of the hand. The tongue is a great tyrant, the tongue will lay on load, and draw blood. The Vulgar understands it of this tongue-oppression; *Is it good for thee that thou shouldest calumniate or slander me?* that is, Give others occasion to speak evil of me. That is a good sence. Slander and censure wound deep, hard words bruise the credit and break the heart, as well as hard blows bruise the flesh, and break the bones. But take it here rather for oppression by outward violence: So the word is often used, (*Psal.* 119. 122.) *I have done judgment and justice, give me not over to mine oppressors*, to those who would wrong me, because I have done right. And it noteth, as an open or violent oppression, so a cunning, subtil oppression, a cheating, fraudulent oppression. All wrong, how close and cunning soever, is oppression. We have that sence of the word (*Hos.* 12. 7.) *He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress.* How doth a Merchant oppress? He comes not like a thief or a *Nimrod* with a sword in his hand, bidding you, Deliver your purse or your life, commanding you to give up your right, or your liberty; but while in buying and selling, in trading and dealing, he offers you a fair bargain, or as we say, a penny-worth for your penny, he smites you secretly, and cuts your throat (as famine doth) without a knife: the balances of deceit are in his hand. Balances are put for all instruments, or means of trading, by these he deceives: light weights oppress the State, as a heavy weight presses the body. The word imports also oppression by with-holding what is due, as well as by taking away what we duly hold (*Deut.* 24. 14.) *Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy*; that is, thou shalt not detain or keep back any part of his wages.

The word (you see) is of a large sence, *Is it good unto thee to oppress?* I know thou wilt not oppress me, either by speaking evil of, or over-censuring me; either by open violence, or by secret fraud; either by taking from me what I have, or by detaining from me, what I ought to have. Thou wilt not oppress either with tongue or hand; either as a robber with thy sword, or a merchant with thy balances. Thus *Job* expostulates upon highest confidence, both of the justice and holiness of God; as if he had said, *Lord, I know thou doest not love to oppress; no thou art merciful and full of compassion. Whence is it then that thou seemest to act so unlike thy self? Is this thy pity to a poor creature, and thy love to the work of thy hands? Thou usest to rejoyce in the consolation of thy people, and mercy pleaseth thee; Thou usest to send out rivers of goodness for wearied souls to bathe in, and streams of comfort for thirsty souls to drink and be refreshed in. How is it then that a bitter cup is put to my lips continually, and that I am overwhelmed in a salt Sea, in a Sea of gall and bitterness?*

Hence observe, *God is so good and gracious that he loves not to greive his creature.*

Among men (*Micah* 7. 4.) *The best of them is as a brier, the most upright is sharper then a thorn hedge.* Even they that seem most gentle and compassionate, will yet sometimes scratch like briars, and tear like thorns: but the Lord changeth not, neither do his compassions fail. The actings of God appear sometimes unsutable to his nature, but they are never so. When he breaks us to pieces, he delights not in our breakings; nor doth he ever break his own, but with an intent to bind them up again. God is so far from loving to oppress, that one of his most eminent works of providence is, to relieve those who are oppressed (*Psal.* 12. 4.) *For the oppression of the poor will I arise, saith the Lord.* And when the Lord arises, oppressors shall fall. *O Lord* (cryes *Hezekiah* in his sickness) *I am oppressed, undertake for me* (Isa. 38. 14.) As if he had said, this disease like a mercileſs tyrant oppresses my spirit, death hath even mastred me, and got the victory over my house of clay. Lord, Come to my rescue, thou wast wont to deliver poor men, as a prey out of the hand, yea mouths of their oppressors. O deliver me from this cruel sickness, which is ready to oppress my life, and hale me as a prisoner to the grave. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress?* And,

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?

DAM *Significat rejicere cum fastidio, tanquam vile & contemptum quid.* Mer. in Pagn. *Ex fastidio & contempta sequi solet rei contempta oppressio, aut abjectio. Hunc hominem quem tuis manibus formasti de luto terræ.* Dru.

This clause hath the same sence in general with the former, *It is not good unto thee*, It is neither pleasing nor profitable, nor honourable, *That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands.*

Some translate this clause by oppression, *Is it good that thou shouldest oppress the work of thine hands?* The word in propriety signifies to *despise*: we have met with it more then once before; it noteth also loathing, yea abhorring. And it may very well bear that other sence of oppressing: for when a man loaths a thing and abhors it, he will quickly slight and oppress it: who cares what becomes of that which he abhors? These two are joyned together (2 *King.* 17. 20.) *The Lord rejected all the seed of* Israel, *and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight.* When once the Lord rejected, or despised the seed of *Israel*, they were presently afflicted and delivered up to spoiling.

יגע *Propriè laborem & lassitudinem quandam in efficiendo opere denotat, ex quo orationis hujus vis amplificatur.*

That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands. He means *himself* or any other man; all men being the work of Gods hands. The word which we translate *work*, strictly taken, signifies hard work, extream labour, labour with weariness. Here understand it in a large sence, for God works not to weariness. And when after he had finished the whole work of creation, it is said by *Moses* (Gen. 2. 2.) That *he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made.* The meaning is only this, he gave over or ceased to work, not that his work put him to any pain or need of rest.

But why is man called, *The work of Gods hands?* Hath God (who is a Spirit) hands or any bodily part?

By an ordinary figure in Scripture, hands and feet, eyes and ears, are ascribed unto God. He is therefore said to have hands, because he works, not because he works with hands. The hand is the instrument of work. Philosophers call it *The Organ of Organs*; man is called the work of Gods hand, because the hand is mans instrument in working. Now whereas man is called, *The work of Gods hands*, it imports three things;

First, An immediety in the work, or an immediate work. God made man himself without any help.

Secondly, An exactness in the work, the work proclaims an accurate author, *The work of thy hands*, a special piece of work, No hand but thine could make such a piece.

Thirdly, It notes the fulness and compleatness of the work, a work consummate and perfect, having the last hand put to it. Man is the work of Gods hands in all and each of these sences.

Heaven is called *a building of God, an house not made with hands* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) Man is a building of God, and he is the work of Gods hands, yet God made man without

hands,

hands, as much as he made heaven without hands. The hand of God implies two things;

First, The Power
Secondly, The Wiſdom } of God.

Man is the work of both, *For the inviſible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head.* Now, if the beams and beauty of the divine nature be viſible in all that was created, then much more in man, who is the epitome or ſum of all that was created.

Alio argumento injuſtitiam à Deo auſert, quod artifices ſua opera amare ſoleant. Merc.

When *Job* puts the queſtion, *Is it good unto thee to deſpiſe the work of thy hands?* he alludes to Artificers, who having made an excellent piece, will not deſtroy or break it in pieces, no, they are very tender of their work, yea, they are apt to boaſt and grow proud of it. The inſtinct of nature teaches us to love, not only that which is our own by natural production, but that alſo which is our own by artificial conception or operation. Indeed if a man make a mean, or an unworthy piece, he deſpiſes it; ſuch work diſcommends the workman, and he will break or burn it, rather then let it be made publick to the publiſhing of his own weakneſs or unskilfulneſs. Man was the Maſter-piece of the whole viſible Creation. Man was made (not as other creatures) to have a *being* only, but that he might *be in the likeneſs of God, and bear his image.* The Lord needs not be aſhamed of, neither doth he deſpiſe any part of his work, much leſs this, which is the beſt and nobleſt part of his work. Hence obſerve in general,

In utero matris mea tam concinnè & aptè formaſti, deſtrues?

Man is the work of God.

All of man, man throughout is the work of God. The fabrick of his body is Gods work. *I am fearfully and wonderfully made,* ſaith *David, marvellous are thy works, and that my ſoul knoweth right well; my ſubſtance was not hid from thee, when I was made in ſecret,* &c. *In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were faſhioned, when as yet there was none of them* (Pſal. 139. 14, 15.) A skilful Architect, before he builds, draws a model, or gives a draught of the building in his Book, or upon a Table; there he will ſhew you every room and contrivance: in his book are all the parts of the building written, while as yet there are none of them, or before any of them are framed and ſet up. In alluſion to Architects, and other Artiſans, *David* ſpeaks of God, *In thy book were all my members written*; that is, Thou haſt made me as exactly, as if thou hadſt drawn my ſeveral members, and my whole proportion with a pen or penſil in a book, before thou wouldeſt adventure to form me up. The Lord uſes no book, no pen to decipher his work. He had the perfect *Idea* of all things in himſelf from everlaſting; *But he may well be ſaid to work as by pattern, whoſe work is the moſt perfect pattern.*

As the body, ſo the ſoul of man is the work of Gods hand too. His power and wiſdom wrought it, and work mightily in it. In regard of bodily ſubſtance, the moſt inferior creatures claim kindred of man, and he may be compared to the beaſt that periſheth; but in regard of the ſoul, man tranſcends them all, and may challenge a nearneſs, if not an equality with the Angels. The body is to the ſoul but as a mud wall which impriſons ſome pretious treaſure; at beſt but like a gold ring to a ſparkling Diamond. If the more unworthy part of man, be a work worthy of God, how much more is his more worthy part? There is yet ſomewhat in man of Gods making, which is better then either of theſe parts, and is indeed *all man. There is ſomewhat in man more excellent then man.* The qualities of man are ſuperior to his nature: man by his nature, differs only from a beaſt, but ſome men by their qualities differ from other men: one man hath better qualities then another, but no man hath a better nature then another. As the ſoul is more excellent then the body, and reaſon then ſenſe, ſo inward gifts are more excellent then the ſoul, and grace then reaſon. Theſe are the beauty, the gildings and engravings of the inner man. The *Aſſyrians* are called the work of Gods hands, not only in reference to creation, but regeneration in Chriſt (*Iſa.* 19. 25.) *Bleſſed be* Ægypt *my people, and* Aſſyria *the work of my hand, and* Iſrael *mine inheritance.* 'Tis a promiſe of the calling of the *Gentiles*, when they who were not a people ſhould receive Chriſt, and be made the ſpiritual *Iſrael*, by the mighty work of God. This alſo is the work which *David* intends, when he invites all lands to ſerve the Lord with gladneſs; becauſe *it is he that hath made us, and not we our ſelves* (Pſal. 100. 3.) Hence the Apoſtle calls all believers *emphatically, The work of God* (Epheſ. 2. 10.) *We are his workmanſhip created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works.* Man is the workmanſhip of God, as he is fitted for natural and civil works; but he is moſt of all the workmanſhip of God, as he is fitted for ſpiritual and holy works. All is the work of God, but this is curious work, workmanſhip indeed.

From the whole, take three cautions.

First, Be not proud of what ye are, all's the work of God: How beautiful or comely, how wiſe or holy ſoever ye are, 'tis not of your ſelves. What hath any man either in naturals or ſupernaturals, which he hath not received?

Secondly, Deſpiſe not what others are or have, though they are not ſuch exact pieces, though they have not ſuch excellent endowments as your ſelves, yet they are what the hand of God hath wrought them, and they have what the hand of God hath wrought in them. Be more thankful if ye are better framed, and have more workmanſhip beſtowed upon you, ſleight not thoſe upon whom God hath beſtowed leſs.

Thirdly, Deſpiſe not what your ſelves are; to do ſo is a ſin, and a ſin (in reſpect of the body) very common. Many are aſhamed to be ſeen, as God hath made them; few are aſhamed to be ſeen what the Devil hath made them. Many are troubled at ſmall defects in the outward man: Few are troubled at the greateſt deformities of their inner man; they call for no repairs, for no freſh colours to be laid on there; many buy artificial beauty to ſupply the defects of natural, who never had a thought of buying (without money) ſpiritual beauty to ſupply the defects of ſupernatural. The crookedneſs and diſtortions, the blackneſs and uncomelineſs of the ſoul are moſt deplorable, yet are they little deplored; we are called every day to mend and cure them, we are told where and how we may have all ſet right, and made fair again, and yet the moſt ſtir not, or not to purpoſe. God will not know any body at the laſt day, unleſs his ſoul be mended by Grace, and ſome do ſo mend their bodies by Art, that God will not know their ſouls at that day. Depart from me, I know you not (will be all their entertainment) ye have mended your bodies, till ye have mar'd your ſouls. Beſides, *What can the man do that cometh after the King?* ſaith *Solomon* (Eccleſ. 2. 12.) The work of the wiſeſt among men, is beyond the correction of an ordinary man. Much more may we ſay, *What can the man do that cometh after God?* The work of the moſt wiſe God is beyond the correction of the wiſeſt among men. They who thus come after God to mend his work, leſt they ſhould be deſpiſed, will but make themſelves more deſpicable. There is more worth in the very defect of Gods work, then in the perfection of mans. We may uſe means to help many bodily infirmities, but they who are diſcontent with Gods work, are quickly proud of their own, and will one day be aſhamed of their own.

Secondly, Conſider how *Job* argues, *Is it good that thou ſhouldeſt deſpiſe the work of thy hands?* Hence obſerve,

It is an argument moving the Lord to much compaſſion to tell him that we are his work, as we are creatures, and his work eſpecially as we are new creatures.

When we are under ſuch afflictions, as threaten to ruine us, 'tis ſeaſonable to tell the Lord he made us. *David* ſtrengthens prayer upon this argument (*Pſal.* 138. 8.) *Forſake not the work of thine own hands*; All men love their own works many dote upon them: Shall we think God will forſake his? See how the people of God plead with God in greateſt diſtreſs (*Iſa.* 64. 8.) *But now O Lord, thou art our Father, we are the clay, and thou our Potter, and we all are the work of thine hand. Be not wroth very ſore, O Lord.* Wilt thou be angry with thy work? Lord, be angry with the works of wicked men, and deſtroy the work of Satan; Do not deſtroy the work of thine own hands, thy people are thy work, Haſt thou not formed them for thy ſelf? They will ſhew forth thy praiſe. That invitation

to prayer (*Isa.* 45. 11.) seems to intimate that this plea hath a kind of command upon God, *Thus saith the holy One of* Israel, *and his Maker, Ask of me things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands, command ye me:* while ye come to me under that notion, that these are the work of my hands, I cannot deny you; Do but name this, and it is a law upon me; ye may have any thing of me, or do any thing with me, while ye speak for the work of mine hands. Hence when the Prophet had put the Jews from that plea, they were a lost people, and their case was desperate; *This is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them will shew them no favour* (Isa. 27. 11.) As if he had said, ye were wont (I know) to come to God with this motive of mercy, when he afflicted you; Lord, thou didst make and form us, therefore have mercy upon us; but this shall prevail no more: He that made you will not have mercy on you; He that formed you will shew you no favour. There is but one argument stronger then this among all the Topicks of prayer, and that never fails; namely that God hath redeemed us, or that we are his redeemed ones. God bestowed much cost upon us in the work of Creation, and therefore under that title he can hardly cast us off; but he hath bestowed so much cost upon us in the work of Redemption, that he will never cast us off.

Further, The Scripture makes frequent use of this argument to repress the pride and presumption of man, and to stop his mouth when he begins to question, and call God to account about any of his dealings, with, why is it thus? or, why am I thus? Thus the Prophet silences the murmurings both of mans heart and tongue (*Isa.* 45. 9, 10.) *Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker, shall the clay say to him that fashioned it, Why hast thou made me thus?* And when the Apostle found unquiet, and bold spirits busied in contesting with God about his eternal counsels, in chusing some and rejecting others; in shewing mercy to some, and hardening others; he stops them with, *Who art thou, O man that replieſt against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* Remember thou art the clay, and he the Potter. *That we are the work of Gods hand moveth his compassion towards us, and represseth our presumption against him.* We must not proudly dispute it out with him, for we are the work of his hands, and we may humbly plead with him, not to despise the work of his hands, or to

Shine upon the counsel of the wicked.

God is light and he hath light, but he hath none for wicked men or for their counsels.

To shine upon the counsel of the wicked.] Notes three things.

Impiorum consilia illustrare, idē est quod juvare, illorū cœptis ac conatibus favere.

First, To favour or delight in them.

Secondly, To succour or assist them.

Thirdly, To make them prosperous and successful.

David praying against his enemies, saith, *Let their way be dark and slippery,* Psal. 35. 6. And when the Lord answered *Job* out of the whirlwind, he questions, *Who is this that darkneth counsel by words without knowledge?* (Job 38. 2.) as to darken wayes, and to darken counsel is to hinder and trouble them: so to shine upon wayes and counsels is to help and favour them. *The Sun is the candle of the world, and Sunshine is the comfort of the world.* The Psalmist prayes in this language, *Thou that dwellest between the Cherubims, shine forth*; that is, help and favour us; so it is expounded in the next verse, *Before* Ephraim, Benjamin *and* Manasses, *stir up thy strength, and come and save us* (Psal. 80. 1, 2.) *Thou wilt light my candle* (was *David's* confidence) *the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness: for by thee I have run thorow a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall* (Psal. 18. 28, 29.) that is, I have done great things, and I have overcome the greatest difficulties through thine assistance. Will God shine thus upon the counsel of the wicked? Or will he help the evil-doer? *Job* denieth it, and therefore prayeth, Shew me why thou contendest with me. I know thou beareſt no good will to those who are wilful in doing evil, nor takeſt thou pleasure in iniquity.

But doth not the Lord give good success to those who are evil? Doth the way of the wicked never prosper? Prospereth it not so far sometime, that godly men stumble in their way, and are offended?

I answer, God maketh his Sun to shine upon the evil and the good, but himself never shineth upon the evil. *Wicked men receive benefits from God, but they receive no blessings from God.*

There is a two-fold light. First, The light of Gods Providence. Secondly, The light of Gods Countenance. The light of Gods Countenance never shines upon the counsel of the wicked, they have only the light of his Providence. He never shines upon them to favour them, though he often shines upon them to prosper them. *A man may have much good shewed him, and yet no good will shewed him.* The clouds and darkness, which at any time cover the counsels of the righteous, are clearer then all the light which shines upon the counsels of the wicked. God varies his dispensations often, but he never varies his affections; whatsoever he doth against the righteous, he never hates or dislikes them; and whatsoever he doth for the wicked, he never loves or likes them.

But who are the wicked intended in this Text, upon whose counsels God will not shine? There are four apprehensions about it: who are wicked all agree, but who these wicked are, is not agreed. Some refer the word to his friends, I know thou wilt not favour their sinful censures and rash judgments concerning me. Surely they shall receive little thanks and less reward for these discourtesies; thou wilt not go forth with them, or give witness to what they have done; thou wilt not confirm or attest what they have spoken.

Job (I grant) found little comfort from his friends: but I do not find that they gave him evil counsel, much less that they took wicked counsel against him. The Lord reproved them for the error of their speech, but he did not reprove them for the wickedness of their persons. Indeed *Job* charges them deeply (*Chap.* 13. 7.) *Will you speak wickedly for God?* Yet I do not believe that he judged them wicked. A thing in it self wicked may be spoken, and yet the speaker not be wicked. Therefore I would not think *Job* aims at his friends, or fastens so deep a charge on them, though they had charged him so deep.

Secondly, Others conceive *Job* means the Devil and his Angels, *Wilt thou shine upon Satan's counsel?* As when *Ahasuerus* (being enformed of that conspiracy against the Jews) enquired, *who is he? and where is he that durst presume in his heart to do so?* Queen Esther *said, the adversary and enemy is this wicked* Haman (*Chap.* 7. 5, 6.) So might *Job* have answered the Lord. My adversary and enemy is this wicked Satan. He laid the plot and hath stirred up all these evils against me: I know Lord, thou wilt not take Satans part: thou wilt not help him who would be the destroyer and murderer, who is the great malignant and projector against thy servant.

Thirdly, Others take the *wicked* here, for the *Sabeans* and *Caldeans*, who were the instruments of Satan, in spoiling and robbing *Job* of his goods and substance. That they were wicked, we need not question; yet

Fourthly, Take it rather in general, for all or any wicked men, upon whose wayes God seems to shine when he gives success to their works of darkness. Hence observe,

First, *Wicked men are sometimes prospered in their counsels, and walk in pleasant* (*though evil*) *wayes.*

God gives delight to those in whom he hath no delight. And they have many good things from him, who never had one good thought from him. Thousands are prospered and hated at the same time. When *Dionysius* (in the story) had rob'd an Idol-Temple, and at his return by Sea had a fair gail and pleasant weather to waft him home with the spoils; See (said he) how the heavens smile upon us, and how the gods are pleased with what we have done. The like conclusions many draw from the premises of outward prosperity: surely the true God is pleased with us: but there is a cloud upon this Sunshine, and darkness in all this light.

Secondly observe, *The Lord hates the counsel of wicked men.*

He is so far from shining upon, that he, indeed, darkens their counsels. He casts darkness upon them, even the darkness

darkneſs of his heavieſt diſpleaſure, when themſelves think, and the world ſaith, all is light about them (*Zech.* 1. 15.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the Heathen that are at eaſe*; They had their pleaſure, but God took no pleaſure in them; *I am very ſore diſpleaſed with theſe Heathens that are at eaſe*; that is, I approve not their courſes, yea my wrath is kindled againſt their perſons. The light which ſhines upon wicked men, turns all at laſt into heat; and they have alwayes the heat of Gods anger mixed with their light: a heat not to warm but to conſume and burn them up. As when the Lord ſends the clouds and darkneſs of outward affliction upon his own people, he ſends likewiſe the beams of his everlaſting love into the hearts: So he clouds and darkens wicked men, while his candle ſhineth upon their heads.

VERS. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh? Or ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth?
Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? Are thy yeares as mans dayes?
That thou enquireſt after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt after my ſin.
Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thy hand.

JOB proceedeth upon the ſame Argument; and as in *verſ.* 3. he had removed three things inconſiſtent with, and diſhonorable to the juſtice of God: So in the two verſes following, he removeth two more. And as he thus acquits the Lord from injuſtice or unrighteous dealing with him: ſo he appeals to the Lord (who was able (he knew) to do it upon certain knowledge) to acquit him from all the unjuſt charges, with which his friends had burdened him, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, &c.

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh? Or ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth?

The Queſtion is to be reſolved into this negation, *Lord, Thou haſt not eyes of fleſh*; *Lord, Thou ſeeſt not as man ſeeth*; as if *Job* had thus ſpoken, *Lord, I have been long afflicted with grievous pains, I am as a man hanging upon a rack, to draw out and force a confeſſion from him; Lord, why is it thus with me? Why am I brought to ſuch a trial? I am ſure it is not with thee as with mortal Judges, who having eyes of fleſh, can ſee no further then the out-ſide of things, and know no more then is told them; and therefore muſt fetch out what lies in the heart of man by examination, and if examination will not do it, they muſt do it by torture; Lord, there is no need thou ſhouldeſt take this courſe; Thou canſt enform thy ſelf fully how it is with me, though I ſhould not ſpeak a word; though I am ſilent, yet thine ear hears the voice and underſtands the language of my ſpirit. Though I hide or cover my ſelf, yet the eye of thy omniſcience looks quite thorow me; ſeeing then thou haſt not eyes like the eyes of men, wherefore is it that thou enquireſt by theſe afflictions after mine iniquity, and ſearcheſt (as men uſe to do) after my ſin?*

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh? Or ſeeſt thou as man ſeeth?

God hath no eyes, much leſs eyes of fleſh; God is a Spirit, and therefore he cannot have eyes of fleſh; He is all eye, and therefore (properly) he hath no eyes. The eye is that ſpecial organ or member of the body into which the power of ſeeing is contracted, but God is all over a power of ſeeing. The body of man hath ſeveral parts, and ſeveral honours and offices are beſtowed upon every part. The eye hath the great office and honour of ſeeing committed to it. The eye is the light of the whole body, and knowledge is the eye of the ſoul. The eye of God is the knowledge of God. The Greeks expreſs God by a word which ſignifies to ſee: and he is therefore ſaid to have eyes, and to ſee, becauſe the eye is a principal inſtrument, and ſeeing a principal means by which man receives knowledge. Naturaliſts tell us, there is nothing in the underſtanding but that which is firſt in the ſenſe. The ſenſes are doors to the mind, the furniture and riches of that are conveyed in by the eyes or ears. Theſe bring informations to the underſtanding. Natural knowledge cannot have an immediate acceſs to man, and 'tis but ſeldom that ſpiritual hath: Both are commonly let in by ſenſe. The ſuperior powers muſt traffick with the inferior, otherwiſe they make no gain. Though God hath no need of any help to bring in or improve his knowledge, yet that is aſcribed to him by which knowledge is improved; He hath eyes, but not of fleſh; he ſeeth, but not as man.

Ipſum nomen Dei Græcum hanc videndi efficacitatem præ ſe fert, θεὸς nimirum à θεᾶν, ſpectare, contemplari dicitur. Nihil eſt in intellectu quod non prius fuit in ſenſu.

Haſt thou eyes of fleſh?] Fleſh by a Synechdoche is put for the whole nature of man. *The Word as made fleſh*, (*Joh.* 1. 14.) not body or ſoul, but *Fleſh*, that is, *man* conſiſting of ſoul and body. Thus here, *eyes of fleſh*, that is, *mans eyes*. And ſo the latter clauſe of the verſe is an expoſition of the former. When he ſaith, *Haſt thou eyes of fleſh?* It is no more then this, *Doeſt thou ſee as man ſeeth?* To have an eye of fleſh, is to judge according to the fleſh; and to ſee as man ſeeth, is to ſee no more then man.

Oculi carnei ſunt ſecundùm carnem judicantes.

When *Samuel* was ſent to anoint a King over *Iſrael* in the place of *Saul* (1 Sam. 16. 7.) the Lord ſaid concerning the firſt-born of *Jeſſe*, *Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his ſtature, becauſe I have refuſed him*; The reaſon added is this, *For the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.* There we have *Job*'s doctrine of Gods ſeeing, delivered by God himſelf. *Samuel* thought he who made the faireſt ſhew to the eye of man, muſt needs be the man who was faireſt in the eye of God; but the Lord ſeeth what is not ſeen, and often finds moſt reality in the leaſt appearance; he who hath not eyes of fleſh, ſees beyond the fleſh.

There are ſeven differences between the eye of fleſh or mans eye, and the eye of God.

First, Mans eye is but a means, or an inſtrument of knowledge: Gods eye is his knowledge. The act and the faculty are not diſtinct in God. All in God is act; neither is God another thing from his act: whatſoever is aſcribed to him, is himſelf. The eye of God is God ſeeing. The knowledge of God is God knowing. The love of God is God loving.

Secondly, Man muſt have a two-fold light to ſee by; an inward light, the light of the eye; and an outward light, the light in the air; without both he cannot ſee. Man doth not ſee (as Naturaliſts ſpeak) by ſending forth a beam or a ray from his eye to the object, but by receiving or taking in a beam or a ray from the object into his eye; The object iſſues it's ſpecies to the eye, which being joyned with the viſive power of the eye, man ſeeth: But God ſeeth in himſelf, of himſelf, and from himſelf, he needs no outward light. Chriſt is deſcribed having a fiery eye; *His eyes were as a flame of fire* (*Revel.* 1. 14. & 2. 18.) Even nature teacheth us that thoſe creatures which have fiery eyes, ſee in the dark, and ſee beſt when it is darkeſt; becauſe they ſee by ſending forth a beam or a flame from their eyes, which at once apprehends the object, and enlightens the paſſage to it. God who commanded light to come out of darkneſs for the uſe of man, commands light in darkneſs for his own. *The darkneſs hideth not from thee* (ſaith *David*) *but the night ſhineth as the day. The darkneſs and the light are both alike to thee. There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death, where any of the workers of iniquity can hide themſelves*, Job 34. 22. Thus *God hath not eyes of fleſh; he ſeeth not as man ſeeth.*

Thirdly, Man ſeeth one thing after another: his eye is not able to take in all objects at once; he views now one, and then another, to make his judgment of them. But God ſeeth all things together; he beholdeth all at one view; his eye takes and gathers in all objects, and all that is in every object by one act. *The Lord looketh from heaven, and beholdeth all the ſons of men; from the place of his habitation he looks upon all the inhabitants of the earth* (Pſal. 33. 13, 14.

Fourthly, An eye of fleſh ſeeth at a diſtance, and at ſuch a diſtance. Naturaliſts tell us, there muſt be a due diſtance between the eye and the object. If you put the object too near the eye, the eye cannot ſee it; *That which is ſenſible put upon the ſenſe, takes away ſenſation.* Again, if the object be very remote, the eye cannot make any diſcovery of it. The eye cannot ſee far, and it cannot diſcern ſo far as it can ſee. We may ſee a thing, and not know what we ſee. But the eye of the Lord ſeeth and diſcerneth at all diſtances. There are none ſo near him, but he knows what they are; nearneſs doth not hinder his ſight; and there are none ſo far from him, but he can diſcover what they are, remoteneſs doth not hinder his ſight. And indeed,

Senſibile poſitum ſuper ſenſum tollit ſenſationem.

all

all things are preſent with him, as in time, ſo in place; *God is neareſt, even next to every object*: He is in every place, yet not included by any; he is in every thing, yet not mixed with any (*Prov.* 15. 3.) *The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. His eyes are upon the wayes of man, he ſeeth all his goings* (Job 34.21.) and that this ſeeing is a diſtinguiſhing ſight, another Scripture clears to us; *His eye-lids try the children of men* (Pſal. 11. 5.) Let them be what they will, and where they will, his eye-lids do not only ſee, but try, that is, he hath a diſtinct, and a certain knowledge, or a critical ſight of the ſtate and condition of every man.

Deus non ſolum eſt proximus objecto, ſed eſt intimè cum illo conjunctus.

Fifthly, Man ſeeth but the colour and skin, the face and out-ſide of things or perſons, but God ſeeth the in-ſides, and looks into the very bowels of them. He is a *ſearcher and diſcerner of the heart*: He ſeeth the ſpirit as ſoon as the face. Our cloaths are not more open to him then our breſts and boſoms. An Heathen wiſhed for a window there, and if we had windows there, we could not ſee what's there. An eye of fleſh cannot read the meaning of our ſpirits; but the Lord can look into the heart without a window, yea, we are all window to him, and he at every turn looks not only upon us, but into us. It was prophecied of Chriſt, (*Iſa.* 11. 3.) *He ſhall not judge after the ſight of his eyes; neither reprove after the hearing of his ears*; that is, he ſhall not judge as a mear man, but as God; he ſhall not judge according to fair appearances, or flying reports; *He ſhall judge with righteouſneſs, and reprove with equity.* Man (whoſe eyes are of fleſh) ſhould not judge according to appearance; yet becauſe his eyes are of fleſh, he cannot judge of that which doth not appear. But God who calleth thoſe things which are not, as if they were, judgeth of thoſe things which appear not, as if they did appear.

Sixthly, An eye of fleſh may be deceived. The ſight of man is ſubject to manifold deceptions. Many things put a ſtop to the ſight of the eye. The eye of man is in danger of as many fallacies, as the underſtanding; and the underſtanding is entangled with many fallacies by the eye. But there is no error in the ſight of God, nor any deception of his eye; you cannot by any art or device, by any policy or hypocriſie, by any masks or diſguiſes, by any ſimulations or diſſimulations make that appear to him, which is not, or make it appear to him otherwiſe then it is. *The heart of man* (ſaith the Lord) *is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* (only the Lord who makes, can anſwer this challenge, ſo he doth in the next words) *I the Lord ſearch the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.* How can that which is deceitful receive according to its doings, but by knowing all it's doings and all it's deceits? As the tongue (the greateſt troubler of the world) no man can tame: ſo the heart (the greateſt impoſtor in the world) no man can diſcover but God, and he can do it eaſily, and doth it continually.

Seventhly, When it is ſaid, the Lord hath not eyes of fleſh, he ſeeth not as man ſeeth, the meaning is, his knowledge is not imperfect as the knowledge of man is. An eye of fleſh hath been but a while, and can be but a while, and therefore cannot attain much knowledge; *We are but of yeſterday, and know nothing* (ſaith *Bildad*, chap. 8.) *He that hath but little experience, muſt needs have more then a little ignorance.* Experience breeds knowledge, and brings to perfection in knowledge. The eye of God is from everlaſting. If he had not (as he hath) all knowledge in and from himſelf, he might have fetcht it in before this time, from what he hath ſeen. And he (having ſeen all things) muſt needs have perfect knowledge, whoſe knowledge had been perfect, though he had never ſeen any of theſe things.

Beſides, As this phraſe, an eye of fleſh, imports thinneſs of experience, and thence imperfection of knowledge, ſo groſneſs of ſpirit, and dimneſs of underſtanding to attain knowledge. When *Peter* made that gracious confeſſion (*Matth.* 16. 16.) *Thou art Chriſt the Son of the living God*; Chriſt anſwers, *Bleſſed art thou* Simon Bar-jona, *for fleſh and blood* (that is, *man*) *hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.* As if he had ſaid, All men are fleſh and blood, ſo dull-ſighted and blind, that they could never have perceived this truth by any ſtudy or obſervation, it comes only by gift and revelation.

Caro ſignificat aliquid pingue, ob-& tuſum, craſſu, minime ſubtile aut perſpicax.

The eye of God is not an eye of fleſh in this ſence neither. All ſpirits have much clearneſs of underſtanding, much ſharpneſs and quickneſs of apprehenſion. The Devil being a ſpirit, though now a wicked ſpirit, hath one name *from knowledge*. How much more knowing is he, who is *The Spirit*, the Creator of the ſpirits of all fleſh, and the Creator of thoſe ſpirits which ſubſiſt without fleſh?

Dæmon.

Further, Sight is put for judgment, and ſeeing for judging. Judging is an act beyond knowing. Judgment is the reſult of knowledge. So, *Thou doeſt not ſee*, is, *Thou doeſt not judge as man judgeth.*

Non vides more hominum, & ſicut illi ex facie judicas ut affectibus ducaris ſicut illi?

Firſt, Mans judgment is often hindered by his affections. His judgment is hindered by divers affections, eſpecially by love, and the nearneſs of relations; man can hardly ſee a fault and a friend, a ſin and a ſon together. Love makes knowledge as ignorance, and light as darkneſs. Chriſtian charity covers a multitude of ſins from private revenge, and harſh cenſures; But humane charity covers a multitude of ſins from publick juſtice, and wholſom admonitions. The former keeps from rigid ſeverity, this endangers to cockering flattery. It is not thus with God, *He ſeeth not as man ſeeth.* They who have the greateſt intereſt, the neareſt relation to God, are ſeen what they are, and ſhall be judged as they are. God hath (indeed) an infinite largeneſs of affection to poor ſinners, and the lap of his garment of love covers every day a multitude, yea, many multitudes of ſins. But he doth not this, becauſe his love to the perſons offending hinders his eye from ſeeing, but becauſe his Son having ſatisfied his juſtice for the perſons offending, he turns away his eye from ſeeing their ſins. God proclaims himſelf at once, *The God pardoning iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſin, and that will by no means acquit the guilty* (Exod. 34. 7.) There is nothing but the Name of his Son, and of his Sons ſuffering, which turns his eye from ſin. He will eſpy, and puniſh, or eſpy to puniſh all our faults through all other titles and intereſts whatſoever.

Again, Mans judgment is clouded by wrath and malice. He cannot ſee the innocency of thoſe he hates, or do them juſtice to whom he bears no affection. The want of love hinders an eye of fleſh, as much as the inordinacy or exceſs of it. But though the Lord be angry and diſpleaſed with man, yet he wrongs no man; *The wrath of man cannot work the righteouſneſs of God, but the wrath of God works righteouſneſs to man.* He never gives more then right to thoſe he loves moſt, nor leſs then right to thoſe he hates moſt. That which we call paſſion in God, is acted with higheſt reaſon, his anger never errs.

Secondly, Man is much ſwayed in judgment by the power, pomp and ſplendor of men. We are apt to think they have moſt worth in them, who are worth moſt. And that they are good, with whom all's well. Even the Saints are toucht with this infirmity: The Apoſtle *James* (Chap. 2. 2, 3.) beſpeaks them thus, *If there come into your Aſſembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel, and there come in a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have reſpect to him that that weareth the gay clothing, and ſay unto him, Come and ſit here by me in a good place; and ſay to the poor, Stand thou there, or ſit here under my foot-ſtool; are ye not partial in your ſelves, and Judges of evil thoughts?* that is, Are ye not condemned in your ſelves and convinced in your own conſciences, that you do evil; and ſo that your thoughts have been evil, which moved you to do ſo? Can you chuſe but judge this an evil thought, to think him the beſt man that weareth the beſt cloaths, and him a vile perſon that is in vile apparel? Thus men, yea, good men may miſ-judge of men. But the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth, It is not good cloaths, but a good heart; it is not a gold ring, but a golden converſation which he accepts; wickedneſs is abominable in his eye, though it ſit upon a Throne; and holineſs ſhines in his eye, though it lie upon a dung-hill. Holineſs is not leſs lovely to him, becauſe cloathed with rags, nor unholineſs leſs loathſom to him, becauſe it goes in a gay coat. 'Tis well conceived, that *Job* had reference to his own condition when he ſpake thus; he lay in a woful plight, all over ſores, and boils, and filthineſs; yet (ſaith he) *Lord, I know thou ſeeſt not as man ſeeſt*; Thou doſt

Forte Job reſpicit ad carneos judicum oculos, qui ex ſpecie & carnis ſplendore judicant, ſordidos vero & ſqualidos contemnunt. At Deus ſordida & humilia non deſpicit. Sanct.

doſt not therefore think me the worſe, becauſe I am thus ill. I am even a loathing, not only to others, but to my ſelf, yet I know thou doſt not loath me; Thou haſt not a bad opinion of me, becauſe my condition is thus bad.

Thirdly, Man judgeth the cauſe by the effect, the tree by the fruit, the man by his actions; that's the way of mans judgment, and ſo man ought to judge. We ought to think well of them, who do well; and when the hand is clean, charity bids us ſay the heart is clean too. But *the Lord ſeeth not as man ſeeth*; he in judging men tranſcends the rule he gives men to judge by. He judgeth the fruit by the tree, the effect by the cauſe, and the action by the man; he had reſpect to *Abel*, and then to his offering. If the worker pleaſe him not, neither doth his work; as he makes, ſo he ſees the tree good, and then the fruit good. Till the man mends, his manners never mends in Gods eſteem. When a good tree brings forth evil fruit, or an evil tree good fruit, 'tis accidental to them both, not natural. God judgeth us by what we alwayes are, not by what we ſometimes act, either in good or evil.

In this alſo *Job* comforts himſelf, that whatſoever fruit he might ſeem to bring forth, yet the Lord judg'd him not (as his friends did) by ſome unſavoury ſpeeches that came from him, but by the ſavourineſs of that ſpirit which was in him. He knew God judged him by the ſetled temper of his inward man, and the ſoundneſs of his mind, not by the caſual diſtemper of his outward man, or the ſound of his tongue. *Job* was a good tree, and *the root of the matter was in him.* And *Job* was aſſured God would not condemn him for his fruit, if ſome of it were bitter and unpleaſant, while he ſaw his root was good.

Fourthly, Man muſt take time to hear and diſcuſs every caſe, to find and beat out the truth of every controverſie, but God judgeth all at an inſtant; the matter is no ſooner before him, but he knoweth it fully: indeed the matter was ever before him, and ever fully known, he knew it from eternity: *Things are known to him before they are, by whom all things are.* The Lord needeth not to put queſtions or to be informed by confeſſions. God is able to prevent our queſtions with reſolutions, and to give us anſwers before we give him our doubts (*Joh.* 16. 30.) *Now are we ſure that thou knoweſt all things, and needeſt not that any man ſhould ask thee.* He that is acquainted with our doubts before we propoſe them, can anſwer them as ſoon as we propoſe them. Seeing it is thus (ſaith *Job*) why am I held ſo long upon the rack to draw out the matter from me? I know thou doſt not judge as man judgeth, by enquiring into, or comparing circumſtances and actions, anſwers and queſtions. Thou art able to make out a judgment of me, and of my condition from thy own knowledge; without the contribution of my anſwers to thy queſtions, or of other mens teſtimonies concerning my actions; *Thou ſeeſt not as man ſeeth.*

ראה *Eſt aliquando deſpicere, & cernere cum contemptu.*

Laſtly, *To have eyes of fleſh*, and to ſee as man, is to ſee with ſcorn, or with diſdain. The original word which we tranſlate to *See*, put alone, ſignifies ſometimes to deſpiſe. The Prince of *Tyrus* is threatned thus (*Ezek.* 28. 17.) *I will lay thee before Kings that they may behold* (that is, deſpiſe and deride) *thee.* And the Spouſe in the *Canticles*, (Chap. 1. 6.) deprecates, *look not upon me, becauſe I am black, becauſe the Sun hath looked upon me*; that is, God hath looked upon me with a ſcorching eye of diſpleaſure, and made me black with troubles; do not ye look upon me with a ſcornful eye of diſdain, becauſe of my blackneſs. Thus God ſeeth or looketh not as man ſeeth; he looketh not diſdainfully upon a poor afflicted ſoul, as men do upon their friends in their affliction, or as ye my friends do upon me in mine affliction.

This is the fourth diſhonourable thought, which *Job* removeth from God. *His eyes are not eyes of fleſh, he ſeeth not as man ſeeth*, either in reference to the truth or manner, the clearneſs or ſpeedineſs, the certainty or impartiality, the infallibility or charity of his judgment. Upon all which his former requeſt is again to be inferred, *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me.*

He proceedeth to a fifth, which he alſo by way of interrogation removeth from God, and ſo virtually reneweth the ſame petition.

Verſ. 5. Are thy dayes as the dayes of men? Are thy years as mans dayes?

I know they are not.

Ponitur dies pro judicio ex Ciliçum idiotiſmo. Hier: *Putarim* Paulum *potius diem maluiſſe dicere, quam judicium ut alluderet ad diem illum ſupremum in quo Dominus ipſe judex ſedebit.* Bez.

Are thy dayes as mans dayes?] Some Interpreters take the word *Day* for *Judgment*. *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* that is, Are thy judging dayes, or thy judgment given upon thoſe dayes, like mans dayes, or the judgment which man giveth? We have the word in that ſence (1 *Cor.* 4. 3.) where the Apoſtle concludes in his own caſe; *It is a very ſmall thing of me to be judged of you, or of mans judgment*, the *Greek* is, *To be judged of mans day*: and according to the idiom of that Language in ſome Countreys, the day of a man is put for the judgment of a man: Though others conceive *Paul* calls it a day rather then a judgment, in alluſion to that laſt day, wherein God will ſit in judgment upon the whole world. So the meaning of *Job* is plainly this, *The Lords judgment is not like mans judgment.* This Expoſition falls in with the ſence of the former verſe; men judge by outward proofs and probabilities, by queſtions and interrogatories, by teſtimonies and witneſſes: God needs none of theſe humane helps in his day of judgment; yet in *Job's* caſe, he carried it, as if he needed them. The Suit depending ſo long before him, and ſuch variety of experiments and trials, being put upon, or taken of him.

Enos *cujus vita duratio breviſſima & penè nulla.*

But, we may better interpret *Dayes* for a part of time; and ſo, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* is, *Art thou ſhort liv'd as man is?* The word [*Man*] ſignifies man in his worſt condition, *Are thy dayes like the dayes of a weak man?* of a miſerable ſickly man? Are they like the dayes of a man, whom we number among the dead, and who is giving up the ghoſt every hour? There are ſome men, whom we call *long liv'd*, that is, men who in probability may live very long: we ſay of a healthy ſtrong man, we would take a leaſe of his life, or if we were to take a leaſe for lives, we would put his life in for one: he is a man of a good complexion and conſtitution, a man like to live, and ſee many dayes. But, ſaith *Job*, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of* Enoſh? As the dayes of a weak ſickly man, as the dayes of one, who looks as if he would drop into the grave every day; as the dayes of a very borderer upon death, of the next neighbour, *and heir apparent to the King of terrors?* Lord, I am ſure thy dayes are not as the dayes of ſuch a weakling, of ſuch mouldring, ſickly clod of earth. This ſence may have a double reference.

First, To the knowledge of God concerning *Job*.

Secondly, To the manner of Gods dealing with *Job*.

Perſtat Job in excludenda ignorantia à Deo judice; Dies hominis ſignificant vitam breviſſimam, quæ cum multa ignorantia conjuncta eſt. Sanct: *Ars longa, vita brevis.* Hypocr.

First, *Thy dayes are not as the dayes of man*; thou haſt had, and haſt time enough to gather knowledge and experience, if thou didſt need ſuch help to make thee more knowing. It was the ancient complaint of that great *Phyſitian*, when he ſaw how much of his Art he had to learn, and how little time he had to learn it in, *Art is long, and time is ſhort*, what can I learn in ſuch a ſpan-long life as mine? Hence it is conceived, that though the Fathers before the flood (ſome of whoſe lives reached eight or nine Centuries) wanted the help of *Libraries* and *Academies*, which we enjoy; yet, that by the experience of ſo many years, they gathered a great ſtock of knowledge, and proved men of eminent Learning. Men whoſe dayes are not as the dayes of ordinary men, attain knowledge beyond ordinary men. How then can the Lord want any perfection of the moſt perfect knowledge, who numbereth not only by hundreds and thouſands of years, but by an eternity of years? His knowledge muſt needs be full, concerning the ſtate both of things and perſons, who not only hath *Antiquity of dayes*, but is the *Ancient of dayes* (Dan. 7. 9.) Many men have lived ſo many dayes, that they are juſtly called *Ancient*, but no man ever lived or ſhall live ſo long, as to deſerve this title, *Ancient of dayes*. God is called the *Ancient of dayes*, not only, becauſe he hath been many dayes, yea all the dayes that ever have been, but becauſe he is *ancienter then dayes*; *He is the dayes ancient, for he made the day. His dayes cannot be like mans dayes, who made five dayes ancienter then man.* God hath more then all dayes, therefore he hath all knowledge; he hath all experience, therefore he hath neither ignorance, nor neſcience. Upon this ground *Job* argues it out with God, that he muſt needs know all things, who was before all times; and that he was acquainted with him better then all men,

who

who lived at that day, because he lived and was acquainted with what he would be, before man had a day, even from eternity.

These words, *Thy dayes are not as mans dayes*, may refer to the dealing of God with *Job*. As if he had said, *Lord, why then doest thou make such haste to enquire after me? why doest thou so incessantly follow me with afflictions? why doest thou keep me upon the rack from day to day, night and day, and wilt give me no rest? Lord, thou needest not fear to loose time, for thou hast all time at thy command; thou canst not want opportunity, who hast eternity. The reason why man is called upon so earnestly to redeem the time, is, because he hath so little time given him, and no time at all but what is given him. His dayes are short dayes, and they are but few, and (which should provoke him for to make haste) he knows not how few: unless he lay hold upon the present day, he is not sure of any day. But Lord, thou art Lord of time, and Master not only over thy work, but also over thy dayes; thou canst allow thy self as many dayes as thou pleasest to do thy work in. Why then doest thou deal thus severely with me, as if thou wert afraid thou shouldest overslip thy day, or want a season to deal with me in?*

Deo nihil affert novi cras tina dies.

Again, When he saith, *Are thy dayes as mans dayes?* it may refer to the changes which happen in the dayes of man: the dayes of man are sometimes fair, and sometimes cloudy, sometimes he hath good dayes, and sometimes he hath ill dayes, therefore he must take his time, and lay hold upon his opportunity. He must make his hay while the Sun shines, who cannot command the Sun to shine. But the dayes of the Lord are (like himself) alwayes the same, alwayes alike, *There are no changes of time to him, who is himself unchangeable.*

Aliam suarum miseriarum causã excludit à Deo, q. d. si non esset firma Dei voluntas, atq; benevolentia erga suos, sed innata illi esset inconstantia, nihil mirum esset si me, quẽ quondã ingentibus beneficiis cumulavit odio prosequatur. Bol.

כימי אנר

Lastly, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* may have reference to man himself; man is as mutable a creature, as his time is: and man is mutable, not only in his condition, but in his affection; now he loveth, anon he hateth; now he rejoyceth, anon he sorroweth; now he esteemeth, anon he rejecteth; now he imbraceth, anon he contemneth. *Lord* (saith *Job*) *I know thou art not in thy dayes as man is in his: Where thou art once a friend, thou art alwayes a friend; whom thou lovest, thou lovest for ever. Thy affections are as unchangeable as thy nature.*

There is a difference in the latter clause of the verse; for whereas he saith, in the first, *Are thy dayes as the dayes of man?* In the second he saith, *Are thy years as mans dayes?* The dayes of God in the first part, are the same with the years of God in the second. But man hath not years ascribed to him in the second. The time of man is so short, that it is reckoned by the shortest compleat time, a day. And when *David* computes the longest date of mans life, he doth not say, *The years of man are threescore years and ten; but the dayes of our years are threescore years and ten* (Psal. 90. 10.) There is yet another difference in the original about the word *Man*. In the first clause the Hebrew word for man was *Enosh*, here it is *Geber*, which signifies a strong man, a mighty man, a man of the most masculine spirit, and strongest body, of the most vigorous abilities, and greatest probabilities to live long; a man of brass, and heart of oak, rather then of clay, and dust of the earth. *Lord, Thy dayes are not only not as the dayes of* Enosh, a weak, sickly man; but, *Thy years are not as the dayes of* Geber, as the dayes of the mightiest and healthiest, of the strongest and stoutest among the sons of men.

Observe hence more distinctly the difference between the dayes of God, and the dayes of man.

First, *Gods day is the day of eternity.*

Mans dayes are but dayes of time. God is said, *To inhabit eternity* (Isa. 57. 15.) that is, he is fixed in eternity, he is without beginning, and without end, yea his dayes are without succession of dayes. All the dayes of God are but a day. Not only are a thousand years to him as one day, but eternity is to him as one day. All that God doth, is said to be done *to day*; *Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee* (Psal. 2. 7.) yet he speaks (say some) of the eternal generation of the Son: or as it referreth to the resurrection of Christ (so the Apostle expounds it, *Act.* 13. 33.) God calls that time, *To day*, though it came a long time after: all is present with God; *Past and to come in relation to God, is neither past nor to come, all is now or to day.* That was not past to God, which never had beginning, the eternal generation of his Son: nor was that to *come* to God which was alwayes before him: The temporal resurrection of his Son, *To day have I begotten thee*, is the most proper stile for God.

Tempus est mensura hominũ habens principiũ & finem; aviternitas est Angelorum, principium habens, sed non finem; æternitas est propria Deo, nec principium habens nec finem. Æternitas est quæ nihil habet mutabile, ibi nihil est præteritũ quasi jam non sit, nihil futurũ quasi nondũ sit, quia non est ibi nisi est. Aug. in Psal. 101. *Erat & erit nostri temporis fluxaque naturæ segmenta sunt. Æternitas est semper & immutabile esse.*

Some distinguish thus between these three, *Eternity*, *Eviternity*, and *Time*. Eternity is that which is peculiar unto God, his are the dayes of eternity. Eviternity is proper to Angels and Spirits, which have a beginning, but shall have no end. Time is the portion and lot of man, who hath had a beginning, and shall have an end. *Time* is the measure of those things, which actually corrupt and change. *Eviternity* is the measure of things incorruptible and unchangeable, not in themselves, but by the appointment of God. *Eternity* is peculiar to God, in whom it is absolutely impossible any change should be. Time hath continual successions, Eternity a constant permanency, Eviternity partakes of both. Hence the second difference,

Mans dayes are moveable, the dayes of God move not.

Thirdly, *Mans dayes being past cannot be recalled; Gods day is ever within his call.*

For, that which is past is as much present to him, as that which is present; and that which is to come is as much present to him, as that which is. *Mans day was, is, and shall be; Gods day alwayes is; his name is, I am: It was, and it will be, are divisions and fragments, morsels and bits of time; eternity is an It is.* This teacheth us,

First, *That God hath time enough to do his work in.*

His dayes are not as mans dayes. *He needs not hasten his work, lest he should lose his opportunity, who is possessed of eternity.* And

Secondly, This (by the way) shews us, *The infinite happiness and unconceivable blessedness of God.*

His dayes are not as mans dayes. One of mans dayes carrieth away one comfort, and the next a second. This day brings one comfort, and the next a second; and so he loseth or receiveth his comforts by dayes and by dayes, by the fluxes and refluxes of time. God hath all his happiness in eternity, that is, he hath all at once. Time neither bringeth nor carrieth away from God. He enjoyeth as much at this present, what ever he had, as what he hath at this present; and he enjoyes as much what shall be, as he doth what is present; he enjoyeth all at once, because he seeth all at once. God hath not one thing after another, but all together. Eternity is the longest and the shortest, it is longest in duration, and the shortest in fruition; not that the enjoyment of any thing there is short, but because in the shortest enjoyment there is all: Every moment of eternity being filled with all the blessedness of eternity.

Thirdly, This shews the reason why the Lord taketh such leisure to do his work; he doth not precipitate or thrust on his designs, because he may take what time he will.

God hath all time at his command.

Men bear sway and rule over persons and places: God only ruleth times. Man hath not one day in his power, not only not the day to come, but not the day present. *Go to now* (saith the Apostle *James*, Chap. 4. 13, 14.) *ye that say to day, or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain, whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow.* Nor indeed doth any man know whether he shall be on the morrow, or on all the day wherein he is. God can boast of to morrow, that is, of eternity, or of all time to come. Man cannot boast of to morrow, that is, of the next day, no nor of the the next time to come of the same day. Hence it is that man must hasten lest he miss his season. When *David* had *Saul* at an advantage (1 *Sam.* 24. 5.) they about him advise him to make use of it, and not to let it slip, *Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee*, &c. Sir having such a day, take hold of it; if you let this go, you may never see such another. Time is no part of the dominion of Kings. So likewise *Abishai* counsels *David* upon the same advantage (1 *Sam.* 26. 8.) *God hath delivered thy enemy into thine hand this day* (let him go this day, and probably thou shalt

shalt never have the like day again) *Now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time,* I can dispatch him at one time, and possibly thou shalt not have a second time. In a good work, it is good, yea, it is best to do our work at once, and not to expect (what we may, or may never have) a second time, when we have a time: *To day if ye will hear his voyce, harden not your hearts.* He hath much hardness, but no wisdom in his heart, who hopes to do that good to morrow, which he resolves to neglect until to morrow, A wise man may hope to do that to morrow, which he cannot do to day; but it is highest folly to resolve upon a neglect of any duty this day upon a hope of doing it next day. It is said, *Rev.* 12. 6. *Wo to the Inhabitants of the earth, because the Devil is come down, having great wrath;* (why so angry?) *because he knoweth that his time is but short.* When the Devil knows he hath but a little time, he will do as much work as he can, and do it presently, he sees all will scape out of his hands else. Only the Lord hastens not, neither needeth he to hasten his work at any time upon this ground, because he hath but a short time. He can take what time he will, and make his day as long, and his dayes as many as himself pleaseth, for the acting of his counsels, whether to punish or to shew mercy. And hence it is that he delayeth till wicked prophane spirits wonder, yea, scoff at his delay, and think, surely the Lord will never do any such thing as he hath threatened or promised, because he stayeth so long before he doth it; whereas indeed to him *that inhabiteth eternity,* deferment is no delay, though to us it seem so, whose times are measured out by inches and hours, by moments and by minutes. Those prophane wretches (*Isa.* 5. 19.) call the Lord, and provoke him to action; *Let him make speed and hasten his work, that we may see it.* The Lord appears slow and slack to many men, but *the Lord is not slack as some men count slackness* (2 *Pet.* 3. 9.) Men think he is slack when he is only patient, and themselves ignorant, *That a thousand years to the Lord are but as one day;* God doth not measure time by our Pole, nor cast it up by our Arithmetick. Eternity doth not only like the unjust Steward, bid us write *fifty for an hundred,* but *one for a thousand,* and (which bears the disproportion of divers hundreds in every one of that thousand) one day for a thousand years. Time is not only a small thing, but nothing unto God. *Mine age* (saith *David*) *is nothing unto thee* (Psal. 39. 5.) *And if all Nations before him are as nothing, if they are counted to him less then nothing* (*Isa.* 40. 17.) Then not only the age of one man, but the ages of all men added together, are before him as nothing, and are counted to him less then nothing. *Surely he cannot want time to do all things, before whom all times are nothing.* He cannot want time to powr out his judgments, and to empty the Vials of his wrath upon wicked men, nor can he want time to fulfil his promises, and to make good every word of blessing which he hath spoken to, or concerning his own people. Wicked men! Do not ye hope? Godly men! Do not ye fear, God will not do what he hath said, because he hath not already done it? He hath not lost his time or season, because he hath not accepted that which ye thought to be the time or season. Christ warns his Disciples (*John* 9. 4.) to make haste about their work, for *the night* (namely of death) *cometh, wherein no man can work;* while you have the day, do your work, for I know what day yours is, your day will be gone, and the night will come, when you can work no more; but Gods day fears no night, whatever comes, he can do his work. The Preacher gives the same counsel upon the same ground (Eccles. 9.) *Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might;* lay hold upon the forelock of time, why? *There is no wisdom or counsel in the grave whither thou goest:* When thou diest, there is an end of all thy working-time; do thy work well, for thou canst not recall a day of thy life to mend thy work in, neither canst thou work at all in that night of death. The Lords day knows nothing of a grave, nor is his Sun acquainted with going down; if he seems slack to his work, or slack at his work this day and the next, *&c.* Yet he hath another day at his call, and after that another and another, all which are to him but one day. Therefore he takes or leaves, defers or hastens, comes or goes at pleasure, *Are thy dayes, O Lord, as mans dayes? Are thy years as the dayes of man?* I know they are not.

But why doth *Job* make so many of these negative Queries?

The next words will answer,

Verse 6. **That thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin.**

Here's the reason of these former Questions, As if he had said, *Lord, surely thou needest not search and examine me in this manner, seeing it is neither thus nor thus with thee; It is not good to thee to oppose or to despise the work of thy hands; thou hast not eyes of flesh or dayes of man.*

That thou enquirest after mine iniquity.

בקש *Significat non tam verbis & interrogatis one, quam actionibus & summo studio aliquid inquirere; & non raro de pœna & nece procuranda accipitur.*

The Original signifies an enquiry two wayes. First, By Word. Secondly, By Actions. By somewhat done, or by somewhat spoken. And it signifies both to do and speak with great attention and heat of spirit. The word is also applied to those enquiries which are made by torture, when the party is suspected for concealment of the matter under enquiry. Which way of examination is called by the *Latines,* a bringing of a man to *question.* That last Engine which was invented to support the tottering state of *Rome,* wherein poor souls are put to extream tortures, to force confession or self-accusations (that I say) is called the *Inquisition,* and the Judges *Inquisitors;* because inquisition or enquiry (according to the word of the Text) is there made after the iniquities of men, after their supposed heresies and heretical practices against the *Romish* Church. *Job* seems to allude to such wayes of examination, why doth the Lord enquire after mine iniquity by sore judgments and terrible afflictions, by strong pains and mighty terrors?

At lowest, the word signifieth a diligent search or scrutinie with utmost industry; industry, even such as they use, who maliciously hunt for the precious life. The Lord saith to *Moses,* return into *Egypt, for all the men that sought thy life are dead* (Exod. 4, 19.) It is this word. So (1 *Sam.* 22. 23.) *Abide thou with me* (saith *David* to *Abiathar*) *fear not; for he that seeks my life, seeketh thy life.* When revenge makes a search, it is a diligent search; malice hath a piercing eye, and enquires narrowly. That gracious promise is thus expressed (*Jer.* 50. 20.) *In those dayes the iniquity of* Israel *shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of* Judah, *and they shall not be found. Job* complains here, *Thou enquirest after mine iniquity;* there the promise is, *In those dayes the iniquity of* Israel *shall be sought for,* or, *enquired after, and it shall not be found;* that is, suppose the iniquity of *Israel* should be sought after, suppose there should be an Hue and Cry sent out after the sin of my people; yet, saith the Lord, it shall not be found: why? what hinders the finding of it, or where shall it be hid? The next words resolve the doubt; It shall be hid in the pardoning mercies of God. *I the Lord will pardon those whom I reserve;* The Lord would give such a full and free pardon of sin, that what search and enquiry soever should be made after it, there should not be so much as any scar or mark, not so much as any print or stain left to be a witness of their sin, or a plea for their condemnation. Answerable to that (*Rom.* 8. 1.) *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Job* speaks as if God were so far from hiding his iniquity in a pardon, when it came to be searched for, that himself searched for it, as if he were resolved not to pardon it. *Wherefore is it that thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?*

דרש *Est inquirere in peccatorem per testes & judiciariam questionem,* Pined. *Quærere ne tat scientiã Dei, & de nitat animadversionẽ & vindictam,* Daresh & Bakash *distinguit*

Both parts of the Verse meet in the same sence. The word (*Darash*) in the latter, being often applied as the former, to a judiciary search. Yet some distinguish them strictly, thus; the former to signifie an enquiry by recalling to memory, or the examining of our selves; *Thou enquirest after mine iniquity,* that is, thou askest thy self whether thou hast not observed some iniquity in me; thou dost (as it were) rub thy memory, and take an account of what is laid up there concerning me. Memory is the store-house or treasury, the record or register of the soul. *Books are a Memory without us, and Memory is a Book within us.* Then the other word signifies searching by examination of the suspected party in either of those wayes before explained. The Lord tells the *Jews* (whose wickedness was grown immodest, and rose a step beyond hypocrisie) that he needed

not

not search after their sins. *In thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of poor innocents, I have not found it by secret search,* Jer. 2. 34. As noting, that the Lord doth sometimes make a secret search, and that there are some who hide their sins, some who sit close upon, and cover them, as *Rachel* did the stoln Idols, when *Laban* came to search *Jacob*'s stuff; that there are some who make excuses and Apologies for them; to these the Lord comes with a secret search for their iniquity. The word in *Jeremy* signifies *digging*; I have not found it by digging: Some put their sins under ground; only deep digging can find these out: *Job* enquires of the Lord why he made such a searching after his iniquities, why he was so curious in looking into every corner, and behind every door, to find out the rubbish of his life, seeing the closest sin is as open to his eye, as the Sun at noon-day; and besides, God knew that *Job* had no close sin, no darling beloved sin in his bosom, no sweet morsels of any forbidden fruit under his tongue. He tells the Lord as much in plain terms, in the next words; *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* As we use to say to a man that makes a busie search after any thing, either in a place or about a person, where there is no probability that it should be found; or when we suppose the person searching cannot have the least ground of perswasion, that the thing is there, or with him; in such a case (I say) a man will answer, why do ye make such a search? ye know what ye look for, is not here; ye know well enough I have it not; ye have some other end in this. Thus *Job* speaks here: *Lord, why dost thou search for mine iniquity? Thou knowest well enough that I am not wicked, There is certainly somewhat else in the wind. Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.*

potest si illud in revocatione ad animum, hoc in scrutatione occultorū ponamus. Coc.

Sententia plana est, non est necesse ut in peccata mea curiosius inquiras, cum Deus sis cui nota sunt & perspecta omnia, etiam interiora cordis. Bol.

Take a Note or two from these words, *That thou enquirest after mine iniquity*, &c.

First, *God knoweth us before he searcheth us.*

Job professes of himself as a Judge (*chap.* 29. 16.) *The Cause which I knew not, I searched out*; but God searches out those Causes which he knows. God doth not search us, that he may know us, or *to inform himself, but to make us know him and our selves.* There are not many who know themselves at all; there are none who know themselves enough. The Lord searches us, that we may search our selves. There are not many who know God at all; there are none who know God enough. God searches us, that we may seek after him. By every affliction the Lord would make us know our selves and *Himself* better. It is said of *Manasseh*, when he was in the Briars, That, *then Manasseh knew the Lord*; and then (doubtless) he began to know himself. *The same light that brings us to the knowledge of what God is, brings us also to the knowledge of what our selves are.* Secondly observe,

Afflictions are Searchers.

Thou searchest for mine iniquity, saith *Job*. *Job* supposed that the Lord came to try him, and to find out the bottom of his heart: When God smites our Bodies or our Estates, he searcheth our hearts, and maketh enquiry in our lives. The Prophet threatens the *Jews* (*Zeph.* 1. 12.) That God would come and search *Jerusalem with Candles*; That is, as some interpret, he would cause the *Chaldeans* to search for their most hidden treasures, and find them out. Others understand it of God himself, searching *Jerusalem*. But God is not like the Woman in the Parable, who had lost her Groat, he needeth to Candle-light to find out the lost Groat, or to find out the filthiness that is in the most secret corners of the heart. The meaning then is, that God would search *Jerusalem*, that is, the people of *Jerusalem*, as exactly, as if they were searched with a Candle: he would bring forth their secret sins, and all their hidden abominations. This search was was made by those terrible and sore Judgments brought upon *Jerusalem*. God kindled a fire of affliction, and searched them by the light of that fire; Troubles are as so many Candles lighted up to search our selves by, and they will be as so many fires kindled to consume us with, if we search not our selves. At this time God is searching *England* with Candles. The Prophet describing the great sorrows of the *Jews*, in their Captivity, directs us what to do (*Lam.* 3. 40.) *Let us search and try our wayes.* When God is searching us, it is high time for us to search our selves. It is sad when God is searching for our sins, if we are not searching for them too; and it is more sad, if when God cometh to search for our sins, we be found hiding our sins. These are searching times; God is searching, let us search too; else we may be sure (as *Moses* (Numb. 32.) tells the people of *Israel*) our sins will find us out. They who endeavour not to find their sins, shall be found by their sins; *Our iniquity will enquire after us, if we enquire not after it.* But what if iniquity enquire after us? What? If iniquity enquire after us, it will find us; and if iniquity find us, trouble will find us; yea, if iniquity find us alone without Christ, Hell and Death will find us. If Iniquity find any man, he hath reason enough to say unto it (what *Ahab* said to *Eliah* without reason) *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* The best of men have reason to look what is evil in them, when God brings evil upon them, or wraps them up in common evils. They who have no wickedness in them to cast them under condemnation, have yet sin enough in them to make them smart under correction. Though *Job* could say from the testimony of a pure Conscience, *Thou knowest I am not wicked*; yet he durst not say, thou knowest I have not sinned. *Job* acknowledged he was sinful, and God knew he was not wicked. In searching after iniquity, he found not hypocrisie; yea, he knew he was not an hypocrite before he searched him; so it follows,

Quum minutatim agnoscam de peccatis populi, & cum eo inibo rationes mea accuratissimè, ut solent qui adhibitis lucernis perlustrant omnia. Jun.

Verse 7. **Thou knowest that I am not wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.**

This seventh verse containeth one of the chiefest questions of that grand controversie handled in this Book, whether *Job* were a wicked man or no? Satan represented him for such to God; and therefore called that he might be tried; the Lord tried him upon that challenge, and he was brought to a grievous trial; *Job* appeals to the Lords own knowledge, and is contented to stand or fall according to his determination, being yet assured that he stood right in the thoughts of God. *Thou knowest I am not wicked.*

Continet versus septimus id quod præcipuè in hac causæ & disputatione spectandum est, sc. Jobū non esse improbum. Pin.

Thou knowest.] The Hebrew is rendered word for word, thus, *It is upon thy knowledge*; or, *It is upon thy know that I am not wicked*: As if he had said, *Thou hast not this knowledge from without, thou dost not ground thy judgment concerning the state of any man upon what others say of him, upon reports or hear-sayes; no, thy knowledge is from thy self; thou knowest upon thine own knowledge, thine is an internal, an immediate, and so a perfect, an infallible knowledge, and that tells thee of me, I am not wicked.*

לע רערך *Apud scire tuum est. Multo plus dicit per hanc phrasin apud scire tuum est, quam si diceret, tu scis In scientia tua est, penes notitiam tuam est, non aliunde sed ex te optimè nosti me non esse improbum.* Drus. *Hæret in regenitu peccatum, improbi tamen dici nec possunt, nec debent.* Merc.

That I am not wicked.] He doth not say, Thou knowest that I am not a sinner; or, Thou knowest that I have not sinned; *Job* had no such opinion of himself, and he knew God had no such knowledge of him. There is a great difference between being a sinner and a wicked man. The best of Saints while they are here upon the earth, are sinners, but the worst of Saints, even here upon earth, are not wicked; they have a new nature, they are new creatures, regenerate and born again by the Word and Spirit, therefore they are not wicked; though much sin be in them, yet no wickedness is in them; and they are denominated from their better part; not wicked from their remaining corruption, but holy from their received renovation. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.*

כי לא ארשע *Quod non impiè egerim.* Mon.

Again, The word in the Original being in the Verb, we may translate (as many do) *Thou knowest that I have not done wickedly.* But the sence is the same; *for every man is in doing as he is in being*: He that is not wicked in his state, cannot act wickedly. So we must understand that of the Apostle (1 *John* 3. 8.) *He that committeth sin, is of the Devil.*

Thirdly, To be *wicked*, is ordinarily opposed *to our being just*; and so, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*, is, *Thou knowest that I am not condemned or cast at thy Bar for a wicked man.* I am not condemned, but justified in thy sight. In which sence the word is used in that Prophetick curse against *Judas*, who betrayed Christ (*Psal.* 109. 7.) *When he shall be judged, let him be condemned*; so we render it: The Hebrew is elegantly translated thus, *When he shall be judged, let him go out wicked*; that is, let him go out from before the Bar and Tribunal of his Judges, a condemned man; or, *Let him proceed wicked*, let that be his title and his honour;

Eveat improbus.

Improbus & juſtus verba ſunt forenſia. Druſ.

nour; *wicked and juſt* are Judiciary or Court-terms, equivalent with *juſtified and condemned.*

Some join theſe words with the Verſe going before; *Doſt thou ſearch into mine iniquity that thou maiſt know whether I am wicked?* As if he had ſaid, *Lord, thou needeſt not make enquiry about this thing; for as I am not wicked, ſo thou art not ignorant: thou haſt not afflicted me, becauſe I am wicked; nor haſt thou ſearched me, becauſe thou art ignorant; Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* Hence obſerve,

First, That, *The Lord knows the ſtate of every man, and of every thing exactly.*

The foundation of God ſtands ſure, having this ſeal, The Lord knoweth them that are his (2 Tim. 2. 19.) And he knoweth them that are not his; not his by the grace of election and regeneration: for all are his by the right of creation and dominion. Thus he knows all the fowls of the Mountains, and the beaſts of the field are his (*Pſal.* 50. 11.) *David* gives this glory to God in his own caſe (*Pſal.* 139. 11.) *O Lord, thou haſt ſearched me and known me*: God did not ſearch to know him, but he ſearched him and knew him. The knowledge of God was not a conſequent, but a concomitant of that ſearch; or it is ſpoken in oppoſition to man; a man may ſearch his neighbour, and yet not know him. There are depths and turnings in the heart of man, which no man can reach or find out; but God hath a thread which will lead him into all, and through all the Labyrinths, a Line which will ſound all the depths of man. Hence *David* makes a particular of the knowledge of God; God knew him in all that he was, and in all that he did. *Thou knoweſt my down-lying and my upriſing, and thou art acquainted with all my wayes.* God is the Judge of all men, therefore he knows all men, *Heb.* 4. 13. *There is no creature which is not manifeſt in his ſight, all things are naked and open before him with whom we have to do.* The Apoſtle by two Metaphors in theſe words, teaches us, that as the out-members and lineaments of the Body, together with their beauty or deformity, are clearly ſeen when the Body is naked and uncloathed; that as the bowels and entrals of the body, together with their ſoundneſs or diſeaſes are perfectly diſcovered, when the body is diſſected or cut up by the hand of a skilful Anatomiſt; even ſo are we in all we do, and in all we are perfectly known; or as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks (2 *Cor.* 5. 11.) *manifeſt unto God*, even manifeſt with as much clearneſs to the knowledge of God, as the light is to the eye of man. He knows 1. Our perſons. 2. Our actions. 3. He knoweth the manner of our actions. 4. He knoweth with what hearts we act. 5. He knoweth not only the means we uſe, but the ends we propoſe in every action. 6. He knoweth what we have been, as well as what we are. And, 7. He knoweth what we will be, as well as what we are or have been; he knoweth what we have done, as well as what we do; and he knoweth what we will do, as well as what we do or have already done. He ſeeth all creatures in the Glaſs of his own counſels through and through. His eye hath thorow-lights in all parts of the world, and in the hearts of all men in the world.

γυμνὰ καὶ τετραχηλισμένα.

And ſeeing man cannot be hid from God, it is the vaineſt attempt for any man to think of hiding himſelf from God; yet that's not only the attempt, but the hope of many, who while they do what they would not have ſeen, pleaſe themſelves with this conceit, that they are not ſeen in doing it, or that they can ſecure what they have done from being ſeen. We learned this of our firſt Parents, in whom the firſt thing that appeared next their ſhame, after they had ſinned, was the hiding of their ſin. Man loveth to draw a curtain between God and himſelf, to raiſe up artificial darkneſs, and to walk in thick clouds (as he vainly hopes) undiſcovered.

Again, Doth God know us? Then let us labour to know our ſelves. God knows who are wicked, many are wicked, and know it not. It is a woful miſtake, when we think our ſelves to be in a good eſtate, and God knows us to be in a bad eſtate: It is a wrong to God and our ſelves, when God knows us to be in a good eſtate, and we think our ſelves to be in a bad eſtate; but it is far worſe, when we think our eſtate good, and God knows it to be bad. We ſhould be acquainted with our condition, leſt we (like *Laodicea*) flatter our ſelves into an opinion that we are rich and cloathed, and have need of nothing, when God knows we are poor and naked, and wanting all things.

Secondly, Obſerve from the elegancy of the Hebrew expreſſion, *It is upon thy knowledge that I am not wicked.*

God knoweth all things in and of himſelf

This gives glory to God, and liſteth him up above the Creature in the fulneſs of his knowledge. Men who have the greateſt knowledge, and vaſteſt comprehenſions of things, yet have not that knowledge in and from themſelves, they fetch it in by borrowed helps, and glad they can have it ſo too. It coſts man a great deal of travel and ſtudy to make himſelf maſter of a little knowledge (*Job* 12. 12.) *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes is underſtanding.* Some indeed get wiſdom and underſtanding, and are owners of a vaſt ſtock and treaſure of knowledge; but when? but how? When they are old, when they have had long experience, and have ſtudied hard for it: *With the ancient is wiſdom, and in length of dayes is underſtanding*: Thus men get knowledge. But mark what is ſaid of God in the next words (*verſ.* 13.) *But with him* (meaning God) *is wiſdom and ſtrength; he hath counſel and underſtanding. With him it is, and he hath it*: The Lord doth not grow more knowing by years, nor doth his underſtanding mend by the multitude of dayes; though he be the *Ancient of dayes*, yet it is not his antiquity which hath got him this knowledge; his knowledge is in him, and with him, and from himſelf: he fetches not his knowledge from ſence, nor doth he take it up by information; he learns it not by demonſtration raiſed from the things themſelves, nor by the collation of one thing with another. He doth not know this to be ſo, becauſe that is ſo, but all things are ſo, becauſe he knows them. He knows all; 1. Fully, not to halves. 2. Certainly, not probably. 3. Actually, not poſſibly. 4. At once, not ſucceſſively; as not one thing by another, ſo not one thing after another. Such are the eminencies and tranſcendencies of the knowledge of God.

The Scripture ſpeaks ſometimes as if God derived his knowledge from report, or as if he did not know whether a people were wicked or no, till he had enquired. When the new world was building their *Babel*, the Lord ſaid, *Let us go down to ſee the City* (Gen. 11. 5.) And when *Sodom* was burning in luſt, the Lord reſolved, *I will go down and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know* (Gen. 18. 21.)

In both thoſe places of Scripture God comes down to our capacity, but he comes not down to any place in the world. He needs not come any whither who is every where. God ſpeaks after the manner of men; but he acts not after the manner of men. God gives us an example what we ſhould do, he doth not work after our example. Leſt we ſhould judge before we ſee, God ſaith I will go down and ſee, before I judge; leſt we ſhould cenſure one another upon fames and common cries without further enquiry, whether it be ſo or no, therefore the Lord ſaith, *I will go down and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the cry that is come unto me.* God knew *Sodom* was wicked, before he came down, but he came down to make it known that he knew it.

As thoſe Scriptures ſeem to import that God knew not how wicked the Builders of *Babel* were, or the dwellers in *Sodom*, till he took pains to enquire; ſo another Scripture imports, that he did not know *Abraham* was a godly man, till he made an experiment of it, by putting him upon that hard piece of obedience, the offering up of his Son; *Now I know thou feareſt me* (Gen. 22. 12.) As if the Lord had collected his knowledge of what *Abraham* was, from what *Abraham* did. But that teſtimony of God, *Now I know*, is but now I have made it known; or, now I know that in the fruit, which I knew before in the root; now I ſee my fear in thy works, as before I ſaw it in thy faith. That place (*Deut.* 8. 2.) bears a like ſence; where *Moſes* beſpeaks *Iſrael* thus; *Thou ſhalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee theſe forty years in the wilderneſs to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldeſt keep his Commandments or no.*

The Lord needed not forty years, no, nor one minutes experience to make up his thoughts concerning that people; he knew what they were at first sight, and what they would prove (even a stubborn, an unbelieving, and a back-sliding people) before they were. God proved them, not to know what was in their hearts, but that we might know it; that, what he knew by his internal, immediate inspection, others also might know by external observation. It would not have been believed that they were so bad, if God had not drawn it out by that forty years variety of his dispensations towards them. Or *Moses* describes God after the manner of men, who prove things, that they may know them, whereas indeed God knows, and then proves them.

Thirdly, Considering how *Job* comes in with this assurance [*Thou knowest that I am not wicked*] to relieve himself in his distress, we may observe,

That, *It is matter of highest consolation to the Saints, to know and remember that God knows them.*

That God knows their hearts and lives, is the joy of their hearts and lives. How rejoycingly doth *David* speak (*Psal.* 139. 1,2.) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me, thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising*, &c. He seems to be as glad that God knew him, as that God would save him. *My witness is in heaven, and my record is on high*, was *Job*'s retort again, when his friends scorned him (*chap.* 16. 19.) There are no mistakes in God; he will give right evidence, as a witness; and a righteous sentence, as Judge.

Again, That God knows, assures us,

First, That what we have done, shall not be forgotten; *God is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love*, &c. *Heb.* 6. 10. It assures us,

Secondly, That we shall not be miss-interpreted for what we have done. The reason why many men have so ill an opinion of others, is, because they have so little knowledge of them. Ignorance makes as corrupt glosses, as unsound decisions upon persons and actions, as it doth up Texts or Questions. Some pervert knowingly and against light, but most pervert ignorantly and for want of light. God knows us perfectly, and he never acts against his knowledge. It assures us,

Thirdly, That we shall be well accepted and rewarded. Though men make ill requital, and pay in bad, yea, in base coyn; yet every man shall receive of God according to what he is, and what his works are (*Gen.* 4. 7.) *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted?*

Lastly, It is a comfort to us, while we are uncertain about our own estates, to know that God knoweth us. God hath a better opinion of some men then they have of themselves. Some do not think, but judge and conclude themselves wicked, when God knoweth that they are not wicked. *The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

Fourthly, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* Hence observe,

To do wickedly, or to be wicked, is inconsistent with Grace.

If *Job* had been a wicked man, he had been a lost man. Sin is not inconsistent with Grace, but wickedness is.

But you will say, What is wickedness? And when is a man so sinful that he is to be numbred among the wicked? To clear that, because *Job* ventures all upon it.

I answer; First, In every wicked man sin reigneth, that is, sin hath not only a being in him, but dominion over him; he yieldeth ready and free obedience to it, as to his *natural Lord*: not a forced and involuntary obedience only, as to a *Tyrant*. Our committing of sin gives not the rule to sin; but our submitting to it. As a man may do many good things, and yet Grace not reign and rule in his heart; so it is possible for a man to do many evil things, and yet not have sin rule in his heart. A man may lay by the actings of a sin, and yet that be a reigning sin; and a man may fall into the act of sin, and yet that no reigning sin. The reign of sin or of grace are chiefly seen in that professed subjection or resignation of our selves to the dictates and commands of grace. *No man can be at once Gods son, and sins servant; no, nor at once a servant to both.*

A wicked man is a customary sinner, he driveth a trade in sin. A godly man (possibly) may commit the same sin again, yet the custom is broken, because he putteth in a plea against sin, and often moveth God for power, not only against, but over it; if he attain not this blessed victory, yet he ceaseth not to complain, and pray, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?* When shall I be delivered from this burden and bondage of corruption? When shall it once be? O that it might once be! Wicked men are so far from pleading against, that they usually plead for their sins; and labour more to make excuses and apologies for them, then to get power and victory over them. They instead of making preparation to resist the lusts of the flesh, make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Thirdly, A wicked man preserves in himself a purpose to sin, while he seems to pray and protest against his sin. He is (as *Augustine* confessed of himself before his conversion) afraid God should grant his prayer, while he prayeth that his corruptions may be mortified. He may put up prayers against sin, but he puts up no desires against it. As custom is the rode of our lives, so purposes are the rode of our hearts. What a mans purposes are, such the movings of his heart are (*Isa.* 56. 12.) *To morrow shall be as to day, and much more abundant*, say they in their beastly abuse of the creatures; we have been drunk to day, and hope to be more to morrow. (*Ezek.* 11. 21.) *Their heart doth go after the heart of their abominable things*, that is, the inclinations and resolutions of their hearts go or walk after their abominations. A godly man sinneth, but he doth not purpose to sin; his purposes are not to sin, holiness is his way; and as sin is it self a by-way, so it is besides his way. The honest Traveller intends to keep straight on to his journeyes end; if he miss his way at any time, he misses his purpose. The Robber skulks about in by-wayes, and comes not into the Rode, but to find and seize upon his prey. *Peter* denied Christ, but did *Peter* purpose to deny Christ? No, *Peter* purposed not to deny Christ; yea, *Peter* promised not to deny Christ. *Peter* resolved that he would die rather then deny Christ, and yet he denied Christ; *Peter* did not go out and make a bargain with the Scribes and Pharisees, as *Judas* did, to betray his Master. *Peter was betrayed when he denied his Master.* *Peter* was suddenly attached with a violent temptation, and arrested with base fear. He did not deny Christ because he resolved to do it, but because he resolved so much not to do it, without due dependance upon Christ for power not to do it. A godly man may have some deliberations about sin, yet no resolutions. He may deliberate upon the acting of some sin, when the occasion is given, but he doth not deliberate upon the finding of occasions to provoke him to the acting of sin. *David* did not go up to his house-top to invite an incentive of Lust, though he there met with one.

Fourthly, Wickedness carrieth clearness, yea, fulness of consent in sin. A wicked man may have many checks at sin from his Conscience, but he hath none from his Will. And a wicked man may have some motions to good from his Conscience, but he hath none from his Will. When a wicked man abstains from doing evil he wills it; and when he doth good, he wills it not. In Nature, the act and the consent go both to evil; *I do evil, and I will do it, is the stubborn voyce of corrupt Nature.* In Grace, though the act goes sometimes to evil, yet the consent doth not. *The evil which I would not, that I do, is the mournful voyce of Grace.* In Glory, both act and consent go to good, and neither of them to any evil. *The good which I will, I do; the evil which I would not, I do not; shall be for ever the triumphant voyce of Glory.* When the Apostle *Paul* (Rom. 7.) bewailed his own bondage under corruption, he yet professed that whatever evil he did, he consented not to doit. And though there may be some kind of consent in the sinning of a godly man, yet it is not such a consent as is in a wicked man: For as a wicked man, though he may sometimes shew his willingness, and give his consent to do good, to hear the Word, to pray, &c. Yet it is not a clear, a full and free consent; the will never comes up heartily in it: so there may be some kind of consent, a negative consent in a godly man doing evil, he may not (as to that act) resist or deny; as when a Question is put to the vote, a man who doth not affirm, may be said to give some consent, when he suspends his voyce, and doth not openly oppose.

Thus

Thus a godly man when a temptation cometh, never gives a direct *yea* of conſent, yet ſometimes not giving his *no*, there is a kind of conſent, a middle act, not a clear or determinate act of conſent. Now a wicked man, as he is *taken captive by the Devil at his will* (2 Tim. 2. 26.) that is, at Satans will, the Devil takes him captive when he pleaſeth: ſo alſo at his own will; He is pleaſed to be taken captive by the Devil.

Veram gratis malus & inultiæ meæ cauſa nulla erat niſi malitia. Auguſt. l. 3. confeſſ. c. 4.

Fifthly, Where there is a wickedneſs in ſinning, there is delight in ſin. Pure delight in ſin is impureſt wickedneſs. To diſobey for nought is the moſt wicked diſobedience, as to ſerve God for nought is the moſt holy ſervice. What is it which ſheweth the eminency of grace? Is it not the joy which the ſoul finds in the wayes of grace? When we can delight in the Law of God, as his Law, abſtracted from ends and fruits. When it is meat and drink to us to do the will of God, though we ſuffer hunger, and are ready to ſtarve in doing it, here is godlineſs at the higheſt: and when any delight in ſin as ſin, as contrary to the will of God, abſtracted from ends and fruits, here is wickedneſs at the higheſt. To act in ſuch a degree of ſin, is inconſiſtent with any degree of grace.

Job appeals to the teſtimony of God, that he had not ſinned in any of theſe degrees, while he ſaith, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.*

Fifthly obſerve, *A godly man may know that he is ſo, and be confident of it.*

He that ſaith, God knoweth he is not wicked, knoweth it himſelf. For though the Lord hath a knowledge of us beyond ours, though he knows us, better then we know our ſelves, yet no man can tell the Lord, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, but he who knows that he is not. The excellency of our condition conſiſts in being godly, the comfort of it conſiſts in knowing that we are godly. When *David* offers himſelf to the tryal (*Pſal.* 139. 24.) *Search me, O Lord, and ſee if there be any way of wickedneſs in me*; He ſpeaks not as doubting whether he were wicked or no, but as being aſſured that he was not. As if he had ſaid, There are many weakneſſes in me I know, but I know not of any wickedneſs. He that offers himſelf to Gods ſearch for his wickedneſs, gives a ſtrong argument of his own uprightneſs. The beſt of the Saints may be at a loſs ſometimes for their aſſurances, and not know they are good. They may ſtand ſometimes hovering between heaven and earth, yea, between heaven and hell, as uncertain to which they ſhall be accounted. Yet many of the Saints are fully perſwaded they are Saints, and ſit with Chriſt in heavenly places, while they are wandering here upon the earth. A godly man may know this two wayes;

Firſt, By the workings of Grace in his heart.

Secondly, By the teſtimony of the Spirit with his heart.

Firſt, By the workings of grace in his heart (1 *Joh.* 2. 3.) *Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his Commandments*: and (*Chap.* 3. 14.) *We know that we are paſſed from death to life, becauſe we love the brethren.* There may be ſuch workings of grace in the heart, as may amount to an evidence of grace. *What our being is, is diſcernable in our workings.* The word is as clear as light, that our juſtification may have a light or evidence in our ſanctification, though no cauſe or foundation there. Grace is the image of Chriſt ſtamped upon the ſoul, and they who reflecting upon their ſouls, ſee the image of Chriſt there, may be ſure that Chriſt is theirs. Chriſt hath given all himſelf to thoſe to whom he hath given this part of himſelf.

Secondly, This may be known by the teſtimony of the Spirit with the heart (2 *Cor.* 5. 5.) *He that hath wrought us for the ſelf ſame thing is God.* God ſets up a frame of holineſs in every believer, He hath wrought us; and how are we aſſured that he hath? *Who alſo hath given us the earneſt of his Spirit.* The graces of the Spirit are a real earneſt of the Spirit, yet they are not alwayes an evidential earneſt; therefore an earneſt is often ſuperadded to our graces. There is a three-fold work of the Spirit.

Firſt, To conveigh and plant grace in the ſoul.

Secondly, To act and help us to exerciſe the graces, which are planted there.

Thirdly, To ſhine upon and enlighten thoſe graces, or to give an earneſt of thoſe graces; This laſt work the Spirit fulfils two wayes.

Firſt, By arguments and inferences, which is a mediate work.

Secondly, By preſence and influence, which is an immediate work. This the Apoſtle calls *witneſs-bearing*, (1 Joh. 5. 8.) *There are three that bear witneſs in earth, The Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood.* The Spirit brings in the witneſs of the Water and of the Blood, which is his mediate work; but beſides and above theſe he gives a diſtinct witneſs of his own, which is his immediate work, and is in a way of peculiarity and tranſcendency, called the witneſs of the Spirit. Hence that of the Apoſtle *Paul, We have not received the ſpirit of the world, but we have received the Spirit which is of Chriſt, that we may know the things that are freely given us of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 12. The things freely given may be received by us, and yet the receit of them not known to us, therefore we receive the Spirit, that we may know what is given us, and what we have received. The Spirit doth (as it were) put his hand to our receits, and his ſeal alſo, whence he is ſaid, *To ſeal us up to the day of redemption*, Epheſ. 4. 30.

Sixthly obſerve, *A godly man dares appeal to God himſelf, that he is not wicked.*

He dares ſtand before God to juſtifie his ſincerity, though he dares not ſtand to juſtifie himſelf before God: *Job* had often laid all thoughts of his own righteouſneſs in the duſt, but he alwayes ſtands up for his own uprightneſs. *God is my witneſs* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Paul*, Rom. 9. 1.) *whom I ſerve in my ſpirit in the Goſpel of his Son*; I ſerve God in my ſpirit, and God knows that I do ſo, I dare appeal unto him that it is ſo, *God is my witneſs*. When Chriſt put that queſtion, & drove it home upon *Peter* thrice, *Simon, loveſt thou me? Lord*, (ſaith he) *Thou knoweſt all things, Thou knoweſt that I love thee* (Joh. 21.) as if he had ſaid, I will not give teſtimony of my ſelf, thou ſhalt not have it upon my word, but upon thine own knowledge. It were eaſie for me to ſay, *Maſter I love thee with all my heart, with all my ſoul*; but I refer my ſelf to thy own boſom, *Thou knoweſt I love thee.* So when *Hezekiah* lay (as he thought) upon his death bed, he turned himſelf to the wall, deſiring God to look upon the integrity of his life, *Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth* (Iſa. 38. 3.) I do not go to the world for their good word of me, I reſt not in what my Subjects or Neighbor Princes ſay of me, Lord, it is enough for me, that what I have been, and what I am, is laid up ſafe in the treaſury of thy thoughts. This brings ſtrong conſolation, when we take not up the teſtimony of men, nor reſt in the good opinion of our brethren, but can have God himſelf to make *affidavit*, or bear witneſs with us and for us. That ſuch a man will ſay, I am an honeſt man, that ſuch a man will give his word for me, is cold comfort; but when the ſoul can ſay, God will give his word for me, *The Lord knows that I am not wicked*; here's enough to warm our hearts when the love of the world is waxen ſo cold, and their tongues ſo frozen with uncharitableneſs, that they will not ſpeak a good word of us, how much good ſoever they know by us.

Seventhly, Conſider the condition wherein *Job* was, when he ſpake this, he was upon the rack, and as it were, under an inquiſition, God laid his hand extream hard upon him, yet at that time, even then he ſaith, *Lord, thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* Hence obſerve,

A man of an upright heart, and a good conſcience, will not be brought to think that God hath ill thoughts of him, how much evil ſo ever God brings upon him.

The actings of God toward us are often full of changes and turnings, but the thoughts of God never change. A ſoul may be afflicted till he is weary of himſelf, yet he knows God is not weary of him. Whomſoever he hath once made good, he cannot but for ever eſteem good; and all ſuch a mans afflictions, are either to ſhew how good God hath made him, or to make him better.

Eightly, *Job* was under as bad thoughts of man, as (almoſt) any man ever was, when he ſpake thus to God, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* Hence obſerve,

That all the hard cenſures and miſconſtructions of men, cannot beat an upright heart out of this hold, that God loveth him, and hath a good opinion of him.

Let men think what they will of him, and judge him as ſeverely as they pleaſe; this moves him not at all to think that God judges him ſo too. He can ſee the love of God through all the anger of the creatures. He likes not his condition the better, becauſe ſome men tell him it is good; nor the worſe, becauſe any man tells him it is ill, while he finds himſelf bottomed upon the free grace of God, and cheared with the clearneſs of his own integrity. *The gates of Hell ſhall not* (much leſs ſhall the uncharitableneſs of men) *prevail againſt ſuch a man.* Happy is he, who can ſay unto God, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked,* while men are ſaying, thou art wicked. And how miſerable is he, whoſe heart tells him he is wicked, though men ſay, ſurely thou art good. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things* (1 *Joh.*3.20.) Doth conſcience tell you that you are wicked? God can tell you ſo much more. It is a woful thing for any man to be under the juſt condemnation of his own heart, though it is more woful to be under the flatteries of his own heart. *It is bad enough to be daubed by others with untempered morter, it is far worſe to be a ſelf-dauber*; No man hath cauſe to rejoyce in what himſelf, or be troubled at what others ſay of him, unleſs God ſay ſo too.

Two things are further obſervable from theſe words;

First, *There is no medium between a godly and a wicked man.*

Every man is one of theſe two. Some are called civil honeſt men; many conceit that theſe are good men indeed, and not a few, that theſe are in a middle ſtate between good and evil: but the truth is, there is nothing between good and evil, light and darkneſs: there is no *medium* of participation between theſe extreams. *Solomon* (Eccleſ. 9. 2.) ſets all men in two orders, *All things come alike unto all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good, to the clean, and to the unclean, to him that ſweareth, and to him that feareth an oath.* Note by the way, he doth not put the diſtinction betwen him that ſweareth, and him that ſweareth not, but between him *that ſweareth, and him that feareth an oath.* There are many who are not ſwearers (ſwearing is deboyſery, and ſo inconſiſtent with civility) who yet do not fear an oath. It is better to fear to do evil, then not to do evil. This diviſion runs through the whole world. Good and evil (in a remiſs degree) mingle in the ſame perſon, but no mans perſon is in a middle ſtate between good and evil.

Secondly, *God hath a certain knowledge concerning the ſtate of every man.*

This is a tranſcendent, beyond any knowledge which man hath of man; God doth not only know what is in us, but what is not in us; not only what we are, but what we are not. *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.* The reaſon why a negative oath is not admitted among men, is, becauſe no man can ſwear ſo in knowledge. None can ſpeak negatively of another, knowingly, but God alone. We may ſay of a man, there is that in him for which it is meet for us to judge him godly. But it is impoſſible from any outward evidence to conclude peremptorily he is not wicked. It is more to ſay of a man, he is not wicked, then to ſay he is godly. *It is eaſier to know what is, then what is not.* As it is in voting, ſo in knowing: Negative votes are ſtrongeſt. To ſay ſuch a thing ſhall not paſs or be done, imports the greateſt power: ſo negative knowledge is the higheſt; to ſay ſuch a thing is not, or ſuch a man did it not, imports a certain knowledge, a knowledge ſo certain, as is appliable to none, but God himſelf, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.*

And there is none that can deliver out of thine hand.

What none? Then were our condition ſad indeed? *None* excludes meer creatures onely; Chriſt can *deliver* us out of the hand of God; and *Job* believed Chriſt had delivered him, when he ſaid, *There is none that can deliver:*

The hand of God is the power of God; and to deliver out of his hand, is to fetch out or free from his power. The word which we tranſlate to deliver, notes delivering either by power or by policy, by ſtrength or by wit. A priſoner is delivered ſometimes by reſcue or open violence, ſometimes by ſtealth or ſecret conveyance; he picks a lock or breaks a door to deliver himſelf out of the hand of man. But neither of theſe wayes can any man deliver himſelf, or get deliverance out of the hand of God. There is no difficulty in the interpretation of theſe words, but there is ſome difference about the intent of them.

First, Some, for *none* tranſlate *nothing*, and ſo joyn theſe words with the former, as an argument of the inſufficiency of mans righteouſneſs; *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked,* yet there is *nothing* (in my righteouſneſs) *that can deliver me out of thine hand.* As *Paul* ſaid (1 Cor. 4.4.) *I know nothing by my ſelf; yet am I not hereby juſtified.* So *Job* ſaith, Lord, Thou knoweſt nothing by me, yet hereby I cannot be delivered.

Ne mea quidē integritas, cujus tu mihi teſtis es, facit ut hac plaga liberer ut qui nihil ſcīto meo corā te promererī poſſim. Jun.

Secondly, Theſe words may be expounded as tending to move compaſſion, and to ſtir up bowels of pity in God toward *Job*; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, why doeſt thou deal thus ſeverely with me, when there is none that can deliver me out of thine hand? who can reſcue me, while thou layeſt thine arreſt upon me? Thou maiſt keep me under reſtraint as long as thou wilt; I cannot be fetcht off, or out, and wilt thou deal thus hardly with me? Wilt thou puniſh me thus?* Whom we cannot hold long in our hands, we are apt to deal more roughly with, while they are in our hands, and to take our peniworths out of them, while we have them. And 'tis uſual with great Princes ſpeedily to ſeal the Writ of execution againſt an eminent offender, when they hear or ſuſpect many potent ſuiters will move for his pardon, and ſolicite his deliverance out of the hand of juſtice. *Job* ſeems to ſpeak in alluſion to ſuch, *If there were any who could deliver me out of thine hand, or pull me away from thee by ſtrength, or by entreaty, I ſhould wonder the leſs at thy ſeverity.*

Non eſt qui clamat, Deus optime, ne ſtringas gladium, ne ſtrictum extendas in populū tuū.

God doth ſometimes even beſpeak the interceſſion of others, and complains that none come in to deliver a people or a perſon out of his hand. When he was about to deſtroy *Sodome* he tells it unto *Abraham*, probably, for that very end, that *Abraham* might intercede for *Sodom*, and (at leaſt) get *Lot* out of his hand. When God was about to execute his judgments upon *Jeruſalem, He ſaw and there was no man, and wondred that there was no interceſſor*, none to take him off from deſtroying that people (*Iſa.*59.16.) The Prophet complains in words of the ſame importance (*Chap.*64.7.) *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that ſtirreth up himſelf to take hold of thee.* Friends, ſeeing a father go out haſtily to correct his child, riſe preſently, or ſtir up themſelves to take hold of the father, or to mediate for the child, Pray ſpare him for this time, and hold your hand: but ſaith the Prophet, *There is none that will ſtir up himſelf to take hold of God.* He is going out in wrath, and no man puts him in mind of mercy, with that cry of another Prophet, *O ſpare thy people, and give not thine heritage to reproach!* When *Abraham* was ready to ſlay *Iſaac* upon the altar, when his hand was ſtretched out to fetch the fatal blow, juſt then, did the Angel take hold of his ſword, and delivered *Iſaac* out of his hand. God ſaith to *Moſes* (Exod. 32. 10.) *Let me alone*; God was about to deſtroy that People, *Moſes* would not permit him, he ſeeks to deliver *Iſrael* out of the revenging hand of God, by that holy violence of Prayer and ſupplication.

Laſtly, Others look upon *Job*, as breathing out a very heroick and magnanimous ſpirit in theſe words. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, Thou knoweſt and thou ſhalt know, that I am not wicked, though none deliver or take me out of thine hand, Thou ſhalt find me holding mine integrity, as long as I hold my life, I am reſolved to honour thee, whatſoever thou doeſt with me.* And ſo he refutes the charge of Satan: Satan ſaid, *Touch his fleſh and his bone, and he will curſe thee to thy face:* No, ſaith *Job*, though he take away my fleſh and my bones, yet I will not curſe him to his face, no, nor ſpeak an ill word of him behind his back. Though I ſhould never be delivered, yet God ſhall never be blaſphemed. Upon the whole, obſerve,

That, there is no means on earth can reſcue us out of the hands of God.

I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand, Deut.32.39. Till God diſcharge us there's no eſcaping: none can force us

out

נצל *In Piel.* נצל *Spoliavit, diripuit, vel ſignificat ſimpliciter eripuit.*

out of his hand, whatsoever is in theirs; power cannot, policy cannot, riches cannot: we cannot bribe our selves out of the sight, or beyond the stroke of divine justice. A golden key will not open Gods prison door. *Riches avail not in the day of wrath*, and in some dayes of wrath, prayer it self cannot prevail. Then take heed how ye fall into the hands of God. No wise man will run into his displeasure, from whom there is no deliverance, but at his own pleasure. See more of this point, *Chap.* 9. 12.

VERS. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about; and yet thou doest destroy me.
Remember I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?
Hast thou not poured me out like milk, and crudled me like cheese?
Thou hast cloathed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.
Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.
And these things hast thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee,

AT *Vers.* 3. of this Chapter, we found *Job* questioning with the Lord, *Is it good for thee that thou shouldest oppress, That thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands?* In these words he insisteth upon, and illustrateth that argument, by fitting it to his own condition; as if he had said, *Seeing thou wilt not despise the work of thy hands, Why shouldest thou despise me? Am not I the work of thy hands? Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about, and yet thou doest destroy me.* The whole context argues out this point: wherein we may observe,

First, His forming or making, set down in general at *Vers.* 8. *Thine hands have made me, and fashoned me together round about.*

Secondly, The matter out of which he was formed and made, at *Vers.* 9. *Remember I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay.*

Thirdly, His forming is drawn out in particulars, Wherein we have,

First, His Conception at *Vers.* 10. *Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me as cheese?*

Secondly, The Conjunction or setting together of his parts, at *Vers.* 11. *Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews.*

Thirdly, The quickning of his parts thus joyned and set together, at *Vers.* 12. *Thou hast granted me life.*

Fourthly, The preservation of his life, in the same *Verse*, *Thou hast given me life*, and (not only so, but) *favour, and thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.*

Lastly, We have *Job's* strength of assurance, or his assertion concerning all this, at *Vers.* 13. *These things hast thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee*; as if he had said, *Lord, Thou knowest all is truth which I have spoken.*

There are three opinions concerning the connection or tie of these words with those that went before.

First, Some conceive that *Job* persisteth in the same matter handled, in the words immediately foregoing, exalting the knowledge of God concerning man upon this ground, because God made man. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* How did *Job* know that? He must needs know what man is, who made man; *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about*; forasmuch as I am thy work, a piece of thy framing, surely, thou knowest what thou hast framed: thou who hast knowledge enough to make me, hast a perfect knowledge of what thou hast made. We may joyn it also with the latter clause; *None can deliver out of thy hand*; Why? *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me.* Is it possible for the work to deliver it self out of the hand of him who wrought it? Is that which is formed too strong for him that formed it, when as the same hand which gave it form, gave it strength? We find this argument as to the former part (*Psal.* 94. 9.) where from the work of God in our natural constitution, the holy Pen-man proves the fulness of his knowledge concerning us in every condition; *Understand ye brutish* (he speaks to men, who acted more like beasts then men) *He that planted the ear shall he not hear? He that formed the eye shall he not see?* As if he had said, He that made the ear, is all hearing; and he who formed the eye, is all eye, all sight. The argument holds strong from Gods power in forming man, to his power of knowing man, and to his power of disposing man. That's the first way of dependance.

Secondly, *Job* may be conceived, as rendering an account of those things about which he had taken the boldness to interrogate the Lord, at *Vers.* 3. Here he answers his own question; as if he had said, now I see well enough why thou maist despise and destroy thy work, *It is thy work*; I will go no further for a reason to vindicate thee in breaking me to pieces then this, *That thine hands have set me together: Thou hast made me*, and thou mayest unmake me; thou hast raised me up, and thou mayest pull me down. So the copulative (*Vau*) in the original which we translate by the adversative, *yet*, is taken for a conjunction causal; and so it is frequently used in Scripture (*Gen.* 30. 20.) *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return*; The sence is, *Dust thou art, therefore to dust thou shalt return* (Exod. 15. 23, 24.) *The waters were bitter, and the people murmured*; that is, *The waters were bitter, therefore the people murmured*; thus here, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, therefore thou doest destroy me.* He that builds the house at his own charge, and by his own power, may ruine it at his own pleasure.

Jam teneo hujus rei causam; cum enim manus illius me fecerint, jure suo potest Deus me destruere. Cajet.

Thirdly, The words may carry the sence of a strong motive to prevail with God, to handle *Job* more gently, or to deal more tenderly with him; Why? The Lord had bestowed much care and cost to make and fashion him: therefore he will surely pity and spare him. There is a natural motion of the heart in every agent, towards the preservation of that which proceedeth from it. Creation is followed with providence. If a speechless and liveless creature could speak and understand, it would argue with it's Maker (in *Job's* case) as *Job* doth, *Doest thou yet destroy me? David* strengthens his heart to ask good at the hands of God, because he had spoken good concerning him (2 *Sam.* 7. 27. *Thou, O Lord of Hosts, God of* Israel, *hast revealed to thy servant, saying, I will build thee an house, therefore hath thy servant found in his heart to pray this prayer unto thee.* Now, if *David* were not only emboldened to ask, but even assured to receive mercy, because God promised to build him a house, that is, to prosper his estate and family; how much more might *Job* be encouraged to pray for, and expect mercy from the hand of God, because God had already framed and built that natural house, his body? The Prophet *Isaiah* being about to plead with God for new mercies, presents him with a catalogue of his old mercies (*Chap.* 63. 7, 8, 9.) *I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath done unto us; and the great goodness towards the house of* Israel, *which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses*, &c. Having thus at large told the Lord what he had done, the Prophet (in a holy zeal) contends with him about what he was doing (*Vers.* 15.) *Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness, and of thy glory; where is thy zeal, and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels, and of thy mercies towards me, are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our Father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us*, &c. As if he had said, That great Sea of thy goodness, hath sent out abundant streams of good things heretofore, and are all those streams now dried up, and the springs exhausted? What's become of thy zeal and strength, and compassions? Are they all spent and gone? Thus *Job* seems to plead here, thine hands have made me, thou hast done thus and thus for me, and wilt thou now destroy me? According to this interpretation the latter clause of the verse is rendered by an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, and doest thou yet destroy me?* What, thou my Maker destroy me! *Remember, I beseech thee* (so in the next verse) *that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?* Thus by a specification of the great outward benefits which he had received from the hand of God, he seems to aggravate his present sorrows, and to sollicite future mercies.

Ex sua formatione artificis misericordiam movet, & ex commemorato pristino beneficio, alia denuo efflagitandi animam arripit. Pined.

Et si: repente præcipitas me. Vulg. *Antithesi beneficiorum amplissimorum in se a Domino collatorum, exaggerat iram qua nunc in se desævit, ac afflictiones, quibus evagitatur.* Jun.

Thine hands.] Hands are often ascribed to God, as was shewed, *vers.* 3. Many things are made with the hand; the maker of all things is without hands, and yet he is all hand. Hence all things that were made, are said to be made by the hands of God; not only the forming of man, but the forming of the Heavens and the Earth, is the work of his hand, *Psal.* 102. 25. *Psal.* 95. 5. Both are put together. (*Isa.* 48. 13.) *Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens.* Wheresoever the great works of God are exprest, a hand usually is exprest as the instrument working them, yet his hand wrought the least as well as the greatest, a worm of the earth, as well as man upon the earth, or the Angels in heaven.

The heads of men have run into great variety of opinion about these hands forming man.

Ambros. *in Hexā. Hom.* 11. *Basil*, &c.

First, Many of the Ancient understand by the hands of God, *The Son of God, the second Person in the Trinity, and the holy Spirit of God, who is the third*; *Thine hands have made me*, that is, the Son and the holy Spirit, who were assistant to, and of council with the Father of the Creation of man, *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our own likeness*, Gen. 1. 26.

Others expound hands literally and formally, not as if God had hands (that's below their conceit) but thus, it hath been said of old, that when God at first formed man, the Son took upon him an outward shape, or the shape of a man; and so (say they) Christ (not made man, but) in the form of man, formed man.

Causis secundis veluti quibusdam manibus utitur Deus ad producendas res sublunares, Aquin.

Thirdly, The hands of God are all second causes, which God useth to the production of any effect. All hands work for God, they work for him, while they are set awork against him; and so may be call *The hands of God*. Mans making since the Creation, is not an immediate work; the Creation of the first man was. Yet it is so much the work of God still, that every man is the work of his hands, as well as the first man. All inferiour causes concurring to the making of man, are the hands by which God maketh man.

Fourthly, The hands of God, are generally taken for the power and wisdom of God. The hand of power acts, what the hand of wisdom doth contrive. As the hand is often put for power, so to put any thing into the hand of another, is to put it into his power. That grant which was made to Satan at the beginning of this book, runs in this strain, *Behold, he* (meaning *Job*) *is in thine hand* (that is, thou mayest do with them what thou wilt) *only save his life.* (Ch. 2. 6.)

The Schoolmen determine the hands of God to be the *understanding and the will of God*, which they call, *the executive power of God*; by these he determines what shall be done, and doth what he pre-determines. The very decree and purpose of God, is called the hand of God (*Act.* 4. 28.) *Of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both* Herod *and* Pontius Pilate *with the* Gentiles *and people of* Israel *were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel determined before to be done.* *Gods hand* was the soveraign power of God over-ruling those evil instruments to fulfil his holy counsels, while they intended only to fulfil their own wicked counsels.

Tu pro tua potestate tuque jure. Bez.

We may best interpret *Job* in the fourth sense, *thine hands have made me and fashioned me*, that is, I am made and fashioned by thy power and wisdom, I am a piece of thy forming. None but the only wise, and all-powerful God could produce such an effect as I am.

Have made me and fashioned me.

Here are two words which some distinguish by referring the one to the body, the other to the soul. We need not be so accurate about these words. But thus much is plainly noted in them, that the Lord was exceeding accurate about this work, the *fashioning of man*. Both words have their special elegancies.

עצן *In sua prima significatione denotat dolore afficere.*

The first which we translate *made*, signifies more then to *make*, it signifies to make exactly and curiously. It is a word proper to Artificers who work, or should work with an equal mixture of diligence and knowledge, of pains and skill: Artificers mingle their heads and their hands in every thing they undertake, and bestow more study then toil upon their works.

This word is also translated to grieve, vex, or put one to trouble. The perverse carriage of the people of *Israel* toward the Spirit of God, is expressed by it (*Isa.* 63. 10.) *They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit.* And *that bread of sorrows*, that is, bread gotten by sorrowful or hard labour is delivered in this term (*Ps.* 127. 2.) See a further explication of the word. *Chap.* 9. *vers.* 27.

God is not put to any pain at all in making man, he doth all his works with infinite delight and ease. *Nothing is hard to him who can do all things: Omnipotency never meets with any difficulty.* But God is exprest in making man by a word, signifying solicitousness and painful care, implying that man is made as those things are, upon which man bestows greatest pains and care. Man doth not look like a peice of work slubbred over slightly, or clapt up in haste, The most wise God, who shewed his *manifold wisdom* in the work of redemption, shewed much of his wisdom in the work of creation; he made man (as we speak) in Print.

Panis anxietate magnâ & labore partus. Deus non se fatigavit in homine condendo; sed de Deo Scriptura hominis more loquitur, quasi summa cura & anxietate ad eum formandum usus esset Deus, ut nihil ad ejus perfectionē deesset. Mer.

A learned translator renders, *thy hands put me to pain, which have made me*; as if *Job* had complained here of the pain which God put him to after he had made him, rather then exalted God for the pains he seemed to have taken, when he made him. But we may better keep to our rendering, *Thine hands have made me, and,*

Manus tuæ dolore afficiunt me, quæ fecerunt me. Jun.

Fashioned me.] The *making* of man importeth his being: The *fashioning* of him, the outward formality of his being. Man receives not only his nature, but his figure from God. The word signifies to trim or polish, to do a thing curiously and compleatly (*Gen.* 1. 31.) *God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* He saw all with delight and highest content; for, he had put all into a composure of most exquisite comliness and perfect beauty. *A due and proper fashion is the essence of comliness. Thine hands have not only made me, but fashioned me*, and that not in part only, but as it followeth,

עשה *Est aliquid facere, sed ornatè & politè, rem omnibus modis perfectā efficere.*

יחד כנוב *Alludere videtur ad figuli rotam* Pined.

Together round about.] This is no Pleonasme or superfluity of speech; for though when a thing is made and fashioned, it is supposed to be made round about, yet here to shew the exactness of God in making man, *Job* speaks as if God had resolved to have all of his own doing, and would not trust the least part of this work into the hand of any other, *thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about.* Which words are say some,

Artifices opus pene absolutum curiosè circumspiciunt, ut si quid oculis ingratum deprehendant, corrigant. Sanct.

First, An allusion to the art of a Potter, who formeth and fashioneth earthen Vessels, turning them often about and about upon his wheel. Or it may be an allusion to a Statuary, or to a Painter, who having a curious costly peice in hand, goes about it, and views it round on every side: that if any thing sute not his eye, his fancy, or the rule of art, he may correct it.

Dicit in circuitu, quod corpus videtur animæ esse in circuitu, sicut vestimentum vestito, aut sicut domus habitatori. Aquin.

Secondly, Others conceive that this *round about*, is only a circumlocution for the body, because the body encompasseth the soul round about, as a garment doth the body, or a house the inhabitant.

Totum dicit ut ad singula corporis membra referatur.

Thirdly, *Together round about*, is (as was touched before) me in every part, or all me. When some took offence at Christs healing of a sick man upon the Sabbath-day, he answers, *Are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day?* (Joh. 7. 23.) or that I have made the whole man whole, not leaving any unsound limb about him? There is a like phrase (*Luk.* 11. 40.) which may illustrate this; *Ye fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?* That is, did not he that made man, make him *together round about?* Did not he make whatsoever is man? So *Job's together round about*, is, as if he had said, *Thou hast made me within and without from head to foot; thou hast made me all that I am; how great, how good, how strong, how beautiful soever I am, I am made by thee.* Thou (as *David* speaks (*Psal.* 139. 5.) *hast beset or formed me* (so the Hebrew) *behind and before, and laid thy hand upon me.*

Idem est quod Latinus dicit intus & extra, intus & in cute, à capite ad pedes.

Fourthly, By *together round about*, we may understand all without man, which man hath about him. Thou hast made and fashioned not only my body, but my estate, my honour, my friends, my children (children *round about the Table*, Psal. 128. 3.) Thou hast given me all that I have about me; whatsoever I am, I am made and fashioned by thine hands: So the phrase is used, *Chap.* 19. 9, 10. *He hath stript me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head, he hath destroyed me on every side*; or, he hath destroyed me round about, that is, all that he hath made round about me, he

Quantus, quantus sum magna Dei cura & artificio elaboratus sum. Pined.

Ὅτι ὅλον ἄνθρωπον ὑγιῆ ἐποίησας.

צרחני *Formasti me Per circuitū omnia etiā illa intelligamus quæ hominem tingunt, sc. facultates, liberos, familiam universam.*

he hath taken away from me; he hath stript me of all he once cloathed me with. Mr. *Broughton* translates much to that sence; *Thou hast fashioned me and made me in every point*, that is, Look whatsoever I am considerable in, under what notion soever I may be taken, *Thou hast made me and fashioned me in all.* Hence observe,

First, *The making of man now, is the work of God, as well as the making of the first man was.*

Job doth not say, The Lord did once make and fashion man, but, *thine hands have made me:* He ascribeth his own making to God, as well as *Adam's*. The structure and frame of Nature is the work of God, not of Nature. Nature and natural causes are nothing but the order in which God worketh; God turneth or changeth, stops or sets them forward as he pleaseth. Second causes work purely at the will of God, though means be used by man, yet the effect is Gods. Corn groweth in the field by the hand of God. You will say, What then doth the husbandman? What doth the earth? What doth the Sun and Rain? Do not all these work? All these are nothing but the order wherein, and by which the hand of God makes the Corn to grow; for let all those second causes work as hard as they can, yet the Corn grows not unless God speak the word: His steps, not the husbandmans, drop fatness. It is he, not the Sun or the Rain, which makes the vallies stand thick with corn, to laugh and sing. As in spirituals, so in naturals, he that planteth, and he that watereth, is nothing, but God that giveth the encrease. The Psalmist speaks exclusively of man, as to the point of mans making, and he puts an emphasis upon it, as if a man did not take notice enough, if at all, of this, that in this man is nothing; *Know ye, that the Lord he is God, it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves.* There may be a great deal of Grace acted in acknowledging God to be the author of Nature; yet I conceive the Psalmist speaks there rather of Gods making us in Grace, then in Nature.

Natura nihil aliud est quam divinorum operum ordo. Brent.

Psal. 100. 3.

Secondly, Observe, *Job* recounting what God had done for him, brings in, *Thy hands have made me and fashioned me*; then,

Our making and natural constitution are to be reckoned amongst the great benefits received from God.

Psal. 139. 14. *I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* The making of man is a wonder; though the frequency of it makes the wonder little observed, yet the wonder is not (in it self) the less. *David*, who had serious and holy thoughts about natural things, confesseth, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made.* A Heathen had three reasons for which he used especially to thank God. One of them was this, because he had made him a man. If men who have but the light of nature, can see so much of God in nature, how much of God should we see in nature, who have the light of Grace to see it by?

Thirdly, From the words put together, *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me together round about*, observe,

The whole fashion and fabrick of man is from God.

From which General take these Consectaries.

See more of this point before at v. 3. of this Chapter.

First, Then do not undervalue the body, it is the work of God; *He hath fashioned it round about.* We alwayes look upon and value our bodies too much, when we are proud of them; but we can never look upon or value our bodies too much, while we are thankful for them; and that we may be so, we ought to view every room of this house of clay, from story to story, from the Garret to the Cellar, from the Crown of the head to the Sole of the foot, that we seeing the wonderful works of God, may have our hearts enlarged in his praises. Some have put ignoble titles upon the body of man, calling it a prison, or a shackle. The body is not a prison, it is a palace; it is not a shackle, it is an Organ, a fit instrument for the soul to use and act by. If at any time the body be unuseful to the soul, that proceeds from sinful corruption, not from its natural constitution.

To σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν.

But the Apostle (*Phil.* 3. 21.) calleth our body *a vile body*, or the body of our vileness. Mans body is not vile, as God made it (so it is a stately structure) but as sin hath made it. The Apostle calls it vile, not absolutely, and in it self, but relatively. The body cloathed with Mortality, is vile, compared with the body when it shall be cloathed with Glory, and that Glory like the Glory of the body of Christ, as is assured us; *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* The words carry an allusion to those who changing old and broken vessels, desire to have them wrought in the best and newest fashion. The body of Christ is the richest piece of Gods work, and this shall be the pattern of ours; as here upon earth the spirits of Believers are of the same fashion with Christs (the same mind is in the Saints which was in Christ, there is but one draught of Grace (in the main) upon the souls of all holy men, and that is a copy of Christs, his being the original) so in heaven the bodies of all believers shall be of the same fashion with Christ. There shall be but one draught of Glory in the main (for degrees do not vary the kind) upon the body of Christ, and the bodies of all his members. In reference to this future change of the body, the body in its present state, is vile.

Secondly, Hence it follows, That as we must not undervalue the frame of mans body in general, as imperfect; so we may not despise any for their special bodily imperfections. It is God who hath made and fashioned them round about. It is said (2 *Sam.* 5. 8.) that the blind and the lame were hated of *David's* soul. Yet to hate any for defects in the body, is a very great defect in the soul; and to contemn any for natural blemishes, is a spiritual blemish. How then could *David* hate the blind and the lame, and not sin? or are we to number this among his sins? There are two expositions of those words, upon either of which we may clear the difficulty.

First, That when *David* sent to summon that Fort, the *Jebusites*, who were the Defendants, trusting in the strength of the place, told *David* in scorn, that he must first conquer the blind and the lame; as implying that blind and lame souldiers were Garrison good enough to deal with his great Army upon the advantage of such a Fortress.

Secondly, The blind and the lame may rather be the Idols and strange gods which the *Jebusites* worshipped, of whose protection they were not the less confident, because the *Jews* counted them blind and lame. As if they had said, even these gods, which you call blind and lame, see well enough what ye are doing, and will come fast enough, and too fast for your ease, to our aid and succour. These blind and lame gods were justly hated of *David's* soul, but he had learned better then to hate men who were made lame or blind by God.

Thirdly, Seeing all men are fashioned round about by the hands of God, then as we must not despise any for their bodily imperfection, so not envy any for their bodily perfections. Some are as much troubled to see another have a better body, or a more beautiful face, as many are (alike sinfully both) to see another have a better purse, or a more plentiful estate then themselves.

Fourthly, *Let not the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?* If thy earthly Tabernacle be not so highly, so strongly built, if the Materials of it be not so pure, or not so exactly tempered, if thou hast not not so good a constitution, so elegant a composition, if thou art not so adorned and polished as some others are; yet be not discontented, the hands of God have made and fashioned thee round about. It is a great honour to a Vessel, that he made it, though he have made it (in this sence) a vessel of dishonour.

Fifthly, If God hath fashioned our bodies, then we must not put them out of fashion. It is dangerous to deface the work of God, to undo that which God hath done, to unmake that which God hath made; how sad is it that any should pull down a building of Gods own setting up, without warrant from God? Self-murder, or the murder of another, is an high affront to God, and should have a severe revenge from man. He that sheds his own blood, takes revenge upon himself: *And whoso sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man* (Gen. 9. 6.) As what God hath joyned by a civil, so by a natural band, let no man put asunder.

Lastly, If thou art made and fashioned by God, then let God have the use of all thou art. Let God dwell in the house which he hath set up. Let thy body be employed for God; he that made it, hath most right to it. Every thing in man shews forth the wisdom and goodness of God towards man,

man, let every thing in man shew forth obedience and submission unto God. This was the ground of *David's* prayer (*Psal.* 119.73.) *Thy hands have made me, and fashioned me, give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments*; as if he had said, Lord, I would use this body, this soul, this all, which thou hast made, for thy glory, therefore give me understanding that I may learn thy will; I would not do the will of another, while I dwell in thy house, and am thy tenant at will. I would not imploy those members which thou hast given me, to fulfil the Law of sin, or the commands of Satan. The Apostle is clear upon this argument in reference to redemption (1 *Cor.*6.19.) *Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price; therefore glorifie God with your bodies, and in your spirits, which are Gods*; Now as in the work of redemption we are of God by Grace, so in the work of creation we are of God by Nature. The reason holds in both; glorifie God with your bodies, which are not your own, but Gods. It is usual in letting out of houses to put a clause in the Lease, that the house shall not be imployed to such and such uses, but only to such as are expressed in the Indenture. Surely the Lord who hath built and furnished these houses, hath taught us how to imploy them, and what trade to exercise in them, even the trade of holiness. Take heed you do not let out any room or corner of a room in this house for sin to trade in, or for the work of iniquity. This is to let out a house of Gods making to the Devils using.

Yet thou doest destroy me.

בלע *Absorbere est morsicatim destruere.* Coc. *Deglutio significat omnimodam exterminationem, rerumq; omniū profundissimū exitium.* καταπίνω ὁ Σύρ. & εἰς νῖκος.

The word signifies to *swallow up*; and to swallow up with greedines, *Psalm* 52.4. *Thou lovest all devouring* (or swallowing) *words*; words which swallow down thy neighbours credit, and devour his good name, as one morsel. The Holy Ghost expresseth our final victory over death, by a word which reacheth this sence (1 *Cor.*15.54.) *Death is swallowed up* (or drunk down) *in victory*; death is drunk up at a draught. Christ called his sufferings (by which he got this victory) a cup. The Apostle uses the same word again (2 *Cor.* 5.4.) *That mortality might be swallowed up of life.* When this mortal shall have put on immortality, death shall be swallowed up in victory, that is, there shall be a compleat victory over death, and not only so, but mortality shall be swallowed up of life. In heaven there shall be no death, nor any thing like death, nothing bearing any the least resemblance of it's image, or letter of it's superscription, nothing of mortality shall be found or felt there: There mortality shall be swallowed up of life; here *Job* complains that his life was almost swallowed up of mortality. *Yet thou doest destroy, or swallow me up:* As thou hast already swallowed up my estate, so thou seemest resolved to swallow up my very breath. When *Joab* besieged *Abel*, a wise woman out of the City cryed unto him, *Thou seekest to destroy a City in* Israel, *why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?* 2 Sam. 20. 19. *Job* saw a great Army of afflictions encamping about him: and he seems to cry out to the Lord of those hoasts, why seekest thou to destroy thy servant? Why wilt thou swallow me, who am the work of thy hands?

Distinctio Hebræorum magis postulat, ut verba præcedentia, simul, circumquaq; cum his jungantur, & absorbisti me. Merc.

Grammarians observe from the exactest reading of the Hebrew, that the former words [*Together round about*] should be joyn'd with these [*Thou doest destroy me*] *Thine hands have made me, and fashioned me, and yet thou doest destroy me together round about*; that is, Thou makest an utter end, a total consumption of me.

Licet sensus non multum diversus sit, interrogatio tamen sensu reddit valde acrem, & incitatum. Merc.

Again, These words are read by some with an interrogation, *Thine hands have made me and fashioned me, and doest thou yet destroy me?* The question doth not alter, but quicken the sence, and render it more pressing and pathetical; Wilt thou destroy me thus exactly, whom thou hast made so exactly? The (*yet*) in the Text sounds out an admiration. As when God (*Amos* 4.) had brought many judgments upon *Jerusalem*, and found them still impenitent, he concludes the narrative of every one, with, *Yet have they not returned unto me*; As if he had said, What a wonder is here? So *Job* repeating the favours of God to him, concludes with a *yet thou doest, or doest thou yet destroy me?* As if he had said, What a wonder is here? *How unsearchable are thy judgments, O God, and thy wayes past finding out?* Thus he sets what God then did, in opposition to what he had done, that so the consideration of former mercies might provoke him to remove or mitigate present judgments. Doest thou destroy me who hast made me? Hence observe,

First, *That to mind God of making us, is an argument to stay his hand from breaking us.* See more of this point, v. 3.

It repented the Lord (saith *Moses*, Gen. 6. 6.) *that he had made man, and it grieved him at the heart.* This repentance and grief did not arise from his making of man; but from that necessity which his own justice and honour laid upon him to destroy man whom he had made; as it follows in the next words; *And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created.* The words shew the resolution of God, not his propension; it went to his heart to do it. If God repented and grieved (understand both by a figure) because he had made man, whom he must destroy, then it cannot but be a grief to him to destroy that which he hath made. It is as easie to the power of God to undo, as it is to do: but it is not so easie to his will to undo, as it is to do.

Secondly observe, *Afflictions destructive to the outward man, may be the lot of the best men.*

God never destroyes that spiritual creature, which the hand of his grace hath made and fashioned: but he doth sometimes destroy the natural creature of those who are spiritual.

Thirdly observe, *A good man will make honourable mention of the goodness of God to him, while he is under greatest evils.*

Job writes the natural history of Gods power and wisdom in his constitution, while destruction was knocking at his doors. Though God will destroy what he hath made, yet he ought to be glorified for what he hath made. The praise of God for fashioning us, is never so comely, as when he is putting us out of fashion.

Fourthly observe, *God doth that sometimes which is most improbable he should do.*

He acts strangely in wayes of mercy, and strangely in wayes of judgment. He saves those whom we expect he should destroy, and he destroyes those whom we expect he should save. *The Kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entred into the gates of* Jerusalem, (*Lam.* 4. 12.) and who would have believed that the adversary and the enemy, sorrow and destruction should have entred into the gates of *Job*? God comes with such afflictions upon his people now, as make him to be admired by all the world. Christ will come with such mercies at the last, as will make him to be *glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe* (2 Thes. 1. 10.) Christ will exceed, not only our unbelief, but our faith.

In the former verse *Job* pleaded with God, as his maker; he proceeds still in the same argument, and re-enforceth it from a special intimation of the matter out of which he was made, *clay*.

Vers. 9. **Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?**

זכר *Recordatus est, memor fuit, odoratus fuit, quando de sacrificiis usurpatur. Odoretur omnia munera tua.* Jun. Zachar, *mas aut à memoria quia magis pollet quā mulier aut quia memoriam & nomen familiæ conservat.* Buxtorf.

Remember, I beseech thee.] *Job* speaks heartily, his spirit was in a heat. *Remember, I beseech thee.* The original word is applied to a sensitive act, as well as to a rational (*Psal.* 20. 3.) *The Lord remember*, or *smell all thy offerings.* Memory is the savour or sent of things preserved in the mind. The Hebrews express man, or a male child, by a word of that root, and they give two reasons of it. Either, first, because man is of a stronger memory then the woman. Or, secondly, because the man-child preserveth the memory of the family, and is a monument of his fathers honour, his name being carried on from generation to generation; in opposition to which, women or females are called *Nashim*, which word implieth *forgetfulness*, because their names and titles are swallowed up in their husbands, and forgotten when they are married.

Memory or the act of remembring is improperly applyed to God. For remembrance is of things past, but to God all things are present. Memory is the store-house where-

wherein we lay up several notions, and keep records of what hath been done, which by an act of the understanding we review and fetch out again. All things are ever open before God. He needs not turn leaves or search registers, he needs not so much as strain a thought to recal what is past; that which was from the beginning, and shall be to the end, yea, to that which hath no end, eternity, is alwayes before him. God is said to remember, or to forget, when he acts like a man, who remembers or forgets; but there is no act either of forgetfulness, or of remembrance in God.

Remembring implieth two things in God.

First, A serious attention to the person and consideration of the thing which he formerly seemed to slight, or lightly to pass by. We also remember by minding and thinking upon what is present, as well as by recalling what is past.

Secondly, To remember, notes a speedy supply of our wants, or actual deliverance out of dangers. God remembers us, when he favours us; he remembers us, when he pities us; he remembers us, when he relieves us; *Who remembred us in our low estate*, Psal. 136.23. that is, who brought us out of our low estate. *The needy shall not alway be forgotten* (Psal. 9. 18.) not alway, no nor at any time; the Lord doth not at all forget any, much less such needy ones, as that Scripture intends. The meaning is, they shall not alway be undelivered, their estate shall not lie for ever unconsidered, and their cry unattended to. God will not deal with them, nor suffer others to deal with them, as if he had forgotten them. *Hannah* was long under that affliction of barrenness, and when the Lord gave her conception, it is said, *He remembred Hannah* (1 Sam. 1. 19.) his thoughts were ever upon her, and upon her petition; but when he granted her petition, then he remembred her indeed. As we then remember God when we obey his commands: so God remembers us then, when he fulfils our requests. *Remember, I beseech thee.*

As it is our duty to remember the Lord: so it is our priviledge that we may put him in remembrance.

It is a priviledge, and a very great one to be a *remembrancer to the King of heaven*. The Prophet describes such an office (*Isa.* 62. 6.) *Ye that make mention of the Lord*, or nearer the Hebrew, *Ye that are the Lords remembrancers, keep not silence, and give him no rest.* Great Princes have an officer called their *Remembrancer*, and they need remembrancers. It is at once their honour and their weakness to have them. They cannot retain all businesses, and preserve a record within themselves of all affairs within their Kingdoms: It is an honour to God that he hath *Remembrancers*, but it is his greater honour that he hath no need of them. Himself is the living record of all that hath been done, or is to be done. Knowledge is above memory, and he that knows all things is above remembrancers. God is willing we should speak to him after the manner of men: but we must not conceive of him after the manner of men. We must not think he hath forgotten us, though we may beseech him to remember us.

There are four things which the Saints usually move the Lord to remember.

First, His own mercies; *Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies*, was *David's* prayer (*Psal.* 25. 6.) *Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* was *David's* question and infirmity (*Psal.* 77. 9.) Yet God acts sometimes, as if he had forgot his nature, or had need to be minded to do what he is. God can no more forget himself, then deny himself; no more forget to be gracious then cease to be: yet he gives his people leave, yea a charge, to move him to do, what he cannot but do, what he is resolved, yea what he is ready to do. Mercy pleaseth God so much, that he often appears displeased on purpose, that we may remember him of his mercy. He delights we should desire, what he delights to grant.

Secondly, The Saints usually mind God of his Covenant. *God is ever mindful of his Covenant* (Psal. 111. 5.) yet he loves to be minded of it. His Royal title is, *The God that keepeth Covenant for ever*; yet he loves to be desired not to break it. Thus *Jeremy* begs for the Jews, the Covenant-people of God; *Do not abhor us for thy name sake, Do not disgrace the throne of thy glory; remember, break not thy Covenant with us*, Jer. 14. 21. The Psalmist prayes upon the same ground, *Have respect to the Covenant; for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*; As if he had said, Lord, Thou hast made a Covenant to preserve and protect thy people, but now they are oppressed; The *dark places*, that is, places full of ignorance and wickedness (which are spiritual darkness) are full of cruelty: Holy knowledge hath no such enemy as ignorance. Or, *the dark places are full*, &c. may be thus understood, there is no such obscure corner or by-place in the land, but their malice searcheth it out for the vexation of thy people. We are so far from having liberty to serve thee publickly in the light, that we feel the cruelty of bloody minded men, though we do it secretly or in the dark. Now Lord it is time for thee to remember thy Covenant.

Thirdly, The Saints use to put God in remembrance of the rage and blasphemies of his and their enemies. Thus the Church of the Jews cries unto the Lord (*Psal.* 137. 7.) *Remember, O Lord, the children of* Edom *in the day of* Jerusalem, *who said, raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof.* When a man is wrong'd who intends revenge, he will say to the party wronging him, well, *Remember this*, or, *I shall remember you for this.* Revengeful men have strong memories: so hath the God to whom vengeance belongeth. He will certainly remember the sinful, revengeful cry of *Edom* against *Jerusalem*, though the sins of *Jerusalem* did cry to him for vengeance. The Psalmist is as earnest in another place, urging the Lord to remember for his own interest, as here for the interest of his *Sion* (Psal. 74. 18.) *Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy Name.* As if he had said, Pray, Lord, take a note of this, make a *memorandum* of this, *That the enemy hath reproached thy Name*; God will remember it, if any of his servants are reproached, much more when himself is.

Fourthly, The Saints remember God of their own frailty, and that two-fold. First, Natural; Secondly, Spiritual. *Remember how short my time is, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?* (Psal. 89. 47.) Man is a frail short-liv'd creature, and it is some comfort to him, that God knows he is so. That which *Job* puts the Lord in remembrance of, is his natural frailty; some understand it also of his spiritual; *Remember, I beseech thee.*

That thou hast made me as the clay.

The LXX reads it, *Thou hast made me clay.* The word signifies cement or morter, which are mixt of earth and water, Thou hast made me as tempered clay. When the original of man is described, it is said, *The Lord formed man dust out of the ground*, or, *of the dust of the ground*, (Gen. 2. 7.) here *Job* saith, *Thou hast made me as the clay*, or, *Thou hast made me of the clay*; the sence is near the same, whether we take *clay* for the matter out of which man was made, or according to which man was made, or the similitude according to which man was made. *Job* speaks of himself with respect to creation: for, according to the ordinary course of generation, man is not made of clay. The first man was made of clay, and of him all men are. We derive our pedigree from the dirt, and are akin to clay. *Job* might say, and so may any man, *Thou hast made me of the clay.* However *Job* was, and *man now is made as the clay*; that is, frail, brittle and weak. We are composed of materials, which will quickly crack and break. When the Holy Ghost would describe how easily Christ can shatter to pieces all the opposites of his Kingdom; it is said, *He shall dash them in pieces like a potters vessel*: A potters vessel will not bear blows, especially not the blows of such an instrument, as is there spoken of, *an iron rod: He shall break them with a rod of iron* (Psal. 2. 9.) we may break a potters vessel with a little wand, or a weak reed, how then should it endure the weight and hardness of an iron rod? The Spirit of God seems to delight in this allusion, and therefore takes it up often. Read, *Isa.* 45. 9. *Isa.* 64. 8. *Rom.* 9. 21. We have the state of the Jews, described under this notion (*Jer.* 18. 4.) The Lord bids *Jeremy* go down to the potters house, he obeys, and found the potter working a work on the wheel, *And the vessel that he made of clay, was marred in the hand of the potter, so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter*

ὅτι πηλὸν με ἐποίησας. Sept. חמר

Propriè significat cementum, vel terram aquâ mixtam.

In memoriâ revoca, ut me è luto primum, i.e. primum hominem unde orti cæteri & formaris singuli more. Merc.

to make it. Then, the Word of the Lord came to him, saying, Cannot I do to you as this potter? saith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the hand of the potter, so are ye in my hand, O house of Israel. I can form you, and I can break you, I can put you into what condition I please, and ye ought not to be displeased at it. A potters vessel is an emblem of the strongest Kingdoms; How much more of the strongest men?

That we are made of clay, intimates three things, at all which *Job* seemeth to aim, when he saith, *Thou hast made me as the clay.*

First, The excellency of mans frame. He is not thrust together like a rude lump or mass of earth, but *curiously wrought* (Psal. 139. 15.) To make a vessel of clay is an artificial work, not a natural. It requireth much pains, but more skill. Whence *Job* argueth, *Thou hast made me as the clay*; Thou hast shewed thy heavenly wisdom in shaping and contriving me, as a vessel of honour for thy use; *And wilt thou bring me into dust again?* The remembrance of that love and care which God hath laid out upon us in our constitution, is an argument moving him to pity and compassion, as was shewed at *vers.* 3.

Secondly, That God hath made us of clay, shews our utter inability to contend with God, and to stand against his stroaks; It is, as if *Job* had said, *Lord, Surely thou forgettest of what mettal I am made, thou thinkest I am made of a hard Rock, or of invincible Adamant, that I am compounded of Iron, and other the strongest materials; Alas, Lord, there is no such matter, I am made but as the clay; A great deal of power and wisdom appeared in making me, but a little power will serve to ruine me; I am no sooner touch't but crackt. Why then doest thou plant all thy Ordnance, and discharge so many volleys of shot against me? Lord, What am I? Am I a wall of brass, or a bulwark of stone? Thou knowest I am but a wall of clay, a paper wall, a potters vessel, a little moistened earth. Will any man prepare Cannon to batter a cottage, or a beetle to kill a flie? Thy providence needs not make such provision against me, or handle me so roughly: that which is weak calls for tender usage, and that which is weak may last long, if tenderly used; a glass with care will continue many ages. Deal gently with thy servant, Remember, I beseech thee, thou hast made me as the clay.*

Thirdly, *That we are made as the clay*, shews our easiness to be overcome by temptation, and our obnoxiousness to sin. Sin is (in its kind) as spiritual, as grace is; yet our sinful corruption is figuratively called, *the flesh.* One reason (I conceive) of which may be this, because flesh, taken properly, is an occasion of sin. As the sensitive part is a servant, so a snare to the rational, much more to the spiritual. The flesh is at once the organ, and the burthen of the spirit. The Apostle calling Saints to run the race of holiness with patience, gives a very suitable advice, *Let us lay aside every weight*, that is, all carnal cumber; he that would shew himself light of foot, will not take a burden upon his back, he casts off his very garments; to which the next words of the Apostle seem to allude, *Cast off every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us.* So a garment doth, especially a long garment, which in running daggles and folds about our heels. The reason why our sinful corruption is compared to such a garment, is because it is so much assisted by this body of clay, the flesh which is as a long garment to the soul, hanging about it, and besetting it on every side.

ενσφιγξ & ad circumagendã proclivis: Metaphora ducta à lacinios & talaribus vestibus, quæ curentibus in stadio non sunt aptæ.

From which sence *Job* seems thus to move the Lord, *Suppose I have sinned* (he had said, *Vers.* 7. *Thou knowest I am not wicked, but suppose I have sinned*) *and have had my failings, yet, Lord, Remember thou hast made me as the clay, I am not a pure spirit, as Angels are, I have a body of earth about me, which clogs and hinders me in every duty, which many wayes endangers me unto every sin.* God himself takes up this as an argument to spare sinful man (*Psal.* 78. 39.) when the people of *Israel* rebelled against him, *He many a time turned his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.* What staid him? The next words give a reason; *for he remembred that they were but flesh*; that is, weak and very subject unto sin. This argument prevails again, (*Psal.* 103. 14.) *Like as a father spareth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; Why? For he knoweth their frame, he remembreth that they are dust.* As if the very matter out of which man was first made, though without sin, were some disadvantage to him in the resisting of sin. It was a disadvantage before man had any sin in him, how much more is it now when most men have nothing at all in them but sin, and the best have very much. *That which is born of the flesh* (saith Christ, *John* 3. 6.) *is flesh.* His meaning is, corrupt nature can produce none but corrupt acts. It is a truth also, that our *pure nature*, because it was constituted (as of other parts, so) of flesh (the foul like a sparkling Diamond, being set in clay) was thereby rendered more prone to fleshly or sinful acts. *Natural flesh (in its best state) is more apt to bring forth spiritual flesh (namely sin) then a spirit is.* And that's a reason among others, which some give, why God was so irreconcilably angry with the Angels which fell, why he did never so much as mention them in a way of mercy, or discovered a thought of them for good since their fall (I say) one reason given is this, *Because God could not remember that Angels were made as the clay, or formed out of the dust*; They were created spirits, pure spirits, they had no clogs of flesh and blood about them, no fogs, no mists vapouring up from a sensitive part to cloud their intellectual. They had the more power to continue pure, because they were free from any earthly and elementary mixtures. Their sin was compound of more evils, because their nature was so simple. Angels having no tempter without them, no flesh about them, turned themselves away from God, meerly upon the freedom of their own wills. As every good action is by so much the better, by how much it hath the freer concurrence of our wills: so is every evil action so much the worse. The sin we commit is the greater, by how much we have had the less provocation to commit it. The sin of our first parents in eating the forbidden fruit, was aggravated in it self, because God gave them such plenty and variety of other fruits to eat: but it was lessened in comparison of the Angels sin, because they had more provocation to sin, then the Angels had. The bait of the temptation against our first Parents, was laid in their constitution, which being corporal and earthly, must needs be delighted with earthly objects. *The forbidden fruit was pleasant to the eye*, there the flesh took it; *And it was pleasant to the taste*, there the flesh took it again. Those provocations man had over and besides that of the Angels, a hope or a desire to mend his condition, and to become like unto God. A body of earth hath a sutableness to all earthly allurements. Every like hath a natural tendency and motion towards its like. This moves the Lord to pity sinful man, though man must not hence plead impunity for sin. The measure and degrees of sin upon such actings are abated, but the acts do not therefore put off the nature of sin. *A sinner in dust and clay cannot be excused; yet is not so much polluted, and more to be pitied then a sinning spirit.* And that's a third notion in which we may expound *Job*, beseeching God to *remember, that he hath made him as the clay.*

Angeli idcirco irremissibiliter peccaverunt, quia tanto robustius stare poterãt quanto eos carnis commixtio non tenebat. Greg. *Moral. in loc.*

I might write many things in this clay out of which man was made; but I have met with other passages already of the same subject, especially in *Chap.* 4. *vers.* 19. in those words, *Whose foundation is in the dust*; which Text being near of the same importance and interpretation with this in hand, I shall rather refer the Reader thither, then insist upon the same deduction and inferences a second time. Take only this in general. Our reflection upon the matter out of which we are extracted, should lessen us to low and modest thoughts of our selves: for what is lower then the earth. We say, *He that lieth upon the earth, hath not whence to fall*; It is as true, *He that riseth out of the earth, hath nothing in himself whence he should be lifted up.*

Materia ex qua orti sumus nobis ad modestiã magistra esse debet, quid enim luto sive argilla vilius? Sanct.

Remember that thou hast made me as the clay, and

Wilt thou bring me into the dust again?

To be brought to the dust, is first a circumlocution or description of death, *Psal.* 30. 9. *Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?* That is, shall I praise thee when I am among the dead? *What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?* Not that profit sure; I cannot bring thee in the tribute of praise, when my life's gone out.

Secondly, To be brought to the dust, is a description of any low and poor condition, *Psal.* 22. 29. *All they that be fat upon the earth* (that is the great and mighty) *shall eat and worship; All they that go down to the dust* (that is, the

mean

mean and baſe) *ſhall bow before him.* As if he had ſaid, rich and poor, high and low, the King and the Beggar, have a like need of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and muſt ſubmit unto him, that they may be ſaved; for as it there follows, *None can keep alive his own ſoul.* The captivity of the *Jews* in *Babylon*, is expreſſed under thoſe notions of *Death*, and of *dwellingin the duſt*, Iſa. 26. 19. To ſhew how low they were brought; even ſo low, that no power but his who can raiſe the dead, could work their deliverance.

Job ſaw himſelf brought to the duſt of a low condition, of poverty and of diſgrace, and he feared he ſhould be brought to the duſt of death and of the grave. That's the meaning of this expoſtulating Query. *And wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?* He was not at all brought out of the duſt of his affliction, and therefore he could not ſay of that, *Wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?*

The words are read three wayes.

1. 2. 3. As an { Aſſertion. Interrogation. Admiration.

Firſt, Many Interpreters give them as a plain Aſſertion; *Remember that thou haſt made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the duſt again.*

Secondly, Others read them (as we) with an interrogation; *Remember that thou haſt made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into the duſt again?*

Thirdly, Some heighten them into an admiration; *Thou haſt made me as the clay, and (what?) wilt thou bring me into the duſt again!* What a wonder is this? Could I have expected ſuch a ſudden change as this!

Quoad naturam vilisſimus ſum, quoad judicium tuum morti addictus, ut in pulverem revertar, utrumq; debet te commovere, ut parcas mihi in vita. Coc

Take the words as a direct aſſertion, *Thou wilt bring me into the duſt again*: So they may have reference to the Decree of God concerning man, as thoſe before had to the creation of man. As if he had ſaid, *By creation and natural conſtitution, I am frail and weak, made of the clay; by thy purpoſe and decree I am appointed unto death; Thou wilt bring me into the duſt again, therefore ſpare me for the ſhort time I have to live.*

Particula & pro ſic ſumenda eſt, & futurum potentiale eſt, decentiâ, vel debitu, vel jus, vel poteſtatem denotans, q. d. ſicut me tanquam cementum compegiſti, eadem poteſtate cum volueris, in terram reduces, nulla mihi illata injuria. Bold.

Some change the Conjunction [*And*] into the Adverb of Likeneſs [*So*] to note a right, power or priviledge; and the Text runs in this form, *Remember, that as thou haſt made me of, or as the clay, ſo thou maiſt* (it is thy priviledge, none can contradict thee in it, and thou doſt me no wrong in it, thou maiſt) *as thou haſt purpoſed, bring me to the duſt again.* Though it be common and natural to all creatures mixt of Elements, to be reſolved and turned back into that out of which they were made, that is, to die, yet to man it is more then natural; there is a decree upon it, beſides the naturality of it: *Man dieth by a Statute-Law of Heaven.* To die is a penalty inflicted upon man for ſin; for he had not been under a neceſſity of dying, if he had not ſinned. And therefore though God formed man (as the holy Story informs us, *Gen.* 2. 7.) out of the duſt of the earth; yet ſo long as man ſtood, he never ſaid to him, *To duſt thou ſhalt return.* God only put a ſuppoſition, that in caſe man did fall, he ſhould ſurely die. But when man had fallen by ſin, then he hears what he was, and what he muſt be; *For duſt thou art, and unto duſt thou ſhalt return* (*Gen.* 3. 19.) As if God had thus beſpoken ſinful man; *Thy body was framed out of duſt, and now I charge this burden upon thee, thou ſhalt return to the duſt again.*

It is a Queſtion (and I ſhall touch upon it) Whether death were natural to man or no? Whether man were made mortal, or whether he made himſelf mortal? Some affirm, That death was natural, not accidental or occaſional to mankind. They argue for this Opinion;

Firſt, thus; *Adam* died not the death of the body, or a natural death when he had ſinned; therefore the death of the body was not inflicted for ſin upon his perſon and his poſterity, but was ſeated in, or a conſequent of his nature.

I anſwer, Though *Adam* died not preſently a natural death, yet he was preſently made ſubject or liable unto death; the ſentence was paſt upon him, though the ſentence was not executed upon him. A Malefactor who is caſt at the Bar, is a dead man in Law, though he be repreived from the preſent ſtroke of death.

Again, Though death it ſelf did not inſtantly ſeize upon him, yet the ſymptoms of death, and tokens of mortality did. Fear and ſhame, pains and diſtempers, ſweat and weakneſs quickly ſhewed themſelves as ſo many harbingers or forerunnners of his approaching diſſolution: we ſee and feel death in theſe before we ſee or feel death it ſelf. Theſe bid us prepare our bodies for the grave, and our ſouls for heaven.

Secondly, Others reaſon thus, Chriſt hath delivered his people, the elect, from all that puniſhment which the ſin of *Adam* did contract and deſerve; but Chriſt hath not delivered his elect, his own people, from turning to the duſt. Godly men die as well as the ungodly, Believers as well as Infidels; therefore (ſay they) the death of the body was not procured by ſin.

I anſwer, Whatſoever is an evil in death, Chriſt hath delivered his people from; he hath taken away all that from death, which is puniſhment or annoyance, though death be not taken away. Chriſt hath freed us from the effects of ſin, as he hath freed us from ſin it ſelf, that is, from their prevalence and dominion over us, not from their preſence or being in and upon us. Hence the Apoſtle (1 *Cor.* 15.) triumpheth over death; *O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory?* As if he had ſaid, Death once had a power over man to ſting him to death; death once had a victorious power, and would have been the great conqueror, riding in triumph over all the poſterity of *Adam*; but now death had neither ſting nor ſword to uſe againſt Believers, it hath nothing of victory over the Saints: It is now but a ſleep, a ſleep in Chriſt, a reſt from labour, a putting off the rags, the worn rags of mortality, that we may be dreſſed in the robes of glory. The evil of death is removed, and that which remains of death (the ſeparation of ſoul and body) proves the greateſt good to both, it being but a preparatory to their everlaſting union.

Omne principatum ſe cipiatum ſequitur naturam principiorum.

Thirdly, It is argued, That death and corruption were natural to man, becauſe the matter out of which man was made, was dying and corruptible; for that which is made, muſt follow the nature of that Principle out of which it is made. The effect cannot be (ſay they) more noble then the cauſe; nor the ſubject conſtituted, more durable then that which goes into its conſtitution.

To clear up an anſwer to this, we muſt diſtinguiſh of a threefold immortality.

Firſt, A primitive, ſimple, independent, eſſential immortality; this is proper and peculiar to God; in which ſence the Apoſtle affirmeth, *He only hath immortality* (1 Tim. 6. 16.)

Secondly, There is a derivative, dependent, eſſential immortality. Some ſubſtances have no ſeed of corruptibility, nor of death in them: Being either ſeparate from all matter which is the ſeat and root of corruption, as the Angels; or united to matter, yet ſo as not being produced from it, or having any affinity with it, ſuch are the ſouls of men. Whole man in his creation was not immortal either of theſe wayes; a part of man was, but man was not created immortal. Man was of a middle ſtate and condition, neither altogether ſo mortal, nor altogether immortal, but capable of either.

Thirdly, There is an immortality by the power or gift, by the mercy or juſtice of God. The power and juſtice of God ſhall give an immortality to the bodies of the damned in hell, they ſhall ever live a dying life, who were dead all the while they lived. They who have ſlighted the mercy of God, ſhall be upheld by his power, to endure his juſtice to all eternity; wicked men would have ſinned with delight for ever upon the earth, if they could have lived for ever upon the earth; and they ſhall live for ever with pain in hell to ſuffer for their ſin.

The power, goodneſs and mercy of God ſhall much more give immortality to the bodies of the Saints in glory; they who have had a will to delight in obeying God that ſhort time they lived on earth, ſhall have a power to live for ever in delight, praiſing God in heaven.

Adamus habuit potentiam non moriendi, non impotentiam moriendi.

The body of man in the ſtate of innocency, had an immortality by the gift of God; yet with condition that he did ſubmit to that Rule which God gave him to live by. *Do this and live, was the Law of* Adam's *life.* *Adam* had not an impoſſibility to die, but a poſſibility not to die; this was the ſtate of immortality in the ſtate of innocency. Man had not fallen into the grave, if he had not fallen into tranſgreſſion. His life was made as long as his obedience; if he had not turned from God, he had not returned to the earth.

Adamus peccans non ſolum potuit mori, ſed non potuit non mori.

Death

Death was conveyed in by sin, and our possibility not to die, was not only lost, but changed into a necessity of dying. So then man is brought to dust, not because his nature was subject to corruption, but because sin hath corrupted his nature. When he abused the liberty of his will, he was subjected to this necessity against his will. By an irreversible ordinance of Heaven, *It is appointed unto all men once to die, Heb.* 9. 27. *Job* speaks to that point of Gods Law concerning man, *Thou hast made me as the clay, and thou wilt bring me into the dust again.*

Quicunque dicit Adamum primum hominem mortalem factum, sive peccaret, sive non peccavet, moreretur in corpore, hoc est, de corpore, exiret, non peccati merito, sed necessitate naturæ, Anathema sit. Conc. Mel. can. 1.

Thus the words are taken as an assertion of the power and priviledge of God, to unmake and pull down man, whom he had made and set up.

If we read the words by way of interrogation or admiration; so *Job* seems to intend them, as an allay to mitigate the present severity of the Lords proceeding with him; *Thou hast made me of the clay but a while ago, and wilt thou bring me into the dust again? O spare me a little before I go hence, and shall be seen no more!* It will not be long before there must be an end of me, O let me have a more comfortable being and breathing while I am here!

When Satan provoked the Lord against *Jerusalem*, to destroy it, the Lord answered (*Zech.* 3. 2.) *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire?* As if he had said unto Satan, Art thou moving me to throw this people into that fire of affliction out of which they were so lately snatcht? *Jerusalem* was in the fire but a while ago, and shall I cast it in again? *Job* pleads in the same form, though not in the same matter; I was clay but the other day, and Lord, shall I to dust again to day? Let me see some quiet dayes before I see the end of my dayes. Gild over this clay of mine with the shinings of thy face upon me, before thou rendereſt me dust again.

I have more then once had occasion to touch this Argument, and shall therefore pass it here.

Job having thus set forth his natural constitution, in the matter of it, as he made of clay, goeth on to describe himself more distinctly: First, In his conception of his whole body. Secondly, In the formation and delineation of his parts.

Verse 10. **Hast thou not poured me out as milk, and crudled me like cheese?**

Lacti simile infusio semen, postea admirabili Dei opere non secus ac caseus concrescit & consolidatur, ut membra paulatim conformari incipiant.

Under the modest shadow of this Verse, that great natural mystery of mans generation and conception is contained. The former word signifies not only the powring forth of Liquids, but the melting and dissolving of the hardest metals, Iron, Brass, *&c.* that they may be fitted to run, or be powred forth, *Ezek.* 22. 21, 22. And as this signifies the softning and melting of that which is hard, so the next word (which we translate *crudled*) signifies the hardning or thickning of that which is soft and fluid. *Moses* useth it in describing the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea, *Ex.* 15. 8. *The floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.* The Prophet *Zephany* useth it for the setledness and resolvedness of a people in sin (*chap.* 1. 12.) *The Lord* (saith he) *will punish the men that are setled* (we put in the Margin *curdled* or *thickned*) *on their Lees.* I might from these proprieties of the original words, illustrate that secret of mans original. But forasmuch as the Spirit of God hath drawn a curtain, and cast a vail of Metaphors over it, therefore I intend not to open or discover it. Ancient Philosophors have spoken of these natural operations in a like Language, and under these similitudes: I shall only say in general, that these two expressions, First, *Thou hast poured me out as milk.* Secondly, *And crudled me like cheese*, are appliable to that special contribution which God hath charged upon each Parent; towards that great work, the continuation of their own kind, and the raising up of a posterity in their place, to serve himself, and their Generation. Hence learn,

נקד
Notat rei liquidæ concretionem coagulationem vel condensationem.

Οἶον ἐκ τοῦ γάλακτος πῆξις, τὸ δὲ ὕσιμα τὸ γάλα ἔστιν, &c. Arist. *De gen. Animal. c.* 20.

First, That, *Man hath reason to be humbled at the means and manner of his Original.*

What hath he to be proud of in this world, who, that he might be prepared for his coming into the world, was powred out as milk, and curdled as cheese? Let not man be high-minded, whose beginning was so low and homely. Hence learn,

Secondly, *Our natural conception is from God.*

Men (in a strict sence) are called *the fathers of our flesh*, and *God the father of Spirits* (Heb. 12. 9.) Yet God hath the chief title to the fatherhood of our flesh, as well as the sole title to the fatherhood of our spirits. *Thou hast powred me out as milk, and thou hast crudled me like cheese*; here is no mention of his Father, none of his Mother; but as if the Lord had wrought all by an immediate power, he ascribes the whole effect to him. *Thou hast powred me out as milk, &c. We are also his off-spring*, as the Apostle tells the *Athenians* out of their own Poets, *Acts* 17. 28.

Nihil de genitoribus aut seminibus nascitur, si ea non operetur Deus. Aug. *in* Psal. 118.

Thirdly, This gives caution to all whom the Lord hath called, or shall call to the state of Marriage, to be holy in that estate. *Marriage is honourable* (Heb. 13. 4.) *and the bed undefiled, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*: No wonder if God have a respectful eye to the undefiled in that relation, and a revengeful eye upon the defilers of it; seeing as his own authority instituted it, so his own power acts so eminently in it. Our conception, our formation, our birth and production, are all ascribed to, yea, assumed by God himself. Of which second act the next verse gives us a noble and an elegant proof.

Verse 11. **Thou hast cloathed me with skin and flesh, and fenced me with bones and sinews.**

Semen in utero mulieris, primis septem diebus conglobatur, coagulatur, fitque ad capiendam figuram idoneū. Gel.

Job proceeds like a great Philosopher, about the production of man. For when by that former work of Nature, the matter is poured out and crudled, God by nature makes a further progress, and prepares for another work, the forming and fashioning of that unshapen lump, into the parts and lineaments of an organical body. Some Naturalists undertake to tell us exactly what is wrought the first seven dayes, and what the next, when the Brain, Heart and Liver are formed, and when the Flesh, the Bones and Sinews. The ancient and learned Physitians have distinguished this whole work of God, in perfecting mankind, into four periods. The first is, while the matter or principles out of which man is made, being mingled together, retain their own form. The second is, when those principles are grossed into a rude fleshly mass. These two periods *Job* hath taught us long before *Galen* and *Hippocrates*, in the former verse, under those notions of *pouring out as milk, and crudling as cheese.* The third period is, when a representation is made of those principal parts, the Brain, the Heart and the Liver, together with the threads, and (as some allude) the warp of mans constitution, or, as others, the lines and shadows of a man, such as a skilful Artisan makes with a ruder pencil, when he is about to draw a curious picture. The fourth period is, when both the similar and organical parts are compleated, and also beautified with proper and lively colours. These two latter periods are described by *Job* in this verse, and in the beginning of the next.

Gel. *l.* 7. *de Sem. ex doctrina* Hippocr.

Thou hast cloathed me with skin and flesh.

The original word for *skin*, comes from a root signifying *naked.* We commonly say he is naked, who hath nothing upon him but his skin. And *Job*, who here saith, *Thou hast cloathed me with skin*, said, *chap.* 1. 20. *Naked came I out of my Mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither:* That is, with nothing but my skin. He that wears only skin and flesh, hath no artificial cloathing, but he hath a natural cloathing. We are dreſt in garments taken out of the Wardrobe of God and Nature before the world puts a rag upon us. Thus man is born naked, yet cloathed; unarmed, yet fenced.

עור *Pellis a* ערה *Nudavit.*

Thou hast cloathed me with skin and flesh, &c.] Which some interpret in reference to the soul, which is covered over, and enclosed with the skin and flesh:

But this cloathing of skin and flesh refers rather to those inward, more noble and tender parts, the Heart, Liver, Brain and Bowels; these are enclosed with skin and flesh, lest they should take cold: These are fenced with bones and sinews, lest they should take hurt. Hence death is called an *uncloathing.* Death strips us, not only to the skin, but of the skin. *We that are in this Tabernacle, do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be uncloathed,* 2 Cor. 5. 4. that is, not that we would put off this garment of skin and flesh, this

Pellis, ita dicta, quod externas injurias tegendo repellat. Drus. *Ulterius progreditur in formatione fœtus, nā post consolidatum semē & formata jam membra, accedunt extrinsecus cutis & caro, ad protegenda interiora, quæ absque hoc velut sepimento & munimento essent obnoxia & exposita periculis.* Merc.

natural

natural cloathing, but we would have a supernatural cloathing upon it, even a vest of glory put upon these vests of frailty. This Scripture in *Job* is of the same language with that of *Paul*, *Thou hast cloathed me with skin and flesh.*

It is said of a virtuous woman (*Prov.* 31. 21.) *That she is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are all cloathed with Skarlet*, or *double garments.* The great and most wise God hath prepared such cloathing for mans inward parts, that he nedes not fear snow or cold, he hath provided double garments, two suits, skin and flesh. Flesh is an under-garment, and skin is an upper garment; flesh covers the bones, and skin covers the flesh. Anatomists observe, That man hath two distinct coats of skin upon his flesh, or mans skin is a lined garment, yet differing from other garments; for here the lining is uppermost. This uppermost skin, or as some call it, the *scarf-skin*, is without sense, you may thrust a needle through it without pain. There was great reason it should be so, that it might defend the skin under it from external injuries, as also attemper the exquisite sense thereof, and so become the *medium* or mean of touching; for all sensation is made by some mean: and it is either altogether hindered, or much disturbed by the immediety of the Object and the Organ. Hence when this cuticle or scarf-skin is off or broken, the gentlest touch upon that bared part, breedeth much pain, but spoileth the true sensation. Under this curtain or scarf-skin, the true and proper skin lieth. The Greeks call it Δέρας, because it may be flayed off, or Δέρμα, *quasi* Δέμα, a band, because it compasseth or knitteth together the whole body. This skin is a seamless garment, yet it hath divers out-lets made for the relief and ease of Nature; some of which are obvious to sense, others called *pores*, are both innumerable and imperceptible.

To this double vesture of skin, *flesh* is added, as having according to *Job*'s Philosophy, an immediate conjunction or contiguity with one another. But our Philosophers in their professed descriptions of mans Anatomy, place two parts between the skin and the flesh, namely, *fat* and the *fleshly Membrane*. Concerning which, they who please may consult the writings of learned Naturalists. I shall not step out into such digressions.

Further, As God hath given such a cloathing of skin and flesh, so he hath given us armour under that cloathing. *Thou hast fenced me with bones and sinews.*

The word which we translate *fenced*, is the same used (*ch.* 1. 10.) Where Satan tells the Lord that he had secured the state of *Job*, so that he could not come nigh it. *Hast thou not made an hedge about him?* The Devil made many assaults against *Job*, but he could not batter down that hedge, it was Cannon-proof. As the state, so the body of *Job* was fenced; if we look upon the Skeliton of a man, we shall see the proportion of an armour, brest and back formed up with bones and sinews.

עצמות *Ossa à robore & firmitate dicta.*

Bones are for strength, and sinews for motion; bones being firm and stiff in themselves, are moveable by sinews. There are other parts of the Body which contur to the making up of this Armour, Gristles, Muscles, Ligaments, Membranes, all which serve for motion, fastening and defence, as well as *Bones and Sinews*: but these being the principal and most known, are here expressed for all the rest.

Ὀστέα τῷ σώματι στάσιν καὶ διάστημα καὶ σχῆμα παρέχοντα. Hip.

Bones give the body stability, straightness and form. They are as the carkas of a Ship, whereto the rest of the parts are fastened, and by which they are sustained. They are as the posts, pillars, beams and rafters of a house, by whose knittings and contignations the whole building is both proportioned and supported. And though the bones are for number very many, and in their forms exceeding various, some thick, some thin, some plain, some hollow, some of a greater, others of a lesser bore, yet are they so connect and fitted together by articulation or by coalition, by contiguity or continuity (as the Anatomists speak) that they all appear as one bone, or pack of bones.

Sinews or Nerves derive their pedigree from the Brain, and are the Organs by which the animal spirits are conveyed, and flow into the whole body, and with them both sense and motion. Sinews have so much of strength in them, that the same word is put to signifie both strength and sinews, and to do a thing strongly and vigorously, is to do it (*nervose*) sinewously. It is wonderful which Naturalists write of the conjugations and uses of the sinews; to whose Labours I refer the studious Reader for further satisfaction. I have given enough to shew what this Text calls me to, *That God hath indeed cloathed man with skin and flesh, and fenced him with bones and sinews.*

Some have quarrelled with the wisdom and goodness of God, for turning man altogether naked and unarmed into the world. This Scripture is enough to confute the unreasonableness of that quarrel. *Job* thankfully acknowledgeth that he was both *cloathed and armed*, though not in the sence of these complainers. It is more honourable for man to make himself artificial Cloathing and Arms, then to have had none but natural; God hath given man reason to invent, hands to prepare, and a tongue to call for those things which by a Law of Nature are imposed upon other creatures; the power of reason, and the skill of the hand are a better safeguard to man then any the beasts have, and can provide whatsoever man wants to secure him either from cold or danger. And though the body, as now it stands, be but (as it were) the Sepulcher of that which God at first created, though we lie open to so many diseases and deaths, that the soul may well be said to inhabit an unwalled and an unfortified City, yet man hath great cause for ever to extol the bounty of God in those still continued ennoblements of this earthly mansion, his mortal body. Yea, the noble structure and symmetry of our bodies invites our souls not only to thankfulness, but to admiration. One of the Ancients stileth man *A great Miracle*; Another, *The Miracle of Miracles*: A third, *The measure of all things*: A fourth, *The pattern of the Universe, The worlds Epitome, The world in a small Volume*, or, *A little world.* They also have distinguished the whole frame of the Body into three Stories, in allusion to a like frame observable in the world. First, The superior, which they call intellectual or Angelical, because they conceived it to be the habitation of Angels or Intelligences. The second or middle part they call Celestial or Heavenly, the seat of the Sun and Stars. The third, Elementary, in which all corporeal creatures are procreated and nourished. This division of the world is eminent in man, for he also is a building of three Stories. The Head, which is the Seat of Reason, the mansion, the Tower of wisdom and understanding, is placed highest: The Brest or middle venter is the Celestial part, wherein the Heart, like the Sun, is predominant; some have called the Sun *The heart of the world*, and the Heart, *The Sun of mans Body*, by whose lustre, beams and influences, all the other parts are quickned and refreshed; hence we say, when the heart holds, all holds. The third part of the Body, or the lower Venter, containing all parts necessary for the nutrition of individuals, or the propagation of the *Species*, carrieth a clear resemblance with the elementary or lowest parts of the Universe.

There are five things in particular, which as so many Rounds of a Ladder, may help us to raise our thoughts higher in the duty of holy admiration about this work of God.

First, That God frameth up this goodly and beautiful Fabrick out of such mean and improbable Materials. To consider out of what stuff our bodies are made, advanceth the honour of him who made us. Man can make his work (except the form) no better then the matter out of which he formeth it. But as the form of mans body is better then the matter, so the matter becomes better then it was before it received that form.

Secondly, The matter out of which God maketh man, is originally homogeneal, or but of one kind, yet there is a strange heterogeny or variety in the very substance, as well as in the shape of the several parts; which are therefore divided by the Surveyors of this Building into parts similar and dissimilar. Is it not incredible to meer Reason, that one Lump should be spread out into thin, tender skin, wrought into soft flesh, extended into tough sinews, hardened into strong bones; that one piece should make an outward Jerkin or Cassock of skin, an under garment of flesh, Columnes and Rafters of bones, Bands and ties of sinews; that the same should make veins, like channels, to carry, and blood like water, to be carried into every part, to moisten and refresh it? When an Artificer buildeth an house, he requires more materials then one, he must have

Quomodo ex re tantula & jui simili, tam varia & discrepantes partes extiterunt; hæc profecto est stupenda omnino opificis nostri sapientia & vis ad quicquid efficiendum. Merl

Stones and Timber, Iron, Lead, *&c.* to compleat his Fabrick; but the Lord frameth all the parts, rooms and contrivances of the Body out of one and the same Mass. *Thou dost not know* (saith *Solomon*) *how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child* (Eccles. 11. 5.) Who can know by a meer rational demonstration, how a solid substance should grow out of that which is so fluid? And that parts materially, as well as figuratively unlike, should arise out of a like matter?

Thirdly, The work of God in framing of man is internal, as well as external. A Statuary or an Engraver will make the Image or Pourtraiture of a man, but his work is all outward, he cannot make Bowels, or fashion a Heart within, he cannot cut out Veins, Bones and Sinews. The greatest wonders of Creation are unseen. God hath packt many Rarities, Mysteries, yea, Miracles together in mans Chest. All the vital Instruments and Wheels whereby the Watch of our life is perpetually moved from the first hour to the last, are locked up in a curious internal cabinet, where God himself prepared the pullies, hung on the weights, and wound up the Chime by the hand of his infinite power, without opening of any part; as our own learned Anatomist elegantly teacheth us in the Preface to his sixth Book.

Fourthly, The dimensions, proportions and poyse of mans body are so exact and due, that they are made the model of all structures and artificials. Castles, Houses, Ships, yea, the Ark of *Noah* was framed after the measure and plot of mans Body. In him is found a circulate Figure, and a perfect Quadrate, yea, the true quadrature of a Circle, whose imaginary Lines have so much troubled the Mathematicians of many Ages.

Fifthly, In every part usefulness and commodiousness, comliness and convenience meet together. What beauty is stampt upon the face? What Majesty in the eye? What strength is put in the arms? What activity into the hands? What musick and melody in the tongue? Nothing in this whole Fabrick could be well left out or better placed, either for ornament or for use. Some men make great houses which have many spare rooms, or rooms seldom used; but as in this house there is not any one room wanting, so every room is of continual use.

Was ever clay thus honoured, thus fashioned? *Galen* gave *Epicurus* an hundred years to imagine a more commodious situation, configuration or composition of any one part of the Body: And surely if all the Angels in Heaven had studied to this day, they could not have cast man into a more curious mould, or have given a fairer and more correct edition of man. *Thie clay cannot say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? Or this work, he hath no hands* (Isa. 44. 9.) The Lord hath made man so well, that man cannot tell which way to be made better. This work cannot say, he that wrought me hath no hands, that is, I am ill wrought; as to say, you have no eyes, you have no ears, are reproofs of negligence and inadvertency, both in hearing and seeing: So when we say to a man, surely you have no hands, our meaning is, he hath done his work either sloathfully or unskilfully. But this work of mans body shall not need to say unto God, he hath no hands; he hath given proof enough, that hands and head too were employed about this work. Let us make it appear that we have hands and tongues, and hearts for him, that we have skin and flesh, bones and sinews for him, that we have strength, and health, and life, and all for him, seeing all these are also derived from him, as appears in the next words, *Thou hast granted me life and favour.*

Job having thus described the natural conception and formation of his body, descendeth to his quickning and preservation. When God had formed man out of the dust of the earth, he then breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul; and thus when God had formed man in the womb, given him Skin and Flesh, Bones and Sinews, then he gives Life and Breath, and all things necessary to the continuation of what he hath wrought up to such excellent perfections. Our divine Philosopher teacheth us this Doctrine.

Verse 12. *Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*

This Verse holds out to us the great Charter of God to man, consisting of three Royal Grants. First, Life. Secondly, Favour. Thirdly, Visitation. The bounty of God appears much in granting Life, more in granting Favour, most of all in his grant of gracious visitations. *Thou hast granted me life,* &c.

The Letter of the Hebrew is, *Thou hast made or fitted for me life and favour.* The Soul is the ornament of the Body, Life the lustre of our Clay. Thou hast not thrown or hudled my life into my body, thou hast put it in exquisitely and orderly. The frame of the body is an exquisite frame; but the frame, the faculties and powers, the actings and motions of the soul are far more exquisite: The Inhabitant is more noble the House, and the Jewel then the Cabinet. *As the life is better then meat, and the body then* (artificial) *rayment* (Mat. 6. 25.) So the life is better then the body, which is to it a natural rayment.

עשית חיים *Vitas fecisti* Mont. *Vitam dispensusti mihi.* Sept. *Quasi debito loco & ordine.*

Thou hast granted me life.

Life is put Metonymically for the Soul, of which it is an effect, as the Soul is often put for the Life, whereof it is a cause.

We translate in the singular number, *Life*; the Hebrew is plural, *Thou hast granted me lives.* But hath a man more lives then one? Some understand *Job* speaking not only of corporal, but spiritual life; as our natural life is the salt of the body, to keep that from corrupting; so spiritual life, or the life of Grace, is the salt of the soul, to keep that from corrupting.

Secondly, *Thou hast granted me lives*, that is, say others, temporal life and eternal life.

Thirdly, *Lives* may be taken for the three great powers of life. Man hath one life consisting of three distinct lives: For whereas there is a life of vegetation and growth, such as is in Trees and Plants; and a life of sense and motion, such as is in the Beasts of the Earth, Fowls of the Air, and Fishes of the Sea; and a life of reason, such as is in Angels, whereby they understand and discourse; these three lives, which are divided and shared among all other living creatures, are brought together and compacted into the life of man. Whole man is the Epitome or sum of the whole Creation, being enriched and dignified with the powers of the invisible world and of the visible put together, under which notion we may expound this Text, *Thou hast granted me lives*; a threefold life, or a threefold acting or exercise of the same life. *Thou hast granted me lives.*

Hence observe, *Life is the gift of God.*

מקור חיים *Vena vitarum.*

With thee is the fountain of lives, the well, or *the vein of lives* (Psal. 36. 9.) The Psalmist alludes, either first, to waters which flow from a fountain, and so doth life from God. Or secondly, To Metals; *With thee is the vein of lives.* As all mineral veins, the veins of Gold and Silver, of Lead and Iron, *&c.* lie (as it were) in the bosom and bowels of the earth; so doth life in God. There is not the least vein of this Quicksilver in all the world, but comes from him. Or thirdly, The Psalmist alludeth to the veins of the body, which as so many rivers and rivulets derive their blood from that Red Sea the Liver. God hath a Sea of life in himself, and all that live are fill'd with life from him. This is one of his royal titles, *The living God*; He is *the living God*, not only *subjective*, because he liveth; but *effective*, because he enliveneth and quickneth all living creatures; *From him we receive life and breath* (Acts 17. 25.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*, vers. 28. *In him we live*, &c. that is, *by him*, or *through him*, as the same Apostle teacheth (*Rom.* 11. 36.) The same power giveth us being, and maintains it. This is true, yet the context carrieth the Preposition (*In*) further. For the Apostle having asserted, *vers.* 27. *He is not far from every one of us*; subjoynes this as a proof, *For in him we live*, &c. Implying that man is, in a sence, contained in, or invested with God. The divine nature cannot be circumscribed with any thing, yet circumscribeth all things: For which, *Paul* refers the *Athenians* to Heathen Poets, who spake this truth in a carnal language, yet such as might be spiritualiz'd by a sanctified understanding. The result of which is, *That God is the author and conservator of our lives.* This glory is given also unto Christ, who is called *The Prince of life*, because he hath life at command; *The Son quickneth whom he will.* Christ hath the power, not only of natural, but of spiritual and eternal life. *He is the Prince of Lives.*

Jovis omnia plena. Vulg. *Jupiter est æther, est terra Jupiter cœlumque, & omnia Jupiter, & si quid supra.* Æschyl.

Job

Job speaks in the language of Princes, *Thou hast granted*, &c. As they make our grants of Lands and Offices, so God makes a grant of life. The civil godship of Kings and Magistrates appears much in this, that they can grant a forfeited life, either by reprieve for a time, or by pardon for ever. It is ordinary with men, to grant others Leases for their lives, but they cannot grant them life. Princes can grant an offender a Lease of that life which he hath, but no Prince can grant life to those who have it not. That's Gods peculiar, *Thou hast granted me life.*

חסד *Denotat impensum studium vel exuberantiã boni.* Coc. *Augusta innocentia est secundum leges justum esse; latius officiorum patet quam juris regula. Quam multa pietas humanitas, liberalitas, exigunt, quæ omnia extra publicas tabulas sunt?* Sen. *l. 2. de ira. Virtutum quædam seminaria tribuisti mihi, & præsertim misericordiæ, quam sibi innatam ipse fatetur,* Job 31. 18. *Aquin.*

And favour.] The word signifieth the purest, sincerest, and most tender kindness, the fullest favour, the most courteous courtelie, *Gen.* 21. 23. & 24. 49. *Exod.* 15. 13. *Ruth* 1. 8. Hebricians tell us, That it noteth an exuberancy of kindness, such as breaks the bounds, and exceeds the ordinary laws of love. It is but a poor way of loving, to love only by rule and measure. There is no true love can act beyond the rule which God gives, but love quickly exceeds the rules of men. Hence the Jews call those *Chasidem*, who are not only just by stature, giving every man his right, paying every man his due, but noble, heroical, free-hearted and open-handed in their distribution of favours.

One Expositor by *favour* understands the seeds of grace and vertue, especially of charity and mercifulness, which (saith he) seem to have been connatural to *Job*.

Liberum arbitriũ tribuisti mihi. Cajet.

Another interprets *favour* by *free-will*. But I pass these as perversions, not expositions of Scripture: And shall represent what is both safe and sutable.

First, Some restrain this *favour* to that which he received in the womb before he was born, or the favour which he had to be born, which is to be reckoned among very valuable favours. *Thou art he that took me out of the womb*, was *David's* thankful acknowledgment, *Psal.* 22. 9. The womb is to all infants a temporary prison, and to some a grave. It is favour to have those gates unlockt, and the little prisoner set safe at liberty.

Hebraismus est quando ex dubus, simul positis substantivus unum adverbialiter sumitur alterumq; determinat. Bold.

Secondly, We may interpret it as an *adjunct*, or an *adverb*, shewing how the Lord granted him life. It is an usual Hebraism to put the latter of two Substantives adverbially, *Josh.* 2. 14. *We will deal kindly and truly with thee*, say the Spies to *Rahab*. The Original is, *We will deal kindness and truth to thee*; which is also rendered kindness in truth, or kindness truly, that is, thou mayest trust us: we do not flatter thee, and we will not deceive thee. So here, *Thou hast granted me life and favour*; That is, life by favour, or life favourably; importing, That the receit of life, is the receit of a great mercy; as if *Job* had said, *I could not deserve that thou shouldest bestow life upon me: When I was formed and fashioned in the womb, it was thy favour to quicken me: Mercy put breath into those tender principles, and first rudiments of my body.* And seeing not only sense and motion, are brought in by life, but reason also, and all the noble operations of it; *Job* had reason enough to say, *Thou hast granted me life*, as a great, or with abundant favour.

Hence observe, *Life is a special favour of God.*

There are divers sorts of creatures which have not the favour of life bestowed on them, no not the lowest degree of life. The Lord hath given man not only life, but the highest degree of life; that is a high favour. It was Satans argument (*Chap.* 2.) *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*; As if he had said, *What is a mans body to his life? What are his estate, his lands, his gold and silver? What are all these dead commodities to his life? Life is the most precious of natural blessings.* A worm (under this consideration) is a more noble creature then the Sun, because a worm hath life, which the Sun hath not. *The lowest of a superior order, is better then the highest of an inferior*; Though the Sun be the excellentest of all inanimate creatures, yet it moves (though in heaven) in a lower orb, then any thing that lives groveling on the earth. A Leaf is more excellent then a Pearl or a Diamond, because a Leaf hath a life in it, which these have not. That opinion of voluptuous Atheists or Epicures, delivered us by the Preacher, hath a truth in it; *A living dog is better then a dead lion* (Eccles. 9. 4.) For though (as that voice spake from heaven, *Revel.* 14. 13.) *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord*, and though cursed are the living that live without the Lord: in which sence the pooreſt dead Dog is better then the proudest Lion alive; Yet, consider man only within the line and compass of natural life; then he that lives in the worst condition, is better then he that once was in highest dignity, but now is dead. It is usual in Scripture by a Dog to set forth the vilest estate of man, and the most excellent by a Lion. When *Mephibosheth* would shew how low he was in his own eyes, though the son of a noble Prince, he joyns these two, *Dead and a Dog together*, 2 Sam. 9. 8. *What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead Dog as I am?* He calls himself not only a Dog, as Christ did the Woman of *Canaan*, and as she acknowledged her self to be; but to lay himself as low as low es it self, he calls himself *a dead Dog*, implying, That life giveth some honour, and casteth lustre upon every subject, which it inhabits, though it be the meanest. When *Esau* was near perishing with hunger (*Gen.* 25. 32.) he resolves thus, *I am at the point to die, and what profit shall this birthright do to us?* As if he had said, shall I keep my birthright, and lose my life? My life is more precious. Thus he spake, and he spake profanely in it; yet there is some truth in what he spake; for if we take birth-right precisely in the notion of a civil priviledge, so life is better then a birth-right; but he is called prophane *Esau*, because there was a spiritual priviledge in his birth-right, which he ought to have valued above his life. Any spiritual good thing is better then natural life; but life is the best of natural, and better then all civil good things. When the Prophet would express how great a blessing a King was to his people, he called him, *The breath of their nostrils*, Lam. 4. 29. and *live for ever*, was the highest apprecation given the *Babylonian* Kings. The most noble imitations of Art are about this piece of Nature; it is the ambition of a Painter to draw to the life, or to shadow the motions and actings of life. When we would commend a picture, we say, It is done to the life; How precious a favour is real life, the very shadow of which is of so great a price? He that layeth down his life, payeth the greatest debt, whether to justice or to nature. Christ went to the highest price for, and shewed the greatest favour to sinners, when he parted, and pawned this jewel for them, his precious life.

This should mind Parents, as to pray for quickning after conceptions, so to give thanks when the embryon is quickned.

Now if this natural life be such a favour, What is spiritual and eternal life? *Thou hast given me life and favour*, or *life as a favour.*

Chesed *omnia beneficia Dei promiscuè complectitur* Coc. *Non solum vitam dedisti, sed cumulasti bonis omnibus, quæ ad victũ, honorem, & rem vitæ necessariam pertinent. Hoc nomine complectitur etiam omnia beneficia quæ ultra vitam Deus homini concessit, dum educandum eum instituendum, & informandũ in lege sua & timore curat.* Merc.

Thirdly, By *favour* in conjunction with life, we may understand the accidents of life; that is, those good things which accompany and accommodate our lives; *Thou hast given me life*, not a bare life, nor a mear subsistence or being in the world, but with life thou hast also given me favour, many mercies and comforts to make my life sweet and pleasant to me.

Besides, *favour* takes in not only those outward comforts of health, strength, liberty, plenty, but those inward ornaments of life also, good education, and instruction in knowledge both humane and divine. It appears *Job* had a fair portion of these favours. His was not a naked, but a clothed soul, a soul gilded and engraven all over with heavenly truths.

So that *Job* in this word reports the bounty and munificence of God towards him, in all the former additions and accomplishments of his life. Many have lives which they scarce look upon as a favour. *Some accidents of life, are more worth then the substance of it. Our well-being is better then our being.* It may prove a desirable favour to be rid of life. In which sence *Job* spake of himself at the first verse of this Chapter, *My soul is weary of my life.* His life was then a burden, but once a favour. *Thou hast granted me life and favour.*

Fourthly, *Job* may here intend spiritual and eternal favour. *Chesed* signifies the grace or favour of God in Christ (*Psal.* 89. 33.) *My loving kindness will I not take from*

Quoniam Chesed *significat aliquid per-fectum in amore: idcirco statuimus* Jobum *hic intelligere istam æternam quod Deus exerceat erga suos quos facit filios suos in Christo.* Coc.

him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. If he fail in duty I will chasten him in mercy, I will not remove mercy from him. The Vulgar translates, *Thou hast given me life and mercy*, which some expound of that special mercy, the pardon of his sin, and his washing from original corruption; As if *Job* had said, I partake not only of life, but also of that which is better then life it self, Thy favour or loving kindness, *Psal.* 63. 4. The favour of God in spiritual things, (in pardoning sin, in regenerating the soul, in sending the holy Spirit) is the perfection of his favour. What is man without that favour which makes him a son of God, but even a beautiful, or at most, a rational beast? as *David* calls him, *Psal.* 49. 21. And should a man give thanks for outward favours only, without any reflection upon spiritual; a beast, could he speak might give such thanks. The life of sense and growth is as a mercy, but beasts and plants live thus: The life of reason is a greater mercy, but wicked men live thus; many are in Hell, unto whom God granted this life, and they would be glad God would call in his grant, and take it from them: But unto these three lives God adds a fourth to his Elect, even a life of grace through Jesus Christ. This is the favour of favours, and the blessing of all our blessings; except this favour be granted with our lives, it were better for us never to have had a grant of our lives. It is more eligible not to have been born, then not to be born again.

Chesed sumitur pro vitâ ejusque ornatu. Coc.

There is a fifth Interpretation, taking the word *Chesed* for corporal favour, or the beauty of the body, we say, such an one is well favoured, he hath an excellent feature; the favour of man is seen in the feature of his face. Favour is the perfection of beauty. Some have a clear mixture of white and red, yet no favour. In this sence the word is used (*Isa.* 40. 6.) where the Lord makes a proclamation, *The voice said Cry, and he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field*; The word which we translate *goodliness*, is *Chesed*, *All flesh is grass* (man withers quickly) and *Chesed*, *the goodliness thereof*; all of man, his favour, beauty, strength, all these are as the *flower of the field*. Some read *goodness* for *goodliness*; the sence holds, if we take it so: the natural, the moral goodness of man is but a flower. As no goodliness, so no goodness of man, except spiritual, lasteth long, and that lasteth long and long, even for ever. Grace is not as the flower of the field; that is, durable substance: that (as the Prophet speaks there of the Word of God in *vers.* 8.) shall stand for ever. The grace of God is as lasting as the Word of God, for his Word is the external seed or principle of grace. But all other goodness and goodliness of man how good, how goodly soever; his other beauty how beautiful soever; his strength, how strong; his favour, how well favoured so ever, is but as the flower of the field, which is either cut down while it is green, or soon fades while it stands.

Take favour in this sence, and the sence of the whole verse is harmonious and sound. *Thou hast granted me life*; my body is formed and quickned, and more then so, *Thou hast given me favour*, my body is full of beauty and comliness. The comliness of the body is a favour received, and many receive favour, because they are comly. From either of which considerations we may call the comliness of the body *favour*, and it is no common favour, God denies this to many; he grants them the life of Nature, but not favour; yea, he grants many the life of Grace, but not favour. *Beautiful souls are often ill-housed; and filthy souls cleanly housed*; 'tis admirable when both beauties meet in the same man; *Moses* was a *goodly child* (Exod. 2. 2.) and a good man. As grace in the inward man is the best favour, so favour is graceful to the outward man. *Thou hast granted me life and favour,*

And thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

פקד. Inspectio in bonum vel malum. Sept. Visitatio. Vulg. Interdum de Deo ad Deum refertur, denotat providentiam. Pined.

Here is the third benefit of this *Royal grant*, *The visitation of God*. One reads, *Thy presence*. A second, *Thy assistance*. A third, *Thy inspection, thy over-looking or superintendency hath preserved my spirit*. The Hebrew word signifies, The visitation of a superior over an inferior, as when Masters enquire into their Families, or Governors into their Colledges and Hospitals, to see whether the Statutes and Orders appointed by the Founders and Benefactors be observed. There is a threefold visitation of God held forth in Scripture.

First, A visitation of condemnation. God visits to take vengeance by destructive punishments, when warning is not taken, nor repentance shewed after corrective punishments. *Shall not I visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Jer. 5. 9.

Secondly, A visitation of correction (*Psal.* 89. 32.) *If thy children forsake my law, &c. then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him,* &c. Though they break my Laws, yet I will not break my Covenant, they shall smart for it, but they shall not perish for it. This is a fatherly visitation.

Thirdly, A visitation of consolation. And this two-fold, First, For deliverance out of an evil estate, and that either temporal; the Lord is said to visit his people *Israel*, when he delivered them out of *Egypt* (Exod. 4. 31.) or spiritual and eternal; *God hath visited and redeemed his people*, saith the blessed Virgin (*Luke* 1. 68.) that is, he hath visited his people, to redeem them from sin and Satan, death and hell, by Jesus Christ.

Secondly (Which is most proper to this Text) there is a visitation, for protection in a good estate. When God (having caused our line to fall in a fair place) draws his line of providential communication round about us; So Mr. *Broughton* translates, *Life and loving kindness hast thou dealt to me, and thy providence preserveth my spirit.* As if *Job* had said, *Thou didst not only give me life and favour, but thou didst protect me for many years in the enjoyment of those favours.* Providence was the hedge, not only of his outward, but of his inward estate, *Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*

שמר Summa solertia atque diligentia prospexit, cavit, observavit, ut solent custodiæ & excubiæ nocturnæ, vel gregum custodes.

The Verb which we translate, *hath preserved*, signifieth to preserve, both by strength and watchfulness. The Noun expresseth a *Watch-tower*, in Hebrew, because a watchman standeth upon his Tower, and looks round about him, to espy and give notice of approaching dangers. The Lord preserveth both wayes, by his watchfulness, and by his strength: his eye is wakeful enough, and his arm is powerful enough to preserve us. *He that keepeth* Israel *doth neither slumber nor sleep* (Psal. 121. 1.) *the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary* (Isa. 40. 28.) He that is thus wakeful can easily visit, and he that is thus powerful, can easily preserve those whom he visiteth.

Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

But how did the visitation of God, preserve the *spirit* of *Job*? Or what are we to understand by his spirit, which was thus preserved?

The spirit of man is taken three wayes;

First, For *Life*. Thus God keepeth us from death, while he preserves our spirits.

Secondly, For the *Soul*. Thus God preserveth our spirits, while he keeps us from falling into, or from falling in temptation; while he keeps our corruptions from prevailing, and our graces from decaying.

Thirdly, The spirit of man is taken for his *Courage*. Thus God preserveth our spirits, while he keeps us from needless fears, and cowardly despondencies. Doubtless *Job* had experience of the visitation of God preserving his spirit in all these sences; yet here he seems chiefly to intend the preservation of his life, which God had granted him with favour, or of those comforts which were granted him with his life. Hence observe, First in general,

That what God granteth, he preserveth.

It is a part of his grant, that he will preserve. Should the Lord bestow the greatest stock of mercy upon us, and leave us to the wide world, he should quickly lose all; God is not like the Carpenter or the Mason, who buildeth up a house, and then leaveth it to it self, or to the care of others. The Lord surveyes what he builds, and keeps up what he sets up; all would come down else. Providence succeedeth Creation, or Providence is a continued Creation. As soon as ever the Lord had made Man, and a Garden, He took the Man and put him in the Garden which he had made, *to dress it, and to keep it* (Gen. 2. 15.) God putteth the creatures under mans charge, yet he keepeth all creatures in his own charge, and especially man: A Garden without a man to visit it, would soon be a wilderness. And man without God to visit him would soon be, or be in a wilderness,

either

either out of order, or in danger. *Achish* promiseth *David*, *I will make thee a keeper of my head for ever* (1 Sam.28.2.) His meaning was, he should be *Captain of his guard*. Great Princes have their guards, they have keepers of their heads. The great King of Heaven and earth is a guard to the meanest man, and the keeper of his head. God enquires of *Cain* for his brother *Abel* (Gen.4.) *Where is Abel thy brother?* What is become of him? *Cain* was angry at the question, *Am I* (saith he) *my brothers keeper?* We ought to be one anothers keepers; our mutual visitations should preserve one anothers spirits. Some are apt to think themselves too good for the work: others, that the work is too hard for them. It is our comfort, and it may be our assurance, that God hath neither of these thoughts; *The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The Sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the Moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul: The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth and for evermore* (Psal. 121. 5.) How large a writ or patent of protection is granted here? No time shall be hurtful, neither *day nor night*; which includes all times. Nothing shall hurt, neither Sun nor Moon, nor heat nor cold: These include all annoyances. Nothing shall be hurt, *Thy soul shall be preserved, thy outgoings and thy comings in shall be preserved:* These include the whole person of man, and him in all his just affairs and actions. Nothing of man is safe without a guard, and nothing of man can be unsafe, which is thus guarded. They shall be kept, who can say, *The Lord is our keeper.* And they cannot be kept, no not by legions of Angels, who have not the Lord for their keeper. None can keep us, but he, and he hath promised to keep us *for evermore.* Some men are weary of their offices, and some are put out of office; God is neither. In that Prophetical curse against *Judas*, 'tis said, *Let another take his office* (Psal.109.8.) What office? It is this word, and notes there the office of looking to, or of preserving the souls of others, we commonly call it, *The cure of souls.* Such is the office of all the Ministers of Christ, That's *Episcopacy by divine right*; this in the Text is *divine Episcopacy.* That word which here in *Job* we translate *visitation*, and in the Psalm now cited, *office*, is called *Episcopacy* by the Apostle (*Act.*1.21.) Christ is the great Bishop or visitor both of our souls and bodies. He is the œcumenical Bishop. The whole world is his Dioceis. He preserveth man and beast. See more of this point, *Chap.*7.20.

Præfecturã ejus accipiat alter, id est, omnia quæ in ejus cura sunt quæ sub sua potestate habet.

Again, For as much as this visitation which extendeth to the whole man, is here in the letter determined upon the spirit, We may observe,

First, Taking *Spirit* for *Life*,

That as our well-being, so our being in the world is at the daily dispose of God.

The living God not only giveth, but maintaineth our lives. We live not by bread, while we are healthy, nor by medicines, when we are sick; but by the Word of God. His visitation doth all.

Secondly, Take *Spirit* for the *Soul*, then we are taught,

That our souls are not independently immortal or incorruptible.

As the life of the whole man is not, so neither is the life of the soul, of, or in it self, without support from God. The Angelical spirits who were never married to bodies of earth, stand not mearly by Creation, but by Providence. The visitation of God preserveth those spirits; how much more the spirits of men, which are espoused to dust and clay?

Thirdly, As spirit signifieth the soul, not only in it's natural, but in it's spiritual state, or in the state of grace; We learn,

That our spiritual stock and treasure are in danger, and would decay, if the power and care of God did not preserve our spirits.

Grace cannot keep it self, if left to its self. We should lose, not only degrees of grace, but all grace, were it left in our own hands. But because it is grace, therefore it is not left in our own hands, therefore it cannot be lost. So the Apostle clearly (1 *Pet.*1.4.) *We are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.* The word signifies to keep, as a City beleaguered without by a strong enemy, is kept by a Garison within. Man at the first had an excellent estate in spirituals; though it cannot be said (properly) that he had grace (for that is in the hand of a Mediator) yet he had the image of God, and perfect innocency; but because God did not visit his spirit by fresh assistances, he was stript of all, and fell from the throne of his created glory. As God visits our souls by preventing grace, to give us what we had not: so he visits us by his preserving and persevering grace, to continue what he hath given.

Lastly, Forasmuch as (though God createth and careth for the whole man, yet) the visitation of God is expressed only, as to the spirit; We may Observe,

That God doth chiefly take care of, and provide for the spirit or soul of man.

When God formed the body of man at first, out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils, the breath of life, it is not said he became a living body, or a living man, *But, man became a living soul.* So here, the work of providence is not enlarged to the whole man, but restrained to his spirit; As if the Lord did scarce think our bodies either worth, or needing a visit in comparison of our spirits. And seeing God cares for nothing in us, so much, as for our spirits, should not our care be chiefly for our spirits? The soul is (upon the matter) all man; ought not man to be most of all for his soul? Shall the thoughts of God be most busied, his care and inspection most fixed upon our spirits, and shall not ours? While Christ in a manner dischargeth us for our outward man (*Matth.*6.25.) *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on*; his meaning was, to charge us more deeply with the inward man; yet how many are there, whose outward man stands them in more cost and care, in more thoughts and visitations for one day, then their spirits or inward man doth for a whole year, yea, for their whole lives! Visitations are frequent and serious for the preserving of the body: but where shall we find serious thoughts of visiting the soul?

Take this word further, *If it be the visitation of God which preserveth our spirits*, we should often visit God with prayer, intreating him to continue these visitations. Prayer is our visiting God, as providence is Gods visiting of us, and we should visit God by prayer, not only (as they, *Isa.*26.) in trouble, but in our peace: we should desire him to visit our estates, our families, but especially our souls and spirits in their most flourishing condition. The Apostle useth it as an argument to keep us from distracting thoughts (*Phil.*4.2.) *Let your moderation be known unto all men: The Lord is at hand. Be careful in nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God.* The Lord is at hand, let not your hearts be troubled. Visit God in duty, who is at hand to visit you in mercy. Though there be an infinite distance between God and man, yet God is not far from any man, and he is ever near some men; Let not us be strangers to God, when we hear he maketh continual visits to us. *Thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.*

Vers. 13. **And these things hast thou hid in thine heart, I know that this is with thee.**

Some read the first clause (which adds sharpness to it) with an interrogation. *And hast thou hid these things in thine heart?* Is it so with thee, or hast thou dealt so with me indeed?

The heart of God, is the will, purpose or decree of God; These are a vast repository, wherein all things are laid up.

And these things hast thou hid, &c. What things? what is the antecedent to these things?

First, Some say, His afflictions, *These things*, that is, these afflictions, which thou hast now laid upon me, were I hid in thine heart: thou hast shewed me many favours, while in secret thou didst prepare rods for me.

Secondly, The antecedent *to these things* in mercy, *life, favour and visitation*, spoken of before, say others; As if *Job* had spoken thus, *This bill of blessings now read, these priviledges not reckoned up, were hidden in thine heart: thou hast had gracious intentions towards me, while thou hast been smiting me.*

Scio quia universorum memineris Vulg.

Quasi hæc mala velut in animo recondita in tempus opportunum asservasset, ut nec opinantem opprimeret. Atrox querimonia. Merl

I know all this is with thee.] That is, Thou remembrest all this, and keepest a record of it by thee; The Vulgar makes this the Text, *I know thou remembrest all things*, or *all men*.

Some (supposing the antecedent to be his afflictions) make out this harsh and unbecoming sence; As if *Job* had thus uttered his mind to God, *I now perceive thou hast had coals of anger raked up in the ashes, while those warm beams of love did shine upon me; Thou hast held out mercy in thy hand, but somewhat else lay in thine heart.* This interpretation, in the common understanding of it, is most unworthy of God. It is the wickedness of men to speak fair, and to do some courtesies, while cruelty and revenges are hid in their hearts. When *Esau* (*Gen.* 27. 41,) saw himself defeated of the blessing by his brother, *He said in his heart, the days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother* Jacob: Here's the character of malice, he gave neither brother nor mother ill language, but *he said in his heart.* The holy God never speaks good to them, to whom he intends evil. The Creator needs not daub or pervaricate with his creatures.

I grant indeed that the Lord giveth wicked men many outward favours, and speaks them fair in his works, but he never speaks them fair in his word, *Say, Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand, shall be given him* (Isa. 3. 11.) Men are apt to flatter, but flattery is much an abomination to the Lord, as it is below him.

I grant also, That the Lord giveth his own people many favours, and speaketh real kindnesses to them while he hides affliction in his heart. What evil soever he brings upon them, he hath thoughts to do them good, and hath nothing but good for them in his thoughts.

We understand by those *hidden things*, the mercies which *Job* with his last breath had enumerated: then the words import two things.

First, An argument to move the Lord not to destroy him, or to assure his own heart that he would not. As if he had said, Lord, I know thou remembrest well what thou hast done for me, what cost thou hast been at in making me at first, and in preserving me hitherto; surely then thou wilt not pull all down in a moment.

Secondly, The words may import that the Lord in afflicting *Job* had used only a kind of sacred dissimulation. A dissembler carrieth himself as if he had no intent to do what he is resolved to do: It is usual with men thus to dissemble hatred, and so have some their love. He that purposeth much good to another, hideth it sometimes under sowr language and unkindest usage. *Joseph* had most endeared affection towards his brethren, yet he put a disguise of anger upon it, acting the part of a severe man, who lieth at catch to find out advantages and pick quarrels. *Joseph* used many stratagems of love, to entangle his Brethren, and wrapt up his good will in hard speeches and rough carriages; nothing appearing less then what indeed he most was, *a loving Brother, forgetful of nothing but injuries*; *Job* seems to have had such a conception of God, while he saith, *These things hast thou hid in thine heart*; and then his sence riseth thus, *Lord, I know thou beareſt favour and good will towards me still. The fire of thy love is not extinct, but covered. Thou dost but personate an enemy, thou art my friend; thou draweſt a cloud betwixt me and the light of thy countenance, but thy countenance is still as full of light towards me as ever; and though I see nothing but sorrows on every side, yet I know mercies are hid in thine heart.* Thus the words are an assertion of *Job*'s faith and assurance that God loved him, while his chastenings lay most heavy upon him. Hence observe,

> First, That, *The Saints while they are strong in faith, are able to discern the favour of God through the clouds and coverings of his most angry dispensations.*

This they can do, and when they can, they are arrived at a great height in Grace. To maintain our interest in Christ through disadvantages, is strong faith. The woman of *Canaan* (Mat. 15. 26.) knew her pardon and acceptance wer hid in the heart of Christ while he called her Dog, and would scarce vouchsafe to cast an eye upon her. Faith did this, and Faith can do the like at this day: But every true Faith will not do it. There is a kind of miracle wrought in such believing: So Christ concludes with that woman (*ver.* 28.) *O woman, great is thy faith!* Truth of grace is not enough for every work of grace; some works will not be done without strength as well as truth. Weak faith is ready to say, Mercy is lost, when it is but hidden, and that God means us no good, when we do not enjoy good. But the strong Faith speaketh on this wise, *Lord, I know there is mercy in thine heart towards me, though I see nothing in thy face but frowns, and feel nothing from thy hand but blows. Let God do what he pleaseth with me, I will not have a jealous thought of him, or suspect his intentions towards me, whatsoever his actions be.* Hence observe,

> Secondly, *We may gather arguments of support in our greatest sufferings from the apprehension of concealed mercies.*

The skill and holy subtilty of Faith can wind it self in Gods bosom; and from what it finds lying secretly there for us, encourages us to bear what is openly laid upon us. Observe,

> Lastly, *A Believer looks upon all his receipts, as coming out of the heart of God.*

As he can look into his own heart, and see all the Commandments and revealed Counsels of God hidden there, so he can look into the heart of God, and see all the comforts he wanteth hidden there. Men of the world take their comforts only from the hand of God, Saints take theirs from the heart of God. It putteth the price upon every blessing, when we can look upon special love as the spring of it. Look how much of the heart of our friend we can see in a courtesie, so much true value there is in it. Hence it is usual with man, when he would express his freeness to those who desire a favour at his hands, to say, Yes, *Take it with heart and good will, you have it with all my heart.* We read of one, who complained he had received but a Golden Cup, when he saw another receive a Kiss from a Noble Prince: A Kiss is a better gift then a Cup of Gold. Love is the richest present. How happy then are they, who have the golden Cup and a Kiss too? Much from the hand, and all from the heart, from the love of God.

Job having thus revised and read over the particulars of his former mercies received from the bounty and free love of God, revives his complaint about, and renews his desire of deliverance from present sorrows, in his next address to God.

VERS. 14, 15, 16, 17.

If I sin, then thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.
If I be wicked, wo unto me; if I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head; I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction.
For it encreaseth; Thou huntest me as a fierce Lion, and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.
Thou renewest thy witnesses against me, and encreasest thine indignation upon me, changes and war are against me.

THe connection of these words lieth somewhat in the dark, and this in evidence hath caused divers conjectures about it.

First, Some make the connection with the thirteenth Verse, *I know* (saith *Job*) *that this is with thee*; and here he declared what was with him, namely, that, *If I sin, then thou markest me*; *and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

Secondly, The connection is made by others with the twelfth Verse, *Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit; yet if I sin, thou markest me*, &c. As if *Job* had said, Though thou hast been pleased to make so many grants of favour, and hast done all these things for me which were hidden in thine heart, yet I know thou wilt not bear with, or connive at me, *if I sin against thee*: Thou hast not given me these mercies, that I should be emboldened to transgress the rule of thy justice; no, though thou hast done much for me, *Yet if I sin, thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.*

Thirdly, A third goeth higher, and makes these words depend upon the third Verse; where *Job* puts three Queries to God; the last of which is, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* I know it is not (for 'tis like I might escape as well as another, yet) *if I sin, thou markest me, and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity; if I be wicked, wo unto me.* Mine own experience proves thee far enough from shining upon the counsel of the wicked. Behold clouds and darkness are upon me.

There is a fair sence in any of these connections; which to determine, is not easie; I shall leave all three before the Reader.

Verse 14. If I sin, then thou markest me.

If I sin.] Sin standeth here in opposition to wickedness; *Thou wilt not shine upon the counsel of the wicked.* And, *vers.* 15. *If I be wicked, then wo unto me; for if I sin, then thou markest me.* Sin is any transgression against, or deviation (though but an hairs breadth) from the rule; *If I fail*, be it never so little.

שמר **Then thou markest me.**] The Original hath three significations, which occasion as many different interpretations of the Text.

First, To preserve, and that two wayes; first, By protecting from those evils which others would bring upon us (*Psal.* 141. 9.) *Keep me from the snare which they have laid:* That is, protect me from the danger which their snares threaten me with. So at the twelfth verse of this Chapter, *Thy visitation doth preserve my spirit.* Secondly, It is rendered to preserve by *sparing*, or not bringing those evils upon us which our own sins have deserved. So the Vulgar here, who to make out his sence, puts the latter part into the form of an interrogation, *If I have sinned, and thou hast spared me for a time, wherefore then dost thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* As if the meaning of *Job* were this, When in former times I sinned against thee, thou wast pleased to remit of thy severity, and deal gently with me, *Thou didst spare me as a Father spareth his Son that serveth him.* Why is the tenour of thy dispensations so much changed from what it was, seeing thou art a God that changeth not; and I am but what I was, a weak and changeable man? Why I am I now charged with sin, and not set free, as sometimes (I have been) from sorrow the fruit of it? Wilt thou deal with me, who sin out of infirmity, or against my will, as with those who are wicked, and have a will to sin?

Si peccavi & ad horã pepercisti mihi, &c. Vulg.

Secondly, To prevent others from doing what they desire, or our selves from what we fear (*Psal.* 18. 23.) *I was upright before him, and kept my self from mine iniquity*; as if he had said, I have maintained such strict watch over my own heart; that I have prevented my self from falling into that sin which I was most subject to and in danger of, both in regard of my constitution and temptation. Taking this meaning of the word, the whole verse is rendered thus, *If*, or, *When I am ready to sin, thou (stoppest or) preventest me, why then dost then not acquit me from mine iniquity?* As if he had said, Lord, wilt thou deal with me as with a wicked man? Thou knowest that I am not wicked, for by thy preventing grace, thou hast kept me from all wickedness, and stopt me from many sins. Hence note,

> That, *The remembrance of the power of God in keeping us pure from greater sins, is an argument that he will spare us, though we have (through infirmity) fallen into sin.*

He that holds us from iniquity, will not destroy us for iniquity. Some are stopt from sin, and storm when they are stopt; these have no reason to think God will spare them because he hath stopt them. Thousands are stopt from sin, who neither know what it is to sin, nor that they have been stopt from sin. These cannot plead this point: As it is no virtue to endure what is not grievous to us, so no grace not to do what is not joyous to us when we do it. But to know we are stopt from a pleasing sin, and rejoyce at it, to see how our corruptions have been prevented, and to bless God for it, this is a great degree of grace. As there is a preventing grace, which beginneth with us, while we are strangers from God, and are walking on in the wayes of sin; so there is a preventing grace, watching over us after we are turned to God, lest we fall into sin. Experience of this may be a sweet support unto the soul, under the saddest afflictions, and in the darkest night of spiritual desertions.

Thirdly, The word signifieth to keep in prison, or in safe custody. The Nown is a prison in Hebrew. And thus the sence is given three wayes, as an Assertion, as an Interrogation, as an Imprecation.

First, As an Assertion, *If I have sinned, thou wilt*, or, *thou maist imprison me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Hence observe,

> That, *The best and dearest of Gods servants may look for straights, if they walk loosly.*

The Lord will shut them up, if they presume and take undue liberty, or grow licentious. They shall be either humbled or destroyed, who turn the grace of God (that is, the manifestation of his grace, either by his word or by his works) into wantonness. God will not cocker his own children, and dandle them so, as to forget to correct them, if they forget him and their own duty. If *Israel* sin, *Israel* shall smart for it; and if *Job* sin, *Job* must look to be laid in prison for it. Thus he speaks, acquitting God from shining upon the counsels of wicked men, seeing he will not spare, no not his own children, if they sin against him.

Secondly, The sence is given by an Interrogation; *If I sin, wilt thou therefore shut me up in prison? Wilt thou not acquit me from mine iniquity?* And so he pleadeth with God, as using too much severity and rashness against him; *What, shall I be laid by the heels for every fault? Shall I be arrested and clapt up in Irons for every sin? Wilt thou imprison me, and not acquit me from mine iniquity?* They who are most wicked, deserve no worse then this; and shall I, if I do but sin, receive such measure? Where are thy compassions, and the sounding of thy bowels? are they restrained? It should seem so, else thou wouldest not thus restrain and imprison me.

Valde durũ videtur, ut si quid peccaverim perpetuò me in carcere, custodiaq; arctissima detineas, neq; unquam peccati pœnas remittere velis. Pin. *An simulac pecco observas me, &c.* Jun.

Thirdly, As an Imprecation; *If I have sinned, according as I am charged, imprison me as long as thou wilt, and do not acquit me from mine iniquity:* If I am such a man as my friends judge me to be, I expect no favour: let me be poor and sick still, torture me, rack me, do what thou wilt with me. Like that of *David*, Psal. 7. 4, 5. *If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me, &c. Let the enemy persecute my soul and take it; yea, let him tread down my life upon the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust.* I ask no favour, if I am such a man as mine enemies have represented me; or if I have done that for which they chalenge me.

Verba juramenti & contestantis suam innocentiam; si peccavi, imprecor mihi durissimam custodiam. Bold.

Fourthly, To observe and mark; and it importeth a critical, a curious observation; to mark exactly (*Psal.* 130. 3.) *If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity who shall stand?* But doth not the Lord mark iniquity? Doth not he take notice of every sin acted by any of the children of men, especially by his own children? Why then doth the Psalmist put it upon an *If?* If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquity. 'Tis true, the Lord marks all iniquity to know it, but he doth not mark any iniquity in his children to condemn them for it: So the meaning of the Psalm is, That, *if the Lord should mark sin* with a strict and severe eye, as a Judge, to charge it upon the sinning, no man could bear it. Mr. *Broughton* translates, *When I sin, thou dost watch* me; watching is more then marking; as if the Lord had taken up a stand upon a high place, and did there compose himself to see what's done, or to make annotations upon the whole Text of mens lives all the world over. Hence observe,

Refertur ad exquisitam Dei observationem universarum humanæ vitæ actionũ. Rab. Abr. Tygur, *Reg.* 70.

> That, *God takes notice of the sins and failings of his own people.*

If I sin, then thou markest me; and in the fourteenth Chapter, verse 16. *Thou numbrest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sin?* Thou numbrest my steps; what steps? He meaneth not the steps of his outward, but of his inward man; or the steps of his outward man in order to the inward. There is a moral walking; *Walk before me and be upright*; walking is conversing or acting; so, *Thou numbrest my steps*, thou tellest my moral motions, the actings of my soul and body, what I do, and what I think;

Observas me ne unquam lateant peccata. Aug. *Quoties peccavi id diligentissimè notasti.* Mer.

Dost

Dost thou not watch over my sin? And again (*Chap.* 31.4.) *Doth not he see my wayes, and count all my steps?* That is, how my converſation is ordered, both toward himſelf, and toward my neighbour? Thus the Lord counteth all our ſteps, we cannot ſtep aſide, or tread awry, but he obſerves us. There are two that keep a record of our lives.

Firſt, God, he followeth us up and down, as with Pen, Ink, and Paper, to write our actings.

Secondly, Our own conſciences (which are as God within us) keep a record too, they write our lives, and count our ſteps. Many cannot read the book of conſcience, and ſo know little that is in it: But a time will come (if conſcience be not purged by the blood of Chriſt) when they ſhall perfectly read all their ſins in the book of conſcience. And if conſcience, which is Gods Deputy, then, much more God, who is the Judge of conſcience, marketh us if we ſin. God needs not judge upon information, but upon his own obſervation. He will reprove every man whom he doth not pardon; And is able to ſet before us in order, whatſoever any of us have done. How then do ſome ſay, *That God ſeeth not ſin in his Children? Job* ſaith, that God marked his ſin; but according to this doctrine, he ſhould rather have ſaid, *if I ſin, thou doſt not mark me.* Some through ignorance ſin, and ſee it not, ſin and perceive it not; but no man (among all the multitudes of men) can ſin unſeen, or unperceived by God. *If I ſin, then thou markeſt me.*

And thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

לא תנקני *Non purges me ut ſim immunis ab omni peccato*

Will not the Lord acquit? Why have we a Goſpel then? What's the buſineſs of mercy? And where's the efficacy of Chriſts blood? Doth not this purchaſe, and do not they offer acquittances from iniquity? The words are interpreted three wayes.

Firſt, That *Job* ſpeaks from his unbelief, as if he could not ſee pardon through the thick cloud of his troubles, or have any evidence, that God had mercy in ſtore for him, while he endured ſuch plenty of miſeries.

Secondly, That he ſpake thus, upon a ſuppoſition of impenitency; As if he had ſaid, If I ſin and humble not my ſelf, thou wilt not acquit me.

Thirdly, That by *iniquity* he means his affliction, putting the cauſe for the effect: So, *Thou wilt not acquit me for mine iniquity*, is, Thou wilt not take away theſe afflictions, which are counted as the *proceed or iſſue* of mine iniquity.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *Sin is a debt.*

Every acquittance ſuppoſeth an obligation. All men, as creatures, are in a debt of duty to God; and when they fail in that, they are in a debt of penalty, as ſinners.

Secondly obſerve, *When ſin is pardoned, the ſinner is acquitted, his debt is taken off, and his bonds are cancelled.*

Pardon is our diſcharge, our *quietus eſt*, ſealed in the blood of Chriſt. All Proceſs at Law, or from the Law, is then prohibited: there's no more to be ſaid, or done againſt us.

Again, The word ſignifies to cleanſe and purge, as well as to acquit; Note from it,

That as ſin defileth the ſoul, ſo pardon cleanſeth it.

Purge me with Hyſop, and I ſhall be clean; waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter then Snow, was *David's* prayer for pardon after his great defilement, *Pſal.* 51.7. *If we confeſs our ſins, he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs*, 1 Joh. 1.9.

Fourthly, Foraſmuch as *Job* groaning under burdens of ſorrow, ſpeaks ſo often about the pardon of ſin, We learn,

That while ſin remaineth (to our ſence) unpardoned, the ſoul ſeeth no way to get out of ſorrows.

The removing of affliction is a ſign that ſin is forgiven, and the ſenſe of our forgiveneſs, is an argument that affliction ſhall be removed.

Fifthly, Taking the former words in conjunction with theſe, *If I ſin* (knowingly and wickedly, as they charge me) *Thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.* Obſerve,

That a perſiſting ſinner, is an unpardoned ſinner.

There is abundant mercy for returning ſinners, but I know of none for thoſe that reſolve to go on in ſin. There is a promiſe of repentance, and a promiſe to repentance, but there is no promiſe which doth not either offer or require repentance; *Repent, and thou ſhalt be ſaved*, is the tenor of the Goſpel, as well as *believe, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* Though many who are going on in their ſins, are overtaken by grace, yet there is no grace promiſed to thoſe who go on in their ſins. The holieſt are threatned with wrath, if they do; ſurely then, none are put into an expectation of mercy, if they do. The promiſes either find us repenting, or they cauſe us to repent. No ſinner is pardoned for repentance, nor without it. *Job* ſpeaks that language more clearly in the words following, which ſome make an expoſition of theſe.

Verſ. 15. **If I be wicked, Wo unto me.**

If I be wicked.] What it is to be wicked, hath been ſhewed, and the difference between a wicked man and a ſinner diſcovered, at *verſ.* 7. upon thoſe words, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked.*

Wo unto me.] The word is derived (ſaith one of the Rabbins) from a root ſignifying to *howl*: Great mourning is a kind of howling: and they who are in wo, are bid to howl (*Iſa.* 13.6. & 23.1. &c.) Wicked men howl rather then pray in their diſtreſs, becauſe of their extream worldly wo; *They have not cryed unto me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds*, Hoſ. 7.14.

אללי לי *ab* ילל *Ejulatu deducit Rab.* Moſ. Kimchi.

There are legal woes, and there are evangelical woes. The Law cries wo, and ſo doth the Goſpel: Goſpel woes are the worſer of the two; for if the Law ſay wo to us, the Goſpel may ſay mercy to us; but if the Goſpel ſay, wo to us (as it doth to hypocrites, who abuſe, and to unbelievers, who refuſe mercy) where ſhall we have mercy? All woes may be underſtood in this place, Law woes and Goſpel woes, temporal woes and eternal woes, *If I be wicked, then wo unto me.*

Hence obſerve, *Wo is the portion of wicked men.*

Though they laugh, yet wo is their portion, yea they are therefore threatned with wo, becauſe they laugh (*Luke* 6.25.) *Wo unto you that laugh now, for ye ſhall mourn and weep.* Some wicked men are as merry, as if mercy were their peculiar. But we may ſay to their mirth, What doth it? Or if we ſhould ask them, What they do to make themſelves ſo merry: *David* will reſolve us what their courſe is (*Pſal.* 36.2.) *The wicked flattereth himſelf in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful.* He that would be flattered, ſhall never want a flatterer; for if none will do it, he will do it himſelf. He ſpeaks well of himſelf, and therefore he thinks all's well. But uſually he hath ſome others ready enough to ſpeak well of him too. The true Prophets complained of the falſe for *crying peace, peace, when there was no peace*; for ſaying all is well, when they ſhould ſay all is wo. But though wicked men flatter themſelves, and though they get their neighbours to flatter them, yea though Miniſters flatter them, yet God will not flatter them; and at laſt their own conſciences will not flatter them neither. Conſcience will preach them a Sermon of woes at laſt, though poſſibly it hath been ſilent through ignorance, or ſilenc'd through malice for a long time.

As all the promiſes of grace and mercy, hang over the heads of the godly and ſincere; which way ſoever they go, a cloud of bleſſings drops and diſtils upon them. So clouds of wrath and blood hang over the heads of wicked men, dropping upon them, yea dropping upon them when they ſuppoſe the Sun ſhineth upon them.

Secondly, Conſider who ſpeaks this; *If I* (ſaith *Job*) *be wicked, then wo unto me.*

Hence obſerve, That, *A godly man may put the worſt caſes to himſelf.*

The Scripture puts ſuch caſes to godly men, therefore they may put ſuch to themſelves (*Rom.* 8.13.) *If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die*, ſaith the Apoſtle, writing to the Saints.

Saints. Though such a supposition cannot be resolved into this position, *A godly man shall die*, yet the supposition is true, If he liveth after the flesh he shall die. So the Apostle of himself, and his fellow-Apostles, yea of the Angels; *If we or an Angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, then that which we have preached, let him be accursed* (Gal. 1.9.) And as *Paul* prophesied a curse upon any, either Apostle or Angel, who should preach a false Gospel; so a *wo* upon himself, if he should neglect to preach the true Gospel, 1 *Cor.*9.16. They who are above all curses, may be threatned with a curse. And they who shall certainly be preserved from doing that which inevitably brings the curse, may be told of a curse in case they should do it.

They put dangerous suppositions opposite to these, who say, *Let a godly man be never so wicked, yet it shall be well with him; let him sin as much as he will, yet it shall be well with him.* The Spirit of God never puts such suppositions. As the Scripture speaks often to perswade; so sometimes to terrifie the godly from sin, but never a tittle which may be an encouragement to sin. It speaks much to keep up their hearts in an assurance of pardon, in case they fall into sin, and much more to keep down their corruptions, and to preserve them from falling into sin. Though there be a truth in it, that how much so ever a godly man sinneth, he shall be pardoned; yet the Scripture useth no such language, and the form of wholsom words teacheth every man rather to speak thus, *If I be wicked, then wo unto me.*

If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.

These words stand in an elegant opposition against the former. Here are persons and states opposite: persons, *The wicked and the righteous*; *If I be wicked, if I be righteous:* states, *Wo, and lifting up the head*; *If I be wicked, then wo unto me*; *If I be righteous, then will I not lift up mine head.* He doth not say, If I be righteous I shall be happy, though that be a truth, but (which was more sutable to his purpose) *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head.*

Some put this into a *dilemma*, or double argument, by which *Job* would aggravate the greatness of his affliction; As if he had said, *Let me look which way I will, my case is very sad, if I be wicked then wo be to me*; *If I be righteous, yet I am so full of sorrows, that I am not able to hold up my head*; But I rather interpret this latter part of the verse, as a description of *Job's* humility, in the best of his spiritual estate, then as any aggravation of the ilness of his temporal estate.

If I be righteous.] He speaks not as if he doubted whether he were righteous or no. *Job* had shewed the setledness of his spirit in that assurance more then once before, but he puts the best of his case, to shew how low he was in his own thoughts, when he was at best. There is a twofold righteousness; First, Of Justification. Secondly, Of Sanctification, of sincerity or uprightness: and so his meaning is, Suppose I am such, as I have asserted my self to be, and as God himself hath testified me to be, perfect and upright, yet *I will not lift up my head*; Some read I cannot, others, I dare not lift up my head.

I will not lift up my head.] Not lift up thy head, *man*, if thou wert righteous? Why, who in the world shall lift up their heads if the righteous shall not? Are their any that have such cause to lift up their heads as they? He might say indeed, If I were rich, or if I were honourable, yet I will not lift up my head; these are things which cannot, and therefore should not lift up any mans spirit an inch from the ground: but to say, If I were righteous, I would not lift up my head, seems a degradation or an abasement of righteousness. To clear this, I shall open the phrase a little.

To lift up the head of another man, is to advance him. Thus *Pharaoh lifted up the head of his chief Butler*, Gen. 40.13. And the King of *Babylon lifted up the head of* Jehojakin *King of* Judah, *and brought him forth out of prison*, Jer. 52.21. In this sence *David* calls God, *The lifter up of his head*, Psal. 3.3.

To lift up our own heads, is to prevail, and to get above pressing evils victoriously, *Judg.* 8.28. *Thus was* Midian *subdued before the children of* Israel, *so that they lifted up their heads no more*; That is, *Gideon* routed and made so compleat a conquest over the *Midianites*, that they were totally broken, and could no more insult over *Israel*. The victory of Christ over all our spiritual enemies, is thus described, *Psal.*110.7. *He shall drink of the brook in the way*; that is, of the waters of affliction and sorrow, which either the wrath of God, or the rage of men gave him to drink, while he was in the way of perfecting the work of our Redemption; and because he shall do this, *Therefore shall he lift up his head*, that is, he shall prevail by his passion, and overcome by dying, yea, he shall overcome death by a triumphant Resurrection.

Again, There is a two-fold lifting up of the head; First, A lifting up of the head with joy and consolation (*Luke* 21. 28.) Secondly, A lifting up of the head with pride and ostentation, *Psal.* 83.2. *Lo thine enemies make a tumult, and they that hate thee have lift up the head*; that is, they have proudly boasted and vaunted themselves. The latter is *Job's* sence, *If I be righteous, I will not lift up my head* in pride; he might and he did lift up his head in joy, because he knew himself righteous.

Attollere caput notat gaudium & fiduciam. Coc.

Once more, There is a lifting up of our heads in our selves, and a lifting up of our heads in Christ. *Job* disclaims the former here, but he all along assumes the latter. We cannot lift up our heads too high, in the thoughts of Free Grace, nor hang them down too low, in the thought of our own Works.

Further, While *Job* saith, *I will not lift up my head*, he meaneth less then he speaketh. In Scripture there is sometimes less expressed then is intended, and sometimes more. That of the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 15.58.) *Your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*, rises in sence higher then the expression; our labour in the Lord shall not only not be in vain, but abundantly advantageous. This of *Job*, *I will not lift up my head*, falls in sence below his expression, for his meaning is, I will abase my self before God, I will be so far from priding my self, or walking (as the daughters of *Jerusalem* are described by the Prophet, *Isa.* 3.16.) with a *stretched forth neck*; that I will rather hang down my head.

Non levabo caput h. e. demisso capite ac mente coram te ambulabo.

To hang or hold down the head, in Scripture noteth humbling and sorrow; when Christ bids his people lift up their heads, with joy, because the time of their Redemption was drawing nigh; it implied that their heads would hang down with sorrow, while that Redemption was further off. The Jewish fasts are described (in part) by this posture of sorrow (*Isa.* 58.5.) *Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bull-rush?* Times of fasting are times of mourning, and then (it seems) they used to hang down the head, as a sign of mourning.

Miseri & infœlices capite demisso, & in terram dejecto ambulant. Sanct.

Hence observe, *That a godly man how upright and holy soever he is, walks humbly with God.*

The more holiness any soul hath, the more humility it hath. Humility is a great part of our holiness; much more then is it an argument of holiness. The Pharisee (*Luke* 18.) who thought that he was righteous, lifted up his head full high, he would not lose an inch of his commendation, and therefore commends himself. He is his own reporter of what he had done, and who he was; but the poor Publican durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, his spirit hung down as well as his head, yet he was the righteous man, and went home justified rather then the other. It is the scope and design of the Gospel to make and keep us humble. God hath set up the way of saving us by faith, that he might take away boasting, and that no flesh might glory in his sight.

Secondly, If *Job* would not lift up his head, though righteous, what shall we judge of those, who lift up and carry their heads so high, though they are wicked? There is no reason any man should be proud of his goodness; what a madness then it is for wicked men to be proud of, or in their naughtiness!

Thirdly, Though *Job* was very thankful for, and joyful in, yet he durst not lift up his head, or be proud of the white robes and costly raiment of imputed righteousness: What then shall we say of them, who are proud of the dirty rags and filthy raiment of their own inherent righteousness? A godly man walketh tremblingly, lest he should offend, therefore he saith, *If I am wicked wo unto me!* and he walketh humbly, when he doth not offend, there-

therefore he saith, though I am righteous, yet I will not hold up my head. *Job* hath often breathed out the humility of his soul in former passages, therefore I shall not insist upon it here.

I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction.

Saturitas hæc respicit animæ ventriculũ, qui tantã arumnarum copiã vix potuit concoquere. Pined.

I am full.] That is, my mind is full. The spirit hath a stomach, or a capacious vessel for the receiving either of good or evil, of joy or sorrow. *Job's* spirit had received in as much evil and sorrow as ever it could hold, and more then he could well digest.

קלון קלה *Quod est cremare, ignominia enim efficit pudorem, qui est πύρωσις in corde, & in vultu sicut ignis. Erubescentes vultus habent flammantes.* Sanct.

I am full of confusion.] The word signifies shame and burning heat, because shame appeareth with a burning heat or blush in the face, which is also called confusion of face. Blushing puts the face into a flame. Some take confusion here for shame, rendering the Text, *I am full of shame*, or of ignominy: which ignominy might arise two wayes; Either from that reproach which his friends cast upon him, while they branded him for a wicked man, and an hypocrite; *I am full of reproach*, so full, that I might justly be ashamed, yea confounded, if I were such as they describe me. Or from that reproach which his afflictions cast upon him. Poverty is no shame to a begger, who was born poor; but poverty is a shame to a man who hath been rich, and lived in honour. The original word holds this forth most properly, being opposed to that which signifies weightiness and honour, because honour is a weighty thing, as this signifies lightness and shame, because shame is a light thing, or a thing of nought.

Our Translators rendering the word *confusion*, seem to intend somewhat else besides *shame*.

Confusion notes a disorder, and an uncomposedness of spirit. When a man knows not what to do, or whose counsel to follow. When a man cannot make up his thoughts, or bring them to any issue: When the mind is like a skain of ravell'd silk which will neither wind nor draw, then we are in confusion. And this I conceive was it, which *Job* chiefly intends, when he saith, *I am full of confusion.*

Hence observe, *Great sorrows distract the mind, and bring a man to his wits end.*

While we suffer much, we scarce know what to do. Trouble upon the sensitive part, troubles the understanding. Confusion upon our estates, makes a confusion in our minds. It is very hard to keep our spirits in order, while our houses and business are out of order: every affliction makes some confusion without us: and it is exceeding rare if affliction make not much confusion within us. I (saith *Job*) *am full of confusion.*

עני *Est imbecillitas, maximè quæ est à majore vi vim supprimente, statũ miserum cum succumbentia notat.*

See thou mine affliction.] There is a two-fold sight of affliction; First, by a bare intuition, discerning it. Secondly by a gracious compassion, delivering us from it. The former sight God always hath of all our afflictions; neither our sins, nor our sorrows can be hidden from him. The latter he sometimes suspends, and will not see, what he cannot but see. He will not see so as to relieve, what he cannot but see so as to observe. It is this second kind of sight, which *Job* entreats and prayes for here; *See thou my affliction*; that is, pity me in my affliction.

The word which we render affliction noteth weakness, and casting down, or that weakness which ariseth from casting down, an oppressing affliction, which like some great weight lies heavy upon us.

Videt vexationem homo qui vexatur videt Deus qui eam respicit & propitius est. Drus.

There are different readings; some thus, *I am filled with affliction, and see my sorrows.* The *Chaldee* thus, *I will satiate my self with shame, and I will see my affliction.* Man seeth his affliction by feeling it. Sight which is the chief sense, is put for any sense. And so the meaning is, Though I am righteous, yet I cannot hold up my head, or take any comfort, because I am so full of confusion, and see so much affliction; As if he had said, *Can a man at the same time mourn and rejoyce? Can a man lift up his head, while he hath such a load upon his heart?*

Hence observe, *They who see much affliction, can hardly take in any consolation.*

Come to a godly man, under great outward or inward troubles; tell him of the love of God, of the pardon of sin, of an inheritance among the Saints in light, as his portion; you can hardly fasten any of these things upon him: sorrow within, keeps comfort out. As till sin be cast out we cannot act holily: so till worldly sorrow, or the excess of godly sorrow be cast out, we cannot act joyfully. The Saints in a right posture of spirit, are joyous in all their tribulations; and Christ is able to make consolations abound, as tribulation doth abound; yet where there is abundance of tribulation, consolation is usually very scarce. Drops will hardly be received, where Rivers are offered and poured forth.

Satis habeat ignominiæ, & vide impotentiam meam. Coc.

Another reading of the word, representeth *Job* bespeaking God in prayer, mixed with complaining; *If I were righteous, yet cannot I lift up my head: be thou satisfied with confusion, and behold my affliction.* So Mr. *Broughton.* As if *Job* had said, *Let it be enough, Lord, let it now suffice, give me some ease, that I may lift up my head a little before I lay it down for altogether.* Thus *David* prayed (*Psal.* 39. 11, 12.) *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth; surely every man is vanity; O spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence, and be no more.* When *Nehemiah* was humbling himself, and confessing his sin, and the sin of that people, he concludes according to this interpretation, (*Chap.* 9. 32.) *Let not all the trouble seem little before thee that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, and on our Priests, and on all thy People*; as if he had said, Lord, consider that now we have been greatly punished, though we have been punished less then our sins deserve. Thou maist justly inflict more, but we are not able to endure more.

Thirdly, We read imperatively, *Therefore see thou mine affliction:* So his meaning is, Lord, take notice of my sad condition, I am full of trouble.

Rectius in imperativo, q. d. vide Domine quo sim statu, tũ cognosces ita esse ut dico. Merc.

Hence observe, *That when sorrows are come to a great height it is time for us to pray, that God would cast a compassionate eye upon them.*

When we are past the cure and help of man, we are fittest objects for God. When the pressures of the people of *Israel* were greatly encreased in *Egypt*, then the Lord himself saith, *I have seen, I have seen* (Exod. 3. 7.) and when affliction is boyl'd up to the height, then let us say, *See Lord, see Lord.* When the rage and blasphemy of *Rabshakeh*, both by speaking and writing, reached even unto heaven; *Then* Hezekiah *went and spread the letter before the Lord,* (2 King. 19. 14.) As if he had said, *Lord, do thou read this letter, Lord, bow down thine ear and hear, Lord, behold and see, we are full of confusion, see thou our affliction.* And when the enemies of the Jews in *Nehemiah's* time fell to scoffing and jearing the work they had in hand, and them in the work, then that zealous Governour puts it unto God, *Hear, O our God, for we are despised.*

Secondly, Note, *That when our afflictions are at the highest and greatest, then the Lord is able to master and subdue them.*

I am full of confusion, see thou mine affliction; As if he had said, It is in vain for me to shew my diseases and my wounds to creatures, but I know I am not past thy cure, though I come thus late; or thus, I have shewed my wounds and my diseases to the creature, I have made my moan to men, but they cannot help: Now I bring them unto thee, *O see my affliction.* All our ruines may be under the hand of God, he hath bread and cloathing for us, he can be our healer, when none can either in Heaven or Earth.

Lastly observe, *When our afflictions are at the highest, then usually God comes to deliver.*

When the waters of affliction swell over the banks, and threaten a deluge, then God turns the stream; when our sores fester and are ready to gangrene, then God applies his balsom. He seldom appears in a business which others can do, or undertakes that which is mans work. As in the sore travel of women in child-bearing, other helpers undertake it not, till (as they speak) it be past *womans work*; so God seldom meddles eminently (he acts alwayes concomitantly) till our deliverance is past *mans work*, that so the whole praise of the work may be his. When danger is upon the growing hand, then desire God to take deliverance

rance in hand; then pray, and pray earnestly, that God would see your afflictions, when you perceive them to be increasing afflictions; so it follows in the next verse, *See thou mine affliction.*

Verse 16. **For it increaseth; Thou huntest me as a fierce Lion, and again thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.**

This Verse with the next, are an elegant and pathetical description of *Job*'s yet growing and prevailing sorrows; for having closed verse 15. with an Assertion and a Petition, *I am full of confusion, therefore see thou mine affliction*; he presseth and pursueth both in these words, *For it increaseth; Thou huntest me as a fierce Lion.*

גאה *In bonum, elevatur, eminuit; in malum, intumuit, superbiit; de inanimatis, crevit, auctus fuit.*

For it increaseth.] Mr. *Broughton* renders, *How it fleeth up!* The Hebrew word is taken sometimes in a good, and sometimes in an ill sence. In a good sence it signifies to be lifted up, or be eminent in excellency. In an ill sence, it signifies to be lifted up or exalted with pride. The word is applied also to things without life, and then it signifies to augment by addition or increase.

The Vulgar takes it in that ill sence, as noting pride and high-mindedness, translating by the Nown, thus, *For pride thou dost catch me as a Lion*; or thou dost *hunt me as a Lion, because I am proud.* A Lion is a stout creature, and may be an emblem of pride.

Another gives a sence near that. *When it lifteth up it self, then thou huntest me as a fierce Lion.* When what lifteth up it self? When my head lifteth up it self; he had said in the former verse, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head; for if I do lift up my head in pride, then thou wilt hunt me as a fierce Lion*; I shall be sure to smart for every proud thought and high imagination. Both these Translations render the meaning of *Job* thus, *If I should plead my own righteousness and innocency before thee, as thinking therein to lift up my head, and so should wax confident in my self, I shall presently pay for it; for I perceive that thou art preparing thine instruments against me, as men do against fierce Lions and wild savage beasts, to hunt, catch and destroy me.* Here is a truth in *thesi*, *God doth resist the proud*: If any head lifteth it self up against God, God can quickly lay such an head as low as the ground. But in *Hypothesi*, or in *Job*'s case, I cannot consent to it, as a truth suting this Text.

A third Translation puts it by an Interrogation; *I am full of confusion, see thou mine affliction; Can it be lifted up?* That is, Can my head be lifted up, when I am so full of sorrow and confusion? Whatsoever my righteousness is, I am not in case now to stand upon it; 'tis no time for me to talk great words: Can I lift up mine head when thou pressest me with such a weight of affliction? *Great afflictions will keep down the greatest spirits, or break them down.* Affliction will make the stoutest heart stoop, and the highest head to bow.

But take the word according to our reading, as it refereth to his afflictions; *it increaseth*, that is my affliction increaseth, and so a double exposition is given.

First, As if *Job* had spoken his wish or his desire; *I am* (said he before) *full of confusion, see thou mine affliction. O that mine affliction might increase, and that I might be fuller of confusion! O that my troubles might be strengthened upon me; and that I might be weak enough to see an end of my troubles! I am yet too strong for death; O that thou wouldest quickly dispatch me! more weight, deeper wounds, harder blows would be welcome.* As if here again *Job* had assumed and renewed that complaining desire mentioned (*chap.* 6. 7, 8.) *O that I might have my request! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!* (What was that?) *Even that it would please God to destroy me, that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off.* But I shall let this pass; *Job* hath spoken these wishes plainly, and in the Letter too often; I will not charge him with another from a questionable interpretation.

Rather take the words declaratively, not for a wish of greater future afflictions, but for a manifestation of the greatness of his present afflictions; so we express them; *I am full of confusion, see thou mine affliction, for it increaseth.* This is a clear and a fair sence: *Job* intending to describe his estate more fully, sheweth it still upon the encrease, waxing worse and worse, greater and greater. As if he had said, mine are a pile or heap of afflictions, and still more are piled up and heaped on.

There is an elegancy in it, as taken in the other sence, for pride or lifting up. See my affliction, *it waxeth proud.* For as the waves of the Sea are called proud waves, when they swell and encrease; so an affliction encreasing and swelling, may be called a proud affliction. Some afflictions, like a great Sea, rise above us, and stand over us; or like a cruel Master, domineer and insult upon us. *Job*'s afflictions were proud ones, they came upon him with a kind of authority, as if they would lay him at their very feet. Hence observe,

Effert sese afflictio mea. Elegantiâ autem figura dicit, quod sese efferat. Elationem & superbiam morbo & dolori tribuit, cum totum hominẽ possideat. Mer

They who have endured very great afflictions, may yet find their afflictions greatning and encreasing.

He had said before, *I am full of confusion*; and yet here he saith, *My affliction encreaseth.* When we think we have as much as our backs can bear, yet (possibly) more weight may be laid on. When we hope our affliction is upon the declining hand, that those waters are upon an ebb, and the fire slacking, then they may flow higher, and the furnace may be heated seven times hotter then before. The Lord threatneth obstinate and rebellious sinners (*Lev.* 26.) *I will punish you yet seven times more for your sins.* Though I have brought such calamities upon you, that ye have been ready to say, surely now God hath done his worst, we are in as bad a case as we can be; no, saith the Lord (who hath infinite wisdom to find out wayes of afflicting, as well as of shewing mercy) *I will punish you yet seven times more for your sins; no man knows how much more God can punish him*: His judgments in the executing of them, as well as in the laying of them, are past finding out. We know not the beginning of them, neither do we know when they will end. Now as the Lord afflicteth some seven times more for the punishment of their sins, so others seven times more for the trial of their Graces. Sufferings are sent in perfection, to make us more perfect through sufferings. Afflictions swell with pride, to abate the swelling of our pride, or to shew how those swellings are abated into humility. God hath unsearchable riches and treasures of chastenings, as well as of wrath or of love. And as when we think we have received as much mercy as God can give us, he can yet give us more, and make our mercies sevenfold greater to our apprehensions then before; so also he can dispense himself in the matter of affliction.

For it increaseth.] This increase is set forth by an elegant similitude. Though similitudes prove nothing, yet they much illustrate what is already proved.

Thou huntest me as a fierce Lion.

Thou huntest me as the ramping Shakal: So Mr. *Broughton.* The word *Shakal*, signifies a fierce assaulting Lion; or, as we speak, a *Lion rampant.* Some translate a *Lioness*, others a *Leopard*, spoken of in the fourth Chapter. We may take it in general for any fierce, cruel and savage beast, of the one kind or of the other.

Thou huntest me as a fierce Lion.] For *Thou*, some render (*It*) referring to his affliction; *For it increaseth, and it hunts me* (my affliction hunteth me) *as a fierce Lion.* Sorrows are compared to a fierce Lion. Afflictions hunt and follow, they tear and destroy like a wild beast. *Like a Lion, or like the young Lion, roaring on his prey* (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 45.) *when a multitude of shepherds is called out against him* (Christ is compared to such a Lion there) *will not be afraid of their voyce, nor abase himself for the noise of them.* Such were the afflictions of distressed, despised *Job*, they braved him to his very face, and would not withdraw or turn away from him, notwithstanding all the outcries and loudest lamentations which he made against them.

Effert se dolor meus ut Leo, nequaquam cedens. Merc.

Secondly, The comparison is laid between the Lion and *Job*; *Thou huntest me as if I were a Lion*: So divers of the Ancients, and the *Septuagint* understand it: *I am taken or catched like a Lion*: As if *Job* had said, *Lord, thou usest me as a wild beast, thou huntest me as thou wouldest hunt a Lion or a Bear, thou settest thy nets and toils, thou makest snares and pits* (as *Nimrods* do in the hunting of Lions and other wild beasts) Thou dealest with me as if there were no taking, no taming of me, but by severest and roughest wayes: Thou dealest with me, as if in my prosperity I had been

Capior sicut Leo ad occisionem. Sept. *Tendis mihi & expandis rete, no sicus ac ad feram capiendam.* Rab. Sil.

Quidam referunt ad prioris status felicitatem; nam serpens & imperiosum animal Leo est, regisque potentiæ symbolum.

like

like a fierce Lion, oppressing and preying upon the poor; or, as if in my affliction I had provoked thee to resolve, that thou wilt never leave off to afflict me, till thou hast destroyed me; *Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lion*: How are they hunted? Lions are not usually hunted to be preserved, 'tis rare to hunt Lions so, but because they are hurtful and destroying creatures, therefore they are hunted that they may be destroyed, and do no more hurt; as if he had thus expressed himself, Thou, Lord, seemest to adjudge me not only as an unuseful and unserviceable creature, but also as a dangerous and a noxious creature, as a *natural brute beast made to be taken and destroyed* (2 Pet. 2. 12.) yet I cannot assent that *Job* (though under the darkness of a sore temptation) had such dark thoughts of God, as if he had no other end in afflicting him, but to make an end of him.

Non caplor ad vitam, ut animalia quæ ſolent haberi in deliciis. Bold.

I rather expound him in a third sence, that the comparison is made between God and the Lion; *Thou, O God, like a Lion, dost hunt me.* Consent of Scripture is clearest for this interpretation, which often represents God in afflicting his people, under the notion of a Lion, as will appear in the proof of the observation arising from it; which is,

That, *The Lord seemeth sometimes to put off all his pity and compassion towards his people.*

So the Church complains (*Lam.* 3. 10.) *He was unto me as a Bear lying in wait, and as a Lion in secret places.* God threatned by the Prophet *Hosea* (chap. 5. 14.) *I will be unto* Ephraim *as a Lion, and as a young Lion to the house of* Judah; *I, even I will tear and go away.* I will afflict them fiercely and terribly. Again (*Hos.* 13. 7.) *I will be unto them as a Lion, as a Leopard by the way, will I observe them.* *Hezekiah* speaks the same Language (*Isa.* 38. 13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lion, so will he break all my bones.* As when man dealeth cruelly with his brother, he is a Wolf to him, or a Lion to him (*Psal.* 17. 12.) Man acting of beastly lusts, is all the metamorphosis or change of men into beasts, which Heathen Poets have so much fancied, or the Holy Scriptures so often mentioned. Now, I say, as man acting cruelly upon man, is called a Lion, so also is God. When God would shew the abatements of his wrath, then he saith, *I am God, and not man* (Hos. 11. 89) *How shall I give thee up* Ephraim? &c. Thus he debates, by and by he votes and resolves negatively, *I will not execute the fierceneſs of mine anger; I will not return to destroy* Ephraim; *for I am God, and not man.* But when he would shew the highest workings of his wrath, then he denies to shew himself so much as man: Thus old *Babylon* and *Chaldea* are terrified (*Isa.* 47. 1.) *Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin Daughter of* Babylon, *&c.* Why so? *Babylon* had set so long upon the Throne, that she knew not how to think of sitting in the dust; yet she must: for (*verſ.* 3.) *I will take vengeance, and will not meet thee as a man.* How then? I will meet thee as if I were a beast, or a Lion; Thou shalt find no kind of humanity at all from me, not only not the kindnesses and mercies of a God, but not so much as the kindness and mercy of a man. Thus the Lord met with that Literal *Babylon*, and so at last he will meet with Mystical *Babylon.* And as he will be to all his proud enemies, a destroying and devouring Lion; so he appeareth often to his own people; he saith even to *Jeruſalem*, and to *Zion*, I will not meet you as a man, when *you are carnal and walk as men.* The usual dealings of God with his people are full of compassion; *In measure (peck-peck) when it ſhooteth (or when thou ſendeſt it) forth, thou wilt debate with it; He ſtayeth his rough wind in the day of the Eaſt-wind* (Isa. 27. 8.) He will not bluster against and storm his people, when their enemies storm against them; he also measures out their afflictions, and marks what is fit and proportionate to their strength, and for their good, as a Physitian measures and weighs all the ingredients which he mingles in a potion for his sick Patient: so the next words intimate; *By this therefore shall the iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin.* Yet at another time he afflicteth without measure, as if he intended to kill rather then to cure, and to take away their lives, rather then to take away their sins. I grant his greatest afflictions are as exactly measured and weighed as the least. God knows to an hairs breadth, the length and breadth, and to a grain, the weight and burden of the longest, broadest and weightiest affliction; but when he afflicts greatly, he is said to afflict without measure, because things unmeasurable, or which cannot easily be measured, are very great. And if ever the Lord afflicted any of his (in this sence) without measure, surely he afflicted *Job* so, who thus cries out, *Thou hunteſt me like a fierce Lion.*

And again thou ſheweſt thy ſelf marvellous (or wonderful) upon me.

Again.] We render it as an *Adverb*; others, as a *Verb*, *Thou returneſt, and ſheweſt thy ſelf wonderful upon me.* The sence is the same in both, noting the continued or repeated acts of his affliction. Thou art still wonderful against me. As if *Job* had said, *Lord, thou no sooner ceaſeſt, but thou beginneſt again; thou no sooner takeſt off thy hand, but I feel it again; if thou graunteſt me a little breathing, and withdraweſt from me, thou returneſt again; if thou giveſt over the chaſe a while, thou purſueſt it again with as loud a cry, with as fierce aſſaults as ever; my sorrows know no intermiſſion, my pains know not only no period, but no pauſe, I have ſtorm upon ſtorm, grief upon grief, here much and there much, I am alwayes and every where again afflicted, though already half-dead with affliction.* Hence observe,

וחשב *Et rediis, licet aliquantiſper remittas, tamen ſtatim redis, &c. Una vice poſt aliam.* Ab. Ezr. *Iterum iterumque oſtendis miranda tua facta in me.* Druſ. In me *non caret emphaſi, q. d. in me jam ſemel, mortuo & pene confecto.* Merc.

God doth often renew the ſame, or ſend new afflictions upon his choiceſt ſervants.

One would think that light should follow darkness, and day succeed the night, that though sorrow continue all the night, yet joy should come in the morning, that after wounding; we should have healing, and after sickness, health. So they promised themselves (*Hos.* 6. 1.) *Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up.* Yet many have felt wounding after wounds, and smiting after blows; darkness hath went after darkness, and their sorrow hath had a succession of greater sorrows. It was a special favour to *Paul*, when *Epaphroditus* was restored (*Phil.* 2. 27.) *He was ſick nigh unto death, but* (saith he) *God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me alſo*; and why? *Leſt I ſhould have ſorrow upon ſorrow.* God would not do what some of his enemies thought to do, *add affliction to his bonds*; therefore he healed *Paul*'s helper, and kept him alive, in whom he so much delighted. *Sorrow upon ſorrow is a mournful bearing, and yet many a precious Saint hath born that coat.* The promise to the Church is, *That her peace ſhall be as a River, and her proſperity as the waves of the Sea* (Isa. 66. 12.) When the Church shall come to her full beauty, and attain a perfect restauration, then her peace shall be a continued peace, she shall have peace upon peace, everlasting successions of peace; a River being supplied and fed with a constant stream, the waters that flow to day, will flow again to morrow; peace like a river is *peace, peace*, or perpetual peace. *Sions* peace shall not be as a *Land-flood*, soon up, and as soon down again; but as a *River*: and (which yet heightens it) *her proſperity ſhall be as the waves of the Sea.* If the wind do but stir upon the face of the Sea, you shall have wave upon wave, waves rolling and riding one upon the back of another. Such shall be the prosperity of *Zion* on earth for a time, and such it will be for ever in heaven; there peace shall be as a river to eternity, and prosperity as the waves of the Sea, joy upon joy, and comfort upon comfort, riding and rolling one upon the back of another. As it shall be thus with the peace of the Church at last, so it may be with the afflictions of the Church or of any member of the Church at present. Their afflictions may be as a river, and their sorrows as the waves of the Sea, coming on again and again, renewed as often as abated.

Again thou ſheweſt thy ſelf wonderful, or *marvellous againſt* or *upon me.* Both rendrings are consistent with the Original.

פלא *Mirabilis ſis in me.*

Marvellous upon me.] That is, Thou dost not punish or afflict me in an ordinary way. Marvels are not every dayes work, thou takest a new, a strange course to try me; such afflictions as mine have no parallel, such have scarce been heard of, or recorded in the history of any Age. Who hath heard of such a thing as this? Thou seemest to design me as a president to posterity, or to shew in my example what thou canst do upon a creature; *Thou ſheweſt thy ſelf marvellous upon me.* As *Moses* saith concerning *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, when they murmured and murinied against

Mirificum ſit ſpectaculum homo, qui tam diva patitur tam conſtanti invitoq; animo.

against him and against *Aaron*, *If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me; but if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, then*, &c. The Lord to manifest his extream displeasure against those mutiniers, did (as it were) devise a new kind of death for them; *If these men die the common or the ordinary death of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me.* These men have given a new example of sin, and surely God will make them a new example of punishment. *Job* speaks the same sence, *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me*, thou wilt not be satisfied in afflicting me after the rate or measure of other men: All the Saints should do some singular thing, and many of them suffer some singular thing. The Apostle assures his *Corinthians* (1 Cor. 10. 13.) *There hath no temptation taken you, but that which is common to man.* *Job* seems to speak the contrary. A temptation hath taken me, which is not common to man.

Further, These words, *Thou art marvellous upon me*, have reference to God who sent those afflictions, as well as unto the afflictions which he sent: As if he had said, Lord, thou actest now besides thy nature and thy custom: thou art merciful, and thou delightest in mercy; thou art good, and thou dost good; how or whence is it then, that thou art so fierce against me, and pourest out so many evils upon me? I could (not knowing thee as I do) have believed, though it had been told me, that thou wouldest have been so rigorous and incompassionate; if a professed enemy had done this, he had done like himself, and had been no wonder unto me; but now as thou hast afflicted me, till I am become a wonder unto many; so thou, O Lord, art become a wonder unto me, and to all who hear how thou hast afflicted me. Meek *Moses* made himself a wonder, when he broke out in anger. Every man is wondered at, when he doth that which he is not enclined to do, or not used to do. Is it not a wonder to see the patient God angry, the merciful God severe, the compassionate God inexorable? Thus, saith *Job*, *Thou shewest thy self marvellous upon me.* Hence observe,

First, That, *Some afflictions of the Saints are wonderful afflictions.*

As God doth not often send his people strange deliverances, and work wonders to preserve them, so he sends them many strange afflictions, and works wonders to trouble them. And as many punishments of sin upon wicked men, so some trials of Grace upon godly men, are very wonderful. The Lord threatneth the *Jews* (Deut. 28. 59.) That he would *make their plagues wonderful*, he would make strange work among them. And he saith of *Jerusalem*, *I will wipe it as a man wipeth a Dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down, or wiping it, and turning it upon the face thereof* (2 *Kings* 21. 13.) To see a great City handled like a little dish, or a strong Nation turned topsie-turvy (as we say) or the bottom upwards, is a strange thing. It is an ordinary thing to see Cups and Platters turned upside down, but it is not ordinary to see Kingdoms and Nations turned upside down. To wipe *Jerusalem* as a dish, was to do that which was never done before. Some expound that place of the frequency of affliction, that God would smite them again and again; as they that make clean a dish, wipe it over and over, that no filth may stay in it. The Seventy and the Vulgar translate, *I will blot out Jerusalem as they use to blot out a Table-book that is written all over*: He that hath a Table-book full of writing, and would write more, takes a cloth or a spunge, and blotteth out what was written; and that he may throughly wipe his Table-book, he rubs it often with his spunge, to get the Letter clear out. Thus God threatned to do with *Jerusalem*, *He would wipe or blot out* her golden Characters and honourable inscriptions, till nothing of *Jerusalem*, but her shame and her sin, should remain unblotted out. Was not the judgment brought upon *Jerusalem* a wonder? when the Prophet saith (*Lam.* 4. 12.) *The Kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world would not have believed it.* The Apostle speaks thus of his own, and of his fellow-Apostles afflictions (1 *Cor.* 4. 9.) *We are made a spectacle* (as upon a Theater) *unto the world, and to Angels, and to men.* All begin to wonder at us, what the matter is, what strange creatures we are, whom the Lord suffers to be thus used. The people of God are often a gazing-stock to the world, in regard of what they do, and not seldom in regard of what they suffer.

Delebo Jerusalem sicut deleri solent tabulæ. Vulg.

Θαῦμα ἐγένετο.

Secondly observe, That, *When God doth greatly afflict his own people, he goes out of his ordinary way.*

He shews himself marvellous or wonderful; a man is never marvelled at, when he goes his old pace in his old path. God loves to have his hand in the honey-pot, therefore it is strange to see him give his people a bitter cup to drink, or feeding them with wormwood or with gall. Judgment is the strange work of God (*Isa.* 28. 21.) *The Lord shall be wrath in the valley of* Gibeon, *that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.* And if every work of judgment be his strange work, a work he delighteth not to be conversant in, what then are great and sore judgments? Though the Lord be infinitely pleased in the executions of judgment, yet because (if a *more* may be conceived in infinity) he is more pleased with mercy; therefore judgment is called *his strange work, his strange act.* To see a Prince renowned for clemency and pity, passing a severe sentence, is a strange sight. We say he hath shewed himself marvellous, he hath gone both against his practice and his nature, his custom and his inclination. To see any man do what he useth not, hath somewhat of wonder in it; much more, to see God do so. When he taketh up his Rod, we begin to start; how much more, when he taketh up his sword, when he hunts those like a Lion, whom he dearly loveth, and uses those as wild beasts, who are his precious children? When he smites them with rigor, whom he carrieth in his own bosom? These, these are acts which represent him to admiration; as many acts of his power and mercy cause the Saints to cry out admiringly, yet joyfully, *Who is a God like unto thee?* So some acts of his visible severity cause others of them to cry out admiringly, yet sorrowfully, Why, O God, dost thou in appearance so unlike thy self?

Verse 17. **Thou renewest thy witnesses against me (or, thou bringest new witnesses against me) and increasest thine indignation upon me; changes and war are against me.**

This seventeenth verse is but a further amplification of what he had spoken before, setting forth the greatness and frequent returns of his trouble.

Thou renewest.] The first day of the Month is called *Chodesh* in the Hebrew, from the word here used, because then there was a *New Moon*, or a change of the Moon; so, *Thou renewest*, thou makest a change; I have many new Moons, but they are all and alwayes at *full* in sorrow; *Thou renewest*

Chodesh, *Novilunium primus dies mensis, quo quasi Luna innovatur.*

Thy witnesses.] The *Septuagint* saith, *thy examinations*; so it is an allusion to the trial of a Malefactor, who is examined by the Judge, and if he deals not plainly in confession, then his examination is renewed. Thus saith *Job*, Thou sendest (as it were) new examiners with more Articles and additional Interrogatories, as if I had concealed somewhat, and had not told thee my whole heart.

We translate (and so the word most properly beareth) *witnesses*; the sence is the same. As some Malefactors are often examined, so more evidence, and new witnesses are brought against them; though in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established, yet where there are more witnesses then two or three, there is more establishment.

Again, As they who are of a wrangling and unquiet disposition, will never sit down in a Suit, when by the examination of some witnesses, they have brought the matter to a trial, and are cast; yet this doth not satisfie them, they will have their Writ of Errour, and bring the matter about in another Court. Thus (saith *Job*) as if the Lord were resolved this Suit should never have an end, *He renewes his witnesses against me.* When I think all is concluded and agreed between us, I am as much to seek as ever; he brings all about again. So that after all my travel, I am as far from an end, as I was at the beginning; I am where I was, and am like to continue there; for I see the Lord *renewing his witness against me.*

Non tam videtur de instauratione plurium testium queri, quam de sententiæ ferendæ dilatione & mora. Pin.

The doubt is, what or whom he meaneth by these Witnesses?

Philippus à Lo.

One saith, These witnesses were Devils. Satan accused him at first, and he is not alone either in tempting or accusing, he can soon have a Legion to joyn with him in any design of wickedness. But I pass that opinion.

Secondly, Others say, The Witnesses were *Job*'s three Friends; they all testifie against him; *Eliphaz* began, and *Bildad* was his second, *Zophar* stood ready to follow; all against *Job*.

Pœna unius pœnitentiæ, quasi de statim decedente, aliam quasi secuturam tam efficaciter es. Coc.

Thirdly, By Witnesses, most (and they most clearly) understand his afflictions; *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes*, that is, thou bringest new troubles to testifie against me. When one affliction hath spoken at thy Bar against me, thou callest for the testimony of another, and of another, and when there will not be another, I know not, unless it be when I am not. When *Naomi* was become *Marah* (her former pleasures being turned into bitterness) she saith (*Ruth* 1. 21.) *The Lord hath teſtified againſt me.* *Job* is very expres in the point, at the sixteenth Chapter of this Book, *verse* 8. Which may be a Commentary upon this; *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, which is a witneſs againſt me; and my leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth witneſs to my face.* Afflictions bring in evidence, and testifie many wayes.

They sometimes witness for us, evidencing our Graces, our Faith, Patience, Sincerity and Submission to the hand of God; they are witnesses also of our Adoption or spiritual Sonship (*Heb.* 12. 8,) *If you be without chaſtiſement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Baſtards, and not Sons.* It is no good sign to be free from sufferings. *Hear ye the Rod*, saith the Prophet *Micah*; as we ought to hear it, calling us from sin; so we may hear it calling us as Sons. Chastenings speak our Priviledges, as well as our Duties.

They often witness against us;

First, That sin is seated in us, and hath been acted by us. If we had no sin, we should know no sorrow. Though some afflictions are not sent out directly against sin, yet every affliction is both a consequent and a testimony of remaining sin. The bundle of Rods at our backs, saith, there is folly and sin bound up in our hearts; and when once we are purged from sin, we shall hear no more of any affliction, of any rod. We shall be past suffering, as soon as we are past sinning.

Secondly, They are witnesses in special, of that great sin, the pride of our hearts and lives. If there were not swellings and impostumations of pride in our spirits, we should not feel such lancings. *Paul* himself acknowledges that they were growing upon him, if God had not taken a severe course to keep them down: *Leſt I ſhould be exalted above meaſure through the abundance of revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the fleſh, the meſſenger of Satan to buffet me* (2 *Cor.* 12. 7.) Hence afflictions are called humiliations, both because an afflicted person is humbled or laid low by the hand of God; as also, because afflictions are sent to humble and lay us low in our selves. Now, if one special business which affliction hath with us, be to humble us, then doubtless affliction witnesseth that there is pride in us. That which is sent to remove an evil, shews the presence of it.

Thirdly, They are witnesses, by bringing to our remembrance the acting of forgotten sins. Affliction is a help to memory. That which we forget we have done or spoken, witnesses coming in, make us remember; so also do our troubles. When the Brethren of *Joſeph* had been put in ward three dayes, and heard him demand one of them to be left as an hostage in prison till they brought *Benjamin*, this distress caused them to say, *We are very guilty concerning our Brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear, therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us* (*Gen.* 42. 21.) The guilt of that sin was about twenty years old, but they felt not the smart of it till themselves smarted for it; their imprisonment set their memories at liberty, and when they saw themselves in danger to become bondmen to the *Egyptians*, they had witness enough of their selling *Joseph* for a captive to the *Ishmaelites*.

Fourthly, Afflictions witness obstinacy and resolvedness in the wayes of sin, or that afflicted persons or Nations turn not for sin. Every wound will open its mouth as a witness, and every stroak will bring an evidence against the impenitent. The troubles which God brought upon *Ahaz*, witnessed emphatically (2 *Chron.* 28. 23.) *This is that King* Ahaz, *who in the time of his diſtreſs, did treſpaſs yet more againſt the Lord.* If we are not bettered by our distresses, our distresses testifie that we are naught; how much more when we are worse in our distress? As all good things which we have received, so all evils which we have suffered, will rise up in judgment against those who still continue evil.

Fifthly, Afflictions witness two things concerning God. First, That he hath an eye upon us, and care of us. He will not let us want any thing that is needful for us, no, not affliction. Due chastisement given a child, is an argument that his Father loveth him, and looks to him. Secondly, They are witnesses of Gods fatherly displeasure. Some say, God cannot be displeased with his Children, because his love is everlasting. But will any man say, A Father doth not love his Child because he corrects him? Yet a Father never correcteth his Child but when he is displeased with him: Parents may not strike unprovoked, and 'tis rare that God doth so. A man may be much displeased with, and much love the same person at the same time; and 'tis very usual for God to do so. Afflictions never testifie any the least hatred of God against his people, but they often testifie some, and sometimes great displeasure against his people.

Lastly, Afflictions upon the godly, are reckoned very sufficient and credible witnesses by the world, that either they are not godly, or that surely some great ungodliness hath been acted by them. How many precious men have been cast upon this evidence, for traytors and rebels against God? *Job*'s friends took this for proof enough that he was wicked. They could not be perswaded he was good, because he endured so many evils. As the High Priest cried out against Christ, *What further need have we of witneſſes? Behold now ye have heard his blaſphemy:* So said *Job*'s friends concerning him; What need have we of further witness? Behold we have seen his misery. What do these losses in his estate, and ruines upon his family? What do these sores upon his body, and sorrows upon his soul, but publish unto us (what he hath kept close and concealed) the prophaneness of his spirit, and the hypocrisie of his former profession? *Job* perceiving his friends making use all along of this proof, as of their chiefest and strongest *Medium*, might well complain to God, upon the renewal of every dayes affliction, *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſes againſt me.*

And encreaſeth thine indignation upon me, or, Thy indignation encreaſeth upon me.

In the beginning of the Verse, his own afflictions did increase, but here the indignation of God. Indignation is more grievous then affliction, and the indignation of God is the most grievous indignation.

The word signifies wrath, displeasure, fierce, fiery wrath, hot consuming displeasure. כעס

Increaſeth.] There is a double increase here noted. First, Extensive. Secondly, Intensive; an increase both in multitude and maghitude: As if he had said, I have more troubles in number, and more in weight. רב

Indignation is here put for the effects of indignation; neither the wrath, nor the love of God do ever encrease in him, but in their exertions, or in putting them forth towards us. Hence observe,

First, That, *A godly man may conceive himſelf under the indignation of God.*

The Church stoops to it (*Micah* 7. 9.) *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.*

Secondly observe, That, *The more we ſee of the indignation of God in any affliction, the ſorer is the affliction.*

As the love and smiles of God comfort the Saints more then all the outward comforts he heaps upon them; a little with much sensible love, is to us a huge mercy: So the disfavour and frowns of God troubles the Saints more then all the troubles which he heaps upon them. A little with much sensible disfavour, is to us a heavy cross. Let trouble increase, yet if displeasure abate, the spirit of man will bear and stand under it, though his flesh and outward man fall under it. Though the Furnace should be heated seven times hotter, yet if the Lord do

but

do but let down one beam or ray of his love into the ſoul, all that burning fire will be but like a warm Sun. But when the ſcorchings of indignation mingle with affliction, this is dreadful. *The anger of a fool* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is very heavy*; yet that is not ſo much as a feather to a milſtone, or a mountain, compared with the anger of God. And though believers are freed from that anger and indignation which he darts upon his enemies, yet they to ſenſe, yea and to their preſent opinion, may be dealt with as enemies. And though the indignation which God pours upon his own people, and that upon the wicked, be as different as their ſtates are; yet the one may be under as much temporary pain and ſorrow as the other is. For as an hypocrite may for a time taſte as much of the goodneſs of God, and feel as much joy in his ſervice, and ſometimes more, then a man who is godly and ſincere; ſo alſo may one who is godly and ſincere taſte more of the diſpleaſure of God for a time, and feel as much ſorrow in his ſufferings, and ſometimes more, then a wicked man.

Pœne militant in me. Vulg.

Job concludes with the ſame thing, in a different habit of words. *Changes and war are againſt me.* I have variety of afflictions, a multitude of afflictions, and afflictions in their ſtrength, theſe three things are implied in thoſe two words, *Changes and war*; he had variety of afflictions, for *changes were upon him.* He had many and ſtrong afflictions, *For war was upon him.* One ſtrong man cannot make a war, nor many weak ones. And it is as ſtrange that this ſhould be called a war, which was but againſt one weak man. The *Roman* ſtories cry up the honour of a man, who alone upon a narrow paſs made a ſtand againſt a whole army, till ſupplies came; what ſhall we ſay then of *Job*, who ſingle and alone maintained his ſtanding againſt many armies, and held out a long war? *Changes and war are upon me.*

חלף *Excidere, quod exciditur immutatur à ſtatu ſuo.*

The firſt word which ſignifies *Changes*, ſignifies alſo deſtruction or cutting off. Some render it ſo here, *exciſion or cutting off* (by which he meaneth death) *is upon me.* The other word which we tranſlate *War*, noteth alſo a ſet or an appointed time, as was ſhewed at *Chap.* 7. *verſ.* 1. *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?* So ſome tranſlate it here, putting all together thus, *Exciſion* (or death, the cauſe being put for the effect) *is upon me, and a determined time of my life.*

צרא *Eſt tempus quo quis in ſtatione aut militari officio eſt. Circa hos tantos dolores, mihi certum tempus eſt præſcriptum, intra quod ſum moriturus.* Merc.

Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *Changes and ſtayed army have I.* Taking in both interpretations of the word, ſo his ſence may be expreſſed in this tenor, *Lord have not I a ſetled and determined time to die? Why then are ſuch extream afflictions prepared againſt, and charged upon me, as if by thoſe thou wouldeſt haſten my death, and bring me to my grave ſooner then thou thy ſelf haſt appointed? I ſhall die at the time thou haſt determined, though thou ſhouldeſt not diſtreſs my life, and even force out my breath with ſuch preſſing extremities.*

Hunc ſenſum amplectuntur Aben-Ezra. *Rab.* Sal.

Further, taking the latter word for a preſcribed time: ſome conceive *Job* carrying an alluſion to thoſe who are ſurprized with Fevers and Agues: they have changes, ſome well dayes, and ſome ſick dayes, yet the Fever returns upon a ſet time, or in a conſtant recourſe, till the diſtemper is checked; As if he had ſaid, *My afflictions are like Fever fits; though I have ſome intermiſſion, yet I find a regreſſion, the fit comes upon me again; Changes, at ſet times are upon me.*

Exercitor contrariis & interſe compugnantibus malis, vel potius variis & ſibi invicem ſuccedentibus malorũ agminibus. Merc.

But rather, according to the letter of our tranſlation, *Changes and war are againſt me*; that is, *I am exerciſed with variety of wars.* The word imports any kind of change, change of times, or change of things; it ſignifies alſo change of garments (*Judg.* 14. 12.) That notion of the word, hath an elegancy in it in reference to *Job's* condition. He was a man cloathed with affliction, ſorrow encompaſſed him as a long mourning cloak; and *Job* had changes of his rayment, he went not alwayes in one ſuit, though his ſuits were ſtill of one colour, for he went alwayes in *blacks.*

τὰν κλίσιν τρεπόμενον.

Again, We may interpret this change, of his change from one eſtate to another, from joy to ſorrows, from peace to trouble, from plenty to want, from coſtly robes to filthy rags. Time was when *Job* went in ſcarlet and fine linnen, and, if he pleaſed, might have fared deliciouſly every day; but when he ſpake this, he was in another ſtate and habit, cloathed with ſackcloth, and lying in the duſt. It is ſaid of wicked men (*Pſal.* 55. 9.) *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God.* Every creature is ſubject to change, and have ſome changes every day; God only is unchangable. Yet ſome men ſeem to have *no changes*, and though they cannot be free from natural changes one moment, yet they may be free from many years civil changes: they may be ſo far from ſuch changes as *Job* felt, from good to evil, that all the changes they are acquainted with, may be only from good to better, from ſtrong to ſtronger, from rich to richer: that's the intent of the *Pſalm*; *They have no changes* from joy to ſorrow, from health to ſickneſs, from riches to poverty, from honour to diſgrace, *therefore they fear not God*; their hearts were hardned, becauſe their eſtates proſpered.

Agmen quoddam malorum, u etiã dicitu lerna vel Ilias malor Merc.

So then, theſe changes import, either divers ſorts of afflictions, or divers returns and charges of the ſame afflictions. The ſecond word carrieth that alluſion, *Changes and war are upon me*; that is, ſuch changes as there is in war, when firſt one Regiment charges, and another ſeconds, and ſo Regiment after Regiment, Company after Company, File after File, now the right Wing, and then the left, at laſt the Reſerve. Thus the Lord ſeemed to bring up his Bands and Troops of afflictions to aſſault *Job* in turns and changes, till his whole Army had aſſaulted and skirmiſhed with him. Thoſe Military terms of ſhooting and warring are frequent figures in Scripture, ſhewing how God conflicts with ſinful, weak man, after the manner of men. Obſerve hence,

Vexationes turmatim me invadunt. Drus. *Sagittandi & militandi verba ſæpè & elegantèr in ſcripturis declarant Dei contrà impios pœ flagella conſtitutum.*

First, *That afflictions are at the command of God.*

He marſhals and diſpoſes them, as Armies are by their Generals in times of war. He can ſay to one affliction, as the Centurion to his Souldiers, Go, and it goeth; to another, Come, and it cometh; to a third, Do this, and it doth it. All Armies of ſorrow are led by God in chief: They charge whom he pleaſeth, and where he pleaſeth, high or low, Perſon or Nation: if he gives the word, they fall on preſently, nor will they return till he orders their retreat.

Secondly note, *That the Lord hath variety of wayes and means to afflict and try his people.*

Changes and war are againſt me. The Phyſitian hath variety of medicines for his ſick patient; if one removes not the diſtemper, he changes and tries a ſecond. There is nothing ſo full of changes, as war, not only in regard of the uncertainty of events, but variety of means, new forces being raiſed, and new ſtratagems uſed, from day to day. *Haſt thou but one bleſſing?* ſaid *Eſau* to his Father *Iſaac.* The hand of man may be ſtraitned to one bleſſing, or one blow; but the hand of God is never ſtraightned. As he hath ſtore of bleſſings, ſo of blows, and can give both out, both in degree and kind diverſified; if one Army of evils doth not humble and conquer us to his obedience, he can quickly leavy a new one. All creatures will come in to his help, if he do but ſet up his ſtandard, or give command to beat his drum. He changed his Armies ten times againſt *Pharaoh: Pharaoh* had indeed changes and war upon him, yet no change wrought in him: therefore the war was changed, till he was deſtroyed. This war with *Job* was not a deſtroying one, but it was a terrible one, ſo terrible that he cries out in the language of his former complaints, *Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

VERS. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

Wherefore then haſt thou brought me forth out of the womb? O that I had given up the ghoſt, and no eye had ſeen me!
I ſhould have been as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.
Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.
Before I go whence I ſhall not return, even to the land of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death;
A land of darkneſs, as darkneſs it ſelf; and of the ſhadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkneſs.

THeſe five verſes are the concluſion of *Job's* reply to *Bildad*; there are four things remarkable in them.

First, He complaineth that ever he lived a day or an hour in the world, at the beginning of *vers.* 18. *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth of the womb?*

Secondly, He wisheth that he had died speedily: seeing he could not have that (supposed) happiness not to be born into the world, his next request is, that he might not have stayed long in the world; he would not have appeared as a man, no nor as a child, but that birth and burial might have been contiguous, not knowing the distance of a day, *Vers.* 18, 19. *O that I had given up the Ghost, and no eye had seen me! I should have been as though I had not been, I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.*

Thirdly, He sheweth that however he had been disappointed of both those votes, yet he could not live long; As if he had said, Though I have found much trouble in the world, yet I shall not much trouble the world, the time of my departure is at hand, I have lived most of my dayes already, and all my dayes are not many, *Vers.* 20. *Are not my dayes few?*

Fourthly, He entreateth and sueth that the few dayes (of those few dayes which he had to live) might be good dayes, *Are not my dayes few? Cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little, before I go whence I shall not return,* &c.

Sui oblivisci-tur ut superâ, ut doloris. Merc.

The eighteenth and nineteenth verses carry a sence very like to that which hath been opened at *Chap.* 3. of this Book, where *Job* complained of his birth, and was troubled that he had the favour of a being (because he found such an ill being) in the world. His passion runneth out here into a vehement expostulation, **Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?** As there, *Why died I not from the womb?* Vers. 11.

Job puts the Question, and demanded an account of God, Why he came out of the Womb? There are three sorts of questions.

First, Such as arise from a desire of necessary information: 'Tis good to ask that we may learn.

Secondly, Such as arise from a needless curiosity: 'Tis not good to ask what no duty enjoyns us to learn.

Thirdly, Such as arise from pure passion, or rather, from mudded perturbation, not so much desiring information from others, as to vent our selves. 'Tis very ill to ask when we care not to learn. Such is the question here put (say some) a passionate question, arising from the fume and vapors of a distempered mind, desiring to ask, rather then to be answered, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* As if he had said, *Was I born only to be an object of evil? Came I into the world to be made a sad spectacle to the world, to Angels and to Men? Have my dayes been lengthened out on purpose, that my troubles might be lengthened?* Such a troubled sence there is in these words. The complaints of Saints may sometimes look like the blasphemies of wicked men.

Job complaineth of his birth, and seems forgetful of all former benefits.

Hence observe, *When we want the mercies we would have, we grow angry with the mercies which we have had.*

un ita is mecum, ex bene-cio tuo non neficium. cc.

David speaks it to the praise of God, *Thou art he that tookest me out of my mothers womb* (Psal. 22.) *Job* speaks it as a dammage to himself, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

Secondly observe, *We are ready to think we live to no end, if we have not our own ends.*

That's the voice of nature, and so far as nature prevails in us, it speaks in us.

Thirdly, *Man is apt to say, there is no reason for that, of which he seeth not the reason.*

When we are at our wits end, and at our reasons end, we think there is an end of all wisdom and reason, as if neither God nor man could give an account beyond ours, or answer, when we are non-pluste.

Yet we may conceive *Job* had a further sence, which yields a more mollifying meaning of these words; for though he (as all the Saints in the Old Testament) was much in the dark about the benefit of sufferings, which the Gospel hath now more clearly revealed to us, and called us unto; yet he might have some other intendment in these expostulations: We may charitably suppose him troubled that he was in a condition of life, which (as he conceived) hindered the main end of his life, the glorifying of God; *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* As if he had said, *Lord, I am in a state, wherein I know not how to honour thee, and then what is my life worth unto me? Thy justice is greatly obscured towards me; many are ready to say, for my sake, that surely thou art a hard Master, leaving them to reap evil who have sowed good, and paying thy faithful and most active servants their wages in sufferings. And as for mercy, I taste little of that; comforts are dainties with me: my cup is bitter, my sorrows are multiplyed: Now when neither justice nor mercy move visibly towards me, how shall I glorifie thee? And wherein can my life be useful or advantagious to thee? Am I not like a broken vessel, a vessel wherein there is no pleasure? Wherefore then was I brought forth out of the womb?*

Nunc in me justitia tua obscuratur, & ego non sentio fructus gratiæ tuæ; quâ in re ergo gloriæ tuæ inservire potest vita mea? Coc.

This Exposition teacheth us, That,

A godly man thinks he liveth to no purpose, if he do not live to the praise and glory of God.

God hath made all things for himself, and it is the design of the Saints to be for him. While that end is attained they can easily part with all their own; and where that is crossed, they cannot be pleased in the attainment of any of their own. The interest of Christ is not only their greatest, but all their interest. Any stop of, much more a disservice to this, causeth an honest heart to cry out with *Job*, and ('tis easie to conceive) it causeth *Job* to cry out, *Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?*

O that I had given up the Ghost, and no eye had seen me!

O that I had given up the Ghost!] The original signifies usually a gentle and an easie kind of death. Giving up the Ghost, is not a pulling or a violent rending of life away from us, but our laying it down, our surrender or willing resignation of it. Some read this clause, not as we Optatively, *O that I had given up the Ghost!* but declaratively, *Wherefore hast thou brought me out of the womb? for then I had quickly given up the Ghost.* But rather take it as a wish, *O that I had given up the Ghost!*

אנץ *Facilem & sine dolore mortem innuit.*

And no eye had seen me.] That is (say some) I would I had died before I had been born, for then no eye had seen me. Or more generally thus, O that I had died speedily, so speedily that I might have gone out of the world, before I was observed to have been there: Who delights to see the dead? Especially a child dead-born, or dying as soon as born? *Sarah* was the delight of *Abraham's* eyes, whilst she lived, and yet assoon as she was dead, he gives any money for a sepulchre to bury her out of his sight. Or again, *Job* that he might shew how little he regarded life, disregards that which is most desirable in life. Man naturally desires, *To see, and to be seen; to know, and to be known.* That which carries a great part of the world, is an affectation to be pointed at, and taken notice of, as *Som-bodies* in the world. He that liveth unseen in the world, is as a man out of the world, or as one buried alive. To be in prison is a great punishment, because a prisoner liveth out of view; he cannot freely see or be seen. *Job* wishes no eye had seen him, rather then his eyes should have seen so much evil, or that others should have seen him in the midst of so many evils. Hence observe,

Innatum est omnibus ut cognosci se velint, & studio teneantur res alias cognoscendi.

First, *That undue and unreasonable questions, are usually followed and fruited with undue and unreasonable wishes.*

Having put the question, *Wherefore hast thou brought me forth out of the womb?* See what a wish comes upon it, *O that I had given up the Ghost, and no eye had seen me!* He that takes undue liberty to speak or do, knows not where he shall restrain himself. They who alwayes act as far as they may, shall often act beyond what they ought. And they who act at all beyond what they are directed, are often carried beyond what themselves intended.

Secondly observe, *Man had rather not be seen at all, then to be seen miserable.*

To be seen, is a great part of the comfort of this life; but who would not gladly exchange it for ease in obscurity? It is an honour to be seen, but who would be seen cloathed with

with dishonour? When Christ is propheſied of, as the great pattern of patience and ſelf-denial, it's ſaid, *He hid not his face from ſhame and ſpitting*, Iſa. 50. 6. To be a ſpectacle of miſery, is to ſome worſe then their being miſerable. They would count it a piece of their happineſs, to be unhappy in a corner; and their troubles half removed, if they might ſteal their troubles. As to be in a good eſtate, and to know that we are ſo, makes our eſtate better to us: So to be in an ill eſtate, and to be known that we are ſo, makes it to ſome tempers a great deal worſe. As the hypocrite hopes when he ſins, that no eye ſees him: ſo many wiſh when they ſuffer, *O that no eye had ſeen me!*

Verſ. 19. **I ſhould have been, as though I had not been, I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.**

Some read this verſe alſo as a wiſh; *O that I had been, as though I had never been! O that I had been carried from the womb to the grave.*

He confirms what he had ſaid, by a further declaration of his condition, in caſe he had not been brought forth out of the womb, or had died before he had been ſeen in the throng of the world; Why, what then *Job?* Then, **I ſhould have been as though I had not been**, and my afflictions ſhould never have had any being: ſo ſpeedy a death had quitted me of all the evils of my life. I ſhould not have ſipt or taſted, much leſs have drunk ſo deep of this cup of ſufferings. It is ſaid of Abortives who die in the womb, and of ſuch as die immediately after they are born, *They are, and they are not*; they who live but a moment in nature, ſhall live for ever. A life here leſs then a ſpan long, will be eternity long: yet as to the world, ſuch a life is no life, ſuch a being no being. Lawyers ſay, They who die before, or as ſoon as they are born, are reckoned as unborn; they make no change in ſtates, they never had a name, or an intereſt in the world, and ſo they go for nothing in the world. The Prophet *Obadia* (verſ. 16.) threatens *Edom*, *That they ſhall be as though they had not been*; that is, they muſt periſh, and their memorial with them. Some are ſo thruſt out of the world, that they ſhall be, as if they had never been; and ſome come into the world ſo, that their being was, as if they had never been.

Eſt & non eſt Octimeſtris partus. Hippocr.

Abortivus pro non nato cenſetur in jure.

A ſhort life is by common eſtimation no life.

As in heaven, where we ſhall live for ever, we ſhall be, as if we had ever been: So on earth, ſome live ſo little, that they are as if they never were: That which hath an eternal duration and ſhall never end, is as if it had ever begun; and that which is but of a ſhort duration and ends quickly, is as if it had never begun. The reaſon why the fruit of ſin goes for nothing, is, becauſe the pleaſure of ſin is but for a ſeaſon, and that a very little ſeaſon; *What fruit have ye of thoſe things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?* That is, Ye have no fruit, or your fruit was nothing: we may ſay of all the pleaſures of ſin, their cradle is their grave, or more near *Job's* language, they are carried from the womb to the grave. So he ſpeaks next of himſelf,

I ſhould have been carried from the womb to the grave.

I ſhould have paſſed without noiſe or notice. There would have been little trouble with me in the world, I ſhould have made but one journey, and that a ſhort one. The ſpeech is proverbial: *From the womb to the grave*, is the motto of *Infant-death*. The Septuagint read it as an expoſtulation; *Wherefore was I not carried out from the womb to the grave?* It would have been a happineſs to me, either not to have been at all, or to have had a being but equivalent (in common account) to a not being. And thus it had been with me, if my firſt ſtep out of my mothers womb, had been into the womb of that *grand mother* the earth. *Job* is often upon the ſame point, renewing his deſires after death: he did ſo (as hath been toucht) at the third Chapter, and at the ſixth, and now he is as fierce and freſh upon it as ever.

Proverbiale eſt, ab utero ad ſepulchrum, cum quis ſimulac natus eſt moritur.

A godly man may often diſcover the ſame infirmity.

Whilſt the ſame ſtock of corruption remains in us, it is productive of the ſame corrupt fruit. There is a ſeminal vertue in the earth, look how often it is plowed and ſowed, ſo often it ſends forth a crop; there is a ſeminal vertue in the earthly part of man, which makes him to put forth evil, as often as occaſion plows, and temptation ſoweth his heart.

Verſ. 20. **Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.**

יחדל *Primo adjungunt colo. Numquid non pauciras dierum meorum finiatur brevi?* Vulg. *An non pauci dies mei ceſſantes, ſc. deficientes?* Targ. *Annon pauliſper diebus meis ceſſabit?* Jun.

Are not my dayes few?] There is a difference in the reading: Many tranſlators joyn the Verb *Ceaſe*, with this clauſe: ſo that whereas we read, *Are not my dayes few? Ceaſe then, and let me alone*; they read, *Will not my few dayes ceaſe? Then let me alone that I may take comfort a little.* Mr. *Broughton*, and he hath a ſecond, varieth yet further, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* Inſtead of applying the word *few* unto dayes, *Are not my dayes few?* They (taking in the Verb) joyn it to the act of God, *Will not he leave off a little in my dayes?* That is, Will not God forbear a little to trouble me? Will not he give me a breathing time in my dayes, which are but few? Surely he will, he will not be ſo ſtrict with me, I doubt not of a gracious anſwer to this humble petition.

But rather follow our ſence, and let the firſt clauſe be a queſtion, *Are not my dayes few?* And then the next words are an inference or uſe which he makes from it; *Ceaſe then, and let me alone*, &c.

Are not my dayes few?] The queſtion doth affirm, Yes, my dayes are few. The ſence may be made out one of theſe three wayes, and not unprofitably by all three.

Firſt thus, As a juſtification of his former wiſhes and deſires to die: Have I not upon good reaſon wiſhed that I had never lived? Who can be in love with a ſhort life, and a long trouble? *Are not my dayes few?* Or,

Secondly, As an anſwer to ſuch as objected againſt him for wiſhing he had not lived: *Do you know* (ſaid they) *what you have ſaid? Is life ſuch a ſmall matter with you? Or, do you underſtand what you deſire, when you deſire death? Is deformed death become a beauty in your eye? What ever you think of it, life is a precious Jewel; Yes* (ſaith *Job*) *I know very well what life is, and I know if I had died before I was born, I had loſt much life; What's the life of a few dayes? The life of eternity is worth the having and eſteeming; but why ſhould you think I have wiſhed away a matter of moment, when I wiſhed away this life? For are not my dayes few?*

Whence obſerve, *The loſs of a whole life in the world, is no great loſs.*

We cannot loſe a great deal, when all is but a little; nor many, when we have but a few in all. He looſeth but a few dayes, who dieth the firſt day; then, what have we got, when we have lived according to the calculation of nature, many dayes? *Job* makes this an argument to ſatisfie others about his wiſh, that all his dayes had been cut off. May not we ſatisfie our ſelves by it, when a piece, or a part, an end, the worſt end of our dayes is cut off? What if we have abated ten or twenty of thoſe years which poſſibly we might have lived? Twenty years are but a few dayes; for, a whole life, conſiſting of three twenties and ten, is but a few dayes. This we are ſure of, that the few dayes we loſe on earth, ſhall never be miſſed in heaven; it will be no abatement to our comfort there, to think we lived but a little here; all the ſorrows of this life will be ſwallowed up in the next, and ſo will our ſudden parting with this life.

Thirdly, The cleareſt ſence of theſe words [*Are not my dayes few?*] is, that they are the ground of a petition for the mitigation of his troubles; As if he had ſaid, *Lord, I have but a while to live in the world, my dayes are few, therefore do not think much that I ſhould have a little comfort and refreſhing in theſe my dayes; Conſider my life is ſhort, O that thou wouldeſt ſlack thy hand, and yield me ſome eaſe and comfort in this ſhort life.* He had uſed this argument at *Chap. 7. verſ. 16. Let me alone, for my dayes are vanity*; here, *Let me alone, for my dayes are few. The fewneſs of our dayes is one of the vanities of our dayes.*

Are not my dayes few?] The Hebrew is, *Is not fewneſs of dayes mine?* Yes, That's my portion. Abſtracts often encreaſe, and ſometimes they diminiſh the ſence. Here the ſence is diminutive; as if he had ſaid, My dayes are ſo far from many, that they are fewneſs it ſelf: Mine are not encreaſing

Paucitas dierum, i.e. pauciſſimi dies. Abſtracta ſignificationem incitant & acuunt. מעט *Imminutionem decrementumque ſignificat, q. d. nunquam creſcit, ſed dex creſcit, & ad angustias majores indies reducitur, & in perpetua conſumptione evaneſcit.* Bold.

and

and growing, but declining and abating dayes. My dayes are going down, they are brought into a leſſer and a narrower compaſs every day. The *Chaldee* renders, *Are not my dayes ceaſing?* My dayes fade and wear out every day; *Shew me how ſhort my life is* (cloſer to the Original) how ſoon ceaſing I am; or, as others, What, or of what quantity mine age is, how tranſient, how temporary I am.

מה הרל אני
Quanti ævi ego? Mont.

Ceaſe then, and let me alone.] Some read it in the third perſon, *Therefore let him ceaſe from me, and let me alone*; we in the ſecond, *Ceaſe then, and let me alone.* *Job* looks upon himſelf as one beſieged and ſtraitned with afflictions: Now (ſaith he) I beſeech thee raiſe thy ſiege, and draw off thy force from me; or if thou wilt not make a final peace with me, yet grant me a ceſſation, let me have a truce for a limited time, let me not have ſuch continual Alarms, or be forced to ſtand armed continually; let me reſt, ſaith the *Septuagint*: *Iſſachar* ſtooped to burdens, becauſe he deſired reſt. Some are ſo burdened, that they cannot reſt, how much ſoever they deſire it. *Job* deſires God to give him reſt, becauſe his dayes were few.

ישירת ממני
Deponat à me, ſc. *flagellum aut ſupplicium. Deponat exercitus ſuos procul à me.* Jun.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *It is an argument moving the Lord to forbear ſending us many troubles, becauſe we have but few days.*

Thus *David* prayes (*Pſal.* 89.47.) *Remember how ſhort my time is; wherefore haſt thou made all men in vain?* Lord, I have but a few dayes, and ſhall my dayes be nothing but clouds and darkneſs? The ſame argument is uſed, *Pſal.* 39. *ult. O ſpare me, that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no more.* I ſhall ſoon be gone, let me have ſome eaſe while I ſtay here.

Secondly obſerve, That, *Except the Lord withdraw his hand, nothing in the world can give us eaſe.*

Ceaſe then, and let me alone that I may take comfort; as if he had ſaid, If thine hand be upon me, in vain do friends comfort me; creatures offer me their help in vain. *Ceaſe then, and let me alone.*

From the matter of his Argument, obſerve,

The Life of man is ſhort.

It is a common *Theme*, and every man thinks he can declaim upon it, and ſpeak to it; but there are very few can live to, or act by it. A multitude of inſtructions ariſe to us from the fewneſs of our dayes: And did men know indeed that their dayes are few, their evil deeds would not be ſo many, and their good would be more.

Again, That mans dayes are ſo few, yields us not only many inſtructions, but many wonders. Is it not ſtrange that we who have but a few dayes in our lives, ſhould have ſo many afflictions in our lives? That we ſhould have few dayes, and many ſorrows? Is it not ſtrange that we ſhould have few dayes in our lives, and many cares about our lives: Many cares and few dayes, yea, many cares upon one day? *Thou art careful about many things*, ſaith Chriſt to *Martha*. Is it not ſtrange that we ſhould have ſo few dayes, and ſo many ſins? Few dayes, and innumerable ſins; ſo many ſins as no man can number them, and ſo few dayes, that a Child may number them? And is not this a wonder above all the reſt, that we ſhould have but a few dayes, and yet be graveli'd and puzl'd ſo as we are in numbring them? A little humane learning will ſerve to number our dayes, but we need a great deal of ſpiritual learning to number them. A little ſtudy in the Mathematicks will do it, but we need more then ſtudy, experience in Divinity before we can do it, unleſs God himſelf be our Tutor; *He only can teach us ſo to number our dayes that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom.* We ſhall commence fools at laſt, if we have not one wiſer then the wiſeſt upon earth, to teach us this truth.

ברן:
Roboravit, confortavit reſpiravit, vires collegit.

That I may take comfort a little.] The word which we tranſlate to take comfort, ſignifies ſuch comfort as they find, who being heated extreamly, and extream thirſty, come to drink at a fountain of ſweet waters. The Vulgar readeth it, *Let me alone that I may mourn a little*; yet taking in the former ſence, he ſeems thus to explain himſelf; If the Lord would let me alone, I would go and eaſe my ſelf with complaining; the waters of my head, the fountain of mine eyes would be a refreſhing to my wearied ſoul. *Sorrows are ſometimes joyous, and moderate mourning gives the mind a reviving.*

But rather, Take it in the general, *Let me alone that I may comfort my ſelf*, and that theſe ſorrows may abate; I deſire to rally, and recollect my ſcattered thoughts a while, and ſo take in ſomewhat of the ſweetneſs of this life before I die. *Ceaſe from me for ſome refreſhing* (ſaith Mr. *Broughton*) *I do not expect much, Lord, let me have ſome before I go whence I ſhall not return.*

Si dolorem amovere non vult, reſpirandi locum aliquem & ſpatium concedat. Mer.

Here obſerve one common principle of Nature,

Man deſireth his own good.

A well-being as well as a being. What is there in life for Nature to prize, if there be nothing but ſorrow in it?

Secondly obſerve, That, *Great ſufferings make us very modeſt in our demands.*

Job was in great affliction, and now a little comfort would go a great way with him. When the people of *Iſrael* were in bondage under *Pharaoh* and task-maſters, and had heavier burdens laid upon them, they do not ſo much as move for a total releaſe from their task, but modeſtly complain, *There is no ſtraw given unto thy ſervants, and they ſay to us, Make Brick*; as if they had ſaid, Let us have ſtraw, and we are willing to make brick. A poor man cries out for a halfpeny, for a farthing, not for hundreds or thouſands. He that is ready to ſtarve, will not ask good chear, or a plentiful feaſt, but let me have a cruſt of bread, or a little water. When *Dives* was in hell, what did he deſire of *Abraham?* Did he beg to come into his boſom? Doth he ſay, *Lazarus* is in a good place, let me come too; No, he deſired but a drop of water; and what was a drop of water to flames of fire? O how would it delight the damned in hell to think of a ceſſation but for one hour from their pain! What a joy would it be unto them, if it ſhould be told them, that a thouſand or ten thouſand years hence they ſhould have one good day, or that they might be let alone to take comfort a little! *They who are low, make low demands.* Think of this, ye that enjoy much comfort, and ſwim in rivers of pleaſure. Let not the great conſolations of God be ſmall to you, when you hear *Job* thus inſtant and importunate for the ſmalleſt; *Let me alone, that I may take comfort a little.*

But why is he in ſuch haſte for a little comfort? One ground is, in the former words, *My dayes are few*; and he backs it with a ſecond in the next; If it come not quickly, it will come too late. I am ready to take my laſt journey, *Therefore let me take a little comfort.*

Verſe 21. **Before I go whence I ſhall not return, even to the Land of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death.**

Before I go.] That is, before I die. Death is a going out of the world: Chriſt intimates his death under this notion (*John* 16.7.) *If I go, the Comforter will come. And I go from you*, &c. Dying is a journeying from one Region to another. *Death is a changing of our place, though not of our company. Before I go.* Whither?

Periphraſis moriendi, qui moritur dicitur abire; unde abitionem pro morte veteres uſurparunt. Dr.

Whence I ſhall not return.] That's a ſtrange journey indeed. That which pleaſeth us in our longeſt journeys while we live, is a hope of returning to our own homes again. But when we die, we take a journey from whence there is no returning. Not return? Shall not man return when he dieth? Is death an everlaſting departure, an eternal night? No, Man ſhall return, but he ſhall not return to ſuch a life or ſtate as he had before. He is gone for ever out of this world, and out of all worldly intereſts. *Job* believed a reſurrection or a returning from the grave by the power of God, and he knew there was no returning by the power of Nature, or by the help of any creature, in that reference, *we go whence we ſhall not return.* So *David* ſpeaks of his dead Infant, *I ſhall go to him, but he ſhall not return to me*, 2 Sam. 12. 25. When once we are ſhut up in thoſe Chambers of death, and made priſoners in the grave, though all the Princes in the world ſend warrants for our releaſe, we cannot get releaſed. The pertinacy and ſtiffneſs of the grave is ſuch as yields to none. We are faſt ſhut up, when we are ſhut up there. Love and the grave will hardly part with that which they have cloſed with, and are poſſeſſed of. The grave is one of thoſe three things which are never ſatisfied, or ſay it is enough, *Prov.* 30. 15.

Fidē reſurrectionis non lædit. Pin.

Indicat nullam eſſe vim in natura cui pareat mors & cui receptacula animarum obediant, reddereque cogantur, quem ſemel receperunt. Pin.

And

And as it is insatiable in receiving, so it is as close in keeping; it will part with nothing. A grave is the Parable of a covetous man, he is greedy to get, and watchful to hold; when his money goes into his purse, he saith, it shall not return: The grave hath a strong appetite to take down, and as strong a stomack to digest. Till God (as I may so speak) by his mighty power gives the grave a vomit, and makes the earth stomack-sick with eating mans flesh, it will not return one morsel. At the Resurrection this great Eater shall cast up all again. And as they who take strong vomits, are put into a kind of trembling convulsion, all the powers of the body being shaken; such will the Prognosticks be of the Resurrection; there was an Earthquake when Christ arose, God made the Earth shake, and commanded it to give back the prisoner, because *it was not possible that he should be holden of it.* And when God speaks the word, it will not be possible for the grave to hold us prisoners: till then it will. It was usual among the Ancients, to say of a dead friend, *He is gone, and he will come again*; intimating a Resurrection. Heathens not knowing nor believing it, call death, *An eternal leave-taking or farewel, never to meet again.*

Veteres Romani dicere solebant, abiit & reversurus est, resurrectionem carnis haud obscurè innuentes. Ter. *Salve æternum mihi maximè Palla. Æternumq; vale.* Virg. Æneid. *Valeant qui inter nos dissidium volunt.* Ter.

Observe from this description of the grave,

That, *The statutes of death are unrepealable.*

Death is an everlasting banishment from the world; *I shall go whence I shall not return.* This may lie very sad upon their spirits, who have not a better place then the world to go to, when they go from the world: To go whence we shall never return, and yet where we cannot endure to be a moment, is deepest misery: Such a man cannot chuse but set out with a sad heart. And that's the reason why wicked men, whose consciences are awakened, go so unwillingly to this sleep, they know whither they are going, only they know they cannot return. *Make ye friends* ('tis Christ's counsel) *of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations* (Luk. 10. 9.) *Mammon of unrighteousness*, that is, say most Interpreters, Mammon gotten unrighteously; but surely Christ would not teach any to make men our friends, by that which makes God our enemy. They translate better, who render it, *Make ye friends of the false or unfaithful Mammon*, that is, of that Mammon which will deceive and leave you shortly; therefore make you friends of it while you have it; that when ye fail, that is, when ye die, or go out of the world, they may receive you, that is, ye may be received into everlasting habitations: leave not this habitation till ye have got interest in a better. The Saints arm themselves against death by this argument; *We know that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) We know there is no return to buildings made with hands; we must leave our Houses for ever, our Lands for ever, and our Relations for ever; but we are assured of a building *of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.* This supported their hearts, when their earthly houses were falling.

Animula blandula, &c. quæ nunc abibis in loca. Air.

Quod est falsum ἀδικον ab Hellenistis usu Hebræorum dicitur Hēs. *exercit. Sac.*

Job having thus described death it self, proceeds to describe the grave, which is the place of death, or the *Black Hall of the King of Terrors.* Would you know what this place is, from whence there is no returning? It is, saith he (in the close of this Verse) *even the Land of darkness and the shadow of death.* And in the last Verse, Verse 22. **A Land of darkness, as darkness it self, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.**

This is the place where death dwells, or the seat of death; and here's a description of it, which exceeds the Fancy of Poets, and the Rhetorick of all Heathen Orators. The Spirit of God riseth to the height of eloquence, in discovering that unpleasant Region.

This subterranean Geography gives a double character of it. 1. *A Land of darkness.* 2. *A Land of the shadow of death*; both which are aggravated by their additions. It is a Land of darkness, but not of any ordinary darkness; *It is a Land of darkness, as darkness it self.* It is a Land of the shadow of death, not of an ordinary shadow of death, but of the shadow of death, 1. *Without any order.* 2. *Where the light is as darkness.*

A Land of darkness,] That is, abounding with darkness, a Land where darkness is the staple, and the only commodity to be had. Darkness is the hangings and ornament of the house of death. The grave is elsewhere called *A Land of forgetfulness* (Psal. 88. 11.) Because there all things are forgotten. We read (*Jer.* 12. 5.) of *a Land of peace*, that is a land where peace abounds, a land in every corner whereof peace springs and groweth up. *Canaan* (Deut. 8. 8.) was called *A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of the valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, pomegranates; a land of oyl-olive, and of honey:* That is, a land where these good things were natural and plentiful: A land where Neighbour-Nations might furnish themselves, and fraight their ships with those commodities. In such a sence *Job* calls the grave a land of darkness; as if he had said, Would you know what the merchandize of the grave is? I will tell you, it is darkness, there you may have darkness as much as you desire, and besides that, nothing, how much soever you desire it.

Cum sepulchrum dicitur terra tenebrarum, ibi tanquã in nativo solo obscuritas intelligitur provenire.

This shews the terror of death to a meer natural understanding. Many are afraid to be at all in the dark, how much more to be alwayes in darkness: As light is put for joy, so darkness for sorrow. Darkness, whether spiritual or natural, is afflictive. Dark houses are unpleasant, what then is a land of darkness? The face of a man is darkened with sorrow, and joy is the light of it. It hath been observed that some *Great Princes* have had light beaming out from their eyes. *Augustus* had so sparkling an eye, that few could look upon him; his eyes cast forth rayes like the Sun, dazling the beholders. Good, gracious Princes cast out beams of favour upon their people, which refresh them as the light. Death and the grave have no light in their face. Death looks black and grim, Hell is extreameſt darkness, and the pains of hell are chains of darkness.

Suetonius in Augusto. c. 79.

And the shadow of death.

There is more then the shadow of death in the grave, death it self dwells there. The words sound an abatement of the sence, but indeed they heighten it. *The shadow of death* is thick darkness, thickest darkness, the very strength of darkness. This shadow is the substance of death, or death with addition of greatest deadliness.

Terra cujus palpebræ sunt sicut caligo umbrarum mortis. Targ.

Job having given the land this dreadful name, *A land of darkness, and of the shadow of death*, makes it yet more dreadful by this further explication.

A Land of darkness, as darkness it self.] Or, *A Land of darkness, which looks like darkness.* The word signifies wearisness, restlesness, and vexation of spirit. To be in a dark condition, is to be in a wearisom condition. The Vulgar reads it; *A Land of misery.* Some darkness hath a degree of light mingled with it, but this is pure or unmixed darkness, darkness in its proper hue, darkness it self. When a man of skill acts skilfully, we say, he acts like himself; and when a wicked man doth very wickedly, we say, he doth like himself. The darkness of the grave looks like nothing but it self.

ארץ עפתה

Every evil the more like it is to it self, the worse it is. When the Apostle would shew sin in its colours, he calleth it *sinful sin* (Rom. 7. 12.) *Sin by the Commandment became exceeding sinful*; the commandment caused it to look like it self. Sorrowful sorrow, and painful pain are the worst of pains and sorrows. There is sorrow which may consist with some joy, and pain, which may cohabit with some ease; but he that hath sorrow like sorrow it self, and pain like pain it self, hath the extremity of both. Thus also every good, the more like it is to it self, the better it is; holiness like it self, is the purest holiness; grace like it self, is the sweetest grace. When a holy man works like himself, his work is best. God is ever like himself in all he doth; and every thing we do, is then best, when it is done most like to what God doth.

And of the shadow of death, without any order; or, **The shadow of death, and not orders.**

ולא סדרים *Et non ordines.*

The word which we translate order, is frequent in the Rabbins; the holy Text hath it only in this place, and here, in the plural number, *A Land of darkness, and the shadow of death, and without any orders*, a land unordered. There's no government, no method in the grave. And if it hath no order, then it hath nothing in it but confusion, nothing

but

but diſorder. That the grave, or the ſtate of death is without any order, may be underſtood two wayes.

Hebræi ad vices diti & noctis, æſtatis & hyemis, &c. referunt. Experiem viciſſitudinum. Jun.

First, Without order, becauſe it hath no changes, or viciſſitudes in it, there is no difference in the grave between night and day, Winter and Summer, hot and cold, wet and dry, between the riſing and ſetting of the Sun: This is the the order which God hath ſet in Nature; and when the flood had put all things into a kind of confuſion, God promiſed, *That ſeed time and harveſt, and cold and heat, ſummer and winter, day and night ſhould not ceaſe*; that is, there ſhould be an everlaſting order continued in the creature. The dead know none of thoſe changes and viciſſitudes; as much of the vanity, ſo ſome of the comforts of this life conſiſt in changes; but all is alike in death.

Secondly, There is no order in going to the grave; men do not keep to a rule in dying, nor obſerve their ranks. The old go not always firſt, and then the young; the great before, and the mean following after. Death hath no maſter of the Ceremonies; but takes promiſcuouſly, here a child, and there a man; here a rich man, and there a beggar. And as there is no order in going thither, ſo none when we are there: the grave mingleth the duſt, and bones of one with another. We cannot diſtinguiſh the rich mans duſt from the duſt of the poor, nor the bones of Kings from thoſe of the loweſt ſubject. Though rich men are buried in more eminent places, and Kings under ſtately Monuments, though their Tombs differ from their inferiors, yet their bones do not. An old Philoſopher was obſerved ſearching a Cæmitery, and prying buſily among the Tombs, and being asked, what he looked for, anſwered, I come to ſee if I can find the duſt of rich men, and the bones of Princes, but I cannot ſee which is which; the duſt of the rich and of the poor, of Princes and peaſants, are all alike to my eye.

And ſeeing *Job* makes this an aggravation of the miſery of death that it is without order; We may obſerve,

That order hath an excellency, and a beauty in it.

The leſs order there is in any place or State, the worſe it is; and where is no order, there it is worſt of all. Civil order is the beauty of Common-wealths, and ſpiritual order is the beauty of the Church. The Apoſtle rejoyced to behold the order of the *Coloſſians*, as well as their faith, (*Col.* 2. 5.) His charge to the *Corinthians* is, *Let all things be done decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14. 40.) He had warned them (*verſ.* 33.) to take heed of diſorder, becauſe *God is not the God of confuſion, but of peace.* Where order is not kept, the peace cannot be kept. Death is evil, and that is without order; hell is worſt of all, and there is no order at all. It is a kind of death to ſee any diſorder, and a very hell to ſee all in diſorder.

חפץ
à radice
יפע
Floruit, ſplenduit, fulgorem & magnificentiam exercuit. Tenebreſcit, ſicut caligo. Mon.
Quod in ea ſplendidiſſimum eſt, caligini ſimile eſt.

And where the light is as darkneſs.] Some read by the Verb, *where it ſhineth like darkneſs*, or thus, *where it lighteth like darkneſs.* The Vulgar paraphraſes rather then tranſlates, *Where there is everlaſting horror. Job* ſaid before, it was a land of darkneſs, and like *darkneſs it ſelf:* yet now he ſeemeth to affirm, that there is light in the grave: and if there be, how is that darkneſs like darkneſs it ſelf? His meaning is, that which looks moſt like to light in the grave, is darkneſs; and it is therefore darkneſs like darkneſs it ſelf, becauſe if you can imagine any thing to have a ſhew of light in the grave, that very light is as darkneſs. When the Apoſtle would invincibly argue the infinite wiſdom and ſtrength of God, he ſaith, *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer then men, and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger then men* (1 Cor. 1. 25.) God is only wiſe, only ſtrong; how then ſpeaks this Apoſtle of the fooliſhneſs or weakneſs of God? His meaning is, look what act ſoever of God appears to man, as having fooliſhneſs or weakneſs in it, even that fooliſhneſs is wiſer, and that weakneſs ſtronger then men. In what ſence *Paul* ſaith, *The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſdom, the weakneſs of God is ſtrength*, or (which is all one) the darkneſs of God is light; in the ſame *Job* ſaith, The light of the grave is darkneſs. For as God is wiſdom, and in him there is no fooliſhneſs at all; ſtrength, and in him there is no weakneſs at all; light, and in him there is no darkneſs at all: So *Job* ſuppoſeth of the grave, that in it there is darkneſs, and no light at all, while he affirms, the light found there is as darkneſs. Chriſt ſpeaks near this language of *Job* (*Matth.* 6. 23.) *If therefore the light that is in thee be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs!* He had ſaid before, *The light of the body is the eye; and if the eye be ſingle, the whole body is light*; that is, if a man have right aims and pure ends, theſe will keep him right in all his courſe; but if his eye be dark, his ends baſe, how baſe will his actions be, how great his darkneſs? We may argue thus to the point in hand, if the light of the grave be darkneſs, how great is that darkneſs? The Prophet *Amos* ſets forth great changes in States and Kingdoms by prodigious changes in the Air, *Lo, he makes the morning darkneſs*, Chap. 4. 15. Again, *He turneth the ſhadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night*, Chap. 5. 8.

When either civil or moral good is turned into evil, we are paſt all hope of good; if once our light be dark, we muſt expect nothing but darkneſs. The beſt works of hypocrites will be found wickedneſs; how wicked then will they be in their worſt? If their holineſs be unclean, how unclean is their unholineſs? All their moral light is as darkneſs, and all their civil light ſhall be turned into darkneſs.

Some (eſpecially Popiſh) Interpreters underſtand this deſcription, not of the grave, but of hell. The ſame word in the Hebrew ſerves both hell and the grave. Death looks like hell, and bears much of it's image. What is there in hell, but the agonies and ſweat of death, the pangs and paleneſs of death, the chains and bonds of death? The ſtate of the damned in hell, is an eternal act of dying: And all that *Job* ſpeaks of the grave, is fulfilled there to the utmoſt. There is darkneſs, like darkneſs it ſelf, called therefore *utter darkneſs*; there is the ſhadow of death without any order, there the light is as darkneſs. But though the Text be true of hell, yet *Job* had nothing to do or ſuffer beyond the grave, and I ſhall carry his diſcourſe no further, keeping within thoſe confines: We may learn,

That death in it ſelf is no way deſirable.

Is there any beauty in darkneſs, in thick darkneſs, where there is no order, in darkneſs, where the very light is darkneſs? One of the greateſt plagues upon *Egypt*, was three dayes darkneſs; what then is there in death (naturally conſidered) but a plague, ſeeing it is perpetual darkneſs?

Noſtri theologizantes ad infernũ referunt, ſed Job ad ſepulchrum reſpexit. Merc.

If death be ſuch in it ſelf, and ſuch to thoſe who die in ſin, how ſhould our hearts be raiſed up in thankfulneſs to Chriſt, who hath put other terms upon death and the grave by dying for our ſins! Chriſt hath made the grave look like a heaven to his. Chriſt hath aboliſhed death, not death it ſelf (for even believers die) but all the trouble and terror of death, the darkneſs and the diſorder of it, are taken away. Chriſt hath mortified death, killed death, ſo that now death is not ſo much an opening of the door of the grave, as it is an opening of the door of heaven. Chriſt, who is the Sun of righteouſneſs, lay in the grave, and hath left perpetual beams of light there for his purchaſed people. The way to the grave is very dark, but Chriſt hath ſet up lights for us, or cauſed light to ſhine into the way. Chriſt hath put death into a method, yea Chriſt hath put death into a kind of life, or he hath put life into death of believers. All the gaſtlineſs, horror, yea the darkneſs and death of death is removed. The Saints may look upon the grave as a land of light, like light it ſelf; yea as a land of life, like life it ſelf, where there is nothing but order, and where the darkneſs is as light.

Job's reply to *Bildad* and complaints to God have carried his diſcourſe as far as death and the grave, he gives over in a dark diſordered place; God ſtill leaving him under much darkneſs, and many diſorders of ſpirit. As his great afflictions are yet continued, ſo his weakneſſes continue too. His graces break forth many times, and ſometimes his corruption: Both are coming to a further diſcovery, while his third friend *Zophar* takes up the bucklers, and renews the battel: upon what terms he engages with *Job*, how *Job* acquits himſelf, and comes off from that engagement, is the ſum of the four ſucceeding Chapters.

AN

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

ELEVENTH, TWELFTH,

THIRTEENTH, AND FOURTEENTH,

CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

AN

EXPOSITION

To the CHRISTIAN READER; To those chiefly of this City, who have been the movers, and continue the promoters of this Work.

IN *this Fourth Part I present you with* Job's *third Dispute*: Eliphaz *and* Bildad *having given their judgment upon his Case,* Zophar *undertakes him*: *How he mannaged his Arguments, and what answer he received, are (according to the measure of received light) discovered in this expository Discourse; I shall here only (by way of preface) propose a question, and offer my apprehensions towards the resolution of it.*

Whether *Job* and his friends, who were the interlocutors at this conference, spake (as the holy Prophets and other penmen of the holy Scriptures did) by inspiration of God, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. or, as they were moved by the holy Ghost, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21.

That the Book of Job *is a part (as the Apostle phraseth it,* Rom. 15. 4.) *of those* things which were written aforetime for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope, *is testified not only by the divine grandeur and majesty of the stile, together with the intrinsecal excellency and efficacy of the matter, (in both which it declares it self a glorious beam of his wisdome, who is light and the Father of lights) but also by the concurrent Testimony of, not a few, other* Scriptures.

For, as the History of it (that such a man was) hath a full Prophetical testimony by Ezekiel (*ch.* 14. 14.) *and an Apostolical one by S.* James (*ch.* 5. 11.) Ye have heard of the patience of *Job*, and have seen the end of the Lord: *So the authentity and authority of it is clearly asserted by* S. Paul, *calling in and associating the testimony of this Book with* David's *Psalms, to that great Truth, that,* The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

For, Though it doth not argue a Book purely divine, because some sentence of it is quoted in Scripture (for so the Books of Aratus, Menander *and* Epimenides, *Heathen Poets are) yet such a manner of quotation as the Book of* Job *is honoured with, is an undoubted argument of it. While* Paul *quotes the writings of the Heathen, he slights those Heathen writers, with,* As certain also of your own Poets have said; for we are also his offspring, *Act.* 17. 28. *And again,* One of themselves, even a Prophet of their own, said, The *Cretians* are alwayes liars, evil beasts, slow-bellies, *Tit.* 1. 12. *He makes use of what another of them said, without saying any thing at all of him,* Evil communications corrupt good manners (1 *Cor.* 15. 33.) *But when he cites this Book, he doth it in the same form wherein most of the Books of the Old Testament are cited in the New, giving his citation the value of a reason, in reference to the point he was upon, with an emphatical causal particle,* For it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, 1 *Cor.* 3. 19. *Which are the words of* Eliphaz, *Job* 5. 13. *Now, as when God took the first-fruits, he consecrated and sanctified the whole kind of which those first-fruits were a part; so where he takes any part of a Book as an authoritative Scripture-proof, he confirms that whole Book for Scripture.*

And as this Book is there authoritatively cited by the Apostle Paul, *so divers sentences and branches of it are transplanted and engrafted by the penmen of other Scriptures into the body of those Scriptures which God appointed and called them to pen. Psal.* 8. 5. *&* 144. 3. Lord, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man, that thou makest account of him? *are fully the same in sence, and near the same in the letter with that of* Job 7. 17. *And the comparison of* man to a shadow (*Psal.* 144. 4.) *seems to be transcribed from the words of* Bildad, *chap.* 8. 8. *That also of* Ps. 107. 4. He powreth contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way, *fell first from the mouth of* Job, *chap.* 12. 21, 24. *And the words of* v. 42. *of the same Psalm,* The righteous shall see it and rejoyce, and iniquity shall stop her mouth, *were spoken by* Eliphaz, *Job* 5. 16. *&* 22. 19. *The like observations may be made between* Lev. 26. 5. *&* Job 11. 19. *between* Deut. 10. 17. *&* Job 34. 19. *between* Ps. 7. 15. *&* Isa. 59. 15. *compared with* Job 15. 35. *Now, as the calling out of some one sentence of this Book for a Scripture-proof, so the frequent mixing of the language and phrase of it in the Scripture, is a convincing argument that the whole Book is of God.*

But doth not Job *charge his friends as* forgers of lies? *chap.* 13. 4. *If they were so indeed, how can we assert their discourses for divine truths?* For no lie is of the truth, 1 *Joh.* 2. 21. *If they were not, how can we assert the discourse of* Job *for truth, who was thus mistaken? I answer,*

First, Job *spake rather passionately then positively.*

Secondly, The lies he charged them with, were not erroneous assertions against the truth, but unkind aspersions (flowing from a zeal for God) upon his person.

Thirdly, Job *doth not charge his friends with lies strictly taken, as if they had knowingly spoken any thing which was false, or as if they had spoken at any time purposely to ensnare him: his friends supposed and were confident that they spake truth not only in it self (as indeed they did) but also to his state, and their aim was to instruct or reclaim him, not to ensnare or entangle him by what they had spoken.*

Lastly, They spake no doctrinal untruths, though some of their applications were (as to this case) untrue.

And thus even the Apostles themselves did fail sometimes; for as Jobs *friends applied their Doctrine to a Saint, as if he had been an hypocrite, so did they in their Epistolical writings apply their Doctrines to some hypocrites, as if they had been Saints.*

But doth not God himself in the conclusion and determination of this dispute, say expresly to Eliphaz *the* Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant *Job* hath (*ch.* 42. 7.) *If they did not speak right of God, how then were they taught of God what to speak? I answer,*

First, Some expound those words (as the letter also seems to carry it) comparatively, not as if they had not spoken right of God, but not so right as Job *had.*

Secondly, That which they spake of God in his Nature, Properties and Works, was all right, only they had not spoken right of God about the intendment of his works and dispensations towards Job; *they did not hit the meaning of God in that so clearly as God did; though (I conceive)* Job *himself was much in the dark about that point too, as* Elihu *laboured to convince him*

It may be again objected, That Job *and his three friends oppose each other, and maintain different opinions, how then can all be true? Must not one side be out, he or they? I answer,*

First, Job *and his friends did agree in many points (as was shewed in the Preface to the second part of these Expositions) and all those principles wherein they agreed, are the undoubted truths of God.* I know it to *be* so of a truth (*saith he,* ch. 9. 2.) *And again,* My eye hath seen all this, and mine ear hath heard and understood it, *chap.*13.1. *In both these passages* Job *votes with his friends, and seals to the truth of many things which they had spoken; as if he had said,* Though I cannot agree with you in all, yet I will agree as far as I can: In these points you and I have no quarrel.

Secondly, Where they disagreed, the difference was not thus wide, that his friends maintained an errour, and he a truth; but only thus, he maintained more truth, or truth more clearly then they did. They taught truth in all they spake, but not all the truth: As for instance, That, God afflicts for sin, *or,* that sin is the cause of affliction, *is a truth, but not all the truth; or, not absolutely and universally true; for some afflictions are not sent for chastening and correction, but meerly for trial and probation: Again, they teach, that,* God doth severely punish wicked men in this life. *This is true, but not universally and absolutely true; for, as some godly men are troubled, so some wicked men prosper all their dayes.*

Thirdly, Though the opinion which Job's *friends held in opposition to him, was not throughout sound and orthodox, yet their way of expressing it was.* Remember, I pray thee (*saith* Eliphaz, *c.*4.7.) Who ever perished being innocent? *or,* where were the righteous cut off? *Here* Job *opposed him,* c. 9.22. This is one thing, therefore I said it, he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. Eliphaz *guided by the experience of Gods usual administrations in those times, held, that God doth not greatly afflict (for that he means by perishing and cutting off) any godly man in this life. This was his mistake; yet the words with which this Opinion is cloathed, contain a clear truth; and being an appeal to experience* (Remember I pray thee) *are very parallel to that of* David (*Ps.*37.25.) I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.

Fourthly, Job's *friends spake truth in* these, *or in the position all along, they only fail'd in* hypothesi, *or in the application: yea, all their applications and inferences might have fitted some men in such an outward condition as they saw* Job *in, but they did not fit* Job, *because his inward condition was not such as they censured it to be; and God left them under those misapprehensions of his inward condition for the promoting of his own holy design in the full trial of* Job's *patience, while his friends wounded him deeper by these continual reflections upon his spiritual condition, then Satan or the* Sabeans *did by the breaches and irruptions they made upon his outward condition.*

But doth it not abate the divine authority of this Book, if any thing in it be unduly stated and applied?

The Scripture reports many things, even of those who wrote or spoke it historically, which are against the Scripture doctrinally. All that Moses *spake, was not right; for he once spake unadvisedly with his lips* (Ps. 106. 33.) *And so did* David, *when he* said in his heart all men are liars, *Ps.*116.11. *And again* (Ps.73.13.) Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. *The Prophet* Jeremy *doth not only write a curse upon his birth-day, but he curses the man who brought tidings to his Father, saying,* a man-child is born (*Jer.*20.14,15.) Jonah *prayed,* take my life from me, *when he saw that God spared the lives of the* Ninevites: *he was also angry for the death of a gourd, and said,* I do well to be angry even unto death (*Jon.*4.3,9.) *These things are written in Scripture for our caution, not for our imitation; and they are discoveries, not of the wisdom and holiness of God, but of the folly and sinfulness of man. Some such sad discoveries* Job *made in this Book, and some such his friends made.* ¶ *But if some passages in this Book discover the weakness and mistakes of the speakers, how can we raise Doctrines and Observations from them?* ¶ *Every speech and passage which the infinite wisdom of God hath thought fit to put into this or any other Book of Scripture, hath in it somewhat for our instruction. That blasphemy of the fool, which contradicts not only the truth, but the very being of God* (Ps.14.1.) The fool hath said in his heart there is no God, *teacheth us this divine truth, that there are seven (that is, all manner of) abominations in the heart of man. We may draw useful instructions from the words of* Judas *the traytor, after Satan had entred into him, and filled his heart; yea, from the words of Satan in his temptations and proposals unto Christ; much more may we from the sayings of holy men, which are true for the matter (as all the sayings of* Job *and his friends are) though there be a failing in the manner of speaking, or in their references to a particular case.* ¶ *Nor is it unsafe to affirm, that even such sayings are from the inspiration of God, which have an infallible truth in them, though they who said so, did not understand them so. When the chief Priests and Pharisees sate in Council, and debated the destruction of Christ the Saviour of the world, fearing the* Romans *would destroy them, and take away both their name and nation,* Caiphas, *who was high Priest that same year, said unto them, ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole Nation perish not,* Joh.11.49,50. *This was wicked and bloody counsel, according to his intendment and meaning in giving it (for we must not condemn the innocent, though but one man, upon politick respects to preserve the greatest multitude or a whole Nation of men) yet there was a great truth of God in it, even the sum and substance of the whole Gospel; for it was not only expedient, but also necessary, that one man (Jesus Christ the only Son of God) should be put to death, that the whole Nation of the Jews, and all the Gentile Nations might not perish eternally. Thus the Evangelist explains the cruel advice of* Caiphas, *in the next words* v.51,52. This he spake not of himself: but being high-Priest that year, he prophesied that Christ should die for that Nation, and not for that Nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. *This sence was far from the heart of* Caiphas, *though the words which bear it were uttered with his tongue. And thus if we (in some places) pass by the particular meaning of the speakers, and keep to the general meaning of what is spoken, we may make a savoury and an edifying construction of every passage in this Book; in which, as there are abundance of holy truths, and as it were, a* compendium *both of Law and Gospel, so (upon this account) there is no one sentence in opposing any one truth contained and held forth in either. And therefore from all these premises I conclude the question first proposed affirmatively, That* Job *and his friends* spake by the inspiration of God, or as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

I shall not entertain the Reader any longer at the Door or in the Entry of the Book; but commending this brief excercitation with the following expositions to the blessing of God, for a fruitful improvement of these and all other helps, which his gracious bounty continues or renews upon us for the furtherance of our faith and knowledge in, and of our obedience to the whole mystery of his will revealed in his Word, I subscribe my self,

March 20. 1648. Your affectionate Friend to love and serve you in the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE ELEVENTH, TWELFTH, THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. 11. Verſ. 1, 2, 3.

Then anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid,
Should not the multitude of words be anſwered? and ſhould a man full of talk be juſtified?
Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?

Sophar ſonat idem quod ſpeculator, & Naamathites pulchrum & jucundum. Greg. Phil.

JOB hath already ſtood two charges; the firſt from *Eliphaz*, the ſecond from *Bildad*. Here a third begins.

Then anſwered Zophar the Naamathite, and ſaid.

Who *Zophar* was, hath been ſhewed at the eleventh verſe of the ſecond Chapter. His name *Zophar* imports a *Watchman*, and his additional title *Naamathite*, *pleaſant* or *beautiful* in the Original.

The matter of his anſwer may be conſidered;
Firſt, In the Preface,
Secondly, In the body of it.

The exordium or preface is contained in the three firſt verſes. The body of his anſwer in the following parts of the Chapter: wherein three things are cleare;

First, A general propoſition, containing the matter in debate, or the poſition which *Zophar* puts upon *Job*, as his, and takes upon himſelf to confute, as erroneous. This he layes down in the fourth verſe, *Thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.*

Secondly, We have the confutation of this poſition enlarged, from the 5. verſ. to the 12.

Thirdly, *Zophar* having ſhewed *Job* his errour, and, as he hoped, convinced him of it, proceeds to give him counſel, and cloſeth the Chapter with inſtruction. He inſiſteth in the ſame method, and treads the ſame path that *Eliphaz* and *Bildad* had done before; firſt, chiding and reproving *Job*, then counſelling and adviſing him.

Zophars preface preſents us with a three-fold neceſſity, engaging him to this reply.

Quòd verboſus ad ſucandam malam cauſam.

First, From that multitude of words which *Job* had already heaped together for the colouring (as he judged it) of a bad cauſe, verſ. 2. *Should not the multitude of words be anſwered? and ſhould a man full of talk be juſtified?* Is it not high time that I ſhould ſpeak a little, when thou haſt had time to ſpeak ſo much?

Quòd mendax ad obſtinatè tuendam malam cauſam.

Secondly, He argues this neceſſity from the falſity of what *Job* had ſpoken, in the firſt clauſe of the third verſe, *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?* It is thy ſin, that thou haſt ſpoken lies; and it would be mine, if I ſhould not ſpeak againſt them.

Quòd irriſor ad contemnendas veras admonitiones illudendum Deo & hominibus.

Thirdly, From the ſcorn and levity of ſpirit, which *Zophar* ſuppoſed he ſaw frothing at the lips of *Job*, *When thou mockeſt, ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?* It were the ſhame of all men, if none ſhould. Thou art ſitting in the ſcorners chair, Shall I be afraid to raiſe thee up, or pull thee down?

So then, The preface may be formed up into this Argument;

Many words, and those full of lies and scorn, must be undertaken and answered; no man can or ought to hold his peace, when he heareth such discourses:

But thy answer is full of words, and as full of lies and scorn;

Therefore I must undertake thee, I must answer.

Paulo amarulentius agit & aculeatius. Coc. *Zophar Jobum reprehendit atrius quam cæteri incalescente ut fit in certamine animo, ita ut à conviciis non abstineat.* Meri.

Thus *Zophar* presseth upon his friend with violence, if not with virulence and fourness of spirit: handling him more roughly, and pouring more gall and vineger into his wounds, then his former Antagonists had done. As his spirit grew warmer, so did his words; and in heat of arguing, he comes very near unto reviling.

Vers. 2. **Should not the multitude of words be answered?**

חרך דברים *Multus verborum*, i.e. *verbosus.*

The multitude of words] *Zophar* taxeth *Job*, as overcopious in language, as a man given to talk, and affecting to hear himself speak. Eloquence of speech, or elocution, is an excellent gift of God; but verbosity, and a love to flow out continually at the tongue, is the vanity of man; at once, a sin in the speaker, and a burden to the hearers. *Paul* was taxed for this at *Athens*, Act. 17. The *Athenians* were the great wits of the world, masters of eloquence; and when *Paul* came amongst them, they encountred him, and some said, *What will this babler*, this *sower of words say?* vers. 18. So some give the notation of the Greek word, though others, with better reason, take it, as an allusion to little birds, which pick up the seed sown, and being of no great use, either for meat or musick, are yet troublesome enough with unceasant, immelodious chirpings. Such an one those Philosophers censured *Paul*, This man speaks many words, but he makes no musick, no ear is taken with him, nor understanding enriched by him. *Though all we speak is in words, yet we must speak more then words.*

σπερμολόγος vel ἀπὸ τῶν σπείρειν τὰς λόγους, vel potius, ἀπὸ τὸ λέγειν, σπέρματα, quasi seminilegas *dicas, quod fata in agris depascantur, metaphora ab aviculis sumpta, quæ neq; magnopere sunt esui, neq; cantu delectant, sed garritu perpetuo sunt molestæ.* Beza.

I shall lay down five particulars, whereby we may discern, when a multitude of words are sinful, or when there is a multitude of sins in a multitude of words: It is possible to speak many words, and all few enough, and no sin at all in them. They are sinful,

1. When words are unprofitable, light, vain, frothy, words that have no nourishment in them: for as meat is to the palate, so are words to the ear, to the understanding. *Words are the bread of the mind.* Some words are nothing but wind, there's no food, no tack in them; you cannot pick one good bit out of a whole discourse. He that hath spoken one such word hath spoken too many: how much more when a multitude of them are spoken together? As it shews the nobleness of action, to do what is worthy to be spoken of, so of elocution to speak what is worthy to be done.

Secondly, When words are beside the matter, beside the business in hand; when we shoot out arrows not eying the mark, arrow after arrow, and all from the mark, this is reprovable. If we speak not to the point, we speak to no purpose. Be clear to that, and the fewest words will make the fullest answer. Be off from that, and many words make not a word of answer.

Thirdly, When there is but a little matter in a great many words, when plenty of words have a scarcity, a dearth of matter in them. Some contract (as it were) the spirits of a point into a few words, and can give you much in a little, a large matter in a narrow compass. This is an excellent skill, though not alwayes fit: because all are not able to apprehend what is couched and drawn up so close together; all are not able to drink spirits, but must have them infused into, and incorporated with larger discourses, and particular demonstrations; they must have line upon line, and precept upon precept, that is a multitude of lines and precepts. Yet matterless words are reprovable, how many soever they be, and the more they be, the more reprovable they are, *Shall not such a multitude of words be reproved?*

Fourthly, A multitude of words are sinful, when they are affected; when a man delights to speak much. A man may be that to himself, which *Ezekiel* was to his hearers, as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument (*Ezek.* 33.32.) Such will speak often and long, not that they care to profit others, but for their own applause, or to please themselves.

Fifthly, And lastly, When we think to carry it by the multitude of words: 1. In reference unto man, to speak a man or his cause down, to over-bear him with a croud or throng of words. Or secondly, in reference unto God (*Eccl.* 5. 2.) *Be not hasty to utter a thing before God*, or concerning God, Why? *For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few.* There is an infinite distance between God and man. We are not able to comprehend, Who, or what God is; we cannot reach God, and therefore we should be very careful and deliberate in speaking to and of God, or about the things of God. The Apostle (*Rom.* 8.31.) having set forth the great mystery of the love of God to us in Christ, concludeth (as some conceive) like an Orator, *What shall we say then to these things?* As if he had said, Here is a subject about which much might be said, but we had need be very careful how and what we say about it, *What shall we say to these things?* No man, no not the tongue of an Angel is sufficient to deliver and unfold these secrets: such love, such goodness are beyond words. The Moralist hath a grave and serious passage to this purpose, while he was falling upon a discourse about the heavens, stars, and superiour motions. *When we enter into our Temples, we compose our selves to reverence; we look even to our garments, that they sit comely about us; we (as it were) fashion and shape every member into an argument of modesty. How much more should we do this, when we come to speak of the stars, and heavens, but most of all, when we speak of the nature of the gods,* (The best Heathen Catechisms speak no better) *Lest we speak any thing rashly, or affirm any thing that is untrue.* If an Heathen was thus taken up with the thought of heavenly bodies, and strucken with a reverential awe, when he was to speak about Idol-gods, how much more ought we to come to the Apostles *stand*, about the Divine things of the great and only wise God? *What shall we say to these things?* It is good for us to avoid a multitude of words in all things, especially in things which are so high, so much above us. The Apostle admonisheth (1 *Tim.* 6.20.) *Avoid prophane and vain bablings*; There may be profane and vain bablings about holy and sacred things: And that not only when we argue about them, but when we pray about them.

Cum in cælo Deus sit, i.e. longissime à nobis, de divinis rebus ignorari necesse est. Hier. *in loc.*

Senec. *l.* 7. *Nat. Quæst.*

In omne argumentum modestiæ fingimur.

This excess Christ reproveth in the prayer of the Pharisees, *Mat.* 6. 4. *They think they shall be heard for their much speaking*, and that they must prevail with God for the things they desire, because they utter many words to manifest their desires. Thus to use many words in prayer is babling, not praying: And thus to use many words in preaching, is the uncomeliness, if not the sinfulness of preaching.

Paul, Acts 20. preached until midnight. There was a multitude of words, yet not too many words; his discourse had not one of these evil ingredients; he did not speak unprofitable things, or things beside the matter, or a little matter in many words; he did not speak, because he affected to speak, or because he thought to carry it by speaking. Thus, to pray long, or to preach long, is no fault: The greatest multitude of such words, is not one too many.

Numquid qui multa loquitur non & audiet? Vulg.

The Vulgar varieth from our reading, *Shall not he that speaketh much hear also?* The Original will bear it: As if he had said, *Thou hast spoken a great while, wilt thou not have the patience to hear thy friend? Wilt thou have all the talk thy self? Thou hast uttered a multitude of words, be content to receive a few. They who have spoken, should be willing to hear and receive an answer.* Much speaking is then most offensive, when we will not take our turns to hear. Some will have all the discourse, all the argument themselves, and when they have spoken long, will hardly endure another to reply a little. See how God hath disposed the organs of the body: he hath given two ears, and but one tongue, which speaks thus much, That a man should be more ready to hear, then to speak; and that's the Apostle *James* his rule, *Chap.* 1. 19. *Let every man be swift to hear, and slow to speak*: not that he doth *positively* commend slowness of speech, that is not his meaning; heaviness of speech is no vertue, nor any mans commendation: but he speaks *comparatively*, *Be swift to hear, and slow to speak*; that is, Be ye more nimble with your ears, then with your tongues; be rather willing to receive instruction, then forward to give it, rather attend the mind of others, then open your own. *There is a time to keep silence, and*

and a time to speak, Eccles. 3. 7. Every thing is comely in its season.

Observe, From the whole reason, That

It is a duty to answer, when much hath been spoken.

Especially, when we conceive any thing spoken against the truth. *Solomons* seeming contradiction asserts this duty, *Prov.* 26. 4, 5. *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.* One rule saith, Answer him not; and the other saith, Answer him. The meaning is plain to the point in hand; *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him*, that is, if he speak foolishly and passionately, do not thou answer him passionately and foolishly too, for then thou shalt be as foolish as he, thou shalt be like or equal to him, as if thy spirit and his were cast in the same mould. *For the answer which a man giveth another is the measure of himself, the image of our minds is drawn with the tongue. But answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit*, that is, If he have spoken foolishly, do thou answer him wisely and discreetly; let thine answer be according to his folly, but in thine own wisdom. Thus to answer a fool according to his folly, is indeed to answer him contrary to his folly. Thus he must be answered, or else he is not answered: and if he have no answer, he will think that he is unanswerable; that, all is oracle which he hath uttered, he will grow into proud and high conceits of himself, that surely he is a conquerour and invincible, because no man takes up the bucklers, or appears in the field against him. Therefore answer him, *Lest he* (whom all that know him, know to be a fool) *be wise in his own conceit. Should not the multitude of words be answered?*

And should a man full of talk be justified?

This latter branch is of the same strain with the former, and what I have observed there answers both, yet I shall open the letter of the Text, and shew the elegancy of the Original.

אִישׁ שִׂפְתַיִם *Notat non loquacem modo, sed etiam facundum.* Merc.

Should a man full of talk?] The Hebrew is, *A man of lips.* Mr. *Broughton* translates it, *Shall the lips-man be justified?* He speaks of *Job*, as if he were composed and made all of lips. *When a man useth one member inordinately, he may be said to have but one member.* Denomination is given from that which is most, or acts most. Thus as he that is a great fighter, is called, *A man of his hands:* so he that is a great talker, is called, *A man of the tongue*, or *a man of lips:* as if he laid by the use of all the other parts of his body to imploy his lips, or were active only with his tongue. The Apostle speaking of the variety of Church-members, under the notion of a natural body, subjoyns (1 *Cor.* 12. 17.) *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?* In like manner if the whole were lip and tongue, where were the eye, where the ear? As we may be said not to have that which we use not; so to have only that, which we use too much.

Si labium valdè deductum sit, atq; etiam tenue loquacitatis atq; eloquentiæ signum est; sicut etiam crassiora labia loquendi ineptiam & difficultatem indicant.

Or secondly, The lips being a special instrument of speech, and a help to pronunciation, are here put for speech it self, and so we explain it in our translation, *Should a man full of talk?* A man of lips, is a man full of talk. And there is a natural reason for it too. As *Physiognomists* gather conjectures from the frame of the whole body, from the lines and lineaments of the face about the habits and dispositions of the mind; So they draw arguments from the lips, whether a man be quick or slow of speech. Some mens lips have a stamp of talkativeness upon them, and others of silence. Thus we may understand that of *Moses* (Exod. 6. 12.) When God was about to send him to *Pharaoh*, about the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, he made many excuses, and at last falls upon this, *How shall Pharaoh hear me that am of uncircumcised lips?* But was *Moses* of uncircumcised lips? as to be of an uncircumcised heart, so to be of uncircumcised lips may intimate spiritual pollution and uncleanness. When the Prophet *Isaiah* cried out at the vision of the glory of God, *Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips* (Isa. 6. 5.) it is, as if he had said, I am a man of uncircumcised lips. But though *Moses* was humble enough in the acknowledgement of his own sinfulness, yet his aim was to note the unfiledness of his speech, not the filedness of his nature. For as among the Jews, uncircumcision was a sign of all the natural uncleannesses of the soul, so of some imperfections upon, or belonging to the body. Thus *Moses* called himself a man of uncircumcised lips, because *he was not eloquent, but slow of speech, and slow of tongue*, (Exod. 4. 10.) He was (according to the letter of the Hebrew) *heavy-mouthed*, or as we say, *meal-mouthed*; and this according to that idiom was to be of *uncircumcised lips*, as if *Moses* had pleaded thus, *I have not a polite and curious language to win upon Pharaoh, My tongue has not been pared and smoothed for the Court-dialect, I that have kept sheep so long, and have conversed with clowns and shepherds, How shall I speak to a King? Pharaoh useth to have accurate Orators about him, men of lips, but I am none.* So then, according to this second sense, a man of lips is an eloquent man, a man ready, very ready and apt to speak; a man whose tongue is the pen, that is, like the pen of a ready writer.

Crassiora habeo labia, quam ut coram rege expeditè & facundè loqui possim: circumcisionis, i.e. extenuatione & expolitione labiorum indigeo. Pined.

Further, when *Zophar* calls *Job a man of lips*, he implyeth, That *Job* had carried himself in that disputation, as if every member of his body had been a lip, or as if he had a lip in every member, that is, as if every member had spoken. According to that of *Solomon* (Prov. 6. 13.) *He speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers*; his carriage, his posture, his action, speak and proclaim what is in his heart, or what his mind is, *He speaketh with his feet.* When violent and passionate persons are speaking, you shall see, as it were, a lip in their feet, a lip upon their hands, a lip in their eyes, a lip in their brows, a lip in their arms, that is, they speak with all these, they move their hands at you, and their heads at you, and their eyes at you, as if all spake. *These are men of lips.*

Toti veluti linguæ sunt, oculis, naso, fronte, ore, manibus, cubitis, pedibus colloquuntur. Bold.

Should a man of lips be justified?] He speaks not of that great work of grace, the justification of a sinner before God; to be justified here is to be approved, *to carry the cause*, or *prevail in arguing.* He that prevaileth in any controversie should be justified: *But shall a man of lips be justified?* Must he needs be thought to speak truth, because he speaks much, or in greatest weight because in greatest number, *Shall he be justified?* We have the word in that sense (*Psa.* 51. 4.) *I will confess*, &c. *that thou mightest be justified, when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest:* That, when thou shalt judge and pronounce sentence upon me, thou mayest appear in the opinion and esteem of all the world to have done me right, or not to have wronged me at all; I aforehand confess my sin, and condemn my self. So we may interpret that (*Job* 13. 18.) *Behold now, I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified*, that is, I have laid my matters so well, and put my business into such a fair state, that I know I shall come off with credit, *I know I shall be justified.* And this is it which *Zophar* seems especially to charge *Job* with, That he hoped to get the Garland, and beat all down before him with his lips, with the multitude of his words; as if he had said, *Thou hast placed thy defence in windy words, and not in substantial truths; but this noise, this talk will stand thee in little stead, thou shalt find that the day will not be won with words.*

Vincet causa, ut necessario habeatur verídicus quia multíloquus? Janson.

Hence observe,

Good words cannot make a bad cause good.

Plerumq; pro differentium viribus & eloquentiæ potestate etiam perpetuæ veritatis conditio mutatur. Min. Octavio. *In multíloquio non deest peccatum.*

Words sometimes makes a good cause appear bad, and a bad cause appear good; but when the rubbish maliciously or ignorantly cast upon the one, and the varnish cunningly laid upon the other, are taken off, both will appear as they are, the one as good as it is, and the other as bad as it is.

Again, *Shall a man of words be justified?* He that speaks much may sooner ensnare then clear himself. In many words there are usually many errours. Silence seldom brings repentance; and it is but seldom that much speaking calls not for much repentance. They that speak much, are in danger to offend much. To be sure, He that hath nothing but words to hold him up, must needs fall. You cannot blow away, either a mans assertion or objection with your breath, but with your reason and authority.

Vers. 3. **Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou mockest shall no man make thee ashamed?**

Zophar riseth higher in language still, reproving *Job*, not only for the multitude, but for the falseness of his words.

Should thy lies?] The Hebrew word is of a large extent, signifying in the verb, *to frame, fashion,* and *form* a thing out of a mans own mind; and so *Zophar* would fasten this upon *Job*, That the words which he had spoken were only shap't and wrought in his own spirit, he had received no such thing from God, no such thing was ever approved by God; the birth of all was but his own fleeting fancie, and sickly imagination. So the word is used (*Nehem.*6.8.) *There are no such things done, as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart*; Thou wouldest put me in fear, and bear me in hand (saith *that worthy of Israel* to his enemy suborning false fears against him) that there are strange plots laid, and many adversaries combined against me: but I perceive it is thy plot to tell me of a plot. Thy information is but to make me afraid of that which is not, not to secure me from that which is. We read of *the moneth which Jeroboam had devised of his own heart* (1 Kings 12.33.) It is the word of the Text. Lies are framed and fashioned out of our own hearts, there is the shop wherein they are wrought. The heart is deceitful above all things; *A deceitful heart is a fit shop to frame lies in, which are deceitful ware.* Such *Zophar* supposed *Jobs* to be.

בדא *Significat aliquid ex ore sin effingere, machinari, cogitare, educere mendacium è cogitatione ad os.* Rab. Mardoch. *Objicit illi vitium, quod Græci λογοποιίαν, &c. Famigerationem vocant, quod est falsa fingere, & aliis narrare. Plautus vocat hos Gerruli-figulos; Ammianus Marcel. Rumi-gerilos.* We call such Talebearers. *Pessimum genus hominum qui verba gestarent.* Sen. *epist.* 123. *Montanus reddit Baddim, Nugatores: Galli appellant Nugatores Badins & Badaux.*

Secondly, Some read, *Should thy toyes*, thy trifling discourses make men hold their peace? Should thy tatling, thy idle tales impose silence upon thy hearers?

בר *Est admodum generale nomen apud Hebræos, ramum, surculum, cogitationem significans, quod cogitationes in animâ sint tanquam rami in arbore, huc illuc protensi.* Merc.

Thirdly, The word signifies the members of the body, and the boughs of a tree, and by a trope the thoughts and abilities of the mind, which are to the mind, as limbs to the body, and as boughs shooting from a tree. *I will not conceal his parts*, saith God of *Leviathan*, Job 41.12. that is, What mighty members he is made up of. Some read the word so here, *Should thy parts be conceal'd*, or, *Should men hold their peace at thy parts?* As if he had said, *Thou thinkest that thou hast mighty parts, that, thou putt'st such Leviathan-like members, such Goliah-like limbs of wit and knowledge, of judgement and eloquence, that all the host of learned men needs must be afraid and tremble to deal with thee, or accept thy challenge. The weapons of the mind are more powerful, and sometimes more terrible then the members of the body.* An ignorant or slow-witted man, is no more able to argue with one that is quick and judicious, then a child is able to wrestle with a Giant.

But the word is most usually taken in the sense we render it, for lies or falshoods; So (*Isa.*44.25.) *He frustrateth the tokens of the liars*, namely, of those that tell lies of the stars, and say, The constellations have reported events to them, of which indeed there is not a letter written, nor a word to be spelled out of those heavenly characters. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

מרים *Aliquando denotat viros notabiles & insignes.* Coc.

Make men.] The word may be limited to great and wise men, *Should thy lies make wise men hold their peace?* So some restrain it here; As if *Zophar* had said, *Indeed thy lies may cause ignorant men to hold their peace, they may deceive the simple, and catch the weak; but should thy lies make men of parts and abilities, men of experience and understanding hold their peace?* Thus the word is used (*Deut.*2.34. *Psal.* 17.14. *Isa.*3.24.) to note illustrious and wise men, men of more then an ordinary pitch and measure in dignity, or in wisdom.

מתים *Est generale comprehendens viros, mulieres & parvulos. Hæc vox (à* מות *mors) ex eo nata videtur, quod omnes sinus morti subjecti, ita à Græcis βρότοι, & à latinis mortalis usurpatur.* Mar.

Others take the word indifferently for any rank or sort of men, one or other: or as we commonly speak, for *any mortal man.* For it cometh from a root which signifies death, which is the last debt of all mankind; as the Greeks have a word for man in general noting his mortality, so have the Hebrews: because all men carry about them the ensigns or symptoms of death continually, therefore they are called *Mortals.* So here, *Should thy lies make any mortal man, or any man alive hold his peace?* Be he high or low, knowing or ignorant, I tell thee the most simple man that goes upon the ground cannot hold his peace, when thou speakest, and may well enough answer all that thou hast spoken. Thus you see the sense is heightned by the lowness of the persons, who are supposed match enough for *Job* in this controversie. What thou hast argued, a woman, even the weakest among women, a child, even a little child, may confute and answer. We need not send for the great Rabbies and Doctors of the Law to deal with thee. Who can be silent, or speak without success? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Hold their peace?] No, They should not: Should what thou hast spoken falsly be received like an oracle of truth, against which no man may open his mouth or mutter? Should it be received as some Divine Revelation which all must admire, none question? Must all the world of reasonable men stand mute at these thy reasonings? Hast thou any hope that thy lies shall find such entertainment, and go off at such a rate of belief or admiration?

דהחריש *Obmutescere Solet Scriptura per verbum silendi & tacendi reverentiæ plenum timorem exprimere.*

Holding the peace importeth greatest reverence both to speakers and actours, as also greatest worth or weight in what is spoken or done. When the Lord slew the two sons of *Aaron* by fire from heaven, *Aaron held his peace*, in token of submission, *Levit.*10.3.

הס *Quam vocem Hieronymus interjectionem esse docet imperantis silentium. Vel est imperativum per apocopen ab* הסה *tacuit reverentiæ causa.* Buxt.

And when providential actings spake aloud the deliverance of the Jews out of *Babylon*, the Prophet like a crier in a court, commands or proclaims silence (*Zech.*2.13.) *Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord, for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.* The Hebrew word *Has* (saith one of the Ancients) is an interjection, or rather a verb of the imperative mood, enjoyning silence or inhibiting speech: we in our language use a word near that in sound, when we would have any, or all, hold their peace, we say, *Husht*: So saith the Prophet, *Husht*, not a word, *For the Lord is raised up out of his holy habitation*; his meaning is, Yield all reverence, respect and fear, stand in awe, budge not, let the wicked silence their vain boasts, and the godly their vain fears: Let neither the one or the other utter a word before the Lord.

Job describing himself in his former flourishing estate, saith, *Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at my counsel; after my words they spake not again* (Chap.29. 21.) that is, I was a man of so much authority and veneration, that when I spake, no man would offer to speak after me, much less contradict what I had spoken; Thus it was once with *Job*: Now *Zophar* puts it as a matter of reproof. What? dost thou think thy words, yea thy lies such, as no man may examine, much less gain-say? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Again, As holding the peace, notes reverence, so favour and connivence. When we are willing to let an ill word spoken, or a thing ill done pass, as if we saw or heard it not, we hold our peace at it. *When the children of Belial said of Saul, How shall this man save us? and they despised him, and brought him no presents*, the Text saith, *But he held his peace, He was as if he had been deaf*, 1 Sam.10.27. It is wisdom not to see or hear, what we are not in a condition to redress. Connivence is better then complaint, when we cannot mend our selves, nor reduce others. In this sense we may also take, Holding the peace here. Should any man favour or wink at thee? Should any man be afraid to speak truth, when thou speakest lies? Hence observe,

First thus, *It is a duty to vindicate, or to be an advocate for oppressed truth.*

Zophar spake true in the general, Lies must not make us hold our peace. It is a duty to plead the cause of truth, yea to be valiant for the truth. We must know no relations in truths case. *Socrates* is my friend, *Plato* is my friend, but truth is a better friend then both. Whosoever dares speak against truth, we must dare to speak for it. 'Tis noble to shew our selves friends to truth, though we lose friends by it; and enemies to errour, though we get enemies by it. There is a three-fold lie which we must not hold our peace at.

First, There is a verbal lie, when a man tells a false tale, or bringeth up a false report, which is the lie of the ninth Commandment, *Thou shalt not bear false witness*: Hold not thy peace at such a lie.

Secondly, There is a doctrinal lie, when a false position is averred to be the truth of God, and stampt with divine authority. Any erroneous Doctrine is comprehended under, and branded with this title, *A lie*; *For this cause* (saith *Paul*) namely, *because they received not the love of the truth, God shall send them strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie*, (2 Thess.2.11.) He means a doctrinal lie, all the doctrine of *that man of sin*, with which he hath deceived the world under the notion of truth, is but one *great lie.* We must contend earnestly, even wrestle for the

the faith once committed to the Saints against all those lies.

Thirdly, There is a practical lie, of which the Apostle speaks (1 *Joh.* 2. 4, 5.) *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* This is a lie, not spoken, but done, when a mans actions contradict his profession, or when his works unteach what he hath taught by word. The whole life of an hypocrite is but one continued lie. The first of these is a lie told, the second is a lie taught, the third is a lie acted; and all of them are not only to be abhorred in our selves, but opposed in others. All lying is hateful to God, being most opposite unto God, who is the true God, and the God of truth. Lying makes us like the Devil, who was a liar as well as a murtherer from the beginning; the Devil told the first false tale, and preached the first false Doctrine; he is therefore justly called, *A liar from the beginning.* We may sometimes forbear to speak the truth, but we must never forbear to speak against a lie, whether verbal, doctrinal, or practical. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

לעג

Irrisit, subsannavit, balbutivit, nam si quos cum sanna excipere volumus blæsitatem effingere solimus ad eos videndos. Merc. *Sanna est derisio quæ non sit simplicibus verbis, sed gestu.* Pisc. *in* 1 *Epist. ad Cor. cap.* 14.

And when thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?

This is the third charge, and it is higher then the former two: Multitude of words is ill enough; and lies are far worse; but to mock is worst of all. And which is yet more, The word which is here used signifieth the worst kind of mocking, even that which is joyned with scorn and extream derision: it notes mocking not only with the tongue by uncomely speeches, but mocking by the eye or hand with uncivil gestures, or by the affected mimical postures of the whole body. The enemies of Christ are so described in that noble prophesie (*Psalm* 22. 6.) *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people; all they that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, they shake the head.* The event fulfilled this at the death of Christ, *Matth.* 27. Such mocking *Zophar* chargeth *Job* with; thou dost not only speak lies, but thou settest them off with scornful gestures.

21. *Quid potest esse tam ridiculum, quam sannio est, qui ore vultu imitandis moribus, denique corpore videtur?* Cic. *l.* 2. *de Orat.*

Again, This word signifieth not only a light jeast, or a merriment, but that which hath virulency, and wears a sting; not only that which hath ridiculousnes in it, but that which hath cruelty in it. That's the Apostles Epithete (*Heb.* 11. 36.) *They had trials of cruel mockings.*

Thus he reproves *Job*, as if while he lay in the dust, and was groveling on the ground, he had like *a mad man cast fire-brands, arrows and death*; or had behaved himself more like a fool in a play, then a mirror of patience; *Deceiving his neighbour, and saying, Am not I in sport?* Prov. 26. 18, 19.

There is much labour among Interpreters, to find out what gave *Zophar* occasion to break out in so much bitternes upon *Job*. I shall touch that in the close. *When thou mockest,*

Shall no man make thee ashamed?] Some render, *Shall no man confute thee?* We may put both together. Shall no man by confuting thee put thee to shame? When a confident man is thorowly answered, he is ashamed.

כלם

Ignominioso pudore suffundor gravius significat quam בוש *quod est in bonum aliquando, hoc semper in malum.* R. D. Kimchi. Buxtorf. *Significat eum qui conscientia turpitudinis hominum oculos fugit, ut profligati milites, qui sine Ovat. one, taciti & clanculò redeunt Domum.* Coc.

The word which we translate, *Make ashamed*, signifies the greatest shame, as that before did the greatest mocking. Highest shame is but a fit reward for highest scorn. Some Criticks in that language have observed, that the word is never taken, but in an ill sence, for the most shameful shame, when a person is so ashamed that he is confounded, and dares not lift up his head, or look another in the face. The Lord saith to *Moses* in the case of *Miriam*, *If her Father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven dayes?* (*Numb.* 12. 14.) The face is the table of beauty and honour; but when it is spit upon, it is made a sink of shame. God did more then spit in the face of his undutiful Daughter *Miriam*, when he filled her face with the filthy spots of leprosie: *Miriam* must be greatly ashamed, when shut out of the Camp and society of *Israel* seven dayes. When *David*, over-passionately lamenting the death of *Absalom*, blemished the victory of that day, and soiled the beauty of that great deliverance; the Text saith (2 *Sam.* 19. 3.) that the Souldiery went home, *as men ashamed?* Souldiers after a battel won are wont to come home gallantly, and in a triumph; but these victors gat them by stealth that day into the City, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battel; they went sneaking, as we say, home to their dwellings, scarce a man durst lift up his head. Such a sence is here intended, Shouldst not thou be made to hold down thy head, and cover thy face for shame, who hast opened thy mouth in scorn, and in discovering thy own shame? Note from it,

First, *Scornful gestures and mockings are the height of sinnings.*

Zophar put this in the third place, as the highest step in the gradation of *Job*'s sin. There is *a walking in the counsel of the ungodly, and a standing in the way of sinners, before we sit down in the chair of the scorners* (*Psal.* 1. 1.) The Vulgar reads it, *In the chair of the malignants.* When men once arrive at scorning and mocking, they are come to the uppermost form of sinners. *The chair of mocking, is the chair of malignity.* That which is said of a woman in a peculiar sence, is true of any man in this sence, *When he hath lost his modesty, he hath nothing else to lose.* The Apostle *Peter* being about to shew the utmost evil of the worlds old-age or dotage in sin, saith, *There shall come in the last dayes scoffers* (2 *Pet.* 3. 3.) There have ever been deceivers, but at last there shall come scoffers, saying, *Where is the promise of his coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.* *Julian* was in his time counted, and stands upon record to this day among the greatest of sinners, *An apostate from Christ*; and did not the apostasie of his heart break out chiefly at his lips? Did not the very spirit of malignity against the Gospel of Christ, appear in mocking the Christians? When he had taken away their estates, he said, It should not trouble you to be poor, your Master was poor, and he said, *Blessed are the poor.* And when he had caused them to be smitten, Your Master (saith he) hath taught you, *That whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek, you must turn to him the other also.* Thus he turned the holy counsels of Christ into prophane jests. The vilest wickedness of the Jewish state is expresst thus, *They mocked the messengers of God, and misused the Prophets* (2 *Chron.* 36. 16.) It is a great sin not to hear the messengers of God, not to obey the truth that is brought in his name; but to mock his messengers is the dregs of sin. When upon the ascent of Christ into Heaven, many had received such abundant inundation of the Spirit, That they spake with divers tongues the wonderful works of God; *Some* (saith the Text) *were in doubt, saying one to another, what meaneth this? Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine,* (Act. 2. 13.) *Others mocking*, &c. Mockers must stand by themselves, they are marked for wrath: We may warn all such, as the Prophet doth (*Isa.* 28. 22.) *Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong.* If God make the bands of affliction and wrath strong upon any, it will be upon mockers. They break the strongest bands of duty, therefore their bands of misery shall be stronger then they can break.

Reditus ecclesiis eripuit Sarcasmis additis, se Christianos expeditiores facere ad regnum Cœlorum, quia Galilæus magister ipsorum dixerit, beatos esse pauperes, &c. Pezel. *in* Sleid.

Secondly, Observe, *We should not forbear to own, no not a mockt and a derided truth.*

Christ will be ashamed of that man, who shall be ashamed of him, and of his words, in an adulterous and sinful generation. When truth is honoured and applauded, it is easie to own it, but it is our greatest honour to own a dishonoured and a despised truth.

Thirdly, *Mockers should be put to shame.*

Yea, Mockers shall be put to shame. They who cast shame upon the truth, shall have shame cast upon themselves, they shall be buried in shame. They that lift up their heads against Christ, against the people and wayes of Christ, shall be made to hold down their heads, to hold them down for ever. *When thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?* If man do not, God will.

It is here enquired, why *Zophar* imputes these three faults. First, Multiloquy. Secondly, Lying. Thirdly,

and mocking unto *Job*. What occasion had this poor man given for this accusation?

For the first, nothing appears but this, which comes to nothing: *Job* spake a little more then his friend *Eliphaz*, and not much more then *Bildad*. The discourse of *Bildad* is contained in one short Chapter; *Job* lengthened out his answer in two, except this will make it out (which must be very poorly) I see not how he over-acted with his tongue, or failed in speaking too much.

For the second, Some fasten *Zophars* suspition of a lie upon that in *Chap.* 10. *vers.* 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* As if he had obtruded that upon the knowledge of God, which was not, and therefore was not to be known.

Thirdly, He is judged mocking at *Chap.* 10. *vers.* 3. *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* But besides these conjectures, *Zophar* himself gives the reason expressly in the next words, *For, Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes:* As if he had said, *If thou thinkest that I charge thee unjustly, in saying that thou hast scattered lies, and art a mocker; I will tell thee plainly, what renders thee guilty in my thoughts, Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in his sight.* But how slender a foundation this position yields, to support so heavy a charge (were it *Job*'s (*in terminis*) in down-right words, which yet hath not appeared) I shall clear in the opening of those words. But before I come so far, take two or three Observations, upon the Preface in general, as it contains this three-fold accusation already opened.

a

First, *That it is no new thing for him that speaks truth to be counted a lier, nor for him that speaks seriously to be counted a mocker.*

It was so with *Job*, There were some slips of passion in *Job*, but no error in his opinion, and yet he is called a lier; poor *Job* who lay upon the dunghil full of sores, and bodily distempers, full of sorrow and inward temptations, had little leisure to mock and jear, his very wounds might speak his denial of such behaviour; yet he is judged a mocker. The Apostles were sometimes counted mad men, besides themselves, and out of their wits; sometimes cunning and crafty men, who went about to out-wit others. *Paul* is put to his plea in that common case (2 *Cor.* 6. 4.) *as deceivers, yet true*; we are lookt upon as a company of *Mountebanks*, as if our design were to cheat the people at once, of their purses, and of their souls: We are esteemed deceivers, as if we were hired to cry up an Impostor, rather then a Saviour, and to fill the world with fables, rather then sollid truths; but truth of understanding is the commodity we deal in, and we deal in it with truth of heart. Again (2 *Cor.* 2. 17.) *We are not as many, which corrupt the word of God.* Even they who received the Word by immediate revelation, were suspected of corrupting the Word, of mixing and mingling it with their own inventions, to serve turns, or to make it comply with their own interests. But (saith he) we are no corrupters, we make not our own markets of the Word, we do not put it off for worldly advantages or gain, we only make this advantage and merchandise of it, the gaining of your souls.

Secondly, Observe, *A good man may causlesly charge those that are innocent.*

As we must not at all judge a man to be wicked, who is falsly charged, so we should be very cautious how we judge a man wicked, who chargeth another falsly. This age is a charging age, The Tongue and Pen have made as hot charges as the Sword. Lier, Heretick, Schismatick, Deceiver, Hypocrite, are the common weapons of our paper war. It is a duty to give a meek interpretation of rigid censures, much more to be sparing in our judgments upon rigid censures. A good man may pass an ill sentence upon those who are and do good. So did *Zophar* upon *Job*, and yet upright in the main.

Prima simplicium irarum tela sunt maledicta. Sal.

Thirdly, Observe, *It is a dangerous thing to say that is a lie or false, which we are not able to make out for truth.*

That was *Zophar* case, he could not bring both ends of *Job*'s speech together; he suspects all was nought, because he could not find what was good. *Job* was neither babler, nor lier, nor mocker, though *Zophar* thought him all these. We through the glass of our own notions, and especially thorow that of our own prejudices, see things in strange colours. We should look upon every thing in its own likeness; we should prove and try every thing to the bottom before we censure, as well as before we approve. That may be found serious, which at first weighs but light, and that a truth which we called a lie. Such caution was never more needed, nor less used then at this day.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

For thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

But, O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee.

And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is: know therefore that God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth.

IN the three former verses we had the Preface of *Zophars* speech.

In this fourth, He layes down the opinion or position, which he opposeth and speaks against in the fifth and sixth, *Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.* This *Zophar* interpreted as carrying a secret accusation, and reflection upon the justice of God. In saying, Thou art innocent, thou saiest, God is unrighteous. *He that (being punished) acquitteth himself, condemneth his Judge.*

Thou hast said.] Or, Thou hast confidently affirmed: The words imports more then a bare *say-so*; Thou hast strongly testified for thy self, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean.* That's the force of *David*'s infirmity (*Psal.* 116. 11.) *I said in my haste, All men are liars. I said*, is, more then a conjecture, and more then a naked affirmation, even an assertion, and a confident assertion too. So is, *Thou hast said.* If another had said it, we should sooner have believed it. A modest submission of thy doctrine to the judgment of thy superiors, or of thy friends and equals, would become thee better. We have reason to doubt thy doctrine more, because we see thy own hand writes the approbation, and thou art not only a witness, but the only witness in thy own cause. Hence Note,

Dicere est affirmare & pro certo asserere.

When a man bears witness of himself, he layes himself open to jealousies and suspition.

Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure.] Thou shouldst have expected the testimony of another. What do thy neighbours say of thee? What do thy friends say of thee? Do they subscribe this certificate, That thy doctrine is pure, and thy life clean? Christ holds forth a divine prerogative, when he saith (*Joh.* 8. 14.) *Though I bear record of my self, yet my record is true.* God may give testimony to himself, and Christ there speaks in reference to his Godhead, as his next words intimate, *I know whence I came, and whither I go.* It is the priviledge of God alone to be a self-witness. Hence that of Christ (*Joh.* 5. 31.) *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true.* How shall we pacifie and reconcile these two Texts? In one Christ saith, *Though I bear record of my self, yet my record is true*; and in another, *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true.*

I answer first, Christ speaks either by way of concession; though I should grant thus much to you, that if I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true, yet I have further testimony (as he shews in the following verse) *There is another beareth witness of me*, and so I can easily spare my own. Or,

Concessio Rhetorica. Bez.

Secondly, If I should barely assert for my self, I give you an occasion to suspect whether my assertion be true.

Thirdly, The word which we translate *true*, is well rendred *firm*, If I bear witness to my self, my witness is not valid or authentical; for another man may bear witness to his neighbour, and his witness not be true; but that which ratifieth a testimony (*foro humano*) is when it comes from a second, or a third, *In the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall every word be established*, Deut. 19. 15.

But

But may we not bear witneſs to our ſelves?

In ſome caſes we may, in moſt we may not, eſpecially in theſe two.

Firſt, When we teſtifie for our ſelves out of an ambition to commend our ſelves, to ſpread our own plumes, and to grow up into the applauſe of the world: This is phariſaical boaſting of, rather then witneſs-bearing to our ſelves.

Secondly, When what we ſay or teſtifie is untrue. We muſt not bear falſe-witneſs, either for or againſt our ſelves. *Zophar* ſuſpects *Job*'s ſelf-witneſs of both theſe errors, as aiming at ſelf-applauſe, and that by arrogating more to himſelf, then he was able to make out. He offends who affects to blazon himſelf by a worth which is really his; but he that blazons himſelf by a worth which is not his, multiplies offences. Some ſay *they are Jews, and are not, but are the Synagogue of Satan,* (*Revel.* 2. 9.) A Jew may offend, in ſaying, he is a Jew; but he that ſaith he is a Jew, that is, a true believer (for under thoſe old Teſtament terms, Goſpel-profeſſors are expreſt in the *Revelation*) and is not, that is, hath neither the inward power, nor the outward evidence of a Saint, his pretended piety is double iniquity. A Jew of Satans Synagogue, is the worſt Diſciple of his Synagogue, *None are ſo bad as they, who only ſeem to be good. They are twice dead, who have but a name to be alive.* The Apoſtle chides thoſe bitterly, who were Jews only in the letter, and in the fleſh (*Rom.* 2. 17, 19.) *Behold, thou art called a Jew, and reſteſt in the law, and makeſt thy boaſt of God, and art confident that thou thy ſelf art a guide of the blind,* &c. *Thou that teacheſt another, teacheſt thou not thy ſelf? Thou who makeſt thy boaſt of the law, through breaking the law, diſhonoureſt thou God?* To ſay our doctrine is pure, when it is defiled with error; to ſay our ſelves are clean, when we are either openly prophane, or cloſely hypocritical, adds to the impurity of our doctrine, and to the uncleanneſs of our lives. Moſt appear too too bad; but they are worſt, who would appear better then they are.

But do we not find *Paul* more then once maintaining his own integrity? Saith he not, *I have lived in all good Conſcience before God untill this day,* Act. 23. 1. Saith he not? *I am not mad, moſt noble* Feſtus, *but ſpeak forth the words of truth and ſoberneſs, Act.* 26. 25. When we are accuſed and called to anſwer, we may ſay, Our doctrine is pure, when it is; and that we are clean, when we are.

In ſuch a caſe, not to teſtifie the truth for our ſelves, is near as bad as to teſtifie a falſhood againſt another. And in any caſe to give a wrong teſtimony of our ſelves, is worſe then to give it of another. *The ſin is the greater, by how much the perſon againſt whom we ſin is nearer to us: and every man is neareſt to himſelf.*

Calumniatoris hæc verba ſunt, non veritatem & juſtitiam proſequentis. Beda. *Non ita dixit, tantum dixit nihil impium feci.* Hieron. *In eadem ſententia ſunt Gregorius & Chryſ.*

Thou haſt ſaid; And what ſaid he? **My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy ſight.** Divers of the Ancients upon this place challenge *Zophar* of ſlander and calumniation, for faſtning this report or fame upon *Job*. One is very angry with him, How is it poſſible (ſaith he) that *Job* ſhould be imagined to riſe to ſuch a pitch of ſelf-confidence, or to ſpeak at ſuch a rate of ſpiritual pride, when he teſtifies (*Chap.* 9. 20.) *If I juſtifie my ſelf, mine own mouth ſhall condemn me; if I ſay I am perfect, it ſhall alſo prove me perverſe.* And though *Job* ſaid, *I am not wicked,* ye he ſaid not, *I am clean.* The difference is great between a denial of wickedneſs, and a preſumption of cleanneſs. Theſe two cannot expound each other: He that preſumes he is clean, denies he is wicked: Yet he that denies he is wicked, may be far enough from affirming, that he is clean. Such conſequences have more uncharitableneſs then logick in them, and can hardly expect ſo much charity, as to acquit them from ſlander.

But I dare not put an intendment of ſlander upon *Zophars* account; that's too deep, and more then can be juſtified. For, though *Job* ſpake not thus, in ſo many ſyllables, yet to that effect he had ſpoken; words had paſt from him, which might give, at leaſt a colourable pretence for ſuch a charge. And *Zophar* ſeems (in one reſpect) to deal better with *Job* then his other friends; for he collects the matter upon which he minded to debate with him, and layeth it down in an entire propoſition, This is the thing thou haſt ſaid, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in his ſight.* When or where ſaid he ſo? Some ſettle it upon that (*Chap.* 6. *v.* 10.) *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*; that is, (as theſe expound) I have ſpoken truth, and all the truth. Others put it upon that (*Chap.* 10. 2.) *Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me*; which hath (ſay they) this ſecret intimation in it, That *Job* did not ſee any ſin in himſelf, and that he thought God himſelf could hardly ſhew him one, for which he contended with him. Thoſe words alſo at *verſ.* 7. of the ſame Chapter, *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, are ſuppoſed an appeal to God himſelf to give teſtimony againſt him, if he could; *Thou knoweſt*, and I will ſtand to thy judgment, *that I am not wicked.* Theſe paſſages *Zophar* might conſtrue to the ſence given, As if he had ſaid, *I am clean in thy ſight.* And we find *Job* in his following diſcourſe (*Chap.* 31. 7.) ſpeaking out plainly, *If my ſtep hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to my hands; then let me ſow, and let another eat,* &c. If any blot hath cleaved to my hands; amounts to as much as this in the letter, I am clean in thy ſight. And as *Zophar* here, ſo *Elihu* taxeth him with it elſewhere (*Chap.* 33. 8, 9.) *Surely thou haſt ſpoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, ſaying, I am clean without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

What then was faulty in *Zophar*?

This. He managed his diſcourſe more like an Accuſer, then a Comforter. He amplified and ſtrained the words of *Job* to a ſence which he intended not. He ſpake what might be cloathed with ſuch an interpretation; But, *Charity thinketh no evil, and love would have made a better Comment.* He never meant to raiſe himſelf upon his own innocency, or to ſtand upon his terms with God: How often had he diſclaimed and even proteſted againſt ſuch overweenings? Yet his friends impoſe that ſence upon him all along; and will make him ſay, what he never thought, and own what his ſoul abhorred.

Accuſatorum more amplificat, & interpretatione parum benevola, eo rem adducit, ut talia cenſeretur locutus Job. Sanct. *Neceſſe eſt contentioſius loquaris, quod probare non poſſis.* Quintil. *Dedam.* 18.

Take one Note from their miſtake, and then I ſhall give the ſence of the poſition more diſtinctly.

Words are often miſconſtrued, and reckoned for more then the ſpeaker meant them.

We are apt to put unſound gloſſes upon the Word both of God and man. Many report the matter ſpoken, falſly, and very few report the meaning of the ſpeaker truly. More quarrels and controverſies ariſe from the miſtake of words, then from difference of judgments. There is ſcarce a book written about any Tenet which is oppoſed, but the Author is forced to a great expence of time and pains for the clearing of his meaning from the miſtakes of oppoſites. Yea a man can hardly let a word fall in ordinary conference, but ſome miſ-improvement is made of it. When *Peter* asked Chriſt concerning *John*, *Lord, and what ſhall this man do? Jeſus ſaith unto him, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* Joh. 21. 22. *Then went this ſaying abroad among the brethren, that that Diſciple ſhould not die; Howbeit Jeſus ſaid unto them, He ſhall not die; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?* Falſe-witneſſes come againſt Chriſt, and what is their teſtimony? *This fellow ſaid, I am able to deſtroy the temple of God, and to build it in three dayes,* Mat. 26. 61. This was a mere miſtake of the words of Chriſt, *Joh.* 2. 19. where when he was demanded by the Jews, *What ſign ſheweſt thou unto us, ſeeing that thou doeſt theſe things?* He anſwered, *Deſtroy this Temple, and in three days I will raiſe it up.* How groſly did they corrupt this Text by their expoſition of it! Chriſt ſaid, *Deſtroy ye*, they made it, *I am able to deſtroy*; he ſaid, *This Temple*, meaning his own body; they ſay, the material Temple, or place of publick worſhip: So the Jews ſtumbled at his words, when they fell firſt from his lips, as their reply telleth us, *Fourty and ſix years was this Temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?* The Evangeliſt explains him right in the next line, *But he ſpake of the Temple of his body.* It is to be bewail'd how ſuch miſ-underſtandings have troubled the Church and ſervants of God; and that ſo many have ſuffered upon ſuch miſ-underſtandings. The Wiſeman hath a Proverb, which reacheth this abuſe, though it be not direct to the point in hand, *He that covereth a tranſgreſſion ſeeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter, ſeparateth very friends* (*Prov.* 17. 9.) He aims at tale-bearers, who repeat what they hear upon deſign to breed jealouſies, and heart-burning among friends, or, according to the

language

language of the times, to *cajole* the neareſt and the ſtrongeſt *confidents*. But we may apply it to the ſence before us, That uſually they who repeat a matter, ſeparate very friends; for who is it almoſt that repeateth the diſcourſe of another (eſpecially if he hath any prejudice againſt the party, or doth not meet fully in opinion with him) but he ſpoils it in repeating, and ſo ſeparates very friends? This was the fault of *Job*'s friends, they repeated his words, but moſt of their repetitions, were perverſions or unkind Criticiſmes upon, rather then charitable reports of what he ſpake. And therefore he was forced (*Chap.* 23. 3.) to appeal unto God with whom he knew himſelf ſhould find candid dealing, and his words receive a genuine interpretation, *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his ſeat; I would order my cauſe before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.* As if he had ſaid, I have been often wronged by my friends in miſconceiving what I have argued, but were I to argue and plead it with God himſelf, I know he would deal fairly with me, and put a right ſence upon every word, he would make the beſt of what is not ſo well ſpoken, and nothing but good of what is well ſpoken; He would receive what is right, and rectifie what is amiſs. Let us now examine what *Zophar* judged *Job* to have ſpoken amiſs.

Thou haſt ſaid, My Doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy ſight.

His ſuppoſed error was, that he thought his doctrine true, and this was his blot, That he thought himſelf clean. This thou haſt ſaid,

My Doctrine is pure.] That is, I am orthodox or ſound in judgment, both in my general tenets, and in what I have particularly maintained in the preſent diſputation concerning the providence of God in afflicting godly men, and in diſpenſing outward comforts to the wicked. *Thou haſt ſaid thy doctrine*, delivered upon both or either of theſe ſubjects, *is pure.*

לקח *Accipere, doctrina dicitur ab accipiendo, i.e. diſcendo, nam diſcere eſt accipere.* Druſ.

The original word which we render *Doctrine*, is derived from a root which ſignifies *to take, or to receive.* And that upon a threefold ground.

First, Becauſe ſuch Doctrines are delivered upon the taking of mature deliberation, or gained by taking much pains for them.

Secondly, Becauſe ſuch Doctrines are in their own right to be received. Sound Doctrine is worthy to be received, it is worthy of all reverence and ready acceptation.

Thirdly, Becauſe there is a power in ſuch Doctrines to take or catch thoſe unto whom they are ſpoken. *Truth is full, not only of ſtrength, but of ſubtilty.* Hence ſome conceive that the alluſion is to Hunters and Fowlers, who lay baits, and ſet traps to catch birds, or other game. So (in a good ſence) a man of wiſdom and underſtanding, publiſhing ſound Doctrine, layes a bait, with holy craft to enſnare and catch his auditors (*Prov.* 11. 30.) *He that winneth ſouls is wiſe*; it is this word. They who are godly and judicious catch ſouls, as a fowler catcheth birds: by laying out ſound, wiſe and faithful arguments, they take and ſnap men; they hold their ſpirits faſt, till they overcome and win them, even as the ſnare of the fowler takes the bird: Such are wiſe men indeed. The whoriſh woman (*Prov.* 7. 13, 21.) is ſaid, to catch or gain the young man (the word is the ſame in the original) *by her fair ſpeech*, her taking language. *A whores doctrine is very taking, her lips drop enſnaring eloquence.* As there is a power in ſinful counſel to take and enſnare; ſo much more in holy and wholſom counſel. The Apoſtle was a Craftsmaſter in this ſoul-trade (*2 Cor.* 12. 16.) *Being crafty* (ſaith he) *I caught you with guile*; I plaid the *cunning mate* with you, I laid a ſnare, and ſet a trap, but all for your good.

Metaphora ſumpta à venatione. Piſc.

Further, The word ſignifies pleaſure and ſweetneſs, noting thus much, That purity of Doctrine is pleaſant, and gives much delight. As meats are to the taſte, ſo are truths to the underſtanding; nothing brings in greater contentment to any faculty, then a clear apprehenſion of the proper object. Suitableneſs is the ground of pleaſure. And the pleaſures of the intellectual part, are as much above thoſe of the ſenſitive, as the underſtanding it ſelf is above the ſenſes. A *Philoſopher* having found out a true and rational concluſion in *Geometry*, ran about the City, where he lived, as if he had been diſtracted with joy, ſaying, *I have found it, I have found it.* When God gives, and we by ſtudy and prayer find out the treaſures of divine truth, it is as the beginning of Heaven (*Matth.* 13. 44.) *The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treaſure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and ſelleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. The ſtatutes of the Lord are right, rejoycing the heart*, Pſal. 19. 8. To receive pure Doctrine is as much a pleaſure, as it is an honour; as much the delight, as the ornament of the mind.

My doctrine is pure.

Pure.] The word ſignifies pellucid or clear, that which a man may look thorow as Glaſs, or to the bottom of it, as a Cryſtal fountain. Pure doctrine is like Glaſs or a Cryſtal ſtream, upon which you may not only look, but look thorow it, and to the bottom of it, and find all clear. Such a purity is here meant, *My doctrine is pure.* Purity of doctrine imports two things,

זכך ז ך *Mundus, purus, clarus fuit, eſt lucere ad modum vitri & chryſtalli.*

First, The preciouſneſs of doctrine; for that which is pure is precious, and every thing the more pure it is, the more precious it is in its kind.

Secondly, The unmixedneſs, the uncompoundedneſs of doctrine. Purity is oppoſed to mixture; pure is as much as ſimple or uncompounded; we read of the *ſimplicity of the Goſpel* (*2 Cor.* 11. 3.) which is nothing elſe but the purity of the Goſpel. The contrary whereof is corrupting or *adulterating the word of God*, by the addition of humane inventions, and our own fancies.

My Doctrine is pure.] Pure in both theſe ſences. It is precious and worth much: it is unmixed, nothing but it ſelf. I have not feigned and coyned it out of mine own brain. I have not embaſed it with an allay of inferior mettal; it is the ſincere ſimple Word of God.

Whence Note, *True doctrine is pure doctrine.*

True doctrine is pure two wayes. It is pure *ſubjectively*, and it is pure *effectively*. It is pure in it ſelf, and purifies us, *Joh.* 17. 17. *Sanctifie them through thy truth, thy word is truth.* Pure doctrine will purifie. *Falſe principles breed falſe practices; crooked rules make crooked lives:* That which is polluted is as apt to pollute, as that which is pure to purifie. The nature of things is ſtampt upon their effects. Truth is compared to the moſt excellent metals, and it excels them. The Apoſtle ſpeaking of all ſorts of doctrines built upon *Chriſt the foundation*, calls ſome *gold, ſilver, precious ſtones: others, wood, hay, ſtubble* (1 Cor. 3. 12.) The difference of doctrine is ſet forth under theſe Metaphors: Pure doctrine is *gold, ſilver, precious ſtones:* Falſe doctrine is *wood, hay, ſtubble*, theſe are combuſtible matter, they will burn, they will not bear the trial; whereas the Word of God, and ſo the truths that are bottomed upon that, are (*Pſal.* 12. 6.) Pure: How pure? *As ſilver tried in a furnace of earth, purified ſeven times*; that is, it is altogether pure, having not the leaſt droſs in it. *My doctrine is pure,*

And I am clean.] The word [*Bar*] undergoeth a three-fold interpretation among the Rabbins.

כר ג בדר *Mundum reddidit, terſit, politvit, diſcrevit, elegit. Hæc vox ch filium ſignificat, chaldaica eſt, & in ea ſignificatione tantum,* Pſal. 2. 12. Prov. 31. 2. *reperitur.* Piſc.

First, It ſignifies clean or pure. So we tranſlate.

Secondly, It ſignifies a Son or man-child (ſo it is rather a Chaldee word) *Prov.* 31. 2. *Pſal.* 2. 12. *Kiſs the Son:* and from this word *Bar*, a Son, it is conceived that in our Northern parts, a child is called a *barn*; in the Latin, the ſame word denotes a young child, and pure or clean, and ſo it bears fair to the interpretation of the Text: becauſe howſoever a child is naturally all filthy and unclean, in regard of the guilt and pollution of original ſin; yet in regard of acts, a child is clean, he is white *paper*, as he hath no fair letters, ſo no blots upon him.

Thirdly, It ſignifies elect, choſen or preferred before others (*Cant.* 6. 9.) *She is the only one of her mother, ſhe is* (*Bar*, the word of the Text, *the clean one*, or) *the choice one of her that bare her.* But how is ſhe called the *only one* of her mother, and yet *the choice one of her that bare her?* if there be but one, how can there be any choice? The original is, *She is the one of her mother, and ſuch an one*, as if ſhe had ten thouſand to chuſe out of, ſhe could not chuſe a better; this would be her only child, her flower, how many ſoever ſhe might be ſuppoſed to have. If a man who hath many children likes one more then the reſt, he uſeth to ſay, *There is my only Son, that's he.* One as good as can be, is a choice one, though we have no more; yet properly

perly a choice one, is the beſt among many. In this ſence the word is uſed (*Nehem.* 5. 18.) where the bill of fare for *Nehemiah* his Table is thus drawn up, *He had ſix choice ſheep*, &c. They did not take the flock as they came, but picked the beſt for the Governours Table. Thus the word carries a comparative ſence in it, pointing out not only one that is clean, but one elect before others for his cleanneſs, *I am clean*,

Te, O Deus, judice & teſte, tè bene conſcio.

In thine eyes.] That is, Thou, O God, conſidering, trying and judging me, I ſhall yet be found clean. It is an high challenge, but we are not to take it ſtrictly; *Job* was no legal Juſticiary, he ſought not righteouſneſs in the works of the Law, but through faith in the Meſſiah: He ſpeaks here, as in other like places, one or all of theſe three wayes.

Firſt, In oppoſition to the opinion which men had of him: As if he had ſaid, In the ſight of men I am filthy and unclean, an hypocrite and wicked: my friends judge me ſo, but, *I am clean in thine eyes.*

Secondly, *I am clean in thine eyes*; that is, in the general bent of my ſpirit, in the common tenor of my heart and life; though I have my failings, yet my courſe is holy. Denomination is taken from the better and greater part.

Thirdly, *I am clean*, &c. that is, in reference to the ſpecial charge, which my friends lay upon me; they ſay I am an hypocrite, Lord, I am clean from that in thine eyes. Thus *David* (*Pſal.* 18. 24.) *Therefore hath the Lord recompenſed me according to my righteouſneſs, according to the cleanneſs of my hands in his eye-ſight.* The ſame Comment will ſerve *David's* Text and *Job's*. *David* was not in a conteſtation with the juſtice of God upon his own integrity, but upon a vindication of his integrity from the injuſtice and jealouſies of men.

Hence we may obſerve (which is a ſeeming contradiction)

No man is clean in God ſight: Some men are clean in Gods ſight.

No man is clean in Gods ſight, that is, in himſelf or of himſelf, *Job* 14.4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Every man is hewen from a corrupt ſtock, and therefore is corrupt; *Behold the heavens are not clean in his ſight*, Job 15. 15. *Yea he chargeth his Angels with folly*, (*Chap.* 4. 18.) How great then is the folly of that man, who upon his own account diſchargeth himſelf of folly in the ſight of God?

Yet a believer may ſay he is clean in the ſight of God.

Firſt, Clean perfectly by the grace of juſtification. So believers in this life are, as having no ſpot or wrinkle imputed to them, though many ſpots and wrinkles remaining on them. The cleanneſs of Chriſt, is clean in the eyes of God; and that is the Saints cleanneſs. 'Tis theirs for their uſe, though not in their propriety,

Secondly, Clean alſo in the ſight of God through the grace of ſanctification; God gives and ſees, as a deſire of, ſo an endeavour after univerſal, practical cleanneſs, in them that are juſtified. A believers way in this world is clean from crimes, though not from ſins. *If any man ſay he hath no ſin, truth is not in him; and if any man commit ſin, grace is not in him*, 1 Joh. 3. 8, 9. Sin lives in a clean perſon; but he that is clean lives not in any ſin. And this is a cleanneſs in the ſight of God.

In the conjunction of theſe two, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy ſight*; we ſee the two heads of religion, or the two main hinges upon which all religion turneth. Firſt, *Purity of doctrine.* Secondly, *Cleanneſs of practice. Holineſs of life and ſoundneſs of opinion, conſtitute a perfect man*; Here's the character of a Chriſtian, in his compleatneſs. This was typified in the Old Law, by the *Urim and the Thummim*, ſet in the *breſt-plate of the High Prieſt. Urim* typed *purity of doctrine*; *Thummim, cleanneſs of life.* This *Motto* fitted not only the Prieſts of the Old Teſtament, or the Miniſters of the New, but befits every Chriſtian: Every believer ſhould bear this upon his breſt, *Purity of doctrine, and cleanneſs of life.* Chriſt checks the Phariſees (*Matth.* 23. 2, 3.) who had the former, but not the latter; they had purity of doctrine, but they wanted integrity and holineſs of life: they ſate in *Moſes* chair, and therefore he biddeth his Diſciples and the people, *That all whatſoever they bad them obſerve, that they ſhould obſerve and do; but* (ſaith he) *do not ye after their works*; take heed of treading in their ſteps: you may do their words, but not their works; why? for *they ſay and do not*; though they have purity of doctrine, they have not cleanneſs of life. It is an ill hearing, and a ſad ſpectacle, when theſe two are ſeparated. When purity of doctrine, and cleanneſs of life appear together in one perſon, happy is that man; and he is a fit inſtrument to make others happy: but where either of theſe appears alone, or with its contrary, as a companion, purity of doctrine with uncleanneſs of life, or cleanneſs of life with error and unſoundneſs of doctrine; it is dangerous to embark with, or come near ſuch; for themſelves are in great danger: Themſelves are in an ill condition, and they are fit inſtruments to make others worſe. Unſound doctrine frets like a Canker, and an unclean life is catching like a Leproſie. We are apteſt to take an unſound doctrine from thoſe whoſe lives are clean; and we are apteſt to imitate their unclean lives, whoſe doctrine is ſound.

From the latter branch, **I am clean in thine eyes**, Note,

Firſt, *It ſhould not ſatisfie us that we are clean in the eyes of men, unleſs we can approve our ſelves to God alſo.*

For as not he that commendeth himſelf, ſo not he that is commended by others is approved; but whom the Lord commendeth, 2 *Cor.* 10. 18. It is but cold comfort to be clean in the eye of our neighbours, that they give us a fair teſtimony; if in the mean time our own heart condemn us. Yea, what though we are (like that generation ſpoken of by *Solomon*) *Pure in our own eyes*, and have a *plaudite* in our own hearts, if we are impure in Gods eye. It is moſt deſirable to be a *white in the eye of God*: while we are white in his eye, we need not trouble our ſelves much, though we are black in the eyes of all the world. *It is a ſmall thing with me* (ſaith *Paul*, 1 Cor. 4. 3.) *that I ſhould be judged of you, or of mans judgment; yea I judge not my own ſelf, but he that judgeth me is the Lord.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *What we are, and what we do, is all before the eye of God.*

It is a common doctrine, that God ſees and takes notice of us. But as common as the doctrine is in the mouths of men, the uſe is rare in the hearts of men; yet there is no man ſo heightned in grace, but may make uſe of it. Chriſt himſelf made uſe of it, *Pſal.* 16. 8. (The words were ſpoken by *David* his figure, and applied to Chriſt, *Act.* 2. 25.) *I fore-ſaw the Lord always before my face.* Chriſt did not uſe this doctrine to keep or over-awe his heart from ſin (he was infinitely above that) but to ſupport his heart in ſuffering, as appears in the latter part of the verſe, *he is on my right hand, that I ſhould not be moved.* But to us it is uſeful both theſe wayes, and many other wayes. The neglect of this doctrine leaves us under the neglect of many duties, and opens a gap, yea floud-gate unto every ſin. Durſt any mock God with out-ſide and bare profeſſion, if the heart had fed upon, and thorowly digeſted this truth; cleanneſs and uncleanneſs, ſincerity and hypocriſie are in the ſight of God? How often do men flatter themſelves with this vain hope, that their work is in the dark, and no eye ſees them? How often doth the *Church-Atheiſt* queſtion, like thoſe (*Job* 22. 13.) *How doth God know? Can he judge thorow the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him that he ſeeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of Heaven.* Sure he troubles not himſelf with what we do; and though moſt are ready to acknowledge in words, that God ſeeth them, they act as if God (like the Heathen Idols) had eyes, but could not ſee. It was that which *Melanthon* obſerved of the *Italians*, *You* (ſaith he) *are very zealous to believe that God is in the bread, but you walk as if you did not believe God to be in Heaven.* Bleſſed is he that condemneth not himſelf by the truths which he alloweth.

Thirdly, Foraſmuch as the original [*bar*] ſignifies not only purity, but elect and choſen, Obſerve,

Clean and holy perſons, juſt and upright perſons, are fit for choice and election.

Men may not chooſe, as God chooſeth. God chooſeth out of a common maſs without reſpect to good or evil, as the motive of his election; he did not look upon mankind, and ſee one pure, and another impure; one clean, and another

another unclean; and then chuse the clean, and leave the unclean; No: (*Rom.* 9. 11.) before *Jacob* and *Esau* were born, before they had done either good or evil; *That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said,* Jacob *have I loved, but* Esau *have I hated*; Gods election is not upon actions. He found them both in a like state, yet he chose *Jacob*: The reason of it is, because he hath power, and a purpose to make them clean, whom he chuseth. God elects to cleanness, but he doth not elect any, because they are clean, or cleaner then others. The grace of election is not directed by, but directs and leads to the grace of sanctification. But when men go to chooſing, they must not take this course, because they have not this power: when men choose, they must choose upon fore-seen, or rather present works of holiness and righteousness. They must chuse men fearing God, and hating covetousness, for Magistrates. They must chuse men apt to teach, sober and blameless, for Ministers. They who cannot make men fit, whom they have elected; must consider who are fit, and then elect them.

Zophar having laid down *Jobs* opinion of himself, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes,* (vers. 4.) proceeds to the confutation of it in *vers.* 5, 6. which we may give you in this argumentative form.

That person is not pure in doctrine, and clean in the sight of God, whom though God hath greatly afflicted; yet he might justly afflict more:

But though God hath greatly afflicted thee, yet he might justly afflict thee more;

Therefore thou art not pure in thy doctrine, nor clean in his sight.

The assumption is given in the close of the sixth verse, *Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth:* and is prefac'd or led in by a wish, in *vers.* 5. and part of *vers.* 6. a wish that God himself would undertake *Job*, and dispute with him.

Vers. 5. **But O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee!**

As if *Zophar* had said, *While I am about to speak; I almost think it will be but lost labour for me to speak; yea, I think thou art beyond the speaking of any man: thou art so obdurate and hardened in thy way, so wise in thine own conceit, so stiff to thine own principles, so unyielding to those better counsels which have already been given thee, by thy grave, learned and godly friends, that I am much (and I conceive any man would be) discouraged to argue and debate the matter further with thee. And therefore I would willingly quit my hands of this task, and leave thee to God, I would gladly be eased of this burden, and turn thee over (as a man past cure by man) to the hand of Heaven. O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee!*

Or secondly, This Preface may have relation to those secret hints, yea sometimes explicite wishes of *Job* (declining the sentence and censure of his friends) that God and he might speak together. He only desired the Lord to abate the dreadful splendor of his Majesty, or not to clothe himself with dazling light, and amazing glory in that congress. And, *Then* (saith he) *let him speak and I would answer* (Chap. 9. 15.) Again (*Chap.* 10. 2.) *I will say unto God, Do not condemn me, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me?* In both which passages *Job* seems to petition and press the Lord for a *personal treaty*; in answer to which request, possibly *Zophar* might thus begin, *My friend* Job, *It falleth now to my lot to speak unto thee, but I should (with all my heart) rejoyce, if God would grant the wish which thou hast so often presented to him, even vouchsafe to speak unto thee himself. We have often heard thee appealing from earth to heaven, calling God to witness, that such and such is thine integrity. O that God would answer thee, and give thee a meeting! O that he would condescend so far as to confer immediately with thee! How glad should we be of this? and we believe thou wouldst be as sorry; it will be little to thy ease, if God once take thee to task, thou shalt quickly find it otherwise with thee then thou dreamest or presumest; he would soon cool these heats, and asswage the swellings of thy spirit, by discovering himself in holiness, and thy self in sinfulness. Thy crest will fall, and thy courage come down as soon as ever he enters the list with thee, and doth but shew thee who he is, and what thou art.* Either of these wayes the connexion lies fair, *O that God would speak and open his lips against thee!*

The Hebrew is, *Who would give*, or, *O that some body would get God to speak?* The phrase is optative, including an ardent desire of obtaining, and therefore we translate not, *Who would give?* but, *O that God!* As implying the great and instant importunity of *Zophar* to speed his sute, *That God would speak and open his lips against him.*

Quis det Deum loqui?

Some too critically and over-curiously distinguish between the *speaking of God, and his opening of his lips.* As if the one, namely *speaking*, did import an *immediate voice*, when God reveals himself without the intervention of any instrument or second cause: but the opening of his lips, *a mediate voice*, when God speaks (though in an extraordinary manner, yet) by man or Angel, or any other creature, whose service he is pleased to design for such a manifestation of himself. *God can give a lip to liveless creatures, and make any thing his tongue.* He that made mans mouth to speak, can make that speak which hath no mouth; and so, may be said to open his lips in whatsoever he useth to demonstrate or discover his mind to us by. But I pass this as a nicity, especially because *Zophar* imploring God to deal with *Job* immediately, and not by the service of any creature, yet calls it, *The opening of his lips.*

Loquitur Deus per semet-ipsum, aperit vero labia cum vel hominum vel aliarum rerum opera tanquam instrumento utitur ad aliquid manifestandum. Aquin.

Speaking and opening the lips, are the same thing under different expressions, or the latter is but an exposition of the former. Opening of the lips is speaking, we speak by opening the lips; only here is an *hysteroſis*, a figure frequent in Scripture, when that which is first in nature, is put last in order, for opening of the lips precedes speaking; here the method is inverted, *O that God would speak, and that he would open his lips against thee!*

O that God would speak!] The word carries more then common talking, it is here restrained to speech in judgment, or to an exact discussion of the cause preceding judgment. Such is the meaning of that heavenly summons (*Psal.* 50. 7.) *Hear, O my people, and I will speak* (I will debate the matter, and plead with thee) *O* Israel, *I will testifie against thee. Zophar* prays for a day of trial, for a little day of judgment. *O that God would speak,*

דבר *Non ad quemlibet sermonem, sed ad eum qui in judicio habetur, vel ad disceptationem spectat.* Bold.

And open his lips.] *To open the lips* implieth grave and deliberate speaking. The Hebraisme is very frequent, *Psal.* 78. 2. *I will open my mouth in a parable.* Parables are sententious speeches, speeches filled with weight of wisdom. To open the mouth in a parable is to have an active intension of the spirit, preparing and fitting the mouth to open. The mouth of a wise man is under custody, least the treasures of his mind should steal out, or be stoln out unobserved. *Precious things are not left open, they are under lock and key.* He is a wise man that keeps a lock and a key at his lips: the lock of silence, and the key of speech; or the key of discretion to shut and open the lock according to the true occasions of speech and silence. *David* prayeth, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips* (Psal. 141. 3.) As we should desire the Lord to keep or watch the door of our lips, least we speak sinfully; so we should keep or watch our own lips, that we may speak fruitfully and seasonably. The Scribe which is instructed to the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man which is an housholder, bringing forth out of *his treasure things both new and old* (Matth. 13. 52.) He hath a store, a stock of knowledge laid up there, and he openeth not his mouth, or vents it, till occasion speaks. That counsel (*Prov.* 22. 17, 18.) fully reacheth this Hebraism of opening the mouth. *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise*; (what to do?) *and apply thine heart unto my knowledge*; (let thine heart draw in knowledge) let it be as a bed, or a repository for the words of the wise to rest on, or to be laid up in; for, *it is a pleasant thing* (there's the treasure) *if thou keep them within thee, they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. If thou keep them within thee:* As if he had said, When thou hast been a learner, and hast gained a stock of knowledge, then, *they shall be fitted for thy lips*; that is, thy lips shall bring forth, shape and form, those notions of truth into profitable and savoury discourses, *They shall be fitted to thy lips.* Some speak the words of wisdom, but such words are not fitted to their lips: It is (as the Proverb teacheth) *The Ass to the harp, or the Cat to the lute.*

Aperire labia est sapienter & cum pondere loqui; quasi thesaurus effet in corde, cujus os & labia sint velut ostium sub clave vel sigillo, &c. Bold.

Words

Sane aliter rem habere intelligeres quam putas, non ita jubus apparebis, ut tibi persuades. Merc.

Words must be seated in the heart before they are fitted to the lips. *Davids mouth did not speak of wisdom, till the meditation of his heart had been of understanding. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh, both good and evil.* And as a good man speaks evil, so an evil man speaks good unhandsomely, because it is not in, nor with his heart.

Sincerius erit si in simplici fandi notione sumatur hoc verbum quasi Jobi dulciloquio simplex Dei loquela opponatur, ut hac illud facillimè confundi dicat.

Further, To open the lips is no more in ordinary acceptation, then to speak plainly: and then it stands in opposition to those eloquent orations, which (as *Zophar* supposed) *Job* had studied to defend and secure himself against God; as if he had said, *If God would but open his lips, and speak unto thee, one plain word might be enough to overthrow all the curious discourses and set speeches, enough to answer, and cut the sinews of all the fine spun orations, and cunning sophistry which thou hast used in this cause. Let God arise* (saith *Moses*) *and his enemies shall be scattered. Let God open his lips*, saith *Zophar*, *and thy mouth shall be stopt.*

His verbis habita personæ & temporis ratione non leviter pungitat Job. Bold.

Thirdly, The words may carry a redargution of *Job*, as a man whom God did so far neglect, that he would not afford him a word; As if his friend *Zophar* had thus reproved him, *Thou hast been calling upon God to speak, and shew thee why he contendeth with thee, yet thou hast not prevailed in thy sute, he vouchsafeth thee never a word, but leaves thee still to us.* This (some conceive) hath a reproof in it, considering the times wherein *Job* lived; for then it was no very strange thing (though it was an high favour) for God himself to speak to the Saints his special favourites. *God at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets* (Heb. 1. 1.) And as he spake by the Prophets, so he spake by himself; God spake nine times unto *Abraham*, as you may observe upon diligent reading from *Gen.* 12. to 22. He spake also to others of the Ancients. And when God refused to open his lips and speak to *Saul*, how pitifully doth he complain, *I am sore distressed, for the Philistims make war upon me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by Prophets, nor by dreams* (1 Sam. 28. 15.) *Saul* took it not only as his *disparagement*, but as his *undoing*, that God refused him *conference*. This refusal (according to the present interpretation) *Zophar* layes in *Jobs* dish, *Thou hast prayed that God would manifest himself to thee, and that's an honour which he hath done to many of his servants, in the Catalogue of whom thou writest thy name, and pretendest thy self for one, but he hearkens not unto thee, though I wish he would. O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee!*

Gen. 12. 1, 7, 13. c. 15. 1 c. 17. 1. c. 18 1. c. 21. 12. & 22. 1. 11.

But what is the manner of Gods speaking, and how doth he open his lips?

It is an allusion unto men. Man is not able to understand the way of a spirit, but by what is common to man. A spirit hath no lips to open, nor any instruments of speech: And to speak strictly, a spirit doth not speak at all. God is said to speak,

Formatas à Deo sensibiles & externas voces negare videtur. Basil. *in Isa. 7. Quod non ausim admittere.* Bold.

First, When by his mighty power he forms and frames a voice, which is audible and perceptible by the ear, as unto *Samuel*, *The Lord called Samuel, Samuel*, at the last *Samuel* answers, *Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.*

Secondly, God spake to *Moses*, *Face to face*, that is, familiarly and clearly. This was the highest degree of revelation, and drew nearest to that which the Saints shall have in glory.

Thirdly, He spake also by many signs, especially by *Urim and by Thummim.*

Fourthly, God spake when he intimated or hinted his mind to the spirit of man, by the instinct of his own Spirit. Most of the Prophets heard only an inward word, which is called, *The coming of the word of the Lord unto them.* As God only speaks to the heart, while the word soundeth in the ear; So he often speaks to the heart, when the ear hears no sound. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* (*Psal.* 85. 8.) God speaks peace when he sends or gives peace, that is, all good things. God speaks peace also, when he (as it were) by a secret Eccho, returns a word of assurance to the petitioners heart, that he will give peace. When *Zophar* wishes, that God would speak, he means it of speaking by audible voice, or face to face, not by signs or secret intimations.

Zophar being thus instant, That *God would speak, and open his lips against Job*, teacheth us,

First, *Some men are beyond the conviction of man.*

O that God would speak. We say of a sick man, whose disease is desperate, as in the plague, &c. *The Lord look upon you, the Physicians have given you over, they can do no more, we leave you to the prayers of the faithful, and to the compassions of God:* Some in spiritual distempers are so extreamly diseased, that the soul Physician can do nothing upon them, they are past all his medicines and preparations, these we give up to the cure of God, who raiseth the dead, and calleth those things which are not, as if they were. I grant, that whatsoever healing or cure is wrought upon the soul of man by men, is from the Lord. *Man and man stand upon even ground*; Humane reason and humane reason are equal; and he that speaks is often upon a lower ground (though he stand higher) then he to whom he speaks, and is sometimes weaker in humane reason: Now that which overcometh and convinceth must have an advantage, and come in power, else there can be no victory. An equal (in all points) cannot be a conquerour. Hence when the Prophets delivered their messages, they put Gods authority to the word, *Thus saith the Lord:* They knew all they spake could prevail nothing. But though God give the effect of mans word to every man, yet some men appear more untractable and unteachable by the Ministery of man then others, they fit under it, and (possibly) have sate under it long, yet nothing's done, their mindes are as blind, their wills as stubborn, their wayes as crooked as ever. Man is not any thing in the conversion of any man without God (1 *Cor.* 3. 7.) but some we refer wholly to God, having spent much strength and time upon them in vain. Some men have out-stood, and are the reproach of all the prayers and tears, of all the counsels and admonitions of man: What can we do more or less then give up such (as neer lost men) to the work of God. *O that God would speak.*

Secondly, Observe, which *Zophar* chiefly intends,

That if God once open his lips, and deal with a soul, he will quickly bring down his spirit and convince him.

Man cannot hold out against the speakings of God. Man is not able to withstand the immediate, no nor the mediate speakings of God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*; it is our warfare, but the conquest is from God. When he cloathes the word with his own power, and bids it go in his might, the strongest holds of ignorance and unbelief, of obstinacy and rebellion fall to the ground, like the first ripe figs shaken with the wind. When the unlearned or idiot comes into the assembly of the Saints, *He is convinced of all, and is judged of all; for the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so falling down on his face, he will worship God*, 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. What wrought this sudden change? Was it the power of men? No, *He will report that God is in you of a truth.* The man perceived God was there, and upon that apprehension his heart was subdued, he falls down on his face and worships. When God works, the work is done. He works for us, and none can hinder; He works in us, and we cannot hinder. The arm of grace in the word of God is invincible. *O that God would speak.*

Vers. 6. **And that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, &c.**

As if he had said, *'Tis but reason that I should call God to speak unto thee, for the secrets and depths of wisdom are hidden from and above our reason.* The natural man perceiveth not any thing of God, and the spiritual man may be yet unable to perceive many of the things of God. *O that God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom.*

Videtur Jobo impingere quasi illi abstrusam Dei sapientiam se assequi gloriatus fuisset. Merc.

Zophar seems to meet with *Job's* seeming boast, that he was one of Gods familiars, and well acquainted with his will. The conviction riseth thus, *Thou hast carried it as if thou wert of the Cabinet-councel in heaven, as if thou hadst stood at Gods side, when he gave his orders and dispatches concerning the affairs and motions of the whole world; thou takest upon thee, as if thou wert the favourite of the great King, and knowest his heart; But if God speak to thee indeed, he will shew thee other manner of secrets then thou art yet acquainted with, thou shalt at once see that thou mistakest much, and knowest little.*

O that

תעלמית חכמה

Præcipua arx disputationis Tsopharis hæc est, multa hominibus non patere, deq; isDeum in controversiam non debere vocari. Coc.

O that he would shew thee the secrets.] Or, *The hidden things* [of wisdom.] Here we have *Zophars argument* distinct from his two friends. He deals with *Job*, not so much to convince him of his own sinfulness, as of the mysteriousness of divine wisdom. Thou complainest and crvest out of the hand of God, of thy great afflictions: I tell thee there is a secret of wisdom in this dispensation, I will plead no other justification of Gods proceedings, but only this, God is infinite in wisdom; *O that God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom.*

Every word, and all the works of God are full of wisdom, and yet many of them are so plain and easie, that he that runs may read them: So plain and easie, that an *Adonibezeck* may run, ye fall and read them (Judg. 1.7.) *As I have done, so God hath requited me.* There was no mystery at all in that. Sense and reason have their lessons, as well as grace and faith. But as there are some lessons easie enough for sense; so there are not a few hard enough for faith. And as some sins of men are plain, very sinful, yet very plain, while other sins lie close in the heart, and are not only an iniquity, but a mystery of iniquity, or iniquity wrapt up in a mystery (the whole body of Antichristian iniquity is a mystery): So some lessons of the wisdom of God are plain, full of wisdom, and full of plainness; we may read wisdom upon the very letter of some words, and in the face of some works of God, while other lessons of wisdom are hard, so hard to be understood, that none can unriddle the meaning of them. And in this the Lord maintaineth his own honour, and keepeth state; he will not have all he doth, or all he speaks lie level to every apprehension, or to be a Text for every mans interpretation; he hath some knotty ænigma's and obscure riddles to exercise the holiest wits, the highest parts, the choisest gifts of his people, yea and their patience too: they must stand waiting and expecting, yea admiring and wondering what God meaneth. 'Tis learned nescience willingly not to know, what God is unwilling we should know. They are as good Scholars who endeavour not to learn what he is not pleased to teach them, as they who have learned what he teacheth them. Though his secrets be with those that fear him, yet we must fear to be among his secrets.

Sunt quædam abyssi de quibus disputare, quas scrutari, est seipsum præcipitare. San. *Erudita insciti a est, non scire velle quæ magister maximus nos voluit nescire.*

The secrets of wisdom here especially meant, are (I conceive) the secrets of providence; That's the subject upon which the dispute runs: God in his actings toward mankind, hath many reserves in his own breast and bosome, which no man is able, or should adventure to give any reason or account of, besides the dictate and meer good pleasure of his own good will.

Once more, *O that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom*, is, as if *Zophar* had said, Thou judgest upon the out-side, thou dwellest in the bark and rinde of divine dispensations, thou canst not look into their heart, God alone can shew that to thee. The word which we translate [*Shew*] signifies to interpret and expound that which is dark, mysterious and ænigmatical.

Hence observe, First, *Wisdom is a secret, or hath a secret in it.*

1. Then it is precious. That which is very common may be very good (as air and water) but it cannot bear any great price. 2. Then wisdom must be sought for, and sought with diligence; *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures,* (*Prov.* 2.4.) Wisdom lies deep, as the veins of gold silver in the earth. *Wisdom is to be sought as silver.* Silver is not to be had upon the surface of the earth there you may find pibbles and flints, but if you would have silver, you must dig and Mine for it. Secrets are not seen at first sight, nor found out upon the first search; we must enquire and enquire, look and look, enquire and look often, and long for the secrets of wisdom. We may buy gold too dear, and be at more charge to seek for silver, then the silver will be worth when it is found. But we cannot buy wisdom too dear; and the least vein of divine secrets, which we find, will not only bear all our charges in the search, but enrich us also.

Again, The word is in the plural, *O that God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom.* Hence note,

There are many secrets in wisdom.

The Apostle (*Ephes.* 3.10.) speaks of the *manifold wisdom of God.* His wisdom is full of variety, it is of many sorts and forms, of many folds and plights. The wisdom of God is simple and uncompounded, it is pure and unmixed with any thing but it self, yet it is manifold in degrees, kindes and administrations, *There are secrets of wisdom*; when you have learned one secret, there are more to be learned. As there is not only a secret, but secrets, many secrets of iniquity lie in the heart of man; we may go from one room of the heart unto another (as the Prophet *Ezekiel* was carried from one place to another about the house of the Lord, *Chap.* 8.) *to see greater and greater abominations.* Thus you may go from secret to secret, from one secret of wisdom to another, and when you have seen both, there are yet greater secrets to be seen, besides those which shall never be seen. Some works of wisdom are unsearchable, and past finding out; they are also innumerable and past reckoning up. Some things are called secrets, because they can hardly be known; other things are called secrets, because they cannot at all be known. A third sort are so secret, that it is our sin to attempt, yea to desire to know them. All the secrets of wisdom are in God, yet some belong unto us; and they are called secrets, not because they are not at all revealed, but because they are obscurely revealed. Some secrets in God belong to God alone; and they are called secrets, because they are not at all revealed. That's the meaning of *Moses*, Deut. 29. 29. *Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but things revealed unto us, and our children for ever.*

Thirdly, The special secrets of wisdom here spoken of, being seated in providence, Observe,

The works of God are full of secret wisdom.

As there are mysteries in the Word, so in the works of God. There are mysteries in the work of redemption, the whole Gospel is a mystery. *The great mystery of godliness*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. Now as the work of redemption is full of mysteries, so are the works of providence; How many hath God posed and put to a stand to read and pick out the meaning of his providential motions? why he afflicteth this man, why he prospereth that; why affairs go sometimes forward, and why at any time backward; why the deliverance of the Church proceeds no faster, and why deliverance makes so many stops and stands, why such instruments are laid aside, and such imployed, these pose and gravel the understanding of man: nor can we give any account of them till we go into the Sanctuary, and inform our selves from the oracle of the Word about the order of the works of God.

Fourthly, Observe, *God only can shew and teach us effectually the secret wisdom of his works and of his word.*

As we learned from the former clause, That a word of Gods speaking humbles the soul: so here we learn, That a word of Gods speaking enlightens the soul. God is the revealer of secrets, *There is a God in heaven* (saith *Daniel*, chap. 2. 28.) *that revealeth secrets.* I cannot interpret the Kings dream, or spell the meaning of it, but there is one in heaven that can, his name is the *revealer of secrets.* If he shew them, we shall surely see them. *Thou hast corrected me* (saith repenting *Ephraim*) *and I was corrected*; and if God instruct us, we shall be instructed. The dullest Scholar cannot but learn, if God vouchsafe to be his Tutour. *He that made the understanding can make us understand.* This is one of the articles of the new Covenant, *Heb.* 8. 11. *In those dayes I will put my lawes into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the greatest:* God himself hath undertaken to be our teacher: though we are unapt, dull and indocible, yet, he hath promised to be at the pains to teach us. His teaching doth not acquit us from our attendance upon the teaching of man, but assures us that he will teach his, if man doth not: and that while man teacheth, he will make that teaching effectual and successful. When he gives us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his Word by, we read and understand: And unless he give us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his works by, we cannot read them with understanding. We are as ignorant in the book of the creatures, as in the book of Scripture, until God instruct us; and if he instruct us, we prove knowing

knowing in both. *What I do* (saith Christ, *John* 13.7.) *thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter:* And what was the date of this *hereafter?* even the day of the Spirits operation in him. *Ye have an unction* (as the beloved Disciple writes, 1 *John* 2.20.) *from the holy one, and ye know all things.* When the anointing teacheth, we have a *qualified, a moderated Omniscience.* He knows all things (in this sence) who knows as much as concerns him to know; and except the anointing teacheth *us*, we know never a Letter, either of what God hath written, or of what he is doing, as we ought to know. His ancient people the *Jews*, (*Psal.* 106.7.) *understood not his works*; and he reproves them by the Stork in the heavens, by the Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, by all the fowls of the air, as more learned and sagacious in his works and providences, then the men of *Israel*, *The stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow observe the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgment of the Lord* (Jer. 8.7.) My people do not understand when it is winter, and when it is summer; when it is a season of mercy, and when of judgment. Some are sick, their bodies are smitten; others are poor, their estates are smitten; a third sort are disgraced, their names are smitten; but they have neither ears to hear, nor hearts to understand unto this day. How sensless are thousands at this day about the great things which God is doing among us? He works terrible things in righteousnes, but few learn either the righteousnes of their own wayes, or the righteousnes of Gods wayes. Few learn either what God hath done, or what themselves ought to do. *O that God would teach such the secrets of his wisdom!*

That they are double to that which is.

כפלים *Dualis numeri propriè significat duplicia. Linguæ sanctæ mos est ea duplicia vocare, quæ aliqua dignitate, virtute, aut numero excellunt; sicut apud Latinos res hujusmodi Decimanæ vel Decumanæ vocari solent.*

The word **double**, is not here taken arithmetically or strictly, as noting just *two for one*; but by *double*, is meant much or *manifold*; a certain excess being put for an uncertain: it is frequent, in the language of Scripture, to call those things which exceed much, *double*; and but *double*, though they exceed very much, though they exceed seven fold, yea an hundred fold, *Isa.* 40.2. *Speak comfortably to Jerusalem*, &c. *for she hath received of the Lords hand double for all her sins.* But doth it suit with the goodnes of God, or his sparing mercy, to punish his people much for sin, or double for their sin? Doth not *Zophar* in this verse, argue *Job* into patience, and redargue his impatience, by telling him, That *God exacted of him les then his iniquity deserved*; and did he exact of *Jerusalem* double for all her iniquities?

I answer, God is so far from exacting double of his people for sin in a way of satisfaction, that he taketh nothing of them, not a penny of them upon that account. Christ is the only pay-master for believers to the justice of God, and he hath paid double, yea, an hundred fold, in sufficiency, for all their sins. When the Church receives double, it is double, that is, full chastisement for all her sins, but she makes no payment for any one of her sins. So *double destruction* threatned upon the enemy, is full destruction, (*Jer.* 17.17.) And when the Church is promised *double honour for her shame*, Isa. 61.7. *and double liberty for her restraint and imprisonment*, (Zech. 9.12.) the Prophets give her assurance of compleat honour and perfect liberty.

In spelunca duplici, i. e. excellenti, pulchra & eximia. Bol.

Again, The word *double* is put also for that which is in any kind choice and excellent. The burying place which *Abraham* bought of *Ephron*, is called (from this word) the *Cave of Machpelah*; that is, say some, a double Cave, one for men, another for women, one within another; or, as others, a fair, beautiful Cave; to which sence, the words of the children of *Heth*, at the sixth verse, seem to lead us: *In the choice of our sepulchers bury thy dead.* That which is best or most, is double at least. Thus the *secrets of God*, being very excellent, *are double*,

לתושיה

To that which is.] The word which we translate, *that which is*, beareth a very various sence, and so renders the Text very difficult.

Secundum legem. Pag. *Et quod multiplex esset lex ejus* Vulg.

First, It signifies a Law or Rule prescribed to live and walk by; Hence some translate, *They are double according to the Law. O that he would shew thee, that his Law is double, or that there is a great deal more in the Law, then thou apprehendest.* Some restrain this to the Law given *Noah*, the seven precepts whereof are famous among the ancient traditions of the Jews. The first whereof, forbad the *worship of strange gods.* The second commanded to *bless the Name of the true God.* The third prohibited the *shedding of innocent blood.* The fourth was against the *defilements of filthy lusts.* The fifth against *Theft.* The sixth concerned *judgment and justice.* The seventh said, *Thou shalt not pull a member from a living creature, and eat it.*

Intellige legem Noæ datam. Hug. Grot. *in loc.*

But we need not reduce *Zophar*'s text to these straights; but enlarge it to the whole revealed will of God, which is often called the Law of God. The Hebrew particle affixed, noteth a relation; *double according to*, or, *by the measure of the Law.* As if he had said, Thou hast narrow thoughts of God, and of his secret wisdom in afflicting thee; but according to law, thy afflictions might be double upon thee, God might make his little finger heavier then his loyns have been. To this sence Mr. *Broughton* translates; *And that thou shouldest have double by justice.*

Duplicia tibi conveniunt, i. e. *duplo majora supplicia quam patiaris, juxta æquitatis normam.* Merc.

Hence observe, *There is more righteousnes in the law of God then man is able to comprehend.*

As there is more mercy in the Gospel then we are able to comprehend (no man ever saw into the depths of that mercy) so there is more holiness in the Law, then we are able to comprehend: No man ever saw into the depths of that righteousnes. There is an infinite holiness in the Law, (*Psal.* 119.96.) *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*: He speaks not in the concrete, I have seen an end of *perfect things*; but in the abstract, *an end of perfection, and of all perfection*; I have come to the outside, or to the very bottom of all (a man may soon travel through all the perfections that are in the world, and either see their end, or see that they must end.) *But thy commandment is exceeding broad*; that is, it is exceedingly broader then any of these perfections, I cannot see the end of it, and I know it shall never have an end. There is a vastness of purity and spiritualness in the Law. Some narrow it up into a small compass; the Pharisees of old, with their poor impure spirits and gross imaginations, straightned the Law into their model, and made it very narrow: They thought no man brake the Law, which saith, *Thou shalt do no murder*, but he that cut his brothers throat: That no man brake the Law that forbiddeth Adultery, but he that actually defiled his neighbours wife, *&c.* But when Christ opened the mysteries of the Law, he shewed secrets of wisdom there. His Doctrine assureth, That a lustful thought is a violation of that Commandment, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*: That an angry thought is a breach of that Commandment, *Thou shalt not kill.* Thus the Law is of a vast compass. *I* (saith *Paul*) *was once alive without the Law* (Rom. 7.9.) I thought my self a *brave man, I was some body*, my Conscience never troubled me, I knew not my disease, while the Law stood aloof off, and I was without the Law, (Not that *Paul* had not the Law both written in his heart, and in his book; for as a Pharisee, he was brought up among the Commentators of the Law) but he was without it, or, he was but at the outside of it (though I give it not for the proper meaning of the place, yet in that sence also) he was without the Law; he had not travelled through the length and breadth of it: *But* (saith he) *when the Commandment came*, when it came in the spiritualness of it, and I saw, in some measure, what holiness was couched there, I was then in a woful condition, I saw my self a lost man; *then sin revived, and I died*; and (*ver.* 13.) *Sin by the Commandment became exceeding sinful*; that is, when the Commandment was cleared to me, then I saw that I was extream sinful, or felt the violent motions of my sin. My sin being discovered by that light, began to spit out its venom, either provoking me with fresh and unwearied assaults to commit it, or terrifying and vexing me for what I had committed. There is a multiplicity of purities in the Law, reaching the multiplicity of impurities and sinful imaginations in us. The Law of God doth, though the Laws of men do not, nor can, take notice of, and descend to the least *Items* and *punctilio's*. A man cannot so much as go a hairs breadth beyond that which is right, but the Law is upon his back; a man cannot have a wry thought, but the Law meets with it; and a godly man (who is spiritual, and hath a new nature in him) seldom hath a wrong thought, but he takes himself tardy in it, and finds somewhat in that holy and righteous will of

Divinæ legis multiplicatio in eo consistit, quod ad minima quæque se extendit. Aquinas. Lex Dei curat de minimis.

God, by which he can charge himself a sinner. Whereas, they that are carnal, and ignorant of the Law, can run on in a thousand sins, and never tell themselves of one, nor will they be convinced, when another tells them. *A godly man hath a Preacher in his own bosom*; if he do but step aside, or do amiss, somewhat within will shew him a rule, and bring him a light to take measure of, and see his failings by. *He* (as the Apostle hath it, 2 *Cor.* 10. 6.) *hath in a readiness to revenge every disobedience.* He finds a weapon ready to his hand, in the Magazin of the word of God, to avenge every disobedience of his heart; if but a vain thought arise, he hath somewhat ready to check it; such is the variety and largeness of the Law, that it discovers and controlls every aberration. *If God shew a Soul the secrets of wisdom in the glass of the Law*, he must confess that it is double to all he knew before, from the light of nature, or from the dictates of humane reason.

Præscriptum rationis quod sequi oportet in pœnis irrogandis Rab. Levi.

Secondly, The word signifies an inward Law, as well as an outward; yea, the height and spirit, the extractions and quintessence of reason come under this notion. There is a reason, a prescript of reason in God. He acteth by a rule within himself, his righteous will is his rule. He gives us a law to regulate our wills, but his own will is his law. We need give no other reason, that what he hath done is right, but this, that he hath done it. We have received one law from the mind of God, but there are infinite laws in the mind of God. Thus the sence runs very clear; *O that God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double (to what thou thinkest) according to the internal, eternal movings and thoughts of his own heart.* Hence *David*'s holy rapture (*Psal.* 40. 5.) *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order to thee: If I would declare and speak of them, they are more then can be numbred.* The works of God toward his people are many and wonderful, but his thoughts are more. The thoughts of God are the eternal purposes of his heart. He doth not think and then resolve, but his thoughts are his resolutions. His thoughts stand, he never lost or laid aside any one of them.

Infinitæ sunt in mente Dei leges, rationes, & modi quibus utitur in mortalium regimine; qui sensus leviſſimus est. Bold.

Duplo majora esse iis quæ existunt Jun. *Vox* Thusiah *complectitur omnes virtutes Dei, ejus sapientiam & justitiam, quæ duplo, i. e. multo major & illustrior est quam nobis videatur, vel nostra ratio capere possit.*

We translate, *That they are double to that which is*: the word signifieth *being*, or the existence of a thing; and so others render, *O that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to those things which exist*: As if he had said, The Lord hath revealed and made many things apparent, but the things which appear not, are far more then those which do appear; the secret wisdom of God exceeds what he hath revealed; he afflicteth thee according to what he hath revealed, but he might afflict thee more; if he should proceed with thee according to the height of his secret wisdom. Hence observe,

> That, *The wisdom of God which appeareth to us, is not half, or is but little in comparison of that which is in God.*

The Lord hath not brought forth all the treasures of his wisdom; he hath not stamped all his wisdom upon any thing which he hath done, no nor upon any thing he hath spoken: It is not possible that a finite nature should receive the whole impression of an infinite wisdom. Our receipts are but drops, he hath an Ocean of wisdom in himself. We are narrow-mouth'd vessels, we take in by little and little. We are vessels of a small and narrow gage; when we have taken in all we can, we have taken in but little. God gives us more then we receive, and he hath more then he hath given. As the secrets of sin in man are double to those which appear; no man ever sinned out all the sinfulness of his heart. Though thousands have brought forth abundance, though they have acted many abominations, yet as *Solomon* speaks, there are still *seven abominations in their hearts.* Monsters and Prodigies of wickedness lie in those dens and dark chambers, which the world never saw. Now as the secrets of sin in man are double to those which appear; so much more are the secrets of wisdom in God. The great God of heaven and earth hath a stock, a store of wisdom by him, which no creature ever saw or looked into, or is indeed capable of. No man, but the *Man-Christ*, hath known so much as is possible to be known of God, and most of God is impossible to be known by man. We should be ashamed, that we know no more of what is revealed; and we should adore what is not revealed to our knowledge. The wisdom of God is divided into secret and revealed: mans portion is in things revealed; Gods portion is in secret things: God hath reserved a far greater portion for himself then he hath given unto man; that which will serve man, will not serve the Lord; his portion is as much above mans, as himself is above man. This *Zophar* layes before *Job*, that he might convince and humble him. Why dost thou cavil or fret thy self through with impatience, at what God doth, seeing thou canst not found the reason of what he doth? thou hast not fathomed God; thou hast not reported all that God is, or hath, *The secrets of wisdom are double to that which is.*

His next words are an inference upon, or the use of this Doctrine.

Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth.

Thus he applies what he had spoken in general. God hath secrets of wisdom, and they are double; What then? I infer this upon it, *Know therefore (O* Job) *that God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth.* Observe from *Zophar*'s method,

> That, *Truths are to be applied and brought home to the Conscience of the hearer, or to the business under debate.*

Possibly *Job* might not have known the meaning of *Zophar*'s discourse, That God had secrets of wisdom, and that the secret wisdom of God is double to his revealed; he might be to seek what use to make of this: *Therefore* (saith he) *know* (here is the application) *God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth.*

Exacteth of thee.] The Hebrew *Nashah*, signifies, to forget, to lend, and to exact what is lent; and from this fruitfulness of the Original, there arise sundry interpretations of the Text. Many take the former sence; as *Nashah*, signifies, to forget, and they differ yet much in giving the meaning of the whole Sentence.

Oblivisci, & in suo Hiphil non tam oblivisci facere, quam notitiam auferre significat.

First thus, *Know therefore that God maketh or causeth thee to forget thine iniquity*; as if he had said, There is infinite wisdom in God, and if he should break forth upon thee in the full lustre of his holiness, and make thee remember all thy sins, thou wouldest be swallowed up in the gulf of thy own sinfulness. As no man can see the face of God and live, it is so glorious; so a sinner cannot see his own face and live, it is so odious. As God in condescention to our weakness, shews us but the *back-parts* of his *glorious self*, so but the *back-parts* of our sinful selves. It is alwayes our sin to forget our sins, but it is often mercy in God to make us forget them. *Know therefore that God makes thee to forget thine iniquity*; that is, the Lord doth not set them in the eye of thy Conscience, nor deals he with thee as if thou hadst committed such sins, which yet he could bring to thy remembrance, and set them in order before thine eyes. So the interlineal gives it, *Know that God doth cause somewhat of thine iniquity to be hidden from thee, or, to be a secret to thee.* God doth not open the pack of thine iniquity, and shew thee all the wickedness that is in thine heart and life; God lets some of it lie hid, and be as a thing forgot, or a secret to thy self.

Stito quod Deus latere facit aliquid de iniquitate tua. Ar. Mont.

Secondly, Others refer this forgetfulness to God himself, who is said to forget the fault, when he remits the punishment. This comes up to the sense of our Translators; for when a thing is forgotten, then it is not exacted, or called for (*Act.* 17. 30.) *The times of this ignorance God winked at*; he regarded not, he looked not after what was done; (that's the common exposition of the Text) God did (as it were) forget the sinfulness of those times. As God is said to forget sin, or to remember it no more, when he fully pardons it; so he may be said to forget sin, when he doth not fully punish it. When meer ignorance hinders man from seeing, meer mercy hinders God from seeing. He is pleased to wink, when we cannot see. *When men have not much understanding what to do, God hath not much memory of what they do*; that is, he doth not strictly reckon with them, or bring them to an account for what they have done. Though a sin of ignorance is damnable in it self, and may condemn the sinner, yet the Lord puts a difference between sins committed ignorantly and knowingly, in the dark and in the light; between those which are committed against the light of nature only, and those committed against Gospel-light. Thus the present exposition carries it;

Know,

Scito quod Deus remisit tibi partem iniquitatum tuarum. Vatabl.

Know, O Job, *that God handles thee, as if he had forgotten or were ignorant of thine iniquity.* Which interpretation a learned Writer makes his translation of the Text; *Know therefore, that God hath remitted part of thine iniquity.*

Oblitus, i.e. *pœnam iniquitatis tuæ debitam distulit.* Tyg.

A third renders, *Know therefore that God hath deferred thine iniquity*, he hath put it aside for a time, and hath not called thee to a present answer. Deferring is a temporary forgetting; when a man doth willingly forget a thing, he intends not to take a strict or sudden account of it; as when he forgets unwillingly or through infirmity, he cannot take any account of it at all.

Scito quod oblitus est tui Deus propter iniquitatem.

There is yet a fourth interpretation given from this sense of the word, *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, because of thine iniquity*; and so the forgetfulness lies upon *Job's* person, and not upon *Job's* sin; Thou complainest that God regards thee not, hears not thy cry, attends not to thy prayer, hastens not in with relief and succour in this thy sad condition, *Know that God forgets thee*, and he hath reason to do so; *He forgets thee because of thine iniquity.* God forgets those who have forgotten him, *Prov.* 1. 28. *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.* But hath not the Lord promised to answer when we call, yea to answer before we call? Hath he not promised to be found of those that seek him? yea to be found of those who seek him not? Why then are these earnest suitors rejected, unanswered? The cause was in themselves; *They hated knowledge*: therefore God would not know them: *They would none of his counsels*, therefore he would none of their prayers. God put them in mind, but they forgot him; therefore they put God in mind, and he forgot them. *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, because of thine iniquity.* To obey God is to remember him, and none are so much remembred by God, as they who obey him; to sin against God is to forget him, and none are forgotten of God, but for their sin.

Significat mutuo dare & exigere, more fœneratoris.

We translate, *God exacteth of thee* [less then thine iniquity deserveth.] The word signifies also to *lend* (as was toucht before) so we read (*Deut.* 15. 2. *Deut.* 24. 10.) in the Laws given to the *Jews* about releasing; to exact less then due, is, *to release somewhat of what is lent.* The Adverb *less* is not in the Original, no nor the verb *deserveth*; our Translators have added both in a different letter, to supply and clear their sence upon the place, the words being only thus, *Know that God exacteth of thee for thine iniquity.* Mr. *Broughton* renders it roundly so, *Know that the Puissant will call thee to an account for thine iniquity.* Another learned Translator gives it thus, *Acknowledge at least that God exacteth somewhat of thee for thine iniquity*; as if he had said, *Do not think that all this evil is come upon thee without cause; for shame submit, and confess that thy sin hath deserved some of it.* Our rendring alludes to the dealing of a merciful Creditor with his Debtor, who is willing to be compounded with, for what is justly owing him; or, to the dealing of a merciful Magistrate towards a Malefactor, when he layes not the rigor of the Law upon him. Thus the *Jews* would not exact so much punishment of *Paul*, as they supposed his iniquity deserved. The Law admitted forty stripes; they would not go to the utmost line of justice; they, to do him a courtesie, or to avoid the suspition of cruelty (though this mercy was cruel) abated him an ace, and therefore gave him only forty stripes save one. The mercy of God to man, runs not like this, or any other mercy of man to man. When we say, God exacteth less then iniquity deserveth, we mean, God hath not exacted half, no nor a tenth of what our iniquity deserveth. He sets down but fifty in his Bill of chastnings, for an hundred, which he finds in our Bill of transgressings: And this half which he exacteth, is not taken, either to satisfie himself, or properly to punish us, but to purifie us, that we may glorifie him. God exacteth so little, that he indeed exacteth nothing. The word is harsh, and hears ill among men; but God is so good to *Israel*, that we know not how to call him an *exacter*, but because he doth not exact.

Agnosce saltem exigere abs te Deum aliquid de iniquitate tua. Jun.

2 Cor. 11. 24.

Hence observe, First, *Every sin makes us debtors to God.*

We are in his books, and in his bonds for every transgression. All men are in a debt of duty to God (as creatures) which if they pay not, they sin, and so run into a double debt; a debt of duty, which they should have performed, and a debt of penalty, because they have not performed it. *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil*; there is the *penalty.* Creatures owe God a duty, which they ought to pay; and sinners owe him him a penalty, which must be paid, either by themselves, or by their Surety. The Apostle useth that phrase (*Gal.* 5. 3.) *Every man that is circumcised, is a debtor to the whole Law.* He is a debtor in regard of duty, because he that thinks himself bound to keep one part of the Ceremonial Law, doth thereby binde himself to keep it all; where the parts are inseparably united, we pull all upon us by engaging or medling with any one. And he that is a debtor in duty to keep the whole Law, must needs be a debtor in regard of the penalty; because he is not able to keep any part of it. And that's the reason why Christ (who stood in the place of sinners) was put to pay both these debts, that so he might fully cut scores with the Law. He paid the debt of duty, *by fulfilling all righteousness.* He also paid the debt of penalty, *by enduring all sorrows*; even the sorrows of death it self. We do but confess the debt, and God crosseth the book, and cancelleth all our bonds. *If we confess our sins, he is faithful to forgive us our sins, and the bloud of Christ cleanseth us from all sins*, 1 Joh. 1. 9. The red lines of his bloud are drawn over the black and abominable lines of our transgressions, and so the debt is discharged.

Secondly, Observe, *If God exact not the whole debt of sinners, it is mercy.*

Zophar would have *Job* to know this, Thou hast spoken hardly of God, because he hath smitten and afflicted thee; but God doth not exact of thee what thine iniquity deserveth; Is not this mercy? *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed*, Lam. 3. 22. and *vers.* 39. *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?* It is mercy if life be spared. Though a man be not left a rich man, a strong man, yet if he be left a living man, yea though but a man, he hath no reason to complain, while he remembers he is a sinful man, and is punished for his sin. It is mercy that we have not the whole debt laid upon us: If God defer any time, or remit any part, it is a favour; As Christ paid, so he paid all for believers: and the damned shall pay all in hell; there shall be no releasing, no compounding of their debts. And because they are not able to pay down the full summe at once, therefore they shall alwayes be paying. How rich is the grace which we have by Jesus Christ, through whom God releaseth all our debts! We must have paid all, if Christ had not paid all: Now he hath paid all, and we pay none at all. Christ having paid all for his redeemed ones, God doth not exact one farthing from them, much less the utmost farthing, as he will from the impenitent and unbelievers.

Thirdly, Observe, *Afflictions are the desert of sin.*

God exacteth of thee less then thy iniquity, or *then thine iniquity deserveth.* Most are afflicted for their sin; none had ever been afflicted, if they had not sinned. The doctrine is true, though *Zophar* failed in his application. *Job* was a sinner (the best of Saints on earth are sinners) yet God afflicted *Job* for the trial and improvement of Grace, not for the purging or correcting of his iniquity, as hath been observed from those words in the second Chapter, *Thou provokest me to afflict him without cause*; that is, without such cause as thou suggestest, his iniquity or hypocrisie.

Fourthly, Observe, That, *All the afflictions of this life are less then our sins.*

That's *Ezra's* confession (*Ezra* 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less then our iniquities deserve.* Was it a touch, or some light stroke which God gave *Jerusalem?* Was their wound but a scratch, or their affliction little? Read the *Lamentations* of *Jeremiah*, and you shall find how doleful, how sad, how terrible a judgment was brought upon *Jerusalem*; even such, as was not done under the whole heaven: and yet *Ezra* saith, *Thou hast punished us less then our iniquities deserve.* As all the good which we do in this life, is less then the least of the mercies of God; so the least evil of sin which we commit, is greater then all the evils of punishment in this life. *In the life to come God will make even with sinners and with*

saints. These shall receive as much good as Christ hath deserved for them, and they shall receive as much evil as themselves have deserved: Both are here short of their due, yea, and uncapable of their due. The Saints in this life, cannot hold so much glory as Christ hath purchased, (1 *Cor.* 15. 50.) *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.* The frame of nature, though purified and purged, is not receptive of heavenly glory. Thus also the frame of mans nature unpurified, is not receptive of so much punishment as sin deserveth. This flesh and blood cannot enter into the Kingdom of hell. Therefore as the Saints shall have spiritual bodies, that they may be fit vessels for the glory of heaven; so the wicked shall (in a sence) have spiritual bodies too, that they may be fit vessels for the misery of hell. Their bodies shall not die, their bodies shall live without the supports of nature, meat and drink, sleep or refreshing. Thus they shall have an Angelical life; and all to this end, that they may be capable subjects of the fury and wrath of God, even of all that vengeance, which he hath prepared, and will powr out upon those who disobey the Gospel, and come not in to receive Jesus Christ. We may say of wicked men, in this life, *Verily they have their reward*; they have seen the best of their dayes, the best of their state; but how much so ever any wicked man is punished, though he spend all his dayes groaning and sighing, though he be poor and sick, weak and pained, though he lie upon the rack of the most torturing diseases, the Stone, Gout, &c. yet it cannot be said of this man, *He hath had his punishment.* A miserable ignorant man is ready to say, *I hope I have had my punishment, my hell in this life*: Alas! poor soul, thou maist be pained here and in hell too; thou maist go from rack to rack, from torture to torture; present punishments are but as a sip of that cup, which shall be drunk to the bottom in hell; they are but as sports to the pains there, and as painted fire to real fire. As the best of the Saints portion is behind, their works follow them, their reward waits for them; so the worst of a wicked mans portion is behind; his sins follow him, his works of spiritual darkness follow him into eternal darkness, his punishment waits for him; though his judgment be now asleep, yet it will be awake, and never sleep, no, nor slumber any more.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?
It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper then hell, what canst thou know?
The measure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the Sea.
If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?
For he knoweth vain man, he seeth wickedness also; will he not consider it?
For vain man would be wise, though man is born like a wild asses colt.

THe three first Verses of this context are an illustration, or a comment upon the sixth. *Zophar* having breathed out his wish, *O that God would speak, and that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is*; proceeds to prove, that it is but need he should; those secrets being such, as none can see, till they are shewed. This he sets on rhetorically, with a vehemently negative expostulation.

Verse 7. *Canst thou by searching find out God?* Thou canst not. *Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* It is impossible. In the two following verses, the eighth and the ninth, he pursues the same argument; advancing the wisdom of God above the highest heavens, and carrying it below the lowest parts of the earth: *The utmost extent of things created is too narrow for the Creator.* Mans natural wisdom reacheth at the most, but to the utmost bounds of nature. But Gods wisdom *is as high as* (that is, higher then) *heaven, yea deeper then hell; the measure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the Sea.*

From the vastness of Gods wisdom, he descends to the absoluteness of his soveraignty, at the tenth verse, and gives an account, or an argument of both in the eleventh and twelfth.

Verse 7. Canst thou by searching find out God?

חקר *Perscrutatus est, inquæsivit remota aut abstrusa.*

The word implies exactest diligence to find. *Canst thou by searching find?* that is, Canst thou find by all thy studies and endeavours? There is a finding by chance or accident, as well as a finding by search. Some cannot find what they search for; others find what they search not for; (*Psal.* 116. 3). *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me, I found trouble and sorrow*: I found trouble which I look'd not for; I was not searching after sorrow, but I found it. There is an elegancy in the Original (note that by the way) *The pains of hell gat hold upon me*, so we read; the Hebrew is, *The pains of hell found me* (one word signifies both) they found me, I did not find them. But no sooner had the pains of hell found me, but I found trouble and sorrow enough, and soon enough.

But usually the word noteth a finding (as here) upon enquiring; *Canst thou by searching find?* Canst thou find out God by thy exactest scrutiny, by the trial of all thy wits, or by the improvement of all thy abilities? That which is easie, is found with little search; that which is hardest cannot be found with all our search. When God would shew the obviousness and openness of the sin of man, he saith, *I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these*, Jer. 2. 34. Their sins are evident to every eye. Here when *Zophar* would shew the mysteriousness of the wisdom of God, he saith, *Thou canst not find it* by the most secret search.

But you will say, Cannot God be found by searching? God is every where; the invisible God is every where visible. Sense sees somewhat of him; though Faith sees most, (*By faith moses saw him that is invisible*, Heb. 11.) Sense shews somewhat of him to those who have no faith. You might read much of God in the Book of Nature, if you had not the Book of Scripture to read. Thus the Apostle convinceth the *Gentiles*, (Rom. 1. 20. *The invisible things of God*, to wit, *his eternal power and Godhead, are seen in things that are made*: And how are they seen? What! by opening their bowels, or by looking into their heart? No, If you look but upon the face, the surface of the Creature, if but upon the rind, the outside of the things that are made, even their external form and fashion, their beauty and order draw goodly lines, and make fair representations of God himself; *even of his eternal power and Godhead.* Do but pull up a grass from the earth, or crop off a leaf from a tree, and you may see God upon it. How is it then said, that you cannot find out God, no not by searching?

Præsentemque refert quælibet herba Deum.

I answer, First, We may find God by searching, but we cannot find him out; that is, we cannot find the utmost of God; as the next clause seems to explain: *Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?*

Secondly, God may be considered, either in his being, or in the manner of his being; in his working, or in the manner of his working.

In his being, God is easily found out: This notion lies uppermost, or riseth up in every heart; it is a principle that lives in, and cannot be blotted out of a natural Conscience: Thousands deny God, but all (who have not quite put out the very light of nature) acknowledge there is a God. A Heathen said, *There is no Nation so barbarous, so untaught and ignorant, but confesseth there is a God.* When man fell from God, this truth stood; as when Cities and great Buildings are overthrown by war, some Towers, some Pinacles survive the violence; so amongst the ruines and decayes of that perfect nature, which God made at first, the notions of a God remained. Atheists, who would not find God, find him against their wills, even whether they will or no. While they thrust God out of their Conversations, he continues in their Consciences. That God is, is so easily found, that it can hardly be lost; it is found with so little study, that many who study much to lose it, cannot.

But you cannot find out God in the manner of his being, or what a God he is: you cannot find out his power and wisdom, his holiness and his justice, his faithfulness and unchangeableness, with all your search; you cannot find these distinctly in the book of Nature, nor understand them easily when you find them plainly described, and highly magnified in the book of Scripture.

Again,

Again, We may find out God in his working, or in his works; we may see such works done, as speak a God, such, as all must say with the Magicians of *Egypt*, *The finger of God is here*: We may find this with a little searching, possibly without searching; we can hardly hide this from our eyes; yea, if we shut our eyes, we have much ado not to see it. Some cannot see, though their eyes are open; others shut their eyes, lest they should see (*Isa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thine hand is lift up, they will not see.* Some workings of God are so eminent and evident, that if men were not wilfully blind, they must needs see them. That God works, that there is a divine power, carrying on the affairs of the world, is written as with a beam of the Sun. But if we consider the manner of his working, there's a secret, that's mysterious: Providence hath such various wayes, such intricate turnings, that a searching man may be to seek about them. God doth not always leave the Print of his footsteps, where he goeth. The way of an Eagle in the air, the way of a Ship in the midst of the Sea, the way of a Serpent upon a Rock, are not so untraceable as many of the wayes of God.

Now forasmuch as *Zophar* treating of the wisdom of God, concludeth, That God cannot be found out. Having wished, *O that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom*, he puts not the Question thus, *Canst thou by searching find out the wisdom of God?* But, *Canst thou by searching find out God?*

Hence observe, *The wisdom of God is God.*

So also the power of God is God, and the holiness of God is God. The attributes and qualities of God, are essential to God; there is no distinction between substance and quality in God. Man and his qualities are two things, man and his wisdom, man and his holiness are distinct. Many men are neither wise nor holy, yet men still. But God and his wisdom, God and his holiness are the same; He could not be God, if he were either unwise or unholy. *Once have I sworn by my holiness*, saith God, *Psal.* 89. 36. that is, I have sworn by my self, as the Apostle explains it, *Heb.* 6. 13. *Because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself.*

Secondly, Observe, *The wisdom of God is unsearchable.*

As they said in the book of *Judges*, *As the man is, so is his might*; so we may say much more, As God is, so is his wisdom. There is more wisdom of God in making the least thing, then we can make out. Then, what is there in God himself? If a man should be examined about the meanest Creature, can he resolve fully, why it is made of such matter, why in such a form? Can he tell why the colour is such, or such the qualities? why for such uses, and why unto such ends? God hath bestowed great skill upon smallest works.

Thirdly, Observe, *God is unsearchable.*

Canst thou by searching find out God? It is not in vain to see God, but it is in vain to search him. God is *not far from any man* (Acts 17. 27.) but he is far above all men. When a Philosopher was asked by *Hiero*, What God was? *I cannot answer suddenly* (said he) *pray give me a day's time to consider of it*; when that day was ended, and the King demanded an answer, he desired a second day, and after that a third, till at last he gave it over, professing he could not find out God. God exceeds and swallows up, not only the reason of natural men, but of spiritual. They who are enlightened by the grace of God, cannot see all the light that is in God, or all of God, who is light.

Fourthly, When *Zophar* saith, *Canst thou by searching find out God?* He seems to imply,

That, *There is a way to find out much of God, though we cannot find him by searching.*

The best knowledge of God is from his own revelation, not by our study. Would you find out God? Do not think to do it by beating your brains, but by beating the Heavens. The knowledge of God cometh down from God; we know him when he makes himself known to us. And usually he doth not make his fulness known to us, till we make our emptiness known to him. We cannot find out God by reading, but we may by praying. *If any man lack wisdom* (especially this wisdom to know God) *let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not.* It was a good speech of *Luther*, *He hath studied well, who hath prayed well*: Prayer attains the key of mysteries, and faith enters into them. Hence, when *Zophar* had prayed, *O that God would speak, and that he would open his lips, and shew thee the secrets of wisdom*; he presently concludes all searches about him successless, without him, *Canst thou by searching find out God?*

Bene orasse est bene studuisse. Luth.

Fifthly, *If by searching we cannot find out God, then we must not boldly pry and press into the secrets of God.*

Yet this should not quench endeavour, but regulate it, and keep it in compass: This should make us humble, but it must not make us idle. Though we cannot know all of God, yet we are bound to learn all that may be known. It will be as much our sin not to desire to know what we may, as to desire to know what we may not. It is our duty to enquire and travel to the utmost of our line; we must not sit down where we are, because we cannot go as far as we would. As we must aim at, and labour after perfection in holiness, though we cannot reach it; so also in knowledge. We must not rest in any imperfect knowledge of God, because we cannot know him perfectly. Which *Zophar* teacheth us in the next words;

Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

This latter clause gives light to the former: For some may observe: Cannot we find out God by searching? *Great difficulties whet and quicken industry, but a total impossibility not only dulls, but deads it:* If we cannot find out God, why then do we search? Yes, you must search, and you may find; *but you cannot find him out unto perfection by all your searchings.*

The word, **Perfection**, in the Original, signifies the height, strength, or utmost accomplishment of a thing. A learned Author translates it, *the parts about the heart*, or *the closest lodges of the heart*; which by a metaphor signifies our inward thoughts and most retired imaginations. As if he had said, *Canst thou find out the inmost recesses or secrets of Gods heart? Hast thou seen what is laid up in the inner chambers of his Spirit?* The heart of man is deep, only God can search it; but O how deep is the heart of God? no man can search it.

תַּכְלִית *Quam Graeci συντελειαν reddere solent, significat finem vel consummationē rei. Juxta Apollinarium accipitur pro præcordiis quasi dei præcordia, cordisq; recessus penetrare homini sit impossibile.*

תכר *significat ultimum summumque.* Coc.

I find a like interpretation given of the former clause, in answer to this: *Canst thou by searching find out God?* rendring it thus; *Canst thou find out the last thing of God?* The word (*Hakar*) which we translate *searching*, signifies the *chief and last of a thing.* And so that Text of *Solomon* is expounded by the same Author (*Prov.* 25. 27) *It is not good to eat much honey*, so for men *to search their own glory, is not glory*; so we render: he thus; *It is not good to eat much honey, but the last of glory is glory*; The sence of which reading is to this effect. The best of temporal and outward things (honey it self) if you eat much of them, will not be sweet, you may eat honey till honey be loathsome to you; but glory, or heavenly things (he takes glory for the happiness which man shall have with God in Heaven, not for the fame or respect which man hath with man on earth, which is the sense of our translation) glory (I say) or the state of Heaven, is such, that the last of it is glory; the longer you feed upon glory, the sweeter it will be, the last bit will be as sweet as the first; *The manna which came down from heaven was loathed by the Israelites. But no Israelite shall loath the manna which he finds in heaven:* The last of glory will be glory; the longer we eat, the more we shall delight; the more we taste those dainties, the more pleasant will they be to our taste. Taking the word (*Hakar*) in that sence, it may be rendred, *Canst thou find out the last of God?* And so it falls in with this, *Canst thou find him out unto perfection?*

Unto perfection.] Canst thou come to the uttermost of what God is? or of what God doth? Canst thou know God, as we speak (*à capite ad calcem*) from head to foot, from beginning to end, from first to last, within and without? Canst thou take in all the excellencies and dimensions of God? thou canst not do it, man, wert thou more then a man; hadst thou the understanding of an Angel thou couldst not do it. *How much soever thou art above man, below God, thou canst not find out God unto perfection; God only knows God perfectly.*

Invenire potest deus sed non ad plenum. Drus.

Hence observe, *Though much of God may be found out, yet all cannot.*

We cannot find him out unto perfection. Finite cannot hold infinite. Some may conceit (but it is a meer conceit) that they can; as a Country fellow thinks, if he were upon such a Mountain which bounds the Horizon, he could touch Heaven, and take a Star in his hand; but when he comes thither, Heaven is as far off as it was, and the Stars as much out of his reach, as they were, where he stood before: Such are the guesses of men about God: if they could attain such a point, and be resolved in such a doubt, then (doubtless) they should know all the mysteries of the Divine nature: but if they get thither, they are as far from the perfection of God as before; for how near soever we come to God, there is an infinite distance between us and God. Every Believer is near God in affection, yet is he still infinite removes from his perfection. *When we seem to come neerest the perfections of God, God goes further off from us, and we are as much to seek as ever.* When *holy Augustine* walked by the sea-side, rapt in the meditation of God and of his wayes, he heard a voice, which bad him *lade the ocean with a cockle-shell:* We may sooner drain the ocean with such a little shell, or with a spoon, then the perfections of God with our largest understandings. The Lord bespeaks *Job* (chap. 38. 22.) *Hast thou entred into the treasures of the snow?* There are secrets in Nature, which were never entred into by Art: The treasures of the snow descend upon us, but we cannot ascend into the treasures of the snow: we cannot enter into natural things, how shall we enter into spiritual? how shall we enter into the God of spirits? *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,* (1 Cor. 2. 9.) And if the things which God hath prepared for man, have not yet entred into his heart, can God, who hath prepared those things, enter into his heart? *Solomon* puts the question (*Eccles.* 11. 5.) *Canst thou know how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child? Even so* (saith he) *thou knowest not the work of God who maketh all.* If natural questions pose us, divine questions may amaze us. To know God here is eternal life; and yet we shall not know all of God in eternal life. It is our perfection to know God while we sojourn here upon the earth; yet we shall not know God to the utmost of his perfection in Heaven: In Heaven we shall know him perfectly, but not unto perfection: *Now we know in part, then we shall know as we are known*; that is, we shall know much, we shall know abundantly: *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face* (1 Cor. 13. 12.) that is, clearly, immediately, not by reflection, but by intuition. Then the curtains shall be drawn aside; then all the clouds and dark vapours, which stand between us and truth, shall be scattered from before our eyes: Then, the beautiful face of truth shall be unveiled, there shall not so much as any doubt interpose between truth and our understandings. Those perplexed questions, and fatal controversies, which have troubled the peace of the Churches, and exercised, yea, vexed the greatest wits to resolve and compose them, shall have all their knots untied, and their fallacies discovered by the meanest Scholar in glory. And yet *Zophar*'s denying question may be put to the highest Graduate in glory; *Canst thou find out God unto perfection?* As there shall be *no seekers in heaven, so, no such finders.* Creatures shall there know so much of God as will make them perfectly happy, but to know God unto perfection, is more then comes to the share of a creatures happiness. *'Tis the perfect happiness of God, to know himself unto perfection.*

Cum accesserit, longius abit.

Zophar having by way of question laid down this Position, That, man cannot find out God unto perfection, exemplifies it.

Altitudines cœli, Heb. Emphasin continet plurale, more Hebræorum, maximam altitudinem significans.

Verse 8. **It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper then hell, what canst thou know?**

It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do?] What is as high as Heaven? The Wisdom of God is. Wisdom is the soaring Antecedent to this Relative. The Hebrew is plural, *It is as the highnesses of heaven*; take all the heights and elevations, all the spheres and stories of Heaven, climb the loftiest pinnacles of Heaven, Wisdom is higher, or high beyond them all: so it may be rendered from the original, *high above the heavens.*

Quid facies in altitudine cœlorum? Sept. Vatabl. *Pag. Regia.*

Some Translators give us the Text in this Interrogation, *What wilt thou do in the height of the heavens?* which sounds like the Apostles caution; *Be not high minded, but fear:* or like *David*'s humble acknowledgment (*Psal.* 131. 1.) *I do not exercise my self in things too high for me:* As if he had said, Seeing thou canst not mannage the height of the Heavens, surely thou canst not digest the height of God who is above the Heavens: If thou shouldst be put to give an account of things in Heaven, of the Sun, Moon and Stars, or of their motion, thou wilt be puzled. How then wilt thou be able to give an account of him who is higher then the Heavens, whom the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain? (1 *Kings* 8. 17. *Isa.* 66. 1.) *Who also buildeth his stories in the heavens*, Amos 9. 6. *Astronomers* have left us the doctrine of the Heavens; they tell us of the nature and order, of the qualities and influences of those superiour bodies: but they speak most by guess, or without book. There is no certainty in that knowledge, though some probability. *Astronomers* look up to Heaven, but they bring little of Heaven down to us. *What wilt thou do in the height of heaven?*

Deus non solum in rebus creatis est, sed extra, pro sua essentiæ immensitate. August. *lib.* 11. *de civ. D. c.* 5. *Damas. l.* 2. *de orthod. fide, cap.* 6.

Further, when *Zophar* saith, *The wisdom of God is as high as heaven*, he means, his Wisdom is exceeding high. The highest Heaven being the highest of all things visible, that must needs be higher then the highest of visibles, which is higher then the Heavens; and because those things which are extream high affect us highly, therefore he gives Divine wisdom the utmost line of the dimension. *It is as high as heaven.*

שאול *denotat omnia loca subterranea Deus.*

Deeper then hell, what canst thou know?] The word *Sheol*, is taken for all that is deep or low, sometimes it is put in special for the grave, here for the place of the damned. As we can do little in the height of Heaven, so we know little of the lowest hell. Some of the upper part of the earth is to us yet (*terra incognita*) an unknown land: but all of the lowest part of hell, is to us an unknown land: Many thousands have travelled thither, but none have returned thence to make reports, or write books of their travels. That piece of *Geography* is very imperfect. *It is deeper then hell, what canst thou know?* Heaven and hell are the greatest opposites, or remotest extreams. (*Matth.* 12. 23.) *Thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted up to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell:* Heaven and hell are at furthest natural distance, and are therefore the everlasting receptacles of those who are at the furthest moral distance, Believers and unbelievers, Saints and impenitents. And as the height of Heaven, so the depth of hell is ascribed to wisdom, to shew the unsearchableness of it. *O the depth* (as well as O the height) *of the wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his wayes past finding out!* (Rom. 11. 35.) We read of the deep things of God (1 *Cor.* 2. 10.) *The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things, or the depths of God.* Satan, who is full of subtilty and craft, hath his *depths* also, (*Rev.* 2. 24.) *But unto you I say, as many as have not known the depths of Satan:* That is, who have not approved nor practised the policies and devices which Satan inspires his disciples with, under the notion of profound wisdom. Deeps of all sorts lie far out of our view, and are hard to be found out.

Jupiter *est summus vertex atq; infima planta.* Orph. *in Satur. hymno apud* Euseb. *l.* 3. *c.* 3. *de præpar. Ev.*

Verse 9. **The measure** (or the stature) **of it is longer then the earth, and broader then the sea.**

The former verse shewed us the height and depth of wisdom; this, its length and breadth.

Populari modo loquitur, nam hoc spatio ac distantia vulgus nihil rarius concipit. Bold.

It is longer then the earth.] He speaks popularly, or to the shortest and narrowest capacity; man thinks there is nothing longer then the earth: The length of many parts of the earth is exceeding long; how long then is the whole earth? *Mathematicians* tell us, that the circumference of the earth is about twenty two thousand miles, a vast length; and the measure is the same in the length of it from East to West, or in the breadth of it from North to South: Every Sphærical body is of equal dimensions. The measure of wisdom is longest, being longer then the earth, which is the longest journey man ever travelled.

ים *Mare & occidens, quod mire magnum erat ad plagam occidentalem terræ Israel.*

And broader then the sea.] Latitude or breadth is usually ascribed to the sea, as longitude or length unto the earth. The Psalmist, in his meditations upon the works of God, calls it, *The great and wide sea,* Psal. 104. 25. Breadth is ascribed to the sea, because of its huge extension. The sea is a lower firmament: and as the upper firmament is called in the Hebrew, *A thing stretched out, or spread forth. The*

upper

upper firmament is one expansion; so also is this lower firmament, the sea. The sea puts out long arms, and thence it is denominated *broad*. The breadth of a man is measured by his arms stretched forth, as his length is measured from head to foot: Thus the sea stretching forth its mighty arms to imbrace the earth (we commonly call them, *The arms of the sea*) carries away the name from all other creatures for latitude or breadth. There is nothing counted so wide and roomthy as the sea. Such (and how much more no man knows) is the wisdom and knowledge of God.

Here are four very different dimensions met together, *height* and *depth*, *length* and *breadth*, yet they all mind and speak the same thing, *That the wisdom of God is infinite*; higher then all natural height, and deeper then all natural depth; broader then all natural breadth, and longer then all natural length. The Apostle speaking of the love of God in Christ (*Ephes.* 3. 18.) ascribeth these four dimensions to it, with which *Zophar* here adorns the wisdom of God, *That you may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.* Many wits run riot in Geometrical notions about these moral dimensions. And whereas Naturalists give us but three dimensions of a body, longitude, latitude and profundity, the love and wisdom of God have altitude added, which is a fourth. But all these dimensions serve only to shew the immensity both of the love and wisdom of God.

Observe hence, First, *Mans inability to reach the perfection of creatures, should convince him of his utter inability to reach God in his perfection.*

For when *Zophar* affirms the wisdom of God higher then heaven, deeper then hell, &c. He by a lesser impossibility would convince us of a greater. Thou canst not find out the height of heaven, nor the depth of hell; thou canst not take the perfect length of the earth, nor the breadth of the sea; therefore much less art thou able to take the height and depth, the length and breadth of God himself, or of his wisdom.

Secondly, When he saith, that the wisdom of God is higher, longer, deeper and broader then heaven, earth, hell and sea; We may observe,

That God is present with all his creatures in all places.

The wisdom of God is every where, therefore God is. Wisdom is the *eye of God*, and God is said to have *seven eyes* (that is, many eyes, or a manifold wisdom) *running to and fro through the whole earth*, Zech. 3. 9. cap. 4. 10. *There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*, Eph. 4. 6. God is above all, not only in regard of power and authority, but of inspection and over-sight. God stands aloft, as upon a watch-tower, beholding all that's done below, whether within or without; whether for or against the Church. There is no turning, no corner, wherein any can stand unobserved; for as he is above, so he is through all, and in all: He is through all the world by his common providence, as well as in all his Saints by his special grace. *In him we live, and move, and have our beings*, Acts 17. Yea, he is present in all places, not only virtually and efficaciously, but essentially. It is not with God as with the Sun, the Sun is fixt in its orb, and from thence sends forth its light and influence into all the world: We cannot say the Sun is every where, though the light and heat of the Sun are every where; the body of the Sun is only in Heaven. Again, it is not with God, as with a King, who sits upon his Throne, and yet hath long hands, and many eyes, reaching all places of his Dominion, but it is by his Authority and Commissions only. A King is virtually present in many places at once, but not personally; whersoever his residence is, there his person is, and no where else. Whereas Gods hands and eyes, his power and wisdom extend over all personally. The Divine nature is as large and vast as the Divine power. *Do not I fill heaven and earth*, saith the Lord (*Jer.* 23. 24.) Once more, God is every where, not as the Air is every where: The Air is part in one place, and part in another, God is all in every place; God is wholly in the height of heaven, and wholly in the depth of hell, wholly in the length of the earth, and wholly in the breadth of the sea. All God is in all things, and all God is without all things; he is without all things, and not shut out of any thing; he is in all things, and not included in any thing, so the Ancients speak of this wonderful mystery of Gods omnipresence.

Essentia divina tota est intra omnia & tota extra omnia. Nusquam inclusa, aut exclusa, omnia continens, a nullo contenta, nec propterea est immista rebus aut sordibus inquinata. Aug. *ep.* 57. *ad Dar.*

Thirdly, Note, *God is not only in, but above and beyond all creatures.*

He is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell. (So the Hebraism) 2 *Chron.* 2. 6. *Who is able to build him a house* (saith *Solomon*) *seeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain him?* God hath given a limit to every thing, but himself hath none. He that made all things, cannot be circumscribed by the things which he hath made. Man makes a house, and there he dwelleth, his house shuts him in. God hath made a house big enough for all creatures, but not big enough for himself; *The heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, how much less this house which I have builded?* saith the same *Solomon*. The heaven of heavens is the highest heaven, the chiefest heaven, the third heaven, the heaven compassing and containing all those heavens which we behold. That heaven which containeth the heavens, cannot contain the God of heaven. (1 *Kings* 8. 27.) *God is a sphere, whose center is every where, and whose circumference is no where.*

Fourthly, Observe, *All that is done in the world, is done by the ordering or over-ruling hand of God.*

God useth means, but himself is present with all the means he useth, and *acts in every thing that acts*; He that is every where can as well do all, as any one thing. A man who hath many businesses to do at the same time in many places, cannot attend them all, and gives the reason, *Do you think I can be every where? I was in such a place; could I be in this too?* Carnal minds think it a strange doctrine to affirm, That God doth all things, and that there is not any motion in the creature, but God is in it. But what difficulty is there in this, when we have once digested this principle, That God is every where? *He that is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell*, &c. is ready at every turn to do what is done. Kings send their Vicegerents and Deputies, who do their work, while themselves are absent. Kings are not in the means and with the means which they imploy, and that's the reason why instruments work often so contrary to the mind of Kings: They not being actually present with them, cannot over-rule and order them. But God being present with all instruments and second causes that are awork in the whole world, orders them all by his sovereign will. They who act against the revealed will of God, are yet order'd by his secret will. There is nothing done against the counsel and purpose of God, though many things are done against the command and appointment of God. For as he is with every hand that helpeth us, so he is with every hand that smiteth us; as he is with every tongue that blesseth us, so he is with every tongue that curseth us. When *Shimei* cursed *David*, he knew God was with that tongue, and therefore he said, *So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse* David, 2 *Sam.* 16. 10. We indeed pray to God *Our Father in heaven*. Heaven is the Throne of God, but Heaven it is not the Prison of God; God is never shut up in Heaven, though his glory shine most in Heaven. But *Moses* saith to *Israel*, *Go not up, for the Lord is not among you*, (Numb. 14. 42.) I answer, The Lord is not among a people when he doth not assist, prosper and bless them; but he is then among them, both, to observe what they do, and to punish what is done amiss. Thus God is near those who depart from him, as is further cleared in the next point.

Fifthly, Observe, *God beholds all the good, and all the evil that is done in the world.*

His wisdom being higher then heaven, and longer then the earth, brings him in intelligence from all the quarters and corners of heaven and earth; our works are before him, and so are our words (*Mal.* 3. 16.) *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another.* What then? Did they whisper so in one anothers ear, that no ear else heard them? *No, the Lord hearkened and heard it*; the Lord listened (as it were) at the key-hole, he was under the window; and what then? *A book of remembrance was written before him*; all was kept upon record. And when they who do not fear the Lord speak one to another, when wicked men plot against the righteous, or conspire against the righteous

wayes

wayes of God; *He hearkneth and heareth*, and there is a book of remembrance kept of that too. Let them whisper as softly as they can, God can hear, and will record all their malicious speeches, all their evil devices and contrivements against himself, or against his servants.

Sixthly, Observe, *There is no avoiding or getting from the justice of God.*

God is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell, *&c.* Some who have done wickedly in one place, escape the Law, by getting into another; they will be out of your bounds, and then they are safe: But who can go out of Gods bounds? (*Amos* 9. 3, 4.) *Though they dig into hell, thence shall my hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down; though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search them, and take them out thence*, &c. And, *Psal.* 139. 7, 8. *Whither shall I go from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me*, &c. There is no avoiding the justice of God; for there is no avoiding the presence of God. He hath power to arrest and attach a malefactor, where-ever he finds him, and he can find him where-ever he is; *though he fleeth, yet he shall not flee away, and though he escapeth, yet he shall not be delivered*, (Amos 9. 1.) that is, though he thinks he hath escaped, yet I (saith the Lord) will overtake him quickly, and my sentence shall be executed upon him. Thus the workings of God, and his wisdom, are compared unto, and exceed all the dimensions of the creature; he is above and beyond all their perfections, therefore unsearchable, therefore not to be found out unto perfection.

Zophar, from the infinite wisdom of God, descends to argue his Soveraignty, and the uncontroulableness of his power.

Verse 10. **If he cut off, and shut up, and gather together, then who can hinder him?**

As if he had said, The Lord is in all places, and where-soever he comes, he is within his own Dominions; it is possible for the greatest Prince in the world to travel out of the bounds of his own power. The chief Officer of a City hath great power within that City, but beyond he cannot meddle. Kings have great power within their own Dominions, but get into another Countrey, and they cannot touch you: Should a King act his authority beyond his limits, many would hinder him, no man would obey him. But where-soever God acts his authority, he is in his own Kingdom; for all the world is his: therefore none can hinder him. This *Zophar* shews in three Acts of Soveraignty; *If he*, 1. *cut off*, 2. *shut up*, 3. *gather together*; *who can hinder?*

דלף *Muto, pertuto, item rescindo.*

If he cut off.] The word signifies, to change and alter; to put things into another course, to pass away, as well as to cut off and destroy; that which is cut off, is changed, and that which is destroyed, passeth away. We have an elegant gradation (*Isa.* 8. 8.) and this word makes the first step of it; *He shall pass thorow Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy Land, O Immanuel. He shall pass thorow*; that is, the King of *Assyria*; who is compared to a mighty river, covering all its channels, and overflowing all its banks; he shall pass thorow the Land like a violent torrent, he shall destroy and cut off much people in *Immanuel*'s Land, that is, in Christs Land, *who is God with us*: Yet he will not suffer his people to be utterly cut off. The enemy, who once associated and prevailed, shall associate and be broken; *for God is with us, vers.* 10.

כנר *claudere.*

And shut up.] The word is taken two wayes; sometimes in a good sence, so, *If he shut up*; is, if he secure any from danger, hiding them in his own pavilion of protection, *Deut.* 32. 36. *The Lord shall repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left*: that is, when he shall see that none are out of the power of the enemy, none shut up in the City, none guarded and kept safe from danger; but all doors & places lying open to the destroyer; then God *repents himself for his servants*; that is, he changes his course (though not his decree) and hastens to the rescue of his people, thus exposed to trouble on every side.

Again, The word is taken in an ill sense; so, *If he shut up*, is, if he restrain mercy, and expose to misery (*Deut.* 32. 30.) *How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?* How shut them up? As into a prison, or under durance; except the Lord had delivered them as prisoners, into their enemies hands, they had never come into their hands. The people of God are compassed about with such priviledges, that they can never be overcome by man, till God withdraws his *safe-conduct*, and gives them to the robbers, and to the spoilers, *till their rock sells them, and their God shuts them up.* It is an allusion to strong Cities or Forts, which are so built and mann'd, so victualled and provided with ammunition, that it is impossible to take them in by assault or siege, unless the Governor, or he that hath the power of the place, sell, or betray them to the enemie. The People of *Israel* were so fortified with promises, yea, walled about with God himself, that except their rock had sold them, except God had (as we may speak with reverence to his eternal faithfulness) betrayed them into their enemies hands, they had continued impregnable. In this sence take the word here, *If the Lord shut up*; that is, if he put men as in a prison, or into the adversaries hands, who can hinder?

Or gather together.] This act of providence is opposite to the former; by that, men are shut up as prisoners, and debarred of liberty; by this, they are gathered together, as friends, unto one society. Scattering imports affliction; and gathering, a return out of affliction. The Apostle *James* dedicates his Epistle *to the twelve Tribes scattered abroad.* And when the Prophet *Zephanie* foretells the restauration of the *Jews* (chap. 3. 17.) he brings in God *rejoycing over them with joy, resting in his love, joying over them with singing*, and saying (*ver.* 18.) *I will gather them that are sorrowful, I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out.* To gather, is to restore, whether to civil, or to spiritual society.

קהל *congregari coetum.*

There are two words in the Hebrew, noting Church-Assemblies, whereof this is one; yet it may be interpreted a Common-wealth-gathering, as well as a Church-gathering, of a civil, as well as of spiritual communion. The book *Ecclesiastes* receives its title (*Koheleth*) from this root. Two reasons may be given of it; either because that book of the *Preacher* is a collection of excellent observations: *Solomon* there gathered together and congregated many points of highest wisdom. Or because men ought to assemble, or congregate themselves chearfully together, to hear, and drink in at the ear those excellent instructions which *Solomon* gives in that Book. A learned Interpreter understands all these acts, of affliction; if the Lord *cut off* by sword; *shut up* in prison, *gather together*, and bundle men up as fewel to feed the flame of his fiery indignation, though he doth all or any of these things, who can hinder him? The *Chaldee Paraphrast* translates, *though he gather together his armies*, his military forces; though he muster nations together in a warlike manner, to vex or destroy each other.

Koheleth, *Liber in quo collectæ omnes scientiæ, & ad quem audiendum homines congregantur.*

Si congregaverit exercitus aut copias militares. Targ.

Who can hinder him?] The Hebrew is, who can turn him away from his purpose? who can stop him? The Lord hath no peer, no superior, none to check his counsels, or stay their executions; when he hath determined to do a thing, none can say, it shall not be done, or it shall be done another way; his power is supream, and he can do what he pleaseth, without giving an account to any. The sum of all is, that God may destroy, spoil, overthrow, burn, consume if he will; he may do what he will with men and Kingdoms, and no man must open his mouth against him; or if any do, it is in vain, or at their own peril. Thus he answers *Job*, who complained in his afflictions, that the *Lord had cut him off, and shut him up*; that the *Lord had gathered together* armies of *Caldeans* and *Sabeans* to destroy him. Though he do, (saith *Zophar*) yet know the wisdom of God is unsearchable, higher then heaven, deeper then hell; if he will take these courses with thee, who can hinder him? why dost thou complain, as if God had done thee wrong? whereas he hath right to do what he will, and he can will nothing but what is right.

Hence

Hence observe, First, *All the changes and troubles, the good and evil in the world, is from God.*

If he cut off, if he shut up, if he gather together; he speaks as if there were no hand of the Creature moving in any of these things, but that God himself had done all: *Come* (saith *David*, Psal. 46. 8.) *behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.* See how the Lord hath made the earth desolate; see how he drives the nations, and drives the inhabitants of the world. We have a great instance in this Kingdom; *Behold the works of the Lord:* see what desolations he hath made in the North, in the West; see how many houses are burnt, how many towns impoverished, how many families utterly ruined: Come, behold what desolations the Lord hath made. Come also, and behold what habitations, what reformations he makes in the earth: where you see these things done, know it is God that hath done them, as the Psalmist adds in the next words; *He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire.* Our eyes are usually much upon second causes, and little upon the first; this makes us angry and impatient: if we could see God more in what is done, and man less, we should be much satisfied; or, at least, less troubled; we should possess our souls in patience whatsoever is done.

Secondly, Observe, *God cannot be hindred of his purpose.*

What he hath a mind to do, shall be done, though all the world say no; he gives no account of, nor can any restraint be laid upon his actions. If he cast one into prison, and enlarge another; enrich one, and impoverish another; give one honour, and lay reproach upon another; who shall say, What dost thou? I have often met with this point of the Soveraignty of God, therefore I only touch it here.

Zophar, in the former words, moves *Job* to consider the unsearchable wisdom of God, and his unquestionable soveraigney; *Canst thou by searching find out God?* &c. *If he cut off, and shut up, and gather together, who can hinder him?* Thou canst not fadom the bottomless abyss of his wisdom, nor stay him in the resolved actings of his power. He now proceeds to give the reason of both (for the connection may refer to either.)

First, He gives a reason why a man cannot reach the wisdom of God (*ver.* 11.) *He is vain man.* And as man shews his vanity in nothing more, then in his assayes and offers to find out the secrets of God; so his vanity renders him under an utter impossibility to find out the secrets of God.

Vanitas hominum assignatur causa cur secretorum divinæ providentiæ sunt incapaces. Merc. *Probari videtur à Sophare cur Deus jure possit succidere,* &c. *Quia omnium hominum vanitatem & secretiora dignoscat peccata.* Bol.

Secondly, He gives a reason why; *If the Lord cut off, and destroy, and gather together,* if he turn the world upside down, why man cannot hinder him: *He knoweth vain man*; he knoweth that man hath no power to match his; vain man is weak man, and what can weakness do against strength, impotency against omnipotency?

Again, man is vain, and therefore gives the Lord cause (if he should descend to give a reason of himself, or of his actions) *to cut off, to gather together, to shut up:* Vain man is wicked man; *he seeth wickedness also:* so that if God would not act by his prerogative, man gives him ground enough, legal ground according to the line of humane understanding, to do what he doth. *He knoweth vain man* well enough, both what he is, and what he hath done.

All this *Zophar* intends against *Job*, as if he were the man whom God knew to be vain, and in whom he saw iniquity; yea, the brutishness of a wild asses colt, and was about to break and tame him by those judgments. *Zophar* speaks right in this, of mans nature in general; but his censure of *Job*, was erroneous. He was not a vain, but a holy man; neither did God see wickedness, but uprightness in him. Grace had changed his nature; and the Spirit in regeneration, had blotted out the image of a beast, and stampt him with that image, which is after God, in righteousness and true holiness. And as for his afflictions, they were not sent to tame him, but to try him; not to break his headstrong spirit, but to shew that he was already broken, and brought to hand; yea, led by the Spirit of God.

Verse 11. He knoweth vain man, he seeth wickedness also; will he not consider it?

He knoweth.] To know, is sometimes taken for a pure act of intuition, or for the discerning of persons and things, what they are. Sometimes it imports an act mixt, or made up with the understanding and affections; and then, to know, takes in both delight and approbation, *Psal.* 1. 6. *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; it is the way, which himself hath cut and chalked out for them; therefore he cannot but approve it (2 *Tim.* 2. 19.) *The Lord knoweth who are his*; yea, he knoweth who are not his too; but with a knowledge as different as the persons; he knows the latter, and rejects them; he knows the former, and is pleased with them; *I know Abraham* (saith God) I, there's a man; I know what an one he is: he is a good man, and he is one I have in my heart to do him good. The Lord also knoweth vain man; there is nothing of vain man hidden from God, though there is nothing of vain man, loved or approved by God. *He knoweth vain man, or men of vanity*; so the Hebrew. We put it into an Epithite, *vain man.*

אדם שוא *Mortales vanitatis* i. e. *vanitatem mortalium.*

Vain man.] That is, inconsiderate, rash, heady, hasty man. With all these fences the original word is filled. When men go headlong, and without heed upon businesses, when they move without steadiness of spirit, or an inward ballast to keep their thoughts in a due and equall poyse, they are vain men. The Law saith (*Exod.* 20. 7.) *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain* (it is this word) that is, Thou shalt not speak rashly of the things of God, or of God himself, without reverence and pre-meditation, who God is, and what the errand is thou dealest with God about.

איש *Proprie significat præcipitantia & temeritatem.*

Further, The word signifies *craft, deceit, lying and falseness, whether of heart or tongue.* The Lord knoweth the falseness, baseness and corruption, as well as the inconsiderateness and rashness that lies in the heart of man; some render it so here, from the Letter of the Hebrew, *The Lord knoweth men to be liars*; or, *those men who are liars.* Idols are expressed by this word, because they are vain, lying, false gods, *Jon.* 3. 3. *They that follow lying vanities* (which may be either meant of worshipping Idols, or of any sinful way of practice) *forsake their own mercy.* So, *Psal.* 62. 9. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie; to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter then vanity.* Vanity is a light thing, but these men will prove the lighter of the two. The Citizen of *Sion* is one, *that hath not lift up his soul unto vanity* (Psal. 24. 4.) unto false worship, or false wayes: he lifteth up his soul unto that which is holy, just and good, the righteous Law of God.

Novit homines mendaces. Pagn. *Homines falsitatis.* Caj.

In general, this word signifies any evil or sin, especially those which refer to injustice, or our neighbours wrong, *Psal.* 12. 2. *They speak vanity every one with his neighbour*; that is, they speak injuriously, every one deceiveth, or would circumvent and over-reach his neighbour. This is to speak vanity with a neighbour (*Psal.* 16. 4.) *I have not sate with vain persons*; who are those? he expounds it in the next words; *Neither will I go in with dissemblers*; that is, with men that make a fair shew to their brethren, whilst their hearts are full of poyson against them; who speak one thing, and intend another; these are vain persons, and how religious soever they may seem to be, *their Religion is vain too.*

The Lord knoweth vain man; or, *he knoweth the vanity of men.* Hence Note,

First, That, *Man is naturally full of vanity, very full of vanity.*

To be called a man of vanity, imports vainest vanity; as it imports, that God is full of truth, when he is called *the God of truth*; and that he abounds with comfort, when he is called *the God of all comfort*; so it is a Hebraism, noting how full of vanity man is, who is called *a man of vanity*; and how false he is, who is called *a man of falshood*: So the Apostle shews how full of sin that man is, how many thousands he hath sent to perdition, whom he calleth *that man of sin, the son of perdition*, 2 Thes. 2. 3. They who would have sin, and the fruit of it, perdition, let them go to *that man.* He that would have vanity, needs must go to the heart of any man for it; there's enough, and too much of this to be had in the heart of the best, of the wisest man. Generally man hath,

1. Much

1. Much falseness of spirit.
2. Much rashness of spirit. And he hath a double rashness.

First, Rashness, in not considering his end (*Deut.* 32.29.) *O that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end!* Wisdom looks to what is coming upon us; folly stayes upon what is present with us.

Secondly, Rashness, in not considering the way or means that lead unto a good end. Many a man sees such an end, but goes a way quite contrary; he sets up his resolution for heaven, that's his end; but he walketh hell-ward. This also is vanity, and unless timely foreseen and turned from, will prove the greatest vexation of spirit.

Secondly, Observe, *God is exactly acquainted with the state of man.*

He needs not enquire of others, or receive information from abroad; *he knows vain man.* In the former verses, *Zophar* asserteth, That man cannot find out man by searching; here he shews, That God can find out man without searching. Man knoweth but little of God, therefore he adds, *Canst thou find him out unto perfection?* But God knoweth all of man, and therefore finds him out *unto perfection.* That's the opposition, *He knoweth vain man thorow and thorow.* The darkest room in man, is light to the Lord (*Jer.* 17.9.) *The heart of man is deceitful above all things*; there's a depth in mans heart, and it is a depth of deceitfulness; hence the Prophet sends a challenge to all men; *Who can know it?* Can you find any man able to find the bottom of man? the bottom of mans deceitful heart? The answer waves all mankind: God only takes it upon himself, *I the Lord search the heart.* God can find out all the deceits and tricks of mans false heart; he can easily discern a wolf under sheeps cloathing, and rotten bones in a painted Sepulcher; he can see a wooden post to be but a post of wood, though gilded over, and looking very beautiful; the Lord can do it, it is at once his work, and his priviledge, *to know vain man.*

Thirdly, Take the words in connection with what went before; *He cutteth off, shutteth up, and gathereth together*; *for the Lord knoweth vain man.* Hence observe,

That, *God is led by his knowledge to do whatsoever he doth.*

When we see so much confusion, such cutting off, such shutting up, such gatherings in the world, we are apt to think no account can be given of these things. Yes, *God knoweth vain man*; he doth not work at a venture: he sees *that* in man, which justifies him in all the works he doth among all the children of men.

Further, From the connection, we see the cause of all troubles which are in the world, of cuttings off, and shuttings up, of destructions and devastations: *The Lord knoweth vain man.* It is the vanity of man, which subjects the Creature unto vanity, *Rom.* 8. *The creature groaneth.* We hear Creatures groan, Kingdoms and Nations groan, when God cutteth off, and shutteth up, and hudleth them together; but what causeth this doleful groan? Is it not the sin of man? Vain man brings in all these vanities into the world. *We may see the seed of all our troubles in our sins*: The nature of man gives you an account of these workings of God. There is war, there is famine, and there's the plague, there are divisions, there are vexations, between man and man, friend and friend, kingdom and kingdom: All these breed in the heart of man. The Prophet (*Jer.* 4. 18.) speaking of judgments then abroad, saith, *This is thy wickedness, because it is bitter.* Troubles are alwayes bitter, often very bitter; but would you know whence this bitterness is, and how to call it? *This wormwood is wickedness*; you may read what you are, and what you have done, in what you feel and suffer. *Mans sufferings are so much from his sin, that they are called his sin.*

He seeth wickedness also.

That's a second step.

He seeth.] To know, is an act of the understanding; to see, is an act of sense. These, in God, are not distinguished; his eye is his understanding, his sight, his knowledge. *Zophar* puts it under distinct terms, to shew the exactness of Gods knowledge; *he knoweth vain man, and he seeth.* That knowledge which we have by sight, hath a threefold advantage of any other natural knowledge. It is,

First, The Easiest
Secondly, The speediest } Knowledge.
Thirdly, The surest

An eye-witness is far more authentick then an ear-witness is. *God seeth*; he doth not trouble himself to dig down into a matter by tedious enquiries, he needs no *Committee of Examinations to make discoveries*; he need not pump and fetch up the hearts of men; *he seeth what waters are in the fountain*; he seeth, he doth not learn. And what doth he see? *He seeth*

Videt non discit. Coc.

Wickedness also.] The word is sometimes taken for internal wickedness, that stock and mass of corruption, which lies close within us; and so it falls in with the former expression, the vanity of mans nature.

און
Intrinsecam malitiam ac mentale desiderium ad malum importat.

But besides, It notes any external evil, and so there is a difference, *The Lord knoweth vain man*; what his nature is, *and he seeth wickedness.* All the actings of vain men, all the evil counsels and crooked conveyances of their lives, whatsoever wickedness they do, is immediately before his eye. The Lord knows the vanity that dwells in the heart, and sees the wickedness that is acted by the hand.

In propriety, the word imports that which is *without reason*: wicked men are unreasonable, or *absurd men*; that's the Apostles character of them (2 *Thes.* 3.2.) They can give no account why they are wicked, neither of the end they propose, nor of the means they use. There is no reason in what they do; nor can they give any true reason why they do it. Sin is an absurdity both wayes: *He seeth wickedness.* Hence observe,

All the movings of the sons of men in the wayes of sin, are evident to God; *He seeth them.*

What we do, we do in the eye of Conscience; and though Conscience be now asleep or blind, in the sinners eye, yet Conscience hath an open Eagle-eye upon every sin. Now if conscience seeth wickedness, God seeth it much more; *If our heart condemn us* (and that it could not do, unless it see us) *God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things*, 1 John 3.20. Take heed of endeavouring to hide sin from God, or of hoping you sin unseen. That was good counsel which one of the Ancients gave; *It is best to shew that unto God, which we cannot hide from him.* Shew your wickedness unto God, by confessing it; for you cannot hide it from God, by denying or excusing it; *He seeth wickedness also.* There is yet a third act inferred upon the former two.

Will he not then consider it?] Many a careless man knoweth and seeth his own wickedness, or the wickedness of others; but he layeth neither of them to heart: But do you think that God knoweth and seeth wickedness after the rate of careless men? Doth he know, and see, and not regard? No, *he considers it.* And *Zophar* is not satisfied to say, *he considers it*; but he puts it home strongly with a Question, *Will he not consider it?* Yes, he will; certainly he will consider the vanity and the wickedness of man, because he knoweth the one, and seeth the other. What is not known and seen, cannot be considered. One or both those acts are precedaneous to consideration; but some see and know what they never consider; consideration doth not alwaies follow those acts. God looks weightily upon the world, he sees judiciously, critically; he doth not look upon men to gaze at them, but to discern, try and judge them.

The Hebrew word signifies a clearness of observation, and a strength of judgment about the things which are seen; or an act of discerning, arising from greatest attention and meditation, *Psal.* 37.10. *Thou shalt diligently consider his place*, saith *David*; prophesying the utter ruine and abolition of a wicked man; though he flourish, yet it is but for a while; anon he is gone, and when he is gone, though thou diligently consider his place, though thou sit down and mark how this man lived, and what he was, yet scarce any footsteps of him will be found; *It shall not be.* The word is used to the same sence (*Lev.* 10.10.) where Laws are given to the Priests, about discerning the defilements of the people; *That they might put a difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.* So to consider, as to see a difference between person and person, state and state, is diligent consideration. Thus God *considereth*; he

בין
Ex vi originalis hæc consideratio est attenta quædam, diligens, prudens, & quasi consiliatrix meditatio, qua unum ab alio discernitur.

he distinguisheth man and man, the wayes of one man from the wayes of another; and the way of every man in it self: He knoweth man, as a Judge knoweth, upon trial and examination of witnesses, with all the circumstances of the fact.

Zophar, in this seems to touch *Job*'s supposed hypocrisie; as if he had said, *Possibly thou presumest to impose upon God, or put him off with fair shews; but thou wilt be deceived: he trieth the spirits of the children of men, he weighs all their actions, he will weigh thee out to a grain, he will discover the least error and variation from the Rule. Therefore never think by thy flourishes of profession and out-side devotion, to deceive him. He knoweth vain man, and seeth wickedness; will he not then consider it?* Hence observe,

God doth not only know and see, but he takes deep consideration of mens wickednes.

The Prophet calls the Jews to *consider their wayes* (Hag. 1. 7.) as if he had said, I know you have kept many fasts, you have confest your sins, and often arraigned your selves in the ears of heaven, but all this while you have not considered them; *Go now, and consider your wayes.* God considers your wayes, and will not you? Gods consideration is not a bare knowledge of the fact. He considers the person *who*, the place *where*, the time *when* the fact was committed. He considers the means and admonitions, the warnings and cautions, the threatnings and the judgments which providence administred to prevent it. All these are brought into the reckoning, where there is (such as Gods is) a full consideration. *Now consider this, ye* (inconsiderate ones) *that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*, Psal. 50. 22.

Secondly, To consider a thing, is to punish it; and so it answers the former Verse: *The Lord cutteth off, and shutteth up*; he makes strange work in the world. Why? *He knoweth vain man, and he seeth wickedness also? will not he then consider it?* that is, Is it possible he should know and see so much wickedness, and not punish it? As we say to those under our power, concerning the faults which we know them guilty of; well, there will come a time, when we shall consider this; that is, a time will come, when we shall punish you for this, you shall find and feel what you have done. Thus God considers the sins of men. Hence note,

The evils which God knows and sees, he will certainly punish.

Amos 3. 2. *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.* God knows all the families of the earth, as to know is a work of the understanding; but he knoweth only some, (and then he knew but one family of the earth, that of the *Jews*) as to know, is a work of the affections, fruited with works of special mercy: When the Lord saith to *Israel*, You have I known; he means, I have shewed you mercy, I have done you good above all the families of the earth, but now I will bring evil upon you. Abused mercy turns to wrath, and the greater the mercy abused is, the greater is the wrath. The Lord will not cocker his own children; his nearest people, who lie in his bosom, shall have stripes for their sins, and broken comforts for broken Commandments. Will the Lord thus consider the failings and backslidings of his professed friends, and will he not consider the wickednesses of his professed enemies? When *Jehu* was upon the execution of Gods design against the house of *Ahab*, and had slain *Joram* his son, he thus bespoke *Bidkar* his Captain, *I remember how the Lord laid this burden upon him, Surely I have seen the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, said the Lord, and I will requite thee in this plot*, 2 *King.* 9. 29. *I have seen.* God saw, and he saw with an eye of vengeance; He saw blood to requite it with blood, (*Psal.* 10. 11.) *The wicked hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never see it.* There's self-flattery at the highest: Hence the conclusion is ready, *ver.* 13. *The wicked contemn God; he hath said in his heart, thou wilt not require it.* This is the language of a wicked heart. But what saith the heart of *David*, the next words are the language of his heart, *Thou hast seen it, for thou beholdest mischief and spight, to requite it with thy hand*: As the hearts of men differ, so do their opinions: an evil heart will not allow God to be a beholder of evil: a good heart is afflicted that he is not only a beholder, but an avenger of evil. *Let no man deceive you*, (saith the Apostle, *Eph.* 5. 6.) *with vain words.* (And let no man deceive himself, say I, with vain hopes) *for because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.* Disobedience is the forerunner of wrath; where sin opens the door, judgment will enter, (*Psal.* 34. 16.) *The face of the Lord is against them that do evil.* The face of the Lord is either his anger or his knowledge; *The face of the Lord is against them*; that is, he seeth, and his wrath goeth forth against what he seeth. Seeing them, he is against them: They (perhaps) have cast their own sins, as well as the word of God, behind their backs; But God hath not cast their sins behind his back; *his face is against them*: and what to do? *To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.* The anger of God is sharp, sharper then any two-edged sword; it doth not only cut, but cut off; it cuts off branch and root, wicked men, and their remembrance from the earth. *Then God remembers sin indeed, when he doth not leave a remembrance of the sinner.* There was never any sin committed in the world, but God considered it, to punish it. The sins of believers are considered, and punished upon Jesus Christ; Justice went forth against Christ, he was arrested for our debt, and discharged it with the full consideration. Believers may tell God, that Christ hath given him *consideration* for all their sins. And God tells unbelievers that they must pay the consideration themselves. The holy God cannot see the unholiness of man, and not consider it. Man makes no great matter of sin, but God doth. Man thinks himself good enough, though he be stark naught; and wise enough, though he be a very fool. The next verse leads us unto that meditation.

Verse 12. **For vain man would be wise, though man is born like a wild asses colt.**

For vain man.] The Hebrew word signifieth, *hollow* or *empty*, any thing which hath nothing in it; and so a person who hath (as we say) nothing in him. The French call such persons *Fols*, which comes near in sound, to our English word *Fools*; but their language takes it up from the Latine word *Folles*, signifying a pair of bellows; because the men they mean to decypher by it, are like a pair of bellows, sending out nothing but a blast of wind or air. The word of the Text is of the same intendment with *Racha*, of which we read, *Mat.* 5. 22. *He that shall call his brother Racha*, &c. that is, an empty man, a man empty of worth and wisdom, a man that hath no brains in him (as we say) or no goodness, such a man as this is *Racha*; and he is *Nabub* too, an empty, hollow fellow.

נבוב *Significat concavum, vacuum, nullam habens solliditatem: hinc notat stolidos, vanos, qui, ad instar vasis in quo nihil est, vacui dicuntur, sc. cerebro & sapientia. Galli vocant tales fols, quasi follies, instrumentum, quod nihil continet, nisi aerem.* Bold. Racha *eandem habet significationem* ריק *evacuare.*

Hence observe, *A vain man is an empty man.*

He hath nothing in him, but that which is good for nothing. There is no *natural vacuum* (as Philosophers speak) in any part of Nature. Neither is there a *moral vacuum* in any man. But a thing or person is then said to be empty, when void of that with which it should be fill'd: that which hath not the filling, which of right or duty, which according to its own constitution, or the just expectation of others, it should have, is empty. The stomach is empty when it hath no meat in it, though it be full of wind. Man is called empty, because (though as full of evil as an egg of goodness, yet) he is not fill'd with good, he is not fill'd with God, with the knowledge of God, with love to, and faith in God. So the Apostle *James* bespeaks him (*ch.* 2. 20.) *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?* As if he had said, *Thou empty man, thou that hast but a boast of faith, thou whose faith is fill'd up with good words, not fruited with good works, wilt thou know (thou shalt, whether thou wilt or no) that thy faith is dead?* Where there is life, there is operation; works are not the form, but they are the fruit of faith: they are not the essence of a living faith, but they are the evidence that faith lives; and he is to be numbred among the vainest of men, who speaks of his faith, while his works are altogether speechless, or speaks nothing but unbelief.

When man fell from God, the Devil emptied him of that which he was full of, the Image of God in uprightness, and fill'd him with that which was but emptiness, his own Image, in unrighteousness. The nature of fallen man, in the best notion of it, is but *white paper*, in which nothing is written; in another notion, it is *black paper*, written, or blotted rather with evil. And though some notions and general principles

ciples (from which conscience works to conviction) remain there, yet they are so weak and languid, so like sparks covered over with, or rather buried in embers and ashes, that they are scarce discernable; and are not only utterly unable without assistance to discern between common truth and error, good and evil, but quite dead to spiritual good. Hence, though man hath not lost all, yet he hath as bad as lost all, because he hath lost that which was best, or should make him fit to act that which is good. Things which act not are but very little better, then those which are not. Man having totally lost all holy habits, and all power to act in, or toward holiness, is not wronged, when he is called, *vain empty man.*

And as he is vain, because empty of what he ought to have, so he is more vain, because full of all that which he ought not to have. This empty fulness the Apostle describeth (*Rom.* 1. 29, 30.) *filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity*; with such stuff as this he is filled, of this chaffe and cockle he hath good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, to give into your bosom. The heart of man at the best of nature, is but like a Childs pocket full of stones, and balls, and bables. How empty is that heart which is thus filled? The understanding of man, which hath not one holy sentence written in it, is yet written all over with unholy sentences; his judgment and conscience are defiled and fly-blown with false principles, with lyes and errors; and if there be any truth there, it is about such things as make him little the wiser, and never a whit the better. Vain man is empty man, unless to be full of vain things, or a fulness of evil things (which are worse then emptiness) may go for fulness.

אִישׁ נָבִיב יִבָּלֵב
Vir vanus cordabitur, vel cordatus efficiatur.

Would be wise.] There is an elegant *Paranomasia* in the Hebrew, which our Language doth not admit: but the literal sence runs thus, *Vain man would have a heart.* This gives us a further evidence, what this vain man is; he is a man without a heart. *Ephraim was a silly Dove without an heart* (Hos. 7. 11.) without judgment to know, and without courage to do the will of God: here, *vain man* would have a heart: He would be wise if he knew how. The heart is the seat of wisdom; therefore we render it well, *Vain man would be wise.* Mr. *Broughton* thus, *Vain man would be made hearty:* And the Vulgar, *Vain man is raised up to pride*; or as our Proverb speaks, *Takes heart at grass.* As the heart is the throne of knowledge, so knowledge (unless sanctified) is usually a step to pride: Bare knowledge is windy, *it puffeth up* (1 Cor. 8. 1.) They who are not edified by knowledge, are elated by knowledge. We have cause to be humbled, because we know so little; and if we once know much, it is alwayes a temptation to, often a cause of pride.

Cor est sedes sapientiæ, unde pro sapientia ponitur. Vir vanus in superbiâ erigitur. Vulg.

But to our reading, *Vain man would be wise, he would have a heart.* Naturalists observe, That, those creatures which have the thickest and grossest hearts in bulk, are the most stupid and uningenious. But to have a great heart in a moral sense, noteth greatest wisdom, noblest ingenuity, and (in Scripture language) purest holiness, *Prov.* 15. 32. *He that heareth reproof getteth understanding*, so we translate: The Hebrew is, *He that heareth reproof possesseth a heart*; or, *getteth a heart.* A man that will not be reproved, hath lost his heart as well as his ear; have but a patient ear to hear, and you may get a heart to know: understanding and knowledge, yea and grace too, come in at the ear.

Quanto stupidiora sunt brutæ, tanto crassiore pollent corde. Plin.

Cordare nihil aliud est, quam ingeniosum, sapientem magnique consilii vivâ evadere.

Vain man would be wise; and is not this a good *woulding?* Is it any part of mans folly, that he would be wise? What can be better wished then wisdom? *Solomon*'s prayer was for a heart. When God gave him a blank from Heaven, and said, *Ask what I shall give thee: He said, Give thy servant an understanding*, or (according to the letter of the Original) *an hearing heart*, 1 Kings 3. 5, 9. And was *Solomon* called *vain man*, because *he would be wise?* Was not his election highly approved by the only wise God? How then is it, that *Zophar* upbraids *Job* with this design, and closely taxeth him as a vain man, because he would be wise?

I answer, To desire to be wise is a great point of wisdom: and whereas *Zophar* makes it a fault, That *vain man would be wise*, the faultiness must be found in one or both of these sences.

First, When man would be accounted wise, and affects the reputation of wisdom, more then the reality of wisdom; when he doth not so much care to be wise, as to be thought wise. The name is better to him then the thing. *Many have a great opinion of their own wisdom, and would have others take up that opinion of them too. Wisdom is the best thing.* And these think themselves well enough, if they flourish in the thoughts of others for wise men. The reputation of wisdom pleaseth them as much as the enjoyment of it. Thus, to have an itch to be esteemed wiser then we are, or wise when we are not, is the greatest piece of folly. It is a loud vanity to affect an opinion of wisdom among others, or to have an high opinion of our own wisdom. Thus vain man would be wise, and it is his vanity that he would.

Secondly, Man is vain when he would be wise beyond his line, or in things above him, not in things about him, or fit for him. The scope of the place leads us to this Exposition. *Canst thou by searching find out God! Canst thou find him out to perfection? He is as high as heaven*, &c. Though such knowledge of God be too high for any man, yet vain man offers at it, and thinks he knoweth nothing, if he know not something which he ought not to know. *Man naturally desires forbidden wisdom*; and his desire is seven times stronger after it, as it is *forbidden*, then as it is *wisdom.* Many will not hear Wisdom when she calls, who yet would be wise in that which they have no call to. *An evil heart cannot desire any good, but for the sake of some evil that comes with it.* The Devil tempted man to be wise in a way of sin. The first sin came in by an attempt to get forbidden wisdom: *When the woman saw, that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof*, &c. *Gen.* 3. 6. But what was the wisdom which the woman expected from the fruit of this tree? It was not wisdom to know God, but to be as knowing as God: So the Tempter promised, *Ye shall be as Gods knowing good and evil*, ver. 5. To know God is eternal life; but a desire to know, as God, brought in eternal death. The Apostle cautions, *Not to be wise above that which is written*; and adviseth, *Rom.* 12. 3. *To be wise unto sobriety.* There is an intemperance of the understanding, as well as of the affections. There are two extreams about wisdom, neglect and affectation. One cares not to know what is necessary, what may make him holy, and bring him near to Christ. Another cares only to know unnecessaries: His wisdom and learning lies in canvasing *foolish and unlearned Questions*, which *Paul* bids *Timothy* avoid, 2 *Tim.* 2. 23. He pleases himself with crotchets and curiosities, with meer notions and niceties; about these, his imagination waxes wanton, and runs riot, yea, mad. Or, he must be breaking open of Gods Cabinet, entring into his Counsels, prying into his Ark; he thinks he knoweth nothing worthy a man, unless he know that which is above man. Thus also *vain man would be wise*, and it is his vanity that he would.

עַיִר
Hic vertitur pullus tamen ejusmodi esse constat, qui oneribus vehendis, & agrariæ culturæ aptus sit.

Though he be born as a wild asses colt.] That is, like a wild ass. As Son of man is not a young man, but a man; so the *asses colt* is not a young ass, but an ass, any ass. The word is often used for asses under burthen, and fitted for use, which colts are not, *Gen.* 49. 11. *Binding his foal unto the vine, and his asses colt unto the choice vine*, there to take up their burden, and undergo their labour. So then, when he saith, *Vain man would be wise, though born like a wild asses colt*, his meaning in *plain English* is only this, man would be very wise, wiser then man, he would be thought as wise as God, at least he would search out the wisdom of God, and yet indeed *he is a beast*; and *Zophar* instanceth in the wild ass among all beasts, because the ass among beasts, and the wild ass among asses is furthest from wisdom. Some beasts have a kind of knowledge, and are very teachable, but the wild ass is not guilty of either. A man of weakest parts and thinnest intellectuals is in scorn (though not without blame) called an ass; as a crafty man is (without blame) called a fox.

Ad majorem stupiditatem declarandam, פֶּרֶא *vertitur Onager, qui est asinus sylvestris.* Merc.

Man hath wit and subtilty for the world, and to contrive for his lusts, but being degraded from that dignity of a son of God, he walks more like a beast then a man towards God. *Eccles.* 3. 18. *I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. That they might*

might see; How shall they see it? They will not see it till they are shewed it, and scarce then. I said in mine heart that God would manifest this to them, that they themselves are beasts. As whatsoever good we have, comes from God, not from nature, so it is from God that we must learn the badness of nature. *Man is so much a beast, that he cannot know himself to be one, till God teach him. And we never learn to be men, till we have learned that we were beasts.* Man was made like unto God, but man hath made himself like unto a beast. In three respects man is born like a wild asses colt, or like a beast.

First, In regard of his ignorance. Knowledge is proper to those who have reason, yet some who have reason have scarce any thing which can be called knowledge. And though grace repair the image of God in knowledge, yet the best of men may confess with *Agur*, (Prov. 30. 2.) *Surely I am more brutish then any man*, or (more near the Hebrew) *then a man, and have not the understanding of a man.* Wicked men are more brutish then beasts, and holy men are more brutish then a perfect man. The best have somewhat of the beast in them, because they have not the whole understanding of a man in them. *David* charges himself for one *sinful act*, much more then is it true of a *sinful state*, *So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee*, Psal. 73. 22. His dissuasion carries the same meaning, *Psal.* 22. 9. *Be not as the horse, or as the mule which have no understanding.* And so doth his conclusion (*Psal.* 49. 20.) *Man that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.* Not as if he meant it of men quite rob'd of reason. This *not understanding* is to be restrained to the duty of their high place, and the providence of God in raising them to it. He that understands not who raised him to honour, and what his honour leads him to, is the more like or below a beast, because he is so much above other men. *Of all fools a fool in honour looks most unlike a man.*

Secondly, Man is like a beast, or like that beast here expressed, *for wantonness*, lust and vanity. The Church of the Jews in her defection to idolatry is compared to a dromedary and a wild ass, (*Jer.* 2. 23, 24.) *Thou art a swift dromedary, traversing her wayes, a wild ass* (or, *O wild ass*, so some translate it) *used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure; in her occasion who can turn her away? All they that seek her will not weary themselves, in her moneth they shall find her.* The Prophet describeth the spiritual wantonness of that people in their idolatrous and superstitious mixtures by the natural wantonness of the ass, *In her occasion who can turn her away?* she is not to be medled with, when the fit's upon her. *All they that seek her will not weary themselves*, they desist from pursuing her, knowing they may tire themselves, but not take her with all their travel, till somewhat hath tamed her; Then, *In her moneth they shall find her.* Not that the wild ass (as an old *Rabbin* dreams) useth to sleep one whole moneth of the year, and then the hunters used to catch her napping. I shall remit this among Jewish fables. But the *moneth* she is to be found in, may be the moneth near her sorrows, when her burden takes off her speed, and makes her more easie to be brought to hand. Some read the text differently, yet the sense is the same. *All they that seek her need not weary themselves: In her moneth they shall find her.* As if he had said, A little labour will serve to catch her, she is to be had with ease, when or where her lust is to be satisfied. Like this wild ass were the people of *Israel* in spiritual wantonness, *so set upon it*, that none could turn them from it: The Prophets wearied themselves in vain to reclaim them from that lewdness; *So prone to it*, that none needed to weary themselves to get their *good-will*, they did even prevent wooing, and went up to the bed of love, or of mystical fornication, with the Nations round about, as soon as they did invite, but with a glance of the eye. And as they were like the wild ass for spiritual, so they, together with the most of mankind, have undergone as mean a comparison for their proneness to, and violent pursuit of corporal wantonness and uncleanness.

Thirdly, Man is like a wild ass, in regard of stubbornness and unteachableness. Wild asses are as untractable, as almost any creature. Naturalists tell us, They are all for liberty. The wild ass is not used to burthens, or brought to hand; he or she are not fed at rack and manger, they eat what the wilderness affords, and are not under any mans care or government. God himself hath given us this character of the wild ass in this book (*Job* 39. 5.) *Who hath sent out the wild ass free?* (What master hath the wild ass been apprentic'd to?) or *who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?* (from whose hand hath he received his Indentures, or been manumitted?) *Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver.* The horse and ox must serve; the horse travels, and the ox tills the ground: the ox is under a yoke, and the horse hath a bit and bridle to keep him in subjection: but the wild ass regardeth not the driver, he cares neither for his whip, nor for his whistle. He is altogether a stranger to discipline, and likes not to hear of any master but himself, or to be a servant to any but his own will. Such is the nature of man, *Man is born like a wild asses colt*; he loves to be free, or rather to be dissolute, he cannot endure to be subdued to order; he would know no law but his own lust, nor rule, but his own desire. Every man is of himself, *A son of Belial, A son without a yoke.* Man is so much for sinful liberty, that he cares not for true liberty. The liberty he seeks, makes him a bond-slave to corruption; Thus man is born a wild asses colt, he is ignorant, wanton and licentious.

So much for the words as we translate.

There is yet another reading of good use, and worthy our examination. 'Tis given out thus, *So shall vain man be made wise, and the asses colt shall be born a man.* This rendering may bear a double interpretation.

First, It may be understood *Ironically*, as a scorn put upon *Job*, and upon all such as *Zophar* supposed him to be, vain men. *Vain man shall be made wise, when an asses colt is made a man*; that is, *He shall never, or very hardly be made wise*; as if he had said, *It is as unheard of, and as strange a thing that such a man as thou, a man so proud and high in thine own thoughts, so vain in thy imaginations, that such an one as thou shouldst be made wise or holy, as it is for a wild ass to be made a man.* There is a truth in this position, if *Zophars* supposition had been true. For the distance between mans nature, and grace, is greater then that between mans nature and a beasts: *Bare reason is further from grace then sense is from reason.* It is as easie to change a beast into a man, or to make a beast understand reason, as to change a sinner into a Saint, or to make a believer of an Infidel. Conversion is not the change of actions only, but of nature. This sentence, *Vain man shall be made wise, when an ass is made a man*, is of the same sense with that Proverb among us, *When the skie falls we shall have larks*; or with this, *Such a thing shall come to pass when a black-more is washed white*; or rather with that of our Saviour in the Gospel, *It is easier for a camel to go thorow the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*, Matth. 19. 24. Rich men shall go to heaven, when a camel or a cable (so some read) passeth thorow a needle; that is, it is impossible they should by any power of man; and therefore to ease the sharpness of the speech, Christ adds by way of explication, *With God all things are possible. It is an hard thing, yea an impossible thing* (*without God*) *for a rich man to be saved*, or for a vain man to be made wise. And it is thus hard to make a rich man happy, because he thinks himself happy enough; and to make a vain man wise, because he presumes he is wise enough. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool then of him*, Prov. 26. 12. or in the language of this text, there is as much hope of a beast as of him. A man had better be ignorant, then conceited of his knowledge. *An opinion of knowledge keeps out true knowledge.* Not only instruction, but correction is lost on such *Opinionists*. (*Prov.* 27. 22.) *Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a morter among wheat with a pestel, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.* He means it not of a natural fool, nor of one that is convinced of his foolishness, but of him (who is the great fool of all) that is in love with his own fancies and shadows of wisdome: take such a fool and beat him to pieces in a morter, that is, let him be afflicted, till he be almost destroyed, yet his folly departs not from him; you may as soon make a beast a man, as such a fool to understand. *There is but one greater enemy to real knowledge then ignorance, and that is a conceit of knowledge.*

Only he that can drive a camel thorow a needles eye, and make a beast a man; Only he that calls those things which are not, as if they were, can make vain man wise, and him to be holy, who is not.

Secondly, This rendering, *So shall vain man be made wise, and the wild ass shall be born a man,* sheweth us the effect of those afflictions, which God layeth upon man. He considers their sins to punish and chasten them; What of that? *So shall vain man be made wise,* &c. As if he had said, The end of the chastening of God upon man, is to make him wise, or (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.*27.9.) *By this shall the iniquity of man be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin,* his vanity, that the *wild asses colt may be born a man,* or *reborn.* This interpretation gives us the very language of the new Testament, about the grace of *regeneration,* or *a new birth,* John 3.5,6. In which this wonder is continually wrought, *A wild ass is born a man.* Hence observe,

That, *afflictions blessed and made effectual by God, make a gracious change in man.*

How many ignorant men have, with correction, received instruction? how many proud men have been made humble; and of carnal, spiritual? how many unruly spirits have been brought in compass, and stubborn ones subdued with a rod? The rod and the word work miracles, when God works with them. If God speak to a dry rod, it shall bring forth these Almond-blossoms and heavenly fruits; and unless he speak with the word, we continue dry, yea dead, earthly and unfruitful. *Before I was afflicted, I went astray;* saith *David*: *David* wandred like a sheep, and was as a beast; affliction made him a man, and turned him home. *Ephraim* crieth out, *Jer.* 31.18. *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised;* importing either the strength of the affliction; when God will afflict, no man can stay his hand, or take off his blow: or the effect of the affliction; *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*; that is, I was bettered by my chastisements. The Lord chasteneth some, who are not chastised; there is no change made, they do not mend with beating. This I rather pitch upon, as the meaning of *Ephraim*'s bemoaning affliction, *Thou hast chastened me, and I was chastened*: and observe how he speaks of himself under the notion of a beast; *I was as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke,* I could not endure to come under discipline, I could not abide the yoke; or submit unto thy will; *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God*; But is this the language of a beast? No, when once the Lord had chastened him, he spake like a man, whereas before he spake and did like a beast, even like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; but now he hath the voice of a man, yea the voice of a Saint, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.* O happy chastenings, which make such changes! And chastisings have many advantages to make such changes, to turn beasts into men. For,

First, They imbitter the world to us, the world is such a beast that it makes men beasts, and when the world is taken out of our hearts, the beast departs from us, and is taken out of our hearts.

Secondly, Afflictions make sin more visible, judgements reallize the evil that is in sin; and shew us the poison of that serpent.

Thirdly, Afflictions are proper to tame our wildness, and take down the loftiness of our spirits. *Nebuchadnezzar* for his pride was (in a manner, in his manners he was before) turned into a beast. His outward shape was not changed, (The Poets Metamorphosis was in morals, and so was this in the Prophet) but he lived like a beast, or he lead the life of a beast. *Some for sin are put to live like beasts, and all men in sin live like beasts. Nebuchadnezzar* living among beasts, and like a beast, learned to be a man; For at the end of the dayes, saith he, *I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes to heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me,* (Dan. 4.24.) Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* was born a man, I do not say he was born an holy man, but a man he was born, *His understanding returned unto him, and his Councellours and his Lords sought unto him,* they owned him then not only as a man, but as a Monarch. Afflictions civillize most, and they spiritualize many. They are more brutish then beasts, who (as the Prophet describes them, *Isa.* 91.20.) continue *like wild bulls full of the fury* (and empty of the spirit) *of the Lord,* when they are entangled in these nets, or taken with these toils.

And because there is so great a tendency in affliction to humble and purifie vain man from his sin, therefore affliction is brought in as a great aggravation of the sin of man. How beastly are they that will not return from their folly, when they are smitten and broken with judgements? Hence that iterated expostulation (*Amos* 4.) *I have smitten you,* &c. *yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* God himself doth even wonder that the beast should not turn man, when he had been so long under the burden, and had received so many blows. 'Tis seasonable for us of this Nation, to consider this point. We have been like wild asses colts, ignorant, vain, obstinate, and unteachable; God hath considered these things, he hath written his observation of them in bloudy characters. O that this might be the fruit, that such as have been empty, and without hearts, might learn wisdom, that such as have been wild asses, might be born men, yea good men. This would make all our losses gain to us, and our judgments mercies; such a change as this would change our water into wine, and all our sorrows into joy.

Thus I have done with the first part of *Zophars* speech, wherein he reproves *Job*, and argues the matter with him. He is now ready to alter his stile, and instead of conviction prepares advices for him.

VERS. 13,14.

If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.
If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

IN the former part of this Chapter, *Zophar* confuted the opinion of *Job*, and reproved him for asserting and standing so closely to it. In this he gives him counsel and direction; his counsel is contained in these two verses. Toward the receiving of which he proposeth not a few encouragements, in the words which follow. The whole may be formed up thus,

Est parænesis, qua Jobum hortatur, ut ad Deum rede-at amplissima illi boni pollicent. Merc.

Thou oughtest willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey that counsel, in the hearing and obeying whereof, thou shalt be freed from evil, and enjoy all desireable blessings and good things.

But if thou hear and obey my counsel, if thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards God, if thou put the iniquity of thy hand far away from thee, thou shalt be freed from all evil, and enjoy all desireable blessings and good things.

Therefore thou oughtest willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey my counsel.

The conclusion of this syllogism is delivered in the thirteenth and fourteenth verses. The assumption, (namely that, in preparing his heart, and praying unto God, he should be blessed) is laid down, in the 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19. verses; which is illustrated by the opposite and contrary condition of the wicked, at the twentieth verse, *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

If thou prepare thine heart.

The words are an hortatory supposition, and (as was toucht before) we may observe that the three friends of *Job*, cast their discourses in the same mould, and insist in the same method. Their speeches are all of one frame and piece, as if they had spoken by consent, or had before-hand resolved upon a joynt-mannaging of their arguments & proceedings. While they all hit the same nail, they hope at last to drive it home to the head. As I have shewed *Eliphaz* in the fifth, and *Bildad* in the eighth Chapter, so now I must shew *Zophar*, after he had sufficiently, if not bitterly reproved *Job*, administring holy and wholsom advice and counsel.

If thou prepare thine heart.] As if he had said, *Come (friend) leave off thy complainings, and disputings, leave off thy self-justifyings and over-weenings of thy own worth; Be perswaded at last to lay down thy weapons, and submit thy self, give over reasoning, and fall to praying. Prepare thy heart to seek God.*

The

Tu autem firmasti cor tuum, &c. Vulg.

The Vulgar reads it, as a charge brought against him, and not as a counsel given to him, *Thou hast stiffened thine heart against God, and thou hast stretched out thine hands toward him:* As if *Job* had still continued contumacious and obstinate against God, after all these breakings. To firm or strengthen the heart, is to harden the heart, or to be insensible under the hand of God. But rather take it according to our translation, as a direction or counsel, *If thou prepare thine heart*, that is, if thou puttest thine heart into order, or if thou fix thine heart, so the word is translated (*Psal.* 57.7. & 108. 1.) *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise.* An unfixed, or an unsetled heart, must needs be an unprepared heart. *Fixedness of heart is preparatory to preparation of heart.* A fixed heart (and that only) is fitted to move towards, and to follow after God. It is very hard to aim right at that which is in motion, but it is harder for him that is in motion to aim right. *The steady man hits the mark.*

נכון לבי

Paratum vel fixum est cor meum

Yet more distinctly consider,

First, What is here meant by the heart?

Secondly, What by the preparing or fixing of the heart?

Cor est primum vivens & ultimum moriens.

First, The heart is not here taken in its natural capacity, for that part of the body, which *Philosophers* call *the first living, and the last dying in man.* But by the heart (in a metaphor) we are to understand the soul, or the whole inward man: For as the heart is the principal part of the body, so the soul is the principal part of man, and the failings and wounds of the soul are to the whole man, like the failing or wounding of the heart in reference to the outward man.

Again, As the heart in Scripture signifies the whole soul or inward man, so it is put distinctly for those noble faculties of the soul; First, *The understanding.* Secondly, *The will.* Thirdly, *The memory.* And for a fourth, which is a result or compound of them three, *The conscience.* The Apostle means the understanding, while he saith of the Gentiles, (*Rom.* 1:21.) *Their foolish heart was darkned:* they had a knowledge of God in the creature, but they waxed wanton, and became vain in their imaginations; and therefore their *foolish heart*, that is, their understanding *was darkned*; God sent them a *spiritual cloud*, because they did not improve *natural light.* They who abuse light are most usually and most justly left in darkness. But to the point, the same Apostle attributes *blindness of heart*, that is, of understanding, to the same Gentiles, *Ephes.* 4. 18.

Secondly, The heart expresseth the *will*, in that answer of Christ to the Lawyers Question, *Which is the great commandment in the Law?* Matth. 22. 36. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God* (saith Christ, *v.* 37.) *with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind*; that is, with thy will, with thy affections, with thy understanding, and with all of each of these. And as the heart of man is his will, so also is the heart of God. *I have sought me a man* (saith God, 1 *Sam.* 13.14.) *after my own heart.* He is such a man as I would have, he is so much after my will, *That he will perform all my wills.*

Thirdly, The heart of man is his memory (*Psal.* 119. 11.) *Thy word have I hid in my heart:* Memory is the repository or store-house of the Word, the treasury of holy Truths, *Mary hid the words of Christ there*, Luke 2. 19.

Fourthly, The conscience, which hath in it the light of the understanding, the motions of the will, and the recognitions of the memory, comes under the notion of the heart (*Psal.* 51. 12.) *Create in me a clean heart, O God*; that is, purifie my conscience, set that right; *David*'s conscience was extreamly out of frame, his sin had reduced it back into a kind of chaos, this made him pray for a new creation: Ordinary repairs, or a little mending would not serve his turn. But if this Scripture convince not the heart, for the conscience, yet that of the Apostle *John* doth beyond all exception. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our heart* (1 *John* 3.20.) and so doth that of *Job* (Chap. 27. 6.) *My heart* (that is, my conscience) *shall not reproach me so long as I live.* It is conscience which chideth and reproacheth the sinner, and tells him his own. It is conscience that speaks fair, and gives good words to those who walk uprightly: *My heart* (saith upright *Job*) *shall not reproach me*; that is, I have walked in my integrity, therefore I am not afraid what conscience can do, or say against me.

When *Job* is advised to *prepare his heart*, we must enlarge it to the whole inward man, not fix it upon any one of these faculties in opposition to, or exemption from the other. *If thou prepare thine heart.*

Dicit cor tuum, non labia tua, quod hypocritarum est; hortatur Jobum, ut ad Deum redeat non fictè & simulatè. Drus. *Verbum* כון *semper accipitur in bonum.*

This preparation consisteth in two things.

First, In removing and sweeping out the filth which is in the heart, *Matth.* 15. 19. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.* Now, as it is the continual work of an evil heart to send out these; so it is the first work of preparing a good heart, to purge and cast out these. They come out of the heart easily, but, O how hard is it, to thrust them out! yet this must be done, or else nothing is done towards the preparation of the heart. If you were to prepare an house for the entertainment of a great Prince, what would you do? Would not your first care be to carry out the dirt, and wash the floor; down with the cobwebs there (cries one) away with every unclean thing (saith another) Thus we begin to prepare our houses for such noble entertainments. Again, when you are to prepare a plot of ground to receive seed, what do you? Do you not first pick out the stones, pull up and bury the weeds, and then sow? Thus the Lord dealt with his vineyard (*Isa.* 5.2.) *He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and then planted it with the choicest vines.* He gathered out the stones before he planted it, he would not set vines among stones. The first work in all preparations is to get out the rubbish, and remove impediments.

Secondly, The heart wherein Christ is to be lodged, must not be a mere *vacuum*, only swept and empty; holiness doth not consist in negatives, in removing and throwing out of evil, though that be a great part of it: Therefore the next part of preparation is the adorning and beautifying of the heart, the quickning and heightning of it to those duties and services which God calls for. If you entertain a Prince, or but a special friend, as you sweep your house, and wash away the dirt, so you put up your *Arras hangings*, lay on your *Persian carpets*, set up your *Ivory beds*, uncover your *rich stools*, bring out your *Plate and ornaments*, till then the house is not prepared. Thus to the point in hand, the preparation of the heart consists in the actings of grace, in opening of all your spiritual stores, in putting on the richest furnitures of the inward man, in being cloathed with the Spirit, in shewing forth the vertues of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you be not thus beautified, as well as emptied, you are unprepared.

It is said (*Matth.* 12.44.) *That the evil spirit* returning to his house, whence he came out, when he is come, *findeth it empty, swept and garnished.* No marvel if it were empty, for who would dwell in a house, which hath had the Devil for its Tenant? But how came it swept, and with what broom? How came it to be garnished, and with what furniture? Must a house be made clean to entertain an unclean spirit? Must it be swept to receive him, who hath fill'd the whole world with filth and rubbish?

This emptying, sweeping, and garnishing, is fit for such a guest. A heart emptied and swept of goodness, a heart adorned and garnished with noisom lusts (such are the ornaments and garnish there meant) is a heart prepared for the Devil. In this manner, but with the most contrary materials must the heart be prepared for God. It must be emptied and swept of sin, it must be garnished with grace, before the King of glory enters in.

In these two acts, preparation of the heart consists, and without both it is imperfect; if the room be not cleansed, he who is of purer eyes then to behold any unclean thing, will not lodge in it. God and sin cannot dwell together, *What communion is there between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial?* Neither is it enough (if it were possible) to cast out sin, and to put off the old man, unless you put on the new. Some attempt to put the new man upon the old. They are willing (in this sense) to be cloathed upon, but cannot endure to be uncloathed. *Holiness upon unholiness is the disguise, not the habit of a holy man.* Others would be uncloathed, so they might be spared this pains to be cloathed upon. It is easier with them not to do evil, then to do good. *Evil laid aside, and good not admitted or acted,*

acted, makes but half (if ſo much of) a good man. A due preparation of the heart conſiſts in putting off every evil, and in not doing any; in putting on all, and in doing every good.

This is the work which *Job* is adviſed unto. The ſum of all ſafe and wholſom counſel is contracted into this one ſentence, *Prepare thy heart.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *God muſt have the heart.*

He made the heart, therefore he deſerves it. He gives us his heart, therefore he deſerves ours. Whatſoever we give him without a heart, we give him nothing. *There is only ſo much of value in what we do, as there is of heart in it.* It is the voice of our hearts, not the muſick of our tongues that God regards, *My ſon, give me thine heart.* God muſt have your beſt piece, for he is the beſt of all.

Secondly, *Any heart will not ſerve Gods turn, it muſt be a prepared heart.*

He accepts not the beſt ſervice without a heart: How then ſhould he accept an evil heart, which can do him no ſervice, or none but ill? As a good heart is the beſt part of man, ſo an evil heart is the worſt; and there is no heart, but is one of theſe; that which is not good, is evil, and that which is not prepared, is not good. Therefore the heart, which is a gift fit for God, muſt be a prepared heart.

Thirdly, *Our preparations for God muſt begin at the heart.*

When *Zophar* would direct *Job*, he ſaith, *If thou prepare thine heart*; never think to cleanſe your hands before you cleanſe your hearts: who can ſweeten the ſtream, while the fountain is bitter, or make the fruit good, while the tree is evil? (*Act.* 15. 9.) *He put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith:* Where the holy Ghoſt begins, we muſt: They who agree not in purity of heart, ſhall differ for ever. They who agree in purity of heart, though they diſagree in opinion, ſhould put no difference (I am ſure not ſuch wide ones as now are) between themſelves. The truth is, where hearts are really purified by faith, their differences in opinion cannot be very wide: for they who are ſo wide that they cannot be ſaved, were never purified: When once the heart is purified, head and hand cannot continue very long, or very much unpurified. For though purifying begins alwayes at the heart, yet it never ſtayes there. Many a man hath purified his head from falſe principles (he is very Orthodox) and his hands from falſe practices (he is very honeſt) whoſe heart was never purified. But there is no man, nor ever was, whoſe heart is purified; but his head and hands, were, are, or ſhall be purified, even in this preſent life. A man whoſe heart is prepared cannot perſevere to the end in doing or holding evil; but the reaſon of all the evil both done and held in the world, is, becauſe the heart is not prepared. So it is ſaid of *Rehoboam* (*2 Chron.* 12. 14.) *He did evil in the ſight of the Lord*, Why? *Becauſe he prepared not his heart to ſeek the Lord.* Poſſibly he made ſome outward preparations, but he prepared not his heart. And when *Simon Magus*, who made ſuch haſte to be waſhed in the water of baptiſm (*Act.* 8.) did ſoon after appear ſo foul; where lay the fault? He had made ſuch an outward profeſſion, that the Apoſtle could not refuſe him, his tongue was as good, and 'tis like he ſhewed as fair a hand as the reſt did; why then did *Simon Magus* fail? The Apoſtle tells him (and us) the reaſon (*verſ.* 21.) *Thine heart is not right in the ſight of God*; he had waſhed his out-ſide, but his inwards were unclean. *The heart is the worſt part of man, till it be mended, and then 'tis the beſt.* Where moſt evil lieth, there we muſt begin to be good; all is good, when that is good which is the ſeat, the neſt of all evil. When Chriſt was coming into the world, to accompliſh that great work of redemption, he ſaith (*Heb.* 10. 5.) *Lo I come (in the volume of thy book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God, a body haſt thou prepared me,* &c. Chriſt needed not to have a heart prepared him, his heart was prepared from all eternity; there was never any, the leaſt unpreparedneſs in his heart, for he was holy in his temporal conception, and he was the holy Son of God, by an eternal generation; and therefore he doth not ſay, *An heart haſt thou prepared me*, no, he might ſay (in the higheſt ſence with the Pſalmiſt) *My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.* What needed he then to fit him for a ſacrifice? Only a body capable of ſufferings. He had a heart fit both to do and ſuffer, but he wanted a body: *He was in the form of God*, therefore a body, a ſute of fleſh and blood, ſuch as the *Divine Nature* never wore before, muſt be provided for him, and provided it was: God himſelf was at the whole coſt to make it (man contributed nothing) *A body haſt thou prepared me, O God.* But when man is called to do the will of God, he hath a body prepared, but he wants an heart. He hath but need to pray, *Lord prepare an heart for me*; if the heart be prepared, the body is. All the diſtempers and unſerviceableneſs of our bodies ariſe from the unpreparedneſs of our hearts. The heart carries the whole man with it; if once that be ready, all is ready.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *God will not do us good, until we are fit to receive good.*

Grace is free, yet grace prepares us for grace. As the mere favour of God beſtows the firſt grace upon us, ſo the exerciſe of grace fits us for further favour. *If thou prepare thine heart, then, &c.* In all the publick reformations recorded in Scripture, God calls his people to ſet their hearts right (*1 Sam.* 7. 3.) *Put away the ſtrange gods, and Aſhtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord.* The want of this is complained of, as the cauſe of all their wants: Hence the Prophet prayeth (*Pſal.* 78. 8.) that they might not be as their Fathers, *A ſtubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that ſet not their hearts aright.* While our hearts are not right with God, no marvel if things go wrong with us. All the unevenneſs of our lives, whether in what we do, or in what we enjoy, ariſeth from the unevenneſs of our hearts. How can they expect to receive good, who are totally unfit to do good? *The lips of the wiſe diſperſe knowledge, but the heart of the fooliſh (doth) not ſo*: (or nearer the original) *is not right,* (*Prov.* 15. 7.) This latter Tranſlation expounds the former; for the reaſon why he cannot do ſo, is, becauſe his heart is not right. *The lips of the wiſe diſperſe knowledge*, they ſcatter or ſow the good ſeed of knowledge: but the heart of a fool is not right, therefore he cannot do ſo; and becauſe his heart is ſo unprepared to do good, he receives no good. This was the ſtop, or gave check to that good work of reformation (*2 Chron.* 20. 23.) much was done, *Howbeit the high-places were not taken away*; why what hindered? *The people had not as yet prepared their hearts unto the God of their father*; they were not ready for God. And that may be the very reaſon, why at this time we go on ſo ſlowly in duty, and why our mercies come on ſo ſlowly; we are not prepared for the God of our fathers; our pride, our envyings, our worldlineſs, and creature intereſts, are ſo great, and ſtick ſo cloſe to us, that we are unfit for the work God calls for at our hands, and for the mercy which we are waiting for at the hand of God.

Fifthly, How is it that *Zophar* ſaith, *If thou prepare thine heart?* he puts the work upon *Job*. Who is able to prepare his own heart? We may as well create a world, as convert our ſelves. We may as ſoon be our own *Saviours*, as our own *preparers*.

It is indeed Gods work to prepare the heart; yet *Zophar* gives good counſel to *Job*, when he ſaith, *If thou prepare thine heart*. The *Pelagians* of old, with their ſucceſſors in that perſwaſion, *Papiſts* and *Arminians*, miſ-interpret texts of like importance with this, to prove that the converſion of man to God begins at man; or that the grace of God is ſubſequent, or but a ſecundary to the ſelf-preparations of man. Whereas ſuch Scriptures ſhew us our duty, not our ability, what muſt be done, not what we can do. A natural man hath no ſtrength; a godly man cannot improve his ſtrength without aſſiſtance. *Without me* (ſaith Chriſt) *ye* (my Diſciples) *can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 5. Our preparations of heart do not at all begin at us, nor are they compleated by us.

Hence Obſerve, *We may be called to do what is not in our power to do.*

The Apoſtle exhorts, *Work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling* (Phil. 2. 12.) He ſeems to give a ſtrange reaſon in the next verſe, *For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleaſure* (v. 13.) Our inability to work doth not exempt us from working, we having a promiſe from God to make us able: we are commanded to do what we have not ſo much as a will to do, becauſe

cause God is engaged to work in us both to will and to do; and that, not according to any predispositions of ours, but *of his own good pleasure*. Our Master in Heaven shews us our duty, and then helps us to perform it: He calls us to prepare our hearts, and then prepares them for us. For they who have received grace, have not a full power to obey this call, and they who are in nature have none at all; yet it is not in vain to say to a man of the one estate, nor of the other, *Prepare thine heart*; though the latter be dead in sins and trespasses, yet it is neither improper, nor unprofitable to bid him turn from sin, because while we speak to the ear, God saith he will speak to the heart, and accompany the Word with his own power, yea, *make the word of man the power of God unto mans salvation*. And though the former cannot fully obey this call, nor prepare his heart without new actual concurrences, and fresh receits of grace, yet by such invitations God awakens and stirs up those old habits of grace, which lay slumbering, or unacted, and causeth such to stir up themselves, who were asleep, or very unactive. The Prophet complained (*Isa.* 64. 7.) *That no man stirred up himself to take hold of God.* As man must stir up himself, yet he stirs not, till God stir him; so man must prepare his heart, yet he cannot prepare it, till God prepareth him; *Psal.* 10. 17. *Lord, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* It is not only the priviledge, but the purpose of God to prepare our hearts; yet if we desire he should, we must set our selves to prepare our own hearts. *David* in that gratulory prayer for the free oblations and contributions of the people toward the building of the Temple, thus bespeaketh God, *Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee* (1 Chron. 29. 16.) He blesseth God for the present preparation, he begs of God to continue their prepared hearts in a gracious frame; and yet as if nothing had been done, he prayeth for further preparation (*Prov.* 16. 1.) *The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord.* You see all is from the Lord, the root and the fruit, *heart-work and tongue-work*, our thoughts which are the moulds of action, and our words which are the image of our thoughts; God works at the bottom of the heart, and at the tip of the tongue, yet man must not sit still; that God works, must not make us idle: when we hear that God doth all, we must not take up resolutions to do nothing, no, the Lord in speaking thus, at once directs us what to do, and assists us to do it. *Grace is as much magnified in working in us, as in saving us without works*; that's the reason why we are so often called to duty, though we have no power. *If thou prepare thine heart,*

And stretch out thine hand toward him.

Or *Spread thy palms to him*, so the letter of the original.

ופרשת אליו כפיך

The word which we translate, *Stretch out*, signifies sometimes an affected ostentation, or the spreading of a thing to have it seen. Hence one of the Ancients expounds this place as a reproof upon *Job*, giving the meaning of it thus, *Thou hast stretched forth thine hands towards him*, that is, *Thou hast vaunted of thy works of piety, justice and charity; thou hast spread thy palms, yea thy plumes before God, and shewed him what work thou hast done him.* Some tell us that the word *Pharisee*, is derived from (*Parash*) to lay open, to unfold and stretch out: and there is a double reason given of it; First, Because the *Pharisees* wore the Law openly, with broad enlarged phylacteries: Or secondly, Because they loved to do all their duties openly, they would pray in the open Streets, they gave alms with sound of trumpet, and Christ tells them to their teeth, *That all they did was to be seen of men*; they kept their evil hearts close, and durst not let them be seen; but their good works they cared not who saw them, or rather their care was that all should see them; thus they spread out their hands. Christ adviseth in the matter of alms, to keep the hand close, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth* (Matth. 6. 31.) The right hand is the working and giving hand; our good works, especially our gifts, should be done in such secrecy, that the left hand which is so near a neighbour, must not know what is done by the right. But the Pharisees made not only their *left hand*, that is their next neighbours, but Town and Country know what their *right hands* had done. *He that desires all should be known, which his right hand doth, doth nothing at all with a right heart.* It is dangerous to hide the talents which God lends us; but it is as much our duty to hide the talents (such are gifts to the poor) which we lend to God, as it is to lend them. These talents are best traded, when wrapt in a napkin, or buried in the earth.

Expandere manus est opera pietatis ostentare & vaniloquentia dilatare. Greg.

Some conceive *Zophar* in these words taxing *Job* with vain ostentation of his good deeds; *Thou hast stretched out thine hands*, that is, Thou hast told God stories of thy charity, of thine alms, &c.

Manuum expansio pertinet ad habitum furentis. Phil.

Others interpret it thus, *Thou hast stretched*, &c. that is, thou hast carried thy self insultingly, furiously, madly toward God. Stretching forth of the hands, is a posture of fury: an uncomposed mind is often visible in the uncomposedness of an outward member.

But thirdly, waving those two, *stretching forth of the hands*, as it is here given in counsel, hath a three-fold use in Scripture.

First, It is a gesture of sorrow, mourners stretch out their hands (*Jer.* 4. 31.) *I heard a voice as of a woman in travel, and the anguish, as of her that bringeth forth her first child. The voice of the daughter of* Zion *that bewaileth her self, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied, because of the murderers.*

Secondly, *It is a gesture of bounty or pity.* Stretching out the hands, implieth a readiness and willingness to receive to favour, or to shew favour (*Isa.* 65. 2.) *I (saith the Lord) have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*; that is, I have expressed my willingness to entertain them, to pardon them, and to do them good. *Open hands are the emblem of an open heart, and arms stretched out, of a readiness to imbrace.* When we stretch out our hands to God, it speaks our willingness to receive his commands; and when God stretcheth out his hands to us, it speaks his readiness to pardon our sins, and supply our wants.

Est habitus opem implorantis & orationis signum. Merc.

Thirdly, Stretching out the hands is a *prayer gesture.* As he that helps stretcheth forth his hand, so doth he that would be holpen. When *Moses* went out from the presence of *Pharaoh*, he saith, *As soon as I am gone out of the City, I will spread abroad my hands unto the Lord, and the thunder shall cease*, &c. *Exod.* 9. 29. That is, I will pray unto the Lord, that the thunder may cease, and I am assured it shall. So (1 *King.* 8. 22.) at the dedication of the Temple, *Solomon stood before the Altar, and spread forth his hands towards heaven. Let us lift up our heart with (our) hands unto God in the heavens* (Lam. 3. 41.) or according to the letter of the Hebrew; *Let us lift up our hearts to our hands, to God in the heavens*; that is, let our hearts be lifted up as well as our hands. Some lift up their hands while their hearts hang down in prayer. The Apostles charge (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) clears it further, *I will that men pray every where lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.* Heathens have observed and described this posture of suppliants to their Idol-gods, bowing their knees, holding up their hands and praying.

Nixæ genibus supinas manus ad Deos tendentes, ovantesque, &c. *Livi.* 39 *Ac supplex geminas tendens ad sidera palmas* Syl. Ital.

So that putting both together. *Prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him*, are plainly this, *Prepare thine heart and pray, or prepare thine heart to pray.* The sign is put for the thing signified, or the gesture used in that duty for the duty it self in which it is used. There are four significations which *stretching forth the hands* may have in prayer. I will touch upon that (only to shew the vanity of it) which the *superstitious Papists* do much insist upon; we pray (say they) stretching forth the hands or arms, to express *the cross of Christ*; because when a man stretcheth out his arms, his body makes the figure of a cross. This they make one reason, why stretching out the hands, is appointed or accustomed in prayer. But how they who lived where such a kind of death as crucifying was never heard of, as *Zophar* and *Job* did; and so many hundred years before Christ died upon the cross; how they (I say) could in prayer form their bodies intentionally, to that which was never formed in their minds, the cross of Christ, is beyond all conjecture, and is no point at all of faith. To pass that, there are (I say) four significancies in it.

First, stretching out the hands towards God in prayer, implieth a resignation of our selves to the will and work of God. It is as much as to say, *These hands of mine, which I have heretofore imployed about the work of the Devil, and the service of sin, now, Lord, I dedicate them and their work*

wholly to thy self. They who give their hearts to God, will not ſtick at giving their hands. Holy prayer offers up the whole man to God, and deſires him to take the ſpoils of all. A godly man hath not a finger at his own diſpoſe. The hand being the great organ or inſtrument of action, the ſtretching out of our hands to God, may well imply our readineſs to act wholly at his direction. *The ſureſt way to write our ſelves ſervants to God, is to give him our hands.*

Secondly, Stretching forth of the hands, ſignifieth a holy ſtriving with God in prayer, or the earneſtneſs and ſtrong intention of our ſpirits in prayer. A man that ſtriveth with another, ſtretcheth out his hands, and takes hold of him. So did *Jacob* when he wreſtled with the Angel, he held him faſt, and would not let him go, till he had prevailed for a bleſſing.

Oratio eſt elevatio mentis ad deum.

Thirdly, Stretching out of the hand imports the lifting up of the mind to God in prayer. Prayer is the aſſent of the ſoul to God. We pray no more then we have communion with God in prayer. *Unto thee, O Lord* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 25. 1.) *do I lift up my ſoul.* We ſhould not leave any thing of our ſouls, no nor of our ſelves here on earth, when we pray to *our Father which is in Heaven.* We ſhould then lock our hearts againſt worldly thoughts, and ſet them open to God only. Satan is very buſie to buſie the heart with temptations, while the tongue is uttering petitions. Let hands lifted up be witneſſes that the ſoul is, that it is in the mount, out of the noiſe and clutter of this world. How can we believe that God heareth us, when we do not hear our ſelves? or that he ſhould be mindful to grant what we ask, when we do not mind what we are asking?

Quæ autem ſignitia eſt alienari & capi ineptis cogitationibus cum deũ deprecaris, quaſi ſit aliud quod magis debes cogitare quam quod cum Deo loquaris? quomodo te à Deo audiri poſtulas, cum teipſe non audias? vis eſſe deum memorem tui cum rogas; cum tu ipſe memor tui non ſis? Cyprian. *Ser. de Orat. Dominica.*

Fourthly, Stretching out of the hands ſaith, that all our hope and expectation is in God. We ſtretch out our hands to him to tell him that we depend wholly upon him for help, mercy, favour and pardon; that unleſs he deliver us, we are loſt and undone for ever. When a child is in danger of falling, he ſtretcheth out his hands to his mother, or to any next him, crying for their help. If a man be fallen into the mire, or water, he ſtretcheth out his hands preſently; though himſelf cannot ſpeak, yet his hands lifted up ſpeak for hands to lift him up. The priſoner in war caſts down his weapons, and lifts up his hands to the victor for pitty and quarter. Thus hands lifted up or ſtretched out in prayer, beg mercy, and ſhew our dependance upon God for ſuccour. The lifting up of our eyes to God, is of the ſame ſignification: *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the Heavens; as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hand of their maſters, and as the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her miſtreſs, ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God till he have mercy upon us;* Pſal. 123. 1, 2. In this poſture Chriſt prayed to his Father, *Joh.* 17. 1. *Theſe words ſpake Jeſus, and lift up his eyes to Heaven, and ſaid, Father, the hour is come, glorifie thy Son.* He lifted up his eyes as a ſign of confidence in, and holy boldneſs with his Father. This ſign is alſo given, with a hand ſtretched out in prayer, as *Zophar* gives in counſel; *If thou ſtretch forth thine hands towards him.*

First, Obſerve, *That as the heart muſt be prepared for all good duties, ſo eſpecially for prayer. If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him.*

Prayer is a duty of greateſt weight, a moſt ſpiritual duty, it is our acceſs to God in Chriſt, it is *our entring into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus,* Heb. 10. 19. And if ever we had need to look to the holineſs of our hearts, it is when we draw near unto the holy God, who is looking into our hearts. In prayer we deſire God to look into our hearts, and ſhall not we look into them our ſelves?

Secondly, Obſerve, *Prayer is a ſpecial duty of repentance: And the confeſſion of our unpreparedneſs, is a ſpecial part of prayer.*

Zophar thought *Job* had need enough to repent, and he that repents hath need enough to pray: repentance is our returning to God: prayer is our drawing near to God. *I will ariſe* (ſaith the prodigal Son) *and go to my Father, and I will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.*

Thirdly, *If thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him;*

Hence Obſerve, *In prayer the whole man muſt be exerciſed.*

Heart and hand muſt joyn in this duty. Not only the ſoul but the body muſt pray; hands muſt pray, knees muſt pray, and eyes muſt pray; *Geſtures are ſpeaking in prayer,* by theſe we pray when we hold our peace, and lift up a loud voice when we ſay never a word; *kneeling or proſtrating the body ſpeaks humility; beating the breaſt, ſmiting upon the thigh, are ſignificative of ſorrow; lifting up the eyes and hands to Heaven, argue a fervent and attentive ſpirit.* But as it is compleateſt duty to pray with hand and heart; ſo it is emptieſt hypocriſie, to pray with the hand and not with the heart. Theſe geſtures (take that caution) may ſoon degenerate; the body may be very active when the ſoul ſits ſtill or is eſcaped from the work. Some uſe much action, who uſe no affection in prayer; ſoul-prayer, though alone, is good, but wo to body-prayer when it is alone; how can it get warmth or heat when it is alone? Soul prayer is abſolutely neceſſary, body prayer is comely. Internal prayer pleaſeth God moſt, external prayer honours God moſt. What God hath joyned together, let not us (while we may keep them together) part aſunder.

Hi geſtus facile degenerant. Optimæ preces quæ minimum ſtrepunt & in abſcondito cordis ad eum effunduntur qui videt in occulto & rependit in aperto, qui non tam vocis quàm cordis auditor eſt.

And as the whole man ſhould be imployed in prayer, ſo eſpecially in that *ſignal concluſion* of it, *Amen.* Some of the ancient Hebrews teach us to gather up all our ſpirits into the *Amen* of prayer, becauſe prayer is (as it were) *gathered all together,* or ſumm'd up into *Amen.* The ſpirits of the whole prayer are contracted into it, and ſo ſhould the ſpirit of him that prayeth. *Amen is a ſhort word, but it is in ſence as long as the longeſt prayer.* Moſt ſay *Amen,* becauſe they uſe to ſay ſo, not becauſe they know what they ſay. *Amen* is often at the tongues end, but 'tis ſeldom at the hearts end. Formality and flatneſs of the ſpirit, pal's and unſpirits it in the ſpeaking. There are three things which the Rabbins have obſerved upon the ſaying of *Amen.*

First, Your *Amen* (ſay they) muſt not be haſty. Secondly, It muſt not be maimed or defective. Thirdly, It muſt not be alone.

Ne ſit reſponſio Amen raptamanca orba, in Notis ad Pirke Avorh.

First, It muſt not be *haſty,* without a ſetled conſideration of what we have prayed for. We muſt ſay *Amen* with our underſtandings. That's the Apoſtles argument for prayer in a known language: *Elſe when thou ſhalt bleſs with the Spirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay Amen, at thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt?* 1 Cor. 14. 16.

Secondly, *Amen* muſt not be *maimed,* that is, without the proſecution and inſtance of our ſpirits, we muſt ſtretch out our hearts after it, and be ſwallowed up in God.

Thirdly, *Amen* muſt not be *alone, or an orphan,* that is, without faith, love, and holy confidence: for when we ſay *Amen,* we ſay *Let it be done;* and ſhall we ſay to God, *Do all,* and have no faith that any thing ſhall be done? Let not *Amen* ſtand alone as a poor orphan, which hath neither Father nor Mother, *faith nor love,* to ſupport and carry it on to the object of prayer, to the God hearing prayer.

Some Interpreters give it, as *Zophars* ſpecial aim, to remember *Job* that his prayers had been faithleſs and flat; that the ſpirits of his petition were exhal'd and gone. For whereas *Eliphaz* and *Bildad* had exhorted him to humility and patience, *Job* anſwers, he had prayed for both, as alſo that God would either end his pains or him; remove his ſorrows, or ſhew him the reaſon why they were continued. *Zophar* ſteps in upon this advantage: *Thou haſt been praying indeed* (ſaith he) *but thy heart hath not been right, nor thy ſpirit fervent; thou haſt not prayed with a prepared heart, nor with a ſtretcht-out hand unto God; thou haſt prayed rather out of the bitterneſs, then out of the holineſs of thy ſpirit: Thy ſutes are the fruit of preſumption, not of faith; of unwarrantable boldneſs with God, not of an holy confidence in him; now I would have thee pray indeed. Prepare thine heart and ſtretch out thine hands, pray with all thy might, and then hearken what the Lord God will ſay.*

This check (as ſome conceive) cauſed *Job* in his anſwer to *Zophar,* to complain, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he anſwereth him:* (Chap. 12.)

as

as if he had said, Zophar, *you have mocked and upbraided me with my prayers, you thought I did not prepare mine heart nor stretch out my hands to God in prayer; you speak to me as if you had felt me in a cold sweat at duty, or had seen the image of pale death sitting upon all my addresses unto God. But I am sure I feel you too hot at reproofs, and see the image of an unfriendly jealousie sitting upon this your address to me. You do but mock me while you say unto me, prepare thine heart and stretch out thine hand to God.* Yet (in my thoughts) this counsel of *Zophar* is so holy and grave, that I see not how a gracious heart (such *Job*'s was) could interpret it as a mock, especially considered in its connexion with the next verse.

Verse 14. **If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy Tabernacle.**

He had exhorted him before, to prepare his heart and stretch out his hand; now he bids him prepare his hand before he stretch it out.

If iniquity be in thine hand.] The word Iniquity bears any sin; yet the *Chaldee* specificates it into a lye; *if a lye be in thine hand.* Others (which amounts to a lye) *if deceit, wrong dealing, oppression or any violence be in thine hand, put it far away from thee:* any thing that deceives is a lye. *Isa.* 44. 20. *He feedeth of ashes* (that is, sorrow is his food) *a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lye in my right hand?* As if he had said, His Idol promised him better fare then ashes, yet he is so much deceived, that he cannot see he is, or say there is a lye in his right hand. Oppression is properly and usually called the sin of the hand. There are many sins of the body, which are not sins of the hand; all those are, wherein the hand acts most, as in violence and wrong; in these sins there is so heavy a hand, that they deserve to be called *sins of the hand.* And though the word may take in any kind of sin, yet *Zophar* charges *Job* chiefly with that, as his other friends had done, more then once, before. That proclamation to repent, which the King of *Nineveh* caused to be published through the City, ran in this tenor, *Let every one turn from the violence that is in their hands*; and if you would know what that was, read the second of *Nahum*, there we are shewed that *Nineveh* was a spoiling City, and the men thereof as Lions, tearing in pieces enough for their whelps, and strangling for their Lionesses, they filled their holes with prey, and their dens with ravin; they cared not whom they ruined, so they might raise up their own estates. This is iniquity of the hand.

Si mendacium sit in manu tua. Targ. *Intelligit rapinam aliorum bonorum facultatis male partas. Si qua defraudatio manu tua.* Bez.

And secondly, We may understand it not only of outward and violent, but of any close and secret wrong; carry it as covertly as you can, even like Juglers, who do that before your face which you cannot see; yet wrong dealing and wrong doing is iniquity, and the iniquity of the hand. *Evil done by sleight of hand, or cunningly, is as bad as that which is done by strength of hand or violently.*

Thirdly, *If there be iniquity in thine hand,* is as if he had said, *if thou hast gotten any thing wrongfully, which still remains in thy power, put it away,* &c. To be in the hand, is to be in our dispose; and we say commonly, *such a thing is out of my hand,* when we have parted with it, or disposed of it. So, *if iniquity be in thine hand,* is, if thou hast deceived any man, and the matter be still with thee, restore it, send it home to the right owner, away with it, *put it far from thee.*

Before I come to the other branch, take one Observation from this as it hath reference to the former counsel, *Prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards God: if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away from thee.*

The hand must be cleansed as well as the heart.

For as God cannot bear it, that we should come with clean hands, a fair outward conversation, when our hearts are filthy; (such Christ discovered the Pharisees, who were like platters washed on the out side, but unclean within; or like sepulchers fairly painted, but full of dead mens bones and rottenness,) so neither can he bear it, that they whose hands (even to the eye of the world) are filthy and unclean, should yet pretend, *they have as good hearts as others, they mean well*; as the one is *gross hypocrisie,* so the other is *gross profaneness.* Never brag of your good meanings, or that you have good hearts, when your hands are foul. I grant many have clean hands, while they have polluted hearts; but where I see polluted hands, I have great reason to think there is a polluted heart too: *many appear better, but scarce any worse then they are.* The heart may keep in its filthiness while the hands are washed; but if the heart be washed, the hand will not keep its filthiness. It is very possible for a man that hath a clean heart to foul his fingers, but he will not wear them foul: He reneweth faith and repentance, he washeth off the filth in that *fountain which is always open for sin and uncleanness.* They whose constant way is evil, and yet say they have good hearts, deceive themselves, but cannot deceive others. Their impiety is too plain to deceive the plainest soul in grace, that hears them say so. *The preparation of the heart will be seen at the fingers ends: purity of spirit cannot consist with impurity of life: if thou hast iniquity in thine hand, put it far away from thee.*

Put it far away from thee.] The Original is one word, רחקהו but it is a strong one; thrust it away, remove it to the utmost distance. *Elonga eam*

Hence learn, First, That, *sin must be put away.*

There is no inmate or neighbour so bad as sin, if it dwell nigh you it will undo you: it were better a Lyon and a Bear dwelt with you, or that you dwelt among Scorpions, then that you and sin should dwell together. Sin is a bad commodity, you will never gain by it, you will certainly break if it lye upon your hand; put it off at any rate, or rather whatever it cost you, put it off. *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it away.* And not only so, But

Secondly, *Put it far away from thee.*

We can never put sin too far from us.

The Apostles rule is, *Abstain from all appearance of evil,* that is, do nothing wherein sin appears, or which hath a shadow of sin, 1 *Thes.* 5. 22. *There is no holiness in having a shew of goodness, but the very shews of sin are evil.* What the Apostle adviseth for the avoiding of sin, that it may not be committed, is as good advise for the putting away of sin when it is committed: for as we are to go far from sin by a holy care lest we fall into it; so we must go far from sin by a holy repentance after we have fallen into it. We should put it so far from us, that there may be no returning. We should put it as far from us, as the East is from the West, which is the greatest distance, not only mensurable, but imaginable. When God pardons sin he puts it thus far from us (*Psal.* 103. 12.) and so should we (if it were possible) when we repent of it. The Original word in the *Psalm* is that of the Text, and may be rendred thus, *God hath put our sins as far away from us, as he hath put the East from the West.* As the grace of God toward us will not suffer sin in the guilt of it to abide near us; so the grace of God in us, will not suffer sin in the pollution of it, to abide near us. Besides, sin is such both in the nature and effects of it, as no wise man can desire near him. Who would not put poyson far from him? Who would not thrust the Plague or the Leprosie far away from him? Who desires the neighbourhood of a mortal enemy? Sin is all this and more to us, therefore put it far away.

Thirdly, *Zophar* having invited *Job* to pray, counsels him to *put iniquity far away.*

Note from it, *We cannot draw near to God in prayer, except we put sin far from us.*

If sin be not put far from us, God will remove far from us: The holy God will not come near (unless to punish) the prayers of an unholy heart. You may stretch out your hands to Heaven, but you cannot reach Heaven, if any iniquity be in your hands.

Fourthly, Taking iniquity (as it hath been opened) for the violation of commutative justice, for wrong dealing and oppression; Then Observe,

That which is ill gotten must be restored.

Put it out of thy house, out of thy family; it will be a fire to burn, a moth to consume, a canker to fret all thy com- *Rapina ... ret diu in ... manu, facilius est bona sua dividere, quam male parta suo possessori reddere. Agglutinata est hujusmodi iniquitas picatis manibus.* Pined. *Notat male parta citò ad suos dominos esse mittenda tanquam nobis & rei familiari nociva. Animus ad restituendum paratus, si potestas fieret, est absolutè necessarius.* Ames. *l.* 5. *de conf. c.* 4.

forts;

sorts; *that which is ill got, will poison that which is well got.* *Moses* bespeaks the Israelites concerning *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Depart I pray you from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins:* it is dangerous to be a neighbour to wicked men; the tail of the storm sent upon them may fall upon our selves: it is more dangerous to keep wickedness in our own hands, the whole storm will then fall upon us: It is very sinful to get by wrong, but it is more sinful to keep what is wrongfully gotten; yet how hardly are men perswaded to part with it! It is easier to do an act of charity then of justice; Many are willing to give, but few are willing to restore; yet we are more bound to be just then to be charitable, and to restore then to give; and indeed no man can give till he hath restored, nor be charitable till he is just. That which is stollen is not fit for a gift either to God or man. *God hates robbery both for almes and for burnt-offerings.* They who are unable may be innocent though they restore not, but no man can be innocent who is unwilling to restore. Some have done iniquity with their hands, who have not iniquity in their hands. What they have taken from others, is taken from them, or spent by them. These must shew, they have it in their hearts to restore all, though they have nothing in their hands to restore. How can we expect, that God should remit our just debts, if we will not restore our unjust gains?

Let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle.

As the former clause respected the reforming of his person, so this the reforming of his family.

Let not wickedness dwell.] That is, let it not continue there. But is it well if wickedness dwell not with us? may it stay a while with us? No, not a moment. As the Apostle *Paul* speaks in reference unto those false brethren, *who came in privily to spie out their liberty in Christ, and bring them into bondage, unto whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an hour,* (Gal. 2. 5.) So we must not give place to wickedness for an hour; it is not enough to say of wickedness, it shall not dwell or abide with us for ever; we will have it but for a week or a night, it may be but for an hour: no, it must not stay with us an hour, no not one moment, with our good leave and liking. When *Zophar* saith, *Let not iniquity dwell in thy tabernacle*, he means, hasten it away; and the reason why he saith, *let it not dwell*, is, because no man can so watch his house and family, no nor his own heart, but sin will sometimes come in; he shall find such strangers there as he never invited, such as he never looked for; he shall find them not only knocking at the door, but boldly drawing the latch, unlocking the door, and thrusting in; man cannot prevent this, either in regard of his heart or his house; but he may say, wickedness shall not dwell with me; as soon as he discovers it he may remove it, or chide it out of doors. Though we cannot keep evil out, yet we may thrust it out; though we cannot hinder its coming in, yet we may hinder its staying in; we need not make a bed, or provide a chamber for sin: this requires some pause and consideration. We examine men (if we know them not) whence they are, and whither they will, before we bid them welcome, or admit them to rest under our roof. The Prophet rebukes the people of *Israel* (*Jer.* 4. 12.) *How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* vain thoughts will offer themselves, but why do you accept and entertain them, why do you speak them fair? *Let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle.*

In thy tabernacle.] Some understand it personally: The body of a man is his tabernacle, *When the earthly house of this tabernacle* (saith the Apostle) *shall be dissolved,* (2 Cor. 5. 1.) So *let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle*, is, let it not dwell with thee, or in thy heart.

But secondly, Tabernacles were of two sorts, Ecclesiastical, or Civil, either the place of Gods worship, or of mans residence. Some expound this Text in the former notion: *Let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle*, that is, take care to purge the worship of God from all idolatry and superstition: There was a publick worship in that age, as we may collect from the discourse of *Job*'s friends; here *Zophar* (according to this sence) presseth *Job* to a reformation of worship (he being a publick person and the Priest) or accuseth him, as having suffered abuses to creep into it: at which *Eliphaz* seems to aim in his rejoynder (*Chap.* 15. 34.) *For the congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.*

But I rather take tabernacle, for a civil dwelling, so, *Let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle*, is (by a Trope) as if he had said, let not wickedness dwell in those who dwell in thy tabernacle: A tabernacle is not a subject capable of good or evil, but as persons abiding there are good or evil.

Hence Observe, First, *He that cleanseth himself, should labour to cleanse others also.*

As it should not satisfie us to be happy alone, so not to be holy alone. Grace is communicative and catching as well as sin: A man that hath no wickedness dwelling in himself, would not have any man a dwelling for wickedness: having purified his own heart and hands, he labours as far as his line reacheth, to purifie those about him. Christ gives this charge to *Peter*, *When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

Secondly, In relation to our own tabernacles, Observe,

The governour of a family is to look to his family, to all under his charge, that wickedness dwell not among them.

It was the commendation of *Abraham*, and that which moved God to entrust him with his secrets; *I know* Abraham *that he will command his houshold, and his children after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord:* and if *Abraham* would teach his houshold the way and will of God, doubtless *Abraham* would not let that dwell in his houshold, which was contrary to the way and will of God. When *Jacob* went to *Bethel*, with sacrifice, he said unto *his houshold and to all that were with him, put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean* (Gen. 39.) Such was the resolution of *Joshua*, *I and mine house will serve the Lord:* And *David* who had the care of a whole Kingdom upon him, yet takes care that no wickedness should dwell in his Court and *Royal family*, Psal. 101. 7. *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.* The sins that dwell in our families, become ours, if we labour not to purge them out. A man is guilty of so much sin as he might prevent by such means as God hath afforded him, if he doth not. We have not satisfied our duties when we look to our selves only, but to all under our shadow or within our sphere. Further, Family sins bring family judgments, as well as national sins bring national, or personal sins personal judgments. Because *Eli* suffered his Sons in sin, and did not restrain them, therefore he suffered for their sins; their sins were charged upon his account, and he paid dearly for them. When we make other mens sins our own, they will make us smart as much as our own: *And the sins of those who are ours, may quickly be ours. Where the relation is nearer, the contagion is quicker.* They are so, not only when we command and give them counsel to sin, or take pleasure in their sin, but when we do not reprove them for sin, or not improve all due means to prevent or remove their sin.

Lastly, These two verses present us with a platform of repentance in three special acts or requisites. First, *Preparation of the heart:* Secondly, *Fervent prayer:* Thirdly, *The putting away, casting out, or banishing of iniquity.* Till the heart be prepared we cannot pray; untill iniquity be purged out, prayer is not accepted; unless all three be done we have not repented, or our repentance must be repented of. Except we repent thus we cannot be saved; and only that repentance is not to be repented of, which is unto salvation.

Nota hic tria ad veram resipiscentiam necessaria, primo cordis preparationem, secundo orationem, tertio iniquitatis propulsionem Merc.

VERS. 15, 16.

For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear.
Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away.

IN the former context, *Zophar* gives *Job* good counsel; in this he gives him encouragements to follow that counsel. His encouragements are laid down more generally in these two verses; and they are drawn into particulars

ticulars in the words following to the end of the Chapter. There are three branches of this general promiſe in the fifteenth verſe.

Firſt, *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot.*
Secondly, *Thou ſhalt be ſtedfaſt.*
Thirdly, *Thou ſhalt not fear.*

In the { First / Second / Third } he promiſeth him { an honourable / a ſetled / a comfortable } eſtate.

Verſ. 15. **Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot.**

We had an expreſſion neer this at the 15. verſe of the 10. Chapter, where *Job* ſeems to ſpeak (as ſome expound) deſpairingly, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head:* or, as others, humbly, *I will not lift up my head though I were righteous. Zophar* anſwers him here: thou ſayſt, *if thou wert righteous thou wouldſt not lift up thy head*, but, I tell thee, if thou wert righteous (according to the counſel given thee) thou mighteſt lift up both thy head and heart, thou mighteſt take both courage and comfort, *Then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot.*

What the lifting up of the head, or of the face imports, may be ſeen (*ch.* 10. 15.) I ſhall here only add a threefold ſignification about lifting up the face; both phraſes being of near affinity.

Firſt, To lift up the face is a ſign of chearfulneſs, *Job* 22. 26. *For then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God*; that is, thou ſhalt lift up thy face unto God with delight. Joy is the light and life of the face; no marvel then, if we lift up our faces when God cauſeth us to rejoyce. *A merry heart*, ſaith *Solomon* (Prov. 17. 22.) *doth good like a medicine*; and where that medicine works kindly, it ſets a man upon his legs, and makes him hold up his head like a man. God hath given man an erect countenance in the fabrick of nature; but his countenance is then moſt erect, when grace cauſeth him to rejoyce in God.

Secondly, *To lift up the face*, is an act of reverence and reſpect. (*Deut.* 28. 50.) *The Lord ſhall bring a nation againſt thee of a fierce countenance, which ſhall not regard the perſon of the old*, ſo we tranſlate; the Hebrew is, *which ſhall not lift up his face to the old*, that is, which ſhall give no reverence to old men; the Septuagint render it thus, *there ſhall come againſt thee a people of fierce countenance, who ſhall not admire the face of an old man*; an old grave man, according to the common rules of civility, is to be had in admiration or high eſteem. *Young ones ſhould lift up their faces to honour thoſe, whoſe faces hang down with age.*

Non elevet faciem ad ſenem. Heb. *Non miratêtur faciê ſenis.* Sept.

Elevare caput geſtus eſt erecti animi confidentis & nihil erubeſcentis. Pined.

Thirdly, (Which I rather take for the meaning of this text) *lifting up of the face*, implieth ſtrong confidence. Thus *Abner* ſpeaks to *Azahel*, *Turn thee aſide from following me*; *wherefore ſhould I ſmite thee to the ground? How then ſhould I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?* (2 Sam. 2. 22.) that is, how ſhall I come with any confidence or freedom of ſpirit, before *Joab*, if I ſhould ſlay thee? When *Cain* was rejected with his offering, (*Gen.* 4. 5, 6, 7.) the text ſaith, *He was very wroth, and his countenance, or his face fell*: which is directly oppoſite to lifting up the face. The falling of *Cains* face was in two things: Firſt, He fell from a chearful to a churliſh countenance, he lookt doggedly and ſourly; we ſay of ſuch a man, he hath *a down look*. Secondly, He fell from a confident, to a cowardly countenance. The fall of *Cains* countenance diſcovered the fear which fell upon *Cains* heart; he did not bring the firſt offering with his heart, and he had no heart left to bring another offering. *The face varieth as the mind varieth. That is ſeen in the face which is out of ſight*: The evidences of the heart are read there, and we may take the copy of a mans ſpirit in his countenance. Four things are chiefly ſeen in the face; Firſt, Pride: *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not ſeek unto God*, (*Pſal.* 10. 4.) Secondly, Fear; *Dan.* 5. 6. *Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him.* That is, his thoughts being troubled at that dreadful apparition, his countenance changed. Thirdly, Envy and diſcontent, (*Gen.* 31. 2, 5.) *Labans countenance was not toward Jacob as before*; his face ſuffered an evil change, becauſe God made a good change in the eſtate of *Jacob*. Though *Laban* was a ſubtle man and a diſſembler, yet his envy at the proſperity of *Jacob*, was too big to be diſſembled. Fourthly, Guilt; and ſhame, the fruit of it, appear in the face; *He dares not ſhew his face, whoſe wickedneſs ſtares in his face.* The Lord ſaid unto *Cain* (Gen. 4. 7.) *If thou do well, ſhalt thou not be accepted?* The word which we tranſlate *accepted*, ſignifies properly *to lift up*, and ſo it may be rendred in that place; *if thou do well, thou ſhalt have a lifting up*, that is, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face upon as good terms as thy brother Abel*: uprightneſs hath boldneſs both with God and man. (1 *Joh.* 3. 21.) *If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence (or freedom of ſpeech) towards God.* They that are aſhamed of what they have done, hang down their heads, or pull their hats over their eyes, they dare not be ſeen of men, much leſs of God, *who is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity. Thou ſhalt lift up thy face.*

Quem faſt aut pudet aut pœnite oculos dejicit. Erubuit gremio; pudor dejecit ocellos. Ovid. 6. Met. *Si bene ego vis elevare i.e. elevati erit ſibi.*

Without ſpot. The Original imports any kind of blemiſh. Some tell us, that the word *Momus*, is derived from it, which ſignifies a *fault-finder*, or one who makes it his buſineſs and ſtudy, to find or make faults in what is done or ſpoken. To *lift up the face without ſpot*, is, to be without blemiſh, or blameleſs.

מום *Denotat vitium corporis vel quicquid pulchritudinem deſtruit. Hinc* Momus.

Spots in propriety of ſpeech belong to the body. *Can the Leopard change his ſpots?* (Jer. 13. 23.) The Lamb for the Paſſover muſt be without ſpot, (*Exod.* 12. 5.) So muſt the Prieſts, (*Lev.* 2. 17.) As whatſoever ſtains the the beauty, and darkens the light of the face, ſo whatſoever diſcompoſeth the harmony, or hinders the comlineſs of the whole body, comes under the proper ſenſe of this word.

There is alſo a metaphorical ſpot, which is twofold: Firſt, Upon the name or credit: ſo a mans diſhonour is his ſpot; any blemiſh caſt upon our reputation, is called an *aſperſion*. Secondly, Upon the mind or inward man; ſo every ſin is a ſpot. The Greek word for *unblameable*, or without ſinful blemiſh, diſcovers it ſelf plainly to be the offſpring of this in the Hebrew. The ſoul takes ſpots as well as the body. Whatſoever blemiſheth the beauty, or obſcures the glory of the mind; whatſoever ſullieth the credit, or obſcures the dignity of man, comes under the metaphorical ſence of this word. ἄμωμος.

Moſes having exalted God in his perfections, *A God of truth and without iniquity, juſt and right is he*, (Deut. 32. 4.) ſubjoyns (the more to aggravate them) not the imperfections, but the groſs impieties of *Iſrael*, (verſ. 5.) *They have corrupted themſelves, their ſpot is not the ſpot of his children*; that is, their ſin is, not a ſin of infirmity, ſuch as often appears upon the children of God. They ſin as if they had no relation to God; they ſin like aliens, yea like rebels, not like children, not like members of the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*. Any ſpot is bad, but ſome are worſe. Sin-ſpots are the worſt of ſpots, yet they are not all equally bad: There is a ſpot which is, and a ſpot which is not the ſpot of Gods children. The Apoſtle counſels the *Philipians* to take heed of theſe ſpots, as they deſired to live in the reputation of children, (*Chap.* 2. 15.) *That ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke* (ſo we render,) or (as the Greek bears it clearly) *that ye may be ſpotleſs ſons of God*, that is, without all ſuch ſpots as are unſuitable to, or inconſiſtent with your ſonſhip. Some are ſo beſpotted, that they are called ſpots: *Theſe*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Jude* (verſ. 12.) *are ſpots in your feaſts of charity.* He that hath many ſpots, is not forward to hold up his *face*; then how ſhall he who is a ſpot? τέκνα θεοῦ ἀμώμητα.

But what is the ſpot intended in this text? There are three interpretations about it.

Firſt, Some take it for the ſpot of grief and ſorrow ariſing from affliction. *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, that is, thou ſhalt get clear of theſe afflictions which ſpot thy face with ſorrow. This ſence alludes to that (*Chap.* 9. *verſ.* 31.) where *Job* complaineth, *though I waſh my ſelf*, &c. *yet ſhalt thou plunge me in the ditch*, I ſhall be all mire and dirt, all to be ſpotted with troubles and ſorrows, though I waſh in the waters of repentance: No ſaith *Zophar*, if thou doſt repent indeed, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, God will throw thee into the dirt no more. Some tranſlate from the letter of the Hebrew, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face out of the ſpot*, that is, thou ſhalt riſe out of thy affliction, and recover out of the mire of thy tribulations.

Index animi vultus.

Hence Obſerve, *They who repent and get looſe from ſin, ſhall proſper, and get looſe from ſorrow.*

Though

Though all our repentings, washings and purgings, cannot deserve freedom from the least evil, yet this is the way to such freedom; and when we (through the power of Christ) purge our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, we are in the fairest probability, in the neerest possibility to be freed from the spots of tribulation and affliction. *Sin and sorrow usually come, and go together:* when we fall into the mire of sin, God casts us into the mire of sorrow; and though he often vary his dispensations, yet this is a truth, That when we get out of the mire of sin, the Lord lifts us up out of the mire of sorrow.

Secondly, Others take it for a *sin-spot*. *If thou prepare thine heart, &c. then thou shalt lift up thy face without spot,* that is, the Lord will not take notice of thy sin.

Hence note, *Though no man is without his spot, yet all believers are accounted spotless.*

Balaam confesseth (*Numb.* 23.21.) *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel*; that is, he charged no spot upon them at that time, they sinned not perversly, nor did they lie impenitently in sin; *Christ sanctifieth and cleanseth his Church with the washing of water by the word, that he may present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish*, Ephes. 5.26,27.

Thirdly, Many understand it of a *shame-spot*, which is the consequent of sin. *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot*, that is, thou shalt not be ashamed to lift up thy face, or when thou liftest up thy face, thou shalt have clear and free access to God. No cloud shall sit upon thy spirit to interrupt communion with him.

Hence Observe, *Holiness of life and purity of conscience, cause boldness and confidence in our approaches to God.*

The Apostle *Peter* chargeth husbands, *to dwell with their wives according to knowledge, and as being heirs of the same grace of life, that their prayers be not hindred* (1 Pet. 3.7.) Uneven or sinful walking in any relation, hinders prayer three wayes. First, It deads our spirits, streightens our hearts, weakens our gifts for prayer. Secondly, It hinders the effect, fruit and success of prayer. Thirdly, It hinders us from the very act, it breeds a strangeness between our souls and God, and makes us listless to the duty. The soul is unwilling to come into the presence of God, while sin sticks upon the conscience: such as have no heart to come before God, cannot lift up their faces to him. It is said of the poor Publican (*Luke* 18.) that he durst not *lift up his eyes to heaven*, he had low thoughts of himself, and his posture was lowly. The Publican had no purpose to continue in sin, yet because his conscience was not cleared of sin, he durst not lift up his face to heaven, but standing afar off sayes, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* Guilt clogs the soul. How shall an unholy heart converse with a holy God? When we lift up our faces, or give good looks to sin, we cannot lift up our faces to, or expect a good look from God. They whose hypocrisie is so vigorous, that they can at once look upon sin with joy, and upon God with confidence, shall at last to their sorrow find God rejecting their confidences; and indeed he is not confident but impudent, who hopes for favour from God, while himself makes sin his favourite. Those hypocrites went thus high, whom the Lord upbraids (*Jer.* 7.9.) *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsly, and come and stand before me in this place? Some hypocrites seem to have a very lively hope; yet the hope of all hypocrites shall be as the giving up of the Ghost.*

Lastly, The spot from which *Job* is promised freedom, is expounded for *disgrace or dishonour*. *Job* was bespattered by his friends as a wicked man, as the worst of wicked men, an hypocrite.

Hence Observe, *It is a great mercy to have our credit cleared up from those blemishes which the uncharitable suspitions or rash censures of men have cast upon us.*

There is no spot except that upon the conscience which is so unbeautiful as that upon our credit. He hath little to lose in this world who hath lost his good name: And if the loss of credit be so great an affliction, the reparation of it cannot be a small mercy. *David* was a man spotted with the imputation of rebellion, *Saul* lookt upon him as a traytour: It was a high favour which God gave him, when he gave him back his good name, when he caused him to lift up his face without spot, yea without spot in the eye of *Saul*: *Saul acquitted him, and said, thou art more righteous than I. The Lord brought forth his righteousness as the light, and his just dealings as the noon-day*, Psal. 37.6. His righteousness lay in the dark, and his just dealing was adjudged treachery and deceit: Yet at last he recovered his credit, and his name was cloathed with honour in the estimation of his adversaries. This is the first promise, *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot.* The second is,

Yea thou shalt be stedfast.] It is a happiness to get a good estate, but it is a greater happiness to keep it. *Thou shalt be stedfast.* The Hebrew word, in the verb, signifies to *melt or dissolve*; and in the adjective, *strong durable and compact*; that which is melted is called compact, either by the figure antiphrasis, because it is uncompact, or, according to the nature of the thing, because mettals which have been melted grow more compact and solid when they cool again. Some render it here, *Thou shalt be like a molten pillar*; brass or iron being molten and cast into the figure of a pillar, are strong and steddy; the word is so rendered, (1 *Sam.* 2.8.) *The pillars* (that is the firmest and strongest parts) *of the earth, are the Lords.* This promised stedfastness may be taken two wayes.

יצק *Fudit, liquefacit durus compactus, vel per antiphrasin, vel quòd metalla fusa consolidentur. Hinc* מוצק *fusum, in hoc libro passim sumitur pro* חזק *forti, valido.* Merc.

First, In reference to his externals, as if *Zophar* had said. *Thou wast once Master of a good estate, thou wast once rich and full, but thy estate, thy riches were not stedfast, thou hast lost all, thy wealth is consumed and gone; yet humble thy self, and thou shalt lift up thy face, thou shalt not only be exalted, but established: Thou shalt be stedfast.*

Secondly, Stedfastness may refer to his internals, and so there may be a fourfold stedfastness.

First, Of judgement; when a man holds to his profession, and fleets not in opinion. The Apostle cautions his *Ephesians* (chap. 4.14.) *Be no more children tossed too and fro, with every wind of doctrine:* be firm to your principles, be not as a meteor carried about with every gust, but as a star fixed in your orb.

Secondly, There is a stedfastness of resolution, 1 *Cor.* 15.58. *Be ye stedfast and unmoveable*, that is, hold to your purpose: serve the Lord, and go on in his work, let nothing take you off: Such was the masculine stedfastness of Queen *Hester*, resolving to do her duty in the face of danger, *If I perish, I perish.*

Thirdly, There is a stedfastness of faith. When we believe and do not *waver*, or hesitate (*Jam.* 1.6.) The Apostle *Paul* speaks of the solidity of the firmament of faith, (*Col.* 2.5.) *Rejoycing in your order and the stedfastness of your faith in Christ.* And *Peter* exhorts to resist the devil, being *stedfast in the faith*, 1 Pet. 5.9. *He that fights must look to his footing. We cannot resist another till we are setled our selves.* στερέωμα πίστεως.

Fourthly, There is a stedfastness of conscience. Conscience is full of uncertainties till we settle upon Christ: the stedfastness of conscience ariseth from the peace of conscience, and our peace flows to us in the bloud of the covenant.

We may understand this promise, of outward, but especially of inward stedfastness; of the stedfastness of his faith and the quietness of his conscience; that he should no longer hang between hope and fear, between perswasions and doubtings of the love of God.

Hence Observe, *Grace establisheth the heart.*

Put away sin, and thou shalt be stedfast. Grace is brought into the heart by Christ: Grace and Christ can never part: the doctrine of grace is therefore said to establish the heart, because Christ is in it, *Heb.* 13.9. *It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein:* when he saith *it is good*, he means, *it is better that the heart be established by grace then by meat.* For meat doth in a sence establish the heart, that is, it recreates and refreshes the heart. As *Abraham* speaks to the three men whom he invited to his tent (*Gen.* 18.5.) *I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts*, the Hebrew is, *stay or establish your hearts.* But the lasting comfort and establishment of the heart, is by *grace*; that is, with grace wrought in the heart, or with the doctrine of grace (which is a means of working *Gratia reddit homini constantem firmum secure & constanter agentem, minimè præsumentem.* Pined.

working that grace) for he opposeth grace to meats, about which, questions were then started, and many were unsetled; and *with meats* he understands by a *Synechdoche* the whole body of the Ceremonial Law, which is opposed to the Gospel, or the doctrine of grace; as if he had said, do not think to settle your selves by the Ceremonial Law, one part whereof consisted in the choice and distinction of meats, for they *have not profited them that have been occupied therein*, they have gotten no establishment by them, but grace will do it. As your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderness, so meats of the Sacrifice in *Canaan*, and are dead; but he that feeds upon Christ, and is filled with grace, shall live for ever. Meats profited them so little, that they are said not to profit them; they administred only a transient help to the body: but grace profits so much, that it only may be said to profit, that administers a permanent advantage to the soul. Grace renders us alwayes the same, and preserves us from change. Inconstancy is the companion of sin; yea inconstancy is the companion of all earthly things; earthly things move and are unsteady; *it is impossible to stand fast upon an unsteady foundation.* The Apostle (*Ephes.* 4. 13.) describeth the Gentiles thus, *I say unto you* (speaking to the Saints) *that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk*; ye were Gentiles, but now I would not have you walk as other Gentiles, namely as unconverted Gentiles: do not imitate them from whom you have made so happy a departure; but how did they walk? *In the vanity of their mind*, that is, in the unsetledness and unconstancy and unstaidness of their minds; you have received grace, and grace should make you firm and stable upon your *basis, upon Christ your bottom.* The holy Ghost reproves this unsetledness in the old Jews (*Jer.* 2. 23.) *Thou art a swift Dromedary traversing her wayes*, (never setled in any way, *vers.* 36.) *why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of* Egypt, *as thou wast ashamed of* Assyria; thou wentest to this Kingdom and to the other Nation for help, and here thou thoughtest to strengthen thy self, and there to obtain deliverance; *Why gaddest thou about* so much? the world being uncertain, leaves thee in perpetual uncertainties; thou couldst find no help in *Assyria*, thou shalt find none in *Egypt*, neither the one nor the other shall be able to establish thee. So *Chap.* 31. 22. *How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter?* We are in continual motion till we settle in God. As the needle in the Mariners compass being toucht with the loadstone is unquiet till it points to the North, and there it settles: so it is with the soul, to what quarter of the creature soever we turn our selves, we shall be unsetled, wavering, and unsteady, till we point directly unto God, till we look heavenward. *The heart finds no ground, till it gets off the earth.*

Impius non potest esse firmus.

There is a double unstedfastness which sin brings in, and grace casts out.

First, About our way. Many are alwayes to choose; whether this way or that, is their quere: they not only (which is the infirmity of many of the Saints) halt in their way, but between two wayes. An upright heart may be unsteady in the right way; but a carnal heart is unsteady between the right way and the wrong. Such are sometimes in good wayes, and sometimes in evil wayes; they may happen upon a good way, but they cannot chuse it; or if they chuse it, it is not for its goodness, but commodiousness; it serves their turns, and upon that account they take a turn in it.

Secondly, They are unstedfast about the end. A wicked man is often secure, but he is never setled concerning his end. He presumes he shall be well, but he cannot know it shall be well with him. They who walk in dark wayes, must needs be in the dark about their end. An evil mind is never quiet upon good termes. They who are morally evil, have no true reason to expect eternal good. There is a quietness of mind concerning our end, which ariseth from the ignorance of our ill estate, and there is a quietness which ariseth from the knowledge of our good estate: in the former sence many wicked men are quiet, their consciences do not trouble them, and they wonder why any mans should. These are asleep in the darkness of sin, and they shall lye down in the darkness of sorrow. Only he that finds himself united unto Christ, and by vertue of that union, cleansed from the guilt, and relieved against the dominion of sin, is steadfast indeed. *Him wilt thou establish* (saith the Prophet) *in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.* It is a bastard peace which is the daughter of ignorance: true peace is the daughter of saving knowledge.

Lastly, As this stedfastness is understood of his outward estate, We learn,

That God only can establish the creature to us.

The fashion of the world passeth away, yet God can bid it stand. The creature can be no more to us then God makes it, how much so ever we make it in our account. *David* calls his outward estate a *mountain*, *Psal.* 30. 6, 7. yet he acknowledgeth that all the strength and standing of his mountain was from God. *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong.* And he found his mountain shaking, yea and his heart shaking too, when God did but hide his face. *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.* That's the second thing promised. There is yet a third, *viz.*

And thou shalt not fear.] He carries it higher yet. There is an holy fear, and there is a sinful fear. There is a fear of care, and there is a fear of distraction. There is a fear of watchfulness, and there is a fear of distrustfulness. He doth not mean the holy fear of care and watchfulness; but the sinful fear of distraction and distrustfulness, *Psal.* 112. 1. *Blessed is the man that feareth God.* Why? *vers.* 7, 8. *He shall not be afraid*: he that feareth holily, shall not be afraid distractingly. Again, This exemption from fear doth leave us secure; it is *Babylon* which saith, *I sit as a Queen and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow.* She is so fearless that she is also careless. The more *Jerusalem* and her children know their safety, the more they labour to be safe.

Thou shalt not fear. This negative promise may have a threefold reference. *Thou shalt not fear*, First, The continuance of thy present troubles. Nor secondly, The return of these troubles. Nor thirdly, The rising of new troubles. Thy heart shall be far above all these fears.

Hence Observe, First, *To get free from sin, is the way to get free from fear.*

Put away iniquity, and then thou shalt not fear. As by fear we keep from iniquity (*The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil,*) so by departing from iniquity we keep from fear: An evil conscience is a troubled conscience: *God is above all fear*; *and man is never without fear till he is in God*, (Prov. 21. 1.) *The righteous is bold as a lyon.*

Mala conscientia nunquam est sine motu. Extra Deum nihil est firmum, unde efficitur ut nemo extra Deum possit esse sine metu. Sanct.

Secondly, *To be free from the fear of evil, is better then to be freed from evil,*

He doth not say barely, Thou shalt be freed from evil, but, Thou shalt be freed from fear. Happiness consists more in removing inward then outward trouble. He that is not indeed afraid of evil before it comes, may be happy though it comes. It is the perfection of our spiritual estate not to fear: *Perfect love casteth out fear:* (1 *John* 4. 18.) It casteth out all fear that we shall loose the favour of God, or be cast out of his love: it doth not cast out the fear of offending God, but that whereby we question the favour of God. Whatsoever the premises of Gods dealings are, such souls make this conclusion, That God will do them no hurt, and means them nothing but good. A great part of the Saints portion both on Earth and in Heaven, lies in their deliverance from fear. And if any ask, how can this be? The next verse answers,

Vers. 16. **Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away.**

עמל
נשכח
Laborum oblivisceris.

These words give us a reason of the former, *Thou shalt not fear, because thou shalt forget thy misery*, or *thy labour.* As we do not feel, so we cannot fear that which we have forgotten: and he who is delivered from dangers, is much armed against the fear of danger; while he well considers how he overcame those which are past, he sees whatsoever may come, as already conquered.

Thou shalt forget.] This forgetfulness implies two things.

First, That he should be long free from such evils as had oppressed him, so long, that he should forget that he was ever oppressed by such evils: The fruit of a long freedom from

from trouble, is forgetfulness of that trouble. The Lord saith of his people in *Babylon*, *They have been lost sheep, their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place* (Jer. 50. 6.) Now as sheep having gone long astray, forget their former folds and resting places, so they who have been long freed from misery, forget their misery. *Length of time wears out the remembrance both of the good we have enjoyed, and of the evils we have suffered.* Thus God encourageth the believing Gentiles (*Isa.* 54. 4.) *Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood.* The shame of their youth, was their bondage in *Egypt*; the reproach of their widowhood, was their captivity in *Babylon*: here the Lord promiseth such a mercy, as shall swallow up the memory of both. As a great mercy puts out the memory of a lesser (*Jer.* 16. 14, 15.) The deliverance out of the Babylonish captivity, swallowed up that deliverance from Egyptian bondage;) so great mercies long continued, swallow up the remembrance of all our miseries.

Secondly, This *forgetting* notes such a removal of former evils, that not so much as a scar, or any print of them should remain to be seen: while the scar of a wound remains, the memory of it cannot but remain. When *Joseph* interpreted *Pharaohs* dream about the seven years of plenty, and the seven years of famine, (*Gen.* 41. 13.) he saith there should be such a famine upon the land after the seven years of plenty, that the *seven years of plenty should be forgotten*; why forgotten? because there should be no print, no sign left of plenty: so the Lord sometimes after seven years of famine, after seven years of poverty or trouble, gives seven years of such plenty, peace, rest and comfort to his people, *as wear out all the marks of their former afflictions.* When *Josephs* brethren feared he would remember the wrongs which they had done him, he answers as if he would assure them that there was not the least print of them left in his mind, *Gen.* 50. 21. *Fear ye not, I will nourish you and your little ones.* He hath forgotten all received injuries, who resolves to return courtesies. He is farthest from revenge, who is ready to feed his enemy. Thus saith *Zophar*, *Thou shalt forget thy misery*, the Lord will heal thy wound so perfectly, that there shall not be so much as any mark of it remaining. The forgetfulness of misery, cannot but spring from any eminent succession of the contrary mercy. The Prophet describes such a change, and this effect of it, *Isa.* 65. 13. *My servants* (*saith the Lord*) *shall eat, and ye shall be hungry; my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; my servants shall rejoyce, but ye shall be ashamed*; hence *v.* 16. *He that blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth, because the former troubles are forgotten*: Eating causeth us to forget hunger; so doth drinking, thirst; and rejoycing, shame. Thus saith Christ, A woman after sore travel *remembers her anguish no more, for joy that a man is born into the world*, Joh. 16. 21. Either of these ways *Zophar* may be expounded, *Thou shalt forget thy misery*, that is, thou shalt have freedom from thy misery, till the memory and marks of it are quite worn out; such a series of mercies shall succeed thy troubles, as shall make thee doubt whether thou wast at all in trouble: *Thus to forget misery, is to be perfectly happy*; and in the issue both these met in *Job*: The long continuance, and the abundance of mercy which he received, made him discount all the evil which he had endured. *Thou shalt forget.*

Obliviscetur pristina mala, non oblivione memoriæ sed bonorum successione. Hier. *in c.* 54 Isa.

But how could he forget? For the clearing of this and other Scriptures of the same stile, take this distinction. There is a double forgetfulness. First, In reference to the rational part. Secondly, In reference to the sensitive part. He is not promised (for that were an affliction) forgetfulness of his afflictions in reference to his rational part, he should remember them still so as to consider what they were, and to be thankful for his deliverance out of them. In this sense, they who have the greatest cause to forget these miseries, have also greatest cause to remember them; it is the will of God we should. *As it is a sin affectedly to forget the sins we have committed and are pardoned, so to affect a forgetfulness of the sorrows we have suffered, and are escaped, is sinful; God receives much glory by our recognizing of pardoned sins, and of escaped sorrows.*

Quantum attinet ad scientiam rationalem tantor præteritorum malorum, quantum autem ad experientiæ sensum prioris immemor. Aug. *de civ. Dei l.* 22. *c.* 30.

But in reference to a sensibleness of those evils, or of any trouble arising from the remembrance of them, thus he is promised to forget them. As if *Zophar* had said, *When thou thinkest of thy affliction, it shall not afflict thee, yea it shall be thy joy to remember it. It is a great refreshing to remember the troubles which we have been in, and are freed from.* When *Joseph* was advanced in the Court of *Pharaoh* to great honour, and was married there, he called the name of his first-born son *Manasseh*, from this word signifying to *forget*; and he gives the reason of it, *for God hath made me forget all my toil and all my fathers house* (Gen. 41. 51.) How had God made him to forget it? Not in regard of the rational act, for he did remember what his Fathers house was, together with all the afflictions he met with there from his envious Brethren, and this was his duty: but the Lord made him forget all the pain, smart and sorrow of those afflictions; *He was very sensible how much he had suffered, but he had no sense of it.* In Heaven we shall forget all the troubles and storms of this life, and all our sins, as they are any hinderance to our joy; but there shall be a remembrance, even in Heaven, of the troubles and sins of this life, so far, as to give God the glory of making that glorious change. As we may be said not to know evils two wayes, either because we are ignorant of them, or because we have no experience of them; so we may be said not to remember past evils two wayes, either because the memory of them doth not stay with us, or because the remembrance of them doth not annoy us. And that's the meaning of forgetfulness about injuries; when we exhort not only to forgive a wrong, but to forget it: A man may rationally remember the wrong which another hath done him, with all the circumstances and passages of it, and yet forget it spiritually. Some say, *they are content to forgive an injury, but they can never forget it*; I say, forget it so far as to forgive it fully, and then remember it as much as you will. *The natural memory of injuries is no sin, but the angry and revengeful memory.* God in the new Covenant is said to forget the sins of his people, and to remember them no more; but doth he forget any thing, or doth it slip out of his memory? No, he knows all things by one everlasting act, and he remembers even all the sins of his elect, he remembers all the sins which he hath pardoned; but he is said not to remember them, or to forget them, when he pardons them, because they are before him as if they were not remembred, that is, he is not provoked by those sins; his Spirit is not drawn out in revenges against such sinners as he hath pardoned. Thus in the Text before us: *Job* being delivered from his outward afflictions and inward temptations, is assured he shall forget them; not that the rational act should be deleted and blotted out, but the sensitive: the trouble of his troubles, the afflictiveness of his afflictions should be removed, he should remember sorrow to his sorrow no more.

Hæc olim meminisse juvabit.

Anima beata fruent indeficienter æternorum jucunditate gaudiorum, oblita erit culparum, oblita pœnarum; nec tamen ideo suæ liberationis oblita, ut liberatori suo sit ingrata. Aug. *ubi supra.*

Seeing it is promised *Job* that he shall forget his misery,

Hence Observe, That, *The very representation of evils past, may be a present pressing evil.*

The representation of past afflictions, is sometimes very afflictive. As a man by considering his former comforts, may take in comfort; or by reflecting upon, and remembring his former sins, may sin over all his sins: so by remembring his former sorrows, he may have a new indurance and impression upon his spirit of all his sorrows. It is a mercy when evils are remembred without a taste of evil; and when a review of former sorrows doth not revive our sorrows.

Secondly, Observe, *Thou shalt forget thy misery.*

Forgetfulness is the cure of all our sorrows.

The forgetfulness of some things is a sin, and the forgetfulness of other things is a priviledge. To forget our duties, to forget the mind of God made known unto us, is our sin; but (as explained) to forget the trouble and affliction which hath been upon us, is a special priviledge. It is sin to forget the history of our troubles, but it is mercy to forget the pain of them. Forgetfulness is good for little; only the forgetfulness of the evil of sin, or of

evil

evil customs, so as not to practise them again; and the forgetfulness of the evils of punishment, or of our evil condition, so as not to be oppressed with them, is good, and the cure of all those evils. When the word preached hath wounded the heart of a wicked man, and made it smart, what is his cure? his cure is to cast the word out of his thoughts, and to forget it, or as much of it as he can; if he can but forget the word, his cure is wrought, and he is whole again; though indeed, such a mans remedy is worse then his disease; and his plaister then his pain; yet he hath got (such as it is) a cure. Thus also the forgetfulness of our troubles is the remedy of our troubles, as sleep is of our sorest travels (*Psal.* 127. 2.) *So he giveth his beloved sleep*; *So*, how is that? that is, notwithstanding all the hard labour and pains they take, yet the Lord giveth them sleep, and sleep makes them forget all their former labour. So some interpret those words (*Psal.* 126. 1.) *We were like them that dream*; that is, when the Lord began to work deliverance, to turn again the captivity of *Zion*, we (as it were) forgot what our state and condition but lately was. A dreamer forgets how it was with him; so, we are as them that dream, we have forgotten all the evils we have been in; even the long time of our captivity. When a friend is in great pain, such as the tooth-ach, *&c.* we say to him, (in a merriment) *do but forget it a while, and you shall be cured.* You may write (*probatum est*) upon this receipt, if you can receive it; but it is God only that can cause us to receive it; he only can work this forgetfulness of evil, as he only works a true remembrance of what is good. Some men have taught an art of memory, but 'tis God must teach this art of forgetfulness; this forgetfulness proceeds from the grace or favour of God. Heathens speak much of the River *Lethes*, of which, if a man did drink, he presently lost his memory, and forgot all that he had either enjoyed or endured. *Lemuel* (*Prov.* 31. 4.) would not have *Kings drink wine* (that is, immoderately) *lest they drink and forget the law* (ver. 5.) but he adviseth (*ver.* 6.) *to give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that are of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more* (ver. 7.) Of this wine, some understand that of the Evangelist *Mark*, in his description of Christs passion (ch. 15. v. 22.) *They gave him wine to drink mingled with myrrhe, but he received it not.* Naturalists observe, that myrrhe stupifies and dulls the sense of pain; but Christ bids pain do its worst, he needed not forget it, who was able to conquer it; his spirit was infinitely above such reliefs. But to the point; as there is a natural and an artificial way to cause forgetfulness of misery, so there is a supernatural. God can give his people to drink of such a *mystical Lethes*, he can give them a cup of such a river of consolation, as shall drown the memory of all their sorrows. As when a Table-book is written all over, you may take a spunge, and wipe out every Letter; so when our memories are full of our miseries, the Lord can spunge all out, and not leave so much as one line or letter to be read any more.

Multimodis fefe commaculat ictibus, myrrhæ presumptione munitus. Apul. l. 8.

Thirdly, *Zophar* puts this forgetfulness of his misery, as a consequent of *Job*'s putting away of his iniquity. Hence observe,

When the hand and heart are clear of sin, former sufferings will not be grievous to us.

So long as a man continues in sin, not only his present, but his past sufferings are his torment: put away iniquity, and thou putteſt away the tormenting thoughts of thy misery; thou shalt not feed upon *the wormwood and the gall*, as the Church did, (*Lam.* 3. 19.) while she remembred her affliction: the blow was past, but the remembrance of it was as bitter as gall, and as unpleasant as a dinner of wormwood. In heaven, or in that perfect state of blessedness which is promised (*Rev.* 7. 17.) *God will wipe away all tears from our eyes*; because then he will for ever cast every sin out of our hearts and lives. The captive *Jews* in *Babylon*, kept their sins too close, and therefore when they sate down by the river, and remembred *Zion*, they wept, (*Psal.* 137.) the sorrows and afflictions which they had in *Zion*, as well as their love to *Zion*, made them weep in *Babylon*; though while they were in *Babylon*, they lived free from sorrow; so free, that many of them could not be got out of *Babylon*, when God called them away (*Zech.* 2. 6.) and when *Cyrus* had proclaimed them a full liberty to go away (*Ezra* 1. 3.) yet say they, *when we remembred thee, O Zion, we wept.* The remembrance of former troubles will afflict, till we are cleared from the guilt, and have subdued the power of sin. *Thou shalt forget thy misery.*

And remember it as waters that pass away.] Some read these, and the words before, not as a promise, but as an exhortation; *Do thou forget thy misery, or remember it as waters that pass away.* As if he had said, thou poreſt too much upon thy sorrows; I counsel thee to forget them, let them be as a river swallowed up in the sea of an eternal oblivion.

But I conceive this latter clause to be an explication of the former: For if any ask, How shall he forget his miseries? Here's the answer, he shall forget them as *waters that pass away.* This similitude is more then once used in Scripture, to note utter forgetfulness. *Job* (chap. 6. 15.) compares his friends to *the stream of brooks that pass away*, because they had forgotten the laws of friendship. *David* imprecates vengeance on his enemies in a like phrase (*Psal.* 58 7.) *Let them melt away as waters that run continually*; that is, let them and their memorial perish. Who takes notice or remembers the waters that pass in a River, or under a Bridge? When the woman of *Tekoah* would shew that they were all as lost and buried in oblivion, if *David* did not fetch home his banished, she expresseth it thus; *we must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground, which* (*passeth away, and*) *cannot be gathered up again*, 2 Sam. 14. 14.

Non recordaberis amplius, nam aquarum quæ præterierunt nulla penitus recordatio est.

This may be interpreted, first, as an allusion, either strictly, to *Noah*'s floud: *Thou shalt remember it as waters that pass away*, that is, thou shalt remember the flood of all thy sorrows and afflictions, as thou dost remember the flood of *Noah*; of which, no doubt, *Job* had heard. The Lord, in the Prophet *Isaiah*, chap. 54. 9. speaks of the removal of his peoples affliction, under that Notion; *For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee*, &c. So here; thy afflictions shall be as the waters of *Noah* that are past. Thy troubles swell now very high, thou sufferest a deluge, an inundation of sorrows; but they shall be dried up, and shall not leave so much as their slime for a token that they have been there.

Or more generally, as an allusion to all sudden torrents, or the rising of waters upon the fall of great rains in the southern parts of the world; of which, *Psal.* 126. is a great proof: waters in those regions swell in a moment, and are down almost as soon as swoln; having no constant fountain to feed them, they cannot continue. So saith he, a mighty flood of trouble and sorrow overwhelmeth thee, but it shall quickly dry up; it is but a cloud, a storm, it will pass away, and be spent sooner then thou dreamest, even so soon, that thou shalt be like one that dreameth.

Secondly, It may be taken as a proverbial speech, *You shall remember it as waters that pass away*, that is, you shall not remember it; it shall be as if it had not been. Who can tell what waters have past, or where to find those waters which are past? to remember a thing as waters that pass away, is to let it pass out of memory. Some things leave lasting expressions behind them, but a sudden passing water doth not.

Proverbialem reor hunc loquendi modum, quo significatur aliquid justive boni, sive mali, quod jam præteriit nihil esse reliquum. Sanct.

Thirdly, We may interpret it thus, *Thou shalt remember it as waters that pass away*, that is, thou shalt remember it as that which shall never return again, or is quite gone, and shall never trouble thee any more. Some expound that of the Prophet so, *Affliction shall not rise up the second time*, (*Nah.* 1. 9.) (which others, and I think rightly, interpret of an utter consumption; there shall be no need for affliction to come the second time; for it shall spoil all at first; thy affliction shall make a total devastation.) Yet it may be taken in the sence suggested. Affliction shall not rise up the second time, that is, *thou shalt not be afflicted the second time.* The waters of affliction are passed away, and shall not flow back again. *Job* (chap. 28. 4.) speaks of *waters forgotten of the foot*; he means (as is conceived) waters so deep, that no man could pass thorow them, and are therefore said to be *forgotten of the foot*, because no foot had passed them of a long time, nor was any like to pass them any more. Thus also an affliction through which a man

shall never pass again, may be called a *forgotten affliction*. Hence when the prophet had said (*Nah.* 1. 9.) that *affliction should not rise up the second time*, he adds from the Lord, (*ver.* 12.) *I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.* This I apprehend as the proper meaning of the text in hand, *Thou shalt forget thy misery; or if thou dost remember it, thou shalt remember it but as waters that are passed away. Thy misery will be as nothing to thee, and shall never return upon thee.* Hence observe,

The memory of miseries which shall never return to hurt us, comforts us.

Miserrima malorum impendentium expectatio. Mercl.

It is our joy to remember those things which were our sorrow, when we are beyond the borders of sorrow; such *a remembrance is as joyous, as the remembrance of an evil, whose return we fear, is grievous.* The very suspition that an affliction will renew, reneweth our affliction. Then we feed heartily upon the good which is before us, when we are freed from the after-claps or *after-reckonings of evil.* That the *Israelites* were delivered from those *Egyptian* task-masters, was very sweet, but to see them at their heels, and upon their backs again, was exceeding bitter; hence the Lord, to relieve them from those thoughts, gave them this assurance by *Moses* (Exod. 14. 13.) *The Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.* It is not so great a loss not to see, as it is a trouble to see what we would not. The King of *Babylon* slew the sons of *Zedekiah* before his eyes, before he put out his eyes (*Jer.* 39. 6, 7.) doubtless the putting of his eyes to that use, pained him more then the putting of them out. Now as it is a misery worse then blindness, to see that which grieves us; so it is a mercy as good as sight it self, not to see what would grieve us; especially to receive a faithful promise, that we shall see it again no more for ever. And as it adds to the affliction of a man in misery, to remember that he hath enjoyed friends and good dayes, which he shall not enjoy nor see again any more for ever; so it adds to the comfort of a man, encompassed about with mercies, to remember he hath endured sorrows, and been oppressed by enemies, which he shall not endure, nor be oppressed by, no nor see again any more for ever. This is the priviledge of the Saints, in reference to that greatest enemy, *Sin*; they remember their sins as waters that are passed away, they shall never return to hurt them, much less to condemn them. Thus to remember our sins on earth, is a piece of heaven, and will be a great part of our happiness in heaven; where we shall say in highest triumph and exultation of spirit, concerning sin and Satan, death and sorrow, or whatsoever hath the face, or deserves to wear the name of a mystical *Egyptian*, these *Egyptians* whom we have seen and felt so often in the dayes of our mortality, we shall not feel, no, nor so much as see them again any more for ever.

Miserum est misse fœlicitatem.

VERS. 17, 18, 19, 20.

And thine age shall be clearer then the noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.
And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt take thy rest in safety.
Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea many shall make suit unto thee.
But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

THis latter part of the Chapter, consisteth (as was touched before) of divers motives and encouragements, which *Zophar* bestows on *Job*, to hearten him on in hearkning to his counsel. As he was encouraged before by a promise, that his present troubles should suddenly expire; so here, that ancient mercies should suddenly revive; as if *Zophar* had said, *Thou shalt be blessed, not only by deliverances from, or removals of evil; thou shalt not only forget misery, and have the prints of thy afflictions wiped out; but thou shalt be fairly stamp'd with fresh favours, and the best of blessings shall be heaped upon thee.* This he expresseth in those elegant metaphors and comparisons.

Verse 17. **Thine age shall be clearer then the noon-day, thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.**

All which he exemplifieth in plain assertions, assuring him, that he shall spend the latter part of his life in safety. ver. 18. *Thou shalt be secure*, &c. In freedom and honour. ver. 19. *None shall make thee afraid; yea, many shall make suit unto thee.* The ungodly are not so. ver. 20. *The eyes of the wicked shall fail*, &c.

חלד *Tempus, seculum, ævum sed & vitæ curriculum citò cessantem significat, quasi per Metathesin à* חדל *cessare. Quasi meridianus fulgor consurgeret tibi ad vesperam.* Vulg.

Thine age.] The Hebrew word signifies time in general, or the whole state of this world. *David* prayeth to be delivered *from the men of this world*; or, of this age, (*Psal.* 17. 14.) he means it of men who have nothing beyond the world; all whose estate lies on this side heaven. The word signifies also the particular age of a mans life; and here distinctly the latter part or old age of a mans life. *Thine age*, that is, *thine old age*, or the latter part of thy life, of which thou seemest to make little reckoning; upon which thou lookest as if it were not worth the having; that latter part of thy life, of which thou sayest in thine heart, surely it will be as death to me, it will be full of death and darkness, of diseases and of weaknesses; the strength of it will be but labour and sorrow; that evening of thy life, of which thou judgest (according to the experience of others) surely it will be dim and misty, cloudy and uncomfortable; even that age of thine shall be

Clearer then the noon-day.] The letter is, *thine age shall rise above the noon-day.* The noon-day is taken two wayes; sometimes for extream heat, and sometimes for extream light.

Esto illis jucundum refrigerium à meridiano æstu. Jun.

First, At noon, we expect the extremity of heat; the Sun of persecution is signified by the noon-day, *Isa.* 16. 3. *Make thy shadow as the night, in the midst of the noon-day*; that is, be a refreshing and a protection to my people, when their troubles are at the hottest. And *Cant.* 1. 7. *Tell me where thou makest thy flocks to rest at noon*, that is, in the heat of persecution. The Church desired to understand where to shelter, what cooling place was to be had in the times of greatest tribulation.

Notum proverbiale est, luce meridiana clarius, item lucernâ accendit in meridie. Lux fœlicitatis symbolum. Vita jucunda & luminosa. Coc. *Summa erit lætitia tua.*

Secondly, Noon imports the clearest light; it is a common proverb, when we affirm a thing to have the greatest clearness, to say, *It is as clear as the light at noon-day.* And, *to light a candle at noon*, is a proverb of reproof to those, who trouble themselves to make that plain, which hath no obscurity in it. And as noon is put for light, so light is often put for joy; and clearest light (such is that of noon-day) for greatest joy; *light is sown for the righteous*, that is, they shall reap a harvest of joy.

When *Zophar* promiseth, *Thine age shall be clearer then the noon-day*; his meaning is, *thy latter end shall be full of comfort, and thou shalt rejoyce in the serenity of thy condition.* Hence observe,

God can make the worst part of our life the best to us; and when we expect (according to the course of nature) the least good, he can encompass us with the choicest good.

Old age is called the *evil day* (Eccl. 12. 1.) and the description of it is given in terms very apposite unto this; *while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; while the Sun, or the Light, or the Moon, or the Stars be not darkned, nor the clouds return after the rain.* He compareth old age to a gloomy day, when shower falleth after shower, and cloud follows after cloud; yet the Lord can make that age which usually gives nothing but clouds and showers, but moisture and wet, to be as clear as the light at noon, and as dry as sunshine. *We need not fear our worst state, if God will undertake to mend it*: be not troubled with tiring expectations of pain and weakness, of diseases and sicknesses in old age; God is able to make thee, notwithstanding the disadvantages of nature, strong and healthy. *Old age will be youth to us at his word. Abraham* was not troubled at *an hundred years old*, when God promised him, *thou shalt have a son. Sarahs* dead womb was no impediment, when God said, *thou shalt conceive.* Young men shall faint, and old men shall renew their strength like the Eagle, when God will have it so. The summer of your lives shall be a winter, and your winter a summer; your cloudy dayes shall be clearer then the noon, and your noon a cloud, at his command, who made both summer and winter, sun and cloud. *He that put nature into order, can order things against nature.*

Thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.] This

This additional clause heightens the sence of the former. The words which we translate, *to shine forth*, signifies also, to *darken*; so Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Thy time shall pass the noon-day, obscureness shall match the morning.* And another thus; *If thou dost wax obscure, or dark, yet thou shalt match the morning.*

Licet te ut vitæ functũ existimes novo natali velut aurora consurgas.

עֹף

Our Translators take *Zophar* continuing the Metaphor of light; *Thine age shall be clearer then the noon-day*: and here he shews, that it shall not be a standing, but an encreasing light, the light of the morning; *Thou shalt be as the noon, in regard of the clearness of thy light; and thou shalt be as the morning, in regard of the increase and continuance of thy light*: For though we have the greatest light at noon, yet that light is near a declension. The Sun being come to his height, is in its *vertical point*; and every hour after noon, (though we cannot perceive it) grows darker and darker, till the shadow of the night wrap up all; but the morning-Sun is a rising Sun, which gains and gathers every moment. That's *Solomon's* description (*Prov.* 4. 18.) *The path of the righteous is as the morning-light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* So then, these two are excellently joyned together, to make up the highest expression of a prosperous estate; thy estate shall be so prosperous in the degree of it, that it shall be *clearer then the noon-day*; and yet it shall be of such continuance, or rather, of such encrease, that it *shall be as the morning*; thou shalt be in a state of perfection, yet receiving addition: though in a strict sence, Philosophy defines that only *perfect, to which nothing can be added*; yet there is a kind of perfection in receiving additions: *Job's* state shall be so perfect, that it shall need no addition, and yet there shall be additions to its perfection. *It shall be noon for perfection, it shall be morning for addition and augmentation*; *Thou shalt shine forth as the morning.* Hence observe,

Æquè illustrandi ac tenebrescendi significationem habet. Si obtenebrescas, eris tanquam mane. Merc.

אם *Si subintelligitur.*

God is as able to continue his people in a high estate, and to encrease it, as to raise them to it.

Thy light shall be as the noon, and thou shalt shine forth as the morning. If the Lord please, he can stop the declinings and decayes even of temporals; he can give us an everlasting noon in the things of this life, and he will certainly do it in the life to come. He who causeth our Sun to ascend till it makes a noon, can command it to stand at noon, or ascend till it makes a clearer noon: As himself is *higher then the highest*, so he can make us higher, when we think our selves at the highest. As he makes the darkness of affliction darker to many, who supposed it to be at the darkest; so he makes the light of joy lighter to many, who supposed it to be at the lightest. Some whose state is darker then midnight, are yet as the evening encreasing in darkness; and some, whose age is clearer then the noon-day, are yet as the morning encreasing in light. Our evil dayes, and our good dayes, our sorrows, and our joyes, receive their limits from the hand of God. Our sorrows will every day be more sorrowful, unless God stop them; and our joyes will every day be more joyful, if God enlarge them.

Consolatio nunquam deerit in omnibus adversitatibus.

Secondly, As the word signifies to obscure and darken, the sence appears thus, *Thou shalt be clearer then the noon, and if any obscurity seize upon thee, yet thou shalt match the morning*; thou shalt overcome that darkness, and thy skie shall be clear again; the clouds shall break upon thee, day shall dawn, and comfort shall renew; *thy obscurity shall be as the morning*, which disperseth darkness, and conquers it by the approaching light. That promise (*Isa.* 58. 10.) is a clear exposition of this; *Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day*; that is, thy affliction shall be turned into consolation, and thy evil dayes into good dayes. The vulgar Latin translates the former part of the verse thus, *Thou shalt be clear towards the evening*; or, *thy evening shall be clear*; the latter, thus, *when thou thinkest thou art consumed, thou shalt be as Lucifer*; or, *as the morning-star*; *even like that star which is the forerunner or messenger of the morning.* Hence observe,

Et quasi meridianus fulgor consurget tibi ad vesperam, & cum te consumptum putaveris, orieris ut Lucifer. Vulg.

That, *God can quickly turn all our sorrows into joy, and our worst times into pleasant times.*

Thy obscurity shall match the morning. He can cause joy to rise out of sorrow, and turn our water into wine, our losses into gain; *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning* (Psal. 30. 5.) And again, *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness* (Psal. 112. 4.) As the Sun of wicked men sets at noon, so the light of the Saints riseth at midnight, *Amos* 8. 9. *I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day*; which text stands in as direct an opposition to this, as words can be penn'd. He who causeth the Sun to go down at noon, can command the Sun to rise at midnight; and he who darkens the earth in the clear day, lightens the earth in the darkest night. As natural, so civil and spiritual light and darkness take their turns, and make their changes, as God decrees. It is the happiness of the Saints in misery, that their friend and father can say unto their misery, *Be gone*; and to happiness, *Return.* The state of the *Jews* was obscured by the rising of that fiery fatal Comet, *Haman*; but anon, *Mordecai* arose, like a bright star in their Horizon, and then, *the Jews had light and gladness, and joy and honour*, Est. 8. 16.

Thirdly, Compare this Verse with the counsel before-given. *Zophar* adviseth *Job* to seek unto God, and to humble himself before him; what shall be the fruit of it? *Thine age shall be clearer then the noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.* Hence note,

When we are better, God usually makes our estates better.

Turn thou to God, and God will turn thy darkness into light. The Prophet (*Isa.* 58. 10.) having described a fast, and taught the *Jews* how to humble themselves aright before God, subjoyns this promise, *Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day.* When we depart out of the darkness of sin, the Lord bids the darkness of trouble to depart from us. While we cast our selves down, he raiseth us up, and sets us in the glory of our enjoyments. We complain we are in darkness, but we forget that our sins stand in our light, and hinder good things from us. As promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, but from God; so the stop of promotion comes not from any of those quarters, but from our selves; if we were empty, God would fill us; if poor, God would enrich us; if low and abased, he would exalt us. That advice of the Apostle *James*, speaks all this; *Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up* (chap. 4. 10.) As for those, who, being in darkness, *kindle a fire, and compass themselves about with sparks, that they may walk in the light of their own fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled*; *this shall they have from the hand of the Lord, they shall lie down in sorrow* (Isa. 50. 11.) *A man continuing in sin, shall find himself as much disappointed in labouring to get out of darkness, into light, by his own power, as in hoping that God will bring him out by his power.*

Zophar goes on, and draws this general into particulars. There are five particular blessings laid down in *vers.* 18, & 19. all which, summed together, make up the mercy of *ver.* 17. *viz. prosperity like the noon-day, and comforts like the morning.* The first is,

Thou shalt be secure, because there is hope.

Thou shalt be secure.] The word signifies an act, not only of adherence, but of assurance; not only of recumbency, but of certainty: when the heart is fully setled, and acquiesceth in the sufficiency and faithfulness of him who hath undertaken and stands up for our protection.

There is a double security.

First, Sinful, accompanied with a neglect of good means, and with a presumption of a good end. Both are comprised in that rebuke given the false Prophet (*Jer.* 28. 15.) *Thou makest this people trust (or secure) in a lie.*

Secondly, There is a security which ariseth from the actings of a vigorous faith, grounded upon the promise and word of God; that's the security for which *Zophar* engageth: That sense is clearly given in the words following; *Thou shalt be secure because there is hope*; that is, because thou hast a sure word, upon which to cast the anchor of thy hope. True hope is rooted in the promise, and fruited with peace. That's it, which, in this point, we call security. When a lender hath the word of a good man for his money, he is said to have good security. How secure then may the Saints be, who have the word of the good God for their security. *Thou shalt be secure.*

בטח *Non simplicem fiden, sed certitudinem denotat, est firmidine acquiescere in sufficientia præsidii sui.*

Spes illa solum firmitatem habet, quæ Deo nititur. San.

Because there is hope.] That is, Thou shalt not only have a present good estate, and store of blessings in possession, but abundance in expectation: Hope is of good things to come: An assurance of what we have not, is as good a settlement to the heart, as what we have; and he that can look for no more then he hath, can never have a settled heart. The hope of more is a richer inheritance then the inheriting of much. Were it not for hope, the heart would be unsatisfied in the best times. It is never well with us in this life till we can, upon warrantable terms, look beyond what we see. Vision will be enough for us in Heaven, but on earth we cannot have a vision of any good thing which is enough. This makes the difference between the state of the Saints, and of worldly men, *We walk by faith, and not by sight*: They walk by sight, and not by faith. Faith leads us into the Treasury of God; sight leaves them among the treasures of men. Our best estate lyes in invisibles: Sense is of things present or seen, which are but temporal; Faith and hope are of things absent, and out of sight, which are eternal.

Further, These promissory words, *Thou shalt be secure because there is hope*, may refer,

Spes est melior res. Drus.

First, To the attaining of a good condition. Secondly, To the increasing or bettering of that good condition to which he should attain. Thirdly, To the keeping or maintaining of the good which should be so increased. Thou shalt have a *morning*, there's good attained; thy *morning shall rise up to a noon-day*, there's good increased; *thy noon shall not decline*, there's good maintained; and because of all these hopes, thou shalt be secure: and all these hopes must meet to make up a full security.

Hence observe, *Hope in God is the settlement and security of the soul.*

There is a hope which is ill set, such a hope cannot settle us. That hope which is right set is setling. Our hope is as the object is upon which we hope: if we hope upon that which is sure, hope it self is sure; hope in God must needs be sure, because God is. So the Apostle argues: *God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast*, (Heb. 6. 17, 18, 19.) God is the Saints anchor-hold, they cannot be removed by any storm, when once they have fastened upon him. As every one that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as God is pure: So every one that hath this hope may assure himself, because God is sure. *He is the hope of all the ends of the earth: and hope in him shall never end but in a full enjoyment of himself in heaven.*

Observe secondly, *That the condition of a godly man can never be desperate.*

Whatsoever he wants in the world he cannot want hope; he hath somewhat in hope, though he hath nothing in hand: He hath much in the promise, though little in his purse: He hath plenty of bread in the word, when he hath scarce a loaf, or when he hath greatest scarcity at his table. He may expect more of the world then he hath, though he hath much; and he may look upon all that is in the world, as his, though none of it be his. He hath a right to all, and he shall receive as much as he needs: If less then all will not support his needs, he shall have all; God will give every Believer a world by himself, rather then not give him as much as he hath promised. If the good things which God hath already made, be not enough to make good every word which he hath spoken, he will speak another word, which shall make more. *As the heaven and the earth, which are created, shall pass rather then his word; so he will create a new heaven and a new earth, that all his words may stand.*

Confide dum spes est. Jun.

There is a textual reading of these words given by some, which reaches the sence of this Observation; *Be thou confident, or secure, while there is hope:* So it is a counsel, not a promise; an exhortation, not a doctrinal assertion; or it is the use of the former doctrine, shewing us what becomes us to do, when we hear what God hath spoken. *When God makes us a promise, it is our duty to rest upon him in it: Promises are the pillars of the soul; Christ is the substantial pillar of the soul, the promises are declarative pillars.* As it is the priviledge of believers, that they may, so it is their duty, and they must rest upon those pillars. They are invited to close with every word of God, and embrace every offer which he makes. The word is spoken in vain, mercies are tendered in vain, except we act faith, and pitch our hope upon them. Shall we be confident when men (*who are a lye, and their breath is in their nostrils*) give us hopes they will stand our friends and help us; and shall we not when the great, the faithful and ever-living God saith, he will be our friend and helper!

There are three considerations which should make us hope whensoever God offers us a word.

First, Consider what God hath done. *Experience works hope.* Look into your own experiences, and ask after the experiences of others. The report of both will be, *Thou Lord hast not forsaken them that seek thee* (Psal. 9. 10.) Who would not seek him, who hath never forsaken those that seek him?

Secondly, Consider who it is that ingageth: It is God: A God all-sufficient to make good his word; there is nothing too hard for him: and as not one Iota or tittle of his commands, so not one of his promises shall fail, all shall be fulfilled. He gives promises, and he can create performances. *The Promise is good, but the Promiser is better*; therefore be thou secure and trust when thou hast his promise.

Thirdly, Consider the relation which God beareth to his people. It is not an enemy, that speaks to ensnare and circumvent us, to mock and delude us; it is not a just man who speaks, who (though he mean well, and hath a mind to do what he speaks) yet may soon become unable: but it is God, in relation a Friend to us, a Father to us, one who speaks what he meaneth, and is able to do what he speaks. It is God who is able, and whom no accident can disable, he it is that speaks unto us. If God tell thee thy light shall be clearer then the noon, that thou shalt shine forth as the morning, be thou confident, act faith, yea let faith have a perfect work; then it hath, when we trust perfectly; *Be secure, because there is hope*; That's the first priviledge promised. The second is this,

Yea thou shalt dig about thee.] Some expound this digging tropologically for the works of holy worship and obedience to God. These are a kind of digging in Gods earth.

חפר *Fodit hinc talpa à fodiendo.*

Others, *Thou shalt dig*; That is, thou shalt provide thy grave. As if he had said, *I promise thee favour, not only while thou livest, but when thou art dead*; thou shalt have a comely burial, and be laid in thy sepulchre with honour. The words which follow, [*Thou shalt take thy rest in safety*] are interpreted to fill up this sence, *Thou shalt be laid in thy grave; and when thou art there, none shall violate thy ashes, or disquiet thy dust.* It is threatned as a sore curse (*Jer.* 8. 1.) that the bones of the deceased Kings and Princes, *&c.* should be pull'd out of their graves, *and should be spread before the Sun, and Moon, and all the Host of Heaven, whom they had loved.* Now here (say they) *Job* is assured, that none shall stir his bones, or pillage his tomb, when he should sleep with his Fathers in the grave. But I pass it.

Ad sepulcrum pertinet, q. d. *Sepultus jacebis securus.* Aquin

Thirdly, *Thou shalt dig about thee*; that is, thou shalt draw a line of defence, or a trench about thee: So Mr. *Broughton*, *Thou shalt entrench, and lye down safely.* The Mole's safety (who is named from this word in the Hebrew) is in earthing himself; and so is the safety of men in war. Thus it is an expression of greatest safety, thou shalt be as safe as if thou wert fortified with walls and trenches, or hadst planted bulworks round about thee.

Facebis securus velut fossa circumducta. Tyg. *Securus ages acsi vallo & fossa munitus.* Vatab.

Fourthly, Others think that *Zophar* alludes to the fashion of those times: Either first, In their removings, when taking up their tents, and intending to pitch them in a new place, they digged to let in the stakes and fasten them; so, *to dig*, is no more but this, thou shalt pitch thy tent, or set up thy tabernacle, and be in safety: God can protect thee in a tent as well as in a castle. *We call the furniture of our houses, our moveables, but they had moveable houses.* Or secondly, That he alludes to their digging of wells, which was in those ages and places a noted business, as we may read in *Genesis*. So, *Thou shalt dig*, is, thou shalt make provision for thy flocks and cattel (water being one part is put for all) and none shall contend with thee, as the herdsmen of *Isaac* and of *Gerar* did, *Gen.* 26. 20.

Puto alludi ad morem Arabum, qui subinde tabernacula sua & sedes movebant. Merc.

Fifth-

Fodiendi operam ad rem agrariam refert. Cajetanus.

Fifthly, I rather conceive *digging* is put either strictly for tilling and manuring the earth, or, more largely, for the labour of any calling: *Thou shalt dig about thee*; that is, thou shalt follow thy business in the place where providence hath cast thee; digging is put for the whole service of this life, (*Luke* 16. 3.) the unjust Steward, when he feared to be called to an account, queries with himself, *What shall I do? for my Lord will take away my stewardship; I cannot dig*; that is, I know not how to put my self to any labour, or calling, especially to a calling of hard labour, and I am ashamed to beg, what will become of me? But what priviledge is there in this, that *he should dig*? I answer first, It is a mercy to have a calling. But secondly, When it is said, *Thou shalt dig*; he means two things further. First, thou shalt thrive and prosper in thy calling: Thou shalt gain by digging. Secondly, Thou shalt be safe in thy calling, *thou shalt dig without fear or danger*, without let or hinderance. When *Job*'s estate was surprized, his servants were some plowing, others keeping sheep, all at work. Now it is promised, that he and his shall dig in quietness. To clear which sence, we may connect the latter clause of the verse (which I have proposed, and shall open as a third distinct priviledge) with this, *Thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt rest in safety*; That is, in labour thou shalt have rest; or, the rest of safety shall be thy portion, in all the motions of thy labour.

Hence observe, *It is a great blessing when we freely enjoy the exercise of our callings.*

It is our duty to have a calling, and it is a mercy to go on profitably and peaceably in it.

There are some (though I cannot much approve the interpretation) who expound that (*Cant.* 7. 1.) where Christ speaks to the Church, *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes?* to this sence, thy feet are beautiful in thy calling. When a man hath his shoes on, he is fit for business, and his feet are never so beautiful, as when he is at honest business: As the Saints have a spiritual and heavenly calling, in which they deal with Christ and trade towards Heaven: So Christ will have them imployed in earthly callings, and maintain dealings with men; one calling honours and supports the other; our general calling gets a blessing upon the special; and in our special callings we have occasion to shew forth our vertues and graces, and so to honour our general calling: It is a high commendation when we can say to a Christian, *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes?* That is, thou art holy when thou art about worldly things, as well as when thou art about spiritual things: This is a truth, and may be a good allusion, though not a proper exposition of that Scripture: Now as our feet are beautiful with shoes, when we go on justly, and righteously; so when we go on thrivingly, quietly, and peaceably in our callings; when though we have much labour, yet we have no sorrow in our callings: when though we work hard for the bread we eat, yet we get bread to eat, and others do not eat the bread for which we have wrought.

שכב *Cubare, cubat qui non dormit: hoc verbum de morte usurpatur hinc* שכבים *mortui.* Drus. ἀναχάσεις ᾗ οὐκ ἔσαι ὁ πολεμῶν σε. Sept.

And thou shalt take thy rest in safety.] That's a third priviledge. The word signifies a lying down, whether in the day time for a short refreshment, or in the night for sleep. And so it is no more but this: As thou shalt dig, and thrive at thy work, so thou shalt take thy rest in safety; thy reposes in the day, and thy sleep in the night, shall be sweet unto thee. *Ishbosheth* was slain at noon upon his bed: the night hath been fatal to many.

Note, *It is a mercy to enjoy rest with quiet.*

They who are continually hurried with fears, who (like *Job*) have had their estates plundered and spoiled, would count it so. How many thousands, lately, in this Kingdom, have, as it was threatned (*Deut.* 28. 26.) *been in fear day and night*, who when they have lain down could not rest an hour in safety? The Scripture gives us many promises about this blessing, *Prov.* 3. 26. *When thou lyest down, thou shalt not be afraid*; *yea, thou shalt lye down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.* Psal. 127. 2. *So he giveth his beloved sleep.* Psal. 3. 5. *I laid me down, and slept; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me.* Psal. 4. 8. *I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou Lord makest me dwell in safety.* When the Lord undertakes our protection, *we may sleep on both ears*; that is, securely and comfortably; when he watcheth over us, we shall rest, though thousands watch against us. A good nights rest is the good gift of God, and deserves daily acknowledgments by man.

The fourth priviledge follows.

Verse 19. **Thou shalt lye down, and none shall make thee afraid.**

Some interpret this as a repetition, or but as an addition to the former; but we may thus difference them; That, promised rest to his person and family; this, to his estate and cattel. The word (*Rabats*) here used, properly signifies the lying down of cattel in their fields and folds. Thus understood, it is a distinct mercy, Thou shalt be quiet in thy bed; as also thy cattel, thy sheep and oxen, shall all lye down quietly in their stalls and pastures, none shall stir them up, much less take them away. But some may object, The Text doth not say, Thy cattel, *&c. shall lye down: But thou shalt lye down.* I answer; A man and his estate, whether in things living, or without life, may be wrapt up in one: we are well and in peace (according to common speech) when ours, and all that we have, are well.

רבץ *Proprie de gregibus*

Hence note, *A peaceable condition, even for our goods and cattel, is a remarkable favour.*

That our estates are quiet as well as our persons, that our beasts can lye down safely as well as our children, is to be numbred among our mercies. The Psalmist prayeth hard for it (*Psal.* 144. 13, 14.) *That our sheep may bring forth thousands, and ten thousands in our streets: That our oxen may be strong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out; that there be no complaining in our streets*: and least any should judge these but small matters, he casts them up into a great sum, even the sum of all our desires, *Happiness*; *Happy is that people that is in such a case.* Though neither all our happiness, nor our chief happiness, consisteth in these outward things; yet such an enjoyment of these things is a happiness.

There is a fifth priviledge greater then any of these, and yet but an outward priviledge: This makes the Sun of his promised prosperity as the noon day in his highest *Zenith* of perfection.

Yea many shall make suit unto thee.

The Hebrew is, *They shall intreat thy face.* And the word which we translate *entreat*, signifies also *to weary, or tire one out, to be pained either in mind or body*; and when it is joyned,—as here, with the word *face*, or *countenance*, it signifies to weary one with prayer and intreaty; that is, to use many intreaties, so many intreaties as weary a man to hear them. That parable which teacheth that men ought alwayes to pray, and not to faint, represents us with a Judge which feared not God, nor regarded men, and with an importunate Widow, who came unto him, saying, *Avenge me of mine adversary, and he would not for a while*; *But afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet, because this Widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me* (Luke 18. 5.) As many are weary of prayer, so some are wearied with prayers; and grant the petitions of the poor, not to relieve them, but to ease themselves. So the meaning is this, *They shall make many suits to thee*, even as many as are made to him that is wearied with suitors. Though it be a great honour to have suitors, yet there is a burthen in it too: The faces of Kings and Magistrates are wearied with hearing supplications.

חלה *Doluit corpore vel animo & cum nomine* פנים *Facies, vultus, est fatigare aliquē precibus.* —*prece quâ fatigent virgines sanctæ minus audientem carmina vatem.* Horat. l. 1. Od. 2.

Others understand *face* here (as it is often taken in the Hebrew) for anger and displeasure, and give the elegancy of it thus, *Many shall abate*, or *weary thine anger*; when they hear that thou art angry or displeased with them, they shall make so many suits and petitions to thee, as shall take off thine anger, and bring it down. It is hard to be angry with those that are humbled; when God is angry, we may be said to weary his anger by prayer; or to cause him to give over being angry. The Church wonders when the anger of God outstood so many prayers. *O Lord God of hosts, how long wilt thou be angry against the prayers of thy people?* (*Psal.* 80. 4.) The anger of God can hold out as long as his love; but God will appear weary of his anger, when we are not weary of praying to him. We weary the anger of God, and make it faint with supplications, when we supplicate

plicate him earnestly, and humbly, without weariness and fainting. As sin and unbelief are said to weary the patience of God, (*Isa.* 7. 13. *chap.* 43. 24.) So prayer and faith (or the prayer of faith) are said to weary the wrath of God. In this sence the word is frequently used, (*Psal.* 119. 58.) *I intreated thy favour* (or *wearied thy face*) *with my whole heart.* *Saul* speaks in the same form of words, (1 *Sam.* 13. 12.) *I said the Philistims will come down now upon me in* Gilgal; *and I have not made supplication unto* (or *wearied the face of*) *God.* So then the blessing here promised *Job*, is, that many (as subjects to their Princes, and tenants to their Lords, yea, as man to God) should make their suit, and do homage to him. As if *Zophar* had said, *Many now despise and undervalue thee because of thine affliction; and heretofore many came boldly to disquiet thy person, and spoil thy substance; but the case shall be so altered with thee, that they, who before despised thee, shall honour and reverence thee:* (As many of them who mocked Christ, shortly after adored him,) *they that heretofore terrified thee, shall be afraid of thee, and shall humble themselves before thee. They shall fear thy power, and beg thy favour, with renewed supplications, till it shall be a weariness to hear them. Thou shalt be more able to destroy them, then deny them. Only take my advice, and hearken to my counsel. Be thou earnest in seeking unto God, and others shall quickly seek unto thee; do thou make suit to him, and weary his face, and thou shalt see many will come and weary thy face with suits: Thy very enemies, and unkindest friends, will be glad, not only of thy company, but of a good word, or a good look, from thee.* And in this *Zophar* spake truer, in reference unto himself, and his friends, then he was aware of: For as others, so these three, by the command of God (*chap.* 42.) were glad to come and intreat the face of *Job*, that he would intreat the face of God for them.

Te suspicient & colent, tibi supplices erunt propter divitias & dignitatem. Drus.

First, Hence observe, *It is an honour to have others sue or seek to us.*

In this God gives us a share, and makes us partakers with himself in one of his greatest honours: It is the honour of God, that all creatures sue to him, and depend upon him; that all need his help, and that so many petition him for it every day. *He is the God hearing prayer, therefore to him shall all flesh come.* The highest glory which God hath on earth, is, that so many thousands come thronging to, and knocking at the gate of Heaven, with tears and prayers. One reason why Princes and Magistrates are called *gods*, is, because such as are oppressed, or in want, make supplication unto them; *Prov.* 19. 6. *Many will intreat the favour of the Prince*: It is the subjects duty to do it; and the doing of it is the Princes honour: *Flatterers are the disgrace of Princes; but Suitors are a grace unto them.* That civil power is draw down to the lees, or is at the lowest ebb, which no man, or but few, sue unto. And the lowest ebb, both of *Zions* spiritual power, and outward splendor, is thus expresst (*Jer.* 30. 17.) *This is* Zion *whom no man seeketh after.* *Zion* was once sought unto, for thither the Tribes went up, they went up thither to worship the Lord: and when the glory of *Zion* should be restored, the Prophet assures her (*Isa.* 60. 14.) *The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet: And they shall call thee the City of the Lord, the* Zion *of the holy One of* Israel. (*Isa.* 45. 14.) *The labour of* Egypt, *and merchandise of* Ethiopia, *&c. they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee, and there is none else, there is no God.* To make supplication to any one, either supposeth him to be a God, or that much of God is in him. (*Psal.* 45 12.) *The rich among the people shall intreat thy favour*; (it is the word in the Text) not only poor mean underlings, but *the worldly rich among the people shall seek thy heavenly riches*; the honourable shall think it an honour to joyn in communion with thee. The *Philadelphian* Angel is promised this high priviledge, *Rev.* 3. 9. *Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, which say they are* Jews, *and are not, but do lye, behold I will make them come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee*; that is, I will make them submit and sue unto thee as unto my special Favourite. The glory of Christ himself is thus described (*Isa.* 11. 10.) *There shall be a root of* Jesse, *and to him shall the* Gentiles *seek.* To seek or make suit to a man, *speaks reverence to, and worth in his person: It speaks ability to help, and supposeth willingness; it speaks a fear of having that power used against us, and an earnest desire of having it improved for us*; honour comes in from all quarters to those who have many suitors.

Secondly, To whom, and upon what terms, doth *Zophar* make this promise? He makes it unto *Job*, and to him in case he should seek unto God, and humble himself before him.

Observe, *Holiness towards God, makes us honourable and venerable among men.*

I grant, some are therefore despised because they are holy; and not a few continue in, or turn to unholiness, lest they should be despised. Holiness, which is the beauty of men and Angels, yea of God himself, is accounted a blot among unholy ones; yet all they who are holy are truly honourable in themselves, and they are honourable in the eyes and esteem of many others. Though they are thought unworthy to live in the world, yet *the world is not worthy of them*, Heb. 11. 38. There is more worth in the least Grace, then in all earthly glory. *Them that honour me* (saith God, 1 *Sam.* 2. 30.) *I will honour*; *and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* God is the fountain of honour, and yet he receives honour. We give much honour unto God, when we sincerely seek unto him, and obey him; they that honour God thus, shall have a like honour, others shall seek to them, and obey them. *Since thou wast precious in my sight thou hast been honourable* (Isa. 43. 4.) All are ready to honour those who are precious in the eyes of earthly Kings, and sue for the favour of their Favourites. This in a proportion is true of every one that is precious in the eyes of God, he shall be honoured, sometimes in the eyes of worldly men, but alwayes in the eyes of men fearing God. There is a spiritual excellency stampt upon the face of the meanest servant of God: they that are spiritual see and reverence it. The Citizen of *Zion* is described among other qualifications by this also, he is a man, *in whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.* As Grace is honourable, so it is a sign of grace to honour those who are gracious.

Omnes quodāmodo mali esse cogūtur ne viles habeantur. Sal. *lib.* 4. *ad Eccl. Cathol.*

These are the promises made by *Zophar* to encourage *Job*, both in general, *ver.* 17. and in particulars, *ver.* 18, and 19. In *ver.* 20. he draws up the conclusion of his speech, setting down the contrary estate and condition of wicked men, and by consequence the estate of *Job*, if he should continue (as he supposed him) wicked. While he spake of mercy, he spake in the second person; here he speaks of judgment in the third.

Verse 20. **But the eyes of the wicked shall fail; and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.**

As if *Zophar* had said, *If thou dost persist in thy sin, thou mayst look for good till thy eyes ake, and never be blessed with the sight of it; or thy condition shall grow yet more sad, so sad, that thy eyes shall be pained to see it, and thou shalt have no hope to escape it; or if thou hast, it shall be a dying hope, even like the giving up of the ghost.*

Here are three branches of this description, concerning the opposite condition of wicked men.

First, *Their eyes shall fail*, in looking for good.

Secondly, *They shall not escape*, present evil. If they hope they shall, then

Thirdly, *Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

The eyes of the wicked shall fail. The failing of the eyes may be considered two wayes. There is first a natural failing of the eyes through age, as also through extremity of want and affliction (which is an accident unto Nature.) The eyes of the wild Asses are said to *fail because there was no grass*, Jer. 14. 6. God threatens the *Jews* with such troubles as should *consume their eyes*, Levit. 26. 16. When *Jonathan* (1 Sam. 14. 29.) wanted food, his eyes were dim, and as soon as he had tasted a little honey, *See, I pray you,* (saith he) *how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.* Neither of these wayes are we to understand it here. Secondly, There is a failing of the eyes in a moral sence: Though the optick vertue of the eye be like

Hebraismus est qua extrema describitur virium extenuatio atq; defectus ad mortem usq; Bold.

like that of *Moſes*, which was as ſtrong and clear at a hundred and twenty years old, as at twenty, yet when a man is diſappointed of the thing which he looks for, his eyes are ſaid to fail. The failing of our eyes is the diſappointment of our hopes. And the reaſon of that expreſſion is, becauſe the eye is the inſtrument, by which we look up, or look out for that, which is the deſire, and would be (as we conceive) the ſatisfaction of our ſouls. Yet further, the eyes may be ſaid to fail two wayes.

Dum expectant bonum & non aſſequuntur. Sic conſumptio oculorum ſumitur in Scriptura. Rab. Sol.

First, (As before) When we obtain not what we have long expected: So the captive *Jews* complain (*Lam.* 4.17.) *As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have waited for a nation that could not ſave us.* *Job*, in vindication of his integrity, profeſſeth, *That he never cauſed the eyes of the widow to fail* (Chap. 31.16.) that is, he neither made them ſtay over-long for an anſwer, nor did he chide them away preſently with a bad one. For,

Videndo & invidendo langueſcit. Invidia eſt oculorum dolor.

Secondly, This failing of the eyes doth ariſe from the ſight of that which we would not ſee, as well as from the not ſeeing of what we would. *To meet with that which we look not for, is as troubleſome, as not to meet with that for which we look.* And as want of that good, which we would enjoy, ſo envy at the good, which another enjoyes, is a pain unto the eyes. Envy is the worſt diſeaſe of the eye: when a man ſeeth another flouriſh in proſperity and in peace, whom he hates, that monſter envy tortures him, and his eyes begin to ake.

In both or either of theſe ſences we may underſtand it here.

First thus, Wicked men ſhall look long enough for any good before it comes, their eyes ſhall fall out of their heads with looking for good becauſe it comes not.

Dicit Jobi æmula oritus & invidis hæc arbitror intelligenda. Bold.

Secondly, *Their eyes ſhall fail*; that is, they ſhall ſee the righteous in ſuch proſperity, and raiſed up to ſuch luſtre and glory, that they ſhall not be able to bear it. This ſome give as the peculiar intent of the place. For though the aſſertion be appliable to all wicked men, yet it ſeems to aim chiefly at thoſe who inſulted over *Job* in his affliction. Theſe mens eyes, ſaith *Zophar*, ſhall be dazled, and ſink in their heads, at the ſplendour of that reſtitution which God will make in thy eſtate, if thou wilt but return to God, and repent. *They who mocked thy fall, ſhall be amazed at thy riſing.*

This firſt clauſe taken in connection with the counſel before given, yields us this Obſervation:

The prayers of the Saints draw down good upon themſelves, and trouble upon their adverſaries.

Prayer is an offenſive weapon as well as a defenſive: as it protects us from evil, and attaineth good for us, ſo it wounds our enemies, and obſtructs the paſſages of their good. What hinders the deſires of wicked men, and breaks their projects? what ſtops the courſe of their counſels? Some poor ſoul, perhaps many, are praying againſt them, and then, the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, they ſhall never partake of their expectations. There is a deſtroying power in the prayers of the Saints, as well as a ſaving and a helping power. The witneſſes have a flame at their lips, fire proceedeth out of their mouthes, which devoureth their enemies (*Rev.* 11.) which moſt interpret to be their prayers: they pray their enemies to deſtruction, they pray them into diſappointments; their enemies lay deſigns, and prayer diſmounteth their deſigns, or turns their Artillery againſt their own breaſts.

Secondly, Take the interpretations given of theſe words in their own compaſs. Then

Obſerve, firſt, *It is a vexation to wicked men, a very pain to their eyes, to ſee the proſperity of godly men.*

A good man is an eye-ſore to thoſe that are evil. *Haman* was in an high eſtate, a great man, and full of honour, yet *Mordecai* was an eye-ſore to him; *Haman's* eyes failed when he ſaw him, and therefore after he had made report to his friends, and to his Wife, *of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him*, &c. he melts into this ſad and diſcontented concluſion, *yet all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee* Mordecai *the* Jew *ſitting at the Kings gate*, *Eſther* 5. 13. All the pictures in the Kings gallery, did not pleaſe and feed the eyes of *Haman* ſo much as the ſight of *Mordecai* ſitting at the Kings gate vexed him.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Wicked men ſhall never obtain the good things they long for and gape after.*

Their hopes ſhall be fruitleſs, their projects ſucceſleſs, their labour ſhall be labour in vain. The beſt are ſometimes put to it very hard, their refuge and their hopes fail them long, though not for ever, (*Pſal.* 69. 3.) *Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.* *David* waited ſo long, that he was even weary with waiting, yet God came at laſt. The ſtubborn *Jews* are threatned, *Deut.* 28. 32. *Thy ſons and thy daughters ſhall be given to another people, and thine eyes ſhall look and fail with longing for them all the day long.* *Siſera's* Mother, and her wiſe Ladies, looked long through the lattice for his coming, but he came not at all. The eyes of the wicked ſhall fail indeed, they ſhall fail with waiting upon their idols and vanities, upon their luſts and lyes, upon their relations and friends, upon their policies and plottings: It ſhould make the Saints to lift up their heads and their eyes with confidence, that God will cauſe the eyes of wicked men to fail.

מנוס אבד מנהם *Effugium peribis ab iis.*

And they ſhall not eſcape.] As they ſhall not receive the good which they expect, ſo they ſhall not be able to deliver themſelves from the evil which they fear. *They ſhall not eſcape*; the Hebrew is, *Their refuge ſhall fail them:* Mr. *Broughton*, *Their refuge ſhall be forlorn.* You may take it either in reference to their eſcaping the hand of men, or to their eſcaping the hand of God. They ſhall not eſcape the hand of men, their refuge ſhall fail them there. When once *Saul* was forſaken of God, he could not eſcape the hand of the *Philiſtims*: ſee (1 *Sam.* 28.) what means he made to eſcape them, whom he had often conquered; he goes to the Devil for help, but he could not eſcape; *Nothing ſhall do them good who are forſaken of God.* And if they cannot eſcape the hands of men, much leſs ſhall they be able to eſcape the hand of God. As his hand is not ſhortned to ſave, ſo not to puniſh. Where he reſolves to ſtrike, he can. *They ſhall not eſcape.* This intimates two things.

First, The falſeneſs of thoſe props and ſupports, whether perſons, or things, upon which they leaned. *I* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 142. 4.) *looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me:* The help of man often fails *good men*, though the help of God never fails them. The help of man often fails wicked men, and the help of God fails them ever. They may look in a ſtreight not only on the right hand and on the left, that is, on all creatures, but upward alſo, on God himſelf, and yet find no refuge. God will not deliver wicked men, and others ſhall not. Nothing can ſave him whom God will deſtroy, or give up to deſtruction.

Secondly, The vanity of their own hopes; they have great hopes that they ſhall get off, and out-run their dangers, but they cannot. Their ſorrows ſhall be too ſwift of foot for them; yea, their ſorrows ſhall purſue them as upon Eagles wings. *They ſhall not eſcape.*

Hence obſerve, *There is no eſcaping the hand of God.*

His is a long hand, every thing is within the reach of it. His foot is a ſwift foot; therefore *the flight ſhall periſh from the ſwift, and the ſtrong ſhall not ſtrengthen his force, neither ſhall the mighty deliver himſelf, neither ſhall he ſtand that handleth the bow, and he that is ſwift of foot ſhall not deliver himſelf,* Amos 2. 14. When a prevailing enemy comes, there's no fighting with him, but there may be an eſcape from him. *A good pair of heels may do us ſervice where hands cannot.* But when a people can neither fight nor flee, neither charge nor retreat, their caſe is deſperate. There is no getting from that vengeance which God ſendeth to attach and apprehend his enemies. As *all outward helps ſhall fail thoſe whom God will not help*; ſo God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him. On that ſuppoſition *Rabſhakeh* thought to daſh the confidence of *Hezekiah*, and to perſwade him that he ſhould not eſcape. *Is not this he in whom thou truſteſt* (ſaith he) *whoſe high places and whoſe altars thou haſt taken away?* Thou truſteſt in God, but will God deliver thee when thou haſt thus diſhonoured him? *They that deſtroy the inſtituted worſhip of God, have little reaſon to hope that God ſhould aſſiſt them; while they*

they offer to trust him, which is his natural worship. Seeing then God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him, and blasteth every outward thing which they make their confidence, how is it possible for them to escape? When our Rock will not save us, how shall we be saved by a staff of reed?

The third branch of the Text wrings the very dregs of the wrath of God, into the cup of ungodly men.

Spes eorum. נפח נפש

Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

When hope dyes all dyes: hope is the last commodity which a man puts off in this life; But what is their hope worth which is as dead?

Proprie hæc phrasi significatur deliquium animæ. Est spes stolidum abominatio animæ. Vulg.

There is much variety in interpreting this expression. The word properly taken signifies *swooning*, or failing of the spirits. The giving up of the ghost, is the total and final failing of the spirits. He can have but few spirits left alive, whose hope hath given up the ghost. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Their hope is nought but pangs of the soul:* The Vulgar, *Their hope shall be the abomination of their soul:* The sence of which translation seems to be this; That which wicked men receive in lieu of, or in answer to their great hopes, shall be an abomination to them; they hope for good, but evil cometh. And every evil is then most grievous, when it succeeds the hope of good. Hope may be said to give up the ghost, when either the good we would obtain removes further from us, or the evil we would decline comes closer to us: Hope expires when we are presented with visions of fear and sorrow, after our highest expectations of joy and comfort: Hence some translate the word (*Nephesh*) *a breath or puff of wind*; to which the hope of the wicked is elegantly compared, because it quickly vanisheth, and produceth no effect, or not the effect hoped for. That complaint of the Prophet, sutes this notion fully, (*Isa.* 26. 18.) *We have been with child* (big with hopes) *we have been in pain*, (endured much to enjoy our hopes, and bring them to the birth, but instead of them) *we have, as it were, brought forth wind, we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth.* After long looking, and long labour, all proved but a gripe of wind, or a Collick fit.

Vox Nephesh hoc loco pro illitu & simili sumitur. Bold.

Again, say others, *Their hope shall be as the snuffing of the breath*; that is, they shall be so angry at their disappointments, that they shall vex and snuff at it. Or thus, The things which they shall receive upon all their hopes placed in, and credit given to the creature, shall not be worth *a snuff of breath*; that is, they shall be light and vain: So some expound that (*Mal.* 1. 13.) where the Prophet brings in that people toyling under the pressures of (that which should have been their delight) the publick worship; *Ye have said, Behold what a weariness is it, and ye have snuffed at it*; (it is this word) they cryed out, we have brought many weighty Offerings, and Sacrifices, and what a burthen is it to do so? *And ye snuffed at it*; that is, ye thought much of it, or were vexed at it; so we translate: But the letter of the Original is read thus, *Ye have said, Behold what a weariness is it, whereas you might have blown it away, or blown it off*; as if he had said, you think you have done a great matter, and speak as if ye were all in a sweat at my service; whereas indeed you have done little for me, and what you did, you spoiled it in the doing, you have done it in an ill manner; you have brought me a poor, a lame, and a halting Sacrifice, such as a man might even blow away with his breath; and your own hearts have been more halting, lame and light, then your Sacrifice. So here, their hope shall be as a thing blown or puffed away with a breath; there shall be no stability, no subsistence in it.

Spes speratæ rei nunc sunt pro re exhibita. i. e. exhibetur pro re quæ speratur. Sic flatus pro flatu dicitur, & pro re quæ projicitur.

The words (according to our reading) teach us, that the hopes of wicked men are decaying and dying hopes. *Giving up the ghost* is the last act of life, and the beginning of death. As all the hopes of wicked men perish when they dye, so while they live their hopes are dying. A godly man hath not only a living, but a lively hope, (1 *Pet.* 1. 3.) A wicked man hath but a dying hope at best; and his hope *shall be worse and worse every day, till it be utterly desperate.* The Prophet *Joel* describeth the judgments of God upon his ancient people, by pulling off the bark of a tree (*chap.* 1. 7.) *He hath laid my vine waste, and barked my fig-tree; He hath made it clean bare, the branches of it are white.* The *Caldee* Paraphrast glosses it by the expression of this Text, *He hath caused my fig-tree to give up the ghost*; hence the meaning is plain, that, look as a tree (take it for a fig-tree, or any other tree) when you pull off the bark, bears no more fruit, but dyes; so shall the hope of a wicked man be: We may say of such a mans hope as Christ of the fig-tree which he cursed, *Never fruit grow on thee more*; thou art a dying tree, thou hast done thy worst, thou hast seen thy best dayes, now thy bark is peeled off, thy boughs are bare; *Thy hope is as the giving up of the ghost.*

Spes eorum perditio Sept. sui sc. rerumque suarum, vel quod de ipsis impiis sperari potest animæ perditio est.

Lastly, The Hebrew, having no particle of similitude, runs thus in the letter, *Their hope shall be the giving up of the ghost*; that is, *A wicked man is often brought into such a condition, that he hath no hope but this, that his day is almost done, and himself a near neighbour unto death*: He hath no hope when he dyes, yet all his hope is to dye; and that's a miserable hope. *Jonah*'s hope (under temptation) was the giving up of the ghost; therefore he prayes hard that God would take him out of the world. *Achitophel*'s hope was his death; he being crossed in his wicked counsel, went and hanged himself. They who are past all positive hope in this life, retire (as their last reserve) to this privative hope, O that they were dead. *Not to be, is their hope who are oppressed with fears of being miserable. Despair of all good while we live, makes evil (such is death) the best of our hopes.*

Spes eorum efflitio animæ i.e. *tanto dolore afficientur excidentes sua spe ut sibi mortem consciscant.*

The sum of all is, *A wicked man is a miserable man.* Put the three parts of this verse together, and you may read the worst of misery. *He that never receives the good he hopes for, and sees others receive that good which he grieves for: He that cannot escape any danger which he fears, nor meet with any deliverance which he desires: He whose hopes are dying, or who hath no hope but to dye: He that is all this, is any thing but happy, and wants nothing but hell (at the very brink whereof he is, when he is all this) to make him compleatly miserable.*

The Prophet *Malachi* gives us the opinion of those times concerning wicked men, *You call the proud happy, and they that work wickedness are set up*; but he tells of a time when they should return, and *discern between the righteous and the wicked*: There is the greatest real difference already between the righteous and the wicked: but God will make a legible difference, a difference so plain and legible, that you shall not need to call in the help of faith (which hath the most exquisite eye) to read it; sense may do it. The oldest eyes, even the eyes of the old man shall *discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not*; when the one shall be burnt up root and branch in the fire and flames of Justice, and the other refresht with the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Wait but a while, and you shall see God drawing out these positions in providences towards his people, and making a visible comment upon this Text of Scripture. The light of the righteous shall not fail, but the eyes of the wicked shall: The one shall be secure because there is hope; but the other hath no hope to escape, or the hope he hath shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

And Job *answered, and said,*

No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you: yea, who knoweth not such things as these?

I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: the just upright man is laughed to scorn.

THis, and the two following Chapters, contain *Job*'s answer to the counsel and objections of his third friend, *Zophar*, not excluding what had been said by the two former. There are four things most remarkable in it.

First, *Job* sharply rebukes that pride of spirit, and confidence of their own opinion, which he observed in his friends. He pursues this point from the beginning of the Chapter, to the end of *ver.* 4. *No doubt but ye are the people*, &c.

Secondly, He refutes that opinion which they three had maintained against him; namely, *that good or evil things distinguish good and evil men*; himself shewing by many arguments, taken from the various administrations of God, that outward evils are often the lot of good men; and that outward good is often the lot of evil men in this life. The Theme begins at *ver.* 5. and is enlarged to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He rejects his friends, *as Physitians of no value*; yea, as having wronged God, whilst they seem to be advocates for him. This he prosecutes with much variety, from the beginning of *chap.* 13. to *ver.* 17.

Fourthly, He renews his former plea with God, putting many requests to him, and strongly arguing for a release from, or at least, a lessening and mitigation of his troubles.

The whole discourse is somewhat more pressing and sharp, then either of the former; *Job*'s stile tasts much of the gall and vinegar, in this reply; and there was some reason it should: for seeing his friends undervaluing the defence he had made, and charging him afresh with that old leaven of hypocrisie (as if there were no way to assert the justice and holiness of God, but by condemning him for unjust and unholy) he could not take it well at their hands, but grows somewhat warm in language towards them; we shall be sensible of it in opening the body of his answer.

Then Job **answered, and said.**] He seems to assert, rather then to dispute; and is larger in laying down his own positions, then in answering the objections of his friends. Yet indeed a clear assertion of truth, is a sufficient confutation of error; and a clear stating of a question, is the answer of all objections.

No doubt but ye are the people.] The word is usually translated, *the multitude*; and it comes from a root, which signifies *to cover or hide*; because a multitude, or a great croud of people hide and cover the face of the earth.

עִם a עם *Operuit, texit, quia multitudo terram tegit*

No doubt but ye are the people: The text is taken two wayes; some read it as a plain assertion; others, as an Irony; which is a speech fill'd with derision; while the letter of it makes no doubt, the spirit of it is an absolute denial.

Vidéo quod estis populares, & vobiscum mortua est sapientia. Pagn. *Vos estis hominum universitas.* Tygur. *Putatis quod vos estis specimen totius orbis.* Vat.

They who take it as a plain assertion, read thus; *Without all question you are to be reckoned* (inter plebem) *but as the ordinary sort of people, even as the vulgar; and wisdom is dead with you; if ever you had any wisdom, your wisdom is faded, your parts are spoiled, you have outlived your prime; you are not the men you pretend to be, the choicest and the chiefest, the cream and flower of all; no, your speech betrayes you, and saith, you are of the vulgar, of vulgar judgments, and common understandings. I see no depth or mystery in any thing ye have spoken.* Thus the Pharisees speak, *Have any of the rulers believed on him? but this people* (this common people, this vulgar) *who know not the law, are cursed,* John 7. 49.

Secondly, By *the people*, some of the *Rabbins* understand the choicest, the elect of the people; so the language is ironical. *No doubt but ye are the people, the choice the chosen people, the chosen of God, his elect and precious ones, his favorites and familiars, to whom he opens his bosom, and reveals his secrets; ye are the Church and people of God, to whom the divine Oracles are committed. We are thrust out among the prophane.*

עם Populus, id est, מבחר דעם electus populi. *Rab. Mos. ben. Nahm. Vos estis lectissimi in toto populo, at velut columnæ totius nationis.* Merc.

Again, *Ye are the people, that is, the chosen of the people, the representative of the whole Nation*; as we may say of the *House of* Commons *in Parliament, ye are the people of* England, that is, the people have chosen you, and confide in you, as the wisest, the most judicious and faithful of your several Countries, for carrying on the affairs of the Kingdom, and maintaining of their rights. In this sense (though they are but a few hundreds, yet) they are *the people of the Kingdom. Job* taxeth his friends as arrogating this; *Ye are the people, ye are they that would seem to be a whole Nation of men; ye (sure) have got away all the wit from the world, ye would be accounted as mankind, or as the flower of the universe; ye take it upon you as if all the world were epitomized in you three; as if all wise, learned and knowing men had delivered up, and put over their judgments and understandings, their all, into your hands; yea, as if wisdom had yielded her self captive to you, and ye had devoured all knowledge: surely ye are the men.* The Lord by the Prophet *Jeremy* (chap. 5. 1.) bids them *run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, to see if they could find a man:* And the old Cynick went into a throng with a torch by day, to find a man. *A man of wisdom and integrity is the man; other men compared to him, are but beasts. Zophar* at the twelfth verse of the former chapter, compares *Job to the wild asses colt*, and numbers him among the beasts: here *Job* fits him with an expression; you carry your selves (saith he) as if you only were *The men*, and I, yea, all men besides, *very beasts, or wild asses colts*, that knew neither what ye say, nor whereof ye affirm.

Amicos modestè reprehendit asperso tamen modico sive sale sive felle sub ironica forma. Sanc.

Quoniam Zophar Jobum *vellicando, pullo onagri, i. e. stupidissimo bruto comparaverat, ideo dicit, vos estis homines, cæteri ad, vos bestiæ.* Merc.

And wisdom shall die with you.] Moral wisdom is the knowledge of natural things, and of their causes. Divine wisdom is the true knowledg of God and of our selves. We may suppose both wisdoms intended here; as if he had said, *you pretend to so much wisdom, that if you should die, all that is called wisdom must surely die with you, there will be none (to be feared) left in the world, when you leave the world.* When the Sun goes down, the light goes down; the Sun is the vessel of light: it was said of *Chrysostom* (who held forth much light of knowledge in his time) *that it were better the Sun should be taken out of the firmament, then he from his Sphere.* When some men go down, much light goes down with them: *A wise holy man is both a burning and a shining light. Job* puts it upon his friends as their presumption, to think so highly of themselves; his thoughts were, that wisdom would be safe, when they should not be; that the common wealth of learning would lose little or nothing, though it lost them, with all their learning; that the day of knowledge would not be darker, whensoever they with all their light should set.

Sapientia est rerum divinarum & humanarum, causarumq; quibus hæ res continentur scientia. Cic. l. 2. *de Off.*

Whether or no *Job*'s friends were thus conceited of their own abilities, and preferred themselves before their brethren, is more then I dare conclude against them. Their round dealing with *Job*, and those magisterial lessons and advices given him, sound somewhat that way; but let it be granted that *Job* in his passion over-acted a little upon his friends, yet there is this truth in it, which shall be my first Observation from these words: That,

Quando non vicinum integræ mentis hæc quæ in mundo est sapientia. Bold.

That, *Many are apt to over-value and over-rate their own abilities, as if they had engrossed all knowledge, and had the monopolie of wisdom in their own breasts; as if all must borrow or buy of their store, and light their candle at their torch.*

Wisdom is no mans peculiar; and a great opinion of our own wisdom, savors of great folly: The very head of that monster, *Papal pride*, appears in this point. The Pope thinks himself to be *The man*, that *He is the people*; that all the wisdom and judgment of the world is contracted into him, and fastned to the pummels of his chair; whence he would be believed to utter Oracles with a spirit of infallibility. *No man errs more then he who saith he cannot*; nor is any man a greater stranger to true knowledge, then he who boasts he hath more then his neighbours. It is noted of the inhabitants of *China*, that as they are a witty nation, so they have a conceit of their own wit above all the nations of the earth. Hence their boast, *that they have two eyes, the* Europeans *one, and the rest of the world is blind.* But they who think all are blind, who see not with their eyes, are yet blind, and have never seen themselves. It is the emptiness of knowledge, not a fulness of it, which makes so great a sound. They who expect that all should bow to their judgments, and acquiesce in what they resolve; they, who would be esteemed to speak nothing but principles and *postulata*, which must be swallowed, without chewing, by an implicit faith; they, who require assent, rather then perswade it, may justly fall under the weight, and feel the smart of this scornful objurgation, *ye are the men, and wisdom shall die with you.* The Apostle is express, *He that thinks* (that is, proudly conceits) *he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know* (1 Cor. 8. 2.) What then doth he know, who thinks (which he cannot without highest pride) that he knoweth all things, and that all men must know (if they will know any thing) from him.

Secondly, Observe, *All kind of scorn is not alwayes uncomly.*

We may, without breach of charity, or stain of holiness, check pride with derision, and speak them below men, who speak themselves above men, or act what is unworthy of men. The Jews are taught by God himself to deride the proud King of *Babylon*, Isa. 14. 4. *Thou shalt take up this proverb (or taunting speech) against the King of Babylon, and say, How hath the Oppressor ceased, the golden City ceased!* &c. vers. 9, 10. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee, to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the Kings of the nations; all they shall speak unto thee, and say, art thou also become weak as we? art thou also become as one of us?* This is the *Proverb* which was to be taken up against the King of *Babylon*, and it is a *taunting proverb* indeed. Not only should the great Princes then alive who (*ver.* 8) are expressed under the shadow of *Firtrees and the Cedars of Lebanon*, rejoyce against him; but even the dead whom he had oppressed, are here brought in, insulting over him. When the *Babylonian* should tumble down to hell, the Princes there are represented rising from their places, to give this great Prince the upper hand, and the highest room in that kingdom of darkness. Thus hell it self is said to be moved, and to be, as it were, in a hurry, how to entertain that mighty King; that he who had been chief in wickedness and in pride, might have his right, to be chief in torment. The dialogue which the dead are said to have with that deceased King, is somewhat like those in which *Alexander* and others are derided by the dead in *Lucian*; *Art thou become like unto us?* &c. In what a heat of heavenly zeal doth *Eliah* deride the Priests of *Baal?* 1 Kin. 18. 27. *Cry aloud, for he is god, either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.* When the Prophet *Micaiah*, (1 *King.* 22. 17.) was called for to give his opinion about *Ahab*'s expedition to *Ramoth Gilead*, he knowing what they would have him vote, they expected he should join with the rest, and say what they had said; therefore when *Ahab* asked, *shall we go up to Ramoth Gilead?* yea, saith he, *go up and prosper*; I know you have a mind to go up, I pray go; *Ahab* resented it as a scorn, and therefore adds, *How oft shall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the name of the Lord?* They who resolve upon their way, before they ask counsel, are often counselled according to their own way, are led to error in scorn, because they had no love unto the truth. We find the Apostle *Paul*, in the highest elevation of his spirit, expressing himself in language extreamly parallel with this of *Job*. It seems the *Corinthians*, much like the *Laodiceans*, had boasted of their spiritual fulness, that they were rich, and encreased with goods, and had need of nothing. Yea, saith the Apostle, I know ye are, I will be of your opinion too for once (1 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *Now ye are full, now ye are rich* (all things go bravely with you) *ye have reigned as Kings without us*, that is, you exalt your selves above us here, as much as a King is above his own subjects, you are supream. I and *Apollos*, whose Ministry God was pleased to use in planting and watering the Gospel among you, are now looked upon as mean fellows, as men of low and poor parts; or, at best, but as some good honest dull Preachers, not worthy to be named the same day with your new and high-flown teachers (yet all this is but an holy scorn put upon them, as his correction, in the next line, imports) *I would to God* (saith he) *that ye did reign* (namely, in deed and in truth; I shall not envy you, only I would be bold to put in for a part with you) *I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you*; I would be glad to share in those gallant Gospel-notions you so much brag of; but I fear your portion is but small in true spiritual Gospel-knowledge, except in your own conceits, and there you abound sufficiently. Again, in *v.* 10, though in another stile, yet fully to the sence, and almost the words of *Job*; *We are fools for Christs sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised*; we are nothing, ye are all: This the Apostle speaks, as most interpreters agree, by an Irony; or if taken properly, the sence may be given thus, we are fools in the opinion of the world, possibly in yours too, because, for the Gospels sake, we expose our selves to so much hazard. *But ye are wise*; who so preach Christ, that ye endanger neither life nor liberty, neither persons, nor estates. Read the same strain, (1 *Cor.* 14. 36, 37.) *What! came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?* What! do you think that you have all the word and will of God? doth all the knowledge of Scripture, and resolution of doubts lie in your breasts, and flow out at your lips? comes all from you? have you the sole trade of Gospel-truths? he subjoins, *If any man thinks himself to be a Prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the Commandments of the Lord*: as if he had said, do not think you have got all, I have somewhat as well as you, I know what the commandment, what the will of God is. *Job* speaks in the next verse, as if he had read this Epistle of *Paul*, or had set him a pattern; for having said, *No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you*; he adds,

Ridet spiritus carnales, videt ciro spirituales. Descendit ad gravissimam ironiam, ut ambitiosos illos ad ruborem vel invitos cogat. Bez. *in loc.*

Postquam serio & absque figuris vanam eorum confidentiam repressit, tum ironicos quoque eam deridet. Cal.

Hæc antithesis est ironica & plena aculeis.

Aspera objurgatio ne soli sapere Corinthii sibi videantur. Bez. *Objurgatio est paulo asperior, sed quâ necesse fuit retundere superbiam Corinthiorum, qui sibi ultra modum placebunt.* Calv.

Verse 3. **But I have understanding as well as you, I am not inferiour unto you; yea, who knows not such things as these?**

As before, he derided their ignorance, or their presumption of knowledge; so now, he puts himself into the ballance with them: you that think you have all the wisdom and knowledge, let me come in for a share with you; *I have understanding as well as you, I am not inferior to you*; possibly I shall weigh as heavy as you, when we are weighed together; yea, who doth not weigh as heavy as you? *Who knows not such things as these?*

We have here a double comparison.

First, *Job* compares himself with his friends, and that two wayes. 1. For the matter; That, as they had understanding, so had he: *I have understanding as well as you.* 2. He compares himself for the degree; my understanding is as large as yours: *I am not inferiour to you.*

Secondly, He makes a comparison between his friends and the rest of men; even with the vulgar and ordinary sort of men: as if he had said, *Do not think that I lift my self up above my brethren, or would be reckoned for more then an ordinary man*, when I say, *I have understanding as well as you; for truly who knows not such things as these? yours is but the common Ephah, and your measure but the measure of a man.*

I have understanding as well as you.] The Hebrew is,

Non sum excors, neque cor perdidi.

I have a heart as well as you. The heart in Scripture is put, as for the affections, so likewise for the understanding; a man without understanding, is a man without an heart: the heart is the treasury wherein the precepts and maximes of holy knowledge are laid up: *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things. Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding.* The Hebrew is, *and without heart* (Jer. 5. 21.) And in *chap* 34. of this Book of *Job*, *ver.* 32. *Let men of understanding tell me*; the Original is, *Let men of heart tell me.* And the *Latines* call a wise man (*Cordatum*) *a hearty peice, a man of heart.* The name of one of the twelve Apostles was *Lebbeus* (from *Leb*, the heart) signifying as much as wise, or understanding. Some, for *I have understanding*, read, *I have courage and height of spirit, as well as you*: The heart, in Scripture, is often put for courage, 2 *Sam.* 17. 10. *He that is a valiant man, whose heart is as the heart of a Lion, shall utterly melt*; that is, his courage shall fail. So the Prophet threatens, that the *mighty mens hearts in* Moab, *in that day, shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs* (Jer. 48. 41.) The failing of the heart is the failing of courage; that's a good sense here, *I have courage as well as you*; or, I have spirit to stand to my cause, and maintain what I have asserted, notwithstanding all the contempt and contradictions which you have poured upon me; you have not yet made my heart fall, though my body, though my estate be cast down. You have loaded me with reproaches and heavy censures, but my spirit bears your infirmity in doing so.

נפל
Non cado à vobis, vel præ vobis, Hebraismus est, quo cadere significat abjectum esse & inferiorem.

I am not inferiour to you.] I have the same for kind, and I have as much of it as you. The Hebrew is very elegant, *I do not fall before you*; a man that falls before another, is subdued and overcome. He that falls under in wrestling, is prevailed over: I do not fall as the weaker, I yet keep my ground, and stand upon my legs. So the word is used, *Nehem.* 6. 16. When those enemies perceived how God dealt with his people, the Text saith, *they were cast down in their own eyes*; or, fell before their own eyes, that is, they were ashamed and dejected, because they saw the prosperity of the *Jews*.

There may be a threefold sence of this, *I am not inferiour to you*; or, *I do not fall before you.*

First, I am not inferiour to you in honour and dignity; *I am as great a man as you.*

Secondly, It may refer to holiness: I am not inferiour to you in grace; *I am as good a man as you.*

Thirdly, Which is specially meant; I am not inferiour to you in knowledge and understanding; *I am as wise a man as you.* Some render it thus, *I yet fall, trip, or stumble no more then you, and I hope to stand my ground in this controversie as long as you dare stand against me.* Hence observe,

> First, That, *In some cases, self-commendation is not uncomly.*

To boast of our understanding, proceeds from the want of it; but a man may say, *I have understanding as well as you*, without a boast. This is a very tender point; example from the servants of God in Scripture, teacheth us to be more ready to speak and write our blots and failings, then our good works or praises: And the rule of Scripture is, *Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips* (Prov. 27. 2.) The Apostle also is expres, that self-commendation is no commendation (2 *Cor.* 10. 18.) *Not he that commendeth himself, is approved; but whom the Lord commendeth.* To have praise of other men, is better then to have praise of our selves; but to have praise of God, is better then to have praise of men. Yet when men dispraise us maliciously, we may justly praise our selves. Such praise is but to do our selves justice, which we are more bound to do, then to any other man.

There is a twofold commendation of our selves. There is a sinful self-commendation, when we desire to be lifted up in the opinion of the world. There is a lawful self-commendation, when we desire to be lifted up, lest the glory of God should be cast down. When the honour of God is in danger to be abated in our abatings, we may safely take all due honour to our selves; yea, we are bound to honour, and make the most (we possibly can) of our selves with truth, when either the truth, or honour of Christ must be lessened, if we do not. *I think* (saith *Paul*) *that I have the spirit of God* (1 Cor. 7. 10.) He speaks not, as if he doubted whether he had; but to reprove those who slighted him, as if he had not the spirit of God. While he saith only, *I think I have the spirit of God*, he saith more to this purpose, then if he had asserted strongly, *I have the spirit of God.* The confidence of the false Apostles, that they had the spirit, gave occasion, not only to suspect whether they had it, but to conclude, that they had it not: *Paul*'s modesty, in but thinking, gave occasion to be resolute, in concluding, that he had the Spirit.

Further, *Job* doth not only commend himself positively, and say, I have understanding, I have wisdom; but he commends himself comparatively, which is the most unpleasing way of commendation. We use to say, *comparisons are odious*, and subject to misconstruction; yet *Job* commends himself, at least, by comparing himself with, if not preferring himself before the formost of his friends; *I am not inferiour to you.* Hence observe,

> *A man, in some cases, may so stand upon his own honour, as not to yield or submit to others at all.*

The Apostles counsel is, *In lowlineß of mind, let each esteem other better then themselves* (Phil. 2. 3.) and yet a time may come, when a man, with lowliness of mind enough, may judge himself better then another. When the matter lies between Saints and Saints (of such the Apostle there speaks) one Saint should not lift up himself above another, they should rather give honour one to another, and think others better then themselves: *If any man hath wherein to boast, I much more* (saith *Paul*, Phil. 3. 4.) yet he calls himself *leß then the least of all Saints*; amongst Saints, he cares not though he were accounted the least of Saints; but when his Ministry and Apostleship was under-rated, he speaks of himself at the highest rate, 2 *Cor.* 11. 5. *I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles*, fully the language of *Job* here; *I am not inferiour to you*, no, not to the best of you. But were some of the Apostles greater and better then others? was there inferiority and superiority amongst them? No, Apostleship, as an office, is of equal honour in all Apostles; but even amongst Apostles, some had more excellent gifts, and greater enlargements; God did communicate himself more to one then to another; one of those stars differed from another star in glory: Thus among Apostles, some one might be chief: thus *Paul was not behind* (which I take for a modest expression, that he was *even with*, yea, that he, in some things, *went before*, or *outwent*) *the chiefest of the Apostles.* He indeed confesseth at *chap.* 12. of the same Epistle, *ver.* 11, 12. *I am become a fool in glorying*; as if he had said, it is the guise and character of a fool, affectedly to commend himself, but (I have not affected it) *ye have compelled me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you* (that is, ye ought to have given testimony to my integrity, and to have maintained the honour of my Ministry) *for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing*; though you, through envy, account me nothing; and though I, in humility, would account my self nothing, yet (being now put to it) I must speak it out, *I am not behind the very chiefest Apostles*: or, as some render from the letter of the Greek; *I want nothing, (not a hairs breadth) of their measure, who are Apostles above measure*; *I am as much an Apostle, as they who are more then much Apostles.* All this while, *Paul* was no *Braggadochio*, no vain *Thraso*: He doth not contend personally with the Apostles for preheminence or primacy, but he checks those who hoped to be excused in undervaluing him, because they valued other Apostles above him, or pretended to have received Gospel-mysteries from some other of the Apostles (whose great *confidents and familiars* they would be esteemed) beyond all that *Paul* had ever yet taught. *Paul* (I say) never wrangled with any of the Apostles for the upper hand; he never said to *Matthew*, *Thomas*, or *Andrew*, &c. *I am not behind you*; or, *I am better then thou.* But because they made use of the parts and gifts of some of the Apostles, to slight his, he, who somewhere saith, *I am not worthy to be called an Apostle*; saith here, *I am not behind the greatest, the chiefest of the Apostles.* Thus we may stand upon terms of credit with any who lay our persons low, that they may disparage our work, and lay that service low to which God hath called us.

τῶν ὑπερλίαν Ἀποστόλων. *Iis qui sunt supra modum Apostoli.*

Solomon gives us an excellent observation (*Prov.* 25. 26.)

A righteous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring. Some interpret it thus, A righteous man falling into sin, *before*, that is, in the company or presence of the wicked, *is as a corrupt spring*, many begin to suspect that his waters are not wholesom, when they see such corruption swimming at the top, and so refuse to drink him any more, *&c.* to accept his counsels or instructions. This is a useful explication; yet I rather give the sence from the point in hand: *A righteous man falling*, that is, basely submitting, or creeping poorly to *a wicked man, is as a troubled fountain.* Many a righteous man is made to fall down before the wicked. *Abel* fell down before *Cain*; for he murdered him: and so have thousands of righteous souls fallen before their bloody persecutors; but for a righteous man actively to fall down, to crouch or stoop to wicked ones, either through fear or flattery, is an act unworthy a righteous man. A righteous man thus falling before the wicked, what is he? or to what shall we liken him? *Solomon* tells us, *he is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.* A righteous man is a wholesom fountain, a spring of pure water, many may refresh themselves at him; but he, by this his act, becomes a *troubled fountain*, he hath mudded the purity of his own soul, with worldly respects and carnal interests, else he had never bowed to that generation of golden Idols, and graven Images. Noble *Mordecai* would not fall before proud *Haman*: He chose rather (if that must have been the issue of it) to fall down by his power, then to fall down unto his person. Giants are called *Nephalim*, from this word, *Fallers*, because men, beholding their vast limbs, and dreadful stature (like the Army of *Israel* before great *Goliah*) fall before them for fear. There are Giants still in every Land (though not in body, such are very rare, yet in mind) they would be *Nephalim*, all must fall before and submit unto them; they would be *Josephs*, every mans sheaf must make obeisance unto theirs. *Paul* would never fall down to *false Apostles*, nay, he would not to a true *Apostle*, when he did not walk according to the truth; *he withstood* Peter *to the face, because he was to be blamed*, Gal. 2. 11, 14. Though Christians ought, in lowliness, to submit to one another; and in duty, to submit to Magistracy, and the higher powers, yet they must not submit to the pride or lust of any how high soever. Thus to bow before wicked men, is somewhat like bowing to an Idol. *To adore them, is to dishonour God; yea, to make them Gods.*

Heb. *Cum quo non sunt hæc?*

Who knows not such things as these?] As he had ballanced himself with his friends, so he thought any man might. Such a treasure of knowledge as this, is no mans peculiar: We may gather up such upon the common; we need not travel to the oracles of learning for it, he that knows any thing, knows what you say; he that is not (such as you think me to be) *a wild asses colt*, a very fool, may fathom all your notions; they carry no such depth, but that line enough may be had in any mans brain to reach their bottom. *Who knows not such things as these?* Hence note,

First, *There are some common principles, and easie truths, which fall under every mans apprehension.*

Who knows not such things as these? The Apostle (*Heb.* 6. 1.) speaks of the *first principles of the doctrine of Christ.* The objects of knowledge are of various degrees, according to the degrees of capacity in the subject. (*Heb.* 5. 14.) we read of *strong meat for men of full age, and milk for babes.* The youngest child feeds on milk. Who knows not such things as these? Some principles in Religion are of so easie a digestion, that even babes in Christ may feed upon them, and suck them in. We say of those commodities which are rich and high-prized, *they are not every mans money*; so we may say of those truths which are dark and mysterious, *they are not for every understanding*: He that hath an understanding, may understand so much of the mystery of Christ, as may light him safe to heaven, though some things are too high for those who are highest, to understand fully, while they are here upon the earth.

Secondly, Observe, *Who knows not such things as these?*

It is a shame not to be acquainted with common principles.

Every one knows these things; what? not understand that which the meanest may understand? We find the Apostle improving this argument, *Rom.* 2. 4. Where (having convinced the Gentiles in the former Chapter, for sinning against the light of nature, and the benefits of creation) he proceeds to convince the Jews for sinning against the light of Scripture, and the mercies of redemption. *Despisest thou the riches of the goodness and forbearance of God*, &c. *Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Art thou a Jew, one that boastest of so much knowledge, and dost not thou know this common principle? dost not thou know the meaning of the goodness and forbearance of God? every child in holy knowledge knows the voyce of mercy, that it bespeaks our return to God, or *leads us to repentance.* The Apostle deals with the *Corinthians* upon the same ground (*1 Cor.* 11. 14.) about the wearing of long hair, *Doth not nature it self teach you?* It is a shame for you to be ignorant of that which you may learn at the school and university of nature? nature teacheth, *that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him.* It is not only a sin, but a dishonour for a man, to do that, which his being a man tells him he should not do. By a like insinuation *Paul* labours to keep the *Ephesians* at furthest distance from gross sins; *for this ye know* (saith he) *that no whoremonger, &c. hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God and Christ.* This is a received truth; do you not know this? I know ye know it. Some truths can hardly be known by all our study, many are known without any study. *It is almost as hard to be ignorant of some things, as it is to know other things.* There will be a sore reckoning with the world one day, because they are not seen in the deep mysteries of Christ, having been often shewed them; but when it shall be found, that they are not seen in that, which they could not but see, except they had shut their eyes, this will render them altogether inexcusable, and shut their mouths for ever. *The more easie any truth is, the harder will be our suffering, and the greater our sin, if we attain not to the knowledge of it.*

Thirdly, *Job*'s friends carried it, as if their discourse had been all riddle and mystery; yet he tells them, *Who knows not such things as these?* Hence note,

It is a vanity to pretend mysteriousness about vulgar truths.

Some cover the Sun with clouds, and put disguises upon the plainest doctrines. They dig deep for that which lies above ground; and in stead of enlightning what is dark, darken the cleerest light. They speak and write of things as new and never known, whenas all that hear or read them, may justly reprove them with that ancient proverb, *You tell us news*; or in the language of this Text, *who knows not such things as these?*

Job having thus rebuked the pride of his friends, begins to check their scorn.

Verse 4. **I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he heareth him; the just upright man is laughed to scorn.**

I am as one mocked of his neighbour.] The word signifies scorning joyned with laughter, strictly called derision. The letter of the Hebrew is, *I am the laughter* (the sport or pastime) *of my neighbour*; he speaks partly in the first, and partly in the third person: He doth not say, *I am as one mocked of my neighbour*; that had cast it too directly upon his friends; but, *I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour*, and so lets it light where it will. *Job*'s comforters had high thoughts of themselves, and low thoughts of him. A man that is mocked, is under the greatest contempt, and meanest estimation. *I am as one mocked*, &c. as if *Job* had said, *Instead of comforting, informing, and supporting me, you have mocked me in my adversity.*

Nolnit Job dicere prima persona, socio meo, sed socio suo in tertia, ut modestius loqueretur. Merc.

Observe, *It is an addition to affliction, to be mocked in affliction.*

Mocking is one of the greatest afflictions. Amongst the sufferings and cruel persecutions that the Saints endured, the Apostle mentions this, *They had trial of cruel mockings*, (Heb. 11. 36.) *Who knows how deep sharp words will enter, and what wounds they will make?* They not only wound the name, but the spirit; they stab to the heart. It was one great part of the sufferings of Christ, he was mocked and used like a fool in a play; they put a robe on his back, a reed in his hand, and a crown upon his head; and when he hung on the cross, finishing the work of our salvation, they (in

(in highest scorn) *Bid him save himself.* The Apostle *Jude* assures us, that the Lord is coming to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly *of all their hard speeches which they have spoken. Hard speeches are as bad as hard blows; and amongst all hard speeches, mockings are the hardest. A man will easier receive a blow from his friend, then a scorn from his friend*: Scorning is fundamentally opposite to the fundamental laws of love. This is the second ingredient which imbittered his sufferings; *I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour.*

Ab amicis acceptæ contumeliæ acutiũ habẽt molestissimum.

Secondly, Note, *The nearer they are from whom we receive discourtesies, the nearer they go to our hearts.*

A wound from a hand afar off, is far off from our hearts. *What?* Thou my friend, Thou my familiar use me thus? The mock of a neighbour is cutting, almost killing. *The unkindness of a friend hath most of the enemy in it.* When Christ perceived his own Disciples withdrawing, he was extreamly troubled at it. Many of the people were offended, and went back, and walked no more with him; and he complained not, he expected no better from them: But when he saw his Disciples hang a little off, he expostulates, *Will ye also go away?* (John 6. 67.) What, you my Disciples? As if he had said, *That will be a cross indeed, your departure will be a home-affliction; it is no wonder if others do it; but will ye do it? will ye go away too?* And because the sufferings of Christ, were to be the highest in all aggravating circumstances, that they might answer all the aggravations of our sins, therefore he was wounded (as the Prophet speaks) in the house of his friends, betrayed by his own Disciple, and by a Disciple kissing him. *Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?* (Luke 22. 48.) Any treason is bad enough, but the treason of a Disciple, and of a Disciple kissing is worst of all. But as it behoved Christ to fulfil all righteousness, so to receive all unkindnesses, and therefore this. Though (as I have noted already) *Job* was not a type of Christ, yet their sufferings were very like: Christ was wounded by the lips, and *Job* by the tongue of a friend. I am as a man *mocked of his neighbour,*

Who calleth upon God, and he answereth him.

There is a difference among Expositors about the Antecedent of this *Who*: whether it should be referr'd to *Job*, or to the neighbour about whom *Job* speaks. *I am as a man mocked of his neighbour; who,* which neighbour calls upon God, and he answers him. So some understand it, and then the words are a description of *Job*'s neighbour, *I am as a man that is mocked of his neighbour*; And what kind of neighbour is he? He is one that useth to call upon, and to be heard of God; he is a man acquainted with God in prayer. The Hebrew word, which we translate to *call* upon God, notes a sort of men, whose chief business, or trade, was to call upon, or invocate the Name of God (*Psal.* 99. 6.) Moses *and* Aaron *among his Priests, and* Samuel *among them that call upon his Name; they called upon the Lord, and he answered them*: implying, that it was their special calling to call upon God. So saith *Job*, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour*; which neighbour is one that calls upon God; that's his profession, or his work; and 'tis, as a painful, so a most noble work. Prophets and Priests were professed callers upon God. That interpretation of the word gives the sence thus, *I am derided by neighbours, who yet are such as would be loth that God should deride them: they deride me, whose duty it is to pray for me, and to pray with me; you are men of prayer, men that call upon God, and you have the favour to be heard of God; God is facile and favourable unto you, but ye are hard and sowre to me, you shew me no favour: how uncomely a thing is this, that you, who wait to be heard of God, should not hear me? or that you, who are heard of God, should deride me?* This Exposition, as it may stand with the letter of the Text, so it may teach us this lesson:

קרא
Dicitur cui ex officio incumbit invocare Deũ. Bold.

Siccine ludus & fabula ero etiam illis, qui in Dei famulatu socii mei sunt ejusdemque consortes ministerii? Bold.

Ego risui sum socio meo, qui sc. socius, quoties deum inclamat eum exaudit: q. d. deum in omnibus facilẽ habent.

They who have had experience of Gods tenderness to help them, and hear their prayers, should be very tender to others, when they call to them, and seek their help?

What? Should I be mocked of a neighbour that useth to call upon God? such carriage looks like theirs who call not upon God. You that have had answers from God in prayer, and know what it is to be answered, think what it is for you but to deny a friend, especially to mock a friend, when he calls upon you in the day of his calamity. Will you take it well if God deny you, or send a mock in steadof an answer to your prayer? *You that have any suit to God, be not hard, much less inexorable, when distressed friends sue unto you.*

But the Antecedent seems rather to be *Job* himself. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour; who,* that is, *which man thus mocked, doth yet call upon God, and he answers him:* They mock him, but God doth not mock him. Or thus, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour*; who thereupon takes an advantage to call upon God, to go to God, when he cannot be entertained, or is rejected by men, *and he hears him.* The vulgar translation reacheth this sence very clearly, *He who is derided of his neighbour as I am, will call upon God, and God will hear him.*

Qui deridetur ab amico, sicut ego, invocabit deum & exaudiet eum. Vulg. *Et respondet illi* i.e. *ut exaudiatur ab eo, emollietur interpretatio si & sumatur pro ut. Antehac cũ ad dẽum clamarem, me exaudire solebat, sed & nunc eum idem facturum non despero, me nunc qui talis sum vos mei socii ridetis?* Merc.

There is a difference in the latter clause, *And he answereth him*; we put it in the Present tense, *He answereth him*; others in the Preterperfect tense, *He hath answered him*; some in the Future, *He will answer him*: He calleth upon God, that he may answer him, or to be answered by him: So *Abraham* speaks (*Gen.* 23. 8.) *Intreat for me to* Ephron, *that he may give me the cave of* Machpelah: Thus here, *He calls upon God, and he answereth him*; that is, he calleth upon God that he may answer him; he hopeth to speed well in Heaven with his petition, though he speed ill on earth.

Hence observe, First, *It is the priviledge of the Saints, when men fail and reject them, to make God their refuge, and their recourse to Heaven.*

They who have interest in God, know how to make this improvement of it: If the world cast out the Saints, God will take them in: His stile is, *The helper of the friendless.* And *David*'s experience was, *When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up,* (Psal. 27. 10.) that is, *Though my father and mother,* who are nearest to me, should be so unnatural, as to restrain their bowels, and forsake me; or though they should be restrained from doing me those offices which Nature dictates, yet the Lord takes me up, *sc.* in the everlasting arms of mercy: His love never changes, nor can any thing stop the motions of his love. His love is hottest to us, when the love of man waxeth cold. The departures of friends bring him nearer to us; and where creature comforts end, the comforts of God begin. *They are in a sad condition, who being cast off by men, have not a God to call upon, and go unto.* Only they who can have access to God, need not fear the recesses of men.

Ubi deest auxilium humanum, ibi maximè adest auxilium divinũ Aquin. *in loc.*

Secondly, Observe, *That the repulses which we meet with in the world, should drive us nearer to God.*

I (saith *Job*) *am mocked of my neighbour*; What course shall I take? Shall I lye down and vex? Shall I fret my self, and pine away? I know a better way then that: I will call upon God, I will try what's to be had in Heaven, now that the earth hath nothing for me; men have not an ear for me, but sure enough God hath not only an ear to hear, but a heart to pity, and a hand to work deliverance. The holy Prophet resolves, *It is good for me to draw nigh to God,* (*Psal.* 73. 28.) And when he saith, *'tis good,* his meaning is, *'tis best.* This positive is superlative. It is more then good for us to draw nigh to God at all times; it is best for us to do so; and it is at our utmost peril not to do so; *For lo,* (saith the *Psalm*, vet. 27.) *they that are far from thee shall perish; thou shalt destroy them that go a whoring from thee.* It is dangerous to be far from God; but it is more dangerous to go far from him. Every man is far off by nature; and wicked men go further off: The former shall perish; the latter shall be destroyed: He that fares best in his withdrawings from God, fares bad enough: Therefore it is best for us to draw nigh unto God. He is the best friend at all times, and the only friend at some times. And may we not say, that God suffers and orders evil times, and the withdrawings of the creature for that very end, that we might draw nearer unto him? doth he not give up the world to a spirit of reviling and mocking, that he may stir up in his people a spirit of praying? This is a gracious design of God, and we should interpret the neglects, the contempts and scorns of the world, to be as the Voice of God saying to us, *Come to me, and see whether you shall not have*

better usage; see whether I will scorn you; you have loved the world too much, you have too much pleased your selves with the smiles and good looks of men; you have been taken and overtaken with the things of this life, come to me, and take (you cannot overtake) the things of eternal life. The least things of Heaven are more noble then the greatest things on earth. *Shall we not then prize the great things of Heaven much, when we can hardly enjoy the least things of the earth?* Shall we not, when we are mocked of our neighbours, call upon God, we having this assurance, that he will not mock, but answer us?

And he answereth him.] The answer which God makes to such as call upon him, is either to the outward, or to the inward man: he answers the inward man, or the spirit of man, by a hint from his Spirit. Satisfaction to our spirits, is an answer from the Spirit. When the Lord (having said to the soul, *I am thy salvation*) saith also, *I am thine honour, I am thy credit, I am thy liberty, I am thy riches, I am thy friend*; the soul is more abundantly filled then with riches, credit, liberty, friends, or honour. Again, answer comes to the outward man, Providence speaks to some as the Spirit doth to others. We having called upon God, see the creature at work towards a redress of our evils, and a supply of our present wants. Under the Law God answered many wayes: He answered by *Urim and by Thummim, by Prophets and by dreams, by visions and revelations.* And though we have not such answers now, yet we have as sure answers. God never receives any prayer which doth not receive an answer. We may call upon men, and not be answered; men may go to idols, to lying vanities, and not be answered; but if we go to God, we shall.

Hence observe, *Prayer and seeking unto God are not in vain, or fruitless.*

The Lord will answer. Sometimes he answers before we call; and he gives before we ask; and he promiseth, if we ask he will give; and answer if we call. Christ raiseth up our confidence, that God will hear us, because men do. (*Math.* 7. 9, 10.) *What man* (saith he) *is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?* Christ argues from that readiness which is in men (especially in those who are in relation to us) to give, that God will give much more. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him?* If a father will answer when a son asks him, much more will God: Yea though when a son asks, a father will not answer; though when a son asks, a father mocks, and in stead of bread gives him a stone; in stead of fish a serpent; though in stead of granting, he cross his sons petition; yet be confident your Father in Heaven will answer; he will not mock; he will not give stones for bread, nor a serpent for fish; he loves to be giving, and to be giving good gifts is his delight.

Further, From these words, taken together, we may observe,

That, *As it is sinful, so it is extreamly dangerous to mock those who have the ear of God, or acceptance with God in prayer.*

Will you use him ill that can go and tell God how you have used him, and shall be sure to be heard? It is uncomely to mock an enemy, it is more for one friend to mock another; it is yet worse to mock a friend in his affliction; but it is worst of all to mock any man living that is praying in faith, and humbling himself before God. Such the Psalmist brands, *Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because God is his refuge,* (Psal. 14. 6.) That is, ye have derided godly men, when ye have heard them pray in their affliction. The great Wits and Politicians of the world smile at the simplicity of those, who make such a business of prayer in times of distress: who, when they hear of any troubles arising, presently give this counsel, Come, let us go pray, and seek God. This counsel of the poor *they shame*, and think them silly fellows who give it. They had rather lay their heads together a plotting, then their hearts together a praying. And if such joyn in counsel to call for prayers in times of trouble, it is not out of an opinion, much less out of faith that it will do any good, or prevail any thing, but only to please the people, or comply with a party: for in truth they shame those counsels of the poor, as the poorest counsels. Some are ashamed of prayers; and others will put them to shame who pray. The best I can do for such as deride prayer, or those who pray, is to pray for them, as Christ for his crucifiers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* Do you know what you do, when you mock a man that can pray? I believe you do not, therefore I will tell you: you mock that Spirit by which he prayes; you provoke God to whom he prayes; you stir up the whole Church against you, for whom he prayes, you set the Chariots and Horsemen of *Israel* against you, you turn Armies against you; that is, you turn the prayers of all the people of God against you, when you turn against prayer. Do you know what it is to provoke such who can complain to God of your provocations? You were better have tales told of you to the greatest enemy you have in the world, then to have tales told of you unto God, by those, whom he is pleased to number among his friends.

Job having thus set forth how he had been assaulted by men, and how he had retreated to God; now layes down a general proposition, as a corrollary, or conclusion, drawn from all, *The just upright man is laughed to scorn.*

The just upright man.] *Job* speaks still in the third person, he doth not say, *I who am a just upright man, am derided*, he speaks modestly as *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. *I knew a man.* So here, *The just upright man.*

צדיק תמים *Justus, perfectè justus, i.e. justissimus. Vel integritatis perfectio. Vox Thamim adverbialiter posita sumi.*

Both words are near a kin in signification, the one, at most, doth but explain and heighten the other. *The just upright man, is the man justly upright*, or *uprightly just.* The latter word is plural in the Original, (as *Gen.* 6. 9.) noting a man that acts in the exactness of uprightness, even all manner of uprightnesses; or a man so upright, that he hath the uprightness of many men in him; for as we say of some men, who are egregiously dishoneſt, that when dishoneſt men are scarce, they may go for twain; so some men are so exactly upright, that where upright men are scarce (as they are every where) they may be reckoned for two, or many.

But how is this just man, who hath the uprightness of many men in him, entertained in the world? do not all reverence and adore him? The next words shew us his usage, *The just upright man*

Is laughed to scorn.] He was mockt before; now he is *laughed to scorn.* The Original is the same, though the sence be extended; he is not only laughed at, but he is a laughter. *The perfect, just, is a mockage*, so Mr. *Broughton*, the abstract is put for the concrete. A man that is through in justice, through in integrity and purity, this man is made a laughing stock, a jest, a sport, he is loaded with disgrace, while some are unburdening themselves of sorrow. They resolve to laugh and be fat, to be merry and sing care away, they want a theme, a subject; none so fit as *the just upright man: Come let's pass upon him:* Thus *He is laughed to scorn.* As if *Job* had said, *It is no great wonder to see that I am mocked of my neighbour, for this is according to the wont and old custom of the world, the just upright man meets with such dealing every where; it is no new thing which I suffer, mine is but a common lot with the best of the Saints: If I am laughed to scorn, so have my betters been.*

שחוק *Irrisio justus perfectus.* Heb. *Hic te ludos facit.* Plaut.

Hence note, First, *That holiness is under disgrace among unholy men.*

It is not alwayes a disparagement to be laughed at; the best may be laughed at; *The just upright man is so. Jeremiah* was more then so, he was a Prophet of the Lord, yet he saith, *I was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day*, Lam. 3. 14. He was a derision, and a derision to all his people. Some read thus, *I, together with all my people, am a derision*; as noting, that he and all that adhered to him, or owned him, were derided. So speaks the Prophet *Isaiah* typically of Christ, *Chap.* 8. 18. *Behold I, and the children which thou hast given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel.* Our Translation makes all his people deriders of him: And then *all* doth not include every individual, but only shews the great and general Apostacy of that people, from all respect to this Prophet, or to his ministry. How often doth holy *David*, that heavenly Singer, complain of those who made hellish songs upon him? And *Job* complains of this more then once, read *Chap.* 12. 2, 6. *Chap.* 21. 3, &c. *Paul* was one of the ablest speakers, in the mysteries

mysteries of the Gospel, that ever lived: yet when he came to *Athens* (Acts 17.) they say, *What will this babler say?* *Solomon* gives us a Proverb to this point (*Prov.* 14.2.) *He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the Lord; but he that is perverse in his wayes, despiseth him.* It is a truth, if we understand the antecedent *to him*, to be the *Lord*, and so make the opposition thus, *He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the Lord; but he that is perverse in his wayes, despiseth him*; that is, *despiseth the Lord*. But the meaning of the Proverb is this, *A man walking in his uprightness feareth God, but a perverse man will despise him that walketh in his uprightness. You are so precise, you go so gingerly, as if you were passing a narrow bridge over a deep precipice; you will not turn aside, or step awry, not you:* thus he is despised. The Apostle reports us a great example of this unholy scorn, (*Gal.* 4. 9.) *He that was born after the flesh, did persecute him that was born after the spirit.* *Ishmael* persecuted *Isaac*. *Moses* tells us the manner how, and the weapon wherewith; *Ishmael* did not lift up his hand against *Isaac*, (as *Cain* did against *Abel*) but his tongue: He mocked him, (*Gen.* 21. 9.) Those greatest differences in *Divine Heraldry*, of being *born after the flesh, and after the spirit*, shew where the quarrel lay; it was the spiritualness of *Isaac*, which rendred him so obnoxious to his carnal brother *Ishmael*. *Isaac* was born after the spirit, and doubtless he shewed some fruits of the Spirit, which *Ishmael* did not relish, and therefore mocked him. *Even so it is now* (saith the Apostle there) and we may now say, *Even so it is now*: The reason of it is that of the Apostle (*1 Cor.* 2. 14.) *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.* A rational man laughs at, and scorns a foolish thing: Now the natural man hath reason enough (he may be a man of the most sublimated reason) but having no grace he understands not the things of the Spirit of God, therefore *they are foolishness unto him*: Those things which are fullest of Divine wisdom, are counted most foolish by him that understands them not. As, they are fools who cannot understand; so some wise men count many things foolish which yet are above their understanding. No marvail then, if they use them as foolish things, if they mock and scorn them: No marvail, if they deride those who trouble themselves with such baubles and toyes as they conceive the things of God to be: No marvail, if they count them a company of hair-brain fellows, who are most conscientious about them. Hence it is that Gospel simplicity is mockt as simpleness; punctual obedience, as scrupulousness; sorrow for sin, as dumpishness; zeal, as madness; contempt of the world, as ignorance of the worth of it; self-denial, as a wronging of our selves. It is recorded in the life of *Nero*, that the Christians were despised, and mockt, as a sect of silly fools, by the wise Citizens, and grave Senators of *Rome*, because they seemed to use a strange kind of superstition, or a new Religion, and would be wiser in their generation then the rest of the world. Reproach is one of Satans choice engines to batter *Sion* with; he hath scarce such another shaft in all his quiver to wound Religion at the heart with. This Lion in the way frights many from entring into, or appearing in the wayes of God. It causeth others to apostatize, and forsake the wayes of God, after they have entred into, and for a time appeared in them. As *Zedekiah* durst not obey the word of the Lord, in rendring himself to the *Babylonians*; so many are afraid to obey the word of the Lord, in rendring themselves up to *Sion*, lest some finding them there should mock them, *Jer.* 38. 39.

Christiani ab Ethnicis derisi sunt, qui videbantur genus hominũ superstitionis novæ & maleficæ. Suet. in vita Neron.

Secondly, Observe, *As holiness in any degree is subject unto scorn, so they who are most holy meet with most scorn.*

The just upright man, who would be holy to the height, shall have scorn to the height. If a man serve God (as *David* danced before the Ark) with *all his might*, a *Michals* wit will mock and teem with a prophane jest, though she be cursed with barrenness all her life after. That child of the flesh made her flesh childless unto the day of her death, 2 *Sam.* 6. 23. If a man do (as Christ expects) some singular things, he may quickly be laughed at for singularity. *Paul*, in the highest actings of his faith, was accounted mad, 2 *Cor.* 5. 13. It is possible to move in the ordinary course and common round of Religion, and to have fair quarter, yea to have respect, and be accounted wise in the world; but he that will be *a just upright man*, that is, he that sticks at small matters, and acts the greatest; he that will not go an hairs breadth from the mind of Christ, and will do his whole mind; he that will walk precisely, accurately, and, as we say, *in print*, this man may soon have the honour to be called, a fool *in print*; at best he shall be laughed at, let him look for it. All holiness may come under contempt; but the more holy you are, the more subject you are unto contempt: never think to get credit in the world by your holiness: It is enough that holiness hath credit with God and good men. The Apostle assures us (*Heb.* 11.) That those Worthies of the Jewish Church (whose names sparkle like bright stars in the firmament of that chapter) *obtained a good report, through faith,* (ver. 2.) But of whom, or with whom? Did the world think the better of them, or well of them, because of those high and heroical actings of their faith? No, *vers.* 36. tells us, they were both scourged, and mockt by the world, for all their faith. These gallant men in grace, had a good report with none but gracious men, and the God of grace. If we will now live after their rate by faith, and walk in the uppermost regions of Religion, we must expect a good report there only, where they found it. *Those works of faith, which are most above reason, seem to be without reason*; and that which is most pleasing unto God, seems to have not so much as any thing of a man in the eyes of many men: you venture not only liberty, estate, and life, but your very discretion, if you walk in the cleanest paths of wisdom. *Few have holy wisdom enough to be accounted fools, or seriousness enough in the things of God to be laughed at, especially to be laughed to scorn.* No man knows where his worldly losses will end, when once he hath gained Christ. It is an experienced truth, which is lent us by a *Noble Patriot* yet living; *That man will but deceive himself, who hopes to save any thing by his Religion but his soul. The just upright man is laughed to scorn; and the more just he is, the more he is laughed at.*

VERS. 5, 6.

He that is ready to slip with his feet, is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.
The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

IN the former context, which contained the preface to this ensuing discourse, *Job* taxeth the pride and self-conceitedness, the scorn and contemptuousness of his friends. They thought themselves *the chief of men, and mocked him; as if he had not been so much as a man, or not to be numbred among men.*

Now he enters upon the Argument it self: And in these two verses layes down two Positions in direct opposition to what *Zophar* had asserted. He at the seventeenth verse of the eleventh Chapter, describes the state of a godly man, exceeding the light of the noon-day, and of the morning: *Thine age shall be clearer then the noon-day, and thou shalt be as the morning*, &c. And at the twentieth verse he gives ungodly men their doom: *The eyes of the wicked shall fail; and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.* Both these conclusions are contradicted by *Job*; the former in the fifth verse, and the latter in the sixth. In the fifth, *He that is ready to slip with his feet, is as a lamp despised:* As if he had said, *Thou tellest me, that a godly man shall be brighter then the Sun at noon; that his brightness shall increase like the Morning-sun, more and more unto the perfect day; whereas, alas, I see all the light which many a godly man hath, no bigger then a candle, or lamp, and that not like the light of a great candle neither, or of a goodly beautiful lamp, but like the light of some poor candle, or of the meanest lamp. There is a great difference between a lamp and the Sun. What is the light of the most shining lamp, to the light of the Sun? but the difference is greater between the Sun and a base blinking lamp. I see their light no clearer, then that of a despised lamp, whose light thou talkest up to the Sun at noon for clearness. The holiest men, if afflicted, do but smother in stead of shining.* Again, *Thou tellest me, that the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and that their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost; but I have often seen, and can give*

thee proof of it, the eyes of ſuch are bleſt, and refreſht with the deſire of their eyes; they ſee what they moſt deſire, proſperity in their dwellings. The tabernacles of robbers proſper, and they that provoke God are ſecure, into whoſe hand God bringeth abundantly. Thus the oppoſition ſtands in theſe two verſes, as they are an anſwer to what *Zophar* had promiſed as the portion of the righteous, and threatned as the lot of wicked men.

Frequens eſt in Scriptura uſus vocis נכון *pro eo quod eſt diſpoſitus, deſtinatus.*

He that is ready.] That is, he that is very near ſlipping. The Hebrew (*Nachon*) ſignifies to be prepared or diſpoſed, yea to be deſtinated to ſuch a purpoſe, it ſignifies alſo to be *fixed* and ſetled (*Pſal.* 108.) *O God, my heart is fixed,* or, *my heart is ready.* He that is ready to ſlip, is, as it were, fixed to ſlip, he is ſet in a ſtate wherein he cannot ſtay. All men in the world are in an unſetled eſtate, in a ſlippery condition, but ſome are in a more ſlippery condition then others; They are (as we ſay) next door to deſtruction, within a ſtep of danger, ready to tumble and fall from the pinacle of their proſperity. *There are preparations for ruine as well as for riſing. He that is ready*

מעד *Nutavit. Nutatio pedum denotat ruinam, calamitatē, c. ſū adverſum, & firmitas pedū conſtantem rerum ſecundarū ſtatū.*

To ſlip with his feet.] There is a twofold ſlipping with the feet ſpoken of in Scripture.

Firſt, There is a ſlipping into ſin; of that *David* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 73. 2. *As for me, my feet were almoſt gone, my ſteps had well nigh ſlipt, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked;* that is, I had almoſt ſinned, I was tempted to hard thoughts of God and of his wayes, as he explains himſelf at the 13th verſe of that Pſalm, ſhewing what the ſlip was, *Then ſaid I, verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency;* This was the thing he was ready to fall into, to look upon all his labour, as loſt labour, as labour in vain, which he had beſtowed in attendance upon the duties of holineſs and repentance.

Secondly, *Slipping with the feet,* is to fall into affliction. When we decay and decline in honour, credit, riches, and poſſeſſions, we may be ſaid to have got a ſlip. 'Tis a proverbial ſpeech, and we find it frequent in Scripture; *his foot ſhall ſlip,* that is, he ſhall down, his ſtate ſhall change. *Moſes* deſcribes the Lord thus ſpeaking of his enemies, (*Deut.* 32. 35.) *To me belongeth vengeance and recompence,* what then? *Their foot ſhall ſlide in due time.* Theſe men ſuppoſed themſelves ſetled upon a rock, that they were ſo eſtabliſhed that nothing could remove them; but in due time they ſhall find that they ſtood upon ice, or glaſs, their foot ſhall ſlide, they ſhall fall from their heights and ſeeming holds *in due time.* So (*Pſal.* 94. 18.) *When I ſaid, my foot ſlippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up,* that is, when I gave my ſelf for a loſt man in the world, then the Lord ſupported me, (*Jer.* 13. 16.) *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble upon the dark mountains. Dark mountains,* are mountains of ſorrow and trouble: to ſtumble upon the dark mountains, is to be ruined among our troubles. To ſtumble, ſlip, fall, run all into the ſame ſenſe. In purſuance of which, the ſtate of wicked men is called a ſlippery ſtate, and the place upon which they ſtand, *a ſlippery place,* Pſal. 73. 18. *David* being much troubled at the proſperity of wicked men, and ſo troubled that his ſteps had well nigh ſlipt, ſtayed, or recovered himſelf, by remembring that his enemies did not ſtand faſt. *I went into the Sanctuary of God, and there I found that thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places:* and when he found that their eſtate was ſlippery, that they ſhould ſhortly fall, then he kept his ground and ſtood upright. Who can envy or be grieved to ſee a man in an eſtate great and proſperous, wherein yet there is no continuance, or from which he muſt ſhortly fall, and in the fall bruiſe and hurt himſelf more, then he did comfort himſelf in his ſtanding? all the things of this life, eſpecially to wicked men, are ſet in ſlippery places. The world it ſelf is ſlippery, and ſo is all that's in it. The world may be compared to that ſea of glaſs, (*Rev.* 4. 6.) It is a ſea for the uncertain motions, and tempeſtuouſneſs of it; and it is like a ſea of glaſs for the ſlipperineſs of it. Glaſs you know yields no good footing, neither doth the world to any that would ſtay themſelves upon it. And as the ſliding of our feet ſpeaks the change; ſo the firmneſs of our feet, the eſtabliſhment of our eſtate, *Pſal.* 121. 3. *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved;* a man cannot go without moving of his feet; and a man cannot ſtand whoſe feet are moved. The foot by a *Synechdoche* is put for the whole body, and the body for the whole outward eſtate: ſo that, *He will not ſuffer thy foot to be moved,* is, he will not ſuffer thee, or thine, to be moved or violently caſt down. The power of thine oppoſers ſhall not prevail over thee, for the power of God ſuſtains thee. *He will not ſuffer,* &c. Many are ſtriking at thy heels, but they cannot ſtrike them up, while God holds thee up. If the will of thine enemies might ſtand, thou ſhouldeſt quickly fall; But God *will not ſuffer,* &c.

Hence Obſerve, *That the beſt earthly eſtate in it ſelf, is a tottering eſtate.*

An earthly eſtate is ſo, whoſoever is the maſter of it, unleſs God will be the eſtabliſher of it. This text ſpeaks of the afflictions of the godly; their outward eſtate is full of uncertainties, their feet (treading earth) are ſubject to ſlide. *David* once thought himſelf ſo ſetled, that he ſhould never fall, *In my proſperity I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved: Lord, by thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong,* Pſal. 30. 6. But he quickly felt his feet ſliding, and his mountain falling. Worldly men phancy and project to themſelves an everlaſtingneſs in worldly things, *Pſal.* 49. 11. *Babylon* boaſts (*Revel.* 18. 7.) *I ſit a Queen;* ſhe doth not ſay, *I am,* but, *I ſit a Queen;* as if ſhe had ſaid, I am not only in a high place, but in a ſure place, I have a warm and a firm ſeat, I am well ſetled. *I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow:* I feel no ſorrow, neither do I fear any, I ſhall have no changes. Preſumption makes the ſoul believe it foreſees, and therefore propheſies as great things as faith can. The Prophet *Zechary* (chap. 1. 11.) hath Chriſt repreſented in a viſion, ſending out the Angels, thoſe heavenly ſcouts or intelligencers, to bring him in a report, how things went in the world, *Theſe are they* (verſ. 10.) *whom the Lord hath ſent to walk to and fro through the earth;* and what is the report they bring? *Behold all the earth ſitteth ſtill, and is at reſt.* The earth of wicked men, did not only, as they thought, ſtand faſt, but had ſet themſelves down ſoft and ſure, they thought themſelves ſitting upon down pillows for eaſe and ſoftneſs, and upon rocks of Adamant for ſureneſs and unmoveableneſs; they ſate ſtill and were at reſt, yea doubtleſs they ſaid in their hearts, who ſhall raiſe us up? Both the poſture and the confidence of literal *Babylon* was like that of myſtical *Babylon;* yet as old literal *Babylon* (though ſhe ſate ſtill and cloſe in her ſeat, yet ſlid and fell at laſt) ſo alſo ſhall myſtical *Babylon.* She that ſaid, *I ſhall ſee no ſorrow, ſhall ſee nothing but ſorrow.* Now if the feet of that great temporal monarchy did ſlide, and the feet of this ſpiritual monarchy muſt, both which have had as ſure footing as the world with all its wit and ſtrength, policy and power, were, or are able to make, what then may the weaker and more uncompacted parts of the world expect? There is no firm ſtanding upon that which is unfirm; if our foundation be unſure, our footing cannot be ſure: moveable creatures will never put us into an unmoveable condition. The ſoul ſtandeth faſt in Chriſt alone; when we once fix upon him, we are fixed; our feet may ſlip or ſlide, I confeſs, though we are in him, but they ſhall not ſlip or ſlide from him at all for ever. *He that is ready to ſlip with his feet.*

Hic verſiculus obſcurus eſt. Merc. Vox לפיד *propriè tædam vel facem ſignificat, non illud vaſculum in quo ignis oleo nutritur.* Abē Ezra in לפיד *Lamech ſervile facit ut* פיד *ſit calamitas idem quod* אוד *infortunium, ut hoc de ſe dicat per tertiam perſonam; ſum ut qui eſt deſpectus in mente felicis hominis ob afflictionem & calamitatem.*

Is as a lamp deſpiſed.] The words of this text are ſomewhat dark, and there are not a few who make the *lamp* the darkeſt word in it. One of the Rabbins reades very differently. The word which ſignifies a *lamp,* he divideth into two words. *Lamech* prefixed is ſervile (as Grammarians ſpeak) noting as much as *for,* or *becauſe of;* and *Pid,* deſtruction, calamity, or ſorrow: So it is taken, *chap.* 31. 29. *If I have rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me:* and then the ſenſe is, as if *Job* in the third perſon had ſpoken thus, *I am as a man deſpiſed in the thoughts of him that is in proſperity, becauſe of my afflictions.* But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this tranſlation of the word, which yields us this ſence, though it ſtand entire under the notion of a torch or link, which are carried in the ſtreets to give light, or (as we render) of a lamp, which is a veſſel, filled with oyl, and fitted with wick, giving light in the houſe. Every one knows what a lamp is; but what is a deſpiſed lamp? a deſpiſed lamp is a lamp whoſe frame is old, worn, batter'd & out of faſhion, or whoſe oyl is conſumed. A lamp or a torch is very deſirable in a dark night, but when

'tis

'tis day, or when the torch is burnt down to the laſt inch, and the lamps oyl is ſpent to the laſt drop, then both are deſpiſed, who cares for either? So that, for a man to be looked upon *as a deſpiſed lamp*, is a proverbial ſpeech, importing, that he is of no more value then a thing of naught.

Tæda deſpecta eſt tæda conſumpta quæ jam uſui eſſe non poſſit ad prælucendũ. Dum præluc ebat in pretio erat, ſed conſumpta contemnitur. Merc.

A deſpiſed lamp is of the ſame ſignification with a ſmoaking firebrand. When the people of *Iſrael* were in a great fear, at the invaſion of *Rezin* and *Remaliah*'s ſon, and the heart of *Ahaz* the King, moved as theirs, like the trees of the forreſt ſhaken with the wind, the Lord bids the Prophet, *ſay unto him, Take heed, and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint-hearted:* What? not fear when ſuch mighty enemies are coming againſt us: No ſaith he, *fear not, for the two tails of thoſe ſmoaking fire-brands,* (Iſa. 7. 4.) *Ahaz* and the Iſraelites lookt upon them, as the flame of a devouring fire that would burn and conſume all: no, ſaith God, they are but as *ſmoaking fire-brands*, they are but brands ends, they have almoſt conſumed themſelves, they are ſmoaking rather then burning, they will ſoon go out. A *ſmoaking brand* is a proverb for that which is almoſt ſpent, whoſe violence you need not fear, it can do no great hurt, nor can it ſtand you in any ſtead. As *ſmoaking flax* in the Goſpel (*Matth.* 12. 20.) notes the loweſt degree of grace, which Chriſt will not quench nor put out; ſo a *ſmoaking fire-brand* notes the leaſt degree of hurtful power remaining, or malice vexed out; and a ſmothering lamp, the leaſt degree of uſefull remaining power, or comforts wearied out. On the other ſide, a bright burning lamp, or the lighting of a candle, expreſſeth the beginnings of honour and excellency, or our continuance in the enjoyment of them, (*Pſal.* 18. 28.) *Thou wilt light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darkneſs.* See what an office holy faith puts God unto; *David* believed that God would come and light his candle; what candle? his meaning is that the Lord would renew his eſtate, and chaſe away the darkneſs which lay upon it. *Thou wilt light my candle*; thou wilt cauſe me to ſhine clearly and fairly in the world, though I have been a while as a candle extinguiſht, or burnt out. The Prophet ſets the hoped and prayed for reſtauration of *Sion* under a like metaphor and alluſion (*Iſa.* 62. 1.) *For Sions ſake I will not hold my peace, and for Jeruſalems ſake I will not reſt, until the righteouſneſs thereof go forth as brightneſs, and the ſalvation thereof as a lamp that burneth:* That is, till the eſtate of the Church be beautiful and glorious. Now as a burning lamp is the emblem of a happy, ſo a dying deſpiſed lamp is the emblem of a miſerable condition. For what's a broken dying lamp worth? what's the ſnuff of a candle worth? or a candle burnt down to the ſocket? of no more worth is many a gracious ſoul in the thoughts of worldly wealthy men, when once he hath loſt the wealth of the world. Riches are to the reputation of man, as oyl to the lamp, they feed and nouriſh it, they cauſe it to ſhine out with a reſplendent brightneſs: but when riches are conſumed, a mans reputation conſumes too, he is a deſpiſed lamp. Thus the intendment of *Job* is obvious, and may be drawn into this plain obſervation,

Tempora ſi fuerint nubila ſolus eris.

That they whoſe eſtates are ſliding and falling are ſubject to deſpiſing. Or more briefly thus, *They who are afflicted are uſually ſlighted.*

Affliction ſubjects us to contempt. Chriſt appeared meanly in his outſide, he appeared in an afflicted condition, *a man of ſorrows* (Iſa. 53.) and what was the effect of this? *He was deſpiſed and rejected of men* (verſ. 3.) *and we hid as it were our faces from him, and we eſteemed him not. Unhappy poverty* (ſaith the heathen poet) *hath nothing in it more unhappy then this, that it makes men ſcorned and derided.* A man emptyed of riches is uſually filled with contempt. They that ſlide ſhould be lifted up, as the law ordered concerning the aſs overburthened, and the oxe fallen into a pit; but when a man is fallen under the burthen of affliction, uſually another burthen, the burthen of contempt is laid upon him, he is deſpiſed: while we are burning lamps ſhining with riches and greatneſs, we are lookt upon and ſought to; but no ſooner under a vail of want, but thrown by and regarded no more.

Nil habet infælix paupertas durius in ſe, quam quod ridiculos homines facit. Juven. Sat. 3.

This holds true alſo in regard of internal gifts and endowments; while a man hath great abilities and quick parts, he is as a lamp full of oyl, or as a burning light: ſo *John* Baptiſt is deſcribed (*Joh.* 5. 35.) *He was a burning and a ſhining light, and ye were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoyce in his light*, all liked him very well, yea they even danced about him, as children about a bonfire (ſo much the word bears) for a ſeaſon. The lamp of *Johns* Miniſtery was alwayes alike, burning and ſhining, his oyl did not waſt. 'Tis ſaid indeed by *John* himſelf (*Joh.* 3. 30.) *I muſt decreaſe*; not that *John* did abate or leſſen his light, but becauſe a greater light coming, his light was obſcured (as the ſtars by the ſun) but not at all diminiſhed; but though *Johns* light was alwayes alike, yet the peoples delight in him was only for a *ſeaſon*: Even they whoſe gifts are not at all abated, may yet find a great abatement in the acceptation of their gift; how much more they (which is the caſe of not a few) whoſe gifts are indeed abated? Many are as a burning and ſhining lamp a great while, but at laſt (according to the lamps motto) *by ſhining they conſume*: Their oyl ſpends, their parts impair, their gifts are deaded, *Theſe are deſpiſed lamps.* There are lamps ſpoken of, *Matth.* 25. which Chriſt will deſpiſe. The fooliſh Virgins brought lamps, but they had no oyl in them. Some make a great profeſſion, and would be thought burning and ſhining lights, who yet have no oyl, that is, no truth of grace. Lamps without oyl, Chriſt will deſpiſe: But he will not deſpiſe a lamp becauſe it is not gilded with riches and worldly honour, or becauſe not filled with ſuch or ſuch a meaſure of gifts; that's the way the world goes; let a man have never ſo much oyl of grace and ſincerity in his lamp, never ſo much of God and of Chriſt in his lamp, if he have not golden oyl in his lamp, riches and fulneſs, rare gifts and great parts, he is deſpiſed, and caſt off.

Prælucendo pereo.

There is another reading of the words, take it thus; *A man that is as a deſpiſed lamp by thoſe who are at eaſe, is ready to ſlip with his feet;* that is, to ſin: the words may bear this tranſlation, without any ſtrain to the text, and with the advantage of another truth, which may be given you in this Obſervation,

Affliction layes us open unto temptation.

עשת *Candidus, nitidus, per metaphoram, denotat cogitationes lætas, quæ ſunt veluti radii animæ.*

As holy *David* (*Pſal.* 73.) was ready to ſlip with his feet into ſin, by ſeeing wicked men ſtand ſo faſt in honour while they ſinned: So when a holy and righteous man ſees himſelf diſhonoured, he is ready to ſlip with his feet, to ſin, and ſay, *I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency.* It is a temptation to be deſpiſed; and, except the heart be very well ſetled, the feet will ſlide. When a hypocrite is deſpiſed, he not only ſlips in, but falls from that profeſſion he formerly ſeemed to ſtand in; he caſts off the wayes of God, when he ſees himſelf caſt off by men. They who are well rooted and ſound at heart may be ſorely ſhaken; but the rotten hearted, and unſound, are rooted up by the ſtrength of this temptation. The third branch of this verſe, ſhews us by whom the man ready to ſlip is deſpiſed, it is

In the thought of him that is at eaſe.

שאנן *Quietus, tranquillus, & per Metonymiam ſecurus, inſolens, quod tranquillitas homines ſecuros & inſolentes reddat.*

In the thought.] The word ſignifies alſo *clear, or pure*, and by a metaphor it notes a thought, becauſe thoughts are as the irradations and beamings forth of the mind. And the word in ſpecial notes *joyful or delightful thoughts*; that ſence makes the text yet more emphatical. A man compaſſed about with ſorrow is deſpiſed *in the joyful, or rather jolly thoughts of him that is at eaſe*: a man at eaſe hath pleaſant and merry thoughts, and being full of theſe merry delightful thoughts, he deſpiſeth him who like an expiring lamp, ſits ſobbing and ſmothering in ſad and ſorrowful thoughts.

Of him that is at eaſe.] Quiet, ſetled, and (as the word imports by a trope) inſolent and ſecure; eaſe doth uſually make men not only ſecure, but inſolent. *Becauſe they have no changes, therefore they fear not God*, Pſal. 55. 19. *It is ſeldom that their hearts are changed, whoſe eſtates feel no change. Civil changes occaſion ſpiritual:* None are further from a ſpiritual change then they, who fear not God; and they who have no civil changes are very often far from fearing God. *Jeruſalem* had little eaſe a long time, but ſhe is promiſed it: *Thine eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation*, or, *an habitation at eaſe*, (Iſa. 32. 20.)

Jerusalem that now is, hath been an unquiet habitation, full of troubles, tost up and down; but at last God will make her *a quiet habitation*: *Babylon* hath been at ease a great while, but *Jerusalem* shall have her turn to be at ease too.

Job speaks indefinitely; he is despised in the thought [*Of him that is at ease.*] Let him be who he will, a good man or a bad man, he is apt to despise those that are in great affliction. A godly man is not wholly exempt from this, not only unchristian, but unmanly passion. *Job* speaks here with an eye to his friends, whom, though he rebukes often very sharply, as acting very sinfully, yet he did not judge as wicked. The best man at ease, may not only be unsensible of his brethrens afflictions, but, in a degree, slight the afflicted: *Job* supposes his friends faulty in this; as if he had said, *you (my friends) are at ease and quiet, all things go well with you; I am a poor snuff, a consumed lamp, and you despise me, you make nothing of my ordinary sorrows, and but light of my heaviest burdens.* A good man may fail thus far for a time in his duty towards an afflicted friend, and though he fail not thus far, yet he may come within the verge of this sin, *despising*. For we despise the afflicted, not only by reproaching them with our words, and vilifying them in our thoughts, but by not laying their afflictions to our hearts, and bearing a part in them, by a brotherly fellow-feeling. When we do not suffer with them, we under-reckon them in their sufferings. Hence observe,

First, *They who are at ease, whosoever they are, especially wicked men, are apt to despise those that are in pain.*

Few feel any smart, till themselves smart, or any want till themselves are empty. It is bad enough, not to feel the smart or want of others; but it is far worse to insult over it. Of such, *David* makes complaint (*Psal.* 123. 4.) *Our soul is exceedingly fill'd with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.* And again, *The drunkards made songs upon me.* Wine puts the wit in tune for a prophane jest. When *David* was eating ashes, and drinking tears, he was despised by those who did eat the fat, and drink the sweet; they cried out, *Where is now thy God?* Psal. 42. 3. *David* professeth concerning his enemies, (Psal. 35. 13.) *When they were sick, my cloathing was sack-cloth, I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into my own bosom*; that is, say some, though they got no good by my prayers, yet my own soul did: rather thus; I prayed often and much for them, even from my heart; the *returning* of the prayer, may signifie his frequent minding of them; and the *bosom*, both secrecy and affectionateness in prayer for them. Lastly, We may read it thus, *Let my prayer return into my bosom*, that is, I wished no worse to them then to my self; let me receive that of God for my portion, which I have desired may be theirs; either of these interpretations shew *David*'s sympathy, even towards his enemies; which the next verse (14) clears yet more; *I behaved my self as though it had been my friend and brother, I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother.* Would you not believe, if these enemies of *David* should hear of any affliction befallen him, that they would be in *blacks*? See how they mourn (as we say) in *Sack and Sugar* (ver. 15, 16.) *But in my adversity they rejoyced, and gathered themselves together. With hypocritical mockers at feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth*: When they were a feasting, they were mocking; abusive speeches were as sauce to their meat, and sugar to their wine; and they would forbear a while to employ their teeth at eating, that they might employ them in reviling; *they gnashed upon me with their teeth.* The teeth speak as well as the tongue; gnashing of the teeth hath a loud voice in it. The damned in hell shall gnash their teeth in sorrow for pain; the pain which themselves feel: and the wicked here on earth, do often gnash their teeth in joy or scorn at the pain which others feel. The Prophet *Hosea* describes the tempe of such intemperate feasters (*chap.* 7. 5.) *In the day of our King, the Princes have made him sick with bottles of wine*, that is, in the day of the celebration of the Kings Birth or Coronation, or some of those great feasting festivals, the Princes made him drink more then did him good; and what did he then? he was then fit to do evil, and so he did; *He stretched out his hand with scorners*, that is, say some, he took up his cups, or put his hand to his cups, as often as vile persons, scorners, use to do: or nearer to the point; *He stretched out his hand*, that is, he acted against goodness and good men, against justice and those who are just, even as *scorners* and contemners of justice, and goodness, of just and good men, use to do. Neither is it any wonder that men at ease are thus ready to despise the best of men in a low condition, seeing they despise even the most high God. They who serve their lusts, cannot serve either God or man, but they can despise both. And their consciences seldom trouble them (whatsoever they do) who have no trouble in their condition. *Jesurun waxed fat*; *Israel* was called *Jesurun*, either from *Jasher*, righteousness; because they had received righteous laws, or were called unto righteousness; or from *Shor*, to look or see; because this people saw more of the glory of God, then any people under heaven; yet even this *Jesurun*, when he *waxed fat*, that is, rich and great, then *he kicked* (Deut. 32. 15.) Kicking is an act of contempt; and against whom did he kick? *Moses* tells us; *then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation.* If men at ease venture to despise God, they will not stick at men; least of all, at men in their afflictions.

Secondly, Observe, *It is very sinful to despise those that are in affliction.*

Job speaks it, not only by way of Narration, declaring what was done; but by way of conviction, reproving what was done. If it be sinful not to pity those that are afflicted, then much more to despise them (*Amos* 6. 4. *They lie upon their beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches,* &c. *but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.* He speaks nothing of their rejoycing at *Joseph*'s affliction, or that they laughed and passed jests upon him; no, but they did not grieve, they did not pity him in his affliction; this was their sin: how sinful then is theirs, who despise the afflicted?

There is another reading of this verse; which I shall only name. *He that is fit to guide the feet of others, is as a despised lamp in the thought of the rich, who are at ease*: As if *Job* had said, they whose holiness is most eminent and exemplary, even leading-men in holiness, are despised. *Lucerna contempta judicio hominis opulenti, qui idoneus est gressibus dirigendis.* Tyg.

Job having thus crossed *Zophar*'s first assertion, representing the righteous as a despised lamp, whom his friend had compared to the morning-light, or noon-day Sun; he now proceeds to refute his second assertion, representing the wicked in fullest prosperity and highest security; *whose eyes*, his friend had said, *should fail*, and *whose hope* he had compared to the *giving up of the ghost.*

Verse 6. **The Tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God, are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.**

As if he had said, Friend *Zophar*, thou hast affirmed, *that the righteous man is as the shining light*; I say, *he is but a despised lamp*: thou affirmest, that *the eyes of the wicked shall fail*, &c. but I have seen *the tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God, secure.*

He describes a wicked man, by sins against both Tables. First, He sins against his neighbour by injustice; he is a *robber, the tabernacles of robbers prosper.* Robbery is a sin against the second Table; and robbery is here mentioned by a *Synechdoche*, for all sins against the second Table. Secondly, He sins against God; he provoketh God, which is the breach of the first Table: and provocation of God is here mentioned by a *Synechdoche*, for all sins against the first Table. *They that provoke God, are secure.* Though every sin against our brother, be also a sin against God, and we may provoke God, when the sin is immediately or nextly against our brother; yet God, in the sins of the first Table, is chiefly provoked, and those sins are immediately against God; therefore he putteth both instances. Take a man that breaks the first Table, or the second; take a man that cares not how he wrongs his neighbour, or how he prophanes the name of God, the one prospers, and the other is secure; therefore your position is false, *that the eyes of the wicked shall fail*, and that *their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

The Tabernacles of robbers prosper.

That is, the dwellings and families, the affairs and undertakings of robbers, they, and all that belong unto them, prosper. *Tabernacula i. e. quæ ad illos pertinent universa.*

Robbers

שדד *Prædones, vaſtatores.*

Robbers are of two ſorts; there are open and violent robbers, who waſt, ſpoil and deſtroy all that comes near them, and care not who ſees; ſuch are warlike robbers, who bring power to do, what they cannot do by juſtice: Such were thoſe warlike bands (and at them *Job* aims in this argument) of *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, who ſpoiled *Job*'s eſtate and cattel. The uſual effect of war is waſt and ſpoil: It is ſaid of the Turkiſh wars, *That where the Grand Signiors horſe ſets his foot, no more graſs will grow*; he makes havock of all. By robbers here, we may underſtand firſt, thoſe boiſterous ſons of *Mars*, men of blood and violence, who make their will their law, and think they may do whatſoever they have power to do. God himſelf is called *El-ſhaddi, the mighty God*; he is mighty to ſave, and mighty to deſtroy; he is able to lay all the world waſte when he pleaſeth, as he once did, when the world diſpleaſed him. God can deſtroy as much as he will, but he will not deſtroy as much as he can. Theſe robbers have their name from the ſame root, becauſe they uſe all their power to deſtroy: They have a will to deſtroy as much as they can; but they cannot deſtroy as much as they will: If they could, the whole world muſt fall before them, if it will not fall down unto them.

Secondly, There are ſecret robbers; deceit and fraud commit robbery, as wel as power and force. Some rob while they pretend to ſeek for right; they ſue at law, hoping to pervert juſtice. Some are robb'd, others are murdered by the law. The law is a ſhadow to many lawleſs actions. He is a robber, that takes his neighbours right from him by pretence of law, as well as he that takes his purſe in the high way. Again, others rob ſecretly, while they ſeem only to ſell; they ſteal, while they tell you, you ſhall have a penny-worth for your penny. *Ephraim ſaid, ſurely I am become rich, I have found me out ſubſtance; in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity in me, that were ſin, Hoſ.* 12.8. I have got a great eſtate, and I hope there is none in the world can tax me that I have done them wrong; *in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity*: Who? I wrong! I ſteal or rob! not I; I have not ſtained my trading and commerce with any ſuch foul fact; I confeſs, I have uſed ſome ſubtilties and ſleights, I have a little helped my ſelf by art; my calling is a myſtery, and if I deal myſteriouſly in it, for my own advantage, who can blame me for that? I am ſure, none can charge me with any open wrong or robbery; *in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity*. And it appears plainly, that I have done no ſuch thing, *for that were ſin*; that is, punishment would follow ſuch iniquity; whereas I thrive and proſper: *ſuch ſales they make, who have ſold their conſciences*. To clear this ſence, obſerve what the Prophet ſaith in the former verſe; *He is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppreſs*: When a buyer comes to him for a commodity, he weigheth it out fairly in the balance, there's no iniquity; but there is deceit in the balance, or he hath a bag of deceitful weights; that's iniquity. To deceive with weights, is robbery, as well as to take by force; a man may rob with a pair of balances or a meet-wand in his hand, as well as with a ſword or piſtol in his hand. Both or either of theſe robbers may be underſtood here.

Ex eo facilè conſtat me non eſſe peccati reum, quod mihi bene eſt: Nam qui rei ſunt, eos Nemeſis *impunè abire non ſinit.* Jun. *in loc.*

Laſtly, Some, inſtead of robbers, read, *rich men*. Rich men are called robbers, not as if a man could not be rich without robbery (the bleſſing of God, not their wronging of men, makes many rich; a diligent hand, not a violent nor a fraudulent hand, enriches many) but rich men are called robbers, becauſe many, if not moſt rich men, are (in one of theſe ſences) robbers, or becauſe riches are alwaies a provocation to robbery; yea, and a help to it. For, as in one reſpect, poverty is a temptation to robbery (*Prov.* 30.9.) *Feed me with food convenient for me, leſt I be poor, and ſteal*: as poverty is a temptation unto ſtealing, ſo are riches. He that hath power, hopes he may oppreſs, and go unpuniſhed. Some durſt not oppreſs, but for the ſhelter of a high place. A Pirate taken at ſea, and condemned by *Alexander*, ſaid unto him, *I am condemned for robbing at ſea in a little ſhip, but thou robbeſt at land all the world over, and art applauded*: There are more who ſteal by reaſon of their abundance, then by reaſon of their want; what they have, gives them ability to rob for more.

שלו *Quievit, per-*

The Tabernacles of robbers,] whether of the one kind, or of the other, [**proſper.**] The Original ſignifies, not only a thriving, but a peaceable condition: They and their ſtoln goods lie (for a time) as ſafe and quiet as a child in the mothers belly. The word bears ſuch a ſence. Hence obſerve, *Metaphora fœlix, ſalvus fuit.*

Unjuſt men, men of violence, may proſper for a while.

Robbers may enjoy proſperous ſafety, and ſafe proſperity. Having met with texts before, about the proſperity of the wicked, I ſhall not ſtay upon it here; the next clauſe alſo, giving further occaſion to touch upon it again. The ſecurity of thoſe who provoke God, is the ſame with the proſperity of the robbers, and they who rob men, provoke God; yet here to provoke God, is a ſin of another claſſis, yea, of another nature then to rob men; therefore I ſhall diſtinctly open it.

They who provoke God, are ſecure.

Here is the ſecond ſort of proſperous wicked men. They who break the ſecond Table, and wrong their neighbours, *proſper*; they who break the firſt, and *provoke God, are ſecure*.

They that provoke God, The word ſignifies, to move, or irritate: it ſignifies, to move corporally and locally (*Job* 9.6.) *He ſhaketh the earth out of her place.* (Iſa. 23.11.) *He ſhook the kingdoms.* This word ſerves in both Texts. And hence it is taken for paſſion or inward diſtemper againſt others (2 *Kings* 19.28.) *Becauſe thy rage againſt me*; word for word, *becauſe thou waſt moved againſt me*: ſuch a one (we ſay) was moved, exceedingly moved when he was in a rage and angry. They may be ſaid to move God, who provoke him, they attempt to put him out of temper. רגז *Movere, cõmovere, irritare ad iracundiam.*

To provoke God, is more then to ſin againſt God; it is ſinning with an high hand, or with ſuch circumſtances, as exceedingly aggravate ſin. Provocation notes the higheſt act of diſpleaſure, and therefore that ſin which provokes, is one of the higheſt. (*Pſal.* 106.7.) *They remembred not the multitude of his mercies, but provoked him at the ſea, even the red ſea.* The confluence or meeting together of many ſins, makes up a provocation.

Such ſinners of the higheſt ſtature, *Job* deſcribes in this ſecure eſtate: *They who provoke God*; As if *Job* had ſaid, *I do not ſpeak of thoſe who ſin lightly, who trade in ſmall ſins, or ſin after the rate and courſe of ordinary men, that theſe only are ſecure; but they who ſin provokingly and boldly; they who ſend defiance to heaven by ſinning, even theſe live ſecurely here on earth*, Theſe

Are ſecure.] The hebrew is abſtract and plural; *They that provoke God, ſecurities, confidences are to them*; as, (*Pſal.* 1.1.) we read of the *bleſſednеſſes of him that walketh in the Law of God*; which we tranſlate, *The man is bleſſed*: So here; *They that provoke God, are ſecure*; or, *ſecurities are to them that provoke God*: They ſin againſt God every way, and they have ſecurity every way; they ſin againſt God as much as they can, and they have as much proſperity as they will. All kind of ſecurity is their portion, who commit all kind of impiety. Hence obſerve, בטחות *Numerus pluralis abundantiam ſignificat, q. d. magna ſecuritas, & vox originalis eam ſecuritatem denotat quæ audaciam & temeritatem parit.*

God ſometimes gives them greateſt worldly peace, who offer him the higheſt provocations.

Such as will not let God reſt, God lets reſt. Wicked men would throw God out of heaven, if they could; but he doth not throw them out of earth, though he can. It is a wonder of patience, that God ſhould let them have any eaſe, who do their utmoſt to weary him.

I ſhall here touch four grounds of this diſpenſation of God toward wicked men in temporals.

Firſt, The Lord gives them ſecurity, that they may have opportunity to ſhew themſelves, and to bring out thoſe curſed treaſures of iniquity ſtored up in their hearts. If luſt were alwayes pinched with poverty, and burdened with affliction; if luſt were alwayes in bands and chains, in priſon and reſtraint, under the revenging hand of God, luſt could not look like it ſelf, nor diſcover what it can do. *There had never ſo much of the ſinfulneſs of men appeared, if ſo much of the goodneſs of God had not appeared.* As afflictions draw out the graces of the Saints, ſo they keep in, and dead the corruptions of the wicked; many corruptions cannot at all, but in a warm Sun. There are ſome, I confeſs (unbelief, diſcontent, murmuring, *&c.*) which act eſpecially in cold and froſty ſeaſons; but moſt are ſtopt.

Secondly,

Secondly, Tis thus, as to discover what men are; so to make them more unexcusable for being what they are. What can they say for themselves, who have received so much good from the hand of God, and have requited him with so much evil? What plea can they make, who anger God, while he is giving them content? who, while God encompasseth them with blessings, compass him about with their rebellions? Thou art unexcusable, O man, who makest such returns. When *Dives* in the parable, begs for a drop of water, he is answered, *Son, remember, that thou in thy life-time hast had thy good things*: Dost thou call now for an abatement of fire and torment, who didst multiply thy sin as fast as thy comforts were multiplied? Dost thou call for ease, who didst abuse all thy ease? He hath not a word more to say for himself, his next suit is for his brethren, that they might not come into that place of torment, out of which he had no hope to escape. *Every mouth will be stopt by these openings of the hand of God.*

Thirdly, Such dispensations are both the trial and honour of the Saints. They will not venture into sinful waies, though others thrive in them. They see some prosper by robbery, others advanced by flattery; yet they will not set up those trades. This is an evidence that they love holiness for holiness sake, and hate wickedness (how prosperous soever it is) for wickedness sake. Sin is worse to them then hell. The blackness of that coal offends them more then the heat of it.

Lastly, God doth this, to keep the Saints, while they are in the world (which is their proper way of living here) to a life of faith. If all godly men should prosper and have peace, if all wicked men should suffer and be in trouble, if God should leave visible marks of his displeasure upon every one that provoketh him, and visible marks of favour upon every one that pleaseth him, men would live by sight, and not by faith. In the next life there will be an end of faith, God will then give every one his portion: then no man that provoked God impenitently, shall be at ease; nor shall any smart who have sincerely pleased him. Tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul that sinneth; and every soul that hath taken hold on Christ by faith, and walked in love, shall have life and immortality: every one shall feel what he is, and enjoy what he hath believed. *Heaven and hell have all in sight: faith will have no work in either.* Here we must always walk by faith, and then most, when godly men are cast down, and when *they who provoke God are secure.*

Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

As if he had said, They take courage to *provoke God* through the abundance which he bestows upon them. Those treasures of good things which he brings into their hands, cause them to bring out those evils which were treasured up in their hearts. Hence observe,

Wicked men make the blessings of God fewel for their lusts, and beat their outward comforts into the weapons of an unholy war against him.

Their bread and their wine, their gold and their silver, their wool and their flax, do but feed and cloath, enrich and strengthen their base corruptions, *Hos.* 13.6. *According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me.* When the heart is lifted up with the creature, it falls from the creator; and that proves an occasion of forgetting God, which should be a means of remembring him. The smallest taste of benefits ought to put us in mind of our Benefactor: But they had put God out of their minds, while he was putting fat morsels into their mouths, and had filled them with his benefits.

Again, In these words, *Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.*

Job seems to have a special respect to the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, into whose hands God put all his abundance. Hence observe,

What the worst of men have, is of Gods giving; he puts into their hands.

Satan puts wickedness into their hearts, but it is God who puts power into their hands; God puts the persons and estates of others into their hands. They indeed ascribe all to their own power and policies. So the King of *Babylon* (Isa. 14.) boasted, *By my hand and by my power have I done these things*; he forgot that he was an instrument in the hand of God, or that God gave those nations into his hand. The Lord stayes himself from bringing afflictions upon his people by this argument, *Deut.* 32.27. *Lest their adversaries should say, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this.* God would not put his people into their hand, because he foresaw they would not acknowledge it; but *sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag, as if by them their portion had been fat, and their meat plenteous.* Man is unwilling to own any beyond himself as the author of his enjoyments. He scarce accounts any thing worth the having, unless it be of his own bringing in.

Further, We translate, *Into whose hand God bringeth* **Abundantly.**] The Adverb, *Abundantly*, is not in the Original; our translators add it in a different letter, as an explication, to shew the bounty of God, even to many of them, who most designedly disobey him. Such receive not only enough to support their lives, but to satisfie their lusts. They have, not only as much as they need, but as much as they desire. God brings Quails into their hands as well as Manna; yet he puts these into their hands, not as *love-tokens*, but as *wrath-tokens*. And while the meat is in their mouths, the wrath of God falls, *yea abides upon them.* It is not alwayes a mercy to receive what we would. God brings abundance into their hands, who never had one drop of favour from his heart.

In cujus manum venire facit deus, sc. omnia animi sui vota. Merc.

There is another reading, which gives an intimation of that particular sin, whereby these secure ones had provoked God. They were such, *as brought God in their hands*, that is, *false worshippers and Idolaters*: Such are well described by this *Periphrasis*, *they bring God in their hand*: we render, *into whose hand God putteth*; these render, *who put God into their hand.* The Jewish Doctors are much for this sence; but it receives little approbation amongst the Latines, and I will not insist upon it; yet this is a truth, *Idolaters put God in their hand*: True worshippers carry God in their hearts; Idolaters carry God in their hands; that is, they have a God of their own making; an Idol, an Image, is the work of their hands. He that worshippeth according to mans invention, hath his god in his hand. Again, false worshippers may be said to carry god in their hand, because they act as if God were in his power and dispose (or they desire he should be so) not they in his. The *Tyrians* chained *Hercules* to a post, that he might not depart their country. Other of the heathen would adopt or reprobate their gods as they pleased; unless the gods pleased them, they should be no longer gods. This is to bring a god in the hand grosly and openly: they do it closely and covertly, who are unwilling to be guided by his hand. They who would bring God down to their wills, make laws for God; and they who make a law for God, act as if they had made God. *Every thing must receive the rule of its being, where it receives a being.*

Est qui adduxit Deum in manu sua. Ari. Mont. *Deum gestat in manu sua, qui facit sibi Deum, quem habeat in sua potestate, nolens esse in manu Dei.* Coc. *Non placet quod nonnulli Hebræorum hæc ad Idololatræ referunt.* Merc.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10.

But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.
Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.
Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?
In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

JOB having checked the pride of his friends, in the four first verses of this Chapter; and opposed the opinion of *Zophar*, in *ver.* 5, 6. he in this context brings out his proof, which he takes as low as low can be; that so he might raise his conviction the higher. He deals not with him upon the dictates of humane reason, or upon the authority of Scripture; but from the voice of nature, from the common cry and consent of all the creatures; he convocates a synod of beasts and birds, of senseless trees, and mute fishes, to give their suffrage for the determination of the controversie betwixt him and his friends.

Disseruisti; amici, plenaque de sapientia & potentia Dei, quod omnia creat & conservat, quasi hæc mihi incognita essent, nam vobis tacentibus docet me hæc creatura. Mer.

Ask now the beasts, and they shall tell thee.

As

As if *Job* had said, *Friend* Zophar, *thou hast discoursed about the providence of God, as if it were all riddle, or mystery, which none but learned men could teach, and none but men of extraordinary parts could understand: But surely thou needest not speak so high, or in the clouds, forasmuch as the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, &c. may be our masters, to teach us the wisdom and power of God, though man should be silent. These have a voice, these have tongues like trumpets to proclaim a providence in ordering the world, and that God doth, both in Heaven and earth, whatsoever pleaseth him: And therefore though the wisdom of God be higher then heaven, deeper then hell, broader then the sea, and longer then the earth; though there is a wisdom of God, and much in all his wisdom, which no creature can comprehend, yet his wisdom receives testimony from every creature, and we need not make such weary and long journeyes to find out so much of it as concerns our instruction and satisfaction. Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee.*

Hence observe, *All creatures have a teaching voice, they read us divinity lectures of Divine Providence.*

Non est ullum animal tam exiguum in quod non plus discere possimus quàm in omnibus sculptis, pictis aut fusis simulachris. Lavat.

Christians, who have not only reason but grace, may learn from creatures which have not so much as life or sense. Images made by man are teachers of lyes; but the things which God hath made are teachers of truth. And hence it is that Christ himself taketh up parables from the meanest of the creatures, to instruct his hearers. I confess there is no knowledge like the knowledge of Christ, and of him crucified: The cross of Christ is the chief subject of holy study: As the Apostles resolve assures (1 *Cor.* 2.) *I determined to know nothing among you but Christ, and him crucified.* All knowledge, without the knowledge of Christ, is but ignorance: Yet there is a usefulness of knowledge from natural things, as subservient unto spiritual. Grace in the heart of a Believer improves common earthly objects to holy ends, as having a stamp of Heaven upon them. *The world below is as a glass, wherein we may see the world above.* They who cannot read other books, may run and read this: It is the *Plowmans Alphabet*, the *Shepherds Kalender*, the *Travellers Perspective*, through which he receives the lively species of infinite excellencies in God. We may meditate from the Sun, to the Stone; from the Cedar, to the Hysop that groweth on the wall; from the Angel, to the Worm that creepeth on the ground; from all, from the least of these we may know much of the great God; and it is the scope of the Apostle, (*Rom.* 1.) to convince those who do not. It is reported of one, who had but little or no knowledge at all in Arts and Sciences, or skill in Tongues, and yet was full of knowledge in Heavenly things; that being asked, How he came by that knowledge, having not read books? he said, he had a book which he read continually, which had three great leaves, *The Heaven, the Earth, the Waters*; the creatures contained in these, were as so many letters, out of which he spelled many mysteries, and comfortable truths. Though the creature is not able to lead us into a saving knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, yet it gives us such advantages to know God, as will leave us unexcusable in our ignorance.

Seculum est speculum

There are four things which the creatures teach us.

First, They teach us that there is a God; and much of that which God is. (*Rom.* 1.20.) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* As faith sees him that is invisible, so sense shews us him that is invisible: Faith sees God in himself; sense shews us God in his works.

Secondly, The whole creation teacheth us ready obedience to the will of God: All creatures obey the law of their creation: *Fire and hail, snow and vapours, stormy wind and tempest fulfilling his word,* Psal. 148. 8. And if there be any stop at all, or interruption in their obedience, if they do not fully answer the end for which they were created, it is either to testifie, or to punish mans disobedience.

Thirdly, All creatures teach us dependance upon God. Things without life are expressed, as putting forth acts of faith towards the living God. (*Hos.* 2.21.) The earth cryes to the heavens; and the corn, and the wine, and the oyl cry to the earth; there is an intercrying from the lowest to the highest, till the cry come up to the most high God. The whole presents us with an *elegant prosopopeia*, All the creatures striving to do them good, to whom God had once betrothed himself in mercies, and in loving kindness; yet all (in a chain of dependance) confessing their inability to do them good, without help from God. The corn, and the wine, and the oyl would feed and refresh *Jezreel*; but then the earth must give these rooting, juyce and nourishment: The earth is willing to do her office, and give out her strength to these, that these might strengthen *Jezreel*; but then the heavens must open their treasury, and let down their rain, and heat, and influences into the bosom and bowels of the earth, to make it fertile. The heavens are ready to befriend the earth, at her request, with these inriching dowries of rain, heat and influence; but the heavens cannot send a shower, nor the sun a ray, till God gives commission, and therefore they cry to God to *unbind the sweet influences of* Pleiades, *and loose the bands of* Orion, that so, God commanding the heavens, the heavens may feed the earth, and the earth may feed the corn, the wine, the oyl; and these may feed *Jezreel*, the beloved ones of God. Thus *the eyes of all wait*, or *look up unto God* (Psal. 145. 15.) that they may receive good. Such is the very manner of their subsistence as declares their dependance: they wait upon God, and shall not we?

Fourthly, The whole creation teacheth us, that there is somewhat more provided for us then we now enjoy. The Apostle makes that use of it (*Rom.* 8. 19.) *The earnest expectation of the creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God:* But how can the creation have an earnest expectation? Not that the creature is able to put forth such an act directly, for then it must have not only life, but reason and grace; but there is somewhat in the creature, not only like *expectation*, but like *an earnest expectation*; the creature stretcheth out (as it were) its head to look for these things, and is weary till it receives them: We know (saith the Apostle, *ver.* 22.) *That the whole creation groaneth and travelleth in pain together until now.* Now if the irrational and inanimate creatures, which have been tired out by mans sin, and made subject to vanity, by reason of mans vanity, if they live under an expectation, how much more should man himself? Shall liveless creatures be restless in their present condition, which our sin hath brought upon them; and shall we, who are the sinners, rest in that condition? Shall the world groan under a state of vanity, and shall we rejoyce, and satisfie our selves in it? The beasts of the earth may teach us better; and the fowls of the air may instruct us to soar to a more heavenly pitch of spirit.

Ask now the beasts.] The word *Behemoth*, signifies all sorts of beasts, whether wild, or tame; yet most usually those that are wild and savage, such as will not come to hand: to take the word in that strictness inlargeth the sence, as if *Job* had said, *The worst, the most unteachable of the beasts, will teach thee; those beasts which have nothing in them but cruelty and fierceness, but rage and ravening, will inform thee.* The Elephant, in this book, is called *Behemoth*, which word is in the plural number; as if we should say, *beasts*; intimating the huge vastness of the Elephant, that he hath (as it were) many beasts summ'd up in him; here are *Behemoth*, or *beasts*, in that one Beast.

בהמות *Pecora campi.* Eliphas *dicitur* Behemoth *numero plurali, à vastitate corporis, quod quasi à multis jumentis compositus videatur.*

Ask the beasts. * It is usual in Scripture to turn us to the irrational creatures, when we depart from, or act below reason. To put a man to school to the beasts, implies beastly ignorance: *Ask now the beasts*, they will convince thee, or stop thy mouth. The Prophet brings in the Lord bespeaking Heaven and earth, (*Isa.* 1. 2.) *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O earth, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me:* So *Deut.* 32. 1. *Give ear, O ye Heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth: Moses* tells the people, that the very Heavens and earth should shame them, if they would not hearken. Now as when at any time God appealeth to, or bespeaketh the Heavens and the earth, and makes them his witnesses, or hearers, it is to shame mans deafness and rebellion; as if unreasonable creatures, were more ready to hear, and receive instruction, then man. So when he bids us go, or sends us to inanimate creatures, to hear them speak, it is to shame mans dulness; as if they were more ready to give instruction, then we to receive and entertain it. Thus *Solomon* sends the sluggard to the Ant; *Go to the Ant, thou sluggard:* The little Pismire shall teach thee; there

* *Patheticus admodùm est ille modus loquendi in scripturis, quando quis cœlum terram aut animalia ratione destituta alloquitur.* Bold.

there thou ſhalt learn a leſſon of laborioufneſs, and induſtry, to provide for thy ſelf and thine. The Apoſtle ſaith, *He that provideth not for his own houſe, is worſe then an infidel*; becauſe the light of nature teacheth a man to provide for his houſe: But we may ſay, he that provideth not for his houſe is worſe then a beaſt, worſe then the creeping things of the earth; becauſe the light of nature teacheth them to do ſo. *Go to the Ant, thou ſluggard; conſider her wayes, and be wiſe. Iſa.* 1. 3. Go to the Ox, and to the Aſs, O unthankful man; they will teach thee; *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his maſters crib*: As the Prophet ſpeaks to the Heavens and the earth, he deſires them for his hearers, rather then men; ſo he ſends the people to the Ox, and Aſs, that they ſhould be their teachers, when they refuſed to hear him. *Ask now the beaſts*, they are wiſe and learned enough to direct thee in this point.

They ſhall teach thee.] Theſe words carry a double figure in them; either a *Proſopopeia*, which is the imitation of a perſon, or the attribution of ſpeech and reaſon, to things ſpeechleſs and irrational: or a *Metonimy* of the effect; *Ask the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee*; that is, ſtudy the beaſts, and this knowledge is attained. Meditation is both the daughter and the mother of wiſdom. They who have no wiſdom cannot meditate, and they who meditate ſhall have more wiſdom. The creatures teach us when we think of them: they teach us, though not formally, yet vertually. They anſwer, and reſolve the queſtion put to them, though not explicitely, to the ear, yet convincingly to the conſcience: *Ask now the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee.*

So then, we ask the creatures, when we diligently conſider them, when we ſearch out the perfections, and vertues, which God hath put into, or ſtamped upon them: To ſet our minds thus upon the creature, is to diſcourſe with the creature. *The queſtions which man asks of a beaſt, are only his own meditations.* Again, the creatures teach us, when we in meditation make out collections, and draw down a demonſtration of the Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs of God, in making them; or of the frailty of man, in needing them; ſuch concluſions, and inferences, are the anſwers, and teachings of the creature. It is an excellent paſſage of *Auguſtine*, to this purpoſe, in the tenth book of his Confeſſions, *I put the queſtion*, ſaith he, *to the earth, and to the ſea, and to the reſt of the creatures, and they gave me an anſwer. Now if you would know what my queſtion was; it was the deep intention, and conſideration, I had in my heart about the creatures: And would you know what their anſwer was? Their anſwer was that which I collected in my meditations from their ſeveral natures, qualities, and properties.* So then to ask the beaſts, and to be taught of the beaſts, is only in a ſerious, and holy manner, to let out our hearts in meditation; and every true concluſion, derived from ſuch a meditation, is the voice, and anſwer, of the creature.

There is one thing further obſervable in theſe words, *Ask the beaſts, and they ſhall teach thee.* The Original is in the ſingular number; *Ask the beaſts, himſelf ſhall teach thee.* It is uſual in Scripture to put a plural and a ſingular thus together; though *it croſs Grammar, yet it improves Divinity.* Eccleſ. 10. 1. *Dead flies cauſe the ointment of the Apothecary to ſtink*: The Hebrew Noun is plural, and the Verb of the ſingular number: The reaſon of this kind of ſpeaking, is to ſhew that any one of the number, about which we ſpeak, will produce the effect of which we ſpeak: And ſo when he ſaith, *Dead flies will corrupt*, it notes, that any one, or every particular dead fly among flies, is enough to corrupt the moſt precious ointment. So when he ſaith, *The beaſts will teach*, putting beaſts in the plural number to a Verb of the ſingular, it notes, that every particular beaſt, or every ſingle creature, is able to give inſtruction. And ſo the ſence is ſtronger, Thou ſhalt not only be taught and inſtructed from the whole congregation and aſſembly of the creatures, or by laying them all together in thy thoughts, but each one ſhall teach thee, every one by himſelf ſhall teach thee; the leaſt as well as the greateſt; the Mouſe as well as the Elephant, or the Lyon; the Shrimp as well as Leviathan; the Hyſop on the wall, as well as the Cedar in *Lebanon*; the Graſs of the field, as well as the Oaks of *Baſhan*. *So many creatures as are in the world, ſo many preachers there are in the world, of the power and goodneſs of God.*

And the fowls of the air, and they ſhall tell thee.

עוף *Generali ſuo ambitu quicquid per aërem volitat includit.*

This clauſe is of the ſame ſence with the former. The word ſignifies any thing that flies in the air, all winged creatures, both the greater and the leſſer: The Eagle, or the Sparrow; the Oſtrich, or the Fly: Thou haſt ſwarms of Teachers. All theſe *can tell thee*: Yea not only ſo, But

Verſe 8. **Speak to the earth, and it ſhall teach thee.**

Hinc עפעופים *palpebræ à celeri motu*

The word imports a ſilent enquiry, or a ſtudious meditation upon, or about a thing: ſpeak to it in thy heart and thoughts, or in thy deepeſt meditations, as was explained before. There is a different tranſlation. Some render, not by a Verb, but by a Noun, and repeating the Verb, *Ask*, out of the former direction, they give it thus, *Ask every ſlip, or ſprig, which grows in the earth, and it ſhall teach thee*: For the word *Shuah* ſignifies a branch, or a ſprig, a ſlip, or a plant, any thing that grows out of the earth. And ſo the ſence is carried thus, *Ask of the beaſt of the earth, ask of the fowls of the air*; yea, ask of every ſprig, or ſlip, or plant of the earth, and that ſhall teach thee alſo. So that as *Job* before ſent him to the beaſts and fowls, ſo now he ſends him to trees and plants, that they alſo may be his teachers. And yet he hath not done, here are more Maſters.

שיח *Notat quicquid è corde vel ore emanat, meditationes, colloquia, preces, nec non apud ſe meditationes alioſq; actus mentales.* Bold. *Virgultum terræ.* Pagn.

שיח *Significat quemlibet fruticem arbuſculum aut herbam.* Gen. 2. 5.

רגה *Piſcis.*

רג *Multiplicatus, inſtar piſcium auctus fuit.*

The fiſhes of the ſea ſhall declare unto thee.

The ſilence of fiſhes is grown to a proverb, *As mute as a fiſh.* How then can a fiſh declare? Fiſhes are ſo far from forming up words and ſentences, that they cannot make a ſound, or the rudeſt noiſe; yet they have a ſpeech, though they have no voice. The Scholars of *Pythagoras* were enjoyned ſilence for five or two years; here we have a ſort of Tutors who are alwayes ſilent. Theſe ſay not much, while they ſay little; but they ſay much, though they can ſay nothing. A fiſh is expreſſed by a word in the Hebrew, which ſignifies to multiply; and to encreaſe as a fiſh is an Hebraiſm for a great increaſe (*Gen.* 48. 16.) The very multitude and increaſe of fiſhes, their huge ſhoals, and innumerable numbers, declare much to us.

I might inſiſt largely upon theſe Teachers, and ſhew you how every creature hath a proper leſſon for us, and what thoſe leſſons are. I will give but a touch.

If you ask the beaſts, They will teach you to know and own God, from whom you receive ſo much good, ſo many benefits. That leſſon the Prophet calls the Jews to learn from the Ox and the Aſs, *Iſa.* 1. 3. *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his maſters crib, but* Iſrael *doth not know.*

Go to the fowls of the air, and they will inſtruct you: Firſt, That God hath a care of his people, becauſe he hath a care of them who are ſo much inferiour to his people. Thus Chriſt ſupports our faith, and ſcatters diſtracting cares (*Mat.* 6. 26.) *Behold the fowls of the air, for they ſow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly father feedeth them; are ye not much better then they?* And as he takes care to feed them, ſo to preſerve them; *A Sparrow falls not to the ground without the will of your Father, ye are of more value then many ſparrows*; therefore be not afraid at the approach of fear. Will not God take care of you, who takes care of Sparrows? Secondly, The obſervation which the fowls of the air make of their ſeveral ſeaſons, teach us to keep time and ſeaſon. The Prophet makes that uſe (*Jer.* 8. 7.) *The Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, obſerve the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.* When we ſee the Swallow coming in the Spring, and going away towards Winter; when we obſerve the Turtle and the Crane timing it ſo exactly, do they not teach us to know the time of judgment, and the time of mercy; when it is Winter, and when it is Spring; when it is warm, and when it is cold?

Look upon the earth, and learn, Firſt, The power of God bearing it up: It is marvellous, even miraculous, that the earth ſhould hang upon nothing, that it ſhould hang in the thin air, that it ſhould hang there, where a tennis-ball, yea where a feather will not ſtay without ſupport. The earth hath nothing but the decree and power of God to bear it up. How doth this teach us the power of God, and the infinite ſtrength of his decree! Secondly, The earth teacheth us what we are, and what we muſt be, *Duſt thou art*

duju ſmodi interrogatio mentis peratio quâ reaturarum rfectiones ntuemur ac editamur. unc homo reaturas terrogat uando eas iligenter nſiderat; d tunc interrogatæ ſpondent m homo rſpicit od tanta dinatio ſe non poſ- niſi ab iqua ſupeore ſapienæ diſpenante. quin.

ocebit , i.e. unaæque ex ſtiis docet te, cum mini pluli adjuntur verbū gularis meri diibutio fit um quæ nine conentur. uſcæ perr, i.e. elibet dere ſufit.

art, and to dust thou shalt return. Ask the earth, and that will teach thee that thou art a brittle creature: Ask the grass of the earth, and that will teach thee that thou art a withering creature: *Isa.* 40. 6. *The voice said, Cry; and he said, what shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field.* Thirdly, The earth calls us to fruitfulness, when we are plowed, manured and watered: and that they, who often drinking in the rain of Heavenly doctrine bring not forth fruit, are near unto cursing, *Heb.* 6. Lastly, All the creatures teach us that special point which *Job* is upon, namely, *That the tabernacles of robbers prosper.*

For *Job* having said in the former verse, that the feet of the godly slide, or that they are trampled under foot, that robbers are rich, and oppressors prosper, he bids *Zophar Ask the beasts, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, whether it be not so or no.* As if he had said, *Even beasts and birds teach us, that it is thus among men: For are not the most innocent and harmless beasts torn, vexed and devoured by the more cruel and stronger beasts. There is no desert in those, why they are advanced, and prosper: Neither is there any fault at all in those, why they are destroyed, and perish. The fowls of the air teach this also; do you not see the greater preying upon the less: is not the innocent Dove grip't in the talons of the ravening Vulture; and the poor Partridge by the hawk? The sea gives us the same instruction, for there also the Sharks and Whales,* &c. *swallow whole shoals of smaller fishes.* As there are beast-devouring beasts, and fish-eating fishes; so there are *men-devouring, men-eating men*: There are *civil Canibals* in every Kingdom of the world, whose Tabernacles are glutted with prosperity.

Again, The beasts and birds, *&c.* will tell you that the tabernacles of robbers prosper, if you put them this other question, *In whose possession are most of you? Who is your master? Come to the flocks of sheep, and to the herds of cattel, and ask, whose are ye? They will answer, such a wicked man is our master, a robber is our owner, an oppressour is Lord of all these flocks and herds. Ask the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, to whose tables are ye most ordinarily served up? who feeds upon you? The fishes will say, We are carried up to the great mens tables, the robbers and oppressors of the earth feed upon us, we scarce ever come to the poor mans trencher, and but seldom* (comparatively) *to the good mans trencher; the greatest store of us is spent out upon the wicked, the tyrants of the earth glut themselves with us, we satisfie the lusts, fat the backs, and fill the bellies of oppressors. Ask the earth for whom it sends forth corn, and wine, and oyl, for whom she gives out her treasures of gold and silver, together with her rich materials for ornament and cloathing. The earth will tell you, most of my delicates are swallowed down by robbers; my silks and scarlets, my gems and precious stones, cloath and adorn the backs of robbers:* Thus pass through every species of the creation, and all return this answer to the question in hand, *The tabernacles of robbers prosper.* Thus your thoughts may travel through all the creatures, and receive particular instruction from them. *Zophar* said, *Chap.* 11. 7. *Canst thou by searching find out God?* Yea, saith *Job*, I can find him almost without searching, every thing I see shews me God. I need not go to the heights of Heaven, or the depths of the Sea, as if the knowledge of God were not to be had within the bounds of the visible creature: whereas indeed every created form, informs us of the Creator; and every object we see, is as a teacher to the ear. The Apostle *James* gives a Caution (*Chap.* 1. 3.) *My brethren, be not many masters:* Which we may understand either thus, be not Magisterial and censorious (as if every one of you had many Masters in him) towards your brethren: or thus, let not every one take upon him to be a teacher, or (as some) to be a whole university of Teachers. For as it is said, that *there are more Physitians then sick persons:* Every man almost will venture to prescribe a Medicine. So we may say, there are more Masters then scholars: There are more who think themselves able to teach, then who are convinced that they have need to learn. Thus the Apostle would not have us to be *many Masters:* Yet we see God hath provided us *many Masters*, even as many as there be beasts in the field, or birds in the air, as many as there be trees and grass growing upon the earth, and fishes moving in the sea.

Videbatur Zophar sapientiam extra fines rerum aspectabilium coslocasse. Merc.

Hence take these two Corollaries.

First, We who have had so many Teachers, that we might know God, and glorifie him as God, shall have a many condemners if we do not.

Secondly, If they shall be without excuse, who know not God by the teaching of the creatures, how inexcusable will they be, who know him not in Christ, who is taught and preached every day?

But the points of holy learning which *Job* especially intendeth, are expressed in the two next verses.

Verse 9. **Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?** &c.

As if he had said, *Though there are manifold lessons to be learned from the beasts, and from the fowls, and from the fishes, yet I call you in a special manner to learn that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, and that all these things are in the hand of the Lord.*

There are two points in these two verses, which *Job* calls us to learn.

First, *The work of creation*, ver. 9.

Secondly, *The work of preservation, or providence*, vers. 10.

The work of creation, *Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?* And if the hand of the Lord hath wrought them all, then the hand of the Lord doth dispose them all too; which is the Argument he was upon.

Who knoweth not.] That is, every one knoweth this; or every one may know from the works of the Lord, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them.

That the hand of the Lord.] Why doth he say, *The hand of the Lord?* Was it not the word of the Lord that made the world? The Lord said, *Let there be light, and let there be earth, and let there be seas, and let there be grass*; and all things were so; how doth he say here, the hand of the Lord hath wrought them? I answer, the hand of the Lord, is no more then the word of the Lord; the hand of the Lord is the power of the Lord; and the word of the Lord is the power of the Lord too: Only, here he saith, that the hand of the Lord made them, to note, that the Lord made them immediately. *The hand of the Lord* put to a work, noteth his immediate work. *Who knows not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought these things?* That is, that the Lord, without any help or assistance, hath set up this mighty frame of Heaven and earth; that he alone hath provided and prepared all those vessels, which furnish it for the use and accommodation of the sons of men.

Who knoweth not in all these, &c.

That is, in one as well as in another. The lowest as well as the highest works of God, shew that God wrought them. Some pieces and parts of the world, are more excellent then the rest, but there is enough in any one of them to speak out who made it.

Hence note, First, *God alone made the world.*

Creation had but one hand in it. The hand of the Lord hath wrought. Every work of providence hath the hand of God in it, and some the hand of God only. But in creation the supream cause was all the cause, that knows nothing either of subordinate causes, or of instrumental. Some have asked, with what tools, or instruments, did God make the Heavens and the earth? with what ladders and scaffolds did he build so many stories, and after set up the roof over all? *Job* answers these fools, *Who knoweth not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them?*

Naturalis Theologia. Socinus negat naturaliter ex animadversâ mundi machinâ Dei existentiam & providentiam colligi, sc. ut absurdum non sit esse mundum & non esse Deum & providentiam, nempe quia præstantissimi Philosophi non agnoverant. Soc.

Secondly, *The Lord hath so made all, that the very things which he hath made, proclaim that he made them.*

Who knoweth not in all these? or, *from all these.* Many works of providence are so done, that man cannot so much as be suspected to have done them. God doth like God: He needs not subscribe his name to his work; for *that his Name is near, his wonderous works declare.* It must be said by way of affirmation, *This hath God wrought*; as well as by admiration, *What hath God wrought!* Now, if providence (wherein usually man acts with God) act so much above man, that the whole is ascribed to God: how much more doth creation declare it self to be the sole work of God, *Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath made them?*

But

But it may be objected, To understand that the world was made, is the work of faith; How then do we know it from all these? Or how do the creatures demonstrate their creation? Saith not the Apostle, *Heb.* 11. 3. *Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear?* I answer, Faith gives the highest understanding of these things; and there is somewhat of these things which we cannot understand but by Faith; yet the very creature doth demonstrate a creation. A Christian knows in a higher way then a Philosopher; yet a Philosopher may know that by reason, which a Christian knows by Faith. A Believer is in a higher form, and hath a higher light then a Philosopher, though both learn the same lesson.

And this doth more convince, not only Atheists, who deny that there is a God, *Who hath wrought all these:* but those also who improve not the works of God: for though we give God the greatest glory when we understand by believing, yet we may understand this principle by reasoning. The creature well viewed by a natural eye, tells the understanding, that a Divine power once created, and still ordereth all these things.

Hence thirdly observe, in reference both to creation and providence,

That the Lord doth not only the greater things, but the lesser.

Psal. 145. 6. Whatsoever is in Heaven, earth, or sea, *he hath wrought them all.* When the Primitive Christians were under the heat of persecution, they lived upon God under this notion, *Acts* 4. 24. *Thou art God which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:* For hence it follows, that he takes care of all. Providence is as large as creation. It was an ancient heresie, that, but some of the creatures, or the best of them, were made by God, and that, the more troublesome, and worst, were made by the Devil. To which purpose that story is famous, reported by *Austin*, in his first Tractate upon *John*, concerning a *Manichee*, that argued with an Orthodox Christian against the Creation; who having perswaded him, that God never troubled himself to make little Flyes, upon that concession caused him to confess, that he made not the Bee, the Locust, and smaller Birds; having got this advantage, he leaves not his Sophistry, till he forced him to confess, that God made neither the Ox, nor the Elephant, no, nor man himself. The truth is, if we do not give God glory in making the least of the creatures, we shall quickly be drawn to deny him glory in making the greatest. As it is in sinning, if we make not conscience of committing the least sin (I do not say, that if we commit a little sin, we shall presently commit a great one) but if we commit it out of this opinion, that it is no great matter, if once we admit of a little sin upon this ground, it will quickly bring the Conscience to swallow the greatest. 'Tis so about the works of God; if we deny his power in the work of creation, or his wisdom in the work of providence, about the least creature, we shall quickly grow to a kind of Atheism, and deny, or at least not hold forth with power the work of God in any of the creatures, or that *His hand hath wrought them all.*

Augusti. *Tract.* 1. *in* Joh. *Cum orthodoxus muscam dixisset à diabolo factam, compulit fateri eum* Manichæus *ab eodem factā apē, locustā, lacertā, avē, bovem, elephantem, hominem.*

Verse 10. **In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.**

The hand which made all, keeps all that he hath made in his hand. The former verse holds out the creation, and this the conservation of the world.

In whose hand.] The hand is put for power; and to be in the hand of God, is to be in the power of God.

Hence observe, *The same power that made the world, preserveth the world.*

Si creaturæ à deo factæ sunt manifestum est, quod in dei potestate sunt sicut artificiata in manu artificis. Aquin.

When men have done their work, they put it out of their hands; we usually say, such a thing is in, or under, my hand; that is, it is a doing, I am at work upon it; but as soon as we have done our work, we say, such a thing is *out of my hand*; that is, I have done with it: Man cannot hold his work alwayes in his hand; but God doth: And there is a necessity that he should. The world would presently run out of its being, if it were not upheld by the same hand which at first gave it a being: When man sinned, the world had ruined, if Christ (by whom all things were made, *John* 1.) had not stept in, to be the stay and prop of it, *By him all things consist*, Col. 1. 17. *He upholdeth all things by the word of his power*, *Heb.* 1. 9. He is that powerful word which made all things, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power; we owe the standing of the world as much to Christ, as we do the creation of it. *In whose hand*

Is the soul of every living thing.] The Hebrew word נפש Anima *qua vivitur cum sensu & sensibili appetitu spiritus hominis qua vivitur cum consilio voluntatis. Omnis anima est in manu dei, quia ut produci ita ab ipso habet conservari.* Jans. *in loc.* signifies, not only the soul of man, but of any creature that breatheth, or the breathing of any creature. And it is put for the whole *compositum*, the body and the life. *Every living thing died*: So *Moses* speaks of the Flood. God put their lives out of his hand into the hand of the merciless waters: Yea, not only men, and beasts, and birds, *&c.* but trees and plants, the grass in the field, and the flowers in your gardens, live by the power of God: the trees in Winter are as dead, their leaves fall off, and their fruit is gathered, the fields are uncloathed and naked: but when the Spring comes, grass comes, trees bud and bring forth fruit again; shall we ascribe this to the Sun? shall we go no further then the season for this? and say, the Spring is come, and therefore the grass comes? No, *In his hand is the soul of every living thing:* There is a life in the grass, and it is of God that the grass grows, that the trees blossom and bring forth. *In his hand is the soul*

Of every living thing.] Sometimes the word is restrained to man, *Gen.* 2. *Eve*, the first Woman, was so called, because she was the Mother *of all living*, yet she was the Mother only of *living man.* Some take it so here, implying that the Lord, who made all souls, hath the soul of man especially in his hand. But we need not restrain it thus; seeing the last clause of the verse speaks expresly of the care of God towards man: *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing,*

And the breath of all mankind.] Or, *The spirit of all mans flesh:* So Mr. *Broughton* reads it: Breath and spirit are often used promiscuously; and *Ruah* signifies both.

רוח Spiritus est flatus, seu respiratio universæ carnis.

Here 'tis taken for the breath, or breathing of man, which is but an act of life. *In whose hand is the breath of all mankind. Daniel* makes report to *Belshazzar* (Dan. 5. 23.) what God had done for his father *Nebuchadnezzar*, in what great glory he had set him up, *&c.* and then reproves him, *The God, in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy wayes, hast thou not glorified. The God, in whose hand thy breath is. Belshazzar* was a great Prince, the greatest Monarch at that time upon the earth, he commanded all, he had the breath of many in his hand, as *Daniel* there speaks of his *father, whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive*, such was the power of that great Monarch; but then he minds him, that he was not Lord of his own life; *Thy breath is in the hand of God*; if God will, he can keep thee alive; and if God will, he can take away thy life. It is true of God in the fullest extent. *Whom he will he slayes, and whom he will he keeps alive.*

It is the comfort of our lives, that our lives are in the hand of God. *That which is in his hand, is in a safe hand.* It is not in the power of all the world to take away one life which God will keep. As the safety of the soul, in the state of grace, lyes in this, that it is in the hand of God, as Christ argues in the tenth of *John*, *Ye are in my Fathers hand*; that is, your spiritual estate is in his hand, and *my Father, which gave you unto me, is greater then all, and no man is able to pluck you out of my Fathers hand.* Here is the safety of the Saints; and that's the priviledge we have under the Covenant of Grace by Christ, beyond what we had under the Covenant of works in *Adam.* Our spiritual life was then in our own hand; now it is in the hand of God. Here also in its proportion lyes the safety of our natural life; it is in the hand of God; God hath not only taken the life of our souls into his own hand, but the life of our bodies too; he disposeth of lives as he pleaseth; he can say to one in a day of common calamity, *Thou shalt have thy life for a prey*; and to another, *Thou shalt dye by the sword*, &c. What can we say in these times of death, when the breath hath gone out of many thousands; why hath it not gone out of our bodies? No other account can be given but this, Our breath is in the hand of God; were it not so, the breath of many of us had not been in our bodies at this time.

Further, It should teach us to honour that God, in whose hand our breath is. *Daniel* checked *Belshazzar*, because he failed

failed in this, *The God in whose hand thy breath is, hast thou not honoured.* How careful are we to please those who have our estates in their hands? We respect him also very much, in whose hand our health is: But if our life be in the hand of another (as sometimes it is) how do we study and strive to comply with the commands, yea with the very humours of such a man? Shall we not honour God, *in whose hand our breath is?*

Lastly, If our breath be in the hand of God, it teacheth us, that *the time of our death, and of the going forth of our breath, is set down and disposed by God.* Sometimes a sickness indangers our life, and threatens to stop our breath presently; but God saith, no, it shall not be. Sometimes outward violence invades us; but as *David* comforts himself, *Our times are in Gods hand*: And as none can take away life, if He will continue it; so none can continue life, if He will take it away. If God send for our breath (how unwilling soever we are to part with it) it must come. One of the Ancients bespeaks a wicked man thus, *Thou hast thy breath in thy nostrils, and thou art unwilling to let it go; but if God speak the word, thy breath will go.* Again (saith he) *When God shall reunite these two, thy body and thy breath, and cast both into hell together, he will hold thy breath in thy body whether thou wilt or no:* Here is a double punishment; he will fetch thy breath out of thy body, when thou wouldst keep it; and he will keep thy breath in thy body, when thou wouldst be separated from it. Thou shalt dye when thou wouldst live; and thou shalt live when thou wooest death, and desirest to be dissolved, yea to be annihilated.

This also administers comfort to the Saints, that as when their breath goes forth, Gods hand leads it forth; so that hand of God will preserve their breath for ever. He gives them eternal life, and that is in his hand; *He can lengthen out life to all eternity, in whose hand life is.* He that gives us life of a span-long, can give us life eternity-long.

Thus we have seen *Job*'s first Argument from the creatures, all which acknowledge God their Maker, God their Disposer, and Preserver; they have their being, and their well being, together with the changes and continuance of both from him.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?
With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes, understanding.
With him is wisdom and strength; he hath counsel and understanding.
Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

THe knot of connection, which ties these words to the former, lyes so close, that many have been troubled to find it out.

First, It is conceived by some, that *Job* having in the former verses, the seventh and eighth, called his friends to read the Book of Nature; *Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee,* &c. Turn over all the leaves of that great Volume, the World, and they will be instruction to thee. He now pursues the same point, and tells them, that it would not be unprofitable for them, or lost labour, if they, in pursuance of his counsel, should set upon this study; **For the ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth his meat**; that is, every sense will give them information about its proper objects, and shew the peculiar end of its institution: he instanceth in two senses, Hearing and Tasting, by a *Synechdoche*, for all the rest; as if he had said, *Each power and faculty with which the nature of man is endowed, will be a contributor towards the attainment of this knowledge; and declare that the wisdom and power of God is eminent and conspicuous in the creature.* And because old men have heard many words, and have tasted many meats; that is, have had long experience of things; therefore he addeth in the twelfth verse, *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes, understanding*; they who have run the longest course in the world, and have seen the greatest variety of changes, must needs know most of God, because every change holds forth somewhat of God.

Agitur de creatoris cognitione percipienda ex creaturis experimento rerum sensibilium, quæ per illos duos sensus, gustum videlicet & auditum, significantur. Aquin. *placet etiã* Sanct.

Secondly, The connection appears to others thus; as if *Job* would here again meet with that opinion, which his friends (*Zophar* especially) had more then once insinuated, that the doctrine which they were upon, and had taught him, was a deep mystery, and very hard to be understood, that it was (which some now glory in, *Theologia cryptica*) *Divinity in the mystery.* No, saith he, there is no such matter; the point you are upon is very plain and easie; you need not make so many preambles, as if it were all under a vail, or within a curtain of secrecy (as was hinted in the former Chapter) for the things are plain. As the ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth meat, so it is here; these things are as obvious, as sensible objects to the senses; we may learn them by ordinary hearing, which is the use of the ear; and by common experience, which is imported by the tast.

Thirdly, That *Job* refers to his own doctrine; As if he had said, I have held forth my opinion concerning the dealings of God with just men. And the truth I have maintained, is as plain and easie to the understanding, as sounds and languages are to the ear, or as meats unto the mouth. For as the understanding is to things rational and speculative, so are the senses to things external and sensitive; the palate to meats, and the ear to words.

Fourthly, That *Job* being about to lift up the Name of God, to speak out his glory in the attributes of his power and wisdom; and that God by his absolute soveraignty over all creatures, may afflict or prosper, do good or evil as he pleaseth; doth here preface or premise this general commendation of his wisdom, that God doth as exactly apprehend all that is done or spoken in the world, as the ear of a man tryeth the words of him that stands next him, whether they be true or false, for him or against him: or as the palate tasteth meat, whether it be sweet or bitter, liking or loathsome. All the wayes of the children of men are before the Lord, he discerns the voice of all their actions, and the language of every mans life: he knows whether their works be sweet or bitter, whether good or evil. The Psalmist speaks near the language of this interpretation, (*Psal.* 94. 9.) *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?* God is elsewhere said to have eyes, which try good and bad; he is here spoken of as having ears discerning truth and falshood. And his ears are so quick, that they take in the least whisper, the stillest voice; there is not a word spoken, but the voice is heard by God: *He hears our silence, as well as our speech, and can tell what we say, when we say nothing:* He hears the voice of our thoughts, our thoughts are as loud in the ears of God, as a trumpet in our ears. God hears the voice of our actions, though we utter no words. *The voice of thy brothers blood crieth*; thou hast done a bloody deed, and that hath a voice, a crying voice (*Habbak.* 2. 11.) *The stone shall cry out of the wall.* The Lords ear hears the voice of all creatures, even of those that cannot speak; he can do what he pleaseth, and he is as clear in all he doth, as the ear is in trying words, or the taste in discerning meats.

Divina jactentia omnia quæ loquuntur cogitantur aut fiunt, ita cognoscit quasi illorum audiret voces, quod auriũ est; aut gustaret sapores, quod faucium est. Sanct. *Sensus percipiunt sonos, sapores,* &c. *Nonne oportet deum qui hæc dedit omniscium esse?* Goc.

Every excellency in the creature is in God by way of eminency. Doth the ear of man try words? then the ear of God doth much more. Doth the mouth of man taste meat? much more doth the Lord taste men. Hence he sometime speaks distastingly of men, they are represented as a burthen to his stomack, and he as ready to spue them out.

Further, The words seem to carry a reproof of the rash and inconsiderate judgement of *Jobs* friends about what had been spoken. This Exposition may be taken two wayes. Either

Socios taxat quod non diligenter expenderent à se dicta, q. d. *vestrũ sane erat purgatam aurem afferre non me carpere,* &c Merc.

First, In reference unto what *Job* had offered.

You have heard my judgement about the dispensations of God before, and I have spoken it a second time, *that the tabernacles of the wicked prosper, that many a godly man is as a despised lamp:* Now, *Doth not the ear try words? Doth not the mouth taste meats?* As if he had said, *You have not yet weighed nor considered what I have proposed; if you had, I should not have needed to come upon this point the second time; you have been rash in your judgements, your ears have not done their office, you have not pondered my speech, nor the arguments and reasons which I have produced in confirmation of my opinion.*

Or secondly, in reference to what *Jobs* friends had offered. As if he had said, *You have declared many things to*

me, and you think that I have taken no notice of them, but I assure you I have, my ear hath as exactly tryed your words, as the mouth or the palate of a man tasteth meats.

Taking it thus, we may best read the words comparatively, (as we find them *chap.* 34. 3.) *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.* Thus the sense is most clear. Hearken diligently to my words, and then you may understand my meaning as distinctly as your taste doth what you eat.

בחן *Probare, tentare, penitùs explorare, & diligenter expendere. Aurem non externâ tãtum intelligi sed & internam* i.e. *exactum judiciũ quod iis quæ audiuntur ist adhibendum.* Merc. *Aurium & Stateræ idẽ ist nomen in Hebræo, duæ enim aures sunt velut bilances quibus expenduntur quæ audimus.*

The word which we translate try, signifies *exact tryal*, a perfect exploration. The ear is the chief Instrument of the understanding, the sense of discipline. Here *Job* speaks not only of the outward ear, but of the ear as it acts with the understanding, which not only hears the sound of words, or knowes *the English of them*, but discerns the meaning and scope of them. This *Job* especially intendeth, when he saith, *The ear tryeth words.*

Observe, *The ear must do more then hear, in hearing it must try what it heareth.*

He puts that which is properly an act of the understanding upon the ear, which is but an outward sense, namely, to try the truth or falshood of those things that are spoken. The Original word for an ear (represents us with this duty of the ear) being in the dual number, signifies *a pair of ballances*, to note, that when we *are hearing we should be weighing*; we should put every word into the scales as we receive it. *Doth not the ear try words?* When you have received a piece of gold you try it, and there is a double tryal, a tryal by the *Touchstone*, and a tryal by the *Ballance*. Every one that doubteth will go to the Touchstone to try whether it be good mettal or no, and he will go to his ballances and try whether it be weight or no. Thus when words are spoken they should be tryed, tryed by the touchstone and ballance of the Sanctuary. An attentive ear, and a holy understanding, will never put them among our treasures of knowledge or leading principles, till they have brought them to this tryal.

The point layes a just reproof upon those who hear many words, but try none. It is said of the *Bereans* (*Act.* 17.) that when an Apostle spake, they tryed his words; they might have trusted *Paul* as soon as any man alive, that he would not put any false Coyn upon them, that he would not speak a word that wanted a grain of weight, yet their ears would try the words of *Paul*, though he spake by inspiration immediately from heaven, though he had an infallible Spirit. If this duty were observed, if hearers would try words, so many light pieces, light doctrines, which bear no weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary, would not be pursed up, and put in among our treasures. Many make treasure of light and erroneous doctrine, of base coyn, and counterfeit money: The reason is, Because the ear doth not try, the understanding and ear joyn not together, *Psal.* 62. 11. *God hath spoken once, and twice have I heard it*; that is, he heard it with his outward ear, and he heard it with his understanding: He duly weighed what God spake. Thus you must do if you will hear to purpose, be it who will that speaks; hear it once, and hear it again, that is, hear it with a sensitive ear, and hear it with an intellective ear, judge of it and try what it is. Our Saviour Christ cautions us to *take heed how we hear*; though to hear be a natural act, yet there is an artificial hearing, there is an heavenly art in it. *The ear must be taught by the Spirit to hear, or else it can never hear what the Spirit saith.*

Secondly, Observe, *No doctrine ought to be rejected until it be tryed.*

As none ought to be received till it be tryed, so none to be rejected. *Job* taxeth his friends, that they out of prejudice had cast off what he had spoken. Doth not the ear try words? Why have you not done me that right, as to examine the things I have spoken, before you censure me? you slight and contemn me, as if I were a man distracted and out of my wits; as though my words were not worth the weighing. *It is as dangerous to refuse, as to receive what we have not examined.* For, however a doctrine may be worthy to be rejected which we do not try, yet we do not our duty to reject it before we have tried. As we say of a judge, he that judges a man before he hears him, though possibly the sentence which he passeth may be just, yet the judge is unjust; so it is in this case, if we reject a doctrine before tryal, though possibly it be worthy to be rejected, yet we are worthy to be reproved for rejecting it. We erre in laying aside an errour, before we have found it to be an errour. The best that can be said of such, is, that they have done well by accident. And as they need pardon who do evil, though they know it not; so they have nothing to boast of, who refuse that which is evil before they know it to be so. The Apostle gives that rule (1 *Thes.* 5. 21.) when he had said, *Despise not prophecyings*, be diligent in attending the means, he adds, *Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.* As we must not reject or refuse to hear the Word, so we must not receive every word we hear, *but try all things, and hold fast that which is good. Doth not the ear try words?*

And the mouth taste his meat?

The Hebrew is, *Doth not the palate taste his meat?* There is a dispute among Philosophers what is the proper *sensorium* or instrument of tasting. Most give it to the whole *mouth*, some to the *palate*, others to the *tongue*, not a few to the tip of the tongue; there is a fifth opinion which ascribes it to the *nerves* which diffuse themselves quite through the tongue; a sixth places it in the *throat*. Hence *Aristotle* reports of *Philoxenus* an *Epicure*, who wished that he had a neck as long as a Crane, that he might the longer taste the pleasure, and take the more delight in his meat. Which way soever it is in nature, the Moral truth is the same, which you may take in this brief Note. *Arist. l. 3. Eth. c. 10.*

Every sence hath a distinct office, the Ear is for hearing, the Mouth for tasting, the Eye for seeing, the Nostrils for smelling; Thus the Lord hath made a Polity in the *body Natural*. The body of man is a kinde of corporation, every officer standeth in his place, and hath his duty. The comliness of the body natural, and the comliness of a body Politique, whether civil or spiritual, shines in the due discharge of each members office: every member needs the help of his neighbour member, and the operation of every member is a help to the whole; The eye sees, the ear hears, the mouth tastes, as a servant, and for the service of the whole body.

There is yet another translation (observed by *Chrysostom*) in some of the *Greek versions*, where it is read thus, *The ear tryeth words, and the mind tasteth meats.* One letter added in the greek changes the signification from the *mouth to the mind*; taking it with that literal addition, these words are an explication of the former: As the ear tryeth words or sounds, so the mind trieth meats. What meats? *Truth is the meat of the mind, the nourishment of the understanding.* Hence the word of truth is often compared to things edible and potable, to meat and drink, to honey, and the honey comb. And the want of the word of truth is called a Famine by the Prophet. The soul starves where the word of truth is not rightly divided, cut out, or carved to it. All the excellencies of God that are held forth in the word, are the souls food, (*Psal.* 34. 8.) *O taste and see that the Lord is good*; what is it that tasteth how sweet the Lord is? It is the mind working, meditating, and acting faith upon him. *Faith is the souls taster*, faith is the mouth of the soul, which not only tasteth but cheweth the promises and manifestations of God to his people, and so makes meat of them; *Meditation turns the promises into marrow. My soul* (saith *David*, Psal. 63. 5, 6.) *shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* As there is all manner of riches, so all manner of dainties in the believing meditations of God: every promise is a dish, and all the promises are a royal feast to faith. Heathens have given this notion about the taste of words. *Cicero* in his Oration against *Piso*, saith, *Pompey could not taste that Philosophy.* He was a great Souldier, a man of action, and troubled not himself with sedentary studies, and bookish contemplations. And as there is a spiritual taste, so a spiritual hearing, or rather these are the same; to taste spiritually is to hear spiritually. It was the meat of Christ *to do the will of him that sent him:* it is meat to such as are Christs, to hear the will of God by those whom he sends, and the more they hear, the more wisdom they get, as followeth,

Ut auris vas mens haud mala sententia. Drus.

Pompeius non gustaret illam Philosophiam. Cic. in Pison. *Gustare ejus sermonem volo.* Plaut. in Mostel. *Act.* 6. *Judicare genus est ipsius sentire qui namque sentit judicat aliquo modo.* Arist. l. 2. de An.

Vers.

Vers. 12. **With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes understanding.**

בשישים *in decrepitis.*

With the ancient is wisdom.] The senses are a door to the understanding, both acting together lay up treasures of knowledge, therefore with the *ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes understanding.* The word which we translate *ancient*, signifies not the first, no nor the second (for the Hebrews reckon three) but the third and last step of Old age. The first, by their calculation begins at the year threescore, and extends to threescore and ten: when man is threescore, he enters (say they) the borders of old age, and while he is travelling to threescore and ten, he is in the first territory of old age. The second reaches from threescore and ten to fourscore: he is an old man indeed who attains that reckoning, (*Psal.* 90. 10.) The third is that whole space be it longer or shorter, that man lives beyond fourscore, and that is properly meant by the word used in this Text, *with the ancient is wisdom*; and the more ancient any are, the more wisdom they may be supposed to have.

Triplex senectus apud Hebræos, decrepiti sunt annosiores senibus. Merc.

Not that every old, or every decrepit old man hath wisdom; some have attained the last degree or step of old age, who have not attained the first degree of wisdom: They have walked in a vain shadow, and have learned nothing. But when he saith, *with the ancient is wisdom*, he means; First, it is the duty of old men to shew forth wisdom. Secondly, old men have had a great opportunity to gather wisdom, a price hath been in their hands, though possibly they have not had hearts to make use of it. It is not running through a great many years, that makes men wise: *wisdom is the gift of God, not of time.* And as this doth not infer, that all old men are wise, so neither doth it infer, that none but old men are. Wisdom is not so with the ancient, as if it could be no where else; Gray hairs have not ingrossed that whole commodity, nor is it all given and granted to them. *Wisdom doth not alwayes lean upon a staff, nor look through Spectacles: It doth not alwayes* (as some describe venerable old age) *go upon three legs, nor see with four eyes. Young men may have wisdom if God give it, and old men cannot have wisdom unless God give it.* Some young men have understood as much as the ancient, yea more then the ancient, as there will be a clearer occasion to shew at the thirty second Chapter, *vers.* 7, 8, 9. whither I refer the Reader, if God shall carry on this work so far by my hand.

Observe, at present, First, *Old men should be wise men. With the ancient is wisdom.*

Where should we go for wisdom but unto them? Some will not so much as suspect young men for much wisdom, but we have reason to look for it among the Ancients. The Apostle (1 *John* 2. 11, 12.) writ to Christians of all sorts and sizes, under the titles of *little children, young men, and fathers*, and he gives a special reason of his dedication to either of them. *I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven. I write to you young men, because you are strong*, &c. *I write unto you fathers, why? Because you have known him which was from the beginning.* He gives a reason suitable to old men, *I write unto you fathers, because ye have known him which was from the beginning.* As if he had said, wisdom and knowledge are amongst old men, amongst the fathers. I take it for granted, that you are knowing men, therefore I write unto you about these depths of knowledge. *With the ancient is wisdom.* The Apostle (*Heb.* 5. 12.) gives a severe reproof to those who *when for the time they ought to be teachers, yet had need that one teach them again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God. When for the time*, that is, they had a great deal of time, and therefore their proficiency in holy knowledge should have been great. And proportionably how much time every one had, such a talent he hath had, and he shall be reckoned with, as having had it to get wisdom. Time in it self cannot advantage us, but time bringeth advantages with it for the compassing of the greatest undertakings, and for the perfecting of those who are most imperfect. Time is not an empty duration. God hath filled time with helps to eternity, and with means *to know him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, which is eternal life.* Wo to those that have not competently learned this great lesson, *when for the time they ought to be teachers*, &c. An old man ignorant is more childish then a child. To see an old man in the *first rudiments* or *primer* of natural knowledge is uncomly; but how dreadful is it to see an old man not able to read nor understand the *primmer of the Gospel*, or the first principles of Religion; we have seen sad experiences of some who have lived under powerful means, even till decrepit old age, even until this third degree of old age, and yet have not been in their *A. B. C.* of saving knowledge, being unable to spel or put two letters together in the things of God, or to make out any one conclusion understandingly about the necessaries to salvation. It is bad enough when children and young men are ignorant, and foolish in the things of heaven; but with what tears should we lament it, when with the ancient there is no wisdom, *nor understanding in length of dayes.* Which crosseth the second part of *Jobs* Assertion,

Turpis & ridicularis est senex elementaris.

And in length of dayes understanding.] Both parts of the sentence have the same sence. *In length of dayes*, or in many dayes, that is, by the experiences which we get in length of dayes, understanding is improved and heightned. Experience is a great teacher. The Apostle tells us that every experience we have of God should teach us to hope in God. *Experience worketh hope* (Rom. 5.) *Experience also worketh knowledge.* Experience is a *tedious Master*, it keeps us long at School; but experience is a *sure master*, and we may learn much by experience. *In length of dayes is understanding.*

Scientia domi paratur ex libris, prudentia ex itinere & usu verum.

Observe upon the whole verse, *Old men are to be honoured, and their counsel to be respected.*

With them (probably) there is most wisdom, and therefore they deserve most respect. Hence the Scripture calleth us often to reverence gray hairs, and that we should rise up to old men; not that we are to adore, which is indeed to dote upon old age; it is doting to think that every thing must be true which an old man saith, or which the Fathers have asserted. But as it is the dotage of any man, to credit any thing which an old man speaks, or to pin our faith upon the opinion of the Ancients, so it is a sin (besides the incivility of it) to slight or undervalue what old age speaks. Old men having injoyed the like means that young men have, and having made improvement of the means which they have injoyed, are to be looked upon with veneration, and their counsel is to be received with more respect then that of young men. What destroyed the Kingdom of *Rehoboam?* he followed the counsel of the young men, and would not follow the advice of the old Councellors, who had been with his Father, and had long known the carriage of the Kingdom, and the way of government: He takes young mens counsel, and so overthroweth all. The same error and danger lyes in spiritual, as well as in temporal affairs. An ancient Writer, describing the happiness of a City, saith, *Then a City is happy, when it useth the counsel of old men, and the strength of young men:* When it hath the heads of ancient men, and the hands of young men; the one to give counsel and advice, the other to act and execute; then a City, or Commonwealth, is like to be safe and flourish. Though we must not tye up our selves to the counsel of the ancient, nor esteem all truth because the Ancients say so; Truth is older then the eldest; Truth hath the grayest hair, the hoariest head: And though if truth be spoken by a Youth, we must reverence it, and reject error, though an old man be the patron; yet old men must have reverence in what they say, and deserve preheminence in counsel.

Maximè salva est civitas, ubi consilia senum, juvenum arma obtinent. Plut.

Job seems to apply this to his friends. You are men of years, therefore you surely have attained much understanding. You may well know what I have taught, and what I am now teaching, That God is transcendent in wisdom, that his knowledge as well as his power is over all. You must needs know that God works mysteriously and secretly, that he works supreamly and authoritatively, that he needs not give an account unto the children of men, *With the ancient is this wisdom, and in length of dayes this understanding*; This is the wisdom which I shall now demonstrate.

Vers. 13. **That, with him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.**

In sapientia & fortitudine consistit divina providentiam esse omnibus partibus perfectam.

With him.] The Antecedent is not the ancient man spoken of before, with him wisdom may be, but not strength. Old men do probably increase in wisdom, but they do certainly and unavoidably decrease in strength. Here then we must look for another Antecedent distinct from the ancient man. *With him*, that is, *with God*, about whose providence and justice I have spoken, with him is wisdom and strength; as if he had said, if men by hearing and tasting gather up much knowledge in a tract of time, and length of dayes; then what treasures of knowledge and wisdom are there in God, who is the ancient of dayes, and who is as old as eternity. *Job* argues from the less to the greater: with God who is eternal, and inhabiteth eternity, there is wisdom and strength, and he hath counsel and understanding.

With him there is wisdom and strength.

We met with both these attributes of God, *Chap.* 9. *vers.* 4. *He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength, who hath hardned himself against him and prospered?* Therefore I shall not stay upon them here, only a word.

First, *God is infinitely wise and strong.* He is wise to design, and strong to effect.

Secondly, *they who want wisdom must go to God for it. With him is wisdom*, as if he had said, You may gather wisdom among the creatures, and from observation, but all wisdom is laid up in God. Study alone will not make you wise, experiences alone will not make you wise, you must go to the Fountain of wisdom; So the Apostle directs (*Jam.* 1. 5.) *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.* And again, (vers. 16) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights*; (Holy wisdom is not a vapour which fumes up from the earth, but an influence which falls from that light of heaven) *with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning.*

Some conceive that *Job* here answers the counsel of *Bildad*, (Chap. 8. vers. 8.) *Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy self to the search of their fathers, for we are but of yesterday*, &c. I grant (saith he) we are to enquire of former ages; I am of your opinion too, that, with the ancient is wisdom; yet I do not expect to find all wisdom among the ancient, (their Well hath not depth enough to yield these waters to all comers, or for all occasions) no, I must go to God; *With him is wisdom, and he hath counsel and understanding.* Though all the ancient men in the world, and ancient Councels, affirm that, which the word of God denies, we must not believe them, for *with him is wisdom.* In the 28. Chapter of this book, *vers.* 12. the question is put, *Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?* Where? All the creatures disclaim it, *The depth saith, it is not in me, and the sea saith, it is not with me.* Though we may gain wisdom by conversing with the creatures, yet there is no creature hath wisdom in his keeping, or at his disposing. That's the priviledge of God; *With him is wisdom. With him*, as with a Master, as with a Lord; His it is. *With him*, as with a dispenser, as with a Steward; He gives it out as he pleaseth, he bestowes it upon whom he will; all wisdom is Originally in him, and derivatively from him. (*Chap.* 15.8.) *Hast thou heard the secret of God, and doest thou restrain wisdom to thy self?* As if he had said, Thou talkest as if thou hadst been of Gods counsel, or at least as if thou hadst learnt knowledge, not only from the mouth of men, but immediately from the mouth of God himself.

Thirdly Observe, *That all the wisdom of man, compared with God, is no wisdom.*

Our wisdom is foolishness compared with God. I ground it from the Text, thus. He had said before, *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes understanding.* Now saith he, *With him is wisdom, and he hath counsel and understanding.* As if he had said, I told you of wisdom in old men, and of understanding in length of dayes, but I assure you this wisdom is nothing to the wisdom I now speak of. He means not a wisdom different in kind; for if there be true wisdom in old men, it is a drop of Gods ocean, a beam of the Father of lights. But the wisdom that is in God carries the name of wisdom from the wisdom that is in old men. As all the light of the Stars is but darkness compared to the light of the Sun; so there is wisdom with men, with old men especially, and there is wisdom with God: But the wisdom that is in God, who is the ancient of dayes, extinguisheth and overcometh all the wisdom in men, though they be never so ancient. *With him is wisdom and strength.*

He hath counsel and understanding.

Here are four words used in reference to God: we had but two before in reference to old men, *wisdom*, and *understanding*. But with God there is *wisdom, strength, counsel*, and *understanding*; and though three of the four are used promiscuously, yet as they stand here together we may give them a distinct sense.

Understanding consists in finding out secrets and mysteries, in diving to the bottom of truths. With God there is understanding, he findes out the most hidden mysteries, his name is the *Revealer of Secrets.*

Secondly, **Counsel** is properly that which fits means to the attaining of an end. When we have a business to do, we go to counsel, and Counsel is to provide futable means for the carrying on of such a design, and the accomplishing of our desires.

Thirdly, **Wisdom**, as it stands distinct from understanding and counsel, consists in the due ordering of those means which counsel hath found out. Thus understanding findes out the matter, counsel declares the means, and wisdom manages and disposeth all towards the attainment of the end. All these are in God,

And a fourth, which is **Strength** to execute and carry on the means (according to the dictates of understanding, counsel and wisdom) home to the end. If a man be furnished with the greatest measure of understanding to find out, of counsel to contrive, of wisdom to dispose, yet if he want an arm of strength, what can he do? 'Tis true, wisdom is better then weapons of war, yet what can wisdom do without weapons of war? A good head is better then a strong arm, yet what can a good head do without a strong arm? But where wisdom and weapons of war, where a good head and a strong arm joyn, what can they not do?

Job to demonstrate the absolute compleatness of God in all his administrations, shewes all these meeting in God. Would you have understanding? it is in him, he can search out deep things: Would you have counsel? He can direct you to the most proper means. *With him is counsel.* Would you have wisdom? He can mannage and order means to the best advantage: *He is the God only wise.* Would you have strength? He can execute and bring to pass effectually whatsoever he intendeth, his power is over all, and there is nothing too hard for him. Thus the glory of God is lifted up, not only above the actings, but above the thoughts of man.

Hence Observe, *God is compleat in all perfections.*

Among men excellencies are scattered, and lye divided, one hath depth of understanding, a second clearness for counsel, a third is enriched with treasures of wisdom, a fourth is fortified with a hand of power. 'Tis rare when any two of these meet in one man; and he is a kind of miracle of men, in whom they all meet, though but in some low or languid degree. But in God they meet all, and continue alwayes in the highest degree. Those things which single put honour and value upon man, concenter in God. Who would not seek unto and depend on God? Who would not have God his friend, in whom he hath all friends, and who is such a friend, that having him we need not care nor fear who is our enemy?

One God helping, is more then all men opposing. When word was brought to a great *Carthaginian* Commander in their war against the *Romans*, that the Enemy was very strong and numerous; He answer'd the trembling Intelligencer, *How many do you reckon me for?* Some men are of such vast wisdom strength and courage, that one of them may be mustered for a whole Army of men. *How many then may we reckon God for*, who alone hath all that which all men have among them, who alone can do more then all men combined together can? Men act their several parts in the scene of worldly affairs, but God acteth all parts. As he that rides post a long journey, takes fresh horses to carry him

him through; one horse carries him the first stage, and there he is left: A second speeds him to another Stage, and there stayes: In the same manner a third to a third. So it is in transacting any great business, one man will help you thus far, and another will carry you so far, and a third yet farther. One carrieth us as far as counsel and wisdom work, but he wants strength; another hath strength, but he wants faithfulness. But God carries us through the whole journey of our works, he is never tired, nor can he be taken off. (*Isa.* 40.28.) *The mighty God fainteth not, neither is weary, and there is no searching of his understanding.* Yea, not only hath he this unweariedness in himself, but he communicates it to his, *the young men shall faint*, (that is, they that are strong, especially they that boast in their own strength) *but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint.* The Lord gives his much of himself, *they shall act like God who trust in God.*

Job having arrayed the Lord in all these excellencies, proceeds to illustrate what he had asserted by some special instances. As if he had said, lest any should think that I speak only general notions, I will give you particular proofs, which you who are old men have surely made out by your own Observation, and are able from experience to attest.

Verse. 14. **Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.**

Here is an instance of the strength and power of God, yea of his wisdom and understanding; all these concur in one act of providence; though some one appear and be put forth more eminently. I will tell you (saith *Job*) what God doth: this God of whom I have spoken great things, doth great things; Yea, it is far easier for him to do great things, then for me to speak of them; for himself can as easily, and as speedily do them, as speak them. The Works which speak him great, are more then can be spoken; Of some I shall now speak.

Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.

יהרס *Propriè deleverit, dissipaverit. Ampla valde & vehemens est illa significatio destruendi, ut etiã denotet Anathematizare, excommunicare.* Pin.

These words relate to the attribute of power: *With him is strength.* And they are more then a bare affirmation that God is *strong*, they prove that he is *strongest*, or that there is no strength a match for his: This the instance reacheth fully, *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.* No man, no nor Angel, is able to preserve what God will overthrow, or to restore, what he hath once destroyed.

The word which we translate *to break down*, signifies an utter dissipation or dissolution, even the putting of a thing out of its being: Some interpret it by *Anathematizing, cursing, or excommunicating*, which imports the devoting both of things and persons to a total and perpetual ruine.

First, some understand *Job* speaking here of his own children and family which God had broken down, with a high and strong hand. Children are a living *house*; A son in the sacred language hath his name from building, because sons build or continue their fathers house. When *Sarah* prayed *Abraham* to go in unto *Hagar*, she said, *It may be I may obtain children by her*: The Hebrew letter is, *It may be I may be builded by her*, Gen. 16.2. *Rachel* invited *Jacob* to *Bilhahs* bed upon the same hopes, That I also (said she) may *have children*, or be *built by her*, Gen. 30.3. Now as when God gives children *he builds*, so when he takes them away *he breaks down: If the Lord break down thus*, if he take away the children which he hath given, who can restore them to us again, or repair that breach?

Secondly, others conceive he refers to those two ancient acts of Gods *breaking providence*, the overthrow of *Babel*, and the destruction of *Sodom*, which were not builded again to that day.

Melius quadrat ut in communi dicatur, quicquid vult Deus quacunq; ratione destruere. Bol.

Thirdly, we need not restrain his fence to any special City, or to his own family; expound him rather of the ruining of mans estate in general. *If the Lord break down*, and deface their worldly glory, who are most fairly built and raised up, who have strongest foundations, and firmest walls, who have highest towers, and the most aspiring pinnacles; if he pull down an estate thus founded, thus raised, and break it to pieces, it shall certainly be broken, and that without remedy.

Hence Observe, First, *What God will do, he can do, and it shall be done.*

He breaks down without asking any man leave: God doth not work by sufferance, but by authority. The whole world is his work, and he may make what work he will in the world. *If he will work, who shall let it?* (Isa. 43.13.) if he will smite, who shall let it? He will not put up his sword at thy word, no nor for fear of thy power. If he give the word, *Break down, down it shall.* The word of God plants, and the word of God roots up, and it doth both irresistibly. If God will destroy persons or *Kingdoms, there is no saving them.* As none can pull down, what he sets up, so none can set up what he pulls down. If he saith, Let it lye in the dust, who shall raise it up again? The Prophet (*Mal.* 1.4.) brings in *Edom* surveying the desolations which God had made upon his Territories. *Edom* began to reflect sadly upon his ruinous condition, *We are impoverished*, saith *Edom:* upon this *Edom* takes counsel, yea he resolves, *We will return and build the desolate places.* But what saith the Lord to *Edom?* (Do and you will) *They shall build, but I will throw down again.* As if he had said, *I once threw down, and made desolate the palaces of Edom; and if Edom will attempt to better his condition, and build again, I will again make desolate: as fast as* Edom *repairs, I will pull down. Man shall never make up the works which God hath slighted, till he hath leave for it from heaven.* (Psal. 28.5.) *Because they regard not the works of the Lord, he shall destroy them, and not build them up*, that is, he shall destroy them, and they shall not be built. For unless God himself will build what he hath destroyed, no man can, (Hos. 6.1.) *Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us*; If God make the wound, it is not in the skill or Chirurgery of man to give a plaister: *He hath smitten us, and he will bind us up.* When you have got a wound from God, you cannot get your cure from the creature; man tares, and God heals; man smites, and God bindes us up; but if God tare and smite, he must bind up and heal, or else we can never be healed: our wound and our salve come from the same hand. When *Jericho* was destroyed, the Lord said by *Joshua, Cursed be the man that riseth up and buildeth this city* Jericho, *he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it,* (Josh. 6.26.) We find that for five hundred years none attempted to build this City, the curse of God lay so heavy upon it; but after five hundred years, whether the man forgetting what was spoken, or presuming that now after so long a time, God would forget what he had spoken and not make it good, One *Hiel* the *Bethelite* (as you may read 1 *King.* 16.34.) built it, but how? By building that, he pulled down himself, for saith the Text, *He laid the foundation thereof in* Abiram *his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son* Segub, *according to the word of the Lord which he spake by* Joshua *the son of* Nun. The meaning is this, when he laid the foundation of that city, the curse of God fell upon him, and his eldest son died. God pull'd down the best part of his living house, his eldest son, and yet he would not be warned of the judgement of God, but went on to finish *Jericho* (for setting up the gates notes the accomplishment of his work, as laying the foundation signifies the beginning of it) and what came of that? then the Lord slew his youngest son, *he set up the gates thereof in his youngest son* Segub, he built *Jericho:* but he could not deliver himself from the curse; God did not say, this city shall never be built, but cursed be he that builds it, and this curse shall be upon him, *He shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it*; and so it came to pass, the History fulfilled the Propheſie, and the work of providence gave Testimony to the truth of the word. This also is very remarkable in the story of *Jerusalem.* Christ threatned *Jerusalem* that it should be destroyed, and the Temple, that *there should not be left one stone upon another, that should not be thrown down.* The event answered this threat. The *Romans* ruined all, and were that *abomination of desolation in the place.* Yet in the time of *Julian* some had a design to build the Temple and

restore *Jerusalem*: Yea that Apostate *Julian*, on purpose to cross the words of Christ, and the counsel of God, of which he had heard, that *There should not be left one stone upon another*; therefore he (not out of any good will to the *Jews*, or out of any desire to have the Worship of God and the Temple restored, but only in spight and malice, to see whether he could cross the word of Christ, and reverse his curse) gave the *Jews* (like another *Cyrus*) ample commission, and full liberty, to go and build the Temple. In pursuance of which grant they gathered a vast store of materials; but when they began to work, the story saith, That God from Heaven, by storm and tempest, did so dismay and scatter them, that they were forced to give it over, and confess the hand of God was against them; he confounded those builders of the Temple, as he did the builders of *Babel*. *It is* (in some cases) *a dangerous attempt to build when the Lord hath pulled down; but it is* (*in all cases*) *an impossible attempt to build what God resolves shall continue down.*

Ammianus Marcel. l. 23. Hist. Tripart. l. 6. c. 43.

It is thus also with private men, some have had fair estates in the world, God pulls them down, and breaks them to pieces. We use to say of a man that fails, *He is broke*; such will be trying to get up again, yet they cannot: some after breakings have had more then they had at first to set up with, besides their stocks of experience; yea these men, besides their experience, have added more diligence in the use of all honest means: yet God will not let them build their estates again, he will not let them thrive in the world. Tis so also with the body: God pulls down a mans health, and strength, and then he goes from Physitian to Physitian, he asks every one he meets what he may do to build up his body again? Yet this man must carry a crazy body to the grave. *He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.* That's the first Instance.

The second is, **He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.**

סגר *Ad vias impedimentum ad carcerem ad vinculũ referri solet.*

The word which we translate to shut up, notes any kind of block, impediment, or hinderance laid in a mans way to stop his course; it is applyed also to locking of a door, that none come out, or go in; to the shutting of the Heavens, that it rain not, (2 *Chron.* 7. 17.) Shutting and opening note acts of power; and so to shut that no man can open, or so to open that no man can shut, are acts of supream power. Hence the giving of a key hath been an ancient ceremony, of investing men in places of authority and chief command. *He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening*; that is, none till he pleaseth: God saith of *Eliakim* (Isai. 22. 22.) *The key of the house of* David *will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open*; that is, he shall have the highest office in the Kings house; to shut and open bears the same sence *with going out, and coming in before a people*, Numb. 27, 17. Christ, of whose Kingdom the house of *David* was a type, is described by opening and shutting (*Rev.* 3. 7.) *These things saith he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth.* Christ hath all power in Heaven and earth given into his hand; and therefore what his hand doth, no man can undo. Now in his absence he puts this general power into the hand of the Church, to be exercised and administred by such Officers as himself hath appointed: Thus he applyes himself to *Peter*, after he had made that confession, which is the Foundation of the Church (*Matth.* 16. 19.) *I will give to thee the keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven*: where though the words vary, yet the meaning is the same, and give us this assurance, that no power can rescind what is done in and by the Church, according to the will of Christ in binding, or in loosing. Further, *shutting up*, notes in general the putting of a man into a sad condition, whether in regard of civil, or spiritual things; and *opening* imports deliverance and freedom from either.

Concludere ut nemo aperiat, suprema potestatis & libera omnium administrationis symbolum est. Sanct.

Aperire, aliquid significat lætum fortunatum, contra clausum, miserum & ærumnosum. Aprilis vocatur ab aperiendo cælo.

Hence observe, *There is no prevailing against God, or repealing any of his resolves.*

As when he breaketh none can build; so when he shutteth up none can open. *Balaam* confesseth (*Numb.* 23. 20.) *God hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it*; and where God hath cursed, who can reverse it? *If the Lord shut any door against us, or upon us, all the Smiths on earth cannot make a key to open it.* If God shut, or lock up the Heavens that it rain not, who can open them? *Elijah* comes in as if he had the keyes of Heaven at his girdle, (1 *Kings* 17. 1.) *There shall be* (saith he) *neither dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.* We find in the Epistle of *James* what the word was, *Elijah prayed that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth, for the space of three years and six months. And* Elijah *prayed again, and the Heaven gave rain.* It was not an Imperative word, it was a petitionary word, that locked and unlocked the Heaven: None hath an Imperative word, a word of command to lock and unlock Heaven, but God himself, *Amos* 3. 7. *I caused it to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City.* Again, If the Lord shut up the womb, there is no bringing forth, *Gen.* 20. 18. *The Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of* Abimelech. If the Lord shut up the earth, it becomes as iron, and brings forth no fruit; if he shut a man up in sickness, in poverty, in disgrace, in trouble of spirit, there is no unbinding, no opening. *He hath concluded, or shut up, all under sin, that every mouth may be stopped*, Rom. 3. 19. *He hath shut them all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all*, Rom. 11. 32. They are shut up as a company of prisoners in a dungeon, that they may receive, whatsoever they receive, at the hand of mercy; for who can open for those men? who can unloose these Seals of unbelief, till mercy unloose them? As none could unloose the Seals of that Book, wherein the Mysteries of God were contained, but only Christ, *Rev.* 5. 5. So none can open the Seals of sin which are upon the heart of an unbeliever, but Christ only: Christ who opened the Book, opens to our souls; Christ who loosed the Seals, can loose us from our sins: Him God hath appointed to be the great *Opener* of prisons, and the *Deliverer* of those who are in bonds: If the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed; and until he make us free, we are slaves indeed. *Whom Justice locks up, Mercy lets out.* There is no opening, either by the force, or by the desert of man, where God shutteth up. The evil Angels have so much power, that they are called powers; yet they could never get out of prison. *They are reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, to the judgment of the great day*, (*Jude* ver. 6.) Their chains will never wear out, nor can they be filed off; whithersoever those wicked spirits go, they go in chains, like prisoners who are kept till the day of Session. The Apostle *Peter* (1 *Pet.* 3. 19.) assures us as much of the spirits, or souls, of those evil men who lived in the dayes of *Noah*: These being cast into prison, could never break prison, nor make an escape unto this day. Christ by his Spirit, in the ministry of *Noah*, preached to them for the preventing of their imprisonment: He preached to them who are now in prison, that they might not have been imprisoned. *But see how sure a Goal Hell is*: those disobedient unbelievers, who were cast into prison in *Noah*'s time, were all fast there in the Apostle *Peter*'s time. There is no picking the lock of Hell gates, nor breaking through the walls of that fiery *Tophet*. *Abraham* in the Parable (*Luke* 16.) assures the rich man in Hell, that he could not come out of that place of torment, and that no comfort, not so much as a drop of comfort could be conveyed to that place (*ver.* 26.) *And besides all this* (saith he) *between us and you there is a great Gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.* The man is convinced that he could not get out, and therefore desires that no friend of his might come in; but that *Lazarus* might be sent to *testifie to his five brethren, lest they should come into that place of torment.* He knew well enough, if they were once there, they could come out no more. God will at last send his Writ to the Grave to bring out the bodies of the wicked that are shut up there, and he will send a Writ to Hell, to bring out the spirits that are shut up there, that both together may receive sentence of eternal imprisonment and torment: God will shut them up, and there shall be no opening for ever.

VERS. 15, 16.

Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.
With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his.

JOB

JOB proceedeth upon his former Argument in giving Instances to prove the great power and the unquestionable soveraignty of the Lord. In the former context we had an instance in civil affairs: *He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.* The acts of God are irreversible by man: Here he instanceth in natural things, *Behold, he withholdeth the waters,* &c. As God shutteth up men, and they cannot get out; so he shutteth up and imprisoneth the waters, and they cannot get out. This also calleth up our attention and admiration, **Behold,**

He withholdeth.] The word signifies, First, to stop or to stay a thing by strength, and fine force. Secondly, to stop or to stay a thing by authority, or command. Thirdly, to stop a thing by intreaty, or by prayer (2 *Sam.* 24. 21.) When *David* offered a sacrifice in the floor of *Araunah*, the Text saith, *So the plague was stayed:* there was a stay, a stop, a withholding of the plague: *David* intreated the Lord, and the Lord at his intreaty gave that effect; he checkt the malignity of the pestilence, and bid the destroying Angel sheath his sword. The same word is used (*Numb.* 16. 48.) when the plague was begun among the people, *Aaron* took a Censer and offered incense, *and so the plague was stayed*, or withheld: the plague was marching on swiftly and furiously, but at the intercession of *Aaron*, God stopt its course, and bid it stand. This withholding, is sometimes applyed to the laws of men: Laws are as boundaries and limits, yea, laws are as bridles and bonds, as chains and fetters, to stay and restrain, to stop and withhold the sinful extravagancies and excursions of the flesh. I find it often applyed to the withholding of water. *If I* (saith the Lord) *shut up Heaven, that there be no rain,* (2 *Chron.* 7. 13.) *then if ye pray, &c.* God locks the Clouds, and prayer is a key of Gods own making to open them. This word is also applyed to the restraint of that other Element, the stopping and shutting in of fire (*Jer.* 20. 9.) Fire and water are head-strong Elements, *They are good servants, but ill masters.* God puts a bridle upon the fire, a bridle upon the water. *He withholdeth*

עצר
Prohibuit, cessare fecit.

The waters.] What waters? It may be understood, First, of waters under or upon the earth; there are *subterranean channels* of water: Springs furnish Rivers, Rivers are *subterranean channels*, earthen vessels, or rather vehicles and conveyances of water. He withholdeth the waters, he withholdeth the under-waters, he forbids those Springs to feed the Rivers, and then they are dryed up. Secondly, it may be understood of the waters that are above (the Empire of the Lord reacheth both.) Waters hang in the Clouds, there are seas of water above us; it is the mighty power of God which gives those *aiery Sponges*, the Clouds, a retentive faculty, for else they would soon dissolve and overwhelm us. And it is from the anger and judgments of God, that those *aiery sponges*, the Clouds, are sometimes so closed up, that they yield no more water then Iron or Adamant. As he alwayes withholds the water from drowning the whole earth, so he sometimes withholds it from refreshing many parts of the earth, he forbids the Clouds to distil a drop. Thirdly, it may be expounded of the waters of the Sea, which feed the Springs, as Springs feed the Rivers, (*Nah.* 1. 4.) *He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and dryeth up all the rivers.* Where the Sea is dryed, the Rivers must. The Sea is Grandmother to the Rivers. The Prophet *Zachary* speaks the same (*Chap.* 10. 11.) *He shall smite the waves of the Sea, and all the deeps of the Rivers shall dry up. Thus also he withholdeth the waters,*

And they dry up.] What dryeth up? The Rivers dry up, when the waters of the Sea are withholden; and the things that grow upon the Earth dry up, when the waters of Heaven are withholden; and when they are withholden very long, not only the Fruits of the Earth, but the Rivers dry up too. In that great drought, (1 *Kings* 17. 17.) *The brooks dryed up, because there was no rain in the land.* Again (*Joel* 1. 20.) *The beasts of the field cry also unto thee, for the rivers of waters are dryed up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.* The fire hath devoured; What fire? It was not ordinary elemental fire that burn'd the pastures; the fire was the *Sun*, there being no rain to mollifie and mitigate his scorching beams; the Sun, as a fire, consumed the pastures of the Wilderness. So here, *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up*; that is, the Pastures (as well as the Rivers) together with all Vegetables, that are nursed and nourished by those breasts of Heaven distilling upon them.

Further, *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up*; takes in the effect which follows the withholding of the waters, and the dryness of the earth, namely, *barrenness, and famine:* and so the cause is put for the effect; and, he withholdeth the waters, is, he causeth famine in a Land: He withholdeth the waters, and, then Corn, and Grass, Trees, and Plants dry up. That three years famine (2 *Sam.* 21.) was from an extraordinary drought, as is conceived: The fruit of a drought is famine; and the fruit of rain is abundance. Plenty descends from Heaven in showers: God takes away the fruits of the earth by taking away that which should nourish and feed the earth in bearing fruit.

q. d. *Quando vult potest tum sterilitatem tum copiosã rerum omniũ abundantiã elargiri.* Bold.

I shall but note two things from this briefly, referring the Reader to the thirteenth verse of the fifth Chapter, where the power of God, in ordering rain and waters, is more fully opened.

Hence observe, First, *The waters are at Gods command, He withholdeth them.*

He withholdeth them, as it were, by a law; or he withholdeth them as with a bridle. *There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word*, saith *Elijah* (1 *Kings* 17. 1.) This spake he in the power of God; for he prayed, and then the rain or the waters were withholden. God complained of his Vineyard, (*Isa.* 5.) that he had bestowed much cost upon it, and yet had received little rent from it, unless such as was paid in base coin; *He looked for righteousness, but behold oppression*, &c. Well saith the Lord, *Go to, I will tell you what I will do*; I will do thus and thus; and besides all this, *I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* The power of God, and his glory, is wonderfully lifted up in this work of providence (*Amos* 4. 7.) *I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest*; that is, in the time when the Corn and Grass had most need of rain, *I withheld it, and I caused it* (saith he) *to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City:* read *Jer.* 5. 24. and 10. 13. *Joel* 2. 23. *Matth.* 5. 45. *Acts* 14. 17. There is a piece of secret Atheism in some about this point: The heart may be sweetly moistened by the acknowledgment of God in the rain: But most stick too much in natural causes, and scarce look beyond the Almanack for the changes of the weather. We shall have rain (say they) at the change of the Moon, or when the Wind turns. 'Tis true, that there is a natural reason, why at the change of the Moon, why at the change of the Wind, there may be a change of the weather; yet God hath a power above the Wind, and above the Moon; and therefore sometimes he lets the Moon change and change, yet no rain; and the Wind blows from all the points of Heaven, and yet no rain: That we might not stick in second causes, God often acts beyond them, yea against them: And that we should not despise second causes, and the order in which God hath disposed the frame of Nature, he often works with them, and by them. When natural causes produce their effects, God shews his bounty; and when natural causes cannot produce their effects, God shews his Soveraignty, and teacheth man his duty. Hence the want of rain in an ordinary course, is put as an extraordinary occasion of prayer, and seeking God (1 *Kings* 8. 35. *Zach.* 10. 1.) *Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain.* When rain comes not in the season of nature, we may shew much of grace in asking rain.

Secondly observe, *That natural causes being stopped, natural effects must cease.*

There can be no natural effect without a natural cause: All such effects are miraculous; withhold the rain, and all dryes up; there is a natural dependance between the fruitfulness of the earth and the rain. *David* in his last words, shewing how blessed and how great a blessing a just and a godly King is: *He shall be* (saith he) *as the light of the morning when the Sun ariseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain* (2 Sam. 23. 4.) Here he puts in all the natural causes. *He shall be as the tender grass springing out of the earth:* But what causeth the grass to spring out of the earth? There is first, the *rain*, to moisten; and secondly, the

the *clear shining*, to warm and draw out the seminal vertue of the earth. When the Lord threatens (*Deut.* 28. 33.) *I will make the Heavens over you as braſs*; he preſently adds, *and the earth under you ſhall be as iron.* If the Heavens be braſs, the earth will be iron. We have this concatenation of cauſes elegantly ſet forth (*Hoſ.* 2. 21, 22.) *I will hear the heavens* (ſaith God) *and they ſhall hear the earth, and the earth ſhall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oyl, and they ſhall hear* Jezreel. *Jezreel* muſt have Corn, and Wine, and oyl; Corn and Wine muſt be had from fertile earth; the earth cannot be fertile without benign Heavens; the Heavens can ſhew no kindneſs to the earth, either by moiſtening ſhowers, or quickening heat, without orders from God. Hence the Heavens cry to God, and the Earth to the Heavens, and the Corn to the Earth, and *Jezreel* to the Corn, that he may be fed. *If God withholdeth the waters of Heaven, the earth dryes up*; we are fed by the bleſſing of God upon ſecond cauſes. Again,

He ſendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

This latter clauſe doth not hold out the mercy oppoſite to the judgment in the former; but it holds out a ſecond judgment. For as there, *the withholding of the waters* was a judgment; ſo here, *the ſending of them out* is a judgment too. When God withholdeth the waters over-long, the earth cannot bear fruit; and when God ſendeth out the waters overmuch, the fruit which the earth bears is ſtifled and choaked. Waters are ordinarily ſent to refreſh and revive the earth; but here they are ſent to overturn the earth.

שלח
Si miſſerit aquas tãquã nuncium dẽ ferentes aut juſſionem demergendæ terræ ſibi demandatũ. Pin.

He ſendeth them.] The word ſignifies the ſending out of a meſſenger upon ſome command. Waters receive a commiſſion to ſtay at home, and they receive a commiſſion to go out in a way of judgment: God gives them a precept, a writ, *Go and overturn the earth*: He looſens their bonds, and enlargeth their borders, to puniſh thoſe who will not be kept in bounds. *Moſes* deſcribing the Deluge (to which *Job* here, as ſome conceive, alludes) ſaith, *All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of Heaven were opened* (Gen. 7. 11.) both the under-waters, and the upper-waters were till that day impriſoned and kept cloſe by the Decree of God; But then God broke open the priſon, and let out the waters, and we ſee what work they made in the world.

חפך
Evertit mutavit ſubſtantiam formam aut locum rei alicujus.

They overturned the earth.] The word notes a change both of place and ſtate; either of which, when they are great, are an overthrow, or an overturning. But is not the earth too big to be overturned? And hath not God promiſed that he will never deſtroy the earth again by water? Beſides, the earth is rather overwhelmed, then overturned by the waters. To clear this. *The earth* may be taken three wayes.

Firſt, for ſome ſpecial Tract, or Province of the earth, which the Lord may overturn, that is, ſpoil and deface without breach of that promiſe, *Gen.* 9. 11. The Bow in the Clouds is a ſign between God and the world, that he will never drown the World any more; this doth not hinder the overthrowing of great Tracts and parts of the World by water.

Secondly, By the earth we may underſtand the Inhabitants of any part of the earth, and the dwellings which they have raiſed for themſelves upon the earth. Theſe the waters are often ſent out to overturn, though the ſite and ſoil of the earth remain the ſame.

Thirdly, By the earth, we may underſtand the fruits of the earth, or the things which grow out of the earth. Thus God overturneth the earth, by ſending out immoderate rains and exceſſive ſhowers: When Corn and Graſs, when the Vines and Olives are deſtroyed, the Earth (for that ſeaſon) is deſtroyed.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The Lord can make any of the creatures mans ſcourge.*

He that made the whole World without any Inſtrument, can make one part of the World an Inſtrument to deſtroy another: He that ſet up the world without help, cannot want help to throw it down. He hath his Fire-works and his Water-works ready; *He ſendeth out the waters, and they overturn the earth.* We uſe to ſay, *Fire and water have no mercy*: Water is a terrible Element, though it is a uſeful and a comfortable Element. I might bring you many ſtories, ancient and modern, of the wonderful effects of water. *Pliny in his natural Hiſtory*, and *Seneca*, in his natural Queſtions, give us ſundry inſtances of Towns and Countries, made deſolate by water. Plin. *lib.* 2. *cap.* 90. & 92. *Nat.* Sen. *lib.* 6. Nat. *quæſt.* *c.* 23. *Hiſt.*

The queſtion is put (*Job* 28. 22.) *Haſt thou entred into the treaſures of the ſnow? Or haſt thou ſeen the treaſures of the hail, which I have reſerved*: Againſt when? *Which I have reſerved againſt the time of trouble, againſt the day of battel and war?* The Lord ſpeaks here as ſome great Prince, who hath a Magazine ſtored and filled with Ammunition againſt a time of war. *Haſt thou* (ſaith he) *entred into the treaſures of the ſnow?* Haſt thou been in my Magazine, and conſidered what ſtores I have laid up there againſt the day of battel and war? What day of battel and war is this? We may expound it either one or both theſe wayes: Firſt, of ſome day of Gods ſpecial wrath and judgment upon a people, when no enemy appears but himſelf; when he (as it were) in perſon makes war upon them, and comes forth in battel againſt them: In ſuch a day of battel as this, he brings out theſe treaſures of wrath, the Snow and the Hail. God went to war and battel againſt *Egypt* immediately; and one of the ſoreſt plagues was the Hail, which deſtroyed the earth by killing the Cattel, Corn, and Fruits, *Exod.* 9. 18. God ſent down ſhowers of water made up into bullets, upon *Egypt*, ſuch is Hail. Secondly, We may underſtand it of a day when a war is made againſt his people; for then he ſometimes brings forth this Ammunition out of his ſtore-houſes, he fires his great Guns, and pours out volleys of ſhot from Heaven upon the enemies of his people. We have a clear record, which gives God the glory of this truth (*Joſh.* 10. 11.) When *Joſhua* was ingaged in battel with thoſe uncircumciſed Nations, *The Lord caſt down great ſtones from Heaven upon them, and they dyed; they were more which dyed with hail-ſtones, then they whom the children of* Iſrael *ſlew with the ſword.* Thus whether we underſtand that Text of the day of Gods immediate war againſt evil men, or of the day when evil men war againſt the people of God: both are evidences of his power, in ſending *waters, hail and ſnow, ſtorm and tempeſts* (all which he hath at his command) *to overturn the earth.* Great Princes and States, ſend forth their Generals with command to overturn Cities, and deſtroy all that will not ſubmit unto them; God gives a charge to ſenſleſs and inanimate creatures to go forth and overturn the earth, and it is done.

Secondly obſerve, *That the very ſame creature which is a mercy to us, may be a great affliction and a ſcourge to us.*

Waters fatten, and waters deſtroy the earth. We pray in drought for rain and waters; the Lord can give us rain, until rain ſhall afflict as much as drought. There is no earthly thing but we may have too much of it. The exceſs of any creature is a judgment upon the creature. We may ſoon have too much fire, and too much water; too much heat and too much cold; as the want of theſe things troubles us, ſo likewiſe doth the glut of them: we depend upon God as much for the quantity and meaſure of outward mercies, as for the mercies themſelves. See here a difference between the things of Nature, and the things of Grace. We can never have too much of Grace, nor too much of the Spirit. *The more we have of theſe the better; and we are then beſt, when we have moſt.* A gracious heart grows up to glory, through the abundance of grace. *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs*, (is the Apoſtles caution, *Eph.* 5. 18.) *But be filled with the Spirit.* We may drink wine quickly to exceſs; but we cannot be filled with the Spirit to exceſs; there is no exceſs poſſible in that, and therefore the Apoſtle gives no caution about it. Take your fill of the Spirit, you cannot be overfill'd. The wine of the Spirit doth not make us drunk; the more we drink of it, the more ſober we are. And the waters of the Spirit do never drown us; the more and the oftner they fall upon us, or overflow us, the more fruitful we are. The waters of the Spirit are never ſent out to overturn the ſoul; the mightieſt inundations of Grace, make the heart mighty for God. Spiritual things in the leaſt degree are a bleſſing; and the greater the degree is, the greater is the bleſſing. Hence that promiſe, *In the latter dayes* (ſaith God) *I will pour out my Spirit*; you ſhall not only

only have some drops, and still dews, but strong showers, rivers and torrents flowing down from Heaven, upon the dry and parched ground, upon the barren wilderness, to make it like *Eden*, the Garden of God; such Rivers shall run into you, till you shall have Rivers running from you. *He that believeth on me* (saith Christ, *John* 7. 38.) *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: This he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.*

Verse 16. **With him is strength and wisdom; the deceived and the deceiver are his.**

The former instance was in the works of Nature; now *Job* instanceth in civil things, shewing the providence and power of God acting mightily in them: *With him is strength and wisdom.*

We had these words at the thirteenth verse [*With him is wisdom and strength*] so we translate in both. Why doth he (only two verses put between) repeat the same thing again? He had said, *ver.* 13. *With him is wisdom and strength*; here, *With him is strength and wisdom*: Why doth he touch so often upon this string?

Note from it, First, *That all repetitions are not useless and vain.*

Repetitions in Scripture have not only an elegancy in them, but a profitableness in them. That's one thing.

Secondly, From the matter, *With him is strength and wisdom.* (That's the point.) It is no small matter that he repeateth, and it teacheth us thus much,

That we need to hear often of, and meditate often upon, the power and wisdom of God.

When we have learn'd that lesson once well, we have learned a great many lessons: When the heart is but assured and settled in this truth, and can make the inferences, and draw out the conclusions which flow from those premises, we have profited very much in the knowledge of God.

But further, we may answer. The reason why *Job* repeateth what he had so lately asserted, may be this, because he beginneth upon a new subject: and therefore as he put this Preface [*With him is wisdom and strength*] to those former Instances, so now giving Instances of an higher nature, he renews that Doctrine, *With him is wisdom and strength.* He would have the thoughts of men close fully with these Attributes of God. As if he had said, *I shall speak to you of such things as you will never believe, nor honour God in the manifestation of them, unless your hearts be very well setled upon this foundation, that with him is strength and wisdom.*

Hence observe, *That great truths must be ushered, or led in with great thoughts of God.*

As in prayer, when weighty petitions are made, we find the Saints raising up their hearts, and bearing up their spirits to high thoughts of God: so when any great doctrinal truths are laid before us, usually there is somewhat prefaced about the greatness of God, which may cause us to reverence and adore such truths. The Prophets, *Thus saith the Lord*, or, *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, was as if they had said, We speak his words, who is able to make them good.

Or lastly, *Job* speaks this only in a way of acclamation, as being lifted up and ravished with the meditation of Gods Greatness, Power, and Wisdom. And therefore as he had said, so he saith it a second time, *With him is wisdom and strength.* He is the strong God, the wise God: This, Rhetoricians call (*Epiphonema*) a raising up of the voice and spirit, in acclamation to the truth of that which is spoken. When the Apostle had exhorted the Saints to rejoyce, he adds, *And again, I say, rejoyce*: so here, did I say the Lord hath wisdom and strength? I will say it again, with him is wisdom and strength.

Epiphonematicōs dictum, cum eo sane est robur & ratio. Mere.

But though the words in our Translation are the same with the thirteenth verse, yet the Hebrew differs. In the thirteenth verse the words are *Chochmah* and *Geburah*; but here, *Ghoz* and *Tosiah*; which though they bear the same interpretation in the English, yet they have a greater force in the Original: For the former signifies not only irresistible strength, but excellency and dignity joyned with that strength: so that it imports a person cloathed as much with dignity and honour, as with strength and power (*Psal.* 29. 1.) *Give unto the Lord glory and strength*; that is, give unto the Lord a strength which is glorious. *Jerome* translates this word often by *Imperium*, sometimes by *virtus*, noting in both, *an Imperial sovereignty or power.*

עז

Ita fortitudinem significat, ut etiā dignitatem, præstantiā, honorem & excellentiam connotet. Hieronymus *vertit* imperium *sæpè*, virtus. *7o. Honor regius.*

The latter word signifies not only wisdom in general, but the highest and purest wisdom, the most *sublimate and refined wisdom, the very quintessence and spirit of wisdom*: Again, it signifies not only the *quintessence, and extract of wisdom*, but *being and existence*: As if he had said, *with him is being, substance, permanency*: divers of the Rabbins translate so, and so doth Mr. *Broughton, He hath the force, and all that is*; all being is contracted and brought unto God, *for he is the first being, and in him all things live, move, and have their being.* Now here is much more then we had at the thirteenth verse, *With him is force, and all that is*; that is, the being and subsistence of all creatures is contained in God. God is his own being, he is *self-being, self-existence*; and all existence or being is derived from him. This is the highest Elogy of God. Thirdly, It signifies not only the first being, but the most excellent being, the being and subsistence (so some of the Rabbins render it) of the *High-Priest*, of Kings and Emperours, a being in sovereign authority; fix your thoughts upon the noblest subsistences, such, and infinitely more noble then such, is the subsistence of God. With God *is being*, with him is the most glorious being; all the excellent beings that are scattered through the world, are summ'd up, and united in God; yea they are all but so many streams, and beams, issuing from this *ever-flowing Fountain and glorious Sun of being.* Fourthly, This word signifies also the rule, or the certain law of wisdom and judgment: not only that wisdom which acts in man, but the rule by which that wisdom acts. The reason of government, or the measure by which all things are to be governed, lyes in the bosom of this word. Here also another shining truth breaks forth from under the clouds of this expression; *With him is such wisdom as is the rule and measure of all things which are done in wisdom.* *Job* being to speak great things of God, that *the deceiver and deceived are his, that he looseth the bonds of Kings*, &c. had but need to put this preface to it, *With God is the measure, the reason of all things.*

Tuscijah denotat subsistentiam eminentissimam qualis est dignitas regalis.

Significat certam legē & rationem ad quam omnia exiguntur. Mer. *Cum ipso est Tuscijah & lux perpetua movens omnia secundam voluntatem suam Antevertentem.* Rab. Abra. Peril. *Robore quidem valet, sed interim etiam certa lege & ratione ac æquitatis formula omnia gubernat. Prima justitiæ & juris Origo est optima & santissima Dei voluntas partī quia ille jus habet in omnia quippe quæ ipsius sunt.* Coc.

Thus we have found these words in the Original, far more fruitful and extensive in sence, then those used for strength and wisdom at the thirteenth verse.

From the last interpretation, take this Note,

That the will of God, or God himself, is the rule of all things.

God hath not a rule without him, but within him, it is himself. In this he differs from the best of men: Man hath a rule, but the rule is one thing, and the man is another; the Law is one thing, and the King is another: but God and his rule are the same; his will and his law are himself; this renders him excellent in dignity, *The Lord over all. Tyrants make their will their law*; But what is their will? Their will is crooked, a leaden, Lesbian rule, which turneth and changeth, and will fashion it self to any occasion, or immergency: their wills are distorted and turned this way and that way, even every way. And therefore it must needs produce tyranny for a man to make his will his rule, because his will hath not an everlasting rectitude and straitness in it. But the Lord makes his will a law, and there is no tyranny, nothing but justice and equity in it. It is impossible for any law to be made so strait as the will of God is; it is impossible to give a rule so holy as Gods will is. If we could have a supream Magistrate, whose will were as holy, just, and good, as any law, it were reason his will should be the law: but this cannot be; therefore it is the prerogative of God alone, whose will is (as we have described) the original of justice, and so more then a law, which is but the measure of justice. *The counsels of God are without consultation, his decrees without deliberation: he hath all wisdom without study or experience; all knowledge and evidence of things without discoursing upon premises, or drawing down conclusions.* And whence is this? but because with him is this certain rule which cannot err. The Pope challengeth to himself, that, though he may err in his private actions as he is a man, yet as he is (in *Cathedra*) seated in the Apostolick chair, as he is the visible head of the Church,

Church, he cannot err; his will is the rule: we see what rule it is, by the rules which it hath given. Who can say that is clean, which brings forth an unclean thing; or strait and true, which brings forth that which is crooked and erroneous? Sinful actings speak sinful men, and his actings have been sinful enough to speak him (what is written of him) *The man of sin.* The actings of God have been so holy, that they declare him *The holy God*; and his wayes so wise and just, that they proclaim his Wisdom to be the unerring rule of justice. *With him is strength and wisdom.*

Job having thus premised the unsearchable *wisdom* and insuperable *strength* of God, giveth a proof of both in the next words,

The deceived and the deceiver are his.

שגג *Ignoravit* שגה *In Hiphil errare fecit.*

The deceived.] *Is passive*, A man misled through ignorance or inadvertency: **The deceiver**, *is active*; he consults and plots to catch the simple in his snare: Yet the word may signifie also to seduce ignorantly; for as all are deceived through ignorance (he is not deceived, who knows that he is) so some deceive through ignorance; supposing they give good counsel, and hold out the truth, when they are wrapt up in, and blinded with the darkness of error. And though most deceivers deceive knowingly, and intend to do the evil which they do, yet ignorance causeth some to deceive; and did they know better they would not do so bad. But under what notion soever any man is deceived, or becomes a deceiver, the Text entitles them both to God.

Ex Hebræis multi per facientem errare Satanam nimis arcte intelligunt.

The deceived and the deceiver are his.] I shall open two things about it.

1. Who are the deceived and the deceiver.
2. In what sence they are said to *be his*, that is; the Lords.

There are some, who by the *deceiver*, understand the Devil, who is indeed *the great deceiver* and impostor: he wrought the first deceit in the world, and to deceive is his continual trade in the world. Men do but use deceit in their Trades and Transactions; but the Devils trade and all his transactions are deceit. Yet we must not restrain and narrow up this Scripture to him only. God considereth that *great deceiver*, and all that are deceived by him. But *Job* discourseth of men, not of devils; and then the deceivers and the deceived are of two sorts.

1. In matters of Religion, or in spiritual things.
2. In matters of the world, or in civil things.

In matters of Religion, there is much deceiving, and many are deceived: Christ foretells it will be so. (*Matth.* 24. 24.) *There shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders, in so much that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very elect.* But though it be impossible for them to deceive the elect, yet their attempt shall not be without too much success. For, *Take heed* (saith Christ to his Disciples, *ver.* 4, 5.) *that no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.* Their deceits shall prosper. *Paul* (*Tit.* 1. 10.) speaks of deceivers who *subvert whole houses*: not by outward violence, but by cunning craftiness, they overthrow their faith, and turn them from the truth: thus they deceived whole families.

Secondly, There is *The deceiver and the deceived* in civil things, or in matters of the world. And these are of two sorts.

Non solum hæc quæ loquitur Job, de Judæo-Syrianis intellexerim sed de omnibus erroribus tũ in politiâ & civitatibus regendis, tum in domo, &c. Merc.

First, In commerce and trading: Thus we read (*Prov.* 11. 1.) *Of the false ballance, which is an abomination to the Lord.* And the Prophet *Micah* brings in the Lord disdaining at these deceivers, (*Chap.* 6. 11.) *Shall I count them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? for the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lyes* (he means Exchange-lyes, Warehouse-lyes, Shop-lyes, the lyes of the seller, or of the buyer) *and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.*

Secondly, In matters of *government and policy*, about which the greatest deceits and jugglings have been exercised in all the ages of the world. What crafty Councellors suggest, simple plain-hearted men are taken with, and often misled to their own destruction. In *Absalom*'s rebellion there *went two hundred men out of* Jerusalem *that were called, and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing,* namely, of *Absolom*'s intent of aspiring to his Fathers Throne: *They were meerly catcht*, and surprised with his wilely insinuations. Politicians are skill'd to put fair vizards upon foul faces, and cover their wicked designs with honest pretences. These are *State-sophisters*; their study is to put fallacies and cheats upon the common people. All these deceivers, and they who are deceived by them, are comprehended under this general affirmation, *The deceived and the deceiver are his.*

How his?

The Hebrew is rendred, or rather paraphrased three wayes. First, *They are of him.* Secondly, *To him.* Thirdly, *From him.* We translate, *They are his*, and that may include all three. Yea, there is a *five-fold his*, which I may hint to clear this point.

לו *Ejus vel ei vel ab eo est errans & errare faciens.* Merc.

First, *His* by creation.
Secondly, *His* by possession.
Thirdly, *His* for use and service.
Fourthly, *His* by way of dominion, or disposal.
Lastly, *His* by way of special affection and appropriation.

The two former of these are too little for the point: For, to say *the deceived and the deceiver are his*, by creation, is indeed to say nothing peculiar to this point: for so is the earth, and the sea, and the storms, and the winds, every thing is his, they are all Gods creatures. And secondly, to say *they are his by way of possession*, that he is the Lord and Proprietor of them, this also is too little, for so (*Psal.* 50.) *All the beasts of the forrests are his, and the cattel upon a thousand hills.* To say no more of this deceiver, and the deceived, then you may say of the beasts of the field, or of the fowls of the air, or of the fishes in the sea, that the Lord is the maker and possessor of them, is below the purpose of *Job*, and the honour of God. And as these two are not enough, so the fifth way of being *his*, is too much, for *they are not his* by way of special affection and appropriation. That's too great a priviledge for the deceiver and the deceived: for so only (among men) the Saints are his. These are Gods peculiars, and beloved ones, as he speaks of his people *Israel*, to *Moses*, Exod. 19. 5. *Now therefore if ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine.* And though it be possible for many that are deceived, and for some who deceive at present, to be his, even in this way of special appropriation; yet this were too high a sense to give this Text; therefore we shall take the *his* in the third and fourth sences. *They are his*; that is, *his* to use, or he makes use of them: and *they are his* to dispose; that is, he disposeth and ordereth, both the deceiver and the deceived, to his own righteous ends and holy purposes.

Both which may be more fully demonstrated, by these following interpretations.

First, *He knoweth them*: so the vulgar reads it, *He knoweth the deceiver*, or the deceiver is known to him, and so also is the deceived: As if he had said, *The Lord is acquainted with the deceiver, though he thinks that he walks in a mist, or is wrapt up in a cloud, though he flatter himself that no eye sees him; yet whether he be a deceiver in matters of Religion, or in matters of Trade and State-policy, God knows what he is; he whose seven eyes run through the whole earth, sees him throughly.* For when it is said, that the Lord knows the deceiver, it is not meant only thus, that he knows his name or person, *There goes a deceiver, there's a false heart, there's a head full of errors and rotten principles*; but the Lord knoweth with what artifices and fetches, with what devices and projects, by what wayes and engines, he compasseth and carrieth on the trade of deceiving. He knows also by what misrepresentations, false glosses, and semblances of truth, the deceived have been intrapt and drawn into the snare. To do this is one of the highest acts of wisdom. To discern how, and wherein another hath been deceived, shews as much soundness of understanding, as not to be deceived. Any fool commits, or runs into error, only a wise man finds it out; *Eccles.* 1. 17. *I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. Solomon* studied as much to know folly, as to know wisdom. Only truth discovers falshood, and right the wrong.

Ipse novit. Vul.

Novit quâ arte quo ardu fallit decipiens, cujus rei ignorantiâ vel inanimadvertentia falsa pro veris amplectitur errans, quod non nisi per sapientiam fieri potest. Merc.

Secondly, *deceiver and the deceived are his*, sounds thus much, *That God will make them both to be accountable unto himself.*

himself. A master saith to his steward or servant, You shall give me an account of these actions and expences; so saith God to the deceiver, and the deceived, you shall answer for what you have done, you that deceive shall be sure to pay for it; and you that are deceived shall not escape a tryal and a censure, for your carelesness and your folly: you should have look'd better to it, twas your duty to prove all things and to hold fast that which was good. Some are deceived in civil things, and are blameless; It is their affliction to be deceived, not their sin: but there is no man that is deceived in spiritual things, and is blameless; there it is every mans sin not to know his duty, and not to try before he approves. The same word in the Greek signifies both to prove, and to approve; implying that no man ought to approve any thing before he hath proved it. It is no honour to a man to approve that which is true, before he proves it: but he that approves an errour before he hath any proof of it, runs himself into a double sin: First, of being deceived: Secondly, of not so much as considering whether he were or no. But which way soever a man is deceived, whether through ignorance or idleness, whether because he could not find the truth when he searcht for it, or because he would not be at the cost and pains to search for it, whether it were this or that by which he is deceived, God will reckon with him about it; much more then will he reckon with deceivers, whether they have deceived simply, or upon design, though these last shall be deepest in condemnation. God will arraign all impostors and cheaters, all mountebanks and corrupters of truth, whether in spirituals or in civils; *They are all his*, and they shall stand before him to receive according to their deeds of darkness and deceit.

Neq; permissiõ tantũ Domini hoc Scriptura tribuit, ut quidam putant, qui sapientiorũ spiritu factio videri volunt. Merc. Job *vult indicare divina providentia fieri, quod quidã errant, quidam vero alios decipiãt & in errores inducant.*

Thirdly, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*, that is (as some understand it) he permits and suffers deceiving and deceit to be in the world; it is from his sufferance that there are any such. This is a truth, though not all the truth; The Lord doth not will any deceit, yet there can be no deceit whether he will or no; it is possible, yea very easie for him to hinder both the deceiver and the deceived, but he is not obliged to do it, neither is he pleased to do it: he doth not alwayes give check to deceivers, nor doth he at all times set a bar in their way. He alwayes hinders errour morally, by declaring against it; but he doth not alwayes hinder it powerfully and effectually by acting against it. Thus the deceiver and the deceived are his by permission: but this is not all, they are more his then thus. For,

Fourthly, *The deceiver and the deceived are said to be his, because he ordereth and disposeth them*; he sendeth out deceivers, and giveth men up to be deceived. He is active in this dispensation, yet free from the least touch of pollution. He is not the author of the deceit, though he be the orderer and disposer of it. Mr. *Calvin* gives his judgement upon the place to this effect, roundly and clearly. *To say* (saith he) *that God doth only permit men to deceive, and to be deceived, is a very cold expression, and speaks little, yea it is a derogation to the honour of God*; for the Lord in infinite wisdom and holiness, disposeth of the errours of men, and of those that lead them into errour.

There are four things, in which the providence of God moves to the ordering of this disorderly work of man.

First, He orders the persons, who shall deceive, and who shall be deceived; Hence it is said (*Matth.*24.) that the false prophets, and the false Christs, arising in the latter times, *should (if it were possible) deceive the very elect.* Then the elect are persons exempt; deceivers may distemper them, but they shall never poison them.

Secondly, When or what time any shall deceive or be deceived, is also ordered by God. We read that Satan was bound for a thousand years, *that he should not deceive the nations* (Rev. 20.) It was God that bound him. Satan must be in a chain of divine providence a thousand years, *and after that he must be loosed a little season.* He that bound him loosed him; and as he bound him that he should not deceive, so he loosed him to deceive the Nations. But how doth Satan deceive? Not immediately by himself; the devil doth not come above-board (as we speak) he doth not walk in his own likeness, and appear as he is, that would terrifie men, rather then deceive them; but he acts by transforming himself into an angel of light. He stirreth up the spirits of men, to deceive, as he stirreth them up to vex and persecute those who will not be deceived: as the devil is said to cast those witnesses of the truth into prison, who are imprisoned by men at his instigation (*Rev.*2.10.) so he is said to deceive and lead those into errour, who are misled by men at his instigation. It was the devil who filled the heart of *Ananias*, to vent a verbal lye; and the devil fills the hearts of deceivers to vent and maintain doctrinal lies. The times of these deceivers are in the hand of God; he hath set down the term when they shall begin, and how long they shall continue their ensnaring Trade.

Thirdly, God orders how far any man shall deceive, or to what degree his deceit shall prevail. Hence the Apostle speaking of deceivers, *men of corrupt mindes, reprobate concerning the faith*, concludes, *but they shall proceed no further* (2 Tim. 3.9.) As the maliciousness, so the deceivableness of men would know no bounds, if God did not bound it. But because he doth, therefore though they would, yet they shall proceed no further. No man can do good till God assists him, and no man shall do hurt when God will stop him.

Thus far the Lord is active in ordering the deceiver, and the deceived. That Scripture is clear for it (1 *King.*22.22.) *Ahab* was deceived, and the false prophets deceived him; Whence was it? The deceivers and the deceived were under the hand of God. *Micaiah* spake it out plainly, as *Ahab* had desired (1 *King.* 22. 19, 20.) *I saw the Lord sitting upon his Throne*, &c. *And the Lord said, who shall perswade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?* &c. *And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will perswade him. And the Lord said, thou shalt perswade him, and prevail also, go forth, and do so. Now therefore* (saith the Prophet) *the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets.* The Lord hath done it: He was active in it, yet full of holiness and truth in himself, as well as of justice and wrath against *Ahab.* Because *Ahab* hated the true Prophet, therefore he is given up to the teaching of false prophets. Here was more then a bare suffering: God, as a Judge, put a lying spirit, as his executioner, into the mouths of those lying prophets. They who like not plain-dealing, are justly flattered into destruction. The Apostle speaking of that gross deception under which the Jews then lay, and still lye to this day; ascribes it to God by Scripture Authority, *According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber; eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day*, (Rom. 11.8.) And the Lord takes it upon himself in down right words, (*Ezek.* 14.9.) *If the Prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet.* Not that the Lord did instil or infuse errour into the Prophet; he is the God of truth, he is the author of truth, and therefore cannot be the author of errour; he is the revenger of errour, and therefore also he cannot be the abetter of it. Yet the Lord saith, *I have deceived him.* Observe (saith *Calvin*) *God slinks not into a corner, saying I permitted it, and suffered it, I drew a curtain between me and the world, and let men do what they pleased, No, but he standeth in the open light, and saith, I have deceived that Prophet.* The man of sin is prophesied coming *with all deceiveableness of unrighteousness, in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth: For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lye.* The delusion is of their deserving, but of Gods sending: They deserve it because they never loved the truth, and God sends it because he ever loveth justice.

And as he sends these *spiritual delusions*, so he likewise sends *political delusions.* When a people are deceived and led away from the wholesome rules of government, when they have *State tricks* put upon them: We may conclude as the Prophet doth, *when* Egypt *was seduced* (Isa.19.14.) *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to erre in every work thereof.* Nations, through the just judgement of God, run into errour after errour, and stagger like a drunken man in his vomit, till they fall into the pit, and into the snare of some utter desolation.

Further, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*; that is, the Lord improves both, to serve his own ends, to bring about his counsels, and promote his glory. We think nothing

nothing serves the ends of God but the publication of truth; yes, the publishing and spreading of errours serve his ends too, and bring his purposes to pass. Carnal reason startles at this, and cannot make it out. But go into the sanctuary, and learn what this meaneth: remember *Jobs* preface, *With him is strength and wisdom*, and you will be satisfied. The preface makes the doctrine easie: and who is not convinced that there is infinite wisdom, and a strait rule in him, who can regulate the irregularity and crookedness, the errours and absurdities of man? Who can find out the depth of his wisdom, who is able to make such improvements out of folly, and give an advantage to truth, by the breaking out of falsity? Doth not the glory of God shine bright in this? The question is put by *Augustine*, in his 22. book *of the City of God*, Why doth not God remove and sweep sin and errour out of the world? He answers, *It is better, and an act of greater power to make good out of evil, then not to suffer evil to be: As it is one of the highest acts of grace in man, to render good for evil: so it is one of the highest acts of power in God to draw good out of evil.* We may well conclude, *wisdom and strength are his*, whom the craft and skill of men to deceive cannot circumvent, and whom the sillines and folly of men in being deceived cannot disappoint. In how clear a light doth God dwell, yea how clear a light is God, who makes his way without one wry step through all the mists and darkness of this world? It argues an infinite soveraignty in God, that he doth his work by that which seems to work against him. Deceivers do the work of God, though they intend nothing but their own.

For first, God would have his people tried, and he tries them by those who attempt to deceive them. (*Deut.* 13. 1,2.) *If there arise among you a Prophet, that speaks unto thee, saying, let us go after other Gods*, &c. *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you.* Here is the account which God gives, why he lets deceivers go abroad, and take their scope among his people, *It is to prove his people.* The Apostle gives the same reason, (1 *Cor.* 11. 19.) *For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.* It would never appear either what false principles corrupt the hearts and understandings of men, or what truth and sincerity are lodged there, if the Lord did not let out deceivers and false prophets, to open their packs of lies in their sight or hearing.

Secondly, God would have us, not only hold truth, but be zealous for the truth, and *contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints*: He therefore sends out some to oppose it. Some are busied in spreading deceits, that we may learn to be more busie in withstanding them, or more watchful in avoiding them. When we hear that there are *Cut-purses* in a crowd, every man looks to his purse; so when we hear that deceivers and impostors are in the Church, and that they come with such an effectualness of deceit, that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect, this must needs awaken all to look to themselves; will you not try what ye receive, when ye hear there are deceivers, and teachers of false doctrine are abroad, as well as teachers of the truth? and that there are *blind guides*, as well as *Seers* gone forth? If nothing but truth could possibly be offered, our care and pains to prove what is offered might be spared: Neither would it be needful for us to pray unto Christ (the great Prophet) to keep us in his truth, but only to give us faith to receive, and wills to obey his truth. But seeing there are deceivers abroad, shall we not examine before we receive? shall we not weigh and try all in the balance of the Sanctuary, by the touchstone of the word, ere we believe it?

If any ask, Why are so many misled into errour, and poisoned with unwholsom doctrine? why doth not God preserve, and antidote all places against these infections? The Prophet *Ezekiel* hints us an answer (*chap.* 14. *vers.* 7.) God punisheth one sin with another. When men continue in sins of practice, God lets them fall into sinful opinions. He justly blinds their eyes against his truth, who harden their hearts against his fear, *and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces.* A second reason is given by the Apostle (2 *Thes.* 2.) He had said, *vers.* 11. *God shall send them strong delusion*, the reason follows, it is, *because they received not the love of the truth*: The understanding may submit, while the affections stand out. It is easier to receive truth, then to receive the love of the truth. And how much truth so ever we receive without love to it, leaves us still under the wrath of God. The wrath of God is visible in his judgements; and this is judgement in perfection, *to be given up to strong delusion.* Those are the sorest punishments which are made of sins. They are punished with the belief of errour, who love not truth. *False doctrines are fit plagues for false hearts.* And as they shall be beaten with many stripes, who know their masters will and do it not, so also shall they who know it, and love it not; and indeed these and the former are the same. The reason why any doth not what he knows, is because he doth not love it; and he that loves it, will do it, for love is the fulfilling of the commandment.

By all it appears, how the *deceiver and the deceived are Gods.* Mr. *Broughton* hath put the sum of these several interpretations into his translation. *By him, and from him, and for him, are deceivers and deceived. From him*, that is, he sendeth them. *By him*, that is, he suffers and orders them. *For him*, that is, they promote his glory, and serve his ends, either to try and discover who are faithful, or to punish those who are false.

Take one note by way of inference from the whole. *If the deceiver and the deceived are the Lords, then surely they who lead others into truth, and they that are led into truth, are his much more.* Truth teachers, and truths receivers, lye, as, in the bosom of God, and are his by special approbation; They are to him as the apple of his eye, as his precious jewels; They are his Scholars, he teacheth them; he teacheth those that teach truth, and they who learn truth are taught of him; The Lord feeds them with knowledge and understanding; *He maketh them to lye down in green pastures* (of sound doctrine) *he leadeth them beside the still waters* of spiritual consolation. *He will open the gates of salvation, to a righteous nation who love the truth*, (Isa. 26. 1.) They are his, and none shall pluck them out of his hands; they shall not be left either to the cunning craftines of deceivers, or to the rough violence of oppressours. And though such as publish and receive the truth may suffer for it, yet they shall never loose by it. *Truth is such a commodity as never broke the buyer, what ever it cost him.*

VERS. 17, 18.

He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools.
He looseth the bonds of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

JOB insisteth upon his former argument, to illustrate the power and wisdom of God. He had done it in natural things at the 15th vers. *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up.* He did it in civil and spiritual things, at the 16th vers. *The deceived and the deceiver are his.* In this context he enumerates more distinctly, the several sorts and degrees of men, whom the Lord by the wonderful administrations of his power and wisdom, sets up or casts down.

In the former verse we heard of deceivers in Religion, and of deceivers in policy: of *Church-deceivers*, and of *State-deceivers.* The instances given here are about the latter: we may call them *State-hereticks*, deceiving, or being deceived in the ministery of justice, to Kingdoms and Commonwealths. And because the intent of *Job* is to shew the mutations of States and Kingdoms, therefore he speaks of those who are the chief supporters, the most eminent pillars of States and Kingdoms. Of these he names, 1. *Councellours.* 2. *Judges.* 3. *Kings*; in whose miscarriages whole Kingdoms miscarry.

Versibus his quinq; describitur Monarchiæ status Labefactatio atque eversio. Merl.

It is here observable in general, that *Job* being to describe the providences of God in the world, doth not meddle with small matters, as what God doth to a private person, or single families; but he deals in those which are most eminent, the transmutations of Kingdoms, which fall within the observation of the whole world. If a particular man be undone or ruined, his next neighbour takes notice of it, but it is scarce known in the next village: But when Kingdoms are ruined, all States and Kingdoms ring of

Assert rara & extraordinaria quæ Deus facit, ut his tremendis operibus & judiciis veterũ à nobis excutiat. Merc.

of it, such events are the talk and wonder of the Nations round about.

Secondly, He doth not instance in the founding and establishing of Kingdoms, wherein yet the wisdom and power of God are very glorious; but in their destruction and putting down. And the reason is, because we take greater notice of God in pulling down, then we do in building up; we observe him more when he killeth, then when he maketh alive; his withdrawings are more noted then his presence, and we are more sensible of our privations, then of our injoyments. The Sun is more looked at in an ecclipse, then when it shineth with purest lustre.

Further, He giveth instance in these, because we are apt to cast the miscarriages of Kingdoms upon second causes. It was the pride of such, the envy of others, the ambition of a third sort, or the unfaithfulness of a fourth, which undid all; we seldom look up to the hand of God, while we complain so much of men. In all changes here below, *Job* carrieth our thoughts directly to God, *He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled:* Do not stay enquiring how weakly Counsellours advised, or how foolishly Judges gave their sentence, it is God that doth all these things, *He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools*, &c. More distinctly,

מוליך *Ire faciens.* יעץ *Consulere, decernere, deliberare. Consiliarius est, qui sibi ipsi vel aliis dat rationē agendi.*

He leadeth.] The Hebrew is, he makes them go, he makes them go whether they will or no: he leadeth them from the height of their dignity, into a despised condition. No man hath any mind to such a motion.

Counsellours.] Counsellours (as the word is ordinarily taken) are such as give advice in publick affairs; *they chalk out the way for action*; that's the proper work of counsel; Counsel is to lay the design, and to cut out the means, how businesses are to be carried, how to be mannaged, then others are called to execute. *Counsel tables order the affairs of the whole world:* they give the rule, and draw the method, they appoint the instruments and set the time how all shall be done. A Counsellour is like the Pilot at the helm, steering the vessels course, (*Prov.* 11. 14.) *Where no counsel is, the people fall, but in the multitude of Counsellours there is safety.* Hence when *Job* would set forth the destruction of a people, he tells us that God *leadeth Counsellours*

Διάγω βουλευτὰς αἰχμαλώτους. Sept. *Ducit consultores captivos.*

Away spoiled.] The Hebrew is variously interpreted. The Septuagint saith, *He leadeth them away as captives.* Then the sence riseth thus, That the Lord takes the wise Counsellours of the earth, as prisoners in war; when they in their counsels and designs have set themselves against his Throne and Kingdom, when they have been devising devices against his people; then the Lord comes out with his Army, conquers them, and leads them captive. When Christ ascended upon high, (*Psal.* 68. 18.) *He led captivity captive*, or, *He captivated captivity*; that is, he led those captive who had captivated his people; or he led his people, who were miserable captives to Satan, into a blessed captivity to himself. And as he led *captivity captive*, so he can *lead liberty captive*, making those who injoyed the greatest liberty, even *Counsellours themselves, his captives.*

There are three wayes in which this leading Counsellours spoiled and captivated may be understood.

De gradu dignitatis dejicit. Drus.

First, *Spoiled of their honour and reputation.* It is as easie as it is usual with the Lord, *to spoil those of honour in the world, who use their counsels and their power against those whom he honours.* It is as great an affliction to cast them out of the hearts of men, (especially of good men) as out of their estates. *The hand of God is in nothing more visible then in making them a detestation among men, who were the delight of men.* Honour is one of the richest spoils that can be taken from any man, especially from Counsellours; who alwayes do as much with their reputation, as with their reason, and can do nothing with all their reason, when once they have lost their reputation.

Sapientes hujus seculi optato fine dejicit. Pin.

Secondly, *He leadeth them away spoiled* of their hopes and expectations, spoiled of the booty and of the prey which they designed to themselves; they thought of rich advantages by spoiling others, but they are led away spoiled. To which sence the words are well expounded, *He doth cast the wise men of this world from their wished end:* They who presumed and promised themselves great spoils, become a spoil. *Eliphaz* treateth at large of this point, (*Chap.* 5. 12.) *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hand cannot perform their enterprise.*

Hebræi spoliatos mente & judicio exponunt. Merc.

Thirdly, These Counsellours are often spoiled, not only of their honour and credit, of their ends and hopes, but also of their wits and wisdom. They whose wits and wisdom continue as high and quick as ever, may yet be disappointed in their counsels, and loose both their ends and honour: But the Lord doth sometimes spoil the wise of wisdom, and knowing men of understanding. The Hebrew Doctors delight most in this interpretation, *He preyeth upon the wisdom of the wise*; they think themselves able to outreach and outpolicy all the world: Yet God blasts their gifts, and darkens their understandings, he puts them out of their wits, and makes their judgements injudicious. He gives them up (as he did those Gentiles, who waxed vain in their imaginations, *Rom.* 1. 28.) *to a reprobate mind*, to an unjudging, or an unapproving spirit. They who knowingly put darkness for light, and light for darkness, evil for good, and good for evil, wrong for right, and right for wrong, shall do it at last for want of knowledge. *They who act against their light, shall not have light to act by.* And as some counsellours are thus spoiled for a punishment to themselves, so not a few are spoiled that they may be a punishment to others. For this cause they are disabled to resolve what is safe for a people, and what is unsafe; what may be for their uniting, or what for their dividing; what for the setling, or what for the disturbing of affairs. (*Psal.* 75. 5.) *The stout hearted are spoiled*; so we read, but some translate, *They are spoiled of their stout heart:* The stout hearted, the strong are spoiled; the strong man may be spoiled by a stronger: that's a good sence, but it is more elegantly rendred, *they are spoiled of their stout heart*, that is, the Lord takes their heart out of their bosom. Daring men, who fear nothing, are turned into *Magor-missa-bibs, fear round about*; their stout hearts are taken from them; and then, they are so far from being a terrour to other men, that they run from the shadow of a man: Their courage is down, they cannot give a child a confident look, much less look dangers or enemies in the face. Now, as the Lord spoils Souldiers and warriours of their stout hearts, so he spoileth Counsellours of their cunning and politick hearts, of their wise hearts; *the politick hearts are spoiled*, or, *they are spoiled of their politick hearts. Rabbi Moses* (as was noted) readeth this text so; *he bringeth wise men into a spoil of their wisdom*, that is, he takes their wisdom as a prey: and as a man that is spoiled, is sent away without a peny in his purse, or a garment upon his back, so these wise Counsellours are sent away without any wit in their heads, or prudence in their breasts. One of the Greek translatours, (both the Hebrews and the Greeks joyn in this sence) gives it thus, *He leadeth away Counsellours to uncounsellableness*, or he leadeth them away (saith another) *into penury or poverty of counsel*, they have not so much as a peny worth of counsel about them, if one should come to ask it of them. The Vulgar Latine comes near this sence, rendering thus, *He leadeth the Counsellours into a foolish end*, or, *into a foolish conclusion of their business*; that is, he brings their counsels to such an end, that they shall be accounted fools and unwise men, by all men of wisdom.

Spoliati sūt fortes corde, q.d. *privati animo animositate & fortitudine.*

Διάγων βουλευτικὰς εἰς ἀβουλίαν. Symach.

Adducit ut prædā. Tyg.

These three wayes we may understand this text, that God *leadeth Counsellours away spoiled.* All which are wrapped up in a fourth, he brings them into straits and difficulties, like captives in chains, and so drags them after the chariot of his triumphing providence, drawn by *his own infinite wisdom and strength*: And thus they become a spectacle of scorn or pity to all beholders.

Further, Consider that these Counsellours may be of two sorts. First, Such as give evil counsel against a Kingdom or State, these are usually led away spoiled of their honour, and of their hopes, of their ends, yea and of their wits. Secondly, Such as give good counsel, and that with all their might, and the best of their understanding, yet, even these are sometimes led away spoiled of all: So that though they would, yet they shall not be able to direct or deliver those that trust them and depend upon them. Hence Observe,

First, *A spirit of counsel is the gift of God.*

It is a special gift of God to be able to give good counsel: it is a great gift of God, to be willing to receive good counsel. I scarce know which is the greater, to be willing to receive good counsel, or to be able to give it. Many can give good counsel, who will not receive it: To give or to receive *are the gift of God.*

Secondly Observe, *Kingdoms and States fail, when counsels fail.*

Jobs scope is to shew the alterations that are in Kingdoms: now as by the Majesty of Kings, the wisdom of Counsellours, the prudence of Judges, the eloquence of Orators, and valour of Souldiers, Kingdoms flourish and are established; so by the taking away or decay of these, Kingdoms decay and come to nothing, or to that which is *next to nothing, a chaos of confusion.* This judgement is threatned, (*Isa.* 3. 4.) *In that day the Lord will take away from Jerusalem, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of bread, and the whole stay of water.* There is a twofold staff of a people, there is a *natural staff*, and there is a *civil staff*; the natural staff is bread and water, which by a *Synechdoche* are put for all the necessary supports of a natural life. The removal of these is ruine; yet God when he intends ruine, takes away other stayes besides these. The same Prophet proceeds in this sad narrative, *He will take away also the mighty man, and the man of war, the Judge, and the Prophet, and the Prudent, and the Ancient, the Captain of fifty, and the Honourable man, and the Counsellour.* Thus the Lord takes away the *civil staff and stay* of a people, that is, men inabled for publick services. And when these foundations of humane society are out of course or removed out of place, down comes the roof and highest pinnacles of the most potent Commonwealths. For as *when vision*, that is, the word preached, *faileth, the people perish*; (the preaching of the word is called a vision, either because the word was received by vision from God, or because in it, the Lord is seen, and his truth is discovered to us.) Now (I say) as when this vision faileth, the people perish, that is, their souls perish, the spiritual part perisheth, they perish in the capacity of a Church: So when counsel fails, the people perish in their civil capacity, as they are a politick State or Commonwealth. Learn hence, what need we have to pray for the maintenance of these stayes. God in judgement may lead our Counsellours away spoiled, and then we are spoiled.

Thirdly Observe, *The ruine of Kingdoms is not from chance and fortune, but by the decree and purposes of God.*

He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled. He in mercy giveth Counsellours, to establish and preserve Kingdoms; and when either Counsellours abuse their wisdom, or when a people abuse the blessings which God giveth, or hath restored to them by their Counsels, then he takes them away, *he spoileth the Counsellours that the people may be spoiled.* We sometimes wonder that Counsellours have no more wisdom, we should rather be humbled that our selves have no more goodness. Usually a people are first spoiled of goodness, before Counsellours are spoiled of wisdom to give advice, or are successless in what they advise. If God doth this, we cannot complain: When he gives Counsellours, he is not indebted to do it; and when he takes them away he is provoked to do it; he takes them not away whilest good counsels are received, or while we are thankful to him for the good we receive by counsel. When the Lord would destroy *Egypt*, he spoiled the Counsellors of *Egypt* (Jer. 19. 11, 12, 13.) *Surely the Princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise Counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish; How say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient Kings?* The Prophet discovers their degeneracy from their ancestours. And whence was all this? Was this from the turning of *fortunes wheel*, as heathens used to speak? No, *vers.* 17. *Because of the Counsel of the Lord of hosts, which he hath determined against it.* The Lord had a Counsel, and his Counsel was against *Egypt*, therefore the Counsel of the wise shall not help *Egypt*: For the Princes of *Zoan* shall become fools, and the Counsel of the wise Counsellours of *Pharaoh* brutish. When the most proper means of safety cannot save, nothing can. And though Counsellours themselves continue wise, yet they shall have no better success then fools. *Achitophels* Counsel was in an ill matter, yet it was the best Counsel that could be given to facilitate the ends of *Absalom*, but the Lord turned it into foolishness: The event is the same, whether God turn (as he did *Achitophels*) wise Counsel into foolishness, or (as it follows in this text) *the wisest Counsellours into fools*; both these are alike easie to God and fatal unto man.

And he makes the Judges fools.

Some expound this as a repetition of the former clause. *A Counsellour may also be a Judge*; so they are coincident terms. But rather take them distinctly, for here are three Officers specified: First, He who is supream, *the King*: Secondly, They who are subordinate, *the Judge*, and the *Counsellour*. Now as *He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled*, so *he makes the Judges fools.*

The Judge (*as distinguished from the Counsellour*) *is one who administreth justice according to law. Judges are servants to the law, and rulers to the people*, Gen. 19. 9. *This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge*; he will govern and give us the rule, he will take upon him to teach us what to do, say the *Sodomites* to *Lot*. After the death of *Joshua*, the supream Magistrate in Israel was called a Judge, till *Saul* was elected King. Here the Judge is a subordinate Magistrate, placed under Kings.

שפט
Ita significat ut idē sit quod regere, rempublicam administrare leges & jura præscribere.

He makes the Judges fools.] Not by any positive act, infusing folly. But God may be said to make Judges fools, two wayes. First, By not enlightning their understandings, and leaving them in the dark. Secondly, By overreaching their understandings, and outwitting them in the light. It is usual amongst us, to say, of a very wise man, *he will make such a one a very fool if he deal with him*: Not that he puts folly into the man, or withdraweth wisdom from him, but he doth so much overpoise him in parts, that when he deals or argues with him, he will appear but a child or a very fool. Those Israelites that went to search the land of *Canaan* were doubtless no dwarfs, yet when they saw the huge sons of *Anak*, they looked on themselves like grashoppers. A tall man is but low of stature; A rich man but poor; A wise man but a fool, in comparison of him who greatly excels in stature, riches or wisdom. We may take this text either of a privative act, the Lord withdraws and withholds the light, so that the Judge cannot see the rule of the Law, and then (like a fool) he errs in judgement; or of a superlative act, for though the Judge retain his light, yet the Lord makes a fool of him. Who can tell how much the wisdom of God exceeds the wisdom of man, when the Apostle tells us, that *the foolishness of God is wiser then men?* 1 Cor. 1. 25. *If the foolishness of God* (namely that which vain men count foolishness) be *wiser then men*, then surely the wisdom of God will soon make the wisest among men fools indeed.

יהולל

Again, *Job* doth not say, *He makes fools Judges*; that the Lord doth sometimes (*Isa.* 3. 4.) *I will give children to be their Princes, and babes shall rule over them*: The Prophet speaks not of children in age, for *Josiah was a child*, and but eight years old, yet a great blessing to the Kingdom of *Judah*; but he means children in understanding. The fore-thought of that, troubled *Solomon*, Eccles. 2. 19. *I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun* (saith he) *because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me, and who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? Rehoboam* proved a foolish Prince. Now as God to punish a people makes fools Judges, so which is more, *He maketh Judges fools*; let them be as wise as they will, he outwitteth them, and catcheth them in their own devices.

The Vulgar Latine reads it thus, *He brings the Judges into astonishment*, or *amazement*. The Septuagint, *He brings them into fear and trembling*: Both note the same thing, that the Lord casts them into a consternation of spirit, and then they fall upon erroneous and foolish determinations. (*Isa.* 19. 14.) *He mingleth a perverse spirit in the midst of them.* They turn giddy, or are giddy with turning, and know not well what to do, or which way to resolve.

Judices in stuporem, Vulg. *in pavorem*, Sept. *in conturbationē mentis.*

Hence Observe, First, *That the wisest men are not always wise.*

God

God can make Judges fools. As wisdom is the gift of God, so is the continuance of it: And unless we receive a supply of wisdom from God, we shall quickly turn fools, and do things rather like mad men, then like men of reason and understanding. *We want daily wisdom for our daily work, as much as we do daily bread for our daily wants.*

Secondly, *Failings in judgment are in judgment from God*; or, *God in judgment makes men fail in judgment.*

It is a high judgment of wrath, to disable men from judging in reason.

This God doth, both to punish the sins of Judges, and of those for whom they judge. When a people trust in the wisdom of their Judges, when they make them God, of whom God hath only said, *Ye are Gods*; then God makes them less then men. (*Acts* 12.) When *Herod* made an Oration, the people cryed, *The voice of God, and not of man.* Judges should give glory to God, as *Herod* did not, and so was consumed of Worms; yet God may send a Worm into the counsels and resolutions of the Judges, and eat them out, because of such cryes among the people.

Lastly, It is matter of comfort to consider, that the Lord can make Judges fools: That (as Mr. *Broughton* translates this verse) *He brings Counsellors to badness, and Judges to stark madness.* We need not fear what wise men act against us, while the only wise God acteth for us.

Job goes on, and gives an higher instance then in Judges and Counsellors.

Verse 18. **He loseth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.**

He loseth.] The Hebrew is, he openeth or untieth the bond of Kings.

מוסר יסר. Rad.

The bond.] The word signifies any thing that knitteth, or holdeth together. Sometimes it is put for discipline and correction: The Greek expresseth instruction and correction, both the parts of discipline, by one word.

Quod est constringere aut ligare vinculo aut quacunq; institutione aut arctiore disciplina, quam Graci παιδείαν vocant. καθιζάνων βασιλεῖς ἐπὶ θρόνου. Sept. Catenam regum solvit, q.d. e vinculis eos evehit ad regnum. Tharg

We may take this *bond* two wayes. First, Passively, and secondly, Actively.

First, Passively, and then by the bonds of Kings, are understood those bonds wherewith Kings are bound. So the *Chaldee* Paraphrast translates, *He bringeth Kings from bonds to the throne*; that is, Kings who have been bound, captivated, and brought very low, he raiseth up again: The Septuagint runs upon that sence, *Placing Kings in their thrones*; as speaking of those Kings who had been put out, or put off from their thrones; these the Lord re-inthrones, or sets up again.

And then in correspondency to that understanding of the word [*Bond*] the latter clause of the verse [*And girdeth their loins with a girdle*] is to be understood in a good sence. He giveth them strength and honour, he settleth their affairs and *crowns*, after greatest shakings and depressions. *A BOND is for punishment, a girdle is both for strength and ornament.* A girdle is the *emblem* of power; and to gird a man is as much as to give him power: So that when 'tis said, *He girdeth their loins with a girdle*, the meaning is (according to the sence given of the former clause) he strengtheneth them in their Kingdom, State, and Government, and restores them the obedience of their people; thus the phrase is used (*Isa.* 45. 5.) concerning *Cyrus*, *I girded thee though thou hast not known me*; that is, I set thee upon the Throne, I established thee, and confirmed thee, I put thee into that high condition, though thou little thoughtest that it was I who did it. There is a profitable truth in this interpretation. *Kings are delivered from bonds, and set upon their thrones by the special providence and power of God.*

But if we view this Text with the Context more strictly; the scope of the whole lodges our thoughts in another sence. For *Job* is setting forth the judgment of God upon *Kingdoms*, in the judgments which he brings upon *Counsellors*, *Judges*, and *Kings*. Therefore we cannot with any sutableness to the Context (though the thing be in it self a truth) understand it of a work of deliverance, in loosing the bonds of Kings, and re-establishing them upon their Thrones. Here then we must take the word *bond*, actively, and so we may expound it two wayes.

First, For those *bonds* with which Kings illegally bind their people. Such are the bonds of oppression and tyranny: And so the meaning of, *He looseth the bonds of Kings*, is this; God by his mighty power breaks, or by his wisdom untyes those bonds of oppression, with which Kings attempt to enslave their people; such were the bonds of *Rehoboam*, whose resolution was (though it was a rash one) to bind his people in bonds; and when they petitioned him, complaining of heavy burthens laid upon them in his Fathers dayes, praying, that now his yoke might be made easier: Easier, saith he, nay it shall be made heavier; *Whereas my Father made your yoak heavy, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions; my little finger shall be heavier then my fathers loins.* I will publish such Edicts, and put out such Proclamations, as shall be so many chains, bonds and fetters upon you, to tye you faster, and hold you closer in subjection then ever you were to this day. This sort of *bonds*, the Lord breaks, he looseth the *oppressing bonds* of Princes. When they act the *Tyrant*, not the *King*, and in stead of ruling, vex a people; when they will not let their subjects enjoy such liberty as becomes men, or Christians, then he looseth their bonds. Kings and people too, joyn sometimes (though in vain) to break the bonds of God. (*Psal.* 2. 1, 2.) *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together:* And what is it upon? It is this, *Come let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us:* What? Will Christ subdue us to his Laws? Will he lay bonds upon us, and make us slaves under the Scepter of his Government? Come, *Let us break these bonds, and cast these cords from us:* let us get out our necks from this yoke, and our shoulders from these burdens. We are a free people, our tongues and our consciences are our own, who is Lord over us? Thus people and Kings conspire to loosen the bonds which *Jesus Christ*, *the King of Saints, and King of Nations*, chargeth upon them for their good; they will not abide such bonds, not they; but they must, for they do but *imagine a vain thing.* But when Kings and Princes, out of the pertinatiousness and pride of their spirits, or out of an ungoverned resolution in government, say, that they will lay bonds and tributes, impositions and services upon their people, which make them groan; then the Lord takes counsel in Heaven (and it is not in vain) I will break their bonds, (saith he) and cast their cords off from you, and he doth it. As *Sampson* brake the withs and bonds wherewith the *Philistims* bound him, so doth God those wherewith his people are bound, *as a thread, as a thread of tow is broken, when it toucheth* (or as the Hebrew is) *smelleth the fire.* Thus he wrought for his holy Name, and for his people in *Egypt*. *Pharaoh* said to his wise Counsellors, *Come, let us work wisely*, let us make bonds for this people, and bring them into perpetual servitude; they were first commanded to make brick, and then compelled to make brick without straw; they served with rigour. Here were bonds, but God loosened them, and by a mighty hand, and stretched out arm, delivered his people, drowning *Pharaoh* in the red Sea. Thus the bond of that King was loosened; and so were those of *Rehoboam*; for while he (as was toucht before) prepared bonds for his people, and thought he could never make them slaves enough, God in judgment stirred up another King, and ten Tribes of twelve departed from his obedience, and never returned again; neither did God permit *Rehoboam* to proceed in his attempt for the reducing of them, but took the revolt upon himself, saying plainly by the mouth of his Prophet, *This thing is from me*, 1 Kings 12. 24. Thus the bonds of that King were loosened, and himself was brought into straits, while he endeavoured unjustly to straiten those in whose just liberties he should have rejoyced. Those are the freest Kings who govern a free people; and the more free a people are, the more are they truly subject. Slavery doth either embase the spirits of a people, or heightens them to disobedience. *Oppression makes a wise man mad; but none are so mad as oppressors, how wise soever they seem to be.* When their bonds are loosed (as they shall) they loose more then they could get, should they continue fastened.

Activè vinculum quo illi alios vinciunt, significat sæpe tyrannide aut impotenti regũ dominatione liberari subditos dũ jugum excutiunt & è potestate tyranni eximunt. Merc.

Secondly, As Kings have *oppressing bonds*, so *governing bonds.* Wholesome laws are the peoples bonds; and it is both their duty and their liberty to be thus bound. *It is a far greater bondage to be under no laws, then to be under hard*

ones. When every man doth that which is right in his own eyes, there is ſcarce any man will be found either doing or enjoying that which is right. Therefore let people take heed, leſt while they complain of the bonds of oppreſſion, that they do not throw off the bonds of ſubjection: Yet thus alſo God *looſeth the bonds of Kings:* He in judgment to Kings, and Kingdoms, leaves a people to forget their duty, and to withdraw from due obedience.

(a) Balthūm regum diſſolvit. Vulg. (b) Authoritatem & imperiū illis adimit. Merc. In Baltheo regnantis intelligitur gloria, in funere vero è regno depoſiti ignominia. Hieron. Aurum Baltheus inſigne fuit regum, clariſſimique magiſtratus, quare ſpoliari cingulo dicebantur ei magiſtratu & dignitate privabantur. Pined. (c) Baltheus non fuit inſigne regale, ſed militare. Bold.

The Vulgar tranſlateth (*a*) *He unbuckleth or diſſolveth the belt of Kings*; which is gloſſed to this ſence; (*b*) *He diveſts them of regal power.* The *belt* was alwayes a *mark* of honour, and ſome of the Learned obſerve, that it was anciently an emblem of *Kingly power:* And ſo the unlooſing of it muſt imply the taking away of that power. (*c*) The *belt* is taken here by others for the emblem of a Souldiers power only, not of a Kings. Hence girding, or putting on the belt, is as much as preparing for war: *Gird up now thy loins like a man,* ſaith God to *Job* (*Chap.* 38. 3.) when he challenged him to a diſpute, which is a *verbal war.* (Pſal. 93. 1.) *The Lord reigneth, he is cloathed with majeſty: the Lord is cloathed with ſtrength, wherewith he hath girded himſelf. David* giving charge to *Solomon* upon his death-bed concerning *Joab*, who had been his chief *Commander*, or the *Generaliſſimo of his forces*, ſaith, *He put the blood of war upon his girdle*, (or the belt, ſo *Pagnine* tranſlates) *that was upon his loins*, (1 Kings 2. 6.) *Chriſt* himſelf (*Iſa.* 11. 5.) is deſcribed, having *Righteouſneſs the girdle of his loins, and faithfulneſs the girdle of his reins*; that is, coming forth girded, or belted about, as a victorious Conqueror, with righteouſneſs and faithfulneſs. That's the meaning of that cooling meſſage (1 *Kings* 20. 11) *Let not him that girdeth on his harneſs, boaſt himſelf as he that putteth it off*; that is, do not ſing *Victoria* before the battel; the event of war is uncertain. And it was uſual, when commiſſion Officers of Armies were caſhiered and turned off, for any miſdemeanour, to take away their belt. There is a famous ſtory in *Suidas* about it, of one *Auxenſius*, a great Commander under *Lycinius* the Emperour; He reports, that when *Lycinius came into the Court of his Palace, where there was a great Bath, and ſome Vines growing about it, with the image of* Bacchus *ſet up among the Vines: The Emperour had* Auxenſius *draw his ſword, and cut off a bunch of Grapes, which as ſoon as he had done, he commanded him to offer it at the feet of* Bacchus, *which was as much as to acknowledge him to be a god:* Auxenſius *anſwered, I am a Chriſtian, I will not do it: What? not do it upon my command, ſaith the Emperour, then you muſt quit your place: With all my heart, Sir, ſaid the Chriſtian ſouldier; and, in token of it, put off his belt; which was as much as the giving up of his Commiſſion, and went away with joy in that ſuffering for Chriſt.*

According to this tranſlation and uſe of the word, *He looſeth the bond and belt of Kings*, the ſign is put for the thing ſignified; and the meaning riſeth thus, God caſteth down Kings, not only from their Soverainty and Regal power, but from their Military power. He takes not only their Crown from their head, and their Scepter out of their hand, but the Belt and Sword from their loins: So that as their people refuſe to give them any willing ſubjection, ſo they are diſabled to compel them.

Non ſolum regali diademate illos eruit, ſed etiam Baltheo quod eſt ſimplicis militis inſigne, i.e. illuc eos abjicit, ut nec militis quidem nomine digni reputētur. Bold.

Hence obſerve, *Kings are in the hands of God, to ſet up, and to caſt down, as himſelf pleaſeth.*

By me (ſaith God) *Kings reign, and Princes decree juſtice*, Prov. 8. 15. and when Princes refuſe to *decree juſtice*, God can ſay it, and effect it, *Ye ſhall not reign.* (Iſa. 45. 1.) *Thus ſaith the Lord to his anointed, to* Cyrus, *whoſe right hand I have holden to ſubdue Nations before him, and I will looſe the loins of Kings*, &c. God ſet up *Cyrus* King, to put down Kings, yet he ſaith, *I will looſe the loins of Kings. Cyrus* was the Inſtrument, but both the deſign and the ſucceſs was of God. Kings cannot make bonds ſo faſt, either to ſtrengthen themſelves, or ſtrait their people, as God can looſe them. There are four bonds which the Lord uſually looſeth, when he chaſtens the pride and ſin of Kings.

Firſt, The bonds of their *Authority*, that their word is not reverenced, nor received, as before. *Where the word of a King is* (ſaith *Solomon*) *there is power:* Yet when God is angry, he can render their *word powerleſs.*

Secondly, He looſeth the bonds of their *riches and Revenues:* Riches are a ſtrength to Kings: Riches are the ſupport, as well as the fruit of peace; and they are the ſinews of war: When treaſure is gone, power ſtayes not long behind. *Money anſwers all things*; and when that fails, Princes ſeldom receive contentful anſwers. God ſends a Moth upon the publick treaſure, and that eats aſunder many bonds and obligations.

Thirdly, Which is ſtronger then the former two, God looſeth *the bond of a peoples love and affection unto Kings. Love is the bond of obedience, both to God and man.* Princes ſit faſteſt in the affections of their people. That King who hath the hearts of his Subjects, hath their hands and their purſes too at command. *Jehoram* out-lived, or rather, never lived in the love of his people, and *he died undeſired* (2 Chron. 21. 20.) *Some have ſaid, let them hate while they muſt fear: But that fear is ſafeſt which ſprings from love.*

Oderint dū metuant.

Fourthly, The Lord looſeth *the bonds of their Leagues, Allyances, and Confederacies with forreign Nations:* They ſhall not ſtand faſt by covenants with men, who break the covenant of their God. Through this judgment of God, Kings have been oftner entangled, then ſtrengthened with Leagues. Thoſe Leagues and Alliances, ſpoken of by *Daniel* (*Chap.* 11.) between the Kings of the North and of the South, proved ſnares to catch, rather then helps to uphold one another.

Theſe bonds, or what bonds elſe ſoever, the Kings of the earth make, either to ſupport themſelves, or oppreſs their people, are looſed by the power of God. As there is no bond of God ſo ſtrong, but the heart of man will attempt to break it; ſo there is no bond of man ſo ſtrong, but the hand of God can break it, *He looſeth the bonds of Kings.*

And girdeth their loins with a girdle.

In the firſt interpretation of the former clauſe, *This girding of the loins of Kings with a girdle*, was taken in a good ſence, namely, for the ſtrengthening of their State. But in purſuance of the ſecond interpretation, which hath appeared moſt agreeable to this Text, *The girding their loins with a girdle*, undergoes a very different conſideration, and may be taken two wayes.

Per cingulū aliqui vires innuunt, cingulo enī lumbi præcinguntur, in quibus virium ſedes & robora. Druſ.

Firſt, As a *girdle* is oppoſed to a *belt*: A girdle is of ordinary uſe, a common part of cloathing: Every man weareth a girdle; but every man doth not wear a belt; that hath ſomewhat of honour in it. And ſo the ſence is this, He looſeneth the belt of Kings, and takes off their ſword, ſo that they cannot carry on their wars: And then, *He girdeth their loins with a girdle*; that is, he brings them into a low or common condition.

Habitus hominis abjectiſſimi ut opponitur Baltheo, quī reges ornat. Pined.

Secondly, A girdle, and girding with it, ſignifies, not only a common, but a ſervile, or captivated condition. So ſome expound the words here, as an alluſion to that cuſtom which was amongſt the *Perſians:* (one of the Rabbins is clear for it, and frames his comment upon that notion.) The Kings of *Perſia* were wont to gird thoſe with a girdle, whom they had taken captive; and they miniſtred unto, and attended thoſe great Kings, being girt with a girdle. Now, That to be girt about the loins is a poſture of ſervice, is clear alſo in Scripture, being a Metaphor taken from the uſage of the Eaſtern countreys, where, wearing long garments, they girded them in all preparations for travel, or labour. *Gird up the loins of your minds* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 1. 13.) that is, be in a readineſs to ſerve the Lord. When Chriſt went to waſh his Diſciples feet, *John* 13. *He took a towel and girded himſelf.* And when he would ſhew how bleſſed thoſe ſervants ſhall be whom their Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find watching; He tells them (*Luke* 12. 37.) *Verily I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them to ſit down to meat, and will come forth and ſerve them.* And again, when he would prove that no man, by all his watchfulneſs and diligence, can deſerve any thing at the hand of God: He puts a query, *Luke* 17. 7, 8. *Which of you having a ſervant plowing, or feeding cattel, will ſay unto him, when he is come from the field, go and ſit down to meat, and will not rather ſay unto him, make ready wherewith I may ſup, and gird thy ſelf and ſerve me*, &c. According to this approved uſe of the phraſe, *Job's* ſence is this, *He looſeth the bonds of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle*; that is, they who ruled others, are forced to obey, and from Commanders are turned into ſervants: So low

Cingulum per zonam exponitur, qua ſolebant præcingi, qui regibus Perſarum miniſtrabāt & qua duces exulum Iſraelitarū ante reges Perſarum miniſtrantes accingebantur. Merc. ex Ramb.

q. d. Commutat eos in famulos. Druſ.

the

the Lord hath sometimes cast the mightiest and highest Princes of the world.

Præcingit fune lumbos eorum. *Funis nomine vilitas zonæ denotatur qua plebeiæ conditionis homines uti solent.* Bold. *Pro zona funiculus.*

The vulgar translateth yet more low, *He girdeth their loins about with a rope*; which is the meanest matter and making of a girdle: they shall not only have a girdle for a belt, but a rope instead of a girdle: So that word is rendred (*Isa.* 3. 24.) by the same Translator, The wanton and delicate Dames of *Israel*, shall have, in stead of a *curious girdle, a rope*; to note the extream turn which God would make in the state of those proud women; and thus he can abase the pride of the greatest men.

Let that be the Observation upon the whole matter,

God sometimes doth, and he always can bring those that are highest in worldly dignity, into the extreamest depth of worldly misery.

Rulers become captives; they who sat on Thrones, live in prisons; the *royal belt* is laid aside, and a common girdle, yea girding with sackcloath, taken up by the mightiest earthly gods, when the God of Heaven is angry. *The greatest changes are incident to the greatest persons.* *Nebuchadnezzar's dream* was full to this point (*Dan.* 2. 10.) He forgetting it, sends for the Magicians and Astrologers to tell him, both what his dream was, and what the interpretation of it; but they could not. *There is not a man upon the earth* (say they) *that can shew the Kings matter; therefore there is no King, Lord, nor Ruler, that asketh such things at any Magician or Astrologer: none can shew it unto the King, except the Gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.* But unto *Daniel* the secret was revealed by God; and before he revealed it to the King, he makes this preface almost in *Job*'s stile and language, but fully with his spirit and intent, blessing God, because *wisdom and might are his, and he changeth the times and seasons; he removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings; he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding*, &c. (*ver.* 20, 21.) Then he tells *Nebuchadnezzar* his dream, and the interpretation thereof. A goodly image it was, yet degenerating and gradually abasing from *a head of gold, to a breast and arms of silver, thence to belly and thighs of brass, to legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay.* All these represented some Kings and Kingdoms falling, and others rising upon their ruines, till a Kingdom doth arise which should never fall (*ver.* 44.) In the same prophecy (*Chap.* 4. 10.) we have the Kingly power described by a goodly tree, the height whereof reached unto Heaven, under which the beasts of the field had shadow, and the fowls of the Heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, *&c.* But, *Behold a watcher, and an holy one, came down from Heaven; He cryed aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, and shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit*; so the body of this flourishing tree vanished to nothing, only the stump of his roots were left in the earth with a band of iron and brass. This vision is also interpreted (*ver.* 24, 25.) by the loosing the bond of that great King so much, that he was driven from men, and took up his lodging with the beasts of the field, and was made to eat grass as Oxen, and was wet with the dew of Heaven. God, to shew that he can throw the most potent Monarchs, into the lowest condition of men, speaks of this Monarch, as thrown into the condition of beasts: Being (as our late Annotators have observed upon the place) either stricken mad, and so avoided mans company, or being cast out for his tyranny, he wandred among the beasts, and eat herbs and grass. These visions are cleerest manifestations, that God cuts down Kings, and Kingdoms, even to the very stumps (as we say) to the very roots, and sometimes pulls up root and all.

And, that God hath actually done thus to the greatest Princes, all Histories are full: There is no truth hath received greater testimony then this. The records of Scripture, give us high instances of it (*Judg.* 1. 6, 7.) *Adonibezeck*, a great King, was taken prisoner by the Army of the two Tribes, *Judah* and *Simeon*, and *They cut off his thumbs, and his great toes:* The eminency of the judgment draws from him an acknowledgment of his own former cruelty, and of the present justice of God upon him, *Threescore and ten Kings, having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me.* He cut off their thumbs, that they might be disabled from handling Arms, or fighting with him; he cut off their great toes, that they might be disabled to run from him, or escape by flight. Suppose these were petty Princes, yet their number was great; and the hand of God was seen greatly, both in casting them from their dignities, and in catching him at last, who had captivated all them. And as those Heathen Kings, so also some of the Kings of *Judah*, who were of Gods special anointing and setting up, were miserably afflicted, and brought into bondage, by the special counsel of God. Take the example of *Zedekiah* (2 *Kings* 25. 6, 7.) whom, when the Army of the *Chaldees* took the City, *They pursued, and took, brought to the King of* Babylon, *who gave judgment upon him; and they slew the Sons of* Zedekiah *before his eyes, and put out the eyes of* Zedekiah, *and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to* Babylon. How sad a spectacle was here? A King of *Judah*, the Ruler of Gods chosen people, in fetters of brass? When the latter Greek Empire was overthrown by the Turks, that great Family of the *Paleologi* (in which the Empire had long continued) came to that lowness, that some of the Royal blood became Servants, and ordinary Tradesmen. In them the observation of the Preacher was fulfilled (*Eccles.* 10. 7.) *I have seen servants upon horses, and Princes walking as servants upon the earth.* *Sapor*, King of *Persia*, took *Valentinian*, the Emperor, prisoner, and used him as a stool for himself to step upon, when he mounted into his saddle. *Sesostris*, King of *Egypt*, subduing divers Kings, compelled them to draw his Chariot. *The Roman* Historians give frequent testimony, that in the flourishing state of that *Imperious Commonwealth*, conquered Kings and Princes were dragg'd at their Chariots in triumph. Victorious *Tamerlane*, having overthrown and taken *Bajazet*, the Turkish Emperor, shackled him in fetters of gold, caused him to be shut up in an iron cage, made in the fashion of a grate, and so carried him like a wild beast, as he marched through *Asia*, to be scorned of his own people. *Henry* the fourth, Emperor of *Germany*, having been oft worsted in battel, was at last reduced to such exigents, that he had not wherewith to buy him bread, but was forced to come to the great Church at *Spires* (which he himself had built) and there beg to be a Chorister, that so he might get a small stipend to keep him from starving; but could not obtain it: which repulse caused him to bespeak the standers by, in the words of lamenting *Job* (Chap. 19. 21.) *Have pity upon me, O my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.* The weight of these miseries brought him shortly after to his grave; but he found none so humane as to put him in, for he lay unburied five years, no man daring to do it, because the Pope had forbidden it to be done. These examples (more might be added) are clear expositions of, or experiments rather of this Scripture. Let the great men of the earth hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously; let them take the counsel of Christ (*Psal.* 2.) *be wise therefore now, O ye Kings, and be instructed ye Judges of the earth: Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling: Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little*: There is no striving by the most glorious Princes of the earth, with him who is *the King of Heaven, and Lord of glory.*

Pezet. *Mellificii Hist. part.* 3.

Take two Corrollaries from the whole. *If the Lord do thus toss Kings like tennis-balls, and hurl whole Kingdoms into ruine; if he befools the Judges, and spoils the Counsellors of the earth, surely he will not spare inferiors and weaklings, who strengthen themselves against him.* If God deal thus with *Kings*, what will he do with *subjects?* He that smites Princes, will he let a people pass unpunisht? God hath in all ages set some Kings and Princes on the scaffold, and made them eminent in sufferings, as well as in dignity, that others beholding the justice of God, might glorifie him, and humble themselves. Hence we may argue, as Christ did in his own case; *If it be thus done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry?* If the Lord hath been thus severe against the tallest Cedars in *Lebanon*, and against the Oaks of *Bashan* (Kings and Monarchs of the world) that are exalted and lifted up: Shall not low and dry shrubs (inferiour persons) feel the axe and stroke of his anger, when they sin contemptuously against him? Even these are often as proud, unjust and oppressive, according to the line of their power, and the length of their hand, as they *who have longest hand, and largest power.* It is an admirable dispensation, when God

layes his rod upon the back of Kings, to warn mean men. The children of Princes are usually corrected (for their faults) by correcting the children of *Plebeians* in their presence; their Tutors and Governors do only put them in fear, and make them know discipline, by the smart which others feel. What shall we say then, when God corrects the Children of Kings, yea Kings themselves, in the sight of the common people, that they may be warned and learn discipline?

Secondly, *If the strength of Kings cannot hold out against the anger of God, how shall the weak stand before him when he is angry?* That argument in the Prophet (*Jer.* 12. 5. *If thou hast run with foot-men, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses?*) may be inverted here; if God hath contended with horses, and they could not weary him, how easily will he run with footmen? The stateliest Palaces, and strongest Thrones of Kings, have been consumed or thrown down at his word: Then what will become of cottages and common mens estates, when he speaks against them? When the Lord hath once (as lamenting *Jeremy* complains, *Lam.* 2. 16.) *in the indignation of his anger despised the King and the Priest*, his indignation will make quick dispatch of the rest, who follow their steps in sin, or partake in their transgression.

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.
He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.
He poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the strength of the mighty.

JOB goes on in his enumeration of Instances, for the proof and clearing up of his grand Proposition. In the Context before opened we saw how *God leadeth Counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools*; how *he looseth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.* Here we find him at the same work still, though upon other objects;

He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

Facit principes ut deveniant in dementiam. Jun.
Ducit sacerdotes inglorios. Vulg.
כהן
Ministrare in sacris aut politicis. Sacerdos princeps in quacunque dignitate constitutus.

There is a difference about the word which we translate Princes: At the seventeenth verse, *He leadeth Counsellors away spoiled*; and here, *He leadeth Princes away spoiled:* Spoiled (as was shewed before) of their ends, and of their hopes, of their power and honour, yea and of their wits and understandings, which causeth some to render it, *He leadeth Princes into madness.* Mr. *Broughton*, *He bringeth Dukes to badness:* And the vulgar, *He leadeth Priests into dishonour, or spoiled of their honour.* The Hebrew [*Cohen*] indifferently signifies a *Prince*, or a *Priest*, and is frequently used in the old Testament for both: And the Verb whence this Noun is derived, signifies to administer, both in political, and ecclesiastical affairs, and so either a Governour in the Commonwealth, or a Governour in the Church. It is put for a Church-governour, *Isa.* 28. 7. *The Priest and the Prophet have erred*, Psal. 99. 6. Moses *and* Aaron *among his Priests.* And for a State-governour, 2 *Sam.* 8. 18. Davids *sons were chief Rulers:* For both, *Gen.* 41. 45. *The Priest, or Prince of* On, *Exod.* 2. 16. *The Priest, or Prince of* Midian.

Three reasons are assigned, why those two dignities fell under one expression.

First, Because of old time, *the Priest and the Prince* were one person. The eldest in the family (before the giving of the Law) was both: And after the giving of the Law, together with all the ceremonial Institutes, the high Priest of *Aarons* order was a great Prince in *Israel.*

Secondly, The Priesthood in general was an office of honour, therefore it is expresst by a word of honour.

Thirdly, Because the Priests were unto God, the King of Heaven, as Princes are unto the Kings of the earth: Princes stand but a degree below Kings, and bear the great offices in Kingdoms; they are of Kings secret counsel, and know their hearts; they conveigh the mind of Kings to the people, and often as Commissioners represent their persons. Such (in their capacity) were Priests, in reference unto God; and are therefore called *Gods nigh ones.* This is it which the Lord spake (saith *Moses*, when the two sons of *Aaron* were slain by fire, while they offered with strange fire, *Levit.* 10. 3.) *I will be sanctified in those that come nigh me*, or *in my nigh ones*; such especially were the Priests; they approached to God, and received his mind, and were therefore said to speak from Gods mouth, and to *preserve knowledge*, even the knowledge of himself in their lips. God committed his secrets, and the mysteryes of his will, to the Priests first, and by their Ministry conveyed both unto the people: They were as the vessel, or cabinet, in which God laid up those precious treasures; *The Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts* (Mal. 2. 7.) God gave the honour of this title to the whole Nation of the Jews, they were called a *Nation of Priests*, (Exod. 19. 6.) *Ye shall be to me a Kingdom of Priests, or a royal Priesthood:* A Kingdom of Priests, for two reasons chiefly: First, Because God did esteem that people above all the people of the earth, he put an honour and a value upon them, therefore saith he, *Ye shall be to me a Kingdom of Priests.* And secondly, Because God communicated more of his counsels to that people, then to any other people, and they were more familiar with him then the rest of the world; even as the Priests were more familiar with God, and came nearer to him then the people. So that look what proportion the Priests among the *Jews* bear to the people, the same did the *Jews* bear to all other people of the world. We may take the word here in either sence, *He leadeth Princes*, or, *He leadeth Priests away spoiled.*

Ex omnibus regnis vos eritis mihi regnum nobilissimum familiarissimum amicissimum, quibus arcana & secretiora consilia revelabo.

As the word is rendred Priest, Observe,

First, *That the holiness of the profession cannot keep the person from sin.*

Priests provoke God, and therefore they are spoiled. Grace it self is not, much less is any outward vocation, a bar against temptation: And they who fall in temptation are near falling into affliction, whosoever they are. Which makes a second Observation,

They that are near unto God shall suffer when they sin; and the nearer they are, they shall suffer the more, because the nearer they are, the greater is their sin.

The Priests are among the spoiled, *Jer.* 14. 18. *Both the Prophet and the Priest go about into a land that they know not*; that is, they go into banishment, and are carried captives into a strange land. That Text hath a very different reading, for whereas the word which we translate *go about*, signifies also to *trade or make merchandize*, the whole is rendred to this sence: *The Prophets and Priests together make merchandize of you, and you either discern it not, or do not regard it.* This reading gives us a clear reason of that which is contained in the former. This shews their sin, and that their punishment. *Those Prophets and Priests who sell souls in their own land, are justly sold as slaves into a land that is not theirs.* (Lam. 2. 6.) *The Lord hath despised in the indignation of his anger, both the King and the Priest*; he puts King and Priest together, in suffering, because they were joyned in sinning. *They who associate in doing evil, shall be associated in feeling it.* And they shall feel most evil, when they do it, whose office is set up by God, and they put into office for the preventing of it: such are Kings and Priests. The Prophet *Malachy* reproves the *Levites* (Mal. 2. 8.) *Ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the Law; ye have corrupted the Covenant of Love*; that is, ye have been false, base, and unfaithful in your office: your selves have gone out of the way of truth and holiness, and ye have hindred those who would have walked in it. It was your duty to preserve the Covenant made with your Tribe, but ye have corrupted it. This is your sin, and I will tell you your judgment: *Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people. Unsavory salt is fit only for the dunghill, the seat of contempt.*

As the word is rendred (Prince) in our Translation, Observe,

That the honour of man is no shelter against the wrath of God.

As

As the holiness of the Priests office cannot do it, so neither can the power of the Princes office. Princes are called the Shields of the earth (*Hos.* 4. 18.) *Her Shields* (or, *her Rulers*, as we render) *with shame do love, Give ye.* They are (indeed) the Shields of the earth, but they cannot shield themselves against the assaults of Heaven. Princes should be Shields to protect men from the oppression of man, but they cannot protect themselves against the justice of God. The Prophet (*Isa.* 43. 14.) tells the people when they were in fear, *Thus saith the Lord your Redeemer, the Holy one of* Israel, *For your sake I have sent to* Babylon, *and have brought down all their Nobles*; the Hebrew is, *I have brought down all their bars*: Faithful *Nobles* are the bars of a Kingdom and Commonwealth, to keep out evils: It is their duty to bolt out impiety against God, and unrighteousness towards man: And as they should be a *bar of equity* against these evils of sin, so a *bar of security* to keep out the evils of trouble. Now (saith the Lord) I have sent to *Babylon*, and have brought down all those Nobles, who were as bars in the way to hinder your deliverance from, and return out of captivity. Those Nobles (it seems) were *cross bars*, they lay cross the way of the people of God, to hinder their passage out of *Babylon*, therefore God destroyed them. *When Nobles, or great Princes, bar up the liberty of Gods covenant-people, their nobility and greatness will be no bar against their own misery. He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and*

He overthroweth the mighty.

סלף *Supplantare inflectere, mutare, dejicere, deturbare.*

Here is another act of Divine power. That God is omnipotent, proves he can do all things; but the doing of them is a visible proof of his omnipotency.

To overthrow, Imports utter ruine: He doth not only shake and displace; but he shakes them to pieces, roots them up, and layes them flat.

He overthroweth the mighty.] Princes are among the mighty ones of the earth, yet some Princes have no great might; but how mighty soever Princes are, down they must, whether they will or no, when the Almighty wills it.

איתן *Robustus fortis a rad.* אתר *quæ vox affert fortitudinem quandam, quæ non permittit se tractari, & duritiem quæ pertinaciter resistit. Fluvios Ethan.*

The Hebrew word signifieth the most confirmed strength, even that strength which seems to laugh at opposition, and to have outgrown all fear of being weakened, or overpower'd. Great and impetuous Rivers are set out by that word (*Psal.* 74. 15.) *Thou driedst up mighty Rivers*; or, *Rivers of might*; Rivers which nothing can stand against: What can withstand a swelling torrent? The weight and violence of water beareth down all before it: no bonds, no bounds of mans making can stay it. Yet the Lord can; he, and he only, beareth down the waters; or he drieth them up: He either *drieth up mighty Rivers*, or stoppeth their course, while they are running with full streams, in a full career.

Hence learn, First, *That all strength and might is weak, before the strong and mighty God.*

He overthroweth the mighty (1 Sam. 2. 9.) *by strength shall no man prevail*: When we conclude the probabilities, whether a party shall prevail or no, we count upon their strength, we reckon their numbers, we enquire what Armies they have in the field, what Garrisons in Cities, what Friends and Confederacies abroad, yet in all this we reckon not upon that which will do the thing, strength cannot do it; *by strength no man shall prevail, The Lord overthroweth the mighty*: whatsoever strength we have to assist us, or to oppose us, the Lord is stronger.

There is a five-fold strength, the overthrowing of which mightily declares the strength and might of God.

First, *The strength of the body. God overthroweth* the most robustious and giant-like men, *the sons of* Anak *are but grashoppers to him*; they (who as we speak) have bodies of brass, he crusheth before the moth. *Goliah* had a mighty strength of body, and yet the Lord overthrew him: *Sampson* had a mighty strength of body, yet when the Lord withdrew from him, he was overthrown. Then remember the Prophets counsel (*Jer.* 9. 23.) *Let not the strong man glory in his strength, but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, who overthroweth the mighty.*

Secondly, *God overthroweth the strength of riches*: Riches are a strong tower. The same word in the Hebrew signifies strength and riches, because a mans strength is computed by his riches: A rich man is a mighty man in the eye of the world; and so is a worldly rich man in his own eyes. Yet, as the strength of body within us, so the strength of estate without us, is soon blasted by the breath of Gods displeasure. Then, take the counsel of the Apostle *James* (Chap. 1.) *Let the brother of high degree rejoyce in that he is made low* (that is, low in his own thoughts; rich men are usually fuller of high thoughts then they are of earthly treasures) the rich man hath cause to rejoyce when he is low in himself, *knowing that as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.* Riches and rich men pass away of themselves; how much more when God blows upon them and drives them away.

Thirdly, *He overthroweth the mightiness of honour*: Many fortifie themselves with great earthly Titles, but these are but paper walls to the batteries of Heaven. *Haman's* honour among the people, and favour with the Prince, could not save him, when God frowned.

Fourthly, *He overthroweth the mightiness of authority*; that's distinct from honour; a man may have great titles, and yet but little authority. Mean men have sometimes great commands, they may have authority over those who are above them in honour. But though the might of authority be in conjunction with the mightiness of honour, the Lord overthroweth it. So that he who could (as the Centurion in the Gospel) say to this man, *Go, and he goeth; to another come, and he cometh; to a third do this, and he doth it*, may at last (as our Proverb speaketh) *command his man, and do it himself.* When once commands are slighted, authority is overthrown. God who gives weight to the word of a man, can also make it light; he shall speak, and none regard.

Fifthly, *God overthroweth the mightiness of courage*: He makes the valiant faint, and the man, whose heart was like the heart of a Lion, to run, like a Coward, at the shaking of a leaf: God who saith to them that are of a *fearful heart, be strong, fear not* (Isa. 35. 4.) *and maketh the feeble to be as* David (*Zach.* 12. 8.) This God can say to the strong, be ye afraid; and to him that was as *David*, be thou feeble: He that overthroweth the couragious, can also overthrow courage.

Thus the strength of body, the strength of riches, the strength of honour, the strength of authority, and the strength of courage, are all overthrown by the strength of God. Who can conceive how much strength God hath, who is stronger then all these strengths? And as the Lord alwayes overthroweth the mighty, and gets the day of them, when he engageth with them; so he desires to engage with them. Mighty men seem to be some match for God; and the fall of these makes God more known as he is *Almighty.* Hence that of the Prophet (*Isa.* 2. 12.) *The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon,* Whom? he doth not say upon the low, weak and poor; but it shall be upon, *every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up?* What day of the Lord is this? It is the day of the Lords judgment, the day of his wrath: when he contendeth with a people, then he picks out the great ones chiefly, to contend with. His day *shall be upon all the cedars of* Lebanon, *and upon all the oaks of* Bashan, *and upon every fenced wall*; that is, upon men, who are, in the account of the world, tall like Cedars, strong like Oaks, high like Towers, invincible like Walls of brass; with these the Lord will be dealing in his day: and (*ver.* 17.) *The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day*; as if he had said, these men were exalted before; now the Lord overthrowing them, he himself shall be exalted. For the Text may be taken two wayes; he shall be exalted either as the Agent, that is, it shall appear that he alone hath overthrown these mighty ones: Or secondly, the Lord alone shall be exalted; that is, he will come into the place of those mighty men; these carried it in the eye of the world, as the only great ones; now the Lord comes into their place, they shall be exalted no more, his Name shall be exalted, and his only. When God appears in his greatness, none appear great but he: When he exalts himself, none will pretend to exaltation. The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

I shall give you four Corrollaries or Deductions from this Proposition, *The Lord overthroweth the mighty.*

First, *Then, fear not the mightiest enemies.* God is Almighty, the weakness of God is stronger then men; seeing

ing God is described overthrowing the mighty, if we keep close to him, we need not fear to be overthrown by the mighty.

Secondly, If the Lord overthroweth the mighty, *Then trust not in the mightiest friends.* When great seconds, and assistants appear on our part, then we think we are safe; but what can mighty men do for us, if the Almighty God be against us? As was further shewed (*Chap.* 9. 13.) *Unless the Lord withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him*; the helpers of strength stoop, unless upheld by the strong God. As therefore we ought not to fear the worst of foes, so not to trust upon the best of friends, because they are mighty.

Thirdly, *Let no man rejoyce, or boast in his own strength*; though that five-fold strength, before spoken of, meet in him, yet let him not trust upon it. He that breaks them single, can break them combined. A threefold, yea a fivefold cord, is easily broken by the arm of omnipotency.

Fourthly, (Which was toucht, *vers.* 18.) *If God overthrow the mighty, how soon can he overthrow those who have no might?* You that are weak and poor in comparison of the mighty Princes and *Nimrods* of the world; you (I say) have cause to fear and tremble before the mighty God: As they said, (2 *Kings* 10. 4.) *Behold two Kings stood not before him, how then shall we?* So we may say much more of the Lord, two Kings, yea hundreds of Kings, Nobles and men of might, have not stood before him, how shall worms, and weaklings wrastle it out, and contend with him?

Verse 20. **He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.**

This verse gives us another act of Gods power, towards the altering and subverting of States and Commonwealths. Kingdoms are much upheld by the eloquence of Orators, and by the wisdom of the Ancient. God makes these *two removes*, when he would *remove* the beauty and blessing of a Kingdom. First,

He removeth away the speech of the trusty.

The Hebrew is, *He removeth the lips of the trusty.* The same word signifies lips and speech, because the lips are the instrument of speech (*Gen.* 11. 1.) *All the earth was of one speech*, or *of one lip*; that is, they all spake one Language. *He removeth the speech of*

Labium ponitur pro loquela.

Amovet sermonem eloquentibus. Jun.

לנאמנים *a rad.* נאם *Dixit locutus eloquius fuit.* Rab. Kinchi.

The trusty.] The word hath a double reading, according to a double derivation in the Hebrew. For some derive it from a root which signifies *to speak*. Taking it so, the sence is, *He bereaveth Orators of their eloquence*; or (as Mr. *Broughton*, closer to the letter) *He bereaveth the Orator of lips, He makes them like men dumb, or tongue-tied, who were once all voice and tongue.*

Thus *Job* toucheth upon all those evils which hasten the ruine of a people; one whereof, and that a great one, is this, when God takes away speech from men, whose very trade it is to speak. When God threatened to break the *staff* of *Israel*, he saith, *I will take away the eloquent Orator* (Isa. 3. 3.) *Kingdoms, with all their blessings, are as much, if not more, upheld, or cast down by tongues, then they are by hands.*

God is said to remove, or take away the speech of the Orator, two wayes.

First, When he takes the Orators away; his picking such out of Councils by death, hath had a sad presage in it, of the approaching funerals of publick prosperity.

Secondly, When though he leaves the speakers, yet he disables them to speak: When though he leave the Orator, yet he takes away his Oratory, so that he cannot deliver himself with any command over the attentions and affections of his hearers: That's the excellency of Oratory, to carry the heart by the ear; to make every sentence perswasive; every word *a nail, or a goad*; a nail to fasten resolution, or a goad to quicken unto action. It was said of a *Grecian Orator*, who was also a great Souldier, that he thundred and lightned, moved and awakened all when he spake. But if God once *take away the speech of the Orator*, he may speak his hearers into a sleep.

Pericles (Olympius *propter eloquentiam dictus*) *fulminabat, intonabat, confundebat Græciam.* Plutarch. *in vita* Peric.

Hence observe, First, *That ability of speech is a special gift of God.*

He removeth and taketh it away, therefore he giveth it. (*Exod.* 4. 10.) We find *Moses eloquent only to tell God he was not eloquent*: He speaks very rhetorically to excuse his service for want of Rhetorick. *Lord* (saith he) *I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant* (neither yesterday, nor to day; that is, not at any time) *but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.* But how doth the Lord answer him? *The Lord said unto him, Who hath made mans mouth?* As if he had said, *Seeing I make the mouth, which is the instrument of speech, or the shop wherein words are made, I also can make the mouth eloquent, and give thee words to speak.* The Lord argues further with *Moses*, *Who maketh the dumb?* Is it not I the Lord? I who make the dumb, can make thee speak, and speak eloquently too: I can give thee a flowing tongue. Therefore be not afraid to go on my errand: I, who send thee, will store thee with language to do the errand about which I send thee: *It shall be given thee in that same hour, what to speak.*

Secondly observe, *Man is not master of his own tongue.*

God takes away the lip of the Orator. They (*Psal.* 12. 3, 4.) bragged much of their tongues; surely they thought if any thing was their own, their tongues were, they could speak what they list, *Who is Lord over us?* say they: Yet they found a Lord over their tongues. God is Lord of the tongue two wayes,

First, Because he will bring every one to an account for his tongue: Those boasters (*Psal.* 12.) thought themselves exempted from any such controul, *Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* Who hath any thing to do with what we speak? Who shall audit us for words and syllables? Yes, there is one will do it to a syllable. God gives the rule what we shall speak, and he will call every one to a reckoning for what he hath spoken.

Secondly, God is Lord of the tongue, in reference to the power of speech. Man cannot speak what he would, or when he would (*Numb.* 23. 11, 12.) *Balak* had hired *Balaam* to curse the people of God; and *Balaam* had a good will to it, if ever man had; but *Balak* found *Balaam* in another note, he only published the glory of *Israel*, and propheſied their highest blessings. *Balak* was extreamly troubled at this; and saith, *What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold thou hast blessed them altogether.* As if he had said, *What* Balaam? *Art not thou master of thy own words? I called thee to curse, and not to bless; didst not thou understand what my business was? I knew* Israel *was fenced enough, and too much, with blessings: How is it, that when I sent for thee to blast them, that thou hast blessed them altogether? art thou bribed on their side? or knowest thou not, that I am able to promote thee to honour? Speak, man, the sudden fate of this numerous people, and fear not: Why hast thou gone so contrary to my design?* What saith *Balaam? He answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?* *Balaam* seems to reply from his conscience. 'Tis the duty of every man to take heed to speak that which the Lord puts in his mouth. But *Balaam* was only overpower'd: If God would have suffered him to speak what *Balaak* had desired, his own conscience had never stood in his way: He that opened his Asses mouth a little before to reprove his madness, now shut his mouth from uttering that wickedness. *The Lord* (saith he) *hath blessed them, and I cannot reverse it:* As if he had said, *I have been tugging at it, and labouring to curse them, but I cannot do it.* The Lord restrained his heart, and bound his tongue, that he could not form a curse, and now he puts it off with this fine language, *Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth?* No man ever came with fuller purpose to curse the *Israel* of God then *Balaam* did, but his tongue was not his own, he could not.

לנאמנים *a rad.* אמן *quæ est constantia, fidelitas, stabilitas in dictis & promissis. Qui digni sunt quibus fides habeatur.* Auth. Catenæ.

So much upon that rendring of the Text, *He bereaves Orators of their eloquence.*

We translate, *He removeth away the speech of the trusty*: And so the word is derived from a root, which signifies constancy, fidelity, truth, stability in word or deed: Men so qualified, are worthy to be trusted, and only they. But though it is easie to say, who a *trusty man* is, yet it may be doubted still who is here meant by these *trusty men*: Yet considering *Job*'s scope, we may well conclude, that he speaks of

of men either actually trusted, or worthy to be trusted with the mannagement of publick affairs. Some *Magistrates* are not only *Governours* over the people, but *Feoffees* for them. Thus the Free-holders of *England* in their respective places, chuse the *Members of the House of Commons in Parliament*, *as their Trustees*, and commit the protection of their estates and liberties into their hand: Of such *Trusty men*, or of *men thus Trusted*, we may well interpret this text. And as of these Counsellours whom the people chuse, and Trust; so also of those whom Kings and Princes chuse for, and trust with great offices and employments.

But how doth God remove away the speech of such men: What? doth he make them speechless, or strike them dumb? he can do that; but here (I conceive) the removing of speech may be taken two wayes, first, only, for an abating of the ability of speech; so that they who would, cannot give counsel, either with that clearness of judgement, or freedom of language, which they have sometimes shewed. Secondly, For the changing or turning of the tenour of their speech. When a man speaks unlike himself, contrary to what he hath spoken, when he speaks, as if he were not the *same man*, *then his speech is removed.* When a man, who once spake for the truth of God, speaks against it: When he that once spake for the rights, and just liberties of men, is now heard speaking against them: When they who in every speech were wont to advance those counsels which tended to the peace and safety of Kingdoms, shall upon all emergencies speak that which doth but lengthen out their trouble and danger, Then know *the speech of the trusty is removed. The speech is never removed till the heart be. The mind is first changed, and then the words.* As the manner of speaking shews of what countrey we are, *Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech bewrayeth thee:* so the matter which is spoken discovers of what part we are. We may say to many, you are thus or thus, for your speech bewrayeth you: and to some, You are removed from the cause you once appeared in, *for your speech is removed:* you have certainly turn'd tables, and changed your interest, for your language is changed, and your discourse runs counter to all you did before.

This is the removing of speech.

But how can we attribute this to God? I answer, God changes or removes the speech of the trusty, not by making them unconstant and unfaithful, but by leaving them to their own unfaithfulness and unconstancy: All men (even the best of men) have a seed of unfaithfulness, or a principle of apostacy in them, and if God leave them to themselves, they are quickly turned aside. *No man knows what his heart will do, till he is tryed.*

The time of temptation is the time of discovery. Changes in the providence of God, make the changeableness of mens mindes, both visible in their actions, and audible in their speeches. For

This change or remove of speech, ariseth two wayes.

Sometimes from fear. Some are surprised and arrested with dreadful forecasts, what will become of them, and their estates, what of their wives and children, if they stand to former professions and engagements. *Fear is a very bad counsellour.* Fear hath removed the speech of the *trusty* more then once.

Secondly, The speech of the trusty is removed through hopes and gifts. Expectation will change a mans opinion, much more will somewhat in possession. How many have lost or alter'd their tongues by being felt in the hand, (*Deut.* 16. 19.) *A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.* That expression in *Moses* of *perverting words*, doth excellently answer and expound this in *Job* of *removing speech.* And whereas *Job* saith only that *the speech of the trusty is removed*, *Moses* saith, *the words of the righteous are perverted.* He that was right and went right before, even his words are perverted by a gift. The ancient adage said of such, *The ox is upon their tongue*, that is, money or worldly respects hath silenced them: The reason of that speaking was because the figure of an ox was anciently stampt upon their money; we say the *black ox treads* upon some mens toes; we may say, the white, or the red ox treads so hard upon many mens tongues, that either they will not speak at all, or not as they did. We read that *Demosthenes*, *a great Orator*, being to speak upon a business of consequence, came to the bar with *a scarff or muffler about his neck*, and said he was not able to speak, he was troubled with a *Quincey*; to which some of the wits of the time answered, That *the Orator was sick of the money, not of the Quincey.* Bribes had swell'd his throat, that he could not plead. Thus the speech of the trusty is removed, when some unrighteous bias will not suffer them to speak what they should, or carries them to speak what they should not.

Πῶς ὑπὶ γλώττῃ.

Non Anginâ sed Argentangina correptum Oratorẽ dicentes. Plutar.

Yet further, Some understand *the trusty*, of (men trusted with the souls of men) the Priests and Prophets of those times. The word may be well translated, *truth-speakers*, or *messengers of truth*, God removeth their speech.

First, When they whom he had sent with promises of mercy in their mouths, are now commanded to thunder out threatnings and denunciations of his wrath; when they to whom God hath said, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people*, have now no messages, but sad ones, no visions, but of amazement and desolation.

Commutat promissiones suas factas per prophetas, in comminationes, vel efficit ut qui læta polliceri solent nihil jã nisi tristia prædicent. Philip.

Secondly, the Lord removeth away the speech of these *trusty ones*, by leaving a people to the speech of those who are *untrusty*. When the Jews would not receive the faithful Prophets, God gave them up to the teachings of false Prophets. Speech is removed, when the speakers are thus changed.

Thirdly, God changeth or removeth the speech of *Truth-speakers*, by forbidding them to speak. God doth sometimes silence the sincerest Prophets. When men will not obey what they speak, God will not let them speak, (*Ezek.* 3. 26.) *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover, for they are a rebellious house.* As men when their sin is at the highest, *say to the Prophets, Prophesie no more*; so when judgement is at the highest, God saith unto the Prophets, Prophesie not. The wrath of God is extreamly hot, when flattering Prophets are sent to cry, *Peace, peace, where there is no peace, and to daube up sinful men with untempered morter:* 'Tis also as hot, if not hotter, when God puts a bar upon the lips of his faithful Prophets, that they shall no longer denounce his war against sin, or convince the sinner. *The peace of a people cannot be long liv'd, when once the speech of the trusty is thus or thus removed.*

Take two brief deductions from all.

First, *There is no depending upon the faithfulness of man.* God removeth away the speech of the trusty. *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye,* (*Psal.* 62. 9.) they that have done and spoken right to day, may speak and do wrong to morrow. *Man is a mutable creature in his qualification, as well as in his constitution.* Both his natural, and his moral endowments, are as mortal as his life is: And in many, these die and go to the grave before their Masters.

Secondly, If the speech of the trusty be so often removed, Then, *we must judge of what is spoken by a standing rule, not by the person speaking.* It is an evil, and a soar disease under the sun, that good counsels are refused, because some have a prejudice against the person: And it is a worse evil, when all, even evil Counsels are received upon the good esteem we have of the person. We must look to the matter, not to the man, both in the things of God, and in the things of men; there is neither wisdom nor safety in taking any thing upon trust, especially when we hear that God in judgement *removes away the speech of the trusty.* Whosoever speaks, if he speak truth, it ought to be embraced. And though an *Achitophel*, an Oracle of wisdom on earth, or Angel from heaven, speak what is false, 'tis our duty to reject it. The wisest men are not alwayes wise, neither do the prudent alwayes understand their way. The holiest men are not holy in all things, neither do they who are real friends to truth speak all truth. *Paul* (Gal. 2.) found *Peter* faultering in his speech, and giving not only counsel but example that was not right. The ancient Fathers, men of profound judgement and understanding in the Scriptures, have erred, and misdelivered the mind of God. Whole Councils (which are a collection of wise and learned men) have had their mistakes. We may conclude as the Prophet doth (*Isa.* 2. 22.) *Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* The

honest

honest and the wise, the holy and the just, the eloquent and the trusty, are not always to be trusted. For, *God removeth away the speech of the trusty*, who (possibly) may be all these.

Sapientes senes vocantur licet sint juvenes, propterea quod sapientia utplurimũ in senibus invenitur. Rab. Dav.

And taketh away the understanding of the aged.

Understanding is so proper to the aged, or men of years, that an understanding young man, deservedly draws upon himself the honour and account of many years; *as an old man very foolish, is young-old; so a young man very wise, is old-young.*

Age ordinarily heightens understanding, and experience maturates and improves natural parts, as was shewed at the twelfth verse: yet they whose understandings have had the greatest advantages of experience, may act without understanding, yea against, not only experience, but reason. *Some mens understandings are enfeebled with age, and themselves are old children rather then old men:* that's the judgement which this text holds out unto us.

טעם

Significat gustare, inde cognoscere, judicare, metaphora ducta à sensu ad animam. Hinc Sept. *intelligentiam.* Rab. Moys. *probationẽ.* Rab. Mord. *Decretum.* Pagn. *Consilium.* Tyg. *Judicium.* Regia *Discretionem.* Hebræus *apud* Cajet. *Saporem reddit. Hæc vox in Grammatica sig. accentũ cujuslibet dictionis, eo quod det ei bonũ gustũ & sensũ ad intelligendũ sapientiam.* Rab. Mard.

בעל טעם

Præses consilii.

The word which we render **understanding**, signifies to *taste*, or *the sense of tasting*, and it is frequently translated from the sense to the understanding, because (as was shewed at the 11th verse) the understanding tasts a doctrine, or a proposition, whether it be true or false, as the mouth or palat tasts meat, whether it be sweet or bitter. This word is very comprehensive, signifying (as some critical Rabbins teach us) counsel, judgement, wisdom, reason, both the argument and decree upon which any thing is done, as also the discretion with which it is done. Grammarians tell us that the due and proper accent of every word, is in the Hebrew called [Tagnam] because the accent doth give as it were a right taste of the sense, and so leads to a right understanding of the word. When the holy singer invites all to that glorious banquet, (*Psal.* 24. 8.) *O taste and see that the Lord is good*, he means, understand how good he is. The same inspired heart prayes in this language, (*Psal.* 110. 56.) *Teach me good judgement and knowledge*, that is, give me a true taste and relish of heavenly truth, *Prov.* 11. 22. *As a jewel in a swines snout, so is a fair woman without discretion or understanding. Beauty without brains is a loathsome deformity.* In the book of *Ezra*, the *Chief or President of a Council*, who ordereth and moderates the whole proceeding there, is thus expressed, *The Master of Taste.* He had need to have a quick internal palate, who must taste all men, and all matters, as the President of a Council must.

This taste, this understanding, or whatsoever moral excellency comes within the compass of this word, God taketh away sometimes from the aged, or from men (who for that service) are of the most perfect age.

Hence Observe, First, *Our understandings are at the dispose of God.*

He gives understanding to the simple, and he can take it from the subtile. *Old men are not always wise:* Not only because some never had wisdom, but because many loose the wisdom which once they had. And this is a loss which we sustain from no hand but the hand of God. Man may take our riches and worldly estates from us, and make us poor, but God only can take our understandings from us, and make us fools. Men can empty our purses, but God, and God only can empty our brains.

Quos perdere vult Jupiter hos dementat.

Observe Secondly, *That when the Lord will destroy a people, he takes away the understanding of the ancient.*

Heathens said, *God bereaves them of understanding, whom he designs for destruction.* Now as this is a sad presage of ruine to the party himself, so likewise of ruine to those who have relation to him. And as it is a judgement upon a people when Princes refuse the aged, and follow young Counsellours: So it is the same, if not a greater judgement upon a people, when God takes wisdom from old Counsellours, and leaves them to act like young ones. A young man without understanding cannot do so much hurt as he that is aged: His youth leaves his advices under question and discussion. But when old and experienced Counsellours, who have travelled in affairs many years, and have got the reputation of wise men, prove like empty casks without any filling of wisdom, they quickly undo all with authority, and unsuspected. No marvel then if God put this among his marvellous judgements, (*Isa.* 29. 14.) *Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder.* See how attention is raised, here is, *Behold*, and then, *Behold I will do a marvellous work*, and then, *a marvellous work and a wonder:* And what it is? *The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* No man wonders to see some men without wisdom, they were never guilty of it: But to see wise men unwise, and prudent men (such I mean as have given long proof of their prudence) without understanding, here's a wonder. As we say, young men may die, but old men must; so young men may be wise, but old men should: and those old men, who have once been thought wise, are seldom thought otherwise of, though God have indeed taken away their wisdom. *Now there are no fools do so much mischief, as they who are thought to be wise.* A fool that is wise in his own conceit only, endangers no body but himself, for no body will trust him. But a fool that is wise in the conceit of others, may endanger thousands, for all are ready, not only to trust, but adore his *foolship.* It would not be so great a judgement to have understanding taken from the aged, if the reputation of it were not still left upon them. It is a soar scourge to a land, when God, as the Prophet threatens (*Isa.* 3. 2.) takes away that staff, *the prudent and the ancient*, that is, young men who are wise, as well as *ancient* wise men. But it is a soarer scourge, when he takes away *the prudence of the ancient:* So that those ancient men, who used to be prudent, become light and precipitate in their counsels. When stayed and sober-paced men, run headlong, all, both things and persons, are like to run headlong with them. By such mens fooolish counsels, the wise and just God brings the honourable into contempt, and the strong to weakness; and when all this is done, there is nothing wanting for the ruine of a people, but their actual ruining. The next verse shews us God doing both these.

Vers. 21. **He poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakneth the strength of the mighty.**

This verse (I say) is a continuation of the former argument: giving us yet more prognosticks of the approaching ruine of Kingdoms and Common-wealths. He had said (vers. 19th) *He leadeth Princes away spoiled*, now, *He poureth contempt upon Princes.* As *understanding* is most proper for the *aged*, so is *honour* for *Princes*, and *strength* for the *mighty.* God, to make his judgements exact, punisheth them in that which is most peculiar to them. *He poureth contempt upon Princes*, &c.

Solet effusio magnã profusi liquoris copiã denotare. Pined.

He poureth contempt.] That is, he makes them very contemptible. To pour out any liquid, implieth plenty of it; as the pouring out of the spirit, a plentiful giving of the spirit. When the spirit was poured out (*Act.* 2.) The bystanders said, *these men are full of new wine:* No saith the Apostle, these men *are not drunken (as ye suppose) but this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass in the last dayes (saith God) that I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh*, that is, they shall have abundance of my Spirit. So, *Isa.* 44. 3. *I will pour out water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground*; that is, they shall have much spiritual refreshing, who now are quite destitute of it: such are there shadowed out by the thirsty and dry ground. Again, (*Zech.* 12. 10.) *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication.* And as pouring, applied to the spirit, implies a great measure of the spirit, so in any other. *Psal.* 42. 4. *When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me:* The pouring out of the soul is the pouring out of sorrows; and to pour out sorrow, is to be exceeding sorrowful: So the *pouring out of fury*, notes an excessive fury, *Ezek.* 20. 33. And when *David* as a Type of Christ complaineth (*Psal.* 22. 14.) *I am poured out like water*, his meaning is, all my bodily strength and comforts are departed. Whatsoever is poured out, poured in, or poured upon us, be it good or evil, we have enough of it. Much contempt is their portion upon whom contempt is poured. Here it is poured upon them, upon whom a little is very much,

Upon

נדב *Liberales, munificos denotat, quod liberalitas & beneficentia principes maximè deceat. Nadib est homo liberi spiritus, non invitè & coactè sed sua se voluntate impellens ad honesta & laudabilia.* Merc.

Upon Princes. Princes are vessels of civil honour; yea many Princes are fountains of civil honor, they pour honour upon others; how great a turn is it, when contempt is poured on them, and they filled with dishonour! Some are so contemptible, that they are not sensible of contempt: but nothing touches Princes so soon as contempt doth. 'Tis worse to them to be despised, then to be destroyed; and they can easier part with their lives then with their honour. Here then is the very pinch of Princes, *contempt*, especially if they be Princes of Noble and Princely spirits: Such are pointed at in this word, which properly signifies *munificent, liberal* and *free-hearted*; Princes are, or should be so. Liberality or munificence is the vertue and honour of Princes. Such a free Princely spirit God expects from the meaneſt of his people toward his service (*Exod.* 35.5.) *Take ye from amongst you an offering unto the Lord, whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it.* A true worshipper is not thrust and driven on by an outward written law, but findes a law written in his own heart: He (as it is said of *Araunah*) *like a King gives to the King.* *David* prayeth, *Uphold me with thy free spirit*, (Psal. 51. 14.) 'Tis this word: the spirit of the Lord is a Noble, free, Princely spirit. It is free two wayes. First, Subjectively, or in it self, giving out freely and liberally to us. Secondly, It is free in the effects, *Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, it makes us free. They who have received this spirit, serve the Lord freely, and judge his service freedom. Hence (*Psal.* 110. 3.) *all the people of God are expressed by this word, a Princely people; Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*, they shall be willing as Princes, liberal as Kings, they shall give up soul, body, name, estate, all to Jesus Christ. They who have felt the day of divine power, are not acted by humane power, by the coercions and ordinances of men; they are under no constraint, but that of the love of Christ. Worldly Princes have that in their name, which the Saints have in their nature. And because many worldly Princes have so little of that in their natures, which they have fully in their name, true Nobleness, I mean, and freeness of spirit to do good and defend those who are good, therefore God *poureth contempt upon them.*

Hence Observe, First, *If Princes use not their honour for Christ, Christ will pour dishonour upon Princes.*

1 *Sam.* 2. 30. *Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.* When Princes act unlike themselves, God makes them unlike themselves, vile and contemptible. The Apostle speaks of himself and of his fellow Apostles in (1 *Cor.* 4. 9.) *I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed unto death; for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to Angels, and to men.* As the Lord suffers his Saints to have contempt poured upon them by the world, and to be made a spectacle of scorn; so he himself poureth contempt upon the greatest of worldly Princes, he setteth them as upon a theater or open stage, that all may behold and look upon them, and say, Thus hath God done with the men who had no delight to honour him. *Since thou wast precious in my sight* (saith God of his meanest people, *Isa.* 43. 4.) *thou hast been honourable*, that is, altogether honourable in thy self, and honoured by all men who know thy worth: and when once highest Princes are vile in the sight of God, they become dishonourable, even altogether dishonourable in themselves, as also in the eye and esteem of all men who know their unworthiness. And when Princes are thus become dishonourable, they are within a step of becoming miserable. The Psalmist had no sooner said, *He poureth contempt upon Princes*, but presently it follows, *and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way*, (*Psal.* 107. 40.) When Princes are under contempt, they are uncertain of their course, they are entangled in their counsels, they are in a maze, and know neither their way, nor their end, but are at their wits end, and at their honours end, both together. We have a Prophecy of a glorious Kingdom, (*Isa.* 32. 1.) *Behold a King shall reign in righteousness, and Princes shall rule in judgement*, &c. Then (*vers.* 5.) *The vile person shall no more be called liberal, or Prince. Nabal* shall not glory in this title *Nadib. Nabal* is a fool, and *Nadib* is a Prince. In that Kingdom, fools or vile persons shall no more be honoured nor adored like golden Idols. Men shall be known what they are, and called what they deserve. Then, Princes who misapply their power, and refuse to be *nursing fathers* to the Church, then, Princes who bring not their glory to the new *Jerusalem*, and submit not their crowns unto the Lamb, even all they who are a terrour to the good, and praise them who do evil, *shall no more be named gracious Lords*, but shall go forth with everlasting shame (instead of a crown) upon their heads. Swelling titles will be no Sanctuary against those vials of contempt, ready to be poured out upon all contemners of Christ, and opposers of his throne, for ever.

Secondly Observe, *They that have received much honour from God, shall receive much shame from him, if they abuse their honour.*

Proportional to the honour they have received will the contempt be which they shall receive. God doth not drop, but pour honour upon Princes; therefore he will not drop, but pour contempt upon them by whole buckets full, it shall come down as a sweeping rain. As they who have had, not only as *Moses* speaks of his, *doctrine dropping as the rain, and speech distilling as the dew*, but Gospel knowledge pouring down upon them; these shall not have some drops of anger, but God will pour out his anger and his fury upon them, if they are unfruitful, or bring not forth fruit meet for his (their Masters) use. They that have but a drop or two of the word, shall have comparatively but a drop of judgement. That's the reason why it shall be easier for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, then for *Bethsaida* and *Chorazin*, at the day of judgement, *Matth.* 11. 22. Justice looks to the measure, as well as to the matter of sin, in pronouncing punishments. *He poureth contempt upon Princes,*

And weakneth the strength of the mighty.

The Hebrew is, *He weakneth the girdle of the mighty.* The Vulgar and the Septuagint are very bold with this text, in their translations, giving a sense hardly reconcileable to the Original. *He relieveth those that are oppressed*, saith the one: *He healeth those that are humble*, saith the other: Both wide enough from our reading, *He weakneth the strength of the mighty.* The word signifies rivers and torrents, which run with a mighty force. *He looseneth the strength or girdle of the mighty:* the same word notes a girdle and strength, because a girdle causeth strength, or is an advantage to put out our strength; for though now men usually ungird themselves when they go about strong labor, yet in those times it was not so; *Job* speaks according to the custom of those Eastern Countries, who (wearing long garments) when they prepared for travel or labour, girded up themselves, that so they might be more nimble and expeditious. *Job* had said, *vers.* 19. *He overthrow the mighty*; here he saith, *He weakneth the strength of the mighty.* There is a difference between these two: There, *he bringeth a greater power, and so overthroweth them.* As 'tis said in the Gospel, though a strong man armed keep the house, yet when a stronger comes, he spoils him. But here 'tis said, *He weakneth the strength of the mighty*, that is, *he abateth or draweth out their strength.* As the waters of a great river, being drawn out by sluces, the strength of the river is weakned: So the Lord drains and draws out the strength of mighty men, and weakens them. It is storyed, that when *Cyrus* besieged *Babylon*, which was encompassed with a mighty river, the river *Euphrates*, he made many sluces and cuts, which fetched out all the water from the river, and so surprised them in the height of security, they thinking the place impregnable, and having also a propheſie, *That the city should never be taken till the river proved their enemy.* Thus the Lord, he sluceth out the strength of the strongest men, their personal strength, the strength of their arms and legs; their relational strength, the strength of their friends, allies, and confederates; so some understand this place: There is a girdle of strength wherewith one Nation is tyed to another, such are leagues of amity and mutual aid: The Lord weakneth this strength also, and makes them who were a help, a hurt unto their neighbours. He saith, *Gird your selves, and ye shall*

Humiles autē sanavi. Sept.

אפיקים *Sunt aquæ cum impetu fluentes.*

מוה *Significat non fortitudinē solum sed cingulū; siquidē virium sedes in lumbis qui cingulo muniuntur, vel quòd vires augeat, cinēti enim robustiori sunt, & habiliores ad opus faciendū.* Dru. *Eos qui oppressi sunt relevans.* Vulg.

shall be broken in pieces; gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; take counsel together, and it shall come to nought, Isa. 8. 9, 10. *The strength of all creatures associated, is too weak for the single strength of God.*

Hence Observe, *All the strength of man is at the pleasure and dispose of God.*

He overthrows strength, not only by overpowering it, but by unpowering it. He can alwayes bring more strength then we have, or lessen the strength which we have. As we cannot master Gods strength, so we are not masters of our own. *Sampson's* strength was a terror to the *Philistims*; but as soon as God was gone from him, his strength was gone, and then they despised him, who before trembled at him; and called him out to make them sport, whose presence had so often spoiled their sport. How many mighty men hath God weakned? How many invincible Armies and Armadoes of men (as proud men have stiled them) hath God conquered? How many potent Kingdoms and Commonwealths hath God reduced to confused heaps? *Once hath God spoken, yea twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God; also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy* (*Psal.* 62. 11, 12.) 'Tis safest for us to fly to this mercy, seeing we can neither fly from, nor stand before this power. *Thou hast a mighty arm, O God, strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand,* (Psal. 80. 13.) The weakness of God is stronger then man: And before God all mans strength is turned into weakness. All the Instances which *Job* hath already given, prove this great truth, *That with God is wisdom and strength*; and least any should think it is not yet proved enough, he is ready in the two next verses to give us yet a further, and (if a clearer may be) a clearer proof.

VERS. 22, 23.

He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.
He increaseth the Nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the Nations, and straiteneth them again.

WE have seen, in the former context, how large a testimony *Job* hath given of the power and wisdom of God; producing many proofs which speak both no less then infinite. And because those were particular and personal, therefore he giveth us (in these two verses) two more which are general, and National. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness. He increaseth the Nations,* &c. Here's providence unlocking secrets, opening those things which were sealed up: these acts are attended with sutable effects, *The increasing and destroying, the enlarging and straitening of the Nations.*

Verse 22. **He discovereth deep things out of darkness.**

גלה עמקות
De revelatione occultorum propriè usurpatur. Profundatenebris obducta & aperta sunt. Pined.

The word properly signifies to unfold that which is wrapped up, or to manifest that which is hidden. Deep places are hidden places. God discovereth those things which are most hidden, even deep things out of darkness: *Deep things, and darkness,* are put together, because that which is deep is dark. The further we remove from the fountain of light, the more darkness prevails over us; and therefore every degree of deepness adds a degree of darkness; all depth being downward, and so a departure from the Sun. *In the beginning darkness was upon the face of the deep* (Gen. 1. 1.) but darkness is alwayes in the bottom of the deep, *He discovereth deep things out of darkness,* that is, the remotest, lowest, and most retired depths. These deep things may be referred to two heads.

There are deep things of God: And deep things of men.

The deep things of God are, First his thoughts (*Psal.* 92. 5.) *O Lord, how great are thy works? and thy thoughts are very deep:* so deep, that all the line of mans understanding is not able to sound or fadom them. The thoughts of God are his Decrees and Counsels; he doth not think to resolve, but his thoughts are his resolutions. The thoughts of God are so deep, that the Apostle (with a mixture of amazement and adoration) cries out, *O the depth* (Rom. 11. 33.) Secondly, The deep things of God are his Word, containing either Doctrines to be believed, or Prophecies to be fulfilled. The Word of God hath its shallows, and it hath its depths: there a Lamb may wade, and there an Elephant may swim.

Secondly, There are deep things of men; which are of divers sorts.

First, His Word is deep. Though the words of men float upon their tongues, yet *Solomon* assures us, that *The words of a mans* (that is, as the word imports, of an excellent mans) *mouth are as deep waters* (Prov. 18. 4.) A wise prudent man speaks Oracles; and when you hear the sound, and understand the Grammatical sence, you do not presently reach the depth of what is spoken. As some speak shallowly, so they hear shallowly; they dive not into those deep waters which flow from a wise mans mouth. He speaks wisdom in a mystery, or mysteries of wisdom.

Secondly, There is a depth in a man, deeper then his words, and that is, the *depth of his thoughts* (Psal. 64. 6.) *Both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* The heart is often put for the inward thought; but here, the inward thought is an act of the heart; and the heart is the faculty, or power of thinking: *Counsel in the heart of a man is like deep water* (Prov. 20. 5.) The heart of man is a great deep, so deep, that none can find it out but God himself, *Jer.* 17. 10. *I the Lord search the heart,* &c. *What man* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 2. 11.) *knoweth the things of a man* (that is, those things which lye in the heart of man) *but the spirit of a man which is in him?* Some men flatter themselves, that God himself cannot find out the things of their spirit: Hence that woe in the Prophet (*Isa.* 29. 15.) *Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord.* Doubtless they had some hopes to hide their counsels from God, else they would never have sought to hide them. They shewed themselves foolish enough in seeking to hide them; but they had proclaimed themselves more fools in seeking to hide them, if they had been convinced they could not. But though no depth of mans heart can hide his counsel from God; yet many men have depth enough in their hearts, and to spare, to hide their counsels from men.

Thirdly, There is in man a depth of doctrine, or opinion; which is also called the *depth of Satan* (Rev. 2. 24.) *As many as have not known the depths of Satan:* Those depths of Satan were the dark opinions, and false doctrines of seducers: These called their opinions depths, or profundities: And the holy Ghost addeth an Epithete, *depths of Satan.* As if he had said, you call your opinions depths, and so they are, but they are such depths as Satan hath brought out of Hell; they are the whisperings and hissings of that Serpent, not the inspirations of God. The doctrine of Antichrist (that great Merchant of error) is called a *mystery of iniquity* (2 Thes. 2. 7.) A mystery is a truth shut up, or lying in the deep: The deep and dark mysteries of the wicked, will God reveal, *vers.* 8. For *he discovereth deep things out of darkness.*

Darkness may be taken two wayes. There is a natural darkness, which is only the privation of natural light: And there is a metaphorical darkness, which is the privation of moral light. This darkness is in many through their ignorance; and darkness is made by others through their knowledge. The infinite knowledge of God makes a darkness to hide his ways and counsels in, and so doth the knowledge of men. They keep their projects and purposes under the vails and visors of specious pretences, and studied secrecies. Out of all this darkness God discovers deep things.

The latter clause of the verse is but an heightning of this, *He bringeth out to light the shadow of death.*

Shadow of death, is taken two wayes.

First, For extream danger.

Secondly, For extream darkness.

For extream danger, *Psal.* 23. 4. *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,* that is, in deadly danger, *yet I will fear no evil.*

But here, *shadow of death,* is put for extream darkness. The grave is a place of darkness; and things that are buried lye in the dark. (*Job* 34. 22.) *There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves*; that is, the workers of iniquity cannot be hid in the thickest darkness. The shadow of death is the highest, the most superlative degree of thickest darkness: As if *Job* had said,

God

God doth not only bring deep things out of darkness, but the deep things out of the greatest darkness; out of that darkness that is as deep and dark as the grave.

When counsels lye so deep, that the persons who have laid them, have not so much as any jealousie they shall be discovered; when counsels lye so deep, that others have no hope that ever they should be discovered; yet then the Lord discovereth them, and this is *to bring out to light the shadow of death.*

Hence observe, First in general, *All things are known unto God.*

He that makes all things known, must needs know all things: And he that makes those things known, which are most unknown, cannot but know those things which are easily known. He that can expound a riddle, can tell the meaning of a plain saying; and he that discovers deep things out of darkness, cannot but see those things that lye in the open Sun. Unless God were infinite in knowledge, he could not make these things known. (*Eccles.* 7. 24.) *That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* The Wise man sends a challenge to the wise men of the world, *to find out the wisdom of God: That's the thing which is far off*, not only from our senses, but from our understanding. That's it *which is exceeding deep. Deep, deep*, as the Original expresseth it; deep to men, deep to Angels, and too deep for both. Who can find this out? No man can find any thing of it by his own light: and there are none who receive light to find it all out. God is light, and he dwells in light: and as he hath no darkness at all in him, so nothing is dark to him. He perfectly knows his own creating wisdom: *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Many things are covered as to the eye of the world; they have masks and clouds cast over them, which eyes of flesh cannot see through; but these are all naked before the eye of God: yea they are as *manifest* and open to his eye, as a body is, when dissected by the hand of a skilful Anatomist; he sees our bowels, and knows whether we are sound at heart or no. It is not the fairness of the skin, the cleanness of the outside, will deceive him; if there be any spots upon the spirit, he discerns them; God needeth none to tell him what is in the heart of man, he makes his way into the depths of that darkness with his own eye.

Secondly, Observe, *As God knows deep things, so he makes them known.*

What is always open to himself, he sometimes revealeth unto man. God discovers both the deep things which himself or man doth or speaketh.

First, He revealeth the deep things which himself speaketh. Unless God expound his own word, all our glosses will but corrupt it: For, *No Prophesie of Scripture is of any private interpretation* (2 Pet. 2. 20.) *By private interpretation*, the Apostle means not the interpretation of one or of a few private men, for possibly, one or a few and he or they not invested with any publick commission, may give a true sence of Scripture, when many, and they called to a publick office, mistake and go wrong. But by private interpretation, he brands that comment which flows from a mans own brain, or fancy, without the consent of other Scriptures, or the teachings of the Spirit. No Scripture, whether Doctrinal, or Prophetical, is of any such private, that is, humane interpretation. Man with all his wit, learning, and parts, cannot interpret the Word of God, only the Spirit of God can, or they can, who are assisted by the Spirit.

So much the Text in *Peter* now cited, holds out clearly in the letter; and yet some of the Learned give another expression of it. For the words shew us rather the authority and original of the Scriptures, then the way of their interpretation. The Apostles scope being to prove, that the Prophets did not declare their own private opinions, but the mind of God, in what they spake. And that therefore the word of prophecy, as the Apostle adviseth in the former verse, is to be *heeded carefully*. The words following lead us also to the same sence (*ver.* 21.) *For the prophecy came not in the old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost.* The Prophets were the Interpreters of the mind of God to the people; not the messengers of their own minds. The false Prophets vended their own dreams, and ran of their own heads before they were sent; therefore their prophesies were of a *private interpretation*; that is, they opened only that to the people, which themselves were authors of; so did not the true Prophets. They said, *Thus saith the Lord*; or as *Paul, We have received of the Lord, that which we deliver unto you.* From all it appears, that the Apostle is speaking of the pedigree, not of the exposition of Prophetical Scriptures. Yet the truth is as evident for the one as for the other. As the Scripture it self is not the interpretation of mans mind; so neither is any true interpretation of Scripture from the meer mind of man. *The Spirit of God* (in man) *searcheth all things, even the deep things of God*, 1 Cor. 2. 10. And without the Spirit, man cannot find any thing of God; no not that which lyeth uppermost, or most in sight.

Again, He revealeth the deep things which himself doth. *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the Prophets* (Amos 3. 7.) The secret intended by the Prophet, was the decree and purpose of God to bring evil upon that Land, to take away the voice of mirth and gladness, and to make them an astonishment, an hissing, and a perpetual desolation. The secret of such decrees God reveals to his Prophets, that they may warn the people, either to prevent or prepare for the evil which is to come. When God was about to destroy *Sodom*, he saith, *Shall I hide from* Abraham *that thing which I do?* Gen. 18. 17. God revealed the rising and fall of the Kingdoms of this world, the rising and fall of the Kingdom of Antichrist, the making of the Kingdoms of this world, the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ; all these the Lord revealed by the Spirit unto the Apostle *John*, by him collected into that book called *The Revelation*. In the eighth of *Daniel* (*vers.* 13.) Christ is stiled *Palmoni*, which we translate, *a certain Saint*, but in the Margents of our Bibles we put, *The Numberer of secrets*, or, *a wonderful Numberer*. Christ is *the Numberer of secrets*, he tells them over, and hath them all (as we say) at his fingers ends: he can give an account of them at an instant, both how many they are, and what they mean. When *Nebuchadnezzar* desired to hear the interpretation of his dream, *Daniel* ascribes all to God, *He revealeth the deep and secret things, he knoweth what is the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him*; Dan. 2. 22.

Besides these deep and dark things which concern future events, the Lord revealeth also the deep things of doctrine, the supernatural mysteries of Religion; the Incarnation of his Son, the Resurrection of the body, the mystery of justifying Faith, and of the new Birth, which are absurdities to Nature; these are all revealed in the Word of God to our ears, and by the Spirit of God to our hearts.

Secondly, As the Lord revealeth the deep things which himself doth, or speaketh, so also the deep things of mans doing, or speaking, whether they be good or evil. Though the sinner go as deep as hell, yet himself, and his sin, are under the eye of God. *Thou* (saith the Psalmist) *hast set our iniquities before thee, and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.* When God intends to punish iniquity, he is said to set it before him, but whether he do or no, it is before him. And as our secret iniquity is always before him, so he sometimes sets it before men. (*Eccles.* 10. 20.) *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bed-chamber; for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.* Solomon warns those who wickedly conspire against Kings, and persons in authority, to consider, as their sin, so their danger; for though they carry the matter never so closely, God can make it known: 'Tis hard for a man to conceal his own thoughts (when the mind is full it may quickly run over at the mouth) but 'tis easie with God to find out a way for the revealing of our thoughts. *A bird of the air shall carry the voice:* But what's the voice of a thought? Or, how comes a bird into the bed-chamber? The bed-chamber is the securest place; and a thought is the most secret act? What can be more secret then a thought? Who can hear the sound of our thoughts, or understand their language? We say, *Thought is free.* Thoughts fall not under the cognizance, or censure of any Court. That which fears no evidence,

Propriâ interpretationem non opponit communi sive publicæ, sed adventitiis Spiritus sancti donis, ei solertiæ, vel ei ingenii vigori qui fit à natura hominibus quantûvis ingeniosis insitus. Bez.

Sensus Petri Apostoli hic videtur esse, Prophetas non suæ mentis sensum edidisse, sed fuisse interpretes consilii divini, vel prophetas non suâ sed Dei mentem homini-bus exposuisse. Calvin. Myroth. Evang.

Qui occulta in numerato habet. Jun.

Quæ in cogitatione revolvuntur, de facili verbo proferuntur etiâ præter intentionem proferentis. Lyr. in Eccles.

fears no ſentence: Yet God, to whom our thoughts are evident, can ſend in evidence againſt our thoughts. *A bird of the air ſhall carry the voice* of that which hath no voice. It is a proverbial ſpeech, to note, that by the moſt unlikely means, if other means fail, God will reveal thoſe curſes, and reveal them ſpeedily. As if he had ſaid, *Rather then ſuch ſecret wickedneſs ſhall be undiſcovered, God will make birds ſpeak, and chamber-doors ſpeak, the ſtone out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber ſhall ſpeak, rather then ſilence ſhall cover ſuch a wickedneſs.* More diſtinctly, when he ſaith, *A bird of the air ſhall carry the voice*, he implyes two things: Firſt, That it ſhall be revealed by ſome unexpected means, or by means as little ſuſpected for the doing of ſuch a thing, as a bird is. *As*, when *Balaam* went on ſinfully, *the dumb Aſs, ſpeaking with mans voice, forbad the madneſs of the Prophet: Balaam* little dreamt of ſuch a reprover; and theſe ſhall as little dream of ſuch a tale-bearer. Secondly, This phraſe of ſpeech implyes, that the matter ſhall be revealed by ſome ſpeedy means. *A bird ſhall do it*: The Meſſenger ſhall not go, but run; he ſhall not run, but fly; *a* Pegaſus *ſhall be the Poſt*, he ſhall have wings added to his feet; he ſhall have wings inſtead of feet. The Angels are deſcribed with wings in Scripture, to ſhew their ſpeed; a winged Meſſenger ſhall be diſpatcht on this errand. Once more, as ſome refer this diſcovery purely to the providence of God, ſo others to the policy of Princes, who have their ſpies flying like birds in all places; men no more feared to carry the report of what is ſpoken, then a bird is. They have their intelligencers in every bed-chamber, men no more feared to carry the report of what is ſpoken, then the chamber-doors are. In the ſame ſence that Kings are ſaid to have *long hands*, we may ſay alſo that they have *long ears*: They have *long hands*, becauſe they can uſe means to ſtrike thoſe that are far from them: and they have *long ears*, becauſe they can uſe means to hear thoſe who are far from them. But whether we take this, or the former interpretation, the point is equally performed; for even thoſe diſcoveries which are made by men, are ordered and brought on by the wiſe and holy providence of God, who doth ſo hate evil, and all the works of moral darkneſs, eſpecially the curſing of Kings and lawful Magiſtrates, that he will diſcover them out of all the deeps, either of natural or artificial darkneſs.

Principes & potentiores ſunt auritiſſimi, vix quicquam fit aut dicitur quod ipſorũ cognitionem fugiat. Jun.

Further, God bringeth good things as well as evil, juſt and holy actions, as well as ſinful and unjuſt, out of the deeps of darkneſs: *Many works of light lye in darkneſs:* Many excellent things are under concealment. *David*'s integrity lay in the dark, yet God brought it forth as the light, and his innocency as the noon-day. God is not unrighteous, to forget or conceal, either our labour of love, or labours in holineſs, though men do.

Laſtly, How great an experiment hath God given us of this truth, in that grand diſcovery which he hath made to to the world (in this latter Age) of *another world?* A great part of the world, even ſo great as bears the name of a *new world*, was a deep thing of darkneſs, to this part of the world, for many and many ages and generations. No man ſo much as dream'd of ſuch Nations as are now diſcovered. The ſurface of thoſe huge Countreys was as little known to us as the center of the earth is: yea it was judged a kind of hereſie in ancient times, to ſay there were *Antipodes*. But now 'tis known, that the feet of our Brethren have walked oppoſite to the ſoles of our feet; and we have not only experience, but light of reaſon enough to evince it. God hath made Art a key to Nature, and hath diſcovered many deep things out of that darkneſs to us, which our fore-fathers never ſaw. Thus we ſee, that *deep things*, both Divine and humane, and theſe both practical and natural, are fetcht out of darkneſs by the mighty power, and unſearchable wiſdom of God.

There are three wayes by which God makes diſcoveries of evil plots, or practices, lying in deepeſt darkneſs.

Firſt, By the *confeſſion* of the perſon, whoſe head hath contrived, or his hand acted them. Evil in the heart drops out at the mouth; and this two wayes.

Firſt, By queries and queſtions put to the guilty. Such are often entrapt in their own anſwers, and their own tongues are a witneſs againſt themſelves. As ſpeech bewrayeth whence men are, ſo what they have been doing: (*Prov.* 20. 5.) *Counſel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of underſtanding will draw it out.* He draws it out by queſtions and examinations. When thoſe black waters will not flow out of themſelves, they are pumped up by the art and induſtry of others.

Secondly, A confeſſion of theſe deep things out of darkneſs is made by the workings of a mans own Conſcience. When Conſcience is touched, and beginneth to ake, that will tell tales: It is hard for a man, at ſuch a time, to keep his own counſel. It was the caution of an Ancient, *Be afraid of doing any thing which is ill, though there be no witneſs but thy ſelf:* If thou couldſt do it, thy Conſcience taking no notice of it, thou mighteſt poſſibly keep it ſecret; but whatſoever thou doeſt, is done in the eye of Conſcience, therefore take heed. We have a ſaying, *That murther will out*; and if nothing elſe bring it out, Conſcience will: Conſcience will examine a man as ſtrictly as any *Inquiſitor in* Rome. And as men, examined and tortured by ſevere Inquiſitors, confeſs what they would not; ſo alſo do they who are examined and put upon the Rack by their own Conſciences.

Turpe quid auſurus, te ſine teſte time.

Secondly, *God revealeth deep things immediately by his own Spirit:* As the Spirit revealeth the holy counſels of God to us, ſo the moſt ſecret evil deſigns and counſels of men. (*2 Kings* 6. 11.) When the King of *Syria* could take no counſel, but it was preſently diſcovered, he might well be caſt into a ſuſpition, that ſome about him were falſe to him, and held correſpondence with the enemy, *Therefore* (ſaith the ſtory) *the heart of the King of* Syria *was ſore troubled for this thing; and he called his ſervants, and ſaid unto them, Will not ye ſhew me which of us is for the King of* Iſrael? *And one of his ſervants ſaid, None, my Lord, O King, but* Eliſha *the Prophet that is in* Iſrael, *telleth the King of* Iſrael *the words that thou ſpeakeſt in thy bed-chamber.* The Spirit of God revealed the deep counſels of the *Syrian* King unto the Prophet, and the Prophet revealed them to men.

There is a third way which is more common, by which the Lord diſcovers deep things out of darkneſs, and that is, by *wonderful providences*; he makes ſome acts of his own providence as keys, to unlock the ſecrets of men; as hands, to pluck off the vails; as winds, to diſpel the clouds, and ſcatter the miſts which hid their actions, or intentions. In the hiſtory of *Joſeph* we have an admirable demonſtration of this: It was a ſecret, a deep thing of darkneſs that his Brethren conſpired againſt him, they ſold him into *Egypt*, and brought his torn coat home all bloody to his Father, which cauſed the plain-hearted old man to conclude, *That ſome evil beaſt had devoured him.* Thus the matter was locked up; yet God makes ſeveral acts of his providence as keyes to open it. Firſt, Famine pincheth *Jacob* and his Family; then *Joſeph*'s Brethren muſt into *Egypt*; and after one journey, they muſt make a ſecond; and then *Benjamin* muſt be detained, and *Simeon* bound; here was a ſtrange ſeries and ſucceſſion of providences, till the whole matter was diſcovered. The *Gunpowder-plot* was a deep thing of darkneſs, a ſtrange monſter (*Cui lumen ademptum*) which ſaw no light, not only becauſe it never took effect, but becauſe it was kept ſo cloſe a long time, under oaths, and ſtrongeſt concealments, that there was not the leaſt ſuſpition of it; yet by a ſtrange providence God diſcovers this deep thing out of darkneſs: A Letter written with uncouth expreſſions, and by miſtake put into a wrong hand, was the occaſion of bringing all to light. Latter times have given us great experiences of this: The beſt intelligences have we have had of ſecret counſels have been from their cabinets, who contrived them.

Take four Corollaries from this.

Firſt, Be afraid to do, or to plot any evil ſecretly: The Lord diſcovers deep things out of darkneſs. Uſually *they who do things that are not fit to be ſeen, conceive they are not, or ſhall not be ſeen either in doing them, or when they are done.* Flatter not your ſelves in this vain hope; you may caſt a vail upon them a while, but out they will at laſt.

Secondly, Be not afraid of the ſecret plottings of evil men, or of the deep things of their darkneſs; how deep ſoever the wayes and counſels of men are laid, yet they are all above-board to God. Suppoſe enemies are taking counſel againſt us, yet we have a powerful friend behind the hangings, who hears every word they ſay, and ſets down in a book every reſolve they make, and will in fitteſt ſeaſon, both diſcover, and diſappoint them. Let this be encouragement

couragement to all the faithful; their Father in Heaven knows and over-rules the darkest designs of wicked men on earth.

Thirdly, *When men are plotting, let us be praying.* David knew *Achitophel* could give desperate and deep counsel against him, therefore he prayeth, *Lord turn the counsel of* Achitophel *into foolishness:* As if he had said, *Lord, thou knowest what he hath advised, I do not; he is plotting against me, Lord take notice that I am praying unto thee. Plots were never any match for prayer; nor the counsels of the wicked able to stand before the supplications of the righteous.*

Fourthly, *No mans uprightness shall be always hid*: God will clear the innocent, for he discovereth deep things out of darkness; he that manifests the guilt of all, will also manifest the innocency of his. There is seldom any eminent or singular good thing done in the world, but it falls under misconstruction, and often such glosses are given as corrupt the contexture of sincerest works; for the conclusions of malice are ever like those of Logick, following (*deteriorem partem*) the weaker and worser part. How often is holiness miscall'd hypocrisie, and zeal vain-glory? How often is contending for the faith, misjudged faction; and contending against error, humour? In the midst of all these dark thoughts of men, concerning our works, this may bear up our hearts, that as God knows them what they are, so he will make them appear as they are. The Lord Christ comforts his Disciples against all the calumnies, and misapprehensions of the world, though they should be called *Beelzebubs*, and made as black as Hell by traducing pens, or tongues; yet saith he (*Matth.* 10. 25.) *Fear them not, for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known:* Which words may have a double aim.

First, To deter the Disciples from concealing the Word of God for fear of men. As if Christ had said, *Be ye bold and constant in delivering the message which I shall put into your mouths; declare to the world the whole counsel of God; keep not back, conceal not his truth, betray not his cause by a cowardly silence: for whatsoever plausible excuses you may make, to palliate and hide this lowness and falseness of your spirits, yet at length all will out; and though you would not declare the truth of God to his glory, yet God will declare the whole truth concerning you, to your shame; as the madness of your persecutors shall be manifest, so also shall your fearfulness; therefore fear them not: What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light,* &c. *for what ye do, or forbear to do in darkness, shall come to light, with the reasons of it.*

Secondly, These words aim at the support of the Disciples under the slanders and spiteful opinions of men, when they fully and couragiously declare and preach the Word of God. As if he had said, *Your innocency may be hid, and your righteousness unknown; you may be called* Beelzebub, *and Devil, for speaking the truths of God; yet I will take a time to put off these ugly disguises, and render you even to the eye of the world such as you are, upright and honest men, my zealous and faithful messengers: for I assure you, there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed:* and *therefore your faithfulness to my cause and Gospel shall not; do ye reveal my hidden truths, and leave it to me to reveal your integrity, how much soever it may be hidden.* Upon the same ground that wicked men are to fear, godly men are not to fear: Wicked men have cause to fear, because their evil deeds shall be made manifest; and godly men are not to fear, yea they are to rejoyce, because their goodness and good deeds shall be made manifest: All their uprightness, and faithful intentions, for the promoting of the honour of Christ, and advancing the Gospel, shall be set in the open light.

Yet further, Though we should do much good, which is in the dark too, or hidden from our selves (for there are, as sins, so, in a sence, good works of ignorance) or if we should have forgotten the good which we have done knowingly, yet the Lord will redeem our works out of this darkness also; the darkness I mean, whether of our own ignorance or forgetfulness. Neither secrecy, nor inscience, nor oblivion, our own, or others, can long cover a good work; let it be only our care to do good; it is the care of Christ, that no good which we have done shall be lost, or left in perpetual darkness. God makes many discoveries of deep things out of darkness here, and he will make an universal discovery at last: As that Apostolical caution against rash judgment clearly imports: (*1 Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness* (whether good or bad) *and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts* (whether just or unjust) *and then shall every man* (who is praise worthy) *have praise of God.* The Apostle in this aims rather at the encouragement of the Saints, whose best actions are often hid, then at the terror of the wicked, who desire and hope that their evil actions shall be always hid. Thus we see how God discovers dark and *deep things.* In the next verse we shall see him altering and disposing, turning and changing *great things*, even the Nations of the earth.

Verse 23. **He increaseth the Nations, and destroyeth them; he inlargeth the Nations, and straiteneth them again.**

Here are two acts of providence, like *checquer-work*: a white and a black: An act of mercy, and an act of judgment; an act of the right hand, *increasing and inlarging*; and an act of the left, *destroying and straitening Nations.* God doth not only abase particular persons, how great soever they are (*Loosing the bond of Kings, and pouring contempt upon Princes*, &c.) but he hath a controversie with whole Nations and Kingdoms, they shall be abased and smart under his hand, if they go on provoking and sinning against him.

Non solum Dei suæ potentiæ ac sapientiæ documenta præbet, in his quæ unius vel alterius regis sunt, sed in universa aliqua multitudine & numerosissimo populo. Merc.

He increaseth the Nations.] The word which we translate *to increase*, hath a double derivation. Some take it from a root, which signifies to augment, or multiply. Others take it from a root, which signifies to err, or wander, and in construction, *to deceive.* Hence some render, *He deceiveth the Nations, and destroyeth them:* So the Septuagint; and it is a truth, God deceiveth the Nations, he leaveth them to their own mistakes, or to the evil counsels of others, *and then destroyeth them.* Destruction is usually let in by misapprehension. The judgment of God upon the outward estate begins at a judgment upon the understanding. Seldom hath any Nation perished, but they see they have been befooled, and that they refused their own good before they were deprived of it. As the Text may bear this translation, so the truth flowing from it, is very useful.

שגה *Crescere, multiplicare.*

שגה *Errare.* Πλανῶν ἐθνη καὶ ἀποπλανῶν αὐτά. *Decipiens gentes & perdens eas.* Sept.

But because the ordinary acception of the word runs fairest, *He increaseth the Nations*, &c. I shall insist only upon that.

When God made the world, he said to man, yea to every thing that had life in it, and so power of increasing, *Increase and multiply: A word from God makes the creature multiply.* The increase of every thing is from God, as well as the constitution of it. There is a threefold increase. First, In number; God said to *Abraham, I will multiply thy seed as the sand of the Sea, and as the Stars of Heaven*; and it was so. Secondly, He increaseth Nations in riches and plenty; he blesseth their basket and their store; they lend to others, and do not borrow. Thirdly, He increaseth Nations in honour and reputation; they are the head, and not the tail; the sheaves of their neighbours round about, fall down to their sheave. Such honour is promised the Jews, *That ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the Nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you,* (Zach. 8. 23.) Thus the Nations are increased by a word of blessing from the mouth of God.

And as he *increaseth*, so he *destroyeth.* The decayes of Nations are from God, as well as their improvements are. God declareth his power by pulling down, as well as by raising up; by killing, as well as by making alive; by destroying, as well as by increasing.

This destruction is wrought two wayes, openly, or secretly. Sometime *God is a moth and rottenness* to a Nation, he destroyes them silently, and unseen (*Hos.* 5. 12.) they decline and moulder away, they know not how. Sometimes *he is a Lion, and as a young Lion unto a Nation, he will tear and go away, and none shall rescue* (Hos. 5. 14.) he destroyeth them visibly, by Diseases and Plagues, by Famine and the Sword. By some one, or by all these, he destroyeth them, till, as he threatned the Jews (*Isa.* 6. 11.) *The Cities be wasted without inhabitants, and the houses without man, and the Land be utterly desolate.*

The last branch of the verse is of the same importance with the former.

He inlargeth the Nations, and straiteneth them again.

There is a different reading, for some render the former as an act of judgment, *He scattereth, or subverteth the Nations*; and the latter as an act of mercy, *He restoreth them again.* Thus he banished the Jews into *Babylon*, and after seventy years brought them back to their own Land. We understand the former clause as an act of mercy; the latter of wrath and judgment.

Subversas in integrum restituit. Vulg. 70. שטח *Significat expandere vel extendere sicut cum aliquid expanditur ut explicetur. Longè latèque super faciem terræ propagat & dilatat eas.* Drus.

The Original word signifies, to expand, or stretch a thing forth. When God increaseth a Nation, he inlargeth their borders, and, having multiplied their number, gives them more room. As the inlargement of the Church is described by the Prophet (*Isa.* 49. 20.) such is the inlargement of Nations. *The children which thou shalt have after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ear, The place is too strait for me; give place to me that I may dwell.* As Bees swarm when the Hive is overcharged, or as Rivers overflowing break their bounds, so do the Nations of the earth, who are compared to great Rivers. God sometimes opens these flood-gates, and lets them out like a mighty torrent. The irruptions of the *Gothes* and *Vandals*, of the *Huns* and *Heruli*, are famous among Historians. And as barbarous Nations spread out themselves because of numbers, so do other Nations by their power. The *Babylonian*, the *Persian*, the *Grecian*, the *Roman* Empires, extended the wings of their sovereignty all the world over.

נחה *Duxit, deduxit placidè & sensim sicut pastor greges aut pater filium suum. Unde* מנחה *Quodlibet donum seu donarium honoris causa alicui oblatum, eò quod sensim & cum pompa quadam portetur.* Rivet. *Expandit eas super faciem terræ, & ducit eas in locum perditionis.* Merc. *ex* R. Kinch.

Mr. *Broughton* translates, *He spreadeth the Nations, and governeth them*: So both parts of that verse speak mercy to Nations. Others of the Learned joyn in that translation. The Hebrew word beareth that sence most properly, signifying to *lead*, yea, *to lead gently*, peaceably and quietly, as a Shepherd leadeth his Flock, or as a father his child. Many offerings of the Jews in their ceremonious worship, were denominated from this word, *Minchah*, because they were brought in such an honourable way, and presented before the Lord. The providence of God leads all people; his own people are led by a special providence, as the *Israelites* were, in the day by a Cloud, and in the night by a Pillar of fire. *The Lord alone did lead them, and there was no strange God with him* (Deut. 32. 12.) *The Lord in mercy led forth the people, which he had redeemed; he guided them in his strength to his holy habitation* (Exod. 15. 13.) This interpretation runs fair. And while we in stead of *he leadeth*, render, *he straiteneth them*; we mean, he leadeth them into straits. As he spreadeth them out by prosperity, so he straiteneth them by affliction. In this variety of reading, the scope and general sence of the Text is the same, setting forth the irresistible power of God, in disposing Nations for the better, or for the worse, as he seeth cause, or as they give it him.

First, Observe, *There is a vicissitude and change in Nations as well as in persons.*

In this verse the scales go up and down, *He increaseth the Nations, and destroyeth them; he inlargeth them, and straiteneth them again.* Particular men, are sometimes up, and sometimes down; sometimes well, and sometimes sick; sometimes inlarged, and sometimes straitened. Now as it is with the parts, so with the whole; and though the world be a dissimular body, yet in one notion it is a simular body, being all alike in subjection to vanity and change. What Nation is there but hath suffered many changes? This Nation hath been a great example of it, and so it is at this day: And unless we humble our selves before God, and *kiss the Son*, least he be further angry, we have cause to fear greater changes then ever we have had. Who knows what changes a year, yea, a day may bring forth? These two things are out of all question: First, That we have deserved the worst of changes. Secondly, That the face of affairs looks as if we should every day change for the worse, till we come to the worst.

Secondly, Observe, *All the changes in Nations are from God.*

He increaseth and straiteneth them; his providence (not fate) watcheth over them, to order all their motions. As the motions of single persons, so the motions of whole Kingdoms are ordered by a higher hand. Divine providence acts upon every stage of worldly affairs in the world. There is a wheel in a wheel; Gods wheel moves in all the wheels of the creature: States cannot do what they please, and go on after their own pleasure; God governs the Governors, as much as those who are governed. He leadeth them into wayes of peace and prosperity; he also leadeth them into wars and troubles. We have both expreſt (*Jer.* 31. 28.) *Like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy, so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord.* No people in the world did ever find God more increasing, or straitening them then the *Jews* did: They were as set upon a Beacon, for all the world to look and gaze at: They were Gods *peculiar treasure*; yet he cast them out as dung, or dross. He increased them in number, in riches, and in honour. When the severest courses were taken to diminish them (as in *Egypt* by slaying the males) he then increased them: yet the hand of God was as eminent in destroying, as increasing them. More then six hundred thousand came out of *Egypt*, all whose carkasses (excepting two) fell in the wilderness. God increased them again in *Canaan*; they were almost innumerable, when *David* numbred them; yet he destroyed and wasted them by the *Babylonians*. After their return from *Babylon*, they grew mighty again; at last God sent the *Romans*, who took their City and Temple from them: And how they have been scattered and emptied ever since, the Records of ancient times, and the experiences of this declare. What God did, and hath done, with the Nation of the *Jews*, he hath also done in many other Nations, and can do in all. He can lift them up, or cast them down; give them a being, or no being; a well-being, or a miserable being, at his pleasure. The absolute sovereignty and greatness of God, will bear him out in these great works, upon the greatest Nations. What's the greatness of any one, or of all Nations put together, to the greatness of God? *Behold* (saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 40. 15.) *the Nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance.* A bucket full of water is no great matter to the Ocean; what then is a drop? All the weight that can be put into a pair of ballances is not much; what then is the light dust, which hangs about it? We know that bears no weight at all. It is no more for the great God to move the greatest Nation upwards or downwards, into an increase or a diminution, then to blow away the smallest dust. And as if a drop, or a dust were too much, the seventeenth verse assures us, that *All Nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him as less then nothing and vanity.* Nor can God ever want means to increase, or destroy whole Nations, who made the whole world without means: *Cannot he speak a Nation into any thing, who spake the world out of nothing?* When a people increase in sin as much as in sovereignty, and are straitened in obedience and thankfulness to God, who hath enlarged them, then he reduces them to their former nothing.

Fata quædã regnarum & gentium quidam esse volunt, sed omnia talia nos docet Scriptura Dei nutui & consilio immutabili tribuere. Merc.

Job hath not yet done with this argument; as he had told us of the judgments of God upon greatest persons before he spake of Nations; so now having spoken of the judgments of God upon Nations, he descends, in his conclusion, to those again which God sends upon eminent persons, in the two last verses of this Chapter.

VERS. 24, 25.

He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and causeth them to wander in a wilderness where there is no way.

They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

THese two verses are the continuation and conclusion of *Job*'s Argument, lifting up the power and wisdom of God in his dispensations towards men.

In the former part of the Chapter we have discussed what God doth to persons, and what to Nations. Here *Job* turneth his speech upon a point which he had touched before, *He maketh the Judges fools*, or turneth their counsels into folly: Now, *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth,*

He

מסיר לב סיר

Eſt recedere, declinare, in Hiphil removere recedere faciens.

He taketh away.] Some read, *He changeth*; Others, *He removeth*, or *cauſeth to decline*. The Hebrew will bear either of thoſe readings, *He taketh away*

The heart of the chief of the people of the earth.

The heart is the *chief piece* in any of the people of the earth: And here he taketh away the heart of the *chief of the people of the earth*. 'Tis ſad when the chief part is taken away from the chiefeſt of the people.

Cor permetaphorâ ſignificat mediũ & interius cujuſq; rei, per ſynechdochen omnia quorũ ſedes eſt in corde, mens, voluntas, &c. Pined.

The heart under a natural conſideration is that noble inſtrument of life ſeated in the midſt of the body: by a metaphor it ſignifies any thing which is ſeated in the middle, or toward the center, becauſe the heart is ſo placed in the body. And by a *Synechdoche*, the heart is put frequently in Scripture for the motions of the heart, or for whatſoever acteth there. The underſtanding, will, affections, purpoſes, reſolutions, or courage of man, any or all of theſe are expreſſed by the heart, becauſe any or all theſe are wrought in, or iſſue from the heart.

To take away the heart, hath reference chiefly to theſe three things.

First, He taketh away the underſtanding, and leaveth men to the guidance of ignorance: and then they are hurried by guſts of paſſion, not ordered by the dictates of reaſon. God benights their minds, their fooliſh hearts are darkned, and ſo they become vain both in their imaginations and reſolves: The *chief of the earth* are then neither able to give good counſel nor recieve it; they who formerly were as Oracles, betray a feebleneſs of judgement, and the graveſt States men prove infants in underſtanding. All wholſom remedies, and proper expedients for their own good, or the publick ſafety, are taken from them when God taketh away their hearts. This was further ſhewed at the ſeventeenth verſe, whither I refer the reader.

Cordis nomen ad voluntatẽ potius quã ad intellectum hoc loco pertinet. Aquin.

Secondly, The heart is put for the will. Some interpret this text, rather of the will then of the underſtanding: God is ſaid to *take away the will*, when he takes it off from what it was ſet upon before, and cauſeth it to move and encline to another object. (*Prov.* 21. 1.) *The Kings heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water, he turneth it whitherſoever he will.* By the *heart* we are to underſtand the will of Kings; *turning* properly concerns the will: The will putteth it ſelf out to proſecute what the underſtanding dictates: *The will uſually walketh in, or after the light of the underſtanding*: God works ſo effectually in *the heart of the chief of the people of the earth*, that though their underſtandings give them light to walk in ſuch a way (whether it be a falſe or a true light or way, is not the point here) yet he can take their wills off from it, *and turneth them whitherſoever he will.* As the perſons of Kings are in the hand of God to protect them, ſo their wills are in his hand to guide and over-power them. *They who are maſters of men, are not maſters of their own will. A King who rules others, is not under his own rule.* The ſimilitude is very elegant, God turneth his heart *even as the rivers*, or *ſprings of water*: Rivers of water are led by their channels, you may draw them this way or that way by cutting out water-courſes. When the will of any one of the *chiefs of the earth* runs ſtrongly in ſuch a conſtant ſtream, God can ſtop it, cut out ſluces (as it were) and give it a new channel, he can empty the ſtream *of a Kings will, into a channel of his own making*, and cauſe this river to run upon what ground he pleaſeth. Some of the Ancients obſerving what ſtrange courſes the hearts of moſt Kings have run, turn the interpretation of this text into another channel, telling us it muſt be expounded of the Saints who are *ſpiritual Kings*. *Do you think*, ſay they, *that the heart of* Pharaoh, Antiochus, Herod, *or of* Julian, *was in the hand of God?* Doth God turn the heart into the wayes of blood and perſecution againſt his people? ſurely ſuch mens hearts are in the hand of the devil, not of God: ſo they argue. But by their leave, we are not afraid to ſay, that even the hearts of wicked Kings are in the hand of God; yet he hath no hand in their wickedneſs, unleſs to bound it. The wills of the moſt wilful Princes are flexible and moveable at the will of God, even while they move, yea ſpurn againſt it: he makes them ſubject to his ſecret will, while they are rebelling againſt his revealed will. They will not do the latter, but the former is done upon them whether they will or no. *Some men are ſo wilful that they turn their whole ſoul into will*; there is nothing of reaſon or underſtanding, nothing of love or affection appears in them, but all of will: Their ſouls are loſt in their wills: yet theſe wills God findes out and diſpoſeth of. The will of Princes (ſaith a heathen) is ſtiff and ſtrong, unready and unwonted to the direction of others. They who are full of power think all muſt obey their wills; therefore to make their wills either ſubject or obedient, argues tranſcendent power. The wills of moſt men are ready to follow the wills of Princes, as the ſhadow doth the body: therefore to make their wills follow, is the work of God (*Eccleſ.* 8. 4.) *Where the word of a King is, there is power; and who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Princes will not be ſtopped but by a ſuperiour power; their priviledge is great, and many times the violence of their ſpirits greater. As *Pilate*, when ſome adviſed him to alter the inſcription upon the croſs of Chriſt, anſwers, *What I have written I have written*, it ſhall ſtand: ſo the *chief of the earth* ſay, *what we have done, we have done, what we have reſolved, we have reſolved.* Yet God who is chief above all the chiefs of the earth, taketh away, or removeth the hearts of the chief of the earth, they ſhall not alwayes will what they would. A good man doth the evil which he would not, and evil men do the good which they would not. God cauſeth them to will that the thing ſhall be done, though they have no will, either to the thing or to the doing of it.

Nec me fugit quàm durus & verè inſolens ad recta flecti regius nolit tumor. Senec. Act. 1.

Principum virorũ illa vox eſt, Quod ſcripſi, ſcripſi.

Thirdly, The heart is put for *courage* and *fortitude*. God takes away the heart under this notion; *he can make the moſt valiant men cowards, and pull down the higheſt ſpirits.* As he gives women the courage of men, ſo he can make men leſs then women in courage (*Amos* 2. 14, 15.) The Prophet ſheweth God taking away, not only fighting courage, but flying courage (ſo ſome underſtand that text) *The flight ſhall periſh from the ſwift*, they ſhall not have a heart to ſhift for themſelves: they once made ſure of it that they had legs to run, though no hands to fight, but their flight ſhall periſh, they ſhall not have ſo much ſpirit left as to run away. The fighting courage of Iſrael was quite ſunk, (*Joſh.* 7. 5.) *The hearts of the people melted, and became as water*, that is, their courage failed. And it is threatned as a judgment, (*Lev.* 26. 36.) *I will ſend a faintneſs into their hearts*: And what ſhall the effect of this be? *The ſound of a ſhaken leaf ſhall chaſe them, and they ſhall flee as fleeing from a ſword*: they ſhall not only flee at the beating of a drum, at the ſound of a trumpet, or at an Alarm to the battel, but at the ſound of a ſhaking leaf, *Deut.* 28. 65. *The Lord ſhall give thee a trembling heart.*

Any of theſe wayes, the heart is in the hand of God; he can make an underſtanding heart fooliſh, a reſolved wilful heart flexible, and a ſtout couragious heart faint and fearful. He that had a heart like a lion, ſhall quake and be (as we ſay) *white-liver'd* at the real appearance, yea at the ſhadow of danger. Thus the Lord ſheweth his mighty power among the chief of the earth, in taking away their hearts.

Put as quod cor Juliani *impiiſſimi in manu Dei fuit? abſit, ſed de illis dicit, qui regnant ſuper peccata.* Hieron. *in* Pſal. 137.

God in Scripture calleth upon man to give him his heart: *My ſon give me thine heart.* This act of God in the text is a chaſtening of the former neglect.

Hence Obſerve, *God taketh away their hearts, who will not give up their hearts unto him.*

If we graciouſly give our hearts unto God, he will not judiciarily take our hearts from us. We never have our underſtandings, our wills, our courage, ſo much in our own cuſtody, as when we reſign them to Gods keeping. God would ſo order them in us and for us, that we ſhould have the command of them, were they once at his command. But if when he calleth, *Give me thine heart*, we or any of the chief of the earth ſay, no, we will not give our hearts to thee, not our underſtandings to judge for thee, not our wills to ſubmit to thee, not our courage to act for thee: Then ſaith God, I will take away your hearts from you; you that uſe your underſtandings, your wills, your courage againſt me, ſhall not have them to uſe (*Hoſ.* 7. 11.) *Ephraim is called a ſilly dove without heart*: then the chief of the earth are like *ſilly doves* (though indeed ravenous Harpies) when God taketh away their hearts. The Saints are *innocent doves, without gall*; *and the wicked*

are silly doves, without a heart. God threatneth his people to send them such Chiefs, Chiefs without an heart, (*Isa.* 3.4, 12.) *I will give them children to be their Princes, and women shall rule over them.* He doth not mean children in age, or women in sex; for some women are of masculine spirits, and have done valiantly. 'Twas *Deborah*, a woman, who said, *O my soul thou hast trodden down strength*; no man ever spake more like a man: Some children in years have acted like the aged, *Josiah* did so. So then the Prophets meaning is, I will give them rulers that shall be as little in understanding, as children are in stature, their reason shall scarce be a cubit high; I will give them Chiefs, that shall be as timerous as women naturally are: Their courage shall scarce serve them to see their own bloud without swooning, much less to venture their blood in any honourable service. Thus God takes away the hearts of the chief of the people, when either they or the people refuse to give God theirs.

ראשי עם *Capitum populi.*

Again, The Hebrew is, *He taketh away the heart of the* [*Heads*] *of the people of the earth.* The Leaders and Governours of a people, are their Heads: That's the language of the old Testament every where. It is ill when the heart is taken from the *heels or lowest* of the people; but how miserable is it, when the heart is taken from the *heads or highest* of the people. A people whose heads have no heart, are upon the matter headless. *A heartless head, is no better then no head.*

Lastly Observe, *All mankind is not of one rank.*

We have here the people, and the Heads of the people. As the natural body is distinguished into superiour and inferiour, into noble and ignoble parts, so is the political body: As that body is a monster, which is all head, or whose head is too big for the body, so is that which hath no head, or a head too little for the body. Where all govern there is no government, and where all are chief there can be no order. And as God hath appointed some to the dignity of Headship, for the preservation of order, so it is their duty who are Heads to preserve order. The head takes care naturally for the whole body, the head sees for the foot, and respects the little finger. Magistrates are rulers over the persons of the people, but they are servants to the good of the people. A people ought to serve their rulers, yet rulers are the greatest servants. As it is the duty of all to serve them, so it is their office to serve all. *He taketh away the heart of the chief*, or, *of the heads of the people.* And what then?

None of the works of God are without effect; when he acteth, somewhat will come of it. Here is a threefold effect following this judiciary act of God in taking away the heart of the *chief of the earth.*

First, *They wander in a wilderness where there is no way.*
Secondly, *They grope in the dark without light.*
Thirdly, *They stagger like a drunken man.*

The first of these effects is laid down in the latter clause of the 24th verse.

תעה *Usurpatur de errore cordis aquè ac de errore pedis.*

He causeth them to wander.] The word which we translate, to wander, signifies both corporal and mental wandering; the errour of the foot, and the errour of the mind. 'Tis put for corporal wandering (*Gen.* 20.13.) *When God caused me* (saith *Abraham*) *to wander from my fathers house*; and again, *Gen.* 37.15. 'Tis put for mental wandering, *Psal.* 119. *ult. I have gone astray like a lost sheep, seek thy servant*; Isa. 63.17. *O Lord, why hast thou made us to erre from thy wayes?*

But that which is most considerable here, is the act of God, *He causeth them to wander*; This intimates an efficiency: Hence 'tis questioned, How doth God cause man to wander? God doth not lead man into false wayes: nor doth he hinder man from going in those wayes which are good and right; thus God causeth no man to wander: And yet he doth more then barely permit or suffer man to wander; he is active in it, *He caused them to wander.* For the clearing of it, I answer,

First, God judgeth and pronounceth such unworthy of light, who have abused it; or that he should clear their mindes with the knowledge of his truth, who have not obeyed his truth, but held it in unrighteousness.

Secondly, Upon the passing of this dreadful sentence, he withdraweth or withholdeth his light from them. They must needs wander who walk in darkness; and unless God continue his light, we return to our own darkness. The setting of the Sun is enough to make the surface of the earth and the air dark, because they have no inherent light: God needs not infuse darkness into us, to make us dark, we in our selves are nothing but darkness.

Nō quod in falsitatē eos inducat, sed quia lumen suū iis subtrahit ne veritatm cognoscant, &c. Aquin.

Thirdly, Having withdrawn his light, God proceeds to an act of tradition, delivering such up into the hands of their own dark lusts and black affections, yea he delivers such up into the hand of Satan, who is the Prince of darkness, and who hath darkness enough to cast into the mind of man, till it be filled with darkness. *If our Gospel be hid* (saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4,) *it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their mind, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them.* Satan is Gods executioner: the God of this world blindes their eyes who see not the offered light of God: and the more it is offered and neglected, the more he blindes them, and the more they wander. They wander who never saw the light, but they wander most dangerously who are blinded with the light, or because they abused it.

Fourthly, The Lord is said to cause men to wander, because he ordereth the objects and occasions, the means and manner, the steps and degrees of their aberrations. They who wander most out of the way of obedience, cannot wander out of the eye and way of providence. The providence of God is ever in its way, even in reference to them who wander out of the way. They who act most confusedly, indisposedly, and erroniously, are kept in a due course and method, as to the purpose and design of God. The Prophet *Isaiah* (chap. 20.20.) speaks of a *bridle that shall be in the jaws of the people, causing them to erre or wander.* A bridle is rather to keep in the way then to carry out of the way. The place is of difficult interpretation: most expound it of the power of the Babylonians, which being put into the jaws of the Jewish nation, caused them to wander out of their own countrey into captivity, yea and caused many of them to erre and wander from the way of holy doctrine and worship. However, we may allude to that Scripture for the clearing of the point in hand, though we make no proof of it. The bridle of providence is in the jaws of many men, even in the jaws of the heads of the earth, causing them (as *Job* speaks here) to wander; and yet while they are wandering, that bridle rules and holds them within the compass of divine pleasure. Thus the Lord who guides his people in his own way, causeth many to wander in a wilderness where there is no way, and yet guideth them in their wanderings. For as the darkness is no darkness to God, so the wilderness is no wilderness to God: his providence is in a clear way to the fulfilling of his own counsels, how much or how long soever he causeth men to wander from theirs.

In a wilderness.] We are not to take this *wilderness* literally, as if the meaning were, that God bringeth men into deserts and wasts, as he did *Israel* his people fourty years together. *To wander in a wilderness* is a proverbial speech, and implies these two things.

First, He is said to wander in a wilderness, who is ignorant of his way, or knoweth not how to direct and make his course: we say, *The man's in a wood*, when we perceive one intangled in speech or action. Hence,

Secondly, To wander in a wilderness, notes improbability, yea extreamest difficulty of attaining our end. A man that is in a wide vast wilderness, gives himself for lost, every step may be backward as well as forward: As he knows not where he goes, so he knows not whither he goes: He is in a wilderness, who knoweth not his way, or despaireth of his end.

תהו *Inanitas, vacuitas, confusio, res informis, errare eos facit in invio vel inani ubi nullus sit difficultatū exitus.* Pined. *Mente destituti vias & rationes ineunt incōmodas & perniciosas.*

The Original word is *Tohu*. *Moses* hath it to express the Chaos, *Gen.* 1. 1. *The earth was without form and void:* Before God planted the world, all the world was a wilderness, a place without form, it had no method in it: Creation methodiz'd that rude heap, and drew the wilderness into a garden. A wilderness notes any state or condition without shape or order: and those men wander in a wilderness, who wanting the true leadings of humane reason, and a divine rule, run dangerous and pernicious wayes, both to themselves and others: He that goes in such wayes, goes out of his way, yea (as the next clause of

of the verse speaks) he goes without all wayes. *They wander in a wilderness*

דרך *iter, via quæ calcatur pedibus, per metaphoram cursus vel institutum vivendi.*

Where there is no way. The way is to be understood as the wilderness, *metaphorically*: The word signifieth, not only a way which we tread with our feet, but the way which we tread with our actions: A right course of life is the way of man. These (through the just judgement of God) *wander in a wilderness where there is no way*; that *is no plain, no right, no beaten way*, unless beaten by the sons of Belial, or by the travellers to the land of trouble and darkness. When God takes away the hearts of men, they run strange courses, and go wayes which wise men never went; the foot of honesty or of justice, treads not their paths. They who go in such wayes, *go in a wilderness where there is no way.*

Observe from this effect, First, *That the very mistakes and errours of men are from God.*

First, Spiritual mistakes, or mistakes in spiritual things, (*Isa.* 63. 17.) *O Lord, why hast thou made us to erre from thy wayes* (so the Church crieth out) *and hardened our heart from thy fear?* God made them to erre when he did not effectually shew them the truth; he hardened their hearts when he did not soften them. God left them a while to the conduct of their own lusts, because they had long refused the conduct of his Spirit. They *vexed his Spirit* (vers. 11.) and therefore he gave them up to their own spirits (*Psal.* 81. 12.) All the motions of man are aberrations, when he moves without, or against the Counsel of God.

Secondly, Mistakes in civil things (which is the business of this text) are from God too. God took away the heart of *Rehoboam*, and then rejecting good counsel, *he wandered in a wilderness where there was no way. Wherefore the King hearkened not unto the people, for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying*, 1 King. 12. 15. The Lord left *Rehoboam* to the pride of his heart, and to the blindness of his mind, and then he ran into that extream mistake, which lost him ten parts of his kingdom.

Secondly, From the connexion, *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the earth*; and what followeth, *They wander in a wilderness where there is no way*,

Observe, *When the heart is disordered, the whole man is disordered.*

Put the heart out of frame, and all is out of frame: The heart is the prime mover in man, whether it be to do good or to do evil. Therefore the work of conversion beginneth at the heart, or is the giving of *a new heart*: God doth not give a new hand, or a new eye, a new tongue or a new foot, but a new heart, because he knows that if once the heart be new, the whole man will be renewed. If the heart be setled, all is setled: *His heart is fixed* (saith the Psalmist) *and he shall not be afraid.* The heart runs before the foot stirs, either into the wayes of sin, or from the approach of danger. The heart is Pilot and guide (under God) of mans life and way. Where God takes away the heart, he never stayes himself; and he that hath not a heart within him, nor God near him, may do any thing rather then what he ought, or go any whither rather then where he should. *He that is deserted of God intangles himself at every step*, he is in a wilderness, and the further he goes, the more he is out of his way. As it was with *Pharaoh*, God took away his heart, he would not hear the counsel that was given him to let the people go, and then he wilder'd himself from day to day, till he was utterly ruined, every step he took was out of the way of his own safety and honour.

Thirdly Observe, *They that will not take Gods wayes, shall be carried where there is no way.*

God sheweth man his way, Go here (saith God) it is a way of holiness; go there, it is the way of justice; come hither, this is the way of truth: Thus God beckens and invites man into his way. If we say, no, but we will walk in our own wayes, then God resolves, seeing you love to go out of my way, you shall go in a wilderness where there is no way; you shall meet with bushes, thorns and briers to scratch and vex you; yea, you shall meet with wild beasts, with Scorpions and Serpents, to sting and devour you. God meeteth those that rejoyce and work righteousness, even those that remember him in his wayes (*Isa.* 64. 5.) But Bushes and Briers, Serpents and Scorpions shall meet those who turn from the wayes of God, even those who rejoyce in and work unrighteousness: These run into danger, as fast as they run into sin. *There's no safety out of Gods way: many have died in Gods way, but no man ever perished in it.* It is said of *Abraham*, (*Heb.* 11. 8.) *That he went out he knew not whither.* The Saints go at Gods call where there is no way, that is, no way known to them, but yet they are assured there is a way cut out and measured for them, by the wisdom of God: *Abraham* was sure of a good way, and of a good end, yet he went he knew not whither. *Abraham* knew he had God for his guide, though he knew not a step of the way he was to go. It becometh us to follow God blindfold; blind obedience (in that sense) is good, but due to none but God. Faith bids us do that, for which we can give no reason but this, we are commanded to do it. So some expound that of *David*, (Psal. 119. 104.) *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*; he doth not say, the word was a light unto his eyes, but a light unto his feet. The word is a light to the eyes, that is, it shineth to the understanding; yet the word is sometimes a light unto our feet, when it is not a light unto our eyes, that is, God will have us go where we cannot see our way. Answerable to that of the Apostle (2 *Cor.* 5. 7.) *We walk by faith, and not by sight*; Faith hath a light for our feet, but not to our eyes. Full vision swallows up faith in heaven: And the more vision we have on earth, the less we act by faith. Believers have not a clear sight, but they have a sure guide. Wicked men would be thought to see much, but their sight leads them out of the true way, or into the wilderness where there is no way, but that of sin, nor end, but that of sorrow. Here is the first effect of Gods *taking away the heart of the chief of the earth, they wander in a wilderness where there is no way.* We have two other effects, *vers.* 25.

Deus requirit ut sinamus nos ab illo duci quâvis videamur per invia duci. Dum enim ille dux noster itineris fuerit nostros pedes diriget quâ via nos ducat tenebras. Pined.

Via fidei est obscura non aperta & clara visionis.

Vers. 25. **They grope in the dark without light, and they stagger like a drunken man.**

מישׁשׁ *Palpavit, tetigit, tangendo explo-ravit. Descriptio hominis cujus mutatus est cor, & meas aut erepta aut conturbata vehementer.* Sanct.

They grope in the dark without light. The word signifies to find out or prove our way by feeling, this we call groping. In the dark, hands or staves are to us instead of eyes. A blind man though he be in the open Sun, yet he gropes for his way, for he wants the light of his eyes: a man who hath the light of his eyes, yet wanting the light of the air, and being in outward darkness, even he must grope his way, (*Job* 5. 14.) *Eliphaz* describing the judgment of God upon the men of the world, saith; *They meet with darkness in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night*, that is, in things that are clear and evident they are puzzled, and know not which way to turn themselves, when the way lies strait and is without turnings. It is a great judgment of God, when in businesses that are as clear as day, men stand beating their brains, and troubling themselves, as if they were in the dark. It is very ill to want light, but it is worse to have light, and not to use it. These *grope in the dark without light.*

There is a twofold darkness; First, Natural, that is not here meant. Secondly, Metaphorical; and that is of two sorts. First, The darkness of ignorance. Secondly, The darkness of trouble or of affliction. We may understand the text, of darkness in either of the two latter senses; *they grope in the dark*, that is, in the darkness of ignorance, or, in the darkness of trouble. Rather joyn both together, they are in trouble, and they are ignorant, not knowing which way to get out, and clear their way.

But why doth he say, *They grope in the dark without light.*

Light and darkness are contrary, what agreement is there (saith the Apostle) between light and darkness? Though there be no agreement between light and darkness, yet sometimes there is a mixture of light and darkness; some darkness hath some light in it; that's it we call twy-light, the dusk of the evening or of the morning, there is a time when it is not perfectly dark, yet the light is gone, the Sun is down. Such a day is described in the book of *Zechary*

Zechary, A day which shall be neither dark nor light, but it shall be between both. It is mercy, that when we have not a clear light, yet to have some glimmering, or appearance of light. The judgment here is, *They shall grope in darkness without light*; that is, they shall have pure darkness.

Hebraïs usitatum est dum vim & ponâus asserre volunt sententiæ affirmativæ, addunt contrarii negationem. In tenebris & non in luce, i.e. in tenebris omnis lucis expertibus.

The Hebrew is yet somewhat more emphatical. *They feel darkness, and not light.* Repetitions with a negative are frequent in Scripture, to shew a vehement negation (*Amos* 5. 18.) *The day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.* Isa. 38. 1. A message was carried to *Hezekiah*; *Thou shalt die, and not live*; that is, thou shalt surely dye. *John* 1. *He confessed, and denied not*; that is, he confessed strongly or peremptorily. So here, *They feel darkness, and not light*; that is, they feel extream darkness, or the extremity of darkness, the greatest darkness imaginable.

Two things I shall observe from this (taking the passage as an expression of the judgment of God upon a sinful people.)

First, *They who abuse light shall be deprived of light.*

He taketh away the heart; then they wander, and then they grope in darkness without light. They had light, yet acted like men in the dark, or like blind men: They walked in darkness when they had light. Hence God pronounceth against them, *You shall grope in darkness, and have no light.* God threatned his ancient people the *Jews* with this dreadful plague (*Deut.* 28. 28, 29.) *I will smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart; and thou shalt grope at noon-dayes, as the blind gropeth in darkness; and thou shalt not prosper in thy wayes.* Light is the gift of God; he giveth, and he taketh it away. As when he created the world, there was nothing but darkness, and he said, *Let there be light, and there was light*; so he saith now to persons, yea to Nations, who are in light, and have abused the light, the light of the Gospel, or the light of outward prosperity, *Let there be darkness upon them*, and it is so. He can make light without darkness, and darkness without light. Take heed of sinning against light, lest ye grope in the dark without light. *Those sins leave the soul, yea the whole man in greatest darkness, which are committed in or against the greatest light.*

Secondly, Observe, *That persons forsaken of God, and covered over with darkness, are useless and unfit for any thing.*

He that is in the dark cannot act. *Prov.* 4. 19. *The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble*: They who know not at what they stumble, know not where they go. A blind man fears in a plain way, and goes sometimes confidently where there is greatest danger: Wicked men are blind; they know not whither they go, nor what they do. He that knows not what he doth, may too late know what he hath done; and he that knows not whither he goes, may know too late whither he is gone; having stumbled often, he falls at last into that pit of darkness, from whence he shall never see nor find his way out. Remember the counsel of Christ (*John* 12. 35.) *Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth*: They who know not where they go, know not whither they go: If our way be hidden from us, so also is our end. This is the second effect which follows the taking away of the heart, *They grope in darkness without light.*

The third effect is,

He maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.

Ebrietas est turbatio capitis, subversio sensus, repulsus linguæ, procella corporis, naufragium castitatis, insanis voluntatis. Aug.

They who are overcome with wine, or strong drink, are unable, not only to manage businesses, but to order themselves. *Drunkenness is the disturbance of the brain, and the overthrow of our senses. Drunkenness maketh a storm in the tongue, and a tempest all the body over. Drunkenness drowneth reason, and maketh shipwrack of chastity.* There is a mental, as well as a corporal drunkenness: A dry drunkenness, as well as a wet drunkenness. Sober, grave, discreet, and prudent men, who by their wisdom and judgment have overcome all oppositions, and carried all before them, even these shall stagger and reel too and fro, not knowing where they are, or upon what ground they stand.

The wrath of God taketh away the reason of man. The drunkards reason is suspended: We say commonly, *they are beasts*; and we call drunkenness a beastly sin, because such act more like beasts then men. *I* (saith the good Prophet, *Jer.* 23. 9.) *am like a drunken man, because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness*: That is, I do even stagger and reel, I am as a man astonished and senseless at the apprehension of Gods displeasure, and because of that cup of his fierce indignation, which his holy Word threatens against an unholy people. The Prophet was as a drunken man, while he foresaw a cup in the hand of God, the wine whereof was red with wrath; how drunken then were they, who were made to drink it, dregs and all to the very bottom? Of such *Isaiah* speaketh (*Chap.* 29. 9.) *They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink: For the Lord hath poured upon you the spirit of deep sleep.* Men sin greatly against God, when they are drunken with wine; and God punisheth man greatly, when he makes him drunken without wine: when he takes away the heart, and leaves sober men to act and personate the drunkard.

To clear which, I shall shew you a seven-fold parallel between a man who hath too much drink in him, and no heart in him; God having taken away his heart.

First, They who are drunken, think every thing moves and reels; the very earth seems to totter under them, and the whole world to turn about them: Whereas indeed, 'tis only their heads that turn, and themselves that reel. 'Tis so with many great Politicians and Chiefs of the people: God in judgment taketh away their hearts, and then (to their apprehension) every thing turns. They fearfully suppose sometimes, that all turns against them; and sometimes flatteringly, that all turns for them. This giddiness of their heads, must needs produce giddy counsels, and unsettle all they set themselves unto. God took away the heart of *Cain*, and then in this sence also, as well as in the letter, he dwelt in *the land of Nod*, that is, in a trembling moving land: yea, *Cain* thought every mans hand was turned against him to slay him, so soon as God was turned from him, *Gen.* 4. 14. *Pharaoh*'s suspicious head forecast great dangers to himself from a people, who intended him no harm. These *Israelites* (saith he) will surely turn from me, and joyn with my enemies: This unjust and groundless fear, put him upon such counsels, as proved the just ground of his own overthrow.

Secondly, Drunkenness makes the object appear double or crooked to the eye. For as he that looks upon objects through the water that is without him, so he that looks upon them through the watry liquor that is within him, sees that which is strait, as if it were crooked, and that which is single doubles in his sight. Thus when the Lord powreth a spirit of penal drunkenness upon the wisest in the world, the straitest and justest actings of righteous men are judged crooked and indirect; what they do with greatest simplicity and plainness, is counted doubling, yea, juggling with God and man. Christ himself was called a deceiver by such a generation. And *Paul* speaks of himself, and his fellow Apostles, we are, *as deceivers, yet true.* And as the actions of others, so their own dangers and enemies seem double, yea treble, and twenty-fold, to what indeed they are. Troubled imaginations are a distorting and a multiplying glass, to every work, thing, or person they look upon.

Thirdly, Drunkenness dims the bodily eye. The mental eye of these men is so dimmed, that they cannot discern between right and wrong, between good and evil. They put *light for darkness, and darkness for light; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.* Their minds are blinded, and their understandings as much disabled from knowing what is just, as their wills and affections are from chusing and embracing it. The Prophet (*Isa.* 28 7.) reproving drunkenness in the letter, saith, *They have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the Priest and the Prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.* Now as men that are corporally drunk, wear out their wits, drown their brains, weaken their judgments, and when they are actually drunk are not able to make any judgment at all; such dotards do they proceed, who are intoxicated with the wine of divine revenges. The Prophet describes them fully (*Isa.* 19. 14.) *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spi-*

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rit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt *to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.* They who err in every work, must needs draw them into error, who work by their direction. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. They who have lost their own eyes, will make but ill guides for others.

Fourthly, A drunken man defiles and pollutes himself with his own vomit; he pours that out loathsomly, which he poured in delightfully. Thus also men left of God, defile whatsoever they put their hands or tongues unto: They continually vomit up the filthiness of their hearts, the pride, the cruelty, the injustice, the baseness of their spirits, in all they speak, or act: Their best counsels are like *shameful spewing upon all their glory*, as the Prophet speaks (*Hab.* 2. 16.) *Their stink, and their ill savour goeth up when they do great things* (Joel. 2. 20.) And the greater the things are which they do, the greater is the stink that goeth up: Their own dung, or vomit, is of a better savour, then their designs and workings are. Plain-hearted *Jacob* was afraid that the fraudulent and cruel dealings of his two sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, would make him *stink among the inhabitants of the land* (Gen. 34. 30.) Cruelty and treachery are odious, both in the sight of God and man, good and bad; they are so in the good, whosoever commits them; and they are so in the sight of the bad, if any commit them but themselves.

Fifthly, Drunkenness doth not only empty men of reason, but filleth them with passion, it makes them mad and furious: We say of some, they are *mad-drunk*. This effect of drunkenness is often visible in the counsels and wayes of men deserted, and dishearted by God; they become raging mad; they like *Jehu, drive furiously*, they fume and foam, they make all both weary and ashamed of their company. *Why do the heathen rage* (saith the Psalmist) *and the people imagine a vain thing?* 'Tis a fit of this drunkenness that makes them so. The inhabiters of the earth being drunk with the mystical wine of Babylonish whorish fornication, rage against Christ and his Laws: yea, then *they are full of the fury of the Lord, lying like a wild Bull in a net at the head of every street*, Isa. 51. 10.

Sixthly, The Text tells us, that drunkenness makes men stagger, they cannot keep their feet, nor stand their ground. Such a judgment God sendeth upon wicked men; their minds are full of irresolutions, they are not able to stand to their own purposes and promises; they stagger from this part to that, from this side to that; they change interests as fast as there is any change in affairs, or outward accidents; now they are for the truth, and presently they oppose the truth; they are like the *double minded man*, of whom the Apostle *James* speaks, *Unstable in all their wayes.*

Lastly, Drunken men often run upon their own ruine. We have a saying, *That drunkards seldom take hurt*; the meaning is, they are not sensible of the hurt they take; they indeed take hurt oftner then any men, and run desperately upon their own death. Thus men left of God run courses as unsafe, as they are unjust: And while they make too much haste to save, destroy themselves. They rush like *Balaam* upon the swords point; and while they are most afraid of trouble, no advice, scarce any force of friends can keep them off from it. They will stagger till they fall; and fall so, that they can never rise again. We may find many parallels of it abroad, and among our selves not a few. Do we not see men groping in the dark without light, wandring in the wilderness where there is no way, staggering like drunken men? It were easie to give particular examples of these three effects in all Ages and Histories of the world: But I shall conclude with three general Instances held out in Scripture.

The first is that of the Apostle concerning the Gentiles, (*Rom.* 1. 21.) *They knew God* (they had light) *but they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened:* They obscured the light which God gave them in the creature, or benighted themselves in the day time of natural light: And what followed? *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.* They wandred in the wilderness of their own *lusts and vile affections*, where there was no way: They groped in the darkness of *a reprobate mind*, without light. They staggered like a drunken man, from one evil to another, being *filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers*, &c.

Secondly, We read another parallel in the whole Nation of the *Jews* (Rom. 11. 8, 9, 10.) *God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day*; that is, in the stile of *Job*, he hath taken away their hearts; and have not the *Jews* wandred ever since in a *wilderness where there is no way?* Have they not groped in darkness without light?

Thirdly, Take the instance of all *apostate Christians*, according to that grand Prophecy of the Apostle (2 *Thes.* 2. 11, 12.) They had the light of truth shining to them, but did not receive the love of it: *For this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lye*; they should be seduced and led into a wilderness of error; they should grope in the dark without light, and stagger from one lye to another, from one false way to another, like a drunken man, till they fell into that bottomless pit of destruction; as the Apostle shuts up that dreadful Prophecy (*vers.* 12.) *That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* God takes away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, in reference to civil things; he also takes away the heart of the people of the earth, in reference to spiritual things; wandring, groping, tottering, are the effects of both. When God doth the former, Kingdoms wander, grope and totter: when God doth the latter, Churches do so: By the former, the outward glory and beauty of mankind decayeth; and their inward, by the latter. Churches and Kingdoms, the bodies and souls of men, decay, dye and perish for ever, when God taketh away their hearts. And when he in justice doth this (as when he doth it, he alwayes doth) then he declares (which is *Job*'s scope in this whole discourse) that *with him is wisdom and strength, and that he also hath counsel and understanding.* And lest any should think that *Job* had all this while told stories, and spoken at random, he assures us in the next words, that he had spoken only what his own experiences and observations gave testimony unto: *Lo, mine eyes hath seen all this*, &c.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.
What ye know, the same do I know also, I am not inferiour to you.
Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.
But ye are forgers of lyes, ye are all Physitians of no value.

HE Friends of *Job* charged him with ignorance of God, and of his wayes: To refute which, he made that excellent confession, both of the Power and Wisdom of God, in the Chapter foregoing, and concludeth his discourse upon those points, at the beginning of this, with an attestation to all, from his own knowledge and experience. Some joyn the two first verses of this thirteenth, to the last of the twelfth Chapter, beginning this at the third verse. And they who consent to their standing, as a part of the thirteenth Chapter, yet interpret them as a transition, or passage to the matter here further discussed and enlarged.

Caput malùm ordiri à ver. 30 sed transitio est. Merc.

Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

As if he had said, *To assure you that all is true which I have spoken and asserted, mine own eyes and ears are witness.* We may give you the sum of his reasoning thus:

That which I have clearly seen, that which I have received from good hands, and from approved Authors, that which I have fully understood to be, is a truth.

But the whole matter, which I have declared in the former Chapter, is such, as mine eye hath seen, mine ear hath heard, and my understanding hath fully apprehended.

Therefore those things are true, and ought to be received by you as truths.

Lo, mine eye hath seen all this, &c.

Triplex cognitio, 1. oculorum per experientiam, 2. auris per traditionē, 3. intellectus per discursum.

Here is a threefold knowledge laid down in this verse:
First, Knowledge by experience, *Lo, mine eye hath seen.*
Secondly, Knowledge by tradition, or by teaching, *Mine ear hath heard.*
Thirdly, Knowledge by discourse, *Mine ear hath heard and understood it*; that is, I have understood what I have seen and heard.

Lo, mine eye hath seen.] The eye is taken in Scripture two wayes.

In oculis mens & ratio intelligitur, qua, quæ cognovimus vidisse dicimur. Sanct.

First, Figuratively, So it is put for the understanding; because as the eye is the light of the body, so the understanding is the light of the mind. An ignorant man is a blind man, how clear sighted soever the eye of his body is (*Deut.* 29. 4.) *The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day.* Here are three faculties, and three acts: First, *The heart to perceive.* Secondly, *The eye to see.* Thirdly, *The ear to hear.* The heart is sometimes put for the whole inward man, and then the eye and the ear are taken properly for the organs of the outward man: But we cannot interpret *Moses* so, for though the Lord had not given them an heart to perceive, yet they had bodily eyes to see, and ears to hear, they were neither deaf nor blind sensitively: so then, the two latter expressions import no more then the first; he hath not given you eyes to see, he hath not given you ears to hear; that is, you are utterly shut up in blindness and ignorance, or you have not hearts to perceive (*Luke* 24. 31.) *Their eyes were opened, and they knew him.* They saw before, but they did not see discerningly, or with the light of their understandings. The business of the Gospel is to *open the eye, to turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God* (Acts 26. 18.) That is, to convince the understanding, that a state of sin is a state of darkness, and that the grace and favour of God to sinners is light; that, to be under the power of sin, is to be under the power of Satan; and that it is both our duty and our happiness to turn to God. To see these things, and these our understandings only can see, is to have our eyes opened.

Some understand the Text in *Job*, of the eye, in this tropical sence, and then it is coincident with the latter clause, the eye is the understanding. But rather take it literally, for the corporal eye, and so the eye importeth experience and observation, which come in, or are entertained at the eye.

Mine ear hath heard.] The ear is the sense of discipline, knowledge enters at this port, when that of the eye is shut up, either by a defect in Nature, or by accident. They who are born blind, may be bred great scholars; the ear can let in learning enough without the assistance of the eye. Hearing is a nearer servant to the understanding, then seeing is.

Mine ear hath heard.] The ear hears, either by instruction from man, or by revelation from God, of which *Eliphaz* spake (*Chap.* 4. 12.) *Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.* Here I conceive *Job* intends the former, having learned what he here avouches, from men learned and knowing in the wayes of God.

Further, We may take both sight and hearing more largely, and then the whole is no more but a vehement affirmation, that *Job* did understand what himself had affirmed, as also what his friends had so largely argued. As if he had said, *I very well perceive what ye (my friends) have said, and indeed they are not new to me, experience hath taught me them before, and I have heard of them often, they are the received principles of wise and godly men, even such as I have seen, heard and understood, before ever I convers'd or changed a word with you.* And so these three expressions, I have seen, heard, and understood, are but an amplification of the same thing, either implying, that he understood them as clearly, as if his eye had seen them; or that which way soever any mans understanding can be helpt, his had, even by the ear, and by the eye, both which had contributed their best furtherance, to furnish him with those notions. *Lo, mine eye hath seen,* &c.

Vidi, audivi, intellexi, asseverationem continent & amplificationē rei benè perspectæ ac eadem res per eandem vocem & synonimiam repeteretur. Bold.

Hence observe, First, *That our senses are inlets to the understanding.*

Job placeth the understanding last, *Mine eye hath seen all this, and mine ear hath heard and understood it*; or understood it by the service of mine eye, and of mine ear. The senses of the body are advantages to the mind: The eye doth not see for it self, or for the body only, but the eye sees for the understanding: The ear doth not hear for it self, or for the body only, but the ear heareth for the understanding. The right use and diligent improvement of sense, improves us both in knowledge and in holiness. While we look with the eye upon what God doth, while we attend with the ear what God speaks, we learn who God is, and what we must be. As the eye and the ear are servants to sin, so they are servants to grace: They are alwayes servants to sin in wicked men, and sometimes they prove so in good men: An eye not watched takes in vain objects: *Thine eye* (saith *Solomon*) *shall behold the strange woman, and thine heart shall utter perverse things:* The eye carrieth the message to the heart, and presently corrupts the spirit with the object which it beholds, if the object be corrupt. Hence the counsel of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 23. 31.) *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup: Look not upon the wine*; Why not? Will the colour hurt us? Yes; The colour of the wine will stain the eye, and the eye will stain the heart. As sad objects go quickly from the eye to the heart (*Mine eye affecteth mine heart,*

Lam.

Lam. 3. 51.) ſo do luſtful and vain objects; they being taken in at the eye, do both affect and infect the heart in a moment. Let not theſe ſenſes which the Lord hath given us for natural uſes, to the body, and for ſpiritual uſes, to the ſoul; let not theſe (I ſay) be abuſed, or turned to the diſſervice of the body (much leſs) to the deſtruction and damnation of the ſoul.

Secondly, *Job* having ſpoken with much plainneſs and confidence in the former Chapter, about the diſpenſations of God, clears it here, that he had not ſpoken by rote, or without book, or tumbled out what he could not prove: No (ſaith he) mine eye hath ſeen all this, mine ear hath heard and underſtood it.

Note from it, *It becometh us to be well aſſured our ſelves of what we teach unto others.*

He that inſtructeth another ſhould firſt be inſtructed himſelf, and ſhould have, not only a ſound of words at his tongue, but ſound knowledge at his heart. As it is the duty of him that inſtructeth others, to practice what he ſpeaks; ſo, to be well aſſured of what he ſpeaks: As his life ſhould hold forth a pattern of that doctrine which he delivereth, ſo his underſtanding ſhould hold the model of that doctrine which he delivereth: Thou that teacheſt another, art not thou taught thy ſelf? 'Tis ſinful not to do what we teach; or to teach what we do not know. *A good man will adviſe no more then he will do; and a wiſe man will ſay no more then he underſtands.* *Job* was much aſſured that he knew what he taught his friends, when he affirms in the next verſe, that he knew as much as any of his friends.

Verſe 2. **What ye know, the ſame do I know alſo; I am not inferiour to you.**

Secundum ſcire vel ſcientiam veſtram & ego novi.

The Hebrew is, *According to your know or knowledge, is my knowledge*; I am not below you in knowledge; Take knowledge in the matter, or in the meaſure, *I am not inferiour to you.* I know the ſame things which ye know; I have extended my knowledge to as many particulars as you, and I know every particular as fully, and am as clear in it as your ſelves.

But doth not *Job* play the boaſter? Doth not pride put forth its head at his tongue, while he ſpeaks ſuch language as this?

Job ſpake this ſence, and almoſt the ſame language at the third verſe of the twelfth Chapter, where he ſaith, *I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferiour to you; yea, who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?* Thither I refer the Reader for the meaning of this ſeeming, unbeſeeming boaſt. I ſhall here only anſwer in general, that *Job* ſpeaks not this ambitiouſly, or arrogantly, as they do, who love to live in the ſound of their own commendations; who, if others commend them not, will not fail to commend themſelves: *What know ye that I know not?* Neither doth he ſpeak this in contempt of his Friends, as if he ſlighted or undervalued them: *Job* knew it to be, not only uncivil, but ſinful, to trample upon the reputation of his Friends; to ſpeak high words of himſelf, and baſely of other men. *Job* ſpeaks this, not becauſe he delighted in it, but becauſe he was neceſſitated to it. The Apoſtles Apology may be his (2 *Cor.* 11. 5.) *I ſuppoſe I was not a whit behind the very chiefeſt Apoſtles* (here *Paul* ſpeaks in as bragging language as *Job* doth) *but I am become a fool in glorying:* 'Tis folly to do ſo, yet he hath enough to vindicate his own wiſdom, while he ſpake like a fool; even this, *You have compelled me.* If any ſhould ſay, *Job became a fool in glorying*, he had the ſame to ſay of his Friends, which *Paul* had of the *Corinthians, You have compelled me*, you have put me upon it, I could not avoid it; while you have laid me low, and ranked me, not only among ignorant men, but even among the beaſts; was I not forced to ſtand up for my ſelf, and tell you plainly, that I know as much as you, and that *I am not inferiour unto you?* Some, in contempt of their Teachers, are ready to ſay, what need we hear Sermons? we know as much as the Preacher can tell us? *Job* was not unwilling to hear the counſel of his ſervant, much leſs did he contemn the counſel of his Friends. So then, Theſe words are a neceſſitated vindication of himſelf, he could not ſo forſake his own honour and reputation, as to let it lye in the duſt, for fear he ſhould ſeem proud in ſpeaking for it. Though all ambitious contending with others, is odious, yet no man ought to betray the truth, or his own integrity, leſt he ſhould be counted contentious. He buyes the opinion of an humble and of a peaceable man too dear, who either payes the Faith of God for it, or his own credit.

Non dicit hæc arroganter & ambitioſè, ſed ſumma neceſſitate impulſus. Pined.

Verſe 3. **Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.**

The word which we tranſlate [*Surely*] is not only a particle of aſſertion, but of illation, rendring a reaſon of what was ſaid before. Some render it here, not *Surely*, but *Therefore I would ſpeak to the Almighty*; as if he ſaid, I am aſſured that God is good and juſt, and I have found men harſh and unequal to me, *Therefore I will ſpeak to the Almighty.*

אולם *Non ſolum eſt particula aſſertiva ſed illativa, cauſam reddens.*

There is alſo a different tranſlation of the whole verſe, thus, *Surely I would ſpeak for the Almighty, and I would reaſon for God.* And ſo he confutes the ſuſpition of his Friends concerning him, and their confidence of themſelves; as if he had darkened the glory of God, and they only were the aſſertors of it; as if he had oppoſed God, and they only had ſtood up to defend and maintain his cauſe. *You think that you only have ſpoken on Gods ſide, and that I have ſpoken either to his diſſervice, or for my ſelf, but indeed, I would ſpeak for God, I deſire to maintain the juſtice, honour, holineſs, mercy, and goodneſs of God as much as any of you all; and I would as readily engage for him, as you or any man elſe; I would ſpeak for the Almighty, and I would plead for God.* We cannot have a better cauſe to plead then Gods; nor can any give us a better fee. It is our duty to be Advocates for God, though we have nothing for our pains; how much more, when all that we have already, we have from him; and what ever we ſpeak or do for God and his cauſe, ſhall ſurely be remembred: God keepeth a book of remembrance of what the Saints ſpeak one to another, concerning their own caſes or troubles: then much more doth he keep a book of remembrance, when (according to this tranſlation) they *ſpeak for the Almighty, and plead for God.*

Profectò ego pro omnipotente loquar & diſceptare pro Deo forti volo. Jun.

But the ſence runs more generally with our tranſlation, **I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.** And then the meaning is, as if *Job* had ſaid, *I ſee I ſhall avail or profit my ſelf but little by any further conference with you, therefore I deſire to turn my ſelf to God, from whom I am ſure of a good anſwer.*

Again, *Job* ſeemeth to comply with what *Zophar* had ſpoken (*Chap.* 11. 5.) *O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!* *Job* accepts his wiſh; *You have ſaid, O that God would ſpeak, I deſire no other; I alſo would ſpeak to the Almighty, I would reaſon with God; what in your account would be my puniſhment, I ſhould receive as a great happineſs; yea I make it my requeſt, that I may ſpeak with the Almighty, and that I might reaſon with God,* Thus he declareth the confidence which he had in the goodneſs of his cauſe, as alſo the clearneſs of his conſcience, both which were ſuch as did not fear, no not the preſence of God himſelf.

And I deſire to reaſon with God.

This part of the verſe is of the ſame intendment with the former. The word ſignifies to reaſon by way of formal diſpute, where arguments or mediums are held out, upon which we conclude the truth of our opinion, or poſition. The *Jews* call Logick by this name.

יכח *Eſt ratione & argumentis utra citraque habitis veritatem inquirere. Dialectica Hebræis dicitur* חכמה הויכוח *ars arguendi, quod ἔλεγχον Græci dicunt.*

The Septuagint do ſomewhat allay and modifie the words, ſuppoſing *Job* too bold and free in this offer; therefore they add, *I would reaſon with God, if he pleaſe to give me leave, or if he will accept of me in it:* The ſupplement is pious, and is to be underſtood in all expreſſions of this nature. What any man at any time deſires of God, he muſt do it with ſubmiſſion to the will of God, unleſs God hath already declared his will concerning that deſire.

Septuaginta addunt, Si voluerit *piè & urbanè, q. d. ſi illi accepta fuerit hæc mea diſputandi & loquendi voluntas.* Iun.

But ſuppoſe God ſhould have hearkened to *Job*, and granted him this requeſt, could *Job* make any improvement of it? Is it poſſible for duſt and aſhes, for fleſh and blood, to proſper in a contention with the Almighty, or to reaſon the caſe with God, and carry it? Yea, is it poſſible for man to ſpeak at all with the Almighty, or to reaſon with God?

I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks thus, not as if he thought that God and he could perſonally, or, as we ſay, hand to hand, ſpeak together,

together, and reason out the case. 'Tis true, God sometimes hath spoken with man; but then it was in a humane shape (*Gen.* 18. &c.) And when it is said that he spake with *Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, Exod.* 33. 11. yet *Moses* did not, nor indeed could he, *see the face of God* (vers. 20.) God manifested himself familiarly and plainly to him; this was speaking *face to face.* So, all that *Job* desires, is but a liberty to open his mind freely to God, and to receive answer from God in what way he should appoint. As if he had said, *I had rather speak with God himself, then with you my friends, and I doubt not but I shall find at last a more favourable hearing from him, then I have yet had from you.*

Non ipsius accusandi sed criminationis vestræ refellendi gratia, causam meam apud ejus tribunal agere desidero; non ut ejus judicia disputarē: velim, sed ut vestros errores destruerem. Aquin.

Again, *Job* doth not desire to reason, or speak with God as an Adversary, but as a Judge: He had no controversie with God, but he applyes himself to God for the determining and ending of the controversie which he had with his Friends.

Lastly, *Job* did not suspect that there was any the least error in the proceedings of God with him, but his hope was to make it appear, even before the Tribunal of God (if he could be admitted thither) that his Friends had erred in their proceedings with him, and opinion of him. Hence Observe,

First, *That man naturally seeks refuge, when he finds himself oppress,*

Job found himself oppress upon earth, therefore he hath recourse to Heaven. This Text is *Job*'s Appeal. When the Apostle *Paul* found himself overborn by the clamours of the *Jews*, he saith, *I appeal unto* Cesar: We, in such a condition, may appeal to Christ. When we are pinched by men, Faith turns to God. And, that is one of the advantages which the Saints gain by their hard usage in the world, and the troubles of this life; they converse more with, and draw nearer unto God, who is the comfort of our lives. We are never happy in our distances from God; and when we are near him, nothing can make us unhappy.

There are three things in God, which may encourage us to communicate our condition, and spread our cause before him.

First, The clearness of his understanding: He knoweth all things and persons, and he knoweth them infallibly. 'Tis a misery to be bound to the award of blind Judges, or of those who will not see. There is no ignorance at all in God, neither can any thing pervert his knowledge. That which deters hypocrites, invites the sincere into the presence of God, *his omniscience.* They can daub up their matters with men, but God looks through all their morter, and searcheth that which they would not have seen at all, *the heart.* Our hearts are as open to him as our faces are; and our thoughts as conspicuous as our actions. Now (I say) that which discourageth hypocrites, incourages the upright in heart, though they have many sins and corruptions about them, yet they know God knoweth that their corruptions are a burden to them, and their sins their sorrow: They know, he knows also the integrity of their hearts, and the state of their cause. God is such a Judge as needeth none to inform him, neither can any, by misinformations, mislead his judgment.

Secondly, As God knows the right state of our cause, and of our hearts, so he will do us right; he cannot be deceived, neither will he deceive; he rewardeth every man according to his works. And as he commands his Ministers, *to say unto the righteous, it shall be well with him, so he will say nothing but well unto the righteous. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*

Thirdly, God is patient, he hears us out: He will not snap us up, or cut us off in the managing of our cause. As he hath a piercing eye, so a patient ear; yea, it is no burden to him to hear, how much soever he hears; though we are long in drawing out our minds, even so long as would be tedious unto men, and tire the ear of an Angel, yet God bids us say on, and speak out all. Thus the unerring knowledge, the unstained justice, and the unwearied patience of God, may invite all that are upright into his presence, *Who would not speak unto the Almighty, and desire to reason with him?* And so we do in prayer and holy meditation, in the secret disputes and reasonings of our souls. In all these we speak to the Almighty, and he hath promised to give us answer to our doubts, ease and satisfaction to our spirits. Though God doth not appear visibly to us, or make answer audibly, yet when we speak in faith, and with sincerity, he answers us really, and the effect is often made as clear to our experience, as if God had condescended *to a free conference face to face.*

Secondly, Forasmuch as *Job*, after all these arguings with his Friends, being still unsatisfied, desires *to reason with God,*

Observe, *That when we cannot get satisfaction from men, we may yet expect it from God.*

The reason of all things is in God; and though we must not reason with him, as *contenders*, yet we may and ought, as *learners.* As it is the honour of Christ, that we should go to him for salvation, so for instruction. He is our Prophet, as well as our Priest; our Oracle as well as our Advocate. He speaks to us, as well as for us. What man cannot teach us, he will: We may carry our doubts from friend to friend, from Preacher to Preacher, and yet remain unresolved. As some sicknesses of the body are the *Physitians reproach*, he cannot remove them; so some distempers, and trouble of mind are (in that sence) the *Preachers reproach*, he cannot cure, or quiet them: yet, both body and mind may find remedy in *speaking unto the Almighty, and in reasoning with God.* 'Tis a fault in many, that they are so slow in asking God, and so forward in asking men. We should ask God before men, and make him not our refuge only, but our choice: We should speak to the Almighty, not only when men give us no answer, but before we seek their answer. It becometh us upon any doubt to inquire, first, of God by prayer, and to hearken what he will say to us in it. Many have had their scruples and troubles taken away by an immediate work, or moving of God upon their hearts; and 'tis sweetest and most refreshing when we have it so. It is the will of God that we should use means, and take advice, both of Christian friends, and of the Ministers of Christ; God often goeth forth with their counsels, and makes them prosper: But if he withdraw his help from men, and appear not in their teachings, it is to draw us out yet more in seeking to be taught by him, and in desiring that he would give us our comforts with his own hand, and tell us good tidings of peace and mercy with his own mouth. So he may be said to do, when after prayer and wrestlings with him, we find our spirits inlightened with the truth, or refreshed with the comforts we have been seeking for.

Thirdly, Observe, *That an upright heart is not afraid to reason with God himself.*

The Justice and Majesty of God, which make rotten hearts tremble, make the righteous rejoyce: It glads them not only that God is gracious and merciful, but that he is just and holy: *Sing unto the Lord (O ye Saints of his) and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness*, Psal. 30. 4. The remembrance of Gods holiness, fills them with joy who are holy. Such love to reason with God, as much because he knows them, as because he is ready to pardon them. A godly man knows himself so sinful, that he needs the grace of God to pardon him; and yet he knows himself so sincere, that he fears not the justice of God should behold and try him. We say that is a good piece of cloath, or stuff, which the Merchant offers to a clear light; that is a good piece of gold which the Pay-master willingly brings to the ballance and touchstone: So it is an argument of soundness and integrity, when the soul sets it self in the sight of God, who is light, and whose eye discerns what every one is; who also hath a ballance and a touchstone in his hand, to weigh all men, and to try what metal they are. *David* prayeth as hard to be searched, as to be saved (*Psal.* 139. 23, 24.) *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me.* He knew he was a sinner, and he was assured God knew he was not wicked: had he been wicked, he would have had little mind to be searcht; or had his way been evil, he had never called to have it tryed. They that are deformed, or foul-faced, hate the looking-glass. *And every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved* (John 3. 20.) The Word of God, which is doctrinal light, deters sinners, how much

more

more doth God himself, who is essential light? *The sinners in Zion* (saith the Prophet) *are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* Isa. 33. 14. But the Saints in *Sion*, they, *who* (as the same Prophet describes them in the next words) *walk righteously and speak uprightly*, they rejoyce in God as he is an everlasting burning, and as he is a devouring fire, for they know he will neither devour nor burn them. God, who is a *devouring fire* to wicked men, is a *reviving sun* to those who fear his name, *Mal.* 4. 1, 2.

Vers. 4. **But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Physicians of no value.**

But] or, *For* (so it may be rendered) *ye are forgers of lies*, &c. This verse giveth a reason why *Job* would not continue any further debate with his friends, but apply himself to God. *Ye are forgers of lies.* Lying words can no more cure the mind, then improper medicines can heal the body: And he that speaks lying words, gives not only improper, but poisonous medicines to the mind.

Ye are forgers of lies.] This is a severe charge and a high one. To tell lies is bad enough, but to forge lies is far worse. The word signifies to dispose or put any thing into exquisite order and method: As if he had said, *You are composers of lies, you have the art of it, you are lie-makers, master-workmen at the trade, the chief of liars.* It notes also the putting of one thing upon another, or the fitting them together, which is a further aggravation, you (which is the custom of common liars) put this lie upon that, and fit one to another, as a Joiner doth board to board in one frame. The *Italian* reads, *ye are hatchers of lies*, you gather up without order whatsoever comes next to hand for the strengthening of your cause. But *forging* doth properly belong to a Smith, who puts his Iron in the fire, to heat, and mollifie it, that he may work it with his hammer into what shape and form he pleaseth. Thus liars do: they find a matter which is not shap'd fit for their turn and purpose, therefore they put it into the fire of their own imaginations, or into the flames of malice, and there they heat it, and then with their wit they hammer and fashion it, and make it up into an instrument to wound the honour and reputation of others. So *David* complains (*Psal.* 50. 19.) *Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.* And again (*Psal.* 119. 69.) *The proud have forged a lie against me.*

טפל *componere concinnare* q. d. *vos estis compositores & quasi Architecti mendaciũ: significat etiã unum applicare alteri ut fabricantes solent. Hos Augustinus vocat fabulones i.e. qui fabulas vanas contexerint.* Aug. *Conf.* lib. 3. c. 6.

Observe from the propriety of the word, which he useth to aggravate the greatness of their sin.

That to be a plotter or contriver of sin is worse then to be an actor of it.

As every good action is by so much the better, so every evil action is by so much the worse, by how much it hath more, either of the head or heart in it, (*Psal.* 5. 9.) *Thou hatest the workers of iniquity*, (Mat. 7. 23.) *Depart from me ye that work iniquity.* You that set your wits on work, you, who as it were keep a shop to work evil in, and make trade of it, depart from me. *They that will not part from sin, must depart from God, whether they will or no.* The best of Saints on earth, do that which is sinful; but they are (as we may say) bunglers at it in comparison of these who make it their work, or make a business of it.

The Saints do evil as natural men do good, or perform holy duties; these do but slubber over holy duties; and they (in this sense) do but slubber over evil, they have not the skill, that hellish skill, to form it up and make it a curious piece. Here lies the spirit of wickedness: *That sin is most ugly and deformed in the sight of God and of those who are godly, which is contrived and compleated with greatest exactness and curiosity.*

Ye are forgers of lies.] A lie may be taken two wayes. Either more largely, for any falsity or untruth: Or secondly, more precisely and strictly, for that which is spoken, not only falsely, but knowingly, and with an intent to deceive. To lie, is to go against our own mindes, or to affirm a thing which we are assured is not so. *Job* doth not charge his friends with lies strictly taken, as if they had knowingly spoken that which wa false, or as if they had done it with an intent and purpose to ensnare him: Such lying continued in, is inconsistent with godliness, and any one act of it strikes at the vitals of godliness. His friends supposed, and were very confident that they spake truth, and their aim was to instruct, not to entangle him by what they had spoken. As that which is well-spoken, is often ill-taken; so, that which is ill-spoken, may have a good intent. 'Tis possible for a man to speak that which is false, with more honesty then some speak the truth: so did these friends of *Job*, who though they cannot be altogether excused, yet they must not be rashly censured. To clear up the matter yet further, consider, that

There is a threefold lie, as was shewed at the third verse of the eleventh Chapter.

First, A verbal lie, When we either make an untrue relation, or being asked, give a false answer to the question. Such was the lie of *Ananias*, (Act. 5. 3.) *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the holy Ghost?* The Apostle asked himif he sold the land for so much; yea, for so much, said he, when his own heart gave his tongue the lie for saying so.

Secondly, There is a practical lie, When we act against what we speak, and unsay with our lives what we say with our lips: Many a mans hand gives his tongue the lie, and his works speak the falsity of his words. Lying is very abominable when it is only a *tongue-craft*, but it is then most abominable, when it is also a *handy-craft*.

Thirdly, There is a doctrinal lie, So is every errour and unsound opinion. False notions are a lie in the understanding: The judgement mislead, misleads others. The Lord by his Prophet reproves such liars, (*Ezek.* 13. 9.) *Mine hand* (saith the Lord) *shall be upon the Prophets that see vanity and divine lies*; that is, lying doctrines, as is expounded (*vers.* 22.) *Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.* The Apostle *John* concludes against this sort of lies, (1 *John* 2. 21.) *No lie is of the truth*, that is, no doctrinal lie, either about matters to be believed, or to be done, either concerning the mysteries of faith, or the rules of a holy life, is of the truth. *Nothing but truth can flow out, or follow from that which is true*; as that old rule in logick teacheth us. Many lies have a likeness to truth, and most lies are so bold as to claim kindred and alliance to the truth, but no doctrinal lie doth indeed receive life or breath or any thing from any doctrinal truth, much less from him who is essential truth: To both which we extend S. *Johns* negative conclusion, *No lie is of the truth.*

Ex veris possunt nil nisi vera sequi.

The lie which *Job* chargeth upon his friends in this place, is not a verbal lie, no nor a practical lie, but a doctrinal lie, as if he had said, *You have taught and maintained an errour, though you have so great an opinion that you have all truth on your side, and that you are only upon the side of truth.*

Mendacium eo referendũ est, quod neque rectum in cõsulãdo nec in admonendo modũ teneant, sed inutilibus & importunis cõsiliis & orationibus utũtur. Pin.

But how doth it appear that his friends had forged doctrinal lies, or maintained errours?

There are four things observable in their discourse with him, which give evidence to this accusation.

First, Because to defend the justice of God they concluded *Job* guilty: They knew not how to reconcile it, that God should be righteous in laying such afflictions upon him, unless he were unrighteous; this was a doctrinal lie. The severest dealings of God with man in outward things, are no infallible marks of his disfavour, as hath been cleared more then once from the subject of this Book.

Secondly, He might charge them with forging of lies, because when they professed they came *to mourn with him and to comfort him*, (*Chap.* 2.) they, in stead of comforting him, made him mourn, and in stead of wiping off his tears, caused him to weep. Their words were gall and vinegar, not oyl and honey, as he both expected and needed. They spake much of the law, much of justice, but not a word, or but very little of free-grace, and mercy, and when they did, they did so cloud and clog it with conditions, and legal restrictions, that the poor man could not at all lift up his head in any solid consolation. They were not careful to state his case right, or else it was hidden from their eyes, notwithstanding all their care: hence it was that they spake so much at random, as if they had not minded his condition, and laid load upon, instead of easing his wearied soul.

De lege multa, de gratia nihil loquebantur. Mere.

Thirdly, He calleth them forgers of lies, becauſe *Zophar* had charged him with an affected curioſity in ſearching into the ſecrets of God, and in prying into thoſe things which he would have hidden, *Chap.* 11. For, while he puts him that chiding queſtion, (*verſ.* 7.) *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* He intimates plainly that *Job* had been attempting to ſearch out God, and had hopes to find him out unto perfection: This he ſpeaks out, *verſ.* 12. *For vain man would be wiſe, though he be born like a wilde aſſes colt.* As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt an itch to be wiſe beyond ſobriety, thou haſt a moneths mind to feed thy fancy with hidden myſteries, the open truths of God will not ſerve thy turn:* Whereas indeed, *Job* only deſired to have his cauſe cleared up to his own ſpirit, and to ſee the reaſon why God contended with him. He did not curiouſly intrude himſelf into the counſels of God, but ſought that he might be better fitted to anſwer the call of God.

Fourthly, He taxeth them as forgers of lies, becauſe they thought he only made a ſhew of holineſs, but was really wicked and falſe at heart. *Is this thy fear* (ſaid *Eliphaz*) *Is this thy hope? Is this thy uprigheneſs?* ſee what an upright man thou art: Here's a goodly profeſſion. While they charged him unjuſtly with hypocriſie, which is a practical lie, he juſtly charged them with errour, which is a doctrinal lie. If any man ſaith that himſelf is ſo holy that there is no ſin in him, he lies (ſaith the Apoſtle *John*, 1 Epiſt. chap. 1.) *and the truth is not in him*: and if any man ſay of another, becauſe he is outwardly unhappy, that he lives in ſin, and hath no goodneſs in him, this man lies too, and hath not that particular truth in him, which would teach him not to judge of mens perſons by events. Theſe things laid together might ſtir up the paſſion of *Job* to that high and unfriendly language againſt his friends, *Ye are forgers of lies, and*

ye are all Phyſicians of no value.

There are two ſorts of Phyſicians, the one in a proper, the other in a metaphorical ſenſe. A Phyſician properly taken, is a Student in nature, and learned in the temper, conſtitution and parts of the body: his buſineſs lies either in the preventing or curing of bodily diſeaſes, which are enemies to the life and ſubverters of the ſtrength of man. *Jobs* friends were not Phyſicians in this ſenſe, or if they were, yet he oppoſeth them, not in their Philoſophy, but divinity: And their errand to him, was not to heal the diſeaſe in his fleſh, but to remove the ſorrows and diſtempers of his ſpirit. His friends were his Phyſicians in a figure. In the ſame ſence that the ſoul is ſaid to be ſick, and the mind diſeaſed, the ſoul and the mind have their Phyſician. The Soul-phyſician doth not give counſel for the preparing of medicines, but his very counſels are the medicines, his word (that being the word or mind of God) is both the purge and cordial: Such Phyſicians *Jobs* friends would have been, but he complains of them, that, either their medicines were ſpiritleſs, and had no effect at all, or elſe that they wrought too violently; and hence it is that though he call them by an honourable name, Phyſicians, yet he abates it by an undervaluing Epithete, *Phyſicians*

Of no value.] The word is uſed, though not in the ſame conſtruction (*Zach.* 11. 17.) *Wo to the Idol ſhepherd*. Some render there to the ſhepherd of an Idol, or of a vain thing: others, Wo the ſhepherd of no value, or who is good for nothing, unleſs it be to feed upon, and devour the flock. The word *Elil*, ſignifieth vanity or falſhood, it ſignifieth alſo an Idol, ſome ſay from the root *Al*, in Engliſh, *not*, and ſo *Elil*, is as much as *nullity*, or *nothingneſs*. Idols are nullities, *an Idol is nothing in the world*, (1 Cor. 8.) and to ſay that a man is an *Idol Phyſician*, is all one, as to ſay, he is no Phyſician, or a Phyſician of no value. Rabbi *Levi* notes that the duplication of the letter *lamed*, ſhews the extream nothingneſs that was (as to this purpoſe) in theſe Phyſicians.

There are divers conjectures among interpreters about the reaſon of this ſtile.

Some thus, *Phyſicians of an Idol*, that is, you are to me like thoſe Phyſicians who undertake to cure a dumb Idol, a ſtock or a ſtone: For as they that give phyſick to an Idol, or apply medicines to a liveleſs Image, cannot profit it at all, or cauſe it to live, ſo you have done no more good to me then if you had beſtowed all your potions and medicines upon an Idol, for I am not at all healed nor recovered by them.

Medici Idoli, i. e. *ſicut medici qui curant Idolũ, truncum aut ſtipitẽ, qui quãvis multa adhibeant pharmaca nihil efficiunt.* Pined.

Secondly, One of the Rabbins tells us from the *Talmud*, that *Alal*, ſignifies the *ſinew in the neck, or the neck bone*, and ſo it is a proverbial ſpeech; when they would expreſs a vain boaſting Phyſician, they ſay he is a *Phyſician of the neck-bone*: he that undertakes an impoſſible cure, is as one that undertakes *to ſet the neck-bone*, which our *Engliſh* proverb puts among impoſſibles, *If you have broke your neck, come to me, and I will ſet it.* This ſenſe may have ſome admittance here. As if *Job* had ſaid, *You are as Phyſicians of the neck-bone, you promiſed to do great matters, to reſolve my doubts, and eaſe me of my ſorrows, but I ſee (the way you go to work) it is impoſſible to be done. If a man*, ſaith the Apoſtle (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *be overtaken with a fault, ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a man in the ſpirit of meekneſs.* The word in the Greek ſignifies to ſet a bone, put him in joynt again, handle him gently and tenderly, reſtore him with a ſpirit of meekneſs, ſo it becomes a ſpiritual Phyſician.

Apud Thalmudiſtas אלל *eſt nervus colli, qui ſi læſus fuerit nunquam poſtea curari poteſt, unde medici* אלל *dicti, qui quod promittũt præſtare nõ poſſunt.* R. Sol.

Thirdly, *A Phyſician of no value*, or *an Idol Phyſician*, is a Phyſician who can do no more good then an Idol, which is none at all. The Pſalmiſt ſaith of Idols, *They have eyes and ſee not, hands and handle not, ears and hear not, feet and cannot walk*; that is, there is no help to be had from them. *Jobs* friends gave him cauſe to call them *Idol Phyſicians* in this ſenſe alſo. As if he had ſaid, *A ſtatue upon a wall, or the picture of a Phyſician, an Apollo cut in a ſtone, or an Æſculapius in a wood, might have cured me as much as you have done: yea you have rather done me hurt then good. Whereas a man ſhould be not only a Phyſician, but a God to man, you are not ſo much as men, ye are but Idols; your words help me no more then a ſtock, or a ſtone, which cannot give to him that is in want, nor refreſh him that is weak.*

Medici Idoli, i. e. *veluti Idola mortua ſine ſenſu ſine auxilio, ut lapideus Apollo, aut ligneus Æſculapius. Homo homini Deus.*

Fourthly, We may take the words in a more mollifying ſenſe. *Ye are Phyſicians of no value*, that is, you are unskilful Phyſicians, you have neither brought that credit to your ſelves, nor that comfort to me which I expected; your art hath failed you, and your practice is unſucceſsful.

There are four things that make a Phyſician of no value, or his labour of no effect, and all theſe did meet in *Jobs* friends.

Firſt, When a Phyſician doth not fully know the name or nature of that diſeaſe, under which his patient labours. We ſay, *If a diſeaſe be known it is half cured*; *whereas he that doth not know it can never cure it, unleſs by gueſs or accident.* Such cure as Empericks, not as Phyſicians, if they cure at all.

Secondly, As a Phyſician ſhould know the name and nature of the diſeaſe, ſo, that he may be a Phyſician of value, he muſt know the cauſe of the diſeaſe. The cure is found in the cauſe: to diſcover whence the diſtemper grew, and what the occaſion of it was, directs unto the remedy.

Thirdly, He is a Phyſician of no value, who giveth hurtful medicines, medicines that are unſafe and noxious, ſuch as rather kill then cure.

Vanus medicus eſt qui etſi bona medicamẽta ægrotoexhibuerit, non habita tamẽ ejus corporis vel morbi ratione, &c. Merc.

Fourthly, Suppoſe the medicine be in it ſelf good, yet if it be not rightly applyed, or not applyed at a right time, the effect is loſt. A man may do as much hurt by giving a good medicine, as by giving an ill one: For as we ſay of food, *that which is one mans meat is another mans poyſon*, ſo much more of phyſick, *what is one mans help is another mans death.* Theſe four things muſt concur in a good Phyſician, and a failing in any of them makes a Phyſician of no value.

Jobs friends (in ſome degree or other) failed in all theſe. They did not ſee into the nature of his trouble: they thought it to be a puniſhment from the revenging hand of God as a Judge, whenas it was but a tryal or a temptation from the chaſtening hand of God as a father: They did not diſcern the true cauſes of it, they thought it was for the diſcovery of his hypocriſie and of the juſtice of God: whereas it was for the diſcovery of his ſincerity and of the goodneſs of God: They prepared ſome medicines of unſound ingredients; as that God will ſpeedily give outward good things to ſuch as are good. And laſtly,

Asserebant bonis semper benè evenire quod falsum est. Mere.

lastly, those that were sound they misapplyed: Thus *Job* was wounded with their salves; made sick with their medicines; and his very Physitians were a disease unto him.

Hence observe, First, From the allusion, *That the soul hath its sickness as well as the body.*

The soul hath its Feavers, Consumptions and Imposthumations: There is not any disease of the body, but some have curiously found out a parallel distemper in the soul. *Solomon* in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple, calls every one to know the *plague of his own heart.* Tis hard to know our own spiritual diseases; but it is harder to know the diseases of other men's spirits.

Secondly, Observe, *Good counsel and wholesome instruction is as physick and medicines to the soul.*

Animæ egrotantis medicus est oratio.

As the Word is meat, so medicine too: The Word is meat to feed and refresh the healthy soul, and the Word is medicine to cure and raise the soul that is weak and sickly. There is no soul-disease, but we may find a remedy for it in the Word. *The Lord* (saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 50. 3, 4.) *hath given me the tongue of the learned* (What learning was it? was it the learning of Philosophers? No, it was this) *That I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* There is a word which will ease the soul of its burthen, and cure the soul of its disease, if it be spoken in its season.

Thirdly, Observe, *He is a soul-physitian of no value, who makes wrong application of truths, as well as he who applyes that which is false.*

To preach the Law and the terrors of it, to preach the Justice of God and the severity of it, these are truths; but for a man to preach these to a poor broken soul, to a soul that lyeth languishing and trembling under the hand of God, to a soul that hath the pillars of its comfort shaken with the breakings in of divine wrath, this man is a *Physitian of no value.* For though the things are true, yet they are ill tim'd and applied; such a soul should have supports and cordials from the Covenant of grace, to refresh his fainting spirits; such a one should have the oyl of gladness poured into his wounds, his belly should be filled with the strongest wine of consolation. On the other hand, when a soul is stubborn in impenitency, or high flown with presumption, going on in the pride of his heart, yet saying, I shall have peace: to apply promises of mercy, the glad tidings of salvation, the freeness of grace to such a soul, may be its hardening and undoing: Though mercy may be tendered to the ungodly, for God justifieth the ungodly; yet we must not say to a man, that perseveres in his ungodliness, that God will justifie him, but that God will condemn him. The worst of sinners may be saved, but we must let him know, God will not save him in his sin. Woe unto us, if we cry peace to those who make war with God. To deal gently with such, is to be cruel both to theirs and our own souls. Such must be thundred at, as *Paul* did at *Elymas* (Acts 13. 10.) *Thou child of the devil, and enemy to all righteousness:* This was the language even of *Paul*, who preached the grace of the Gospel as high as ever man did. To flatter those that persevere in sin, is to destroy them: smooth words to the wicked are as drawn swords. The doctrine of the law, and the doctrine of free grace, must be preached distinctly, and set out in their several natures, and rightly applyed to their proper objects. We may be Physitians of no value, while we prescribe that which in its own nature is wholesome physick. The Word of God must be rightly divided: Every soul must have his own portion. The childrens bread is not for dogs: And though they who are dogs in the fence of their own unworthiness, may gather up the crumbs that fall from, yea may eat the whole loaf (whole Christ) which is upon the childrens table; yet they who are dogs indeed ought not to be offered a crumb of it. The Prophet *Ezekiel* reproves the false Prophets severely for misapplying the threatnings and promises of God; for giving bread to the dogs, and throwing stones at the children. *Will you pollute me* (saith God, *chap.* 13. 19.) *among my people?* How is God polluted? He is infinitely above all pollution. He is polluted when any shall make him the author and maintainer of their lyes, or when they speak so of his truths, that they incourage any in their pollutions. We pollute the Word of God (yea God himself) when we misapply it, to favour and side with the pollutions of evil men; or when we do not apply it to ease and revive the spirits of good men *Will ye pollute me among my people, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live?* The souls that should not dye, are said to be slain, when we threaten where we should promise; and we save the souls alive that should not live, when we promise where we should threaten. Though the unskilfulness or unfaithfulness of man cannot make the faithfulness and counsels of God of none effect, either by slaying one soul, of whom he hath said, *live*; or by saving one soul, of whom he hath said, *dye*: Yet they whose words run knowingly cross to the word and will of God, are justly charged with slaying those whom God will save; and with saving those whom God will slay. As they who willingly scandalize a brother by any, to him doubtful, practice, are said to destroy him for whom Christ dyed (*Rom.* 15. 15. 1 *Cor.* 8. 11.) because they do as much as in them lyes, to destroy and cause him to perish, for whom Christ dyed; though indeed it be impossible for such to perish, or be destroyed. So also are we to expound the Prophet, these do what in them lies to slay the souls that should live, though indeed such shall not be slain: and this, if any thing, is to be, as *Job* rebukes his Friends, *A Physitian of no value: An Idol, a no Physitian, or one as good as none: seeing it were as good to do never a whit, as never the better.*

Job having thus reproved his Friends, and made an appeal to God, gives them advice in the next words, not to speak a word more, unless it were to better purpose then what they had already spoken. *O that you would altogether hold your peace.*

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8.

O that you would altogether hold your peace, and it should be your wisdom.
Hear now my reasonings, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.
Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?
Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?

JOB having shewed his Friends their error in what they had spoken, desireth they would speak no more, unless they could do it to better purpose: He calls upon them aloud to stop their mouths (*vers.* 5.) and to open their ears (*vers.* 6.) being men (as he conceived) more fit to learn then teach. He presseth this counsel by divers arguments: two of which we have in this Context.

The first at the close of the fifth verse, *And it should be your wisdom.* The Argument lyes thus, *It is best to do that which will be your wisdom if you do it. But to stop your mouths, and open your ears, to be silent and hear, will be your wisdom: Therefore you were best to follow my advice, and hold your peace.*

A second Argument is contained in the seventh and eighth verses; and it is drawn from the sin and danger of it, in case they should proceed to speak as they had done; *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* &c. He seems to reason with them thus, *It is not good for you to go on in sin and wickedness: But in speaking thus, ye sin, and do wickedly: Therefore it is not good for you to go on in speaking thus: Be ye therefore silent, and attend unto what I have now to say.*

O that ye would altogether hold your peace.

O that ye.] The Hebrew is, *Who would give this to you?* Or, *O that some body would bestow this gift*, the gift of silence, *upon you*, unless you had a happier gift in speaking. *Quis det ut tacendo taceretis?*

That ye would altogether hold your peace.] The word which we translate, *to hold the peace*, or, *to be silent*, signifies properly, to dig, or plow the ground, to be very busie; and by an *Antiphrasis* (frequent in the Hebrew tongue, which imployes many words to contrary senses) it signifies, to do nothing, and to be silent, to be altogether idle: so they are, who neither do, nor speak. Further, Here is more then a bare wish for silence; here is an inforcement of it, *O that ye would altogether hold your peace:* The letter is, חרש *Fodit, aravit, per antiphrasin, nihil egit; siluit.*

O that you in being silent, would be silent; or, *O that you would be most silent in silence.* *Job* thus strongly bespeaking the silence of his Friends, may have a threefold reference; or, at least, he referreth to some one of these three things.

First, To the speech of *Zophar*, at the third verse of the eleventh Chapter, who had thus reproved *Job*, *Should thy lyes make men hold their peace?* Here *Job* replyes, as if he had said, *You told me that it was uncomely, my lyes should make men hold their peace; or that no man could hold his peace at my lyes; but surely you have spoken such lyes* (so he charges them in the verse foregoing) *and have talked so much at random, that it would very well become you to hold your peace, and to be as mute as fishes: to speak no more, will be your best Rhetorick*; or rather, *you will speak most when you speak no more; your silence will be more perswasive then your speech hath been.*

Secondly, This desire of *perpetual silence*, may have reference to that *seven dayes silence* which we read of in the second Chapter of this Book; when *Job*'s Friends came to mourn with him, and to comfort him; the Text saith, that *They sat down seven dayes, and no man spake a word to him.* Now saith *Job*; *Ye held your peace a great while when you came to me; truly it had been very well for me if you had altogether held your peace; and I would you would now remember your first posture, and as you began with silence, so conclude: sit and say nothing. O that you would altogether hold your peace.*

Thirdly, We may refer it to the whole matter of the contest between him and his Friends: As if he had said, *For asmuch as by all that you have spoken, you have not at all abated my pain, nor resolved my doubts, nor comforted my spirit, nor done me any good, I wish you would give over speaking. Seeing your speech is so fruitless, I wish you would be speechless: O that you would altogether hold your peace: And whereas you have gained no reputation of wisdom by speaking, you may by forbearing to speak,* as it follows in the Text,

And it should be your wisdom.] Properly there is no wisdom in silence. Silence is a privative, at least a negative. As dumbness is a total, so silence is a temporary privation of speech: But wisdom is a positive, and among habits the most excellent habit. *He that is really a fool, is a fool though silent; he is not wise, because he hides his folly.* So that, when *Job* saith, *It should be your wisdom*, his meaning is, this would be your wisest course; of the two you would shew your selves wiser men by silence, then by talking at such a rate of indiscretion as some of you have done. Silence may be the covering of folly; but no silence can be the cure of it: or silence may cause others to think we are wise; but it cannot make any man wise. (*Prov.* 17. 28.) *Solomon* giveth us that rule, *Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise*; he doth not say he is wise; but he is counted so: he is counted wise, because he hath this happiness, not to discover his want of wisdom. Yet further, as a fool may gain the reputation of that wisdom, which he hath not, if he be but wise enough to hold his peace; so a wise man may shew the wisdom which he hath by holding his peace, when speaking is unseasonable, or when himself may learn by giving others, who are wiser and more able then himself, the greater liberty of speaking. It is a good piece of learning to learn not to speak, as well as to speak well: Nature teaches us to speak; Art teaches us to speak well; but Vertue and Grace teach us not to speak. A wise man will be silent as a learner, that he may be fitted to speak as a Teacher. The Apostles Canon concerning *women*, hath its use in respect of many men, *Let them learn in silence*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 11.

Atque utinam taceretis, ut putaremini esse sapientes. Vulg.

Discamus prius non loqui, ut post modum ad loquendum ora reseramus, & post multum silentium ex discipulis officiamur magistri. Hieron *in* 3. *cap. Eccles.*

Hence observe, First, *That in some cases it is wisdom to be silent.*

Solomon tells us (*Eccles.* 3. 9.) that there is a season for silence, *Every thing is beautiful in his season*; so is silence, and so is speech. It is a great part of prudence to know when to be silent, and when to speak. *There is,* (saith he) *a time to keep silence, and a time to speak:* When it is a time to speak, silence is our folly; and when it is a time to keep silence, speaking is our folly. There are seven special seasons of speaking, and seven of silence.

The seven seasons of speaking are these,

First, (Which is a general) When by speaking we may bring glory to God, and do good to our brethren.

Secondly, When we have an opportunity to vindicate the honour and truth of God.

Thirdly, When we may relieve the credit of a brother that is wronged.

Fourthly, When by speaking, we may instruct or direct those that are ignorant.

Fifthly, When we may comfort and support those that are weak.

Sixthly, When we may resolve and settle those that are in doubt.

Seventhly, When we may duly reprove and convince those that do evil.

At such times as these we have a season to speak; and then it is our sin, or our weakness, nothing at all of wisdom, to be silent.

There are also seven special seasons of silence, and then it is our wisdom not to speak. Such as these,

First, It is never in season to speak, till we have a call. Tis as impertinent to be busie with our tongues, as with our hands, in other mens matters, unless they, or the providence of God, or our present duty, bespeaks us.

Secondly, It is a season to be silent, when we are not rightly informed in or about the state of the matter or question, to which we must speak: Such shall do well to speak their own doubts, but they are unfit to give others resolution. He must be a master of the question, who makes a determination upon it: And until he hath the compass of it in himself, he can never draw it to a good conclusion.

Thirdly, When we know the state of a question, yet we must not speak without a sutable preparation, either actual, or habitual: Be not rash to utter a thing before God or man. The Apostle *James* bids us be *swift to hear, and slow to speak*; yet we must not hear till we are prepared, then much less may we speak.

Fourthly, It is a season to be silent, when what we speak is like to be a snare unto our selves. *When they hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and abhor him that speaketh uprightly, when they afflict the just, and turn aside the poor in the gate* (Amos 5. 10, 12.) *Then* (vers. 13.) *the prudent shall keep silence, for it is an evil time.* But must not evil times, or the worst evils of worst times be spoken against, lest we bring our selves into an evil snare? Must we never speak, but when we are sure to come off well, and save our skins? Yes, at our peril we must speak, when there is greatest peril: So did the ancient Prophets; so did the holy Apostles: Yet (though another interpretation may be given of that place in the Prophet, making the silence of the prudent in evil times to be their acquiescence in the evils of punishment, which God brings; not their quietness with the evils of sin, which men commit: And so their silence is opposed to murmuring against God; not to their speaking against, or reproof of men) yet (I say) we may be silent from reproving men. First, When there is no probability, that the evil which we bring our selves into, shall be ballanced with any proportionable good to others. Secondly, when those sins have been sufficiently witnessed against already; so that men sin, not for want of light, but directly against it. In such a time as this, we have no obligation to run upon our own danger. That's the rule of Christ (*Matth.* 7. 6.) *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rent you.* Where we see, as Christ will not have his Word offered some sort of obstinate hardened sinners (shadowed under the names of swine and dogs) lest they should abuse it; so lest they should abuse those that bring it. He provides, as for the honour of the Gospel; so for the safety of those who publish the Gospel.

Fifthly, As it is a season for silence, when the passions and corruptions of others are up; so when our own passions or corruptions are up. It had been better for meek *Moses* to have held his peace, then to have spoken when the people provoked him to anger: for then he spake unadvisedly with his lips. *Passion is an ill counsellor, and as bad a speaker.* A man is not fit to reprove, or speak angerly, when he is angry. Storms at the tongue are never so seasonable, as when there is a calm upon the heart: He was a wise man, who when he saw a man angry, would advise him, to say over all the letters of the Alphabet, before he ventured to

put

put any two of them together, or speak a word.

Sixthly, It is a season for silence, when men are not capable of what we speak. Words are lost, not only upon a meer sot, a fool, a madman, but upon such as are indisposed to hear them. *Abigail* saw it was no time to speak to *Nabal* when he was drunken, and his heart merry with wine, *Therefore she told him nothing less, or more, till the morning light*, 1 Sam. 25. 36. Christ tells his Disciples (*John* 16. 12.) *I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.* The now, was not seasonable, therefore Christ was silent.

Seventhly, It is a season of silence, when what we speak may be a grief and burthen to the spirits of any, especially of those that are already afflicted. We must not make the green wound bleed afresh; nor at any time speak to the wounding of any whom God would have us heal. In these cases it is our wisdom to hold our peace.

There are three sorts of *peace-holders*.

First, There are some who hold their peace, and it is their cunning; they are silent upon design: It is not their wisdom, but their craft; they will say nothing, lest they should discover themselves.

Secondly, There are others who hold their peace, and it is their weakness: They speak not, because they cannot speak, either what they ought, or as they ought.

Thirdly, There are those who hold their peace, and it is their wisdom; as in the cases before alledged.

Secondly, Observe, *Speech discovereth what we are.*

Eloquere ut te videam.

When *Job* saith, if you would hold your peace, *it should be your wisdom*, it was an argument, that the speech of these men had discover'd their folly: We may see what men are by what they speak, as well as by what they do: And by these two, all of man, that is knowable by man, may be known. What we are in being, the same we are in acting and in speaking, if we act or speak our selves. Man is made as visible by what he speaks, as what he speaks is audible. *Speech is the image of the soul*, or *the looking-glass of the mind.* As we may see our faces in a glass; so others may see the face or representation of our spirits upon our speech. The fashion of the body shines by reflexion in the glass; and the form and frame of our hearts is reflected from our lips. *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks:* And as we take vessels, or glasses, and knock upon them, that by the sound we may perceive whether they be whole or crackt; so the sound which we make discovers whether we be crackt or sound: The crack in the glass would not be seen easily, if it were not heard; and many a mans folly and ignorance would not appear, could he but keep his own counsel.

Oratio est imago vel speculum animi: ut vir est, ita ejus oratio.

Job, having laboured to speak his Friends into silence; now labours to gain audience whilst himself speaks.

Verse 6. **Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.**

Both the parts of the verse are of one interpretation, only the sence is heightened in the latter.

יכח *Correptionem, confutationem, reprehensionē, objurgationē denotat, ut apud Græcos* ἔλεγχος. *Non imperiosè jubet sed vehementer optat.* Pined.

Hear now my reasoning.] The word which we translate *reasoning*, signifies also, *reproof*, *redargution*, *correption*, or *conviction*.

We may take it for any discourse by way of argument, wherewith a man doth either defend what himself, or reprove what others have done or spoken.

The form of speech is imperative, or by way of command; yet we are not to take it, as if *Job*, in a *Lordly tone*, imposed silence upon his Friends: Though his language was *Imperative*, yet his spirit was not *Imperious*. His words carry a vehemency in counsel; not the authority of a command: As if he had said, *O that I could obtain thus much favour from you, that, forbearing a while to say any more, you would now hear what I have to say.*

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

קשב *Notat gestū diligenter auscultātis: plus valet quam* שמע *sc. non solū attendere, sed intendere animum.*

To **hearken**, is more then to *hear*; for it imports a man purposely setting himself in a posture to hear, or taking pains to hear; we may see the attention of the mind in the composedness of the body. He that hearkens puts himself into a learning frame. Careless behaviour shews a careless hearer. The word here used, notes mind and body in a readiness to catch any thing that is spoken; or the attention and intention of the ear and heart together.

To the pleadings of my lips.] Or, *To the chiding of my lips*: As if he had said, *I must deal sharply, severely and plainly with you; I must speak home, and tell you your own.* Some conceive that *Job* useth this word, to meet with the conception of his Friends concerning what he had spoken. *Come* (saith he) *I know you think I have been too sharp all this while; that I have been rather chiding then disputing; well, if you have that opinion of my former discourse, let it be so; now come on, hear my chidings once more; hearken to my earnest pleadings.* Or (as others) to that *Apologetical narration*, which I make for my self.

רוב *Est judicio contendere vel litigare, hinc aliqui, litem, vertunt, & Tygur. contentionem.*

Hence observe, First, *It is the duty of a man to make defence for himself, and to apologize in his own cause.*

He that is innocent must not let his integrity lye stained, or blotted, and not stir his tongue to vindicate and disasperse it. It is a duty to stand up for one another who is wronged, much more for our selves, we being nearer to our selves then to any other.

Secondly, *It becomes us, not only to hear, but diligently to hearken unto them, who desire to set themselves right in our thoughts.*

Some ears thirst for slanders, and can greedily drink in an ill report of their brethren, yet, will not have the patience to hear their defence. 'Tis hard to possess those with the truth of a mans cause, who are prepossessed with an ill opinion of him. Love thinks no evil of others, and is not willing to hear it. Justice thinks no evil of others, till it hath heard it; and concludes no evil of others till it hath heard them. As the Judge must hear what the witness can say against the party accused; so what the party accused can say for himself: In this sence, that of the Apostle *James* should obtain with us; *Be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath*, Jam. 1. 19. We should be more forward to hear what a man can plead in his own justification, then we are to speak to his condemnation; we should be more forward to hear him, then to be wroth and angry with him.

Thirdly, *Man accounts it a dishonour, if he be not heard and hearkened to when he speaks.*

Not to hear a mans words, is within a degree, as disgraceful, as to give him disgraceful words. 'Tis ill when we only give another the hearing, who speaks the truth; but it is worse, when we will not so much as give him a hearing. Some hear much, and do not regard it; others regard so little, that they do not hear; either of these is a sleight put upon man. Now if it be a dishonour to man, to be slighted when he speaks; what a dishonour do they put upon God, who slight what he speaks? How often (as *Job* here with his Friends) doth God plead with man for audience? (*Psal.* 81. 8.) *Hear, O my people, and I will testifie unto thee; O* Israel, *if thou wilt hearken unto me.* How often did he send his Prophets, with, *Hear now the word of the Lord?* And when after these, his own and his Prophets wooings for attention to the words of his counsel and command, he found the people stopping their ears, and refusing to hear, how doth he again open his mouth in wrath, and thunder out words of cursing and consumption, which whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear, they must both see and feel. *Neither God nor man can bear it, to speak and not be heard. Hear now my reasoning* (saith *Job*) *and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.*

Job having made his preface, and called for attention, enters upon the matter of his reproof.

Verse 7. **Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?**

Jam incipit dicta sociorum refutare. Merc.

In this, and the next verse, *Job* doubleth his words; and that he might make them hear twice, he speaks the same thing more then once. *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* is the same with, *and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person?* is the same with, *Will ye contend for God?* In the heat of his discourse, he doth not only propose, but press; not only speak, but repeat what he had to say over and over. *Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* When we earnestly oppose what another saith or doth, we say, *Will ye, will ye?*

הלאל דוברו

Will ye speak wickedly for God?] The letter is, *Will ye speak iniquity for God?* There is a threefold reading of that clause, *Will ye speak wickedly?* First, *Of God?* Secondly, *To God?* Thirdly, *For God?* Mr. *Broughton* takes the first, *Will ye speak unright of the Almighty?* Wee the last, *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* The sence comes near to one in all three. The Septuagint render it as an argument why they should take heed what they spake, because of the person before whom they spake. *Do you not speak before God? and will ye speak deceitfully in his presence? Do you not know where you are? Remember that you are in Gods presence, he sees, and he hears you: Do you think that none hears you, but I that am a poor creature in pain and misery? The great God of Heaven and earth heareth you. Do you not speak before God? and if you believe you do, will you speak deceitfully?* This sence is very savoury, useful and close; but this reading is too wide for the Original text: Which though it may bear such an exposition, yet it cannot bear such a translation.

Numquid non coram Deo loquamini, & ante conspectũ ejus proferetis dolum?

The words are clearer according unto our reading, *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* That is, Will you strain the truth for his sake? Will ye reproach me under pretence of honouring God? *Job*'s Friends had great thoughts of God, doubtless they had; yet, their mistake was great, when, to set up the glory of God, they darkened the innocency of man: In speaking thus, they *spake wickedly for God.* As if *Job* had said, *Speak righteously for God as much as you will; so I desire to speak for God as much as you; but you are so transported in defending the righteousness of God, that you care not how you wrong me: The cause of God needs no such Advocates: He will never thank you for condemning me, to justifie his dealings with me: He is righteous in afflicting me; and I am not wicked because afflicted.*

Dum ejus defenditis justitiam me accusatis ut impiũ: itane Dei causa agenda ut ejus gratia mihi sitis iniqui? Merc.

Hence Note, First, *That a good cause may be ill mannaged; and we may exceed our duty, while we are doing it.*

There is no greater duty then to speak for God; yet it is possible to speak sinfully when we speak for God. That zeal is without true knowledge, which obscures one truth, while it is clearing up another.

Secondly, Observe, *We must take heed we break not the rules of justice and charity to man, while we maintain the justice or truth of God.*

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, is the first and great Commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self: We cannot express our love to God, while we shut out love to man. God hath no delight in such love: And that doctrine which dis-joyns the love of God and man, is a lye for God. The Vulgar reads the Text clearly to that sence, though with too much variation from the Original, *What? hath God need of your lye? The truth of God hath no need of our lye against man:* We may bespeak many at this day, who undertake the Cause of God, or at least pretend they do, *What? hath God need of your slanders, or of your passions? hath God any need of your anger, of your revilings, wrath? The wrath of man works not the righteousness of God.* It is a dishonour unto God to be helped thus. As we must not do evil, that good may come to our selves; so we must not do evil, that good may come to God, *Rom.* 3. 8. The Apostle rejects the very thought of such a design, with a kind of horror and detestation; for he had no sooner repeated that impudent and blasphemous slander (some affirm that we say, *Let us do evil, that good may come*) but presently he blasts both it and them, with this dreadful judgment, *Whose damnation is just:* If they deserved damnation, who put such an opinion upon the Apostles, what do they who practice it? They who suppose themselves such skilful Alchymists, in drawing good out of evil, that (to try their skill) they will do evil, hoping to draw good out of it, shall find at last, that they have drawn damnation upon themselves by that tryal. But some may object, Doth not the Apostle confess at the seventh verse, that he had done evil for that end; and that having attained a good end, he thought himself excused for the evil of his way: *If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lye, unto his glory, why yet am I judged as a sinner?* It seems then the Apostle had told lyes for the upholding of truth; and that the truth of God had abounded to the glory of God through his lyes. I answer, The Apostle doth not speak those words in his own person, or in the person of a godly man, but in the person of a profane Objector, whom he confuteth: As if he had said, *Some man possibly may plead thus for his sin; The truth of God hath gained by my lye; and if so, why am I judged as a sinner? They are shining sins indeed, which cause the glory of God to shine more bright. Can I be a looser where God gains? Surely I cannot. I may rather encourage my self to do evil (as we* (saith the Apostle) *are also affirmed to say) that good may come.* So then the Apostle doth but repeat and refute what some said for themselves, and of the Apostles; he doth not in the least affirm it of himself. God often brings good out of the worst of evils; but that's no thank to those who commit the evil. Evil can produce nothing naturally but evil; it is a Divine power and wisdom which overmasters it unto good. The way which God hath taught us to glorifie him by, is to do that which is good, and to speak the truth; and though he can raise glory to himself out of the evil which we do, and out of the lyes which we publish; yet he never calls for our evil, or for our lye, to raise his glory. The Psalmist assures us (*Psal.* 16. 2.) *My goodness extendeth not to thee:* And if God hath no need of our goodness, surely he hath no need of our evil: He wants not our help, though he bespeaks it, and may command it: Why then should any man *speak wickedly for God?*

And talk deceitfully for him? Or, *Talk deceit for him.*

רמיה *Est deceptio, & frustratio ut* קשת רמיה *arcus frustrans.*

The sence is the same as before. The word which we translate *deceit*, is a Noun, and signifieth hope frustrated, or the deceiving of expectation. A Bow which carries the Arrow false, is thus expresst, *a deceitful bow*, because it frustrates the Archers aim, sending the Arrow beside, or above the mark. It signifies also a man that is *slow of foot*, dull, and lazy, a man of a flegmatick and unactive spirit: A slothful man is a deceiver, he deceiveth himself, and he deceiveth those that imploy and set him a work: He doth his own business but by *halves*; and if any trust him, he will deceive them *wholly*.

Piger dicitur איש רמיה *Quia decipitur ipse spe & frustrantur qui ei quicquam committunt.* Coc.

Job giveth yet a further charge upon his Friends, in the expostulation of the next verse.

Verse 8. **Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God?**

Will ye accept his person?] There is a different reading of these words. Some thus. *Will ye put your selves into the room or place of God? Will ye personate God?* So the word bears; signifying, as to accept, so to sustain or represent another person. Will you take upon you the place of God, or stand in his stead? Will ye be as Gods Deputies and Vicegerents, as if you had commission under the great Seal of Heaven, to deal thus with me? Or will ye take the office of God upon you, to judge the heart, and of the secrets which are lodged there? You judge me an hypocrite; let me profess what I will of my own integrity, let me produce the fairest proofs of my uprightness, yet you judge me an hypocrite, and conclude me a wicked man: Will ye thus take the sole priviledge of God upon you, and judge my heart?

נשא *In hac phrasi, non tollendi sed accipiendi notionem habet. Nasa sustinere, sustentare, eo quod patroni clientum personam quodammodo sustentant.* Bold. *Faciem Dei accipere est personã Dei agere & representare & ejus vice ac munere judicandi fungi.* Philip. Fresb.

Hence observe, *They that take upon them to judge the heart, or to judge of that which doth not appear, take upon themselves the place of God.*

Num? i! Deus indiget vestro mendaci? Vulg.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it? (Jer. 17. 9.) Man cannot know his own heart, much less can he know the heart of another man. God takes that honour to himself (*vers.* 10.) *I the Lord search the heart.* Only he that is invisible, is able to see into that which is invisible. Christ gives a rule for judgment: *Judge not according to the appearance* (John 7. 24.) yet we must not judge of that which doth not appear; we must search before we judge, because many things are not, either in regard of good or evil, as they appear; but if nothing appear after searching, we must suspend our judgment. That which doth not appear, must be left to the judgment of God, at his appearing; so the Apostle directs (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time:* What is the time? The next words shew it, *Till the Lord come*; that is, till he come to judgment. But must we reserve all judiciary proceedings to that day? No, Magistrates must do justice; and therefore they must judge every day. His mean-

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ing then is, judge nothing which doth not appear: He takes not away civil judgment upon proof (as some have abused that Text) but only that judgment which hath no proof; as the Apostle explains himself in the sequel of that dehortation. *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart.* As if he had said, That kind of judgment you must refer to the day of judgment; you must not judge of things hidden in darkness, or of the heart of man; ye may judge the works of men, or whatsoever shews it self in the open light.

We read, *Will ye accept his person?* Here two things are to be opened: First, What it is to *accept a person.* Secondly, In what sence the Friends of *Job* might be said *to accept the person of God*; or how his person may be said to be accepted.

The letter of the Original is, *Will ye accept, or lift up his face?* This phrase, *of lifting up the face*, hath a threefold different use in Scripture.

First, God is said *to lift up his own face*; and that intimates favour and kindness to man (*Numb.* 6.26.) *The Lord lift up his countenance* (or *face*) *upon thee, and give thee peace:* That is, the Lord bless thee, and do thee good.

Secondly, Man is said *to lift up his own face*; and that noteth boldness and confidence, (*Job* 11. 15.) *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot*: That is, thou shalt not be afraid to look any man in the face.

Thirdly, Man is said *to lift up the face of another*; either the face of another man, or (as here) *of God himself:* and this signifies alwayes extraordinary favour; sometimes illegal favour. (*Gen.* 32. 20.) *Jacob* sends a present unto *Esau*, and saith, *Peradventure he will accept*, or lift up *my face:* So (*Deut.* 28. 50.) the Lord threateneth his ancient people, that he would send such enemies among them, as *should not regard the person* (so we translate) or *not lift up the face of the old:* An old man full of gray hairs, and venerable gravity, shall have no more regard then a child, or a beardless boy. *The honourable man, is the man eminent in counsel, or whose face is lifted up* (Isa. 3. 3.) The Lord threatned that he would make the Priests *contemptible, because they had been partial in the Law*, or because *they had accepted faces in*, or against *the Law* (Mal. 2. 9.) that is, because they had done, or required such and such things to be done; not because the Law required them, or because they saw it was the will of God in the Law, but because they saw it was for their own advantage and convenience: They perverted the Law, both in opinion and practice, to pinch or favour men as they pleased. 'Tis said of the jealous man (*Prov.* 6. 35.) that *he will not regard* (or *not accept the face of*) *any ransom*; that is, he will not be moved by any gift, to spare him that hath dishonoured his bed.

Transfertur ad res inanimatas ut cum quis rē aliquā revereri & permagni æstimare videtur, non tam rei dignitate, quam peculiari aliqua ratione, aut spe lucri permotus. Pined.

More distinctly, *To accept a person*, consists in these two things. First, *When to those who are like, we give an unlike judgment.* Secondly, *When to those who are unlike, we give a like judgment:* To do this, is to be partial, and to accept persons in judgment. Liberality or bounty is not obliged to give like to those who are like; but Justice is. We may give as we will; but we must judge by a rule. God elects according to what is in himself; but he judges according to what is in us, or according to what we have done. When *Jacob* and *Esau were yet unborn, neither having done good or evil, God loved* Jacob, *and hated* Esau: This was not accepting of persons, because the Lord did this, not as a Judge, but as an Elector; so the Apostle states it (*Rom.* 9. 11, 12, 13.) He loved the one, and hated the other, though both were alike, *That his purpose, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.* Thus God elects persons; but he is no respecter, or accepter of persons; for, *In every Nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him*, Acts 10. 34. God will not ask any man what *countrey-man* he is, or of what kindred he is, before he accepts him; *For the Scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed, for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him* (Rom. 10. 11, 12.)

Prosopolepsia definitur, siquis paribus imparia, vel imparibus paria tribuat. Coc.

But if this be to accept persons, how could *Job* charge his Friends with accepting the person of God?

For the clearing of this Query, I shall shew first negatively, how we are not to understand it; and then affirmatively, how we are.

First thus, We are not to understand it, as if *Job*'s Friends imagined that God had need of their favour in his cause; The usual reason, why the persons of men are accepted, is, because their cause cannot bear them out; he that hath a good cause never desires to have the sentence carried by any byas to his person; but he that distrusts his cause, useth all the means he can, he turns every stone to ingratiate his person, or, as we say, to curry favour with the Judge. *Job* and his Friends knew well enough, that (as the Apostle affirms out of the Psalm, *Rom.* 3. 4.) *God must be justified in his sayings, and overcome when he either judgeth, or is judged:* The justice of his cause will carry him out against all men, *Yea every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.*

Secondly, As God needs not any respect or favour to his person from the creature; so it's impossible that God should receive more respect or honour from the creature then doth belong to his person: We may quickly out-act our respects to the best of men, and offer them more then they are fit to receive: but God is infinitely exalted above all our praises, and is fit to receive more then we can offer. The Psalmist indeed saith, that the *Israelites* flattered God: *When he slew them, then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongues,* (*Psal.* 78. 36.) But could they flatter God? Man is flattered when that is ascribed to him which he hath not; or when he is applauded for what he hath, beyond the worth of it. God cannot be flattered thus: He is as much beyond flatterings, as he is beyond sufferings. The *Jews*, then, are said to flatter God, not because they applauded him by fair speeches more then was his due; but because by fair speeches they hoped to prevent what themselves did deserve; or they flattered God with their own promises, not with his praises. They sinned against him, and he slew them; and when the sword found them, they sought God, they creep'd to him, and fawn'd upon him, they came as with ropes about their necks, confessing they were worthy to dye, yet humbly begging for life; and if God would but sheath his sword, and spare them, O what manner of men would they be in all holy conversation and godliness. Thus *they flattered God with their mouth, while their hearts were not right:* They made great shews of repentance and turning to God; but they meant no such thing: this was their flattery; neither can the Lord be flattered any other way. And as he cannot be flattered by over-praising him, so his person cannot be accepted by over-respecting him.

So then the meaning of *Job*, in charging his Friends with accepting the person of God, is only this, that he conceived his Friends so zealous in lifting up the glory of God, that they cared not under what temptations and disadvantages they left him *poor man*; they did not attend the law of love and pity towards him, in conjunction with the law of love and honour towards God. As if he had said, *You see me miserable, and you know God is just* (*I know he is so too:*) *Hence you infer, God being just, he would never punish me thus, if I were not unjust. This to advance the righteousness of God, you suspect me of wickedness; and to maintain his truth, you charge me with falseness of heart, and secret hypocrisie: The former is your duty, but the latter is your sin; will ye thus reject my person, that ye may accept his?*

Hence observe, First, *That to accept persons in judgment crosseth the rule of justice.*

'Tis injustice to accept the person of God (in the sence explained) how much more to accept the persons of men? The Apostle professeth strongly, (2 *Cor.* 5. 16.) *Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more*; that is, we do not respect him for any fleshly consideration. That was once our error, we expected a Christ in outward pomp, and worldly splendor; we looked for a Christ in robes of royalty, and in the majestick state of earthly Princes; we were offended at his meanness and poverty, because we saw no form nor beauty in him; but we have learned to think and judge otherwise of Christ. Now, if it be a sin, or besides our duty, to respect *Christ* after the flesh, how much more any Christian? We may argue so here,

here. If it be a sin to accept the person of God, or by inclining to him to wrong men, how much more to accept the person of man, or by inclining to one man to wrong another. *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty* (Lev. 19. 15) As if he had said, ye cannot do that which is right in judgment, if ye respect the person of any man, high or low, rich or poor: Some, possibly, may respect the person of the poor (though usually respect of person is given to the rich) but the Law of God is so exact in this point, that if a poor man (or a man *in forma pauperis*) contend with, and sue him that is rich, yet, thou shalt not do the rich man wrong, and say he is rich, he can bear it well enough; no, but if his cause be right, though his adversary be poor, let the rich man have his due. Magistrates are not called to do acts of charity, but of justice. Laws are made without respect of persons; but they are seldome executed without respect of persons. While the Law is moulding and framing, the Legislators know not what particular persons shall fall under it; therefore it is made without partiality or respect of persons. But the Judge too often remembers and studies the person as much or more than the Law: His friend, or his kinsman is in the cause; such a man recommends the business to him, who hath done him a courtesie, or may do it hereafter: Such a great man is concerned in it, who may do him an ill turn, or make an unpleasing representation of him at Court, and in the Princes ear. These considerations corrupt the Judge, and turn him aside in judgment.

Secondly, Observe, *We accept the person of God, when under the title of doing him right, we wrong man.*

Some are zealous for God to the hurt of their brethren: And while they can suppose themselves acting for God, they care not what they act against man. Such a spirit the Prophet describes (*Isa.* 66. 5.) *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified:* As if he had said, while you shew hatred towards your brethren, you say it is in love to God; while you cast their persons out of your society, you say it is for the Name of God: and that the Lord (say you) may be glorified, we must not spare any man, brother, or friend, one or other. So (*Jer.* 50. 7.) *All that found them have devoured them* (he speaks of those that went to seek God with their faces towards *Zion*, who sought to worship God in the exactest manner) *and their adversaries said, we offend not*: (They thought they might eat up a man, with as little offence to God or man, as to their own stomachs, when they had this to say for it.) *Because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers.* These men have sinned against God, and we hope we must not bear with such: If we did not find them in an error, did they not wrong God and his truth, we would not do thus; but *we offend not*, for *they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers:* They concluded they might use them as they list, when they had this plea, it is for the Lord. That's the reason of Christs premonition (*John* 16. 2.) *They shall cast you out of the Synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service.* 'Tis possible for men to seem inflamed with a zeal for God, while they put their brethren into flames.

And as this is true in regard of the persons of men, so of their doctrine: Some say, God is honoured by such an opinion, and therefore it must needs be right. *Papists* maintain the doctrine of free-will, and tell us it is that God may be glorified; how else (say they) can we answer those exhortations and commands to repent and obey his voice, if man have not free-will, or a power to obey? Were it not a mock if God should bid man do that which he cannot do? Therefore that the honour of God may not be stained, the will of man must be advanced.

Arminians hold universal redemption, or that Christ died equally for all men. Now as the Papists pretend zeal for God in maintaining free-will, lest he should seem to mock in his commands; so these maintain universal redemption, lest God should seem to mock in his promises; For, say they, God offers grace and mercy, forgiveness of sins and life eternal unto all; hence they argue, if Christ dyed not for all, he doth but delude us in making these offers: Thus out of a respect to the person of God, they destroy the truths of God. For the truth is, man hath no free-will (before conversion) either to obey the commands of God, or to believe his promises; and yet the Lord in unspeakable wisdom and justice, yea and in mercy too, commands him to obey, and presents him promises to believe. These administrations of God are not arguments of mans ability, but of his duty; and while God in them shews man his duty, he conveys an ability: he doth not bid a person unconverted obey and believe, because he hath an inherent power to do them; but because out of his free love and grace in Christ he intends to give him that power. And therefore the expedient for the removing of the former difficulties, is not to be found in the free-will of man, but in the free-grace of God: who though he requires what we are not able to do, yet enables us to do what he requires. If we seek other helps to ease us of these scruples, we shall be convinced at last, to have overthrown the truth of God, while we would be thought zealous for his honour: And that is the sin of accepting the person of God, whom we can never honour enough, either in his person, works, or truths. *Will ye accept his person?*

Will ye contend for God?

It is not a fault, but a duty, to contend for God; to contend for God with our tongues, and to contend for God with our hands (*Jude* 5. 23.) Meroz *was cursed, because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* Therefore when he saith, *Will ye contend for God?* He doth not blame them for the matter, their taking Gods part; but for the manner in which they did it. As if he had said, *If you will ingage as patrons of Gods cause, and contend for him, you must do it so as becomes the cause of God; you must not, to gratifie God, oppress the poorest man.*

Secondly, We may give this sence, *Do ye contend for God?* That is, do ye think God cannot maintain his own cause without you? When *Gideon* had destroyed the Altar of *Baal*, and *Joash* his father defended the action, *Joash* saith, *Will ye plead for* Baal? *will ye save him? if he be a God, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar* (Judg. 6. 25.) You need not trouble your selves, for if *Baal* be a God, he will do well enough; he will set himself right, and maintain his own divinity. In that sence also *Job* might here speak to his Friends, *Will ye contend for God?* Do you think he is *Baal*, one that cannot save himself, and manage his own cause? Doth he need you? He being the true God will plead for himself: therefore hold your peace, and hear what I have to speak. You have spoken wickedly for God, and talked deceitfully for him: You have so accepted his person, and contended for him, that he will give you no thank for your labours. *Job* yet proceedeth to give some further Arguments, why they should forbear to speak, and give him further audience.

VERS. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do you so mock him?
He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.
Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?
Your remembrances are like unto ashes, and your bodies to bodies of clay.
Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may speak, and let come on me what will.

JOB still persists pressing his Friends to silence, and requiring audience for what he had to speak. The ninth and tenth verses are an appendix to, or an inlargement of his second Argument, which began at the sixth verse. There he expostulates, *Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person?* Will ye make such adventures? and run such hazzards as these? Here he diswades them from it. *Is it good that he should search you out?* (ver. 9.) if he do, you will have the worst of it: for, *he will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons*, vers. 10. If you give wrong judgment for God,

you

you shall not escape the just judgement of God.

His third argument is grounded upon the Majesty and greatness of God, *vers.* 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* &c.

His fourth, upon their frailty and weakness, *vers.* 12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes*; and will you who are but dust and ashes speak thus, not only before, but concerning the high and the holy God?

From all these premises, he draws the wish of the fifth verse, *O that you would altogether hold your peace*, into a conclusive charge at the 13 verse, *Hold your peace*, &c.

Vers. 9. **Is it good that he should search you out?**

The sense of this phrase (*is it good?*) was given at the third verse of the tenth chapter. Good is here put for profitable or advantageous.

Some refer it to God, and expound it as if he had said, *Do you think it will be profitable for God to seek after you, to draw you to his party, or to the patronage of his cause? Mistake not your selves. God doth not want your help; he can maintain his cause, though he see not you for his advocates, though he make not you of his counsel.* But I pass this as too strained an interpretation.

Nũquid existimatis utile Deo futurũ quærere & ascíscere vos in suæ causæ patronos? Non bene cedet nobis si factũ vestrũ discusserit & propius inspexerit ac diligentius expenderit. Merc.

For *Job* intends this directly to his friends: and while he saith, *is it good that he should search you out?* his meaning is, it will be ill for you. It will be so far from your profit or benefit, from your ease or credit, that you will find it both your loss and your shame, if once God come and *search you out.* If God look more narrowly into this business, you will get nothing by it but a chiding, as is expressed in the next verse, *He will surely reprove you.*

חקר
Investigare, scrutari.

The word signifies not only to search diligently, but to search judiciarily, or as a judge searcheth and tryeth a man or his cause. *Job* speaks of himself under this language in the exercise of his Magistracy, (*chap.* 29.16.) *The cause which I knew not, I searched out.* If any, under the law, enticed their brethren to idolatry, *saying, Let us serve other gods, Then* (saith the Lord by *Moses*, Deut. 13.14.) *shalt thou enquire and make search, and ask diligently*, &c. Man searcheth what he doth not know; God knoweth all things, and yet he searcheth. He doth not search to inform himself in what he knoweth not, but he searcheth to inform or to assure us that he doth know. *David* prayeth, *search me O Lord, and know my heart*, (Psal. 139.23.) yet he confesseth (*vers.* 1.) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me*; yea he knew God knew him without searching. There are no secrets to God: He knows by immediate intuition, not by discourse or inquisition.

So then, *Job* speaks of God after the manner of men, who make enquiries that they may know, and search that they may find.

But why would it not be good, or what hurt would it be to his friends, if God should search them out? I answer, *Job* supposed that his friends had not dealt fairly nor sincerely with him; and though he could not find out the unevenness of their spirits towards him, yet God could: He saw perfectly that they did not move upon right principles, that there was more of anger and animosity, then of zeal and charity in their discourse; that they had a desire rather to conquer him, then to comfort him; and that they were more busie in judging his person, then in applying remedies to remove his grief. Now, when God upon the search should find out such ill matter as this against them, could it be good to them? Surely such a discovery as this could not gain them either reward or approbation. *Is it good that he should search you out?*

Hence Observe, First, *God is able to search out and discern the hearts and secret wayes of all the children of men.*

He knows not only what we do, but with what heart and for what ends we do it. *His eyes* (do not only see, but) *consider, his eye-lids* (do not only behold, but) *try the children of men*, (*Psal.* 11.4.) The eye-lids of man do not see at all, they only protect and fence the sight of the eye: But to shew that God is all sight, and all eye, his very eye-lids are said to do more then see, to try the children of men. *O Lord* (saith *David* in the place lately cited) *thou hast searched me, and known me.* Man searches man, and cannot know him, for, *what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?* (1 Cor. 2.11.) but the Spirit of God knows what is in man, he hath a threed which leads him unerringly, quite through the labyrinth of mans heart. *Thou hast known me*, all over, *thou knowest my down-sitting and up-rising*, that is, whatsoever I go about or take in hand: *Yea thou understandest my thoughts afar off*; that is, before I think them, or before they are born.

We cannot draw a curtain between God and our souls, nor spread a vail of secrecy over any of our actions. *The wayes of a man are before the Lord, and he pondereth* (as in a ballance) *all his goings*, (Prov. 5.21.)

Secondly Observe, *It will be little to the profit or credit of hypocrites and evil doers, when God comes to search them.*

Christ quickly espied among all his guests, the man that had not on him the wedding garment; and as soon as Christ spake to him, he was speechless. He was condemned in himself, because he had not prepared himself.

Three things arise from this consideration by way of corollary.

First, *Take heed of sin, for God will search you out.* *Moses* tells the two Tribes who desired to take up their inheritance on the other side *Jordan*, that if they should prove false to their own proposals, their sin would surely find them out. But doth sin make search for the sinner? or will sin discover and betray it self? When he saith their sin would find them out, his meaning is, the revenging hand of God for sin would find them out. When we feel the effects, and receive the rewards of sin, our sin findes us. Many lose both the sight and memory of the sins they have committed; but their sins keep the sight of them, or will follow them (as the hound doth the fleeing game) upon the sent, till they have found them out.

Secondly, *It is good for man to search himself before the Lord searches him, or because the Lord will surely search him.* It will be our wisdom to bring our own works to the touchstone, for God will; to travel into our own hearts and over our own lives, for God will. Let not any region of thy self be (*terra incognita*) an unknown land to thy self, for God walks through thee every day. God threatned to search *Jerusalem* with Candles, because they had not searched themselves by the clear sun-shine of his word. A sin of ignorance committed is less then a sin against knowledge; but to hide a sin we have committed, or to be wilfully ignorant of it, encreases it.

Lastly, *It is best for us by humble confession to make our sins known to God, seeing God doth search out our sins, and will know them, whether we will or no.* Concealment doth not hide the eye of God from sin, but the mercy and pardoning grace of God from the sinner. The disguises which we put upon the evil which we have done, cannot make them less visible to, but more ugly in the sight of God. To assure that, is *Jobs* scope in the next clause of this verse.

Do as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?

חתל
Proprie est illudere, mẽtiri, decipere mentiri illudendo, vel illudere mẽtiendo.

The word signifies to illude, to lie, to deceive; to lie that we may deceive, or to deceive by lying. One man, or (as the propriety of the Original founds) one poor, weak, sorry, sorrowful man, may thus mock and deceive another; but can weak, sorry, silly man put cheats and deceits upon the strong, the wise, the only wise God?

But may we conceive that *Jobs* friends had any such design in hand, or that they were contriving a plot against God?

'Tis equally as vain and sinful to strive with God by our wit, as it is by our strength; and we can as soon overcome him, as over-reach him.

Neither did *Job* impute this to his friends, that they set themselves industriously to deceive or mock God; yet he might speak thus,

Sæpe inter disputandũ spectamus non quid quisq; sibi propositum esse dicat, sed quid ex ipsius oratione consequatur. Merl.

First, Because they handled the cause with weak and improper arguments, such as had only a shew of reason or divine authority in them, not the substance or reality of it; which imported, as if they supposed God himself would be taken with appearances and very similitudes: to be so, is indeed to be mocked and deceived. Upon this account *Job* chargeth them with mocking God. Neither is it against the laws of disputation to put such inferences upon anothers assertions or argumentations as may possibly flow

of

or follow from them, though the arguer be free and far enough from any such intendment.

Secondly, Because they (undertaking to plead the cause of God) might seem to deal like those Advocates, who to draw on their clients, and multiply their own fees, tell them their cause is good, and that they doubt not of the day. Which though it were most true in regard of God and the cause it self he had in hand with *Job*, yet it was not true in regard of the grounds upon which his friends managed it and held it forth.

Referendum videtur ad incorruptū Dei judiciū, quod depravari detorqueriq; à recto humanâ persuasione aut fraudulētia non potest. Phil.

Thirdly, He might speak thus, because they appearing as witnesses against him before the tribunal of God, might seem to deal like those witnesses who give a wrong testimony to mislead the judge, that he may give sentence against the innocent: thus an earthly Judge may be mocked or deceived. *But* (saith *Job*) *do ye think to mock or deceive God thus? Do ye think because you have given such a hard testimony of me, and say I am wicked, that he will take your word, and condemn me upon it? Do ye hope, either to corrupt and darken his understanding that he cannot see the right, or to over-perswade his will to act against what he sees, and to overthrow the right? please not your selves with these mis-representations of me and of my cause to God: for he will quickly look through all the false colours you have laid upon it, and the fallacies that are in it; and you will find at last, that you have deceived your selves, not God, by all your insinuations of my deceit and hypocrisie towards God. As one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him?*

Hence Observe, First, *Man may be mocked and deceived by man.*

That's supposed by *Job*. As the strength of man prevails over humane strength; so also doth the wit and understanding of man prevail over humane wit and understanding. And as some men are in reference to strength, so others are in reference to understanding, *children*. You may mock and cosen them, impose upon and delude them, even as if they were a company of little children.

Vulgus plerumq; credit omnia quæ à magnis hominibus audit.

As many wise men are led by the multitude, so the foolish multitude are easily led by any one, who is great in power, or eminent in reputation for wisdom. *Two hundred men went after Absalom in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing*, (1 Sam. 15. 11.) They were not of his councel, nor privy to his conspiracy, he deluded them into treason. *Simon Magus bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one, to whom they all gave heed from the least unto the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God*, (Act. 8. 9, 10.) But he did but mock them. Such impostors and mountebanks have in all ages put cheats upon simple people, not only in matters of State, but of Religion. Popish Priests and Jesuites have been greatest designers and actors in Soul-mockeries: by these, God hath sent *strong delusions* among them who have not received the love of the truth, and they have believed lies.

Secondly Observe, *God cannot be mocked by man.*

Gal. 6. 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* Man never deceives himself so much, as when he thinks or attempts to deceive God. He often takes the wise in their own craftiness, but the craft of the wisest never took him. *In vain* (saith *Solomon*) *is the net spread in the eye or sight of the silly bird:* If a weak man see the snare, he will not come into it: There is no snare can be spread out of the eye and sight of God, and therefore he will never come into any snare. And as it is an impossible thing, so also a thing extreamly perillous, to go about to mock God: so much the Apostle infers from this principle: For he had no sooner laid down my conclusion, *God is not mocked*, but presently he subjoyns, *Whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap.* Our actions, good or bad, are like the seed sown, the reward of them is the harvest reaped; such as the seed sown is, such shall the corn reaped be: God will not give them a harvest of wheat and barly, who have sown tares and cockle. Many evil works are rewarded by men with good, and most good works are rewarded by men with evil: but God is not unrighteous, either to give us good for evil, or evil for good. For though God bestows some common temporary benefits upon mankind in common, *making his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sending rain on the just and unjust*, Mat. 5. 45. yet he bestows no special nor eternal favours upon them; and a time will shortly come, when they shall not enjoy those which are common, and temporary.

Thirdly Observe, *We may be found mockers and dishonourers of God, while we think we are serving and honouring him.*

A good end will not excuse us while our way is unwarrantable.

Lastly Observe, *We may be judged to do that which our actions speak, though we be far from such intentions.*

Jobs friends had no such wicked purpose in their hearts as to mock God, yet *Job* had reason to charge them with it.

They, who having been enlightned fall away, are said to crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame, (Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.) *And they who sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, are said to tread under foot the Son of God, and to count the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing*, (Heb. 10. 26, 29.) Yet, possibly, neither of these do it formally and professedly. It is rare to hear of a *Julian* openly blaspheming the name, and spurning against the honour of Jesus Christ. Yet in effect, and by way of interpretation, all they do it, who depart from the known truth, and give themselves up (after conviction) to the wayes and lusts of their own hearts.

Job having disswaded his friends from accepting the person of God, and from speaking wickedly for him, proceeds on to shew them the danger of it in case they should dare to do so.

Vers. 10. **He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.**

He will surely reprove you.] As if he had said, *You must not expect favour at the hands of God, if ye accept persons by shewing them unlawful favour:* Will not the Judge of all the earth do right? *Arguendo arguet.*

He will surely reprove you.] The Hebrew is, *In reproving he will reprove you.* Which noteth two things. First, The certainty of the action; and Secondly, The severity of it. First, *Certainty*, God will do it. We translate, *He will surely*, or without doubt he will, there is no question to be made of it, you shall be reproved. Secondly, *Severity.* In reproving he will reprove, that is, he will *throughly reprove you*, he will not do it to halves, no, he will rather do it double, as the words are doubled, *in reproving he will reprove you*; you shall have it both surely and severely.

Reprove them! for what? He will reprove you for your unjust dealing, for your iniquity: the latter words of the verse clear that sense, *He will reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons*, that is, he will reprove you for accepting persons. As (*John* 16.) the Spirit is promised to come into the world, to reprove or convince the world (that Greek word answers this in the Hebrew) he shall come to reprove the world of sin, convincing them that they have sinned, and shewing them what the desert of sin is.

Further, This reproving may be taken two wayes. There is a verbal reproof, and a penal reproof; a reproof by speaking, and a reproof by acting or inflicting punishment: both these wayes we are to understand the text, *He will surely reprove you*, you shall have it both by words and blows.

Job in this seems to prophesie: for the event made good what he speaks, as we read in *chap.* 42. of this book *vers.* 7. where the Lord, upon the conclusion of this debate, thus bespeaks the friends of *Job*, *My wrath* (he means *Eliphaz*) *is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath.* Here is a reproof. *Job* I say, did, as it were, prophesie what would come upon them, that surely sooner or later, God would take them into his hand, and give them a sound chiding, for their unsound arguing.

Hence

Hence Observe, First, *Sinners shall not escape the reproof of God.*

This reproof (for the clear understanding of the point) may be taken two wayes.

First, For a stop to what they would act: Thus he doth very frequently reprove sinners, staying them from a progress in their sins. (*Gen.* 31. 24, 42.) When *Jacob* departed from his Uncle *Laban*, *Laban* pursues him, but the Lord (*ver.* 24.) overtakes *Laban*, and tells him in a dream by night, *Take heed that thou speak not to* Jacob *either good or bad.* *Jacob* tells him in plain terms, *God rebuked*, or *reproved thee yesternight* (ver. 42.) It is the word in the Text: As if he had said, Thou camest forth with a purpose to make me serve thee still, but the Lord hath reproved thee, he hath stopt thee in this design, and forbidden thee to speak either good or bad; that is, that thou speak not any thing to me, either by way of threatning, or of promise, to draw me back, and bring me to thine house again. We read of this reproof (*Psal.* 105. 13, 14, 15.) *When the people of the Lord were few, and strangers in the Land, and did wander up and down from one Kingdom to another people, he suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, he reproved Kings for their sakes. He reproved Kings*, this reproof was a stopping of their intendments, he would not suffer them to wrong his people. When *Israel* was mad in following Idols, the Lord saith, *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths*, (*Hos.* 2. 6.) It is an allusion to beasts, who are ready to break out of their pastures: the hedge stops or gives a turn. God in pursuance of his Covenant, and with a gracious meaning to a revolting people, hedges them up by affliction to stop them from undoing. It is a mercy to be kept out of the pound, though it be by a thorn hedge, sharpest troubles. This stop the Lord doth often give, though he doth not alwayes give it unto sinners: He sometimes lets them run on to fill up their measure of sin, and to receive their full measure of punishment. Reproof for sin is a great favour; though the Lord be angry with us for what we have done, yet it is a favour that he will not let us do more, and so make our selves more vile and miserable.

There is a second way of reproof which all sinners shall certainly meet with. All sinners are not stopt in their way; but all sinners shall be blamed for going out of the way. Though the fact proceed, yet they shall be convinced that there is a fault in the fact; and that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against the Lord (*Psal.* 50. 21.) the hypocrite is described going on in sin, and flattering himself that God was like himself. But what saith the Lord, *I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thine eyes.* Some men are afraid to reprove, many are unable to reprove: or if they be neither afraid, nor unable, yet they may be unwilling to be at the pains and trouble of reproving: But the Lord will not forbear his reproof: God is not afraid of any mans great looks; nor doth he want ability to reprove and convince the stoutest sinners. He will convince the whole world, and stop every mouth; he will make every one know what he hath done, and acknowledge that he hath done amiss. Ordinary men, yea Ministers, may flatter a people in their sins; and the Lord may leave them to such a judgment, that when they hate those that reprove in the gate, at last they shall have none to reprove in the gate: they shall have none but flatterers, even such as dawb with untempered morter, and sow pillows under their elbows, crying peace, peace, where there is no peace: Thus they shall fatten them up with flatteries against the slaughter of the great day; a mans own heart and conscience is not alwayes in a case to reprove him. It is said of *David*, as soon as he had cut off the lap of *Saul's* garment, *His heart smote him*, that is, his Conscience reproved and checked him: It is a happiness, that when others reprove not, conscience doth: But though conscience fail too, yet God will not; God is greater then our consciences, and when conscience is asleep, God neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, and at last he will awaken conscience too.

So that which way soever we are flattered, whether by men, or Satan, or by our own consciences, yet God will surely reprove. Many are upheld by false testimonies in an opinion of their good estate, whenas their estate is stark naught: For as there is a threefold testimony for the soul, to assure it of a true peace, *The water, the blood, and the spirit*; so in allusion we may say, that to flatter a man into an unsound peace, there is a threefold testimony, 1. from the world, 2. from Satan, 3. from a mans own heart; these three joyn together to deceive the soul into a most dangerous security; but when they have done their best (which is indeed worst for us) to hide us from our selves, the Lord discovers all; no sinner shall escape his reproof; or if he escape it a while here, it is in judgment, and he shall not escape it when the Lord comes as Judge.

Secondly, Take it for reproving by punishment, and then Note,

That no impenitent sinner shall escape the vengeance of God.

The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men (Rom. 1. 18.) *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, of the* Jew *first, and also of the* Gentile (*Rom.* 2. 9.) There is a certain Decree gone forth, and the word is ratified in Heaven, that every sin shall be punished; punished either in the person that doth commit it, or in his Surety. The wages of sin is death, and that either the sinner must receive, or Christ, upon whom our sins are laid. *He will surely reprove thee, if* &c.

Thirdly, Observe, *God will reprove and punish sinners severely; he will do it to purpose when he doth it.*

If we come under his hand, we shall feel his hand; if he rebuke us, we shall know he rebukes us; *Thou hast chastised me* (saith *Ephraim*, Jer. 31.) *and I was chastised.* (Gen. 2. 17.) *In the day thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt dye* (which we translate) *thou shalt surely dye:* There is a certainty and a severity in it; thou shalt have a through death, death in thy body, and death in thy soul; a temporal death, and an eternal death. There is a severity to those that continue in their impenitency. Some reprove as if they did not reprove; their reproofs are soothings rather then reprovings. *Eli* did not *surely reprove*; he in reproving did not reprove; he did rather smooth then rebuke his sons; his words did rather incourage then humble them: If we compare, 1 *Sam.* 2. 23. with *chap.* 3. 13. we shall find what account God gave of his reproofs. *Eli* (1 *Sam.* 2. 23.) comes to his sons, and saith, *Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil doings by all this people. Nay my sons, for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lords people to transgress.* And then telleth them, *If one man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him; but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall intreat for him?* Here is a reproof; and, indeed, there is a great deal in it; but it did not come up to the nature of the sin of those men; he should have stormed and thundred upon them; he should have made his sons ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble: and because he did not, therefore (*Chap.* 3. 13.) the Lord sent a message to him by *Samuel*, *Behold I will do a thing in* Israel, *at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle*, &c. *Because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*; or (according to the Hebrew) *frowned not upon them.* He either smiled, or looked too pleasingly upon his sons, when he reproved them: this caused God to frown upon *Eli*, and brought sore displeasure upon his family. It is good for us to reprove as God reproves. Great sinners must have great reproofs: Some must be saved with fear, pulling them out of the fire; we must cast them into the fire, that they may escape the fire: Pitiful cruelty is better then cruel pity. Some in dealing both with the sinful practises and erroneous opinions of men, handle them as men handle thorns, as if they durst not touch them; this fatteneth sin, and confirmeth error: For as a cold and heartless petitioner invites a denial, so a cold and heartless reprover heartens the sinner. The way to cure some souls is, to beat them black and blew with reproofs, as the word used somewhere in the Epistles of *Paul* signifies. *Paul* exhorts *Titus* to rebuke the Cretians *sharply* (or cuttingly) *that they may be sound in the faith* (Tit. 1. 13.) Sores must be cut and lanced, before they can be healed. God reproves severely, as well as certainly. *He will surely reprove you.*

If ye do secretly accept persons.

As

Etiamſi etiam perſonam accipiatis. Jun. *Si occultè & per hypocriſin, &c.* Merc.

As if he had ſaid, You may cover the matter, and put pretences or colours upon it, but God will find you out. Some tranſlate the Original by *although*, which makes the ſence clearer, *Although ye do accept perſons ſecretly*, though ye carry it cunningly, or hypocritically: Yet, *&c.* Many ſin, as it were, by art, and are skilful to do evil: They can draw a fair skin over a putrified ſoar, and make the blackeſt and moſt deformed actions appear beautiful: The Phariſees were indeed corrupt and rotten carkaſſes, yet they looked like painted tombs; they were but rotten poſts, yet they were gilded over. Herein lyes the cunning of ſinning, to do it ſecretly.

certiſſimè vos arguet ſiocultè in gratiam cujuſque diſcreditis à recto. Tyg.

Others render this clauſe cauſally, *He will reprove you, becauſe you do ſecretly accept perſons:* The cloſe carriage and contrivance of your ſin, will cauſe you greater ſhame. *Job* ſpeaks not thus, as if they ſhould eſcape the reproofs of God, who accept perſons openly: But

Firſt, Becauſe men ſometimes do it openly, and are not reproved. As if he had ſaid, You may perhaps do this ſo groſſly, that every man ſees it, and yet no man reprove or puniſh you for it, but though you do it ſecretly, God will reprove and puniſh you for it.

Secondly, It may have this meaning, If you do it ſecretly, men cannot puniſh you: for they judge and puniſh only thoſe things that appear: Juſtice muſt proceed (*ſecundum allegata & probata*) according to what is alledged and proved. So that if you ſecretly accept perſons, men cannot deal with you; but God can: He will find you out, and make you ſmart for it.

Hence Obſerve (I have opened before, what it is to accept perſons, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.)

Firſt, *That to accept perſons is a provoking ſin.*

He will ſurely reprove you, if you do ſecretly accept perſons. The accepting of, or the ſhewing favour to a perſon, may be as great a ſin as the oppreſſing of a perſon. And the reaſon of it is,

Firſt, Becauſe the oppreſſion of one perſon is alwayes joyned with the accepting of another: And therefore though the very act of accepting a mans perſon, or the ſhewing more favour to a man then is due, may ſeem to have no fault, or but a ſmall one in it; yet becauſe the favour you ſhew to one, doth redound to the wrong, or preſſion of another, the ſin muſt needs be exceeding great.

Secondly, It is a provoking ſin to accept perſons, becauſe it is a ſin that cannot be committed, but with a great deal of reſolvedneſs and premeditation. A man muſt know both perſons and cauſes before he can properly be ſaid to accept perſons. So that this is not a ſin which a man falls into through inadvertency, or infirmity: Now, that which puts a great aggravation upon any ſin, is, to do it knowingly, and premeditately. The more of our underſtanding or of our will is mixed with any ſin, the more ſinful it is; I know no ſin which hath more of either, then the accepting of perſons hath. Therefore God will ſurely reprove thoſe who accept perſons; what ſin ſoever eſcapeth, that ſhall not; you cannot plead an excuſe for it; nor is there any cloak for this ſin. It cannot be committed out of ignorance or infirmity, but upon will and election.

Thirdly, As the accepting of one perſon is a wrong to another; ſo it is ſuch a wrong as a man can have no repair for. He that hath the wrong, knows not where to go to be righted. The accepting of perſons is a ſin againſt all Laws, and yet we can hardly find any Law againſt it.

Fourthly, They who ſit in judgment, perſonate and repreſent God himſelf; and therefore while they accept perſons, they make God a partaker, yea an actor in that which he moſt hateth.

And as this is a great ſin in civil judgment, ſo in ſpiritual. This St. *James* ſhews (*Jam.* 2. 2, 3, 4.) *If there come one into your aſſembly, with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, you have reſpect to him, and ſay unto him, ſit thou here in a good place; and there come in alſo a poor man in vile rayment, and you ſay to the poor, ſtand thou there,* &c. *Are ye not then partial in your ſelves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? We muſt not have the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of glory, with reſpect of perſons.* The Apoſtles reſolve for himſelf and his fellow Apoſtles, is (2 *Cor.* 5. 16.) *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh*; that is, we accept no mans perſon, in regard of any outward intereſt, as to the ſwaying of our judgment, to think well or ill, highly or meanly of them. External relations and differences muſt bear no weight at the Goſpel beam. It is as dangerous (if not more) to accept perſons in ſpiritual, as in civil judgment; and the Lord is a ſevere revenger of both.

But ſome may ſay, If it were between man and man, ſo to accept perſons, the Lord might be angry indeed; but will not God favour an accepter of perſons, when it is in favour to his own cauſe? No, he will not. That's the caſe here, *Will you* (ſaith *Job*) *accept the perſon of God?*

Hence obſerve, *God will not bear it, that we ſhould wrong the meaneſt man for his ſake.*

Neither indeed can we do him right by doing injury to others. This doth infinitely advance the holineſs and purity of God; and convince the falſeneſs and wickedneſs of man. The Judges and Magiſtrates of the earth will do right between man and man, in an ordinary caſe, between ſubject and ſubject of equal rank; but if it be the Kings caſe, or if ſome great perſon be intereſſed in it, how apt are Judges to lean towards greatneſs, and to give ſentence with the Prince, though they lay it heavy upon the people. Now if God himſelf will not endure that any creature ſhould be wronged, under a pretence of doing him right: How ſhall any men be born out, who favour the great ones of the world, to the prejudice and undoing of inferiours? The Lord proteſts (*Iſai.* 61. 8.) *I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt-offering:* See how he reproves thoſe who were very zealous to promote his cauſe. But is it blame-worthy to be zealous for God? No, Their zeal was good; but the means they uſed to expreſs it, was evil. They robbed men, the better to enable them to bring offerings to God. They oppreſt their brethren, that they might be liberal at the Temple. God teſtifies againſt this, *I hate robbery for burnt-offering.* Woe to thoſe who rob men to inrich God. Some now promote preaching, and perhaps will ſet up a Lecture out of the overplus of their unjuſt gains. Though it be an excellent work to maintain the preaching of the Goſpel, yet their work is bad enough, who gripe and graſp unjuſtly, and think to ſalve it by this, they are very liberal toward the promoting of the Goſpel, this is to bring robbery for burnt-offering. Others extort and grate in their dealings, who pleaſe themſelves with a purpoſe to be charitable to the poor; they will build Almſhouſes, and give much in their *laſt wills to good uſes:* The Lord hates robbery for charity, as well as for burnt-offerings: He rejects what we give, either to him, or to his poor, if we give what we have unduly gotten.

Thirdly, *Job* ſaith, *He will ſurely reprove you, if ye ſecretly accept perſons.*

Then Obſerve, *Secret ſins, even heart-ſins, are known unto God.*

The Lord by *Nathan* tells *David*, *Thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this thing before all* Iſrael, *and before the Sun.* Secret ſins ſhall have open puniſhment; that which is done (whether good or evil) in a corner, God will proclaim upon the houſe top: Remember this, you that can ſin ſmoothly and fairly; that can (when you have eat up your brethren) like the Whore in the Proverbs, *Wipe your mouthes, and ſay, we have done no wickedneſs.*

I grant, that in ſome ſence ſecret ſins are not ſo bad as open ſins are: Yet there are conſiderations which render them worſe then open ſins. Secret ſins are not ſo bad as open ſins in two reſpects. Firſt, becauſe they give no ſcandal to thoſe that are good. Secondly, Becauſe they do not infect by example, nor incourage thoſe that are evil. Open ſins are both ſcandalous and infectious; ſecret ſins are neither. But if a man ſin ſecretly, upon deſign to hide his ſin, or hoping to carry it ſo, that God ſhall not find him out, this ſecreſie increaſes ſin, and ſhall have the greater condemnation. He that ſins openly, appears to men what he is; but he that thus ſins ſecretly, thinks that it cannot appear to God what he is, or he hopes that God will never make it appear what he is. This is a great aggravation upon his ſin, and therefore *Job* puts a mark upon it, *He will ſurely reprove you, although you*, or, *if you do ſecretly accept perſons:* Do it as privately as you will, that ſhall be no excuſe to you; though ſome ſecrecy may mitigate ſin, yet no ſecrecy can acquit us of ſin.

Job

Job goes on yet to humble his Friends, and to shew them their error: He adds two Arguments further in the eleventh and twelfth verses. The first is taken from the Majesty of God, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* And the second is taken from the weakness and frailty of man in general, and of themselves in particular. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay:* Will you then contend with God? will you sin against him?

Aliqui ex Hebræis שאתו *flammam exponunt. Annon ejus ignis vos terret?*

Verse 11. **Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?**

It is queried what is here meant by *the excellency of God.* The Hebrew word is derived from a root which signifieth *to lift up.* And some of the Jewish Doctors tell us, that there is a word of this form, which signifies *a fire, or a flame*; and so the Verb *Nasha*, signifies sometimes to burn or to consume, as well as to ascend, because the natural tendency of fire is upward, ascending as it burneth. And so they give the sence thus, *Shall not the fire of the Lord make you afraid? shall not the flame of God terrifie you?* What flame? what fire? The flame of his anger here, and the fire of his wrath for ever. There is a fire in hell (whether material, or metaphorical, is not a question for this place.) Shall not that fire of God make sinners afraid? Are you able to dwell with those everlasting burnings, with that consuming fire? The Saints, who are acquitted from their sins, shall dwell with God, who is an everlasting burning: but wicked men, whose sins rest upon them, shall be as the stubble, suddenly burnt, though never consumed.

Statim ut se commoverit, turbabit vos. Vulg. *Commotio ejus versabit vos.* Sept. *Elevatio ejus.* Reg. Complut. *Elevare se idem est quod surgere & se ad puniendum accingere, cum punit Deus dicitur surgere, egredi, moveri loco suo. Adventus vel commotio dominipœnas instigentis hostium strepite comparatur in Scriptura,* Merc.

But I pass that. Another reads it thus, *Shall not he, as soon as he moveth himself, make you afraid?* When God begins to rise, mah must fall: So the words bear an allusion to Magistrates, who sitting upon the seat of Judicature, when they come to give sentence upon a guilty person, begin to stir themselves, to rise majestically, and to compose their countenances into an aspect of terror and severity. Thus when the Lord begins to stir and move himself, will not you quake? The splendor of Majesty, which sits in his face, dazles the eyes, and overcomes the strength both of men and Angels.

Alludit ad terrorem quem Deus apparens incutere solebat. Bold.

Others conceive *Job* referring to that custom of God in those ancient times, when he appeared in a Cloud, or by some visible sign to his servants the Prophets, and other holy men: When the Lord did so declare his presence, we find (as it hath been observed in former passages of this book) that the holiest men were surprized with fear, and trembling took hold of them. Hence that humble deprecation of *Job* (Chap. 9. 34.) *Let not his fear terrifie me.*

Ista commotio est levatio vel extollentia, quare alii legunt excellentia ejus turbabit vos, i.e. *statim ut suam majestatem & excellentiam conspicuam fecerit turbabimini.* Pined.

Further, This stirring up may very well stand with our translation: For the Hebrew, *Nasha*, from whence this word cometh, signifies *to lift up, to advance and extol:* as it signifies the stirring and moving of a person when he riseth or lifteth himself up; so also his dignity or excellency, a civil rising or highness, as well as a local. Dying *Jacob* calls *Reuben* his first-born, *The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.* The priviledge of primogeniture was very great. The first-born were as Princes among their brethren: And from this word, a *Duke* or a *Prince* is called *Nasha*, because he is lifted up, or exalted above other men. Hence also, in an ill sence, the pride and sinful loftiness of man is often expressed by this word: for pride is the lifting up of our selves above our place and degree: when we in our thoughts rise beyond what we are, or are over-conceited of what we are, this is pride. Thus *Moses* and *Aaron* are falsely taxed (*Numb.* 16. 4.) *Ye take too much upon you; wherefore lift you up your selves above the congregation of the Lord?* (It is this word) why do you make your selves better then others, or greater then you are? Is it not the pride of your spirits? So (*Isa.* 14. 13.) the pride of the *Assyrian* is described, *Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God.* He was not so mad as to think that he could literally get up into Heaven, or that he could set his Throne above the Stars; but the phrase noteth out the excessiveness of his pride. He was the highest Monarch on earth, and it was no pride for him to think himself so; (it is not pride for a King to think himself the greatest man in his Kingdom, for he is so) but when he would be higher then man, and do that which exceedeth the state of a creature, here was pride. The *excellency* of God is that height, dignity, glory, and majesty which he hath in himself, above and beyond all creatures, *Shall not his excellency*

Nasha נשא *Attollere elevare unde* נשיא *Significat ducem aut principem eo quod sit elevatus super alios.*

Make you afraid? The word signifies extream fear, such fear as doth swallow up and amaze. *Psal.* 18. 4. *The floods of ungodly men*; or (nearer the letter.) *The floods of the sons of belial*; that is, the abundant ungodliness of those who are most ungodly, vomiting out reproaches and threatnings upon me, *made me afraid.* (*Hest.* 7. 6.) Haman *was afraid before the King and the Queen:* when *Esther* told *Ahasuerus* that he was the man that had conspired against the *Jews*, he was so afraid, that he sunk under his fear. (*Isa.* 21. 4.) *My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me* ('tis this word) *the night of my pleasure hath he turned into fear unto me*; such a fear seized upon me, as turned all my pleasure into dread and terror.

בערה *Perterruit, perturbavit.* ἐκθάμβου ὀρᾶς, Sept. *Torquebit, vexabit.*

Put all these together, and there are four or five wayes in which the sence of this question [*Shall not his excellency make you afraid*] may be made out.

Objicit illis rerum adversarum impatientiã, sæpe enim correpta Deo, constantiam quam nunc sani & felices habere videntur, admittent. Aquin.

First thus, As if *Job* did suggest to his Friends how suddenly they would discover their own weakness and fearfulness, though they now insulted over him, if the Lord did but appear in his excellency and greatness to them, as he had to him. As if he had said, *You think you shall never be in such a plight as I am, whatsoever God doth with you: But you shall find it otherwise; you will tell me another tale if God do but once shew himself against you, and do with you as he hath done with me: You can now trample upon me, and think I am a man of a very fearful spirit; but if the Lord do but appear in his excellency, your strength will be no more then mine. Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you, as it hath done upon me?* That's one sence.

Gravissimã suis amicis comminatur supplicium. Pin.

Secondly, Some conceive that *Job* doth only threaten his Friends with the terror of the Lord, and with the breakings forth of wrath, which they were to expect for what they had done against him. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* Certainly it shall; that is, the Lords power and greatness will at last make you know, that you have handled his cause ill, and done me wrong in handling it.

Thirdly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* may refer to what he had said before, *You have accepted the person of God*, but should not his excellency make you afraid to do it? Mens greatness may make you willing to flatter them (*few flatter their equals, and none will flatter their inferiours*) because haply your dependance is upon them, and your expectations from them: but should not the excellency of God make you afraid to flatter him? The excellency of men may provoke you to favour them, and wrong inferiours to serve their turns; but such excellency as is in God should make you forbear to do so. There are two reasons why it should. First, God is above all your flattery and favour, he needs none of your help: Great men may have need of lyes and flatteries: but God hath none. Secondly, As the Lord is above the flatteries of men, and hath no need of them; so he doth abhor and abominate them. Many men love to be flatter'd, you can do nothing so pleasing to them as that; yea, though you flatter them with the obscuring and dimming of the true lustre of others: but the Lord likes it not. *Should not such excellency make you afraid?*

Tenendum quod Job *hoc versu non terreat amicos sed præpostere territos, metu eminentiæ vel magnitudinis Dei accusat.* Coc. *Judicatis secundum personam potiorem non ex perspectione causæ.* Id.

Fourthly, Others interpret the Interrogation affirmatively, *Doth not his greatness make you afraid?* Yes, his greatness doth make you afraid: You fear the greatness of God so much, that you thereupon condemn me: you are so afraid that you should in any thing tax the justice of God, that you must needs tax me for unjust: As if he had said, *Is not this the reason that you deal thus with me? Is it not because the excellency of God doth over-awe you; therefore you would rather offend on my part then on his; you would be sure (as you hope) not to displease God, whatever becomes of me: you think (possibly) thus with your selves, If we should speak less for God then is his due, he is so great that he can punish it; but if we speak less for* Job *then his due, he is but our equal, what can he do? we need not fear him.* Thus many understand the words, not as if *Job* did threaten his Friends with, but as if he only told them, that they were over-much afraid of the dignity and excellency of God, and thereupon were weighed down in their judgments to speak they cared not how hardly of him.

Fifthly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*? That is, his excellency ought to make you afraid. (*Mal.* 1. 6.) *A son honoureth his father*; that is, a son ought to honour his father; it is the duty of a son to honour his father. So here, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid*? that is, his excellency ought to make you afraid. It is a due and an equal thing that you should be so kept in awe by the Majesty of God, that you should not speak or do any thing to the prejudice of man. *Should not his excellency make you afraid*?

Observe from it, First, *That the Lord hath an excellency in him,*

Excellency is an excess in any quality, or a gradual heightning of any thing or person above another. We are to consider this, that we may give God glory, *and praise him* (as the Psalmist speaketh) *according to his excellent greatness*. God hath an excess of goodness in him; not an excess, as excess notes superfluity, or more then needeth; but an excess, as it notes more then is in any other besides himself. The excellency of God may be considered two wayes, First, Absolutely, as it is an excellency in himself; Secondly, comparatively to all other excellencies. God is excellent beyond compare; they who have an excellency, have none like unto Gods, or none at all compared with God. The Prophet tells us, that *The Nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance; yea, all Nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less then nothing, and vanity*, *Isa.* 4. 15, 17. Besides the greatest excellency of man is a fading excellency (*Job* 4. 21.) *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away*? Men go away not only as they are poor and mean, but as clothed with excellency, whether outward excellency, or inward excellency: the beauty of the body, learning, wisdom, eloquence, the endowments and riches of the mind, all these excellencies which are in them, go away? *Journeyeth it not with them* (when they make their journey out of the world?) as Mr. *Broughton* reads that place. And as the excellency of all men (I mean their worldly excellency) shall go away, so especially shall the excellency of the hypocrite (*Job* 20. 6.) *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever*. Hypocrites make a great shew, they have not only the profession of Religion, but often the beauty of Religion shining upon them; there is a verdure and flourishiug greenness upon their wayes to the view of man: but though their excellency mount up to the Heavens, yet down they shall, they shall lye down, and everlasting contempt shall cover them.

Further, We may open the excellency of God under a threefold notion.

First, There is an excellency of his Being.

Secondly, Of his Attributes.

Thirdly, Of his Works.

In all these we should acquaint our selves with his *excellency*.

First, There is an excellency in the Being of God; creatures have a being, but not such a being as God hath. For

First, The Being of God is of himself. All creatures have their being of him, and from him. Creatures have a derivative being; God is *Original Being, the first Being*. Here is the excellency of his Being. It is said (*Habak.* 1. 7.) of the *Chaldeans*, *That their judgment and their dignity*, or (it is the word of the Text) *their excellency shall proceed of themselves*. But is any man the fountain of his own happiness, excellency or greatness? Can it be said of any in the world, that his excellency shall proceed of himself? In one respect the excellency of some doth: In another respect it doth not, it cannot. It cannot be said of any excellency in creatures, strictly, that it proceedeth from themselves, all comes from God. But take a creature in its reference to any, or all other creatures, and so the excellency of some proceedeth from themselves, and not from other creatures. Such is the meaning of that place, *Their judgment and their excellency shall proceed of themselves*; that is, they shall not depend upon other persons, or Nations, they shall not imp [illegible] out their wings with other mens feathers, nor shall they shine with a borrowed glory. Some Kingdoms do glorious things, but their glory proceeds from neigbouring assistances: But the *Chaldean* needed not to confederate with any. Thus a creatures excellency may proceed from himself, not from other creatures; but all proceeds from God: and the excellency only of God in his Being is from himself alone, independent upon the creature.

Secondly, *Gods Being is to himself as well as from himself*: And thus also he excelleth man, whose being is not to himself, but to another; for all things are and were created unto God. No creature was made to it self. The dignity of God is to himself alone: He indeed doth give out himself voluntarily, and so his Being is for the good of others; but he hath this prerogative, to keep all his Being to himself: As it is the holiness of man to put forth his being for God; so it is the holiness of God, that his Being is for himself; he doth and may do all things for his own glory, as man ought to do all for the glory of God.

Thirdly, *Gods Being is an unchangeable Being*: Man is in motion every day, either in his increase, or in his decrease; he is either growing, or he is decaying, both in his natural and civil state. Man hath no consistency, while he is, he continueth not what he was. Man is a shadow, he is alwayes turning; but with God *there is no variableness; nor shadow of turning*. The Psalmist sets out this opposition between God and creatures (*Psal.* 106. 26, 27.) *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou Lord art the same, and thy years shall have no end*.

Fourthly, Mans being in this life, it is not only changeable, but determinable. Gods is an eternal Being, he is from everlasting to everlasting. We are short-breathed, short-lived creatures; if we number three or fourscore years, we are counted wondrous old; and when we have numbred all our years, they are no number at all to the years of God.

Fifthly, Mans being is but a particular being: The Being of God is an universal Being; he is a Being in all things, and yet not included in any; a Being without all things, and yet not excluded from any.

Sixthly, Mans being is such as man may comprehend; one man can measure another. No man hath any such excellency in him, but another may be found to take the length, and breadth, and depth of it, even all its dimensions. But Gods Being is an incomprehensible Being, there is no measuring, either of his Nature, of his Counsels, or of his Wayes.

Seventhly, The Being of God is an absolute perfect Being. Mans being is respective and imperfect; though it be perfect in its kind, as such a creature, yet it is not perfect in all kinds: Somewhat may be taken from man, and added to him, and he a man still; but God is so perfect, that nothing can be added to, or taken from him; all things are laid up in him: He is the sum and comprehension of all those excellencies which are scattered in the creature, and he infinitely excels them all.

The result of all these, is *excellency*. God hath not only a Being as we have, but an excellency, a glory in his Being above all other beings: The being of the creature is no being, we are but *Non-entities* compared with God. *I am that I am*, is his stile. God is the highest Entity, the Entity of all Entities.

Secondly, The excellency of God appears through all his Attributes.

Man is wise. There are many wise men in the world: But is man wise as God? The wisdom of man is foolishness to God; and the foolishness of God is wiser then men.

Man hath knowledge, but doth man know as God? Man knoweth not as God knoweth, if we consider either the matter or manner of knowledge. Man knoweth but some parts and pieces of things; God knoweth all things: Man knoweth but in part; God knoweth fully: Man knoweth one thing by another, he must beat out his way by argument, and know by demonstration, descending sometimes from the cause to the effect; ascending at other times from the effect to the cause: But God knoweth all things in themselves; He knows by immediate intuition: He seeth causes in themselves, not by their effects; and he seeth the effects in themselves, and not from their causes.

Man is just. There are just men: But is any man just

as God? O the exactneſs of the juſtice of God! There is no errour in his judgement, he will give to every man according to his work. Where's the man that gives to any man according to his works?

Man is merciful: but is he merciful as God? Hath man ſuch a ſtock of mercy as he? Hath man mercy for ever? Hath man multitudes of mercies? Mans mercies are cruelties compared with the mercies of God.

Man is patient; but is he patient as God? If God had no more patience then man, or then all men and Angels too, his patience would be ſpent out in a day, it would not laſt one hour, amongſt ſo many ſinnings and provocations, among ſinnings after ſo many warnings.

Man hath love, but doth he love as God loveth? ſo freely? ſo fully? ſo conſtantly? ſo without ends and deſigns upon thoſe he loves? Our love is hatred compared to the love of God.

What ſhould I ſay of the power, of the holineſs, of the faithfulneſs, of the bounty of God? What of every thing that is attributed unto God? He is ſo excellent in every one, that he is all excellency.

Thirdly, There is an excellency in the Works of God: what God is in Being, the ſame he is in working. He is (*Iſa.* 28. 29.) *Wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working.* Excellent in working, becauſe excellent in being. *Exod.* 15. 7. *In the greatneſs of thine excellency, thou haſt overthrown them that roſe up againſt thee.* (Deut. 33. 26.) *There is none like the God of Jeſurun* (that is, the God of Iſrael) *who rideth upon the heaven to thy help, and in his excellency on the skie?* God is ſaid to ride to the help of his people, becauſe he helps them ſpeedily; and he rideth in his excellency, that he may ſhew his ſtate and magnificence when he comes to help them. When God works in his excellency, we ſhall ſee the excellencies of God imprinted upon his works. *Haſt thou an arm like God?* ſaith *Elihu* to *Job*, *or canſt thou thunder with a voice like him? Canſt thou teach like God?* (ſaith he alſo). We may ſay to the worker, *Canſt thou work like God?* to the Teacher, *Canſt thou teach like God?* to the Souldier, *Canſt thou fight like God?* Now, as there is an excellency in the Being, Attributes and Works of God, ſo this his excellency ſhould ſtrongly affect and overawe our hearts: *Should not his excellency make you afraid?*

Hence Obſerve, *The excellency of God ſhould keep men in a holy compoſure of ſpirit, in a holy care to pleaſe him, in a holy fear of offending him.*

What? before the excellency of God, before a God ſo excellent in Being, ſo excellent in the manner of his Being, ſo excellent in working, and we walk looſely and careleſly? Let this excellency of his make us afraid. *The Lord moſt high is terrible*, (Pſal. 47. 2.) he is terrible becauſe ſo high. The Preacher in his deſcription of old men, ſaith, *They ſhall be afraid of that which is high*, (Eccleſ. 12. 5.) Old age loves to keep upon even ground, for fear of falling: But the youngeſt and ſtouteſt of men, they who are moſt ambitious of clambring unto high places, have cauſe to be afraid of the moſt high God, and when he diſcovers his highneſs they will be afraid. Men never fear that which is but equal to them; and until they conceive an excellency in God, they never fear him. *David* prayeth that God would be pleaſed to ſhew his excellency, his greatneſs and his highneſs to his enemies, (*Pſal.* 7. 6.) *Ariſe, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thy ſelf becauſe of the rage of mine enemies, for their ſakes return thou on high.* Why would he have God to lift up himſelf and to return on high? The Lord is ever on high: The meaning is, Do thou declare thy ſelf to be on high, let thy excellency appear above all. Why? What will be the effect of this? *So* (ſaith he) *ſhall the congregation of the people compaſs thee about*; that is, they ſhall crouch and fall down before thee when thou appeareſt in thy highneſs. When Chriſt appeared in his highneſs, though but as a Lamb, upon his throne, all the congregation did compaſs him about, terrour and aſtoniſhment ſurprized them all: The kings of the earth and the chief captains, called to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, to hide them from the face of him that ſate on the throne, *Rev.* 6. 16.

Nonne quã. erigetur ipſe ſuper ſolium judicii, &c. Tar.

The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* gloſſeth this text of *Job*, *Shall ye not be afraid when the Lord is lifted up, or ſet upon his throne of judgement?* They who now ſlight the Lord, ſhall then tremble at the Lord, and before the preſence of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.

Laſtly, Foraſmuch as *Job* having charged his friends with accepting the perſon of God, and with ſpeaking falſly in favour of him, ſubjoyns in this verſe, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*

Obſerve, *That all our undue ſpeakings and actings for, or in the cauſe of God, ariſe from our undue apprehenſions of God.*

We conceive of God after the rate and proportion of a man, and meaſure him by our own ſpan. Hence it is that many in ſtead of adoring and fearing God, do indeed but play with him, and take the liberty of an ungovern'd boldneſs, both concerning his counſels and his judgements. What becomes of the excellency of God, when he is drawn down to the reaſon, and *narrow'd*, or rather *nothing'd* into the capacities of a creature? We never abaſe our ſelves as we ought, nor keep our diſtance, till we are rapt into the meditation of his divine excellencies and perfections. When *David* puts thoſe humbling, emptying queſtions, (*Pſal.* 8. 4.) *What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* When he (I ſay) puts theſe queſtions, ſee where his heart was (verſ. 9.) *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* When he thought of the excellency of *Gods name*, he did not think himſelf worth the *naming*, *What is man?* while he thought who God was, he did not think himſelf worthy of one of Gods thoughts, *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* The Angels cover their faces before God; they adore, but they cannot bear his glory. They that know God, fear him, and they who know him moſt (ſo do Angels) fear him moſt. The more excellent any creature is, the more he fears the excellency of the Creatour. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*

And his dread fall upon you?

פחד

Pavor, timor, ad metũ ab externa vi aut authoritate incuſſum ſolet referri. Riv.

His dread.] The words bear the ſame ſenſe with the former, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon them. *His dread:* The Original imports a fear riſing from ſome outward cauſe. Divine fear is cauſed three wayes; Firſt, by the rule or precept of the law. Secondly, By the penalty or threatnings of the law. Thirdly, By thoſe judgements which are inflicted for the tranſgreſſion of the law. We may underſtand the text of fear, by all theſe. *Shall not his dread*, the dread of the precept, which is ſo holy: the dread of the threatning, which is ſo terrible: the dread of the judgements of God, which are ſo exemplary, *fall upon you?*

Fall upon you?] The dread of God is from above, as lodged on high, and ſo comes down (as it were) with an advantage upon tranſgreſſours, (*Rev.* 11. 11.) It is ſaid that when ten parts of the city fell, *fear fell upon the reſt.* Fear fell upon them, as a ſtone from an high tower, and cruſht their ſpirits. The Apoſtle ſpeaks this notion, *Rom.* 1. 18. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven.* As if heaven did open to let his wrath down, or to diſcharge it like a thunderbolt upon unrighteous men. The *Spaniards* have a proverb (which an interpreter remembreth upon this place) *God hath the hill and the ſtones*, which is as much as to ſay, *God hath the upper ground of all creatures*, and his wrath falls upon them as ſtones from an high place. We may contend with angry men upon even ground, creature with creature, but God hath the upper ground of all creatures, his wrath *falls* upon us. He hath the hill, yea he hath the wind and the ſun of us, he hath all advantages on his ſide, there is no ſtanding out againſt him.

Semper ex ſublimi loco pugnare adverſus mortales Deus dicitur; quod in Hiſpanorũ proverbio eſt: Ipſius mons & lapides ſunt. Pined.

Hence Note, Firſt, *God is to be dreaded.*

To be dreaded in the juſtice of his law, in the ſeverity of his threatnings, in the greatneſs of his judgements; from each of theſe, dread falls like a mighty milſtone upon the heads of unbelievers and obdurate ſinners. Juſtice appears with open face in the law, threatnings lie virtually in the law: judgements are ſeminally in the threatnings, and threatnings are viſibly in judgements. God is to be dreaded, when we hear the rule of the law; he is to be feared more, when we hear the threatnings of the law; he is to be feared moſt, when we hear or ſee thoſe threatnings

executed in judgements. *The man* (saith *Moses*, Deut. 17.12,13.) *that doth presumptuously* (by sinning against the rule of the law) *shall die* (by suffering the penalty of the law) *and all the people shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously.*

Secondly Observe, *The dread of God shall certainly fall upon sinners.*

As it noteth a duty, that we should dread God, so an event that such as continue in sin, the dread of God will fall upon them. The dread of God will surely take hold of sinners, unless they get Christ to be their Saviour: No fence against the dread of God but Christ: For as one Scripture saith, *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness:* So, another saith, *He is Jesus that delivereth us from the wrath to come.* There is no wrath escaping, but by a *Mediator.*

Vers. 12. **Your remembrances are like unto ashes, and your bodies to bodies of clay.**

This verse is an *Antithesis* to the words before. *Job* having perswaded his friends to silence, and to desist their unfriendly carriage towards him, by an argument taken from the excellency of God; now moveth them by an argument from their own weakness and infirmity; *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you? vers.* 11. There he tells them who God is, and that they ought to stand in awe of him. Here in this 12th, he tells them what they are, and how they ought to be abased in the sense of their own frailty; *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay. Hold your peace,* &c. Will you, who are clay and ashes stand it out against his excellency?

Your remembrances are like unto ashes.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *Your remembrances are parables of ashes, or have the similitude and likeness of ashes in them.*

There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of those words. Some expound them as a threatning against his friends: *Your remembrances are like unto ashes*, that is, your remembrances shall be brought to ashes, or, you shall be made like unto ashes. To bring one to ashes, is an effect of wrath; the fire of Gods wrath quickly consumes man to ashes. Ashes are a sign and a monument of extreamest anger. So the Apostle *Peter* speaks of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, in his second Epistle, *chap.* 2.6. Where, proposing Gods judgement upon those cities, he saith, *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.* And the Apostle *Jude*, describing the destruction of the same cities, saith, *They suffered the vengeance of eternal fire*, they were turned into ashes for ever: For, as if that fire burned or were not quenched unto this day; he calls it an *eternal fire*: or the reason may be, because they went from one fire to another, from the fire which God rained down from heaven, to the fire which he hath prepared for the ungodly in hell: Historians speak of the marks of this vengeance of God upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, as still remaining. Some call that place, *The Region of ashes.* And *Josephus* reports it, as the tradition of those times, that the apples of *Sodom* were fair and pleasant to the eye, as if fit to be eaten, but as soon as they were touched, they turned to ashes. Some Interpreters (I say) conceive *Job* hinting that judgement of God upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, thereby admonishing his friends, that as God turned those cities into ashes, so if they should provoke his excellency, he could quickly deal with them, and make them an everlasting argument of his displeasure. Though I stay not upon this Exposition;

Yet because it contains a general truth, take one Note from it:

That, *If God be provoked he can soon turn all into ashes, weaken the strength, and blast the beauty of man.*

As the Lord speaks to *Abimelech*, Gen. 20. 3. *Thou art but a dead man, because of the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a mans wife:* As if he should say, I can quickly destroy thee, turn thee into the grave, tumble thee into the earth, though thou art a king and a great one. The *Roman* History speaks of *Cæsar*, that when *Metellus* the Tribune controlled his orders, about the publick Treasure, *Be quiet* (saith he) *lest I lay thee dead in the place*; yet correcting himself, he added, *Young man, it is harder for me to speak it, then to do it*; which he spake to mollifie the sharpness of his speech, as not proceeding from his nature, but his passion, and as being grieved at the harshness of his own language. If the Kings and Potentates of the earth speak at such a rate, that they can easier destroy men, then say they will destroy; how much more may God? This is really true of him who is the only Potentate, the Lord *of heaven and earth*, that it is as easie for him to destroy persons and nations, and to make their remembrance to be as ashes, as it is for him to say he will.

Some others speak higher (*a*), and interpret this text, as they say probably, of eternal fire: as if *Job* had threatned his friends with damnation. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? Your remembrances are like unto ashes*, you shall be turned into hell, and sent to everlasting destruction. But I approve this less then the former. *Job* was displeased with his friends for their opinions concerning him: yet doubtless he had a better opinion of them, then to judge them under such a displeasure of God.

Thirdly, *Your remembrances* is expounded actively thus, *the things which you remember* (*b*), the reasonings, objections and records which you have brought out of the store-house of your memories against me, and would have remembred, are like unto ashes, utterly extinct and easily blown away. The word Remembrance, is used in that sence, (*Exod.* 17.14.) Where *Moses* is commanded to write a *memorial* against *Amalek*, that is to record somewhat as a *remembrance* against them: Records, and the officer that keeps records, are both expressed by this word, because they preserve the remembrances of what is past.

Though this hath a fair sense, yet it seemeth not to be so clear to the connection of these words, therefore I rather incline upon a fourth interpretation, (*c*) taking this *remembrance* more generally for any thing which is memorable in man; as riches, dignity, power, credit, learning, wisdom. As if *Job* had said, *These things by which you hope to be remembred and become famous in the world, are but ashes*; that is, mean, and of no consistence. (*Prov.* 10.7.) *The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot. The memory*, that is, when persons living in after-ages shall remember the just, they will bless them and highly esteem them; but the name and credit of wicked men shall consume as a rotten thing to nothing.

Taking their remembrance for that which was most memorable in them, We may Observe,

That the best things, those things which are most remarkable and memorable in man, are but vain, and subject to a sudden decay.

What men lay by, and esteem as a monument to posterity, or as a memorial to preserve their names to all generations, how often is it scattered like ashes in the air, or spilt like water upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up? Men for their *remembrance*, use to set up the most lasting materials, pillars of marble, or Pyramids of stone. It is said of *Absolom*, that *he in his life time had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, and he called it after his own name, because he had no son to keep his name in remembrance:* Yet that remembrance of his, proved like ashes, and so will all that whatsoever it is, which vain men frame or fancy to themselves to make them memorable and renowned among posterity or succeeding ages. Your remembrances are like unto ashes; which will receive a clearer evidence when I have a little opened the latter clause of this verse.

And your bodies to bodies of clay.

That is, As ashes are a fit parable or similitude to shadow out all the permanency or excellency of your remembrances, so a body or a heap of clay, is a sufficient parable or similitude of all the value and dignity of your bodies.

Your bodies.] The word (*Gab*) which we translate *body*, signifies any thing, which is *high, lifted up and eminent*, or *the upper and superiour part of any thing.* It is said (*John* 19. 13.) that *Pilate sate down in the judgement-seat, in a place that is called in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.* Seats of judgement are erected and set up in eminent places,

(a) *Forte etiam extremũ Gehennæ supplicium cineris nomine proponitur, vel significat mortẽ ignobilẽ.* Pined.

(b) *Sẽtentiã hanc, & ex cinere ductã similitudinẽ ad ipsas responsiones & argumenta amicorũ refert*, q.d. *responsiones vestræ pereunt & collabuntur.* Vat

Unde מוכרים *Mazchirim dicebantur illi qui erant à commentariis, quiq; negotia scriptis mãdabãt. Liber* Lichrinoth, i.e. memoriarum. *Est.* 6.1

(c) *At cinis est qui quid tãdẽ turgetis amici.* Mer. Poet *Memoria vestra* i.e. *quicquid in vobis memorabile est, ut opes, dignitas, fama, splendor & vita, nihil aliud est quã cinis omnia in cinerẽ & nihilũ redigẽda ut vana* &c. Merc.

גב *Propriè sig. superiorẽ partem & prominemẽ, unde vox latina* gibbus *credenda est fluxisse.* Rab. Mard. *Gabbatha est suggestũ eminẽs lapidibus stratũ. Vult quicquid in ipsis potissimũ eminet, esse cumulum luti.* Merl. Et tumulus luti altiora vestra. *Jun. Cognata voce fastus & arrogantia vocatur in Scriptura, Ghobah,* גבה *unde à Kimchi exponitur omnis altitudo & eminentia.*

ces, that so the Judge may be in the peoples view. According to which acceptation of the word, the meaning rises thus, That which is highest in you, your greatest elevations, are like to a lump of clay. And so the opposition stands fair between this and the former verse; there *Job* tells his friends, that the excellency of God may justly make them afraid. But what is your excellency? As your remembrances, or whatsoever is most memorable in you are like unto ashes, so all your excellencies, compared with the excellency of God, are but like a clod of clay.

Hence Observe, *That which is most high and excellent in man, compared with the excellency of God, is but like to dirt or clay.*

Quicquid in vobis est maxime memorabile & altum, si cum Deo cōparabitur nihil est. Jun. *Eminentiæ vestræ dignæ sunt, quæ ad quisquiliarū & luti cumulos projiciantur.* Bold.

All the dignities and eminencies of man are but fit to be swept to the dunghill when God is named. When *Abraham* a Prince, and a great one too, stood before the Lord, he hath no valuation for himself but by *dust and ashes*, Gen. 18. 27. We cannot but have low thoughts of our selves (what worldly and carnal heights soever we are in) when we truly remember the high God. There are three things upon which many men raise themselves very high, even to think themselves like the most High, as it is said of *Lucifer*. First, Their riches. Riches are not only a strong but a high Tower; this eminency is most like to clay, yea it is an eminency in clay or *thick clay*, as the Prophet speaketh (*Hab.* 2.) Secondly, Men think themselves very high if they get upon the pinacle of honour, from this height they look down upon, and despise all as underlings; yet this is but like clay too, how often have the greatest earthly honours been laid in the dust? Thirdly, Others are lifted up with their natural wisdom, their learning, parts and gifts. They who contemn riches and honour, are yet puffed up with a conceit of their inward endowments: yet as God will destroy all the wisdom of this world, so the wisdom of the best men in the world is foolishness compared to God. If some one creature hath such an excelling excellency, that other excellent creatures (as the Stars to the Sun) have no excellency in the presence of it, how much more are all created excellencies swallowed up at the thought of that excellency which is in God? must not all go for clay and ashes, when we have once mentioned him?

Gab est extātia clypei. Umbones vestri i.e. *argumenta vestra sunt fragilia. Ista quæ vos ut diligētey observata commemoratis, & in me tanquam certa quædā axiomata decenatis, nō sunt solidiora quā cinis, et lutea propugnacula.* Bez.

Further, The word signifies also the bosses of a buckler (*Job* 15. 27.) because bosses are the most eminent part of a buckler, being set out for the ornament of it. Thus some translate it here, *The bosses of your bucklers*, or *your bucklers are like bucklers of clay.* But what was the buckler of *Jobs* friends? their buckler was their arguments and their reasons, which they urged against *Job*. Arguments are amongst Disputants, their weapons, their sword and buckler. The third interpretation of the former clause, and this, comply fairly, *Your remembrances*, that is, the things you have remembred to or against me are like unto ashes, and *Your bucklers*, that is, your arguments and objections are like unto clay, weak and poor, however you think they are strong, impregnable and unanswerable. The Apostle useth a similitude which may give some light to this (1 *Cor.* 3. 12.) where he compares sound doctrine to *gold, silver, and precious stones*, but corrupt doctrine, to *wood, hay, stubble.*

Et corpora vestra corporibus luteis, i.e. *acervis luteis. Redigentur in lutū cervices vestri.* Vulg.

Thirdly, We translate, *Your bodies*, so the word signifies by a Trope, because the body of man stands upright, and is lifted up: Man doth not go groveling upon or toward the ground as a beast goeth, but he hath an erect figure and form, therefore his body is called *Gab*, that is, *lifted*, or *raised up.* Others render it by a part of the body, the *back* or *the neck*: So the Vulgar, *Your necks which are lifted up shall be brought down to the clay.* But I rather keep to our rendring of the word, by the whole body, then by a part or member of it; As if *Job* had said, *Your bodies, which in regard of the figure and frame of them are lifted up, as if they did scorn the earth, are yet but pieces of earth and clods of clay; you trample upon earth and clay as things below you, yet you are no better then the things you trample upon, even earth and clay: and to them these bodies of yours must shortly be reduced and resolved into as their first principles, though now you look big upon me and carry it high.*

Hence Observe, First, *The body of man, how strong, how beautiful soever, is but a piece of earth and clay.*

First, It is clay in regard of the baseness and meanness of it: earth is the meanest of the elements, the lowest and worst of all, so is the body the meanest part of man.

Secondly, It is clay in regard of the brickleness of it, it breaks quickly like a Potters vessel.

But it may be said, Why doth *Job* speak thus to his friends? Why doth he tell them that their bodies are bodies of clay? Did not they know that before? Need any man be told that his body is formed out of the earth, and that it turneth to the earth again? Especially needed these friends of *Job*, who were men of such knowledge and wisdom, yea of holiness too, needed they to be taught that their bodies were bodies of clay?

I answer, We may know many things which we are not affected with. There is a twofold knowledge of things: There is a knowing of things in the notion, or a speculative knowledge; and there is a knowing of things in the application, or a practical knowledge of them. Doubtless they knew this speculatively, but *Job* thought they did not know it practically. They would never (as he supposed) have been so stiff towards him, if they had remembred that themselves were clay. A man hath some knowledge wherein he differeth little from a beast, which hath no knowledge. The Prophet teacheth this for truth, (*Jer.* 10. 14.) *Every man is brutish in his knowledge.* A strange speech; it might rather be said, that *every man is brutish in his ignorance*; though a beast cannot properly be called ignorant, yet a beast hath no knowledge: How is it then that he saith, every man is brutish in his knowledge? It is because though every man knows that which a beast cannot, yet he doth not make that improvement of it which a man (especially which a Saint) should and might. This is a kind of brutishness in knowledge: And when he saith, *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*, it is a very large word, for are godly men brutish in their knowledge? surely no; then every man here, is every wicked man, and all such are brutish in their knowledge. Though a wicked man knoweth that his body is a body of clay, though he knoweth there is a God, and a Christ, and if you speak to him of these things, he will say, *he knows them as well as you*, yet he is brutish in the knowledge he hath of them all. Every wicked man is so; yea in every thing he knoweth and doth, he is brutish. I conceive also that place of the Prophet may take in godly men, in a mitigated sense, even they are brutish in their knowledge; Why? because they do not improve their knowledge to that height which they might, they do not that good, nor raise that glory to God by their knowledge, which the talents they are entrusted with, call for. The Apostle *Jude* concludes of wicked men, *That which they know naturally, in that like brute beasts they corrupt themselves:* and I may say, what the Saints know spiritually, if they corrupt themselves, or are corrupted in any of that knowledge, so far they know but like brute beasts: Therefore though this is a common lesson, yet it is but need to press it upon all, as *Job* here doth: *It is not without cause that men are told that their bodies are bodies of clay. It is no easie-matter to know our selves in those things which are easily known.* It is a good determination which one hath made concerning knowledge: First, *He that knoweth not what he should, is a beast among men.* Secondly, *He that knoweth no more then needs must, is a man among beasts.* Thirdly, *He that knoweth all that he may know, is as a God among men:* This third must be taken thus: He that knoweth all objects knowable within the compass of man, and he that beateth out the knowledge of those objects to the full, making the highest improvement of them, this man is as a God among men: and he may well be called so, seeing there are very few who ever arrived to this height about any one object of knowledge, and (I believe) never any one attained it in reference unto all.

Now while we find *Job* teaching this plain piece of knowledge, that *our bodies are bodies of clay*, it teacheth us three Lessons.

First, *That man is a proud piece of flesh, and therefore hath need to be told that he is but clay.*

Secondly, *That pride ariseth either from ignorance, or forgetfulness of what we are.*

David desired the Lord to teach him how frail he was, *Psal.* 39. Though *David* was a very holy and a knowing man, yet he knew not that plain point. Some think it so common a truth that no man needs be taught that *man is*

mortal. One great reaſon why immortality is ſo little looked after, is becauſe our mortality is ſo little looked into. We know little either of the power of God, or of the weakneſs of man; and many who have ſome knowledge of theſe cannot be ſaid to make any uſe of them: their knowledge lies mouldring by the walls, they do not act the things they know; ſuch knowledge leaveth a man in a worſe condition then ignorance doth. Beſides, a man that forgets what he is, will be as proud as he that knows not what he is: *Forgetfulneſs is a temporary ignorance:* how much ſoever any man knows, yet he can uſe no more then he remembers, and 'tis ſeldom that he uſeth all that.

Thirdly, *The meaneſt things in the world, are parables or ſimilitudes, fit to ſet forth what the outward ſtate of man is.*

What the work of God is upon the ſoul, is not before us now. That's precious indeed both for matter and form, there are engravings and ſtamps upon the ſoul of a glorious excellency: But (I ſay) take man in his outſide, and then the meaneſt and pooreſt things in the world are parables of man, *our bodies are like bodies of clay.* The Apoſtle *Peter* calleth his body an *earthly tabernacle*, (2 Pet. 1. 13.) *I know I muſt ſhortly lay down my earthly tabernacle:* The body is a tabernacle, and that is an uncertain dwelling, it is not built as an houſe that hath foundations. And if you call it an houſe, yet it is not a houſe of marble, but of *clay*, Job 4. 19. Other Scriptures call it, *an earthen veſſel*, (2 Cor. 4. 7.) *We have this treaſure* (ſaith the Apoſtle, but it is) *in earthen veſſels.* They had the treaſure of all Goſpel truths, of Goſpel graces and of Goſpel gifts; theſe precious treaſures they carried about with them, but all in earthen veſſels: Yea, the body of man is not only called earthen, but whole man is called earth, and as if he could never be called earth enough, he is called earth three times over in one verſe, (*Jer.* 22. 29.) *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord:* Which words, though they may well, and (poſſibly) moſt properly in that place be taken as an appeal (uſual in Scripture) to the whole body of the earth, yet they have a clear truth, as applyed to the bodies of men made of earth; all men on earth have earthen bodies, and moſt men have earthen mindes too, and ſo very earth, or earth, earth, earth, nothing but earth. It is reported in the French Hiſtory, that when an old Counſellor would needs depart the Court, and retire himſelf to a private life, the King deſired him to leave him his advice in ſome general rules, what to do in the government of the kingdom; at which motion he took a fair Paper, and wrote upon the top of the leaf, *moderation*, and in the middle of the leaf, *moderation*, and at the bottom of the leaf, *moderation:* His meaning was, as if he had ſaid to that King, *Sir, if you would keep your kingdom quiet, carry the reins of your government moderately quite through.* So here, if the queſtion ſhould be, what is man? and a blank paper were preſented me to ſet down *Jobs* opinion of him, I muſt write on the top of the leaf, *earth*, in the middle, *earth*, at the bottom *earth: His remembrances are like unto aſhes, and his body to a body of clay.*

Job having taken his friends down by theſe arguments, and cooled their ſpirits, thinks now they may be dealt withal, and therefore concludes,

Verſ. 13. **Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.**

From the connection of theſe words, We may Obſerve,

That a man when he is humbled, is in a good temper to hear counſel.

Your bodies are bodies of clay, now, *Let me alone, hold your peace that I may ſpeak*; If you attend your own condition, you will the better attend my counſel. *Pride of heart ſtoppeth the ear.* They who have high thoughts of themſelves, think meanly of what is ſaid unto them by others. Were men low in their own eyes, they would embrace every advice that hath truth and holineſs in it.

At the fifth verſe *Job* ſaid, *O that you would altogether hold your peace*; here he turns his wiſh into a charge.

Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak.

But doth *Job*, as many, who becauſe they love to hear themſelves ſpeak, deſire others to hold their peace? Doth *Job* ſpeak thus becauſe he would have all the talk? Or becauſe he was reſolved to have the laſt word?

Job's modeſty and humbleneſs of mind may acquit him from ſuch imputations. This his forwardneſs to ſpeak, and importunity for audience, did both ariſe, not from his own deſire to ſpeak, but from a willingneſs to rectifie what his friends had ſpoken amiſs, and to ſet himſelf right in their opinions: or he adviſes them to hold their peace, leſt by ſpeaking as they had done, they ſhould loſe their peace. Many break not only the outward peace of others, but the inward peace of their own ſouls, becauſe they cannot (in this ſenſe) hold their peace. There might be much more peace then there is, in our hearts, in our houſes, in the Commonwealth, in the Church, if we could teach our tongues to hold their peace, when it is unſeaſonable to ſpeak. There is a time to be ſilent and a time to ſpeak; could we time our tongues well, how well might we time our actions; becauſe our words are ſo unruly, therefore our wayes are ſo uneven. *Job* ſaw it was time for his friends to hold their peace, and time for him to ſpeak: Therefore he ſaith, *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak.*

But why doth *Job* add, *Let come on me what will.* A ſtrange kind of ſpeech. Doth it become a man to be ſo reſolute, or rather (as the words at firſt view import) ſo deſperate? Is not here the voice of deſperation? Would any wiſe man ſpeak ſo?

Let come on me what will.

The Vulgar tranſlateth this part of the verſe thus, *Hold your peace that I may ſpeak what ſoever my mind ſuggeſteth to me*, or *Hold your peace, let me ſpeak what ſoever comes into my mind*; as if *Job* would ſpeak any thing that came next, or floated uppermoſt in his phancy, ſo ſome gloſs the interpretation of the Vulgar, which is indeed diſhonourable to ſuppoſe of him. Shall we think that he cared not how he ſpake, who had ſo often reproved his friends for ſpeaking careleſly? Would he run headlong into that errour, which he had ſo ſeverely reprehended?

Tacete paululiſper ut loquar quodcunq; mihi mens ſuggeſſerit. Vulg. *Loquar quicquid in buccam venerit.*

Let come upon me what will.] The word [*Let come*] ſignifies to paſs over, or paſs upon; ſo then, *I will ſpeak, let what will paſs upon me*, is no more but this, let what cenſure ſoever paſs upon me, cenſure me how you will, I will ſpeak, or I will ſpeak how ever you take it.

Loquar & tranſeat ſuper me quid vis. Vatab. *Quocunq; res ſit caſura pro me loquar.* Bez. *Loquar meo periculo quicquid tandē mihi ſit eventurū.*

Or, It may refer to the determination of God, I will ſpeak and ſtand to his ſentence, let him paſs what judgement he pleaſeth concerning me, I am reſolved to maintain my cauſe: as we ſay in our language, when we are reſolved to do a thing, *Fall back or fall edge I will do it.*

Job in theſe words removeth a ſecond pretence which his friends made for what they had ſpoken.

Firſt, They ſaid, they did all for the glory of God, and to maintain his juſtice. As to that, he told them roundly before, that God needed none of their patronage, *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? will you talk deceitfully for him?* He deſires not your lies to defend and uphold his cauſe.

There was a ſecond thing which his friends held forth as a ground of their counſels, and that was the tender care and compaſſion which they had of *Job* himſelf, leſt going on thus complaining, yea as they thought, thus blaſphemeing, the Lord ſhould bring ſomewhat worſe, then ever yet he had brought upon him. As *Job* therefore takes off the former pretence before, ſo he takes off this here: As if he had ſaid, *You ſeem to be very tender of me, leſt God ſhould lay ſome further judgement upon me for maintaining my integrity, but I will ſpeak, come of it what will, at my peril be it, I will bear all the blame my ſelf, take you no care, have you but patience to hear me ſpeak, let all the trouble that may enſue be on my ſcore, I will be accountable to God for it.* 'Tis true, *Job* being provoked ſpeaks this with ſome heat, and was deſirous rather to caſt himſelf wholly upon God then to hear his friends any longer.

Ego de me ipſo rationē reddā Deo & quicquid peccavero luā: Interim non ſine ſtomacho hoc dicit, ſed irritatus à ſociis & domino ſe malens committere quā tales nugas audire. Merc.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *An upright heart is very reſolute; I will ſpeak, and let come to me what will.*

There is nothing that can make a man afraid, who is not afraid of himſelf. *The righteous is bold as a Lyon.* As one of the ancient Martyrs ſpake when his perſecutors terrified him

him with threatnings, *There is nothing* (saith he) *of things visible, nothing of things invisible, that I fear; I will stand to my profession of the Name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints, let come on't what will.* It is said of *Luther*, when he was to go to the Meeting at *Worms*, that being informed by his friends that he had many enemies lying in wait to ruine him, *Tell me not of it* (saith he) *for I will go, though there be as many Devils to assault me as there be tiles upon the houses.* Thus the Apostle *Paul* (*Acts* 21. 10.) when some did weep and mourn over him, because it was propheſied that he should be bound at *Jerusalem*; *Agabus* had bound himself with *Paul*'s girdle, and said, *So shall the* Jews *at* Jerusalem *bind the man that owneth this girdle*; and thereupon they intreated him to forbear going up: Forbear? (saith he) No, I will go to *Jerusalem*, *I am ready, not to be bound only at* Jerusalem, *but to dye there for the Name of the Lord Jesus:* I'le put it to a venture. When once *Hesters* heart was set upon it to engage for the deliverance of the *Jews*, she would on, *I will go in to the King, which is not according to the Law* (I know I run an hazard) *and if I perish, I perish:* I am upon a good ground, and in a good cause, though I fail in some outward formalities, yet I will venture. Thus will an upright heart speak, thus will an upright heart do: An upright heart will both speak and do, let come on it what will; let the world be pleased or displeased; let the world frown or smile; let the world be angry or imbrace. And it is the same phrase in the Hebrew which we have (2 *Sam.* 18. 23.) when *Ahimaaz* would go and carry the tidings of *Absalom*'s death unto *David* (*Joab* had sent *Cushi* with the message before, yet *Ahimaaz* would needs run after him) *Let me, I pray thee,* (saith he to *Joab*) *run after* Cushi: *And* Joab *said, wherefore wilt thou run my son, seeing thou hast no tidings ready? But howsoever* (said he) *let me run*; I have a mind to carry this message *howsoever*; that is, *Let come on me what will.* Even so saith the soul in its uprightness and resolvedness upon the wayes of God, though checkt with why would you do so? Howsoever let me go, though you think it is to no purpose, yet let me go on: Let come of it what will, I resign the issue wholly to God.

וידרמה *Et sic quicquid.*

Secondly, When *Job* speaks thus, *Let come on it what will*, you must know he had very good ground for what he spake, he knew whom he trusted; and trust him he would, though he slew him, as we shall hear him professing with his next breath.

Hence Note, *An upright heart never feareth any hurt from God.*

Non desperati verba sunt, sed bene potius sperantis de Deiope quia mox suæ spei rationem reddit. Merc.

You think I am running upon the spears point, even upon the displeasure of God; well, I'le try that; *Let come on it what will*, I have not one jealous thought of God: As one in sickness and pain, ready to dye, seeing his friends about him mourn, said, *Do not trouble your selves, I know God will do me no hurt.* *Job* was willing to bear any thing at Gods hand, even a slaying, and yet he believed he should not bear the weight of his little finger (as we say) upon the account of reproof. *Job* was not desperate, nor did he defie or dare God, as wicked men use to do: tell them of hell, they care not for hell; tell them God will be angry, they regard not his anger. A gracious heart cannot slight, and would not for a world willingly incur the least displeasure, or so much as a frown from God; a frown from God would go to his very heart. But he can speak out of the height of his confidence, that in any just thing he will on, and bear all the blame which God will lay upon him, being well assured, that God will lay no blame upon him at all from his anger or justice, though in his wise providence, he should lay a multitude of the soarest afflictions upon him.

But what is it which makes the Saints so resolute with God, that they fear not any hurt from God?

How can they fear any hurt from God, when they have so many promises of good from God? God hath not spoken one hard word against them all the Bible over; nor will he bear it that any should speak any thing but good concerning them. *Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him.* The Apostle assures us, *That the Law* (namely in the threatnings of it) *is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners,* &c. The Law was not set to bring any of the punishments which are threatned there upon the righteous and holy: The godly man needs not fear any hurt from the Law, because the Law is not made to punish or to condemn a righteous man, though it be set to guide and order the conversation of a righteous man: But the Law is made for the wicked, they have cause to fear all the terrors of it, and God will at last open the treasury of his wrath, and bring out all the weapons of his indignation that lye there, and strike them through. Now if the Saints fear not the threatnings of the Law, what need they fear any thing? Other parts of the word are full of their consolations: *Yea whatsoever was written heretofore, was written for their learning, that they through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope,* and so rest their souls sweetly in the arms of God, as in the arms of a tender Father. Why should they be afraid of any evil from God, who hath promised them so much good? Yea, that *all shall work together for good to them:* May not this make any good man say confidently, I will do my duty, come on it what will: What can come of it but good? because the Lord hath said, all shall work together for good; though happily I shall have a cross, it will be a good; though the Lord leave me to the cruel dealings of men, it will be good. But especially while we look up and consider what Jesus Christ hath done, what Christ hath suffered, what Christ hath undertaken, and stands engaged in on their behalf, they may well put themselves upon God, and appeal not only to his mercy, but stand to the utmost of his justice They may expect hard measure from men (and the best is, they can do well enough, let men do their worst) but as for all the hard measure they shall receive from God, *I dare* (as we say in our common speech) *excuse them for a penny*; I may say to any upright and faithful soul, such an one as *Job* was, Go on, let come on it what will, I will bear all the chidings, yea all the smart thou shalt ever hear or feel from God.

Job having by these Arguments, taken from the excellency of God, and his Friends baseness, prepared their minds to attention, and taken upon him a resolution to speak, speaks home in the next words, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth,* &c.

VERS. 14, 15, 16.

Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?
Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own wayes before him.
He also shall be my salvation, for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

JOB resolved to speak in the former verse, and here he speaks indeed. But doth he not bite his own tongue? Or rather, Doth not his tongue bite him? while he saith, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* It is the Apostles great *Axiome*, founded in the Laws of Nature (*Eph.* 5. 29.) *No man ever hated his own flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it,* &c. *Job* speaks as if he hated, or were cruel to his own flesh; *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth,* &c? But if we inquire into this speech, we shall find it an Argument, not of any hatred against himself, but of abundant love to, and faith in God.

The words in general set forth the temper and state of *Job*'s spirit, or in what frame of heart he stood ready to speak unto God, having before resolved to speak: As if he had said, *I am far enough from rage, or from despair; I am neither out of my wits, nor out of my hopes; I come to plead my cause with God, having my heart fill'd with strong confidence in God, resting and reposing my self upon him, and giving all that I have or am unto him: Let me speak* (saith he in the former verse) *and let come on me what will; at my peril be it; I will trust in God.* And he seems to explain himself here; *Do not think that I mean to tear my flesh, and to run violently upon my own ruine, when I said, let come on me what will; no, this was not the language either of fury or of despair, but of faith and confidence;* (*for as it follows*) *though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?

First, There are some who conceive, that *Job* being in a commotion of spirit, upon some suggestion of the Devil to despair,

despair, and to give up all for lost, did therefore indeed tear his own flesh, and seek to cast away his life; to which *Job*, recalling himself, answereth here, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?* As if he should have said, *O thou enemy, Satan, why dost thou tempt me thus? Why dost thou put me upon despairing thoughts? Why wouldst thou have me let go my hold of God? Why dost thou provoke me to carry my self as a mad man, tearing my flesh with my teeth, and even throwing my life out of my hand?* This carrieth a fair sence, supposing such a temptation was upon him; and indeed there is no temptation so black and devil-like, but we may suppose the Devil presenting it to this afflicted soul.

Aliqui suspicantur Jobum respondentem & repugnantem hosti interius aliquid instillanti & ad se lacerandum stimulanti. Pined.

Secondly, The words may be expounded as an inquiry after the reason, or cause, why he indured such grievous afflictions: *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand? What's the matter that I am cast into such extremities, and put upon such grievous tryals as I am at this time? Wherefore am I not only counsell'd, but almost constrained by my bodily pains, and the troubles of my spirit, to seek ease in tearing mine own flesh, and in laying violent hands upon my body? If my gestures or speeches are unusual, so are my sorrows; the sence of what I suffer even makes me do I know not what, or what I know I should not do. Wherefore do I take my flesh,* &c? That's a second interpretation, taken from the impatient postures of those who are in great afflictions. Such sometimes rend and tear their garments, so did *Job* in the beginning of this book, when he heard the first news of his sad calamities, yea such will sometimes tear or bite their own flesh, and gnaw their tongues. 'Tis said, that *when the fifth Angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, that his kingdom was full of darkness* (that is, of trouble) *and they gnawed their tongues for pain* (Rev. 16. 10.) They gnaw their tongues when they are punished, who never smite upon their thighs, nor are pricked at the heart, because they have sinned.

Moris est affectis & indignabundis vestes & membra lacerare. Merc.

Existimatis me desperantis instar mihi velle mortem conscisere, at quorsum ego me lacerem, & mihi ipsi vitam eripiam? Sanct.

Thirdly, Others interpret the words as a denial of impatience, which his Friends had often objected against him: As if he had said, *You think that I carry my self as a man that is desperate, tearing my flesh,* &c. *but you are much deceived in me; wherefore should I do a thing so unbecoming one that trusts in God, as I do? I trust in God; yea, though he should slay me, yet will I trust in him; I complain indeed of my own afflictions, sense of pain causeth me to doe so, but I do not complain against God, my faith and trust in him will not let me do so.* Some conceive, that here *Job* answers the words of *Eliphaz* at the beginning of the fifth Chapter (*ver.* 2.) *Wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one*; wicked foolish men are so envious and unquiet in their spirits, that they even kill themselves with vexation; but why should I, what reason have I, who am assured of the good will of God to me, and am resolved to submit to his good pleasure? what reason have I to *tear my flesh, or throw my life out of my hand?*

נשא *Est tollere, levare. Quare levo dentibus meis carnes meas?* q. d. *Ita confectus sum, ut quantus ego sum levare dentibus possim, & quasi uno bolo devorari.* Pined.

There is a fourth interpretation, that *Job* in this query hath reference to his own weakness and leanness, to the decay of his strength and flesh; *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* As if he should have said, I am so wasted and consumed, so far spent, that all the flesh I have will scarce make a morsel, a man may take it up in his teeth at once. Thus it is expounded by that (*chap.* 19. 20.) *I am escaped with the skin of my teeth*; I am nothing but skin and bones. So, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* Why am I brought thus low, thus lean? all my flesh will scarce make one *mouth-full.*

En anima mea stat super labia mea statim expressura videorque solis meis dentibus reliquam totius corporis carnem sustentare. Bold.

Lastly, Some render, not, *Wherefore do I*, but, *Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth?* That is, wherefore should I be cruel to my self? You think I utterly neglect my self, and have given up all my hopes; but I have not, I am not come to that pass yet; and I firmly believe I never shall. It is bad enough when we eat and devour one another; but it notes the worst of conditions, when we devour and eat up our selves. It is said of the fool (*Eccles.* 4. 5.) *He folded his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.* Who is this fool? and, how doth the fool eat his own flesh? By the fool (in this place) we are to understand the sluggard, or the slothful man; *Folded hands are the emblem of idleness:* The idle man, or the sluggard, folded his hands together; that is, he will not work, he will take no pains: Now he that will not labour, saith the Apostle, 2 *Thes.* 3. *Neither let him eat.* The sluggard will not labour, and therefore he eateth his own flesh, having nothing else to eat. But doth the sluggard indeed feed upon his own flesh? Is he a *self-Canibal?* will he indure the pain of eating his own flesh, who will not take the pains to get himself bread to eat? No, but he is said to eat his own flesh, because while he favours himself too much, he is cruel to himself, he starves himself; hunger eats his flesh, because he hath nothing to satisfie his hunger; or he is said to eat his own flesh, because through sloth, and the neglect of his calling, he is brought into want, and into such want, that if he will eat, he must eat his own flesh, for he hath got neither boyld nor roast, neither wet nor dry to sustain his life. Or lastly, he may be said to eat his flesh, while he foldeth his hands, because he grows vext and passionate against himself, when he sees into what straits and bonds his lazy folded hands have brought him. He is a fool indeed, that thinks folded hands will either fill his belly with meat, or his mind with content. So (*Isa.* 9. 20.) when the Prophet describeth the trouble of a people under the wrath of God, he shews, that at last they shall grow cruel to themselves, *They shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm*; that is, they shall be so forgetful of the Laws of nature and friendship, that they shall either vex their nearest friends, as he speaks in the former verse, *No man shall spare his brother*; or they shall vex themselves, who are nearer then any friend; no man shall spare his own flesh. Thus the Lord threatned the oppressors of his people, that he would at last make them feed upon their own flesh, and drunken with their own blood (*Isa.* 49. 26.) They who have been cruel against his servants, shall be unnatural to themselves; they shall either destroy and vex one another, or every man shall destroy and vex himself, till they are all utterly consumed. *Job* sees no reason, why he should do what such as these do for want of faith. *Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth?* I know my duty is to love and take care of my self; and I know God loves and takes care of me too. Some self-love is a vertue in all, a grace in some, it being the measure of that love we ow unto others, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self.* And as a man is bound to take a special care of all those (within his compass) whom God loves, so he ought to be much more careful of himself, who hath received any evidence that God loves him: And hence it is (according to this exposition) that *Job* saith, *Wherefore do I*, or, *should I take my flesh in my teeth?* Shall I who have received so much kindness from God, and (notwithstanding these wounds) shall receive more, shall I, shall such a one as I be unkind to my self?

Lastly, These words (I conceive) carry in them a *self-reproof:* As if *Job* perceiving his spirit growing somewhat unquiet and unsetled, and himself ready to break out into passionate gestures, under the pressure of his continual troubles, did thus chide and rebuke down these commotions, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* Why am I thus impatient? O my soul, doth this become thee? or dost thou now walk by that rule of obedience which thou art to learn by the things which thou suffereſt? Is this the acting of a patient man? Is this to submit to the hand and rod of a father? In this sence *David* (upon the apprehension of some undue strivings and strugglings in his spirit) takes himself to task, schools and catechises his soul with serious questions (*Psal.* 42. 11.) *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God. David* after these chidings bids his soul hope in God; and *Job* after these chidings makes highest professions of his hope in God, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth,* &c.? *Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him.*

Hence Observe, First, *That in great afflictions a man is apt to afflict himself, and to add to his own afflictions.*

When we have more upon us then we are well able to bear, we usually put more weight upon our selves. We scarce feel lesser burdens at all, and great ones we feel too much. When God smites us, we are ready to tear our selves.

Ut qui in cruciatibus carnes suas mordent allevari se sentiunt, sic ego dum hæc loquor. Chrysost.

Secondly, Consider the ground of this, why is it that men (as this phrase importeth) afflict themselves when they are afflicted? It is because they hope to find some ease in it.

Hence

Hence Note, *That a pain of our own adding, seems to lessen our received pains.*

And indeed it doth somewhat draw the mind from thinking of what it feeleth: Every trouble is the less to us, by how much we mind it the less; and if we could not mind it at all, it would be no trouble to us at all. For this reason, in extremity of pain, as in the Stone, Gout, Tooth-ach, men usually divert and turn off their thoughts, as much as they can, from what they feel, by discourse, and the company of friends; yea, we shall see them sometimes bite their lips, or their finger; such pain added to pain, gives some mitigation of pain.

Thirdly Note, *It is sinful to be active in our own miseries, or to afflict our selves.*

Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth? It is unnatural to do so. It is unnatural to take the fleth of others in our teeth, more to take our own; every man is nearer to himself then to any other: therefore a sin committed against our selves, is greater; because we sin against a nearer engagement. We ought to suffer chearfully from the hand of God or man, but we must not suffer from our own. No man must be his own carver, either in his comforts, or in his sorrows. We must let God alone to cut out, and measure our portion of both. *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?*

Fourthly Observe, *A godly man will not take his own part, nor bear with himself, when he doth evil, or goes beside the rule, whether in active or passive obedience.*

He is willing to receive counsel or reproof from others; and he is upon all discoveries of the naughtiness of his heart, his own reprover: he usually casts the first stone at his sin with his own hand, and blames himself more then any other man can, for his own secret distempers, or outward miscarriages. A carnal heart doth what it can to excuse its sin, or to flatter himself in it: but a holy heart doth both aggravate and rebuke its own sin: Wherefore am I so vain, so earthly? Why am I so proud, and so impatient? *David* needed no man to accuse him of his sinful envy at the prosperity of the wicked, he layes on load upon himself (*Psal.* 73. 22.) *So foolish was I and ignorant, even as a beast before thee.* He once indeed (being under a desertion) wanted a *Nathan* to bring his sin home to his conscience; but when he was come to himself, he could be his own *Nathan*: *As for me* (saith he, *ver.* 2.) *my feet were almost gone:* Why was I thus foolish? So *Job* here, Why am I thus unquiet? *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth,* &c?

And put my life in mine hand?

Animam meam solicitus custodio, non secus ac rem pretiosissimam, quam nusquam tuto deponere, nec ulli credere audemus. Pined.

These words have the same meaning in general with the former. I shall only open the importance of the phrase.

First, *Putting the life in the hand,* is interpreted for a solicitous care of life: As if he had said, *Wherefore do I keep life so close, as if I were loath to part with it?* If God slay me I will trust in him. What need I take so much care of this life, to hold it in my hand? Let it go, I know it shall be well enough with me; if I lose this life, I shall find a better; for I believe in God. When a man would preserve and keep a thing safe, he carries it in his hand; he will not lay it out of his hand. And that is one reason why the Saints are said to be in the *hand of God*, and to resign themselves into his hand; *Into thine hand do I commit my spirit:* It is their desire to be in the hand of God; and Christ assureth us (*John* 10.) that we being in his Fathers hand, none can take us out. Holy *Job* knew his life, his spiritual life was in the hand of God, and that his going out of this natural life was but a passage to eternal life: Wherefore then (according to this exposition) should he so solicitously put his life into his own hand? *We need not fear to part with that which the grace of God hath found.*

Nomen animæ pro tota persona sumi potest, ut ponere animam in manibus sit ita debilitari ut homo stare pedibus non possit; sed manibus sustentetur, ad modum infantium. Bold. *Volis extremisque innitens digitis vitam ago.* id. *Anima in manibus est, anima è corpore excessa, quæ enim in manibus habemus, extra nos sunt.* Sanct.

Secondly, Others understand by *life, the whole man*; and so the putting of his life in his hand, notes bodily infirmity; as if being weak with sickness, he was forced to lean upon his hand. *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* That is, Wherefore am I brought thus low, that I do even go upon my hands? Little children before they can go upon their feet, go upon all four, as we say, they go upon their hands. The feet and legs are the pillars and supporters of the body. *Job*'s pillars (saith this interpretation) shrunk under him, he must walk and live upon his hands. The learned Author quoted in the margin contends much for this sence: but I shall not stay upon it.

Thirdly, *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* Is (as another fancieth) a metaphorical speech, implying, that a man is dying, or near to death: The life of such a man sits upon his lips, or is come out into his hand, ready to shake hands with him, and return to God that gave it. As if he had said, my life is gone out of my body, I am in the state of death; or (as his words are also glossed) my life is so wasted and diminished, that it is scarce a handful. Why is it thus? Is it because Satan hopes that yet in the extremity of my affliction, he shall obtain his wish, and hear me with my last breath blaspheme God and dye? If that be his end, he shall miss his end; *For if the Lord slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Lastly, We may expound the words yet more clearly and satisfactorily by divers other concurrent Scriptures, all which carry this plain sence, *That putting of the life into the hand*, notes only the exposing of our life unto peril or dangers. So *Jephthah* bespeaks the quarrelling *Ephramites* (Judg. 12. 3.) *When I saw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of Ammon*: That is, when I saw you deserted me, and would give me no assistance, I resolved to put it to an adventure; I put my life in my hands, and passed over against the children of *Ammon*: I went upon great disadvantages; my Army was not a match for the enemy, nor fit to meet them in the field; yet I ran that hazard: I put my life in mine hands. So (1 *Sam.* 19. 5.) when *Jonathan* pleaded for *David* before his father *Saul*, and told him what good service he had done for him, and what he had deserved of the Kingdom, he instanceth in that unparallel'd act of valour, when he undertook *proud Goliah*. *He did put* (saith he) *his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine*; that is, he put himself into a great danger: The *Philistine* was such a monster of men, that the whole Army of *Israel* trembled at his challenge; therefore surely a single man was in great danger to deal with him hand to hand: *David* doing so, put his life in his hand. The Witch of *Endor* is at this language with *Saul* (1 Sam. 28. 21.) *I have put my life in my hand*; that is, I have ventured my life in raising up of *Samuel*; this she said, because there was a Law lately made against Witches by *Saul* himself. Once more *David* useth the same expression (*Psal.* 119. 109.) *My soul is continually in mine hand, yet do I not forget thy Law.* The souls of the Saints are always in the hands of God, and it is both their safety and their honour that they are so. Why doth *David* say, my soul is in mine hand? had he call'd it out of the hand of God, and taken the care of it upon himself? Nothing less. His meaning is only this, *I walk in the midst of dangers, and among a thousand deaths continually; I am in deaths often, my life is exposed to perils every day, yet do I not forget thy Law:* I keep close to thee, and will keep close to thee whatsoever comes of it. *Augustine* upon that place doth ingeniously confess, that he understood not what *David* meant, by *having his soul in his hands:* But *Jerome*, another of the Ancients, teacheth us, that it is an Hebraism, signifying a state of extreamest peril. The Greeks also have drawn it into a proverb, speaking the same thing.

Est Hebraismus quo significatur vitam habere periculo expositam. Hier. *Ep. ad Suniam.* Ἐν τῇ χειρὶ ψυχὴν ἔχει. *Græc. proverb. pro versari inter pericula. Quod manu portatur, facile excidit; facile etiam diripi potest & si servatur sola Dei protectione servari videtur.* Mer.

But why doth the holding, or putting the life in the hand, signifie the exposing of the life to peril? There is a twofold reason of it.

First, Because those things which are carried openly in the hand, are apt to fall out of the hand, and being carried in sight, they are apt to be snatcht or wrested out of the hand. And therefore though to be in the hand of God, signifies *safety*, because his hand is armed with irresistible power to protect us: Yet for a man to carry a thing in his own hand, is to carry it in danger, because his hand is weak, and there are safer wayes of carrying, or conveying a thing, then openly in the hand. If a man be to ride a long journey with any treasure about him, he doth not carry it in his hand, but puts it in some secret and close place, where it may be hid, and so more secure. The *Caldee* Paraphrast, to express the elegancy of that place fore-cited out of the *Psalm*, gives it thus, *My life is in as much danger as if it stood upon the very superficies or outside of my hand*; as if he had no hold of it, but it stood barely upon his hand; for that

Anima mea periclitatur, acsi in superficie manus mea esset. Cald. Paraph.

that which is set upon the plain or palm of the hand, and not grasped, is in greater danger. Things safe kept, are hidden or held fast. *There was a treasure hid in the field, which when the man had found, he went and hid it,* (Mat. 13.44.) he did not carry it in his hand, but hid it, laid it up safely. So our life is said *to be hid with Christ in God,* (Col. 3.3.) which notes not only the secresie of this spiritual life, but the safety of it also. As some things are hid that they may not be seen, so other things are hid, that they may not be lost. Hence to carry the life in the hand, imports the danger of loosing it.

Quæ aliquis amittere timet diligenter abscondit. Aquin. *in loc.*

Secondly, There is another reason of that speech, because when a man is about to deliver a thing or to give it up, he takes it in his hand. They that put themselves upon great perils and dangers for God and his people, deliver up their lives and their all to God: Hence that counsel of the Apostle, (1 *Pet.* 4.19.) *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* So here, the life of men in danger is said to be put in the hand, because such are as it were ready to deliver and commit their lives unto God, that he would take care of their lives to preserve them from the danger, or to take them to himself, if they lose them in his service, either doing or suffering according to his will. That of the Apostle comes near this notion, (1 *John* 3.16.) *We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren:* now if we lay them down, we must put them into our hands, as a man that is ready to lay down money upon a bargain, or for a commodity, takes his purse into his hand. *Job* had his life in his hand, ready to deliver it up to God, yea, though God should seem to take it violently from him, yet he would willingly resign it to him and trust him with it. This sense carries a clear reason of such kind of speaking, yet I do not conceive it to be the particular reason of it in this place: For, as to such a sense, *Job* should rather confidently affirm, I will or I do put my life in my hand, then either question or expostulate with himself, *Wherefore do I put my life in mine hand?*

Now, seeing *Job* speaking thus refutes a charge that was brought against him, that he was careless of his life, or through distemper and impatience cared not what became of it; We may Observe,

That though we are to venture or put our lives unto any hazard when God calleth us, yet no man may expose his life without a call.

Job would have his friends know, that he did not carry his life open in his hand as a thing he made no reckoning of. Our lives are given us of God, and till he bid us bring them forth and carry them in our hands, we must keep them as safe as we can. I only hint this here, because the strength of *Jobs* intendment in these words lyeth in their connection with the following verse, to which I pass.

Vers. 15. **Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own integrity.**

Why should you think that I am impatient? Why should you censure me as desperate and careless? This is the temper and frame of my soul; judge you of it, whether it look like your conceptions of me. Let God do what he will with me, slay me, tear me, take away my life, I am resolved what to do, *to trust in him.* Is this impatience or despair?

Further, If we consider the former expostulations in the last exposition, as a reproof or a check to the motions of his own heart toward impatience; Then these words are the lesson of instruction which he gives his soul. What? Thou my soul in rage? doest thou bid me take my flesh in my teeth? I tell thee what my former resolves have been, and what my present duty is, even to trust God in all estates. And now I am upon that resolve again, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Afflictiones graviores, mortis & occisionis nomine significantur. Drus.

Though he slay me.] Slaying speaks death, and that a violent death, yet all slaying is not death. (*Rom.* 8.36.) *For thy sake are we killed,* or *slain all the day long.* All the persecutions and troubles which the Saints endure, are their slaying; though they be not all unto death, yet they all go upon the account of death. *For thy sake are we slain all the day long. Paul* was alive, and yet in the number of these slain. By being slain all the day long, he means a being alwayes within the view, or under the sufferance of bloody persecutors.

Though he slay me. Slaying is the utmost of outward evils.

Hence Observe (before I come to the main), *That there is no outward evil so bad, but God may lay it upon his best servants.*

Job puts this supposition as his own case. *Though he slay me,*

Yet will I trust in him.] There is a double reading of these words. Some read them negatively, others (as we) affirmatively.

The reason why the negation is added by some Interpreters, is, because the same Hebrew word in sound, which we translate, *him,* signifies also the adverb of denial, *not* or *no:* therefore the *Masorites* observe that this text is to be corrected in the reading. There is a like variety of reading upon the occasion of this Monosyllable, *Lo* (2 *King.* 8.10.) Where when *Hazael* was sent by *Benhadad* to enquire of *Elisha* whether he should recover of his disease whereof he was sick, *Elisha* said unto him, *Go say unto him, thou mayest certainly recover, howbeit the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die.* As if he had said, though the disease in it self be not mortal, yet thou shalt die of it. Whereas others translate it, *Elisha said unto him, say, thou shalt not certainly recover, for the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die.*

Lo, in Hebræo mutatis literis mobilibus, aut non *aut* ei *vel* ipsi, *sonat. Masoritæ hunc locum enumerant inter ea quæ cū scribātur* לא *legātur* לו Merc. *Vade dic ei sanaberis, quāquā aliqui existimant amphibologicā fuisse responsionem, nam vox eadem sola diversā Scriptura significat, aut* ei, *aut* non. *Dic nō omnino revalesces.* Jun. *Si enecaret me nō sperarem?* Jun. *Ecce occidet me nō sperabo.* Mont. *Quāvis ab eo mortis sententiā recipiarē, tamē me hortārē ab eo sententiā nō expectarem, quippe qui noverim non nisi justissimè ēn hoc feciſſe.* Bol.

Now, the negative in *Job* hath a double reading. First, By way of interrogation, and then the sense is the same with our translation, *Though,* or *if he slay me, shall I not trust in him?* that is, yes, I will, or I ought to trust in him; should I distrust God because he afflicts me, when as he afflicts to shew his faithfulness, I will not do it. Others read it negatively, without an interrogation, thus, *Though he slay me, I will not expect,* or *behold he will slay me, I will not hope.* So the interlineal.

But would *Job* say so, can this stand with the state of grace and holiness? Were not this indeed to give up the cause, and to blaspheme God?

I answer, There is a sense wherein we may acquit *Job* of this charge, though we should read it negatively, which yet is not the sense I shall stay upon: For the clearing of it, I must premise two things concerning the Original Text.

First, That the Hebrew word which we translate *to trust* (of which more a little after) signifies also to expect or look for a thing at the hands of another.

Secondly, The word stands alone in the Hebrew without those words which we supply, *in him,* and must be rendred thus, according to the sense under hand, *Though he slay me, I will not expect,* and then the meaning may be given thus; Although God should pronounce that heavy sentence of death upon me, yea sign the Writ for my Execution, yet I would not expect a more gentle sentence or look for a reprieve, because I know that what God doth to any man, or to me, he is just in doing it; I know that if he load me with the heaviest afflictions, he may do it, and (without any further pleading or expectations) I am ready to submit unto it; and yet in this I do not cast my self as a wicked man, for *I will still maintain my ways* (as he adds in the next words) neither in this do I cast off all my hopes or expectations in God, *for he shall be my salvation,* as he speaks in the next verse. Thus much he had said in effect before, (*chap.* 9.15.) *Whom though I were righteous, yet would I not answer,* that is, I would not stand upon my terms with God, or expect any other terms from him: though God should wound me deeper, yet I would not hope to have him alter what he had done, as if I thought he had done me wrong. *You, my friends, conceive that I complain of God, as if he had been cruel and too severe towards me; no, I do not think so, for if he should slay me, I would not sue to him to take off that sentence as unjust, but I would willingly lay my life down at his feet, knowing that he will give me a more desirable life then this.* Thus we may fairly bring *Job* off in the negative reading; he was ready to undergo the hardest measure, and yet not to think hardly of God, or stand expecting any reversal of his judgement as too hard.

Again,

Ecce occidet me nō spero me hinc liberandū, vel fore ut convalescā, actū est de me, deploratus est hic morbus. Merc. è Rab. Lev.

Again thus, *Behold he will slay me, I will not hope*, that is, I see my bodily estate and outward comforts brought so low, that it were folly to hope; Why, should I hope for life and prosperity here, when providence speaks to me of nothing but death? and me-thinks I see the Lord ready to slay me; my disease is not for cure, nor my wounds for healing, why then should I stand hoping about these poor transitory things? yet I would not have you think I am without all hope, I have better things to hope for then these; and about them I have a lively hope, though I die, as he adds in the next verse: *He also shall be my salvation, and an hypocrite shall not come before him.*

Verba sunt magnæ spei & fidei cujusvis maximè in cruce & morte ostenditur, ideo utrūq; conjunxit, mortem & spem. Merc.

But I shall pass that negative translation, and give the sense as it lies affirmatively before us in ours. The strength of faith is never fully tried but under and upon a cross: Death and hope seem to be at the greatest distance; here we have death and hope brought together: Death could not kill *Job's* hope, his hope did almost enliven his death. *Job* had more life in death, then most have in their lives. God could easily slay *Job's* body, but his faith could not be slain. God will not slay faith, and no other power can. Behold *Job* dying and believing, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*; and so this text is the triumph of *Job's* faith over sorrow and death: The uprightness of his heart, the greatness of his spirit, the undauntedness of his courage, his contempt of the world, and his longing desires after God, are all wrapt up and spoken out together in these words. As if he had said, *I see the Lord is determined to take my life, but what if he do? do you think that I have nothing to trust him far beyond that? If he destroy my body, I know he will save my soul; I have matters of greater moment to trust God with, then those which concern this frail piece of flesh: Death it self shall not cast me down from the footings of my faith, or beat me off from the hold-fast of my hope in God.*

Again, As these words have in them assertion of *Job's* faith, so also a vindication of his person from the suspitions or accusations of his friends. For how can he be charged as wicked, who professeth trust in God, and promiseth that he will trust in him, even unto death, and in it?

יחל *Est expectare cum longanimi perseverantia, cū certitudine futuri boni & lætitia.* Coc.

The word which we translate *trust*, signifies also to *expect* or *hope*; and it signifies expectation, first, with patience and waiting: Secondly, with assurance of receiving that which we wait for: thirdly, with present joy, or joy concomitant with sorrow. So then, *I will trust him*, is not only, I will stay more time, but I will stay with patience, with assurance, yea and with joyfulness.

But how can a man trust God when he is slain? He that is dead, is past hope, he hath for ever done trusting and believing. For when a man is slain and dead, he either goes to heaven or to hell: If to hell, there's no hope: if to heaven, there's no need of hope, what, should a man hope for that which he enjoyes, or trust when he is in possession?

I answer, first, All slaying in Scripture sense is not to bodily death; it notes sometimes only a civil death, or the putting of a person totally out of all his former power or present comforts: So the slaying of the witnesses is interpreted, *Revel.* 11. Take slaying so, and then, to trust when we are slain, is no more then to depend upon God for deliverance in extreamest dangers.

Secondly, Though a man who is actually slain, cannot be said to hope; yet a man may say, I will hope or trust though I am slain: For so this trust is the act of a living man concerning somewhat which he shall enjoy or be after death: So any believer dying, whether it be by a natural or a violent death, may say, Though I die yet I will trust in God: First, For the salvation of my soul: Secondly, For the resurrection of my body: Thirdly, For the eternal rest both of soul and body together in glory.

But what was it that *Job* was thus resolved to trust God for?

Take slaying in the first sense, for greater afflictions then any he had yet felt, and then, *I will trust in him*, is first, a serious profession of his faithfulness and adhering to God and his wayes what ever God should do with him, or how great discouragements soever God should put upon him. So we may well expound *Job* by that admirable protestation of the Church, *Psal.* 44. 17, 18, 19. *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falsly in thy covenant; our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way; though thou hast sore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with of death.* Trusting in God, in a large sense, is put for the whole compass of our duty to him, especially in evil times. Or secondly, I will trust him, is a high profession of his faith, that God would give remedy to the worst of his present, or possible outward evils, and raise him up or restore him again, how low soever he should be brought.

Take slaying in the second sense, for death, and then his meaning is, that though God should take away this life, yet he had a hope laid up beyond this life: and this I conceive most proper here, or certainly intended here, because he had so often given up his hopes of a temporal restoring, and adds expresly in the next verse; *He also shall be my salvation.*

Hence Observe, First, *The character of a godly man; he is one that trusteth in God.*

This is proper to godliness. It is the breath of the new creature, and only by the breath of the new creature can these words be spoken indeed, *I will trust in God.* (1 *Pet.* 3. 5.) The Apostle describing the holy women of the former time, exhorteth that they may be a pattern to the women of the age to which he wrote, *For* (saith he) *after this manner the holy women also in old time, who trusted in God, adorned themselves.* He describes holy women by this, they *trusted in God.* A carnal man is a man without hope, (1 *Thes.* 4. 13.) *I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope.* Who are these? The Apostle tells us, *Ephes.* 2. 12. *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the Covenant of Promises, having no hope.* A heathen (every carnal man is no better) hath no hope, or if he have, it is like himself, a carnal hope, in the nature of it, because it is so in the object of it: His hope is in man, (*Jer.* 17. 5.) *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm:* He that is in the flesh, trusts only in the flesh, and fleshly things. (*Psal.* 52.7.) *He trusts in the abundance of his riches:* he can trust in earthly riches, but he cannot put forth an act of trust upon the unsearchable riches of God: It is an easie matter to say the words, but it is the hardest matter under heaven to say, and say it truly, to say and do it, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Secondly Observe, *True trust can triumph over a worse condition then what is present, how bad soever it is.*

Job doth not say, I will trust in God, though now my case is very sad, but he puts a harder case then ever he was yet in, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* *David* (Psal. 3. 6.) puts hard cases to his soul, *If ten thousands of people set themselves against me round about, yet will I not be afraid: David* was not in such straits at that time (though in straits) he was not beleaguered with ten thousand enemies, but he could put those straits to himself, and yet be enlarged in dependance upon God. We have *David* again breathing out the very same spirit of faith in like expressions, *Psal.* 27. 2. & *Psal.* 46. 2. *Though the mountains be removed, and though the earth be carried into the midst of the sea, yet will not we fear.* He puts not only such cases as he was not in, but such as there was no probability that ever he should be in; *that the hils should be carried into the sea,* that earth and sea should mingle. *David's* faith conquered not only real evils, but all imaginable evils. As the Lord puts the remotest suppositions to shew his own faithfulness, so do the Saints to shew their faith, (*Isa.* 54.10.) *Though the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord.* Though the whole course of nature fail, yet the Lord will not let one jot of the Covenant of grace fail: And that's indeed the reason why the Saints rejoyce over all difficulties, even because they know God is able to help them in greatest difficulties: He hath not spent the treasures nor the stores of his wisdom and power upon former salvations, they know if they need stronger and stranger salvations, he hath strength and wisdom enough to work them, and will, because he is as faithful and true, as he is strong or wise.

Thirdly

Thirdly Observe, *Trust is due to God, it is due to God in all estates.*

Some trust in God in fair weather; when they are full they can trust in God for bread; and when they are safe, they can trust him for protection: but for a man to trust God for bread in wants, and for safety when he slayeth him, to trust God in all turns, this is not only a benefit to our selves, but a duty unto God. There is nothing more due to God, as God, then trust is: even a man in high place looks to be trusted, and the higher any man is, the more he looks to be trusted. And shall not the most high God? We read (*Judg.* 9. 15.) that when the trees had chosen the bramble to be their King, the bramble puts these terms upon them, (*Judg.* 9. 15.) *If indeed you anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon.* Even a bramble looks to be trusted in, if you set him up for your king. Now if creatures love to be trusted, though they be but *exalted brambles*, how much more doth the Lord, the great and glorious Lord exalted over all? Surely if he be not trusted by us, we shall be consumed by him, a fire will proceed from him to devour the tallest Cedars that either distrust or do not trust in him.

Fourthly Observe, *To trust God is an high honour done to God.*

Trust is a great part of divine worship. It is natural worship; the very discoveries of God unto us, though he should never manifest his will concerning this act, call for this. When it is discovered to us (which the word every where doth) that God is above all, that he is all-sufficient, that he is unchangeable, these very discoveries, though there were never a rule for it in all the word of God, would teach us to trust upon God. There are some parts of Gods worship which we should never have known if he had not given us a direct and expres rule for them. Such is all his instituted worship; The special forms of worship depend upon the revealed will of God, but the general worship of God (such as to love him, to fear him, to trust upon him) flow from the manifestation of his nature, or from his very being.

But you will say, What is trust?

Take it in brief thus, *Pure spiritual trust is the highest exercise of faith, whereby looking upon God in himself and in his Son through the promises, the soul is raised above all fears or discouragements, above all doubts and disquietments, either for the removing of that which is evil, or for the obtaining of that which is good.* This is the nature of that trust which is the honour of God, and his natural worship, as natural is opposed to special and instituted worship.

Fifthly Observe, *A believer seeth God good to him, or a friend to him, when he receiveth nothing but evil from his hand, and sees nothing but frowns upon his face.*

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. There is no man will trust a professed enemy at all, nor a reconciled enemy much: therefore *Job* did not think God an enemy, though he slew him; forasmuch as he resolved to trust him, though he slew him. No man will trust him that he suspects to hate him; A godly man hath good thoughts of God, let him be doing what he will with him. When God put *Abraham* upon that hard task to slay his son, he yet knew that God loved him, and therefore he was willing to do it, and he would trust God for that son, of which the promise of God said he should live, though the command of God said he shall die. Now, as *Abraham* (the Father of believers) was perswaded, that God loved him when he bid him slay his son; So though God himself slay a believer, yet he believes that he lives in the love of God. While a believer is all over as it were in gore-blood, whilst he is all wounds, and wounded (he sees) by the hand of God, yet he cannot be beaten out of this hold, God is good to him, yea, that *truly God is good to all his Israel.* Christ had said to his Disciples, (*John* 21. 11.) *Our friend* Lazarus *sleepeth*: but when *Martha* heard him give order to take away the stone from the Sepluchre, (*vers.* 39.) *Lord* (saith she) *by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four dayes.* Christ answers her, *said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?* Though I was not so friendly to my friend as to come and keep him alive when he was only sick, or to raise him up as soon as he was dead, yet do not think but I am a friend to him still, *Did not I say, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?* I have not neglected my friend: Though I have let him lie four dayes in the grave, yet he hath lain in my heart all this while. We may say in all our extremities, though God lets us die and lie in the grave either of death or affliction till we stink, that yet we are his *dead friends, and he is our living friend,* in whose bosome and embraces we have lain all the while. See how *Paul* exulteth in the love of God in the midst of all troubles and persecutions: Suppose sword and famine should compass him about, *Rom.* 8. 38,39. *I am perswaded that neither life nor death,* &c. *nor any other creature should be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Holy *David* of old rejoyced in this assurance. (2 *Sam.* 23. 5.) *Although my house be not so with God,* yet (I know God is my friend, for) *he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow*; that is, though my house should not flourish in worldly dignity and outward pomp; yet he is my salvation, and I can desire no more.

Sixthly Observe, *Job* had said before, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?* Why should I take such courses as these to ease my present trouble? *though he slay me, I will trust in him*; as if he had said, my remedy is in God, not in tearing my flesh, or in impatient gestures: these would prove as miserable comforts as my friends are comforters: the neareſt way to sound consolation, is to *trust in God.*

Hence Observe, *That trust in God is the best ease to the soul, and a remedy of evils before the remedy comes.*

God often defers the remedy as to our sense, when he gives it to our faith. He that believes not, is condemned already, he hath his judgement before the judgement: and he that believes, is saved and eased already, he hath his deliverance before deliverance. Whilst our wounds have no cure, trust in God cures them. Faith is a remedy before a remedy in all kind of evils. (*Isa.* 50. ult.) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servants, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* Trust in God, though you are in darkness, though you see no light; this is light before light, pardon before pardon. Trust God in temptations, and you are above temptations, while you groan under the burden of them. Trust God in weakness, and you are strong: *Paul* in such a case *besought the Lord thrice*, and was answered with this, 2 *Cor.* 12. 9. *My grace* (not thy grace) *is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness* (he doth not say thy weakness is perfected into strength) This satisfied *Paul* to the full, as he concludes in the next words, *Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* When we rest with our weaknesses upon Christ, the power of Christ rests upon us. And then as it was with *Paul* (vers. 10.) *when we are weak, then are we strong*; when we are sorrowful, then have we joy; when we are in bondage, then are we free. Thus by trusting we have either a remedy from, or a remedy in all our troubles and afflictions.

Further, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*; his faith was pitcht upon God, and he passeth by friends and creatures. As if he had said, *Truly though you endeavour to comfort me, and would give me your utmost help, yet I cannot trust upon you; but if God should slay me, I would trust him: though all the world should engage and promise to do their best for me, I could not trust them; but if God should do the worst against me, yet I would trust in him.*

Hence Observe, *That we can never trust God too much, nor creatures too little.*

We can never trust God too much, because as he is God, all

all our trust is but due to him. And we cannot trust creatures too little, because they are but creatures, and so no trust is due to them. There is a trust of charity or civility due to man; it is not good to be alwayes jealous one of another; but though there may be a trust of charity, yet there must not be a trust of confidence upon any creature. *Some jealousies of man are against the rule of love to man, but all trust in man is against the law of duty to God.* Now, as it is a duty to trust God, so if we look upon God, we have the greatest encouragements, if upon our selves, the greatest cause, to trust him.

First, Consider *the Being and Essence of God*, and there's enough to draw out trust. His Being is in and from himself. *It is best to depend upon him who is absolutely independant.*

Secondly, Consider the excellency of his Being. *Job* said to his friends a little before, *Doth not his excellency make you afraid?* I may say here as truly, *Doth not his excellency make you confide, or trust?* The power, the wisdom, the goodness, the mercy, the faithfulness, the truth, the unchangeableness of God, these, all these excellencies of his Being, call upon us to trust in him. Who would not trust in him that hath all, and is All? Who would not trust in him that can do whatsoever he pleaseth, and will do whatsoever he hath promised?

Thirdly, Consider him in his relations to us: He is our Creator, that's the ground of trust given by the Apostle, *Let us commit our selves unto him in well-doing as unto a faithful Creator.* He that made us, will surely take care of us: We may well give up our selves and our all unto him, who gave us our selves, and our all. And if creation assure us of preservation, then redemption assures us of it much more. God was at so much cost in making of us, that he will certainly take care of us; but he hath been at much more cost in redeeming us, and therefore he will much more take care of us, upon the account of that relation. He hath been at too much charge with us, to lay us aside and throw us by. Again, He is a Father: *earthly fathers lay up and provide for their children*, and shall not our heavenly Father? All the relations wherein we stand to God, are grounds of our trust upon him, and engagements of his assistance to, and providence over us.

Fourthly, The operations and workings of God, call for this trust: What hath God wrought? and what cannot God work? He works without, and he works within, he stops or moves all the wheels of all creatures as seemeth best to him. The tongues, the hands, the hearts, the wills, the affections, the love, the hatred, the anger, the desires of all the sons of men, are under his power, and at his dispose. Who would not trust in God?

Fifthly, If we look upon our selves as creatures, and all creatures with our selves, we shall quickly find a necessity of trusting God. As creatures are not of themselves, so not in themselves. We receive life from God, and in him we live. If we depart from him in whom we live, we shall surely die. Our natural, as well as our spiritual life, is preserved by the power of God. The life of man consisteth not in the abundance of that which he possesseth, but in dependance upon him in whom he believeth. Man is not sufficient of himself (in spirituals) to think a good thought, that sufficiency is of God: and all temporal good things are not sufficient for man, their sufficiency is of God. A horse is a vain thing to save a man, bread is a vain thing to strengthen a man, wine is a vain thing to chear a man, yea, wisdom is a vain thing to counsel a man, without God. As there is nothing which the devil doth more oppose, or God more require, so there is nothing which we more need, or by which we gain more then by trusting God: God gives himself most out to us, when we trust most in him: As an act of trust gives most glory to God, so it fetcheth most good from God. Our trusting in creatures make them vain to us; and our not trusting in God, makes him (in a sense) vain to us; that is, God will not give out his strength and help, if we do not trust him: he is as one weak when we trust him weakly, he is as one empty-handed when our hearts are empty of trust.

For the advancement of this grace of *trust*, take these three rules from what we find in *Job*, whose trust was risen to such a height, that it did not only live, but was lively in the very approaches of death.

First, *Labour to know God.* *Job* was a man acquainted with God, and therefore he trusted in God, (*Psal.* 9.10.) *They that know thy Name will trust in thee.* The reason why God is trusted so little, is because he is so little known. We say of some men, *They are better known then trusted; and if we knew some men more, we should trust them less:* But the truth is, God is alwayes trusted as much as he is known; and if we knew him more, we would trust him more; every discovery of God shews somewhat which renders him more worthy of our trust.

Secondly, *Recollect and meditate former experiences.* The consideration of what God hath done for us, keeps the heart up in trust that he will do more.

Thirdly, *Be upright.* That which made *Job* confident to trust upon God, though he should slay him, was *the uprightness of his heart with God.* He may trust God, who is faithful to God. *Job* had Gods own hand to his certificate, that his heart was upright. *Beloved* (saith that beloved Disciple, 1 *John* 3.21.) *If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God:* An hypocrite may presume, but he cannot be truly confident. Besides, 'tis a dishonour to God, when they say they trust him, whose lives are dishonourable to him: They make God (as much as lies in them) a partaker in their wickedness, who pretend he will take their parts, while they are wicked and do wickedly. Railing *Rabshakeh* tells *Hezekiah* (2 King. 18.20,21,22.) *Thou sayest (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war*; and when he had beaten him off from humane helps, he labours to drive him from divine help also; thou perhaps wilt say, *I trust in God*; If thou sayest so, remember, *Is not that he whose Altars and whose high places Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, ye shall worship before this Altar in Jerusalem:* As if he had said, *Thou trust in God! thou who hast dishonoured God, pulled down his altars!* &c. *Rabshakeh* thought that *Hezekiah* had done God great disservice in destroying the Altars; and if it had been so, this charge had cut off the confidence of *Hezekiah*: But how justly may we upbraid many that profess they trust in God, and say, Is not he the God whose name you blaspheme? the God whom you provoke? the God whose truths and wayes you neglect and kick against? the God whose servants you oppose? and will you say you trust in God? For shame either disclaim your confidences, or be reclaimed from your courses. That man who walks uprightly before God, may trust perfectly in God. He that contemns the command, hath no part in the promise. We do not oblige God to do us good by our doing good; but God hath not obliged himself to do us good, while we are doing evil. There are promises of grace, but there are no promises of reward to wicked men.

Lastly, Take two characters of holy trust.

First, It takes us off from all other dependances. As a man cannot serve, so neither can he trust *God and Mammon*: As in spirituals, so in temporals; while, with the Apostle (*Phil.* 3.3.) *We rejoyce* (which is an effect of trust) *in God, we have no confidence in the flesh.* If God be not trusted alone, he is not trusted at all. Every thing we joyn with him disjoyns us from him. He that takes hold of God, lets go his hold of all other things: We may use the help of creatures, but we must trust none but God. He that (in this sense) will needs be so wise and provident as to get two strings to his bow, shall find, when he comes to shoot, that he hath not one. If we trust in God and man together, God will not help us, and man cannot.

Secondly, Holy trust acts in all estates and turns: *As true obedience respects all the commandments, so true trust respects all the dispensations of God.* Trust reposeth upon God, not only for some, but for and in every thing. Some say they trust God for pardon, for heaven, and for eternal life, who do not, or think they need not trust him for the needs of this present life: For these, some suppose they can help themselves, and others suspect God will not stoop so low as to help them. *A true Believer depends upon God as much* (in proportion to the thing) *for a piece of bread, as for heaven*; and the Lord (in proportion to the thing) is as careful to provide Believers with the bread of this life, as he is to give them the bread and means of eternal life. This is trust indeed, when we trust God for all, for temporals as well as for spirituals, in the least as well as in the

greatest matters: Yea, the less the thing is for which we trust God, the greater is the grace of trust. As it argues the greatest degree of holiness, when we will not offend God by committing the least sin, and when we are thankful to him for the least mercy; so it argues a great degree of faith, when we depend upon God (being convinced we have need to do so) for his good will in receiving the least comfort, and for his strength in performing the least duty. Some, when they have a great business to undergo, stir up themselves to trust God, and so they ought; but the spiritualness of trust is seen, when in the least businesses we undergo, and in the least duty we go about, we go out of our selves, and go forth in the strength of God: For as it is the very same love of God that saveth us eternally, and preserveth us temporally; so it is the same power of God which doth great or small things for us: And therefore we should in all depend upon God, knowing, that without him we cannot do the one, and that we shall be able to do all things through him strengthening us. Yea, lastly, we must trust God in our injoyments, as well as in our wants. It is an hard thing to say, *Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him*; but it is harder to say, Though he make me alive, yet I will trust in him. It is a glorious tryal of trust, to say, Should God make me not worth a groat, yet I will trust him; but it is a greater glory of this trust, to say, Though God make me worth thousands, yet I will trust in him: *It is hard to trust God in a low and troublesome estate; but it is harder to trust God in a full and prosperous estate.* When we (to sense) have the least need of Gods help, then to trust in him, and depend upon him, shews we are most sensible that we need his help: For by this we in one act give testimony to the All-sufficiency of God, and to the emptiness of the creature; by this we make God all, and the creature nothing at all. Faith gives a more spiritual discovery of it self, when it convinces us that we are poor in the midst of our abundance without God, then when it convinceth us, that we have abundance in God, though we are poor. Tis noble when we can say, though God afflict me, and empty me, I will trust in him; but 'tis heroically Christian to say, Though God comfort me, and fill me, I will trust in him. *The stronger we are in grace, the less we go, either alone, or upon the crutches of the creature.*

While I affirm this, I would not at all derogate from the excellency of *Job*'s trust in God, I only shew you a more excellent way of trusting him.

But it may be questioned, Doth not *Job* derogate from, yea, contradict his own *professed trust*, when with the same breath, with which he concludes, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*, he concludeth also,

But I will maintain mine own wayes before him.

In the former part of the verse, *Job* discovered the highest confidence in God. In this latter part, he seems to discover too much confidence in himself, *But I will maintain mine own wayes before him.* The Apostle argues the inconsistency of these two (*Rom.* 11. 6.) *If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.* The wayes of a man are his works: If he trust in God, he depends on grace; if he maintain his wayes, he may be said to depend on works. How then shall we reconcile *Job*'s trusting in God, with his maintaining of his wayes?

I answer, There is a maintaining of our wayes before God, which is but a fruit of self-confidence, and an Argument of our departure from the grace of God. But this act of *Job* sprang from no such root; nor will it yield any such fruit, as will appear in opening of the words.

But (or *nevertheless*) **I will maintain.**] The Original word signifies three things. First, (As we translate) to plead, dispute, and maintain a cause, or a position, as just and right. Secondly, To reprove. Thirdly, To correct or amend that which is amiss, faulty, and erroneous: And according unto these three significations, the sence of this Scripture may be given three wayes. *But I will maintain*

Mine own wayes.] His wayes were his works, or the manner and course of his life; which is therefore called our way, because we pass and repass up and down in it, as a man doth in a way to or from his own home.

Before him.] Or, *Before his face*, so the letter of the Hebrew. Which he adds, first, in opposition to men; and secondly, that he might more emphatically set forth the strength of his confidence towards God. *I will maintain my wayes before him: I will not only make good what I affirm to those that are like my self; I have not only hope to render my self and my wayes fair to the eye of the world; but I am assured that I can render both fair to the eye of God himself.* Some can maintain their wayes well enough before men, who cannot maintain them before God; his eyes look through all their coverings and vizards: He can distinguish between appearances and realities; he can see a rotten heart within a painted skin. Holy upright *Job* was not afraid to come into the presence of God, there to open himself, and to have all his wayes scanned and examined. Those wayes had need be fair and well mended which abide the survey of God himself.

I will maintain, &c.] That is (according to the first signification of the word) *Though the Lord slay me*, yet I will stand to, and abide my tryal, I will not be brought to an ill opinion of my self, nor will I think the worse of my spiritual, internal estate, how much evil soever the Lord shall be pleased to deal to me in my outward estate: No, I will be as high in pursuance of what I have heretofore asserted, namely, that mine heart is upright with him, and my wayes right (in the main) before him, when he is slaying me, as ever I was, when he was prospering me, or shall be again if he should prosper me again.

Priusquam hinc ab ea vias meas i. e. rationes & causam meā arguā. Ego sane ut perii perii, verum non continebo meipsū quin jus meū coram illo asseram. Merc. *Sunt confidentiæ verba quod speret se causā suam probāndum coram Deo fretus sua innocentia.* Merc.

Whence Observe, First, *An upright heart keeps its ground in all turns and times.*

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; and not only so, *But I will maintain mine own wayes also.* For as an upright heart maintains the same practice of holiness at all times: Though there be slaying and killing for the Name and Truth of Christ, yet he will not change his way, nor go into a wrong way, wherein perhaps he shall have more safety, by complying, and chiming in with the opinions or practises of other men. As he (I say) maintains his wayes in regard of his present practice, so also in regard of his former integrity in that practice: which is the thing *Job* intends chiefly in this Assertion.

Secondly, *Job* speaks this as an Argument of his uprightness, *I will maintain mine own wayes before him.*

Hence Note, *That it is a sign of a heart sound in holiness, when we can with confidence set our selves before God, and maintain what we are in his presence.*

It shews that a man is right when he dares come to tryal: I will dispute it out with God himself, saith *Job*: Not that he (as I have often shewed before) had an opinion that there was no sin in him; or that God could find no faults in him: *Job* acted upon the principles of the Covenant of grace, and knew upon what ground he went, but (taking that in) he is resolute to maintain his wayes, and this was a proof of his uprightness. It is an Argument that a piece of gold is weight, when a man is willing to have it brought to the ballance; and that it is right metal, not counterfeit and base, when a man is ready to offer it to the touchstone: Try me, prove me, do what you will with me, bring me to the ballance, or to the touchstone; I will maintain my wayes, I doubt not but I shall be found weight and right, saith the upright soul (*John* 3. 21.) *He that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest.* He that doth the truth is not afraid of the light; *That will but make his deeds manifest that they are wrought in God*, as Christ speaks in that place. How are the deeds of a man wrought in God? First thus, The deeds of the Saints are wrought in God; that is, in the strength and power of God. Secondly, They are wrought in God; that is, at the command, and by the authority of God. They that work in the power of God, and by the rule of God, *their deeds are wrought in God.* Now, *He that doth the truth, comes to the light*; he loves the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God, both according to the mind of God, and by the power of God. Our deeds have no value in them, but as they are done in God: Nor can we maintain any of our wayes before God, but when we walk in God. We may make a flourish before men, of what is wrought in man: But what we maintain before God, must be of God.

God. See how you can put your wayes before the light of Gods countenance, and debate them in his presence. It is an easie matter to carry it out with creatures: Consider what you can do with God. *I* (saith *Job*) *will maintain mine own wayes before him.*

quoniam ad anteactæ vitæ pœnitentiã quam ad sequentis puritatem pertinere existimat. Vatab. *Arguere vias in conspectu ejus, est dare operam ut innocenter vivat coram illo.*

Thirdly, *I will maintain my wayes*, may signifie his resolution to continue in the wayes of holiness and obedience for the time to come: *Though he slay me, yet will I maintain my wayes*; that is, I will not be brought out of love with holiness, though the Lord should lay me under the greatest discouragements: Here is another Argument of sincerity. A sound heart saith, What evil soever I find in the wayes of God, I will never think ill of the wayes of God: No, I will yet walk in them, I will now run in them; how hardly soever I am used in those wayes, I will never out of them; though I meet with Lyons in them, though I meet with blows and troubles in them, yea, though God meet me as a Lyon in them, though I receive blows and troubles from the hand of God himself, in whose wayes I walk, though he seem to stand there with a drawn sword to slay me, *Yet I will maintain my way.* This is a truth, and true of *Job*; yet I conceive the word in the Hebrew, which we render *maintain*, doth not lead us to it; and therefore (though it hath learned Assertors) I will not stay upon it.

יכח *significat etiam reprehendere, corrigere, sic aliqui latini exponunt & referunt ad pœnitentiã de vitæ anteactæ erratis.*

Again, Take the word in the second sence, as it signifies *to reprove*, and then the meaning riseth somewhat different from the former, though it comes to the same issue: *I will reprove my own wayes*; that is, Though I still assert my sincerity, yet I do not presume my self free from sin: I will judge my self to have failed in many things; and that the Lord might justly correct me, slay me, yea (in regard of the desert of sin) cast me to Hell, thus, *I will reprove mine own wayes before him*; while God is smiting me, I will be accusing my self; I will say that I have sinned, and that he doth me no wrong: I will not only acquiesce and rest satisfied in the sentence of God upon me, though it be to death, but I will also blame my self for whatsoever is blame worthy in my heart or life. So then, he intended not any accusation of God, but an examination of himself, or a serious discussion of his course and conscience as in the sight of God.

Hence Observe, *That when God is smiting or slaying us, we should be judging our selves, and confessing our sinfulness.*

I will reprove mine own wayes before him. *Job* did not say, I will reprove his wayes, but mine own: He said not, God doth ill in slaying me, but I have often done ill in disobeying him. This is an Argument of a holy heart, when in the midst of all sufferings we can acquit God, and lay load upon our selves. The Apostle assureth us (1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord:* There's one truth: And yet this is as great a truth, *When we are judged of the Lord, we should judge our selves.* When we are corrected of the Lord, we should correct our selves; when he reproveth us, we should reprove our selves, and acknowledge that we are such, as in whom God might find enough, not only to lay rods of correction upon us, but even scorpions of destruction. *I also will reprove my wayes before him.*

Lastly, Taking the word (as some do) for *correcting*, *I will correct my own wayes before him*; so there is this sence in it, *When God is slaying me, I will be thinking how to be more holy; how I may amend my own wayes before him.* As if he had said, *I will not do like stubborn and rebellious ones, who when God chastens and afflicts them, they more pollute and corrupt themselves, or do worse and worse: No, I would be, and do, better and better; I would correct my wayes yet before him: I will not only maintain my wayes in holiness, as I have done; but I would put out a more pure and correct edition of my works, I would take care to have all the errata's (which I have observed in any page of my life) amended: and now that the Lord hath cast me into the fire of affliction, I would come out gold: I would have all my dross purged out, and my whole lump refined.* These resolves, which the sence of the word now presented holds out unto us, discover also much holiness of heart. What greater discovery of holiness is there, then to make the best improvement of the worst estate; and to be mending our souls, while our bodies are a slaying? Yet I conceive (according to the coherence and drift of the place) that our translation renders it most fair, that *Job*, notwithstanding the Lord should slay him, would yet stand up with holy confidence to plead his own integrity, even in the sight of God: *I will maintain my own wayes before him.*

But this was not all, *Job* might possibly be checkt: What? *Maintain your wayes?* And that before God? Yes do, see what you can get by it; Will you plead with God? What will it advantage you? What? saith *Job*, I fear not any loss by this course, and I hope to be a gainer? I am so far from being startled with these fears, that I am settled in this assurance; what that was he gives in the next verse,

Verse 16. **He also shall be my salvation, for an hypocrite shall not come before him.**

As if he had said, *Never put me this doubt, that God will disclaim me, because I maintain mine own wayes before him; nor do I believe that God will damn me, because he slayeth me: No, Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him; and though I maintain mine own wayes before him, yet he shall be my salvation.*

Hoc evadet mihi in salutem. Simile, ero, eis in Deum. Drus.

Some render, *This shall turn to my salvation*; He will not rebuke me, much less condemn me, as he will those who justifie themselves proudly, for this shall turn to my salvation; that is, he will be pleased with, and accept of me; he will not say it is rashness or folly, pride or self-conceit, which hath stirred me up to maintain my wayes; he will rather say, it is the integrity and uprightness of my heart; and that I have done no more then I might, yea, no more then I ought for his glory, being thus charged as I am by you my Friends: I do not distrust my cause, though you do; yea, I am setled in this perswasion, that when God hath heard my plea, he will give sentence on my side, though you are my accusers.

He also shall be my salvation.

Salvation is a large word. God is all salvations to his people, and the Author of all salvation, of temporal, as well as of eternal. Upon whatsoever we can write salvation, we may entitle God to it. *He that is our God, is the God of salvation* (Psal. 68. 20.) But what is the salvation to which *Job* here entitles God?

Sunt qui de futuro accipiunt, erit post mortem, sed ego de præsenti tẽpore accipio. Merc.

Some refer it to temporal salvation, *He also shall be my salvation*; that is, he shall deliver and restore me from my present troubles; though he now slay and quite undo me, yet I believe that he will revive and repair me again.

In salutem esse dicitur non ratione præsentis opis sed rationis liberationis ab omnibus malis & translationis ad beatitudinem. Coc.

Others interpret it strictly of eternal salvation; *He also shall be my salvation*; that is, though he slay me here, yet I am sure he will save me hereafter, and be my portion for ever. Three Reasons rise from the Text, why *Job* should here rather be understood of eternal, then of temporal salvation.

First, Because he speaks in the next clause about the presence of God, *An hypocrite shall not come before him*: coming before God (in the sence there intended) and salvation, are the same; eternal salvation consists in the vision of God, *Psal.* 16. 11. *In thy presence is fulness of joy.*

Secondly, Because we find *Job* expressing little confidence, but rather much diffidence about any temporal restauration; he gave himself for a lost man, as to the riches, honour and greatness of this world. He had better assurance of the glory he never had, then of the greatness he once had.

Thirdly, Because he speaks here upon supposition of his being slain; take slaying strictly, for the separating of soul and body; and he that is so slain is beyond temporal salvation. For these three reasons we may conceive *Job* here aiming at, and reaching after eternal salvation.

He also shall be my salvation.] Some connecting this clause with that sence of the former, *I will reprove my own wayes*, give the Observation thus.

Quamvis adversum me coram Deo vias meas tanquam malas arguo, scio tamen quod sententiam in mei favorem pronunciaturus sit. Bold.

While we reprove our selves, and confess our sins, our hearts may be raised up in confidence of the favour of God in the pardon of our sins.

He doth not say, If I reprove mine own wayes, God will reprove me too. There are some reprovings of our hearts, from which we may infer, that God will reprove us much more: So 1 *John* 3. 20. *If our heart con-*

demn us, God is greater then our hearts, that knoweth all things. 'Tis so, when the heart is ingaged to any lust: When such a mans heart condemns him, God will condemn him a thousand times more: A man continuing in sin, cannot say upon good ground, I reprove my wayes, yet God shall be my salvation; yea, while such reprove themselves, they may be sure God will reprove them also. Only, when we humbly acknowledge the sinfulness of our wayes, and forsake them, we are assured of mercy. These, and none but these, have warrant from the word, to say, salvation belongs to them. *Prov.* 28. 13. *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.* (1 John 1. 9.) *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins:* To confess sin is self-condemnation. God is so gracious, that he will not condemn; so faithful and just, that he will forgive those that confess. While we implead our selves, God will not be our Judge, but Christ will be our Advocate: Hence that Gospel-prophet incourageth drooping souls (*Isa.* 43. 16.) *Declare that thou mayst be justified*: Declare, what should he declare? Declare thine iniquity, and thou shalt be justified from all thine iniquities. The Lord also will be thy salvation.

Secondly, Take the former clause according to our reading, *I will maintain my own wayes before him: He also shall be my salvation.*

From this Connexion Observe, *There is a self-justification consistent with salvation.*

Christ chargeth the Pharisees (*Luke* 16. 15.) *Ye are they which justifie your selves before men, but God knoweth your hearts:* That is, you bear up, and pride your selves with this, that men know no ill by you, that no man can say, *black is your eye*; but God can see, *black is your heart.* They who rest in a justification before men, while their hearts are naught, are condemned before God. And all who justifie themselves before God, upon the goodness of their works, shall be condemned. But though we may not justifie our selves upon the goodness of our works, yet they (whose works are so) may justifie themselves that their works are good. 'Tis not pride, but duty (when we are called to it) to say we are what we are, and to maintain that our wayes are right, when they are right. God takes it well at our hands, if we speak the most (with truth) of our selves, when others speak less then truth, or that which is not true of us. Self-condemnation is alwayes not only uncomely, but sinful, except it come under the notion of self-vindication, or of such a self-justification as this point leads unto. Thus we may maintain our wayes before men: Yea, thus (while we put our mouths in the dust, and are deeply humbled before God for the imperfection of our wayes) we may maintain the uprightness of our wayes before God, and be assured that he also will be our salvation.

Further, Take the words in their own compass, and we may Observe,

First, *God is the salvation of his people.*

How often do the Saints breath out this faith, *He is our salvation*; upon this faith they live, and in this faith they dye, *That God is their salvation.*

Secondly, Observe, *A thought that God is salvation to us, is consolation enough to us.*

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: he also shall be my salvation. When *Jacob* lay upon his death-bed panting and gasping for life, *O God* (saith he) *I have waited for thy salvation.* He could not go on blessing his sons, but he must make a parenthesis, to take a view, or get a taste of this salvation. To reflect upon our interest in the salvation of God, is light to us in darkness, and life to us in the approaches of death. To be saved by any hand carries comfort in it, much more to be saved by the hand of God: But the comfort of the Saints is yet higher, God is their salvation. We are happy enough that God saves us; but we have a further happiness, in that God is our salvation: *If God be our salvation, we are not only as safe, but (according to our measure and receptibility) as happy as God himself is.*

Thirdly, *Job* speaks emphatically, *He also*; he cryes up the Name of God. And in this open affirmation, that God is his salvation, there is a secret negation, or a denyal implied, that salvation is in any else: As if he had said, *He, and he only; he, and none but he.*

The point from it is, *That none but God is able to give salvation to his people.*

Salvation belongeth unto the Lord (*Psal.* 3. 8.) The Hebrew is, *Salvation unto the Lord.* Salvation is so much his, that the holy Ghost puts nothing between it and him. We supply the sence well, *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.* And it doth not belong unto him in common with others, *'tis his propriety:* He gives it, and none else can; (*Isa.* 43. 11.) *I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour.* No? We find in the Book of Judges, that God raised up *Saviours* to his people (*Neh.* 9. 27.) True; but, first, He never raised up any *Saviour* for eternal salvation, but only Jesus Christ, who is also God. Secondly, They who were *temporal Saviours* did not save in their own strength, and by their own power; God is said to raise them up *Saviours*, because he raised up such Instruments as himself intended to save them by; it was God that saved them, though men were imployed to save them. *Whosoever brings us salvation, God is the Author of it.* The Prophet concludes (*Jer.* 3. 23.) *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains.* He speaks but of a temporal salvation; and by hills and mountains he means the greatest means, the highest helps, the strongest hands, the wisest heads on earth; and yet he saith, *In vain is salvation hoped for from those hills and mountains*; truly God is the help of his people. It is much more vain to expect eternal salvation from any other; in vain is *soul-salvation* hoped for from hills, or from the multitude of mountains; from this good work or that good work; from hills and mountains of good works; though you pile up mountains of prayers, hills of alms, and deeds of charity; yea, though you dig the lowest valleys of humiliation, and make rivers and seas of tears with weeping, yet in vain is eternal salvation hoped for from these hills and mountains, from these valleys and seas, *Salvation is of the Lord: He also shall be my salvation.*

When *Job* had said, *I will maintain mine own wayes before him*; Doth he say, *And they shall be my salvation?* Doth he say, my righteousness, my integrity, shall be my salvation? His wayes were indeed the way to salvation; but his wayes were not, nor did he intend them to be, his *salvation.* The uprightness of our hearts, the righteousness of our wayes cannot save us; Christ only is our salvation. How much soever we may maintain, or may be compelled (as *Job* was) to boast of our wayes, yet we cannot make salvation of them; we must give that wholly to God. It is an admirable frame of heart, when we are highest in speaking for our selves, or in maintaining our wayes before God and man, yet then to go quite out of our wayes, and out of our selves. To expect all from free-grace, when we have been most free at works, most active in doing, or patient in suffering for God, is the right Gospel temper.

Fourthly, Observe this from it, *That an upright heart in the worst of times, looks at, and hath an eye upon the best things.*

Though he slay me, he shall be my salvation: With the same breath he tells us of God slaying him, and of God his salvation; he saw life in death, light in darkness, deliverances in destruction, repairs in ruine, salvation in slaying: such are the workings of a gracious heart, such the prospects of faith in the gloomest day, in the darkest night. Faith only sees such sights as these, reflected from the glass of precious promises.

Lastly, *Job* expresseth his special interest in, or relation to God, *He also shall be my salvation.*

Hence observe, *That a Believer looks upon God himself as his salvation.*

My God, my salvation. God hath (as it were) made himself over to Believers: *Job* doth not say, God will give, or bestow salvation upon me; but he saith, *He shall be my salvation.* It is God himself who is the salvation and the portion of his people. *They would not much care for salvation, if God were not their salvation.* It more pleaseth the Saints that they enjoy God, then that they enjoy salvation.

tion. False and carnal spirits, will express a great deal of desire after salvation: O they like salvation, heaven, and glory well, but they never express any longing desire after God and Jesus Christ. They love salvation, but they care not for a Saviour. Now that which saith pitcheth most upon, is God himself; he shall be my salvation, let me have him, and there's salvation enough; *He is my life, he is my comfort, he is my riches, he is my honour, and he is my all.* Thus *David*'s heart acted immediately upon God, *Psal.* 18. 1, 2. *I love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.* It pleased holy *David* more, that God was his strength, then that God gave him strength; that God was his deliverer, then that he was delivered; that God was his fortress, his buckler, his horn, his high tower, then that he gave him the effect of all these: It pleased *David*, and it pleases all the Saints more, that God is their salvation (whether temporal, or eternal) then that he saves them. The Saints look more at God, then at all that is Gods. They say (*Non tua, sed te*) *We desire not thine, but thee*, or nothing of thine like thee. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee?* saith *David* again (*Psal.* 73. 25.) What are Saints, what are Angels, to a soul without God? 'Tis true of things, as well as of persons. What have we in Heaven but God? What's joy without God? What's glory without God? What's all the furniture and riches, all the delicates, yea, and all the diadems of Heaven, without the God of Heaven? If God should say to the Saints, here is Heaven, take it amongst you, but I will withdraw my self, how would they weep over Heaven it self, and make it a *Baca*, a valley of tears indeed. *Heaven is not Heaven, unless we injoy God.* 'Tis the presence of God which makes Heaven: *Glory is but our neerest being unto God.* A *Mephibosheth* replyed, when *David* told him, *I have said, thou and* Ziba *divide the land: Let him take all if he will*, saith *Mephibosheth*; I do not so much regard the land, as I regard thy presence; *Let him take all, for as much as my Lord the King is come again in peace to his own house*, where I may injoy him. So, if God should say to the Saints, take Heaven among you, and withdraw himself, they would even say, Nay, let the world take Heaven if they will, let them take glory if they will; if we may not have thee in Heaven, Heaven wouldbe but an earth, or rather but a hell to us. That which Saints rejoyce in, is, that they may be in the presence of God, that they may sit at his table, and eat bread with him; that is, that they may be near him continually, which was *Mephibosheth* his priviledge with *David*. That's the thing, they say, which they desire, and which their souls thirst after; that's the wine they would drink. *My soul* (saith *David*, Psal. 42. 2.) *thirsteth for God, for the living God, when* (me thinks the time is very long, when) *shall I come and appear before God?* He spake this in the greatness and heat of his zeal to injoy God in the Ordinances of his publick worship: How much more was his soul on fire to injoy God, where he should be above Ordinances? The usual saying of Christians is, *Come let us go to prayer*, or, *let us go to Church*; we should rather say, *Come let us go to God.* We should prize duties no further, then as we obey and injoy God in doing them: Nor should we prize Heaven it self further, then as we shall have there a more full and perfect injoyment of God. *Salvation it self were no salvation, without the God of salvation. He also shall be my salvation.*

But an hypocrite shall not come before him.

In this latter clause, *Job* secretly refuteth the censure of his Friends, who had aspersed him as an hypocrite. *Bildad* did it in the eighth Chapter, though not directly, by way of assertion, yet obliquely, by way of inference, while he said (vers. 13.) *The hypocrites hope shall perish, and be cut off, and his trust shall be as a spiders web.* Here *Job* speaks that out, which no hypocrite can, *I* (saith he) *will maintain my wayes before God, and he shall be my salvation*: 'Tis not so with hypocrites, they dare not maintain their wayes before God; or if they do, they shall yet fall under the condemnation of God: Thus by way of argument, he denieth, as they by way of argument had affirmed him to be an hypocrite. *Job* could come where no hypocrite can.

Audeo coram Deo apparere, quod non facerem si impius & hypocrita essem ut vos me esse dicitis. Mere.

An hypocrite shall not come before him.] The Hebrew is, *All hypocrites shall not come before him*; that is, *No hypocrite shall come before him. Not all*, is often in Scripture put for *none*; or, *none at all. David* (*Psal.* 47. 17.) saith of the worldly rich man, *When he dyeth, he shall carry nothing away with him*: The Hebrew is, *When he dyeth, he shall not carry all away with him.* The meaning is, (as we translate) he shall carry nothing at all away, he shall not carry so much as a rag away with him. So the Apostle speaks (*Rom.* 3. 20.) *By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in thy sight*: The Greek is, *All flesh shall not be justified in thy sight, by the deeds of the Law*: The meaning is, none shall. So here, *All hypocrites*; that is, *No hypocrite.* I have opened something about him at the eighth Chapter, and shewed there what an hypocrite is; he is one that acts another mans part; he acts a person which he is not. *An hypocrite is a wicked man in a godly mans clothes.*

Non veniet in conspectu ejus omnis hypocrita. Heb. *Non omnis, in sacro sermone sæpe valet nullus Hypocrita, Græcis est quod Latinis histrio, Larvatus nimirum homo, qui aliud ipse est, & aliud se esse simulat.* Sanct. *Flagitiosus.* Vatab. *Impius.* Pagn. *Coram Deo dolus non ingreditur.* Sept. *Hanc vocis significationem agnoscere videtur* Rab. Mord. & Rab. Lev. *in lib.* Rad.

Some translate by a general word, *A wicked man shall not come before him*: Others render, *An accepter of persons shall not come before him*; He taxed his Friends as such before. Two or three of the Rabbins (though they are somewhat hard put to it, to make out that sence of the word) are much for the latter, *An accepter of persons shall not come before him.* We render it strictly according to the proper signification of the word; yet to say a wicked men, or an accepter of persons, shall not come before him, is as much as to say, an hypocrite shall not come before him: For though all wicked men, all accepters of persons are not hypocrites (some sin, and care not who sees; they sin in the very face of the Sun, and *the shew of their faces* (as the Prophet speaks) *doth testifie against them*) But (I say) though possibly some wicked men (at least in some things) are no hypocrites; yet there is no hypocrite, but he is a wicked man; therefore we shall not call either of them out of his name, though we give both, or either of the names to each of them: And as their titles, so their estates are alike, we may as well say, *A wicked man*, as *An hypocrite.*

Shall not come before him.] Not come before him? Whither can they go? or where can they be behind *him, whose face is every where?* I answer, *To come before God*, may be understood either of this life, or of the life to come. We come before God in this life, while we attend the duties and ordinances of his worship. But it may be said, Do not hypocrites come thus before God? None come more before God in that sence then hypocrites; and herein lyes their hypocrisie chiefly, that they come before God in outward holy duties; and yet are so unholy in their lives, or at those duties. The Lord speaks complaining of such an hypocritical people pressing upon him (*Isa.* 58. 2.) *This people seek me daily; they take delight in approaching to God:* Yet all this was only *as a Nation that did righteousness*; they were not really a righteous Nation. In another Prophet (*Jer.* 7. 10.) the Lord reproveth hypocrites openly, and in terms, for coming before him, *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely*, &c. *and come and stand before me in this House?* They came so much before God, that he was put to chide them out of his presence; he could scarce stave them off. How then is it that *Job* saith, *An hypocrite shall not come before him*, if we understand it of this present life?

Phrasis Hebraica idem est ac illum condemni, & rejici. Bold.

I answer, He comes not so before God, first in regard of right; secondly in regard of acceptance. An hypocrite hath no right to come before God in any duty, he cannot call God Father; he cannot lay claim to any promise of the Covenant; or if he do, he shall not be accepted, much less suffered to see God as his salvation. Thus an hypocrite shall not come before God in this present life, though he appear often personally before him.

Secondly, He shall not come before God in the life to come, to injoy, or joy in his presence; he shall not see God to his comfort, but to his torment; he shall only see God as a Judge, to be condemned by him, and thus he would not see him: He shall be driven to the Tribunal, or Judgment-seat of God, but he shall not stand in judgment.

Non veniet in conspectu ejus ut videat ipsum Deum in quo ultima salus hominis consistit, veniet tamen in conspectu ejus judicandus. Aquin.

There are four expressions in Scripture, which gradually set forth the rejection of wicked men from the presence of God.

First, They shall not be admitted entrance, *Rev.* 21. 27. *Chap.* 22. 14. *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, nor whatsoever worketh or maketh a lye*; that is, unholy ones shall not so much as set one foot over the

threshold of that holy City. He speaks thus (*Isa.* 59. 14.) in another case, *Equity cannot enter.* It was a time, wherein equity was so far from having due respect and entertainment, that justice could not so much as get in adoors: *Equity cannot enter.* The wicked *shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; they shall not have the least admittance.

Secondly, The Scripture saith, wicked men shall not stand in the presence of God (*Psal.* 5. 5.) *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight.* *David* treateth there much upon the same Argument that *Job* doth; for after he had spoken of his own acceptance with God, he adds in a way of opposition, *the foolish shall not stand in thy sight*; though, possibly, he may enter, yet he shall not stand there.

Thirdly, The Scripture saith, they shall not dwell with God (*Psal.* 5. 4.) *Evil shall not dwell with thee*; that is, evil men shall not, though they should be admitted entrance, though they should be suffered to stand a while before God, yet they shall not dwell with God, they shall presently pass away.

The fourth expression is that in the Text, which comes between the first and second, between entring and standing, that is, *coming before God*; *An hypocrite shall not come before him*; that is, God will not have any thing to do with him in a way of favour. Thus he is excluded totally; he shall not enter, saith one Scripture; if he doth, he shall not come before God, saith another; if he come before God, yet he shall not stand in his sight, saith a third; if he stand, yet he shall not dwell with God, saith a fourth. I might add a fifth, which saith, *He shall not inherit the Kingdom of God* (1 Cor. 6. 9.) Now in opposition to all these, the upright and holy are admitted, they have entrance into the House of God, they come before God, they stand in his sight, they dwell with him for ever; yea, they shall not only dwell as servants, or as friends, but as sons, as his first-born, as heirs; all they shall inherit the Kingdom of God. One of the highest priviledges promised unto *Sion* is, that a time shall come when the wicked shall not come unto her (*Isa.* 52. 1.) *Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O* Zion, *put on thy beautiful garments, O* Jerusalem, *the holy City.* Wherefore must *Jerusalem* the holy City awake thus, and be ready in her dress, in her beautiful garments? Why, there is good news for her, *For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean:* As if he had said, *In times of* Sions *defection, or oppression, when there was no due reformation of worship, nor order among worshippers, then the uncircumcised and the unclean came and stood, yea, even dwelt with thee, as thy own children*; *but, O* Jerusalem, *a time shall come when the uncircumcised and the unclean shall not so much as come into thee, they shall be rejected and cast out for ever.* Prophane ones shall find no place at last in *Sion* here below; and hypocrites shall never come into the *Sion* which is above. Some hypocrites will come into the Church when she is most refined; there is no keeping of them out, till they discover themselves, and so are cast out; or apostatize, and so go out of themselves. Possibly the Church militant may be so purged and reformed at last, that as there shall be no prophane in her, so but a few hypocrites. But into the Church triumphant, we are sure, the closest hypocrite shall not enter: God will wash off all the varnish and paint, which they have put upon the face of their profession, with rivers of brimstone, and will give them the cup of his fierce wrath to drink unto eternity.

Hence Observe, First, *Hypocrites are the worst of wicked men.*

Every wicked man is not bad enough to be called an hypocrite. Hypocrites are the chief of sinners; not only the children, but the first-born of the Devil. We may wrong a wicked man, by calling him an hypocrite; but we cannot wrong any hypocrite, by thinking him all that's wicked. The Moralist saith, *When you have said a man is ungrateful, you have said all that is ill of him.* I am sure, when we have said a man is an hypocrite, we have said all that's ill of him; and have called him not only (as we say) *all to nought*, but *all that's nought.* To do wickedly, or to be wicked, is bad enough; but to do wickedness under pretence of goodness; or for a man, whose heart tells him he is wicked, to pretend to goodness, this is abominable. An hypocrite is not worse then other wicked men, because he alwayes hath more sin then they, but because he hides his sin: Nor doth the greatness of his sin lye simply in this, because he hides how sinful he is; but because he appears holy, which he is not; that he seems to be good, is worse then his being really bad. That Satan is the *Prince of darkness*, speaks not so much ill of him, as this, that *he transforms himself into an Angel of light.* An hypocrite never doth good out of love to God, but out of design for himself. He thinks he can impose upon God, and mock him, as one man mocks another; he makes God an Idol, as if he had eyes and could not see; or had no eyes to see his wayes, not understanding to search into his heart. And to shew that hypocrites are the worst of sinners, they are sentenced to the worst of punishments. *An hypocrite shall not come before him*, saith *Job* here; how great a punishment that is, will appear in the next Observation. When Christ would express the forest judgment upon any sort of sinners, he tells them, *They shall have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers*, (Mat. 24. 51.) implying, that the judgment passed upon hypocrites is the most dreadful judgment. Now if the judgment of an hypocrite be the greatest judgment, then the sin of an hypocrite is the greatest sin; for the justice of God takes the measure of punishment by the measure of sin. As every sin deserves punishment; so ever, where the punishment is greater, the sin is greater, either in the matter, or in the circumstances of it. Hypocrites are (as one glosseth this Text in *Matthew*) the freeholders of Hell; other sinners are but as inmates with them, and have but a portion of their misery. Now as that by which other things are proportioned and measured is a perfect measure, and that by which other things are weighed is a perfect weight in its kind: so that by which the greatest misery is weighed and measured, is the most perfect misery in its degree: Seeing then the weight and measure of that misery which rests upon an hypocrite, is used by God himself, to weigh and measure out the misery of those who shall have the greatest misery; therefore the misery of an hypocrite is the greatest; which clearly argues what is here asserted, that his sin is also greatest.

Secondly, Consider in what the punishment of the hypocrite doth consist: *Job* doth not say, *An hypocrite shall be cast to hell*, and tormented in that Lake with fire and brimstone (which yet other Scriptures say) but here *Job* saith only, *An hypocrite shall not come before him*, he shall be banished out of the presence of God. This is his punishment.

Hence Observe, That, *The punishment of loss is a very great punishment, one of the greatest, if not the greatest punishment.*

Sinful man falls under a twofold punishment, First, *of loss.* Secondly, *of sense.* Many dispute which of these is the greatest; and most determine, that the punishment of loss is greater then that of sense. This is the punishment of an hypocrite, *He shall not come before God.* This loss is a great punishment in this life: Not to injoy God by Faith in Ordinances, Promises, and Dispensations, is the great misery of man; hypocrites are denyed this injoyment. For though they come before God (as I said before) and press into his presence, to worship him; though they challenge the Promises, and are apt to flatter themselves, that God is with them in providential Dispensations, yet they have no acceptance with him. God denyeth them his presence: They come to God, but God doth not come to them; though they talk of the Covenant, and lay hold of it, yet it is with a false finger, and God reproves them for their boldness and usurpations (*Psal.* 50. 16.) *Unto the wicked God saith, what hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee?* I grant an hypocrite may have some flushes of the presence of God in Ordinances and duties, and that's his Heaven. This the Apostle calls his *taste of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come* (Heb. 6. 5.) he may have some raisings, yea, supposed ravishings of Spirit at the report and sight of heavenly things: but his taste of these is not spiritual, but sensitive only, such as the understanding gives in to the affections upon any rational discourse or demonstration of objects pleasing to the nature of man: any higher

higher injoyment of God then this the hypocrite tasteth not. And usually he prayeth, and heareth, without any sense of these. He doth nothing with God, while he hath to do with him: And here is his punishment, though he be not sensible of it now, but he shall be sensible of it in the life to come. As he shall not come before God for ever; so he shall know the meaning of it, what it is not to come before him. Carnal men lightly esteem the presence and injoyment of God; yea, they are glad when they are out of his presence. Few know when God is near them, or when he is far off; what his departures mean, or what his returnings. They who know these things, count his presence their greatest gain, and his absence their greatest loss. When God sentenced *Cain* for the murder of his Brother, he complains chiefly of this, (*Gen.* 4. 14.) *Thou hast driven me out this day from thy face*, or, *from thy presence*. And what was that? It was but the common presence of God in Ordinances. *Cain* had been offering sacrifice, and God did not accept him; he could not go from the universal presence of God; and he was not at all admitted to his comfortable presence; yet he looked upon it as his greatest misery, that he was deprived of his common presence in publick worship, from which he was as a person excommunicated. *I am driven out from thy face.* When *Saul* could not get an answer from God, neither by Dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets, this he represents as the worst of his affliction (1 *Sam.* 28.) To be shut out from the sight or society of a man whom we much esteem, is exceeding afflictive. Though *Absalom* was reconciled to *David* his Father, so far as to be admitted to come to the City; yet because *David* gave order that *Absalom should not see his face*, nor come to Court, he could not bear it, but resents this restraint so passionately, that he sends to *Joab*, and bespeaks him thus? *Wherefore am I come from* Geshur? *It had been good for me to have been there still; now therefore let me see the Kings face, and if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me* (2 Sam. 14. 24, 34.) As if he had said, I cannot satisfie my self with my liberty in *Jerusalem*, if I stand excluded from the Kings presence: I had rather dye, then indure this piece of banishment. How then will hypocrites be tormented with an eternal banishment from the face of God! It is the greatest tryal the Saints have in this life, when they loose the sight of God by faith; when they come before God, and cannot find God; when God covers himself with a Cloud (as the Church complains) that they cannot come at him; this is the hardest exercise of the Saints in this life. And O how they are refreshed, when God returns and comes into their spirits; when he sheds his love abroad into their hearts by the Holy Ghost. This is Heaven upon earth; and of this they say as the Disciples at the transfiguration of Christ upon the Mount (*Mat.* 17.) *It is good to be here.* When the Lord Jesus perceived a vail drawn between him and his Father, and that (while he was suffering for the sin, and by the malice and wrath of man) he suffered also an eclipse (though he knew it was not a total one, and would be but a short one) of the light of his Fathers face, how did he cry out (who never shrunk, nor opened his mouth at the scourges and crown of thorns, at the spittings and buffettings, at the nails and spear which tortured his blessed body, how did he cry out I say) at this short desertion, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* (Matth. 27. 46.) Hence take a scantling of those torments which shall vex hypocrites in Hell, who shall be made to know fully (which they have here slighted) what the comfortable presence of God means, and yet shall see themselves shut out from it, without the least hope of any injoyment. And that which will make the suffering of this loss most torturing and insufferable, is, that they shall ever be thinking of it. If a man could forget his losses, how great soever they are, they would be only a privative evil to him, not an afflictive evil; but to be ever thinking of our losses, is to us worse then the loss it self. Now, wicked men shall ever be poring upon the loss of Heaven in Hell, and casting up the sum of it, though they cannot exactly make out the sum. This will be the sting of all their sorrows, and the very head of that poyson'd arrow which shall drink up their spirits. And this arises two wayes: First, From the very conduct of Nature, which alwayes leads our thoughts to, and fastens them upon our losses. As where the pain is, there we point with the finger; so where the loss is, there we dwell with our thoughts. Secondly, This arises inevitably from the justice of God; who having prepared this as the hypocrites punishment, will irresistably hold his thoughts and this loss together; so that it shall not be in his power to lay them aside, or suspend them for one moment. From all these considerations, let the hypocrite understand the terror of this sentence, that he shall not come before God.

If any shall object, How can hypocrites be said to lose this presence of God, seeing they never injoyed it?

I answer, We may be said to lose a thing three wayes. First, As having had and possessed it before; thus hypocrites do not lose the presence of God. Secondly, We may be said to lose that, which hath been offered and tendered to our injoyment: And Thirdly, That which we have hoped to injoy. In these two latter senses, hypocrites lose the presence of God, together with all the blessed concomitants of it. For salvation hath been offered to them, and they have professed, yea, possibly, they have had strong hopes that they should be saved. Whence else is that challenge of admittance (*Matth.* 7. 22.) *Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name?* &c. To whom Christ will profess, *I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.*

Again, *An hypocrite shall not come before him.* Then, who shall come before him? Take the answer to this question, from the mouth of Christ himself (*Matth.* 5. 8.) *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* And the Apostles negative, *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, may be resolved into this affirmative, *Holy ones shall see the Lord, the holy One*; they see God here in a glass darkly, and they shall see him face to face clearly in Heaven. The reason why we see so little of God in the glass of Ordinances and Promises, is, because there is so much unholiness in our hearts: The hypocrite cannot see him at all; and the sincere cannot see much of him, because remaining corruption stands between God and them, hindering their sight. When we shall see God as he is, we shall be like him; and as we grow now to a clearer sight of him, we shall also grow into a fuller likeness with him.

Lastly, For as much as *an hypocrite shall not come before him*, we learn,

That there is no coming before God without Christ.

The reason why an hypocrite shall not come before God, is, because he cannot bring Christ with him; he comes in his own name, and therefore receives nothing from God but frowns, or a command to depart and be gone. Through Christ we have *access with boldness to the throne of grace*; and we may speak to God as to a friend: But they who come boldly before God without Christ, come presumptuously, not believingly; and shall find, that fool-hardness, not faith, hath acted them up to such a confidence. For as *no man can come unto Christ except the Father draw him*; so *none can come unto the Father unless Christ bring him.* Christ takes his people (as it were) by the hand, and leads them up to his Fathers Throne. As when a poor suitor comes to present some request to a great King, he (possibly) dares not come near, till the Favourite, or some eminent Officer of the Court brings him up. 'Tis so here: But as for the hypocrite, he may stay long enough at the door, before Christ vouchsafe to bring him to his Father; and if he shall be so impudent, as to come alone, Christ will quickly turn him back. Man cannot come immediately before God: The hypocrite is out of the Mediator, and therefore *An hypocrite shall not come before him.*

VERS. 17, 18, 19.

Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration, with your ears.
Behold now, I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified.
Who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

JOB had made his Preface, and called for attention at the sixth verse of this Chapter, *Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.* Having spoken a little,

little, he makes a new preface, and again calls up their attention, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration, with your ears.*

There are two parts of this second preface.

In the first, he requireth a fair hearing from his friends, which, with some interpositions of his growing confidence, is contained in these three verses.

In the second, he desireth a fair hearing from God, *vers.* 20, 21, 22.

In this part of the preface directed to his friends, he calls for attention in general at the seventeenth verse, *Hear diligently my speech.* And shews a twofold ground of it, *vers.* 18, 19.

First, From the goodness of his cause, and the clearness of his conscience, at the eighteenth verse, *Behold now, I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified.* A man that is sure he hath a good cause, cares not who hears it, only he would have it well heard.

Secondly, He giveth another ground, from his own necessity, he must be heard, he shall die else; in the latter part of the nineteenth verse, *Who is he that will plead with me? for if now I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.*

Hear diligently my speech.

Job had found his friends unequal hearers, and therefore he begs a better hearing; and to prepare their attention for it, he layes about him (as we use to say) thick and threefold, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration, with your ears.*

Audiendo audite Attentionē ab iis nō quatemcunq; sed maximam efflagitat.

Hear diligently.] The Hebrew is, *Hearing hear*, that is, *Be sure you hear when you hear.* As if he had said, *It is not any kind of attention which will serve my cause, you must give attentive diligence and diligent attention to my words.* The doubling of the word imports two things; either first, that his friends were unwilling to hear; or secondly, that what he had to speak was of very great importance, such as might justly command a double hearing. *Hear diligently my speech.*

Ænigmata. Vulg.

And my declaration.] The Vulgar reads it, *My dark speeches:* But there is no light at all in the Original, leading them to translate *dark speeches.* They say it is because *Job* speaks about a difficult point, or the riddles of providence, shewing how the Lord had afflicted the innocent, and yet is himself just. These indeed are *hard sayings, dark speeches*; and we may grant, that there is a darkness in the matter, a depth and a mysteriousness in what he was about to speak. But *Jobs* design was to speak plain, not in parables, to speak in the sun, not in the clouds. And the Hebrew word in its native importance, is to open or explain, to set a thing forth in lively colours: Which signification is altogether inconsistent with that of the Vulgar, which reades, *Hear my riddle*, or *my dark speech.* Besides, the word [*declaration*] signifies a grave and a weighty speech, a speech which is not froth'd out with light words, nor wrapt up in obscure meanings, but is bottomed upon reason, and ordered with a clearness of discretion. Further, the word (*declaration*) is conceived to be a *law-term*, for he speaks afterwards of pleading, *who will plead with me?* I will make my declaration. In law-suits the Plantiff puts in a declaration of his grievance: so saith *Job*, *Hear now my speech, and my declaration, with your ears.* I am at the bar, let my declaration be read for the opening of my cause.

אחותי
ה הוה
Patefecit, ostendit, quæ significatio est omnino contraria ænigmati, indicationē planam & minimè ambiguam denotans.

With your ears.] The ear is the Organ of hearing, and that only, we have nothing to hear with but the ear, why then doth he say, *hear my declaration with your ears?* when if they heard it at all, they must hear it with their ears. I answer, This is but an enforcement of what he said before, *hear diligently*, that is, *hear with your ears*, be sure you hear, set your ear to work upon it, take heed how you hear, or in hearing be sure you hearken. So in the new Testament often, *he that hath an ear to hear, let him hear*, which is as much as this, let him hear with his ears, that is, let the ear do its work, and not be idle. Every man that hath ears, hath not an ear to hear. Most are like the Idols of the heathen, who have ears but hear not. All ears are shut till Christ bores them to a saving hearing of the word. Till the heart be opened, the ear is deaf, and cannot hear to purpose. Further, take this rule. *It is a heightning of the sense of what we say, when we put the Organ and the act together, and joyn them which cannot be severed:* So, when we hear one say, *I saw it with my mine eyes*; we know he could not see but with his eyes; yet thus he speaks to note the certainty and clearness of the sight he had of such a thing. And thus, *I heard it with mine ears*, is, I heard it certainly, fully, and attentively. Such is the meaning of *Job* in this admonition to his friends, *hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*

Vox ista grave quoddā dictū & sententiam notatu dignā importat, atq; in hoc loco ad forū pertinere putaverim. Gold.

Hence (considering the state of *Job* when he called for this hearing) Observe,

That a man in affliction desires to be heard with much attention.

He that can hardly speak for attending upon his own pains, would fain have others attend to his speech; he would not have his words lost when they come drencht and bedewed with his own tears and blood. The affliction of others should move us to hear them; and they that are in affliction will be sure to put it as a motive why they should be heard. And that's one reason why times of affliction are such special seasons of prayer to God. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray*, Jam. 5.13. As he hath reason to pray then, because of his own need, so he hath an encouragement to pray then, because he may have stronger hopes to speed. God hears at all times with his ears when we pray with our hearts, but his ear is quickest when our wants are sharpest. Afflictions do sometimes hinder us from hearing counsel, yea afflictions hinder some from hearing comforts, (*Exod.*6.9.) *And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel* (what spake he? Not the law which called them to obedience, but a promise which called them out of bondage), *but they hearkned not unto Moses for anguish (or straightness) of spirit, and for cruel bondage.* Their bondage suffered them not to hear of their deliverance out of bondage. But though affliction hinders many from hearing both counsel and comfort, yet they who are in affliction think all bound to hear their complaints.

Secondly, In that *Job* calls so often for attention (for I told you this was his second preface: at the sixth verse he bids them hear and hearken, now he bids them hear again)

Hence Observe, *They who are at ease themselves, are seldom so sensible as they ought of those that are in misery.*

Their pains, their prayers, their tears, are not laid to heart as they ought. The ground upon which the Apostle assures the Saints that they shall be heard when they cry to Christ, when they make declarations of their miseries and sorrows before his throne, is, his sensibleness of their sorrows, (*Heb.* 4. 15.) *We have not an high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin:* Christ was under temptations; he feeleth ours, because he had many of his own to feel. But they who never had experience of sorrows, know not how to hear, especially not how to hear diligently the cryes of those that are in sorrow. See more of this at the fifth verse of the twelfth chapter. Here I shall only add, that there are two sorts of men who are ill-hearers. First, Such as enjoy worldly pleasures and contentments to the full. Secondly, They who are over-full or intangled with worldly cares and businesses: both these are very ill-hearers. And hence I conceive that Proverb (among us) hath its original, when a servant, or any other we have to do with, regards not or forgets what we say; we say to such, *surely you hear with your harvest ears.* Harvest time is a time of great pleasure, and a time of great business: and so the meaning of the Proverb is, you hear as if you were taken up with some other delights or affairs. Most hear the word of God with *harvest ears*, and that's the reason we have so ill a seed-time for the word. While we are sowing the word, most men are in the harvests of their worldly contents and cares, and therefore their harvest in holiness is very small, if any: Most who bring forth fruit, bring forth but very little, and very many bring forth none at all, and all upon this account.

Thirdly Observe, *Job*, though but a man, yet (you see) he expects to be heard: Now

If a man speaking to men takes it ill if he be not heard, how ill may God take it if men will not hear when he speaks?

We put God to many of these prefaces: the Prophets of old, seldom, if ever, came with a message from God, but they begin with, *Thus saith the Lord*, or, *Hear what the Lord saith*, &c. Christ in the Gospel and in his Epistles to the Churches (*Rev.* 2. 3.) repeats this often. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.* So (Psal. 81. 13.) *O that my people had hearkened unto me:* and vers. 8. *Hear O my people, and I will testifie unto thee.* Thus God calls for, yea even begs for hearing. It's a strange condescention, that he should stand wishing for our attention, who (upon the highest terms of Soveraignty) may command our attention. Besides, God hath no need that we should hear him, he doth not speak to us for our help, or to supply his wants, *If he were hungry he would not tell us, for the world is his and the fulness of it,* (Psal. 50. 12.) Now if take it ill, that men will not hear us, when we are hungry to feed us, or when we are weak to help us, how much more may God take it ill at our hands when we will not hear him, who only commands us to our duty, or counsels us for our good? We are apt to think much, if God do not speedily hear our prayers, and grant our requests: what cause do we give God to be angry, when we will not hear his precepts nor hearken to his laws? And yet the Lord instead of anger expresses sometimes nothing but compassion, when he is not heard. *O that my people had hearkened unto me!* God is much dishonoured when he is not heard, and yet he pities those who do not hear him.

Fourthly, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration, with your ears.* Hence Observe,

Weighty and extraordinary matters must be heard with more then ordinary spirits.

Luke 8. *Take heed how you hear.* There is as much danger in hearing ill, as there is benefit and comfort in hearing well. And according to the concernment of the word we hear, ought to be our heed in hearing. He that hears *the word of life, had need to hear for life.*

Fifthly Observe, *It is not unuseful often to stir up our auditors to attention.*

Job makes more prefaces then one to be heard, and he doth more then speak; when he speaks to be heard, he speaks passionately. The Preacher tells us, *that, if the iron be blunt, and a man do not whet the edge, he must put to more strength,* (Eccl. 10. 10.) So we may say in this case, if our hearers are dull, and we do not whet their edge, we must put more strength to it, or rather we lose all our strength, how much soever we put to it. When spirits are low and dead, we must speak to raise and quicken them, or else we speak in vain to instruct or reprove them. We say in our Proverb, *A whet is no let.* He that is whetting his sithe mows no grass, and yet he shall mow little unless he whet. There is as much work done in preparing the instruments with which we work, or the objects upon which we work, as there is in doing the work it self.

Lastly Observe, *That good duties must not only be done, but be done diligently.*

Hear diligently my words. We must not only pray, but pray diligently: not only love God, but love him with all our strength and with all our heart. The manner in which we perform a duty is as much to our acceptance, as the matter of the duty, *Eccl.* 9. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* It is very commendable in our worldly or special callings, to do what we do with our might: but especially when we are about the things of God, which concern our heavenly or general calling, then whatsoever we do, *let us do it with our might*; when you hear, hear with all your might, when you pray, pray with all your might. (*Jer.* 48. 10.) *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully:* we put in the margin, *negligently*, according to the *letter* of the Hebrew: and those two words may very well interpret one another, for he that doth a thing deceitfully, doth it negligently, and he that doth it negligently doth it deceitfully: he doth it as if he would deceive God or men, or both, but at last he deceiveth his own soul. Therefore saith *Job*, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration, with your ears.*

Job having thus renewed his preface for an attentive hearing, proceeds to give them reasons, why he would be heard thus attentively. We have the first in the eighteenth verse.

Vers. 18. **Behold now I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified.**

My business is ready, I have ordered all things, therefore I would be heard. *When we have made great preparations, we do not love disappointments.* As when the King (in the Parable) sent out, saying, *my supper is ready, I have kil'd my oxen and my fatlings,* and all is prepared, come to the marriage, *and they began all to make excuse, he was wroth.* When a feast is provided and set upon the table, and the invited guests come not, who can take it well? Tis so in all other preparations, and this is *Jobs* argument: Hear diligently my speech, I do not call for attention, having nothing to say, or nothing worth the hearing, *I have ordered my cause.*

Primâ argumentū à bona fide & conscientia sua. Jun.

I have ordered.] The word signifieth to order with reason, to methodize things, it is applyed to the marshalling of Armies, and so to words or things wherein skill and art are shewed.

עָרַךְ *significat quicquid certa ratione & ordine disponitur, ut acies,* &c.

My cause.] The Hebrew [*Mizpat*] hath a threefold use. It signifies First, a dispute between parties. Secondly, the sentence of the Judge. Thirdly, the execution of the sentence. In this place the word is taken in the first sense, for the setting and stating of a controversie about which parties are to plead or dispute. *Behold I have ordered my cause;* as if he had said, *I am not come unprepared to this bar; though you through ignorance or prejudice mistake my condition, yet I have examined it and purely considered mine own cause, and upon good grounds I have concluded with my self, that notwithstanding all mine afflictions God hath not punished me for my sin, but still accounts me innocent and righteous.* So the words carry that rejoycing which *Job* had in the integrity of his heart, and goodness of his cause, he having throughly weighed and digested what he had to speak. All things being thus ready he made no question but to go away with victory, and get the day after a full hearing. *I know I shall be justified.*

מִשְׁפָּט *tria continet 1. rationes litigantium. 2. sententiā judicis. 3. executionē sententiæ.* Rab. Sal. *Ad causam meam disputandā compareo sic instructus ut me à vestris criminationibus absolutum iri nō dubitem.* Bez.

I know.] We may distinguish of a threefold knowledge.

First, Notional or speculative, which is the work barely of the understanding. Of that I conceive the Apostle speaks, (*1 Cor.* 8. 1.) *Knowledge puffeth up.* There is a knowledge swimming in the brain, which hath some light, but no heat, much wind, but no nourishment in it.

Secondly, There is an experimental knowledge seated in the heart, and visible in the life: The Samaritans profess this (*John* 4. 42.) *Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ,* that is, we are experimentally convinced by what we have heard and seen, that *this is He.* (Eccles. 8. 5.) *Whoso keepeth the commandment, shall know no evil* (so the Hebrew); we translate it, *he shall feel no evil,* that is, he shall not have an experimental knowledge of evil. A man that keepeth the commandment, knoweth what is evil, or else he could not do that which is good; but he that *keepeth the commandment shall know no evil,* that is, he shall not feel any evil. So we are to understand that of the Apostle, (*2 Cor.* 5. 21.) where he saith, that *Christ knew no sin,* shall we think that Christ died for he knew not what? He died to take away sin, and did not he know what sin was? Yes, Christ knew fully what sin was, he knew what the nature, and what the effects of it were: but he knew no sin experimentally, he felt no sin in his own heart, he acted no sin in his life. We say to a man that liveth in prosperity, *You never knew poverty*; and to an healthy man, *You never knew sickness.* This is experimental knowledge.

There is a third kind of knowledge, which we call *fiducial*, when the heart cleaveth to, or is assertain'd of what we know. Of this we are to understand the Apostle *John* (*1 Ep.* 2. 3.) *And hereby do we know that we know him.* To know that we know, is to be assured that we know. And again,

in

in the fifth Chapter of the same Epistle, ver. 13. *These things have I written to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know, that ye have eternal life.* We may believe, and yet not know that we shall live, much less that we have eternal life. Many have a vital act, who have not a fiducial act of faith: And therefore, while the Apostle in this verse, saith, *I have written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God*, he saith also, *I have written, that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.* If they did believe before, why doth he write unto them that they might believe? They had the faith of adherence and recumbence; but he desires to raise and heighten them to the faith of evidence and assurance. Such a faith the Apostle expresseth (2 Cor. 4. 14.) *Knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.* (*Knowing this*) How did the Apostle know this? Not barely by speculation, not at all by experience, for he was not yet raised up: But he was assured of it, as if it had been already done, *That he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus.*

When *Job* saith, *I know I shall be justified*, his was not a speculative knowledge, but partly an experimental knowledge, for he found that he was already justified; and partly a *fiducial knowledge*; *I know*; that is, I am sure, that the Lord will justifie me, and that I shall depart from his bar acquitted in this controversie. He doth not say, I know that I have not sinned; but I know that I shall be justified from my sin; and not only carry this present cause, but continue in the love and gracious acceptance of God for ever.

Justus inveniver pronunciaverq. Justum esse nihil aliud importat quã in causa obtinere & a judice sententiam in favorem accipere. Justus invenitur in judicio, non qui culpa caret, sed qui justus declaratur. Sanct.

I shall be justified. Justification is the declaring of a man to be just: He is just, not only who hath no sin, but he who is acquitted from his sin; or to whom his sin is not imputed. He is righteous, whom God pronounceth righteous, though in himself ungodly; for God justifieth the ungodly, *Rom.* 4. 5. *Job* knew he was thus justified; yet, I conceive the justification strictly intended here, is the determination of the question between him and his Friends on his side; which yet reached his total standing in a state of justification. This he opposeth to what he had affirmed of the hypocrite in the former words, *An hypocrite shall not come before him*; that is, he shall not be justified; but I know that I shall be justified.

Hence Observe, First, *That a godly man, even in this life, may arrive at assurance that he is, and shall continue in a good, in a justified condition.*

It is good to be justified; but it is better to know that we shall be justified. There are three Graces spoken of by the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 13. 13.) *Faith, Hope, and Love.* And the Scripture holds out an assurance in reference to every one of these. First, The assurance of Faith (*Heb.* 10. 22.) *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith.* This assurance of Faith hath a double respect: First, to our persons; Secondly, to our services; that in both we are pleasing unto God. Secondly, There is an assurance of Hope, (*Heb.* 6. 11.) *We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of Hope unto the end.* Faith hath an eye to the truth of the Promise; Hope to the good of the Promise; and the assurance of Hope is, that we shall certainly receive that good. Thirdly, There is also an assurance of Love (1 *John* 4. 18.) *Perfect love casteth out fear.* How is Love made perfect? and how doth it cast out fear? *Herein* (saith the seventeenth verse) *is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world*; that is, as his love is sincere to us, so is ours to him (according to our measure) even in this life, and this gives us boldness or assurance, that all shall go well with us in the day of judgment, or in the next life; and so this love casteth out all fear of condemnation in that day; which fear, where it remains (as the Apostle concludes) *hath torment*, then which, nothing is more contrary to assurance. In perfect love there is no torment, because there is no fear; and there is no fear, because there is an assurance of the Love of God. In this love the soul doth repose, rest, and delight it self. There is a fourth thing spoken of, to which also assurance is annexed, (*Col.* 2. 2.) *The full assurance of understanding:* This is the clearness of our apprehensions about the things which we believe, and upon which we fasten by Faith and Love. The light of the understanding shining upon the mysteries of the Gospel, and mixing with our other graces, bottoms the soul upon the strongest foundation, and raiseth it up to the higest pinnacle of assurance. We may say of assurance, in reference unto these *four Graces*, as Philosophers do of the Heavens, in reference to the *four Elements*; they tell us the Heavens are neither *earth nor air*, neither *fire* nor *water*; but they are *a quintessence, or a fifth essence.* So we may say, assurance is neither *faith*, nor *hope*, nor *love*, nor *knowledge*, but it is a fifth thing, sublimated and raised, either out of, or above all these: It is somewhat of each of these; but more then all these. *I know that I shall be justified*, is more then knowledge, or love, or hope, or faith, even the result of them all in their best perfections. Knowledge above knowledge, is the assurance of understanding: Faith above faith, is the assurance of faith: Hope and love above hope and love, are the full assurance of hope and love made perfect. This is called by the Apostle (*Rom.* 4.) *A full perswasion. Abraham* (saith the Text, *ver.* 21.) *being fully perswaded.* It is a Metaphor taken from Ships that come into an harbour with full sail; so doth the Soul sometimes: It comes into the port of a heavenly peace, with full sail, with top and top gallant (as we use to say) with all the sails spread, and colours flying. So it was with *Abraham*, there was not any sail of his soul but was filled with the wind of assurance. This is called (*John* 14. 21.) the manifestation of Christ to the soul: *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest my self to him.* Christ is manifested to many by the reading and preaching of his Word; but he manifests himself only unto some by the light and influences of his Spirit. The former is common to all who live within the sound of the Gospel; the latter is the sole priviledge of those who obey the Gospel; nor do all these receive this priviledge now; very few injoy it at all times. Christ loves many a soul, to whom he doth not presently manifest his love. God hath love laid up in his heart for all his; but he doth not *shed his love abroad into all their hearts, by the holy Ghost* (Rom. 5. 8.) *The first fruits of the Spirit* (Rom. 8. 23.) *The witness of the Spirit* (ver. 16. of that Chapter.) *The sealing of the Spirit* (Eph. 1. 14.) *The earnest of the Spirit* (2 Cor. 5. 5.) are not bestowed upon every Believer at all times, and not sensibly upon some at all in this life: And all these are but several expressions of this one thing, our *knowing that we shall be justified*: Yet in this many of the Saints have gloried before they came to glory. *Habakkuk* had it in the height; so had many of the old Worthies, *Heb.* 11. 13, 35. Though their Gospel-light was not so clear as the Gospel-light after Christ came, yet *they saw the Promises afar off, they imbraced them, and were perswaded of them*; by these three steps, of seeing, imbracing, and perswasion, they ascended to an assurance, or knowledge, that they should be justified.

But some may say, These were extraordinary men; can ordinary Believers attain to, or know this?

All do not know it, but all may. There are but some Believers who reach this perfection, yet all should be aiming at, and reaching after it. And though they were extraordinary men in whom the Scripture gives instance, such as *Abraham, Habbakkuk, Paul*, &c. yet as the Apostle saith of some under eminent temptations, (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man*; so we may say of those who attained those eminent consolations, there is no consolation hath been given unto those, but what is common to Believers. For as few men fall into all those temptations which are common to man, so few Believers attain all those consolations which are common to Believers. Some are slothful, and will not give diligence to make their calling and election sure; others cannot find it sure to them (though it be in it self) notwithstanding all their diligence.

If any object further, that of the Apostle (*Rom.* 11. 20.) *Be not high minded, but fear.*

I answer, That fear is a duty, which is opposed to high-mindedness; but, that fear is, at least, an affliction, which is opposed to stedfastness. Again, this is not spoken to nourish doubting, whether we are justified, or no; but to preserve us from presumption when we are justified. So we may answer these places (*Prov.* 28. 14.) *Blessed is the man that*

that feareth always. (Phil. 2. 12.) *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* These seem to call Christians to live in a doubtful condition, or in a state of trepidation, always fearing: but their intendment is, not to keep the soul from being setled by faith in Christ, but from being high flown in any opinion of our selves: or the Spirit speaks thus, not to put us upon doubts of our standing, but to preserve us from falling. For these cautions are so far from opposing assurance, that they strengthen it. The way not to be afraid is thus to fear: Nor are any so sure as they, who thus tremble. They that are working out their salvations with fear and trembling, may know without fear and trembling that they shall be saved: And they that thus fear always, may be assured that they shall be above fear for ever. But say some, the Preacher speaks out against this knowledge, *Eccles.* 9. 1. *No man knoweth love or hatred.* It is true, *not by all that is before him.* We cannot know love and hatred from the works of God without us; but we may know love and hatred by the work of God upon us, or by the workings of God within us. We cannot fetch an evidence that God loves us out of our chests and money-bags; nor can we read an assurance, or a conveyance for Heaven, in the assurances and conveyances of our lands; but we may fetch this evidence, and read this conveyance from, and in the Covenant of grace, received by faith, witnessed and sealed to our hearts by the holy Spirit.

Secondly, When was it that *Job* manifested this height of assurance? *I know that I shall be justified.* It was after he had said, *I have ordered my cause.*

Hence Observe, *That true assurance, or a knowledge that we shall be justified, ariseth from a due consideration of the state of our hearts and lives.*

I have ordered my cause, and now I know. *Job*'s assurance did not grow whilest he slept, or was secure; his was not an assurance arising from negligence, but from diligence. Some conclude what they have no premises for: They will conclude for Heaven and glory, they make no doubt but they shall be saved; but they have no foundation to build this tower of assurance upon, they can say nothing to warrant, or bear up their confidence. It is an easie thing to say, *I know I shall be justified*; but it is an hard thing for a man to say, *I have ordered my cause.* They who say they know they shall be justified, before they have ordered their cause, do *but build castles in the air*; whereas this Castle should be built upon Christ, he is the foundation. Some are as confident as confidence it self, who yet are as ignorant as ignorance it self: Some are as confident as confidence it self, who yet are as prophane as prophaneness it self; as proud as pride it self, as worldly as the world it self: Is this the ordering of our cause? Or can they order their cause, whose hearts and lives are thus out of order? A true Believer is able to shew somewhat for it, why he is so sure: He can shew Christ (as I may so speak) his bracelets and his love-tokens; he can tell Christ of the secret smiles and kisses which he hath given his soul some time or other: He can say, Christ is come to me both by water and blood; he can produce the graces and the actings of his Spirit, and can say, by these I am assured, by these I am grown up to this perswasion, that nothing shall ever separate me from the love of God. If any man say he is sure, he shall be justified; let him consider how he came by his assurance: Have you ordered your cause, and viewed your state in the glass of the Word? Hath that presented to you justification, pardon and peace flowing to you in the blood of Christ? If it be so, you may say as *Job* here, *I know I shall be justified.* But disordered causes can never leave assurance of any thing but of wrath and death.

Job having thus made out his first ground, why he would be heard and come to a tryal, proceeds to another, in the nineteenth verse.

Verse 19. **Who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.**

Who is he that will plead with me?] Where is the man? The words, as the former, speak the greatness of his spirit? *Job* durst bid battel, and send a challenge to all opposites in the world. He throws down his Gauntlet to all comers,. Let me see the man that dares undertake me in this dispute? *Who is he that will plead with me?*

Job speaks not proudly, or vainly, confiding in his own strength, or wit, in his nimble tongue, or quick invention; he speaks thus, trusting in the power of Christ, and as being assured of such an interest and estate in him, as all the opposition in the world should never be able to overthrow.

Job speaks like another *Goliah*, who (1 *Sam.* 18. 8, 9.) *stood and cried to the Armies of* Israel, *and said unto them, why are you come out to set your battel in array? Chuse you a man for you, and let him come down to me, if he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.* In such a manner (but with no such spirit) *Job* speaks here, where's the man? Chuse out who you will to plead and to dispute with me. Thus *Job* challenged like *Goliah*, but he fought like *David* (ver. 45.) *In the Name of the Lord of hosts.*

Hence Observe, *He that is sincere, fears not to come to tryal.*

The righteous is bold as a Lyon. He is so far from declining tryal, that he invites it; where is the man that will plead me? But I will not stay upon this, having been led to it by a former passage.

Secondly Observe, *A soul that is sincere and well bottomed upon the grace of God in Christ, is unconquerable.*

Job knowing he should be justified, calls out, Who is he that will plead with me? As the Apostle sends a challenge in the behalf of Believers (*Rom.* 8. 33.) *Who shall condemn? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* Let me see the man, or devil, who dares. So Believers are able to send challenges themselves. Who is it that will plead with us? But are there none will do it? Will none accept their challenge? Yea, many may be found to plead with them, but none can overcome them. This Text in *Job*, and the point grounded upon it, is of the same interpretation with that (*Rom.* 8. 31.) *If God be with us, who can be against us? Who can be against us?* Many are against those with whom God is; yea, many will be against them, because God is with them. *They are most opposed by men, whom God owneth most.* But who can be against us, to overthrow and conquer us? We shall stand against all opposition, if God be with us. So here, who will plead with me? *Job* had those that would plead with him, he wanted not undertakers; there was *Eliphaz*, *Bildad*, and *Zophar*, these pleaded with him, but these did not overcome him. God gives sentence for *Job*, Chap. 42. 7. *Ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant* Job *hath.* The Prophet brings in Jesus Christ in such a triumph of spirit over all possible enemies or oppofers (*Isa.* 50. 7, 8.) Whereas he had shewed Christ professing, that all his power to fulfil the active part of his Mediatorship, was derived to him from his Father (*ver.* 4.) *The Lord hath given to me the tongue of the Learned,* &c. So there he shews that all the strength and courage with which he was armed to suffer or contend in the passive part of his Mediatorship, was also derived to him from his Father, and maintained in him by a continual supply of his assistance. *The Lord God will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed: He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us stand together* (as Plaintiff and Defendant use to do in a Law suit before the Judge) *who is mine adversary?* (or master of my cause, or owner of my judgment, that entreth his action against me) *let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me: who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat them.* These words are a comment upon *Job*, and fully explain his meaning: Both give us the strength of this Observation,

That the Lord being near to a soul, and standing on his side, he can never be prevailed against.

The Apostle *Paul* applyes that of the Prophet (which originally belongs to Christ) to the comfort of every Believer (*Rom.* 8. 33, 34.) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that dyed, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God.* Here are the holy challenges

Sermæ ad modum conscientiæ, in trepidæ mentis, & ad certamen spirituale quemq; provocantis verba sunt. Nemo est qui me in mea causa convincere potest. Mer.

challenges of faith; faith is ready for all comers. If the Law come to plead with us, faith tells it, that Christ hath fulfilled the Law for us. If sin come to oppose us, faith tells it, Christ *in the similitude of sinful flesh hath condemned sin in the flesh.* If death come and look the soul in the face, faith answers, *Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel*: Yea, faith can, not only answer, but scorn death, *O death, where is thy sting?* If the Devil come, faith tells him, he is but a conquered enemy, and that *Christ hath* (long since) *spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly; that Christ came to destroy* (and hath destroyed in us) *the works of the devil.* Thus faith repels the charge of the law, of sin, of hell, and of the devil; yea, if *God himself* frown upon the soul, and his wrath seem to burn as hot as fire against us, faith can tell *God himself*, that Christ hath paid our debt, and given a ransom to God for us, and therefore knows that he will not require it of us again, because *he is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* If none of these, if neither law, nor sin, nor death, nor devil, no nor God himself (considering how he hath been pleased to condescend to poor sinners, and ingage himself to Christ on our behalf) can plead down the believing soul, then nothing can. Nor did *Job* boast beyond his line, when he said, *Who will plead with me?*

Lastly, These words, *Who will plead with me?* hold forth, not only *Job*'s courage that he durst, in this case, speak with any living, but also the necessity which pressed him to speak, which was such, that if he did not speak, he could not live, as is clear in the last clause of this verse,

For now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *If now I speak not; I should starve.*

Nunc enim silebo & expirabo.

The Original may be literally rendred thus, *For now I shall be silent, and give up the ghost.* And so the meaning is, as if *Job* were hastning his undertakers to this quarrel, wishing them to make speed and come to plead with him, that he might try out this business by dint of argument, because he saw death ready to put him to silence: *I shall dye*, and then it will be too late to argue or speak with me, therefore while I live, and I perceive I shall not live long, let us try it out, and see what you have to say against me.

Secondly, These words, *If I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost*, may note two things. First, That *Job* was filled with abundance of matter, which was exceeding burthensome to keep within his breast, therefore he must needs vent, and let it out. As if he had said, I have so much to speak, that it will even kill me if I should conceal it. *Elihu* was in the same case (*Job* 32. 17.) *I also* (saith he) *will shew mine opinion; for I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me: Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles; I will speak that I may be refreshed, I will open my lips and answer.* *Elihu* was constrained to open his mind, it would be an ease to him to speak. So saith *Job*, *Now if I hold my tongue I shall give up the ghost.* Or secondly, It may note, that *Job* was much afflicted, and exceedingly troubled in his spirit at what his Friends had spoken to him, and charged upon him. And so it is, as if he had said, you have so tormented me with your reasonings, that if I have not liberty to justifie mine own innocency, my heart will break: It were better for me to dye, then to live stained with such imputations; and I know not how to live, unless I may wipe them off.

Satius mihi fuerat mori quamsile re tio causam meam prodere. Bez. *Non possum me continere quin loquar; Alioquin moriendum mihi est.* Merc.

Hence Observe, First, *It is a pain not to speak when we are much ingaged to speak.*

Thus the Prophet complains (*Jer.* 20. 9.) *I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.* As some are wearied with speaking; so some are wearied because they do not speak: They are tired with holding their tongues, as much as some are with using them. Words kept in are as great a burthen to some, as words spoken out are to others. When a man is under such a pressure, he finds no rest till he hath delivered himself. When *Joseph*'s Brethren came to him, he hid his affections a great while; but as soon as he saw his Brother *Benjamin*, he could not refrain; he must go into a private place to weep, and spend his passion, else it would have broak out before them all. 'Tis so with us when we have much to say to God in prayer; the heart hath a load upon it, and cannot be quiet, it is ready to break and give up the ghost, until we have broken or opened our minds to God.

From the second sence Observe, *That a man can easier dye, then suffer blots to lye upon his integrity.*

Our reputation should be dearer to us then our lives; therefore saith *Job*, *If I keep silence, I shall give up the ghost*; I cannot bear this. He was not so sensible of any of his sufferings as of this. And as it is an ease, so it is a duty to repair our own credit, and to take off what we find unjustly charged upon us: especially when it reflects upon Religion, as it did in *Job*'s case. His Friends suspected him of hypocrisie, *Is this thy fear; thy confidence, and the uprightness of thy wayes?* These jealousies stirred up the spirit of *Job* to call for his Adversaries, and provoke them to appear and plead it out with him. I have from other passages toucht this point before, and shall therefore add no more here.

VERS. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my self from thee.
Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.
Then call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me.
How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.

IN the three former verses, *Job* prefac'd to his Friends, and bespake their attention; being so well assured of his cause, that he sate down under the comfort of this conclusion, *I know that I shall be justified.* Here, in the three first verses of this Context, *Job* bespeaks God himself, and seems to indent with him upon some conditions before he would speak further, or proceed in this dispute.

Verse 20. **Only do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my self from thee.**

As if he had said, I am willing to argue, but it must be upon these precautions.

Cautionem videtur à Deo petere ante disputationis congressum. Pined. Duo, *ut scilicet mecum litiges & simul me affligas & terres.*

Some understand those words, **Only do not two things unto me**: As if *Job* had desired God not to do two things unto him at once; that is, not to afflict him, and confer with him, not to smite him and dispute with him together; it is too much to be at two such works, or rather to be doing and suffering at one time: Therefore do not two things to me, any one of these is exercise enough for one man at once.

What the two things he would not have done unto him were, are set down in the next verse. First, *Withdraw thine hand far from me*, &c. Secondly, *Let not thy dread*, &c. *Then call thou*, &c.

In that *Job* desires God would not do these two things unto him,

Observe, First, *That all sufferings are not equal, there is a gradual difference among sufferings as well a specifical.*

As all sins, so all sufferings are not equal. Some sins are more grievous and burthensome to God then others are, (*Jer.* 44. 4.) *I did send unto you all my servants the Prophets, saying, O do not this abominable thing which I hate. This abominable thing.* There were many other abominable things which the Lord hated, and which he would not have that people do; but their idolatrous worship, their burning incense to strange Gods, was a special abomination, *O do not this abominable thing which I hate.* Now, as some sins are more grievous unto God then others, and therefore he desires earnestly, that we would not burthen him with them: So the Lord layes some afflictions upon his people, which are more grievous to them then any other could be, and therefore they cry out, *O do not this unto us:* This is sad.

Hence Note again, That, *We are apt to think we can bear any affliction better then that which we fear or feel.*

O do not these two things unto me! Were it any thing else, I might undergo it, but I am not able to endure these. Some speak thus of any affliction; and he that hath pain in any part of his body, is apt to judge; were this pain somewhere else, I could bear it better: We are very prone to dispute the dispensations of God, and to think that he might place his chastenings (if he must chastise us) some where else, as much to his own glory, and not so much to our sorrow. *Only do not two things unto me.* What then?

Then will I not hide my self from thee.

The Hebrew is, *Then will I not hide my self from thy face.* But suppose the Lord would not do those two things for *Job*, could he hide himself from his face? *David* saith (*Psal.* 139. 4.) *Whither shall I go from thy presence?* It should seem *Job* had some whither to go out of the presence of God: *Elihu* in the 34th of this book, *vers.* 22. tells us, *There is no darkness nor shadow of death where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves.* How is it then that *Job* saith he would not hide himself, when as indeed he could not, upon what terms soever God should deal with him?

I answer; when *Job* saith, *I will not hide my self*, he intends not this, that he could hide himself; but that (if God would not do those two things to him) he should have no cause to hide himself. Hiding proceedeth from a double cause. First, from fear, (*Isa.* 2. 19.) *They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* Here is hiding for fear. So (1 *Kin.* 22. 25.) the Prophet *Micaiah* having received such course usage from King *Ahab*, tells him to his face, *Behold thou shalt see in that day when thou shalt go into an inner chamber to hide thy self.* Secondly, Hiding proceeds from shame; a man that is ashamed dares not shew his head. That hiding of our first parents was the effect of both these (*Gen.* 3. 10.) In their innocency they were naked and were not ashamed: but after they had sinned they ran amongst the thickets to hide themselves, being both ashamed and afraid: (*vers.* 10.) *I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid my self.* Fear and shame made him hide himself, when once he had sinned. When *Job* resolves, *then I will not hide my self from thee*, his meaning is, I will not be afraid to appear before thee, nor ashamed to speak unto thee; so he explains himself at the 22th verse, *Then call thou and I will answer, or let me speak, and answer thou me*, that is, I would come forth boldly, and stand with confidence at thy Tribunal. I shall give you a note from this, when I have shewed the matter of *Jobs* deprecation, *Do not two things unto me*: What two things?

Ritsi nihil mihi cõscius sum, me tamẽ abscõderẽ & latebras quærerem nisi benevolẽtiæ tuæ ostensione roborarer.

Vers. 21. **Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread terrifie me; or, let not thy dread make me afraid.**

These are the two things which he so earnestly deprecates. And for the removal of both these, he prayed as earnestly once before, almost in the same words, (*chap.* 9. *vers.* 34, 35.) *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me; then would I speak, and not fear him, but it is not so with me.* Having opened these two verses there at large, I shall refer the Reader thither: yet because (though the matter be the same) the expressions vary, I shall a little insist upon them.

Withdraw thine hand far from me.] That's his first condition. *By the hand of God*, he means either the afflictions which were upon him, and so it is as much as this, mitigate my sufferings, abate my pains, release me from my sorrows. The word which he useth, *Chap.* 9. 34. for *the rod of God*, is the same in effect which he useth here for *the hand of God*; only with this difference, this properly signifies *the palms of the hand*; *Withdraw thy palms from me:* To strike with the palm of the hand, is to strike like a father; a blow with the palm of the hand, may have more smart with it, but it hath not so much force and wrath with it as a blow with the fist or hand closed. Yet I conceive *Jobs* intent is the same in both, and though he received stroaks of all sorts, some with the palm, others with the fist, some greater, some less, yet all were with the hand of a father: nevertheless, *Job* desires God would withdraw his hand, though he knew it was a fathers hand, because while the smart and pain of that was so vehement upon him, he could not speak nor manage his cause before him freely; *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

הרחיק longe fac à me, כף habetur hic nõ יד quod cap. 9. 34. virgam, hic palmã i. e. plagã significat. Merc.

Further, There was another thing, which this request of *Job* may bear an allusion to, *Remove thine hand away from me.* It was a custome among the Ancients, to lay the hand upon the head of an offender, as a token of his condemnation. And that's the reason why the hand was laid upon the head of the sacrifice, when all the sins of the people were confest over it; shewing, that the sacrifice was (as it were) condemned to die, typifying the death of Christ, who was condemned for us, God having *laid upon him the iniquities of us all.* Now saith *Job*, *Remove thine hand away from me:* thou seemest to act towards me as if thou wert angry, or didst intend to pronounce a sentence of condemnation against me; O do not deal thus with me! How shall I treat with thee, whilst thou seemest to have such hard thoughts of me? Therefore, *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

But, what was it that lay upon *Job* as the hand of God? I shewed before, that it was his affliction, which though in it self, it be no argument that God condemns, yet in the opinion of some men it is; and *Jobs* friends did therefore think God condemned him, because they saw he afflicted him. So then, the removing of those afflictions, in reference to which his friends pronounced him condemned by God, would be as the withdrawing of the hand from the head of an offender, a sign of his acquitting and absolution.

Hence Note, First, *Afflictions are grievous to the sensitive part of the best and holiest men.*

Even a *Job* prayeth, *Withdraw thine hand away from me.* There is no affliction for the present that is joyous but grievous; and as it is grievous to natural men, so it is grievous to the natural part of spiritual men. It is nothing else but grievous unto carnal men, they find no comfort, no sweet at all in it, the Saints do: their inward man hath joy and refreshing in their sorrows, but their outward man feels smart; therefore, *Remove thine hand away from me.*

Secondly Observe, *While afflictions are sharp upon us, it is hard to compose the spirit to think of, or speak aright to God.*

This discovers their folly, who put off the great businesses about which they are to treat with God, to a sick bed. *Job* saith to God, take away thy hand, and then I will speak: these say we will speak to God when his hand is upon us; we will look to the health of our souls when our bodies are sick: But how rare is it to find a sick body and a quiet mind together. *Job* could not argue with God about his innocency while he was greatly afflicted, how then shall others about the setling of their eternal peace and the pardon of their? We are more prone to impatience then to repentance in the day of our distress.

Thirdly Observe, *It is lawful to pray for the removing of afflictions.*

Withdraw thine hand away from me, was a good petition; we may make such petitions unlawful if we put our wills as a law to God, and do not leave all to the will of God. We may pray for the thing, but we must submit the circumstances of it, the time of it, the manner of it, to the wisdom of God. While we desire him to withdraw his hand, we should get our hearts willing to bear his hand; that's a gracious frame of heart indeed. As it is the worst frame of heart to pray for the pardon and removing of our sins, while we find a willingness, much more a resolvedness in our hearts to continue in them; so it is the best frame of heart to pray for the removing of afflictions, whilest we find a willingness to continue under them, if God shall so dispense and please. See more of this, *Chap.* 9. 34. *Withdraw thine hand away from me,*

And let not thy dread make me afraid.

Thy dread.] Giants are called *Emims*, from this word (because they are terrible to beholders.) And so are Idols; because

אימה Terror unde Enim Gigantes.

becauſe though they are indeed but meer ſcarcrows and bugbears, yet they are terrible to the ignorant and unbelieving, as was further ſhewed, *Chap.* 9. 34.

What was this *dread?* It may either be, that terrour which accompanied his afflictions, there being as it were ſome ſparklings of Gods anger mixed with them. When God gives us the bittereſt cup of affliction to drink, if he do but drop in a little of his love we take it down as a pleaſant draught; but if he drop the leaſt of his anger into the cup of affliction, this is dreadful. Hence *David* prayeth, (*Pſal.* 6. 1.) *O Lord rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure.* He doth not pray abſolutely, let me not be rebuked, but *rebuke me not in thine anger*, let me ſee thy love in my rebukes. He knew God did love him, but he could not ſee it: God rebuked him, and he perceived nothing but anger; God chaſtened him, and he ſaw nothing but diſpleaſure, yea, and hot diſpleaſure; this made him cry out, *O Lord rebuke me not*, &c.

Secondly, This *dread* may be taken for the majeſtical preſence of God; though there be no lettings out of his anger or diſpleaſure, yet the very appearance of God to poor duſt and aſhes hath a dread in it, ſuch a dread, as not only ſtrikes the moſt eloquent man dumb, but the ſtouteſt dead: The majeſty of God is infinitely above the creature; therefore he ſaith to *Moſes*, *No man can ſee my face and live:* there is ſo much dread in the face of God, that man cannot behold it. We may conceive the Lord at this time letting out much of himſelf to *Job*, his terrour was upon him. God ſhews himſelf to man two wayes.

Firſt, In ſome external viſible form, ſo he often appeared to the Fathers in the Old Teſtament. 'Tis the opinion of ſome that the Lord ſhewed his dreadfulneſs to *Job* by an outward apparition.

Secondly, God ſhews himſelf to the mind of man: and as the appearances of God to ſenſe are very dreadful, ſo are thoſe which he makes to faith. They who have no outward viſions of God, are yet often terrified at the mental apprehenſions of his Glory and Majeſty. Faith makes things preſent, and doth evidence them to the ſoul as fully as ſenſe can. God cannot be ſeen, yet faith can give us a ſight of God, a ſight of his power, and of his wrath, as well as of his goodneſs and mercy: and until the Lord withdraw that, and put other evidences before the eye of the ſoul, there's no peace. That's the reaſon why many wicked men have been brought to utter deſpair, and die in horrour of conſcience: they apprehend the wrath of God revealed againſt them, and their conſciences are affected with it; there is a kind of faith upon their conſciences, ſuch as the devils have, who *believe and tremble:* and ſo do wicked men, they are full of trembling and aſtoniſhment at thoſe repreſentations of the greatneſs, Power and Majeſty of God which their faith makes to them. Now as it is with them, ſo it may be with true Believers much more: they have deep and terrible apprehenſions of God; and according to the degree of this faith, is the degree of terrour which falls upon them, (*Pſal.* 90. 11.) *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear ſo is thy wrath.* Though the diſpleaſure of God be as himſelf, alwayes alike, yet to thoſe whoſe hearts are tender, the diſpleaſure of God is more grievous. Hard hearts have no fear in them, and to them the diſpleaſure of God is nothing, they dread it not, they will venture upon the Pikes, and ruſh upon the Swords point. *Job* was a tender hearted man, he feared God, therefore theſe appearances of God to his faith did exceedingly affect and trouble him: So he ſpeaks, *Chap.* 31. 23. *For deſtruction from God was a terrour to me, and by reaſon of his highneſs I could not endure.*

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The holy God is in himſelf very dreadful to the moſt holy and upright among the children of men.*

Job had ſaid, *Chap.* 10. 7. *Lord, thou knoweſt that I am not wicked:* and at the eighteenth verſe of this chapter, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* What a faith was here! Yet now he confeſſeth, *Thy terrour makes me afraid.* Where was there a holier man then *Habakkuk?* yet read the third chapter of that propheſie, and you ſhall find how he ſhook and trembled, how his lips did quiver, and rottenneſs entred into his bones, and all at the apprehenſions he had of the Majeſty and greatneſs of God. That holy Prophet *Iſaiah*, how was he affected when God appeared to him! he crieth out, *Wo is me, for I am undone, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoaſts.* When the Lord appeared to publiſh that holy Law, how did the people tremble! *O* (ſay they) *let Moſes ſpeak to us, but do not thou ſpeak leſt we die*, Exod. 19.

Secondly Note, *That God doth ſometimes appear to his people in Majeſty only, and not in mercy.*

He letteth out his glory and his greatneſs, but conceals his goodneſs, his loving kindneſs and compaſſion. They can ſee a holy God, a juſt God, a high God, a glorious God, but they do not ſee a merciful God. God acts not as a natural, but as a voluntary agent, and therefore he can ſuſpend or diſpenſe himſelf as he pleaſeth. The Sun hath light, but the Sun (being a natural agent) cannot ſuſpend its light; it alwayes ſhews its brightneſs and beauty, except ſome cloud interpoſe, or the moon eclipſe it: but the Lord who is light and all light, doth not alwayes manifeſt himſelf in light; he puts clouds and darkneſs round about him, he hideth his face and will not be ſeen. Sometimes he appears all mercy, and at other times all juſtice; ſometimes all goodneſs, and at other times all wrath; ſometimes he lets out nothing but love, and at other times nothing but diſpleaſure: Now as he varies his diſpenſations to us, ſo we are apt to vary in our apprehenſions of him: and as we cannot ſee God at all until he manifeſt himſelf, ſo we ſee him no otherwiſe then he pleaſeth to manifeſt himſelf: Hence the ſame ſoul ſees him to day all mercy, and the next day, poſſibly, the next hour, all juſtice: Now his goodneſs refreſheth, and anon his dread terrifies.

Thirdly Obſerve, *That as ſome afflictions are more grievous then others, ſo thoſe are moſt grievous to a godly man, which carry any appearance of the diſpleaſure of God.*

O let not thy dread terrifie me. All ſufferings cannot terrifie, where God ſhews his love; and any will, where he ſhews his dread. If a man were in hell aſſured of the love of God, he could rejoyce; and if he were in heaven under thoughts of his wrath, he could not but tremble. His love is better then heaven, and his wrath is worſe then hell.

Laſtly Note, As a deduction from the whole, *That if a godly man may be thus terrified with the Majeſty of God, how terrible will the wrath of God be to the wicked!*

Job was not afraid of the wrath of God againſt his perſon, for he had ſaid immediately before, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* If the Majeſtical dread of God ſwallow up the beſt, the holieſt men, how will the dreadful Majeſty of God ſwallow up wicked men! how will he conſume them, who is to his own as a conſuming fire! We may argue here as the Apoſtle *Peter* doth in language near to this (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?*

Job having thus deprecated the terrour of the Lord, *Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid:* reſolves (upon the ſuppoſition of this grant) what to do;

Verſ. 22. **Then call thou, and I will anſwer, or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.**

This is as much and in effect no more then he ſaid before, *Chap.* 9. 3. *Then would I ſpeak and not fear him:* yet here he a little amplifies what he ſaid there; for though *Job* doth often ſpeak the ſame thing for ſubſtance, yet his expreſſions are full of uſeful variety, new flowers of Rhetorick, and new actings of his affections ſhew themſelves. There it was, *Then I will ſpeak and not fear him:* here, *Let him call and I will anſwer, or let me ſpeak, and anſwer thou me.*

Actor vocat reū, reus reſpondet: ita conflatur judiciū cū vocatione intelligitur actio, & cū reſponſione defenſio.

Job in theſe words, gives God his choice to take which part he pleaſed. As in law ſutes, one ſuſtains the part of the Plaintiff, and another ſuſtains the part of the defendant:

dant: Or as in disputes, one sustains the person of an Opponent, and the other the person of a Respondent. Unto these *Job* alludes, as if he had said, *I am entring upon a dispute, and commencing my suit in Heaven, before the Tribunal of* Jehovah: *As for me, I know mine own integrity so well, that I care not which part I take, I will be Opponent, or I will be Respondent; I will be Plaintiff, or I will be Defendant; and therefore, Lord, I refer it wholly unto thee; take which part thou pleasest; I'le take up what thou leavest, and do what thou appointest. Then call thou and I will answer.*

Verba sunt arrogantia & scandalosa. Caj.

This offer argues only abundance of courage and holy confidence; yet some have adjudged it scandalous and full of arrogancy: As if *Job* had taken too much upon him, and had spoken more boldly to God then became him: As if he thought himself match enough for God at any weapon, or were ready to deal with him upon any terms. *Eliphaz* is supposed to aim at this passage (*chap.* 15. 4. *Yea thou casteth off fear*) yet most excuse him, conceiving that all this did flow from an holy familiarity which *Job* had with God: and that, because he had a gracious friendliness in his heart towards God, he would therefore speak to God as to a friend. Or it imports only that *Job* was very sure of his cause; and therefore as when a man would shew the confidence he hath to foil his Adversary in combat, he saith, chuse what place you will, take what weapon you will, bring out two swords, take you one, and I will take the other, I desire not to surprise you, or deal with you upon disadvantages. So *Job* being assured of a good end, was content to stand to the determination of God himself, in what way he should proceed to tryal.

Deo dat optionem interim sui oblitus & immodicus. Merc.

Audacius agit peteret potius patientiam. Merc.

Then call thou, and I will answer.

Then. This particle *Then*, implyes that he could not do it till then, and that then he could: As if he had said, *I shall be in no case, either to answer, or to oppose, unless these two conditions be granted; but then I shall.*

Call thou. The Lord calleth us to do our duty, and he calleth us to answer, and give account how we have done our duty, or what we have done. He calleth daily to the first, in the preaching of the Word. And he will call us all to the latter, in that great day, by the sounding of the Archangels Trumpet. (*Psal.* 50. 4.) *He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people:* And *ver.* 1. *He hath called the earth*; that is, the people of the earth; he will call them all before his Throne; *Job* offered himself to a personal day of judgment before that general day of judgment. *Call thou*, is (*verbum forense*) a Law-term, call me to the Bar, or call me before thy Judgment-seat.

And I will answer. The word which we translate, *I will answer*, signifies often in Scripture, *to testifie*, or *give witness*; (*Exod.* 20. 16.) *Thou shalt not bear false witness:* The Hebrew is, *Thou shalt not answer false witness*; that is, when thou art required by a Judge to speak in any case, thou shalt not answer besides the truth. When *Jacob* had put his part of the cattel on the one side, and *Laban*'s on the other, he saith, *So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come* (*Gen.* 30. 33.) it shall testifie or bear witness for me. The word is used in that sence (*Isa.* 59. 12.) *Our sins testifie against us:* The Hebrew is, *Our sins answer against us*; which imports that our actions, whether good or bad, shall be called out to speak what we have been and are. And then, good actions will give a good testimony; and evil actions will give an ill testimony; (*Hos.* 5. 5.) *The pride of* Israel *doth testifie to his face*; or, *doth answer to his face.* Thus here, *Let him call, and I will answer:* I will give in evidence and testimony according to the truth of my heart and life. I will not bear false witness, though it be in my own cause.

Or let me speak, and answer thou me.

שוב *Verbum respondendi in hac secunda parte est ab alia radice & lenius accipi debet.* Pin.

There's the other part. **Let me speak**; I will be Plaintiff, or Opponent, and let the Lord answer or return; for the word which we render *to answer*, in this latter clause, is of a different root in the Hebrew from that in the former, and carries in it more respect. It intends not any summons or citation of God to answer, but it is an humble supplication, beseeching him to return what his Wisdom should think fit in answer.

Hence Observe, That, *Acquaintance with free grace, gives us mighty confidence towards God.*

Take away thy dread, and then I am ready for a hearing. I acknowledge my weakness is such, that I cannot bear thy Majesty; and I know my own uprightness is such, that I am assured of thy Mercy. When the Lord had called his people to repentance (*Isa.* 1. 16.) *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings*; then he invites them to a free conference; *Come, let us reason together.* He speaks familiarly to them, I will argue it out with you, against all your unbelief: *Come, let us reason together.* Now, as God speaks familiarly to man, when he hath put his sins away: so, when the Lord hath put his dread away, man speaks familiarly to God; *Come Lord, let us reason together*; now let me speak, and answer thou me: The place where God communed with his ancient people the *Jews*, was the *Propitiatory*, or *Mercy-seat*, Exod. 25. 22. and the place where God communeth now with his people is called, the *Throne of grace* (Heb. 4. 16.) *Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* We can have no boldness but at a Throne of grace: When grace in our own hearts opposing sin, meets with that grace which is in the heart of God for the pardon of sin, we are carried as upon Eagles wings beyond the regions of fear. *Job* lived long before Christ came in the flesh, yet Christ was come into his heart; and when he desired God to remove his dread, he moved to be looked upon and heard in a Mediator.

Job having thus prepared his way begins to plead.

Verse 23. **How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression, and my sin.**

His way of arguing is much like that of the seventh and tenth Chapters, and his general scope is the same, at once to maintain his own former integrity, and to aggravate his present misery. That's the sum of his discourses, queries and expostulations, to the end of the fourteenth Chapter.

How many are mine iniquities?

He seems to take the hint of this first enquiry from *Zophar*'s wish, *Chap.* 11. *ver.* 5. *O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee: and that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are double to that which is: Know therefore, that God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserveth.* *Job* answers, you desired that God would speak; you doubted not but if he did, he would make it appear my sins were double to mine afflictions: With all mine heart (saith he) this is it I long for; I desire that God would speak, and that he would speak out what my sins are. *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.* As if he had said, *I am willing to hear, and know the worst of my self.*

Some conceive, that *Job* having made that motion, *Let him speak, and I will answer*, &c. stood waiting a while to see what God would do: But receiving no answer, he thus breaks out; *How many are mine iniquities?*

Adeone flagitiosus ego, ut ne dignus habear cui improbitatē exprobres? Saltem igitur scelera mea ostendi mihi.

And these put a very harsh construction upon this Interrogation,; as if *Job* had said, *What? am I so wicked and sinful, that I am not worthy unto whom thou shouldest shew my wickedness, and my sin? if I am so vile, let it appear how vile I am, and shew me those sins which have rendred me* (it seems) *not only unworthy of acceptation, but of an answer.* I like not this gloss, neither doth it bear the image of a gracious spirit, such as *Job*'s alwayes was, though it was sometimes a little muddy and tumultuous.

Rather thus, *Job* having a purpose to defend his cause, asks at once from the grief of his heart, and from the clearness of his conscience, *How many are mine iniquities?* As if he had said, *I am suspected of great crimes, and I am in the eye of my friends as a person condemned already; but I would those crimes were brought forth, and surely they ought, before I am either censured, or condemned: Therefore Lord, How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my my transgression and my sin.*

So the words carry a strong desire, which this afflicted soul had discovered more then once before, to see the bottom of his condition, and to find out the reason why God did thus afflict him: And if it were for sin (about which he

he had no fear upon his conſcience) O that God would but ſhew him his ſin. His ſin (under that notion) was a ſecret to him, but he was willing to know it. There are two queſtions which would be reſolved before I proceed further to the opening of this. *How many are mine iniquities?*

Firſt, Seeing *Job* at *Chap* 9. *ver.* 22. laid down this concluſion, *He ſlayeth the wicked and the righteous*; and upon that bottom grounded all his anſwers, that the diſpenſations of God are alike in outward things to good and bad: Hence the queſtion riſeth, why he labours ſo much to clear himſelf of ſin, as if his afflictions muſt needs argue him wicked, whereas he before had argued, that the Lord doth as much afflict the righteous as the wicked.

I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks thus, as vindicating his perſon, not as doubting his ſtate. He did not queſtion whether God was his friend, becauſe he was afflicted, but he deſired to remove the ſuſpitions of his Friends. *Zophar* (*chap.* 11. *ver.* 14.) gave *Job* occaſion to call for this diſcovery, while he counſelled him, *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy Tabernacles.* His Friends put theſe jealous ſuppoſitions, theſe if's and an's often upon him, *If iniquity be in thine hand*, &c. The counſel was good; but their jealouſie was not. *Job* ſaw what hung upon their ſpirits, and therefore begs of God to unſecret his ſins, and lay open his tranſgreſſions. As if he had ſaid, *Lord, my friends are unſatisfied with all the profeſſions and proteſtations which I have made of my innocency: They ſuppoſe that I keep my ſin cloſe, & roll it like a ſweet morſel under my tongue; they would rake into my life, and ſee the bottom of my heart. Lord, let them ſee all, ſhew them what I am, and let me know what I have done. If it be as theſe men ſay, let it appear to thy glory, and to my ſhame. How many are mine iniquities and ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.*

Secondly, It is queſtioned why *Job* makes requeſt, that God would ſhew him what and how many his ſins were, was he curious to know their Arithmetical number? Did he think God had over-reckoned him, or that himſelf could know their reckoning? Or did he think his ſins were ſo few, or ſo ſmall, that they could not hurt him? One ſin is enough to juſtifie God in our condemnation, we need not ask for a great many. The beſt of Saints, even they who have lived in no ſin, and comparatively have committed but few ſins, have yet deſired the Lord to cover their ſins, and pronounced him bleſſed, *Whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered* (Pſal. 32. 1.) As the Saints are not forward to proclaim their good works; ſo neither is it pleaſant to them to have their ſins proclaimed: Why then is *Job* ſo buſie about this point of knowledge?

I anſwer, *Job* did not ask this queſtion, either out of curioſity to know the number of his ſins, or as if God had put more to his account then he had committed. He did not deſire this, as if he thought his ſins were either ſo few, or ſo ſmall, that they could do him no hurt; nor doth he ſpeak by way of extenuation, as if they were not many. He knew his ſins were many and great, yea, that if he had but one, and that a little one, he could not boaſt before God.

Nihil aliud eſt quam ſe ſibi bene conſcium.

But Firſt, He ſpeaks thus, becauſe he knew his ſins were neither ſo many as his Friends had reckoned them; nor ſo great as they had aggravated them; nor ſo black as they had painted them.

Secondly, When he deſires to be ſhewed his ſin, it is a proof that he was not guilty of any beloved ſin. He ſpeaks as *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know nothing by ſelf.* Lord, if any filth lye unſeen, make me know it; *His heart did not condemn him*, and therefore *he had confidence towards God*, 1 *John* 3. 21. As if he had ſaid, Lord, My accuſers have no proof, they do but gueſs that I am wicked, my own heart is not ſo much as my accuſer at all; Lord, thou knoweſt exactly what I am, ſhew me, ſhew all, how many are my ſins?

Thirdly, He deſired to know his ſins; Firſt, That he might mourn and repent for his unknown ſins. Secondly, That he might turn from them, and return to God more fully. Thirdly, That he might be more watchful againſt them.

Laſtly, He was bold to ask this queſtion, becauſe he knew God would deal with him, as a Father, by a Covenant of grace through Chriſt; not, as a Judge, by a Covenant of works in himſelf: and therefore he was not afraid to know his ſins, and to have them all ſet in order before him: He was aſſured God would not condemn him, and he did not contend to juſtifie himſelf before God, he only waited till God would juſtifie him againſt the contendings and uncharitable ſurmiſings of men. Theſe, or ſuch as theſe, were the grounds upon which *Job* makes this addreſs to God, and puts both this queſtion and requeſt: *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.*

How many. The word refers both to quantity and quality; the Vulgar reads it, *How great ſins have I?* or, *How great are the ſins which I have?* We read it quantitively, for the number, *How many are my ſins?* How great, or how many? Make me to know both their number and their nature.

במה *ad utrumq; pertinet, ad multitudinē ſcilicet & magnitudinem. Quantas habeo iniquitates?* Vulg.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *God only can give us the number and nature of our ſins.*

No man can tell how many his ſins are; they are more then the hairs upon our head, they are as the ſands upon the ſea-ſhore innumerable. The kinds or ſorts of ſin, yea, the greater acts of ſin may be numbred by man; but he only that numbers the Stars, can number all our ſins. We commit many ſins of ignorance; and we are ignorant of ſome of our ſins of knowledge: we commit known ſins, which we do not know that we have committed.

And as God only knows the number, ſo the greatneſs and the aggravations of our ſins. Who can underſtand his errors? (Pſal. 19. 12.) He means practical, not doctrinal errors. As theſe errors of wandrings are beyond our numbring, ſo alſo beyond our underſtanding. As there is a height and a depth in the love of God, which paſſeth our knowledge. So there is an height and a depth of wickedneſs in our hearts, which paſſeth our knowledge. The Lord only can ſhew us how ſinful we are; as he only can ſhew us how gracious himſelf is.

Further, The multiplication of terms in this paſſage is conſiderable, *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.* Here are three Original words, by which *Job* doth expreſs the ſame thing. Firſt, Iniquity. Secondly, Tranſgreſſion. Thirdly, Sin. The Latines give us four, and they labour much to find out a material diſtinction in this verbal diſtinction: or to ſhew how iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin, as alſo, how ſin in the firſt clauſe, and ſin in the ſecond, differ.

חטאות *Per errorem admiſſa*
עונות *ſunt propriè perverſitates*
פשע *gravius eſt defectionem & rebellionem ſignificans.* Merc.

The firſt word, which we tranſlate *iniquity*, ſignifies a perverſeneſs and crookedneſs of ſpirit, or thoſe ſins which have a peculiar crookedneſs and perverſeneſs in them. The ſecond ſignifies any, the leaſt aberration from the way or rule of holineſs in our actings, though our hearts ſtand right: every ſtep beſide the line is ſin. The word in the ſecond clauſe, which we tranſlate *tranſgreſſion*, ſignifies *rebellion* and *obſtinacy of ſpirit*, the riſings of our thoughts againſt God.

The Latines make out the diſtinction thus. By *iniquities*, they underſtand thoſe evils which are committed againſt our neighbour. By *ſins*, thoſe which a man commits againſt himſelf. By *tranſgreſſions*, thoſe which are immediate againſt God: And by ſin in the fourth place, *Omiſſions*: As if he had ſaid, *Lord, ſhew me mine iniquities, any evil I have committed againſt others: Shew me my ſins, thoſe which I have committed againſt my ſelf; ſhew me my tranſgreſſions, the rebellions of my life againſt thy Majeſty. And ſhew me my ſins, all my neglects to perform, or negligent performances of holy duties: ſpread all before my face.* This hath a truth in it: yet the holy Ghoſt doth not obſerve ſuch a diſtinctneſs in theſe words, but uſeth much variety and liberty in their application.

Latini numtuntur quatuor diſtinctis verbis & curioſius inter hæc diſcrimen conſtituere nituntur, 1. iniquitas in proximũ. 2. peccata in ſe. 3. ſcelera in Deũ. 4. delicta omiſſionis: Lyran. Aquin, *paulo aliter.*

Sometimes ſin, which goes loweſt in ordinary ſignification, is an aggravation: (*Hoſ.* 12. 8.) *In all my labours they ſhall find none iniquity in me, that were ſin*; as if ſin here were more then iniquity, or great iniquity. Sometimes iniquity is put as an aggravation upon ſin (*Pſal.* 32. 5.) *Thou forgaveſt the iniquity of my ſin*: That is, the ſinfulneſs of my ſin; or thoſe conſiderations which have rendred my ſin out of meaſure ſinful. Now ſeeing there is ſuch a promiſcuous uſe of theſe words in Scripture, we cannot clearly eſtabliſh, or build upon ſuch a difference.

Therefore paſſing by thoſe critical niceties, I ſhall take the

Est coacervatio quædam artificio plena; Nam sicut ejusdem vocis repetitio ita etiam plurimarum eandem rem significantium acervatio vim solet addere orationi. San.

the words as *Synonimaes*, signifying one and the same thing, yet being thus joyned, they signifie more then any one singly can. For as the repeating of the same words heightens the sence, so also doth the heaping up of divers words which have the same sence. So that this Rhetorical acervation intimates *Job*'s earnest desire, that all *his sins*, by *what name or title soever distinguished*, might be produced, and made known unto him. *Let my iniquities, my transgressions, my sins*, call them what you will, let them all be presented to my face. When God proclaims his pardoning mercy, he heaps up these words in his own title, calling himself, *The Lord, the Lord gracious*, &c. *pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin.* Lest any breach of the Law might be thought unpardonable, all the words which imply a breach, are used in the proclamation of pardon. And while *Job* would here shew both his repentance and his innocency, that he was far from hiding any darling sin in his bosom, he begs the discovery of whatsoever bare the name, or had the nature of sin, in his heart or life.

Hence Observe, First, *That the better any man is, the more willing he is to know the worst of himself.*

He who is light in the Lord, is willing to see his dark part as well as his light. Some are very desirous others should know the good they have done; but they cannot abide to be shewed the evil which themselves have done. The Pharisee (*Luke* 18.) publisheth to all, how he paid tithes and gave almes, how he fasted and pray'd, &c. but he spake not a word, either confessing his known sins, or begging a sight of what he did not know. *Solomon* perceiv'd that this spirit of self-flattery possessed many in his time (*Prov.* 20. 6.) *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find? Hypocrites labour much to shew others their goodness: The sincere labour more to see their own vileness.* A godly man finds delight only in the knowledge of his graces; but he finds profit in the knowledge of his corruptions. We are pleased only with the sight of friends, or of wife and children in our houses; but if a thief be got in, we thank him that shews us who, and where he is. There are two things which argue a gracious frame of spirit: First, When we desire to know how frail we are: Secondly, When we desire to know how sinful we are. A natural man loves not to take notice either of the infirmities of his body, or of the presumptions of his soul: And though some wicked men will say from a spirit of impudence, they care not who knows their iniquities, transgressions and sins; yet no wicked man ever did or can say from a spirit of repentance, Lord make me to know mine iniquities, my transgressions, and my sins. A carnal heart is more willing that others should know his sins, then he is (under this notion of knowledge) to know them himself; he knows them in the history or matter of fact, with a kind of delight; it sometime pleases him to remember the evil which he hath done: but he cannot abide to know them in their nature; it never pleases him to repent of the evil which he hath done.

Secondly Observe, *Whilst Christ is known to us, we need not be afraid to have our sins known to us.*

To know sin, and not to know Christ, is sad. One sin seen, without a sight of Christ, swallows up the soul: but a sight of Christ swallows up all our sins. None can be truly willing that God should shew them their sins, but they to whom God hath shewed a Saviour. *Job* had said, *He shall be my salvation*, before he said, *Shew me my transgression.* When we have seen heaps upon heaps of mercy in God, we cannot despair (though we ought to grieve) when we see heaps upon heaps of sin in our selves. *Heaps of mercy cast down or cover heaps of sin.* All our mountains of sin become mole-hills, yea plains, before this *Zerubbabel.*

Again, It is remarkable, that *Job* having asked the question, *How many are mine iniquities?* follows it presently with this petition, *Make me to know my transgression and my sin:* As if he had said, I may see my sins how many they are; or that they are very many, and yet not know what any one of them is, without thy special teaching.

Hence Observe, *Our sins may be told us, or we may have the tale of our sins, and yet not know our sins.*

It is harder to know the nature, then the number; what, then how many our sins are. Every man (who knows any thing of the state of man) knows he is a sinner; but few know their sins. Christ is preached to all; yet Christ is not known to all: There is much in this, *Make me to know.* To know sin, is to be sensible of the evil of sin; as to know Christ, is to have a feeling of Christ, and to taste how sweet the Lord Christ is. We may hear of our sins all our dayes, and yet not know our sins: It is possible for a man to write down catalogues of his sins, and to keep a record of them every day, and yet not to know them, not only not so far as to mourn for them after a godly sort; but not so far as to be affected with them after a moral sort, or so far as an ingenious man might be. It is one thing to know our transgressions; another thing to write our transgressions, or to speak of them. For as some have whole books written full of *Sermon-notes* by them, who have not one line of a Sermon written in their hearts, or upon their wayes; so a man may have whole books written full of *sin-notes*, and yet not one sin making impression upon his heart. *There are but few who know what they know.*

There is a threefold knowledge of sin.

First, In the kind of it, that this or that is sinful; this knowledge of sin comes not from our selves. There are many actings which we do not know to be sinnings, till God makes us know them. Some things wherein we thought we did God good service, we may find our selves transgressors in them.

Secondly, There is a knowledge of sin in the nature of it, that it is a transgression of the Law, and a departure from God; that it is a filthy and a polluted thing, a base and dishonourable thing; that it is nothing that is good, and all that's evil; that it is so evil that we cannot make it worse then it is, nor call it by any name so bad as its own, *Sinful sin.*

Thirdly, There is a knowledge of sin in the effects and issues of it: That as it is filthy, so it defiles; that as it is a pollution, so it pollutes every thing that toucheth it; that, as it is base and dishonourable in it self, so it doth embase and dishonour every soul that commits it, much more those that love it: That it is big with, and brings forth death; that it is fruited with damnation, that it is armed with all the curses written in the Book of God against sinners; that the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against it, and shall be poured out upon it for ever, unless we have part in the blood of Christ, which was poured out to wash and save us from it, We never know sin thus, till God makes us know it. Sin is as a fire to consume, as a serpent to sting and poyson us; yet sinful man esteems it but as a fire, or as a serpent painted upon a wall, or set upon a sign-post, which though they have the colour, yet have they not the heat of fire, nor the poyson of a serpent. *Grace only gives us the true sense of our own sin:* And he who hath received the largest measures of the grace of God, had need to be instant in prayer with the God of grace, *To make him know his transgression and his sin.*

VERS. 24, 25.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?
Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

Cum à me rogatus (O supreme judex) ut si quæ sunt apud te recondita mea scelera proferre velis, taces omnino, sane videris tuo isto silentio refutari, nihil tale in me reperisse; cur igitur abscondis faciem & mecum tanquam cum inimico agis? Aqui.

WE need not labour much for the connection of these words, which are indeed a continued description of the sorrows of a troubled spirit. Some joyn them with the request made in the former verse thus, *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin. Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* As if he had said, *For asmuch as I proposing that to thy Majesty, to discover the worst and darkest part of me, and yet thou dost not bring forth any accusation, or lay any crime to my charge, seeing by thy silence thou seemest to acquit me of being guilty of any such transgression as my Friends have suspected me of; Wherefore is it that thou hidest thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? If indeed thou couldest produce against me any studied wickedness, or arraign me at thy bar for an hypocrite, then I should see reason enough, why thou, who art of purer eyes then to behold any unclean thing, shouldst hide*

hide thy face from me in such uncleanness; and were I such an one, I might see reason enough why thou shouldest count me as an enemy, or never own me as a friend. But forasmuch as that not only appeareth not, but indeed is not; I now further desire to understand what is the cause why thou hidest thy face from me, and why thou holdest me as thine enemy.

Vers. 24. **Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?**

The words are not so much a question, as an expostulation, which is a very vehement opening of the heart to let out the grief that lyeth there: Yet *Job* keeps within the bounds of duty and holy modesty: He did not invade the prerogative of God, whilest he thus asked an account of him. We must here take in a double supposition that we may clear *Job*. First, That, he knew God had a reason why he hid his face from him. Secondly, We must suppose, that in case the Lord should still hide the cause from him why he did hide his face from him, yet *Job* was resolved to sit down and honour God even in that darkness about his own condition: for without these suppositions, to put questions, much more to put expostulations upon God, is unbecoming the state of the creature, much more of a Believer. We must say God hath just cause for whatsoever he doth; and he doth not wrong us, if he refuse to shew us the cause, though we request him to shew it us.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face?

Here are two things to be opened.

First, What is meant by *the face of God.*

Secondly, What hiding his face doth mean.

This phrase [**The face of God**] must be understood by that common figure, an *Anthropopathy*. God is often spoken of in Scripture after the manner of men; sometimes inward passions, sometimes (as here) outward parts are ascribed to him.

The face of God is put First, For the essential glory of God. (*Exod.* 33.13.) When *Moses* desired to see the glory of God, the Lord telleth him, *ver.* 20. *Thou canst not see my face; for there is no man can see my face and live. Thou canst not see my face*; that is, my essential glory; thou mayest see my declarative, or my manifestative glory, the glory of my Attributes, as they are expressed in that proclamation of his *great Name*. The face of God, as taken for his essential glory, is alwayes hid; it is an object too pure and spiritual for the eye, and too high for the understanding of a creature.

Quare Divinitatem tuam subducis. Targ.

Secondly, The face of God signifies the general presence of God: And so when God hides his face, he denyes us the comfortable enjoyment of his presence.

Thirdly, and more particularly, The face of God signifies the anger and wrath of God, (*Lev.* 20.6.) *The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people.* And in the Psalms often the Lord is said to set his face, that is, to manifest his displeasure against wicked men. The face of God, signifies also the favour of God, the good will of God. So in this place, and *Psal.* 18.19. 1 *Sam.* 13.12. *Numb.* 6.25. *Dan.* 9.17. both these, the anger and the favour of God, are called the face of God, because the anger and the favour of men appear in their faces. Man can form his face into the signification of either of these, into an angry look, or into a pleasing look: We may see wrath, or we may see love printed upon the countenance. Hence the favour and the anger of God are expressed by *the face of God*. *Job* complaineth, that the favour of God, the light of his countenance was hidden from him.

Hidest. The hiding of the face of God may be considered either as it is, or as we apprehend it to be. His face is never hid, but to our apprehensions. In his dispensations, there are the hidings, and there are the discoverings of his face; there are the shuttings, and there are the openings of his love. Further, the hiding of the face implyes two things.

Fratorum more qui eos quibus succensent aspicere dedignantur. Marc.

First, Displeasure. A man turneth away his face from those with whom he is displeased.

Secondly, Disdain. We turn from those we slight: and to turn the back upon a man is real slighting. Where we will not look, we do not love. As the Prophet said to a great King, (2 *Kings* 3.14.) *Were it not that I regard the presence of* Jehoshaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look toward thee nor see thee.* So here, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* is, Why art thou so angry with me? Why dost thou slight me, as if I were not worth a look, or a cast of thine eye: A man in misery usually saith, *Pray look upon me.*

Faciem avertere indignantis est & supplicium inferentis, sicut faciem convertere benevolentis & beneficientis est. Pin.

Again, This also (as some Interpreters conceive) hath reference to a judiciary proceeding: *Speak thou, and I will answer*; or, *I will speak, and answer thou me: Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* When a Magistrate finds a business foul against a man, he turns away from him. Some of the Ancients refer it to a known custom of the Judges in those times, who when they pronounced sentence of condemnation, caused a curtain to be drawn before them, or, hid their faces from the condemned party; for as the covering of a mans face was a token that he was condemned; so they who condemned them covered their own faces: Of which custom see more upon those words, *chap.* 9. *ver.* 24. *He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof*, &c. And whether the usages of former times in judiciary proceedings, give any light to this Text or no, yet the general scope and intendment of it is plainly thus. *Wherefore, O Lord, dost thou put thy self into an angry posture against me? Why are all the appearances from Heaven to my soul black and lowring? Why is it that I see not those former smiles in thy face? Why am I not received into the embraces of thy armes? Why dost thou act the wrathful Judge, who art indeed a loving Father? As my soul hath delighted in thy forepassed kindnesses, so it desires to know, with all humble submission to thy will, why thou grievest me now with this unkindness, the hiding of thy face? Tell me Lord, tell me, wherefore hidest thou thy face from me?*

Antiqua erat consuetudo, quod cum judices capitis sententiâ laturi erant interjecto velo se continebant absconditi. Hujus meminit, Basil. Ep. 79

Hence Observe, First, *That holy men even in this life have a sight of the face of God.*

Wherefore hidest thou thy face? It was not usual with God to hide his face, *Job* had seen it, else he would not have complained because he could not see it. We are not much troubled at the want of that, whereof we never had any experience nor enjoyment. We are not at all troubled at the non-enjoyment of that, of whose being, or whether there be such a thing or no, we are altogether ignorant. *Job* saw God did not deal with him as he was wont, nor do to him after the manner of a friend. God had been familiar with him, and given him frequent visits, this made him so sensible of his present shyness and estrangements. *Chap.* 10. *v.* 12. *Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.* When friends visit they see one anothers faces. It is said of the two Kings (2 *Kings* 14.8.) that the one sent to the other, saying, *Come, let us look one another in the face*; that is, Let us have an interview. The soul of a believer hath interviews with God, God and he doth often look one another in the face. Whersoever the Saints are (except in cases of desertion) the place may be called, as *Jacob* called that where he wrestled with God, (*Gen.* 32.30.) *Peniel*, that is, *the face of God:* yet not in that sence fully in which *Jacob* calls it so: He called it the *face of God*, because he had seen God *face to face.* We can call it so only (ordinarily) because we see his face. It is one thing to see *the face of God*, and another thing to see *God face to face.* The former is the common priviledge of Saints in this life; the latter is very rarely given the Saints here; or it is the priviledge of but some Saints, and those rare ones, to have it here.

There is a twofold sight or vision of God.

First, A vision of grace. Secondly, A vision of glory. Glory is nothing else, but the vision of God; (1 *Joh.* 3.1.) *We shall see him as he is.* Both these sights of God are expressed by one phrase of speech, in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and in the Greek of the new, and we translate both by seeing God *face to face.* So *Jacob* professed in the place now cited, that he had seen God; and the Apostle promiseth that we shall see him, so (1 *Cor.* 13.12.) where he also compares the sight of God here to seeing in a glass darkly, and calls the sight of him in heaven, a seeing of God *face to face.* Now the reason why some of the Saints (as *Jacob* and *Moses*) are said to *see God face to face* in this life, which the Apostle appropriates to the next, is this as I conceive, because those sights of God which *Jacob* and *Moses* had were immediate, God in an extraordinary

extraordinary manner coming down to wreſtle with *Jacob*, and calling up *Moſes* in an extraordinary manner to ſpeak with him in the mount; Theſe diſpenſations being (*præludia gloriæ*) the foreactings of a glorified eſtate, are ſet forth by that act which is peculiar and proper unto the ſtate of glory, *The ſeeing of God face to face.* But as for the uſual manifeſtations of God to believers in this life, they are only the ſeeings of his face.

So then we muſt diſtinguiſh of the viſions of God in this life. Some are extraordinary, ſuch was that of *Jacob* and *Moſes*, ſuch was that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 6. 5.) and of *Job* (*chap.* 42. 5.) By all theſe God was ſeen (in this ſence) *face to face.* There are alſo ordinary manifeſtations of God, in which only the face of God is ſeen, and thoſe may be referred to three heads.

Firſt, We ſee his face in the glaſs of the word, there we have a viſion of God: hence the preaching of the word is called *viſion*, (Prov. 29. 18.) *Where there is no viſion the people periſh.*

Secondly, We ſee the face of God in the glaſs of his works. What God is, appears in what God doth. God needs not ſubſcribe his name to his works (as men do) to ſhew that he is the Author of them, for his works are his name, and in what work ſoever his hand hath been, his face is ſeen. Eſpecially in thoſe three great works, firſt, in the work of creation, (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The inviſible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly ſeen, being underſtood by the things that are made.* Secondly, In the works of Providence. And this even in the common works of providence, our daily ſupport and protection, the conſtant recourſe of ſeaſons and times, of nights and dayes, *Pſal.* 19. 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament ſheweth his handywork; day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledg*; that is, the providences and turnings of every day, declare the glory of God, and ſhew his handywork: but chiefly in wonderful providences, in his great deliverances and miraculous operations for his people is God ſeen. Thirdly, In the work of Redemption, in which the face of God is more ſeen then in both the former, even his manifold wiſdom, *Epheſ.* 3. 10.

Thirdly, We ſee the face of God in the Ordinances of his worſhip, in them we have moſt viſible viſions of God in this life. For this ſight holy *David* was athirſt, *Pſal.* 63. 2. *O God, thou art my God, &c. My ſoul thirſteth for thee in a dry and thirſty land, where no water is, to ſee thy power and thy glory ſo as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary.* The ſight of God in the Sanctuary, is through the Ordinances and worſhip of the Sanctuary. God is ſeen in his works, but he is ſeen more in his word; in that *as in a glaſs with open face we behold the glory of the Lord, till we are changed into the ſame image*, (2 Cor. 3. 18.) The ſight of God is a transforming ſight; we cannot ſee what he is, and be what we are. The beauty of God ſhines in his Ordinances, and that beauty beheld doth not only reflect upon, but aſſimulate the beholder. Hence *David* again (*Pſal.* 27. 4.) makes it the chiefeſt and the choiceſt, the one and the only thing of all his deſires, *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the dayes of my life*; what to do? *To behold the beauty of the Lord.* Where doth beauty ſit? Beauty ſits in the face, and therefore to behold the beauty of the Lord, is to behold the face of the Lord. Theſe are the ordinary viſions of God in this life, or the ſeeing of his face: and when the Lord is pleaſed to give any of his ſpecial favorites extraordinary and immediate manifeſtations of himſelf (which as he did to ſome Saints before the coming of Chriſt, ſo he can renew it (when he pleaſeth and ſees it fitting) to believers now) when I ſay God gives immediate manifeſtations of himſelf, they may be ſaid to ſee God *face to face*, becauſe ſuch manifeſtations are the firſt-fruits of glory, or glympſes of heaven before we come to heaven, where we ſhall as fully and as clearly as a finite nature can take in an infinite, *ſee God face to face.*

Now as unbelievers ſhall never ſee God face to face in glory: ſo they know not what it means to ſee his face in wayes of grace. And therefore they entertain it with a kind of ſcorn, when it is reported that any man hath ſeen the face of God; This is a ſtrange language to the men of the world, who live without God in the world. They who live without God in the world, live without God in the Church: and we are as Barbarians to them, they underſtand not what we ſay, when we ſay we have ſeen God in prayer, or at the word, in private duties, or in publick aſſemblies. In theſe, believers ſee the face of God; they who do not, do nothing in any of theſe. Our buſineſs in ſuch duties is to ſee God: we come not to ſee one another, or to ſee the walls and ornaments of the place we meet in, we come not (as the Diſciples ſpake wondring at the fabrick of the Temple) *to ſee what manner of ſtones and buildings are there, but to ſee what a holy and gracious God is there*; and when the worſhippers in ſpirit miſs this ſight, though they know their labour is not loſt, yet the comfort they expected is not gained, and therefore they mourn, yea humbly complain, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

Secondly Obſerve, *That God doth ſometimes withdraw himſelf and hide his face from his choiceſt ſervants.*

It is the ſole priviledge of the Saints to ſee the face of God, but they live not alwayes in the enjoyment of that priviledge: (*Iſa.* 8. 17.) *I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the houſe of Jacob, and I will look for him.* The Saints are now the *houſe of Jacob*; the eye, yea the heart of God is ever upon this houſe, yet he ſometimes hideth his face from it. Then the Lord hideth his face, when he doth not enlighten as formerly, when he doth not enliven as formerly, when he doth not aſſiſt in doing as formerly, when he doth not ſupport in ſuffering as formerly; when there is a withdrawing of theſe or in any of theſe, then God is ſaid to hide his face from the houſe of *Jacob*; *David* often bemoans himſelf under theſe hidings. And the Prophet puts the caſe in general, that ſuch as fear the Lord and obey the voice of his ſervants, may yet walk in darkneſs and ſee no light (*Iſa.* 50. 10.) We never want light in our ſpirits, till the face of God is hid from us, as we never want light in our eyes till the Sun is hidden from us: but why doth God hide his face from his choiceſt ſervants? *Job* a choice ſervant of his asks the reaſon, wherefore hideſt thou thy face far from me? I ſhall (upon that occaſion, and the clearing of this Scripture) anſwer it in ſome particulars.

Firſt, The Lord hides his face ſometimes, becauſe he will hide his face. What if God ſhould have anſwered *Job* when he enquired, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* It is my pleaſure? God may do it by prerogative, and neither ask us leave, nor give us the reaſon why. *As he hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth* (*Rom.* 9. 18.) ſo he may ſay, I ſhew my face to whom I will, and from whom I will, I hide it.

But, Secondly, He hideth his face at one time, becauſe he intendeth to ſhew it more clearly at another. When he means ſhortly to give the ſoul a full ſight of himſelf, he gives it at preſent no ſight of himſelf: when he is about to pour out abundance of love into a boſome, he quite withdraws the ſenſe of his love.

Thirdly, Undervaluings of former manifeſtations are often chaſtned with after hidings.

Fourthly, God denies his preſence, that we may prize his preſence, and pray more earneſtly for it.

Fiftly, When we value the face of the world too much, God hides his face. When we are deſirous to make a fair ſhew in the fleſh, God will not ſhew himſelf to our ſpirits. Our dalliance with the creature, cauſeth God to look off from us, or to look ſtrangely upon us. The heart of a godly man may get a haunt to ſome vanity here below, and then God reſtrains viſion from above. He ſhews us the wandrings and out-lyings of our affections, by the withdrawings and vailings of his own. We cannot love God till he ſhews us his face; and after we have ſeen it, we cannot but love him: yet they who have ſeen him, and love him, may for a time be overtaken with the love of the world, and then God will not be ſeen. Every opening of our ſelves to the world is a hiding of our ſelves from God. When we hide our faces from God, no wonder if God hide his face from us.

Sixthly, When we hide our faces from the wayes or from the people of God, God will hide his face from us. Some who have had Communion with God, and have ſeen his face, may (under a temptation or upon a guſt of carnal fear) if not withdraw from, yet ſcarce own the people or the

the wayes of God; yea, possibly they may set their faces against some of the wayes of God. When it is so with them, God will surely hide his face from them. Apostates draw back totally from profession, when they perceive they cannot bring forward their own profit or other private interests by their profession; and of such the Lord hath said, *My soul shall have no pleasure in them,* (*Heb.* 10. 38.) True Believers may draw back partially or in part, and when they do so, God will make them know that while they are in such a base temper, his soul hath no pleasure in them, and therefore hides his face from them.

As these or the like are causes in us, why God hides his face, so he hath gracious designes upon us, which he effects by hiding his face. Chiefly these two,

First, To try us. *There is no greater trial of grace then the withdrawing of comfort*; and in that state where we shall have a conjunction of all comfort, we shall never be put to the trial of any grace; yea, the graces which act in trials shall have no existence there. Faith and hope and patience have no place in heaven, because they have no work in heaven: And they have no work there, because God will never hide his face, and Satan shall never shew his face there. For between the appearing of Satans face, and the hiding of Gods face lieth the work of these graces, (*Isa.* 8.17.) *I will wait upon God who hideth his face:* there's the trial of patience, to keep close to God, when God seemeth to depart from us.

Secondly, God hides his face that we might be in love with that state where his face shall never be hid. 'Tis best of all to be dissolved and to be with Christ, because then we and our joyes shall never be divided. That joy which depends upon changeable things, must needs be changeable. The joy of heaven is a dependent joy, yet because God on whom it depends, will never change a look towards us, therefore our joy shall be unchangeable. If the Sun did alwayes continue the same aspect upon the moon, which it doth at the full, the Moon (though hers be a dependent and a borrowed light) would ever continue at the full, and know no change. God will not vary his aspect toward the Saints in heaven, for one moment, to all eternity, and therefore the joy of Saints in heaven will be for ever at the full. There is a double difference between the manifestation of God here upon earth, and in heaven. First, A difference in the degree, the manifestations in heaven are clearer; here *in a glass*, there *face to face*, as the Apostle speaks. Secondly, The manifestations of God to the Saints in heaven are without intermission, there shall not come one cloud between the face of God and our souls for ever. Hence as the holiness, so the joy of the Saints in heaven shall be the same for ever. Now God hides his face, and puts us to this question, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* that we may long for that estate where this question shall never be put, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?*

Thirdly Observe, *That it's a great affliction to the soul, when the face of God is hid.*

Wherefore hidest thou thy face? As if he had said, Lord, I could suffer any affliction, yea all afflictions better then this one. *Job* was not a type of Christ (as I have toucht before) but as in many things, so in this, his spirit and his condition were very parallel or like to Christ. When Christ was upon the cross, he cryed out, and put this question, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Such was *Jobs* cry, *Why hidest thou thy face from me?* As Christ upon the cross, so *Job* upon the dunghil, had a body full of pains; but he passeth by these, and only complains of the sufferings of his soul in the hidings of his fathers face. Here was the pinch; *Why hidest thou face from me?* The Lord threatens, *Deut.* 32. 20. *I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be:* Certainly no good end if God hide his face. He speaks in reference to temporal or outward things, *I will hide my face from them,* that is, I will withdraw my protecting presence, my wonted influence and assistance; or as he tells them (*Jer.* 18. 17.) *I will shew them the back and not the face in the day of their calamity*; when I have done this, then *I will see what their end shall be.* Though God be not seen, yet he can see; having hid himself, and left a sinful people to shift for themselves, he then (as it were) watches, like *Moses* sister, when he was put into his boat of bulrushes (*Exod.* 2. 4.) to see what will become of them. God knows the end from the beginning, and looks quite through all causes into their issues; yet thus he speaks after the manner of men, who cannot see an hour before them; *I will see what their end shall be.* God sees they must needs come to a miserable end, whose wayes he will not vouchsafe to see. Much more is this true in regard of our inward and spiritual estate, if God hide his face, he seeth what the end will be, even anguish and sorrow, trouble and vexation of spirit. What can that soul see but visions of darkness, which hath no vision of God, who alone is light? After the people had said (*Hos.* 6. 2.) *Let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn and he will heal us*; he adds, After two dayes *will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight*: *In his sight*, which some interpret, *when God brings us into his sight, or into a sight of him, we shall live*, that is, our lives will be sweet unto us, we shall recover when God appears to us, and gives us evidence that we are accepted with him. A sight of the *face of God* is the happiness and life of man. As no man can see the essential face of God and live, so no man can live comfortably, unless he see the providential face of God. It is observed, that the heathens exceedingly desired a sight of their gods, and that they might see them, they invented images, and set up statues to represent the gods; that so they might see whom they worshipped, and at once behold and adore their *dunghil-dieties.* They knew no way of seeing their gods, but by their sence; and therefore they made sensible Gods. They would rather have Gods with eyes that could not see, then not see their gods with their eyes. Yea, I find a learned Christian among the Ancients, giving this as one reason why Christ took our nature upon him, and so became God manifested in the flesh, that, God who in himself is altogether invisible, might be visible in his Son; God is more visible in Christ, then he is in all creatures; The Apostle calleth him *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,* (*Heb.* 1. 3.) Jesus Christ is the brightness, the *sent-forth-light*, the beams or splendor of his Fathers glory, and the imprinted image of his essence or person (for the words are a metaphor drawn from a lightsom body, which sends forth beams of light, and from a seal, which leaves its own impression or image where it is stampt, I say) Christ Jesus is all this, not only in regard of his Divine Nature, and eternal generation, but also in respect of his incarnation, and sending in the similitude of sinful flesh. For in Christ manifested in the flesh, the glory and excellency of God the Father shined forth; who as he is in himself altogether invisible, so he is in nothing so visible as in his Son our Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore all the former wayes of manifesting God under the Law, have been laid by and disused, since God manifested himself to us by his Son: the excellency of this being so great beyond the former, that to look for them, would be but like calling for Star-light after the Sun is risen, as the Apostles way of argumentation doth clearly evidence in the first of the *Hebrews, vers,* 1, 2, 3. But to return to the point (from which, I have upon the overture of this notion, a little digressed). It appears by all this, that the manifestation of God to the soul, is our highest both priviledge and comfort, and that the hidings of his face are our greatest both loss and sorrow.

Gentiles ab hoc simulacra finxerũt ut oculis cernerent quod colebant. Chrysologus hinc argumẽtatur incarnationis causam, ut se invisibilis deus faceret visibilẽ satisfaceretq; amori, qui quod amat videre cupit.

There are four particulars from which I shall briefly evidence this yet further.

First, The need or rather the absolute necessity we stand in of the presence and favour of God. It is needful for us to have the creature, but there is a necessity that we should enjoy God. God is enough for us without any creature, but all creatures are nothing to us without God; God and all that he hath made, is not more then God without any thing that he hath made.

Secondly, All our profits come in at the door of divine favour and munificence. And having God, we have all: He that hath the fountain, hath the stream; he that hath the Mine, hath the gold and silver. He that hath the Sun, hath the light: Whilst we enjoy Communion with God, we enjoy the fountain the mine, the Sun of all enjoyments. We say *there is no fishing to the sea,* because the sea hath the vastest capacity; there's fish enough in the sea to fill all our nets, and to lade all our vessels: we may say infinitely more truly, there is no enjoyment to the enjoyment of God,

God: God hath enough not only to supply all our needs, but to satisfie all our desires. The best of meer creatures is but a particular good. All creatures are not an universal good. *The One the One-most God is all good. God will be hereafter, and he can be now, All in all unto us.*

Thirdly, Nothing is so honourable to man as the enjoyment of God. It is an honour to a common man when he is admitted to the presence of a great man. If a Prince (who is but man in a great letter) speak kindly to us, and shew us any countenance, we think our selves honoured not a little: what is it then for the great God of heaven to shew us his face, and give us countenance?

Fourthly, It is joy and delight unspeakable to enjoy the face of God. One of the Roman Emperours was of so amiable a temper and composure, that he was called *The Delight of mankind: God is indeed the delight of Saints.* The joy of glory is this, *We shall ever be with the Lord*; the joy of grace is, *when the Lord is with us.* We may have grace, but we can have no joy, when God hides his face from us; and he that hath once seen the face of God, can never give over asking, knocking, praying, begging, till the Lord restore unto him the light of his countenance, and the joy of his salvation. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?*

And holdest me for thine enemy.

We may expound this latter clause by the former: Surely *thou holdest me for an enemy, else why dost thou hide thy face from me?*

חשב *existimare, reputare, etiã in pretio habere.*

Holdest.] The word signifies the esteem or account which we have either of persons or of things. (*Gen.* 31. 15.) *Are we not counted of him strangers?* say the wives of *Jacob*, in reference to their Father *Laban*, he deals with us as if we had not been born in his family, or as if he had no relation to us. So here, *Thou counteſt me*, or, *thou holdest me for thine enemy*, that is, thou carriest it as if thou hadst nothing at all to do with me upon terms of friendship, as if thou hadst no acquaintance with me, or hadst never seen me before, yea thou dealest with me, not only as with a stranger, but as with an enemy; not only as if thou didst not know me, but as if thou didst hate me.

Non pluris facit nos quã si extera & peregrina essemus.

By nature we are all enemies to God, (*Rom.* 5. 10.) *Whilst we were yet enemies Christ died for us.* Yea, we are his hearty enemies, or enemies with our hearts: we hate God naturally, as we should love him spiritually, with all our might and all our mind. *We were enemies in our minds, or, by our minds, by reason of wicked works,* (Col. 1. 21.) *Job* was once such an enemy, but he knew he had been reconciled unto God by the death of his Son in the promise, and so was become his friend. *Job* knew he was justified and pardoned, that God was his God in covenant, and therefore it was strange to him to receive the usage of an enemy. Is this thy kindness to thy friend, to number him among thine enemies?

ἡγῆσαί μὲ ὑπεναντίον σοὶ. *Putas me tibi contrarium.* Sept. *Ita me percutis ut soles quos inimicos judicasti. Sic caro judicat in cruce.* Merc.

For thine enemy.] An Enemy is first one whom we hate. Secondly, He is one who hath done or attempts to do us wrong: Thirdly, An Enemy is one whom we oppose, and seek to destroy. *Job* seems to have this thought, that God had all these thoughts of him. *Thou holdest me for thine enemy*, that is, as one whom thou hatest, as one that had done thee wrong, as one whom thou opposest and wouldst destroy. *Thus the flesh judges even in those who are more then flesh.* The rule of love given by Christ is, *Love your enemies: if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink:* *Job* speaks of himself as of an enemy in vulgar notion, or as of an enemy dealt with according to the laws of nature or of nations, not according to the law of Christ or of Gospel-grace; yet God did indeed feed and comfort *Job*, though he outwardly dealt with him as an enemy, pulling the bread from his mouth, and stripping him of all his comforts.

Hence Observe, First, *God acts towards some of his neareſt friends as if they were his greateſt enemies.*

He may not only hide his face from them, but shew his wrath against them. God wounds his with love, and he wounds those whom he loves. *Whom I love I correct*: there is wounding in correcting. So he acted toward *Jacob*, (*Gen.* 32.) *he wrestled with him.* Is it the part of a friend when he meets his friend to wrestle with him? When friends meet, they imbrace and salute one another, they rejoyce and confer one with another: God wrestled with *Jacob*, and wrestled with him, not in sport, but very roughly, he put his thigh out of joynt, and made him halt for it. And as God dealt with personal *Jacob*, so he dealt with national *Jacob*, or the people of the Jews, who were his friends above all the nations of the earth, *Jer.* 30. 10. *Therefore fear not thou O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord, neither be dismayed O Israel, for I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of thy captivity.* This was a gracious promise that the Jews should return from *Babylon.* But who sent them into *Babylon?* or was it the part of a friend to send them into *Babylon?* It was God who sent them into *Babylon*, and himself interprets his own action, (*vers.* 14.) *I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased.* God who wrestled with *Jacob* till he lamed him, smites the seed of *Jacob* till he wounded them, and that not with some slight wound, but with the wound of an enemy, that is, with such wounds as an enemy is wounded with: God wounds a beloved people with the wounds of any enemy, even with such a wound as an enemy gives, and with such a wound as an enemy receives. God was not an enemy to *Job*, but God wounded him as if he were an enemy. The wounds of God are the wounds of a father, whose end is to correct, not to kill; he smites us as children, and counteth us children whilest he is smiting us; yet he smites so hard and wounds so deep as if wrathful anger moved his arm to smite and wound. Great wounds are the wounds of an enemy; for, as a man is said to hate father and mother, yea and his own life, when he regards not what they say to withhold him from the duty which he oweth to Christ, in this case (though he truly reverence father and mother) he is said to hate them, because we commonly hate those whose counsels and desires we reject, or they at least think we do so; so, a great wound is called by the Prophet the wound of an enemy, because none but enemies use to give such wounds. There is no outward condition so sad, but God sometimes puts his own into it. As a wicked man can do any thing to God but love him, he prayes to God, he hears the Word of God, he gives an outward conformity to the Law of God, but he cannot love God: So God can do any thing against his own people, but hate them: He can impoverish them, weaken them, and wound them, he can correct and chasten them, he can speak cursedly to them, and deal coursely with them, but he cannot hate them.

Ab inimico illata dicitur illa plaga quia gravis est qualẽ inferre solet inimicos. Sanct.

Secondly Observe, *A Godly man may doubt whether God love him or no.*

Where God loves he loves to the end. All his friends are his sons. A son is not taken for years, as a servant is: once a son and ever a son, and because every friend of God is a son of God, therefore once a friend and ever a friend: yet, they who are for ever the friends of God, are not alwayes perswaded of the love of God. The relation cannot be lost, but the sweetness of it may. As many wicked men are high flown in confidences that they are the friends of God, and that God useth them as friends, they are rich, and they are full, they have favour and honour in the world, above thousands of their brethren, upon these grounds they boast, *see how God loveth us*, and yet at that time God hates them and counts them as his enemies. The Jews had an high esteem of *Moses*, they trusted in *Moses*, yet Christ saith unto them, (*Joh.* 5. 45.) *I will not accuse you to the Father, there is one will accuse you, even Moses in whom you trust.* So will some glory that God is their friend, and they his favourites: But while they think they trust God, and God helps them, we may say, God whom they trust will accuse, and not only accuse but destroy them as professed enemies. Now, as some have false perswasions that God is their friend, so others are under false suspicions that God is their enemy. An upright heart is not alwayes setled in this great truth, that God loves him, yea he may come almost to a settlement in this great errour, that God hates him. Nothing can separate us from the benefits of the love of God (*Rom.* 8. 39.) but many things may separate us from the feelings of it.

Thirdly

Thirdly Observe, *To be an enemy to God is the worst of all conditions.*

God is the best friend and the worst enemy; no love like his, no wrath like his: *Those mine enemies that would not have me reign over them, bring them forth and slay them here before me.* His foes shall be his footstool. And as to be a real enemy to God, is to be in the worst condition, so to apprehend our selves enemies to God, or not in the favour of God, is a very sad condition. I have opened this point further at the seventh Chapter, vers. 11. Where *Job* complains in language near this, *Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden unto my self?* An enemy is the mark against whom we direct all our shot, and brandish all our weapons. We are all by nature enemies to God, blessed are they who through grace are his reconciled friends. *Job* having asked the question, why God, hid his face and held him as an enemy, beseeches him not to contend with him, because he was (if he was) so weak and inconsiderable an enemy.

Vers. 25. **Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?**

There is a twofold consideration of this verse, First, as it stands in its own bounds. Secondly, As it relates to the words following. I shall here open it in its own compass, and only explain the meaning of this manner of speaking.

Folia prepulsum concutit, secundum vulgare dictum, qui afflicto afflictionem addit. Drus.

Both parts of the verse are proverbial, and are nearly allied in sense to that proverbial speech used by the Prophet (*Isa.* 42. 3.) repeated by Christ (*Mat.* 13. 20.) *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoaking flax.* To break the bruised reed, and to quench the smoaking flax, is as much as to break a leaf driven to and fro, and to pursue the dry stubble. So that both these similitudes express such as are weak and unable to resist, or the adding of affliction to those who are already over-burdened with affliction. That for the general.

עָרַץ *Est conterere, cōfringere aut roborare se, & potentiā ostendere in aliquo confringendo.*

Wilt thou break.] The word which we translate, *to break*, signifies to break terribly, or to beat a thing to powder: to break with power, or to shew much power in breaking. *Sanctifie the Lord in your hearts, and let him be your dread.* He is to be dreaded who can break all power, and whose power none can break (*Luk.* 12. 4.) *Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him.* The mighty man is expressed by this word, because men of might are able to break opposers. But wilt thou mightily break that which hath no might? What's that?

עֲרָצִים *Potentes dicti qui potentia sua aliis sunt formidabiles.* Merc.

A leaf driven to and fro?] Wilt thou put out thy power against him that is but weakness? A leaf upon the tree is a weak thing, but a leaf shaken off the tree, driven to and fro upon the ground, is contemptible: Wilt thou break a leaf? and,

Verè eadē sententia, nisi fortè stipula aliquid ignobilius & inutilius significat.

Wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?] To break a leaf, and to pursue the dry stubble, are one thing. And as there he speaks not barely of a leaf, but of a leaf driven to and fro; so here he compares himself, not only to stubble, but to *dry stubble*. Stubble will consume quickly, but dry stubble is at once flame and ashes. Such a poor thing, such a nothing am I; and wilt thou strive with me? While he saith, wilt thou do this? he intimates that 'tis not Gods manner to do this.

Hence Observe, First, *God useth not to afflict those that are afflicted, or to act his strength upon those who have no strength.*

The day of the Lord (saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 2. 12.) *shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low, upon the Cedars of Lebanon, and upon the Oaks of Bashan, and upon all the mountains, and upon the hills that are lifted up.* God doth not use to deal with the leaves of the Oak and Cedar, but with the body and roots of the Oak and Cedar: his quarrel is not with the stubble which grows upon the hills and mountains, but with the hills and mountains themselves. He loves not to humble the humbled, but the proud; nor to bring down those that are low, but the lofty. 'Tis true the meanest sinner shall not escape his judgement, but he chiefly desires to be doing with the mighty. Usually the Lord gives strength to the weak, he rarely opposeth the weak with his strength. That's the report which the same Prophet makes (*Isa.* 25. 4.) *Thou Lord hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in their distress* (thou dost not put out thy strength against the poor and needy in their distress) *Thou art a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat* (therefore surely thou usest not to storm those that are in the storm, or kindle a fire upon those that are in the heat). 'Tis the Lords manner to bind up the broken, not to break the broken; to heal the wounded, to comfort the mourners, to raise up them that are cast down; he useth not to smite the wounded, to grieve the mourners, or to cast them lower, who are already cast down. 'Tis the way of God to weaken the strong, and to strengthen those that are weak. *Will he break a leaf?* he will not.

Non est cōveniens ut aliquis fortissimus ostenderet suā potētiā in re debilissima. Aquin. *Itane velis te fortē præbere conterendo foliū quod vento rapitur?* Pin. *Cōtra foliū cui avellendo satis est tenuissimus spiritus, insurgere jubes vehemētissimum ventum? --An gloria magna est, Insidias homini supposuisse Deū?* Tibul.

Secondly, *Job* speaks it as a thing unbecoming, and below the great, the mighty God, to contend with the weak.

Hence Observe, *It is no honour to the strong to overcome the weak.*

Is it an honour to the eagle to catch a fly, or for a lion to kill a mouse? Thus *David* bespeaks *Saul* (1 Sam. 24. 14.) *After whom is the King of Israel come out? after a dead dog or after a flea?* Am I match for thee? Go rather and lead thy army against the *Philistims*, engage with thy equals, if thou wouldest get honour. To see a strong man fight with a child, or conquer a woman, is it any honour to the man? The Poet of old said, *Is it a glory to God to lay snares for man?* God is so much above man, that he cannot honour himself in opposing man. The strongest men, compared with God, are so weak, that when he would get himself honour in opposing them, he usually gives them more strength, that so his strength may be somewhat glorified in overcoming them. God sets the creature on high, that his highness may appear in pulling them down. Strength subduing the strong, and wisdom befooling the wise, get a name in the world. Thus he saith of *Pharaoh, Even for this same cause have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my Name may be declared in all the world,* (Rom. 9. 17.) *Job* gave us a particular of Gods powerful acts, (*chap.* 12.) and he shews all along that God acted his power upon men of greatest power, *He looseth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle; He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty:* he had not to do with underlings; Kings, Princes and Councellours, the combined strength of whole kingdoms and nations, are no match for God, but these carry the fairest appearance of a match, and therefore he delights to deal with them. He suffers *Babylon* to arrive at a great height, to be founded upon *seven hills*, to be counselled by *seven heads*, to be defended *by ten horns:* Now when *Babylon* sits upon seven hils, and becomes a beast having seven heads and ten horns, that is, abundance of wisdom and policy, store of power and outward force, even the civil power of ten kingdoms to back her, here is wisdom and strength for the wise and strong God to glorifie himself upon; and therefore when *Babylon* falls, the Name of God is cried up, (*Rev.* 19. 1.) *After these things* (that is, after the tragical downful of *Babylon*) *I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia, salvation, and honour, and glory, and power unto the Lord our God.* God needs not break a leaf or pursue the stubble to shew his power, for the tallest and best rooted tree is before him, but as a leaf, and the hardest metals but as the dry stubble. The vision in *Daniel* tells us (*chap.* 2. 35.) that, not only the *clay, but the iron, the brass, the silver and the gold* (that is, the mightiest Monarchs and Monarchies of the earth) *were broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away.* And when at any time God breaks those who are (comparatively to other men) but as a leaf driven to and fro, or pursues those who are but as dry stubble, he doth it not to get himself honour in the acting of his breaking and pursuing power, but of his preserving and saving power; for he preserves *his* whom he thus breaks, and saves *his* whom he thus pursues. Yea, the very reason why he breaks them is, that he may preserve them, and he pursues them upon design to save them.

I may

I may add further, that God breaks the leaf, not to shew his power, as to shew what power the leaf hath received from him: The strength of a believer is never more seen then when he endures breaking. *God punishes the wicked to shew his power, but he afflicts the godly to shew their power*; That power I mean, which he hath given them, not only to do, but to suffer, whether for him or from him. It were indeed no honour for God to try his strength upon us; but it is a great honour for us when God at once gives and tries our strength. To see a leaf whole in the very breaking, and flourish in the withering, to see dry stubble endure the flame (and like the bush in the book of *Exodus*) to burn and not to consume, this gives witness to all the world how strong weak man is by the power of God, *Being strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness*, Col. 1. 11. As God never indeed breaks the bruised reed, nor quencheth the smoaking flax, so he would never assay to break the bruised-reed, but to shew that it will not break; nor would he assay to quench the smoaking flax, but to shew that it will not quench or go out, *till he send forth judgement unto victory*: as if he had said, the bruised-reed shall not break till it be made strong, and the smoaking flax shall not be quenched till it be a perfect flame, that is, it shall never be broken, it shall never be quenched. Judgement brought to victory, is holiness, or the principle of grace within us, triumphing over all temptations without us, and all corruptions within us, by the power of Jesus Christ.

Aptissima similitudine utitur Jobus ad hominis imbecilitatē notandā. Pin.

Again, A leaf or dry stubble are the emblems, not only of that sort of men who are accidentally weak, but of all men in regard of their natural weakness. Thus the strongest men are but stubble: And some conceive *Job* speaking here of himself, not only as he was a man in affliction, whom the tempest of Gods wrath had shaken as a leaf, and the heat of troubles had parched into dry stubble, but he speaks of himself as a man; and what he speaks of himself is applycable to mankind. *Man at his best estate is altogether vanity*, *Psal.* 39. He is compared indeed sometimes to a flower in the field, which hath sap and moisture, greenness and verdure in it, yet he is of so short continuance, that even this green flower is but dry stubble: He hath a spring wherein he buddeth, and a summer wherein he is green; but his Autumn and his winter, wherein he fadeth, and his fruit falleth off, come so fast upon him, that we may call his whole life a winter, and all his dayes the fall of the leaf. A godly man in reference to his spiritual estate, is like unto a tree, *whose leaf shall not wither*, (*Psal.* 1. 3.) but in reference to his temporal estate, he is likea withering leaf: So the Prophet complains, *Isa.* 64. 6. *We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.*

Dū se Jobus folijs & stipulā appellat, sibi accessum præparat ad divinā misericordiā quæ eo se facilius inflectit, ubi majorē esse videt miseriā. Sanct.

Lastly Note this, *The Lord is moved to pity, when we mind him of our frailty.*

Non fuit hæc Jobi mens ut quicquā voluit de Dei gloria detrahere, sed ut cōmemoratione tenuitatis suæ & sūmæ Dei potentiæ illū ad misericordiam flecteret. Merl.

The intendment of *Job* was not to charge God with severity, but to move him to mercy. Our strongest argument to prevail with God, is to shew him our weakness: To confess our natural weakness, moves him much; to confess our spiritual weakness, moves him much more. If a Pharisee come and tell him a long story of his righteousness, the Lord abhors it; but if a *poor publican* look upon himself as unworthy to look up to heaven, this stirs, not only compassion, but acceptation; *He went home justified rather then the other*. If you would prevail with God, hold forth your soars, your sicknesses, your diseases, your distempers, your nothingness; say, you are but smoaking flax, and bruse reeds, that you are but leaves driven to and fro, and as the dried stubble. There is yet a further sense to be given of these words as they stand in connection with the following verse, to which I pass.

VERS. 26, 27, 28.

For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.

And he, as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

AT the four and twentieth verse, *Job* was sadly inquisitive, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* &c. here he makes as sad a narrative. *David* (*Psal.* 66. 16.) invites all that fear God, *Come and I will declare what he hath done for my soul*. *Job* seems to invite attention from all, while he declares what God had done against his soul, *Thou writest bitter things against me*, &c. The whole relation is carried on in a continued metaphor, alluding to a judiciary proceeding, as if himself were a guilty malefactor, and God the Supream Judge, First, Aggravating his faults and pronouncing sentence upon him, *vers.* 26. *Thou writest bitter things*, &c. Secondly, Executing the sentence, *vers.* 27. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks*. In the close of all, *Job* declares the effect which that sentence pronounced and executed, wrought upon him, (*vers.* 28.) *He, as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

Thou writest bitter things against me.

God hath a double book, and both in a figure. He hath a book of his *resolved decrees*, and a book of his *acted providences*. This latter (the book of his providences) is but a transcript or a copy of the former. Those huge Original volumes of love and blessings which God hath laid up in his heart for his own people, those also of wrath and judgement which he hath laid up there against his enemies from all eternity, these volumes (I say) of love or wrath, are in writing out every day, by the hand and pen of providence, in the ordering of all those affairs which concern both persons and nations. *Job* is to be understood of this latter book, the book of providence, in which God writ bitter things against him, though those bitter things compared and laid together, with the comfortable issues in the book of Gods decrees, were indeed, if not sweet and pleasant, yet very wholesome and profitable.

Scribere forense videtur & pertinet ad firmum & irrevocabile judicis decretū. Translatio ducta est a regibus sententiam scriptām mandantibus. Chrys.

Further, This writing of bitter things, is also conceived to be an allusion to Judges, who command the sentence against offenders to be written. That which is written, is not only recorded but established. *What I have written, I have written*, saith *Pilate*; as if he had said, I may sometime recal a transient word, but what I have written, and is under my hand, shall stand. Any writing hath a firmness in it, especially *laws*, which tell men what they must doe, and *judgments* which tell them what they must receive or suffer: So the people of God are said to *execute the judgment that is written* upon the Kings and Princes who oppose the kingdom of Christ (*Psal.* 149. 8, 9.) *To bind their Kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written*. That is, written in the decrees of God, and written by the decrees of men. Thus they spake in the book of *Daniel*. *Now, O King, establish the decree, and sign the writing that it may not be changed*, Dan. 6. 8. And when the Lord would shew *Belshazzar* the certainty of his approaching ruine (*Dan.* 5. 24.) he presented to him upon the plaister of the wall of his palace, the fingers of a mans hand, which wrote over against the candlestick, and this writing was written, *Mene, Mene, Tekel* &c. A bitter thing was written against that Prince in the midst of his delicious banquetings. *Thou art weighed and found too light, Thy kingdom is divided*, &c. And as in all civil nations, the sentence of judgment is written; so among the Grecians, *to write* was as much as *to accuse and impeach*: why not also among the Jews? *Jobs* wish seems to imply it (*chap.* 31. 35.) *O that my adversary had written a book against me*, that is, a book of accusation, which in the civil law is called a *Libell*, and the act of bringing in an accusation, *Libelling*. It is the way of our law to bring in writings of inditement, or of charge against offenders, as well as to write the sentence or judgment given upon it. Thus (*Jer.* 32. 30.) *Write this man childless (saith the Lord) a man that shall not prosper in his days*. As if he had said, the decree is gone out against him, he shall not escape.

Græci dicunt γεγραφέναι τινὰ, quum judex reo latā sententiā perscribit & γέγραφθαι est accusare. Merc.

Thou writest bitter things.] The Laws of *Draco* are said to be *written in blood*: and this Decree of God against *Job* was (as he conceived) *written with gall and wormwood. Thou writest bitter things against me.*

I find some variety of opinion about these bitter things.

And

And there are divers ingredients to make up these pills.

First, Some expound these bitter things of sin; *Thou writest or settest down my sins.* Thou keepest an account of all my weaknesses and transgressions. There are two who write our sins. First, *God books our sins*; that is, he knows the sins we commit as exactly, as if they were written down before him in a book. The formality of writing is infinitely below God, but the effect of writing, which is the evidencing of what is done or spoken, is always before him. Secondly, *Conscience books our sins*; *Job* intends the writing of God, *Thou writest bitter things*, which some aggravate; as if *Job* did secretly tax God with severity; and had said thus: *I know thou keepest a book, thou writest diaries and annals, the whole history of my life: but thou settest down little of my good works, or of what is praise-worthy; thou takest little notice of any thing that might render me acceptable to thy self, or commend me to the acceptation of others: only my sins and failings, which are a bitterness to me, those thou settest down, and keepest a perfect account of.* But *Job* was far from such reflexions upon God, yet we may give a safe sence of the whole, though we interpret these bitter things by sin: There be two reasons why sins are called *bitter things*.

First, Because they provoke God to anger, even to bitter anger, they imbitter the Spirit of God against us (*Hos.* 12. 14.) Ephraim *provoked him to anger most bitterly.*

Secondly, Because sin procures us evil and bitter things. Sin is bitter in the effects of it, as well as base in the nature of it.

Hence Observe, *How sweet soever sin is in the acting, it will be bitterness in the end.*

There is a bitterness in the best of sin. One of these two things do always follow sin, Repentance or punishment. Repentance is the best we can expect when we have sinned; and they who do not repent, shall find punishment whether they expect it or no. Now, there is a bitterness in Repentance; Repentance is no pleasant portion. Though the Saints have a holy delight in repentance, yet (take it in it self) repentance is no delightful work, and therefore it is often expresst by breaking the heart, and afflicting the soul: The repentance of the *Jews* is so described, (*Zech.* 12.10.) *They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for me as one that mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him:* In bitterness and in repentance at the same time. So that let the best come of sin which can come, that we repent and are humbled for it, and repent savingly, yet bitter sorrows, bitter tears, and bitter mournings are the issues of it. I believe *Peter* did not sin very sweetly, when he denied his Master, but I am sure after he had done it, *he wept bitterly*, (*Matth.* 26. 75.) But if the sin be not repented of, then comes the bitterness of punishment. Possibly a sin we repent of, may receive bitter chastenings: God may correct us medicinally, for the sins over which we have mourned penitently; but if the sin be not repented of, then he punisheth for the satisfaction of his own righteous justice, as well as for the correction of our unrighteousness; and that's a bitter thing indeed. Thus sin is a bitter thing, as the effects of it are bitter: It is a bitter thing also, as the root of it is bitter: So much that caution of *Moses* to *Israel* imports (*Deut.* 29. 18) *Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood.* In the soil of mans heart there is such a root: Our natures bear nothing but gall and wormood; sinful actions sprout and shoot forth from our sinful corruptions. Yet this place of *Moses* is to be understood, not so much of that general corruption which is in our hearts; for if so, then he needed not to say, *Lest there should be among you a root which beareth gall and wormwood.* For every man in the world, regenerate or unregenerate, hath such a root in him: But he means it (as the Text hath it) of some apostatizing or backsliding person that should solicite others to sin; saying, *Come, let us go, and serve other gods*; he meant it of those whose hearts were hardened and heightened in sin, whose original corruption was drawn out not only to do wickedly themselves, but to provoke their brethren unto wickedness; these he calleth emphatically *a root which beareth gall and wormwood.* For look what a mans own corruption or original sin is to him, the same is another corrupt and sinful person to him; namely, an inticer unto sin. So the Author to the *Hebrews* expounds *Moses* (*Heb.* 12. 15.) while he useth the same phrase, or rather borrows it of *Moses, Lest any root of bitterness springing up, trouble you, and thereby many be defiled:* That is, lest some scandalous persons not only trouble the peace of the whole Church, but also vitiate the purity of some particular members of the Church, by the contagion of their evil example: Now, though these Scriptures do rather call sinful persons, then the sin in a person, a *root of bitterness*, yet those persons are therefore called so, because of their sin; and their sin is a root, which as it defiles others, so it destroyes themselves. When the Apostle *Peter* saw he was deceived in *Simon Magus*, he saith, *Now I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. In the gall of bitterness* (Acts 8. 23.) that is, in a state of sin and impenitency, which will at last bring forth the bitterness of punishment. In that sence also the Prophet threatens, *Isa.* 24. 9. *They shall not drink wine with a song, strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it*; that is, it shall be turned into bitterness: We have a common saying amongst us, *Sweet meat hath sowr sauce*: So here, strong drink, which goes down merrily, shall be turned into bitterness, they shall not drink it with a song. Voluptuous men mingle their drink with singing; but these sorrowful men should mingle their drink with weeping; this would make it bitter to those that drank it. *Solomon* describing the harlot (*Prov.* 5. 4.) with the contentments which she offers, concludes, *Her end is bitter as wormwood*; that is, the end which she brings others to. That's her end in which she causeth others to end, as well as that wherein she ends her self: Her end both wayes is the same, *bitter as wormwood.* The Prophet *Jeremy* shuts up his admonition (*chap.* 2. 19.) with, *Know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God*, &c. Sin is like that book (*Rev.* 10. 9.) *Sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly.* Or, as *Abner* said to *Joab*, (2 *Sam.* 2. 26.) *Shall the sword devour for ever? Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?* Yea, we may call every sin a bitter thing, not only in reference to the future effects of it, but in reference to the present taste of it. Sin is often bitter, not only in the belly, but in the mouth: It is bitterness not only in the end, but in the beginning, yea, the very sweetness which is in sin, promotes the bitterness of it: for as in nature, sweet meats liberally fed upon, breed choler, and beget bitterness in the stomack; so these sweet morsels of sin, upon which the soul feeds, cause bitter tastes, and sowr humours, disaffecting both soul and body, and troubling the whole man.

Secondly, *Bitter things* are the displeasure of God, take it abstractedly from the punishments which usually are sent out after it. Thou writest *bitter things against me*; that is, thou art angry with me. A man of a bitter spirit, and an angry man are the same. (*Dan.* 8. 7.) In the vision of the He-goat and the Ram, it is said, *That the He-goat came close unto the Ram, and he was moved with choler against him*; so we translate it: It is the same word in the Chaldee, which we have here in the Hebrew: He was moved with bitterness; that is, he was very angry. So (*Hab.* 1. 6.) the *Chaldeans* are described to be *a bitter and an hasty Nation*; that is, an angry Nation. Anger is bitter both to those who are angry, and to those with whom we are angry. Again (*Prov.* 17. 11.) *An evil man seeketh only rebellion*; it is this word, *He seeketh only bitterness*, which we translate *rebellion*; because they who indeed rebel are full of wrath, rage, and bitterness. The word is used in the same sence upon the surprise of *David*'s Carriages by the *Amalekites* at *Ziklag*; 'tis said, *The soul of all the people was grieved, or bitter* (1 *Sam.* 30. 6.) That grief was properly anger, as we may collect by the effect of it; *for they spake of stoning him*; stoning is an high act of angry revenge. The learned Physitians tell us, that bitter things are naturally very hot; anger and displeasure are the heat of a mans spirit; *Anger is the boyling of the blood about the heart*, as Philosophers teach. So that bitterness being caused by heat, we may well express bitterness by anger, which hath so much from heat. Hence *cursing* (which is an act of anger) *and bitterness* are put together (*Rom.* 3. 14.) as also *bitterness with wrath.* Eph. 4. 31. Thus here, *Thou writest bitter things*, or bitterness against me, is, thou writest thy self angry and displeased with him. And so the words [*against me*]

Non mirum est peccata quæ primum dulcia videntur amaritudines vocari, eum dulcia omnia in amarorem & bilem facile commutentur. Pined.

Scribere amaritudines est cum ira & indignatione decernere extremi supplicii sententiam. Amaritudo sæpe ponitur pro iracundia.

Amaritudo pertinet ad conceptam iram, biliosamque indignantis animi commotionem. Amara pro biliosis accipiunt medici. Hippocr. *lib.* 4. *de Morbis. Amarum efficitur à caloris excessu.* Galen. *Amaros vocat genus biliosorum qui cum difficultate placantur.* Aristot. *lib.* 4. *Ethic.*

me] have an accent, a weight in them: As if he had said *Thou seemest to vary the course of thy dealings towards me, both in reference to former times, and in reference to other persons: thou wast not wont to be thus bitter against me, and towards others, thou art sweet and gentle;* (Isa. 54. 7.) *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on thee;* that is, *the experience which thy people have had of thee, and such have been my experiences: but now thou seemest to run another course, Thou writest bitter things against me.*

Taking bitterness for anger, I might Observe,

That God sometimes appears very angry with those whom he entirely loveth.

He seems to be all gall, when he is nothing but honey; to burn with wrath, when an everlasting flame of love is kindled in his breast. I have lately insisted on this point, therefore I forbear.

Vox amaritudinis accipitur pro mortis sententia lata. Bold.

Again Observe, *The anger of God is very terrible, it is a bitter thing.*

There is no dallying with Divine displeasure.

Analogia sumi videtur ex lethalibus quibusdam venenis, quæ cum ignea & calidissima sunt, amarissima etiam sunt. Fel terræ. Pined.

Thirdly, Others restrain these *bitter things* to death. *Thou writest bitter things against me*; that is, a decree of death. Death is a bitter thing: Bitterness and death are joyned in Scripture, (2 *Kings* 4. 40.) *The Prophets said, Death was in the pot*, when they had put wild gourds or bitter herbs into the pot: Wild gourds are very bitter, so bitter, that the *Persians* called them, *The gall of the earth*; death was in the pot when such bitter herbs were there: So *Moses* speaks (*Deut.* 32. 32.) *Their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter, their wine is the poyson of Dragons*; that is, their grapes, their clusters, their wine, all their designs and actions are all deadly; deadly to themselves chiefly; but deadly also unto others (*Prov.* 31. 6.) *Give wine unto those that be of heavy hearts*; so we read it, give wine unto those that be of bitter hearts: so saith the Original: And it it is plain from the context, that he means it of persons ready to dye, or to be put to a violent death. The borders of death are bitter, much more death it self; yea, to some the borders or approaches of death are more bitter then death it self. When *Agag* was spared by *Saul*, he doubted not of quarter at the hands of *Samuel*, and therefore *comes out delicately* (both in his gate and garb, 1 *Sam.* 15. 32.) and saith, *Surely the bitterness of death is past*; that is, the fear of death is past; surely if *Saul* a Souldier saved me alive in the heat of the battel, *Samuel* a Prophet will not kill me in cold blood. In this sence *Hezekiah* complains (*Isa.* 38. 17.) *For peace I had (or on my peace came) great bitterness*; that is, the fear of death, as the next words explain, while he saith, *But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption. Job* had the sentence of death in himself, and he thought God had written that sentence too. *Thou writest bitter things against me.*

Amaritudo est quicquid potest vitam reddere molestam. Inter sapores amaritudo est inimicissima naturæ & palato. Hinc amaritudo dicitur de re quacunque tristi, sc. amara anima, amarus fletus, amaræ lachrymæ. Pined. Κατήγεσις, ἐμὲ κατὰ Sept. *Malim a verba intelligi suppicia.* Merc.

But I conceive [*bitter things*] are here intended in a larger sence, being put not only for the evil of death, but for all the evils of this life, for whatsoever renders the life of man bitter and grievous. For as bitterness among all tastes is most unpleasant to the palate: so also are afflictions both to the mind and outward man. The seventy agree in this sence so fully, that in stead of *bitter things* they translate, *Thou writest evil things against me.* It is frequent in Scripture to call any afflicting evil a bitter thing. (*Ruth.* 1. 20.) *Naomi* changeth her name to *Marah*, when she was full of trouble: *Call me not* Naomi, *that is beautiful; but call me* Marah, *that is bitter, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me, I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.* She had lost all, and was in great affliction, therefore she takes a name sutable to her estate, *Call me* Marah. We read of the waters of *Marah*, that is, bitterness (*Exod.* 16. 23.) All the waters of affliction may be called *Marah*, only the Lord shews his people a tree (as there he did *Moses*) which being cast into them makes them sweet. *Afflictions in themselves are not joyous but grievous*, Heb. 12. 11. How grievous or bitter afflictions are to the flesh, hath been heretofore insisted on, therefore I pass it here. *Thou writest bitter things against me.*

And makest me to possess the sins of my youth.

The Hebrew word which we translate to *possess*, signifies also to *dispossess or disinherit*, and by consequent to consume and destroy: so some translate it: whereas we say, *Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth*; they say, *Thou dispossessest me by the iniquities of my youth*; or as the Vulgar, *Thou dost consume me by the sins of my youth*; thou makest me poor and naked, thou strippest me of all my comforts by reason of the transgressions of my youth. And so thou dispossessest me, is the same with our rendring, *Thou makest me to possess*

Verbum ירש *Ex iis est quæ contraria significant; denotat enim hæreditate aliquem expellere, & per consequens consumere, perdere. Quidam existimavit peccata suæ adolescentiæ vocari, ea, quæ à filiis suis adolescentibus perpetrata fuissent.* Pined

The sins of my youth.] What are those?

First, Some expound these words [**of my youth**] not of *Job*'s youth *personally* taken, but of his youth *relationally* taken; that is, of his Children. So, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth*, is, thou makest me to possess the sins of my *youths*, or *of my young ones*, who sinned against thee; I seem now to be punished for them, and to inherit my Childrens transgressions. So did *Eli*, God reckoned with him for his childrens sins: Eli *possest the sins of his youth*, of his relational youth, of his sons whom he did not restrain (as he had power to do) when they were not only vitious, but scandalous. Sin is an inheritance which ascends as well as descends: As many children possess or are punished for the sins of *their old age*, that is, of their fathers (they imitating their fathers sins) so many fathers possess or are punished for the *sins of their youth*, that is, *of their children*, they having not sufficiently reproved their Childrens sins: While Parents neglect their duty to their Children, they feel smart for their Children; and the Father of spirits layes those rods upon their backs, which their foolish indulgence would not suffer them to lay upon the backs of the Children of their flesh. But I pass this interpretation, as over-reaching the scope of this Text, though it contains a general truth.

Secondly, Others interpret these words as a proof of *Job*'s eminent and exemplary piety and holiness, all the time of his elder and more confirmed years: As if God could find little or nothing to charge him with as sinful, after he came to be a man, and was master of himself. 'Tis said by the reporter of *Cardinal Bellarmine* in his life and death, that when the Priest (according to the Romish custom) came to absolve him, he could not remember any particular sin to confess, till he went back in his thoughts as far as his youth. If it were so, I must say, that how great a Scholar soever this *Cardinal* was in *books*, he was but a mean Scholar in *his own heart and life*, in which the best Christians see sin enough to confess and bewail in their best times; yea, the better any one is, the more he sees his own sinfulness. The oldest and sincerest of Saints in this life, needs not go a day back, much less back to the beginning of his knowing dayes, his youth, to find matter of confession, seeing he sins every day, yea, every hour. Yet thus they report of *Bellarmine* to advance his piety, that, if he had not confest the sins of his youth, he could not tell what to confess. In this sence, the present exposition makes *Job* speak to God, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth*, as if all the other sections and parts of his life had been unblameable. But this savours not the spirit of *Job*, who, as he was very confident of the sincerity of his heart, so he was well acquainted with the sinfulness of his nature, and saw himself not only a sinner, but much sin, all his life over.

Quidam ex hoc loco colligunt eximiam viri sanctissimi sanctitatem, qui in ætate jam confirmata & matura nihil sibi conscivit. Sanct.

Thirdly, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth*, is, Thou makest me possess or remember all my sins: *Job* had the whole course and tenour of his life in view. Old age and youth are the two extreams of mans knowing time upon the earth: We can hardly remember what we were, or what we did before the days of our youth; though before that we are evil, and do evil. Man is born in sin; and he sins almost as soon as he is born; but those sins fall not under our own observation. *Austin* said of himself, I know not the sins I committed in my infancy, yet I know that then I sinned; which he proves; because he had observed anger and envy in sucking Children. *Job* goes not back to the sins of his infancy and childhood, which others might remember, but he goes as far as himself could remember, even to the sins of his youth: These he possessed, or the thought of these possessed him. *That possesses a man which his mind runs much upon.* God is therefore said to make him possess the sins of his youth, because

the dealings of God with him caused him to recollect and read over all his sins, especially the sins of youth.

Fourthly, *To possess the sins of youth*, is, To feel sorrow or pain for the sins of our youth. We may be said to possess the sins of our youth two wayes: First, When we feel the smart of them: Secondly, When we are affected with the filthiness of them in our riper years. Some old men possess the sins of their youth another way, namely, by delight: For as most delight in the act of sin, and not a few are delighted in the hopes of sin, a sin to be committed pleases them with a promise of future pleasure, *To morrow shall be as this day* (said those Epicures, *Isa.* 56. 6.) *and much more abundant.* They tasted the sweet of sin before they came at it. So there are some who take delight in the sins that are past: They that are old in sin can talk merrily of, and contemplate sweetly upon the sins and vanities of their youth; and in this they do not only possess the sins of their youth, but react the sins of their youth: For so often as a man remembers a sin which he hath committed with content, he commits it again. Holy *Job* did not possess the sins of his youth thus; he reflected upon them to mourn over them, and repent afresh for them, not to make merry with them, he chewed them over again in his thoughts, not as sweet morsels, but as gall and wormwood. *Thus he was made to possess the sins of his youth.*

Fifthly, *The sins of youth are possessed*, When the guilt of them flies in our faces, and our tears that they are not pardoned return upon our spirits: In this sence also (possibly) God made *Job possess the sins of his youth.* He was as much (or more) exercised with inward terrour, as with outward trouble; and when God hid his face from him, he saw his sins with open face.

Hence Observe, First, *Youth is easily overtaken with sin.*

Young men are least able to foresee the issues, to resist the temptations or keep out of the wayes of sin. The Prophet describes the childehood of Christ, our Emanuel, under the notion of childehood in general, which knows not how *to refuse the evil and chuse the good* (Isa. 7. 15.) *Paul* saith of himself (1 *Cor.* 13. 11.) *When I was a childe, I spake as a childe, I understood as a childe, I thought as a childe:* all in him, or done by him, was childish, when he was a child. 'Tis but a little better, (ordinarily) and sometimes it is much worse, in the next step of mans life, which is *youth.* He that is a youth, thinks as a youth, speaks as a youth, acts as a youth; all in him and done by him is youthful, that is, imperfect and immature, subject to miscarriages and mistakes. *David* puts and answers the question, (*Psal.* 119. 9.) *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?* Young men are apt to go foul wayes, or to defile their wayes, and therefore need instruction how to cleanse them. And *David* prayes in special that God would pardon the errours which he found in that paragraph of his life, *Psal.* 25. 7. *Remember not the sins of my youth!* And besides the obnoxiousness of youth to sin in general, *Youth hath its proper sins.* The Apostle writing to *Timothy*, an holy man, yet a young man, exhorts him (2 *Tim.* 2. 22.) *Fly youthful lusts*, look to that; there are lusts which hang upon youth, & dog that season of life more then any other, there are certain sins to which we are peculiarly endangered in each division of our lives: As every calling, every place, every relation hath its special sins and temptations, so hath every age of life. Old men are passionate and covetous, men of middle age are revengeful and malicious, young men are precipitate and voluptuous. The Hebrews call a young man *Nagnar*, which springs from a root signifying to shake off or to be tossed to and fro, implying that such are unconstant to their own resolutions, and apt to shake off the gravest counsels. Hence the Apostle cautions not only *Timothy* but *Titus*, *Let no man despise thy youth*: as if he had said, thy youth lies open to contempt, because it lies so open to sin: keep to the rule, and thou wilt keep up thy reputation. Be thou watchful over thy self, lest thou be despised: For, I conceive, the charge is not so much given unto others (though that be a good sence) as unto *Timothy* himself. *Paul* puts it close upon him, *Let no man despise thy youth*, do thou so behave thy self, that none may have so much as a colour or pretence to despise thee. How he might do so, his next advise directs: *Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity* (1 Tim. 4. 12.) Make it appear that thy wisdom and understanding have outstript thy years; make it appear that all gravity doth not wait upon the hoary head; make it appear that some, even in the bud and blossome of nature, are ripe in grace and mature in holiness; write after this copy, and all will either imitate thee or not condemn thee: Thus aged *Paul* lessons and cautions his young scholar *Timothy*, as knowing the disadvantages of youth, and the temptations it subjects us to.

Hence Observe, Secondly. *That sins of youth may prove the sufferings of old age.*

As young men who are very active and venturous receive bodily bruses and blows in the heat of youth, which they feel and groan under when they are old; so likewise the sins which young men venture upon and make light of, may press their souls and lie heavy upon their spirits in old age. *Job* speaks of some wicked old men (chap. 20. 11.) whose *bones are full of the sins of their youth, which shall lie down with them in the dust.* The sins of some old men are young; while their bodies grow weak, their lusts grow strong: such shall feel more smart of them in old age, then ever they found pleasure or delight in them in youth: Their bones shall be full of them, though their bellies are never full of them. It is a sad meeting *when young sins and old bones meet together:* And it is possible that even they who have truly repented of the sins of youth, may yet feel the grief of them in old age: For though such shall not be punished for the sins of youth, yet they are often chastened for them, and though God will not remember their sins against them, yet he may give them such mindings of them as will make their hearts to ake, and themselves cry out, What fruit have we of those youthful vanities, whereof we are now ashamed, and wherewith we are now pained? *If our youth be not given as first-fruits unto God, he usually gives us* (*yet in mercy to his*) *bitter after-fruits.* Give God the possession, yea the dominion of thy youth, least thou say (as *Job*) he makes me possess the sins of my youth.

Seek first the kingdom of God, seek it first in intention in the first place, and with the best of thy desires and endeavours: Seek it also first *in time*, let him have the flower of thy youthful services, least thou taste the fruit of youthful sins.

Hence Observe, Thirdly. *That a godly man looks often upon present sufferings as the chastenings of his former sin.*

God did not afflict *Job* for his former sins, for he told satan (chap. 2.) *Thou movest me against him without cause*, that is, without any such cause as thou hast pretended and suggested, I finde no affected unrighteousness in him: yet *Job* saith to God, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth.* He look't back upon his life and saw such failings and corruptions as might call for the rod of this sharp and severe correction. Whatsoever Gods aim is in afflicting, it well becomes the best of Saints to have an eye upon their sins when God hath them under his afflictions. They who are freest from the fear of Gods revenging hand for sin, are readiest to remember their sin, when they feel his correcting hand.

Hence Observe, Fourthly. *Sins formerly repented of and pardoned, may be presented to the soul as unpardoned.*

Some conceive *Job* under that temptation, while he was under this affliction. The tenour of the covenant of grace is, *I will forgive their iniquities and remember their sins no more: and when their sins come to be searched for, they shall not be found, because I have pardoned them.* God never revoked any of his gracious pardons, nor doth he ever recharge pardoned sins: yet a godly man may remember his old sins with new fears that they are not pardoned. As it is one of satans devices to fill them with assurance of pardon, who are under guilt: so to fill those with doubtings that they are not pardoned, who are acquitted from guilt: while it is an easie thing with a soul to sin, it is also very easie for that soul to believe the pardon of sin: But when once Christ helps us to dispossess our souls of the power of sin: how doth Satan labour to possess our souls with the guilt of it?

Furiosus juvenibus animi habitus. Plat. l. 2 de Leg.

it? yea, God himself may for a time or for our tryal make us possess the guilt of it; and leave us to the questionings of passed pardon. In such a case the sins which have been pardoned are pardoned again, not that the first pardon is recalled, but cleared, and faith strengthned that we are pardoned. For though there are no degrees in pardoning grace it self (in sanctifying grace there are, that doth or should grow every day in us, and we encrease in it with the encrease of God) yet pardoning grace may have an encrease as to the person pardoned. All the sins of a believers youth are pardoned, yet he often wants evidence of their pardon: The grace of God knows no decay, but there are decays in our spirits and upon our faith about it, and those sins whose commanding strength is broken, may stand up in much condemning strength. *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth.*

Lastly Observe, *That in times of affliction believers are apt to have misgiving thoughts about the pardon of sin.*

Affliction carries with it a renovation of guilt, though it be no argument of guilt; As punishment is the daughter of guilt, so affliction is somewhat akin to punishment. Now because he who is but afflicted often thinks himself punished, and he that is punished ought to acknowledge himself guilty, hence it comes to pass that he who is but afflicted thinks himself under guilt, he is full of fears that his sins stand still upon his own score, and that God is reckoning with him upon that account. When the womans son was dead, she said to the Prophet, *Art thou come unto me to call my sins to remembrance, and to slay my son,* (1 *Kings* 17. 18.) Her sorrows brought her sins to remembrance, and then she feared that God contended with her for her sins. God maketh us to possess the sins of our youth, when in old age (as it follows) *he puts our feet in the stocks.*

Vers. 27. **For thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly into all my paths, and settest a print upon the heels of my feet.**

I shall add only a word of this and of the next verse, because both are but an aggravation of *Jobs* sufferings, about which he hath spoken so much before.

Me coerces istis malis quasi sontē compedibus vinctū. Jun.

For thou puttest my feet.] As if he had said, *Thou proceedest with all severity against me as against a grand malefactor, thou layest me fast by the heels.* It is usual to put offenders into prison or into the stocks. Some translate this word by *shackles*, some by *stocks*, some by *prison*: *Job* amplifies his misery under all these notions. His afflictions were to him as a prison, as stocks, as shackles. The Church expresseth her sufferings in this metaphorical language, *He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travel: he hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old: he hath hedged me about that I cannot get out, he hath made my chain heavy.* *Jerusalem* was as a prisoner loaded with irons, bound in chains, and enclosed round about with thick and mighty walls. Such was *Jobs* condition, *Thou puttest my feet in the stocks,*

Lam. 3. 5, 6, 7.

Amplificatio est artissimæ custodiæ. Pined. *Singulis his malis circūcludens me, tanquā armatis custodibus.* Jun.

And lookest narrowly into all my paths.] This good man was not only a prisoner but a close prisoner; His paths were looked narrowly unto, his troubles like armed keepers went with him whithersoever he went: if at any time he was let out of the stocks, a watch was set upon him lest he should escape, or rather it was with him as with those prisoners who are narrowly watcht while they are in closest prisons. When *Peter* was in prison, the keepers watched at the door, and more then that, *he slept between two souldiers bound with two chains,* (*Act.* 12. 6.) Thus narrowly was *Peter* looked unto; And thus in allusion was *Job* looked unto: *Am I a sea or a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?* was *Jobs* question in the seventh chapter; His assertion here, *Thou lookest narrowly into all my paths*, seems to carry the same intendment; thither I refer the Reader for the further clearing of this.

ἐφύλαξας πᾶς τὰ ἔργα. Sept.

Yet others give the meaning thus, *Thou observest all my actions*, and then *paths* are taken metaphorically: so the *seventy* translate, *Thou takest notice of all my works*: Which reading bears a proportion to the proceedings of a Magistrate, who having attached an offendour, and laid him fast, looks and enquires into his life, and examines his particular offence, that so a charge or an inditement may be drawn up and brought in against him at his tryal. The next clause runs in the same strain.

Radices pedū sunt vel vestigia vel planta. Coc. *Radices pedum vocat ipsos primores vel extremos pedes, qui in digitos quasi radicis partes dividūtur.* Jun. *Simplissimū puto signū tibi facis, i.e. annotas omnia vestigia mea.* Merc. *Ita me quacunq; incedā sollicite observas, ut ubicunq; pedē posui, tu quoq; vestigium figas.* Bez. *Vel ut sensus sit, se nervo & cippo adeo constringi & premi, ut vibices appareant.* Lav. *Vestigia iræ tuæ usq; ad extremos pedis articulos pertingunt, ut quum pes sontis totus urtur gravitate compedū.* Jun.

And settest a print upon the heels of my feet.] Master *Broughton* translates from the letter of the Original, *And thou leavest thy prints upon the roots of my feet.* The roots of the feet are, say some, the soles, say others, the steps of the feet. And whereas we translate *the heel*, which is the hinder part of the foot, the word is translated also by the forepart of the foot, which is divided into toes, as the root of a tree divides it self; But though there be some variety about the particular signification of the word, yet the general sence is, That *Job* prosecutes the allegory of a prisoner.

First thus, *Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet*, that is, Thou followest me as it were at the heels; Thou dost not only watch my paths, but even tellest my steps, if I do but set down my feet, thou printest upon the very same place, and so it falls in with the sence of the former clause.

Or Secondly, He in these words complaineth of his soreness by reason of this imprisonment. *Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet*, the shackles and the chains which are upon me, leave their marks behind them in my flesh, my feet, the very soles and toes of my feet swell with my heavy fetters. *Jobs* condition was like that of the afflicted Jews in the Prophet (*Isa.* 1. 5.) *The whole head was sick, and the whole heart was faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there was no soundness in him, but wounds and bruises.* There was a wound in the very soles of his feet, that is, he was all over wounded, or afflicted quite through. As *Paul* said *I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus*, so might *Job*, *Paul* had marks or prints of his suffering for God, *Job* of his sufferings under the hand of God.

I will not draw out any particular observations from these words, seeing they all tend (which hath been more then once observed already) to shew,

First, *That God casts his outward dispensation towards his choicest servants into forms of greatest rigour and severity.*

Secondly, *That great afflictions often draw out great complaints from the choicest servants of God.*

Thirdly, *That the most patient man may sometimes let fall words of impatience under the hand of God.*

Where faith is highest it is not alwayes at the same height, and where patience hath a perfect work, some of its works may be full of imperfection. But I pass these, and shall only note two things.

First, The several stairs or steps by which *Jobs* spirit ascended to the highest sence of his afflictions. Here is a sevenfold gradation, in this and the precedent verses. First, God hid his face. Secondly, He counted him as his enemy. Thirdly, He broke him like a leaf. Fourthly, He writ bitter things against him. Fifthly, He made him possess the sins of his youth. Sixthly, He puts him into prison. Seventhly, He watched him, lest he should escape, and followed him step by step. What could be added to these sorrows? might not *Job* say with the Church in the *Lamentations*, *Was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow? They that are greatest in holiness, may be greatest in sufferings.*

Secondly Note, *Job still keeps his eye and heart upon God in all his afflictions.*

THOU hidest thy face. THOU countest me thine enemy. THOU pursuest me. THOU writest bitter things against me. THOU makest me possess the sins of my youth. THOU puttest me in the stocks, THOU settest a print upon the heels of my feet. He sees God in all, and fears not to make him the Author of all these evils: *We honour God as much in acknowledging him to be the fountain of all the evils we suffer, as of the good things we enjoy.*

The twenty eigth verse is joyned by some to the next chapter, as if that whole chapter were but an explication of this verse, or at least this verse the preface to that whole chapter.

Verse 28. And he as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

And he.] Who is that? He changeth the person from the first to the third; he doth not say, *I*, but *He*, though he meaneth himself; such speaking is frequent in Scripture, and hath been noted before in this Book.

He as a rotten thing, &c.] As if he had said, I am not able to continue under these afflictions, or bear these pressures any longer. I faint, I fail, I decay, I dye. He asked the question what he was (*Chap.* 6. 12.) *Is my strength the strength of stone? or is my flesh brass?* Here he tells us what he and his strength, what he and his flesh are, *Even as a rotten thing, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

We have here a double similitude, both implying his insufficiency to stand in the hands of God. First, Of a rotten thing. Secondly, Of a garment eaten with moths. I consume; and how? As a rotten thing. The Hebrew is concrete, I consume as *rottenness*; rottenness it self is consuming; and rottenness consumeth any thing it toucheth. Time will consume that which is sound; but that which is already rotten, how quickly doth it consume? How can that hold out against decay, which is a decay? *I consume as a rotten thing.*

And as a garment that is moth-eaten.] *David* compares man under affliction to a *moth*, as here *Job* to a *moth-eaten garment.* Psal. 39. 11. *When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.* Moths have so little substance in them, that they have scarce any subsistence. The least touch crusheth and moulders them into nothing. A Moth is as weak as weakness it self; yet it eats out the strength of the strongest garment. A moth-eaten garment is scarce a garment: The beauty of it is defaced, and the usefulness of it is departed. Mans best garments of honour and riches, are little better then a moth-eaten garment: (*James* 5. 1, 2.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you; your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.* Where the Apostle is conceived to invite rich men (from which they think themselves at greatest distance) to mourn over their miseries. First, Because they treasure up riches, of which they make no use, but let them corrupt; and because they provide Wardrobes of apparel, which they wear not, but the Moths eat them up. Secondly, Because they lay out their strength and time in gathering a perishing portion, riches which are corruptible, and garments which are meat for Moths. As if he had said, how vain are you who labour for that which is more then corruptible? Your riches are actually corrupted, and your garments, how careful soever you are to perfume and preserve them, are more then subject to Moths; the Moth actually eats them. Now (I say) if mans best garments are little better then a moth-eaten garment, what is a moth-eaten garment? And then what is that man (such a one *Job* accounted himself) *who consumeth as a garment that is moth-eaten?* Surely the spirit of this holy man could not go lower for a comparison, then the effects of Moths and rottenness.

By which self-abasement he seems to argue with God for compassion and sparing mercies: As if he had said, *Could I bear these sorrows any longer, I would not so earnestly beg an end of them: But alas! if they do not end speedily, I must: My strength is gone, and I am but rottenness: Thou who teares me as a Lyon, by open and violent afflictions, dost also eat me as a moth by secret and silent consumptions.*

I might here also draw out divers Observations about the frailty of man: As,

First, *That man is but weakness and rottenness.*

Secondly, *That man cannot hold out against the hand of God.*

Thirdly, *That even some of Gods chastenings are destroyings and consumings to all the strength and lustre of the outward.*

Fourthly, *That a Believer in affliction is apt to mis-judge the issues of his own condition.*

But because these points have occurred upon other Texts of like sence with this, therefore I only hint them, and shall shut up this whole Chapter, with this brief admonition from the conclusion of it. How should we labour to please God in walking uprightly with him, before whom we cannot stand when he is angry with us? How should we labour to live in his favour, by whose displeasure we are suddenly consumed? And if the chastenings of God consume those whom he loves, how will his judgments consume those whom he hates? *When thou, Lord, with rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume, Psal.* 39. 11. How then will his beauty consume, when God with severest revenges chastens man for iniquity? *Our God is a consuming fire*, he can consume us as a rotten thing, and as a garment that is moth-eaten; therefore *let us* (ask and) *have grace, that we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*

CHAP. XIV. Vers. 1, 2.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down: He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

IN the last verse of the former Chapter (which some connect with this) *Job* shewed how poor and pitiful, how weak and miserable a thing man is under the afflicting hand of God, and he did it under the shadow of a two-fold similitude. First, *Of a rotten thing.* Secondly, *Of a garment which is moth-eaten.*

He prosecutes the same Argument in the first and second verses of this Chapter; From all, drawing down this expostulatory conclusion, *vers.* 3. *And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one?* &c.

Verse 1. Man that is born of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble.

Job doth not say, *I who am born of a woman, am of few dayes*; but *Man that is born*, &c. He speaks in the third person, rather then in the first, for two reasons, as I conceive.

First, To shew that those miseries which were fallen upon him might fall upon others; *No temptation had taken hold of him, but such as was common to man.*

Secondly, He speaks thus, the more to abase himself. The third person put for the first implyes contempt. He thinks himself scarce worth the naming, who doth not speak of himself in his own name. *Man that is born of a woman*, &c.

Tertia persona pro prima usurpatio contemptum denotat. Bold.

Man is here described two wayes: First, In his original or procreating cause, *Woman.* Secondly, In his state or condition, and that from a double adjunct: First, Of time, *He is of few dayes:* Secondly, Of affliction, *Full of troubles:* Both further illustrated by two similitudes: First, *Of a flower:* Secondly, *Of a shadow:* Of all which this is the sum or the result, *He continueth not*, vers. 2.

Man

Man that is born of a woman.] That is, Every man, or (as we say) every mothers child. Mr. *Broughton* adds an Epithete borrowed from the signification of the Hebrew word *Adam, Earthly man born of a woman.* The first woman was (in a sence) born of a man; but since all men are born of a woman: And as the first man received his proper name *Adam* (which is now become an Appellative or common to all men) from the matter out of which he was formed, earth, or red earth, *Gen.* 2. 7. So the first woman received her proper name (which is now become an Appellative or common to all women) from the matter out of which she was formed, the flesh and bone of man, *Gen.* 2. 23. *And* Adam *said, this is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.* And as in our language the woman hath but a syllable more in her name then the man, so also in the Hebrew, there it is, *Ish, Ishah,* with us, *Man, Woman.* The Rabbins have an observation, that in the words *Ish* and *Ishah*, the letters of the Name of God *Jah* are contained, which is (say they) an Argument or token of the gracious presence of God with Husband and Wife, while they walk in that relation according to the will of God; but if they depart from that, God departs from them, and taking the letters of his own Name from their names, there remains nothing but *fire* (so the words denuded of Gods Name signifie) between them both.

Mulier dicitur virago quia de viro sumpta.

אישׁ & אשׁה Continetur nomen Dei. י Quod est symbolum gratiosæ Dei præsentiæ si maritus & uxor juxta Dei præcepta vivant, si ab eis decedant & Deum recedere ab ipsis, ut utriusque nomen excluso יה maneat אש ignis Buxt.

But to the Text. Man is here spoken of as born of a woman, rather then as begotten by man, and that (possibly) for these three Reasons.

First, Because the formation and production of man is from the woman, in her the body of man is framed by the mighty power of God, and all the pieces of it put together; and in her man receives his life and quickening. Hence it was that *Adam*, who at first called his Wife *Woman, because she was taken out of man*, calls her afterwards *Eve, because she was the mother of all living*, (Gen. 3.20.) And upon this ground some Nations have made a Law, that all descents should be reckoned by the Mother, because the Mother gives the greatest contribution towards the birth and bringing forth of man.

Apud Lycios si quis percontetur, qua familia ortus? &c. A matribus genus suum repetere solebant, quod plurima substantia qua constamus materna sit. Plut. *de Clar. Mulier. cap. 9.*

Secondly, He speaks of man as born of a woman, thereby leading us to the original of mans sin. The woman was Satans instrument to ensnare the man: Sin began at the woman, though it was finished by the man. *Adam* charged his sin upon the woman sinfully, to excuse his sin, *The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat*, Gen. 3. 12. *Paul* charged the sin of man upon the woman holily, to humble woman for that sin, 1 *Tim.* 2. 14. Adam *was not deceived* (that is, he was not first deceived) *but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression.* While we remember, that we were born of a woman, by whom sin came into the world, we cannot but remember and be convinced, that we came sinners into the world.

Thirdly, He speaks of man born of a woman, to mind man of his weakness. Sin and weakness enter'd man at the same time; and the woman is not only a weak vessel, because of her transgression; but the weaker vessel, because of her constitution (1 *Pet.* 3. 7.) Man being born of a woman, the weaker vessel, must needs be a vessel of weakness. The Apostle saith, *God sent forth his Son made of a woman* (Gal. 4. 4.) Which imports, not only the mystery of Christs birth, that he was made of a woman (a pure Virgin) without the help of man; but also, the frailty of Christ in his birth, that he was born, into the world passible, mortal, and infirm, because born of a woman. Hence when men act weakly, or below men, they are in Scripture called, or compared to women (*Jer.* 51. 30.) *The mighty men of* Babylon *have forborn to fight, they became as women*; that is, weak and pusillanimous. So the Prophet *Isaiah* describes the degenerate Governours of *Judah* (Chap. 3. 12.) *As for my people* (*saith the Lord*) *women rule over them*; that is, men rule over them, whose spirits are effeminate, and whose courage rises no higher then that of women. Some of the superstitious Heathen, to advance the strength and abilities of their *Goddess Wisdom*, fancied, that she was born of a Father, without a Mother. And here I conceive the principal intendment of *Job*, in leaving out the mention of man, and ascribing the whole production of man to the woman, was to imply, or rather to prove how weak and frail a piece of flesh man is by nature.

Hanc de patre ferunt sine matris fœdere natam. Martianus in Palla. Hym.

Hence Observe, *The original or birth of man speaks the frailty of man.*

As that which is impure cannot send out that which is clean; so neither can that which is weak produce that which is strong. As man breeds that in him which will consume him; so he is bred of that which shews he must consume. If it be asked how a garment frets when it is not worn, or how timber wasts when it is not used? We answer, the garment breeds a moth which frets it; and the timber a worm which eats it out. If it be also asked, How man decayes when no outward violence appears against him? We may answer, he breeds his own decay; himself gives life to a worm in his root, which smites his flourishing gourd to death: Thus man breeds his own consumption. But besides this, he is bred of that which doth consume, *Man is born of a woman.* And, as God decreed, for the punishment of her sin, *That the woman should bring forth in sorrow* (Gen. 3. 16.) so the woman brings forth a sorrowful man. Can we expect any thing but sorrowful from sorrowful? From frail but frail? Or from her who is of few dayes, and full of trouble, any thing but him who is such himself? So it follows in *Job*'s description of man, where having given us the cause, he proceeds to the effects. *Man that is born of a woman.* Woman is the procreating cause of man, and from her man derives a double effect. First, *He is of few dayes.* Secondly, *He is full of troubles.*

Is of few dayes.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *short*, or *cut short of dayes.* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Short of life.* So the Psalmist (*Psal.* 89.45.) *The dayes of his youth hast thou shortened*, or *cut off.* 'Tis said of *Abraham* (Gen. 25. 8.) that he *died in a good old age, an old man, and full.* The Hebrew goes no further, *He died full.* Full of what? Our Translators, to fill up the sence, add by way of explication, *Full of years.* *Abraham* had his belly full of living before he died, he had not an hungry desire after a day more in this life: He was both hungry and athirst for eternal life. He died *full of years:* but though *Abraham* was full of years, yet his life came also into *Job*'s reckoning. *Few of dayes.*

קצר ימים *brevis curtusve dierum.*

The dayes of man are few, or short: First, Considered in themselves (*Psal.* 39. 5.) *Behold thou hast made my dayes as an hand-breadth.* That is not long, which is no longer then the breadth of an hand. The breadth of the hand is taken two wayes: First, In the largest extent, for a span, or the whole space between the top of the thumb, and the little finger stretched out. Secondly, In the lesser extent, for the breadth only of four fingers, which is the measure (as Interpreters conceive) which *David* takes of the dayes of man.

Secondly, The fewness or shortness of mans dayes, may be considered comparatively, and that two wayes. First, As man may be compared with man. Secondly, As man is compared with God.

We may collect the fewness of mans dayes now, by comparing him with man, under a twofold consideration. First, Of what number the dayes of man once were. Secondly, Of what number they shall be.

First, The dayes of man are few now compared, first, with what his dayes were before the *flood*; then many men lived, six, seven, eight, nine hundred, and some almost a thousand years, as *Moses* hath reported the genealogy, age and death of the Patriarchs from *Adam* unto *Noah* (Gen. 5.) Now, if any man attain fourscore, or a hundred years, he is wondrous old; and if any reach one hundred and forty or fifty, (as lately one of our Countrey men did) he is such a rarity, that he draws more eyes to behold his wrinckled withered face, then any can with their most youthful beauty. I read of one, who had been an *Esquire for the Body to* Charles *the Great, Emperour of* Germany, who is called in History *John of Time*; because he lived three hundred sixty and one years. Yet three hundred sixty one, is but a few to eight or nine hundred years: And besides, the life of that Age is not to be cast up by what years one man lived; but by what was the ordinary number of mans years in that age.

Johannes *de Tempore* Caroli M. *Armiger, obiit annos* 361. *natus.* Ranic. Temp.

But as mans dayes are few, compared with what he lived before the flood; so they are fewer compared, secondly,

with the dayes which man might have lived if he had not fallen. The ſtate of innocency had in it a kind of immortality; it was not impoſſible for *Adam* to die before he fell; but it was poſſible for him not dye; this is now changed into a certainty, that we ſhall dye, according to that Law of Heaven (*Heb.* 9.27.) *It is appointed unto all men once to dye.* Now the dayes of man are truly called few, or cut ſhort, becauſe it is determined they ſhall end, and that ſhortly: And though the determined end of theſe dayes is uncertain to us; yet their end is certainly determined.

Now if the dayes of man are few, compared with what they once were, or might have been upon the earth; how few are they in compariſon of what they ſhall be when he ſhall be raiſed out of the earth? Then the dayes of mans life, whether in Heaven or Hell, in happineſs or in miſery, ſhall be as many as the dayes; or rather as long as the day of eternity.

Again, As the dayes of man are few, compared with what he once had and ſhall have; ſo they are feweſt of all, compared with the dayes of God; ſo few, that as his dayes cannot be counted becauſe they are ſo many; ſo ours can hardly be counted becauſe they are ſo few. *David*, who found out a dimenſion (a hand-breadth) for the dayes of man, conſidered abſolutely, or in themſelves, could find out no dimenſion little enough for the dayes of man compared with God (*Pſal.* 39.5.) *Mine age* (and his age may be the meaſure of every mans age, *Mine age*, ſaith he) *is as nothing before him.* All time is as nothing, compared with eternity; what a nothing then is the age of one man to eternity, which is ſcarce any thing to all time? Some things created and finite are ſo great above others, that they are nothing to them: What is the Ant to the Elephant, or the Shrimp to the Whale? What is the whole body of the Earth, to the body of the Heavens? Naturaliſts ſay, 'tis but a point. Now if one creature be ſo far exceeded by another creature, that it is ſcarce diſcernable; how indiſcernable are all creatures to the Creator, finite to Infinite? As one part of the earth is but a point to the whole, and the whole earth but a point to the Heavens; ſo one part of time is but a moment to all time; and all time is but a moment to eternity; eſpecially to the eternity of God: which is not only as ſome creatures (by his diſpenſation) ſhall have, *an eternity forwards*; but alſo as no creature is in a capability, or poſſibility to have, *an eternity backwards*; and yet in ſtrict ſence, there is neither *forwards nor backwards*; neither paſt nor to come in Gods eternity; *His Being conſiſts in one eternal Now, or I am; and hath nothing to do with, I was, or I ſhall be:* And therefore the age of man is nothing before him; for mans age, though it be as nothing, undivided, is yet divided, *into paſt, preſent, and to come. Three nothings, which being added together, amount in the total ſum to this nothing of the age and dayes of man* (as *David* ſpeaks) *before God.*

Hence Obſerve, *Sin is the ſhortener of mans dayes.*

Job leads us to this Obſervation, while he ſaith, *Man that is born of a woman is of few dayes.* Man born of a woman is ſinful man. This truth is ſo general, that it never received an exception in any one man born, after the ordinary way, of a woman. Chriſt was born of a woman; but he was conceived miraculouſly by the holy Ghoſt. Man might have been born of a woman, and yet have been of many dayes, if he had not been born in ſin. 'Tis the birth of ſin in man which is the ſeed of death: And as ſin makes the dayes of all men few in nature; ſo the ſins of ſome men makes theirs fewer then the dayes of nature. For, as though the dayes of a good man at the moſt are but few; yet becauſe of ſome ſpecial goodneſs they are often prolonged: So, though the dayes of a wicked man at the moſt are but few; yet, becauſe of ſome ſpecial wickedneſs they are often ſhortened. *Solomon* gives us both parts of this aſſertion in one verſe (*Prov.* 10.27.) *The fear of the Lord prolongeth* (or *addeth to*) *dayes, but the years of the wicked ſhall be ſhortened.* And as *Solomon* tells us poſitively, they ſhall be ſhortened, ſo *David* tells negatively, how much they ſhall be ſhortened (*Pſal.* 55.23.) *Bloody and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their dayes:* Poſſibly they ſhall not live out a quarter of their dayes; but he is peremptory that they *ſhall not live out half their dayes.* Thus, as every man, becauſe he is a ſinner, ſhall live but a few dayes; ſo ſome ſhall not live half thoſe few dayes, becauſe they are notorious ſinners. All men are of few dayes; ſome men are of fewer then a few. The ſin of nature ſhortens all mens lives into a few dayes, and ſins of practice ſhorten ſome mens lives into fewer then a few.

From *Job*'s ſolemn Doctrine of mans ſhort life, or few dayes, we may draw out many leſſons of very ſerious admonition.

First, Seeing our dayes are few, let us live all our dayes: Some loſe many out of a few, and live not one of their few dayes. 'Tis poſſible to have a being (according to the account of man) many dayes, and to have lived none of them; or not to have lived at all. *We live no more of our time then we ſpend well.* A Heathen ſaid, *He lived no day without a line*; that is, he did ſomewhat remarkable every day. What a ſhame is it that a Chriſtian ſhould live a day without a line; do nothing in it worth the doing!

Secondly, Be perſwaded that your dayes are few. It is eaſie to ſay our dayes are few; but it is hard to believe it: Every Age hopes to ſee the next Age. The child hopes to be a youth, and the youth to be a man; the man hopes to be an old man; and he that is an old man, hath hopes to be very old; he that is very old hopes to live more then a few dayes yet; or that yet he ſhall not dye theſe many dayes. And becauſe every Age hath hopes to live that which is to come, it doth not live that which is preſent. We ſhould do more work, but that we hope for more dayes.

Thirdly, Seeing the time of this life is ſhort, and haſtens out of our hands, let us make haſte to lay hold upon eternal life. Our dayes here are few, ſuch as a Child may count; but dayes innumerable, ſuch as no man can count, or depend upon them. All our dayes are but few; and every man living hath lived a few dayes already; poſſibly thy few dayes paſt are all that thou ſhalt paſs. Say not of repentance, I will repent to morrow: Say not to Chriſt when he is tendered thee to day, come again to morrow. *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 27. 1.) *for thou knoweſt not what a day* (even the day thou now haſt) *may bring forth.* Poſſibly this day may bring forth thy death (for the dayes of man are few) and then how ſhall to morrow bring forth thy repentance, or make thee another offer of a *This-dayes refuſed Chriſt?* Wilt thou boaſt of the births of to morrow, when as thou knoweſt not whether a morrow ſhall be brought forth to thee? *Man* (whoſoever thou art) *waſt thou not born of a woman?* If ſo, *thy dayes are few*, thy buſineſſes are many, and there is one thing neceſſary. We ſay of ſome men, that they do much in a little time: And truly how much ſoever any man hath to do, he hath but a little time to do it in. *Few dayes* ſure are but a little time; and all the time we have is but a few dayes. Beſides, Theſe few dayes are all the working-dayes that ever we ſhall have: Let this be a ſpur to diligence and to duty. Hear and obey the counſel of the Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 9.10.) *Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt.* In Heaven there is nothing but reſt; and in Hell, though there be no reſt, yet there is no labour. In Hell there is nothing but wages; and in Heaven there is nothing but reward; our whole work lyes in the few dayes which are on this ſide both.

Ab hoc momento pendet æternitas.

Fourthly, See in this truth, what falſe concluſions worldly men make unto themſelves, when with him in the twelfth of *Luke, ver.* 19, 20. they ſay to their ſouls, *Souls, ye have good laid up for many years, take your eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry.* How vainly do men reckon upon *many years* yet to come; when as their whole time paſt, preſent, and to come, can make up but a *few dayes*! The Apoſtle *James* rebukes thoſe upon this ground, who forelaid their buſineſs but *one year*; How much more are they rebukeable who forelay their pleaſures for *many years?* Chap. 4. 13, 14. *Go to now, ye that ſay to day, or to morrow, we will go into ſuch a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what ſhall be on the morrow: For what is your life? Is it not even a vapour, that appeareth for a litte time,* (that's at moſt but a few dayes) *and then vaniſheth away?* So *Paul* pleads down a worldly ſpirit, (1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30.) *I ſay brethren, the time*

time is short; it remaineth, that they who have wives be as if they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it. We should shorten our joyes and our sorrows; we should take up or draw in our affections about worldly things, because our time in the world is short; and our dayes are continually drawing off from the world.

Fifthly, This should check our envy at the prosperity of wicked men. Their day (of account) is coming, and their dayes (of receit) are going (*Psal.* 73. 18, 19.) *How are they brought to desolation in a moment, as a dream when one awaketh? so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.*

Sixthly, Let the righteous be patient in affliction; all their dayes are but few; and therefore their dayes of sorrow cannot be many. *Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.*

Lastly, Trust not in man; yea, *cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils*, and whose dayes (because they are few) must shortly cease. Place not the hopes of your life in him, who cannot (with warrant) hope for a long life, much less assure you of any comfort of your life: seeing as his own life is empty of dayes; so it is, as it follows in this Text.

Full of trouble.

Few dayes and many troubles make up the character of man. We use to say, *Short and sweet*; but here it is, *Short and sowre; yea, short and bitter.* As some speak much in a little; much matter in a little discourse; many matters in a few words: And as some do much with a little; much good with a little talent: So all men suffer much in a little; much trouble in a little time; many sorrows in a few dayes.

שבע *repletus, satur, ad ventriculum & appetentiam refertur.*

Full of trouble. The word which we translate *Full*, alludes to the filling of the stomach, and the satisfying of the appetite with meat. *Trouble is hard fare, but there is plenty of it.* Man usually hath his fill, and never knows the want of trouble. Ever since man brought forth sin, the earth brought forth trouble. Sin is the seed of trouble; and trouble is all the harvest we reap by sin.

רגז *est conturbari, inquietari aliquo vehementi doloris effectu. Satur Tremore.* Regia. *Plenus iracundia.* Pag.

The word which we render, *trouble*, contains in it more sorts of trouble then one. It notes, not only all kind of outward trouble, but inward trouble; vexing trouble, such as disturbs and unquiets the whole man. Some render it by trembling; so the word is used *Hab.* 3. 16. *My belly trembled* (or *my bowels were moved*) *rottenness entred into my bones.* Holy men are full of trembling at the holiness of God; and sinful men have reason to be full of trembling at their own sinfulness. The body trembles when the visions of impendent evil pass before, or are represented to the mind. Others render it by anger, wrathfulness, rage. *Man is full of anger:* And that in a twofold construction; First, Passively, he feels the anger both of God and man; the sad effects of mans rage and of Gods displeasure. Secondly, Actively, man is full of his own anger; full of anger. First, Against his fellow-brethren. Secondly, Against God. Thirdly, At the dispensations of God; when God sends him trouble, he is angry. When God sends others prosperity, if it like not him, he is angry. Anger makes the prosperity of others our trouble; and our own troubles would be little trouble to us if we were not angry with our troubles. Trouble and anger are well expressed by the same word, seeing most of our troubles proceed from the anger of God, and are all increased by our own anger.

For the clearing of *Job's* Proposition, or Observation, That man is full of troubles, I shall present the Reader with a particular of the troubles of man.

The troubles of man are either inward or outward.

Inward troubles proceed from a threefold cause. First, From the terrors wherewith God first exerciseth the spirits of his own people. *Job* was full of these troubles, as we have opened before; and so was *Heman*, *Psal.* 88. 15. Secondly, There are terrors wherewith God vexeth the spirits of wicked men; *Cain*, *Saul*, and *Judas* were full of these troubles; and the Prophet pronounceth of wicked men in general, that they are like the *troubled sea when it cannot rest*, Isa. 57. 20.

Secondly, Inward troubles arise from the temptations of Satan; we hear many poor souls complaining of these: As that wicked spirit goes about seeking rest, and finding none; so he would not suffer any man to rest. Satan is a troubled spirit; and he is a troubling spirit.

Thirdly, Inward troubles arise from the lusts and corruptions of our own hearts. *Paul* who triumphed and rejoyced over all outward troubles, cryes out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Rom. 7. 24. Who is there that hath any spiritual life, who groans not under the body of this death? One bemoans and weeps over unbelief; another over pride; a third over passions and base fears; a fourth over deadness of spirit, and hardness of heart. These fill the Saints with trouble while they keep them in; much more when they prevail and break out. And as Believers are full of trouble because of their own corruption; so also by reason of the corruptions of others. Their hearts bleed at the prophaneness, and their eyes weep at the pride of other men.

These inward troubles are enough to fill us; but as *Ezekiel's* Roll was full of woes, so our lives are full of troubles, both within and without.

Outward troubles are of two sorts.

First, Ordinary, or those which come daily upon us, the labours and businesses of our callings. The Apostle speaking of and to those that marry, saith *Such shall have trouble in the flesh*, 1 Cor. 7. 28. Flesh and troubles are married together, whether we marry or no; but they that are married, marry with, and match into new troubles. All our relations have their burdens as well as their comforts.

Secondly, Extraordinary troubles; and these are of three sorts. First, Publick, in the common calamities which fall; First, Upon the Kingdoms: Secondly, Upon the Churches wherein we live. Secondly, Private troubles, which are those which befal our dwellings and Families. Thirdly, Personal troubles, which fall upon our own selves. To these three kinds all our outward troubles are reducible; but the particulars of them are almost innumerable. What *Paul* saith of his perils (2 *Cor.* 11. 26.) we may say of our troubles, we are in troubles by waters; in troubles by Robbers; in troubles by our own Countreymen; in troubles by the Heathen; in troubles in the City; in troubles in the Wilderness; in troubles in the Sea; in troubles among false Brethren. We are in weariness and painfulness, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness; of all these troubles we may say as he (*ver.* 28.) *They are without.*

Again, we have troubles in getting, troubles in keeping, and troubles in losing the things of this life. We have trouble in doing our duties; troubles for doing our duties; and troubles worst of all for not doing our duties; or for doing that which is not our duties: As some have troubles of Conscience; so not a few have troubles for Conscience.

Lastly, Besides all these troubles, whether of action or passion, we are also, or ought to be, (we seldom want occasion to be) full of the troubles of compassion at the troubles of others, though we our selves be free from trouble. Thus *Paul* speaks of himself (2 *Cor.* 11. 29.) *Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?* And thus *Paul* charges us, *Weep with them that weep* (Rom. 12. 15.) *Remember those that be in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being your selves also in the body* (Heb. 13. 3.) Sympathy is a Christian duty. Christ himself (our Head) is afflicted in all our afflictions; we also should be afflicted in the afflictions of one another, as fellow-members. He that hath no cross of his own, must take up and bear his brothers: And he that hath many of his own, must bear a part of all his brethrens crosses. Now, what between the troubles which we feel, and the troubles whereof we have a fellow-feeling, we must needs be full of troubles; few of dayes and full of troubles. The report which old *Jacob* made before *Pharaoh* of his life (*Gen.* 47. 9.) may be the report of all our lives, when we have lived most, and lived best; *Few and evil have the dayes of the years of our lives been:* yea, though we should have attained (which *Jacob* said he had not) *to the dayes of the years of the life of our fathers in the dayes of their pilgrimage.*

What

What hath man (as *Solomon* concludes by way of question concerning man in a natural consideration) *of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the Sun?* What hath man of all his labours (much more of all his sufferings) but trouble? *For all his dayes are sorrows, and his travel grief,* Eccles. 2. 22, 23.

From all observe two things.

First, Observe the difference of the life of Saints on earth, and their life in heaven: Here it is few of dayes, and full of troubles; there it will be full of dayes, and full of comforts: *In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.*

Secondly, Observe in this conjunction of few dayes and full of troubles in the life of man, the goodness of God to man. Few dayes are (in themselves) an affliction; fulness of trouble is (to us) a great affliction, but many dayes and full of trouble, had been a greater affliction. How sad would our condition be if perpetuity and misery, a multitude of dayes and a multitude of troubles had met together in our lives? The curse of hell is eternity and misery, a life without end, and troubles without end. 'Tis a mercy, when that which is sharp is but short, when that whose very beginning grieves us, ends quickly. Christ having foretold the destruction of the Temple at *Jerusalem*, and the great tribulation which should accompany it, even such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be, concludes (*Mat.* 24. 22.) *And except those dayes should be shortned, there should no flesh be saved; but for the Elects sake those dayes shall be shortned.* God did not make the dayes of those troubles shorter then himself had decreed, but shorter then the enemy had determined, or then any wise man, who judgeth only by the rules of humane policy, could have expected. The troubles of those dayes seemed to be very long-visag'd, but God shortned the dayes, that the trouble of his people might be shortned, and that some *flesh*, that is, some men, and those men some of the Jews (for there is a double Synecdoche in the word *flesh*) *might be saved:* that is, with a temporal salvation, from the Roman Sword and devouring calamities which attended that terrible War. Now as it is a mercy when God shortens the dayes of special trouble, into which any sort or nation of men fall; so it is a mercy that God hath shortned and lessened the dayes of mankind, considering the general trouble into which we are fallen. Let it not be a trouble to us that our dayes are few, seeing if our dayes were more our troubles would be more, and our sorrows would encrease as the number of our years encreased. He that is displeased because his dayes are few, is also displeased because his troubles are so few. We have little reason to be in love with this life because our dayes are few, and less because our troubles are many. But we have much reason to love God, who when we had procured to our selves many troubles while we live, hath contracted and epitomiz'd our lives into a few dayes.

Job having asserted the shortness and troublesomeness of mans life in a direct proposition, proceeds to illustrate both by a double similitude. First, *Of a flower.* Secondly, *Of a shadow,* in the second verse.

Vers. 2. **He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.**

Man is like a flower and a shadow, he is but the shadow of a flower, or the flower of a shadow.

He cometh forth like a flower.] Some restrain this similitude to those who die in childhood or in youth: such indeed are blasted in their blossom, and cropt in their flower. But as one part of mans life compared with another, may be called the flower of his life, so his whole life laid together may be called a flower, and that's the meaning of this place. As man in his best estate, and in all estates is altogether vanity, so man in his best dayes, and in all his dayes is but a flower.

And whereas there are many rarities and excellencies in a flower, three especially. First, Odour or sweetness, affecting the smell. Secondly, Beauty and variety of colour, affecting the eye. Thirdly, Softness and smoothness, affecting the Touch: whereas (I say) there are these three rarities in a flower, *Job* passeth them all by, and speaks of it not as flourishing but withering, not in its springing up but in its cutting down, or of its springing only in relation to cutting down. *He cometh forth like a flower.*

And is cut down.] Death is the sithe which cuts down these flowers, either first, Natural death. First, By sickness. 2. By age: or secondly, Violent death, which is, first, Casual, when a man is slain by accident. Secondly, Cruel, when a man is slain by murderers. Thirdly, Legal, when a man is slain by the Magistrate.

Hence Observe, *Man in his flourishing is near to withering.*

He cometh forth and is cut down, his standing is so small that it is not so much as mentioned. We are born to die, and we die as soon as we are born. Christ speaks to the Church, *Canticles*, 2. 11, 12. *Rise my love, for lo the winter is past, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come*; so we translate, but others thus, *The time of cutting is come.* The same word in the Hebrew signifies both to *sing* and to *cut*; we taking the former, adde the word *birds* (which is not at all in the Original) to fill up the sence, or to shew what singing is there meant; namely that, which is most proper in the spring when flowers first appear, the singing of birds. The other reading, as it is clear in the letter of the Hebrew, so it elegantly suits the point in hand; *The flowers appear, the time of cutting is come,* implying that flowers are cut even as soon as they appear: *Such a flower is man. He cometh forth and is cut down.* Thus *David* describes him, *Psal.* 103. 15, 16. *As for man, his dayes are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth; for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.* Though the flower be not cut down with any instrument of iron, nor cropt by the hand, yet a breath of wind blasts it, yea the gentle motion of the air quickly blows off its beauty. The Naturalist tells us of a plant called *Ephemeron*, because it lasts but one day, as he doth also of a worm called *Hemerobion*, because it lives but one day. Such a worm is man; or (as the Psalmist speaks) *a worm and no man.* Such a flower is man, or (as we may speak) *a flower and no man.* The heathen Poet gives his wonder and observation of the Rose, that it grows old in the very budding. The Septuagint read the words of *Job* in the same tenour. *He decayes like a budding flower,* that is, he decayes in his very budding: As if death did rise early and watch for the flourishing flower, to crop or cut it down. And though some of these flowers stand till they wither, or as *Solomon* allegorizeth, (*Eccles.* 12. 5.) *Till the Almond-tree shall flourish,* that is, till gray-hairs; yet all the time of their standing they have been falling, and every hour which increaseth or swells their stalks, hath been also cutting of them down. And it would have been better for some, if they had been actually cut down in that state, which we distinctively call their *flower*, while they were well-sented and beautiful, whereas standing long, they have not only decayed, but smelt ill upon their stalks. Man in his best estate is vain, and many who have stood beyond that, have proved far worse then vain.

Tempus putationis advenit. Pagn.

Plin. Nat. hist. lib. 25. cap. 13. l. 11. c. 36.

Mirabar celeri fugitiva ætate rapinam. Et dum nascuntur consenuisse rosas. Virg.

Tanquã flos efflorescens decidit.

Now lest this first similitude of a flower coming forth and cut down, should not reach the transitoriness of this dying thing called man; therefore *Job* puts him upon his fullest speed, or rather upon the wing in his motion through the world, by a second similitude, which carrieth in it the hastiest swiftness and the most unsetled changeableness.

He fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

Shadows are caused by the interposition of any gross body between us and the Sun. Every shadow is dark, and darkness is but a great shadow. Hence there are two sorts of natural shadows. First, The shadows of the night, to which the Church alludes, (*Cant.* 2. 17.) *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away.* Secondly, The shadows of the day; these are according to the motions of the Sun, in continual motion or variation, sometimes on our right hand, sometimes on our left, sometimes shorter, sometimes longer, and are longest in the evening, as the Prophet speaks, (*Jer.* 4. 6.) *The shadows of the evening are stretched out.* When the Sun riseth, the shadows of the night are not, and while the shadows of the day are, they continue not, but receive some change every moment.

ment. Such is man, he fleeth as the shadow of the night before the day, and as the shadow of the day till night return again.

עמד *Stetit, subsistit, perstitit, permansit. Unde* עמוד *columna erecta, à stando dicta.*

He continueth not.] The Hebrew is, *he standeth not.* A pillar is expressed by a word of this root, because of its standing and firmness. Man is not a pillar, but a shadow; or if he be a pillar, he is but a pillar of smoak, which is carried and scattered with the wind, as a shadow is altered or changed with the Sun. We read often of the shadow of death, and our life is but a shadow; because it continueth not. Death is a perfect shadow, and a shadow is the similitude of our imperfect life: To have no shadow of turning, notes the perfection of God (*James* 1. 17.) To turn like a shadow, notes the imperfection of man. The Vulgar translates, *He continueth not in the same state.*

Et nunquã in eodẽ statu permanet. Vulg.

There is a threefold state of man. First, A natural state. Secondly, A civil state. Thirdly, A spiritual state. The two former of these, are of little or no continuance, the third doth not always continue in the same state.

The natural state of man may be considered,

First, In reference to his body; this suffers an alteration every day, either a perfective alteration, as in those that are young; or a corruptive alteration, as in those who are of full age: Yea, the perfective alteration of the body tends to a corruptive alteration, and while we are growing stronger, we are hastning, not only to weakness, but to dissolution.

Secondly, The natural state of man may be considered in reference to his mind: This continues not in one state. 'Tis the sole priviledge of God to be one within. *He* (saith *Job*, chap. 23. 13.) *Is in one mind, who can turn him?* Men are in twenty minds, they cannot but turn. We use to say of several men, *So many men, so many minds:* But we may observe in the same man, *How many minds!* The mind of man is more mutable then the wind or weather: Now he is pleased, anon he is angry; now he likes, anon he dislikes; now he loves, anon he hates; now he wills, by and by he wills not: The will, the affections, the understanding of man, are so often in new habits and changes of dress, are shaped into such various forms of opinion and judgement, that 'tis hard to say what any mans mind is; and there are not many who know their own minds.

And as man continues not in his natural state, whether of body or mind; so his civil state is of as little continuance: whether we look upon him, First, In his honour; Or, Secondly, In his power; Or, Thirdly, In his riches; Or, Fourthly, In his relations. I leave the Reader to enlarge upon these common places of mans mutability. Day unto day makes report, and every dayes experience is a Sermon of these things: yea, how many have we seen in one day, honourable and dishonourable, in fulness of power, and emptied of all their power; abounding in riches, and brought to beggery, compassed about with friends and kindred, with wife and children, and yet forsaken of all before the evening. *Their inward thought* (saith *David*, Psal. 49. 11.) *is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations: nevertheless man being in honour* (power or riches) *abideth not.* If he abides, these do not; and if these abide, he doth not: and the longest that both these have abode in any example since the foundation of the world, is not long enough to warrant this conclusion, that, *They did abide.*

Thirdly, Consider man in his spiritual estate, where his continuance is most steady, yet there he continues not in the same state. Some have a spiritual estate, which is of as little continuance as mans natural or civil state is. The hypocrite appears to others, and is often conceited of himself, full of the flowers of grace; but he quickly disappears: he is cut down like a flower, and fleeth away like a shadow. The parable saith of such a man, (*Mat.* 13. 20, 21.) *He heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while:* that is, he continueth not: his leaf of out-side profession falls, and his goodly form of godliness without power breaks to pieces upon the least blast or touch of persecution. And if persecution do not kill his profession, it will die alone, or rather, it will decay alone; for indeed it never had any life.

Now, as temporary believers have total decayes, and continue not at all in their spiritual estate; so true believers may have temporary decayes. The way of a man in Christ doth not flee like a shadow, but increaseth *more and more unto the perfect day,* (*Prov.* 4. 16.) And that Scripture which takes up *Jobs* similitude, comparing *all flesh to grass, and the goodliness thereof to the flower of the field, the grass withereth, the flower fadeth,* doth yet by way of opposition, assure us, that *the Word of God abideth for ever,* (*Isaiah* 40. 8.) Now, as the Word of God, so that grace which is revealed to us and wrought in us by the Word and Spirit of God, abideth for ever. And yet though a state of grace, wheresoever, it is doth continue for ever, yet it doth not continue always in the same state: and that not only because it is gradually changed by way of improvement here (till it take its highest degree in glory, where it shall know no change at all, either by way of abatement or of improvement) but also because it is often changed by way of gradual abatement. *Peter* did not always continue in the same state of faith, nor the Church of *Ephesus* in the same state of love, though their faith and love did continue. What soul can say it continues ever in the same degree of spiritual strength, health, life and enlargements? Though the whole time of a Christian in this world be a growing time, yet consider it in parts, and we shall find many declining times. Thus as man continues not at all in his natural and civil state, so his spiritual estate doth not always continue the same: and so of all it may be said, *He continueth not.*

VERS. 3, 4.

And doest thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest him into judgement with thee?
Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

JOB having shadowed the frailty of man under divers similitudes, in the close of the thirteenth Chapter, and in the beginning of this, draws down from all, this passionate question, at the third verse, *And doest thou open thy eye upon such an one?* Upon such an one as I, who am as *a rotten thing*; or, *as a garment that is moth-eaten!* Upon such an one as I, who am of *few dayes and full of trouble!* Upon such an one as I, who am *like a flower* coming forth, and presently cut down! Upon such an one as I, who am *like a shadow fleeing away and continuing not! Doest thou open thine eyes upon such an one; and bringest me into judgement with thee?*

אף־על־זה *Etiam super hunc.*

Such an one, is a term of diminution; *Job* debaseth and lowers himself, *Such an one!* Is such a poor one, a man so inconsiderable, a man who besides the common condition of men, which is low enough, is yet brought lower by these afflictions?

Terminus diminuens.

Such an one, sometimes increaseth the sense and heightens it. (*Neh.* 6. 11.) When *Sanballat* and the enemies of the Jews by secret practices and cunning plots would have discouraged *Nehemiah*, telling him what designs were against him, and perswading him timely to avoid his own fall, that so the work might fall, he answers, *Should such a man as I flee?* such a man! A man in such a place, and having such power; a man so trusted, and under such ingagements; a man upon whose care and conduct the well-fare of a nation, and the advancement of publick good so much depends? *Should such a man as I flee?* there the sense is raised: but here it falls; *Such an one,* is a poor one, a mean one; Doest thou open thy mouth to speak against, or thine eye to look upon such an object?

Job having considered his own estate in common with that of mankind, concludes, *And doest thou set thy eye upon such an one?*

Whence Observe, *That the due consideration and knowledge of what we are, leads us to low thoughts of our selves.*

There is no man proud of himself, but he that is ignorant of himself: we are lifted up with high thoughts above what we are, because we have not true thoughts of what we are; if once we saw what moth eaten garments, what rotten things, what fading flowers, what fleeing shadows, what decaying, dying creatures we are, every one would say

say to God in holy wonder, Doest thou take notice of *such an one?* of so mean an one as I. We should not aspire to be counted *some bodies*, some great ones in the world, but we should look upon our selves as *no bodies*, as unaccountable in the world, such as deserve not, that the great, the high God should vouchsafe us a cast of his eye. This is *Jobs* sense of himself,

Doest thou open thy eye upon such an one as I?

Oculi Dei providentiã denotat.

The opening of the eye is taken two wayes.

First, In a way of fatherly care and providence: Thus *David* speaks (*Psal.* 144. 3.) *Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man that thou makest account of him?* So *Job* (chap. 7. 17.) *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him, and that thou shouldst set thy heart upon him?* that is, that thou shouldst take care of him, and make such provision for him. When *Hezekiah* was in a day of rebuke and blasphemy, he spread *Rabshakehs* railing letter before the Lord, and prayed, *Lord bow down thine ear and hear, open Lord thy eye and see*, 2 *Kin.* 19. 16. that is, take care of me and of the people under me: the mouth of *Rabshakeh* is open to threaten and revile, let thy eye be open to see and prevent all the evils which he threatneth.

Further, Opening the eye is an act of little or no difficulty; it is as easie to open the eye as to *turn the hand*; to give a look is a small gift. Thus we may understand *Job*, as if he thought himself unworthy the least motion of providence. Doest thou vouchsafe to open thine eye upon such a one? I am not worthy thou shouldest take notice of me or of my condition. A glance of thy eye is more then I can look for.

I will not prosecute this sense, both because I handled it, chap. 7. 17. as also, because though it be a truth, yet, I conceive, it is not the proper truth of this place.

Aperire oculos in aliquẽ, est intentis oculis eũ valdè observare, quid rerum agat. Drus.

Secondly, As opening of the eye signifies providence and care to do us good, so watchfulness to discover and find out what we are, or what evil we have done: for as in Scripture to open the hand is to be liberal, bountiful, and munificent (*Psal.* 145. 16.) *Thou openest thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.* So to open the eye upon a man, notes diligent inspection over him, or an accurate observation of his wayes, goings, actings, to bring him to a strict account for all: he that passeth a man by, and will not bring him to judgement for what he hath done, is said (in our common speech) to connive or wink at him. He that winks at another, will not see though he doth see. It is said (*Act.* 17. 30.) that *God winked at the former times of their ignorance, but now he commands all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world.* There is another meaning of winking which I have opened (*chap.* 8. 4.) but this is a truth, God winked, that is, he did not take much notice, or follow men up and down, to see what they did in those times, because they were in the darkness of ignorance; they had but little light to do good by, therefore he was not so strict to observe what evil they did; so that the opening of the eye, implieth a critical, or a judiciary inspection, as well as a paternal, fatherly, careful inspection, and so we are to expound this place, as is evident from the sixth verse of this chapter, where *Job* desires that which is contrary to opening the eye, *the turning from him, that he might rest till he shall accomplish as a hireling his dayes.* He that openeth his eye to a man turneth his face to him; now seeing man is weak, and his dayes determined, turn from him with thine eye, or why doest thou set thine eye upon him? As if he had said, *Doth it become thy greatness and majesty, to take such strict notice of all the motions of so poor a creature as I am? or doth it become thy goodness and mercy to be so severe to watch me so narrowly, to look after me so exactly, that I cannot stir but thou observest it, and numbrest my very steps?*

Contextus exposcit, ut de severitate divini judicii loquatur, Sanct.

Cum stomacho & indignatione legendum est: Itane Jupiter hoc solium & stipulã, &c. Mer.

Job speaks in a kind of passion, and the gloss which some interpreters put upon his words, renders them, not only very unbecoming, but very sinful; as if he thought it altogether unfit for God to eye what he did, or to bring him into judgement for it. Heathens said of their *Jupiter*, *he was not at leasure to look at small matters*; but it is a great dishonour to God, to say he cannot look after the smallest matters and motions of the creature: We cannot dishonour God more, then by counting this a dishonour to him. *The lowest persons and actions are not beneath the observation of the most high God.* *Jobs* intendment was to move God to compassion, not to put himself beneath his consideration.

Hence Observe, *That our frailty is a good pleadable argument to move God to deal mildely and gently with us.*

I am a weak poor creature, therefore pitty me, therefore spare me; we must never plead our fulness before God, but we may plead our emptiness; we must never plead our goodness, nor our worthiness, but we may our sinfulness and unworthiness. The latter clause of the verse shews us what *Job* desires, when he deprecates the opening of Gods eye upon him.

And bringest me into judgement with thee.

Observe here the change of the person: He spake before in the third person, *Doest thou open thine eye upon such an one?* here he speaks in the first person, *Doest thou bring me to judgement with thee?* He relates to his personal condition and makes application to himself, *Doest thou bring me into judgement with thee?* I shall not stay upon these words, having often (from like passages) shewed how unable man is to stand before God in judgement. *Job* insisteth much upon it, being provoked by his friends, charging him with a conceit of self-righteousness, which he disclaimed as often as they charge him with it, *Doest thou bring me to judgement with thee?* Men of eminency will not contend with those who are much inferiour to them, they cannot honour themselves by such contests, as was lately shewed at large (*chap.* 13. 25.) upon that expostulation, *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro?* &c. Thus *Job* pleads here, *Doest thou bring me to judgement with thee?* I am no match for thee, there is no equality between us, thou canst not raise thy Name by casting me down: thou mayest honour thy mercy and compassion, by pardoning me, but not thy power by overthrowing me. *The worst and weakest of sinful men, are the best foil to set off the beauty and strength of mercy.*

Verbum est futuri temporis, quod debitũ connotat & decorum, ut Gen. 18. 25.

Huc pertinent omnia quæ hoc loco copiosè disserit Job de miseria humanæ vitæ, ut Deus tã misero homini misereatur, nec tam duris experimẽtis probet. Mer.

Yet men are not therefore free from the judgements of God because they are low and mean, for God will judge the lowest, even such as lie on dung-hills, or grind in the mill; the great God of heaven and earth will bring the least to judgement, as well as the greatest. The Rabbins have a conceit that some shall be exempt or privileg'd from the judgement of God hereafter, because they endure much pain and poverty here; but these are vain conceits: All must come to judgement, though but few shall stand in judgement. God will glorifie his justice in casting the lowest of wicked men to the lowest hell, as well as high and lofty ones.

Take one Observation from both parts of the verse laid together, *Doest thou open thy eye upon such an one as I am, and bringest me to judgement?*

There must be a discerning of the person and cause, before either can be brought to judgement.

You must open the eye to see what the man is, and what he hath done, before sentence be given upon him. The law forbad the Judge to receive gifts, because gifts blind the eye of the Judge; a Judge had need to have his eyes open, to discern the cause and every circumstance of it. If a gift put out the receivers eye, how shall the Judge discern him that gives it. We cannot judge what we do not know, nor can we judge aright without a right knowledge.

Job having pleaded his weakness, pleads his sinfulness.

Vers. 4. **Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.**

As if he had said, *Lord, if thou openest thine eye upon me, thou must needs find me unclean, full of sin and defiled with sin: Nor canst thou expect any other of me, for, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? surely not one; therefore do not open thine eye severely upon me, do not bring me into judgement with thee, thou art of purer eyes then to behold iniquity.*

I shall

I shall first open the words and give the sense as they contain an entire proposition, *A clean thing cannot be brought out of an unclean*, and then I shall consider *Jobs* scope in using this plea,

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

טהר *munditiem nitentem denotat.*

The word which we render *clean* signifies shining, beautiful, a substance so pure and transparent that we may see through it, so pure that it is free from all spot or defilement, from all blackness and darkness; Who can bring such a clean thing out of an unclean? the Hebrew word (*Tama*) comes near the word (*Contaminatum*) which is used by the Latines for unclean; and it speaks the greatest pollution, the sordidness and filthiness of habit, the goar of blood, the muddiness of water, whatsoever is loathsome or unlovely, noisome or unsightly: All these meet in, and make up the meaning of this word, *Who can bring a clean thing out of this uncleanness?*

טמא *immundus, pulchra est illius turpitudinis & sordium appellatio, in quam squalor quidam mœrentis animi & sordidatus habitus, cruoris & sanguinis macula, nubila, crassa omnia turbida immundaque cadant.* Pined.

Clean and unclean may be taken two wayes; either first corporally and externally; or secondly, morally and internally; *Job* speaks not of the former; the uncleanness here meant is moral or internal,

Which is also twofold. First, The uncleanness of our natures: Secondly, Of our actions; the uncleanness which lyes in the inward man, puts it self forth in the outward man; and so we are unclean both within and without.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This question may undergo a threefold exposition. First thus, Who can bring a morally clean person out of a person originally unclean? The word which we render *bring*, is *give* in the Hebrew; Who can give a clean thing out of an unclean? Which may well refer to the birth of man: So the word is used (*Gen.* 17. 16.) God promiseth *Abraham* to bless *Sarah*, and give him a Son of her: So here, Who can give a clean thing? That is, cause it to be born of an unclean; *Job* layes his hand upon his birth-sin; as if he had said, all men are naturally unclean; therefore the children born of them are unclean too.

Secondly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May refer to the action of the same man, take *Job* or any other person who is morally unclean by nature, this man being unclean, cannot bring forth a clean thing; that is, a clean action: As the root is, such is the fruit; we are such fruit as our parents are, unclean both; and our fruit is such as we the parents are, unclean both.

Thirdly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May note the change of the same person from his moral uncleanness into moral cleanness; Who can make a person clean who was born unclean? The Hebrew particle (*Min*) rendred, *out of*, hath a double use; sometimes it notes the Original of a thing, *That which is originated is like its original.* Again, it notes also change and mutation; Who can bring a clean out of an unclean? That is, who can change unclean into clean? Besides the word which we render *bring* signifies *to make a change*, Isa. 51. 12. *Who art thou that art afraid of the son of man, who shall be made as the grass?* The Hebrew is, who shall be given, that is, changed as the grass.

מן *originis & mutationis nota.*

נתן *dare, pro efficere usurpatur.*

Thus we have a threefold interpretation of the words, The first respecting the extraction of one person from another. All persons are unclean, because they come from an unclean root.

A second referring to the actions of the same person. That which is done by man cannot but be unclean; because man himself is unclean who doth it.

A third respecting the change of the person himself from what he was. Who can make an unclean person clean? This is a work too hard for any creature, Man or Angel. Man cannot by his own power make a natural man, much less a spiritual man; he cannot give any man a *being*, much less a holy *being*.

First observe from the connection, *Job* having described mans life, *Few of dayes and full of troubles, like a shadow, and like a flower cut down and withered*; he now descends to mans uncleanness, as if he would lead us to the spring-head and cause of all our sorrows: This is the method and dependance of *Job's* discourse, which teacheth us,

That the length of our troubles, and shortness of our lives, are caused by the corruption and uncleanness of our natures.

Are our lives troublesome? Is the scene of our actions intangled? sin hath done it. Is the thread of life cut off? have we but a few dayes? sin hath procured this. We are unclean, therefore we are dying, fading, withering. In all, whether personal or publick troubles, we may answer our selves with this, we have what we deserve, the root of all our miseries is within us, we may thank our own evil dispositions, that our condition is so full of evil. God made man upright and happy; he gave him a life wherein he might have continued long and long, even for ever. Though man might have died as created, yet there was no necessity he should dye till he had sinned. Both the troubles of this life and death it self are debts of penalty for our uncleanness; and when we are once perfectly cleansed, we shall never be under any arrest for these debts.

Secondly Observe; *Sin is an unclean thing.*

They who see the face of sin in the glass of the Law, see it the most ugly and deformed object in the world. If Vertue could be seen, she would attract all eyes and hearts to her: *Vertue is an invisible beauty.* So if sin could be seen, all eyes would turn away from it: *Sin is an invisible deformity.* The Spirit of God doth as it were strive for comparisons to set out the ugliness of sin: It is compared to the blood and pollution of an Infant (*Ezek.* 16. 6.) to the corruption of a rotten Sepulchre (*Rom.* 3. 13.) to the scum of a seething pot (*Ezek.* 24. 11, 12.) All these comparisons shew us somewhat of the ugliness of sin; but it is ugly beyond compare. How sad is their mistake who think to adorn themselves with sin? Who put on pride as a cloak upon their backs, and unrighteousness as a Crown or a Diadem upon their heads: who boast as if they had their *holy-day clothes* on, when they are cloathed with *unholiness*, and make to themselves *beauty spots* of the *blackest spots* of sin! The Apostle (*Col.* 3. 12.) calleth us to put on another kind of dress, *to be cloathed with humility, meekness, humbleness of minde, charity*; these are shining, pure, white rayment indeed; Our righteousness is a filthy rag, if we boast in it, or would be justified in it: then how filthy a rag is our unrighteousness, especially if we boast of it, or justifie our selves in it!

Thirdly Observe, *Man being naturally unclean, his children and posterity are unclean too.*

John. 3. 6. *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.* The copy cannot be better then the Original, nor the effect nobler then the cause; *This flesh hath an ill name all the Scripture over:* 'Tis no wonder if that which is poysonous bring forth a poysonous seed, or that a stinging Serpent procreates a stinging Serpent, a Toad a Toad, or that a Wolf brings forth a Wolf: The son of an *Ethiopian* is also an *Ethiopian*: Our father was an *Amorite*, and so are we. The natural constitution of every thing is transmitted by natural generation; man is himself unclean, and all his issue is like himself. God created man pure in his own likeness after his Image; and man begets man impure in his own likeness after his image.

Caro in scriptura male audit. Mirum non est si aruginis vanus aut cicutæ vacuus fit à medulla, aut noxium aliquod bibeat; Aut si Æthiopissæ filius Æthiopicis ab ea colorem trahat. Sanct.

There are two things in this uncleanness.

First, There is a privation of that comeliness and beauty which was stampt upon man in his creation: Some define original uncleanness to be *only a privation of original righteousness*, and that it is one part of it, all agree; but there is something positive in it too; for it is as if a man, who is richly cloathed, excellently adorned, should not only have all his goodly garments pulled off (which were an abasement to him) but should be thrown into the dirt, or have dirt cast upon him; *Joseph's* Brethren took off his party-coloured garment, and then threw him into a pit; so doth sin: that strips us first of our goodly array, our original righteousness; and then drenches, or daubs us rather all over, or over head and ears, in mire and filth.

There are seven considerable properties in this natural uncleanness.

First, It is an internal uncleanness; a spot upon the garment is bad enough; a spot upon the face is far worse; but an infection in the flesh is yet worse; and that is worst of all which is seated in the bowels, or hath seized on the vitals: The uncleanness here spoken of is not as a spot upon the garment, or dirt upon the face, but a soar in the flesh, (a soar is nothing but the uncleanness of the flesh gathered to a head) yea, it is like a soar in the bowels, or intrals,

trals, in the heart or liver; for *even the mind and conscience is defiled*, Tit. 1. 15.

Secondly, It is an abiding uncleanness, all the water in the Ocean cannot wash it out; all the fire in Hell cannot burn it out; Hell fire shall never consume this dross: Though wicked men in this life be cast into the fire of Gods judgments, and he kindle it with the bellows of his wrath, yet their dross remains, *reprobate silver shall men call them*; (*Jer.* 6. 30.) they will not be purged in this life, and in the next life they shall not be purged. They shall be for ever in punitive flames; but they shall not find (as Papists dream) any purgative flames. The corruption of nature will not depart from them. The uncleanness of the metal is the dross of the metal; the dross of mans nature is harder to separate then the dross of metal; the lead in that infernal furnace will not consume, nor will the bellows break; yet the dross of lust will not out of reprobates. And as fire and brimstone shall not fetch this uncleanness out of reprobates in the next life; so grace and mercy do not fetch it fully out of the elect in this life; they who are renewed and regenerate, are yet in part carnal and corrupt. *Grace is in a continual conflict with corruption; but glory only makes a total conquest.*

Thirdly, It is an abounding uncleanness, it is not in the hand or face only, but in and upon the whole man, it goes quite through. There is not the least part free: Man from head to heel, from top to toe is described unclean (*Psal.* 14. *Rom.* 3.) *The Lord looked down from Heaven, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God: they were all gone out of the way, and become vile, vile all over.* There is a double universality of this uncleanness. First, It doth defile all men. Secondly, All of man: Not one man in the world but is unclean; and not one part in any man but is unclean; survey him in his understanding, will, memory, affections, conscience, eye, hand, tongue, feet, all the parts of the body and powers of the soul are unclean. *As grace sanctifies, so sin defiles all where it is, even body, soul, and spirit*, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23.

Concupiscentia est appetitus inordinatus per quem superiora inferioribus tupitt servium, aut inferiora superioribus contumaciter reluctantur. Janson.

Fourthly, It is an active or a powerful uncleanness, stirring up an holy war in man, against the holy will of God: An inordinate appetite accompanies it; or it is an inordinate appetite causing the inferiour parts of the soul stubbornly to resist the superiour; or the superiour basely to submit unto and serve the inferiour. This makes Lust a King, and Reason a Slave; yea, this would make Grace a Slave. As *Paul's* experience teacheth us, (*Rom.* 7. 23.) *But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.* That is, it doth captivate me in part, and hath a design to captivate me altogether.

Fifthly, It is a diffusive or an infectious uncleanness, like a leprosie or a plague. Now, as good is by so much the better, by how much it is the more diffusive, so evil is so much the worse by how much it is the more diffusive. This evil is diffusive two wayes. First, By way of propagation, from *Adam* to all his posterity. Secondly, By way of imitation, and so one man doing evil, another seeth and catcheth it, he is infected and defiled with it: That's the reason why *David* (as some conceive) was so exceeding strict, in this point (*Psal.* 101. 7.) *He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house; he that telleth lyes shall not tarry in my sight*; his wickedness may spread, it may poyson the heart of a King, I will not put my self upon the temptation. The Apostle (*Heb.* 12. 15.) warns the Church of this danger, *Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* Though this uncleanness doth not infect by imitation only (which was the error of *Pelagius*) yet it infects strongly and commonly by imitation: Hence *Moses* chargeth the people of *Israel* to have nothing to do with the *Canaanites*, lest they should be misled by their example. And when they acted against this rule, they quickly broke all rules (*Psal.* 106. 36.) *They were mingled with the Heathen* (then immediately follows) *and learned their works.* He means not works of art, or agriculture, of peace, or war, but of false worship and idolatry; *They served their idols, which was a snare unto them.* Evil men endanger the good, as bad humors do the blood, or an infected house the whole neighbourhood.

Sixthly, It is a bewitching and an ensnaring uncleanness. All the bodily beauty in the world did never intice so many as the deformity and foul face of sin hath. It was prophesied of Christ (in reference to his outward appearance) *He hath no form nor comeliness; there is no beauty that we should desire him.* Hence the Prophet foresees what entertainment he was like to find in the world: *He is despised and rejected of men; we, as it were, hid our faces from him, and we esteemed him not*, Isa. 53. 2, 3. Beauty and comeliness are the attractives, the loadstone of love. Christ was not loved because he did not appear beautiful: Lust is loved though it be unbeautiful: There is no form nor comeliness in sin, nothing why it should be desired, yet it is admired and highly esteemed by all sorts of men. They dote upon it, and run mad with love for it, as the choicest beauty in the world.

Seventhly, It is a murderous and a mortal uncleanness; there is no escaping death if we live in it. This uncleanness doth not only spoil our inward beauty, and put the soul out of fashion, but it destroyes the life of the soul, it is the ruine as well as the dishonour of man.

Now as all men, because unclean, bring forth an unclean personal issue (which riseth from the second exposition.) So because every person is unclean, the actions which he brings forth are unclean too. *What soever sinful man doth, is sinful:* Consider mankind under two ranks, regenerate and unregenerate: The unregenerate are so unclean, that whatsoever they do is altogether unclean. *Do men gather grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles?* Make the tree good and the fruit good, while the tree is evil, the fruit cannot be good. 'Tis because the heart is evil, that (as God complains *Gen.* 6. 5.) *All the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart are only evil continually.* The imagination gives shape to every thing which the mind works upon; all that man frames and fashions, all the creatures he makes within him are unclean. The works of a natural man are unclean for the most part in the very matter; but all that he doth is unclean for the manner; his hands are unclean, and (by his handling) he makes all unclean. The mind and conscience of a wicked man being defiled, he is *abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*, (Tit. 1. 15.) that is, he knows not how to do a good work, he is not handsome-handed, or rather not handsome-hearted at any good work: he knows neither how to contrive, nor act, much less to delight in any thing that is good; that's the meaning of being reprobate *to every good work*: Though he may set about many good works, yet at best they do but bungle at them all. *Some good works are so good that no man can do them ill*; they cannot be done sinfully, though they may be done imperfectly. Such are, to love God, to fear, to believe, to trust, to rejoyce in him, and to hope for his mercy. These works are so good, that, as no wicked man can do them at all, so, no good man can sin in doing them. These works are so good, that the least degree of them is good; and therefore though they are acted often weakly, yet they are never acted wickedly. But there are good works which a carnal man will be dealing in, as to pray, to hear the Word, *&c.* These he will be doing, but he is reprobate to the doing of them; he defiles and spoils them in the doing. The case is put *Hag.* 2. 14. *If a man that is unclean do carry holy flesh, shall it not be unclean?* The Prophet states it affirmatively, ceremonially holy flesh is defiled with our spiritually unholy flesh: The uncleanness of the giver renders his gift unclean: *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord:* Their prayers are sometimes called *howlings* (*Hos.* 7.) sometimes *bablings* (*Mat.* 6.) Their prayers at best are but *wouldings* and *wishings*, or meer presumings, such were *Balaam's* (Numb. 33. 10.) they desire mercy more then grace, they will have the end, but care not to walk in the way.

Now if the prayers of carnal man be unclean, how unclean are their oaths? If their mercies be cruel, how merciless are their cruelties? If their praises of God be filthy, how filthy are their prophanations? If the best they can do be bad, how bad is their worst?

Secondly, The works of the regenerate are unclean also. *Job* speaks his own case, he was a holy man by Gods own testimony, yet he saith, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? All our righteousness are as filthy rags*, (Isa. 64. 6.) A regenerate man sins in all he doth: We do not say, all he doth is sin, as the Papists charge us: The work of Gods spirit upon us, and the motions of grace in us are pure;

Mala mea pure mala sunt, & mea sunt: bona autem mea nec pure bona sunt nec mea sunt. Hugo

pure; yet, as clean water passing through an unclean pipe, receivs a tincture of that uncleanness; so sinfulness cleaves to our holiest action, we the instruments being sinful.

If it be objected, That which is sinful is a transgression of the Law; but good works are not a transgression of the Law; therefore they are not sinful.

I answer.

First, Sin is a transgression of the Law; but every thing which hath sin accompanying it, is not a transgression of the Law: We cannot argue from the abstract to the concrete.

Secondly, There is a twofold transgression of the Law: First, Against the matter of any duty required. Secondly, Against the manner in which the Law requires that duty should be performed: In this latter sence there is a transgression in the best works of Believers: Where is the soul that is carried out in prayer, *&c.* with that love and delight, with that purity and fervency of spirit, which the spiritualness of the Law doth call for?

If it be again objected, That good works in the regenerate are the works of the Spirit of God in them, and therefore are not sinful,

I answer.

That which proceeds from the Spirit as the immediate and sole cause, is not sinful: But good works are not wrought solely by the Spirit of God; the spirit and mind of man are subservient and instrumental in that work: Now an effect which proceeds from divers subordinate causes, takes its qualification from the lowest as well as from the highest. Though a Writer have exact skill, yet if his pen be naught, the writing cannot be exact.

Lastly, (Say some) good works are pleasing to God; but that which is sinful doth not please God.

To which I answer.

That our good works do not please God, as done by us; but as done in Christ: He is the Altar which sanctifies all our gifts; he is our High-priest who takes away the iniquity of all our holy things, that we may be accepted in all our offerings. 'Tis through a Mediator that God is pleased with what we do, and pardons our defects.

Thirdly, The words may import a change of the same person, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*

Hence Observe, *Man cannot convert or make himself clean; nor can any man make man clean.*

Man can no more sanctifie himself or another, then he can redeem himself or another. But you will say, A man is often exhorted to cleanse himself (*Isa.* 1. 15, 18.) *Wash you, make you clean,* (2 Cor. 7. 1.) *Having these promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.*

I answer.

First, If these Texts be understood of persons regenerate, as that of the Apostle clearly is, then it is true, they who are already cleansed may further cleanse themselves; for though we do not cooperate in the first conversion (there we are meerly passive) yet we do in the second: We cannot begin holiness, but we may and ought to *perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.* We cannot work our own salvation; but we may work out our own salvation. They who have received the Spirit are fitted to carry on spiritual work.

And though the Text in *Isaiah* speaks of persons unregenerate, yet it is not in vain to say even to such, *Wash you, make you clean.* An unclean person may apply himself to the means of cleansing: They who have no grace, yet have reason; and God deals with us, as with rational creatures: They who are dead in sins and trespasses, may hear the word of life and live. The dead and unclean are invited to the means of life and cleansing; and God in the use of means hath promised to cleanse and enliven them; but man of himself cannot cleanse himself, nor make himself differ from what he is, or others are. As our sanctification is the will of God; so it is the work of God too. 'Tis neither our own power, nor the power of any creature, which gives us the new creation: so the last words of the verse resolve, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?*

Not one.] That is, No man can do it. Some read this interrogatively, or by way of question, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Cannot one?* Or, *Is there not one that can?* We negatively, *There is not one that can:* No man can do it..

If we take (as we safely may) the former reading, the question affirms; Is there not one? Yea, there is one, and but one, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean: As the Scribes said (*Mark* 2. 7.) *Who can forgive sins but God only?* So, who can cleanse a soul but God only? *God only of unclean can make us clean.* He who can raise up Children to *Abraham* out of stones, and alter the course of Nature, he can make the Leper change his spot, and the Blackamore his skin; to God nothing is impossible; but to man many things are impossible; and there is nothing more impossible then this, the cleansing of the spiritually unclean. As that only can make and continue a cold body hot, which is it self and of it self hot; so he only can make an unclean thing clean, who is himself and of himself clean; God is clean, and there is no spot in him; therefore he can make us clean, and take out all our spots. The Chaldee Paraphrast takes the word, *One*, for the description of God, or for the Name of God. And so this place is paralleld by that (*Mark* 2. 7.) which according to the letter of the Greek is to be read thus. *Who can forgive sins but one? or, the one God?*

Some expound this, *One*, strictly of *Jesus Christ*, who was designed to that work when he came into the world, who is the *great cleanser:* In whom a fountain is opened to wash for sin and for uncleanness, and *whose blood cleanseth from all sin:* Who purifieth those he saveth, and purgeth all he pardoneth. Christ is that *clean, that holy thing:* And he being so, makes us so; yea, *he is made to us of God, wisdom, righteousness* and *sanctification or cleanness.* Christ bringeth clean out of unclean, by removing a twofold uncleanness. First, The guilt of sin when he pardons. Secondly, The filth of sin when he sanctifies.

From this whole Doctrine of mans uncleanness we learn.

First, *Man cannot oblige God.*

What hath man to boast of? Will any one be proud of his filthy garments, or of a spot in his face? Much less can we boast who have a spot upon our hearts, and are all over spotted in our lives.

Secondly learn, *That in our confession of sin, we should lay our hand upon our birth-sin.*

The sense of our natural uncleanness humbles most; and we should often reflect upon it, that we may be more humbled. We cannot shift off our sin upon the temptation of Satan, or the solicitation of men; we have the root of the matter in our selves. *Job* was most sensible of the sinfulness of his nature: He had many sins, but he saw this at the bottom of them all. 'Tis our duty to mourn for actual sins, but chiefly for original sin. We must weep over the streams; but most over the fountain: The heart of man hath not laboured more to corrup any truth, then this about mans natural corruption. The old *Pelagians* dressed up Nature very fine, and would at least perswade us it is not so bad, or so opposite to good as some would make it. They told us it hath some disposition to good; and that if helped a little, it would come on to do good. Papists at this day follow them, if not in the same steps, yet in the same path: Both have darkned counsel by words without knowledge.

Thirdly, *If all men be unclean, then every man hath need of washing.*

Thou shalt not wash my feet, said *Peter* to Christ, *John* 13. 8. *If I wash thee not* (saith Christ) *thou hast no part in me.* Then he prayes, Lord (wash) not only my feet but my head, *&c.* Christ speaks thus to every soul, *If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me:* Christ is a clean Head, and he cleanseth all his members.

Fourthly, *The thoughts of our general uncleanness, should provoke us to bless God, that there is a fountain open for sin and uncleanness.*

Fountains should be as welcome to those who are filthy,

אין אחד
non unus,
non ne un
Quis dab
mundum
homine co
taminato
peccatis, n
si Deus, q
unus est q
remittat ip
si? Chald
Nonne tu
qui solus e
Vulg.
Solus Deus
potest ex
immundo
facere mun
dum condo
nando pec
cata, nam
cujus pecca
tum condo
natum est,
purus est.
Drus.
Sicut de
frigido fa
cere calidu
est ejus quo
per se calid
dum est, ita
de immundo
facere mun
dum est ejus
qui per se
mundus est.
Unde quic
quid mun
dum est à
Deo mundi
iem habet.
Aquin.
אין אחד
Unus accip
itur à
Chaldeo pro
Dei descrip
tione &
quasi nomi
ne. Clarum
satis est re
spici media
torem, qui
unus pacifi
cationem
faciat.

as to those who are thirsty. When *Hagar* was thirsty, God shewed her a fountain of water: When *Sampson* was very thirsty, God opened a fountain in the jaw, and he drank and was revived. We are filthy, and God opens a fountain, he sends our leprous souls to the *Jordan* of his Sons blood, and bids us wash and be clean. When our hands are unclean, is not a bason of water welcome? Our souls are unclean, O how welcome should the blood of Christ be unto us? Bless God, who, as he hath discovered our uncleanness, so a fountain, that we may wash away our uncleanness. How wonderful are the workings of Divine love, that we, who were all spots and unclean, shall at last be presented unto God perfectly clean, *Not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*, Ephes. 5. 27.

Having opened the sence of these words, as they contain this doctrinal Proposition of mans natural uncleanness: There is yet somewhat considerable in their scope? Why doth *Job* speak of this uncleanness?

Quasi innuat Job non debere Deũ hominem punire, ob peccatum ad quod ist pronus ex ſe, ſed ſui oblitus hoc dicit. Merc.

Some give this for his scope, as if *Job* from his original uncleanness would extenuate his actual uncleanness: or that he ought to be pardoned by Grace, because he was polluted by Nature: As if he had said, *Lord, I was born unclean, and therefore cannot but be unclean; no wonder ill fruits grow on me, who have a root of evil in me.* But this was (in proportion) as far from the mind of *Job*, as it is from the truth of God. Besides, that we are born sinful, and cannot chuse but sin, is no extenuation, but an aggravation of our sin. That sin is not only our act, but our nature, leaves us without desert of pity, or matter of apology. We pity a man, who by accident hath taken poyson, and is sick: But who pities a Serpent, whose nature is poysonous? or such creatures, to whom poyson is as food? When *David* confesseth (*Psal.* 51.) *In iniquity was I conceived*, &c. Was he sowing a fig-leaf over his uncleanness? Or covering it with carnal reasonings? No marvel though I bring forth sin, who was conceived in sin. No marvel if I conceive iniquity, who was brought forth in iniquity. No, *David* doth not excuse, but humble himself; he doth not challenge mercy, but sees his need of mercy, because he was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity. Such also (I conceive) was the frame of *Job*'s spirit in making this confession, and pouring out this complaint upon his birth-sin.

His design was, First to abase himself, to make his heart more pliable and ready to submit unto saddest dispensations. I am unclean; And is it any wonder that the holy God, who cannot behold any unclean thing, should throw an unclean person over head and ears into the waters of affliction?

Ex naturæ ſuæ corruptione ſperat Deum facilius pertrahere, ad veniam ſibi dandum, ne ſe ita graviter affligat. Merc.

Secondly, He speaks this as a motive to compassion, desiring the Lord to mitigate his sorrows, while he aggravated his sin; yea, to cease from afflicting, because he knew (by reason of this natural uncleanness) he could not cease to sin, till he should cease to be in this world. Thus God himself argues for his own compassions and sparing mercies to the renewed World after the Flood: For whereas he had said (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *The imagination of the thought of mans heart is only evil continually, and therefore I will destroy, man whom I have created, from the face of the earth.* Yet at the eighth Chapter, ver. 21. the Lord resolves thus, *I will not again smite the earth any more, and every living thing, as I have done:* Why? *For the imagination of mans heart is evil from his youth:* As if he had said, *Though I drown'd the world with water, yet they are not washed from their uncleanness; I see water will not fetch out sin, nor my judgment make man holy: I must always destroy, if I should destroy as often as men do wickedly, therefore I will not smite the earth in this sort any more.* Thus *Job* might move the Lord to forbear afflicting him, because he could not (being born in sin) forbear to sin; though in this he aggravates his own sinfulness. We may beseech the Lord to spare us when we act sin, because our natures are sinful: But wo unto those, who go about, either to palliate or extenuate their acts of sin, by the sinfulness of their natures.

VERS. 5, 6.

Seeing his dayes are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed him his bounds that he cannot pass.

Turn from him that he may rest, till he shall accomplish as an hireling his day.

JOB having pleaded for pity, upon consideration of the weakness and frailty of man, upon the consideration of the shortness of his life, and sinfulness of his nature, proceeds here to another Argument from a double consideration about death.

First, Because death hath a set and a fixed time, at which it will come, and will not tarry, in the fifth and sixth verses.

Secondly, Because there is no returning from death: When death hath got us into its hand, it holdeth us fast, and keepeth us sure enough. This he illustrates two wayes,

First, By a dissimilitude, in *ver.* 7, 8, 9, 10. *There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again*, &c. But it is not so with man: *Man dieth and wasteth away; man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?* This is a dissimilitude.

Secondly, He illustrateth it by a similitude, *ver.* 11, 12. *As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and dryeth, so man lyeth down and riseth not.* By these two are set forth the prevailing strength of death. When once we are under the power of the grave, there is no release nor fetching us back by any created strength.

In these two verses, the fifth and sixth, *Job* openeth his first Argument, that there is a set time; and not only a set time, but a time irrevocable; a time so set, that there can be no unsetling of it, *The number of his months are with thee, thou hast set him his bounds, which he cannot pass.*

His dayes are determined.

The Argument stands thus,

He should be mercifully and gently dealt with in this life, whose life is set out by certain bounds and limits, beyond which he cannot pass, and from which he cannot return.

But thus it is with poor man, *There is a set period of his life, and as he cannot get beyond it, so he cannot come back from it.*

Therefore turn away and let me have some rest

As if he had said, *Besides, that this life is full of evil (as was shewed before) death, the greatest of natural evils, is at hand, which suddenly takes us away, throweth us into the grave, hides us there without possibility of returning to such a life as we here enjoy.* *Job* hath used this Argument before: Neither should it seem strange, that he now repeats, and modestly objects it unto God to move pity, and stir the bowels of his compassion towards him. The Psalmist, whether *David* or some other Pen man, argues thus; (*Psal.* 89. 48.) *Remember, Lord, how short my time is; wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth and shall not see death, and shall he deliver his soul from the power of the grave?* He urgeth the Lord to grant some ease, some breathing, some respit and relaxation in this life, because death cannot be far off, from which there is no rescue, no returning.

The word which we translate *determined*, signifies properly to dig, and by a Metaphor to make an exact and curious search; or by searching thoughts to dig down into the depth of a business, and then to settle it. Hence it is translated *diligent*, (Prov. 10. 4.) *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*; properly, *The hand of the digger makes rich.* And the word imports not only digging in the ground for ordinary commodities, as for stones, or coals, but digging for gold and silver, for the most precious metals or minerals; How diligent are men when they dig for such treasure and for riches? Such is the diligent hand which maketh rich. Now because when we make any serious determination upon any matter before us, we first search or dig into the bottom of it: Therefore the word is translated here to *determine*. Tis so also, *Isa.* 10. 23. *The Lord God of hosts hath made a consumption, even determined in the midst of all the land.* God makes many consumptions, he layes whole Countries and Kingdoms waste; but his are not consumptions at a venture, or by hap-hazard, accidental consumptions, but *consumptions determined*; that is, the Lord sets down directly who and how many, where and when, what persons, what places, what estates and things shall

חרץ *movit, agitavit quadam alacritate, etiam ſedulò & ſolicitè minutiſſima quæque curavit, ordinavit, ſtatuit, decrevit.*

יד חרצים *Conſumet populum. & præciſis amputatiſq; inutilibus impiis, abbreviabit populum & ad minutiſſimas juſtorum reliquias, redigetur.* Pined.

ſhall be conſumed; God makes a determined conſumption in the greateſt confuſions and hurry of the nations. When we think nothing is done wiſely, all is done wiſely. And that which croſſeth the revealed, fulfils the ſecret will of God. The moſt diſorderly conſumptions (to us) are determined and ordered by God.

Dies hominis dicuntur definiti ad menſuram certam & anguſtam. *Dies breves hominis ſunt,* Vulg. Ἐὰν ᾖ μία ἡμέρα ὁ βίος αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. חרצ *idem quod* חתן Rab. Dav.

As this word [determined] is applyed to the dayes of man, it hath a twofold ſignification.

Firſt, It notes that the dayes of man are reduced by God to a certain number.

Secondly, That they are reduced to a ſhort number, ſo ſome tranſlate, *Are not the dayes of man ſhort or few?* and the *Septuagint* yet cloſer: *Is not the life of man upon the earth one day?* as if all life were contracted into one ſingle day, or determined into the narroweſt compaſs.

Yet I conceive (though the Original may bear it) this latter ſenſe is not ſuteable to this place; *Job* told told us at the beginning of the chapter, that the dayes of man are few upon the earth; And 'tis not probable that he would touch upon the ſame ſtring twiſe in ſo narrow a compaſs.

So then, This determination of our dayes refers *to a certain number or meaſure* of our dayes. Which expoſition as it keeps a difference in the words, ſo it doth much illuſtrate the mind of *Job*, who in this diſcourſe endeavours by various arguments to ſet forth the miſery and weakneſs of man, and to plead with God upon that account of pity and ſparing mercy. This interpretation falls in joint alſo with the next clauſe of the verſe, about which I ſhall add a word before I give the point.

The number of his moneths are with thee;

Apud nos numerum illorum eſſe dicimus quorum numerus a nobis ſtabilitur. Aquin.

That is, In thy power, under thy eſtabliſhment, or in thy knowledge, ſo we render this phraſe (*chap.* 10.7.) *Thou knoweſt that I am not wicked*, the Hebrew is, *It is with thee that I am not wicked*, ſo, *the number of his moneths are with thee*, that is, they are plain before thine eye, and eſtabliſhed in thy counſel.

Obſerve firſt, into what ſmall portions he diſtributes the life of man, dayes and moneths, *His dayes are determined, and the number of his moneths are with thee.*

God hath a diſtinct knowledge of every particular time of mans life, and digeſteth it into the ſmalleſt diviſions;

Non de annis ſed menſibus & diebus ſolum fit mētio ad diſtinctam de ſingularibus Dei notitiam exprimendam. Bold.

He knoweth not only thoſe more remarkable ſtages of infancy, of childhood, of youth, of full age and old age, but the moneths and dayes of our lives: yea, his knowledge reacheth unto (which to us are almoſt indiſcernable) hours, minutes and moments, even theſe are meaſured, numbred, caſt up by the infinite foreknowledge of the eternal God.

Secondly Obſerve, *The dayes and moneths of mans life are ſet and fixed.*

There is a reſolve paſſed upon every man, our times are not now to be diſpoſed of; God hath paſt the account of time from all eternity. As to every thing there is a ſeaſon, (*Eccl.* 3.1.) ſo to every perſon: and this is true not only of ſingle perſons, but even of whole generations, yea of all the generations of mankind, (*Act.* 17.26.) *He hath made of one blood, all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed.* God hath determined not only how long man ſhall live, but how long the world ſhall live; he ſaid of mankind before the flood, *his dayes ſhall be an* 120. *years*, Gen. 6.3. He told *Abraham* his ſeed ſhould be a ſtranger *four hundred years.* He told the Jews their captivity ſhould continue *ſeventy years in literal Babylon.* And he hath told us (if we could read the figures) how many years the Church of the Goſpel ſhould groan under myſtical *Babylon. All things and perſons on earth are dated in heaven. Whatſoever man is Lord of, I am ſure he is not Lord of time*, he cannot diſpoſe of one minute for himſelf or others. We live not at our own pleaſure, nor at the pleaſure of any creature, God keeps reckoning for us. The very hairs of our head are numbred, then ſurely the dayes of our lives are numbred. The hairs of the head are meaneſt parts indeed but an excrement of man, and there are ſuch multitudes, ſuch numbers of hairs upon the head, that it is a wonder they ſhould be numbred, or any account kept of them: yet to ſhew the providence of God extending to the leaſt things, it extends to the numbring of hairs and dayes.

Now, if God hath determined the dayes of mans life, then enquire not of the ſtars or of ſtar-gazers for the number of them. When *David* would know the number of his dayes, he doth not reſort to Aſtrologers, but to God; *Lord, teach me to number my dayes*, he puts that requeſt to God; nor did he put it to God as enquiring for the preciſe number of his dayes, (about this we muſt not be curious) as to know whether we ſhall live twenty or thirty, whither ſeventy or eighty years, ſuch numbers are not to be ſearched after. It is not for us to know theſe times and ſeaſons, God keeps them in his own hand: *David* I ſay, did not trouble himſelf or God about this) but he prayed that God would teach him that holy skill to number his dayes, that he might apply his heart unto wiſdom; conſidering he had but little time, he would be inſtructed how to improve and uſe it well.

I ſhall open the laſt branch of the verſe, and then add ſomewhat further by way of Obſervation.

As *Job* acknowledgeth that our dayes are determined, and that the number of our moneths is with God, ſo he concludes that this determination is unalterable and indiſpenſable.

Thou haſt appointed him his bounds which he cannot paſs.

חקי עשית *Statuta feciſti Statuta enim & decreta Dei de hominis vita ſunt velut cancelli intra quos homo continetur & ſunt certi fines, quos ultra citraque nequit conſiſtere vita.* Merc.

It is uſual with men to do and undo, to reſolve and reſcind their reſolutions: but the determination of God ſhall ſtand. He ſaith and may ſay it, *What I have written I have written. There are no raſures in the records of heaven: Thou haſt appointed him his bounds which he cannot paſs*; The Hebrew is, *Thou haſt made him a ſtatute*, thou haſt made him a Law: we rightly tranſlate *law* by *bounds*, for laws are the bounds of mens actions, men would be boundleſs and keep within no compaſs, if there were no laws to rule and order them; God gave a law to bound all men, and men make laws to bound ſuch as are under them. And as God gives us a law to bound our lives in morality, ſo he gives a bound or a law to our lives in nature; and as the way of mans life is ſet out by a Law, ſo alſo is his end or death. The Apoſtle ſpeaks very ſutably to this expreſſion (*Heb.* 9.27.) *It is appointed* (or made as a ſtatute or law) *to all men once to die.* There is a law, or a ſtatute paſſed that man muſt die: and there is a law, or a ſtatute paſſed how long man ſhall live, or when he muſt die, and that Law of death is irrepealable. When the Apoſtle ſaith, *it is appointed to man once to die*, (as we tranſlate,) The word *once* is not to be referred to *die*, as if there were ſome ſuſpition that man could die twiſe (when the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaks of ſome that are twiſe dead in ſpirituals, he means only they are *throughly dead*) But *once* is referred to *appointed*, it was *once* appointed, and that once ſhall ſtand; there ſhall never be any altering or renewing of the ſtatute; there's no need to make a new law upon the point, God hath *once* ſetled it, and it is ſetled for ever: When *Abiſhai* went to the cave where *Saul* was, and asked *David* leave to kill him, *I will ſmite him* (ſaith he) *but once, and I will not ſmite him the ſecond time*, I will make ſure work at a blow; (1 *Sam.*26.8.) Such is the intendment of the particle *once* in that Law: The Lord hath appointed the bounds of life *once*, and the bounds of death *once*: he will not appoint them a ſecond. *Thou haſt ſet him his bounds which he cannot paſs.*

Iterato præcepto opus non eſt.

There are two opinions about the bound of mans life, or what this bound is: Firſt, ſome place it in natural cauſes, as in the temperament and conſtitution of the body. There is a truth in that, but we muſt not reſt there: Natural cauſes are ſomewhat, and men who live long are uſually of a laſting complexion and conſtitution. But ſecondly, the true bounds are ſet by God; *the will of God is the limit of mans life*; for though there be a ſutableneſs in the natural temper of men to ſuch a term of life, yet God often acts beſide and croſſeth that; ſome healthy men die young, and ſome crazy men live till they are old. The bounds may be paſſed which our natural complexion ſets, the bounds cannot be paſſed which the providence and will of God ſets: That, man dies at ſuch a time, may be a contingency in reference to ſecond cauſes, but let him die when he will, it is neceſſary in regard of the firſt cauſe. *He cannot paſs.*

Impoſſibile eſt hominē diutius vel minus vivere quam divina diſpoſitio habet; licet hunc hominē nunc vel prius mori ſit contingens, ſi in ſe conſideretur. Aquin.

עבר
Verbū præ-
creundi
cūè qua-
drat legi &
tatuto.

The word *pass*, is proper to laws and *bounds*; bounds are set on purpose to keep us from *passing* beyond them. As all good laws are bounds which we should not pass: so *transgression* which is the breach of some law, signifies a passing over or beyond the law. God hath set man a bound or a law, how long he shall live, as well as a law in what manner he shall live. The former bound is passed by man every day, the latter was never passed by any man. We often pass the bounds of the moral law of God, but we cannot pass the bounds of the eternal decree of God.

Hence Observe, *That as the dayes of man are determined by God, so man cannot live a day beyond that determination.*

Friends cannot protract, enemies cannot shorten the life of man one moment. How often did the Jews design the death of Christ, but they could not accomplish it, till his *hour was come*. And when his hour was come, he would not pass it. What was said of Christ is true of every man, he lives not after, nor dies before his hour is come. Man is apt to think himself master of his own life, if not to continue it, yet to end it: and we have a saying (which some count a subtle and a wise one) *He that cares not for his own life is master of another mans life:* but both speak false doctrine, and are confuted by *Jobs* divinity. What God speaks of that law which is the rule of our lives in grace (*Mat.*5.18.) *Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or title shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled:* The same may we speak of this law, which is the limit of our lives in nature, one jot or title of this law shall not pass unfulfilled, and when once this law is fulfilled, the life of man cannot pass one jot or title further.

Some Scriptures seem to speak against *Jobs* doctrine of the certain determination of mans dayes by the decree of God. I shall briefly clear them.

First, When *Hezekiah* was sick, and (as he thought) dying, did not God send him a message by the Prophet *Isaiah* (2 King. 20. 5.) *Turn again and tell the captain of my people, thus saith the Lord the God of David thy father,* &c. *I will heal thee, and* (not only so, but) *I will add to thy life fifteen years.* If fifteen years were added, then surely his dayes were not determined: either God had not appointed him a set time, or he changed his mind and came to a new appointment: and *Hezekiah* did either pass the bounds which God once fixed, or he might have fallen short of them.

I answer,

The fifteen years added to *Hezekiahs* life, were added to *Hezekiahs* date, not to Gods. *Hezekiah* looked upon himself as a dead man: he was sick, and sick to death in his own opinion, possibly also in the opinion of all his servants and Physitians, yet he, & they too were deceived; God had determined him a longer time, and tells him he had, *Thou shalt live yet fifteen years:* This addition doth not imply any alteration in the purpose of God, as if having once decreed that *Hezekiah* should live but forty years, he afterwards (upon his prayer) granted that he should live fifty five: For as he determined *Hezekiah* should be sick unto death, and that he should receive sentence of death in himself, so he determined also, that *Hezekiah* should recover and out-live that dangerous sickness fifteen years.

Secondly, That of the Preacher may be objected (*Eccles.* 7. 16, 17.) *Be not righteous over-much, neither make thy self over-wise; why shouldest thou destroy thy self? Be not over-much wicked, neither be thou foolish, why shouldest thou die before thy time?*

I answer,

He that dies before his time, dies not before the time which God hath determined. An unseasonable death to man doth not prevent Gods season. To clear which we must distinguish about death, which is twofold; first, natural, secondly, violent: A man that dieth a violent death, is said to die before his time, because he dieth before that time which he might have reached according to the course of nature: sin cuts man off before nature cuts him off, but then God cuts him off for his sin. Thus many die before their time; and, except in that sense, no man dieth before his time. That, such was the meaning of *Solomon*, is plain in the text, when he saith, *be not wicked over-much*: Which (by the way) doth not imply that there is a mean in wickedness, or that the Preacher would perswade men only to a temper in wickedness; be wicked so far but no further; all wickedness is too much or more then enough. *Every mean in sinning is an extream.* But when he saith be not over-much wicked, he intends only thus much, give not thy self up to wickedness, lest the Magistrate (who bears not the sword in vain) call thee to an account, and send thee to the grave by the hand of justice, before old age or sickness send thee thither. The Hebrew is, *Wherefore shouldest thou die in a time not thine?* that is, before thine old age, for that is mans proper time of dying. Again, The proper time of mans dying is, when he is ready for death: As when a Steward is ready to make his account, then is his best time to give up his Stewardship; and therefore be not wicked over-much, lest God take thee away when thy accounts are altogether unready, that's no time for thee to die in. There is a time of him that dieth, and a time of death; the time of death is whensoever a man dieth, but the time of him that dieth is only then, when he is fit to die.

Thirdly, Some may object the promise which is added to the fifth commandment, *Honour thy father and mother that thy dayes may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee* (Exod. 20. 12.) which carries this threat in it; if thou dishonour thy father and mother, thy dayes shall be shortened: Whence it may be argued, that, the shortening or lengthening of mans dayes depends upon his own actings, upon his obedience or disobedience, not upon the sentence and decree of God: for if a mans life cannot be lengthened beyond its set time, where lieth the motive or strength of this argument?

I answer,

This explicit promise of lengthening, and implicit threat of shortning our dayes, doth not enforce a mutability in the appointment of God about the date of our dayes; but only holds forth a token or an evidence who they are to whom God hath appointed many dayes. Such as are obedient to parents, may with warrant look upon themselves as designed by God to long life: and they who are rebellious against their parents, have a witness against themselves, that God hath allotted them but a short life, or will cut them off shortly by death. For (as *Solomon* speaks) *The ravens of the valleys shall pluck out the eyes of such and eat them*, that is, they shall die ignominiously and their carkasses shall become meat for the fowls of the air. Our obedience or disobedience to the revealed will of God, doth not make any change of, but fulfils and draws out the secret will of God.

Fourthly, Saith not *David* (Psal. 55. 23.) that, *The blood-thirsty and deceitful man shall not live out half his dayes:* And again (*Psal.* 89. 45.) *The dayes of our youth hast thou shortened:* If our dayes may be halved and shortened, then our dayes are not unalterably bounded and determined.

I answer,

There is a twofold limit of mans dayes; there is a general limit, and there is a special or personal limit: The general limit, is threescore and ten or fourscore years (*Psal.* 90. 10.) (Those few exceptions which some have made by exceeding this limit, do not weaken this general rule). But besides this general, there is a particular limit upon every person. The limit of one may be threescore years, when another is limited to fourty, a third to twenty, a fourth to five, and a fift to four, *&c.* These are special limits upon special men; now when the Psalmist saith, that *a deceitful man shall not live out half his dayes*, the meaning of it is, he shall not live out half the dayes of mans general limit, as suppose a bloody man be cut of at thirty, he hath not lived out half seventy or eighty years, which are the common bounds of life prescribed to mankind beyond which they cannot pass; but this man lives out all the dayes of his special limit, or all the dayes which were determined for his portion in the land of the living. Thus the bloodiest and most deceitful wretch that ever was in the world lives out all his dayes. Our dayes are as many as God appoints in special and no more, whensoever or in what way soever we are brought to the period our dayes.

From

From the whole context Observe by way of corollary,

First, *The decrees of God are absolute and irrevocable.*

As we cannot add one cubit to our stature, so not one hour to our dayes. And such as the statute or decree of God is concerning the number of dayes, which every person shall pass in this temporal life, such also is the decree of God concerning the number of those persons who shall inherit eternal life. The dayes of mortality are determined for every person, how many they shall be; and it is determined who and how many persons shall enjoy a blessed eternity.

Secondly Observe, *The absoluteness and irrevocability of Gods decrees concerning the number of our dayes, doth not disingage us from the use of means, and second helps for the continuance and lengthening of our dayes.*

Man must not say, God hath decreed how long I shall live, therefore I need not take any care of my life; this were to resist the command of God, while we think we submit to his decree: Whereas indeed all the commands of God are subordinate and ministerial to the fulfilling of his decrees. Will any man say, God hath determined my dayes, which I cannot pass, therefore when I am hungry I will not eat, when I am sick I will not take physick nor use medicines. The decree of God is so far from calling us off from, that it obligeth us to the use of all due means for our preservation. When Satan tempted Christ to throw himself down from the pinacle of the Temple, he answers, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.* While we neglect our selves we tempt God: we must not throw away our lives, because God keeps them. *Jacob* had assurance of his life by a special promise, yet when *Esau* came out against him with four hundred men, he doth not say, *Lord, thou hast undertaken for my protection, what need I trouble my self? I will sit down under that banner of thy promises and providence, which thou hast displaid over me, let* Esau *rage and threaten, let him muster and lead all his forces against me if he will, what care I? I fear him not, he must break through the truth of God before he breaks in upon me; the word of God must fall before I fall: I am under the charge of heaven.* Doth *Jacob* make this use of the promise? no, he falls a praying like a Saint, and he falls a providing for his defence like a Souldier (*Gen.* 32.) Had not *David* a sure word from God, that he should live to wear the crown of *Israel* and *Judah?* yea, he had not only a word but a sign, he was anointed by *Samuel*, which ceremony assured him he should be king, yet how doth he improve all aids and friends to save his life: He doth not say, *Samuel hath told me from the Lord, that I shall be king, therefore I will not stir a foot from Saul, let him do his worst:* no, he withdraws from Court, and gathers an army; he defends himself by power, he doth not stand to the naked defence of the promise. And if it be our duty to labour after the preservation of a temporal life, though God hath decreed the bounds of it, then much more should we do thus in reference to spiritual and eternal life. Some will say, God hath made a decree which cannot pass, who shall be saved and who damned, therefore what need we use the means of salvation? what need we avoid the wayes of damnation? but remember, the same word commands us to *depart from iniquity*, which saith, *The foundation of God standeth sure, and he knoweth who are his.* 'Tis as much our duty to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, as it is to believe that the election and calling of God are sure.

Hominũ excusationes sunt Dei tẽtationes.

Thirdly Observe, *If our dayes are determined by God, then we should not be afraid (when we have a due call) of shortening our dayes, by running hazards and hard adventures for God.*

Our life is in Gods hand, he hath set the bounds, which no mans malice can shorten, nor any cowardise of our own lengthen. As none could bring us into the world, so none can thrust us out, till the time appointed. Let not persecutors take away the truth from us, which God hath given us to believe, for they cannot take away a day from us, which God hath given us to live. This is an excellent ground of courage, but no ground of carelesness: Were we perswaded of this truth, it would ease us of much inordinate fear, though it should not at all abate our orderly care of this present life. *Paul* was in *deaths often, but he died not once*, till his day came. *Paul* was in the lions mouth, but the lion could not eat him, because he was not then meat for death.

Lastly, *God is most exact to his own numbers.*

As he is exact concerning duties by him commanded to require them, so he is exact concerning dayes by him appointed, that we may enjoy them. *My Spirit* (saith the Lord) *shall not alwayes strive with man, his dayes shall be an hundred and twenty years* (*Gen.* 6.5.) The flood came not upon the old world an hour before this number of years was run out, and the old world could not pass that number of years an hour, the deluge comes, and all are drowned. The Lord foretold *Abraham* (as was toucht before) *Gen.* 15.13. *Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land which is not theirs, they shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years* (beginning the account at the birth of *Isaac*) The fulfilling of which prophecie is reported in the holy story (*Exod.* 12.40.) *It came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years* (beginning the account from the day in which the promise was made to *Abraham*) *the self-same day it came to pass that all the hoast of the Lord went out of the land of Egypt.* God did not only not fail them a day, but he did not fail them a piece of a day; for they came out in the night, because the four hundred and thirty years were expired that night, and when the time was out, though it were night, God would not stay till morning or break of day: he would rather provide them a Torch, an extraordinary night light (then stay for day-light) that so his word might be fulfilled in its perfect season. The *Babylonish* captivity continued seventy years and no longer. And some give that for the reason why *Belshazzar* was slain in the night, because then the years of that captivity were expired. The collation of times proves it, that *Daniels weeks* were fulfilled to a day at the death of Christ. God the great disposer of time and numberer of dayes, hath also calculated all the times of the Churches troubles and deliverances in the book of the *Revelation:* and there the dayes of *Babylon* are determined, and her bounds are set which she shall not pass. We have a saying, much like our selves, *A day breaks no square:* but it is not so with God, he keeps time with us to an hour. All the visions of God *are* (as the Prophet *Habakkuk* speaks of that vision, *chap.* 2.3.) *for an appointed time, but at the end they shall speak, they shall not lie, though they tarry, wait for them, because they will surely come, they will not tarry.* The visions of God do tarry sometimes beyond our time, but they never tarry beyond Gods time. He hath set a bound to all the affairs and states on earth, which they cannot pass.

Job having thus asserted the certainty and irrevocability of Gods decree about the dayes of man, grounds an earnest petition upon it in the next verse,

Vers. 6. **Turn from him that he may rest, till he shall accomplish as a hireling his dayes.**

But is this a good petition? Doth *Job* pray in faith or according to knowledge, when he prayeth the Lord to turn from him? Is not the presence of God most pretious and desirable? Is not the departure of God the saddest affliction of man? why then doth he desire the Lord to turn away, seeing it is our happiness to have God near us.

I answer,

God may be said to turn away from man in two respects, First, In displeasure, when he ceaseth to do us good, Secondly, in favour, when he forbeareth to lay any further evil upon us, it is this latter turning away which *Job* prayes for.

ἀπόστα ἀπ' ἐμοῦ. Sept. *Discede ne tuâ præsentiâ cõserves me, meque morti permitte.* Aquin. *Absiste ab eo ut desinat, cum jã grato animo excipiet diẽ fatalẽ, tanquã mercenarius.* Tygur.

Yet some interpret him in the first sense, *turn away*, that is, withdraw thy presence from me, even thy supporting and strengthening presence, which while it remains with me I cannot die, therefore withdraw it, and let me die, let me go to rest, until I may expect at the resurrection my reward, even as a hireling doth his dayes-wages for his dayes-work.

There is a threefold truth in this exposition, yet I cannot give it as the truth of this text.

First, It is a truth that the presence of God is the support of our lives; if he do but turn away we quickly dye, and return unto our dust. The damned would dye, but God will not turn away from them, his angry presence is with them to hold their souls in life, that so both soul and body might be held in pain. The Elect must dye if God should turn away from them; his favourable presence holds their souls in life, and will hold both their souls and bodies together in joy for ever. As the rising of the Sun is the cause of the day, and when the Sun departs and turns away, darkness covers the face of the earth; so the presence of God is the support of our lives, and when God departs and turns away, death covers our faces in the earth.

Secondly, 'Tis true, *death is a rest*; death is not only (like sleep) the parenthesis of our labours, but the full stop and period of our labours: There's no work in the grave.

Thirdly, 'Tis a truth, that *the toils, troubles, and evils of this life make death desirable.* 'Tis best to desire to dye, that we may enjoy Christ and God, who are the chiefest good; yet the fear or feeling of evil cause most to desire death. It is some mercy to dye before times of judgment; and it is a mercy to dye in times of judgment (*Rev.* 14. 13.) *I heard a voice from Heaven saying to me, write, blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours:* Some lay the emphasis upon those words, *From henceforth: John* was prophecying of troubles and persecutions to come upon the Church of God. Now, the Spirit saith, *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from henceforth:* As if he had said, The time I am prophecying of, will be so full of labour and trouble, that even they who live in the Lord, may account it their blessedness to dye then, as well as it is their blessedness to dye at any time in the Lord.

But I pass this exposition. The words hold out rather a deprecation of, then a prayer for death: Take it thus; *Job* having said to God, at the third verse, *Wilt thou open thy eye upon such an one?* here intreats God to turn from him: As if he had said, *Be not so strict in marking who I I am, or what I have done:* He speaks after the manner of men, who turn away from those whom they intend to spare: If a Father would not correct his Child, who hath offended him, he turns away, that he may avoid the temptation, or provocation of doing it. Thus *Job* intreats the favour of God, or the forbearance of his anger, *Turn away from me*, let me be quiet a while; let me have some peaceable dayes in the world before I depart the world.

Ne me tam accurate & attente observes, q. d. simula te non videre.

Turn from him that he may rest.

חדל *Significat finire & quiescere, sive cessare ab actione.*

The word signifies to cease or give over action (*Ezek.* 3. 2.) *He that heareth let him hear; and he that forbeareth let him forbear.* (Gen. 41. 9.) *Joseph* took account of the corn, till there was so much that he left numbring, he numbred no more. God is said to cease from the work of Creation, because he rested from that kind of action, he created no more. Here, *Let me rest*, is, let me have a cessation from sufferings, let me be afflicted no more.

Ut cesset sc, hæc plaga vel afflictio. Chal. Metr. *Non vitam longiorem precatur sed pœnæ relaxationẽ*

Others read, *Let me alone that it may rest*; that is, let the affliction rest: So he prayed (which may expound this place) at the tenth Chapter, *ver.* 20, 21. *Are not my dayes few, cease then and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little:* As if he had said, *Forbear, let this poor man alone.*

Till he shall accomplish as a hireling his dayes.

עד־ירצה׃ *Verbum* רצה׃ *Significat vehementer velle & delectari re aliqua. Metaphorice complere velut lato animo, res finem velut optare videntur, & gratum habere quasi eo propendeant.* Merc.

That the dayes of man are like the dayes of an hireling, was shewed (*chap.* 7. 1.) I shall now only open the accomplishment of his day.

The word which we translate *accomplish*, signifies properly to *desire* and *will* with great *delight*, and by a Metaphor to *accomplish*, because we labour earnestly to accomplish that, which we greatly desire and delight in. So here, *till he shall accomplish* with delight, with willingness, his day, or bring his life to that longed for end, as a hireling his day: so some render, *Till the hour or time comes, which is so much desired:* That is (saith the *Glos*) till I am as willing to dye, as a labouring man is to go to supper and to bed. A hireling is put to hard labour, yet he comforts himself that evening will come, and then he shall have both rest and wages: Let me alone, *that I may accomplish as a hireling* (who is hard wrought) *my day:* That's pleasing to him, and so would this be to me. Again, *The dayes of an hireling*, notes a time set out to a special business: As the *dayes of a man* note the whole time of our pilgrimage here on earth: And then his meaning is, let me rest, till I have finished the work for which I came into the world; let me not depart without my errand. One of the Ancients finds it thus in some copies, *Turn from me that I may rest and refresh my life as a hireling, who hath breathings and times of intermission granted him from his labour.* But surely *Job* intends here a period, not a pause of his labours.

Donec optata veniet. Vulg. *Hebraizantes putant Jobum hic petere, ut tam diu permittatur vivere, quo usque ipse sponte sua senio jam confectus optet mortem, i.e. donec sponte moriatur.* Chrysost.

Hence Observe, First, *The life of man is a laborious life.*

He must accomplish his dayes as a hireling: He is a labourer, not a loiterer. Sin brought pain into our labour; but the duty of labour was before sin.

Secondly Note, *We have but a day of labour:*

A hireling doth not think much of it; it is but a day, and if some have a longer day then others, yet still 'tis but a day: This day will end, and it will be as if it had never begun; we shall forget all our sorrows. A woman in travel hath great sorrow, but when the work is over, she forgets all her sorrow, for joy that a man is born into the world: When we come to the wished accomplishment of our labours, we shall forget that we were in labour. As our labours are little regarded by the world here, so we shall as little remember them our selves hereafter; we shall lay them all under our pillows, when we go to the grave, and talk no more of them.

Thirdly Note, *This life must be accounted for*; or, *there is a reckoning to come about this life.*

Every man accomplisheth as a hireling his day; a hireling hath his work viewed before his wages are paid: *Every man must give an account of himself to God.* Evil workers shall be paid with death: They who do good shall receive the free gift of eternal life: Our labour shall not be in vain, either in the Lord, or out of the Lord: all that we do shall be considered: Wicked men shall have their pay for what they have done, and the Saints shall receive their reward: *Their works shall follow them:* They shall not receive wages for their work; but they shall receive benefit by their work, worth more then their work ten thousand times told. Though Saints are not mercinary (they work, not as hirelings for pay) yet in the issue they shall have better then pay for all their works. They shall receive more for the least work, then the best works can deserve. A cup of cold water shall have a reward, rivers of oyl have no merit. It were not worth while to be as an hireling, or to set our hand to the noblest works among men, if all the return were to come through the hands of men: But as whatsoever we do in this world is in the sight of God: so it is also in the memory of God. For, *He is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love* (Heb. 6. 10.) Both the labour of our callings, and the labour of our sufferings, shall have a full reward.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof dye in the ground:

Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.

But man dyeth and wasteth away; yea, a man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and dryeth up:

So man lieth down and riseth not; till the Heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

IN these six verses, *Job* amplifies and illustrates his former Assertion, that, *The dayes of man are determined, and the number of his months, which he cannot pass:* He doth this, First, By a dissimilitude, Secondly, By a similitude.

The dissimilitude is laid down, in the seventh, eighth, ninth

ninth and tenth verses: We have the explication in the seventh, eigth and ninth verses, and the application of it, at the tenth. *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down,* &c. *ver.7. But man dyeth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?* ver. 10.

The similitude is contained in the eleventh and twelfth verses, *As the waters fail from the sea,* &c. *So man lyeth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more.*

Verse 7. **For there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.**

The general subject of this context is the same with the former, which hath also been insisted upon from other passages in this book; namely, that man dying, returns not from death in this world: So that (here being no new matter) my chief business will be to explain the terms, and clear the parts of this dissimilitude:

Quia est arbori spes. Pagn.

There is hope of a tree.] Or, *A tree hath hope*, so the letter of the Hebrew, and so it is rendered by learned Interpreters, ascribing that to a tree which is proper to a man, hope: That which hath no reason cannot have any hope; nor doth the Hebraism intend any more then our reading. To say, *A tree hath hope*, is only this, *Man hath hope of a tree*: or, *There is hope of a tree.* A tree hath a natural aptitude to sprout up after it is cut down, and therefore man hopes it will. There are three opinions concerning the scope of these words.

q.d. *Arbor habet naturalem aptitudinem ut reparetur.*

First, Some conceive *Job* expressing his hope of the resurrection by this comparison: And then the words are a similitude, not a dissimilitude: As a tree cut down sprouts again: so, though man be cut down by death, yet he shall revive and rise again. What the Prophet speaks of the restoring of the people of God, the *Jews*, from the grave of their civil death (their captivity in *Babylon*) is as true of the restoring of all the people of God from the grave of a natural death. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead,* Isa. 26. 19. In pursuance of which exposition, the question at the close of the tenth verse, *And where is he?* is read with an admiration, which gives the sence thus: Doth the tree grow when cut down? And doth man dye, waste away, give up the ghost? And, *Is he no where?* What? Is he no where? That's incredible: man is somewhere when he is not here, and in due time it will appear where he is. Some of the Ancients expound the words as a holy triumph over, or scorn of death, as if he had said, *What? shall senseless trees and shrubs grow up again? And shall not man the noblest of the creatures? Is this good Reason, or good Divinity, that trees shall rise, and men shall not?* The Scripture by the reviving of a dying creature, sets forth the resurrection of man after death, (*1 Cor.* 15. 36.) *Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it dye.* The seed dyeth and then groweth, there is an argument from Nature; a tree may dye, and yet grow, there is an argument from Nature. The resurrection of the dead is an Article of Faith, and yet our eyes may shew us an argument of it in Nature. We may see a resurrection in the annual reviving of a tree; the tree in winter casts its leaves, and looks as dead; but when the Sun returns, and with that the heat, the tree reviveth: Every spring is as a resurrection from death. There is a truth in this interpretation, but to make out such an Irony by the Grammar of the words, or such an inference from the scope of the Text is very hard, if at all possible: And therefore I lay it by.

Augustinus docet hæc verba continere in se vim similitudinis & exponi debere per ironiam, q. d. *scilicet homo non resurget cum videatur resurgere, arbor sic etiã.* Lyranus apud Mer.

Secondly, Others interpret *Job* bemoaning the condition of man (as to this point) inferiour to that of trees. For first, The boughs of a tree may be lopt, yea, the body of it quite cut down, and yet it feels no pain: The tree is not grieved how much soever you hew, cut, and mangle it; but when God layes his Axe either to the boughs of man by sickness, diseases, and outward afflictions, or to his root by death, man feels pain: every stroke puts him to smart. Secondly, As the tree is cut and cut down without pain, so it will sprout up again, and renew, which man doth not.

Hence Note, *That a man in extream affliction thinks any condition better then his own.*

Job seems to envy the happiness of a tree. How low will the thoughts of man descend when he is laid low? He would even change estates, or (as we say) turn tables with stones and shrubs. There is hope of a tree; but I am (as to a temporal restoring) past hope.

Thirdly, The words carry an Argument to move the Lord to spare *Job*, or not to cut him down, though he had beaten off his leaves and fruit (his substance being swept away by robbers) though he had lopt off his boughs and branches (his children being swept away by death) yet he desires that he would not press upon his person also, and cut him quite down, because then he should be lost for ever out of this world. He was not like a tree, which when cut down shouts forth at the root again. We find such Arguments used by Orators and Poets to set forth the vanity of man beyond that of other creatures. *The sun sets* (saith one of them) *and riseth again; But when mans Sun goeth down, it riseth no more; 'tis alwayes night with man when this night comes. The snow dissolves* (saith another) *and then the fields are cloathed with grass, and the trees with leaves, but neither the honour, nor the eloquence, nor the piety of man can restore him to a spring after the winter of his death. There is hope of a tree if cut down,*

Soles occidere, & redire possunt Nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux, nox est perpetua una dormienda. Catullus. *Diffugere nives, redeunt jam gramina campis arboribusque comæ,* &c. *Nõ Torquate genus, non te facundia non te restituet pietas* Hor. lib. 4 Car. Od. 7

That it will sprout again.] The word which we translate to sprout, signifieth to change, and renew to another, or a better state. *Job* makes use of it, at the fourteenth verse of this chapter, *I will wait till my change*, or my sprouting come. Though he was hopeless of a change from death to this life, yet he was assured of a happy change in death, yea, of a change from death to eternal life.

חלף

But it may be doubted, how *a tree if cut down sprouts again.* 'Tis true, when only the boughs are lopt off, it sprouts presently; but if the body of a tree be cut down, will it grow again? That seems to be the sence of *Job.*

Proprie mutabitur, instaurabitur.

I answer.

The bodies of some trees (as for instance the Willow) being cut down and set into the ground, are every where observed to grow, and their tender branch doth not cease. Some interpret *Job* not of trees in general, but of this or some other particular sort of trees.

Again, Some trees though the body which is cut off will not grow, yet the root which remains will grow up into a new body. Such a tree is the (*a*) *Laurel*, whose description given by *Pliny* in his Natural History doth well agree with this discourse of *Job*. And because the Heathen did not believe a resurrection, therefore they made those trees to be Symbols and Emblems of death, which being once cut down, grow no more: It is observed that the Romans were wont to place a (*b*) *Cypress-tree* at the threshold of the house of death, because the *Cypress* being cut down never springs any more.

(a) *Quavundum arboris radix vivacior superficie ut lauri, itaque cum truncus interiit, resciſſa etiam lætius fruticat.* Plin. Nat. Hist

Lastly, Many trees (their roots remaining in the earth) will grow after cutting, though not in a full body, yet in sprouts, their tender branches will not cease; or as some render the Hebrew, *Their suckers will not leave:* We often see young slips rise at the root, when the tree it self is cut down. And this I conceive to be the meaning of *Job*, who calls such shoots *suckers*, because they live upon the root, like little children at their mothers breast. *Job* carries on the explication yet further.

(b) *Romani moris fuit ut potissimum cupressus quæ excisa renasci non solet in vestibulo mortui ponerentur.* Serv. in Virg. lib. 4. Plin. l. 16. cap. 32.

Verse 8. **Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof dye in the ground.**

In which words he puts a supposition of greater improbability. 'Tis much that a tree cut down should grow, much more if the *root wax old, and the stock dye in the ground.* It shewed not only the improbability, but impossibility (in nature) that *Sarah* should have a son when she was waxen old, and her womb (as the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 4.) was dead. And will the dead root of a tree grow naturally again? I conceive this dying of the root is only the decaying of the root; or that he intends only a partial, not a total death. Christ tells us (*John* 12. 24.) *That except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and dye, it abideth alone,* (that is, it doth not increase or bring forth more corns) *but if it dye, it bringeth forth much fruit.* The death of corn in the ground is not a total death, but only a corruption or alteration of it; for if the seminal life and vertue of it be quite extinguisht or drawn out, it could not yield either blade or ear without a miracle; yet because that alteration of it is a

kind

kind of death, therefore it is used as an illustration of Christs rising, and also of ours (by *Paul* 1 Cor. 15.) from a total death. Now as according to the course which God hath set in Nature, a corn of wheat (in this sence) dying, bringeth forth fruit: so according to the course of nature, the root of a tree (in this sence) dying or dead, buds and brings forth boughs, as it follows in the next words.

Verse 9. **Yet through the scent of water, it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.**

Odor levem rei alicujus contactum denotat. Suavis Metaphora. Dicuntur arbores quasi ad capiendum aquæ odorem & ad humorem contigendũ se suasque radices convertere. Pined.

It is an elegant Metaphor, as if a tree smelt the water as soon as it came near: And it notes thus much, That the tree upon the first soaking in, or springing up of the water, is refreshed and made fruitful. When the three Children were cast into the fiery Furnace, 'tis said, *The smell of fire had not passed upon them*, (Dan. 3. 27.) that is, their garments were not so much as touched or singed with fire. The fire had not made the least impression upon them. So 'tis said, when *Samson* was bound, he broke the cords, even as a thread that smells the fire (*Judg.* 16. 9.) A log will endure the fire long, but upon the first approach of fire, a thread is burnt asunder. The Prophet saith of Christ, *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord* (Isa. 11. 3.) The Hebrew is, *Shall make him smell in the fear of the Lord*; or, *He shall smell in the fear of the Lord.* Smelling is put for understanding; and (because the smell is a very quick sence) it notes freeness or quickness of understanding, as we render, *He shall be quick of understanding*; he shall understand the deepest mysteries, and most difficult cases as speedily as the most exquisite smell takes a scent. So then, when *Job* saith, by the scent or smell of water it will bud, it notes quick growing, or an easie bringing forth of a harvest of boughs (as the Original imports) whereas man will not grow again by an application or use of means.

קצר *Propriè messis, ut palmites qui sunt rami vitium vocantur.* קצירים Psal. 80, 12.

A tree cut down springs again: But how? *Through the scent of water.*

Hence Note, First, *Every effect hath a cause.*

The tree will grow, but it must have at least a smell of water.

Secondly, Observe, *Natural effects have their natural causes.*

Through the scent of water it will grow; Water is as proper to preserve or draw out the life of plants, as bread is to preserve the life of man.

Thirdly, Observe, *Upon the presence of the cause the effect follows presently.*

Through the scent of water it will grow; give it water, and you shall soon perceive a growth. How doth this shame man! A tree grows, sends out both leaves and fruit through the scent of water; but man hath spiritual water, the rain of holy Doctrine from Heaven; he hath not only the scent of water, but abundance of water soaking upon him, yet how little doth he grow! Yea, how many are there that grow not at all? Many souls are continually digged, dressed, and rained upon, who stand like *old dotards* in a forrest, not having so much as one green bough upon them: Is this to honour the means, or to honour God who gives the means? Trees answer all natural causes with sutable effects, when the Sun turneth about, they put on their green suits, they send out their leaves, their blossomes, and their fruits: The Sun of righteousness shines, the warm beams of Gospel-light dart upon thousands of souls, who continue in a winter of ignorance and unbelief, yielding neither the pleasure of leaves, nor the profit of fruit. And though some bring forth leaves, yet how few bring forth fruit, especially fruit meet for repentance from dead works, or for the hopes of eternal life? We see many spiritual helps; but how rare are spiritual effects? The grass and trees of the earth will condemn those who make no growth in grace, though they have been often watered with the word of grace.

Verse 10. **But man dyeth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?**

גבר *Vir potens & clarus.*

The Hebrew is, *Strong and powerful man dyeth*; let him be as strong as he will, dye he must, waste, and give up the ghost: Some observe an inversion of natural order in the words. For man goes down to the grave by these steps. He first wastes, secondly, giveth up the ghost, and then he dyes. The Spirit of God doth not alwayes exactly attend (*prius & posterius*) first or last, according to the order of nature: Neither is there any redundancy in this plenty of words. There is not one tittle in Scripture but hath its use and elegancy; and because the Spirit of God would shew the certainty of this thing, he heaps many words together into one asseveration, man wastes, dyeth, and giveth up the ghost; he is all things, and suffers all things which speak mortality.

Sunt qui volunt hic esse hysteron proteron.

Ego hanc geminationem ad copiam linguæ sanctæ facere puto. Merc.

We render, *Yea, man giveth up the ghost*; as if that implyed somewhat more then the former two: The particle, *Yea*, (in the Hebrew) heightens the sence, man wasteth, dyeth, yea, he giveth up the ghost.

Some understand wasting and dying but as preparatories or antecedents to giving up the ghost: Man decayes and wastes, yea, he dyeth every day, but he doth not give up the ghost every day, that's the last act. *Paul* speaking of his outward troubles and persecutions saith, *I dye dayly*; and in another place, *I have been in deaths often*: Natural death steals upon us part after part, it seizeth now upon the eyes, and makes them dim, then upon the ears, and makes them deaf, and so takes in now this member, and anon that, till it conquer the whole man. Death hath its forerunners and harbingers, sicknesses and diseases: A sick diseased man hath many symptomes of death upon him before he gives up the ghost: When he gives up that all is given up, death enters his fort, and takes full possession of him.

Ubi est? Nullibi, ut inde redire possit ad eandem vitã quam semel reliquit. Non est, quia non est in vivis. Drus.

And where is he? The question seems to carry a negation in it, *Man is no where.* He is not transplanted as trees sometimes are, and set in another ground. But is that goodly thing, *man*, quite gone, and vanished to a nothing when he dyeth? That which is no where is nothing: There must be some place for every thing: *Every entity must have its* ubi, *every what its where*: Therefore to say man is no where, is to say man is nothing, or to assent to a total mortality both of soul and body? We must therefore restrain *where is he?* to, where is he in the world? Look for him in the Countrey, in the City, at home or abroad, he is not to be had: Man gives up the ghost, and where is he?

I might here give Observations about the mortality of man, but having done it lately, *ver.* 1, 2. I will not do it again.

Note First in general, *Man is a wasting, dying creature.*

He hath received a life which he must shortly render and repay.

Secondly, *When man dyeth, himself and all his glory are gone, gone for ever out of this world.*

Where is he? He and his riches, he and his honour, he and his wisdom? what's become of all his designs, devices, counsels and thoughts? (*Psal.* 146.) *Trust not in Princes, nor any of the children of men, their breath is in their nostrils, they dye, and then all their thoughts perish.* The things which they have contrived in, or produced out of their thoughts, those curious fabricks of the brain fall and dye with them. So much of *Job*'s dissimilitude.

The similitude follows in the two next verses, *Job*'s discourse moves from the root and sprigs of a tree, to the seas and waters.

Verse 11. **As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and dryeth up.**

The similitude is opened in this eleventh verse, and applied at the twelfth, *So man lyeth down, and riseth not*, &c.

As the waters fail from the sea.

The particle, *as*, is not in the Original. There we read, *Waters fail from the sea, and the floods decay and dry up, man lyeth down and riseth not.* This hath led some Interpreters to render it (as the former) by a dissimilitude: And they make out the sence thus: *The sea ebbs and fails from the shoar, yet it returns again when the tide turns; and though the floods decay and dry up through the extremity of heat*

אולים מגרים *Verbum denotat abire, proficisci.* 1 Sam. 9. 7. Deut 32. 36.

heat and drought, yet the rain comes and fills them up again, but man (whose life is like water spilt upon the ground 2 Sam. 14. 14.) is unlike the sea, or river water: for when he ebbs he flows not again, when his moisture is dried up it returns to him no more.

But the stream of interpreters conclude it a similitude, and I shall keep to that, it being also very suitable to the purpose of *Job*.

As the waters fail from the sea.] How do the waters fail from the sea? The sea is the great vessel or receptacle of waters, God calleth the *gathering together of waters sea*, (*Gen.* 1.) And if the waters which are gathered together fail, what will become of the scattered waters?

There are different apprehensions about the making out of a clear meaning.

First thus, As waters after an exundation of the sea, or of some great river are (upon the reflux of either) separated from the channel, and left behind upon the land, which they overflowed, and because they cannot return (for then they must ascend, which is impossible to nature) they there utterly dry up and evaporate: so man dieth and returneth no more unto his place; As if he had said, *It is as absurd and incongruous to affirm that man shall return again to this present life, when he dieth, as to say the sea-water left upon the land, can conveigh it self back into that ancient channel.*

Argumentū sumi arbitror ab impossibili, sc. tunc hominē ad hanc vitam reversurum, cū aqua sursum versus ad locū se referat unde defluxit. Sanct.

Secondly, Others make it an argument of the resurrection, As if he had said, *just as the sea decayes and dryes up, so man when he dies shall be utterly lost*: One is as true as the other. We have a Proverbial speech, *This is as true as the sea burns*: we may speak to the same sense, *This is as true as the sea is empty or dried up.*

Thirdly, This sence is given, as when the sails from the place to which it hath usually flowed; and leaves its former bounds, then the floods and streams adjacent dry up (because they are fed and maintained by the sea, *Eccl.* 1.7.) so when natural moisture decayes in man (which is the supplement and oyl of life) man fails and can no more revive himself, then a river can recover its streams when it is cut off from those secret supplies and springs which it receiveth from the sea: Thus the similitude is applyed in the next verse.

Vers. 12. So man lieth down and riseth not, till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

שכב *cubat in pulvere sive in sepulchro quod Chaldæi vocant* שכיב *unde* שכיבים *mortui.*

As if he had said, *Death brings man to bed in the grave, from whence he riseth not,*

Until the heavens be no more.

What Heavens? and *how are the heavens no more?* there is a threefold heaven, first, the aiery heaven, or all that space between the earth and the moon, birds are said to flie abroad in the heaven, that is, in the air: Secondly, The starry heaven, or the heaven where the stars are placed, whether moveable or fixed: Thirdly, The imperial heaven, which is called the *seat of the blessed*, or, which is more transcendent, *the place of the special residence of God*, when he saith, *till the heavens be no more*, means he the aiery, or the starry, or the highest heaven? there is no question but these last heavens shall continue for ever: then we must interpret him of the starry and aiery heavens.

Until the heavens be no more.] *Until* hath a threefold signification in Scripture.

First, *Until* signifieth a certain period or duration: *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come*, (Gen. 49. 10.) So, (*Rom.* 11.25.) *Blindness in part is hapned unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* In these and many other texts, *Until* notes a determinate time with an exclusion or shutting out of succeeding times, or any stop till the accession and accomplishment of that time.

Secondly, *Until* notes perpetuity, and is put for, *ever*, *Psal.* 110. *Sit thou at my right hand until I have made thy foes thy foot-stool.* Christ shall not sit at the right hand of God till that time only, and then be put from his place; For, *Unto the son he saith, Thy throne O God is for ever and ever*, Heb. 1. 8. yet we must distinguish between the substance and the circumstance of Christs Kingdom, between the thing it self and the form or manner of administring and dispensing it. In the former sense it is absolutely everlasting, in the latter it shall remain only until the consummation of all things.

Thirdly, *Until* signifies as in some places, *for ever*, so in others, *never*, 2 Sam. 6. 13. *Michol had no child until the day of her death*, that is, she never had a child. And so *until* is most generally interpreted (*Mat.* 1.25.) *Then Joseph took unto him his wife, and knew her not, till she had brought forth her first born son.* That is, he never knew her, it being (though no article of faith, yet) a received opinion, that *Mary* was a virgin as before, so ever after the birth of Christ.

When it is said here, man shall not rise *till the heavens be no more*, Some conceive *Job* expressing one impossible thing by another, or implying that it is as impossible to nature for man to rise from the grave of corruption, as it is for the heavens to corrupt. As if he had said, *Man shall never rise by natural power, as the heavens shall not decay by natural weakness.* The heavens have no seed of corruption in their constitution as not being mixed or made up of different qualities: hence *heaven* in Scripture notes perpetuity. *To have a throne as the dayes of heaven, is to have a throne for ever*, (Psal. 89. 29.) And so *Daniel* speaks in that prophecie of the Kingdom of Christ, (*Dan.* 2. 44.) *And in the dayes of those Kings, shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the Kingdom shall never be left to other people*: so we render, but whereas we joyn *heaven* to *God*, some of the learned joyn *heaven* to *Kingdom*, and read it thus, *In the dayes of these Kings shall God set up the Kingdom of heaven*, or *a heavenly Kingdom*, that is, an everlasting Kingdom, for so he explains it, *which shall not be destroyed*, in this sense the Gospel is called *the kingdom of heaven*, because of the perpetuity of it: No sin of those that profess it, no violence of those who oppose and persecute it, shall prevail against it or totally abolish it: The Kingdom of heaven is (in this sense) above the possibility of earthly violence. So then *mans lying in the grave till the heavens be no more*, notes continuance in the grave, even as long as this world continues, or that it shall be night with every man that dies till the day of judgement.

q. d. *Sicut impossibile est cœlum corrumpi, it hominē mortuū resurgere.* Aquin. *Elegans Hebraismus est, quando unum impossibile per aliud impossibile declaratur.* Bold. *Ex cœlorum diuturnitate probat quod nunquam juxta naturam sit reparandus homo.* Merc. *In diebus autē regum illorū suscitabit Deus cœli regnum: ubi nomē cœli, nō construitur cū nomine* Deus, *sed cum nomine regnū*, q.d. *suscitabit Deus cœleste regnum. Donec atteratur cœlū*, Vul. *ac si*

בלתי *esset à* בלה *senescere, veterascere. Sed fere omnes sumunt verbū* Bilthi *pro dictione indeclinabili negativa* Non. *Hackwel.* Apol. of the power of God in governing the world. *lib.* 4. *c.* 13. *Sect.* 4.

Here 'tis questioned, Shall the heavens be no more after the day of judgement? or shall the heavens corrupt when man is raised from corruption?

The Vulgar Latine reads, *Till the heavens be torn or worn out.* As if the heavens should be at last like old garments spent and thread-bare with long use and wearing. But the heavens are made of such stuff as will not waste or decay with age or use: when or which way soever they end, they shall end by the will of God (by which they began) not by doing service unto man.

There are divers opinions in the point. First, Some think that all creatures shall be restored to that perfection they had before the fall. Secondly, Others, that the heavens and elements only shall be restored. A third sort say that the heavens and only two of the Elements, the air and the earth shall be restored. A fourth say that the old world shall be totally abolished, and a new one created in the room of it. A fifth opinion affirms that the whole world with all the parts and works thereof, excepting Angels good and bad, the heaven of the blessed and hell, the place of the damned, shall be totally and finally annihilated; as they were once made out of nothing, so they shall turn to nothing and not return again: And these interpret this Scripture, *till the heavens be no more*, as teaching this utter abolition. To which they add many texts of Scripture, which they conceive speaking the same sense, and countenancing their assertion, *Psal.* 102. 25, 26. *Heb.* 1. 10, 11. *Isa.* 34. 4. *Isa.* 51. 6. 2 *Pet.* 3. 10. *Rev.* 6. 14. In these quoted places we read, *that the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, that the heavens shall perish and vanish away as the smoak, that they shall be dissolved and rowled together as a scroll, that they shall fall as a withered leaf or as a dry fig from the tree, that they shall pass, yea, pass away with a great noise*: from all which it is collected and concluded that there shall be a total abolition of the visible heavens at the day of the resurrection.

Many arguments are brought to confirm this, chiefly from the uselesness of these creatures in that state: when man

man shall have no more need of the heavens, why should the heavens be any more? what shall man do with the Sun, or the stars to enlighten him, with earth or water, with beasts or fouls to feed or serve him, when he shall have a spiritual body, and be raised to a state of incorruption? he shall be lifted above the use of these things, and why should that be, which will be of no use?

Again heaven and earth serve here to shew us the invisible things of God, the footsteps of his eternal power and Godhead are seen in the things which are made. But when man shall see God face to face, when God shall fully manifest himself, what need we any more these glasses? He that hath a good eye cares not for spectacles: man who is the noblest of visible creatures in his present condition, shall be above the use of creatures in that condition. Hence some state the question thus, That when it is said the heavens *shall be no more*, The meaning is not, that they shall not be at all, but that they shall not be for those ends and uses, to which they now serve and were at first set up.

Vetustas ista in cælis non secundū diminutionē intelligēda est, sed quantum ad usum & ministerium quod: post judicium cessabit. Bold.

Hæc in substantia semper sunt permansura & tantū immutanda in meliorē statū, electorū splendori & gloriæ accommodationem. Merc.

Lastly, Many resolve it thus, that the heavens shall continue according to their substance, not according to their present quality; they shall not be annihilated (say they) but bettered. As if when God brings man to glory in heaven, he will bring the heavens to glory also. And that as the beauty of the creature hath been darkned by the sin of man, so it shall receive greater beauty when the sin of man is done away. The Apostles language enclines to this (*Rom.* 8. 21.) *The creature it self also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.* So that *till the heavens be no more* is according to this position, *till the heavens continue no more in their present state*, but are brought to one more perfect, where the alteration will be so great, that it may well be said, they shall be no more what they now are. As we say of a man who is much changed either in mind or body, *he is not the same man.* For (say they) *as the vile body of man shall then be fashioned like to the glorious body of Christ, according to the mighty power of God, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself*; So the vilest part of the frame of the world, much more the heavens, shall be put into a more excellent fashion then now they are: *The fashion of the world passeth away*, but God will put it in a fashion which shall not pass.

I shall not here interpose my own sense in so great a variety of judgement among learned men, especially, because it is all one to the scope of the text I am upon, whether we understand it of a total abolition of these heavens, or of the restitution and renovation of them. For as according to the former interpretation these heavens will be no more at all, so according to the latter, these heavens will be no more as now they are, and so though then they be, they yet may be said to be no more. And *until the heavens in one of these senses shall be no more, man lyeth down and riseth no more*, yea, as it followeth in the close of the verse,

They shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep.

Death is here compared to sleep, and the resurrection to awaking. The metaphor is very elegant, and it hath been opened at the thirteenth verse of the third chapter, thither I refer the Reader.

Observe First, from the former words, *That the most durable creatures are perishing, changeable creatures.*

The heavens are an emblem of continuance: and (as hath been shewed) to say such a thing shall be till the heavens be no more, is to say it shall ever be: yet these heavens are in a perishing condition, and shall be, if not totally annihilated, yet so much altered from what they are, as will amount to this, *they are no more*: all those Scriptures come up to that, if they reach not the other sense, to which they put very hard. What is there of the creature to be trusted? earth is fading, yea, and heaven too: trust not in the heavens, but in the God of heaven, of whom it is said, *in him there is no variableness nor shadow of change.* God is so far from a real change, that he hath not the least shadow of change. But creatures are so changeable that there is not in them a shadow of unchangeableness; It is no wonder to see the sublunary world change, to see the state of men change, the riches and peace of kingdoms change, the beauty and purity of a Church change, when even the heavens shall change and be no more what they have been; when we are taught that the most durable things perish and change, how changeable are those things which are most subject to perishing?

Secondly, Consider under what notions *Job* represents death, *they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.*

Hence Observe, *We ought to familiarize death to our selves, to put it under the fairest and easiest apprehensions.*

Some translate death into such terrible shapes, and represent it to themselves under such affrighting forms, that they live in bondage through the fear of death all their dayes; do as the spirit of God teacheth you; cloath it with pleasant expressions, call it the undressing and uncloathing of your selves, call it rest, conceive it under the notion of sleep, and then you will not fear but welcome it; Is any man afraid to go to bed? thus we should allay the bitterness, beautifie the deformity, take off the edge, and pull out the sting of death by such sweet and soft thoughts of it, as the spirit of God suggests. Sleep is a short death, and death is but a long sleep. The Babylonians are threatned with death under the name of a long sleep; (*Jer.* 51. 57.) *I will make drunk her Princes and her wise men, her Captains and her Rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep and shall not awake.* 'Tis a judgement to be cast into a sleep like death, but 'tis a mercy that death is but like a sleep; To sleep a perpetual sleep and not to awake, is to die: but they who are dead shall awake out of sleep. For as death is a sleep, so it is but a sleep: death is not a perpetual sleep, though he who in stead of sleeping, dieth, is said to fall into a perpetual sleep; Death compared with ordinary sleep, is a perpetual sleep, but death in it self considered, or considered rather according to the appointment of God, is not a perpetual sleep. There shall be an awakening and a rising, we shall sleep no more, when the heavens are no more. *Job* is express for this in the nineteenth chapter, and here he assures us that man shall awake from the grave at last, while he saith it will be long ere he awake. Man hath done his work before he falls into this sleep, but man must awake before he receive either his wages or reward, *we must all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to what he hath done in the flesh, whether it be good or evil.* They (as was lately toucht) who have done evil shall receive their wages, and they who have done good shall receive a reward; Such as our work was when fell asleep, such will our receit be when we awake. *Job* was so full of this hope, that he should both awake at that day, and receive a good reward, that he is even in hast to go to bed, and petitions for a grave in the next verse, to which I also hasten.

VERS. 13, 14.

O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me in secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me.

If a man die, shall he live again? All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.

JOB is an earnest and an humble suiter, for that which nature least desires, yea for that which nature abhors. He petitions for the grave and woes death, as if there were some beauty in darkness or loveliness in that king of terrours.

Verse 13. **O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me in secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me.**

The words fall under various interpretations. Some conceive *Job* begging to be hid in the day of account, which is a day of wrath to the wicked, and of *the Revelation of the righteous judgement of God to all.* The Popish writers find here their *Limbus patrum*, or their imaginary receptacle

teptacle of those souls which died in faith, before Christ came in the flesh; this, say they, is the *secret place* to which *Job* wishes he might retire; that by a present banishment from the world he might get out of the noise and sence of those evils, with which the scene of his life was fill'd and made uncomfortable.

Secondly, Say others, *Job* in this prayer for a grave, doth plainly renew that suit which he had made more then once before, *to dye*: As if he had said, *Considering my sad estate, the burden and pressures that lye upon me, death is better to me then life, and the grave more eligible then my bed-chamber; 'twere better for me to be under the earth, or in the earth, free among the dead, then to walk upon the earth, fettered with these afflictions, among the living.*

Thirdly, That having said, *Man lying down shall not awake till the Heavens be no more*; he only subjoyns that death would be welcome to him; nor would he move against it, if after he had passed that darksome valley, he might in some reasonable time return again to the land, and enjoy the light of the living; if a time for such a return might be set, then he could chearfully descend into the grave: but as *Job* had often argued the impossibility (considering the Decrees of God concerning dying man) of such a return, so I cannot conceive him aiming at the grant of it in this request, and therefore I lay it by, as an unsuteable and improper interpretation.

Fourthly, That which carrieth the sence most clearly is, that *Job* speaks like a man besieged with trouble, and compassed about with sad distractions: who makes request for this and that, and he knows not what; he looks for something to ease his grief, and therefore wisheth for any thing, whatever comes next to hand, or lyes uppermost in his thoughts, he cares not what it be, so it be not what it is; put me under ground, hide me in the earth, Lord, do what thou wilt with me, so I may be set at liberty, from the bonds and chains of my present pressing miseries, if I could but get release from this prison, send me to the prison of the grave, and I readily submit to thy good pleasure, yea, that would be pleasing unto me: *O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave.*

The grave hath been opened before, and the manner of this wish about it (*Chap.* 6. 8.) *Who will give*, who will bestow the favour of a burial upon me, and put me into the possession of the house of death. He speaks as if his request were not only difficult, but only not impossible: or as if it would be costly to the granter.

מי יתן *Quis dabit? Hebraismus optantis, valet idem quod utinã, & rei optatæ aut difficultatem aut impossibilitatem affert.* Pined.

Who will hide me in the grave? Hide me as a treasure, so the Original intimates. Treasures are hidden things, as the notation both of the Greek and Latine words teacheth. A treasure is substance or riches laid up for the day following, or for the time to come: *O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave*, yet not as trash, but treasure; not as a rotten careass, but as a precious jewel: *The bodies of Believers are treasure as well as their souls; their earthly part is precious as well as their heavenly.*

צפן *recondere, hinc* מצפנים: *thesauri a recondendo, sic* Συνεωγε *à reponendo, quod in diē crastinum, i. e.* εἰς ἔπειτον *reponerentur.* Drus.

The grave may be taken two wayes: First, Strictly and literally, for the place of burial, or for the house of death.

Whence Note, *That the grave is a hiding place; the grave is a sure hiding place.*

When we are once hidden there, we lye open to no more violence: The grave is a shelter from all storms: We need not fear that it will either rain or blow through that house; that's the reason why they in the Book of the *Revelation* desired death when the vials of Gods wrath were pouring out upon the earth. Though some have not been free from the rage of men in the grave, yet none have felt it. *O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave:* I have met with this strain of sorrow before, therefore I do but touch it here.

Sepulchrum est quasi scrinium vel capsa in qua reponitur corpus.

Secondly, As the grave in Scripture is taken for the place of the dead: so for any place where the living are hid, or hide themselves.

A secret place is the grave of a living man.

Qui a communi hominum consortio superari, sive ut imminentia sibi pericula sive debita supplicia declinarent, in cavernis etiam in sepulchris habitare solebant. Bold.

In times of persecution the Saints were forced to bury themselves alive, because the malicious enemy sought their lives, (*Heb.* 11. 36.) *They wandred in desarts, and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth*: Thus the old Believers were buried alive: It is said of *Obadiah* (1 Kings 18.) *That he hid the Lords Prophets by fifty in a cave*: These caves were graves of living men. Some understand *Job*'s meaning of such a grave: and that he did not desire death, but the securing of his life, or to be hid alive, not to be hid in death; He would be somewhere in safe custody, out of the reach of those troubles which annoyed him; The next clause doth somewhat favour this sence, *O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave.*

And keep me secret. These words are but an explication or repetition of the former; *Job* doubles his request, to shew how strongly his heart was fixt upon it: *O that thou wouldest keep me secret.* How long?

Until thy wrath be past. That is, the effects of wrath: The letter of the Original is, *Thy nostril*, because in the nose or nostrils wrath and anger shew themselves; we breathe anger; and the breath of the Lord is nothing else but his wrath, which like a stream of brimstone kindles the fiery *Topher*, (Isa. 30. 33.) *Job* desires the Lord to let this breath pass, and then he is willing to appear out of his grave, or to be kept no longer secret: As if he had said, I cannot stand in the open view of thy wrath, or in the face of thy fierce displeasure; *Oh that thou wouldest hide me till thy wrath be past. God put* Moses *in the clift of the rock, and hid him with his hand, while his glory passed by* (Exod. 33. 12.) much more have we need to be hid while the wrath of God passeth by, or until his wrath be past.

Nasus, ira, quæ tumente & fumante naso manifestari solet.

שוב *Non semper est revertī, redire; sæpe est averti, recedere. Hinc* תשובה *conversio animi sc. ad Deum, &* משובה *aversio, recessio.* Drus.

Hence Observe, First, *God in his actings towards man shews himself like a wrathful man.*

The wrath of God is not a passion in him, but an action towards us. He acts as men when they are angry; but he suffers nothing by his anger: He smites and wounds, and pulls down and destroyes like a wrathful, yea, an inraged man; yet he doth this in the exactest frame, and sweetest composure of his spirit: The wrath of God never disjoynts him, never puts him out of order, as the wrath of man doth. *The wrath of man is the rage of man; but the wrath of God is the reason of God.* His wrath toward all is full of serenity, and it is full of tender mercy to his own.

Secondly, *Job* fearing the wrath of God resorts to God for shelter and hiding, *O that thou wouldest hide me till thy wrath be past.* When a man (whom we fear) is angry with us, we run from him, and go to some friend with this request, O that you would hide me till the wrath of this man be over. When *Rebeckah* understood that her son *Esau* was wroth with *Jacob, and comforted himself purposing to kill him*, she adviseth *Jacob* to flee to his Uncle *Laban*, and tarry there, till his Brothers wrath should turn away (*Gen.* 27. 43, 44.) She doth not direct him to go to *Esau*, and desire protection from him till his own wrath were turned away. Were it not strange if a King being wroth with one of his subjects, he should go to the same King and say, *O hide me till thy wrath be past*; yet thus *Job* speaks.

Hence Observe, *That our only refuge from the wrath of God, is God himself.*

Nothing can hide us from the wrath of God but the mercy of God. As God hides his people from the wrath of men, (*Psal.* 27. 5.) *In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his Pavilion, in the secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me.* And again, *In the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast:* As (I say) God hides his people from the wrath of men, so also from his own wrath. When a Believer apprehends God angry, he knows not whither to go, but unto God: He appeals from God to God; from an angry God to a pleased God; from the wrath of God to the mercy of God; from God in himself to God in his Son. Carnal men have poor shifts, when God is angry they hide in man: Can the power and mercy of a creature be a covering against the wrath and indignation of the Creator? Yet this is all the covering which a carnal man inquires after. *The Kings and Captains* (Rev. 6.) *call upon the rocks and mountains to hide them*; that is, they apply themselves to worldly means, to worldly helps and powers, to these they cry, hide us from the wrath of God; but they know not what this meaneth, to make the love of God a refuge from the anger of God. Such a spirit Christ discovers while he forbids the tears of the daughters of *Jerusalem* (Luke 23. 30.) *Weep not for me, but weep for your selves, and for your children:* Why so? Sad dayes are coming, so sad, *That they*

they shall say to the mountains fall on us, and to the hills cover us; not as if they should think the hills would hear or pity them; but because they could find none to do it, and they might as soon make a mountain move to their help, as move men to help them.

Again, Mountains and hills may be taken there for the greatest powers and strengths of men; or for men of great strength and power: In which sence it is said in the second of *Isaiah*, *The day of the Lord shall be against the high mountains*: So then, to call to the mountains for covering in a day of trouble, is at best but to expect it at the hand of man. These are miserable shifts. God doth so overrule the world by his providence, that sometimes the earth helps the woman (*Rev.* 12. 16.) in a day of trouble; but the woman (that is, the true Church) doth not cry to the earth (meer men of the world) for help; God makes the hills and mountains cover his people in a day of his wrath; but they do not go to hills and mountains for covering against his wrath. *David* puts the question (*Psal.* 139. 8.) *Whither shall I fly from thy presence?* He resolves it presently, that neither Heaven, nor hell, nor the uttermost parts of the earth could afford him a corner for security, or a hiding-place from the hand of God: We must look for a protecting hand in God, when we are afraid of his smiting hand; *Only divine love hides from divine wrath.* This was shadowed in the description of the Ark, in which the Tables of the Law were laid up (*Exod.* 25.) There the Mercy-seat was put upon the Ark, the Cherubims covering it with their wings, implying that the mercy of God only protects us from his wrath. The wrath of God is caused by sin (which is the transgression of the Law) but to shew that mercy covers from wrath, the Mercy-seat was made to cover the Ark wherein that Law was reserved, which discovers both the sin of man, and the wrath of God against it. The wrath of God had never been revealed against man, if man had not sinned against the Law; yet now God sits between the Cherubims over the Mercy-seat, to cover that Law which through sin causeth wrath: With one hand he gives a Law, and with another hand he hides us from wrath: *Out of his hand went a fiery Law*, (Deut. 33. 2.) and *out of his hand went a shining Gospel*, and with that *a Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings*: When that fire would burn us, this Sun warms us; while the flames of that would consume us, the wings of this overshadowed us, and hid us till the wrath of God be past. Thus our hiding from the wrath of God is in the love of God. Hence also that gracious invitation (*Isa.* 26. 20.) *Come my people, enter into your chambers, until the indignation be overpast*: Those chambers into which God invited his people are none other, but himself: When they could not build, or find out chambers to hide themselves while his indignation smoaked, himself will be their chamber. One of the Ancients interprets those chambers to be the grave, into which the Saints should willingly go to hide themselves in the time of Antichrists rage, of which he conceives that to be a prophecy. However, we are sure *the name of the Lord is not only a hiding chamber, but a strong tower; the righteous run into it, and are safe. O that thou wouldest hide me until thy wrath be past.*

Tertul. lib. de retur. carnis. Bold.

Thirdly, *Job* perceiving a storm of wrath about him, dares not hide it, but seeks a hiding place.

Hence Observe, *Man is not able to bear the wrath of God, or to stand before God when he is angry.*

Job was a man of unspotted integrity, perfect, upright, fearing God, eschewing evil, yet he was afraid when God appeared in wrathful dispensations. The wrath of God as threatened in the Word, is slighted by unbelievers; but when it is felt either in the conscience or upon the flesh, the stoutest run and hide: The love of God is undervalued by those who know it not; but a soul that hath once tasted that the Lord is gracious, and lives in the love of God, this soul is swallowed up with love, and values it more then life. 'Tis so with those who know not the wrath of God, their hearts being hardened: They say with *Pharaoh*, *Who is the Lord?* But when conscience is awakened, the heart touched, the eye opened, then horror and amazement take hold of them, as pain upon a woman in travel; (*Isa.* 2. 19.) *They shall go into the holes of the rocks, and to the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* When God comes with terrible shakings, they shall hide themselves, whose terror made others shake. The wrath of a powerful man is dreadful, *The wrath of a King* (saith *Solomon*) *is as the roaring of a Lyon*; What then is the wrath of God? If *Rebeckah* was so sensible of the wrath of *Esau* against *Jacob*, that she durst not venture *Jacob* into his angry presence: What are they, who make no haste to be hidden from an angry God; or to have the anger of God appeased, and turned away from them?

Fourthly Observe, *There may be sensible feelings of the wrath of God, even upon those who are dearest unto God.*

It is *Job* that prayes, *Hide me till thy wrath be overpast*: There was indeed more fear of wrath among Believers under legal administrations, then after that fuller breaking forth and appearance of the grace of God, bringing salvation under the Gospel: So we may understand that of the Apostle (*Rom.* 8. 15.) *Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear again. Paul* (according to this interpretation) speaks not of a person, but of the whole state of the Church; giving the sence thus, Ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear, ye are under the Gospel; the spirit of bondage was that which properly belonged to the times of the Law; when little of Gospel light appeared, fear and terror held the people of God in bondage. But this is the time of grace, the day of love, the day of shedding the love of God abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost; therefore be of good chear, live like free-men and like sons, not like bond-men or servants.

Ante Christium erat δειλία, δειλία & φόβος Sandys.

Fifthly, He prayes, *Hide me till thy wrath be past*: *Job* was sensible of wrath, but he knew assuredly that it was not abiding wrath.

Hence Observe, *The wrath of God to his own people, is not an everlasting wrath.*

The wrath of God against wicked men is an everlasting wrath, they cannot be hid till the wrath of God be overpast, for it will never pass, (*John* 3. 36.) *He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him*, and shall abide to all eternity. The appearings of wrath are terrible, but who can abide the abidings of wrath? *Who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a Refiners fire* (*Mal.* 3. 2.) Wicked men cannot abide the coming of *Christ*, when he is but like refining fire to purge out their dross; How then will they abide the day of his coming, when he is like consuming fire, to devour both them and their dross?

Sixthly, *Job* was under grievous pains, a cup of sorrow was put to his mouth; yet he moves not so much to have the cup of sorrow pass from him, as to have the wrath of God pass from him.

Hence Observe, *A good heart is more sensible of divine displeasure, then of outward pain.*

He fears the appearance of wrath more then the feeling of smart. It is a work of grace to be afraid of the anger of God, and it provokes him as much when his wrath, as when his love is slighted. *Many tremble at the corrections of God; but there are few who tremble at the anger of God.* The holy Prophet (*Jer.* 10. 24.) seems to invite correction, so he might be free from anger, *Correct me, O Lord, but not in thine anger*: Let me see thou lovest me, and then smite me if thou wilt: Anger smarts worse then any rod upon the soul of a believer; but 'tis the rod of God, not the wrath of God which makes an unbeliever smart. *Let there be no more mighty hail and thunder, take away this death*, saith a *Pharaoh*; *Take away thy displeasure, let thy wrath pass*, saith a *Job*, a *David*; yet at last the wrath of God will be more painful then pain, more deadly then death it self to a *Pharaoh*, wrath will burn hotter then fire in hell for evermore.

Patet hinc tam acerbum esse omnibus ira Dei sensum, ut nihil sit quod homines non perferre malint. Merl.

Lastly, See *Job*'s temper here; he trembled at the wrath of God, and was afraid: We read him full of faith and confidence, *Chap.* 13. 16, 18.) *I know I shall be justified, and he also shall be my salvation*: There he stood in the light of the favour of God; here he is clouded with fear, and compassed about with darkness.

Hence

Hence Observe, *That the best of Believers do not always retain the same degree, and evidences of holy faith.*

Their estate is always sure; but their estate is not always clear: Their condition is the same; but their apprehensions about it vary: Now they overflow with joy because they see the pleased face of God; soon after they are filled with fear, and would be hidden from his wrath. *O that thou wouldest hide me till thy wrath be past*; that's his first wish.

That thou wilt appoint me a set time.

חשית לי חק *constituas mihi legem aut præceptum, statutum, i. e. certum & præfinitum terminum.* Merc.

This is his second wish.

But for what? or to what purpose would he have a set time? Times relate to things or actions. As *to every purpose there is a time set* (Eccles. 3. 1.) so, to a set time supposeth a purpose for it: What was *Job's* purpose for which he thus earnestly desires a time might be set.

We may very clearly refer it to the wish foregoing, *O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave*: As if he had said, as I beg to go to bed in the grave, so I beg of thee to appoint me a set time when I shall go to that desired and longed for bed of the grave. *O that thou wouldest appoint me a time.*

The word which we translate *set time*, signifies properly a Statute, a Law, or Ordinance: There is a double Law, a Law of things, and a Law of times, and the word bears both, therefore we translate well, *O that thou wouldest appoint me a set time*, or a law concerning the time; but dares *Job* ask God a set time? God sets us a time, but may we desire God to set us a time? The Jews were reproved for this by *Moses* (Psal. 78. 47.) *They limited the holy One of Israel*; they put him to a time, or set him a day, by which if he did not help them, they did not believe he could help them. It is insufferable presumption to set God a time. And it wants not danger to move God to set us a time. All the actings of *Job* in this state are not warrantable: Many of them are not for our imitation, but caution: *Job* expresseth a troubled spirit while he prayes for an abatement of his trouble: This prayer was not the breathing of his grace, but the breaking forth of his sorrow: He would be in the grave, he would have a set time, he must have things brought to an issue: In all this we see not a rule for prayer, but an error for passion.

Sciamus hæc perturbatum vi mali, Jobū dicere, nec certè nec quicquam hinc posse colligi, nisi quod levationem mali quoque modo postulat. Merc.

Hence Note, *That extremity of pain may put a good man upon unadvised petitions.*

A distressed soul often makes distracted prayers, and desires more that his own will, than that the will of God may be done. The will of God, his word of command, or his word of promise are our rule and warrant what to ask. They ask besides all the rules which God hath set who ask a set time. Hence take two deductions.

Non est quod hæc quis accuratius ad legitimæ orationis leges exigat. Merl.

First, *That it is the sole priviledge of God to set and appoint times.*

As God hath appointed to men the bounds of their habitation, *so also he hath determined the times*, (Acts 17.26.) And as he hath set the time of nations and people in general, so of singular persons, *My times are in thy hand* (saith *David*, Psal. 31. 15.) That is, thou hast the disposé of them: While he saith *my times*, he doth not speak himself the Master, but the servant of time. Again, *My times are in thy hand*; that is, all my times, I reserve none of them in my own hand: My times of trouble, and my times of comfort; my times of joy, and my times of sorrow; my times of honour, and my times of reproach; when I shall fall into affliction, and when I shall be delivered out of affliction; how long I shall live, and when I shall dye; all these times are in thy hand. Nor did *David* at all desire to have his times, or any part of his times out of Gods hand: And as it is our duty to leave our times in Gods hand; so it is our comfort that they are in so good, in so wise a hand: We should not only be content, but rejoyce that our times are there. Man is not wise enough to use the times which God sets him; much less is he wise enough to set his own times.

Secondly Note, *It is our duty to refer all the circumstances of our petitions to the wisdom of God.*

We may be suiters to God, but we must not be his counsellers, nor our own carvers when or where, how much or by what means we would have the mercies which we ask for. *Job* spake well in one respect, though he would have a set time; yet he took not upon him to set the time. It was his failing to desire a set time; but it had been a great sin for him to set the time. Man must expect a law from God; he must not give himself a law; much less may he give the law to God. *O that thou wouldest appoint me a set time,*

And that thou wouldest remember me.

Et constitue as mihi tempus in qua recorderis mei. Vulg.

This is his third desire; *He would be remembered*: Some joyn these two latter wishes into one, *O that thou wouldest appoint a set time wherein to remember me*: But for what, or in what would he be remembred? Either thus, Remember to hide me in the grave at that set time; or Lord when thou hidest me in the grave be pleased to remember me: The grave is a place of forgetfulness; *David* complains (*Psal.* 31. 12.) *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind*: *Job* is willing to be among the dead; but not to be forgotten, or out of the mind of God; Let the world forget me, I can bear that; but I cannot bear it that God should forget me: *O that thou wouldest remember me.* Heman (*Psal.* 88. 5.) describing his sorrows, saith he, was *free among the dead, like as the slain that lye in the grave, whom thou remembrest no more.* Dead men are, as if they were, not only out of the memory of men, but of God himself: *Job* was content to dye out of the world, but not to dye out of the memory of God: He liked a grave of earth; but he liked not the grave of forgetfulness: *Set me a time for the grave, and remember to hide me there, or remember me when I am hidden there.*

Lastly, This prayer, *Remember me*, may be understood as a general prayer for good at the hand of God: The remembrance of God intimates all good to man. 'Tis good enough if he remember us for good, as *Nehemiah* prayed he would: To remember notes chiefly these two things,

First, To value and esteem: Worthless things are not fit for a treasury, much less for our memory: Who would keep a record of that which no man cares to know; nor shall be the wiser if he do know it?

Secondly, It notes care. When we would help a friend or do him a curtesie, we remember him and have him often in our thoughts.

Some restrain *Job's* request for remembrance to that special act of power and mercy, the raising of his body from the grave. Others confine it to the repairing of his broken family, and the gift of children in stead of those who were slain: As if he deplored the loss of his sons and daughters, and that he was as a tree cut down, which sends out no suckers; or that he was (as that Eunuch saith of himself in the Prophet) *a dry tree*, which bears neither leaf nor fruit. And therefore prayes, *O that thou wouldest remember me in this.* The word is often used by God in reference to that special mercy, The giving of children; *Rachel* was barren a great while, yet at last, (the Text saith) the *Lord remembred* Rachel (*Gen.* 30. 22.) *Hanna* being barren prays in this stile (1 *Sam.* 1. 11.) *O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then*, &c. The Hebrew word signifying a man-child (not that used by *Hanna*) springs from this root, because a man-child preserves the memory of the family; whereas the female, or daughter, looseth her name in marriage. The answer which God gave to *Hanna*, runs also in the same stile (*ver.* 16.) *And* Elkanah *knew* Hanna *his wife, and the Lord remembred her.* When the Lord took away *Job's* children, he took from him his remembrance; or those who would have preserved his name and memory: which *Bildad* seems to aim at in his description of the judgments of God upon wicked men (*Job* 18. 17.) *His remembrance shall perish in the earth, and he shall have no name in the streets*: That is, he shall have no son to bear his name, or to keep his memorial alive, when he is dead.

Aquinas *putat divinam recordationem sumi pro resurrectione & vita. Ista phrasis recordari alicujus in sacro codice sæpe usurpatur ab iis qui prolem à Deo postulant, præsertim masculinam.* Bold. *A* זכר *quod hic habetur venit, Zachar* i. e. *masculus quasi patris memoria.*

Now whether we understand this passage in general, or restrain it to either of these particulars, we may learn,

That there is nothing more desirable then to be remembred of God; and that to be remembred of God is the accomplishment of all our desires.

We can ask no more of God but to remember us: For as our remembrance of God is the sum of all our duty to him: so Gods remembrance of us is the sum of all his mercies to us. When the Ark had floated and had been tossed many dayes upon the waters of that mighty deluge, the Text saith, *God remembred* Noah (*Gen.* 8. 3.) Though our Ark be driven in a tempestuous sea, yet it shall neither sink nor split, while we sail in the thoughts of God. It may be much if some men remember us: When *Joseph* a prisoner had expounded the Butlers dream to liberty and enlargement, all the fee he asked for his pains was, *Remember me when thou comest to* Pharaoh: That is, speak a good word for me, do me a curtesie at Court, when thou art restored thither. The ungrateful Butler forgot *Joseph*, but God did not: And though *Pharaoh*'s Butler did not remember *Joseph* for interpreting his dream, yet God sent *Pharaoh* a dream, which at last caused the Butler to remember both his own fault against *Pharaoh*, and his forgetfulness of *Joseph*. *If God remember us, he will find out some way or other that men shall.* And though a friend, who loves us and keeps us in his memory, may not be able to do us good (he may want power though he want no good will) yet the power of God is as strong as his memory, he is able to do us good, and can command all, both persons and things, to work together for our good. 'Tis a mercy, *If God think upon us, though it be to afflict us*, if he remembers us, though it be with a rod; (even that remembrance is an evidence of his care over us, and love to us.) Then how comfortable is it for him to remember us with a staffe for our support and comfort!

The thief upon the cross gathers all his petitions into this one, *Lord, remember me when thou comest to thy Kingdom. If we have but a place in the memory of Christ, we shall not want a place in the Kingdom of Christ.* Let us get into the heart of God, and we are sure enough to have all the holy desires of our own hearts: If we once have a place in the heart of God, he will not cast us out of his memory, though he cast us into trouble. He remembers his in prison and in chains, in sick beds, and in the valley of the shadow of death: Though he bury us in the grave, yet he will not bury his thoughts of us. We use to say of men, *Out of sight, out of mind*; but, as we cannot be hid in any secret place out of the sight of God, so God will never let us fall out of his mind.

From all take this deduction.

If it be such a treasure of love and mercy to have God remember us, what a treasure of wrath and misery is it to be everlastingly forgotten by God!

Wicked men shall never be remembred by God for good; nor shall they ever be forgotten for evil. The memory which God keeps of them, and of what they have done, will torment them as much as their own memory of it will. How glad would they be if God would but forget them! How would they be if they could forget themselves! But as they can remember no good they have done; so they shall not forget the evil they have done: And as God will not remember them for good; so he cannot (because he will not, and he will not because he is just) forget to pour out upon them the utmost and extreamest evils.

Job having presented God with this threefold request; to be hid in the grave, to have a set time appointed him, and to be remembred: He passeth from petitioning to a strange kind of questioning, and from both to the highest and noblest kind of resolving.

Verse 14. **If a man dye, shall he live again? All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.**

There is much variety of conjecture about the meaning of these words.

Non est dubitantis de resurrectione mortuorũ ad vitam æternam.

Take this precaution, *Job* doth not speak here as doubting, whether a man that dyes shall live any more: He is clear for the resurrection of the body unto life, and for the life eternal of whole man after the resurrection. It is usual both in Scripture and common usage to propound that by way of doubt or question, which yet is held as an undoubted position. *Job* did neither doubt that man shall dye, nor that he shall live again, though he put an *if* to the one, and a *question* about the other.

The *Chaldee Paraphrast* seems to understand him of eternal life, but applyes it to a wicked man: *If a man dye:* That is, if a wicked man dye, shall he live again? Shall he injoy eternall life? No, though he live eternally, yet he shall not enjoy life one moment. His second life shall be the second death. He shall live as life notes the union of soul and body; but he shall not live as life notes the communion of man with God.

Si mortuus fuerit vir impius, fierine potest ut vivat? Chald.

But though this be true, yet I conceive it quite besides *Job*'s scope. *Philippus.*

Secondly, Others interpret it of the resurrection in general: And render the question as an admiration: *If a man dye, shall he live again!* He shall live; and is it not wonderful that he should! The resurrection is a miraculous work; it should raise our thoughts about the power of the everliving God, when we hear his power can raise man from death to everlasting life. *Tantum opus admiratur, non negat.* Merc.

Yet usually in Scripture when the interrogation is put with a negative particle, the sence is negative, as (*Psal.* 56. 7.) *Shall they escape by iniquity?* No, they shall not escape: And when the interrogation is put with a negative particle, the sence is affirmative: As (*Jer.* 5. 9.) *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not my soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Yes, I will visit for these things, and my soul shall be avenged on such a Nation as this. According to this interpretation, *If a man dye, shall he live again?* must be rendred by a denial, he shall not live again. Hence *In scripturis interrogatio asserens negationi similis est, & negans assertioni.*

A third opinion expounds it by a plain negation, *If a man dye, shall he live again?* No, he shall not; that is, he shall not live in this world, nor return any more to a natural life. And hence

A fourth interprets *Job* as speaking conditionally, or upon an impossible supposition: As if he had said, I know and am assured, That if a man dyes he cannot live again a life of nature. But if such a thing might be, and God would appoint me a set time when it should be, how willingly would I dye and wait all those dayes of my appointed time (how many soever they should be) till my change come; that is, till God restore me from the state of death and the grave, to such an estate of outward comforts and abundance as I once enjoyed. But I cannot conceive *Job* so in love with a natural life, as thus to hanker after it by such remote conditions, and groundless wishes; And therefore, *Conditionaliter sumi putat Cajetanus.*

Fifthly, I incline to those, who expound the question in the first part of the verse, as an absolute negation: *If a man dye, he shall live no more*; that is, a natural life. And the latter part of the verse, (*All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*) as a testimony either of his submission to the will of God for the time of his death, or of his faith, and full assurance of a resurrection to eternal life: As if he had said, *Though when I dye I shall not live again in this world, yet I am willing to dye when God will, and I believe I shall live again in the world to come, and do therefore wait in faith till this change shall come.* Hence

Sixthly, *Job* is here conceived correcting his former wish, and reprehending himself for it: As if he had said, *I indeed desired the Lord to appoint me a set time, when he would restore me; but why do I vex my self and trouble the Lord with vain wishes, as if this were a petition befitting me to ask, or God to grant? Why should I expect that which was never granted to any man, That being dead I might live again?* *Quasi ipsũ reprehendat, quod talia oret,* &c. Sanct.

Lastly, Some give out his meaning thus, If thou wouldest grant me my wish, and hide me in the grave, appointing me a set time, when thou wouldest be pleased to do this for me; then should I think my self happy, because if I were once dead, I know I shall return no more to the miseries of this life, upon which condition I would be glad to wait with patience for the grave, what time soever thou shouldst appoint me, till that my change by death should come: or, being dead and laid in my grave, I would wait thy appointed time for my resurrection unto life.

All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.

That

That God appoints out the time of man, and that man shall live out and cannot outlive that appointment, was shewed at the fifth verse: I will not here renew that discourse.

כל ימי צבאי אוחל
Cunctis diebus militiæ meæ expectabo. Mon.

The Hebrew is, *All the dayes of my warfare.* The reason of which hath also been shewed (*Chap.* 7. 1.) The dayes of man are but travel and warfare, a continual combat with temptations and tryals, as was opened there: The Scripture delights to set forth the sorrows of mans life under those two similitudes of a wayfaring man and a warfaring man. Under both notions, the duty of the Text (waiting) is also shadowed.

To wait hath four things in it.

First, An act of patience; he that waits must be content to stay: *He that believes will not make haste*; that is, he waits; and he that waits makes haste to believe, or hope, which is the second thing.

Secondly, It hath an act of hope in it; he that waiteth is in expectation to receive: He hopes mercy will come at last: To wait upon God implyes there is somewhat to be had from God. He that hath no hope will never wait.

Thirdly, An act of humility; he that is in a waiting condition is in a low condition: And as his condition is low, so his spirit should be lowly; waiting speaks the duty of a servant.

Fourthly, The waiting here intended carries in it utmost perseverance, *All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait.* Some wait, but 'tis only for a time: They are short-breath'd, and their patience quickly tires. That wicked King said, *This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait upon him any longer?* (2 Kings 6. 33.) He that waits indeed, continues waiting, he waits long, and he will wait yet longer. As a good heart will not let God wait long, no nor at all (willingly) for obedience; so he is willing to wait as long as God sees good for deliverance. We must not let God stay long for our work; but we must stay as long as God pleaseth for his work.

Hence Observe, First, *It is our duty to wait Gods time fully.*

All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait; and this both in regard of personal and of publick desires or needs, (*Hab.* 2. 2, 3.) *The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lye*; that is, it shall not fail: All failing is a kind of lying: He that fails of truth when he speaks, lyes in a word; and he that fails of performing what he speaks, lyes indeed. The vision of God speaks and will not lye; but it speaks not till the end; therefore we must wait till the end: So the Prophet adviseth in the next words, *Though it tarry, wait for it, for it will certainly come, and not tarry.* It will not tarry beyond the time; but it may tarry to the very end of the time: then wait the longest day, and to the utmost of that day. It is said, that the people of *Israel were ashamed, when they saw that* Moses *staid so long* (Exod. 33.) they could wait no longer, they thought he was lost in the Mount: *Come, let us make us Gods, to go before us, for as for this* Moses *we know not what is become of him:* They who will not stay for God, make haste to Idols; and they who will not wait in the way of God, run destructive wayes. *Samuel* directed *Saul* to go down to *Gilgal*, and there to stay for him seven dayes (1 *Sam.* 10. 8.) according to this appointment *Saul* tarried seven dayes (1 *Sam* 13. 8.) but *Samuel* came not, and the people were scattered from him: hereupon *Saul* calls for the burnt-offering and peace-offerings, and he offered his burnt-offering: And was he not to be excused in this? Had not he waited long enough? *Samuel* said he could come the seventh day, and *Saul* waited for him seven dayes: Why then doth *Samuel* chide with him (at the eleventh verse) saying, *What hast thou done? Saul* answers, *Because thou camest not within the dayes appointed, I forced my self and offered a burnt-offering.* But would *Samuel* break promise? Was there *yea* and *nay* with him? How is it then that *Saul* saith, *He came not at the time appointed: Saul* staid seven dayes, but he staid not seven dayes quite out; he stayed the seventh day, and a great part of it, and no *Samuel* came, but *Saul* would not stay the last hour: *Samuel* came at the end of the seventh day, and so made his word good; but because *Saul* waited not to the end of the seventh day, he fell into that great evil. *Thou hast done foolishly*, saith *Samuel*, (ver. 13.) *and thy Kingdom shall not continue*, because thy patience was so short, thy power shall be shortened. Take heed of giving up your hopes: Say not the Lords time is past, he will not come. We know what they do who are obliged to pay money upon bonds, on a certain day. It satisfies not the Law, that they waited at the place appointed, about noon or toward the evening of that day, and the Creditor came not, they must wait till the going down of the Sun, and then make the tender, or else the forfeiture may be taken. Thus we must wait on God to the last day, and every part of the last day, till our changes or our comforts come. If we give over before the Sun go down, we shall go down in darkness. *Ye have need of patience* (Heb. 10. 36, 37.) *that when you have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise:* That is, the thing promised. As we need the patience of labourers to do the will of God; so the patience of waiters, to tarry for our answer and reward.

I will wait till my change come.

And one would think *Job* needed not to wait long for that: for, said he not (*chap.* 10. 17.) *Changes and war are upon me? Job* was under perpetual changes, and his were great changes, changes from a prosperous to an afflicted estate, from health to sickness, from honour to disgrace, from riches to poverty, and though his afflictions hung long upon him, yet he had changes of affliction; fresh and fresh evils, *changes and war*, or changes of war were against him: As he complained (*chap.* 10. 17.) God brought fresh Armies to charge him every day, and doth he now want a change? And who is there that liveth and doth not change? We change (though not sensibly, yet) in some sence or other every moment. Changes are upon us, changes of time, of place, of condition, and of affection. *Man continueth not* (saith *Job* at the beginning of this Chapter) we are only constant in changes: What then is the meaning of this desired change?

Man hath three great changes, and they are all three taken in here; according to a threefold opinion about the interpretation of these words.

First, Some understand the change for which *Job* waited, to be a change in his outward condition. A change from weakness to strength, from poverty to riches, from sorrow to joy; he waited for deliverances from his present evil, and to be re-established in his former comforts. Though *Job* needed (if ever man did) such a change as this, yet (I conceive) this was not the change for which he promiseth here to wait. But

Donec veniet rerum vicissitudo & status hic meus mutetur in melius. Bold.

Secondly, *Till my change come*; that is, till death come. Many both of the Rabbins and others go this way, and judge it the most proper interpretation, *All the dayes of my appointed time I will wait*, till I dye: Or, I will live waiting for a change by death: Death is a great change, the great change, not only of this or that man, but of mankind. Death brings a change to all, to good and bad, to believers, and to Infidels, though the change which it brings to these differing persons be as different as their natures. When the Saints dye, they have a change, and no change: As a Worthy amongst us once said, when he was ready to dye, *I shall change my place, but not my company:* I shall have a new house, but my old society: The Saints converse with God, they live with God; while they live in the world, they converse with Christ, and have communion with the Spirit; they converse (among men) chiefly with good men on earth, and with all these they shall converse in Heaven; here is no change: Yet the Saints have a great change, and a blessed one when they dye: They change from all outward evils, all their troubles shall be removed; they change also from spiritual evils, all their corruptions shall remove, there shall not be so much as any sin or any remnant of sin remaining in them, when they remove from hence; here is a happy change: yea, they shall have not only no sin in them, but no temptation without them; no Satan to tempt, as well as no corruption to side with temptation: When wicked men dye they have a change too, but it is a miserable change; theirs is a change from evil to worse, from bad to worst of all; they have a change from fading comforts to lasting sorrow; or they have a change from temporary sorrows to everlasting sorrows; *Son, remember*

Aben Ezra *exponit discessus meus, i. e. donec hinc migrē, de morte intelligit tanquam simplicius.* Merc.

member (saith *Abraham* in the parable to *Dives*) *that thou in thy life time hast received thy good things:* thou faredst deliciously every day, thou wast cloathed with purple and fine linnen, but see thy change: thou who hadst a table spread and furnished with delicate meats, thou who hadst a cup brim full, yea running over with delicious wines, now thou hast not so much as a drop of water to cool thy tongue. This is the change which wicked men shall have in death, from pleasure to pain, or from short pains to eternal pain, from a few moth-eaten, worm-eaten, dying, decaying delights, to those griefs which cannot die, to those griefs which as a worm shall gnaw upon their souls and consciences worse then death. Some wicked men are as miserable as they are wicked in this world; *The wicked travel with pain all their dayes* (*chap.* 15.) yet they shall travel with greater pain when they die: their present sorrows are but the beginning of sorrows: now they do but sip of that cup, which they must drink up dregs and all for ever. Death is a change to all, dying Saints change from bad to good, from good to best: when wicked men die, they change from bad to worse, from worse to worst of all.

Hypothesis Jobi, quod ira Dei abitura, quod annus gratiæ venturus, quod statio ipsius & militia certis diebus definita, quod spes sit, quod decessio ejus ventura præbant argumentū magnū resurrectionis mortuorum. Tota enim disputatio Jobi eo collimat, ut probat in rebus externis non esse signa iræ vel gratiæ, in hac vita non dari id quod fideles sperāt, ideoque nihil ipsis cōvenientius esse, quā anhelare ad mortē. Coc. *ἕως ἀλλοίωσιν γένωμαι.* 70. *donec vertus fiam. Donec veniat sancta nativitas mea.* Sym. *Renascitur qui resurgit & ingreditur novum vitæ curriculum.*

Thirdly, This change is interpreted of the resurrection, *Job* desires to die presently, and would wait willingly till the resurrection, knowing that then he should be freed from all affliction; One of the ancients renders it, *I will wait until my holy birth-day come*: The resurrection is a birth-day to the world. The earth and sea shall be in travel and be delivered (he that is raised from death begins a new life) They took dead men into their womb, and shall (by the power of God) return them living. There shall not be one abortive or still-born in that great birth-day. Some expound that regeneration which Christ speaks of (*Matth.* 19. 28.) of the resurrection, and give the sense only with the alteration of a point, thus, *Ye which have followed me, shall in the regeneration* (or resurrection) *when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* Which reading *Beza* a learned interpreter affirms, that he hath observed in five ancient copies, implying that when the bodies and souls of the Saints shall be married again together, never to be separated by death, that will be as a new birth-day to them all. However 'tis clear beyond dispute that the resurrection day of Christ is called in Scripture both the day of his begetting, and of his brith. For that of (*Psal.* 2. 7.) *Thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee*, is interpreted by the Apostle of the resurrection of Christ, *Act.* 13. where having said (*vers.* 30.) *God hath raised him from the dead*, he subjoyns (*vers.* 32. 33.) *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as it is also written in the second Psalm: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* And that the resurrection of Christ is his birth as well as his begetting is proved by the same Apostle, who calleth him expresly *The first-born from the dead* (*Col.* 1. 18.) Now as the first birth-day of man into the world is a change: So this second birth-day will be a greater change. As the Apostle disputes it all along (1 *Cor.* 15.) how great a change will that be when mortality shall put on immortality, when corruption shall put on incorruption, when that which is sown a natural body shall be raised a spiritual body; Hence the Apostle concludes at the fifty first verse, *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed:* which the Vulgar Latine reads thus, *we shall all rise, but we shall not all be changed*, and another, as the learned *Beza* hath observed upon that place: *we shall all sleep, but we shall not all be changed.* For these not observing that the Apostle in this place speaks only of the bodies of the Elect, and knowing that the bodies of the wicked shall not have (though they shall have some change) such a change as is here spoken of, upon these grounds they have thus boldly altered the text, to serve their own sense: whereas both the Syriak and Arabike interpreters keep to the Original Greek, from which we translate, *we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.* For the Apostle treating of the state of all Saints at the last day, of whom many shall then be found alive, he declares what shall be done to them: *They* (saith he) *shall not sleep*, that is, they shall not die, yet they shall be changed; So that, though some of the Saints shall not be raised because they shall not die, yet all at that day shall find a change: *We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.* This is the great change: In the morning of the resurrection we shall all put on fresh suits, fresh suits of flesh and robes of glory upon them, such as shall never change, much less wear out, such as shall be fresh, not only as the garments of the Israelites fourty years in the wilderness, but for ever. After this change we shall hear no more of changing. And that we shall have such a change the Apostle speaks again (*Phil.* 3. 23.) *Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like to his glorious body.* The body shall be cast into a more excellent mould, even as a vessel that is broken or out of fashion, is put into the Gold-smiths hand to be changed or new made; yea, there shall be a change at that day not only of the body but of the whole man, the soul shall be changed, not in the substance of it, but in the perfections of it, for then full glory shall be poured into the soul, and it shall have a better estate, though not in the nature of it, yet in the degree of it, then it had before. Then mans glory shall be compleated when soul and body shall meet again, and be re-united: the union of soul and body constitutes man, a soul alone is not man, as a body alone is not; Now in the day of their re-espousals, what gifts will the Lord bestow? what tokens of his royal bounty? Such gifts, such tokens sure, as will convince man that his change is come, and abundantly recompence all his dayes of waiting for it.

Again Observe, *That the assured hope of the resurrection to eternal life, will support the soul with patience under all the evils of this life.*

Job could willingly undergo any condition, because a change was coming: Though we fight with beasts as long as we live, we have advantage enough in this one truth, *the dead shall rise* (1 *Cor.* 15. 31.) what though we endure hardship in this life, we shall arise to a better life. The Authour to the *Hebrews* (*chap.* 11. 35.) reports the courage and constancy of the Jewish Martyrs upon this account, *They were tortured not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection.* But are there two sorts or two degrees of resurrection? one good and another better, that he saith, they looked to obtain a better resurrection?

I answer.

He calls that which they expected a better resurrection, not comparatively to another resurrection, but either first, in comparison of that life which they were to lose, if they would keep the faith; or Secondly, in comparison of that life which they might have kept if they would have let go their faith, or submitted to idolatry. And their life in this latter sense may elegantly be called a resurrection, because they being but as dead men in the hands of those tyrants for professing the faith, were offered their lives again, or should have been restored to a free enjoyment of their lives, if they would have renounced or denied the faith. But these noble professors thought the offer of such a life too vile a price to sell their faith for. And therefore they despised that deliverance which was only a resurrection from a threatned death, to a transitory life, in comparison of that true or better resurrection, which would be from an inflicted death to eternal life. Now if the Saints under the old Testament were thus Heroical in sufferings upon the hope of a future resurrection, about which they had no open direct promise, nor any very clear evidence; how much more should we who have the doctrine of the resurrection written as with a beam of the Sun, together with the glory and the happiness which shall follow? assurance of a change to any better state, is apt to raise in man high resolutions in any the worst estate wherein he is. And the hope of mending our condition enables us to bear a bad condition: hope is the support and pillar of the soul, in its heaviest pressures; that which adds infinitely to the punishment of the damned in hell, is, that as they are in an ill condition, so they know their condition will never mend, they cannot say *they will wait till their change come*; they must suffer, but they cannot hope; Their change shall never come, though they should hope for it, because they have no ground of hope, everlasting wrath is determined upon them. This makes them compleatly miserable.

ble. To be without hope of good, is worse then the enduring of evil: the damned in hell are more pained with thinking that their miserable condition will never change, then they are in bearing their present misery. The Saints in heaven are in a happy estate, and they know it will never change, they joy as much in this assurance, as they do in the sense of their present happiness: they enjoy all their joyes at once, because their joy is one, and shall ever be the same; Their condition is so good that they need not desire a change, and so sure, that they need not fear a change. It is the extremity and the height of a good estate to be beyond the fear, and of an evil estate to be beyond the hope, of change: it is an abatement of our comforts, to enjoy good which may be changed for evil, and an abatement of our sorrows to endure evil which may be changed for good. 'Twas thus with *Job*, he was in a sorrowful condition, but he believed a change was coming, and therefore he resolved. *All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.
For now thou numberest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sin?
My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sowest up mine iniquity.

IN the close of the fourteenth verse, we heard *Job* resolving *to wait all the dayes of his appointed time, till his change shall come*: and according to the various interpretations of that *change*, opinions vary about the *call* and *answer* of this fifteenth verse.

Thou shalt call, and I will answer.

Si me voces moriq; jubeas paratus sum. Rab. Moyses. *Quum me vocabis ad migrandum ex hac vita, ego libens tibi respondebo.* Merc.

They who interpret that change by death, sence it thus, *when-ever thou shalt send out thy writ, or summons to the grave, I shall readily submit unto it and obey: thou shalt call and I will answer, why should I be slow-footed or faint-hearted, when I am called to the grave? seeing I am assured, that I shall not be lost in the grave, no, nor forgotten there: though the grave be the land of forgetfulness, thy affections towards me will preserve thy memory of me; and seeing I live in thy love, I cannot live out of thy thoughts: Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.*

Hence Observe, *That a godly man* (in a due frame of spirit) *willingly obeys the call of God to die.*

The Apostle had not only a willingness, but a forwardness to die, even a zeal or a kind of ambition to die, *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all.* The Saints receive their call to death as a call to rest: and though the body for a while lie down in the dust, yet they know what is prepared for the soul, and when they two meet together again, both shall be called to an everlasting rest. Some interpret these words, *of calling and answering*, by the common custome of inviting, and of the readiness of those who are invited, to come unto a feast: How willing are we to feast with our friends? Saints never go to a feast indeed till they have done eating: the hunger of the soul after this feast conquers the fear of death. I grant there is a natural fear of death, and 'tis possible that a believer who (in his own thoughts) hath often acted the dying man, may yet find some regret and unwillingness to die when death comes: the very loosing of the bond, the untying of the marriage knot between soul and body, is unwel-come to nature, while grace bids it wel-come. *Paul* did not so much desire to be uncloathed as to be cloathed upon: he was willing rather that mortality should be swallowed by eternal life, then that natural life should be swallowed up by mortality. Yet at last faith conquers natural fear, grace laughs while nature mourns, and a believer can with as much chearfulness answer the call of God to die, as the call of a friend to dinner when he is hungry, or to bed when he is weary.

Secondly, They who expound this *change* for that of the *resurrection*, give another meaning of this call and answer. As the former take it for a call to the grave, so these for a call from the grave, and his answer to be a willing return from thence: he would not let God call twice, much less demur upon the matter, whether he were best come out of the grave or no. *Thou shalt call, and I will answer, here I am, Lord, I come.* The Septuagint render *I will obey thy call.* In that day God will call, yea, he will make the greatest call that ever yet was made. *Then our God shall come, and will not keep silence, he shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth that he may judge his people* (Psal. 50. 3, 4.) *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed* (1 Cor. 15. 52.) And again, *The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first*, (1 Thes. 4. 16.) he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with a loud exhortation, so loud that all who are in the grave shall hear him: the word in propriety signifies that encouraging voice, which is among marriners, or rowers in a galley, who are called with one consent to buckle to their oars: the Lord shall descend with a shout like that, and rouse the dead at once out of their graves. In the parable of the Virgins 'tis said, *at midnight there was a great cry, behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.* (Mat. 25. 6.) This is not the cry of those who are called, (there will be a cry among them) but a cry from heaven calling them to meet the bridegroom. Christ speaks of two sorts of dead men, and of a twofold call to a twofold resurrection, *Joh.* 5. *The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live:* These are the dead in sin, who are called to arise in newness of life, or to a new life, the life of grace: *Marvel not at this* (saith Christ) *for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.* As a great cry causeth the spiritual resurrection from sin, so the corporal from the dust. Both are effects of the mighty power of God. When Christ raised *Lazarus*, he spake with a loud voice (*John* 11. 43.) *Lazarus come forth, Lazarus* answered this voice and came forth. And as he then, so all mankind shall hear and obey the voice of Christ commanding them to come forth. God calls now, and few will answer or obey: *O that my people had hearkned unto my voice,* (*Psal.* 81. 11.) God will at last speak so loud and so effectually, that the deafest Adders shall hear the voice of the charmer, and appear out of their holes; The Lord commands the Prophet (*Ezek.* 37. 4.) *Son of man prophesie upon these dead bones:* he means it typically of the Jews in captivity, yet there the resurrection is shadowed: God will prophesie upon our dead bones: And if any ask, Can these bones live? yes, these bones shall live. *God will lay sinews upon them, and he will bring up flesh upon them, and cover them with skin, he will put breath into them and they shall live.* Now a gracious heart answereth the call of God in the actings of a spiritual life (*Psal.* 17. 8.) *When thou shalt say seek my face, my heart answers, thy face Lord will I seek.* Then every man gracious or without grace, good or bad, shall answer the call of God to the receiving of another life: a life to some better then that they once lived, a life most unconceiveably worse then the death from which they are called. *Thou shalt call and I will answer,* that's a second sense.

Thirdly, That change was interpreted by others for a change in his present state, from sickness to health, from pain to ease, from sorrow unto joy.

Hence ariseth a third interpretation of this call of God and answer of *Job*, in reference to a judiciary disceptation or debate, which *Job* had professed himself willing to abide and carry through with God, in case he would be pleased to grant him that desired change: he spake that desire before; And I find one interpreter fixing him in it here. *It is manifest* (saith he) *that Job doth not speak here of the resurrection of his flesh, but of that call and answer for the ending of his present controversie*: about which we read his offer (*chap.* 13. 21.) *Withdraw thy hand far from me, let not thy dread make me afraid: then call thou and I will answer, or, let me speak and answer thou me.* And so, *withdraw thy hand*, is as much as this,

Ἐν κελεύσματι, cum hortationis clamore. Keleusma proprie est hortamen quod apud nautas est solenne, quo uno veluti concentu remos ducunt. Bez.

Manifestum est Jobū nō loqui de carnis suæ resurrectione, sed de ea vocatione, et responsione de qua (c. 13. 12.) *ut præsentem litē dirimat esse intelligendum.* Eold

change my state, and then I will answer thy citation or thy call, and give an account of my self, in whatsoever thou shalt demand of me: I have opened his mind in this proposal upon those words of the thirteenth chapter, thither I refer the Reader.

Take only this note from it, *That when the body is unburthened of outward afflictions, and the soul eased of inward sorrows, then we have a great advantage both to plead with and pray to God.*

How much the inward man is pressed by the outward, and how the spiritual part of the inward man is pressed by those fears that arise from its carnal part, might be shewed from this exposition, but (though it hath a fairness in it, and a learned pen to maintain it, yet) I wave it as not so proper and pertinent as either of the former two, to the scope of this call and answer, which this Scripture leads us to.

Job having promised a readiness in himself to answer the call of God, shews his assurance of Gods readiness to call him, and of his acceptance with him.

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hand.

It hath been shewed (*chap.* 10. 3.)
First, That man is the work of Gods hand.
Secondly, In what sense hands are ascribed unto God.
Thirdly, How man is the work of Gods hand.
For the clearing of these particulars in a way of explication, I send the Reader to the chapter and verse fore-cited, and shall deal with this clause only as it stands in connexion here with the call and answer last opened.

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.

Which some conceive to be the very form of words in which *Job* intended to answer God: *Thou wilt call, and thus I will answer: O God, thou hast, or thou wilt, have a desire to the work of thy hand*, As if he should say, *When thou calleſt me, I know thy call must spring from the good will thou beareſt me, thy affections will come forth to me, when thy voice comes forth; thou wilt therefore speak because thou hast a desire to the work of thy hand*; so the words stand in opposition to those (*chap.* 10. 3.) *Is it good that thou shouldeſt despise the work of thy hand?* Which some expound as his expostulation with God, upon an apprehension that he slighted him: but now he is confident God hath another opinion of him, and would be so far from despising, that he will have a great desire to him who was the work of his hand.

Secondly, Many of the Hebrew writers expound *Job*, as if he thought God had a mind or a purpose to destroy the work of his hand: and they read it with an interrogation, *Wilt thou desire or be forward to destroy that which thou hast made?* Hence also the Septuagint render it as a deprecation, *Do not reject or unmake the work of thy hands.*

Nũquid perdere desideras? Rab. Lev. Τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου μὴ ἀπορρίψῃς. *Ne repellas opera manuũ tuarum.* Sept.

Thirdly, The Original word which we translate, *Thou wilt have a desire*, imports a strong coveting desire, such as is after silver. The same root in the Hebrew signifies silver and to covet, because silver is so much coveted, *thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.* As a covetous worldling hath a great desire after gold or silver, he longs for it, and it pleaseth him when he can get it, so the Lord himself hath a longing, covetous desire after man, who is the work of his hand. The Lord seemed to use *Job* as if he were but rubbish and dross, no way desireable, yet he believed God would look upon him as a silver vessel, and as a vessel of honour: The Vulgar Latine translates wide from the letter of the Hebrew, but near to this sense; *Thou wilt put forth thy right hand to the work of thy hand*: this departs from the letter of the words, but the sense is fair to the scope of the words; for it is an argument of love and friendship, to put forth the right hand to a man; if we meet one whom we love and delight in, we cannot pass him, without taking him by the hand; And as it is an argument of love and friendship to allure with the hand, so of charity or pity to reach out the hand: *Thou wilt have a desire*, may be well expressed thus, *thou wilt put forth thy hand to the work of thy hand, and help me up* when thou biddest me rise. A true friend reacheth his heart out before he reacheth out his hand. God had cast *Job* into the mire and ditch (as he spake *chap.* 9.) yet he believes he would take him by the hand, and lift him not only out of the ditch of affliction, but out of the grave of death. Hence Observe,

כסף *desiderare, amare, hinc nomẽ argenti, quod desiderabile est.*

Operi manuũ tuarũ porriges dextrũ, Vulg.

First, *That God bears much affection to man as he is the work of his hand.*

It argued high displeasure when God spake thus against his people, *He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no pity* (Isa. 27. 11.) The meanest creature in the world is the work of Gods hand, and under that notion, the desire of his heart; it is natural to all men to love their own works; and it is the distemper of most men to over-love and dote upon, yea, to be proud of the work of their hand; God hath a desire to, and a liking of all his works, (*Gen.* 1. 31.) when he had finished that great structure, that noble fabrick of the world, *he saw all that he had made*, and he saw it with content. God did not make the world, and then take a view of it, all was one act; yea, he saw the idea or platform of it in his own breast from eternity; but the Scripture speaks thus, to shew what price and value he put upon his work. And if the natural frame of man be such as God hath a desire to, and looks upon with delight, as it then came out of his hand in the first creation; what desires hath God to the work of his own spirit in our hearts, which is the second or the new creation? Hath he not a desire to the new creature, who hath a desire to every creature? If he hath a desire to the work of his power in creation, then much more to the work of his spirit in regeneration, which is the most beautiful piece of work which he ever made? Angels are excellent creatures, being confirmed in holiness; the Soul of a believer formed up by grace, is a creature matching Angels. When *Stevens* face was full of beauty, the Text saith, it did *shine as the face of an Angel.* If an Angel were corporal, he could not have more lustre and beauty than *Stephen's* face had. Every Saint hath a heart like the face of an Angel, full of divine beauties and glorious excellencies. To such a work of God, how great a desire hath God? *Daniel* was called *a man of desires* by the Angel, (*chap.* 9. 23.) we translate *greatly beloved*, but the Chaldee is, *Thou art a man of desires:* Though every believer cannot be called a man of desires in *Daniels* height, yet every believer is a man of desires, a man whom God desires. It is an honour to man to be desired among men (and those Princes died in dishonour, of whom the holy Story saith, that they died undesired; but how great an honour is it to that man who lives desired of God, and (whereof *Job* was assured) to whom God will have a desire as to the work of his hands, when he is dead! Take this Corollary from it.

Conſuevit artifex appetere opus manuũ ſuarum, ejuſq; videndi cupiditate teneri. Drus.

If God hath a desire to the work of his hand, how should they who are the work of his hand have a desire unto him?

What desire should we have to God, who hath wrought us, when we hear that he hath a desire to us, because he hath wrought us? Shall the Potter have a desire to the clay, and shall not that clay (which hath desires) have a desire to the Potter? One of the Ancients speaks passionately to this point; *I was made by thee, O Lord, and my heart is restless till it return to thee*; the work should have a desire to the hands that made it, and that which hath received a being, to the fountain of its being. Sinful distempers cause us to depart from God, the work hath then no desire to the hand that made it. Holy actings are all from God, and they carry us back to God from whom they are. A holy heart cannot but have a desire to God, the work of whose hands it is.

Thirdly, *Job* was in a very sad condition, when he spake this, he was pleading with God for a change, a change by death, he will needs die rather than continue such a life; The hand of God had cast him as low as a man could be on this side the grave or hell: and yet he saith, *Thou shalt have a desire to the work of thy hand.* Hence Observe,

Faith can discern some light of favour, some glimmerings of love, through the clouds of darkest dispensations.

It is the holy skill, the art of faith, to make conclusions of life in death, and of light in darkness; *This is the right Logick of Faith*: Faith can prophesie, and faith is a true Prophet, *thou wilt have desire*, he speaks of the time to come. The presumption of evil men prophesies sometimes,

or

or dreams rather, that God will have a desire to them; but faith makes sure prophesies, because 'tis bottomed upon the sure word of God; *Jobs* faith prophesied more than once. *He shall be my salvation,* (chap.13.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I shall see him,* &c. (chap.19.) Faith hath a quick eye, and sees good in the end from the beginning. Faith sees the movings of that holy concupiscible appetite in God towards poor sinners, when it feels nothing but the movings of his irascible appetite. While *Job* perceived wrath, or somewhat in the likeness of wrath, mixt with the dealings of God towards him, he promised himself (and that not coldly but confidently) not only somewhat in the likeness of the favour of God towards him, but his real favour; *Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.*

But had not the Lord a desire to *Job* before? Was the spring of his affections shut up till that day should come? or was his love to him yet to begin? No, the love of God and his desires had flowed to him from everlasting; as whom he loveth, he loveth to the end, so whom he loves, he loved without beginning: but his love and his desires had been a little while hidden, and (as some rivers) had run under ground. *Job* saw nothing in his latter dayes, but the actings of his anger, and was sensible only of severity in his proceedings, as the complaint of the next words teacheth us.

Verse 16. *For thou numbrest my steps, dost not thou watch over my sin?*

conclusio pathetica ex comparatione severitatis judiciorum Dei hoc & sequente versu, cum infirmitate omnium rerum creatarum, ver. 20, 21. *nominatim vero hominis usque ad finem,* Jun.

In this and the verse following, *Job* makes a pathetical comparison, between the present seeming rigour of Gods dealing with him, and that sweetness which he hoped to find ere long or at the last: *Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand, but now thou numbrest my steps.*

Two things are here to be opened.

First, What he means by his *steps.*

Secondly, What he means by Gods numbring his steps. *Job* speaks both by a figure.

צְעָדַי gressus meos. *διαστολὰς* 70. *studia, sumitur tropologicè pro actionibus tum animæ tum corporis.*

By *steps* we are to understand his actions, all that he did, yea, all that he thought, his inward motions as well as his outward motions. So the Septuagint translates, *thou numbrest my meditations,* or, the workings of my heart. As the whole course of a man is called his way, so the several actions of that course, are his steps: holy actions are strait steps, and sinful actions are uneven ones, *he went on frowardly in the way of his heart,* Isa. 57. 17. that is, in the way which his heart most delighted in, that was a crooked way, and such were his steps, such disorderly walkers use not to number their own steps, but God doth.

Gressus (unt affectus & actus quibus animus hominis incedit, bonis quidem ad palmam, malis verò ad pœnam.

Numbring the steps notes an exact account, and an accurate observation of our actions, we say of a man who goeth softly, *surely you tell your steps,* The Lord is said to number our steps, when he makes a strict inquisition concerning all our transactions, and sets down step by step, every passage of our lives, when he keeps (as it were) *a day-book* of all we do, and records us to a word or a thought. *David* speaks of his enemies, (*Psal.* 56. 6.) *they gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul:* that is, they mark every thing I do or say: he that would be watcht exactly, were best to have an enemy to watch him: love makes us watchful over one another, Jest we take hurt, but malice makes a man observant enough of another to do him hurt: thus *David's* enemies were double diligent upon their watches, *they mark my steps when they wait for my soul:* And again, (*Psal.* 17. 11.) *they compassed us in our steps, they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth.* It is an allusion (as I conceive) to hunters, who go poring upon the ground to prick the hare, or to find the print of the hares claw, when the hounds are at a loss, and can make nothing of it by the scent. Thus his enemies cast about to find where he had gone, or what he had been doing, that their blood-hounds might follow the game with a fresh cry. So then, *thou numbrest my steps,* is no more but this, whatsoever I do or speak, thou art very curious and critical in the observation of it; I will not stay in the inlargement of any points from these words, but referr to (*chap.*10.14.) where *Job* speaks the same sense, *If I sin, then thou markest me,* &c.

מִסְפָּר est numerare vel supputare, Hinc libellus supputatorius. Numerare gressus est studiosè aliquem observare, & omnia ejus facta inquirere, quod fere fit hostili animo Bold.

Singula facta mea recenses & ad amussim metiris. Jun.

Only note in passage.

First, *God knows all the motions of our hearts, and the actions of our lives.*

He that is unacquainted with our wayes, cannot number our steps: it is best for us to number our own steps, and to take heed to our own wayes, when we hear that God is so exact at it: it would make us cautious what we do, if we knew of a man who took notice of all we did.

Secondly, The person, *Job* was a holy man, whose steps God numbred, whence we may learn,

That God sees the sin of his own children.

Job was not of opinion that God sees no sin in his children, he knew himself to be a child of God, and he knew his steps were numbred, yea, and his sin watched over, as he speaks in the next clause.

Dost thou not watch over my sin?

Parce peccatis meis, Vulg. *Hæc præcatio filo orationis non convenit.* Merc.

Some render this as a Prayer, *Do not keep my sins, or spare me my sins,* that is, do not punish them: but this is inconsistent with the tenour of *Jobs* discourse, and so I leave it.

חשמור q. d. *excubias agis super peccatum meum; verbum de verbo. Nec custodis super peccatum meum. Non præteribit te ullum peccatorum meorum* 70.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Dost thou not keep or observe upon my sin?* The sense is the same with what we said last, or we have here but an exposition of it. Some read it without an interrogation, *Thou watchest over my sin,* in both there is an allusion to a severe creditour, who gives no day, but presently exacts the forfeiture or penalty of his bond. So the Septuagint render, *None of my sins pass thee,* thou takest notice of all, to punish and bring me to judgment for them. Others translate, *Thou dost not wait,* or *expect at all upon my sin;* As if he had said, *As soon as ever thou hast seen me commit any sin, thou layest thy arrest and charge upon me, thou dost not give me time, but callest me to a present account.*

Verbum שמר *pro expectare & differre cum magna parte Hebræorum sumo.* Merc.

We may here again note, the inspection or superintendency of God over the wayes of man: he is so perfect a numberer, that he watcheth to number: he that will number how many steps another takes, had need watch him well. Let no man wonder that God numbreth his steps, when he watcheth to number them: and indeed, it is as easie for God to see every sin in us, as to see one sin; there is no difficulty to omniscience, in knowing all things. Let this be also for our caution and admonition: if God watcheth over our sins, how should we watch over our selves? Christ gives this charge, *What I say to you, I say to all, watch:* we must watch for our own outward safety, though God watcheth to save, his watchfulness is no plea for our carelessness: much more have we need to watch, lest we sin, because God watcheth to observe our sins. His watchfulness should provoke our carefulness. The Lord (as it were) watcheth advantages to bring evil upon them, who are not watchfull against evil; (*Dan.*9.14.) *Therefore hath the Lord watched the evil, and brought it upon us:* they were not watchful against the evil of sin, therefore the Lord watched to bring upon them the evil of punishment. Have not we cause to watch, lest we transgress, when God watcheth to chasten our transgressions? The Prophet (*Jer.* 20.10.) complained, *All my familiars watched for my halting:* God (in a sense) *watcheth for our haltings.* He doth not watch as wicked men do, with a hope to see us halt, as the Prophet personates his unkind familiars there, saying thus among themselves, or every man in his own heart, *Peradventure he will be enticed, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.* It pleaseth wicked men to see the godly halt or stumble, much more to see them fall: God is infinitely above such thoughts or designs, he watcheth for our haltings to make us know them, not to insult over us for them. He watcheth for our haltings, not hoping to see us halt, but to prevent us from halting, or if we halt, then to preserve us from falling. He at most watcheth for our haltings, to correct us for them, not to take his revenge upon us for them. He watcheth us to make us watchful.

There is a double watchfulness which this should lead us to.

First, A watchfulness in reference to God.

Secondly, A watchfulness in reference to our selves.

We should watch 1. What God doth. 2. What God saith. And we should watch, 1. What we do. 2. What we speak. 3. What we think. Every thought, word, and work must be accounted for, and brought to judgment: and therefore it is as much our wisdome, as it is our duty to

watch

watch over them. *Thou watchest over my sin* (saith *Job*) And suppose God find his sin, what will he do next? that *Job* seems to tell us in the next verse. Our sins are but trash, yet *Job* supposed that God put his into a bagg; they are no treasure, yet *Job supposed*, God sealed up his sins in a bagg, and lest the seal should not be strong enough, he represents God sowing up this bag-full of sin, such were the apprehensions of this sorrowful man.

Verse 17. **My transgressions are sealed up in a bag, and thou sowest up mine iniquity.**

There are two expositions of these words.

Elegans Hebraismus pro eo quod est remitaclaudere, ut nullo modo eam videre aut tangere liceat. Sigillare peccata est eorum memoriam penitus delere. Pined.

First, That *the sealing of transgressions up in a bag*, implies the utter removing of transgression: as if they were sealed up never to be seen or brought forth any more: the word is used (*Job* 9.7.) *he sealed up the stars*; that is, he covers them with clouds and darkness, or overcomes them with greater light. The clearness of the day seals up the stars alwayes, and so doth the cloudiness of the night sometimes. Some give this sense of the sealing here, *my transgressions are sealed in a bag*, that is, they are hid, and shall not be remembred at all for ever. *Daniel* prophecying of the sufferings of Christ, saith, (*chap.*9.24.) *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and the holy city to finish transgression*: The Chaldee word is, *to seal up transgression*, what that is, the next words shew, *and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity*, this was done by the death of Christ. The death of Christ was the death of sin, and when reconciliation is made for sin, the end of sin is made. This is a great Gospel truth, when sin is pardoned, it is sealed up so fast, that *when it is to be sought for, it shall not be found, and when it is enquired after, it shall not be.*

Yet I conceive it sutes not this place, nor answers the subject upon which *Job* still insists, for he is aggravating the dealings of God with him, as severe, *he numbreth my steps*; So that to say *my transgressions are sealed up*, that is, they are pardoned and covered, is an exposition of so great a variation from the scope of *Jobs* discourse, as cannot be admitted in this place. Therefore to clear his meaning, I shall offer, that sealing is used in three cases.

First, To keep things secret that they may not be seen.

Secondly, To keep things distinct, that they may not be confused.

Thirdly, To keep things safe (as we usually speak) that they may be forth-coming.

Obsignate cellas, referte annulum ad me. Plaut. in Casin. *Quæ fuit illa prisci orum vita? qualis innocentia? in qua nihil signabatur, & nunc cibi quoque & potus annulo vindicant à rapina.* Plin. Lib. 31. Cap. 1.

When *Daniel* was cast into the Lions den (that he might be safe; not safe from the Lions, but safe that none should fetch him out from the Lions (that there might be no delusion in the business,) 'Tis said, *a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the denn, and the King sealed it with his own signet* (chap. 6.17.) Seals were anciently put upon chests of goods, especially of their choicest goods. *Pliny* gives it as an argument of the integrity of the times before him, that then *nothing was sealed up, servants might then* (as we speak of those that are very trusty) *be trusted with untold gold, but now* (saith he) *house-keepers secure their very meat and drink with seals, lest their servants should steal, and imbezzle them.* In allusion to this or that other service of the seal, *Job* saith here, *my transgression is sealed*; as if he had said, my transgression is kept safe, that it may be ready as matter of accusation and charge against me. In pursuance of which sense, some interpret these words, as a metaphor taken from Sollicitors about Law-suits, who carry their papers and bills of inditement sealed up, and put into a bag, which custome is continued at this day. As if *Job* had said, *my inditement, or charge, is sealed up in thy bag, surely thou intendest shortly to proceed to a tryal against me.* When God tells the people of *Israel, their vine is as the vine of Sodom*, &c. he minds them presently, *Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures?* (Deut. 32. 34.) that is, this evil which you have done, the sins which you have committed, like *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, are laid up in store with me, and sealed among my treasures; I have taken sure notice of all, and shall bring all forth in due time: you have scattered your sins and wickednesses abroad, but I have gathered and sealed them up. God treasures up mercy for an obedient people, but he treasures up wrath for the rebellious. Or, if God should not do it, yet such do it for themselves, (*Rom.* 2.5.) *Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath.* As impenitence seals our sins upon us, so it treasures and seals up the wrath of God upon us for our sins. *The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his sin is hid* (Hos. 12. 13.) From whom was it hid? Not from the eyes of God, (possibly not from the eyes of the world) but it is bound up and hid, as reserved to a day of reckoning. It is bound up, not let loose by pardoning grace; it is hid, not with a covering of mercy, but with a covering from mercy; it is hid, not for protection, but (as *Job* thought his sin was sealed) for punishment.

My transgression is sealed up in a bag.

Further, This *sealing up in a bag* is an elegancy heightning the sense: A man counts or tells over his spending money, but when he seals it up in a bag, it is an argument he means to lay it by as a stock. A stock of money is not scattered about, but put in a bag; and when it is in the bag, it is not only tied, but sealed up. Thus *Job* seems to conceive, that God had taken a note of all his sins, and laid them up till a fit time, to call him to an account about them, and punish him for them.

And thou sowest up mine iniquity.

Job prosecutes the same metaphor, and hath the same mind in this, as in the former part of the verse.

The words undergo different readings, some thus, *thou sowest iniquity to iniquity*; the Original signifies to joyn, or, to make an application of one thing to another, like an artificer, who puts piece to piece in any fabrick. In which sense *Job* saith of his friends, *Ye are forgers of lies* (chap. 13. 4.) that is, you curiously frame up a lie, or put one lie to another, (*Psal.* 119.6,9.) *The proud have forged a lie against me: so, thou sowest iniquity to iniquity*; the iniquity of one year to the iniquity of another; the iniquity of one relation to the iniquity of another; this is a sowing, or joyning of iniquity. Others thus, *Thou sowest to mine iniquity*, that is, thou sowest the punishment of iniquity to my iniquity, thou addest affliction to my sin: *Job* thought God heaped all his sins upon him together, and with them the punishment of all his sins. Again, *Thou sowest up mine iniquity*, is but an explication of, *thou hast sealed up my transgressions in a bag*; or, the bag of my transgression is not only sealed but sowed. Hence observe,

A gracious heart looks upon his own sinnings as the occasion of his sufferings.

He fears there is somewhat in deck against him. And 'tis a truth, that as God hath a *bottle* wherein he puts the tears of his afflicted people, so he hath a *bag* wherein he puts the sins of an offending people. God puts none of the sins of his people in a bag to condemn them, yet he often puts their sin in a bag to chasten them. Hence a godly man is apt to judge all his afflictions as the fruit of his sins: and though it was not so in *Jobs* case, yet he good man, put all upon his sin. It is good to judge our selves when we are judged) that is chastened) of the Lord.

Fallitur hac in re Jobus, non esse hæ afflictiones pœnæ peccati, sed fidei probationes, quod Dei consilium non satis intelligebat Job. Drus.

Secondly, Though this be a truth in general, yet *Job* is not to be excused in having such dark thoughts of God, and such black thoughts of himself; That surely *God sealed up his iniquities in a bag*, and was resolved to afflict him for them. *Job* mistook his own condition, and the mind of God towards him in some things, as well as his friends did. God had not sealed up his transgressions in a bag, but he had cast them behind his back. God did not afflict him for the punishment of his sin, but for the proof and exercise of his graces, as hath been shewed all along. *The holiest man on earth is subject to misconceive the reason why he suffers, as well as the rule of what he should do.* Thirdly observe,

That though a gracious heart will not bear the hard censures of others about his sins, yet he is ready enough to censure and accuse himself.

Job did as often confess his iniquity before God, as he had pleaded his innocency before men. He would not have taken it well at the hands of his friends, if they had told him that God had filled a bag with his transgressions, and that God

God had sealed it up against a day of account, yet thus he speaks of himself. As his faith appeared little while he thought that God had sealed up his transgressions; so his humility and self-abasement appeared very great in this acknowledgment of his transgression.

Further, *Job* imployes three words in these two verses about the same thing, the acknowledgment of his sinfulness; 1. Sin. 2. Transgression. 3. Iniquity. These are taken sometimes promiscuously, as was shewed, (*chap.* 13. 23.) here we may give them a distinct sense.

חטא *est peccatum ex ignorantia vel infirmitate.*

The first signifies properly a falling through ignorance or infirmity, a stepping out of the way besides our intention, (possibly) against our full resolution.

עון *est dissentio justi & injusti.*

The second signifies a dissent from, or dislike of that which is just and right.

פשע *quando peccatum fit ex dedignatione parendi vel ex amore licentiæ. August. Conf.*

The third imports rebellion, and prevarication, when we sin scorning obedience, or judging it a thing below us. One of the Ancients confesses of himself, that when he was (in his youth) admonished by his mother to take heed of sinful wayes, and to walk with God, he was ashamed to follow her counsel. This is rebellion indeed, and the height of of iniquity; it is bad enough to do ill, but it is worse to be ashamed to do good, worst of all to be ashamed to leave off doing evil. *Job* chargeth himself with sin, transgression, and iniquity, not with all of them in their full extent and aggravations, but with all of them in their kind. Hence observe,

That a godly man is subject to all sins, even the worst of sins.

Not only to sins of infirmity, but of prevarication; not only to sins of ignorance, but to sins against knowledge: he may sin, not only because he cannot discern the rule clearly, but even against a clear rule. There is no sin but a regenerate man may fall into, except that from which no man can be raised, the sin against the Holy Ghost. Now as the best discover somewhat in them productive of the worst sins, so God hath discovered himself ready to pardon the worst of sins: if we commit transgression, iniquity and sin, he proclaims himself, *the God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*; yea, his nature is infinitely more ready to pardon, than our nature is to sin. We should fear to commit the least sin, even a sin of infirmity, but we need not fear whether God will pardon (for he certainly will) more than sins of infirmity, even the greatest sins. And though now not only our iniquities and sins, but even our least transgressions, or steppings aside, are sealed, and sowed up in a bag; yet Believers shall shortly see all their sins, bag and all, thrown into the bottom of the Sea, and sinking, like a talent of lead, or a weighty mill-stone, in those mighty waters of free grace and undeserved mercies.

VERS. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

And surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.
The waters wear the stones, thou washest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth, and thou destroyest the hope of man.
Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth, thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.
His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not, and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.
But his flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn.

Mirum est audire Jobum in mediis ærumnis Philosophantem. Olymp.

IN this context *Job* gives us a proof that he had not lost his Philosophy, much less his grace, in a sick bed. An Interpreter breaks out into admiration, that a man distressed with so many troubles, smitten with so many sores, grieved with so many pains, could intend his thoughts so much about the secrets of nature, and the providential transmutations of the creature; that he, who had been confined so long to a chamber, could travell thus in his thoughts, for illustrations of his own case, over mountains and rocks, among stones and trees, through the winds and waters.

The 18th and 19th verses are a collection of comparisons for this purpose.

The words are plain, but there is much variety of judgment about their scope, and *Jobs* intendment in them.

Some conceive, that under these similitudes he bewails lastingness and long continuance of his sorrows, or rather, that he lasted and continued so long in his sorrows: As if he had said, *The strongest pieces of the lower world are eaten out by time, or forced into a decay by outward violence: mountains and rocks cannot stand their ground when the earth shakes: The hardest stones cannot ever contend with the smallest droppings, nor can the deepest roots hold their possession against an overflowing deluge: all these are subject unto change, when thus assaulted: how is it then that I subsist under so many sorrows, and yet bear such burdens of affliction, who am neither mountain, nor rock, nor stone, nor tree? how is it that I am not wasted, and removed by the tempest of thine anger, and quite washed away with these inundations of thy displeasure? Surely, if I had been a mountain, I might have been pulled down before this time; had I been a rock, these strokes and diggings might have undermin'd me; had I been a stone, these continual droppings might have worn me out; and how green and flourishing soever I had been, these flouds might long since, not only have discoloured, but drowned all my beauty.* Thus he argues from the greater to the less, if such robustuous creatures fall and fail by these accidents, whence was it that he who was but weakness had held out so long? how was it that he (almost a dead man at first) did yet live in the midst of so many deaths? Hence,

Secondly, Others conceive, that *Job* under these similitudes renews his old suit to die; as if he had said, *There is nothing so firm, nothing so strongly setled, but must yield at last unto corruption, and change its state: therefore let my change come. Let me be removed, for rocks must remove; let me be consumed, for mountains must consume: Stones wear, and trees are washed away, let me be worn and wash'd one of the world, let me pass away, and die.*

Thirdly, That *Job* doth here move the Lord to pity him, and hasten his release, suspecting that at the last he might break out into some impatiency, or discover uncomely passions: As if he had said, *Lord, mountains cannot stand alwayes, and rocks will fail at last; how much sooner may my patience? My strength is not the strength of stones,* (as he spake, *chap.* 6. 12.)

Has similitudines eodem spectare puto quo præcedentes de aquis è mari abeuntibus, &c, ad ostendendam sc. mortem hominis irreparabilem. Merc.

Fourthly, All these similitudes are conceived to aim at the same point, which *Job* had been upon a little before; namely, to shew that a man dying shall return no more to his former state, as was there opened. Death giveth us such a wound as shall never be healed here, it is an irreparable loss of our worldly comforts: This he shadows out by mountains, rocks, stones, trees, and fruits of the earth, which are changed and consumed, as if they had never been. Thus in general; I shall now open the distinct parts of these comparisons.

Verse 18. **Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.**

Rab. Kimchi exponit נופל, *non cadens, sed altus, editus, ut* נפלים *gigantes, q.d. Mons editus & giganteus decidet. Lib. Rad.*

Here are two similitudes; Some read, *Surely the high mountain, or highest mountain, cometh to nought*, for the Hebrew word here used signifies not only to *fall*, but to be very *high and great*, so high and great, that a man beholding it, or looking down from it, is giddy, and falls for fear. Hence Giants (*Gen.* 6.) are called *Nephilim*, which properly signifies *Fallers*; not because they fall, but because they make others fall: yea, they being so high, or men of such stupendious limbs and stature, others seeing them, tremble, and fall before them: So here, for the *mountain falling*, we may read, *the high and huge mountain, the gigantick mountain*, the mountain above ordinary mountains, as much as the giant is above the ordinary pitch of men; As if *Job* had said, *the highest mountain comes to nought*, he speaks not of annihilation, but alteration, they moulder and break, they are not what once they were.

נבל *proprie significat illum defluxum deciduorum foliorum ex arbore cum marcescunt ex nimio humore.*

The word which we translate *cometh to nought*, signifies properly ro *wither as a leaf*, or to fall as a withered leaf: when the sap or moisture of the tree goes down to the root, then the leaves fall off. Thus (saith *Job*) the great mountains, the huge giantly mountains come to nought; they wither, they fall off like the leaves in Autumn: the Prophet *Isaiah* prayeth (*chap.* 64. 1.) *O that thou wouldest bow the heavens, and come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence*: by mountains he means the greatest worldly powers, not natural, but metaphorical mountains; yet

yet it is a truth in the letter, for if the Lord do but bow the heavens, and shew his power; if he bow the heavens, and comes down in the greatness of his strength, then the hardest mountains, like the liquid waters, shall flow down at his presence.

And the rock is removed out of his place.

A rock is harder than a mountain; a mountain is earth heaped together, but a rock is earth hardned together: but though it be not only a mountain, but a rock, yea, though it be a mountain of rocks, remove it shall.

עתק *consenuit* παλαιοῦσθαι, *veterascit.* Sept

The word signifies properly, *to wax old*, because things that wax old are removing and passing away; Hence the same word signifies to wax old, and to be removed; that's the Apostle's description of a thing that waxeth old, (*Heb.* 8.13.) *that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away*; he speaks to a spiritual point, yet from a maxim in nature. So here, the rock is removed out of his place, is the same with, the rock waxeth old; because that which waxeth old is ready to be removed out of his place. From these two similitudes, Observe,

First, *There is no creature so strong or firm, but is subject unto change.*

The mountains and the rocks change ordinarily by the power of time, how much more when God contends with them by an extraordinary power? The Prophet *Nahum* speaks this in highest Rhetorick (*chap.* 1.4,5,6.) *he rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry.* (If any thing keep water, it is the sea, which is the greatest vessel prepared on purpose by God to keep the waters; yet God can lade the Ocean with the hollow of his hand, and dry, not only a pond or a river, but the Sea; *He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry*;) *Bashan languisheth and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth, the mountains quake at him, the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein, then who can stand before his indignation, and who can abide the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* This piece of *Nahum's* prophecy is a clear commentary upon the Text of *Job*: what can be said more, and nothing less deserves to be said, either of the instability of the strongest creatures, or of the omnipotency of the God of strength. He tosseth the hills like tennis-balls, and cracks the rocks like a nut-shell; before him the hills melt, and the foundations of the earth are discovered. The creature will change by reason of its own weakness, though God should not exert or put forth his power against it. Every mixt body hath the seed of corruption in it, and therefore must corrupt naturally, though God should not destroy it providentially or judiciarily: Now if these creatures are changeable in themselves, surely when God changeth them they shall be changed: all creature strength must yield to his strength, whose weakness is stronger than all creatures; If God send out a commission against a mountain, it falls, and must come down; if he bids a rock remove, the rock shall be removed; if God say to the wind, blow away that mountain, or to a tempest, blow down that rock, it shall be done; stormy winds and tempests go presently upon his errand, and fulfill his word. Faith is said to remove mountains, but it is only upon this account, because it engageth the power of God, who alone can do it.

Secondly, Observe, (which is also applicable to the other similitudes;)

That the strongest creatures read man a lecture of his weakness.

When *Job* would shew man his frailty, he sends him to the mountains and rocks, which are the most durable among earthly substances: the weakest creature is an embleme of mans weakness, and the strongest teacheth him, there is no trusting to his strength. As *Solomon* sends the *sluggard to the pismire*, saying, *consider her wayes and be wise*; so we may say to the strong man, to the confident man, to the proud man, to all who think they shall never be removed; go to the mountains, repair to the rocks, and be wise; go to the stones which wear away with water drops, go to the trees which are rooted up by a deluge of waters: go to these, and learn the vanity and mutability of your best estate. We may learn of that which cannot speak; things insensible may reason the matter with us: they have a voice, though not a tongue, to tell us what we are; For as *the invisible things of God, to wit, his eternal power and Godhead, are seen in the things which are made*; so the invisible things of man, even his temporal weakness and frailty, are seen in the things which decay since their making. The power of God is invisible, and so is much of the weakness of man. The constitution of the creature makes the former visible, and the corruption of it makes the latter visible. Every thing that man sees remembers him what he is, and what he must shortly be. And because abundance of caution in this point is no burthen, *Job* gives further caution: And as I have opened the former, so I shall now these latter instances, by which he confirms this truth.

Verse 19. **The waters wear the stones, thou washest away the things that grow out of the dust of the earth, and thou destroyest the hope of man.**

In this verse we have two similitudes more, together with the application of all the four, in those words, *Thou destroyest the hope of man*, in conjunction with the twentieth verse, *Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth*, &c.

Gutta cavat lapidem. Ovid. *lib.* 4. *de* Ponto.

The waters wear the stones.] Waters are soft and liquid, yet they make impression upon that which is hard, and almost impenetrable: it is a Proverbial speech, *water by continual running, or often dropping hollows and dents a stone.* This similitude intimates, that though *Jobs* afflictions had been small or light, whereas indeed they were great and heavy, though they had been but as little drops whereas indeed they were a mighty deluge, yet their long continuance and frequent repetition, would utterly weaken and wear him out at last: *dropping will consume a stone.*

Hence Observe, *That continued and repeated acts though small, produce great effects.*

What single force doth not, many doublings of it will. Many lighter blows will kill as well as one great wound. A man may be whipt as well as club'd to death. He that goes but a little way in an hour goes a great way if he continue going many hours. A Student in any profession may have got so little learning by one dayes study, that he cannot perceive he hath got any, yet continuing to study he may attain the highest degree of learning. A believer findes little or no growth in grace or in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by some one exercise either in prayer or hearing the word, yet by a constant attendance upon the Lord in these duties, he grows to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Smallest sins lived in (which some do not so much as suspect to be dangerous) destroy the soul, as well as that (whatsoever it is) which is called by this name, *a sin unto death* (*1 John* 5.16.) The greatest number is made up of conjoyned unities. Here a little and there a little, comes to much. The mightiest oak is hewed down, and the strongest wall is undermined by many stroaks of the axe and mattock. A ship may be swallowed up with a multitude of little sands as well as broken upon a rock: you may make a burden of many feathers as well as of one mass of lead. A multitude in any kind whether of actions things or persons, though inconsiderable apart, yet put together or following each other close, will carry all before them, and overcome all difficulties. *The waters wear the stones.*

Thou washest away the things that grow out of the earth.

Thou washest] Who is that? the antecedent is God himself. *Thou* (O Lord) *washest away the things*, &c. Here *Job* expresseth the supream efficient of all those alterations in the creature, who it is that pulls down the mountains, that removes the rocks, all these changes are wrought by the power of God, *thou washest away the things that grow out of the earth*, or, *thou bringest a deluge upon them.* God brought once an universal deluge, which washed away not only all that grew out of the earth, but all that lived upon the face of the earth. God hath given mankind his covenant, and set *his bow in the cloud* as a sign of it, *that all flesh shall not be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth*, (*Gen.* 9.11.) yet God hath often since brought floods upon particular places and countreys, which have destroyed and washed

washed away that which grows upon the face of the earth, as herbs, grass and trees.

סְפִיחֶיהָ *germina*, Pag. *sponte nascentia*. Vatab. *Quæ sponte fundit pulvis terræ*. Complut.

The word strictly taken signifies only those things which grow naturally out of the earth without the labour of man, without plowing, digging, or sowing. So we find the things that grow out of the earth distinguished (1 *King.* 19.23.) *This shall be a sign to thee, thou shalt eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and the second year that which groweth of the same, and the third year ye shall plant and sow*: The Levitical Law mindes us also of this distinction, (*Lev.* 25. 5.) *that which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap.* As the Jews were forbidden to sow their field in the year of *Jubile*, so also to reap that (as a peculiar crop to any one of them) which grew up without their sowing. The standing corn (if it stand too long) sheds some grains, which spring up without plowing or sowing: This is said to grow *of its own accord*; yet (I conceive) we need not take it here in such a restrained sense, but in general, for all or every thing that *groweth out of the dust of the earth*, whether by or without the labour of the husbandman: *Thou washest away the things that grow out of the dust of the earth.* Hence observe,

First, *The same thing may be both a blessing and an affliction.*

Things grow out of the dust of the earth, by water flowing out of the earth, or by the rain falling upon the earth from heaven; and yet the falling of the rain, and the flowing of the water, may destroy the things that grow out of the dust of the earth: if the rain fall not on the dust of the earth, nothing will grow. God threatens to make the rain of the land powder and dust (*Deut.* 28. 24.) that is, to send so much drought, that the dust shall rise from the earth up into the air, and fall down upon the earth instead of rain. Now when the rain is dust, nothing will spring out of the dust of the earth. The earth is barren; the earth opens its mouth, and gapes to heaven for rain (as a thirsty man) to make it fruitful: yet, this water, this rain, which sometimes is a great blessing to the earth, and causeth it to bring forth fruit abundantly, even this destroyes the fruit of the earth: *too much of any thing in nature is hurtful*: there may be too much of nature, but there cannot be too much of grace; some things are so good, that we cannot have too great a quantity of them. The dews and drops of heaven upon the soul in greatest abundance, will not destroy the things that grow in or out of our souls, but make them grow more. Our sin and the wrath of God turn our greatest worldly comforts into curses; but that is alwayes a blessing to us which cures us of our sin, and the more we have of it, the more blessings we alwayes have.

Secondly, Observe, *The Lord who makes things to grow out of the earth, makes them wither.*

He who giveth us the fruit of the ground, takes the fruit of the ground away: Mercies and Judgments come from the very same hand, and both from the hand of God; The Lord saith to the fields, encrease and multiply: His word, yea, his steps drop fatness. Where God walketh in mercy, every step he sets is a drop of fatness, and where he walks in anger, every step he sets is a drop of leanness; He that makes the fields flourish, makes them droop; *he washeth away the things that grow out of the dust of the earth.*

Thou destroyest the hope of man.

As if he had said, *Thou who causest the mountains to fall, and rocks to consume; thou who causest stones to wear, and washest away the things that grow out of the earth, thou, even thou, destroyest the hope of man*: that is, in destroying these things, thou destroyest the hope of man; or, as thou destroyest these strong, durable, and beautiful creatures, so the hope of man set upon any creature. The Hebrew particle (*Vau*) is often put as a note of likeness; *And thou destroyest*, is, *so thou destroyest the hope of man.*

But shall the hope of man be destroyed? What hope, and whose hope shall be destroyed? There is a hope of man, stronger than the mountains, and more durable than rocks or stones. Though these consume and come to nought, yet that shall not. The hope of the Saints endures for ever, and they shall never be ashamed of their hope: their hope is an *Anchor*, (so the Apostle calls it, *Heb.* 6.) *sure and stedfast*: and as the hope of the Saints is a sure anchor, so it is fastned by such a cable as will never crack, let the winds blow, and the waves rise as high as they will. The word of promise is the cable which holdeth this anchor, that word of promise is stronger than a threefold cord, and cannot at all be broken.

Again, as this anchor is strongly fastned above, so it is let down upon, and is fastned in a rock beneath. That anchor of hope will never drag which falls into Christ, the clifts of that rock hold it, and will not let it go. *It is impossible to destroy such a hope as this: The hope of Saints shall indeed be destroyed, or perfected rather, by enjoyment*; but it shall not be destroyed by disappointment. When we enjoy all things, what need we hope for any thing? Hope is swallowed up in fruition. *Saints never lose their hope, till they have found all that they hoped for: If in this life only we had hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable*, 1 Cor. 15.19. We shall not hope any longer than we live here, but we have a hope of good beyond this life: our hope lasteth no longer than our lives, but the things we hope for, last longer than the mountains, yea, longer (as old *Jacob* speaks in his benediction upon *Joseph*) than the *everlasting hills*: our hope will last, that is, we have hope of that which will last as long as everlastingness.

Seeing then the hope of Saints is no perishing hope, whose hope doth *Job* mean, when he saith, *Thou destroyest the hope of man?*

He means the hope of vain men, or the vain hope of good men. God destroyeth all the hopes of vain men, and all the vain hopes of any man, such hopes as those proud men had after the floud shall be destroyed; who said, *Go to, let us build us a city and tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the earth.* (*Gen.* 11. 4.) God scatters their hopes, who by worldly power or policy, hope to secure themselves against scattering: a hope to get our selves a name, and so to fasten our selves upon earthly foundations, as never to be removed, shall surely be removed. The Psalmist discovered, that the inward thoughts of covetous men are, *that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations*, (Psal. 49. 11.) this is their thought and hope: God destroyeth such hopes often, letting their houses fall to the ground, before themselves fall into the grave: or if their outward glory out-live them, yet their posterity shall out-live their glory; their sons shall either wantonly scatter what they have miserably gathered, and at last be eaten up with wants, or the wrath of God will scatter what the father gathered, and the son hath mind enough to keep. And as God destroyes the hope of covetous men, that their riches shall abide, so the hope of voluptuous men, that their pleasures shall be renewed: such a hope the Prophet *Isaiah* describes the idle, idoll shepherds full of; (*Isa.* 56.12.) when they say, *Come ye, and I will fetch wine, and we will fill our selves with strong drink, and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.* The hoped for cup shall be pulled from their mouths, who do not drink for thirst, but thirst for a drinking.

Further, God destroyeth all their hopes, who *hope in the arm of flesh.* The Jews thought *Egypt* help enough against all enemies, even while they neglected to keep God their friend. But see how the Prophet reproves them, or befools them for it: *Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?* As if he had said, When one worldly means fails thee, thy resort is to another: if *Assyria* help thee not, thou art confident that *Egypt* will, *but thou shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria.* That is, these hopes shall fail thee, and thy expectations, they shall be frustrate in the one as well as in the other. For *God hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them*, (*Jer.* 2. 36,37.) Thus God destroyeth the hope of vain men, and not only so, but

He destroyeth also the vain hopes of good men ('tis possible for such to have vain hopes) hopes of long life, of prosperous dayes, of riches, and of great things for themselves: They sometimes project as vainly as the world, and joyn with those in action, from whom they are separated by profession. The Lord in mercy blasteth these hopes of good men, that they may be taught to fix their hopes on better things. He shews how weak and withering the creature

ture is, though in their hands, that their hearts may be wholly set on him. We enjoy God most, when we hope least in man; and God doth therefore destroy the vain hopes of some men, that they may enjoy himself more. As all the hope of hypocrites shall be destroyed, so shall some hopes of those who are sincere.

Thou destroyest the hope of man; that is, in destroying those things upon which man hopes; thou destroyest the hope of man: the act or habit of hope is often put for the object of it. Man hopes in mountains material and metaphorical; he trusts in the rocks and stones of the earth? or in the things that grow out of the earth; riches and plenty. All these things are destroyable, and when these are destroyed, the hope of most men is destroyed: if the matter upon which our hopes are fixed be perishing, our hopes shall perish: We cannot raise a safe or a firm building upon a rotten or unsound foundation. Earthly things, the mountains of the earth cannot make a pillar to prop up the hope of man, when God will pull it down.

I have from former passages in this book, shewed, how great a possession hope is; and that even the light of Nature in some, hath preferred it before all their possessions. I have also shewed, that it is the last piece which man quits the possession of in his greatest extremities, and that when that's gone, all is gone. Man hath nothing more to be destroyed, when once his hope is destroyed: if our hope be prevailed over, we are prevailed over for ever: *Jobs* discourse leads us to this conclusion in the next verse.

Verse 20. **Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth, thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.**

This verse explains the application of the similitude, when the Lord destroyeth the hope of man, he prevaileth against him for ever.

Thou prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth.

תתקפהו *prevalebis ei*, Mont. *fortior eo fuisti*, Pagn.

Thou prevailest] The word is, *thou waxest strong upon him*, or, thou art stronger than he: all prevailing proceeds from greater strength, either of body or mind: equality makes no conquest. And though (as *Hannah* sings 1 *Sam.* 1, 9,) *by strength shall no man prevail*; yet the strength of God will prevail. The reason why no man prevails by strength is, because God alone hath more strength than all men put together, and because he hath, therefore he can prevail by his own strength over man, and that for ever.

נצח *quod est triumphare aut vincere, idē est quod aliquid ad finem victoriosè & triumphanter perducere.*

Thou prevailest for ever against him] The word which we translate *for ever*, signifies also in the verb to prevail, to triumph, or to overcome; thou waxest strong over him triumphingly and victoriously; or, thou triumphest over him, and thou shalt always triumph over him. A triumph is the signal of perfect victory, and where victory is perfect, it is victory for ever: God prevails so over man, that he may triumph, and therefore he is rightly said to prevail triumphantly, or to prevail for ever.

Thou prevailest for ever; which may be understood two wayes.

First, That man is so prevailed upon, that he cannot repair himself again. If God break down, man cannot build up, and if he wound, man cannot heal: both breach and wound must continue for ever, unless the same hand that made them make them up again.

Secondly, That, how often soever God taketh man in hand, he is sure to carry the day against him; *he prevaileth for ever*. God is always armed with sufficient strength to subdue all strength unto himself. Nor can we surprize God, or come upon him, before he hath drawn out his strength, and made it ready. He must be a perpetual Victor or Triumpher who hath always strength enough to get the victory, and whose strength is always ready enough to go to battel. There was never any man always a conquerour, but God is. Men have been mighty conquerors, and have had conquerour justly affixed to their titles. Yet not one of these was always a conquerour, the best of men have been sometimes worsted, or could not prevail; Only God prevaileth ever. If he undertake a work or a design, whether for or against man, he will be sure to have his ends: for nothing can stand in his way. All that is in the way is of his own setting, and he is wiser than to set any thing in his way, which shall hinder him in the bringing about his own ends. What strength soever the creature hath, it hath from God, and surely he hath not given out more than he keeps to himself. He will not be mastered with his own gifts, nor make derivative power too strong for original power. Indeed all the power which God gives is weakness, and the wisdome folly, compared with that he keeps: and what is weakness to omnipotency? what is folly to wisdome? what is mortal and changeable, to eternal and unchangeable, that it should hinder its prevailing?

The vulgar reads differently, referring this act of prevailing, not to the strength of God prevailing over man, but to the bounty of God giving man strength to prevail: *Thou hast strengthened him for a little while, that he might pass away for ever.* As if God exalted man only to cast him down with a more fearful ruine: or, as if *Job* had said, *Thou didst heretofore strengthen me, but now thou abatest my strength; I was once set up, but now thou tramplest me under foot.* 'Tis, I grant, the design of God against his enemies, to advance them on purpose that he may overthrow them with greater advantage. Thus the Lord said of *Pharaoh*, *for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee* (Rom. 9. 17.) But God deals not thus with his own servants; for though he gives them strength, and then tries them, yet he never gives them strength that he may (with a greater reputation to his own strength) triumph over them. And therefore I lay this translation aside, and embrace our own, as cleareſt to the intendment of these similitudes: *Thou prevailest for ever against him.*

Roborâsti eum paulum, ut in perpetuum transiret. Vulg. *--tolluntur in altum, --ut lapsu graviore ruant.*

And he passeth.] That is, he dieth; so the word is used (*chap.* 10. 21.) death is our passage out of the world; we come in, and we pass out: man must pass when God giveth him a pass to travel out of the land of the living.

Thou changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

This change of his countenance is taken three wayes.

First, Some understand it of the habit of a dying or dead man: Death brings a change upon the whole man; especially upon the face or countenance: both the beauty and the feature of the face change at the appearance of death: fairness is then turned into paleness, sweetness into swarthiness. The nostrils are sharp, the eyes hollow, the ears are shrunk, and the jaws fallen: the dead man looks not like himself, not like the man he was, when he was healthy and alive. Physicians give us the description of that change, and teach us to spell the letters, and read the characters of death printed upon the face. Death sends its image as a harbinger to take up every room of our bodies, before it self comes to lodge in our bodies. Standers by may see death in their sick friends, long before their sick friends feel it. Hence observe,

Nitidum & vividum vultum cum lurido & pallente commutat. Mere. *In morte tota facies redditur sibi contraria. Acutus enim fit nasus, oculi cavi, tempora collapsa, aures contractæ, &c. ut docet* Hipp. lib. prænot.

Death defaceth the beauty, and doth blast the comliness of man.

How much soever any glory in the beams of beauty now, sickness will shortly eclipse and death will totally darken it. Spiritual beauty will never change, but for the better: the countenance of the soul adorned with grace, changeth into glory, when a believer dies: Soul-beauty will be more beautiful, and attain its full perfection, when bodily beauty is none at all, but is turned into corruption: when the frame of nature is ruined in us, the frame of grace shall be compleated in us; And we shall be all glorious within, when there is no glory left without. *Thou changest his countenance.*

--Nulla non dies formosi spolium corporis abstulit. Sen. in Hypol.

Secondly, *This change of the countenance* is expounded not for that instantaneous change which death brings into the body, or not for that only, but for that continual change which man is subject to in his body while he lives: the countenance is put for the whole outward man. Death is our most remarkable change, but it is not at all our change: Every day carries away some spoils of beauty and strength from the strongest and most beautiful body. No day looketh upon us, or we upon it, with the same face.

Mihi frigeſte ſenſus, melius omnino hanc faciem interpretari poſſumus generalem ſuarum rerum ſtatum Bold.

Thirdly, Others take the countenance more largely, not for the face or whole body onely, but for the whole state of a man: it is usual to apply the word *face* or *countenance* to all changes: we say, *there is a new face of things*, or of affairs,

affairs, when affairs whether personal or publick are much changed. As if he had said, *Thou changest his whole state, and sendest him away: because all changes appear in the face, therefore in whatsoever our change is, 'tis said our face is changed.*

Man hath one face in riches, another in poverty; one in honour, another in disgrace: The copy of a mans countenance changeth, not only as his body, but as his condition and relations change. You may see how it is with us in our faces; for, as our conditional countenance changeth, so doth our personal. 'Twas shewed at the second verse of this Chapter, that man continueth not in any condition alwayes the same; his natural, his civil, his spiritual estate, are liable unto changes: what they are, I refer the Reader back to the verse mentioned; *Thou changest his countenance,*

Ablegas eum hinc non rediturum, velut extrudis & amandas eum ex hoc seculo prorsus.

And sendest him away. He said before, *He passeth away*; here he varies the phrase, *Thou sendest him away*, that is, he dieth, there's the end of all. Man hath many changes while he lives, and shortly he must change from life to death: the manner of expressing it is considerable.

Thou sendest him away. Man dieth by dispatch from God; God sends him a writ to die. *Thou sendest him away.* Death is mans dismission out of the world. The word imports *a special direction.* When *Adam* had sinned, *the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of* Eden, *to till the ground from whence he was taken* (Gen. 3. 23.) He bid *Adam* be gone out of the Garden, and he bids the sons of *Adam* be gone out of the world. Old *Simeon* said, *Now let thy servant depart in peace; give me my dismission or my writ of ease.* God sends wicked men away whether they will or no: Saints would be sent away and depart with leave. Wicked men are put out of the world, as the Leprous person was put out of the Camp of *Israel*, lest he should infect others. Godly men are sent out of the world, when they have done the errand they came about, for the good of others.

Verse 21. **His sons come to honour, and he knows it not; they are brought low, and he perceiveth it not.**

Cum multi fuerint filii ejus nescit sin autem pauci fuerint ignorat Sept.

כבד *Pondus & gravitatem, hinc honorē, divitias, &c. denotat.*

His sons come to honour. Some refer it to number; *his sons are multiplied*: others, to riches; *his sons get wealth*; we, to greatness; *his sons come to honour.* Some are born to honour, and others come to it; some receive it from their parents, others get it by their atchievments; it runs to some in their blood, others rise to it by their virtue and worth, by their parts and abilities: 'Tis better to get honour, then to have honour, and to make our selves honourable, then to be made honourable. It is easie to inherit honour, but it is hard to attain honour. *His sons come to honour*;

And he knoweth it not. An act of knowledge is often put for an act of the affection: We are said not only not to know that which we are ignorant of, but that which we are regardless of, so here, he knows not when his sons come to honour, that is, he is not affected with it: Usually a parent knows nothing more then the preferment of his children, and he seldom studies any point more. *Job* describes a father ignorant or insensible of his sons preferment. And as he knows not the good which his sons come to, so not the evil which comes upon his sons, as he tells us in the next words.

And they are brought low, or *diminished.* They are diminished in number, but few are left; or they are made low and poor in state, there is but little left to them.

And he perceiveth it not. That is, He is not grieved at it. But who is this insensible ignorant father? or what is it that renders him thus ignorant and insensible of all the providences of God, whether good or bad, to his own bowels?

Some expound both clauses of a dead father; *Thou sendest him away*, he dies, and then *his sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not*, &c. A dead man hath no knowledge at all of what is done among the living: They that are out of the world, perceive not what is done in the world; no, not with those that are neareſt and deareſt to them, their own sons; and as they have no knowledge of, so no affections to the world; the dead neither rejoyce with, nor mourn over those that live. *Solomon's* description of an Atheist, and of his false conceits about death, may (though not in his sence) be applied for the illustrationn of this truth (*Eccles.* 9. 5, 6,) *The living know they shall die.* Atheists speak thus, not from a certainty of knowledge causing them to prepare for death, but from a careleſness mixed with their knowledge, causing them to slight death; they know they must die, and therefore care not though they die. Death (say they) befals all, and therefore should not trouble any. This is all the care they take about death, when they profess their knowledge of death. *The living know they shall die, but the dead know not any thing.* The Atheist speaks it downright, as if when a man dies, there were an end of him. He knows no more, that is (in their divinity) he is no more. But though the dead in Christ know many things, they know their own happiness and eternal life, and though the dead who die out of Christ, know many things, they know their own torment and misery, they know also the falseness of this opinion, that the dead know nothing; yet there is a truth in what they say, though not in what they mean: For the dead know not any thing of this present life, or of the things done here on earth. They know not any thing of these things, as knowing is taken for apprehending; and they know nothing of them, as knowing is taken for grieving at, or rejoycing in them; so the Preacher speaks at *ver.* 6. in the language of his Atheist still: *Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished, and they have no more portion for ever in all that is done under the Sun.* They therefore have no love nor hatred, nor envy about those things that are doing under the Sun, because they have no portion in all that is done under the Sun. When man dies, he hath a portion, but it doth not lie under the Sun. Wicked men have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers: The godly have a portion with Christ and all the Saints in glory; as for earthly things, they are none of their portion, and therefore none of their care, and they have as little affection about them as they have use of them, their sons come to honour, and they rejoyce not; their sons are made low, and they grieve not. The Prophet *Isaiah* prayes earnestly (*chap.* 63. 16.) *Look down (O Lord) from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory, where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards me? Are they restrained? Doubtless thou art our father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us, and* Israel *acknowledge us not*; that is, as some expound the place to the point in hand; though *Abraham* and *Israel* our forefathers are so far from being able to relieve and deliver us out of our troubles, that they are utterly unacquainted with them; yet we are assured thou knowest what our troubles are, and art able to relieve us. Though *Abraham* and *Israel* our deceased forefathers have no zeal, nor any sounding of bowels, that is, pity and compassion towards us their bowels, though they are not grieved because we are made low, yet Lord, thou livest for ever, and so do thy zeal and compassions to thy people; therefore look down from heaven and help us. There is another exposition of the Prophet, which gives the sence as a prevention of an objection against the former petition; why should you expect to be heard though you are the children of *Abraham* and *Israel*, when your walk is so unanswerable to that of *Abraham* and *Israel*, that if they were alive again here upon the earth, they would not own or acknowledge you as their children? To this the Prophet is conceived to answer, let it be granted or confessed that we are a people so degenerate, that even our forefathers, if they were sent among us from the dead, would not own us for their children, let it be granted that we are unworthy in our selves to be counted *Abraham's* children; yet through thy free grace, we may be numbred among thy children. *Doubtless thou art our father, though* Abraham *be ignorant of us.* Thy love changes not, though the love of men doth; thou wilt not cast us off, though *Abraham* do: This is a very spiritual interpretation, nor is it inconsistent with the former; we may joyn both together thus, If *Abraham* were alive, he (possibly) would neither own nor help us, we are so sinful; but *Abraham* is dead, and doth not so much as know that we want help; therefore Lord, look down from heaven, and help us thy self; *Abraham's* bowels are not moved towards his sons, *O let not thine be restrained!*

Let this admonish parents who take inordinate and immoderate care, by right or wrong to advance their chil-

children: Some live miſerably, that their children may flouriſh; yea, not a few have deſtroyed their own ſouls, that their children might be great and rich when they are dead; what a pitiful deſign is this! Thou ſhalt not rejoyce in the grave that thy ſon is rich, neither ſhalt thou grieve for thy ſon that he is poor, when thou ceaſeſt to be among men; for as thy knowledge is periſhed, ſo thy love, thy envy, thy ſorrow are periſhed as to the creature here below. A ſons preferment is nothing to the deceaſed father; therefore let not fathers venture their Conſciences, and hazard their ſouls to prefer their children: be not anxiouſly afraid, that when you are dead, your children may be poor, this trouble will never come near your heart when you are dead. God promiſed *Joſiah* (2 Kings 22. 20.) *I will gather thee unto thy Fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered into thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all* (that is, not any of) *the evil which I will bring upon this place*: As if he had ſaid, I am reſolved as I have decreed, to bring evil upon this place; but it ſhall be no grief to thee; for thou ſhalt firſt be taken out of this place. And when the Prophet *Iſaiah* brought *Hezekiah* a ſad meſſage, *Behold the dayes come that all that is in thy houſe, and all that thy fathers have laid up in ſtore until this day, ſhall be carried to* Babylon; *and of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, ſhall they take away, and they ſhall be Eunuchs in the palace of the King of* Babylon (*Iſa.* 39. 6, 7.) *Then ſaid* Hezekiah *to* Iſaiah, *good is the word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken; he ſaid moreover, for there ſhall be peace and truth in my dayes*: He ſpeaks not ſlightingly of the evil to come; *Hezekiah* was far from the ſpirit of that *Roman* Emperor who ſaid, *When I am once dead, let heaven and earth mingle, what care I what becomes of the world when I am once out of it*: *Hezekiah* was not a man of this temper; yet it was ſome abatement of thoſe evils to him, that they ſhould not come till he was paſt feeling them, or being ſenſible of them. The reaſon which the Prophet gives, why God takes good men out of the world ſometimes, is, becauſe he knows a ſtorm is coming, and he would not have them overtaken with it, and therefore he houſes them before it come (*Iſa.* 57. 1, 2.) *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* The evil to come is no hurt to them when they are gone. This is Gods deſign, though few conſider it: And as they who are taken away, have no feeling of the evils to come, ſo no fellow-feeling; there is no ſympathy in heaven: Saints are not troubled there at the troubles of any here on earth. It is a grace while we are here troubled at the troubles of others; and it is our priviledge, that in heaven we ſhall not. The Author to the *Hebrews* exhorts us, *to remember thoſe that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them that ſuffer adverſity, as being our ſelves in the body* (Heb. 13. 2.) 'Tis our being in the body which makes it either a duty or poſſibility for us to partake in the ſufferings of other men.

Me mortuo miſceatur igne terra. Calig.

We may hence confute the Popiſh Doctrine and Practice of praying to Saints departed. When they are ſent away, they know neither our ſpiritual nor our temporal eſtate, why then ſhould we pray to them about either? The Saints cannot ſee from heaven to earth, nor can they hear from heaven to earth; 'tis God, whoſe name is *the God hearing prayers*, and therefore to him *ſhall all fleſh come*; if all fleſh are obliged to come to him, where is our warrant to come to Saints departed? And if we do, where is our hope to receive their help, when they are ignorant that we want help? *Though we are made low, they perceive it not.*

A ſecond interpretation tells us, that *Job* ſpeaks not here of a man in the ſtate of death, but of a man about to die, or upon his death-bed: ſuch a mans *ſons come to honour, and he knoweth it not*; and then we muſt expound *knowing* in the ſecond ſence, for regarding or being affected with what we know. *Great perſonal afflictions make us forget all worldly relations, together with the comforts and ſorrows which attend them.* A ſick man, eſpecially a dying man, takes no pleaſure in his life, and is uſually ſo buſied with his own pains, that he takes little or no notice of the pain or pleaſure of others. A man in ſuch a condition, can hardly be perſwaded to take in ſpiritual comforts, or to refreſh his ſoul with a taſte of that ſweet wine, with a morſel of that marrow and fatneſs which the promiſes of eternal life preſent unto him, much leſs can he delight himſelf in ſenſitive, leaſt of all, in ſenſual objects. Come, and tell him his ſons are advanced, and his eſtate thrives, he regards it not; alas (ſaith he) I am going out of the world, what's all this to me? Mr. *Broughton's* tranſlation anſwers this ſence with much clearneſs: *Only his fleſh is grieved for it ſelf, and his ſoul will mourn for himſelf*; as if he had ſaid, his own grief will ſpend out all his poſſibilities of grieving, he will have none in ſtore to beſtow elſewhere: Our ſons are our own fleſh and blood, and if any thing would affect a man, it would be to hear of his ſons; and if any thing concerning his ſons would affect him, to hear of their welfare or affliction, would. How do parents rejoyce when their ſons come to honour? how are they afflicted, when their ſons are made low? As our ſons are our own, ſo we reckon upon their good or evil, upon all the occaſions of their joy or ſorrow, as our own. Our children are our ſelves multiplied, and (in a ſence) immortaliz'd; and love to our children, is but one degree in nature removed from that of our ſelves: Yet a time is coming, when our ſons and our daughters, about whom we have had ſo many joyes and ſorrows, for whom we have laid out ſo many thoughts and cares, even theſe ſhall not have either our joy or ſorrow, our thought or care. It was an argument of the wonderful love of Chriſt, as ſome of the Ancients obſerve upon this place, that when he was nail'd to the Croſs, ready to die; he (as it were) forgot his own ſorrows and grievous ſufferings, and remembred his relations (*John.* 19. 25.) He ſaid to his Mother, *Woman, behold thy ſon*; and to the Diſciple, *behold thy mother*. Now was *Simeon's* propheſie fulfilled upon the bleſſed Virgin, *Yea, a ſword ſhall pierce through thy own ſoul alſo*, Luke 2. 35. And therefore Chriſt applies theſe comfortable words, as a ſalve to her wounds, even while his own were bleeding unto death: *Woman, behold thy ſon*; *Diſciple, behold thy mother*. He calls her *woman*, and not *mother*, not as unwilling to own her for his mother; but either as fearing that ſuch an owning her, might have created her further trouble; or, as ſhewing that being ready to die, and return to his father in heaven, he was above earthly relations, and knew none after the fleſh, no not his own mother. And yet though he was not only above, but leaving his mother, he leaves her to the care of his beloved Diſciple. And that remembrance which Chriſt at his death expreſſed to his mother, in committing her to a diſciple, the ſame he had expreſſed a little before to all his Diſciples; yea, and to all believers, both in committing them to his father when he was gone, and by telling them that he was but gone (as a harbinger) to take up lodgings, and prepare a place for them; aſſuring them alſo, that in his abſence he would ſend the Spirit, who ſhould (with advantage to them) make up the want of his bodily preſence. And laſtly, that himſelf intended to return to them again; he would now ſend one to them, but hereafter he would not ſend a meſſenger for them, but come himſelf, that where he ſhould be, there they might be alſo. Was not the love of Chriſt to his children, ſtronger then death, when he thus remembred and took care of them, both in the approaches and agonies of death? Earthly parents may neglect both the wo and welfare of their children, but Chriſt will not; ſurely he will not do it now, when his fleſh upon him is cloathed with glory, and his ſoul within him is filled with joy; for he did not when his fleſh upon him was full of pain, and his ſoul within him did mourn; which is the reaſon or excuſe rather which *Job* gives in the next verſe, why earthly fathers do not ſometimes know their own ſons either in honour or diſgrace.

Verſe 22. **But his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn.**

They who expound the former verſe of man in the ſtate of death, give the ſame expoſition of this, *his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn, when he is dead.* But hath a dead man pain? or can he mourn? Death is a total privation of all ſenſitive powers, there's no feeling in the grave. The meaning is this, he is afflicted while he lives at the thought of what he ſhall be when he is dead; he grieves that worms ſhould eat him, and that his fleſh ſhould corrupt and rot in the earth. What *Job* ſpeaks (*chap.* 21. 23.) in direct oppoſition to this point, is yet a clear proof of this interpretation: *He ſhall be brought to the grave, and remain in the tomb, the clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him*: Now in the ſame ſence that the clods of

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the valley are sweet to some dead men, they may be said to be painful unto others. Some are very desirous to die; to such the clods of the valley are sweet, that is, it pleaseth them as much to lie in the grave, as to go to a perfumed bed, or to rest upon a bed of Roses: Others are very unwilling to die, to such the grave is a prison of darkness and astonishment. Their living flesh hath pain upon them, while they consider that their dead flesh must consume. Or pain and mourning are here ascribed to dead men, as speech and joy are often in Scripture ascribed to Trees and Stones, and Corn-fields (liveless, insensible or irrational creatures personating or taking upon them those actions which are proper unto man) by the Figure *Prosopopeia*.

Intelligo per Prosopopeiã post mortem, cum Aben Ezra. *Mer.*

Secondly, The Text may be rendred out of the Hebrew thus, *While his flesh is upon him, he shall have pain; and while his soul is within him, he shall mourn*; that is, he shall be in pain and misery as long as he lives, especially while he lives (as a sick man doth) upon the borders and confines of death. The life of man, while he lives in health, is painful; but when *upon* sick and dying, he is fuller of pain. *Then his flesh* he is *him hath pain, and his soul within mourns*; he hath sorrow without, and sorrow within; which comprehends all sorts of sorrow: when the flesh is pained, and the soul mourns, what can be added to that pain and mourning? If the spirit be whole, it will sustain the infirmities of the body; if the body be whole, it will somewhat allay the infirmities of the mind; but when the flesh is in pain, and the soul mourns, natural misery is compleat; for then all man is in misery. Flesh and spirit, body and soul, are all of man. And in all this *Job* doth not speak his speculation, but his experience; he felt what he said, and endured himself what he delivered unto others.

A verme super eo dolebit. Targ.

I might here draw out observations about the troubles of mans life, and the quickness of his sorrows in the approaches of death: but these points have occurred before, and therefore I shall not renew any discourse upon them in this place.

Thus I have (through the continued help of Christ) finished the Commentary of this fourteenth Chapter, and of *Job's* whole Answer to the Charge of *Zophar*, the last of his three Friends; and so of the whole first Charge of his three Friends, and of his Answers to all three. It seems they were all unsatisfied in his Answers, as much as they were about his person; and therefore they begin in order as they began. *Eliphaz* leads the Battel a second time, and that more fiercely then before; he falls upon *Job*, not so much with stronger arguments, as with harder words; rather reproving, then arguing with him, and reproving him with much heat, if not with some bitterness of spirit; as will appear (if the hand of God shall lead us yet further) in publishing the explication of that his second congress.

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH

AND SEVENTEENTH CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER:

To those especially of this *CITY*, who have been the MOVERS, and continue the PROMOTERS of this WORK.

SOLOMON, *who made many Books, tells us (towards the end of one of them,* Eccl. 12. 12.) That, of making many Books there is no end; and, that much study is a wearineſs to the fleſh. *But, while* Solomon *ſpeaks thus, doth he not at once blot thoſe many Books which himſelf had written, and diſcourage others from writing any more?* Though ſtudy be a wearineſs to the fleſh, *yet ('tis granted) that's no ſufficient reaſon why we ſhould deſiſt (the fleſh muſt be wearied and hard wrought, 'tis good it ſhould be ſo) but there's no colour of reaſon, why we ſhould begin that, which either cannot be finiſhed and brought to an end, or which is to no end, when 'tis brought to an end and finiſhed. How then* ſaith Solomon, *that* of making many Books there is no end? *His ſcope clears this ſcruple; for, having read his Son a Lecture upon the vanity of the Creature, and having given him many excellent advices, for the due ſteering of his courſe through this world, he applies all in the former part of this Verſe.* And further, by theſe, my Son, be admoniſhed. *Let what is now written take upon thy heart, and be accepted with thee. For* (verſ. 10.) The Preacher ſought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. *Again* (verſ. 11.) The Words of the wiſe are as Goads and Nayles faſtned by the Maſters of Aſſemblies, which are given from one ſhepherd: *Therefore, let theſe words, like goads, put thee on, and like nayles, faſten thee to the obedience of my counſels.* By theſe, my ſon, be admoniſhed: *As if he had ſaid,* Let not this Book, which diſcovers the vanity of all worldly things, be accounted vain: If this Book prevail not with thee, if it maſter not thy judgment, and mannage not thy affections, 'tis to no end for me to make many Books; ſeeing this is cloathed with as much compleatneſs of rule to direct, as a Book of this Argument, can be; and is ſtampt with as much ſtrength of authority to command, as any Book, of any Argument, can be: And further, why ſhouldeſt thou my ſon, put me to the making of many Books? What if I could make many with as much eaſe to my own ſpirit, as I have made this one, which was given me in immediately by the Spirit; yet thou canſt not ſtudy (*or, as we put in the Margin,* read) many Books without wearineſs to the fleſh.

So then, though Solomon *might have had juſt ground to put the affectation both of writing and reading many Books, upon the file of his obſerved vanities; yet he doth not diſoblige from the ſtudy of neceſſary and ſerious Books; nor at all condemn thoſe many Monuments of profitable Learning, which induſtrious Pens have in any Age bequeathed to Poſterity. He indeed (which is yet but a ſecond deſign, if it be at all the deſign of that place) takes us off from vain ſtudies, and cenſures thoſe Books (be they few as well as many) which have no tendency to make any man, either the wiſer, or the better by reading them. Nor can thoſe* Books, how many *ſoever they are, be (to their diſparagement) called* Many, *which center in, and promote (what is but one in every kind) any kind of truth, chiefly that which we call divine or holy Truth. Any* one *uſeleſs, or erroneous* Book *is* too many: *Many uſeful and Orthodox* Books *are but* One. *The* five Books *of* Moſes *are but* One Law. *The* four Books *of the Birth, Life and Death of* our bleſſed Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt,

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are but One Gospel: *All the* Books *of both Testaments are but* One Book. *Upon which account, we may also say, that, all those* many and many Books *which faithfully interpret that* one Book, *are but* one Book. *And though of making many such Books, there should (as I conceive there will) be no end till this World ends, as End is taken for ceasing to make them; yet of making many such Books, there is an end; yea, many noble ends, as End is taken for the good or benefit which comes by making them. The* making *of such* Books *is good, and a benefit to the Reader, as communicating to him those* manifestations of the Spirit which are given to every man (*to whom they are given*) to profit withal: *The word* (τὸ συμφέρον) *there used by the Apostle, signifies such a profit as streameth out to community. The* making *of such* Books *is also good, and a benefit to the* Maker, *as being an improvement of his Time and Talents, to his own peace and his Masters glory. 'Tis reward beyond all the world can give, for any* Work, *that God hath glory, and man peace, in doing it. As this small piece of* work *is directed to these last mentioned ends, and (as it ought) principally to the first of them; so, that it may reach the former, by adding a Mite or two to the Treasury of the Readers* knowledge *in the* best things, *and by being his encouragement to walk in the* best wayes, *is the Hope and Prayer, and the reaching of it, will be indeed a very rich reward and payment of*

May 22. 1650. Your very Affectionate Friend and

Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE FIFTEENTH, SIXTEENTH, AND SEVENTEENTH CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XV. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Then anſwered Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *and ſaid,*

Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge? And fill his belly with the East-wind?

Should he reaſon with unprofitable talk? Or with ſpeeches wherewith he can do no good?

Yea, thou caſteſt off fear, and reſtraineſt prayer before God.

For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chuſeſt the tongue of the crafty.

Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: Yea, thine own lips teſtifie againſt thee.

WE are come to the ſecond Section of this great diſpute, between *Job* and his three Friends: they have all ſpoken one turn, and now they return to ſpeak: *Eliphaz*, who led the firſt charge, leads the ſecond, and that with a very violent march, againſt this ſorrowful man. Yet we are not to conceive *Eliphaz* upon any deſign to revile his perſon, or to vex his ſpirit: That were moſt unſuteable in any Friend, much more (ſuch we ſuppoſe *Eliphaz* to have been) in a godly friend: Charity ſuggeſts a fairer interpretation of this procedure, that he ſpake thus harſhly, and dealt thus roughly, being moved by ſome unwary paſſages in *Job*'s diſcourſe, not well underſtood or miſapplyed. At which ſtone how many ſtumble at this day! Firſt, Miſconceiving, and then cenſuring their Brethren; being firſt offended without any juſt cauſe given, and then giving juſt cauſe of offence. Had we once learned to expound each others actions, ſpeeches, and opinions, by the rules of Charity, we ſhould not ſo often, no nor at all break the Laws of Love. We ſhall make a good improvement of this failing in *Job*'s Friend, if it may be our warning (in dealing) to deal better with our Friends.

Non malidicendi ſtudio ferebatur, quod à bono viro prorſus alienum eſſet. Pined.

There are three parts in this ſpeech; in the firſt *Eliphaz* appears by way of reproof, and reprehenſion, which extends it ſelf from the beginning of the Chapter, to the end of the thirteenth Verſe; and he reproves *Job* upon five

points of error, or misbehaviour, of all which he conceived him guilty.

First, He reproves him of folly, or for speaking that which was unworthy a wise man, in the second and third Verses, *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge?* &c.

Secondly, He reproves him of prophaneness, or for doing that which was unworthy a godly man, at the fourth Verse, *Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God.* The sum of both is, *Thou speakest unwisely, and thou actest wickedly:* Which he takes for so plain a charge, that he makes him his own Accuser, as if there needed no evidence but his Conscience, though he had (as *Eliphaz* misjudged) daubed up the matter with fair words, and colourable pretences (*ver.* 5.6.) *Thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity: Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips testifie against thee.*

Thirdly, He reproves him of pride, and arrogance, of self-conceit, and overweening his own parts, and positions (*ver.* 7.8,9,10.) *Art thou the first man that was born, or wast thou made before the hills,* &c. As if he had said, *Thou carryest it, as if thou hadst engrossed all wisdom, as if thou hadst more knowledge and understanding, more learning and experience, then any man; yea, then all men living.*

Fourthly, He reproves him, for slighting and undervaluing the counsels and the comforts tendered to him by his Friends, at *Vers.* 11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee?*

Fifthly, He reproves him for his confident sticking, or adhering to his own principles, at the twelve and thirteen Verses, *Why doth thy heart carry thee away,* &c. Thus he repoves his morals in the first part of his discourse,

In the second, he confutes his Doctrinals, or that which he supposed *Job* had asserted; *sc. His own purity and perfections* (Vers. 14, 15, 16.) *What is man that he should be clean? Behold he putteth no trust in his Saints,* &c.

Eliphaz *asseruisset tantum malos hic à Domino affligi, idem ille nunc sed apertius ostendit.* Merc.

In the third place, he labours to maintain his own Assertion, that God doth afflict none but wicked men, *Who ever perished being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?* Chap. 4.7. This he doth by the authority of the Learned, and from the experiences of the Ancient, *ver.* 7. to the end of the Chapter: *I will shew thee, hear me, and that which I have seen I will declare; which wise men have told from their Fathers, and have not hid it,* &c. These are the parts, and this is the resolution of the whole Chapter.

Verse. 1. **Then answered Eliphaz the Temanite, and said.**

ὑπολαβὼν *excipiens.* Sept. *Quilibet pro suis sociis velut in solidum respondet, ut nunc patet. Sopharis enim defensionem contra Jobum manifeste assumit* Eliphaz. Bold.

Then; That is, when *Job* had made an end of answering *Zophar*, then *Eliphaz* answered or replyed upon *Job.* That's properly a replication, which takes off the answer given to a former Argument; and in this *Eliphaz* also makes a defence for his Brethren, *Zophar* and *Bildad.* These three stood to one another, as much as any one of them did for himself; as if they had all entred Bond, and given security for reciprocal assistance. Thus the dispute grows hot, but still 'tis orderly, according to that Apostolical Canon, (1 *Cor.* 14.29.) *Let the Prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. Eliphaz* is now up, let us consider what he saith.

Verse 2. **Should a wise man utter vain knowledge?**

The Question denyes; he should not: No man should; least of all he.

The Wise man is here opposed to the *crafty man*, at the fifth Verse. There is a wide difference between wisdom and craft, between prudence and cunning: *A crafty man knoweth what is good, but he commonly doth what is evil; he is able to see the right, but if it be not for his turn, he turns from it, and cares not to do wrong. A wise man is he that knoweth how to distinguish between good and evil, and ever aims to act what is good; his understanding is well enlightned, and his conscience binds him to follow the light of his understanding; as he can see what is just and right, so he cannot but embrace and do it.* A wise man, in Scripture-language, is a holy man, and a fool is a wicked man; holiness is the best wisdom, and wickedness is the worst of folly. *Eliphaz* seems to admit *Job*'s challenge of being a wise man, that he might check him with more advantage for speaking so unlike one: As if he had said, *Should a moral wise man,* much more a spiritual wise man; should he that is, or pretends to be thus wise (as thou dost, should he) *utter vain knowledge?*

Job at the twelfth Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 2,3,4. objected ignorance, or but popular knowledge to his Friends; *I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferiour to you; who knoweth not such things as these?* As if he had said, *You think your selves among knowing men, the highest in knowledge; but who knoweth not such things as these? Eliphaz* turns it here upon *Job*, by the way of recrimination or counter-charge, he brings in a cross Bill: *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge? Thou dost arrogate to thy self the reputation of a wise man; but art thou wise, who speakest at such a rate of folly? The image of thy mind is stampt upon thy words, it may be seen as well as heard what thou art, by what thou speakest.*

רעת רוח *Scientiam venti vel ventosam, i. e. vanam. Numquid sapiens respondebit scientiam venti, vel scientiam ventosam.* Merc. *Numquid sapiens respondebit quasi in ventum loquens.* Vulg.

Vain knowledge. The letter of the Hebrew is, *Knowledge of wind*, or *windy knowledge:* The Metaphor is elegant; vain knowledge is justly called windy knowledge: Vain knowledge makes a great bluster, and noise, like the wind, but it passeth away, and though we cannot tell whither it goes, yet we may easily tell whence it comes, even from the fancy, and out of the mouth of a foolish man. It was usual of old, to call that which is *vain, windy*; those despisers of holy Counsels, and Divine Alarms, given by the Prophets, said, *The Prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them,* Jer. 5.13, That is, both the Doctrine and the threats which these Propphets utter, are vain and ineffectual; they will do us neither good nor evil; no mans finger shall ake, though their tongues ake with talking.

The Prophet *Hosea* at once reproves and terrifies the *Jews* in this language, *They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind* (Hos. 8.7.) To sow the wind, is to do a vain thing; our actions are as seed; such as we sow, such shall we reap; they sowed sin, and they reaped trouble. Themselves sowed the wind by what they did; and they thought the Prophets sowed the wind in what they spake: And indeed the words of the Prophets were wind, as the peoples works were, in referenee to the issue; those produced a whirlwind to scatter their contemners, as these did to scatter their actors. The old Satyrist calls *vain words, bubly toyes,* because such words are like a bubble, full of wind (possibly full of wit) but empty of wisdom and good instruction.

Bullatas nugas utpote similes bullis vento plenis, Pers. *Sat.* 5.

Should a wise man utter vain knowledge? The Scripture calls that vain:

First, Which is unprofitable, these mutually expound each other, *Eccles.* 1.2, 3.) *Vanity of vanity, saith the Preacher,* &c. *What profit hath a man of all the labour which he taketh under the Sun.* There's most vanity, where there is least profit; and where there is no profit at all, there is nothing at all but vanity. *Turn not aside from following the Lord* (saith *Samuel*) *for then should you go after vain things which cannot profit.* 1 Sam. 12.20,21.

Secondly, The Scripture calls that and those vain, which hath or have no solidity in them; vanity hath so little weight in it, that when the Spirit would express men who have no weight in them, he saith, *They are lighter then vanity,* Psal. 62.9.

Thirdly, The Scripture calls that vain which is alwayes moving, varying, and unsetled; (*Psal.* 144.4.) *Man is like to vanity, his dayes are as a shadow that passeth away:* He is therefore like to vanity, because he is so like a shadow, continually passing, but never continuing.

Fourthly, The Scripture often calls that vain which is sinful in practice, or unsound and erroneous in opinion; *I hate vain inventions* (saith *David*) *but thy Law do I love.* Whatsoever opposes either truth of Doctrine, or purity of Worship, is a vain invention of man, and opposite to the Law of God; he *utters vain knowledge*, who utters false Principles which subvert the Faith, or superstitious forms which endanger the life and power of godliness. *Eliphaz* supposed, that somewhat of vanity in all these notions, was rallyed together into the discourse of *Job*, that it was light and frothy, that it was erroneous and full of incongruity, especially (which carries all these in it) that it was worthless and unprofitable to the receiver, as he expresseth in the third Verse, *Should he reason with unprofitable talk?*

Should a wise man utter vain knowledge?

Hence

Hence Observe, *There is a vanity in some kind of knowledge, and folly in that which not a few call wisdom.*

It hath been the business of some mens knowledge, to find out a vanity in all sorts of knowledge. *Eliphaz* spake well for the matter, though ill to the man. *Job* did not utter vain knowledge; but, we know, too many do. The old Gentiles waxed *vain in their imaginations*, their very reasonings were vain; so the Original word tells us: It was not their fancy, but their understanding which was vain. The Apostle cautions the *Colossians*, *Let no man spoil you through Philosophy and vain deceit* (Col. 2. 8.) Philosophy in it self is an excellent knowledge, yet it may be vainly taught, and so deceive us, as to spoil us: I may say also, let no man spoil you through Divinity and vain deceit. Divinity, which is in it self the most excellent knowledge, the knowledge of God, may be vainly taught, and so deceive us, as to spoil us: *That knowledge which is best in it self, is vainest to us, when it is unduly or falsly uttered.*

ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν, vani facti sunt in ratiocinationibus suis. Baz.

Secondly, Observe, *It is most uncomely for those, who either have, or would have the reputation of wisdom, to speak vainly.*

Should a wise man utter vain knowledge? 'Tis no wonder to hear a vain man speak vainly, and for a fool to utter folly. *Do men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles? The vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisie, and to utter error against the Lord* (Isa. 32. 6.) If a fool, a vain man, or a vile person, speak thus, he speaks like himself; but if a wise, or a good man speak thus, he speaks so unlike himself, that the *Chaldee* Paraphrase puts not only an undecency, but an impossibility upon it, *Can a wise man utter vain knowledge? It is impossible.* Men act according to their principles; *Every thing is in working, as it is in being:* If there be wisdom in the heart, it will be heard at the tongue: A wholsome Fountain will send out wholsome waters: *He that is born of God* (saith the Apostle *John*, 1 *Epist.* 3. 9.) *cannot sin*; though he hath not a natural impossibility to sin, yet he hath a moral impossibility to sin, because *the seed of God remaineth in him*, the frame and bent of his heart is set another way: Now, as there is a moral impossibility, that a godly man should commit sin, so that a wise man should speak sin, or utter vain knowledge. A wise man speaks, as well as acts, by measure; he weighs what he saith, as much as what he doth; the tongue of the wise is as a Tree of life: Grace in the heart blossoms at the lips, in savory words, which minister grace unto the hearers. *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge?*

Estne possibile, &c. Chald. Paraph.

Sapiens ad mensuram sermones profert libra examinatos justitiæ, ut sit gravitas in sensu, in sermone pondus, in verbis modus. Ambros. l. 1. Offic. c. 3.

And fill his belly with the East-wind?

A belly full of windy meat is bad enough; a belly full of wind is far worse: But what is here meant by the belly? what by the East-wind?

Venter pro corde, cor pro intellectu & mente accipitur in Scriptura.

The belly is put for the heart and affections, together with all the intellectual powers of the mind, *John* 7. 38. *Out of his belly* (that is, out of his whole soul) *shall flow Rivers of living water.* This water is the holy Spirit; the holy Spirit is sometimes compared also to the wind. A wise man should desire that his heart may be filled, with the sweet gales and holy breathings of the Spirit of God, by heavenly inspirations: And shall he fill his heart with the East-wind of earthly passions?

קדים Pro רוח קדים Rab. Mardoch. *Observat. hunc ventum à Græcis appellari Apestoren quod à sole spiret atque eadem ratione appellatur à Latinis subsolanum.*

The word which we translate *East-wind*, signifies only the East; *Should he fill his belly with the East*; we rightly add the *East-wind*: He compares *Job*'s passions unto the wind, and unto the East-wind: To the wind, because of the vanity of them; to the East-wind, because of the hurtfulness of them. For, as by wind in the former clause he means worthless things, so by *East-wind* in this he means dangerous things. There are two Reasons why he expresses such inward motions by the *East-wind*.

Poetæ Eurum Appellant truculentum, rapidum, animosum, tumidum & indomitum. Ardore. Sub calidi & æstuantis aeris similitudine sermones ejus exasperatos & excandescentia plenos describit.

First, The *East-wind* is a vehement and strong wind; we read *Exod.* 14. 21. that when God divided the Red Sea, to make a passage for his people, he caused an *East-wind* to blow all night, and divided the Sea with the force of it. Poets describe the East-wind to be fierce, heady, turbulent, and impetuous; that's one ground of it.

Secondly, The East-wind is observed by Naturalists to be a hot and fiery wind: Hence the Vulgar translates, *Thou fillest thy belly with heat:* The East-wind parcheth and blasteth Corn and Fruits. *Pharaoh* beheld in his Dream seven Ears withered, thin, and blasted with the East-wind (*Gen.* 41. 23.) So then, under this notion of the East-wind, *Eliphaz* closely censures *Job*: First, That his thoughts were violent, and impetuous: Secondly, That they were angry, fiery and furious; as if coals were kindled in his bosom, and a flame ready to blaze at his lips: As if like *Paul*, while *Saul* (*Acts* 9. 1.) he *breathed out threatnings and slaughter*, or was inwardly heated with resolutions of revenge. The Prophet *Jeremy* saith, *The Word of God was as a fire in his bosome, and he could not refrain:* Many a mans breast is like a heated Oven, he is ready to consume all with the breath of it.

Jobo *attribuit vanitatem in sententia, tempestatem in affectu, imbecillitatem in argumento, superfluitatem in verbis.* Coc.

But why doth *Eliphaz* charge *Job* with such unruly perturbations? Some assign the reason from those words, *Chap.* 14. *v.* 14. where he desires that *God would even hide him in the grave*; he was so vext and troubled at the state wherein he lived, that he preferred death before it, and thought a not being in the world, better then a being in his condition. But we may rather leave the reason more at large, to all that vehemency of spirit, with which *Job* had prosecuted and pleaded his sorrowful case.

From the scope of *Eliphaz* in this part of his reproof, we may observe:

First, *That violent passions are the disguise of a wise man.*

We cannot see who he is, while he acts unlike himself: Anger lodgeth in the bosom of fools; and when it doth but intrude into the bosom of a wise man, he (for the time) looks like a fool.

Secondly, *Passions in the mind are like a tempest in the air they disturb others much, but our selves more.*

Many a man (like a Ship at Sea) hath been overset and sunk with the violent gusts and whirl-winds of his own spirit.

Observe thirdly, *He that fills his own mind with passionate thoughts, will soon fill the ears of others with unprofitable words.*

This is clear from that which goeth before, *He utters vain knowledge*; and it is clearer from that which follows after; when a mans thoughts are like a wind, his words (which are the first born of his thoughts) must needs be windy. A passionate man speaks all in passion, and sometimes cannot speak at all for passion; his extream desire to say much stops him from saying any thing: But whatsoever he saith, is the copy of his present self, fierce and boysterous. *The image and superscription of our hearts is stamped upon our words.* Some can speak better then they are; but usually men speak according to what they are, and then especially when they are (which passionate men for the most part are) not themselves. Thus it follows in the next Verse.

Verse 3. Should he reason with unprofitable talk?

Eliphaz speaks all Interrogatories; and these speak him in anger, if not in some distemper. Should he do this? and should he do that? do shew that either another hath very much done, what he should not; or that he who reproves him hath not such a spirit of meekness, as a reprover should, *Gal.* 6. 1.

The words shew the effect of what he taxed him with before: As if he had said, *Would you know what to expect from a passionate man, from a man whose belly is filled with the East-wind? You shall have him shortly filling your eares with an East-wind, even reasoning with unprofitable words:* And (as the next clause gives it, which is only an exposition of this) *With speeches wherewith he can do no good:* Some words are great doers, they do much hurt, or they do much good; and those words usually do some hurt, which can do no good; yea, that which is weak and unable to do good, may be strong and powerful to do evil. However, not to do good is to do evil, because it is every mans duty, whatsoever he doth, to be doing good: Here *Eliphaz* reproves *Job*'s words as evil, while he only saith, they do no good. And yet he saith

Cum interrogatione & stomachô legenda sunt hæc. Merc.

somewhat more then that, for he saith, *They can do no good*: It is ill not to do good actually; but not to have a possibility of doing good is far worse, When the Apostle would say his worst of the best of mans sinful flesh, he doth not only say, *It is not subject to the Law of God*, but adds, *Neither indeed can be* (Romans 8. 7.) So here, *Words wherewith a man can do no good*; How bad are they?

Hence Observe, First, *That which can do no good should not be spoken.*

Cui bono

Before we speak a word, we should ask this question, To what purpose, to what profit is it? Shall he that hears it be made more knowing, or more holy by it?

Observe Secondly, *Unprofitable talk is sinful; and speeches which do no good, are evil.*

Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment, *Matth.* 12. 37. And though a man be very busie, and take much pains in speaking, yet if his words be unprofitable, and his speeches such as can do no good, they will come under account as idle. Now, if unprofitable talk be sinful, and speeches that can do no good; then what is prophane talk, and speeches which do hurt, (infection gets quickly in at the ear) defiling the mind and corrupting the manners of those that hear them. The Apostle gives us the rule of speaking, both in the negative and in the affirmative (*Ephes.* 4. 29.) *Let no corrupt communications proceed out of your mouths, but that which is good to the use of edifying, which may administer grace to the hearer.* Again, (*Coloss.* 4. 6.) *Let your speeches be alwayes with grace*; that is, such as testifieth that there is grace in your heart, never speak a word but such as may stand with grace; yea, speak such words as may be a witness of grace, wrought in your selves, and a means of working grace in others. Let your words be *seasoned with salt*; the salt of our words is holiness and truth; prudence also is the salt of words; good words, and true, spoken unseasonably, may do hurt: Prudence teaches us the time when, and the manner *how to answer every man.*

Thirdly, Observe, *It is matter of just reproof against every man, to be unprofitable, and to do no good:*

Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen down and cast into the fire (Matth. 3. 10.) Some conceive that the word *Belial* comes from *Beli*, which in Hebrew signifies *Not*, and the word *Jagnal*, which here in the Text signifies to do good: Because a *Beliast*, or a Son of *Belial* is such a one as neither doth good to himself nor to any other. The unprofitable Servant who hid, and did not improve his Talent, shall be condemned: And he who uses his talent unprofitably and vainly, shall not escape: *Should he reason with unprofitable talk?*

Belial *ex* בלי *non* & יעל *quod in hiphil significat prodesse, ut denotet inutilem, qui nec sibi, nec aliis prodest.*

Thus far we have seen *Eliphaz* reproving *Job* of folly in speaking unlike, and below a wise man; he proceeds to reprove him for acting unlike, and below a godly man: This he sets home with a particle of aggravation.

Verse 4. Yea, thou castest off fear, and restrainest Prayer before God.

As if he had said, besides, or above all this, that thou hast uttered vain knowledge, words that cannot profit, thou hast also *cast off the fear of God*, &c. The word which we translate *to cast off*, signifies *to make void, to scatter, to dissolve, to break in pieces*; to make as nothing, or to make nothing of. It is often used in Scripture, for *breaking the Commandments of God*, implying such a breach as makes the Commandments void, which is the proper character of an evil heart; *A godly man may sin against the Commandments, but a wicked man would sin away the Commandments*; he would repeal the Law of God, and enact his own lusts: Such is the force of the word here, *Thou castest off fear.*

פיר *Rabefactasti, irritum feciſti, diſſovisti, fregiſti.*

There is a natural fear, and a spiritual fear; we are not to understand this Text of a natural fear (which is a trouble of spirit, arising upon the apprehension of some approaching evil) but of a spiritual: Fear is here put alone, but we are to take it with its best adjunct, *The fear of God*; for as the *word* sometimes is put alone, to signifie the word of God, as if there were no word but his; and as the word *Commandments* is put alone, to note the Commandments of God, as if no Commandments deserved the name, but only the Commandments of God; so *fear* is put alone, by way of excellency, for the fear of God; as importing, that his fear is excellent, and no fear to be desired but his. This Divine fear comes under a double notion:

First, It is taken for the holy awe or reverence we bear to God in our spirits, which is the worship of the first Commandment, and the sanctifying of God in our hearts.

Secondly, For the outward acts of Religion, which is the worship of the second Commandment, *Their fear is taught by the precepts of men* (Isa. 29. 13.) that is, their outward worship and Religion, is such as men have invented, not such as God hath appointed: Some take it here in the first sence only, *Thou castest off fear*; that is, thou castest off that awe, reverence, and regard thou owest to the Name of God; others understand it in the second, *Thou castest off fear*; that is, the outward worship and service of God: but I conceive we have that expressed in the next clause, *And restrainest prayer before God*; there he taxeth him with neglect of outward worship, and here with neglect of inward, *Thou castest off fear*; fear is as the bridle of the soul; fear holds us in compass, it is the bank to the Sea; fear keeps in the overflowing of sin, *Thou castest off fear.*

Timor hoc loco pro reverentia & tremore, potius quam pro religione & cultu, licet utrumque cohæreat. Pined.

But what cause had *Job* given *Eliphaz* to charge him with casting off the fear of the Lord; we find *Eliphaz* touching upon this point before, and upbraiding *Job*, (*Chap.* 4. 6.) *Is this thy fear?* Is this thy confidence? As if he had said, *Is all thy profession come to this?* Here he chargeth him expresly, *Thou hast cast off fear: Job* had not given him any just cause to speak or think thus hardly of him; but *Eliphaz* might possibly ground this accusation upon those words (*Chap.* 9. *v.* 23.) *This is one thing, therefore I said it, he destroyeth the perfect and the wicked*, &c. Which *Eliphaz* did interpret as a casting off the fear of God; hath he awful and reverent thoughts of God, who affirmeth, that God laugheth at the afflictions and tryals of his people? Again, *Chap.* 12. 6. *The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, into whose hands God bringeth abundantly:* Hath not this man cast off all fear of God, who dares say, the wicked prosper, and are secure? Is God become a friend to those that profess themselves enemies to him? Others refer the ground of this to *Chap.* 13. 21, 22. where he seems to speak boldly, and as some have taxed him, impudently, *Do not two things to me, withdraw thy hand from me*, &c. *Then call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me:* Hence *Eliphaz* concludes, surely, the man hath cast off the fear of God; he speaks to God as if he were Gods fellow, *Speak thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me:* Are these words becoming the great God of Heaven and Earth? Art not thou grown over bold with God? Dost thou speak as becomes the distance, that is between the Creator and the Creature? The Greek translates to this sence, *Thou speakest to God without any modesty*; thou hast put on a brazen face, and hardened thy heart against the fear of the Almighty. These shews of a ground *Eliphaz* might take, but *Job* had given him no real ground to pronounce this heavy censure, *Thou castest off fear:* But passing by the rigid Hypothesis of *Eliphaz*, we may from his words, as they are a Thesis, observe,

Nullo pudore loquutus es coram Deo. Symmach.

That to cast off the fear of God is highest wickedness.

To cast off the fear of God is the beginning of wickedness; as to entertain *The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom:* The word here used, signifieth not only the beginning but the top, the chief, the head and highest perfection of a thing: The fear of God is both first and last, the beginning and end of holiness. *To fear God, and keep his Commandments, is all man in goodness; to cast of the fear of God, is all man in sinfulness:* The beginning and end of wickedness: *It is ill not to have the fear of God; but it is far worse to cast off the fear of God:* It is ill not to chuse the fear of God (*Prov.* 1. 29.) but to reject the fear of the Lord, that is desperate; if once fear be cast off, all wickedness is let in; at the same door, at which the fear of

of the Lord goes out, any sin may enter: As *Abraham*, said, *The fear of God is not in this place, and they will kill me for my wives sake*: They have no impediment of lust to cast off, who have once cast off the fear of God. And as they who cast off this fear are ready to do or say any thing that is good; as they have no restraint upon them from iniquity, so they can easily restrain themselves from duty: The next words shew this.

Thou restrainest power before him.] Prayer is a principal part of the outward worship of God, and is both here and elsewhere put for the whole outward worship of God.

The word signifies also, *meditation*, *musing*, or *thinking*: So some render here, *Thou takest off conference with God*; thou wast wont to keep continual correspondence with Heaven, and maintain a sweet humble familiarity with God by holy meditation, but now thou art like a stranger, and comest not at him. But whether we translate the word by Prayer, or Meditation, the sence is the same; for praying is speaking to God; yea, an arguing and pleading with God: And so 'tis used in the titles of *Psal.* 102. & 142. The word which we render *to restrain*, signifies two things: First, To withdraw or stop: Secondly, To lessen and diminish, *Jer.* 48. 37. *Every beard clipt* or *diminished*: We may take it in both sences here, as reproving *Job* either for a total forbearance, and throwing up the duty of Prayer, or for shortning and abating it: Yet there is an opinion that *Job* is not here charged for lessening or abating, but for lengthening and increasing Prayer; *Thou castest off fear, and multipliest Prayer*: The Hebrew word notes the cutting or dividing of a thing into small pieces or portions; which is indeed to multiply it, and to make it, though not more in bulk, yet more in number, *Job* 36. 27. *Thou makest small the drops of rain*; that is, thou multipliest the drops of rain: So here, thou makest small thy Prayers, as so many drops of rain, thou hast never done dropping Prayers; thou dost mince thy supplications, or cut them out into many small shreads, as if thou didst hope to be heard for thy much speaking: Such were the silly devotions of the old superstitious Gentiles, which the hypocritical Pharisees imitated, and were therefore reproved by Christ, under the name of *vain repetitions* (*Matth.* 6. 7.) Of which fault a learned Interpreter, judges *Eliphaz*, reproving *Job* in this place. But I rather keep to our own Translation, *Thou restrainest Prayer*.

Here again it may be questioned, What cause had *Eliphaz* to charge *Job* with *restraining prayer*? The Jewish Writers say, it was because he denyed Providence, and so by consequence Prayer; for if God do not order the affairs of the world, the afflictions and deliverances of his people, why should we pray to him about them? Others refer it not to his denial of Providence, but to that which *Eliphaz* supposed a fundamental error against the Doctrine of Providence, *That God destroyeth the righteous and the wicked*; *that he laughs at the tryal of the innocent*. Now will any innocent man pray to God in his affliction, when he is told that God laughs at his affliction? Will any righteous man call upon God for help, when he is taught that God destroyeth the righteous? Who would serve a Master who gives such wages, and payes those that honour him with disgrace, yea, with destruction? So that *Job* is charged with restraining Prayer, according to this answer to the question, not because he totally forbore prayer himself, or perswaded others to forbear it; but because *Job*'s assertions were such as might yield those consequences, and cause many to suspend Prayer, or give over calling upon the Name of God in the day of trouble. We may be charged to say or do that, which flows from what we do or say, though we neither say nor do the thing it self.

Many are guilty of those errors consequentially, which yet they never affirmed thetically or directly. We may be so far from asserting, that we may professedly abhor an opinion which yet lyeth secretly under some of our assertions. We say justly, That the Pope is Antichrist, and that pure Popery is Antichristianism; yet the Pope doth not deny Christ, for the Pope thinks himself Christs Vicar upon earth, and therefore must needs acknowledge him to be come in the flesh; yet by consequence, the Pope is an opposer both of the Person and Offices of Christ, and Popish doctrine fights against the Truth of Christ. As prophane men *Profess they know God, yet in their works they deny him* (*Tit.* 1. 16.) So many erroneous persons profess they love and honour those holy truths and spiritual duties, which by consequences they indeed deny, as *Eliphaz* (though unduly) supposed *Job* had done the duty of Prayer. *Thou restrainest prayer before God.*

Taking the words abstractly, they yield us this useful Observation,

That it is an Argument of an evil heart, to shorten, or restrain, to lessen, or to give off Prayer in times of trouble.

That King spake to the height of prophaneness, when he said (2 *Kings* 6.) *This evil is of the Lord, and why should I wait on the Lord any longer?* When we have done waiting, we have done praying. No man will ask for that which he doth not expect to receive. How long soever affliction lasteth, so long prayer-season lasteth: If the Winter day of our trouble be a Summer day in length, if it be continued many dayes, yea, many months, and years, prayer should continue (*Psal.* 50. 15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble and I will hear, and thou shalt glorifie me*: Let the day of trouble be short or long, God looks to hear of us all that day. *Is any afflicted, let him pray*, saith the Apostle *James*; it is a duty to pray, when we are not afflicted, when we prosper in the world: But *is any man afflicted*, then is a special season for prayer. A sincere heart prayes alwayes, or continues in prayer; an hypocrite never loves to pray, and at two seasons he will restrain, or lay aside prayer: First, When he is got out, or thinks he hath prayed himself out of affliction. Prosperity and worldly fulness stop the mouth of prayer; and he hath no more to say to God, when he hath received much from God. Secondly, A hypocrite restrains prayer, when he perceives he hath got nothing by prayer; he sees he cannot, or fears he shall not get out of trouble, and therefore he will pray no more in trouble; his spirit fails, because his afflictions hold out. Upon which soever of these two grounds the hypocrite restrains prayer, he shews the wickedness of his heart. If from the former, he shews, that he bears no true love to God; if from the latter, he shews, that he hath no true faith in God, or dares not trust him. Further, to cast off prayer, is to cast off God; and he that lives without prayer in the world, lives without God in the world: Hence *the Heathen who know not God, and the Families that call not upon his Name*, are joyned together, or rather are the same (*Jer.* 10. 25.) Further, to restrain prayer, is worse then not to pray: The latter notes only a neglect of the duty; the former a distast of the duty. To give over an holy exercise is more dangerous then not to begin or take it up. The one is the prophane mans sin, the other is the hypocrites. *Thou restrainest prayer*: And he that doth not utter prayer with his mouth, will soon utter wickedness with his mouth, as it follows.

Verse 5. *For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chusest the tongue of the crafty.*

Here *Eliphaz* explains, and proves what he said before, that *Job* had cast off the fear of God, and restrained prayer: As if he had said, *If thou hadst kept in holy fear, that would have kept in thine iniquity: Hadst thou not restrained prayer, that would have restrained and bridled down thy sin; but thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and that sheweth that prayer is restrained, and that fear is cast off*: Here is a demonstration of it; If you should come to a Princes Court, and see a great croud about the door, you would say, the Porter is there, he stops and examines them; if at another time you see all going in as fast as they please, you will say, the Porter is out of the way. Thus while the fear of the Lord stands like a Porter at the door of the soul, we keep our thoughts and actions in compass; we examine what goes in, and what comes out: but when once that's gone, order is gone. Any thing may be done by him, who fears not, who prayes not. Thou hast cast off fear, and restrained prayer, for thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, out it comes as fast as it can: I need not tell thee wherein thou hast offended, thy mouth pours it out.

Detrahis confabulationem cum Deo. Jun.

שיחה *Meditatio, loquela, etiã oratio.*

גרע *Significat, 1. prohibere, 2. diminuere Non est intelligendum quasi arguatur* Job, *quod remiserit vel prohibuerit orandi studium: sed potius è contra, quod multiloquio, vel battologia usus erat.* Bold. *Hoc est vitiũ dictum à* Theophrasto. μικρολογία *& proprie à Græcis dicitur* λεπτολογία *minutiloquium. Minuere stillas aquarum, est minutissimas frequentissimasque pluvias guttas mittere.*

Hebræi ad id referunt, quod putant Jobum *Dei providentiã negasse, quod nos non putamus* Mea, q.d. *ista aut assertio & doctrina, quod mala & supplicia eveniant bonis & justis tollit religionem, & publicum divini numinis cultũ.*

Hic proponitur tanquam ingens periculum quod homo afflictus remittat orandi studium.

Non opus est ut te doceã in quo pecces, cum ipse tuus sermo docet te iniquum esse. Reus verbis oris tui. Sept.

Hence Note, *That the evil which is in the heart will out at the mouth, unless prayer and the fear of God restrain it.*

As the good that is in the heart will come out of the mouth, especially when prayer unlocks the mouth. *David* prayes, *Lord open thou my lips*, and then he undertakes for his mouth, that it shall *shew forth the praise of God.* (Psal. 51. 1.) *My heart is inditing a good matter* (the heart doth this in prayer or meditation) What follows? *My tongue is as the Pen of a ready Writer:* Heavenly thoughts in the heart shoot out at the tongue in heavenly words. When the heart is devising of a good matter, the tongue will be swift to speak, and set all to a good tune. Thus also while the heart is inditing an evil matter, the tongue runs to evil: Such a man needs not learn from others, he hath a root of bitterness in himself: Hence our Saviour concludes (*Mat.* 12. 37.) *By thy words thou shalt be condemned, and by thy words thou shalt be justified:* Why shall we be condemned by our words? The Prophet complains of those who made a man an offender for a word; I answer, our words shew what we are, they declare our hearts; as a man may be discovered of what Country he is, when he speaks, so of what spirit he is. *The tongue is the scholar of the heart, and speaks what that dictates:* A man is justly condemned by evil words, because they testifie that he is evil. *Thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity.*

Qualis vir talis oratio, Mens mala linguam movet & vos fingit ad improbos sensus neque aliud os loquitur quã quod interior suggerit atque imperat sensus.

Observe Secondly, *There are some iniquities which are more properly ours then some others are.*

Thine iniquity: *Job* had (as *Eliphaz* seems to suggest) a kind of peculiarity in it. As God owns some people in a special manner; though all the people of the earth be his, yet they are his beloved people: So man owns some sin in a special manner; though a corrupt heart hath a relation to all the sins in the world, yet some one is his beloved sin; and may be called by way of eminency, his iniquity. 'Tis his, as his Houses and Lands, as the Money in his Purse, and the Garments on his back are his.

Observe Thirdly, *Every man is most ready to act and utter his special iniquity.*

Thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity. There are some sins in a mans heart, which possibly he may never utter all his dayes; but he must be talking of, or acting his beloved one. Hence *David* speaks it, as a high work of grace in him (*Psal.* 18. 23.) *I have kept my self from mine iniquity.* Even a godly man, who disowns every sin, hath some one sin more his own then others. This finds him work (not to do it) but to keep himself from doing it.

And thou chusest the tongue of the crafty.] As if he had said, Thou wast wont to speak prayer, now thou speakest pollicy, thou dealest cunningly and deceitfully with us, not plainly and clearly. Why, what had *Job* spoken or done, that should gain him the disreputation of *a crafty man*: Some conceive *Eliphaz* hinting at those words (*Chap.* 6. 24.) *Teach me, and I will hold my tongue,* &c. Thou speakest as if thou wert willing to be taught, shew me my error, and I will turn from it; yet this is from craft, not from conscience. For though thou seemest to be willing to receive instruction, yet thou keepest close to thy opinion, and wilt not part from it. We shall sometimes hear a man speaking very ingenuously, convince me that I am in an error, and I will relinquish it; and yet he resolves to hold his own. To desire instruction is grown into a complement, but 'tis by the *tongue of the crafty:* The instrument is here put for the effect, the tongue for speech, as *Isa.* 50. 4. *Thou hast given me the tongue of the learned*; what to do? *that I may know to speak a word in season.*

Lingua pro doctrina / Metonymicè, causa vel instrumentũ pro effectu.

Again, the word (Crafty) is taken in a good sence by some Interpreters: So the tongue of the crafty is the tongue *of the wise*; as if he had said, Thou seemest to speak very wisely, soberly and holily: Others render it thus, *Thou shouldest have chosen the tongue of the wise*; that is, thou shouldst have spoken more reverently and discreetly, whereas thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity; but rather *the crafty*, is the subtil man. As if he had said, Thou lovest to play the Sophister, to put fair colours on a bad matter, and wilt not let things appear as indeed they are. *Be wise as Serpents*, is Christs advice; but he adds, *Be innocent as Doves:* Serpentine wisdom must be mixed with Dove-like innocence; the craftiness of the Serpent alone, belongs only to the seed of the Serpent.

Lingua erudita vel doctrinæ, i. e. ruditè, sapienter, ornate, suaviter loquẽdi facultas.

עָרוּם *Versutus, malignus, calidus. Calidos hic vocat, qui cum male sentiant & agant, inveniunt tamen causationes & colores.* Coc.

Lastly, Whereas he saith, *Thou chusest the tongue of the crafty*; he heightens his accusation, and would represent this good man to the eye of the world in a blacker hue. To chuse, notes a mixt act both of the understanding, will, and affections; and it seems here to be opposed to that wicked act (but not in the wickedness of it) wherewith he bespattered *Job* in the former Verse, *Thou castest off fear.* To *cast off*, or reprobate, is contrary to electing, or *chusing*, and so is the fear of God to craft. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do thereafter; but craft is only the corruption of wisdom, and they have no good understanding who do thereafter. Now, when Divine fear and humane craft stand in competition, for a man to give his vote for craft, and to refuse, at least to let pass the fear of the Lord, this is one of the highest growths of sinful corruption. He that doth thus, needs neither Judge nor Witness against him, he is both himself: So *Eliphaz* resolves it in the next Verse.

Verse 6. Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I; thine own lips testifie against thee.

This Verse hath nothing in it that needs a Comment. The intendment of it may be thus given, *It is as clear as the light, that thou castest off fear, and restrainest prayer before God*; for as much as *thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou hast chosen the tongue of the crafty; these things are so plain that I need not prove them, thine own mouth shall condemn thee, and not I.* As the Judge said at Christs tryal, *What need we any Witnesses, ye have heard his blasphemy, Matth.* 26. 65. Witnesses of old were wont to put their hand upon the head of the Offender, and say, *It is thy own wickedness which condemns thee, and not we*; much more doth their own wickedness condem them, who may justly be condemned without witness.

Testes olim manus super caput rei imponentes dicere solebant, Malitia tua te adduxit ad mortem, non nos. Lyran.

Hence Observe, *That self-condemnation is the strongest condemnation.*

Luke 19. 22. Christ tells the unprofitable Servant, *Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked Servant.* The obstinate Heretick is *condemned of himself*, Titus 3. 14. Not that the Heretick doth condemn himself, formally, he doth not say, I am in an error; you can hardly bring an Heretick to that; and when you do, he ceaseth to be an Heretick. It is his stiffness in opinion, which fastens the reproach of Heresie upon him; but he is said to condemn himself, because holding such an erroneous opinion, he doth virtually condemn himself, and plainly declares, that he is fallen from the truth, or hath alwayes opposed it.

The Prophet, (*Isa.* 44. 9.) saith of Image-makers, *They are all of them vanity, their delectable things shall not profit them, and they are all their own witnesses; they see not, nor know, that they may be ashamed:* Images shew what both they and their worshippers are; though no man should speak a word against them, they having tongues and cannot speak, speak enough against themselves; their silence, or dumbness rather, proclaims aloud to all the world, that they are vain and dunghil Deities; they can do neither good nor evil, to shew themselves Gods; and they who worship them do not so much *as shew themselves men*, Isa. 46. 8. In all this they are their *own witnesses.* They cannot but see their own blindness and folly, who speak to that which cannot hear, and lift up their eyes to that which cannot see: Every sinner hath reason to condemn himself with his own mouth, and why an Idolater doth it not, no reason can be given, but that which was toucht even now from the Prophet, he wants his reason, and is therefore in a holy scorn advised, to *shew himself a man.* While we acquit our selves with our own mouths, and bear witness to our selves, our witness is of no validity, nor are we at all acquitted; but while we condemn our selves with our own mouths, and bear witness against our selves, our witness is strong, and we are abundantly condemned.

VERS.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Art thou the first man that was born, or wast thou made before the Hills?
Hast thou heard the secret of God? and doest thou restrain wisdom to thy self?
What knowest thou that we know not? what understandest thou that is not in us?
With us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder then thy Father.
Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee?

THe first part of this Chapter, is reprehensory. In the former context two points of reproof were opened: First, *Jobs* supposed folly in the second and third Verses: Secondly, his wickedness, in the fourth, both which were aggravated in the fifth and sixth.

In this Context *Eliphaz* gives him a third and a fourth reproof; a third, for the high conceit he had of himself, and a fourth, for the low conceit he had of the comforts of God, tendered to him by his Friends; he reproves him for the high conceit he had of himself, in two things: First, as if *Job* had thought his experience greater then any mans, *Art thou the first man that was born?* &c. *Vers.* 7. Secondly, as if he had thought himself immediately inspired, *Hast thou heard the secret of God*, &c. *Vers.* 8.

This he illustrates by a twofold opposition in the ninth and tenth Verses; First, by the opposition of himself and his Friends in point of knowledge and understanding unto *Job*: As if he had said, *Thou lookest upon us as underlings, as men unworthy to carry thy Books after thee, or to be named the same day, but what knowest thou, that we know not? What understandest thou, which is not in us?* Vers. 9. *Thou art not so weighty, but we hope we may very well ballance thee, and say* (without pride or partiality) *that our parts are as good as thine.* Secondly, by the opposition of their party to him and his, *Vers.* 10. *With us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder then thy Father*: As if he had said, *Our party equalls thine, as well as our parts; Hast thou aged men on thy side? so have we; Hast thou the authority of gray-hairs to back thy opinion? So have we. Hast thou thy Fathers Copy to shew for these thy Tenets? So have we. We are able to make as great a boast of Antiquity as thou thy self canst: Do not think that we have received our Learning from some new fangled Sect, or from upstart Opinionists of yesterdayes edition: No, be it known unto thee, With us are both the gray-headed, and very aged men*, &c.

As thus he reproves *Jobs* high thoughts of himself, so in the fourth place, The low thoughts which he had of them, and the pains they had taken with him, *Vers.* 11. *Are the consolations of God small with thee?* &c.

Vers. 7. Art thou the first man that was born.

Or, as some read it, *Art thou born before the first man?* This is a high strain of Rhetorick, it is impossible to be before the first; for as there *is nothing less then what is least*, so nothing was before the first; but as we say, *Such a man will see the last man born*, when we see him resolved to stay the longest upon a business, or desirous to live very long: So we may say, *Such a man was born before the first*, or *surely he is the first man that was born*, whom we see highly conceited of his own antiquity: And indeed when *Eliphaz* asks the question, *Art thou the first man that was born?* His meaning is to taxe *Job* for *a Puny*, or a young man, yet arrogating to himself the glory of longest experience; as if he had said, *Thou hast told us that we are but of yesterday, and objectest novelty against us, to derogate from our authority, yet surely thou art none of the eldest, thou art not older then* Adam (I believe) *thou wast not before the first man, that ever was, no nor the first man*: It is usual in many Languages, to compare those who are lowest in any degree to the highest, and the meanest to the greatest, Ironically, or in a way of scorn; thus 'tis said to a Coward, or a white liver'd-fellow, *Thou art no Achilles*; to a Dwarf or one of a low stature, *Thou art no Goliah*; to one of weak parts, surely, *Thou art no Solomon, no Aristotle*; so of one that is but young, *Surely thou art not Nestor, thou art not Adam, the first man that ever was.*

Job gave *Eliphaz* and his Friends some colour to twit him thus, while he said (*Chap.* 13. 5.) *O that you would altogether hold your peace, and it should be your wisdoms.* This was as if he had said, *You are but ignorant, and the more you speak the more you discover your ignorance*; And again, *Chap.* 12. 12. *With the ancient is wisdom, and with length of dayes is understanding*; where he secretly upbraided them as Juniors, and that therefore little or no heed was to be taken to what they spake; now saith *Eliphaz, Art thou the first man born?* that is, *Art thou the wisest man living?* He who thinks himself the first man, takes himself for a very wise man, even as wise as *Adam*, who was not only the Father, but the Teacher, and Instructer, of his posterity: In which sense the Jews said to Christ, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham, Joh.* 8. 57. Thou speakest as if thou wert an old man; we know thy age, thou art but a young man, yet thou speakest at the rate of thousands, as if thou wert as old as *Abraham*, or the *ancient of dayes* among men, *Art thou the first man?* Or,

Wast thou made before the hills?

Some conceive, that by the *Hills* he means the *Angels*, but that Exposition smells too much of the Allegory: Take the *Hills* litterally, for the uppermost parts or bosses of the earth; the Original is, *Wast thou formed or made before the face of the hills?* which is an Hebraism. Some interpret the Hills by a Synecdoche, for the whole earth, then the sense is, Wast thou formed before the earth? The first man was formed out of the earth, & art thou older then the earth? So that here *Eliphaz* puts him off by a challenge of greater antiquity then in the former part of the Verse, *Wast thou the first man that was born, or wast thou made before the earth?* the earth is elder then man, both had not the same birth-day.

Philippus sequutus Augustinū, contendit hoc loco angelos colliū nomine intelligi. Ad facies colliū. Heb. Num formatus es ante mundū conditū; nam colles una cū terra formati fuerūt aliquot diebus ante hominē. Drus.

Again, as the Hills are a part of the earth, so they may be said to be born the first of any part of the earth: For the earth was covered with water, it *was a great deep*, till a word of command came from God, that the waters should retire to certain Channels, and receptacles which his wisdom had assigned them; now when the waters were thus gathered and put into those vast Vessels, then the Hills, and Mountains, which are the highest parts of the earth appeared first, and so the Mountains are elder in regard of view, then the Plains and Valleys of the earth. That is said to be first which appeareth first: So then, whether we take hills by a Synecdoche, for the whole earth, or plainly for a part of the earth, both reach at highest antiquity. There is an opinion (I confess) which if true, takes away the ground of this notion, That hills and mountains grew up, or were as so many excrescencies of the earth, since it was created, and that they grow daily (as Naturalists express it) by *Juxtaposition*. But I fully adhere to their judgement (under which this notion stands safe) that the earth was distinguisht into hills, plains, and valleys, by the same immediate power which created it, though I easily grant that many hills have been accidentally caused, and cast up since, especially in the deluge. And this doth more advance the wisdom of God in the frame of this mighty mass, which hath in it greater ornament, and yields greater delight by this variety, then if it had been smoothed all over into Plains and Levels.

Quod prius conspicuum est antiquius esse videtur.

Further, to clear the Text, consider, that it is usual in Scripture, when a thing of great antiquity is spoken of, to compare it to the Hills, *Prov.* 8. 23, 24, 25. *Wisdom* (which is *Christ*) speaks thus, *I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, ere the earth was, when there were no depths I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were setled; before the Hills was I brought forth; while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the World.* Where note also by the way a full confirmation of the opinion even now asserted, that God made the Hills immediately, which are here also called *The highest part of the dust of the earth.* Again (*Psal.* 90. 2.) *O Lord thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations*; which he explains in the next words, *Before the mountains were brought forth from everlasting*

Quod longè antiquum, montium & colliū comparatione indicari solet.

Nūquid ante primum hominē natus es, Pagn. Non natu minus minimo. Est usitatum in omni, ut veor, lingua, ut qui in gradu aliquo ad quādam mediocritatē non pervenere, imo qui in infimo constitere gradu, cū eo qui maxime excellit comparentur; cum ironiatamē, ut si de homine timido dicas, non es cum Achille conferendus &c. neq; aliud voluisse Eliphazem *arbitror quā ejus esse ætatis* Jobum *in qua non multū soleat esse sapientia. Sanct.*

lasting to everlasting, thou art God. Old *Jacob* speaks this Divine Philosophy upon his death-bed, while he was blessing his son *Joseph* (*Gen.* 49. 26.) *The blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the blessings of my Progenitors, above the utmost bounds of the everlasting Hills:* Once more, *Hab.* 3. 6. *He stood and measured the earth, he beheld, and drove asunder the Nations; and the everlasting Mountains were scattered, the perpetual Hills did bow:* Now a thing is called *everlasting*, either strictly, because it shall last for ever, or because it lasteth very long; in this latter sense, the Hills are everlasting: The Hills were from the beginning, and shall continue to the end. As for *Job*, he began to live but lately, and he must shortly die: *Wast thou made before the Hills?* *Eliphaz* proceeds to a second branch of his third reproof.

Vers. 8. **Hast thou heard the secret of God, & doest thou restrain wisdom to thy self?**

As if he had said, *Possibly thou wilt wave or not stand to this plea of thy great antiquity.* What is it then that swells thee into such proud and daring thoughts of thy infallible knowledge? Is it because

סוד *Secretū vel consilium.* συσσιον, Theod.

Thou hast heard the secret of God.] The Hebrew word signifies either counsel, or any thing that is secret and mysterious; some render it, *Hast thou heard things unspeakable:* when the Apostle was caught up to Heaven (2 *Cor.* 12.) *He heard words unspeakable which it is not lawful for a man to utter:* Hast thou heard unutterable secrets? A second translates, *Hast thou heard the mysteries of God?* A third, *Hast thou had discourse with God?* or hast thou heard God discourse about the great things of wisdom? The Septuagint, *Hast thou heard the constitutions of Heaven, or knowest thou in what manner God hath setled all the affairs of mankind, natural, civil, and spiritual?* Art thou of privy counsel to the King of Heaven? or art thou a member of the Celestial conclave? Thus he reproves him for arrogating to himself such knowledge, as is not attainable, but by special inspiration, or revelation from God himself. The Prophet puts the question (*Jer.* 23. 18.) *Who hath stood in the counsel of the Lord, and hath perceived and heard his word? Who hath marked his word and heard it?* So the Apostle (*Rom.* 11. 34.) *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellor?* God is able to make known the whole mystery of his will in a moment to the meanest soul, he can let in floods upon the understanding without our study; he can make a fool wise, and drawing back the curtain of ignorance, irradiate the darkest mind with the clearest light of all things knowable: But hast thou heard such secrets?

συνταγμα κυριε ὁ ἠκουας. *Constitutionē domini audivisti & consiliario te usus est Deus.* Sept. *Eadem vox quæ est secretū, est etiam consiliū aut concilium, quod in conciliis arcana tractantur, & consilia non nisi secretò iniri debēt.* Fined.

There are two sorts of Divine secrets:

First, Secrets of Providence:

Secondly, Secrets of Doctrine.

The former are of such things as God will do; the latter, such as Man is either to do or believe: God reveals both to his people. The ordinary way for us is by the Word written, the extraordinary by a word spoken: Thus God opened his secrets to the ancient Prophets and Apostles. The Prophet *Amos* (*Chap.* 3. 7.) speaks of the secrets of providence, *Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his secrets to his Servants the Prophets:* And the Lord himself saith of *Abraham*, *Shall I hide from Abraham the things that I am about to do:* Now as there is a revealing of Providence, or of the works of God, so there is a revealing of Doctrines and of the holy Truths of God. This he promiseth (*Joel* 2. 28.) *I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesie, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:* Young men, cannot claim to be the first men, they were not before the Hills, yet to them the visions of Heaven are promised: Yet we must not neglect that command of our attendance upon the teachings of the Word, because we have received a promise of the teachings of the Spirit. The Spirit usually teacheth by the Word, never against it; and it is a temping of God, while he gives us means, to linger after immediate Revelations: yea, when the Lord reveales himself immediately, he uses to do it without mans fore-thought or expectations. The Prophets did not set themselves to receive Revelations from God, but his Spirit came upon them with mighty power and irresistible evidence. And though God doth reveal some of his secrets, yet he hath secrets which he will not reveal: *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him* (*Psal.* 24. 14.) *And his secret is with the righteous* (*Prov.* 3. 32.) This secret is either the good will and favour of God, of which the World knows nothing, or the good Word and Faith of God of which the World knows as little: Both these sorts of Divine secrets are with the righteous, and men fearing God; but the secrets of his Counsel are reserved in his own breast. He reveals to his people the secrets of his bounty, and of their duty, what he will do for them, and what they must do for him; but many things which himself will do shall never be revealed by the doing of them; *Hast thou heard the secrets of God:*

And doest thou restrain wisdom to thy self?

חגרע אליך *Detrahis ad te; quod sensu in idē recidit cum eo quod est tibi ascribis fraudando alios, negatam aliis sapientiam tibi assumpsisti ex divino arcano. Sapientia ultra te Jues terminos nō porrigat?* Tygur.

That is, Doest thou think there is no wisdom besides thine? art thou at the very border and utmost limit of knowledge and understanding? is all beyond thee ignorance and folly? Hast thou got and engrossed all the learning from others, and reserved it to thy self alone as thy peculiar, with which none must intermeddle without a license obtained from thee? hast thou the monopoly of wisdom? or is all but enough for thee? Shall none of thy neighbours share with thee? This is either a charge of greater arrogancy then the former, *Doest thou restrain wisdom to thy self?* or at least a charge of greatest uncharitableness; goodness is diffusive, and so is wisdom, and it is the duty of good men to diffuse wisdom. When they have heard the secrets of God, they must communicate them to others, not restrain all to themselves. But I conceive *Eliphaz* intends only the former charge.

Hence Observe, *It is the highest strain of pride for a man to restrain wisdom to himself;*

Or, to think himself so wise, that all must address to him for wisdom: God hath not given all wisdom to any one man, or sort of men, though he hath trusted some with more Talents of it then he hath done others. The Priests lips of old under the Law, and so the lips of Ministers under the Gospel, should preserve knowledge; and the people should seek both Law and Gospel at their mouth (*Mal.* 2. 7.) Yet neither might the Priests then, nor may Ministers now, restrain wisdom to themselves. The rule of the Apostle is, *Be not wise above what is written*; that is above *holy Writ*, or above what is written from the immediate dictates of the Spirit of God. *They are* (as we say) *fools in Print, who say they are wise above what is thus written*; but we may be wise above what is spoken or written by any man, for no man ought to restrain all wisdom to himself; to do so is the *top-stair of Antichristian pride. The Pope restrains wisdom to himself*, he boasts that he hath the secrets of God, and that all must come to him if they will have them unlockt and opened: *His sentences from the Chair are Oracles, and there he is infallible*; all are obliged to receive what he saith, because he saith it: no man must scruple, much less oppose or contradict it. Thus to impose upon men is to set our selves in the place of the God of Heaven; yea, to arrogate to our selves that we are Gods on earth. So the Apostle hath characteriz'd that *man of sin* (2 *Thes.* 2. 4.) *He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped* (that is, above all civil powers or Magistracy) *So that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.* And as he out of all measure wickedly, so many others in a very great measure have shewed themselves as God, while they have taken upon them (as we speak proverbially) *To give the Law*, yea, to give the Gospel to other mens consciences, or to bind up all mens tongues and judgements unto the rule of their apprehensions. When the Apostle had called God to record, that he alwayes purposed to be bold and plain with the *Corinthians*, he presently subjoyns this corrective (2 *Cor.* 1. 24.) *Not that we have Dominion over your Faith, but are helpers of your joy:* As if he had said, Do not think that I take upon me as a Lord over your consciences, to charge any command or observations of my own upon them: No, I am but as a servant of God to instruct you in his counsels, and to comfort you with his promises.

The Grecians, who were men of great knowledge and learning, a very witty and Philosophical people, called all other Nations *Barbarians:* Such pride appears among some (in

(in name) Chriſtians, they ſpeak and act as if all knowledge and truth were centred in them, or as if all were in the dark who ſee not by their light. Knowledge is apt to puff up; how are they puffed up, who think they know all? though indeed they who think they know any thing, know nothing as they ought to know, 1 *Cor.* 8. 2. God reveals that to Babes and Sucklings, which he hides from ſuch wiſe and prudent ones, who *reſtrain all wiſdom to themſelves*. God in judgement reſtrains wiſdom from them, who in pride reſtrain it to themſelves; and as God takes all wiſdom from them, who in another ſenſe *reſtrain wiſdom to themſelves*, that is, who will not uſe it becauſe they have but one Talent of it, or but a little; ſo he will give them no wiſdom at all, who think they are poſſeſſors, or *Lord-Treaſurers* of all the Talents of it, as if all wiſdom were laid up in them. The Babes and Sucklings, ſuch as are low, humble, and meek, are the objects of this bounty; as for the proud, God beholdeth them afar off: and they can never get neer wiſdom who are far from the God of wiſdom. While ſuch vainly reſtrain wiſdom to themſelves, the hand of God is juſtly reſtrained from beſtowing it upon them.

Eliphaz having thus reproved *Job* for entitling himſelf to ſo rich a ſtock of knowledge, either brought in by his own long experience, or from the ſpecial inſpirations and teachings of God; proceeds to challenge to himſelf and his Friends a knowledge equal at leaſt to what he really had, in the ninth and tenth Verſes.

Verſ. 9. **What knoweſt thou that we know not, what underſtandeſt thou that is not in us?**

He retorts what *Job* ſaid, *Chap.* 12. 3. *I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferiour to you.* Here *Eliphaz* tells him, we have underſtanding as well as you: Hath God revealed all knowledge to thee? ſurely we know as much as thou.

Dic age quæ ſunt tuæ partes.

What knoweſt thou which we know not?] The words are plain, and need no explication; they ſound as if he had ſaid, *Come ſhew thy ſkill, and open thy hidden treaſures: thou haſt ſhewed nothing yet, but what is common to us and others; thou ſeemeſt to ſpeak of myſteries, of things that are unknown, and ſecret to this day, but ſurely thou haſt not traded much in theſe*; For, *What knoweſt thou that we know not? thou haſt not yet produced any ſuch piece of knowledge; if ſuch precious matter be in thee, wrap it not up in the napkin of ſilence any longer, bring it forth, that we alſo may know it.*

Qui velit ingenio cedere rarus erit.

Hence obſerve, First, *Man is apt to ſtand upon terms of compariſon with man; he cannot bear it that another ſhould be thought or think himſelf wiſer or more knowing then he.*

Some are not troubled becauſe they know little, but becauſe they are eſteemed leſs knowing then others, *What knoweſt thou that we know not?*

Secondly Obſerve, *Though ſome men are of higher parts, and better natural abilities then others, yet what one man knoweth, others may.*

No man can boaſt himſelf beyond the line and degree of man. For *as the heart of man anſwers the heart of man in ſinfulneſs, ſo in a poſſibility of goodneſs.* One man may be as holy as another, as wiſe and knowing as another; only God is more holy, wiſe, and knowing then any man can be; he knoweth many things which no man knoweth nor can know. But though it be a ſtrain of pride, for one man to ſay to another, *What knoweſt thou that I know not?* Yet it is a truth that one man may know as much as another: and though ſome men know that which another man (in regard of ſome perſonal impediments) neither doth nor can know, yet the humane nature in every perſon is capable of the ſame, both kind and degree of knowledge.

Thirdly, *Eliphaz* is about to reprove the pride of *Job*, as he conceives, and he doth it (as was but now toucht) in ſuch a manner as ſpeaks his own pride, *What knoweſt thou that we know not*, is the language of a high mind: I am as good and as wiſe as thou: though it may be ſo, yet it is uncomely to ſay ſo.

Hence Obſerve, *Some in reproving other men's faults, run into the very ſame faults themſelves.*

The reproof of a fault may not only be faulty, but the fault which is reproved. A man may reprove pride with much pride, and leſſer vanities with abundance of vanity. All that good men ſpeak for good, doth not begin at a principle of goodneſs; their own corruption may riſe up againſt the corruption of others, and ſin is often heard chiding vice. How many are there who check paſſion, with paſſion, and are very angry in diſlike of anger; you ſhall have ſome men ſpeak againſt bitterneſs of ſpirit with a bitter ſpirit, and while they are taxing their Brethren with making breaches or with an unwillingneſs to peace, diſcover much unpeaceableneſs, yea an unwillingneſs to have thoſe breaches healed.

Diogenes was obſerved to trample upon the pride of *Plato* with greater pride; and he who to rebuke pride in Apparrel, wore himſelf an unhandſome and torn Coat, was rightly told that his pride was ſeen through the holes of his Coat. There may be as much oſtentation in wearing ſordid, as there is in wearing the gayeſt Cloathes. It was a ſhame for Heathens to declare their own folly, while they declaimed againſt the folly of their neighbours; how ſcandalous then is this in Chriſtians?

Verſ. 10. **With us are the gray-headed, and very aged men, much elder then thy Father.**

This Verſe is the proof of the former; ſome think the compariſon lyes between *Jobs* Friends and himſelf. We are thy Seniors, yet thou ſpeakeſt as if thou wert the oldeſt man amongſt us: Here are two terms in the Text, which ſeem to diſtinguiſh old age.

First, **Gray-headed.**

Secondly, **Very aged, much elder then thy Father.**

Among the Jews, a man was counted old at threeſcore, which they called, The firſt old age: At ſeventy he was expreſſed by the word which we tranſlate *Gray-headed*, and that was his title till he arrived at *Fourſcore*; from that to the end of life, the whole ſtate was called, *Decrepid old Age*; and they who reached thoſe years, were expreſſed by the word which we render *Very aged men*, or as we ſay, *men having one foot in the Grave*; for he that was an hundred years old, was not numbred among the living, but among the dead. The Chalde Paraphraſt applys the diſtinction thus; *With us is Eliphaz, who is gray-headed, and Bildad who is decrepid, and Zophar who is older then thy Father.* *Hierom* gives *Eliphaz* the precedency in age, affirming that he was the eldeſt Son of *Eſau*, and that at the time of this diſpute, he was no leſs then a hundred and fifty years old, *Jobs* Father ninety, and *Job* himſelf ſeventy. But I ſtay not upon theſe conjectures.

Prima ſenectus זקנה *dicitur, unde* זקן *ſenex: media ſenectus* שיבה *dicitur & incipit ab anno 70. & durat uſq; ad 80. annum; ad quā qui pervenit poſtea* ישיש *decrepitus dicitur, quod eſt ultima ſenectutis vocabulum, quæ durat uſque ad vitæ finē vel uſq; ad annum 100. Nam filius centū annorū habetur pro mortuo.* Druſ.

The ſcope of *Eliphaz* in theſe words may be reduced to this account: As if he had ſaid, *We need not depend on thy Authority or antiquity; For with us, that is, on our ſide, or of our party and opinion, there are men gray-headed, yea very aged, much elder, not only then thy ſelf, but, then thy Father. Therefore do not thou charge us with novelty, know, that we have received our Doctrine from venerable Anceſtors; if thou haſt learned theſe things of thy Father, and drunk in thy opinion from the Aged, ſo have we: Nor do we eſteem the Tenets of our fore-fathers meerly by the number of days which they lived, but by the wiſdom and and piety with which they were enriched.*

Etiā Eliphaz qui, canus eſt, & Bildad qui decrepitus eſt inter nos, & Sophar qui major eſt patre tuo diebus. Targ.

It is obſervable in Scripture, that *Teman* (from whence *Eliphaz* came) was a famous *School of Learning* (*Jer.* 49. 7.) *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, is wiſdom no more in Teman?* He ſpeaks of it, as of a known place for knowledge and wiſdom; What? *Is wiſdom no more in Teman?* As if we in *England* ſhould ſay, *Is there no more learning at* Oxford *or* Cambridge? are the lights extinguiſht, and the fountains dry? Thus *Eliphaz* aſſerts that his abettors and inſtructers in the opinion he maintained, were both old, and learned old men.

From this conteſt about Antiquity and ancient men ſo often renewed and ſo much urged between *Job* and his Friends, We may Obſerve,

First, *That they who have moſt years upon their backs, are, or may be ſuppoſed to have moſt knowledge and wiſdom in their heads and hearts.*

Secondly,

Secondly, *They who have Antiquity on their side, are apt to conclude that they have Truth on their side.*

That which is indeed most ancient is most true; yet there are very many very ancient untruths: It is no new thing to see a gray-headed errour, and a false Doctrine much older then our Fathers.

But I shall not prosecute either of these points, having met with matter of this strain before, *Chap.* 8. *verse* 8, 9. 10. *Chap.* 12. *verse* 12. to which places I refer the Reader.

Eliphaz having finished his third reproof of *Job* for his arrogancy, and the high conceit he had of himself, proceeds to a fourth, and that is (as hath been said) for the low conceit which he had of the comforts tendered him in the Name of God.

Vers. 11. **Are the consolations of God small with thee, or is there any secret thing with thee?**

Num parum à te consolationes Dei. Heb. *Supplendum est verbum reputantur. Numquid grande est ut consoletur te Deus?* Vulg. q.d. *facile est Deo ut te ad statum prosperitatis reducat.* Aquin. *Existimásne tuis ærumnis non posse Deum parè consolationẽ afferre. An minores sunt consolationes dei, quàm ut te consolari possint?* Vatab. *Pauca præ iis quæ peccasti accepisti vulnera.* Sept. *An consolationes Dei tã contẽptibiles judicas, ut projiciat eas ante blasphematores.*

These words undergo much variety of interpretation; the Vulgar Latine, neer which some others translate, gives a fair sense, but at too great a distance from the letter of the Original; thus, *Is it a great thing that God should comfort thee?* As if he had said, *Art thou so low that all the consolations of God are not able to raise thee up? Is it a work too big for God himself to comfort thee? Cannot he change thy outward and inward sorrows into joys?* Will not the consolations of one that is infinite serve thy turn? Hath not he balm enough in store to heal thy wounds, nor treasure enough in stock to repair thy losses? 'Tis no hard thing with God to comfort the most disconsolate soul that ever was; he that made light to shine out of darkness, can give us light in our thickest darkness: This is a truth, but for the reason above, I stay not upon it.

The Septuagint translation is far wider then the former, *Thou hast received but few wounds, in comparison of the sins that thou hast committed*; which is a Paraphrase, not a translation, and such a Paraphrase as seems to lie quite without the compass of the text: The meaning and intendment of it may be given thus; as if he had said, *Thou complainest that thou art greatly afflicted, that thy sorrows are innumerable, but if thou considerest thy great and many sins, thy sufferings are few, yea, thy sufferings may rather be called consolations, and thy losses gains: Are the consolations of God small to thee, seeing thou hast sinned so much?* When God lays but a little affliction upon sinful man, he may be said, to give a great deal of mercy.

A third gives this sense, *Are the consolations of God small to thee?* That is, Doest thou esteem the consolations of God so cheap, that he will give them to such a one as thou? or that he will lavish them out upon the wicked, and cast these Pearls to Swine, to such as are blasphemers and contemners of God?

But why doth *Eliphaz* call these the consolations of God? Did God administer them to *Job* with his own hand, or did he speak to *Job* from Heaven? Some conceive that though he and his Friends spake them, yet *Eliphaz* calls them the consolations of God, by an *Hebraism*, because he judged them great consolations. Thus in Scripture, *The Mountain of God, and the River of God*, are put for a great Mountain, and a great River; so here. As if he had said, *Thou hast received many great consolations from us thy Friends, and doest thou account them small?* But I rather take the sense plainly, that he calls them so, because God is the author and giver, the fountain and original from whom all consolations spring and flow.

Suas & sociorũ consolationes, vocat Dei cõsolationes nõ sine arrogãtia & fastu. Drus.

The *Consolations of God* are two-fold:

First, Arising from good things already exhibited to us.

Secondly, From good things promised to us.

The Consolations of God in this place, are good things promised, or offered: *Promises are Divine conveyances of Consolation.* The Friends of *Job* had made him many promises, that he repenting, *God would make his latter end better then his begining*, &c. Hence *Eliphaz* tells him that he had slighted the consolations of God. Any man who reads his story may wonder why he should: Surely *Job* was not in case to refuse comfort, considering how he was stript of all comfort. *The full soul indeed loatheth the honey Comb, but to the hungry soul, every bitter thing is sweet*; that is, those things which dainty palates distast, he eats very savourly. *Job* was kept short and low enough, he had nothing of consolation left, either without or within; he was poor and sore without, he was full of horrour, and terrour within: the arrows of the Almighty had even drunk up his spirit, and laid all his comforts wast, and doth he yet neglect or undervalue comforts? 'Tis true, he had real consolations, as appears by that profession of his assurance of Gods favour towards him, *I know that I shall be justified*; yet he had no sensible consolations; his frequent complaints shew he had not. So then, the consolations of God (for esteeming which little he is reproved) were the promises of consolation made to him in the name of God by the Ministry of his Friends. *Are the consolations of God small unto thee?*

Hence Observe, First, *That consolation is the gift, and proper work of God.*

Thou (saith *David*, *Psal.* 71. 21.) *Shalt encrease my greatness and comfort me on every side: The Lord shall comfort Sion, he will comfort all her wast places* (*Isa.* 51. 3.) And again, *As one whom his Mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.* God comforts as a Mother, *tenderly*, and he comforts as a Father, yea as a Master, *effectually*; I will comfort you, and ye shall be comforted. As the corrections of God are effectual, and prosper in the work for which they are sent, so also are his consolations. *Ephraim* said (*Jer.* 31. 18.) *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised.* So every soul, whom God comforts, shall say, *Thou hast comforted me, and I was comforted.* This the Apostle speaks out to the praise of God (*2 Cor.* 1. 3, 4.) *Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolations*; all consolation belongs to God; he hath all comfort in his own power, and dispose; there is not any creature in the World can give out the least dram of comfort to us without the commission or leave of God; it is possible for one man to give another man riches, but he cannot give him comfort; man may give honour to man, but he cannot give him comfort. A man may have a pleasant dwelling, a loving Wife, sweet Children, and yet none of these a comfort to him.

The consolation of all our possessions and relations is from God: Whosoever would have comfort, must trade to Heaven for it: that's a commodity can be found upon no earthly coast; you may fetch in wealth from many coasts of the earth, but you cannot fetch in comfort, till you address your selves to the God of Heaven. We can procure our own sorrow quickly, but God only makes us to rejoyce; our relief from outward affliction or inward grief is the gift of God. *He only can comfort us in outward afflictions who can command the creature, and he only can comfort us against our inward griefs, who can convince the conscience.* None can do either of these but God; therefore consolations are from God. *Luther* spake true, *It is easier to make a World then to comfort the conscience*; the Hebrew phrase to comfort, used in divers places of the Old Testament, is, *To speak to the heart:* Now God only can speak to the heart; man can speak to the ear, he can speak words, but he can go no further, Therefore the act and art of comforting belongs properly to God; *Christ is the true Noah: Lamech* saith of *Noah*, *Gen.* 5. 29. *This man shall comfort us, concerning our work and the toil of our hands*; it was not in *Noah* to comfort, but as God made him a comfort: and he was said to comfort as a type of Christ; Christ is true comfort, *He is comfort cloathed in our flesh*, he is (as it were) *comfort incarnate: Noah* sent a Dove out of his Ark, which returned with an Olive-branch, Jesus Christ sends the holy Ghost who is called *the Comforter* with the Olive-branch of true peace to our wearied souls; and to shew that it is now the highest act of Christs love and care as mediator, to give comfort: he promised to send the holy Ghost, when himself was taking his leave of the Church, in regard of any visible abode or bodily presence: being ready to ascend and step into Heaven, he said, *I will send the comforter.* When God rained fire and brimstone from Heaven upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, it is said by some of the Ancients, that he sent a *Hell out of Heaven:* But when he powers the holy Spirit from Heaven upon his *Sion*, we may say he sends *a heaven out of heaven.* Heaven above

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is nothing else but holy comfort, and the comforts of the holy Spirit are the only Heaven below.

How highly then ought we to esteem, how carefully to maintain communion with God, who hath all comfort, seeing comfort is more to us then all we have. If we have comfort, let our estate be what it will we are well enough; comfort is as the spring of our year, as the light of our day, as the Sun in our Firmament, as the life of our lives. Have we not reason then to draw, yea, to press neerer unto God, who hath all comfort in his hand, and without whom the best things cannot comfort us? Nor our riches, nor our relations, nor Wife, nor Children, nor health, nor beauty, nor credit nor honour, none of these can comfort us without God, and if God please he can make any thing comfort us; he can make a crust of dry bread a feast of fat things, a cup of cold water, a banquet of Wine to us. And as he can make our comforts crosses, so our cross a comfort, as *David* speaks (*Psal.* 23. 4.) *Thy rod and thy staff comfort me*, not only the supporting staff, but the correcting rod shall comfort, if God command it to be a comforter: Who would not maintain communion with this God who can make a comfort of any thing, who can answer every cross with a comfort; *If we have a thousand crosses, God hath ten thousand comforts*; he can multiply comforts faster then the World can multiply crosses.

Again, if God be the God of all consolation, *then go to God for consolation*; as the Angel said to the women when they came to the Sepulcher enquiring for Christ, *Why seek ye the living among the dead, he is risen, he is not here:* So I may say, *Why seek ye living comforts among dead or dying creatures? Seek then there no longer. Job* complains in this Book, *When I said my bed shall comfort me, then thou scarest me with dreams*; (*Chap.* 7.) *Job* went to a wrong place, when he went to his bed for comfort; most souls miss of comfort, because they go to a wrong place for it: one goes to his bed, another to his friend for comfort, a third to his wife and Children, these, saith he, shall comfort me; alas, why seek ye the living among the dead, none of these can comfort, though these may be means of comfort. *Who or whatsoever is the instrument, God is the author of all our comfort*; *whatsoever hand brings it, God sends it*; *God* (saith *Paul*) *who comforteth those who are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus* (2 *Cor.* 7. 6.) *Titus* was a good man and brought good tydings, yet *Paul* doth not say that the coming of *Titus* did comfort them; but, saith *Paul, God comforted us by the coming of Titus*; 'Tis not your friend who comforts you, but God who comforts you by the coming of such a friend, when you are in sorrow; by sending in such relief, when you are poor, by sending such medicines, when you ar sick, such salves when you are sore, such counsel when you are in doubt and know not what to do.

Once more, *It is happy for Saints that consolation is in the hand of God*; if it were in the hand of the creature, sure they should have but little of it, but it is in the hand of God. There are these four considerations which may comfort Saints, that comfort is in the hand of God.

First, Considering his nature, he is willing and ready to do good; he is full of compassion, and to shew mercy pleaseth him more then it relieveth us.

Secondly, Considering his relation to his people: he is a Father. Will a Father let a Child lie comfortless, when he can help him? he is our Husband, he is our Friend, all relations provoke God to give out comfort to the Saints.

Thirdly, Considering his Omniscience and Omnipresence; he knows where the shoe wrings, he knows what comfort we want; a friend (possibly) hath the comfort in his hand, which we need, & he may be willing to give it out unto us, but he knows not wherein we are pinched; God tells *Moses, I have seen, I have seen the afflictions of my people in Egypt*. And as he knows how it is with us, so we are ever within his reach, he can lay his hand upon every joynt where we are pained, and put a Plaister upon every wound: here is our happiness. Christ would take off his people from extraordinary cares about the things of the World, by this argument, *Your Father knows that ye have need of these things, Matth.* 6. 32. Your Father who *carry's the purse* knows your want.

Fourthly, Consider his Omnipotence, he is able to comfort; he can command, yea create comforts; he can bring his comforts through an army of sorrows to a poor soul: yea he can lead comfort through an Army of Devils and temptations, to a poor soul; he is Almighty, there is nothing too hard for him to do, nor is he hard to be entreated to do that which gives ease unto his people.

Secondly, Observe, *Consolations rightly administred by men, are the consolations of God.*

While man speaks, God commands; *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, speak comfortably to Jerusalem, tell her that her warefar is accomplished, and her sin pardoned* (*Isa.* 40. 1.) As all the counsels, reproofs, and Doctrines which the Ministers of Christ dispense according to the form of wholesome words delivered either in the Law or Gospel, are the counsels, instructions, reproofs and Doctrines of God, so also are their consolations. And that's the reason why God takes it so ill at the hands of men, when his Messengers, who bring either instruction, or consolation, are refused: because himself is refused when they are, and his consolations are disesteemed when theirs are.

Thirdly, Observe, *To account the consolations of God small, is a very great sin.*

Moses rebukes rebellious *Korah* and his confederates, for undervaluing the priviledge which they (as Levites) had to be neer God in holy Services (*Numb.* 16. 9.) *Seemeth it a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel, hath separated you from the Congregation of Israel, to bring you neer to himself to do the service of the Tabernacle?* &c. If it were their sin to count it a small thing to be called neer to God in holy administrations, how great a sin is it in any man to count it a small thing, that God draws neer to him with heavenly consolations? Though the consolations of God to us be small comparatively to what some others have, yet we must not account any consolation of God, and that upon two grounds:

First, because of our own unworthiness; the least consolations are great, considering how little we are, as *Jacob* speaks, (*Gen.* 32. 10.) *I am not worthy the least of all thy mercies:* He thought little mercies too big for him, because he was little in his own eyes. They who have great, yea any thoughts of their own merits, lessen the mercies of God; but he who sees he deserves nothing but ill, sees abundance of mercy in the smallest good.

Secondly, Smallest consolations are very great, because they proceed from a great God. As no sin is small, though comparatively to another sin it may be small, because it is committed against the great God: so no consolation is small, because it comes from the *great God*. God puts an impress of his own greatness upon the least things that are done or given by him; though he give but a peny, yet it hath the image and superscription *of him, our infinite and eternal Cæsar:* therefore see you slight it not. As a good heart is careful to perform the least duty, and to avoid the least sin, or as a good heart calls no duty little, which God enjoyns, nor sin little which God forbids: so a good heart is thankfull for the least mercy, and calls no consolation small, which God, the great God sends.

Fourthly, Observe, *That great afflictions take away the sense of tendered mercies.*

Consolations for the matter were offered unto *Job*, but his palate was so distempered with the gall and wormwood of his afflictions, that he could not taste them. *Phineas* his Wife regarded not the joyful news, that she had brought forth a Man Child, while she was overwhelmed with sorrow, that the Ark of God was taken. While the Israelites were under hard Task-masters in *Egypt*, they could not attend to the voice of *Moses* and *Aaron*, who told them of deliverance; their troubles and burdens wert so heavy, that they looked upon *Moses* as a trouble, or as a burden, when he came to mediate their release. And as the Idolatrous Israelites who sacrificed their Children to *Moloch*, beat up Drums, and used loud-sounding-Instruments, to drown the cry of the poor Children, that they might not be heard; so some afflictions cry so loud, and many cry so loud in their afflictions, that they drown the

sweet

sweet melody and musick of those consolations that are sounded in their ears. Great complaints render great consolations small: *Job* was not without some blame in this, for though his patience was great, yet had it been greater, he might have missed this reproof from his Friends; *Are the consolations of God small to thee?*

And is there any secret thing with thée?

Et verbum latens tecū. Heb.

The meaning appears thus, *Are the consolations of God, which we have offered, small unto thee, because thou hast some secret hidden thing in thy breast?* This secret thing is opened three wayes.

Estne apud te divinum aliquid reconditum in mente tua, præ quo nostras consolationes Divinas contemnis? Merc.

First, In reference to comfort: As if he had said, *Hast thou some secret comfort besides what we have offered? Hast thou consolations of thy own, which cause thee to neglect the consolations of God?* As in the Gospel, when the Disciples *prayed Christ to eat*, he told them, *I have meat to eat that ye know not of* (John 4. 31, 32.) Christ had secret bread, his work was his food, *My meat is to do the will of him that sent me:* So here, What? hast thou meat which we know not of? Some *hidden Manna* beyond what we have told thee of, that thou carest not for our provisions?

Ista quas ab ipso Deo acceptas affirmamus consolationes leviores sunt quam ut eas probare possis: nimirum quod apud te quidpiam magis reconditū delitescat. Bez. *Aut aliquid abscondit eas apud te.* Jun.

Secondly, others give the meaning thus, *Hast thou some secret conceit of thy own wisdom, above ours?* Or is there some unknown worth in thee, that exempts thee from this general rule, or way of comfort? Dost thou so abound in thy own sence, that thou hast no need of our Notions? Is all we speak below thee?

Thirdly, They are supposed to aim at some secret sin or guilt, which hindred and unfitted *Job* to take in their Cordials and Consolations, till it were purged out, or vomited up by sound repentance.

So one renders the Text, *Doth any thing hide them with thee?* The word signifies to hide and cover (2 *Sam.* 19. 4.) David *covered his face:* So here, Doth somewhat hide, wrap up, and cover these consolations that thou canst not receive them? Or what vails the eye of thy mind, that thou canst not behold what we hold out to thee, or not find out the meaning of it? *If our Gospel be hid* (saith the Apostle) *it is hid to those that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them,* &c. (2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.) Thus *Eliphaz* seems to bespeak *Job*. *If the consolations of God be small to thee,* doth not some cloud hide them from thee? Doth not prejudice against us, or some close sin in thy self interrupt thy sight?

i. e. Ira perstringit oculos animi tui, ut illas non percipias, quas res involucris sectas. Jun.

This is hinted by the old Latine Translator, who saith, *Thy evil words* (*or the evil matter that is in thee*) *hinder this.*

Verba tua prava hoc prohibent. Vulg.

One of the Rabbins glosseth it thus, and the Original reaches it, *Some lye, some inchantment, or witchery hath seized upon thee, though thou pretendest truth.* The Apostle speaks to this sence (*Gal.* 3. 1.) *O foolish* Galatians, *who hath bewitched you, that you should not receive the truth:* Witchery or Inchantment gives a secret wound. *Is there any secret thing with thee?* Hast thou any secret comfort for thy self, any secret conceit of thy self, any secret sin in thy bosom hindering the effectual working, or due prizing of those Cordials which we have given thee?

Apud te potius est incantatio & mendacium etsi præ te veritatem feras. Rab. Abr.

לאט

Occultum malum incantationem vel mendacium denotat.

The first of these secrets things never stands in the way of receiving consolation; he that hath hidden comfort in him, will not refuse spoken comforts; nor do I think that *Eliphaz* aimed at that, unless in scorn, as some resolve it; but rather at one of, or both the latter, though mistaken in both. Yet his suspition gives us a ground for these two Observations.

> First, *That a man who is full of his own wisdom, is not fit to receive instruction, counsel, or consolation from others; that which is within hinders that which comes from without.*

Malo in bonum sumi, licet hoc in eum Eliphaz *dicat, eum ridens.* Merc.

When a man thinks himself wiser then his teachers, he will not be taught, nor learn wisdom by them. Some might have known much, if they had not presumed they knew enough. There is no greater impediment of knowledge, then an opinion of it.

> Secondly, Observe, *A sin kept close, or secret within us, hinders the effect and working of the word.*

Intus existens prohibet alienum.

Though comforts and counsels are given, they will not operate, where secret corruption lyes at heart; the filthiness and corruption of the stomach hinders digestion, till it be purged out: Physitians remove ill humours before they prescribe Cordials, else they do but nourish the disease. 'Tis so in Spirituals; the Apostle *Peter* gives the rule (1 *Epist.* 2. 1.) *Wherefore laying aside all guile, hypocrisie, and envy, and evil speaking, as new born Babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby.* As if he had said, Till you cast out these, you will never thrive under the Word: If a man be to sow Seed in his Garden, he will pull up the Weeds, and throw away the Stones, else the Seed will not spring up to perfection. The Prophet tells the Jews (*Jer.* 5. 25.) *Your sins hinder good things from you:* As sin hinders good from coming to us, so it hinders the Word from working good in us. Though the proper business of the Word be to cast out, or pull up this secret sin, yet there is a great stop given it while any secret sin is nourished, or not cast out. That's the reason why so many precious promises take not upon the heart, some sin, some corruption obstructs their operation, and (like the thief in the Candle) wasteth away their strength and light.

As the Lord said to *Joshua*, when the people of *Israel* fled before the men of *Ai*, *There is some accursed thing among you, therefore they cannot stand before their enemies.* So I may say, when any stand up against the Word of God, or resist the consolations which are offered them, sure there is some accursed thing, some hidden Wedge of stoln Gold, or some Babylonish Garment treasured in, or wrapt about your hearts, and therefore ye can neither see nor submit to the counsels of God for your good.

This is a useful truth for us, though an undue charge on *Job*; and yet his Friend proceeds (if a higher charge can be) to charge him higher, as will appear in the two Verses following.

VERS. 12, 13.

Why doth thine heart carry thée away? And what doth thine eyes wink at?

That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?

מרה *admirantis est*

לקח *Capere, sumere, capit pro rapit, flectit, allicit.*

לב *est animus* Symm. q.d. *permittis te abripiendū & transversum agendum affectu tuo nimis animoso.*

Quia te furor cordis exagitat, quæ te extra te rapit sapientiæ jactantia. Pined.

Tam superbus apud te es ut vix temet-ipsum capere possis; nec quidem tuipsius capax es. Bold.

Possit per dativū ita verti, quid attribuit tibi cor tuum. Bold.

Quid docet te cor tuum. Rab. Sol.

לקח *significat doctrinā, sed ita dicitur a discendo potius quam à docendo.* Drus.

Quid docuit te cogitatio tua. Targ.

FEliphaz insists still upon that unpleasant subject of reproof, the fifth ground whereof here proposed, is *Job*'s over-confident sticking to his own principles, or his overweening his own opinion. This reproof is couched in the twelfth and thirteenth Verses.

Verse 12. **Why doth thy heart carry thée away?**

He speaks by way of Question, or as some expound him, by way of admiration: As if he had said, *It is strange, even a wonder to me, that thy heart thus carryes thee away:* The word which we translate, *to carry away*, signifies to take up, or barely to take, and lay hold upon; *Why doth thy heart?* The heart is the whole inward man; here more specially, the affections; *Why do thy affections master thy judgment? Why are thy passions too hard for thy reason?* Others give the sence thus, *How can thy heart hold thee?* As if *Job* had grown too big for himself; as if he had been so proud and arrogant, so transported with self-conceit, that he could not contain himself, and keep his bounds, or as if he had not stowage enough for his own thoughts. A third thus (which comes near the same sence) *What doth thy heart attribute or ascribe to thee?* Sure thy heart doth give thee some great titles, such as these, Job *the wise*, Job *the holy*, *the just*, *the sincere*; thy heart sets thee out sure, and gilds thee over with attributes beyond thy deserving.

Master *Broughton*, following one of the Rabbins, presents us with a different translation from either of these, *What Doctrine can thy heart give thee?* Or, *What can thy heart teach thee?* The word which we render to take, to carry, or hold up a thing, signifies also to learn or teach Doctrine; but rather to learn then to teach, as Grammarians tell us, which somewhat abates the clearness of that version; yet the *Chalde* Paraphrase follows the same sence, *What hath thy own thought taught thee?* What learnest thou there? As if *Eliphaz* had said, *Thou hast an evil heart, and surely an ill Master will teach but ill Doctrine;* when *the heart is inditing of a good matter* (Psal. 45.) then we may learn good

good lessons from the heart; and then we speak most effectually to the hearts of others, when we speak from our own hearts, they having first been spoken to by the Spirit of God. But a corrupt heart can teach no better then it hath, and that is corrupt Doctrines. These are truths, yet too much strained for upon this Text; and therefore I pass from them, and abide by the ordinary signification of the word as we read it, *Why doth thy heart take thee up, or carry thee away?* As if he had said, Thy heart hath seized upon thee, and arrested thee, thou art led away prisoner, or captive by the violence and impetuousness of thy own spirit.

The word is applyed (*Ezek.* 23. 14.) to the motion of the Spirit of God, sent unto *Ezekiel* to instruct him; *The Spirit lifted me up, or caught me away*; that which the good Spirit did unto *Ezekiel* (not only upon his spirit, but upon his body, for he was corporally carryed away from the place where he was) that the heart of *Job* (as *Eliphaz* conceived) did unto him, it lifted him up, and carryed him away. There is a kind of violence in the allurements and inticings of the heart. As a man is said to be carryed away by the ill counsels of others, so also by his own.

In the former sence the word is used, *Prov.* 6.25. where *Solomon* adviseing to take heed of the Harlot, saith he, *Keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman; lust not after her in thy heart, neither let her take thee with her eye-lids*: There he makes use of this word, let her not take thee, or let her not carry thee away upon her eye-lids, let not her wanton eye flatter thee to the sin of wantonness and uncleanness. As the eye of a whorish woman, so the whorish heart of a man, often takes and carryeth him away.

Hence Observe, *The heart hath power over, and is too hard for the whole man.*

Passions hurry our hearts, and our hearts hurry us; and who can tell whither his heart will carry him, or where it will set him down, when once it hath taken him up. This is certain, it will carry every man beyond the bounds of his duty, both to God and man: Take it more distinctly in these three particulars.

First, The heart quickly carryeth us beyond the bounds of grace.

Secondly, The heart often carryeth us beyond the bounds of reason; *When passion works much, reason works not all.*

Thirdly, It may carry us beyond the bounds of honesty, yea, of modesty: 'Tis very dangerous to commit our selves to the conduct of passion; that (unless kept under good command) will soon run us beyond the line both of Modesty and of Honesty, of Reason, and of Grace. He that is carryed away thus far must make a long journey of repentance, before he can return and come back, either to God, or to himself. Some have been carried visibly away by the Devil, by an evil spirit without them (if God give commission, or permission, the Devil can easily do it) very many are carryed away by the evil spirit within them. An evil heart is as bad as the Devil; the evil spirit without, and the evil spirit within, carry us both the same way, and that is quite out of the way.

Consider further how the heart carryeth us away, even from spiritual duties and holy services; and this is not only the case of carnal men (who are given up to their hearts lusts) but of the Saints; their hearts are continually lifting at them, and sometimes they are carryed quite away from Prayer, and from hearing the Word: The heart lifts the man up, and steals him out of the Congregation, while his body remains there; the body sits still, but the mind which is the man, is gone, either about worldly business and designs, or about worldly pleasures and delights. He stirs not a foot, nor moves a finger, and yet he is carryed all the world over: He visits both the *Indies*, yet steps not over his own threshold. Thus the heart being carryed away, carryeth the man away. And that's the reason why God calls so earnestly, *My Son give me thy heart*; for where our hearts go, we go, or we are carryed with them; *Keep thy heart with all diligence* (Prov. 4. 24.) Or, *With all keeping, or above all keeping*; it must have double keeping, double guards, keep, keep, watch, watch, thy heart will be gone else, and thou wilt go with it; if thou look not to thy heart, thy heart will quickly withdraw it self, and draw thee along also: *Why doth thy heart carry thee away?* is a deserved check upon every man, when his heart doth so; and *Let not thy heart carry thee away*, is a necessary caution for every man, lest his heart should do so. *Job*'s heart was too busie with him, though not so busie as *Eliphaz* judged, when he thus checkt him, with, *Why doth thy heart carry thee away?*

מכל משמר *Cum omni custodia.*

And what doth thine eye wink at?

But is it a fault to *wink with the eye*? It is said (*John* 13. 24.) that *Peter* beckened to, or winked at *John*. (the Greek word signifieth an inviting gesture by the whole head, or by the eye) he winkt at him, I say, *To ask Christ who it was of whom he spake*: There was no fault in that, but *Eliphaz* finds fault with this: What was the supposed fault? There is a twofold faulty winking.

First, When we wink at faults, our own faults, or the faults of other men, to bear with, or approve them.

Secondly, When we wink at the vertues and good deeds of others to slight and undervalue them; possibly *Eliphaz* taxeth *Job* for both these, as if he winked at his own faults, or would not see them, and that he winked at their faithful dealings, as slighting, or not regarding them: Yet further and more distinctly.

The word which we translate to *wink*, is found only in this Text all the Bible over. It properly signifies to insinuate by the eye, to speak or make significant tokens by the eye; there is a language of the eye, as well as of the tongue; here *Job*'s eye gave some ill language to the eye or apprehension of *Eliphaz*. There are various opinions about it.

First, Some interpret it as a note of opposition against, or of dissatisfaction with the counsels which his Friends gave him, as was lately hinted. Shutting of the eye, imports shutting of the mind, or a refusal of what is spoken. When God judicially closed the eyes of the *Jews*, saying to the Prophet (*Isa.* 6. 10.) *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes*; this shewed the shutting of their minds against the truth: So also doth a voluntary or an affected shutting of the eye in some men, though in others it is an act of stronger attention, or intention of their spirits to what is spoken, which some take to be the English of *Job's winking*, as we shall see a little after.

Secondly, This winking with the eye, is expounded by others, though not as an opposition against what he heard, yet as the gesture of a negligent and careless hearer. They who speak, take it ill to have either ill looks, or not to be looked upon by their hearers. The attentiveness of the ear may be much discerned by the eye: One of the old moral Philosophers, in his discourse about hearing, numbers *winking* among the vices and offensive behaviours of a Hearer. When the Lord Christ preached (*Luke* 4. 20.) It is said, *That the eyes of all that were in the Synagogue were fastned on him.* A fastened eye is the note of a fixed heart, as a wandring eye is of a wandring heart. *They fastened their eyes upon him*; as if they meant to hear with their eyes, as well as with their ears. A winking eye is a moveable and an unsettled eye, and therefore may well be the discoverer of an unsetled Spirit.

Thirdly, This winking with the eye is also a sign of disdain and scorn. As if *Eliphaz* had said, The pride of thy heart sparkles at thine eye; while we are counselling and comforting thee, thou art scorning us. The Ancients were very critical about the eye, much of a man may be seen at his eye. As a man sees, so he is seen by his own eyes. The frame of the heart appears much in the eye; a joyful or a sorrowful frame of heart, an humble or a proud frame of heart, a contented, or discontented, an amicable, or a scornful frame of heart appears at the eye. As the ear and nostrils of the Horse discover him most, according to the rules of Naturalists, so the eye of man is the greatest discoverer of man, whether we consider the constitution or the actions of it. And that this action of *winking* is an argument of a scornful spirit, or the action of a scorner, appears from *David*'s petition, or deprecation (*Psal.* 35. 19.) *Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoyce over me, neither let them wink with the eye, that hate me without a cause*: It may seem to be a strange piece of prayer; Why would

Nivus, nutus autor, quia nutus fieri solet vel capite, vel oculis.

רום *Est vox hoc tantum loco reperta, cujus significationem.* Rab. Mardochai *dicit esse insinuationem vel indicationem. Quid annuunt quid innuunt oculi tui. Ægre, qui sibi sapientes videntur, ferunt, sive concionentur, sive disceptent, non audiri cum externis modestiæ attentionis & æstimationis signis. In auditione vitia sunt supercilia, torvitas & tristitia, vultus obtuitus vagus, nutus, &c.* Plut. l. de Aud. *ἀτενίζω, de fixis immotis intentis oculis esse interpretatur. Nictu oculi prodis nos nostrasque orationes à te contemni.* Pined. *Cordis contumacia ex oculis tuis emicat. Nictu te ostendis elatæ* Merc. *In oculis veteribus religio fuit, siquidem in iis imago hominis est & tacitus sermo mentis* Bold. *In oculis, loculis & poculis, homo cognoscitur.* Sent. Hebr.

not *David* have his enemy wink? What was that to him? The meaning is this, Let not mine enemies have any occasion to scorn and deride me, to boast and insult over me.

There are two sins which are very visible in the eye: The first is wantonness, (*Isa.* 3. 16.) *Because the Daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks, and wanton eyes:* The Hebrew is, *Deceiving with their eye:* And the Apostle *Peter* in his second Epistle, *Chap.* 2. 14. gives this character of some, *They have eyes full of adultery*; you may perceive the filthiness and uncleanness of their hearts staring out of their eyes. The second sin which is so visible in the eye, is *Pride*; *Solomon* speaks of a proud look (*Prov.* 6. 17.) *Six things the Lord hateth; yea, seven are an abomination to him*: And the first of the seven is, *A proud look:* The Hebrew is, *Haughty eyes*: Pride and haughtiness are seated, yea, conspicuously enthroned in the eye.

Ad simulatam quandâ innocentiæ significationem & sanctitatis speciem, quod hypocrisin redolet referri potest.

Fourthly, These words, *Why winkest thou with thine eye?* are expounded as a repoof of hypocrisie and seeming holiness: As if *Eliphaz* had said, Thou lookest very demurely, and innocently, as if (according to our old Proverb) *Butter would not melt in thy mouth*; or as if thou wert speaking familiarly to God. For as lifting up the eyes, or looking to Heaven, is a gesture of holy worship. (*John* 17. 1.) *Then Jesus lift up his eyes to Heaven:* So also is winking with the eye. It is very usual with many to shut or wink with their eyes in prayer, that so their spirits may be more composed, and freer from distraction. 'Tis not unlikely that *Eliphaz* observed *Job* winking with his eyes, as if he had set himself to seek God; this provoked him, What? such a one as thou, a hypocrite, a wicked man, what thou go to God? Wilt thou wink with thy eyes, as if thou wert wrapt up in some Divine meditation; whereas we have ground rather to conclude, that thou art devising mischief: There are two Texts in the Proverbs, which give some light to this Interpretation, *Prov.* 6. 13. *He winketh with his eye, he speaketh with his feet, teacheth with his fingers, frowardness is in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually: Solomon* puts a winking eye and a froward mischief-devising heart together: As if he had said, A wicked man (for of him he speaks in the former Verse) winks with the eye, as if he had some high rapture, whereas his mind is set upon mischief, and pursuing the worst of evils. Again, *Prov.* 10. 10. *He that winketh with his eye causeth sorrow:* But how doth a man that winketh with the eye cause sorrow? What dependence is there between these two, sorrow, and winking, that the one should cause the other? These words, *He that winketh with his eye*, are the description of a *deceitful man*; such a one may cause sorrow enough, both to himself and others. *Solomon* intends, not a simple, but a subtil sly winking with the eye; and so the *Syriack* readeth it: *He who winketh with his eye deceitfully, causeth sorrow:* Deceit makes the deceived sorrowful, and it will make the deceiver sorrowful; he must either be sorrowful to repentance, or feel the sorrow of punishment.

Qui annuit oculo suo cum fraude.

Quid collimant oculi tui. Jun. *Metaphora à jaculatoribus sumpta.* Id.

Fifthly, This winking with the eye, is conceived to be a Metaphor taken from those who shoot with Guns or Bows: Gunners and Archers wink when they shoot, that they may take aim the better: The contracting of the sight, strengthens it. So here, *What dost thou wink at?* That is, What dost thou aim at? The eye of a mans mind aims at some mark in meditation; and hence it is usual for a man in vehement meditation, to wink with his eye: As if *Eliphaz* had said, Surely thou hast some great design, some grand plot in thy brain, thou pretendest to some deep wisdom, or unheard of policies; thou hast set up some fair mark before thy fancy, and thou wilt be sure to hit it; What is it that thou aimest at? We find the phrase used in this sence, *Prov.* 16. 30. *He shutteth his eye to devise froward things, moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass:* He shutteth his eyes, as if he would make his thoughts more steddy and fixt, to hit or reach that froward device which he is casting about how he may effect. And as a wicked man shuts his eyes to devise froward, that is, sinful things; so a good man shuts his eyes (lest variety of objects should divert or call off his mind) when he is devising and studying what is best both for himself and others. The rendring of the Vulgar Latine, though it be far from the letter of the Original, and is rather a Paraphrase than a Translation, yet it reacheth this sense fully; *Wherefore doth thy heart carry thee away, and why liftest thou up thine eyes, as if thou wert thinking of some great matter?* Or, As if the affairs of Kingdomes and States depended upon thy care, or were committed to thy trust.

Et quasi magna cogitans attonitos habes oculos. Vulg. *Oculos in cœlo defigere solent cogitabundi & quibus gravis inest solicitudo.* Sanct.

All these interpretations are serviceable to the Text before us; and though we cannot positively and particularly resolve which of them was here intended by *Eliphaz*, yet considering that his scope was to reprove *Job*, we may take in the sense of them all, and conclude, that he censured *Job* in this one word, of all those miscarriages of the heart, which may be signified at the eye; as appears by the inference which he makes in the next Verse: For having said, *What doth thy eye wink at?* He presently subjoynes:

Verse 13. **That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?**

So that this Verse is an explication of the former, and gives us more clearly what *Eliphaz* meant by the *carrying away of the heart, and the winking of the eye*: His heart is carried out of all bounds, who *turneth his spirit against God*: His eye winks sinfully, whose mouth presently upon it speaks unduely. Thou winkest with thy eye, thou art very thoughtfull, and what the fruit or birth of thy thoughts is, we may discern by thy speech, while *thou lettest such words go out of thy mouth.*

Explicationem continet præcedentis versiculi. Bold.

Thou turnest thy spirit against God.] As if he had said, Instead of humbling thy self under the punishment of thy sin, thou with an incensed mind contestest against God himself: and though while he saith *against God*, he doth not mean God directly, but God in his judgments and counsells, in his Word, or in his Works; yet this is a very high charge, one of the highest that is in the whole Book, but very unjust. Indeed *Job* used some passionate speeches to his Friends; and these *Eliphaz* judgeth to proceed from an opposition against God. *Thou turnest thy Spirit against God.*

There is a twofold turning the spirit against God:

First, Natural, *Rom.* 8. 7. Enmity is the turning of the spirit. The wisdome or lust of the flesh is enmity against God.

Secondly, Improved, when we heighten this opposition in our practice, and are enemies to God in our minds; or Gods hearty enemies by wicked works, *Col.* 1. 21.

Quod rediri fecerit ad Deum spiritum tuum. Heb. *Quia respondit ad Deum spiritus tuus.* Mont. *Perire facit verbum qui respondet* Drus.

The Hebrew is, *Thou makest thy spirit to return to God*, which is expounded two wayes; First, thou makest thy spirit to turn upon, or against God: Secondly, thy spirit answers or replieth upon God; both meet in one meaning; for though there may be a turning away of the spirit without answering, yet (in one sense) all answers are the turning of our spirit: if any man ask a question, the answer is the return of his mind who makes the answer; so some render, *Why doth thy spirit return answer to God*; as if he rebuked him for his boldness in replying. Thy spirit returns upon God, if he speak one word, thou wilt have two; in that sense the word is used, *Titus* 2. 9. where the Apostle giving rules (among other relations) to Servants, charges them; *Servants be obedient to your own Masters, and please them well in all things, not answering again.* But, is it a fault for a Servant when asked a question, to make an answer? No, it were a fault not to answer. The meaning is, that a Servant being reproved for a fault, must not answer; that is, his spirit must not rise, and return against his Master; or if a Servant be directed to do any warrantable work, he must not *answer again*; that is, he must not contradict or murmur at the orders which he hath received, but address himself to the fulfilling of them; this is the *answering again*, reproved as a fault in Servants, which is *rather gainsaying than answering*, as we put in the margent of our Bibles: in which sense, answering is taken here, according to this interpretation. Thy spirit answers God, or turns against him. We may clear it also by that of the Apostle (*Rom.* 9. 20.) Where, having shewed the absolute sovereignty of God in his decrees and purposes, by the example of *Jacob* and *Esau*, as also by that of *Pharaoh*, He concludes, *Vers.* 18. *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth:* Saint Paul

Paul fore-saw that this Doctrine would raise a great deal of dust, and cause many to turn their spirits against God, which he thus represents (*Vers.*19.) *Thou wilt say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay, but O man, who art thou that replyest against God?* What? wilt thou chop Logick with God himself? Wilt thou (as the Margent saith) answer again, or dispute with God? Hold thy peace, quiet thy self, What's the matter, *that thou turnest thy spirit against God?*

Spiritus pro arrogantia. Latine dicitur magnos gerere animos qui superbia tumet. Merc. *Quid tumet adversus Deum spiritus tuus?* Vulg. *Quid torva convertis in cœlum Lumina? quid in Deum refundis stomachum & evocas conceptam iram.* Pined. *Animum indignatione accensum.* Jun. *Omnem spiritum suum depromit stultus,* i.e. *iram.* Aben Ezra. *Rege animum.* i. e. *iram.* Horat.

Spirit is here put for the will, thoughts, and counsels of man, cloathed and elated with arrogancy, stoutness, and pride: In all Languages, *Spirit* imports that which is high. And to say, *such a one is a man of spirit*, notes not only the activeness of that man, but often his pride and haughtiness.

Besides, *Spirit* is sometimes put for indignation, for fury, and wrath; in all which acceptions, the word may be rendred here, *Thou turnest thy spirit*; that is, thy anger and wrath, thy fury and indignation against God. So the word is used, *Isa.*25.4. *When the spirit, or blast of the terrible ones, is as a storm against the Wall*; that is, while the fury of the terrible ones is in its highest march and motion, God promiseth to be a strength to the poor, a strength and a refuge to the needy in his distress: So *Prov.* 29.11. *A fool uttereth all his mind, or all his spirit*; that is, all his anger, he lets it out, and discovers himself presently; but *a wise man* (if there be cause of anger) *keepeth it in till afterwards*; that is, till a fit season. He hath a retentive faculty which the Fool hath not. Now in which sense soever of these explained, we understand *Spirit* in the present Text, the charge is as high as it can go upon any man, when 'tis said, He turneth his Spirit against God. Hence Observe:

> *To turn the spirit against God, is the very spirit of ungodliness; there is no greater wickedness than this.*

A godly man may do an act which is against God, but his spirit cannot act against God; that's the character of the wicked. A godly man *delights in the Law of God, according to the inward man*, whilst the outward man sins against the Law of God; an ungodly man turns his inward man against the Law of God, while his outward man pretends obedience to it; and as it is an act of highest disobedience, so of the proudest pride to turn the spirit against God. The Vulgar Latine translates it well, *Why doth thy spirit swell against God?* Thou hast an impostumation in thy spirit against God; yea, it is not only an act of the proudest pride, but of the *maddest madness*, to turn the spirit against God; so the Septuagint gives it, *Thou hast caused thy fury or thy madness to break forth before God*; he that acts against God, is a mad-man indeed, *Will ye provoke the Lord? are you stronger than he?* Is the Apostles chiding question to such mad-men; Are you so mad after your lusts? hath sin made you so foolish? *Have you lost both grace and reason at once?* that you dare thus provoke the Lord, and challenge the Almighty? *God resisteth the proud*, and the proud assault him; Grace turns the spirit to God, repentance is the return of our spirits to God; then what is the turning of our spirits against God, but a clear demonstration of a totally impenitent and graceless spirit?

Furorem erupisti ante dominum. Sept.

Again, when *Eliphaz* saith, *Job turned his Spirit against God*, he doth not mean it of a direct or professed opposition against God, as if *Job* had openly defied him, and blasphemed his Name; but his meaning is, that *Job* shewing so much impatience and unsatisfiedness of spirit, under the dealings of God with him, did not submit to God as he ought. *Eliphaz* (I conceive) did not so much as suspect that *Job* turned his spirit immediately; or, as we say, *point blank* against God himself, but only against his dispensations. Hence observe:

> *That while we speak, or our hearts rise up against the dealings of God with our selves or others, we may be said to turn our spirits against God himself.*

Many who think they have not neglected Christ, will be found to have neglected him, because they have neglected those by whom, or that wherein Christ is offered. The Evangelist brings in Christ speaking thus (*Matth.*25.) *I was hungry and ye fed me not, thirsty, and ye gave me no drink*; they to whom he speaks, wonder at this; *Lord*, (say they) *when saw we thee hungry, and gave thee no meat, or thirsty, and gave thee no drink?* surely, we have not been guilty of such a wickedness: Yea, saith Christ, *In as much as ye did it not to one of these, ye did it not to me*; when ye refused to feed these, ye refused to feed me; I was in these, and these were in me. Now in the same manner, many will say, when we charge them with *turning their spirits against God, with fighting against, and opposing God*: Who? we oppose God? we never opposed God as we know of; yea, peradventure, they will say, we have honoured God; and do you charge us that we have turned our spirit against God? To many such God will say, Inasmuch as ye opposed my word, and murmured against my works; inasmuch as ye were angry with my dispensations, and discontented with what I have done; ye have turned your spirit against me. We may become guilty of this sin before we think of it; for as there is a direct and literal contending with God, so an equivalent, or constructive contending with him. As some men commit plain, open Treason against a State, but others commit only *constructive Treason*: 'Tis so here; the God of heaven knows when spirits turn against him directly, and when by consequence; and he will take vengeance, not only of direct and avowed, but also of consequential and constructive Treason against his Sovereignty, unless the offender repent, and be humbled before him. He will judge thousands at the last day, for opposing him, who, it may be, in some things have pleaded for him; yea, who have in some things not only acted, but suffered for him; though usually, when the spirit of any man turneth against God, that mans works and words turn against him too: So *Eliphaz* further taxeth *Job* in the latter clause of the Verse.

And lettest such words go out of thy mouth.] As if he had said, *Such stuff as thou hast in thy heart, even such flows out of thy mouth*; the word *Such* is added by most Translators; the Hebrew is, *And lettest words go out of thy mouth*; It is no fault to let words go out of the mouth: 'tis no sin to speak, but to speak such or such words, may be very sinful; and therefore we, and others, for explication sake, make this supplement, *Such words*; But what words were they? *Eliphaz* doth not quote any passages in his speech, but leaves them, as we and others translate, under a term of general distaste, *Such words*; as if they were not worth the naming; or as if no epithite could be found worthless enough to name them by. For as when *Ezra* would describe a deliverance, in the reality of it, beyond words, he doth not tell us what it was, but saith only, *Seeing our God hath given us such deliverance as this.* (*Ez.*9.13.) So when *Eliphaz* would describe words in the vanity or sinfulness of them, below words, he doth not tell us what they were, but saith onely, *Such words as these*; yet possibly the words he means were these, *Why hast thou set me as a mark, so that I am a burden to my self* (Chap.7.20.) or these (Chap. 9.30.) *If I wash me with Snow-water, and make my hands never so clear, yet thou wilt plunge me in the ditch*; or these, (Chap.13.26.) *Thou writest bitter things against me, and thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth*: These, or such as these, were the words which *Eliphaz* leaves under this note of disdain, *Such words*. Yet these *Eliphaz* should have mollified with a charitable construction, and not have sharpned his own tongue against them, much less should he have interpreted them, as the turning of *Jobs* spirit against God himself. For as some draw near to God with their lips, and give him smooth words, while their hearts are far from him, and their spirits turned against him; So others may seem to depart from God with their lips, and give him harsh language, while their hearts are near, and their spirits cleave unto him.

הוצאת *Fœminine vel ut animum mulieris impotentia laborantem fodicet, aut format Chaldaica Pungit etiam voce.*

מלים *Logos, nugas, verba* Coc.

I shall further give you a four-fold character of these words, futable to the misprision which *Eliphaz* and his Friends had of him all along. Such words, or words so apprehended, must needs sound harshly in their ears, and in the ears of any man fearing God.

First, *Proud words of himself*, insisting upon his own righteousness, as they conceived, for in the next words *Eliphaz* saith, *What is man that he should be clean?* they thought *Job* spake much to paint and bedeck himself with his own goodness and innocency.

Secondly, *Blasphemous words of God*, though not directly, yet by consequence, against his works and dealings.

Thirdly, *Reproachful, scornful words against them*, as if

they were neither able, nor worthy to be his counsel; *You are the men, and wisdome shall dye with you.*

Fourthly, False words upon the whole matter in controversie, maintaining (as *Eliphaz* judged) contrary to the truth; that he was not punished for his sin. Words under this fourfold notion are reproveable and sinful enough; such *Eliphaz* esteemed the words of *Job* to be, proud, blasphemous, reproachful, false; *Why lettest thou such words as these go out of thy mouth?* Hence Observe:

First, *Passion within will vent it self by words without.*

When the heart is carried away, and the spirit turned against God, no marvel if the tongue be carried away, and the words of such a man be turned both against God, his truth, or people.

Secondly, Note: *Our words are suitable to our spirits.*

Some can dissemble much, and speak golden words, while themselvs are dross; but ordinarily, our words are such as we are: *The vile person will speak villany,* (*Isa.* 32.6.) A man that is all for the world, speaks worldly (1 *John* 4. 5.) *They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world.* Every man is of the world so, as that he is a part of the world; but some are so of the world, that the world is all them; they who are thus of the world, must needs speak of the world, if they speak any thing, for they have nothing else to speak of. Thus a covetous man speaks covetously, and a proud man proudly (*Jerem.* 43.2.) Some told the Prophet to his face, *Thou speakest falsly, the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there*; These were proud words indeed, but who spake them? The Text tells us, *Then spake Azariah the Son of Hoshaniah, and all the proud men:* The proud men spake proudly; so on the contrary, a sober man will speak soberly, an humble man humbly; *The poor speak supplications,* saith *Solomon*; rich men speak their commands, poor men speak their wishes and desires.

Thirdly, Observe: *He that dares to speak evil, is arrived at a great height of evil.*

Eliphaz puts this as an effect of a *heart turned against God*; *Such words as these,* shew that thou art not onely a sinful man, but impudent in sinning. For though an evil heart is *worse than an evil tongue,* and an ill thought than an evil word; yet when ill words spring from ill thoughts, and are as branches growing from the root of an evil heart, this shews a man heightned in sin; *Sin hath got the mastery of the heart, when it freely vents it self at the tongue.* Some keep their sins down by hypocrisie, and some by common modesty; they are either so cunning that they will not, or so bashful that they dare not speak out the filth that lies within. But they are beyond, not only modesty, but hypocrisie, whose tongues can speak all the evil that is in their heart; though the sin of the heart be worse than the sin of the tongue; yet when tongue sins are steep'd in the puddle of a corrupt heart, they are most unsavoury: *David* sinned, when he said, *in his haste, all men are lyars*: How greatly then do they sin, who tell lyes at their leisure, and speak evil with deliberation. That which is said in haste, is said by the tongue alone, without the privity of the heart, but the heart is alwayes privy to that which is said at leisure. The Prophet taxeth those, *the shew of whose countenance did testifie against them* (*Isa.* 3.9) They fall justly under as severe a censure, the sound of whose tongues doth testifie against them, for they also (as it follows in the Prophet) *declare their sin as Sodom, they hid it not.* Further, this also argues the evil of evil speaking, because it wrongs others, and infects the Auditors: the vanity or errour of the mind spoken out, is contagious; better keep it in, than speak it out, but both are naught: 'tis onely good, when we purge it out. Though it be some allay and lessening, yet it is no excuse for sin, that we keep it in; God hates it, let it lye as close as it will; and though a sin kept close doth not hurt others; yet it is not onely hurtful, but deadly to its keeper. They onely are out of danger, who, as they do not let evil go out of the door of their mouths, so not lodge in the chambers of their heart.

Thus I have opened the charge contained in this part of the Chapter; in all which, *Eliphaz* hath reproved the speech of *Job*, as vain, empty, proud, passionate, and erroneous.

He now proceeds to shew him (as he supposed) the errour of his opinion, and to confute it.

VERS. 14, 15, 16.

What is man that he should be clean? and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?
Behold, he putteth not his trust in Saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight:
How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

ELiphaz hath done reproving *Job* for his unprofitable words, and uncomely carriage; he now proceeds to convince him of his supposed errour in judgment, and unsound opinion; namely, That he boasted himself free from errour in practice, and sound at heart: This he looked upon as the Bulwark in which *Job* defended himself, and against this he now raises his battery to beat it down. And this takes up the second part of the Chapter, which I called *Confutation.*

Jam rem aggreditur & Jobi præcipuum firmamentum quo ille nitebatur evertit, quod ille se innocentem & justum diceret. Qua fronte inquit audes id dicere. Merc.

Verse 14. **What is man that he should be clean?**

As if he had said, *Though I should grant that thou art not conscious to thy self of any crime or wickedness acted, for which thou art thus afflicted; yet this is enough to prove thee a sinner, that thou art a man, and that thou art unrighteous, because thou art born of a woman; What is man that he should be clean, and he that is born of woman that he should be righteous?*

What is man?] He speaks contemptuously, What is man? As *Hiram* said of the Cities which *Solomon* assigned him, *What Cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul,* that is, displeasing, or dirty (1 *Kings* 9.13.) Thus *Eliphaz* speaks of man, as if he were displeased with the sight of him, or remembred onely the dust and clay out of which he was made, *What is man* (my friend *Job*) *that he should be clean?*

Job had spoken the same language before (*Chap.* 7. 17.) *What is man that thou art thus mindful of him, &c.* He also empties man of all worth, which should attract the least respect from God upon him: *What is man?* puts a five fold slight upon man.

First, In his nature.
Secondly, In his birth.
Thirdly, In the matter out of which he was made.
Fourthly, In reference to his present condition.
Fifthly, and chiefly, In reference to his corruption, or sinful depravation, *What is man that he should be clean?*

But had *Job* any where asserted himself clean? Did he not assert his own uncleanness, while he proclaimed that Negative Question (*Chap.* 14. *v.*4.) *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* not one. Why then doth *Eliphaz* charge *Job* with this boast of cleanness, who never thought himself clean, as his discourse every where demonstrates, but under two notions: First, as righteous by another, or through Faith in the *Messias*: Secondly, as not scandalous to others by any notorious crime, or conscious to himself of any close hypocrisie; in any other sense than this *Job* never asserted himself clean, and in this he was, yea, every believer is clean. Yet *Eliphaz* fastens it upon him, as if he had trim'd up himself with his own ornaments, or had advanced the Doctrine of *Self-perfection.*

Hence observe in general; That, *When persons are ingaged in a dispute, specially in a difficult controversie, they seldome understand, but seldomer report the truth of each others position.*

Some of *Calvins* adversaries called his Doctrine by the odious names of *Turcism* and *Judaism*: And the Papists call us *Solifidians,* as if we denied all good works, because we affirm, that a man is justified (though not by that Faith which is alone) yet by Faith alone without works. *Job* indeed had spoken much to vindicate himself, but he spake much more to abase, and lay himself low in the sight of God; and therefore *Eliphaz* might have made a fairer collection for him than this, that he affirmed himself *clean.*

Calvino-turcismus. Hun. *Calvinus Judaizans.* Osiand.

What

What is man, &c. The Hebrew is, *Miſerable man.* Miſerable is his name, and miſery is with him, frail is his name, and frailty is with him. Hence Mr. *Broughton* tranſlates, *What is woful man, to be cleared?*

אנש *Nomen humanæ fragilitati ſignificandæ appoſitum.*

What is man that he ſhould be clean?] The words contain a great and neceſſary truth, but becauſe we met with it *Chap.* 14. 4. where the point was opened, and the impoſſibility of ſelf-cleanneſs cleared from thoſe words: *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* (which queſtion anſwers for *Job*, that he was poſitive for the univerſal pollution of the nature of man) I ſhall not therefore ſtay upon it; take onely this brief hint. Here is a ſtrong proof of original ſin, we are clean, but not of our ſelves; we are clean, under a four-fold notion.

Firſt, Clean, meritoriouſly, by Chriſt.

Secondly, Clean efficaciouſly, by the ſpirit uniting us to Chriſt, and ſanctifying our hearts.

Thirdly, Clean inſtrumentally, by the Word, which diſcovers Chriſt the fountain to us, and ſo purifies us (*John* 15. 4.) *You are clean through the word which I have ſpoken unto you.*

Fourthly, We are clean impulſively and attractively, by faith, (*Acts* 15. 8.) *He made no difference, purifying their hearts by Faith*; thus many are clean, and but thus there is no man clean; *What is man that he ſhould be clean?*

And he that is born of a woman that he ſhould be righteous?

יצדק & יובה *Quando conjunguntur diſtinguenda ſunt, illud latius patet; hoc dicitur cum reus à judice abſolutus dimittitur. Illo autem non tantum innocentia ſed & dignitas notatur.* Coc.

Both parts of the Verſe import the ſame thing. *Clean* and *righteous* are near of one ſignification, yet in this place we may diſtinguiſh them; *To be clean*, refers to the purity of mans nature; to be righteous, or to be juſtified (for ſo the word may be tranſlated) refers to the integrity of his life; from both it follows, Man cannot merit, for he is not *clean*: he cannot anſwer God, for he is not *righteous*. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, *What is man that he ſhould either have any cleanneſs in himſelf, or that he ſhould be reputed and looked upon as righteous by others,* (*Both which he intends as applicable to Job.*) *If God ſhould ſearch thy nature, what art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be clean? If God ſhould ſearch thy life, what art thou that thou ſhouldeſt be righteous?* The point of mans utter inability to ſtand before God in himſelf for juſtification, hath been met with, more than once before, and therefore I will not ſtay upon that neither, only conſider the form of expreſſion, or the periphraſis of Man.

Emphaticè mulieris meminit. Ut Cap. 14. 1. Merc.

He that is born of a woman.] In the firſt clauſe he ſaith, *What is man*, in this latter, What is *he that is born of a woman*: He ſpeaks of man in both, yet with an additional emphaſis, to mind us of our birth and original, as was ſhewed upon thoſe words (*Chap.* 14. 1.) *Man that is born of a woman is of few dayes, and full of trouble*: where the Reader may find what that teacheth, even an aggravation of mans ſinfulneſs, in that he is born of a woman, who ſinned firſt, or was, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Tim.* 2. 14.) *Firſt in the Tranſgreſſion.* How prone is man to ſin, being born of a woman, who was ſo prone to ſin, that ſhe was the firſt ſinner? *What is he that is born of a woman that he ſhould be righteous?* The whole race of mankind hath yielded but one exception to this general Rule, and that was in the perſon of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*: He indeed was *born of a woman*, and yet *righteous*, becauſe his Mothers conception *was of the Holy Ghoſt* (*Matt.* 1. 20.) and by *the power of the moſt High over-ſhadowing her, Luke* 1. 35. But we may ſay of all men, except him, (who was alſo infinitely more than man, even *God-man*) *What is he that is born of a woman, that he ſhould be righteous?*

Secondly, *Eliphaz* proceeds (though the point be clear in it ſelf) to give a proof of it, which he urgeth from the greater to the leſs.

Verſ. 15. **Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints, and the heavens are not clean in his ſight: How much more abominable and filthy is man, &c.**

The Argument riſes thus:

If they who are the pureſt, the holieſt creatures, are not able to ſtand before God in their own purity, how ſhall he who hath no purity, no holineſs at all in him?

But the Heavens, yea, the Angels in Heaven, who are the pureſt, the holieſt creatures, are yet unclean in the ſight of God:

Therefore man who is abominable and filthy, drinking iniquity like water, cannot be clean in his ſight.

Behold, he puts no truſt in his Saints] *Eliphaz* urged this argument, (for the ſubſtance of it *Chap.* 4. 18.) here he repeats and re-inforceth it.

Behold, is uſually a note of attention, here it is more, a note of admiration; as if he had ſaid, *Would you think it, that God puts no truſt in his Saints? yet he doth not: or is not this a wonder, that God puts no truſt in his Saints? whom will he truſt, if not his Saints?*

The word which we tranſlate, to put truſt, ſignifies properly to believe, he doth not *believe in his Saints*, or not give *credit to them*; he doth not (as our word hath been) *confide* in them; a perſon is confided or truſted in, either becauſe of his faithfulneſs, or becauſe of his ſtrength and ſtability; the word which we render here to truſt, ſignifies ſometimes ſtrength or firmneſs, as alſo a *Pillar*, which is not onely firm, but upholds and confirms the Building, or that which leans upon it. The ſame word doth elegantly ſignifie both to truſt, and to be firm, becauſe every thing (that is truſted) is truſted upon ſuppoſall, either of a natural, or moral firmneſs. Hence the Vulgar tranſlates, *immutable*; *Behold, among the Saints there is not one immutable, or unchangeable*: And another of the Ancients, *There is no faithfulneſs in his Saints*; that is, firmneſs, or unchangeableneſs of nature is not to be found in them.

There are three different uſes of the word.

Firſt, To *truſt*.

Secondly, To *truſt in*.

Thirdly, To *truſt upon*. So the Tranſlation varies here.

For, firſt, ſome read, *He doth not truſt his Saints.*

Secondly, others, *He doth not truſt in his Saints.*

A third, *He doth not truſt upon his Saints.*

Thus, ſome put a difference between *believing God*, and *believing in God*, and *believing upon God*; though we find them uſed promiſcuouſly in Scripture. It is ſaid by *Moſes* (*Gen.* 15. 6.) *Abraham believed in the Lord, and it was accounted to him for righteouſneſs*; but the Apoſtle (*Rom.* 4. 3.) ſaith plainly, *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteouſneſs*: So that there is not any material difference between thoſe two expreſſions; yet ordinarily to truſt in or upon, is taken in a higher conſtruction than barely to truſt: *Behold he putteth no truſt in his Saints.*

Here it is queſtioned, who are meant by **Saints**; there are three opinions about it. The word *Saint* in general ſignifies a perſon ſeparated, or one ſet apart from others; *Holineſs is our ſeparation from the world unto God*: *holy perſons are ſeparated perſons*; that's their ſtate. But more diſtinctly, who are theſe holy perſons, theſe Saints? The Greek Interpreters reſtrain the Text to *the old Patriarchs, Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob*, as alſo *Moſes* and *Aaron*, with whom God at ſometimes was angry, or found fault with ſome of their actings: Secondly, others, by the *Saints* underſtand the confirmed Angels, who are called *Saints* by way of excellency; becauſe among all creatures they are (in one ſenſe) the moſt holy, as having ever been without the leaſt ſpot or taint of ſin, whether in their natures, or in their lives; and having ever continued as the *Houſhold ſervants of God*, obſervant of, and obedient to all his commands.

But we may rather take it in general, both for the *holieſt of men*, and for the *holy Angels*: *Behold he puts no truſt in his Saints*; no, not in thoſe who are moſt holy.

Hence Obſerve: *There is no created holineſs ſure, ſtable, and perfect in it ſelf*:

The glorious Angels which are, and ever ſhall be Saints in Heaven, and the Saints in Heaven who are like Angels, ſtand not in that holy and happy eſtate, by their own ſufficiency, but by the decree and grace of God. Thoſe Angels which fell at firſt were holy, and they who now ſtand, might have fallen notwithſtanding their created holineſs, if God had not ſuperadded confirming grace, which eſtabliſheth them for ever. Yet this is not all, that the Angels are imperfect, becauſe they might fall if not ſupported; there is ſomewhat more in it; for though the Angels are perfectly righteous in reference to the Law, (for the whole bent of their hearts is to God, and they love God with all their

אמן *Eſt credere tanquam rei fideli & conſtanti aut fidele & conſtans cui credi debeat.*

אומנות *Genus columnarum,* 2 Reg. 18. 16.

In Sanctis ſuis non eſt fides, i. e. firmitas vel immutabilitas naturæ: Aug.

Ecce inter Sanctos ejus nemo immutabilis. Vulg.

Aliqui legunt, Non credit ſanctis ſuis. 2. *In ſanctos ſuos.* 3. *In ſanctis ſuis. Sic credere in Deum, in Deo, & Deo, Synonyma ſunt.* Druſ.

קדש *Eſt abuſu communi ad divinum ſeparare.*

Angeli vocantur Sancti Dei, quaſi ei familiariſſimi atque illius obſequio addictiſſimi. Dan. 4. 8.

hearts, which is the fulfilling of the Law:) So that the obedience of the Angels in heaven is made the copy and pattern of our obedience here on earth, as Christ hath taught us to pray; though (I say) the Angels are thus perfectly righteous in reference to the Law) yet there is a higher righteousness and holiness in God. *There's but the holiness of obeying a Law, God hath the holiness of being a Law*: They have a holiness without spot, yet it is but a finite, a created holiness; now what comparison is there between finite and infinite, created, and uncreated; therefore, though there be no blemish in the obedience of Angels, none in their nature, none in their lives, yet God puts no trust in them, he cannot lay the weight of his confidence upon them, because they are creatures.

The next clause doubles this point.

And the heavens are not clean in his sight.] There is a difference among Interpreters, what these heavens are; The Chaldee Paraphrast, and some of the Ancients, understand the Angels, as in the former part of the verse, and they say, the Angels are called the Heavens under a two-fold consideration:

First, Because Angels are like the Heavens, in their spirituality and incorruptibility, in their order and subordination among themselves; as also in their power over sublunary or earthly bodies.

Secondly, By a Synechdoche, because the Angels have their habitation in Heaven, that's their dwelling-place; so Master *Broughton* translates, *Nor they of heaven be clean in his eyes*; that is, the Inhabitants of Heaven are not clean in his eyes. *The Heathen Poet calls those whom he supposed dwellers in Heaven, by the Name of Heaven*; describing a pleasant River, he calls it, *A River pleasant to Heaven*; that is, to those who are in Heaven.

Cæruleus Tibris cœlo gratissimus amnis. i. e. *diis vel cœlicolis.* Virg. *l.* 8.

Others, by *Heaven*, understand the Saints in Heaven, not the Angels; and that also upon a two-fold reason.

Sancti in quibus tanquam in cœlis habitare dicitur Deus, cœli dicuntur, quæ allegoria frequentissima est inter antiquos patres. Pined.

First, Because God is said to dwell in the Saints, they are his habitation; and wheresoever God dwells, he makes a Heaven.

Secondly, Because the Saints, not only those in Heaven, but they on earth, *have their conversation in heaven*; (*Phil.* 3. 20.) As carnal and earthly minded men are called *Earth*, because their hearts and conversations are fixed to the earth; so spiritual and heavenly-minded men may be called *Heaven*, because their hearts and conversations are fixed in Heaven.

Thirdly, We may rather understand it in a proper sense; *the heavens*, that is, *The heavenly bodies are not clear in thy sight*; the heavens are the most excellent, and purest part of the Creation: And therefore this interpretation, or rather plain construction of the words, suits the scope of *Eliphaz* fully, who, as he spake before of the Angels, who are the purest of all rational creatures; so here of the heavens, which are the purest of all inanimate creatures; yet these are not pure in the sight of God, therefore no man is. The heavens have a kind of uncleanness in them: the *Moon* hath her spots, yea, the Moon is but a spot, if Philosophers may be credited, who tell us that all the Stars, (in their sense the Moon is a Star) are but as the spots of Heaven. A *Star* (as they define) *being the thicker and grosser part of its Orb*: The Heavens themselves are so fine and liquid, so thin and fluid, that they cannot hold the light; therefore the Lord made those Celestial bodies, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, more compact and gross, that so they might both receive, and retain the light, as also transmit and give it out to the World here below. These are spots in the heavens; and though they appear as the glory or *Beauty-spots* of Heaven to our sight, and are so indeed, yet *these are not clean in the sight of God.*

Cœli qui maxime sunt lucidi suas habent maculas, partesque crassiores magisque opacas & materiales, in re igitur perfectissima vidit Deus maculas. Pined.

Again, the heavens are furthest removed from all earthly dregs and dross, so that they are clean, not only in regard of their nature and constitution, but also in regard of their site and position; being placed so far from the sink of the World, the earth, they never received any stain or defilement from it; yet these heavens are not clean in his sight. God doth not make that which is clean, not clean, by his seeing it; but his sight is infinitely above all the cleanness which he sees. That may be clean, considered simply or in it self, which before God, or to the eye of God, is as an unclean thing.

In conspectu ejus. Aliud est purum esse simpliciter, & aliud purum esse coram Deo; ut justus, & justus coram Deo differunt. Luc. 1. 6. Drus.

Hence Note: *God is so clear sighted, that the cleanest creatures are unclean in his sight.*

The very cleanness of the creature, is uncleanness before him, much more, compared to him. For if one creature may be so clean, that another creature which is clean may be said to have no cleanness in comparison of it; then surely God is so clean, that the cleanest creatures have indeed no cleanness in comparison of his. The Stars are very beautiful bodies, and full of light, yet the Sun hath so much light, that it darkens all the Stars, and causeth them to disappear, when it appeareth: Now if the Stars have no light in the sight of the Sun, what light hath the Sun in the sight of God? he that puts all the perfections that the creature hath into the creature, hath infinitely more perfection in himself. Those excellencies which are divided and scattered all the Creation over, are not onely contracted and united in God, but unconceivably exceeded by him.

Job having thus laid down the former part of his argument, applies it,

Verse 16. **How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?**

Concerning the Saints, he said onely, *God puts no trust in them*, and concerning the Heavens, *They are not clean in his sight*: But now that he speaks of man, he doth not say, God puts no trust in him, or he is not clean in his sight; but he layes load upon him, *He is abominable and filthy*: and as if that were not enough, he aggravates it with, *How much more abominable, &c.* If he put no trust in glorified Saints, in whom yet there is no iniquity, then no marvel, if man be called abominable, *who drinketh iniquity like water.*

The whole Verse is a description of mans sinfulness: First, of the sinfulness of his nature, in those words, *He is abominable and filthy*: Secondly, of the sinfulness of his life, *He drinketh iniquity like water.*

How much more] Some read, *Much less*: So Master *Broughton*, *Much less the unclean and loathsome.* The Original may bear either (as also a third reading, *Surely then*) without any impeachment to the scope of the place, *The heavens are not clean in his sight: Much less is abominable and filthy man clean in his sight.* Again, *The heavens are not clean in his sight; how much more abominable and filthy is man in his sight?* We may take it also as a direct inference without any comparison, either from the greater or the less. *The heavens are not clean in his sight; Surely then, man is abominable and filthy.*

נתעב *Abominabilis propriè quem nemo dignari debeat auditu, visu, familiaritate, contactu.* ἐβδελυγμένος. *Abominari nos dicimus, quæ in cogitatione nostra non patimur.* Bold.

The word which we translate **abominable**, notes that which is most *abhorring* to the nature of man; that which is not onely so nauseous that the stomach cannot digest it, but so base, that the mind is burdened to think of it; yea, the word imports that which is rejected by all the senses, abominably rejected; that which the eye cannot endure to look upon, that which the ear cannot endure to hear of, that which is a stink in the nostrils, and which the hand will not touch; such an abominable thing the word bears, and such is man; God loaths him, and is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, much more a lump of iniquity; he is as a stink in the nostrils of God, nor will he touch him (for any thing in him) unless with a hand of justice, to destroy him.

Further, some explain *abominable* by that of the Apostle (*1 Cor.* 16. 26.) *If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maranatha*: that is, let all abominate, and cast him out of their society: When the Lord would shew the worst thought that he had of the best services of the Jews, he tells them, *Incense is an abomination to me*; and when the Psalmist would convince us how the people of Israel had defiled themselves with their own works, and polluted the Land with blood; he gives it in the word of the Text, *Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance* (*Psal.* 106. *v.* 40.) His Inheritance was so abominable to him, that he would not touch it, nor take it into his own hands; but as it follows in the Psalm, *He gave them into the hand of the heathen.* Hence Observe;

Hoc videtur dictum per antithesin, propter Sanctorum & cœlorum pulchritudinem, quorum species, mundities, lux, ordo, concentus mirabilis, conspectus multo jucundissimus.

Sinful man is loathsome, and abominable unto God. How much more abominable is man?

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This is not to be understood of some particular man, or of some sort of men, who are more vile than others; but take the best of men, the most accomplisht and compleat in the whole course of nature, these are abominable; they are deprived of the Image of God, they are stampt with the Image of Satan, they are not only unable to do that which is good, but they are totally averse from it, yea, enemies to it; Is not all this enough to render man abominable in the sight of God? And so abominable is man, that he doth not onely displease the eye of God, but the very eyes of those who have received the grace of God. A godly man turns away from the wicked, as the wicked man doth from the godly; (*Prov.*29.27.) *An unjust man is an abomination to the just; and he that is upright in his way, is an abomination to the wicked.* The distaste is mutual; 'tis called enmity (*Gen.*3.15.) here abomination. The wicked man saith (as the Devil to Christ) *What have I to do with thee, thou Son of David?* The godly man saith, *What have I to do with thee, thou son of Belial?* 'Tis the sin of the wicked man to abhor the righteous, for he abhors him for his righteousness: 'Tis the duty of a godly man to abhor the wicked, and he abhors him only for his wickedness. To do so is a piece of his character, *Who shall dwell in the mountain of God?* He is a man, *in whose eye a vile* (that is, a wicked) *person is abhorred*, *Psal.* 15.4. Much less can he look pleasedly or pleasantly upon a wicked man; his heart riseth against him, not out of pride, or high thoughts of himself, or from the lowness of his condition, if he be poor, but from the odiousness of his disposition, and his opposition to goodness. Such a man is vile in his esteem, how honourable soever he is in the eye of the world.

Again (which shews yet further, that a man in nature is abominable) when any man repents and turns to the Lord, he is an abomination to himself; he is abominable to God, and good men, before he repents; and upon the same account, he is abominable to himself when he repents. For as God and good men before, so he then sees his own vileness and deformity, then he smells the filthiness of his own corrupt heart: This the Prophet assures us (*Ezek.* 36.31.) where the Lord promiseth to pour out the spirit of repentance upon his people, *To take away the heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh*: and then, *They shall loath themselves for all their abominations*, as not being able to endure the stench of their own corruptions: When *Job* at the sight of God, saw himself more clearly, then he cries out, *Wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes*: If a good man, seeing himself, is an abomination to himself, how much more is sinful man abominable in the sight of God?

And (which aggravates the point to the highest) Not only is a man repenting abominable to himself, but even a wicked man, upon a clear discovery of himself to himself, becomes an abomination to himself, though he be far from repentance. That's the reason why a wicked man cannot abide to search his own heart, or return into his own bosome. (*Isa.* 46. 8.) *Remember this, shew your selves men, bring it again to mind*; The Hebrew is, *Bring it to your hearts: They who love their sin, love not to look to their sinful hearts:* they dare not turn their eye inward or upward: not upward, because there is so much holiness in God: not inward, because there is so much filthiness in themselves. Hence the Lord threatens, (*Na.* 3.5, 6,) because they would not look on their own filthiness, that he would shew their filthiness to all the World, *He would shew the Nations their Nakedness, and the Kingdomes their shame*: And howsoever a natural man hides his abomination from his eye now, or will not see it, yet all shall be laid open to him in the day of Judgment, which will be as a day of *the revelation of the righteous judgment of God*: So a day of the revelation of the unrighteousness of man: And then he shall (though too late) abhor himself for ever. There hath been a dispute whether the sins of Believers shall be opened at that day, but there is no question but the sins of unbelievers shall, and that not onely to shame them, but to punish and torment them; yea, possibly, the sight of sin will be a greater torment to them then all their other torments, and to be led about (as the Prophet was in reference to others) from one unclean room of their hearts to another, there to behold all the abominations of their hearts, will be the very pit of Hell. *O how abominable* and, as it follows in the Text,

Filthy is man.] The word is derived from a root that signifies corrupt, rotten, putrified, the scum of a Pot, the rust of metals, the dung, or excrement of man and beasts; there are not words filthy enough to express the filthiness of man. The word is found but three times (as some observe) in the Scripture in this construction, and in all of them it is applyed to shew the abominable wickedness of man; the first place is this of *Job*; it is found also, *Psal.* 14. 3. *Psal.* 53. 3. Which Psalms are most pregnant descriptions of the corrupt state of man; as if this were a word pickt out on purpose, as a glass to shew man his face and natural complexion in.

נאלח *Putridus, fœtidus, graveolentus, translatio à carnibus rancidis non despumatis.* Drus. *Pagninus existimat deduci à* זרא *rubigo ollæ, Spuma, excrementum.*

There is a second translation of the word which gives more light to this, *How much more abominable and unprofitable is man?* One word signifies filthy and unprofitable, because that which is corrupt and filthy, is also unprofitable, and unfit for use. It is an extream debasement unto man, that he is unprofitable, so filthy that he is good for nothing: The Apostle puts these together, (*Tit.* 1. 16.) *Abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*; that is, unfit for every good work: We may say of man (in this sence) as the Prophet (*Ezek.* 15. 3.) doth of the Vine, *Son of man, what is the Vine-tree more then another tree?* Excellent to yield Wine: But in the third Verse we have another answer, *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work, or will men make a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon?* Will you build a house of *Vine Timber*, or will you so much as make *a Pin of it?* The Vine is not fit to make a Pin of; thus we may say of a carnal man, he is unprofitable; will the Lord use him in any work? No, he is reprobate to every good work: Will he serve the Lords turn, so much as to make a *Pin of?* That is, Is he profitable for the least service? No, he is not. He is also like the Corn growing upon the house top, whereof *The Reaper filleth not his hand, nor he that binds up the Sheaves his bosom.* The reason why man appears thus filthy, is, because he deals so much with filth; and he is thus unfit to do any good, because he is continually doing evil, as it follows in the last clause of this Verse.

Inutilis. Fulg. *Quæ putrida sunt inutilia sunt.*

Qui sibi nequam est, cui usui bonus est?

Which drinketh iniquity like water.] Will you know what declares man abominable and filthy in the sight of God? It is not his poverty, his sickness, his rags, or any external defilement, nothing but sin makes him so: *He drinks in iniquity like water*; this makes him as filthy as the dirt and mire he treads upon, or as the vomit and dung which he casteth out.

Hence Note in general.

Sin, and sin only, makes man abominable and filthy in the sight of God.

Nothing can defile the soul but sin; though a man be cloathed with filthy garments, though his skin be over-run with filthy sores, though he lye in a stinking Channel, yet the Lord will not say, he is abominable, or filthy, in these respects; for even in such a state, or at such a time, Christ may have taken him in his arms, and kissed him with the kisses of his lips. But though he go cloathed in Scarlet, though he lye in a bed of Ivory, and is perfumed with all the Spices of *Arabia*, yet sin makes him filthy and abominable in the eye of the Lord.

Secondly Observe, *The multiplied acts of sin are an evidence that man is habitually sinful, or that he is abominable and filty.*

He that doth righteousness is righteous; and he that doth unrighteousness is unrighteous. If man were not filthy, he could not drink iniquity; that is, feed upon, and delight in sin, which is but filthiness.

This expression of mans sinfulness is further considerable; he doth not only commit iniquity, but *he drinks iniquity*; and he doth not sip at it, but *he drinks it like water.* *Elihu* speaks thus (*Job* 34. 7.) *What man is like* Job, *who drinketh up scorning like water*; And so doth *Solomon* (*Prov.* 26. 6.) *He that sends a message by the hand of a fool, cutteth off the feet, and drinketh dammage*; that is, he shall have dammage enough, a full draught of it, his belly full of it, by sending such an empty-headed messenger upon his errand. So *to drink iniquity*, and to *drink it like water*, is to do abundance of iniquity. I shall give seven Observations, which will discover the intendment of this man-

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ner of speaking, and draw out the meaning of *He drinks iniquity like water*,

First thus, *Man naturally hath a strong appetite or desire to sin.*

Mans natural desire is to nothing else but sin. Drinking implyes appetite; a man doth not drink (ordinarily) till he is thirsty: And though Drunkards have sometimes no thirst, yet they have alwayes a strong desire to drink. Sinful man is a thirst for, and desires the drafts of sin (*Ephes.* 4. 19.) *He commits iniquity with greediness*; which is a Metaphor taken from eating and drinking: And because man hath not a greater desire after any thing then to drink, therefore it is grown to a Proverb among us, when we would shew our willingness to do a thing, we say, *We will do it as willingly, as to drink when we are a thirst.* Such is the bent of man to sin, that he hath no more reluctance to commit it, then the thirsty man hath to drink: He thirsteth after it as vehemently, as *David* did after God (*Psal.* 42. 2.) *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; as the Hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.* Or again, the heart of man thirsteth after the waters of iniquity, as *David* thirsted after the waters of the Well of *Bethlem*; *Who will give me to drink of the waters of the Well of* Bethlem? At which word, some of his mighty men brake through the whole Host of the Enemy, to fetch that water. When man thirsts for this water of iniquity, his own heart, or hand, will break through all oppositions, through Law, through Conscience, through Counsel, through an Host of threatnings armed against him, through judgment inflicted on him, he will break through all these, that he may have a draught of his beloved *iniquity-water.*

Secondly, To drink, notes a strong desire, so pleasure and content; and where there is a great deal of desire, there is also much content, and pleasure in drinking.

Hence Observe, *That it is a very pleasant thing to a carnal man to sin, he drinks iniquity, not only like water, but in this sence, like the sweetest wine; a draught of sin is the only merry-go-down to a carnal man.*

A Drunkard likes his drink well, but he likes his drunkenness better: His liquor is sweet to him, but O how sweet is the satisfying of his lust! When he hath his desire he is pleased; when he is frustrated of his desire he is sullen, and like *Ahab*, when he could not obtain *Naboth*'s Vineyard, he is displeased, and refuses, (as he did) to eat bread, because he cannot have this water of iniquity to drink.

Thirdly, Consider the easiness of it, to drink is no hard labour; hence we speak proverbially, *I can do such a thing as easily as I can drink*; there are no bones in drink: *Good liquor* (we say also) *needs no chewing:* Besides, it is easie to drink, because it is natural to drink; Children have no Tutors to teach them to drink. Again, to drink water is easie, because we may get it easily; water is not kept under Lock and Key, but in the common Storehouses or Cellars of Nature.

Hence Note, *A natural man sins with ease.*

q. d. *Facillime laxatis conscientiæ habenis in omnia omnis generis scelera se dat præcipitem.* Bold.

It is no pain to him to sin: Sin is not easie in the effects, so it leaves us in *Little-ease*, pain and sorrow enough are the fruits of it; but it is easie in the act of it; it is to a wicked heart, as easie as to drink water, which is every way easie.

For first, Sin is a common thing, every where to be had; sin may be found (like water) in every Ditch; sin also is like those waters which flow naturally, you need not pump for it, or fetch it up with Buckets.

Secondly, No man needs be taught to sin, Children learn that lesson (and till the Spirit of God teach them, they cannot unlearn it) without a School-master.

Quasi per in curiam & otium, quasi nihil agens.

Thirdly, Most sins in the act of them, have little labour or difficulty in them (*Psal.* 50. 20.) *Thou fattest and spakest against thy Mothers Son.* A man may both speak and do evil, while he sits still and doth nothing; an idle posture may serve the turn for such work as that.

Fourthly, Water is but small drink; water hath little pleasure in it, and less strength in it. And therefore when Christ would shew that the lowest curtesie or charity done to one of his, shall be highly esteemed by him, he saith, *Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a Disciple, he shall not loose his reward*, Matth. 10. 42.

Hence Observe, *Man will sin upon very easie terms, and smallest considerations.*

Though there be little got by it, though he get but a draught of water by it; though his sin bring him in scarce any thing of advantage, yet sin he will; the act of sinning pleaseth some, more then the consequence or gain of sin. *The care not much whether it is water or wine which they drink, so it be iniquity which they drink.* As the Saints, in a height of holiness, will do good, though they do themselves little good, or get no outward advantage by it: They resolve to do good for good sake; the duty abstractly considered, or the act it self, is the thing that pleaseth them; so to a natural man, the very committing of sin satisfieth him more then the outward income or revenue of his sin: *He doth evil for evil sake, and serves his lust for love, not for wages.*

Eo improbitatis evadit impius, ut vel solo peccati & impietatis nomine, nulla præterea mercede proposita, peccato inserviat.

Fifthly, Drinking is a frequent act; a temperate man drinks every day, and often every day; healthy men eat often, and most men drink oftener then they eat: So that to drink iniquity hints also the frequency of committing iniquity.

Hence Observe, *A carnal heart sins often.*

He sins, and sins, he cannot but sin, it is a continual, yea, a continued act; he hath never done; he is like the Drunkard that must alwayes be tipling. Or like the covetous man, who is alwayes *having*, and the more he hath, the more he desires to have. Covetousness is a dry drunkenness; and drunkenness is a wet covetousness; both return often upon the same acts; and so doth every sinner naturally. *He cannot cease from sin*, as the Apostle *Peter* speaks, *Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil, and that continually.* The cup of iniquity is never from his mouth.

Inveteratũ ac inseparabilem peccandi habitum & consuetudinem denotat.

Sixthly, *To drink iniquity like water*, notes not only the frequency of sinning, but the abundance of sinning; they take great draughts of sin, who drink iniquity like water: Such as are accustomed to drink water (in many places it is the common drink) such, I say, drink more then men usually do of wine, or strong drink: First, Because wine and artificial liquors are costly; but you may drink water good cheap, and none will grutch you. Secondly, Water is not strong nor vaporous, it doth not burden the brain like your heady liquors. Now though iniquity be somewhat unlike water in both these respects (for to some their sins are costly enough at present, and they will cost all very dear (except they repent of them before) at the day of reckoning; sin also flyes up into the brain, and doth as much besot, as defile the soul. Now, I say, though sin be thus unlike water) yet the natural man drinks it like water, he takes in and sends out abundance of it; what cares he what it costs him, or how it besots him, neither the present distemperings of it, nor the after reckonings for it, trouble him.

Seventhly, Eating and drinking are the support of nature, by these the body is maintained in life: Now as the body of Nature is maintained by eating and drinking, *so the body and life of sin, the corrupt state and strength of man are maintained by the continual actings of sin.* The old *Adam* is nourished by these waters of iniquity. We say in nature, we are nourished by that of which we are made; that which is the matter of our constitution, is the matter of our nutrition; so in this case, a man in nature is composed or constituted of sin; and a natural man is nourished, and preserved by sinning. Continual acts increase the habit; and as a godly man is nourished by holy acts, and strengthened in spirit by spiritual obedience; doing the will of God is the food of the soul. As Christ speaks (*John* 4. 21.) so doth every true Christian in his degree, *It is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father which is in Heaven*; or as *Job* professeth of himself (*Chap.* 23. 12.) *I esteem the words of thy mouth more then my necessary food:* Thus also the old man saith, It is my meat and drink to do the will of the flesh, and that is indeed the will of his Father which is in Hell. The words of his mouth, his

Perbibisti iniquitatem & ita visceribus immiscuisti, ut nisi cum ipsis exire non possit. Sen. lib. P. *de ira.*

Ut deficienti humido resarciendo, nihil aptius est aqua, & utilius; ita hominis beatitudini, ipsi deest, consummande, natura nihil suggerit nisi peccatum. Coc.

his Counsels and Laws I esteem more then my necessary food.

So much for the opening and illustration of this Scripture phrase, *Drinking iniquity like water*. I shall propound one Querie in general, concerning the whole Verse, and so conclude it. Here is a full description of sinful man: But whether *Eliphaz* speaks this strictly of a person unregenerate, and so applyeth it to *Job*, or whether this description be not also applicable to a man who is regenerate and godly for the main, and was so intended by *Eliphaz*, is here a question.

Some conceive that the words will suit none but an unregenerate man; and 'tis grafted upon all hands, that they are most sutable to him. An unregenerate man is *abominable and filthy, he drinks iniquity like water:* And yet in a qualified sence, we may say all this of a man regenerate: Even *He*, in reference to the remains of corruption, is *abominable and filthy*; and *He*, under some distempers and temptations, *drinks iniquity like water:* Which words of *Eliphaz*, a modern Interpreter parallels with those of *Paul* concerning himself (*Rom.* 7. 25.) *With the flesh I serve the Law of sin.* And delivers his opinion in this case, That though *Eliphaz* aimed at *Job* in all this, yet he deals with him not as with a wicked man, but as with an erring brother. For whereas he had said (*Chap.* 13. 23.) *How many are mine iniquities? Eliphaz* might judge by his words, that surely he thought his iniquities were not very many: And whereas he had said at the twenty sixth Verse of the same Chapter, *Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth: Eliphaz* might collect, surely this man thinks his elder years have been so free from sin, that God can find nothing in them, which might justifie him in these severe punishments. Now *Eliphaz* opposeth these apprehensions, and would both teach and convince him, that as original sin pollutes every man wholly, till he is washed and born again by the Spirit; so no man is so far washed by the Spirit, but that many spots and pollutions of the flesh, do still cleave to him, and often appear upon him. And *Eliphaz* may be conceived to handle *Job* in this manner,

Agit Eliphaz *cum* Jobo, *non ut improbo, sed ut errante.* Coc.

First, To shew him, that though a man be in a state of regeneration, yet he can deserve nothing at the hand of God, because his holiness is still imperfect, and his corruptions are abominable.

Secondly, That the greatest sufferings and afflictions of good men in this life, are very consistent with the Justice of God.

Thirdly, That he might humble *Job*, who (as he feared) was still too high in his own opinion, and thought better of himself then did become him.

Fourthly, To provoke him to resist his own corruptions stedfastly.

And lastly, To bear the cross (which the Lord had laid upon him for his good, especially for the taming and subduing of his corruptions) patiently.

So that *Eliphaz* doth not dispute with him upon this Hypothesis, or supposition, or not upon this only, *That man by Nature, and without the Grace of God, is filthy and abominable, drinking iniquity like water*; but upon this, or this in consort with the former, *That man in a state of Grace, or a godly man, is filthy and abominable, in reference to the flesh that dwelleth in him, and that in reference to his frequent sinnings, he may be said to drink iniquity like water:* And therefore *Job* had no reason to be proud, how good soever he was, or how much good soever he had done; and that there was all the reason in the world he should be patient, and take it well at the hand of God, how much evil soever he should suffer.

This resolution of the Querie, as it is profitable, so probable. For howsoever *Job*'s Friends had branded him in divers passages of this dispute, as a wicked man and an hypocrite, and were so understood by *Job*, as appears in his answers and replyes; yet 'tis most likely his Friends spake so in reference to his actions, not in reference to his state. That he had done like an Hypocrite, or a wicked man, was clearly their opinion; but there is no necessity to conclude from what they said, that they judged him absolutely to be one.

VERS. 17, 18, 19, 20.

I will shew thee, hear me, and that which I have seen, I will declare.

Which wise men have told from their Fathers, and have not hid it.

Unto whom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.

The wicked man travelleth with pain all his dayes, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

Eliphaz having argued against *Job*'s supposed opinion, of *self-cleanness*, and *personal righteousness*, proceeds to the confirmation of his own Position, to which he leads us, by a new Exordium, or Preface, in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth Verses of this Chapter: Secondly, He largely handles and illustrates it from Verse 20. to Verse 31. Thirdly, He applyeth the whole Doctrine to *Job* by way of dehortation, at Verse 31. and so forward to the end of the Chapter.

The general Argument which he brings to confirm his Tenet, may be thus formed up;

That is true which continued experience, and the consent of wise men in all Ages have taught and delivered to us:

But the experience, and consent of wise men in all Ages, have taught, and delivered this, that a wicked man travels with pain all his dayes, that he is punished outwardly by want and sickness, and inwardly by the gripes and scourges of his own conscience.

Therefore this is a truth.

The major Proposition is the sum of the Preface contained in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth Verses: The minor, or second Proposition, is held forth in the twentieth Verse, and is prosecuted to the one and thirtieth.

I will shew thee, hear thou me. and that which I have seen I will declare.

So the Preface begins: He layes down a double proof in this Preface; a proof first from his own experience, secondly from the consent of others. From his own experience, in this Verse, *I will shew thee, hear thou me, that which I have seen I will declare*; The consent of others is expressed in the eighteenth and nineteenth verses, *Which wise men have told me from their Fathers.*

I will shew thee, hear thou me.] As if he had said, *Thou art out of the way, thou art in the dark, and therefore in charity, I will lend thee a thread of true Doctrine, to lead thee out of that labyrinth of error, wherein I see thou art intangled; I will shew thee, and all that I desire of thee as a reward of my pains, is but this, Hear thou me, be attentive,* or (as the *Chalde* Paraphrast renders) *receive it, take it of me; he that speaks truths deserves to be heard, and that is all I desire.*

Cæcutienti tibi & in maximis tenebris versanti, verissimæ doctrinæ lumen præferam. Accipe à me. Targ.

I will shew thee, hear thou me.] But what will *Eliphaz* shew him? Not that which he had fancied, but that which he was assured of.

That which I have seen I will declare.] Seeing is a sure and particular sense; yet as the act of one sense is often put for the act of another; so *Seeing*, which is the most noble of the Senses, is often put for all. *That which I have seen*; is, that which I have learned, that which I have fetched in, or collected by the help of all my senses; yea, by my reason and understanding, *That do I here declare unto thee.*

More strictly, *Seeing* may be taken two wayes: First, As noting experience; I have not only heard some reports about these things, but I have seen, and observed them my self; there is a stronger conviction in this, because the sense of seeing is less fallible then that of hearing; and we say, *One eye witness is better then ten ear witnesses.* Secondly, *As I have seen*, may be taken for common experiences among men; so for special revelation from God. Some Divine revelations were made in visions; and all Divine revelations were so clear and evident, that they were or might be called Visions, as if the matter of them had been represented to the eye; and hence such as God honoured and trusted with those Revelations were called

Certius est, vidi, quam audivi, oculatus testis potior est auritis. Drus.

Seers

Seers (1 Sam. 9.9.) *He that is now called a Prophet was before time called a Seer*: And he was called a Seer, because the clearness of those messages and manifestations was so great, that they might be judged as objects of the eye, rather then of the ear, or of the understanding. Thus the whole Book of the Prophesie of *Isaiah* is called, *A Vision, or a thing seen*; *The Vision of* Isaiah *the Prophet, which he saw concerning* Judah *and* Jerusalem, (*Chap.* 1. 1.) Yet the Prophet did not receive all the Doctrines which he preached, and Prophesies which he published in that Book, by vision; but the manifestation from God, was so full of light to his understanding, that it was as if he had seen it with his eye. Some expound so here, *That which I have seen*; that is, that which I have had a special revelation about. As if he referr'd to the fourth Chapter, where *Eliphaz* reports to *Job* what a dreadful Vision he had, and what the matter of it was, even much like that which is represented in the following part of this Chapter. A learned Interpreter agrees, that it was a Vision; but, saith he, it was either a fained artificial Vision (such are frequent in Popery) or it was a delusion of the Devil. I do not at all admit this latter branch of his opinion; but I must reject the former, as altogether unworthy of *Eliphaz*, who was surely a man of integrity, and fearing God, and was therefore above such affected falshoods, and studied deceits, to gain respect and credit among men.

Mihi non videtur improbabile aut delusum fuisse à diabolo, vel ipsum somnium aliquod aut imaginationē commentum esse, ut sibi conciliaret authoritatē. Sanct.

I shall therefore insist upon the former sence, *That which I have seen*, that is, by common experience, *that will I declare unto thee.*

Hence Observe, First, *What we declare, or communicate to others, we should be well assured of our selves.*

That which I have seen declare I unto thee: while we declare, either by way of instruction, to teach true Doctrine, or by way of information, to report the truth of action, 'tis our duty to declare upon knowledge. So the Apostle *John*, in his first Epistle, *Chap.* 1. 1. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life, that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you*: He brings in the operations of three Senses, Seeing, Hearing, and Feeling, as witnesses to avouch for, and ascertain that which he had declared; we must take heed of declaring upon surmises, and probabilities, upon a bare *hear-say*, or *I thought so*: That which we have clearly learned, we may teach confidently, and nothing besides that.

Observe Secondly, *As we must have a ground for what we declare to others, so when we have a good ground we must declare.*

That which we know we should make known; *That which I have seen I declare unto you*; holy knowledge must be communicated, such light must not be put under a bushel, nor must such a Talent be wrapt up in a Napkin: *He that is taught should teach. When thou art converted* (saith Christ to *Peter*) *strengthen thy Brethren*: Let others partake of thy experiences. *Come* (saith *David*) *and I will tell you what God hath done for my soul*: *Philip* (John 1.43.) being found by Christ, finds *Nathanael*, and saith unto him, *We have found him of whom* Moses, *and the Prophets did write*, Jesus *of* Nazareth; *the Son of* Joseph: He quickly declared what he had seen, and so should we. This is the first proof, *That which I have seen, I declare*, experience is my ground.

The second proof, is from the consent of others, from the authority of the Ancients.

Which wise men have told from their Fathers, and have not hid it.

Eliphaz treads the same steps, as in his first discourse with *Job*. For after he had there delivered the contents or sum of his Vision, he appeals to the judgment of the Saints, *Chap.* 5. So here, having told *Job* that *he would declare what he had seen*, he refers him also to the judgment of others, *That which wise men have told their Fathers, and have not hid it.* I refer you to men, and those not men of a mean rank, but to godly wise men; in which *Eliphaz* seems again to answer what *Job* had objected, that the points he had offered were of common and vulgar observation (*Chap.* 12. 3.) *Who knows not such things as these?* *Eliphaz* replyes, these things are no common discourse, they are such as *wise men have told from their Fathers*: As if he had said, Do not despise what I say, as ordinary, or as a novelty, no, nor as received from corrupt antiquity, for besides what I have seen, I have good authority for what I speak; the ancient and the wise vote with me; *Wise men have told it from their Fathers*, here is the conveyance.

Wise men. He doth not mean worldly wise men, Philosophers and Polititians; but godly wise men, these have told it from their Fathers; their Fathers told it them, and they told it me; so that this position claims by two descents at least. One of the Rabbins gives it three, if not more: for by the Fathers of the wise men he understands, not their immediate Fathers only, but those who were more remote and further off; yea, possibly those who were furthest off, even as far as *Adam*.

Rambam subtilius à patribus suis exponit, à patribus eorum. Ut hic tres ætates considerentur una sapientum hac indicantiū, altera patrum, tertia majorum & atavorum. Merc.

Hence Observe, First, *It is an ingenuity to acknowledge by whom we profit.*

Wise men have told me this, I received it from others, as well as collected it by my own experience.

Secondly Note, *Truth should be conveyed down to our Posterity.*

Truth is a more precious inheritance then Land or Money; if Parents are careful to secure (as much as they can) earthly things to their Children, how much more should they be careful to secure heavenly? In the first Ages of the World, till the Law was given on Mount *Sinai*, faithful men were instead of Books, and Tradition supplied the want of Scripture: But now, our recourse must be to what God hath commanded to be written, not to what men have said. No Tradition is of any force, but as consentient with Scripture, and none of so much force as Scripture. The *Council of Trent*, in the fifth Session, thunders out *Anathemas* against those who receive not Tradition with the same godly affection, and devotion, with which they receive the Scripture it self; *Bellarmine* in his controversie about Tradition, entitles his Book thus, *Of the Word of God not written*; as if the Word of God were to be divided into these two orders, *The Word written*, and the *Word not written*: Tradition with him is the *Unwritten word*, and must be held of as much authority as the Word written; *This is* (as Christ taxeth the Pharisees) *To make the Word of God of none effect, through mans Tradition*: It is still a wise mans duty to tell Posterity what the Word and Truth of God is; but we must not receive any thing, as a truth of God, upon the bare Word of the wisest men. *Wise men have told their Fathers,*

And have not hid it. There is a twofold hiding: First, a hiding to keep a thing safe, that we loose it not: Secondly, A hiding, that we keep it close, and not communicate it: In the former sence, we must hide the truth of God, but we may not in the latter. When *David* saith, *I have hid thy Commandments in my heart*; when *Mary hid the sayings of Christ in her heart*; and when the man that found the treasure (*Matth.* 13.44.) *Went away and hid it, and for joy thereof sold all he had, and bought the field*: All these hid it, that it might be forth coming for their own use, they did not hide it, as unwilling to bring it forth, for the use of others; so the idle Servant hid his Talent, and was justly condemned for hiding it, *Matth.* 25.

Hence Observe, *Truth must not be hid from others.*

Truth is a common good, no man hath the sole property of it; every one may challenge his part of this possession; and the more we part with it to others, the more we increase our own possession. Truth multiplyes in its degree to us, while we make division of it to thousands. A Candle gives not the less light to the owner, because many standers by see by it; and this Candle gives a clearer light to us when we let many see by it: *Our knowledge is perfected while it is communicated.* This Candle therefore is not to be put under a bushel, but must be set upon a Candlestick, that all may see by the light of it. *Shall I* (saith the Lord, *Gen.* 18.) *hide from* Abraham *the thing that I am about to do?* No, I will not, For *I know* Abraham *will not hide it*: *He will command his Children and his Houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.* The *Israelites* were charged to communicate

communicate the wonders which God wrought for them, and the Ordinances which he appointed them, when they were delivered out of Egypt, *Exod.* 12.

I will open my mouth in a Parable (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *I will utter dark ſayings of old, which we have heard and known: And our Fathers have told us, we will not hide them from their Children, ſhewing to the Generations to come, the praiſes of the Lord, and his ſtrength, and the wonderful works which he hath done* (*Pſal.* 78. 2, 3, 4.) 'Tis our duty to preſerve memorials of the works of God, and to declare his word to all that are about us. What wiſe men know from their Fathers, they will not hide.

Eliphaz yet goes on to deſcribe the men whoſe conſent in opinion he had received about the controverſie in hand.

Verſ. 19. **To whom alone the earth was given, and no ſtranger paſſed among them.**

If any man ask who were theſe wiſe men? He anſwers, They were wiſe men,

To whom alone the earth was given.] In theſe words *Eliphaz* ſeems to remove a prejudice that might lie in *Job's* Spirit againſt the teſtimony of thoſe Ancients: For ſuppoſe they were *wiſe men*, yet he might ſay, 'tis like they were but *mean men*, men of no rank or quality, men of ſmall credit or authority, and (we know what *Solomon* ſaith, *Eccleſ.* 9. 16.) *A poor mans wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words not heard:* Therefore ſaith *Eliphaz*, you ſhall not put me off thus, nor diſable my witneſſes upon a ſuppoſition, that theſe wiſe men were mean men, for theſe were *Chiefs and Princes in their Generation*; And he advanceth their honour two wayes; Firſt, in regard of their riches and power, *To whom alone the earth was given:* Secondly, in regard of their righteous and juſt adminiſtrations, *No ſtranger, or ſtrange thing paſſed among them*; as if he had ſaid, *Job, I ſpeak of men that were fit to ſit at the helm of a Kingdom, and govern Nations, yea, to have the reins of the World put into their hands; I ſpeak of wiſe men who by their wiſdom, and the bleſſing of God, have kept the earth quiet, and ſo have poſſeſſed it alone.*

Aſſertur hoc ad amplificandum authoritatem horũ ſapientium, q. d. hi tales & tãti fuerunt ut, &c. Merc.

But it may yet be ſaid, who were theſe Monarchs of the world, and ſole poſſeſſors of the Earth? *To whom alone the earth was given:* Some conceive that *Eliphaz* means it of *Noah and his Sons*, who indeed had the World to themſelves; for the Flood having ſwept away all mankind, except that Family, to him and his Sons the earth was given alone; theſe were the wiſe men (ſaith this opinion) from whom *Eliphaz* received the Doctrine which he communicated to, and preſſed upon *Job*; there was never ſuch a Monarch (except *Adam* the firſt man) as *Noah* was, he had the whole World given him: Hence the Ancients ſtile *Noahs three Sons, The Commanders and Colonels of the whole World:* But I conceive, we need not determine it upon thoſe, though poſſibly *Eliphaz* might have an aim at them. Moſt interpreters take it in general, of the old good Princes, of whom it may be ſaid, *The earth was given to them alone*; *Abraham* was a great Prince, and to him, *The earth* (in one ſenſe) *was given alone.* But who made this great *deed of gift, even the moſt high God*, whom *Abraham* calls (*Gen.* 14.) *The poſſeſſor of Heaven, and Earth:* He it is that then gave, and ſtill gives the earth, and he gives it two wayes; firſt, by an act of common providence, thus (as *Job* expreſſeth it, *Chap.* 9. 24.) *The earth is given into the hand of the wicked:* Secondly, he gives the earth by an act of ſpecial providence, or by vertue of a promiſe, ſo *Canaan* was given to *Abraham* and his ſeed, the people of Iſrael; and thus the Kingdom of Iſrael and Judah, was given to *David* and his ſeed.

Iſta phraſi circumloquitur mihi patriarcham Noe *cũ tribus ejus filiis.* Bold. *Methodius alliq; patres antiqui vocant* Noe *tres filios* Mundi chiliarchos.

When it is ſaid here, that the earth was given to ſuch alone, the meaning is not that none had any of the earth given them but they, but none had the earth given them as they, by peculiar promiſe, and ſpecial providence. Further, the giving of the earth may be conſidered, either as the giving that which is good, or as the giving it for good; as a gift of bounty, or as a gift of mercy; in the latter conſiderations, the earth is given to good men alone: None have it for good but they who are good, and they only make a good uſe of it. Hence Obſerve,

Sapientibus ſolis terra data eſſe dicitur, quia bonorũ terrenorum ipſi ſunt domini, utentes iis ad ſuum bonũ. Aquin. *in loc.*

That the earth, or earthly things, are diſpoſed to the Sons of men, by a deed of gift from God:

Secondly, *Wiſe, holy men, receive the earth and the things of the earth, by ſpecial gift.*

Theſe alone receive the earth from a Fathers hand and good will; it comes to them in the Covenant of grace, to which the promiſe of the earth belongs, as well as of Heaven, *Godlineſs hath the promiſe of this life, and of that which is to come*; Saints have the earth and all earthly things given to them, in reference to their being in Covenant with God; and thus the earth is given to them alone.

Again, we may expound that term *Alone*, by the next clauſe, *To whom alone the earth was given*; that is, as they had great poſſeſſions in the earth, ſo they had thoſe poſſeſſions to themſelves without any to trouble, vex, or moleſt them, which *Eliphaz* thus expreſſeth:

And no ſtranger paſſed among them.] Some read, *No ſtrange thing paſſed among them*; Both readings are a deſcription of wiſe and godly Princes, who having the earth given them, *No ſtranger, or no ſtrange thing paſſeth among them.*

Optimorum principum circumloquitio eſt, quorũ adminiſtratio reſpublicas ſuas tuebatur, omnemque hoſtiũ injuriã prepulſabat. Pined. *Authoritate ſua uſi ſunt ad jus bonũ & æquum tuendũ, & ad injuſtum quodvis & alienũ propulſandum:* Jun. *in loc. Alienus hoc loco idẽ eſt qui hoſtis.* Sanct. *Hoſtis apud majores noſtros, quem nunc peregrinũ dicimus:* Cic. lib. 1. Offic.

Strangers are here taken under a double notion: Firſt, no ſtranger, that is no enemy: To clear which notion of the word *Stranger*, we muſt remember that as the *Grecians* (conceiting themſelves the beſt bred people in the World) called all other Nations Barbarians; ſo *the people of Iſrael, the ſtock of Abraham* (being Gods peculiar Covenant-people) called all other Nations aliens, or ſtrangers: and becauſe they were hated and maligned by all other Nations, therefore they called all profeſſed ſtrangers enemies; ſo the word is uſed (*Iſa.* 1. 7.) *Your land ſtrangers ſhall devoure*; that is, enemies ſhall invade and prevail over you (*Pſal.* 144. 7.) *Deliver me out of the hand of ſtrange Children*, or out of the hand of ſtrangers; that is, out of the hand of mine enemies: The Latine word *Alienus*, is often put for *Hoſtis*, & the *Roman Orator* telleth us, *That he who is now called a ſtranger was called an enemy by our Anceſtors.* The reaſon was, becauſe ſtrangers proved unkind to, yea turned enemies againſt thoſe that entertained them: As formerly Kings were called Tyrants, but becauſe many Kings oppreſſed their people, therefore now oppreſſing Princes only are called Tyrants. So then, to ſay no ſtranger paſſed among them, is as much as to ſay, no enemy, none to moleſt or afflict, paſſed among them.

Again, the word *Stranger* is taken for one that is erroneous, or idolatrous; for a man unſound in Doctrine, or ſuperſtitious in Worſhip: Wiſe men to whom alone the earth was given, had no ſuch ſtranger paſſing among them; they were not mixed with idolatrous and uncircumciſed Nations, they did not communicate with them in worſhip, as in after-times the people of Iſrael did.

Satis apparet non de hoſte temporali; ſed de eo qui alteri quam veræ religioni addictus eſt, vel qui numina extranea colit. Bold.

This notion of the ſtranger, is an advantage to *Eliphaz*; as if he had ſaid, The wiſe men whoſe authority I produce in this cauſe, were ſound in judgement, and pure in worſhip, they did not mingle themſelves with Idolaters and Hereticks, they neither learned their works, nor received their Doctrines, and are therefore witneſſes worthy of credit, and againſt whom there lies no juſt exception. *No ſtranger paſſed among them.*

If we take ſtranger in the firſt ſenſe for an enemy, then the word *Paſſed* ſignifies as much as invaded, and may well be tranſlated to a military motion: No ſtranger or enemy paſſed; that is, none marched among them, or through their Land, to diſturb, or plunder them; when God is ſaid to give Laws to the Sea, or ſet it bounds which *it ſhould not paſs*; this imports that the Sea like an enemy would march through the earth, and overwhelm all, unleſs bridled by a Divine decree.

But if we take *Stranger* in the ſecond ſenſe, for an Idolater, or a man of unſound Principles, then, *No ſtranger paſſed among them*, is, ſuch were not received, and embraced by them, nor admitted among them.

From the firſt Obſerve, *That it is* (as the honour of a people to relieve oppreſſed ſtrangers, ſo) *the happyneſs of a people to be freed from the oppreſſion of ſtrangers:*

From the ſecond Obſerve, *That it is the happineſs of a people to be free from the mixture of evil men, whether ſuch whoſe worſhip is impure or, Doctrine untrue.*

The

The Lord made frequent promises of this happiness to his people (*Isa.* 52. 1.) *From henceforth there shall no more come into them, the uncircumcised, and the unclean*; which is as much as to say, *The stranger* (for all uncircumcised persons were strangers) *shall not come into thee.* We have the like promise (*Joel* 3. 17.) *So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Sion, my holy Mountain, then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no stranger pass through her*; Why not any stranger? *Forget not to entertain strangers, saith the Apostle* (*Heb.* 13. 2.) Jerusalem in her best dayes shall have strangers, to be visited and relieved by her, but Jerusalem should have no strangers in those dayes to defile and pollute her (*Nah.* 1. 15.) *Behold upon the Mountain the feet of him that bringeth good tydings; for the wicked shall no more pass through thee, for he is cut off:* The Hebrew is, *Belial shall no more pass through thee. Belial* is he that cannot endure to serve; he will not yield obedience to the holy commands of God, he casts off the yoak of Christ, and pulls the shoulder from his burden. This *Belial shall no more pass through thee.* The purest times of the Gospel are presented under a like promise (*Zach.* 14. 21.) *In that day there shall be no more the Cananite in the house of the Lord of Hoasts*; That is, the stranger and uncircumcised, the wicked and ungodly, shall no more be mixed with his people.

Thirdly, in that he puts such under the notion of strangers, we learn, *That wicked and Idolatrous persons should be as strangers to us*; we must not lay such in our bosom, to maintain any spiritual society with them, though in some cases, we may have civil society with them. (2 *Cor.* 6. 13, 14.) *Be not unequally yoaked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness, and what concord hath Christ with Belial,* &c. These can never agree together: Let no such stranger *pass*, or be approved among us in the fellowship of the Gospel; there is not only sin in letting such pass with our approbation, but danger; and that a double danger. Both which are assigned as reasons why we should come out of Babylon (*Revel.* 18. 4.)

First, we are in danger of partaking of their sins, and that both by contracting the spot of their sins, as also the guilt of their sins.

Secondly, we are in danger of partaking of their punishments, as it there follows, *That ye receive not her plagues.* There is no safety in being neer those, who are under the curse of God: *The companion of fools shall be destroyed* (*Prov.* 13. 20.) Though possibly he be not a fool in any other respect, but because he is in such company.

Fourthly, Taking it for *a strange or wicked thing.*

Note, That, *It is the honour of Magistrates, when no evil passeth quietly in their Territories.*

When neither Idolatry in the things of God, nor injustice, nor oppression in the things of men, find any favour with them, this is at once their duty, and their glory.

Eliphaz having by way of preface, given proof of what he was about to press upon *Job*, both from his own experience and the consent of Antiquity: He now proposes the point it self.

Vers. 20. **The wicked man travels with pain all his dayes, and the number of years is hidden to the Oppressour.**

In this general Position, *Eliphaz* intends *Jobs* personal conviction, that he was wicked, whom he had heard appealing to God (*Chap.* 2. 10.) *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* As if he had said, *Thou wouldest make us believe that God will be thy compurgator, and give witness for thee upon his own knowledge thou art not wicked: But we who are but men may know the contrary, for we see all the marks and brands of a wicked man upon thee: The wicked man travelleth with pain all his dayes, and so dost thou: These snares and sorrows speak who thou art, though we say nothing.*

Mr. *Broughton* reads, *The wicked killeth himself all his days*, he is a self murtherer; that was the report which *Eliphaz* made of him at the fifth Chapter, *Vers.* 2. *Envy slayeth the silly one.* Both *Job* and his Friends repeat the same thing often, yet with such variety of illustrations, that though for the matter it be the same, yet it is new for the manner: Such repetitions do not only delight, but profit.

The wicked man travelleth with pain all his dayes:] Who is a wicked man, hath been opened at large, *Chap.* 10. 7. where *Job* affirms, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*; There see the temper of a wicked man, I will not stay upon it here. Only consider how his appellation and condition suit one with the other, *The wicked man travels:* the Original word for a *wicked man* signifies an unquiet motion, and so one whose life is a continual, not only motion, but unquietness. *Unquiet* is the name, and unquietness is the state of a wicked man; he is always raising stirs, and acting Tragedies, *His life is always in a hurry, he travels with pain all his dayes.*

He travelleth with pain.] This sentence is but one word in the Hebrew; the word signifies any grief, or sorrow, any torture or torment: The translations are various, but all meet in this one sense, that a wicked mans life is a miserable life; *All the life of a wicked man is spent in carking care:* So the Septuagint. Another renders, *It is spent in sorrow.* But all may be reduced to that which is most proper to the word: *He is in pain as a woman in travail*; and whereas we have heard of some Women in travail many dayes; here is a man in *travel all his dayes.*

חול
מחחילל
Proprie significat cruciatū, lāguorē, pavorem vel dolorem parturiētiū, vel enitentis & molientis facinus aliquod. Omnis vita impii insolicitudine. 70. in dolore. Aquila. *Dolet ut parturiens.* Pag. *Cunctis diebus suis impius superbit.* Vulg.

The wicked man *travelleth in pain* **all his dayes**; his whole life is nothing else but continual pain, or painful throes towards the birth of some filthy *Monster-sin, which sin when it is finished, brings forth death:* Somewhat he hath conceived, the Psalmist tells us what; *He hath conceived mischief, and he would bring forth iniquity.*

The Vulgar Latine translates, *The wicked man is lifted up with pride all his dayes*; which is as much as to say, *He travelleth in pain all his dayes*; for though as some say, *Pride feels no cold*, yet there is nothing feels so much pain as pride doth: And because a wicked man is proud all his dayes, therefore he travelleth with pain all his dayes.

Hence Observe, *The life of a wicked man is a very painful life:* or thus, *The pain of a wicked mans life is the greatest pain.*

It is like the pain of a Woman in travel; when the holy Ghost would set forth great pain, he expresseth it by *the pain of a woman in travel.* But what kind of pain is it, with which a wicked man travels? He hath two sorts of pain.

First, external:
Secondly, internal.

His external pain is of two sorts:

First, Such as God layes upon him, or casts him into; for though many are the afflictions of the righteous, from the hand of God, yet the righteous have not all the afflictions, wicked men have some: They are not only beaten with scourges, but smitten with Scorpions; *God rains down upon them snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this is the portion of many of their cups, even in this life.*

Secondly, Such as a wicked man brings upon himself; Mr. *Broughtons* reading aims at these pains, *The wicked kills himself all his dayes.* A wicked man is often very active, sometimes extreamly malitious against others, so malitious that he murders them; and yet it may truly be said he only *kills himself* all his dayes. The self-love of a wicked man destroys him, and his very earnestness to avoid trouble, tumbles him into it: And this is clear, if we consider either the way which a wicked man takes, or the end which usually he comes unto; his way is a very sad way: A godly man is described (*Psal.* 118. 2.) *Eating the labour of his hands*; that is, the very work which he doth, feeds him; and before he hath any reward for his work, he finds a reward in his work, in which sense, he may well be said, to *Eat the labour of his hand:* On the other side, the labour of a wicked man eats him, the labour of his hand, and the labour of his head, eat him out. The way of sin is a wearysome way (*Jer.* 9. 5.) *They weary themselves to commit iniquity* (*Ezek.* 24. 12.) *She hath wearied her self with lies:* A Lie is not taken strictly there for *an untruth told to deceive others:*

others: A lie is any sin, for every sin is a Lie. Sin tells us a fair tale, but it will deceive us at last.

Again, (*Isa.* 47. 13.) *Thou hast wearied thy self, in the multitude of thy counsels.* (*Isa.* 57. 10.) *Thou art wearyed in the greatness of thy way.* Those counsels were sinful counsels, and these wayes were sinful wayes, both were a weariness, and tired their undertakers. The Lord challenges the Jews (*Mic.* 6. 3.) To shew wherein he had wearied them; *O my people what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee, testifie against me.* God is very tender in laying burdens upon us, but we are very cruel in overburdening our selves.

And whereas the pain of a wicked man is compared to the pain of a Woman in travail; it is not only like it, but exceeds it: For though *when her pain comes upon her, she hath sorrow because her hour is come, yet when she is delivered, she remembreth her anguish no more, for joy that a Man is born into the World* (*John* 16. 21.) The Womans pains end in joy, but the pain of a wicked man is so far from ending in joy, that it hath no end at all, and therefore he is said to travel in pain all his dayes. A wicked man hath the pain, but not the deliverance of a travailing Woman, a Son shall not be born to him. And though he sometimes seems to prosper, and attain his end, yet there is somewhat or other, that sticks still in the birth, and paineth him in the midst of all his prosperity. The Author of that useful History, *The Travels of the old Patriarcks, Kings, and Prophets*, when he comes to write the motions of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, who was a great King, but of a most malitious spirit, against the people of God, he observes that this *Antiochus* in pursuance of his bloody designs, had run more hazards, and taken more tedious journeys to satisfie his malice, and reach his ambitious ends, then any of the Saints had done, upon any command or service of God; upon which consideration, he makes this excellent conclusion, *That wicked men take more pains to go to Hell and eternal destruction, then godly men do in the way to eternal life, and salvation. A wicked man cannot go to Hell with ease; he goes with pain to eternal pains.* Those wayes of sin which have most pleasure in them, have much vexation in them. (*Prov.* 23. 29.) *Who hath woe, who hath sorrow, who hath wounds without cause?* The answer is at hand in the next words, *They that tarry long at the Wine, they that go to seek the mixt Wine:* The Wine is sweet *but it bites like a Serpent, and stings like an Adder, Vers.* 32. The voluptuous man drinks larger draughts of sorrow then he doth of Wine; and while the Adulterer goes to the Harlots house, *he goes as a fool to the stocks, or as an Ox to the slaughter* (*Prov.* 7.) As pleasure is the Epicures God, so gain is the covetous mans God, yet to get it, he *pierceth himself through with many sorrows*, and falls into a snare; (1 *Tim.* 6.) Further, as a sinful conversation among men, so a superstitious service of the true God, and the serving of false Gods is full of trouble.

The false worshipper travelleth in pain all his dayes: All false worship hath a tang of baseness and slavery in it; they that worship the Devil, in what a wretched servitude do they live? In Popery, what vexatious penances do they put upon their blinded Votaries? The Gospel is noble, and the service of it ingenuous, as well as pure or spiritual: Christ hath not called us to drudgery, but to liberty. *They are most free, who serve him most.*

What pain the Jews travelled in when they Apostatiz'd from God to Idols, *Tophet*, and the Valley of *Hinnon*, where they offered their Children in the fire to *Moloch*, are abundant witnesses. Did God put them to such pain in his service? God called them to offer their Beasts in Sacrifice to him: But they offer their Children in Sacrifice to that abominable Idol. *Wicked men live under a hard task-master.*

Now besides all these outward pains which either are concomitants, or consequents of wickedness: There is an inward pain far worse then these. Inward pain ariseth sometimes upon the disappointment of his hopes. A wicked man is exceedingly pained with labour in the attaining of his end, but he is much more pained with grief, when he cannot attain his end; he hangs between hope and fear, while he is at work (for he that cannot walk by faith to his end, shall meet with fears enough before he comes at it) but when his sense tells him that he cannot come at it, he falls into the gulf of despair. Besides this pain of fear that he shall not, and that of despair, when he cannot compass his designs or ends, he is often afflicted with a fiercer pain then either of these, even with the gripes and gnawings of his own evil conscience for the evil he hath done. This pain follows some wicked men all the dayes of their life; and it shall be the portion of all wicked men after death. *Eliphaz* aims at this in the next Verse, while he saith, *A dreadful sound is in his ears*; there I shall further insist upon it. We have yet another very considerable part of the wicked mans misery held forth in the close of this Verse.

And the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

The word which we render, **Oppressor**, signifies a man exceeding powerful and terrible, or by his power terrifying others; He that oppresseth must have power, and some desire power for no other end, but to enable them to oppress. *Solomon* speaks of a *poor man that oppresseth* (*Prov.* 28. 3.) but he oppresseth only those who are less powerful then himself. *A poor man that oppresseth the poor, is, &c.* One poor man may be as much above another poor man in power, as some rich men are above the poor. Equals in power cannot oppress.

עריץ *Violentus, crudelis, robustus tyrannus, qui suis nititur opibus, & aliis terribilis est.*

But who is this Oppressor to whom the number of years are hid? The Oppressor in this part of the Verse, is the wicked man in the former part; *Eliphaz* speaks still of the same person, though under another name, whom he there called wicked, he calls here an Oppressor.

Hence Note, *That to oppress is a very great wickedness*;

For an oppressor and a wicked man are the same man.

Again, in that the word which signifies an oppressor, signifies also a *mighty man*, or a man of great strength.

We may further Note, *That men who have much power are apt to abuse it for the oppression of others.*

It is in the power of my hand said Laban *to* Jacob, *to do thee hurt*; And *Laban* had hurt *Jacob*, if God had not stopt him; *They that have much power in their hands, need much holiness in their hearts, that they may use it well; much power is a temptation to do much hurt.*

Pauci anni reconditi sunt violento. Jun.

The number of years is hidden to the Oppressor.

The number of years,] Say some, is an Hebraism, for few years, or years that are easily numerable; a Child may tell the years of an Oppressor, they are so few: Hence the words are also rendered thus, *Few years are laid up for the Oppressor.* Mr. *Broughton* translates plainly to the sense, *Soon numbred years are stored to the Tyrant.*

Numerus annorū, i.e. *facile numerabiles.*

Hence Observe, First, *That wicked Oppressors are often speedily cut off by the hand of God.*

(*Psal.* 55. 23.) *Blood-thirsty and deceitful men, shall not live out half their dayes*; If God should lengthen out the lives of men set upon mischief, who could live? 'Tis a comfort for us, as well as a curse on them, that *Soon numbred years are stored to the Tyrant, his treasure is not great in dayes, who daily treasures up wrath against himself.*

Another resuming these words, *He travelleth with pain*; out of the former part of the Verse, reads it thus, *And in the whole number of years which are laid up for him, he travelleth in pain:* That is, his whole life is miserable: As if that which is a truth of all wicked men, were more specially applicable to oppressors; That they travel in pain.

Hence we may Note, *They who love to trouble others, shall be sure to meet with trouble themselves.*

Qui vult à multis metui, multos timeat oportet.

He that desires to be feared, shall be often afraid. Oppressors and Tyrants in all ages have experimented this truth; which flows both from the nature of their unjust actions towards men, as also from the just retaliation of God.

Our reading leads us to a further consideration; *The number of years is hidden to the Oppressor:* That is (as

some expound) they are determined, or defined in the secret counsel of God. It is under a hidden decree how long his oppressing power shall continue, and when he shall receive the reward of his oppressions: Or rather thus, *The number of years of his own life is hidden to the oppressor*; that is, he knows not how long he shall live.

But is that any special judgement upon the Oppressor, that the number of his years, or how long he shall live is hidden to him? Is not the number of a good mans years hidden to him? Are not the number of every mans years hidden to him? Doth any man know how long he shall live? *David* indeed prays, *Teach me to number my dayes* (*Psal.* 90.) and *Make me to know mine end, and the measure of my dayes, what it is*, *Psal.* 39.4. Yet he doth not desire to know precisely the number of his dayes, or time of his end, he only desires to know their general number, or utmost extent spiritually; namely, that at the most they were not many, that so he might make a wise improvement of his life, and a holy preparation for his death.

Seeing then the number of every mans years is hidden to him, how is this reckoned as the peculiar punishment of a wicked man, that the number of his years are hidden to him? I answer, It is true, the number of years is hidden from all men, both from good and bad, the Lord hath made that a secret. Two numbers are secret.

First, The number of the years of the World, when that shall end; *Of that day and hour knows no man, no not the Son of man, but the Father only.*

Secondly, The number of the years of a mans own life, or the day of his death is a secret which no man knows, though many have been busie to pry and inquire into it. But though godly men know not the number of the years of their own lives, yet this is no affliction to them, under which notion it is here said of the Oppressor; *The number of years is hidden to him.*

A wicked man is thoughful about this, how he may live long, not how he may live or do well; he would fulfil many dayes and years in the World, that so he might have his fill of worldly profits and pleasures. He is therefore troubled to think his life hangs upon uncertain tearms, because he is uncertain of any good beyond this life. A godly man knows not the number of his years, but he knows by whom they are numbred; that satisfies him, be they longer or shorter, more or less. But a wicked man would have the account in his own hand, he would be Lord of all, even of time too, but he cannot, *The number of years are hidden to the Oppressor.*

Observe Hence, *That the number of the years of mans life is a secret which none knows but God himself:*

And as it is so, so it is best for man, that it should be so. The certain knowledge when our lives should end, would hinder us in many duties and services of our lives. Men would be at a stand in their worldly callings, if they were acquainted with the precise date of their standing in the World. Our not knowing this, is not ignorance, but nescience; and were it not for this nescience, we should be taken off from the study of much profitable knowledge. Besides, our not knowing the number of our dayes, stirs up in us a care of improving every day, and to pray with *David*, *Lord teach us to number our dayes.* Our not knowing which day shall be our last, should provoke us to spend every day so, that we may have comfort if it prove our last. It is best for us not to know that, the not knowing whereof is a motive to be alwayes doing good.

Secondly, Observe, *That it is a great vexation to the oppressor, or wicked man to think of the uncertainty of his own life.*

Numerus annorũ incertus est tyrannidis ejus. Vulg. *Ex ista incertitudine, sequitur suspicio & timor.* Aquin. *in loc.*

The Vulgar makes this Observation from the Text, his translation of the Text is, *The years of his Tyrannical power are uncertain.* If such could but live long enough, what work would they make? Yea what a world would they make? The Jesuits say, *Take time and you may do any thing.* So also saith the oppressor, *If I had but time enough, I could do any thing*; though I am disappointed now, yet I shall have a day to act what I project, and to pour out my revenges; But this cuts the oppressors heart, he doubts his life may end before he can accomplish his ends. A wicked heart is not more pleased in doing evil, then troubled when he is but under a suspition that he shall want either opportunity, or time to do it. This is added to the painful travel of a wicked man, that he knowes not how long he shall travel in this pain; for though all his be painful dayes, yet he had rather continue in pain, then not continue his dayes. But the number of years is hidden, or a hidden thing to him.

Cum ait numerũ annorũ absconditum esse, intelligit annos quibus victurus, aut regnaturus sit improbus tyrannus. Drus.

VERS. 21, 22.

A dreadful sound is in his ears, in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.
He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, and he is waited for of the Sword.

ELiphaz having laid down this position, *That pain is the portion of a wicked man*, goes on to the proof, and illustration of it; first, in reference to the terrours of his conscience; and secondly, in reference to the troublesomeness of his outward state, and the sad changes that are incident to him. That a wicked man travels with inward pain, or terrour of conscience; the first words of this context tell us,

Vers. 21. **A dreadful sound is in his ear.**

קול פחדים *Sonitus terrorũ, numerus multitudinis significationem auget, i. e. sonitus maximè terrificus, vel non unius sed multiplicis terroris.* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *A voice of dreads*; the word is Plural, because, not one single terror, but a multitude of terrors, an Army of terrors incamp about the spirit of a wicked man: and these charge him without intermission; as soon as one hath done, another draws up against him.

And he saith, *A sound of terrour*, because a sound carries fear with it; *Fear is a perturbation of the mind, arising from an apprehension of some approaching evil:* Now, by how much the nearer evil draweth to us, by so much doth fear increase upon us; and then an evil may be said to be very near us, when we hear the sound of it. We quickly see and feel an Enemy, when once he is come within our hearing. When the King of *Israel* sent a messenger to take off the head of *Elisha*, *Shut the door* (saith *Elisha*) *and hold him fast at the door, is not the sound of his Masters feet behind him?* (2 *King.*6.33.) That is, is not his Master near. And when *Eliah* saw the rain at hand, he thus bespeaks King *Ahab*, *Get thee up, eat, and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain* (1 *King.*18.41.) So here, *The sound of terror*, notes the speedy approach of it; the Prophet (*Jer.*4.19.) complains lamentably, *My belly, my belly, I am pained at my very heart, my heart makes a noise within me* (and why all this?) *because thou hast heard O my soul, the sound of the Trumpet, and the alarm of War*; that is, because now it appears that the enemy is at hand. When once we hear the sound of the Trumpet, War is not far off, yea it is even at the door, and death is ready to climb up at our windows. Usually the ear receives the first blow; we first hear, and then feel the Sword.

When *Eliphaz* saith, *A dreadful sound is in his ear*, we may understand it two wayes; either first, that a wicked man hearing the sad reports of approaching evil, is greatly troubled; or secondly, that a wicked man frames to himself an imaginary sound of evil. His fansie makes a noise, he thinks he hears the sound of Drums and Trumpets, the clattering of Armour, and the clashing of drawn Swords, he hears (as the Prophet *Nahum* elegantly describes it) *The noise of the whip, and the noise of the ratling of the Wheels, and of the pransing Horses, and of the jumping Chariots.* Now, whether we understand it of the approach of real dangers, the sound of which, are a terror to him, or whether we take it for those fantastick, panick fears and Satanical delusions, both or either of them render his life uncomfortable, and are the effects of an unquiet, or of a guilty conscience.

Hence Observe, *A wicked man is alwayes subject to fear; he that is a servant to sin cannot but be a slave to fear: And he that hath done much evil, suspects much.*

While we have Peace within, War without doth not much trouble, though it much afflict us. And while our hearts, toucht by the Spirit of God, make us musick, a sound of terrour to the ear is not terrible.

It

Impius tãtũ metuit, quãtum nocuit.

It is said of a godly man (*Psal.* 112. 7.) *No evil tydings shall make him fear* (though there be a dreadful sound in his ear, a sound of danger, yet) *his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.* A wicked man is terrified with conceited danger; a godly man is not afraid when there is real danger. A godly man hath a witness for him in himself; a wicked man carries a witness against him in himself; and this witness is also his judge to condemn him, yea his executioner to torment, and vex him; as soon as our first Parents had sinned (*Gen.* 3. 8.) *They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden, in the cool of the day, and Adam and his Wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord:* Here was no appearance of terrour, it was the voice of God *walking* as a friend, not *marching* as an enemy, and it was in *the cool, not heat of the day*; these circumstances argue the guiltiness of *Adam* and his Wife, who fled and hid themselves at this appearance of the Lord. The voice of God walking, was a dreadful sound in their ears, because they had not hearkned to the voice of God commanding. Wicked *Pashur*, who opposed the good Prophet, is branded with a new name (*Jer.* 20. 3. 4.) *The Lord said, his name shall no more be called Pashur, but Magor-Misabib*; that is, *Fear round about*, and in the next Verse, the reason is given why this name was given him, *For I will make thee a terrour to thy self:* He that is a terrour to himself, can no more be without terrour, then he can be without himself. Nor can any thing be a comfort to him, who is his own terrour. And therefore a guilty conscience hears a dreadful sound, what sound soever he hears: he ever expects to hear bad news, and he puts fearful glosses and comments upon that which is good.

Nemo se judice nocens absolvitur.

Pessimus in dubiis Augur timor. Stat.

A wicked man interprets all reports in one of these two mischievous senses, either *To the discredit of others, or to the disquiet of himself:* Bring what text of providence you can to him, he corrupts it with one of these glosses. Yea, the faithful counsels of his own Friends, are dreadful sounds unto him, for he hath a suspicion that while they are counselling him for good, it is but a contriving of evil against him, or a setting of snares to catch him.

Again, sometimes God creates a sound, or causeth the wicked to hear a dreadful sound (2 *King.* 7. 6.) *The Lord made the Hoast of the Syrians to hear a noise of Chariots, and a noise of Horses, even the noise of a great Hoast*, &c. Upon this dreadful sound, they arose and fled. Sometimes a wicked heart creats a sound, and what the Prophet threatens, he hears, *the stone out of the Wall, the beam out of the Timber crying against him.* The Story tells us of one who thought that the Swallows in the Chimney spake, and told tales of him. We say in our Proverb, *As the Fool thinketh, so the Bell clinketh*; much more may we say, *As an evil conscience thinketh, so every thing clinketh.* As he that hath a prejudice against another, takes all he hears spoken of him, and all that he hears him speak in the worst sense, and most disadvantageous construction to his reputation; so he that hath a prejudice against himself, construes all that he either hears or sees against his own Peace: Hence it is that he doth not only flee when he is pursued, but when none pursue (*Prov.* 28. 1.) *The wicked flies when none pursueth* (except his own fears) *but the righteous is as bold as a Lyon:* This terrour was threatned in the old Law (*Levit.* 26. 36.) *They that are left alive of you in the time of your Captivity, I will send fainting in their hearts, in the Land of their Enemy, and the sound of a shaking leaf shall chase them*; What poor spirits have they who are chased by the motion of a leaf? The sound of a leaf is a pleasant sound, it is a kind of natural musick. Fear doth not only make the heart move, *As the Trees of the Forrest are moved with the wind* (*Isa.* 7.) but it makes the heart move, if the wind do but move the Trees of the Forrest. The Prophet *Isaiah* tells Jerusalem, *Thy slain men are not slain with the Sword, not dead in Battel* (*Isai.* 22. 2.) With what then were they slain? And how died they; a learned Interpreter tells us how: They were slain with fear, and died with a sound of Battel before ever they joyned Battel. This answereth the judgment denounced by *Moses* in another place (*Deut.* 28. 65.) *The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and thy life shall hange in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have no assurance of thy life.*

Hominis tui, nõ expectato adventu hostis, velut transfossi exanimãtur metu. Jun.

But here some may object, Is this the portion of wicked men? Doth a dreadful sound in their ears afflict their hearts? Have not many such, much peace? and do they not either smile or wonder to hear others complaining of an afflicted spirit, and beg prayers for the appeasing of their troubled conscience? which are matters they have no acquaintance with, nor knowledge of.

I answer, First, We are not to understand the proposition, as if all wicked men have, or that any wicked man at all times, hath this dreadful sound in his ear; but thus it is very often, and thus it may be always: thus it is with many, and thus it may be with all wicked men. A wicked man hath (as we say) no fence for it, no priviledge nor promise to secure him from it.

Again, though some wicked men have not this dreadful sound in their ears; yea though they have pleasant sounds in their ears, like them *who sang to the Vial, &c.* (*Amos* 6.) Yet first, their peace is not a true peace; Secondly, it is not a lasting peace; Thirdly, that which they have, ariseth from one of these two grounds; either from neglect of their consciences, or from some defect in their consciences. The neglect of conscience from whence this ariseth is twofold, either first, when they neglect to speak to conscience, conscience and they never have a word, much less any serious conference, or discourse; either concerning the state of their hearts, or the course of their lives, and then all's peace with them. Secondly, when the speakings of conscience are neglected, conscience hath a double voice of direction, and correction; conscience tells a man what he ought, and what he ought not to do: conscience checks a man for not doing what he ought, or for doing what he ought not. Yet many over-power and restrain conscience from this office, and never leave opposing, till they have silenced, yea conquered it: Such as these have peace, such a one as it is, and hear nothing but a sound of delight in their ears, while this silence lasteth.

Again, this may arise from some defect disabling conscience, to do its ordinary, or natural duty. (the conscience of an evil man may have some goodness in it) Conscience may be considered two wayes, either morally, or naturally; that only is a morally good conscience, which is pure and holy, a conscience cleansed from the guilt of sin by the blood of Christ; thus no wicked man can be said to have a good conscience. That is a naturally good conscience which performs the office or duty to which conscience is appointed; conscience is set up in man to perform certain offices: If the conscience of a bad man perform them, his conscience (in that sense) is good.

The first office or work of conscience is to observe, and take notice of what we do, conscience should, as it were, keep a Day-book, and follow us up and down with Pen and Ink, to write all our motions.

A second work of conscience is to testifie what we have done, and which way we have moved.

A third, is, to accuse us when we do evil, and to acquit us when we do well: Now as a wicked mans conscience is alwayes morally evil, because stained, and polluted with sin: So many times his conscience is naturally evil too; that is, it will neither take notice of, nor check him for his sin. When the wicked mans conscience is in this evil state, he thinks his state good enough, and so he is at quiet.

Casuists tell us of four sorts of evil consciences, all which may live out of the hearing of these dreadful sounds.

First, A blind ignorant conscience that cannot discern between moral good and evil.

Secondly, A secure conscience, which thinks not of any penal evil.

Thirdly, A dull, lazy, sleepy conscience, which hath little or no sense, either of what is done or suffered.

Fourthly, A seared conscience, which is altogether senseless.

A conscience thus disabled to perform its work, being either blind, secure, sleepy, or seared, is tame and quiet with the worst of men. But all this while, though this wicked man hath some ease, yet he hath no peace;

his conscience while feared, is far enough from being setled; his conscience while asleep, is far enough from rest. It is with such, as with some sick men, ask them how they do, they will say, Very well, when as indeed they are so sick, that they know not how ill they are; they take death it self for health, and their not feeling of pain, for the curing of their disease.

But when the conscience of a wicked man is once enlightned, softned, and awakened, he cannot but have these dreadful sounds, which will neither give, nor let him receive any rest. Conscience will awake at last, and speak terrible things; conscience will be a *Boanerges*, a terrible Preacher, thundring out, not onely a chiding reproof, but a sentence of condemnation, and then the wicked will even gnash their teeth, because conscience did no sooner use its teeth, they will gnaw their tongues for sorrow, because conscience had no tongue to speak, or they no ears to hear what it spake, till it was too late. *A dreadful sound in his ear.*

In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.

בשלום *In pace.*

The Hebrew is, *In peace the destroyer shall come upon him.* Peace is so near allied, and so great a friend to prosperity, that one word may well serve both. The wicked mans destroyer shall be to him like *Joab* to *Abner*, and *Amasa*, shedding the blood of War in Peace, and putting that blood upon the Girdle about his loynes, *&c.* (1 *Kings* 2. 5.)

But some may demand, How doth this suit with the former Verse? Where *Eliphaz* told us, that *A wicked man travels in pain all his dayes*: How is he in prosperity, if he travels all his dayes in pain? I answer, The denomination is given from the greatest part of a wicked mans life, and that is trouble and pain. Or, secondly, if an instance can be given of any wicked man that hath had more good dayes than evil, or that hath had no ill dayes at all, in regard of any outward trouble and pain, then we may reconcile the Text thus; his prosperity is beside his state, yea, in his very prosperity he is in pain: *In the midst of laughter his heart is sorrowful, and the end of his mirth is heavinesse.* (*Prov.* 14. 13.) His is but a seeming, not a real prosperity.

Est amplificatio malæ cujusdam impiorum securitatis q.d. *si contingat impium nihil timere sed secure agere tunc & inopinato opprimetur.* Pined.

Further, these words are an aggravation of his misery, because if at any time he appears prosperous, and free from fear, then sudden destruction overtakes him.

Et cum pax sit ille insidias suspicatur. Vulg. *Omnia etiam tuta tyranni & impii timent.* Merc.

Or, lastly, The destroyer may be said to come upon him in prosperity, because in his best dayes he fears the destroyer: he suspects danger, when he sees none; and is therefore never out of danger. Who this destroyer is, is left here at large; no particular one is specified, but any terrible one is intended; *Eliphaz* doth not say, A Destroyer, but *The Destroyer*. One both powerful, and skilful to destroy, shall *come upon him*. He shall not onely *come to him*, but *come upon him*; to come upon, is to invade, or to assault: A friend comes to a man with kindness and embraces, to visit or salute him, an enemy comes upon a man with blows and violence, to wound and destroy him. *In prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him.*

Hence observe; *When wicked men think themselves most safe, they are neerest to destruction.*

'Tis seldome that they think themselves safe, and when they do, they are furthest from safety. *'When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever* (Psal. 92. 7.) Their temporal, short spring, is not onely an antecedent, but an Argument of their eternal Winter. And their Winter is not the going down of the sap to the root, but the pulling of them up by the roots; they shall be *destroyed.*

'(*Job* 20. 22.) *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits:* When it is full Sea with him, his Channel shall be dried up. It was said to that Fool (*Luke* 12. 20.) *This night thy soul shall be taken from thee*: The destroyer came upon him indeed in his prosperity, when he sang himself asleep, with *Soul, thou hast goods laid up for many years*, he could not keep his soul one night. (1 *Thes.* 5. 3.) *When they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape*: The general destruction of wicked men in the day of Judgment, shall come as a thief in the night. We have a representation of this, in that woful tragedy which the Lord acted upon the Egyptians (*Exod.* 12. 13.) *At midnight there was a grievous cry*, (he came upon them as a thief in the night) *for the Lord smote all the first-born of the land of Egypt*; they dyed in their warm beds, in prosperity the destroyer came upon them. This is bad enough, yet not the worst of the condition of wicked men: For,

Vers. 22. **He believes not that he shall return out of darkness, he is waited for of the Sword.**

This is a further account of the inward misery or pain which afflicts the spirit of a wicked man.

He believes not that he shall return out of darkness] *He looketh not that he shall escape from darkness.* So Master *Broughton*. There are five interpretations given about this darkness, out of which the wicked man believes he shall not return.

Pii sçt se armant & in spem contra spem sperant. Merc.

First, Some understand it of the darkness of sin; but a wicked man cannot be said to despair of that about which he never had any hope or desire.

Secondly, Some understand darkness literally and plainly, of the darkness of the night, and interpret thus, *He believes not that he shall return out of darkness*; that is, he is so haunted with fears every night when he lies down, that he thinks he shall never live till the morning: This is a good sense.

Thirdly, Others understand this *darkness* to be *death*, he hath a perfect sound of dread when death comes, because he believes not that he shall return out of that darkness. The Resurrection is the consolation of the Saints, in the midst of greatest dangers and thickest darkness; because, though they dye, yet they believe they shall return out of darkness. But a wicked man, who believes or hopes for nothing beyond the time of this life, if he be once cast into the Grave, either thinks he shall lye there for ever, or if he believes he shall rise, yet he doth not believe that he shall rise out of darkness, for he shall rise in darkness, and go down to everlasting darkness.

Fourthly, A fourth expounds it of internal darkness, the darkness of his spirit, or of those mists and clouds which hang about his mind. A godly man falling into this darkness, doth not actually believe he shall return out of it (for such a faith were his return out of it) but a wicked man, as he hath no ground, so no possibility (continuing in the state he is) to believe it. *Saul* had a woful dark spirit, and believed not that he should return out of it, by the help of God; therefore he went to a Witch (a Counsellour of the Prince of of darkness) for help.

But fifthly, I rather conceive, as often elsewhere, so here, by darkness is meant outward affliction. When the destroyer comes upon him, and he is cast into a sad dark condition, he hath no faith for himself, that he shall return out of it, or be delivered from it. This is an extream aggravation of the miserable state of a wicked man, who either hath no outward prosperity, or his prosperity is nothing to him, he enjoyes it not; but if ever he fall into outward misery, how great is his misery? so great that he gives himself for gone, a lost man for ever: *He believes not that he shall return out of darkness.*

Observe hence, *That a wicked man neither doth, nor can believe deliverance from evil.*

First, He hath no ground to believe promises are the foundation of Faith. A wicked man may be under promises of conversion from his sin, but he is not under any promise of mercy while he continues in his sin; the whole Book of God yields him not (in that state) any special promise, for so much as a bit of bread; when he hath bread, he hath it from providence, not from a promise, or but from a general promise. He is fed as a Beast is fed, the Lord being the *preserver of Man and Beast*: He cannot have a special promise himself, not being an *heir of promise*: Therefore when he falls into darkness, he hath no ground to believe. Whereas a godly man never hath so much ground to believe, as when he falls into darkness, because then he hath more promises than before; his outward losses gain him the advantage of many sweet promises, which

which till then he could not plead, for the succour and nourishment of his faith. As a wicked man hath no promise of God (in the sense explained) at any time; so a godly man hath most promises of God in evil, yea, in the worst of times.

And as a wicked man hath no ground to believe, so he usually hath *no heart to believe*: and as he hath no reason to hope for better things, so he hath no courage, his spirit sinks and fails when his state doth. *Abigail* had no sooner told *Nabal* that the destroyer was comming upon him in his prosperity, but his heart sunk within him like a stone, and he dyed away presently.

Secondly, The best of a wicked mans faith (that he shall return out of darkness) is but a presumptuous fancy, or meer Fool-hardiness. A good man is like a Child in his Fathers house, who takes no care, but casts all upon his Parents; in the greatest storm he commits the helm to Christ, as Pilot; he can say as *David* (*Psal.* 42.) when he is in trouble; *Why art thou disquieted, O my soul?* He calls his soul to question, and would have his soul give him a reason, *Why art thou troubled, my soul? hope in God, for I shall yet praise him*: But a wicked man hath no God to hope in, therefore he cannot say, *I shall yet praise him*: That man cannot cast his burden of cares upon the Lord (*Psal.* 55. 22.) who cares not how he burdens God with his sins; therefore he must bear and sink under both burdens himself: He cannot believe that he shall return out of the darkness of trouble, who delights and sports in the darkness of iniquity.

Again, Consider, this is brought as a proof of the wofull condition of a wicked man. It is misery enough, *that the destroyer shall come upon him*; but this is more miserable, he cannot believe deliverance from destruction.

Hence Observe; *That want of faith in time of affliction, is more grievous than affliction.*

It is worse not to believe deliverance, than to fall into trouble; as the life of Faith is the best life, so the life of Unbelief is the worst life. *Despair of good is the greatest evil*: Faith is not onely the support and relief of the soul in trouble, but it is the victory and triumph of the soul over trouble. Faith doth not onely keep the soul alive, but lively; Faith keeps the soul fat, and in good plight; Faith is a shield, both against temptation and affliction. But every blow falls upon the bare skin of an unbeliever; Faith is a shield both against the fiery darts of the Devil, and (with a difference) against the fiery darts of God also. Let God himself cast his darts at a Believer, Faith secures him from hurt, though not from wounds, yea, his very wounds, through a work of Faith, shall work his good.

It is the comfort of a man that *feareth God, and obeyeth the voice of his Servants, that while he walketh in darkness and hath no light, he is bid to trust in the name of the Lord, and to stay upon his God* (*Isa.* 50. 10.) But while a man that doth not fear God, walks in darkness and hath no light, his misery is, that he can neither trust in God till light comes, nor that light will ever come. How happy are the righteous, to whom light ariseth in darkness? How unhappy are the wicked, who being in darkness, conclude that the light will never arise.

Faith makes all evil good to us, and all good better; unbelief makes all good evil to us, and all evil worse. Faith (like the Horse, *Job* 39. 19.) laughs at the shaking of the spear; unbelief trembles at the shaking of a leaf. Faith finds good in Famine, and a Table in the Wilderness. In greatest dangers, Faith answers, I have a great God; when outward strength is broken, and all lyes a bleeding, Faith answers, The promises are strong still, they have not lost a drop of blood, nor have they a scar upon them. When God himself appears angry, Faith answers, I know how to please him, and I can go to one in whom he is, and will be well-pleased for ever. Thus Faith pulls out the sting of trouble, draws out the gall and wormwood of every affliction. But where Faith is wanting, every affliction is full of gall and wormwood, and every trouble vexeth with a double sting. It stings such, as it is a trouble, and it stings them more, as they see no comfort in, nor way out of trouble. The darkness of darkness is this, Not to believe, *that we shall return out of darkness.*

And he is waited for of the sword] This clause is near in sense to the latter part of the former Verse, and yet in this variety of expression, there is some variety of intention. For the clearing of it, two things are to be enquired:

First, What is meant by the Sword.

Secondly, What is meant by, *waited for of the Sword.*

The Sword is taken two wayes in Scripture.

First, literally, for, *That weapon of War*, and by a Synechdoche the Sword is put for all weapons of War; as also by a Metonymie, for War it self: When the Sword is threatned in Scripture, War is threatned.

Secondly, The Sword is taken for the power of the Magistrate, who bears not the Sword in vain: Christ is described as a King armed with his Sword. (*Isa.* 11. 4.) *By the Sword* (that is, with the Word) *of his mouth, he will slay the wicked*: Christ will pronounce a sentence of condemnation, and deliver them up to execution: Thus the Judge slayes the malefactor with the sword of his mouth.

Nempe sua sententia tradens eum justitiæ ministro.

Further, By a Synechdoche, the Sword is taken for all manner of evil and trouble; whatsoever hurts or afflicts is comprehended under the notion of a Sword (*Luke* 1. 35.) Old *Simeon* tells the holy Virgin in his song, *Also a Sword shall pass through thy Soul*; his meaning is not, that she should be cut off in War by the hand of a Souldier, or in peace, by the sentence of the Judge; but that sore troubles and afflictions, like a sharp sword, should pierce her soul.

Quicquid pungit & percutit, & torquet, & cruciat in scripturis sanctis gladius appellatur. Hieron. in cap. ult. Isa.

Here the Sword may be taken either for the Sword of War, or of Peace, or for any evil that befalls the wicked Man.

But how is he *waited for of the Sword?* The Original word is rendred two wayes;

First, Actively.

Secondly, Passively.

Some render actively, *He is waiting for of the Sword*: He stands expecting the Sword, and that in a double sense; he waits for the Sword which he fears will destroy him, or he waits for a Sword, which he desires to defend him. Mr. *Broughton* gives this sense, *Having watch, he thinketh upon the Sword.*

Circumspectans undique gladium. Vulg. *Sc. vel quo pereat, vel quo se defendat. Tanquam ex specula expectat.* Tigur.

Again, Others render it passively, *He is waited for of the Sword*, when he thinks not of it; The Sword lies in ambush to surprize him. A man is said to be waited for by an Enemy, when he intends to assault him unawares; To be thus waited for by the Sword, is to be waited for by Sword-men. And it is as great a disadvantage to be seen of the Sword, before we see the Sword; as it is (according to the old Proverb) to be seen of the Wolf, or of the Crocodile, before we see either.

Hebraizantes tenent esse participium passivum: hinc Rab. Levi *exponit, Conspicitur à gladio. Aspectus gladio.* Vatabl.

The wicked is waited for of the Sword, not for any service, but for the revenge it owes him; the Sword lyes behind the door, or under a bush, to snap him as he passeth.

Est Hebraismus, ut videri à gladio sit ab hostibus observari per insidias.

The Septuagint, instead of, he is waited, or watched, or looked for by the Sword, render thus, *He is decreed into the hand of the Sword*; leading us to the appointment and destination of God, who hath set him out, and marked him for judgment. *He is appointed to the Sword*: Such a decree the Prophet seems to point at (*Jer.* 15. 2.) where he brings in the Lord, as resolved to proceed in judgement against all prayers and intreaties, though made by his greatest Favorites; *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be unto this people, but such as are for death, to death, and such as are for the sword, to the sword*: That is, such as are decreed into the hand of the Sword, let the Sword take them; the decree shall stand, *the sentence is irrevocable.*

Decretus in manu ferri. Sept. *Conspectus ipse ad gladium.* Mont. *Nempe à Deo conspectus & destinatus ad gladium. Prævisus enim est ad gladium.* Sym.

Taking the Text actively, Observe; *That a wicked man thinks every one his enemy.*

He dreams of danger when he sleeps, and where-ever he comes, he waits for the Sword; *He that hath a mind to hurt others, fears it is in the mind of every one to hurt him*: He that is harmless is fearless; and while we go about doing good, we are free from the suspition of evil. *Cain* having murthered his Brother, complains of the Lords sentence against him, *Thou hast driven me out this day*

Nunquam non divinâ ultionem expectat vel metuit. Merc.

from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid, and I shall be a fugitive and a Vagabond on the earth, and it shall come to pass, that every man that finds me shall slay me, (*Gen.* 4.14.) *Cains* complaint is the Comment of this Text, *Every one that finds me shall slay me*, is, *I wait for, or I expect the Sword: Cain* speaks as if an Army were continually pursuing him; or, as if the avenger of blood were alwayes ready at his heels. And that which aggravates the wonder of this jealousie, is, that we can give account but of one man alive in the world besides himself at that time, and that was his own Father *Adam*; We read not of any Son that *Abel* left behind him, nor had *Cain* any Son (upon record) at that time; and yet he cries out as if the World had been full of Inhabitants, and every one of them his Enemy; *Every one that meets me will slay me.* What is said of *Ishmael*, is true of Oppressors, *Their hand is against every man*; and therefore they have cause enough to suspect that every mans hand is against them, they are ever *waiting for the Sword.*

Ex omni parte inimicos sibi imminere videns. Aquin.

Qui de nullo confidit de omnibus timet. id.

Secondly, from the passive sense, *He is waited for of the Sword*, Observe,

That a wicked man is in danger whersoever he is.

He cannot set his foot over the threshold but mischief may arrest him; the Lord said to *Cain*, *If thou doest ill, sin lyes at the door*; that is, (according to the ordinary interpretation) punishment lyes at the door; it lyes at the door, yea, it will draw the latch, or turn the key, and come in at the door; *There is no evil but a wicked man is subject to it*; as there is no good but is the inheritance of a godly man, who is therefore called *an heir of the promise*. He that is an heir of the promise, hath all the good things of this life, and of the next for his inheritance. When he goeth forth, mercy hath him by the hand, yea, mercy lyes under his feet, and holds a canopy of protection over his head. A wicked man is an heir of the curse, and therefore he alwayes stands under the droppings of Divine anger; his breast is the Butt or mark at which God levels the deadly Arrows of his indignation; and *he is waited for of the Sword.*

Thirdly, Observe, *That the expectation of evil is more afflictive than the feeling of evil.*

He doth not say, he is slain with the sword, or cut off with the sword; but he is waited for, or he waits for the sword: All evil attends him who is thus attended, or who gives such attendance. He that is alwayes looking for evil, cannot enjoy the good which he sees. For as the assured hope of approaching comfort swallows up our present sorrows, so the continual expectation of approaching sorrow swallows up our present comforts.

Fourthly, It is not said either by what sword, or whose sword, he is waited for, but *he is waited for of the sword*; here is the sword, but here is no hand named, neither the hand of God, nor the hand of man, drawing and weilding this Sword.

Hence Note; *That the destruction of a wicked man is inevitable.*

When we neither know whose the Sword is, nor whence the Sword is, how shall we prevent it, or provide against it. When the Lord would assure us that an unavoidable overthrow shall come upon the Kingdomes of the earth, which oppose the Kingdome of Christ, he saith, *A Stone cut out without hand* shall do this; it shall be done no man knows how or which way; and therefore no man can know how or which way to hinder the doing of it. As there is a Stone cut out without hands, so here is a sword to cut without hands. The judgment of *Babylon* is thus expressed by the Prophet (*Isa.* 47. 11.) *Therefore shall evil come upon thee, thou shalt not know from whence it ariseth, and mischief shall fall upon thee, that thou shalt not be able to put it off.* The former words expound the latter: Why should not *Babylon* be able to put off the mischief? Because it comes upon her, she knows not from whence. We say in our Proverb, when we threaten a mischief, from which there is no escaping, *You shall never know who hurt you*: He that knows not who hurts him, shall never know how to help himself; and while the hand that strikes us is not seen, how shall we see to defend our selves against the stroke. He that waits for the sword is alwayes in fear, and he that is waited for by the Sword, is alwayes in danger. Either of these is bad enough; and he that is under both, cannot be worse.

Cum Supplicium dicitur, & non dicitur à quo inferendum sit, inevitabile supplicium significatur. Sanct.

VERS. 23, 24.

He wandreth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it? He knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at hand.
Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid, they shall prevail against him, as a King ready to battel.

THese two Verses are a further description of the perplexed condition of a wicked man, *A dreadful sound is in his ears*, &c. *He is waited for of the Sword.* And what more?

Vers. 23. **He wandereth abroad for bread, saying, Where is it?**

We put in those words, *Saying*, and *Is it?* the Hebrew being onely this, *He wandreth abroad for bread, where*; as if he had said, *No man knows where, and he knows not whither himself.*

In Hebræo tantum est movetur pro pane.

There is a two-fold interpretation of this *Wandring*; some understand it of a powerful roving abroad for bread; he takes what he can from those who are next, or he takes what comes next to hand: He must have it, it matters not much with him, how or from whom. Such are called *Rovers*, they rove abroad for bread, they spoil and plunder others, for the supply of their wants, shall I say, or of their lusts. But I conceive this Exposition unsuitable; and the reason is, because *Eliphaz* is not here describing the sin of a wicked man, but his punishment; to spoyl and plunder for bread is his sin; to wander for bread is his punishment, and implies the evil and misery that comes upon the wicked, not the evil and mischief that is done by the wicked.

Tyrannorum furta & rapinas hic describi putat Cajetanus.

Secondly, To wander, is the condition of a man who hath no setled dwelling. *Paul* was once in such a state, *Even to this present hour we both hunger*, &c. *and have no certain dwelling-place* (1 *Cor.* 4. 11.) This was also the lot of the Jewish Martyrs, *They wandered about in Sheepskins, &c.* (*Heb.* 11. 37.) These were *holy wanderers*: They wandered in the world, that they might not wander from God. Here we have an *unholy wanderer*, who having gone astray from God, found no rest among men, a downright Vagabond; for so the word is applied to *Cain* (*Gen.* 4.) *A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be*; and we in our Law, call a sort of idle Beggars, *Vagabonds*, such as go from Countrey to Countrey, from house to house, to seek their bread. Such also were among the Jews, who are therefore called *Vagabond Jews*, (*Acts* 19. 13.) To be a wanderer was one of the sharpest threats that God ever denounced against his people, *My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken to him, and they shall be wanderers among the Nations.*

Panis hoc loco non significat, ut aliâs sæpe, quodcunque esculentum; sed vilissimum quemque cibum quo possit sustentari. Pined.

He wanders about for bread] In Scripture sense, bread takes in all good things, even the best which concern this life: So Christ teacheth us to pray, *Give us this day our daily bread.* But here by *bread*, we are to understand the meanest provision, distinct from flesh, and other Food; a man that lives meerly upon bread, hath but poor fare; though bread be the staff of life, yet he that hath nothing but bread to eat, lives meanly, and hath onely enough to keep life and soul together.

His verbis notatur aliud Dei flagellum nempe extrema inopia. Bold.

Yet further, They that *wander for bread*, must be content with the courset bread, and with a little of that; they are often glad if they get but a dry or mouldy crust of bread to satisfie the cry of hunger. So then, *To wander about for bread*, is to live a a beggars life, or to be driven to the utmost shifts to sustain life, and keep from starving.

To be brought to a piece of bread (of our own) is to be brought to the lowest ebb in worldly things, (*Prov.* 6.26.) *By means of a whorish woman, a man is brought to a piece of bread*; That is, he is made very poor. And if he be at a low ebb, who hath but a piece of bread of his own: what are they who are forced to ask so low as a piece of bread of others? To want bread is ill, but wander about for bread is far worse. He that wants bread is pincht, but he that wanders for it is disgraced.

Exul, inops erres, alienaque limina lustres. Ovid. in Ibin.

Observe

Observe hence, First, *To wander about for bread, is a sore affliction.*

Such an affliction, as *David* professeth he never observed the righteous mans seed fallen into (*Psal.* 37. 25.) *I have been young, and now am old, yet never saw I the righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging their bread*: The righteous are often troubled, yet never forsaken, or if forsaken of men, yet not of God; when all men, even godly men, forsook *Paul*, yet God did not: *The Lord* (saith he) *stood by me*, (2 *Tim.* 4. 16, 17.) And though a righteous man may be brought to begg, yet his seed (that is, his whole posterity) is not; or if we take seed for a single person, to see him beg for bread is very rare; so rare it was in those times, that *David* had not observed it; for he speaks not of that which cannot be, but of that which is seldome or never seen to be. 'Tis a mercy to be denied superfluities, but it is an extream misery to be denied necessaries. The Jews had poor amongst them, but the Law made such provision, that they had no Beggars, or wanderers for bread (*Deut.* 15.) He is not a Beggar that asks Bread upon a pinch, (for so did *David* himself, more than once) but he that makes a trade of it.

casus transitorii non reddunt mendicum. Musc. *in* Psal. 37.

Poverty or want is not a mark of Gods disfavour, no more than riches are a mark of his love: Yet some want and poverty, that especially, which is accompanied with a continual wandering for bread, is a mark of Gods disfavour. It was a Prophetical curse upon the Traytor *Judas* and his Posterity, (*Psal.* 109. 10.) *Let his Children be continually Vagabonds, and beg, let them seek their bread out of desolate places.* And experience tells us, that though sometimes a *Lazarus*, a good man beg, yet the race and generality of professed Beggars are the worst of mankind.

Secondly, Whereas *Eliphaz* speaks specially of the Oppressor, and tells us, that he *wanders about for bread*; we may observe,

Oppression is the neerest way to poverty: They who make Beggars to satisfie their lusts, shall be forced to beg for the satisfying of their hunger.

It is very dangerous to make provision for the flesh by lawful means, to fulfill the lusts of it; but it is most dangerous to make provision for the flesh by unlawful means (by wrong and oppression) to fulfil the lusts of it. They who so fulfil their lusts, shall soon be brought to want. *Hannah* sung out this sudden change (1 *Sam.* 2. 5.) *They that were full have hired themselves out for bread, and they that were hungry ceased.* Not that they ceased to be, but they ceased to be hungry, or their hunger ceased. Godly empty ones were filled, and wicked full ones were emptied; and that which makes the want and emptiness of a wicked man so great a misery, is his want of faith and patience when he is empty; he hath done so much evil, that he hath no faith to believe that any man will do him good; therefore his poverty fills him with impatience, and his mind is more unsetled than his estate.

Thus such as are here described (*Psal.* 59. 14, 15.) *At evening let them return, and let them make a noise like a Dog, and go round about the City: Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied:* A good man may want meat, but he doth not grudge. He that waits upon God, and believes, shall be satisfied, though not filled.

Again, 'tis propheſied of wicked men (*Isa.* 8. 21.) *They shall pass through it hardly bestead and hungry, and it shall come to pass, when they shall be hungry, that they shall fret themselves, and curse their King and their God, and look upward*: When an unbeliever hath nothing to eat, he eats himself. His own fretting wastes him more than his hunger. He then *looks upward*, not as submitting himself to God in his hunger, not as depending upon God, for the satisfying of his hunger: In which sense it is said (*Psal.* 145. 15, 16.) *The eyes of all wait upon thee*, or (as we put in the Margin) *look unto thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due season, thou openeſt thine hand and satisfieſt the desire of every living thing.* A wicked man cannot look upward, *thus*, when he is hungry, he cannot look up and pray, he cannot look up and trust in God; but he looks upward to curse the God of Heaven in his heart, if not with his tongue; he looks upward, because he is vext with all that is done below; he looks upward, not because he hath any pleasant sights in Heaven, but because he is displeased with all he sees on Earth.

Terroribus conscientiæ ita divexatur ut in máxima abundantia summè egeat, laboret de victu supra modum. Jun. *Vagatur, vel in mediis opibus, egestatis metu, nec partis fecundè fruitur.* Merl.

He wanders abroad for bread.] Where? or whither doth he wander? That which *Eliphaz* is conceived to aim chiefly at in this passage, is not so much the real, as the imaginary and conceited want of a wicked man. He wanders while he stayes at home, and seeks for bread, while his Barns and Tables are filled with it. He is terrified with forethoughts of poverty, in the midst of his riches, and when he hath bread, saith, Where is it? He is so troubled with suspected evils, that he cannot take comfort in his possessed goods. Hence observe;

First, *That abundance cannot satisfie.*

God only is fulness to us. A man may wander about in his thoughts for bread, when he hath bread enough about him, and say he shall be undone, and die a beggar, when he hath abundance. *A covetous man is an unsatiable gulf; He only is well who hath enough, and he is best who hath (in temporals) the least enough*: But a covetous man hath not enough though he hath more than enough, and much more than needs; he alwayes dreams of dearths, and suspects the Earth will be barren: with these fears he pines, yea martyrs himself, and is not at all enriched with all his riches; he hath sufficient to maintain twenty, yet is told by his unbelief, that he hath not sufficient for one. This is vanity and vexation of spirit; The life of man doth not consist in what he hath, but in what he is, and hopes to be: his life doth not consist in abundance, either for the continuance of it, or for the comfort of it. A man doth not live more dayes, nor more chearfully any day, because he lives plentifully. The creature were a God to us, if it could do this to us; but this, God hath reserved in his own hands (how much soever of the creature he gives out) that we may know our dependance on him.

Secondly, observe. *That imaginary wants, or to have an unquiet spirit in the midst of our enjoyments, is more afflictive than to be in real want.*

The worst worldly poverty is to be poor when we are rich; as it is the excellency of our spiritual estate to be poor in spirit, in our greatest spiritual plenty to be little or nothing in our own eyes, when we have a great stock of grace: So it is the misery of our temporal estate, to be thus poor in spirit, when we have plenty in the purse; to say we have little or nothing, when we have a great stock of worldly goods.

Zophar concludes of the Hypocrite (*Chap.* 20. 21.) *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in streights*; which may be understood, either first, That when he is full, troubles shall empty him; or secondly, That while his fulness continues, even in his fullest fulness, he shall live, as if he were indeed as empty of wealth, as he is of goodness, alwayes spending himself with fears that all will be suddenly spent; and saying in his heart, *This will not hold out, I shall never be able to bring the year about, or bring* (as we say) *both ends together.* Hence his cares are endless, and he grudges himself ordinary comforts, his worldly sorrow consumes him, and he is willing to dye, onely to save charges: That man is in an ill case, who is grudged what he eats or spends by others, but it is far worse for a man to grudge himself his necessary expences.

Some worldly men, whose Barns are full, are ready to say every one to his soul, as he (*Luke* 12. 19.) *Soul take thine ease, thou hast goods laid up for many years*: Another hath his Barn full, and yet saith, This will not hold one year, and so gives his soul no ease at all. What the Apostle saith of himself, is true of all those who have an interest in Christ, (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) *As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing all things*: But there are some rich, who make many poor, and themselves poorest of all; for though they have all those things, yet they are as if they possessed nothing. It is an affliction to be poor for want of riches, but it is a curse to be poor in the possession of riches. *He that loves Silver shall not be satisfied with Silver* (*Eccles.* 5. 10.) To be satisfied, is more than to be rich, and he is alwayes poor who is unsatisfied; he that expects satisfaction from the creature,

creature, shall never find contentation in the creature; and he that expects no satisfaction from the creature, hath contentation in any portion of the creature. A godly man learns in every estate to be content; A carnal man is content in no estate; when he is poor, he sees he hath nothing; and when he is rich, he saith, he hath not enough. Thus he wanders as well when he is rich, as when he is poor, and is therefore never satisfied.

Again, *He wanders about for bread*, **Where**? Or saying, **Where is it?**

Hence Observe, *A man that is not good, is uncertain where to receive any good.*

Where is it? Though a Believer want bread, yet he knows whither to go for it, and where it is to be had. *The earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof; he goes to Heaven for bread as well as for grace*; he knows there is bread in the promise, and to the promise he goes. The promise hath all things both concerning life and godliness. Christ, who is the bread of life, gives us bread for this life; and having Christ with him, we have all things else; bread and cloathing, gold and Silver, are laid up in Christ.

An Unbeliever (as hath been shewed) hath nothing to do with promises, nor with Christ the fulfiller of promises, and therefore he is ever in doubt, when he is in want; and saith, Where is it? He knows not whither to go, nor to whom for the supply of his wants. A wicked man is never in his way, and, in one sence, he is never out of his way. They may go any where, who know not whither to go. They are never out of their way, who have no home. East, West, North, or South, it is all one to them; which way the staff falls, they go, they have no rule nor line to go by; but though a wicked man know not his particular way, yet he often knows his general end, and that is misery, as the next words tell us.

He knows the day of darkness is ready at hand

At *Vers.* 22. *He believes not that he shall return out of darkness*; that is (as was opened) in case he falls into evil, he thinks he shall never get out of it; he hath no faith that he shall recover out of trouble, but he hath a strong faith, that he shall fall into trouble: *He knows that the day of darkness is ready at hand.*

Here are three things to be cleared.

First, What is meant by *knowing*.

Secondly, What by the *day of darkness*.

Thirdly, What by *being ready at hand*.

To know, it is here opposed to an uncertain guess, or to conjecture; to know is as much as to be fully perswaded; to know, is to be assured; the highest act of faith is often expressed by knowledge: *Hereby we know that we know him* (1 *John* 2. 4.) That is, hereby we are assured that we know him: so here, *He knows*; that is, he is assured; it is setled upon his spirit, that *the day of darkness is ready at hand.* This knowledge riseth not from reports abroad, but from his own breast; so the Septuagint translates, *He knows in himself that evil shall be upon him:* As a godly man hath a witness for him in himself; so a wicked man hath a witness against him in himself.

Novit in seipso quod manat in ruinam. Certo sibi persuadet atque hujus rei præsagium ex sui cordis sensu facit.

What the **day of darkness is**, learn upon the former Verse, *He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness*; There I shewed a fivefold darkness; here I shall reduce it to one of these two.

The day of darkness is either the day of death, or the day of affliction; so 'tis taken (*Eccles.* 5. 17.) *All his dayes he eateth in darkness*; that is, he is in sorrow all his dayes: Though he hath Sun-light, or Candle-light enough at his Table, yet he hath no light in his heart. So the Prophet (*Amos* 5. 20.) *Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light? Even very dark) and no brightness in it?* There is a day of the Lord which is nothing but light; and there is a day of the Lord which is nothing but darkness; that is, of tribulation and anguish upon the soul that sins. The Prophet *Joel* calls it, *A day of darkness, and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness. He knows that the day of darkness is*

נכן

Paratus, firmus, stabilis, certus esse denotat. Drus.

Ready at hand. The word which we translate *ready*, signifies two things.

First, That which is prepared.

Secondly, That which is established, or confirmed.

We translate to the former, the day is ready or prepared; others render to the latter sence, the day is established, and setled; his day of darkness shall certainly come upon him. And whereas we translate *Ready at hand*, noting the nearness of the danger. Others, to note the cause of the danger, render, *He knows that his own hand hath made a day of darkness*; that is, The villanies and wickednesses which he hath committed, cause the clouds of judgment to gather, and look black upon him; his unrighteousness hath hastened on his ruine, and wrapt him up in darkness, *He hath brought an evil day upon himself, by his evil deeds*; or as the Prophet speaks, *His destruction is from himself:* He hath pulled down his House with his own hands, and is the sole author or contriver of his own sorrows.

Tygurina per manum intelligere videtur ipsa impiorum scelera, & per paraphrasim sic sententiam elucidat. Scit quod suis factis periculosa tempora accersierit.

This is an experienced truth; but I rather take the words as we render, *The day of darkness is ready at hand*; that is, it is near, and will shortly seize upon him.

Hence Observe, First, *Many a wicked man grows into an assurance of his approaching misery.*

It is as hard to perswade some wicked men that their state is naught, as it is to perswade some good men that their state is good; yet as many of the Saints conquer unbelief, and come not only to have some hopes, but high assurances, that there is a day of mercy at hand for them, that they are in a present happy state, and eternal happiness waits for them; so a wicked man (after long debate) may have his unbelief conquered, and though he hath been sowing pillows under his own elbows, though he hath slighted all the counsels, admonitions, and threatnings of faithful Friends, though, notwithstanding all this, he continue long, speaking peace to his own soul, and saying, all is well, yet (I say) this man may have his unbelief conquered, and know at last that there is a day of darkness ready at hand; when his eyes are opened to see what he hath done, and what he hath been, he sees that God hath rejected all his confidences, and that he shall never prosper in them.

Secondly, Observe, *That for a man to be assured of his own misery is the height of misery.*

Eliphaz puts it here among the punishments of wicked men. This assurance makes his heart shake; this knowledge is full of fear, and therefore full of torment. As to know that a day of light and deliverance is ready at hand, is light while we are in darkness, and deliverance while we are in trouble: So to know that a day of darkness and misery is ready at hand, is darkness to wicked men while they are in external light, and misery in the midst of all their mirth. And as it is the highest comfort of the Saints to know that they have eternal life, to know that they are in the favour, and live in the love of God; (a man may be in it, and not know it, and then though he shall do well at last, yet his state is but uncomfortable, and he that is an heir of Heaven, may walk as an heir of Hell, with a troubled spirit) but to know that it is so, this is Heaven before we come at Heaven; so it is the deepest sorrow of any man in this life, to know that he hath eternal death; an assurance of this, setled upon the spirit (though I conceive a man cannot have an absolute assurance of it, yet to have strong impressions upon the spirit, that he shall never be saved, or that Hell is prepared for him) this is Hell before he is cast into Hell.

A soul that doubts of mercy and of the favour of God, is in a very sad condition, but the condition of that soul is unexpressibly sad, which is assured of judgment, and of the wrath of God.

Thirdly, Observe, *That as a wicked man may knows that he shall be miserable in the end, so he may know that his misery is near at hand.*

An evil conscience awakened is the worst Prophet, it is full of sad presages; like *Micah* to *Ahab*, it never prophesied good, but evil; and it doth not only propheste of evil afar off, but near, or *ready at hand:* 'Tis true, an evil conscience usually puts the evil day far off (2 *Pet.* 3. 4.) There shall be scoffers, saying, *Where is the day of his coming*, &c. The day of darkness is far enough off, it hath been long talked of, but we do not see it, say these despisers: But when an evil conscience is awakened, then he sees evil near, and himself dogg'd at the heels, or (as the former Verse speaks) *Waited for of the Sword.*

Hæc est pœna impii pars non modica quod cogatur ipse sibi ominari malum. Pined.

As

As a Believer, when the eye of faith is clear, sees mercy near at hand (Faith makes God near, and then all good is near.) So an Unbeliever, when the eye of his conscience is cleared, sees misery near.

Observe Fourthly, *The misery of a wicked man is unmoveable.*

His day of darkness is established by an irrevocable decree, there is no getting it off; he is under a Divine Fate. A day of darkness may come over the Saints, but that day blows over: *David* said once of his day of light, It shall never be dark; and of his Mountain, it shall never be removed; yet he was deceived: But a wicked mans day of darkness shall never be light, nor can he use any proper means to turn his day of darkness into light. He cannot pray, and it is prayer that turns darkness into light; he cannot believe, and it is Faith that turns a day of darkness into light; he hath not a Christ to go unto, and it is Christ only who can turn darkness into light, death to life, and the waters of sorrow into the wine of joy; his darkness shall never be removed, who hath not Christ (who is light) to remove it.

Verse 24. **Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid, they shall prevail upon him, as a King ready to battel.**

In this Verse we have a double effect of those troubles, which are the portion of a wicked man; the first effect is, *They shall make him afraid*: the second effect is, *They shall prevail upon him*; both which are illustrated by an elegant similitude, *They shall make him afraid, and they shall prevail upon him, as a King ready to Battel.*

Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid.] *Trouble* without, and *anguish* within (so some expound) He shall have straits in his state, and a strait upon his spirit; both meeting, shall not only afflict him, but *make him afraid.* The word may be translated to *fright*, rather then to *make afraid:* They shall scare him, not only out of his comforts, but out of his wits and senses. There is a threefold fear.

ר *Idem quod* צרה *angustia.*

First, Natural.

Secondly, Spiritual.

בעת *Perterruit, perturbavit.*

To be spiritually afraid is good; and to be naturally afraid is not evil: So Christ was not only afraid, but amazed (*Mark* 14. 33.)

Thirdly, There is a distracting, vexing fear, which is both a passion and a perturbation: This is at once the sin and punishment of wicked men.

Consider with what weapons and instruments God fights against a wicked man: he doth not say, Sword and fire shall make him afraid, Armies of enemies shall make him afraid, but trouble and anguish shall do it; God can create and form weapons in our own hearts, to fight against us: Inward anguish is far more grievous then any outward stroke. (*Rom.* 2. 9.) *Tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul that sins, whether of Jew or Gentile:* Anguish is the edge of tribulation, both joyned, wound soul and body; yea, strike through both at every blow.

Hence Note, *It is worse to be afraid of evil, then to feel it.*

Every thing is to us as we apprehend it, good is not pleasing to us, nor evil afflictive to us, unless we think it so: They who are not afraid of death, welcome it when it comes; others, through fear of death, are held in bondage all the dayes of their life.

Secondly, Observe, *Distracting fear is the portion of a wicked man.*

The troubles of the righteous are many, but their fears are few (*Psal.* 112.) *His heart is fixed, he shall not be afraid:* 'Tis not said, he shall not hear evil tidings (I know no man whose ears are priviledg'd from such reports) but he shall not be afraid; *I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about,* (Psal. 3. 6.) *Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,* Psal. 23. 4. are the resolves of Faith: Whosoever hath much fear, hath but little Faith, *Wherefore are ye afraid, O ye of little faith?* Mat. 8. 26. And how can they but be afraid (when storms arise) who are of no faith? When Faith increaseth, fear decreaseth; and when Faith is come to the height, fear is gone; where there is no Faith, there can be nothing but fear; *Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid,* that's the first effect.

But that's not all, anguish doth not only fear the wicked man, but *prevails against him:* Some render, *Trouble and anguish intrench about him:* The sence is the same, it is such an intrenchment as concludes in a conquest; the besieger prevails. A second reads it thus, *Trouble shall make him afraid, and anguish shall intrench about him.* The Original joyns the two Substantives together, and the Verb is plural, *Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid, they shall prevail against him.*

תיתקפהו *a radice* יקף *circumivit. Angustia vallabit.* Vulg. *Terrebit eum tribulatio & angustia vallabit eum.*

From this second effect observe.

Evil shall get the upper hand of evil men.

A good man, possibly, may be afraid, and afraid sinfully: excess of fear may take hold of him, but he shall not be prevailed against (*Prov.* 24. 16.) *The just man falls seven times a day* (into affliction and trouble) *and riseth up again*; trouble may throw him down, but it cannot keep him down (*Mic.* 7. 8.) *Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy, when I fall, I shall rise*: The Church rises in her falls, and she sometimes foresees her rising, when she is fallen: The wicked fall, and rise no more. And whereas *the Saints are more then conquerors through him that loveth them*; wicked men are more then conquered, they are utterly ruined, lost, and vanquished, because not beloved. There are two battels wherein we cannot stand without the strength of Christ.

First, The battel of inward temptation.

Secondly, The battel of outward affliction.

We are no match for either, unless Christ be our Second. *Satan hath desired thee* (saith Christ to *Peter*) *to winnow thee as Wheat* (hoping to find, or make thee Chaff) *But I have prayed that thy Faith fail not: Peter* fell into temptation, yea, he fell in the temptation, yet because Christ undertook for him, the temptation could not prevail against him. And as there is no conquest over Satans temptation, but by the strength of Christ; so none over affliction (which is Gods temptation) but by the strength of Christ (*1 Cor.* 10. 13.) *There hath no temptation* (that is, no affliction) *taken you, but what is common to man*; yet no man can stand under that alone, which may befal any man, therefore it follows) *But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able,* &c. Man alone is not sufficient, so much as to think one good thought, how then shall he think good thoughts enough alone, either to scatter a temptation, or to bear an affliction? To carry the soul out in such a conflict requires more then one good thought, yea, more then many good thoughts; it requires good actings; yea, and sufferings too; How shall he do this without the strength of Christ? No wonder then if the lesser of these, yea, the least of the lesser, the least affliction prevail against a wicked man; and if while he runs with Foot-men they weary him, how shall he contend with Horses, with trouble and anguish, shall not these prevail against him, as a King ready to battel? Which is the illustration of the wicked mans downfal: *Trouble and anguish prevail against him:* But how? Not a little, not with strength only enough to turn the scale of the conflict, but mightily, even with much strength to spare.

As a King ready to battel.] There are four interpretations for the making out of this similitude; some place it between a wicked mans trouble and anguish, and the trouble and anguish of a King ready to joyn battel with a potent Adversary: For, then his spirit is much troubled, knowing how great an adventure he makes, in reference to his state, and how great a hazard he runs, in reference to his life, and person. The charge being sometimes given, to fight neither against small nor great, but only against the King. So wicked man when trouble comes, is like a King going to battel, full of fears and anxious thoughts what the issue and event may be: He looks upon himself as the mark, both of the wrath of God and man, and that every blow shall be directed against his breast.

Trouble and anguish single out wicked men; when God sends out his Armies of judgments, he charges them not to fight against the small or great of his own people, but against the wicked of the world: Wrath aims at them, and therefore they are terrified at the approaches of wrath.

Secondly, Others give out the similitude thus, *Trouble and anguish shall come upon him, as a King ready to battel:*

As

As when a King goes to Battel he is compassed with a strong guard. (Every General hath his *Life-guard*, much more *Kings*) So, trouble and anguish shall compass a wicked man, as yet with widest difference; for the Guard compasseth the King for the safety and preservation of his person; whereas trouble and anguish gather about wicked men for their destruction: But the Text will hardly admit this explication, and therefore I pass it.

Præliaturũ regẽ circundare solebat globus militũ, ut lectio Tygurina indicat. Angustia & circũvallatio eũ circũstãt ut regẽ confertis globis præliaturum.

Thirdly, The Hebrew word which signifies a day of Battel, signifies also a *Sphear*, or *round Globe*, we translate it, *a Ball* (*Isa.* 22. 18.) where it is prophesied against *Shebna*, that the Lord would make him an example, and that (as the Hebrew is) *Tossing, he would toss him with a tossing*, that is, he would surely toss, and turn him like a Ball, into a far Countrey; as a Ball is tossed or thrown, so the Lord would throw him into Captivity. Now because it is a usual way of embattailing; to draw an Army into the form of a Globe, or Ball; therefore the same word which signifies a *Sphear*, or *Globe*, signifies also a *Battel*, from the form of it. Taking it in this sense, for any thing that is round, or circular as a Ball, or Sphear. This third interpretation of the similitude riseth thus, *Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid, they shall prevail upon him, as a King put in Chains, or into a hoop of Iron*; some labour much for the maintaining of this interpretation, That *Eliphaz* intends to shew how wicked oppressors shall be surrounded & held fast with trouble, like some great Kings, who falling into the hands of their Enemies, have been shut up in round Iron Cages, as *Tamerlane* carried *Bajazet* the Turkish Emperor; or bound in Chains, as it is Prophesied in the 149. *Psalm.* It was the use of those times, to make *hoops of Iron*, for the securing of Kings and Princes taken in Battel; the forms of which, and how those captivated Kings were lockt up in them, with the posture of their bodies in that base imprisonment, may be seen in *Boldoc* upon this Verse; and he annexeth divers texts of Scripture, in which he conceives there is an allusion to this course way of handling Kings.

Significat globũ pilam aut Sphæram. Apud Latinos Globus est hostiũ aut Armatorum militũ cuneus. Liv. l. 1. Annal. *Romulus cum globo Juvenum.*

וביזור *Exit.* למלחמה *Ad prælia à forma orbiculari, Castra in orbicularẽ formã disponuntur ut fortiora sint.* Merc. *Declarare volens extremas impii angustias, ut illũ eo pacto undiq; stringi tribulationibus, quo Rex ab hoste superatus & captus, pro spectaculo publicè ponebatur in Ferricornio.* Bold. *Ita etiam textũ explicat,* Vatablus.

Fourthly, Our reading compares trouble and anguish to a King, ready to Battel; as if he had said, *Trouble and anguish shall prevail upon him irresistably*: This is but a high expression of greatest preparation for a Battel; for when a King goeth forth to Battel in person, he will have all the strength of his Kingdom with him, which *Job* himself clears in the 29. *Chapter, Vers.* 25. where describing his own former felicity, he concludes, *I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army*: That is, in great strength and power. So the Apostle speaks (1 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *You have reigned as Kings without us, and I would to God ye did reign*; that is, you conceive you have had the confluence of all comforts. and strengths, *You have reigned as Kings*, I would you had, that we also might reign with you, or share in your felicity. So that when *Eliphaz* saith, Trouble and anguish shall prevail, as a King armed, and ready to set forth to Battel; his meaning is, They shall prevail strongly, yea irresistably. The wicked man shall not be able to stand their charge, much less repulse it. These several explications of the similitude meet in one common truth: That as the wicked shall not stand in judgment, when God comes to judg all the World; so when the Lord sends forth his judgments upon any part of the World, they are the men that shall surely fall; trouble and anguish shall terrifie them, as a King going to joyn Battel, or as a King taken and captivated in Battel, or as a King conquering and prevailing over his Foes in Battel. Sin prevails always upon wicked men, as a King commanding and ruling over them; at last, trouble (which is the fruit of sin) shall prevail upon them as a King oppressing and destroying them. They who will not submit to the rule of the Law as a King to guide them: shall be forced to submit to the curse of the Law, as a King to punish them.

VERS. 25, 26.

For he stretched out his hand against God, and strengthened himself against the Almighty.
He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his Bucklers.

ELiphaz having explained much of the inward punishment of wicked men, the torture which they indure upon the rack of conscience, as also some of their outward punishments, he subjoyns the reason of both, their sin, in these two Verses, and that not an ordinary sin, but a sin committed with a high hand.

Vers. 25. **He stretcheth out his hand against God.**

And is it any wonder then that God should stretch out his hand against him? Every sin deserves punishment, and shall be punished either upon the sinner, or upon his Surety; but extraordinary sins call for extraordinary punishments: they who have done much evil, shall endure much. Justice hath an eye to the quantity, as well as to the quality of our works; and that's a work of wickedness in *Folio*, or of the largest size, which is done with a *hand stretched-out*: What revenge is big enough for a sin thus big?

Tanto supplicio nunc scelus dignissimũ explicat. Pined.

He stretcheth out his hand against God.] Here are three things to be opened:

First, What is meant by the *hand*.

Secondly, What is meant by *stretching out the hand*.

Thirdly, How the *hand may be stretched out against God*.

The hand may be taken properly, or improperly; properly for that member of the body, which is so useful and instrumental in all the services of this life; and then to *stretch out the hand*, must be taken in a proper sense; for so wicked men sometimes do; they stretch out the hand of the body against God, by acting sins of violence, and by acting violently in many sins.

The outward members, especially the hand and tongue, are made the weapons of unrighteousness, both against God and Man.

Theod. *l.* 3. *cap.* 20. Niceph. *l.* 10. *cap.* 35.

The Church-Historian reports of *Julian the Apostate*, that when he was wounded in the Battel against the *Parthians*, he took of his blood, and threw it up to Heaven, he stretched out his hand against God, saying, in derision of Christ, *O Galilæan thou hast overcome*: This outward gesture of his body, expressed the secret indignation of his mind. And it is observed by *Jerom*, who saith, he received it from the Tradition of the Jewes, that the *Amalakites*, who were professed Enemies to the Jewes, did lye upon the watch, to take all advantages against them, in their march from *Egypt* to *Canaan*, and when at any time they turned aside out of the way, either because of legal uncleanness, or upon any natural necessity, they would fall upon them and slay them; which being done, they cut off that member which had the Seal of the Covenant (Circumcision) upon it, and with their hands stretched out, threw it up towards Heaven, as if they would challenge God himself to revenge their blasphemy of him, and the contempt of that Sacred Institution.

Amalachitæ Israelitas in Exitu de Egypto vel ob lassitudinem vel ob legalem immunditiẽ extra castra degentes occiderunt, & eorũ circũcisionẽ amputatam in substannationẽ Dei projecerunt in cælum. Hieron.

Secondly, The hand is taken improperly, or metaphorically; so, the power of a man is his hand, the strength of his whole body, state, and mind, may be called his hand; his riches are his hand, his credit is his hand, his wit, and parts, Learning, and Eloquence, are his hand, as there is a power in all these. And when it is said here, *He stretcheth forth his hand against God*; we may understand it in that latitude; for a wicked man improves the strength of his body, the power of his Estate, his Credit, his Wit, all his accommodations in the way of Rebellion against God. A man is said to stretch out himself, when he doth his utmost to attain his end, and makes the most of himself to any purpose: In such cases he stretcheth all that he is (as we say) upon the Tenters; and this all of his put together, is his hand stretched out against God.

Further, *To stretch out the hand*, imports four things.

Extendere manum est omnẽ adhibere conatũ ad percutiẽdũ hostẽ aut aliquid aliud aggrediendum.

First, To do a thing with the utmost intention of mind and body, to do it with all our might and fullest resolution. *Joshua* being resolved to bring total destruction upon the men of *Ai*, *Drew not his hand back wherewith he stretched out his Spear, till he utterly destroyed all the Inhabitants of Ai* (*Josh.* 8. 26.) The stretching forth of his hand was emblematical, speaking, or implying that his spirit kept up to the height of resolution, for the ruine of that City and people.

When the Scripture speaks of God, acting towards Man, either

either in a way of judgment or mercy, this phrase is often used, (*Exod.* 6. 6.) *Wherefore say to the Children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with an out-stretched arm.* (*Exod.* 14. 8.) *The Children of Israel went out with an high hand*; and at the sixth Verse of the same Chapter, the Lord bid *Moses, Stretch his hand over the Sea*; to shew that he was purposed to work a Miracle, for the deliverance of his people. The Prophets are frequent in this language (*Isa.* 5. 25.) *Therefore is the anger of the Lord kindled against his people, and he hath stretched forth his hand against them:* Read *Chap.* 9. *Vers.* 12, 17, 21. *Chap.* 10. 4. *Jer.* 51. 25. *Ezek.* 14. 13. *Chap.* 15. 7. In all these places when the Lord went with full purpose to punish, he is said, *To stretch out his hand.* Now as when God stretcheth out his hand against Man, it shews his resolvedness to smite, so when man stretcheth out his hand against God, it shews his resolvedness to sin, or his actual sinning with full intention and strength of spirit.

Extendere manū est habitus confidentis & potentiā vires, ostendentis.

Secondly, *Mans stretching out his hand*, speaks the confidence of a man, that he shall carry all before him, and win the day; it is usual with contenders, especially with Souldiers, before they joyn Battel, to stretch their hands out, to draw and brandish their Swords, in token both of their courage to fight, and of their confidence to prevail. Obstinate sinners are full of false hopes that they shall obtain what they design, and prosper in their projects of wickedness, and therefore they are said to stretch out the hand against God.

Anima quæ in manu superbia. Sep.

Thirdly, *Stretching out the hand*, is a posture of pride and impudence; pride is written upon a stretched-out-hand. To sin presumptuously, is in the Original to sin *with a high hand* (*Numb.* 15. 30.) The *Septuagint* render that place, *The soul that in the hand of pride thinks so, shall be cut off:* The *Caldee Paraphrase* gives it thus; *He that sins with an uncovered head*; An uncovered head is an argument of boldness, and that he who acts, cares not who sees him. Modesty causeth us to hang down, or cover the head, when we have done ill, and shame makes us cover the head when we receive evil, or are punished (*Jer.* 14. 4.) *The Plowmen were ashamed, they covered their heads because the ground was chapt: for there was no rain in the Earth:* So that to do, or suffer with an uncovered head, is like doing or suffering with a high, or stretched-out-hand, boldly, presumptuously, and as it were, hanging out a Flag of defiance against the God of Heaven.

Fourthly, *Stretching out the hand*, is the posture of a furious mad man; he that wants the use of his reason, makes this use of his hand, laying about him, as if he would do wonders; such madness lodgeth in the hearts of debauched sinners, they do they know not what; they rage and are furious, as if they would pull God out of Heaven, and throw the House, yea the World, out at the Windows: These stretch their hands against God, and they do it three wayes.

First, Against the very being of God; such a wicked man opposeth God as God, he wisheth there were no God, or that himself were God; he would have all power in his own hand: *Francis Spira* in his despairing distraction said, *I would I were above God:* In him nature spake her mind plainly, and not in Parables: Nature heightned in wickedness would be above God; therefore a carnal man is called, *A hater of God:* Now that which we hate we would destroy, and take out of the way.

Secondly, There is a stretching out the hand against God, not only in this open bold challenge, or professed opposition; this very few will own. Few Atheists will speak out their blasphemy, or send their Trumpet to defie God; and most wicked men take a suspicion of this, as the highest dishonour and affront that can be put upon them. What? They oppose God? They stretch out their hand against God? They will tell you, they love God, and it may be they will tell you that God is their God, and yet will be found stretching out their hand against God: therefore not only do his professed Enemies stretch out their hand against God, but even those his professed Friends, who live in the open violation of his righteous Laws; they who oppose the will and Word of God, the Statutes and Ordinances of God, these will be found to stretch forth their hand against God himself.

The Lord complains (*Mal.* 3. 13.) *Your words have been stout against me:* Who? we stout against God? when did we speak against God? we never had such a thought in our hearts, much less, such words in our mouthes: So it follows, *Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?* The Lord tells them (because it seems they could not) *Vers.* 14. *Ye have said it is a vain thing to serve the Lord, and what profit have we, that we have kept his Ordinances, and ye call the proud happy, &c.* To speak, or think thus (though such a word be not spoken formally, as it is probable they did not) is to be stout against God. To say, *It is a vain thing to serve the Lord*, is not only a disservice, but a Rebellion against the Lord: To say, *There is no profit in keeping his Ordinances*, is the highest prophanation of his Ordinances; to call, *The proud happy*, is to stretch out the hand against God, for he stretcheth out his hand against, and resisteth the proud.

Thirdly, The hand is stretched out against God, when it is stretched out against his people, his Servants, or any that are under his tuition, and special protection; to oppose, or stretch out the hand against these, is to stretch out the hand against God. The Prophet *Zachary* sets forth both the care of God to keep his people from trouble, and his Sympathy with them in trouble, by an elegant Similitude: *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye* (*Zach.* 2. 8.) What part is more sensible of the least hurt, then the eye, or being hurt, causeth a greater smart? God is as tender of his people as any man is of his own eyes. *He that toucheth them, &c.* to wrong or vex them, toucheth the apple of Gods eye, he lifts up his hand against Gods face, and against the most excellent part of his face, his eye, and against the most excellent part of his eye, the apple of it or ball of the eye which is the proper instrument of seeing. We use to say, There is no sporting with the eyes; men do not like it, to have their eyes played with: Surely then God will not bear it, that any should smite or wound his eyes. And he interprets any hurt done to his people, as done to his own eye, yea to the apple of his eye. When it was under debate in the Councel what should be done with the Apostles, *Gamaliel* advises, *Refrain from these men, and let them alone, &c. Lest haply ye be found to fight against God* (*Acts* 5. 38, 39.) Some possibly would reply, We fighters against God? We love God; here is a company of turblent Fellows called *Apostles*, who disquiet the City, may we not punish them, but we must presently be judged fighters against God? No, saith *Gamaliel*, you fight against God, if they and their Apostleship be of God.

Dicimus vulgò cum oculis non ludendum est.

Saul was zealous of the Law, and (as he thought) for God; yet Christ rebukes him from Heaven, with *Saul, Saul, Why persecutest thou me?* Thou stretchest forth thy hand against me, when thou dost it against the Saints; then, there is a stretching out the hand against God, not only by a boisterous opposition of God, As *Pharaoh*, *Senacharib*, and *Julian* did, but by opposing the wayes or word, the Messengers or Servants of God.

Hence Observe, First, *Though every sin be against God, yet some sins are more against God.*

We cannot say that every one who sins, stretcheth out his hand against God; there is a difference of sins in degree, though they are all in their nature deadly; there is a presumptuous sin, a sin committed with a high hand, which hath these two things chiefly in it.

First, A sinning against clear light.

Secondly, A sinning with full consent and swindge of will.

In that place of *Numbers*, where this sin is described (*Chap.* 15. 30.) There are two other Characters put upon it: First, it is called, *A reproaching the Lord:* And secondly, a despising *of the Word of the Lord*; Every sin is a transgression of the Word of the Lord, but every sin is not a despising of the Word of the Lord; every sin is displeasing to God, but every sin is not reproaching of God: Every sin, even the least, is a departure from God, but some sins are full of activity against God.

It is conceived, that the *presumptuous sin* in the old Testament, is the same with, or answers to, *the sin against the holy Ghost* in the New; and that which leads to this appre-

hension of

henſion is, becauſe no ſacrifice was appointed for that under the Law, as this is ſaid to be unpardonable under the Goſpel. And the Author to the *Hebrews* is expreſs (*Chap.* 10.26.) *If we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins.* The Goſpel knowes but of one Sacrifice for ſin, and that but once offered; they who deſpiſe that, have deſpiſed all, for there remains no more Sacrifice for ſin. God will not ſend his Son to die a ſecond time for thoſe who have trodden the Son of God in his death under foot, and have counted the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing. God indeed ſtretcheth out his hand all the day long, to a gain-ſaying and rebellious people, that is, to thoſe who ſtretch out their hands againſt him in his Law: But he will not ſtretch out his hand (unleſs to ſmite) to a gain-ſaying and rebellious people, who (in this ſenſe) ſtretch out their hands againſt him in the Goſpel.

Secondly, From the connexion of this Verſe with the former,

Obſerve, *That God proportions the puniſhment of man unto his ſin.*

There is a twofold proportionating of puniſhment to ſin.

Firſt, In the quality, or manner of it.

Secondly, In the quantity, or degree of it.

The Juſtice of God is viſible in both, according to the exact rules of retaliation: As I have done, ſo the Lord hath requited me, ſaid *Adonibezek* (*Judg.*1.) He was puniſhed in the ſame manner that he had ſinned, and ſo have many others. But all ſhall be puniſhed in the ſame degree that they have ſinned. If ſin be great, ſo ſhall the puniſhment of it be. When the iniquity of Amorite was full, he had his fill of wrath. *When God himſelf was preſſed with the ſin of Iſrael, as a Cart with Sheaves:* then he laid on load in judgment. If any wonder why the wicked man ſhould be hurried, troubled, vexed, why he travelleth in pain all his dayes, he may ceaſe to wonder, when he reads, that the wicked man ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God. Is it any wonder God ſhould ſhew himſelf an Enemy to them, who practice the Enemy againſt him? Or that they ſhould be higheſt in ſuffering, who have been higheſt in ſin? The Prophet *Amos* reproves and complains of thoſe, *who made the Ephah ſmall, and the Shekel great* (*Chap.* 8. 5.) That is, who abated the meaſure, and enhanſed, or raiſed the price of their commodities: But if man makes the *Ephah*, or meaſure of his ſin ſmall, God will not make the *Shekel* of his puniſhment great. The wages which the Juſtice of God payes the ſinner, ſhall not be a peny more then his ſinning-work hath deſerved.

Thirdly, In that the ſtretching out the hand againſt God, is a ſin againſt light,

Obſerve, *That ſins committed againſt light, leave the ſoul in the greateſt darkneſs.*

A ſin committed in the darkneſs of ignorance, deſerves yet to be puniſhed with darkneſs, even with everlaſting darkneſs; much more thoſe ſins which are committed, not only in, but againſt the light of knowledge. Some ſhall periſh for want of light; they cannot but periſh who live and die in the abuſe of light. Many ſhall periſh becauſe they have not ſtretched forth their hands according to the light received, to work for God; how deeply then ſhall they periſh, who in the midſt of received light, ſtretch out their hands to work wickedneſs againſt God?

Fourthly, *Eliphaz* deſcribes the wicked man ſtretching out his hand; that is, all the power which God hath truſted him with, to provoke God with.

Hence Obſerve, *That wicked men abuſe the good gifts of God, and turn them againſt God himſelf.*

They uſe their hand, properly taken, againſt God; as alſo their metaphorical hand, their whole ſtrength againſt God; they ſtretch their authority, their high places, their parts, and wits againſt God; they form weapons out of all the good gifts of God, to fight againſt God; ſuch ſinning is out of meaſure ſinful. The idle Servant was condemned, who did not employ and improve the one Talent which he had received, to his Maſters advantage; of how much ſorer condemnation ſhall they be thought worthy who employ their many Talents to their Maſters loſs, and diſadvantage?

Laſtly Obſerve, *Sin is the greateſt evil.*

That muſt needs be the greateſt evil which oppoſeth the greateſt good: God is the greateſt good, every ſin is againſt God, and ſome ſins directly oppoſe God. The Apoſtle argues the evil of ſin, from the oppoſition it makes againſt us (1 *Pet.*2.11.) *Dearly beloved, I beſeech you as ſtrangers, and pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly luſts* (he doth not ſay, which fight againſt, or diſhonour God, but) *which war againſt the ſoul:* We have no reaſon to be dallying with luſts, or to be friends with them, when we hear that our luſts war againſt us; but when we remember that our luſts war againſt God, we ſhould not only abſtain from them, but abhor them. Every thing is by ſo much the worſe, by how much that is better which it is contrary unto: There are four conſiderations which heighten the evil of ſin upon this account, that it is a ſtretching out of the hand againſt God.

Firſt, Stretch out a hand againſt God! No man ſhould dare ſo much as to lift up a word againſt God.

Secondly, Stretch out a hand againſt God! No man ſhould dare ſo much as to lift up a thought againſt God.

Thirdly, Stretch out a hand againſt God! Every man ought to fall down before God, and be well-pleaſed with whatſoever God ſaith or doth.

Fourthly, Every man is bound to ſtretch out heart and tongue, and hand, to think and ſpeak and do for God, and when all this is done, we have done but our duty, and the utmoſt that any man doth or can do in theſe, is not half his duty. How wide then is he from, how oppoſite to his duty, who ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God? *And* (as it follows in the next words.)

Strengthens himſelf againſt the Almighty.] That is, As the Original imports, who makes himſelf a ſtrong Warrier, and will ſhew his valour againſt the Almighty: So Mr. *Brougton*, *He would be valiant againſt the Almighty.* Or as another tranſlates to the letter of the Text, *He ſhews himſelf a man againſt the Almighty*; as if he had ſaid, *This wicked man ſtrains all the ſtrength he hath, to ſhew himſelf a man of his hands, or to play the man againſt God.* The Apoſtle uſeth that word, in reference to temptation, *Play the men*, or *quit your ſelves like men: Saints play the man againſt Satan; wicked ones play the man againſt God: he ſtrengthens himſelf againſt God.* But how? What doth the wicked man to ſtrengthen himſelf? Doth he gather Armies, lay in Ammunition, fortifie Cities, and Caſtles? Doth he thus ſtrengthen himſelf againſt the Almighty? All theſe are no ſtrength againſt God, and this is not the way the wicked man takes to ſtrengthen himſelf againſt God; how then? He ſtrengthens himſelf againſt God, *by hardening his heart*, by ſtopping his ears, by ſetting his face, by debauching his conſcience againſt the call and command of God. Thus,

יתגבר *Roboravit, fortē bellatorē conatur ſe præbere, virum atq; maſculū; in Deū ſe erigere & inſultare præſumpſit, Contra omnipotentē ſe virum exhibuit.* Jun. ἀνδρίζεσθε. 1 Cor. 16.13

He ſtrengthens himſelf againſt the Almighty.

Before we had the word *God*, the *ſtrong God*, here *the Almighty*, which word in the Hebrew, ſignifies not only one that hath great power: But,

שדי *Qui omnia poteſt.*

Firſt, All power; *Shaddai* is he that hath power to do all things: Omnipotency is one of the incommunicable Attributes of God: All the power of man is of his giving, but he hath not given all power to any man, no nor to all men. Only Chriſt as Mediator, or *God-man* hath all power given to him. It is not the will of God to do all that is in his power, but it is in his power to do whatſoever he will. If the wicked mans power were ſuch, what work would he make? If he could do as much as himſelf pleaſeth, he would do nothing, which ſhould pleaſe either God or good men.

Secondly, The word ſignifieth, ſuch a one as hath a ſufficiency in himſelf to do what he will; God needeth not to go out for any aid, or call in the aſſiſtance of any creature: *Shaddai* is the Original of power, he hath all his power laid up in his own compaſs, and his compaſs is infiniteneſs; he is ſelf-ſufficient. Some Princes think they have power enough to do what they will, but they muſt do it with other mens hands. Though they have a civil power or authority to command all, yet they have not a natural power, ſtrength,

Qui ſibi ſufficit & nullius ope indiget, nullis externis armis aut munimentis.

strength, or ability to execute all. God hath both these powers, he hath absolute authority to command all to serve and help him; and he hath such an absolute ability, that he needs none to serve or help him: He that made the World alone, what cannot he do alone? God calls for our help that we may have the honour of it, not that he hath any want of it.

Qui sufficit omnibus aliis.

Thirdly, *Shaddai* is he who hath not only enough for himself, but for all others; the five wise Virgins had Oyl in their Lamps, and they had enough for themselves, but they had none to spare, they could not furnish the five foolish Virgins. But the Lord God Almighty hath strength and wisdom for all that come to him, and call upon him: As he is self-sufficient, so he is all-sufficient; his Ocean can quickly fill all our empty Vessels, and his treasury supply and bear all our charges. This Almighty God, who hath power to do what he pleaseth, who hath all this power in himself, and who hath power enough to give out to all that need, and ask it of him, this is *the Almighty*, against whom the wicked man strengthens himself.

Hence Observe, First, *That the heart of man is very busie to arm against God.*

As when a people are threatned with an invasion, they then strengthen themselves, they lay in their Provisions of War, and get Forces in a readiness: even thus doth the heart of man: Man hath three usual wayes of strengthening himself against the Almighty. First, By carnal pleas and reasonings. He pretends reason for what he doth; and he strengthens himself against all that God saith, by reason: he sets up reason against that Law which is the quintessence of reason, and will not be mad but by reason, such as it is, and that is, such as he is, a mad one. These reasonings are *the strong holds* spoken of by the Apostle (*2 Cor.* 4. 5.) *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing, that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God:* As the weapons of this warfare are not carnal but spiritual, so the strong holds which these cast down, are not corporeal, but carnal; they are not made of Stones, and Timber, of Earth, or Iron, but of the subtilties, slights, excuses, subterfuges, and arguings of fleshly minded men. All which the Apostle wraps up in the latter words calling them *imaginations*, or *ratiocinations, and high things*; that is, such things as are formed in the high and proud conceits of the creature exalting it self against the sound and saving knowledge of God: Such as these:

First, *Others do so.*

Secondly, *Great ones do so.*

Thirdly, *This is the custom of the World.*

Fourthly, *If I should not do so, I should dishonor, yea and undo my self: And why should I refrain what others do, or what would be my own undoing?* No reason for any of these. Thus he strengthens himself against the Almighty: his reason (such as it is) will bear him out.

Secondly, He strengthens himself against God upon presumption of mercy from God; why may not I do thus? God hath mercy for sinners, why not for me though I sin? The Apostle cautions the *Ephesians* (*Chap.* 5. 6.) against such presumptions. *Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the Children of disobedience:* It is good to plead mercy to strengthen Faith, that sin committed shall be pardoned; but wo be to those, who plead mercy to strengthen themselves in the committing of sin.

Thirdly, Others strengthen themselves against the Almighty with hopes of worldly gain, and they incourage themselves in an evil matter, with promises of good; *We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil, cast in thy Lot among us, let us all have one Purse:* Thus *Solomon* personates the inticements of sinners (*Prov.* 1. 13, 14.)

As a gracious heart strengthens it self for God:

First, By the promises of God.

Secondly, By the experiences which himself, or others have had of Gods dispensations.

Thirdly, By considering the nature of God, how gracious, how good, how powerful, how faithful he is.

Fourthly, By remembring his relations to God; he is my Father, my King, *&c.* Shall I not venture to do or suffer for him?

Now (I say) as a gracious heart strengthens it self for the Lord, or (as the Apostle adviseth, *Ephes.* 6. 10.) *Grows strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, putting on the whole Armour of God:* So a wicked heart strengthens it self against the Lord, or grows strong against the Lord, and the power of his might, yea of his Almightiness, putting on the whole Armour of the Devil, that he may be able to stand against all the encounters of the Word, and of his own conscience. For as the Word of God, and the graces of the spirit are the Armour and weapons by which the Saints strengthen themselves against Satan; so carnal reasonings and the lusts of the flesh, are the Armour and weapons by which wicked men strengthen themselves against God.

A wicked mans chief care is to fortifie and incourage his lusts; to put warm cloaths to his sinful heart, and make it stout against God: *Sin begins with turning the heart from God, and sin ends in turning the heart against God:* The first step in sin is a neglect of God, the second step is contempt of God, the third and last is a War with God: He strengthens himself (for the Battel) against the Almighty.

Secondly Observe, *Sin runs us against reason, and causeth us to act not only wickedly, but foolishly.*

Is it not folly and madness for weakness to contend with Omnipotency? When a sinner hath strengthened himself the best he can, the very weakness of God (as the Apostle speaks) is stronger then he. *What King* (saith Christ, *Luk.* 14. 31.) *going to make War against another King, doth not first sit down, &c.* As if he had said, The Kings of the Earth are not so foolish, so brainless, and counsellless to contend with those, whom they cannot match; they will hardly venture a Battel with ten thousand against twenty thousand, they will rather make a disadvantageous Peace, then proceed in a War upon such disadvantages. The King of *Israel* reproved the challenge which the King of *Judah* sent him, by the Parable of the Thistle in *Lebanon*, aspiring to match with the Cedar in *Lebanon* (*2 King.* 14. 9.) What's a Thistle to a Cedar? Then what is man to God? See then what a reasonless, yea sensless creature man is, who will needs go out against God to Battel, though all the number he can muster, is not only as disproportionable as ten thousand to twenty thousand, as a Thistle to a Cedar, but more then one single man is to a Million of men, or then a bruised Reed to the strongest Oak. God with ease made all the power of man alone, and he, though alone, can more easily destroy it: it cost him but the speaking of a word to set it up, and he can pull it down with, yea without a word speaking. Many men have been styled, *The great, The strong, The mighty:* But no man ever durst own this style, *The Almighty:* This title of God in the Text, *The Almighty*, should make *the mightiest of men*, the *Nimrods* of the World afraid to meddle, yea to think a thought of medling with God. The absurdity of men in strengthening themselves against the Almighty, may appear yet more distinctly in three particulars.

First, He that is Almighty is stronger then All; there cannot be two Almighties. Hence the Apostle argues (*1 Cor.* 10.) *Will you provoke the Lord to anger, are you stronger then he?* It is base and cowardly to provoke those that are weaker then our selves; it may give us trouble enough to provoke those who are as strong as our selves, but it is either madness or desperateness to provoke those who are stronger then our selves. And when the Apostle demands, or rather expostulates, *Are ye stronger then he?* His question calls for this positive assertory answer, we are infinitely weaker then he; and therefore there is no prevailing against him, not only not in all things, but not in any thing. It is possible for a weak Enemy to prevail sometimes upon a mighty Enemy. The *Romans* who commanded the world for many ages, and were too strong for any Nation, did yet receive some foils; though they were never conquered, yet they were sometimes worsted, not only by surprisals and Ambuscadoes, but in the open field; and even petty Princes gave checks for a while, to some of their designs. But *El-shaddai*, the Almighty God, never received any defeat, nor is he within the possibility of a surprize.

Secondly, Not only cannot the Lord be defeated, but he cannot be endammaged; he never loſt (as we ſay) ſo much as a hair of his head, nor did he ever ſuffer ſo much as the ſcratch of a Pin. The *Romans* obtained ſome Victories with ſuch extream loſs and hazzard, that it hath been ſaid, Two or three more ſuch Victories, would utterly undo them; they who were never defeated or foiled, have yet been greatly endammaged in Battel; and their cleareſt gains have not been without ſome loſs: but the Almighty never loſt the worth of a thread, or drop of blood, in all thoſe innumerable Victories which he hath gained.

Thirdly, Man cannot ſo much as hinder or retard the deſigns of God. He tranſcends all the impediments, and throws open all the Barracadoes that are ſet in his way. *He will work and who ſhall let him?* (*Iſa.* 43. 13.) There is no putting of a bar in his way; and therefore if any ſhould anſwer the queſtion, *Who ſhall let it?* Yes, there are ſome will let it, the great men, the Nobles of the Earth, ſay no; they will let it. But they ſhall not, ſaith God, in the next Verſe (*Verſ.* 14.) *For your ſake* (ſpeaking to his people in Captivity) *I have ſent to Babylon, and have brought down all their Nobles.* The Original word for Nobles, ſignifies alſo *Bars*, the Bars of a door, or Caſtle-gate, as we put in the Margin of our Bibles; to note, that Nobles and great men ſhould be the ſtrength of a People, and a ſtop to the entrance of any evil among them: but if in ſtead of that, they prove like *Bars*, only to hinder the good of a People, and to lie croſs in all publike proceedings; then the Lord, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, brings them down, and breaks them all to pieces. *I will work, and who ſhall let it?* The Nobles, the Bars ſhall not, though Bars of Iron to Gates of Braſs.

It was ſaid in opening the words, that ſtretching out the hand is the poſture of a mad man: Conſider this, and then ſay, Is it not the maddeſt madneſs to ſtretch out the hand againſt God, or to ſtrengthen our ſelves againſt the Almighty, to oppoſe him, againſt whom it is impoſſible not only to prevail, but to do him the leaſt hurt, or give him the leaſt check or ſtop in his way? If we ſhould ſee a man ſet his ſhoulder againſt a Wall of Braſs, or blow a Feather againſt it, hoping to overturn and batter it down, would not we ſay, this man is either a Fool, who never had the uſe of reaſon, or a Mad-man, who hath loſt his reaſon? He that oppoſeth the counſels and ways of God, can no more overthrow them, then a Feather can a Wall of Braſs, or the touch of a little finger, the ſtrongeſt Tower. The Pſalmiſt repreſents us with theſe ſimple attempts (*Pſal.* 2. 1, 2, &c.) *Why do the Gentiles rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth take counſel*, &c. *Come let us break their bands and caſt their cords away from us:* What follows? *He that ſits in Heaven ſhall laugh, the Lord ſhall have them in deriſion:* He ſees how poor, how inconſiderable, theſe motions and commotions, both of the *Many* and of the *Mighty* are, to give check to that Decree of his Almightineſs, *to ſet his Son upon the holy Hill of Sion.*

Eliphaz hath not yet done with his deſcription of the impotent rage of man againſt the *Almighty God.* O ſinful vain man, whither wilt thou go? What wilt thou do next? The next Verſe tells us,

Verſ. 26. **He runs upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick Boſſes of his Bucklers.**

This 26. Verſe is an amplification, or aggravation of the madneſs of a wicked man, who, when he hath ſtrengthened himſelf againſt God (as he thinks and hopes) ſufficiently, then he *runs upon him*, &c.

Eliphaz carrieth on the metaphor of a Battel, which before it is fought, Armies are muſtered, and drawn up in view of each other; and then to ſhew their courage, they ſtretch out their hands, draw their Swords, and as ſoon as the *Signal of the Battel* is given, by ſound of Trumpet, beat of Drum, or diſcharge of Cannon, they run on upon one another; and when the Battel comes to the heat and hight, they charge home, *even upon the necks of one another, and upon the Boſſes of their Bucklers:* Here's the deſcription of a fierce charge. This wicked one is a Champion for Hell, he challenges the God of Heaven, *and runs upon him*, &c. with utmoſt violence: That's the ſum of the words, I ſhall now open them a little further.

He runs upon him, even upon his neck.

There is a difference among Interpreters about that Antecedent, ſome underſtand *God*: As if the meaning were, God runneth upon a wicked man, like a ſtrong Warrier, with incredible ſwiftneſs and irreſiſtible force, to caſt him down. The wicked man having ſtretched out his hand, and ſtrengthned himſelf againſt the Almighty, now the Almighty runs upon *his neck, even upon the thick boſſes of his Buckler*; Come ſaith God, *I will have a bout with thee, if thou dareſt, I will try it out with thee, I am not afraid of thy ſtiff neck, though it hath Iron ſinews, nor of the thick boſſes of thy Buckler, though they be of Steel.*

Quia impius manũ in Deũ extẽdit ideo currit in eũ Deus ad collum & in dẽſitate corporũ clypeorũ ejus, q. d. in ea quibus iſte maxime roboratur. Rab. Lev. Vatabl. Beza.

Thus ſome, both later Writers, and ancient Rabbins, give the ſenſe, but I rather conceive (with others) that *Eliphaz* ſtill proſecutes the ſtrange progreſs, and hightned wickedneſs of man, who having ſtrengthned himſelf, by hardning his heart againſt God, *runs upon him, even upon his neck*, &c. Taking this ſenſe, there is a different reading; thus, *He runs upon him with his neck*; we ſay, the wicked man runs upon the neck of God; they ſay, A wicked man runs upon God with his neck; their meaning is, He runs upon him audaciouſly and proudly. The neck lifted up, is a token of pride, and preſumptuous boldneſs: And to run with the neck, is to run with the neck lifted up, or ſtretched out; which is indeed the periphraſis of pride. (*Pſal.* 75. 5.) *Speak not with a ſtiff neck*; that is, with a ſpirit unwilling to ſubmit to my diſpenſations. The Prophet *Iſaiah* complains, and threatens (*Iſa.* 3. 16.) *Becauſe the Daughters of Sion are haughty, and walk with ſtretched out necks:* That is, becauſe they teſtifie the pride of their hearts, by the gate and poſtures of the body, as much as by the vain attire, and apparel of the body: *Therefore the Lord will ſmite*, &c. The Lord tells *Moſes* (*Exod.* 32. 9.) *I have ſeen this people, and behold it is a ſtiff-necked people:* He complains by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 48. 4.) *I knew that thou art obſtinate, and thy neck is an Iron ſinew: Stephen* the Proto-Martyr gives a breviate of all their rebellions, *Act.* 7. and concludes (*Verſ.* 51.) *Ye ſtiff-necked*, &c. The ſtiff neck and the proud hard heart are the ſame, all the Bible over.

Quia impius manũ in Deũ extẽdit ideo currit in eũ Deus ad collum & in dẽſitate doriorũ clypeorũ ejus, q. d. in ea quibus iſte maxime roboratur. Rab. Lev. Vatabl. Beza.

Multo aptiùs eſt ut deſcribatur adhuc ille impiorũ conatus adverſus Deũ. Pined.

Inauditam impii temeritatem deſcribere proſequitur. Bold.

Currere collo eſt collo duro & erecto; ſimilia ſunt cũ lana ponitur pro lana alba, &c. Druſ.

Thus the wicked man runneth upon God with his ſtiff, that is, his proud daring ſpirit. As before, *He ſtretched out his hand*, ſo now (which is more) *his neck* againſt God. The metaphor is taken either from Souldiers in battel, who to ſhew their valour, hold up their heads, and ſtretch out their necks, running head to head, and ſhoulder to ſhoulder, when they come to cloſe fight.

In erectione colli faſtus agnoſcitur. Merc. *Metaphora à milite Fortiſſimo in hoſtẽ impetũ faciente.*

Or, It is a metaphor taken from a Bullock *unaccuſtomed to the yoak*; who therefore will not ſubmit his neck to bear it. Wicked men are called Children of *Belial*, becauſe they endure not the yoak of obedience; when God would put his yoak upon their necks, they lift up their necks, or run upon him with their ſtiff-necks.

Metaphora à laſciviẽti & procaci vitulo. Pined.

Hence Note, *It is pride of ſpirit which cauſeth man to oppoſe God.*

The Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *God reſiſteth the proud* (*Jam.* 4.) which intimates, yea and ſpeaks out, that the proud aſſault God. As the wicked in his pride perſecutes the poor (*Pſal.* 10. 11.) So in his pride he oppoſeth God. And as he that loveth God, follows, yea runs after God to obey him; ſo he that hates God runs upon him by diſobedience. An act of ignorant diſobedience is a going from God; an act of known diſobedience, is a running upon God: Running upon God, is not only ſinning, but impudent ſinning. The Angels in Heaven cover their faces before God, daring not to behold him: Humble ſinners on earth, ſuch as the poor *Publican* (*Luke* 18.) venture not to lift up their eyes to Heaven, but proud ſinners, lift up their necks againſt God. They who care not what God ſaith to them, care as little what they do to God: And they who have no faith in God, ſeldom have any fear of him; theſe *run upon him with their necks.*

Per ſuperbiã homo maximè deo reſiſtit & ſuperbus propter præſumptionẽ ſpiritus contra Deum currere dicitur. Aquin.

But I return to our Tranſlation, *He runs upon him, even on his neck*: That is, *on the neck of God*: that is, he ſins fiercely, and fearleſly; he doth not dare God at a diſtance, or like a Coward, ſpeak great words, and vaunt of what he will do when his Adverſary is out of ſight and hearing; but he charges on boldly in his very face.

It

It is said of the Ram (by whom the Prophet means *Alexander the Great*, King of Greece, *That when he saw the He-goat* (that is, *Darius* King of *Persia*) *he ran upon him:* That is, he assaulted him speedily and boldly, overthrowing his whole estate, and so making himself sole Lord of *Asia*. The whole course of his Victories are described by this word, *He ran upon him* (Dan. 8. 6.) And when *Job* would shew how fiercely the Lord handled him, he gives it in this language, *I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder, he hath also taken me by the neck and shaken me to pieces* (*Job* 16. 12.) As God in a way of highest punishment, or chastisement, is said to take a man by the neck; so man in a way of highest sinning and rebelling, is said to take God by the neck, or to run upon his neck: He that ventures upon the neck, cares not where he ventures; and he that runs upon the neck of God, cares not on whom he ventures. And as in height of love, a friend runs and falls upon the neck of his friend; thus *Joseph* did on his Brethrens necks (*Gen.* 45. 14.) and the Father of the Prodigal (*Luke* 15. 20.) *Ran and fell upon his Sons neck, and kissed him*: So in heat of wrath, an Enemy runs upon the neck of his Enemy; and wicked men (who are enmity against God) run upon the neck of God.

Cum eo concurrens collũ invadet. Tigur.

Some conceive that this *running upon the neck of God* imports two things.

First, That the wicked man imagines himself, as having an equality of strength with God.

And secondly, That he hath authority above God, or that he is Gods better, and superior.

Erat pene genus ut Magistratus si quem suo imperio parum obedientem viderit, in collum invaderent & intorquerent. Liv. l. 4.

This latter they ground upon an old custom among Magistrates, who finding an offender contumacious, were wont to command the Officer to take him by the neck, and drag him out of the Court, to receive his punishment. But I shall not insist upon that Criticism; especially considering the incongruity of it with the next words;

Even upon the thick bosses of his buckler.

Malefactors are never permitted to come armed before the Judge to their arraignments.

בעבי נבי מגניו *In densitate altitudinũ scutorũ ejus: in crassitiem corporũ scutorum ejus.* Merc.

The word which we translate *Thick*, signifies also *Fat*, because fat is thick: Hence the Vulgar Latine translates, *He is armed with his fat neck:* But I pass that. According to our reading (which keeps closer to the Original) *Eliphaz* describes the ancient and present form of Bucklers, which as they are defensive weapons, so also offensive, and therefore have not only bosses for ornament, but (one especially in the center or middle with a sharp pike in it) for use: For as the whole Buckler secured the body against the Arrow or Sword of the Adversary, so if he pressed near, this high Boss, or Pike of the Buckler served to pierce and wound the Adversary. So that while the wicked man is said to *run upon God, even upon the thick bosses of his Buckler*; it shews the highest valiancy of a wicked man in opposing God; he fights not only afar off, but near at hand, and presses upon him, though within the reach and danger of his Weapon.

Alludit ad pervetustum præliandi modum cum clipeo, in cujus medio erat prominentia, quæ dicitur umbo, in quo erat cuspis quo cominus concertabatur. Bold.

Hence Observe, *There is no danger can keep a wicked man off from sin.*

Like the Horse in this Book (*Chap.* 39. 22.) *He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth away from the Sword; he swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, he saith among the Trumpets, Aha, aha:* Though God have a Buckler, man will come upon him; yea, though God have a Boss upon his Buckler to strike and wound him, yet on he comes. The Buckler of God is the Law or Word of God, and the Bosses of this Buckler are the threatnings and curses of the Law. Now, when man sins, notwithstanding the Law, which is the Buckler by which God saves and protects his Honour and his Holiness, his Name and Glory from the wounds which sinful man is ready to give him, then man may be said to *run upon his Buckler*. And when notwithstanding the sharp threats and terrible curses of the Law, which are the thick Bosses with which he wounds those who transgress his Law, when, I say, notwithstanding these, man adventures to sin and transgress the Law, he may rightly be said, *To run upon the thick Bosses of his Buckler*. God gave *Adam* a Law, *Of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, thou mayst not eat:* Here was the Buckler; and when he added this threat, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely dye:* Here was the Boss. God sent a word to *Pharaoh*, *Let my people go*; this was a Buckler: *If thou refuse to let them go, I will slay thy first-born*; this was the Boss. *Adam* run upon the Boss of the Buckler, so did *Pharaoh*, and so do all wilful sinners.

A wilful heart will go on in sinning, whatsoever God is speaking, or doing (*Isa.* 57. 17.) *I was wrath, and smote him, yet he went on frowardly in the way of his heart:* Neither the wrath of God, nor their own smart, stop their progress, though smitten, yet they went on, Saints sometimes go on in sinning, though God be smiting; they have run upon the Bosses of the Buckler, to the wounding both of their souls and of their outward comforts; wicked men will run upon them to the damning of their souls and bodies. Though they see, yea, feel the Bosses, judgments not only threatned, but executed, yet on they will, and (like wicked *Ahaz*) *In the time of their affliction sin more against the Lord.* This is the height of sinfulness. As it shews the truth and height of holiness in the Saints, when they will not only run to God in fair times, when men approve, but in the worst times, when men oppose; when they venture to do their duty upon the Bucklers of men, yea, upon the Bosses of the Buckler, extreamest danger: So it shews a like strength and height of wickedness, when men venture upon the Bosses of the Buckler, upon the point of the naked Sword of Gods displeasure; they will venture, let it cost what it will; though the Lord set a flaming Sword in the way of lust, as he did in the way of the Tree of Life (*Gen.* 3.) though the Lord set an Angel with a drawn Sword in the way of lust, as he did in *Balaam*'s way, when he was going to curse *Israel*, yet on they will; Till the heart be changed, neither Swords, nor Bucklers, nor Bosses, neither wrath threatened, nor executed, can cause a sinner to change his course.

This the Prophet complains of (*Isa.* 9. 13.) *The people turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts:* Their incorrigibleness under severest corrections is elegantly described by another Prophet, enumerating five special strokes or smitings, to every one of which he subjoyns, *Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*, Amos 4. 6, 7, 8, &c. *When the bellows were burnt, and the lead consumed of the fire* (that is, when all instruments and means of refining them were spent and worn out, yet their dross remained in them) *The Founder melted in vain, for the wicked* (that is, their wickednesses, or evil things) *were not plucked away* (*Jer.* 6. 29, 30.) They went into the Furnace full of dross, and they came out as full of dross as they went in. The Founder blowed his fire till he burnt his bellows, but their lusts had no scent of fire upon them; his lead (by which he seperates the dross from the metal) was all consumed and evaporated, but the dross of their corruptions wasted no more then the purest gold doth in the fire. Hence the Lord resolved to waste no more of his judgments upon them: *Why should you be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more* (Isa. 1. 5.) To revolt from God, and to run upon him; are sins of the same strain; and they who revolt from him, will not fear to *run upon his neck, even upon the thick Bosses of his Buckler.*

Thus *Eliphaz* hath given us an account, why the Lord afflicts a wicked man all his dayes; he fights against God all his dayes. We have a reason of this reason in the next words; why it is that this wicked man is such a valiant Champion against God, why he commits wickedness with so much greediness; It is, *Because he covers his face with his fatness*, &c. The fatter and fuller he grows in fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, the more hungry and sharp set he is to fulfil them. Full-feeding in sin, doth not satifie, but increase a sinful appetite.

VERS. 27, 28, 29, 30.

Because he covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks.
And he dwelleth in desolate Cities, and in Houses which no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.
He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

He shall not depart out of darkness, the flame shall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.

AS the two former Verses shewed sin the cause of those evils which befal a wicked man; so here *Eliphaz* shews us two causes of their sin.

First, Their riches.

Secondly, Their power.

The first is here described tropically by *Fatness*.

Verse 27. **He covereth his face with fatness, and maketh collops of flesh on his flanks.**

Both parts of the Verse mean the same thing; shewing the wicked mans worldly prosperity by the usual visible effects of it; a *fat face*, and *fleshy flanks*.

He covereth his face with fatness,

Exilit præ adipe oculus eorum. i. e. *exisse videntur præ genarum turore & pinguedine.* Bold.

That is, he is exceeding fat; a phrase like that (*Psal.* 73. 7.) *Their eyes stand out with fatness*: The Hebrew is, *Their eyes are gone out of their heads through fatness*: That is, They seem as gone or going out of their heads. 'Tis usual in the language of the Holy Ghost, to describe wicked men by fatness, (*Psal.* 78. 31.) *He slew the fattest of them*; that is, the worst of them, those who were most rebellious, longing after dainties, when God had given them bread from Heaven. *David* sets forth his Enemies (and so the Enemies of Christ, of whom that Psalm is a Prophesie) under this notion (*Psal.* 22. 12.) *Strong Bulls, or fat Bulls, came about me*: By the fat Bulls he means the Scribes and Pharisees, the high Priest and Rulers, who (as it were) beset Christ with continual conspiracies. More plainly (*Psal.* 17. 9, 10.) *Keep me from mine Enemies that oppress me: They are inclosed in their own fat, with their mouth they speak proudly.* Again, (*Psal.* 119. 70.) *Their heart is as fat as grease, but I delight in thy Law.*

Singulari quodam infamiæ titulo impii & iniqui in scriptura vocantur pingues.

The Scripture speaks thus, not as if fatness had any moral evil in it, or as if leanness had any moral good in it. Fatness doth not discommend us, nor doth leanness commend us to God; yea, a man lean in body may have the worst fatness, he may be proud, swoln and puft up in spirit; and a man fat in body may have the best leanness, much self-emptiness, and poverty of spirit. But because they who have abundance, and grow fat with the Creature, are tempted to forgetfulness of, and rebellion against God; and because a body overburdened with flesh and fat, renders the mind more indisposed to holy and spiritual activity; and usually they who bestow most care and cost in pampering their bodies, go with pined, starved, and lean souls; therefore fatness bears ill in Scripture.

Hoc Ægyptii inusre videbantur, dum sacerdotes Isiaci solebant dare Api Bovi quem colebant potũ ex quodam puteo non autem ex Nilo, quia ejus aqua potu creditur pinguedinem carnisque magnum facere incrementũ. Plutarch. Tract. de Iside, &c.

It is observed by *Plutarch*, that the Egyptian Priests gave their *Apis* (a Deity which they worshipped in the form of an Oxe) the water of a Pit, or Well, not the water of *Nilus*, to drink; the reason was (not as some assign it, because they thought those waters were prophaned by the Crocodile, for the Egyptians had that River in high veneration, but) because the waters of *Nilus* were fatning, nourishing waters; therefore their *Apis*, whom they adored as a God, and from whom they expected continual help, must not drink of it, lest the grosness of his flesh should disable him for their assistance. Fat corpulent men are, in common experience, unweildy, sleepy, and (comparatively) unfit for action. It was a custom, as my Author reports, among the ancient *Spaniards* and *Gaules*, to keep a constant measure, which if a Woman (she not being with Child) did exceed in the compass of her waste, she fell under disgrace, and lost much of her reputation, by having got so much of fat and flesh about her: And doubtless it had somewhat of disrepute in it, in *Job*'s time, else *Eliphaz* (a man of experience) had not given this as a piece of a wicked mans description. *He covereth his face with fatness.*

Ibevi etiam & Galli antiquitus zonæ mensuram habebant, quam si mulier, quæ gravida non esset capere non posset probro magno afficiebatur. Alex. ab Alex. l. 2. c. 25

And maketh collops of flesh upon his flanks.

Which Master *Broughton* renders thus, *And maketh plaits upon the paunch.* Mr. *Calvin* translates it thus, *He hath larded his guts.*

Est descriptio summæ abundantiæ. Jun.

This latter clause of the Verse is of the same intendment with the former: And that which both reprove as sinful, is the intentness of mans spirit about the pampering of his flesh.

He covereth his face with fatness, he makes collops, &c.

He doth not say, Because he is fat, but because he covers his face with fatness, *&c.* That is, he sets his heart upon his belly, and makes it his business to pamper his body. He is active, yea, full of activity in getting this cover, or mask of fatness upon his face; and this mask discovers the naughtiness of his heart.

Hence Observe, *That it is a sign of an evil heart, or a lean soul, to intend the flesh, or to study the satisfying of the bodily appetite.*

A carnal man gives himself to deliciousness; his greatest labour is about that, for which Christ forbids our labour, *The meat that perisheth* (John. 6. 27.) This covering of our selves with fatness, and making collops of fat, the Apostle reproves in those, *Whose God was their belly* (Phil. 3. 19.) and in those *who served not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly* (Rom. 16. 18.) They who serve their belly, as they should serve God, make a god of it; and they who serve their belly at all, do not serve Christ at all. We may provide for the belly, but we must not serve it; and they who do so, deserve rather to be called Epicures then Christians. That's sinful fatness which is got upon terms of slavery, or service to the belly; yea, a man that is intentive upon that question, *What shall I eat?* and careful how to feed his flesh, though he do not grow fat by it; yet he shews himself full of sin by it. The design of such is for the flesh, though their flesh do not thrive under that design. As a man may be very covetous though he continue poor and lean in purse; so a man may be very luxurious, and a great servant to *Bacchus*, and Belly-chear, though he continue lean and poor in body.

The blessing of God fattens some, and such fat ones bless God. *David* propheses, that when *The Kingdom shall be the Lords, and he the Governor among the Nations* (which is very parallel with what those great voices said after the seventh Angel had sounded, *Revel.* 11. 15.) *The Kingdoms of this World are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever*; and when this shall be, saith *David* (*Psal.* 22. 30.) *Then all they that be fat upon the earth, shall eat, and worship*; that is, the great ones shall submit to Christ; his Kingdom shall be inlarged, and not only the poor, who are described in the latter part of that Verse in the Psalm, under the name and notion of such, *as go down to the dust*, but the rich shall receive the Gospel. Kings and Queens, persons of authority and wealth, shall come to the participation of the grace of Christ (*Isa.* 60. 3, 10.) They who have their bellies full of the meat that perisheth, shall have their souls full of that meat which endures to everlasting life. (*Psal.* 45. 12.) *The rich among the people*: What people? The first words of the Verse tells us, he means the *Tyrians*, who were a wonderful rich people (*Isa.* 23. 8. *Ezek.* 27.) and the *Tyrians* are here put, by a Synechdoche, for all other Heathens; for though *Tyre* were a City in the Tribe of *Aser* (*Josh.* 19. 29.) yet it was at that time possessed by Heathens. Now, saith the Psalmist, *The rich among these people shall intreat thy favour*: That is, the Churches favour. God will work their hearts to an earnest desire of admission into the society of the Saints, and to live under a professed subjection to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who have abounded in worldly possessions, and hold the World in subjection to their power: *These rich and fat ones among the people shall intreat thy favour.* This propheste was in part fulfilled (*Mark* 3. 8.) where we read of great multitudes from *Tyre* and *Sidon* flocking after Christ: So that it is not riches and fatness precisely considered, but the intending of our skin, or our studiousness to fill our selves with earthly delicates, which shews we have weak appetites to, or rather a loathing of the things of Heaven.

Secondly, This covering the face with fat, is here presented by *Eliphaz* as a cause or occasion at least of the wicked mans arming himself against God.

Bonorum abundantia vitiorum omnium materiam subministrat.

Hence Observe, *That an evil heart turns the blessing of God into rebellion against him*

The *Jews* were thus charged (*Deut.* 32. 15.) Jesurun *waxed*

waxed fat, and kicked. The Lord complains of this, as of a ſin, which he ſcarce knew how to pardon (*Jer.* 5. 7.) *How ſhall I pardon thee for this? Thy Children have forſaken me*, &c. *When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery, and aſſembled themſelves by troops in the harlots houſes.* Thoſe are great ſins indeed, which put the Lord (whoſe title is, *The God pardoning ſin*, and *ready to forgive*) into a query about their pardon and forgiveneſs. Such kind of ſinning made *Jeruſalem* a Siſter to *Sodom*; that is, as like *Sodom*, yea, and *Samaria* too, as if they had been one Mothers Daughters, or as if they had been of one and the ſelf-ſame blood and ſtock (*Ezek.* 16. 49.) *Behold this was the iniquity of thy ſiſter* Sodom, *pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her, and in her Daughters:* Plenty of the Creature, and plenty of ſin, went together; and whereas *Jeruſalem* ſhould have ſerved God, ſhe ſerved her luſts in the abundance of all things. We have a ſaying, when men are lifted up upon the enjoyment of outward good things (in alluſion to Beaſts) *Provender pricks them.* They act more like beaſts then men, who kick againſt God, who feeds them, and turn his bread of bleſſings into the ſtones of diſobedience. What outward good thing will not an evil heart abuſe, and wax wanton with, when it is ſo apt to abuſe ſpiritual things, and to turn *the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs*; that is, to grow wanton and laſcivious, becauſe God is gracious?

Thirdly Obſerve, *They take little care for their ſouls, who take overmuch for their bodies.*

They who deſire to pleaſe appetite, cannot endeavour to pleaſe God. When the Apoſtle exhorts to put on the Lord Jeſus, he dehorts from providing for the fleſh (*Rom.* 13. 14.) *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof:* As if he had ſaid, Unleſs you forbear providing for luſts, you will have little leaſure, and leſs deſire to put on Chriſt. (*Epheſ.* 5. 18.) *Be not drunk with wine wherein is exceſs* (that is, be not inordinate in the uſe of the creature) *but be filled with the ſpirit:* As if he had ſaid, *You will never be filled with the Spirit, if overfilled with wine; if you give up your ſelves to ſatisfie carnal appetite, you will not have any appetite at all to ſpirituals.* There is an inward gluttony and drunkenneſs, when the thoughts run upon dainty diſhes, and full Cups, or when men chew their meat and wine in their thoughts, before they eat or drink. Now as well they (or rather they more) who are inwardly drunken with exceſſive deſires of wine, as they who are viſibly drunken with the exceſſive taking down of wine, are far enough either from the deſire or attainment of a filling with the Spirit. The ſpirit of the Buttery, and the Spirit of God, have no more agreement then the fleſh and the Spirit; yea, that ſpirit is the groſſeſt part of ſinful fleſh, and therefore can neither take care for, nor bear with, the things of the ſpirit. So far of the firſt cauſe of the wicked mans exceſſive ſinning; his exceſs in the uſe of the Creature, ſet forth by the ordinary effect of it, *Fatneſs*, *He covereth his face with fatneſs:* The ſecond follows.

Verſe 28. He dwelleth in deſolate Cities, and in houſes wherein no man inhabiteth, which are ready to become heaps.

This Verſe ſhews a ſecond cauſe of the wicked mans fierceneſs againſt God, *His power over men*; which is deſcribed (as the former) by the effect of it, *He hath made Cities deſolate.* It requires much power to overthrow whole Cities; that which is ſtrong cannot be deſtroyed without ſtrength; ſuch was the power of the man whom *Eliphaz* deſcribes, ſuch his ſtrength: He ſubdued ſtrong Cities, he conquered men, and he thought he could conquer God too. But though to deſtroy and pull down intimate ſtrength, yet to build and ſet up Cities requires greater ſtrength.

This ſtrength alſo is here aſcribed to the wicked man, who,

Firſt, Either comes to Cities already overthrown, or overthrows Cities.

And then ſecondly, builds the Cities which are overthrown, that himſelf may dwell in them. He will not dwell in Cities built to his hand, or in Palaces ready made, but he will make goodly Palaces out of the deſolate places; a City waſted by War, by Fire, and Sword, ſhall revive out of the rubbiſh, and recover to its ancient ſplendor, if he undertake it.

Maſter *Broughton* renders clearly to this ſence, *Though he makes dwellings of Cities ruinated, of houſes undwelt, which were coming to heaps of ſtone:* Here's the compleatneſs of his worldly power. He makes flouriſhing Cities deſolate, and deſolate Cities flouriſh; he dwells in deſolate Cities, in Houſes where no man inhabiteth; that is, in Cities which he himſelf once made deſolate (having caſt out their proper Inhabitants) but hath now re-edified and enlarged for his own uſe and honour.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That a wicked man cares not whom he ruines, ſo he may raiſe himſelf.*

Down with Kingdoms, down with Cities, down with all, ſo he may ſtand, or have his own ends.

Secondly Obſerve, (which is the ſcope of *Eliphaz*) *A man that hath great power among men, begins to think himſelf ſtrong enough for God alſo.*

He made earthly Cities deſolate, and none was able to reſiſt him, therefore he hopes to make Heaven deſolate, and diſturb the Throne of God; *He runs upon his neck*, &c.

Again, Some expound this Verſe not of the cauſe of this mans ſin, but of the puniſhment of his ſin; *He dwells in deſolate Cities, in places where no man dwelt:* That is, He ſhall dwell alone, he ſhall either refuſe, or be refuſed by all good company, For this miſerable ſolitude may ariſe two wayes.

Terrores de quibus nuper dictum eſt, non patiuntur impium in facemiliari hominum conſortio vivere, ideo deſolatorium urbium ruinas & latibula quærit. Pined.

Firſt, From trouble of mind; he having oppreſſed others, ſhall find himſelf at laſt ſo oppreſſed with the witneſs of his own conſcience, that to avoid it, he retires into deſolate places, into waſte Wilderneſſes, into old ruinous buildings, where none dwell but the *Owl, and the Screech-owl*, (Iſa. 34.) *He that finds not his own conſcience good company, never finds any.*

Secondly, This wicked man is caſt out from the company of men, he hath bern a ſcourge to many, and now all are a ſcourge to him. *Tyranny grows intolerable to mankind* (Dan. 4. 33.) *Nebuchadnezzar* was the greateſt Monarch in the world, and a proud Tyrant; at laſt he was turned out to graſs: his Nobles, Lords, and Subjects forſook him, and he who ruled men, lived among beaſts; or as the ſame Propheſie of *Daniel* reports it (*Chap.* 5. 20.) *When his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was depoſed, or* (as the Chalde) *made to come down from his Kingly Throne, and they took his glory from him, and he was driven from the ſons of men*, &c. Which we may anſwer with *Job*'s Text, *He was forced to dwell in deſolate places.*

Hujuſmodi tyranni ejiciuntur in exilium.

The Roman Story tells us of *Nero*, that perceiving himſelf a loſt man, by the revolt of ſome Provinces, and the general complaint of the people againſt his inſolent Government, he wandered up and down, and crept firſt into a Thicket, by and by into a Cave with *Sporus* his filthy Favorite, and at laſt when he heard of the ſentence of death given againſt him by the Senate, and that their Officers were haſting to attach him, he, with a little help of one of his Servants, cut his own Throat.

Thirdly, Others interpret theſe words, as noting the wicked mans worldly decay; he ſhall not have a houſe to put his head in: His ſtrong Cities and goodly Palaces, ſhall go to ruine; or he ſhall be forced to dwell in a ruinous houſe, a houſe ready to fall about his ears, who before lived in ceiled houſes; he hath pulled down other mens houſes, and now he dwells in houſes ready to fall down; he impoveriſht others, and now himſelf is turned out among the poor.

Hence Obſerve, *That God often makes the puniſhment of man ſuitable to his ſin.*

The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth, the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands (Pſal. 9. 16.) The judgments of God are alwayes juſt, and ſometimes their juſtice is viſible. As the wicked feel them, ſo all may ſee them, and ſay, *Righteous art thou, O Lord.* The Prophet deſcribes this retaliation of Divine judgment (*Iſa.* 5. 8, 9.) *Woe to them that add houſe to houſe, and lay field to field, till there be no place* (that is, no place for others to dwell in) *that they may be placed in the midſt of the earth:*

What is the danger of this? *In mine ear ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, of a truth, many houſes ſhall be deſolate, many and fair without Inhabitants*: Here is deſolation, the reward of deſolation; and as they took bread from others, and pull'd the cup from their mouthes, ſo their bread ſhall be taken away, and their cup left empty. Thus it follows in the Prophet (*Verſ.* 10.) *Yea, ten Akers of Vineyard ſhall yield one Bath*: A Bath was a meaſure among the *Jews* of Liquids, containing, as is conceived, about eight Gallons: So that when he ſaith, *Ten Akers of Vineyard ſhall yield one Bath*; the meaning is, there ſhall be a great ſcarcity of Wine: An Aker of Vineyard ſhould not yield a Gallon of Wine; that's a miſerable Vintage. *And the ſeed of an Homer, ſhall yield an Ephah*: An Homer was a meaſure for dry things, containing ten Ephahs: So that when it is ſaid, *The ſeed of a Homer ſhall yield an Ephah*, the meaning is, they ſhall reap but the tenth part of the ſeed ſown, which is a miſerable Harveſt, and the higheſt threat of enſuing Famine. Thus the Lord puniſhed them as they had ſinned; they ſtarved the poor, and God threatens to ſtarve them. Hunger never pinches ſo terribly, as when it is a puniſhment ſent at the cry of the hungry.

Again (*Iſa.* 33. 1.) *When thou ſhalt ceaſe to deal treacherouſly, then they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee*: When the deceiver is deceived, and the treacherous dealer ruined by treacherous dealing men, then the truth and faithfulneſs of God are eminently exalted. And as it is in puniſhments, ſo often in rewards, God doth us good in the ſame way wherein we have done good. The Midwives ſaved the Males of the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, and by this act of pitty built the houſe of *Iſrael*, which the Lord took ſo well at their hands, *That he built their houſes, or made their houſes flouriſh* (Exod. 1. 21.) As the deſtroyer ſhall be deſtroyed, ſo the builder ſhall be built; mercy loves to be exact as well as judgment.

Again, *Eliphaz* tells us of Cities and Houſes ready to become heaps.

Hence Note, *The moſt flouriſhing Cities, the ſtrongeſt Structures in the World, are ſubject to ruine.*

Art cannot prevent the decayes of Nature, much leſs the Decrees of Divine Juſtice. Material *Jeruſalem* was threatened, that one ſtone ſhould not be left upon another, which ſhould not be caſt down; the event anſwered that prediction. Myſtical *Babylon* is under a more dreadful doom, and the event will in due time anſwer that prediction. *Babylon* is ready to become heaps, and one ſtone ſhall not be left upon another: There is no cement can hold that together, to which God ſaith, *Fall.*

Eliphaz having ſhewed the cauſes of the wicked mans impudent oppoſition againſt God, and (according to the two latter Expoſitions of this Verſe) ſome part of his puniſhment, proceeds further to ſhew his puniſhment.

Verſe 29. **He ſhall not be rich, neither ſhall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.**

Verſe 30. **He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs, the flame ſhall dry up his branch, and by the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away.**

Here is compleat miſery in externals. The judgment is laid down two wayes.

Firſt, Negatively.

And ſecondly, Affirmatively.

Negatively, what the wicked man ſhall not be, what he ſhall not attain to; and then affirmatively, what the wicked man ſhall be, or what ſhall come upon him; the Negative part hath a gradation of four ſteps.

The firſt is this, *He ſhall not be rich.*

The ſecond is, *His ſubſtance ſhall not continue.*

The third is, *He ſhall not prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.*

The fourth is this, *He ſhall not depart out of darkneſs.*

Thoſe are the Negative parts of his puniſhments, the Affirmative are two.

Firſt, *The flame ſhall dry up his branch.*

Secondly, *By the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away.*

He ſhall not be rich.

The words ſeem to carry an oppoſition all along to the wicked mans purpoſes and projects. The wicked man ſaith in his heart, if not with his mouth, *He will be rich*; to which God anſwers, *He ſhall not be rich.* The Apoſtle (*1 Tim.* 6. 9.) ſpeaks of ſuch a ſort of *Rich Will-bees, They that will be rich fall into temptation*, &c. When a man comes to this height of reſolvedneſs, He will be rich whatever comes of it, or whoever ſtands in his way; he will be rich and ask no mans leave, no nor Gods leave, then God riſes to his high reſolves, *He ſhall not be rich*: Let it come to tryal whoſe word ſhall ſtand, his, or mine: And when once this word is gone out of Gods mouth, then he, and all his trees which ſhould bear him that golden fruit, are blaſted and mildew'd. Then, though he lay the ſtrongeſt projects for riches, yet he ſhall not be rich, though he ſweat and toil to be rich, though he dig deep into the ground, and turn every ſtone above ground, to find riches, yet he ſhall not be rich; though he cares not whom he makes poor, yea, though himſelf live poorly all his dayes, that he may dye rich, yet he ſhall not be rich.

Hence Obſerve, *It is not in the power of man to get riches.*

A man may make it his deſign to be rich, but he cannot make himſelf rich. *Moſes* (*Deut.* 8. 18.) gives it in charge to the people of *Iſrael, Thou ſhalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth*, &c. Man is very apt to forget the Author, not only of his ſpiritual, but of his temporal good things, and is readier to aſcribe his riches to his own getting, then to Gods giving. Temporal good things lye more level to the power of Nature, and humane Induſtry, then ſpirituals; yet we can no more attain temporals then ſpirituals without the power of God. Chriſt teacheth us, that our care can no more add a penny to our eſtate, then *a cubit to our ſtature* (*Matth.* 6. 27.) How often have we ſeen experience ſealing to this truth? Many have endeavoured after, and reacht at riches, in good and hopeful; in fair and probable wayes, yet they have not reacht to riches. Others have ſtriven for riches in baſe and unwarrantable, in unjuſt and ſinful wayes, yet they could never get a ſtep beyond beggery.

Ex quocunque piſcatu non evadet ditior.

The Lord gives them a ſtop, and ſaith, *Ye ſhall not be rich*; evil men do not alwayes thrive; *Peter*, a good man, fiſhed all night, but got nothing, till Chriſt bid him put down the Net. Some have caſt their Net in all ſorts of waters, yet could never catch the great fiſh of worldly wealth. It is the bleſſing of God that makes good men rich; and it is a permiſſion from God that makes evil men rich. Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſe of this life, and of that which is to come, yet every godly man meets not with the profit of this life; ungodlineſs is profitable for nothing, having neither the promiſe of this life, nor of that which is to come, yet ſome ungodly men meet with the profit of this life. Though *ſinners are never on the thriving hand, yet they often thrive in their way*; and though Saints are ever on the thriving ſide, yet they do not alwayes thrive in their way: Neither the one ſort nor the other thrives, if the Lord ſaith, *They ſhall not be rich*: When he ſaith ſo to the Saints, it is to humble them; but when he ſaith ſo to a wicked man, it is to puniſh him; *He ſhall not be rich*, that's the firſt ſtep of his miſery.

But ſuppoſe he get riches, yet he cannot keep them; *The wages which he earns is put into a bag with holes, or pierced through, all's gone* (Hag. 1. 6.) Carnal men are like leaking Veſſels to the Word of God, they (as the Apoſtle cautions Believers, leſt at any time they ſhould, *Heb.* 2. 1.) alwayes let it run out. Now as they let out what they have heard of the Word of God; ſo God lets out what they have got of the World: He makes all the Veſſels which hold their earthly ſubſtance leaky: So it follows,

Neither ſhall his ſubſtance continue.

This is his ſecond woe: The word which we render *Subſtance*, ſignifies alſo Power, and Strength; becauſe riches impower and ſtrengthen men to do great things; but how ſtrong and ſubſtantial ſoever they are in the opinion of men, their time is but ſhort, *They ſhall not continue*; and this ariſeth two wayes.

חיל *rebur, pro opibus ſæpe ſumitur. Latine copias poſſis vertere.* Merc.

Firſt,

Summis negatum est stare diu.

First, From the nature of the things of the World, which are all frail and momentary; and though we call them *Substance*, yet indeed they are but a *Shadow*, there is no continuance in them.

Secondly, This ariseth from the judgment and curse of God, both upon such rich men, and upon their riches; if the Lord doth not stop them from getting riches, yet he can speak a word, and blast all that they have gotten.

Hence Note, *That the most substantial of earthly things are of small or no continuance.*

More particularly.

That ill gotten goods are not lasting, or long-lived.

Sometimes they melt away, and dye in the same hands that got them; they alwayes dye and melt away in some of their hands, for whom they were gotten. There is no tack in their estate, in whom there is no Justice. That which is gathered by the unrighteousness of man, shall be scattered by the wrath of God. As the little which a righteous man hath is better, so it is surer then the great riches of many wicked. Sin makes no provision at all for the soul; and it makes very ill provision for the body. The title by which we hold worldly things, is more considerable then worldly things themselves. To hold *in Capite* from Christ is as the purest so the strongest Tenure: Only he who continues the same for ever, and changes not, can give continuance to that which is changeable.

But suppose the wicked mans substance doth continue long for bulk and matter, yet the beauty and comfort of it shall not continue for a moment; which is the third step of this Gradation.

Neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

Riches are one thing, the perfection of riches is another; as in spiritual things there is the substance of them, and the perfection of them; so in temporals: The word signifies, the consummation of any thing, or the bringing it to its perfective end (*Isa.* 33. 1.) *When thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee:* The Prophet doth not mean it of making an end by way of cessation, as if hand, heart, or tongue, did cease dealing treacherously (for so wicked men will never make an end of wickedness, if they might have an eternity to act evil in, they would act it eternally) but he means it of making an end by way of consummation; as if he had said, When they are come to a full stature in treachery, and have compleated their conspiracies against goodness, and good men, then they shall be dealt with in their kind, and as they best deserve. Now as a wicked man would compleat his sin, and often reaches the very perfection of it, so he would compleat his estate, and doth sometimes reach to the perfection of it. The wicked man would be perfectly rich, he is not satisfied to have a compleat estate, or enough for meat, drink, and cloathing, he must have a great estate, enough for pride, pomp, and glory; Manna pleases him not, he must have Quails, superfluities as well as necessaries: He thinks a little too much in spirituals, but a great deal is not enough for him in temporals: His internal imperfections trouble him not, his aim is at perfection in externals. That is perfect only in a strict sence, to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away: The wicked man would attain to such perfection, but he cannot; his own heart forbids the first, for how much soever he hath, he would have more added to it; he saith not, it is enough, though it be too much; God forbids the latter, his portion shall be abated, or (in the words of the Text) *He shall not prolong the perfection thereof.*

מגלם *perfectio eorum a* גלה *perfecit, alii* Minlam *unicam, dictionem perinde ac si duæ essent exponunt, quasi* מן להם *ex eo quod est illorum, i.e. res illorum non extendentur per terram.* Merc.

The utmost perfection he can attain unto, is but the shadow of perfection; and though shadows towards the setting of the Sun grow longer and longer, yet no shadow can be prolonged, they quickly pass and fly away. *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 12. 3.) *A man shall not be established in wickedness, but the root of the righteous shall continue:* A wicked man may be set in the ground, but he hath no root in the ground: *Their stock shall not take root in the earth, and he* (that is, God) *shall blow upon them, and they shall wither* (Isa. 40. 24.) A tree not rooted falls by a puff of wind, or withers while it stands. The tree of a wicked man may have a great body, but he hath no good root, he is not rooted in Christ, he hath no hold of the Covenant, therefore his perfection cannot continue.

Nec mittes in terra radicem ejus. Vulg.

Hence Observe, *That as there is no worldly perfection of any long continuance, so the perfection of wicked men is of shortest continuance.*

Nubecula est, cito transibit.

Athanasius said of *Julian* the Apostate, when he was in the height, in the very Zenith and perfection of earthly felicity, having ascended the Impereal Throne, and given the Law to a great part of the then known World, *He is but a little Cloud, he will soon vanish.* And indeed his glory and the perfection of it did not continue, for when he was but thirty years old, in that prime of his natural course and constitution, he was cut off; his power could not protect his person, nor prolong his perfection on the earth.

David professeth, as from his own experience (*Psal.* 119. 96.) *I have seen an end of all perfection:* The term of universality, *All*, doth not compass in every kind of perfection, but all the perfections of one kind. The end of Divine perfections cannot be seen; when we have seen the most of them, there is more of them unseen; but the end of all humane perfections may be seen. There is a twofold sight.

First, Of the eye.

Secondly of the understanding.

David's eye had seen the end of many humane perfections, and his understanding saw the end of them all; he had seen some ending, and he saw all must end. Never dream of prolonging your perfection here. No wordly thing can continue long, for the World it self shall not continue long: If the Scaffold or Stage upon which these perfections are shewed, or acted, must fall, the perfections themselves cannot stand. There have been but few that ever advanced so far as to an earthly perfection; but there was never any one that prolonged his perfection on the Earth. *Adam* did not continue in that created perfection, which had no imperfection in it; How then shall any of his Children continue in an imperfect (such is their best-) perfection.

As *Eliphaz* hath shewed us the wicked mans misery in the not prolonging of his perfection; so now he shews us a further degree of it, by the prolonging of his affliction.

Verse 30. **He shall not depart out of darkness.**

Here is the fourth step of this Gradation. The wicked mans misery in misery: He cannot stay in a good, nor get out of an ill estate. *Eliphaz* seems to take off an Objection, for some might say, *What if the wicked man do not grow rich for the present? What if his substance doth not continue? What if he prolong not his perfections, or fall from the top-stair of his high condition? Yet we hope at last he may out-grow all this, and get riches which he had not, or regain those which he had?* No saith *Eliphaz*, Either the wicked man shall not rise to riches, or if he rise he shall fall, and when once he is fallen, he shall rise no more; either he shall not get into the light, or if he do, he shall be soon overtaken with darkness; and when once he is in the dark, he shall come out no more, *He shall not depart out of darkness.*

When the wicked man is in the light, he sings, *Loth to depart*, but he must; and when he is cast into darkness, ness, he cryes, *Haste to depart*, but he cannot: The wicked man, like the evil Angels, is held in chains of darkness, which he is neither able to break off, nor to file off: He hath said to God, who is light (yea, because he is light) *Depart from me*; and God saith to him, *Thou shalt not depart out of darkness.*

There is a twofold darkness.

First, Inward.

Secondly, Outward.

Both metaphorical. By darkness some understand inward trouble, or grief of spirit; others expound it of outward troubles and calamities upon his estate: 'Tis true of both, for he shall depart neither out of the one nor the other; but rather take it here for outward trouble; and then, *Not to depart out of darkness*, imports abiding misery, irrecoverable

irrecoverable sickness, decayes and losses, which shall never be repaired.

Hence Note, *Wicked men falling into trouble, shall not know the mercy of a resurrection out of trouble.*

The just man falleth seven times, and riseth again (Prov. 24. 16.) The just man is subject to take falls of two sorts, and both of them *Seven times*; that is, often.

First, He falls into sin.

Secondly, He falls into trouble.

He riseth from both these falls: He riseth from the first by repentance; he riseth from the second by deliverance. *Solomon*'s Text is to be understood of this second sort of falls, and may therefore be expounded by the direct words of *David*, (Psal. 34. 19.) *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of them all:* The righteous have as many resurrections as falls, *But* (as *Solomon* makes the Antithesis in the place fore-cited) *the wicked shall fall into mischief. Solomon* doth not tell us expressly, what the just man falls into, but he tells us he shall rise again: He tells us expressly what the wicked man shall fall into, but he doth not tell us, that he shall rise again; nay, he tells us implicitely, that he shall never rise again. He that riseth again did not fall into mischief, how great soever the evil was which he fell into; and he that doth not rise again fell into mischief, how little soever the evil was which he fell into. Nothing makes our falling either into sin, or trouble, *a mischief to us*, but our continuing in it. *He goes far* (we say in our Proverb) *who never returns*; he falls low, who never riseth; and he stayes long in darkness, who never departs out of it. Darkness is the portion of a wicked man, and he shall never depart out of darkness; neither out of that darkness of sin, nor misery; he hath no desire to depart out of the former, and he hath no promise to depart out of the latter. Thus we have seen the negative punishment of a wicked man, what he shall not be, what he shall not receive; this is enough to make him miserable, but positive evil will make him outright miserable. This *Eliphaz* prosecutes in the next words.

The flame shall dry up his branches.

The flame is taken two wayes: Either,

First, For the wrath of God which goeth forth, causing judgment to take hold of sinners: Or,

Secondly, For the judgment it self, which is an effect of his wrath.

The wrath of God burneth against the wicked as a flame, and then judgments burn up the wicked; there is no heat to the heat of Divine wrath; neither is there any thing punitively hot, till Divine wrath heats it.

Sunt qui ejus liberos intelligunt; sed nos allegoricè intelligimus omnem ejus splendorem, opes, &c. Merc.

The flame shall dry up his branches: Some by his *branches* understand his Children, they shall dye; Children are branches, they stand, saith the Psalmist, like Olive plants, or branches, round about the Table of a man fearing God: Such branches *Job* had, but they were dryed up, and probably *Eliphaz* might give him a rub upon that soar in this expression.

Flamma exurens, in Heb est vehementissimi supplicii atque adeo aterni symbolum. Duci videtur translatio à more hostium vastantium regionem aliquam qui segetes & arbores succendunt.

Secondly, Others by *branches* understand *His followers and flatterers*, who live upon him as branches upon a Tree; but to pass these restrained Interpretations: I conceive we may take the Branch in general, for all that belongs to a wicked man, his Children, his Friends, his Followers, his Flatterers, his Honour, his Riches, his Power; all these look green, and are his beautiful branches; and all these the flame dryeth up. The Prophet complains (*Joel* 1. 19.) *O Lord to thee will I cry, for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burnt all the trees of the field:* The flame, of which he cryes out, and which did not only dry the branches, but devour the Trees of the Field, was the extream heat of the Sun; which as it usually sends out refreshing beams, so when God is angry, it can send out scorching flames, and those beams, which tempered with showers of rain, nourish the Earth, in the long withholding of rain scorch the Earth. And what then befel the Trees properly taken, and their branches, doth often befal both Trees and branches taken in the metaphorical sence, as here in the Text, a flame dryes them up. A godly man is compared to a Tree flourishing and *growing by the water side*; wicked men are compared sometimes to flourishing Trees, but they grow *by the fire side: The flame dryes up their branches.*

Hence Note, First, *The wrath of God is a drying, yea, a devouring flame; the flame of Gods displeasure puts all into a flame.*

That flame will burn up branches, how goodly, how strong, how high soever they are grown; though as strong as the Oaks of *Bashan*, though as high as the Cedars in *Lebanon*, yet this flame will dry them up. The Prophet *Zechariah* speaks this point, while he thus bespeaks *Lebanon* (*Zech.* 11. 1.) *Open thy doors, O* Lebanon, *that the fire may devour thy Cedars:* 'Tis interpreted as a Propheste of the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and *Judea*, by the Roman power; as Christ after threatened them for rejecting him and his Counsel: The words of the Prophet may be understood two wayes, either literally, for the destruction of that Forrest of *Lebanon*, which the *Romans* cut down for the service of their Siege against *Jerusalem*; or figuratively, for the flourishing estate of *Jerusalem*, whose branches, though like the branches of the Cedars in *Lebanon*, were dryed up by the flame of that dreadful War. In which stile and figure the Prophet *Isaiah* denounceth the judgments of God (*Chap.* 2. 12, 13.) *The day of the Lord shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty*, &c. *And upon all the Cedars of* Lebanon. And the Prophet *Ezekiel* puts forth this Riddle and Parable (*Chap.* 17. 3.) *Thus saith the Lord, A great Eagle* (that is, *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*) *with great wings, long winged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came into* Lebanon (that is, unto *Judea* and *Jerusalem*) *and took the highest branch of the Cedar*; namely, *Jehojakim* the King of *Judah*, and carried him captive to *Babylon.*

The Lord can make any affliction a consumption to the most beautiful branches of a sinful people, or person.

Whatsoever he useth as an instrument of his indignation, is his flame: In this sence, the very waters which drowned the old World, were the fire and flame of God: He can by poverty, as by a flame, consume and dry up riches; by disgrace, as by a flame, consume and dry up honour; by sickness, as by a flame, consume and dry up health; God hath special flames for every special branch, nothing can continue to do us good, when God gives Warrant or Commission to any of his flames to scorch and consume it. *The flame shall burn up his branch,*

And by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.

We have the flame of God in the former clause, and the breath of his mouth in this: Some Interpreters conceive that *Eliphaz* mentions these two, The flame and the breath, purposely to put *Job* in mind what God had done to him; for we read in the first Chapter of this Book, of the flame of God, a fire from Heaven consuming that branch, his flocks of Sheep, and *a breath from God*, namely, a mighty strong wind, destroying a more precious branch, his flock of Children: *Eliphaz* cloaths this discourse in such terms as might easily remind and represent to *Job*, what God had done to him, in the day of his calamity.

And by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.] There is yet a difference among Expositors about the Antecedent to *his: His mouth*; Whose mouth? Most understand it, of the breath of Gods mouth, as hath been hinted already: Some expound it of the breath of the wicked mans own mouth: I shall touch upon both.

First, *By the breath of Gods mouth he shall go away:* The breath of God may be taken two wayes.

Either first (as the flame before) for his anger, which is often expressed by puffing the breath.

Secondly, It may be taken for the decree, or determination of God.

Both these wayes a wicked man goes away by the breath of God; first, by the anger of God; if God do but breath angerly upon him, he is blasted and gone, *His glory and greatness languish before the least puff of Divine displeasure:* God needs not make great preparations of Armies, or Forces, to contend with wicked men; he needs not raise Mounts and Batteries, to overthrow their best Fortifications of Riches and Honour: *The Channels of waters were seen* (saith *David*, Psal. 18. 15.) *and the foundations of the World*

World were diſcovered, at thy rebuke O Lord, at the blaſt of the breath of thy noſtrils. The Prophet tells thoſe, who neglected to build the Houſe of the Lord (*Hag.* 1.9.) *Ye looked for much, but lo it came to little, and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it:* God did but blow upon it, and by the breath of his mouth all their expected encreaſe went away. When *Pharaoh* purſued the Iſraelites in the height of pride and preſumption, the Text ſaith, *It came to paſs in the morning watch, the Lord looked upon the Hoaſt of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire, and of the cloud, and troubled the Egyptians, and took off their Chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily* (*Exod.* 14.24,25.) God confounded them *by a look*; how eaſily can the Lord riſe up and deſtroy all the power that riſeth up againſt his people? He can do it with a breath from his mouth, With a caſt of his eye. When Chriſt was apprehended by the Officers armed with Staves and Swords; he ſaid, *Whom ſeek you?* They anſwered, *Jeſus of Nazareth:* He ſaith, *I am he.* (Chriſt was not afraid to confeſs himſelf) *As ſoon then as he had ſaid unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground* (*John* 18.6.) What a ſtrange power was here, that Chriſt could caſt them down with a word, and that not an angry word, not a word of conviction but confeſſion; he did not chide them, and ſay, Ye wretches, how dare you lay your hands upon me, who am an innocent perſon; how dare you carry me to judgment, who ſhall one day be your Judge; Chriſt ſpake no ſuch terrible language, but only ſaid, *I am he*, and down they fell. If theſe words of ſubmiſſion had ſuch a force in them, as overthrew thoſe Officers to the ground, how ſhall his Enemies ſtand before the thunder of his ſevereſt increpations, and final ſentence? As the Lord needs not make great proviſions for comforting of his people, if he ſpeaks a word, it is done; if he give but a good look, their hearts revive; *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon me; thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart* (*Pſal.*4.6,7.) So if God do but darken his countenance againſt wicked men, and frown upon them, if he do but breath at them, he puts ſorrow enough into their hearts, even conſuming killing ſorrow; *By the breath of his mouth they go away.*

Verba vel mandato ex ore Dei procedēte. Jun.

Again, take the breath of God, *For the decree of God:* for the word or command which goeth out of his mouth, by this breath of God, *they go away.* The deſtruction of the wicked is under a Decree; *God hath ſpoken in his holyneſs* (*Pſal.* 108.7,8,9.) That is, he hath given out his word from Heaven, the habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory; or, He hath ſpoken it certainly, there is nothing but holineſs in his word (and that's the ſtrength of words) *David* having received this word, ſtands aſſured, That as *Shechem*, and *Succoth*, *Gilead*, and *Manaſſeh*, *Ephraim*, and *Judah*, would willingly ſubmit to him, and yield obedience; So alſo, that *Moab*, *Edom*, and *Philiſtia*, who were his profeſſed Enemies, ſhould be ſubdued to him. He expected to conquer and triumph over them, to put them to the baſeſt offices, as his Vaſſals, becauſe God had decreed and ſpoken it in his holineſs. God hath ſpoken the word (ſaith he) therefore it ſhall be done, yea 'tis done; and therefore *David* cryed, *All's mine, Gilead is mine, Manaſſeh is mine, Moab and Edom are mine*, as ſoon as God had ſpoken the word. All that ever was done in the World, hath been done by the breath of Gods mouth; that is, by the word or decree of God: So ſome underſtand that of the Apoſtle (2 *Theſ.*2.8.) *And then ſhall that wicked one be revealed, whom the Lord ſhall conſume with the ſpirit, or breath of his mouth, and deſtroy with the brightneſs of his coming:* Antichriſt hath ſtood long, and he hath been for ſome time declining; his downfal haſtens; the breath of God will leave him breathleſs: As he hath ſtood by the flattering breath of men; ſo he ſhall fall by the conſuming breath of God.

This conſuming with breath, notes either (as before) the eaſineſs of that conſumption, 'tis done with a breath, or the way and manner of doing it; 'tis done by the command and decree of God, or by the Preaching of the Goſpel, which indeed gives Antichriſt his fatal blow, and ſhakes all the Towers of myſtical *Babylon*, and is called by the Prophet, The rod of his mouth, and the breath of his lips (*Iſa.* 11.4.) *He ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhall he ſlay the wicked.* Life and death ſit upon the lips of Chriſt, he hath a reviving breath, and a killing breath; he quickens the deadeſt heart, and deads the quickeſt, the proudeſt heart with a word ſpeaking. *By the breath of his mouth the wicked go away.*

Spiritu oris, ſc. ipſius impii, credo potius referrendum eſſe ad impium quaſi ille ſibi ipſi fuerit mortis cauſa dum contra Deum loquitur conſidēter & libere. Sanct. *Spiritu oris ſui,* i.e. *ſuis verbis quæ ſpiritu & halitu in ore formantur.*

Further, The breath of his mouth, ſay ſome, is the breath of the wicked mans own mouth; *By the breath of his mouth ſhall he go away:* That is, by the words which breath out of his mouth. His paſſionate diſtempered ſpeeches ſhall undo him, while he ſpeaks, either outragiouſly, and blaſphemouſly againſt God, or falſly and ſeditiouſly towards man, his ruine enters at the opening of his lips.

The motion of the breath is the preſerver of life, and while breath laſts, life laſts; yet many a mans life had laſted longer had it not been for his breath. The wicked mans breath proves his death, and his tongue which hath been a ſcourge to others, becomes a Sword to himſelf. His words poſſibly have wounded, and his breath hath been the death of many: But now he is wounded by his own words, and cruſht to death by the weight of his own breath, or by the fall of his own tongue upon him: So the Pſalmiſt gives it (*Pſal.* 64.8.) *They ſhall make their own tongues to fall upon themſelves*; that is, Their own words ſhall be brought as a Teſtimony againſt them, and condemn them. *The tongue is a little member* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, *Chap.* 3.5.) And therefore a light member; *yet it falls heavy, as heavy as lead.* A man were better have his Houſe fall upon him, then that (in this ſenſe) his tongue ſhould fall upon him. Some have been preſſed to death, becauſe they would not ſpeak, but ſtood mute before the Judge; but more have been preſſed to death by their ſinful freedom, or rather licentiouſneſs in ſpeaking; this hath brought them to judgement, and caſt them in judgement: *Their tongue hath fallen upon them, and by the breath of their mouth, they have gone away.*

Laſtly (but I will not ſtay upon it, becauſe the Original doth not well bear it) theſe words are caſt into the form of a ſimilitude, deſcribing the manner how the wicked man, and all his glory ſhall go away; even as a breath, or as his breath; *As the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away*; that is, he ſhall go ſpeedily, he ſhall go ſuddenly: A breath is ſoon fetcht, it is both come and gone in a moment; *A breathing time*, is a Proverbial, *for a little time* (much like that, *In the twinckling of an eye*). Thus man comes and goes, is come and gone (eſpecially a wicked man who is driven by the wrath of God) as ſoon as ſeen by others, as ſoon as he hath breathed himſelf: It will not be long ere he goes, and he will not be long a going. *For as the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away.*

The breath of man goes continually, and ſo doth the life of man; while man ſleeps, his breath goes, and ſo doth his life; while man ſtands ſtill, his breath goes, and ſo doth his life: The breath, indeed, is ſometimes in a hurry, and goes faſter then it doth at other times; but though the life of man doth not go faſter at one time then at another, yet it always goes.

Or if at any time our life may be ſaid to go faſter then at another, it is when our breath is (by ſome ſtop in its paſſage) at a ſtand; and when ever our breath comes to a full ſtop, our life is not only going, but quite gone.

The life of man hath ſo much dependance upon his breath, that it is called *Breath*, and *the breath of life: When God formed man out of the duſt of the ground, he breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul* (*Gen.* 2.7.) And as ſoon as God calls back this breath of life, man becomes a dead body, or a carkaſs: The life of man muſt needs go as his breath, for it goes with his breath; and when the life of a wicked man is gone, all (that he called his) his worldly glory, goes with him: In that day all his thoughts periſh: For, *As the breath of his mouth he ſhall go away.*

Eliphaz having laid down the wicked mans ſad condition, and the cauſes of it, concludes with a uſe or application of the whole Doctrine, at the 31. Verſe, *Let not him, that is deceived truſt in vanity*, &c.

VERS.

VERS. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity; for vanity shall be his recompence.
It shall be accomplished before his time, and his branch shall not be green.
He shall shake off his unripe Grape as the Vine, and shall cast off his flower as the Olive.
For the Congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery.
They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

ELiphaz laid down his Doctrine, at the 20. Verse of this Chapter, *That a wicked mans life is a miserable life, he travels in pain all his days*; and having insisted long upon the proof, he now gives us the application of it, in a use of dehortation,

Vers. 31. Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity.

He inforceth this dehortation by a summary repetition of the Doctrine before delivered; which he doth,

First, Plainly in the close of the 31. and in the beginning of the 32. Verses, *For vanity shall be his recompence; it shall be accomplished before its time.*

Secondly, He doth it allegorically, in the close of the 32. Verse, and in the 33. *His branch shall not be green: He shall shake off his unripe Grapes as the Vine, and shall cast off his flower as the Olive.*

Having thus pressed his Doctrine by this powerful motive, he concludes his whole Sermon, with a fresh assertion of his Doctrine, against two sorts of wicked men in particular, which yet may comprehend all wicked men;

First, Of Hypocrites, who corrupt the worship of God, or are corrupt while they pretend to worship God. *Ver.* 34. *For the congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate*;

Secondly, Of oppressors, who pervert Justice, or deal falsly among men; *The fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery.*

Under these two heads, we may reduce all sorts of sinners; sinners against God, under the notion of Hypocrites: And sinners against men, under the notion of Oppressors, who pervert Judgment by giving or taking Bribes: All which *Eliphaz* concludes, by a description of their evil actings (the cause of all their sufferings) under that elegant metaphor of Child-bearing; *They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit*: Thus you have the resolution and scope of the latter part of this Chapter.

Vers. 31. Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity.

These words contain the dehortation; here are three terms to be explained.

First, What is meant by being *deceived.*
Secondly, What by *trusting.*
Thirdly, What we are to understand by *Vanity.*

תעה *Deceptus, usurpatur de errore cordis & pedis.*

Let not him that is deceived.] The Original word signifies, either the turning of the foot, or the turning of the heart, or both out of the way (*Psal.* 119. 176.) *I have gone astray, like a lost Sheep*: That is, I have been deceived, and so have gone out of the way of thy holy Commandments. Satan is an ill guide, and our hearts are no better: He that follows either, quickly looseth himself: And until God seeketh us up (as *David* prays in the next words) we cannot find our way when we are once out of it (*Ezek.* 44. 15.) *The Priests, the Levites, the Sons of Zadock that kept the charge of my Sanctuary, when the people of Israel went astray from me, they shall come near to me*: When the people walked in by places, and were intangled in the briars of their own corruptions; then the Priests kept the charge of the Lord: It was a great mercy, that when the people were deceived, the Priests were not; that when the Sheep went astray, the Shepherds did not: If Priests and people go astray together, who shall reduce them? But to the point; Israel went astray. *They who led them did not cause them to erre* (once they did as the Prophet complains) Who then did? Many go astray, when none lead them astray: Man can deceive himself fast enough, if none else do; yet the *word* implys also the cunning activity of an external agent, to lead poor souls out of the way. We may take in both here; *Let not him that is deceived*, whether by the fallacious arguings of his own heart, or by the subtlety of any other, whether Men or Devils,

Trust in vanity.] Or, *Let him not believe in vanity*: Trusting is an act of faith, and though a man may believe, and not trust; yet no man can trust, who doth not believe. We translate the word not as signifying only bare believing, but as it reaches that higher act of trusting: He that is most deceived, is most apt to trust that which will deceive him more; and gives not only his consent, but confidence to that which either is not at all, or is that least which it pretends to be, fit to be trusted, *Vanity.*

יאמן *credet, ne credat in vanitatem.*

Let him not trust in vanity.] The word which we render Vanity, is not *Habel* used by *Solomon* (*Eccles.* 1. 2.) *Vanity of vanities*, which signifies only a light thing, such as is a vapour rising from the earth, a bubble swelling out of, and floating a little upon the water, or more strictly, a puff or breath of the mouth; but it signifies rashness, falseness, a lie, a deceit; vain things are false, lying, and deceiveable; therefore, one word serves for both.

שוא *Temeritas falsitas mendacium; eadem est vis vocis quæ apud Latinos vocabuli* Vani *quod tam pro mendacio quam pro re ridicula accipi solet.*

Again, *Vanity* may be here taken two ways, either for the sin, or deceit, with which a man is mislead; and then the meaning is, Let not him that is deceived by sin, trust in sin: Or secondly, Vanity may be taken for any creature comfort, and contentment, especially those which are the revenue, or income of sinful practices. Sin leads to profit, to pleasure, to honour, to these frail and transitory things sin leads us, in hope of satisfaction by them, and then the meaning is, *Let not him that is deceived, trust in that which sin promiseth, and professeth it will do for him, or advance him to*: Sin in its nature is vanity, and all the fruits or issues of it are vain too. Therefore, as nothing, and nothing, added together, make nothing, so vanity and vanity put together, make but vanity: The total summ cannot exceed the *Items* or particulars; *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity, for vanity shall be his recompence.*

Hence Observe, First, *Man is very apt to be deceived; so apt to be deceived, that he is scarce ever undeceived.*

Eliphaz speaks here, not only of a possibility to be deceived, but of being actually deceived; and this ariseth two ways, first from the impotence and weakness, from the blindness and ignorance that is in man; he that is blind and weak, is easily mislead; every man naturally, how strong, how wise, how knowing soever he seems to be, is yet weak, blind, and ignorant in a very great measure; and therefore very deceivable: Man is full of craft, this makes him deceitful; he is empty of true wisdom, this renders him deceiveable.

Secondly, As man may quickly be deceived, by reason of the ignorance which is in him, so also by reason of those subtle enemies, who are alwayes about him, yea and within him. We live (as I may so speak) among Cheaters, and Cozenners, and there is a great Cheater lives in us; how hard is it then not to be deceived? If a man be in a Croud among many Cut-purses, and Cheaters, he is in danger to lose his Money every moment; it is so with us: though carnal men are not at all aware of it, nor they who are most spiritual, so much aware of it as they should. It is dangerous to live among deceivers, though we know them, and are aware of them; it is most dangerous to live among deceivers, and not to know them, for then we cannot be aware of them; but it is madness to know we live among deceivers, and yet not to be aware of them.

There are three notorious Deceivers, who labour to ensnare us; we need not wonder though some who are watchful against them, are deceived by them: but it would be a wonder, and such a wonder as yet was never seen, if they should not be deceived, who never watch against them.

First, Our own hearts which have not only an impotence or weakness (as I noted before) whereby they are apt to be deceived, but there is in our hearts an activeness, yea an efficacy to deceive; we are not only passive, but active; we are seldom, if at all, deceived, till we deceive our selves:

selves: And some men are very active in deceiving others, so all men are active in a degree to deceive themselves. (*Jer.* 17. 9.) *The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked*: The heart is deceitful in reference to a threefold object.

First, The heart would deceive God himself, and impose upon the *All-wise*: That's the design of a Hypocrite, his business is to deceive God, though the issue be the deceiving of himself.

Secondly, The heart of man is deceitful in contriving wayes to deceive and supplant other men. The complaint of the Prophet goes very high upon this (*Mich.*7.2.) *The good man is perished out of the Earth, and there is none upright among men; they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net.* To *lie in wait*, is the act, and *a Net* is the instrument of a Deceiver: the Prophesie of Christ goes yet higher (*Matth.*24.24.) *For there shall arise false Christs, and false Prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that (if it were possible) they shall deceive the very Elect.* Deceit works to its utmost possibility, when it puts hard to deceive those, whom to deceive is impossible. If Elect men could be deceived, God should be deceived in his Election; But this is impossible, and therefore that is; the man who is elect is deceiveable, but because he is an elect man, he cannot be deceived: And though an elect man may be deceived in some things (for even he is subject to errour, because he is still (while in this World) the subject of sin) yet he cannot be so far deceived in any thing, as to null or frustrate his election. How restless is man to deceive man, seeing he ceaseth not his endeavour to deceive, where he cannot prevailingly deceive.

Thirdly, (Which I conceive the Text in *Jeremiah* specially aims at) the heart of man is very busie to deceive himself. 'Tis bad enough to deceive others, but to deceive our selves is worse, and that not only because it makes us more miserable, but more sinful: Self-deceit is the most sinful deceit. The heart of man is *desperately wicked*, there is no hope that it will leave off to do wickedly, seeing it is of counsel against its own peace. And surely, man is not only under a possibility to be deceived, in regard of the impotence and blindness of his heart, but also under an impossibility not to be deceived, in regard of the skill and unwearied activity of his heart to deceive himself.

Secondly, Man hath another deceiver continually about him, *The World*, and all that is in the World, *The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*; all these are but as so many snares and juggles to cozen, and deceive poor man.

Thirdly, The Devil, who is *The Deceiver*; of whose *devices we are not ignorant* (saith the Apostle) he is full of tricks and plots; he hath his methods, his arts to deceive. Ever since the Devil deceived himself, he hath been studying how to deceive man; he doth not only go about like a roaring Lyon, but like a subtle Serpent, and a cunning Fox, seeking whom he may devour; or he is a Lyon to devour those whom he hath first deceived as a Fox, or as a Serpent: *Man is a perswadable creature* (*Gen.* 9. 27.) *God shall perswade Japhet to dwell in the Tents of Shem*: The Original word there used to *perswade*, signifies also to deceive, because perswasions are often made as Engins, or baits to deceive.

There is also a kind of holy fraud in the Gospel, and man is as it were deceived into the obedience of it, *Being crafty I caught you with guile* (I fetcht you over, did I not?) saith *Paul* (2 *Cor.* 12. 16.) Now as man is sometimes deceived for his good, so he is often and easily deceived for his hurt, by these three deceivers. Satan, the World, and his own Heart, perswade him by an unholy deceit to dwell in the Tents of sin.

בשו
Bis poteſt ſumi & cū יאמן *credet, ne credat in vanitatem, & cum* נחעה *deceptus, deceptus inquā per vanitatem, ne in eam fidat.*

Again, Some who by vanity understand sin, read the word *Vanity* twice, *Let not him that is deceived by vanity, trust in vanity*; that is, Let not him that is deceived by sin, trust in sin; which interpretation yields us this truth, *Sin is deceitful*, or thus, *Sin doth nothing but deceive.*

The Apostle, (*Heb.*3.13.) chargeth sin with deceit to its very face, *Exhort one the other, while it is called to day, least any of your hearts be hardned through the deceitfulness of sin*; there are three eminent evils in sin;

First, There is a pollution in sin, it defiles.

Secondly, There is baseness in sin, it dishonours.

Thirdly, There is a deceitfulness in sin, it would make us believe we shall be, and receive, that which it is not able to perform.

Hence the Apostle (*Rom.* 6. 21.) puts the question to those who were once the servants of sin, *What fruit had ye then in those things whereof you are now ashamed?* He asketh them, and bids them ask their own hearts, what fruit had you? as if he had said, *I know when you were servants of sin, your sins promised you great matters, great rewards: the Tree of sin seems to be loaded with fruits, the boughs of it look as if ready to break with goodly fruits; fruit pleasant to the eye, sweet to the taste, and desireable to make one wise; but I beseech you tell me what fruit had you in those things whereof you are now ashamed?* If you be ashamed to tell me; I will tell you, *The end of those things is death*; that's all the fruit which the Tree of sin bears. Sin deals with us, as *Jael* with *Sisera* (*Judg.*4.18.) She stood at the Tent door, when he came panting from the Battel, and said to him, *Turn in my Lord, turn in*; she took him into her Tent, and laid him down, covered him warm, and when he asked her for Milk, she gave him Butter, Butter in a Lordly dish; here were fine words, and seeming promises: yet she honestly deceived him, *She put her hand to the Nail, and her hand to the workmans Hammer, and nailed his temples to the ground.* Thus sin bids us turn in, promises to cover us warm, gives us Butter in a Lordly dish, but never tells us of that woful end, and wretched catastrophe which it intends unto us: Sin deals with us as *Dalilah* with *Samson*, takes us into its bosome and embraces; but then it hath a plot to cut the lock of our strength, to deliver us over to the Philistims, to call in Legions of Devils to sieze upon us, and make us grind at the Mill of their basest drudgery.

More distinctly, sin deceives by a threefold promise.

First, By a promise of profit (*Prov.* 1. 13.) *Come cast in thy lot with us, let us lie in wait for blood*, &c. *We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil*: but this precious substance, proves only a pernicious shadow; and these spoils taken, spoil those who take them.

Secondly, Sin deceives by promising content, and sweet delight; what thoughts had *Ahab* concerning *Naboths* Vineyard? If he could but get it, he were *a made man*; what pleasure should he have in those shady walks? what Grapes and Wine from those fruitful Vines? Sin promiseth as largly as God doth, to give us not only delight but satisfaction; that we shall not have so much as an empty corner in our souls; all shall be filled: whereas in truth there is nothing but emptiness, and dissatisfaction in any creature, especially when sin leads or helps us to the enjoyment of it.

Thirdly, At least, sin promiseth and gives its word for it, that we shall be free from trouble, and feel no evil; *That we shall have peace, though we walk in the imagination of our heart* (*Deut.*29.19.) That as they flattered themselves in the Prophet, *we shall not see Sword, nor Famine*: These vanishing dreams of plenty, of good things, and immunity from evil, carry thousands of souls captive to the basest bondage of sin.

Further, This vanity, from trusting which the deceived soul is called off by *Eliphaz*, is conceived to be worldly riches, and the fullest possession of the creature; these are vanity: That they are, is *a common theam*, and yet though it be much spoken of, it is very little believed; we are apt to over-rate the things of the World, and under-rate the things of Heaven. The creature is vanity, not only in regard of the nothingness of it, but vanity in regard of that which we call the somethingness of it, or the best of it.

The Prophet *Jonah* makes the word which we here translate vanity, the Epethite of that which is commonly translated vanity (*Jon.* 2. 8.) *They that observe lying vanities*: Idols are vanity, and a lie, because though they can do no good at all, yet they promise much: Riches are vanity, and a lie, because they cannot do so much good as they promise. *Solomon* saith in his *Ecclesiastes*, *That Money answereth all things* (*Chap.* 8. 10.) And so it doth as the value of all earthly things is made by Money,

חבלי שוא
Vanitates mēdacissimæ mendaces.

and

and as Money is the price of all earthly things. But though Money answereth all things, by satisfying our engagements, yet it answereth nothing to the satisfying of its own engagements. Money and riches have paid many a mans debts, and enough of them will pay any mans debts, but they have never paid their own debts, no more then Idols have, and therefore they justly bear the brand of this reproach, *Lying vanities:* That they are so, appears clearly in two particulars.

First, In the report which they make of themselves.

Secondly, In the promises which they make to us.

First, In the report which they make of their own worth; if you look upon the bill of the creature, it puts down, not only a hundred for fifty, but a million for a mite: For, how much soever it is worth, yet it bears no proportion to that which it would be esteemed worth: As some rich men are not half so rich as they desire to be reckoned; so riches themselves are not so rich by thousands of thousands as they would be reckoned.

There is indeed a created worth in the creature, for it is the work of God; but since the sin of man hath (as to us) both imbased, and imbittered the creature, it is worth nothing comparatively to that at which it is rated, both in its own, and our Books.

Secondly, The creature (in this notion) is a lying vanity, while it perswades us; that in the enjoyment thereof we shall be happy; whereas our happiness doth not consist in any creature-enjoyment; unless God himself be our portion, we are both poor and miserable in the fullest possession of the creature. God is the *living stream*, the creature at the best was but a Cistern, and now it is but a broken Cistern which leaks out all the waters that pass into it, unless God stop the chinks, and mend the cracks of it, by Jesus Christ.

Again, The creature promiseth to ease us of our cares, yet it doth but multiply them: The creature promiseth to satisfie our desires, yet it doth only encrease and enlarge them. Riches are not food, but fewel to our desires; they do not allay our appetite, as bread doth, when received into the stomack, but enflame our appetite, as wood doth, when it is cast into the fire.

Further, The creature promiseth to protect us; hence that of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 10.15.) *The rich mans wealth is his strong City:* That is, it promiseth to be so, and tells him, it will do that for him, which a strong City doth for its Inhabitants, defend him against all Commers and Invaders; yet the same *Solomon* assures us in the next Chapter (*Vers.* 4.) *That riches profit not in the day of wrath.* And *Ezekiel* threatens the Jews, That *their Silver and their Gold shall not deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord.*

Lastly, the Creature promiseth to continue with us. Riches tell us, that though Father and Mother forsake us, yet they will not, though Wife and Children forsake us, yet they will not; they make us believe that they will stick closer to us, then Christ himself, and yet they are upon the wing presently, they flie away as the Eagle, and are gone out of sight, they do not only perish in the using, but perish from our use.

Is not all this and a thousand times more, which might be said of their lying, and vanity, enough, and more then enough to justifie those titles which the Spirit of God hath bestowed upon them, that they are vanity and a lie, or as *Jonah* calls them, *Lying vanities*.

And yet (to close the point) we must remember that creature-riches are not a lie, nor deceitful in themselves. There's no more deceit in the greatest abundance of Gold and Silver, then there is in a wholsome savory piece of bread. Riches are not vain and deceitful, as our hearts are said to be deceitful (*Jer.* 17.9.) nor as lust is said to be deceitful (*Ephes.* 4.22.) For these things are deceitful only through the deceitfulness of our hearts, and lusts: Or they are deceitful *Objectively*, not *Actively*; we are deceived about them, not by them. They do not deceive us till we are decived; nor do they deceive us either as possessed or used, but as adored and trusted. *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity.*

Thirdly Observe, *Man must and will have somewhat to trust to, or lean upon.*

And therefore rather then fail, he will trust that which cannot but fail, *Vanity*. Like one that's ready to drown, he catcheth at any thing, a rotten stick, or a straw, and would support his whole body, by that which is not able to bear the weight of his little finger. Man is a weak creature, sense and nature are enough to make him sensible of his natural weakness; and these also are enough to prompt and provoke him to seek help without himself, though they are utterly insufficient to direct him whither to go for the surest help; *It is the priviledge of God alone to have nothing to trust to, or to be above trust: He who is all strength needs not trust.* As he doth not put trust in his (*Vers.* 15.) Because he knows they are frail and mutable: so he hath no need to trust them, because he knows himself not only strong, but immutable. God is all that he is from himself, and therefore he ever continues to be what he is, by himself. *But man who is not a spring to himself of Being, cannot be a support to himself for the continuance of his Being; much less for the continuace of his well-being.* And as man's necessity calls him to trust, so his duty calls him to trust God: Man fell at first by his desire to stand alone, he would be independent; and men fall every day, because they desire to stand by that which cannot stand alone. It is a special part of that worship which we owe to God, to trust him; and whatsoever we trust besides God, we make a God of it. He that trusts not in the God that made him, makes many Gods (such as they are) by trusting them. While *Job* puts that negative supposition (as to his own case, *Chap.* 31.24.) *If I have made Gold my hope, or have said to the fine Gold, thou art my confidence:* He more then implyeth that many had. Man ought to trust God, but few will; many will trust in Creatures, but none ought: Man will be trusting in somewhat, and he is so forward to trust in vanity (which indeed is nothing) that it is the hardest thing in the World to take him off. We cannot press either our selves or others too much, to trust God, and we cannot repress them enough from trusting vanity: Man is very ready to exercise and put forth an act of trust, and he is as ready to mistake the object of trust.

Lastly Observe, *Man is apt to trust that which hath deceived him; or man being once deceived, trusts that which will deceive him again.*

Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity: We say, *Such a man hath deceived me once, but he shall not deceive me the second time:* But carnal hearts being deceived once by sin and vanity, are willing to be deceived a thousand times; being once deceived, they care not how often they are deceived: That of the Prophet is an eminent Testimony to this too much experimented truth (*Isaiah* 44.20.) *He feedeth on ashes*; that is, he is as much deluded as a man is, who eats ashes, thinking it to be bread or other good chear; or his Idol which promised him great matters and much joy, hath given nothing but ashes, sorrow, and misery; of which, ashes, and especially feeding upon ashes, was an emblem: Now though it were thus with him, yet (saith the Prophet) *A deceived heart hath turned him aside that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?* that is, Though he sees himself deceived, yet he hath no power to withdraw from the deceiver, nor to question the deceit; he is so bewitched with the sorcery of sin, that he cannot deliver his soul from the snares of it; but being deceived, he is willingly deceived, and looks upon his deceiver as his trusty Friend.

God never deceived, no nor failed any man that trusted in him (*Psal.* 9.10.) Yet the hearts of the most will not be perswaded to trust God; sin and the creature deceive all that trust in them, yet we can hardly call or beat the heart off from trusting them. Sin seldom looses its credit; sin hath broken and undone thousands, yea all who have trusted it; yet still it hath credit among thousands, and can be trusted with more then this World is worth, the precious soul of man, for the asking. But let not him that is deceived, trust (any longer) in vanity, if he do, he shall never be a gainer, no nor a saver by it;

For vanity shall be his recompence.

Vanity fills both parts of the Verse, and meets us at every turn, yet with a difference: In the former part by vanity was signified either sin, or the creature; in this latter part, vanity notes misery, or the effect and fruit of sin.

Hence

Hence Observe, *The vanity of misery overtakes all those who are deceived by the vanity of sin.*

Vanity is their recompence.] There are two sorts of recompence.

First, Of wrath.

Secondly, Of favour.

Evil deeds have their recompence, as well as good. *To me* (saith the Lord, *Deut.*32.35.) *belongeth vengeance and recompence*; that is, the recompence of vengeance; as the Apostle expounds it (*Heb.*10.30.) *For we know him that said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompence saith the Lord:* God will not live long in any mans debt; As *holy Gospel-confidence hath a great recompence of reward* (*Heb.*10. 35.) So *every disobedience of the Law received a just recompence of reward* (*Heb.*2.2.) And God is so exact in giving the recompences of punishment, that he will not spare his own, when they are so foolish as to trust in vanity (*Prov.*11.31.) *Behold the righteous shall be recompenced in the earth, much more the wicked and the sinner:* that is, A righteous man shall be corrected, though he sin of infirmity; how then shall the wicked be punished who sin with presumption and delight. As a wicked man hath all his recompences of good on the earth (*Mat.*6.2.) *They have their reward*; so a righteous man hath all his recompences of evil of affliction in the earth; he hath none beyond. But, we may strongly argue, that the wicked, who trust in vanity shall be recompenced with sorrow for ever; seeing the righteous, if they do but a little turn aside to vanity, shall be recompenced with sorrow here: That's the Apostle *Peter's* way of reasoning (1 *Epist.*4.18.) *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* Surely, as the Prophet concludes (*Isa.*59.18.) *According to their deeds accordingly he will repay fury to his adversaries, recompence to his enemies, to the Islands he will repay recompence.*

Secondly, as vanity in the former clause is taken for the Creature,

Observe, *The Creature is most vain to those who trust it.*

The Creature is a vain thing in his hand, who believes and trusts in God, but it is exceeding vain in his hand, who trusts on it; and the more it is trusted, the more vain it is. If we make it our staff, it will be our scourge: if we lean upon it as our rock, it will run into our hands like a broken Reed: The best way to keep up our comfort in the Creature, is to keep our distance from the Creature. And they shall find most content in the World, who live furthest off it, and expect least from it. God is good, and the more we trust him, the better he is to us, yea he is not good at all to us, unless we trust him: But the best of creatures trusted to become evil, yea an Idol to us. *Trust not in vanity* (such are all creature; in their best estate) *for vanity shall be your recompence.*

Again, The word which we translate, *recompence*, signifies *a change*, or the exchange which is made of one thing for another: While *Job* exalts the value and excellency of wisdom above all created excellencies, he saith (*Chap.* 28. 17.) *The Gold and the Chrystal cannot equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine Gold.*

So some render it here, *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity, for vanity shall be his change:* Whensoever he changeth, he shall change into vanity, or when he hath driven a trade in sinful vanity, to the highest; the best exchange which the Merchandize thereof yields him, is miserable vanity: *Vanity can produce nothing to us but vanity:* The effect is not better then the cause, nor the fruit then the Tree; and that which we receive in exchange, though it may be of another kind, yet it is of no better value then that we give in exchange. Hence Observe,

That a wicked mans state never changeth for better, but from good to bad, or from bad to worse.

Till the man himself be changed from bad to good, his state can never change from bad to good: And suppose his outward state be good, then the worst thing that can befal him, is this, that his state should not change. His settledness in that which is civilly good, doth but more settle him in that which is morally evil. *They have no changes, therefore they fear not God* (*Psal.*55.19.) What can be worse for man then this, not to fear God, who is the chiefest good? Who would not fear to be without changes, when he hears that being without them, keeps out this fear?

Suppose further. That the wicked mans outward estate be evil, then it is worse to him, when he changes to outward good: if he change from sorrow to joy, from poverty to riches, from sickness to health, from a prison to liberty, in all these, or in any other of like nature with these, he changes to his loss: That man can never change for good, who continues evil. Such a mans outward estate often changes from bad to worse; if it change from bad to good, that is bad for him; and if being good, it change not at all, that is worst of all.

It is a part of the misery of man, that his state is changable, but that is incident to the best of men: We shall be unchangable in our state, till we come into the presence of God, who is unchangable in his nature. We may say also (considering the many troubles which we are subject to in this life) that it is a part of our happiness, that our state is changable. Those changes which are from evil to good, or from good to better, are to be numbred among our blessings; such are the changes of the Saints, all their changes are for the better: yea those changes of the Saints which are from joy to sorrow, from riches to poverty, from health to sickness, from liberty to a prison, from life to death, in a word, their changes from any kind of outward temporary good, to outward temporary evil, are yet for their good. He cannot change but for his good, who is good, and who abides always under this promise, that all shall work together for his good.

An evil and a good man differ in nothing more then in their changes; nor should any self-consideration provoke an evil man more to desire that he may be changed to good, then this, that his changes may be for good. Who would continue or trust in vanity, were he perswaded that vanity shall be his change?

Secondly, Observe, *That such as our way is, such will our end be.*

If we walk and trust in vanity, we shall have vanity for our recompence, or our change. Every mans end is virtually in his way: So the Apostle argues elegantly (*Gal.*6.7.) *Be not deceived, God is not mocked; whatsoever a man sowes that shall he reap, he that sowes to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; he that sowes to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting:* If the Husband-man sow tares he must look to reap tares: A seed-time of tares, and a Harvest of Wheat, were never heard of in the same ground: As the seed is, such is the crop (*Isa.*3.11.) *Wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hand shall be given him.* There is nothing worse for some, then to have their reward brought in, and all that is owing to them paid: The very receiving of their debts and rewards, is their undoing for ever.

All the misery of a wicked man is summed up in this, He shall have the reward of his hands. Wrath, and death, and Hell, are his rewards, and all the wages which the work both of his hands and heart can earn, and these he shall have fully paid to him: Vain he hath been, *and vanity shall be his recompence.*

Some read this Verse, not as a dehortation, *Let not him that is deceived trust, or believe in vanity*; but as a negative proposition (for that particle in the Hebrew, which sometimes carrieth a prohibition, notes also a bare negation; so here) *He that is deceived with vanity will not believe* (the same word signifies both to believe and trust) *that vanity shall be his recompence:* He will not believe a change, much less such a change; This is a clear sense, and it hints us this Observation.

That a wicked man is full of infidelity or unbelief, that his estate is evil, or shall ever be worse then it is.

The unbelief of man is as strong against the threatnings, as against the promises: The Saints are hardly brought to believe, that glory shall be their recompence, that the purchase which Christ hath made of Heaven, and eternal happiness belongs to them. A wicked man will not believe that tribulation and anguish shall be upon him, or that the wrath of God is revealed from

Vanitate nomē variè hic sumitur, quā ob rem forsan & varie scribitur, oriri loco sig. vanas res quibus fidebat, scopes: gloriā, posteriori loco vanitatem in quā hæc omnia redigēda sint dum ex his decidens miser fiet. Merc.

A radice מור *mutavit* תמורה *commutatio, vanitas erit commutatio ejus, i.e. in nihilum redigetur.*

אל *Malō simpliciter negare quam prohibere* Merc. *Non credet qui vanitate errat quod vanitas erit permutatio ejus* Merc. *Non credet fore ut ejus fœlicitas permutetur & ad meram vanitatem deveniet.* Vatabl.

Heaven against his unrighteousness, he will not believe that he shall go to Hell and be damned, or that everlasting fire shall burn him, or the worm that dies not, feed upon him; he that is deceived will not believe these things, and the Devil hath as great an advantage upon men, by making them strong in unbelief: As God hath, by making his people strong in Faith.

The first assault that ever the *Devil* made against man, was to weaken Faith, or strengthen unbelief about the threatnings: While he laboured to deceive the Woman, he laboured as much to perswade her, *That vanity should not be her recompence:* God had said peremptorily, *In the day that ye eat thereof, ye shall surely die:* The Devil denied as peremptorily, *Ye shall not surely die* (*Gen.*3.4.) The people were commanded to say *Amen* to every branch of the Curse (*Deut.*27.16,17,&c.) Though it be the lowest way of obedience to obey, because we believe the truth, and certainty of the Curse; yet it is a high act of obedience to believe it: And Satan is as busie against our faith, in the threatnings, as he is against our faith in promises. This unbelief opens the way to the committing of sin, and sweetens sin while we are committing it: Were it not for this unbelief sin could not be bread, much less (as it is to many) pleasant bread. Sin would be Gall and Wormwood in the acting of it, did we believe, that it will be bitterness in the end. Who would do the work of sin, did he believe that *vanity should be his recompence?* Because this threat is not believed, therefore the Law which forbids sin, is not obeyed. As Faith is a shield to the new Man, so unbelief is a shield to the old Man; as Faith quenches the fiery darts of the Devil, or his allurements to sin; so unbelief quenches all the fiery darts of God, or his threatnings of punishment. Tush say they, We shall never see Sword nor Famine, we need not fear (which is so much talked of) death or Hell: *Vanity shall not be our recompence.*

Rab. Kimchi *exponit Sheve, pro æquali seu æqualitate. q. d. Ne credat qui deceptus est æqualem semper & sui similē sore sibi statum, vel eodē semper modo res sibi cessuras.* Merc.

There is a third reading of the Text: The former word which we render *Vanity*, is translated by some of the Rabbins, *Equality*, or *a thing that is equal*, the latter, as we, *a lie*, or *Vanity*. This varies the whole strain of the Verse, and yet the Exposition given upon it is clear, both to the general scope, and to the sense given immediately before. *Let not him that is deceived, believe that he shall be always equal, or of the same estate, for vanity shall be his recompence. He thinks to carry it smoothly, and with an even thred, but he is deceived.* Things will not alwayes stand at the same point and poyze with him, and therefore let him not feed himself with groundless ayery hopes, that they will: His affairs will not always have the same face, nor bear the same aspect toward him; now they smile and look pleasantly, but anon they will frown and look sowre.

Non credet verbo aquo qui errat sed mēdaciū erit loco ejus. Pagn. q. d. *qui errat nō credet verbo rectoi sed ponet mēdaciū loco illius & hoc pacto credet.*

Lastly, Keeping near the same sense still; the words are thus translated: *He that is deceived, will not believe the right word, or the word of truth, but he will believe a lie in stead of it:* As if *Eliphaz* had thus school'd and caution'd *Job*, *I have told you this as from God; but I know he that is* (as you are) *misled, and deceived, will not believe the word of God, who cannot lie; he will believe a lie rather.* As the carnal heart changes the glory of God into a lie, so the truth of God into a lie, or embraceth a lie for truth; he that believed not the right word, will soon believe that which is wrong. *As they who receive not the love of the truth, are* (by the just judgment of God) *given up to strong delusions, to believe a lie:* So also are they, who *receive not the truth.* As the not doing of good, is not only it self an evil, but leads us also, or lays us open to the doing of many evils, yea of any evil: So the not receiving of truth is not only an errour, but it leads us also, or lays us open to the receiving of many, yea of any errour.

Eliphaz having thus pressed his dehortation upon *Job*, not to trust in vanity, lest he find vanity the reward and recompence of that unholy faith and trust; proceeds yet further to press his dehortation by the same argument for the matter, though varied in the manner of expression, in the beginning of the next Verse.

Vers. 32. It shall be accomplished before his time, &c.

These words are a strong enforcement of the motive laid down in the former Verse, *Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity:* Why, what if he do? *Vanity shall be his recompence:* That's the first part of the motive. The second is,

It shall be accomplished before his time.] What shall be accomplished? There is no express Antecedent in the Hebrew; we may understand, either first, the life of the wicked man himself, of whom *Eliphaz* had before discoursed. Or secondly, the estate of the wicked man. Or thirdly, the designs and plots of the wicked man. Taking in all three, the meaning is, That himself and all that he hath gotten, and all that he hath projected, *Shall be accomplished before his time*; and what's this but vanity for his recompence?

In non die suo cōplebitur. Mont. *cōpleri ante diē*, &c. *est potius perire quā ullū cōplementū & perfectionē accipere.* Pined.

To be accomplished before the time, is not to be accomplished at all, it notes rather perdition then perfection. The word which we translate to *accomplish*, signifies also *to cut off*; as we put in the Margin of our Bibles, *It shall be accomplished*, or *cut off before his time:* The Vulgar translation fills up the sense thus, *Before his dayes can be filled, he shall perish.*

Antequā dies ejus impleantur, peribit ut sit חמלא מלל *succido. Morte immatura prævenietur vel gladio, vel morbo, vel aliqua alia vio'enta causa in die non suo implebitur sepulchrum ejus.* Targ.

As the Relative looks to the wicked man himself, Observe,

An untimely death is the portion of a wicked man.

He shall be accomplished in a day that is not his, or before his proper day. In opposition to which, *Eliphaz* had promised, *Chap.*5. That a godly *man shall come like a sheaf of Corn into the Barn, fully ripe:* Now saith he, This wicked man shall be like untimely fruit, accomplished, cut off, and perishing before his time. We have such an Expression (*Eccl.*7.17.) *Be not righteous over-much, neither make thy self over-wise; why shouldest thou destroy thy self? Be not over-much wicked* (not that there is any mediocrity in wickedness, or that a man can be wicked in due proportion, but saith he, take heed of high actings in wickedness) *why shouldest thou die before thy time?* Some wickednesses lie close, men live and continue in them long unseen; others are so open and abominable, that their actors are obnoxious to the hand of Justice: He that is wicked over-much, that is, extreamly wicked, shall be cut off some way or other before his time.

Quarrellers die by the Sword, Drunkards die by surfet, Adulterers decay into filthy diseases, Sorcerers are killed by the Devil, Malefactors of all sorts are cut off by the sentence of the Magistrate. Most desire to live long, and yet they take a course to make their lives short; they forget that short way to long life (*Psal.* 34. 12.)

Implere dies ad lōgā ævicē, senectā pertinet, vel denotat illā ætatis maturitatē, quæ nō annorū numero; sed pietatis perfectione definitur.

That promise (*Isa.*65.20.) stands opposite to this threatning, *There shall be no more there an infant of dayes, nor an old man that hath not filled his dayes:* A good man fills his dayes, a wicked man shall be accomplished, or there shall be an end of him before his day; both, before that day which he would live to, according to the course of his desire, and before that day which he might live unto, according to the course of nature.

Besides, a wicked man never fills his dayes, though he be full of dayes; he that is not prepared for death (how old soever he is) dies before he is ripe: he is ripe for destruction, but he is neither ripe nor fit for death: The youngest Saint that dies, dies ripe, though he die before he come to that estate, wherein nature useth to crop men off; yet, he (as the Apostle speaks, *Ephes.*4.13.) is *come to the fulness of the stature of Christ.*

Pii licet ætate juvenes, senes sunt moribus.

Secondly, Referring these words unto the estate of a wicked man, it shall be accomplished, or cut off before the time; that is, his pomp, and greatness, all that he hath gotten together (of which he spake in the precedent part of the Chapter) shall be scattered suddenly.

Hence Note, *Wicked men often outlive all their worldly enjoyments.*

Some live to be their own Executors; they dispose, or rather dissipate all; they leave nothing when they die, for others. The pride of wicked men shall have a fall, their present possessions and future hopes shall come to nought (*Prov.*3.16.) *Solomon* tells us, that *Wisdom hath length of dayes in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honor:* We may say of sin, *Shortness of dayes is in its right hand, and in its left hand, poverty and disgrace.* The former point saith, that a wicked mans dayes are short, he shall be cut off before his time, death cuts him off. The latter saith, his pomp, his riches and honour, all these shall be cut off before the time. We have seen some who have raised great estates by sin, and they have seen an end of all in misery.

Thirdly

Thirdly, Taking the Antecedent to be the designs and contrivements of the wicked man,

Hence note, *The counsels, designs, and contrivements of wicked men, do often prove abortive.*

They are accomplished before their time. Their plots break out before they are ripe, and then all's spoyled. So it was with the Powder-plot, it was *accomplished before the time*; it was discovered before it could be acted; we have often seen grand designs laid in the dust, crusht in the shell, and nipt in the very bud. As the Prophet reproves some for staying too long, in the place of breaking forth of children (*Hos.* 13. 13.) That is, they have let their purposes dye under tedious consultations, or irresolutions for acting: So we may deride others for staying too little in the place of breaking forth of Children. God in judgment hastens them to action before their designs are fully matured by consultation, *It is accomplished before his time.*

And his branch shall not be green.

In the close of this Verse, and in the next, *Eliphaz* in several metaphors, prosecutes the declining condition of wicked men; *His branch shall not be green.*

בדו *Significat & manum & ramum, rami sunt veluti brachia & manus arboris.*

His branch] Or his hand shall not be green; so the word signifies properly: And, that some understand in a figure, his hand shall not be green; that is, himself shall be unapt, and unfit for work. When an arm is dryed up, or a hand palsied, it is unserviceable: The hand of a godly man is green, he is laborious, and fit for labour; the hand of the wicked man, as it is alwayes sinfully dried up, in reference to the doing of any good, so it is often judicially dried up, lest it should do hurt; his hand shall not be green, that is, he shall not have power ro do that evil which he would: When *Jeroboam* put forth his hand from the Altar, *&c.* his arm dryed up, so that he could not pull it in again to him (1 *Kings* 13. 4.) His hand, his arm was not green, he could not use it to hurt the Prophet. (*Zech.* 11. 17.) The wicked Idol Shepherd is threatned, *His arm shall clean be dryed up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkned*: that is, He shall neither have counsel nor strength, he shall neither be able to advise nor act; his eye shall be darkned, so that he shall not be able to see his way; his arm shall be dryed up, he shall not be able to attain his end (*Psal.* 75. 5.) *None of the men of might have found their hands*; as we say of a man that goes lamely or lazily, *He cannot find his feet*; so of a man that acts lamely and lazily, or of a souldier that fights faintly and cowardly, *He cannot find his hands*; or, in the language of the Text, *His arm or hand is not green.*

We translate metaphorically, so the word signifies not a hand, but a branch; because a branch or bough of a tree puts forth from the body of it, as the hand or arm is stretcht from the body of a man; by this branch we may understand either of those two things noted before.

First, The estate of the wicked man; for that is as a branch shooting and growing out from him;

Or secondly, The designs and counsels of the wicked man; they also are branches sprouting from the corrupt stock of his heart: and so this clause is of the same sense with the former; *It shall be accomplished before his time, his branch shall not be green*: that is, he shall not prosper in any thing he possesseth, or undertaketh.

But, thirdly, There is a distinct sense, and so the branch is the Posterity, the Children of this wicked man. As he, and his plots shall fail, so his Children likewise. Children are compared to branches (*Psal.* 128.) *His Children shall stand like Olive-plants* (or branches) *round about his Table.*

Priusquam impius senescat, interbit; & liberi ejus subtatis flore orientur. Paraphr.

His branch shall not be green] *Greenness* notes flourishing (*Cant.* 1. 17.) where the Spouse and Christ speak one to another of their several excellencies, she saith, *Vers.* 16. *Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea pleasant, also our bed is green.* By bed some understand holy Ordinances, wherein the Lord communicates himself to his people. *Our bed is green*; that is, Ordinances are pure, flourishing, and fruit-bearing. In the same sense the word is used (*Luke* 23. 31.) *If they do these things in a green Tree, what shall be done in the dry?* that is, If they do these things in a vigorous, strong, and flourishing tree, meaning Christ himself, who was like a tree full of sap and life; what shall be done in those that are dry? The best of men compared to Christ, are but dry trees, how fear and rotten then are the worst? And if Christ suffered these things for sinners, himself being without sin, what shall those sinners suffer, who are without Christ? They, like dry trees, will soon be consumed by the fire of Gods wrath. So that, when he saith, They shall not be green, it is as much as to say, They shall have no strength, vigour, life, nor beauty. Taking the branch in this sense for Children, Observe,

A wicked Father brings a curse, and withering upon his whole Family.

His branch shall not be green. Though they walk not in the ways of their Fathers, nor inherit their sins, yet they may receive temporal fadings, and outward decays upon their Fathers account. It is a misery to be the branch of a wicked stock (for though an evil stock may have good branches, they who are evil, not onely (as all are) descending from a common evil stock, but also from a particular evil stock (as most are) even some of these are made good by transplantation into Jesus Christ, yet (I say) it is a misery to be a branch of an evil stock) many Children have fared the worse for the wickedness of their Parents, even good Children may fare somewhat the worse for their Parents wickedness. Though God will not lay eternal judgment upon them for the wickedness of their immediate or remoter Parents, yet they may feel delinings, and lose much of their greenness and beauty. It is a disadvantage to be in any relation to a wicked man, Servant, Wife, Children, his whole Family may groan and smart for his sake, *His branch shall not be green.* That's not all yet;

Vers. 33: **And he shall shake off his unripe Grape as the Vine, and shall cast off his flower as the Olive.**

That is, His unripe Grapes and Flowers shall be shaken and cast off. By whom? Some say by God. *He* (that is, God) *will snap off his sour Grape as the Vines*, saith Master *Broughton*; and indeed whatsoever is the wind that shakes them, it is God who blows and sends the wind.

These words are a gradation to what went before, here are two similitudes to set forth one thing, the certain and sudden destruction of all the hopes of a wicked man, *His branch shall not be green*; his Children and Posterity, especially they that follow his steps shall wither; and, which is yet a greater judgment, *He shall shake off his unripe Grapes as the Vine*, &c. Though his branch be green a while, though he hath leaves and buds, yet before 'tis perfect fruit, and gives a pleasant taste, it shall be destroyed: This he shadows under these metaphors, *of the Vine, and the Olive, shaking off his unripe Grapes, and casting off his Flowers.*

The Naturalist observes, that these trees flourish near about the same time, and that the Vine and the Olive joyn, and are (as it were) spoused together; and if storms, or blasts of wind smite the Olive and the Vine, while they put forth their flowers, the hope of the Husbandman is utterly disappointed. We may sum up the meaning of these two similitudes into this brief conclusion.

Eodem fere tempore vites & oleæ florescunt, Plin. l. 17. c. 25. *Aliquando vites maritantur oleis.* id. ib. c. 4. *Pessimus est inter omnia, quum deflorentem vitem & oleam imber percussit; quoniam simul defluit fructus.* Plin. l. 17. c. 25.

That God will utterly destroy the very appearing hopes of wicked men. Their boughs and branches may be green, some flowers, some unripe Grapes may appear; here is hope; but, *He shall shake off*; that is, God shall shake off by some terrible storm which he will raise, by some sudden judgment which he will send) their unripe Grapes, and their fairest Flowers.

Hence observe, *Violent judgments storm wicked men out of all their comforts.*

Thus the Egyptians are threatned (*Isa.* 18. 5, 6.) *Before the Harvest, when the bud is perfect, and the sour Grape is ripening in the Flower, he shall both cut off the sprigs with pruning-hooks, and take away, and cut down the branches: They shall be left together, unto the Fowls of the Mountains, and to the Beasts of the Earth, and the Fowls shall Summer upon them*, &c. The Bud is perfect, while the fruit is imperfect, while God takes away their Buds, he destroyes their hopes. And as God hath his winds at hand, to shake the fruit from off the branches; so he hath his Pruning-hooks to cut off the branches also.

De immatura morte filiorum duas similitudines affert.

Some interpret these unripe Grapes of the Vine, and Flowers of the Olive, as the branch before, for Children, as if *Eliphaz* would here re-mind *Job*, how his Posterity, the Grapes of his Vine, were shaken off, before they were ripe, and the Flowers of his Olive blasted in the Bud; or, as if he would upbraid him with the four manners, and ill-tasted conversation of his Children, under this Allusion of unripe Grapes, which, instead of pleasing the palate by a savoury relish, do only by their sharpness set the teeth on edge.

Odiose Eliphaz *ut acerbos filiorum* Jobi *mores notaret, ipsos omphaci contulit.*

Hence Note, *It is an affliction upon the best, and a judgment upon many, to have their Children, their Grapes and Flowers rent from them, and taken away unripe: And then especially it is so, when God leaves no Grapes on the Vine, no Flowers on the Olive.*

To lose a hopeful Child is an affliction, what is it then to lose them all?

Eliphaz having dehorted the wicked man from trusting in vanity, upon these considerations; gives in the strength of his whole discourse in the two last Verses of the Chapter.

Vers. 34. **The Congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery.**

Epilogus est totius loci. Merc. *Apodosis superioris allegoriæ* Jobum *perstringens cui ista obvenerant.* Jun.

Vers. 35. **They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.**

As if he had said, Here is the sum of all, of all the sins, and of all the punishments of a wicked man. Here are two sorts of wicked men described, and these two (as was toucht before) by a Synechdoche, include all.

The first are such as worship God falsly, or with false hearts: they draw near to God with their lips, but their hearts are far from him, these are Hypocrites, *The congregation of Hypocrites shall be destroyed.*

As these are false with God in his worship, so others are false with men in their commerce and dealings. These are comprised in the second branch, *Fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery*: Bribery is put for all sins against our Neighbours, and hypocrisie for all sins against God. So that here we have sinners against the first Table, and sinners against the second; sinners against God, and sinners against men; in the compass of this division all sins and sinners are contained.

The Congregation of Hypocrites.] That is, Hypocrites, how many soever there be of them, though they be a full Congregation: Hypocrites, how strongly soever they are conjoyned and cemented, yet they shall be desolate.

יעד *Significat non solum congregari; sed in fœdus & pactum aut amicitiam convenire. Illa quæ congregantur ab hypocrita.* Aquin.

The Hebrew word signifies, not only to Congregate, and gather together several persons into one place, but to associate them into a Covenant, League, or Confederacy one with another: as if he had said, Though hypocrites combine, and covenant together, yet this *covenanting Congregation*, or these *unholy Leaguers*, shall be made desolate.

A second interpretation gives it thus, *The Congregation of hypocrites*; that is, all that Hypocrites do congregate; whatsoever they gather together, whether things or persons, their Riches, their Honours, their Relations, all shall be desolate.

Shall be desolate:] Or *barren*; the word signifies both; that which is desolate brings forth no fruit, and that which brings forth no fruit will quickly be desolate.

What an Hypocrite is, hath been shewed before, *Chapter* 8. therefore I will not stay upon it, but refer you thither, where *Bildad* told *Job*, *The hope of the Hypocrite shall perish*: Only note two things from the whole, *The congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate.*

First, *An Hypocrite is under a curse.* Of all men in the World, Hypocrites are deepest under a curse: They are most cursed, who are most wicked; Hypocrites are therefore more wicked than others, because they would seem not onely somewhat, but much more holy than others. It is bad enough to be bad; but it is worse to appear good when we are bad. They who delight in the shews of moral goodness, when they hate, or care not for the reality of it, shall surely meet with, not shews, but realities of penal evil. Their painted feigned fire of zeal shall be punished with the true fire of Divine wrath.

Secondly, Observe, *Hypocrites, how many soever they are, how strongly soever they are confederate, how much soever they have gotten together, shall be made desolate.*

It is not possible to make any power to withstand the power of God. Though like those uncircumcised Nations, *Gebal, and Amnon, and Amalek, the Philistims, and those of Tyre*, they all consult, and lay their heads together, to make a Congregation, yet God will break them all. How long soever their train be, how many soever their attendants be, and how strong soever their correspondency be, yet the Congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate.

And fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery.

Fire may be taken two wayes.

Either literally, and strictly, for the element of fire, or for ordinary fire.

Or it may be taken figuratively, and metaphorically, and so it signifies:

Either first, The wrath of God.

Or, secondly, Any effect of the wrath of God, any revenge, or judgment which God pours forth on wicked men. And so, what judgement soever God sends, we may call it a *Fire*, even that deluge of Water (as hath been noted) which drowned the old World, was (in this sense) a fire.

Divine judgments are represented by fire, upon these three grounds.

First, Because, as fire, they break forth suddenly, and unexpectedly; they are not like the fire that is for use, which we are long preparing and blowing before it will burn; but the Judgments of God are like an accidental fire, which breaks out, when no man looks for it, in a moment.

Os & lingua tribui solet igni nam dicitur lambere & depascere.

Secondly, They are fire, because of their destroying nature, so the Text speaks, it eats up, or devours. Fire is a great eater, fire hath a strong stomach; what will not fire digest? Fire will digest the whole sublunary World at last. *The Element shall melt with fervent heat*: Fire will digest Stones, Adamant, and Iron. Such is the wrath of God, nothing can stand before it, it will subdue the hardest materials, and toughest pieces. The hot stomach of the Ostrich (as some affirm) concocts Iron; what will not the heat of Gods anger concoct, and consume to ashes?

Thirdly, There is a mercilesness in the judgments of God, as in fire: We say, *Fire and Water have no mercy*; there is no intreating them, they are not onely hard, but impossible to be intreated. Such (in reference to wicked men) is the wrath of God; as good speak to fire not to burn, or to water not to drown, as to the wrath of God not to consume wicked men; it must and will do it (*Jer.* 15. 1.) *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me*, &c. to intreat, yet the sentence shall not be taken off, wrath must burn. Though prayer hath in many cases quenched wrath, yet sometimes the wrath of God cannot be quenched by prayer, nor intreated down, there is no speaking to it; and sometimes that it might burn quietly, the Lord hath said, *Pray not for this people. Fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery.*

Tabernacles of bribery, may be taken two wayes: Either for the Tabernacles of those who have taken bribes: Or the Tabernacles of those who have given bribes; for there goes (as we say) but a pair of Shears between him that gives, and him that takes bribes; both are of a piece, and both are alike mischievous and wicked. Some take bribes to pervert Justice, and others give bribes to pervert Justice: Fire is prepared for both their Tabernacles; that is, for their whole estates, or for all that belongs unto them. Yet *Eliphaz* may seem rather to aim at bribe-takers, or unjust Judges (among whom, he secretly numbers *Job*) who suffer themselves to be corrupted with gifts, and to have their eyes put out by rewards: The Septuagint is expres in that sense, *Fire shall consume* (say they) *the Tabernacles of Bribe-takers.* And indeed, if there were no bribe-takers, there would be no bribe-givers: as we say, *There would be no Thieves, if there were no Receivers.* The Receiver makes the Thief; and corrupt Judges, who take bribes, make so many bribe-givers.

שחד *Proprie munus quod datur ad corrumpendum judicem.* Drus.

δωροδοκίων *munera accipientium.* 70.

Further, The word which we translate *Bribery*, signifies properly a gift; and the Text may be rendred thus, *Fire shall con-*

consume the Tabernacle of Gifts. There are many gifts which are far from bribes. There are five sorts of gifts.

First, Gifts of Charity to the poor.

Secondly, Gifts of friendship between equals.

Thirdly, Gifts of duty from inferiours to those above them, to testifie either thankfulness or obedience.

Fourthly, Gifts of bounty and grace, from Superiors to those who are below them, to testifie their favour to them, and that they are well-pleased in them, or in their services; There is no hurt either in giving or receiving these gifts. These are onely testimonies of respect from man to man, and tend onely to maintain humane society.

But there is a fifth sort of Gifts, which we may call gifts of injury, or in the language of the Text, Gifts of Bribery: These are given, either to pervert, or delay Justice, and to overthrow a man and his cause.

Quid est שוחד *quod facit,* הר *unum, dantem scilicet & accipientem; quam primum accipit munus ab ipso, tunc accedit anima ejus ad ipsum, & fit sicut ille ipse.* Rab. Becei, *&c.* Buxtorf. Lex.

The Hebrew expresseth a gift in general, and a bribe, by the same word; because, as all bribes are gifts, so very many gifts are bribes. Gifts of charity, of friendship, of duty, of favour, are but few in comparison of bribing gifts. And 'tis exceeding hard for any man that is interessed in affairs of Judgement between man and man, to receive a gift from either of them, and not be brib'd by it, to transgress the rules of equity and righteousness. A gift transforms the Judge into a party, or makes (as the Hebrew Criticks tell us upon that word) the Judge and party to be but one person.

Lastly, *The Tabernacles of bribery*, may be taken, not only in general for the estates of those who have given or taken Bribes; but particularly for the very Houses which have been built by giving or taking bribes. Some have built houses, with what they have gotten by giving Bribes, and many by taking Bribes, have got enough to build houses: While such look on their houses and dwellings, they may say, if they will say the truth, *Injustice hath built us these houses; these are the tabernacles of bribery.*

Hæc sunt peccata Germanorum.

A Traveller coming to *Rome*, and viewing many famous structures, and goodly houses there, asked who built them? It was answered, *These are the sins of Germany*; the meaning was, that the Money brought for Pardons out of *Germany*, built those Houses. So we may say of many fair places, and goodly dwellings, These are Bribes and Oppressions, such a man built these by iniquity. Bribes may build houses, but bribe-takers cannot protect them: *The Tabernacles of bribery shall be consumed.*

Hence Observe, First, *Bribery is an odious sin.*

That sin which is put to express all sins against our neighbours, must needs be a very odious, as well as a very comprehensive sin. God loves judgment, bribery opposeth what God loves. God commands charity, as well as judgment; and delights to see men bountiful as well as righteous: Yet charity without judgement, and bounty without righteousness, are an abomination to God. God is a God of judgment, they that are against judgment, act not only against the rule which God makes, but against the example which God gives. It is as much the honour of God, that he is a God of judgment, giving all their due; as that he is a God of mercy, giving to all his what they have not at all deserved.

Secondly, Observe, *That which is sinfully gotten, shall be miserably lost. Fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery.*

There is nothing gained, though much be gotten by injustice. Many give bribes to undo others, and all who receive bribes, undo themselves. What is the advantage of any sinful gain, when the fire of Gods wrath consumes the gainer? *What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* And as the loss is infinite, that comes by sin, in reference to the next life; so at best, the gain is little, in reference to this present life: Either the actor of injustice, or his heir, shall find a fire in the foundation, a fire in the Stones and Timber of his House, and down 'twill come; Bribery never bought any lasting materials to build with: *Woe be to him* (saith the Prophet, *Hab.* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12.) *that coveteth an evil covetousness; or* (according to the Hebrew) *that gaineth an evil gain to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil: Thou hast consulted shame to thy house,* &c. *For the Stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the Timber shall answer it.* What shall the stones cry? Or, what shall the beam answer? The stones shall cry, that the mortar in which they were laid, was tempered with the bloud of innocents; and the beam shall answer, that it was set up by pulling down the poor.

Those are crying sins indeed, which cause stones that cannot speak) to cry: And what answer can be given for those iniquities which provoke *Timber beams* to answer? Such is the iniquity of oppression and injustice, which are the fruits of bribery. See a parallel place (*Jer.* 22. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.) the sum of which may be drawn up into this conclusion, given by *Eliphaz*, *Fire shall consume the Tabernacles of Bribery.*

Eliphaz having thus described the perishing estate of wicked men, as an argument to deterr and stave them off from wickedness, concludes his whole discourse with an Allegorical recapitulation both of their sin and misery, in the last words of this Chapter.

Vers. 35. **They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.**

The Scripture is frequent in this metaphor; we have it (*Psal.* 7. 14.) almost word for word, *Behold he travelleth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and hath brought forth falshood.* (*Isa.* 59. 4.) *They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.* The Apostle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 15.) speaks the same language, *When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* All alluding to the natural conception, formation, and production of Children. We have these three in the Text before us, the order of the words being a little altered.

Here is first, Conception; *They conceive mischief.*

Secondly, Formation; *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

Thirdly, the Birth; *Bring forth vanity.*

More strictly to the method of *Eliphaz*; we have first, the Conception; secondly, the birth of sin: And as if one birth were not enough, they return to their work, providing for a new birth of the old man; *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

עמל *Labor, molestia, perversitas.*

They conceive mischief.] The word which we translate mischief, signifies properly, labour, hard labour, or labour accompanied with a great deal of pains and sorrow; it signifies also wickedness, perverseness, We translate *mischief, They conceive mischief*, or some mischievous device to the dishonour of God, and the wrong of man.

They conceive] Conception is here the work of the mind; we ordinarily say, *We conceive such a thing*; that is, We take it in, or apprehend it by an act of the understanding.

Here's the truest character of a wicked man, he is one that conceives mischief. The allusion teacheth us:

First, *That a wicked man sins with much freedom of spirit, or he sins freely.*

He conceives mischief. The conceptions of the mind cannot be forced, nor can the conceptions of the body; and therefore the Law resolves it, That there is no rape, where conception follows. These conceptions are the joynt actings of the will and understanding, both concur in them. An unregenerate person is free to do evil, he needs not be forced to it, he cannot be forced from it; and every evil is the more evil, by how much the more freely it is done. The more voluntarily we sin, the more wickedly we sin.

Again, The conceptions of the mind are deliberate, there is a collecting of one thing from another, a debating in conceiving. Hence Note,

Secondly, *Wicked men sin with deliberation.*

They sit down and meditate, they lay the frame of wickedness in their hearts, and then set it up, or act it with their hands.

Note thirdly, *All the conceptions of wicked men are wickedness.*

They are very fruitful in wickedness, and they bear no other fruit. Mischief is not onely that which he conceives, but all that he conceives; he conceives nothing else. A wicked man cannot think or conceive one good thought; he may think of that which is materially good,

but he conceives no good (*Gen.*6.5.) *All the thoughts of the imaginations of his heart are onely evil and that continually.* All the Creatures which he forms in his mind, all the children of his understanding are deformed and monstrous; *He conceives mischief*, which, as it notes a continued act, so an act continued about, or upon the same object.

Fourthly, Observe, *To be a contriver, a plotter, a conceiver of mischief, is worse than to be an actor, or a doer of mischief.*

It is ill to have a hand in any sinful evil, it is worse to have a head in it, but worst of all to have a heart in it. Conceivers of mischief always have their hearts and heads in mischief; and if they are not stopt, will have their hands in it too: they who are plotters, and designers, would be actors. Hence they are called *Workers of iniquity*. They have an inward shop, and an outward shop: first they work it in their thoughts, and mould it there, and then it comes out. To conceive mischief, is properly the Devils trade, he rather deviseth than acts wickedness. There are many wickednesses in the World which he cannot act; but he is or would be the plotter, setter, and contriver of them all: This is the wickedness of the Devil: and every conceiver and deviser of mischief is of *the Devils trade*. A good man may (possibly) do evil, but a wicked man deviseth evil. As it notes the spiritualness of a man in holiness, when he doth not onely act that which is good, but his heart is upon it, he conceives and frames it in his mind. So it notes a man spiritually wicked, when his mind frames wickedness. The Apostle concludes of himself, (*Rom.* 7. 25.) *So then with my mind I serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the Law of sin.* Not that he willingly gave up his flesh to sin, but that he was carried through the infirmity of the flesh to some sinful actings, while his mind, his devisings, and contrivings, were according to the Law of God, and he *delighted in the Law of God concerning the inward man.* This is the spiritualness of holiness, and without this, there is no outward act of any account with God. It is what the mind moves to, not what the mouth speaks, or the hand doth, which commends us to God. What is it to God, that we serve his Law with our flesh, if with our minds, we either serve the Law of sin, or do not serve the Law of God? Man is not what he acts, but what he conceives, unless he act what he hath conceived. *They conceive mischief,*

And bring forth vanity.] Now they come to the birth; they are in travel after conception; they bring forth, and the Childs name is *Vanity*.

The Original word is rendred three wayes.

First, We say *Vanity*.
Secondly, Another saith *Lyes*.
A third saith *Iniquity*.

אין *Vanitas, mendacium, pervertit.&c.*

The word will bear any of, or all the three translations. They bring forth vanity, a lye, iniquity. They who conceive mischief, may bring forth any thing but what is good. Those three words may serve the same thing; every vanity is a lye, and any lye is vanity, and iniquity is both lye and vanity. The persons of whom *Eliphaz* discourseth, are said to bring forth vanity, on these three grounds.

First, Because they sometimes bring forth no fruit at all; they are conceiving mischief, but they can make nothing of it, their conceptions end in abortions; they devise and plot, but all is hatching of wind: The Church is so expressed, though in a different case (*Isa.* 26. 17, 18.) *Like as a Woman with Child, near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and cries out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord; We have been with child, we have been in pain:* The Church had conceptions for good, she hoped that the Lord would have done some great thing for her; yet after her conception, and travel, see what she brings forth, *We have been in pain, and brought forth wind*; that is, nothing at all, it proved a meer timpany; for so he explains it, *We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the Inhabitants of the World fallen*; that is, we have not obtained that deliverance that we hoped for in the earth, neither have our enemies (who are called by the Prophet, *The Inhabitants of the World*) been subdued under our power; they have not fallen. Now as the Church and people of God sometimes are disappointed in their expectations; they conceive, yet bring forth wind, not that Man-child of mercy which was expected: So, much more do wicked men, after all their pleasing conceptions, and pangs of travell, they bring forth vanity; and their vessel is marr'd upon the wheel.

Secondly, They are said to bring forth vanity, or a vain thing; because what they bring forth is not proportionable to their expectation. Their *Mountain* proves a Molehill or (as it was said of old) *a Mouse*. *Parturiunt montes,&c.*

Thirdly, Because the birth is not onely alwayes below, but often quite cross to their expectation; they conceive mischief against others, and bring forth mischief upon themselves: this is vanity, yea, and vexation of spirit, *They bring forth vanity.*

Observe from this allusion; *Wicked men cannot but act evil.*

They who conceive, must do their utmost to bring forth conceptions. As a Woman with Child cannot but bring forth when her time is come, and her pains are on her; if you would give her all the World it is impossible to divert or delay the birth. So is it with a wicked man, when he hath mischievous conceptions in his heart; *He sleepeth not unless he do mischief* (*Prov.* 4. 16:) Whatever comes of it, fall back, or fall edge, he must do it. He cannot forbear an attempt to do it, though it cost him his life; many have been at that cost, in attempting to do it, but could not.

Observe, secondly, *Wicked men are oft put to much pain in fulfilling their lusts, or in acting their conceived mischiefs.*

It is with such men as with the Women in Child-bearing, on whom the Lord hath laid that heavy burthen, *In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children* (*Gen.*3.16.) wicked men feel this to the full, *In sorrow they bring forth*: *The wicked man travelleth in pain all his dayes*, vers. 20. It is their delight to sin, but for the most part they smarr in sinning, and run through many sorrows to accomplish their sin. They are so mad upon sinning, that the sweetness of doing mischief pleaseth them more, than all the troubles they go through in doing it discourageth them. Many evils cannot be done with ease, it costs sinners dear to effect what they design; they often have, as we say of women, after long and sore travel in child-bearing, *A very hard bargain of it*, and pay very dear for that which is worth, or worthy of nothing but repentance or greater pain.

Thirdly, Taking vanity for iniquity; which sense was given in opening the terms.

Observe, *Such as our thoughts and conceptions are, such are our productions.*

They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity; such as we plow and sow in the mind, such is the Harvest of our actions: The very form, the lineaments and portraiture of a mans spirit, is drawn upon the things he doth; his works are the image of his heart. As it is said of *Adam* in nature, *He begat a Son in his own likeness*; so doth every man in morals. Our actions are as our selves are, they are begotten and brought forth in our own likeness, whether good or evil, onely with this difference; Good actions are born in our supernatural likeness, evil actions in our natural likeness.

Fourthly, As to bring forth vanity imports, as was interpreted, either no fruit, or that which is not sutable to the designs and desires of wicked men,

Observe, *Sinful conceptions often prove abortive, and miscarry; they bring forth nothing, or nothing as they would have it, who have conceived them.*

The birth is sometimes short in degree, and not seldome contrary in kind; they have not what they expect, yea, they have what they least expect (*Psal.* 2. 1.) *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?* Why a vain thing? Because they cannot obtain their desire: it is vain to imagine the pulling down of Christs Kingdome, which must stand for ever. *Pharaoh* designed mischief, *Let us work wisely*; (here is the language of conceivers) but he brought forth vanity, in all the notions spoken of: vanity, as it was a sinful and wicked act; vanity, as he failed in the thing he did expect; he thought to bring destruction upon Israel, but he could not; he thought to subdue the people of Israel, and

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make them ſlaves for ever, but he could not: He brought forth vanity alſo in the worſt ſenſe, the iſſue was contrary to his expectation, himſelf and his Army were ſwallowed in the Red Sea, and Iſrael was ſaved. *Haman* deviſed miſchief againſt the Jews, but he brought forth vanity; he did not effect what he intended againſt them, this was vanity; nay, it wrought the contrary way, himſelf was hanged on the gibbet he had prepared for *Mordecai*, this was vanity and vexation too; every wicked man brings forth vanity in ſome one, if not in all theſe notions of it, after all his conceptions of miſchief.

Perſeverante allegoria venter ſumitur ex conſueto loquendi modo ſacri ſermonis pro intelligendi facultate. בטן

And their belly prepareth deceit.] The belly is taken here metaphorically, for the underſtanding, or *mind*; becauſe natural conception is in the belly wrought; therefore *Eliphaz* proſecutes the Allegory in ſuitable expreſſions, *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

The word ſignifies,

To prepare { Accurately, / Strongly.

Their belly prepareth deceit: They expreſs a kind of curioſity in working, they are very exact in every point; they prepare with art, they will not have their work like a Cobweb, curious, yet weak; but they muſt have it ſtrong too; they prepare for eſtabliſhment, and plot as if it were for everlaſting. So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 37. 3. *Pſal.* 89. 14.) *Righteouſneſs and judgment are the habitation of Gods throne.* It is this word, *The eſtabliſhment or ſtrength of Gods throne is righteouſneſs and judgment*: Righteouſneſs and judgment are the baſis and eſtabliſhment of all Thrones; That which hath made Thrones to totter in all ages, hath been the want of righteouſneſs and judgment.

The wicked man in the Text prepares not only curiouſly, but ſtrongly; as he likes no bungling, ſo he is not pleaſed with toyes and bables; he would lay his deſignes ſo cunningly, and ſo firmly, that as they ſaid of the *Powder-plot*, All the Devils in Hell ſhall not diſappoint it: He hopes to catch and hold, not the weak Flyes only, but the ſtrongeſt Eagles, in his deceits and ſnares.

Their belly prepareth deceit.] That is, they prepare to deceive and enſnare: The Prophet denounceth judgment againſt the Prieſts, againſt the houſe of Iſrael, and againſt the houſe of the King, becauſe they had been a *ſnare upon Mizpeh, and a net ſpread upon Tabor* (*Hoſ.* 5. 1.) that is, becauſe they had prepared nets and ſnares to entangle and deceive the people. Their bellies prepared deceit; and ſo did theirs, who ſaid (*Jer.* 18. 18.) *Come, let us deviſe devices*; let us contrive ſomewhat to enſnare the Prophet (*Jer.* 18. 18.) *Their belly prepareth deceit*: He ſpeaks in the preſent tenſe, as if they were alwayes doing it; they know neither vacation nor ceſſation from this wicked work. It is a continued act, *Their belly prepareth.*

Hence obſerve, *A wicked man is conſtant in conceiving and contriving wickedneſs.*

He doth it not by ſtarts and fits, his belly is ever preparing; when one deceit is wrought off, he goes to work upon a ſecond, and then he projects for a third. Some ſpeak of a *perpetual motion*, we find it here; what a man doth naturally, he doth conſtantly. Though there be much art in preparing deceit, yet it is the work of ſinful nature; the frame, the engine of a wicked mans heart moves perpetually, *He prepareth deceit*, he is alwayes at it. As *David* profeſſeth (*Pſal.* 45. 1.) *My heart is inditing a good matter, I will ſpeak of the things which I have made touching the King.* *David* had ſome holy work ready made, but he had more a making; he ſaith not, I have endited, but *my heart is enditing*; I am upon it, it is my continual ſtudy. So alſo the wicked mans heart is alwayes preparing and deviſing unholy work, or that which is evil.

Again, *Their belly*; that is, their mind prepareth.

Hence Note, *The mind of man is the Shop wherein deceit is framed;*

Yea, the mind is not onely the Shop, but the Artificer; and it is not onely the Shop and the Artificer, but the very Tool that frames it: The underſtanding and wit of a wicked man, hammer out, and ſhape all his deceitful wares.

The hand and tongue begin where the mind ends; the tongue publiſheth, and the hand executes what the mind prepares, and the heart ſuggeſts. That which one of the old Poets ſaid of the Belly, under the notion of Appetite and Hunger, the ſame we may ſay of the belly, in the notion of this preparing; *This belly is the Maſter of all ſinful arts*, and that which gives out, and furniſheth man with all the cunning deceits of wickedneſs. *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theft, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies* (*Matth.* 15. 19.) theſe are the wares which are not onely laid up in the heart, as in a *Store-houſe*, but made in the heart, as in a *Work-houſe*; and from thence they proceed *ready made. The belly prepareth deceit.*

Artis magiſter ingenique largitor venter. Perſ.

Laſtly, Mark how *Eliphaz* deſcribes the wicked man in his actions, *He conceiveth miſchief, and brings forth vanity.* And yet again, he is *preparing deceit.*

Note from it, *An evil heart is never diſcouraged by any diſappointments from going on in evil.*

One would have thought, after he had conceived miſchief, and brought forth nothing but vanity, that we ſhould have heard no more of him; that he would now ſit down and be quiet, but *his belly prepareth deceit* preſently; he will to it again, he will try once more; if he fail in one plot, he hopes to thrive in another; he will ſow his ſeed of ſin in the morning, and in the evening he will not withhold his hand; and though he ſee neither of them proſper, yea, though he ſee both of them blaſted, yet he will to his ſowing again. As a gracious heart receives many diſappointments and diſcouragements, but, ſaith he, I will not give over, *My belly ſhall prepare ſtill, holy, and juſt, and righteous things*; and the more he is diſappointed, the more holily he acts: So doth a wicked man more ſinfully; for he acts as ſtrongly and naturally in his ſtate, as a godly man doth in his; and therefore he will not be put off by diſappointments. He ſaith in the words of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 23. 35.) *They have ſtricken me, and I was not ſick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not, when I awake, I will ſeek it yet again.* Wicked men in general, as well as Drunkards in particular, of whom *Solomon* there ſpeaks, meet with many blows, and are often ſick with following their ſin; yet (becauſe they are never ſick of ſin) as ſoon as ever they awake, and recover a little, they forget all their wounds and ſickneſſes, and reſolve to ſeek it again. They pleaſe themſelves ſo much with what is to come, that they ſlight all that hath been done, and reſolve with thoſe (*Iſa.* 56. 12.) *To morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant*: They are preparing for ſin, even while they are ſinning: It is ſaid (*Revel.* 6.) that he on the Red Horſe *went forth conquering and to conquer*: he had not onely a preſent conqueſt, but a project to conquer; he was actually a Conqueror, and having conquered, he had freſh deſigns in his eye. As Chriſt goes out thus conquering, and to conquer, ſo wicked men go out doing evil, and to do it; deceiving, and to deceive. *Their belly prepareth deceit*: though they have brought forth vanity once and again, yet they prepare, as aſſured of victory.

This ariſeth three wayes.

Firſt, From the extream love and good affection which a carnal heart bears to ſin: as the love which believers bear to Chriſt, is not onely a motive provoking them to do for Chriſt, but alſo to perſevere in doing for Chriſt, though they ſuffer much in doing for him; he that loves Chriſt, will not onely ſweat at his work, but bleed at his work, if his work cannot be carried on without bleeding. Thus alſo the love of wicked men to their luſts, is not onely a motive provoking them to fulfill their luſts, but to endure any thing for the fulfilling of them; *Love is the ſpring of labour, actions are affections put forth, and made viſible*: Love is alſo the ſpring of valour, as well in a bad cauſe, as in a good cauſe: What is it that love dares not attempt, towards the attainment of what we love? *Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.* Love is ſuch a vehement flame, that though you caſt the waters of ſorrow, yea, flouds of trouble upon it, yet theſe cannot extinguiſh it; much more then will it keep alive after many deferrs and diſappointments. It is the obſervation of one of the Ancients, that Love built the two Cities; Holy Love built the City of God, and unholy Love built, or is daily building the City of Satan: And though it be much hindred and oppoſed in building this City; yea, though the

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materials with which it would raise and fortifie this City, be often scattered and broken, yet these Builders will provide more materials, *Their belly prepareth deceit.*

Secondly, This their unwearied projecting and acting after discouragements and disappointments, ariseth from the extream desire they have to attain their end. It is a true Axiom, that, *The appetite of the end is infinite.* Whatsoever a man proposeth to himself as his end in any undertaking, will carry him on without end till he do attain it: As rest is the natural end of motion, so till man hath reached his civil (though sinful) ends, he cannot rest. A wicked man proposeth an end to himself in evil actions, as well as an honest man doth in good: and therefore till that profit, or pleasure, or honour, or revenge, which he proposeth to himself be enjoyed, he is unsatisfied; let God or Man put as many stops as they will in his way, let his first, and second, and third *conceptions of mischief* conclude in the *bringing forth of vanity*, yet he is not concluded by it, he will try a fourth, and a fifth time too, *His belly again prepareth deceit.*

Thirdly, His hope to speed at last, puts him forward to new experiments, when former ones have failed; he perswades himself he shall obtain, if he continue. As the Saints having prayed, and waited long without an answer from God, yet go on praying, *their belly prepareth new prayers*, because they have a good ground to hope that God will hear at last: So ungodly men persevere in plotting mischief, because they have strong hopes (though but the shadow of a ground to hope) that they shall one day accomplish their desires. As the heart would break for sorrow, so both heart and hand would break off from labour, were it not for hope. But where hope of attaining lives, especially where it is lively, there such will labour as long as they live: Though they have hitherto been deceived in their expectation, *yet their belly prepareth deceit.*

Thus *Eliphaz* prosecutes his dehortation; and though he saith not to *Job*, as *Nathan* did to *David*, *Thou art the man*; yet *Job* was the man he meant, *the man, who* (in his opinion) *had conceived mischief, and brought forth vanity; yea, the man whose belly was even then preparing deceit.* How much *Eliphaz* was deceived, appears upon the whole matter; what *Jobs* belly, his mind, his inward man was preparing, will appear by his own answer in the two Chapters following.

CHAP. XVI. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Then Job answered and said,

I have heard many such things: Miserable comforters are ye all.

Shall vain words have an end? Or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?

I also could speak as ye do: if your souls were in my souls stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you.

But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.

HIS Chapter, and that which follows, contain *Jobs* second answer to the second charge of *Eliphaz*. He calls it an answer, but in strictness of speech it is a rejoynder; and he rejoynes with some acrimony and sharpness of speech. *The longer contention is maintained, the hotter are the spirits of the contenders; and the more we are put to answer, the more angry are our answers.*

Vers. 1. **Then Job answered and said;**

And what said he? His answer consists of three general parts.

In the first, he confutes what *Eliphaz* had asserted; which he doth to the eighteenth Verse of this sixteenth Chapter.

Secondly, He proceeds to corroborate and confirm his own Tenet or Opinion; which he doth to the eleventh Verse of the seventeenth Chapter.

Thirdly, He renews his former complaints and desires; which he doth from that eleventh Verse to the end of the Chapter.

The first part of his answer, is confutation; and he begins his confutation with an accusation; with an accusation of those who had disputed with him: and that's the subject of these five Verses, in all which he taxeth, or checks his friends for their unfriendly and uncomely dealing with him; and he checks them (as *Eliphaz* had done him at the beginning of the former Chapter) upon five points of errour and unfriendliness.

First, For speaking unprofitably, or for telling him no more than he knew before, at the entrance of the second Verse, *I have heard many such things.*

Secondly, He chargeth them for speaking *such things*, as did rather increase, and boyl up, than mittigate and allay his sorrow, *Miserable comforters are ye*, in the close of the second Verse.

Thirdly, He accuseth them for speaking so much, or for endless speaking; their discourse was tedious, they would not give over, Thus he takes them up at the third Verse, *Shall vain words have an end?* What, will you be endless? will you never have done?

Fourthly, He accuseth them for their causless speaking, in the same third Verse, *What emboldeneth thee?* (or what provoketh thee) *that thou answerest?* As if he had said, *Have I given thee any cause?*

Fifthly, and lastly, He reproveth his and their whole carriage towards him, by a serious profession of his contrary carriage, or that he was purposed to deal better with them, upon supposition that they were in his case; and this he doth two wayes;

First, Telling them what he could do, if they were in his case; *Verse 4. I also could speak as you do, if your soul were in my souls stead, I could heap up words against you,* &c.

Secondly, Telling them what he would do; *But I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief, Verse 5.* That's the course which I would take; I could deal as harshly with you as you do with me, but I would not; you should find me in another strain and temper. *Then Job answered and said.*

Vers. 2. **I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all.**

We find this point tossed both wayes; *Jobs* Friends telling him, that he spake but ordinary matter, and he telling them that they spake so too. *Bildad* chargeth *Job* with it, *Chap.* 8. 2. *How long wilt thou speak these things? And how long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?* As if he had said, *Thou speakest impertinently, or what thou speakest doth not much concern the point in hand, it comes not up to the matter; yea, it is quite besides the mark.* And so *Zophar* (Chap. 11. 2, 3.) *Should not the multitude of words be answered? And should a man full of talk be justified?* Thou doest but *Verba dare*, thou speakest to little purpose, or little to the purpose, though thou speakest much.

Eliphaz puts the same language upon him, (*Chap.* 15. 2, 3.)

2, 3.) *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the East wind? Should he reason with unprofitable talk, or with speeches wherewith he can do no good?* Thus his Friends accused him of that for which now he accuseth them; and he himself had accused them once and again of this before: So (*Chap.* 12. 2, 3.) *Who knoweth not such things as these?* They are but vulgar truths which you have told me; and (*Chap.* 13. 1, 2.) *Loe mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard, and understood it; what ye know, the same do I know also; I am not inferiour to you.* You produce nothing all this while but what I am well acquainted with; which is fully the sense of this Verse: *I have heard many such things*: that is, Every man can speak as much as this. Here *Job* playes the Orator, or Rhetorician, whose business and design (as the great Orator tells us) is as much as he can to extenuate, and lay low the arguments and reasons of him that he opposeth. *Job* stands as Defendant here, his Friends as Plaintiffs; therefore he endeavours to render their Charge weak, and what they said, sinnewless; *I have heard many such things as these.*

Rhetorico modo principium sumit ab extenuatione, vice quippe defensoris agit. Pined. *Defensor causam fuisse negabit si potest, aut eam vehementer extenuabit.* Cic. l. 2. ad Heren.

Job doth not accuse his Friends, as giving out false and erroneous Doctrine: for himself had heard and learned those things before; but he accuseth them for bringing proofs which were not to the purpose, or which were insufficient to prove their purpose: As if he had said, *I expected when you would produce some stronger arguments to maintain your opinion, or clearer answers unto mine: I waited for some new matter, and to have heard somewhat that I had not heard before, but you have deceived my expectation*: For, *I have heard many such things as these.*

Hence Note, First, *Some truths are of very common observation.*

Who knoweth not such things as these? Every Child that hath been Catechised, knows them. 'Tis no disparagement to any truth, that it hath been often heard, and is commonly known. The more common a truth is, the more weighty it may be. Yet, Which gives us a second Observation.

Ordinary truths will not serve in extraordinary cases, and that which every man knows and hears, will not resolve us in those points which few men know or hear.

As *Jobs* Person was a *Phœnix* in the World, his age afforded not his second; *There is none like him in the earth*, saith God himself to Satan (*Chap.* 1. 8.) So *Jobs* condition was a *Phœnix*, it had no second; there was no man tryed like him in the whole earth; and therefore his case could not be measured by the common Standard, or rule of Providence. *He had need hear that which was never heard before, who bears and feels that which was never born nor felt before.* There are some temptations on afflictions, as the Apostle speaks (*1 Cor.* 10. 13.) *which are common to man*: Common truths may comfort and satisfie the consciences of such. But there are temptations (such were *Jobs*) which are not common to man, we can hardly find their parallel, or a president of them in the Records of any age: Common truths will not comfort, nor satisfie the consciences of such. Every dispensation hath a doctrine suitable to it; dispensations which are seldome seen, call up doctrines which are seldome heard.

Secondly, *Job* complains, that he hears only those things which he had often heard.

Hence observe, *It troubles a man in trouble, to be often pressed with the same thing.*

A man at ease is pained with unnecessary repetitions; much more a man in pain, and though they who like and love the things which they have heard, do both love and like to hear them often; yet (in some cases) they may hear them too often. Some indeed speak very prophanely, what *Job* spake justly; who when they would not put off submission to, and attendance upon holy Doctrine, say, We know before we go what he will say: We know such things as the Preacher usually speaks; what can he tell us, that we have not heard before? That's the language of the Prophane; *We know as much as he can teach us.*

Though it be granted, that a man knows as much as the Preacher can tell him, yet he ought to hear it again. Though the matter be known before, yet to hear it often may work a better knowledge, and leave a stronger impression upon the heart than ever. 'Tis profitable to write the same things, therefore it cannot be unprofitable to hear them (*Phil.* 3. 1.) *Brethren, to write the same things, to me, it is not grievous, and to you it is profitable*: If to write, then to speak the same things is profitable. In the Story of the Acts of the Apostles, when *Paul* had preached in the Synagogue; the Jews being gone, the Gentiles besought him, That those words might be preached the next Sabbath (*Acts* 13. 42.) The repeating and inculcating the same thing, is not alwayes blameable, and it is sometimes desireable: but when a man is under sore afflictions and temptations, when he is burthened with many sorrows, it is very grievous to have those things that have been often answered or assented to, again objected, or asserted. A weak stomach must have variety and change, to entice the appetite, and so must a troubled and distempered spirit; *I have heard many such things*: And hereupon he inferrs:

Miserable comforters are ye. As if he had said, This is a miserable way of comforting, alway to be beating upon, and inculcating the same thing; *Job* calls his Friends *Physicians of no value*, (*Chap.* 13. 4) Here he expounds himself, while he calls them, *Miserable comforters*: He is a Physician of no value, who instead of curing, increaseth the disease; and he is a miserable comforter, who instead of abating our sorrow, adds to it, and heightens it, *Miserable comforters are ye.*

It seems the Friends of *Job* (at least to his sense) had forgotten the design they proposed to themselves when they first undertook this visit, (*Chap.* 2. 11.) *They made an appointment together, to come, and mourn with him, and to comfort him.* That was the intendment of *Jobs* Friends at their first addresses. Yet, after so long a conference, he makes this report, *Miserable comforters are ye*; ye rather vex than heal any sore; you, my Friends, have troubled me more than my wounds, you have wounded my spirit more than Satan did my flesh; *Miserable comforters are ye.*

Consolatores malorum; i. e. *malos potestis consolari.* August.

One of the Ancients renders the words thus, *Ye are comforters of evil men*; or, *possibly, you may comfort evil men*; but you cannot comfort me. As that which is one mans meat is another mans poyson; so that which is one mans comfort is another mans sorrow. All good men cannot take in their comforts the same way; but the way of comforting good and evil men, differs as much as good and evil. The words of flattery and falshood will serve to comfort the one, no words will comfort the other, but those of sincerity and truth. I dare not conceive *Jobs* Friends such as would sow Pillows under the elbows of evil men, yet surely they put hard stones under the sore and aking arms of this good man.

Consolatores Onerosi. Vulg.

The Vulgar translation speaks thus, *Ye are burdensome comforters.* A comforter should take off burdens; sorrow is a burden: As the judgments that God threatned upon the Jews, and other Nations, are represented in the Prophets, under the name of burthens, *The burthen of Judah*; the *burthen of Israel*; the *burthen of Moab*; the *burthen of Babylon*; the *burthen of Idumea*: So any affliction upon a person, is his burthen; and the business of those who come to comfort a soul in affliction, should be to take off his burthen, at least to lighten it. *Jobs* Friends did indeed bind the burthen faster upon his spirit, and therefore he might well call them *Burthensome comforters.* False hearts count all truth a burthen: *The land* (saith *Amaziah*) *is not able to bear his words* (*Amos* 7. 10.) yet his were words of truth, and tended to peace. Some truths may be burthensome at some times to a good heart. Hard words are alwayes burthensome; *Job* had store of them.

מנחמי עמל *Consolatores laboris aut molestiæ.* Heb.

The letter of the Hebrew gives the sense thus; *Ye are comforters of trouble*; that is *troublesome comforters*: As if he had said, *Ye do not comfort me in my troubles, but ye trouble me with your comforts: Ye are comforters made up of trouble; that's the predominant Element, which denominates your complexion and constitution; ye are so troublesome, that you seem to be nothing but trouble.* Our rendring in the concrete is clear to *Jobs* scope, *Miserable comforters are ye all.*

Hence

Hence obſerve, *Some, while they go about to act the part of comforters, do but add to their ſorrow, whom they pretend to comfort; and inſtead of comforters, prove tormentors.*

But when doth a man deſerve this title, *A miſerable comforter?* That which cauſed *Job* to charge his Friends with this miſcarriage of their pains with him, will reſolve the queſtion, and tell us when.

Firſt, They gave him little hope of good, or they did not open to him a door of hope wide enough: 'tis true, they made ſome overtures that way, which yet (comparatively to what they ought) were ſcarce conſiderable. And *Eliphaz*, who had been ſomewhat large upon the point in his firſt congreſs with *Job*, ſpeaks nothing of it in his laſt: For, as if he thought his caſe deſperate, and had given him for a loſt man, he ſhuts up in the dark, as we ſee, in the cloſe of the former Chapter; where he thunders out the judgments of God upon Hypocrites, and Bribe-takers, without ſo much as one word of comfort to the penitent: This is to be a *Miſerable comforter*. The ſong of comforters ſhould at leaſt be mixt, like that of *David* to the Lord, *of mercy, and of judgment* (*Pſal.* 101. 1.) A ſong of judgment alone, or moſt of judgment to a heavy heart, may be called (like that of *Jeremie*) *A Lamentation*, but it is not *a Conſolation*.

Secondly, They (as was toucht before) tyred out his afflicted ſoul with tedious diſcourſes, and unpleaſing repetitions; they alwayes harped upon the ſame ſtring, and that makes no muſick to a diſconſolate Soul. As God complains of thoſe Prayers as unpleaſing, which are full of unneceſſary repetitions; ſo alſo thoſe counſels are unpleaſing to man, which are made up of needleſs repetitions. To preſs the ſame point, though true, oft and oft, is a wearineſs to the ſpirit; and becauſe it ſuggeſts this ſuſpition, that the hearer doth oppoſe, or reſiſt that truth, it proves an upbraiding, rather than a teaching, or a comforting: Comfort muſt be ſtollen in unawares, by a holy ſlight of hand, it muſt not be beaten in with beetles, as it were by force of hand.

Subripere debet conſolatio & furtum facere affectibus. Sen.

Solomon tells us (*Prov.* 25. 12.) *As an ear-ring of Gold and an ornament of fine Gold, ſo is a wiſe reprover upon an obedient ear.* What he ſpeaks of a reprover is as true of a comforter; and he onely is fit to be a reprover, who is skill'd, or knowes how to be a comforter. He that will open or launce a ſore, had need be acquainted with the means of healing it. The ſpirit of God, who is *the Reprover*, (*John* 16. 8.) is alſo *the Comforter* (*John* 14. 26.) We may therefore take up *Solomons* Proverb here, *As an ear-ring of Gold, and an ornament of fine Gold, ſo is a wiſe comforter upon an obedient ear*. They who hang Jewels in their ears (as it was the cuſtome of thoſe times, and is to this day) take that which is of great price and value, yet of little weight: No man hangs a Talent, or a great lump of Gold in his ear: Gold is precious, but much Gold is ponderous, and burdens, rather than adorns the ear; the bulk of it is more comberſome, than the beauty of it is conſpicuous. So comfort, which is the moſt pleaſant Jewel of the ear, ſhould be pure and precious as the Gold of *Ophir*; but yet it muſt be like an ear-ring, which, though it be not light, in regard of worth, yet it is light in regard of weight. We muſt not load, but guide a man with counſell, nor muſt we burden him with many, but eaſe him with pertinent words of comfort.

Eſto correptio non levis prætii ſed levis ponderis.

Thirdly, That which rendred them yet more miſerable Comforters, was, their unkind grating upon that ſtring of his ſinfulneſs and ſtudied hypocriſie. *Job* acknowledged himſelf a ſinner, and that he could not be juſtified in the ſight of God by any righteouſneſs of his own; yet ſtill his friends were unſatisfied about his ſincerity; and ſtill they preſented him with ſuſpicions of ſecret wickedneſs, as the cauſe of all his ſufferings; ſtill they told him of the ſad fate of Tyrants, of Oppreſſours, of unjuſt Judges, of unſound, and falſe-hearted Worſhippers; and though they did not apply theſe Parables perſonally to *Job*, yet the general diſcourſe ſounded, as if they had ſaid, *Thou art the man.*

Now as the Apoſtle ſpeaks concerning death (1 *Cor.* 15. 56.) ſo may we ſay concerning any affliction, *The ſting of affliction is ſin*; the ſting of ſickneſs, the ſting of poverty, the ſting of diſgrace is ſin: when the leaſt trouble is armed with ſin, the ſtrongeſt tremble at the ſight of it. A godly man can eaſier bear the weight of all afflictions, than the weight and burthen of one ſin; ſo long as he ſees all clear between God and his own ſoul; ſo long as he can look up to God, as having his ſin pardoned, and can approve his heart to God, that he lives not in any known ſin; in this caſe, though the Lord lay the heavieſt burthen of affliction upon him, he can go lightly under it; *The ſpirit of a man will bear all theſe infirmities*: but if his ſpirit be wounded, either with the guilt of ſin, or with the fear of the wrath of God, how can he bear it? This afflicts more than all other afflictions. This was it which cauſed *Job* to cry out, *Miſerable comforters*: His Friends ever upbraiding him with his ſin, his ſin, his ſin, as the root, and therefore as the ſting of all his troubles. They applied nothing but theſe corraſives to his wounded ſoul, which called aloud for the balm of *Gilead*. There are two ſorts of miſerable comforters.

Firſt, They who flatter the ſoul that lives in ſin.

Secondly, They who imbitter, and burden their ſouls, who, being under burdens of ſorrow, are alſo in bitterneſs for their ſin.

Some ſow Pillows under the elbows of thoſe who delight in ſin, and dawb them up with untempered mortar; others thruſt ſwords, and ſhoot arrows into the bowels of thoſe who mourn for ſin; and inſtead of bringing well-tempered mortar to bind and cement their ſouls, lay hard ſtones under them, which vex and gall their ſouls. Both are *Miſerable comforters*.

They who undertake the office of comforting others, ſhould conſider theſe three things eſpecially.

Firſt, The nature of affliction, whether internal, or exterternal; that which will comfort a man in bodily afflictions, will not do it in ſoul afflictions.

Secondly, The degree, or meaſure of affliction: If the Plaiſter be too narrow for the Sore, how can it heal?

Thirdly, They ſhould conſider the temper of the Perſon afflicted, if he be preſſed in conſcience for ſin, they ſhould not preſs his conſcience with ſin; much leſs ſhould they thunder out judgment and terrour againſt him for ſin; if he be very weak, they ſhould uſe few words; if he he paſſionate, they ſhould uſe gentle words, leſt, inſtead of perſwading, they provoke his ſpirit: Many a ſoul is caſt down, and ſwallowed up in deſpair, by the ignorance or unfaithfulneſs of thoſe who would be called Comforters, and Supporters: (*Ezek.* 13. 19.) *They ſlay the ſouls that ſhould not dye, and ſave them alive that ſhould not live.* Unskilful Phyſicians of the body, kill more than bodily diſeaſes. And though the unskilfulfulneſs of Soul-phyſicians doth not indeed kill ſouls that ſhould dye (for 'tis their own ſin that kills them) nor can kill the ſouls that ſhould not dye (for the medicine of Chriſts moſt precious blood will heal and ſave ſuch from their ſins) yet un-skilful ſoul-phyſicians ſhall be judged and dealt with, as having done all this, becauſe they have done their utmoſt to do it; which is alſo the meaning of that Text (1 *Cor.* 8.) *And through thy knowledge ſhall the weak brother periſh, for whom Chriſt dyed*: that is, an indiſcreet uſe of that liberty which thy knowledge teacheth thee, doth that which may be accounted a deſtroying of thy weak Brother. As that knowledge, ſo the ignorance before ſpoken of, ſlayes the ſouls that ſhould not dye. As it requires the power, ſo the wiſdome and teachings of God to comfort and extricate poor ſouls, in and from the Labyrinth of their ſorrows.

The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned: What to do? *That I ſhould know how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary* (*Iſa.* 50. 4.) It is a great piece of learning to ſpeak aright to a weary ſoul, to deal with them ſo, as neither to flatter them in their ſins, nor oppreſs them under their ſins; to deal with them ſo in their affliction, as that we neither cauſe them to ſlight the hand of God, nor yet to ſink under it. He that can guide and ſteer the courſe of a ſoul that is afflicted, and toſſed with the tempeſt of ſin and ſorrow, between this rock and gulf, the *Scylla* of preſumption, and the *Charybdis* of deſpair, he is a learned Pilot indeed.

This Learning is the ſpecial gift of God; Chriſt himſelf acknowledgeth, that the Lord his Father had given him the tongue

tongue of the learned for this end. This learning is not taught in the Schools of men: Philosophers and Orators never taught such an art of consolation; nor can it be attained by the bare teaching of the holiest Doctors and Preachers of Divine truths. We may have a rich furniture of materials for this work, and yet make no work of it, nor be able to put truths and consciences rightly together, unless *the anointing teach us.* As the Prophet brings in our great Master and Tutor in this heavenly science, again confessing of himself (*Isa.* 61. 1.) *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives.* Till we are anointed by God, we cannot speak effectually to man; without the Spirit who is the Comforter, we prove but miserable comforters; we bungle at the work, and rather undo souls, then do them any good: We may preach *good tidings, good news*, from Heaven (the Gospel is nothing else but good news) yet no good comes of it, till the good Spirit comes with it, both instructing the hearts of those that hear, and the tongues of those that speak, duly to apply the Word.

Master *Calvin* upon this place saith, *Some Comforters have but one song to sing, and they have no regard to whom they sing it:* All persons, all estates, and all conditions are alike to them. The wisdom of a Comforter consists in discerning and making these differences: As the Apostle *Jude* hints unto us (*Ver.* 22, 23.) *And of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear:* As faith saves all, so (in a sence) fear saves some; that is, they must be terrified and made afraid, that they may be saved. *Job*'s Friends would needs save him with fear, whereas they should have had compassion of him, and have spoken kindly to him: Because they could not make this difference, therefore they took a wrong course with him, and were justly taxed without distinction, *Miserable comforters are ye all.*

Verse 3. Shall vain words have an end?

As if he had said, I have got no comfort, I would fain get some rest; your words have not refreshed me, I desire you would not trouble me, you have done me no good, will you have done?

רברי רוח *Verba venti, i.e. ventosa, parum solidæ rationis habentia.*

Shall vain words have an end? The Hebrew is, *Shall words of wind have an end?* That expression hath been opened twice before. *How long shall the words of thy mouth be like a strong East-wind,* saith *Bildad* (Chap. 8. 2.) *Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the East-wind?* saith *Eliphaz* (Chap. 15. 2.) *Job* retorts it upon them, *Shall words of wind have an end?* You tell me that my words are windy, yours are so indeed: I must hide my self from these blasts and storms of your tongues, unless you grow calmer; *Shall windy words have an end?* Words are windy:

Projicit ampullas, &c.

First, When they have no solid reason, no substance in them: Reason is the substance of words, and so is truth; these two go alwayes together; and where these are not, nothing goes out of the mouth but wind we say of all words which are not followed with action, *Words are but wind*; we may say so also of all words which are not accompanied with reason.

Verba plena spiritu superbiæ.

Secondly, Words are windy when they have much pride, and swelling conceitedness in them: The Scripture calls such words, *Swelling words of vanity:* That which swells our hearts, will quickly swell our lips; pride doth both. Pride is a wind within us; vain words are a wind without us: The proud man knows not how to ease himself of this wind within, but by breaking it out in words.

Thirdly, Words are windy when they have much passion in them, when they are angry and furious; an angry man blusters rather then speaks, and makes a noise rather then a discourse. While *David* (Psal. 39. 2, 3.) *was dumb with silence, while he held his peace from good, his sorrow was stirred, his heart was hot within him, and while he was musing, the fire kindled:* While some are even hoarse with speaking, while they cannot hold their peace from evil, their anger is stirred, their hearts are storming within them, and all their talk is only a wind blowing without them.

We read of a strange distemper in two sorts of men, who ought of all others to be most composed and temperate (*Hos.* 9. 7.) *The Prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad:* Our Translators put in the Margin, *The man of the Spirit*; for *Ruach* in Hebrew, signifieth both the wind that blows in the air, and the Spirit of God which moveth in our hearts: We take that sence, *The spiritual man, or the man of the Spirit*; that is, the man that pretends to have, or should have the Spirit of God (his business lying wholly in spirituals) this man *is mad*; he is so far from acting to the height of those graces which the Spirit gives, that he acts below that Reason which Nature gives. *Ish ruach.*

Yet the Original may be rendred thus (and so divers learned Hebricians render it) *The man of wind, or the windy man, is mad:* Anger is a short madness, and he that speaks angerly, is in danger to speak madly.

Job's Friends were not men of wind, nor were they mad, and the words which they spake had a general sence and savour of truth and soberness in them; yet (as to *Job*'s particular case) they wanted some grains of truth and reason, they were too high and swelling, considering how low and humble he was; they were too full of passion, being spoken to a man so full of sufferings. And therefore though that censure of his Friends words, *as vain* (who indeed were wise and grave men) was too censorious and sharp, yet it must be granted, that their words also were too sharp, even such as vexed his spirit, and wore out his patience, upon which account he expects and begs an end of them. *Shall vain words have an end?* That is, Will you make an end of vain speaking? I pray do, I wish you would: Cut of the thread of this discourse, you have spun it out and continued it, but too long already.

קֵץ *Finis a* קָצַץ *præcidit abscidit. Quia finis est tam temporis quam rei præcisio & terminus*

The Hebrew word which we translate an end, springs from a root which signifies to *cut off*, because every end, whether of time, or things, is the cutting off of that time or thing, the end of which it is. While *Job* asks the Question, *Shall vain words have an end?* He speaks the vehemency of his own desire and expectation, to see an end of them. I shall not stay here to give any Observations upon these words, but refer the Reader to the Texts before alledged, in the eighth and fifteenth Chapters, where this expression is more fully opened.

Only Note, First, *Vain words are very burdensome to a serious ear, much more to a sad heart.*

Secondly, *It is good to end that quickly, we should not have begun.*

Profitable words may be too long continued, but unprofitable words cannot be too soon ended! It is best not to speak vainly, and it is next best to cease, or give over such kind of speaking quickly. There is a time to be silent from good words, as well as a time to speak them; but there is no time to speak evil words; all times, in reference to them, are times of silence. An *Aposiopesis*, or sudden stop of speech, is the most sutable figure of Rhetorick which they can use, who speak unsutably. As the end of what we say or do well is best; so the ending of what we say or do amiss is best. Perseverance in every good word and work is Angelical, and the highest perfection of duty; but perseverance in an evil, whether word or work, is Diabolical, and the utmost departure from duty. Let not thy mouth open to utter vanity; but if it doth, shut it quickly: be not heard speaking that twice, which should not be spoken once.

Or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?

If thou wilt not make an end, then tell me why? Give me a reason; what is it that stirs thee to reply upon me, *What emboldeneth thee to answer?* The Hebrew word signifies, first, *To strengthen, to fortifie, or confirm*; he that is strengthened, is emboldened. It signifies also to be sharp, or bitter (*1 Kings* 2. 8.) *David* on his death-bed, tells *Solomon* his Son, and Successor in the Kingdom, that *Shimei* had cursed him with a grievous curse; that is, with a strong, bitter, and provoking curse, of which we read the Story (*2 Sam.* 16. 5.)

אָמַץ *Est robarare, fortificare acris esse.*

This Query is rendred three wayes.

First, As we, *What emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?*

As

As if he had said, *I thought I should have silenced thee before this time, or that thou wouldest have put silence upon thy self; I wonder who, or what it is that sets thee on to speak still; Dost thou think by thy renewed onsets to weary me, and make me yield at last? Hast thou a hope to prevail upon me by thy importunity, when thou canst not by thy reason? Or hast thou further strength of reason, fresh arguments to produce in confirmation of thine opinion? Are these but fore-runners, or thy Vauntguard? Is the main battel yet behind? Hast thou some reserves of greater power then thou hast yet led up against me? Let me see them if thou hast: If not, give over, and hold thy peace; For what shall either I or thou get by a further progress? What emboldeneth thee to answer?*

Job speaks wonderingly, his reason was at a loss about the cause of his Friends boldness, and therefore he admires it: There are two things which may embolden a man to answer.

First, The goodness and justice of that cause which he undertakes.

Secondly, The strength and assistance of God to carry him through it.

Upon these grounds, the youngest *David* may be bold to enter the Lists, and dare the Combate with the strongest *Goliah*. But there are two other things which usually embolden men to answer.

First, Self-confidence.

Secondly, Unwillingness to yield.

They who are thus emboldened, will not give over answering, though they have no further light of truth, or reason to hold out in their answers: *Job* surely had such apprehensions of his Friend *Eliphaz*, which moved him to ask, *What emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?*

Hence Note, *Such is the stiffness and vanity of some, that they will hold on a contention, though they have no further grounds of truth or reason to continue it upon.*

They will speak on though it be the same thing, only in a new dress of words. They have store of words, though scarcity of matter; we may justly say to such, *What emboldeneth you to answer?* It is more then boldness, a kind of impudence in such to answer: Pertinacy of spirit disdains to lay down the Bucklers. They who contend for victory, rather then for truth, will not be answered, how much soever they are answered: And they *who are more loath to be foiled, then will to be rectified, will hardly submit to the plainest and clearest evidence.*

Quid exacerbat te ut respondeas. Jun.

The second reading is, *What doth provoke thee to answer?* Or, *What imbitters thy spirit that thou answerest?* As if *Job* had said, *Surely* Eliphaz *my fair discourse with thee, should have stopped the course of this severe proceeding with me before this time; thou hast loaded me with hard words, and uncharitable jealousies; But have I spoken provokingly, or bitterly to thee? My conscience tells me that I have not, and thou knowest I have not.*

He that impartially reads over *Job*'s answers to *Eliphaz*, may find here and there a sowre passage; but as we say proverbially, *You must give loosers leave to speak.* The wise Physitian hears his Patient giving him uncomely language, yet will not hear it, much less retort or answer so again: They who are in pain must be born with; though they provoke, it must not be called a provocation; and though they give offence, yet it must not be taken. When the Child cryes, the Nurse sings: God himself bears with the manners of his people (so the word intimates, *Acts* 13. 18.) as a Mother doth with a froward Child; and so should we with the frowardness of our weak and afflicted Brethren. So that in this sence, the provocations which *Job* gave his Friends, were not to be reckoned as provocations; and he might well say to *Eliphaz*, *What provoketh thee to answer?* If I (in the case I am in) have spoken passionately, Wilt thou be provoked by it? Thou shouldst not. Thou oughtest to pass it by, and cover it with the garment of charity.

Yet further, we may take the words as a total denial of any provocation given on his part.

Whence Note, *Some will speak harshly to, and of those who never provoked, or gave them cause.*

Water runs clear till 'tis troubled and stirr'd by some outward violence: But the spirits of some men run muddy, though nothing from without stirs them. The Prophet compares all wicked men to *the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt* (Isa. 57. 20.) The Sea is not alwayes troubled, when the Winds are quiet, that is quiet; we often see a smooth Sea, as smooth as Glass: A wicked man is like the Sea when 'tis enraged, he is such a Sea as knows no calm; he is like the Sea, not only when it is troubled, but when it cannot rest. Though no breath of Wind from abroad offend him, yet he storms: He hath lusts in his own bowels, which provoke him when nothing else doth; yea, those lusts within provoke him, when all without labour to pacifie him.

So *David* complains (*Psal.* 120. 5, 7.) *Wo is me that I sojourn in* Mesech, *that I dwell in the Tents of* Kedar; that is, with the Sons or Descendants of *Ishmael*, who have learned of their Father to mock and persecute; I dwell in the Tents of *Kedar*: But what caused them to mock and persecute? Was it any provocation that *David* had given them? No, for he saith in the next words, *I am for peace* (I would live quietly with all my heart) but when I speak, they are for war. A motion for peace, becomes a provocation to war? It is sinful to speak rashly, or harshly, though we are provoked; What is it then to speak so when we are not provoked? *They angred* Moses *at the waters of strife, they provoked his spirit*; yet *it went ill with* Moses *for their sakes, when he spake unadvisedly with his lips* (Psal. 106. 32, 33.) But what was this unadvised speech. *Moses* reports his own infirmity (*Numb.* 20, 10. 11.) *And* Moses *and* Aaron *gathered the Congregation together before the Rock; and he said unto them, Hear now ye Rebels must we fetch you water out of this Rock? And* Moses *lift up his hand, and with his Rod he smote the Rock twice*, &c. The error of *Moses* in this business was twofold.

First, That he did not only smite the Rock, but smite it twice with the Rod in his hand, whereas he had order only, to *take the Rod in his hand, and speak to the Rock before their eyes, and it should give out water* (Vers. 8.)

His second error was, that he did not only speak to the people (for which in that transaction he had no order from God) but spake bitterly and harshly to them, calling them *Rebels*, and slighting them, *Must we fetch water for you?* &c. What, for you, who are a murmuring and gainsaying people? God knew the stubbornness of that people, and their rebellions against him, yet he did not call them *Rebels*, but said in the close of the eighth Verse, *So shalt thou give the Congregation, and their beasts drink.* God had more reason and power to call them *Rebels* then *Moses* had, yet he did not. And because *Moses* did, that unadvised speech of his, and the actions which attended it, were called Rebellion, at the twenty fourth Verse of the same Chapter, *Ye* (saith the Lord of *Moses* and *Aaron*) *rebelled against my word at the waters of* Meribah.

Now, if *Moses* was thus reproved and censured by God himself, for speaking passionately, to a people who had provoked both God their Deliverer, and him their Leader; What reproof do they deserve, who, either upon none, or very little provocation, call their Brethren, *Hypocrites, Hereticks, Schismaticks, Rebels, perjured Persons, Men of prostituted consciences, or at least, of unsetled and uncertain Principles*? Will not the Lord take notice of this bitterness, even in those who are his precious Servants, towards their fellow-servants, when he laid so heavy a penalty (as non-admission into the promised Land) upon a pair of the most eminent and faithful Servants that ever he called forth to his work, since he laid the foundations of the World?

This falls heavy upon the present Age: Whence is that bitterness, that Gall and Wormwood which falls from many, both Tongues and Pens, every day? What hath provoked them thus to speak and write? I confess there have been provocations, and some do but give Gall for Gall, and Wormwood for Wormwood; yet it cannot be denyed, but that many speak and write bitterly, when they have had no provocation; yea, most who speak bitterly, have been treated gently; and few who answer angerly will be able to give a good account what had provoked them thus to answer; and how much soever any man hath been provoked,

voked, the Lord may juſtly make him ſmart for ſuch ſmartneſs in anſwering. *It will not bear us out in acting or ſpeaking beſides the rule, becauſe others do ſo.* *Paul* ſhews us our duty in his own practice (1 *Cor.* 4. 12, 13.) *Being reviled we bleſs, being defamed we entreat:* We muſt not defame them that defame us; we muſt not revile our revilers. Then woe to thoſe who revile ſuch as bleſs them, and defame ſuch as entreat them: *O what provoketh ſuch to ſuch wayes of anſwering?*

Quid tibi moleſtum eſt ſi loquaris? Vulg.

There is yet a third reading of this clauſe, which I will but touch, *When ſhall vain words have an end? But what trouble is it to thee if thou ſpeakeſt?* Or, *Is it any trouble to thee if thou ſpeakeſt?* As if he had ſaid, *I cannot much wonder though thou doſt not end theſe vain ruffling diſcourſes, for I am perſwaded they are no great trouble to thee, how much ſoever they are to others; ſuch words coſt thee little ſtudy; thou needeſt not beat thy brains, or bite thy nails for ſuch matter as this.* That which comes next, and lyes uppermoſt, is all that ſome men have to ſay, when they have ſaid all. *They that ſpeak moſt to the pain of others, take leaſt pains themſelves.* We ſay, *Good words are cheap*, it coſts little to ſpeak fair; but ill words are cheaper. *Foul language coſts little in the preparation, though it may prove coſtly enough in the event.* There is a profitable ſence in this tranſlation, though I will not give it for the meaning of the Text.

It is our duty to conſider before we ſpeak, as well as before we act; and to put our ſelves to ſome trouble in preparing what we have to ſay, before we give others the trouble of hearing it. When God calls us to ſpeak, either in our own defence, or for the edification of others, on a ſudden, we may expect (according to the Promiſe, *Matth.* 10. 19.) *That it ſhall be given us in that hour what we ſhall ſpeak.* If the Providence of God ſtraiten us, the Spirit of God will enlarge us; that Promiſe will help us, when we have no time to prepare our ſelves; but it will not, if we neglect the time in which we ſhould prepare our ſelves: For when Chriſt ſaith in that place, *Take no thought how or what ye ſhall ſpeak*, we muſt expound it like that (*Matth.* 6. 25.) *Take no thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink*; which is not a prohibition of all thought about thoſe things, but only of thoſe thoughts which are diſtracting and diſtruſtful.

Job having reproved his Friends theſe three wayes, for the manner of their dealing with him; now reproves them by a ſerious profeſſion of his better dealing with them; in caſe (as we commonly ſay) *The Tables were turned*, they coming in his place, and he in theirs: This he doth in the two Verſes following.

Verſe 4. I alſo could ſpeak as ye do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead: I could heap up words againſt you, and ſhake mine head at you.

5. But I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief.

Job in this context tells his Friends two things.

First, What he could do.

And ſecondly, What he would do.

The former of theſe is laid down expreſly in the fourth Verſe.

Verſe 4. I alſo could ſpeak as you do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead, &c.

The Soul is here put (as often elſewhere in Scripture) for the whole man; then, his meaning is (and ſo Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates) *If you were in my place*, or *in my condition.* If God ſhould tranſcribe my wounds and ſorrows upon your backs and conſciences, or if my grief dwelt in your bowels, *I could ſpeak as you do*, &c.

The ſufferings of the ſoul hold out the ſufferings of the whole man, upon a twofold conſideration.

First, Becauſe the ſoul is the principal part of man. When that which is chief ſuffers, all may be ſaid to ſuffer.

Secondly, Becauſe afflictions which lye upon the ſoul are moſt afflictive: The ſenſitive power of the body, is called the ſoul, and we are moſt ſenſible of thoſe afflictions which fall immediately upon the rational ſoul. That man forgets the ſorrows of his body, whoſe ſoul is ſorrowful. The more inward any ſuffering is, the more grievous it is.

I alſo could ſpeak as you do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead, &c.

Some read the words Interrogatively, *Could I ſpeak as you do? If your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead, could I heap up words againſt you, and ſhake my head at you?* Mr. *Broughton* gives that ſence fully, *Would I ſpeak as you, if you were in my place, would I compoſe bare words againſt you, and nod upon you with my head?* The meaning is Negative, *If you were in my ſouls ſtead, I could do none of theſe things. Could I do them? No* (as we ſay) *I could as ſoon eat my own fleſh as do them: If I were at eaſe, and you in pain, could I deal thus with you? I would dye rather then deal ſo with you.* This reading is good, and hath a greater emphaſis in it then our bare affirmative reading, though the ſence and ſcope of both be the ſame.

If your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead.] Some read this Optatively, or as a wiſh, *O that your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead*; and then the latter words are taken as a promiſe or profeſſion of offices of love: First, *I would heap up words for you.*

חבר *Concinnare, aptè diſponere.*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate to heap, ſignifies properly to prepare and fit a thing, to faſhion and put it into a good frame; it is not a rude, inartificial heaping of things together, without form or faſhion, as the firſt Chaos was; but a beautiful elegant digeſtion, or compoſure of them, into the exacteſt form and faſhion, like that of the ſeveral pieces of the World, conjoyned in that work of the ſix dayes creation: As if he had ſaid, *O that your ſoul were a while in my ſouls ſtead, ſee how I would uſe you, how I would deal with you; truly, all the hurt I would do to you, ſhould be this, I would prepare the ſofteſt and the ſweeteſt words I could with all my skill and rhetorick, to eaſe your ſorrows; I would ſpeak muſick to your eares, and joy to your hearts; I would ſtudy and compoſe a ſpeech on purpoſe, to revive and raiſe your drooping, deſponding ſpirits.*

So alſo the ſecond branch may be interpreted, *And ſhake mine head at you, or over you:* For to ſhake the head, notes pity and compaſſion; to ſhake the head is the poſture of thoſe who mourn with, or for their Friends. Hence the word is tranſlated to bemoan (*Nah.* 3. 7.) *Who will bemoan him?* (*Chap.* 42. 11.) Job's *Friends came to bemoan him*; 'tis this word, *They came to ſhake their heads over him, becauſe of all the evil which the Lord had brought upon him:* One of the Ancients makes this expoſition of the Text, *I would have ſhaken my head over you bemoaningly, or with compaſſion:* The ſame word may well ſignifie to ſhake the head, and to pity, ſeeing they who pity others, uſe to ſhake their heads over them, and ſay, *Ah my Friend*, or *Ah my Brother.*

καὶ ἐκίνουν ἂν ἐφ' ὑμῖν τὴν κεφαλὴν συμπαθῶς. *Et moviſſe ſuper vos caput condolenter.* Chryſoſt.

So then, if we read the words as a wiſh, *O that your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead*; yet *Job* did not wiſh it for their hurt, but that he might have an opportunity to ſhew how much he would labour to be their Servant in Love, to do them good.

Hence Note, *A good man doth not wiſh ill to thoſe who have rewarded him with evil upon any other terms, then a diſcovery of his own goodneſs.*

'Tis ſin to wiſh that they who are in a comfortable condition might fall into our miſery, though they have been miſerable comforters to us in our miſery. We may not (in this caſe) wiſh pain or ſorrow to any ſort of men, except upon one of theſe two conſiderations.

First, That we may give them an experiment of our tenderneſs towards them, in doing them all the good we can in their affliction.

Or ſecondly, That God may give an experiment of his graciouſneſs towards them, in doing them good by their afflictions.

The Prophet *Iſaiah* (*Chap.* 14. 10.) foreſhews how they who had been weakened by the power of *Babylon*, ſhould inſult over weakened *Babylon*, *All they ſhall ſpeak and ſay unto thee, Art thou alſo become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?* The people of God ſhall at laſt rejoyce (in reference to the glory of God, and publick good) to ſee their deſtroyers deſtroyed, and thoſe weak who have weakened them. But the people of God (in reference to any private, or perſonal intereſt) cannot rejoyce at the deſtruction,

ction, or in the weakneſs of any man, much leſs can they wiſh them weak that they might have an opportunity to rejoyce over them. *Paul* was a Priſoner, and in bonds, yet he did not wiſh the worſt of his enemies in priſon, or in bonds with him; he only wiſht that they might enjoy the ſame liberty by *Jeſus Chriſt*, which himſelf enjoyed. For when he had almoſt perſwaded King *Agrippa* to become a Chriſtian, he ſaid, *I would to God, that not thou only, but alſo all that hear me this day, were both almoſt, and altogether ſuch as I am, except theſe bonds* (Acts 26. 28,29.) I would keep my chains and troubles to my ſelf, I would have none of you know my ſorrows; but I would that all your ſouls were in as good a ſtate as mine, and knew my comforts. *A holy heart wiſheth all well, as well as it ſelf*; and if at any time he wiſheth that to the worſt of his enemies, which is penally evil, he doth it with an eye both to their ſpiritual and eternal good.

Thus of the words as they are read in the form of a wiſh.

We read them as a Suppoſition, *If your ſouls were in my ſouls ſtead*: And then the two latter branches muſt be interpreted as acts of unfriendlineſs, ſhewing what *Job* could, but would not do, as was toucht before.

I could heap up words againſt you.] That is, I could make long ſpeeches, and enlarge my ſelf in diſcourſe, I could ſpeak terror, and thunder out whole volleys of threats againſt you; I could deaf your ears with loud voyces, and ſad your hearts with heavy cenſures. There is a figure in Rhetorick called *Congeries*, or *The heap*. Many words to the ſame ſence, eſpecially when there is little in them but words, are called juſtly, *a heap of words*: Now, ſaith *Job*, I could be as nimble at this figure as you; and with my ſpeech I could mix your action.

Quaſſare caput, *apud authores Latinos geſtus eſt hominis irati aut minantis aut lamentantis.* Druſ.

Shake my head at you.] Shaking the head, notes ſcorn and threatning (*Pſal.* 22. 7.) *All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot out the lip, and ſhake the head, ſaying, He truſted on the Lord*, &c. So the afflicted Church complains (*Pſal.* 44. 14.) *Thou makeſt us a by-word among the Heathen, a ſhaking of the head among the people.* We have this action joyned with two more, which ſignifie the greateſt contempt, by lamenting *Jeremiah* (Lam. 2. 15.) *All that paſs by clap their hands at thee, they hiſs, and wag their head at the Daughter of* Jeruſalem, *ſaying, Is this the City that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole Earth?* *Ridentes caput motitant.* Druſ.

Our bleſſed Saviour (upon whom contempt and ſcorn was to vent it ſelf all manner of wayes, he being to bear all that ſcorn, as well as all that pain which was due to our ſins; our bleſſed Saviour, I ſay) was ſcorned this way (*Matth.* 27. 39.) *And they that paſſed by reviled him, wagging their heads.* So then to ſhake, or wag the head at a man in affliction, ſpeaks, as ſometimes our pity, ſo moſt times our contempt; and as it is uſually accompanied with audible mockings, ſo it ſelf is a viſible mock: Which being interpreted, ſpeaks thus to the perſon afflicted, *Thou evil-doer, or thou hypocrite, thou doſt even well become thy ſufferings, all theſe miſeries are well beſtowed on thee*, &c.

In this ſence *Job* ſeems to ſpeak here, *I could ſhake my head at you*: I have indeed been as one mocked of his Friend (*Chap.* 12. 4.) and I could mock my Friends, I could laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh; but my conſcience bears witneſs with me, that if it ſhould come, I would not.

Hence Note, Firſt, *A godly man hath a power to do that evil which he hath no will to do.*

A carnal man hath a will to many evils, for which he hath no power or opportunity: A godly man would not do any evil, how much power and opportunity ſoever he hath. And indeed though he hath a natural, or civil, yet he hath not a moral power to do any evil. In which ſence the Apoſtle ſpeaks of a regenerate perſon (1 *John* 3. 9.) *He that is born of God cannot ſin*: He hath a natural power to ſin any ſin, to lye, to be drunk, to be unclean, &c. He may have a civil power to oppreſs, to deceive, to wrong his Brother; yet he cannot turn either his hand or his heart to ſuch works as theſe are; he hath learned better, and is better. He is born of God, his blood and pedigree is ſo high, that he cannot meddle, nor trade in ſuch low things. *Wiſdom is too high for a fool* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 24. 7.) *and folly is too low for a wiſe man.* When *Joſeph* was ſolicited by his Miſtreſs to commit folly with her, he anſwers, *How can I do this great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* (Gen. 39. 9.) *Joſeph* wanted neither power nor opportunity to do that wickedneſs, yet he ſaith, *How can I do it?*

Paul and his fellow-Apoſtles had wit and parts ſufficient to oppoſe the truth, yet he ſaith (2 *Cor.* 13. 8.) *We can do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth.* *Paul* was a great doer, and he ſaith (*Phil.* 4. 13.) *I can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthening of me*; but *Paul* could do nothing to the diſhonour of Chriſt. Doubtleſs *Paul* could have maintained an Argument, and drive on an Objection as far as another man, againſt the truth, if he would have ſet himſelf to it, and have made that his buſineſs; but he had not a mind to do it: The bent of his ſpirit did not lye that way, he was all for Chriſt, and the Goſpel; he was a Giant for the truth; but an Infant, a weakling, as weak as water againſt it; he had neither an underſtanding to conceive, nor a tongue to ſpeak to the diſſervice of Jeſus Chriſt.

Narrat juſtas quid facere potuit, ſed ne juſtitiam deſeret, quod facere potuit declinat. Greg.

It is a good Obſervation of one of the Ancients, upon this place, *A juſt man declares what he can do; but that he may not deſert Juſtice, he forbears to do what he can.* The providence of God ſets bounds to the power of a carnal man; but the Spirit of God ſets bounds to the power of a holy man: if a carnal man keep within compaſs at any time, it is becauſe he is reſtrained; but a godly man keeps within compaſs, becauſe he is renewed. *Laban* tells *Jacob* (*Gen.* 31. 29.) *It is in the power of my hand to do thee hurt*: And why did not *Laban* hurt *Jacob?* Was it from any principle of love or righteouſneſs in *Laban*'s breaſt? The Text is ſilent in that, and *Laban* himſelf ſeems to tell us, whence it was, in the ſame Verſe, *The God of your Fathers ſpake unto me yeſternight, ſaying, Take thou heed that thou ſpeak not to* Jacob, &c. And this his ſpeaking to *Laban*, *Jacob* calls, *Gods rebuking of* Laban (*Verſ.* 42.) implying, that if God had not ſtopt him, he would have done him hurt.

It was more then once in the power of *David*'s hand, to hurt, yea, to ſlay *Saul*, and he was ſtrongly moved by ſome of his great Officers to do it, yet he ſtrongly refuſed to do it, or to ſuffer it to be done, becauſe it would have been ſin in him to do it, himſelf being a private perſon, and the way in which he had any opportunity to do it, being only a private way, when *Saul* was in the Cave, covering his feet (1 *Sam.* 24. 3.) or in a Trench faſt aſleep (1 *Sam.* 26. 7.) and therefore (though he had ſtrengthened himſelf againſt *Saul* with an Army, and was ready (upon his provocation) to ſtretch forth his hand againſt him in battel, yet) he ſaith, *Who can ſtretch forth his hand againſt the Lords anointed, and be guiltleſs?* *David* was not ſtopt from hurting *Saul*, by a rebuke from God, but by the rule and dictate of his own conſcience. The thing might have been eaſily done, but becauſe it could not be innocently done, therefore *David* could not do it.

Secondly, Obſerve more ſpecially to the matter of this Text,

A godly man (when himſelf) cannot be harſh and grievous to others, though he have never ſo much advantage to be ſo.

His cannings are not for ſuch uſes. What the Apoſtle ſaith of his Miniſterial power, a gracious heart ſaith of all his power, It is *for edification, not for deſtruction* (2 *Cor.* 13. 10.) He deſigns his power for the help and comfort of all, not for the hurt or grief of any. A good man is merciful to his Beaſt; how then can he be unmerciful to his Brethren? He pitieth a beaſt fallen under a burthen; how then can he be cruel to his Brother when he is under burthens? Nature, or common humanity abhors ſuch actings; much more doth Grace. *Paul* gives this charge to Believers, *Bear ye one anothers burthens, and ſo fulfil the Law of Chriſt* (Gal. 6. 2.) This Law of Chriſt is written in the heart of every man, who is Chriſts, and therefore he is far from adding to another mans burden: He that hath a fellow-feeling of his Brethrens ſorrows, will not encreaſe their ſorrows: no man will purpoſely encreaſe, or add

add to that burthen which himself must bear. *Could I speak as you do?*

Thus for the Negative, what *Job* would not have done, if their soul had been in his souls stead.

But, What would he have done? He tells us in the next Verse, this is the course that I would take.

Verse 5. **I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.**

This is my design, and all the hurt I intend you. These words in the substance of them have been opened (*Chap.* 4.4.) where *Eliphaz* tells *Job*, that he had done, what here he promised he would do, *Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees: Thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands.* *Eliphaz* had given testimony for *Job*, that he had done, what *Job* now professeth he was resolved to do, and would do, in case he were put into their condition, and they into his, *I would strengthen you with my mouth:* That is, with the words of my mouth; and (which is the same) *The moving of my lips should assuage your grief.*

Here are the two parts of consolation, and the two great duties of a Comforter.

The first, is to strengthen sorrowful man.

The second, is to abate the strength of his sorrows.

Job was resolved upon both: Were they weak in faith, and hope, he would strengthen them: were their fears and doubtings strong, he would endeavour to weaken them, *I would strengthen you with my mouth; and the moving of my lips should assuage your grief.*

Motio labiorum meorum prohiberet. Heb. *sc. dolorem vestrum.*

The word Grief is not expressed in the Hebrew; there it is only thus, *The moving of my lips should assuage*; be it what it will that grieves you, I would labour to assuage it: I would assuage your fears, your sorrows, your impatience, your unbelief; whatever spiritual evil were upon you, the moving of my lips should be for the removing of it: Or (as others render) *For the turning of it away.* For the word signifies,

First, to abate in degree.

Secondly, To turn away, or to stop altogether.

My design should be upon both, I would study to the utmost of my power and parts, not only to mitigate, but quite to remove whatsoever I should find an affliction to you.

It hath been shewed (*Chap.* 4.4.) what power words have, both to strengthen weak faith, and to assuage the strongest grief, thither I refer the Reader; only take two brief notes from it.

First, *A good man doth not only abstain from the hurt that he might do another, but he labours to help him, and to do him good.*

Not to heap words in anger upon them that are in misery, not to shake the head at them in contempt, is only a Negative piece of charity and kindness: 'Tis our duty to use our utmost endeavour to refresh and comfort them. Negative acts of kindness are not the fulfilling of the law of love; it is not charity to the poor, to say I will not make them poorer, I will take nothing from them; it is our duty to give them of what we have. When a man is sorrowful, it is not enough to say, I will not increase his grief: it is our duty to lessen it, yea, to turn it into joy.

And this is more considerable, in reference to the persons with whom *Job* had to do; they had given him very hard measure, yet he would not requite them with hard measure; he would measure that to them which was good, and he would give them good measure. It is the common rule of humanity, to do good to those who do us good; it is more then beastly, even devillish cruelty, to hurt those that do us good; it is the height of Christianity, to do good to those who have been a hinderance to us, and to comfort those who have caused our sorrow. The Apostolical rule is, *Recompence to no man evil for evil* (Rom. 12. 17.) And again (*ver.* 19.) *Dearly beloved, avenge not your selves, but rather give place unto wrath:* The Apostle doth not mean, that we should give place to our own wrath; if we do so, we *give place to the Devil*, as the same Apostle intimates (*Eph.* 4. 26. 27.) Our own wrath must be stopt and resisted, quenched and put out. Then, what, or whose wrath is it, that we are commanded to give place unto? This wrath may be taken two wayes.

First, For the wrath of that man who is our enemy; we must give place to his wrath, not by approving him or his wrath, but by not answering him with wrath. If when another storms we are calm, if when he rages, we shew all gentleness and meekness both of speech and spirit, then we give place to his wrath; that is, we make it room to pass away and evaporate: *Solomon's* Proverb is the sum of this Exposition (*Prov.* 15. 1.) *A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger.*

Secondly, When *Paul* adviseth us not to avenge our selves, but *rather to give place to wrath*, we may understand it of the wrath of God; and the very next words, which the Apostle alledgeth from (*Deut.* 32. 35.) carry the sence clearly this way, *For it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord:* As if the Apostle had said, If you take upon you to avenge your selves, you take Gods work out of his hand; it belongs to God as much to take revenge, as it doth to give reward. And therefore as a man, who having done good, is over careful and anxious how to get his reward, takes rewarding work out of Gods hand, and shall have no more reward then he can get himself; as Christ tells the Pharisees in that case (*Mat.* 6. 2.) *Verily I say unto you, ye have your reward:* And all that a man can get himself, is not worth the having.

So the man, who having suffered wrong, goes about to revenge himself, takes revenging work out of Gods hand, and shall be righted no further then he can right himself, which is but little, if any thing at all; whereas if he would give place to the wrath of God; that is, let God alone, by such wayes as his Justice shall raise up, to right him, against his adversary, he would right him fully. So that our Interest doth not lye in returning evil for evil, but in returning good for evil to our enemies; as Saint *Paul* concludes (*Rom.* 13. 20.) *Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head:* That is, thou shalt either melt and mollifie his spirit towards thee, as hardest metals are by coals of fire (some such melting we may see in *Saul* towards *David*, when he forbore to take vengeance on him (1 *Sam.* 24. 16. *Chap.* 26. 21.) or thou shalt heap coals of divine vengeance upon him, by making his malice and hatred against thee more inexcusable: Which latter, though it may be looked upon as a consequent of our doing good to our enemies, yet we must take heed of making it the end why we do so, for that were to seek revenge while we forbear it, and to do good for that end, were *to be overcome of evil*; which the Apostle forbids in the close of that Chapter.

Job in this Text was far from professing a readiness to assuage the grief of his unkind, or enemy-like Friends, upon hope that God would encrease their sorrow.

Secondly, Observe, *Words duly spoken and applyed, are of great power.*

How forcible are right words? Is *Job's* question (*Chap.* 6. 25.) He doth not there answer his question, nor tell us how forcible they are, but here he doth. They are of such force, that they strengthen weak souls, and assuage the most swelling floods of sorrow.

God at first gave being and motion to all creatures, *with the moving of his lips:* He by the moving of his lips hath ever since ordered all their motions: The word of man produceth great effects; the tongue sets all hands on work; and what almost cannot the tongue of man do? *The tongue is a little member* (saith the Apostle *James*, *Chap.* 3. 5.) *and boasteth great things*: Now as the tongue of vain men boast great things which they cannot do; so the tongues of wise men can really do great things. *Vain men* (as we say) *will take thirteen to the dozen*, but cannot perform one. *Wise men though they speak not much, yet they can perform much with a word speaking.* And though as the same Apostle declaims most holily against the tongue of a wicked man (*Vers.* 8.) that his tongue is such an unruly evil, that no man can tame it; yet there have scarce ever been found any men so unruly, but the tongues of wise and godly men have tamed them: Yea, the tongue of a wise man is to an unruly man, and often to a multitude of unruly men, as a bit in a Horses mouth, or as a Rudder to a Ship, turning him or them about which way soever he listeth; as this Apostle teacheth us by these similitudes (*Vers.* 3, 4.)

the tongue of every man is to, and doth to himself, whether it be good or evil. And as the tongue is thus powerful in civilizing the rude, and in appeasing the humours of those who are most outragious; so it is very powerful in supporting those that are ready to sink, and in asswaging the grief of those who are most disconsolate and sorrowful.

Lastly, Whereas *Job* speaks peremptorily, as if he saw the effect, or were assured of it aforehand, *I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should asswage your grief:* *Job* knew that the success of all his counsels depended upon the concurrence and blessing of God; yet thus he speaks.

Hence Note, *A man may say he hath done that, for the doing of which he hath used suitable and faithful endeavours, whether the thing be done or no.*

The Lord saith to *Jerusalem* by the Prophet *Ezekiel* (*Chap.* 24. 13.) *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged.* Now as God takes it upon him, that he had purged them, though they were not purged, because he gave them so many means and helps for their purging; so any man in his proportion, may take it upon him, that he hath strengthened their faith, abated their grief, yea, and saved their souls, among, and towards whom he hath diligently used those means appointed by God for the attaining of those great and noble ends, though possibly those ends be not attained. God himself reckons thus of all the labours of his faithful servants, they shall be rewarded as having done that which they have been doing with their hearts, hands, and tongues, though they see little fruit of either. *Then I said, I have laboured in vain* (Isa. 49. 4.) but though it was in vain to those for whom he laboured, that is, they got no good by it, yet it was not in vain to him who laboured, he got much good by it; as it follows in the same Verse, *Surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work* (or my reward, one word signifies both reward and work, to shew that these can never be seperated, *my work*, saith he) *is with my God:* And *Vers.* 5. *Though* Israel *be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.*

As we are not to judge of the goodness of any cause by the success, but by the justice of it; so neither doth God adjudge the reward of any work by the success, but by the goodness of it, together with the sweat and sincerity of him that doth it. *As the will of a godly man is accepted for the deed, so his deed is accepted for the success.*

VERS. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged: and though I forbear, what am I eased?
But now he hath made me weary: thou hast made desolate all my company.
And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me, beareth witness to my face.
He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth, mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.
They have gaped upon me with their mouth, they have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully, they have gathered themselves together against me.
God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over to the hands of the wicked.

IN the five former Verses of this Chapter, *Job* reproved the personal failings of his Friends towards him; he now enters upon the confutation of their opinion. This is the constant method, both of *Job* and his Friends; they never come to the matter till they have fallen upon the man; nor touch the opinion, till they have dealt with the person. And this is the tenor of most mens spirits, to this day, in disputes and controversies; and some do not only deal with the man before the matter, but lose the matter in dealing with the man, entangling, and engaging themselves so much in personal quarrels, that they forget, or desert the doctrinal quarrel. *Job* and his Friends, though they were too mindful of the former, yet they did not forget the latter, and here *Job* addresses himself unto it. Yet before he enters upon the state of the question, he sets forth his own state, and shews how it was with him; granting (which *Eliphaz* had made the ground of his accusation) that he was in an extreamly afflicted condition, yet denying what he from thence inferred, that he was therefore wicked, or continued knowingly in any sinful course. He describes his afflictions with much variety of Argument and Elocution, to the seventeenth Verse.

First, Aggravating them by their unmoveableness, or remedilesness: His sorrows were stubborn, and such as would not yield to any kind of remedy.

Verse 6. **Though I speak my grief is not asswaged, and though I forbear, what am I eased?**

In the former Verse *Job* speaks in a high strain of assurance, that if his Friends were afflicted, *The moving of his lips should asswage their grief:* But it seems, his own experience had taught him, that the moving of his lips could not asswage his own grief; *Though I speak* (saith he here) *my grief is not asswaged.*

Hence Observe, *A man may do that for others which he cannot do for himself.*

He may comfort others in their sorrows, when he cannot comfort himself; he may resolve others in their doubts, when he cannot resolve himself; he may answer to cases which their consciences put him, when he cannot answer his own; yea, tis possible for a man to speak such words to another, as may turn him from his sin, and save his soul, and yet himself continue in sin, and lose his own soul for ever. Naturalists have a rule concerning the Senses, That, *when a sensible object is brought too near, or laid upon the sense, it not only hinders, but takes away the present sensation.* This holds a proportion in rational actings: the nearer any one is to us in relation, the harder it is to fix counsel upon him; and because we are neerest to our selves, therefore it is hardest of all to counsel our selves.

Our Saviour Christ prevents what he foresaw some ready to object against him (*Luke* 4. 23.) *Ye will surely say unto me this Proverb, Physitian heal thy self.* The Proverb in its Original is (I conceive) to be understood personally; but as Christ suggests it there, it is to be understood Nationally, or Provincially, *Heal thy self,* is, *heal thy own Countrey*; exercise thy power of working miracles there, as well as thou hast done it in other places; that this is the meaning of it, appears plainly by the next words, *Whatsoever we have heard done in* Canaan, *do also in thine own Countrey:* For Christ as yet had wrought no mighty works of healing there (*Mark* 6. 5.) But why was Christ so slow in manifesting himself to his own Countrey-men? He gives the reason (*Vers.* 24.) *And he said, Verily I say unto you, no Prophet is accepted in his own Countrey:* The Gospel of *Mark* (*Chap.* 6. 4.) adds two closer relations, *His own Kin, and his own House:* They in a mans house are nearer to him then his kindred abroad; and his kindred are nearer to him then his Countrey-men; now among these, a Prophet hath no honour: They know him so much, that they do not respect him, or his sayings. *The* Jews *said, Is not this the Carpenter, the Son of* Mary, *the Brother of* James, *&c.* Christ being thus near to them, had little honour among them. Now for as much, *as a man is nearer to himself,* not only then his Countrey-men, but then any of his Kin; therefore his own counsels and comforts have ordinarily so little effect upon himself; he is not accept in his own breast. There are some indeed so gracious, or great in their own eyes, that they will ask counsel of none but themselves, nor follow any advice but their own; but usually man seeks out, as being neither able to satisfie his own doubts, nor abate his own sorrows, though possibly more able for both, then he to whom he seeks. *Though I speak, my grief is not asswaged; and though I forbear, what am I eased?*

Some conceive *Job* speaking here like an Orator, who seems to stand in doubt what to do, and threfore trembles out his Preface in such words as these, *Shall I speak, or shall I be silent? Shall I open my lips, or shall I forbear? Job's* pain received no check which way soever of these

Eloquar an sileam? Quid agã? Si locutus fuero, &c. Vulg.

these he took, and therefore it seemed vain to attempt either.

Nunc eo res, redierunt, ut quo me vertam nesciam aut quid agam, nam nec loquendo nec tacendo quicquam proficio. Merc.

Though I speak.] That is, *If I stand up in my just defence to answer, and take away your Objections, yet my grief is not answered; that is as busie with me, and as talkative as ever it was; yea, then you object my impatience under sufferings, as an argument of my sin.*

And though I forbear.] That is, *If I bite in my pain, and speak not, if I stand mute, as attentive to hear you speak, yet my sorrow moves not; yea, then you judge my silence an argument of my secret guilt, and that all is true which you have said against me, because I say nothing for my self.* Thus,

What am I eased? Saith the Text in our translation? The Hebrew saith, *What goeth from me?* That is, *What of my pain, what of my sorrow goeth away from me, when I cease, or forbear to speak?* So that,

The general sence of this Verse is to shew that his troubles were past hope of redress; they found no cure; none by speech, none by silence: Grief is sometimes eased by speaking, sometimes by silence, either our own or others.

To say nothing is a medicine for some mens sorrow: the sorrow of others cannot be medicin'd, but by saying much: A plaister of words hath cured many a wound, and the more words have been used, the more some wounds have festered, and the anguish of them hath increased.

Hence Observe, *There is no means of remedy left for that evil which is not remedied by the use and tryal of contrary means.*

If neither speech nor silence ease a mans mind, what can? We find such a kind of arguing (though in a different case) used by Christ (*Mat.* 11. 16, 17.) Where when he would shew how impossible, or at least how extreamly difficult it was to please the *Jews* (they were a humorous people, and let a man put himself in what posture he would, they would find some fault, or have somewhat to object against him) *Whereunto* (saith Christ) *shall I liken this generation?* (they were so untoward, that Christ speaks as if he were straitened, how to find out a fit comparison for them, or could scarce tell to what they were like; yet he tells us) *They are like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling to their fellows, saying, We have piped and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not lamented.* When a man will neither mourn with us, nor rejoyce with us, what shall we do with him? How shall we please him? For what company is he fit? That such was the tendency of this similitude, appears plainly in the application which Christ makes (*Vers.* 18.) *For* John *came neither eating, nor drinking, and they say he hath a Devil:* They did not like the mournful, austere course of *John: The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they said, Behold a man glutonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans and sinners:* They did not like the free converse of Christ. When a people are of this spirit, or at this lock, that neither a man who is affable and courteous, ready both to receive, and give civilities, is welcome to them, nor yet he who is austere, and reserved, close and strict in his way, can give them any content, who, or what can content them? When neither piping nor mourning, when neither dancing nor sorrowing takes with us, what can? When we would describe a person, whose troublesomeness of spirit seems unanswerable, we say of him, *He is quiet neither full nor fasting:* That is, He is never quiet, or nothing can make him quiet. *Abraham* saith to his Nephew *Lot* (Gen. 13, 8, 9.) *Let there be no strife I pray thee, between me and thee, and between thy Herd-men and my Herd-men, for we are brethren, &c. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.* Now as it is an Argument of the sweetest spirit, and fairest disposition, when a man is ready to take either hand, rather then break the peace; so it argues the sowrest spirit, and most untractable disposition, when a man will neither go to the right hand nor to the left, when he will neither move forward nor backward; when he will neither give nor take, neither buy nor sell, there is no dealing with such a man, for he waves all the wayes of dealing.

Thus also we conclude a people incorrigible, who continue in their sins, whether God smite or heal, whether he deliver them from, or deliver them up into the hand of judgments, because these are the utmost bounds, or the extreams of all those providential dispensations which God useth at any time to turn a people from their sin.

Again, We say they are unperswadeable, whom neither fair means, nor foul, can reduce; speak them fair, they are naught; speak them foul, they are naught still; promise them good, they remain evil; threaten them with evil, they will not be good. You may carry it out in all experiments, whersoever you find an evil frame of mind or body, or of affairs, which mends not, or doth not alter for the better, by the application of the other contrary, when the former hath been applyed without success, you may write under it (as to humane helps) *This is a desperate case, a distemper incurable.*

Yet further, *Job* in these words reflects upon his Friends; as if he had said, *Some men by complaining, and opening their sores to those who visit them in their affliction, find their Friends relieving them presently with sound counsel, and pouring the oyl of consolation into their wounded spirits; but alass, it is not so with me, for whether I speak or hold my peace, it is all one; ye are all against me, and are neither perswaded by my speech nor by my silence, to apply proper remedies for the asswaging of my grief, or the easing of my pains.*

Hence Note, *It is the duty, and should be the care of those who visit Friends in affliction, to pick somewhat out of what they say, or at least to take occasion from their silence, to administer consolation to their grieved minds.*

When the Servants of *Benhadad* came to *Ahab* to sue for their Masters life; the Text saith (1 *Kings* 20. 33.) *The men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him* (that is, whether any word of hope would come from *Ahab*) *and they did hastily catch it:* And *Ahab* had no sooner said, *He is my Brother*; but they catcht at this word of comfort, they had what they lookt for, and said, *Thy Brother Benhadad.* If thou owneſt him as a Brother, surely thou wilt not use him as an Enemy: There is (to the point in hand) a holy cunning in catching up words, which drop from the lips of men in affliction; and 'tis our wisdom to make improvement of them.

As for instance, There was an ancient Professor (as I have been informed) in much distress of conscience, even to despair; he complaining bitterly of his miserable condition to a Friend, let this word fall, *That which troubles me most, is, that God will be dishonoured by my fall:* This word was hastily catcht at, and turned upon him to the asswaging of his grief, *Art thou careful of the honour of God, and dost thou think God hath no care of thee, and of thy salvation? A soul forsaken of God regards not what becomes of the honour of God: Therefore be of good cheer; if Gods heart were not towards thee, thine could not be towards God, or towards the remembrance of his Name.* Thus words should be watcht, yea, and silence should be watcht for advantages to ease a distressed soul.

Lastly, These words may refer to God; as if *Job* had said, Whether I speak, or whether I forbear, God doth not come in to my help, I find no comfort from him; he puts no stop to my pain, nor doth he asswage the floods of grief which are ready to swallow me up. He gives me no ease at my complaining cryes, nor doth he give me any at my patient silence. The next Verse seems most sutable to this exposition, where *Job* applyes himself to God, shewing what he did to him, both while he spake, and while he held his peace; he wearied him still, and left him in a wearied condition.

Verse 7. **But now he hath made me weary, thou hast made desolate all my company.**

We may see (in this context) that the spirit of *Job* was much troubled, by the troubledness of his speech. At this seventh Verse he speaks in the third Person, *He hath made me weary:* And before he gets to the end of it, he speaks in the second Person, *Thou hast made desolate:* In the eighth Verse, *Thou hast filled me with wrinkles:* In the ninth Verse, *He teareth me in his wrath:* The tenth Verse is Plural, *They have gaped upon me:* Strange kind of Grammar; sometimes in the third Person, sometimes in the second, sometimes in the Singular, sometimes in the Plural number; *His mind was uneven, or unsetled, and so was his discourse:*

discourse. We must not play the Criticks with the words of man in pain, nor submit their sentences to a Desk of Grammarians: Broken language, and incongruities of speech, do well enough become broken hearts, and wounded spirits: God will not call his Scholars in the School of affliction to the Ferula for such faults or false Latine falling from their mouthes, either in prayer or conferences, while their hearts are true, and the language of their spirits pure.

But now he hath made me weary.

אך עתה

But now.] *Now,* is not here a Particle of time only, or a specification of the season, noting that then God either began, or still continued to make him weary; but it carries also a strong asseveration, or the certainty of the thing; as in that promissory exhortation (*Hag.* 2. 4.) *Yet now be strong, O* Zerubbabel, *saith the Lord, and be strong, O* Joshua. Though you see things yet below expectation, though this be *a day of small things*, yet take heart and encourage your selves to carry on this reforming work. *Yet now be strong,* even now, when so many things might weaken both your hearts and hands, and be ye assured that I will not reject your confidence, but will cause you to prosper in it. And in promises, besides the certainty of the thing promised, and the speedy fulfilling of them, it intimates much sweetness of affection in him that makes the promise. On the contrary, in threatenings, and comminations, besides the certainty and speed of them, it notes the sharpness and severity of his spirit, who gives those threats. So (*Isa.* 5. 5.) *And now go to, I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard. Now, go too,* is chiding chear. As if the Lord had thus rated them; *What? Have you served me thus, as sure as I formerly planted and hedged this Vineyard, so surely will I now pull down the hedge, and root it up.* In this fulness of sence take it here, *But now he hath made me weary*; certainly, or of a truth he hath; I was once sweetly and strongly hedged about with mercy, *But now he hath made me weary and desolate.*

Nunc in principio dictionis quandam cordis dulcedinem connotare solet. Bold.

He hath made me weary.] *He,* is not expressed in the Hebrew, and therefore there is a doubt who is meant by this *He.*

Some understand it of his grief and sorrow, and read it thus, *But now it hath made me weary*; my pain hath tyred me.

Nunc autem oppressit me dolor meus. Vulg.

Secondly, Others understand it of what had been spoken by his Friends; your tedious discourses, and severer censures have quite spent my spirits, and made me weary.

Our Translation leads us to a person, and our Interpretation leads us to God; *He,* that is, *God, hath made me weary. Job* every where acknowledgeth, that God was the Author and Orderer of all his sorrows: *Now he*

לאדי

Non solum fatigationē denotat, sed & fastidiū molestissimū, tum animi tum corporis.

Hath made me [*weary*] Or, *He hath wearied me*; it is but one word, and it signifies not an ordinary weariness, nor such a weariness as comes upon us after a turn or two in the Fields: A man who walks into the air, to refresh himself, may come home weary; but it notes such weariness as we feel after long and tedious travel, or after a hard journey; yea, it notes not only weariness of body, but the weariness of the mind. It is possible for a man to weary his body, and yet his mind remain unmoved; bare outward action stirs not the mind. To ride, to run, to dig, or thresh, weary the body, not the mind; but those works which with action have contention in them, as to argue, and dispute, do at once exercise and weary both mind and body. The weariness of the mind is the most painful weariness: *Job*'s weariness takes in both; Thou hast wearied my body, and wearied my mind too; I am full of sores without, and of sorrow within. And such was that weariness spoken of by the Prophet (*Isa.* 47. 13.) *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels:* That is, In going long journeys, to ask counsel of thy adored Wise men, or Wizzards rather, of Southsayers, and Diviners; in this pursuit thou hast laboured thy body, and vexed thy soul, but profited neither. After all thy travels what hast thou brought home but weariness? *Tyred flesh, and a tyred spirit, is all the fruit of our addresses for comfort to any but God, or in the way of God.*

Sept, Exponunt de defectu rationis q. d. vix præ dolore sui mei compos.

The Septuagint translate yet higher, *Thou hast made me mad, or beside my self:* The Hebrew word signifies to distract, or to put one out of his wits: As if *Job* had said, *I am scarce my own man, being over-burdened with those sorrows God hath laid upon me.*

Hence Observe, First, *A state of affliction is a wearisome estate.*

A man may be wearied who never stirs foot from the place where he stands or sits. O the weariness of a sick bed! Suffering wearies more then doing; and none are so weary as they who are wearied with doing nothing.

Observe Secondly, *Some afflictions are a weariness both to soul and body.*

There are afflictions which strike quite through; and there are afflictions which are only skin-deep: As there is a filthiness of the flesh, and a filthiness of the spirit, properly so called (for though every sin of the flesh, or outward man, defile the spirit, yet there are many filthinesses of the spirit, which are never acted by the flesh, or outward man.) Thus the Apostle distinguisheth (2 *Cor.* 7. 1.) There are also some filthinesses which strike quite through flesh and spirit, body and soul. Thus there are some afflictions which are meerly upon the flesh; there are other afflictions which are purely upon the spirit; the skin is whole, the body is in health, but the soul is wounded, an Arrow sticks within: And there are a sort of afflictions which strike quite through body and soul; as old *Simeon* tells the Virgin *Mary, A Sword shall pierce through thy soul* (Luke 2. 35.) Or as the Psalmist speaks of *Joseph* (Psal. 105. 18.) according to the letter of the Hebrew, *Whose feet they hurt with fetters, his soul came into iron, or the iron entred into his soul:* Such afflictions are like the Roll spoken of by the Prophet *Ezekiel* (Chap. 2.) *Written with lamentations, mourning, and woe, within and without:* Some woes are written only without, some woes are written only within, others are written without and within. Their characters are legible upon the flesh; and their effects descend and sink into the spirit. *Job*'s afflictions were of this extension, he was smitten all over, and written quite through with woes and lamentations.

Thirdly, As the word reacheth the distemper of the brain.

Observe, *Some afflictions do not only afflict, but unsettle the mind.*

They unsettle not only the comforts, but the powers and faculties of it: A man under some afflictions can scarce speak sence while he acts faith, or do rationally while he lives graciously.

A soul that hath grace, yea much grace, may appear much scanted in the use of reason: As *oppression* (from men) *makes a wise man mad* (Eccles. 7. 7.) And the more wise a man is, the more mad it makes him: Fools can bear oppression, and not be troubled much, because they do not understand what justice and right means; and that's the reason why in those parts of the World where Tyrants reign, they love to keep the people ignorant, poor, and low, for such are not much sensible of their oppressions; but oppression is very grievous to an ingenious, wise, and understanding man, and therefore 'tis said to make him mad: *The purest intellectuals have the quickest sense of injuries.* Thus also some afflictions from the hand of God may (in a degree) make a godly wise man mad, and put him for a present plunge beyond the command of his understanding. It is the confession of holy *David* (Psal. 73. 22.) *I was even as a beast before thee, so foolish was I and ignorant:* If *David* a godly man acted below reason, when he saw the prosperity of the wicked; how much more may a godly man act below reason, under the feelings of his own adversity. *Heman* is express in this (*Psal.* 88. 15.) *While I suffer thy terrors I am distracted:* Yet the word in the Psalm doth not signifie properly the distraction of a man that is mad, but the distraction of a man that is in doubt; or the distraction of a man who knows not what to do, not of a man who knows not what he doth, and yet that distraction doth often lead to a degree of this; for a man who is much troubled to know what to do, and cannot know it, grows at last to do he knows not what. We may also take in that about distraction arising from affliction, which was toucht about distraction caused by oppression: Those Christians, who are highest in spirituals, and have the quickest sense of Gods dispensations towards them, do soonest fall into it; whereas a soul upright in the main,

yet

yet being of weak and low parts, and of small experience in the things of God, will go, yea groan under a heavy burden of affliction all his dayes, and not be much moved with it.

Fourthly, Observe, *A godly man may grow extream weary of his afflictions.*

Affliction is the burthen which God layes upon us, and it is our duty, not only to bear it, but to bear it with contentedness; yea we should labor to bear it with joyfulness. *My brethren* (saith the Apostle *James*, *Chap.* 1.) *Account it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*; that is, Into divers afflictions. But yet the best cannot alwayes rejoyce in temptations, nor triumph under a cross; when affliction according to that description of the word (*Heb.*4.12.) comes *quick, and powerful, as a two edged Sword, and pierceth to divide between the soul and the spirit, the joynts and the marrow*, when affliction (I say) cuts to the quick, a Believer is put hard to it; he may be so far (for a time) from triumphing and rejoycing, that he can scarcely find himself contented or patient; his burden may cause him to cry out, *O, the weariness!*

Carnal men cry out at every burden of duty in the service of God, *O what a weariness is it!* They are tired with an hours attendance in holy things; O the burthen! Much more do they cry out under the lighter burdens of affliction. How tedious is a day, or an hour of affliction; two or three fits of an ague, an aking tooth, a soar finger, O what a weariness is this! They sink presently. True Believers, as they have more patience in doing, so in suffering; yet even their patience doth not alwayes hold out; they, as *Job*, speak sometimes mournfully, and complainingly: But now, *he hath made us weary.*

Thou hast made desolate all my company.

Quod loquitur n unc in secũda nunc in tertia persona nihil in sententia mutat id quod admodum frequẽs est in Scriptura Pined.

It was *He* in the first clause, *Thou* in the second; *he* and *thou* are the same person in *Jobs* Grammar, as was toucht before.

Thou hast made [desolate.] The word *Shamam*, signifies to waste, and destroy, and that not by an ordinary destruction, but so to destroy, as works the beholders into amazement and wonder: This word signifies both to wonder, and to destroy; because great destructions cause wonder.

Vastari seu desolari, ita ut videntes obstupescant & horreant.

Thou hast made desolate [all my company:] Thou hast made such a desolation among them, that all who are about me lift up their hands (as we say) *and bless themselves*, admiring to see this day. God brought such a desolation upon *Jerusalem*, as set the World a wondering (*Lam.*4.12.) *The Kings of the Earth, and all the Inhabitants of the World would not have believed, that the Adversary and the Enemy should have entered into the Gates of Jerusalem: Christ will come* (at last with such mercies) *to be glorified in his Saints, as will cause him to be admired in all them that believe* (2 *Thes.*1.10.) He now comes sometimes with such afflictions to his Saints, as easily cause them who believe much more those who believe not to admire. *Thou hast wonderfully desolated, or wasted,*

Et in nihilũ redacti sunt omnes artus mei. Vulg.

All my [company.] The word which we translate *Company*, is rendred, *The joynts or members of the body* by the Vulgar Latine, *Thou hast reduced all my members to nothing:* As if he had said, Thou hast loosened the whole compages, or structure of my bones and body, thou hast untied, or cut asunder all the ligaments that held me together. This translation is but an allusion; because the members of the natural body are like a company of men joyned together in a civil or spiritual body, which is therefore commonly called *a Corporation*. Some contend much for this sense, *Thou hast made desolate all the members of my body:* Especially, because the scattering of his Family doth not so well agree, or comply (say they) with the weariness before complained of, nor with the *leanness, and wrinkles*, which are spoken of afterward; both which belong properly to the body.

Yet I pass that, and take the word as we read it, to express a distinct affliction, thou hast wearied me in my person, and *hast made desolate all my company*; What company?

q. d. desolasti omnẽ Synagogã meã. Bold.

First, Some understand it of the company which used to flock to his Synagogue, in holy duties, and exercises: As if he had answered the words of *Eliphaz* (*Chap.*15.34.) *The Congregation* (*or Company*) *of Hypocrites shall be desolate:* Here, saith *Job*, I grant it, *God hath made desolate all my company.* The Synagogues, and places of publick meeting were wont to be filled, but now that resort is stayed, they are all scattered, or diverted, and those publick places are filled with howlings and lamentations. Thus he grants *Eliphaz* what he had objected, and yet denies what he thence inferred, that he was an Hypocrite.

Secondly, Rather, interpret it of the company he had in his own House, or for his particular Family. So it is a renewed complaint of the loss of his Children and Servants, of his Friends and Familiars, who used to resort to him, and stay about him.

Thou hast made desolate all my company: Some of *Job's* company were made desolate; that is, they were destroyed; most of his Servants were slain by the Chaldeans, and Sabeans, and all his Children were slain by the fall of a House (*Chap.*1.) This company was made desolate indeed: Yet when he saith, *Thou hast made desolate all my company*, his meaning is, as Mr. *Broughton* translates, *Thou hast made me desolate of all my company*; that is, I am left alone.

Hence Observe, *The company of Children, and Friends, is a very great mercy.*

Heman complains much when he wanted this mercy, *Lover and Friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness. Job* makes, as a more particular, so a more pathetical enumeration of this loss (*Chap.* 19.13, 14.) To be desolate, is so great an affliction, that it is often put for all afflictions; and to be desolate of company, is the worst desolateness. When *David* had said, *I am desolate and afflicted*, he presently adds, *The sorrows of my heart are enlarged* (*Psal.*25.16, 17.) A man may be much afflicted, and yet not desolate, but a man cannot be at all desolate, but he must be extreamly afflicted. When the Prophet would put all the miseries of the Jews into one word, he puts it into this (*Isa.*1.7.) *Your Countrey is desolate, your Land strangers shall devour it in your presence:* And when a Land is devoured of strangers, either it is made desolate of its own company, or its own company is made desolate. *Babylon* boasts (*Revel.* 18.7.) *I sit a Queen, and am no widow*; that is, as I have power, so I have resort and company enough, I am not desolate: The Apostle puts these two together, Widow-hood, and Desolateness (1 *Tim.*5.5.) *Now, she that is a widow and desolate*, &c. So that when *Babylon* saith, *I am no widow*, her meaning is, I am not desolate; and hence the punishment of *Babylon* is threatned in this language (*Revel.* 17.16.) *The ten horns which thou sawest upon the Beast, these shall hate the Whore, and make her desolate*, &c.

Those ten horns are ten Kings, who sometime doted upon the painted beauty of that Whore, and then made frequent addresses to her, and did throng about her from all parts of the World; but when once their eyes shall be opened, their hearts will soon be alienated; *They shall hate the Whore.* And then as they withdraw affection, so visits and messages; *Babylons* Courts shall be crouded with Suiters no longer: Thus they shall make her desolate of the company of her old friends, before they make her desolate by bringing in new enemies, who shall strip her, not only of her company, but of her cloathes, yea of her skin; they shall *make her naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire* (*Revel.* 17.16.) Thus, as the misery which came upon *Jerusalem*, so the misery which shall come upon *Babylon* meet in this, *The making of their company desolate:* yet in this they differ, the desolations of *Jerusalem* shall be (at least mystically) repaired, but the desolations of mystical *Babylon* (when they are fully come upon her) shall be irreparable.

Man is naturally (as the Philosopher calls him) *a sociable creature*, he loves company; they who are for a solitary life, *Monks* and *Anchorets*, seem to have put off the nature of man. There is an elective aloneness, or retiredness, at sometimes very useful for contemplation aad prayer, *And we are never less alone, then when we are so alone*; for then God is more specially with us, and we with him. It is said of *Jacob* (*Gen.* 32.24.) *Then Jacob was left alone*, not that *Jacob's* company had left and forsaken him, but

but that *Jacob* for a time had left his company? So, some render the Text actively, *He stayed, or remained alone. Jacob* stayed alone purposely, that he might have freer communion with God in that recess and retirement from the creature: It is good for man to be alone from the company of man, that he may enjoy (more fully) the presence of God.

Yet God himself said at the first when man was created, *It is not good for man to be alone:* There was no moral evil in that aloneness (for when God spake this word, there was no such evil in the visible World) but God called it evil, because it was so incovenient for the civil well-being and inconsistent with the natural propagation of man. And therefore as in reference to both these evils, God said with his own mouth, *It is not good for man to be alone*; so in reference to the former of the two, God said by *Solomon*, *Two is better then one, and wo to him that is alone* (*Eccles.*4.9,10.) *Job* puts his aloneness among his woes, *Thou hast made desolate all my company.*

But it may be said, Had *Job* no company? Were not his Friends about him? Did not these three come to mourn with him, and to comfort him? And had they not been in discourse with him all this while?

Yes, he had company, but it was not suitable company; he had evil ones about him, as he complains (*Chap.* 19. & *Chap.*30.) and though his three Friends were good men, yet to him they were no good company, because so unpleasant in their converse with him.

Hence Note, *Some company is a burthen.*

We say of many men, *We had rather have their room then their company.* Man loves company, but 'tis the company of those he loves. The comfort of our lives depends much upon society, but more upon the suitableness of society: *It is better to dwell in the corner of a house top, then with a brawling Woman in a wide house* (*Prov.* 21.9.) And it is better to be in a Desert among wilde Beasts, then in a populous City among beastly men. This made the Prophet desire a lodging in the Wilderness (*Jer.*9.2.) The Countrey about *Sodom* was pleasant, like the Garden of God, yet how was the righteous soul of *Lot* vexed with the filthy and unrighteous conversation of the *Sodomites?* How uneasie are our lives made to us by dwelling among either false Friends or open Enemies?

In the Creation, when God said, *It is not good for man to be alone*; he subjoyns, *Let us make him a help meet for him. Adam* had all the beasts of the earth about him, but they were no company for him, man knows not how to converse with beasts, or employ his reason with those that have none. As, *it is not good for man to be alone*, so to be in company that is not meet for him is as bad, or worse then to be alone. Therefore saith God, *Let us make him a help meet for him*; the making of a Woman brought in meet company for mankind; yet some men are as unmeet company for men as beasts are, and are therefore in Scripture called *Beasts*. *Paul* fought with such *beasts at Ephesus*; there are few places free of them, and many places are full of them. *David* crys out, *Wo is me that I am constrained to dwell in Mesech, &c.*

There was company enough, but it was woful company. The Primitive Saints associated themselves, they *continued in fellowship one with another, as well as in the Apostles Doctrine, or in breaking of bread and prayer* (*Acts* 2.42.) They were all of one mind, and were therefore fit to make one body. *The communion and fellowship of the Saints, is the lower heaven of Saints.* And the making of such a company desolate, is the saddest desolation that can be made on earth: Communion of Saints in Heaven, is one great accession to the joy of Heaven. And 'tis a great comfort to the Saints in the midst of all the ill neighbourhood which they meet with here, to remember that they shall meet with no ill neighbours there; none but Friends there, none but loving Friends. There shall not be a cross thought, much less a cross word or action among those many millions of glorified Saints for ever; nor shall there be any among them there but Saints; no tares in that field, nor chaff in that floor, no Goats in that Fold, no nor any Wolves in Sheep-skins, no prophane ones there, no nor any Hypocrites there. Unsutable company would render our lives miserable in Heaven it self. If God should say to the godly and the wicked (as *David* once did to *Mephibosheth* and *Ziba*, *Thou and Ziba divide the Land*) divide Heaven among you; might not they answer (with reverence) as *Mephibosheth* did to *David*, Nay let them take it all to themselves, O our souls come not into their secret, and unto their assembly let not our honour be joyned: if Swearers, Adulterers, Lyers, should be our company in Heaven, Heaven it self, were unheaven'd, and everlasting life would be an everlasting death. And that which further argues the burthensomness of unsutable company, is, that even wicked men themselves cannot but confess that they are burthened with the company of those who are good; if such come in presence where they associate in any sinful converse, how weary are they of their company? How do they even sweat at the sight of them? And how glad are they when such turn their backs, and are gone: the only reason why they like them not, is because they are not like them, and they are not good company, because they are good. All company is made desolate to us, which is not made suitable to us. *Job* had many about him, yet he complains, *Thou hast made desolate all my company.*

Job goes on yet to describe his troubles; he wanted desireable company about him, but he had store of witnesses against him; he was emptied of his comforts, but filled with sorrows, as might be seen in the symptoms and effects of sorrow.

Vers. 8. **Thou hast filled me with wrinckles, which is a witness against me: and my leanness rising up in me, beareth witness to my face.**

As if he had said, *Though I hold my peace, and say nothing, though I do not aggravate my grief, yea though I should extenuate and hide it, yet there are witnesses enow of it; my wrinkles speak my grief, and my leanness shews that I am feasted with the sowre herbs of sorrow:* That's the general sense of this Verse.

Si vellem cælare aut verbis extenuare dolorē meū rugæ meæ testimonium dant, &c.

Thou hast filled me with wrinkles.] It is but one word in the Hebrew, we might render it, *Thou hast wrinkled me*; or as Mr. *Broughton*, *Thou hast made me all wrinkled.* The word is not found in this sense any where else in Scripture; but very frequently among the Rabbins. There are also two other significations of it which Interpreters have taken in here.

קמט
Rugas contraxit active corrugavit.

וקמטתני
& corrugasti me. Non alibi quā in hoc libro in scriptura reperitur. Quod succidisti me, testimonio est. Merc.

First, It signifies, *To cut off*, or *to cut down* (*Chap.*22.15, 16.) *Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have troden? Which were cut down out of time:* That old way was the way of sin (the way of holiness is the oldest way, but the way of sin is a very old way.) They who have trod the way of sin, were cut down by judgment, and they were cut down *out of time*; that is, the course of Divine Justice prevented the course of nature and struck them to death before death useth to strike. So some render it here, and then the sense riseth thus, *Thou hast cut me down by the stroke of these afflictions, and this is a witness against me.*

Secondly, The word according to the Chaldee, signifies to bind, and fasten one with Cords, or with fetters of Iron, as Malefactors are bound in Prison (*Prov.*5.22.) *His own iniquity shall take the wicked, and he shall be holden with the Cords of his sin.* The Hebrew word which we render to *hold*, or *fasten*, is expressed by this of *Job* in the Chaldee Paraphrase. Taking this sense of the word, the interpretation given of the whole is, *Thou hast bound, or straitened me with the cords of my affliction, lest I should get out, or make an escape, and this is a witness against me:* There is a truth in both these readings, as to this place; but because *wrinkles* are more proper to the *leanness* which follows, therefore I shall not stay upon them, but keep to our own reading.

In significatione Chaldaica exponitur pro ligare & constringere.

Quod his dolorū vinculis constrictum me tenes, ne quæ elabi queam, testimonium fecit in me. Merc.

Thou hast filled me with [**wrinkles.**] Wrinckles are caused two wayes.

First, Through old age; for then the moisture of the body being consumed, and so the skin contracted, wrinckles appear: These natural wrinckles cannot be avoided, if nature hold out to old age.

Secondly, There are accidental wrinckles, such as are caused by strong diseases, which sucking up, or drawing out the moisture of the body, fade the beauty of it. Great sicknesses hasten on gray hairs, and make a young man look old. *Job* was not filled with the wrinckles of old age (he was

was in the ſtrength of nature at that time) but he was filled with the wrinckles of ſickneſs and ſorrow; grief had made furrows in his face, and his tears had often filled them: we commonly ſay, *Sorrow is dry*; 'tis ſo, becauſe it is a drier. *Solomon* tells us, that *A merry heart doth good like a medicine, but a broken ſpirit* (which is the effect of much ſorrow) *drieth up the bones* (*Prov.* 17. 22.) The Church crys out in the Book of *Lamentations*, *My fleſh my skin he hath made old* (*Lam.*3.4.) How did God make them old? He made them old not by giving them many years, but by giving them many troubles. Many troubles in one year, will make a man older then many years.

We have heard of ſome, whoſe hearts being filled with vexing cares have filled their heads with gray hairs in a very ſhort time. As ſome have an Art to ripen Fruits, before nature ripens them; ſo the Lord hath a power to haſten old age, before nature makes us old. *Thou haſt made my skin old*; that is, full of wrinckles and leanneſs; theſe are the liveries which old age gives. The Apoſtle aſſures us, that Chriſt ſhall one day preſent the Church to himſelf, in the perfection of ſpiritual beauty and glory; that beauty and glory is deſcribed by the removal of that from her ſpiritual eſtate, which *Job* complains of in his temporal eſtate: *Job* was full of ſpots and wrinkles, but ſhe ſhall appear, *Not having ſpot or wrinckle* (*Epheſ.*5.27.) that is, Without any note or mark of old age upon her. A ſpot defaceth the beauty of a Garment, and wrinckles ſpoil the beauty of the face. An old Garment is full of ſpots, and an old face is full of wrinkles. Old things paſs away when we are made new creatures by grace; yet in that ſtate (becauſe we are not perfectly freed from the old man) our garments have ſome ſpots, and our faces ſome wrinkles upon them: But in the ſtate of glory, when all old things, even all the image of the old *Adam* ſhall be totally aboliſhed, we ſhall not have ſo much as one ſpot or one wrinkle. Believers have now a righteouſneſs in Chriſt without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; they ſhall then have a holineſs in themſelves, without *ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing*; that is, They ſhall not only not have any ſpot or wrinkle upon them, but they ſhall have nothing like it, nothing which hath any relation to it, nothing which either themſelves or others ſhall miſtake for it, they ſhall neither ſuſpect nor be ſuſpected to have a ſpot or a wrinkle about them. *A perfect ſoul-ſtate, and a perfect ſtate of body, hath no wrinkle in it.* *Job* to ſhew the decays and blemiſhes of his body, ſaith he was full of wrinkles.

Again, Theſe wrinkles by an elegant metaphor may refer to his whole outward condition: For as a mans face is wrinkled when he grows old, ſo are his riches when he grows poor, and ſo is his honour when he grows out of repute. Poverty is the wrinkle of riches, and diſgrace is the wrinkle of honour; we may take in all three here, for not only was *Job's* body, but his wealth and honour were extreamly wrinkled; and therefore he had great cauſe to cry out according to all the interpretations, *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles.*

Which witneſs againſt me.] I ſhall give the meaning of that, when I have opened the latter clauſe, where it is repeated, *My leanneſs riſing up in me, beareth witneſs to my face*: both parts of the Verſe have the ſame meaning.

My leanneſs riſing up in me.] Some think, that *Job* anſwers what *Eliphaz* had given, as part of the deſcription of a wicked man, in the fulneſs of his proſperity (*Chap.*15.27.) where he tells us, that, *He covereth his face with fatneſs, and maketh collops of fat on his flanks*; as if he had ſaid, *Friend Eliphaz, thou haſt told me, that wicked men are fat and full, if ſo, what are they who are lean and meagre? canſt thou according to thy own rule, read wickedneſs in my phyſiognomie? My leanneſs riſeth up in me, canſt thou raiſe an argument from that againſt me?*

My leanneſs.] *Job's* body was lean, his Purſe and Name were lean, his leanneſs and his wrinkles were of the ſame extent, both reaching all his worldly concernments. The Lord threatens Idolaters (*Zeph.*2.11.) that *he will famiſh, or make lean* (ſo we put in the Margin) *all their Gods. Jehovah*, the true God, who ſaith to man (*Pſal.* 50.12.) *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee*, tells theſe falſe Gods, that he will make them hungry: But what was the meat of theſe Gods? It was the honour and credit, the worſhip and ſervice which they had among men. Indeed they who deny the true God, his due honour and worſhip, do what they can to famiſh, or make him lean; and when the true God (as he hath done by the Preaching of the Goſpel) turns men from Idols to ſerve, and worſhip him the living God, then he famiſheth thoſe Gods: When Idols loſe their eſteem, their leanneſs riſeth up, and they go down. Thus alſo it is with man, his leanneſs may be ſaid to riſe when his credit falls.

Further, There is a twofold leanneſs.

First, Of the ſoul, or inward man.

Secondly, Of the body, or outward man.

When the Jews luſted in the Wilderneſs, and called for fleſh to ſatisfie the fleſh: *God* (ſaith the Text, *Pſal.*106.15.) *gave them their requeſt, but ſent leanneſs into their ſoul.* The ſoul in a proper ſenſe, is neither fat nor lean, and therefore the ſoul in this place of the *Pſalm*, muſt be taken improperly, or elſe the leanneſs of it muſt. The ſoul is put improperly for the body, or for the whole man, and ſo, *he ſent leanneſs into their ſouls*, is, the curſe of God cauſed them to pine ſecretly, or *he ſlew the fatteſt of them* (openly) *and ſmote down the choſen men in Iſrael*: So this leanneſs is expounded (*Pſal.*78.31.) as if he had ſaid, God made them a thin and a lean company before he had done with them. Yet beſides this (I conceive) the Text doth intend ſome ſpiritual judgment; and then the ſoul is taken in a proper ſenſe, but leanneſs in an improper ſenſe: and ſo, *he ſent leanneſs into their ſouls*, is, while they inordinately deſired meat for their bodies, God withheld the ordinary food of their ſouls: He did not adminiſter his grace and holy ſpirit (which are the fatners of the ſoul) while they were thus hungry after dainties for the fleſh.

Job's Friends thought him a lean ſoul, but he here confeſſes the leanneſs of his body; and in that his continual ſorrow the cauſe of it. So the Prophet crys out, *My leanneſs, my leanneſs, wo unto me* (*Iſa.*24.16.)

My leanneſs [riſing up.] Fatneſs riſeth up, and not leanneſs, when a man grows lean, his fleſh falls and abates; skin and bone ſtick together, Why then doth he ſay, *My leanneſs riſeth up?*

Though, when a man is lean, his fleſh falls, yet his bones riſe: A fat mans bones are (as it were) buried in fleſh, you can ſcarce feel his ribs, but when he grows lean, his bones ſtick out, and riſe up: That is the meaning here, *my leanneſs riſing up.*

Job aſcribes a rational act, both to his wrinkles and to his leanneſs, as if both did ſpeak, and which is more, give evidence concerning him; he brings them forth as witneſſes at the bar, this ſpeaks, and that ſpeaks, he doubles it, *My wrinkles witneſs againſt me, and my leanneſs riſing up witneſſeth to my face*: When a witneſs is to give in his evidence in any cauſe before a Judge, he riſeth up, or ſtandeth forth, that all may ſee him; *Job* preſents his leanneſs in the proper poſture of a witneſs *riſing up.*

Maciei *videtur dare perſonam ut paulo ante rugis.*

The Original varies ſomewhat in the latter clauſe from the former; we render both by witneſſing, but we may read it thus, *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, that hath been, or is a witneſs, or* (as M. *Broughton* reads) *a proof, my leanneſs riſing up* (or which riſeth up againſt me) *anſwers* (or ſpeaketh) *to my face.* The meaning is, Theſe outward evils are evidence enough to my Friends, that God is angry with me, and that I am wicked againſt God.

Job grants that thoſe wrinkles, and this leanneſs were witneſſes of his afflictions, he never queſtioned their teſtimony, as to that point, neither indeed could he. *Jonadab* ſaid to *Amnon, Why art thou being the Kings Son, lean, or thin, from day to day, wilt thou not tell me?* (2 *Sam.*13.4.) His leanneſs told his Friends plain enough, that all was not well; he read that in his face, only he could not read the particular ilneſs there. If we ſee a young man, eſpecially the Son of a Great man, or of a King (who is waited upon with all worldly delights) wrinkled, and lean, is it not a witneſs that he hath been ſick, or is overwhelmed with ſorrow? theſe teſtifie to his face, he cannot conceal it.

Magnũ cevtè peccatum, quod tantũ in florente illa ætate deformitatẽ & ſenilem ſpeciẽ induxit. Putant tãtas afflictiones teſtes eſſe magnæ culpæ & iræ Dei. Coc.

But *Job's* Friends ſaid, theſe were witneſſes of his ſin: they produced the wrinkles of his body as a witneſs of his wrinkled ſoul; and the leanneſs of his outward man, as an argument of his inward leanneſs; they ſaid, theſe teſtified plainly, that he was not only a great ſinner, but an Hypocrite: And thus they argued all along, this was their conſtant plea; *Job* muſt needs be (according to this opinion)

opinion) a man of an evil life, because his life was filled with evils; *Thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me, &c.*

Hence Observe, First, *Great afflictions leave their marks behind them.*

Little afflictions leave no wrinkles, no leanness behind them, we recover out of them, and nothing appears of them; as it is in sinning, some sins leave no mark, such are our daily infirmities, and common failings; but there are other sins, which leave a mark behind them, you cannot get them off suddenly, it may be you cannot claw off the marks of some sins as long as you live: though the sin be fully pardoned, yet the mark, the wrinkle, the leanness of it may remain to your dying day. *David* being defiled with adultery and murder, prays, *Cause the bones which thou hast broken to rejoyce:* Those two were such sins as broke his very bones; they were to his soul, as the breaking of a bone is to the body: If a man break a bone, though it be well Set, yet it leaves a mak. *David* carried the skar of those sins to his Grave: Though God had forgiven those sins, and did not remember them, to impute them to *David*, yet when God had occasion to speak of *David* to his highest commendation, he could not forbear the mention of those sins (*1 Kings* 15.5.) *David did that which was right in the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah.* The wrinkle or stain of that sin stuck upon *David's* reputation, when the guilt of it was quite removed, and washed off from his person. 'Tis so with afflictions, some afflictions leave no mark, others go deep: Though all afflictions are light comparatively to the weight of glory, as the Apostle speaks (*2 Cor.*4.17.) *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory:* Yet afflictions being compared among themselves, some are light, and some are heavy: As a Cart that is heavy laden, cuts deep into the earth, and tells you where it hath gone; so doth the wheel of a heavy afflicton drawn over body, soul, or state.

Secondly, Observe (which is the natural theology of the Text.)

Wrinkles, and leanness in youth, or strength of age are an argument of extraordinary sorrow.

Thirdly, Take the words according to the sense of *Jobs* friends, which *Job* also hints as meeting with their objection, *They witness against me:* that is, You use them, you bring them as witnesses against me:

Then Note, *Great afflictions are looked on as proofs, or witnesses of great sins.*

We no sooner hear of, or see a man under great afflictions, but our first thought is surely he hath committed some great sin. This is almost every man's suspicion; but it is an ill grounded suspicion. This point was spoken to (*Chap.* 10. 17.) where *Job* tells the Lord, *Thou hast renewed thy witnesses against me, &c.* There 'twas shewed how afflictions are brought in by God and man as a witness; and this was the greatest evidence, and (upon the matter) all the evidence which the Friends of *Job* brought against him, his wrinkles, and his leanness: I shall here only add this caution.

Take heed of passing judgment upon the evidence of such witnesses as these, wrinkles, and leanness; for though every wrinkle witnesseth that a man is a sinner (were it not for sin we should have remained ever in our body and outward condition, as Believers shall be restored by Christ, without a wrinkle) yet they are not witnesses that a man is wicked: I may say two things of these witnesses.

First, They are always *doubtful witnesses.*

Secondly, For the most part they are *false witnesses.*

It is a very questionable and uncertain evidence which afflictions give against us: *For no man knows love, or hatred, by all that is before him:* We can but guess at the best, by what they say. But usually they bear false witness against the innocent; so they did against *Job*; they witnessed that of him to his Friends which was not right. Therefore the Vulgar translates the latter branch (though not well to the letter of the Original, yet well as to the sense) *A false witness is risen up against my face, contradicting me*; that is, Opposing or weakning all that I have said concerning my own innocence. Yea if we make affliction a witness, we may rather make it a witness of sincerity, and of grace, a mark of adoption and sonship, a mark of divine favour and fatherly love, then of man's wickedness, or of God's rejection and disfavour. The word is clear and expres for this (*Heb.*12. 6, 7,8.) *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth, &c. But if ye be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bastards and not Sons.* So then, our wrinkles and our leanness may upon Scripture warrant, be brought as witnesses for us, but we have no warrant to conclude upon their witness, either against our selves, or others.

But it seems *Job* had a higher witness against him (if such witnesses might be allowed) then a wrinkled skin, or a lean face: Behold now his torn flesh, and his limbs rent in sunder, as if (not only like *Daniel*) he had been cast into a Lyons Den, but as if (which *Daniel* did not) he had felt the worst of the Lyons teeth and pawes.

Vers. 9. **He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me; he gnasheth upon me with his teeth, mine enemy sharpeneth his eye upon me.**

Strange language! *He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me. Job* gives us a description of the Lords dealing with him, in allusion to the fury of wild Beasts, Lyons, Tygers, and Bears, who gnash their teeth, and sparkle with their eyes. when they either fight one with another, or fall upon their prey.

He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me.

'Tis doubted whom *Job* meaneth by this *Tearer:* Some judge this Title applicable only to the Devil, and interpret *Job* speaking of him; *the Devil hateth me, He teareth me in his wrath: Job* was delivered into the hand of the Devil (*Chap.*2.) And this is the courtship of Hell, *He teareth.*

Secondly, Others understand it of his extream pain and torturing disease, that tore him like a savage Beast.

A third expounds it of his Friends, as if he compared them to wild Beasts, who in stead of comforting his spirit, did (upon the matter) tear his flesh between their teeth.

Fourthly, 'Tis conceived, he means those vain ones of whom he speaks (*Chap.* 19.) that came about him, and troubled him.

But fifthly, and most generally, this Text is interpreted of God himself, *He teareth me in his wrath who hateth me.* For though *Job* speaks here distractedly, discovering rather his grief then his enemy; or as a man wounded and smitten in the dark, he perceives he hath an enemy, he feels the smart, and bears the blows, but he is not able to see who hurts him, yet in this confusion of language, his heart was still upon God who ordered, and disposed all those armies of sorrow, which assaulted him on every side.

He [teareth] me in his wrath.] The Hebrew word *Taraph* is near in sound to our English *Tear*, and it significth to tear as a Lyon his prey (*Gen.*49.9.) *Judah is a Lyons whelp, from the prey my Son thou art gone up.* The same word in the Verb notes Tearing, and in the Noun a prey, because the prey is torn by the teeth, or claws of the Lyon.

He teareth me in his [wrath.] Wild Beasts tear not so much for wrath, as for hunger; they tear out of a desire to fill themselves, rather then out of malice to destroy others. But *Job* saith, *He teareth me in his wrath who [hateth] me.*

The word signifies not an ordinary, but an inward hatred, and with the change of a letter it is the same by which the Devil is expressed, *Satan, an adversary*, or *the adversary*; so called because of his extream hatred against mankind, yea against Christ himself. *Job* speaks of God as if he bare such a hatred against him as Satan doth, an inward perfect hatred.

Thus some translate, *He prosecutes me with inward hatred:* A hard expression of God; Doth he tear a harmless soul, and tear him in wrath? Yet this is not all; to make up the measure of this excessive language, take two aggravations more.

He gnasheth upon me with his teeth.] *Job* pursues the allusion still: Beasts (as it were) whet their teeth that they may devour their prey: This action of gnashing the teeth is ascribed to men, and it notes four things.

First,

Rugæ meæ testimonium dicunt contra me, & suscitatur falsiloquus adversus faciē meā cōtradicēs mihi. Vulg.

Ejusmodi querimoniæ in neminem certo jactatæ afflicti hominis propriæ sunt.

טרף *Feravit prædā rapiēdo & lacerādo propriē est.*

שטם *Est totis viribus adversari, idē cū Satan, unde & Satanas dictus. Ira sua rapit quasi odio intestino prosequatur me.* Jun.

חרק *Frenduit dentibus; est invidētiū, irascentium irridentium habitus. Loquitur ad similitudinem bestiæ quæ homini cōminando dentes contra ipsū parat.* Aquin.

First, Extream envy (*Pſal.*12.10.) *The wicked ſhall ſee it and be grieved, he ſhall gnaſh with his teeth and melt away; the deſire of the wicked ſhall periſh:* But at what was this wicked man grieved, till he gnaſhed his teeth? Was it a grief of compaſſion at the miſery of others? No, it was a grief of envy at the proſperity of others, as is clear from the words immediately foregoing. *The horn of the righteous ſhall be exalted with honour:* Envy is the vexation and depreſſion of our own ſpirits, at the exaltation of another man in riches or in honour. It is not a ſickneſs catcht from another mans diſeaſe, but a ſickneſs catcht from another mans health.

Secondly, Gnaſhing of the teeth, notes extream deriſion, or higheſt contempt and inſultation over a man in miſery (*Pſal.* 35.15, 16.) *But in mine adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together* (that is, they gathered themſelves together for joy, or to rejoyce) *yea the very abjects gathered themſelves together* (ſuch as all honeſt, or civil men had caſt out of their company and ſociety, aſſociated and knotted themſelves into companies) *againſt me, they did tear me* (that is, my good name) *and ceaſed not; with hypocritical mockers at feaſts, they gnaſhed upon me with their teeth:* Where it is alſo obſervable, that we have the former act complained of by *Job*, joyned with this, *Tearing, with gnaſhing of the teeth.*

Thirdly, Gnaſhing of the teeth is the effect of extream pain; thus the damned in Hell ſhall gnaſh their teeth for ever (*Mat.*8.12. *Mat.*13.42.) That gnaſhing of teeth ariſeth from a mixed paſſion, partly from envy, and partly from ſorrow; envy at the good which the Saints enjoy, and ſorrow at the evil which themſelves feel; hence comes gnaſhing of teeth in Hell.

Fourthly, Gnaſhing of teeth is an argument of extream wrath and anger (*Acts* 7.54.) where it is ſaid of *Stevens* at once Auditors and Enemies, *When they heard thoſe things, they were cut to the heart* (*Peters* Auditors, *Acts* 2. were prickt at the heart with godly ſorrow, *Stevens* Auditors were cut to the heart with ungodly anger) *and they gnaſhed upon him with their teeth.* The gnaſhing of teeth here ſpoken of is the concomitant of ſuppoſed wrath, *He teareth me in his wrath, and gnaſheth upon me with his teeth.*

Yet further:

Mine enemy ſharpeneth his eyes upon me.] This notes the fierceneſs of an enemy: Wild Beaſts when they fight, whet their eyes as well as their teeth; and a man that is extreamly enraged, looks upon his oppoſite as if he would look through him: Thus *Job* repreſents the Lord in all the poſtures of an enemy, *He ſharpneth his eyes againſt me.*

The word ſignifies to ſharpen as a Sword, or a Spear, or any inſtrument of Iron is ſharpned (1 *Sam.*13.20.) *There was no Smith in Iſrael; but all the Iſraelites went down to the Philiſtims to ſharpen every man his ſhare, &c.* That word is uſed here, *Mine enemy ſharpneth his eye like a Sword*, as if he would ſtrike me through with his eye; we ſay a man hath *a piercing eye*, when he looks very angerly.

When we are well-pleaſed, kindneſs is ſeen in our eyes; we give our Friends a pleaſant and gentle look; Chriſts tells the Spouſe (*Cant.*4.9.) *Thou haſt raviſhed mine heart, my Siſter, my Spouſe, thou haſt raviſhed my heart with one of thine eyes.* The Hebrew is, Thou haſt taken away my heart with one of thine eyes. *A holy love-look ſtole away Chriſts heart*; he could not but love the Church when (through the comlineſs which he had put upon her) ſhe looked ſo lovely on him. As thus a look of love from the Churches eye ſtole away Chriſts heart, ſo a look of mercy from Chriſts eye broke *Peters* heart, yea and opened the Flood-gates of his eyes too (*Luk.*22.61,62.) *And the Lord turned, & looked upon Peter, and Peter went out & wept bitterly.*

There are ſoft looks as well as ſoft words, and there are hard looks as well as hard words: The eye is a Spear and an Arrow, yea a ſharp Sword as well as the tongue; *He ſharpneth his eyes upon me*, as if he would ſtab me to the heart with a glance of his eye. The eye hath its ſcintillations, its ſparklings, even as bright burniſht Braſs, or as a burning Lamp, or as the morning Sun ſends forth his rays and beams, ſuch ſcintillations doth the eye of ſome men ſend forth naturally. The Roman Hiſtorians report of *Auguſtus Caeſar*, and our Turkiſh Hiſtorian reports of *Tamerlane*, that ſuch a majeſtick luſtre ſparkled from their eyes, as dazled the eyes of their beholders, which (ſaith my Author) cauſed the latter, in a comly modeſty, to abſtain from looking earneſtly upon ſuch as ſpake with him. What the eyes of theſe great Princes did naturally, the eyes of many do when they look paſſionately. Chriſt hath a ſharp eye, ſo ſharp, that his eyes (as repreſented to *John* in a Viſion) *were like a flame of fire* (*Rev.*1.14.) The eyes of God are ſo ſharp naturally, or according to the excellency of his nature, that no eye can behold his face; and himſelf beholdeth not only every face, but pierceth into every heart: yet beſides this natural ſharpneſs of his eye towards all, he angerly ſharpens his eye againſt his Enemies. God was indeed *Job's* Friend, and *Job* was Gods Favourite, yet here he ſpeaks of God (as he had alſo done before) as of his Enemy; and as of an Enemy, declaring himſelf at his eye, *Mine enemy ſharpneth his eye upon me.*

Job attributes this to God, in the extremity of his pain; this was the voice of his fleſh, it was not the voice of *Job* himſelf: this was the voice of his ſenſe, not the voice of his Faith. Would you know what was the voice of *Job* himſelf, or of *Job's* Faith? Hear that (*Chap.*13.15, 16,18.) *Though he kill me, yet will I truſt in him. He alſo ſhall be my ſalvation, and I know that I ſhall be juſtified.* Hear again his Faith ſpeaking (*Chap.*19.25.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I ſhall ſee him again with theſe eyes:* Though ſenſe ſaw God as an Enemy ſharpning his eyes upon him, yet Faith ſaw God his Redeemer, in this aſſurance, that he alſo ſhould behold him with an eye of ſenſe, *I ſhall ſee him with theſe eyes.*

Adverſariũ ſuum vocat Job *nõ amicos ſolũ ſed omnẽ creaturã, quæ reſiſtit Domino reſiſtẽte, accuſat Domino accuſante, damnat Domino dãnante, aut ipſum Deum adverſariũ intelligas.* Brent.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *That God dealeth with thoſe whom he loveth dearly, as if he hated them.*

Secondly, *They whom God doth love, may be under preſent apprehenſion that God hates them.*

I only name theſe points as ariſing from this place; they have been handled (*Chap.* 13.24. *Chap.* 14. 13.) upon thoſe words, *Until thy wrath be paſt*; and therefore I ſtay not upon them here.

Thirdly, Note, *God (to ſenſe) doth ſeem to exerciſe a kind of cruelty (even the cruelty of wild beaſts) towards thoſe whom he dearly loves.*

What are tearing and gnaſhing of teeth? What is the ſharpning of the eye? Is not any one of theſe, much more all theſe in one, the diſcovery of cruelty? *Job* ſaith all this: and doth not *Hezekiah* ſay as much (*Iſa.*38.13.) *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lyon, ſo will he break all my bones, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.* We find God taking upon himſelf thoſe ſimilitudes, not only in reference to his Enemies, but alſo to his own people; for as he deals with the wicked when they provoke him, ſo in proportion with his own. *Outward diſpenſations make no difference; I will take vengeance, I will not meet thee as a man* (*Iſa.*43.3.) that is, I will not ſhew ſo much as any humane pity or compaſſion, much leſs Divine, but I will meet thee as a Beaſt. Thus God threatned to deal with *Babylon*; and thus he appears to deal with Sion, with the choiſeſt Sons and Daughters of Sion.

And thus he profeſſed (*Hoſ.* 5.14.) *For I will be unto Ephraim as a Lyon, and as a young Lyon to the Houſe of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none ſhall reſcue him.*

Job having ſhewed what hard uſage he had from God himſelf, who appeared as an enemy, proceeds now to ſhew what hard and courſe uſage he had from men, who were indeed his enemies, into whoſe hands God had delivered him.

Verſ. 10. **They have gaped upon me with their mouth, they have ſmitten me upon the cheek reproachfully, they have gathered themſelves together againſt me.**

The perſon is now changed, as alſo the number; before it was *He*, now *They*: And who were they? We have no Names to give them; only in general. Theſe were the inſtruments which God let looſe upon him; his Friends, ſay ſome; his Enemies, ſay others. Whoſoever they were, doubtleſs they were either down-right Enemies, or Enemy-like Friends; their own behaviour ſpeaks them ſo, *They have gaped upon me, &c.*

לטש *Acuit, deterſit gladiũ ut ſplẽdeat, ad terrorem polivit inſtrumẽta ferrea aut area.* Placidis oculis aliquẽ intuemur quãdo facta ejus bene interpretamur Aquin. *Per metaphoram ad ſcintillationẽ oculorũ transfertur, ubi oculi ad modum aris cãdẽtis, vel lãpadis ardentis, vel auroræ radios vibrare dicuntur.* Bold. *Ingenii vim in eo fulgor oculorũ oſtẽdebat, quorũ aciem inſtar ſiderum vibrãtẽ intẽtius eum intuentes ferre nõ poterant.* Pezel. Melliſ. Hiſt. par. 2. Knolles Turk. Hiſt.

He varies, or heightens their enemy-like behaviour by three expressions.

First, *They have gaped upon me with their mouth.*

Secondly, *They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully.*

Thirdly, *They have gathered themselves against me.*

I shall open them distinctly.

They have gaped upon me with their mouth.

Gaping with, or opening the mouth, implies two things.

First, Scorn and derision (*Lam.* 2.16.) *All thine enemies have opened the mouth against thee, they hiss and gnash the teeth; they say we have swallowed her up: certainly this is the day we looked for.* The Church in affliction was afflicted with scornful gestures.

Secondly, As gaping with the mouth notes scorn, so also cruelty; he that gapes at another, tells him (though he say nothing) that he could devour him, and eat him up (as we say) *Without Salt*; Such a one shews that he needs no Sauce (*Psal.*22.13.) *They gaped upon me with their mouthes, as a ravening and roaring Lyon:* A Lyon gapes at his prey to devour it. *Job* often complains both of the contempt and cruelty of many against him; and their gaping upon him includes both; which are also again intimated in the next clause.

They have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully.

Some render it, *Reproaching me, they have smitten me on the cheek:* Smiting on the cheek is taken two wayes.

Literally.

Metaphorically.

What literal smiting is, all know, and most have felt: but had *Job* any about him who used him thus rudely? I conceive, not; and therefore we may understand him metaphorically. So, smiting on the cheek, is to reproach: And these words, *They have smitten me on the cheek reproachfully*, are no more nor less; then, *They have reproached me.* To smite on the cheek, is a thing so reproachful, that, by an Hebraism, it signifieth to reproach (*Lam.*3.30.) *He giveth his cheek to him that smiteth him*, which is expounded in the latter clause by this, *he is filled full with reproach.* The sufferings of Christ, which were full of reproach, are thus Propheſied, *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting* (*Isa.*50.6.) Christ was smitten on the face literally (*Matth.* 26. 67.) *Then did they spit in his face and buffetted him, and others smote him with the palms of their hands.* He was smitten also tropically, being put to open shame, and disgracefully dealt with. That of the Apostle clears this sense (2 *Cor.*11.20.) *Ye suffer a man to bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face*, that is, If he disgrace you: So the Apostle expounds it (*Vers.*21.) *I speak concerning reproach. Paul* (*Chap.*12.) had a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him, to cuff, or smite him with the fist, so the word signifies; what that was, at least in part, he explains (*Vers.*10.) *I will therefore take pleasure in reproaches.* Thus the Prophet describes the dishonour which should be put upon the Judge (*Micah.* 5.1.) *Now gather thy self in Troops, O daughter of Troops, he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the Judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek*, that is, The enemy shall pour contempt upon thy Kings and Princes; in which sense they may be said to be smitten upon the cheek, though no rod nor hand touch them. And some interpret that (*Mat.* 5.39) *If any man smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left also*, not of hand, but tongue-smiting, or of suffering reproach. As if Christ had said, *If any one disgrace thee a little, bear it, yea though he should disgrace thee a great deal more, yet bear it:* Smiting upon the right cheek, notes a lesser injury received. When a man smites another on the right cheek, he smites with his left hand; the left hand strikes the right cheek, and the left hand is the weaker in most, and gives a weaker blow. If thou receive a blow on thy right cheek with the left hand, turn the other, and let him smite thee with the right hand, let him give thee a smarter, a harder blow: that is, If a man disgrace thee a little, reward him not with disgrace, but prepare to bear a greater, turn the left cheek. And the reason of this was, because slaves and condemned persons were thus smitten, as also such as were supposed to speak irreverently to the Magistrate.

Percutere maxillâ Hebraïca locutio est, quæ significat gravissima contumelia aliquem afficere.

cum aliquis propter gravē aliquam ignominiam pudēfit, licet vis omnis absit, & plagaverberari dicitur in maxilla. Sanct. in Mic.c.5.v.1

Hence it was that when *Paul* had spoken freely to the Councel, saying, *Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day*: presently *Ananias* the high Priest, commanded those that stood by him to smite him on the mouth (*Act.*23.1,2.) In which case Christ himself was smitten by an Officer that stood by (*Joh.*18.22.) From all which Scripture testimonies it is more then manifest, that to smite a man on the cheek, is to disgrace, because they who fell under disgrace, were usually smitten on the cheek: and this I take to be the most suitable interpretation of *Jobs* complaint in this place, *They smite me on the cheek reproachfully.*

Hence Observe, First, *The best Saints on earth have been smitten and deeply wounded with reproach.*

God himself gave an honourable testimony of *Job*, there was none like him, he had no peer on earth, for holiness and uprightness; yet men gave testimony against him, as if he had been the scum of the World, for unholiness and hypocrisie. *David, a man after Gods own heart, was* (not only reproached, but) *a reproach among all his Enemies, but especially among his neighbours* (or nearest Friends both in habitation and relation) *and he heard the slander of many* (*Psal.*31.11, 13.) The word of God was made a reproach to the Prophet *Jeremy* (*Chap.*20.8.) And the spirit was made a reproach to the Apostles (*Act.*2.13.) *Others mocked, saying, These men are full of new Wine: When indeed they were filled with the holy Ghost* (*Vers.* 4.) Drunkards made Songs upon *David*, but the Apostles were sung about for Drunkards.

We are fools, saith *Paul* (that is, We are so called and accounted) for Christ, and being *defamed* (or as the word bears, *blasphemed*; to speak against any thing of God in Man, is blasphemy, as well as speaking directly against God) *we entreat.* And to shew, that this was no prick with a Pin, or small scratch upon their credit, which made him complain, he tells us what this fame did amount unto, *We are made as the filth of the World, and as the off-scouring of all things unto this day* (1 *Cor.*4.13.)

The whole World lieth in wickedness (which is a moral filthiness) so that to be the filth of the World, is to be the filth of filthiness; the filth of a clean thing is bad enough, what then is the filth of a filthy thing? The off-scouring of any thing is base, then what is the off-scouring of all things, which must needs include the basest things? These Apostles who were the ornament and glory, the purest and most refined pieces of the whole inferiour World, were yet made (not that these reproaches did at all change them from what they were in themselves, but they made them to be in the opinion of others, what they least of all were) the rubbish, and the refuse, the sweepings, and the dross of the whole World. The Apologies of *Tertullian* and others, do abundantly testifie what reproaches the Primitive Christians suffered, both in reference to their practice and worship. *Athanasius* was called *Sathanasius* (as if he had been a Devil incarnate) by the Abbettors of the *Arrian* Heresie, which he stiffly opposed: And some who were displeased with the Opinions and Writings of *Cyprianus*, called him in contempt, *Coprianus*, or one that *gathers dung*, as if his Books were nothing but *dung-heaps.*

nōme & est stercoreus, hinc copriō scarabeus, à luto scilicet. Bech. de Orig. Ling. Lat.

How *Luther*, *Calvin*, and other Reformers of the former age, were smitten reproachfully, both by the tongues and Pens of the Popish Party, is known of all these parts of the World: And how much this trade (which is indeed the Devils trade) of slandering the footsteps of Gods annointed ones, is continued unto this day, we have but too much evidence. A man can scarce appear, indeed, for God, but he is thus smitten on the cheek by men. Religion and the power of godliness have ever been an occasion of contention; and for the most part, to smite with reproach, hath been the manner of contending.

There are not many enemies of good men, who have a Sword to draw against them, but all the Enemies of good men have ill words enow at command to throw against them, and of them they are seldom sparing: And, though (which is bad enough, yet no better can be expected of them) this trade of reproaching be driven most by evil men against those who are good, yet (which is far worse) we may learn from this instance between *Job* and his Friends (for even they did not spare to reproach him) that (which shall be a second Observation)

A good

A second Observation.) *A good man may so far forget himself as to speak reproachfully against his Brother.*

Yea, the reproaches of Professors one against another, have been (as they are the saddest, so) the sharpest and bitterest reproaches. They who agree in most things, take it most unkindly when they differ in any thing; and are more ready to revile one another about the points wherein they differ, then to bless God for those wherein they are agreed. The Papists did not more reproach *Luther* and *Calvin*, whose judgements concurred in opposing them, then *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* have reproached each other, where they are opposite in judgement: The corrupt remains even in good men, tell them that whosoever differs from them stands in their light and obscures their excellency, and therefore that themselves may shine the brighter in what they hold, they little care (when master'd by self and passion) how obscure, yea fowl they render them, who hold the contrary.

While Infidels reproached Christians, it was the glory of Christianity, and while the wicked reproach the godly, it is the glory of godliness; but while one Christian reproaches another, the glory is departed from godliness. Is it not enough that the Servants of God are thus smitten by the world, must they needs smite their Fellow-servants, and revile those who are (upon the main) in the same way of God wherein they are, only because they are not fully in their way? Yea, when possibly, they may be in a higher and more perfect way then they? Is it not enough that the Bryars and Thorns, which are among the Lillies, tear and scratch them? Shall the Lillies degenerate into Briars and Thorns one towards another? Or if at any time a Lilly of the one side tear, and be harsh, should not the Lilly on the other side be kind and gentle? If *Israel* transgress, let not *Judah* offend too. *Luther* was often at Sharps with *Calvin*, but *Calvin* professed (and that was a Noble profession) *Though* Luther *call me Devil, yet I will honour* Luther *as a Servant of God.*

Holy *Job* cannot be excused for his failings in this, who as he complains here, that he was reproached by his Enemies, yea and by his Friends too, yet he gave his Friends some advantage to complain also of harsh words, if not of reproaches cast upon them.

Thirdly Observe, *Reproach is a very heavy burthen.*

Remember (Lord) the reproach of thy Servant, how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people, wherewith thine Enemies have reproached thee, O Lord, wherewith they have reproached the footsteps of thine annointed (*Psal.* 89. 50, 51.) And again (*Psal.*69.9.) *The reproaches of them that reproached thee, are fallen on me.* Yet more (*Psal.* 42. 10.) *As with a Sword in my bowels* (or in my bones) *they reproach me, while they say, &c.* Reproach is not only a burthen upon the back, but a Sword in the bowels. A reviling, reproaching tongue is compared in Scripture to three things.

First, To a Razor.
Secondly, To a Sword.
Thirdly, To an Arrow.

A Razor is so keen, that it takes off every little hair; reproach cuts a hair, it will have to do even with undiscernable evils. A Sword wounds at hand, and smites those that are near; an Arrow wounds afar off: So that whether a man be far off, or near, whether his errour be small or great, or but imaginary, it is all one to a reproachful spirit; his tongue serves him for all turns. *David* was tryed by all manner of reproaches; but those which pinched and pressed him most, were his reproaches about spiritual things. Any reproach is bad enough, but a reproach in Religion, is worst; to be reproached with our prayers and with our God, *Where is your God?* Such reproaches, how deep do they go? They strike to the very heart. *Credit is a precious commodity*; a man is more tender of it, then of his flesh; now all reproach falls upon our credit, and the more excellent that piece of our credit is, upon which the reproach falls, the more grievous is that reproach to us. Credit in spiritual things is the most excellent credit: Thus *David* was reproached, and so was *Job*, *Is this thy fear, and thy confidence?* Is this the thing thou hast so long boasted of? Christ was to bear the greatest burthen of affliction, and therefore he did not only bear the Cross, but reproach with it; he suffered death, and reproach with death; he suffered the shameful death of the Cross, in which there was more then a reproach, a curse, *Cursed is every one that hangeth on a Tree:* Christ must die an ignominious death, as well as a painful, and the ignominy was a heavier burden then the pain. We are exhorted (*Heb.*13.13.) *To go out bearing his reproach*; as intimating, that to bear the reproach of Christ, would be harder to us, and a stronger temptation, then to bear the cross of Christ. As the greatest part of Christs sufferings for us, was to bear our reproach, so the greatest part of our sufferings for Christ, is to bear Christs reproach: *Let us go forth unto him without the Camp, bearing his reproach.* And indeed reproach is so great a burthen, that were not this consideration in it; that it is Christs, no man would bear it; and they will yield to do any thing rather then suffer reproach, who are not able to say that their reproach is the reproach of Christ. *Moses* looked upon his reproach, as *the reproach of Christ*, he did not esteem his own reproach, but the reproach of Christ greater riches, then the treasures of Egypt (*Heb.*11.26.) Our reproach is nothing but dung or dross which hath weight in it to press us, but no worth in it to enrich us; but the reproach of Christ is treasure, which though it have weight in it to press us, yet it hath abundance of worth in it to enrich and crown us. The Apostle calls it, The reproach of Christ, both because Christ did bear such reproach himself, and because Christ owned *Moses* in bearing that reproach; yea he owned that reproach which *Moses* bare, as if he had born it himself; while we are reproached for Christs sake, Christ is reproached; and though it should grieve us that Christ is reproached in us, yet it may comfort us, that Christ takes our reproach as his. *They have smitten me on the cheek reproachfully*, and yet they have not done with me.

They have gathered themselves together against me.

It seems they contemned and reproached him not singly or every man apart; but they joyned all together in consulting and plotting against him.

The word that we translate to *gather together*, hath a second signification, namely, to fill, either as a room is filled with Goods, or Persons, or as the stomack is filled with meat, or food, or as an Army with Men. Hence Mr. *Broughton* translates, *They come by full Troops upon me:* And another, *They will be filled with me, or upon me.* The Vulgar explains it thus, *They are filled or satiated with my punishment:* or as a third, *They have taken their fill of pleasure at my miseries.* The reason of this sense ariseth from the former; because, where many things or persons are gathered together, they fill up that place.

מלא
1. *Implere, complere.*
2. *Colligere, congregare, quod rebus collectis impleantur loca.*

First, It signifies to gather together, as men are gathered in a civil Society, and combination: *Job* supposed his Friends conspired his hurt, and that they gathered themselves together against him, who pretended to gather themselves together for him; or we may apply this to his professed Enemies, who were very unanimous to vex and trouble him.

Hence Note, *Men are apt to agree in doing hurt.*

Union is not alwayes a sign of a good cause: 'Tis but seldom we can agree to do a common duty. Good men want the cement of love in a good cause; evil men seldom want it in a bad. *Behold* saith God, *Gen.*11.5,6.) *This people are one, and they all speak one language:* their language was one, and so were their hearts, to build *a Tower, whose top might reach to Heaven:* The builders of *Babel* are more united, then the builders of *Sion*. The Psalmist complains of the Enemies oneness (*Psal.*83.5,6,7.) *They have consulted together with one consent* (or heart) *they are confederate against thee. Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the Philistims, and them that dwell at Tyre: Ashur is also joyned with them,* &c. All Nations, even Heterogenial Nations, can joyn in mischief; men of several Kingdoms, and spirits, *Pilate* and *Herod* joyn to crucifie Christ; but as it is most beautiful and pleasant (*Psal.*133.) So, *O how hard a thing is it for Brethren to dwell in unity?* They who have one God, one Lord, one Faith, one Spirit, one Baptism, one Hope; yea they who (in one sense) are one Body, and one Spirit (*Ephes.*4.4,5.) are seldom one.

Super me implebnntur. Mont.

Satiati sunt cænis meis. Vulg. Ex manis suis voluptatem suam expleverunt. Sygur.

From that second sense of the word, *They have filled, or satiated themselves with me,*

Note, *It is a kind of pleasure to some to see others in pain.*

We should be pained with the pain of others; fellow-feeling is a duty; how far are they departed from this duty, who are so far from feeling the sufferings of others, that they take pleasure in their sufferings?

There are two sorts of pleasure, which every good man should abhor.

First, Pleasure in sin, our own, or others: The worst that was said of the wicked Gentiles was this, *They not only do such things, but take pleasure in them that do them* (*Rom.* 1.32.)

Secondly, Pleasure in the sufferings and sorrows of others; some do not only put others to the suffering of sorrow, but take pleasure in the sorrow which they suffer; they make their tears as Wine, their ashes as Bread; and until they see them weeping and feeding on ashes, their own Wine is as tears, and their Bread as ashes to them. *Haman* came full from the Queens Banquet, and he was invited by her to a second Banquet the next day, yet still he was hungry, and said (*Hest.* 5.13.) *All this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the Kings gate:* Tis like, *Haman* had eaten and drunk freely, yet the Banquet had not filled his belly: *All this availeth me nothing. More then forty of the Jews bound themselves under a curse, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul* (*Act.* 23.12, 13.) It would have been better to *Haman* then meat and drink to have killed *Mordecai*, and all the Jews.

Some have been heard to say, *O how sweet is revenge!* What a pleasant draught is a draught of blood! Spightful spirits hunger and thirst for the downfal and misery of those who stand in their way; nor will any thing satisfie hatred, but the ruine of those who are hated; and when once they see them ruined, they are satisfied. As envy is troubled at the good which another enjoyes more then at all the evils which it self feels; so malice is more satisfied with the evils which befal others, then with all the good which it self enjoyes (*Exod.* 15.9.) *The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my lust shall be satisfied upon them.* *Pharaoh* and his Courtiers, yea all the Egyptians hungred and thirsted for the flesh and blood of *Israel*: They had a lust, or a longing rather (as women with Child have sometimes inordinate appetites after strange meats) to eat mans flesh, and drink the blood of the slain: Revenge is as craving a lust as covetousness, but it is a lust more easily satisfied then covetousness. This encreases by receiving what it desires, but that (if it may have it) is satisfied: That which covetousness receives, is only as fewel to a fire, but that which revenge receives, is as food to the stomack; the desire of the end is infinite, but the end being once attained, desire is at an end: *Ye are filled with me.*

Appetitus finis est infinitus.

Job having thus described the instruments and manner of his affliction, turns his thoughts from them to the supream efficient, and orderer of his afflictions.

Vers. 11. *God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked.*

The words seem to bear an allusion to the proceeding of an earthly Judge, who having tryed a Malefactor, and found him guilty, pronounceth sentence of death upon him, and then delivers, or turns him over to those whose office it is to see execution done accordingly.

The word which we render to *deliver*, signifies also *to shut up*, which suites well with the former notion; for a condemned Person is more closely shut up, and more narrowly watcht, then before: But who were the ungodly to whom he was delivered? and the wicked into whose hands or power he was turned? These were not only the *Chaldeans*, and *Sabeans*, but also all such as shewed any malice against him, or willingly afflicted him in his afflictions.

סרט Avia divertit, deflexit, declinavit.

The words carry in them a correction of his former complaint, as if he had said, *Why do I trouble my self with men, why do I complain of their unkindness or cruelty against me? God hath done it; he hath delivered, and turned me over (as a Magistrate doth a Malefactor whom he hath condemned) into the hands of these tormenters, he hath sealed a writ for my execution.* Thus *Job* ascribes all to God; he sometimes wrangles with men, but as often before, so now again, he looks beyond them, at once seeing and adoring the hand of God, putting him and his estate into the hands of men.

Hence Note, First, *Wicked men are ordered by Providence.*

They cannot take till God puts into their hands: a Sparrow falls not to the ground without God, much less doth a godly man fall into the hands of the wicked without God. They do but execute what God decrees, though they do it without any respect to his decrees, and quite cross to his commands. Many will be found at once executing the decrees and disobeying the commands of God.

Secondly, *God delivers his dearest Children into the hands of wicked men, for trial and correction.*

Their graces and goodness appear most, when they are under the handling of evil and graceless men. Many of their corruptions are purged out, while they are in their power who are not at all purged from their corruption. Foul hands may serve to wash that clean which is foul; and they who are but dross, may fetch off the rust which cleaves to the purest mettal.

Thirdly, Note, *It is an aggravation of affliction to be given up to wicked men.*

It is an affliction to be in their company, what is it then to be under their power? Wo is me, saith *David*, that I dwell in *Mesheč*; how woful then is it to be a Prisoner in *Mesheč?* While God keeps the Rod in his own hands, the smart is not so grievous: We learn this in *David's* choice (2 *Sam.* 24.14.) when three evils were offered him, he resolves, *Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and let me not fall into the hand of man.* A good man can easier die by the hand of God, then receive a slight wound by the hand of an Enemy: As those comforts are sweeter, so those sufferings are not so bitter which Believers receive immediately from God.

Est hoc in judicio Domini gravissimum quod adversariis videatur favere, & a parte eorum stare, consilia conatusque ipsorum contra nos prosperando. Brent.

It is hard to suffer from equals, much more from inferiours, but most of all when we suffer the fatherly displeasure of God from those who are the objects of his displeasure as a Judge. *Let the righteous smite me* (saith *David*, *Psal.* 141.) a reproof from them is oyl, but a reproof from the wicked is Gall and Vinegar to a godly heart: The reason why a godly man chuses rather to be smitten by the righteous, then the wicked, is, because they have somewhat, possibly, much of God in them; therefore much more doth he say, Let the righteous God smite me. It is a mercy, if we must needs be chastised, when God will chastise us himself, and not give us into the hands of men whose mercies are cruel.

There are two things which make it so grievous to the people of God, when they are delivered up into the hands of the ungodly.

First, Their cruelty: Their mercies are cruel, how unmerciful then are they in their cruelties? As they know no measure in sinning against God, so they keep none in vexing man. The Lord promiseth (*Psal.* 126.3.) *The Rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous*; implying, that by the good will of evil men it should rest there; they would never take it off, if God did not.

Secondly (which troubles more then the former) Their blasphemy. And that first against God himself, as if he either could not deliver out of their hands (2 *Chron.* 32.14.) What is your God that he should be able to deliver you out of my hand (*Psal.* 42.) *Where is now their God?* Thus the wicked Jewes into whose hand God delivered his Son, did even dare *God* to come to his rescue (*Mat.* 27.43.) Or, as if he took their part, and favoured the cause which they have in hand. Secondly, They blaspheme, or speak evil both of the wayes and people of God. What's become of your prayers now? Where's your fasting now, of which you boasted, that it would do such wonders? It is a soar affliction to be under the rule of wicked men, much more to be under their rage: that prophetick curse which *David* denounceth against his Enemy, is thus expressed (*Psal.* 109.6.). *Set thou a wicked man over him:* A wicked man were better be under the power of good men, then

then of the wicked (for a good man cannot be so severe to a wicked man, as one wicked man is to another) but if a wicked man be so cruel to wicked men who are so like him, how cruel must he needs be to godly men who are altogether unlike him?

Fourthly, Note, *Godly men look through all second causes to the first.*

As they rest not in the creature for the good which they receive, so they stay not in the creature when they receive evil; they see a hand of God in and over all.

Note Fifthly, *We glorifie God as much in acknowledging afflictions, as in acknowledging mercies and blessings to come from him.*

He is the Author of both; he takes it as much upon him, that he *creates darkness, as that he forms light*; that is, as the next words expound it, *That he creates evil as well as makes peace* (*Isa.* 45. 7.) Now if the Lord challenges this as a part of that glory which he will not give to Idols, then, we give him the glory of the only true God, while we acknowledge this.

Sixthly, Note, *There is no way to settle or quiet the heart, till it look up to God as the disposer of our troubles.*

This was *Job's* last resort: And this was *David's* when *Shimei* cursed him, *God hath bid Shimei curse*: This kept down those angry motions, which must else have boiled up as high in his spirit, as they did in *Abishai's*, himself being more deeply concerned in it then *Abishai* was. *Job* having discovered this frame of spirit more then once before, I here only touch upon it.

Lastly, Take this comfortable Corolary from the whole.

Though God doth often deliver his choicest Servants into the power of wicked men, yet he never delivers them up to the will of wicked men: They cannot do with his people what they please; they shall only do what God himself pleaseth, though they displease God highly in doing it. God never turns the least of those who believe in his Name, out of his own hand, though he turn them over into the hand of the ungodly: as God keeps his title to them still, so he still keeps the possession of them. Saints in the hand of the vilest men, are in the hand, or possession of God two wayes.

First, They are in the hand of his power, he can fetch them out of the hands of men when he will.

Secondly, They are under the hand of his care, and this five wayes.

First, To provide, that though they endure much hardship in their hands, yet they shall receive no hurt; God doth not turn his into the hands of evil men for evil, but for good.

Secondly, He hath them in the hand of his care to furnish them with strength to suffer.

Thirdly, To teach them how to profit by sufferings.

Fourthly, To moderate the hands of the wicked towards them; their hands shall not be heavier then he hath appointed, they shall not give you a stroak more then he hath numbred out.

Lastly, As to order how much, so likewise how long they shall suffer: Our times are in Gods hand, when we are in the hand of men. As they cannot add a drop to our cup, so not a Sand to our Glass, beyond what the Lord hath appointed out.

VERS. 12, 13, 14.

I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder: he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark.
His Archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins asunder, and doth not spare; he poureth out my Gall upon the ground.
He breaketh me with breach upon breach, he runneth upon me like a Giant.

JOB still prosecutes the same argument, setting out his afflictions in their darkest colours to the seventeenth Verse of this Chapter, and then with highest confidence attesting, yea calling Heaven and Earth to attest both the righteousness of his wayes towards men, and the rightness of his worship rendred unto God.

These three, with the two Verses following, contain two general points.

First, He tells us how, and in what manner he was handled by God in those days of his affliction, *Vers.* 12, 13, 14.

Secondly, He tells us how he behaved himself under the hand of God, or how he was affected with these afflictions, *Vers.* 15, 16. *I have sowed sackcloath upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust, &c.* As Gods hand was heavy upon him, so he held out all the demonstrations and emblems of a heavy heart: *I sowed sackcloth upon my skin.*

He begins with, or rather prosecutes the description (for he had spoken much of it before) of his sad afflictions. And because contraries illustrate, and set forth one another, therefore, he first shews what condition he had been in: Secondly, what he then was in. *Our present wants and evils are aggravated by our former comforts and enjoyments.*

This course and method *Job* takes to aggravate his;
First, Telling us that he was once whole and at ease.
Secondly, What he at that time was, pained and broken to pieces.

I was at ease.

But how doth this agree with what *Job* affirmed (*Chap.* 3. 26.) *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet, yet trouble came.* It seems *Job* was never at ease, and yet he saith here, *I was at ease*: He that is not in safety, and hath neither rest nor quiet, surely, *He is in little ease.*

There is no contradiction between these two, we may easily reconcile them, and make up the seeming difference, thus. When *Job* saith (*Chap.* 3.) *I was not in safety, neither had I rest, neither was I quiet*; his meaning is, that his spirit did not trust upon his outward prosperity: He had abundance in the World, but he had no carnal confidence in worldly things. *Job* never said to his soul (when his Barns were full, and his substance multiplyed) *Soul take thy ease, eat and be merry, thou hast enough laid up for many years. Job* had much of the creature in his hand, but he kept it all out of his heart; and when he was furthest from misery, he was far enough from security; he did not think his life safe, because he had sufficient to live upon, nor was he at rest, because he was rich. A believers rest is not in any outward comfort which he receives from God, but in God, from whom he receives all his comforts. So then, *Job* speaks there of the spiritual frame of his heart, but here he speaks of the temporal frame of his worldly estate, in which he had ease, and the affluence of all good things, no man molesting him: As if he had said, *Time was when I was not at all pinched with poverty in my estate, nor blasted with reproach in my credit, nor tortured with pains in my body; I can remember the time when I was at full ease in all these:* That's his sense in this Text, and between these two there is no opposition: *A man may be at ease in the World, and yet not make the World his ease, nor rest upon the World.*

I was at ease.] Such was my former flourishing condition. The word signifies to be peaceable, quiet, or well setled: the *Vulgar* translates, *I was a rich man*: the same word in the Hebrew signifies a rich man, and a man at ease, for two reasons.

שלו הייתי *Pacificus, tranquillus, quietus erã. Fui opulentus.* Vulg.

First, Because riches and ease usually go together; and unless a man live at ease, that is, in outward peace, it is hard to gather riches. *Times of War and trouble are scattering and impoverishing times: The rowling Stone gets no Moss.* As men have the best opportunity, so they are most active to gather wealth when all is still and quiet: There are but few who know how to fish in troubled waters, though some make their best trade there.

Secondly, The same word signifies, both to be rich, and to be at ease, from the effect; because, men that are rich, usually take their ease: as ease and peace give them opportunity to gather riches, so riches cause them to take their ease, both outward civil ease, and oft-times inward sinful ease; that is, to sit down, and make their riches, and outward accommodations, the very basis of their quiet and contentment. So the rich are expressed (*Ezek.* 23. 42.) *Thou satest upon a stately Bed, and a Table prepared before it, &c. And a voice of a multitude being at ease with her,*

and with the men of the common sort were brought Sabeans from the Wilderness, which put bracelets upon their hands, and beautiful Crowns upon their heads: Here's the description of a rich people; and what were they? *A multitude being at ease*, having gotten goodly furniture for their houses, full tables for their bellies, pretious ornaments for their hands and heads; that is, having abundance of all things, they gave themselves up to security, and took their fill in the creature: And by how much the greater a carnal man's worldly felicity is, by so much doth it the more triumph over all jealousies and suspitions of evil (*Revel.* 18. 7.) *Babylon* saith, *I sit a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.* *Babylon* is at ease, she feels no evil, and she fears none. *Jerusalem* was once in such a condition through the favour of God, and so she shall be in due time again (*Zech.*7.7.) *Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cryed by the former Prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited, and in prosperity* (or at ease) *and the Cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the South of the plain? The South of the plain*, was a Region or Countrey, extreamly infested with Enemies, where no man durst dwell or make his habitation, for fear of hostile incursions: yet *Jerusalem* was in such prosperity, or at such ease, that *the South of the plain*, the open Countries and unwalled Villages were as safe to the Inhabitants as walled and fortified Cities: At such ease, and in such safety shall *Jerusalem* be again, when the Lord shall *appoint salvation unto her, in stead of Walls and Bulwarks.*

Misericordiæ movet à priore statu. Merc. *Primus locus misericordiæ est per quæ quibus in bonis fuerit, & nunc quibus in malis sit ostenditur.* Cic. de Invent. lib. 1.

I was at ease.] *Job* makes this report of his former prosperity, that he might move his Friends to pity him in his present misery. It is a rhetorical argument: The Orator gives this rule, when we would stir up compassion towards a man in misery, we must first describe in what heights he hath stood, and then shew how low he is fallen; we are not so much affected with any man's being in a low estate, as with his falling from a high estate. When *Lucifer* the Son of the morning, falls from Heaven, and falls into Hell, to the sides of the Pit, this sets all men a wondering (*Isa.*14. 11, 12, 15.)

Hence Observe, *To have been in prosperity, adds to the burden and bitterness of present adversity.*

It is an affliction, never to have been in prosperity; but it is a greater affliction to be cast down from a state of prosperity: for him that hath been great, and rich, and powerful in the World, to become mean, and poor, and powerless, this pinches sore, and goes to the quick. *Job* aggravates his sorrows at large upon this account (*Chap.*29.*Chap.*30.) *The Candle of God shined upon my head, I washed my steps in butter, my glory was fresh in me, &c. But now they that are younger then I have me in derision, &c.* So (*Lam.*4.2.) *The precious Sons of Sion, comparable to fine Gold, how are they esteemed as earthen Pitchers.* And (*Vers.* 5.) *They that did feed delicately, are desolate in the streets; they that were brought up in Scarlet embrace dunghils.* From delicate feeding to desolation, from Scarlet to a dunghil is a great change; the dunghil would not be so loathsom, were it not for the Scarlet, nor desolation so grievous were it not for the remaining taste of the late delicate feeding. Every remembrance of the Wormwood and the Gall of their present affliction in *Babylon*, was made more bitter by the remembrance of the Milk and Honey which flowed in the Land of *Canaan.* They who have alwayes been in a low condition scarce feel or know the want of great things, because they never knew the meaning of their enjoyment.

Cor dolet, quam scio nunc, ut sum atq; ut fui. Plaut. in Mostel. *Cernite sim qualis, qui modo talis eram.* Ovid. *Fuimus Troes, &c.*

Euripides. The Greek Poet tells us of *Hecuba*, not daring for shame, so much as to lift up her eyes, or look *Polymnestor* in the face, because she had been a *Queen*, but was then a *poor Captive.* Common Captives can easily lift up their eyes and cryes to those that are in prosperity, for relief and help, whereas others who have lived *at ease*, can with more ease starve then beg.

As a downfal from a seeming height in spirituals into the mire of sin, hath more wickedness in it then a bare continuance in sin; so a downfal from a real height in temporals into the mire of misery, hath more trouble in it, then a bare continuance in misery. They who have made a fair shew, or an outward flourish in the Faith, and afterward fall back, are worse then those who never made any shew at all. It is sad for any one to live openly in sin; but for such as have made an open profession of godliness, to apostatize, and fall back to sin, this is matter of saddest lamentation: For as the Apostle *Peter* speakes, *It had been better for them that they had not known the way of God, then after they have known it to turn from the holy Commandment:* It is better (in spiritual respects) never to have been a Professour, then to be an Apostate. Thus also it is better (in civil respects) never to have been high, or great in the World, then after all this to suffer a miserable downfal, and to be numbred among the lowest of the People.

And in this we may see the wonderful love of *Jesus Christ* to poor sinners, who suffered so great a change for our sakes; he might well say, *I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder.* Christ was broken all to pieces for us, he was broken and bruised for us, but he had been at ease: How great was his love who willingly suffered not only for sinners, but as a sinner, having reigned in righteousness from all eternity? The Apostle useth this argument, more then once, to advance the kindness of Christ to sinful man (*2 Cor.* 8. 9.) Beloved, *You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he were rich, yet he became poor for our sakes, that we through his poverty might be made rich:* For Christ who was rich to become poor, argues the riches of his love; this shews the great affection he bare to us, because it shews that he bare such great affliction for us.

Again (*Phil.*2.6,7.) *Who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant:* He emptyed himself, to fill us; and to raise our reputation with his Father, laid down his own.

Now seeing *Jesus Christ* suffered such a wondrous change, from the form of God to the form of a Servant; from the fulness of God, to the emptiness of the meanest man; this is the highest testimony of his love. The course which Christ did run to save us, declares that there went as much of his love, as of his worthiness to save us: For as no creature had worth enough to save us any way, so no creature had love enough to save us such a way. If one had come out of poverty and misery to die for us, it had shewed wonderful love, but to leave riches and become poor, to leave glory and become base, to leave fulness and become empty, to leave (in regard of visible manifestations) his God-head, and become Man: How unchangable was his heart to us, who yielded himself up to such changes for us? He being at ease was broken asunder that we might not be broken, or rather that we might be made whole for ever.

Secondly, *I was at ease:* What follows? *He hath broken me asunder.*

Hence Observe, *All worldly prosperity may quickly be dasht and lost.*

Do not think any new thing happens under the Sun, when you see men that were at ease, broken; men that were full, empty; men that were rich, impoverished; men that were in health, sick. The holy Apostle (*1 Cor.*7.30.) at once counsels and commands us, *Use the World, as not abusing it*, that is, use it well: There is much evil in the World, yet we may, yea we must make a good use of the World: Why? *Because the fashion of this World passeth away.* As fashions in the World alter and change every day, so doth the fashion of this World; there is a World to come, the fashion whereof shall never go or pass away; but the fashion (or scheme) of this World passeth continually. The word which we translate *fashion*, signifies a Geometrical figure, or artificial form, habit, vesture, as also any rhetorical fineness or bravery of words: Now all the beauty of this World is but like some of these schemes, which have more shew then substance in them; and the whole World below put together, is but like a Pageant, or Mask, on the scene whereof many persons are represented to act their parts, but they soon disappear, and the stage or scene it self is pulled down.

As thus the whole World passeth away, so doth the state of each man in the World. And as there is in the World an affected varying of fashions, or a voluntary passing from one vain fashion to another, from one proud fashion to another; so there is an inflicted variety of fashion in the World; God makes man pass from one fashion to another, whether he will or no, or much against his will; when his fashion was fulness, he makes it emptiness; when his fashion

was

was riches, he makes it poverty; when his fashion was Peace and quietness, he makes it Warr and confusion; these are the changes which God makes among the fashions of the World. The pride of man changes from one vain fashion to a other; the providence of God changes man from his most delightful, to a mournful fashion: And when the Garments of outward prosperity seem to us so strong, that they will never wear out, how much or how long soever we wear them, he tears and breaks both them and us, as *Job* complains with his next breath.

He hath broken me asunder.

וַיְפַרְפְּרֵנִי *à radice* פּוּר *contrivit, irritũ fecit. Verba grandia selegit ad exaggerandam mali sui vim.* Merc. *In conjugatione quadrata auxesin habet.* Merc. q. d. *Frequentatis ictibus in minutissimas partes contrivit me.* Bold.

This sentence is but one word in the Hebrew, yet more then a single word; it is elegantly doubled in construction to imply double affliction. Grammarians tell us, that two words put together, or the same word twice put, increase the sense. Ordinary words will not serve to express an extraordinary condition; he speaks great and compounded words, because his sorrows were great and compounded sorrows. *Jobs* was not a single, but a double breaking; yea, his was a manifold breaking: He was often broken, and utterly broken; the repeated strokes which fell upon him (by divine dispensation) from all hands, had beaten him to dust and atomes: *He hath broken me in sunder.*

Further, The *root* of the word signifies, *to make void*, to dissipate, to scatter, to bring to nought, or to make nothing of (*Psal.* 33. 10.) *The Lord brings to nought the counsel of the heathen.* So again (*Isa.* 8. 10.) It is used often for breaking the Law, by frequent and wilfull sinning against it. Proud sinners would break the Law in sunder, or pull it all in pieces: *They have made void thy Law* (*Psal.* 119.) As if they would not onely sin against the Law, but sin away the Law; not onely withdraw themselves from the obedience of it, but drive it out of the World; they would make void, and repeal the holy acts of God, that their own wicked acts might not be questioned; and lest the Law should have a power to punish them, they will deny it a power to rule them; that's the force of the simple word here used, as applied to highest transgressing against the Law of God.

Now as wicked men by sinning, would batter the Law to pieces, so God by afflicting doth sometimes break good men to pieces. Consider what course usage the holy Law of God hath in the hearts and lives of wicked men; O how they tear it, and vex it, and batter it every day: Thus doth the Lord deal with many of his holy servants, who (had they their wish) would not make the least breach in the Law, and whose hearts are often broken with godly sorrow, because they cannot but break it, yet to these he doth not only give a bruise, or a blow, but breaks them asunder.

Confractus sum velut uvæ aut olivæ in torculari.

There is yet another elegancy in the signification of the word: For, as Hebricians observe, it notes a bruising, like that of Grapes or Olives, which are trodden in a press, to make Wine or Oyl; hence also a *Noun* from this *Verb* signifies the Wine-press (*Isa.* 63. 3.) Now Grapes and Olives being trodden, are broken and bruised in pieces; not only is their form and beauty totally spoiled, but all their sweetness, juyce, and Liquor, is wrought out of them, and they are left as a dry lump.

Now look what Grapes and Olives are, when taken out of the Press; even such a lump was *Job*; he was broken asunder in the Wine-press, though not of Gods wrath, as his Friends mis-judged, yet in the Wine-press of his chastisements and severest tryals; all his worldly moisture was squeezed out, and his earthly glory was quite defaced, he had nothing left of that, but (as it were) a dry husk; yet his spiritual estate was still juicy, and his soul, by these pressings, treadings, and breakings, had distilled much sweet Oyl and Wine, and much more was still remaining in him. From these heightned significations of the word laid together;

Observe in general: *God doth not onely afflict those whom he loves, but afflict them sorely and severely.*

He afflicts some, not onely to the impairing and abating, but to the undoing and ruining of their outward comforts, and worldly enjoyments: Nothing can be said to decipher an afflicted state beyond what this word will bear. And that God doth afflict his chosen ones to the utmost rack of this phrase, will appear also from all that follows to the end of the fourteenth Verse; the opening of which will be a continual proof and illustration of this great and often experimented truth, upon, and among the precious Sons of Sion: This I shall hint all along, besides those observations which arise out of them: *He hath broken me asunder*; and what follows in the same Verse;

He hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces.

Is not this to deal severely? A loving Father takes his Son about the neck and kisses him; what a rough salute did the Lord give this Son of his, when he took him by the neck and shook him to pieces? Such a carriage seems not to be after the manner of men, much less after the manner of Fathers; yet this was the manner of God to *Job*, who was also his Friend and Father.

He hath taken me by my neck. The *neck* is as the tower and strength of the body; and when a man is taken by the neck, he is assaulted in his chiefest strength, and taken at the greatest advantage.

There is a threefold metaphor, or allusion in these words, which being considered distinctly, will let out their meaning yet more fully.

First, They bear an allusion to Wrestlers, who take one another by the neck, or collar; he that is strongest, not onely takes his Antagonist by the neck, but shakes him, as if he would shake him to pieces. God wrestled with the Patriarch *Jacob* literally and corporally (though the greatest labour and stress of *Jacobs* wrestling was spiritual and internal.) *And when he saw that he prevailed not* (*Jacob* prevailed with God for so much strength, that now God could not (according to that dispensation) prevail against *Jacob*, yet) *he touched the hollow of Jacobs thigh, and made him halt.* God wrestled with *Job*, not corporally, yet in corporal things; the stress also of his wrestling was spiritual, and he prevailed with God, and over Satan; yet God was pleased not only for the present, to touch a joynt, and make him halt, but even to shake every joynt and limb to pieces.

Secondly, It is an allusion to Serjeants or Bailiffs, that are sent to arrest men for debt, or for their evil deeds: This sort of men are boysterous enough, they having power, will not forbear to lay hold on Persons obnoxious, and take them by the neck, when they attach them. We have that usage expressed (*Matth.* 18. 28.) The evil Servant, to whom the Lord had forgiven ten thousand Talents (a vast debt) found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him an hundred pence (an inconsiderable sum) and would needs exact the utmost from him: the Text saith, *The same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which ought him an hundred pence, and he laid hands upon him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest*: He took him by the throat, the word signifies properly to choak, or to take another so rudely by the throat, as to choak, or (as we say) throttle him. It is translated to choak with water, (*Mark* 5. 13.) and is appliable to any violent act by which the breath is stopt, especially to taking by the neck, or throat.

"Ἔπνιγε *Premebat fauces illius debitoris tanquam suffocaturus: obtorto collo premebat.* Eras.

Thirdly, It is an allusion, as some conceive, to Conquerors in War, who, when they have worsted an Adversary, take him by the Neck, and make him their Prisoner: As it is the last act of triumph and insultation over an Enemy, to tread upon his neck (*Josh.* 10. 24.) *Joshua* called all the men of Israel, and said unto the Captains of the men of War which went with them, *Come neer, and put your feet upon the necks of these Kings: and they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them.* Now as it is (I say) the last act of triumph *to tread upon the neck*; so it is the first act of triumph *to take by the neck*. *Job* thought himself used thus, *He hath taken me by the neck*, as a Wrestler, as a Sergeant, or as a Victor in War.

And hath shaken me to pieces. I will not let it pass unobserved, that the word which we translate *to shake in pieces*, is but one in the Hebrew; but as that which we render *to break asunder*, so this is doubled to heighten the sense, and intimate no ordinary, but a terrible shaking; such a shaking as is followed with scattering, or a shaking, like the breaking of a Potters Vessel with an Iron Rod. The word is used to signifie the irresistable efficacy of the Word of God, whether to convert, or to confound, to break the stony

וַיִּפֹּצְצֵנִי *A radice* פָּרַץ *contrivit cum dispersione, sicut testa: vel in minutissima fragmenta comminuit.* Drus.

heart into contrition for sin; or to batter the obstinate heart, which continueth in sin. *Is not my word a fire?* (saith God) The word of God is a fire, to consume the dross and corruption that is in the hearts and lives of men. *And is not my word a Hammer?* What kind of Hammer? A Hammer *that breaketh the rock in pieces*? Yes, the word of God is all this, 'tis a Fire, and 'tis a Hammer, it burns, it batters all that stands before it. Now as the Word of God is to the hearts of men, so the Rod of God is to the estates of men; it shakes, shatters, and breaks them to pieces: To shake, or break a man to pieces, is in common speech appliable to the estates of men, as well as to their persons; for of such a man we say, *He is broken.*

Λαβὼν μὲ τῆς κόμης. Sept.

The Septuagint reads this clause with an expository addition; *He hath taken me by the hair of the head, and shaken* me. They who follow that reading, interpret it, by a metaphor, *He hath taken me by the hair*; that is, by my outward estate, by my riches, honour, and greatness (these are to men, as the hair is to the head, *ornaments, yet excrements*) he hath taken me by these hairs, even all my outward splendour and glory, and shaken them in pieces.

All this diversity, whether of reading, or expounding the Text, meets in the main point, *That God deals severely with many whom he loves dearly.*

He hath shaken me in pieces, and yet he hath not done with me; as the Lord broke and shook me asunder when I was whole, so he wounds me now I am broken: If he can but find enough of me left together to make a mark of, I shall be sure to feel his Arrows.

Proverbialis locutio quo significamus aliquem esse omnibus telis & injuriis propositum.

And set me up for his mark.] *Job* was cast down by affliction, and yet he was set up to receive more affliction: 'Tis a Proverbial speech, signifying that a man is made the common receit, or subject of misery. A *Mark* is purposely set up to receive Arrows, Darts, or Bullets shot at it; so that for a man to be set up as a mark, is to stand as a common object, upon which all calamities center themselves; what *Job* here complains of, he had expostulated with God about (*Chap.* 7. 20.) *Wherefore hast thou set me up as a mark, so that I am a burden to my self?* I shall speak the less to it here, having spoken to it there already.

A נגד *servo, quod eum diligenter observent jaculatores ne oberrent.*

The same Original word is not used in both places, though the sense be the same: There *Job* speaks in a Paraphrase, *Thou hast set me opposite, or over against thee*: Here he uses a single term, which notes a mark, strictly taken; for it comes from a root which signifies *to observe*; because the mark, or white, is diligently observed by him that shoots; the Archer keeps his eye upon the mark, that he may send his Arrow to the mark. A mark is that to the eye in shooting, which the end is to the mind of man in all his wayes of acting; and therefore our English word *Scope* from the Greek (σκοπὸς) which properly signifies an Archers *mark*, is used figuratively, to signifie the end which we design to our selves in every undertaking. And hence the eye with which we take aim, is put for the end (*Matth.* 6. 22.) *If thine eye be single, the whole body is light*; that is, if the end, or the thing that thou aimest at be just and right, all thy actions will be right too: Every man is regulated by his end, all he doth looks that way; therefore, if thy end and aim be honest and sincere, all thy wayes and works will be such. So then, as the end is the mark of the mind, so a mark is the end of the eye; it directs all unto it. And while *Job* saiths He hath set me up as a mark, his meaning is, *I am the But or white, at which the Lord aims all his Arrows, he empties his Quiver at my breast.* So the Church cries out (*Lam.* 3. 12, 13.) *He hath bent his bow, he hath set me as a mark for the Arrow; he hath caused the Arrows of his Quiver to enter into my reins*: The Hebrew is, *He hath caused the Sons of his Quiver to enter into my reins.* Arrows are the Sons of the Quiver: Sons are called Arrows (*Psal.* 127. 4, 5.) *As Arrows in the hand of the mighty, so are the Children of the youth: blessed is the man that hath his Quiver full of them.* Now as Sons are compared to Arrows in a Quiver, so Arrows are compared to Sons; because as Sons are together in their Fathers house, so are Arrows in the Quiver. Christ is described by old *Simeon*, as a mark set up to shoot at (*Luke* 2. 34, 35.) *This Child is set for the falling and rising of many in Israel; and for a sign to be spoken against.* What sign? *A But-sign, or a But-mark. A sign to be spoken against*; that is, All shall direct the Arrows of their words against him. Bitter words are compared to Arrows; many showers of these were shot against Jesus Christ: He was aimed at on every side, by envious spirits and malevolent tongues: He might say as *Job, Thou hast set me up as a mark.*

Ego ipse positus fui in scopum ut mille jacula, mille sagittas exciperem.

Significat Christi universi scopum fore, quem omnes certatim figere contendant. Beza.

Observe from this Allusion, First, *The Servants of God must expect many afflictions from the hand of God.*

A mark is not set up (or it is very rarely set up) for one shot: As God hath more mercies then one in store for his people, so he hath more Arrows then one for them in his Quiver. When thou hast received one shot, prepare for a second, and a third.

Observe, Secondly, *God seems to take pleasure in afflicting his people.*

This also contributes to the proof of the general Observation before given: For the more pleasure any one takes in afflicting, the more severity he shews in afflicting. A Father chastiseth his Child with tears in his eyes; every stroke which a wise Father gives his Child, is as a wound to himself, and this abates the smart of the blow; but for Fathers to do it, as the Apostle speaks (*Heb.* 12.) *For their pleasure*, or when it pleaseth a Father (in that sense) to do it, this encreaseth the smart. The sufferer feels most pain, when it is a pleasure to another to make him suffer. Now, what is shooting at a mark? No man shoots at a mark for toyl, to make a labour, and a business of it, but men shoot at a mark for their recreation and pleasure.

God delights not properly in the sorrows and sufferings of his people; he is not like those cruel Tyrants, who fasten their Captives to a Post, and then shoot them dead for sport: God doth not willingly, much less sportingly, afflict the Children of Men (*Lam.* 3. 33.) yet it pleaseth him to afflict them; yea, as *Job* speaks (*Chap.* 9.) *He laughs at the tryal of the innocent*; that is, He carries himself (as to their sense) as if he did not regard what they suffered, though indeed he be infinitely tender of them all in their sufferings; yet because they do not alwayes understand the language of this laughter, it makes them cry out as if God had forsaken them, and were either really turned an Enemy against them, or at least, did not use them as his Friends; from which near relation, nothing appears more remote, than to be set up, and shot at as a mark.

Observe, Thirdly, *Affliction doth not hit the Saints by chance, but by direction.*

There is a great difference between shooting at randome, and shooting at a mark. *God doth not draw his bow at a venture* (as he who slew *Ahab* did, 1 *Kings* 22. 34.) or shoot at the whole host of mankind, let the Arrow light where and on whom it will, but he singles out the particular person whom he intends to hit. Every one of his Arrows goes upon a special errand, and touches no breast but that against which it was sent: And as this speaks the honour of God, who determines as much, upon whom, as what to do; and chuseth out those at whom he means to shoot, as well as the means by which he shoots at them; so it should establish our hearts to receive his shot, and in this sense, to be like a senseless mark, which stirs not from the Arrow, nor withdraws from the deadly Bullet. It is not onely the grace, but the glory of a Believer, when he can stand as a But-mark, and take affliction quietly. The Apostle speaks near this language, and fully this truth (1 *Thes.* 1. 3.) *I would that no man should be moved for these afflictions; for you your selves know that we are appointed thereunto.* As if he had said, I would have you stand as Posts, notwithstanding all these afflictions: Not that he would have them careless or secure, but couragious, and full of holy undauntedness: I would have no man flinch, or stir a foot, no more than a mark that is shot at; Why? *Knowing that we are appointed thereto*: As a mark is appointed to be shot at, and set up on purpose that the Arrow may be directed against it; so the Lord sets up his Saints and Servants on purpose, that he may shoot the Arrows of affliction at them; therefore let us keep our ground, and not be moved. We honour God, yea, it is our honour also, when we are unmoveable in active obedience, as the Apostle exhorts (2 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Wherefore my Brethren, be stedfast and unmoveable, alway abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know*

know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. But as it is our honour, and Gods honour too, when we are unmoveable in doing the will of God; so it is a greater honour both to him and us, when we are so in suffering his will, or in passive obedience; when we stand to it, and move no more in way of cowardise and impatience then a Post when it is shot at. This is the glory of a Christian, and it is his duty; this is the glory of God, and it is his due; though it be put here as an aggravation of the greatness of *Jobs* affliction, that he was set as a standing mark, yet it is a heightning of our praise contentedly to be so.

God will make wicked men his *standing mark* to all eternity, against whom he will shoot the Arrows, the poysoned Arrows of his indignation, which shall drink up their spirits, and yet their spirits shall not be consumed. God makes his precious Servants and faithful people, his standing mark for a time, they feel the Arrows of affliction, and are deeply wounded; as *Job* further prosecutes his sad condition, continuing the Allegory in the next Verse.

Vers. 13. **His Archers compass me round about, he cleaveth my reins in sunder, &c.**

God hath a Bow, he hath his Arrows, and his Archers, all ready at a call. The decree of God is his Quiver, his Arrows are his purposes, and the Instruments which execute them are his Archers; whether rational or irrational, whether men, or things, any thing which God useth to afflict man by, is his Archer: *His Archers have compassed me about:* The word is (*Rabbi*) *His Archers* from *Rab, great*; so some read it, *His great Ones have compassed me about.* The word *Rab*, doth not only signifie greatness in bulk, or continued quantity, but in number, or discreet quantity. Hence *Archers* are called, *Rabbi, great ones*; not from their *magnitude*, but from their *multitude*, because Archers go in company; two at the least, and usually many are a set; or they are called *many*, because every one hath many Arrows. Men carry but one Sword, and one Spear, but they carry many Arrows, therefore the word signifies *many*. His *Archers*, or *many, compass me round about.* Hence note, in prosecution of the same point,

רבים
Magni ejus: sed hic quadrare non potest. Licet enim
רכב
sig. magnitudinē sive in quantitate continua sive in discreta, hic tamen in discreta est accipienda, a multitudine enim sagittarii dicuntur. Rabin.

That, *God hath variety of means to afflict.*

He can make any creature his Archer; and he hath many Quivers full of Arrows. Old *Jacob* said of *Joseph* (*Gen.* 49. 23.) *The Archers shot sore at him, and grieved him Joseph* was a mark of envy, because God had put so many marks of honour upon him: His own Brethren were the Archers. *Job* had many Archers shooting at him: I can name you seven eminent Archers that shot at *Job.*

First, Heaven was an Archer; the Heavens shot fire, which burnt up his flocks of sheep.

Secondly, The Air was an Archer, that shot wind, and down fell the House upon his Children.

Thirdly, The Chaldeans and Sabeans were Archers, and they shot spoyling and plundering; they took away all his Cattel, and slew his Servants with the edge of the Sword.

Fourthly, The Devil was an Archer, he shot diseases, and wounded his body all over with sores.

Fifthly, The earth was an Archer, and that shot Worms, he was cloathed with Worms, and clods of Earth.

Sixthly, His Wife was an Archer, or an Archeress, she shot terrible Arrows, evil and bitter words.

Seventhly, His Friends were Archers, they shot reproofs, and uncomfortable comforts; they pierced him with their salves, and the very means that they used to heal him, grieved him more.

All these shot at him; he must needs have many hurts, who was compassed about with so many Archers. *David* felt the anguish of these Arrows (*Psal.* 38. 1.) *O Lord rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure: For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. David* was full of Arrows; what those Arrows were, is not determined in the Text. One of the Ancients saith, They were the threatnings of God, with which his conscience was wounded for sin: as for his body and outward estate, they were in a whole skin. 'Tis true, judgments or wrath threatned, wound the spirit deeper then judgments or wrath executed wound the outward man; and as the whole word of God, so that part of it especially which consists of threatnings, is, as the Apostle speaks (*Heb.* 4. 12.) *Quick and powerful, and sharper then any two-edged Sword, piercing, even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit*, &c. Yet I rather conceive, that *Davids* Arrows were bodily troubles or diseases already inflicted, the immediate cause of which was the anger of God, and the cause of which was his own sin, both which are expressed at the third Verse, *There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin*: When sin stirs up the anger of God, the anger of God can quickly send his Arrows abroad; nor is there any thing in this World so near unto us, but he can make an Arrow, or an Archer of it; *His Archers compass me round.*

And see what kind of Archers his were, they were no bunglers, they were good *marks men*; like the left-handed *Benjamites* (*Judg.* 20. 16.) *They could shoot at a hairs breadth and not miss.* For it follows:

He cleaveth my reins asunder. They are expert Archers who can cleave the reins: The reins are in the middle of the back. He that shoots at a Butt, and hits the middle of it, shoots exactly; the whole Butt is not the mark, but the White, which is set (according to a Geometrical proportion) in the middle of it. He that hits the mark, hits the middle of the Butt; but he that *cleaves the Pin*, (that's the Archers Dialect) which fastens the mark to the Butt, *That's the Archer*, or *That's He* (as they also use to speak at their sport) he wins the prize: An Archer may hit the man, and not his reins; but to hit his reins, is skilful archery: *Jobs* Archers were thus cunning in their art, *They compass me about, and cleave my reins asunder*: That's the first.

Renes sedes sunt affectus & libidinis vehementissimi. Renū nomē in Hebræo à desiderando dicitur.
כליותי
Vulnerare renes est tenuiores affectus configere.

Further, We may understand it by a metaphor, and so two wayes.

First, The reins being the seat of desire, as Naturalists speak; some interpret, *he cleaveth my reins asunder*, thus, *He smites me in that which is to me most pleasant and desirable*: and then the seat of affection is put for the thing which we affect. This holds out a profitable truth.

God can wound us in that upon which we most entirely set our affections.

He knows how to cleave our very reins asunder, and he often doth it; that which we inordinately love, is usually the mark at which he aims his Arrow: The readiest way to lose any comfort, is to over-love it (I add that by way of caution, not of direction.) And indeed, though it be a great deal of smart to us, yet it may prove a great deal of ease to us, to be wounded in that which we over-love. God in much mercy to those he loves, takes that from them which they love too much, that so they may love him the more, to whom all their love, and more if they had it, is but due: *He cleaves their reins, that their reins may cleave to him.*

Secondly, The reins in a metaphor, signifie that which is most secret and hidden (*Psal.* 16. 7.) *My reins also instruct me in the night season*; that is, my most inward thoughts instruct me, I have secret communion with my self, and my heart reads me *a curtain Lecture every night. My reins instruct me in the night season.* This metaphorical interpretation gives us this plain Note.

God pierceth into our most retired thoughts, and can punish our most secret sins.

Those sins which lye as much out of sight as the reins do, he seeth, and he seeth them as plainly as an Archer doth the white, or mark, which stands open to the eye; for all things are naked and manifest (anatomiz'd, or cut open to the reins of the back, so much the word bears, and so manifest are we) before his eyes with whom we have to do.

Take it literally, and then to *cleave the reins*, is an expression of putting a man to the greatest sorrow or pain imaginable; if the back were chined (as we speak) and cut quite down through the reins, this would be an exquisite torment; the reins are a very tender part: A deep wound in some other parts of the body, is but a scratch, and such wounding were a kind of embracing, in comparison of that.

Secondly,

Secondly, To cleave the reins, is to weaken, because the reins, or the loyns, are the strength of a man, or of any creature; *Loe his strength is in his loyns*, saith God of *Behemoth*, which is as some think the Elephant (*Job* 40. 16.) And *a man of no loyns is a man of no strength*, in common language.

Elumbem reddere.

Thirdly, To cleave the reins, is to give a mortal wound. Chyrurgions and Physicians observe, That if the reins be struck through, there is no help for it; cleaving the reins is much like piercing the heart; this is present death, and that leaves no hope of life, the wound of it is incurable.

Mala immedicabilia indicat.

There is a fourth interpretation, *He cleaveth my reins*, may note the torture of any acute Disease, especially that of *the Stone in the Reins or Kidneys*; which is as it were the cutting of the back asunder; poor Patients under it are often heard so complaining: Oh, 'tis like a sharp Knife; the Stone is not only a grinding, but a cutting pain.

I shall onely lay in the consideration of these four glosses from the literal sense of the word, to a farther making out of the first general Observation, *That God often deals very severely in outward, or present dispensations, with many of his dearest Servants*: He doth that which they may call cleaving of the reins; and that, in the easiest of the four senses, is a very severe dispensation; much more (which we may suppose) when the pain of all four meets in one man, as doubtless they did in *Job*; *He cleaveth my reins asunder.*

חמל *Pepercit, ignovit, propitius fuit. Nullam Domihi in me misericordiam, sed omnigenam sævitiam experior.* Merc.

And doth not spare.] He that doth not spare, useth the utmost extremity, and shews no pity or indulgence: to spare, is both an act, and one of the kinds of mercy: Sparing is opposed to severity, it is a doing less against another then we may, and that two wayes.

First, When we do less then we can. We having power, though no right to do more then we do, no nor to do so much as we do: Thus a thief may be said to spare a man, when he doth not take all from him, life and all.

Secondly, When we do less against another then we may, both according to the right of our cause, and the power in our hands: Thus a Magistrate spares a Thief, or a Creditor his Debtor; when the one exacts not the whole punishment, nor the other the whole Sum due. And in this sense God spareth the Sons of men; he hath both power and right to punish sinful man to the utmost, but he spares him: To hold the hand, though but a little, is sparing mercy; but *Job* found not this mercy, *He doth not spare*; as if he had said, *The Lord layes on, layes on, and doth not forbear.*

Hence observe; *There is mercy in sparing.*

There is a five-fold mercy of God.

First, *Rewarding mercy*, towards those who have done well.

Secondly, *Pardoning mercy*, which is exercised towards those who have done ill, or towards past sin.

Thirdly, *Preventing mercy*, when he keeps us from evil, whether it be the evil of sin, or of punishment.

Fourthly, *Delivering mercy*, when though he let us fall into the evil of sin or punishment, yet he is pleased to help us up, and take us out again.

Fifthly, There is *Sparing mercy*; if, while we are in affliction, God deals gently with us, this is sparing mercy: As God was not pleased to prevent *Jobs* sorrows, nor to deliver him from them, so he did not spare him in them; his hand continued heavy upon him, he had no ease.

There is a four-fold degree of this sparing mercy of God.

First, Not to punish at all: thus God sometimes spares his own people, *as a Father spares his Son that serveth him* (*Mal.* 3. 17.) Though they fail, yet he passeth it by, and doth not reckon with them for it. The Lord represented himself to *Amos*, forming Grass-hoppers, which either in kind, or in a figure (shadowing the *Assyrians*) threatned to devour the land; this Vision put the Prophet upon that earnest prayer, *O Lord God, forgive, by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small? The Lord repented for this, it shall not be, saith the Lord* (*Amos* 7. 1, 2, 3.) Here was sparing mercy, and this is repeated a second time (*Vers.* 6.) yet in the third Vision of a *Plumb-line* (by which God was noted, taking exact notice of all the unevenness and crookedness of that people in that Vision, I say) as the Prophet suspended Prayer, so the Lord being resolved no longer to suspend their punishment, saith, *I will not pass by them again any more*: that is, I will spare them no more, which is again repeated (*Chap.* 8. 2.) where by a Basket of Summer fruit the Lord shewed their ripeness in sin, and his readiness to punish, and not to spare.

Secondly, It is sparing mercy, when punishment is deferred, or adjourned to a farther day; thus the Lord spared the old World, a hundred and twenty years, *My spirit shall not alway strive*: It did a long time, he spared them many years to draw them to repentance, and to leave them inexcusable, because they repented not.

Thirdly, It is sparing mercy, when judgment is moderated: When, though God punish, yet he doth not punish to the full; when, though the cloud break, yet he lets but a few drops fall on us, and doth not pour out showers, or make an inundation to overwhelm us; when, though he strike, yet he gives but few strokes; yea, if he abate but one stroke, it is sparing mercy. The Jews (2 *Cor.* 11. 24.) gave *Paul*, *forty stripes, save one*; and in this they would be thought to be merciful, because they might have given him forty by the Law, (*Deut.* 25. 3.) therefore to abate one, was sparing mercy. As to punish beyond the Law, though it be but a little beyond, is cruelty; so to punish less, though it be but a little less, is mercy: And this is brought in as an argument of great mercy (*Psal.* 78. 38.) *But he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath*: They felt his wrath, but God did not stir up all his wrath; they were smitten, but not destroyed, Justice did not make an utter end of them, there was mercy in that. The like read (*Jer.* 30. 11. *Jer.* 46. 28.) *I will not let thee go altogether unpunished* (yet I will spare thee, though I punish thee) *I will correct thee in measure, I will not make a full end of thee.* But are not all the corrections of God, yea, and his judgments too, done in measure? All the judgments of God are done in measure, as measure notes a rule of equity, but not as measure notes a rule of equality. Again, to do a thing by measure, doth not alwayes note the rule by which it is done, but the degree in which it is done. And so to do a thing in measure, is to do it moderately; as when it is said, (*John* 3. 24.) That *God gives not the spirit by measure to Christ*: the meaning is onely this, he gives him the spirit abundantly, infinitely, without stint or limit: So when it is said, that he corrects man in measure, the meaning is onely this, that he corrects him moderately, mercifully, with many stints and limits. *It is of the Lords mercy*, (saith *Jeremy*, *Lam.* 3. 22.) What? That we are delivered? That we are crowned with comforts? These are of the Lords mercy indeed: but he speaks not of these, the mercy he speaks of is, *That we are not utterly consumed.* What kind of mercy is this? Sparing mercy. Suppose God take away many Children, yet if he leave but one, here is sparing mercy to the Parents: Suppose he take many hundreds and thousands of a mans estate, yet if he leave him a little to buy Bread, and to stand between him and Beggary, this is sparing mercy: Suppose we are much consumed, yet if we are not utterly consumed, this is also sparing mercy. In the Prophecy of *Daniel*, we read of a goodly tree, *And behold a watcher, and an holy one came down from Heaven, and cryed aloud, Hew down the Tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit*, &c. *Nevertheless, leave the stump of his root in the earth*, &c. Though it was judgment to shake off the leaves and fruit, to hew down the boughs and stock, yet it was sparing mercy to leave the root, that gave hopes it might grow again, and not be utterly consumed; 'tis sparing mercy when any thing is reserved: But God did not spare *Job*, he took all; he did not leave him (as we say) *A shirt to his back*, nor a sound patch in his skin: Satans power had no limit put to it, but as to life onely (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Behold, he is in thine hand, but* (or onely) *save his life*: There was indeed somewhat of sparing mercy in that, and that was more than Satan would have spared, yet it was but so much, as without which he could not have groaned out this complaint, as to the loss of all other comforts, *He doth not spare.*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, There is a sparing mercy of God in the very act of afflicting, when he shews that he is unwilling to afflict, or discovers tenderness to them that are afflicted (*Lam.*3.12.) *He doth not willingly afflict, nor grieve the children of men.* As there are many who will serve God in an outward form of worship, whom yet they neither serve nor worship with their will: So God will afflict some, whom he doth not afflict with his will; he doth not give out his spirit, or take delight in smiting, while he smites them. Thus the Lord expressed himself towards his ancient people the Jewes; he threatens Israel, *That the Assyrian shall be his King*; that is, the Assyrian shall carry them Captives to *Babylon* and exercise a tyrannical power over them (*Hos.*11. 5.) *Yea, the Sword shall abide on his Cities, and shall consume his branches* (*Vers.*6.) Now though God were resolved to do this, and did also bring it to pass; yet he saith (*Ver.*8.) *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel?* (*sc.* into the Enemies hand) *How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together: I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim:* that is, I will not destroy him wholly, by redoubling evil upon him: I will destroy once, but I will not return to destroy, a remnant shall be saved. The Lord gave up *Ephraim*, but he did not make *Ephraim* as *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, he did not utterly ruine him; and what he did against *Ephraim*, he did it with a secret contest in his own spirit, *How shall I do this?* I do it not with my heart, and whole mind, my heart is turned within me, while my hand is turned against thee; it grieveth me while thou art grieved, while I kindle this fire of affliction in thy borders, the fire of compassion kindles in my own bowels; *My repentings are kindled together*, while I punish thee for thine impenitency, and my heart is turned within me, while I must correct thee, *for refusing to return* (*Vers.*5.)

Nero being desired to sign a Writ for the execution of an Offender, was so pittiful at his first entrance upon the Empire (though he proved a Monster for cruelty after) that he could hardly be perswaded or wrought to subscribe it, and when he did it, in doing it he said, *How glad should I be if I could not write my name*; which wish occasioned *Seneca* his Tutour, to write a Book of *Clemencie*, in which he extols *Nero*, as the pattern and mirrour of clemencie. When either God or man do acts of severest Justice, with meltings of spirit, and tenderness of affection towards those who fall under their hand, those acts of Justice have a great temperament of sparing mercy in them.

Quam velle nescire literas.

For as it is in sinning, when a Believer falls into a great sin, yet because his heart cannot go fully with it, he cannot delight or take pleasure in it, therefore his may be called *Sparing sinfulness*: whereas a carnal heart committing only a little sin for the matter, yet, because he delighteth in it, and is pleased with sin, he doth not spare to sin. Now (I say) as it is in sinning, so in punishing; he doth not spare to punish, who doth it with his whole heart, and takes delight in it, though the actual punishment be but little, whereas he whose heart retreats while his hand is stretched out in greater punishments, may be said to spare in punishing.

Hence, to shew that God exacted the utmost of his Justice upon his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, when he stood in our place; the Apostle saith (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *He spared not his Son.* How did he not spare him? He did not spare him any of these four wayes. He did not spare him, so, as not to punish him at all; for the Cup could not pass from him. He did not spare him by deferring the time, but when the hour was come that he must suffer, he suffered in that moment. Nor did he spare him in the degree, he suffered to the utmost for our sins, God did not abate one drop out of his Cup, not one dram of the weight of his sorrows: Yea fourthly, God did not spare him, in regard of the affection with which he punished him: The Lord may be said *willingly to afflict him for the sins of the Children of men, though he doth not willingly afflict the Children of men*; *He was pleased to bruise him* (*Isa.*53.) and that signifies not only (*Voluntatem Dei*) that it was the purpose and resolution of God, that his Son should be bruised for our sins; but it signifies also (*Voluptatem Dei*) the delight and contentment that the Lord had in bruising his Son. He did not spare, but gave him up with his heart, to those punishments which were due to sinners. God shewed no more relenting towards his Son, when he stood suffering in the place of sinners, then he doth to those sinners who stand in their own place to suffer without his Son: Yea, God the Father did not only not relent, or shew any yerning of bowels towards his Son in that suffering condition, but (as to sense and present apprehension) he hardned his heart towards him, which caused that grievous out-cry of Christ upon the Cross, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

Not that God did really withdraw his love in the least, from his Son, but he did infinitely delight to see his Justice satisfied; and his Son as a Conquerour, bearing up under the weight of it. Thus the Lord took pleasure in afflicting his Son, or (as *Job* speaks, *Chap.* 9.) *He laughed at the tryal of that innocent and Holy one:* And indeed, without this, the work of our redemption had not been accomplished by a full satisfaction to divine Justice; for it would have had somewhat of mercy in it towards the Redeemer, as well as it is all mercy towards the redeemed: But as it is all of mercy to us, so it was to be nothing at all of mercy to Jesus Christ, that sinners are redeemed: he was to have no more of his Father then he paid for, and his Father did not spare him, but made him pay the utmost Farthing, that upon the casting up of the account between himself and sinful man appeared a due debt unto his Justice. *Job* complains, that he was not spared, yet the truth is, that every man, how much soever he suffers on this side Hell, hath somewhat of sparing mercy in his sufferings.

Secondly, Forasmuch as *Job* being about to shew the extremity of his affliction, tells us, *That God did not spare,*

Observe, *Sparing mercy is the lowest degree of mercy: If God deny sparing mercy, he denies all mercy.*

It is argument enough that God shewed Christ no mercy, when the Apostle saith, *He did not spare him.* That we sinners might have all mercy, he that saved us from our sins had none. The Angels who sinned found no mercy, no sacrifice was provided for them, *God cast them down to Hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgement:* All which punishments are affirmed by the Apostle *Peter*, as the result of this Negative, *God spared not the Angels* (*2 Pet.*2.4.) The same Apostle tells us also in the next Verse, that, *God spared not the old World, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a Preacher of righteousness, bringing in the Flood upon the world of the ungodly.* Neither the Angels who apostatiz'd from God, nor the old ungodly World had any share in sparing mercy. *Job* looked upon himself (in reference to present peace) as one in their case, *He doth not spare*; which appears further in the next clause.

He poureth out my Gall upon the ground.

The Original word which we render *Gall*, signifies properly, *bitterness*, because the Gall is so. *Peter* speaking to *Simon Magus* (*Act.* 8. 23.) puts these two together, *I perceive that thou art in the Gall of bitterness:* He that continues in sin, lives in the Gall of spiritual bitterness; and he whose Gall is poured out, is in, or ready to go into the gall of corporal death. For as *cleaving of the reins*, implyed the receiving of a deadly wound; so pouring out the Gall upon the ground, is a proverbial, speaking present death. When the gall is out, the bowels are out; the gall is affixed to the Liver: So that, it is as much as to say, He kills me dead, or I am now upon the borders of death it self: When the gall is indeed powred out, we cannot live; and he who is afflicted to such a height, that he cryes, my gall is poured out, may well be numbred among the dead. The reason or original of this speech was this (as I conceive) because when a wild Beast, or any other (which are fit for mans eating) are taken and slain, it is usual when the bowels are pulled out, to cut off, and throw away, or pour out the Gall upon the ground, lest the overflowing of it should distrelish the neighbouring parts: So that *Job* in this doth only prosecute the former

מרה *Fel ab amaritudine. Viscera.* Vulg.

theam

theam of his grievous ſufferings, or that he was (as *Paul* ſpeaks of himſelf (2 *Cor.*1.8.) preſſed out of meaſure, above ſtrength, inſomuch that he deſpaired even of life; which he gives us yet more fully in the next Verſe.

Verſ. 14. **He breaketh me with breach upon breach, and runneth on me like a Giant.**

Job varies into all manner of inventions and alluſions, to ſet forth both the conſtancy and extremity of his afflictions. As before he compared himſelf to *a mark*, againſt which Arrows are ſhot; ſo now to a *Stone-wall*, or fortified Tower, againſt which, battering Rams of old, and Cannons in latter ages, are uſually planted to make a breach, that the Souldiery may come up to the aſſault.

פרץ *Vi diſrupit, erupit. Poeticè variat orationis modos lugubres.*

He breaketh me with breach upon breach.

Some men are like fortified Cities, which cannot be eaſily entred; yet when the Lord of Hoſts draws up his Armies and beſiegeth them, he hath Artillery and Ammunition enough to thunder down their higheſt Towers, and to make breach upon breach in their thickeſt walls. Satan complains (*Chap.*1.) *Thou haſt made a hedge about him: Job's* hedge was the protection of God; that hedge was ſo ſtrong that Satan could not pull up a ſtake of it, nor make a gap in it, till God gave him leave. But though *Job* (as this ſimilitude implyes) were like a wall or fortified tower, yet God had made breaches in him: God can ſoon break our eſtates, our ſtrength, our health, our comforts, our peace, our all. And when *Job* ſaith, he breaks me *with breach upon breach*; he means a multitude of breaches made together, or continual breaches, made one after another: *Jeremy* laments (*Chap.*4.16.) *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart makes a noiſe in me:* Why doth he thus double upon theſe words, *My bowels, my bowels, my heart, my heart?* The twentieth Verſe gives us an account of that, *Deſtruction upon deſtruction is cryed, for the whole Land is ſpoiled:* Deſtruction upon deſtruction is total deſtruction. Thus *Sampſon* repeats his Victory over the Philiſtines (*Judg.*15.16.) *With the Jaw-bone of an Aſs heaps upon heaps*; or (as the letter of the Hebrew) *an heap to heaps*; that is, I have made a great ſlaughter; or as himſelf explaines it in the cloſe of the Verſe, *I have ſlain a thouſand men.* We have the Prophet *Ezekiels* threat in the ſame language (*Chap.*7.26.) *Miſchief ſhall come upon miſchief, and rumour ſhall be upon rumour:* When the Prophet *Iſaiah* would convince the Jews of their unteachableneſs, that whereas (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.*5.12.) *They ought to be teachers*; yet they had need to be taught the firſt principles of the Oracles of God, like little Children, who muſt have the ſame precepts and lines often and often inculcated upon them, he gives it us in the form of this Text (*Iſa.*28.10.) *For precept muſt be upon precept, line upon line*; that is, they muſt be continually followed with precepts, they muſt have many, and yet they ſcarce learn one; or (as others expound that place) the Prophet deſcribes the ſcornfulneſs of that people who jeered the Meſſengers of God for their frequency in Preaching, with a riming ſcoff, *Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, and there a little*; which ſingle tearms the Prophets had often uſed in their Sermons. Now which way ſoever we take the proper ſenſe of that place, yet the common ſenſe of the words reaches this in in *Job:* for *precept upon precept*, ſpeaks there a multitude of precepts, even as here, breach upon breach ſpeaks a multitude of breaches, or breaches all over. And the Apoſtle *Paul* expreſſeth himſelf in this ſtrain, while he gives the reaſon of the recovery of *Epaphroditus* from a dangerous ſickneſs (*Phil.*2.27.) *He was ſick* (ſaith *Paul*) *nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him; and not only on him, but on me alſo, leaſt I ſhould have ſorrow upon ſorrow*; that is, many ſorrows heaped up together. So then, when *Job* complains of his breaking with breach upon breach; the plain meaning is, that he had many, very many breaches: His very wounds were wounded, there was nothing in him, or about him to be ſmitten, but what had been ſmitten already. As if he had ſaid, I am ſo full of breaches and afflictions, that there is no whole ſpace or room left for a new breach, for another affliction: As he that lies upon the ground can fall no lower, ſo he that is all broken cannot be broken any more.

Vulnera ipſa vulnerat. Nō habet in nobis jā nova plaga locū.

Job had breach upon breach in his eſtate, his Cattle, and goods were taken away: *Job* had breach upon breach in his Family, moſt of his Servants, and all his Children were deſtroyed: *Job* had breach upon breach in his body, that was ſick and ſoar: *Job* had breach upon breach in his credit, he was called Hypocrite again and again: *Job* had breach upon breach in his ſoul, that was filled with fear and terrour from the Lord.

Hence Note, *The beſt Saints on earth are ſubject, not only to great, but various troubles, to breach upon breach.*

God is pleaſed to ſmite them ſundry times, and he ſmites them ſundry wayes: 'Tis no argument that a man ſhall be no more afflicted, becauſe he is afflicted, or that God will not ſmite again, becauſe he hath ſmitten already. God doth not ſtay his hand by looking upon the number, but upon the effect and fruit of our afflictions: Every Child of his, whom he corrects, muſt look for more corrections, till repentance hath had its perfect work; and every Champion of his whom he tryes, muſt look for more tryals, till faith and patience have had their perfect work. God would not give his Children ſo much as one blow, or one breach, not ſo much as a little finger of theirs ſhould ake, were it not for one of theſe ends; and until theſe ends be attained, they ſhall have many blowes and breaches, even till the whole head be ſick, and the whole heart faint, till from the ſole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no ſoundneſs in them, but wounds and bruiſes and putrifying ſoars. As the Vine-dreſſer cuts, and cuts, prunes, and prunes the Vine, this day and the next day, becauſe once cutting or pruning will not ſerve to make it fruitful: So the Lord prunes, and cuts, and pares, and breaks, and breaks, not to deſtroy his people, but to make them (as pleaſant Vines) bring forth abundantly, either the fruits of godly ſorrow for their ſins committed againſt him, or the proofs and experiments of the graces which they have received from him. This latter was *Job's* caſe, and the chief cauſe why he was *broken with breach upon breach.* And no ſooner had the Lord by his roaring Cannon, made breaches in him, fair, and aſſaultable, but he preſently takes his advantage, as *Job* ſhewes elegantly (purſuing the Allegory) in the laſt clauſe,

Ut in vineâ labor labori, cura curæ, ſemper additur, &c. Sanct.

He runs upon me as a Giant.

When a breach is made in the wall, the beſiegers run up to aſſault and ſtorm the place. *Job* keeps to the Souldiers language, the Lord hath made breach upon breach, and and now *He runs upon me as a Giant.* There are three things in this expreſſion.

גבור *Sicut fortis potens idem valet Gigas & ἰσχυρός.*

Firſt, The ſpeed which God made to aſſault him, *He runs.*

Secondly, The ſtrength that God puts forth in aſſaulting him, he runs, not as a Child, not as a weak man, no nor as the ordinary ſort of ſtrong men; but *as a Giant*, or mighty man, who exceeds other men, as *Goliah* did *David*, both in ſtrength and ſtature.

Thirdly, Running as a Giant, notes courage as well as ſtrength. A Giant runs fiercely and fearleſly.

David compares the Sun at his riſing, to a Bridegroom coming out of his Chamber, and *to a Giant, or ſtrong man* (it is the word of this Text) *who rejoyceth to run a race* (*Pſal.* 19.5.) Giants are ſwift, and Giants are ſtrong. Some men are ſtrong but not ſwift of foot, but no man can be ſwift of foot unleſs he be competently ſtrong: Giants are both in exceſs: And therefore *Job* puts both together, *He runs upon me as a Giant.* And yet (I conceive) this running doth rather imply the fierceneſs of the Giant, then his ſwiftneſs. Giants are dreadful and terrible to behold; they are called *Nephilim* in the Hebrew, of diverſe Texts, which coming from the root, *Naphal, to fall*, ſignifies *fallers*, and that in a twofold ſenſe.

Quando aliquis dicitur aut currere, aut aliquid agere, ſicut Gigas, nihil aliud denotat, quam magno animo & ſtrenuè rem aliquam aggredi. Bold.

Firſt, Becauſe they Apoſtatiz'd or fell from God, his truth and worſhip, which *Moſes* ſeems to intimate while he deſcribes the firſt great perſonal defection of the World (*Gen.*6.4.) *There were Giants in the earth in theſe dayes:* theſe he oppoſeth to the *Sons of God*, in the ſame Verſe, who had alſo greatly corrupted themſelves, ſo that (*Verſ.* 5.) *God ſaw the wickedneſs of man was great upon the earth:* For the *Sons of God*, they who owned a profeſſion of Religion (being the Poſterity of *Seth*, they) mingled themſelves with the wicked of the World. As for the Giants, they diſowned God, and were totally departed, or fallen from

from his obedience, and were therefore as some apprehend, called *Nephilim*, or *Fallers*.

Secondly, They were so called, because either through the vastness of their strength and stature, or through the fierceness of their mindes and spirits, they were men of violence, great oppressours, causing others to fall before them: In so much that the very name of a Giant was dreadful. And when those unbelieving Searchers of *Canaan* brought up an evil report of that Land, the worst which they could say of it to the discouragement of their Brethren, was this (*Numb.* 13. 33.) *And there we saw the Giants, the Sons of Anak, which came of the Giants: and we were in our own sight as Grass-hoppers, and so we were in theirs.* Men of strength and courage were as much afraid at this story of Giants, as Children are of Bugbears and Fairies.

So then, when *Job* said, That God did run upon him as a Giant, his intent was only to shew, with how much terrour God was pleased to cloath himself, and how much strength he put forth, while he thus contended with him. The truth is, God needs not lay out his strength to afflict man, he can crush the strongest of men as a moth, with the touch of his finger. The weakness of God is stronger then man; yet God in afflicting his people, will sometimes personate a mighty man, exercising his power to the utmost, and arming himself from head to foot, while he combates with an enemy: which still confirms the general Observation, *That God doth not only afflict such as he loves, but he afflicts them sorely. Doth he not so, when he shakes them in pieces? Doth he not so, when he sets them as his mark? When a multitude of skilful Archers compass them about; when he cleaves their reins asunder; when he pours out their Gall upon the ground? Doth he not so, when he sets Engines of battery to make breach upon breach, and then runs up as a Giant to the assault?* Thus God hath dealt with many precious souls, and thus he dealt (beyond his dealings with many) with his precious Servant *Job*.

And as no man, either in his estate or health, either in his credit or comforts, is *so strong a wall*, but God by his *Artillery* can quickly make a breach upon him; so who is able to stand in the breach, or make it good, when God comes up to the assault? *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the dayes that I shall deal with thee?* saith the Lord (*Ezek.* 22. 14.) When the *Lord as a Giant* runs upon man, the *strongest Giant* among the sons of men, is but as a *Pigmie*, yea but as a *Pismire*, he is but as the *Chaff* before the wind, or as the *potters Vessel* before the Iron-Rod. But though *flesh and blood* cannot stand in the breach when God assaults; yet *Faith and patience* can. *Moses by Faith stood in the breach, and turned away the wrath of God, when he came to destroy Israel* (*Psal.* 106. 23.) *Job* by patience stood in the breaches which God made upon him, when he seemed utterly to destroy him.

For what did *Job* to God, when God did all this to him? Did he oppose? Did he strive with his Maker? The two next Verses shew, that prayers and tears were all the Weapons he used in this holy War with God.

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

I have sowed sack-cloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust.
My face is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the shadow of death.
Not for any injustice in my hands: also my prayer is pure.

THE former words shewed in what manner *Job* was afflicted; and because the manner of his afflictions did almost exceed words, therefore he strained himself to the highest pitch of holy rhetorick, to make his unkind Friends sensible of it. And as there he told us what God had done to him, so here he tells what he did, or how he behaved himself under the hand of God; he tells us how he took those tearings, and those wounds; how he received those showrs of Arrows from the Almighties Bow. *Eliphaz* taxed *Job* in the fifteenth Chapter, with height and haughtiness of spirit in his low estate (*Vers.* 12, 13.) *Why doth thine heart carry thee away? And what doth thine eyes wink at, that thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth?* And (*Vers.* 25.) he more then intimates that *Job* *stretched out his hand against God, and strengthened himself against the Almighty.* In both passages he is severely charged, not only with impatience under the hand of God (which is bad enough) but with opposition against the hand of God, which is far worse.

Job refutes these unfriendly censures, and professeth another kind both of spirit and practice in this Text. As if he had said, *I am not so mad as thou takest me to be, to run upon God, or to stretch out my hand against him while he smiteth me; I have learned better, then to shoot the arrows of blasphemy against God, whilst he shoots the arrows of calamity against me; and if you desire to know what I have been doing, seeing I deny that I have been doing what you suggest; This is the account which I give of my self, and of my behaviour.*

Vers. 15. **I have sowed sack-cloth upon my skin, and defiled my horn in the dust.**

That is, I have humbly submitted my self to receive, and entertain those saddest dispensations.

Hence Observe, *That the surest way to confute the censures, and wipe off the aspersions which are cast upon us, is to shew our selves doing contrary to what others are speaking of us.*

A practical answer is the strongest answer; we may speak more for our selves by our hands, then we can do by our tongues in many cases. The Papists mouths are stopt (who call us *Solifidians*) when they see Protestants forward in and zealous for good works: He that is accused of uncharitableness, may best free himself from that charge, by giving freely to the poor; and he that is accused of injustice, may soonest do himself right, by shewing that he hath done right to every man. Bare denials that we have done evil, are nothing; but when our doing of good appears, who can deny it? The old Philosopher answered him that denied *motion*, by rising up and walking, not by arguing: *Job* answered *Eliphaz*, who affirmed that he turned his spirit, and stretched out his hand against God, by falling down and submitting to it. *I have sowed sack-cloth upon my skin, &c.*

And this *Job* offers, as to remove, and take away that objection of mis-behaviour towards God; so to move his Friends to better behaviour, even to compassion and pity towards him. He was in a sorrowful case, and he had acted the part of a sorrowful man; God had laid him low, and he laid himself low; this might have taught them moderation; why should they speak so harshly against him, who had dealt but coursely with himself? *Sowing sack-cloth upon his skin*; and seeing he abased himself, even *to the defiling of his horn in the dust*, why should they abase him too? It stirs up pity towards a professed adversary to see him in misery, especially, when he submits unto it, and suffers with patience: Much more should the misery of a professed Friend, he also quietly submitting to it, stir up the bowels of pity. So then, the scope of this report which *Job* makes of himself, was not only to answer what *Eliphaz* had charged him with, but also that he might obtain from his Friends, a milder answer.

Hoc affert ut ad misericordiam socios moveat, pœnitentiam, &c. suam & humilitatem, quod sese in his afflictionibus non extulerit. Merc.

I have sowed sack-cloth upon my skin.] The word which we render *Sack-cloth*, is of the same sound in the Hebrew, and almost in all other languages; which is observed as an argument of its antiquity, and that it is the mother of all languages. But how did *Job* sow sack-cloth upon his Skin? This is a hard piece of Sempstery.

שׂק *Saccus, vox quæ hic habetur* Sak *habet eundem sonum in omni fere lingua, quod unum arguit linguam Hebræam omnium esse matrem.*

The Roman Historian reports of *cruel Nero*, that when he fled out of the City (fearing the sentence of the displeased Senate which quickly pursued him) and had got into a grove or thicket like a wild Beast, he commanded those about him to make a trench in the earth, fitted to the dimensions of his body, which he ordered them to line with such pieces of Marble, as were to be had upon the place; thus as it were, preparing his own Tomb, he wept and often cryed out, *See what a workman is here now ready to perish.* What that wretch said of himself, I may say of this holy man in the Text, whom I find thus busied at his Needle, as if he were preparing his own grave-clothes, or winding sheet, *What a workman have we here ready to perish? Job* looked upon himself as a dying man, and behold he is *sowing sack-cloth upon his skin.* When men of worth die, they are wrapt in fine linnen; so *Joseph* of *Arimathea* wrapt the body of *Jesus* (*Mar.* 15. 46.)

Qualis artifex pereo.

And

And a living man full of sores needs the finest and softest linnen to wrap him in: Sack-cloth is a course stubborn cloth, grievous to a sound body, painful to those who have never a breach upon their flesh; but for a man (as *Job* describes himself) full of breaches, having breach upon breach; his body being broken all over, as if it were but one continued breach, to lap up such a one in sack-cloth, is an extream addition to his pains and sorrows. How is it then, that *Job* was thus severe to his own sores? To clear this, *Sack-cloath* may be taken two wayes.

First, Properly. Secondly, Improperly.

Properly, so, sack-cloth is that hairy, rough Garment which was very usual among mourners, whether in times of sorrow for sin or judgement. *Sack-cloth was the Livery of both these sorrows.* The King of *Israel* was a close-mourner in sack-cloth (2 *King.*6. 30.) *The King rent his clothes as he passed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold he had sack-cloth within upon his flesh.* There being a terrible Famine in *Samaria*, that King wore Sack-cloth as an emblem of his sorrow, yet he wore it somewhat concealedly; it was *within upon his flesh.* And so (2 *Kings* 20.31.) when the Servants of *Benhadad* came to *Achab*, they put Sack-cloth upon them. And (2 *Kin.*21.27.) *Achab* himself when he heard that sore judgement denounced against him, *humbled himself, and put on Sack-cloth, and went softly.* In a time of common calamity, the Prophet tells us, *Every head shall be bald, and every beard clipt: upon all the hands shall be cuttings, and upon the loyns Sack-cloth* (*Jer.*48. 37.) And that it was the usual wear in time of repentance, is taught us in the Prophesie of *Jonah*(*C.*3.8.)Where Proclamation was made, by the King of *Niniveh*, That all should fast and put on Sack-cloth. Christ himself describing what *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* would have done if the Gospel had been Preached, or the mighty works done in them which were done in *Bethsaida* and *Corazin*, saith, *They would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes:* that is, they would have put on sack cloth, and sate in ashes, in token of deepest humiliation for sin. Thus sack-cloth properly taken was often used in times of great affliction, whether personal, or publick; as also in times of deepest and most professed repentance.

Secondly, We may take Sack-cloth improperly, and so two wayes.

First, As to *Job's* then present condition, he was full of sores, and those sores were to him as a course covering of sack-cloth; for he was sore all over: In some extraordinary diseases, a scab puts forth all over the body, like the bark of a tree. *Job's* scabs and sores were like the bark of a tree, or a garment of sack-cloth; he speaks near this language (*Chap.* 30.18.) *By the great force of my disease is my Garment changed:* As if he had said, I have another kind of Garment then I was wont to wear; I was wont to wear the best, and the costliest Garments; but now, *By the force of my disease is my Garment changed, it bindeth me about as the colour of my coat*, that is, My sores bind me about as the colour of my Coat. Thus the Greek Expositors render this Text, affirming, that his Skin was discoloured and black, and began to look like sack-cloth, through the heat and distemper of his inward parts: As health and soundness of constitution put out a fresh and lively tincture, so sickness and diseases deface and darken the beauty of the body.

Secondly, Take it again improperly, as to *Job's* then present action; and then, *I sowed sack-cloth upon my skin*, is, as if he had spoken plainly, I have greatly abased, or humbled my self, I have been as one who putteth on sack-cloth. Such was his posture (*Chap.*2.8.) *He took a pot-sherd, and scraped his sores, and sate down among the ashes.* As he who wore sack cloth did humble himself greatly, or at least would be accounted to have done so; so he that is really humbled, and that greatly, may be said to have put on sack cloth. The sign is often put for the thing signified, in reference both to joy and sorrow. White garments and unctions were signs of joy; and therefore when *Solomon* exhorts to joyfulness, he saith, *Let thy garments be alwayes white, and let thine head lack no oyntment* (*Eccles.*9.8.) which we may expound either by that which goes before, *Eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry heart* (*Vers.*7.) or by that which follows (*Vers.*9.) *Live joyfully with the wife of thy youth:* As to bid a man put on white garments, is to bid him rejoyce, so to bid a man put on blacks, or sack-cloth, is to bid him mourn; and he who saith as *Job* here, that he hath done it, saith, That he hath mourned, though he hath not done it. *Job* did not sow sack-cloth upon his skin when he spake thus, but his sorrows did truly speak sack-cloth: Such also is his sense of the next clause; where he professeth,

And I defiled my horn in the dust.] Horns are proper to a beast, but they are often by a figure or improperly ascribed to man. The *horn* imports two things in figure.

First, Strength, and Power.

Secondly, Dignity, and Ornament.

It is often put for strength and power; for the strength and power of good men (1 *Sam.*2.10.) *Hannah* sings, *Thou shalt exalt the horn* (that is, the strength and power) *of thine annointed.*(*Psal.*132.17.) *There shall he make the horn of David to flourish. David* was a type of Christ, and of him this Psalm is expounded. (*Luk.*1.69.) *God hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David:* A horn of salvation, is, strong salvation, or strength of salvation: God laid help for us upon one that is mighty, when he laid help for us upon his Son.

The **horn**, notes also the strength and power of wicked men (*Psal.*75.5.) *Lift not your horns on high, speak not with a stiff neck:* At the tenth Verse of that Psalm, we have both; *All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off, but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.* Those ten Kings, who gave their power and strength to the Antichristian Beast, are shadowed under the title of *Ten horns* (*Revel.*17.12.) Strength and power are expressed by a horn, in allusion to Beasts, whose strength to defend themselves, and to hurt others, is in their horns; and hence it is that the word by which the Greeks express *harmless*, signifies properly *hornless* (*Phil.* 2.15) *That ye may be blameless and harmless, the Sons of God without rebuke*, &c.

Metaphoræ ab animalibus ductæ, quorũ vires fere in cornubus existunt. ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔχειν κέρας, Est carens cornu.

Secondly, As the horn is put for strength, so for splendour, and dignity: The Texts before alleadged may be so expounded. And again (*Hab.*3.4.) *His brightness was as the light, and he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power:* We in the Margin put, *Bright beams out of his side:* For the Hebrew word which signifies *a horn*, signifies to radiate, and shine forth (*Exod.*34.29,30.) When *Moses* came down from the Mount, the Text saith, *He wist not that his face did shine.* And when *Aaron*, and all the people of *Israel* saw *Moses, behold his face shone:* The Vulgar translates, *The face of Moses was horned, or had horns upon it:* that is, beams and rayes of light like horns appeared, or darted from his countenance, so that the eyes of the beholders were dazled: And the reason why *Moses* is commonly pictured with horns, is, because this word signifies, both beams, and horns. So here, *I have defiled my horn in the dust:* that is, My dignity, and excellency; thus the Chaldee expresseth it: as if he had said, I have taken off, or laid by all ornaments to put my self into the posture of an humble supplicant; *I have defiled my horn in the dust.*

קרן *Radiavit, splenduit.*

Quod cornuta esset facies ejus. Vulg. *Inde* Moses *cornutus pingitur.*

Splendorem meum. Chald.

[**Dust**] also is taken properly, or improperly; properly, dust is light, small, crumbled earth. Christ chargeth his Disciples (*Mat.*10.14.) *Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your word, when ye depart out of that City, shake off the dust of your feet:* That action was emblematical, and noted one of, or all these three things.

First, That the earth was polluted, where such refusers of the precious Gospel did inhabit, and was therefore to be shaken off as a filthy thing.

Secondly, That they were base and vile as dust, such as God would shake off.

Thirdly, That the dust of the Apostles feet there left, might be as a witness (so the other Gospels express it) against them, that the Gospel had been Preached there.

Dust also in a proper sense, was used in times of humiliation and sorrow among the Jewes; for then, they either sprinkled dust on their heads, or lay down in the dust: *Joshua* and the Elders of *Israel* put dust on their heads (*Josh.*7. 6.) and *Job* professeth (*Chap.*42.6.) *Therefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes:* Which we may understand either strictly, that he sate down in the dust, testifying his repentance; or largely, that his was a great and a deep repentance, even like theirs, who are humbled in dust and ashes. That carnal worldly sorrow of the Merchants and Friends of *Babylon* is thus expressed (*Revel.*18.18,19.) *And they cast dust on their heads, and cryed, weeping and wayling, saying, Alas, alas, that great City.*

Improperly,

גלד *Cutis vox Arabica nõ alibi in Scriptura reperitur. Et* Gelad *propriè significare cutim & crustã quæ plagæ siccæ superinducitur* Rab. Levi. *Nigrorẽ nacta est cutis mea propter cruciatum, acerbitatem quasi saccus quidam ex vellis contextis effictus.* Sanct.

Improperly, dust signifies any very low condition (*Psal.* 113. 7. 1 *Sam.* 2. 8.) *He raiseth the poor out of the dust.* And again (1 *Kings* 16. 2.) *For as much as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee a Prince over my people* Israel, &c. To be exalted from the dust, is to be exalted from among the common people to a Princely state, as that parallel place tells us (1 *Kings* 14. 7.) All men are but level with the dust in their natural constitution; but all Magistrates are above the dust (that is, the common people) by their civil constitution. When *Job* saith, *I have defiled my horn in the dust*; it may be understood either properly, that he did sit down in dust and ashes as he speaks (*Chap.* 10.) or improperly, that as God had brought him into a low condition, so he was willing to submit himself to a low condition, and to be, not only as *man*, who is dust in his nature, and must return to dust, but as becomes *that man*, whose power and honour, whose excellency and greatness is laid in the dust: *David* imprecates (*Psal.* 7. 5.) *If I have done this, if* (as some charge and suspect me) *there be iniquity in my hands*, &c. *Let the enemy persecute my soul, and take it; yea, let him tread my life down to the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust*: That is, Let him totally ruine me, or lay me as low as low can be. The Church is thus excited to rise from her captivity (*Isa.* 52. 1, 3.) *Awake, and shake thy self from the dust, arise, and sit down, O* Jerusalem; *loose thy self from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of* Zion. To lye in captivity, is to lye in the dust; and as to shake off the dust, is to return from captivity; so to defile the horn in the dust, is to lay aside our dignity.

Job gives yet a further description of his self-humiliation.

Verse 16. **My face is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the shadow of death.**

As *Job* put on his mourning garments, so he was indeed a mourner; he wept, and he wept plentifully: much eye-water doth not cleanse, but foul the face, *My face is foul with weeping*; or my face is swoln, and my cheeks blubbered with weeping, saith the Latine Translator.

Facies mea intumuit à fletu. Vulg.

Note here three sorts of tears spoken of in Scripture.

First, There are tears of worldly sorrow.

Secondly, Tears of godly sorrow.

Thirdly, Tears of Hypocrisie.

The last sort is applyable to both the former; it respects sometimes worldly sorrow, and sometimes godly sorrow; for both may be feigned: Such were those tears (*Jer.* 41.) When *Ishmael* had killed *Gedaliah*, the Text saith, *Ishmael went to* Mizpeh, *and met the men, weeping all along as he went*; as if he had been greatly troubled for the afflictions of the Land; but they were *Crocodiles tears*. *Ishmael* wept only till he had gotten those men (as a prey) in his power, and then he destroyed them. *Ishmael* was a State-hypocrite, and seemed full of compassion, that he might get an opportunity to vent his malice.

There are many Church-hypocrites, who can foul and disfigure their faces with weeping, as Christ reproves the Pharisees (*Matth.* 6. 16.) while they have no thought of washing or reforming either their hearts or lives. *Job*'s *face was foul with weeping*, but his heart and life were clean; he needed not strain for tears, or weep by art; how could he restrain tears, whose troubles were inlarged? The word which we render *foul*, is doubled in the Original, which speaks thus much, that his face was double-dirtied, or double-dyed in his own tears: Neither yet was this all the argument of his real sorrows; for he had not only quite wept away his beauty, but he had almost wept away his life too, and was even dead with grief, as it follows in the next words.

חמרמרה *Facies mea fœdata est à* חמר *lutum, hic duplicatur ut ante ad augendam significationem.*

And on my eye-lids is the shadow of death.

That is, Mine eyes are darkened, and I look like one that's ready to give up the ghost: As if he had said, *My sorrow may be seen upon my eyes and eye-lids, which with extremity of grief, and multitudes of tears are even wasted away, and sunk in my head, as when a man is dead, or dying*: Much weeping weakens the eye-sight; yea, some are said to weep out their eyes. *David* gives us that effect of weeping (*Psal.* 6. 7.) *I water my couch with tears*: That is, I weep abundantly: Then it follows, *Mine eyes are consumed because of my grief*: And (*Psal.* 38. 10.) *My heart panteth, my strength faileth, as for the light of mine eyes, it is also gone from me*: I am even grown blind with sorrow, or (as the Church bemoans her sad estate, (*Lam.* 2. 11.) *Mine eyes do fail with tears.* Abundance of tears bring failing of eyes; and he that useth his eyes to much weeping, shall have little use of them for seeing: we may assign the reason of it from Nature, because continual pouring forth of tears spends the spirits, and so weakeneth the visive power. Now as death is a total privation of sight; so they whose sight is much impaired, look somewhat like the dead: Hence *Job*'s complaint, *On my eye-lids is the shadow of death.*

Shadow of death.] Notes the clearest appearance, the strongest signs of death: Or this shadow of death upon his eye-lids, together with the fouling of his face, in the former clause, may be an allusion to some fashions or customs of mourners in those times or places. This phrase (which also often occurs in other Scriptures) was opened (*Chap.* 3. 5.) thither I refer the Reader.

Hos gestus in humiliationibus Orientalis etiam Græcos usurpasse testatur & videt Plutarchus in libello de superstitione. Densissima caligo est oculis meis offusa. Mer.

Thus we have *Job*'s behaviour in his affliction by a twofold act, and a twofold effect of it.

The first act was, *Sowing sackcloth on his flesh.*
The second was, *Defiling his horn in the dust.*
The first effect was, *Foulness upon his face.*
The second was, *Death upon his eyes.*

Hence Observe, First, *They are most sensible of the hand of God, who are most submissive to it.*

As *Job*'s afflictions were great, so was his sorrow, and so was his submission: *Sorrow is not contrary to patience*; *Job* was the most patient, and the most sorrowful man in the World. There is an immoderate sorrow inconsistent with patience; but great sorrow is not only consistent with patience, but an argument of it; and unless we have some sorrow, we are not patient at all: How can he be called patient, who either feels not, or slights his affliction. It is as ill a symptome of a diseased soul to be unsensible of judgments, as to be unsensible of mercies. Unless we feel the rod, we cannot hear the voice of the rod, nor receive instruction by it. To be as a Trunk, or a Stone, under correction, is not to be patient under it, but to despise it: *Humble your selves under the mighty hand of God*, is the advice of the Spirit, by the Apostle (1 *Pet.* 5. 6.) As God humbles us for sin, or for the tryal of grace, so they who have grace receive power to humble themselves; and to humble our selves, is not only an act, but an high act of grace; both the grace of God toward us, and the graces of God in us, are exalted when we are low in our own eyes.

Secondly, From the manner of this sorrowful humiliation, *He sowed sackcloth upon his skin, and defiled his horn in the dust.*

Observe, *That as God letteth out visible tokens of his afflicting hand upon us, so we should let out visible tokens of our humiliation under his hand.*

As we are visibly afflicted, so we should be visibly affected. We may make our humblings seen, though we must not do it to be seen. As *the light* of our active obedience, *should so shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven* (*Matth.* 5. 16.) So also should the light of our passive obedience shine before men, that they may see our holy sufferings, and glorifie our Father which is in Heaven. It is as great a sin to to boast of our poverty, as it is to boast of our riches, and as great a vanity to be proud of a cross, as to be proud of a Crown; yet it is an honour to God, when men see that we are not ashamed either of poverty, or of a cross. The cross should be carried upon our shoulders, not put up in our pockets: God loves to see us own our troubles as well as our comforts; and as he will condemn those who wrap the Talent of their gifts and abilities in a Napkin, and hide it from the use of others; so he doth not approve those who wrap up their crosses and afflictions in a Napkin, and hide them from the sight of others; especially considering, that even these also are Talents for which we stand accountable, how we have used them, both for our own good, and the good of others. *I have surely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himself thus* (saith the Lord) *Thou hast chastised me, and*

I was chastised (Jer. 31. 18.) *Ephraim*'s outward moans were as musick in the ears of God; *Ephraim* did not murmure against God, but he bemoaned himself; *Ephraim* was not angry at his chastisement, but *Ephraim* mourned being chastised; God heard this fully; in hearing he heard it, or, it pleased him to hear it. It is our duty to testifie our sorrow by the saddest notes of a troubled spirit, and it is a delight to God when we do so; not that he delights in our sorrows; but he delights in the witness which we bear to his Wisdom, Righteousness, and Faithfulness, in sending those sorrows. *I heard* Ephraim *bemoan himself.* Will an Offender that looks for mercy come before the Judge in rich apparel, or in some affected dress? Comes he not rather in his prison clothes? Puts he not on the garments of heaviness? The Messengers of *Benhadad*, put dust on their heads, and ropes about their necks, and sack-cloath on their loins, when they came to mediate for the life of their Master. And thus the Lord speaks to the *Israelites* (*Exod.* 33. 5.) when they had sinned, and he was wrath, *Put off your Ornaments that I may know what to do with you:* Ornaments are uncomely when God is threatening judgments: It is time for us to lay by our bravery, when God is about to make us naked. Sack-cloath sowed upon the skin, and our horn in the dust, are the best ensigns of an afflicted state. The Prophets counsel indeed is (*Joel* 2.13.) *Rent your hearts, and not your garments.* (Rending the garments may be taken, not only strictly for that act, but largely for all outward actings of sorrow.) Yet when he saith, *Rent not*, this is not a prohibition of, but a caution about the outward acting of their sorrow. *Not*, in Scripture, is not alwayes totally negative, it is often directive and comparative: So in this place, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; is, *your hearts*, rather then *your garments*; or be sure to rend your hearts, as well as your garments: The one must be done, the other ought not to be left undone. See more of this (*Chap.* 1. *Ver.* 20.) upon those words, *Then* Job *rent his Mantle.*

Thirdly, Observe, *Great sorrow produceth great effects, and leaveth such impressions as testifie where it is.*

The Apostle saith of the sorrow of the World, *That it worketh death* (2 Cor. 7. 10.) The sorrow of the World may be taken two wayes.

First, For the sorrow of carnal worldly men, whose sorrow for sin is only a vexing of their hearts, not a breaking or humbling of their hearts; which being separate both from true faith for the pardon of sin, and from any real purpose of leaving their sin, *worketh death*, both temporal death, often wearing out their natural life lingringly, and sometime destroying their natural life violently, as in *Judas*, as also hastning them on to eternal death, of which it self is a foretast, or beginning.

Secondly, This sorrow of the World, is a sorrow for the loss of, or disappointments about worldly things. This also worketh both of those deaths in meer worldly men; and when it is excessive (as under a temptation it may be) in a godly man, it may be said to work the death of the body in him; yea, great and continued sorrow, though it be not excessive, worketh towards this death in a godly man, drying his bones, and drawing out his spirits, as is clear in *Job*, on whose eye-lids the very shadow of death sate, while he wept and sorrowed. 'Tis hard to dissemble a little grief; but a great deal cannot be hid: As godly sorrow manifests it self in excellent effects upon the soul, of which the Apostle numbers up seven at the eleventh Verse of that Chapter, *For this self same thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of your selves,* &c. Now I say, as godly sorrow manifests it self in manifold effects upon the soul, so doth the sorrow of the World set its marks upon the body: As a good mans heart is made clean by weeping the tears of godly sorrow; so every mans face is made foul by weeping the tears of worldly sorrow: and as godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation and life eternal; so the sorrow of the World worketh an entrance to temporal death; yea, we may say that godly sorrow doth sometimes work temporal death; *Paul* was afraid lest the incestuous person, while he was repenting, might be *Swallowed up with over much sorrow* (2 *Cor.* 2.7.) which as we are to understand chiefly of a swallowing up in the gulf of despair, so we may take in that also as a consequent of the other, a swallowing of him up in the grave of death: As if he had said, The poor man may both despair and dye under this burden, if you let it lye too long upon him. As soon as *Heman* had said (in his desertion) *My soul is full of troubles*; he presently adds, *And my life draweth nigh unto the grave; I am counted with them that go down to the pit, free among the dead* (Psal. 88. 3, 4, 5.) To which he subjoyns (*Ver.* 9.) *Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction*; and then expostulates (*Ver.* 10.) *Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? Shall the dead arise and praise thee?* As if he had said, *These sorrows will bring me to my grave*; or in the language of *Job*, *On my eye-lids is the shadow of death.*

Till we enjoy a life beyond the reach of all sorrows, we shall not be beyond the reach of death. Hence that promise (*Revel.* 21. 4.) *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain:* And as that life which hath no death in it, shall have no sorrow in it; so that life which is a continual death (the life of the damned) is nothing else but sorrow, *There shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, for evermore* (Mat. 13. 42.) Their eyes shall ever weep, their faces shall ever be foul with weeping, and on their eye-lids the shadow of death shall dwell for ever.

Fourthly, The hand of God being heavy upon *Job*, *He defiled his horn in the dust, and fouled his face with weeping*; he regarded neither the beauty of his face, nor the dignity of his condition, all was nothing to him.

Learn from it,

Great afflictions take off our respect to the World, and all worldly things.

What is Honour? What is Gold or Silver? What is a goodly House? What is a beautiful Wife, and pleasant Children? What are fine Clothes, or a fair Face in a day of sorrow, or in the approaches of death? Spirituals are highest prized when we are lowest: Grace shines clearest in worldly darkness; but the light of worldly enjoyments is darkness to us; and that which some esteem as a Sun, is but a Cloud to us in the day of distress: That is best which is good to us in our worst estate. The favour of God, the pardon of sin, the fruits of the Spirit, are alwayes pleasant to the Saints; but then most, when the years or times are upon them, of which they not only say with the Preacher (*Eccles.* 12. 1.) We have no pleasure in them, but, we have much pain and trouble in them. The face of the new creature is never foul with weeping, nor is the horn of our salvation defiled when we lye in the dust, or on the dunghil.

Job having (according to his manner) accurately described his calamities, and shewed with what deep sense, and self-abasement he had entertained them; he passeth to a refutation of that inference which his Friends drew, and had often pressed upon him from those premises of his affliction. *Eliphaz* suggested him impious and unjust, because he was thus smitten. *Job* plainly denyes it (*Verse* 17.) I have not received these wounds in my body and estate, *for any injustice in my hands*, no, nor for any impiety in my heart, *also my prayer is pure.* This Verse takes off both parts of that general assertion, as to *Job*'s personal condition (*Chap.* 15. *Vers.* 34.) *The Congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate; fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery.* There *Eliphaz* closely hinted that *Job* was an unjust man, and an Hypocrite: *Job* answers, No, my Tabernacle is not the Tabernacle of bribery, *there is no injustice in my hands*; my Congregation, or those with whom I joyned in worship, were not a Congregation of Hypocrites, *My prayer is pure:* As if he had said, *Though it be a truth, that the Congregation of Hypocrites shall be desolate, yet it doth not follow, that every man is an Hypocrite, whose Congregation is made desolate, for mine is desolate, and yet I know my prayer is pure: And though fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery, yet every man is not guilty of bribery, whose Tabernacle is consumed with fire, for so is mine; and yet I avouch it, there is no injustice in my hands.*

Verse

Verſe 17. *Not for any* [injuſtice] *in my hands.*

חָמָס *Propriè rapina violentia injuria.*

The word that we tranſlate *injuſtice*, ſignifies rapine, violence, or wrong done by violence, any open tyrannical oppreſſion. The Harpy being a ravenous Fowl, hath his name from this root in Hebrew (as alſo in the Greek from one of the ſame importance) becauſe he doth not ſubtily ſurprize his prey, but openly aſſault it. It ſignifies alſo violence mingled with ſcorn and contempt; as is obſerved upon that of the Prophet (*Ezek.* 22. 26.) *Her Prieſts have violated my Laws*: The Prieſts did not go behind the door, they made an open breach upon the Law of God; they did not ſin ſecretly, as if they had been afraid to be ſeen, but avowedly and before the Sun. Hence ſome have rendred that Text, *Her Prieſts have contemned my Laws*; noting either that it was a violation with contempt; or that Laws which are once contemned cannot be long unviolated. Thus *Job* profeſſeth, there is no ſuch injuſtice in my hand; *Job* did not diſclaim all failings in doing juſtice, but all intendments of doing injuſtice; he did not peremptorily deny that there was no injuſtice in his hand ariſing from miſtakes of the Law, but none from the contempt of the Law, *Not for any injuſtice.*

In my [hand.] Injuſtice is aſcribed to the *hand*, not becauſe injuſtice is alwayes, though uſually it be done with the hand; with the hand men take away, and with that men detain the right of others. *David* ſpeaks thus (*2 Chron.* 12. 17.) *Seeing there is no wrong in mine hand*; that is, I have done no wrong. The hand is the great inſtrument of action, moſt injuſtice is done by the hand, though much be done by the tongue; and a Judge who gives an unjuſt ſentence with his tongue, may be ſaid to have injuſtice in his hands. Beſides, he may be ſaid to have injuſtice in his hands, who keeps any thing in his hands which was gotten by injuſtice; he alſo may be ſaid to eat injuſtice, who feeds upon what he got unjuſtly (*Prov.* 4. 17.) *They eat the bread of wickedneſs, and drink the wine of violence*: That is, They eat bread, and drink wine, gotten by wickedneſs and violence. *Job* diſclaims injuſtice in all theſe notions, *There is no injuſtice in my hands*: As if he had ſaid, *I have not gotten wealth by injuſtice, nor inricht my ſelf by making others poor; I have not been as an Harpy, to ſcratch and tear from others to feed my ſelf*: He gives a full account of this (*Chap.* 29. and *Chap.* 30.) wiping off thoſe aſperſions of injuſtice, by a large narrative of his proceedings in that publick capacity, as a Magiſtrate; the breviate of which is ſummed up in this negative, *There is no injuſtice in my hand.*

Further, Injuſtice may be taken two wayes.

Either ſtrictly, for the act of a Magiſtrate perverting the Law, and going beſides the rules of righteouſneſs.

Or largely, for any wrong that one neighbour in a private capacity, doth another.

To do juſtice is every ones duty as well as the Magiſtrates: We uſe to ſay, *Every man is either a Fool, or a Phyſician*; we may ſay, *Every one is either a doer of juſtice, or a diſhoneſt man*: For though to do juſtice is chiefly the Magiſtrates work, yet no man (who hath any thing to do in the World) can live as he ought, without doing juſtice: In this large ſence alſo we may expound *Job*'s diſclaimer of injuſtice: As if he had ſaid, *I have not willingly failed in any of thoſe duties which the Law of love towards my neighbour calls for, and obliges me unto: There is no injuſtice in my hands.*

Alſo my prayer is pure.

Prayer is taken two wayes, as injuſtice is.

Either largely, for the whole worſhip of God, *My houſe ſhall be called the houſe of prayer* (Matth. 21. 13.) That is, All kind of publick worſhip ſhall be performed, and tendred to me there: Prayer being ſo principal a part of worſhip, may well comprehend all the parts of worſhip; that which is chief in any kind, often denominates all the reſt. So *Love* is put for all the duties of the Law, and *Faith* for all the duties, yea, and for all the Doctrines of the Goſpel; though in both, many other duties and doctrines are contained.

Strictly, Prayer is that part of worſhip which conſiſts in calling upon God: *Prayer is the making known of our deſires, or the opening of our hearts to God. It is the aſcent of our ſouls to God. David* being about to pray, ſaith, *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my ſoul.* In this place we may take prayer in both the notions of it, *My prayer*

Is pure.] The word ſignifies ſhining, bright, glorious; a gracious prayer ſhines ſo bright that there is a glory in it; *My prayer is pure. Zophar* charged *Job* for ſaying, *My doctrine is pure* (Chap. 12. 4.) Now *Job* himſelf ſaith, *My prayer is pure.* The truth of Doctrine is the purity of it; and the ſincerity of prayer is the purity of it: *Job* did not boaſt his prayer pure without infirmity, but he did profeſs it pure without hypocriſie. Yet beſides this caſting out of hypocriſie, there are divers ingredients to be taken in towards the compoſition of a pure prayer, of which I ſhall touch more diſtinctly by and by. We read in the Inſtitutes of the Ceremonial Law of pure Myrrh, of pure Frankincenſe, of pure Oyl, of pure Incenſe, all which concurred to pure worſhip among the Jews, and typed out all pure worſhip, both among Jews and Gentiles; of the latter the Lord ſaith (*Mal.* 1. 11.) *From the riſing of the Sun unto the going down of the ſame, my Name ſhall be called upon among the Gentiles, and in every place Incenſe ſhall be offered unto my Name, and a pure offering.* This pure offering *Job* intends when he ſaith, *My prayer is pure.*

Under theſe two, *There is no injuſtice in my hand, and my prayer is pure*: *Job* contains the whole duty of man, both to God and to man: Here is Juſtice comprehending the duties of the ſecond Table; and Prayer comprehending the duties of the firſt Table: Thus *Job* was compleat in all the will of God, and had reſpect to all his Commandments. And thus he verified Gods teſtimony of him (*Chap.* 1. 1.) and approved himſelf to be *A man perfect and upright, fearing God, and eſchewing evil*, which is the whole duty of man.

His duobus membris utramque tabulam complexus Iitur. Mere.

From the words in general,

Obſerve, Firſt, *Man hath great ſupport in bearing afflictions, from the witneſs which his heart gives of his own integrity.*

'Tis matter of wonder that ever *Job* ſhould bear ſo many burdens, and endure breach upon breach, till we remember, that though he had many breaches upon his body and eſtate, yet he had none upon his conſcience: Indeed his ſpirit had breaches by way of tryal and temptation from God; but it had none by way of diſobedience againſt God. *The ſpirit of a man*, ſaith *Solomon*, *will ſuſtain his infirmities* (Prov. 18. 14.) There are two ſorts of infirmities.

Firſt, ſinful infirmities, ſuch are impatience, doubtings, deadneſs of heart, and vanity of thoughts.

Secondly, Penal, or painful infirmities, ſuch as are poverty, ſickneſs, diſeaſes, or any outward croſs whatſoever.

Theſe latter are the infirmities which *Solomon* means; and theſe the ſpirit of a man will ſuſtain, even while his fleſh or body ſinks under them: Yet here ſpirit is not taken meerly in oppoſition to bodily, or material fleſh (though the ſpirit under that phyſical notion is able to bear much more then the body can) but as ſpirit is oppoſed to ſpiritual and ſinful fleſh; that is, to a carnal corrupt mind: The ſpirit of a man furniſhed with grace, ſupported with the favour of God, and the teſtimony of a good conſcience, will ſuſtain all his infirmities; that is, cauſe him to bear with much, not only patience, but courage and chearfulneſs, the heavieſt burdens of affliction, which either the wiſdom of God doth, or the malice of man can lay upon him. Holineſs makes the weak ſtrong, and the ſtrong like Giants, to endure all ſhocks of trouble and hardſhip. A whole skin feels no ſmart, though you bath it with brine; and if a man have a ſound conſcience, if his ſpirit be not galled and raw, he is able to ſtand at any time, and ſometimes to rejoyce in the ſalteſt waters of worldly ſorrow. For though he be not (as was ſhewed before) ſenſleſs of, or without outward ſmart; yet having no inward ſmart (which is the worſt ſmart) he is above it: The pains and wants of the body are almoſt loſt and ſwallowed up in the comforts and enjoyments of the mind. A wounded ſpirit who can bear? A ſpirit unwounded what can it not bear? He that hath no injuſtice in his hands, hath much peace in his heart; and while our prayer is pure, our ſpirits will not be much troubled in any of our troubles.

Secondly, Observe, *It is possible to live without any known sin.*

Job knew of no injustice in his hand, nor was he conscious of any impurity in his prayer. The Apostle *John* writes to all Saints of all Ages and Statures, under the title of *His little Children, not to sin* (1 *John* 2. 1.) And in that he doth not only admonish them of what they ought not to do, but of what they might attain not to do: For though, *He that saith he hath no sin, deceives himself*, and sins in saying so (1 *John* 1. 9.) yet it may be said of some without sin, and they (in *Job*'s case) may say it of themselves without sin, that *they sin not*. The best Saints have, and know they have sin in their natures, and sin in their lives; yea, and sometimes they fall into great sins; yet such a degree of holiness is attainable in this life, that a man may be said, *not to sin*: For then (in a Gospel-sence) we are said not to sin, when we cast off and are free from all gross and scandalous sins, and do both carefully avoid and make conscience of the least and the most secret sin. *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* (Luke 1. 16.) *were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameless*: That is, They did not live in any open or known sin; they lived so, that no man could blame them, or bring any just complaint against them, either in matters of morality, which seem to be meant in the word *Commandment*; or in matters of worship, which seem to be meant by the word *Ordinance*. And when I speak of not living in any known sin, I mean not only, that Saints may rise so high as not to live in any sin which the World takes notice of; but they may, yea, and often do arrive at that height of holiness, not to live in any sin known to themselves; if once a true Believer discovers sin, he cannot own it, much less live in it; be it injustice or wrong towards men; be it any failing in the worship and service of God he will not suffer it to lodge with him. He that hath grace in his heart, cannot live with injustice in his hand; there is an inconsistence between these two, a life of grace, and to live in sin. Sin may be much alive in him that hath grace; but he cannot live in sin; he may be often tempted to the act of it, and sometimes possibly overtaken with it, yet he cannot live in it: He cannot keep injustice in his hand, nor frame an impure prayer in his heart. A good man may do an act of injustice, but he continues not unjust; he restores what he hath taken unjustly from men, and repents before the Lord; but usually he is not conscious to himself of doing unjustly towards men. If a *Laban* (one with whom he hath had converse and dealing twenty years together) should come and search his house, he is able to say to him as honest *Jacob* did to his Uncle *Laban* (Gen. 31. 37.) *Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy houshold-stuff, set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both*: As if he had said, Is there any injustice in my hand? Let it come to tryal. Or as upright *Samuel* to all *Israel* (1 Sam. 12. 3.) *Behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed, whose Ox have I taken? Or whose Ass have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Samuel* had been long a Judge, yet he knew of no injustice in his hand, neither did any man know of any; and therefore all acquit him from the least blemish of unfaithfulness in his Office (*Vers.* 4.) *Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought* (as a bribe) *of any mans hand. And he said unto them* (Vers. 5.) *The Lord is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that ye have not found ought* (that is, ought gotten unjustly) *in my hand*: That man hath reacht the perfection of justice, who neither takes out of the hand of others violently, nor of the hands of others covetously to byas his spirit when he sits in judgment. Such a perfect Justicer was *Samuel*, all *Israel* could not find ought (so come by) in his hand: He might say (and he did say as much in effect) with *Job*, *Not for any injustice in my hand.*

And as a Believer may arrive at such a blameless walking towards men, that they cannot say, *He hath sinned*; so at such a holy walking before God, that God himself will not say, *He hath sinned.* And this God will not say, when he sees a soul labouring (as *Paul* was once praying that the *Colossians* might) *to walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing; being fruitful in every good work*, *Colos.* 1. 10. And when he sees, that his prayer is pure, and his worship tendered with a perfect or sincere heart.

When a soul doth not wilfully neglect any duty towards God, God will say he hath performed all duty; and though there may be many failings in prayer, yet God will say, that mans prayer is pure. So then, we grant that no man lives and sins not, yet we affirm, that no godly man lives in sin; and that some godly men are so far from living in any sin, that others cannot tax them, nor can they tax themselves of acting any gross sins; yea, though the best of Saints here know they sin, and know their sins, yet they may be said not to commit known sins, that is, not to sin knowingly: He is not properly said to sin knowingly, who knows he sins, but he who sins against his knowledge.

Thirdly, Observe, *Holiness consists in a compleat uniformity, or in conformity to the whole will of God.*

Job draws the picture of a holy man, in all his limbs and lineaments; equity and purity contain all; Some are *First Table Christians*; others are *Second Table Christians.* Some are zealous for prayer, who are extream cold in doing justice; some are extream honest and just to men, righteous in all their dealings, but they care not for prayer, nor have they any delight in communion with God: The Law of God is one entire thing, and so must mans obedience be; *He that offends in one point is guilty of all*, James 2. 10. For though he that commits adultery cannot properly be said to break that Law, *Thou shalt do no murder*; yet whosoever commits adultery, may properly be said to break the whole Law: the reason is given by that Apostle in the next Verse: *For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill: Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the Law.* He that breaks any one link of a chain, breaks the chain, though he break not a second link: 'tis so here, the whole Law is copulative: and as in this sence, the Law is one; so the *Law-maker is altogether one*: This the Apostle *James* hints, as the reason of it, *For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill*: As if he had said, There is one and the same Legislative power commanding all, and therefore, if ye transgress one, ye transgress all. And how can there be a state of holiness, without an equal respect to both Tables of the Law, seeing the breach of any one Law of either Table, is, though not formally, yet reductively a breach of every Law in both Tables. And therefore 'tis the aim of a Believer to fulfil both Tables of the Law, though he fail in every Law of both: He gives up his will wholly to God; yea, he may be said to lose his will in the will of God; and this is his doing the whole will of God. And indeed we do nothing, unless we be found doing all.

Fourthly, Observe, *We may without hypocrisie make report of our own integrity.*

Job doth it here, and had done it before, and we find holy men doing it often in Scripture; *I* (saith *Paul*, 2 Tim. 4. 7.) *have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the Faith*: This he speaks of himself, but not for himself; not out of vain glory, or a desire of esteem with men, as the Pharisees, but that others might be encouraged by his example, and that God might have the glory of his free and powerful grace, enabling him to give and hold out such an example. Other passages in this Book have led me to this note before, and therefore I only mention it here.

More particularly, Observe, *Injustice towards men, and impurities in the worship of God, are great and provoking sins.*

Job disclaims these by name: It is as if *Job* had said, Were there injustice in my hands, or were I false in the worship of God, it were no wonder though all these judgments should seize upon me; yea, though my burden were heavier, I had no reason to complain, I must thank my self: Injustice and false worship, will certainly bring breach upon breach; they break not only single persons, but King-

Non ad jactantiam sed ad divinæ veritatis assertionem commemorat.

Kingdoms and Nations. Oppreſſion and Superſtition are Kingdom-ſhaking ſins; much more will they ſhake the walls and foundations of a private Houſe, or Family.

Again Obſerve, *If God afflict where there is no injuſtice, how juſtly doth he deſtroy thoſe who are unjuſt?*

Shall they complain who are beaten for their faults, when ſome are beaten who have no fault? The Apoſtle *Peter* argues (1 *Pet.* 4. 18.) *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and ſinners appear?* I may alſo argue, if the righteous be not ſaved (from outward afflictions) if the godly are ſmitten, how ſhall the ungodly and ſinners eſcape unſmitten? Many are ſmitten, not for any injuſtice in their hand (there is ſome other end, and that a juſt one, why they are ſmitten) nor is God unjuſt in ſmiting them. Now, if juſt ones are (without any injuſtice) thus ſmitten; how juſt is it with God to ſmite thoſe who are unjuſt? The repenting Thief rebuked him that blaſphemed, and ſpake evil of Chriſt, upon this conſideration, *Doſt thou not fear God, ſeeing thou art in the ſame condemnation? and we juſtly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds:* This man and we are in the ſame condemnation, but not in the ſame fault; we are all condemned to dye, but we juſtly, and he unjuſtly; *This man hath done nothing amiſs*, but we have done much amiſs (*Luke* 22. 40, 41.) Now as this Thief was patient under his own juſt ſufferings, ſeeing another ſuffer who was juſt; ſo when we hear that the Lord afflicts thoſe who have done no evil, how ought ſuch to lay their hands upon their mouthes, who are afflicted for the evil which they have done. *We know* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 3. 19.) *that whatſoever the Law ſaith* (in a way of threatening) *it ſaith to them who are under the Law* (that is, who are not only under it, as having heard the precept of the Law, but are under it alſo, as having by ſin deſerved the penalty of it) *That every mouth may be ſtopped, and all the World become guilty before God*; or, *ſubject to the judgment of God*, not having a word to object why ſentence ſhould not be executed, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed.

My prayer is pure.] Taking prayer either for the worſhip of God in general, or for that ſpecial duty of calling upon the Name of God,

Note from it, That, *Only pure prayer is acceptable prayer.*

Cain brought an offering to God as well as *Abel*; *But unto* Cain *and his offering God had not reſpect* (Gen. 4. 5.) It is not what we do, but how we do it, which is acceptable to God.

Pure prayer is pleaſing to the pure God, and no other can pleaſe him. Heathens have told us, that their Gods require pure worſhippers, and pure worſhip: The impure ſpirit imitates God, he will be worſhipped, and he will have (according to mans opinion) a pure worſhip; How much more doth the holy God require pure worſhip?

Omnis præfatio ſacrorum, eos, quibus non ſunt puræ manus ſacris arcet. Liv. lib. 41. *Præcipuum eſt non admittere in animum mala conſilia, puras ad cœlum manus tollere.* Sen. li. 3. Nat. Qu.

But what is it which denominates *prayer pure*? Or when is prayer pure?

Prayer is pure:

First, When it is directed to a right object, when we pray to God, and to God only: It is the ſole priviledge of God to receive prayer; *O thou that heareſt prayer, to thee ſhall all fleſh come:* There is but one hearer of prayer, and that is God. *Daniel* withſtood the Decree of the King, when he forbad him to make his prayers to God; he would rather be caſt to the Lyons, then not to pray, or pray to any beſides God; therefore he opened his window (to let them ſee his reſolution) and prayed to God thrice a day openly. We may petition living men, but we muſt pray only to *the living God.* All men (except ſuch as have ſinned unto death) are to be prayed for, but no man muſt be prayed unto: Neither Saint, nor Angel, nor any Creature, are the object of prayer, but God alone.

Secondly, Pure prayer muſt be right in the matter of it, as well as the object; if we pray for that which is unlawful, our prayer muſt needs be unlawful; as it is a ſin to do any thing which God commands not, ſo it is a ſin to ask any thing which God allows not. God hath ſet ſpecial bounds to three things.

First, To our Faith, he teacheth us what to believe.

Secondly, To our actions, he teacheth us what to do.

Thirdly, To our prayers, he teacheth us what to deſire.

We may make enlarged prayers, but we are not left at large in prayer. *The ſquare or rule of prayer is the will of God* (1 John 5. 14.) *And this is the confidence that we have in him, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.* The will of God is the rule, not only of things to be done by us, but of things which we are to ask God to do for us: As man naturally would rather do, ſo he would rather have his own will, then the will of God. Man would fain be his own carver, but God will not let him: It pleaſes man better to go two miles upon his own errand, then one upon Gods errand; and it pleaſes man better to have any one thing of his own chuſing, then two of Gods chuſing; but it ſhould not. The will of God under a threefold revelation is the rule and matter of prayer.

First, The will of God in Commandments; whatſoever God hath charged upon us to do, we may pray for power and ſtrength to do it, or that it may be done.

Secondly, The will of God in Promiſes; what God hath ſaid he will give, we may pray to receive.

Thirdly, The will of God in Propheſies; what God hath foreſhewed ſhall come to paſs, we muſt pray that it may come to paſs. The prayer of man gives birth to the Propheſies of God. *Thus ſaith the Lord, I will yet for this be enquired of by the Houſe of* Iſrael, *to do it for them,* (*Ezek.* 36. 37.) God is a ſure pay-maſter, yet he expects we ſhould ſue him, before he payes. *Daniel* found by Books, that the time drew nigh, for the deliverance of the *Jews* out of *Babylon*; and then (ſaith he) *I ſet my face unto the Lord God, to ſeek by prayer and ſupplications, with faſting, ſack-cloath, and aſhes* (Dan. 9. 1, 2.) The manifeſtation of the will of God in a Propheſie, is a ſtrong ground of prayer: Thus the matter of prayer is the will of God under one of thoſe three manifeſtations, a Command, a Promiſe, or a Propheſie.

A third thing in pure prayer, is the form of it. There is a twofold form of prayer.

First, The internal, or eſſential form.

Secondly, The external, or accidental form of prayer.

The external form, is that habit of words and expreſſions with which we cloath our deſires, when we preſent them unto God: This form varies, not only according to the ſeveral occaſions and emergencies of this life, which call us to the duty of prayer; but alſo according to the ſeveral gifts and abilities of thoſe who pray. We are free as to this form, from all tyes and preſcriptions, except this, that we utter our minds to God ſoberly, gravely, ſpiritually, with an eye to thoſe forms and patterns of wholeſome words delivered to us in the Word of God; and eſpecially to that part of the word which Chriſt gave both as a compendium, and a copy of holy prayer.

But as for the eſſential and internal form of prayer, that is unchangeable, and muſt ever be one and the ſame; Namely, *That we pray in the Name of Chriſt.* One of the Ancients was much delighted in reading *Tully's Hortenſius*, yet this at laſt abated the edge of his delight in it, *That he did not find the Name of Chriſt in it.* As the Name of Chriſt is the greateſt ornament of all Books where it is; ſo *the name of Chriſt is the eſſence of all prayers; and that is no prayer, where his Name is not.* (John 14. 13.) *Whatſoever ye ask in my Name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son: whatſoever ye do, do all in the Name of Chriſt, giving thanks to God, through him,* Col. 3. 17. To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is more then to name Chriſt in prayer: *It is eaſie to name Chriſt in prayer; but it is a hard thing to pray in the Name of Chriſt.* To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is,

Auguſt. l. 3. Confeſſ. c. 4.

First, To look up to Chriſt, as having purchaſed us this priviledge, that we may pray; for it is by the blood of Chriſt that we draw near to God, and that a Throne of grace is open for us.

Secondly, To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is to pray in the ſtrength of Chriſt.

Thirdly, To pray in the Name of Chriſt, is to pray in the vertue of the preſent mediation of Chriſt, which carries this acknowledgment in it, *That what we ask on earth, Chriſt obtains in Heaven.*

To pray thus is no easie matter, and unless we pray thus, we do not pray at all. (*John* 16. 23, 24.) *In that day ye shall ask me nothing: Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my Name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.* But how do these parts of the Text consist? Why doth Christ tell them, that they shall ask nothing in that day, and yet promise, that what they ask he will give? There is a twofold asking:

First, By way of Question.

Secondly, By way of Petition.

The former is, asking, that we may know, or be informed in what we doubt; the latter, is asking, that we may receive and be supplied with what we want. Now, when Christ saith, *In that day ye shall ask me nothing:* he had a little before promised such a manifestation of the mind of God to them, by the Spirit, that they should not need to come and ask him: As if he had said, *Now ye put questions* (as we read they did) *about many things, ye understand little of the mystery of the Gospel; but in that day ye shall have so clear a revelation about the things of Heaven, that ye shall not need to propose your doubts; and desire resolution, for you shall be able to resolve your selves by the light within you.* This the Apostle *John* (1 *Epist.* 2. 20.) tells the Saints, *But ye have an Unction from the holy One, and and ye know all things:* And again (*Vers.* 27.) *But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you; and ye need not that any man should teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lye; and even as it hath taught, ye shall abide in him.* These Scriptures are both a clear exposition, and an illustrious verification of that Promise of Christ, *In that day ye shall ask me nothing:* That is, After my resurrection.

But when he saith, *Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my Name, he will give it:* The meaning is, Your prayers shall be heard, while you keep close to this essential form, *Asking in my Name.* Besides this essential form of prayer, there is also another form, which we may call in a qualified sence, essential: As when the matter we pray about is spiritual, and absolutely necessary to salvation, then to pray in an absolute form. If it be temporal, and outward, or if it be of a spiritual nature, yet such as is only necessary to the well-being of a Believer, as spiritual gifts, yea, and the degrees of grace are, then to pray in a conditional form, as submitting it to the will of God, not only for the time, and manner, and means, and measure, wherein, or by which we shall receive those things, but also submitting the very things themselves to his good pleasure, whether we shall receive them at all, or no. Nor doth conditional prayer hinder Faith, but looks to the rule. We may pray without doubting, though we pray with a condition; and when we are fullest of submission, we may be fullest of confidence; yea, without submission in those cases there can be no true confidence.

Fourthly, Prayer is pure, when the end which we aim at is pure: The end denominates every action, as to the quality or goodness of it. The great end of prayer, as of all other actions, and without which, neither those, nor this, can be called *pure*, is, *the glory of God. Hallowed be thy Name*, is the first prayer, and that hath influence into all our prayers: we must pray for all, that God may be glorified, and pray for nothing, that our lusts may be satified. Though we may pray that our wants may be supplyed (that may be an end) yet never that our lusts may be satisfied (*James* 4. 3.) *Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss:* Where was the fault which the Apostle found, and specified in those prayers? Not in the object, they prayed to God; not in the matter, they prayed for things lawful; not in the form, they prayed in the Name of Christ; but the fault was in the end, *Ye ask amiss, that ye may bestow it on your lusts.* It is possible for a man to pray, not only for evil things, but for good things; and not only for outward good things, but for spiritual good things, to bestow upon his lusts; some pray for spiritual gifts, to bestow them on their lusts, pride, vain-glory, and covetousness; yea, it is possible for a man to pray for grace, to bestow it on his lust (so Hypocrites do) though it be impossible for any man, who indeed receives grace, to bestow it upon his lust: Let your end be pure, that your prayers may be pure also.

Fifthly, Prayer is pure when it is mingled with, *and put up in Faith. By Faith* Abel *offered a more excellent sacrifice then* Cain (*Heb.* 11. 4.) and *without Faith it is impossible to please God* (*Vers.* 6.) Prayer is our coming to God, *He that comes to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* Faith takes hold of Christ, by whom only our prayers are purified; and therefore there can be no pure prayer without Faith. As God purifies our hearts by Faith, so our prayers are purified by Faith. Faith doth not only take hold of God for the granting of our prayer, in which sence 'tis said (*James* 1. 6.) *If any one ask, let him ask in Faith*; that is, That he shall receive: But Faith takes hold of Christ for the purifying of our prayer, that so it may come up with acceptance before God. *He is of purer eyes then to behold evil, he cannot look on iniquity* (to approve of it, or to like it, *Hab.* 1. 13.) Seeing then there is much iniquity in our holy things; we must do all by our High Priest, who (as the typical High Priest did for the Children of *Israel*, *Exod.* 28. 38.) bears the iniquity of our holy things, that we (as they) may be accepted before the Lord.

Sixthly, *That, and only that, is pure prayer, which is breathed in, and breathed out, by the Spirit of God. Edifie your selves in your most holy Faith, pray in the holy Ghost* (*Jude, vers.* 20.) Or, *Praying by the holy Ghost* (as some translate) that is, by the strength and help of the holy Ghost. We cannot make pure prayer with our own breath, parts, and gifts; the holy Spirit breaths holy prayer into, and draws it out of our hearts: As we know not what to believe or do aright, till the Spirit teacheth us; so *we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it self maketh intercession for us* (Rom. 8. 26.) The Spirit maketh intercession, not as Christ doth; the Spirit doth not mediate between God and us; but as it is the office of Christ to intercede for us with God; so it is the office of the holy Ghost to make those intercessions in us, which we put up to God: So that the Spirit is said to make intercession for us, because the intercessions and prayers which we make, are made by the Spirit; the Spirit forms them in us. As some duller Scholars in a School, who cannot make their Exercises, get their Exercises made for them by those that are more pregnant; so the Spirit makes intercession for us. We are dull, and low, and straitened, we cannot make a prayer, the Spirit makes them for us in our hearts: Hence it is said in the beginning of the Verse, *The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:* The Greek word signifieth to help, as a Nurse helpeth a little Child to go, or as a weak decripid old man is upholden by a staff, or rather (as the compostion of the word implyes) *The Spirit helpeth together:* And then it is a Metaphor taken from those who lift a weight, or a piece of Timber (too heavy for one) together: The Spirit lends us his hand in this duty; and they who have received grace, act also with the Spirit: Thus, the *Spirit helpeth together:* The Spirit and a Believer are both at it, to carry on this praying work; yet all that strength which we put to the work flowes from the Spirit; who as he raiseth us when we are quite fallen, so he assists us when we are raised, and then we make good work, pure work of it in prayer.

συναντιλαμβάνεται, particula συν, ad nos laborantes refertur, quorum tamen vis omnis ab eo Spiritu proficiscitur, qui sicut nos penitus collapsos erexit ita etiam erectos regit; ideoque dicitur ipse vicissim onus attollere ne sub eo fatiscamus. Bez. in Epist. ad Rom.

Lastly, *That is a pure prayer which comes from a pure person:* And there is a double purity of the person necessary to a pure prayer.

First, There is the purity of his state; he must be a converted, and regenerated person, otherwise his prayer is abominable, though he should be right in as many of the forementioned requisites, as it is possible for an unregenerate man to be; as suppose he not only prayeth to God, and for such things as are agreeable to the will of God, but also (as he thinks) for the glory of God; yet the mans prayer is impure, because himself is impure: God hath respect to the person, before he hath respect to his supplication. (*Prov.* 15. 8.) *The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to God; but the prayer of the upright is his delight:* And again, *He that turns away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abomination* (Prov. 28. 9.)

Secondly, As there must be purity of state, before there can be a pure prayer; so also purity of life; that is, he must be renewed in purity, not lying or continuing in any sin (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubtings. Holy hands*, note

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the purity of our actions, as a *holy heart* notes the purity of our state: To lift up the hands is to pray, the sign being put for the thing signified: The meaning is, let your prayers be holy. First, *Without wrath* to men; come not to seek the favour of God, with anger and revenge in thy heart against man. Secondly, Pray *without doubting*; that respects God, and is opposed to Faith: As if the Apostle had said, Pray both in actual Faith and Love. Yet the Greek word (διαλογισμῶν) there used, is rendered by some, disceptation, or wrangling; as if the Apostle had in that specified one effect of wrath. 'Tis expounded also by others, for any internal distraction, or distemper of the mind; for the mind of man is often carryed away from God in prayer, and maintains secret Dialogismes, Discourses, and Conferences, in, and with it self, when it should be wholly taken up with God.

The covetous mans heart talks of gold, and the voluptuous mans heart talks of pleasures, when he seems to pray: yea, these Fowls will often come down upon the Sacrifice of an *Abraham*, only as soon as he espies them, he drives them away; yet by these interruptions in prayer, as well as by any sinful action unrepented of before prayer, the holiness of prayer, or the lifting up of holy hands in prayer, is hindered and defaced, even in those, whose persons are holy. *David* was a man that was pure in state, he was a converted person; yet he saith (*Psal.* 66. 18.) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my prayers.* Though I am pure in state, yet if I am impure in life, the ear of God will shut against my suits (*Isa.* 1. 14, 15.) God rejects the prayers of his own people, because their hands were full of blood; and hence his counsel, *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes,* &c. *Come now let us reason together, saith the Lord* (*Vers.* 18.) As if he had said, While I see your sins, I cannot hear your prayers; while your iniquities are before mine eyes, your supplications cannot enter into mine ear, nor will I answer them. How can any soul expect with Faith, that God should do what he requests, when he will not do what God commands? Or that God should fulfil our desires, while we in any thing neglect his rules?

As the prayer of an unholy person is turned into sin; so the sin of a holy person may cause the Lord to turn away his prayer: Then take that counsel of the Apostle, writing to, and of Saints (*Heb.* 10. 22.) *Let us draw nigh to God with a true heart, in full assurance of Faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water:* There is a twofold evil conscience.

First, That which lives in any known sin unrepented of.

Secondly, That which is unquiet and unsetled about the pardon of those sins which we have repented of.

We should get both these evil consciences, but especially the first, cured and removed by the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, before we draw nigh to God in prayer; as also *our bodies washed in pure water*, which is either an allusion to the old Ceremonies among the *Jews*, who before they came to worship at the Tabernacle, purged themselves with divers outward washings, leading them to the consideration of that moral purity, both of heart and life, in which God is to be worshipped; or it is an allusion to Baptism in special, in which there is an external washing of the body, signifying the washing of the soul by the blood of Christ, and by the effectual working of the Spirit: The sum of all is, unless the person be pure, his prayer is not pure. These are the ingredients which constitute pure prayer; all these met in *Job*, and therefore he concluded, not only confidently, but truly, *My prayer is pure.*

And as these are the ingredients of prayer, so they are all necessary ingredients; so necessary, that if any one of them be wanting, the whole prayer is impure: They are necessary by a double necessity.

First, As commanded by God in prayer.

Secondly, As means without which man cannot attain his end in prayer.

The general end of prayer, is, that prayer may be heard, accepted, and answered; God hears, accepts, answers, no one prayer, without some concurrence of all these. The Incense of the Ceremonial Law was a shadow of prayer, which is so great a duty of the Moral Law: But if this Incense had not been made exactly according to the will of God, both for the matter and the manner of the composition, prescribed (*Exod.* 30. 34, 35, 36.) If after it had been thus made, it had not also been offered according to those rules given (*Levit.* 16. 12, 13.) it had been *an abomination to the Lord*; or as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks (*Chap.* 66. 3.) *Such a burning of Incense had been but as the blessing of an Idol.* We may conclude also, That, if prayer be either composed, or presented in any other way then God himself hath directed, it is not only turned away, but turned into sin. *That man hath spoken a great word, who can say* (*in* Job's *sence*) *My prayer is pure.*

Thus *Job* justifies the prayer he made to God, and maintains his justice towards men. *There is no injustice in my hands, also my prayer is pure:* A high profession, yet in the next words he goes higher, and makes both an imprecation against himself, if it were not thus with him, and an appeal to God for his testimony, that it was thus with him.

VERS. 18, 19.

O Earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.

Also now behold my witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high.

JOB having (with much confidence) asserted the integrity of his heart, and the righteousness of his way, both towards God and Man, confirms what he had thus confidently asserted, by a double Argument.

First, By a vehement imprecation (*Vers.* 18,) *O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.*

Secondly, By a free appeal, an appeal to God himself (*Vers.* 19.) *Also now behold my witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high:* He shews the necessity of this appeal (*Vers.* 20.) *My Friends scorn me*; therefore I am constrained to go to God. When men have done us wrong, and will not do us right, it is both time and duty to appeal to God. Upon this ground *Job* appeals, and he concludes (according to our translation) his appeal with a passionate, yet holy wish (*Vers.* 21.) *O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his Neighbour.* The reason both of his appeal and wish, is given further (*Vers.* 22.) he looked on himself, as a man standing upon the very confines of death, the grave was ready for him; therefore he begs, that this business might be dispatched, and his integrity cleared before he dyed. He was loth to go out of the world, like a candle, burnt down to the socket, with an ill savour. He that hath lived unstained in his reputation, cannot well bear it, to dye with a blot; and therefore he will be diligent by all due means to maintain the credit which he hath got, and to recover what he hath lost: This was the reason of *Job*'s importunity discovered in these two Verses, now further to be opened.

Est juramenti deprecatorii forma, quo asseverat nullius sibi iniquitatis conscium esse. Aben. Ezra.

Verse 18. **O earth, cover not thou my blood, and let my cry have no place.**

There are two branches of this imprecation, or rather these make two distinct imprecations.

The first in these words, *O earth, cover not thou my blood.*

The second in these, *Let my cry have no place.*

Job engages all upon the truth of what he had said, being willing that his worst might be seen, and his best not heard, if he had not spoken truth.

O earth, cover not thou my blood.] *Job* speaks pathetically, or as some render him, Poetically, while he bespeaks the earth, and makes the inanimate creature his hearer. The sacred Pen-men do often turn their speech to the Heavens, and to the Earth: Thus *Moses* (*Deut.* 32. 2.) in the Preface of his Sermon, his last Sermon to that people, *Give ear O ye Heavens, and I will speak, and hear O earth the words of my mouth.* So the Prophet *Isaiah* (Chap. 1. 2.) *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth, I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me:* God speaks to that which hath no ears to hear, either to reprove those who have ears, but hear not; or to raise up and provoke their attention in hearing. Thus *Job, O earth,* &c. as if the earth were able to take his complaint, and return an

Poeticum sane & patheticum in dolore aut re alia gravissima, res mutas mortuasve, omni sensu audituque carentes testes & auditores compellare.

an anſwer; as if the earth were able to make inquiſition, and bring in a verdict about his blood.

O earth [cover] not thou my blood.] The word ſignifies not only common, but a twofold metaphorical covering.

First, Covering by way of diſſimulation; to diſſemble a matter, is to cover a matter: In that ſence *Solomon* ſpeaks (*Prov.* 12. 16.) *A fools wrath is preſently known, but a prudent man covereth ſhame:* That is, He diſſembleth his wrath, or his anger, he will not let it alway break forth, for that would be a ſhame to him.

Secondly, The word ſignifies to cover by forgetfulneſs; That which is not remembred, is hid or covered. (*Eccleſ.* 6. 4.) *He cometh in with vanity* (ſpeaking of man) *and departeth in darkneſs, and his name ſhall be covered with darkneſs:* That is, He ſhall be forgotten, he ſhall be as if he had not been. And thus it is applyed to the pardon of ſin (*Pſal.* 32. 1.) Sin is vailed with the worthineſs and obedience of Chriſt, as with a garment, and is to God as a thing forgotten, or out of mind, when once it is forgiven: In both theſe ſences *Job* ſeems to beſpeak the earth, *O earth, cover not my blood:* That is, If thou haſt any of my blood, do not diſſemble it, bring it forth, be not as if thou kneweſt of no ſuch matter. As ſimulation makes that to be, which is not; ſo diſſimulation makes that not to be, which is.

Sanguis terra tegitur quando facinus diſſimulatur, nec vindictam expoſcit.

Again, *Cover not my blood:* That is, Forget it not, if thou haſt ſuch a record upon thy File, let it be continued and remembred, that the Generations to come may judge how I have been dealt with by this preſent Age, or how I have dealt in it.

O earth, cover not my [blood.] But what is his [*blood*] which he would not have covered? His blood may be taken two wayes.

First, Paſſively, for his ſufferings and grievous afflictions, which were even to blood: The Apoſtle tells the Hebrews, *Ye have not reſiſted to blood, ſtriving againſt ſin* (*Heb.* 12. 4.) There is a threefold ſtrife againſt ſin.

First, Againſt ſin already acting and moving in our ſelves.

Secondly, There is a ſtriving againſt that ſin which others move us to act, whether by promiſes, or by threatenings.

Thirdly, There is a ſtriving againſt that ſin which others act.

The Apoſtle (as I conceive) intends one of, or both the latter ſorts of ſtriving againſt ſin, which is indeed a ſtriving againſt ſinners; and in this ſtrife he ſaith, *Ye have not reſiſted unto blood*; ye have (I grant) reſiſted, to the loſs of your goods, yea, and to the loſs of your credit and reputaon in the World (*Chap.* 10. 33, 34.) but know, ye are not come to the heat of the Battel, till your bodies bleed; ye have loſt no blood yet, *ſtriving againſt ſin. Job* reſiſted, or rather ſubmitted to blood; he had loſt blood, in the great fight of affliction which he indured; he was wounded all over. Now, ſay ſome, he cryes, *O earth, cover not my blood:* That is, Theſe my bloody ſufferings; what I have endured, let it be remembred. But we cannot well accommodate this interpretation to the Text: For, firſt, there may be as much vanity in deſiring the evils we have ſuffered, as the good we have done, ſhould be known: We muſt let God alone to erect the monument of our ſufferings; that muſt be none of our care.

Ne tegas ſanguinem meum. i. e. injuriam mihi latam qua innocens pereo. Merc.

Secondly, We cannot ſo much as ſuſpect that *Job* would maintain the memory of his ſufferings againſt God; yet it was he who ſmote *Job*, though by the hand of Satan, and wicked men: This *Job* had acknowledged more then once, with much humble ſubmiſſion, and therefore he doth not deſire that his blood might be forth-coming in a way of conteſtation with him. Further, If we look only to thoſe inſtruments of his affliction, who had indeed done him wrong: Surely the ſpirit of this good man, as it was far from meditating revenge, ſo his ſcope and buſineſs here, was rather to bring himſelf to a tryal then them, rather to have his own innocency cleared, then their guilt proved: And therefore we have called theſe words, an imprecation upon himſelf, in caſe he were guilty, not an accuſation of their guiltineſs. In purſuance of which general ſence, we muſt expound blood under another notion. And therefore,

Secondly, Blood may be taken actively, and ſo it falls under a threefold conſideration.

First, Blood is put for the general ſinfulneſs or corruption of mans nature, as alſo for any particular ſin, as it is wrapt up in mans natural corruption. One of the Ancients interprets *David*'s prayer (*Pſal.* 51. 14.) *Deliver me from blood, or bloods*, or (as we render) *from blood-guiltineſs, O God*; not of that ſpecial ſin, or not of that only, the death of *Uriah*, but of all ſin, which (ſaith he) therefore bears that title, becauſe it flows from the polluted nature of man, which the Scripture calls fleſh and blood. That of the Prophet is more proper to this point (*Ezek.* 16. 6.) *When thou waſt in thy blood, I ſaid unto thee live:* That is, When thou was wrapt in, and defiled with thy ſin and miſery, then I had pity on thee, and ſpake life into thee. Every ſoul tumbles in blood till it is ſprinkled with blood; our blood is our filthineſs, and the blood of Chriſt is our holineſs, freeing us at once from the guilt, and from the ſtain of ſin. This corruption of nature, together with that iſſue of it, the tranſgreſſions of life, may be called blood, for two reaſons. *Auguſtine.*

First, Becauſe it deſerves death, and is a ſtate of death; we are dead in ſin, and *the wages of ſin is death*; and as any kind of death may be expreſſed by blood, ſo a violent death is the pouring out of blood.

Secondly, It may be called blood, becauſe ſin is expiated by blood, and *without ſhedding of blood there is no remiſſion*, no not of the leaſt ſin.

Secondly, *Blood* ſignifies ſome notorious ſin or ſins. Great ſins are not only bloody ſins, but (in Scripture language) blood. (*Iſa.* 1. 15.) *When ye make many prayers, I will not hear*: Why? *For your hands are full of blood:* That is, Of great and foul crimes: For ſhould we take blood there, for any ſin, according to the former interpretation, then whoſe prayer ſhall be heard? Who is it that ſins not? Yea, who is not full of ſin? So that by *hands full of blood*, he means hands ſtained with great ſins; or with ſins, if ſmall in themſelves, yet (which greatens the leaſt ſin) loved and unrepented of (*Ezek.* 9. 9.) *Thus ſaith the Lord, The iniquity of the Houſe of* Iſrael *and* Judah *is exceeding great, and the Land is full of blood:* That is, Of all kind of wickedneſs (*Ezek.* 24. 7.) *For her blood is in the midſt of her; ſhe ſet it upon the top of a rock; ſhe poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with duſt:* Which words deſcribe, as the ſin of *Jeruſalem*, ſo her impudence in ſinning. *Her blood was in the midſt of her*; it was not caſt behind the door, or put into a corner, *She ſet it upon a rock*; and not only ſo, but upon *the top of a rock*; as if ſhe not only cared who ſaw it, but had taken care that all might ſee it; *She poured it not upon the ground, to cover it with duſt:* In which words the Prophet alludes to that Law (*Levit.* 17. 13.) commanding that the blood of a beaſt ſhould be poured out, and covered with duſt. And Again (*Hoſ.* 4. 2.) *By ſwearing, and killing, and ſtealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood:* That is, One wickedneſs is heaped upon another. There is an aggregation, or a combination of many ſins together; their ſins are ſo thick ſet, that there is not the leaſt ſpace, either of time or place between them; they ſin continually; and they ſin contiguouſly; ſin toucheth ſin. *Sanguinis nomine intelligitur peccatum graviſſimum, ac deteſtandum facinus.* *Aggregant peccata, peccatis.* Chald.

Thirdly, By *blood* in this active ſence, we may underſtand thoſe ſpecial ſins which draw blood; the ſin of oppreſſion, and the ſin of murder. The Scriptures laſt cited include theſe principally, though not theſe alone, or not theſe excluſively to other ſins. Sins of cruelty are often called blood by name; and ſuch are named bloody men, who commit ſuch things (*Pſal.* 55. 24.) *Blood-thirſty and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their dayes:* That is, Murderers and Oppreſſors ſhall not. When *Shimei* curſed *David*, he ſaid, *Go thou bloody man, thou Son of* Belial (2 *Sam.* 16. 7, 8.) He calls him bloody man, in reference to that particular act, with which *David* had ſtained his hands, *the murder of* Uriah. *Hab.* 2. 12. *Woe to him that buildeth a Town with blood, that ſtabliſheth a City with iniquity:* That is, By the iniquity of oppreſſion: He builds with blood, who, to ſet his own neſt on high, throws down the right, or takes away the lives of others. Under this third, as alſo the ſecond notion of blood, we may beſt interpret *Job*'s imprecation, *O earth, cover not thou my blood:* That is, The oppreſſions and cruelties which I have committed,

if

if I have committed any. Some conceive that *Job* refers to the story of *Cain* and *Abel* (*Gen.* 4. 10.) The earth would not cover *Cain*'s blood; that is, the blood of *Abel* which *Cain* had spilt. *Eliphaz* told *Job* before in a third person, that his Tabernacle was a *Tabernacle of bribery*; as much as to say, That he had done wrong in his place, and had been a grinder of the faces of the poor. Now saith *Job*, *O earth, cover not my blood*; if I have been an oppressor, if I have drank the blood of the poor, or am guilty of such like abominations, I desire that the earth would not cover, or dissemble it, but let it be published to my shame, and brought forth to my judgment. Mr. *Broughton*'s note is full to this sence, *If there be any injury in my hands, let the earth reveal it.* And the *Tygurine*, *O earth, do not conceal my capital crimes.*

Si quam eædem maleficiumvè quod objicitis patravi, illud revelet & testificetur terra. Jun.

O Tellus ne celes scelera mea capitalia. Tygur.

The second branch of the imprecation falls cross to this; for in this *Job* prayes, that his evil deeds might be discovered; in that he prays, that his very prayers (which were his best deeds) might not be accepted, if he had either been, or done, as was suspected.

And let my cry have no place. The word signifies a loud cry, a grievous cry, the cry of a man extreamly pressed; yea, even utterly oppress: This cry is expounded three wayes.

First, For the very cry of grief, or for a cry caused meerly by grief. *Let my cry have no place:* That is, Let not my pains and sorrows, my groans and sighs, in midst of all these evils be regarded, either by God or Men, if I have done such evils as I am accused of. 'Tis a great affliction which puts a man to his cry, whether to God or Man; but it is a greater affliction to cry and not to be heard, neither by God nor man: The cry of a poor man is then said to have no place with a Judge, when he will not hear it, or take notice of it.

Secondly, Others expound this for the cry of sin. Great sins are called a cry, not only because they make others cry, but because themselves are very clamorous and crying. Sin hath a tongue to speak, and it hath teeth to bite: Every sin speaks, but some sins have a loud voice, they cry, *The blood of thy Brother, which thou hast spilt, cryes unto me* (saith God to *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 10.) The sin of *Sodom* cryed up to Heaven (*Gen.* 18. 20.) Oppression causeth a cry; so here, *Let my cry*, that is, my crying sins, or the cry of my sins, *have no place*; that is, none to hide, or shelter themselves in: And then this clause of the imprecation is of the same sence with the former, *O earth, cover not thou my blood.*

Clamat quia innocens effusus est, & dicitur interpellare dominum, non prosecutione Eloquii sed indignitate commissi Ambros.

Thirdly, By this cry we may understand *Job*'s prayer, and that of two sorts: First, Prayers, Petitions, or complaints to men; let not any Friend regard my cry. Secondly, Prayers to God; for as there are crying sins, so there are crying prayers; *The Lord said to* Moses, *Wherefore cryest thou unto me?* Exod. 14. 15. *Asa* cryed unto the Lord (2 *Chron.* 14.) The *Ninevites* were commanded to cry mightily to God (*Jonah* 3. 8.) and Christ himself prayed with strong cryes (*Heb.* 5. 7.) As there are two things especially which make sins crying sins.

First, When they are earnestly committed.
Secondly, When they are constantly committed.

So two things make prayers crying prayers:

First, When we pray with earnestness.
Secondly, When we pray with continuance, or perseverance.

Ne in cælũ efferatur suscipiaturve clamor meus si sim ejusmodi. Jun.

We find *David* often crying to God in prayer; so that when *Job* saith, *Let my cry have no place*; his meaning is, *Let not God hear my most earnest prayer:* A dreadful imprecation! When we, who have no help on earth, shall wish that we may have none in Heaven neither; What can we wish worse to our selves then this?

From the words in general Observe, *It is lawful to use imprecations.*

Job did not sin in this: There are imprecations of two sorts.

First, Upon others, when we wish them evil, or curse them; this in some rare cases may be done; *David* useth imprecations against the incorrigible enemies of the Church, and so may we; but in reference to personal injuries, the Gospel-rule is; *Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you*, Matth. 5. 44.

Secondly, Upon our selves; such are the imprecations intended in this point. *Job* calls down mischief upon his own head, in both parts of the Verse, *Let all my sins be discovered, let all my prayers be refused, if ever I have done this thing.* Imprecations, or wishes of evil upon our selves may proceed upon a double ground.

First, For the assuring of what we promise, or engage our selves to do: As to say, *I will do such a thing, or I promise to do it; if I do it not, I wish evil may befal me:* This is to put our selves under a curse, which we do at least implicitely in taking any promissory Oath. There are two sorts of Oaths.

First, Assertory Oaths, when we affirm such a thing to be true.

Secondly, Promissory Oaths, when we promise to do such a thing, calling God to witness, and laying our selves under a penalty, if we do it not. This is expressed in some, and implyed in all solemn Oaths and Covenants. The present point extends not to this sort of imprecations.

Secondly, Imprecations of penal evils may be used for the stronger denial, or disavowing of any sinful evil, of which we are suspected, or with which we are directly charged. To this sort of imprecations the present point is confined: This was *Job*'s case, he was deeply charged to have done wickedly; and he as deeply denied that he had done so. Thus *David* imprecates evil upon himself (*Psal.* 7. 3, 4, 5.) The title of the Psalm shews the occasion of it. *Shiggaion of David* (that is, *David*'s variable, or delightful song, or *David*'s solace) *concerning the words of* Cush *the* Benjamite: That is, Either of *Saul* himself, whose ill disposition towards him he closely taxeth under the word *Cush*, which signifies a Blackmoor, or *Æthiopian*; or it may design some of *Saul*'s Courtiers, who had done ill offices to *David*, and accused him of a conspiracy, to take away *Saul*'s life, as appears (1 *Sam.* 24. 9.) *And* David *said to* Saul, *Wherefore heareſt thou mens words, saying, Behold* David *seeketh thy hurt.* Now *David* composed this Psalm in his own vindication, and fears not to call down vengeance upon his own head, if he were guilty. *O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hands* (that is, this iniquity, if I have done this) *If I have rewarded evil to him that was at peace with me* (what then? He imprecates) *Let mine enemy persecute my soul and take it, yea, let him tread my life down to the earth, and lay mine honour in the dust.* *David* layes all at stake, soul, and life, and honour, in the highest actings of holiness towards God, and integrity towards man. He that is in *David*'s case, and hath *David*'s conscience, may do the like, and fear no hurt. The Woman suspected of adultery was by the Law (*Num.* 5.) to imprecate, and wish evil on her self, if she did not speak true in denying it: For the Priest was commanded to bring the Woman, and to put the offering on her head, and then to give her the water of jealousie to drink, saying, *This water which causeth the curse, shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot*; and the Woman was to answer, *Amen, Amen*; As if she had said, *I pray God this misery may come upon me, in case I have been false, or unfaithful to my Husband.* Thus the Woman confirmed the curse, and took it upon her self, if she were defiled; or testified her Faith in God, that he would clear her innocency, she being not defiled; and therefore the word *Amen* was doubled.

And here it will not be impertinent to remember how the superstitious heart of man hath in times of former ignorance and darkness invented and adventured upon wayes of tryal in doubtful cases, with some resemblance to (possibly in imitation of) this appointment of God among the *Jews.*

The old *Saxons* had their *Ordeal*, which word signifies, *Due part*, or *Dome* and *Judgment*: There were four sorts of *Ordeal*, by which when manifest proofs were wanting, they attempted (or indeed tempted God) to find out whether the party accused were guilty, or guiltless.

Verstег. Restitut. of decayed Intel. in Antiquit. Chap: 3.

The first was by *Combat*, in which the person accusing offered with the peril of his life at any weapon, to prove his accusation: And if the person accused did refuse the challenge, or did either yield, or was slain in the fight, he was without further evidence adjudged culpable.

The second was by *Fire*, in which the persons accused were

were to take red hot iron in their bare hands, or to go bare-foot and blindfold where red hot Irons were laid, and if they did either step between them, or stepping upon them, felt no harm; this was a declaration of innocency.

The third tryal was made by *Hot boyling water*, into which if the person suspected thrusting his naked Arm, found no evil effects, he was pronounced guiltless.

The fourth was *by cold water*; into which persons accused, having a cord tyed about them, were cast, and if they sunk to the bottom, and continued a little there, till they were drawn up, they were held faultless; all these tryals were made with prayer and invocation upon the Name of God, that the truth might be made known.

These customs drew their first breath from Paganism, and were continued by some who professed Christianity, till clearer light convinced them of their vanity, and unwarrantable boldness with the Name of God.

Now, as all imprecations used with these or the like Ceremonies and circumstances invented by man are wicked and unlawful; so those which are in themselves lawful, are used by most unlawfully. And therefore I shall give some rules and bounds, beyond which we may not pass, without sinful presumption.

First, *An imprecation must be used only in very great, serious, and weighty matters:* Woe to those who wish evil on, or curse themselves about trifles; some have been heard to wish themselves *hanged, yea damned,* upon small occasions.

Secondly, It is not enough that the matter be great, and serious, unless it be done with serious deliberation, and self examination, as also with highest reverence of God, who knows our hearts, and will judge both our wayes and words.

Thirdly, It must be done with a desire to honour God, as much as to exonerate our selves. *David* knew Gods Name was blasphemed by those who misjudged him; *Here's a man that would be thought so holy, and religious before God; see how perfidious and disloyal he is to his King.* When *David* saw the honour of God concerned in him, he was bold to say, *Lord, if I have done this thing, let him persecute my life and take it*; he hath persecuted my life, but he could not take it hitherto; but let him take it, if this be so.

Fourthly, Be sure that you are clear in the matter, and that you imprecate in truth; God is an avenger of falshood, much more of studied falshood. It is hard to deprecate his wrath, when we have spoken falsly; surely then he will pour out his wrath upon their heads, who imprecate it, to cover their falshood. The *Jews* accused Christ falsly, and as earnestly prayed judgment against him, crying out to the Judge, *Let him be crucified:* But when they saw they could not prevail with importunity, and that *Pilate* (who was doubtful of the justice of their clamour) took water, and washed his hands, and said, *Behold I am free from the blood of this man*; then in a rage they imprecate, *Let his blood be upon us, and upon our children* (Matth. 27. 25.) As if they had said, Be not thou so scrupulous to condemn him, if thou thinkest him innocent, let the vengeance of his innocent blood fall upon us and our posterity. When a man is accused rightly, and the Judge rests unsatisfied, the Accuser may say to satisfie the Judge. *Let his blood be upon my head*; I have spoke my conscience, and the truth. The *Jews* accused Christ falsly, yet called for his blood upon their heads; therefore God gave them their wicked wish, and they lye under the weight of this imprecation to this very day. They prayed that the blood of Christ might be upon them, and it is upon them. As God pours the blood of Christ upon some in mercy, so upon others in wrath. The blood of Christ is upon Believers, to wash and cleanse them from their sins; but the blood of Christ hath been upon the *Jews* to condemn and scatter them, as a vile people, all the World over for their sin: The Lord hath been most exact in answering this cry, even in the very place where they made it. The History of the *Jews* reports, that about thirty eight years after this dreadful curse upon themselves, *Herod* called the *Jews* together, and demanded a sum of Money of them for making a *Water-course*, which they refusing to give, he sent for Souldiers to come secretly armed, who slew great multitudes of them in that place, where they cryed, *Let his blood be upon us,* &c. At another time *Florus*, who was General of the Common Souldiers, made a second, and that a more bloody massacre of them there. And when *Jerusalem* was taken by *Vespasian*, the blood of Christ was poured upon the heads of many hundred thousands, who were slain by Fire and Sword, Famine and Pestilence; besides more then seven thousand of them, who were led captive: And the Story informs us further, that *Cæsar* sold the younger and common sort of those Captives at that contemptible rate of *thirty a penny*; as they or their Fathers sold Christ for *thirty pence*, so by the just judgment of God thirty of them were sold for a penny. There was never any people in the World, who tasted more justly, or more deeply of that cup of self-cursing then the *Jews* have done; yet many persons have tasted deeply of it too besides the *Jews*. This sin hath so much, not only of wickedness, but boldness in it, that God never lets it go altogether unpunished, though (being repented of) it may be pardoned. Master *Perkins*, in his Book *Of the right government of the Tongue*, touching upon this point, tells of certain English Souldiers in the time of King *Edward* the sixth, who were cast upon the French shore by a storm; in which stress they went to prayer, that they might be delivered; but one Souldier, instead of prayer, cryed out, *Gallows take thy right, or claim thy due*; and when he came home he was hanged indeed. Mr. *Fox*, in his Book of *Acts and Monuments*, hath a notable example to this purpose, of one *John Peters, Keeper of Newgate*, who was wont to at every ordinary thing he spoke (whether it were true or false, it made (with him) no great matter) to averr it with this imprecation, if it be not so, *I pray God I may rot before I dye*; and so it came to pass. I might give many instances of such imprecations which God hath followed with severest vengeance: I shall add one more which is fresh in the memory of many yet living, of a *Gentleman of quality, a Knight, that suffered at the Tower-hill, about the death of Sir Thomas Overbury*, who confessed it was just with God that he should undergo that ignominious death; for oft in gaming (said he) I have used this wish, *I pray God I be hanged if it be not so.* I will conclude this point with a nearer instance, *A Woman who accidentally came into the Congregation while this word was preached, did afterwards by writing certifie me, that she being convinced in conscience of her sin in wishing evil upon her self, thereby to cover a sin, which she had committed, but denyed, did feel the sad effects of it according to her wish, begging earnest prayers that it might be forgiven her, and that God would be entreated to take off his hand.* *Sir Gervaise Ellowayes.*

Let those wretches hear and fear, and do no more so presumptuously, who fear not to wish, *The Devil take them,* and *God damn them,* lest indeed God let the Devil loose upon them, and take them at their word. And here it may be observed, that such as are most guilty are most apt to imprecate vengeance upon themselves, that they may appear guiltless. They have no way left to perswade others, that they are good, or have not done evil, but by wishing evil to themselves. Such is the stupidity of a misled conscience, that when it is deepest in sin, it dares defie Gods justice to gain an opinion among men, of its own innocency.

O earth, cover not thou my blood.

More particularly, Observe,

Great sins, bloody sins, especially this sin of shedding innocent blood, shall not pass undiscovered.

God will give a tongue to the earth, he will make speechless creatures speak, rather then blood shall be concealed. Blood may be concealed a long time, but blood shall not alwayes be concealed (*Gen.* 4. 7.) *What hast thou done? The voice of thy Brothers Blood cryeth to me from the ground:* The blood had no voice, and the ground was silent; blood hath no more voice of its own, then water hath, or then a Fish that lives in the water hath; these did not speak formally: but the Lord speaks thus to shew that he will certainly bring bloody sins, chiefly the sin of blood, to light. The justice of God in all Ages hath sent out his Writ of enquiry after bloody men, and for the blood of the innocent (*Psal.* 9. 12.) *When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembreth them, he forgetteth not the cry of the poor.*

But doth not the Lord make inquisition for all sin? Or is there any sin that God doth not enquire after?

Surely

Surely no, there was never any sin committed in the World, but the Lord hath inquired after it; sin shall not be lost, God will find it out, and keep it upon record: But when it is said, *God makes inquisition for blood*, it argues the greatness of that sin: For *while that act of God, which extendeth to every sin, is appropriated to some one particular sin, it is an argument that God takes special notice of it, or that it is a very provoking sin:* Though God makes inquisition for all sin, yet as if he would let all other sins pass unsought, and un-enquired after, it is said only of this sin, that he *makes inquisition* for it. We find not the like expression about any other particular sin in all the Book of God; though it be a truth, that he inquires for all sin.

Thirdly, Observe, *Innocency fears no discovery.*

Come who will, Angels from Heaven, Devils from Hell, Men on Earth, let all Creatures be summoned into one Jury of grand Inquest, an innocent person will neither run nor hide his head for it: He whose heart bears witness with him, fears no witness that can be brought against him. While Conscience acquits, the matter is not much who accuseth, or condemns: He that is righteous knows that all his sins are covered by the free grace of God in the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and he knows that he hath not covered his sin as *Adam* by excuses; nor sewed the Fig-leaves of carnal reasonings together, to hide his nakedness; he knows also that he lives not in any known sin, nor hath wickedly departed from the Lord. Now because in all these respects he knows nothing by himself, therefore he cares not who knows him; he calls not for Masks, or Visors, for Curtains, or coverings, to obscure or disguise himself, or his actions under, either from the sight of God or Man, but is willing to stand forth in the open light. For though the best of men may have done some act, which is not fit for the open light, yet considering the whole frame of their hearts and lives towards God, together with what hath past between God and their souls about that act; they are not afraid that the worst act which ever they have done should stand forth in the open light; and as for those crimes which men uncharitably charge upon them, every honest heart speaks boldly the sence of this first part of *Job*'s imprecation, *O earth, cover not thou my blood.*

From the second branch of *Job*'s imprecation, *Let my cry have no place,*

Observe, *Not to have prayer heard and accepted by God, is the greatest misery that can befal man.*

God is the last refuge of a distressed soul; and the means by which we make God our refuge, or fly to him for refuge, is believing, and fervent prayer: Prayer is a duty, and yet it is a priviledge; it is a priviledge, not only to receive an answer of prayer, but to put up our requests in prayer; he therefore that asks a stop upon his own prayers, hath at once asked a stop upon all his mercies; he cannot look to be relieved, who tells God he doth not look to be heard; and when prayer hath no place of acceptance in Heaven, we can have no place of contentment on the Earth: Upon this account we may conclude,

That, *Man cannot bespeak any thing worse for himself, then not to be heard when he speaks to God.*

As it is one of the highest honours done to God, that men make prayers to him; so it is one of the deepest afflictions of man, for God not to hear his prayers: Such was *Saul*'s condition (2 *Sam.* 28.) *God doth not answer me, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets:* He could get no answer from God, his cry had no place: This troubled him more then the invasion of the *Philistims*. *I am sore distressed* (saith he) *the Philistims make war upon me, and God is departed from me.* When trouble comes, and God goes away, man is in a woful estate. We have no promise to receive unless we ask; and though we do ask, we cannot receive, unless our prayer be received: God receives the prayer of man, before man receives any thing from God in prayer. All our treasure lyes in Heaven; our comfort is in Heaven, our protection is in Heaven; and prayer is the messenger which we send to Heaven in the Name of Christ for all things, or, for whatsoever else we need on earth. Now if prayer cannot get in, if God will not hear prayer, if he send back our messenger without audience, what can we receive?

The sinfulness of man appears in nothing more then in this, That he calleth not upon God (*Psal.* 14. 4.) *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread, and call not upon the Lord:* Now as the sin of man appears exceedingly in not calling upon God; so the wrath of God appears exceedingly in not hearing man when he calls (*Prov.* 1. 20.) *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. God will pour out wrath upon the Families that call not upon his Name* (Jer. 10. 25.) but he pours out most wrath upon those Families whom he hears not, when they call upon his Name. All our mercies are shut out at once, when prayer is shut out: nor shall that person have place or room in Gods heart, whose *cry hath no place in his ear.*

Holy *Job* was sensible enough of this, nor durst he have imprecated, that his cry should have no place, but that (being conscious of no evil) he was assured that his cry had place; and therefore as in the sincerity of his soul he made that imprecation; so in the confidence of his soul, he proceeds to make his *Appeal* to God in the next words.

Verse 19. **Also now, behold my witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high.**

As if he had said, *I fear no evidence that can be brought against me on earth, and I rejoyce in the witness I have in Heaven: though I have none to testifie for me here, yet I have one that will testifie for me above: My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high.*

Some conceive, that as *Job* had spoken to the earth before, so now he speaks to Heaven, *O earth, cover not my blood: O Heaven, witness for me.* But he saith not, my witness is Heaven, but my witness is in Heaven; nor doth he call the Heavens to witness for him; but he calls him who is in Heaven to witness, and that is God.

Utitur testificatione cœli postquam terræ testimonium produxit. Eugub.

There are two branches of this Appeal, and they both intend the same thing. *My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high.* The words *witness* and *record*, are of the same signification; though they differ in the letter: The one is properly an Hebrew word, and the other Syriack: When *Jacob* and *Laban* were in that contest (*Gen.* 31. 47.) *Jacob* took a Stone, and set up a Pillar for a witness, *And* Jacob *said to his Brethren, Gather stones, and they made an heap, and they did eat there upon the heap, and* Laban *called it* Jegar-sahadatha, *that is, a heap of witnesses* (as it is in the Margin.) *but* Jacob *called it* Galeed, *or* Gilead: *Jacob* speaking the pure Hebrew, and *Laban* the Syriack language, they take in both the words of *Job*'s Appeal, *My witness is in Heaven, my record is on high.*

Idem bis dicit conscientiæ suæ integræ declarandæ causa. Lav.

מֵיחָד *Synonymum est* שֵׂד Hieron. in Trad.

Job speaks the same thing twice, to shew how strongly he believed that the Lord would be witness for him, *My witness is in Heaven, my record is on high.*

Est forma juramenti, quo deũ invocat innocentiæ suæ testem atque conscientiæ spectatorem: Cajet.

Heaven and **high** are the same, as **witness** and **record** are. And when he saith, *on high*, or in the high place; he useth not the word *Bamoth* by which those *high places* are expressed, wherein the false gods were worshipped, or the true God falsely: *Job* puts that word into his Appeal, which belongs properly to God, and signifies in Scripture, the place of his glorious residence. *Job*'s *record* was not only *on high*, but (*Bemerumim*, the Hebrew is Plural) *in the heights:* Some translate it in the Superlative, not (*in excelsis*) *on high*, but (*in altissimis*) *in the highests:* As if he had said, *My witness is above all witnesses*, and therefore he is a witness above all exception. And *Job* did well, for his purpose, to say his *record was on high*; not only because of the dignity of that which is high, but for the advantage which he hath, who is on high, or in the highest, to be a witness. God is said to be a witness in Heaven, or on high, to shew how easily he can observe and take notice of those things which are below: God hath eyes infinitely pure and piercing, he beholds all things, and he beholds them from on high, as from a watch-tower, which renders the object more obvious to the eye: The sight is soon intercepted upon a level: but, *The Lord* (saith *David*, Psal. 14. 2.) *looked down from Heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God:* If but one had sought God, God had found him out; but the report which he makes upon that survey, tells us, *They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good, no not one* (Ver. 3.)

בְּמְרוֹמִים *In excelsis, malim in altissimis, quia excelsa vocantur quæ Ebræis* בְּמוֹת *in quibus sacrificabant idolis: Cæterum* מָרוֹם *proprie de Deo usurpatur & de cœlo, de Deo in singulari numero, de cœlo in utroque.* Drus. *Dicitur Deus testis in excelsis propter locum aptissimũ ad contemplandum tanquã in sublimi speculaquicquid agitur.* Pined.

Further

Further he saith, *My witness is in Heaven, or on high*; implying, that he was such a witness as was able to protect him; a witness who is above all fear, and who needs no favour. Some witnesses are not only men of no state, but of no conscience. *Such underlings will be hirelings* upon Oath against the truth, and are ready to testifie any thing for hope of gain, or for fear of a frown: *My witness* (saith *Job*) *is in Heaven, my record is on high*; such a witness he is as cannot be corrupted by gifts, such as hath no need of any mans gifts, seeing he gives to all men life and breath, and all things.

Hence Observe, First, *That as God is the Judge of all men, so he is their witness.*

God is the Judge of all the earth, and God is the witness of all the earth too (*Jer.* 29. 23.) *Because they have committed villany in* Israel, *and have committed adultery with their neighbours Wives, and have spoken lying words in my name, that I have not commanded them; even I know, and am a witness, saith the Lord:* He saith not, I know, and am Judge; but I know, and am Witness.

Let no man hope to escape the judgment of God, because there is none to witness against him: for if God hath not the witness of man, if our sin be a secret to all the World, yet God hath alwayes two Witnesses.

First, *Our own conscience.*

Secondly, *Himself.*

An earthly Judge must not be a Witness; his duty is to give sentence, not to give evidence; he must determine according to what is alledged, and proved upon testimony given; but he cannot give testimony; he cannot be Judge and Party too: But God is so *transcendently Soveraign*, that he is both Judge and Party, he pronounceth sentence, and gives in evidence; Christ is called, *The faithful, and the true Witness* (Rev. 3. 14.) And yet, *All judgment is given into his hand* (John 5. 22. 27.) God judgeth upon his own knowledge, not upon the knowledge of others, and therefore as there can be no failing in, so no avoiding of his judgment.

Secondly, Observe, *It is lawful to appeal to God, or to take God to witness.*

An Oath is the calling of God to witness, and whensoever we appeal to God, or call him to witness, it is an Oath. The Apostle *Paul* took an Oath, when he said (*Rom.* 1. 9.) *God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you in my prayers.* Thus in highest holiness he sware that he prayed for the *Romans* spiritual good, while he was absent from them, and had never so much as seen them; and that he passionately desired to be present with them, and see them, that he might *impart unto them some spiritual gift*: Because being a meer stranger, he had not yet made his actions a witness of his love to them, and because no man can be an unerring witness of another mans heart, or of the moving of his affections, therefore he calls God to witness, who alone knows the heart, and can tell how much we love either himself, or one another.

He speaks as much (though in another case) to the *Corinthians* (2 *Cor.* 1. 23.) *Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul, that to spare you, I came not as yet unto* Corinth. As if he had said, By this my earnest adjuration, I assure you, that the reason why I have deferred my coming to you, was not from any levity of mind, or change of purpose in me, but only because I was unwilling to use such severity as the distempers among you call for, and would have pressed me unto being present. We find him in the same tenour of speech towards the *Philippians* (Chap. 1. 8.) *For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Christ:* That is, I call God to witness, I love you: And again (1 *Thes.* 2. 5.) *Neither at any time used we flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness:* As if he had said, Had I *used flattering words*, you might witness it; and that I have not used a *cloak of covetousness, God is witness.* I might have worn a cloak of covetousness so closely, that you could not have seen it, but God could; he can judge through the darkest clouds, and see through the thickest cloaks and coverings; but I appeal to him whether I have put on such a cloak, or no. As *Paul* by Oath purged himself from covetousness of spirit; so *Abraham* protested by Oath against all covetous practices (*Gen.* 14. 22.) *I have lifted up mine hand to the most high God, the possessor of Heaven and Earth, that I will not take any thing that is thine.* This gesture of lifting up the hand when an Oath is taken, is there put for an Oath it self; by which *Abraham* appealed to God, as a witness of his sincere intentions in taking up those Armes for the rescue of his *Nephew Lot*; and that as he had overcome his Enemies, so he had overcome covetousness, which was, of the two, the far more noble victory.

This calling of God to witness is of two sorts.

First, When we are called by others, who have lawful power, to testifie the truth; such is swearing before a Magistrate.

Secondly, When we offer it our selves, for the removal of such jealousies as are cast upon us, and we have no other way left, to free, or vindicate our selves from them.

This latter was the occasion of *Job*'s Oath, as also of those alledged concerning *Paul* and *Abraham*: but whether it be an Oath of the one sort, or of the other, both meet in this, that God is appealed to, and called to witness by such as use them: And seeing he is a jealous God, who will not hold them guiltless that take his Name in vain, I shall add some cautions for the bounding and directing of our practice.

First, We may call God to witness in weighty matters; and unless the matter be weighty, either in it self, or in the consequents of it, we may not: *God is my Witness, and God is my Judge*, are not for common, much less for vain things. There are two things in every Oath or Appeal to God, which shew this.

First, An Oath is for confirmation (*Heb.* 6. 16.) Vain things are not worthy the mentioning, much less are they worthy the confirming: We ought not to strive at all about them, much less ought we to swear about them, which is *an end of all strife.*

Secondly, In every Oath or Appeal to God, there is an invocation of the Name of God; but the Name of God must not be taken in vain; which it cannot but be, when it is taken into our mouthes about a vain thing,

Secondly, We may call God to witness when men give a wrong witness of us, or will not give a right witness for us; but if we can have testimony upon earth, we must not go to Heaven for it; God must be our last resort. *Job* found none on earth to witness for him, and his afflictions were looked upon as sufficient witnesses against him, and therefore he was necessitated to make his address to God.

Thirdly, When the matter is not only such as others will not testifie, when they might, but such as no man can testifie (none being privy to it, but only God and our own souls) then we have a just ground of appeal to God; who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart: *Job*'s sincerity was suspected; and that is such a secret as man hath no access unto, and therefore can give no witness to it: Who is sincere, and who is an hypocrite, is resolved only by the testimony of God, and of our own souls.

Fourthly, We must be sure to call God to witness in truth; *Thou shalt swear the Lord liveth in truth, in righteousness, and in judgment* (Jer. 4. 2.) *Unless we have a witness within us, we must not call God to witness who is above us.* God is ready to witness with our Consciences; but woe to those who call God to witness against their Consciences. Holy *Paul called God to record upon his soul* (2 Cor. 1. 23.) That is, He did as it were (which is also done in every Oath) engage, or pawn his soul and salvation upon it, that he spake the truth: When our souls bear record with us, we may venture to call God to record upon our souls. But some, when they have no witness from their souls, yea, when their souls witness against them, will yet venture to call God to record upon their souls. They will needs be tryed by God, who dare not abide the just tryal of men; such would make God (who cannot lye) witness to a lye: They use the glorious God, as some do a sort of miscreants, called *Knights of the Post*, who for a Fee, will not only say, but swear what you will. This is highest profanation of the Name of God: For as he that believes not the truth of God, makes him a lyar; so also doth he that appeals to God for the witness of an untruth.

More

More particularly, *My witness is in Heaven, my record is on high.* *Job* speaks this, not only because he wanted the witness of men, but because of the high esteem he had of the witness of God.

Hence Observe, *The witness of God is the most desireable witness.*

The witness we have on earth is nothing worth, unless we have a witness in Heaven: If we have not the inward witness of our own conscience, it is little advantage though we have a thousand outward witnesses: Conscience is more then a thousand witnesses; but God is more then ten thousand Consciences: Therefore never rest in any witnesses, till you have the witness of God. *We labour* (saith the Apostle (2 *Cor.* 5.9.) and that word signifies not only an earnest, or an industrious, but an ambitious labour) *that whether present, or absent, we may be accepted of him:* As if he had said, *Possibly we might gain acceptation and applause among men,* would we but study to please and apply our selves to them; but the favour of men will not serve our turn, nor can we sit down and rest our selves under their shadow. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord,* was *David*'s prayer (*Psal.* 19.14.) *David* could not bear it, that a word, or a thought of his should miss acceptation with God: It did not satisfie him that his actions were well witnessed unto by men on earth, unless his very thoughts were witnessed to by the Lord in Heaven.

Some, as it is said of those Rulers (*John* 12. 42.) *Love the praise of men more then the praise of God:* So long as they have a *record here below,* they little regard his *record who is on high.* There is no greater argument of a carnal mind, then this: He that loves the praise or testimony of men as much as he loves the praise or testimony of God, doth indeed love it more: Seeing there is nothing more unequal then an equal partition of our esteem between God and Man. Where our obligation unto two is unequal, we can never be discharged by paying each of them an equal sum. We have cause to bless God when we have witness among men; but the witness of men should be of no price with us in comparison of the witness of God: Not only may we have recourse to the witness of God, when we cannot obtain the witness of men; but we must prefer the single witness of God before a throng of humane witnesses; and when we have enough on earth, yet say with *Job, My witness is in Heaven.* The witness of the men of this world, or of evil men (while we keep a good conscience) is a mercy. But as the witness of good men is more desireable, then the witness of all other men, and the witness of a good conscience is more desireable then the witness of good men; so the witness of God is more desireable then (without which we cannot have it, and with which we shall have it) the witness of a good conscience.

For as the testimony of God against us, is more terrible then that of our own hearts (1 *John* 3.20.) *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things*; and therefore knoweth more evil by us, and every evil more then our own hearts do; so the testimony of God for us is more comfortable, then that of our own hearts. If our hearts acquit us, God is greater then our hearts, and knowing all things; he knoweth more good by us, and every good more then our own hearts do. Who can express or tell how pleasant it is to receive this testimony from God, that we please God? *Behold* (saith *David Psal.* 133. 1.) *how good and pleasant a thing it is for Brethren to dwell together in unity:* But O how good and pleasant a thing it is for God and man to dwell together in unity; for man to be alwayes giving witness to God, that he is good and gracious, and for God to be alwayes giving witness to man, that he is upright and righteous. When Conscience speaks us fair, we have peace, and a continual feast; but when God speaks us fair, and gives us an *euge* from Heaven, *Well done good and faithful Servants,* we have peace which passeth all understanding, and not only a joyful feast, but a feast of joyes which are unspeakable, and full of glory. Yea, when we are at the fullest tables of this world, this is the sauce in our dish, and the sugar in our cup: *Go thy way* (saith the Preacher, *Eccles.* 9. 7.) *eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart*; (Why? what's the matter now?) *For now God accepteth thy works. Thou hast a witness in Heaven.*

Thirdly, Observe, *A good man dares appeal and put his cause to God.*

A wicked man will sometimes appeal, and put his cause to God out of presumption, and impudence: but a good man appeals to God in faith, and holy confidence.

As it is an act of grace or favour in God to receive an appeal from man; so it is an act not only of grace, but of courage in man, to make an appeal to God. It is an *act of grace,* as it is part of the worship of God; but it is an *act of courage,* or as I may call it, *a daring work,* as it is a putting our selves under the justice of God, yea, an implicit imprecating of the vengeance of God, in case we speak untrue: Thus to appeal, or swear, is a *daring work,* and such as no man durst do (if he knew what he did) but in a good cause. It is a fearful thing thus to fall into the hands of the living God. Some have ventured upon false Oaths and Appeals to God, only for fear of men: Such say commonly, *They had rather trust God with their souls* (by swearing falsly) *then man with their estates, lives, or liberties, by confessing the truth.* Which is not only as if a man should flee from a Lyon, and a Bear should meet him; but infinitely more then if a man for fear of the biting of a Whippet, or of the stinging of a Bee, should willingly offer himself to the mouth of a Lyon, and to the sting of a Serpent. To swear is not only to set our naked breasts before the Cannons mouth, but with our own mouths to give fire to it, if we utter falshood.

Fourthly, Observe, *It is the joy and comfort of an upright heart, that there is a God in Heaven who knows his heart, and bears witness of all his wayes.*

It is the terror of wicked men to think that there is a witness in Heaven, and a record on high. Hypocrites may pretend they rejoyce, that God is their witness, but its only a joy of the tongue, and from the teeth outwards, or to serve their turn; but an upright heart rejoyceth indeed at this, he riseth every morning, and walks all the day long, and at night lyes down and rests upon this thought, *God is my record, God is my witness, he hath searched me, and known me, he knoweth my down-sitting and my up-rising, he understands my thoughts afar off, he compasseth my path, and my lying down, and is acquainted with all my wayes.* In the midst of all the clamours, misapprehensions, and mis-judgings of men, it is an abundant refreshing and consolation to the Saints, that there sits one in Heaven, who as he knows them fully, so he judgeth all men rightly, and will render to every man according to his works.

Lastly, Consider the place into which *Job*'s faith ascended while he speaks of God. *My witness is in Heaven, my record is on high.* Who is in Heaven? Who is on high? You may know whom he means when he saith, *He that is in Heaven, he that is on high,* though his name be not expresst. There are Angels in Heaven, but they are nothing compared to God; there are the souls of just men departed, and made perfect, in Heaven, but they are nothing compared to God: There's no name in Heaven but God; God is all in all in Heaven; and he should take up all our hearts and thoughts while we are on Earth, especially when we discourse of Heaven.

Hence Observe, *Though God be every where, yet he is especially in Heaven.*

God is upon the Earth, yea, God is in Hell, *If I make my Bed in Hell thou art there* (Psal. 139. 8.) Yet when *Job* acts faith upon God, he saith not, I have a witness on Earth, but my witness is in Heaven (*Psal.* 2.4.) *He that sitteth in Heaven shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.* God doth not sit as circumscribed in Heaven; but there the Scripture describes him sitting (*Psal.* 123.1.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens.* Christ teacheth us to pray (*Matth.* 6.) *Our Father which art in Heaven*; and when he himself prayed, *He lift up his eyes to Heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come, glorifie thy Son,* &c. (*John* 17. 1.) Jesus Christ speaks to God as in that place, and he speaks of Heaven as of a place, as of a special and distinct place, to which he lifted up his eyes, when he prayed to his Father.

There is *a new Divinity*, which tells us, *that Heaven is every place, and every place is Heaven*: But why did Chriſt aſcend? *Why was he carryed up* (*Luke* 24. 51.) when he went to Heaven? If Heaven be every where, there's no need of aſcending to get into Heaven; and we may as properly deſcend into Heaven as aſcend up to Heaven, if Heaven be every where.

Non in Cœlo Brentii, *quod nuſquam eſt.* Vit. P. Mar.

Peter Martyr lying upon his death-bed, and having many Friends about him, diſcourſed ſweetly of Heaven and heavenly things: *Bullinger* ſtanding by, alledged that of the Apoſtle (*Phil.* 3. 20.) *Our converſation is in Heaven*: True, ſaid the *ſick man*, it is in Heaven, but not in the Heaven of *Brentius*, which is no where. He that makes Heaven every where, makes it no where: Though God be in all places, and whereſoever God is, Heaven is; yet there is more in Heaven, then is common to all places. That's Heaven properly, where the glory of God ſhines moſt, and where there is the ſpecial revealings of his honour and power; therefore it is called, *The habitation of his holineſs, and of his glory* (Iſa. 63. 15.) Heaven is (as we may ſpeak) the place of *Gods glorious reſidence*: This Heaven is not every where, for though God be every where, yet he doth not manifeſt himſelf equally every where. God hath built Heaven (as that great Monarch, *Dan.* 4. 3.) ſpake boaſtingly of *Babylon*, *For the houſe of his Kingdom, and for the honour of his Majeſty.* A meer Naturaliſt hath told us, That this principle is ſtampt upon the nature of man, that God hath his dwelling place on high, or in Heaven. Heaven is ſo proper to God, that God is often (by a Metonimy) called Heaven in the holy Scriptures. *Thy Kingdom* (ſaith *Daniel* to *Nebuchadnezzar*, Dan. 4. 26. *ſhall be ſure unto thee, after that thou ſhalt have known, that the Heavens do rule*: That is, When thou ſhalt be humbled and brought to this acknowledgment, that the God whoſe Throne and dwelling place is in Heaven, ſits alſo upon all earthly Thrones, and is King in all the Kingdoms of Men. Chriſt puts the Queſtion to the *Jews* (Matth. 21. 25.) *The baptiſm of* John, *whence was it, from Heaven, or of Men?* That is, Was it from God, or from Men? Was it a humane invention, or a divine inſtitution? The prodigal Son cryes out, *Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and in thy ſight*: That is, Both againſt my earthly and heavenly Father. Some, becauſe theſe and the like Scriptures call God Heaven; and becauſe it is ſaid after the reſurrection (when all the Saints ſhall be gathered into Heaven) *That God ſhall be all in all*; upon theſe miſtakes, I ſay, they have run into that groſs error, *That Heaven is God.* But when the Scripture calls Heaven the habitation of God, the Throne of God, the City of God, the building of God, an houſe not made with hands; it cannot be but a perverting of Scripture, and a throwing up of Reaſon, to call it God, or to ſay that God and Heaven are the ſame. Nor doth it at all follow, that God is Heaven, becauſe *God ſhall be all in all* to us in Heaven. *Paul* was not teaching the *Corinthians* there what Heaven is, but wherein the happineſs of the Saints ſhall conſiſt, when they ſhall all be called up to Heaven, after the general reſurrection from the dead: Then Chriſt ſhall reſign up his Kingdom (as Mediator) to his Father, then *God ſhall be all in all*: In All, that is, There will be no more need of a Mediator between God and Man; there will be no more need of Preaching, nor of making Prayers, nor of uſing Seals. All the glaſſes through which we ſaw God, and the outward Ordinances, in which we enjoyed God in this life, ſhall be laid aſide, when we ſee him face to face; and then God will be King, and Teacher, light and life, glory and happineſs, to his Saints, immediately, and for ever.

Quaſi à natura inſtam ſuiſſe opinionem Deum in Cœlo habitare aſſerit Ariſtoteles. lib. 1. *de* Anima, cap. 3.

'Tis granted, That Heaven is nothing to us without God, yet God is ſomething, yea, he is infinitely more then Heaven. *Solomon* beſpeaks God thus in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple (1 *Kings* 8. 27.) *Behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much leſs this houſe that I have builded*: If Heaven, even the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain God, then, it is not God. That which doth contain a thing, is not the thing contained; much leſs is that which cannot contain a thing, the thing which it cannot contain.

Again, that which *Job* calls Heaven in one part of the Verſe, he calls high in the other, *My witneſs is in Heaven, my record is on high.* God dwells in the *high and holy place* (*Iſai.* 57. 15.) And Chriſt, after he had finiſhed the work of mans redemption, is ſaid, *To ſit down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high* (Heb. 1. 3.) This high place is the higheſt place; all that we call Heaven is high; but all that we call Heaven is not alike high. Heaven is a building of three Stories. The Air is called Heaven: The Fowls of the Air are ſaid to *fly above the Earth in the Firmament of Heaven* (Gen. 1. 20.) The Clouds are called Heaven (*Lev.* 2. 19.) *I will make your Heaven as Iron, and your Earth as Braſs*: That is, I will make the Clouds, which are ſoft like Spunges, hard like Iron, they ſhall not yield a drop of water, to refreſh the wearied Earth.

The ſecond Story is the Starry Heaven, where the Sun and Moon move, and where thoſe other glorious Lights are ſet like golden ſtuds to adorn, comfort, and direct the World. *His going forth is from the end of Heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it* (Pſal. 19. 6.)

The third is called, *The habitation of God, the Heaven of Heavens, the third Heaven, the higheſt Heaven.* The Apoſtle ſaith of Chriſt, that *He aſcended far above all Heavens* (*Epheſ.* 4. 10.) And yet he then aſcended into Heaven; the meaning is, Chriſt aſcended above all the viſible Heavens, into that, which is inviſible to us who are on earth. This Heaven. *Job* pointed at while he ſaid, *My record is on high.* Take four deductions from it.

Firſt, If Heaven be higheſt, then there is nothing but ſerenity in Heaven. The higheſt places in a civil ſence, are full of ſtorms, and ſo are high places in a natural ſence; but the higheſt places in nature are free from clouds, ſtorms, and vapours. Naturaliſts tell us of *Olympus*, a very high Mountain, lifting up its head beyond the middle Region, whither no breath of wind ever comes: You may draw Letters and Figures in the Sand, and come many years after, and find them no more ſtirred, then if they had been written in Marble; and if the higheſt places in nature are alwayes ſerene, how ſerene is the high place of glory? When you are once in Heaven, you are beyond, not only proper, but figurative ſtorms and winds for ever.

Secondly, Heaven is high, therefore it is a pure place. Every thing in nature, the more high it is, the more pure it is. Earth is the loweſt, and the groſſeſt of the Elements; the Water next to that, is more groſs then the Air; the Air is more groſs then the Fire, which Philoſophers call the higheſt of the Elements: The higher we go, the more purity we find; and when we are (*in altiſſimis*) at the higheſt, there is nothing but purity, perfect purity; there is not the leaſt mixture of droſs, nor the leaſt ſpot of dirt in Heaven: Heaven is all pure, and none ſhall come thither but ſuch as are pure. Pure perſons are fit for a pure place, and only they are fit: No unclean thing ſhall enter there; and he that hath this hope (of entring there) purifies himſelf, not only as Heaven is pure, but as God is pure, in whoſe ſight Heaven it ſelf is impure (*Chap.* 15. 15.)

Thirdly, Heaven is high, *Then Heaven is a ſafe place.* High places are ſecure places; the high places of the earth are ſo accounted; and when God promiſes ſafety to his people, he tells them they ſhall dwell on high, while they are here below. (*Iſa.* 33. 16.) *He ſhall dwell on high, his place of defence ſhall be the munition of rocks; and I will cauſe thee to ride upon the high places of the earth* (Iſa. 58. 14.) When thoſe builders of the Tower of *Babel* thought to make themſelves ſafe, they ſaid, *Let us build a Tower, whoſe top may reach to Heaven*: If there ſhould come another flood, they hoped to be dry, and to get above the danger. Once in Heaven, and we are out of Gun-ſhot; not only beyond the reach of man, but of Devils too: They who are got into that high place, ſhall neither feel, nor fear the Deſtroyer any more.

Fourthly, Heaven is a high place, then it is a large and capacious place: As a Spherical, or round Figure, is the moſt capacious, ſo the utmoſt round of that Figure is the moſt capacious round; in Heaven there is room enough; though we are crouded here, yet there we ſhall not. We may call Heaven (as *Iſaac* did the Well, about which there was no contention between his Herdmen, and the Herdmen of *Gerar*) *Rehoboth, room* (Gen. 26. 22.) In Heaven we ſhall not contend for room; Chriſt aſſures us, that in his Fathers Houſe are many Manſions (*John* 14. 2.) He had ſaid before to his Diſciples (*Chap.* 13. 33.) *Whither I go ye cannot come*: And when *Peter*, troubled at this

ſpeech,

speech, put the Question (*Vers.* 36.) *Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me afterwards.* Christ perceived his Disciples more plunged in their spirits with this answer and promise to *Peter*; and therefore adds a prohibition of their fears, at the beginning of this Chapter, *Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me: in my Fathers house are many mansions:* As if he had said, *Do not think that I told you, ye cannot follow me now, and that* Peter *shall follow me afterwards, as if the place I go to were only large enough for me and* Peter; *for believe me, there are many mansions; I tell you not how many, neither can they be told, but there are enough, not only for my self and* Peter, *but for you all; yea, for all those, who either have, or shall believe on my Name; if it were not so, I would have told you, I would not delude you with vain hopes, I am well acquainted with all the rooms in my Fathers house: and though when I came into the World for your sakes, there was no room in the Inn for me to be born in, but a Stable among Beasts, yet I will take care that when you come to my Fathers house, you shall not be straitened for Quarters, I who am your Redeemer, will also be your Harbinger, I go to prepare a place for you, and I am certain my Fathers house will hold all his houshold.*

Tophet *is prepared of old, it is deep and large* (Isa. 30. 33.) Hell is large enough for a Prison; there's room for all the Children of disobedience to lye bound for ever: But Heaven is large, as a Pallace, or as a Paradise; there's room enough for all the Heirs of promise, to walk at liberty for ever.

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

My Friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.
O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbour.
When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.

JOB having strongly asserted his own integrity, at the seventeenth Verse of this Chapter; and thereupon as strongly imprecated the heaviest vengeance upon his own head, in case he had not spoken truth (*Vers.* 18.) Having also made his appeal to Heaven, calling God to witness, that it was truth which he had spoken (*Vers.* 19.) Here at the twentieth Verse, he gives us a reason why he made that appeal; and the reason was, he found no comfort in the creature, he had no hope of help on earth, and therefore he resorts to Heaven.

Verse 20. **My Friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears to God.**

There is some variety in the translation, but the sence of all meets in one, *My Friends scorn me*; or, *Scorners are my Friends:* The word signifies to deride, or scorn, not in a rude homely way, but to do it with quaintness of speech, or in refined language, to do it wittily, and cunningly, close and home. Hence the word signifies a *Rhetorician*, or an *Orator*, and is so translated here, by divers of the Learned, *My Friends play the Rhetoricians*, they speak eloquently, they compose fine orations, and set speeches against me; but alas! I only speak tears.

Yet further, it signifies *to interpret* (Gen. 42. 23.) *Joseph* spake unto his Brethren *by an Interpreter*, it is this word. That's the interlineal reading of this Text, *My Friends are Interpreters*, or rather (for that must be the meaning) *Misinterpreters*; they put wrong expositions upon all my speeches, and corrupt my Text with their unfriendly glosses.

We read in the ordinary acception of the word, *My Friends scorn me*; or, *My Friends are scorners:* As if *Job* had said, *These my Friends, whose profession and relation call them to administer serious and wholesome counsel to my troubled mind, even they break forth into scorn; they pour the vinegar of their sharpest censures into my already rankled wounds, instead of the suppling, skinning Oyl of comfort and consolation; and therefore mine eye is pressed to pour out tears to God: Who can forbear weeping, while he is but reporting my sufferings? How then should I who suffer? My Friends scorn me, &c.*

Hence Observe, *The best of Friends may prove unfriendly.*

Men are but men, and so they act: There is no repose, either upon the wisdom, or strength, or affection of the creature, they are all mutable, and may do that which is most opposite, both to their profession and relation: A Friend, a Scorner! What more unsutable? And that may be a second Note.

Scorn is wholly opposite to the Law of Love.

He departs far enough from the rules of friendship, who doth not pity and assist his afflicted Friend: How far is he gone from it, who scorns and derides his Friend in affliction?

Thirdly, Considering the Person who was thus scorned; *Job*, a man beloved of God, the great *Favourite* of that Age to the King of Heaven,

Hence Observe, *They who are highly approved and honoured of God, may fall under the contempt and scorn of men.*

As they who are applauded and flattered, yea, adored by men, may be the scorn and contempt of God. What Christ speaks of things is true of persons (*Luke* 16. 15.) *That which is highly esteemed amongst men, is abomination in the sight of God:* So they who are highly esteemed of God are often an abomination to men. God seeth not as man seeth, no not as good men see; God and good men are not alwayes of an opinion, either about things or persons; and as the worst of men find some to flatter and applaud them, so the best of men find some to undervalue and deride them, and they sometimes find good men doing so. There is no judging either of men or of matters, by what is said of them: In this sence all men are, or may be lyars, carrying a false report in their mouths: Should we judge concludingly of men by the opinion of man, how base and contemptible would many precious souls appear to us? And how precious would many appear to us, who are only worthy to be contemned? Christ gives the rule (*John* 7. 24.) *Judge not according to appearance* (or by the face) *but judge righteous judgment:* We must not judge either of things or persons, till they appear, nor may we judge of them by appearances, especially not by those appearances which the tongues of men put upon them. The Greek, in that Text of *John*, saith, *Judge not according to the face:* For though the face in its natural frame be the *Index or discovery of the mind*; yet as a man may artificially set his face to a look altogether unlike his mind; so others may set a face upon the wayes and actions of a man altogether unlike both the man and his actions. He that had judged *Job* by the face, which God had put upon his outward condition, or by that which Satan and his Friends put upon his wayes and actions, must have judged him either an Hypocrite, serving God only to serve his own turn; or else prophane, casting off the service of God. All the *morally illfavoured faces* in the World are of one of these two features or complexions; the opinions that went abroad of *Job* made him appear like both, and yet he was a man most beautiful in the eye of God; a man that had received the fairest Letters commendatory under Gods own hand, that ever man had to that day, *My Friends scorn me:* What then?

But mine eye poureth out tears unto God.

As before he had appealed to God; so now *his eye poureth out tears unto God.*

The Hebrew is, *Mine eye poureth out:* The word signifies to flow forth like water, and to wast in flowing forth; his eyes were as a Fountain, which flows continually, yet retains a perpetual stock of water; but his strength abated, and his spirits issued with those waters. *Mine eye poureth out*; we add the word *Tears*, because tears are the only *eye-waters*, or all the waters which flow from the eye, *Mine eye poureth out tears.*

The word signifieth sometimes only to drop, either as a Limbeck drops down the water which is raised up by the heat into fumes, or as the Eaves of a house drop in a time of rain; so mine eye distilleth or droppeth tears. *Job* had a heat within him which might well cause those distillations, and

מלין דעי *Verbum* הליץ *in hiphil significat Eloqui, facundum esse, sumitur etiã pro illudere, quia id non sine sermonis venustate fieri solet.* Merc. *Colloquutores mei.* Vatab. *Rhetores.* Pagn *Cum amici mei Rhetorica oratione contra me agunt, manantibus lachrymis Dei opem imploro.* Tygur. *Interpretes socii mei.* Mont. *——Quis talia fando temperet à lachrymis.*

עין פניו *Secundum vultum vel faciem.*

דלף *Stillare sive. diffluere instar aquarũ & stillando quasi attenuari.*

Translatio est à stillicidiis.

and showers without him, which might well cause those droppings.

This distilling, dropping, or pouring out of tears, was the pouring out of his sorrows, and there was more in it then silent sorrow; there was a voice in his sorrows, or a voice of mourning was mingled with his weeping; yea, this word implyes speaking, in many places of the old Testament, where to drop is to Prophesie, and Prophecying is a vocal act (*Micah* 2.6.) *Prophesie ye not, say they to them that prophesie*; the word is, *Drop not*: Both are expressed (*Amos* 7.16.) *Prophesie not against* Israel, *and drop not thy word against the house of* Isaac. So (*Ezek.* 21.2.) *Drop thy words towards the holy places, and prophesie against the Land of* Israel. And the reason of it is, because words fall into the ear of the hearers, as drops of rain upon the dry and thirsty ground, both to soften and make fruitful. *Job*'s tears preacht; the dropping of his eye was a kind of prophecying: Tears are not words formally, but they are virtually. Weeping is inarticulate speaking: And though God (by reason of his infinite and unchangeable happiness) never spake that language, yet he understands it fully. *There are* (saith the Apostle, arguing against speaking in an unknown tongue) *it may be, so many kinds of voices in the World, and none of them are without signification* (1 Cor. 14.10.) The voice of tears is very significant, yet God only knows the special signification of it; man knows only the general, that it signifies sorrow. Possibly words went with *Job*'s tears; but if not, yet his tears had the force of words: Weeping speaks, though the weeper speak not: *Mine eye poureth out* (or speaketh) *tears.*

Phrasi Hebraica stillare sæpe pro loqui sumitur.

There are seven or eight sorts of tears spoken of in Scripture, and every one speaks.

First, Tears of worldly sorrow. *Esau* had enough of them; he found store of tears when he lost the blessing: He for one morsel of meat sold his birthright, but he could not purchase it again with floods of sorrow, *For he found no place of repentance*; that is, he could not prevail with his Father *Isaac* to change his mind, *though he sought it carefully with tears* (Heb. 12.17.) *Esau*'s tears spake his hunger after that which he had sold to buy off hunger, or to pay a debt to Nature.

Secondly, There are the tears of repentance and godly sorrow; such were those of *Mary* (*Luke* 7.83.) who wept, *and washed Christ's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head*: She had been a sinner, such a sinner as bore away the name from all the sinners in the City; and she mourned so for sin, that she bare away the name from all the mourners in the City: *Mary*'s tears spake her tender respect to Christ who saveth sinners, and her abhorrence of her self for sin.

Thirdly, There are tears of craft and wicked dissimulation (*Jer.* 41.6.) *Ishmael* goes forth to meet the men that came towards *Jerusalem, weeping all along as he went*: his were *made tears*; he shed tears that he might shed blood, and weep himself into an opportunity of doing mischief unsuspected. *Ishmael*'s tears spake treachery, but because those plain-hearted men could not interpret them, they perished.

Fourthly, There are tears of love unfeigned and strong affection: Thus David *and* Jonathan *kissed one another, and wept one with another, until* David *exceeded* (1 *Sam.*20.41.) When *Jesus Christ wept* at the Sepulcher of *Lazarus*, *The* Jews *said, Behold how he loved him* (*John* 11. 35,36.) They saw his heart at his eyes: These tears spake mutual and real endearments.

Fifthly, There are the tears of holy prayers, and fervent desires. Jacob *wept and made supplication* (Hos. 12. 4.) He cryed and prayed: The voice of his tears was lowder then the voice of his supplication; and his prayers were (in this sence) even drowned in tears: *Jacob*'s tears spake the fervency of his spirit, and his faith in prayer: The Angel understood them so, and he prevailed.

Sixthly, There are tears of compassion for the miseries of others. *Weep with them that weep*, is the Apostles rule (*Rom.* 12.15.) When *Nehemiah* heard the report of *Jerusalems* ruine, and of the sad condition of his Brethren there, *He sate down and wept* (Nehem. 1.4.) His tears spake pity to his Country-men, and zeal for God.

Seventhly, There are the tears of *passion*, in reference to our own afflictions: Such tears speak humane frailty, or the common infirmity of the flesh.

Eighthly, There are the tears of damnation: Hypocrites and their associates in Hell are described, *Weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth for evermore*: Their tears speak despair, or misery without hope of remedy.

The tears which *Job* poured forth, were of the seventh sort, tears of passion, or sorrow, caused by the afflicting hand of God, but especially by the unkindnesses of his Friends; *My Friends scorn me, but mine eye poureth out tears unto God.* *Job* knew that as God had a Book for his prayers, so a Bottle for his tears; yea, he knew tears should be heard as well as prayers. *Tears are powerful Orators*: God reads our hearts in those lines which tears draw on our faces. One of the Ancient Philosophers hath adjudged weeping unworthy a man, and tells us it is only for Women and Children to weep: But as there are tears of effeminate and childish pusillanimity, so there are tears of heroical and holy importunity. To weep for fear of sufferings from man, is indeed below man; but to weep to God when we suffer, either under the hand of God or man, doth well become the best of men; not to weep to God, when we either suffer, or have sinned, proceeds not from courage, but from sullenness, and is not the argument of a noble spirit, but of a hard heart. Who so couragious as *David*? who feared not a Lyon, nor a Bear, who would not be afraid though an Hoast of men encamped against him, and though he walked in the valley of the shadow of death; yet how often do we read him weeping and crying to God (*Psal.* 39.12.) *Hold not thy peace* (saith he) *at my tears*: *David* in that case could not hold his peace from crying to God, and he was perswaded that God would not hold his peace at his cry; he expected to have his tears answered: He did not say, Hold not thy peace at my words, or at my prayer, but as importing that his very tears had a voice and language in them, he desired that they might be answered. *David* did not weep for fear of men, but in faith to God. And so did *Job*: *Mine eye poureth out tears unto God*: God was the object of his tears, as much as of his prayers. God is above, and yet our tears fall into his bosom: These waters ascend; this rain doth not fall but rise; these showers do not come from the Clouds, but they pierce the Clouds. As the heat of the Sun draws the water upward, so doth the heat of Gods love. Some of the Ancients use strange Hyperbolies about the power and motion of tears, I will not stay upon them, we may say too much of them; but thus much we may safely say, that from a heart rightly affected, and touched with the sense, either of sin, or suffering, they have much weight in them, and are pressing upon God: *Mine eye poureth out tears unto God.*

Lachryma à viris claris auferendæ sunt, mulieribus autem relinquendæ. Plat. de rep. Dial. 3.

From the connexion of this latter part of the Verse with the former,

Observe, *When we are scorned by men, it is good for us to mourn to God.*

My Friends scorn me, now I weep and pray: It is best for us to apply our selves to God when we live in the embraces of men; when all men speak well of us, and applaud us, what is all this, if we have not the good word and the good will of God? Unless we have an applause in Heaven, it will do us no good to have the true applause, much less the flatteries of men on Earth. Suppose they speak right, and give us but our due, yet we must not rest in that, but go to God. The good word of God is better to us infinitely, then the best word of the best men; to him let us have recourse when we have the greatest favour, and fairest Quarter in the World: but when the World scorns and rejects us, then is a special season for us to hasten into the presence of God; we should live neareſt and closest to God, when men cast us off, or throw us out of their societies and affections.

There is a twofold recourse to God; whereof the first is from choice, the second from necessity. It is best to make our recourse to God upon choice; but he will not refuse us if necessity drive us to him: God is most worthy to be our choice, but he is willing to be our refuge; yet he is indeed a refuge to those only in evil times, who have made him their choice in the best times. When all goes well with us in the World, we should not think our selves well till we

enjoy

enjoy God: *It is good for me to draw near to God,* ſaith *David* (*Pſal.* 73. 28.) It is good for me to do it in good times, in the beſt times, this I make my election: And when *David* ſaith, *It is good*; he means, *it is beſt*; that poſitive bears the ſence of a Superlative; and therefore he had ſaid a little before (*Verſ.* 25.) *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee:* But in an evil time, God is both the choice and the refuge of his people. He is our refuge properly to whom we come when others caſt us off; and he is our choice to whom we come, when others call for us, and ſeem ambitious to be kind unto us. It is not thank-worthy to make God barely a refuge, to come to him becauſe we can go no where elſe; we ſhould think our ſelves no where till we are in his preſence, whereſoever we are; and that we have nothing till we have him, whatſoever we have. Not to prefer the leaſt of God before all the World, is not only uningenuous in us, but ſinful againſt, and diſhonourable unto God. *Job*, who here wept to God in his low eſtate, had often rejoyced in God in his beſt eſtate, and preferred him before his chiefeſt joy: They may confidently weep to God in ſad times, who have delighted themſelves with God in comfortable times.

Secondly, Obſerve, *Liberty of addreſs to God, when men ſcorn and reject us, is the great priviledge of the Saints.*

Every man cannot do this: Can the men of the world pour out tears to God when they are ſcorned by the world? Can they pour out prayers to God, when they are ill intreated by the world? Can they go into the imbraces of God, when they are caſt out by men? They cannot. They can vex themſelves, when they are vexed by others, and perhaps vex thoſe that vex them; they can be angry when they are ſcorned, and perhaps ſcorn their ſcorners; but how to ſpread their condition before God, or to pour out tears to him, they know not: They who can do thus are honoured by God, when ſcorned by men, and God will pour out comforts into their boſomes who can pour their tears into his; they can never be at any loſs, who find out God to weep to.

Job having thus given the reaſon of his appeal to Heaven, enforceth it farther with a ſtrong wiſh, according to our tranſlation, which is alſo confirmed by the concurring vote of divers other tranſlations.

Verſe 21. **O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his Neighbour.**

ויוכח לגבר *Utinam diſputare poſſet vir cum deo & filius hominis ſodali ſuo.* Pagn. *Optat ex æquari hæc duo, hominis cum Deo, & hominis cum homine diſceptationem.* Mere. *Certè hic aliquid ſubauditur ut, & quis det viro, vel ut faciat ac concedat Deus ſc. hoc viro.* Merc.

The ſum of his deſire may be drawn up into this *Brief*, *That he might argue his caſe as freely with God, as men of the ſame rank and degree argue out their caſes with one another.* Some expound it as a correction of his boldneſs in appealing to God. As if he had ſaid, *I have indeed called God to witneſs: But what am I, or what is my Fathers houſe, that God ſhould deſcend to my concernments? The infinite diſtance which is between the Creator and the creature ſeems to forbid and check my motion, bidding me keep within my own line, or ſphere, and meddle with my equals; But O that I might ſpeak with God, as man with man, or man for man, I doubt not but I ſhould carry the day, and prove my ſelf innocent:* not that *Job* intended a controverſie with God, or would ſtand upon his defence with the moſt High.

Utinam mihi concederetur cauſam meam adverſum vos apud Dei Tribunal diſceptare ſicut agere homines cũ hominibus conſueverũt. Bez.

I have before ſhewed how far this was from the temper of his broken ſpirit. All that he intends by the propoſal of this deſire, is the gaining of an opportunity to ſet himſelf right in the opinion of men, by that impartial deciſion of his cauſe, which he was well aſſured God would give upon the whole matter in queſtion between him and his Friends, if once he would be pleaſed to vouchſafe him a free and familiar hearing of it. As if he had further ſaid, *I have not appealed to Heaven, becauſe I am unwilling to have my condition known on earth, that men ſhould ſee the worſt of me; for my deſire is, that I might plead before God, as a man for his Neighbour, and that I might be laid open in open Court, by the evidence of witneſſes, and a full examination of my cauſe. Taking theſe explications of the Text, in the form of a wiſh, the ſcope of it ſeems to be the ſame with what he ſpake before* (Chap. 9. 33, 34, 35.) *God is not a man as I am, that I ſhould anſwer him, and we ſhould come together in judgment, neither is there any Dayes-man betwixt us,* &c. In which words, as in theſe before us, while *Job* lifts up the Majeſty of God, and humbleth himſelf, as unworthy to have to do with God, yet he diſcovers the vehement longings of his ſoul to receive a judgment or determination from God in this ſuit or controverſie, which had depended ſo long between him and his Friends.

The Obſervations which ariſe from this reading and ſence of the Text, are of the ſame ſtrain with thoſe formerly given upon that, and ſome other paſſages, where *Job* knowing his own uprightneſs and integrity, declares not only willingneſs, but extream earneſtneſs, to have his cauſe tryed at the Bar, and before the Tribunal of God, who both ſaw his wayes, and ſearched his heart; who as he had juſtified him from all guilt in reference to himſelf, by not imputing ſin unto him, ſo he would juſtifie him againſt the ſins, which men imputed to him, by ſaying he was not at all guilty.

Theſe points having been more then once hinted already, I ſhall not inſiſt upon them here.

Secondly, The words are rendred as noting the deſign which *Job* had in *pouring out tears to God*, and then the connection between this and the former verſe ſtands thus, *I pour out tears to God, that he would be pleaſed to plead the cauſe of a man with God, as the Son of man pleads the cauſe of his friend.* Mr. *Broughton* joyns fully with this, *Unto the puiſſant doth mine eye drop, that he would decide the cauſe for earthly-wight before the puiſſant, as the Son of* Adam *doth with his Neighbour.*

Apud Deum ſtillat oculus meus ut diſceptet cauſam viri cum deo, ſicut filius hominis cauſam amici ſui. Jun.

Our tranſlation carries the ſence of a wiſh; that a man might have liberty to plead with God, as man with man; this carries the ſence of a wiſh, that God would plead the cauſe of a man with God, as a man pleads the cauſe of his friend; which is indeed to deſire God to be his Advocate. How God is an Advocate with God, will appear further in the proſecution of the Text.

Ad Deum ſtillat oculus meus ut judicet viro cum Deo, & filium hominis reſpectu proximi ſui. Coc.

A third reading keeps to this dependance upon the former Verſe, and to the ſame ſcope of this, yet varies the tranſlation, Thus, *Mine eye poureth out tears to God, that he would judge for a man with God* (*and that he would judge*) *the Son of man in reſpect of his Neighbour.*

The firſt reading makes the latter branch of the words a deſcription of the manner how *Job* deſired to plead with God even as man doth with man. The ſecond makes it a deſcription of the manner how *Job* deſired God to plead the cauſe of man with God, even as man pleads with man. This third makes it a ſecond diſtinct deſire, and the whole Verſe to conſiſt of two diſtinct deſires.

Firſt, *That God would judge for a man with God.*

Secondly, *That God would judge the Son of man in reſpect of his Neighbour.*

In the former he petitions for mercy with God; in the latter for right againſt man; or in the former he ſues for a judgment of acceptation for himſelf, and in the latter for a judgment of reproof and redargution upon his Friends.

This difference is grounded upon the different conſtruction of the words in the Original. For the word which is rendred to plead or judge, is conſtrued with, or governs (as Grammarians ſpeak) the *Dative caſe* in the firſt, and the *Accuſative caſe* in the latter clauſe of the Verſe.

Hence the former is rendred,

That he would judge or plead for a man with God, which notes favour, and a benign defence or patronage of his cauſe with God; ſo this is uſed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 11. 4.) *He ſhall reprove* (argue, judge, or plead) *with equity for the meek of the earth:* That is, He ſhall reprove or plead in favour of the meek, or on their ſide; he ſhall undertake their cauſe, and make their defence for them. And thus at laſt God did judge or plead for *Job*, giving ſentence in his behalf, and caſting the ſcales on his ſide againſt his Friends, and therefore the latter clauſe is rendred thus,

That he would judge the Son of man in reſpect of his Neighbour: That is, That he would reprehend and reprove him for the wrongs which he hath done to, and for the uncharitable cenſures which he hath laid upon his Neighbour. The meaning of the whole Verſe, according to this tranſlation, may be repreſented and paralleld in that prayer of *David* (Pſal. 35. 1, 2, 3.) *Plead my cauſe, O Lord, with them that ſtrive with me; fight againſt them that fight againſt me,* &c. *ſay unto my ſoul, I am thy ſalvation.* Thus *Job*, as *David*, deſires the Lord to ſpeak a word

of comfort to him, and to tell his enemies, or his uncomfortable friends, *their own.*

I shall only leave one Observation upon this Exposition,

When Christ comes graciously to assert the innocency of his own people, he will severely rebuke those who have done them wrong.

Laban had given *Jacob* hard usage, while he was a Servant in his house; and when he was gone, *Laban* pursued him with hard thoughts: but God pleaded for *Jacob*, and rebuked *Laban* (*Gen.* 31.42.) The Prophet foretels, *That the mountain of the Lords house shall be established in the top of the mountains*; that is, he will not only deliver, but advance his oppressed Church, *The house of the God of* Jacob (*Isa.* 21. 2, 3.) and when he doth this, *He shall judge among the Nations, and shall rebuke many people* (Vers. 4.) Some have observed the same difference in these latter words of *Isay*, which hath been noted in the Text of *Job*, and render it thus, *He shall judge among the Nations*; that is, the Heathen Nations, who have vexed his Church, *And he shall rebuke or plead* (it is the same word in the Grammatical construction, as here in *Job*) *For*, (or in the behalf of) *many people*; that is, for many of his own people, who have been opposed by those Nations; the effect whereof we have in the next words, *And they shall beat their swords into plow-shares*; that is, God will so judge those Nations, that his people shall not need to stand upon their guard, or learn war any more; because their enemies shall either be turned to them, or be totally overturned. Woe to the Nations, when God stands up for his people; he will certainly ruine *Babylon*, when he undertakes the controversie, and pleads the cause of *Zion*. Yea, the day hastens when he will *Convince all that are ungodly, of all the hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him* (Jude v. 15.) that is, against his people, for his sake.

Fourthly, Besides these three expositions of the Text, I find another which is more literal, and yet more spiritual then any of the three; and it is that which our late learned Annotators have given us, *Mine eye pours out tears unto God.*

And he will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend. The mind of which translation is this, *He*, that is, Christ Jesus the Mediator between God and man *will plead for a man*; that is, for me; he speaks in the third person for modesties sake, though he means himself; he will plead for me (though you plead never so much against me) for me (I say) he will plead *with God*; that is, with God his Father: The Hebrew word here used for God, is in the singular number, *Eloah*, not *Elohim*, and so it is in the close of the former verse, *Mine eye poureth out tears to (Eloah) God, and he will plead with God*, which more then intimates a distinct *personality*, or subsistence in the Divine Nature. *One*, who is, and is called God acting towards *another*, who is, and is called God, though God be but one, or (*unissimus*) One-most in nature. *Job* weeps to God the Son, in assurance that he will plead for him with God the Father, *He will plead for a man with God.*

And the Son of man; that is, Jesus Christ. whom he called God before, he calls now, *The Son of man*; this Title is frequently attributed unto Christ in the New Testament (*Matth.* 8. 20.) *The Foxes have holes*, &c. *but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.* So (*Mat.* 10.23. & 11.19. & 12.8, &c.) Jesus Christ is called *the Son of man.*

First, To shew the truth of his *humane nature*, he being lineally descended from *David*, according to the flesh, and is therefore stiled, *The Son of* David.

Secondly, To shew the depth of his abasement, Christ humbled, yea, emptied, and nothing'd himself, when *Being in the form of God, he was made in the likeness of men* (Phil. 2.) when being *the Son of God*, he submitted to so mean a stile, *The Son of man*. *Ezekiel* amongst all the Prophets is oftenest called, *Son of man.* The reason which some assign is very probable, That God spake to him under that Title, to keep him humble in the midst of his many visions and revelations; for which end, *Paul* in the same case had *A Thorn in the flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet him* (2 *Cor.* 12.) And though Jesus Christ needed nothing either to make or keep him humble (he being infinitely beyond the reach of pride) yet he needed much to shew and give proof how humble he was: Nor could there be any greater evidence of it, then this, that he was pleased to be *The Son of man.* Yet I conceive, *Son of man* may be here only an Hebraism denoting *man*, which kind of speaking is also usual among the Greeks. And that *Job* might speak of Christ under this notion, is clear from that faith which he discovered in the *mystery of his incarnation*, that *great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh*, of which he spake so confidently (*Chap.* 19. 25, 26, 27.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold*, &c. *Job* believed that he should see this Redeemer with *humane eyes*, and therefore he did believe, that his Redeemer should have a humane Nature, or be *The Son of man.* Jesus Christ, was *A Son of man*, in reference to his participation with us in all things, which concern created Nature: And he was *The Son of man*, by way of Eminency in reference to his freedom from any participation with us in corrupted nature, otherwise then in the penal effects of that corruption, as the Apostle states it (*Heb.* 2. 17. *chap.* 4. 15.) *In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, and he was tempted in all points, like as we are, yet without sin.* He that is in all things like man, except sin, is rightly called, *The Son of man*; for sin is not at all the form, but all the deformity of man: Hence *Job*'s faith prophesied, *The Son of man will plead*

For his friend. The word in the Hebrew comes from a root, which signifies to *feed* either our selves or others, because friends use often to feed together, and sometimes one friend feeds or provides, and offers food to another. It is taken sometimes largely for a *Neighbor*, and not seldom strictly for a special friend (*Deut.* 13. 6.) *If thy friend who is as thine own soul entice thee, &c.* that is, if the nearest friend that thou hast in the world entice thee, *&c.* In this strict sence the word is to be taken here; *Job* was not one of Christs friends at large, he was a special *Bosom-friend*, *Job* was not (according to the known use of that word among us) *A friend of Christ extraordinary*, but he was *Christs friend in ordinary*, a man who dayly convers'd with Christ, and Christ with him; a man who daily performed Offices of dutiful love to Christ, and a man to whom Christ daily performed the Offices of bountiful and merciful love. Hence his holy assurance that Christ would perform that office of mercy for him, *The Son of man will plead for his friend.*

The words thus opened are (as I may say) *An Epitome of the Gospel, a little Gospel*, yea, I may call them, *the whole Gospel*; what is the Gospel but this *good news, that Christ, God-man, mediates for his people.* All that Christ was, is expressed in this; whatsoever Christ did more then this on earth, is implyed in this, and this is all Christ now doth for us in Heaven, *He ever lives to make intercession for us*, saith St. *Paul*, (*Heb.* 7. 25.) which is the same in effect, with what holy *Job* professeth in this Text, *He will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend.*

There is one thing further to be noted, for the clearing of this Text; For possibly the Reader may scruple how the same words should be rendred by some, as a wish, *O that one might plead for a man with God*; and by others as a conclusion, *He will plead with God for a man.* Again, how the latter branch should be rendred by some in the form of a similitude, *As a man for his neighbour*, and by others as a direct assertion, *And the Son of man for his friend.*

I answer to the first, That the same word may be thus diversly rendred according to differing Moods of Grammar; and so the sign of the Optative Mood which is in the form of a wish, is by some judged most sutable to the scope of this place. So that a wish may here be understood and safely supplied, though it be not expressed.

To the second scruple I answer, that the particle *Vau*, in the Hebrew, placed at the beginning of a word, though it be usually taken as a Conjunction, knitting one sentence to another, yet according to the exigence and scope of the Scripture, it undergoes divers other significations.

As first, A disjunctive (*Exod.* 12. 15.) *Ye shall take it out from the Sheep, or from the Goats*: The Hebrew is, *And from the Goats*; but because the Law did not command both, but gave a liberty to chuse either of the two; therefore we render not *And*, but *Or*, from the Goats: So (*Judg.* 11. 31.) See the Margin of our Bibles; which shews that

Jephtah

Jepthah did not bind himself to offer up whatsoever should meet him, in Sacrifice; but one of the two he did bind himself to, either to dedicate that to the Lord, or to offer it up for a burnt-offering.

Secondly, It is often used *Adversatively*, and is rendred, *But* (*Gen.* 42. 10. *Psal.* 44. 17, *&c.*)

Thirdly, Casually, and it is rendred *For* (*Psal.* 60. 11. *Isa.* 64. 5, *&c.*)

Fourthly, (Besides divers other acceptions of it, which I shall omit.) it is used *Comparatively*, or as a Note of *likeness* (Prov. 25. 25.) *As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far Countrey:* The Hebrew is, *And good news.* So (*Prov.* 26. 7.) and very frequently in that Book. Thus in the Text the particle (*Vau*) is taken by some as a note of likeness; comparing the two parts of the Verse with each other; but by others it is taken only as a conjunction copulative, knitting both parts of the Verse together: *He will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend.*

From the words according to this latter reading,

Observe, First, *There is an Advocate between God and Man.*

Sin hath made a breach, there needs a Mediator to heal it. God and sinful man are (as we speak) *Two*, and they cannot be made *One* but by a *Third*. Man was created in a state of amity with God, that state needed no Mediator; man being restored is in a state of reconciliation unto God, that state needs a Mediator, both to settle and continue it: And he who is the Mediator between *both parties*, is *an Advocate*, a Pleader, a Patron for the *one party*. There was need of a Mediator, even in regard of God himself, that both his *State* might be preserved, and his *Justice* satisfied: But there was need of an Advocate, only in regard of man, that so his wants and miseries might be declared, and that mercy, together with help in the time of need, might be obtained. The Apostle (*Gal.* 3. 20.) describing the nature of a Mediator, saith, *A Mediator is not of one*, or (as we supply) *not a Mediator of one.* A Mediator is of two, yea, and for two. But an Advocate, though he be between two, yet he is but for one, or *of one*, either *of one* individually taken, or *of one* specifically taken, either of one man, or of one sort or company of men, who though they are many in number, yet their state or case is one. Thus Christ is an Advocate *for one*, or *of one*; all that he is an Advocate for, being in one and the same condition for the main, though some particulars in every mans case may vary.

The Greek word which is rendred *Advocate* in the New Testament, is applyed to the *holy Ghost*: But there is a great difference between Christ his being a Paraclete, or an Advocate, and the Spirit's being an Advocate (*John* 16. 7.) *If I go not away* (saith Christ) *the Comforter* (or the Advocate) *will not come unto you:* That is, *The holy Ghost* will not come unto you. One Advocate goeth away, that the other Advocate may come. Christ is an Advocate by way of *impetration*; the Spirit is Advocate by way of *application*: Christ is an Advocate with God, to get mercy for us; the Spirit is an Advocate with us, to prevail on our hearts to receive that mercy: Though Christ be our Advocate in Heaven, pleading for us with the Father, yet if we had not the Spirit to plead in our hearts on earth, we should never receive the good that Christ hath purchased for us of his Father. *Christ appears for us in Heaven* (*Heb.* 9. 24.) He appears as an Attorney in Court for his Client; he is gone to Heaven to appear for us: the Spirit comes from Heaven and appears in us. Christ began the work of his intercession here (*John* 17.) He is gone into Heaven to continue and perfect it. The Spirit doth both begin and perfect his intercession here; he doth not plead for us, but in us; or the Spirit makes intercession for us by stirring us up to prayer, by teaching us how to word and mould, or rather how to sigh and groan our prayers; Christ makes intercession for us, by presenting, and tendering those prayers to the Father which the Spirit helps to make, or by making prayers for us himself to the Father.

Some dispute how, they inquire much after the manner how Christ makes intercession, or performs the office of an Advocate for us; but it is enough for us to know that he is an Advocate, or that he makes intercession for us; though we are not able to describe the manner how: Whether it be,

First, Only by presenting himself to the Father, and his appearing for us, which is an equivalent, if not a formal intercession.

Or secondly, By the tendring of his righteousness, and merits, as satisfaction to the Father.

Or thirdly, By expressing our wants and his desires for us: Whether by all these, or by which of these, or whether by some other way, is not determinable by us; yet this is clear, that he performs the office of an Advocate for us, and that we receive every good thing from the hand of God through his hand.

Further, Christ may be considered:

First, As an Advocate for the whole Church: There are some causes of common concernment to all the people of God. Thus he was an Advocate for *Jerusalem*, when under bonds and captivity in *Babylon* (Zech. 1. 12.) *Then the Angel of the Lord* (not a created, but the creating Angel, or *the Angel of the Covenant, who is the Son of God*) *answered and said, O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on* Jerusalem, *and on the Cities of* Judah, *against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years.*

And as Christ pleads for the whole Church, so for every particular Member of the Church, and that also under a twofold notion.

He is Advocate, first, to take away our sins. *If any man sin* (saith the Apostle *John*, 1 *Epist.* 2. 1.) *we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous*, &c.

Secondly, Christ is an Advocate for us with the Father in our sufferings and troubles, to get them taken off from us, or sanctified to us. Doubtless *Job* made use of Christ continually as an Advocate, to take off the guilt of sin; yet here he makes use of Christ as an Advocate to get off his sufferings, especially these mis-judgings of his Friends, who deeply censured and aspersed him, because of his sufferings; yea, a Believer makes use of Christ as an Advocate, to get any good thing, whether little or great, whether for soul or for body, as much as he doth for the removing of any evil, whether of sin or trouble.

Secondly, Observe, *The Doctrine of a Mediator between God and Man was known and believed in the World, long before Christ came into the World.*

Many saw Christ by Faith before he was seen in the flesh: *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen* (Heb. 1. 1.) And as it is the evidence of things, so of persons that are not seen. Christ tells the *Jews* (John 8. 56.) *Your Father* Abraham *rejoyced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad:* And when the *Jews* quarrelled at this, *Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen* Abraham? *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before* Abraham *was, I am.* As *Abraham* saw his day by Faith, so David *in spirit called him Lord* (Matth. 22. 43.) And as these persons, with all the holy Elders, saw Christ by Faith in the Promise, so the whole Ceremonial Law was a representation of Christ to faith by sense: Every slain Sacrifice spake the death of Christ; and the sprinkling of that blood, the sprinkling of their consciences and ours for the remission of sins: Yea, *They did all eat the same spiritual meat* (that is, the same which we now eat) *and did all drink the same spiritual drink*; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them (and least we should mistake what was meant by that Rock, the Apostle expounds it himself) *And that Rock was Christ.* The Rock did not follow them, but Christ who was signified by that Rock did follow them. They who are built upon Christ the Rock, shall never be moved; yet Christ is a moving, as well as a living Rock, to those who are built upon him; whithersoever they move, he follows them. Thus Jesus Christ was meat and drink to the *Jews*, as well as to us; for he is *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the World* (*Revel.* 13. 8.) That is, The vertue of his death sayed all who have been saved from the foundation of the World. As Christ was slain from Eternity in the counsel of God; so he was slain from the beginning of time in the promise of God (*Gen.* 3. 15.) which was the publication of his death; he was then also slain as to the heart of Believers, whose Faith (having once a

word

word for it) makes that which is absent, in regard of place, spiritually present; and that which is not, in regard of time, truly to be.

Thirdly, Observe, *The Mediator between God and man hath been known and believed in all Ages under a two-fold nature, both God and Man.*

We have both in this profession of *Job*'s Faith: He believed the Mediator to be God, for he saith, *Mine eye poureth tears to God.* There is the Divine nature. He believed that the Mediator should be man, and therefore adds, *The Son of man for his friend*; there is his humane nature; so that not only the general Doctrine of the Mediatorship of Christ, but this particular about the constitution of his person as Mediator, was also known. Had not our Advocate been man he could not have suffered for us; and had he not been God he could not have satisfied for us. These points of Gospel Catechism are so necessary and fundamental, that in every Age Believers have in some measure been instructed about them. And whereas the Apostle saith (1 *Tim.* 2.5.) *There is one Mediator between God and men*, or, *of God and men, the man Christ Jesus:* He doth not add *man*, to exclude the Divine nature from the Mediatorship, but emphatically to demonstrate that nature, in which he gave himself a ransom for us, of which he speaks in the next Verse. For though the ransome was paid by him who is God, or had a Divine nature, yet it was paid in the Manhood, or humane Nature only. The humane Nature was the matter of our ransome; but the Divine nature gave worth and value to it.

Further, *Job* speaks with much confidence and assurance, both of Christs willingness to undertake his cause, and of the success or good issue of his cause, if once Christ did but undertake it: *He will plead for a man with God.*

Hence Observe, Fourthly, *Christ is very ready to speak for, and plead the cause of poor sinners before God his Father.*

He will do it, saith *Job*; Christ is easie to be intreated, he is found of those that seek him not, then surely he will be found of those that seek him. His promise is (*John* 6. 37.) *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out:* As if he had said, Whatsoever I do, I will not do this: And when he saith, he will not do this, his meaning is, that he will do much more for them, then the not doing of this comes to; he will readily receive their persons, and undertake their suits, though they have no fee to give him, nothing to move him, but the need they have of him.

Fifthly, Observe, *Christ is a powerful, and an effectual Mediator with the Father.*

He carries the day; he is a prevailing Mediator. Christ is such a Physitian, that no man ever dyed under his hand; and he is such an Advocate, that no mans cause ever miscarried under his hand. The *Arminians* maintain a propitiation made, or a Sacrifice offered by Christ for all; yet they dare not say, it is effectual for all; but the intercession of Christ (in their opinion) is effectual for all. Christ dyed (say they) for those that he doth not save; but Christ prayeth for none but those that shall be saved. They are not for universal Intercession, though they are for an universal Sacrifice, or propitiation; and their reason is, Because they cannot deny, but many shall perish for ever, which yet they could not, did Christ but pray for them. We believe that his Sacrifice is as effectual as his Intercession; and that therefore he dyed for none but those for whom he prayes, his Intercession being for the drawing out, and bringing home the benefit of his Sacrifice to those, and to all those for whom he offered himself to God. But to the point in hand, The *Arminian* who leaves the death of Christ in the hand of mans free will, assisted only by general Grace, to make it effectual to himself, or not, he (I say) asserts the Intercession of Christ not only sufficient, but effectual for all, in whose behalf he intercedes: So that we are sure all shall go well with us in the Court of Heaven while we have Christ our Advocate with the Father.

And that we may have fulness of confidence to come to God by Christ, let us consider these five things.

First, Christ is most wise to mannage our cause; so wise, that he is the *Wisdom of the Father*: If we had an Advocate at the Bar furnisht with as much wisdom as the Judge, it were a great step to obtain in a right suit.

Secondly, Christ is an eloquent Advocate, a powerful Orator. *As the Lord hath given him the tongue of the learned, that he should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary* (Isa. 54.4.) So he hath a learned tongue to speak a word for him that is weary: Christ is the *Essential word*, and the flower of all declarative words is with him; when he spake on earth, he spake with authority (*Matth.* 7. 29.) All wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth (*Luke* 4. 24.) Yea, his hearers somewhere testifie, never spake man as this man speaketh: And as no man ever spake like him to man; so no man ever spake like him to God.

Thirdly, Christ is a faithful Advocate; his intercession is a part of his Priestly office; we have a *faithful high Priest*, saith the Apostle, therefore a *faithful Advocate:* He will never either desert our cause, or betray it; he is as sure to us as our own souls; yea, he and the souls of his are one.

Fourthly, Christ is a merciful Advocate, he layes our cause to heart, our cause is his cause: He hath espoused the Interests of his people, and doth all for us upon his own account. When Saints are persecuted, we may tell him that he is persecuted, and that he is afflicted when they are: The Church may plead with Christ to plead for the removing of her sufferings, under the title of his sufferings, he being the head of the Church, and the Church being his body. Christ is, as a faithful, so a merciful high Priest (*Heb.* 2. 17.) and the Apostle saith, That in all things it behoved him to be like his brethren, that he might be so. Christ had an ability of *sufficiency* to be merciful to us, as God, though he had never been made like unto us by becoming man; but he had not that ability (as some speak) of Idoneity, or fitness to be merciful. His being made like unto us, hath given him a double Idoneity, for the tenderness of his heart towards us.

First, *In that he himself hath suffered being tempted* (*Heb.* 2. 18.) His passions in the flesh were great.

Secondly, In that himself suffers still in all our temptations, his compassions with our flesh are great.

Now an Advocate, who either hath had an experience of trouble in his own person, or is full of the sense of his Clients trouble, and feels his smart, will certainly do his utmost to relieve him; because in his relief himself is relieved also.

Fifthly, Christ is the Favourite of the Judge; it is a great advantage to have one pleading for us at the *Bar*, who is in favour with the *Bench*: Christ is highly in favour with the Bench: God hath testified from Heaven, *This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (*Matth.* 3. 17.) The Judge is our Advocates Friend and Father.

Lastly, That we may be further assured that he will do his utmost for us, our Advocate calls us his Friends: As the Judge is his Friend, before whom he pleads; so every Saint is his Friend, for whom he pleads. Some will do more for friendship then for a fee. We know it is so with Jesus Christ, he pleads for his people, because they are his Friends: This *Job* makes use of here, *He will plead for a man with God, and the Son of man for his friend.* As if *Job* had said, I know I have a Friend of Christ, and Christ looks on me as his friend, and therefore I have highest confidence that he will plead my cause, and take off this scandal. So much for *Job*'s earnest desire upon his appeal, that his cause might come to a hearing, and that Christ would undertake the pleading of it before his Father.

He gives a reason in the last Verse, why he was thus pressing to have the business brought to an issue; why he did thus appeal to God as his witness, why he did pour out tears to Christ, that he would plead for him? Why all this?

Verse 22. **When a few years are come, then shall I go the way whence I shall not return.**

Deum vellem jamjam in præsentia disceptationem in se recipere quia ad mortem propero. Jun.

As if he had said, *For as much as I must dye shortly, I desire to have this difference taken up before I dye: I cannot live long in this world, and I would not go out of the world, under such a cloud as is now upon me:* Is it not time for me to hasten my cause to an end when mine end hastens? and to get my business determined before my years are?

When

Anni numeri. Heb. i. e. qui numerati ſunt adeo & breviſſimâ periodo circumſcripti.

When a few years are come.] The Hebrew is, *years of number*, that is, *Years which may eaſily be numbred* (*Iſa.*10.19.) *The trees that remain ſhall be few that a Child may write them*, they ſhall be trees of number, that is, a ſmall number: and (*Gen.*34.29.) *Jacob* ſaith, *We are but few*, the Hebrew is, *We are men of number*, we may ſoon be told, a Child may tell us, and yet you provoke City and Country againſt us. We very well tranſlate according to the Hebraiſm, *years of number, a few years. When a few years are come*,

I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall not return.] What way is that (which hath *Vestigia nulla retrorſum*) where all ſteps are forwards, and none backward: this is ſuch a way as we meet not with in all our earthly travels, yet every man on earth is travelling towards ſuch a way: travel which way you will, you have as many ſteps backwards as forwards, men coming, and going: but (ſaith *Job*) *I ſhall go the way I ſhall not return.*

What way is this? This is the way of all fleſh (*Joſh.*23. 15. 1 *King.*2.2.) This is the way to the grave, that way hath no ſteps backwards.

But is there no return from the grave?

It is true, ſome have riſen; there have been ſome firſt-fruits of a reſurrection: but they who have come from the grave are ſo few, that their foot-ſteps are worn out by thoſe many and many thouſands of thouſands who have gone to the grave. What multitudes have gone the way to the grave, and are not returned? ſome few have returned, but theſe ſo few, that we may ſtill affirm, the way to the grave knows no returning. That which is very rarely done (the contrary being very frequently done) is ſaid not to be done at all, or never to be done.

But *Job* ſeems to deny his own return; he ſpeaks as if he ſhould not be only lodged for a while, but loſt for ever in the grave; *I ſhall go the way, whence I ſhall not return.*

I anſwer, That *Job's* faith was clear in the point of the reſurrection of the body appears by the confeſſion which he makes (*Chap.* 19. 25, 26.) and therefore when he ſaith, *I ſhall not return*, his meaning is (as was ſhewed upon a like paſſage *Chap.*10.21.)

Firſt, That he ſhould not return by any power of nature.

Secondly, That he ſhould not return to a ſtate of nature; he believed fully that he ſhould return by the power of God, to an eſtate of glory. Our bodies which are ſown natural bodies, ſhall be raiſed ſpiritual bodies. Though that which was ſowed ſhall return, yet when it returns it ſhall not be as it was ſowed.

Laſtly, whereas *Job* ſaith, *I ſhall not return*, his meaning is, when I die, or if I die, I ſhall no more return to my houſe and dwelling in the world, I muſt take my leave of all thoſe things for ever. *My place ſhall know me no more*, as he ſpeaks to the ſame ſubject (*Chap.* 7. 10.)

From the firſt branch of the verſe Note, *The years of man's life are few, You may quickly number them.*

Secondly, *As the years of man's life come aboue quickly, ſo when they are come, we muſt go certainly, we muſt go with death.*

I ſhall go (ſaith *Job*) there is no hindring, no ſtopping of that journey. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, *He hath no mind to go*; he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, *He is not at leiſure to go*; he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, he is not fit to go, *He is not prepared to go*; he muſt go as he is, fit or unfit, prepared or unprepared, he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, he will give all the treaſure in his houſe, all the money in his purſe, to be ſpared this journey; he muſt go. It will not ſerve any man's turn to ſay, he will get another to go for him, or he will ſend one in his room; There is no dying by proxie; every man when his few years are come muſt go in perſon.

Thirdly Obſerve, *A Believer can ſpeak of death familiarly.*

It is a comfort to him in his ſorrows, to think that he ſhall die ſhortly, *When a few years are come, I ſhall go the way, &c.* he ſpeaks pleaſantly, the mention of death was a life to him. *Job's* life was a kind of death, and therefore to him eſpecially death would be a kind of life; were our hearts rightly affected, they that have the moſt lively life, would think death better then this life, *I deſire* (ſaith *Paul*) *to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all:* Death was better to him then life; and leſt any ſhould ſay, no marvel if *Paul* deſired to die, who could ſcarce tell where to live; and no marvel if he would die once for all, who was in deaths often: to prevent this cavil, he adds, *Which is beſt of all.* Barely to die is better to ſome then a troubleſome life; but to die and be with Chriſt, is better then the beſt life, much more is it better then that life in this world, which is a continual death, as *Job's* was. How ſhould ſuch a man ſing out *Job's* verſe, *When a few dayes are come, I ſhall go the way, whence I ſhall not return.*

Fourthly Obſerve, *It is good to put death before us under the eaſieſt notions.*

Here *Job* calls it only a going, a going out of the world, that is all; he elſewhere calls it a ſleep, and the Spirit of God every where (in reference to Saints) ſpeaks of it in the moſt comfortable expreſſions. Death it ſelf is ſo embalmed, yea and cloathed in the holy language, that there is even a ſweetneſs and a beauty in it. When a man hath worn a ſuit of Apparel a great while, and hath even worn it out, or it becomes foul and naſty, would he not be glad to put that off, and get a new one upon his back? therefore death is called an uncloathing, a putting off the fleſh; there is no hurt in that; when a man hath tired himſelf all the day at his work, would he not gladly go to bed? therefore death is called reſt or ſleep. Under theſe or the like conſiderations held forth in Scripture, we may (as it were) bury all hard thoughts of death, as was further ſhewed (*Chap.*14.12.) eſpecially while we remember that as now life is by many degrees, bits or morſels, ſwallowed up of mortallity, ſo then death ſhall (at one bit or morſel) *be ſwallowed up of life* (2 *Cor.*5.4.) For Chriſt hath not only conquered, but *aboliſhed death, and hath brought*, not only *life*, but *immortality to light through the Goſpel* (2 *Tim.*1.10.) Life is good; yet when it may be ſaid of a life, it ſhall die, that puts an evil into life: But if life be good, how good is immortality, which is a life that cannot die?

Sixthly, Note, *Job* is very importunate to have a blot upon his good name wiped out; his conſcience was clear, his ſoul was well, he could ſay (*Chap.*13.) *He is my Saviour, and I know that I ſhall be juſtified*; yet becauſe he was under aſperſions and harſh cenſures, he haſtens to have theſe taken off, becauſe he was to die ſhortly.

If we ſhould on this ground, be careful to ſettle our outward eſtates and credits; how much more ſhould we be careful upon this ground to ſee that our ſouls be well ſetled? How ſhould each one ſay, I will haſten to get my ſins pardoned, my perſon juſtified; I will haſten to have all clear between God and my ſoul; *For when a few years are come, I ſhall go the way whence I ſhall not return:* And if I do not ſee theſe things done, while I am here, I ſhall never come back to ſee them done, nor can they be done at all in the place whither I am going. There is no repenting, no reforming, no believing in the grave: if our ſpiritual change be not before our natural change, it will never be. This argument ſhould provoke us to ſettle the affairs of our ſouls ſpeedily. It is not unlawful, nay, it is a duty to vindicate our credit, and to order the affairs that concern this life, becauſe we have not long to live: The haſt of death ſhould make us haſt our work, even the work of this life; much more upon this ground ſhould we ſee that our hearts be ſetled, that our eternal peace be ſetled; how ſhould the haſt of death make us haſt the work of the life which is to come? But as it ſhould make us haſten that work, ſo it muſt not make us huddle that work, or ſlubber it over, or do it to halves. Such haſt is waſt indeed: For, if we leave our ſouls half ſetled, and our peace half made, and our repentance and turning to God in the mid way, we ſhall never come again to finiſh and perfect them, no more then we ſhall to begin them. Therefore ſet ſpeedily about the work, and give your ſelves no reſt till the work be perfected; for when a few dayes are come, *you ſhall go the way where ye ſhall not return.*

Laſtly, Which was *Job's* ſpecial caſe,

It is an affliction for any man to die under a blot of diſgrace.

Our credit and good name ſhould be precious to us while we live; eſpecially we ſhould be careful to die with good credit, and not to let a blot lie on us when we are going out of the World. *Job* would not die under the name of an

Hypocrite;

Hypocrite, or an Oppressour, with which black titles he had been charged by his Friends. It is a mercy to go to the grave with honour among men, and to die desired; though it be enough that we go to our Grave having honour with God, and being desired of him. A good name is a Box of ointment powred forth; and a good report (especially among those that are good) is as the embalming of our memories to posterity. And yet the Saints are not so sollicitous for repairs in honour, because of that esteem which they have of their own esteem (that's the strain of ambition) and they have learned to go through good report and evil report, through honour and dishonour; they know how to go forth without the Camp, bearing the reproach of Christ: But they are unwilling that Christ should bear their reproach, or that his name should be dishonoured through them. And therefore seeing they desire while they live, to adorn the Doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in all things, they cannot but be careful before they die, to remove from their own names whatsoever might reflect dishonour upon his. How near *Job* was (in his own opinion) to the valley of the shadow of death, is yet more evident in the first words of the next Chapter: Here he only tells us, he must die shortly, there he tells us, upon the matter, that he was dead already; here he saith, *When a few years are come, I shall go*; there he saith not only that he had no more *years* to come, but no more *dayes, my dayes are extinct*, &c.

CHAP. XVII. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the Graves are ready for me.
Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eyes continue in their provocation.
Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee, who is he that will strike hands with me?
For thou hast hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt them.
He that speaketh flattery to his friends, even the eyes of his Children shall fail.

Hoc capite intendit inani nave præmissa. Aquin.

THE beginning of this Chapter pursues the Argument laid down in the close of the former: Or as a learned Expositour speaks, *Job* in this *doth enliven the premises*, and (as it were) put fresh spirits into what he had spoken before. For whereas he had before desired the Lord to hasten his cause to a day of hearing, because his day of death hastned (*Chap.* 16. *Vers.* 22.) *When a few years are come, I shall go the way, whence I shall not return*: Here to shew that he was a dying man, he describes himself as a dead man; *My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the graves are ready for me.*

Secondly, There *Job* made an appeal to God, *O that a man might plead with God, as a man pleads with his Neighbour.* (*Vers.* 21.) And he gives the reason why, *My Friends scorn me.* (*Vers.* 20.) He doth the same here in other language (*Vers.* 2.) *Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?* And therefore he renews his appeal to God, and begs to be heard before indifferent Judges, or Umpires, *Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee, who is he that will strike hands with me?* In the fourth and fifth Verses he further urgeth the reasons of his appeal, or he backs his motion, that God would do him right, from the insufficiency of his Friends to do him right: *Thou hast hid their heart from understanding*: As if he should say, Who would stand to the judgement of those, who want understanding? *Thou hast hid their heart from understanding: therefore shalt thou not exalt them, &c.* To this honour of judging my cause, and deciding this controversie, yea, I find them so unfit to be either my Judges, or my Arbitratours, that they are indeed but *Flatterers*; and therefore they may rather expect some sudden judgement upon themselves, or their Children, then that God should do them this honour to judge for me: *He that speaks flattery to his Friends, even the eyes of his Children shall fail,* (*Vers.* 5.)

Thus I have opened *Job's* scope in the context of these five Verses; which I have put together, because the matter runs in a continued dependence. And though for the main it be the same with which he concluded in the sixteenth Chapter, yet the variety of reading and expression will yield us variety of meditation; I descend to particulars.

Vers. 1. **My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct; the graves are ready for me.**

Here are three things, every of which speaks a dying man.

First, *Corrupt breath.*
Secondly, *Extinguished dayes.*
Thirdly, *A grave made ready.*

First, **My breath is corrupt**: *Ruach.* There are three interpretations given of that word [*My breath*] Some understand it of *his mind*, or whole inward man: As if he said, *My thoughts are, or my mind is exceedingly troubled*; and so most of the Greek Interpreters read it; and then the word which we translate *Corrupt*, may signifie grieved, pained, or afflicted, and it is often applyed to those pains which are most painful, even the pain of a Woman in travel. And so the sense is made out thus, as if *Job* had said, *I am extreamly troubled, or I am pained, like a Woman in the hour of travel; as she is in bodily pain, so I am pained in mind; I have felt many inward pangs, and throwes, and yet I am not delivered*: But I conceive this exposition unsuitable to the scope of the place, *Job* being about to describe the state of his body, or of his outward man, and not the affliction and trouble of his mind.

Pereò spiritu agitatus. Sept. רוחי חבלה *Vox* חבל *ligavit, constrinxit per antiphrasin significat solutus, ruptus, corruptus, accommodatur etiam ad dolores intensissimos quales sunt parturientium, quia cor valde constringunt. Spiritus vitales qui animæ instrumentum sunt ad vitæ functiones.* Aquin.

Secondly, The word (*Ruach*) signifieth the vital powers or spirits, which support man, and serve him in all the functions of life; spirits are the promoters of action, and when the vital spirits are corrupted, man is unable, not only to act, but to live. The expence of spirits, is the most chargeable expence to the life of man, and when a mans spirits are much spent, he is like a dead man, though he be alive: We say ordinarily when we are weary, *Our spirits are spent*; that is, Our vital spirits which give activity and strength to the whole body.

Thirdly, Rather understand it literally, and strictly for the *breath*, which comes forth by respiration, *My breath is corrupt*: and then the corrupting here spoken of, is not to be taken for any illsavour in his breath: they who have corrupt breath are offensive to others in breathing. The breath is said to be corrupt, because it smells of the corruption of those parts from whence it is drawn; we must not understand *Job* so: But when he saith, *My breath is corrupt*, his meaning is, that either he had obstructions and stoppings of breath, which distemper Physitians call the *Tissick*; a man under that infirmity may be said to have his breath corrupted, because he breathes difficultly. And as it is so in some diseases, so it is alway so in the approaches of death; a little before a man dies, his breath shortens, he breathes hardly, or he hardly breathes, he lies gasping for life, and catching for breath: Such a state *Job* here intends. The *Tygurine* translation takes that sense, *My life is departing, or I am giving up the ghost.*

Corruptio non hic denotat spiritum graveolentum, sed spiritum qui cum ingentiori nisu & dolore emittitur. Pined. *Medici Asthma vocant; & quia Asthmaticus suffocari videtur, ideo legitur hic*; jam quidem ago animam. Tygur.

Hence Note, *The breath of man is corruptible, though his soul be not.*

These

These two are very distinct: Some make the soul and breath one thing, and argue the corruptibility of the soul from such Texts as this. But the breath differs, not only from the soul, but from the life: The soul hath a life of its own, and the life of the body is it union with the soul; breathing is the acting of life, proceeding from that union, and ending when that union is dissolved. Breath may be corrupt, and life may vanish, but the soul continues; the breath is so vanishing, that the Prophet gives caution (*Isa.* 2.22.) *Cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.* The breath of man is so ready to cease, that it is our wisdom to cease from man; for when breath goes, man is gone, and all goes with him, in that day his thoughts perish; and therefore *Job* had no sooner said, *My breath is corrupt*, but he adds,

My dayes are extinct.

נועכו *Vox tantū hoc loco reperta significat excidere amputare extinguere.*

[My dayes] that is, The time appointed for my life, which is measured by dayes, by natural dayes, or by artificial dayes: Our dayes come and go continually; and when our tale of dayes is come and gone, our dayes are [extinct.] The word which here we translate extinct, is found no where else in the Hebrew of the Old Testament: it is rendered three wayes.

Excisi sunt. Pagn.

First, Thus, *my dayes are cut off*; which metaphor is often used in reference to life; our dayes are (as it were) so many threads, and our life is like a piece of cloth woven together by many dayes; when the Web, be it more or less, longer or shorter, is finished, the thred is cut: *My dayes are cut off.*

præviabuntur dies mei. Vulg.

Secondly, The Vulgar reads it, *my dayes will be shortned*; they shall be put in a narrow room, into a little *compendium*, I shall soon be able to read over the volume of my dayes, they are but short, a meer Epitome.

Thirdly, We read, *my dayes are extinct*, or put out. Which is a metaphor taken from fire, from a Torch, or Candle, which is the sense of the *Tygurine* translation.

Deus mei ritu lucernæ deficiunt. Tygur.

My dayes fail, as a Candle, or as a Lamp, which, when the oyl is consumed, goes out: Mr. *Broughton* keeps to the metaphor of fire, *My dayes are quenched.* There is a flame of life in the body, the natural heat is preserved by the natural moysture; these two, Radical heat, and Radical moisture, work upon each other; and as long as Radical moisture holds out to feed the Radical heat, life holds out; but when the heat hath once sucked and drunk up all the moisture (in some acute diseases it drinks all at a draught) as the flame drinks up the Oyl of the Lamp, then we go out, or as *Job* speakes here, *Our dayes are extinct.* Excessive moisture puts out the fire, and for want of moisture it goeth out.

Vita extinguitur quãdo humor nativus in quo vita consistit extinguitur.

Hence Note, First, *Man's life, as a Fire, or Lamp, consumes it self continually.*

There is a special disease called a *Consumption*, of which many die; but the truth is, every man who dies, dies of a Consumption; he that dies of a Surfet, may be said (in this sense) to die of a Consumption. The fewel and food of man's life is wasted sometimes more sparingly and gradually, but 'tis alwayes consumed (except in those deaths which are meerly occasional, or violent) before man dies.

Again, *Job* speaks peremptorily, *My dayes are extinct.* He was not then dead; but because he saw all things in a tendency to death, and was himself in a dying posture; therefore he concludes, *My dayes are extinct.*

Hence Note, Secondly, *What we see in regard of all preparatory means and wayes ready to be done, we may speak of as already done.*

The Scripture speakes often of those things which are shortly and certainly to come to pass, as come to pass. And as the Apostle argues in spirituals, *We know that we are translated from death to life, because we love the Brethren, and he that believeth hath eternal life:* So we may argue about naturals, he that is sick beyond the help of means, and the skill of the Physician, is translated from life to death, and we may conclude of a man in this case, he hath temporal death; or he may say of himself, as *Job* doth in the next words,

The graves are ready for me.] The Original is very concise, it is only there, *The graves for me*; we supply those words *are ready.* And because of that shortness of the Language, there have been many conjectures for the supply or filling up of the sence. Some thus, *The graves for me*; that is, there is nothing for me to think of now but only a grave, I may lay aside all other business, and attend that alone, how I may lie down in the dust with peace. I am not a man for this world, it is best for me to retire or withdraw my soul quite from the earth, seeing I have no hope to keep my body long out of it; or if I do let out my soul to the earth, it shall be only to so much of it, as will hold my body, or serve to make me a grave. *The graves for me.*

קברים לי *Sepulchra mihi. Cum mutila sit oratio indifferens est ut variis modis perfici possit.*

Secondly, *The graves for me*; that is, I desire or wish for nothing but a grave, *A grave for my money*, as we say of a thing that we greatly desire: so saith *Job*, *A grave for me:*

As if he had more largely spoken, thus,

Sepulchra mihi; supple opto, quæro, cogito, aut quid simile.

As I perceive I am going to the grave, so I desire to go thither; I have (as to this sence) made a covenant with death, and an agreement with the grave. The grave and I shall not fall out, now that I am ready to fall into it. For if I had my vote, or might put down in writing what I would have, I would write, A Grave, A Grave for me; as I am declining, and decaying in my body, so my spirit, and my mind are as willing that my body should decay: I am as ready for the grave as that is for me. A grave for me: So the words carry a reciprocation of readiness between *Job* and the Grave, *The grave gapes for me, and I gape for the grave:* We may parallel this kind of speaking with that in the Book of *Canticles* (*Chap.* 2.16.) where the Spouse saith, *My beloved is mine, and I am his:* The Original is, *My beloved to me, and I to him:* There are no more words then needs must be. The largness of their affection, bred this conciseness in language, *My beloved to me, and I to him:*

Sepulchra mihi inhiat, ego sepulchris. q.d. *Aliis omnibus rebus valedico atque renuncio.* Jun.

The expression Notes two things.

First, Propriety, *My beloved to me*, or, *my beloved is mine*; that is, I have a propriety in him.

Secondly, It Notes possession, *I have him*, I have not only a right to him, but I enjoy him; I have not only a title, but a tenure; God hath given me Livery and Seisin (as our Law speaks) he hath put me into possession of Jesus Christ, and I have given Jesus Christ full possession of me, I am no longer my own, but his, and at his dispose. So here, *The grave for me, and I for the grave:* The grave is my right; yea, the grave is my possession. The grave is a house that every one hath right to, and some are so near it, that they seem possessed of it. *The grave is mine*, saith *Job*, or I am as a dead man, ready to be carried to my grave: The Grave is not made ready, till man is undressed by death, and so made ready for the grave. We say of very old men, though in health, and we may say of very sick men, though young, *They have one foot in the grave. Job* speaks as having *both his feet in the grave:* Yea, we may say, that *Job* speaks as if he had not only his feet in the grave, but (which is far more) *his heart in the grave.* There are many who have their feet in the grave, whose hearts are at furthest distance from it, *Job* had both. *Heman* (*Psal.* 88. 4, 5.) describes his condition in such a language, *My soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh to the grave, I am accounted with them that go down into the pit; I am as a man of no strength, free among the dead; like the slain that lie in the grave, whom thou remembrest no more, and that are cut off from thy sight:* That Scripture may be a Comment on this, *My breath is corrupt, my dayes are extinct, the graves are ready for me.*

Further, *Job* speaks in the Plural number; he saith not the grave is ready for me, but, *The graves are ready for me.* Why, how many graves must *Job* have? Would not one grave hold him? Or, was *Job* covetous to have many graves? *Many houses will not serve some men when they live, but one house will serve any man when he dieth.* A little room will hold those dead, for whose covetous and ambitious minds the whole World was not roomthy enough while they lived. Ordinary men will have here their Winter-houses, and their Summer-houses, their City-house, and their Country-house, their houses on the Plain, and their houses on the Hill; men have variety of houses while they live; but one is all when dead: Why then doth *Job* say, *The* [*graves*] *are ready for me?*

He

He saith it to shew that death abounded to his apprehension, or that he could not escape death: As if he had said, Whersoever I set my foot, I step upon a grave. The Poet describing a tragical state, saith, *There was much of death to be seen, or many appearances of death.* *Job* saw deaths, and beheld graves every where gaping for him. *Paul* was in deaths often, and *Job* was in many deaths at once: *The graves are ready*, there are many Pits making, I am sure to fall into one, there's no avoiding it.

Plurima mortis imago.

Learn from it, First,

That, *In times of sickness and affliction, discourses of the grave, are the most seasonable discourses.*

Death should be much in our thoughts, and much in our speech at all times, but most of all in times of sickness, or of danger. Some when they are sick, cannot abide to hear a word spoken of the grave; others will forbid such as come to visit the sick, to speak a word of death. *Lewis* the eleventh King of *France*, was so excessively afraid of death, that he had given command to his Attendants not to give him any warning of the approach of this his last Enemy by *Name*. It was worse then death to him to hear of death; and yet before he died, he was told of it, not only plainly, but rudely. The *French* Historian reports, that his very Barber, with some other inferiour Servants (as if they had rather come as Judges to pronounce the sentence of death upon him, then as friends to be his remembrancers of death) told him bluntly and abruptly, without preface or preamble, or the least word of comfort to sweeten such a bitter potion, That his fatal hour was come, that neither his Hermit nor his Physitian, could keep him alive a day longer. They who are unwilling to hear, or speak of death, shall hear it spoken of whether they will or no. Death should be much upon the tongue, and more in the thoughts of good men when they are in health, but when they are in their *natural preparation for death* (sickness is a natural preparative for death) they should be very often in their *spiritual preparations*, by thinking and discoursing of it.

Comines. lib. 10.

Secondly, From this manner of speaking, *The grave for me.*

Observe, That, *A godly man is sometimes as ready for the grave, as the grave can be for him.*

Let it come as soone as it will, it cannot come too soon; as the grave gapes for him, so doth he for the grave; as the grave hungers for him, so doth he for it, and nothing can satisfie him but a grave. *I desire* (saith *Paul*) *to be dissolved:* He was ready for the grave: And ready he was, not in a vain wish, O, I would die, and I desire to die; but from a grounded hope that he should be well in death. *Saul* (2 *Sam.* 1.9.) was sorely wounded, the graves were ready for him, and he was ready for the grave too: But whence was it? It was not from his preparedness to die, but from his impatience to live; as appears both by the true History of his death, and by the false report of it made by the *Amalekite*. The former saith (1 *Sam.*31.4.) *Then said Saul unto his Armour-bearer, Draw thy sword and thrust me through therewith, lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and abuse me: Saul*, upon this account was so ready for the grave, that he begg'd to be thrust into it, and when he could not obtain that miserable favour, he thrust himself into it; so the latter part of the Verse informs us, *But his Armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid: therefore Saul took a Sword and fell upon it.* The *Amalekite* reports *Saul* thus bespeaking him (2 *Sam.*1.9.) *Stand I pray thee upon me, and slay me; for anguish is upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.*

Man dies not by piece-meal, now a little, and then a little, nor is life divisible, when it departs it departs together; but when *Saul* had no mind to live, it troubled him that he was no nearer death: A dishonour was fallen upon him, the day was lost, and he was wounded: *Saul* could easier die then out-live this disgrace. Such a readiness to die many have had, it vexeth them to live, die they will, because they cannot live as they would: this is a readiness of desperation, not of preparation. *Job* was much troubled, pain and smart afflicted him, and they had some influence upon his desire of death; but his chief motive was above: what old *Simeon* desired, to depart in peace because his eyes had seen his salvation, *Job* desired, because he knew by Faith, that God was his salvation.

Thirdly, *Job* speakes chearfully of the Grave:

Hence learn, *A believer in the greatest afflictions of this life, sees ease and refreshing in death.*

He knowes that he shall bury all his sorrows when himself goes to the grave; yea, that then his sins, as well as his afflictions go to their grave too, and shall never rise again.

Fourthly, *Job* speakes confidently, he shall die presently, the grave was ready for him: But it was not so, *Job's* grave was not ready, and he out-lived this black day many a fair year.

Hence Observe, *A good man may mistake the times and seasons of God's dispensations to him.*

He thinks, yea concludes, he shall die, when he shall not die: Wicked worldly men, do not believe they shall die, when they must; they cannot be perswaded that they shall die, when they are ready to drop into their graves. *Job* seemed to have an assurance that he should die, yet he did not, God reprived him from death, and restored him from trouble. We are never the nearer the grave, because we prepare for it, speak and meditate on it, or resolve to go into it: It is not our holding back from the grave, that will keep us out of it, nor our willingness to go to the grave, that will put us into it. It is good to mistake upon the best side; God usually recalls those from death, who are most ready at his call to die.

Fifthly, In that he speaks of Graves in the Plural number: Learn this, *There are many wayes of going out of the World, though there be but one way of coming in.*

Whithersoever we are going, we are going to the grave; and when we have stept over, or scrambled out of one grave, we may quickly slip into another, and be locked in fast enough.

Lastly, Take this from the whole, by way of Corollary; It is our wisdom to stand alwayes ready for death, and the grave, for they stand ready for us: Ours is a dying life, a decaying strength, ours are consuming dayes, our dayes cannot be many, possibly they will be but very few; for ought we know the grave is now ready for us, and we are sure it is a digging and preparing for us: Therefore let us be digging in the Word of life, that we may be ready to meet and welcome death and the grave, which are so ready for us: *The graves are ready for me.*

Job proceeds to re-inforce the cause of his appeal.

Vers. 2. **Are there not mockers with me? And doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?**

חתלים החל *à illusit derisit.*

Master *Broughton* translates by way of affirmation, *Surely mockers are bestowed on me.* We by way of Question, *Are there not mockers with me?* Yes, there are mockers with me: Some read it as the form of an Oath. It is familiar in the Hebrew to use such forms of swearing and imprecating; so the words are rendred by a learned Interpreter, *Let me perish if my friends are not mockers, if they go not about to delude me.* *Job* spake this a little before, *My friends scorn me* (*Chap.*16.20.) Here he is at it again, *Are there not mockers with me?* I find three words applyed by *Job* to his Friends, while he reproves this their unfriendly usage.

אם לא *Formula jurisjurandi huic linguæ familiaris.* Merc. *Disperea nisi amici mei studeant mihi imponere.* Vatabl.

The first (*Chap.*12.4.) there he useth a word which signifieth to mock with derision. The word (*Chap.*16.19.) notes them such as mocked, with wit and jesting. The word here used signifies to mock by deceiving or deluding, as if his Friends had carried matters with him more like Sophisters, then Comforters: So the word is applied (*Gen.* 31.7.) *Jacob* tells *Leah*, and *Rachel*, *You know that with all my power, I have served your Father Laban, and your Father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times:* that is, He thought by changing my wages to deceive me, and get all the stronger Cattel to himself. When *Moses* went out upon the request of *Pharaoh*, to sue unto the Lord for the removing of a present plague: *Moses said, Behold I go out from thee, and I will intreat the Lord that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his Servants, and from his people to morrow; but let not Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more* (*Exod.*8.29.) as if he had said, You have

שרק מליצים

mocked

mocked me two or three times, and said you would let the people go, do not so any more, lest your deceiving of my expectation, prove the greatest deceit of your own.

The deluding Doctors which some delighted in, are expresst by this word (*Isa.*30.9.) *This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the Law of the Lord:* They did not love the Law of the Lord; What then? *which say to the Seers, see not, and to the Prophets, prophesie not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesie deceits.* The wickedness of that people lay in two things; either they would have the Prophets silent, and not speak at all, or if they did speak, they must *Prophesie deceits:* They loved to to be cozoned: truth made them smart, and they could not abide it. *A guilty conscience cannot endure plain words, but it loves smooth words*; as many as you will of these words (say they) or else not a word; either prophesie deceit, or cease prophecying. Here *Job* complains, *Are there not deceivers with me?* As if he had said, *You tell me you bring the mind of God, but you bring false Doctrine, you preach deceit.* Though we cannot say they preached smooth things to *Job*, they spake hardly enough of him, and harshly enough to him, yet we may say they preached deceitful things to him; for though they did not speak with an intention to deceive him, yet they were deceived in speaking, and he had been deceived if he had yielded to what they spake. In which sense *Job* calls them (which one would think he had little reason to do, considering how roughly they dealt with him, he, I say, calls them) *Flatterers*, at the sixth Verse of this Chapter: And what's the business or chief design of Flatterers, but to catch others with words, or to deceive them into a compliance with their own ends. And this is often (and was in this case) the end, or tendency of the action, when it is not the end, or intention of the Agent. From this notion of the word,

Finis operis & finis operantis distinguuntur.

Observe, First, *To be among Deceivers is a great misery.*

Secondly, *To be a Deceiver is a great sin.*

Thirdly, *To publish that which is false, though there be no intendment to deceive, is to be a Deceiver.*

As most are ignorantly deceived, so there are some ignorant Deceivers: and as some think what they do to be very just, and that it is their duty to do it, when indeed it is very sinful, so there are some who think what they teach to be very true, and that it is their duty to teach it, when indeed it is very erroneous. There are but few who know they are Deceivers, when they are: now *as that Servant which knew his Lords will, but did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes*; and yet, *he who knew it not, and did commit things worthy of stripes* (shall not escape a beating, he) *shall be beaten with few stripes* (*Luk.*12.47,48.) So he that knowes the truth of God, and yet deceives others with false Doctrine, shall be beaten with many stripes; and he who not knowing the truth, deceives others, shall not escape unbeaten, or unblamed, as *Job's* Friends did not.

Non peccavi. Vulg. q.d. *innocens heu morior. Quandoquidē non sunt ludificationes apud me.* Jun.

There is another reading of this first clause, differing from ours, *Are there not mockers with me?* The Vulgar thus, *I have not sinned.* A second to the same sense, thus, *For as much as there are no mockings or deceivings with me,* I am a man who deals plainly and simply. The word which we translate Mockers, as noting a Person, is rendered by the act, and that negatively: *There are no mockings with me*; that is, I use no mockings or no false play, as I am accused; I have spoken my heart nakedly and clearly. *And yet mine eye continueth in their provocation: therefore lay down now, put me in a surety with thee, &c.* (*Vers.*3.) This is a good reading, but I will not stay upon it; only take two brief Notes from it.

A good man is upright-hearted, and down-right in all his dealings and sayings.

There are no mockings with me, I am what I appear, and I appear what I am: An Hypocrite is full of tricks and shifts, he disguiseth both his person and his actions: No man can tell where to have him, or what to make of him. When he speaks, his words do not signifie what he means, if they signifie any thing; and when he acts, his works do not signifie what he is, they signifie any thing rather then that. All are mockings of others, though he will find in the end, that he hath mocked himself most all.

Secondly, As he joyns this with the next clause, *There are no mockings with me, and yet mine eye continueth in their provocation.* Note, that,

How plain-hearted soever a man is, yet it is very hard to perswade those who are once prejudiced against him that he is so.

Let *Job* say and profess what he would, yet he could not recover his credit, nor set himself right in the opinion of men till God did it for him (*Chap.*42.) But I pass that, *Are there not mockers with me?* What the mocking and scorning of *Job's* Friends was, hath been opened (*Chap.*12.4. *Chap.* 16.19.) And therefore I refer the Reader thither.

Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?

Should he not rather have said, *Doth not mine ear continue, &c.* Mocking is the object of the ear, and not of the eye. There are some mockings indeed, by mimical foolish gestures, and they are the object of the eye; but here *Job* speaks of what he had from them in conference, which is properly the business of the ear; and yet he saith, *Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?* By the eye we are to understand the eye of the mind. *Doth not mine eye?* that is, Have I not a representation in my spirit, or upon my fancy of your mockings, and bitter provocations, even as if they were visible before mine eyes? Have I not night visions and apparitions upon my Bed, of what you speak or act against me every day?

Assidue in id oculos & mentis aciē intentā habeo quod me assidue irritant, in eo defixæ sunt omnes meæ cogitationes. Merc. *Isti dies noctesq; nō cessant exacerbare animā meū.* Jun. *Intenta cogitatio somnū impedit.*

Again, We may expound the Text properly of his bodily eye, because the trouble which they gave him in the day time, hindred his sleep in the night. The letter of the Hebrew favours this sense, *Doth not mine eye lodge in their provocation?* So we put in the Margin of our Bibles: Hence Mr. *Broughton* reads, *In these mens vexing lodgeth mine eye*; that is, When I go to Bed and hope to sleep, then in stead of lodging in my Bed, I lodge in the thoughts of my Friends unkindness; and indeed, *a man may sleep better upon the bare boards, then upon hard words.* Such words keep the eyes waking, and are as bad to sleep upon, as a pillow of thorns; especially when (which was *Job's* case) the eye continueth in them. Intentness of mind, or vehement cogitation about any thing, keep open the eyes, and forbid the approach of rest; *Doth not mine continue?*

Vel a מרר *amarū esse. Sive à* מרח *quod est irritare sive exacerbare.*

In their [provocations.] He called them *Mockers*, and their mockings were *provocations.* The word (as some derive it) signifies that which is bitter. *Provocation is a bitter thing.* Others derive it from a root signifying to irritate and stir up the spirit of a man; which is *provocation* properly. *Provocation is a high act of wrong:* A man may do another wrong, on this side a provocation. As the provocation of God is a high act of sin in man, ordinary acts of sin do not amount to a provocation (*Psal.*106.7.) *They provoked him at the Sea* (it is this word) *even at the red Sea*, that is, There they sinned extreamly. So (*Psal.* 95.8.) which the Apostle quotes (*Heb.*3.8.) The holy Ghost calls the whole time of that peoples froward walking, or sinning against God in the Wilderness, *The provocation: Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation:* that is, In the time when ye sinned, not only to the offending, but to the provoking of God against you, not to the breaking of his Laws, but to the vexing of his spirit. When sin is compleat, and iniquity grown to a full stature, that day is justly marked in the Calendar of Scripture, with *a red letter*, implying wrath, and is therefore called, *The provocation:* So when any man deals very unkindly, frowardly, or unfaithfully, against his Brother, then 'tis a provocation, *Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?*

Now for as much as the same word signifieth both bitterness and provocation, and that most provocations are given by uncharitable and unconsiderate speeches;

Observe, First, *Unkind words are bitter to the hearer.*

The Apostle gives the rule to Husbands (*Col.* 3.19.) *Husbands love your Wives, and be not bitter to them:* that is, Do not give them bitter words in stead of faithful counsels. Some Husbands speak their Gall to their Wives, to whom they have given their hearts. Among the Heathens the Gall of the Sacrifice which they superstitiously offered at Marriages, was pull'd out and thrown away, before it was presented at the Altar, signifying that Man and Wife should be (as Naturalists say the Dove is) without Gall one towards another. Wholsome counsels and admonitions

Quo instituto legis Author non obscure innuebat à conjugio semper debere bilem iramq; abesse Drus. Prov. Clas. 2. l. 4.

monitions for the matter, are often adminiſtred with ſuch an undue mixture of heat and paſſion as renders them, not only diſtaſtful but hurtful to the receiver.

Secondly, Note, *Harſh words carry much provocation in them.*

ἵνα μὴ ἀθυμήσωσιν, ἀ-ϑυμέω, animum dejpendeo.

The ſame Apoſtle in the ſame Chapter enlarging his Inſtitutes for the direction of Believers in all Relations, beſpeaks Parents (*Verſ.*21.) *Fathers provoke not your Children to anger:* The word ſignifies any kind of provocation, but that eſpecially which is cauſed by contumelious and upbraiding ſpeeches. A Father provokes his Child, when he ſpeaks haſtily, and threatningly, terrifying his Child, rather then inſtructing him: The reaſon why Fathers ſhould not thus provoke their Children, is added, *Leſt they be diſcouraged*, or (as the word imports) be as if they were without ſouls, moop't (as we ſay) and heartleſs. For as there is a provocation (in a good ſenſe) which heightens the ſpirit in well-doing, and enlivens it for action: The Apoſtle exhorts to that (*Heb.*10.24.) *Let us conſider one another to provoke one another to love, and to good works.* That is, let us ſet ſuch copies of holineſs that others may be ſtirred up, beyond their ordinary pitch, and elevation of ſpirit, to a zealous doing of good: Or ſpeak ſuch winning words, give ſuch preſſing exhortations, that the hearts of your Brethren, may be carried beyond their uſual courſe in holineſs. Thus he tells the *Corinthians* (2 *Epiſt.* 9.2.) *That their zeal had provoked many:* But to what had it provoked them? Not to anger and paſſion, towards any, but to charity, yea and liberality towards the poor. And though the Apoſtle uſeth another word in the Greek, yet he means the ſame thing, when he aſſures us (*Rom.*11.11.) that the Jews *ſtumbled, not that they ſhould fall* (but that they might riſe) for ſo it follows, *But rather through their fall ſalvation is come to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealouſie.* The ſalvation of the Gentiles bred emulation in the Jews, What? Shall they go away with all the ſalvation? Shall the Gentiles poſſeſs Heaven alone, whom we thought the meaneſt people upon the Earth? Come, let us alſo put in at leaſt for a part, and get a ſhare in Goſpel-mercies and priviledges with them. Thus they were provoked to emulation, and this emulation was and ſhall be (through the power of God, who is wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working) a help to faith in Chriſt, and ſo to their riſing from their fall. And the Apoſtle was ſo intent upon the promoting of this deſign of God, that he profeſſeth (*Verſ.*13,14.) that he *magnified his Office* among the Gentiles, not only to ſave them, but (ſaith he) *If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my fleſh, and might ſave ſome of them:* He hoped the Jews would, at laſt, *believe for anger*, or for *very ſhame*, and go to Heaven *in a holy chaſe.*

Now (I ſay) as there is a provocation which heats and hightens the mind of man to an eager purſuite of the beſt things; ſo there is a provocation which abates and blunts his edge, which chils and flats his ſpirits to any thing that is good, which was the ground of the Apoſtles dehortation, *Provoke not your Children, leſt they be diſcouraged:* And as the effect of ſuch provocations is to ſome a diſcouragement in doing their duty, ſo the effect of it in others is a thruſting them on to do that which is moſt contrary, not only to their duty, but to their diſpoſition.

Railing ſpeeches, uncomely and uncivil language, have provoked many, both to ſpeak, and to do that which they never dreamt of, or which was moſt remote from their natural temper and inclination. For though ſuch diſtempers lie in the bottom of nature, yet unleſs they had been ſtirred and ſpurred up, thoſe diſtempers would not have appeared and broken out. *Moſes* was the meekeſt man upon the earth, yet when they *provoked his ſpirit, he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips* (*Pſal.*106.33.) There are three ill effects of provocations.

Firſt, Provoking ſpeeches raiſe up hard thoughts of the ſpeaker. It is a high work of grace to think well of them, who ſpeak ill of us, or to us.

Secondly, Provoking ſpeeches blow up hard words of the ſpeaker; many excuſe it, when they give ill language, *You provoked me:* And though they be not to be excuſed who do ſo when they are provoked, yet their ſin is the greater, who provoke them.

Thirdly, Provoking ſpeeches are ſometimes the cauſe of revengeful practices, and very often of licentious practices. Sober admonitions and grave reproofs, reclaim thoſe who go aſtray, but violent rebukes make them deſperate. Some care not what they do when they hear others ſay they care not what. Many Children have run ill courſes by over much indulgence, and neglect of diſcipline; and ſo have not a few, by the over-much ſeverity and ſharpneſs of thoſe that are over them. Patience is hard put to it, to keep either mind or tongue or hand in compaſs, when we are provoked: Great provocations are great temptations. When God is provoked he is tempted (*Heb.*3.8.) *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the Wilderneſs, when your Fathers tempted me, &c.* We may expound it two wayes.

Firſt, That while they tempted God, by queſtioning his power for them, and preſence with them, they provoked him, he was greatly diſpleaſed with them for it.

Secondly, That while they provoked God they tempted him, they tempted him to deſtroy them, or to act that power againſt them which they did not believe (after ſo many experiences) able enough to deliver or protect them. If then God himſelf be ſo tempted, that (as he is pleaſed often to expreſs himſelf after the manner of men) he can ſcarce hold his hands, or forbear to do that which he had no mind to do when he is provoked, how much more is weak man tempted to do that which his corruptions are alwayes forward enough (and too too much) to do, when he is provoked.

Again, When he ſaith, *Doth not mine eye continue in their provocation?*

Learn, thirdly, *Hard words ſtick upon the ſpirit.*

They hang about the mind, and are not eaſily gotten off. Good words dwell much upon the ſpirit, and ſo do ill words. When a man hath once got a word of promiſe from God, about any mercy ſet home upon his heart, the eye continues in that conſolation: O it is a ſweet word, the ſoul lies ſucking at it night and day. And when a man hath once got a word of command from God about any duty ſet home upon his ſpirit, his eye continues in the direction of it. *O how I love thy Law* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.*119.97.) *It is my meditation all the day*; he could not beat his thoughts off from it, when love had faſtned on it. As theſe good words cleave to a gracious ſoul, and dwell with it; ſo it is hard even for a gracious ſoul to diſlodge hard words: O how doth the eye continue in thoſe provocations? And doth not experience teach us, that vain thoughts thrown into the mind by Satan will not eaſily be driven out? How often doth the eye continue in his provocations? The ſpirit of a man hath a ſtrong retentive faculty, it will hold the object cloſe, and as it were live and lodge in it. How many make their abode in provocations, and *reſide upon* bitter words, received from their Brethren? How many lie down with them at night, and riſe with them in the morning; yea, and walk with their eye upon them all the day long? And here it may be queſtioned,

Was not this a ſin in *Job?* That rule of love then was in being, which is now expreſſed (*Epheſ.*4.26.) *Be ye angry and ſin not, let not the Sun go down upon your wrath.* Then, how could *Job* ſuffer his *eye to continue in theſe provocations?*

I anſwer, There was an infirmity in this; 'tis our duty, as to forgive, ſo to forget, or lay aſide the thought of injuries and wrongs received: And it is the Character of wicked men, *They ſleep not unleſs they have done miſchief* (*Pro.*4.16.) Their eye continues in their own corruption, or in the temptation of Satan till they have brought it forth. For as when good men have ſtrong impreſſions unto good upon their ſpirits, they cannot ſleep till they have done good, their eye continues in that holy provocation (*Pſal.*132.4.) *I will not* (ſaith zealous *David*) *give ſleep to my eyes, nor ſlumber to my eye-lids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob:* So wicked men give no ſleep to their eyes till they have done that miſchief, or executed that revenge to which they conceive themſelves provoked. But the eye of *Job* did not continue in thoſe unfriendly provocations, to watch an opportunity for ſelf-revenge upon, or of doing miſchief to his Friends: He did not let the Sun go down upon wrath, that he might deviſe their ruine in the dark. He was not ſo wiſe as he ſhould have been, to hurt himſelf, and hinder his reſt, by ſuch a contiual

poring

poring upon their unkindnesses; but he was not wicked at all, much less so wicked (which some from this passage may conceive him) as to pore upon their unkindnesses, with a purpose to hurt them: So, that act might have somewhat of sin in it, because he troubled his own peace more then he needed, but it had not this sin in it, that he studied how to trouble the peace of others.

Lastly, We may rather interpret these words to the blame of his Friends, who continued to provoke him, then to his, whose eye (because they did so) could see nothing but provocation, or at least must see that, whatsoever it saw, and therefore could not but continue in it. How could the eye of *Hannah* chuse but continue in the provocation of *Peninnah*, when it is said (*1 Sam.*1.6,7.) That as her Husband *Elkanah* gave her special tokens of his love, year by year, so she provoked her to make her fret year by year, therefore she wept and did not eat. *While a provocation is continued, our sense of it can hardly be intermitted.*

Job having complained of received provocations, renews his appeal to God.

Vers. 3. **Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee: who is he that will strike hands with me?**

The words are an Apostrophe to God. That *Job* speaks to God, not to *Eliphaz*, is clearer then needs be proved. The word which we render **lay down**, signifies also to appoint, (*Exod.*1.11.) *They did set* (or appoint) *over them Task-masters.* And again (*Exod.*21.13.) *I will appoint thee a place whither he* (the man-slayer) *shall flee.* In the present Text both rendrings of the word are used. We make use of the first, *Put, or lay down:* What would *Job* have God *lay down?*

Appone cor tuũ, i.e. adverte quæso animũ meis verbis. Vatabl.

Some give it thus, Lay down, or apply thine heart to me, attend I pray thee to my words, and consider my cause.

Secondly, The words may be conceived as an allusion to those, who going before a Judge, or having a Cause to be tryed by Umpires, use to lay down an ingagement, or as we call it, an *Assumpsit*, that they will stand to the award, or arbitrement, which shall be made.

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ערב

Est fidei jubere pro aliquo, seu aliquẽ in suam fidẽ recipere. Hinc arrabo spiritus. Pone pignus, vadẽ, aut fidejussorem mihi tecum. Pagn. *Dispone quæso consponsorẽ mihi tecum.* Jun. *Nũ Arrabonem dabis?*

Put me in a surety with thee.] The Original word properly signifying to undertake for, or to give credit and assurance in the behalf of another; and hence the Noun derived from it, signifies *an earnest*, because an earnest laid down, is a *real surety*, that such a thing shall be performed. In which sense *Thamar* useth the word (*Gen.*38.17.) who when *Judah* promised to send a Kid of the Goats, said, *wilt thou give me a pledge till thou send it?* and hence in the New Testament the word *Arrabo* is used in the Greek, as also in the Latine, for the earnest of the Spirit, or for that assurance which the Spirit settles upon the hearts of Believers in this life that they shall inherit eternal life (*2 Cor.*1.22.) *Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the spirit in our hearts.* And again (*2 Cor.*5.5.) *Now he that hath wrought us for the self same thing is God:* God having prepared a place for us, prepares us for the place, and then gives us our evidences, that in due time we shall take possession of it. *Who also hath given us the earnest of the spirit.* The same Apostle tells the *Ephesians*, that, *After they believed they were sealed with the spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, till the redemption of the purchased possession* (*Ephes.*1.14.) So that an earnest is a real Surety, and a Surety is a personal earnest. While *Job* saith, *Put me in a Surety*, his meaning is, he would have some person to be an undertaker for the ordering of his Cause, or an ensurer that all should be performed according to the determination that should be given about it, *Put in a Surety with me.*

חקע

Sign. Defigere, infigere, & si de contractibus dicitur, percutere manũ. Quis est manum meæ plaudatur? Jun. *Quisquis ille sit fide-jussor meus, veniat & paciscatur mecum. In sponsionibus manus invicẽ complodebant, hinc manum complodere, pro pacisci, stipulari.* Merc.

Who is he that will strike hands with me?] He proceeds in the same allusion. These words are disposed two wayes: Some put the Interrogation after *He*; *Give, or put me in a Surety: Who is he?* I would gladly see the man, or know who it is; *Who is he? let him come and strike hands with me, whosoever he is:* As if he had said, I shall easily agree that any man should have the hearing and determining of this business, whom thou shalt appoint.

We put the Interrogation after the whole sentence, *Who is he that will strike hands with me?* And then the sense appears thus, *If God once put in a Surety to undertake for me, who is he that will contend with me, or engage in this Quarrel against me?*

To strike hands, is a phrase of speech grounded upon that ancient form of making bargains or entring contracts, by joyning, or striking hands: And these contracts may be taken two wayes, or under a double notion.

First, As they concerned Suretiship for Money, in which sense *Solomon* speaks of it more then once (*Prov.*6.1.) *My Son, if thou be surety for thy Friend, if thou have stricken hands with a stranger*; that is, if thou hast entred into Bond for him, and hast testified it by striking hands, then, &c. (*Prov.* 22.26.) *Be not thou one of them that strike hands*; that is, Be not too forward to engage thy self, or to undertake for others; as it is expounded in the next words, *or of them that are Sureties for debts*; such hasty engagements may bring thee into more trouble, then thou wilt be able to get off in hast: There are many who have struck, yea wounded their own hearts incurably, by striking hands for their Friends. Go to the Courts of Justice, and there is nothing more frequently heard of, then the sighs of Sureties: He dissassures his own Estate, who assures for others.

Hæc est sponsio quæ propriè ad nũmorũ negotiũ spectat. Aben Ezra. in Prov.6.

Secondly, As Contracts and Suretiship for Money were confirmed by striking hands; so it is very probable that those Suretiships which were given about Tryals, and for appearing to the Action of the Plantiff in Judgement, were also confirmed by that outward ceremony; in which sense we are to understand it here.

Further, The word which we translate to *Strike*, signifies also to Fasten, which shews another part of the Ceremony; for as striking, so joyning and clasping of hands was used.

Once more, the word signifies, and oft is applied to the sounding of a Trumpet, or the giving of any sound: This also carries on the same allusion, because when two men strike hands, they make a sound; the interpretation of which is, that the bargain is made, or it speaks the parties agreed; and hence that known expression among us, *Of striking up a bargain, or a business.*

Clangere tuba. Complosæ manibus sonus editur.

Thus the whole Text is carried on in terms alluding to the ordinary proceeding, either in becoming Bound with another for Money, or in giving assurance to perform, and stand to the arbitrement, or award of those who shall judge, and determine any matter in difference: But how are we to apply this to the present case?

Lay down now, put me in a surety with thee: who is he that will strike hands with me?

There are three or four expositions given about it.

First, That *Job*, in these words, desires God to give surety that he would stand to the judgment which should be given: or he would have God assure him, that he would not deal with him according to the severity of his Justice, or the excellency of his Sovereignty as a Judge, but descend to such a course as is usual among men, while they are engaged in any controversie between themselves. *Job* hath spoken the same sense clearly before, in some other passages of this Book, especially (*Chap.*9.33,34.) But this sense is not clear to the scope of the present place: And therefore as they who maintain it, confess, that *Job* was somewhat too bold with God, so we may say that they are somewhat too bold with the Text.

Da fide-jussorẽ apud te, qui in hac contentione quæ mihi tecũ intercidit spondeat te statuturum iis quæ judicata fuerint; ut te non tanquã judicẽ geras sed tanquam litigatorẽ. Merc. *Familiarius quã par erat cũ Deo agit.* Merc.

For the reason or ground upon which *Job* desires that God would give him a surety, hath no correspondence with this interpretation (*Vers.*4.) *For thou hast hid their heart from understanding.* Now, what coherence is there between these two, that *Job* should say, *Thou hast hid their heart* (that is, the heart of these men) *from understanding: therefore give me a surety that thou wilt proceed with me after the manner of men.* Besides the words of the fifth Verse oppose it yet more, *He that speaks flattery to his Friend, the eyes of his Children shall fail.* Now, for *Job* to to desire God to put him in a Surety that he would deal thus, or thus with him, because the man who speaks flattery to his Friend, his Childrens eyes shall fail, hath no argument at all in it; yet the abetters of this Interpretation mollifie all, by saying, that *Job* spake from a disturbed spirit, being much moved with the ill-dealing of his Friends; and though there may be some inconsistence with the context, yet the Text considered in its own compass, bears it well enough; but I pass from it.

Secondly, That *Job* desires God to appoint a Surety between him and his Friends, who should undertake both God's Cause and his against them three: As if he had said, *Lord, my Friends have wronged me, and they*

have wronged thee too, O that thou wouldest provide a man furnished with wisdom, and a spirit of discerning, both to right thy honour, and to clear up my integrity. Such a one was *Elihu*, who appeared shortly after upon the Stage, and there acted such a part as this.

Thirdly (say others) *Job* desires that God himself would be his Surety, and take up the whole matter between him and his Friends; which he also did in the latter end of this Book, giving judgement for *Job*, and blaming the miscarriage of his Friends. So the word is used (*Isa.*38.14.) when *Hezekiah* lay sick, even unto death, he prayed, *Lord I am oppressed, undertake for me,* It is this word, *Be Surety for me.* A learned Translatour renders it, *Weave me through*, or *weave me to the end*; for the word signifies the Thred in weaving, called the *Woof*, which being put upon the Shuttle, is cast through the *Warp*, in making Cloath, whither Linnen or Woollen; thus it is used (*Lev.*13.52.) and so these words of *Hezekiah* carry on the Allegory of the tenth Verse, *I said in the cutting off of my dayes, &c.* and of the twelfth Verse, *I have cut off like a Weaver my life, he will cut me off with pining sickness.* In both which Verses, *Hezekiah* compares man's life to a piece of Cloath in the Loom, which is made sometimes shorter, and sometimes longer, and whersoever it ends, the Woof, or running Thred is cut off: Hence *Hezekiah* prayeth, Lord, these sicknesses, like a sharp Knife, threaten to cut the threed of my life, yet I beseech thee, do thou weave on, weave me to the end of that Warp which is given to man, in the common course of nature, and let not this sickness cut my thred in the mid-way: This is a good sense of the Text.

Pertexe me. Jun.

But when our Translators render the word, *Undertake for me*; the meaning is, I am sore oppressed with the violence of this sickness, which like one of the Sergeants of cruel death hath arrested me, nor is there any way for me to escape, unless thou, O Lord, rescue me out of its hands, or (as it were) give Bail, and become surety for me: *I am oppress, O Lord, undertake for me.*

David having done a great piece of Justice which contracted him much envy, and had drawn many Enemies upon him, thus bespeaks God (*Psal.*119. 121, 122.) *I have done judgement and justice, leave me not to mine oppressours, be surety for thy Servant:* that is, maintain me against those who would wrong me because I have done right; put thy self, or interpose between me and mine Enemies, as if thou wert my pledge. Impartial justice upon oppressours, layes the Judges open to oppression; but they who run greatest hazzards, in zeal for God, shall find God ready to be their Surety, when they pray, *Be surety for thy servants.* And thus we may conceive *Job* entreating the Lord to be his *Surety* and Protectour against all those oppositions and misapprehensions which were heaped upon him by man. *David* was assured that God would be his Surety (*Psal.*27.5.) *In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion*; and he assures all that fear God, that he will be their Surety (*Psal.*31.20.) *Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence, from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a Pavilion, from the strife of tongues.* To this sense the Vulgar Latine translates the whole Verse, *Put me near thy self, and then let whose will contend with me*; that is, Do thou stand by me, and undertake for me, and then I fear not who opposeth me: Which answers that of the Apostle (*Rom.* 8.) *If God be with us, who can be against us.*

Pone me juxtate & cujusvis manus pugnet contra me. Vulg.

This exposition holds out a comfortable truth to us, yet The Text seems to aim at somewhat else; for the words are not barely, *Put me in a surety*, but, *Put me in a surety with thee*; which shewes that God and the Surety he desired, were two, or distinct; his prayer was not that God would be his Surety, but that he might have a Surety with God. And therefore,

Fourthly, The whole Verse is thus read word for word out of the Original; *Appoint I pray thee, my Surety with thee, who is he then that will strike upon my hand*; that is, Appoint Christ, who is with thee in Heaven (and hath already agreed with thee, to be the Surety of distressed sinners, appoint him I say) to plead my cause, and to stand up for me, and then no man will dare to contend with me. So the words are of the same meaning with (*Chap.* 16.21.) where *Job* having made his appeal to God, declares his confidence that Christ would plead for him, and appear his Advocate.

Hence Observe, First, *Jesus Christ is not only an Advocate for his people, but their Surety.*

He doth not only plead our cause, but pay our debts. Christ entered into Bond for us, and took all our debts and duties, whatsoever we owe to God, upon Himself, to see all performed, that we might go free, and be accepted (*Heb.*7. 22.) *By so much was Jesus made the surety of a better Testament.* Where the same word which is here used by *Job*, is (with the difference only of that Dialect) used also in the Syriack version of that Epistle. Jesus Christ may be called the *Surety of the Covenant* two wayes.

First, Because he ratifies it on Gods part, making Faith of it unto us, or assuring us that all the mercies and good things therein granted and promised, shall be made good, and fulfilled to every Believer; as the Apostle concludes (2 *Cor.* 1. 20.) *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen:* that is, He will give a being and an accomplishment to them all. Whatsoever God hath spoken, he will see it done.

Secondly, Jesus Christ is called the Surety of the Covenant because he ratifies it on our part: For though (as *Socinians* object against this point) we sent not Christ unto God in our name, but God sent him to us in his name, yet Christ did undertake, as in our nature, so in our name, and did restipulate with God on our behalf, that whatsoever was owing to his justice and holiness by man, either as a penalty for past defaults, or as a duty to present commands, should all be satisfied and performed by himself: And as Christ (being our Surety) did both these in his own person, by active and passive obedience, so far as it was *satisfactory*; so (as a Surety) he helps us to perform the latter so far as it is *gratulatory.* For whatsoever duty God requires of us, and calls us to, in testimony of our thankfulness for his benefits, and of our submission to his will, this Christ undertakes to his Father that we shall do, and accordingly out of his fulness gives us grace and strength to do it.

Secondly, Observe, *If Christ be Surety for us, we need not fear any opposer.*

Put me in a Surety with thee (saith *Job*) *who will strike hands with me:* who will contend with me, or sue me? When either the Money or duty which a man is bound to pay, is already paid by his Surety, or is undertaken for by a Surety, who is not only able but willing to pay; what needs he to fear? The Creditor cannot Arrest the Debtor, if the Surety have discharged and cancel'd the Bond. Thus the Apostle teaches Faith to triumph (*Rom.*8.33,34.) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth; it is Christ who died, yea rather who is risen again?* *Job's* challenge, *Who is he that will strike hands with me?* is very parallel in words, and full to the sense of *Pauls*, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods Elect?*

Thirdly, Observe, *Our Surety is of Gods appointing, not of our own.*

Appoint, I pray (saith *Job*) *put me in a surety with thee.* We sinned of our selves, but we could not find a Surety of our selves. *God sent his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to deliver those that were under the Law* (*Gal.* 4. 4.) God sent his Son, man did not send for him, no nor sue for him: The way of our deliverance was as much from the will and wisdom of God as from his mercy (*Heb.*10. 10.) *By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* It was as impossible for man to contrive this way of his deliverance, as it was to deliver himself. *Job* did not direct God to this way of acquitting by a Surety, but God having revealed it to *Job*, he prays for the effect and comfort of it, to his own soul: when a Believer burdened with sin, or distressed by temptation, spreads his condition, and makes his moan to God, he in effect begs of him (as *Job* here did) to appoint and put him in a Surety with him, by perswading his heart, that Jesus Christ became bound for him, and hath discharged all his engagements according to that eternal Decree and Ordination of saving lapsed man by his mediation.

To

To which Ordination Jesus Christ most willingly consented, as the Apostle expresseth it (*Heb.*10.9.) *Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God, &c.* Which readiness and freeness of Jesus Christ to undertake for us, is also elegantly described by the Prophet *Jeremiah* (*Chap.*30.21.) by that very word which *Job* useth in this place, *For who is this, that engageth his heart to approach unto me, saith the Lord?* The Jews had been long under the *Babylonian* yoke, and their Governours were either strangers, or appointed by strangers. But the Lord promised in this Verse, that *their Nobles should be of themselves, and that their Governour should proceed from the midst of them:* Which was verified, when God turned their Captivity as Rivers in the South, and raised up *Zerubbabel*, and others of the Jewish line, to reassume the Government of *Judah*. But this Prophesie was chiefly intended and verified in a spiritual sense, when God sent Jesus Christ, a Governour, proceeding from the midst of them (of whom *Zerubbabel* was but a type) for of him the Lord speaks chiefly in this admiring Question, *Who is this, that engageth his heart to approach unto me?* Or who is this that with his heart (that is, with so much chearfulness and willingness) hath put himself as a surety for this people with me, to approach to me in their cause, and to take upon him the dispatch of all their affairs and concernments with me in the Court of Heaven? *Who is this great, this forward Engager*, but *he who also said, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God?* What will came he to do? Even this, To be a Surety, and so a Sacrifice to God for sinners (*Heb.* 10.) Thus the whole business of our deliverance, and the first motions to it, lay quite without us. God appointed and put in Christ our surety with him, and Christ freely condescended to be our surety, knowing that the whole debt must lie upon his discharge: *Put me in a surety with thee.*

But here it may be doubted, how this notion of a Surety, suites with this place, seeing *Job's* controversie was with man, not with God; and himself also had professed that all was clear for him in Heaven.

I answer, That although men accused *Job*, yet their accusation reach'd not his peace with God: for had he been such a one as they represented him, he must needs have fallen under the divine displeasure, more then he did under theirs. And therefore while he pleaded *Not-guilty* to their charge, he begs further discoveries of the favour of God to him through the Mediatour, by the remembrance of whose *Suretiship* his heart was confirmed in the pardon of all his sinful failings against God, whereof he was guilty, as well as his heart told him that he was not guilty of those wilful sins wherewith he was accused by men. When we lie under wrongful accusations, of which we indeed need no surety to acquit us, it is good to view and renew our Interest in *the Surety*, who will acquit us where there is need.

Job proceeds to re-inforce the reason why he desired God to undertake, or to provide a Surety for him.

Vers. 4. Thou hast hid their heart from understanding, therefore shalt thou not exalt them.

Or, *Thou hast hid understanding from their heart.* As if he had said, *Thou hast cast such a mist before the eyes of these men, who mock me, and judge me wicked, that they are unfit to be trusted with the determination of my cause; for did they not want a due light of understanding, they might quickly discern my integrity, and clear me from their own suspitions.* God sometimes (as it were) wraps, or folds up the hearts of the Children of men in ignorance, blindness, and darkness, and so hides not only understanding from their hearts, but their hearts from understanding. As God is said to circumcise the heart, to open the eyes, to take away the vail, when he gives the knowledge of his truth; so he is said to blind the eyes, to cover the heart with fat, and to cloud the understanding, when he denies, or withholds the knowledge of the truth: *Thou hast hid their hearts from understanding.*

שכל *Est mens, ratio, intellectus, dexteritas in agendo.*

The word which we translate **Understanding**, signifies any of, or all the intellectual powers, together with a readiness, or activity for dispatch in any service we are called unto, *Thou hast hid their heart from understanding*, therefore they do but bungle at the business, and cannot judge aright; they cannot discern the manner of thy dispensations towards me, nor see the bottom of my condition. *Job* did not censure his Friends as fools, or ignorant, as if they were witless, or worthless men; they were wise and learned, yea honest and godly too. But when *Job* saith, *Thou hast hid their heart from understanding*, we are to restrain it to the matter in hand, or to his particular case: As if he had said, *Thou hast hid the understanding of what thou hast done to me from their hearts; thy providences are mysteries and riddles which they cannot unfold; and as they know not the meaning of what thou dost, so they know not my meaning, when I said* (*Chap.*9.17.) *He hath multiplyed my wounds without cause*; Nor when I said (*Vers.*22.) *He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked. These sayings are secrets to my Friends: Now, Lord, for as much as these men have no true insight in this present controversie, therefore I beg that thou wouldest undertake for me, or put me in a surety with thee.*

Further, For the clearing of this Scripture, it may be questioned: First, how God is said to hide the heart from understanding? God doth this four wayes.

First, By speaking darkly, or in such a manner, as the understanding cannot easily find a passage to the things that are spoken. *A Parable is a dark saying:* And when Christ Preached in Parables, *His Disciples came and said unto him, Why speakest thou to them in Parables?* (*Mat.*13.10.) Now among other reasons which Christ was pleased to give of that dispensation, this was one (*Vers.*14.) *In them is fulfilled the Prophesie of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand: and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive.* As if Christ had said, These men have justly deserved to be punished with spiritual darkness (which is *not Understanding*) and therefore I have spoken to them in a dark way. They did not hear to obey what was plain and easie to be understood, and therefore now they shall hear what they cannot understand.

Secondly, God hides the heart from understanding, by denying, or not giving light; and that a twofold light.

First, The outward light of his Word: Thus all those people are said to *sit in darkness*, that is, to have no understanding in the things of God, where the Gospel is not published.

Secondly, By denying, or not giving the inward light of his Spirit, though the light of the World abound. For as a man may have the Sun shining in his face, and yet be in the dark, if he wants eye-sight: So (as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4.) the Gospel is hid in the most glorious shining of it to those, whose *minds the God of this World hath blinded.* Now, every man is born spiritually blind, or he is blind by nature, and he is blinded by the God of *this World*, till the God of *all Worlds* sends his spirit with the Word for the opening of his eyes.

Thirdly, God hides the heart from understanding, as by not giving, so by withdrawing the light which he hath given. Many have forfeited their eye-sight and their light, and God hath taken the forfeiture of them: Which he doth first, when men are proud of the light, and puft up with knowledge. Secondly, when men are unthankful for the light, and will not acknowledge God the giver of it. Thirdly, when men grow wanton or vain in the light, when they abuse it, and having the light walk in darkness. All which reasons of Gods withdrawing light, as many Scriptures testifie, so they are all testified in that one Scripture (*Rom.* 1. 21, 22.)

Fourthly, As God may be said to hide the heart from understanding, by a total withdrawing of light, so by withholding it for a time, or in part, by clouding or eclipsing it. God hides the heart of some men from understanding, only in such a point, or at such a season, giving them light in other things, yea and in that thing too at another season. This fourth way I conceive most proper to this Text of *Job*; for his freinds were not under that terrible judgment of a total hiding their hearts from understanding; only the light was with-held from them in and about that transaction. As when Christ after his Resurrection appeared to those Disciples (*Luke* 24. 26.) the Text saith, *Their eyes were held, that they should not know him.* And (*Vers.* 31.) *There eyes were opened, and they knew him*: Thus God at one time holds the intellectual eye of some good men, that they cannot discern such or such a Truth, yet afterwards he opens their eyes and they discern it.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *The wiſeſt men do not ſee all truths, nor are they able to judge of all matters.*

Theſe were wiſe men, very wiſe men; they ſpake excellent things, and very underſtandingly about God, they gave *Job* very good counſel, but yet they failed here. *Elihu* (*Chap.* 32.9.) ſaith, *Great men are not always wiſe*; we may ſay wiſe men are not always wiſe: and as *no man is wiſe at all times, ſo there is no man wiſe in all things.* We cannot conclude, that becauſe a man hath given a right judgement in ſome one, or in many points, that therefore we may truſt his deciſions in all points. As God hides all wiſdom from ſome men, ſo he very rarely, if at all, truſts any one man or ſort of men at one time with all wiſdom. *Job's* Friends were well acquainted with, and they have acquainted us with many excellent notions about that great Doctrine of Providence, but they were much miſtaken about the Providence of God with *Job*, nor did they ſhew themſelves acquainted with that excellent Deſign of God in his afflicting Providences, thereby to try the ſtrength and manifeſt the graces which he hath beſtowed upon his people.

Secondly, Obſerve, *The hiding of the heart from, and the opening of the heart to underſtanding, are the work of God.*

We ſee no further then God gives us light, and ſo far as he leads us, we go right; if he withdraw, we turn aſide, and quickly wander from the way of truth and righteouſneſs. We have nothing of our own but ſin and ignorance, wiſdom is of God; *Every good and perfect gift comes from above.* As God hides all Goſpel-truths and myſteries from worldly wiſe men; ſo no Goſpel-myſtery is known to any man till God diſcover and make it known (*Matth.* 11.25.) *At that time Jeſus anſwered and ſaid, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, becauſe thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, but haſt revealed them unto babes.* By wiſe and prudent, he means worldly wiſe men, meer Philoſophers and Politicians, or Hypocritical Profeſſors, ſuch as the Scribes and Phariſees were, from theſe God (in judgement) hides the things of the Kingdom of Heaven, and reveals them unto Babes; even to ſuch as are at the greateſt diſtance in natural conſiderations from the capacity of ſuch rich and heavenly manifeſtations. There is no greater argument, that God opens the heart to underſtand, then to ſee Babes underſtand: If true knowledge in ſpiritual myſteries were from man, they who have moſt of man in them would have moſt of that knowledge; but we are taught by experience, that ſuch men as the World calls *Fools, do not err in the way of holineſs* (*Iſa.* 35.8.) And that the courſe of all Worldly wiſe men, is a continual erring from that way, and that ſome godly men, who are higher by head and ſhoulders then ſome of their Brethren in natural wiſdom, have run into, and maintained errours; whither can we aſcribe all this, but to the power of God? *Moſes* ſpeaks of the many ſigns and miracles which God wrought in the midſt of that people, which they did not underſtand: Why, what was the reaſon? *Moſes* tells us expreſly, what, *Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to conceive, nor eyes to ſee, nor ears to hear to this day* (*Deut.*29.4.) They had ſenſitive eyes and ears, yea, they had a rational heart or mind, but they wanted a ſpiritual eye to ſee, a ſpiritual ear to hear, a ſpiritual heart or mind to apprehend and improve thoſe wonderful works of God: And theſe they had not, becauſe God had not given them ſuch eyes, ears, and hearts. Wonders without grace, cannot open the eyes fully, but grace without wonders can. And as man hath not an eye to ſee the wonderful works of God ſpiritually; until it is given; ſo, much leſs hath he an eye to ſee the wonders of the Word of God, till it be given him from above; and therefore *David* prays (*Pſal.*119.18.) *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy Law.* And if the wondrous things of the Law, are not much ſeen till God give an eye, then much leſs are the wondrous things of the Goſpel. The light of nature ſhews us ſomewhat of the Law, but nothing of the Goſpel was ever ſeen by the light of nature: Many who have ſeen and admired ſome excellencies in the Law, could never ſee and therefore have derided that which is the excellency of the Goſpel, till God hath opened their heart to underſtanding.

Thirdly obſerve, *It is a great judgement to have our hearts hidden from underſtanding in the things of God.*

It is a ſore judgement not to have the light, but it is a ſorer judgement not to ſee by the light when we have it. To have a heart hid from underſtanding, is far worſe then to have a heart unable to underſtand. Our inability to underſtand, ariſeth two wayes.

Firſt, From a natural infirmity in the underſtanding.

Secondly, From the natural obſcurity of the matter preſented to the underſtanding.

Plain truths are not apprehended by a weak underſtanding, and the ſtrongeſt underſtanding cannot apprehend ſome obſcure truths, as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſaith of S. *Paul's* Epiſtles, that in them *there are ſome things hard to be underſtood* (*2 Pet.*3.16.) Now as there is an affliction in it, not to be able to underſtand any truth which God hath revealed for our uſe, ſo there is much wrath and judgment in it, when God hides underſtanding from the heart in any of thoſe things which he hath revealed for our uſe; but eſpecially in thoſe things which are neceſſary, either to our future, or our preſent peace. Thus the Prophet *Iſaiah* was ſent to preach that people blind, and deaf, and ignorant (*Chap.* 6.9, 10.) *Go tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but underſtand not, and ſee ye indeed, but perceive not: Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſee with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and underſtand with their hearts, and convert and be healed:* As if the Lord had ſaid, This people ſhall want neither means nor Miniſters, neither word nor light; but they ſhall reap no benefit neither by means nor Miniſters, neither by word nor light; yea, all theſe means ſhall produce contrary effects, they ſhall be hardned and not ſoftned, blinded and not enlightned, their ears ſhall be deafned, not bored by the Word. They would not hear, therefore they ſhall not; they would not underſtand, therefore they ſhall not be able to underſtand. They who refuſe the offers of mercy, ſhall be deſtroyed with the offers of mercy. And as God doth often take away the Goſpel in wrath, ſo he ſometimes ſends it in wrath. It is a great miſery to have the Goſpel hid from a people for want of revelation, but it is loweſt miſery to have it hid in the revelation. *Jeruſalem* ſignifies, *The viſion or ſight of peace*; and this was the glory of *Jeruſalem*; yet at laſt this glory was taken from *Jeruſalem*, though her name continued; *Jeruſalem* (*the ſight of peace*) could not ſee her peace (*Luk.*19.41,42,43.) When Chriſt came near to *Jeruſalem, He beheld the City, and wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace:* What then? Chriſt ſuppreſſes the happineſs which they ſhould have enjoyed by ſuch a ſight, with a ſilent admiration; and only tells them weeping, *But now they are hid from thine eyes*; How hid? Was there no more Preaching in *Jeruſalem*, no publick Miniſtry after that day? Yes, the whole Colledg of Apoſtles preached there, and they preached the things which belonged both to their temporal, and to their eternal peace; yet as the things which belonged to their eternal peace, were hidden from moſt of their eyes, ſo the things which concerned their temporal peace, were hidden from ſo many of their eyes, that their ruine was unavoidable. God hid their heart from underſtanding, therefore he did not exalt them; yea, therefore he caſt them down.

Thus *Job* deſcribes the ſequel of that ſad diſpenſation to his Friends, *Thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding:* What follows?

Therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them.] Mr. *Broughton* renders it; *Therefore thou ſhalt not give them Honour:* And is this all, that they ſhall not be exalted or honoured? No, the Negative hath this Affirmative in it, Thou wilt therefore caſt them down, or humble them: As (*Prov.*17.21.) *Solomon* ſpeaks of the Father of a Fool, *He that begets a Fool, doth it to his ſorrow, and the Father of a Fool hath no joy:* Is that all, that he hath no joy? No, the meaning is that the Father of a Fool, hath much ſorrow; yea, the denial of all joy, affirms more then the feeling of much ſorrow, for it ſpeaks all ſorrow. So, *to accept perſons in judgement is not good*; that is extream ill: There is nothing worſe then that, which in this ſenſe is not good. Thus here, thou haſt hid their heart from underſtanding, *therefore ſhalt thou not exalt them:* that is, Thou ſhalt

humble

humble and abase them; and though Non-exaltation, in this place, doth not carry all kind, or the extremity of abasement, yet it carries a very great abasement: Why? What was this abasement, or *Non-exaltation?*

We may interpret it two ways. *Thou shalt not exalt them*, that is,

First, Thou shalt not give them this honour to determine my cause; thou wilt take the matter out of their hands into thine own, or thou wilt put it into some other hand.

Secondly, Thou shalt not exalt them to the honour of a conquest over me, or to carry the cause against me; yea, they shall be overthrown, and the cause shall go against them: Both these ways answer the event. *Job's* three Friends had neither the honour to end this controversie, nor did they at all prevail in the end; they went not away with victory, nor could they glory, that they had got the day of *Job: Thou shalt not exalt them.*

Hinc colligo te nolle ut de reportata super me victoria glorientur. Bold.

Note hence, First, *Exaltation is from God.*

Promotion comes neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; that is, it comes not by the power of any creature, in any coast or quarter of the earth. Whence comes it then? The next Verse directs us, For God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another (*Psal.* 75.6,7.) We can no more make our selves great men, then, we can make our selves men: Our civil frame is as much from God as our natural; by what hand soever we are exalted, it is God that exalts us.

Secondly, Observe, *God hides understanding from them, whom he is about to abase, or cast down.*

The fall of most men is from their own folly, and usually God takes away their wisdom, whose honour he takes away. They shall not see the way to their own preservation, who are intended for destruction. All Ages have taught us this Doctrine in the downfal of the greatest Princes; who have refused all counsels and overtures for their own good, till their evils have psoved past cure, and themselves irrecoverably lost. That which a Child might foresee, they have had no eyes to see, nor hearts to consider: because God would either not exalt them, or not establish them in their exaltations, therefore he hid their hearts from understanding the things of their own peace. Fools are not fit to be exalted to high places, and when once we see those who are in high places, *acting the foolish man*, we shall soon see them tumbling down from their high places, *and acting the miserable man.* Some who were never very wise, have been exalted to, and continued in high places; but there was scarce ever any man, who (in this sense) lost his wits, that hath either been exalted to a high place, or continued in his exaltation.

Quos perdere vult Jupiter hos dementat.

Thirdly, Considering those particulars wherein the *Non-exaltation* here propheſied of, did consist.

Observe, *It is an honour to hear and judge the cause of another man.*

God is the Judge of all the Earth, he will hear and determine the causes and cases of all mankind. He that hath the hearing but of any one case, shares in this honour of God, and they who are set apart by office to do so, are called Gods (*Psal.* 82.) God puts so much of his own work into the hand of a Judge, that he therefore puts his own name upon him.

Again, We may look upon *Job's* Friends, not as Judges of his case, but as Parties, putting in their accusation, and pleading against him.

Hence observe, *It is an honour, and an exaltation to win the day in any cause, or to get the better.*

Whatsoever the contention be, or in what way soever managed, whether by the Sword, or by the Tongue, or by the Pen, to be victorious in it, is honourable; and he that loses his causes, loses much of his credit also. And though prevailing, or success doth not at all justifie the matter (it is the matter which must justifie the success) yet success doth alwayes exalt the man. He that overcomes in a dispute carries away the honour, though possibly he carry not away the truth.

Lastly, From the connexion of this with the former part of the Verse,

Observe, *They who maintain errour among men, shall not find favour with God.*

A heart hid from understanding is hid from the truth; God loves his truth so well, that he will not exalt those who depress his truth. *Job's* Friends being left in the dark (as to that point in question) *did not speak of God the thing that was right* (*Chap.* 42.7.) *And therefore the Lord said to* Eliphaz, *My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two Friends.* Though an errour be held unknown and in zeal for God (as they did) yet the jealousie of God waxeth hot against such: These repenting were, and such as they, repenting, may be pardoned, but they shall nor be exalted. And if they who for want of light of knowledge, and in much heat of honest zeal, defend a lesser errour (such was theirs) shall not be exalted, how will the Lord cast them down who broach, and spread blasphemous errours, and damnable Doctrines, in a time of clear light, and against frequent admonitions, if not convictions? *Whosoever* (saith Christ, *Mat.* 5.19.) *shall break one of these least Commandments, and teach men so* (joyning the errour of his practice with, or turning it into the errour of his opinion) *he shall be called least* (that is, nothing at all, or No-body) *in the Kingdom of Heaven*: And he who is nothing in the Kingdom of Heaven, is not exalted, how high soever he may get in the Kingdoms of the earth. And if the teacher of errour against the least Commandment of the Law shall have no place in Heaven, where will their place be who teach errours against the greatest Commandments of the Law, yea against the most precious and absolute necessary principles and foundations of the Gospel?

Vers. 5. **He that speaks flattery to his friends; even the eyes of his Children shall fail.**

There is some variety in expounding these words; because of the several notions into which the Original is rendred: As we read the Text, it is a plain affirmation of judgment upon the posterity of Flatterers.

The word which we translate *Flattery* signifies in the Verb to divide into parts, and hence in the Noun, a lot or portion, because every lot or portion is divided from the whole; it signifies also a prey or booty, which men take in War, or which Thieves and Robbers take from Travellers upon the high way, and that upon the former reason, because when a prey is taken, they divide, or cast it into several portions, or parts: Hence also (say some) it signifies to flatter; because the tongue of a flatterer is divided from his heart.

חלק *Divisit in partes, in Hiphil emollivit, lævigavit, blanditus fuit.*

Further, It signifieth to smooth and polish, or (as we say) to make a thing very glib and neat. This comes nearest our translation; for a flatterer hath a smooth, polished tongue, and his trade is to smooth, or sooth both things and persons. The flatterers tongue is like the Harlots tongue, to whom this word is applied (*Prov.*7.21.) *With much fair speech, she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips* (with the smoothness, or as some translate, with the lenity of her lips) *she forced him:* Flattery seems to be far from force, yet nothing puts, or holds men under a greater force then flattery.

He that speaks flattery to his friend.] Flattery is a special language, though it be spoken in all languages. Men learn *to speak flattery*, even as we learn to speak Latine, French, Italian, Spanish, or any other Language: Flattery is an Art, it hath rules of its own, and terms of its own; he that *speaks flattery:* Mr. *Broughton* in this place calls it, *Vain-goodly-speech:* And the Apostle *Paul* calls it, *Good words, and fair speeches* (*Rom.*16.18.) The expressions which the Apostle useth, are most proper to the description of flattery; they are both Compounds, as the spirit of the Flatterer also is: He hates simplicity, or singleness of heart, making a shew of much goodness in word, but is void of deed and substance: He promiseth fair, and when he speaks, you would think he minded nothing, or were solicitous about nothing but the Honour and advantage of him to whom he speaks, when indeed he minds nothing but himself, and self-concernments, as the Apostle in that place deciphers him; *He serves not our Lord Jesus Christ, but his own belly, and by his good words and fair speeches, he deceives the hearts of the simple.* The Greeks have another characteristical word for

Νὰ τῆς χρησολογίας καὶ δολογίας.

this

this sort of men, by which they mean all such as seem to carry it fair with all men, but maintain true friendship with no man; we may call them *Men-pleasers*, but *Self-seekers*. As also one of the old Emperours had his Sur-name from that word used by the Apostle in the place last mentioned; because he was observed very ready to give all men good words, but had no regard to do good, yea, he did very much evil; or as another gives the reason, because he was a *Fawning Prince, rather then a kind one*. *Job* seems to charge his Friends, that they were men of such a temperament, and had rather fawn'd upon him then been real friends to him.

Hæc est blandities quæ à Græcis vocatur ἀρεσκεία, & Aristoteles vulgò ἀρεσκοὺς, appellari docet eos, qui comiter cum omnibus cõversantur, sed veram amicitiam cũ nemine colunt. Arist. l. 8. ad Nico. *Pertinax Imperator dictus χερσολόγος quod blandus esset magis quã benignus.* Bez. in loc. ex Aurelio. Vict.

But here it may be questioned, Why doth *Job* speak his Friends speakers of flattery? He had little reason to complain he was flattered; and we find him often complaining that he was roughly dealt with: *Job* heard few polished, or buttered words, but bitter words great store, why then doth he say, *He that speaks flattery to his friend?*

We may understand it two wayes.

In reference to { *Job.* / *God.*

First, His Friends had spoken flattery to him; for though in some things they were very severe and harsh, yet in other things he might interpret their sayings to be but soothings; they made him large promises of a restauration, that his estate should be like the morning, that he should out-shine the very Sun, and be a great man again. Thus they spake (*Chap.*5,19,20. *Chap.*8.5. *Chap.*11.15,16, *&c.*) he looked on all these fair promises as flatteries, because in his own thoughts he was a dead man, and his calamities past all hope of recovery in this World. As if he had said, *Why do you feed me with such vain hopes, and propheſie to me of Wine, and of strong drink, of earthly honour and riches, of length of dayes, and of a multitude of years yet behind in the race of this present life; I cannot but call this flattery, and a departure from the laws of friendship: For alas! My dayes are extinct, my breath is corrupt, and yet you are telling me of long life, and good dayes in this World.* And indeed this is at once the custom and the fault of many who visit their Friends upon the borders of death; they think they are not friendly, unless they labour to give them hopes of life, and deliver their opinion peremptorily, *We doubt not but you will do well enough, you will recover from this sickness, and getting over this brunt, see many dayes.* This is flattery: it is our duty to speak comfortably to our dying Friends, to set forth the love of God, and his readiness to pardon, to prepare them for a better life, and to make their passage out of this more easie: But when we see them at the Graves mouth; when death is ready to seize on them, then to tell them of long life, is rather the office of a Flatterer then of a Friend. We shew more love to our dying Friends, by offering our counsels, and tendering up our prayers for their fitness to depart out of this life, then by shewing our desire, that they should live, and our loathness to part with them.

Is est χερσολόγος qui verbis multũ pollicetur nihil præstat. Bez. *Blanditur dum externa bona illi pollicebantur.* Merc.

Secondly, *Job's* Friends may be said to speak flattery to God; and then the words are an Argument from the greater to the less; as if he had said, *If he who speakes flattery to his friend, a man like himself, shall be punished, then much more shall he, who speaks flattery to God.* But, you will say, How can God be flattered? There are two wayes of flattering men.

First, By promising them more then we intend.

Secondly, By applauding them more then they deserve.

When we cry up those for wise men who are little guilty of wisdom; or commend those as good, who are very guilty of evil; both these are strains of flattery: It is impossible to flatter God in this latter sense, for we cannot speak of God higher then he is; his glory, wisdom, and goodness, are above, not only our words, but our thoughts. But we may flatter God in the first sense, by promising him more then we intend; they on their sick beds do but flatter God, who tell him how good and holy they will be, when their hearts are not right with him: Yet neither is this flattery of God which *Job* may be supposed to suggest against his friends. The flattery here suggested, is their justifying the proceedings of God in afflicting *Job*, by condemning *Job*; as if there had been no way left to clear up the righteousness of God, but by concluding that *Job* was unrighteous: This manner of arguing, *Job* calls, *Speaking wickedly for God, and talking deceitfully for him:* This he also calls, *The accepting of his person* (*Chap.*13.7,8.) As if they had been the Patrons and Promoters of Gods cause and honour, while they thus pleaded against *Job*, and laid his honour and innocency in the dust. That there is a sinful flattery of God in such a procedure against man, was shewed more largly in the place last mentioned, to which I refer the Reader for his further satisfaction.

He that speaks flattery to his friend, What of him? The next words tell us what.

The eyes of his Children shall fail.] But shall he himself escape? Shall not he smart for it? Saith not the Scripture, *Whatsoever a man sowes, that shall he reap:* the sower shall be the reaper.

This is not spoken to free the Flatterer from punishment, but to shew that more then he shall be punished for his flattery; as he himself shall not escape, so he may bring others also into danger with him: As sin spreads it self in the pollution of it, so in the punishments of it. When but one sins, many may be defiled, and when but one acts a sin, many may be endangered; a man knows not upon how many he may bring evil, when he doth ill himself.

The eyes of his Children shall fail. What is meant by the failing of the eyes, was shewed (*Chap.*11.20.) where *Zophar* saith, *The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.* In general 'tis this, They shall be disappointed of their hopes, or they shall expect so long and nothing come, that their eyes shall fail with expectation, *The eyes of his Children shall fail.*

Morũ atque vitæ imitatores. Aquin.

Some by Children, understand, not his natural Children, or the Children of his body, but his Children in a figure, such as imitate and follow him, who take his course, and tread in his paths; for as they are called the Children of the Devil, who are like him, and do his works; and as we are called the Children of God, not only in reference to our new birth and spiritual generation, but also in reference to our new obedience and holy actions (*Mat.*5. 44,45.) So they may be called a mans Children, who resemble him in his manners, as well as they who issued from his loins.

Hence Note, First, *The punishment of sin doth not alway rest or determine in him that committed the sin.*

The bitter fruits of sin are often transmitted, and handed over to those who had no present hand in them when they were committed. The whole Family and Posterity of sinners may smart many a day after, and inherit the sins of their Progenitors, as well as their Lands; when the Father purchaseth, or provides an Inheritance for his Child by flattery, or any other indirect way, the eyes of his children may fail for it. I have met with this point before (*Chap.*15. 33,34.) and elswhere, therefore I only touch and pass from it.

Secondly, Consider the particular sin against which this judgement is pronounced: It is the speaking of flattery.

Hence Observe, *The sin of flattery is a very provoking sin.*

That sin which shall be punished in posterity, is no ordinary sin: Those good actions which the Lord promiseth to reward in posterity, or in after-times, have a special excellency in them: It shewed that the deed of *Jehu*, in destroying *Ahabs* House, and rooting out his Idolatry (though *Jehu* himself was a very bad man, and did it with a bad heart, yet I say, it shewed that the deed) was very good, because the Lord promised to reward his Children for it, with the possession of the Throne of *Israel* to the fourth generation (2 *King.*10.30.) Now as those acts have a great deal of excellency in them, for which God rewards and blesseth to posterity; so those sins have a special malignity in them, which are threatened and pursued with revenges to Posterity: Such sins have a touch of the first sin in them. The punishment of *Adams* first sin is hereditary to the last man; all have smarted for that sin, and the eyes of his Children have failed, because he looked upon, and eat the forbidden fruit. Now every sin which is thus spoken of in Scripture, as Idolatry in the second Commandment, and here flattery, hath a special stamp of the first sin upon it;

not

not only as being a ſin, and ſo a derivative from it, but as having much of the ſinfulneſs of that ſin in it: The evils of which did not dye with thoſe who gave it life.

And as all flattery is very ſinful, ſo ſpiritual flattery, or flattery about ſpiritual things, is moſt ſinful; both becauſe about them we ought to be moſt plain-hearted, and becauſe a deceit about them doth moſt hurt. Any kind of flattery is bad enough, but this is worſt; ſuch was that of the falſe Prophets, *Who daubed with untempered morter, and cryed, Peace, peace, when there was no peace:* Who ſet themſelves to pleaſe, not to inſtruct the people, and were therefore buſie in ſewing pillows under every elbow. A flatterer would make all men lean ſoft, ſit eaſie, and be well perſwaded of themſelves, though their caſe be ſtark naught: He that thus ſpeaks flattery to his friend, doth indeed ſpeak miſery, yea, and death to his friend. The flatterer is the greateſt hater, and no man ſpeaks worſe of another then he who ſpeaks better of him then he deſerves, or then his ſtate will bear. It is dangerous to ſpeak all the good of a man that is true; but to ſpeak good of him which is not true, may be his utter undoing.

And though it hath been ſaid, and often experienced, that flattery gains friends, and truth ſpeaking hatred; yet none have run into ſo much hatred as flatterers. For as it is ſaid of Treaſon, That many love the Treaſon, but all hate the Traytor; ſo many love to hear themſelves flattered, but all hate Flatterers. And though true reproofs are bitter Pills, and very diſtaſtful to moſt in the taking down, yet wiſe *Solomon* hath aſſured us, That, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards ſhall find more favour* (even with that man) *then he that flattereth with his lips* (Prov. 28. 23.) There are many who, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 36. 2.) *Flatter themſelves*, they are their own Paraſites. But as they who flatter others do moſt commonly fall under their diſpleaſure; ſo all they (ſooner or later) ſhall fall under their own diſpleaſure (and that's worſe then the diſpleaſure of any, yea, then of all men) who have flattered themſelves. It is our wiſdom and our peace, to be plain with our ſelves and with all men, how much preſent diſquiet ſoever we get by it. *Paul* ſpeaks it out to the *Theſſalonians* (Epiſt. 2. 3, 4, 5.) *Our exhortation was not of deceit, neither at any time uſed we flattering words. But as we were allowed of God to be put in truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak; not as pleaſing men, but God.*

Further, theſe words may be expounded, not as a threat againſt his Friends for their flattering of him, but as a threat againſt himſelf, in caſe he ſhould have flattered them. And ſo they carry alſo the weight of a reaſon, why he uſed ſo much freedom in reproving them, and ſhewing them the danger that hung over their heads: As if he had ſaid, *You, my Friends, may perhaps wonder at my boldneſs and plainneſs of ſpeech, while I tell you that God hath hid your hearts from underſtanding, and that he will not exalt you: But you muſt pardon me, I had rather incur your frowns by my downright dealing with you, then Gods by flattering you; I had rather make your ears tingle by reproving you, then make the eyes of my Children ake by my applauding you; for this I have learned as a certain truth, that he who ſpeaks flattery to his friend, the eyes of his children ſhall fail.*

Hence Obſerve, *That even a godly man doth, and ought to ſtrengthen himſelf in doing his duty, by the remembrance of thoſe evils which are threatned againſt the neglect of it.*

A Believer makes uſe of the threatnings, as well as of the promiſes, to keep his heart cloſe in obedience. That is the beſt obedience which ſprings from the fear of the Lord and his goodneſs; but that may be a good and pure act of obedience which ſprings from the fear of the Lord, and his wrath. Chriſt exhorts and *forewarns his friends to fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into Hell* (*Luke* 12. 5.) 'Tis nobleſt and moſt ſpiritual, to obey God for himſelf, without reſpect either to Heaven or Hell; yet we may have reſpect both to Heaven and Hell, to reward and puniſhment in our obedience. *Joſeph* reſiſted temptation by the higheſt Argument, when he ſaid, *How can I do this great evil, and ſin againſt God?* (Gen. 39. 9.) He reſiſts temptation by a good Argument, who ſaith, How can I ſin againſt God, which will do ſo much evil to my ſelf, or draw many evils upon mine? And thus *Job* argued according to this interpretation, when he ſaid, *He that ſpeaks flattery to his friend, the eyes of his Children ſhall fail:* Or, as Mr. *Broughton* renders, *The eyes of the given that way* (that is to flattery) *ſhall be conſumed.*

There is another reading of the latter clauſe, and ſo of the whole Verſe, *The eyes of thoſe that conſider, obſerve, or attend him, ſhall fail*; and ſo they derive the word (*Bamin*) not from (*Ben*) a Son, or a Child, but from (*Bin*) which ſignifies to underſtand or conſider, *The eyes of thoſe that conſider him ſhall fail:* Then the meaning is, my friends are ſo exact, and acute in flattery, in compoſing and uttering fauning ſpeeches, that they who hear them are wrapt into an extaſie, and their very eyes do fail with their intentneſs in beholding them. They are ſuch powerful Orators, that they can draw the minds and eyes of their Auditors whither they pleaſe, and cauſe their eyes to ake with looking ſo wiſtly on them, having (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in a like caſe) their perſons in admiration.

Job having thus complained againſt, and taxed his Friends of flattery, goes on to aggravate the ſadneſs of his condition, and upon the whole, to move the Lord to haſten an end of his miſeries, or to haſten his end, either to determine them, or to determine him.

Vox Banim non filios ſed intelligentes vel conſideran-tes ſignificat à Verbo בון *quod eſt intelligere, hinc ſic conficitur textus.* Et oculi conſiderantium eum deficient. *Bold.*

VERS. 6, 7.

He hath made me alſo a by-word of the people, and afore-time I was as a Tabret.
Mine eye alſo is dim by reaſon of ſorrow, and all my members are as a ſhadow.

IN theſe two Verſes *Job* repeats and aggravates his affliction; and he doth it (as he had done before) by ſhewing the effects of his affliction. We judge of cauſes by the effects; that which produceth a great effect, muſt needs have a greatneſs of caſuality in it. Two effects of his affliction are laid down in this context.

The firſt tells us what his affliction wrought in others.

The ſecond, what it wrought upon himſelf.

What his affliction wrought in others, is ſet forth (*Verſ.* 6.) *He was become the talk of all, poſſibly, the ſport of not a few.*

The Argument ſtands thus,

That it is a very great affliction, which every man ſpeaks of, or which makes a man a by-word.

But ſuch is my affliction, every one talks of it, and I am made a by-word of the people.

Therefore my affliction is very great.

What his affliction wrought upon himſelf, is expreſſed in the ſeventh Verſe: Dimneſs in his eye, and weakneſs in his whole body, *Mine eye alſo is dim, by reaſon of ſorrow, and all my members are as a ſhadow.*

The Argument may be formed thus,

That is a great affliction, the ſorrows whereof dim the eyes, and macerate all the members of the body.

But ſuch is the ſorrow of my affliction, that my very eyes are dim, and all my members are macerated.

Therefore mine is a great affliction.

As if he had ſaid, *Should I hold my peace and ſit down in ſilence, yet my dim eyes and dryed bones, my withered skin and crippled limbs, are as ſo many tongues, yea, trumpets, to ſpeak and ſpeak aloud the ſorrows of my heart, and the ſufferings of my outward man.* This ſeems to be *Job*'s ſcope in the words now under hand.

Verſe 6. **He hath made me a by-word of the people.**

He] Who is that? The Antecedent is inquired for: Our late Annotations fix it upon *Eliphaz*, who ſpake laſt, and at whom he pointed in the Verſe before, *He hath talked ſo of me, that now I am a common talk: He hath ſpoken ſuch words by me, that now I am made a by-word.* We had need take heed of what we ſay of any Brother, for if one man give out the word, enough will follow to make *him a by-word.*

Others reſolve it upon God himſelf, *He*, that is, God hath made me a by-word. *Job* at firſt acknowledged God the Author of his troubles, and ſo he hath done all along, as hath been toucht in divers paſſages of this diſpute: As no man

Hæc de Domino dicit, quem ubiq; facit ſuarum calamitatũ authorem. Merc:

man lifts up his hand, so no man lifts up his tongue without God. As afflicting actions, so afflicting speeches are at his dispose: *He hath made me*

משל *Potestatem quandam habet & excellentiam; significat proverbium, parabolam, axioma quod vocatur propositio maxima.*

A by-word.] The Hebrew word in the Verb, signifies properly, *to rule, to govern, to have dominion, or supreme power, as a Prince or Potentate:* And by a Metaphor it signifies any thing that excelleth, or is eminent in any kind: Upon this account it is oft employed to signifie those rules of truth and holiness, to which every mans reason must yield obeysance; such are called in a way of excellency by Moralists, *Proverbs*; by Orators, *Sentences*; by Logicians, *Maxims*, or *Principles*, which are not to be proved, but supposed: No man must deny them, or if any man do, he is not to be disputed with; *such rules are Rulers*; and they are thus expressed upon a twofold reason,

First, Because of the difficulty and mysteriousness of their meaning; they are of few words, but of so large and multiplying a sence, that they do as much master, as enlighten the understanding.

Secondly, They are so expressed because of the extent or universality of their usefulness, they being such as bear sway in, and have an influence upon all transactions. That one sentence, or rule of Equity, *What you would have others do to you, do so to them*, runs through the whole course of mans life, and reacheth us in all acts of Justice, whether distributive, or commutative. And as those proverbial sentences, which direct justice and good manners, are of great command and authority among men; so likewise are those which had their rise from the reproof of any mans injustice, or evil manners. If once a man be made a *by-word* (whether the grounds of it be true or false, makes no matter as to this point) it will stick by him, and overcome his credit; let him do what he can, he shall hardly claw it off again as long as he lives. *Thou hast made me a by-word.*

In parabolizare populorum. Nam est infinitum, q. d. ut sim illis proverbio & vulgi fabula, vel ut de me proverbium faciant, Merc.

Further, to clear the Text, we may consider that the word *By-word* in the Hebrew is of the Infinitive Mood, and so some render it, *Thou hast made me for the parabolizing of the people*; or that the people make Parables and Proverbs of me; which we render fully to the sence, *Thou hast made me* (a Parable, a Proverb, or) *a by-word among the people.* Two things are usually implyed when a man is said to be a *by-word.*

First, That he is in a very low condition. Some men are so high, that the tongues of the common people dare not climb over them; but where the Hedge is low, every man goes over.

Secondly, That he is in a despised condition: To be a *by-word* carries a reflexion of disgrace. He that is much spoken of, in this sence, is ill spoken of; and he is quite lost in the opinion of men, who is thus found in their discourse. It is possible (though rare) for a man to be in a low, or bad condition, and yet to be well spoken of, yea, to be highly honoured; some are had in precious esteem, while they lye upon the dunghil: But usually a man greatly afflicted is little valued, and he whose state is laid low in the World, his person is also low in the opinion of the World. *Job* was at that time a By-word in both these Notions; he was low in state, and he was lower in esteem.

Hence Observe, First, *Great sufferers in the things of this World, are the common subject of discourse, and often the subject of disgrace.*

Fieri solet ut insignes virorum illustrium, calamitates in proverbium abeant deque iis fiant cantiones. Merl.

Such evils as few men have felt or seen, all men will be speaking of. Great sorrows, especially if they be the sorrows of great men, are turned into Songs, and Poetry playes its part with the saddest disasters. When *Sihon* King of the *Amorites* had taken many strong Cities from the King of *Moab*, the misery which fell upon the *Moabites* by that War was put into Verse, and passed into a Proverb (*Numb.* 21.27,28,29,30.) *Wherefore they that speak in Proverbs say, Come into* Heshbon, *let the City of* Sihon *be built and prepared: For there is a fire gone out of* Heshbon, *a flame from the City of* Sihon, *&c.* That is, A fierce hot War is made, which hath *consumed* Ar *of* Moab, *and the Lords of the high places of* Arnon. Holy *David* met with this measure from men in the day of his sorrows (*Psal.* 69. 10, 11.) *When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach, I made sack-cloth my Garment, I became a Proverb* (or a By-word, 'tis *Job*'s language) *to them:* In the next Verse he tells us who did this, by way of distribution, *They that sit in the Gate* (that is, Great ones) *speak against me, and I was the song of the Drunkard:* That is, Of the common sort. When those false Prophets, *Ahab* and *Zedekiah* (who to put the *Jews* into a hope of a speedy return from their captivity in *Babylon*, prophesied the speedy ruine of *Babylon* it self, when, I say, those false Prophets) should be cruelly put to death by the command of the King of *Babylon*, according to the the Prediction of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, then the same Prophet foretels also, that this judgment of God upon them for their lyes, should be made a By-word, and their names a curse (*Jer.* 29. 21, 22.) *And of them shall be taken up a curse, by all the Captivity of* Judah, *which are in* Babylon, *saying, The Lord make thee like* Zedekiah, *and like* Ahab, *whom the King of* Babylon *rosted in the fire.* That signal Victory of *Gideon* over the *Midianites* became a Proverb in *Israel* (Isa. 9. 4.) *As in the day of* Midian. And the Lord promises his people, that the fall of the King of *Babylon* shall be so notorious, that they shall take up this Proverb, and say, *How hath the oppressor ceased? The golden City ceased?* (Isa. 14. 4.) The Prophet *Habakkuk* assured them that this should be, while he said (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Shall not all these* (certainly they shall) *take up a Parable against him, and say, Woe to him that encreaseth that which is not his? How long? And to him that ladeth himself with thick clay.*

Plaga Zedekiæ tangant te, sit frater & servus Zedekiæ. Vatabl.

Secondly, Observe, *It is a great burden to be made a disgraceful by-word.*

Thus God threatened his own people, and numbred it among the forest punishments of their disobedience (*Deut.* 28. 37.) *The Lord shall bring thee and thy King whom thou hast set over thee, to a Nation whom thou nor thy Fathers have known, and there thou shalt serve other Gods, wood and stone, and thou shalt become an astonishment, and a Proverb, and a by-word, among all the Nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.* This threat was renewed (*1 Kings* 9. 7.) And the Psalmist bewails it, that God had brought his people into such a condition, *Thou hast made us a by-word among the Heathen, a shaking of the head among the people: Thou hast made us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round about us* (Psal. 44. 13.) The Prophet *Jeremiah* speaks terror from the Lord (*Jer.* 24. 9.) *I will deliver them to be removed to all the Kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach, and a proverb, and a taunt, and a curse in all the places whither I shall drive them:* The Hypocrite, who putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a Prophet to enquire of the Lord, hath his doom denounced in this tenor (*Ezek.* 14. 8.) *I will set my face against that man, and make him a sign and a proverb, and cut him off from amidst my people.* Again (*Ezek.* 16. 44.) *They that speak in proverbs shall say, Such as the Mother is, such is the Daughter: The* Hittites *and the* Israelites *were both alike in sin, and they should not be unlike in punishment:* Such short sentences are an advantage to memory, and serve in stead of larger Histories of eminent providences, whether mercies or judgments.

Thirdly, Observe, *God often turns that to the honour of his Servants, which men intended to their disgrace.*

In proverbium abiit, Jobi *patientia.*

Job was a by-word, in disgrace; God made him a by-word too, but for his honour. *Job* is famous to a Proverb at this day; for as when we would set forth the greatness of any mans suffering, we say, *He is as poor as Job*; so when we would set forth the greatness of any mans patience, we say, *He is as patient as* Job, or, *He is another* Job: All the vertues and graces which the Saints have manifested under sufferings, are proverbially expressed under the sufferings and patience of *Job.* Never did *Cesar*, nor *Alexander*, nor any of the great Hero's of the World, obtain such a name and glory, by victories over men, as *Job* did by patient suffering under the hand of God.

And as he is proverbially spoken of for his suffering, so likewise for his holiness, God made his piety a Proverb too, though his Friends suspected him for an Hypocrite. When the Lord would shew himself so unalterably resolved,

ved, that nothing should take him off from bringing judgment upon a sinful people, he saith, I will not do it, though *Noah, Daniel, and Job stood before me* (Ezek. 14. 14.) As if he had said, I will not do it, though the most eminent men in holiness, or the greatest favourites that ever I had in the World sue that they might be spared. If any in the World could obtain this of God, *Noah, Daniel,* and *Job* could: but they should not, therefore none shall. See with what honourable names he is listed, *Noah* and *Daniel,* men remembred, yea crowned with honour by God and all good men, are but company good enough for *Job. Thou hast made me a by-word.*

לפנים
Interpretatur, antea, prius, i. e. קדם *vel ante faciei,* i. e. *in conspectu hominum & in oculis eorum. Exemplum sum coram eis.* Vulg. *Sumitur verbum Tophet ut* מופת *portentum, prodigium, res mira,* i. e. *Exemplū quoddam prodigiosū, ἢ μὴ δέλον αὐτῶ ἐπεξεργασίαν. Et nollet eā ignominiā exponere.* Bez. *Græci dicunt συλλυσειν nam συλλυσις dicitur proscriptio publicè in cippo.*

And aforetime I was as a Tabret.

Aforetime. The word may be taken two wayes.

First, As signifying what was or hath been done in former times, in which sence we translate, *Aforetime, or formerly, I was as a Tabret.*

Secondly, As signifying what is or hath been done in the presence of others, *Before them I was as a Tabret:* We put in the Margin, *Before their face, or in their sight:* That is, They being witnesses of it, *I was as a* [*Tabret.*]

The Vulgar Latine translates the word which we render **Tabret,** an *Example, I am a by-word, and an example before them;* which is a good sence; and then the word *Tophet* (of which more by and by) is used for *Mophet,* which signifies a wonder, or some strange unusual thing which appears, or is reported to the admiration of all beholders and hearers. I am a Proverb, and a strange example: Strange examples grow often into a Proverb. So the Greek expresseth it; and we in English say to a man who hath offended greatly, *You shall be made an example:* That is, You shall be severely punished (*Matth.* 1. 19.) *Joseph* being very tender of the honour of *Mary* his espoused Wife, perceiving that she was with Child before they came together, he was loth to make her a *Paradigm,* or *an example,* of dishonesty and disloyalty; he was unwilling to make her a publick example, and therefore *was minded to put her away privily,* till the Lord gave him warning in a dream about it: So saith *Job* here, according to this rendring, I am a by-word among the people, and as it were a *Paradigm,* a publick example. Great afflictions have these three things in them, in reference to others.

First, they are a wonder to others.

Secondly, They are a terror to others.

Thirdly, They are an instruction unto others.

We find all these and more in one Verse (*Ezek.* 5. 15.) *So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, an instruction, and an astonishment unto the Nations round about thee, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger, and in fury, and in furious rebuke: I the Lord have spoken it.*

The Apostle *Peter* describing the judgments of God, first upon *Sodom* and *Gomorah,* saith, That, *God turning the Cities of* Sodom *and* Gomorah *into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample to those that after should live ungodly* (2 *Pet.* 2. 6.) The burning of those five Cities by immediate fire from Heaven, made them examples, or instructions to all succeeding Generations; we may read the odiousness of those sins, and the severity of God against them, by the light of that fire to this very day. Great afflictions are teaching afflictions; *Those calamities which destroy some, should instruct all:* We are not only to admire and wonder at them, to be amazed and terrified at them, but to be taught and admonished by them. So the Apostle concludes concerning the several judgments which God brought upon the *Jews,* while they murmured and disobeyed him in the Wilderness: *All these things happened to them for examples* (or types) *and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the World are come* (1 *Cor.* 10. 11.) There are two sorts of examples written in the Word.

First, There are examples for our imitation.

Secondly, There are examples for our caution.

Some are examples by the good which they have done, these must be imitated; others are examples by the evils which they have suffered, by these we must be warned: This translation of the Text intends *Job* an example of Caution.

Again, *Aforetime I was as a Tabret:* That is, Aforetime I was in good repute, or I was pleasant company: As if he had said, *I am now derided, mocked at, and tossed upon the tongues of men, yea, I am now voted an Hypocrite, though heretofore in my prosperity, report gave a very pleasant sound of me, though absent, and my person was as welcome to them as a Tabret. To speak of me wheresoever I came not was musick, and I was musick wheresoever I came; but now what am I? A by-word, musick still if you will, but in scorn, a song of disgrace.* That's the first sence.

Hence take one Observation, before I proceed to further explication.

The affections and opinions of men are very variable.

I am now a By-word, before time I was as a Tabret. As the estates of men change, so usually do our opinions of them. *Job*'s heart was the same as before, he was as holy as ever he was, only he was not so wealthy as he was; his spirit was as full of Grace as before, only his Purse was not so full of Gold as before; he had not so many thousand Sheep, nor so many hundred Oxen, he had not such a Family and Retinue, such worldly riches and honour, and because he endured such a change in his condition, see what a change he suffered in mens affections, he that before was as a *Tabret,* all were glad of him, is now *a by-word,* the scorn of all.

Christ giveth testimony of *John Baptist* (John 5. 35.) *He was a burning and a shining light;* and what followes? *And you rejoyced in him for a season.* Though *John* did burn and shine all the while which God continued him in the Candlestick of the Church with equal heat and lustre, yet they rejoyced in him but for a while, or *for a season.* The Jewes changed their thoughts of *John,* and their esteem of him was weakened, though *John* continued in the same strength of parts and gifts: Then, how would they have changed if *John* had changed. The peoples hearts were flatted towards him, though his abilities were not; *John* had not that repute and honour after a few years which he had at the first. And the word in the Gospel which we translate to *rejoyce,* comes neer the word which we have in this Text, *a Tabret;* for it signifies to leap and dance; and the Tabret is a musical Instrument, at the sound of which men dance and leap; for a time they leaped about *John;* he was a burning and shining light, and they danced and skipped about him, as Children do about a blazing Fire in the Streets, but this was only for a season: *John* himself found the World a changling, his followers kept no constant tenour towards him, how constant soever his tenour was. How great a change did Christ himself find; *He is yesterday, to day, and the same for ever;* yet one day the Jewes cry *Hosanna,* they will needs make him a King, he had much ado to keep himself from a Crown; the Air eccoes with *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:* yet presently after, the cry was, *Crucifie him, crucifie him, he is not worthy to live,* he could not keep himself (by all his power as man) from a Cross; a Murtherer is preferred before him, *Not this man, but Barrabas.* We read (*Acts* 14.) how suddenly the tide and stream of affections turned, and how opinions varied about *Paul;* when he and *Barnabas* had wrought a great cure, the people came and would needs adore them and offer Sacrifice, and said, *The Gods are come down in the likeness of men:* They brought Oxen and Garlands, and would needs worship them, there was much ado to stave them off from Deifying, or making Gods of them; and yet before that Chapter is at an end, their acceptation of him was at an end; and *Paul* was stoned as unworthy the society of men, by the same men, and in the same place where he was saluted as a God. It is no new thing in the World, to see those a *by-word* of the people, who even now were their *Tabret:* To adore one while, and to despise another, to applaud to day, and to dislike to morrow, now to smile, and anon to frown, is the constant inconstancy of the creature.

Therefore, *Live not upon the breath of men, upon popular air, or the speech of people:* Though to have credit with men be a blessing, yet let us live upon the credit which we have with God, and rejoyce only in his esteem. Most men are full of change, and are apt to vary their aspects every moment, their affections are as moveable as their outward condition is. Only God never alters his opinion of any man, he never rejects where he hath accepted, nor casts off where he hath embraced; once a friend, and alwayes a friend;

freind, once pleased with us and always pleased with us; yea God is pleased with his while he manifests a fatherly displeasure against them; and they are as a Tabret to him while he makes them a By-word among the people. *Job* was a Tabret in the ears of God, when he was a By-word among the people.

Thirdly, Because a Tabret or Drum is empty of all but Air, and giveth nothing but a sound; some interpret thus, *I am before them as an empty Vessel, or as one who hath nothing in him but wind, and from whom nothing comes but a sound of words*; that is, They look upon me as a man of no real worth. *Paul* saith of himself, that though he *spake with the tongues of men and Angels*, that is, with the most excellent *tongues*. Angels have no tongues, nor have they any faces as men have, yet in Scripture, the face of an Angel is put for the most beautiful face, and the tongue of an Angel for the most eloquent tongue among all the children of men: Now saith *Paul*, though I had the tongue of Angels, or men, and were the best speaker that ever was, yet (being void of true charity) *I should become as a sounding brass and a tinckling Cimbal* (1 *Cor.* 13. 1.) Such *a tinckling Cimbal* was *Job* esteemed, a Drum full of Air, or any *empty Vessel*, as Jerusalem was left by the King of Babylon (*Jer.* 51. 34.)

Existimant esse vocem Chaldaicam quæ significat Dominum vel principem q. d. *qui princeps eram factus sum in proverbium & fabulam.* Rab. Lev. Yarabi.

Fourthly, Some both of the Rabbins and latter Writers tell us, that *Tophet* is a Chaldee word, signifying *Lord, or a Prince*: And they refer us for a confirmation to (*Dan.* 3. 2.) Where we find the word put into the Summons which *Nebuchadnezzar* sent to his Nobles and great Officers, for their attendance at the Dedication of the Image which he had set up: We render it, *Sheriffs*, whether our word hits that, is doubtful, but without doubt it signifies such as were in high Authority, being there marshall'd before the Rulers of the Provinces.

Taking this interpretation of the word, *Jobs* meaning is, *I am now a Proverb*, or a man of no credit, *though heretofore I was as a Prince, or a Ruler in their presence.* Some reject this because the mixture of the Chaldee with the Hebrew, was long after *Jobs* time, which yet may easily be reconciled. And the sense is good, being indeed the same in substance with the second Exposition.

Fifthly, This word *Tophet* which signifies a *Drum*, or (as we) a Tabret, which is a smaller Drum (for there is the *Martial Drum*, or the Drum of War, and the Tabret, which is a *Mirth Drum*, a Drum used at sports, and dancing; this word I say) gives denomination to a place very famous or infamous rather in the Scripture of the Old Testament: A part of good *Josiah* his reformation is thus described (2 *Kings* 23. 10.) *And he defiled* (in the opinion of Idol-Worshippers, though indeed the purest worship used there, was more filthy then any filth which *Josiah* threw into it: He, saith the Text, defiled) *Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Children of Hinnon, that no man might make his Sons and Daughters pass through the fire to Moloch.* The Prophet *Jeremiah* complained of, and threatned that place (*Chap.* 7. 31, 32.) *They have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnon, to burn their Sons and Daughters in the fire*, &c.

Now, the reason why that place was called *Tophet*, from the word in the Text, arose thus, because when the Jews in those abominable Idolatries offered their own Children, the fruit of their bodies, in Sacrifice to *Moloch*, the reputed God of the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*, who was so called from *Malac*, signifying to Rule or Reign (for as all Idols would rule as Kings, so this was a chief, *a King Idol*; hence some conceive *Moloch* to be the same with *Baal*, which is also a name of Supremacy, signifying *Lord, or Master*) This *Moloch* was an hollow Image of Brass, into which they put much Fire, having the face of a Bullock, and hands spread abroad like a Man; He had seven Chappels, and whosoever offered his Son to him entred into the seventh; which when any did, they used to beat upon Drums and Tabrets, that the shreeks and cries of the poor Child might not be heard by the Father: Hence the place was called *Tophet* from *Toph*, a Drum, which comes from a radical word signifying to beat, or strike with the hand, because Drums are artificially beaten, and we ordinarily say, *Beat the Drum*, or, *At the beat of Drum.*

Barathrum quod supplicii locus erat apud Athenienses, pro inferno usurpatur. Becm. de Orig. Ling. Lat.

A nomine Gehinnon, i. e. Vallis Hinnon. infernum dicitur Gehenna. Hieron. in 10. Cap. Math.

גיא Vallis & נהם ruguit, gemuit. Et ignis gehennæ primo ero. Rab. Da. Pagn.

Sum velut Gehennæ. q. d. *Etiam me vivum adjudicant Gehenna, vel miserandæ alicujus mortis generi. Sed res hæc quadrare non potest, nã ignis illius vallis Gehennæ multo posterior fuit quam* Job. Pined. Merc.

And hence this place *Tophet*, where those Children were superstitiously tormented by fire and burnt to ashes, grew to a Proverb; so that any place of extream torment was called *Tophet*. As Hell is called *Barathrum*, because *Barathrum* was a place so called among the *Athenians*, into which they cast notorious Malefactors. Hence also Hell is called *Gehenna*, from the Valley of the Son of *Hinnon*, where those Children were Sacrificed, or from *Ge*, signifying a *Valley*, and *Naham*, roaring or crying: So that it was called *Gehinnon*, from the *cry of the Children*, and *Tophet* from the beating of Drums to drown the cry of the Children. And upon this account some learned Translators render the sense thus, *He hath made me a by-word, and I am as Hell*: that is, They judge me worthy of Hell and Damnation; yea, *that I am a very Hell, I am as Tophet before them*; or they look upon me, as a man in Hell already: But I find this Interpretation discharged from this Text upon good reason, especially by a demonstration of the invalidity of that reason upon which it is grounded, either by the first discoverers or maintainers of it. For the Idolatry of Sacrificing Children to *Moloch* in *Tophet*, and the fire in the Valley of *Hinnon* were not heard of in the time of *Job*. The first mention of the *Valley of Hinnon* is (*Josh.* 18. 16.) at the distribution of the Land of *Canaan* among the Tribes of *Israel*; and the name *Tophet* was not given it till some Ages after that, not till the Idolatry of the Jews was grown to its height (which was not presently, but by certain degrees) for that act of theirs in offering their Children to that Idol seems to be the highest growth and top-branch of it. And therefore I pass this exposition.

Existimo Toph significare Tympanizatum, i. e. hominẽ qui passus est illud supplicium, quod Græci vocant τύμπανον, Latini quoque Tympanum. Bold. *Tympanizatio illa videtur esse quæ erus per quatuor mẽbra distentus bacillis ad numerũ in ventre tanquãtympanum percutiebatur.* Id.

ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν,

Sixthly, The word *Tophet* is conceived to set forth the manner of a punishment or torture used in those times. Some Malefactors were adjudged to have their bodies stretched out by the four quarters upon an Engin, and then to be beaten upon their bellies to such a number of strokes as the Law, or sentence of the Judge appointed. Which manner of torture was called by the Greeks *Tympanization*, or as we express in our language, *Drumming*, and the person adjudged to that punishment was said to be drummed, when it was inflicted upon him, because he was beaten upon his body like a Drum, and beaten also like a Drum in measure, or to a certain number of stroaks, the greatest number not exceeding forty, as the judicial Law of *Moses* appointed (*Deut.* 25. 2, 3.) which may be a confirmation of this Notion upon *Jobs* Text. To which also we may add the present custom of the Eastern countries, especially among the Turks, who commonly punish their Captives and Gally-slaves stretching them naked upon a broad Plank or Board, and giving them many cruel stroaks upon their Bellies: But above all, the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives a cleer light to this (*Heb.* 11. 35.) where describing the several torments which the Saints of the old Church among the Jews endured, he saith, *Women received their dead raised to life again, and others were tortured.* So we translate: The Greek is, *Others were drummed*, that is, they endured the torture of Tympanization, or Drumming; which word is also used by the Compiler of the History of the *Maccabees* (2 *Maccab.* 6. 19. 28.) who tells us that *Eleazer*, and other Martyrs were Tympanized or Drummed; he offered himself willing to the Torment or Drum; the manner of which may be easily collected from the thirteenth Verse of that Chapter in the *Maccabees*, where the Author saith, *As he was ready to give up the Ghost, because of the stroaks, &c.* which shews two things.

ἀνθαιρέτως ἔδωκε τὸν τύμπανον πεσεῖν.

First, That the torture was by beating with Staves, or Cudgels.

Secondly, That it was not usual for men to die under such beatings, that punishment not being to death, but to paine and disgrace; as appears also from that of *Pilate* concerning Christ, who when he found nothing in him worthy of Death, said, *I will chastise* (or beat) *him, and release him* (*Luke* 23. 15, 16.) And *Paul* received *forty stripes save one, five times of the Jews* (which seems to have been a torture somwhat like this we are now upon) *and was thrice beaten with Rods*, and yet survived them all (2 *Cor.* 11. 24, 25.)

The Prophet *Nahum* also may be thought to allude to this custom (*Na.* 2. 7.) *And Huzzab* (which some take for the proper name of the Queen of *Ninevie*) *shall be led away Captive, she shall be brought up, and her Maids shall lead her as with the voice of Doves, tabring* (or Drumming) *upon their breasts*, it is this word in the Text; that is, They shall inflict that punishment upon themselves, which others use to inflict on evil doers; as if he had said, They shall torture upon

themſelves, or be their own Tormentors for very griefe and vexation at thoſe miſeries which their enemies ſhall bring upon them. As the poor Publican filled with godly ſorrow and remorſe for his ſin, *Smote upon his breaſt* (*Luke* 18.13.) So it is uſual for ſuch as are overburdened with worldly ſorrow, to ſmite upon their breaſts, and add a voluntary pain to that which is inflicted.

Statuit me ad dominari populis & tympanizatus palam ero. Bold.

Job is conceived to aim at this form of puniſhment; and then (taking the former part of the Verſe, not as we render it, *I am a by-word*, but as the word properly ſignifies, *to Govern, or bear Rule*, and then I ſay) the ſenſe appears thus, *I who have been a Ruler, or in place of Authority heretofore, am now looked upon as a man who either had been, or deſerves to be tortured, drummed, or cudgelled; as if I were at once an ordinary man, and an extraordinary Malefactor*: We may alſo keep to our Tranſlation of the former part of the Verſe, and ſuite this Expoſition of the latter part very well unto it; Thus, *He hath made me a by-word of the people, and before them I am in no better repute then a man who for his faults hath undergone publique ſhame; as if we ſhould ſay* (*according to our cuſtomes*) *then a man that hath been whipt about the Streets, or hath ſtood upon the Pillory, or that hath been branded with a hot Iron in the hand or face*; both which Applications of this Expoſition center in that Obſervation lately given, about the changeableneſs and inconſtancy of mans opinion concerning and of his affections towrads man: And therefore I ſhall not inſiſt further upon the uſe of it, but onely add, that,

Ac ſi publicè fuiſſem tympanizatus & bacillis cæſus.

Bolduc. A learned Interpreter takes much pains to make out a proof of this expoſition from that paſſage of the Prophet *Iſaiah* (*Chap.* 30. *Verſ.* 30, 31, 32, 33.) where the Lord having made gracious promiſes to his own people of their deliverance from the *Aſſyrian* Bondage, thus threatens the *Aſſyrian*, the Rod of his anger, and the Staffe of his indignation (*Verſ.* 30.) *The Lord ſhall cauſe his glorious voice to be heard, and ſhall ſhew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with ſcattering Tempeſt and Hailſtones. For through the voyce of the Lord ſhall the Aſſyrian be beaten down, which ſmote with a Rod. And in every place where the grounded ſtaffe ſhall paſs, which the Lord ſhall lay upon him, it ſhall be with Tabrets and Harps, and in Battels of ſhaking will he fight with it. For Tophet* (which is the word of the Text) *is ordained of old, yea for the King it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire, and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a ſtream of Brimſtone doth kindle it.* In theſe words (ſaith my Author) there is a cleer deſcription of that kind of torture, called Tympanization, or Drumming, with which the King of *Aſſyria* is either threatned (*in ſpecie*) particularly, and properly, or by a *Synechdoche*, to ſhew that God would lay ſevere puniſhments upon him. For (ſaith the Prophet) *Through the voice of the Lord ſhall the Aſſyrian be beaten down, which ſmote with a Rod*: He ſmote with a Rod, but he ſhall be beaten down with a Staffe; for in every place *where the grounded Staffe ſhall paſs*, or, *every paſſing of the Rod founded*; that is, Of the Rod founded in the Decree of God, which ſo eſtabliſheth it, that no power nor policy of the *Aſſyrian* ſhall avoid, or remove it: For though *God will not let the Rod of the Wicked reſt upon the lot of the Righteous* (*Pſal.* 125. 3.) yet the Rod of God ſhall reſt upon the lot of the Wicked, *There ſhall be the reſt thereof* (*Zech.* 9. 1.) The Rod of God, by *the lighting down of his arm* (*Verſ.* 30.) ſhall ſtrike home to, yea into the fleſh of his Enemies, and there make deep gaſhes or cuts, running like ſo many rivulets with blood; and (ſaith he) The Lord ſhall *lay it upon him*, or, as our Margin hath it, *Shall cauſe it to reſt upon him*; when the Lord layes it on, let who ſo will, or rather who ſo can (and indeed none can) take it off, *The Lord ſhall lay it upon him*; and (as it follows) *it ſhall be with Tabrets and Harps*; which, as moſt Interpret of the joy which the Jews ſhould have at the downfall of the *Aſſyrian*, ſo my Author expounds it ſuitably to his Notion, of the manner of Gods ſmiting the *Aſſyrian*; which ſhould be as a Drum or Tabret is ſmitten, with many repeated ſtroaks, which in ſome exerciſings of that Art, paſs ſo thick, and ſo unceſſantly, that the Sticks ſeem to reſt upon the Drum, as alſo the finger upon the Harp, and not to move at all off from either; even thus ſhall God lay his Staffe upon the *Aſſyrian*: *and in Battels of ſhaking will he fight with it, or with them*; that is, by the ſhaking of Battels, or by frequent renewed Battels, will he fight with and deſtroy them. For (as it follows) *Tophet is prepared of old*; that is, The Engin upon which he ſhall be tortured: the form and manner of which is in many particulars deſcribed out of ancient Writers, by the Author of this Expoſition, but I ſhall not ſtay upon them. This *Tophet is prepared of old*, or, *from yeſterday*; that is, God hath prepared it aforehand, and made it ready, *He hath made it deep and large*; that is, proportionable in all its dimenſions for that uſe and purpoſe; *yea for the King it is prepared* (*the great King of Aſſyria*) which is added, becauſe this was a puniſhment for common men, yet the King (ſaith he) ſhall be thus tortured, he ſhall no more eſcape the hand of God, then the meaneſt of his Subjects, and he ſhall be handled in the ſame manner as the meaneſt among them ſhall. The diſhonour of ſuch a ſuffering is a greater puniſhment to a great King, then the pain of it, yet he cannot be diſpenſed with, *yea for the King it is prepared. The pile of it is fire, and much wood:* What's the meaning of that? My Author anſwers, This puniſhment of drumming was ſometimes but preparatory to another: firſt they were beaten, and then they were burned; and therefore (ſaith he) before the Engin a great fire was made, into which when they were tortured by beating, offenders were caſt and conſumed to aſhes. Our Martyrologies tell us of ſome, who have been firſt hanged, and then burned; and ordinarily among us, when Traytors are put to death, a fire is made at the place of Execution, into which their bowels are caſt, when their bodies are cut up and quartered. Thus here, *The pile thereof is fire and much wood*: And the *breath of the Lord as a ſtream of Brimſtone doth kindle it*; that is, The Lord being extreamly angry with, and incenſed againſt the King of *Aſſyria*, will therefore kindle this fire of his wrath totally to conſume him.

Jubet amoveri naxialem ſtipitem plebeia clarumpæna me dannet virum. Prud. in Rom. Martyr.

But here it may be demanded, Did any of the Kings of *Aſſyria*, who captivated and afflicted the Jews, ſuffer ſuch a kind of death as this? I ſuppoſe none of them did: Some tell us that the Army of *Sennacherib* which invaded *Judea*, was overthrown and deſtroyed by the Angel in that place called *Tophet*, or in the *Valley of Hinnon*, which is alſo given as a reaſon why that word is uſed in the Prophet; but *Sennacharib* himſelf was ſlain in the Temple of this Idol (2 *Kings* 19. 37.) Nor is it (as I conceive) the mind of our Expoſitor, to conclude from hence that the King of *Babylon* was put to death by ſuch a torture; but only to ſhew under the deſcription of that kind of death, that the death and deſtruction of the King of *Babylon* ſhould be very terrible, and that God would judge him, even as notorious offenders are, both to a painful and a ſhameful end.

As this Interpretation of the Prophet gives much light to that of *Job*, ſo it is an ingenious conjecture upon that place, and carries a fair correſpondence both to truth and reaſon. Nor is there (that I have met with) any Interpreter who doth not underſtand that Text of *Iſaiah* in its firſt and literal ſenſe, of the temporary judgements which God threatned to powre upon the State and King of *Babylon*; as moſt in a Tropological and Alluſive ſenſe, interpret it of eternal judgment in Hell, which is indeed a *fiery Tophet*, and is prepared of old, yea for the King it is prepared, for the great King of *Aſſyria*, as well as for the meaneſt perſon.

Nam ſore ut inſtituat me ad præſidendum populis, quamvis tympanotribarum materia ante fuerim. Jun.

There is a ſeventh Tranſlation and Expoſition of theſe words which takes the former part of the Verſe as was toucht upon the laſt, and reads the whole thus; *For he will make me a Governour among the people, though I have thus been made as matter for the Fiddlers or Taberer's Song.* So that, as the former Expoſition renders the Text as a complaint, proceeding from *Jobs* grief, that he who had been a great Man, a Governour of the people, ſhould be now puniſht as a Slave, or as a Malefactor; ſo this renders it as a Propheſie, proceeding from his Faith, That God would reſtore and raiſe him again to be a Governour among the people, though now he was the ſcorn and deriſion of the people.

Reſtituet me Deus in dignitatem meã & altius provehet. Jun.

This reading riſes cleerly enough from the words of the Text, yet I have one exception againſt it, as to the conſtant tenour of *Jobs* profeſſion; who though he were full of Faith in God, that it ſhould go well with

him for eternity, yet he conſtantly diſclaims a hope of reſtauration to a temporal greatneſs; and having ſaid at the beginning of this Chapter, *My days are extinct, the Graves are ready for me*, it ſeems unſuitable to ſay here (which is the ſenſe of this tranſlation) *My Worldly joyes are bloſſoming, the Thrones are ready for me*: And therefore (with much reverence to the learned Author) I lay by this Interpretation.

Laſtly, Maſter *Broughton* tranſlates thus, *That maketh me a by-word to the people, and I am openly a Taber*: He applies it not (as we) to the former time, but to that time, *I am a Tabret*, and that openly, or in open view, in the ſight of all. We ſay of a man that is abuſed and jeered, *He is played upon*; ſo ſaith *Job* (according to this rendering) *They play upon me as a Tabret*, they rejoyce in my ſufferings, they make themſelves merry with my ſorrows, and rejoyce at my calamity. So the Lords of the *Philiſtims* dealt with *Sampſon*, having put out his eyes and impriſoned him, they ſent for him, *to make them ſport* (*Judg.* 16. 25.) Thus (as the ſenſe of this Tranſlation leads us) *Job* aggravates his ſorrows, by the joy which others diſcovered at it; which is alſo the meaning of the *Septuagint*, whoſe reading is, *Thou haſt made me a talk among the people, and I became a Laughing-ſtock to them.*

Poſuiſt autem me fabulam ingentibus & riſus eis devoti. Sept.

Hence Obſerve, *Greif is moſt greivous when others rejoyce at it.*

Thoſe afflictions which make others laugh, make us moſt mournful. When *Nero* had ſet *Rome* on fire, he made himſelf Muſick at it; and that calamity upon the City, was as a Tabret to him; while they were ſorrowing, he was ſinging. As to rejoyce at the evil which others ſuffer, is baſe joy, the worſt of joyes in it ſelf, ſo it makes the evils which we ſuffer worſe to our apprehenſion. The Prophet laments over *Jeruſalem*, becauſe of this (*Lament.* 2. 15.) *All that paſs by, clap their hands at thee, they hiſs and wag their head at the Daughter of Jeruſalem, ſaying, Is this the City that men call the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth? All thine enemies have opened their mouth againſt thee, they hiſs and gnaſh the teeth, they ſay, We have ſwallowed her up certainly, this is the day that we looked for, we have found, we have ſeen it.* *Jeruſalem* was as much burdened with her Enemies joy, as with her own ſorrows. If when we mourn, we have ſome to mourn with us, we are comforted in our mournings; but when God leaves us to the ſcorn and contempt of men, when they make themſelves merry with our troubles, and exult at our calamities, when our tears are as Wine to them, and the Bread of our affliction becomes the Bread of their deſire, this renders our ſorrows out of meaſure ſorrowfull. Hence *David* (*Pſal.* 25. 2.) prays ſo hard, *Lord let not mine Enemy tryumph over me*: It is eaſier to loſe a Battel, yea to die in Battel, then to be led in Triumph, or to be Triumphed over after the Battle: *David* being freed from that fear, gathers a ſtrong argument that God had reſpect to him (*Pſal.* 41. 11.) *By this I know that thou favoureſt me, becauſe mine Enemy doth not triumph over me.* It is greateſt mercy when we triumph over our Enemies, but it is great mercy when God delivers us from being triumphed over by our Enemies; for as the mercies of the Wicked, ſo the joyes of the mercileſs are cruel. The Apoſtle reports it as a great part of his affliction, that he was made *a gazing ſtock, or a ſpectacle to the World, to Angels and men* (1*Cor.* 4. 9.) The word which the Apoſtle uſeth is an Alluſion to the Roman Theaters, whither all the people reſorted to ſport themſelves; and their ſpecial ſport was, to behold the combates of Men with Men, or of Men with Beaſts; ſuch a ſporting ſpectacle were the Apoſtles made (in their combates with the World) *to the World, and to Angels, and to Men*: They had Spectators enow, they were a Spectacle to *the World*, that is, to the Inhabitants of the World, who are diſtributed into their firſt and grateſt diviſion in the next word, *Angels and men*: Heaven and Earth are the Fabrick of the whole World, Angels and men are all the Inhabitants of both: yet ſome reſtrain *Pauls* Text, to evil Angels only, or Devils, becauſe it ſounds harſh to the ear, that the good Angels ſhould delight themſelves in beholding the ſufferings of good men; but it is not *Pauls* ſcope to ſhew that every beholder of their ſufferings took delight in their ſufferings, but that all did, or might behold them, for thoſe things were not done in a corner. The Apoſtles were ſet forth by their Adverſaries as if they had invited all the World, Angels and Men, good and bad, to laugh at them; yet as good men could not behold them without weeping, ſo the good Angels could not behold them with rejoycing, unleſs it were at their conſtancy and courage for God, or at that Crown which they ſaw ready prepared for thoſe who overcome: And in this ſenſe good men alſo rejoyced at their ſufferings. But when any mans ſufferings are rejoyced at, becauſe he ſuffers, and is in pain; this is very painful.

θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν.

This was *Moabs* burden (*Jer.* 48. 39.) *They ſhall howle, ſaying, How is it broken down? How hath Moab turned the back with ſhame? So ſhall Moab be a deriſion, and a diſmaying to all them about him.* And when the Pſalmiſt would expreſs how highly God was offended at the counſels and plottings of wicked ones, he tells us, *He that ſitteth in Heaven ſhall laugh, he ſhall have them in deriſion* (*Pſal.* 2.)

Job having aggravated his ſorrows, by their effects upon others; now ſhews what effect they had upon himſelf.

Verſ. 7. My eye alſo is dim by reaſon of ſorrow, and all my members are as a ſhadow.

Mine eye. The eye is taken two wayes, either properly for the corporal eye, or tropically for the underſtanding: Some interpret *Job* of the eye of the minde; and that hath compliance with the tranſlation which is alſo given of the latter clauſe, as I ſhall ſhew when I come thither. But I rather take it literally for the eye of the body. *Mine eye*, that is, That Organ of ſight which is as the Glaſs or light of the whole body, even that is dim by reaſon of.

Ut illa de inferiori ſenſibili cognitione quæ fit per phantaſmata, ſic iſta de intellectuali oculo exponi debet. Bold.

Sorrow. The word ſignifies more then ordinary ſorrow, it ſignifies ſorrow with indignation, or from provocation: *Job's* ſorrow had a touch of indignation, and it ſtirred him up to ſome undue provocations: Sorrow is taken two wayes.

Actively.
Paſſively.
Actively, for the ſorrow, ſorrowing.
Paſſively, for the ſorrow, ſorrowed.

כעש *Denotatur in illo verbo activa provocatio, indignatio, irritatio.*

Sorrow is the affliction it ſelf, or ſorrow is that paſſion which moves in us when we are afflicted, *By reaſon of ſorrow mine eye is dim: Sorrow is a waſt both to the vital and viſive powers* (*Pſal.* 6. 7.) *Mine eye is conſumed becauſe of grief:* Again (*Pſal.* 39. 9, 10.) *Have mercy on me O Lord, for I am in trouble; mine eye is conſumed with grief, yea my ſoul, and my belly.* This effect of grief hath been toucht before (*Chap.* 16. 16.) *Mine eye is dim by reaſon of ſorrow.*

Caligavit ab indignatione oculus meus. Vulg.

Magna cogitatio obcæcat adducto intus viſu in morbo comitiali aperti nihil cernunt animo caligante. Plin. lib. 11. c. 37. *de oculis & lachrymis.*

And all my members are as a ſhadow.

Members. That is, Firſt, all the members of my body: Secondly (the Hebrew bears it) all the creatures, and imaginations of my mind are as a ſhadow.

יצר יצרו *Formavit.*

The ſame word is uſed (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *The thoughts of the imaginations of mans heart* (that is, the figments, or features of things which are formed up there) *are evil, and only evil continually*: We put, *All my thoughts*, in the Margin of our Tranſlation: As if he had ſaid, *My minde is ſo enfeebled that I can ſcarce think or frame any ſolid notion; my mind is ſo unſetled that I know not how to make up my thoughts, or bring them to a rational iſſue about any point.* Sorrow weakens the intellective part, as well as the ſenſitive: As if he had ſaid, *My minde, which heretofore was apt to conceive, and to bring forth the exacteſt Ideas and platformes of truth; I, who could ſhape and faſhion excellent meditations, am now ſo weak-headed, that I can ſcarce put two thoughts together, and all I do is but a ſhadow to what I have been able to do.*

Creata in ea quaſi umbra omnia. Merc. *Per creata alij membra alii cogitationes volunt.* Rab. Lev. *Vocabulum illud quadrat in illa omnia quæ externa figura aut interna cogitatione effigiantur; hinc multi legunt cogitationes phantaſiæ.* Pagn. Reg. Vatabl.

This is a fair ſenſe, yet conſidering the context, I rather underſtand it of the members of his body, which were ſo decayed and poor, that he look'd like a *Skeleton*, or (as we ſay of ſuch) *Anatomy*, nothing being left but skin and bone, nothing but a pack of bones; ſo that he was rather the ſhadow and appearance of a man, then a man.

Hence Obſerve, *The ſorrows of the mind break the body, as well as the mind.*

This effect of ſorrow hath been met with in other places,

places, and particularly (*Chap.* 16. 16.) I shall only add, that although godly sorrow (as was there shewed) may work deeply to the expence of bodily strength, yet there is a very gracious promise (*Isa.* 58. 11.) that God will make *the bones of such fat*, that is, Fill them with marrow, which is the strength of the whole outward man. And they who are weakned by the continual exercises of godly sorrow, here, are in preparation to an estate, where they shall sorrow no more: *There will be no dim eyes in Heaven, nor members like a shadow:* Our vile body shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body, and all tears and mourning shall flee away. Perfect happiness is inconsistent with a blubbered eye. And though in Heaven a Saint may be called *Adam* (because his body, for the substance of it, shall be the same that it was here on earth, though extreamly refined and sublimated, yea, spiritualiz'd, yet earth still, now I say, though a Saint in Heaven after the resurrection, may (in this sense) be called *Adam*, made of Earth) yet no Saint can be there called *Enosh*, that state being incapable of the least mixture of sorrow.

VERS. 8, 9.

Upright men shall be astonied at this, and the innocent shall stir up himself against the Hypocrite.
The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.

IN the two former Verses *Job* shewed the greatness of his affliction from a twofold effect.

In these two Verses he shews two reasons why his afflictions were so great; not as *Eliphaz* and his Associates had suggested, because he was a great sinner, or had sinned beyond the common line of man; but,

First, That men, even *upright men* might be astonied, at the strangeness of this dispensation of God, and of his strength, supporting a weak creature under it, and carrying him through it: *God will do some things which shall at once teach and astonish his people, and gives them not only matter of instruction, but cause of wonder.*

Secondly, That the innocent and righteous might be encouraged by my example to proceed vigorously in the ways of holiness, notwithstanding all the opposition they find from men, and the afflictions laid upon them by the hand of God; for as much as the favour of God shines in upon me through all these Clouds, and I have no doubt of his love, though I feel all this smart.

Vers. 8. **Upright men shall be astonied at this.**

Nabi nō tam in conscientia parum à peccato, quā ab omni passione, humanoq; respectu immunē virū hic significat. Bold.

Who is an upright man hath been opened before; yet here the upright man is a man free from passion and prejudice, as well as from hypocrisie and false-heartedness.

The word which we translate [Astonied] signifies astonishment with admiration, or such an admiration, as leaves a man astonied and senseless, or puts him quite beside himself. When natural reason is much overpowered, we act as if we had had no reason.

Tacitus miratus est, præ admiratione stupuit.

Upright men shall be astonied. Master *Broughton* reads it in the Imperative Mood, *Let upright men be astonied at this:* He carries the same form to the end of the context, *Let upright men be astonished at this, and let the innocent stir up himself against the Hypocrite: Let the righteous hold on his way, and let him that hath clean hands be stronger, and stronger:* As if the words contained a use of exhortation or direction to several duties which *Job's* state calls us unto.

We say, *Upright men may be astonied*, as importing the event, or what was intended in the act: As if he had said, *Men of a right temper will not be transported with ungrounded jealousies and uncertain conjectures concerning me, when they see all this upon me, but will refer my strange disasters to the unconceiveable wisdom of God, who thus orders the afflictions of his people, and seems to reward their holy services with sharpest sufferings.*

Upright men shall be astonied, at what? **At this**, or upon the consideration of this thing: but what is this thing, the consideration whereof, shall raise up such astonishment? When the Bush burned and was not consumed, *Moses* resolved, *I will turn aside now, and see this great thing:* Strange sights call us to consideration. We have in this Text, *A bush burning and not consuming*, upright men may well be astonished, and turn aside to see it.

More particularly, there are four things upon which the occasion of this astonishment is pitcht.

Upright men shall be astonied at, or upon this.] First, At your hard dealing with me, at your rigid censures of me: your bitter by-words and taunting Proverbs against me, will certainly cause upright men, men of a clear judgment and conscience, to stand astonied: As if he had said, *It is not my single opinion that you have wronged me, but all men of integrity will not only say the same, but be amazed at your dealings with me.*

Secondly, *At this*, that is, at the deliverance which God will give me out of these troubles. Thus the sense is made out by those who render the sixth Verse as the Prophesie of *Job's* Faith, that he should be restored and set up to govern among the people: This turn of things shall worke astonishment in the best and most sober spirited men, *upright men shall be astonied*, to see me translated from the dung-hill to the Throne, from a state of greatest contempt to a state of highest honour. Good men shall glorifie God in me, and shall rejoyce at the downfal of Hypocrites; but though the event did verifie this, *Job* was at the last restored, and was made as a Prince among the people, and his restauration was such as might justly astonish and draw all that either saw or heard of it into admiration, yet I much doubt whether *Job* had any such scope in these words, which rather continue and heighten the aggravations of his then present troubles, then hold out any intimations of his hope, much less of his assurance of a raising to a future worldly prosperity.

Animi, dictis, factis viri boni gloriantur in Deo & de hypocritarū confusione exultant. Jun.

Thirdly, Some conceive this matter of astonishment to be the patience of *Job* under his sufferings, that he should endure and hold out in such extremities, till his *eye was dim by reason of sorrow, and his members were like a shadow: Upright men shall be astonied at this.* Is it not marvellous that a man should act a life of grace, when it could scarce be perceived that he acted the life of nature? As God doth often work miraculously for the deliverance of his people out of trouble, so they sometimes (by his power) work miraculously under troubles, before deliverance comes. Such patience, such humility, such meekness, and faith, are recorded in Scripture, as have caused upright men to stand astonied. This is a good sense, but I rather pitch upon a fourth, as most proper to this place.

Cladis hæc mea universis est stupenda sed justis præsertim. Pined.

Fourthly, I conceive when *Job* saith, *Upright men shall be astonied at this*, He points at the greatness of his affliction: As if he had thus expressed it, *My being made a by-word among the people, my dim'd eyes and leane body will make such a report, and be such a sight, as will set all honest men a wondring, upright men shall be astonied at this. What! Hath the Lord dealt thus with Job, a holy man, concerning whose integrity he hath given such ample testimony? This is indeed the Lords doing, but it is marvellous in our eyes.*

Quod ita atrociter affligar cū sim innocens, &c. Mere.

Hence Observe, First, *That the best of men, upright men are sometimes at a loss how to interpret the outward dealings of God.*

Some providences of God put the wisest to a stand; not only are Fools and wicked men, but men of the greatest experience and understanding in the ways of God, so puzzled that they know not what to say, or how to answer? The Lord is pleased to give as hard Texts and Chapters in his works as he doth in his Word; many outward administrations lie so close, yea so cross to his ordinary proceedings, that we know not what to make of them: If we see a wicked man afflicted, we shall see a godly man afflicted much more: If we see a godly man prosper, we shall see a wicked man prosper double to it; these are strange things, at which not a few are amazed, and at their wits end; should we judge of all the dealings of God by humane reason, we should conclude some of them without, or against reason, though indeed they are only above our reason, or have a height of reason in them, which we cannot reach, and therefore must admire.

No man wonders at that for which he can give a reason, and therefore we say it altogether unbecomes a Philosopher (who would be thought knowing about the reason of every thing) to wonder: There are depths in the pro-

videnees of God which no man is able to reach or sadom, the upright men need not be astonied at them. The Preacher gives a caution, that we should not be over curious in prying into such secrets (as some make the connexion of those two Verses, *Eccles.*7.15,16.) *All things have I seen in the dayes of my vanity: Solomon* was a man of vast observation, and though he had not seen all things in their particular existence, yet he had seen all things in their general nature; and he gives instance in two sorts of things which he had seen, *There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness* (*Job* was a righteous man, and he perished outwardly) *and there is a wicked man that prolongs his life in wickedness.* Among all his observations, he thought none of greater moment then these two: Now when God puts the righteous into a perishing condition, and sets up the wicked in worldly glory; this is matter of much admiration and inquisition, therefore he subjoyns (according to this interpretation) his caution (*Vers.*16.) *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self over-wise*; that is, Be not anxious in searching out every particular, or every little little about this administration of God; make not thy self over-wise, do not think that thou canst reach the reason of all that God hath done in causing a righteous man to perish, and a wicked man to flourish, there is more in it then thou canst comprehend, *Why shouldest thou destroy thy self?* that is, Thou maist amaze and bewilder, yea undo and destroy thy self, if thou venturest too far upon those secrets of providence, but thou wilt not be able to extricate or resolve thy self by all thy venturing.

Dum plus scire vis quã oportet, præ admiratione rei humanum captum vincentis ad mentis stuporem devenias. Pined.

Now, *If the providences of God be such a deep, that upright wise men are astonied at them, then what a deep are the counsels and decrees of God?* Providences are the dispensations of God to the eye, they are the objects of sense; if we cannot see to the end of that which is before us, as providences are, how shall we see the end of that which is so far off from us, as the Counsels and Decrees of God are? The Apostle stood as a man astonied at both (*Rom.*11.33.) when he had spoken of that amazing dispensation of God in casting off the Jews, and receiving the Gentiles, he cries out, *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements!* and among them, this special judgement, in taking the Gospel from the Jews, and breaking them off, who were the natural branches, that the Gentiles who were the wild Olive might be graffed in: *How unsearchable is this judgement, and this way of God past finding out! Upright men are astonied at this.*

Secondly, Observe, *How strange soever the dealings of God are with his, yet righteous men are only astonied at them.*

They are not scandalized, they are not offended at God for them, they do not blaspheme the name, or apostatize from the ways of God, nor do they quarrel at his dispensations. For as when they are astonished at the prosperity of the wicked, they preserve high and holy thoughts of God, and only seek resolution at the mouth of God: as the Prophet *Jeremiah* did (*Chap.* 12.1.) *Lord, thou art righteous, yet let me reason with thee: Why doth the way of the wicked prosper?* Or as *Habakkuk* (*Chap.*2.2.) propounds his question to find out the knot in the ways and dealings of God: Now I say, as it is thus with the righteous, when they see the great prosperity of the wicked, so when they see the greatest adversities of the godly, they are only amazed at the dealings of God, they do not despond, much less blaspheme because of his dealings. But when carnal men see those who have gone for righteous or upright, under afflictions, they run into desperate extreams.

First, They despise and slight them.

Secondly, They look upon them as the most miserable men in the World: *Afflicted grace and innocence hath no beauty in a carnal eye.*

Fourthly, They judge hardly of God, who deals thus severely with men: what? Are these the servants of God, and doth he use them thus? Doth he recompense them thus for the pains which they have taken, and for the work which they have done him?

Fifthly, They grow into an abhorrence of holiness, and into a distast of Religion it self. If God pay his Servants wages in such coyn as this (say they) let whoso will serve him, we are not ambitious of his Livery. If this be the portion of Professors (as you call them) let who will profess; thus they are scandalled and offended.

It is storied, that when *Aygoland* a King of the Moors (who had long maintained War against *Charles the Great*, hoping to make a fairer agreement with him) and promised to receive the Christian Faith, and be Baptized, he coming with a Gallant retinue to the French Court, saw there a number of poor men fed and cloathed by the Emperours charity, and enquiring who they were, it was answered, *That they were the Servants of God:* What, said he, Are the Emperours Servants so rich and brave, and are the Servants of God so poor and squalid? I had a purpose to be baptized, but now I am resolved never to serve that God, who keeps and rewards his Servants no better. What this King spake out, many speak in their hearts; they will not serve Christ upon self denying and suffering terms.

Aygolandus abjecto servorum Dei statu offensus a Christianæ fidei professione abstinuit. Lampad. in Sleyd. part. 3.

As when the Cross falls upon Hypocrites, they depart from the Faith, and (with *Demas*) imbrace this present World, they will not endure a storm for Christ, nor hazzard their worldly possessions for all the promises in the Gospel; so when the godly fall under crosses and afflictions for the Gospel, evil and prophane men reject it, they will none of it: The righteous may be astonied and wonder, but the wicked blaspheme *at this.*

Thirdly, Observe, *Good men are apt to have strange thoughts about afflictions and crosses.*

They who are well acquainted with the Theory of sufferings, yet when they come to suffer indeed, find much loathness and averseness to it. The Apostle *Peter* saw this, and laboured to remove it (*1 Pet.*4.12.) *My brethren, think it not strange concerning the fiery tryal, as if some strange thing had hapned to you, but rejoyce, &c.* They looked strange on tryals, as if they had never seen nor heard of them before: They knew not how to digest such hard meat as sufferings are, under the profession of the Gospel; their hearts were somewhat cold to those fires, and they had no mind to come near lest they should burn their fingers, and were therefore warned, *Think it not strange concerning the fiery tryal. Jesus Christ* (as the Prophet describes him, *Isa.* 53.3.) *was a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.* Christ and grief were no strangers, why then should a Christian think strange of it? The Apostle useth that argument (*Vers.* 13.) *But rejoyce in as much as ye are partakers of Christs sufferings:* Ours are the sufferings of Christ, not only because we suffer for him, and he suffers with us, but because he suffered the same things, yea far greater both before us and for us: Christ took our sufferings upon him, when he took our nature upon him, yet our nature thinks strange to partake in the sufferings of Christ.

The Apostle *Paul* (*1 Epist.* 3.3,4.) tells the *Thessalonians*, that he sent *Timotheus* to establish them, and to comfort them concerning their Faith, *That no man should be moved by these afflictions:* Intimating that the best of men, the best of Saints, are apt to be moved by afflictions; he means it of an inward motion, that is, to have their spirits disturbed and troubled, as *Davids* was when he put those questions to his soul (*Psal.*42.11.) *Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? But why should no man be moved by those afflictions? The Apostle shews why, For your selves know that we were also appointed thereto: for verily, when I was with you I told you before that we must suffer tribulations, as it came to pass, and ye know it.* *Paul* gave them notice before affliction came, lest they should be moved when they were come. Thus Christ warned his Disciples, and he warned them for this end (*John* 16.1.) *These things have I spoken to you that you be not offended:* What things were these? *They* (saith he) *shall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service:* Christ foresaw that when these things came, they would find work enough to quiet their spirits in, and to quit themselves from troublesome motions: And as Christ, to keep or make their hearts quiet, tells them of their sufferings aforehand, so he therefore tells them that he himself had suffered before-hand (*John* 15. 18.). *If the World hate you, you know it hated me before it hated you*; you know it, and knowing it, you ought not be troubled

q. d. *Tribulationũ jã nobis causa & ratio explorata est; at quondam utpote ignota, multã admirandi & philosophandi materiam ipsis justis præbebat.*

when

when you meet with hatred in the World: The Servant must not expect better usage then his Master. When we see so much laid in to fortifie our spirits against outward crosses, in, or for the profession of the Gospel, it is an abundant argument that our hearts are apt to startle, and we to be astonied at them.

And the innocent shall stir up himself against the Hypocrite.

עיר *Evigitavit, excitavit.*

The innocent.] Here is a different Character, or cloathing of words, but the person is the same. *The innocent shall* [*stir*] *up himself:* The word signifies to stir up from sleep, and to stir up from sloath; it signifies also such a stirring as the Eagle useth to provoke her young ones to fly (*Deut.* 32. 11.) Thus the innocent shall awake and stir up himself.

חנף *Sunt qui reddunt improbum quomodo ea vox exprimitur apud Hebræos.* Drus.

Against the Hypocrite.] The Hypocrite is taken two wayes: Either strictly, as opposed to the upright in the former part; and under that notion I have heretofore spoken of the Hypocrite (*Chap.* 8, &c.)

Secondly, The Hypocrite may be taken largely, and so every wicked man is he, except he who openly professeth wickedness, and yet even he may go for an Hypocrite, for he is more wicked (when he hath professed his utmost) then he doth profess himself to be.

Reddunt iniquum. Sept. *Delatorem.* Targ. *Justus super inimicum consurget.* Olymp.

The *Septuagint* render him, *Unjust*, and the *Chaldee Paraphrase*, *The backbiter or defamer:* And another of the Greek Interpreters calls him *the enemy*; *The innocent shall stir up himself against his enemy*, or against his opposite: And who is that, but the wicked man, under what notion soever we put him? The single terms thus cleared, fall yet under a different sence, as joyned together.

Suam orationem paulo incitatiorē excusat, q.d. quid mirum me ita loqui cum res ipsa tam indigna sit? Pined.

First, Some conceive that *Job* makes an apology, or an excuse for himself in these words, why he expresst so much passion, and used such sharpness of speech toward his Friends: As if he had said, *Blame me not for doing it, things are carried so, as upright men may be astonied, it would make a wise man mad, and a meek man furious; a very post would be awakened and stirred, at what my Friends have again and again pressed upon me; therefore pardon my passion, and (if you will needs call it so) my impatience.*

Non me latet ad rem tantam sapientes percelli, atque adeo interdum insontes adversus eos qui sic affliguntur, tanquam adversus hypocritas commoveri. Bez.

Secondly, Master *Beza* expounds *Job* aiming at a good man in great troubles mistaken for an Hypocrite, by those who are good: He represents him speaking thus, *I am not ignorant, that not only ordinary and common men, but even the wise and the upright will be troubled and astonied at my sufferings, and that sometimes (in such a case as mine is) innocent men will stir up, or set themselves against him that is afflicted, as if he were an Hypocrite.* When God puts a disguise of great troubles upon his faithful Servants, they who are faithful will scarce own them; they are ready to number them among enemies, at least to doubt very much (as they did about *Paul* upon another account, *Acts* 9. 26.) whether he be a Friend or a Disciple. Afflictions have made the sincere appear as Hypocrites in the opinion of those who are sincere.

Indignabitur contra hypocritam quod ille calamitates tribuit peccatis. Cajet.

A third makes this the ground of the innocent mans quarrel against the Hypocrite; why doth he stir up himself, and engage against him? Why is he so angry with the Hypocrite? Even because he sees the Hypocrite foolishly condemning the godly as wicked, because they are afflicted, or ascribing their calamities meerly to their sins.

Excitabit se contra impium florentem & felicem, quod videat illū non recipere digna peccati.

Fourthly, Thus, The innocent shall *stir up himself*; That is, His spirit shall be troubled at the Hypocrite, or wicked man, whom he sees in a flourishing condition: so we may expound it by that caution which *David* gives (*Psal.* 37. 1.) *Fret not thy self because of evil doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.* Good men have been much moved and fretted at the prosperity of the ungodly: But surely *Job* is not here declaring the infirmities of the innocent, but their graces. And therefore,

Last y, *The innocent shall stir up himself against the Hypocrite*, carries in it the commendation of the innocent persons perseverance and constancy in the faith and sincerity of his profession, what changes soever are upon him: As if he had said, *Though a godly man be afflicted and brought low, though he be scorned and trampled upon when he is brought low, yet he will not forsake his principles, or disclaim his profession; nay he will be so far from slacking in, or turning away from his profession, that he will manifest more holy zeal for God and his wayes, together with more holy opposition against wicked men, and all their wayes, then ever he did before: The upright shall be astonied at this, but they shall not be disheartened, their wisdom and courage shall still appear in maintaining their quarrel against the generation of evil doers, wheresoever they meet with them. The innocent shall stir up himself against the Hypocrite.*

Quamvis ab eo rideatur quod affligatur, haud tamen propterea desiderio ducetur ejus sequendi aut ei se adjungendi sed excitabit se, &c. Merc.

Hence Note, First, *There is an everlasting opposition between the godly and the wicked.*

The innocent stirs up himself (like a Lyon) against the Hypocrite; His heart riseth against him, not as a man, not as his enemy, but as a wicked man, and as an enemy to God. The foundation of this holy War was laid in that word of God (*Gen.* 3. 15.) *I will put enmity between thee and the Woman, between her seed, and thy seed.* As there is an enmity, *de facto*, in wicked men against the righteous, they will ever be opposing them: So there is an enmity, *de jure*, of right and duty, in the righteous against the wicked, they ought ever to oppose them; that quarrel, those feuds must not be laid down: And therefore the Apostle *John*, who though he was the beloved Disciple, and was most pressing and perswasive to love among Saints and Brethren, yet he forbids the love of wicked men, *Love not the World* (1 *Epist.* 2. 15.) which refers as well to worldly persons, as worldly things. And the Apostle *James* is direct (*Chap.* 4. 4.) *The friendship of the World is enmity against God.* Our piecing in, or making peace with the World, is a proclaimed War against God himself. It is our duty, and it is our spiritual safety, to stir up our selves spiritually against the wicked. As we deny not civil peace with Hypocrites, and the worst of men; so there is a spiritual warfare which we are bound to continue (how chargeable soever it may prove to us) against all Hypocrites and wicked men. And if they say (of this Sword) as (*Jer.* 47. 6.) *O thou Sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be quiet?* We must answer as the Sword doth there, *How can I be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given me a charge against* Askelon? The Sword of that War receives its Commission from God, and is designed now to one Coast, anon to another: The Sword of this War hath long since received its Commission from God, against all the coasts of sin, and powers of darkness; nor can it be quiet, or put it self up in its Scabboard, while there is an Hypocrite appearing upon the face of the Earth.

Gods quarrel must be perpetuated, it can never be taken up. *Let them return to thee, but return not thou to them,* was the Prophets charge (*Jer.* 15. 19.) There's no compounding of this difference; they must return and give themselves up to God, and his wayes, else we cannot give them an inch of ground, or make truce with them for an hour, much less may we make peace with them, or give them the right hand of fellowship.

Secondly, Here we have the Hypocrite in his flourish, and the innocent in his affliction; the Hypocrite aloft, and the innocent below; yet when it is thus, even then the innocent is described stirring up himself against the Hypocrite.

Hence Observe, *A godly man afflicted, doth not at all approve or applaud the Hypocrite, but opposeth him in his greatest pomp and worldly splendour.*

When the wicked are at the highest, even as happy as the World can make them, yet a godly man will not change states with them, or (as we say) turn Tables with them; he would not have his outward prosperity, with his heart, if it were worth ten thousand Worlds: *He sees and knows there is more excellency and worth in afflicted grace, then in the most prosperous wickedness:* The love of God is better then life, and if so, what are all the things of this life compared to it? Hence a godly man hath no better opinion of the wicked in riches, then in poverty, and he hath no worse opinion of himself when he is poor, then when he was rich: He doth not account

grace the leſs glorious, becauſe it hath ſo little of outward glory upon it.

And ſeeing he will not change ſtates with him, he cannot envy him: We envy thoſe only whom we judge in a better condition then our ſelves. *David* under a temptation, *was envious at the fooliſh, when he ſaw the proſperity of the wicked* (Pſal. 73. 2, 3.) and his feet were almoſt gone, his ſteps had well-nigh ſlipt, but when he recollected himſelf, and went to the Sanctuary, ſuch thoughts were quickly down, and envy was extinct, he ſaw much matter enough to pity wicked men, but none to envy them, they ſtand in ſlippery places, and are ſuddenly caſt down. *How are they brought into deſolation, as in a moment they are utterly conſumed with terrors.*

And as he doth not envy them, ſo thirdly, much leſs doth he imitate them; he is ſo far from imitating them, that he ſets himſelf to oppoſe them, and he oppoſeth them all thoſe wayes, and with all thoſe weapons that God hath put into his hand: He oppoſeth ever him by counſel and conviction, by reproofs and prayers. And as he fights againſt the Hypocrite by prayer; ſo by prayer he fortifies himſelf againſt all ſinful compliances with him.

Thus *David* prayed (*Pſal.* 141. 4.) *Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity, and let me not eat of their dainties*: As if he had ſaid, *Though wicked men be fine fed, and dyet upon dainties every day, though they devour the fat, and drink the ſweet, and have all things that their hearts can deſire, yet, Lord, ever keep me from the practice of wicked works with men that work iniquity, and let me not eat of their dainties, who find a ſweetneſs in ſin, and take pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs.*

It is the counſel of the Wiſe man (*Prov.* 1. 10, 11.) *My Son, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not*: Do not aſſociate with them, they will tell thee of great matters, they will ſay, *Come let us lay wait for blood, we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil; caſt in thy lot among us, let us all have one purſe. My Son, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their paths; for their feet run to evil*, &c. He that would refrain his foot from walking in, muſt firſt refrain his heart from approving of, the paths of wickedneſs.

This the innocent doth and more, while he ſtirreth up himſelf againſt the Hypocrite. And as he ſets himſelf againſt the way of the Hypocrites, ſo he labours to ſet forward with all his might in the way of holineſs, for that's his way, as appears in the next Verſe.

Ex tanti viri exemplo atque memoria incrementũ accipient ſingulare. Sanct. *Tenebit mordicus.* Merc. *Apprehensã tenebit firmiter, non. diſcedit ne latum quidem unguẽ, ſed hærebit firmior in ſuo vivendi inſtituto & pietatem audentius colet.* ἀνδίξεται δηλονότι τῆς ἑαυτῦ ὁδοῦ, *inhærebit juſtus viæ ſuæ.* Theodol.

Verſe 9. **The righteous ſhall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands ſhall wax ſtronger and ſtronger.**

The righteous.] It is the ſame man ſtill, who ſhould be encouraged by *Job*'s example to a vigorous progreſs; *He*, the righteous man,

Shall hold on.] The word ſignifies to hold with ſtrength, to hold toughly, to hold as with the teeth, reſolving never to let go, but ever to go on

In his way.] What way? It may be taken either particularly for that way of oppoſition which he maintained againſt the Hypocrite; or ſecondly, for the way of righteouſneſs, and that twofold.

First, The way of his heart, or his inward way.

Secondly, The way of his hand, or his outward way.

The righteous man holds on in both theſe wayes; he continues his courſe both in the holy motions of his ſpirit towards God, and in the holy actings of his life towards man: In this way he is full of motion, but he will not move a ſtep, nor willingly decline to the right hand or to the left, out of this way: Here he walks as to induſtry; and here he ſtands as to conſtancy. *The righteous ſhall hold on his way.*

Hence Obſerve, First, *The righteous ſhall perſevere; perſeverance is at once the duty and the priviledge of the Saints.*

As they are in a good ſtate, ſo they ſhall go on in a good way, *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day* (Prov. 4. 18.) *The goodneſs of Hypocrites is as the morning cloud, and goeth away as the early dew* (Hoſ. 6. 4.) The wind ſcatters the morning Cloud, and the riſing Sun exhales the early Dew; thus the goodneſs of the Hypocrite is gone; but the goodneſs of the righteous (like the goodneſs of God, of and from whom it is) *endureth* (in its proportion) *continually* (*Pſal.* 52. 1.) As they who joyn works to grace, make grace to be no grace; ſo do they who ſay, the work of grace may be loſt; or that grace may for ever loſe its working: The work of grace may be clouded, but grace is no cloud; the working of grace may decline, but grace cannot dye.

The righteous ſhall hold on his way.] Further, This Scripture tells us, that he ſhall hold on, not only in fair way, and in good weather, but in ſtormy weather, and rugged wayes, when his way lyes among ſharp Stones, and ragged Rocks, through Bryars and Thorns; yea, I may ſay, when his way lyes among Bears and Lyons, he will on.

Hence Obſerve, *A godly man perſeveres, notwithſtanding all ſeeming diſcouragements from God, and all real oppoſitions from men.*

Though God ſeem to caſt cold water on him, yet his fire never goes out, and often (by a holy *Antiperiſtaſis*) he is inflamed the more: While the evil World thinks to daſh him out of countenance, and damp his ſpirit, he is the more emboldened: As the Apoſtles approved themſelves the Miniſters of Chriſt, ſo doth every Believer (in his Sphere) *In much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes, in ſtripes, in impriſonments, by honour, and diſhonour, by good report, and evil report*, &c. (2 *Cor.* 6. 4, 8.) Let the way be what it will, foul or fair, *a green Carpet way*, or a deep pochy way, let it be what it will, he goes through thick and thin. *Paul* puts the queſtion, and reſolves it (*Rom.* 8. 35.) *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* He puts it of a perſon, Who ſhall? And he anſwers about things, *Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, ſhall theſe ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt?* That is, Either from that love which we bear to Chriſt, or from that love that Chriſt bears to us; what ſhall make Chriſt out of love with us? Or what ſhall make us out of love with Chriſt? Shall any thing? Nothing ſhall, for thoſe things ſhall not which might ſeem moſt able to make us out of love with Chriſt, or to tell us that Chriſt doth not love us. *Shall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? Nay in all theſe things we are more then conquerours through him that loved us*: He loved us, therefore he will love us, and we ſhall go on to love him: for through him we ſhall not only conquer, but over conquer, or more then conquer, whatſoever ſtands in the way to divert us from his love, or to render him unlovely. Nothing can ſeparate Believers from the love which Chriſt bears to them; if any thing can do it, ſin can; but ſin cannot, becauſe he hath more then conquered it by his own power: Nothing can ſeparate Believers from the love which they bear to Chriſt, if any thing can, tribulation can, but that cannot, becauſe we ſhall more then conquer it through his power. *The righteous ſhall hold on his way*; he neither turns back, nor ſtands ſtill. *David* was ſorely ſhaken, and tempted (*Pſal.* 73.) yet *his feet were* (but) *almoſt gone, and his ſteps were* (but) *well-nigh ſlipt*. As Hypocrites at the moſt are but *almoſt Chriſtians* they are not Chriſtians altogether; and as they ſtep at their neareſt but *well-nigh Heaven*, they ſhall not enter in; ſo the feet of true Believers may almoſt be gone out of the good way, but they ſhall not go out altogether, and their ſteps may well-nigh ſlip from God, but they ſhall be upheld; and hence it is, that though they have many, not only ſlips, but falls in the way, yet they ſhall neither ſlip nor fall quite out of the way; this *David*'s experience taught him, at the twenty third Verſe of that Pſalm: *Nevertheleſs* (ſaith he) *I am continually with thee, and thou haſt held me by my right hand*: That is, Though I have many troubles in thy way, yet I depart not out of thy way: I have temptations to leave thee, but I will not leave thee; *I am ſtill with thee*, I am where I was, yet not by any power of my own, but by thy power, for *thou holdeſt me by my right hand*: It is not the hold which we have of God, but that which he hath of us that makes us hold on our way: We ſhould quickly let go our hold of God, if God had not infinite faſter hold of us; *Thou holdeſt me by my right hand*. There is a (*manutenentia Dei*)

Dei) *an invisible Hand-holding of God*, by which the whole visible Creation is supported, without which no Creature could hold on in the way of Nature; much more is there an invisible *Hand-holding* of God, by which the spiritual Creation is supported, and without which the new Creature cannot hold on in the wayes of Grace. 'Tis the hold which Christ hath of us, and the rooting which we have in him, by which we are confirmed. *Israel* the people of God, is said, *to grow as the Lilly, and to cast forth his roots like* Lebanon (*Hos.* 14. 5.) The Trees of *Lebanon* are high, and spread out their branches, but they are also deeply rooted, they have as much under ground as above, they have as much hold in the earth as they have shew in the air. As the Saints grow up and spread forth their branches, so they grow down and cast out their roots like *Lebanon*; so that the winds and storms which shake them, do indeed but settle them. 'Tis the goodness of the root which at once makes them fruitful, and makes them firm: He that stands by this strength shall stand; and he that is fruitful by these roots shall be fruitful still, and bring forth more fruit in age. *The righteous shall hold on his way.* As Christ speaks terribly to the wicked, that they shall hold on their way (*Revel.* 22. 11.) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still*: These are not permissions to wicked men to be wicked still, much less are they perswasions unto wickedness, but they are dreadful comminations; wicked men are threatned with this plague, to be given up to the wickedness of their own hearts: Now as Christ speaks terribly there to his Enemies, so he speaks comfortably and encouragingly to his Friends, *He that is righteous let him be righteous still; and he that is holy let him be holy still*: which carries not only the force of a command upon them, or the direction of a rule to them, but also the sweetness of a gracious promise, or of a special priviledge, that they shall be maintained in righteousness and holiness unto the end, or that *they shall hold on their way.* Hypocrites may make a fair flourish, and stand some brunts, they may *endure for a season*, but they endure not long, much less to the end. *They went out from us*, saith the Apostle *John* (1 *Epist.* 2. 19.) they had once an appearance, and a presence with us, but *they were not of us*: That is, They had no real communion and fellowship with us; their bodies were with us, but not their hearts; and when we lost them, we lost no more then the Corn doth when the Chaff is winnowed away; or then the Body doth, when hurtful humours are purged away. Who were these? He means the Apostate professors of that Age, *Ebion, Cerinthus, &c.* These *were not of us*: How did the Apostle know that? He tells us how in the next words, *For if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.* Saint *John* puts it beyond all dispute, and himself had not the least doubt of it, that they who are once in Church, shall continue in it; and that they who depart, do not depart from grace, but from a shadow of grace: They do not fall from what they were; but manifest what they were not: *They went out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.* But why doth the Apostle say they were not *all of us?* Were any of those Apostates of them? *Not all*, is a known Hebraism for none (*Psal.* 143. 2.) *In thy sight* (not all men, that is) *no man living shall be justified.* So (1 *John* 3. 15.) *Ye know that every murderer hath not*; that is (as we translate) *No murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* So here, *They were not all*, that is, *None of them were of us*: Many have forsaken a profession of Faith; but he that hath Faith will not forsake the profession of it. *The righteous shall hold on his way*: And not only so, but,

Cum creverimus in Domino mittemus radices nostras sicut arbores Libani, quæ quantum in auras consurgunt vertice, tantum radice in ima demergunt, ut nulla tempestate quatiantur, sed stabili motu consistant. Hieron.

He that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.

To continue in the right way is very good; but to encrease in it is far better; he that holds his own in sad times, is to be commended; but he that thrives and gains in godliness in sad times, is to be admired: And who is that? *Job* tells us,

He that hath clean hands.] The words are a Circumlocution, describing the same person, who was before called, *upright, innocent, and righteous.* And yet surely it is not a bare repetition of the same person, under another title; for though we must take this cleanness of hands in conjunction with cleanness and uprightness of heart: And though it be not so hard a matter to shew a pair of *white clean hands*, as it is to have an upright, or a *clean white heart*; yea, though it be true, that clean hands will not wax stronger and stronger in a day of affliction, unless joyned with an upright heart, yet (I say) these clean hands imply somewhat else, not only besides that uprightness, but also besides that innocency and righteousness spoken of before.

The Hand is the instrument of action, and *clean hands* are an emblem of holy actings: So that *Job* seems to intimate, that he, who besides the uprightness of his heart, and the general innocency and righteousness of his way, is also careful to keep himself free from every spot which might foul his hands. He (I say) who is thus compleat and spotless, is fullest of courage when troubles and sorrows are upon him. 'Tis true, a mans general uprightness and innocency will mightily uphold him in the main; yet if he have got a visible blot or defilement upon the face or hand of his conversation or dealings with men, this will be a damp upon his spirit, and a deadning to his heart, though the bent of his heart stands fair towards God.

Again, this may be added in answer to a Plea which some make when they are taxed with the uncleanness of their hands (say they) *O we have good hearts, we are upright towards God; we confess we fail many times, but we have good meanings, and we would both do and be better*: Is thy hand unclean? Thy heart is a thousand times more unclean: Is thy way evil? Thy spirit is worse: How can any man have a good meaning, or a good heart, when himself is evil? No man can. There is no excuse for the uncleanness of the hands, by saying the heart is clean? For where there is a clean heart there will be clean hands. Many have clean hands, that have unclean hearts; but no man hath a clean heart whose hands continue unclean; much less will such a one plead the cleanness of his heart in excuse for the uncleanness of his hand; nor is there any ground for such a Plea. Should a man say, here is a Tree that bears ill fruit, but it hath an excellent root, I am sure it is of a right kind, but (I confess) the fruit is naught; would not any man of reason condemn such reasoning? Would he not say, This is to bely Nature? For every good Tree brings forth good fruit: Is it not also a belying of the Spirit of grace, to say, The heart is upright, but the hands are unclean: For an upright heart makes a clean hand, as clean hands are a probable evidence of an upright heart.

He that hath not both these, hath neither of them to purpose; which (we may conceive) was *Job*'s scope while he puts them here together.

Further, while *Job* speaks in the third person, *He that hath clean hands*; he answers *Eliphaz* for himself, who in a third person charged him with the uncleanness both of his heart and hands (*Chap.* 15. 14.) from which he also vindicates himself (*Chap.* 16. 17.) As if he had said, *You have often charged me with the uncleanness of my hands; but though I will not boast of my self, yet this I feel and speak by experience, He that hath clean hands shall wax*

Stronger and stronger.] The Hebrew is, *He shall add strength*; that is, He shall go on from one degree of strength to another. But what strength shall he add? He means not bodily strength: The best of Saints may loose that in the battels of affliction, and grow every day weaker and weaker: But he shall add spiritual strength, so the Apostle states it (2. *Cor.* 4. 16.) *Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.* The more evil a Believer suffers, the stronger he is in goodness, and to do good; while his flesh wears off and wastes, he gets new spirits; he takes heart, and is more couragious, as the *Septuagint* render *Job*'s Text.

יסף אמץ *Addet fortitudinem, purus manibus sumet audaciam.* Sept. *Is cujus vita pura est addet robur*, i.e. *magis invalescet ut bene aget.* Merc.

Hence Observe, First, *Grace is of an increasing nature, it grows stronger and stronger.*

True grace lives, and therefore it must needs grow. The grain of Mustard-seed proves a great tree (*Psal.* 84.)

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They go from strength to strength, or from company to company; that is, from one good company to another, still gathering up goodness as they go. As the Bee goes from Flower to Flower, to gather Honey; so Believers go from Duty to Duty, from Ordinance to Ordinance, from Praying to Hearing, to gather Grace and Strength; every Grace hath strength; and the more Grace the more strength; till we come to that, which is strictly called, *Strength of Grace.*

Secondly, Observe, *A through godly man doth not only not fall from Grace in time of trouble, but he increaseth and groweth in Grace; he addeth Strength.*

As affliction gives a proof of Grace, whether it be true or no; so where it is true, it is improved by affliction. Naturalists tell us, that the reason of Thunder and Lightening is, because the Heat being pent in, and imprisoned by the Cold of the middle Region, breaks out (by an *Antiperistasis*) with terrible noise and flashings: And thus when Grace is pent in by opposition, persecution, and affliction, it enlargeth it self, and breaks out with greater strength, yea, with a kind of heavenly violence; and not only maintains its own, but is a gainer.

Tanto magis integritati studebit. Bez.

It is said of the *Lacedemonian Republick*, That when all other Kingdoms were undone by War, that only grew rich, was bettered by it. We may say, that whereas all prophane persons, and Hypocrites, are undone by affliction (all their Paint is washed off, their Varnish discovered) only true Believers thrive, and are advantaged by it: He that hath an upright heart, and clean hands, grows stronger and stronger: His inward man increaseth in outward decayes. It is said of the *Israelites* (*Exod.* 1. 12.) that the more the *Egyptians* afflicted them, *The more they multiplied and grew:* They multiplied in number, they grew in strength and stature; their oppression was their addition in temporals: It is so with all true *Israelites* in spirituals, the more they are afflicted and troubled, the more they increase: And whereas the Lord speaks in reference to wicked men (*Isai.* 1. 5.) *Why should you be smitten any more? Ye will revolt more and more.* (The more evil men are smitten for their good, the worse they are.) We may say on the contrary, that the righteous, the more they are smitten with evil, the better they are; yea, they sometimes put wicked men to such a stopping expostulation, as God makes there concerning wicked men; *Why should we trouble them any more? They will hold fast more and more; they will not be beaten off with sowre looks and hard words, no nor with our hardest blows: We may trouble and weary out our selves, yea, and break our own hearts, but we shall never dishearten them.* All Ages have given experiments of this: The Apostles in the *Acts* rejoyced when they were threatened, and were emboldened with scourging. 'Tis said of the suffering Saints (*Heb.* 10. 34.) *They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods:* They were glad of an opportunity to put off their worldly goods at so great a rate, as a proof of the sincerity of their graces: *Our goods never go off at so high a price, nor come to so good a Market, as when they are spoiled in a good cause.* *Paul* tells us, *That many waxed confident by his bonds* (Phil. 1. 14.) They were so far from withdrawing from the profession of the Gospel, because *Paul* was clapt up in Prison, and laid by the heels, that they were more bold to avouch it. As some have been weakened and terrified by the sufferings of others; so many have been confirmed and heartened; they have not only kept from discouragement, but they have waxed confident by bonds, and their Spirits have been at greater liberty by seeing others in Prison, though they had reason enough to expect their turn would be next.

Exquisitior crudelitas gentium adversus Christianos, illecebra est magis sectæ, plures efficimur, quoties metimur. Tertul.

One of the Ancient tells us, *The more cunning and exact Persecutors are, the more constant and exact Believers are.* The Christians of those times grew into a kind of artificialness in Grace, while the Heathens grew so artificial in cruelty; and the oftner they were mowed down by the bloody Sword, the more were begotten and quickened by the Word: The opposition which truth and holiness found, was a provocation to own the truth, and to them a sweet temptation unto holiness.

Thirdly, Note, *When God gives new tryals, he will give new strength.*

The righteous grow stronger as their afflictions grow stronger: Never fear greater tryals, when you are promised greater strength: If you have more burdens, you shall have more shoulders. Whether the Lord calls us to passive obedience, or to active, he is wise and faithful to proportion, and gives out suitable ability. It is not from the improvements of Free-will, but from the fresh anointings of the Spirit, *That we are strengthened with might in the inner man* (Ephes. 3. 16.) And again, (*Col.* 1. 12.) *We are strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering with joyfulness.* Affliction it self cannot strengthen us in Grace, it rather weakens us; the increase of strength flows from the same Fountain, whence we had the first strength: All is from God. *In the Lord have we righteousness and strength* (Isa. 45. 24.) And *He is an everlasting strength, the Rock of Ages* (Isa. 26. 4.) As he is an everlasting strength in himself, so he is to his people: And the reason why his people are everlasting strong, is, because he is so. *Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint* (Isa. 40. 30, 31.) But why shall the youths faint, and the young men utterly fall? Are not beginners in grace as sure to be upheld as the ancient, or men of dayes? And why is fainting and falling the lot of youths and young men, who are supposed in their spiritual capacity, or in their natural, to have the greatest strength? The Apostle *John's* experience of the young men seems to differ very much from this Prophesie of them; *I write unto you young men* (saith he, 1 *Epist.* 2. 14.) *because ye are strong, and the Word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.* How doth *Isaiah* say, the young men shall utterly fall, and yet *John* saith, *They have overcome the wicked one?* That is, The Devil. Every Victory is an argument of strength; especially a Victory over him who is very strong.

I answer, The Prophet and the Apostle do not speak of the same young men: The Prophets young men are any men that boast of their own strength in spirituals, and trust upon it; these, of what age soever they be, he calls young men, not because like young men they have a real great strength, but because (which young men are very apt to do in the strength they have) they trust in a strength which indeed they have not; so that these are called young men, because they boast of, and trust in their supposed strength, not because they are really very strong; and therefore these young men shall not only faint, but utterly fall. But the Apostle *John's* young men are such as have much strength in them, and yet live, and walk, and fight in the strength of Jesus Christ; these young men are so far from falling utterly, that they shall stand for ever, and all their enemies shall either flee or fall before them, because as the battel reneweth, so Christ will renew their strength, and recruit their hearts with further aid at every further charge.

Only by going out of our own strength we get strength, that was *Paul's* experience of himself (2 *Cor.* 12. 9, 10.) *When I am weak, then I am strong:* That is, When I am weak in my self, and have low thoughts of my own stock, then strength is sent me in; and I am supported by an Almighty power, when I see that I have no might: *Therefore* (saith he) *most gladly will I rejoyce in my infirmities, that the strength of Christ may rest on me: Paul* was no sooner convinced that the strength he had was not sufficient, but he heard that comfortable word from Heaven, *My Grace is sufficient for thee:* We are stronger by the Grace in Christ, then by the Grace we receive from Christ. He that lives upon the Grace received from Christ, and not upon the Grace in Christ, shall quickly feel a want of Grace, and a decay of spiritual life.

Now, if Grace received from Christ be not stock enough to live and continue upon, what is Nature for any man to begin upon? *Peter* had received Grace, and he made an honest real profession to Christ, not a flattering verbal complement, when he said (*Matth.* 26. 33, 35.) *Though all*

men

men ſhall be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I not be offended; and though I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee: yet becauſe he did not enough (if at all) renounce his own ſtrength, inſtead of waxing ſtronger and ſtronger, he was weaker and weaker, and did not only deny his Maſter, but forſwore him. Not only they who go out in the ſtrength of nature, but they alſo who go out in the ſtrength of inherent grace, may quickly (notwithſtanding a ſincerity of profeſſion) diſhonour their profeſſion, and fall from their own ſtedfaſtneſs: Therefore truſt in the Lord, and ye ſhall not only hold on, but grow ſtronger and ſtronger in your way.

And if ſuch be the ſtate of a godly man, that he holds on, and waxeth ſtronger in times of trouble, what ſhall we ſay of them, who turn out of the way, or languiſh in it, when nothing troubles them? What ſhall we ſay of them who run out of the way, though there be no Lyon in the way, when we hear that Saints will not out though there be a Lyon in the way? What ſhall we ſay of them that depart from God, when (as *Job* ſpeaks in another place) they waſh their footſteps with Butter, and the rock powers out Oyl to them (that is, when God loadeth them with his benefits daily) when we hear that the righteous, and he that hath clean hands will not out of the way, though every ſtep be up to the knees in Mire, though he be daſhed againſt the Rocks, and killed all the day long? Was there ever truth of grace in thoſe who finding nothing but comfort and outward bleſſings in the way, do yet go out of the way, grow cold and ſink in their profeſſion? When Chriſt gives outward pleaſure to his followers, and they forſake him, may they not juſtly be ſuſpected to take pleaſure in forſaking him? And that they never took any pleaſure in following him, but only followed him for their pleaſure? What would theſe do if they were aſſaulted with ſtrong temptations or troubles, who turn aſide being freed from all ſuch temptations? What would they do if their ways were full of briers and thorns, who go back and Apoſtatize while their wayes are ſtrewed with flowers, and they tread upon Roſes? 'Tis true indeed, that the warm Sun (as we ſay) cauſeth ſome to caſt off their Cloaks, which the cold wind moved them to keep cloſer on; but, though it be a truth, that proſperity makes many forſake God, yet it cannot be denied but that adverſity is a greater temptation to deny him. A ſound heart may (poſſibly) give in a little in boiſtrous times and Winterly dayes, but it is almoſt an infallible diſcovery of a rotten heart, to flinch in fair weather, or in a Summers day. As they who keep cloſe to, and hold in the wayes of God in dark and doubtful diſpenſations, ſhew a pure love to his wayes; ſo they who warp and recede, under clear and comfortable diſpenſations, ſhew a pure diſlike of them.

Laſtly, Note the various expreſſions uſed in theſe two verſes, we have here the deſcription of a godly man under four Titles.

Firſt, *The upright.*
Secondly, *The innocent.*
Thirdly, *The righteous.*
Fourthly, *He that hath clean hands.*

Theſe meet in one perſon, yet they have diſtinct ſignifications: Uprightneſs is ſtrictly oppoſed to hypocriſie: innocency, to guilt; righteouſneſs to oppreſſion; and cleanneſs of hands to all the pollutions of converſation. Every kind of goodneſs, and all the graces concenter in him that is truly godly.

He that is godly, is any thing that is good; and he that is wicked is any thing that is evil. You cannot call a wicked man out of his name, how ill ſoever you call him. And you cannot call a compleat godly man out of his name, how good ſoever you call him, he is *upright*, and *innocent*, and *righteous*; his hands are clean, and his heart is clean, he is clean all over, and holy all over, while we call him all this we do not call him beyond what God hath made him.

VERS. 10, 11, 12.

But as for you all, do you return, and come now; for I cannot find one wiſe man among you.
My dayes are paſt, my purpoſes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.
They change the night into day, the light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.

THough *Job's* Friends had ſeverely reproved and threatned him; reproved him for his ſuppoſed ſin, and threatned him with further ſufferings, in caſe he continued in ſin; yet did they as often counſel, and encourage him; counſel him to repent, and return to God, encourage him with promiſes that God would repent and return to him, yea turn his captivity and afflictions, *as the Rivers in the South*; and that though he then was in a night of ſorrow, yet a morning of joy, or joy in the morning ſhou'd ſurely break out and ſhine upon him.

Now, as *Job* had before often (and alſo in the former part of this Chapter) ſupported himſelf under the weight of all their reproofs and threatnings, by the power of God, and the conſcience of his own integrity; ſo he had as often before, and he doth it here again in the latter part of this Chapter, caſt off their promiſes and incouragements, together with all hopes of any reſtauration in this life, to ſuch a flouriſhing outward condition as he once enjoyed.

And becauſe his Friends diſcerning this in him by ſome of his precedent anſwers, had judged it as a ſymptome of ſecret guilt, and ſelf condemnation, which would not let him ſo much as expect any good: So *Eliphaz* had perſtringed and ſmitten him (*Chap.* 15. 22.) *He believes not that he ſhall return out of darkneſs:* Therefore *Job* wonders to ſee them perſiſt in that opinion, and concludes them under a great defect of underſtanding, who did not perceive that a man ſo miſerably pined, and worn with ſickneſs and pain, as he was, had nothing to look after, or prepare for, but only a Grave. And this he doth with much rhetorical elegancy, and paſſionateneſs of ſpeech, to the end of this Chapter.

His ſenſe may be drawn together into this brief way of reaſoning.

He who is as a dead man already, ſhould not feed himſelf, or be fed by others, with hopes of life, or of worldly proſperity in this life.

But I (for my part) am as a dead man, or but the ſhadow of a man.

Therefore I will neither feed my ſelf, neither ought you to feed me with hopes of life, or of proſperity in this life.

Yet before he layes down, and illuſtrates this Argument, he invites over his Friends to his opinion, and profeſſeth that they had not yet ſpoken any reaſon, nor argued like wiſe men in all that they had argued to the contrary.

Verſ. 10. **But as for you all, do you return, and come now, for I cannot find one wiſe man among you.**

Though ſome wiſe men go out of the way, yet it is for want of wiſdom that any man goes out of the way; while *Job* calls upon his Friends to return, he implies that they going out of the way were not wiſe, and that it would be their wiſdom to return into it.

But as for you all.] *Job* puts all his Friends into one predicament, and indeed they were much alike to him, having all troden in the ſame path, and met in the ſame judgement of, and reſolutions againſt him. But what would he have them do? As he ſuppoſed them all in one way, and that out of the way: So he ſets them all to the ſame work, that they might come right again.

Do you return, and come now.] Yet, there are three opinions about his meaning, while he ſaith, *Return and come.*

Firſt, Some conceive, that *Job's* Friends, being nettled (as we ſay) and provoked with what he had ſpoken before, began to renew the diſpute, and to rally themſelves with conjoyned Forces, for a freſh encounter; which *Job* perceiving, he (according to this Interpretation) dares them in theſe words, and ſends them a Challenge: As if he had ſaid, *I ſee you are providing your ſelves,*

Quaſi facta teſtudine una omnes concurrite. Nicet. *Ad diſputationē provocat.* Sanct.

selves, and consulting for a rejoynder with me; I, do, do if you think good, return, and come, put your selves into what posture you please, joyn your forces together, I am ready to receive your charge, and make my defence, I am not afraid of you all; you are three, and I have not so much as a Second, yet I will not turn my back from you all, therefore, as for you all, do ye return and come now, come, when, or as soon as you will.

Verumtamen omnes incumbite & venite quaso. Sept. *Convertendi verbum cum quocunq; alio verbo junctum, idem significat quod* rursus, *aut* altera vice *aliquid facere.*

Thus, *He challengeth them to a further dispute. Return, and come,* is (as the propriety of the phrase in the Original imports) *come again if you will, come a second time, come a third.* The word that we translate *Return,* when it is joyned with another Verb (say Grammarians) signifies as much as *Again,* or, *to do a thing the second time.* Take two places of Scripture for it (*Jos.* 5. 2.) *At that time the Lord said unto* Joshua, *Make thee sharp Knives, and circumcise again the Children of Israel the second time:* So we translate: The Hebrew is, *Return* (which is the word of the Text) *and circumcise them a second time:* Not that they who had been once circumcised, must have a second circumcision: But for as much as circumcision, which was first commanded to *Abraham,* had been long dis-used, while the people of *Israel* were moving and unsetled in the Wilderness, therefore the Lord gives circumcision a kind of second Institution, by requiring *Joshua* to restore it solemnly a second time, as it was set up at first. Return and circumcise them; that is, renew that ancient Ordinance of Circumcision.

The like way of speaking, read (*Psal.* 85. 6.) where *David* (in behalf of the Church) pleads with God thus, *Wilt thou not revive us again?* The Hebrew is, *Wilt thou not return, and revive us?* We translate the Verb *Return,* by the Adverb, *Again. Wilt thou not revive us again?* Thou hast given us many *revives:* when we were as *dead men,* and like carkasses rotting in the Grave, thou didst revive us; wilt thou not revive us once more, and act over those powerfully merciful works, and strong salvations once more, or again? So here, *Return, and come*; that is, Come again.

The words thus expounded, are an argument of *Job's* magnanimity and holy courage in maintaining his right, and standing up in the defence of his own integrity against all comers. As it is our duty to contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints; so for our own faithfulness.

Secondly, Others expound the words as an advise, not as a challenge; not as a profession of his fixed purpose to oppose what his Friends should say in maintenance of their opinion, but only as a desire of their attention to what he had yet to say for his. *Come return now,* as if he had thus expressed himself, *Ye are not right, let me set you right, and instruct you better; learn of me; you have need enough to be taught, for I have not found a wise man among you.* Thus *David* calls his Scholars about him (*Psal.* 34. 11.) *Come ye Children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord.* The former gloss shewed the strength and courage of *Job's* spirit, this the piety and holiness of his spirit: 'Tis our duty, *in meekness to instruct those who oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth* (*2 Tim.* 2. 25.)

Incitat amicos ad mutandam sententiam. Pined. *Ut convertatis.* Jun.

Thirdly, The words are more generally taken for an invitation to repentance, *Come now, return.* Some translate the word *Return* in this Text, by *Repent,* which is the sense of it in a hundred Texts of the Old Testament. Repentance is a turning and returning; all returning supposeth, either our being out of the way, or that we have gone as far as our business lies in that way; The returning of repentance, supposeth only the former, for, every step in sin is quite out of our way; what have we to do in the way of sin, but only to come out of it, our business lies not there; all that we do there must be undone again, or else we are undone for ever.

In this returning of repentance, we may consider, first, the term from which, and secondly the term to which we are called to return. The term from which is twofold.

First, Sinful practices.
Secondly, False and erroneous opinions.

Job doth not deal with his Friends about the former; he did about the latter; they were under a grand mistake concerning the Doctrine of providence, and from that he invites them to a speedy return.

The term to which we are to return in the actings of repentance, is threefold.

First, To our selves.
Secondly, To God.
Thirdly, To him whom we have wronged, or from whom we sinfully dissent.

Job may be interpreted as calling his Friends to a return, in this threefold reference.

Ad se redire etiã Latinis dicitur qui ad bonam mentẽ redit. Grot.

First, As repentance is a returning to our selves: a man that is carried away, either to false opinions, or into wicked courses, is gone from his nearest home: 'Tis a duty to deny our selves, but 'tis a sin to depart from our selves: And as it is a sin to depart from our selves, so every sin is a departure from our selves; therefore re-repentance which is a turning from sin, must needs be a returning to our selves. The Gospel represents the repentance of the Prodigal Son, under this notion (*Luke* 15. 17.) *And when he came to himself, he said, &c.* He had not been with himself a long time before, yet at last he came to himself, this was his first step to repentance. An impenitent person is not only out of his way, but out of his wits, he is gone, not only from Divine truth and holiness, but from his own natural reason and prudence; if so, whensoever he repents, he returns to himself.

Secondly, Repentance is a returning to God; *If thou wilt return O Israel (saith the Lord) return unto me* (*Jer.* 4. 1.) The grace of repentance is most frequently and most suitably expressed by this act of returning to God; and they who do not repent are every where said not to return to God (*Amos* 4. *&c.*) *Yet have ye not returned unto me.*

Thirdly, Repentance is a returning to man: We must not be ashamed to acknowledge our failings one to another, or to return to them in duty from whom we have departed, either by not giving them their due, or by accusing them unduly. We must not be ashamed of returning to them, by submitting to the truth, from whom we have departed by following or holding any errour. Thus *Job* may be conceived counselling and calling his Friends to a return in these three senses given: First, to themselves; Secondly, to God; Thirdly, to him, whom they had so long opposed. But though all three may be included, yet the scope and design of *Job* seems to intend the third: *Return, and come now*; that is, *Return to me,* let not truth fare the worse for my sake, do not you cast it off, because I hold it. It is not enough to turn from any evil, whether of opinion or practice, and return to the obedience of God, but we must also return to the love of good men, and unite with them in the truth.

But why must they return? *Job* gives the reason expressly in the latter part of the Verse.

For I cannot find one wise man among you.

All the wayes of sin and errour are wayes of folly; they stamp a man for a *Fool and unwise,* whosoever walkes in them; *I cannot find one wise man among you:* When he saith, *I cannot find,* It shews that he had endeavoured to find, he had been seeking for a wise man among them, but he found none. *The Lord* (saith *David*; *Psal.* 14. 2.) *looked down from heaven upon the Children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God* (but he found none) *They are all gone aside* (*Vers.* 3.) *Job* seems to have been upon such an inquiry: He had looked over his Friends, and weighed them one by one, but he found not one wise man among them. The Preacher (*Eccles.* 7. 27, 28.) *counting one by one to find out the account, found but one man* (that is, one wise or good man) *among a thousand:* No marvel then if *Job* found not one among three, yet considering what three these were, men numbred among *the Worthies,* possibly, *the first three* of that age and place, it may justly be marvelled why *Job* should speak at so low a rate, or so slightly of them: Was he not too censorious and rigid, too bold and adventurous, to speak thus concerning men of such gravity, authority, and reputation, for wisdom, and learning, yea, and for holiness too, as these *three* were? Shall

we

we say that this censure proceeded from *Job's* wisdom, or from his passion? Was he wise in saying so, or so much as charitable?

I answer, *Job* did not speak this from any ill will to his Friends, or from contempt of them; it had been not only unfriendly, but very sinful to have done it. That word of Christ had its truth in those times, *He that is angry with his brother unadvisedly, shall be in danger of judgement; and he that saith to his Brother, Racha* (which signifies an empty fellow, or a man that hath nothing in him) *shall be in danger of a Councel: but he that saith, thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell fire* (*Matth.* 5.23.) *Job* did not call his Friends Fools, when he said, *I find not one wise man among you*; So much may be said without passion or reviling: Nor did he question their wisdom in general, but (as hath been answered for him upon a like passage) only to the point in hand: As if he had said, after all this arguing, *You are still besides the matter, you have not hit the joynt of my case; come to me, I will shew you your mistake, and make it plain that you are all out.*

Hence Observe, First, *It is no fault to speak of men as we find them.*

Venite ad me audiendū & ostendam vos omnes decipere. Drus.

The rule of Christ (*Mat.* 7.1.) *Judge not that ye be not judged*, forbids, first, rash judgement of men; secondly, wrong judgment of men; thirdly, final judgment of men (that's peculiar to God) but it doth not forbid all judgment of men. We may call *a Spade, a Spade*, and him unwise who is so: All reproving is taken away, if all judging be, for we must reprove no man but whom we judg faulty, *Let the righteous smite me* (saith *David*, *Psal.* 141. 5.) He means it not of smiting with the Sword, but of smiting with a deserved censure; as if he had said, If I have done amiss, let me hear of it, yea let me smart for it, by a faithful reproof.

Secondly, Observe, *A wise man may do or speak that which is a just forfeiture of his present reputation for wisdom.*

This proceeds sometimes from a special judgment of God upon men, who in anger blasts their abilities, and commands a decay upon their greatest treasures of wisdom (*Isa.* 29.14.) *The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid:* It shall be so, saith God; the understanding of man is as much at Gods dispose, as his riches or honours are. Now as this proceeds sometimes from the special judgement of God upon man; so it may proceed at any time from the natural frame of man, who at the best is a creature composed of light and darkness, of wisdom and folly, of knowledge and ignorance, of grace and corruption, of an old man, as well as of a new. The over actings of the worser part, may soon leave a good and a wise man (in the main) under an eclipse, both of his goodness and wisdom. *David said in his haste* (and as he said it, he sinned in saying so) *All men are lyars:* But we may say it with fullest deliberation (and not sin at all in saying so) that *All men are lyars.* The Apostle saith it (*Rom.* 3.4.) while he saith, *Yea let God be true, and every man a lyar*; that is, Let this be acknowledged and confessed by all, That God cannot lie, such is his power that he can neither deceive, nor be deceived; but let it be as much acknowledged that every man is under a possibility to be deceived, yea and to deceive in the worst sense, and that in some sense every man is actually deceived, or a Deceiver: which proves this to be a truth, *Every man is a lyliar:* The lie, is that, which no man will bear at the hand of man, yet all must bear it from the hand of God; it is indeed a dishonour, but it is no slander to say, that every man is a liar: and because he is so, he may soon dis-intitle himself of wisdom. We must not lay too much upon men, for when they speak and do most unwisely, they speak and do most like men.

The Prophet (*Hosea* 6.7.) saith, *They like men have transgressed the Covenant:* The Hebrew is, *They have transgressed like Adam.* The Apostle speaks of some, *over whom death reigned, who yet had not sinned after the similitude of Adams transgression* (*Rom.* 5.14.) Infants die, and they die in that sin which *Adam* committed, though they never come to commit sin actually as *Adam* did; but all who sin actually, sin after the similitude of *Adams* transgression: He set the first Copy, and all his Posterity have written after him. We do but shew what we are, and whence we are, when we sin, even a company of men, the Sons of *Adam.* To be a man is also to be a sinner. Now, as it may be said, we like men have transgressed, so we like men are unwise. It is very easie for the wisest man to do unwisely; we have but shewed our selves men when we have shewed our selves unwise. That hath obtained us an Axiome, *It is humane for man to erre:* One of the wisest sentences among men, is, That man may do unwisely: He that doth all things wisely is more like God then a Man, nor can we do any thing wisely, but as God is pleased to teach and guide us. As we have need to ask our *daily bread* from God for the support of our bodies, so our daily wisdom from God for the management of our affairs. As God *takes the wise in their own craftiness* (1 *Cor.* 3.19.) So he can take wisdom from the crafty; and unless he supply wisdom to the wise, they will soon be so overtaken by their own folly, that of a whole throng of them, it may be said, by him that engageth with them, *I have not found one wise man among you.*

Thirdly, Observe, *Wise men are rarely to be found.*

There are store of subtle men, and crafty men there are but too many; but the wise man is a rare Jewel: It was for a wise man that the Prophet commands a search to be made, when he said (*Jer.* 5.1.) *Run ye to and fro, through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if you can find a man. Jerusalem* was full *of men*, and yet *a man* could not be found, when diligently sought for: What man was this? The next words describe him for a wise man indeed, *if there be any that executeth judgment, and seeketh the truth.* I cannot say that such wise men *are thick sown*, but I am very sure, *they are thin come up. Paul* found so great a scarcity and dearth of them, even among the Saints in the Church of *Corinth*, that though he doth not say it positively (with *Job* here) I have not found a wise man among you; yet he speaks it Interrogatively, and chidingly (1 *Cor.* 6.5.) *I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? No not one that shall be able to judge between his Brethren?* There are not many *knowing wise men*, among all men, *but judging wise men* are fewest of all.

Fourthly, Observe, *Wise men are apt to shew themselves unwise in expounding and judging the providences and dealings of God toward man.*

The works of the most wise God are all right, but few men are wise enough to pick out the right meaning of them. Providence is carried about the world in a Chariot of light, and yet there is much darkness in the minds of most men about it. This arises chiefly two wayes.

First, From the seeming confusions which are in the world. God doth not keep a method, nor govern himself by presidents, no man can tell certainly which way he will go, by looking into the way which he hath gone; for though he useth no liberty in the issue of his dealings, but rewardeth every man according to his works, yet he useth much liberty in the means which lead unto it.

Secondly, This ariseth from the narrowness of mans heart, who measuring God by his own line, and comparing what God hath done, by what he would do, cannot (as the Apostle speaks in another case) attain unto the righteousness of God in what he doth.

'Tis excellent wisdom to know how to interpret and improve the dealings of God with our selves or others. The grossest mis-interpretation of his dealings, is, to conclude the guilt or innocency of man, the love or hatred of God from them. *Job's* Friends upon such mistakes, incurred this censure, *I have not found one wise man among you.*

Job having by way of introduction, spoken to the men, or to the persons of his Friends, proceeds to speak his own case.

Vers.

Verſ. 11. **My dayes are paſt, my purpoſes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.**

What do you tell me of comfortable dayes? *My dayes are paſt, they are gone by:* as we ſay, *The Shew is gone by*, or, *the Company is gone by*; ſo ſaith *Job*, *My dayes are gone by:* There's no looking after them any more: they are out of ſight, why would you bring them into my mind again? *Dayes* may be taken here in a two-fold ſenſe.

עברו *Tranſierunt.*

First, For the term of his life.

Secondly, For the ſtate of his life.

As taken for the term of his life, *My dayes are paſt*, is, I am a near neighbour to death, death and I am ready to meet and imbrace. The life of man is meaſured by dayes; when our dayes are paſt, there's nothing left to meaſure, nothing to meaſure by.

Morti vicinus ſum.

My dayes are paſt.] But how could *Job* affirm, The term, or *dayes of my life are paſt*, when, as he was alive that day to ſay this, ſo he lived many a fair day after he had ſaid it. Can we call that *paſt*, which is ſtill preſent with us? or which is yet to come?

He affirms this, First, becauſe he conceived that the greateſt part of his dayes were actually paſt, and that it was not worth while to reckon upon the few dayes behind, he did not think that remnant ſo conſiderable as to meaſure it, but threw it by, as a piece of *uſeleſs nothing:* Our dayes are ſo paſſing, that (with a little Rhetorick) we may ſay they are paſt, as ſoon as they begin; how much more may we ſay ſo, when we are ſure they muſt ſhortly end, and are really almoſt, yea, only not, paſt.

Secondly, *Job* might ſay, *My dayes are paſt*, becauſe doubtleſs it had ſeized on his ſpirit, that his Glaſs was run, that he ſhould die preſently, he never looked to out-live that ſtorm: So that his *dayes were paſt* in his account, though not in Gods account. *Job* could ſay of himſelf (as we uſe to ſay of thoſe Women, who have gone out their full time of Child-bearing) that, *He had not a day more to reckon.* As *Job* had a full aſſurance that he ſhould live eternally, ſo he had a kind of aſſurance that he ſhould die very ſhortly: And therefore as to his own apprehenſions, and the calculation which he had made of his dayes, their date was out, and he might ſay, *My dayes are paſt.*

Again, As taken for the ſtate of his life, ſo *My dayes are paſt*, is, My good dayes, my proſperous dayes, are paſt. You tell me of a day of deliverance, what a morning I ſhall have, but I look on all my dayes here, as dayes of darkneſs. We ſay of a man who is not only in an evil, but in a deſperate, or irrecoverably evil condition, *He hath ſeen all his beſt dayes*, or *all his good dayes are gone. Job was full of truſt for a good eternity, but he had no hope of good dayes.* The term of a mans dayes may continue long, when the comfort of his dayes, is, or when his comfortable dayes are quite paſt: Though *Job's* dayes continued, as to the term of his life, yet his dayes (as he judged) were paſt, as to any comfortable ſtate of life, in which ſenſe he might alſo ſay, *My dayes are paſt.*

Nor did *Job* ſpeak this complainingly, or with a low ſpirit, *My dayes are paſt*; he did not whine it out as they do, who are loath to die, and would fain live ſtill in the delights of life; but he ſpake boldly and cheerfully, he ſpake of his Dying-day, as of his Marriage-day, *My dayes are paſt.* As a young man ſaith, *My marriage day is at hand*, I ſhall be married ſhortly; with ſuch a holy alacrity *Job* ſpake, I ſhall die ſhortly, *my dayes are paſt:* He looked upon his comfortable dayes in the World as paſt, and yet he was comforted: *Job* was full of pain, yet uſually in the cloſe of his ſpeeches he gathered up himſelf, and ſpake in a height and heat of ſpirit. As the Cock towards morning flutters his Wins before he Crowes, and gives warning of the approaching day; or as the Lyon ſtrikes his ſides with his Tail, to rouze up his ſpirits before he attempts his prey; ſo *Job* ſtirr'd up himſelf towards the cloſe of his anſwers, and reſumed new ſpirits, acting *That dying man* to the life, who having nothing in this World, either to fear or hope, dies without fear, yet with abundance, yea in aſſurance of hope: *My dayes are paſt.*

Hence Obſerve, First, As the words are taken in the former ſenſe: *A gracious heart hath peace in the approaches of death.*

His contentments are not done, when the term of his life is done: He can ſay, *My dayes are paſt*, as cheerfully, as *Agag* ſaid, *Surely, the bitterneſs of death is paſt. Some godly men have died far more pleaſantly then ever any wicked man lived.*

Secondly, From the latter ſenſe, Obſerve,

A gracious heart can take preſent comfort, and rejoyce in this World, while he knowes that all his worldly comforts and joyes are paſt.

Faith overlooks, or looks through and beyond all the evils of this life, to a good which ſhall never die; yea Faith ſees and enjoys a preſent good, while ſenſe ſees nothing, and indeed hath nothing elſe to ſee, but evil. A carnal man parts with his good dayes, or with the good of his dayes, as *Phaltiel* went to deliver up *Michal*, *Sauls* Daughter, and *David's* Wife by right, weeping all along as he went (2 *Sam.* 3.16.) There's a ſad parting between a worldly heart and worldly things; but he that is ſpiritually minded, though he doth not deſpiſe the meaneſt of worldly good things, as made by God for the uſe and comfort of man, ſo when God calls him from them, or them from him, he can part with the uſe of them, and yet not be diſpoſſeſſed of comfort; he knows that he hath a preſent good, and that he hath greater good to come, while he ſaith, *My dayes are paſt.*

My purpoſes are broken off.] The word which we tranſlate *Purpoſes*, ſignifies moſt uſually an evil purpoſe, or wicked deſignments; yet it is uſed alſo, as among the Rabbins, ſo by the Penmen of Scripture in a good ſenſe, for a warrantable, yea for a holy purpoſe: In the Book of Proverbs (*Chap.*1.4. *Chap.*2.11.) it is tranſlated *Diſcretion* or *Adviſement*, proceeding from the teachings of wiſdom, which ſtirs up gracious purpoſes in the ſoul towards God, and every good.

זמם *Cogitavit plerumq; in malum aliquando in bonum* זמות *Cujus ſingularis* זמה *quod antiquitus legebant Zemma ferre ſcelus denotat* מומה *autem quod ab eodem themate vocabulum eſt mediũ.* Druſ. *Rupti ſunt articuli cordis mei.* Sept. *Convulſæ ſunt compages corporis mei.* Aug.

My purpoſes are broken off: The Septuagint render, *My heart ſtrings are broken:* The heart-ſtrings by a metaphor, may be taken for purpoſes, becauſe purpoſes are as Bands or ſtrings upon the heart; and therefore when purpoſes are broken, we may ſay, the bands or ſtrings of the heart are broken.

Another reads, *The bindings or faſtnings of my body are looſned, or torn aſunder*; which tranſlation (as alſo the former) taken literally, notes only his nearneſs to death; for when a man dieth, we ſay, his heart-ſtrings break, and his whole body is in a fit of Convulſion.

My purpoſes are broken.] The word ſignifies a violent forcible breaking, as if a Giant had broken them.

But what was it which broke his purpoſes? The violence and continuance of his afflictions was this Breaker; or his purpoſes were broken by the confuſed motions and troubleſome repreſentations of his own fanſie, to which ſick men are very ſubject.

Again, what were thoſe purpoſes of his which were broken? If they were evil purpoſes, he had reaſon to rejoyce, not to complain; if they were good purpoſes, was it not his ſin as well as his affliction that they were broken off.

I anſwer to that, Purpoſes may be good, and yet broken without the ſin of the purpoſer, if himſelf be not the cauſe of that breach, and the impediment of their performance: If our holieſt purpoſes are broken off by the inevitable providence of God, the holineſs of man receives no blemiſh by it. The purpoſes of *Job* were good doubtleſs, either ſpiritually good, or civilly good; and they may be taken either for thoſe purpoſes of doing good, which he had, before he fell into trouble, or for thoſe which he had laid up in his breſt, to do, when he ſhould be again reſtored and delivered out of trouble. As if he had ſaid, I once had an expectation of life, and I purpoſed with my ſelf what to do with, or in my new life, but now thoſe purpoſes are all broken off, for I ſee my life is ready to be broken off. The next clauſe

ſeems

seems to explain this, and in that we shall see more fully what he means by these purposes.

Even the thoughts of my heart.] Every thought of the heart is not a purpose; yet every purpose is a thought of the heart: our thoughts are made up into purposes, either what to do, or not to do: Hence it is usual to say, I thought to have done such or such a thing; that is, I purposed to do it. Therefore *Job* might well say, *My purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart*, because purposes are nothing else but a frame, or pack of thoughts: There is an elegancy in that word which we translate *Thoughts*. The Hebrew is, *The possessions of my heart*; so we put it in the Margin of our Bibles: A learned Translator renders it thus, *The thoughts which my mind was wont to possess are pull'd or snatch'd away*: He means it not of all his thoughts, as if his power of thinking had been lost; but of those special thoughts which he had, or hopes, which he nourished about his restoring to happy dayes; these once possessed his heart, but they were gone. Thoughts are called the possessions of the heart two wayes.

מורשי *Possessiones cordis, à radice* ירש *cogitationes meæ avulsæ sunt, quas possidere solebat animus meus.* Jun.

Dicuntur cogitationes possideri à corde, quid enim magis proprium aut innatũ cordi quam suæ ipsius cogitationes? Drus. Coc.

First, In a passive } sence.
Secondly, In an active }

Passively, Because they are possessed by the heart; the heart doth enclose and hold our thoughts: The heart is the naturally proper vessel or receptacle of thoughts, therefore they are called the possessions of the heart: The heart is the soyl and seat of thoughts; there they are planted, and there they dwell.

Actively, For as thoughts are possessed by the heart, so thoughts possess the heart; thoughts are full of activity; they trouble and they comfort the heart; look what our thoughts are, such is the state of our hearts; if our thoughts be quiet, our hearts are quiet; if our thoughts be unquiet, our hearts are unquiet; if our thoughts be joyful, our hearts rejoyce; if our thoughts be sad, our hearts are sorrowful. 'Tis said in the Gospel (*Luke* 24. 38.) *Why are ye troubled? why do thoughts rise in your hearts?* That is, Why do troublesome and disconsolate thoughts rise in your hearts? 'Tis as natural for thoughts to rise in the heart, as it is for water to rise in a Spring; therefore Christ did not chide them because thoughts, but because such thoughts did rise in their hearts: We cannot hinder our hearts from thinking, no more then we can hinder the fire from burning, or water from wetting; but 'tis our duty to hinder our hearts from undue or discouraging thoughts, and to check them for thinking so. Thoughts rule the heart and put it into several frames and forms according to their own likeness; and therefore it is both our wisdom and our holiness to put and keep our thoughts in the best likeness. The heart (in a figurative sence) is nothing else but the frame of our thoughts; and our thoughts in a proper sence, are nothing else but *the possessions of the heart*.

Tabulæ cordis. Chald.

Further, The Chaldee Paraphrase saith, *The Tables of my heart are broken*; so it is an allusion to writing: The Law was written at first in Tables of Stone, and now a heart of flesh (not a fleshly heart) is the Tables of the Law; our hearts are Tables both for our own writing and for Gods. *Job* had written many purposes upon those Tables; therefore he might well say as in this case, My purposes, or all that was written upon the Tables of my heart, are broken. In my thoughts I had written and set down many particulars which I purposed to have done, but now those lines are crossed, or quite blotted out. God writes many of his own thoughts in our hearts, and our thoughts are the writings of our hearts; when our purposes and thoughts are broken, the *Tables of our hearts are broken*.

Scriptura cordis nunc litura est. Pined.

Hence Observe, First, *Right purposes are good, but it is not good to live upon purposes.*

Action must presently follow resolution, and performance must be speeded after purposes, else they are to little purpose. When *David* had said, *I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord* (Psal. 32. 5.) he instantly confessed them: And when he said, *I will take heed to my wayes* (Psal. 39. 1.) he instantly took heed to them. His purpose was in nature, before his practice, but in time they went together: There is a double danger in delaying purposes.

First, That the mind of the purposer may change, and his spirit grow flat towards them.

Secondly, That the seasons may change, and though he have a mind, yet he may want means and opportunity to perform them.

There is danger in both wayes, and much sin in the former way of breaking purposes; The danger of both will be more discovered in the second Observation.

Secondly, Observe, *When great afflictions come, especially when death comes, all our purposes are broken off.*

As man is apt to busie himself about many things, which he cannot know, so about many things, which (though they are possible to be done, yet) he shall never do. It is in man to purpose, but we must ask leave of God, before we can perform: Cross providences break many purposes, but death breaks all. All our purposes concerning the World, and the things of the World dye with us. When the breath of great Princes goeth forth (*Psal.* 146. 4.) *In that very day all their thoughts perish.* Great Princes are full of great thoughts; but they who cannot keep themselves from perishing, shall never keep their thoughts from perishing. The imaginary frames which they set up, the contrivances, plots, and projects of their hearts are all swept away like the Spiders Web, or broken like the Cockatrices Egg, when themselves are swept away from the face of the Earth, and broken by the power of death. The thoughts of many Princes and Polititians dye while themselves live: *Ahitophel's* purposes were broken and disappointed, while himself looked on, and he was so vexed to see it, that he executed himself because his purposes were not executed. In these times of publick shaking, how many purposes have we seen go to wraek? They who have been long laying their designs, and brooding upon their counsels, have had their eggs broken in a moment, and their thoughts blown away like chaff before the wind, or the lighter dust before the whirlwind: Now as the purposes of many about gathering riches, about taking their pleasure, about advancing themselves to, or establishing themselves in honour and high places, have perished before they dyed; so when such dye, all their purposes shall certainly perish: And as the purposes of all about worldly things perish in the approaches of death; so do the purposes of some about spiritual and heavenly things. How many have had purposes to repent, to amend their lives and turn to God, which have been prevented, and totally broken off, by the extremity of pain and sickness, but chiefly by the stroke of death; when they have (as they thought) *been about to repent*, and (as we say) *turn over a new leafe in their lives*; they have been turned into the Grave by death; and into Hell by the just wrath of God.

Some interpret this Text, as *Job's* complaint of the unsettlement of his thoughts about heavenly things, and the breaking of his purposes in the pursuit of eternity: He could not make his thoughts about Heaven hold or hang together, even those thoughts were full of gaps and empty spaces, or rather like Ropes of Sand. Many honest and gracious souls have found work enough upon a death-bed, or a sick-bed to attend the pain and infirmity of their bodies. When they have purposely set themselves (the habitual bent of their hearts being alwayes set that way) actually to seek God, to meditate upon the precious Promises, to put forth fresh lively workings of Faith upon the Lord Jesus Christ, they have been suddenly recalled, yea, even forcibly fetcht back by some violent assault of pain, or a previous charge of death: So that those thoughts which should be (and they desired that they might be) like their objects, most durable and steady, were yet more like some odd ends or broken pot-sheards, more like vanishing flashes, or wandring fancies, then that beautiful frame of heart, or those well combined and fastened meditations which they intended. For though all the troubles of this life, and the approaches of death it self cannot break, disappoint or scatter those fixed purposes, and thoughts which a Believer hath had, or those results and resolves which he hath often made in his own soul about the hopes and concernments of eternal life; yet he may be pitifully puzzled, amuzed, and interrupted in his present motions and meditations about them.

Non poterat jugi contẽplatio in rerum divinarum ut quõdam solebat intendere propter vim doloris. Phil.

Propter multiplices animi motus & perturbationes jã dolebat, jam timebat, nunc se erigebat in spem meliorem, nunc iterum concidebat.

Hence take this Caution.

Seeing not only our worldly thoughts periſh, but our ſpiritual thoughts may be much broken by ſtrong temptations and variety of bodily diſtempers, in times of trouble and ſickneſs, let us haſten to ſettle our purpoſes and thoughts about eternal life, yea, to ſee our ſouls paſſed from death to life, before we ſee ſickneſs and ſorrow, much more before we ſee our ſelves ready to paſs from life to death. Purpoſes to repent, or to mind heavenly things, not only may, but for the moſt part are broken off, and loſt when ſickneſs and ſorrow find us. Beware of this deceit of the Devil, who tells us we ſhall have leiſure to ſeek God when we are ſick, and that we ſhall have a fair opportunity to ſettle all the affairs of our ſouls, when we are going out of the body: Then (he tells us) we ſhall have nothing elſe to do, and therefore we ſhall ſurely do it then. Let not Satan deceive us with theſe vain words, for then he intends us moſt blows; then is his ſeaſon to break our thoughts into a thouſand pieces, and to vex us with the ſplinters, even when we lye upon our ſick-beds, or are bewildred with affliction. There is ſcarce one of twenty, but finds breakings, and convulſions upon his thoughts, at the ſame time when he feels them upon his body: How often have ſick men been heard to ſay, We cannot ſet our ſelves to think ſeriouſly of Heaven, or to act Faith, *&c. To ſuffer and be ſick, is work enough for any man at one time:* He had not need to have his greateſt work to do when he hath ſuch work to do.

They who have had brave ſpirits, and fixed holy purpoſes upon their death-beds, were ſuch as had been long exerciſed in them before. Woe to thoſe who put off their beginnings in Grace, till they are ready to finiſh in Nature: A dying man is unfit for any buſineſs; how much more for this? He is extreamly indiſpoſed for worldly purpoſes, much more for heavenly: And therefore as ſoon as a man that hath any Eſtate, begins to be ſick, Friends will move him, *Pray Sir, ſettle your Eſtate, make your Will, you know not how God may deal with you, if your diſeaſe ſhould encreaſe a little more, you may be totally diſabled to do it; therefore pray haſten:* Yea, we find that moſt men of valuable Eſtates in the World, make their Wills in their health, when they are free from ſickneſs and furtheſt from death, when they have the greateſt activity of mind and body: They wiſely remember how ſome, who had a full purpoſe to make their Wills in ſickneſs, have been ſuddenly overpowered by the malignity of a diſeaſe, and could never do it, but have left all at *ſix and ſevens.* If ſo, ſhall any man leave his ſoul undiſpoſed of, or at *ſix and ſevens*, till ſuch a time? A ſick man being minded of any worldly buſineſs (unleſs he have a great mind to it) thinks it excuſe enough to wave it, becauſe he is ſick; I pray do not trouble me with it (ſaith he) I cannot think of it now, you and I will ſpeak about it hereafter when I am recovered. Do ſick men think it reaſon they ſhould be excuſed from worldly buſineſs becauſe they are ſick? And ſhall any man reſolve that it is beſt to deal about ſpiritual buſineſſes when he is ſick? If *Job*, who had a holy and a ſound mind under a diſeaſed body, ſaid, *My purpoſes are broken off, and the thoughts or poſſeſſions of my heart*: How much more will they feel theſe breaches, whoſe minds are ſick and more diſeaſed then their bodies?

Further, Obſerve, *The difference between God and man, what a vain creature man is, and how excellent God is.*

God never had one of his purpoſes broken; whatever he purpoſed he hath carried to perfection; he never loſt a thought, nor any of the poſſeſſions of his heart. *The counſel of the Lord ſtandeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all Generations* (Pſal. 33. 11.) 'Tis the glory of God that his purpoſes ſtand; he is able to make them ſtand, though all the world ſhould combine as one man to caſt them down. 'Tis the diſhonour of man that he ſo often falls from his own purpoſes, and eats up his own reſolves; and 'tis the puniſhment of ſome men, that their purpoſes receive a fall, that their moſt ſolemn debates and ſetled reſolves are ſcattered and confounded: *The Lord* (in judgment) *bringeth the counſel of the Heathen to nought, he maketh the devices of the people of none effect* (Pſal. 33. 10.) All the thoughts of man are loſeable, and moſt men loſe their thoughts.

It is the comfort of Believers that they are not bottom'd upon their own purpoſes or thoughts, but upon the thoughts and purpoſes of God (that's their baſis) and that ſhall never be broken; God is unchangeable, and therefore his purpoſes cannot break: When mans purpoſes are broken, he either changeth, or ſuffers a change; of which *Job* complains in the next Verſe.

Verſe 12. **They change the night into day, and the light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.**

Here are two things to be opened.

Firſt, What is meant by changing the night into day.

Secondly, Who it is that changeth the night into day.

They change the night into day.] Hath not the Lord made a Promiſe, yea, a Covenant (which is more then a Promiſe) and annexed a ſign to it, which is the ratification of a Covenant (*Gen.* 8. 22.) that to the end of the world, while the earth remaineth, *Seed-time, and harveſt, and Summer, and Winter, and cold and heat, and day and night, ſhall not ceaſe*; that is, they ſhall not ceaſe in their turns and ſeaſons? How is it here ſaid, *They change the night into day*; as if the night and day were out of courſe, when as the Lord hath covenanted, that they ſhall continue in their courſe?

I anſwer, There is a twofold change of times, of day and night.

Firſt, A Natural
Secondly, A Metaphorical } Change.

The united power of all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, cannot make a natural change of day into night, and God the Creator hath promiſed that he will not make that change; he will not break the ſucceſſion of night and day, while the Earth remaineth.

But a Metaphorical change of night into day, and of day into night, hath been often made; for when the night is ſo full of trouble to us that we cannot ſleep, the night is changed into day; and when the day is ſo full of trouble to us, that we can neither do our work, nor take our comforts, then the day is changed into night: The night is the time appointed for natural reſt, therefore the night may be ſaid to be changed into day, when we cannot reſt, and this is a great affliction; for though in ſome ſence, and in Scripture-ſence too, to have the night changed into day, is a mercy, and notes a change from a troubled eſtate into a comfortable eſtate; yet to have the night changed by our reſtleſneſs, or want of ſleep, is both an affliction it ſelf, and an argument that we are burdened and over-preſſed with other manifold afflictions.

Hoc tormentum cordis, nec nox interrumpebat quæ eſt tempus deputatum humanæ quieti, gravius eſt patiſomni defectum in nocte quam in die. Aquin. *Meæ cogitationes moleſtæ animum rodentes, noctem mihi convertunt in diem; efficiunt ut noctes ducam inſomnes.* Merc.

In this ſence *Job* complains of the change of his night into day; and thus God often changeth times and ſeaſons, both to particular perſons and whole Nations (*Dan.* 2. 21.) Daniel *anſwered and ſaid, Bleſſed be the Name of God for ever and ever, for wiſdom and might are his, and he changeth the times, and the ſeaſons, he removeth Kings, and he ſets up Kings:* He changeth the times and ſeaſons; that is, He makes ſeaſons comfortable, or troubleſome; peaceable, or unquiet; he changeth the night into day, or the day into night, as himſelf pleaſeth.

And the light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.] That is, The day is to me as no day, becauſe of my calamity and miſery; my day is ſhort, becauſe darkneſs ſuddenly overtakes it. Artificial dayes are long or ſhort, according to the diſtance which the darkneſs of the night keeps from them. Our Metaphorical dayes are long or ſhort, according to the diſtance which the darkneſs of trouble keeps from them. Thus the change of day into night, and of night into day, is to be reckoned by the condition we are in: When we cannot ſleep in the night, our night is changed into day; and when ſorrow ſeizeth on us in the day, our day is changed into night; or, *The light is ſhort to us by reaſon of darkneſs.*

Propter calamitates.

But who was it that made this change? *They change the night into day, and the day into night:* Who? Some aſcribe it

it to his troubled thoughts, of which he had ſpoken before; his thoughts were ſo torn and diſtracted, that their confuſions turned the night into day, and the day into night; that is a plain ſence: As if he had ſaid, *By reaſon of my continual cares and diſtractions, I take no comfort neither night nor day.*

Hæ meæ cogitationes noctem mihi in diem convertunt. Merc.

Others refer it his Friends, *They*, that is, my Friends, *turn the night into day, and the day into night*; and if his Friends be the Antecedent, it comes much to one, for his Friends did it by filling him with troubleſome thoughts, and unquiet reaſonings; his Friends did it by filling his heart and head (as we ſay) with their Proclamations.

Præſentium malarum cogitationes efficiunt ut dies quamvis lucidus mihi ſit nox. Jun.

Hence Note, *When the mind is unſetled the man cannot reſt.*

Waking nights and weariſome dayes are the portion of a troubled ſpirit.

There is a further elegancy conſiderable in the latter branch of this Verſe, *The light is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.* The Original is, *The light is near becauſe of darkneſs.* The word ſignifies *nearneſs*, whether in time or place, and it is uſually put in Scripture for *ſhort*, for that which is of ſhort continuance (*Job* 20. 5.) *The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort.* The Margin is, *The triumphing of the wicked is from near*: That is, It is hard by, it began but lately, and it will ſoon be over, or at an end. In this elegancy the holy Ghoſt ſpeaks of falſe Gods (*Deut.* 32. 17.) *They ſacrificed to Devils, and not to God; to Gods whom they knew not, to new Gods that were come newly up:* The Hebrew is, to *near Gods* (it is this word) *to ſhort Gods*; Gods that are near: That is, Gods ſhort or near in their original, they have been but a little while, they are *newly come up*, as we tranſlate, *Whom your Fathers knew not, nor feared:* Idols are new Gods, near Gods; we need not travel far to find out their deſcent and pedigree, the oldeſt of them are but of a late date, or of a new edition, upſtart Gods, as they are compared with *Jehovah* the true God, who is from everlaſting: And as they are called near Gods, in regard of their original, and riſe; ſo likewiſe in regard of their continuance, they are not for eternity, we ſhall ſee an end of thoſe Gods ſhortly, they are not long-lived, much leſs are they to everlaſting. The true God is the ſame for ever; falſe Gods are nothing; Idols are nothing in the World, and they ſhall in ſhort time be thruſt out of the World; and all the *near Gods* ſhall be put far away. What the Lord ſpeaks of theſe night-Gods, the Gods of the darkneſs of this World, *Job* ſpeaks of the comforts or light which he once received from God. *The light is ſhort, becauſe of darkneſs:* That is, It is ready to end and expire.

Propinquum pro brevi exponit. Rab. Sol.

Idola dicuntur dii ex propinquo, i.e. *qui diu non durant, vel qui de novo pro diis haberi cœperint.* Merc.

We may ſay of all the light which we have in this World, that *it is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs*: Spiritual light, or the light of Gods countenance ſhining in, or upon his people, hath a darkneſs attending upon it in this World. The experiences of moſt Chriſtians anſwer that of one of the Ancients about this heavenly light, *It comes but ſeldom, and it is ſoon gone:* We have but ſome glimpſes and glances of Divine favour here, not a ſteady ſence of it; that (except to a very few) is reſerved for Heaven: 'Tis ſo alſo about temporal light; the light of Gods providence towards us hath a darkneſs attending upon it, yea, a darkneſs mixed with it: When our comforts have ſcarce ſaluted us, or ſpoken with us, they are interrupted and taken off by approaching ſorrows. Thoſe creature enjoyments and relations which have moſt light in them, have alſo much darkneſs hanging about them, and hovering over them. *Man at the beſt eſtate is altogether vanity: And his longeſt light here is ſhort becauſe of darkneſs.*

Rara hora brevis mora. Bern.

But *Job* ſpeaks not this in reference to the general ſtate of man, much leſs to the beſt eſtate of man in this life; he applyes it ſpecially to an afflicted eſtate, and particularly to his own: How ſhort is the light of an afflicted ſoul? How quickly do Clouds come over him, and Eclipſes ſhut the ſhining from him, when the light of a man in proſperity is but ſhort, and his day in danger of a night every moment? All our light on earth dwells upon the borders of darkneſs; the light of Heaven hath no neighbourhood with it, and therefore is not only long, but everlaſting.

Yet I find a learned Interpreter making this Verſe ſpeak the return of *Job*'s light; *The changing of night into day*, is to be underſtood (ſaith he) in a good ſence: And the breaking of his thoughts and purpoſes is (according to this Interpretation) nothing elſe but the ſcattering of his dark and melancholy thoughts and purpoſes, which being removed and gone, the night of ſorrow was turned into a day of joy, and the morning light (here called the *near light*, becauſe it immediately ſucceeds the darkneſs, which the noon-light doth not) this morning-light (ſaith he) came before the face of darkneſs.

Illæ tenebroſæ cogitationes à mente mea diſcedentes, pro nocte jucundum quietis diem, & pro tenebris lucem matutinam, i.e. optatam pacē conſtituunt. Bold.

To which ſence the Vulgar Latine tranſlates the laſt clauſe, *After darkneſs I hope for light*; or, though I be now in darkneſs, I hope for light: As if *Job* had ſaid, *After this dark night and dreadful ſtorm, God hath ſpoken to the angry Sea of my tempeſtuous thoughts, and behold there is a great calm.* But though the Author of this Expoſition be ſo much in love with it, that he counts all other ſpurious; yet I rather perſiſt in, and ſtick to the former; ſeeing the whole context runs upon the aggravation of *Job*'s preſent troubles, with which this Interpretation holds no agreement. Nor is there any neceſſity (as the Author ſuppoſeth) to take it up, for the avoiding of that imputation of a low, weak, and ſinking ſpirit, which the former Expoſition, in his apprehenſion, ſubjects *Job* unto; for though we ſay that *Job* doth, as often elſewhere, ſo here again, make report of his ſorrows in higheſt ſtrains of holy Rhetorick; yet we are ſo far from ſaying that he deſponded, or ſunk under them, that we doubt not to ſay (which is all that this Author would ſay, or have others take notice of in his ſingular Interpretation) that he was more then a Conqueror over them all. 'Tis not only granted, that *Job* did hope for a day of joy after his night of ſorrow, but affirmed, that he had a day of joy in his night of ſorrow (for he could ſay, in a true ſence, what the Apoſtle *Paul* after did, *as ſorrowful, yet always rejoycing*) yet his night (by reaſon of his outward troubles, and many aſſaults of inward terror) was changed into a laborious toyling day, and his outward light of comfort was ſhort and quickly ended, when he had it, *By reaſon of the faces* (as the Original hath it) *or ſudden appearances of darkneſs.*

Et rurſum poſt tenebras ſperò lucem. Vulg.

VERS. 13, 14, 15, 16.

If I wait, the Grave is mine houſe: I have my bed in the darkneſs.
I have ſaid to corruption, Thou art my Father; to the Worm, thou art my Mother, and my Siſter.
And where is now my hope? As for my hope, who ſhall ſee it?
They ſhall go down to the bars of the pit, when our reſt together is in the duſt.

JOB proſecutes the former Argument, and ſhews yet more fully the vanity of thoſe hopes which his Friends would nouriſh in him about a temporal reſtauration. He ſhews alſo, that though himſelf ſhould nouriſh them, and even ſtrive to hope, yet he could no more keep ſuch hopes from languiſhing, then himſelf from dying, *If I wait, the Grave is mine houſe.*

If I wait.] Waiting is an act of the mind, in expectation of ſome future good: The Original word ſignifies an earneſt waiting, or waiting joyned with much intention of ſpirit, and ſtrong deſires, as if the mind did let out a cord, or line, to take hold of the thing, for which we wait. Waiting is nothing elſe but patience lengthened out upon a promiſe. There are three acts of the ſoul upon the promiſes.

Verbum קוה *affinitatem habet cum* קו *perpendiculũ, lineas*

First, Believing.
Secondly, Hoping.
Thirdly, Waiting.

We believe the truth of the promiſe; we hope for the good laid up in the promiſe; we wait till that good be given out unto us. *If I wait* (ſaith *Job*) God waits

Dicitis (amici) ſi me humiliem, manere me nam lineam expectationem: atqui cernitis vires meas & vitam meam veniſſe ad ultimam quippe mala mea curam reſpuunt. Cor.

upon us; and we wait upon God: God waits in mercy; we wait in duty: *God waits to be gracious* (Isa. 30. 18.) and man waits to be refreshed with the Grace of God. *Job*, in this place, seems to make light or little of this duty of waiting: *If I wait*, or, *although I wait*, or, *what if I wait*, what shall I get by it? Where's the profit? Or what are my comings in? He tells us what; If I wait, all that I shall get by it will be a *Grave*, or *a bed in darkness*: And all my preferment will be, *to call corruption my Father; and to say of the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and my Sister*: Here's all I am like to have for all my waiting.

But was this all he looked for by waiting?

Yes, it was all he looked for, and all he thought himself in a capacity to receive in this World (though in that he was deceived) he had no expectation but to dye, and go down to the dust; he had no hope to rejoyce in any Kindred or Alliance, but Worms and corruption, these were his Mother, and his Sisters, and Brethren: If I wait, here's all I shall have. Thus (as I intimated before) the words carry a strong confutation of those hopes which his Friends endeavoured to raise up in him, that God would raise him up, and make him as a Prince among the people, if he repented and turned to God. No, saith he, what do you tell me of a great House, and of a great Name, of a rising Sun, and of the Morning light? why am I so often told of these things? I tell you once for all, the Grave is my house, Darkness is my bed, and the Worms are my kindred and companions; let me hear no more of these groundless prophecyings, and unsavory flatteries, for my wound is incurable, and I am at the last cast, *If I wait, the Grave is my house.*

Docet præcisam esse sibi his malis omnem vitæ spem vel si eam maximè animo fovere velit. Si expectē i. e. *si expectare studeā.* Merl.

Again, The word which we translate to *wait*, coming, as was toucht before, from a Root which signifies a Carpenters Line, by which he measures his buildings: Some render the Text thus, *If I build, the Grave is my house*: As if he had said, I have no other house to build but a Grave; or when I have builded my best, I shall have no other house but a Grave.

Si ædificavero, infernus domus mea. Rab. Dan.

The Grave.] The same word signifieth Hell, as was shewed (*Chap.* 11. 8.) and therefore I will not stay here upon it: *If I wait, the Grave*

Is my house.] He calls the Grave a house, because there we rest as in a house: Man goeth forth of his house to labour, and comes home to his house for rest: Some tell us *Job* calls the Grave his house, in allusion to those forms of making Graves, or Sepulchres, used in ancient (which are also continued in these) times, with arches, and contrivances like a house.

Ægyptii defunctorũ sepulchra, domos æternas appellant. Diodor. lib. 1.

And I have made my bed in the darkness.

Intelligi potest de lecto bene ornato super quem reponi solebant principum cadavera Mausoleis, quod juxta Hebræum in plurali dicitur, stravi strata mea, *magnificum quid sonat & Pompaticum.* Bold.

He speaks still in prosecution of the allusion: In a house there are Dining-rooms, and there are sleeping Rooms; there is the Bed-chamber, and the Bed in the Chamber. The Grave is my house (saith *Job*) and there I have a Bed, I have made it,

In the darkness.] The Grave is a dark place; and the Grave is called Darkness in a double respect.

First, Because there is no light of the body there.

Secondly, Because there is no light of the Sun there.

The light of the body is the eye, and the light of the Air is the Sun; but in the Grave the Sun shines not, or if it did, yet there the eye sees not, therefore the Grave is darkness: *I have made my bed in the darkness*: And darkness is most fit for a bed; sleep loves darkness: A working Room must be light; but 'tis no matter how dark a sleeping Room be: When we go to sleep, if it be not dark, we make it dark, that so we may sleep the better. The Apostle gives that as an argument why the Saints should not sleep as do others, because they were once darkness, but now light in the Lord. He that is in aerial light can hardly get his body to sleep; And will you who are in spiritual light compose your souls to sleep? All sorts of sleepers covet the dark, and therefore they who sleep in death, are elegantly described making their bed in darkness, that so they may have (as it were) all accommodations for their rest, *I have made my bed in the darkness.*

It may be questioned (towards the clearing of this Verse) Did not *Job* wait? Why doth he say, *If I wait?* Was he upon Iffs or Ands about that great and necessary duty? He resolved peremptorily (*Chap.* 14. 14.) *All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*: And is he so much changed already into an unresolvedness about his waiting?

I answer, This supposition about waiting, is not a negation, nor is it a note of his irresolution to wait for any thing, but only for that particular, about which his Friends were so busie to awaken and heighten his expectations. *Job* waited upon God for all things which he desired to have; only he did not wait upon God for that which the visible dispensations of God seemed to tell him aloud, that he should not have, a temporal deliverance: yea, when he saith, *If I wait*, namely, for this thing, it is an Argument that he acknowledged it a duty to wait upon God for all those things, for the receiving of which he had any rule or ground of hope from God: Every exception confirms the rule. He that saith he doth not wait upon God about that for which he hath no warrant, saith strongly, that he ought to wait upon God where he hath a warrant.

From which consequence we may observe this unquestionable truth.

That it is the duty of man to wait upon God.

Waiting upon God is a duty of the first Commandment; it is a part of natural worship: It is not in mans liberty, whether he will wait or no, he is commanded to wait: *David* speaks it double, and no doubt he laboured to act it double (*Psal.* 40. 1.) *Waiting, I waited*; or, *I waited patiently upon God.* The Apostle gives that advice to the Saints (*Heb.* 10. 36.) *Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise*: There is doing the will of God, and then there is receiving the promise; yet we must do somewhat after we have done the will of God, before we can receive the promise; and that is, we must wait upon him: *You have need of patience*, saith the Apostle: What kind of patience? There are three sorts of patience.

First, The patience of labouring, that he puts in the former part of the Verse, it is our *doing the will of God.*

Secondly, There is the patience of suffering.

Thirdly, There is the patience of waiting after we have both done and suffered the will of God.

We have need of this patience, *the patience of waiting*, that we may receive the promise, that is, the mercy promised. God hath preventing mercies, and they come to us before we wait for them; but his rewarding mercies must be waited for: He will exercise the grace of patience in us, by causing us to wait for our reward, as he exerciseth the graces of love and zeal, in commanding us to do his will; and usually without waiting after we have done his will, there is no receiving of the reward for doing his will. And for the Promises and Prophesies in general, *Though God never fail his own time, yet he seldom comes at ours.* That great Promise about the deliverance of the people of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, was performed punctually to an hour (*Exod.* 12. 41, 42.) *It came to pass at the end of four hundred and thirty years, even that very night, it came to pass, that God brought out all the Host of* Israel. The time being out in the night, God did not stay till morning, but brought them out that very night: We count it a very venial sin to break our word for a day, or to let a man wait a day beyond the time promised; we commonly say, *A day breaks no square*: It is not so with God, he keeps his time punctually, he will not break his word one day. We read of the shortening of evil times, but not of their lengthening: God never makes his people wait for good longer then he hath promised. But though God keep his time exactly, and come just at the moment he hath prefixed and foreshewed, yet we are apt to antedate the promise of God, and to set it a time before Gods time: We are short-sighted, and short-breathed; that which is but a moment in the Kalendar of Heaven, seems more then an Age to us. Now in this regard there is much need of patience, of waiting patience, to tarry, not only our time, but Gods time; which is the meaning of the Prophet *Habakkuk* (Chap. 2. 3.) *The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak and not lye: though it tarry, wait for it, because*

because it will surely come, and will not tarry: The Prophet adviſes, *Though it tarry, wait for it*; there's our duty, yet he preſently affirms, *It will not tarry*: So then it may tarry, and yet it tarrieth not; it may tarry beyond our time, but it tarryeth not beyond Gods time; *It will come, and will not tarry*; that is, not beyond the time which God hath prefixed, though it may ſoon tarry beyond the time which we have prefixed; therefore if it it tarry, wait; there is no remedy but patience.

The Apoſtle *James* gives the Rule (*Chap.* 1. 4.) *Let Patience have her perfect work:* That is, Let all manner of patience work in you to the end, and let it work to all thoſe ends or purpoſes to which it is appointed. Patience hath her perfect work.

First, When it puts forth perfect acts.

Secondly, When it perſeveres in acting.

Patience aſcends by three ſteps to the perfection of her work.

The firſt is a ſilent (not a ſullen) ſubmiſſion or reſignation of our ſelves to the diſpoſe of God (*Pſal.* 39. 9.) *I was dumb* (ſaith *David*) *and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.*

Secondly, A kind of thankful acceptation, or kiſſing of the Rod which ſmites us: *If their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled* (ſaith the Lord; *Levit.* 26. 41.) *and they accept the puniſhment of their iniquity:* The phraſe imports a welcome receiving of it, as of a love-token from the hand of a Friend, or that the Rod is not only juſtly, but mercifully and graciouſly inflicted: This is a great perfection of patience; and to this *Job*'s patience attained the very firſt day of his ſorrows, while he bleſſed the Name of the Lord, not only for giving him ſo many good things, but alſo for taking them away (*Chap.* 1. 21.)

The third ſtep, is, ſpiritual joy, and ſerious chearfulneſs under ſorrowful diſpenſations: This the Apoſtle exhorts the Brethren to (*Verſ.* 2.) *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations:* And preſently adds (intimating that the higheſt perfection of patience conſiſts in joy) *Let Patience have her perfect work:* As if he had ſaid, I have told you what the perfect work of patience is, do not give check to your patience till it be got up this ſtep, and hath ſet your ſouls *a rejoycing*, or (as we ſpeak) *a crowing* over all your temptations.

Every Grace ſhould have its perfect work in us, and ſo they have, when patience hath its perfect work; and then patience hath done that perfect work there commanded, when we wait quietly, thankfully, and rejoycingly, till God hath done the work which he hath promiſed. This waiting patience is alſo called (by Chriſt himſelf) *The poſſeſſion of the ſoul* (Luke 21. 19.) *Poſſeſs ye your ſouls in patience.* What title ſoever we have to our own ſouls, we have no poſſeſſion of them without patience: As Faith gives us the poſſeſſion of Chriſt, ſo patience gives us the poſſeſſion of our ſelves: An impatient man is not in his own hand. And as waiting patience gives us the preſent poſſeſſion of our ſelves; ſo it will bring us to the poſſeſſion of all good things elſe that we ſtand in need of to make us happy. The Prophet pronounceth them bleſſed, who wait; every bleſſing is a good thing; but to be bleſſed is all good things; *not only is a bleſſing but bleſſedneſs the reward of a waiter. The Lord is a God of judgment, bleſſed are all they that wait for him* (Iſa. 30. 18.) Waiting is not only a duty, but a benefit, yea, our bleſſedneſs. And if any object, How is it bleſſedneſs, or ſo much as a ſingle bleſſing, to wait upon God under this notion, as a God of judgment? To have ſaid, *God is a God of mercy, bleſſed are they that wait for him*, might have taken upon the heart; but to ſay, *God is a God of judgment, bleſſed are they that wait for him:* How can that be? Is there any deſireableneſs in judgment?

I anſwer, Judgment is not there oppoſed to mercy (there's no bleſſedneſs in being near ſuch judgment.) We may conſider judgment in a threefold oppoſition.

First, Judgment is oppoſed to anger and ſeverity (*Jer.* 10. 24.) *Correct me, O Lord, in judgment, not in thine anger:* It is a bleſſed thing to wait upon a God of judgment, in oppoſition to anger, or as judgment imports the golden bridle of moderation upon the paſſions and affections.

Secondly, Judgment is oppoſed to injuſtice: it is a bleſſed thing to wait upon a juſt God, who will certainly do us right; it is a miſery, one of the greateſt miſeries under the Sun, to wait upon unjuſt and unrighteous men; but how great a mercy is it to wait upon a juſt and a righteous God?

Thirdly, Judgment is oppoſed to folly, ignorance, and unadviſedneſs; thus God is a God of judgment, or wiſdom, and bleſſed are they that wait upon the wiſe; it is a vexation to wait upon raſh, fooliſh, heady men, who do they care not what, or know not what they do; but to wait upon a man, much more upon the God of judgment, who knows how to order and do all things, who hath the full compaſs of every cauſe within him, and will time every circumſtance to our beſt advantage (to wait upon this God, I ſay) is a high piece of happineſs: God being ſuch a God of judgment, *Bleſſed are they that wait for him*; and ſo bleſſed are they, that however he may put them to wait long, yet he at his coming will more then recompence all their waiting; as we find in the exultation of the Church (*Iſa.* 25. 9.) *And it ſhall be ſaid in that day, Loe this is our God, we have waited for him, he will ſave us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad, and rejoyce in his ſalvation.* Poſſibly ſome had ſaid then to the Church (as was ſaid continually to *David*, Pſal. 42. 3.) *Where is your God?* Ye have long looked for him, but he doth not yet appear. The Church having born thoſe reproaches long, ſees God coming at laſt, and then ſhe breaks forth in triumph, as if ſhe had held God forth in her hand, and cryes him up, *Loe this is our God, we have waited for him:* The words have a ſound of victory, yea, of many victories in them. They ſhall in the end overcome all difficulties, who can but overcome their own hearts to a patient waiting upon God: As true repentance for the evil we have done, ſo holy patience for the good we would receive, ſhall never be repented of.

And (to add that further) though, when (as it appeared here to *Job*) God in his providential actings, determines negatively, and ſpeaks it out by the manner of his workings, that his will is not to give, or do for us ſuch a thing, it ceaſes to be a Duty to wait for it; yet to lay down the Duty of waiting, or to throw it up at any time upon ſuch grounds as theſe four (which are the uſual grounds upon which it is laid down or thrown up) is extreamly ſinful, and a high contempt of God.

First, It is extreamly ſinful to give over waiting upon God, as being unwilling to tarry his leiſure. 'Tis the prerogative of God, to date all times, as much as to do all things for us; our times are in his hand as well as our affairs; and he is the diſpoſer of all things, as in regard of the means, ſo alſo of their ſeaſons. Hence 'tis our duty to wait as a time, ſo all the dayes of our appointed time (how many ſoever they are, they are all of Gods appointment) till our change ſhall come, as *Job* profeſſed his reſolution to do (*Chap.* 14. 14.) The *Iſraelites* are charged (*Pſal.* 78. 41.) *For limiting the holy One of Iſrael:* How did they limit him? There is a twofold limiting of God: First, To means, when we think we cannot be ſaved unleſs we are ſaved our own way. Secondly, There is a limiting of God to times, he muſt ſave us by ſuch a day, or elſe we cannot be ſaved: Thus the *Iſraelites* limited the holy One of *Iſrael*, and ſet bounds to him, whoſe Power and Wiſdom are immeaſurable. God may juſtly limit man; and man never doth juſtly, till he keeps within the limits of God: but it is not only a ſin, but a high preſumption, for man to limit God: Nor is it poſſible for man to break his own bounds more by any thing he doth, then by ſetting bounds to God, what, or when he ſhall do.

Secondly, It is exceeding ſinful to give over waiting on God for deliverance out of an affliction, becauſe we are either diſpleaſed with God who ſends it, or are angry at the affliction ſent. When God throws a ſtone at us, we ſhould ſtoop humbly, and taking it up, put it into our boſome (if we do ſo, though it look like a worthleſs Pebble, it will quickly change into a precious Pearl; however, we muſt) not like the Dog rage at it and bite it, which yet many do. Now they who are vexed at the

affliction which God sends, or at God himself, for sending the affliction, these will never wait upon God for the removing of it. Such was the frame of that wretched King (2 *Kings* 6. 33.) who said, *This evil is of the Lord, wherefore should I wait on the Lord any longer?* As if he had said, I will never wait for any kindness at his hand, who hath already used me thus unkindly: He that takes an affliction in ill part at the hand of God, will never expect good from him; or if he do, it must come very speedily, or else his waiting is over. 'Tis not unlikely that this King, by the advice of the Prophet *Elisha*, had waited a little, but he was soon weary; *Why should I wait any longer?* There was reason enough why he should, but his unbelief would not let him see what he saw, nor understand what himself had spoken: For the reason which he gave, why he would wait no longer, is the strongest reason that can be given why he should have waited longer, *This evil is of the Lord.* 'Tis true, that among men, they, from or of whom evils are, are usually the unfittest to remove them: Men who wound are seldom skill'd at curing; but the Lord brings no evil, but what he can remove, nor doth he make any wound but what he can heal; yea, no Power nor Art in the World, can heal the wounds that he makes, or remove the evils which he brings, but his own. Hence the patient Believer cryes out with the Church (*Hos.* 6. 1.) Let us return to the Lord, yea, let us wait upon the Lord, *for he hath torn, and he will heal:* But the impatient unbeliever saith, Let us turn away from the Lord, let us wait upon the Lord no longer, for 'tis he that hath torn us, therefore surely he will not heal us. Grace and corruption may take up the same principles, but they draw conclusions from them as contrary as themselves are.

Thirdly, It is exceeding sinful to give over waiting, as thinking that God cannot help. Some shorten their patience by shortening the hand of God. That such were the apprehensions of the *Jews*, is more then probable by the Prophets Negative assertion (*Isa.* 59. 1.) *Behold the Lords hand is not shortened that it cannot save.*

Fourthly, It is exceeding sinful to give over waiting upon God, by turning aside to sinful wayes: Some find out (as they suppose) nearer wayes ro help themselves, then by attending upon God; they like not (as such have prophanely cal'ed them) those *pious delayes*; and so over Hedge and Ditch they will, to the overtaking of their own ends. The Prophet *Jeremiah* describes such (*Chap.* 18. 12.) *And they said, there is no hope*; or, our case is desperate, all's lost. What then? *But we will walk after our own devices, and every one do after the imagination of his evil heart:* The Lord had told them (*Vers.* 11.) *Behold I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you.* But did the Lord devise a device, meerly to ensnare them, or did he frame evil against them only to undo them? No, his aim was their repentance, not their ruine, and therefore he adds in the same Verse, *Return ye now every one from his evil wayes, and make your wayes and your doings good:* As if the Lord had said, Though I am about to frame evil against you, yet do ye return to me, and all shall be well. How do they resent this threatening and this Counsel? They grow desperate upon it: And seeing God had brought them into such straits, they would get out as well as they could: And as he was devising devices against them, so they had devices of their own, and them they would follow. Thus they would not wait upon God for a remedy in the way of repentance for their old sins, but they would provide themselves a remedy by running into new sins: They had a device in their heads which should match the device of God.

Now what the Prophet subjoyns (*Vers.* 13, 14, 15.) as a strong redargution of that people who refused to wait upon God in that way, the same we may say to all those who refuse to wait upon God in any way. *The Virgin of* Israel (he calls her so, to mind her what she should be, not to commend her what she was) *hath done a very horrible thing; will a man leave the Snow of* Lebanon, *which cometh from the rock of the field?* Or, *Will a man* (as our Margin hath it) *leave my fields for a rock, or for the Snow of* Lebanon? That is, Will any Traveller be so foolish, as to leave the plain fields, where he may pass with ease and pleasure, without let or hinderance, to climb over craggy Rocks, and precipitious Hills? Will he leave a beaten path, to go through vast Woods and desolate Forrests covered with Snow, where no track or footsteps are to be seen? Or (as it follows in that Verse) *Shall the cold flowing waters which come from another place be forsaken?* Or, *Shall the cool running waters be forsaken for strange waters?* That is, Will any man who hath fresh Fountain-water of his own at home, go to seek water in a stinking Ditch, in standing Pools, and miery Puddles, when he is athirst? Such is the choice or exchange which they make, who cease waiting upon God in his wayes, and turn aside for help to their own *crooked wayes, Stumbling* (as the Prophet speaks at the fifteenth Verse of the same Chapter) *in their wayes from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up*, or, *where no Causey is.* Though the hand or providence of God doth sometimes bring his people (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 42. 16.) *By a way which they knew not, and leads them in paths that they have not known:* That is, into a way which they knew not, by any former teachings of men, or experiences of their own; yet his hand never leads them into any way, which is not cast up, or which may not be made out, by some rule or example in the Word: To leave waiting upon God in his ordinary wayes, and to go in any extraordinary way which hath no ground in the Word, is purely to follow our own wayes, and to go after the imaginations of our evil hearts.

Job in this place apprehended it unseasonable for him to wait for those worldly attainments and enjoyments which his Friends promised him; but he was not unwilling to tarry the Lords leisure, nor was he displeased with God for afflicting him, nor did he say, God could not help him, much less did he turn from God to any wicked way to help himself, when he said, *If I wait, the Grave is mine house.*

Secondly, Observe from it, *A good man may give up all worldly expectations.*

A Believer may in this sence be an unbeliever, and lay down all his hopes in this life, of long life and of good dayes, of riches and temporal greatness: When Friends bid such on their sick Beds, *Be of good chear, we hope to see you abroad shortly; we hope God will raise you up again, they will even forbid those comforts, and say, Do not intice us back into the World with these hopes, the Graves are ready for us, and we have made our bed in the darkness; it is not for us to look for life here, indeed to live to us is Christ, but to dye is gain.* A Believer can willingly part with all his earthly possessions for heavenly hopes, much more can he joyfully part with all his earthly hopes for the possession of Heaven.

Thirdly, From these expressions, *The Grave is my house, I have made my bed in the darkness.*

Note, *A Believer looks upon death as a state of rest.*

As the whole house is a place of rest compared with the World abroad; so the Bed is the special place of rest (*Rev.* 14. 14.) *Blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth they rest from their labours, and their works follow them:* They shall follow their work no more, who are followed by their works. The Grave is the house and bed of the body to all who dye: Heaven is the house and rest of the soul to all those who dye in the Lord. Saints have here a rest in their labours, they shall hereafter have a rest from their labours.

Lastly, Whereas the bed of death is made in darkness.

Observe, *There is nothing desireable in death, as considered in it self.*

A dark condition is the worst condition: Darkness, which in Scripture signifies all evil, is a word good enough to express the state of death by: What desireableness there is in Death, what pleasures in the Grave, will appear further in those Arguments which Death useth to invite us home to its house, the Grave, in the next Verse, which tells us, our most lovely Companions, yea, our sweetest

sweetest and most endeared Relations there, are, Corruption and Worms.

Verse 14. I have said to Corruption, Thou art my Father; and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and my Sister.

Hyperbolæ sunt quibus significat se omnem jam vitæ cogitationem abdicasse. Jun.

This Verse is of the same sence with the former; only here, *Job* breaks into an elegant variation of new metaphors, and hyperbolical expressions.

I have said.] That is, I have (as it were) called to, and saluted the retinue and attendants of Death, as my friends and kindred: As I have made my bed in the Grave, and as that is my house, so now I am finding out my houshold relations; I say to this, Thou art my Father; and to that, Thou art my Mother and Sister.

קרא *Est clamare vocare appellare, & per electionem nominare: elegans prosopopeia, per quam Job tumultū alloquitur.* Bold.

The word which we render, *I have said*, &c. signifies not barely to *say*, but to cry, or call out: I have called out to corruption: So Master *Broughton*, *To the pit I cry, O Father; O Sister, O Mother, to the Worm:* Not barely, *I have said*, but *I cry*; and not barely, *I cry Father to the pit*, but he adds also a note of exclamation, *O Father.*

Secondly, The word imports not generally a calling, or crying out, to any one that comes next, but to some special person, by way of election and choice, or to such as we know well, and are acquainted with, as the terms of Father, Mother, and Sister, imply.

Verbum קרא *significat etiam occurrere alicui, nam occurrentem solemnis salutatione vel interrogatione aliqua proprio nomine appellare.*

Further, The word signifies, not only to call aloud, and to call with election, but to go forth on purpose to call a Friend, or to invite him in: As when we see an acquaintance coming towards us, or our dwellings, we step out to meet and welcome him, so the word may bear in this place: As if *Job* seeing death drawing toward him, had gone out, and said, *O corruption my Father, O Worms my Mother, my Sister*, welcome, welcome; such an elegancy the word yields us.

I shall not here stay upon any anxious disquisition about the propriety of these relations, how *Job* calls corruption his Father, and the Worm his Mother and Sister, or in drawing out comparisons about them; we are to look only to a general proportion, not to an exact propriety in these words; there's no need to make out parallels between corruption and a Father, or between Worms and a Mother, or a Sister.

Only thus much may be asserted particularly.

First, He speaks thus to shew that he looked on death, not only not as an enemy, but not as a stranger. Death and he were well acquainted.

Secondly, He speaks thus to shew, that death was not only not a stranger to him, but as one of his kindred: He was upon as fair terms with death, as with Father and Mother.

Ut ostendat mortem sibi in votis esse, cunctis illum amicitiæ & necessitudinis nominis compellat. Pined.

Thirdly, *Job* speaks thus to shew, that he did not only look upon death as in a near relation to him, but as having a kind of delight and contentment in death: What is more sweet to a man, who hath been a long journey, and is returning home, then to think that he is coming to his Father and Mother, his Brethren and Sisters? As Nature gives us Kindred by blood, so it is a custom to adopt and stamp to our selves Kindred by kindness; one we call Father, and another we call Mother; one is our Brother, a second is our Sister, a third our Cozen, by the mutual tyes, or by the receits and returns of courtesie. Thus we are to take these compellations, as intimating with what spirit *Job* entertained the thoughts of death, even with no other then if he had been to fall into the embraces of Father, and Mother, and Sister: He said to corruption, as we should say to Wisdom (*Prov.* 7. 4.) *Say unto Wisdom, thou art my Sister, and call Understanding thy Kinswoman*, That is, Acquaint thy self with, and be familiar with Wisdom, so shalt thou keep thy self (which is both thy wisdom and thy happiness) a stranger, *from the strange woman*, Vers. 5.

Further, it may yet be enquired, what it is which *Job* calls *Corruption and the Worm*, I have said [to Corruption] &c. What is this corruption? There are two opinions about it.

First, Some interpret him speaking to the corruption, and Worms, which had already seized upon his body; for his diseases and ulcerous sores had bred corruption and worms: As if he had said, *I may well call corruption my Father, for I am already full of corruption, I may well call the Worm my Mother, my Sister, for the Worms creep in and out at my sores continually; my body is as if it had lain already in the Grave, full of corruption and Worms.*

שחת *Fovea, corruptio, quod in fovea corpus corrumpitur.*

Secondly, Others expound him speaking to, and of, the corruption and Worms, which waited his coming into the Grave. The word in the Text, which we translate *Corruption*, signifies also the Grave; because bodies do not only corrupt in the Grave, but quickly turn to corruption. As soon as a body is dead, it is a carkass; and after it hath been a while a carkass, 'tis nothing but corruption: Hence some render it, not, *I have said to corruption*, but *to the pit, or grave*: So Master *Broughton*, *To the pit I cry, O Father; to the worm, O Mother, O Sister.* The Grave is so proper a place for corruption, that 'tis proper enough to express corruption by the Grave.

And besides those Worms which are generated out of the putrefaction of mans body, there are Worms ready generated in the Grave to entertain us. Worms are the proper Inhabitants of the Grave; there they keep house, as Father, and Mother, and Sister, to welcome and embrace such as descend into it.

Master *Fox* reports of Doctor *Taylor*, a famous Martyr of Christ in Queen *Maries* time, who was burned at *Hadley* in *Suffolk*, that when he knew he should suffer death by fire, he said, *I have been deceived my self, and I shall deceive many at* Hadley; when some hearing this, began to hope he would recant, and shrink from that profession of the Gospel which he had made: At last he explained himself, *I am a man of a very full fat body, which I had hoped, should have been buried in* Hadley *Church-yard, but I see I am deceived; and there are a great number of Worms there, which might have had good cheer upon my carkass, but I shall deceive them all, my body being to be burned.* The Earth breeds Worms in its own bowels; and our body, which at the best and alive are but refined earth, being once dead yield another race of Worms. *Job* may be supposed speaking unto both, or either, *I have said to the Worm, Thou art my Mother and my Sister.*

We may hence Observe, *That some Believers are so far from fearing, that they are familiar with death.*

Other Texts in the former passages of this Book, have occasioned like Observations; yet as often as this occasion is renewed it will not be unprofitable to renew this Observation: To write the same things where we read the same things (yet the Reader will not find them the same) is not unprofitable.

I say, some Believers are familiar with death, I am far from saying, that he who is not, is no Believer: There are not in all the same degree of holiness; though holiness be the same in all; but a Believer may arrive at such a composure of spirit, at such a stature of holiness, as not to fear death. There are some Believers, (and it is their sin) who are but little acquainted with death, they seldom go out to the Grave, or look into the Pit they are going to; he that hath often conversed with death in the meditation (which is a Believers way) of the death of Christ, cannot be afraid to dye, if he know what the death of Christ means which he hath meditated upon. He that knows it throughly, may (as the Prophet speaks in another case, *Isa.* 11. 8.) *Play on the hole of this Asp, and put his hand upon the den of the Cockatrice*; yea, such a Believer may not only play and put his hand upon the Grave, which is the hole of this Asp, and the den of this Cockatrice, but he can play with the Asp it self, and take up the Cockatrice in his hand; with this Asp or Cockatrice he can sport himself as with a Brother or a Sister.

O how different are the thoughts of carnal men, and their words of death? How dreadfully do they speak and think of the Grave? An unbeliever saith of the Grave; *It is a prison, not a house; he finds no bed in darkness, 'tis to him a Dungeon; he saith to corruption, Thou art my foe, and to the Worms, ye are to me as Feinds and Furies*: He cannot bear the thought of them, much less their sight and presence. Saints speak courtingly of death; there is a kind

kind of holy courtship in the language of *Job*: *Agag* (1 *Sam.* 15 32.) *came out to* Samuel *delicately*; for said he, *Surely the bitterness of death is past*: But he was deceived, for *Samuel* hewed him in pieces; and when he said, the bitterness of death is past, he meant death was past. He did not believe, but that death would be bitter whenever it should come; but he thought death was past for that time however, and so he came out delicately, he stood as a Courtier, yea, as a King before *Samuel*, because he had escaped (as he supposed) that King of terrors. Thus the Saints come out delicately indeed, and court it, in the very face of the King of terrors, for they know the bitterness of death is past, though they were assured they must dye presently: They do not say, *Death is past*, they know death will come, and they must dye, but the bitterness is past, the Gall and Wormwood is taken out; and upon this account they can say *to corruption, Thou art my Father, and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and Sister.*

Thirdly, Note, *Corruption and Worms are the portion and companions of the dead.*

Only Jesus Christ was exempt from this portion, who though he submitted himself to death for sinners, yet having no sin in himself, he was not at all subject to death, nor was it *possible that he should be holden of it*: He was the holy one, he had no corruption in his spirit, and therefore *his flesh saw no corruption* (Acts 2. 31.) But as for all flesh, they having corrupted all their wayes, their flesh shall see corruption in the end.

Take two Corolaries from this.

First, *Let no man glory in bodily beauty, in honours, or alliances.* Corruption will shortly seize upon the most beautiful body, Worms will crawl upon the smoothest cheeks, upon the fairest face, and into that mouth which now boasteth great things, and speaks so proudly; this earth must turn to earth, and then the greatest Kindreds, and noblest Pedigrees, will be lost or swallowed up in this, *Corruption is my Father, and the Worm my Mother, and my Sister*: Man is corruptible while he lives, and when he dyes he is corruption. Every man living is but a Worm; Jesus Christ, who abased himself to the lowest condition of man, saith, *I am a worm and no man* (Psal. 22. 6.) When man dyes, as he goes to the Worms, so he makes Worms; who would be proud of his flesh, did he know that 'tis but corruption and worms once removed, and that it must suddenly move back again to corruption and worms.

Secondly, *Seeing death hath nothing of its own but darkness, corruption, and worms, which are all unpleasing, and a regret to flesh and blood, therefore live much in Christ, who only gives a remedy against all these evils*: If we live in the Grave of Christ, that will make the darkness of our Grave light, and the corruption of it sweet unto us. He that upon good interest can say to Christ, *Thou art my Father, thou art my Brother, thou art my All*, can say rejoycingly to corruption, *Thou art my Father*; *and to the Worm, Thou art my Mother, and Sister. Relation to Christ is so comfortable, that it overcomes the discomfort of our most unpleasant relations.* That which raised the spirit of holy *Job* to these free complyances with death, was the light which he had (even in those darker times) about the Redeemer, of which, as the nineteeth Chapter gives us a clear and an illustrious proof, so the next Verse gives us more then an intimation.

Verse 15. And where is now my hope? And as for my hope who shall see it?

He that chearfully questions, Where is my hope? puts it almost out of question where his hope is.

Where is now my hope?] Had *Job* lost his hope, or was it to seek? *David*'s enemies interrogate him (and that interrogatory was as a Sword in his bones, or as a Dagger at his heart) *Where is now thy God* (Psal. 42.10.) Their meaning was, Thy God is no where, he is not to be found, thou hast none to help, none to deliver thee: *Job* puts the question himself, and he puts it to himself, *Where is now my hope?* His meaning is not, that it was no where, but that it was not there where some would have it.

Hope may be considered two wayes, either as taken for a grace acting in us, or as taken for some good upon which that grace acts: *Job*'s question concerns not hope as it is a grace acting in us; he that hath that hope knows where it is, and where it is once it abides for ever; *Hope is no remover*, it is an abiding grace (1 *Cor.* 13. 13.) *Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three*: These are abiding graces; these must and shall keep house, not only in the Church militant in general, but in the soul of every true member of the Church: And if in reference to this hope, *Job* had questioned, *Where is now my hope?* He might have answered, It is in thy heart; the grace of hope dwells there. This grace of hope is no fading quality, but a setled power: Hope doth not alwayes act, but it alwayes is, where it ever was: It is not alwayes *a lively hope*, but it is alwayes *a living hope*. As *Eliphaz* checks *Job* (Chap. 4. 4.) *Is this thy hope?* So many a Believer deserves to be checkt and chidden, because his hope is not more strong and stirring, because his hope is so unlike hope, especially so unlike that hope, which he ought to have, after so much experience. What? *Is this thy hope?* Is this all? You have talked of hope all this while; is this all you have to shew for it? This is a poor piece of hope, a hope unworthy of thee. Some good men may justly fall under this check; and whereas hope maketh not ashamed, they may for a time be ashamed of their hope; yet it is with them as with those Trees of which the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 6. 13.) *Whose substance is in them, when they have cast their leaves*: So the holy seed shall be, and is the substance of it; and though for a time it appear not, and so may bear this question, *Where is it?* yet it will appear again, and by bearing fruit, answer for it self, *Here I am.*

Secondly, Take hope for that good upon which our hope is set, or for the object of hope. There is a twofold object of hope.

First, Eternal, and heavenly.

Secondly, Temporal, and earthly.

Spiritual things are the hope laid hold upon (*Heb.* 6. 18.) *That by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lye, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us*: This Scripture teacheth us, that as there is a hope by which we lay hold, that's the grace of hope; so there is a hope upon which we lay hold, that's the good for which we hope. God himself, and all the good things of eternal life, which God hath promised, are this hope. This hope also *Job* had, and he knew where it was: As he knew he had the grace of hope in his heart, so that he had the choicest good of hope in Heaven; nor would he have parted with this hope for all the possessions in the World.

But as hope (whether in the object or in the actings of it) respects temporal, or earthly things; *Job* saith, *And now where is my hope?* That is, If I wait and hope about these things, my labour is lost, my hopes are vain and vanishing, yea, already vanished, as the next clause (which is of the same sence with this, and therefore needs no explication) further sheweth.

And for my hope, who shall see it?] That is, Who shall see that which you would have me hope for? You would perswade me that I shall be a great man; if I should take up such a hope, who shall ever see it made good, who shall see it fulfilled? No man shall.

And because the word which we translate *Hope* in both parts of this Verse, signifies also a *Congregation*, or the meeting of many things or persons together: That first and great congregation of waters, or rather the congregating of those waters is expressed by it (*Gen.* 1. 9.) and in a like sence 'tis used concerning persons (*Jer.* 3. 17.) Hence the whole Verse is thus rendred, *And where now is my congregation? And as for my congregation, who shall see it?* As if he had said, *If ye ask after my congregation, or family, 'tis in the Grave; there's all that I look for, there's my Father and Mother, there's my Sisters, and will any man go down with me into those chambers of darkness to visit my congregation, to see my family: This is all the family which I have in my eye, and whose eye else is greedy to see this?*

I might from this Verse turn back to that Observation lately given; That a true Believer is sometimes able to make triumphant reports about the wrack of his worldly hope; he can say, Where is it? And who shall see it?

With

Ecquis me talem inuenebitur, qualem me futurum docitis? Bez.

קוה *Significat congregare & congregationem. Et ubi nunc congregatio mea, & congregationē meam quis intuebitur?* Bold.

with dry eyes, when the will of God removes it out of his sight.

David treating of the vanity of worldly things (*Psal.* 39. 7.) concludes in the midst of all his outward enjoyments, *And now Lord, what wait I for? Where is my hope?* Or, *What do I hope for?* ('Tis all one) *my hope is in thee*; not in the World, not after worldly things; he easily gave up his hope there: The more hope we have in God, the less we have in and about the creature. *Job* had much hope in God; but he had none, not only in, but none for the creature. All those hopes were in his sight, as himself was, dead or dying, and therefore fit only to be buried out of his sight, as he speaks in the next Verse.

Verse 16. They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust.

Spes mea, omnia mea; recte in plurali dicit, significans non spem tantum sibi ab illis propositam sed & omnes alias spes hujus vitæ. Merc.

They shall go down.] Who? or what shall go down? There is no expres Relative in the Hebrew: *They*, that is (say some) *these hopes*: He speaks in the Plural number, as if he had said, *All my hopes about this life are going down to the pit.* The best of worldly hopes, and worldly things, are dying and perishing; mine are to me as dead and perished.

Secondly, Others understand it of *Job* himself; for the word which we translate *Barrs*, signifies also *the members of the body*: As if he had said, *I my self shall go down to the Pit, or Grave.*

בר *Vectes significat, & ea omnia quæ velut vectes aliquid sustentant.*

A third thus, *They shall descend upon the bars of the Grave*: The meaning is, *Ye shall quickly see me and all my worldly hopes, which ye so much speak of, put together in a Coffin, and carryed out upon a Beir to the Grave for burial.*

Aliqui Rabbini ad ipsum Jobum *referunt, quod ipsius sulchra,* i. e. *membra, brachia, vires, robur descendent. Vectibus sepulchralibus descendent.* Jun. *Mox videbitis istas expectationes quas prædicatis, una cum corpore ferretro efferri in sepulchrum.* Jun.

This going down to the bars of the Pit, according to our reading, imports, that he and his hopes should descend to the lower parts of the earth, the Grave, and be buried there; the Pit would shut him in, and make him fast enough. The Grave is a Prison, and there are bars or bolts belonging to that Prison which shut the Prisoners in; there's no breaking of that Prison: The Decree of God is the bar of the Grave, and his purpose locks it up till the day which himself hath appointed for the resurrection from the dead, and the judgment which is to follow. As the evil Angels are reserved in chains of darkness to the Judgment of the great day; so are the bodies of men chained and barred down in the darkness of the Grave, till God sends out the Arch-angel with the sound of a Trumpet to summon them to his Bar.

Per irrisionem hæc dicta sunt. Cajet.

Yet further, these words are interpreted as spoken in derision of those overtures which his Friends made to him about worldly happiness: As if he had said, *You perswade me that I shall have much good in the World: Very well, let it be so; but do you think that I can carry my Goods, my Houses and Lands, my Silver and Gold, my Corn and my Wine, to make merry with in the Grave?* Shall I, and the greatness you promise me, live together in the Grave, and make our abode in darkness? The *Septuagint* seem to favour that sence, rendring it, *Shall my Goods go with me to the Grave?* Or, Shall we descend into the dust hand in hand? When I surrender this battered Fort into the hands of death, shall I march out with bag and baggage to these Subterranean dwellings? The Apostle affirms, That *we brought nothing with us into this World*; and (he doth more then affirm) *It is certain* (saith he) *we can carry nothing out* (1 Tim. 6. 7.) And therefore what doth it avail a dying man to tell him of riches, seeing when he dyes he must leave all his riches.

An bona mea mecum ad infernos descendent, aut pariter super pulverem descendemus.

Mr. *Broughton* translates plainly thus, *To the midst of the Grave all shall descend, when we shall go down together in the dust.* From which our reading of the latter clause varies but a little.

When we shall rest together in the dust.] The word which we express by *rest*, is derived by some, from a root signifying to descend, or go down; hence the difference of translation. The Hebrew particle (*im*) which we render *When*, signifies also *For*, or *For asmuch*: Further, it is sometimes taken conditionally, for *If*, as also interrogatively for (*utrum*) *whether*; according to all which acceptions, this clause hath undergone a variety of reading.

But I pass them by, and keep to our own, *When our rest together is in the dust*, or, *for as much as we shall rest together in the dust.* Of this rest I have spoken before (*Chap.* 3. 17.) *There the weary be at rest*, thither I refer the Reader: We may also take *Job*'s sence in this place, by that which he speaks so clearly out to this point (*Chap.* 30. *Vers.* 23.) *For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.* I shall not stay here to draw out Observations; matter of this purport, about the certainty of, and about our rest in death, having occurred heretofore: All that I shall add for the close of this Verse and Chapter, shall only be an offer towards the resolution of a doubt, which may arise upon the whole matter of *Job*'s continued resolves for death, and his refusals of any entertainment of the hopes of life.

Hence it may be questioned, Did not *Job* sin in giving up his hope, and in refusing to be comforted when his Friends, wise and godly men, laboured to assure him of deliverance?

I answer, First, *Job* was willing to be comforted, but he did not like their way of comforting, which was indeed a wounding; for the promises which they made him, did all along carry an implication of his guilt; they never promising him any deliverance, but upon the supposition of his repentance from those wickednesses, with which they charged him; whereas he utterly denyed their charge in the sence which they laid against him.

Secondly, I answer, We cannot altogether acquit *Job* from blame, in judging his state so deplorable and remedileſs. For though with an eye to the creature, and all second causes, there was no probability, or possibility for his recovery, yet *Job* should have raised his hopes upon the Power and All-sufficiency of God; he might have remembred, that as his affliction was extraordinary, and the hand of God very visible in it; so his deliverance also might have been as extraordinary, and that God could have put forth as strong, and as visible a hand to restore him, as he did to cast him down: 'Tis said of *Abraham* (*Rom.* 4. 18, 19.) that *he against hope, believed in hope*; nothing appeared for the support of his hopes, yet *Abraham* did not say, *Where is my hope?* Or why should I wait for Children? *He considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old; neither yet the deadness of* Sarah's *womb*: These natural impediments came not to his mind, while he had a word from the Lord of nature, *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in Faith, giving glory to God.* But we may say of *Job* (from the continual tenour of his own answers) that he considered his own body as dead too much, and so attained not to *Abraham*'s strength of Faith.

Yet we have three things to say for him: First, There was a great difference between his case and *Abraham*'s; *Job* had no such ground of Faith as *Abraham* had; *Abraham* received a special, yea, an absolute promise from God, that he should have a Son; but *Job* received only a conditional promise from man, grounded upon the general promises of God, that he should be restored: This consideration abates much from the Objection of his unbelief; though it cannot be denyed, but his Faith might and should have risen higher upon the power of God, who as he was all-sufficiently able, so he did afterwards actually raise him up.

Secondly, The design of God being in *Job*'s example to set forth a pattern of Patience; as his design was in *Abraham*'s example to set forth a pattern of Faith; he was pleased to let *Job*'s Faith run it self out about spirituals and eternals, not minding temporals, that so his patience might have a perfect work in bearing the full weight of his affliction to the end, while his Faith did not so much as put under a little finger to ease him with the least belief, that it should (as to this life) be taken off, or have an end.

Lastly, (As 'twas hinted) *Job* had much Faith to some purposes, though none to this; he had a full trust in God, though he should kill him; but he had no trust that God would not kill him: he believed God loved him while he did afflict him, though he did not believe that God would

deliver

deliver him from his afflictions. *As no mans Faith works alike at all times; so 'tis rare that any mans Faith works alike to all things:* Some who believe and hope mightily for the things of Heaven, have but little, either Faith or Hope for earthly things: Not becauſe a Faith which ſerves for Heaven, is not enough ('tis rather more then enough) to ſerve for Earth: But becauſe moſt of thoſe whoſe Faith is ſtrong and much enlarged for Heaven, take ſo much ſatisfaction there, and are there ſo much at home, that they account themſelves Pilgrims and Strangers here, and are not much mindful (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* 11. 15.) or deſirous of their earthly Countrey and concernments, *What we do not much deſire to have, we do not much believe (though we believe) that we ſhall have it. A full ſoul,* ſaith *Solomon, loatheth the Honey-comb:* Thoſe ſouls which are full of Heaven (though they do not loath, yet they) are not hungry after (though they can thankfully receive and enjoy) any *Honey-comb* of this World. *No man having drunk old Wine, ſtraightway deſireth new, for he ſaith the old is better* (Luke 5. 39.) Doubtleſs *Job* had drunk the old Wine of Gods favour and love in the Redeemer, and ſo his thirſt was much ſlacked, if not totally quenched towards the new Wine of a temporal reſtauration. And hence we may not only charitably, but more then probably conclude, That it was not for want of Faith, that *Job* did not believe or hope for what his Friends promiſed him, but becauſe he had employed his Faith upon better and more pleaſing promiſes.

Thus *Job* hath finiſht his anſwer to the ſecond charge of *Eliphaz:* And (through the help of Chriſt) ſomewhat is here tendered for the illuſtration and expoſition of it. His other two Friends, *Bildad*, and *Zophar*, ſtand ready to enter the Liſts with him, and to renew their charge; what they ſaid, and what anſwer they received, ſhall (if God continue life and ſtrength, with theſe peaceable opportunities) in convenient time be preſented to publick view.

AN

AN

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Obſervations

UPON THE

EIGHTEENTH, NINETEENTH, TWENTIETH, TWENTY-FIRST, AND TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTERS

Of the Book of

JOB.

JOB

TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER:

To those especially of this *CITY*, who have been the MOVERS, and continue the PROMOTERS of this WORK.

GOD only wise, who caused his holy Word to be written aforetime for our learning and instruction, hath in all times appointed the Ministry of expounding and Preaching his Word, that it might be the better fitted for instruction: The business of the Expositor (or of the Preacher expounding) is to collect and give out the sence and meaning of the Word aright: The business of the Preacher (or of the Expositor preaching) is to divide the sence and meaning of the Word aright, giving to every one that portion which is proper to him; his proper Doctrine *(of Truth) his proper* Reproof *(of Error) his proper* Correction *(of evil Manners) his proper* Instruction *(about holiness of Conversation) and all in* Righteousness. *While* Jesus Christ himself *was fulfilling his Ministry here on earth, he performed not only the office of a* Preacher *(Luke* 4. 18, 19, 20, &c.) *but of an* Expositor *also (Luke* 24. 27.) Beginning at *Moses* and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. *The Scripture is indeed its own Expositor; dark Texts receive light from clearer, and those which are so plain that they need no Comment, are a Comment to those that need. But though the Word of God (as to truth and light) be (as God himself is)* self-sufficient, *and carrieth in some one or other part of it, the interpretation of other parts; yet as to man, there is much need of an Interpreter, for the due accommodation of any one part to the interpretation of another: For the Scripture is such an Expositor of its own hard Places, as it is a Judge of all hard Questions and Controversies, arising from, or grounded upon it: That is to say,* A Normal, not a Personal Expositor. *And therefore as* the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good gift, and every perfect gift, *hath bestowed This very good and perfect gift, His holy Word upon us; so he hath furnished some with gifts, and sent them forth as Interpreters of it; yea, he hath sent forth his* Holy Spirit, *who is not only (as* Elihu *speaks (in this Book) of some choice-spirited man)* An Interpreter, one among a thousand, *but the only un-erring Interpreter. For as the Word of God is the only un-erring* Normal Expositor *of it self, so the* Holy Spirit of God, *whom Jesus Christ hath promised to send, and of whom Christ hath said,* He shall take of mine, and shew it unto you, *is the only un-erring* personal Expositor *of the Word; yet the* Holy Spirit *(as I may say) in person seldom doth it; but usually conveyeth the light of the Word unto man, by such men as himself hath first enlightned.*

There want not some who would have the Word set nakedly before all, that so every man waiting for the light of the Holy Spirit, may make his own apprehension the interpretation of it; and 'tis true, that nothing is an interpretation to any man beyond or besides what himself apprehends; yet the apprehensions of this or that man, may be very serviceable unto many others, and are often the means which God useth and blesseth for the leading of their understandings into the way both of truth and holiness. Nor can they who are thus led, be therefore justly charged to see, spiritually, with other mens eyes, because others have been instrumental for the opening of their eyes; or that they see by other mens light, because others

have been helpful in bringing them from darkneſs unto light ; no more then they can be charged to ſee, corporally, with other mens eyes, whoſe eye-ſight hath been cured (as a ſecond cauſe) by the skill of man ; or, that they ſee by other mens light, who ſaw nothing till a window was opened to them. For the light which any man brings and holds forth, becomes every mans proper light, who is enabled to receive it and ſee by it. The Goſpel is held forth to thouſands to whom yet it is hid ; the God of this world having blinded the eyes of their mind, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the image of God, ſhould ſhine unto (or irradiate) them, *that is, ſhine into them. So that every ſoul muſt have an internal eye or light given him, before he can ſavingly receive that light which is externally offered him ; and whoſoever thus receives the light offered, makes that as much his own (in his own capacity) as it was the offerers. And foraſmuch as there are many* unſtable and unlearned *ones (ſo the Apoſtle* Peter *expreſſeth them,* 2 Pet. 3. 16.) who *(at leaſt preſuming to ſee without, if not ſcorning to ſee by the light which others offer)* wreſt not only the Epiſtles of *Paul,* in which *(as the Apoſtle* Peter *there affirmeth)* are many things hard to be underſtood, but all other Scriptures to their own deſtruction, *it cannot be reaſonably judged a diſſervice either to God or to his people, to endeavour (in the utmoſt improvement of gifts and light received) a right interpretation of them. And though we dare not offer our interpretations under the title of* Infallible, *and ſo challenge a* dominion over the faith *of others, yet we may be helpers both of their joy and knowledge. We are commanded to* try the Spirits whether they be of God *(1 John 4. 1.) We muſt not reject all Spirits, becauſe poſſibly many are not of God. The Spirit of God is above all trial ; but there are Spirits (even the Spirits or ſpiritual gifts of all men) which muſt be ſubmitted to trial, and* ſtand Probationers. *And becauſe they are to be tried, therefore it followeth that they are to be uſed ; for to what purpoſe ſhould that be tried which is not to be uſed ? To try a thing or perſon, doth indeed ſuppoſe that there may be a failing in either ; but it doth not at all infer, that there is no uſe of either, but rather that both are uſeful : And if upon trial much be found which is unſound, and ſo to be refuſed, yet that which is found muſt be retained. Thus the Apoſtle directs (1 Theſ. 5. 21.)* Prove all things, hold faſt that which is good.

What is preſented in the following Expoſitions, is not the impoſing of a ſence either upon the Word of God, or upon the underſtandings of men, but an humble tender of what the Expoſitor underſtands as the ſence of it, to the trial of all.

Some, I know, begin to ſay, that there is, or at leaſt, that ſhortly there will be little or no need at all of ſuch poor helps as theſe : Surely it will be the rejoycing of all who honour Jeſus Chriſt, and love his appearing, *to ſee that day, not ſo much becauſe they may then take their eaſe, and reſt from theſe labours (for though the ſervants of* Chriſt, *through the* infirmity of their fleſh, *are often wearied at their work, yet through the ſtrength of his Grace, they ſhall not be weary of it) but becauſe when that which is imperfect, or (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks,* 1 Cor. 13. 10.) in part ſhall be done away, then that will be come which is perfect. *Only my fear is that ſome are ſo buſie in decrying theſe things (which we readily acknowledge to have many imperfections in them) that for haſte they would do them away (in their own and others wrong) before that which is perfect be come unto us.* Propheſie ſhall ceaſe, and knowledge *(of this ſize, and as now attained)* ſhall be done away ; *but when theſe ceaſe, in order to God's appointment, thoſe weakneſſes and wants in the ſons of men ſhall ceaſe alſo, to cure and ſupply which, they were appointed by God. How happy and glorious a thing were it, if we could ſee this Age approve it ſelf ſuch as had no need to be taught ? or that the ſymptomes of the ſame ſickneſſes and impotencies both of Judgment and Practice did not now diſcover themſelves as formerly ? How many are there who ſpeak much of the* holy and bleſſed Spirit *(concerning whom we can neither ſpeak nor boaſt too much) who yet* walk after the fleſh ? *How many diſcourſe high (concerning which all our diſcourſes fall too low) of thoſe* new Heavens and of that new Earth wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs, *who yet defile and pollute the old with their unrighteouſneſs ? Where almoſt can we behold the Image of that Glory which we ſhould continually wait for, ſtampt upon the wayes of men ? And while the actings of men are every where thus low and earthly, doth the age look like that which is either actually above, or hath near out-grown teaching ? As for my ſelf, I deſire (ſhould I live to that day) when my* Lord and Maſter cometh, *to be found* thus doing. *It is dangerous to lay down or depart from the practice of known duties, upon the*

expectation

expectation of further priviledges; Or to say, we need not now do that which shortly (possibly very shortly) we shall need do no more. Each state hath its proper rules and helps, and to them we must submit, till we are removed out of such a state. 'Tis no wisdom for a dim-sighted man presently to throw away his Spectacles, though he be assured that within a while his eye-sight shall be cleared.

Christian Reader, *let you and I be not only contented, but thankful that we may behold* the Glory of the Lord in these Glasses, *till himself lead us into his Glory, and give us the Top-stone of all Perfections,* to see face to face. *The furtherance of souls in the way to this Glory, is the design of this Work, which now by the assistance of God, is advanced half way; as for the other half (seeing no man can boast of to morrow, or knoweth what a day may bring forth) I can only say, that it is in my heart, if the Lord continue life and strength with the Call hitherto afforded, to advance with what speed I can (though I confess the best of my speed is but slowness) towards the finishing of that also. The travel of this sixth Stage, I leave with you, and both you and it to the blessing, and under the shadow of the Almighty, in whom I am,*

Jan. 3. 1652. Your very Affectionate Friend and

Servant in this Work of the Lord,

JOSEPH CARYL.

AN

AN EXPOSITION WITH Practical Obſervations UPON THE EIGHTEENTH, NINETEENTH, TWENTIETH AND TWENTY FIRST CHAPTERS Of the Book of JOB.

CHAP. XVIII. Verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4

Then anſwered Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and ſaid;*

How long will it be, ere you make an end of words? Mark, and afterwards we will ſpeak.

Wherefore are we counted as Beaſts; and reputed vile in your ſight?

He teareth himſelf in his anger: ſhall the earth be forſaken for thee? and ſhall the rock be removed out of his place?

ELIPHAZ having finiſhed, *Bildad* begins a ſecond diſpute with *Job*; *Then anſwered* Bildad *the* Shuhite, *and ſaid.* Yet he rather reproves then anſwers; and returns invectives more then reaſons. *Bildad* ſtrikes here again upon the ſame ſtone, at which himſelf and his friends had ſtumbled before. His whole diſcourſe falls into three parts.

First, We have his Preface.

Secondly, The body of his Speech.

Thirdly, He winds up, and draws all together into a brief Concluſion.

His Preface is laid down in the four former verſes of this Chapter.

The body of his diſcourſe extends it ſelf from the fifth verſe incluſively to the end of the twentieth, in which his general ſcope is to deſcribe the miſerable condition of a wicked man: and he doth it under a threefold conſideration, as a threefold gradation of his miſery.

First, In his life.

Secondly, In his death.

Thirdly, After death.

So that living, dying, and dead, he is miſerable, and therefore altogether miſerable.

The concluſion of his diſcourſe is contained in the laſt verſe, in which he gives us the ſtrength of what he had ſaid, and re-affirms it; *Surely ſuch are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.*

His general design and scope is to convince *Job* that he was a wicked man, because he suffered those things which none but a wicked man (according to his opinion) ever did, or should suffer. For the proof of this he proceeds in his former method, bringing nothing new for the matter, no new argument, no new *medium*, either to confirm his own position, or to infirm the opinion of *Job*; but cloathing his former reasons in a new dress, he gives us a very lively and pathetical description of the estate of a wicked man; upon which subject he had treated in the eighth Chapter. Only two differences appear between this and his first discourse.

Nova hic nulla: est tamen oratio Allegoriis & Metaphoris illustrius improborũ clades oculis subjicit. Merl.

First, At the eighth Chapter he sets out the happiness of a godly man in opposition to the miserable estate of the wicked; here he leaves out that part.

Secondly, At the eighth Chapter he useth many arguments to move *Job* to repent, and turn to God. He leaves out that work also here, not so much as once mentioning repentance, or exhorting him to return to God; as if he either thought it too late, or that *Job's* obstinacy was remediless, and the wound both of his outward and inward state incurable.

The first part or preface is spent in reproof, and we may observe five things for which *Bildad* reproveth *Job*.

First, He reproveth him for *wording it*, or for talkativeness, at the beginning of the second verse; *How long will it be ere you make an end of words.*

Secondly, He reproveth him of inadvertency, and carelessness, in the middle of the second verse; *Mark*, &c. As if he had said; *You have been heedless all this while, you have not well attended what we have been about; Mark, and afterwards we will speak.*

Thirdly, He chargeth him with contemptuous thoughts, and an irreverent estimation of his friends: (*vers.* 3.) *Wherefore are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?* Thou hast not only numbred us with, but below the lowest of the people; Thou either lookest upon us as if we had forfeited our reason and were not men, or had lost our integrity, and so were the worst of men.

Fourthly, He chargeth him with fury and impatience in the beginning of the fourth verse; *He teareth himself in his anger*; As if he had said; *As thou hast torn our reputation, so thy own peace; thou art uncivil to us, and a torture to thy self.*

Fifthly, He chargeth him with insolency and boldness towards God himself in the latter part of the fourth verse; *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee, and shall the rock be removed out of his place?* What! must God work wonders, and turn the world upside down for your sake? Dost thou think thy self a man so extraordinary, that the ordinary providences and dispensations of God, will not serve thy turn? *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?* &c. These are the steps of *Bildad's* angry address to *Job*; *Then answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said.*

Vers. 2. How long will it be ere you make an end of words? &c.

There is some variety of conjecture who is here intended, or to whom *Bildad* directs his speech.

For the original is plural, as if he were not speaking to a single person, but to a multitude; *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* And it is questioned upon that ground, whether *Bildad* spake to *Job* alone or no.

First, Some conceive, that *Bildad's* discourse aims at *Job*, in comfort with *Eliphaz*, who spake before, as if *Bildad* had been angry with them both; because *Eliphaz* and he holding out so long a dispute, had hindred him from unburdening his mind, and offering his opinion; *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* As if he had said, *Will you two have all the talk, shall not I and my brother be suffered to speak our judgments? How long will it be?* Thus he is supposed to grow angry, not only with *Job*, but with his friend.

Secondly, Others think that *Bildad* spake only to his friends and companions in that dispute, and not to *Job* at all; as if he had altogether disliked the course which they had taken for *Job's* conviction; *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?* As if he had said; *Ye have not hit the point, nor stated the question right, ye do but speak words all this while, ye are not yet upon the matter.* Others make it out thus; *Why do you wrong your selves so much, and disparage your wisdom to talk with such a man as this* Job *is? A man of so little reason, and of so much passion; a man so obdurate in and addicted to his own way; a man so high in and stiff to his own conceit: do ye not perceive that ye labor in vain, that your words perish into air, and leave no impression upon this hardned man? doth he not cast your counsels behind his back, and refuse all your advices? therefore be ye advised, give over, make an end of words.* Which way soever we take it, whether *Bildad* speak to *Job* in consort with *Eliphaz*, or only to his friends, the heat of his spirit breaks out at his lips. And his own words proclaim, if not his pride, yet his impatience, while he saith, *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?*

Miror de vestra imprudentia, quod cũ perspicuum sit, vos inventũ verba proferre & laterem lavare, huic homini duræ cervicis satisfacere conamini. Bold.

Hence Note, *Long disputes kindle passions.*

In those acts wherein reason should do all, passion would do most, and comonly doth too much; hence, instead of arguing we fall to inveighing, and for real convictions give personal provocations. Most are so immoderate in disputation, that they need a moderatour, as much to quiet their spirits, as to state their questions and opinions. *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.*27.17.) that, *As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.* When we whet one Iron upon another, the edge grows keen; thus a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. The word that we translate *countenance*, signifies also *anger*, or passion, because anger quickly appears in the face or countenance. Hence some render the Proverb, *As Iron sharpeneth Iron, so a man sharpeneth the anger of his friend.* He stirs up his passion, till he grows as keen as a knife, yea as a razor: opposition sharpeneth the spirit, and some have been so sharpened by it, that they come to sharps indeed, and when they have long contended by words, have fallen to blows.

This carries a fair sence, yet I conceive that clearest, which restrains these words to the person of *Job* alone. But then the query will be why he speaks in the plural number, *How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?*

Some answer, *Bildad* speaks to *Job* in the plural number, for honours sake, and in reverence to his person. I find very little reason for that, considering he speaks of him at so low a rate all the Chapter over.

Honoris gratia. Cajet.

Secondly, One of the Ancients tells us, *Bildad* spake in the plural number, because he thought *Job* was possest with an evil spirit; That evil spirit in the Gospel, being asked his name, answered, *It is Legion, for we are many.* Had *Job* been possessed with an evil spirit, he might well have been spoken to as *many*: I am sure, as more then *a Good many*. But I pass that.

Pravo spiritu comitatus. Bed.

Thirdly, It is conceived that *Bildad* speaks plurally, because *Job* had his assistants, seconds, and abettors in that dispute, who did sometimes put in a word, and help him at a dead lift.

Fourthly, I conclude, that he speaks to *Job* alone, in a word of the plural number, according to the common and familiar usage or *idiom* of the Jewish Language, rather then from any special respect intended to his person, or the plurality of his Assistants; *How long will it be ere you make an end of words?*

Quod cum solo Jobo disputans illum appellet numero multitudinis potius ad familiarem linguæ Hebraeæ consuetudinem, quã ad illius honoris grave aliquod momentum referendum est. Pined.

The matter of this first clause, hath been opened upon those words of *Zophar* (*Chap.* 11. 2, 3.) *Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified?* Where twas shewed, that words without matter, a very, empty discourses are very burdensom to an understanding ear: *How long will it be ere you make an end of words?* There is the first charge, talkativeness or unprofitableness in his speech.

His second charge is carelesness, and neglect of what his friends were about to speak, or had formerly spoken.

Mark, and afterwards we will speak.

Instruite ut postea loquamur quod an tu nobis loquendi formulas præscribis? nec quicquam recte dictum censebitur nisi tu id probaveris.

Some interpret it ironically, as calling for his direction, not as desiring his attention; *Instruct us, and then we will speak.* As if he should say, *Yes, do, prescribe to us what we shall say, put matter into our heads, and words into our mouthes; you were best take upon you to be our Teacher, and Master, as if nothing could be right, but that which you direct.* But the word which we translate to *mark*, doth not intend

intend direction to others, but attention in our selves; and not so much the attention of the ear, as of the mind, and heart, when the soul as it were sits upon a business, with its whole strength, and puts out all its powers, to what it is about: *Understand*, or *mark*, *and afterwards we will speak.* Now as the former clause was interpreted, either in reference to the friends of *Job*, or to *Job* himself, so is this also.

בין *significat propriè intrinsecus mente considerare, & animū certa dispositione intendere.* Merc.

They who expound *Bildad* in the former part reproving his friends, give the sence thus: *Mark, and afterwards we will speak.* As if he had said; *O my friends, cease to utter your thoughts inconsiderately, speak no longer what comes next, but mark; sit down, and consider what you have to say; let us mark, and afterwards we will speak.* Thus he reproves their rashness, *as not having attended their own design, nor the intendment of* Job *in his foregoing answers. Elihu's* zeal breaks out into such Language both against *Job* and his three friends (*Chap.* 32. 3.) *Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather then God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled; because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.* Job's friends found many answers, yet *Elihu* saith, they had found no answer; their answers were not judicious, or convincing (as he conceived) they did not hit the thing of the controversie: Such answers are no answers, unless we answer to purpose, we answer not at all.

Quis sit disputationis cardo nō satis attenditis. Bold.

In which sense *Caiphas* reproves the assembly of the Pharisees (*Joh.* 11. 49.) when they sate in counsel against Christ; and took into consideration what was best to do with him, who had done so miracles; *You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient that one man should die, &c.*

From this exposition (taking the Text as referring to all his friends,) Observe

Deliberate consideration must go before speaking.

We should first mark, and afterward speak. Every word should stay a while in the heart before it come at the tongue. So, nature seems to dictate; who (as we see in the fabrick of the body,) hath seated the tongue, and the heart at a great distance, that so we might take time to mould our words in our thoughts, and meditate our selves before we advise others. And least the tongue, (as Naturalists also observe) should be too nimble at its work, it hath a double hedge, or wall, one of teeth, another of lips to keep it in. The Apostle *James* (*Chap.* 1. 19.) gives this counsel; *Be swift to hear, and slow to speak.* Some slowness of speaking is no impediment, but the ornament of speech. There is an uncomely slowness of speech, such as *Moses* complained of (*Exod.* 4. 10.) Some have hearts and heads full of rich and rare commodities, who yet want utterance. But it is not only a duty, but our commendation to have a copie of our words, fairly written in our hearts, before we utter them at our tongues.

Non intelligis O Job; hinc tuis responsionibus saltas extra chorum, aliud nanq; nos agimus, aliud tu respondet. Pined. *Surdo fabulā narrare.*

Again, As these words are applied to *Job*, *Mark, and then we will speak*: As if he had said; *O Job, we are not at all understood, no, nor well attended by thee; now do thy part, and we will do ours.*

Observe, *It is in vain to speak till men hear and compose themselves to understand.*

Who would speak to him that hath no ears, or to him that hath not an attentive ear? while we speak to such, we do but tell Stories to a deaf man. He that hath an ear, must have a heart in his ear, else he heareth not. Some sleep at the Word with their eyes open, they sleep with a kind of attention; though they hear all, yet they mark little, and do nothing of that which they have heard: Such, when the Sermon is ended, may tell you somewhat of their own waking dream, but they cannot tell you a word, to purpose, of the most working doctrine. The Apostle exhorts to attend after we have heard (*Heb.* 2. 1.) which shews a double attention: First, An attention while we hear; Secondly, an attention to what we have heard. It is in vain to speak, if there be not both these attentions. *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed, or to mark the things that we have heard.* Now, if we must mark the things that we have heard, surely we must mark things as we hear them: if we miss the first, we can never reach the latter; if we do not mark as we hear, we cannot mark the things that we have heard, that is, consider, and enter into a due meditation of them. Marking is properly a work within; hearing is a work without. The Psalmist (*Psal.* 48. 13.) calls us to mark the Bulwarks of *Zion: Tell the Towers thereof, mark ye well her Bulwarks.* The phrase is very significant, *put your hearts upon her bulwarks*; so the Hebrew. Now as you are to mark the Towers, and Bulwarks of *Zion*, by putting your hearts upon her Bulwarks, that is, by considering how many defences God hath for *Zion*, and *Jerusalem*, how many wayes of protection he hath for his people; This is the putting of our hearts upon *Zions* Bulwarks. Thus we ought to put our hearts upon the word of God, the voice that sounds in *Zion*. This is our marking it. Every Minister may say to his hearers, as *Bildad* to *Job*, *Mark, and then we will speak.* Words exciting attention, are as profitable, as words giving instruction and exhortation. This is the second fault he chargeth *Job* with, An un-attentive spirit, to what was spoken.

The third is,

Vers. 3. **Wherefore are we accounted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?**

Vulgari dicterio bestiā vocamus hominē stupidum. Drus.

Wherefore are we accounted as beasts?] Here *Bildad* chargeth him with evil speaking, and with pride, as if he had looked upon them as beasts, and that he only was the man. We proverbially call a man that is either very stupid, or very wicked, a beast. (*Psal.* 49. 21.) *Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.* He that wants understanding, is (as a beast) ruled only by affections, and passions: *Wherefore are we accounted as beasts?*

The Hebrew is singular, Wherefore are we accounted *a beast before thee?* The word *Behemah* is here used, *Why are we accounted a Behemah*, or beast before thee? As if all we did make but one beast; or had neither reason in us to judge, nor abilty to speak, which two distinguish man from a beast.

But why doth *Bildad* tax *Job* with such uncomely language as this? did he ever call them beast? *Job* never spake thus directly, but he did oblickly and equivalently, while he bids them (*Chap.* 12. 7.) *Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee*; The Master is above the Scholar, and he that teacheth, above him that is taught. Hence, while *Job* sends his friends to School to the beasts, he secretly taketh them as more ignorant then beasts. He seems to speak this out (*Chap.* 17. 4.) *Thou hast hid their heart from understanding.* And again (*vers.* 10.) *But as for you all, do ye return, and come, for I have not found one wise man among you.* A company which hath not a wise man among them, may go for beasts, and will hardly be kept from doing like beasts. From these or the like speeches, *Bildad* raiseth this charge; *Wherefore are we accounted beasts before thee?*

But though *Job* spake thus, yet he did it not with a reproaching spirit, but only (in heat of dispute) to shew how they were mistaken; And as for *Bildad*, who makes this harsh construction, he should have considered what words he had given, as well as what he had received; he should have been patient in taking just reprehensions, who had given those which were unjust.

Now in that *Bildad* is netled at this, and takes it so hainously, *Wherefore are we accounted as beasts?*

Observe, *There is nothing that men can hardlier part with then their esteem; and that which sticks most with them, is to be undervalued in the esteem of their parts and gifts.*

Some account it a kind of happiness, and are well contented to be undervalued in their outward estates, they make some advantage of that undervaluing; They had rather be, then be accounted rich; but few love to be undervalued in their inward state; and some had rather be accounted wise and learned, then take pains to be so. He especially that bears himself up upon the reputation of his parts, cannot bear it, to be reckoned for less then he casts up himself; he cannot endure to be low in the eyes of others, who is high in his own. And indeed to be undervalued is a very great tryal. Hence we see the infinite self-denial of our Lord Jesus Christ, who *made himself of no reputation;*

who did not regard for how little he was reckoned; Though *he was in the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God, yet he emptied himself*, and appeared in the *form of a servant*.

Again, Had *Job* spoken with an intent to vilifie his friends, this charge had come justly against him.

Hence Observe, *To undervalue others, and to put upon them terms of contempt, is not only uncomely but sinful.*

Christ takes notice of this (*Mat.* 5.22.) as a great breach of the law of love; Whosoever shall say to his brother *Racha*, (that is, witless, brainless, empty-head; such a one *Racha* signifieth) he that thus vilifies his brother, shall *be in danger of a Council*; *but he that saith thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*

It is a great folly to affect the name of wise, and understanding; as Christ chargeth the Pharisees (*Mat.* 23. 8.) *Be not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and ye are brethren.* The Pharisees were ambitious of titles, and loved to be applauded and pointed at, as the only wise men, as the Oracles of the times. Now as it is a vanity to affect such an opinion of our selves: so it is sinful to asperse any man, or to blot him (undeservedly) out of the good opinion of others. And because we are apt to run into extreams, sometimes to account men as beasts, and sometimes to account them more then men, therefore Christ corrects that humour also (*vers.* 9.) *Call no man father on earth: for one is your father in heaven.* But must we esteem all men alike? Is it not under a command; *Honour thy father, and thy mother.* And is not this true, as of natural parents, so of civil? How then doth Christ say, *Call no man father*; seeing to call any man father, is but to give him honour, and we are obliged by the letter of the Law, to honour every man who is our father? The meaning then of this prohibition, *Call no man father*, is, give no man power over your judgments or consciences, such as the father hath over the person of his child. The Apostle dehorts Saints (*Ephes.* 4.) *Be not as children carried about with every wind of doctrine.* A child is apt to receive every impression, or to think this or that so, because his father saith it: the reason and Authority of a father, will carry and sway a child which way he pleaseth. In that sence, *Call no man father*, honour no man so much, be not slaves to the opinions of others. As among the Papists, Friers are to their superiours or fathers; to question whose commands is a high presumption, to ask a reason, curiosity, to disobey breach of vow: their words must stand for a law, their opinions for Oracles; thus *call no man father.* Now as we must take heed of that extream, not to call men fathers, as if we were to live upon their authority: so take heed (on the other side) of slighting men, of accounting men beasts, of undervaluing them, and trampling them underfeet, both are equally to be avoided; give every man his due; neither have the persons of men (as *Jude* speaks, *vers.* 16.) *in admiration*, by reason of advantage; neither have the person of any man in contempt, that may be, both to your own, and to his disadvantage. *Wherefore are we accounted as beasts before thee?*

And reputed vile in your sight.

The word which we translate **vile**, hath a double signification, according to a twofold root, whence it may be derived. Some derive it from a root which signifieth to *shut up*, to close, to hide, to obscure a thing. And hence some of the ancient Rabbins, as also late Hebricians, render this part of the verse, *not why are we reputed vile in your sight?* but, *why are we shut up in your sight?* The meaning is, why are we reputed as men whose understandings are locked up, and whose minds are closed; as if a cover were put upon them, or as if we were hood-winckt? So it suites well with the former clause; *Why are we accounted as beasts?* and, *why are we reputed as men whose understandings are shut up?* They whose understandings are either shut up, or departed from them, may without any great disparagement be numbred among beasts. This also answers what *Job* spake of his friends (*Chap.* 17.4.) *Thou hast hid their hearts from understanding, therefore shalt thou not exalt them.*

There is a state, or sort of men, whose hearts are looked up, and hid. The Apostle affirms it of the *Jews* in general, *When Moses is read, to this day there is a vail before their eyes.* That is, upon their hearts, their hearts are shut up. And so Christ (*Mat.* 13.15.) describes them, from the Prophet *Isaiah*; *The peoples heart is waxen gross, and their ears dull of hearing, and their eyes* (that is, the eyes of their understanding) *have they closed.* The character of a natural man is thus given by the Apostle (*Ephes.* 4. 18.) *Having their understanding darkned*, or blinded. This is a good sense here; *Wherefore are we reputed as men, whose understandings are darkned, and whose minds are blocked up?*

But rather secondly, the word *Tama*, signifies *defiled*, unclean, or impure; Grammarians tell us, that from the Hebrew word *Tama*, the Latines have the word *Tamino*, which is used only in composition *contamino, to defile, or pollute.* And the word signifies, not any kind of defilement, or filthiness, but that which is most sordid, and excrementitious, most vile, and foul; as appears from the ceremonial Law, *Levit.* 15.2.

Some conceive that *Job* carries on the sense of this with the former clause; *We are accounted as beasts, and reputed unclean before thee:* That is, as unclean beasts, and that under a twofold notion. Either first, as beasts that lie in their dung, and filth, as Swine, and stalled Oxen, *&c.* Or Secondly, as beasts legally unclean; in the Ceremonial Law, beasts are divided into clean and unclean: some were clean, and they were for sacrifice; others were unclean, and they might not be offered in sacrifice. Taking the text under this interpretation, it carries the greatest diminution, of the credit, and goodness of his friends, as if he had reckoned them, not only among, but below many beasts. But I suppose we need not tie up the sence to the exactness of that allusion, *Bildad's* scope being only to complain of *Job's* unfriendly censure of him, and his friends, as if they had been not only ignorant in matters of doctrine, as beasts, but also sinful and unholy in matters of practise, as the worst of men; *Wherefore are we reputed vile in your sight?*

Now seeing the same word signifies *polluted* and *vile* too.

Observe, *Every thing and person, which is defiled and polluted with sin, is also vile.*

Baseness hath pollution in it, either moral or natural: He is not vile, who is low in birth, or low in estate; but in Scripture-stile, the vile person is the wicked person, the person polluted with sin. (*Psal.* 15.4.) *In whose eyes a vile person is contemned.* This vile person is not the poor man, but the wicked man. In which sense the Prophet *Daniel* foretels (*Dan.* 11.21.) *That there shall stand up in his state a vile person.* This vile person was a man in honour, a great King, who is there called vile, because he was a wicked King, a persecutor of the people of God: wickedness obscures all our greatness; nothing makes us truly honourable but grace; and nothing makes us truly vile but sin: what sin doth, that it is; if sin make a person vile, then sin in it self is most vile. We are usually more troubled at the effects, then at the nature of sin: but we should chiefly look to the nature of things. Sin it self is so vile, that whatsoever is vile, is but enough to be the shadow of it; it doth not reallize the vileness of it.

As grace is so excellent that all the excellencies in the creature are gathered together to shadow out what that is, (*Ezek.* 16.) *I cloathed thee with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers skins, and decked thee with fine linnen, and I covered thee with silk, I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thine hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a Jewel on thy forehead, and earings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head.* Here's a collection of the most excellent, and precious things in the world. And what are these? the shadows only of that grace which the Lord puts upon his people, when he hath taken them into covenant with himself: (*vers.* 8.) *Then was the time of love, and I sware to thee, and entred into covenant with thee, saith the Lord, and thou becamest mine.* Gold, and precious stones, shadow the state of the Church of Christ in the purest times, when abundance of grace and spirit shall be powred out, *Rev.* 21. On the other side, when the holy Ghost would shew what sin is, all the filthiness in the world is scraped and thrown together to do it: while the Prophet describes the state of a man in nature, he is compared to an infant in blood, and pollution, unwashed, unbound up. (*Ezek.* 16.4.) The Apostle gives us a like character of

A radice טמה *obturatus, conclusus, absconditus fuit. R. Moyses & R. David: Quare clausi sumus in oculis vestris: dicitur autē corde clausus qui mentem habet clausam ne possit clare res intueri.*

טמא *contaminatus, pollutus, hinc latini acceperunt tamino, quod tantum in compositione utuntur contamino.* Avenar. *Excrementosam spuritiem præ se fert à cujus tactu tanquā à re abominabili abstinere lex præcipit.* Levit. 15.2.

of a natural man, (*Rom.*3.13.) *His throat is an open ſepulchre:* That which ſtreams out of his heart by his tongue and voice, is nothing but rottenneſs, and an unſavoury ſtench, even as out of a ſepulchre. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (*Chap.*22.18.) compares that people in their wickedneſs to droſs; *Son of Man, the houſe of Iſrael is become to me droſs; all they are Braſs, and Tin, and Iron, and Lead in the midſt of the furnace; they are even the droſs of ſilver,* or *reprobate ſilver,* Jer. 6.28. And which is worſe then this, the ſame Prophet (*Ezek.*24.10,11.) compares their corruptions to the ſcum of a pot; *Heap up wood, and ſet it empty upon the coals thereof, that the braſs of it may be hot, and may burn, and the filthineſs of it may be molten in it, and the ſcum of it may be conſumed.* Scum is the filthineſs of the pot; ſin is the filthineſs of the heart and life.

Verſ. 4. **He teareth himſelf in his anger,** &c.

O rapiens animam tuã. Heb. *O tu, heus tu, qui teipſum præ ira dilanias feræ more.* Merc. Jobum *accuſat nõ tãtum iracundiæ, ſed etiã rabidi furoris.* *Tenetur à proximis & rogatur ut ipſe ſibi placetur, nã ſua labia mordet, caput quaſſat, veſtimẽta ſcindit & ſe in columnas impingit.* Sen.

The Hebrew may be rendred by an exclamation, *O thou who teareſt thy ſelf,* or, *O thou tearer of thy ſelf in anger, ſhall thé earth be forſaken for thee?* So *Pſal.* 113.7. *He raiſeth up the poor out of the duſt,* or, *O thou that raiſeſt up the poor out of the duſt!* Read a like conſtruction in the Propheſie of *Obad. verſ.* 3. We render, *He teareth himſelf.* The word ſignifieth to tear after the manner of wild beaſts, to tear as a Lyon tears. Thus *Bildad* conceived *Job* enraged againſt himſelf, as a beaſt; anger having maſtered his underſtanding, and paſſion over-ſet his reaſon. *He teareth himſelf.* The Moraliſt deſcribes an angry man forcibly held by his friends, and they begging of him to be kind to himſelf; he bites his own lips, he rends his cloaths, and daſheth himſelf againſt the pillars; yet all anger is not thus angry: There are divers ſorts of anger.

Firſt, There is an anger with our ſelves, which is good and commendable; here *Bildad* rebukes *Job* for ſelf-anger; and therefore he ſuppoſed *Job's* ſelf-anger was not good. We are oftenеſt out, while we are angry with others, but we may ſoon be out while we are angry with our ſelves. Self-anger is good, when we are angry with our ſelves, either becauſe we have done that which is ill, or have not done ſo much good, or good not ſo well as we might. The Apoſtle numbers this among the effects of that *Godly ſorrow* which works *repentance unto ſalvation, not to be repented of:* Indignation and revenge are both the births of anger; both theſe are numbred among the effects of Godly ſorrow, 2 *Cor.*7.11. Indignation againſt others is ſeldom without ſin; and revenge, in our own cauſe upon others, is ever ſinful; Theſe are to be repented of, and therefore they cannot be the effects of true repentance. 'Twas then indignation and revenge upon themſelves, becauſe they had done evil, which the Apoſtle obſerved and commended as good in thoſe *Corinthians.*

Secondly, There is an anger with others, which is alſo good. It is a duty to be angry, when we ſee others act againſt or depart from their duty; He hath no zeal for God, who, on this ground, cannot be angry with man. And while the anger of man waxes hot, purely, upon this account, the Spirit of God is the fire which boils it up. We are angry for Gods ſake, when we are angry becauſe God is diſhonoured. This is a grave, ſerious, a vertuous, and a holy anger; while the Apoſtle gives a reſtriction to ſome anger (*Epheſ.*4.26.) he gives not only a permiſſion, but a command for this.

Thirdly, There is a pettiſh, or fooliſh anger; when we are angry with we know not what, and angry we know not why, angry with thoſe things which cannot intend us hurt; ſome are angry with the ſtone they ſtumble at, with the rain that wets them, with the wind that blows upon them; if they be not humor'd, they are angred. *Jonas* was angry when he ſaw a gourd withered, and a great City not deſtroyed.

Fourthly, There is a ridiculous cowardly anger, like that of a whelp, or cur, who barks, but runs away. As ſome are more afraid then hurt, ſo others are ſo much afraid, that you need not fear they will do you any hurt. Their anger is but a bluſter, and evaporates into words.

Fifthly, There is a ſlow, wrathful, revengeful anger; an anger which is ſteeped in malice; a ſevere tough anger; an anger, the coals whereof are raked up in the aſhes of a ſeeming forgetfulneſs, but with an intendment to break out into a conſuming flame. Such was that of *Eſau* againſt his brother *Jacob*, when he ſaid, *The dayes of mourning for my father will come ſhortly, and then will I ſlay my brother.* Father and brother ſhould have had but one funeral, if the reſolves of his revengeful ſpirit had not lain croſs to the counſel of God.

Sixthly, There is a vehement paſſionate furious anger, a raging anger, both towards others and our ſelves; with which *Bildad* here chargeth *Job, He teareth himſelf in his anger.*

This anger, though in a reaſonable creature, yet is unreaſonable; it knows no bounds, nor doth it keep any. Grammarians ſay, that *ira* the Latine word for anger, comes from *ire*, which ſignifies *to go*, and they give the reaſon, becauſe a man in anger goes out of himſelf, out of his wits, off from his reaſon; and when a man is pacified, and the ſtorm down, he doth *redire ad ſe*, return again to himſelf. Such anger is a ſhort madneſs, and madneſs is but a long anger. They who are fulleſt of reaſon, are furtheſt from this anger, and moſt diſpleaſed with themſelves for it, if at any time it appear upon them. Yet anger may be improved to excellent ſervices, not only as it warms the ſpirit to reſiſt that which is evil, but as it carries us on to good againſt reſiſtance; in which ſenſe one of the Ancients tells us, that as reaſon ought to be the Chariot-driver in man, and hold the reins; ſo the two horſes, that ſhould draw on the Chariot of man in all his actions, are the *concupiſcible, and the iraſcible appetites*; Theſe two as they are qualified, modified, and kept under the reins of reaſon, are of continual uſe, otherwiſe they break all, and our ſelves too; as here it is ſaid of *Job, He teareth himſelf in his anger.* Of this anger Note;

Zanch. in Eph. 4.

Ira furor brevis.

Plutar. hus.

Furious anger may hurt others, but it hurts our ſelves moſt.

None are more their own enemies then angry perſons are; *Doſt thou well to be angry?* ſaid God to *Jonah*; ſaith he, *I do well to be angry even unto death*, Jonah 4.9. He means it not only of being angry till he dyed, but of dying for anger. That muſt needs be hurtful, yea mortal to man, which carries in it a reſiſtance againſt the immortal God. Some anger is not only a grief for what is upon us, but a kind of ſtomacking at him who lays it upon us; if we do not confeſs it to be ſo, the Spirit of God knows it to be ſo, and tells us plainly it is ſo; and therefore ſuch anger cannot but hurt and tear our ſelves.

For the avoiding of this tearing, vexing anger, take theſe brief counſels.

Firſt, In provocations, *have an eye upward*; This will baſaſt the ſpirit, and make it ſteady; Heaven is above all ſtorms and tempeſts, and the more we converſe there, the leſs ſtormy are our hearts. *David* had provocation enough to make him angry, and boil up his paſſion to the height (2 *Sam.* 16.5.) *Shimei* curſed him, but he looked up, *God hath ſaid to him curſe David*; and then how calm, and meek was his ſpirit? As that is a good anger which is for Gods ſake, ſo, looking up to God will keep us from evil anger.

Secondly, *Turn anger upon your ſelves*; not to tear your ſelves (as *Job* is ſuppoſed here) but to conſider and reprove your ſelves: The more any man is acquainted with himſelf, the leſs angry will he be with others. A true ſight of our ſelves, ſhews us ſo much cauſe to be diſpleaſed with our ſelves, that we ſhall have little leiſure and leſs cauſe to be angry with our brethren. He that looks much into himſelf, will ſee ſo much to do, and to blame at home, that he will not find much to blame abroad, eſpecially he will not do it with paſſionate anger. Anger alwayes riſeth from ſome over-valuing of our ſelves; we think our ſelves ill dealt with, or dealt with below our worth when we are angry. Now he that knows himſelf fully, can ſcarcely think himſelf undervalued by any; he hath lower thoughts of himſelf, then other can have of him: There are not many receits for the cure of anger, better or more approved then this.

Thirdly, *Correct your anger before you imploy your anger*; do with this paſſion as Phyſitians do with their drugs; ſome drugs which are healthful for the body, excellent to purge and diſpel noxious humours; muſt yet before they are uſed, be corrected and receive ſome allay; you may poiſon the body with them elſe, and deſtroy it rather then repair its decayes: So in this caſe, your anger will tear, and undo you, unleſs you correct it, and take off the

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sharpness and virulency of it. And as you do with your horses, especially with stomackful horses; we first bridle and saddle them, and then ride them, else we cannot have them under command: Thus we must deal with anger; it is necessary to be angry sometimes; and he is a fool that cannot be angry at all; only get this wisdom, to bridle and saddle anger before you use it; lest it carry you away, and hurry you without any command.

Fourthly, *Let not your anger hang upon your spirits, or continue with you:* That's the Apostles advice, *Ephes.* 4.27. *Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath.* It is ill being in the dark with so bad a companion; Anger may pass through the heart of a wise man, but, *Solomon* saith, *It rests in the bosom of fools.* It is lawful to do some things, which to continue doing is unlawful; we cannot continue the actings of faith and love too long; But that Spirit which saith, *Be stedfast in faith, let brotherly love continue*; never said, be stedfast in anger, or let contendings among brethren continue. Anger against sin and enmity against the seed of the Serpent must continue, but the continuance of anger against any other, whether things or persons is sinful.

Fifthly, If you will avoid this anger, avoid the occasions of it. They that are subject to passion, should keep out of the way of passion. That King did wisely who when curious glasses were presented to him, broke them himself: And gave this reason, lest another breaking them it should provoke him to anger. 'Tis also very memorable, That when *Cæsar* had gotten the Cabinet of *Pompey* his implacable enemy into his possession, he would not look over his papers, because he would not discover that which might stir his passion, chusing rather to burn them, then to be burnt by them. 'Tis wisdom not to search into that which being found may over-ballance our wisdom.

Sixthly, Give a candid interpretation, both of words and actions; The glass through which we look, gives its colour to the object. Anger is usually blown up by misconstructions. What we judge ill meant, is always ill taken; Love thinks no ill, and therefore believes and hopes that all is well. Give that which troubles thee another name; if there be a mistake in it, yet say, it is thy friends infirmity, or that he did it out of ignorance; if what he spake pincheth, say it proceeded from familiarity, or freeness of spirit.

Seventhly, Give not an easie ear to reports; do not always hear what others say of thee, or what 'tis said they do. Many tear themselves with anger, when they hear themselves torn with slander; and while they have a curiosity to hear what others say of them, they want patience to bear what they hear. 'Tis better we should be in the dark concerning our own wrongs, then that we should wrong our selves by that passion which the light we get about them stirs up in us.

He teareth himself in his anger.

But was this justly charged on *Job?*

I conceive that his friend, (as in other passages, so here) sinned against the Law of Love, while he charged *Job* with so much anger. It is hard to distinguish trouble of spirit, from passion and distemper of spirit. Yet the testimony of God himself concerning *Job*, assures us that he was a meek man, a very mirrour of patience; which will not consist with this accusation in the hight and heat of it. And though it cannot be denied, that *Job* discovered some passion and impatience, in these conflicts, yet all put together, did not amount to this total sum; *He teareth himself in his anger*; much less to that unquietness and dissatisfaction, with which *Bildad* presseth him further in the latter part of the verse;

Hic loquendi modus hyperbolicus pro re impossibili usitatus est in omni lingua: qui tales expectat, in cœlo quærit pisces, in mari stellas; in Italia Tanaim, in Scythia Sanctos.

Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall the rock be removed out of his place?

Here *Bildad* taxeth *Job* with pride, as before with anger, or rather with an angry pride; *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?*

The words are proverbial, and in their general sence are appliable to any thing which is very hard, or to man impossible to be done. Such expressions are usual in all Languages. As when 'tis said, you may as well look for fish in the air, or for stars in the Sea, as to see this thing done. So here, this which thou desirest, is as likely to come to pass, as that all men will shortly remove from off the face of the earth, and that the rocks will move.

More particularly, some understand it thus; *Doest thou think thy self such, or so great a man, that if thou die; and be taken out of the world, mankind shall die with thee, or that the earth shall be forsaken when thou leavest it?* The Septuagint renders; *What, if thou die, shall all under heaven want Inhabitants? Art thou the* Atlas *of the world? doest thou bear up the fabrick of it? must all things run to desolation, unless thou doest order and uphold them? why makest thou such a stir about thy afflictions, and thy death? Is there no man fit to dwell in this house, when once thou art turned out of doors?* *Job* gave his friend such a sarcastical check (*Chap.* 12.2.) *No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.* Here *Bildad* payes him in his own coyn, *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee? &c.* Thus he rebukes his pride, as if (according to this interpretation) *Job* had thought that the safety of the whole world were wrapped up in his: Or as if some prodigious changes must needs follow his change. *Bildad* was grown somewhat warm, and checks *Job's* supposed hight of spirit, with too much of his own. *Shall the earth be forsaken?*

Quid enim si tu mortuus fueris inhabitabilis erit quæ sub cœlo. Sept. *Ita de tua morte & vita loqueris, ac si mortalium omnium salus & interitus ex te penderet.* Pined. *Nō sine fastu videtur* Bildad Jobi *fastum velle proculcare, at excandescerat.* Parap.

And shall the rock be removed?] No such matter; how high so ever thy thoughts of thy self are, or how necessary so ever thou conceivest thy self to be, to the standing and continuance of the world. Yet know, the world shall continue when thou fallest, yea there shall not be the least stop observable in the whole course of nature, when thou hast paid thy debt to nature. Not only shall not the rocks be removed, but not a hillock, not a pebble-stone shall be taken out of its place, though thou be took and hurled out of thine. Indeed the world is indebted to Jesus Christ for its consistence, the earth had been forsaken, had it not been for him, and the rock had been removed out of his place. But the best and wisest of men may be spared, and no great hurt done.

Exponitur per Lyptotē, ubi minus dicitur quā intelligitur. Millies moriaris, num propter hoc mūdi cursus turbabitur? imo nec aut monticulus à vel calculus loco suo dimovebitur. Bold.

Secondly, For the clearing of this obscure passage, we are to recal to mind, that the state of the controversie between *Job* and his friends, was about the providence of God, and the dispensations of Justice; his friends said that good men receive good at the hand of God, and evil men evil. Hence they had all along charged *Job* for a wicked man, for an hypocrite; because he suffered such things. Now for as much as they asserted, that God laid evil upon evil men, and withal observed that *Job* was so impatient under his sufferings, tearing himself in anger, as if he had suffered unjustly; therefore *Bildad* speaks thus; *Shall the earth be forsaken for thee?* or, *shall the rock be removed out of his place.* That is, dost thou expect that God for thy sake should change that course which he hath setled as firmly as the rocks, or as the earth? Dost thou think to make God alter the method, either of his justice, or of his providence? thou mayest as well hope to turn the motion of the Sun, that the earth shall be forsaken, and the rocks removed out of their place, as to expect this. Friend! do not you think either to justle or dispute God out of his way. Hence

Hæc sententia, quòd adversitates acciaunt pro peccatis firma est, sicut terra & rupes, nūquid ergo poterit removari propter tuas disputationes. Aquin. *Per rupem deus est intelligendus quē immutabilem dicit instar immoti Saxi neque cōmovendum à loco judicii.* Rab. Dav. Vatab. *Num deus propter tuā clamorē, quod te innocentē dicis & præter modum affligi, desinat suam solitā exercere justitiā.* Merc. Bildad *se suosq; amicos rupes nominat, firmitur perstantes in sua opinione.*

Thirdly, Some interpret the last clause of God himself, who had determined to chastise the sinfulness of *Job*; *Shall the rock be removed out of his place?* i. e. *Shall God?* God is often called a rock in Scripture, a rock is the Emblem of stedfastness. Dost thou think to remove God who is stedfast as a rock? or to put him besides his purpose by thy crying out of oppression, or crying up thine own innocency. For shame give over.

Fourthly, Others, by the rock interpret *Job's* friends, or the opinion which his friends held. As if he had said; *The opinion which we hold concerning the punishment of wicked men, is as strong upon our spirits, and as much setled there, as the rock is in his place,* and therefore thou shalt move us from our opinion, when thou hast removed a rock, which is numbred among things impossible, or extreamly difficult. All these interpretations center in one common sence: implying that the Lord having appointed wicked men to punishment, will no more change this appointment, then he will remove the rocks, or alter the whole state of things here upon earth. And *Bildad* seems to intimate that it is more unreasonable to divert the course of Justice, or to let the wicked go unpunished, then it is miraculous to overthrow the whole course of nature. *Shall the earth be forsaken*

ken for thee? or *shall the rock be removed out of his place?* Hence we may learn this general truth, that

God will not alter his counsels, nor the course of his providence for any mans sake whatsoever.

You may as soon say, he will alter the whole frame of heaven and earth, or that he will remove the rocks out of their place, as he will do it: the course of justice is as firmly setled as the course of nature is. It was indeed a mistake in *Job's* friends, to think because God hath setled a course of justice, that therefore he would never change the form of justice; for though all the ways of God are just, and he will do justice unto all; though we may (as the Prophet is charged peremptorily) *say to the righteous, it shall be well with him, and wo to the wicked*; yet he varies the manner, the means, the times, and seasons of executing justice, as seemeth best unto himself. The justice of God shall stand though the rocks remove, and the earth be totally forsaken; yet take heed of saying that justice hath forsaken the earth, or is removed, because we see it not acting in its wonted state and outward equipage. That which the Lord speaks to shew the unmovable setledness of his mercy, is as true in reference to the setledness of his justice, (*Jer.* 31.35, 36.) *Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the Sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the Moon, and of the Stars, for a light by night; which divideth the Sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name.* What follows? *If those ordinances depart from before me, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a Nation before me for ever.* As if he had said, when I change the ordinances of heaven, of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, then will I take my mercy from *Israel*; I will never do the one, therefore I will not do the other. The Lord promised at the renewing of the Covenant with man, *Gen.* 8. *ult.* *That day and night, summer and winter, should not cease while the earth remained.* Now saith the Lord, if you can make me to alter the course of the heavens, of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, then I may do this against my people. We have the like assurance given, *Jer.* 33.25. Where the Lord from that consideration of the setledness of the frame of nature, argueth the setledness of his own Covenant of grace, and promise of mercy to his people. Thus also we may argue, in reference to his justice, that you shall as soon get the stars blotted out of heaven, the rocks removed, the earth forsaken, as God will forsake the right distributions of justice towards man. It was said of a man, and he but a Heathen; *That the Sun might as easily be stayed, or turned aside, as he from doing right.* How much more is this true of the righteous God, with whom there is no shadow of turning? And though we cannot say to any man, as *Job's* friends to him; If God punish you not sooner or later here in this world, he must alter the whole course of his judiciary administrations; yet we may say to many, if God save you eternally, he must alter the whole course of his merciful administrations; he must make a new Gospel, yea a new Christ, if you attain eternal Salvation. For by the rules of the present Gospel, and by the way which Christ hath already manifested to save sinners, you cannot be saved, how much soever you presume of salvation: Shall the Gospel be forsaken for you, or shall the promise be removed out of its place, which as it is more immovable then a rock in helping those that turn to God and believe, (*Isa.* 54.10.) So it will move no more then a rock towards the help of those who still turn from God, and continue in unbelief. *Shall the rock be removed out of his place?* Thus much of the preface. *Bildad* hath spoken to the person, and reproved him; he now speaks to his cause.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine.
The light shall be dark in his Tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.
The steps of his strength shall be straitned, and his own counsel shall cast him down.
For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.
The grin shall take him by the heel, and the robber shall prevail against him.
The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

THE miserable condition of a wicked man is laid forth in this Chapter.

First, Allegorically.

Secondly, Plainly.

By way of Allegory to the seventh verse; and in plain expressions to the end of the Chapter. Here are four Allegories.

The first from light, *vers.* 5, 6.

The second from hunting and fowling, *vers.* 7, 8, 9, 10.

The third from Law-proceedings, or the manner of Process in Courts of Justice, *vers.* 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

The last Allegory is taken from Husbandry, *vers.* 16.

The fifth and sixth verses contain the first Allegory; **Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out.** The Vulgar reads it interrogatively; *Shall not the light of the wicked be put out?* But the Original is absolute; *The light of the wicked shall be put out.* *Nonne lux impii extinguetur?* Vulg.

The first word hath an Emphasis in it; *Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out.* **Yea**, imports a vehement affirmation, carrying what is affirmed against all opposition (*Gam*) *yea*, it shall be thus (saith he) which specially reacheth two things. גם *Gam, particula firmitèr corroborat prius dicta.*

First, How much soever thou art angry with us for saying it, yet it shall be thus. Be thou as angry as thou wilt, thou shalt not help thy self: thou mayest entangle thy self more, but thou shalt not at all loosen thy self. A man that hath a burthen upon his back, cannot ease himself by striving and strugling with it; but the more he struggles, the more he is troubled.

Secondly, This *yea*, may bear respect to the exaltation of wicked men, to the height of their prosperity: *yea*, let them have gotten as high as they will, down they shall, as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of *Lucifer*, (Chap. 14.13.) *Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the stars of God, yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.* The higher we build in our own thoughts without God, the lower is our fall, and the more unavoidable. Thou shalt be brought down. Or take the Allegory in the Text, how much light soever the wicked man hath, though he seem to have as much as the Sun, though he seem a fountain of light, yet out he shall, he shall be put out like a candle. *Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out.*

Here are four expressions about one thing; First, *The light of the wicked shall be put out*; Secondly, *The spark of his fire shall not shine*: Thirdly, *The light shall be dark in his Tabernacle*: Fourthly, *His candle shall be put out with him*: We are not curiously to insist upon distinctions, to find out the difference between light and a spark, between light and a candle, &c. Though a difference there be; yet I conceive the speaker did not so much intend that, but heaps up a great many words of a near alliance, or of one signification, the more to ratifie his assertion, that the thing should certainly be done. A wicked man shall be extinct, put him under what notion you will; let him have light, or spark, or candle, he shall go out in darkness.

But what is this light?

There are three sorts of light; First, Moral; Secondly, Spiritual; Thirdly, Civil Light.

Moral Light, is the light of wisdom, prudence, and understanding. And thus some of the elder learned Rabbins, and later Hebricians too interpret this Text. As if he had said, the wicked man shall be made a very fool, destitute of wit, reason, understanding, and ability to judge, or know what evil is upon him, or what is good for him: The spirit of counsel shall be taken from him. That's a sore judgment.

Secondly, There is spiritual light; and that is double. The light of the knowledge of God; and the light of comfort from God. The knowledge we receive from God is light. And the joy we receive from God is light. Some interpret the place of this spiritual light; Though a wicked man, an hypocrite hath a great measure of this light, yet his light shall be put out; as Christ threatens *Mat.* 13.12. & 25.29. *To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance,*

abundance, but from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he seemed to have. That light of knowledge, with which hypocrites seemed to shine, shall be taken away from them. Many hypocrites are irradiated with much light, and have great flashes or flushes of joy and comfort; these shall be taken away, their light shall be put out; yea their sparks shall die, they shall be left in utter darkness: though they compass themselves about with sparks of their own kindling, as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 50.10,11. Though this be a truth, yet (I conceive) it is not the thing that *Bildad* intended. But we are rather to take it for,

Lucis nominibus significatur quicquid lucet in oculis quicquid splendet in fortuna, &c. Merc.

Thirdly, A Civil-light, that is, the light of outward prosperity. And so these words are a gradation, teaching us, that not only whatsoever a carnal man reckons his greatest splendor, but what he calls his smallest ray of temporal blessedness, shall be wrapt up in darkness and obscurity. Outward prosperity, may be called *light* upon a threefold consideration.

First, Because as light refresheth and cheareth the spirits, (there is a terrour in darkness, and when light comes, we are freed from that terrour;) So doth outward prosperity, and the presence of worldly accommodations.

Secondly, Light helps us on in our work; no man can work, till he have either the natural light of the Sun, and fire, or some artificial light. Prosperity and peace carry us on in our worldly affairs. A man who hath much light of knowledge about him how to work, may yet have so much darkness of affliction about him, that he cannot work or move in the most prosper sphere of his Activity.

Thirdly, Light makes us conspicuous; we are seen what we are in the light. Thus outward prosperity makes men appear. Poverty is joyned with obscurity. *What parts, or gifts, or abilities, or worth soever is in a man, he is scarce ever seen above-board, if he be under the straights of poverty and affliction. The light of the wicked shall be put out.* I have heretofore spoken of the prosperity, and also of the decay of wicked men; therefore I shall not insist upon it here. Note, only first, That,

The glory of wicked men, their excellency, their light shall certainly come to nothing.

cum רעץ *sit activum & quodamodo intransitivum, recte dicere possis,* lux impii extinguet se.

They shall be quenched as a fire of thorns (*Psal.* 118. 12.) which any man may suddenly quench, and if no man will, it will suddenly quench it self. Yet further. The word which we translate *to put out*, is active, or intransitive; so some render it here; *The light of the wicked shall put it self out.*

Hence Note, *A wicked man is usually the cause of his own ruine.*

He puts himself out: sometimes he makes his own tongue to fall upon himself (*Psal.* 64 8.) his tongue undoes him, and he is buried under a heap, or pressed to death under the weight of his own words. Sometimes his own strength undoes him; sometimes his wit and parts undo him; His great learning and abilities, prove his ruine; He dies as a fool dies, because he thought himself wiser then any living. The prosperity of the wicked is not like the light of the Sun, but like that of a candle, which consumes it self; and that, not only naturally, as all worldly things do, which will perish with the using, how warily soever we use them; but violently by their vain and unwary using of it. In this the justice of God is eminent upon wicked men: There was scarce a wicked man in the world ever extinguished, but he hath contributed, not only meritoriously (for so all wicked men are wholly the cause of it) but instrumentally to his own extinction: The wicked man is (*felo de se*) a murtherer, a destroyer, an extinguisher of himself: If all men should forbear him, or resolve to let him stand, yet he would work out his own downfal here, as well as he doth his own damnation for ever.

Again, The spark of his fire shall not shine.

שביב *vel flammã vel scintillã significat.*

'Tis the same thing; yet here is a progress in the sence: Besides Sun-light, there is fire-light, and candle-light. But if a man hath neither Sun-light, nor fire-light, nor candle light, then he is in darkness indeed. If he have no fire burning, yet possibly he may have a few coals, or sparks of fire: Wherefore to note the utter extinction of a wicked man, he shall not have so much as a spark of fire; *The spark of his fire shall not shine.*

Ex i'lo igne] fœlicitatis nõ relinquetur scintilla, neq; mica splendoris; extinguetur omnino.

It is a great abatement to be brought from Sun-light, to fire-light; For as the Apostle speaks in another case, (1 *Cor.* 15.) *There is one Glory of the Sun, another of the Moon, and another of the Stars; and one Star differeth from another in glory.* So we may say, there is one light of the Sun, another of the fire, another of the candle, and one candle differs from another in glory. Here is the Sun-light put out, and the fire-light, and the very spark of fire. So that the threatned destruction, or extinction of a wicked man shall be total, every spark of it shall expire. The rich man (*Luke* 16.) was destitute of all good, when he had not so much as a drop of water to cool his tongue. He that begged a drop, had not a drop. Now, as he that hath not a drop of water, is under the greatest drought: so he that hath not a spark of fire, is under the greatest cold or darkness: And as the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 30.14.) to shew an utter destruction, under another notion about breaking a vessel; *Because you have trusted in oppression and perverseness, therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall break it like the breaking of the Potters vessel that is broken in pieces, he shall not spare; so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it, a sheard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.* I note it for that, He shall break the vessel; and so break it, that there shall not be so much as a sheard to take fire from the hearth, or a little water from the pit. When a vessel is so broken, that there remains not a sheard for any use, it is totally broken. What the sheard is to the vessel, that is a spark to the fire; the vessel is totally broken, when there is not a sheard left; and the fire is totally extinct, when there is not a spark left. So this carries not only some extinction of the wicked mans light, but the utter extinction of the least light of a wicked man.

Again, Consider the difference between these two, light and fire. Fire is proper to the house and family: lights shines abroad every where; which imports, that as the renown, fame, and glory, with which the wicked man shines to the world, shall be extinguished: So his fire, and his spark, that is, his family-glory and lustre shall be taken away; he shall be destroyed in his publick capacity, and in his private capacity; his glory abroad, and his glory at home; the Sun, with which he shines in the sphere of this publick employment, and the fire, with which he is warmed in the hearth of his private relations and enjoyments, shall be utterly extinguished.

He hath not yet done.

The light shall be dark in his Tabernacle.

Tum ipse, tũ ipsius domus ex illo splendore in densissimas miseriarũ tenebras incidet. Bez.

He had said before, *His light shall be put out*; why doth he say here, *His light shall be dark?* This seems less then he spake before.

I answer, no; here is still an increase of the sence. To say, *his light shall be dark*, is more then to say, *his light shall be put out*; As was shewed *Chap.* 10. 22. upon those words; where *Job* describes the darkness of the grave in pureft strains of Eloquence, and having said, *vers.* 21. *It is the land of darkness, and the shadow of death, a land of darkness, as darkness it self, and of the shadow of death, without any order:* He concludes, *and where the light is as darkness.* But some may say; If it be a place of darkness, as darkness it self, how can there be any light there? Why doth he say, the light there is as darkness, when he had said, there is nothing but darkness there? It is to shew, (as that place to which I refer was opened) that the grave is so dark, that even that which hath an appearance of light is darkness. Not only is the darkness dark; but the very light is darkness. Thus here, not only is the light of a wicked man put out, but the light of his Tabernacle (if there be any thing left there, that bears any imaginable likeness to it) shall be dark, or more like to darkness. Hence we may Note; That,

God will make the very prosperity of a wicked man an affliction to him.

His light shall go out, even to a spark; and if a spark of light remain, that shall be but darkness. He shall never enjoy good, if any good remain for him to enjoy. Though after great sufferings he may have some ease, yet that shall

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be a pain to him. As it is the priviledge of the Saints, that their darkneſs is light, their ſorrows joyful, their wants a fulneſs; ſo it is the curſe of the wicked, that their light is darkneſs, their joyes ſorrowful, and their ſinfulneſs a want. We may here remember that Argument of our Saviour, which I have formerly made uſe of (*Matth.* 6. 23.) If that which is appointed to comfort a man turn to his ſorrow, how great is his ſorrow? So that here is a peremptory excluſion of all that is, or can be refreſhing to a wicked man; his light is darkneſs to him; and his very bleſſings a curſe to him.

Laſtly, **His Candle ſhall be put out with him.**

The Candle gives an inferiour light; the Candle is a family, a houſhold light: When the Sun goes down, Candles go up; but when this mans Sun goes down, he ſhall not have the help of a Candle, as not the help of fire. Now he that hath neither the Sun to ſhine on him, nor the Fire to warm him, nor a Candle to ſtand by him, what a condition is he in? Which ſtill aggravates the affliction of a wicked man. Some refer it to that cuſtom of the Ancients, who ſet up many Candles, or Lights, when they made Banquets in the night. So, *His Candle ſhall go out*, is, he ſhall never make Feaſt more, nor have merry meeting with Friends more. But I rather take it in general, for all the uſes of Candles, not for that ſpecial uſe of Candles, Torches, or Lamps in great night Feaſts, when their multitude of blazes ſeemed to turn night into day, and to make darkneſs light. Taking Candle in the loweſt ſence, *His Candle ſhall be put out with him*, is, he ſhall not have ſo much as a ſingle Candle, not the ſmalleſt Candle, not ſo much as a Ruſh light left him. And this we find once and again in Scripture to expreſs the ſaddeſt calamity of a people (*Jer.* 25. 10.) when the Prophet deſcribes the deſtruction that ſhould come upon *Jeruſalem*; *Moreover* (ſaith he) *I will take from them the voice of mirth, and gladneſs.* And what more? *The voice of the Bridegroom, and of the Bride; the ſound of a Milſtone, and the light of a Candle:* That is, I will remove all their comforts; when the loweſt means of comfort (bread and candle-light) are removed, then all comfort is removed. So (*Revel.* 18. 23.) the deſtruction of *Babylon* is deſcribed; *The voice of Harpers, and Muſitians, and Pipers, and Trumpetters, ſhall be heard no more at all in thee, and no Craftſman, of whatſoever Craft he be, ſhall be found any more in thee; and the ſound of a Milſtone ſhall be heard no more at all in thee, and the light of a Candle ſhall ſhine no more at all in thee:* That is, Thou ſhalt be utterly overthrown, and ruined; where there is not ſo much as the light of a Candle found, what of mercy can be found? (*Revel.* 22. 5.) When the holy Ghoſt would expreſs a ſtate which ſhall need no creature-comfort, he ſaith, *There ſhall be no night there, and they need no Candle, neither the light of the Sun:* The Sun is the light of the day; and the Candle is the light of the night. Now as the full proſperity of a people is ſet out, when they ſhall have ſo much light, ſo much ſpiritual or glorious light, that they ſhall not need the Sun, nor the Candle: So the total ruine of Nations, or perſons, is ſet forth when they have neither Sun-light, nor Candle-light. *Prov.* 30. 13. *The light of the righteous rejoyceth; but the lamp of the wicked ſhall be put out.*

Illuſtrē cum tota meis convivia flammis Totque gerā mixos una lucerna vocor. Mart. l. 14. Ep. 41.

Antiquitus ante novas nuptas, lampades & tada accenſa præferri ſolebant.

Some interpret Candle and Light by Children or Poſterity; ſo they ſignifie (1 *Kings* 11. 36.) where God being about at once to puniſh, and to ſpare, ſaith to *Jeroboam*, *I will take the Kingdom out of his Sons hand, and I will give it unto thee, even ten Tribes. And unto his Son will I give one Tribe, that* David *my Servant may have a light alway before me in* Jeruſalem. We put in the Margin according to the letter of the Hebrew, *That* David *my Servant may have a Lamp, or a Candle:* That is, ſome of his Poſterity remaining and ruling in *Jeruſalem*; his line ſhall not be extinct. The Woman of *Tekoa* calls her Son, her Coal (2 *Sam.* 14. 7.) *So they ſhould quench my Coal which is left, and ſhall not leave to my Husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth.*

If we take in this Scriptural ſence of the Light and Candle in the Text, it enforms us yet more fully, that when a wicked man is extinguiſhed, all that is his ſhall be entinguiſhed; he, and his Wealth; he, and his Honour; he, and his Children; he ſhall periſh, and his Candle with him; his name ſhall be blotted out, and there ſhall be no memorial of him.

Laſtly, A Candle goes out two wayes, either when the matter is ſpent, and the fuel which it works upon conſumed. Thus every mans Candle goes out, his Candle waſtes; waſtes it ſelf while it ſhines on him. Secondly, A Candle goes out by violence, when it is blown out: So we muſt underſtand the Text; The wicked mans Candle ſhall not be left to conſume, and wear it ſelf out; he, and his; he, and his publick light; he, and his family-light; he, and his poſterity light ſhall be put out before they are waſted out. This *Bildad* reckoned as the portion of *Job*; and it is the portion of every wicked man; 'tis that which is due to him, that which he deſerves, though he doth not alwayes receive preſent pay according to his deſerts.

So much of the firſt Allegory, by which *Bildad* illuſtrates the dark condition of a wicked man, his light, the ſpark of his fire, and his candle are put out.

The Context of the four Verſes following, ſhew the miſery of wicked men, under a ſecond Allegory, of hunting and fowling; where we have to do with nets and ſnares, with a grin, and with a trap; all which are implements and engines belonging to Fowlers and Hunters, with which beaſts and birds are enſnared and taken.

The miſery of the wicked man is here ſet down two wayes.

Firſt, In general; *The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened.*

Secondly, We have the ſpecial wayes how this ſhall be brought to paſs.

Firſt, He ſhall bring himſelf into a ſnare, as is ſhewed in the latter end of the ſeventh Verſe, and in the eighth; *His own counſel ſhall caſt him down; he ſhall be caſt into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a ſnare.* The man runs into it alone; if there be none to drive him into the net, he will haſten into it; if no man ſet ſnares for him, he will ſet a ſnare for himſelf; he muſt be catcht. That's the firſt way, how his ſteps come to be ſtraitened, he himſelf ſtraitens them by his own counſels.

Secondly, If this wicked man ſhould not go into the ſnare, yet he ſhall ſoon be brought into it (*Verſ.* 9. & 10.) *The grin ſhall take him by the heel, and the robbers ſhall prevail againſt him.* The ſnare is laid for him by others, many are contriving the methods of his deſtruction; there are traps ſet in his way, and he cannot eſcape. So that either he ſhall do it himſelf, or if he do not, others ſhall. That's the ſum of this Context.

Verſe 7. **The ſteps of his ſtrength ſhall be ſtraitened**, &c.

This ſhews the judgment in general; all Beaſts and Birds taken in nets, or ſnares, are brought into a ſtrait; *The ſteps of his ſtrength.* By [*ſteps*] we are to underſtand his motions, his actions, his undertakings; whatſoever helps him towards his deſired end.

Impii greſſus ſunt actiones operæ deſideriâ & omnia quibus ad optatum finem contendebat.

And theſe are not ordinary ſteps, but the *ſteps of his ſtrength*; that is, his ſtrongeſt ſteps. Mr *Broughton* reads, *His violent paſſages ſhall be ſtraitened:* Steps of ſtrength, for ſtrong ſteps, is an Hebraiſm very frequent. And theſe ſteps of ſtrength may be,

Firſt, The ſtrength of his mind, and wit, there lyes much ſtrength within; man orders and layes his deſigns by the ſtrength of his underſtanding.

Secondly, The ſtrength of his authority; for therein a mans ſtrength lyes too; let ſuch a man have never ſo much civil power, he ſhall yet be ſtraitened.

Thirdly, The ſtrength of his body, or of his hand; the ſteps of his outward ſtrength as well as of his inward, and authoritative ſtrength, ſhall be ſtraitened.

Fourthly, A man ſets ſteps of ſtrength, or adds ſtrength to his ſteps, by his friends and relations, by his alliance and confederates, by the helps and aids, by the ſeconds and aſſiſtants which he hath abroad in the World. Every ſtep which ſome men ſet, is upheld from without, they go not alone. We may underſtand the Text in any of, or in all theſe wayes. The ſteps of ſtrength, or the ſtrongeſt ſteps which he ſets by the ſtrength of his underſtanding, or by the ſtrength of his authority, or by the ſtrength of his body, or by the ſtrength of his friends, and relations, the ſteps of all theſe ſtrengths ſhall be ſtraitened.

Further,

אוֹן *Significat potentiam illam quæ conjuncta esse solet cum dolore, quem quis peccando sibi vel alii infert.* Bold.

Further, The original word signifies not ordinary strength, or strength in general; but that strength which is usually accompanied with trouble, and with that trouble which flows from, or is the issue of sin; a painful strength. For as many have painful weaknesses upon them; so some have painful strength. And hence also the Hebrew word signifies riches, or power, which are unjustly gotten, and as unjustly kept. This kind of strength, is strength with a pain; when a man gets and maintains what he hath gotten by sin. And there are none who have had so much pain with weaknesses, as some in all Ages have had with strength. *The steps of his strength shall be straitened.*

Straitened] To be straitened in common Scripture-phrase, signifies only to be afflicted; Mr. *Broughton* renders it by the word distressed; *His violent passages are distressed.* And hence Christ (*Luke* 12. 50.) speaks of his sufferings, or of the pre-apprehensions of his sufferings, what effects they had upon him; *I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened, till it be accomplished.* Did not *John* baptize Christ in *Jordan* some years before? What was this Baptism?

There is a threefold Baptism: First, The Baptism of water: Secondly, The Baptism of the Spirit: Both these Baptisms Christ had been baptized with: He was plentifully baptized with the Spirit, and he had been baptized with water in *Jordan*. But there is a third Baptism, that is, the Baptism of Blood, or the Baptism of suffering, and that is it which Christ spake of there; he had not yet been so baptized, drenched, or washed in blood, in his own blood, as he was soon after in the Garden, and upon the Cross. This was the Baptism that he was to be baptized with: And, saith he, *How am I straitened?* That is, How is my soul afflicted at the approaches and appearances of it? *How am I besieged with it?* For to that the metaphor may allude. The same word is used (*Luke* 19. 43.) where Christ foretells the destruction of *Jerusalem*; *Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee* (they who are thus kept in are straitened) *in on every side.* It may refer also to the shutting up of a beast in a pound, or to a woman in travel, who when her pains take hold upon her, how sore are her straits? All shews how great a stress, and distress was upon the soul of Jesus Christ, because he had then such a baptism to be baptized with.

So then, to be straitened is to be afflicted. Outward afflictions are straits, either upon the body, or estate; and the very foresight of these put many to inward straits.

And hence (on the other side) to be enlarged, signifies prosperity, or a good estate. We have *David* so expressing himself (*Psal.* 31. 8.) *Thou hast set my feet in a large room.* Again (*Psal.* 66. 12.) *We have gone through fire and water; but thou hast brought us forth into a wealthy place*; which some translate, into a *roomthy place*: That is, into much prosperity. *Solomon* (*Prov.* 4. 11, 12.) gives us a negative to this in *Job*, *When thou goest thy steps shall not be straitened:* That is, Thou shalt not be afflicted, or thou shalt not come into any trouble. When *Isaac*'s servants had digged a first and a second Well, the Herdsmen of *Gerar* contended about it, saying, *The water is ours.* Then his servants digged a third Well, and for that they strove not; therefore he called the name of it *Rehoboth*, that is, *room*; *for now*, said he, *the Lord hath made room for us* (*Gen.* 26. 22.) We may say of all our comforts, and mercies, *Rehoboth*, here is room; but of all our afflictions they are straits. So that, *The steps of his strength shall be straitened*, is neither more nor less then this; he shall be brought into trouble.

Hence Observe, First, Who is it that is threatened with these straits? It is the sinner, the wicked man here spoken of, he is the subject of the whole Chapter: Then learn,

Sin brings into straits.

There are none brought into such straits, as they who walk in the broad way. If you would be at liberty, keep in the narrow way, and walk, as they who are bound. None are freer from bondage then the Servants of God (indeed none are at all free but they) yet none are more bound then they. As for those who would have more room for their steps, then the Commandments of God afford, they shall have but little room for themselves. They will be found sooner or later in the stocks, or in the net, in the snare, or in the grin, who walk loosely. Sin brings us into a two-fold strait.

First, Into straits of mind; a man shall not know what to do, who doth he cares not what. Thousands have run themselves into these straits, who had room enough in the World; they walked which way they would, they washed their footsteps in Butter, and the Rock poured them out Rivers of Oyl; yet how have their poor souls been straitened by turning aside after vanity.

Secondly, Sin straitens the outward man, the body is brought into prison, into deaths, and dangers. For one who is brought into straits for his Conscience, there are hundreds who are brought into straits by acting against Conscience. Some are brought into straits for doing their duty; but most for doing against duty: With whom are Prisons peopled, are they not with those who break their bounds? Who are generally in the straits of poverty, while they walk abroad, are they not such as walk disorderly? 'Tis sin which usually cloatheth a man with rags, and (though some are fed by it) which snatcheth the bread out of his mouth: Who are they that are brought into the straits of a shameful death, and fall under the strokes of Justice? Are they not such as transgress the rules of Justice, and practically oppose Government?

I grant there is a strait into which some are brought by the closeness of their walking with God, yea, by the enlargedness of their hearts towards God. *Paul* was in such a strait (*Phil.* 1. 23.) Then a man is in a strait when he knows not what to chuse; *I am in a strait between two*; Why? *I know not which to chuse, whether to live or dye*: It was the height of his grace which put him into this strait: But O the straits that men are brought into by the lowness and baseness of their spirits, their wickedness entangles them in such straits, that they know not how to live, and yet are altogether unfit to dye.

Further, The providence of God hath cast many into straits too. *Jehoshaphat* (2 *Chron.* 20. 12.) was brought into a great strait when he said, *Lord, we know not what to do, but our eyes are towards thee.* When wicked men bring themselves into straits, they either despair of help, or their eyes are towards the creature for it. But when God brings his own people into straits, their eyes are towards him for help. The providence of God brought *Jehoshaphat* into those straits; and the providence of God brought him out of them, and gave him not only enlargement, but renown and glory: God can quickly recompence us for all the evils which he layes upon us, but sin cannot. Sin can wound, but it cannot heal; it casts into straits, but it cannot enlarge,

And sin brings not only wicked men, but even good men to straits, even to great straits. What was it that brought *David* into that condition (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) when he said, *I am in a great strait?* Was it not his sin? When he would needs be numbring the people, and pride himself in the multitude of that Nation which he governed, and commanded; this humbled him into a grievous strait. And what was his strait? It was a hard election that God put him upon, whether he would chuse Pestilence, or Famine, or Sword; one of those three he must; such a liberty of chusing is a sad restraint. Our wills are then bound, when they have a freedom to make such a choice. Thus *David* was hampered, when he went beyond his line. Sin will bring Saints to straits, much more will it bring wicked men to straits.

God sometimes brings his own people to straits when they sin, that he may keep them from further sins: (*Hos.* 2. 6.) *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall* (that is, I will bring thee to straits) *that thou shalt not find a path.* God brought them into the straits of affliction, that they might not wander into straits by transgression. It is better to be straitened with a hedge of Gods making, then with a hedge of our own making. The care of God makes a hedge to keep us from sin. Our sin makes a hedge (not as the efficient, but as the procuring cause) to curb our carelessness. The Word of God is one hedge, his Rods are another. It is best to be kept within bounds by the former; but 'tis well if the latter keep us in. *The steps of his strength shall be straitened.*

Secondly,

Secondly, Note, *Wicked men shall be straitened when they are in their strength, and judge themselves furthest off from straits.*

To have said he shall be straitened when he is weak, when he is low, and poor, had not been much: but here he speaks of God, acting like God, against wicked men; when they are in their strength, and flourish, and verdure, and greenness, then they shall wither; when they think they have most room, and are at greatest liberty, both in their estates and spirits, then they shall find themselves shut up (as it were) in prison. There is a Text (*Job* 20.22.) which is very clear to this sence, I will but name it here, because it will come shortly to a fuller handling, where *Zophar* speaking of the Hypocrite, saith, *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits*; that's an amazing expression. Here he saith, *The steps of his strength shall be straitened*; that's very much: but there, *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.* See the difference between the Saints and wicked men; between upright-hearted godly men, and wicked false-hearted Hypocrites. *Paul* saith (in a higher sence, 2 *Cor.* 12.) *When I am weak, then am I strong.* But when a wicked man is strong, then he is weak; and when he walks at large, then he is in straits; that is, weakness surprises him in his strength; and straits attend his greatest enlargements. *The steps of his strength shall be straitened.*

Thirdly, Note briefly this, *There is no strength of the creature that can protect it from the wrath, or from the judgment of God.*

Let him step as strongly as he will, if he be against God, God can straiten him quickly: As he saith of *Sennacherib*, *I will put my hook in his nose* (2 *Kings* 19.28.) He thinks himself a Leviathan, *Who* (as he is described *Chap.* 41.27.) *esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood, darts are counted as stubble, he laugheth at the shaking of the spear.* One would think then that there is no putting of a hook into the nose of this mighty Monster, no drawing him up with an Angle; yet the Lord will put a hook in the nose of Leviathan, and pull him up with a single hair, as if he were but a Sprat: The Leviathans, the Elephants, the Lyons, are as nothing before *Jehovah*. *Can thine heart endure? or can thine hands be strong in the dayes that I shall deal with thee?* saith the Lord to *Jerusalem* (*Ezek.* 22. 14.) No, they cannot. For then *the Dukes of* Edom *shall be amazed, the mighty men of* Moab *trembling shall take hold upon them*, &c. *Exod.* 15. 15. *Hannah* concludes in her Song (1 Sam. 2.) *By strength no man shall prevail*; man cannot prevail over other men by strength, much less shall man deliver himself by strength from the hand of God. How great soever the single or united strength of the creature is, if it be strength against God, a strength acting against the design of God for his people; fear not, the steps of that strength shall be straitened. It is no matter what the strength of any creature is, if the strong God be with us, he can quickly straiten it, *The steps of his strength shall be straitened.*

And his own counsels shall cast him down.

There are two things by which man supports himself, two pillars, like the two pillars spoken of in *Solomon's* Temple, *Jachin* and *Boaz*, which signified, *He shall establish and strength.* There are two pillars, of Nations and Persons; First, Power; Secondly, Policy or Counsel. Counsel is as much a mans strength as his strength is. Now that it might appear, that a wicked man shall have all his props pulled away, and all his pillars thrown down: As 'twas shewed in the former part of the Verse, that his strength shall not help him, so here, 'tis shewed that his craft and counsel shall not. And this is spoken not barely, but with an aggravation: For first, That his counsel shall not help him, is bad enough; but *His counsel shall cast him down*, and that is far worse: Secondly, It had been a sore affliction to have said of his counsel, as he said of his strength, it shall be straitened, or overthrown, but he saith that which is far more afflictive, his counsel shall overthrow him, *His counsels shall cast him down.* Thirdly, It had been a great judgment to have said, his counsel shall be cast down; but it is a far greater to say, *His counsel shall cast him down.* There is no difficulty in these words; therefore I will but give you two or three Notes upon them.

First learn, *The vanity of all helps without God.*

Strength cannot prevail, and counsel shall not. Gods counsel cannot be thrown down, and therefore it will hold us up from falling. But that counsel (and such is the best of mens) which may be thrown down it self, can never keep us from falling. *As riches profit not in the day of wrath* (Prov. 11.4.) so wisdom and wit shall not prevail in the day of wrath. Though you could give counsels as deep as Hell, yet they cannot protect you from a Hell of troubles here, or a Hell of torment after. There is no trusting to any thing without God, if these two pillars be pulled away, strength and counsel, upon what basis shall a man establish himself.

Again, Here is not only shewed the inability of counsels to support a man; but here is shewed the activity of counsels against a man, his counsels shall cast him down.

Hence Observe, *God turns the counsels and projects of wicked men upon their own heads, or against themselves.*

This shews the extream vanity of humane policy, as separated from holy Policy, or from the Wisdom which is from above; seeing it is not only unable to help us, but it doth us hurt. As that which shews the extream wickedness of mans heart by nature, is this, that it is not only unable to do good; but it is vehemently active against good, and sets it self against the whole Law of God, and would overthow it, or cast it down. Nature doth not only pull her hand from the work of God, but puts out her hand to resist it. So that which shews the extream vanity of the counsels of men is this, that they are not only weak to help them, but strong to ruine them. The Psalmist tells us (*Psal.* 64. 8.) *God shall shoot at them with his Arrow suddenly, so they shall make their own tongues to fall upon themselves; all they that see them shall flee away:* (A Text formerly toucht at, yet consider it again) How doth a mans tongue fall upon himself? Or if it doth, what hurt is there in that? What weight is in a mans tongue? It is a little piece of flesh, there is not a bone in it; and I am sure it can break no bones where it falls. The tongue is here taken tropically for words spoken, or counsels given by the tongue. So that when he saith, *Their tongues shall fall*, his meaning is, their counsels shall fall upon themselves, and be their fall. It is an old *Adage*, *Evil counsel is worst to the counsellor.* It may do hurt to those against whom it is given; but it shall certainly do them hurt by whom it is given: (*Psal.* 7. 15.) *He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made; his mischief shall return upon his own head.* The making of a pit, is only the laying of plots, or the setting of designs to do mischief; these shall be most mischievous to the designers. (*Psal.* 9. 17.) *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executes:* That is, It appears God hath done it, he doth it so exactly: Why? He gives instance in the latter end of the Verse, *The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands:* That is, His own counsels shall cast him down. (*Prov.* 26. 27.) *Who so diggeth a pit, shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it shall return upon him.* Doth every man fall into the pit that he digs? Is every man bruised with the stone that he rolls? No; There may be just cause to dig pits. The meaning is, he that digs a pit to catch others. But shall every one that digs a pit to catch others, fall into it? I think not so neither. We may as lawfully dig pits, that is, set counsels to take some men, as we may dig pits to take wild Beasts, Foxes and Wolves, or any hurtful Creature that would annoy mankind. But the wicked man, who digs a pit for the innocent, who prepares mischief for those that have done him no wrong, shall fall into the pit himself. *And he that rolls a stone:* That is, He that would roul a stone upon a just man (for you may roul a stone upon a wicked man, and bring the wheel over him; but he that rouls a stone, or that moves every stone to bring some evil upon a righteous person, this man) shall feel the stone returning upon him; that is, his own counsel shall cast him down.

Consilium malum consultori pessimum.

Some of the Ancients have observed from the phrase of

touling

had built a house, or had a house built) other hands had pluckt it down over her head, but it is far greater misery when a woman shall be so foolish as to pluck the house down upon her own head; this is the judgment that God leaves many worldly wise men and Polititians to, that when they have plotted a great while to pull the house upon the heads of others, it falls upon their own heads; and when they have prepared snares, set their nets, and are waiting to catch their prey, they are ensnared, and their *own feet cast themselves into the net.*

שבב *significat quicquid in modum retis perplexum & implicatum est.*

And he walketh upon a snare.

That's the second Branch: Mr. *Broughton* renders, *He walketh upon the platted grin.* The sence is near the same with the first, and therefore I shall but touch it. The former word noted a more violent and sudden action, *He is cast*; here, *He walketh*: Walking is an ordinary pace, and implyes an ordinary course of life. Now when it is said, *He walks upon a snare*, it shews, that as (in the former clause) a wicked man often falls suddenly and violently into danger; so his whole life is a life of danger; the wicked man lives, but he lives miserably, he lives in the midst of a snare. Some interpret this as a proverbial speech; *To walk upon a snare*, is like that of walking upon burning coals, or upon fire, both are proverbial, for extremity of danger.

Est proverbiale periculi, sicut ambulare super prunas. Drus.

Hence Observe, *That an ungodly man is oft-times secure, but never safe.*

Is he safe that walks on snares? whose ordinary course is upon the borders of death? Such is the walk, and the way of an ungodly man; while he would avoid, he falls into the pit; when he thinks himself most sure, then is he nearest confusion; *He walks upon a snare.* Indeed, every thing that a wicked man hath, or that he sets himself about, is a snare unto him.

First, His Table is a snare; when he comes to his Table, and there finds comfortable provision, the fat and the sweet upon it, then he rejoyceth in his portion, and saith, Soul take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry; yet the curse overtakes him there, *His Table is made a snare, and that which should be for his good, is to him an occasion of falling* (*Psal.* 69. 22.) It is a sore evil, when there is no bread upon the Table; but when a Table full of bread is a snare and a famine to us, that is far worse.

Secondly, His riches are a snare to him: That which a rich man counts his strong Tower, becomes his strong Prison. (1 *Tim.* 6. 9.) *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare* (his riches are a snare, a greater snare then poverty) *and into many foolish hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

Thirdly, His wit, parts, and learning, are a snare, for which he is so much admired in the World; O he is a very witty man, a wise man, a man of a deep reach, a *notable head-piece*, what a nimble, what an eloquent tongue hath he? See how gracefully he expresses himself; yet all this is a snare; it had been better for him if he had been a fool, or dumb, then to have had all that wit, those great abilities, considering how he hath imployed them. A carnal man presumes to ensnare all the World with his wit and words, and these are often a snare for others, but chiefly for himself.

Fourthly, All his Relations, his Wife, Children, Friends, all the comforts that he hath in the World are snares to him.

Fifthly, Religion, so far as he professeth it (a wicked man may make profession of Religion (I say) his very Religion) is a snare: Religion as the World bears, and as many conceive, the notation of it, hath its name (*a religando*) from binding; Religion is a bond, it should be a bond to all men, but it is a snare to wicked men; it should be a bond to tye them fast to God, to tye them to duties, to tye and hold them in the way of holiness; but it is only a snare bond to wicked men; their outward profession causeth them to flatter themselves in their inward corruption, and they take to themselves by so much the more liberty in evil, by how much they give up themselves the more to a kind of bondage in doing good.

Sixthly, and lastly, Which is more then all, *Christ is a snare to a wicked man*; when he hath Christ in his mouth, when he talks of Christ, he doth but walk upon a snare. *If the Son make us free, we are free indeed*; but none are more really in bondage, then they who are but seemingly freed by the Son. *To those that believe, Christ is precious; but to the unbelievers and disobedient, he is a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, that they may stumble and fall, and be broken* (1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.) What a woful condition are such in, who not only cast themselves into a net, into troubles and vexations, but whose highest injoyments, temporal and spiritual, their profession of Religion, yea, their pretensions to Christ himself, are a continual *walking upon a snare.*

Bildad proceeds yet further in the explication of this Allegory.

Verse 9. **The grin shall take him by the heel; and the robber shall prevail against him.**

We saw the wicked man catcht in his own snare before; now here is a snare laid for him: His overthrow is discovered two wayes in this ninth Verse.

First, A secret evil is set for him; *The grin shall take him by the heel.*

Secondly, Open violence shall ruine him; *And the robber shall prevail against him.*

אחם *est apprehendere & apprehensum firmiter tenere.*

The grin shall take him.] The word signifies not only to take, but to hold that which is taken, and to hold it so as not to let it go, to hold it firm and strongly, to keep in safe custody. As the Spouse speaks of Christ (*Cant.* 3. 4.) *I caught him, and I would not let him go.* It is this word; now as the soul putting forth faith upon Christ, doth not only take him and lay hold upon him, but layes hold so, as not to let him go, sticking close, and cleaving to him. Strong faith doth this, such as her faith was when she said, *I caught him, and held him, and would not let him go:* so evil doth not only take, but hold the wicked fast, so fast, that it will not let them go; that's the meaning of the word.

The grin shall take him by the heel.] Before he spake of a net, and of a snare, now of a grin. Here are all sorts of hunting, and fowling instruments heaped together for the compleating and furnishing of this Allegory. Here we have *the grin.*

פח *laqueus à* פוח *flavit, perflavit, sibilavit.*

The Original root signifies to blow or puff with the breath; so the word is us'd (*Prov.* 29. 8.) *Scornful men bring a City into a snare*; so we translate; it is the word which is here translated *grin*; and we put in the Margin of our Bibles opposite to those words, *Bring a City into a snare*, or, *Set a City on fire*; because proud scornful men will not give over contentious speaking, till they blow the spark into a flame, and so set a whole City, yea, Kingdom on fire; or as some render it, till *they blow it up*, as a House or Tower is blown up by the violence of Gun-powder. That City and State is indeed brought into a snare, which is thus blown up or set on fire by the unquiet breathings and vexings of scornful men.

Exsufflant urbem.

The word also signifies to *whistle softly*, because Fowlers and Hunters use to draw the prey into the danger of the grin by a kind of soft musical whistle. And indeed every man is brought into the grin or snare by a *whistle*; that is, by some enticing fallacious voice, tempting him to sin. And hence the same word signifies both.

Sibilo utuntur Aucupes.

The grin shall take him by the heel.] The heel is taken four wayes in Scripture.

First, For the whole body; as in the third of *Genesis*, and the sixteenth verse, *Thou shalt bruise his heel:* The Serpent bruised the whole body of Christ, or (as some understand the heel in that Text) the whole humanity of Christ, which is but as the heel to his divinity: The divine nature being far more excellent then the humane, which alone suffered. For though he suffered who had two natures, yet but one did suffer.

Secondly, The heel is taken properly and strictly for the lowest part of the body; Jacob *took his Brother by the heel* (Gen. 25. 26.) Thus here. For a grin is usually set to catch by the heel, not by the head, or other members of the body.

Thirdly, The heel is put tropically for the actions and motions of this life, (*Psal.* 49. 5.) *Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquities of my* [*heel*] *shall compass me about?* That is, When my sin, or failings in what

what I have done, come to my remembrance, or are chastened upon me; every mans heel hath some iniquity. As we shall have some dirt cleaving to our heels while we walk in a dirty world; so there is some dirt, some defilement, upon all our actions, which we may call, *The iniquity of our heel.*

Fourthly, In a tropical sence, the heel signifies the latter part of a mans life, or old age; so some will needs understand it here; as if the sence were thus, Though the wicked man prosper a great while, the first, the fore-part of his life, yet towards the heel of his life, that is, the latter end of his life, before he come to his grave, he shall be catcht, some mischief shall fall upon him, or he shall fall into mischief; he may prosper a great while, but the grin shall catch him by the heel, it will have him towards the end of his life. But I pass that.

And the Robber shall prevail against him.] Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *The Savage shall lay hold on him:* The word which we translate *Robber*, signifies any wild barbarous sort of men, who live out of rule and order; properly a man that lets his hair grow disorderly, because Robbers and violent persons use to let their hair grow so, either to disguise themselves, or terrifie others. Some by the *Robber*, understand the poor; others, his rich Creditors; we, in pursuance of the Allegory, may call the *Robber* the *Hunter*, or the *Wood-man*, who sets the grin, and layes the snare, this man, this cunning Hunter prevails against him. When the Hunter hath set his grin for the Bird or Beast, as soon as they are caught, he comes in and prevails upon them. The grin doth not kill, but hold fast till the Hunter comes. *The grin shall take him by the heel, and the Hunter, or Robber, shall prevail over him.* So we translate the word (*Job* 5. 5.)

צמם *Prædo, latro quod comam alat.*

Constringens prævalet ei horridus: nimirum venator sive auceps. Jun.

Further, the word signifies also *a thirsty one*; hence the Vulgar translates in the abstract, *Thirst shall prevail, or wax hot upon him*, putting the abstract for the concrete, thirst for the thirsty one, *Thirst shall prevail against him*; which is thus explained, The wicked man is caught by the grin or toyl, and there he vexeth himself till he is weary and thirsty; as Beasts that are caught in a toyl, vex themselves, and labour till they pant and breath for life, and are very thirsty: Thus the wicked man shall be caught in a grin, wherewith striving to get loose, he becomes the more troubled: It comes near the same sence in general, which soever of these we take, namely, that the wicked man, as he runs into the snare, so there he shall perish; he shall be held fast till the Hunter makes an end of him, and he that sets the snare destroyes him. Which falls in with the former interpretation, that the Lord in justice against wicked men, orders both the grin to catch, and the Hunter, or Robber, to prevail.

Exardescet contra eum sitis. Vulg.

Verse 10. **The snare is laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.**

Here are two words of a different root; for though we translate *snare*, as in the former Verse, yet the Original varies; our language is not copious enough for the Hebrew in this particular. The word which here we translate a *snare*, signifies properly a cord, or rope, and it comes very near in sound to our *English* word, *Cable*, which is a great rope, because ropes and cords straiten and hold fast as a snare doth. The word is metaphorically applyed to cruel Creditors, who will be sure to tye their Debtors fast as with a cord, that they shall not get loose: It signifies also a pledge, or an earnest; because that tyes us to performance.

חבל *Funis à stringendo seu ligando.*

The other word which we translate *a trap*, is derived from a root which signifies to catch, to snap suddenly; *The trap is laid in the way*; that's another engine by which hurtful Creatures are taken by Hunters. Here are variety of expressions, all tending to the same thing. Read the like congregating of these words, *Psal.* 140. 5. *Isa.* 24. 17, 18.

מלברח *à capiendo* לכד *enim capere denotat. Omnia quæ ad rete pertinent hic cõgeruntur, & per elegantem expositionem eadem fere res pluribus sententiis amplificatur.* Pined.

The trap is laid for him in the way.] That is, it is set cunningly, closely, and secretly, it is hid for him; so some translate.

And how is it hid?

It is a hidden trap two wayes.

First, By the cunning skill of him that layes it: He layes it with care; and that it may not be discovered, he covers it with leaves, or shadows it with boughs.

Secondly, It may be said to be hidden in reference to their blindness who are taken with it: To a blind man all dangers are hidden dangers; they are laid close though they be laid open; especially when there is a Judiciary blindness upon men; that is, when God blinds them on purpose that they may fall into the net and the snare. *Solomon* tells us, (*Prov.* 1. 17.) *In vain is the net spread in the sight of any Bird*; therefore snares and traps are laid in secret; for, *In vain is the net spread in the sight of any Bird.* Which may be taken two wayes.

First, We may refer the word, *in vain*, to the Bird; as if he had said, It will not help the Bird, or cause the Bird to withdraw from the danger, though the net be spread in his very sight. The Bird is so hungry after the Corn strowed by the net, that though you lay the net in his sight, yet it is in vain, the Bird will come and venture for the Corn: We may exemplifie it thus, That when men are given up to any lust, it is in vain that the net is spread in their very eye; though they see the danger of sin, and be told of it; though it be said, if you go there, you perish; if you go in such a way, you will be damn'd and undone; though the net be laid in their very eye, yet it is in vain, for they see the bait, and they must go forwards, pleasure and profit, upon which lust is set, carries them on against all counsel and perswasion. Thus it is in vain to such silly birds, they get no good by it, they will not be warned, though the net be spread in their very eye, (*Isa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see it:* So it is in this case, these fools will not see what they do see; they are so blinded with somewhat that sin promiseth, that though they be told of the danger, they will not take notice of the danger. When man is departed from God, who is light, he sees no danger, no evil, though he see it. He hath no spiritual, yea, no rational sight of that, of which he cannot but have a sensitive sight. He falls into the snare which he sees, yet (which aggravates his misery) he knows not that he is fallen.

But rather secondly, *In vain is the net spread in the sight of any Fowl:* That is, It is in vain for the Fowler; for if the Bird see the net, he will hardly come into it; therefore it is that Fowlers make it a great part of their art to keep the net and snare secret. And *Solomon* intimates, that if any man hearing of the danger, withdraw not, he is more a fool then a Bird, for he will not come into a seen danger. Who can pity those who are taken in a trap which they saw, and yet would not avoid: They who perish upon these terms, seem to be in love with perishing. *The trap is laid for him in the way.*

From all laid together, the *net*, the *snare*, the *grin*, the *trap*, and the snare a second time, all prepared for the wicked man,

Observe, First, *Wicked men are catcht at unawares.*

A trap, a snare, a net, note surprisal: These are like Stratagems or Ambuskadoes in war. It is one thing to meet an enemy in the open field, and it is another thing to lye in ambush and use stratagems to take him. *Snares take unawares. Solomon* (*Eccles.* 9. 12.) speaks of the misery of man, *Man knows not his time: as the Fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the Birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them*; the snare takes suddenly, it gives no warning, there is no prevention, no fence against it.

Secondly, Observe, *Wicked men are usually taken when their hopes are highest, when they think themselves in the very enjoyment of their own desires, and the possession of the good they have a long time look't for, then God takes them away, and destroyes them.*

The ground of this Observation is, because snares, grins, and traps are baited with meat or some thing that is pleasing to the Creature: To be catcht in a trap, is to be catcht with a pleasant morsel. The Bird looks to be well fed, else he would not be ensnared; he seeks for meat where he finds a trap. As the table of some wicked men becomes their snare; so many run into a snare while they they think they are coming to a full and well-furnished table. Hence it is, that when wicked men are neareſt their hopes, then good men may be furtheſt from fears; for their hopes, or the things that they hope for, are but as baits

Non est quod nos terreant improborum insolentes minæ; cum enim tuta omnia sibi pollicentur & aperto victu jamjam prædam videntur, tum capiuntur, &c. Merl.

to entice them into a snare; they are catching at the bait, and think nothing of the snare. *When they shall say, peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them* (1 Thes. 5. 3.) *Upon the wicked he shall rain snares* (Psal. 11. 6.) When it rains we expect plenty, the Clouds usually drop fatness. The wicked mans cloud drops leanness, and rains a shower of snares upon his head. Thus when men are lifted up with hopes of great worldly enjoyments, when they say the day is their own, they are but running into the net, and the grin will catch them. True Scripture-hopes never make us ashamed; but pure Creature-hopes ever leave us disappointed, and while they offer us a bait, leave us in the trap.

Thirdly, Note, *When wicked men are once catcht, they cannot deliver themselves.*

Snares are set for such Creatures as cannot easily be taken, they are so swift of wing, or foot, that you must take them at an advantage, or you cannot take them; but the wings of the Fowl, and the strength of the Beast, avail them not, when the trap hath taken them. Wicked men have usually great abilities, they are swift of foot, and nimble of wing; it is hard to take them, their power and policy are their security; but when the Lord brings them into a snare, neither wings, nor feet, neither strength, nor swiftness, neither wit, nor greatness shall be able to deliver them. *I* (saith the Lord, *Amos* 2. 9.) *destroyed the* Amorite, *whose height was like the Cedars, and he was strong as the Oaks, yet I destroyed his fruits from above, and his roots from beneath.*

Fourthly, Observe, *A wicked man when he is taken in a judgment, the more he stirs to deliver himself, the more he is intangled.*

Thus 'tis with Birds or Beasts taken in a net or a toyl: Wicked men are *as a wild Bull in a net* (Isa. 51. 20.) they tumble and toss to get out, but their bands are made the stronger, by their stirring, and their attempts to escape danger, engage them faster in it.

Fifthly, Grins, and snares, and traps are all artificial, Nature doth not set them, the skill and industry of man sets and layes them.

Hence Observe, *God prepares instruments to take wicked men with.*

He hath his Hunters, and his Fowlers, he hath men skilful to destroy all sorts of wild Beasts, who rise up to annoy his people. Some men are wild beasts, tearing and spoiling all that come within their reach, they are Wolves and Foxes, ravenous Birds and Vultures; for these the Lord hath Hunters, and Fowlers, that can set traps, and grins, and spread nets to take them, they have an art in it. The Prophet speaks to this allusion, (*Jer.* 16. 16.) *Behold, I will send for many Fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after I will send for many Hunters, and they shall hunt them from every Mountain, and out of the holes of the Rocks.* Nimrod *was a mighty Hunter before the Lord*: The Lord had him in his eye, or he did not fear to hunt and oppress in the eye of the Lord (*Gen.* 10. 9.) The Lord hath his Hunters, and his Fishers too; the true Ministers of Christ are Fishers of men; and the false Prophet was called, *A snare of a Fowler in all his ways, Hos.* 9. 8. As God hath Fishers to catch the souls of men for good; so he hath Fishers to catch the bodies and powers of men for their destruction and hurt, when they use their power to the hurt of his. He hath all sorts of Crafts-men at his call. In the first of *Zachary* (*Ver.* 18, 20.) there are *four Carpenters* (some read *Smiths*) What to do? *To break the horns*: That is, The Powers that vexed the Saints, that pushed *Judah* and *Israel*. When Tyrants put forth their horns, God gives commission to his Carpenters and Smiths to come with Hammers. And when men begin to play the Foxes and the Wolves among his Sheep, he sends his Hunters, with nets, and snares, and traps to spoil these spoilers.

Sixthly, Observe from the accumulation or heap of words here used, nets, and snares, and grins, and cords, and traps, why all these? Do they not intimate to us,

That, *God hath many wayes, variety of wayes, to catch and take evil men with?*

If the net should not take, the snare shall; if not that, the grin shall; if not the grin, the cord shall; if not that, the trap shall: It is threatened in the Prophet, *He that flyes from the Lyon, the Bear shall take him; he that flyes from the Bear, a Viper shall sting him.* His avoiding of one danger shall be his falling into another; and while he thinks to put-run his trouble, he runs into it. As God hath infinite wayes to do his people good (he hath more wayes of blessing and delivering us then one; though he can make any one way do it, yet he hath variety.) And as the Lord pardons sin abundantly (*Isa.* 55. 7.) or multiplies to pardon, that is, he pardons more then one sin, and pardons more then one time; he multiplies acts of pardon. So the Lord hath many wayes to vex and afflict wicked men; he hath variety of judgments, a treasury, a magazine stored with them: He can set up ingine after ingine, instrument after instrument, if one fail, another shall fulfil all his pleasure. Sword, famine, pestilence, poverty, captivity, are all at his command: He can punish abundantly, or multiply to punish; he can multiply punishments both of a new kind, and of the same kind. He can add a snare to a net, a trap to a snare, a grin to a trap, or he can set up more nets, more snares, *&c.* till all the wild Beasts and ravenous Birds be taken.

Retis, cassis, laquei funiculi, decipulæ nominibus utitur ut doceat innumeras esse in manu dei rationes quibus homines suæ ferocitate ac rapacitate aliis molestos capiat, & captos laceret. Merl.

Lastly, Observe, *Wicked men are to be numbred amongst wild and hurtful creatures.*

I note this from the allusion of hunting and fowling; they are either wild or hurtful creatures for whom we set snares and traps; no man sets a snare to take a *Sheep*, or a grin to take a *Chicken*. Beasts and Fowls that will not come to hand, or that prey upon those which come to hand, we destroy with nets and traps. God would have us see what wicked men are in the provision he makes to take them; they are of a wild nature, they are such as care not for community, all their care is for themselves alone. Such is the nature of all wild and savage creatures, they live to themselves, they make not a common stock, nor look to the publick, but every one is for himself. (*Nah.* 2. 12.) They are called Lyons, *Who tear in pieces enough for their Whelps, and strangle for their Lyonesses, and fill their holes with prey, and their dens with raven:* And that's all the care they take; just enough for their own Wives and Children, who are there called their Whelps and Lyonesses; just enough to fill their own holes or houses, let others be as empty as they will, what's that to them. Let the publick shift for it self. Such possibly will pretend the Commonwealth, but they intend only their private wealth, or the publick no further then themselves are concerned in it, or may gain by it. Is it not just that these men should be brought into a snare, that every one should set up a trap, and use means to catch them. For as he is a good Commonwealths-man that feeds the Sheep, and takes care of Oxen; so he is a good Commonwealths-man too, that sets a snare for Foxes, and destroyes the Wolf. As in a spiritual reference it is a part of our duty to take the Foxes, as well as to feed the Sheep; so also in reference to civils. They who are like wild *natural brute beasts*, of a savage and hurtful quality, are as the Apostle *Peter* speaks (2 *Epist.* 2. 12.) *made to be taken and destroyed.* God hath *raised them up* (as he saith of *Pharaoh*) *even for this same purpose, that he might shew his power in them.*

Thus far *Bildad* describes the wicked mans fall, under the Allegory of Hunters and Fowlers, with their snares, traps, cords, and grins.

VERS. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall drive him to his feet.
His strength shall be hunger-bitten; and destruction shall be ready at his side.
It shall devour the strength of his skin, even the first-born of death shall devour his strength.
His confidence shall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, and it shall bring him to the King of terrors.
It shall dwell in his tabernacle, because it is none of his: brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

THis Context contains the third Allegory, under which *Bildad* shadows out the miserable state of a wicked man,

man, which he doth with a very tragical stile, in allusion unto a proceeding at Law, as divers Interpreters state the intendment of these words. And this is pursued and set forth gradually three wayes.

Allegoria ab exemplo forensi reorum, qui gravissimis criminibus tenentur. Jun.

First, By those perplexities, griefs, and gripings which follow the wicked while they live (*Vers.* 11, 12.)

Secondly, By the torments of their dissolution, (*ver.* 13, 14.) where we have the *first-born of death*, and the *King of terrors*, to whom the man is brought to receive his doom.

Thirdly, From that wrath and vengeance which is poured out, not only upon their persons, but upon their estates, houses and families, when they are dead, and taken out of the world, *Ver.* 15. *It shall dwell in his tabernacle* (when he shall be cast out of his dwelling, and) *brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.*

That I may not interrupt the opening of these words in making out the Allegory upon every passage, I shall shew it briefly upon the whole in five particulars.

First, A wicked man is here compared to a notorious Malefactor, whose crimes render him as obnoxious to the Laws of man, and the severest sentence of a bitter death.

Terrores sunt quasi apparitores & lictores regis cujus meminit (v. 14.) Jun.

Secondly, The terrors and distractions spoken of in the eleventh and twelfth Verses, are as the Sergeants and Officers of the Court, who prosecute Offenders, to arrest or apprehend them, and so to bring them to Justice.

Thirdly, The troubles which this wicked man is cast into, shadow out the smart upon his body, fines and confiscations upon his estate, which in legal proceedings are inflicted upon Offenders.

Fourthly, Death it self, which is the chief and sum of all punishments, is here compared to a dreadful King, or to *a King of terrors*, who is as the Judge before whom this Offender is brought for his tryal, and final sentence.

Fifthly, The abiding of evil upon his Tabernacle, and the pouring out of destruction, expressed by *brimstone scattered upon his habitation*, is an allusion to that part of the Judgment which is pronounced upon Malefactors, whose houses are pull'd down, when themselves are put to death, and their dwelling places made for ever inhabitable. *Nettles shall possess their pleasant places, thorns shall be in their tabernacles* (Hos. 9. 6.) The place that harbour'd such wretches in former times shall be unfit for man to dwell in; only wild beasts, *The Owl and Schrich-owl shall rest there, and find for themselves a place of rest* (Isa. 34. 14, 15.) for, *Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.*

In all this *Bildad* secretly strikes through the sides of innocent *Job*; he is the mark at which his parable aims. *Bildad* had heard *Job* complain; First, Of terrors (*Chap.* 6. 4. & 7. 14.) and now he leaves them as his portion. Secondly, He had heard him complaining of spoiling and desolation (*Chap.* 16. 7, 11.) and now he tells him of destruction at his side, and of a desolate Tabernacle. Thirdly, He had heard him complaining of pains and dolor upon his body (*Chap.* 9. 17, 18. & 10. 16, 17. & 13. 25, 26. & 16. 13, 14.) and now he tells him, *That the strength of his skin shall be devoured.* Fourthly, He had heard *Job* speaking of himself as a dying man, as a man already arrested by death, as a man for whom the graves were ready, and he saying to corruption, *Thou art my father, &c.* and here he tells him of the *first-born of death*, and of the *King of terrors.*

From all which *Bildad* seems to argue the matter thus against him in the present Allegory.

Only wicked men are terrified and tormented with fears of destruction, with the killing thoughts of the first-born of death, with the dreadful apparitions of the King of terrors.
But thus it is with thee by thy own confession.
Therefore thou art a wicked man, thou art an hypocrite, and unto thee of right all these evils do belong.

So much of the Allegory in general.

I shall now open the terms and parts of it distinctly.

Verse 11. **Terrors shall make him afraid on every side.**

The word which we translate **Terrors**, signifies extream terrors, such as put a man out of his wits, or make him not himself: Thus it is said (1 *Sam.* 16. 4.) concerning *Saul*, that *The Spirit of the Lord went from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled or terrified him.*

There is a twofold terror:

There is a terror from without, and a terror from within.

Terror from without, is the evil which we feel; the terror from within, is the evil which we suspect or fear.

The Text is chiefly to be understood of the latter sort of terrors, *Terrors shall make him afraid*: Though he be full of outward trouble, yet inward trouble shall be most troublesom and vexatious. The deadly arrow shall dwell in his side, and the sorrows of death shall take hold of him, before death comes near him. *He dyes alwayes, that lives alwayes in the fear of death.*

These terrors are conceiv'd by some to be nothing else but the afflictions, twitches, and stings of Conscience, which Heathen Poets call *Furies*: These they fancied continually hurrying and vexing notorious offenders, bloody and treacherous men. Such they supposed possest with Furies, which were nothing else but disquietments of Conscience, when guilt rising up, looked gastly upon them, and stared them in the face.

Nos generaliter quoscunque terrores intelligimus etsi magna ex parte illi per Satanã suscitentur. Merc. *Terrores sunt Dæmones*, Rab. Sel.

Others interpret these *terrors* of Devils, or evil Spirits; *Terrors shall make him afraid*: That is, evil spirits terrifie him. This differs little from the former; for he may truly be said to be hurried and vexed with Devils, who is terrified with his own evil Conscience: That Conscience which hath nothing of God in it, hath much of the Devil in it, and is an open Court for evil Spirits.

Yet we may further distinguish of three sorts of terrors.

First, There are terrors from God, and these the Saints, the best on earth may be filled with. (*Psal.* 88. 15.) *Heman* complains, *From my youth up, while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted. Thy terrors*, that is, the terrors which thou (O God) sendest or inflictest.

Secondly, There are also the terrors of Satan: As God sets himself against his people; so he lets Satan loose upon them, who can easily dart terrors into their spirits; as God shoots in his poysoned Arrows, so doth the Devil too; God doth it as a Judge, the Devil as an Executioner.

Thirdly, There are terrors of Conscience; Conscience performs many parts in man: First, Conscience acts the part of an Observer, or Watcher: Secondly, Conscience acts the part of a Witness, and brings evidence against us; Thirdly, Conscience acts the part of a Judge, and pronounceth sentence: Fourthly, Conscience doth the office of a Tormentor; Conscience it self can punish those, whom it adjudges to punishment: Conscience gives deeper wounds then Care, and may well be compared to the Vulture, which Heathens feigned eating out the heart or liver.

All these terrors make wicked men afraid: God terrifies some immediately; others are terrified by Satan; and a third sort by the gripes and convulsions of their own Consciences. Or we may joyn all together, God awakens Conscience, and gives Satan liberty to terrifie sinful men.

Hence Observe, *A wicked man is subject to continual terrors.*

Terror doth not alwayes seize upon him, but it alwayes may; there is no keeping off terrors, unless sin be taken off; unpardoned sin pursues with fear; guilt and terror are as the shadow and the body: as by the shining of the Sun, the body casts a shadow; so by the darkness of sin guilt causeth terror.

There is a threefold terror upon a wicked man.

First, There is a terror rising from the evil which he actually feels; whilst he is pained, he is afraid, and is jealous that his present sufferings are but the earnest of those which are to come, or but the fore-tasts of a fuller cup of sorrow.

Secondly, There is a terror from the evil which he really foresees; though at present he feels nothing, yet he foresees much; and while he is at ease, he doubts and suspects he shall not.

Thirdly, There is a terror where there is no real evil either felt or foreseen, but only imagined. The figments of the brain trouble as much as visible or sensible troubles; no fear is more terrible, then that which is a fear of nothing: Evils which are not, nor ever shall be, render our lives as burdensom, as those which are. Of such terror the Psalmist speaks (*Psal.* 53. 5.) *There were*

they in great fear; Where was that? In ſome place of great danger ſure, or in *the valley of the ſhadow of death*: The Pſalmiſt tells us; *There were they in great fear where no fear was.*

But can a wicked man be any place where no fear is?

I anſwer, Where ever he is there is a fear that he might fear; but he is often there, where there is no ſuch fear as he feareth; his uſual fear is no fear, or the thing which he fears is meerly a fancy, a ſhadow of fear; that which he fears he would not fear, did he but know what he feared; *There were there in great fear where no fear was. They ſhall fly* (ſaith the Scripture) *at the noiſe of the ſhaking of a leaf*; that is, they ſhall fear where no fear is: There's no hurt in the falling of a leaf, much leſs in the ſhaking of it: and therefore no real fear, or nothing to be feared.

Put theſe three together, and it muſt needs be that the life of a wicked man under ſin and guilt is ſubject to continual terror; what with the trouble he feels, and what with the trouble he really foreſees, and hath juſt cauſe to fear, and what with thoſe troubles that he fancies, *fearing where no fear is*, he muſt needs have a life full of terror; or, as the Text ſpeaks, *Terrors ſhall make him afraid on every ſide.*

Again, Conſider the miſerable ſtate of this wicked man is not deſcrib'd by outward evils, which vex the fleſh, and are grievous to ſence, as poverty, ſickneſs, pain, but by *terror*, which is an affliction upon the ſpirit.

Hence Obſerve, *That terrors are worſe then troubles; the fear of evil is more grievous then the feeling of it.*

The dread of an enemy is more killing then an enemy: The Lord aſſures *Iſrael* (*Exod.* 23. 28. and *Deut.* 7. 20.) *I will ſend Hornets before thee, which ſhall drive out the* Hivite, *the* Canaanite, *and the* Hittite *before thee.* Theſe Hornets may be taken properly; God who ſent an Army of Lice and Flyes to deſtroy *Egypt*, might much more uſe Hornets, which are a more terrible Creature, and have a more cruel ſting, to ſubdue the *Canaanites*: Yet the Hornets may be rather taken metaphorically, for the ſting and terror wherewith God did ſtrike the hearts of thoſe enemies; *I will ſend a Hornet before you*: That is, terrors. Which we find fulfill'd (*Joſh.* 24. 12.) *I ſent the Hornet before you, which drave them out from before you, even the two Kings of the* Amorites; *but not with thy ſword, nor with thy bow.* What theſe Hornets were is plain in the ſecond Chapter of *Joſhua*, verſe 11. where *Rahab* the Harlot made this acknowledgment, *That the fear of them was fallen upon the people of the Land, and that their hearts did melt becauſe of them.* Before ever *Iſrael* did ſtrike a ſtroke, they overcame; before ever the *Canaanites* ſaw the Hoſt of *Iſrael*, they fled before them. God ſent an Army of fears before the Army of the *Iſraelites*; *Your fear is fallen upon us.* Fear is a cruel Hornet, it quickly ſtings to death. It is ſaid (*Heſt.* 9. 2.) *The fear of the* Jews *fell upon all people*; fear overcame them firſt, and then the *Jews* overcame them, putting in execution the Kings commandment; *They laid hands on ſuch as ſought their hurt, and no man could withſtand them.* They who cannot withſtand the fear of an enemy, ſhall never be able to withſtand the enemy himſelf.

Now, as when a people are taken with the terror of an enemy, the enemy needs not take them; they are conquered without fighting, and beaten without a battel. So diſmaying fear of any kind, or from any other cauſe, doth the like; when that once takes hold upon the heart, 'tis no matter whether the evil it ſelf ever come in ſight. For as joy and comfort are better then thoſe things from which they reſult. *Paul* ſpeaking of thoſe dark times and places, when and where Goſpel-light had not ſhined, yet adds (*Acts* 14. 17.) That *God did not leave himſelf without witneſs, in that he did good, and gave us rain from Heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* Food is a great mercy, but gladneſs is a better. Some have been ſatisfied with gladneſs, who have not been fill'd with food (*Hab.* 3. 17.) but no man was ever ſatisfied with a fulneſs of food, while he was empty of gladneſs. *David* prayes, *Lord reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation* (Pſal. 51. 12.) The joy of ſalvation is more refreſhing then ſalvation; though a man be in the ſtate of ſalvation, yet if he have not the joy of it, what is ſalvation it ſelf to him? As we may have many outward temporal mercies, and yet not have the joy of them; ſo we may have ſpiritual and eternal mercies without that joy which is annexed to them. *David* had the ſalvation of God, his ſoul was in a ſafe ſtate, he was not fallen from Grace, nor out of the love of God, yet he wanted the joy of it. Now (I ſay) as the joy of ſalvation to our feeling, is better then ſalvation it ſelf, and the gladneſs we have with our food, then our food; ſo the terrors, affrightments, and amazements which come with any judgment, are more afflictive then the judgment; and God can ſeparate theſe two when he pleaſeth. For as God can give a man food, and no gladneſs at all, riches, and no comfort at all; ſo he can give trouble and no terror, affliction and no fear at all. Many a good man hath had abundance of the one, and not the leaſt touch of the other. But as trouble is the portion of a wicked man; ſo terrors uſually accompany his troubles, if they come not before his troubles.

Again, The words, *On every ſide*, are an alluſion to a beſieged City. As Chriſt threatens *Jeruſalem* (Luke 19. 43.) *The dayes ſhall come upon thee, that thy enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide*: Thou ſhalt not be able to eſcape any way, there ſhall be no path, no port open; ſo here, terrors ſhall make him afraid *on every ſide*, his ſoul ſhall be ſo ſtraitly beleagerd with armies of evils round about, that he ſhall not have the leaſt hope to make an eſcape. This is the height of the miſery of a wicked man. It is ill to have terror on any ſide; but to have terror on all ſides, how terrible is it? The Prophet *Jeremy* gives *Paſhur* that wicked falſe Prophet this doom (*Chap.* 20. 3.) *Thy name ſhall not be call'd Paſhur* (he would give him a new name, what was that?) *but Magor-miſſabib* (the word of the Text) *fear round about*; which way ſoever thou looke ſt, thou ſhalt ſee fear, or thou ſhalt have viſions of amazement round about thee.

Yea, A man that is under the guilt of ſin, hath fear not only round about him, but above, beneath, and within him; he hath terrors coming upon him from above; *The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs*; he hath terrors from beneath, Hell ſmoaks up wrath againſt him, and vomits conſuming fire to burn him up; he hath a ſpring of fear within, his own ſpirit is reſtleſs, and meditates terror every moment. Now he that hath terror falling from above, riſing from beneath, ſpringing from within, and begirting him round on every ſide, ſhall never want his belly-full, his heart-full of terror.

A Believer may have much terror upon him, and manifold terrors about him; but he is not beſet with terror on every ſide; he hath ever ſome paſſage, ſome way free; when many doors of hope are ſtopt, yet he ſees ſome open; or if none appear open, yet he hath hopes to ſee thoſe blocks and bars removed. At leaſt he hath courage to venture, though he hath but litte hope to ſpeed. When he is at worſt, he argues it as the Leapers did (*2 Kings* 7. 4.) *If we ſay, we will enter into the City, then the famine is in the City, and we ſhall dye there; and if we ſit ſtill here, we dye alſo.*

Thus many times a godly man is put to it, if I go ſuch a way, I ſhall dye, I ſee no hopes; or if ſuch a way, I ſhall be loſt too, I ſee no hopes. But though death waited upon theſe two propoſals of the Leapers, yet then they had a third which gave them ſome glimmering beams of light, ſome remote appearances of life. *Now therefore come and let us fall unto the hoſt of the* Syrians, *if they ſave us alive we ſhall live; and if they kill us, we ſhall but dye.* As if they ſhould have ſaid, We cannot make an abſolute concluſion either for or againſt our ſelves, if we go out to the *Syrians*; come, we will try and put it to a venture, at the worſt we can but dye, and 'tis poſſible, that we ſhall live.

Thus at the worſt, a Believer hath ſomething, upon which he can pitch, if not with a probality, yet with a poſſibility of eſcape and deliverance. And if we ſhould ſuppoſe his terrors on every ſide, ſo that the creature can yield him no poſſible relief or remedy, yet the way upward is open, and he can ſend to Heaven for help and comfort, when the earth ſhews him nothing but terror on every ſide. When he walks in much darkneſs of ſpirit, and ſees no light,

light, even then the Prophet counsels him, *To trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God* (Isa. 50. 10.) And though God seem to cloud his face, and cloath himself with thunder against him, though he seem to forbid his trust, and to beat him off when he stayes upon him, ye he can plead interest, when he hath no evidence, and sticks to the Covenant of *his God*, when he hath no encouragement from God. *Saints had rather trust and stay upon an angry God, then a pleased creature.* And hence the Apostle when he speaks of the forest temptations which befall the Saints, yet assures them (*1 Cor.* 10. 13.) *That as there had no temptation taken them, but what was common to man; so, that God was faithful, and would not suffer them to be tempted above what they were able, but would with the temptation also make a way to escape, that they might be able to bear it.* Here is a comfortable word, though you have terrors on every side, yet you shall escape; you shall have strength to bear it, while it is upon you, and you shall not always bear it: God can and will make a way for his to escape; only a wicked man is so compassed about and made afraid *with terrors on every side*, that he shall not escape; though, as it follows in the last words of the Verse,

They shall drive him to his feet.

There are different readings of this clause.

Constringent eum pedes sui: ut pedibus in terram allidatur & prosternatur.

First, Thus, *His feet shall break him*; or he shall stumble so hard (through his fear) against the ground, that he shall fall, and his feet (by reason of his fall) shall break him. As if he had said, When he assayeth to flee away from terrors, he shall break himself by falling, not deliver himself by fleeing.

Secondly, Mr. *Broughton* renders, *They shall press him at his feet*: That is, Where ever he goes terrors shall press him: As if he had said, If this man, who hath terrors round about, and on every side, should at any time make an escape, and break through them, yet *terrors shall press him at his feet*; where ever he goes, terror will follow and overtake him. To press *a man at his feet*, as to tread upon a mans heels, may be taken as a proverbial speech, noting a very hard and a close pursuit.

Disjicient eum ad pedes ejus. Jun. i.e. *fugientis & vagabundi vestigiis insistunt, donec sistunt ipsum regi.* Id.

A third renders it thus, *And shall cast him down at his feet; Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and cast him down at his feet*: At whose feet? It is resolved thus; *At the feet of the King of terrors*, or, *of the Judge*. This man thinks to make an escape, and get out of the hand of trouble, but terror shall arrest him, and cast him down bound at the feet of the Judge.

The sence is fair from each of these three rendrings, but I rather take a fourth.

Huc illuc vagus & errabundus præ metu: nullo loco possit subsistere, ubique obversante ei terrore.

They shall drive him to his feet. That is, *They shall make him flee or run for it*: Terror shall hurry him up and down, and even *drive him to his feet*. While his mind is unsetled and cannot rest, his body shall not. His heart wanders, and so do his feet. He cannot stay any where, because whersoever he comes, terrors follow and dog him; *he may change his place, but he cannot change his company*; in what place soever he is, terrors are with him; these presently drive him to his feet, he would out-run his terrors, or find a place, where they should not find him, but he cannot.

The approach of terrors have a different effect, as persons differ.

First, They drive some to their defence.

Secondly, They drive others to their feet.

When terrors and troubles appear to men of courage, and of a sound mind, they go to their Arms and Weapons, they stand upon their guard. (*Hest.* 8. 41.) As soon as *Ahashuerosh* had granted the *Jews* liberty to defend themselves against their enemies, they presently gathered together, and *stood for their lives*; *they gathered themselves together*; they did not run away, they were not driven to their feet, but to their hands. Their enemies had authority to destroy them (for the Kings Writ was not withdrawn; only he sent a second Writ whereby the *Jews* had liberty to defend themselves) terror was on every side, yet they gathered together to stand for their lives, and to oppose their enemies.

Thus when terrors appear and draw near the innocent, God gives them a spirit and power to stand upon their guard, and to withstand their dangers. But when terrors meet guilty consciences, they drive them to their feet, they see no hope nor help, but in running away, and that shall not help them neither. Such was the judgment upon *Jerusalem*, as Christ intimates (*Matth.* 24. 20.) when he bids them pray, *That their flight might not be in winter, nor on the Sabbath-day*. This implyed, that their best help should be in their flight, and their strongest refuge in running from the danger: The terror which made *Cain* afraid on every side, drove him to his feet; his own tongue could not conceal the course which his heart intended; *I shall be* (saith he) *a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth* (Gen. 4. 14.) The terror which pursued our first Parents after they had sinned, drove them also to their feet; *Adam and his Wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord among the Trees of the Garden* (Gen. 3. 8.)

Hence Note, *Flight is an argument of guilt.*

When troubles drive us to our feet, not to our hands, when we dare not resist our dangers, but run from them, in such cases, either our dangers are extream great, or which is worse, our spirits are extream little, and our fortitude nothing at all. It is a miserable safety which is sought by running away; such fear shews the mans condition to be worse then his affliction. God threatens his own people, that if his fear did not keep them from sinning boldly and presumptuously against him, their own fear should make them run cowardly and basely from the face of their enemy; they should *be driven to their feet*, not to their hands for help, and they are but miserable helpers: They that flee, flee in confusion, and so may as well run upon the danger as from it; they may soon run into their hands whom they fear; but they cannot get out of the reach of their fear. When the spring of fear is within our selves, we cannot be delivered from fear, until we are delivered from our selves.

Thus the righteous God either keeps wicked men in on every side, as close prisoners, that they cannot flee, or else being *driven to their feet*, they flee and run from that which such as they cannot escape, as is further evident in the next Verse.

Verse 12. **His strength shall be hunger-bitten, and destruction shall be ready on his side.**

ידוי ירעב אנן *erit fames opulentia ejus.*

The Hebrew is very elegant, and speaks in the abstract; *His strength shall be famine*; not famished, but famine; his strength shall turn famine, or famine shall be his strength. We render, fully to the sence of the Text, *His strength shall be hunger-bitten.*

There are two opinions about *this* **Strength**, what is meant by it.

First, Some understand it of his Children. As if having shewed calamity falling upon his person in the former Verse, he intended here to shew the calamity of his Family. *His strength*, that is, *his Children, shall be hunger-bitten.* And the reason why this word is applyed to Children, is, because Children, especially the *first-born*, are their Parents strength, (*Gen.* 49. 3.) *Jacob* saith of *Reuben*, *Thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.* All Children are their Parents strength, in reference to their birth and generation; Dutiful Children are their Parents strength, or a strength to their Parents by defence and preservation. (*Psal.* 127. 4, 5.) *As Arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are Children of the youth; happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them.* Arrows are offensive weapons; yet because that which smites our enemies, is a means of safety unto us, we may well call these living Arrows our defence. *Jacob* called his youngest Son *Benjamin*, *The Son of the right hand*; as hoping (say some) that Son would prove a strength, or as his right hand to him; yet that phrase doth rather speak the nearness and dearness of that Son to him, whom he would love and take care of, as of his right hand.

And thus we may interpret it here, *His strength shall be hunger-bitten*: That is, Want shall enter into his Family, and eat up his Children: This curse is at once propheſied and threatned (*Psal.* 109. 9, 10.) *Let his Children be fatherless, and his Wife a Widdow: Let his Children be continually vagabonds, and beg; let them seek also their bread out of desolate places.* It is an affliction when Children are left fatherless,

fatherless, and the Wife a Widdow; but for Children to be hunger bitten, and to beg their bread, or to eat their bread precariously, meerly upon courtesie; this is a great judgment: As it is a truth, that the children of many wicked men are hunger bitten; so some Expositors fix upon this interpretation as the truth of this place. But I rather keep to the first channel, that the description of the wicked mans personal evils is here continued; and therefore,

Secondly, By Strength, understand his riches, his fulness and worldly abundance; his very abundance shall be resolved into want. This Hebrew word is sometimes translated *riches* or *substance* (*Hos.* 12. 8.) And riches are elegantly called strength.

First, Because riches strengthen a man to attempt great matters; they make him daring and venturous. He that hath a full purse, and a great spirit, what will he not enterprize?

Secondly, Riches are a strength of defence, or as a strong Tower (especially in the opinion of worldly men) to protect against the assaults of trouble, and the approach of dangers.

Both these wayes riches are a mans strength. But in both these the wicked rich man shall be shorten'd, his strength shall be hunger-bitten.

Hence Note, *Creature-fulness cannot preserve from want, creature-strength cannot preserve from weakness.*

Eleganter robori tribuit, quod ipsimet impio erat tribuendum. Merc.

He saith not, the strong man shall be hunger-bitten, but his strength shall, and his very plenty shall be famine; the blessing of God gives plenty in famine, or sufficiency in want; but where the blessing of God is wanting, there is a want in all outward sufficiency. Christ tells the Devil in answer to his first temptation in the fourth of *Matthew*, *Make these stones bread; it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* A man may have bread, and yet not live; he may fill himself with all manner of worldly comforts, and yet be comfortless. (*Luke* 12.) *The life consists not in abundance.* A full Purse, or a full Table cannot maintain life. The Promise is, (*Psal.* 33. 19.) That God *will deliver the souls of his from death, and keep them alive in famine.* As God can deliver his in death, and continue life, without the means of life; so he can let a wicked man famish in fulness, as well as take away his fulness. Which latter *Hannah* in her Song (1 *Sam.* 2. 5.) speaks as an experience, *They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry, ceased:* That is, The rich had not so much means left as would feed them with ordinary bread, much less with dainties and curious fare; they hired themselves out for bread; they were forced to work for a living, yea, to sweat for a crust. 'Tis extreamest famine, when they that have bread enough, cannot fill themselves; but 'tis extream famine when they who were full have no bread. The Prophet threatened famine in that extremity (*Isa.* 5. 13.) *Their honourable men are famished, and their multitude are dryed up with thirst.* If there be any water to be had, the multitude, the common sort will have it; water is a common commodity (even as the air is) and usually lyes in common to all. And if there be any bread to be had, great and honourable men will have it, though the poor starve. Therefore to say, *Their honourable men are famished*, argues the greatness of a famine. And that's the reason which some give of *David*'s choice (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) when God offered him, which he would of those three Judgments, *War*, or *Famine*, or *Pestilence*; he chose the Pestilence; and gives the reason, *Let us fall now into the hand of God, whose mercies are great; but let me not fall into the hand of man.* He durst venture himself rather to the Sword of God, then to the sword of man; not as if he thought, that man could strike harder, or wound deeper then God; but because he knew God would temper his strokes with mercy, which man would not. And yet *David* makes choice of that judgment, which put him in equal hazzard of falling by it, with the meanest of his Subjects. For had he chosen the Sword, the King might have secur'd himself in some strong Fort or City; thousands of the people might fall by mans sword, and his person not come near the danger. Again, if he had chosen famine; *David* being King would not want, as long as there had been a bit of bread to be found in the whole Land. The famine might have glutted it self upon multitudes of his people, while he, possibly, might have had a plentiful, at least, a sufficient Table. Therefore *David* to shew the ingenuity of his spirit in this election, chose a judgment, to escape which his outward Greatness and Power gave him not the least advantage; *He putteth himself meerly upon the mercy of God, who chuseth to be punished by the immediate sword of God:* Whereas if the sword of man or famine be sent against a Nation, Princes can make the best shift to avoid the danger in the one, and hunger in the other. For as (according to that of the Prophet) when the poor can get no water; so when the great and the rich can get no bread, then famine hath its full scope, rides (as it were) in triumph, and hath done its worst.

His strength shall be hunger-bitten.

Yet this hunger is not to be confined literally to the want of material food: For while the man continues in his strength, and hath all creature-comforts about him, somewhat pincheth and pines his spirit, he is vexed and hunger-bitten in the midst of plenty.

Hence Note, *A wicked man is never satisfied.*

The righteous *shall abide satisfied*, there shall be no hunger upon his spirit: *Dissatisfaction is the hunger, contentment is the fulness and satiety of the soul.* Many are hunger-bitten, who have more bread then they can eat. Was it not so with *Haman*? We read him boasting of a banquet, yea, making proclamation of his strength, power, and greatness (*Hest* 5. 11.) Haman *told them of his glory, and of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the Princes and servants of the King; and he said moreover, yea,* Hester *the Queen did let no man come in with the King unto the banquet which she had prepar'd, but my self; and to morrow I am invited unto her also with the King*, &c.

This man had all the honour and power, which that mighty Monarch could pour upon him; nevertheless, we may report him hunger-bitten, as appears in the next Verse; *Yet all this* (*saith he*) *availeth me nothing, so long as I see* Mordecai *the* Jew *sit at the Kings gate.* As if he had said, *What though I and the King banquetted with the Queen to day, and shall to morrow, yet it is not only hunger, but death to me to see this man thrive whom I would not have live.* Thus because he could not have his will upon an honest man, to subdue and destroy him, all that he had was nothing to him, for it availed him nothing. *What we account doth us good, is to us* (*how good or great soever it is*) *no better then nothing.*

There is such a spirit in wicked men, though they live upon the fairest terms in the world, though they be quiet and peaceable, and have profits and pleasures more then they can mannage, or tell what to do with, yet all is nothing, unless they can have their wills upon such as stand in the way of their pride and ambition. What tell ye me (saith such a one) that I have a great estate, that I may take my fill of pleasure, unless I may also take my fill of revenge, and throw down every man that stands not by my favour, or with my interest. Nor is it any wonder, that wicked men are never at rest with what they have; seeing it is not possible that he who makes the world his all, should ever be satisfied, if he had all of it, much less (which is all that any man but the first ever had, or I believe ever shall have) with a piece of it. *Ahab* had a Kingdom, he was rich and full; yet though he had the fulness of a Kingdom, he was *hunger-bitten for a Vineyard* (1 Kings 22.) This is a sore judgment, and it is daily inflicted upon the spirits of many wicked men; they have bread enough, riches enough, gold and silver enough, yet they are bitten with hunger after some forbidden fruit; which if they get not, all is lost to them which they have gotten. And as somewhat which they want, hinders their enjoyment of all they have: so somewhat which another man hath, hinders them more then all their own wants. Such a man prospers, and is in power; this bites their souls, this gnaws their bowels, and they cannot be quiet. *His strength shall be hunger-bitten.*

And destruction shall be ready at his side.

The

The word which we render **destruction**, signifies *vapours, ascending up from the earth*, condensed into a cloud: and (among the Rabbins) it is usually applied, to any (as we speak) misfortune, or calamity, which comes suddenly and falls down upon us like a cloud when it melts and dissolves into a storm-shower; *Any unexpected evil* may well be called destruction wrapt up in and dropt from a cloud. *Destruction shall be ready* prepar'd or fixt; so the word is rendred, (*Psal.*108.) *O God, my heart is fixt, or my heart is prepar'd.* So here, destruction prepared, or ready at hand, it is not to be now debated or resolved on, what it shall be; That's done long ago. Some interpret this *readiness*, in allusion to a judiciary tryal, where the penalty is set and determined by the Law. Destruction is ready according to Justice for the offender: It is ready, as it follows in the Text.

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propriè vapor & nubes quæ sursum attollitur, unde pro infortunio & calamitate, quæ super aliquem ut nubes quædã incidit sumitur. Merc. *Forte parata, destructio est pœna & supplicium constitutũ legibus, & præparatum sontibus.* Pin.

At his side.] Some of the Rabbins who interpret the former word *Strength*, for *Children* (as was toucht before) in pursuit of that, interpret *his side*, for, *his wife*. The Hebrew word signifies either the side or the rib; hence 'tis rendered, *Destruction shall be ready at his rib*, or, *upon his rib*; that is, destruction shall be upon his wife, who was a rib taken out of Man (*Gen.*2.21.) Thus the Rabbins descant upon it; *His strength*, that is, his children shall be hunger-bitten, and *destruction shall be ready at his side*, that is, it shall wait upon his wife whether soever she goes. So here is a description of compleat destruction. The wicked man, in his person, as also in his wife and children shall be destroyed.

Others expound it only of wounds in his own side or rib. In the book of *Samuel* we read of wounds given, under *the fift rib*, because there wounds are most killing and deadly.

Effractor paratus ad costas. Cajet.

Another reads it in the Concrete, *not destruction shall be ready at his side*, but *the Destroyer shall be ready at his side*; His enemy shall wait on him to destroy him. But the abstract hath a greater force and elegancy. To say, destruction shall be ready at his side, is more then to say, the destroyer shall be ready at his side.

Therefore Fourthly, All that I conceive lies in this expression, (*Destruction shall be ready at his side*) is this, to shew that he shall have a sudden and an unavoidable destruction; for those evils which are at our side, are so near us, that we can hardly acquit our selves of them. Evils at a distance may be avoided, but if they come up close to our very sides, how can we escape?

Latrones dicti sunt quasi latrones, latent enim ad insidias & ex latere adoriantur. Habere aliquid ad manũ & ad latus utrumq; significat habere aliquid proximũ. Bold.

Some *Criticks* tell us, that *latro* the Latine word for a thief, is *quasi latera*, because he lies by side of a man, he skulks in a bush, or rides close by the travellers side, talking with him, and then falls upon him; that's also the elegancy of the Hebraiism.

Hence Observe, First, *God hath destruction ready for evil men; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready; he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecuters*, (*Psal.* 7.12,13.)

When we see a bow bent, and the shaft pull'd out of the quiver, and put upon the string, then a man is ready to shoot; Divine destructions may be acted as soon as threatned, they are not to prepare, but prepared.

When the Lord denounceth eternal judgement upon wicked men, he saith; *Go to the fire that is prepared for the Devil and his Angels*; The fire is made, the treasure of wrath is full. As the mercy of God is a ready mercy, and as his pardons are ready for his people; his pardon and mercies are not to seek, he hath them at hand, he is *good and ready to forgive*, (*Psal.* 86.5.) Whereas most men, though they will forgive, yet they are not ready to forgive, they are hardly brought to it, though they do it at last. But God is ready to forgive; he hath (as it were) pardons ready drawn (as a man who would be ready to do a business, he will have such writings as concern the passing of it ready) there is nothing to do, but to put in the date and the name; yea indeed the date and the name are put in from all eternity. Thus the Scripture speaks to shew how forward, God is to do good; He needs not fit his heart to it, his heart is ever in the exactest fitness. Now as God hath mercies ready for his own people, so he hath destructions as ready for the wicked. They are as ready as if he had made, and kept them by him ready made from everlasting.

Again, As a godly man is usually ready to do good, *O God, my heart is prepared* (saith *David*) so God is ready to bring evil upon them who continue to do evil; and therefore fear not when you see men ready bent and set to do mischief, their destruction is more ready then they are to destroy, and God can bring destruction upon them in a moment.

Secondly, Note, *Destruction comes suddenly upon wicked men, and surprizes them unawares.*

Christ will come at last upon all the world suddenly, but the surprizal shall only be upon wicked men. The Apostle shadows this in two Allusions, (1 *Thes.* 5.2,3.) *For your selves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; for when they shall say, peace and safety, then suddain destruction cometh upon them as travel upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.* The thief gives no warning, and the travel of a woman with child, many times gives as little.

Now as in the great day of Judgment, God will come as a thief, and as pain upon a woman with child; so also in the lesser dayes of judgement, those of this life.

Observe, Thirdly, *There is no running away from that destruction which God sends.*

Can a man run from his side? destruction is at the side of a sinner; where ever his side is, there destruction is; Evils which have a Commission from above, never fail to find the offender; we may escape the evil which man plots, man may make ready a thousand deaths for us, and we out-live them all; as *Paul* saith of himself; *In Damascus, the Governour under Aretas the King, kept the City with a Garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And thorow a window in a basket, was I let down by the wall, and escap't his hands. Paul* got clear away, though man laid destruction at his side; but if God lay destruction, there is no window to get out at, nor basket to be let down by; we can neither stand before the judgements of God, nor outrun them.

Vers. 13. **It shall devour the strength of his skin.**

The thirteenth and fourteenth verses contain the second degree or step of the misery of a wicked man. *It shall devour the strength of his skin. Destruction was ready at his side*, in the former verse, now it devours; the word signifies to swallow up at a bit, and so to devour as to consume and bring to nothing; it notes those consumptions which fire and sword make. They are terrible consumers, cruel devourers; these shall devour like a hungry monster.

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The strength of his skin.] The Original word which we translate **strength**, signifies properly a bough or branch of a tree; it signifies also the bar of a door.

And hence it is that some render, *It shall devour his branch*; and by this branch the members of his body may be meant, because as the body of a tree shoots forth branches, which are as its members, so the body hath many members, which are as its branches, and so the same word may very well serve both.

Comedet vectes cutis ejus, comedet vectes ejus primogenitus mortis. Jun. *Devoret pulchritudinem ejus.* Vulg. *Mors devoret speciosa ejus,* 70.

Again, Others translate, *It shall devour the bars of his skin*; bones are as the bars of the skin, and therefore the strength of the skin, like bars, the bones bear up and support both skin and flesh.

The strength of his skin.] The Vulgar reads, *It shall devour the beauty of his skin*; the *strength*, say we, the *beauty* saith he. The Septuagint follows that reading, death shall devour his most beautiful things, or those things which were most amiable and pleasant in his eye.

Our reading is very suitable both to the context and to the original word; for the members of the body are the strength of it, and the bars of a door are the strength of it; therefore, *it shall devour the strength of his skin*, contains and takes in both.

It shall, what shall? What is the antecedent? Some say the devourer is famine, of which he spake in the former verse; *His strength shall be hunger-bitten*; famine shall devour; famine is a great devourer, famine eats up both the strength and the beauty of the skin, it sucks the mar-

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row of the bones, all fade before the face of famine, (*Lam.* 4. 5.)

Others understand destruction or misery in general, as the devourer, *destruction shall be ready at his side, it shall devour.* That is, destruction shall devour the strength of his skin; so it is only a repetition of the same thing, with an elegant force and heightning of the sence.

The first-born of death shall devour his strength.

The thing to be opened in this latter branch (the sence being the same with the former) is, what we are to understand by the first-born of death, and how this phrase and form of speech is us'd in Scripture; There are divers opinions about it.

First, One of the Rabbins conceives, that it is to be expounded by an Hypallage; as if the *first-born of death shall devour*, were put for *Death shall devour his first-born:* That is, his strength, as the first-born is called. But we need not make such an inversion in the words; and therefore,

Mors devoret primogenitũ ejus. Rab. Dav.

Secondly, This first-born of death say others, *is the Devil*, because he was the author of death, he brought death into the world, for he brought sin into the world, he by temptation, and *Adam* by hearkning to the temptation. The Apostle makes the derivation of death from *Adam*, (*Rom.* 5. 12.) *Death entred by one*, and we may safely derive its pedegree yet higher by one; for death entred *that one*, by the Devil.

Again, The Devil may be called *the first-born of death*, because he hath the power of death in his hands: So the Apostle, *Heb.* 5. 14. *For as much then as the Children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the Devil.* He that hath the power of death is the *first-born of death.* The Devil hath the power of death, not as if the Devil could by his will cause men to die, or pass a sentence of death upon them; for this is too high a priviledge for the Devil, he hath no such power of death; It is the sole priviledge of God himself to have this power of death. The power of death, and the power of life are committed to Christ, whom he will he slayes, and whom he will he makes alive. But the Devil is said to have the power of death as Christ gives him a Commission, arms him with a power to inflict death upon wicked men and unbelievers; or he hath the power of death, not as a Judge, but as an Executioner; He is therefore called (*Revel.* 9. 11.) in the Hebrew *Abaddon*, and in the Greek *Apollyon*, that is, *the Destroyer*, or, if you will, *the Executioner, the Hangman.* God puts the business into his hand, therefore he it is that hath the power of death. Some of the Hebrews say upon that place, that God doth set some special evil Angel over some wicked men, he puts the power of death concerning them into his hand; and so he is the *first-born of death*; but I shall not stay upon that.

Angelus morti præpositus vel mortis princeps, cui à domino potestas data est homines interimendi. Merc.

Thirdly, Others by the *first-born of death*, conceive that we are to understand the disease which first seizeth upon the body before the man dies; for death when it seizeth upon the body, appears first in a disease or a distemper, and so the disease is as it were the eldest son of death. The disease being that which death sends forth and necessarily follows, it is therefore called the *first-born of death*; as it were death it self; for those things which are near accomplishment, though they are not fully accomplisht, receive the name, title, or denomination of the thing accomplished. As a man contending with another, if we see he hath a great deal the better of him, though the other make resistance, yet we say, he hath the victory over him: And as Christ himself (*Joh.* 19. 30.) when he was alive upon the Cross, strugling and striving with the powers of darkness about the deliverance of Man, crys out, *it is finished:* and yet the work was not then done, it was not finished till he died indeed; but because he saw he had the better of the day, and he was assured that he should carry it through, therefore thus he spake before the work was totally and compleatly finished. So a disease, a malignant disease, a mortal disease, taking hold upon any man, may be call'd the *first-born of death*; that is, such a disease as death hath begotten; or you may call it death it self, because death will certainly and suddenly follow.

Primogenitus mortis est morbus gravissimus. Rab. Jos.

Morbus gravissimus, à quo mors abest proximè ex usu scripturæ mors appellatur, quod enim parũ differt à forma perfecta illius sibi nomen vendicare solet. Sanct.

Fourthly, The *first-born of death*, say others is that trouble of mind, that anguish or sorrow which death sends as a harbinger to take up its lodging in the spirit of a wicked man; *The afflicting fore-thought of death, is a death, or the first-born of death.*

Primogenitus mortis est mœror animi quem mors præmittit ut sibi præparet hospitium. Cajet.

Fifthly, Some take *the first-born of death*, to be an early death, or death in the flower and strength of age.

Sixthly, The *first-born of death*, is some unusual or extraordinary death; that is, look upon that death which is most deadly, that death into which many deaths are collected, that death which is (as it were) an aggravation of all that is in death, this death is the *first-born of death:* hence it is that the vulgar translation reads, not, *the first-born of death*, but *the first-born death*; that is, whatsoever death is more deadly, and bitter, more cruel and painful, that death, which among all the wayes of dying, carries away the preheminence, that death, which is the very strength of death, and hath in it a double portion of dying, that's the *first-born of death.* And so *the first-born of death*, is nothing else but a proverbial speech for an extraordinary death, for an extream bitter death; For as it is among our children, there is the first-born, the eldest, and then the younger, as they stand in their degree, but among them all, the first-born is chief; so here, That death which among all other deaths is the chiefest, such a death is the *first-born of death*, and such a death shall sieze upon the wicked man. And hence also Mr. *Broughton* (as I conceive) avoiding the letter of the Original (which he seldom doth, yet here he doth it,) instead of *the first-born of death*, saith, *a strange death shall eat the branches of his body.* And we find in Scripture this usage of the word applyed to others, in whom there is an eminency, or a high degree in any kind, though not literally the first-born, because the first-born hath the preheminence above the rest of his Brethren; As *Jacob* saith of *Reuben*, his real first-born; *Thou art my might, and the beginning of my strength, &c.* And the Law provided, that a double portion should be given to the first-born, yea though he lay under some accidental disadvantages, (*Deut.* 21. 17.) *He shall acknowledge the Son of the hated for the first-born, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath*; though he were a son of a wife that he hated, yet this must not be pleaded as a bar to his priviledge. Though the mother was hated, yet the son must be honoured. Where note (by the way) that he speaks comparatively of hatred, that is, though she were a wife whom her husband did not love with strength of affection, yet if she hath born him his strength, his first-born, he must acknowledge his right, by giving him a double portion. According to this Analogy we are to understand the Prophet *Isaiah* speaking of the *first-born of the poor*, (*Chap.* 14. 29, 30.) *Rejoyce not thou whole Palestina, because the rod of him that smote thee is broken; for out of the Serpents root shall come forth a Cockatrice, and his fruit shall be a fiery flying Serpent, and the first-born of the poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety.* The *first-born of the poor*, is not to be interpreted of the eldest son of the poor; but by the first-born of the poor, the Prophet means those who were most poor, extreamly poor, those who were so far from having a double portion of worldly things, that they had no portion at all. Or they are called the *first-born of the poor*, because they had only a double portion of want and poverty, or were oppressed under the very strength of it.

Primogenitus mortis est mœror animi quem mors præmittit ut sibi præparet hospitium. Cajet. *Primogenita mors est, quæ naturalis ætatis prævenit finem.* Aqu. Liran. *Primogenitus mortis est proverbiale dictum, pro morte nõ vulgari sed violenta & maxime Horrenda.* *Primogenita mors.* Vulg. *Primogenitus mortis est mors quæ præ aliis mortibus, tãquã fratribus, in enecando duplicẽ veluti & potissimam potestatem habet.* *Scriptura ob maximã primogenitorum præ aliis filiis privilegia vocare solet primogenitũ quicquid in suo genere aliis antecedit.* Bold.

Now, to shew that God would raise his Church, and lift her up, and give his afflicted people deliverance, he assures them, that *the first-born of the poor*, that is, such as were doubly poor, doubly afflicted, should feed and be comforted. Thus, in the twelfth of the *Hebrews*, *vers.* 22, 23. Believers are all called the *Congregation of the first-born*; *But ye are come to Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of Angels, and to the Assembly and Congregation of the first-born, &c.*

Cœtus sanctorum quos primitivos appellavit, nõ quod omnes primi natura solverint matrũ uteros, sed quia major honor primogenitis lege tribuebatur, eorum præstantiam significavit per hanc Appellationem. Theod. in 1 Coloss.

Why *the first-born*, not because all believers, all Saints are elder brethren, or such as were the first-born of their parents; for the first-born may be an unbeliever, and the younger may be a Saint, a believer. But he calls them the *Congregation of the first-born*, because they shall all be dealt with as the *first-born*, they shall all be lookt upon as the strength of Christ, and all shall have a double portion,

tion, they ſhall all have that honour which the firſt-born hath, a fulneſs of excellency and dignity; hence their title, is, *the Congregation of the firſt-born.*

So we are to underſtand that of the Apoſtle, (*Coll.*1.18.) where we find two expreſſions, ſtanding directly oppoſite to this in the Text; he calls Chriſt *the firſt-born from the dead: He is the head of the body the Church, he is the beginning, and the firſt-born from the dead.* As *Bildad* here ſpeaks of the firſt-born of death, or the firſt-born death; So Chriſt is called (as it were) in way of oppoſition, *the firſt-born from death.* Chriſt is called *the firſt-born from death*, not only becauſe he was the firſt that did ariſe to an immortal life, (ſome there were that did riſe before, as when Chriſt died the graves were opened, and ſome aroſe, but Chriſt was the firſt that did ariſe to an immortal life) and ſo he was (in a ſence) begotten and born again; there was an heavenly nativity in his reſurrection, therefore he is called the firſt-born from death, death gave him up, and was delivered of him for ever. Now (I ſay) Chriſt was not only called the *firſt-born from death*, (upon this account) but becauſe he was the chief, (as it were) the exemplar and leader in the reſurrection, he was the higheſt in the reſurrection, and his reſurrection was moſt glorious. Thus he was *the firſt-born from death*, he aroſe with the greateſt glory and preheminence.

In the fifteenth verſe of the ſame Chapter, Chriſt is called *the image of the inviſible God, the firſt-born of every creature*; that is, the higheſt, the fulleſt of glory among all creatures; for we are here to take heed of the ſence of the *Arians*, and others that follow them, who take hold of this Scripture, where Chriſt is called *the firſt-born of every creature*, as if the ſence were only this, *that Chriſt is the chiefeſt creature* (though it be a truth, that according to his humane nature he is a creature, and ſo the chiefeſt creature, but they reſtrain it to the whole perſon, as if he were only the chiefeſt of creatures) and not God at all. For he is not only in his humane nature the chiefeſt creature, but according to his Divine Nature, the beginning of all the creatures; ſo he is called (*Revel.*3.14.) *The beginning of the creation of God*, which we may explain by, *the firſt-born of every creature*; he is the beginning of the Creation of God, not *principium principiatum* only, *the beginning begun.* Chriſt may be called the beginning of all the creation of God, becauſe God looked on him firſt: but alſo he is *principium principians*, the beginning of the creation, becauſe every creature had its beginning from him. Chriſt is the active beginning, or beginner of every creature; For as the Evangeliſt *John* gives it out (*Chap.*1. *verſ.* 2,3.) *The ſame was in the beginning with God; All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.* Again, the Lord ſpeaking of *David* to the height in the Letter, and of Chriſt in the figure, ſaith, (*Pſal.*89.27.) *I will make him my firſt-born, higher then the Kings of the Earth*; that is, he ſhall be my chiefeſt, my higheſt, my only one. Thus as the firſt-born among the living, or from the dead, ſtill denotes the choiceſt of thoſe who live, ſo the *firſt-born of death*, is the chiefeſt, the higheſt, the ſtrongeſt death that any man dies when he is gathered to the dead.

Luſtly, Some labour much to fix it upon a particular death, and would ſhew us what this firſt-born of death, this moſt deadly death is; and upon debate, the vote caſts it upon famine; which ſome conceive alſo moſt proper to to this place, in reference to the words before, *His ſtrength ſhall be hunger-bitten, deſtruction ſhall be ready at his ſide. The firſt-born of death*; that is, (ſay they) *Famine*, the chiefeſt of deaths ſhall devour his ſtrength, and make an end of him: For though we may ſay, there are as many deaths as there are diſeaſes and wayes to death, yet there are three great deaths, which do as it were ſtrive for preheminence; Firſt, Sword; Secondly, Plague; And Thirdly, Famine; theſe are, as it were, the *firſt three* among the Deſtroyers of mankind: ſometimes in the Prophets God puts a fourth, and ſaith, *My four ſore Judgements*; as if they were Judgments above all the reſt: and then I remember the *evil beaſt* comes among them; but ſword, peſtilence, and famine are the *firſt three*, and according to this opinion famine is put for the firſt of the three, the chiefeſt of the three, like the *Tachmonite* (2 *Sam.*23.) I find one Interpreter ſo confident of it, that he ſaith without all doubt by the *firſt-born death*, he means famine, which is not an infirmity or a diſeaſe tending to or giving us warning of the approach of death, but is it ſelf a continued death, and the moſt bitter death. And indeed the Prophet *Jeremy* in his *Lamentations* ſeems to give the preheminence to famine; *They that be ſlain with the ſword, are better then they that are ſlain with hunger; for theſe pine away, ſtricken through for want of the fruits of the field,* (*Chap.*4.9.)

Dubio procul illa primogenita mors eſt famis, quæ non eſt infirmitas vel morbus ſed continua mors, quâ non datur amarior, &c. Bold.

But I rather take it of any ſort of death, as it is heightned and made grievous by circumſtances, then conclude or faſten it upon any one ſort of death; For as any kind of ſin may by circumſtances be ſo aggravated, and made ſo exceeding ſinful, that it may juſtly deſerve to be ſtiled, *The firſt-born of ſin*; ſo likewiſe may any puniſhment or death, *which is the wages of ſin.*

Hence Obſerve, *The Lord hath various degrees of Judgements, and of deaths, to pour out upon the wicked.*

Some deaths are but like younger Brethren, others are like the firſt-born. It is with puniſhments and judgments as it is with ſins, there is a difference in the degrees of them; though all ſins be of the ſame quality, yet all are not of the ſame quantity. Upon ſome ſins the ſinner layes out his ſtrength, and commits them with all his might, theſe may deſervedly be called the *firſt-born of ſin*, and ſuch ſinners the firſt-born of ſinners; as *Polycarpus* anſwered *Marcion* the Heretick when he came into his preſence, and asked him if he did not know him; *Yes*, ſaith he, *I know thee well to be the firſt-born of Satan.* Now, I ſay, as there are degrees in ſin and ſinners, among whom ſome are as the *firſt-born*, ſo there are degrees in puniſhment; and therein lies the exactneſs of Juſtice to apportion and meaſure out to every one according to his ſin, whether in practice or opinion. To give alike judgments upon all offenders, would be very unlike to Juſtice; And there would be much inequality in ſuch equality. The Lord tells *Babylon*, who was the firſt-born of ſinners, (*Iſa.*47.9.) *Judgments ſhall come upon thee in their perfection*; perfect judgments are the portion of a perfect ſinner; where there is a compleatneſs of wickedneſs, there the compleatneſs of wrath ſhall be powred out, even the firſt-born of death.

Ἐπιγινώσκω τὸν πρωτότοκον τοῦ σατανᾶ. *Euſeb. lib.*4. *Eccl. Hiſt. cap.*13.

Now, as the *firſt-born* is our ſtrength, (which is obſervable) 'tis added in the Text; *The firſt-born of death ſhall devour his ſtrength.*

Hence Obſerve, *That all the power of man fails before the meſſengers of the wrathful power of God.*

Strength ſhall go forth to devour ſtrength; Though ſin be armed, though an aſſociation, or an hoſt of ſinners be in Arms, and ſtand upon their guard, though the ſtrength of each one among them be *the ſtrength of ſtones, and his fleſh of braſs*, as *Job* complained his was not (*Chap.*6.) yet God can provide a judgement that ſhall devour it all at a bit, and ſwallow it as a morſel, he can have *a firſt-born* judgement to diſpatch the *firſt-born*, the ſtrength of ſinners. The Prophet *Iſaiah* in a holy ſcorne invites all the enemies of the Church to joyn forces and councels, to put their ſtrength and their wit together: *Gather together on heaps, O ye people, and gird your ſelves*, (and again he ſaith) *gird your ſelves.* Of all ſtrength, united ſtrength is the ſtrongeſt; united weakneſs is very ſtrong, how ſtrong then is united ſtrength? Hence Polititians adviſe (*divide & impera*) divide your enemies if you would conquer them; but the Lord needs not take his enemies at an advantage, and therefore he ſaith; *Gather together, gird your ſelves, and ye ſhall be broken in pieces*, (*Iſa.* 8.9.) Make your ſelves as ſtrong as you can, ſee if I cannot devour your ſtrength. Do your worſt againſt me, and the beſt for your ſelves, yet all ſhall be brought to nought. Creatures may be dealt with, and kept out, but there is no fortifying againſt the Almighty. When the Lord comes to aſſault or batter, then all our ſtrong Holds, even our ſtrongeſt hold ſhall be, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Nahum* 3.12.) as the firſt ripe figs, which if they be ſhaken fall into the mouth of the eater; and by how much any man is the more confident, that his ſtrong hold, will hold out in the day of aſſault or battery, by ſo much the ſooner ſhall it be rendred up or beaten down, as it follows in the next verſe.

Verſ.

Verſ. 14. **And his confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, and it ſhall bring him to the King of terrours.**

As if he had ſaid, though this man was ſo ſtrong, that he grew confident, (ſtrong men are uſually confident) yet not only his ſtrength, but, *his confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle.*

בטח *ſignificat aliqua in re ſpes omnes poſitas habere & toto animo conquieſcere.*

His confidence.] The word ſignifies ſuch an aſſurance and acquieſcence of ſpirit, as puts a man out of doubt; A man of confidence hath no fear, either of danger or about ſucceſſe; He is not afraid that the danger will come, or that the ſucceſs will not; he ſits down ſecure, and feels not the leaſt pain of ſo much as one jealous thought. *Confidence is the mother of ſecurity, and the daughter of pride.*

His confidence ſhall be rooted out.] He doth not ſay, it ſhall be ſhaken, weakened, or much abated, but it ſhall be rooted out, or grub'd up. The wicked mans confidence is compar'd to a tree that takes root, and ſpreads it ſelf in the ground, that grows up and ſends forth goodly fruitfull branches; but when he hopes to devour the fruit, *the firſt-born of death devours his ſtrength*, and his confidence ſhall be rooted out; to root out, notes total deſtruction.

Hence obſerve, *The worſt of men are apt to be confident of good things.*

Such a one *Bildad* deſcribes in this Scripture, and yet he is full of confidence. *None have ſo great hopes, as they who have leaſt reaſon to have any.* Some wicked men have a plerophorie (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) their ſayls are fill'd with confidence, they are ſure of good things in this life, and of eternal life, they are high-built in hope, but they have no ground, no foundation for their hope. Theirs is a meer preſumption, who are full of ſin, and yet full of hope; full of wickedneſs, and yet full of confidence: Saints who are full of holineſs, are yet often full of fear; full of ſincerity, yet full of doubts. Fancies of faith are eaſily gotten, and as eaſily loſt. Many are high-flown, who never knew what the laying of a good foundation means. *His confidence ſhall be rooted out.*

Note, Secondly, *The confidence of wicked men ſhall be deſtroyed totally; it is rooted out.*

The confidence of a godly man may be ſhaken, and much unſetled: now he is well aſſured, and anon he queſtions all, but his confidence ſhall never be rooted out. (*Pſal.* 112. *v.* 10.) *The deſire of the wicked ſhall periſh*; That is, thoſe things that he is moſt deſirous of. His deſires live, yet they live as a puniſhment, not as a bleſſing, becauſe the thing he deſires, dyes; *His deſires ſhall periſh.*

As his deſires periſh, ſo his confidence ſhall. The thing that he was confident of periſheth, and at laſt confidence it ſelf, both root and branch, act and habit, is rooted out. *Solomon* (*Prov.* 10. 20.) by way of oppoſition ſets the one over againſt another; *The hopes of the righteous ſhall be glad*; That is, he ſhall ſee the thing he hopes for, or the thing he hopes for ſhall come to paſs, this will make him glad. When the man who hopes is glad, then his hopes are ſaid to be glad; *but the expectation of the wicked ſhall periſh*; that is, the thing he expects ſhall periſh, and then his expectation ſhall periſh too, he is weary of expecting, he waits no longer. *Faith is the ſubſtance of things hoped for:* but he that hath no faith, how can his hope have any ſubſtance, *i.e.* He can have no true hope in the good of the promiſe, who hath no true faith in the truth of the promiſe. Unleſs faith live, hope muſt needs give up the Ghoſt, or be as the giving up of the Ghoſt.

A godly mans hope fails not, becauſe his faith doth not; the thing he expects may fail, worldly things fail him often, and ſo may his preſent ſenſe of ſpirituals, yet his expectation fails not: when nothing appears to ſenſe, his hope is vigorous, and his confidence retains not only life but ſtrength. But when the ſence of what a carnal man would have, is loſt, his confidence is alſo loſt; when the one goes, the other ſtays not long behind. If our confidence be rooted in the earth, 'tis no wonder, if it be rooted up. Where the wicked mans confidence ſpoken of in this Text was rooted, will appear yet further from the next enquiry. *His confidence ſhall be rooted out.*

Whence? from what ground, where was his confidence rooted? The text ſaith;

Out of his Tabernacle.] The Tabernacle undergoes here a threefold interpretation.

First, Some conceive that this Tabernacle is his body; He truſted much in his ſtrength, in the ſtrength of his body, as much as in any other ſtrength. Now (ſaith he) his confidence ſhall be rooted out of this Tabernacle; he thought he had ſuch ſtrength, ſuch a good conſtitution of body, that it would have ſtood like a Caſtle againſt all batteries; but it proved a Tabernacle, whoſe ſtakes are quickly pulled up. The body of man is compared in Scripture to a Tabernacle; And the Septuagint clearly adhere to this tranſlation, rendring it thus; *Health ſhall be broken off from his Tabernacle*; that is, his body ſhall decay. *Paul* (2 Corinth. 5. 4.) *We in this Tabernacle groane*; That is, in this body. *I ſhall ſhortly lay down this Tabernacle*, ſaith *Peter*, (2 Epiſt. 1. 14.) that is, my body. The Lord Jeſus while he was in the world did but *tabernacle* with us a while; *The Word was made fleſh, and dwelt among us*, (Joh. 1. 14.) He dwelt amongſt us as in a Tabernacle.

Rumpatur de tabernaculo ſuo ſanitas. Sept.

The body is called a Tabernacle; firſt, becauſe it is weak; ſecondly, becauſe it is moveable. When a Tabernacle is reported for ſtrength or continuance, 'tis extraordinary. (*Iſa.* 33. 20.) *Look upon Sion the City of our ſolemnities, thine eyes ſhall ſee Jeruſalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that cannot be removed, and the ſtakes thereof can never be taken away, neither ſhall any of the cords thereof be broken.* This is a ſtrange kind of Tabernacle, this Tabernacle may goe for a houſe, yea 'tis better then any houſe, a Tabernacle that ſhall never be removed. The Prophet ſpeaks thus by way of oppoſition to common worldly Tabernacles; Tabernacles were ordinarily removed and taken down, their ſtakes were ſoon pull'd up, and their cords broken. But *Sion* at laſt ſhall be ſuch a Tabernacle as ſhall not be removed. But how ſoon is the Tabernacle of mans body removed? the ſtakes thereof are eaſily taken away, and the cords thereof broken; There is no truſting to it for a day, yet the wicked man truſts to it, as if it were ſet up for Eternity. Here's his confidence, he thinks to live long, that his body ſhould hold out in all winds and weathers, but down it ſhall, dye he muſt. *Let not the ſtrong man glory in his ſtrength, but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.*

Secondly, By Tabernacle we may (according to Scripture) underſtand *The place of Worſhip*; ſo his confidence ſhall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, is as if it had been plainly ſaid, All the confidence (he may pretend to have very much) that he hath in God ſhall faile him. The wicked mans confidence grows ſtrong upon this conſideration, that he frequents the Tabernacle, that he goes to the publick worſhip, and applies himſelf to a bodily exerciſe in outward ordinances; Thus 'twas with the *Jewes* (*Jer.* 7. 3, 4.) their confidence was rooted in the Tabernacle, and at laſt it was rooted out of the Tabernacle; they cryed, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we*; they thought to carry it againſt all, becauſe they were a Temple, a Tabernacle, and they had the pure inſtitutions of worſhip among them. In this they truſted and were rooted, when there was falſe ſwearing and lying among them, when they committed abomination againſt God, and dealt falſely with one another, yet then their confidence was in the Tabernacle. Some think *Bildad* aymes particularly at the Oratory or publick place of worſhip, which *Job* had formerly frequented, and in which he had a great name; With this his friend checkt and upbraided him, that now his confidence was rooted out of his Tabernacle. *Eliphaz* took him up thus in the 4th Chapter, *Is this thy fear and thy confidence?* thou buildeſt much upon thy religious attendance at the Tabernacle, that thou art a worſhipper, yet God hath rooted out thy confidence, and manifeſted that thy Religion is vain. *Saints are planted in the houſe of God*, (Pſal. 92. 13.) they have a kind of rooting there; but though the Tabernacle be a good rooting place, yet we cannot root *firmly* there, unleſs we are rooted in Jeſus Chriſt. To root *in* Tabernacle-work, or in the bare uſe of ordinances, as if *that* would carry it, and commend us to God, when there is no heart-work, when there is no looking to the power of godlineſs, and to communion with Chriſt; what is this but building upon the ſand? Many come often to the Tabernacle, who are meer ſtrangers to Chriſt; they uſe pure ordinances, but are themſelves impure.

pure. These may have a great name in the Tabernacle for a while, but God blots their names, and roots their hopes out of the Tabernacle, yea he pulls them from the horns of the Altar, or slayes them there, as *Solomon* gave commandment concerning *Joab*. *Many shall say, Lord, Lord, have we not prophecied in thy name? &c. To whom Christ will profess, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity,* (*Mat.*7.22,23.) That Text is this second interpretation of the Text in hand, and speaks to us fully what it is (in this sence,) for any man to have his confidence rooted out of the Tabernacle.

Yet, thirdly, I conceive we are to expound this Scripture of a vulgar Tabernacle; and then *his confidence shall be rooted out of his Tabernacle*, is no more but this, it shall be rooted out of the place where he dwells; as if *Bildad* had said, the wicked man hath a great deal of confidence in his outward state and worldly prosperity, in the riches, honour, and greatness of his house, yet all these shall fail him; And then the act of trusting is put for the thing trusted unto; *His confidence*; that is, that which he confided in, shall be rooted out of his Tabernacle, he trusted in and boasted of the multitude of his riches, when suddenly they made themselves wings, and fled away.

Hence Note, First, *There is no assurance of earthly things.*

Confidence in that which perisheth in the using, must needs perish when we come to use it.

Secondly, Observe, *Where a wicked mans greatest confidences are, there his greatest disappointments are.*

The world is his God, the earth is his hope, his Taberbernacle is his delight; As his Tabernacle is full of the creature, so he is full of confidence in his Tabernacle; There he lives, and there he loves, yet nothing can protect him from utter extirpation, when the wrath of God begins to dig about him; *His confidence shall be rooted up.*

This *Bildad* further aggravates in the last part of the verse;

And it shall bring him to the King of terrours.

It shall bring him.] What shall bring him? his broken confidence will do it; when confidence is spoil'd, man is amazed; This brings to the King of terrours.

And who is this King of terrours?

The King of terrours.] A strange title! We have heard and read of many titles given to the Kings of the earth, but rarely, if at all, of such a one as this.

Who is this King of terrours, this black Prince, or (as some translate) Prince of clouds and darkness? because darkness and clouds are full of terrour.

Principem Dæmonũ intelligit, sicut poetæ Plutonem regem inferni finxerunt. Rab. Sel.

It was shewed before that some interpret the *first-born of death*, to be the Devil, because he hath the power of death. The same opinion concludes *The King of terrours* to be the Devil, or *Beelzebub* the Prince of Devils. As the Poets fabled *Pluto* King of those infernal Territories.

Scriptura aliquando poeticè loquitur. Merc.

The Scripture speaks sometimes poetically, yet alwayes holily and spiritually.

Rex terrorũ videtur phrasi Hebraica dici maximus & potentissimus terror, qui inter cæteros principatum tenet. Pined.

Secondly, The King of terrours, is strong and mighty terrour. As *the first-born of death*, notes the most deadly death, so, *the King of terrours* according to that Hebraism notes those terrours which are most terrible. Such terrour as overcomes, subdues, and keeps down all other terrours, and makes them as subjects to it, such a terrour as is chiefest and greatest among terrours, that is, the King of terrours.

Nomen substantivũ genitivi casus & numeri multitudinis junctũ alteri substantivo singularis numeri vices gerit superlativi. Bold.

This Hebraism is frequent in Scripture, in the language whereof *a man of bloods* is a most cruel bloody man, and *a man of deceits*, is a man exceeding deceitful; and *a man of sorrows* (as Christ is called *Isa.* 53.3.) is a man full of sorrow; and *a woman of fornications*, is a woman extreamly immodest, and given up to unclean desires. Hence this general rule, *That a substantive of the genitive case plural, joyned with another substantive of the singular number, doth increase and aggravate the sence, and stands in the place and force of the superlative degree.*

Again, As because of the excellency and preheminency of the first-born; every thing which doth excel in any kind, may be call'd the *first-born*; so by the like proportion, because of the eminency of a King, that which is great in any kind, may be called *King*. In this sence (*Job* 41.30.) the Whale is called *King over all the Children of pride*, because he is a creature of a vast and mighty body, and is described *full of contempt*, and prouder then the proudest. (1 *Sam.*25.36.) The feast that *Nabal* made is said to be like the *feast of a King*, that is, a great feast. In that sence, great terrour may suitably be called here, *the King of terrour*. Some labour much to place it upon a particular; and say, *the King of terrours* is death; and so according to legal proceeding, which was toucht at the beginning, we have the wicked man now brought unto execution; *Destruction shall be ready at his side, it shall devour the strength of his skin, the first-born of death,* (a strange way or kind of death) *shall devour his confidence, and root it out of his tabernacle, and he shall be brought unto the King of terrours, to death it self*; there's an end of him. The Philosopher (in this sence) call'd death *the King of terrours*, when he called it *the most terrible of terrible things*; there we may rest the interpretation of this Scripture, he shall bring him to the King of terrours, that is, to death, or to his last end.

Calcet super eum quasi rex interitus. Vulg.

There is another reading which I find much insisted upon by the Latine Translator, who saith not as we, *It shall bring him to the King of terrours*, but *terrour shall tread upon him as a King*, or, *destruction as a King shall tread and trample upon him*; and so it is an allusion to those Kings, Emperours, and great ones of the world, who prevailing over their enemies were wont to tread upon their necks; we find *Joshua* commanding the people of *Israel* to tread upon the necks of the *Canaanitish* Kings, in token of the victory obtained over them, (*Josh.* 10.22.) And as God in his providence gave them power to set their feet in triumph upon the necks of Kings, so it was a Custom among the ancients, when victorious Princes led captived Princes in triumph, to lay them prostrate on the ground, and tread upon their bodies, or go over their necks, in token of their total overthrow and subjection. Thus (according to the present reading) death and destruction like a conquering King shall tread upon the wicked man. This heightens the sence still, to tread and tramp'le upon another, is a note of absolute Conquest. (*Psal.*91.13.) *Thou shalt walk upon the Lyon and Asp, the young Lyon and Dragon shalt thou tread under thy feet*; Thou shalt tread upon them, not accidentally, as a man treads upon an Adder or a Serpent in the way; but his meaning is, thou shalt intentionally tread upon them like a Conquerour, thou shalt tread upon them to testifie thy dominion over them. So (*Luk.*10.19.) When the Lord Jesus gave that promise to his Disciples that they should do great things, he saith, *And you shall* (saith he) *tread upon Serpents*, that is, you shall have power to overcome whatsoever may annoy you; serpentine power is all hurtful power, whether literal or mystical. As the Apostle assures all believers, (*Rom.*16.20.) *God shall tread down Satan* (that old Serpent) *shortly under your feet*. Thus death or destruction shall tread upon the wicked like a King.

Calcare aut conculcare vincentis, & triumphantis est. Mos erat apud Imperatores Constantinopolitanos ut captũ hostem & humi distentũ in illius cervices & collũ insultando conculcarent. Cedrenus.

Taking *this King of Terrours* for death; which interpretation I pitch upon,

Observe, That, *Death is very terrible.*

It is the *King of terrours*; It is very terrible under a threefold consideration.

First, It is terrible, if we consider the Antecedents, the fore-runners, or harbingers of death, which are pains, sicknesses and diseases, these are terrible.

Secondly, It is terrible, if we consider the nature of it; What is death? Death is a disunion; all disunions are troublesom, and some are terrible. And as some disunions are terrible, so those are most terrible which rend that from us which is neerest to us. The disunion of neerest friends, of a loving husband and wife, how grievous are they? Now death makes a disunion of those that are nearer then husband and wife, even of soul and body. These are (as I may say) more then married together; Husband and wife are one flesh, but soul and body are one person. This marriage-bond is broken by the violence of death.

And not only is death a disunion, but it is also a privation: every privation hath some terribleness in it, but this is not an ordinary privation, this is a total privation.

Death is such a privation, as from which there can be no return according to nature, this makes it very terrible; and as it is a total privation of life, so of all those things which appertain to life, all worldly riches, all worldly relations, all worldly comforts, all worldly honours are removed by death; it lays all low, it equalls the highest with the lowest; *death is the greatest Leveller*, as the Poet saith; death levels Scepters and Plow-shares, it makes all alike.

Mors sceptra ligonibus æquat.

Thirdly, There is a terribleness in death in regard of the consequents; rottenness and corruption consume the dead, and darkness covers them in the grave. These natural consequents of death are terrible.

But death is yet more terrible if we step beyond this natural consideration of it; this makes it terrible to Heathens, who lookt no further then the grave: but to look on death as the fruit or wages of sin, and as sin is the sting of death, this renders it most terrible. We may make a threefold gradation of the terribleness of death.

First, To godly men; Secondly, to moral men, who live without any great wickedness, yet still in a state of nature; Thirdly, to wicked men, who have an awakened conscience as well as a conscience extreamly guilty.

Death is sometimes a King of terrours, very terrible to the godly; though they have reason to look on death (in a sence) as the King of Comforts, because when they die they enter upon the enjoyment of their highest comforts, yet, I say, death strikes them with some terrour; especially in two cases.

First, Death is terrible to a godly man, when his spiritual estate is unsetled; indeed when he sees all cleer between God and him, then well-come death, there's no terrour in it; the paleness of death pleaseth him better then the purest beauty that ever he saw in the world: but when the soul cannot see an interest in Christ, when the conscience is ravell'd, and the actings of faith stopt, then the heart is full of fear. He that is in a good estate, is not alwayes in sight of it; This darkness breeds doubtings. That which is not seen, gives us no more comfort, then that which is not at all.

De non existentibus & non apparentibus eadem est ratio.

Secondly, Death may be terrible, as a King of terrours to a godly man, not only when his spiritual estate is unsetled, but also when his worldly estate is well setled, when he hath deeply engaged in the creature, and his earthly mountain (as he apprehends) stands strong. Some godly men have much in the world, and that may quickly have too much of them. Now, if once we over-reckon the creature, though but a little, and cleave, though but weakly, to the world as our friend, we shall reckon that as our enemy, which (as death cannot but do) separates us quite from the world. We may observe some who judge that their spiritual estate is very well bottom'd (they have no fears about it) and yet the fear of death takes hold upon them, because their outward estate is so well bottom'd; they are not much taken with the pleasures of heaven, because they live pleasantly on the earth; it is their sorrow to leave the world while they find so much joy in it; and they are hungry after life, because full of the things of this life. The Apostle speaks of some (*Phil.* 3. 19.) *Whose end is destruction, and whose glory is in their shame*; But I may say of godly men, they ought to be ashamed of this sorrow, seeing their end is salvation. How dishonourable is it, that they should reach so greedily after a life which they cannot hold, whose faith hath laid hold upon eternal life?

Secondly, To meer moral men, death is properly a King of terrour; they who cannot see any good in death, cannot but see it an evil to die. Now it is impossible that they should see any good (except the stop of present evils) in their own death, who are not spiritually acquainted with, and in some degree experimentally interessed in the death of Christ.

Thirdly, Death is most terrible to those who though they have the knowledge of God, and outwardly profess the Gospel of Christ, yet walk contrary to it. Death is not half so terrible to a moral heathen, as to a wicked Christian; their consciences are convinced, they understand what death is, and what follows death. Heathens live so much in the dark, that they see little of that, which is the terrour of death. But enlightned Christians (though continuing in the darkness of sin) have heard and know that there is a Revelation of wrath from heaven against all unrighteousness. And that after death they must appear before the righteous God in Judgment. They have learned, that death cuts down unbelievers as fewel for the fire; that being carried out of the world, they are cast to hell. And that as present death is the wages of sin, so the greatest part of that wages is paid in eternal death.

To close this point, seeing death is the *King of terrours*, it should be our study, as it is of our wisdom, to make this *King of terrours*, a kind of *King of comfort to us*. Many believers have attained to this. And there are many considerations held out in the Gospel, which ease the pains of death, and set the soul above the terrour of it. Natural men can say, *All must die*; why should any man fear that which is common to all men? The natural man can say also, that many indure more pain while they live, then all the pains of death. These poor shifts the natural man can make to stifle the terrour of death. But a believer moves upon higher principles. As

First, That death cannot at all break the bond of the Covenant between God and us; the Covenant is alive though we die. (*Mat.* 22. 31, 32.) *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.* They were dead, when God spake this. Now saith Christ there; *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*; for all are alive to him, even the dead are alive to him; as their souls are alive, so their bodies are as living bodies to him, and though rotting in their graves, he owns them as much as when flourishing in stately pallaces. The relation of God to *Abraham* was as strong when he was dead as when he was alive; *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*

Secondly, Though death breaks the union between soul and body, yet death cannot break the union between the soul and Christ; this also out-lives death: For as when Christ died, death could not break that hypostatical union between the divine nature and the humane nature; though death disunited the soul and the body of Christ, yet it did not disunite God and man in Christ. So though death triumph over the natural union of soul and body, it can never break the mystical union between Christ and the soul; the union between Christ *God-man* and a believer is inviolable, therefore why should they who believe fear death.

Thirdly, The Apostle tells us plainly, that there is no terrour in death, while he assures us that the sting of death is out; and if death have no sting, it hath much honey for believers. Jesus Christ our true *Sampson* hath slain this Lyon, and brought us a honey-comb out of the carkass. Christ hath been the death of death for us, and why should that have terrour in it, which hath no life in it? We say the living Lyon is not so terrible as he is painted; what terrour then is there in a dead or in a painted Lyon?

Fourthly, The Scripture often calls death a *sleep*, *a rest*; And what terrour is there in rest and sleep? what trouble in going to bed? And this sleep must needs be sweet, because it is sleep after labour, yea after sore labour, as *Solomon* speaks of the rest of a labouring man.

Fifthly, As it puts a period to our worldly comforts, so to all our sorrows, and we have no reason to be sorry for that; It puts an end to our few dayes, and to our many troubles, and we have no reason to be troubled at that. And as it is an end of that sorrow and trouble which sin began, so it is a beginning of that happiness and joy which Grace begins, and shall never end; it is the privation of our loosable habits, but it occasions the fruition of those that shall never be lost. It is the opening of the door to eternity, and therefore,

Sixthly, It is call'd *a going to God*, in whom we shall have an eternal injoyment. Death is often in the Old Testament called *a going to our Fathers*, or, *a gathering to our Fathers*; but know that as death is a going and a gathering to our earthly Fathers, so it is a going to our God, and a gathering to our Father in heaven.

Seventhly, This may abate the terrour of death; It is a dying to live, as well as it is a dying from life: we die from a life, and we die to a life, and the life to which is better then that from which we die. The Grave is our long home, but it is not our last home; we shall rise again

and

and live for ever. As Christ argues (*Joh.*12.24.) concerning his death; *Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it remains alone, but if it die it brings forth fruit.* A man dies as a Corn dies, which dies so as to spring out into a blade, and then to bring forth the ear, and at last full corn in the ear. Indeed if a man were to die, and there rot and never rise more, this were terrible; but to die only to live, and to die from a miserable life that he may live a joyful life, to die as a grain of wheat dies, to grow up in greater beauty then he had, yea in a glory that he never had, why should there be any terrour in this? Though in it self considered, as also to wicked men, death be a King of terrours, yet all these considerations laid together, are enough and enough to perswade the Saints to better thoughts of it, and that Christ the Prince of life and King of Comforts, hath desposed this King of terrours; so that as sin shall not, so death shall not have dominion over us: and though our flesh cannot rest in this hope, (in which Christ rested) *that God will not suffer us to see corruption*, yet we may fully rest in this hope, that *our flesh should be freed from corruption.*

Some heathen tyrants were wont to scorn Christians, who believed a Resurrection, when they fled to avoid death and persecution; *Why are you* (said they) *so sparing of a life, which* (you say) *will return again.* And indeed why should we be sparing of our lives, when we know we shall receive them again with advantage? why should we be afraid to let that go which we cannot loose?

For as we should not be over-careful to retain that which we cannot keep, nor spend many thoughts upon that which is gone with a thought; so we should not be over-careful to keep that, which when we have parted with out of our own hands, we know how to commend to a safe hand, even to him who will as surely return it safe into our hands, as he at first put it into our hands.

Thus *Bildad* brings *Job* to execution, and leaves him in the hand of *the King of terrours, Death*, yet (as he conceives) misery is not come upon him to the utmost. There is (as I may say) a divine Fate attending the wicked man after death, his troubles die not when himself dies; evil shall survive him, and dwell in his family, when he is turned out of his dwelling; Though this evil man shall know his place no more, yet misery shall know his place, and abide there too, as it follows, *It shall dwell in his Tabernacle, because it is none of his, &c.*

Vers. 15. It shall dwell in his Tabernacle, &c.

It shall.] What shall? Who is this inhabitant, or this tenant? who lodges there? who is it? *It shall dwell.* There is neither person nor thing expresst, and the conjectures are various in making out an Answer to this Question, Who dwells there?

First, The Text is read, not as if others should dwell in his Tabernacle, but as if some of his should dwell in the Tabernacle of others. So the Chaldee Paraphrast, who finding the Hebrew for *dwelling*, to be of the Feminine Gender, tells us, that 'tis the wife of that wicked man who was driven out of his dwelling, and at last taken hold of by the King of terrours; and so whereas we say, *It shall dwell in his Tabernacle, because it is none of his*; He saith, *His wife shall dwell in a Tabernacle which is none of his.* And in compliance with this rendring, he expounds the words as an argument of that misery which should fall upon the family of this wicked man; A misery so great, that his wife should not have a house of her own to dwell in, but be forced to dwell in a Tabernacle which was not his: that is, to be either as a servant, or at best but as a sojourner in another mans house. It is an affliction for any man, when he dies, to leave a wife, and not to leave her a room of his own to live in.

Uxor ejus habitabit in tabernaculo non suo. Chald.

Habitent in tabernaculo ejus socii ejus. Vulg.

Secondly, The vulgar reading carries a good sence, but departs too much from the original. Thus; *His companions shall dwell in his Tabernacle.* Some expositors who favour that translation, take no small pains to fit this to the Text, and to find out who are meant by these companions.

Some say, his friends, who were formerly his companions, they shall come to his Tabernacle, lamenting their loss, and mourning for him. But that's an honour rather then a judgment to the dead.

Others say, These companions are the worms, *Worms shall dwell with him in the grave.* But that cannot be a special matter of judgment neither, because it is common to all mankind; when any man dies, worms are his companions; or he may say (as *Job* said, *Chap.*17.14.) *To the worm, thou art my mother and my sister.*

Therefore, thirdly, It is concluded, that by his companions are meant such as sometimes dwelt about him, or near him: Those neighbours, whom he living had oppressed, and wronged, vexed, and expulsed out of their dwellings, even they shall come when he is dead, and take possession of his dwelling, they shall enter upon all. Master *Calvins* translation comes near this explication; *He that is none of his shall dwell in his tent*; He joyns those words which we set last (and render, *Because it is none of his*) to the first part of the verse, and gives them not as a reason why evil should dwell in his house, but as a description of that person, who should dwell in his house; *He that is none of his shall dwell in his tents*; that is, the man that had nothing to do with him, or was a meer stranger to him, shall come and dwell in his tent. As if he had said; *Neither his wife, nor his children, nor any of his kindred shall possess what he hath purchased, strangers shall take it, and divide it among themselves; he that is none of his shall dwell in his tent.* And that's the judgment threatned, (*Deut.*28. 30,31.) *Thou shalt build houses, and shalt not dwell therein; thou shalt plant vineyards, and not gather the grapes thereof; thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof.* It is a great evil when he that is none of ours, that is, a meer stranger dwells in our tents, and eats up those good things, which we provide for our selves and families. Thus the Lord tells the Inhabitant of *Mareshah*, that he will bring them an heir, (*Micah* 1.15.) and who was this? not one of their blood and linage, but a stranger, the *Assyrian* should be their heir, and make himself Lord, by the sword, of all their possessions.

Secondly, We may carry the interpretation more generally. For seeing that the punishment of a wicked man after death is here described, the meaning appears thus; *It shall dwell, &c.* That is, *destruction or misery shall dwell in his house.* We read before, *Destruction shall be ready at his side*; now, *It shall dwell in his house.* As if he had said; the destruction and misery I speak of, shall not only be personal, and fall upon the wicked man himself; but it shall be, as it were, hereditary, it shall descend and fall upon the head of all those that belong to him: misery shall inhabit his fair Pallaces.

Habitabit in tentorio ejus cuncta rum rerum interitus. Theod.

Another keeping this way of interpretation, fixeth it thus; *Fear, or the King of terrours, shall dwell in his Tabernacle.* But whether we say, *destruction*, or *fear*, shall dwell there, it matters little; for the difference is not considerable between these inhabitants, the one being the issue or consequent of the other.

Habitabit in tentorio ejus timor. Vatab.

A third saith; *Want shall dwell in his Tabernacle*; *nothing*, or *have nothing* shall dwell in his Tabernacle; which is made out by reading the words, *Mibili lo*, for a nominative case: *Mibili lo* shall dwell in his Tabernacle, that is, *Want*, or, *nothing to him*; he shall have nothing remaining in his Tabernacle; when his person is gone, his estate shall be gone too; nothing shall dwell there; his house shall be full of want, repleniſhed with emptiness; scarcity shall be the furniture of this mans habitation; his house shall be (according to that description of the earth, before the Lord put that rude heap into this exquisite method) *without form and void*; emptiness and confusion shall lodge in his house for ever.

Nobis videtur מבלי לו *pro nominativo esse. Græce sic aptius reddi potest,* οὐκήσει ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ αὐτῆ τὸ μέλλον αὐτῷ, *sc.* ὑπάρχειν *vel ut Theodotio reddit,* ἀνυπαρξία, *inopia.* Coc. *Habitat in tentorio ejus nihil habere. Habitabitur à fera aliqua & bestia sanguinaria.*

Lastly, *It shall dwell*; That is (as some conceive) some wild beast, or noisom creatures shall dwell in his Tabernacle; *When one beast is out, many other beasts shall come in*; It shall be dwelt in by Satyrs and Serpents, &c. And this is very consonant to other Scriptures. For we find it threatned as a judgment upon wicked places, that the wicked being thrust out, wild beasts should succeed them, and hateful birds make their nests, where men of such hateful conditions nested. (*Isa.* 13. 19, 20, 21, 22.) *Babylon shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the Shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and Owls shall dwell there, and Satyrs shall dance*

dance there. *And the wild beasts of the Islands shall cry in their desolate houses, & Dragons in their pleasant pallaces, and her time is near to come, and her dayes shall not be prolonged.*

Again, *Isa.* 34.11. *&c. The Cormorant, and the Bittern shall possess it, the Owl also and the Raven shall dwell in it, and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. And thorns shall come up in her Palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof, and it shall be an habitation for Dragons, and a Court for Owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the Island, and the Satyr shall cry to his fellow, the Shrichowl also shall rest there, and find for her self a place of rest. There shall the great Owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the Vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.* See how large the Spirit of God is in describing these uncouth Inhabitants. When wicked men are gone, then wild beasts, Owls & Satyrs, whatsoever can be afflictive, or unwelcome to the spirit of man, is sent in to take up its lodgings and guest it in the houses of that sinful generation.

I find a learned Commentator, who collects this from the latter part of this clause, from *Mibili lo*, which we render, *Because it is none of his:* he finds these wild beasts in that expression, and therefore he doth not take the word *Mibili*, for an adverb negative, as we do, but for a none, signifying *corruption*, or *putrifaction*, from the Hebrew word *Bahah* to decay or wax old. So the word is used (*Isa.* 38.17.) *from the pit of (Beli,) destruction, or corruption.* Thus some render in the sixth Chapter of this Book, *vers.*6. *Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? Can that which is unsavoury,* Mibili, *through the corruption of salt,* or which having been salted is now corrupted, (can that) *be eaten?* as was shewed upon the place. Now taking that translation, here is a plain description of noisom creatures, or vermine, dwelling in the wicked mans house. As if to the question, *Who shall dwell there?* This answer were returned; There shall dwell in his Tabernacle, whatsoever is engendred of corruption, or filthiness, whatsoever derives its pedegree from, or is the off-spring of any nastiness or uncleanness, adhering to and remaining in his Tabernacle, this is the Tribe that shall dwell there. As if he said; *When he is gone out of his house, the stink, corruption, and filth that he left behind him, shall breed filthy creatures, nasty monsters enow to inhabite his Tabernacle; we know many noisom creatures proceed from putrifaction, such as are mice, rats, and spiders,* as Naturalists observe, and experience teacheth.

Thus we see what variety of conjecture there is about the antecedent of this word, who are the tenants of this wicked mans house when he is ejected. If we follow our translation, that leads us to the third interpretation before given; *It*, that is, destruction, or want shall dwell in his Tabernacle.

Observe Hence, *The wrath of God dwells in the house, and upon the estate of a wicked man, when he is cast out of it, dead and gone.*

That's the scope of the verse; and these various interpretations meet in this one sence, that there is a wrath abiding in this wicked mans house. Whether his companions, such as were none of his, strangers dwell in it; or fear and destruction dwell in it, or wild beasts dwell in it, or vermine dwell in it, whosoever of these are the tenants, and possessors of his house after him; this is the meaning, that the wrath of God dwells there. As Christ speaks of unbelievers; *He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon him, Joh.* 3. It dwells with or inhabits him; it is an abiding wrath. So, here; *It shall dwell.* He doth not say, some evil shall fall upon his habitation, some evil shall happen to him: but he useth a word that notes the perpetuity of it, *It shall dwell.* It shall not come, and lodge for a night, or sojourn for a week, or a moneth; but there it shall dwell, it shall be an inhabitant; wrath shall continue upon it.

As blessings abide upon the Tabernacles and dwellings of the people of God; they do not only happen in sometimes, but they take up their abode in them. *The houses of the Saints are the dwelling places, or the abiding places of mercy.* Mercy hath no where else to rest, but in such houses and hearts. So destruction, and wrath, wild beasts, and whatsoever discovers it self in a way of judgment, is the portion of evil men while they live and shall take possession of their houses when they die. When their bodies are past feeling, their estates, possessions and families shall feel the wrath of God. *It shall dwell in his Tabernacle,*

Because it is none of his.

There are divers translations of this clause. I shall touch only upon three.

Propter non ei. *Reg.* Ex non ei. *Cajet.* Non existente in eo. *Pagn.* Qui non est. *Vulg.*

First, Some render it, *who is not*; Thus the vulgar; *His companions shall dwell in his Tabernacle, who is not.* And so the words are a description of man, vile and base. For as either things which are low in the esteem of men, are said not to be, (1 *Cor.* 1.28.) God useth *things which are not, to bring to nought those things which are.* Now, I say, as base things are said *not to be*, so are base men: and then the Tabernacle of him *who is not*, is the Tabernacle of a vile person. Or it is a description of one who is dead. Death is often noted in Scripture by *a not being*, *Jer.* 31. *Rachel weeping for her children, because they are not, would not be comforted, Revel.*17.8. *The beast which was, and is not*; That is, who is dead and gone, his power is broken. So, *Ezek.*28. 19. *Thou shalt be a terrour, and never shalt thou be any more*; That is, thou shalt die.

Secondly, Thus; It shall dwell in his Tabernacle, *because it shall no more be to him*; That is, his Tabernacle shall no more be for his use or habitation, therefore destruction or wild beasts may dwell in it, or take it up.

Nō ei amplius deserviet suum tabernaculum. Pined. Eò, quod non sit ipsius. Vatabl. תבלי sæpè causam subindicat, ut min sit ex. q. d. ex eo, quod non est ipsius. Non est ipsius, *quia illud rapuit*, i. e. *rapto construxit.* Merc. *Significat merito impii domum ad alienos transfiturā, quod ipse illā non suis sumtibus, sed alienis dispendiis ædificarit.*

A third renders as we; or we from him; *because it is none of his.* The negative particle, is also causal. And then the sence is this; It shall dwell in his Tabernacle, *because it is none of his*; That is, he never got it honestly. So our late Annotators give the sence; He did not come truly by it. This exposition is clear, as giving an account why judgment dwells in a wicked mans house when he dies, even *because it is none of his.* It was unduly gotten, and unjustly kept. So, here is a correction, he calls it *his Tabernacle*, in the former part of the verse; but now he saith, *it is none of his.* For this Tabernacle was set up by oppression, bribery, and injustice, and so maintained. He built his house by unrighteousness, and now he is gone, nothing shall dwell in it but misery and judgment. When the earthly house of his personal Tabernacle shall be dissolved, the Tabernacle wherein his person housed, shall be left utterly destitute.

Hence Observe, First, *That which a man gets unjustly, is none of his, he hath no right to it.*

Man hath no right to possess that which he hath obtained unrighteously. The Apostle speaking to the Church of the *Thessalonians*, (2 *Thes.* 3. 12.) directs all in their callings to be diligent, and laborious; and why? if a man be idle, and negligent, and will not take pains in his calling, all the bread he eats he steals, it is *none of his:* therefore he adds; *We command, and exhort you, by the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness he work, and eat his own bread:* they who do not work, eat the bread of other men, that is, the bread to which they have no title. As our sweat and labour are the best sauce to our meat, so the price which we must lay down for it, else, it is none of ours. Indeed a man may be unable to work, much more to sweat for his bread, and yet the bread which he eats may be his own. Such a one hath a right to every mans bread, and every man is bound in that case to relieve him. 'Tis Idleness, not inability, which is the thief. But he that hath ability to labour in his calling, and is idle, all the bread which he eats is stollen, 'tis none of his own. Hence we may infer, if a man meerly upon his idleness may be said to steal all the bread he eats, as having no right to it, much more that bread is not his own, that is wrung out of the hands, and pulled out of the teeth of others. That which is gotten by grinding the faces of the poor, or by doing wrong to the rich, this bread is not our own; Houses and Lands so gotten, are not our own. That which is justly gotten is a gift from God, but that which is gotten unjustly, is stoln from men. Deceiving is thieving.

Secondly, Observe, *That which is unjustly gotten, shall not be kept.*

All worldly things perish with the using, but such worldly things usually perish before we or ours can use them. Hence we have that dreadful sentence, (*Jer.*22.3.)

Wo

Wo to him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by robbery, that useth his neighbours service without wages, and giveth him not for his work; that saith, I will build me a wide house, and large chambers, &c. This wo doth not only belong to those who build houses by that which they get unrighteously, but it belongs to all who have any thing in their houses which is gotten unrighteously. House is not taken strictly for the dwelling place, (though that be a truth) but any thing that a man possesseth, or enjoyeth, or is part of his inheritance, is his house. *Wo to him that builds a house by unrighteousness.* Why? what wo shall be upon him? This shall be his wo, himself shall not long inhabit the house which he hath built, and the wrath of God shall inhabit it long when he is out of it; destruction *shall dwell there, because it is none of his.*

Bildad goes further to shew the misery of this man. Not only shall destruction and misery dwell there, because the house is none of his; but

Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

As if he had said, either the estate of a wicked man shall be conveyed over to, and possessed by strangers; or if not, yet it shall perish, it shall be consumed as with fire, and brimstone, from heaven; *Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.* These last words of the Allegory, shew the extremity, the utmost of the judgment; **Brimstone** is a dreadful word, it hath a savour of hell in it, the savour of eternal death in it; *Brimstone shall be scattered.* And it is conceived, that *Bildad* in this, either intimates the manner of that judgment which God sent upon *Job* in the first Chapter, when the fire of God fell from heaven, and consumed his sheep. Fire from heaven is a sulphurious fire; Here *Bildad* seems to say, *Thou art the man*; on thy habitation brimstone was scattered, thy flocks of sheep were burnt with fire from heaven.

Non dubiũ quin in Jobum contorqueat cujus facultatum pars igni cælitus delapso consumpta fuit. Merc.

Or, That, he in this minds *Job* of the terrible judgment of God upon *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, of which we read (*Gen.* 19.24.) whom God consumed from heaven by raining down brimstone upon them; *Brimstone was scattered upon their habitation.* So the meaning is; The dwelling of this wicked man, shall either pass away to others, or misery shall dwell in it, or it shall be utterly consumed by fire; *Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.*

It is very frequent in Scripture, when any great judgment is spoken of, to allude to the dealing of God with *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, in scattering fire and brimstone. *Deut.* 29. 23. *The whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that is not sowen, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath, Psal.* 11.6. *He shall rain down upon the wicked, fire and brimstone, this shall be the portion of his cup, Ezek.* 38.22. *Isa.* 34.9. *Isa.* 13.9. *Jer.* 49.18. In all these you shall find an allusion still made to the consumption of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. When God threatneth to bring a total consumption upon a people, and to destroy them utterly from the face of the earth; *then* (saith he) *I will do to you as I did to Sodom, and Gomorrah*; that is, according to the Text, *scatter brimstone upon your habitations.*

Secondly, The *scattering of brimstone* is conceived by others, to note that special judgment, *Barrenness*: his beautiful habitation, (so the word signifies) or (as we may extend it) all his possessions, his fruitful fields and pastures, his goodly hills, mountains, all these beautiful things, shall be as if brimstone had been scattered upon them; that is, they shall be barren, God shall strike them with barrenness, and they shall bring forth no fruit at all. (*Deut.* 29.23.) Brimstone and barrenness go together; *The whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, it is not sowen, nor any grass groweth therein*; so the scattering of brimstone is of the same signification as *sowing with salt*, *Judg.* 9.45. For no sooner had he spoken of brimstone and salt, but presently adds, *it is not sowen, nor grass groweth therein:* as if he had said, it shall be desolate and uninhabited. The Land of *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah* (*Gen.* 14.) was like *Eden*, the Garden of God; but as soon as God had scattered brimstone upon it, it was like a desolate wilderness, or fruitless desert. The apples of *Sodom* are a proverb, to this day, for fruitless fruit, or a shew only of fruit: No fruit (say some) grows there to ripeness or perfection. Or if brimstone speak not barrenness in general, yet (as others restrain it,) barrenness as to him and his, who was thus cast out of his possession. The land of a wicked man may bear fruit, and yet be as fruitless to him, and his, as if it were sowed with brimstone instead of corn; he shall never have the crop, or harvest, or revenue of it, he shall never eat of the fruit of it, though others do, and though possibly it continue as fertile, and be improved as much as ever. A land flourishing with milk and honey to others, may be to former owners as a land *whose streams are turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone*, as the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 34.9.)

Sulphur est symbolũ sterilitatis.

Salsugo, quia sal exugit omnem terræ succũ.

Thirdly, Others conjecture, that this scattering of brimstone implies only that his house should never be inhabited any more, because brimstone is of such an ill savour, that it drives away both man and beast.

Fourthly, That it is a description of that mourning, or of those terrible cries and lamentations which should be made for him at his funerals. Some of the ancients observe, that it was a custome in times of extream mourning, to scatter brimstone, and things of ill-savour, to afflict the smell, as it is to wear black Garments to afflict the sight. Or the reason of scattering brimstone at his burial, may rather be given as an argument of his dishonour, he being a man whose very memory did stink. And therefore whereas sweet spices and odours are properly burnt at the funerals of such whose names and memorials are as a box of sweet ointment powred out, this man's Tabernacle (after he is dead,) shall be perfumed with brimstone; while he breathed in it, though his manners left an ill savour there, yet he took care to keep it sweet; but when he hath breathed his last, then (according to that which is spoken, *Isa.* 3.24. of the proud women of *Israel*) *It shall come to pass, that instead of a sweet smell, there shall be a stink.* As he lived wickedly, and died miserably, so he shall be buried ignominiously.

Est circumlocutio luctus domesticorum in obitu patris familias odores tetros & fœtidos adhibentium in signũ mœroris, sicut etiam nigræ vestes sumuntur à lugentibus. Aquin.

Ad extremã funeris ignominiam pertinet. cum enim in funere divitis aromata cremarẽtur, hic succedit teterimus sulphuris fœtor. Cajet.

But I rather take the former interpretation, that this *scattering of brimstone*, either notes the extremity of the judgment in general: Or in particular, that barrenness shall be the portion of his posterity, when once the wrath of God hath siezed on and swept him away. And so it gives a sutable close to this third Allegory of the wicked man, prosecuted in a legal way, to whose doom or sentence this is added, that his house shall be pull'd down, or consumed with fire, that nothing may remain his of him, but a perpetual execration of name and wayes.

Postquã causa cognita ab illa adjudicata sunt bona immittuntur lictores ad incendendas ædes ejus in facti perpetuã memoriã. Jun.

Hence Observe, *God hath judgments of all sorts and sizes for wicked men.*

He hath *Sodoms*-judgments, such judgments as were poured upon *Sodom*, for high offenders, for *Sodom*-like sinners; He hath not spent all his fire and brimstone upon that City; *brimstone shall yet be scattered upon the habitation of the wicked.* And this notes,

First, The suddenness of the judgment. The *Sodomites* were surprized, when destroyed; they expected it not; *The Sun rose upon Sodom*, saith the Text, there was not a cloud threatning rain, they did not suspect a shower of water, much less did they see a cloud or suspect a shower of fire and brimstone, when God destroyed them.

Secondly, It notes the unavoidableness of it; for who is able to withstand burning brimstone, or to withdraw from that calamity, which drops from heaven? Our houses may shelter us when it rains water, but when it rains fire, our houses are no shelter.

Thirdly, It shews the immediatness of the judgment; The text saith only, that *brimstone shall be scattered*, but by whom, it saith not; if no hand of man appear against the wicked, God will; when none can deal with them, God can. God only appeared in the destruction of *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*. All creatures are as ready at Gods call for the services of wrath and vengeance, as of mercy and salvation. If he do but hold up his finger, fire and brimstone are at hand to consume, as showers of rain to comfort the habitations of the world. Thus much of the third Allegory contained in these five verses. The wicked man was first apprehended by the messengers of death, and then brought to death that King of terrours;

being dead, his goods are confiscate, others enter upon his estate, and brimstone is scattered on his habitation. Here's compleat wrath, and judgment in perfection.

Vers. 16. **His roots shall be dried up beneath, and above shall his branches be cut off.**

This is the fourth Allegory, taken from a tree. Men are often in Scripture compared to trees; all sorts of men, good men, bad men are so compared. Good men are compared to trees flourishing by the river side, (*Psal.*1.) Wicked men are also compared to flourishing trees, but with this difference, they flourish only for a while; but godly men are as trees that flourish continually, (*Psal.*92.14.) *They shall still bring forth fruit in old age.*

In this text the wicked man is compared to a tree; and he is compared to a flourishing tree, he hath both root, and branches, yet he is near declining, yea he is not far from destroying.

His root shall be dried up beneath.] He had a root; what was his root? The root of this wicked man, may be taken two wayes.

First, For those secret counsels, purposes, and designs which he layes for himself, these are to a man as his roots. A mans estate and affairs are setled and fastned by counsel, as a tree is by the roots: the root also which maintains and feeds his affairs and designs is counsel. So some interpret this place, *his root shall be dried up*; That is, his counsels, his under-ground-plots and projects which he laid deep, and low, quite out of sight, as the root of a tree is, these God will dry up, he shall see them come to nothing.

Secondly, By the *roots* in this Allegory we may understand more generally any thing by which this wicked man thought himself strong, or secure: For that is the use of a root. A root to a tree is as the foundation is to a house, the strength of it. His root is whatsoever may strengthen, and hold him fast, whatsoever may keep him in his state, and greatness. Thus not only his contrivances, and counsels, but his riches, and relations, his correspondencies, and allies, whatsoever we may put the notion of strength upon, all that is his root, by that he is upheld, and by that moisture is sent forth into all his branches. But there shall come rooters to his root, they shall grub, and stock him up, they shall take that from him in which his strength lay, and from which his enlivening moisture came.

And above his branches shall be cut off.] The word that we translate branch, signifies, a crop or a harvest; the fruit of a tree is the crop of it. You see compleat misery in this Allegory; *root and branch*, is all that a tree hath; and to be cut off root and branch, is to be utterly cut off. If the root be dried up, though the branches be not cut off, yet the tree withers and dies. Or if the root be not dried up, yet if all the branches be cut off, there's no beauty in it, nor can it bring forth any fruit; A trees bears not at the stock, but at the branches; 'tis but a stump if the branches be cut off.

But take it, as here, in both, and then the judgment is universal; what hath a tree left, when it hath lost, both root and branches. (*Mal.*4.1.) *Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble, the day comes that shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, it shall leave them neither root nor branch*; That is, it shall totally consume them. As it speaks perfect mercy when both root and branch prosper (2 *King.*19.30.) *And that remnant that shall escape of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward*; So it shews the compleatness of a judgment, when there shall be neither root nor branch. The branches of man, are whatsoever man put's forth, to shew his excellency or vertues, his pomp or splendour by. Some interpret *branches* for *children*. So they are called, *Psal.*127. *Thy children shall be as Olive branches, &c.* And then his branches shall be cut off, is, his children and posterity shall be cut off. This also argues the greatness of the judgment.

Others by *branches*, understand his desires acted, or the work he had begun, and put forth: The motions and puttings forth of a man's spirit in actions, are like the branches of a tree: The thoughts of man in the Hebrew are expressed by a word which signifies the boughs of a tree: the fruits which our thoughts shoot, blossom, and bring forth, are our actions. Thus as the wicked man's root, his plots and designs shall be spoiled below; so the branches which shoot out from him into action, shall be broken off; and God will say to this man, as Christ to the Fig-tree, (*Mat.*21.19.) *Never fruit grow on thee more. The root shall be dried up beneath, and the branches shall be cut off above.*

Some understand this more literally, his root, and his branches, that is, his trees shall bear no fruit, or he shall be deprived of their fruit; the estate which he hath abroad in the field, his lands, and woods, his Gardens and plantations shall be destroyed: according to that (*Deut.*28.16.) *Cursed shalt thou be in the field*; that is, thy cattel shall miscarry, thy corn and fruits shall wither; or as we may apply that of the Prophet *Isaiah* (which is spoken (I conceive) of the general consumption which should come upon that people and their posterity) to this particular Judgment of spoiling all the hopes of fruit in the field. (*Chap.*5.24.) *Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust.* The root is fruit (*in potentia remota*) at a distance, the blossom is fruit (*in potentia proxima*) at next door, or the immediate antecedent of fruit; the Prophet to shew that there was no hope of fruit remaining, shews that both their remote and their neerest hope of fruit should be removed.

Nihil non peribet è rebus impii, peribit quod latet (radix) & quod eminet, ramus.

Hence Note, *Wicked men may be fully furnished with means for the attaining of their ends.*

Here are roots, and branches, deep counsels, high actings, many strengths, which are to the wicked man as the foundation is to the house, and as root and branches to the tree. The Prophet (*Psal.*37.35.) speaks under this similitude; *I beheld the wicked like a green Bay-tree*, O how he flourished! yea you may behold him sometimes, as an Oak of *Bashan*, as a Cedar of *Lebanon*; *He casts forth his roots* (in worldly and civil things, as a godly man doth in spirituals,) *as Lebanon* (*Hosea* 14.5.) that is, mighty roots: *and his branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.* It is no unusual thing to see the worst of men thus rooted, thus branched, yea and (for a while) fruited too.

Secondly, Observe, *When wicked men are in their greatest strength and beauty, when they have both root and branches, then judgment comes upon them.*

The strength of man cannot protect against the justice of God, sinners shall feel the impressions of his anger; not only shall their goodly branches feel it, but their strongest roots. What root can keep its earth, when God raiseth a wind, and sends out his storm? What branch can keep either leaves or fruit, when God sends out his blasting mildew? (*Psal.*37.35.) *David* speaks of such a goodly flourishing-tree; *I have seen the wicked in great power*, there is his root; *spreading himself like a green Bay-tree*, there are his branches; yet *he passed away, and lo he was not, yea I sought him, yet I could not find him.* And the very interpretation which the Psalmist makes (in another place) of all the flourishing of wicked men, of their strong roots, and goodly branches, is, that they shall be rooted up; *When the wicked spring as grass, and all the workers of iniquity flourish.* What is the meaning of this? how may we interpret this? *It is that they shall be destroyed for ever*, (*Psal.*92.6,7.) And that which is spoken of mankind in general, is most true of this sort of mankind. *In the morning they are like grass that groweth up: In the morning it flourisheth, and grows up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth, Psal.*90.6. The strongest of men are but as grass, *in the morning they grow*; The best of their worldly beauty is but like grass, for both they and it, they and their glory are cut down and wither in the Evening. At what time soever man is cut down, it is his Evening; but to shew that man shall not continue long, he is here measured by the length of an artificial day, whereof the evening is rather the limit, then a part. Now if the beauty of all men be thus subject to a sudden decay, how much more they and theirs, who are the special objects of the wrath of God, because of their special sins. The Prophet *Amos* seems to imply, that the *Amorites* had some hopes to withstand their

over-

overthrow, and preserve themselves from a fall: *Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them.* What was this *Amorite? His height was like the height of the Cedars.* There was his flourishing branch. *And he was strong as the Oaks (deeply rooted) yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath,* (*Chap.* 2. 9.) Though he were in height like the Cedar, though he were for strength like the Oak, yet up came his root, and down came his top. The creature is no match for the Creator. There is no securing our selves against God, when he comes to take vengeance; both root, and branch, beauty, and strength must wither, and dry up before his consuming jealousie.

Hitherto *Bildad* hath covered and wrapt up his meaning in Allegories; in the allegory of light; in the allegory of hunting, and fowling; in the allegory of a judiciary proceeding; and now in the allegory of a tree. In all which, though there be much variety of usefull meditations for us, yet they all meet in this one great conclusion, that God hath prepared, and will certainly bring forth ruine and destruction for the portion of wicked men.

VERS. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

His remembrance shall perish from the earth: and he shall have no name in the street.
He shall be driven out from light into darkness, and chased out of the world.
He shall neither have son, nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.
They that come after him shall be astonied at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.
Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

WHat the Disciples said to Christ, *Joh.* 16. 29. the same may we to *Bildad* about this shutting up of his discourse; *Now speakest thou plainly, and no parable.* These words are the plain English, or the explication of what he had delivered under the vayle of those Metaphors and Allegories already opened.

In them *Bildad* shadowed the estate of a wicked man; and here he sets it in the open light.

In the context of these five verses, we have three things especially to take notice of.

First, A description of the misery of a wicked man in the 17, 18, 19. verses.

Secondly, We have the effects which this shall produce, *vers.* 20.

Thirdly, The conclusion or upshot of all, in a rhetorical exclamation, *vers.* 21.

The misery of this wicked man is set forth three wayes.

First, By his dishonour, *vers.* 17. *His remembrance shall perish, he shall have no name.*

Secondly, By his death, or banishment, *vers.* 18. *He shall be driven out from light to darkness, he shall be chased out of the world.*

Thirdly, By the desolation of his family; *He shall neither have son nor nephew, nor any remaining in his dwellings,* vers. 19.

The effects which follow this great misery of the wicked man, at the 20*th* verse, are considerable two wayes.

First, What effect it shall have upon those that come after.

Apodosis sive accommodatio superiorum Allegoriarum ad thesin de statu improbi, ut obliquè perstringat Jobum. Jun.

Secondly, What upon those that went before, or that lived with him; the one shall be astonished, and the other affrighted.

The conclusion of all is; *Such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.*

I shall briefly pass the misery of this wicked man in those three verses, because it is only the exposition of what we had before under allegories.

Vers. 17. **His remembrance shall perish from the earth.**

Dicitur memoria alicujus perire pro eo quod est in aternum ab hominum recordatione divelli. Bold.

This some take from the former verse; *His root shall be dried up beneath, and his branches shall be cut off above.* When root and branch are gone, then the memory of all is gone: what can remain when both these are removed?

The perishing of his remembrance, notes the utter extinction of his remembrance, as Chap. 3. 3. *Job* wisheth that the day might perish wherein he was born; his meaning is, that it might no more at all be remembred; so here, *His remembrance shall perish.*

And he shall have no name in the street.

No name.] The Hebrew is, *There shall not be a name to him.* By *name*, in Scripture, is meant honour or estimation among men; For wicked men have a name remaining; but it is an ill name, a name of dishonour, a blemish. So that when he saith, *He shall have no name*, the meaning is, he shall have no good name, or no honourable name remaining. Better have no name, then an ill name. *Cain* hath a name, and so hath *Pharoah* in the old Testament; *Judas* hath a name, and so hath *Demas* in the new, but they are all names of dishonour, and so no names. It is usual in Scripture to put the name for renown, and men of name by an hebraisme are men of renown, *Numb.* 1. 16. we render, *These were men renowned:* The Hebrew is, *These were men of name.* These were the renowned of the Congregation. These were men of name in the Congregation. *Numb.* 16. 2. *And they rose up before Moses with certain of the children of Israel, 250 Princes of the assembly famous in the Congregation, men of renown,* or, *men of name.* The Apostle (*Rom.* 1. 1.) is conceived to advance the honour of his Apostleship, when he saith, *Paul called to be an Apostle.* So we translate it, *called to be*; the Greek is, *Paul called an Apostle*: that is, *Paul* whose name is *Apostle.* Which may be taken according to this hebraisme, as a vindication of himself from that dis-repute which was cast upon him by many among the *Romans.* Therefore (saith he) *Paul named an Apostle*, or, *he that hath this honour to be an Apostle writes to you. Paul* was not ambitious of his own honour, but zealous, lest the Gospel which he preached should be contemned through the contemptibleness of him whose office and charge it was to preach it.

Non nomen ei. *Heb. Nomen in scripturis famam & celebritatem denotat.*

Viri nominati. Onkelos. *Hi vocati Synagogæ.* Sep. *Elegantèr observant Scholia Græca vocem ὀνομαστοὶ significare nobiles, qua ratione Paulus dicit quòd sit vocatus Apostolus, i. e. Apostolus ille nominatus & celebris, ut evangelium ex prædicante ignobilitate non fieret contemptibile.* Pined.

In the Text, *His remembrance shall perish*, is therefore put before *he shall have no name*; because a name is that by which we are remembred; The name of a man is his memorial. See both joyned together concerning God himself (*Exod.* 3. 15.) *Thus thou shalt say to the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all Generations.* That is, by this name I will have a memorial, or be remembred to all Generations. *A man of no name, and a man of no number, are proverbials for a man of no esteem.*

He shall have no name [in the street.]

In the face of the street; so saith the Original: that is, among men he shall have no name: men meet in the street, in publick places, there they discourse both of things, and persons. This man shall have no name there; or if he be there spoken of, (as one of the Ancients glosses the place,) men shall turn away their heads at the mention of him; they shall turn away with indignation, as if an ill savour distempered the ayre every time he was spoken of.

Super faciem plateæ Heb. *Superficies cujusque rei, facies vocatur.* Drus.

Hence note, *It is the punishment of wicked men to have their names dye when they dye, much more while they live.*

A good name among men, is a great blessing: and hence it is a great sin to bear false witness against another, because that takes away his good name. A false witness speaks to the discredit of his neighbour, and sets a brand of disgrace upon his name. If a good name were not a precious commodity; if to be remembred among men were not a great honour, this were not so great a sin. *The memory, or name of the wicked shall rot, Prov.* 10. 4. He doth not say, his house, or his body shall rot, though they must, but *his memory shall rot*; that is, either it shall not be remembred at all, or when ever it is, it shall be remembred as a rotten thing.

Good men, usually, have an ill name among many in the world, and indeed they can scarce be good, of whom all speak well; yea the best may for a time have a blot upon their name among those that are good; but commonly their blot is given by those that are evil. And it is some addition of honour to be ill spoken of by those that are evil: For as it is a discommendation to be commended by such, and a kind of disrespect to be respected by them, so it is

our commendation to be diſcommended by them, and an argument of our integrity, when they condemn us But it is a precious priviledge to have a name with thoſe whoſe names are precious, and to be eſteemed by thoſe who are juſtly had in eſtimation. Further, though the name of a good man for a while be under a cloud, yet his light breaks forth again; and though all the while he lives, his name ſuffer among many, yet when he dyes, his name revives among all. How precious was the name of *Paul*, to the Saints in his dayes? how precious is it among all true Saints to this day? yet while he lived, he was accounted by moſt, as *the off-ſcouring of all things*! Reproached Saints recover honour when they dye, whereas the names of wicked men who lived in honour, fall under reproach when they dye. A good man's name is beſt when he is dead: A wicked man may have a name while he lives. *Nero* is now called a Tyrant; if any had called him ſo while he lived, he could not have had ſafe living in any part of the world. But though flatterers cry up wicked men while they live, in hope to get by them, and though the ſincere dare not cry them down, fearing to be ruin'd by them; yet when they are in their graves, they have no name in the ſtreets, but a name of diſgrace.

Again, Obſerve; *To want a name among men, is moſt grievous to a wicked man.*

Loſs of credit and eſtimation among men, is an affliction to any man, but moſt to wicked men; when they loſe their name here, they have loſt it every where: They have no name in heaven, there they are men of no name; if they loſe their name on earth too, then they are men of no name indeed. Though a Godly man ſhould have no name on earth, yet he hath a name written where it ſhall never be blotted out; his name is written in heaven. Chriſt would have us rejoyce in this more then in all worldly names, (*Luk.* 10. 2,3.) when his Diſciples rejoyced becauſe they had power over evil ſpirits, and could cure all diſeaſes, ſo that their name was up in the world, and 'twas talked of in all places, what mighty things they had done, and Chriſt denied not that it was an honour to be impower'd for the doing of thoſe great things, Yet (ſaith he) *rejoyce not in this, but rather rejoyce that your names are written in heaven.* Now, I ſay, as the Saints ſhould rejoyce in this honour, that their names are written in heaven, above all their rejoycings in an earthly name; and ſhould not onely out-joy worldly joyes, but even joy them out, with the joy they have in God. So, though the Saints have no name upon earth, though their name be written in the duſt, yea though an evil favour be ſcattered upon their name, yet they have cauſe to rejoyce that their names are written in heaven, that their names are enrolled among Saints and Angels, among Patriarks, and Apoſtles; that their names are fixed where the names of the greateſt Potentates in the world (who know not God) ſhall have no place. 'Tis then a ſpecial evil to wicked men to loſe their name in this world, becauſe when they have loſt that, they have loſt all: And when they have loſt it here, they can find it no where. And we may take notice, that whereas the ambition of carnal men layes it ſelf forth in nothing more then to provide for the perpetuating of their names in the world, that yet they loſe their deſign, their names being blotted out, and their memorial loſt in the world. The natural Hiſtorian obſerves of thoſe famous Pyramides, which were ſet up in *Egypt*; that though the work was ſtupendious, and admirable, and is remembred by many ancient Writers; yet (ſaith he) it doth not appear among all thoſe Writers, who were the founders of thoſe Pyramides. Upon which he gives this obſervation, That by a juſt judgment, their names who raiſed thoſe amazing or rather mad ſtructures, are buried in an eternal night of forgetfulneſs, or (as this Text ſpeaks) *their remembrance is periſhed from the earth.* And as this befel thoſe ſons of ambition, who intended to make themſelves famous with poſterity, by erecting thoſe vain-glorious fabricks; ſo much more will it fall to their lot, who hope to make themſelves famous, by wicked works, by injuſtice, tyranny, and oppreſſion, by voluptuouſneſs, intemperance, or any other abomination. The Lord will ſend a rot upon ſuch names, and their memory ſhall periſh for ever. This is the firſt judgement threatned; He ſhall not have an honourable mention among men; *He ſhall have no name in the ſtreet.*

Cum ſcriptores plurimi de tribus illis malibus inſania multa prodiderunt, inter omnes tamen illos non conſtat à quibus facta ſunt, juſtiſſimo caſu obliteratis tantæ vanitatis Authoribus. Plin. l. 36. c. 12.

The ſecond is;

Verſ. 18. **He ſhall be driven out from light to darkneſs, and chaſed out of the world.**

He ſhall be driven.] The word notes a forcible violent or compulſory act, he ſhall be driven, like a beaſt againſt his will, or whether he will or no. But what ſhall drive him, or who ſhall drive him? The Hebrew is plural, and the verb which we read paſſively, is active; ſo it is rendred by a learned tranſlator, *They ſhall drive him.* But who are theſe Drivers? who they are is not expreſt. Some underſtand his troubles, and ſorrows, they ſhall drive him from light to darkneſs, he ſhall dye under the preſſure of his afflictions. *Expellent eum.* Mont.

Others refer it to God himſelf, who is the ſupream diſpencer of judgments; He ſhall be driven by God, or God ſhall drive him *from light to darkneſs, and chaſe him out of the world.* But whether we apply it to God the efficient, or to thoſe afflictions which are the inſtrument of his expulſion, the ſence and tendency of the Text is the ſame.

He ſhall be driven, [**from light to darkneſs.**]

From a threefold light to a threefold darkneſs; firſt, from the light of honour, to the darkneſs of diſgrace; ſecondly, from the light of life, to the darkneſs of death; thirdly, from the light of temporal felicity, to the darkneſs of eternal miſery and condemnation: whither ſoever, or into what eſtate ſoever he goes, *He ſhall be driven.* So the wrathful dealing of God with the wicked is expreſt in Scripture. Some conceive, that the Goſpel-language alludes to this paſſage of *Bildad.* (*Mat.* 8. 12.) *The children of the Kingdome ſhall be caſt out into utter darkneſs.* The *Jewes* were children of the Kingdome, and they thought themſelves heirs of the Kingdome; yea, they preſumed, as if the Kingdome had been entailed upon their perſons, becauſe they were *Abrahams* poſterity; yet ſaith Chriſt, even you, for all your confidences, *ſhall be caſt into utter darkneſs*; that is, to hell, where there is nothing but darkneſs, or you ſhall be caſt quite beyond the verge, or utmoſt bound of the Kingdome. The Kingdome hath light all over, but beyond the Kingdome there is no light; being then caſt out of all hopes to enter the Kingdome, they muſt needs be caſt into utter darkneſs, or into that darkneſs, which is without. And as thoſe children of the Kingdome, ſo all unprofitable ſervants are under the ſame doom, *Matth.* 25. 30. And again, (*Matth.* 22. 13.) *Bind him hand and foot, and caſt him into utter darkneſs; there ſhall be weeping, and wayling, and gnaſhing of teeth.*

Videtur Bildad id maxime ſignificare, quod omnibus improbis evenit. Omnes autem improbi non ita puniantur in hac vita, ſed omnes tandem detrudentur in tenebras exteriores. Coc.

We may expound the wicked man in the Text, driven from light to this darkneſs. Not onely is he driven from the light of honour, to the darkneſs of diſgrace, and from the light of life, to the darkneſs of a temporal death, but to the darkneſs of eternal death, which is utter darkneſs.

And chaſed out of the world.] This clauſe is of the ſame mind with the former; To chaſe, as to drive, notes a violent purſuit; and he is chaſed not onely out of the ſociety of his friends, or out of the Land where he lived, but out of the Land of the living.

Hence note; *Wicked men do not go, but are violently caſt out of the world.*

He is chaſed as a wild beaſt; He hath no mind to go out of his fat paſture, from the place he knows, to a place he knows not. (*Luk.* 12.20.) It is ſaid of the rich man; *This night ſhall they fetch thy ſoul from thee.* He did not reſign, and give it up, but he was driven from it, or it was drawn from him; either of which is to be chaſed out of the world. This is the wicked mans ſecond woe.

יגרוהו *fugabunt eum* נדד *vagatus eſt.*

Behold, A third;

Verſ. 19. **He ſhall have neither ſon nor nephew among his people, nor any remaining in his dwellings.**

This verſe extends the curſe upon him in reference to his poſterity. There is nothing difficult in theſe words; here's total eradication; not onely ſhall he have no ſon, but no ſons ſon. And when he ſaith, **nor ſon, nor nephew**; it is not to be taken ſtrictly; but as including all his kindred, in what degree ſoever. It is as much as to ſay, he ſhall have

have none of his lineage remain, all shall be extinct. Again; He doth not say, he never had son nor nephew, but he shall not have; there shall none remain among his people.

And not onely shall he have no kindred remaining among his people; but he shall not have any remaining in his dwellings: That is, not any friend, not any acquaintance, not any that bears good will to him. A mans children are neerest, and then his nephews; then profest friends, acquaintance, and familiars. But when neither son, nor nephew, nor any friend remains, this is a sweeping Judgement, a very besome of destruction. It leaves none remaining

In his dwellings.] Or in the place of his peregrination and sojourning in this world, as the word imports. In this *Bildad* strikes at *Job*, and wounds the heart of the good man; from whom God had taken all his children; as if he had plainly said; *God hath dealt with thee as with a wicked man, thou hast neither son nor nephew among thy people, nor any remaining in thy dwellings.* But passing by this supposition in reference to *Job*; we may take up a point or two, as it concerns wicked men in general. First note;

The children and posterity of wicked men, are swept away for their fathers wickedness.

Though children shall not be punished for their fathers sin, if they repent, and return to God; yet greater evils fall upon children who do not repent, because of the iniquity of their fathers. Yea good children who walk with God, may have some touch, though not in wrath to them, yet in wrath to their fathers, because of their evils. I have met with this before, and therefore onely touch it.

Secondly, Observe how he puts this as a special judgement belonging to wicked men, for though sometimes it be the lot of godly men, to have neither son, nor nephew, nor any remaining in their dwellings (Some good men never had son or nephew, and others have been bereaved of all they had) yet this is not so great an affliction to a godly man, as it is to the ungodly. For he that can call God father, and speak to Christ as his brother, he that is allied to all the Saints in heaven and earth, in a spiritual relation, hath no want of natural relations, though he hath them not: it is no great matter to him, though he have neither son nor nephew, who is an adopted son of God.

As before, in reference to honour, and renown; a godly man can spare his honour and credit in the world well enough; because he hath so good a name in heaven; he is so well reported of with God, that if the wicked trample his honour in the dust, and reproach him here on earth, he hath no reason to be discomforted. So, he can spare, and be without the outward blessing of sons and daughters, of nephews and friends, because he hath higher alliances, and a more noble consanguinity, as the Prophet speaks; *God hath given him a name better then that of sons and daughters,* (Isa. 56. 5.) But for a wicked man, if he want sons, and nephews, to inherit his estate, and to carry on his part in the world; he hath nothing to relieve that want. He that is childless, and Christless too, hath reason to weep for his children, and not be comforted, because they are not. The fruit of the body was put among the promised blessings to the *Jewes*, (*Deut.* 28. 11.) Children are the comfort of their living parents, and the continuance of their name and memory when they die. That promise (*Psal.* 72. 17.) speaks this fully; *His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the Sun; men shall be blessed in him; all Nations shall call him blessed.* The Hebrew is; *He shall be as a son to continue his fathers name for ever.* So we read in the Margine. Some render the place; *His name shall be sonned, or sonnified,* If I may speak so; that is, his name by many sons shall be continued. This was a prophecy concerning Jesus Christ. As if the several acts, (so some interpret it) and passages of Christs life should be as so many sons, to declare his name to all Generations. But we may rather interpret it of the seed, or children of Christ: his name is continued by sons: he hath a mighty seed, and, *He shall see his seed,* (Isa. 53. 10.)

Filiabitur nomen ejus. Mont. i. e. *multi filii nomen ejus deducent in omnes Generationes, vel ita celebria erunt Christi gesta, ac si singula opera essent filii, qui sunt memoriale sui parentis.* Pined.

In the first ages of the world, either not to have a son, or to have a son die before the father, was an unheard of affliction. One of the Ancients hath observed, that there is not in the Geneallogies before the floud, nor in some generations after, mention of any father, whose son died before himself. But as all had sons, so their sons out-lived their fathers; God giving that as a special comfort to those ages. The first son that died before his father, is recorded (*Gen.* 11. 27, 28.) *Now these are the Generations of Terah, Terah begat Abraham, Nachor and Haran, and Haran begat Lot: and Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity.* It seems to be noted as a strange thing never heard of, nor mentioned in the Book of God before, that the son should die before the father. And, saith my Author, it is to be considered, that this *Terah*, whose son *Haran* died before him, was not onely a worshipper of Idols, but (as it is conceived) an inventer of Idols; This was the onely man upon record, whose sons death prevented his in those elder times. And in all times it hath been numbred among the afflictions incident to sinfull man, when any son dies before the father, much more when the father hath no son remaining when he dies.

Deus in solatium naturæ largiebatur primis seculis, ut nullus filius moreretur ante patrem, donec in supplicium Idololatriæ Thare pater Abraham primus puntus est morte filii sui adhuc vivens. Epiph. lib. 1 contra Hær. *Author & artifex fingendi Idola.* Id. *Quidam resurrectionem aliam non admittebant quam eam, qua consebantur rursus vivere in ipsis filiis parentes mortui.* Epiphan.

Epiphanius in his Writings against heresies reports that some held no resurrection, but the rising up of the fathers in their children; when the father dies, the child rises in his place; this was their resurrection. Though this were a gross heresie, yet there is a truth in it; the father riseth in his child; parents have a kind of resurrection in their children, and while they live parents can scarcely be said to be dead: upon this account the greatness of the affliction riseth yet higher, he that hath neither son nor nephew remaining in his dwellings when he dies, may be accounted more then dead.

This is the third evil that *Bildad* sets down as the portion of the wicked man, who, as he shall be driven out of the world himself; so his posterity shall be blotted out.

He proceeds to shew us what effect this, with the forementioned judgments, should have upon the spirits of the living, what the sight or report of these terrible judgments will work, both in present and after ages.

Vers. 20. **They that come after him shall be astonished at his day, as they that went before were affrighted.**

For the opening of this verse, we may enquire; first, whom he means by, *They that come after,* and, *they that went before him*; secondly, what by *his day*; thirdly, what by *astonished and affrighted.*

אחרונים *Novissimi*
קדמנים *priscі, priores, qui sc. ejus tempore vivebant & judicium ac opera Dei viderunt.* Merc. *Fortasse per primos & novissimos intelligit non solum qui ætate tales sunt, sed etiam eos qui quocunque respectu sibi invicem sunt primi & novissimi.* q. d. *pusilli & magni, sapientes & idiotæ, &c.* Bol.
קדם *prior fuit, tempore, loco, dignitate.*
שמם *tacitè miratus admiratus fuit, præ admiratione stupuit, tacuit.*

They that come after him, &c.] Those that come after, and those that went before, are all men. If it be said, how could they that went before him be affrighted at his day? they that never saw his day, could not be troubled at it?

I answer; The Original word doth not signifie strictly such as live before we live, but such, who though they were born before us, yet are alive while we live; that is, men more ancient then our selves, and yet our contemporaries; so here, they who went before this wicked man, are such, who though they were born before him, yet lived with him, and saw the judgments of God upon him: So the meaning of it is onely this, That as they who lived at that present when God brought those evils upon him were affrighted; so they that come after shall be astonished at him. That is, the one was affrighted at the sight of those judgments, and others shall be astonished at the report, and hearing of them. So our translators expound those words in the margine; *They that went before him,* that is, *they that lived with him* shall be affrighted. This sence is also expresly given by Mr. *Broughton*; *As they at present took an horror.*

Again, These termes, *They that went before him, and they that come after him,* may refer not only to time, but to degree. That is, those that *went before him* in estate, and honour; and *they that come after him* in estate, and honour. As if he had said, high and low, rich and poor, his superiours and inferiours, one and other shall be astonished and affrighted at the terrible fall of this man; when first and last, high and low are afflicted, all are.

They that come after him [**shall be astonied.**]

The Original word which we render **astonied,** signifies to

to admire greatly and silently. Silent admiration is astonishment; it signifies also to be wasted and made desolate. And so strictly that astonishment is meant, which ariseth from the sight or view of places or persons made or left desolate. In the 143 *Psalm*, ver. 4. *David* saith, (as we translate) *My heart within me is desolate*: another translates; *My heart within me is amazed*. Thus here the desolation of the wicked shall be so great, that they who hear the report of it, or behold the ruines of the place, where once he dwelt and flourished, shall stand amazed; even as they who lived to see it acted upon him

שׁעה *Apprehenderunt Horrorem.* Mont.

Were affrighted. The Hebrew is, *They took hold of fear, or Horror*; which is equivalent with this; Fear or Horror took hold of them, or seized upon them like an Armed man. Yet some of the Jewish Doctors think that *Bildad* spake thus industriously; using that phrase; *They took hold of fear*, rather then this, *Fear took hold of them*; to intimate, that when they saw such judgments, they were even active to stir up fear in themselves, or to over-awe their hearts with fears, and turn to the Lord, lest the same calamities should also befal them; according to that, *Luk.* 13. 3. *Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. They that went before him were affrighted*

De die ejus. i.e. *de judicio domini revelato in eum ob exitium ejus, id enim dies significat.* Merc.

At his day. But, what day is this? This day, is his black day, the day of his calamity. It is frequent in Scripture to put the word *day* alone, without any addition, to note an eminent evil day. The patience of God bears long with the wickedness of man, but it will not bear alwayes. (*Psal.* 37. 13.) *The Lord laughs at him: for he sees that his day is coming*. While the wicked plots against the just, hoping to have the day against him, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth, as being vext and filled with envy that he hath a day for himself; while he is thus busie against the man whom God loves, God makes sport at him; *The Lord laughs at him*, (and saith, as it were, let him plot, let him go on,) *because he sees his day is coming*: What day? The day of his ruine, and destruction; this shall suddenly come upon him. In the same sence the word is used (*Psal.* 137. 7.) *Remember O Lord the children of Edom, in the day of Jerusalem*. Was this the day of *Jerusalems* triumph, and glory? no, it was the day of *Jerusalems* misery, and sorrow; it was the day, when the children of *Edom* cryed; *Rase it, rase it, even to the foundations thereof*. In the Prophecy of *Obadiah* (*vers.* 12.) *Thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother*; That is, upon the day of his affliction, or upon the affliction of that day. What! may we not look upon the afflictions of our brethren? yes we may, to pity, and compassionate them, but we must not look upon them with pleasure or delight, with contempt or scorn, as the *Edomites* did; thou shouldest not have looked scornfully, or contentfully upon the afflictions of thy brother: The day of thy brothers affliction should have been a sad day to thee.

Thus it is frequent in Scripture to call the day of affliction a day emphatically. And so we may interpret that of the Apostle, (1 *Cor.* 3. 13.) where he deciphers several sorts of doctrines, under those allegorical expressions of *gold* and *silver*, of *wood*, *hay*, and *stubble*. *Now* (saith he) *every mans work shall be tryed*, it shall be made manifest; *for the day shall declare it*. What day? the day of tryal; he puts the day alone, for the day of tryal, or of judgment, when God shall come to lay the work and the rule together; when he shall bring stubble, &c. and the fire together; the day of tryal shall discover, and make manifest what every mans work is. So here, *They shall be astonished at his day*; that is, at the day of his affliction.

Dies in quibus impius feliciter vivit, commodato habet & quasi alienos non proprios.

Further, this is called *his day*, to note, that it is his of right, or that it is his due. For all the good and comfortable dayes that he lives, *are borrowed dayes*, they are but lent him, onely the evil day, is *his day*; that's his own.

The Lord will send such judgments upon the wicked, as shall be an astonishment and an affrightment to those who behold or hear of them.

As the works of mercy which God hath done for his people are wonderfull, (*Psal.* 78. 4. *Psal.* 107. 15.) And as God hath wonderfull mercies and blessings in store for his people against that great day of his appearing; he will then come *to be admired in all them that believe* (2 Thes. 1. 10.) That is, he will do such things for believers as shall be both to their own and others admiration: So his works of judgments shall be admired too; He will make the plagues of the wicked wonderfull. The Lord threatens (*Deut.* 28. 59.) *I will make thy plagues wonderfull*. Such was the desolation prophecied against *Tyrus* (*Ezek.* 27. 35.) *All the inhabitants of the Isles shall be astonished at thee; their Kings shall be sore afraid*. They shall not be afraid of thee, but for thee. They shall not be afraid of thy standing, but at thy overthrow. So (*Ezek.* 32. 10.) at the fall of *Egypt*, *Tea, I will make many people amazed at thee, and their Kings shall be horribly afraid for thee. When I shall brandish my sword before them, and they shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life in the day of thy fall, &c.* See how the Merchants shall be astonished at the fall of *Babylon* (Rev. 18. 11, 15.) The judgment upon *Jezabel* (2 King. 9. 37.) is expressed by some translators in the language of Astonishment, *The carkass of Jezabel shall be as dung in the field in the portion of Jezreel: So that they shall not say, this is Jezabel*. Thus we translate: others render it; *The carkass of Jezabel shall be as dung in the field in the portion of Jezreel; So that they (being amazed) shall say, Is this Jezabel?* What, is this *Jezabel?* is she become as dung in the face of the field, who so lately sate upon a throne: what, is this she that painted her face, and looked so delicately out at the window, the great commandress in *Israel*, is this *Jezabel?* Thus they wonder. The judgement denounced upon the house of *Eli*, made the ears of those that heard it tingle, (1 *Sam.* 3. 13.) That which makes the ear tingle, will also make the heart tremble, and amaze the hearer.

Obstupentes qui præter ibant, dicebant, illa Jezabel?

Now *Bildad* shuts up his argument, having thus laid down the lot of the wicked, and set it out in several portions; he gives (as it were) a confirmation to all, he puts his seal to it. As if he had said, I have not spoken at randome, I have not spoken what may be; but I have spoken that which shall be, this shall certainly come to pass. And if others shall be astonished who hear or see onely, how shall they who bear and feel those calamities?

Vers. 21. **Surely, such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.**

Surely He concludes confidently; What I have spoken, I will stand to for a truth; thus it shall be. When *Ahasuerus* (in the Book of *Hester*) advanced *Mordecai*, and set him in royal apparel upon the best horse, he (according to *Hamans* counsel) caused it to be proclaimed before him, *Thus shall it be done to the man whom the King delights to honour*. So here *Bildad* having shewed the wicked man in a compleat equipage of misery, stript of all his comforts, and good things, and not so much as *a good word left him* from any man; but all men standing amazed and astonished at his downfall, he seems to proclaim, *Thus shall it be done to the man whom God resolves to dishonour: thus shall it be done to the man whom God dis-favours and frowns upon; such are the dwellings of the wicked*, this their end.

Epiphonema totius orationis; Epilogus hujus loci, hæc est conditio iniqui hominis, in quo redigatur. Merc.

Illud dicitur esse res aliqua, non quod aliquandiu est, sed in quod tandem desinit.

Hence note; *We may certainly conclude, that the estate of a wicked man is miserable.*

As some Believers have an assurance for themselves personally, that it shall be well with them; so we may be assured in reference to the present state of a wicked man, that it shall go ill with him and his; *Such are the dwellings of the wicked*. Though we cannot conclude concerning the person of a wicked man, that he shall be cast away for ever, for tis possible he may repent and be saved, yet as to his present state, and to his person as continuing in that estate, we may with assurance, conclude him undone for ever. The Prophet *Isaiah* hath this charge from the Lord, (*Isai.* 3. 10.) *Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him*; and that reward is woe. The reward put into the hand of a wicked man is such as the work of his hand is; he is a worker of iniquity, then what can his reward be, but woe and misery? Such as a mans way is, such will his end be; If the premises be false and unsound, the conclusion cannot be safe and good. As by a mans fruit we may know what he is, so what he shall be, unless he be changed from what he is. *Such are the dwellings of the wicked.*

And

And this is the place of him that knoweth not God.

Periphraſis impii qui Deum nec novit nec colit, nam colit qui novit, unde pii vocantur יהוה יודעי *noſcentes domini.* Druſ.

In theſe words we have the character of a wicked man; the man who knows not God, and the wicked man, are the ſame. No wicked man knows God, and every man that knows not God is wicked. Theſe are termes convertible. *This is the place of him that knows not God.* There is a fourfold *not knowing of God.*

Firſt, There is an utter *not knowing of God*, or a total ignorance of God. He muſt needs be wicked and walk in darkneſs, that hath no light at all of the knowledge of God.

Secondly, They are ſaid not to know God, who have but a falſe or an erroneous knowledge of God: wrong knowledge is a kind of ignorance; they who know not God, as God, and as God hath declared himſelf to be known, theſe know him not. Now as they who are under a night of total ignorance, ſo they who have an unſound knowledge, and live under a falſe light, are numbred with the wicked; for where there are falſe principles, and apprehenſions of God in the head, there cannot be a right frame of heart towards God.

Thirdly, There is a practical not knowing of God, and that is moſt proper to this place (though both the former may be underſtood.) Some have a notional knowledge of God, and that (poſſibly) a right notion, their underſtanding is not wrapt up in errour; yet they may be numbred among thoſe that know not God, becauſe they act contrary to their knowledge. Of theſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 1. 16. *They profeſs that they know him, but in their works they deny him*; This knowledge is practical ignorance. We read of ſuch in the Epiſtle of *Jude* (ver. 10.) who *what they know naturally as bruit beaſts, in thoſe things they corrupt themſelves*; That is, they live not according to natural principles: *as they ſpeak evil* (the former part of the verſe rebukes that) *of thoſe things which they know not*, ſo they do evil about, or in thoſe things which they know. Their knowledge is according to the light of nature, but their actions are againſt the light of nature. They know onely as beaſts do, *naturally*, but they act contrary to this knowledge, which beaſts do not. Now as a wicked man corrupts himſelf in that which he knows by nature, ſo he may corrupt himſelf in that which he knows by doctrine, or inſtruction. And in this reſpect, though he have a higher knowledge then a beaſt, yet he is but as a bruit beaſt in his knowledge; or as the Prophet ſpeaks of thoſe in his time, (*Jer.* 10. 14.) *He is bruitiſh in his knowledge.* To have notions according to knowledge, and actions according to ignorance, is to be bruitiſh in knowledge. And I conceive the Apoſtle aymes at theſe, (1 *Cor.* 15. 34.) *Awake to righteouſneſs, and ſin not* (the Greek is, *awake righteouſly*, that is, give your minds and endeavours unto righteouſneſs) *for ſome have not the knowledge of God: I ſpeak this to your ſhame.* He writes not of thoſe that had no knowledge of God; but either of thoſe who had an erroneous knowledge, or rather, of thoſe that lived in wayes of unrighteouſneſs againſt their knowledge, as the immediate fore-going words intimate; *Awake unto righteouſneſs: for ſome have not the knowledge of God*: That is, they have not ſuch a knowledge of God, as keeps them to the rule of righteouſneſs. Here again is practical ignorance, or a not knowing of God, when he is known. How great a wickedneſs this is in ſuch as have ſcriptural revelations of God, we may eaſily collect, when we find God charging it as a piece of wickedneſs upon the old Gentiles, who had onely natural revelations of God, that is, onely ſo much knowledge of God as might be pickt out of, or learned by an attentive ſtudy in the book of the creature. (*Rom.* 1. *ver.* 21.) *Becauſe when they knew God, they did not glorifie him as God, neither were thankfull, but became vain in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkned*; and becauſe (though they had a knowledge of God in them, yet) *they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, or to acknowledge God*, as we put in the margin of our Bibles (*ver.* 28.) this provoked God to give them up to vile affections, and to a reprobate mind. We may take meaſure of the ſin by the puniſhment. Spiritual judgements are worſe then corporal. To be given up to vile affections, is more penal then to be given up to the vileſt enemies; yet thus were the Gentiles plagued for ſinning againſt that light which the creature ſheds forth concerning God; then what will their plague be, who ſin againſt Scripture-light, and are ſuch *as know not God* in their own works, when they know him in his word?

Fourthly, There is an affected *not knowing of God*, or (as we may expreſs it) a *ſtudied ignorance of God*; For as we all ought to know God, ſo ſome ſtudy to be ignorant of God, and to keep out the knowledge of holy things. And as, to all, it is a burden to get knowledge, ſo, to many, knowledge gotten is very burdenſome. Man cannot ſin ſo eaſily in the light as in the dark; he puts himſelf hard to it to ſin, who ſins againſt what he ſees. And therefore that they may have liberty to ſin, they have no will to ſee. Such are deſcribed (*Job* 21. 14.) *They ſay to God, Depart from us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes.* Thus as ſome in their practice oppoſe the good which they know, ſo others refuſe to know what is good, that they may the more freely practice evil. And when any man hath long oppoſed light received, he grows unwilling to receive light. He follows on to be ignorant of God; and at laſt is willing to believe, *There is no God.* He that cares not what God ſaith, will not care much to ſay, there is no God. Atheiſm riſeth from prophaneneſs; and he that blaſphemes the word of God daily in his converſation, will at laſt blaſpheme the being of God in his opinion. Theſe know not God indeed, who know not that there is a God; and into this the affected ignorance of God will quickly caſt the wiſeſt (who are ſuch) among the ſons of men.

cognitio hæc quæ impio negatur eſt practica quædam ſapientia quæ in divino cultu conſiſtit in pietate, & in guſtu quodam & quaſi ſapore divinæ bonitatis.

We may take in all theſe ſorts of not *knowing of God*, into the interpretation of this Text; but ſpecially the third, and fourth; ſuch as know God, yet walk contrary to him; or ſuch as refuſe to know God, leſt they ſhould be troubled to walk according to their knowledge. And indeed a wicked man may have the higheſt knowledge of God, on this ſide the love of God, and obedience to his will, which is attainable; he may have any knowledge of God, but that which gives an experimental taſte and reliſh of the goodneſs of God, or that God is good. And hence it is that he ſometimes hinders his own proficiency in the knowledge of God, leſt if he knew as much as he could, he ſhould be hinder'd from doing (what he hath a mind to) evil as he could.

Hence note; Firſt, *Wickedneſs and ignorance go together.*

In ſcriptura ſacra illa ignorari cenſemur, quæ cognita nullum nobis uſum attulerunt, quomodo dicimus illa non audire quibus non obedimus. Sanct.

Dicit eos Deum non noſſe, qui in peccatis perſeverantes, Deum ſic norunt, ut ejus penitus oblivi videantur. Bez.

Where there is only an *invincible Ignorance of God*, that is, ſuch an ignorance as the man cannot help or avoid, there is nothing but wickedneſs; much more where there is this profeſſed ſtudied ignorance. When the Prophet *Hoſea* ſets forth the great iniquity of that people, he gives this in the cloſe, as the cauſe of all, (*Hoſ.* 4. 1.) *The Lord hath a controverſie with the Inhabitants of the Land; becauſe there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the Land.* It is ſtrange that the Prophet ſhould bring in ſuch a charge againſt *Iſrael*; What could he ſay more of the Philiſtims, of the uncircumciſed Nations, and rude Barbarians, who ſate in darkneſs, and in the valley of the ſhadow of death? What could he ſay more againſt them, then that there was *no knowledge of God in their Land?* could he ſpeak thus truly to the people of *Iſrael*, and *Judah*, Gods own people? Was there no knowledge of God in their Land? This cannot be underſtood of a total Ignorance, or as if there had been none at that time who publiſhed the truth, or knowledge of God in that Land. But the meaning is, either that there was not much knowledge of God in the Land; (for in Scripture that which is not in ſome competent meaſure what it ought to be, is ſaid not to be at all) or though they had the knowledge of God, yet they oppoſed the receiving of it, at leaſt they were not zealous to promote it, nor carefull to walk up to it. Now though a land were full of knowledge, as the waters cover the Sea, yet (in ſuch caſes) we might ſay, *There is no knowledge of God in the Land.* This want of knowledge cauſed that plenty of ſin, and over-flowing of wickedneſs, for which God had a controverſie with their Land. We have ſuch a character of ſinfull times given (2 *Chron.* 15. 3.) *Now, for a long ſeaſon, Iſrael was without the true God, and without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law.* They were not totally deſtitute of theſe, but comparatively; There was a great neglect of teaching and expounding the Law; and then there was ſo little of

God

God among them, that they were ſaid to be without the true God. Wickedneſs and ignorance grow up together; ignorance is the mother of prophaneneſs, not of devotion, as the Popiſh teachers (with ignorance enough) perſwade their deluded Votaries. The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 14. 2.) joynes theſe two together; *There is none that underſtandeth, or that ſeeketh after God.* Would you know the reaſon why they did not ſeek God? it was becauſe they did not underſtand: and (*verſ.* 4.) *Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as bread, and do not call upon the Lord*; As if he had ſaid, if they had but a little true knowledge among them all, they would not thus greedily devour my people; they made no bones of oppreſſion, they ſwallowed the poor as pleaſantly as bread, they did they cared not what, when they knew not what they ought to do. The flood-gates of wickedneſs are open, where the door of knowledge is ſhut.

When Chriſt tells us (*Joh.* 17. 3.) *This is eternal life to know God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent.* Why doth he ſay, this is eternal life, but becauſe it ſets us in a frame of holy life? It works grace, and therefore it is glory. It is a holy life to know God thus, therefore it will be a happy life. As to know God is eternal life; ſo not to know him is eternal death. He that knows God, loves him, and he that loves him keeps his commandments, (*Joh.* 14.) and they that do not know God, do not love him; and they that do not love him, do not keep his commandments. Many ſin againſt their knowledge, but they cannot avoid ſin, who have no knowledge. *The blind eat many a fly*, yea poyſon inſtead of bread.

Further, Some underſtand this Text of the knowledge that God hath of man; not of the knowledge that man hath of God; reading it thus; *This is the place of him whom God doth not know.* It is a truth both wayes: for they that do not know God, are not known of God. It is as true a character of a wicked man that God doth not know him, as that he doth not know God. But doth not God know every man? How then is it ſaid that God doth not know a wicked man? As men are ſaid not to know God, when they do not love and reverence him, when they do not fear and obey him; ſo God is ſaid not to know thoſe men whom he doth not love nor approve. (*Mat.* 7. 24.) *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* Wicked men do not know God obedientially, and God doth not know wicked men favourably; and whether we ſay of a man he knows not God, or of God that he knows not ſuch a man, it equally ſpeaks him a wicked man.

Laſtly, Whereas *Bildad* (as his friends before him) makes ſo large a deſcription of the ſtate of a wicked man, and of the portion due to him; firſt, in allegories, and then in plain words, inſiſting upon and repeating it again and again. It is queſtioned by ſome, why his and their ſpirits were drawn forth ſo frequently and unanimouſly to ſpeak of this matter? I anſwer; This might be, firſt, to undeceive the ſimple, who are ready to call the wicked happy, becauſe of their preſent proſperity; Secondly, to conquer the unbelief of moſt who can ſcarcely be perſwaded, that ſin will be ſo bitter in the end.

Many hope to thrive by wickedneſs, and not a few are afraid they ſhould be undone by keeping cloſe to the wayes of holineſs. Therefore the Lord doth ſo often thunder by the voyce of his ſervants, and reveal his wrath from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs; Therefore he hath cauſed the penmen of the holy Scriptures to write the evil of it (as it were) in letters of blood, and to give teſtimony, that it hath ſhed the blould of thouſands already, and will deſtroy all eternally who turn not from it.

Take this anſwer more fully in the following obſervation.

The heart of man is hardly brought to believe that God will indeed pour out wrath upon ſinful men.

As it is a hard thing to believe that God will pour out ſo many bleſſings on his own people: ſo to believe that God will pour out ſo many vials of miſery upon wicked men. Therefore as we hear of the promiſes again, and again; and God oft repeats his mercies to perſwade us that he will indeed perform what he hath ſpoken: ſo we hear threatnings again and again, to overcome the unbelief of wicked men, or to make all know this ſad truth; *Woe to the wicked, woe to the wicked.* If the heart were ready to receive this, it would not be ſo often repeated. Few would take God at his word if he had ſpoke this but once. God ſpake to man in the ſtate of perfection; *In the day that thou eateſt thou ſhalt ſurely die.* No, ſaith the Devil, and the Woman beſieves him, it ſhall not be ſo: the threatning was but once given, and it was not believed at all. The heart of man doth hardly cloſe, either with promiſes or threatnings. Again, God doth it to render wicked men more unexcuſable. If he had ſpoken but once, if there had been but one word of threatning againſt ſin all the Bible over, ſinners had been without excuſe; but how ſhall their mouths be ſtopped, when theſe threatnings are ſo often renewed? when every Page of Scripture teſtifies the deſtruction of wicked men, and ſeals wrath upon them, if they go on in their wickedneſs. How deeply ſhall they be condemned when they are condemned by the mouths of ſo many witneſſes? *David* ſaith, (*Pſal.* 62. 11.) *God hath ſpoken once, twice have I heard it, that power belongeth unto God*; the meaning is, either that God ſpake that often, or that *David* heard it often, though God ſpake it but once; that is, he throughly weighed and conſidered it, at once ſpeaking, *that power belongeth to God.* A holy heart hears that twice, that God ſpeaks but once; Grace hath a quick ear, it makes us, as the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks, (*Chap.* 1. 19.) *Swift to hear*; but God ſpeaks twice, and thrice, yea a hundred times, to wicked men, and they will not hear once; Then how great will their judgement be, and how will their mouthes be ſtopt, becauſe they ſtopt their ears? Hath not God ſaid it again and again; *This is the dwelling of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God?* Hath he not ſpoken it in figures, and allegories? Hath he not ſpoken it in plain words, and in examples? hath he not ſpoken it in bloud? hath he not ſpoken it in fire, in ſword and famine? How often hath he made his wrath ſmoak, yea blaze and burn before the eye of ſence? how often hath he made ſinners ſmell the brimſtone of his diſpleaſure?

Have they not heard of, have they not ſeen the deſolations which ſin hath made? how it hath left thoſe places which were as the Garden of God, like a waſte or wilderneſs? Have they never read or heard of the old world drowned with water? Have they never heard of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* conſumed with fire? Have they not heard of *Pharoah* over-whelmed in the red Sea, for vexing the people of God? and of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram* ſwallowed up alive by the earth for their murmuring againſt *Moſes?* Whole volumes of examples have been collected, wherein the threatnings of God againſt ſin have been made viſible in the ruine and downfall of ſinners themſelves, and in the rooting out of their poſterity. As therefore the Apoſtle argues from the holy lives and happy deaths of the old Patriarchs and others enumerated in the eleventh Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, ſo may we from the unhappy deaths of many whoſe lives have been unholy in all ages; *Seeing we are compaſſed about with ſo great a cloud of witneſſes, let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us.*

If ſinners go on, after all this, what can they plead, why their dwelling ſhould not be made deſolate? or why themſelves ſhould not be condemned for ever?

Thus far *Bildad's* ſecond diſcourſe with *Job*, wherein he ſeverely reproves him of wickedneſs, and ſets before him, the wofull concluſion of the wicked; How grievous and wounding his words were to *Jobs* ſpirit, how unſuitable to his condition, how unappliable to his perſon, will appear in the opening of his pathetical Anſwer in the following Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX. Vers. 1, 2, 3.

Then Job *answered and said;*

How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words?

These ten times have ye reproached me; ye are not ashamed that ye make your selves strange to me.

BIldad's sharp reproof of *Job* in the former Chapter, procures from him a sharp reply in this from *Job*; whose whole discourse declares him the object of mans pity, and God the object of his faith; the sum of his answer to *Bildad*, is to shew how hardly (yea, as he thought how inhumanely) he had hitherto been dealt with; and that upon a four-fold consideration.

First, As he was afflicted.

Secondly, As he was their friend.

Thirdly, As he was innocent, not conscious to himself of any evil that he had wilfully committed against God, or of any wrong done to man.

Fourthly, That they used him thus unkindly while he professed full hope in God, notwithstanding all the calamities which God was pleased to lay upon him.

There are three parts of the Chapter; in the first he very accurately and tragically (as some expres it) amplifieth his own sad estate; and this is carried on from the beginning of the Chapter to the twenty third Verse.

Secondly, He holdeth forth, and maintaineth his own integrity, both by a vehement desire, and an assured hope of his resurrection and appearance before God at the tryal of the last judgment, *Vers.* 24, 25, 26, 27.

Thirdly, He exhorts his Friends to desist, and repent, lest they draw down the judgments of God upon themselves, in the two last Verses: *But ye should say,* &c. *ver.* 28. and *ver.* 29. *Be ye afraid of the sword, for wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment.*

From these parts of the Chapter laid together, we may collect the general sence of *Job*'s Argument, in answer to *Bildad*, thus;

Bildad endeavoured to prove, that *Job* was a wicked man, because he was burdened with affliction; *Job* answereth, I indeed endure those afflictions, which for the matter are the portion of wicked men, yet I am not wicked, as my own Conscience, full of peace and hope in God, doth assure and witness to me; therefore the induring of greatest afflictions, is no sound proof that a man is wicked; nor do these afflictions befal such only as are wicked. The proposition, (namely, that he himself was under the pressure of great afflictions) is clear in the first part of the Chapter, from the sixth to the twenty-third Verse; the Assumption, that he himself was not a wicked man, he proves by his faith and hope in God, laid down to the life, *Vers.* 23, 24, 25, 26, 27. The Conclusion or Inference is implyed.

Job leads us to the description of his afflictions by a pathetical Preface, wherein he taxeth, and reproveth his Friends two wayes: First, By shewing their severity against him. Secondly, By supposing his own guilt against God. He reproveth them by shewing their severity against him three wayes.

First, That they had troubled him long, in the second Verse; *How long will ye vex,* &c. *Vers.* 2.

Secondly, That they had troubled him who was troubled before; *How long will ye vex my soul?* In the same Verse: As if he had said, *My soul was vexed with afflictions, why have ye vexed me, who came to comfort me.*

Thirdly, That as they had done it *long*, so they persisted still in doing it; *Vers.* 3. *These ten times have ye reproached me; you are not ashamed, that* &c. *q. d.* ye did it, and ye do it.

His second way of reproving, is by a supposition of his own guilt: Suppose I have sinned, suppose I have erred, *ver.* 4, & 5. if I had done so, yet surely ye ought not to carry your selves thus towards me; there is some other way of dealing with an afflicted friend, though faulty, then that which you have yet hit on; therefore he goeth on to tell them, as what his case was, so how they should have handled the matter with him; *Know that God hath overthrown me,* &c. *Ver.* 6. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me* (ver. 21.) As if he had said, While the hand of God was overthrowing me, your hand should have been supporting me, and your hearts pitying me. So much for the opening of the whole Chapter, which lets in some light to the understanding of each particular.

Docet minimè æquos in se fuisse tam graviter ipsum insectando etiamsi sceleris reus esset. Merl.

Verse 1, 2. **Then Job answered, and said, How long will ye vex my soul?**

How long?] The Question concludes against his Friends, that they had vexed him already *too long*; it argues also, their perseverance in troubling him; so the word is frequently used in Scripture: *David* speakes much to this sence, *Psal.* 4. 2. *O ye sons of men, how long will ye love vanity? How long will ye turn my glory into shame?* That is, How long will ye go on dishonouring me? And in *Psal.* 13. we have this, *How long*, four times repeated in two verses, while *David* complained of his affliction, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord? For ever?* (That's long indeed.) *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall my enemies be exalted over me?* Here are four times *how long*, to shew that *David*'s trouble had continued exceeding long.

How long will ye vex my soul?] The word which we translate *to vex*, signifies an internal trouble, such as ariseth from the contempt and scorn that others put upon us; many know by experience (though grace sets them above it) how much their spirits are burdened when they are contemned: *They who are duly honoured, have a weight in them; and they who are* (*though undeservedly*) *contemned have a weight upon them.* The word signifies also simply to grieve (*Lam.* 3. 32.) for it is applyed to the act of God; *The Lord will not cast off for ever, but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies; for he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* So the word is used again (*Lam.* 1. 12.) *Was there ever sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done to me in the day wherein the Lord hath afflicted me?* The Vulgar reads, *In the day wherein the Lord hath gathered my grapes, or fruits?* As if the Church had said, I was once like a fruitful flourishing Vine, but now the Lord hath stript me of all my glory, and left me naked and bare, as a Vine after the Grapes are gathered. So *Isa.* 51. 21. *Zeph.* 3. 18. The afflictions of the Church and People of God in their saddest sorrows, are expressed by this word,

Notat internam animi mœstitiam, illam præsertim quæ ex contēptu quodam, vel severiore alicujus increpatione verbo aut opere nascitur. Pined.

Vindemiavit. Vulg.

How long will ye vex my soul?] The word vex, alone had signified the vexation of the soul; but when he adds soul, it increaseth the signification of the word, to say, *You have vexed my soul*, is more then to say, *You vex me*, though that be the meaning of it; so that here's the deepest sorrow, that which toucheth not only the flesh, and skin, but that which pierceth to the very soul: As 'tis said of *Mary*, *A sword shall pass through thy soul*: That is, Thou shalt be deeply wounded.

Addendo, animam meam, *vis orationis augetur & penetrans gravisque mœstitia indicatur.* Bold.

In that he complains, *How long will ye vex?*

Observe, First, *The length or continuance of an affliction is more grievous to us, then the weight and burthen of it.*

He doth not say, how much? or how great? but how long? *A light burthen carried far is heavy; what then is an heavy burthen carried far? The length of the cross grieves more then the breadth or bulk of it.* The souls under the Altar cryed (*Rev.* 6. 10.) *How long Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on earth?* So *David*, Psal. 120. 5, 6. *My soul hath long dwelt with them that hate peace:* He did not complain that he had been amongst those that hated peace; but that he had dwelt long with them; he could not get free from that hateful company. (*Dan.* 8. 13, 14.) The question is put concerning the affliction of the Church (*How long?*) As if it would render her affliction shorter, but to know how long it should continue, especially to know that it should not continue long; *Then I heard one speaking, and another Saint said unto that certain Saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the Sanctuary and the Hosts to be trodden under foot?* As if he had said, Might we but know when this desolation should end, it would be some comfort in the midst of that desolation; *And he said unto me, until two thousand and three hundred dayes, then shall the Sanctuary be cleansed:* Though this answer had much obscurity in it, yet it had some comfort in it. To hear of a period of our troubles, though we can scarce pick out the time of that period, is some abatement of our troubles. It troubles us to stay long from the enjoyment of good; but it troubles us much more while we are long, and know not how long we shall be under the indurance of evil. Many are ready to say in these troublesome times, if we could but see an end of our troubles, if we thought there would be an end of these wars, we could more chearfully bear the expence both of our blood and treasure. When will there be an end? But what is all this length to the endless length of those troubles, which are the portion of impenitent sinners? What will they say, where good shall never be injoyed, and evil for ever felt? *How long*, will be the Cry in Hell for ever. *How long* shall we indure? When will this end? No date, no period can be set to the *how long* of that misery. And this makes every moment of misery as miserable as the eternity of it. And indeed, every moment of an eternal misery hath an eternity in it: As every moment of eternal mercies is like an eternity of mercy.

Secondly, Observe, *Those afflictions pain us most that reach our spirits.*

The soul it self cannot be pained; it being a spiritual substance, hath nothing to do with sensible passions; yet pain and trouble in their effects, grief and sorrow, may quickly pass through the flesh to the spirit: There are some evils which do not make so much as a skar in the flesh, which make deep wounds in the spirit. Christ sweat drops of blood in the agony of his soul, before any hand touched his body; and some evils make deep wounds in the flesh, which make not the least scratch upon the soul; yea, the soul may rejoyce, triumph, and glory, while the body is martyred and torn in pieces. But those afflictions which wound and vex the soul, are most grievous; as those mercies are sweetest, which refresh the soul, and comfort our spirits; many enjoy mercies which comfort and refresh their bodies, but they know not what it means to have their souls comforted. Now as those comforts are most comfortable which comfort the soul; so those sorrows are most sorrowful which afflict the soul: O, saith afflicted *Job*, *Ye vex my soul*; were it but my flesh which the Devil wounded at the first, I could bear it: The *Sabeans* took *Job*'s estate away, and Satan smote his body from the crown of the head to the soal of his foot with botches and sores; but his Friends gave sorer wounds, they vexed his soul by their unkindnesses, and we shall see his soul wounded farther by and by; now only remember that soul-wounds are the sorest wounds.

Thirdly, Compare this vexation of *Job*'s soul with the intention of *Job*'s Friends in visiting him, as hath been toucht before upon some other passages of this book; they did not plot upon him to vex him; nor had they a design to trouble him, doubtless the men had upright hearts, and feared God; they came really to comfort him, and do him good; yet all the pains they took with him, was only a pain to him, *His soul was vexed.* We may intend comfort to our friends, and yet only trouble them; we cannot give our actions that effect which we design them to: *Job* found it so in his Friends. And he might say to them, you came to comfort me; if vexing a soul be comforting it, you have comforted me with full measure: But *call you this comforting an afflicted friend? Is this the lifting of him up that is fallen?* Only God can make our counsels and our persons comfortable to others: As for us we may speak words in the matter comfortable, as well as in our intendment, and yet no comfort come to those we have a mind to comfort. (*Isa.* 50. 4.) *Thou hast given me the tongue of the learned, that I may know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary:* To comfort is a gift of God, a spiritual gift; and as a power to comfort, so the present act is the special gift of God; a man may have the gift of applying the consolations of the Gospel, and yet not give comfort. God hath charged the use of all Gospel means upon us, both to save and comfort our souls; but he hath reserved the fruit and success of both in his own power. We must at once shew our diligence about the means, and our dependance upon God for the end. *How long will ye vex my soul,*

Hoccine est mœstum consolari?

And break me in pieces with words?

The word that we translate, **to break in pieces**, notes a very vehement breaking, to break with extream violence, to break and bruise; as seeds or spices are bruised in a Morter, to pound to dust or powder. The word is used for the breaking of the heart with godly sorrow: Sorrow is a breaker, it breaks no bones, but it breaks the heart. Worldly sorrow breaks the heart to death; Godly sorrow breaks the heart to life, (*Isa.* 53. 15.) *I dwell with those that are of an humble and contrite or broken spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite ones.* The sorrows of Jesus Christ are expresst by this word, (*Isa.* 53. 5. & 10.) *He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities*; and in the tenth Verse, *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief.* Thus the spirit of *Job* was bruised and broken: But, what was the instrument of his breaking? Was he broken with clubs and staves? No, but with hard words and severe rebukes. *How long will ye break me in pieces*

דכא *verbum vehemens. Metaphora à contusione granorum in mortario.*

With words?] *Job* doth not title their words, he saith not, ye have broken me with hard, cruel, or bitter words, he saith only, *Ye have broken me in pieces with words*, leaving us to consider what words were fit for such a work; soft and kind words may melt the heart; but those are hard and harsh words which break it.

Hence Observe, *Unkind and hard words make deep wounds, and break the heart.*

Words are full of power, both to wound and to heal, to break and to bind up, to grieve and to comfort: As the word of God hath an Almighty power to break the heart; so the word of man hath a mighty power to do it. Some are more troubled with what is said to them, then with any thing that is done to them: Unfriendly and reproachful speeches have lain heavier upon them, then the heaviest of other pressures.

Nihil sic hominis affligit animum ut sermo durus. Orig.

David had many hands against him, but he was most afflicted with the tongues which were against him; *As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproached me, while they say daily unto me, where is thy God?* Psal. 42. 10. And as God works upon the heart with two sorts of words: Sometimes with *soft words*, such are his promises: Sometimes with *hard words*, such are his threatnings. So also (in his proportion) doth man; man hath his soft words, and they are of two sorts: First, Friendly words: Secondly, Flattering words; both these insinuate and soak into the spirit of man. Secondly, Man hath his hard and bitter words; these vex and break the heart, and are written (as I may say) upon the broken pieces and splinters of it, as with a Pen of iron, and the point of a Diamond, there's no getting them out again, till grace get them out, or holy

patience

patience wear them out. Cruel words are the heightning of cruel actions (*Mat* 5. 10, 11.) When Christ had said, *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousnes sake*, it follows, *Blessed are ye when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsly.* The blessing is promised not only to those who suffer evil done to them, but to those who suffer evil spoken against them. Hard words are numbred among our hardest tryals: The Apostle (*Heb.* 10. 32, 33.) exhorts the Saints to *call to remembrance the former dayes, in which, after they were illuminated* (that is, after they had received the light of the knowledge of Jesus Christ) *they indured a great fight of affliction*; they who receive the faith, must expect a fight; they might have been in the darknes of unbelief and ignorance long enough without a fight of affliction; but as soon as ever they were illuminated, the Prince of darknes stirr'd up a war against them: What the war was he tells us at *ver.* 33. *Partly while ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly while ye became companions of them that were so used.* He calls the bearing of reproaches, *a great fight of affliction.*

Πολλὴν ἀθλησιν, *Ingens, certamen.* Bez. Magnum *dicit quod* multum *ex proprietate vocis Græcæ possis dicere, quod ingens est exaggeratio contumeliæ, quasi cum multis hostibus confligat qui cum una contumelia depugnat.* Pin.

The word which we render *great*, doth not signifie so much the greatnes of any one, as the concurrence of many afflictions: As if he had said, Ye indured a multitude, or manifold fights of affliction. He that indureth hard words, fights with a numerous Host; words come thick, and like an Army renew the charge: He contends with many enemies at once, who is assaulted with reproaches. And he is a strong man, that is able to stand these assaults, or receive these charges, and not be broken. *Job* was a strong man both in faith and patience, yet he was broken, his peace was much broken, yea, his spirit was broken; *Ye have vexed my soul* (saith he) *and broken me in pieces with words.*

Job proceeds to shew us particularly what kind of words his Friends spake, they were unkind words; and more,

Verse 3. **These ten times ye have reproached me, ye are not ashamed to make your selves strange to me.**

Here is an army of evil words, *These ten times*, &c. What? just ten times? Did *Job* keep tale, and score up the unkind words of his Friends? Were his reproaches just ten? We use to say, *'Tis unfriendly to keep account of kindnesses done to our friends*; but it is more unsutable to the laws of friendship, *to take an account of unkindnesses received from friends. The less we remember them, the better is our memory.* Why then is *Job* so exact and particular in this unfriendly Arithmetick? *These ten times ye have reproached me.*

Numerũ denariũ strictè accipit Cajetanus. Ipsas Jobi *responsiones ei redundasse in confusionem asserẽs.*

Some conceive that *Job* speaks to the very letter, that when he saith, *ten times*, he means *ten times*, and only *ten times*, neither more nor less. Which number is made up thus; Five times his Friends had spoken, and five times *Job* had spoken, here were ten speeches; He was reproach'd as well when himself spake, as when they spake; his own answers were reckoned to his dishonour by his Friends, as he reckoned their replyes: But I pass this.

Notæ multitudinis solent per hyperbolem usurpari; it'd ut Decies *significet* ultra decẽ plurima, *quamvis res ipsa infra decem constiterit.*

Further, we may make it out thus; that in each single answer made by his Friends, there was a double reproach, or much reproach, therefore he reckoneth every one of them for two: We find in Scripture, that the word *ten* is used in a kind of Hyperbole; yea, though the number of the thing done be under ten, or less then ten, yet it's said to be done ten times, only to shew that it hath been done oftner then it should, or when it should not have been done at all. So some understand that speech of *Jacob* to his Wives (*Gen.* 31. 7.) complaining of the harsh dealing of *Laban*, *Your Father hath changed my wages ten times.* 'Tis not probable (though some attempt to prove it) that *Laban* did actually change his wages so often; yea, 'tis conceived that he changed his wages but twice, *ver.* 8. yet *Jacob* saw so much unkindness in that twofold change of his wages, that he saith, *He had changed his wages ten times.*

Ea latini Decumana vocarunt quæ excellentissima & amplissima in suo quaq; genere effent. Decumanus fluctus. Decumana Ova.

Further, *Ten times* may be taken indefinitely for many times. It is usual among the Latines to express any unusual greatness by the number *ten*, and so doth the Scripture too: (*Eccles.* 7. 19.) *Wisdom strengtheneth more then ten mighty men which are in the City*; that is, more then many, or then all the mighty men in the City: *Wisdom is better then the weapons of war.* The Law given about the keeping of the *Ammonite* out of the Congregation, is thus expressed (*Deut.* 23. 3.) *An* Ammonite *or* Moabite *shall not enter into the Congregation of the Lord; even to their tenth generation, shall they not enter into the Congregation of the Lord for ever.* The tenth generation is not to be taken terminatively to their exclusion from the Congregation, as if at or after the tenth generation they might enter in; but the tenth generation is named to shew, that they should not be received in for many generations, yea, that they should not at all be received in; for so the latter branch explains it, *They shall not be received to the tenth generation into the congregation of the Lord, no not for ever.*

Again, To shew the greatness of the famine that God would bring upon his own people for their great sins, 'tis said (*Levit.* 26. 26.) *When I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one Oven*: As if he should say, when Corn is plentiful, two or three women fill an Oven, but *when I have broken your staff of bread*, then (such shall be the scarcity of Corn, that) ten women, that is, many women may put your bread into one Oven, and not fill it, neither shall ye be filled, as the next words assure us, *They shall deliver you your bread again by weight, and ye shall eat and not be satisfied.* So the word is used (*Numb.* 14. 22.) Where the Lord complains, *Ye have tempted me now these ten times.* Thus when *Nehemiah* would shew how unceasant the enemies were in bringing sad reports to terrifie them, he saith (*Chap.* 4. 12.) *Ten times ye have said from all places, they will be upon you*; that is, ye have often said we should be surprised and cut off by such a time. Once more (*Zach.* 8. 23.) The glory of the *Jews* in the latter dayes is thus described, *It shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold* (out of *all Languages of the Nations*) *on the skirt of him that is a* Jew, *saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. Ten men*, that is, many men, even multitudes of men shall desire favour and friendship with the *Jews*; *We will go with you, we will be on your side, for we have heard that God is with you.*

Note by the way, *'Tis good being with those with whom God is, as 'tis best of all to be with God.*

All men ought, *ten men* (saith that text) shall desire to be with the *Jews*, when God appears among them. *Rev.* 2. 10. *Ye shall have tribulation for ten dayes*; that is, for many dayes, or for a long time. So here, *These ten times have ye reproached me*; that is, ye have reproached me very often, I know not how often; he puts it in such a number, as may note any number, yea, that which is only not innumerable; Who is able to number the reproaches ye have put on me? The number *ten*, seems to go burdened with innumerability, because it brings forth the greatest numbers: When, in numbring, unities arise to the number ten, we can go no further, but by resuming unities, and adding them to ten. So that, ten being the greatest simple number, and all compound numbers being renewed at ten, the number ten stands as the chief, and contains the greatest numbers. *Ye have reproached me ten times.*

Hic numerus videtur infinitate gravidus, eò quòd omnes numeros quantùcunq; maximos gignit. Bol. *Denarius numerus ut qui numerandi finis sit videtur maximus: nam cum ad decem pervenitur, ulterius non itur, sed iterum resumitur unitas & denario adjungitur. Semper ad usque decem numero crescente venitur: principium spatiis sumitur inde novis.* Ovid. Fast.

Ye have reproached me.] The word signifies such a reproach, as not only puts a man to shame, but makes him greatly ashamed. So the word is used (*Ruth* 2, 15.) *Let her glean among the sheaves, and reproach her not*; we put in the margin, *shame her not*; say not that she stealeth, for if a gleaner come into a field and glean among sheaves, 'tis suspected that such a one stealeth. Therefore *Boaz* gave this as a special priviledge to *Ruth*, let her come among the sheaves, it shall be no stealing to her, reproach her not with it, put her not to shame. Thus while *Job* saith, *Ye have reproached me*, the meaning is, ye have endeavoured to put me to shame, as if I were a wicked man, a thief, or a murtherer, and this (though once had been too often) ye have done *ten times*, or often times.

We may consider these words: First, As they set forth the sin and unkindness, or rather the sinful unkindness of *Job*'s Friends: Secondly, As they set forth the grace and patience of *Job*, or rather that special grace of patience.

First, As they set forth the sin of *Job*'s Friends in the frequent and often repeated unkind carriages of that visitation. *These ten times*, &c.

Observe, *To fall often into the same sin, is a great aggravation of sin.*

To reproach, or to do evil once, is too oft; but to do it often, *ten times*, how much evil is in that? One of the greatest burdens which we can put either upon our own sins, or upon the sins of others, is the number of them. An evil act single is heavy, what then are many bundled up together? As it is one of the greatest heightnings of the mercies of God, that he is pleased to do us good often, who have not deserved that he should do us good once, that we should have as many and manifold mercies, so those mercies daily renewed upon us, and sent in fresh every morning; so, that which heighteneth sinful actings against God or man, is the frequency of them, that they are renewed every day, or often in a day. (*Luke* 17.4.) *If thy brother trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him:* Christ puts it upon the number, *If thy brother trespass seven times in a day*, it is no great matter to forgive a brother, who offends once a day, or who offends us but seldom; but if he offend seven times in a day, here is the greatness of his sin in trespassing, and the great tryal of our charity and patience in bearing and forgiving. *Peter* put this Question (*Matth.* 18. 21, 22.) *Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him, till seven times?* As if he had said, A sin so often repeated is very great, and will put me to the exercise of all the love I have in my heart to forgive it. And though he thought this a very hard task for his grace to go through with, to forgive to seven times, yet he hath a harder task set him in the reply which Christ makes (*ver.* 22.) *Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven.* Peter's *seven* is multiplied to *seventy seven*; in which as we learn that the multiplication of sin is one of the greatest aggravations of it; so likewise is the multiplication of forgiveness: He that multiplies to sin, sins abundantly; and he that multiplies to pardon, doth (as God, *Isa.* 55. 7.) pardon abundantly.

Secondly, If we consider the state of the men whom *Job* charged to have reproached him *ten times*, they were good men.

Hence Observe, *That a good man may fall often into the same error.*

He that is upright may do amiss again and again, he may *ten times* wrongfully *reproach* man, and as often act disobediently towards God; it is no great matter to hear vile wretches speak evil and do evil an hundred times. They must needs do much evil, and do evil often, who being themselves evil, cannot but do evil, or do evilly whatsoever they are doing. But 'tis very sad (though very possible) when we see those who are good, yet do evil, especially when we see them do it often. It should keep the best humble, that still (by reason of their in-dwelling corruption) they are subject to fall into sin, and it should keep them watchful that they fall not.

Thirdly, Observe, *Reproaches make breaches.*

He said before, *You break me with your words*, now he shews plainly what those words were, reproachful words; reproaches make outward breaches between friends, but he that is reproached, finds a breach within. Sorrow breaks him, and shame breaks him. That which causeth shame hath sorrow in it: When *Paul* wrote sharply to the *Corinthians*, he saith, *I write not these things to shame you, but as beloved children to warn you.* We rebuke offenders, that we may make them ashamed, but not to shame them; but reproaches are cast upon others, to shame them, not to make them ashamed. Among all the tryals which Jesus Christ underwent to break and bruise him, reproach was one of the greatest. (*Psal.* 22. 6.) *I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, despised of the people:* Christ was not only reproached among men, but a reproach of men, he was, as it were, reproach it self. The Prophet (*Isa.* 50.6,7.) foreshewed the wonderful tryal of his patience, in bearing shame, *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting, for the Lord will help me, therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed:* They did what they could to make Christ ashamed, they reproached and reviled him, yea, they condemned him as a wicked man, therefore it follows in the eighth verse, *He is near that justifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us stand together, who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me.* As if he had said, I am not afraid, either of his tongue, or of his hand, of what he can say, nor of what he can do.

Fourthly, Observe, *It is usual for them to be much reproached amongst men, who are most precious with God.*

None receive more contempt on earth, then they whose names are written in Heaven; God hath reserved abundant honour for his people in the next life, but he often gives them up to reproach in this The men of the world cannot but despise those who are in esteem with God; for as 'tis in things, so in persons; *The things which are highly esteemed among men, are abomination to God*; and the things that are highly esteemed by God, are an abomination among men; so those persons who are highly prized with God, are an abomination with men: Should the worth of Saints be taken by the rate-book of the world, how vile were their price? To how low and poor a market would many precious souls come? The Apostle concludes concerning the *old Saints and Worthies* among the *Jews* (*Heb.* 11. 38.) that *the world was not worthy of them*; yet they were adjudged unworthy to live, or have a room in the world.

'Tis sad when good men, who are precious, yea, who rule with God, are reproached and reviled by the world; but it is most sad when one good man reproaches another: 'Tis a grief to hear those who are vile, revile, and throw dirt in their faces, whose faces shine through that beauty and comeliness of grace which God hath put upon them; but to see one Saint throw dirt in the face of another, to bespatter and bemire the credit of another, by Pen or Press, by words or gestures, this is a grief indeed, this is a lamentation, and ought to be for a lamentation among all the people of God, as it is (and will be while it is so) a rejoycing to the world that lyes in wickedness. But though now some of the Saints may say (with *Job*) to their brethren in the same faith, *These ten times have ye reproached us*, yet we have a promise that a time is coming when they shall not so much as once in one thought reproach one another; Ephraim *shall not envy* Judah, *and* Judah *shall not vex* Ephraim *any more* (Isa. 11, 13.)

Lastly, As these words refer to the grace and patience of *Job.*

Observe, *'Tis perfect patience when we can indure reproaches, especially many foul reproaches.*

It is a work of patience to indure but one reproach; but when we indure many reproaches, then patience hath a perfect work; as it shews the miserable perfection of a man in sin, to persevere in sinning, or as it argues the perfect hardness of a mans heart in sin, to sin after he hath been ten times or many times reproved; so it shews the perfection of a man in patience, to continue patient after he hath been *ten times reproached.* This answers that Rule of suffering given by Christ (*Matth.* 5. 39.) *I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also:* That is, When ye have received one wrong, be ye not meditating how to revenge that, but be ye preparing how to receive a second. *Though Grace doth not bid us invite injuries, yet it teaches us to bid them welcome. These ten times have ye reproached me.*

And are not ashamed, that ye make your selves strange to me.

The word that signifies to be ashamed here, is of a milder and gentler signification, then that we had before for reproach or shame. As if he had said, Ye have reproached me, as if ye intended not only to make me ashamed, but to confound me with shame; but you who have reproached me are not ashamed at all, you have not the least tincture of a blush appearing in your faces, though you have gone about to fill my face with shame, and my heart with sorrow.

Further, The word signifies such shame or blushing as causeth a stop in the work or enterprise which we have in hand. *Many would go on in doing good, and not a few in doing evil*

Verbum aliquanto lenius quam superius; q.d. cum vestris me approbriis vehementer pudefaciatis, vos neque leniter erubescitis. Pined.

Verbum hoc afferre videtur eum pudorem, quo quis deterretur ab aliquo opere faciendo. Pined.

evil, were they not ſhamed out of their purpoſes. How holy in outward profeſſion and performances would ſome be were it not that they fear ſhame, this ſtops them in their courſe, and turns them out of the way. Hence that ſevere threat (*Mark* 8. 38.) *Whoſoever therefore ſhall be aſhamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and ſinful generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed,* &c. Chriſt our Lord foreſaw, that as many would take up the profeſſion of the Goſpel for their credit, ſo many would withdraw from it for fear of ſhame. Now as many turn from keeping the holy Commandment for ſhame; ſo many are kept from breaking the holy Commandment only for ſhame. How unholy, how vile would they be, were they not aſhamed that it ſhould be known that they are ſo? Thus ſhame is the check of ſin. But ſaith *Job* to his Friends, *Ye are not aſhamed*; there is not ſo much as any ſhame upon you, cauſing you to bluſh at what you are doing, or to deſiſt from doing yet more. *Ye are not aſhamed.*

That ye make your ſelves ſtrange to me.

תזהירון *Multas patitur interpretationes.*

The word which we render **to make ſtrange**, is found only here in this ſence all the Bible over, yet it undergoes (according to the various apprehenſions of the learned in the Original Language) much variety both of tranſlation and of interpretation, yet none of them hurt the ſence of the Text, and may all ſtand with the truth of that which is here aſſerted.

Quod apparentis mihi. i. e. apertè averſamini.

Firſt, Some render it thus, *Ye are not aſhamed that you ſhew your ſelves openly againſt me*; *q. d.* Are ye ſo bold and confident, as to ſpeak evil of me in my own hearing? It were much for you to vent ſuch words behind my back, but are ye not aſhamed to ſpeak thus to my face?

Quòd obſtupeſcatis mihi.

Secondly, Others give it thus, *You are not aſhamed to ſtand wondring and gazing at me, as if I were ſome ſtrange Monſter never ſeen before:* As ſome men are wondred at for their noble actings, ſo others for their extream ſufferings.

הכר *Arabicè ſignificat ſtuporem.* Rab. Jona. *Significat etiam Arabicè, ſubſannare. Multa ſunt Arabica in hoc libro.* Merc.

Thirdly, The word in the Arabick (with which the language of this Book of *Job* often mingles) ſignifies to ſcorn or deride; in anſwer to which our Text is read, *Are ye not aſhamed to jear and jeſt at me in my miſery?* He hath expreſly charged his Friends with mocking, more then once before, and 'tis not improbable, that he doth touch it here again. We cannot but ſpeak much and often of that, which grieves us much.

Obſtrmatis vultûm in me. Rab. Joſ. Kinch.

Fourthly, One of the Rabbins ſpeaks *Job*'s meaning thus, *Ye are not aſhamed to harden your faces againſt me:* He that hath no compaſſion towards man, hardens his face as well as he that hath no repentance towards God. He that hardens his face againſt a man, hath alſo hardened his heart: The ſhew of the countenance teſtifies the frame of the Spirit. A man doth not (uſually or naturally) look or ſpeak hardly till he thinks hardly. Thus

Indurati eritis mihi. Mont.

Montanus tranſlates, *Ye are indurate againſt me:* And ſo Mr. *Broughton*, *But ye harden your ſelves againſt me, ye take no pity of me.*

Opprimitis me. Vulg. Ἐπικεῖσθε μοι, incumbitis mihi. Sept.

A fifth reads, *Ye oppreſs me*; the Seventy, *Ye load me, ye lye hard on me*, or, *ye are not aſhamed to lay your whole weight upon me.*

כרה *Significat.* 1. *Fodere.* 2. *Inſtruere convivium.* 3. *Emere vel cauponari.*

Once more, Others deriving the word from a root which hath three ſignifications, apply them all three to this place.

Firſt, *To dig*, making the ſence thus, *Ye are not aſhamed to dig me*; that is, to pierce and wound me: So the ſufferings of Chriſt upon the Croſs are prophetically deſcribed, (*Pſal.* 22. 16.) *They pierced* (*or they digged*) *my hands and my feet.*

Secondly, *To make a feaſt or a banquet.* So 'tis uſed (2 *Kings* 6. 23. *Job* 40. 3.) and then the ſence appears thus; *Ye are not aſhamed to feaſt upon me:* That is, to make your ſelves merry with my ſorrow, to feed upon my troubles. What he ſpeaks at the twenty-ſecond Verſe of this Chapter, hath ſome correſpondence with this reading; *Ye are not ſatisfied with his fleſh:* As if he had ſaid, The ſorrows of my fleſh, or my outward ſufferings are not enough to content and fill you, and therefore you ceaſe not to fill my ſoul with ſorrow.

Cauponari aliquem eſt abuti alio

Thirdly, The word ſignifies to *buy, to barter, to bargain and ſell for gain:* And then, this is the ſcope of his reproof; *Ye are not aſhamed to make merchandize of me:* That is, You deal with me, as with a man whom you might uſe at pleaſure, as if I were to be bought and ſold, at any rate, as if I were ſo contemptible, and of ſo cheap a credit, that I were fit only to ſerve turns, or an object for every one to play upon. We ſay of a man that is abuſed, or wronged, either through treachery or revenge, either to make ſport or profit for others, *This man is bought and ſold*; every one makes his advantage, and takes his penny-worths out of him.

ad ſuã gẽriã voluptatem vel commodum Coc.

All theſe tranſlations yield a ſence ſutable to the ſcope of this Scripture, yet, I conceive, ours is more proper then any of them all, and is approved by many learned Interpreters as the beſt, *Ye are not aſhamed to make your ſelves ſtrange to me.* As if he had ſaid, *Ye are my friends, and kindred, I have been long acquainted with you, yet now ye ſtand off, and keep your diſtance, as if I and you were ſtrangers, and had never known or heard of one another until this day, or as if you were much my ſuperiours, and ſo 'twere too much condeſcention in you to be familiar with me.* So the word is uſed (*Gen.* 42. 7.) *Joſeph* knew his Brethren when they came to *Egypt* for bread, *but he made himſelf ſtrange*, he diſſembled his knowledge, or forced himſelf to a neſcience of them, he would not be known that he knew them, he made himſelf ſtrange to them, as if he had been ſome other man. *Joſeph* had abundance of kindneſs in his heart towards his Brethren, and therefore did (with State-Art) but feign a ſtrangeneſs: *Job* feared his Friends had no kindneſs at all in their hearts towards him, but were as real in their ſtrangeneſs, as if they had been very ſtrangers. *Ye are not aſhamed to make your ſelves ſtrange to me.*

Inter omnia quæ interpretes in hanc vocem afferunt, hoc accommodatiſſimum puto ut נכר & הכר *idem valeant, ſc. extraneum ſe geſſerit.* Merc. *Alios vos mihi exhibitis.* Vatab.

Hence Obſerve, Firſt, *It adds to the ſinfulneſs of the evil we do, not be aſhamed that we have done it.*

It is good to be aſhamed when we have done evil: Shame is a good effect of a bad cauſe; ſhame is the fruit of ſin: Till there was ſin in the World, there was no ſhame in the World; and ſin will make them aſhamed for ever, who ſin now and are not aſhamed. They who have not the ſhame of repentance, ſhall have the ſhame of puniſhment. As the people of God have this promiſe, that they ſhall never be aſhamed by the diſappointment of their hopes; ſo they have this promiſe alſo, that they ſhall be aſhamed repenting of their ſins. *And indeed to confeſs or bewail ſin, and not to be aſhamed of it, is not repentance, but impudence.* It is one of the greateſt deſigns of Satan at preſent to ſeparate ſin and ſhame, to make men at once bold and wicked. And he ſo far prevails with ſome, that they are ſo far from looking upon ſin as their ſhame, that they count it a kind of honour; and as the Apoſtle gives the character of ſuch brazen faces, with tears in his eyes, (*Phil.* 3. 19.) *They glory in their ſhame*; that is, what they look upon as their glory, is indeed their ſhame. The Prophet alſo ſpeaks of theſe (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *The ſhew of their countenance witneſſeth againſt them, they declare their ſin as* Sodom, *they hide it not*: How did *Sodom* declare her ſin? *Sodom* did not declare her ſin as *Nineveh, Repenting in duſt and aſhes: Sodom* did not declare her ſin as they that are truly humbled before the Lord declare theirs, who, to uſe the Prophets language (*Iſa.* 43. 26.) *Declare that they may be juſtified*; but *Sodom* declared her ſin impudently, ſhe cared not who ſaw it, or who knew it: How ſad is it when *Jeruſalem* patterns her ſelf by *Sodom? Jeremy* complains of this (*Chap.* 6. 15.) *Were they aſhamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all aſhamed, neither could they bluſh:* They who harden themſelves becauſe they would not bluſh, ſhall at laſt be ſo hardened that they cannot bluſh. Shame is the leading act unto repentance; they that are aſhamed of their ſin, are in a good way to turn from it. And hence ſhame is put ſometimes for repentance; *What fruit have ye in thoſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed* (Rom. 6. 21.) That is, whereof ye now repent, and from which ye are converted. The repentance of *Ephraim* is ſo deſcribed (*Jer.* 31. 19.) *Surely after I was turned I repented, and after that I was inſtructed, I ſmote upon my thigh, I was aſhamed, yea, even confounded,* &c. 'Tis beſt to do ſuch things of which we need not be aſhamed; but they that have done evil ſhall do well to be aſhamed. *Job* ſuppoſing his Friends had done ill in making themſelves ſtrange to him, charges this upon them as an aggravation of it, *Ye are not aſham'd to make your ſelves ſtrange to me?*

Secondly, From the matter about which they ought to have been asham'd, their strangeness to him; *Ye are not asham'd that ye make your selves strange to me.*

Observe, *To be strange to friends, specially to godly friends, is an act that we ought to be asham'd of.*

It is a shameful thing to be asham'd of friends, especially of godly friends: This shame might justly fall upon many at this day; what strangeness is there between friends, and godly friends? Such as heretofore lay in one anothers bosom, are grown so strange, that they cannot stay with content in one anothers sight, they will scarce look upon one another, who not long since (at least in profession) dearly loved one another. They who met purposely to speak one to another, will scarce speak to one another when they meet accidentally. Yea, they who should be ready to dye for one another, can hardly live by one another. When shall we be ashamed of this strangeness? When will the love of many which hath waxen cold gather heat again? 'Tis *Englands* sin at this day, *Strangeness among the Saints*; they who profess themselves to be all acquainted with, and Friends to Jesus Christ, are unfriendly and unacquainted among themselves. They who are near to God, behold each other afar off. Were it not monstrous, if one member of the body should withdraw offices of love from another member, or should be as a stranger to it? These unnatural distances among the members of the same mystical body, are too open either to be hid or denyed. Is it not a reproach to Christianity, that they who indeed are members of the same Christ, should act as if they were not members of the same World. To how many thousands of Saints may we say, as *Job* here, *Are ye not asham'd to make your selves strange one to another?* And consider this further, if strangeness, if a meer withdrawing of converse be so uncomely that Christians ought to be asham'd of it, what then is that which is the root of it, alienation to affections? If Christians have cause to blush when they are not free and open-hearted one to another, how ought they to be confounded, who are guilty of heart-burnings and bitterness of spirit one against another? If we ought to be ashamed that we are not kind to one another, that we are not ready to do one another good, how should we be *asham'd to be cruel to, or to devise evil one against another?* Strangeness is not the doing of evil, but a suspension from doing good, or from shewing wonted respects. Now if it be a shame not to do good, how should we be asham'd of doing evil to our Brethren?

Thirdly, We may consider *Job* not only as a friend, and as a godly friend, but also as an afflicted friend, as a man almost overwhelmed with sorrow.

Then observe, *It is a shameful thing not to own a good man when he is in a low, or in the lowest condition.*

Job knew the time when enough would own him, when enough would visit him, and were ambitious of his friendship; but being upon the dunghil, few would come at him, and none cared for his soul. Strangers desire the favour of those who are in prosperity, and neareſt friends will shew themselves strange to those that are in adversity; but is it not their shame to do so? *Paul* speaks it to the high commendation of *Onesiphorus* (2 Tim. 1. 16.) *He oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:* Many are much ashamed to look upon a godly friend in chains; as they are afraid to wear a chain for godliness. No man was ever more proud of his own golden chain, then some are ashamed of the iron chain of others. When Jesus Christ was apprehended and under his sufferings, this temptation went high even upon his own Disciples and Servants, whom he had often forewarned of sufferings, and instructed how to suffer, (*Matth.* 26. 56, 58.) *Then all the Disciples forsook him and fled.* They who before forsook all and followed him, now forsook him and fled: Neither was this the act of some one or two, but of all the Disciples. *Then all the Disciples forsook him.* And though *Peter* followed him, yet his following was as bad as a forsaking, *for he followed him afar off* (ver. 58.) And when he was come near into the house, he did worse then forsake him, he denied him and forswore him. *Peter* made himself so strange to Christ, that he professed strongly, yea, with an Oath, *I know not the Man:* As if he had said, *If you will not take my word, I will swear I know him not;* O what a distemper of spirit did fear bring him to? How was his spirit overwrought with worldly shame, when he wrought all these sinful coverings, that he might appear a stranger to Jesus Christ? *O* Peter, *wast thou not ashamed to shew thy self strange to Jesus Christ when he was afflicted, who was therefore afflicted to make us who were strangers, and afar off from God, near unto him and his friends? It is no easie thing to be acquainted with the cross of others; how hard will it be to be acquainted with our own cross?* If men be strange to their friends when they are afflicted, O how strange will they be to their own afflictions? When there is no suitableness in our spirits to suffering and affliction, we cannot sute with those that suffer and are afflicted. The Man in the Gospel (*Luke* 10. 30.) travelling from *Jericho* to *Jerusalem*, *fell among thieves, which stripped him of his rayment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead*; then cometh a Levite and a Priest, and what do they? do they own the Man? No, they go on the other side, as if the Man had been sick of the Plague, and they durst not come near him for fear of infection; they saw him in that lamentable pickle, and passed by, they would not do the office of a Neighbour (that's the intent of the Parable, to shew who is a Mans Neighbour) if the Man had been mounted on his Horse, riding gallantly on the way, possibly the Priest and the Levite would have joyn'd with him, and have said, Sir, whither travel you? They would have fallen into discourse with him, as a Man of their own Tribe, and have gone to the same Inn with him; but seeing him lye wounded, and groveling upon the high-way in his blood, they made themselves strange to him. *As men naturally shun their own afflictions, so those that are in affliction:* 'Tis against the light and common principles of Nature to do so; yet naturally Men do so. And because 'tis against the light of Nature to do so, therefore 'tis a shame to do so. And if it be against the light of Nature, and the principles of Morality, how much more is it against the light of Grace, and the principles of Religion, when this strangeness is shewed to those who have Grace, and are indeed religious? 'Tis a Gospel-duty to do good to all, but especially to the houshold of Faith: They break all the bands and tyes of love, who refuse to do them good that have received and express the tokens of divine love; or are strangers in affection to them, who are of the houshold of Faith. Every godly Man may say to his uncharitable brethren, as *Job* did here to his friends, *Are ye not ashamed to make your selves strange to me?* Thus *Job* hath reproved his friends undeserved severity, and he reproves them yet further in the next words, upon supposition that he had deserved it.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

And be it indeed that I have erred, mine error remaineth with my self.
If indeed you will magnifie your selves against me, and plead against me my reproach.
Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net.

IN the fourth and fifth Verses of this Context, *Job* proceeds to reprove his Friends severity towards him, by way of grant, or supposition. He reproves them, not only, because they dealt thus with him who was innocent; but he supposes or grants (though he yields it not) that himself had been an offender, or had erred, and yet shews that their proceeding with him was justly offensive and erroneous.

Verse 4. **And be it indeed that I have erred, &c.**

He useth a figure in Rhetorick called *concession*, when the Respondent is willing to grant more then the Opponent can prove, and gives that which is disadvantageous to his cause, upon confidence of the righteousness of his cause, or when he yieldeth as much as his Adversary desireth, *Concessio est cum aliquid etiam iniquum videmus causæ fiducia pati.* Quint.

Professus sum integritatem meam, sed ut illam tacear, & confitear me errando provocasse iram Dei an continuò dignum est vobis ut miserias accumuletis misero. Pined. *Non importat deficere vel errare per ignorantiam.*

and

and yet maintains what himself desireth. *Be it indeed that I have erred.* As if he had said, *I have often professed (and still do) mine own innocency; but because I see you are very greedy to charge me with, and convince me of an error, I will be silent in that point, and suppose, what you cannot prove; put case it be so, that I have erred, yet you have erred more in your carriage towards me: my error doth not justifie you in what you have spoken and done to me: Though I by sin have provoked God to anger, will that bear you out in your anger against me? Must you needs smite me with your tongues, because he hath smitten me with his hand? Will you add misery to him that is in misery?*

Fsto ignoravi. Vulg.

Be it that I have erred.] Some render, *Be it that I am ignorant*, or have been ignorant. So the Vulgar.

The word in the Hebrew signifies two things.

First, To be ignorant.

Secondly, To be in an error, or to fall into error through ignorance. (*Psal.* 19. 12.) *Who knoweth the errors* (or ignorances) *of his life?*

The force of this word was opened (*Chap.* 6. 24.) Therefore I shall not here stay upon it.

Be it that I have erred.] We may take it three wayes.

First, Be it that I have erred in judgment, and think amiss.

Secondly, Be it that I have erred in word, and have spoken amiss.

Thirdly, Be it that I have erred in action, and have done amiss. Lay the supposition thus large, be it that I have erred in opinion, in speech and practise, yet what have you gained, or how can ye be excused?

We may consider this clause first in it self, and then in relation to this dispute.

Be it that I have erred.] In as much as the same word signifies both ignorance, and error, it may suggest this note to us.

Ignorance and error are very near akin, yea, ignorance is the cause or mother of most errors.

Ignorantiæ duæ pessimæ filiæ falsitas & dubitatio. Aug. l. 22. de Civit. dei ca. 22.

Ignorance is the Mother of two very uncomely Daughters, as one of the Ancients long since observed. The first Daughter of Ignorance, is named *Dubiety* or *doubtfulness*, which is a constant wavering in opinion. A knowing Man hath a setled judgment, but an ignorant man (though he may be stubborn and wilful, yet he) cannot be fixt, or steady. The second Daughter of Ignorance is named *Falsity* or *error*, which alwayes settles us (if ever it be setled) in that which is unsound. It may be hard to convince a knowing man of his error, but he that knows no reason, will not be convinced by reason. Error strictly taken, proceeds ever from ignorance; for he that maintains either an opinion or a practise against the light of his knowledge, is more then in an error; 'tis obstinacy in him, as it refers to practise; 'tis heresie in him, as it refers to opinion.

Secondly, *Job* supposed that which might very well be, while he said, *Be it that I have erred*; he did not suppose an impossibility.

Hence Observe, *It is common to man, to the best of men, to godly men, to be in an error.*

A godly man should not suppose himself an Heretick; who as he usually errs against light, so he alwayes delights in his error; but he may suppose himself erring for want of light. They who in this life have most light in them, have also much darkness in them; and we are apter to follow the darkness of our own spirits, then the light of Gods Spirit. He that thinks he cannot err, reckons himself for more then a man. And while we confess that either we have, or may err, we do but confess that we are men. Yea, as he that saith, *He hath not sinned, so he that saith, he hath not erred, hath no truth in him.* A denial that we have erred, is the grand error; and there are none so stiff in that denial, as they who are most erroneous. While there remains any corruption in the will, the understanding cannot be wholly free from corruption. While sin hath any part in us, it may act it self in every part. Though some (possibly) do not err, yet 'tis too much for any man to say so of himself; no man is exempt from a possibility of erring: Till we arrive at perfect purity, we shall not arrive at infallibility.

Thirdly, Note, *Concessions are sometimes the strongest refutations.*

We may unanswerably convince others of an error, by supposing that we have erred.

Lastly, Take this brief Note also, *It may be our wisdom to give another leave or scope to say, that we have erred when we have not: but it is our sin to charge our selves positively with error, when we have not erred.*

It is one thing to let it be supposed that we have erred when we have not, and another thing to say we have erred when we have not. No man hath liberty to charge himself falsly, to take that sin or that error upon his own account, whereof he is not guilty. Yea, we ought to be more careful that we bear not false witness against our selves, then against another. Every man (next to God) owes most duty and respect to himself. And as we must not suffer the glory of God, or the credit of our brethren to be diminished, so neither must we suffer our own. We may let others work upon a supposition of that which is not; but we must not make positions either concerning our selves or others of that which is not. We may speak it Rhetorically, but we must not speak it Logically, that we have erred when we have not. Thus *Job* speaks, *Be it indeed that I have erred.*

Mine error remaineth with my self.] This sounds like an aggravation of *Job*'s sinfulness; If he had said, *Be it that I have erred*, yet I am now willing to renounce and depart from my error; or suppose I have erred, I will now disclaim and recant mine error; this had sounded well. But to say, *Be it that I have erred, mine error remaineth with my self*, seems to imply a love to error, a hugging, and an embracing of it. We say, *It is incident to man to err, but to persevere in error, or willingly to let error remain upon us, is diabolical and wicked.* How is it then that *Job* saith, *Mine error remaineth with my self?*

Humanum est errare, in errore perseverare est diabolicum.

The word that we translate *remain*, signifies, *to dwell, to tarry, to rest, to take up a nights lodging.* All which expressions seem to meet in this, that he was willing his error should not be transcient but permanent; not as a passing stranger, but as a welcome friend. We have the word (*Jer.* 4. 14.) where the Prophet chargeth this upon *Jerusalem, O* Jerusalem *wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved: How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge* (*or rest*) *with thee?* The best have vain thoughts, passing through them; vain thoughts will come and knock at the door for entertainment; but to open the door and receive them, to like and lodge them, this argues a heart not washed from wickedness. But did *Job*'s error thus remain and lodge with him?

Mecum manebit, dormiet, manebit, pernoctabit, habitabit, hæc omnia significat verbum לון.

There are three or four Interpretations in answer to this.

First, Thus, *Mine error remaineth with my self.* If I have erred, mine error will not hurt you, it hurts no body but my self: What need you be so angry with me for mine error? You shall not answer for it; you shall not suffer for what I have done amiss: So divers give the sence. But this, according to ordinary understanding, is very unbecoming a gracious spirit. As *Job* tells his Wife (*Chap.* 2.) when she advised him to curse God, and dye, *Thou speakest like one of the foolish women.* So, according to vulgar sence, it might be said, that *Job* in speaking thus, *spake as a foolish man*, who when he is told of his faults, saith, *What is that to you; my faults shall not dammage you.* Thus wasters and rioters misspending their estates, being told of it, or reproved for it, answer, Why do you meddle with us? you shall not smart for what we do: Such is the language of foolish and vain men, who have neither honesty to do well, nor can be ashamed when they do ill. Such answers speak a man who hath neither any love to holiness, nor abhorrence of wickedness: For as it argues a sinful frame of heart to let another lye in sin, or to say, what is it to me that my Brother sinneth, he may look to himself, *Am I my Brothers keeper?* So when a man saith, Why do you trouble your self about my sin? What is that to you? Let me alone, take you no care of me; *Mine error remaineth with my self.*

In me stat iste error illiusque punitio, quid ad vos? nihil vos læsit.

Talis responsio est illius, qui neq; pudoris habeat illum nec virtutis studium. Sanct.

Sinete me luere pœnas erroris mei, ego sum qui ob eum pudet malo quæ patitur perferre, quam eorum contumelias audire. Merc.

Yet

Yet some who maintain this explication, make a favourable construction of it. As if he had said thus, To bear the worst that my error can bring upon me, is not so bad as your severe dealing with me; your reproaches and censures grieve me more, then all my afflictions; 'tis more troublesome to hear what you will say to me, then to feel what God doth to me. All the evil which I suffer from his hand, is not so heavy as your tongue, his blows are not so bitter and smarting as your words. But I pass that.

Non propter eos ab opinione mea discedam quam vos errorum appellatis, Lab. Sect.

Secondly, One of the Rabbins interprets it in the future, thus, *Be it that I have erred, I am resolved to err still, or my error shall remain with me.* As if he had said, That which you call an error, I am purposed to hold still. As *Paul* professed (*Acts* 24. 14.) *After the way which they call heresie, so worship I the God of my Father.* So *Job* spake here according to the tendency of this interpretation. *Job* was not resolved to stick to an error indeed, but (saith he) if you call this an error which I have maintained, I am resolved to maintain it, I will not be driven from my opinion, because you have branded it for an error. This, where it hits right, is a just and vertuous pertinacy.

He that judgeth himself to be in the truth, should not leave it because others call it error.

As we should not take up error, because some (possibly wise and learned Men) call it truth; so neither should we let go or depart from that which is truth, because many (possibly wise and learned Men too) call it error. As we ought *to try all things*, so *to hold fast that which is good*, whosoever would pull it from us. The evidence which any way or opinion hath from the Word of God, and the clear light of our own Consciences, may bear us out against any contrary evidence or contradiction of man. It becomes the people of God, to be meek and yielding, that *a little Child may lead them* (Isa. 11. 6.) in the right way; yet it becomes them as well to be so stout and true to the Truth, that the greatest Men in the World should neither lead nor force them out of it.

Thirdly, The words are expounded as a redargution of his Friends insufficiency in arguing with him; *Mine error remaineth with me:* That is, You have not yet removed mine error, nor convinced me that I am out of the way. All that you have said, doth not satisfie my Conscience, nor give me any light to change my judgment. You have spoken much, but you have proved little; your reasons are more in number then weight; I find not my self at all pressed with them, nor hath mine opinion received any dammage, much less a downfal by them. If I have erred, mine error remaineth with me, safe and untoucht, for any thing you have hitherto done or said. *Job* spake this sence before (*Chap.* 6. 25.) *How forcible are right words, but what doth your arguing reprove?* This is a fair Interpretation.

Hence Note, *Many are bitter against those whom they suppose to be in error, whom yet they have not proved to be in an error.*

Job's Friends had reproached him ten times, but they had not answered him to purpose once. He had store of hard words from them, but few sound arguments. *It is an easier matter to be angry with error, then to argue against it.* And the reason why many are so angry, is because they have so little reason. *Much passion and little reason usually dwell together.* They will often be most earnest against an opinion, who have least to say against it.

Fourthly, The words are interpreted with reference to that which follows, (*Ver.* 5.) *If indeed ye will magnifie your selves against me*: As if he had said, *Let it be granted, that I am in an error, and not only so, but that mine error remaineth*, that I persist in mine error after all your counsels and admonitions; yet, ye ought not to magnifie your selves against me, or trample upon me. Though you cannot all this while gain me from mine error, and make me sensible of my mistake, yet you may not (without just blame) thus reproach and throw dirt upon me.

Hence Note, *He that cannot be convinced nor reclaimed from his error, must not presently be insulted over and reproached.*

Though *he that is an Heretick after the first and second admonition, is to be rejected* (Tit. 3. 10.) yet every one that is in an error ought not. The Apostle gives an excellent Rule (2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25.) *The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.* I shall touch at this again by and by.

Vers. 5. **If indeed you will magnifie your selves against me, and plead against me my reproach.**

As this Verse may be connected with the former in the sence last given, so with the following Verse; *Know now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compassed me with his net*; and then the meaning is this; Let it be granted that I am in an error, *If ye* (upon that ground) *magnifie your selves against me, and plead against me my reproach, then know that God hath overthrown me, and he hath compassed me with his net.* There's an answer for you: This may put you to silence, and stop your mouths, both from villifying me, and overvaluing your selves. As if he had said, *The hand of God is upon me, why do you lift up your heads against me? Doth it become you to greaten your selves, because God hath made me little? Or to heighten your spirits against me, when God hath laid me low?*

If indeed you will magnifie your selves against me.

The word which we translate **to magnifie**, refers both to words and works, signifying as to act highly, so to speak big, to boast and vaunt. We magnifie God, not by making him Great, but by making it appear how great he is. But when Man magnifies himself, either he would make himself appear greater and better then he is, or he would make his fellow-brethren appear less and worse then they are. (*Psal.* 35. 26.) *Let them be ashamed, and brought to confusion together that rejoyce at mine hurt; let them be cloathed with shame and dishonour that magnifie themselves against me.* While *David* prayed that these self-magnifiers and admirers might be brought to shame, he plainly intimates, both that they had taken more honour to themselves then was their due, and that they had taken that from him, which was his due. Thus he pleads with God again upon the same account (*Psal.* 38. 16.) *For I said, hear me, lest otherwise they should rejoyce over me; when my foot slippeth, they magnifie themselves against me:* As if he had said, Lord, hold me up and establish my goings, for if I slip, mine enemies think they stand the faster, and if I fall, their pride riseth. Once more, he complains of the insultations of his false friends in the day of his distress. (*Psal.* 55. 12.) *It was not an enemy* (that is, an open enemy) *that reproached me, then I could have born it; neither was it he that hated me* (that is, who professed hatred) *that magnified himself against me, then I would have hid my self from him.* While *David*'s professed or secret enemies magnified themselves, they ever lessened, and abased him.

חגלי a גרל *in hiphil, Magnificavit, auxit, magnificè egit, magna locutus, gloriatus fuit.* Shind.

Thus here; *If indeed ye will magnifie your selves against me*, if ye will grow upon me, or (as we say) crow over me in words; if ye will flourish it in high language, and come with full mouth against me, then know, *&c.* Master *Broughton* refers it to their whole carriage, rendring it thus, *And truly ye deal stately over me.*

Quandoquidem vobis visum est arrumnas meas Grandiloquentia tanta describere, &c. Bez. *Ingrandescitus.* Heb.

Hence Observe, First, *Man is apt to magnifie himself over those that he supposeth fallen into error, or whom he sees fallen into trouble.*

Man is ready to think highly of himself, when he beholds another down. We see this in that great case (about which the Apostle enlarges his discourse, *Rom.* 11.) between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. The *Jews* were fallen, they were as branches broken off: The *Gentiles*, who were a wild Olive-tree, *were graffed in among* (or *for*) *them*, ver. 17. The Apostle had a jealousie that this priviledge would swell the *Gentiles* into great thoughts of themselves, and into a contempt of the *Jews*, and therefore he cautions them (*vers.* 18.) *Boast not against the branches*; that is, against the branches that are broken off. For *if thou boastest, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee?* But it may be objected against the Apostles way of arguing; Why, what if they did not boast? Should they then bear the root, and not the root them? Surely whether they boasted or boasted not, they

they being branches, the root must bear them, and not they the root. I answer, The Apostle doth not at all suppose, that if they did not boast they should bear the root, but uses this as an argument why they should not boast against the branches which were broken off, even because themselves, though graffed in, yet were but branches, and therefore they did not bear the root, but the root them. Now there is nothing more uncomely then to boast against that thing or person whith beareth us up, or against that which receiveth no benefit from us, but we receive much from it. As the Apostle speaks in the close of the seventeenth verse; *Thou with them partakest of the root and fatness of the Olive-tree.* By the *Olive-tree*, we are to understand the visible Church of God (*Jer.* 11.16.) *The Lord called thy name a green Olive-tree, fair and of goodly fruit.* The root of this *Olive-tree* was *Abraham*, by vertue of the Church-covenant in Christ, which was made first, by name, with him, who is hence also called the *Father of the faithful.* Yet (in passage) take this caution, *Abraham* was not the root of the *Olive-tree* (the Church) by way of communication, as if either *Jews* or *Gentiles* did receive any sap of spiritual life from him, as branches do of a natural life from the root; for thus Jesus Christ alone is the root of the Church, or of all Believers; but *Abraham* was and is the root of the *Olive-tree* only in a way of Administration. The Lord calling him forth as the first Man with whom he was pleased to treat, and enter that Covenant with, which yet was originally, and (as I may speak) radically made with Christ, in the behalf not only of ordinary Believers, whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*, but even of *Abraham* himself. Thus I have stept a little out of my way, to shew in what sence *Abraham* is called *the root of the Olive-tree.* The *fatness of this Olive-tree*, is all the outward Priviledges and Ordinances instituted, together with the inward Graces promised. Of this *root and fatness* the *Gentiles* did partake, being taken into the visible Church, from which, before, they were aliens and strangers. Now though the *Gentiles* were thus estated through free Grace in the priviledges of the *Jews*, yet *Paul* foresaw that they instead of thankfulness to God for the mercy bestowed on them, would be ready to exalt themselves against the *Jews*, who for a time, through their own unbelief, were cast down and broken off; and therefore he saith, *Boast not against the branches.* And again (*ver.* 20.) *Be not high-minded, but fear*; As if he had said, Thy state is high, let not thy mind be so too: The *Jews* are fallen, and unless thou walkest in holy fear, thou canst not stand. The Apostle gives another instance of mans readiness to exalt himself against those that are weak in faith, as before against those who were fallen through unbelief. (*Rom.* 14. 3.) *Let not him that eateth, despise him that eateth not; and let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth; for God hath received him.* Here are two sorts, *him that eateth, and him that eateth not:* He that did eat was the strong Brother; he that did not eat was the weak Brother. Now the strong who had a clear light about Gospel-liberties, and was fully convinced that the difference of meats was taken away by Christ, seeing his Brother scrupled, and forbearing to eat, judged him presently as weak, and so was ready at once to despise him, and magnifie himself. These two may easily enough be distinguished, but they are never separated. *He that thinks lightly of another, hath alwayes high thoughts of himself. A despiser of the least of his brethren, is no small man in his own opinion.* *Paul* being informed that the strong (among the Saints at *Rome*) despised the weak, did not only forbid them in this third verse, but chides them at the tenth verse, *Why dost thou judge thy Brother?* Or, *Why dost thou set at naught thy Brother?* And as he took down the *Gentiles*, *Chap.* 14. with *Be not high-minded, but fear.* So he doth these, with *We shall all stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ.* As if he had said, We must all be judged by *One*, and therefore let not any one be so busie in judging: To love is our duty, to judge is Christs prerogative, let us be more in charity, and less in censure.

Paul also intimates this harshness of spirit towards a fallen Brother, in the dealing of the *Corinthians* with the incestuous person, whom himself had ordered to be cast out of the Church, and given up to Satan (1 *Cor.* 5. 5.13.) He perceived their spirits too high against him, and therefore in the second Epistle he mollifies and moderates them (*Chap.* 2. 6.) *Sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many*; do not punish him still, do not imbitter your spirits against him; *Ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, least he be swallowed up with over-much sorrow* (ver. 7.) We cannot have over-much faith in God, we cannot have over-much love to God; the greatest abundance of these is no excess, but we may have over-much sorrow; and though we cannot be too pressing upon Saints to believe, and love, yet we may be too pressing upon sinners to mourn and sorrow. *Wherefore* (saith the Apostle) *I beseech you to confirm your love towards him.* Carry it meekly, mildly, and gently with your formerly offending, but now deeply humbled and repenting Brother; do not magnifie your selves against him, who hath abased and laid himself low before you.

Secondly, Observe, *It is very sinful to magnifie our selves against those that are fallen.*

First, Such forget their own frailty, how apt they are to fall. We should be taught by the failings of some, what we may be tempted to do, as well as we should be taught by the holy actings of others what we ought to do. That corruption, that temptation which hath prevailed against thy Brother, and cast him down, may prevail against thee too, and cast thee down. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth* (not insult over his Brother that is fallen, but remember that himself may fall, and) *take heed lest he fall*; as the Apostle gives us warning (1 *Cor.* 10. 12.)

Secondly, Such forget that themselves have fallen into other sins or errors, and possibly into the same: Some who are deeper in sin and error of another kind, then their Brethren in those charged upon them, or proved against them; yet cannot contain from over-acting in censures upon them: Yea, sometimes they who have fallen into the very same sin, and have been chief in it, will yet heighten themselves against those who have sinned with them, till they are awakened to consider their own sin. *Judah* had defiled *Tamar* (*Gen.* 38.24.) yet as soon as they brought word that *Tamar* was with child, *Burn her* (saith he) to the fire with her presently. Thus he condemned her, being himself guilty of the same fault. He was a most severe Judge of that crime in her, for which it doth not appear that he ever so much as question'd himself, though the principal. The Scribes and Pharisees (*John* 8. 5.) haled the poor Woman taken in adultery before Christ, they called for Justice, and urged the Law. Yet it should seem that they were as bad as she or worse; for when Christ said, *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her*, they went out one by one, being convicted within their own consciences, which secretly suggested, that they could not throw a stone at her for that offence, but they must also hit themselves. How sinful is it to vex and judge others for that, of which our selves are guilty, and have never asked forgiveness. But suppose a man were free from that spot, which he sees his Brother hath taken, and is defiled with. Yea, suppose him as far from a possibility of taking a sinful spot, as the holy Angels confirmed by Grace, yet it were sinful even for him to magnifie himself against those that are fallen into sin. Doth God insult over poor sinners? No, he pities and he spares them. The Lord doth not magnifie himself against any who are fallen, unless such as being fallen, rise up and magnifie themselves against him by their impenitency and presumption. Now doth God (against whom man offends when he falls) pity him, and deal tenderly with him, and shall man insult over an offending Brother? It is our duty to bewail and pray for those that fall, to help, and counsel them up again. To bless God who hath kept us from those snares and temptations, with which, as we see others are, so our selves might be overcome. Such thoughts will keep us from swellings and self-magnifyings against our Brethren, though they have erred, yea, though their error remaineth with them. *If ye will magnifie your selves against me,*

And plead against me my reproach.] Some render the whole verse thus, *Should you magnifie your selves against me, and plead reproachfully against me?* you should not; 'tis not only beside, but against your duty to do so. *Increpatis probosè non spiritu lenitatis.*

Hence

Hence Note, *We may reprove, but not reproach an erring brother.*

Omnis reprehensio vacare debet contumelia.

We should have a respect to the credit of our Brother, while we are rectifying either his conscience or his conversation; and while we take care to save his soul, we must not be careless of his name, or destroy his reputation. *Reprehension should not savour of reproach.* Our zeal for God must be mingled with pity towards man. The Apostle gives that Rule (*Gal.* 6. 1.) *Brethren, If a man be over-taken in a fault, you that are spiritual restore such a one* (set him in joynt again. How? With a rough hand? No,) *with the spirit of meekness*; Do not plead against him his reproach. Do not charge his sin upon him, as if his sin were not common to man; *Do it considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted.* Deal clearly, and faithfully, but not reproachfully with him; *Restore him with the spirit of meekness.* *Paul* was unwilling to deal severely with the faulty *Corinthians*, and therefore he, as it were, puts it to their choice, and even begs of them to prevent his coming among them with a rod in his hand (1 *Cor.* 4. 21.) *What will ye? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?* Now surely, he that was unwilling to chasten them with the rod of reproof, had no will to sting or bite them with the Scorpion of reproach.

Again, Reproach may be taken for affliction it self: And then the sence riseth thus; as if he had said, *Suppose I have erred, and that mine error remaineth with my self; Will you plead my afflictions against me as an argument that I am in, or remain in an error?* So Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *You bring my wretched case as an argument against me.* Afflictions are often called in Scripture, *reproaches*; because they are charged on the afflicted as a reproach. Thus *Rachel* speaks (*Gen.* 30. 23.) *God hath taken away my reproach*: That is, My affliction of barrenness, which was objected against me as a reproach. The same *Elizabeth* (Luke 1. 25.) *She having conceived hid her self five months*, and said, *God hath taken away my reproach.* So (*Ezek.* 36. 30.) the Lord promiseth his people, that they shall receive *no more the reproach of famine among the Heathen*: For when the Heathen saw the people of God in outward wants, and eaten up with famine, they at once blasphemed the holy Name of God, and reproached them; *See what a God ye serve, you that would be esteemed the darlings of heaven, see your condition, your God suffers you to starve, to be hunger-bitten*: Therefore they are comforted with this word, *You shall not suffer the reproach of famine among the Heathen*: implying, that the Heathen usually reproached them in times of famine and affliction.

Hence Note, *Affliction layeth us open to reproach.*

And that is one of the greatest burdens of affliction. The old Poet could say, *That poverty had nothing more grievous in it then this, that it leaves men under disgrace, and exposes them to scorn.* Worldly men esteem others, by their lands, and riches, not by their goodness, or the grace of God.

Secondly, Note, *We are apt to plead the evil which any man suffers as an argument of his sin.*

The reproach or affliction which *Job* suffered, was all the argument and proof which his Friends could produce against him. They brought no witnesses to accuse him, but what they found upon him, his poverty and diseases. *Job*'s uprightness had never been questioned by them, if he had not lost his riches. Other passages of this Book, have yielded the like Observation, and therefore I only touch it here; and as *Job*'s Friends insist often upon the same arguments for substance, so also doth *Job* upon the same answers and replies. *Job* hath already told his Friends more then once, in effect, what he is about to tell them in the next Verse.

Verse 6. **Know that God hath overthrown me, and compassed me about with his net.**

Will you plead my reproach, or my affliction against me? If you will, I desire you to consider whence or from what hand my affliction comes; *Know that God hath overthrown me.*

Know.] There is sometimes a threat, always a reproof in this form of speaking. *Know*, is, I would have you know, or you shall know to your cost. It usually implyes a teaching by correction, yea, by destruction, not by instruction (*Exod.* 7. 5.) When God saith, *The* Egyptians *shall know that I am the Lord*, He means, they should know it to their sorrow, or by their sorrow: As if he had said, *You will not acknowledge it, but you shall know that I am the Lord; you shall know by your own punishments that I have power both to command and punish.* We have a like expression (*Psal.* 9. 20.) *Put them in fear, O Lord, that the Nations may know themselves to be but men.* But were the Nations unskill'd in this piece of knowledge? It is indeed a very hard thing for a man to know himself; but, it seems, very easie for any man to know that he is but a man. The Orator saith, There was never any Nation so rudely barbarous, but knew there was a God; and surely there was never any Nation so blindly ambitious, as not to know themselves to be but men. The Psalmist therefore doth not suppose that they thought themselves more then men in the constitution of their nature, but in the institution of their lives. They think themselves Gods, who either will act by their own rules, or are confident they can give success to their own actions; when men either do what they please, or think they are able to carry whatsoever they do, then they forget that they are but men. Hence *David* prayes, O Lord, put them in fear, dash their counsels, break their plots, then the Nations will know, that is, thou shalt make them know that they are but men. So here, *Know that God hath overthrown me*, is, as if he had said, *You have not taken notice of this, I have spoken of it before, and you would not receive it, you have acted towards me, as if God had nothing to do in bringing me thus low.* Therefore *I warn you again, Know that God hath overthrown me*: I tell you, it is your error and sin, to charge my afflictions upon the account of my sin, *Know that God hath overthrown me.* He hath done it, who may do it to an innocent, and yet be just himself. And seeing God hath done it, how know you that he hath done it, because my sin provoked him to do it, rather then because himself (for ends best known to himself) was pleased to do it?

Mira sabet hac loquendi formula.

Know that God hath overthrown me.

The word translated **overthrown**, signifies in its root, to turn a thing aside, to put it out of the way, as also the making of a thing crooked; and in the Noun, that which is crooked, *Lam.* 3. 36. *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. To crush under his feet all the prisoners of the earth, To turn aside the right of a man before the face of the most high, To subvert a man in his cause, the Lord approveth not.* The Lord doth not subvert or overthrow a man in his cause. God did not overthrow *Job*'s right, but his state. The Vulgar translation speaks that in the Letter (and the Original will bear it) *Know, that God hath not afflicted me according to justice.* Yet that reading doth not charge injustice upon God, for that were blasphemy: But the sence is, he hath not done it according to the way of men, or the ordinary course of Justice between man and man. God acts that justly towards man by his prerogative, which between man and man were perverting of Justice. Hence the Lord himself tells Satan (*Chap.* 2. 3.) *Thou movedst me to destroy him without cause.* To destroy a man without cause, is to pervert Justice. In that sence we may understand *Job* here; *Know that God hath overthrown me*: As if he had said, He hath not dealt with me by the common rule of legal proceedings, but according to the pleasure of his own will. God never doth any man, nor hath he done me any injustice; yet mans justice is not the square of what he hath done to me; therefore you are quite besides the business, when all along you charge me with sin, and error, as the reason of all my sufferings; *Know that God hath overthrown me.* First, *Job* speaks this declaratively, not complainingly; he affirms God had done it; but he did not murmur because he had done it.

עִוְּתַנִי a עָוַת *perdere, pervertere, ex sua proprietate afferre, videtur curvitatem quandam & perversitatē deviantem à recto. Verbum hoc distorsionem non modò à statu fœlici & cōmodo, sed ab æquo & recto significat; sed* Jobus *de statu, non de jure loquitur.* Coc. *Quod non æquo judicio afflixerit me.* Vul. i. e. *cum sim innocens me tanquam impium afflixit, idq; præter modum.* Merc.

Hence Note, *A godly man freely and chearfully owns the hand of God in all his troubles.*

As when he is raised, he owns the hand of God delivering and restoring him; so when he is overthrown, he owns the hand of God smiting and casting him down. We ho-

nour

nour God as much by looking to him as the Author and Orderer of our afflictions, as of our conſolations; of our loſſes, as well as of our gainings; of our overthrows, as well as of our victories. The Confeſſions of the Church run fully in this ſtream, *Pſal.* 44. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Thou haſt caſt us off, and put us to ſhame. Thou makeſt us turn back from the enemy. Thou haſt given us like ſheep appointed for meat. Thou ſelleſt thy people for nought. Thou makeſt us a reproach to our neighbours. Thou makeſt us a by-word among the Heathen.* An evil heart obſerves not the hand of God, either eſtabliſhing or overthrowing. The Prophet ſpeaks this fully (*Iſa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee:* What had the hand of God been doing that they were thus wilfully blind, and would not ſee? The tenth verſe tells us his hand had been doing good; *Let favour be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteouſneſs,* &c. *in the Land of uprightneſs will he deal unjuſtly, and will not behold the Majeſty of the Lord.* Now as wicked men will not ſee the hand of God in favours, ſo not in judgments. Their ſight is bounded with ſecond cauſes; the Creature is their Horizon, and ſhuts them in, they ſee nothing above or beyond it. 'Tis the malice of this man, or the unfaithfulneſs of that man, which hath overthrown them. 'Twas the negligence of thoſe they implyed as inſtruments, or the activity of thoſe that were oppoſite to them, 'twas a chance, or their ill fortune, upon which they have miſcarried. God is not in all their thoughts.

Neſas in tos invehi, in quos divina animadverſio incubuit, imo vero decet potius eorundem jortē lugere et formidare. Orig.

Secondly, *Job* tells his Friends, *God hath overthrown me,* that he might abate the keenneſs of their ſpirits towards him, and to move compaſſion.

> Hence Obſerve, *We ſhould take heed of troubling or grieving them, who are already grieved and troubled under the afflicting hand of God.*

And if it be unnatural and uncomely to grieve thoſe who are in ſorrow, what is it to rejoyce at their ſorrow? The wiſdom of God gives caution againſt this, even in the caſe of an enemy, (*Prov.* 24. 17, 18.) *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth;* (Why not? The reaſon is ſubjoyned) *Leſt the Lord ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him, and he turn away his wrath from him:* That is, The Lord will take it ſo ill at thy hand, to ſee thee rejoycing at the fall of thine enemy, who hath been overthrown by his hand, that he will turn his wrath upon thee inſtead of him.

Convertet ab illo vel redire faciet iram ſuam, ſc. in te.

Fourthly, *Job* ſaith, *God hath overthrown me;* to ſhew his Friends, that there was no neceſſity why they ſhould charge him with wickedneſs, becauſe he was overthrown.

> Hence Note, *God may, and oft doth overthrow his choiceſt ſervants, and ſpoil them of all outward comforts, without reſpect to their ſinfulneſs.*

When we ſee man puniſhed by man, we may well conclude he is a tranſgreſſor, becauſe no man hath power to afflict, or to overthrow an Innocent: Man hath no right to ſmite his Brother, either in body or eſtate, but for his fault. But when God ſmiteth man, we cannot conclude unerringly, that he doth it for his faults or errors. *Know that God hath overthrown me,*

Metaphora à re venatoria.

And compaſſed me with his net.] It is a Metaphor from hunting. The Church bemoans her ſad condition in this language (*Lam.* 1. 13.) *From above hath he ſent fire into my bones, and it prevaileth againſt me; he hath ſpread a net for my feet.* Thus *Zedekiah* is threatened (*Ezek.* 12. 13.) *My net alſo will I ſpread upon him, and he ſhall be taken in my ſnare.*

פצור *à radice* צור *ſignificat rete vel etiã arcem & munitionem altiſſimam & fortiſſimam.*

The Hebrew word which we tranſlate *Net*, ſignifies alſo a *Tower*, or *Caſtle*, or *Fort*. A learned Interpreter contends earneſtly for this tranſlation: And gives Reaſons why it ſhould be rather tranſlated *Tower*, then *Net*. Firſt, From the words following in the next verſe, where *Job* ſpeaks of himſelf as if he were crying out at a priſon window, *Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard.* Secondly, Becauſe at the eighth verſe he ſpeaks of darkneſs ſet in his paths; which ſuits better with the metaphor of a Priſon-tower, then of a Net. But whether we render *Tower*, or *Net*, the meaning is the ſame: And by both, afflictions are underſtood. And when he ſaith, *He hath compaſſed me with his net,* he ſhews the extenſion or largeneſs of his affliction; for as when promiſe is made to him that truſteth in the Lord, *That mercy ſhall compaſs him about* (Pſal. 32. 10.) the meaning is, that he ſhall have many and manifold mercies, compleat and perfect mercies. So that's a compleat affliction which compaſſeth us about, as a net doth a bird or beaſt that is enſnared in it.

> Afflictions may be compared to a net for divers Reaſons.

Firſt, Becauſe there is a contrivance in them, a divine hand doth as it were weave divers providences together, and knot them one with another, to make up an affliction. The Lord uſeth a kind of holy art and ſkill in the preparation of our troubles. There is as much wiſdom ſeen in framing and forming of our afflictions, as there is mercy and kindneſs in working our deliverances and ſalvations. Hence alſo the Church compares them to a building, which is an artificial pile or Fabrick, *He hath builded againſt me* (Lam. 3. 5.)

Secondly, Afflictions are like unto a net, becauſe moſt men fall ſuddenly into them, and are taken unawares. *Job* indeed ſaith of his affliction (*Chap.* 3. 25.) *The thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.* It ſeems he was jealous of a change; and though his mountain was ſtrong, yet he ſaid not (as *David* once did) *I ſhall never be moved.* But uſually men put the evil day far from them, and look no more for trouble then the ſilly bird doth for the net when ſhe is caught with it.

Thirdly, Afflictions are like a net, becauſe we are entangled with them; we are entangled with doubts what to do, yea, in affliction we are ready to ſay, *Lord, we know not what to do.* If we know and are reſolved what to do, then we are apt to be entangled, either with cares how, and by whom to get it done, or with fears, that when all is done, it will not be ſucceſsful and effectual for our deliverance.

Fourthly, Afflictions are like a net, becauſe we being once entangled in them are held faſt, and cannot get forth, till God, who hath compaſſed and taken us with his net, be pleaſed to open it, and diſingage us from our entanglements. The bird cannot get out of the net till ſhe is taken out. We bring our ſelves into trouble, but unleſs the Lord bring us out, there we ſtick. As our eternal, ſo our temporal ſalvations are of the Lord. The nets of affliction which God makes are ſtrong enough to hold the ſtrongeſt. His nets are not like the Cobweb or Spiders net, which detain the weak Flyes, but are eaſily broken by the greater or leſſer Fowls. Though a wild Bull come into Gods net, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſ.* 51. 20.) yet neither his might nor his madneſs can help him out. It was noted, in opening the Original word here uſed for a net, that it may ſignifie alſo a *Tower*, or a *Fort*. The ſame affliction is both a Net and a Fort; a Net, becauſe it entangles; a Fort, becauſe it holds us faſt.

Fifthly, As afflictions are like a net, becauſe they entangle and hold us faſt; ſo, becauſe the more we ſtrive to looſen and free our ſelves, the more we are entangled, and the faſter held. There is no getting out of, no, nor getting any eaſe in affliction by ſtruggling. 'Tis beſt for us to be quiet and patient. Not but that we may ſtir heaven-ward by earneſt prayer to God; yea, and earth-ward too in the diligent uſe of lawful means with man to free our ſelves. The ſtirring and ſtriving which ſtraitens the net of our affliction upon us, is only our diſpleaſedneſs and impatience with it, or againſt God, who hath caught us in it. Or it is our ſtriving to get looſe by the uſe of creature hands and helps alone, without dependance upon, or application made to God. Such ſtirring as this will indeed entangle us, and when we have ſtirr'd thus the moſt we can, we ſhall find our ſelves the more entangled. When God compaſſeth us with his net, we muſt neither ſit ſtill ſullenly and negligently, nor move impatiently and unbelievingly. Let us give God glory (as *Job* did) in our net, and he will not only give us eaſe, but ſet our feet in a large place.

VERS. 7, 8, 9.

Behold, I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but there is no judgment.

He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass; and he hath set darkness in my paths.
He hath stript me of my glory, and taken the Crown from my head.

THe words contain a part of *Job*'s renewed complaint, and continue the aggravations of his sorrow. Having said in the former verse, *That God had overthrown him*; that *he had compassed him with his net*; here he tells us two things.

First, What course he took to relieve himself in that miserable condition; He petitioned and complained earnestly, and he cryed out so loud, as might make all amazed, and look out, *Behold, I cry out*, &c. And he did not (as some) cry out before he was hurt, or complain without cause. He was pressed to it by the oppression that was upon him; *Behold, I cry out of wrong.*

Secondly, He tells us what success his suit or petition had; *I am not heard*, saith he, in the first part of the verse; and he adds, *there is no judgment*, in the second.

Verse 7. Behold, I cry out of wrong, &c.

He did not only cry, but he cryed out, and that aloud.

Behold.] Is a demonstrative Particle. Some render the Original as a conditional; *If I cry out of wrong there is none to hear.* As if he should say, *It is my misery that I suffer wrong; but this is a greater misery that I find none to do me right in my sufferings; If I cry out of wrong* (there is none to hear, or) *I am not heard.* All my crying avails me nothing; every ear is shut, and every hand turn'd against me.

We may here conceive *Job* under a twofold notion. Either,

First, As a poor prisoner crying through his grates, or out at the window, telling the passengers of his doleful condition, that he is shut up within those walls, and irou grates, that he hath been oppressed by hard-hearted Creditors, and that after so many months or years of imprisonment, he can get none to right or deliver him out of their hand.

Secondly, Some conceive him under the notion of a wounded or diseased man, confined to, or shut up in his Chamber, to whom when Physitians or Chirurgions come to apply medicines and means for his cure and healing, he cryes out, they torture and trouble him, they hurt and vex him, they are cruel to him, and will kill him. The Patient cryes out of wrongs, but the Physitian will not hear him: He that is to have his flesh lanced, laments pitifully, yet he is lanced; he whose flesh is to be cauteriz'd, complains sadly, yet the fiery Instruments are applyed to him. The Artist must shew a kind of cruelty as well as skill, else the cure is not wrought.

Thus *Job* is here represented, as under the Physitians hands, though indeed an experiment was to be wrought upon him rather then a cure. To take an experiment of our graces may put us to more pain, then the cure of our corruptions. An experiment (I say) was to be wrought on *Job* to exercise and try him, and he cryes out of wrong, as if their purpose had been to cut his throat, or at least to undo him for ever in this World.

Behold, I cry out of wrong.] The word which we translate *to cry out*, signifies, properly, that cry which is caused by the enduring of extream pains of body, or anguish of mind. Yet some apply it to the vehemency of his spirit, in disputing and pleading with his Friends (Disputants and Advocates often fall into heats and passionate exclamations.) *Behold, I cry*, in this dispute and plea, urging Arguments for my self, and making my defence, yet none regards. I can neither find an equal Judge, nor a faithful Advocate. But I rather restrain it to that cry, which the rack of grief and sorrow forced from him, *I cry out*,

Of wrong.] The word signifies any kind of oppression or injury. Here it may be questioned; First, Of whom? Secondly, To whom *Job* made this cry? He cried out of wrong. Who wronged him? Or wherein was he wronged?

I answer, The wrong he cryes out of, was received of men; he doth not challenge the Almighty, that he had wronged him: He indeed speaks it out plainly in the former verse, *God hath overthrown me, and compassed me in his net*, yet he doth not *charge God foolishly*, as 'tis said in the first Chapter, as if he had done him wrong. The wrong of which he complains was done him by men, and those men his Friends; they wronged him by their hard speeches, and unkind usages (*ver.* 2.) *How long will ye vex my soul, and break me in pieces with words? These ten times have ye reproached me.* That reproach was the wrong he complained of. But to whom did he complain?

First, He complained to men, he told his Friends how they had wronged, and censured him, but they would not hear.

Secondly, He complained to God of the wrong done him by men; but as then he did not hear.

I am not heard.] Or as 'tis translated by many, *I am not answered*; the word signifieth both *to hear, and to answer*, the work both of the ear, and tongue. And the reason (as some tell us) why in the Hebrew one word serves both, is, because there is such a comexion and nearness of relation between the ear and the tongue: So that he who doth not answer, is supposed not to hear; and he that doth not hear, cannot make answer. In nature, usually, they who are deaf are dumb; and when a man to whom we speak makes us no answer, we ask him, what, do you not, or can you not hear? *I cry* (saith *Job*) *but I am not heard.*

We are not to take *hearing* strictly; *For the Lords ear is not heavy that he cannot hear*; and *Job* spake loud enough for men to hear. The Lord hears the least whisperings, the least breathings of the soul. He doth not only hear our lowest speech, but he hears our very thoughts. Thoughts are the first-born of the soul, the language of our hearts. This language of our hearts is as loud in the ears of the Lord, as thunder is in ours. *Yea, he understandeth our thoughts afar off* (*Psal.* 139. 2.) That is, long before we think them. *He to whom all times are the present time, cannot but know that which to us is future, and he from whom all things receive their being, understands those things which as yet have no being.* Now, if God understand our thoughts at this distance, even before we think them, then surely he hears all our words (which are thoughts formed and made up) as soon as we have spoken them.

And if so, then hearing (in the Text) is not to be taken for receiving the sound of words, but for the return which is made to the words which are received. To be heard, imports help, or the giving out of that help, mercy and deliverance, which is desired and asked, whether of God or man. To be heard in prayer, is to be answered in prayer: To be heard when we cry, is to be relieved when we cry. Thus, saith *Job*, *I cry out of wrong, but I am not heard*: That is, I have no ease, no comfort, nor is any deliverance wrought for me. *David*, as the figure of Christ, gives glory to God, because he had been thus heard; *Thou hast heard me from the horns of the Unicorns* (*Psal.* 22. 21.) That is, Thou hast delivered me from the horns of the Unicorns. To be among *the horns of the Unicorns*, is a proverbial speech, for being encompast with greatest danger. The horn is sharp and strong, and the Unicorn is fierce and terrible; so that to be heard *from among the horns of the Unicorns*, is to be rescued from deadly danger.

This in the Psalm is of the same sence with that of *Paul*, (2 Tim. 4. 17.) *I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion: Nero* was this Lion, before whom when *Paul* first appeared, he had no second; *At my first answer* (saith he, *ver.* 16.) *no man stood with me, notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the Lion:* That is, When I was ready to be devoured by the bloody Tyrant, I cryed to the Lord, and he heard me.

So then, when he saith, *I am not heard*, it may be referred (as his cry was.) First, To men. Secondly, To God. I was not heard by men, they did not right me as they ought; I was not heard by God, he did not rescue me as he was able, or as he might. Take it first, as his not being heard, refers to men.

Hence Note, *Men are very deaf usually to the cry of the oppressed and grieved.*

There are two voices at which the ear of Nature is exceeding deaf, or thick of hearing.

Ob violentiam quæ mihi fit vociferor ad Deum. Drus.

יען *significat audire & respondere, hæc enim sunt inter se nexa, ut qui audit respondeat & qui non respondet creditur non audisse. Inde etiam ut qui mutus est continuo etiam surdus est.* Pined.

Exaudire & respondere clamanti est adesse laboranti & opem atque salutem afferre. Est enim hujusmodi responsio non tam verbo, quam re & auxilio præstito. Pined.

The

The first is the voyce of holy counsels; when God speaks, many *are as the deaf Adder, who stops her ear, and will not hear the voyce of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely.*

Secondly, At the voyce of humble complaints, when the poor and distressed speak, many turn away their ear, or turn a deaf ear.

And there are (upon the matter) the same reasons why the counsels of God, and the complaints of the poor are not heard.

First, God commands both, and the heart of man naturally withdraws from the command of God concerning man, as much as from that command which immediately concerns himself.

Again, They who hear the counsels of God, are more engaged to obey them, and walk up to them. Many could be *swift enough to hear*, as the Apostle *James* exhorts (*chap.* 1. 19.) if that would serve the turn, but they are slow to do. Barely to hear the sound of words, is no great burden to the ear, and 'tis none at all to the heart; but hearing carries an obligation to practise, yea, to hear indeed is to practise; and therefore counsel is not heard.

So, hearing the complaint of the poor, ingageth to relieve and help them, to supply their wants, and redress their injuries; yea, to hear their cry indeed, is to relieve and help them; therefore they are not heard. While *Solomon* in his Book of *Proverbs*, shews the danger of not hearing the cry of the poor, he also implies the commonness of it (*Prov.* 21. 13.) *Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.* He that hath a stone in his heart, or whose heart is a stone, hath also (as we say) wool in his ears at the voyce both of God and man.

Secondly note, *Not to hearken to those that cry out of wrong, is very sinful, a very crying sin.*

God in judgment burdens them with oppressions, who neglect the cry of the oppressed; the greatness and provocation of the sin, may be read in the threats denounced against it, and in the judgments executed upon it. It is not enough (though it be more then many can say) for a Magistrate to say by way of challenge (as old *Samuel* did, 1 Sam. 12. 3.) *Whom have I oppressed?* unless he can also say, *When did I not hear the cry of the oppressed?* It is indeed most sinful to make the poor cry, but not to hear their cry, is very sinful. *To deliver the poor and needy, to rid him out of the hand of the wicked*, is at once the duty and the honour of those who are in power (*Psal.* 82. 3.) And if man will not, *God will arise for the oppression of the poor, and the sighing of the needy, to set him at liberty from him that puffeth at him* (Psal. 12. 5.)

Thirdly note, *Not to hear when the distressed cry out of wrong and oppression, is it self a wrong and oppression.*

Job doth not only cry out, because he was in trouble, but because his cry was not heard in trouble: That he was not heard, was more grievous to him then any of his troubles. When they who have power and trust for the help of those that are oppressed, will not hear and help them, their not helping them, is a second, a renewed oppressing of them. Yea, whereas an act of oppression is wrong done at once; the not hearing the oppressed, is the continuing, or (as I may say) the perpetuating of their wrong. The anger of God will burn as hot against the Judge who hath not delivered the oppressed, as against his Adversary, or the Author of his oppression.

Secondly, As these words, *I am not heard*, refer to God, note,

That, *God himself sometimes defers the hearing or relieving of his people when they cry to him.*

The Lord sometimes answers before we pray; *It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking, I will hear* (Isa. 65. 24.) As there is a grace of God always preventing our conversion, he turns to us before we turn to him; so there is a grace often preventing our petitions, and our mercies are given in by God, before our desire of mercy is made known to God. Yet mercy doth not always out-run our motions, yea, the Lord lets us move and move again, ask and ask again, before the mercy asked and moved for, is given in. God sees it needful to exercise our patience as well as to supply our needs, and therefore lets us tarry before he hears our requests; as we put him very often, if not always to the exercise of his patience, and let him tarry before we obey his counsels and commands. And he doth this not only in a way of just retaliation, but in a way of trial. Nor is it any wonder that God delayes his servants, seeing he was pleased to delay his Son, who though he saith, *Father, I know that thou always heares me*; yet in some sence he was not always heard. The Lord deferred Jesus Christ himself, whom we find complaining much after the rate of *Job.* (*Psal.* 22. 2.) Where *David* as a type of Christ, cries out, *O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou heares not; and in the night season, and am not silent* That is, I cry night and day, or continually, but thou heares not. Christ was not heard, that is, he was not presently relieved in the thing that he prayed for. God seemed even to shut up, and stop his ears against his cry; *He cried, and was not heard.* Christ was heard, and not heard. He was not heard for the removing of the Cup from him, the Cup did not pass; yet he was heard as to the supply of strength in drinking that bitter Cup (*Heb.* 5.) *He was heard in that he feared*, or, *for his fear.* He was heard as to the support of his spirit, and the carrying him through the suffering; yet he was not heard as to the removing of the suffering. Christ prayed against suffering, though he was not willing to suffer, and God suffered wicked men to have their will over him. The Prophet *Habakkuk* hath a very parallel complaint to this of *Job* (Hab. 1. 2.) *O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear?* About what did he cry? *Even of violence, and thou wilt not save.* When the Prophet saith, *How long shall I cry?* he doth not ask how long he should yet cry; but he affirms that he had already cried very long: and therefore he adds, *Why dost thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance?* He means not his own iniquity, but the iniquity of others. As if he had said, *Why do I see the unjust dealing, and iniquity of wicked men, by whose violence thy people are wronged and grieved?* And as the Prophet bemoans himself, that notwithstanding his cry, he had yet conversed so often and long with these doleful visions; so at *vers.* 13. he seems to stand admiring how the Lord could bear the beholding of them. *Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he, and makest men as the fishes of the Sea?* &c. Where the greater swallow up the less. As if he had said, Lord, I have often prayed about, and pressed thee with these things, yet thou givest no answer; Thou seest all these evils, and though much hath been said to thee about them, yet thou art as a man that saith nothing; *Thou holdest thy tongue*, even when thy people are ground between the teeth of their cruel oppressors. Why dost thou shew me these sad spectacles? Why dost thou not rather hear my cry, save thy people, and work deliverance for them?

If it be enquired, how doth this answer the promise of God to his people, that they should cry, and he not deliver, seeing he hath said, *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver?*

I answer, The Lord doth always hear so as to give his people the promised good, though he doth not give them the petitioned good. He defers to hear, he lets them cry out of violence and wrong, and will not help for such reasons as these.

First, That they may be more fit to receive deliverance; many cry out of wrong, who are not yet fit to be righted. Deliverances may be our undoing, if we are not prepared to receive deliverance. As we wait for the Grace and Mercy of God, so God waits to be gracious (*Isa.* 30. 18.) We wait for mercy, and he waits till we are rightly disposed to receive mercy.

Secondly, The Lord doth not deliver his presently from the wrong and oppression of the wicked, because some wicked men have not yet done wrong or oppressed enough, and are therefore suffered to do more wrong to others, that themselves may be more fit for ruine. They must fill up the measure of their sin; therefore they are not taken off with a high hand in the way of sin. The Lord always puts a

a moral impediment in the way of ſin, he declares his mind, and gives the rule againſt it, but he doth not alwayes put a judiciary impediment, he doth not alwayes come forth with power and ſtrength, to ſtop men from going on in the way of ſin. He alwayes ſends his earthly Angels or Meſſengers with a word to ſtay the progreſs of wicked men; but he rarely ſends his heavenly Angels (as he did to *Balaam*) with a drawn ſword, to ſtop their progreſs in wickedneſs.

Thirdly, Many cry out of wrong, and God doth not hear, becauſe he deſires to hear more of their cries. When the oppreſſed cry in faith, with fervency, and from a holy frame, their very cry is as muſick in the ears of God. Not that he delights in the miſery of their ſtate, but in the holineſs of their heart. The heart is uſually in the beſt frame for prayer, when our worldly ſtate is out of frame. And then our ſpirits are in the ſweeteſt tune towards God, when we meet with nothing but diſcord, nothing but wrong and violence from men. The Kingdom of heaven ſuffers moſt violence from a gracious heart, and he takes it (as it were) by forte, when himſelf ſuffers moſt violence here on earth, or when his earthly portion is taken from him by force. And therefore,

Fourthly, God ſometimes (that he may teach his to pray better) ſuffers their outward condition to grow worſe. Prayer is the gift of God, and he can make his people perfect in a moment (if he pleaſe) in this great duty and heavenly Art of prayer; yet much of it comes in by exerciſe. Our proficiency in any holy duty, lies much in the practice of it; we muſt not forbear the practice of it, till we can do it better; for in the practice of it, we learn to do it better. Now becauſe our continuance in ſuffering, provokes us to continue in prayer and ſupplication (the oppreſſed widow, *Luke* 18. cried night and day, till ſhe got the ear of the Judge, and releaſe from her oppreſſors) therefore the Lord lets the oppreſſion continue upon many of his precious people, that they continually exerciſing themſelves in prayer, may grow more ſpiritual and heavenly in prayer.

Fifthly, The Lord defers to ſend relief, when his people cry out of wrong, that he may make their relief and deliverance from wrong, more ſweet when at laſt he ſends it: It is therefore long a coming, that it may be more welcome when it comes. They who cry out of wrong, and are not heard after many cries, when once they are heard, how do they ſing for joy? We ſay proverbially, *He that gives ſpeedily, doubles his gift.* And 'tis ſo indeed in the nature of the thing given, and in the deſert of the giver; but 'tis rarely ſo as to the prizings and improvement of the receiver. That which is given ſuddenly, is by moſt receivers ſlightly valued, and little improved; whereas thoſe mercies which we have ſtayed long for, and have coſt us much, ſtick longeſt by us, and turn to greateſt profit, whether we reſpect the honour of God, or the good of our own ſouls.

Sixthly, God lets them cry long without an anſwer, for the exerciſe of ſome ſpecial Graces: The Lord loves to ſee Grace at work, and ſome Graces have no long time to work; for though all Graces are eternal in their nature, yet in their uſe they are not: And ſuch are all ſuffering Graces. When we enjoy all (as in Glory) we can ſuffer nothing. Now when God lets his people cry out of wrong all their dayes (which are not many dayes) 'tis becauſe he would have that ſort of Graces kept in exerciſe (as well as other Graces) the Grace of Faith, of Meekneſs, of ſelf-denial, and of Patience, all which (with ſome others) belong to paſſive obedience; that theſe (I ſay) may be kept in breath, he lets the Saints cry out of wrong, and doth not hear them.

Seaventhly, God ſomtimes doth not mind his when they cry, that they may hereby take occaſion to remember how oft he hath cried, and they have not minded him: doth not the Lord cry out to his people of duty, and they do not hear him? Doth he not complain of this neglect, not only as a diſhonour, but as a grief unto him? (*Pſal.* 81.11.) *O that my people had hearkened to me, and that Iſrael would have heard my voyce.* No marvel then, if God let his people cry out of miſery, and doth not hear them. The Lord ſhuts his ear, that he might conſider how we have ſhut our ears; yea, he ſhuts his ear, that he may open ours. We are moved to hear and anſwer the call and command of God, when we find that he doth not hear nor anſwer our call and cry. If the Lord ſhould alwayes be ſwift to hear us, how ſlow ſhould we be in hearing him? and while we have all our deſires, forget moſt of our duties? In heaven we ſhall have all our deſires fulfilled, and yet not fail in any duty; but while there is corruption in the heart, there will be ſloth in the hand, and when we are waxen fat by the ſpeedy ſucceſs of all our petitions, we are more apt to kick with the heel againſt God, then to work with the hand for him.

Laſtly, God hears alwayes, though he doth not alwayes anſwer in our time, or in our way; yea, it is a hearing, and an anſwer of prayer, that we can pray, though unheard and unanſwered.

Secondly obſerve, *A godly man is under a great trial, a ſtrong temptation, when he cries out to God, and is not heard.*

Gravis eſt luctæ dubitantis carnis & exſpectantis ſpiritus. Merl.

As when Satan tempts us, there is a great conflict between the fleſh and the ſpirit, about the doing of good, and the refuſing of evil; ſo about our receiving of good, and the removing of evil; when we cry to God, and he is pleaſed to tempt us by deferring to hear us. Then the Spirit hopes, and the fleſh doubts; the ſpirit labours to maintain believing thoughts, and the fleſh labours to raiſe deſponding, yea, deſpairing thoughts. *David* was ſo hard put to it upon this account, that though he made no concluſions againſt the graciouſneſs of God, yet he could not avoid the putting, no nor the doubling, and more then trebling of the queſtion about it (*Pſal.* 77.7, 8, 9.) *Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promiſe fail for evermore? hath God forgotten to be gracious?* &c. How full of Queries was the ſpirit of *David* when he could get no anſwers? And though faith lay all this while in the bottom of *David*'s heart, yet that which lay at the bottom of theſe Queries was his infirmity, as himſelf diſcovers, *ver.* 10. *And I ſaid, this is my infirmity.* It argues a great degree, and much ſtrength of Grace, when we maintain high thoughts of God, and ſetled reſolves that he is good, when he not only lets us fall low into trouble, but lets us lie unheard in the day of our trouble. Such was the ſtrength of *David*'s faith, or rather of Chriſts, of whoſe ſufferings that *Pſalm* is a Propheſie; who as ſoon as he had ſaid, *O my God, I cry in the day-time, but thou heareſt not*, &c. (*Pſal.* 22. 2.) adds in the next verſe, *But thou art holy, O thou that inhabiteſt the praiſes of Iſrael.* As if he had ſaid, I will not have an evil, or an uncomly thought of thee, though thou refuſeſt to hear; I know thou art holy, and therefore canſt not but be juſt and good, whatſoever thou art pleaſed to do with me. Every ſoul arrives not at this freedom of faith. The denial of an anſwer to prayer, puts moſt upon complaints and queries; and ſo it doth, eſpecially while they conſider how explicitly and clearly the Lord hath engaged himſelf to anſwer prayer, and to relieve his people when they cry; yea, the Lord hath engaged, not only to hear them when they cry (which notes earneſt ſtrong prayer) but to hear them in their weakeſt ſincere addreſſes in prayer, when they do but whiſper and breath towards him. The promiſe is peremptory (*Pſal.* 50.15.) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.* 'Tis ſo alſo (*Acts* 2.21.) *Whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved.* The Prophet *Joel*, from whom thoſe words are borrowed, ſpeaks of a time when there ſhould be ſore troubles in the world, *Fire and Blood, and Vapour of ſmoke*, all in combuſtion, heaven and earth (to ſenſe) mingled, good and bad, holy and unholy mingled (in appearance) and wrapt up in the ſame common calamity; yet then, *Whoſoever ſhall call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved*; as if prayer made us ſhot-free, and were a ſure defence in all ſtorms; as if no evil could touch their perſons, or come near their dwellings, who can touch the Lord by faith, when they draw near to him in prayer. And which is more, the Lord promiſeth to prevent prayer, at leaſt (as was toucht before) that his ear ſhall be open as ſoon as our mouths, *Iſa.* 65.24. *It ſhall come to paſs, that before they call I will anſwer, and while they yet ſpeak I will hear*: As if the Lord had ſaid, *I will ſometimes give you mercy before you ask it; but when you ask it, you ſhall not go without it;*

even

even while prayer fills your mouths, mercy shall fill your hearts. While your desires are but in forming and framing, your deliverances shall be formed and framed. You shall have perfect mercies, before you perfect duties. While ye are yet speaking I will hear.

Now when the Lord saith, *He will answer before we speak*, and yet lets us speak long, and gives no answer; how is the soul puzzled to reconcile the Word of God, and his Works; the Promises of God, and his Providences; this put *Job* hard to it, and strengthned the temptation upon him; *I cry out of wrong, but am not heard.*

This tryal riseth by a gradation of four steps.

First, It is a tryal, when the answer is deferred.

Secondly, It is a greater tryal, when we are denyed an answer. As God seldom gives what we ask at our time, so sometimes he will not at all give us what we ask.

Thirdly, It is yet a greater tryal, when God in stead of granting, appears angry with our prayers, or with us when we pray, as the Psalmist suspected (*Psal.* 80. 4.) *O Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou be angry (or smoak) against the prayer of thy people?* They cryed out of wrong, they were under the rage and anger of men, and God seemed angry with them while they cryed. So saith the Prophet (*Lam.* 3. 8.) *Thou hast shut out my prayer.* Which action notes God highly displeased with his prayer. When a man comes to our door, and we do not only deny, or defer him, but shut the door against him, this is proof enough, we are angry with him, or that we count him for an enemy. Yet thus the Lord sometimes deals with his people; in stead of opening when they knock, he seems to lock or shut the door against them.

Fourthly, To cry out of wrong, and not be heard, is then most grievous when the Lord suffers us to be wronged more, and encreases that trouble, the removing of which we pray for, even while we are praying. This is a sore tryal indeed. Thus the *Israelites*, who were under heavy burthens in *Egypt*, cryed to the Lord, yet their burthens were made heavier, and their pressures multiplyed. If our disease should gather strength while we are taking medicines to cure it; if our wound wrankle while we are applying Balsams to heal it, we are then ready to conclude, that our case is desperate. How are poor souls brought to the very brink of despair, when their troubles and streights grow more upon them, while (which is the most approved means to be eased of them, or eased in them) they are plying the throne of grace with constant fervent cryes and prayers.

I cry aloud, and there is no judgment.

Exponit eandem rem aliis verbis:

שוע *hæc vociferatio est ex proprietate vocis implorandæ alutis & opis causa cum gemitu & ululatu.*

This second part of the verse is of the same sence with the former. Only there is some variety in the reading, and expressions. He said there, *Behold, I cry out of wrong.* Here, *I cry aloud.* It is but one word in the Hebrew, but we can hardly reach it with two in our language; it signifies more then to cry, yea more then to cry out; it signifies to cry aloud, and not only to cry aloud as a Man, but as Dogs and Wolves, whose crying is howling. So some render it, *a howling cry.* We put both together in our translation, (*Hos.* 7. 14.) though the Original words vary from that here used. *They have not cryed to me with their hearts, when they howled upon their beds.* Take this Note from it,

Strong afflictions usually raise strong affections in Prayer.

As trouble and grief rise, so we rise in our sence of them, and complaints about them. The Apostle saith of Christ, (*Heb.* 5. 7.) *That, in the day of his flesh,* that is, of his humiliation and weakness, while he was subject to the common (sinless) infirmities of our nature; For as the word *flesh* is taken in Scripture for our natural impurity, and for our pure nature, so for our natural frailties and infirmities. Jesus Christ never had flesh in the first sence; he still hath flesh in the second (Glory hath not abolished, but exalted the humane nature of Christ) But in the third sence, he once had flesh, but now hath not, he shook off all our infirmities in the day that he arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven; therefore (saith the Apostle) *in the dayes of his flesh,* while he was continually burdened with temptations and afflictions (*In those dayes*) *he offered prayers and supplications, with strong cryings and tears:* Christ was in a strong conflict; the pains of death took hold of him: And as his conflict was strong, so also were his cryes. When *Jacob* wrestled with the Angel, he did not only pray but cry; *He wept and made supplication* (*Hos.* 12. 4.) Weeping is a loud cry; though we speak not, every tear hath a voyce in it: but usually they who have the weeping cry, have the speaking cry too. And in proportion, when God, at any time, urgeth his people with greater and greater troubles, his people urge him with louder and louder cryes; *I cry aloud,*

Et non est qui judicet Vulg. *Veluti quidam Athleta in stadio consistens vociferor, nec tamen meum injustitur judicium.* Orig. *Proprium erat Athletarum cursorum & pugilum clamor & gemitus qui se in luctâ & certamine confirmarent* Pined.

And there is no judgment. Some render it, and *there is none to judge.* A learned Interpreter tells us, that this is spoken in allusion to the ancient custom of Fencers, Wrestlers, or Runners in a race, who in those exercises were wont to cry out, to cry aloud, to stir up themselves mightily, and shout, and then judgment was given, who had the better, or who had prevailed. According to this interpretation *Job* is conceived complaining thus; I have endured a great fight of affliction, I have been wrestling with strong temptations, but the matter is not yet determined, no man appears to take up the controversie, and pass sentence for me.

Others refer these words to the day of judgment, *I cry aloud, and there is no judgment.* As if he had said, the day of the great trial is not come, therefore my crying is but in vain. There will be a *revelation,* as of *the righteous judgment of God,* so of the righteousness and innocency of man; but that day must yet longer be waited for. I cry aloud, but it is not yet *judgment-time.* So, 'tis an argument to school and quiet his spirit into faith and patience; *Till the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then shall every man have praise of God* (1 Cor. 4. 5.) That is, every man who is praise-worthy shall be approved in judgment.

But I rather take it of the present time, *I cry aloud, and there is no judgment*; that is, there is none to judge between me and my brethren in this case. There is judgment of two sorts.

First, In relieving, and acquitting the innocent.

Secondly, In condemning, or punishing the guilty.

Job complains of the want of both: he found no Judgment either acquitting himself, or condemning his adversary.

Hence observe, *The defect of judgment is a deplorable evil.*

We find God himself complaining of this (*Isa.* 59. 5.) *None calleth for justice*; many called for justice, by way of entreaty, but none called for justice by way of command; there were many suiters for justice, but there were none to do or award justice. But as it follows (*vers.* 14.) *Judgment is turned backwards, and justice stands afar off; truth is fallen in the street, and equity doth not enter.* Here are four words, Judgment, Justice, Truth, Equity, all tending to the same thing, and all denied entertainment among that people: Which is also expressed by an elegant gradation in four words. That which we will not receive, we usually turn back; here the Text saith, *Judgment is turned backward*; if not so, yet we will not let it come near; so here, *Justice stands afar off*; if it come near us, yet it shall not be maintained by us, therefore 'tis added, *Truth is fallen in the streets*; or if it doth not utterly fall, yet it shall not prevail, as the fourth expression tells us, *Equity cannot enter*; that is, it cannot find entrance and entertainment: upon all which the Prophet concludes (*vers.* 15.) *The Lord saw it, and it displeased him, because there was no Judgment.* The Prophet *Habakkuk* laments this (*Chap.* 1. *vers.* 4.) *Therefore the Law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous: therefore wrong judgment proceedeth.* Wrong judgment is no judgment; when wrong judgment proceeds, Justice is at a stand, or *Judgment doth not proceed*; that is, there is none to do any man right according to Justice; it is more sad when judgment is perverted, then when judgment is stayed. When wrong judgment is given, 'tis worse then when no judgment is given. The abuse of a thing is a sorer evil then the absence of it (*Amos* 6. 12.) *They turn judgment into gall* (Hos. 10. 4.) *Judgment springeth up like hemlock in the furrows of the field:* Gall is bitter, and Hemlock is a poysonous weed:

it were better nothing should grow in the furrows of the field then Hemlock, and that we should have nothing to drink, rather then drink Gall. Justice (though the sentence of it be death, which is bitter as gall or wormwood, yet) is sweet. Injustice (though the sentence of it be life, which is sweet as honey or sugar, yet) is bitter as gall or wormwood. But when wrong judgment (which is it self bitter) is also the judgment of death, how bitter is it? God sends a privy search through *Jerusalem*, to find a man, (*Jer.* 5. 1.) *Run to and fro through the streets of* Jerusalem, *and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment.* That City hath not a man in it, that cannot yield a man to execute judgment, though it have multitudes and throngs of men in it. A people are then at the last cast, when God makes search, and finds not a lover of Justice among them. *Nothing layes a people more open to the judgment of God, then the want of a man to execute judgment.* When the oppressed cry out, and there is no judgment done by man, both oppressors and their favourers shall cry out because of the judgments of God.

Job proceeds,

Vers. 8. **He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass, he hath set darkness in my paths.**

This verse contains a further amplification of his sorrow, by comparing himself to a distressed traveller; for here we have a way, and a path, and those things which are most offensive to a traveller in his way. Two things are very troublesom to a traveller in his way.

First, If he meet rubs in his way, much more if he meet with great blocks or fences set cross his way: Of this *Job* complains in the first part of the verse; *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass.*

A second evil which troubles a traveller (though his way be plain) is darkness; How can a man go that cannot see before him? A man travels a good way with more fear in the dark, then he doth a bad way in the light. *Job* complains of this latter annoyance in the latter part of the verse, *He hath set darkness in my paths.*

I shall speak but little to this verse, because the substance of it was opened (*Chap.* 3. 23.) *Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in.*

He hath fenced up my way.] But who was it that fenced up his way? No person is expressed. But as he said before, *God hath overthrown me*; so here his meaning is, *God hath fenced up my way.* The Septuagint read not as we, *He hath fenced up my way*, but, *He hath built round about my way.* So *Jeremy* describes the straitned condition of *Jerusalem* (Lam. 3. 8.) *He hath built about me.* This similitude is used in Scripture when either a person or a people are brought into great straits, or are at a difficult point, so that they know not which way to turn themselves. The Lord tells the Church of the *Jews*, (Hos. 2. 6.) *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths*; that is, the paths of her former sinful pleasures, in which she was wont to walk, and take delight. Now as the Lord hedges up the wayes of some, that they cannot do what they resolve; so he hedges up the way of others, that they cannot resolve what to do. In this sence *Job* complains, *He hath fenced up my way.*

Hence note, *God sometimes brings his people into great straits.*

Many cannot tell how they come into trouble, and most know not which way to get out. The way of that good King was fenced up, when he cryed out, *Lord, we know not what to do.*

Secondly, *Job* speaks this as a heightning of his troubles, which yields this Note,

It is an aggravation of our trouble, to see no way out of trouble.

The present enduring of any evil, doth not so much grieve us, as when we see our selves concluded and shut up in it. The fence which stops our way before us, afflicts more then the burden which is upon us. Those afflictions which are not only a pain to us, but a prison to us, are the greatest trials of our patience. *He hath fenced up my way.*

And set darkness in my paths.] As his way was fenced or stopt with many difficulties, so his path was covered with darkness. *Job* cryed out (*Chap.* 3. 23.) *Wherefore is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* He speaks there, as if being in an evil way, he had desired darkness, that he might not see the evil of it; or as if because there was a hedge in his way, it had been a trouble to him to have any light in his way.

There is a threefold light.

First, The light of Knowledge.

Secondly, The light of Comfort.

Thirdly, The light of Life.

Job's way was so full of the darkness of trouble, that it was a trouble to him that he then enjoyed the light of life; and therefore under that temptation, and darkness of Spirit, he expostulates, *Why is light given?* That is, why is life given *to a man whose way is hid?* But as there, that kind of light in his way was a grief to him, so now darkness is his grief. *He hath set darkness in my paths.* What is this darkness?

Darkness is taken diversly in Scripture.

First, Properly for the privation of the natural light, or Sun-light. *Job's* path was troubled no more with this sort of darkness, then the paths of other men; without doubt, the Sun in the firmament shone freely enough upon him; therefore

Secondly, Darkness is taken improperly, and figuratively, for that which bears the image and likeness of darkness; Such was the darkness set in *Job's* path.

This figurative darkness is chiefly of two sorts.

First, 'Tis put for *affliction*, or the uncomfortableness of our condition, and that either external or internal, either of body and estate, or of mind and spirit.

Secondly, 'Tis put for our doubtfulness or unsatisfiedness, for our ignorance or nescience about our condition. *Job* had all these darknesses in his path; yet I conceive, he in this place principally intends, either the darkness of inward trouble, which accompanied his outward troubles, or the darkness of ignorance and doubtfulness, what to do, which way to go in, or to get out of his troubles.

Hence observe, *God sometimes quite withdraws all comfort from his people in affliction.*

Light is the portion of Saints, and yet they may walk in darkness, and see no light. Not only are their paths darkned by afflictions, but darkness is in that darkness; Darkness dwells upon their affections, and darkness covers the face of their understandings. They are at once in that darkness which is opposed to comfort, and in that darkness which is opposed to Counsel. They can neither tell how to rejoyce, nor what to advise. The Psalmist affirms (*Psal.* 112. 4.) *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness*; that is, comfort in affliction. He hath comforted others in affliction, and been light to them in their darkness, as is shewed in the latter end of that fourth, and in the fifth verse, and therefore by way of gracious retaliation, the Lord will comfort him in his affliction, and command the light to rise upon him in his darkness. Many righteous persons have experimented the truth and sweetness of this promise; yet not a few have been denyed it, and in stead of light rising to them in darkness, have had darkness rising in darkness, or darkness upon darkness; inward darkness upon outward darkness; the darkness of an afflicted Spirit, upon the darkness of an afflicted State; a darkness about what becomes them to do, mingled with the darkness of their greatest sufferings; their path is at once a painful one, and an obscure one; they are full of pain when they go, and they are full of uncertainties and doubts, both when and where to go. *He hath set darkness in my paths.* And,

Vers. 9. **He hath stript me of my glory, and taken my Crown from my head.**

This verse contains a second comparison, by which *Job* amplifies his affliction. He amplified it in the former verse by comparing himself to a Traveller, who meets with those two great discommodities in his way, *Cross-fences, and darkness*: now he amplifies it by comparing himself to a man lately cloathed and furnished with rich and excellent ornamens, but now stript naked and bare. Thus in a literal sence *Joseph's* brethren dealt with him (*Gen.* 37.

37. 23.) they ſtript him out of his coat, his coat of many colours (or pieces) that was on him. The ſame word is uſed in both places, *Job* complains of ſuch hard uſage;

פשט *In hiphil eſt ſpoliare altero ſuadente; ex verbo dicas* Fecit ſpoliare; *ut ſignificet multos in ſuam calamitatem alicujus præcipuè hortatu & ſuaſu conſpiraſſe.*

He hath ſtript me of my glory.] The word which we render Stript, being in *Hiphil*, imports the doing of a thing at the perſwaſion of another; *He hath ſtript me of my glory*; That is, he hath cauſed, or encouraged others to ſtrip me of my glory.

'Tis the barbariſm of the worſt ſort of thieves and robbers, to ſtrip travellers, or ſuch as fall into their hands, and leave them naked. The word ſignifies alſo a greater cruelty, then ſtripping off the cloaths, even the ſtripping off the skin; ſo we tranſlate it (*Micah* 3. 3.) where the Prophet thus beſpeaks the oppreſſing Princes of *Iſrael*; *Hear, I pray you, O heads of* Jacob, *&c. Who alſo eat the fleſh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and as fleſh within the caldron.* We give the ſame ſence here; *He hath ſtript me of my glory*; that is, he hath taken it off, even as the skin of a beaſt is flain off, he hath left me not only without cloaths, but without a skin. When a man hath all taken from him to his skin, then we may ſay his skin is taken off too. And that's the meaning of the Prophet *Micah*, when he ſaith, *They flay their skin from off them.* Not that they did formally exerciſe that act of inhumanity to flay off the skin. He that ſleeps (as we ſay) in a whole skin, may yet in this ſence have his skin flayed off. A man is then ſaid to have his skin flayed off, when he is ſtripped to his skin, and all is taken from him: Cloaths and other outward conveniences, are to a man as the skin is to a beaſt; therefore, they are ſaid to flay a man, or to ſtrip off his skin, who take away ſuch conveniencies. Thus to ſtrip a man to his ſhirt, is to flay off his skin; much more do they flay off the skin, who take ſhirt and all. *Job* ſeems here to bemoan the loſs, not of mean things, or of pure neceſſaries, without which he could not live, but of great things, the honours and ornaments of his life. *He hath ſtript me of*

כבד *Gravitas, pondus; Gloria hominem gravem reddit & ponderoſum.*

My glory.] The word ſignifies that which is weighty, or ponderous; glory and honour are weighty, and they make the man weighty in the eſteem, or ballance of the world, who hath them. The Apoſtle calls it, *A weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. They that have no glory nor honour, either in them, or upon them, are light perſons, and they are lightly eſteemed.

But what was this glory, of which he was ſtript?

There are three ſorts of glory.

Firſt, There is Spiritual glory.

Secondly, There is Heavenly or Eternal glory.

Thirdly, There is Earthly or Temporal glory.

Firſt, We cannot underſtand it of the former. Spiritual glory, is the grace of the Spirit wrought in us. Grace is ſpiritual glory. Hence the Kings daughter, typifying the Church, is ſaid to be *all glorious within*, even here in the ſtate of grace (*Pſal.* 45. 13.) God will not ſtrip his meaneſt ſervant of this glory, and all the powers of earth or hell cannot. *Job* was cloathed with this glory when he was naked, and cryed out, *He hath ſtript me of my glory.*

Secondly, Nor can we underſtand it of the ſecond; It was not heavenly, or eternal glory, *Job* had not yet put on that cloathing, and therefore he could not be ſtripped of it.

Therefore we are to reſtrain it to the third ſort, Earthly glory. And earthly glory may be taken,

Firſt, Strictly, for that which we call fame, or renown in the world.

Secondly, We may take glory more generally for that thing, whatſoever it is, which gets us fame or glory in the world; that which gives any man preheminence above other men, that's his glory. Therefore the mercy of God is called his glory (*Rom.* 3. 23.) becauſe it renders him ſo glorious; And for that reaſon the *paſſing over a tranſgreſſion* is called the *glory of a man* (Prov. 19. 11.) Hence alſo the Woman is called the *glory of the man* (1 Cor. 11. 7.) *The man* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man.* But is not the woman alſo the image and glory of God? The woman may be conſidered, either firſt, according to her ſpecifical nature, and ſo ſhe was created according to the image of God in righteouſneſs and holineſs, as well as the man; or ſecondly, according to her ſex and perſonal relation to her husband, and in that regard, the woman is not the image of God but the man, becauſe dominion (which is the mans priviledge) is the image of God, and not ſubjection, which is the womans duty (*Epheſ.* 5. 24.) And in this ſence the woman (though her Glory be inferior to the mans) is the Glory of the man; for if the ſubjection of the irrational creatures unto man, be his glory, or honour; then what an honour, what a glory is it for man to have ſo excellent a creature as the woman, a creature endued with reaſon, as himſelf is, ſubject to him? Hence upon the ſame common ground, Civil power, rule, and authority among men, are called the Glory of a man, and ſo alſo are worldly riches and ſubſtance, becauſe they occaſion mans eſteem, and put a kind of glory upon him in the world. In this language the ſons of *Laban* complain enviouſly of *Jacob* (Gen. 31. 1.) *And he heard the words of* Labans *ſons, ſaying,* Jacob *hath taken away all that was our fathers, and of that which was our fathers hath he gotten all this glory*; That is, all this ſubſtance and riches, his flocks and heards of cattel, he hath feathered his neſt well out of our fathers eſtate; this they call *his glory*. *Joſeph* gives charge to his brethren (*Gen.* 45. 13.) to make report to his father how it was with him; *Tell him* (ſaith he) *of all my glory in* Egypt; that is, let him know, how much I am enriched and advanced, being made, by the good hand of God with me; *A father to* Pharaoh, *and a ruler over all the land of* Egypt. *Joſeph* would have this told his father, out of affection to comfort him, not out of ambition to exalt himſelf. *Joſeph* did not vainly ſpread his plumes like *Haman*, who in a kind of ſelf-admiration, or in an extaſie of pride called for his friends, and *Zereſh* his wife, as ſoon as he came from Court, *and told them of the Glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things, wherein the King had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the Princes and ſervants of the King.* Such promotion and advancement is the brighteſt ſhine of earthly glory; and whatſoever makes us ſhine with any brightneſs, is our glory here on earth. Hence likewiſe children are called *their fathers glory*. So that place is expounded (*Hoſ.* 9. 11.) As for *Ephraim, their glory ſhall flie away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception.* The glory of *Ephraim* conſiſted in their numerous off-ſpring, according to the propheſie of *Jacob*; *His ſeed ſhall become a multitude of Nations* (Gen. 48. 19.) The departure or rather flight of this glory is ſignificantly threatned, when he ſaith, *Their children ſhall flie like a bird from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*; that is, either their women ſhall be barren and have no conception, or if they conceive, their infants ſhall ſuffer abortion and die in the womb; or if they live to the birth, they ſhall dye as ſoon as they are born; *Their glory ſhall flie away.*

Theſe external things, as children, riches, power, and places of authority, are called the glory of a man; becauſe they render him honourable, and *cloath* him (as the oppoſite word *ſtript* implies) with glory in the eyes of men. Under the Law the High Prieſts ornaments were called *garments for glory and beauty* (Exod. 28. 2.) And we may call thoſe things which are our glory our garments.

Theſe are as garments,

Firſt, Becauſe they compaſs and cover us as round as a garment.

Secondly, Becauſe they keep us warm, and fence us from the cold of outward ſufferings.

Thirdly, They are as garments, becauſe there is an ornament as well as an uſefulneſs in them. Chriſt implies that *Solomon's* Glory was his cloathing and array, while he ſaith (comparatively to the Lillyes of the field) *Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of theſe* (Matth. 6. 29.) *Solomon* in his Glory, was *Solomon* at the height of his outward pomp and greatneſs. When *Michal* ſaw *David* dauncing before the Lord at the removal of the Ark; *How glorious was the King of* Iſrael *to day*, ſaith ſhe? That is, he was not at all glorious; ſhe thought he had laid his honour in the duſt, and ſtript himſelf of all his Kingly Glory, while he dauńced before the Lord with all his might, girded with a linnen Ephod.

Gloriæ dictæ ſunt de te, i. e. quicquid poteſt te gloriosum reddere.

The Church is the *City of God*; and of that City *glorious things are ſpoken* (*Pſal.* 87. 3.) The Hebrew is, *Glories are ſpoken of thee, O thou City of God!* All the Cities of the world are the Cities of God, by his general Title of Soveraignty: For ſo the whole *world is the Lords, and the fulneſs of it* (Pſal. 50. 12.) But there is a City which is his by a ſpecial title of propriety: For as the Lord hath a peculiar people, ſo he hath a peculiar City; and indeed, the peculiar City of God is nothing elſe but the peculiar people of God, living in the order of the Goſpel. Now this City of God hath its Glories, that is, many things which make it glorious. The Cities of men have their Glories, and many have ſpoken glorious things of them. Their Glories are, Firſt, A pleaſant Situation. Secondly, Riches. Thirdly, Populouſneſs, or the multitude of Inhabitants. Fourthly, Beautiful Buildings. Fifthly, Strong Walls and Bulwarks. Sixthly, Good Laws. Seventhly, Good Magiſtrates. Theſe are the chief Glories of the Cities of men. But the Glories of the City of God are, Firſt, Truth of Doctrine. Secondly, Purity of Worſhip. Thirdly, The Unity of Profeſſors. Fourthly, and chiefly, The Preſence of God among them; of which the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeaks in the laſt verſe of his Propheſie; *The name of that City from that day ſhall be, The Lord is there.* Theſe are the Glories of the City of God, and thoſe are the glories of the Cities of men. Now as theſe publick eminencies and advantages are the glory of Cities, both in their civil and ſpiritual capacities; ſo perſonal eminencies and advantages are the glory of a ſingle or particular man: and when he who was rich, is made poor; when he who is ſtrong, becomes weak; when he who had many children, is made childleſs; when he who was exalted in great power and authority, is caſt down and contemned; then he may ſay, as *Phineas* his wife did when the Ark of God was taken, *Ichabod*, Where is the glory? Or as *Job* in the Text; *He hath ſtript me of my Glory*; and (which carries the ſame ſence and ſcope,)

He hath taken the Crown from off my head.

A Crown and Glory are of ſuch near alliance, that they are often put together as one thing. *Solomon* exhorts to *exalt Wiſdom*; and why? *She ſhall exalt thee, and a Crown of Glory ſhall ſhe deliver to thee* (Prov. 4. 8, 9.) And the Lord promiſeth (*Iſa.* 28. 5.) That he will be *for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of beauty unto the reſidue of his people:* Yea, that *his people ſhall be a Crown of Glory in his hand* (Iſa. 62. 3.) All Crowns are glorious, and Glory is a Crown. Hence the Apoſtle ſaith (*Heb.* 2. 9.) *We ſee Jeſus, who was made a little lower then the Angels for the ſuffering of death*, that is, that he might be fitted to ſuffer death (which he had not been, unleſs he had been made a little lower then the Angels in one reſpect, namely, by his taking upon him our humane nature; for Jeſus Chriſt was made lower then the Angels, that he might ſuffer death, as well as by his ſuffering of death; now (ſaith the Apoſtle) we ſee Jeſus who was made thus low) *crowned with glory and honour.* Thus Glory and the Crown are joyned; and therefore as ſoon as *Job* had ſaid, *He hath ſtript me of my Glory*; he ſuitably adds, And,

מור Quod hic vertitur auferre, contrarium eſt verbo אסר quod vincire ſignificat, & veſti poteſt diſſolvit

He hath taken my Crown from my head.] Some render, *He hath untied*; Crowns being anciently tied to the heads of Princes.

The word *Crown* may be taken two wayes.

First, Properly, for that Royal Ornament of Kingſhip: Some interpet it ſo here; as if *Job* had complained that he had loſt his Kingdom, or was diveſted of Kingly dignity. 'Tis undeniable that he was a great man, a chief Magiſtrate, poſſibly a King.

Conqueritur ſe regno ſpoliatum nonnulli ſuſpicantur Jobum regem fuiſſe, i. e. regulum terræ Uz. Dru.

Secondly, The word *Crown* may be taken improperly, or largely; And then whatſoever a man hath in any eminency, he is ſaid to be crowned with it; or that it is called his Crown. (*Pſal.* 8. 5.) *Thou haſt crowned him with honour and dignity*; that is, thou haſt given him abundance of honour and dignity (*Pſ.* 103. 4.) *Thou crowneſt him with thy loving kindneſs and mercy.* And when the year is plentifully ſtored with the fruits of the earth, the Lord is ſaid to *crown it with his goodneſs* (Pſal. 65. 12.) Thus *a virtuous woman is a Crown to her husband* (Prov. 12. 4.) The husband is the wives head, and a woman of ſtrength (as the Hebrew hath it) that is, a woman of ſtrong and maſculine virtues, is a Crown, that is, an Ornament, or an honour to her head. And thus, *Riches are a Crown to the wiſe* (Prov. 14. 24.) That is, they give him opportunity to do great things, and make excellent improvements of his wiſdom; he rules in buſineſſes like a King, his counſels are as powerful as commands, and he gives the Law to others; whereas *the poor mans wiſdom is deſpiſed, and his words are not heard*, Ec. 9. 16.

Again, Some reſtrain *Job*'s Crown to his Children. *Thou haſt taken my Crown off my head*; that is, my Children. Children (*Prov.* 17. 6.) are called a Crown: *Childrens Children are the Crown of old men, and the glory of children are their Fathers.* Children are the Crown of old men in a twofold reſpect.

First, Becauſe it is an honour to have children; and the more children, the more honour.

Secondly, Becauſe they encircle their parents as a Crown (*Pſal.* 127.) *They ſtand as Olive-plants round about the Table*; in which ſence, a knot or company of Drunkards are called a Crown (*Iſa.* 28. 1.) *Wo to the Crown of pride, to the Drunkards of* Ephraim. Drunkards (as ſome expound) are called a Crown, becauſe they ſit round, or becauſe they drink round, till the houſe goes round with them. Theſe are called the *Crown of pride*, or a proud company, becauſe as they drink their wits out of their heads, ſo all humility and civility out of their behaviour. This is true of literal Drunkards. Yet that Text may be expounded of Metaphorical Drunkards, whoſe minds are fluſter'd and overcome with the wine of their own preſumption and proud aerie imaginations.

Thirdly, Others refer it to his Acquaintance and ſpecial Friends, who (having been a comfort and an honour to him) he calls *his Crown.* So the Apoſtle ſalutes the *Philippians* (chap. 4. 1.) *My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and my crown.* He ſpeaks as high of the *Theſſalonians* (1 Theſ. 2. 19.) *What is our hope, our joy, or Crown of rejoycing? Are not even ye in the preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt at his coming?* Converſion is the Crown or chief work of the Miniſtry, and converted perſons are the Crown or chiefeſt honour of a Miniſter. What is more deſirable or honourable then to convert, then to win ſouls to Chriſt, and to build them up in Faith? And thus any may call his godly friends and familiars, eſpecially ſuch as he hath been helpful to in their turning to God, his Crown.

Yet I rather take the word *Crown* here in the general notion of it (as Glory was in the former part of the verſe) for any earthly excellency. In which ſence the whole people of *Iſrael* cry out (*Lam.* 5. 16.) *The Crown is fallen from our head*; or, *The Crown of our head is fallen*, that is, all our priviledges and dignities are departed, now that we are carried Captives into *Babylon.*

Hence obſerve, *The beſt of earthly excellencies may ſoon be taken from us.*

Glory and Crown expreſs the higheſt of worldly attainments or enjoyments; and yet behold *Job* ſtript of his Glory, and his Crown is taken away. Not only is *all fleſh graſs*, but all *the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field* (Iſa. 48. 6.) *The fleſh* of man is his natural conſtitution; *the goodlineſs* thereof is all moral and civil perfections: not only is man of a brittle conſtitution in nature, but all the perfections which he hath, on this ſide Grace, are brittle too. All goodlineſs is fading; only goodneſs or godlineſs is not. As the Prophet (by way of oppoſition) intimates, *verſ.* 8. *But the word of the Lord ſhall ſtand for ever.* As the Crowns of all men, or their chief delights, ſo the Crowns of Princes (who are the Crown or chief of men) decay and wither. Former ages have given teſtimony to it, and ſo hath ours. If the Scripture were ſilent in this point, yet experience ſpeaks it; and if experience had never ſpoken it to this day, nor given an inſtance of a decaying Crown, yet reaſon ſpeaks it, and tells us from the nature of all earthly things, that it may be ſo, though in the event it had not as yet ever been ſo. But when not only Reaſon and Scripture tell us this, but many and many experiences witneſs it, who can doubt it? Nor ſhall I here add any more to confirm it, having at the twelfth Chapter, as alſo from other paſſages of this Book, taken occaſion to touch this Argument, the changes of Princes and of all earthly things. Only take theſe two admonitions by way of Corollary from it.

First,

First, Set not your affections upon things here below; ſet them not upon earthly Glories, earthly Crowns. 'Tis no wiſdom to hold that faſt in our affections, which we cannot hold in our poſſeſſion; or love to that much, which may ſpeedily be loſt. *Solomon* reproves that unadviſedneſs with a vehement expoſtulation (*Prov.* 23. 5.) *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that that is not? for riches certainly make themſelves wings*, &c. While rich men make locks and bolts, while they make clogs and ſhackles to keep, yea, to impriſon their riches, their riches are as buſie *in making themſelves wings to flie away*. And becauſe few will believe or credit this report of riches, but judge it a very ſlander, therefore *Solomon* doubles the word for confirmation, which we render *Certainly*, riches do it. We are not certain of any thing that riches will do for us, only we may be certain, that they will do as little for us as they can, and a great deal leſs then we expect, when we hear for certain that they are making (not feet) but wings to be gone, yea, to fly from us. Now ſeeing it is ſo, is there not much reaſon in *Solomon's* reproof, *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes?* or (as the Hebrew Text hath it with much elegance) *Wilt thou cauſe thine eyes to flie upon that which is not?* A covetous mans eye is as greedy after riches, as a ravenous Bird after its prey; and therefore he is, with much ſignificancy ſaid to cauſe his eyes to flie upon riches. But ſhall our eyes, much more our hearts (uſually the eye moves after the heart, though occaſionally the heart may move after the eye; but ſhall either our eyes or hearts) flie upon that which is flying, or make much haſte to get that, which makes ſo much haſte from us when we have gotten it?. If our Crown of earthly Glories be not taken from us, yet it will take leave of us, or we muſt leave it.

Secondly, *Purſue ſpiritual, and make ſure of heavenly Glory*; lay hold upon that which may be held. You ſhall never be ſtript of the glory of the Righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt in Juſtification, nor of the glory of the Graces of Chriſt in Sanctification. Theſe ſpiritual Glories, theſe inward Glories, ſhall not be taken from you. The Soul that is once thus cloathed, ſhall never be found naked. The exerciſe of ſome Graces muſt be left off, becauſe there will be no uſe of them in Glory. But you ſhall never loſe or be ſtript of any Grace. And if we cannot be ſtript of the glory of Grace, then much leſs can we be ſtript of the Grace of Glory, or have the Crown of Glory taken from our heads. And as that Crown cannot be taken violently from our heads, ſo neither will it ever naturally wither or decay upon our heads. *The Crown of Righteouſneſs*, of which the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks (2 *Tim.* 4. 8.) is alſo (as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks) *a Crown that fadeth not away* (1 Pet. 5. 4.) A learned Tranſlator conceives, that the Greek word, which we, with others render, *Fadeth not away*, is taken from the proper name of a Flower, of which anciently Crowns or Garlands were wont to be made. *The flower fadeth* (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa.* 40. 7.) Yet this flower *Amarantus* (as Naturaliſts obſerve) fadeth not. Not that it never fadeth, but becauſe it retains its freſhneſs and beauty (though cropt) very long; therefore they call it (beyond the nature of any other flowers) *the unfading flower*. Whether the Apoſtle (ſome conceive he did not) did allude to this Flower or not in the uſe of this word, or only attended the Radical meaning of it, is not much material to the point; ſeeing this is clear, that his intendment is to advance the glorious ſtate of the Saints after this life, by the everlaſtingneſs of it, having alſo called it at the fourth verſe of the firſt Chapter, *An inheritance incorruptible, and that fadeth not away*. This Crown, for the beauty and ſweetneſs of it, is like a Crown of Flowers, but in the continuance and laſtingneſs of it, it is like a Crown of Gold, the moſt durable and pureſt Metal. Yea, to ſhew that there is no ſeed or tendency of death or decay in it, it is called *a Crown of Life*. (Jam. 1. 12.)

Bez. *in loc.*

Camer. *Myroth.*

We read of a Crowned Woman (*Revel.* 12. 1.) *Behold, there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a Woman cloathed with the Sun, having the Moon under her feet, and upon her head a Crown of twelve Stars.* Every true Believer is cloathed (in his proportion) as this Woman (who is the Repreſentative of all Believers) with the Sun, that is, with Chriſt; and hath the Moon, that is (the Glory, and the Crown) the beſt of earthly things under his feet; as for his head, that's crowned with Stars, celeſtial excellencies, or the truth and purity of that Goſpel-Doctrine which the twelve Apoſtles (thoſe Stars of the firſt or greateſt magnitude) firſt preached from the mouth of Jeſus Chriſt, *that bright morning-Star*, and hath ſince in all Ages been held forth by all faithful Miniſters, who are *Stars in the right hand of Chriſt* (Rev. 1. 16, 20.) With this Glory Saints are crowned here, and they ſhall be crowned with the fruit of it for ever hereafter. *Job's* Complaint ſhall never be heard in Heaven, which hath often been heard on Earth, and may again be quickly heard from their mouths, whoſe crowns in the opinion of the wiſeſt men, ſit faſteſt on their heads; *He hath ſtript me of my Glory, and taken the Crown from my head.*

VERS. 10, 11, 12.

He hath deſtroyed me on every ſide; and I am gone: and and my hope hath he removed like a tree.
He hath alſo kindled his wrath againſt me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.
His troops come together, and raiſe up their way againſt me, and encamp round about my Tabernacle.

JOB ſtill continues his Complaint; he had done it before in divers alluſions, he takes up three more in this Context, to ſhadow his ſorrowful condition.

The firſt is taken from Buildings in the former part of the tenth verſe.

The ſecond from Trees, in the latter part of the ſame verſe.

The third from War, in the eleventh and twelfth verſes.

Verſe 10. **He hath deſtroyed me on every ſide.**

The word here rendred to *deſtroy*, ſignifies any ruining work, yet moſt properly the ruining of a Building; *He hath deſtroyed me* (ſay we.) *He hath pulled me aſunder member by member* (ſaith another) as a houſe is demoliſht part by part, or room after room, till, as Chriſt foretels the demolition of the Temple, *There ſhall not be left one ſtone upon another*. Thus (ſaith *Job*) *He hath deſtroyed me*. The Hebrew Text is in the Future; *He will deſtroy*; as if *Job's* fear had propheſied utter deſtruction to himſelf; yet moſt tranſlate (as we) in the preterperfect tenſe, *He hath deſtroyed me*. And though *Job* ſaith *me*, yet we are not to confine this deſtruction to his perſon, but muſt extend it to his Family and whole Eſtate; as the next words intimate; *He hath deſtroyed me*

נתץ *Confringere demolire, deſtruere; exprimit omnimodam deſtructionē ædificiis propriè convenit.* סבב *pro* סבוך Merc.

Round about.] 'Tis ſad enough to be deſtroyed in any one part; but *Job* was deſtroyed in every part; therefore he adds, *He hath deſtroyed me round about*: This heightens the ſence. *Job* ſhewing the care of God in the Fabrick of his Body, beſpeaks him thus (*chap.* 10. 8.) *Thy hands have made me, and faſhioned me together round about*: He that is made and faſhioned, is made and faſhioned *round about*; yet this addition *round about*, hath its force, noting the exact and particular care of God in ſetting up the whole of his outward man in every part. Here the work of judgment is as large and exact as the work of mercy once was: *He was formerly faſhioned round about*, and now *he was deſtroyed round about*.

Further, This expreſſion, *round about*, may have either its reference ſtrictly to a Building of defence, a Fort or Caſtle, which when it is beſieged (as he proſecutes it in the latter words) when Forces lie round about it, they batter and aſſault it on every ſide, till at laſt they level and ſlight it on all ſides, not leaving one Tower or pinacle ſtanding. Or it may refer to the alluſion of a Tree, in the next clauſe of this verſe, which, when we would root up, we dig round about it, and then pull it down. *Thou haſt deſtroyed me round about*. It was the envious and malicious complaint of Satan (*chap.* 1. 10.) that God had made an hedge or wall (which was as an impregnable fortification) about *Job's* eſtate and perſon. *Haſt thou not made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide?* He doth not only ſay, Thou haſt made an hedge about him, *ſc.* his perſon, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath (which is very particular) but he ſubjoynes *on every ſide*. *Job* once had an hedge round about

about him on every side, but now his defence was on every side removed. This complaint of *Job* stands in direct opposition to that of Satan.

Hence observe, *That even universal destruction (in regard of outward things) may be the lot of the best and holiest of the servants of God.*

Job was not only touched (as Satan desired) but destroyed; not only were the pinnacles of his house pull'd down, or the battlements and beauty of it defaced, but, the pillars of it loosed, and the foundation razed; all that was destroyable was destroyed. The servants of God have somewhat that can never be destroyed; 'tis our comfort, that though all *round about us* is perishing, yet we have somewhat *within us* that shall never perish.

Thou hast destroyed me round about: and I am gone.

Excedo è vivis, & jam me excessisse dicas, mortuum, sc. non moribundum.

That is, according to the Arabick Idiom, *I am dead*; dying is a going away, *I am gone*; I am a lost man, I am removing from the land of the living.

I am gone.] He was not gone when he spake this, and yet he saith, *I am gone.*

Pined.

That which we look upon as certainly future, or inevitably to come to pass, is to us as if it were present, or already past.

That good which we are sure to have, is as good as had; and that evil which we either must feel, or have deserved to feel, is as already felt. *Abimeleck* having deserved present death, the *Lord* tells him; *Thou art but a dead man, because of the woman whom thou hast taken* (Gen. 20. 3.) because in strictness of justice, 'twas death to take another mans wife, therefore he is spoken to as a man among the dead. So because believers are sure of eternal life, therefore the Scripture expresseth them in a present possession of life, or as *being past from death to life*, as if they had not only some beginnings, and foretastes of it by faith and hope, but were in the full fruition and visions of it. Thus here because all outward appearances and probabilities spake *Job* going out of the world and dying, therefore he concludes himself gone out of the world and dead. *I am gone,*

And he hath removed my hope as a tree.

Recedere aut abire facit spem.

He hath made my hope to depart, or go away, so in strictness of the letter; as if he had said, *I am gone, and my hope is gone*; and the reason why he said *he was gone*, was, because his hope was gone; hope is the most stayed comfort that we have, the last that departs, yea that which can scarce depart; hope cannot be reckoned among our *moveables*, for it is compared to an Anchor, and to an Anchor that will not drag; *We have* (saith the Apostle, *Heb.* 6. 19.) *this hope as an Anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast*; yet, *Job* perceived his Anchor moving, yea *removed.*

He hath removed my hope.] My hope is gone; what hope was this which was so movable? It was his hope about or for worldly things; *Our hope about moveables is moveable*; the hope we have about the world, is like the fashion of the world, which passeth away. *Job's* friends had laboured much to encourage and revive his hope, the hope of a restitution to honour and greatness in this life. But, saith he, *my hope*, this kind of hope is removed, 'tis gone; he had given sufficient proof that he had a hope which was not gone, but was indeed the Anchor of his soul, *sure and stedfast*, and that it *stood fast as Mount Sion*, in the midst of all the shakings of this worldly hope, and could not be removed.

He hath removed my hope.] As we are to take it for a worldly hope in general, so some restrain it to his hope of Children; Parents have much and many hopes about their Children: A good child is usually call'd a hopeful child; Children hope to have an inheritance from their Parents, and Parents hope to have comfort in their Children. He that hath no hope of Children, is called *a drie tree* (Isa. 56. 9.) Here *Job* bemoans (according to this interpretation) both the loss of the Children which he had, and his hopelessness of having any more Children, under the metaphor of a dry tree. *He hath removed my hope as a tree.*

But I conceive we are not thus to straiten his sence; for not only (to his apprehension) was his hope of Children removed, but his hope of life, and of any good which concerned this present life. *He hath removed my hope*

As a tree.] The word signifies both a tree growing, and a tree cut down, or rooted up; here we must restrain it to the latter; he hath removed my hope as a tree which is removed or pulled out of the ground. *Job* prosecuted this metaphor (*Chap.* 14. 7.) *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branches thereof will not cease, though the root thereof wax old.* There he spake of a hopeful tree, but here he speaks of a tree that hath no hope, or of a tree of which there is no hope; *My hope is removed as a tree*; that is, as a tree of which there is no hope that ever it should sprout again; for though a tree that is cut down may sprout again, the root being left in the ground; yet when a tree is pulled up by the roots, there is no hope that it should ever grow again. Indeed a tree that is pulled out of one ground by the roots, may yield hopes of growing, if it be planted in another ground; and thus tree's are sometimes removed out of the ground, not to the fire, but to a fitter soyl. And thus (though I do give it for the meaning of the Text) *Job's* hope was indeed removed as a tree, it was removed from earth to heaven, from things seen and temporal, to things which are not seen, but are eternal. *My hope hast thou removed as a tree.*

Indifferens est ad lignum viride & aridum aut excisum significandum.

I have (upon other Texts of this Book) spoken of the nature of hope in general, and of hope about worldly things, and therefore I pass it here; only take this Observation,

That worldly hopes are perishing and loosable.

The Apostle ascribes an eternity to spiritual hope (1 *Cor.* 13. 13.) *Now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three*: Spiritual graces continue, but spiritual gifts are subject, not only to declining, but to vanishing. Charity never faileth (*vers.* 8.) *But whether there be prophesies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away:* but *faith*, *hope*, and *charity*, are lasting graces, there is no corruptibility in them. In heaven we shall be above hope, being taken up to the fruition of that which we hoped for; yet we cannot say, that then our hope shall be removed, but then we shall move in a sphear beyond hope. Hope is not destroyed, but perfected by fruition, as faith is perfected by vision. Saints may have their hopes of earthly things removed, but themselves remove into those heavenly things which they hoped for. The tree of this hope shall stand and flourish for ever; but of their other hope, they may say as *Job*, *He hath removed it as a tree.*

Vers. 11. **He hath also kindled his wrath against me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.**

Job proceedeth to set forth his affliction by a third Allusion. His affliction was very great, in that his hope was removed; but this made his affliction most grievous, that there was an appearance of the wrath of God against him in it, and the kindlings of divine displeasure. God doth sometimes remove the hopes of his faithful people, in regard of worldly things, and yet manifests his love to them, in spiritual things; they feel not the kindlings of an enemy-like wrath, but the warm beams of a friendly, yea of a fatherly kindness in their fiery tryals; but when these two meet, when at once earthly hopes are removed, and a fire from heaven kindled, who can bear it? The Prophet *Malachy* questions (*Chap.* 3. 2.) *Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiners fire.* If none can abide the coming of Christ with *refining fire*, then who shall abide it, when he comes with *consuming fire?* The fire of divine holiness is very terrible, then O how terrible is the fire of divine wrath?

He hath kindled his wrath against me.] In this and the next verse, the comparison is taken from War (as before from trees and buildings) in which God is compared to some great Monarch of the world, who being exceedingly offended, and provoked, his anger kindles against his enemies, and he sends his Troops and Armies, to incamp against

againſt them; *His wrath is kindled againſt me*; and he *counteth me as one of his enemies.*

War begins at anger and wrath; it ſtirs firſt within, and then it breaks out; *Whence come wars* (ſaith the Apoſtle *James*, Chap. 4. 1.) *and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your luſts, which fight in your members?* Were there not a fight in our ſelves, there would be no fighting with others. There is ſomewhat in the Lord, proportionable to this; Whence are the wars that he hath with the Creature? Their original is deſcribed after the manner of men, from ſome kindlings of jealouſie and wrath in him; not that there is any perturbation in the heart of God, he is infinitely above it; but he is thus deſcribed, after the manner of men, the flame of whoſe wars begins with a fire of wrath; therefore ſaith *Job*, *He hath kindled his wrath.*

חרה *Exarſit, incenſus, aduſtus fuit, hinc latinũ ira & iraſcor.*

The word kindled in the Hebrew comes from a root, which ſignifies anger, becauſe anger is the kindling of a fire in our boſoms; and from that Hebrew word it is conceived, that the Latine word *ira* is derived, it being as near in ſound, as it is in ſence. Wrath is a fire, and is therefore properly expreſſed by a word ſignifying the heat of fire; wrath in it ſelf is hot, and burning, here the fire is made hot, *He hath kindled his wrath*, theſe put together, note fierce wrath (*Pſal.* 2. 12.) *If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little.* The wrath of God is a fire, but ſometimes it is as a fire not kindled; but if his wrath be kindled but a little, it makes a dreadful fire. 'Tis the nature of fire to be hot, but fire is not only hot but fierce when 'tis kindled (*Numb.* 32.14.) *Ye are riſen up in the place of your forefathers to kindle the fierce anger of God*; the kindled anger of God, is the extreameſt anger of God.

I ſhall not ſtay upon the deſcription of the wrath of God, having ſpoken of it at large (*Chap.* 14. 13.) where *Job* as dreading the appearance of the wrath of God, begs with earneſtneſs, *O that thou wouldeſt keep me in ſecret, until thy wrath be paſt.* Only note here, that the wrath of God (as was touched before) and the kindlings of it, do not imply any paſſion or change in God, he hath infinite ſerenity and quietneſs in his breaſt for ever: what fires ſoever he kindleth in the Creature, himſelf is alwayes in one mind. The Scripture ſpeaks thus in reference to thoſe effects expreſſed upon man, not in reference to any impreſſion wrought in God. When that is done upon the creature which teſtifies the fierceneſs of anger, then anger is ſaid to kindle in God. One of the Ancients tells us, That the wrath of God againſt ſinners is nothing elſe but the puniſhment of ſin; Or the wrath of God is his holy and moſt bleſſed Will, everlaſtingly burning with hatred againſt ſin, and turning from it in high diſpleaſure; even as man diſcovers his hatred of thoſe things which are againſt his will, and lets out his ſpirit in anger againſt them. Had not ſin broke forth in man, there had never been any appearance of anger in God. As the wrath of God draws out puniſhment, ſo ſin is the occaſion which draws out the wrath of God. Yet the wrath which *Job* ſpeaks of here, was not kindled upon that account; God himſelf declaring that he was moved to deſtroy him without any ſuch cauſe. That fire was kindled for the tryal and exerciſe of his patience, not for the puniſhment of his wickedneſs. *He hath kindled his wrath againſt me.*

Ira Dei eſt delinquentium pœna, furor Dei eſt ſupplicium peccatorum. Chryſ.

Hence note, Firſt, *The wrath of God is terrible.*

A fire kindled to warm is comfortable: *Aha* (ſaith he in the Prophet *Iſa.* 44. 16.) *I am warm, I have ſeen the fire*; but a fire kindled only to conſume is dreadful. The wrath of God is ſometimes as a fire raked up, ſometimes as a fire blown up: *The light of* Iſrael *ſhall be for a fire, and his holy One for a flame, and it ſhall burn and devour his thorns and his bryars* (ſuch are all his enemies who ſcratch and tear his people) *in one day.* The Lord is *a conſuming fire* to his own (*Heb.* 12. 29) for the burning out of their corruptions; but he is *a conſuming fire* to the wicked, and unbeliever, for the burning up of their perſons; he is a conſuming fire to theſe, and yet they ſhall not conſume; he is a fire, whoſe heat is unſufferable, and yet they muſt ſuffer it; the fire of his wrath is unquenchable by any thing but the blood of Chriſt; and the fire of the wrath of Chriſt is altogether unquenchable. *If his wrath be kindled, who alone quencheth the wrath of the Father, how ſhall his wrath be quenched, or who ſhall quench it?* Pſalm 2. 12. Note,

Secondly, *A godly man may be under ſome preſent apprehenſions of wrath.*

He hath kindled his wrath againſt me. *Job* was not only ſencible of the abatement of his outward comforts, but he felt ſome ſparklings of the wrath of God, in the abſence of inward comforts. Chriſt hath delivered believers *from the wrath to come*, yet even they may ſee and feel wrath kindling and coming upon them.

Thirdly, *The apprehenſions of wrath are more grievous to a believer, then all his other ſufferings.*

It is poſſible to bear all ſorrows with comfort, which are ſeparate from wrath. The Plague of Thunder and Hail upon *Egypt* was grievous, but that which made it very grievous was to ſee Fire mingled with the Hail (*Exod.* 9. 24.) 'Tis the minglings of the Fire of divine anger with the ſtorm of Thunder and Hail, the troubles of this life, which renders them ſo grievous to be born. 'Tis wrath which makes Hell ſo terrible: the Fire in Hell would be (comparatively to what it is) but as a warm Sun, did not the breath, that is, the wrath of the Lord *like a ſtream of brimſtone kindle it*, as it is ſaid of *Tophet* (*Iſa.* 30. 33.) As the wrath of God makes Hell ſo hot to the damned for ever, ſo it is ſome appearance of wrath, which makes affliction ſo hot to believers for the preſent. *He hath kindled his wrath againſt me.*

And counteth me as one of his enemies.

Job ſpake this language before (*Chap.* 13. 24.) *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and holdeſt me for thine enemy?* there he troubledly expoſtulates the matter with God about it, here he affirms directly; *He hath kindled his wrath againſt me, and counteth me as one of his enemies*; though the words carry the ſame general ſence, yet we have ſomewhat here worthy our obſervation and diſcuſſion, beſides what was there held forth.

חשב

He hath counted.] That is, He hath reckoned and ſet me down, or caſt me up in the number of his enemies; all thoſe tranſlations the word will bear.

In ſonie eſt ſicut adverſarios ſuos i. e. ſicut unum ex adverſariis ſuis.

Again, He hath counted me as his enemies.] The Text is plural in the Hebrew, not as we render, *As one of his enemies*, but, *as his enemies.* That is, as a deadly, not as a common enemy; as if I were ſuch an enemy to him, as had the enmity of all his enemies contracted together in me; he counts me, not as a ſingle enemy, but as an Hoſt of enemies. It is a frequent Hebraiſm in Scripture, to put a word of the plural number, to note ſome ſpecial thing or perſon in the ſingular. Thus 'tis ſaid of *Jephtha*, *that after he had judged* Iſrael *ſix years, he died, and was buried in the Cities of* Gilead (*Judg.* 12. 7.) that is, in one of the Cities of *Gilead.* Again, The godly is *like a tree planted by the rivers of waters* (Pſal. 1. 3.) That is, as a tree planted by ſome eminent river of water; ſo here, *He hath counted me as his enemies*, that is, as one of his enemies, yet ſuch a one as may ſtand for all the reſt.

Præclarè dicit tanquam, vel quaſi. Neq; enim aut Hoſtili animo aut etiã perturbato Deus ſuppliciа irrogat. Niceta.

Further, *Job* doth not ſpeak abſolutely, *he hath counted me an enemy*; as if God had proceeded againſt him (*hoſtili animo*) with the heart of an enemy, but he expreſſeth himſelf comparatively or with a qualification, by a note of ſimilitude, *he hath accounted me as his enemies*, or, *like an enemy.*

Job did not ſuſpect, much leſs conclude that God had written his name in the catalogue of his enemies, no, he knew God was his friend, and his heart told him that he was Gods friend, that he bare no ill will to God; yet (ſaith he, though ſuch be my ſtate, though I know God loves me, and though he knows I love him, yet) he hath counted me (that is) he hath carried himſelf towards me, and dealt with me as with one of his enemies; his heart is with me, but his hand is againſt me.

Hence note, Firſt, *God is really a friend to his people, yet he ſometimes deals with them appearingly, as with enemies.*

The love of God is everlaſting and unchangeable to his people, but his diſpenſations towards them have many changes. Hypocrites make a ſhew as if they were Gods

Gods friends, and God makes a ſhew againſt the ſincere, as if they were his enemies. Hypocrites are as Gods friends, and God deals with them as with his friends; they give him an outſide profeſſion, and he often gives them outſide comforts, and proſperity, he deals with them as if they were his friends: now (I ſay) as hypocrites declare a formal friendſhip or love to God, ſo God declares a formal enmity againſt many who are ſincere, that is, he gives them the uſage of an enemy, the wounds and ſtroaks of an enemy. As the Lord deſcribes the formal profeſſions and practices of love and ſervice to him (*Iſa.* 58.2.) *They ſeek me daily, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the Ordinances of their God*; So, we may deſcribe the Lords outward diſpenſations and providences of wrath to his; he ſmites them daily, and afflicts them in all their wayes, as a Nation that doth unrighteouſneſs, and hath utterly forſaken the Ordinances of God. Thus he is ſaid to count them as enemies when he acts towards them as we do towards thoſe whom we indeed count our enemies, as was more at large ſhewed upon that place before-cited, *Chap.* 13.

Further, take notice of theſe two things.

Firſt, That God hath enemies; ſome are even fighters againſt God himſelf; And theſe are of two ſorts.

Firſt, Natural enemies, or enemies by Nature, and thus every man that is born, is born his enemy (*Col.* 1.21.) *Being enemies in their minds, by reaſon of wicked works.* All men are enemies, with all their hearts to God, till he doth overcome and change their hearts (*Rom.* 5.10.) *While we were yet enemies, Chriſt died for us*; thus all are enemies.

Secondly, God hath enemies by practiſe, ſuch are all they who live and continue in ſin, theſe upon the matter, proclaim and maintain war againſt God himſelf: Sin is not only a turning from God, but a turning againſt him. Theſe enemies are alſo of two ſorts, either ſecret, or open. Moſt are ſubtle enemies to God, going on cloſely in wayes of ſin, and keeping ſecret correſpondence with the luſts of their own hearts, and the temptations of Satan. Others are profeſſed and open enemies to God, they even ſend defiances to Heaven, and will do what they liſt, let God do or ſay what he pleaſe. Such a one was *Pharaoh*, and ſuch was *Julian*, ſuch were they (*Luke* 19.14.) who ſaid, *We will not have this man reign over us*: of whom Chriſt ſaith, (*verſ.* 27.) *But thoſe mine enemies that would not have me to reign over them, bring them forth and ſlay them before me.*

Again, What he ſaid before, *God hath deſtroyed me on every ſide, and kindled his wrath againſt me*, is reſolved into, or wrapt up in this, *He hath counted me as an enemy*; ſo that, to be an enemy, is made the meaſure, or the ſignification of the worſt eſtate imaginable. He that counts a man his enemy (according to the rule of nature) counts the leaſt good too much for him, and the greateſt evil too little for him. As it implies the greateſt manifeſtation of love and tenderneſs, when it is ſaid, God deals with us, *as with ſons* (Heb. 12.7.) And ſpares us *as a Father ſpares his Son that ſerveth him* (Mal. 3.17. A Son may expect, by the laws of Nature, the moſt gentle uſage, and kind acceptance from a Father) ſo it implies the hotteſt revelation of wrath and diſpleaſure, when it is ſaid, that God counts us, or deals with us, as with an enemy. God keeps his friends *as the apple of his eye*, (Pſal. 17.) which notes their ſafeſt keeping; but as for the perſons and lives of his enemies, he caſts them out as out of the midſt of a Sling, which notes their utter periſhing. Hence obſerve,

That it is a moſt dangerous condition to be in a ſtate of enmity againſt God.

Who would live in ſuch a condition as aſſures him of nothing but death? What do enemies expect leſs at our hands? And what can the enemies of God expect leſs at his hand, in whoſe hand the breath of his enemies alwayes is, and all their wayes? God hath given us a rule to love our enemies, *If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirſt give him drink* (Rom. 12.20.) And in doing this as we obey God, ſo we imitate him, *and declare our ſelves the Children of our Father which is in Heaven; for he maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good: and ſendeth rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt* (Matth. 5.45.) But though God doth this often and long, yet he doth not this alwayes, or ever; nor doth he expect that we ſhould do this alwayes, or to all our enemies. It may be ſin to us not to take vengeance on ſome who are our enemies, even as it would be ſin to avenge our ſelves on any. And if men ſhould quite ſlacken juſtice, and not take vengeance on thoſe who are Gods enemies and theirs, yet God will. But if we be found continuing under a ſtate of enmity againſt God, he will not act towards us according to that law which he enjoyns us, he will not feed ſuch enemies, nor will he give them water to drink; He will not make his Sun to ſhine upon them, but command his fire to conſume them; and he will rain, not fatning and refreſhing ſhowers, but *ſnares, fire, and brimſtone, this ſhall be* (their drink) *the portion of their cup* (Pſal. 11.6.) 'Tis true, *When we were yet enemies, he ſent his Son to dye for us*, there he acted up to the higheſt degree of that law of love; yet they that believe not on his Son, but ſtand out in rebellion againſt him, ſhall ſurely dye. God hath not prepared bread and water, but fire and brimſtone for preſumptuous ſinners and unbelievers. This abuſed love will turn to the hotteſt wrath. And as God hath ſhewed himſelf the beſt friend to his enemies; ſo he will be their worſt enemy. God will appear an eternal enemy to his enemies in the next life, and he will not ſpare them in this. *Moſes* gives them a dreadful alarm (*Deut.* 32.40.) *I lift up my hands to heaven, and ſay, I live for ever: if I whet my glittering ſword, and my hand take hold of judgment, I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me: I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (and my ſword ſhall devour fleſh) and that with the blood of the ſlain from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoyce, O ye Nations, with his people, for he will avenge the blood of his ſervants, and will render vengeance to his adverſaries.* As the love of God, in many paſſages of Scriptures, triumphs in lofty and pureſt ſtrains of rhetorick over all the unworthineſs of man, ſo doth his wrath in this over all the oppoſitions of man. The enemies of God ſhall be ſure to ſmart and fall; and therefore 'tis well for thoſe that have to do with enemies, if they can but make it out, that their enemies are Gods enemies; for as God will ſurely bleſs thoſe who bleſs his people, and curſe thoſe who curſe them: ſo when his enemies are curſed by us, he curſeth them too; and while we oppoſe them, he joyns with us; whenſoever we go forth againſt the Lords enemies, we go forth *to the help of the Lord* (Judg. 5.23.) therefore the Lord will help us to deſtroy them. The Lord will deſtroy them according to his own decree, though we ſhould forbear or withdraw our help; much more will he deſtroy them when we help on the execution of his decree. *The Lord* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 110.1.) *ſaid unto my Lord* (that is, the Father ſaid to the Son, whom he hath given, as for a Mediator to his people, ſo a Lord over them) *ſit thou at my right hand, untill I make thine enemies thy footſtool*: that is, till I ſubdue them all under thee, or make them fall before thee. All the enemies of God are under this decree, and this decree (as the Prophet *Zephany* ſpeaks, *Chap.* 2.2.) *will bring forth.* The decree (like a woman with child) will be in travail, till it hath brought forth this judgment againſt all the enemies of Chriſt; yea though they ſit upon thrones, and have the Nations under their feet, yet they muſt be made his footſtool. *Job* found hard ſtroaks from the hand of God, who did only count him as an enemy; what then ſhall they receive, who are his enemies indeed?

Job proceeds to give us a more particular deſcription of Gods dealing with him, as with one of his enemies, ſtill proſecuting the Allegory of War.

Verſ. 12. **His troops come together, and they raiſe up their way againſt me, and encamp round about my Tabernacle.**

Here are three things conſiderable.

Firſt, The gathering of the Army; *His troops come together.*

Secondly, Their march; *They raiſe up their way againſt me.*

Thirdly, Their Siege; *They encamp round about my Tabernacle.*

In all which, *Job* elegantly deſcribes the enemy-like proceedings of God with him.

His

His troops come together.] The Hebrew is *Gad*, the name of one of the Patriarchs (*Gen.*49. 19.) *Gad, A troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last*; Both words are of the same root, *Gad* signifies *a troop*, and to *overcome*.

His troops come together against me.] But what are these troops?

I answer, They are the several afflictions and troubles which God mustered and called together to charge *Job* with. Many horsemen make a troop, and so do many afflictions; *Job* had so many as made not only a troop, but an Army; yea, a great Army. He speaks not only of a single troop, but of many troops; *He hath brought his troops against me.*

Copiæ Dei sunt omnis generis calamitates. Merl.

Some troops in the Letter assaulted *Job*, troops of *Caldeans* and of *Sabeans*; but besides these, his sickness and his sores, his pains and his poverty, the anguish and terrors of his soul; all these were troops, which came upon him as armed men; yea, his very friends who were about his bed, were as troops of enemies to him; at best, they were but miserable comforters to him.

This coming together of his troops may be taken two wayes.

First, *They come together*; that is, they come all at once, or at one time.

Vox originalis non solum temporis est, sed etiam consensus & [illegible] ejusdem. Συνδρομὴ δὲ πλοῦ τὸ συνεχῶς αὐτῷ ἐπομένους. Sept.

Secondly, *They come together*, that is, they come with one consent, they have (as it were) made a compact or a confederacy, they are united as one man to afflict my soul. So the word is rendred (*Psal.* 55. 14.) *We took sweet counsel together*, that is, we were of one heart, we agreed sweetly in our counsels. *Job* had many troubles, but they were all of a mind; they came all upon him by orders from one hand, and they came with one heart. The *Septuagint* express it by the same word, which is used in the *Acts* of the Apostles (*Chap.* 2. 46.) to shew the oneness of the pure primitive Church in the worship of God. *They continued dayly with one accord* (or unanimously) *in the Temple*, &c.

Thus the Army is levied, and the troops are come to their Rendevouz, we shall see them in their march presently; take only a Note or two from those words, *His troops are come together.*

First, *Afflictions are as Gods Army.*

Here are troops of them. The name of God is, *Lord of Hosts*; and as he raiseth his host to ruine his enemies, so also to chasten his own people.

Secondly observe, *The Lord sends many afflictions upon one man at one time.*

Here is not a single affliction to a single man, but a single man to many, to a multitude of afflictions. Here was a man and an Army; *Job* and a whole Host grapling together: *Many are the troubles of the righteous* (saith the *Psalm*) And, *now ye are in heavinesse through manifold temptations*, saith the Apostle (1 *Pet.* 1. 6.) And why were they in manifold temptations? The next verse answers; 'twas for the trial of their faith. It is a sufficient trial of humane strength and manhood, to combate with one man; he is counted more then a man, a Giant, who contends with two. But for the trial of divine strength and faith, manifold temptations are but sufficient. A little of God in one man raiseth up his spirit to do more then many men; even to combat with many troops of temptation.

Thirdly, From this allusion note, That, *Afflictions are all at Gods command.*

They are his troops, he is their General; they move according to his orders. As God raiseth these troops, so 'tis he that sends them directions what to do, and whither to go; they come when he bids them, and they go when he bids them; when he saith, Charge, they charge; and when he saith, Retreat, they retreat; according to the sound of the Trumpet which they hear from heaven, they move on earth. We may say to these temptations, as he in the Prophet, to the sword, (*Jer.*47.6.) *O thou sword of the Lord, how long wilt thou be ere thou be quiet? put up thy self into the scabbard, rest, and be still:* Here was a cry to the sword to be quiet; but the sword answered, or the answer was made in behalf of the sword, *How can it be quiet, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against* Askelon, *and against the Sea-shore, there hath he appointed it.* It is to no purpose to speak to the sword to be quiet, you must speak to the General, to him that commands in chief, and is cloathed with a Commission for the war. What can the sword do? It must proceed till he that drew and called it forth, recals and remands it back into the scabbard. 'Tis thus also in this war or fight of afflictions. The soul having been long pressed and assaulted by them, may perhaps cry out to them, O ye sorrows of the Lord, when will ye depart? O ye pains and sufferings, when will ye cease? But they answer, how can we depart? We are Gods troops, he hath given us a charge to come together against you; and with you we must stay till God call us off?

And seeing afflictions are at the command of God, be not angry, let not your passion rise against the creature, against this or that second cause by which you are afflicted; look up to the Lord of this Host, to the Commander of these troops. He sends them out as he pleaseth, and when he pleaseth, to punish and destroy his enemies, as also to exercise the Graces, and try the holy valour of his own children and servants.

Fourthly, *God is able to raise troops of affliction out of any of his Creatures.*

He is never at a loss for an Army. When the wrath of man is kindled, O, if he could get an Army, he would do wonders. The Lord can levie an Army with a word speaking; he can have troops, if he do but sound his trumpet, and beat his Drum; if he do but hold out his will, and say it is his pleasure, they are presently at his call. How soon did the Lord raise Armies against *Pharaoh*, of Flies, and Lice, and Hail? *&c.* How quickly did the *Chaldeans* and the *Sabeans* break in upon *Job?* How soon did an unkind Wife, Scabs and Sores, and what not, that was grievous to a poor man, either within or without, come in troops against him at the Lords appointment? *His troops come together.* Thus they are met and mustered, now they are upon their March.

They raise up their way against me.] That is (as some interpret it) they make themselves a large and plain way to come against me; and so 'tis an allusion unto Armies, who when they are marching, send Pioneers before them, to open narrow wayes, to level those that are uneven, and throw down their banks: The ordinary Road is not fit to march in, Armies must have room, therefore they raise up or prepare their way. This word is used (*Isa.* 57. 14.) To prepare and fit a way, a way which before was wayless and inaccessible; *Cast you up, cast you up, prepare the way.* The *Baptist* in a spiritual sence fulfilled that Propheſie, he prepared the way of the Lord, by him *the valleyes were exalted, and every mountain and hill was made low, the crooked he made straight, and the rough places plain.* 'Tis the the work of the Ministers of the Gospel to take out all the stumbling blocks and rubs that lie in the way of conversion, and hinder souls from turning to the Lord. The troops in the text did not raise up a way for *Job*, but for themselves, or against him.

סלל *Parare viâ & quod videbetur inaccessum sternere & ad æqualitatem dacere.*

Significat fore ut Apostoli monstrent, gentibus atque sternant facilem viam & aditum ad fidem Evangelii, ne hæreant aut deterreantur difficultatibus.

They raise up their way against me.] That is, they prepare a way to come upon me, or against me. The Hebrew word signifies *upon*, as well as against; they make their way upon me, they go over me, and trample me under their feet, they make me their way. The Prophet speaks this Language (*Isa.* 51. 23.) implying the extream insultation of the adversary afflicting the people of God: *I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee* (meaning *the dregs of the cup of his fury*) *which have said to thy soul*, (that is, to thee) *bow down, that we may go over; and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street to them that went over*; that is, thou hast humbly submitted thy self to their proudest cruelties. Indeed, wicked men (according to the letter of this text) would have the souls of the Saints bow to them, by yielding to, or following their sinful counsels and commands, but the souls of the Saints (in this sence) are stiff and cannot bow; as for their bodies or outward man, they can lay them down and bow, not only to the ground, but as the ground or as the street, for their enemies to go over. So here, these troops (saith *Job*) have made me as the very ground, or as the street upon which they trod; they have trod upon me. As *Joshua* gave order to the people of *Israel* (chap. 10. 24.) when he had overcome those Kings (who were a type of all the enemies

Fecerunt viam super me. Vulg.

עלי *potest super me exponi, ut sit sensus velut viam tritam reddiderunt super me, ut sint illis velut viâ frequenti ambulantium itione trita.* Mercs

of

of the Church, over whom the people of God ſhall triumph) *It came to paſs, that when they brought thoſe Kings unto* Joſhua, *that he called for all the men of* Iſrael, *and ſaid unto them, Come near and put your feet upon the necks of theſe Kings*; go over them, make them your way, do not ſtand upon it, becauſe they are Kings and great ones, tread upon them and fear not. As to tread upon enemies, and make our way over them, notes the compleateſt victory, and higheſt triumph, ſo to be trodden upon by enemies, and to be made their way, ſpeaks the loweſt ſufferings and contempt.

But I rather follow our own tranſlation; *They have made their way againſt me*: That is, coming againſt me, they have made or prepared their way. As if he had ſaid, whatſoever lay in the way of my afflictions, they have removed, that ſo they might have a clear mark, and make a full charge againſt me. Hence obſerve,

That, *When God ſendeth evils upon a perſon* ('tis true alſo when he ſendeth them upon a people) *nothing ſhall hinder.*

His troops ſhall raiſe up their way againſt the beſt and ſtrongeſt; though it be a barred way, a rough, mountainous way, a craggy way, like the *Alpes* (which *Hannibal* paſſed with his Army againſt the *Romans*) yet the Lords Army will (as he ſaid) find a paſſage, or make one. We have an expreſſion in *Pſal.* 78. 49. very near this; where the wrath of God againſt *Egypt*, is thus deſcribed; *He caſt upon them the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath, indignation and trouble, by ſending evil Angels amongſt them.* Moſt interpret theſe evil Angels of wicked Spirits or Devils that vexed them; others of troubleſome men, who vexed them with evils; ſome expound that Text particularly of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, who, though perſonally conſidered, were very good, yea, the beſt of men then living; yet they were evil Angels in regard of the effect of their meſſage unto the *Egyptians*. A good man may (in this ſence) be an evil Angel, he may be a meſſenger of evil, or a means of executing the wrath of God upon wicked men. Thus *Moſes* and *Aaron* may be called evil Angels; for they brought ſad meſſages or ill tidings to the *Egyptians*, concerning thoſe dreadful plagues wherewith the Lord oppreſſed them for their oppreſſions upon his people: For by the Miniſtry of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, the Lord caſt forth the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath and indignation. But *Egypt* was a ſtrong place, and the *Egyptians* a mighty people, they would not eaſily yield; wherefore (ſaith the Text) when he did ſo, *he made a way to his anger*: As if the Pſalmiſt had ſaid, if there were not a way for his anger, that is, for the execution of his anger, he forced his way; though he did not find a way, yet he made one, and fought himſelf through all difficulties which ſeemed to oppoſe the deſtruction of his enemies. We put in the Margin, *He weighed a path*; he made the path as exact, as if he had put it into a ballance; the way was fitted to the largeneſs of his own anger, and it was fitted to the dimenſions of their wickedneſs. Thus he made a way to his anger, both by ſuiting the way to his anger, and by removing all impediments out of the way of his anger. If God will work to ſave, who ſhall let it? And if God will work to deſtroy, who or what ſhall let it? When God will either try his own people, or puniſh his enemies, nothing can hinder; neither the power nor the politick preparations of evil men, no, nor the prayers of good men (which yet are the ſtrongeſt rubs in the way of his anger) he will make his way through their ſupplications, when he is reſolved to puniſh his people; *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people* (*Jer.* 15. 1.) Now with what weapons did *Moſes* and *Samuel* uſe to ſtand before the Lord? Surely with prayers and tears; nothing makes ſo real a defence againſt the anger of God, as the prayers of his people do; yet God will break through theſe: he will make a way for his anger through theſe, they ſhall not ſtop him; much leſs ſhall the preparations or ſtrengths of wicked men ſtop him. As the weakneſs of God is ſtronger then man, ſo the weakneſs of prayer is ſtronger with God, then all the ſtrength of man. If prayer doth not ſtop his wrath, humane power ſhall never be able to give it the leaſt check. All our ſtrong holds and Forts will be but as the firſt ripe figs, which being ſhaken, fall into the mouth of the eater, when once the Lords army makes a Battery againſt us. His troops will not turn till they have fulfilled all his pleaſure; *They have raiſed up their way againſt me.*

And encamp round about my Tabernacle.] The Lords troops being raiſed, they raiſed up their way, and marched, and now they ſit down, and encamp round about poor diſtreſſed *Job*: *They encamp round about my Tabernacle*; that is, about all that I have, or my whole poſſeſſions. Here's a ſtrange ſight, an Army encamping againſt a Tabernacle: *Job* might ſay, What needs ſuch warlike preparations againſt me? Alas, mine is but a Tabernacle; I am not fortified in a Caſtle, or encompaſſed with impregnable walls and bulwarks; *They encamp againſt my Tabernacle*: A Tabernacle is but a weak houſe, weaker then our ordinary houſes; a Tabernacle can hardly keep out the rain, or ſtand againſt the wind, how then can it keep out an Army, or ſtand their ſtorm? A Tabernacle is a moveable dwelling, faſtened with cords and ſtakes, without foundation; yet here *Job* ſpeaks as if God had brought all his Artillery, planted his Batteries and Engines of war to beat it down; *He hath encamped round about my Tabernacle.*

Hence note, *All that man hath in the creature, amounts but to a Tabernacle.*

Job was a great man, and he had a great eſtate, an eſtate foundation'd and ſetled upon as much ſtrength as the creature uſually can afford, yet all was but a Tabernacle, whoſe cords are quickly looſened, and whoſe ſtakes are ſoon pulled up, and then down it falls. Man himſelf in regard of his natural life, is periſhing, his body is a Tabernacle; *Our earthly houſe of this Tabernacle*, as the Apoſtle calls it (2 *Cor.* 5. 2.) Now as the body of man wherein his natural life dwells, is a Tabernacle; ſo are thoſe things which concern the ſupport and continuance of his natural life. Who would truſt to, or ſhelter himſelf in a Tabernacle, when we have the Name of the Lord, as a ſtrong Tower, into which we may flee with aſſurance of ſafety? He that gets moſt of the world, hath got but a Tabernacle; and he that loſeth all that he hath in the world, hath loſt but a Tabernacle. A little true knowledge of what the world is, mingled, though with but a little true faith about the things of the world to come, will eaſily carry us above all the good and evil of the world.

Again (in purſuance of the Allegory) we know when an Army encampeth about a City, and layeth ſiege to it, no man can get out; *Thus it is with many poor ſouls, afflictions hem them in round, they have never a port to get out at; the way is only open to heaven.* The Lord is pleaſed to lay very cloſe ſieges to many of his people, they are ſtraightned in their outward enjoyments, they are ſtraightned in their ſpiritual enjoyments, and can find no comfort. As the ſouls of ſome refuſe to be comforted, ſo comfort refuſeth the ſouls of others; or all comforts are (as by a ſtrong hand, yea, as by a ſtrong hoſt) with-holden from their ſouls. *David*'s mighty men broke through the hoſt of the *Philiſtims*, when he longed for the water of *Bethlehem*; but Gods hoſt of troubles and afflictions cannot be broken through by the mightieſt among the ſons of men, though there be a well of water beyond them, which their ſouls long for as much as *David* did for that of *Bethlehem*.

Laſtly, Take this Note from the alluſion alſo; *They encamp againſt me.*

Afflictions may continue long upon us or about us.

There is a difference between the fighting of a Battel and encamping; a Battel is but for an hour or a day; but encampings are for continuance: we have heard of encampings and beſiegings, not only for a few dayes, but for many months; yea, for ſome years. The troops of trouble give ſome only a fierce charge, but they ſit down and *encamp againſt the Tabernacles* of others. Some particular ſouls have endured longer ſieges then ever any City did. Not only do the *terrors of God* (within and without) *ſet themſelves in array againſt them* (as *Job* complained, *chap.* 6. 4.) but *they are afflicted and ready to die from their youth up, ſuffering thoſe terrors*, as *Heman* complains (*Pſal.* 88. 15.) Therefore let not our hearts faint, though we are beſieged, though ſorrows encamp againſt us. When God ſeems to tell us in the diſpenſations of his providence, that he will batter us down and level us with the ground, yet all this is but to try how we can ſtand our ground in an evil day, how

we

we can maintain our truſt, and hold out a ſiege; ſome give up the ſtrengths under their command at the firſt ſummons, others hold out till the laſt bit of bread; God doth but try his whether they will perſevere to the laſt, to the utmoſt. *Let patience have its perfect work*, for afflictions will have their perfect work; when they make long work, let patience make long work too. When God encamps againſt us, let us ſpeedily give up the ſtrong holds of ſin, but let us maintain the ſtrong holds of grace, the forts of faith and patience, quitting our ſelves like men, or rather like Chriſtians; let us give proof of holy courage in the hotteſt aſſaults, and in the longeſt ſieges. The Lord doth not intend ruine to our perſons, though he ruine our Tabernacles. Thoſe outward evils ſhall work for our good, which deprive us of all outward good; and if both the Tabernacles which we uſe, and in which we dwell, while we are in the body, as alſo the Tabernacles of our body, be diſſolved and ſhattered to the ground in this war, yet *we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

Laſtly obſerve, *There is no ſtriving, no contending with afflictions.*

God hath whole Troops and Armies of them at his command. As his enemies cannot ſtand before him, ſo neither can his friends, when he appeareth as an enemy. There is no prevailing but by ſubmitting. *Who* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa.* 27. 4.) *would ſet the briars and thorns againſt me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together.* Wicked men are briars and thorns, if they contend with God, they contend with a fire, and are burnt. If godly men ſhould ſet themſelves in battel againſt God, when he ſets himſelf in battel againſt them, how ſoon could he go through them alſo and burn them together? When the Lord of Hoſts ſends his troops to encamp againſt us, he doth not intend we ſhould fight them away, but pray them away; nor is it his meaning, that we ſhould raiſe the ſiege by oppoſing his troops, but by falling down before them. We cannot conquer the leaſt affliction by force, but we ſhall be more then conquerors over the greateſt afflictions, even over all afflictions by faith. When Armies of bloody men invade or encamp againſt the people of God, we cannot (without preſumption) expect victory, unleſs we fight as well as believe; and act courage againſt them, as well as faith in God. But when Armies of affliction encamp againſt us, there is no overcoming, but only by believing in God, and humbling our ſelves. We muſt reſiſt the Devil and his troops of temptations, and he will flee from us. But no affliction ſent by God, did ever depart from him that was found reſiſting it. The Army of ſorrows which encamped againſt *Job*, was never fully withdrawn, till he ſaid, *I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes* (chap. 42. 6.)

Thus we have heard *Job* bewailing his condition under the Allegory of war, troops of enemies drawing together, and encamping againſt him; in the next place he bewailes his condition, in the withdrawing of his friends: If when evils and enemies come upon us, our friends ſtand cloſe to us, it is a great ſupport; but when many troubles throng about us, and all our friends leave us, this is ſad. Thus *Job* deſcribes his forlorn eſtate in the next words; *He hath put my brethren far from me*, &c.

VERS. 13, 14, 15.

He hath put my Brethren far from me, and mine Acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me.
My Kinſfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me.
They that dwell in mine houſe, and my maidens count me for a ſtranger.

JOB hath thus far expreſt his (almoſt) unexpreſſible ſorrows and afflictions by many elegant Metaphors and alluſions; he is now as exact and accurate in ſetting forth the effects of thoſe ſorrows, or what followed upon his affliction.

The firſt effect is deſcribed in this context, to the end of *verſ.* 19. And that is the unkindneſs and contempt, the unfaithfulneſs and unthankfulneſs of his friends and neareſt relations.

Secondly, He ſhews the waſting of his ſtrength, and the general conſumption of his own body, at *verſ.* 20. *My bone cleaveth to my skin and to my fleſh, and I am eſcaped with the skin of my teeth:* The burden of all which preſſures enforced him to make a threefold cry.

Firſt, For pity and compaſſion; *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*, verſ. 21.

Secondly, For ſparing and forbearance, in *verſ.* 22. *Why do you perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh?*

Thirdly, He cries out for attention to his cry, and ſerious conſideration of his ſad complaint, in *verſ.* 23, 24. *O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in a rock for ever.*

Theſe words hold forth the firſt effect which followed his ſorrows and afflictions; namely, the withdrawing of his friends, the unkindneſs or contempt of all thoſe that were about him; and he ſeems to caſt or diſtribute thoſe into four ranks, from whom he received ſuch unkindneſſes.

Firſt, His kindred, or thoſe of his blood; *He hath put my brethren far from me*, in *ver.* 13. And in *v.* 14. *My kinſfolk have failed.*

Secondly, He complains of the unkindneſs of his own family, in *verſ.* 15, 16, 17. Which he ſets down, Firſt, In general, in the former part of the fifteenth verſe; *They that dwell in my houſe.* Secondly, He names them diſtinctly. Firſt, His *maid-ſervants*; in the cloſe of the fifteenth verſe. Secondly, His *men-ſervants*; in the ſixteenth verſe. Thirdly, His *wife*, in the ſeventeenth verſe; thus his own houſe and family had deſerted him, and proved undutiful to him.

Thirdly, He was likewiſe grieved by the contempt which he received from children, the children of thoſe who lived about him; in *verſ.* 18. *Young children deſpiſed me, I roſe, and they ſpake againſt me.*

Fourthly, He deſcribeth the unkindneſs and unthankfulneſs of his intimate acquaintance and higheſt confidents, to whom he was wont to open his boſom, and with whom he had maintained cloſeſt correſpondence, both by giving and receiving courteſies, in the nineteenth verſe; *All my inward friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved are turned againſt me:* Theſe are diſtinguiſhed from his kindred, and may be intended alſo in thoſe words of the thirteenth verſe; *My acquaintance*; and in thoſe of the fourteenth verſe; *My familiar friends.* Thus we ſee all were turned againſt him, his kindred, his family, his acquaintance and aſſociates. This was an extream aggravation of his affliction; eſpecially if we conſider two things.

Firſt, The univerſality of this deſertion; it was not ſome one or two of his relations; *all his relations failed him*; kindred, ſervants, acquaintance, and, who is more then all theſe, his wife.

Secondly, Not only did all his common friends, but even they who had made profeſſion, ſerious profeſſion of love to him; there are ſome friends of whom we make no great reckoning, if they fall off from us; but when intimate friends, ſuch as know our hearts, and have been truſted with our ſecrets, ſuch as we love with much entireneſs, and are endeared to us by long familiarity, when theſe apoſtatize from their profeſſed friendſhip, and renounce the Laws of love, how heavy is this croſs? Yet even ſuch was *Job's* deſertion; as will appear in the opening and proſecution of this context.

Verſe 13. **He hath put my Brethren far from me.**

In the former verſe we heard of Troops drawing about *Job's* Tabernacle, and beſieging it: Now in this nick of time, while troops of enemies draw near about him, his Brethren withdrew and departed far from him; *He hath put my Brethren far from me.* This deſertion of his Brethren is put in equal ballance with the invaſion of his Enemies, and is indeed a heavier burden of affliction, and doth much over-ballance it. *Their unkindneſs troubles us moſt, from whom we have leaſt reaſon to ſuſpect unkindneſs.*

אח *Frater cognationem habet cum* אחר *unus, quia fratres in uno convenire debent, ac proinde res inanimatæ, quæ in uno conveniunt, fratres dicuntur.*

He hath put my brethren.] The word which we translate *Brethren*, notes not only *nearneſs*, but *oneneſs*: Many brethren, yea, all brethren ſhould be one, and agree in one. They who are near in relation, ſhould not be far off in affection. *Job* calls himſelf *a brother to Dragons* (chap. 30. 29.) becauſe his preſent ſtate was like that of Dragons, ſolitary and withdrawn from friends. And *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 18. 9.) *He that is ſlothful in his work, is brother to him that is a great waſter*, that is, he is very like him, or *ſuch another*; yea, things without life, which have a likeneſs, are called in Hebrew brethren or ſiſters (*Exod.* 26. 3.) becauſe brethren and ſiſters have, or are ſuppoſed to have likeneſs in conditions, and oneneſs in affection; *My brethren.*

But what were his brethren?

There are ſeven ſorts of brethren.

First, Natural brethren, who are of the ſame blood; and theſe are ſo called, ſometimes in a larger, and ſometimes in a ſtricter ſence: They are called brethren in a large ſence who are of the ſame linage, though they be not immediately ſprung from the ſame loins. *Abraham* calls *Lot* his brother, who was only his nephew (*Gen.* 14. 14.) *James* and *Joſes*, *Simon* and *Judas*, who were the kinſmen of Chriſt, are yet called his brethren, *Matth.* 13. 55. But ſtrictly they are natural brethren, who are born of the ſame parents.

Secondly, They are called brethren who are of one Countrey or Nation.

Thirdly, They who are of one Neighbourhood, or are near in habitation.

Fourthly, There are brethren by ſtudy, by courſe of life, or profeſſion.

Fifthly, There are brethren in manners and ſuitableneſs of diſpoſition.

Sixthly, Brethren by friendſhip, by covenant and mutual ſtipulation.

Seventhly, Brethren in Religion and Faith of the Goſpel. We may take all theſe ſorts of brethren into the Text; but ſpecially brethren in blood, and nearneſs of alliance; theſe *Job* ſeems particularly to intend, while he ſaith, *He hath put my brethren far from me.* But, how far were they put, or at what diſtance did they ſtand? We may underſtand it of a twofold remoteneſs or diſtance.

First, Of remoteneſs in place; as if he had ſaid, *My Brethren came not at me, they will not ſo much as be where I am, one houſe will not hold us, I have little of their company.*

Secondly, Of remoteneſs in ſpirit, they are far off in affection, their minds are departed or alienated from me; though I enjoy at any time their bodily preſence, I have a little of of their company, but leſs of their hearts.

Again, He doth not ſay, *My brethren are gone from me*; but, *He hath put my brethren far from me.* But who was it that put his friends far from him? *Job* aſcribes this as much as any other part of his affliction unto God; *Job* was as ſenſible that God had put his brethren and friends far from him, as he was that he had ſent ſo many enemies and ſtrangers (*Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*) in upon him. It was from the ſame hand that theſe invaded him, and that they departed from him.

רחקים

Hence note, First, *Brethren may fail in love to their Brethren, and prove not only forgetful, but unfaithful.*

Yea, not only may brethren prove forgetful of us, but cruel to us. We have an experience of this in the firſt pair of brethren that ever were in the world: As ſoon as the bond of brotherhood could be broken, it was broken; *Cain ſlew his Brother Abel*, he was far from him indeed when he thus drew near to him. Chriſt forewarns us that we may quickly meet with ſuch actings againſt the light of nature, while we follow and act up to the light of Grace; *The brother ſhall deliver the brother to death, and the father the child, and the child ſhall riſe up againſt his parents, and cauſe them to be put to death* (Mat. 10. 21.) To deliver a brother up to death, that is, to deliver him up to others to put him to death, is as bad as if our ſelves had taken away his life. We do that evil which we do not hinder others (according to our place and power) from doing; much more may we be ſaid to do that evil, which we provoke thoſe to do, who have power to do it. To deliver a brother up to death, is to kill our brother. Grace teaches us to lay down our lives for the brethren. Corruption teaches the brother to take away the life of a brother. Our Book of *Martyrs* gives divers inſtances of brethren ſuffering for Chriſt, by the procurement of brethren. There are no bonds of love, but have often received a crack by luſt, and ſometimes a total breach; and where there ſhould be the greateſt love, there have been the greateſt breaches. The Prophet *Obadiah* checks thoſe *Edomites*, who were the Deſcendants of *Eſau*, and and ſo by *Iſaac* their common Father, brethren to the *Iſraelites*; the Prophet, I ſay, checks them for their inſolency againſt their afflicted brethren (*v.* 12.) *Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy Brother.* The day of their brother was the day of their brothers calamity, as is plain in the next words, *In the day that he became a ſtranger*, that is, to his own Land, being carried away into captivity: Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked upon this day of thy brother. But was it a ſin to look upon them in that day? To ſee them was no ſin, and to ſee or look upon them with an eye of compaſſion, was a duty; but they looked upon their brethren with an eye of ſcorn at, or with an eye of delight in their miſery; it pleaſed them to ſee their brethren oppreſſed and carried captives. This kind of ſeeing their brethren, was (within one degree) as ſinful as ſlaying them; ſuch looking upon them when led into captivity, was a leading them into captivity. That which we rejoyce to ſee any ſuffer from the hand of others, they ſuffer alſo from our hand. The Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes this unnatural unkindneſs againſt brethren (ariſing, in ſome, at leaſt, from a pretended or ignorant zeal for God) in the profeſſion of the ſame Religion (*chap.* 66. 5.) *Hear the word of the Lord ye that tremble at his word, your brethren that hated you* (he doth not ſay, your enemies that hated you, this a ſtrange conjunction, *hating brethren, your brethren that hated you*) *that caſt you out for my Names ſake* (there's the ground of the quarrel, it was religious, or about the things of God) ſaid, *let the Lord be glorified*, or, *appear in glory.* Which implies that either they pretended to glorifie God by caſting out their brethren, as Chriſt foretold, *John* 16. 2. *They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues; yea, the time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, ſhall think that he doth God ſervice.* To do God ſervice is to glorifie him. Theſe brethren judg'd their brethren evil doers againſt the Lord, and that therefore it was good to puniſh and caſt them out; hence, they ſaid, *let the Lord be glorified*; or theſe words, *let the Lord be glorified*, may be expounded ironically, as if theſe perſecutors of their brethren had derided their brethrens expectation and hope of the glorious appearance of the Lord in judgment, to vindicate their innocency and do them right. And ſo it anſwers that of the ſame Prophet, *chap.* 5. 19. *Let him make ſpeed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it.* As alſo that of the Apoſtle, 2 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. *Where is the Promiſe of his coming?* &c. Hence 'tis added, *But he* (that is, *the Lord*) *ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed.* They who either think to bring glory to God by troubling their brethren, or who deride their brethrens hope, that the Lord will appear to deliver them from, or to recompenſe them for all their troubles. Theſe troubling brethren (I ſay) ſhall have ſhame to their portion, and the portion of their troubled brethren ſhall be joy at the appearing of the Lord. The ſame Scripture ſhews the extream hatred of brethren againſt their brethren, and the ſore diſpleaſure of the Lord againſt Brethren-haters.

Secondly obſerve, *The eſtrangement of brethren from us is very grievous.*

Job laid it more to heart that his brethren did not comfort him, then that ſtrangers did afflict him. It is one of the moſt delightful ſpectacles to ſee brethren dwell together in unity (*Pſal.* 133. 1.) *Behold, how good and how pleaſant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* He compares it to the dew of *Hermon*, and to the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the *beard*, *even* Aaron's *beard, and that went down to the skirt of his garment.* Now, as it is a pleaſure to behold the union and harmony of brethren, ſo 'tis very bitter to ſee brethren broken off and disjoynted from one another. Whether they be brethren by blood, or brethren by profeſſion; but chiefly if they be brethren in the faith and profeſſion of the Goſpel. *Abraham ſaid unto Lot, let there be no ſtrife, I pray thee, between me and thee, & between my herdmen & thy herdmen.* He would not only have

have no ſtriſe between themſelves, but not between their ſervants, and why? *For we are brethren* (Gen. 13.8.) The diviſions of brethren are both grievous and ſcandalous; grievous to themſelves, and ſcandalous to others. Hence *Moſes* gives counſel to the two contending *Iſraelites* (as *Stephen* reports it, *Act.* 7.26.) *Sirs, why do ye wrong one to another? you are brethren.* The name of a brother, or the remembrance that we are brethren, is enough to pacifie our ſpirits, and haſten us to a reconcilement of all our differences. And that ſo many brethren, who alſo are *Iſraelites*, fall out with, and wrong one another, and will not be reconciled, how ſad is the ſcandal, and how heavy the burden at this day? All gracious hearts have much cauſe to lament this, as all eyes, even the eyes of our common enemies, have too much occaſion to take notice of it.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *He hath put my brethren far from me*; Obſerve,

The changes of affection are from God: or, *it is of the Lord that our brethren are at any time eſtranged from us.*

As God puts health far away from us, or aboundance far away from us, ſo he puts friends far away from us. This doth not excuſe brethren in their unkind departures and eſtrangements from one another; only it ſhould teach us to depend upon God, as much for the eſtabliſhment and continuance of friends in their affections and reſpects to us, as of our Lands and Cattel in their fruitfulneſs to us, or of our own bodies in their health and ſtrength to us. There is an over-ruling hand of God, and his effectual working, as in all other afflictions and troubles which come upon us, ſo in the withdrawings of friends and brethren from us. As God forms the ſpirit of man within him, in reſpect of being and exiſtence (for he is the God of the ſpirits of all fleſh, or the Father of ſpirits) ſo likewiſe in reſpect of motion and influence (*Zech.* 12.1.) It is the Lord who makes men to be of this mind, or of that mind, who ſhapes and faſhions their ſpirits, either towards a compliance with, or a diſlike whether of things or perſons. Friends love no longer then God maintains love in them, and they can do us good no longer then God maintains in them a will to do us good; we cannot diſcharge the loweſt natural duty of love unto a brother, unleſs God come in; yea, we quickly grow unnatural, if God leave us. The love or hatred of man is from the Lord.

But ſome may ſay, Is the hatred of man from God? If ſo, how ſhall we acquit God from being the author of ſin?

I anſwer, God is ſaid to put our friends far from us, when he withdraws or withholds that aſſiſtance and influence which inlarges and unites the hearts of friends. We are all by nature (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Tit.* 3.3.) *Hateful, and hating one another.* And while nature, as corrupted, acts alone, it is not more hateful to God, then full of hatred to men, eſpecially to good men. As God doth not, ſo there is no need he ſhould put enmity and hatred into the heart of a brother againſt his brother, there's too much of theſe already in every mans heart; if God do but leave a brother to himſelf, he quickly ſhews himſelf unbrotherly. Now if brethren hate unleſs God over-rule their hearts, then 'tis no wonder if ſtrangers and enemies do it (*Pſal.* 105.25.) When *Moſes* deſcribes the cruel uſage which the *Egyptians* ſhewed to the people of *Iſrael*, he tells us, *God turned their hearts, that they hated his people, and dealt ſubtilly with his ſervants.* That is ſomewhat a hard ſpeech when 'tis ſaid, *He turned their hearts to hate his people*; God did not drop hatred into their hearts; God turns the heart from ſin, not to ſin; but he is therefore ſaid to turn their hearts to hate his people, becauſe he gave them up to the baſeneſs and ſuſpiciouſneſs of their own hearts, which told them a thouſand ſad ſtories, or propheſies rather, what the *Iſraelites* would do, and how they would burden *Egypt*, and bring it low, unleſs themſelves were brought low by an impoſition of new burdens. This was enough, and this was all that God did when he turned the hearts of the *Egyptians* to hate his people, *and deal ſubtilly with his ſervants.* Unleſs God hold our hearts, and keep them for us, we are not only unſteady in every duty both to God and man, but we act quite beſide, yea contrary to our duty: We love where we ſhould hate, and hate where we ſhould love; we help thoſe whom we ſhould oppoſe, and oppoſe thoſe to whom we ſhould be helpful; we are like brethren to thoſe whoſe enemies we ſhould be, and we are as enemies to our brethren. *He hath put my brethren far from me,*

And my acquaintance are verily eſtranged from me.

יְדָעַי *Noti mei.* Vulg. *Neceſſarii mei.* Tygur. *Scientes nomen meum obliti ſunt mei.* Sept.

Brethren are our neareſt *acquaintance*, and all our *acquaintance* may be called brethren. The Hebrew word ſignifies, *to know.* Some render it ſo here, *they who knew me, or were known to me, are eſtranged.* The knowledge we have of men brings us into acquaintance with them; and the more we are acquainted with them, the more we know them. The word implies, intimate and ſpecial knowledge (1 *Sam.* 3.7.) Samuel *did not yet know the Lord*; Not know the Lord! why, how was *Samuel* bred, that he did not know the Lord? He was come to years of knowledge, and had he lived in ignorance? The meaning is not, that he did not know the Lord at all, but he had not yet known the Lord by way of extraordinary revelation, or viſion: Thus *Samuel* did not know the Lord till that time. God reproves the *Jews* for their hypocriſie and formality (*Iſa.* 58.2.) *They ſeek me daily, and delight to know my wayes*; that is, they pretend to an earneſt deſire of knowing my wayes, they ſeek to me as if they would creep into my mouth, yea and lodge in my heart, to know all my deſire concerning the holineſs of their lives, and the exacteſt conformity of their wayes to my will. Thus they would be thought to know me and *acquaint* themſelves with me; and ſo much the word uſed by *Job* (which we render *acquaintance*) holds forth. Yet becauſe *Job* ſpeaks at *verſ.* 19. of his *inward friends*, therefore I rather take *his acquaintance* here, for common friends, ſuch as were but generally known to him, or ſuch as knew him but generally; *My acquaintance,*

זוּר *Alienatio aut receſſus ejuſmodi eſt ut cum aliquis nauſeã habet.*

Are verily eſtranged from me.] The word ſignifies, ſuch an eſtrangement, or alienation of ſpirit, as ariſeth from nauſeouſneſs, or the offence which the ſtomach takes at ſuch meats as are improper to it. As if he had ſaid, *My acquaintance loath me, their ſtomachs turn at me, they are ready to vomit at the ſight or thought of me, and of my afflicted condition.* In which ſence, the word is uſed (*Ezek.* 14.5.) Where the Lord complains of the backſliding of his ancient people to Idolatry; *They are all eſtranged from me through their Idols*; as if the Lord had ſaid, *My people whom I have loved begin to loath me, I am out of date with them, and my wayes are out of requeſt with them ſince they have found new gods, or new wayes of worſhipping God.* Old acquaintance are often laid by when we find new. And (which was *Job's* caſe) when old friends fall into a low condition, ſome will loath them, or eſtrange themſelves from them, though they have no new. *My acquaintance are*

אַךְ זוֹרִי אַךְ טוֹב *Tantũ bonũ, bonũ merum, nullius mali mixtura adulteratũ.*

Verily eſtranged.] The word *verily*, hath an emphaſis in it, and notes not only the truth of the thing, or that it was ſo, but alſo the degree of the thing, that it was very much ſo. As if he had ſaid, *They are altogether eſtranged*, or, *there is nothing in them but eſtrangement and unfriendlineſs.* We have the like uſe of the word, though to another end (*Pſal.* 23.6.) *Surely goodneſs and mercy* (or, *only goodneſs and mercy*, pure goodneſs and mercy) *ſhall follow me all the dayes of my life*; that is, I ſhall have goodneſs and mercy without any mixture of ſorrow and trouble; ſo here, *They are ſurely or verily eſtranged from me*; that is, they are ſtrange as ſtrange can be; there is not the leaſt mixture of love, not the leaſt appearance of good will to me among them all.

Verſ. 14. **My kinſfolk fail.**

Before he ſpake of his brethren and acquaintance, now of his *kindred.* All our brethren are our kindred, but all our kindred are not brethren. The original word ſignifies one that *is near*, and in the Verb, *to draw near*; ſo 'tis uſed (*Pſal.* 73.28.) *It is good for me to draw near to God.* We draw near to God in any act of worſhip, or in the exerciſe of any grace, eſpecially in the exerciſe of faith, even as we are ſaid in Scripture, to depart or turn from God, when we neglect his worſhip, or when we act any luſt, eſpecially unbelief, *Heb.* 3.12. And becauſe the people of God uſe to draw near unto him thus, and 'tis never ſo well with them as when they do ſo; therefore all

the people of God, are called *Gods nigh ones* (Psal. 148. 14.) *He also exalteth the horn of his people, the praise of all his Saints, even of the children of* Israel; *a people near unto him.* All the Saints are (as we may say) Gods kindred (it is this word) *a people near to him.* Our kinsfolk are near to us. How great a priviledge is it to be near God, or of kin to the most High.

חדל *Affert cessationem ab aliquo opere aut officio.*

My kinsfolk fail.] Friends fail. First, In number when they die, that was not *Job's* meaning.

Secondly, There is a failing in courtesie; thus his kinsfolk failed, they ceased to perform the office of kindred to him, as *Ruth's* kinsman did. *Job* had many of his kindred living, but none in whom kindness lived. He had many kinsfolk, but few friends. *My kinsfolk fail.*

And my familiar friends have forgotten me.

Familiar friends are expressed in the Hebrew, by the same word which was before translated *acquaintance*, only with a little difference, this is active, the other passive; as if *his acquaintance* were rather known by him, then knew him, and his *familiar friends* knew him more then they were known by him. *Familiar friends* are such as we daily or very frequently converse with. We say, *Out of sight, out of mind.* It seems *Job's* friends cast him out of their mind, while they were in his sight. Forgetfulness is the absence of a thing or person from our minds. Memory is the treasury of the mind; forgetfulness exhausts that treasure. *My familiar friends,* saith *Job,*

Have forgotten me.] Possibly some of them forgot that they had such a friend, but all of them forgot him as a friend, they forgot all the courtesies and kindnesses that ever they received from him, as also all the kindnesses and courtesies that ever they professed to him.

Again, To *forget*, is to neglect, or to slight. Though they had him in their thoughts, though he lived in their natural memory (as memory is taken properly for the keeping or laying up of that which is past) yet they morally forgot him, that is, they slighted and neglected him: And then my familiar friends have forgotten me, is, as if he had said, *Those friends to whom I have expressed love, take no care of me, they perform no offices of love to me, nor do they regard what becomes of me, sink or swim 'tis all one with them.* So the word is applied (*Lam.* 2.2.) *He hath violently taken away his Tabernacle, as if it were of a garden, he hath destroyed his places of the Assembly; the Lord hath caused the solemn feasts and assemblies to be forgotten in Sion.* How forgotten? The Lord did not cause the *Jews* to forget that there had been solemn feasts, and Sabbaths in *Sion*; the thing was remembred, and that was an addition to the sorrow of their captivity; but those feasts were disused by all, none came at them, none observed them, and they were sleighted by many; thus they were forgotten. And as the Lord at that time in wrath caused them to forget their solemn feasts in a strange land; so he promised in mercy, that a time should come when they should be forgotten in their own Land (*Jer.* 3.16.) *And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and encreased in the Land, in those dayes saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it,* &c. But what are those dayes, wherein the Ark (which is put Synechdochically for all Ceremonial observations) should not be remembred, or should be forgotten? We may understand it, either of the dayes of Christs coming in the flesh, when all shadows should vanish or disappear; or of the times of their restauration, when they should not trust to, nor boast of those external Evidences of Gods presence, as formerly they had done when they cryed, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord,* Jer. 7.4. They who use outward administrations may be said to forget them while they live in the spirit, and have no confidence in a form, though good, useful and necessary.

Oblivio negligens est recordatio vera, diligens & studiosa.

Thus *Job* complains, *My familiar friends have forgotten me*; either they do not at all visit me as friends, or they do not use me friendly in their visits. To forget, is either to neglect the doing of a thing, or the doing of it negligently; as to *remember a thing*, imports, not only the doing of it, but the doing of it diligently. And so those former expressions, *They are estranged from me, they have failed*, are the same with this, *They have forgotten me.* All signifying and speaking the unkindness of his friends to him in that low condition.

Hence observe, First, *Adversity and affliction are the touch-stone of friendship.*

That's the time to try friends, to know what friends are, or who are friends. And as adversity is the demonstration, or touchstone of friends, so 'tis a high commendation to continue friendship in adversity. Christ tells his Disciples (*Luke* 22.28.) and he puts an accent of honour upon it, *Ye are they, who have continued with me in my temptation*; as if he had said, *All have not done thus, nor could ye have done it, unless it had been given you from above*; and when the temptation, that is, the tryal and sufferings of Christ grew very high, they began to fail in doing it, and shrink from their Master: yet Christ took their former constancy to, and continuance with him so well, that he did not only give them the honour of this acknowledgment, *Ye are they*; but presently tells them of an honourable reward; *and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my father hath appointed unto me.* It is an easie matter to abide with Christ, or with those that are Christs, in times of peace, or in the day of their consolations; but when we are under temptations, afflictions, and troubles, then to abide and keep close to Christ, and those who profess Christ; here's the proof of friendship, and Gospel-love. Many will run to friends to ask shelter, when themselves are in a storm (as we use to betake our selves to the shelter of a spreading tree in a storm of foul weather) who quickly leave them when the storm is blown over, and the weather fair. But how few are there who run to their friends when they are in a storm to offer them shelter? The Apostle complains of his desertion in such a condition (2 *Tim.* 4.16.) *At my first answer no man stood with me: but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge:* And he remembers it to the praise of *Onesiphorus*, for whom also upon that account he prayes (2 *Tim.* 1.16.) *The Lord give mercy to the house of* Onesiphorus, *he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.* Many friends come about us when we have a crown of comfort or of honour upon our heads, or when we have our garments of praise and joy upon our backs; but when we are in sackcloath, or wear a chain, then to appear with us or for us, argues strength as well as truth of love. True and strong love hath these five things in it.

First, It is not weakned by time, it never waxeth old; true love, the older it grows, the stronger and fresher it grows. We say, *Time is a great eater*, it consumes all things; but Eternity cannot eat out true love, either to God or man. True love shall be old, but it never waxeth cold, nor vanisheth away.

Secondly, True love is not hindred by remoteness of place, love knows no local distances; a friend in the farthest parts of the world, is as near to real affection, as he that lodgeth under the same roof, and eats bread with us every day. We may soon remove out of the sight, but we cannot remove out of the mind of a friend indeed.

Thirdly, True friendship or love is fruitful; sincere affection will put it self forth, and bud into action, it doth not rest at the tongues end, or confine it self to fine expressions, and complements, but it makes appearance or may be seen at the fingers ends, and is laborious in works and offices of friendship. As faith, so love without works is dead, and as that faith which justifies, so the love of a just person is justified by works. Hence the beloved Disciple mingles or makes up his counsel about this duty with a dehortation and an exhortation (1 *Joh.* 3.18.) *Brethren, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed, and in truth*; that is, let our deeds speak the truth of our love; it is an easie matter to say, but it is a great matter to do or to deed our love. Much love may be expressed by the tongue, but actions are the compleature of love. There may be abundance of love-labour in lip-labour, but where love labours truly at the lips, it will not withdraw the labour of the hand, or of the whole man for his good whom we love.

Fourthly, Truth of affection is full of compassion, sorrowing the sorrows, and being afflicted in the afflictions of those we love; it is so far from departing from those that are burden'd, that it bears a part of the burden with them; it weeps with those that weep, and causeth us to *remember those that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that suffer*

ſuffer adverſity, as being our ſelves alſo in the body (Heb. 13. 1, 2.) They who are of one heart, make both their loſſes and their enjoyments common, they all ſhare in what befals any one.

Fifthly, True love is as ready to own the perſon of a friend, as to ſympathize with his condition. As hope makes us not aſhamed of our own eſtate, whatſoever it is, ſo love makes us not aſhamed of the eſtate of another (*Prov.* 17. 17.) *A friend loves at all times*; he is not aſhamed to profeſs or expreſs his love at any time. He loves his friend in good report and ill report, (if that ill report be not raiſed upon his ill deſert) in honour and in diſhonour (if that diſhonour riſe not from his diſhoneſty); he is neither aſhamed of his friends poverty, nor of his priſon, when (not his own ſin, but) the chaſtning hand of God, or the unjuſt hand of man caſts him into either.

Thus a *friend loves at all times*, and he that loves not at all times, is no friend at all. We ſhall quickly ſee the end of their love, who love either God or man meerly for ſelf-ends: but where the ends of love to God or man are pure, that love will endure and hold out unto the end. Chriſt forewarns us (*Matth.* 24. 12.) That in the latter times, *becauſe iniquity ſhall abound, the love of many ſhall wax cold*: cold no doubt to God, and cold to man. The abounding of iniquity in thoſe dayes will make a ſcarcity of love. When iniquity abounds, trouble waxeth hot. And as then all falſe love waxeth quite cold, ſo the true love of ſome both to God and man will wax colder then it was. The blaſts of trouble, whether among or againſt the brethren, may (poſſibly) blow up and more inkindle the love of ſome, but they will blow out and quench the love of many. Trouble is the ſureſt trial of love; and therefore Chriſt tells us plainly (what *Job* found in the time of his perſonal trouble) that in times of great publick trouble there ſhall be but little love.

Secondly, In that *Job* complains of this ſo much and ſo often in his affliction, Obſerve,

The alienation of friends, or their abatements of love, is a very great encreaſe of our ſorrow in times of ſorrow.

The kindneſs of friends is comfortable at all times, much more in ſad times. And as their unkindneſs leſſens our comforts in good times, ſo it adds to our ſorrow in evil times, and that upon a threefold conſideration.

Firſt, Becauſe they are obliged by received courteſies.

Secondly, Becauſe they have obliged themſelves by promiſed kindneſſes. It doth not trouble us much to ſee them uncourteous to us, who never received courteſie from us; or to ſee them unwilling to do us a kindneſs, who never promiſed any. But when we ſee our courteſies loſt upon any man, or him ſitting looſe to us, notwithſtanding all his own promiſes, this goes to the heart, and cuts deep. An unexpected croſs is not ſo grievous to us, as the croſſing our expectation. God himſelf calls Heaven and Earth to witneſs againſt ſuch as fail him in obedience, when he hath fill'd and followed them with benefits, (*Iſa.* 1. 2.) *I have nouriſhed and brought up Children* (ſaith the Lord) *and they have rebelled againſt me.* Though when any man rebelleth againſt God, he croſſeth his will, yet many rebel againſt him of whom (in a ſence) we may ſay, that they do not croſs his expectation; for though he hath deſerved better at the hands of all, yet he looks for no better at the hands of ſome: But when Children, and Children whom he hath tenderly brought up and nouriſhed, rebel againſt him; when they whom he hath even ſtudied to pleaſe, care not to pleaſe him; when they from whom he had reaſon to expect all obedience, and nothing but obedience, pay him with rebellion, he will bear no longer. 'Tis thus in a proportion between man and man, as between God and man. Hence *David* complains often of the unkind alienation of friends, (*Pſal.* 31. 11.) *I was a reproach among all mine enemies* (that was not ſo much, he could expect no better) *but ſpecially amongſt my neighbours, and a fear to mine acquaintance; they that did ſee me without fled from me.* *David* ſpeaks here of three ſorts; Firſt, Enemies; Secondly, Neighbours; And thirdly, Acquaintance. That his Enemies reproached him, was a trouble to him, yet the leaſt of his troubles; the thing which troubled him moſt, was, that his Neighbours reproached, and that his Acquaintance were *afraid of him*; he was *a fear to his acquaintance*, not that they were afraid he would do them any hurt, but they were afraid to own him, or do him any good. We have *David* bemoaning himſelf again for this (*Pſal.* 38. 11.) *My lovers and my friends ſtand aloof from my ſore, and my kinſmen ſtand afar off.* His friends came near enough to him when he was (as we ſay) in a whole skin, or in a good condition, but when ſores were upon him, he means it not of ſores (in proper ſence) upon his fleſh, but of ſores in a metaphor, troubles in his eſtate; then as if his ſore had been a plague-ſore, they ſtood afar off. Read the ſame holy man once more bewailing the unfaithfulneſs of his friends (*Pſal.* 69. 8.) *I am become a ſtranger to my brethren, and an aliant to my mothers Children.* And though *Heman's* greateſt trouble was a divine Deſertion, yet he was not a little troubled that men deſerted him (*Pſal.* 88. 8.) *Thou haſt put away my acquaintance far from me; thou haſt made me an abomination unto them.* *Heman* had a precious ſpirit, yet God at once poured terror upon him, and ſuffered men to pour contempt upon him; and while the terrors of God diſtracted him, he could not conceal how much the contempt of men diſquieted him.

Thirdly obſerve, *The moſt profeſſed and real friends in the world, may prove unſteady and unkind.*

We cannot be aſſured of any friend but Chriſt. Where or whom he loves, he loves to the end; but we may quickly ſee the end of mans love. *Men are mutable in their condition, but more mutable in their affections.* Now they love, anon they hate; now they applaud, anon they calumniate; now they lay us in their hearts, and anon they caſt us out of their houſes; now they cannot tell how to live out of our company, and anon they cannot live in it. There are many rocks upon which love hath ſplit, and friendſhip hath been broken; but uſually 'tis ſome change in our outward condition, which makes the change in our affection. Sometimes the proſperity of friends turns our love into envy: And, which we may (charitably) interpret as an argument of Gods favour to them, checks our friendſhip with them.

It is an ancient obſervation, That proſperity hath many friends, yea, that all men are greedy to call themſelves the kindred of the rich; and like ſwallows to flutter about thoſe who live in the warm ſummer of worldly abundance. Yet the envy of ſome is too hard for their love, and they grow poor and beggarly in their affections to thoſe who outgrow them in riches and poſſeſſions. Some cannot rejoyce in friends any longer then they ſtand upon equal terms and even ground with them. But the ordinary rock upon which friendſhip ſuffers, is poverty and affliction; that which ſhould be the ſpecial ſeaſon for friends to ſhew themſelves in, becomes the occaſion of their falling off (*Prov.* 17. 17.) *A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adverſity*; as if he had ſaid, there is little or no uſe of a brother, but in a time of adverſity, or that's the ſpecial time in which we have uſe of him, he is born for that very end, to aſſiſt and comfort an afflicted Brother; as Chriſt ſpeaks of witneſs-bearing to the truth (*Joh.* 18. 37.) *To this end was I born, and for this cauſe came I into the world, that I ſhould bear witneſs to the truth*: As if Chriſt had thus expreſſed himſelf, *I ſhould looſe the very end of my birth, the end why I came into the world, if I ſhould not bear witneſs to the truth*; ſo we may conclude, if brethren and friends help not their friends and brethren in adverſity, they looſe the very end why they were born, and the deſign of ſetting up that relation. To give witneſs to an oppreſſed truth, and to give aſſiſtance to a diſtreſſed brother, are a pair of the nobleſt works, which we have to do in this world. Yet we rarely find either zeal enough in men to give witneſs to oppreſſed truths, or love enough in men to give help to their diſtreſſed brethren.

εὐπορία πολλοὺς φίλους. ἐν πενίᾳ πάντες ἐκ συγγενεῖς. *Græc. Prov.*

Fourthly obſerve, *Holy and good men may be deſerted by friends that are holy and good.*

Job was a good man, and there is no queſtion but *Job* had good men to his friends, and that divers of his kindred feared God, yet how ſhamefully was he diſowned by them all? There is no duty, whether to God or man, but a good man may come ſhort in his anſwer to it; *In many things we offend all*, and all are apt to offend in this. As the law of faith in God, ſo the law of love to man is not eaſily fulfilled. Where the true habit of love is, there may be a great defect

in the exercise of it. As he that hath faith doth not alwayes act faith, sometimes he acts as an unbeliever; and as he that hath the graces of patience and humility doth not alwayes act the patient and the humble man; so he that hath love, and is a friend at his heart, may yet shew himself unfriendly: Not only may carnal and graceless friends, but even spiritual and gracious friends prove very vain and unstable to us. As *Alexander* the Coppersmith, a temporary Believer, turn'd enemy against *Paul*, and did him much evil (2 *Tim.* 4. 14.) So they who were true Believers and found in the faith, were not true to him in their friendship; for they all forsook him, though not through unfaithfulness, yet through fear in an evil day, as he complains at the sixteenth verse of the same Chapter, *At my first answer no man stood with me, all forsook me.* *Paul* had not a friend to own him, or shew him any love when he was brought before *Nero*. How great the sin of this universal desertion was, we may collect from that serious intercession, *I pray God it be not laid to their charge.* Unless free mercy come in with pardon and discharge, our cowardly withdrawings from Saints in times of danger, as well as our withdrawings from Christ and his Truth, will be charged sadly upon us. When Christ himself was betrayed by *Judas*, and attached by the *Jews*, all his Disciples (even *John* the beloved Disciple, who but a little before leaned on his bosom) forsook him and fled: And as all they fled from him, so *Peter* who followed him, followed him afar off; and when he was come to Christ in his bodily presence, even unto the high Priests Palace, he then forsook, and fled from Christ more then all his fellow Disciples, he denied him, and forswore him: Our Lord Jesus Christ might say indeed, *My familiars and acquaintance are verily estranged from me.* Therefore in such forsakings and failings of friends, let us not be scandalized, as if some new thing had happened, or as if this were not a temptation common to man. While we remember that Christ was forsaken, that *Paul* was forsaken, that *Job* was forsaken, who are we, that we should not be forsaken? Men may say it, and yet fail; only God hath said it, who cannot fail; *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.*

To close this Point, take these four Deductions.

First, *There is no friend upon whom we can fully confide, but God himself.*

And indeed to confide fully on any friend (were upon the matter) either to suppose or make him our God (*Mic.* 7. 5.) *Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom: for the son dishonoureth his father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a mans enemies are the men of his own house.* But may we not trust friend nor brother? May not a husband trust the secrets of his heart with his wife? This seems unnatural to all these relations, and takes that from them which is a principal end why they are. The Prophet in all these cautions against creature-trust, doth not command or teach friends to nourish jealousies concerning each others faithfulness (which is the canker of friendship) nor would he have the husband torment himself with fears of his wives disloyalty to him, if he should communicate his bosom-secrets to her (which were to make marriage a meer bondage.) That which he aims at, is to arm us with patience, if friends fail and prove unfaithful; or to forewarn us that there is no friend but may prove unfaithful; and that therefore, as himself did (*v.* 7.) we should resolve to *look unto the Lord*, that is, to be confident of his help alone.

Secondly, *It is of God that friends are faithful and true unto us.*

When friends are friendly, this is of God; and if our friends are unfriendly, this also is of God. The Lord can make our enemies to be at peace with us. And unless he uphold the hearts of our friends, they will quickly be as enemies to us. The smiles and the frowns, the love and the hatred, the good will and the ill will of man are ordered by a divine hand; riches and honour, with all other accommodations and comforts of this life, are not more the gift of God to us, then the affections of our friends are.

Thirdly, *Though friends have given us much proof of their faithfulness, yet they may fail in the offices of friendship.*

Not only professed, but experienced friends may prove vain and helpless to us. We cannot conclude that any man will do us good, or stand our friend, because he hath done so; for not only may his hand be shortened, and he cannot do as before; but his mind may change, so that he will not do as before. Experiencrs of what God hath done for us, are strong grounds of confidence in him; the more experience we have, the more hope; but the experience we have of men, is not a sure ground of hope; that they have been a support and comfort to us, is no infallible argument that they will be so again.

What *Absalom* said to *Hushai* (when upon a seeming defection from *David*, he offered him his service and advice) *Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Why wentest thou not with thy friend?* The same may be said to many, who make real defection from their friends, and apostatize from all their most serious professions of friendship; Is this your kindness to your friends? why go you not with your friends? False friends will alwayes fail us for an advantage to themselves; and true friends may sometimes fail us, when we expect most advantage, and need most assistance from them. Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? is *Job*'s denying question in this Book. We may also question with as strong a negative concerning persons; *Who can find a certain friend among men*, who are all (upon one account or other) uncertain? We have no assurance of men but this, that *surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie* (Psal. 62. 9.) Men of high degree and men of low degree, comprehend all sorts of men: A lie and vanity comprehend all kinds of uncertainty; and therefore (though such men, whose hearts God establisheth to us, may be sure to us, yet) we may write *uncertainty*, *uncertainty*, upon all men.

Fourthly, *'Tis best to use friends as knowing that they may fail us.*

We must have them as if we had them not, and love them as if we loved them not. Not that we should be unsound or cold in our love to others (that were not only uncivil, but sinful) but that we should not be confident, or make our selves sure of the love of any. That man who is unsound or cold in his love, is less then a friend; and he that is confident, or makes himself sure of the love of a friend, makes him more then a man. That speech, *So love as if thou shouldest shortly hate*, may have an ill use; yet there is a good use to be made of it: For though (in regard of the sincerity of our own affections) we should so love, as if we were to love for ever, yet in regard of the instability of mans affections, we should so love, as if occasion might be given us to hate every moment. We must so love God, as knowing that whom he loves, he loves to the end, that is, without any end of loving; yet we must so please God, as if we feared his love might end, or be turned into hatred every hour: but though we should be willing to please and pleasure men in all lawful things, as if their love towards us could never end; yet we must so love them, as knowing that their love might quickly end. We rarely give our friends so much love as we ought; but we often expect more love from them then we should. We can never give God so much love as we ought, nor are we able to hope for so much love from him as we should. 'Tis best for us to give all our love to God, and not to expect much from man: We may hope for most from God, when we expect least from the creature. The fresh springs of the consolation of God flow most fully into us, when the fresh springs of our affection run chiefly unto God. And the Lord is pleased sometimes purposely to stain the beauty of all our comforts in the creature, with their failings and uncertainties, that while we use them, we may enjoy none but himself; and that while we love them, we might live only in and upon his love.

Sic ama tanquam osurus.

VERS.

VERS. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19.

They that dwell in mine house, and my maids count me for a stranger, I am an aliant in their sight.
I called my servant, and he gave me no answer; I entreated him with my mouth.
My breath is strange to my wife, though I entreated for the childrens sake of mine own body.
Yea, young children despised me, I arose, and they spake against me.
All my inward friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved, are turned against me.

Verse 15. *They that dwell in mine house.*

נור a גרי *Variè redditur, Incolæ, inquilini, advenæ. Inquilini domus meæ:* Vulg. Γέιτονες οἰκίας. *Vicini domus.* Sept.

THe word is rendred a Tenant who hires Land to use, or a House to dwell in; and so some understand it here; *They that dwell in mine house*, that is, they that hire my Houses, or my Lands, and dwell upon them; *My Tenants count me a stranger.*

Others translate *Neighbors*, or such as dwelt near him; *My Neighbors count me a stranger.*

Thirdly, The word signifies a *Sojourner*, one who hath the conveniencies of Lodging and Diet in the house (*Exod.* 3. 22.) *Every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in the house, Jewels of silver, and Jewels of Gold.*

Fourthly, The word may note any passenger or stranger whom we entertain and admit to stay with us, and abide in our house for a season. The sojourner lives with us at his own charge, he payes for what he receives; but the stranger stayes with us upon our cost, and hath his welcome freely. *Be not forgetful* (saith the Apostle) *to entertain strangers* (Heb. 13. 2.) So the word is used (*Exod.* 2. 22.) *Moses* called his Sons name *Gershom*, for he said, *I have been a stranger in a strange Land.* And *Job* shewing his nobleness in Hospitality, saith (*chap.* 31. 32.) *The stranger did not lodge in the street; I took him into my house.*

Eadem vox Gherim *Hebræi vocabant eos quos Graci* προσήλυτος *vocant, illos, sc. qui non genere, sed quasi adoptione initiati profitebantur Judaismum, & circumcisionem accipiebant.* Bold.

Fifthly, This word signifies a *Proselyte*, who was not originally of the people of *Israel*, but a Gentile, or a stranger by birth; yet receiving Circumcision, was looked upon as one of them, and admitted to the priviledges of the *Jews*. The word is used in that sence (*Exod.* 12. 48.) *When a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the Passeover to the Lord, let all his Males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it.* Of such Christ speaks (*Mat.* 23. 15.) *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites; for ye compass Sea and Land to make one Proselyte* (that is, to bring one into the Jewish Religion) *and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell then your selves*; for (to open that difficulty only in passage) though seducers are seven-fold the children of hell more then the seduced, barely so considered, in which regard, the seducing Pharisees were the elder sons of Satan, or more the sons of Satan then the seduced Proselytes; yet because young proselytes who drink in false opinions or superstitions, at the perswasions of others, are usually far more taken with them, and more zealous for them, then their perswaders (we have seen many Novices very violent, and even to out-act their Leaders) hence it is (as I conceive) that Christ saith, that the old Pharisees made the young Proselytes *twofold more the children of hell then themselves*; seeing by how much any do the more advance the design of hell, by so much the more they are advanced in their portion in hell; *Double work shall have double wages.* But to return; though some Proselytes were at once converted and perverted, or, turned from what they were, to what they should not be, yet many were indeed converted from what they were, to what they should be: And 'tis supposed, that the Psalmist includes those (*Psal.* 118. 2, 3, 4.) among all sorts that are invited to praise the Lord, First, The whole body of the Jewish Nation (*vers.* 2.) *Let* Israel *now say*, &c. Secondly, The Priests and Levites (*vers.* 3.) *Let the House of* Aaron *say, his mercy endureth for ever.* Thirdly, The Proselytes (*vers.* 4.) *Let them now that fear the Lord, say, that his mercy endureth for ever.* Some who were not either of the house of *Aaron*, that is, of the Priests or Levites, nor of the house of *Israel*, that is, native *Jews*, yet might be of the *Jewish* Religion, and *fear the Lord.* All such were called *Proselytes*, and therefore they also were invited to praise the Lord. Some understand *Job* speaking of such in this Text; *The dwellers in mine house*, or proselytes, such as I have been a means to turn to God, even they turn away from me; *They count me a stranger, and I am an aliant in their sight.*

זר *Alienum significat & hostem.*

They counted me a stranger. The word signifies not only a stranger, but an enemy. *Strangers have devoured the Land* (Isa. 1. 7.) that is, enemies. And the reason why the same word signifies both an enemy and a stranger is, because enemies are the worst of strangers: And though sometimes our neighbours and they of our own house are enemies to us, yet most commonly our enemies are strangers to us, and alwayes they who are enemies, are estranged from us. In which sence *Solomon* often calls the *Harlot a strange woman* (Prov. 2. 16. & 5. 3. *&c.*) Not only because she is a stranger, or another, from a lawful wife, but because she is really an enemy, and will destroy his peace who is enticed and overcome by her.

Further, This word which we render *Stranger*, signifies also *a prophane man*, who indeed should be a stranger to the Saints, and is a stranger to God, as the Apostle expresseth all such (*Eph.* 2. 12.) *Aliens from the Commonwealth of* Israel, *strangers from the Covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.* So some understand it here.

Sicut prophanum reputaverunt me. Targ.

They count me a stranger. That is, the men of my house, who have seen my way of worship, and have joyned with me in the exercises of Religion, now that I am fallen under these afflictions, account me as a stranger from the Covenant, as a prophane man, as an out-cast from the people of God: As if he had said, *They who were strangers and aliens from the true God, now count me a stranger and an alien, as if I had renounced my Religion, and had made a defection from the fear of God.*

נכרי *Extraneus fui.*

And I am an aliant in their sight. An Aliant is a man unknown to us, or if known to us, yet not of the same Nation with us. *I am accounted an Aliant*; as if I were not the same man, as if I were not *Job*, but a strange kind of creature, newly come into the world, or come from another world. My friends look upon me as if they had never seen me before, or any like me; they whisper among themselves, or say in their hearts, Is this *Job?* Surely it is not he, or if it be, he is not the man he was. Hence note,

First, *Man is ready to receive, and as ready to forget received courtesies.*

Job was not counted a stranger by strangers, but by home-dwellers, by persons obliged, by such as had tasted of his favours, and reaped a plentiful harvest from his bounty; these, these were they who counted him a stranger. How unnatural and inhumane is it to count him a stranger to us, that hath entertained us when we were strangers? Yet such returns man makes to man. And no marvel if such be the carriage of man to man, when man carries it thus to God himself. Every sin we commit against God, is a transgression, not only of the Law of holiness, but of Law of the love and kindness. The Apostle doth most significantly put these two together, *unthankful, unholy* (2 *Tim.* 3. 2.) Seeing every act of unholiness hath much unthankfulness in it. We are dwellers in Gods house. The whole world is Gods house; he hath set up this great Fabrick; yet to how many that dwell in this house is God a stranger, and an alien in their sight? They live without God in the world. Yea, there are many that dwell in Gods more special house, the visible Church, who yet count God as a stranger; or at least have little acquaintance with him. Many profess the name of God, who know not what it is to converse with God. And they who know what it is, are yet so slow and seldom in it, that the Lord may justly say, *You that dwell in my house count me a stranger.* We have all our accommodations in the house of God; he feeds and provides for our bodies in his common house, the world; and in his spiritual house, the Church, he feeds and makes provision for our souls, and yet (in a great measure) we are as strangers to him, and give the Lord cause to be a stranger unto us. *Moses* having told the people of *Israel* what God had been to them, and done for them, checks their unthankfulness, *Deut.* 32. 6. *Do ye thus require the Lord, O foolish people?*

people and unwise? Why? what had the Lord done for them? He had taken them into his house, he made them his house, he dwelt among them, yet they forgot him and turned aside unto other gods. They made themselves strange gods, and so made God a stranger to them. They who take strange Gods, make the true God a stranger; *If God alone be not our God, he is not at all our God.* It is said of good *Hezekiah* (2 Chron. 32. 25.) that when the Lord had healed him, and restored him from the grave, whither he gave himself for gone; that, yet *Hezekiah rendred not again according to the benefits done to him; for his heart was lifted up*; his heart should have been lifted up in thankfulness, but his heart was lifted up in pride. God dwells with an humble soul, and humble souls dwell with God; but as God beholds the proud afar off, so when any of his own people, who are in a state of nearness to him, are lifted up with pride, they behold God afar off, he is as a stranger to them. While we keep close to God by faith, our hearts are kept low by humility. *Hezekiah* prayed hard to have his body healed, and no sooner was his body healed of that swelling boil, but his soul sweld. They who are proud, whether towards God or man, can never be thankful. When shall we who are so greedy to receive, say, what shall we return?

Secondly, Consider how *Job* taxeth those who had dwelt in his house, whom he had entertained when they were strangers, who had received kindnesses from him. O saith he, *They that dwell in mine house, count me a stranger.*

Hence note, *Man cannot but resent it ill to see those forgetful of him that have received kindness from him.*

The former point shewed that we are apt to forget the courtesies we receive; this shews how deep an impression this makes upon their hearts from whom we receive them: when they that dwell in our houses count us strangers, when they who have eaten our bread will not own us, what brand is black enough for such unthankfulness? Now, if man cannot bear it to see those forgetful of him, of whom he hath been mindful, and to whom he hath been helpful, surely God will not bear it at the hand of man. This caused the Lord (*Isa.*1.2.) to make his appeal to Heaven and Earth, *Hear O ye Heavens, and give ear O Earth:* What's the matter? *I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me.* God resented it deeply when such as himself had nourished, rebelled; when the Children whom he had brought up were disobedient against him. There is an obligation in nature, to bring up Children, to feed and nourish them. Now, if it be so offensive when Children do not answer our care in their breeding and education; much more is this true in reference to strangers. The Lord may tell those who are now his Children, that he nourished, yea and redeemed them, when they were not only strangers, but enemies; how greatly then do we provoke the Lord by our unthankfulness, when we make him a stranger to us, who took us in when we were strangers, and acted such unspeakable love to us when we were enemies.

Further, the Text holds out another antecedent to these words, besides the dwellers or sojourners in *Job's* house, even his houshold servants.

My maidens count me a stranger, I am an aliant in their sight.

He speaks also of his men-servants in the next verse; *I called my servant, and he gave me no answer.* We are now come to the third sort whom *Job* taxeth of unanswerableness in duty to him in his afflictions. First, His kindred were unkind; Secondly, His friends were unfriendly; Thirdly, His servants proved unserviceable.

אמה *Ancilla, sic dicta à fidelitate; ancilla libera & ingenua; cui credita sunt praecipua domus ministeria.* Bold.

My maidens.] The word which is here used for *Maidens*, doth not signifie those who are for ordinary service only, but such as have command and trust, such as keep the keyes of the family. The word imports *trust*: servants are expresst by that word both for the trust committed to them, and for their expected faithfulness in that trust. *Abigail* gives a distinction of maid-servants in that expression (1 *Sam.*25.41.) some for government, others for common work in the house: that Text saith, *She arose and bowed her self on her face to the earth, and said, Behold let thine hand-maid be as a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.*

Let thy hand-maid.] There she expresseth her self by the word of the Text, *Let thy hand-maid be as a servant*; that word notes a servant of an inferior rank, not a directing, or an over-seeing servant, but a working servant; *Let thy hand-maid be as a servant* (to do the meanest work) *to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord. Job* speaks of the best sort of servants, not of drudges; *My maidens* (who had trust) *accounted me as a stranger.*

שפחה *Notat servā abjectioris conditionis.*

Vers. 16. **I called my servant, and he gave me no answer.**

'Tis the duty of servants to be at a call, or to come when they are called. The word implies calling by name, which is a free and a familiar way of calling. It carries some respect and favour in it to speak to a servant by name; *I called my servant, and he gave me no answer:* Silence is sometime a sign of consent, but silence is here taken for a sign of contempt; not to answer when we are called is incivility in most, and it is undutifulness in some; if a servant answer not when he is called, he forgets what his calling is. The Apostle forbids servants some kind of answering (*Tit.* 2.9.) *Exhort servants to be obedient to their own Masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again*; yet here *Job* reproves and complains of it as a fault in his servant, that he did not answer; how then saith the Apostle, *Not answering again?*

There is a twofold answering; First, By way of contradiction; Secondly, By way of submission; or there is an answer of reluctance, and an answer of obedience: when the Apostle saith to servants, *Be obedient to your Masters, not answering again*, he means, not answering by way of contradiction, or reluctance, as servants are very apt to do. When Masters give lawful commands, servants must give answer by submitting, not by questioning, much less by opposing: hence we put in the margent, *Not gain-saying.* A servant must give an answer when he is asked a question, but he must not gain-say when he is enjoyned a duty. Some servants are both lowd and lazy, quick of tongue and slow of hand. *Job's* servant was one if not both these; *I called my servant, and he gave me no answer.*

And I intreated him with my mouth.] I did not only call, but intreat him; the language of a Master is imperative, 'tis his place to command, not to entreat; but saith *Job, I intreated.* The word here used signifies the *humblest intreaty*, the intreaty of a poor man for an alms; according to that of *Solomon* in the *Proverbs* (Chap.18.23.) *The man useth entreaties*, or, *speaketh supplications*; it is this word, *he speaketh humbly*; they that are rich and have enough speak big, the words of Great men are usually like themselves great and high, but poor men speak supplications. *Job* did not speak commands, but supplications to his servant; he did not speak to him as a servant, but as if himself had been his servant, at least, as if he had been his fellow-servant. As his estate was brought low, so his spirit was humble; 'tis comly when our expressions bear the image of our condition.

חנן *Est blandè loqui & cū obsecrationibus, ut loquitur pauper.*

I intreated him with my mouth.] There is somewhat more in that. The mouth is the shop of words (as the heart is of thoughts) there they are wrought and framed, and from thence they are sent out; yet a man may speak and not with his mouth; a nod with the head, a look with the eye, a motion from the hand, have a language in them, especially from a Master to his servants; and there are gestures of the head, hand, or eye, which may signifie not only speaking but entreating; but *Job* entreated *with his mouth*; a master may entreat by the mouth of another, and send a messenger to entreat his servant. Had *Job* done only so, that had been much; but it is much more for a Master to entreat with his own mouth, *I intreated him with my mouth*, I spake my self, and yet I could get no answer. *Job* puts in all these aggravations to set forth this part of his affliction; he called, he intreated, and that with his own mouth, yet his servant regarded not.

Further, His meaning is not only that he could not get a word from his servant, but that he could not get any work from him. *Job's* servant did not only refuse to speak to him, but to do for him; when a servant makes no answer with his mouth, yet if he act with his hand, it makes some amends; his industriousness is a satisfaction for his unmannerliness; and his diligence may obtain pardon for his silence. We read in the Gospel of a Father who said to one of his Sons, *Go, and he answered, I will go, but he did not*; he answered with his mouth, but not with his hand; to another

for

ſon he ſaid, *go*, do ſuch a thing, and he ſaid, *I will not*; he did not only not promiſe to go, but plainly denied to go; but afterwards he repented and went, he denied his Father with his tongue, but he obeyed with his hand; it were well if a ſervant who forbears to anſwer by word, would anſwer by his work. When *Job's* ſervant gave him no anſwer, he gave him neither word nor work, neither tongue nor hand. And though *Job's* ſervant had denied him nothing but an anſwer in words, yet he had reaſon enough to be troubled at it, and to number it among his ſorrows. Not to anſwer when we are called to, is a deſpiſing of him that calleth us; and we can hardly ſpeak any thing of a man, which renders him more worthleſs, then by not ſpeaking to him. What can we eſteem him worthy of, whom we do not eſteem worthy of a word from us? Hence obſerve,

First, A man in affliction is apt to lay every thing to heart; and is very jealous of every mans carriage towards him.

We are ſenſible of any diſreſpect from men, when the hand of God is upon us; *Job* could not but take notice of a ſlight from his ſervant: We might think that *Job* a man of a great and truly noble ſpirit, ſhould have over-looked the neglect of his maidens and men-ſervants, and not have troubled himſelf with it, but he could not. Though the thing in it ſelf was light, yet it lay heavy upon his ſpirit; as in his proſperity *he did not deſpiſe the cauſe of his man-ſervant, or of his maid-ſervant, when they contended with him*, (Chap. 31. 13.) ſo in his adverſity he could not deſpiſe the contempt of his man-ſervant, or of his maid-ſervant, when they did not own nor anſwer him. *We take moſt notice of little evils, when great evils are upon us.* And as uſually it is our infirmity to do ſo, ſo there may be both a diſcovery and an exerciſe of much grace in doing ſo. For as it ſhews much holineſs of ſpirit, if when we are loaded with great mercies, we can take notice of little mercies to be thankful for them, ſo if when we are under great afflictions, we take notice of little afflictions to profit by them. He that is ſpiritual, deſires to pick out the meaning of God towards him, in the ſmalleſt croſs-carriage of man towards him. There is much faith ſeen in bearing a heavy croſs, and much tenderneſs in feeling the lighteſt croſs. And as he that hath a tender conſcience is troubled for, and feels the ſmart of the leaſt ſin which he hath committed againſt God, ſo he feels ſome ſmart of the leaſt trouble inflicted upon him by the hand of man, becauſe he looks upon it as a tryal ſent from God.

Secondly, In that he complains thus of his ſervants, Obſerve,

God can create trouble to us out of any of our relations.

They who live and depend upon us, may become a burden to our lives. As ſervants are a help to their Maſters, ſo Maſters are the ſupport and ſtay of their ſervants, they feed them, they cloath them, they lodge them, they have all that they have in the world from them. 'Tis true, ſome ſervants have been great comforts to their Maſters, they have been to them as their right hand, or as their Children; hence *Solomon* gives the wiſe ſervant a part of the inheritance among the brethren, (*Prov.* 17. 2.) yet how often doth that relation prove an affliction? How many ſervants are there, who ſerve their own ends, and not their Maſters, or who care not to ſerve their Maſters any longer or further, then they can ſerve their own ends? The ill diſpoſition and demeanor of ſervants, is none of the leaſt of thoſe troubles, of which the Apoſtle warns them that marry (2 *Cor.* 7. 28.) *Nevertheleſs ſuch ſhall have trouble in the fleſh*; that is, in their outward condition. With all our comforts troubles are mingled, the ſtate of marriage is not only an honourable, but a comfortable ſtate, yet many troubles attend and throng about it: there is comfort in Children, but there is trouble in Children too; there is comfort in ſervants, yet they are troubles alſo. A ſervant is the loweſt and laſt reſort of a miſerable man for comfort, if he be denied it there, if a ſervant refuſe to help, and inſtead of ſubmiſſive and ſweetning anſwers, either ſtands mute and ſullen, or gives revilings, how great is the miſery of ſuch a man?

Ad valde acerbam injuriam pertinet, ut domini cum ſervis blandè loquantur, & ſervi contemnant. Pined.

Thirdly, In that he charges it upon his ſervant, that he did not anſwer when he was called, Obſerve,

It is the duty of ſervants to be obedient to the call and command of their Maſters.

The time and buſineſs of a ſervant, is not his own, but his Maſters hand; and 'tis his duty at all times to ſerve his Maſter in every honeſt buſineſs. Gracious hearts pattern themſelves in their attention to God, by the attentiveneſs of good ſervants to their Maſters (*Pſal.* 123. 1.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwelleſt in the Heavens; behold as the eyes of ſervants looks to the hands of their Maſters, and the eye of a maiden to the hand of a Miſtreſs, ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God till he have mercy on us.* The ſervants eye ſhould alwayes be upon his Maſter, and the maidens eye upon her Miſtreſs, not only to hearken what they ſay, but to obſerve what they do, and to pick out the meaning of every motion and turning of their hand. A ſervant ſhould alwayes ſtand ready, and ſet himſelf in a poſture of obedience. Beckening with the hand, or a nod with the head, ſhould be to him as a word of command. The Centurion gives that character of a good ſervant (*Matth.* 8. 9.) *I have Souldiers under me, and I ſay to one go, and he goeth, and to another come, and he cometh, and to my ſervant do this, and he doth it.* Here is no murmurings at, no nor ſo much as any the leaſt diſputings of the orders given. Going and coming and doing, are the beſt language of ſervants; 'tis moſt comly when they ſpeak with their feet, and make anſwer with their hands. The Apoſtle is much upon this obſequiouſneſs of ſervants in moſt of his Epiſtles (1 *Tim.* 6. 1.) *Let as many ſervants as are under the yoak, count their own Maſters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blaſphemed:* The doctrine of God is, that ſervants ſhould give honour to their Maſters, therefore the doctrine of God is blaſphemed if they do not: The Apoſtle ſpeaks to believing ſervants, and he preſſeth them upon that very account; *They that have believing Maſters, let not them deſpiſe them becauſe they are brethren.* The Apoſtle ſeems to ſay, that ſome ſervant might thus object, *As my Maſter is in the faith, ſo am I too; what honour do I owe him? there is neither Jew no Gentile, bond, or free, maſter nor ſervant, but in Chriſt we are all one:* It is true ſaith the Apoſtle, yet abuſe not this priviledge; ye are all one as to the participation of Goſpel-Grace, in the pardon of your ſins, and the juſtification of your perſons; but ye are not all one as to the ſtate of your relations. Grace doth not take away or cut aſunder the bonds of duty, whether natural or civil. Read more, *Col.* 3. 22. *Epheſ.* 5. & 6. Now (I ſay) ſeeing the Apoſtle inſiſteth ſo much upon that point, ſurely there is much of the will and glory of God in it, elſe the Spirit of God would not have left ſuch frequent and plentiful admonitions about it. Hence as *Paul* uſeth a negative conſideration in *Timothy*, provoking ſervants to obedience, that the name of God be not blaſphemed; ſo he uſeth an affirmative in direct oppoſition to that in his Epiſtle to *Titus* (Chap. 2. 10.) *That they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.* Holineſs being moſt viſible in our relations, relational holineſs muſt needs be the chiefeſt ornament of our profeſſion. Whereas *Job* ſaith, his ſervant would not anſwer, though he intreated him with his mouth, Obſerve,

To act againſt the condeſcention of thoſe who are above us, heightens our ſin.

It is a fault for a ſervant not to anſwer when he is barely called or commanded; but for a ſervant not to anſwer when he is intreated, is exceeding ſinful. Every Maſter is above his ſervant, but when he entreats, he puts himſelf below his ſervant. And by how much the Maſter goes out of his place, in gentleneſs to entreat his ſervant, by ſo much doth a ſervant go the more out of his place in ſtubbornneſs, by not obeying his Maſter. Now, if it be ſuch an aggravation of a ſervants undutifulneſs, not to hear when his Maſter entreateth; how ſinful is it when man doth not hear at Gods entreaty? We are all ſervants to God, how oft doth God call, and we do not anſwer, yea, how often hath he intreated us with his mouth, and yet we have not yielded? God beſeecheth man to be reconciled to him, and he refuſeth; God beſeecheth man to obey him, and he either denieth or delayeth obedience. No man could bear that at a ſervants hand, which God beareth at ours. We are careleſs and negligent, we are ſtubborn and unfaithful, yet God is patient. Did Maſters reflect on their ſervices to God, they

Cum vis ut ſerviat tibi ſervus tuus, & tu non vis ſervire Deo, facis Deo quod tu pati non vis. Auguſt.

they would see little cause to complain of, or much cause to be patient towards their most unprofitable servants. We are very sensible of a servants failing in duty to us; when shall we be sensible as we ought of our failings in duty to God? When we are troubled that servants do not come at our call, nor do at our bidding, we should consider how many calls we have withstood, and how many biddings we have disobeyed. Let us be exact in duty to God, and walk to all well-pleasing, seeing we expect exactness in duty from man, and to be pleased in all things.

Job proceedeth to describe his affliction in a nearer relation. By how much any relation is nearer to us in which our affliction lies, by so much doth that affliction come nearer to us. Affliction from a servant pincheth much, but affliction from a wife pincheth much more.

Vers. 17. **My breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the childrens sake of my own body.**

We found that *Job's* Wives breath was strange to him, (*Chap.* 2. 9.) when she bid him *curse God and die*; now his breath is strange to her. 'Twas sin which made her breath strange to him; but sorrow made his breath strange to her.

My breath was strange to my wife.

There are four interpretations of these words.

First, Some by the word (*Ruach*, which we render *breath*) understand *the mind*, or *understanding*; and because the word which we translate *strange*, signifies also *to be distracted*, to be as a mad man who hath lost the use of his reason; from both, the sence is made up thus; *I was as a distracted man in the account of my Wife*, my Wife looks on me as if I were out of my wits, and so unfit for her converse or society. The understanding of a madman is a stranger to himself, and we love not to be near those who are mad.

Quasi uxor Jobi eum pro demente habuerit. Bold.

Secondly, Others translate, not *breath*, but *life*, because *life* is continued by *breathing*. Life is the union of soul and body, while breath continues, life continues, and the departing of our breath is the departure of life. According to this sence of the word, the Text is thus translated, *My life is strange to my Wife*, that is, *I being sick and full of sores, my Wife is weary of my life*, and would be glad to see me in my grave; *Job* was as a man free among the dead, and these conceive his Wife was willing to be freed from him by death.

Thirdly, Others by his *breath* understand that which moved upon his breath, his words, or voice, his speech, or complaint. Words are nothing but breath formed and shaped to express our minds by; so, *My breath is strange*, is, my words, my complaints to her, my discourses with her are strange; she will not hear me speak, my voice is offensive and unpleasant to her by reason of my affliction; I deal so much in groans and sighs while I speak, that she cannot bear it to hear me speak.

Fourthly, Take breath strictly for that which we respire or breath forth while we live. *My breath is strange*, that is, *loathsom*, noysom, ill savoury. So the word is used (*Numb.* 11. 20.) where the Lord tells the people of *Israel* when they murmured for flesh, that they should have their fill of it (*vers.* 20.) *Ye shall not eat one day, or two dayes, or five dayes, or ten dayes, or twenty dayes, but even a whole moneth, till it come out of your nostrils, and be loathsom to you* (so we read, or) *till it be strange to you*, or an abhorrence to your stomach. As all things are strange to us which we never had or used, so some things grow strange to us, because we have and use them so much. The strangeness of loathing is worse then the strangeness of not having. Ye shall be acquainted with flesh till ye count it strange, that is, ungrateful or unwelcom both to your presence and your palate. So here, *My breath is strange to my Wife*, 'tis to her as unsavory meat which the stomach loatheth, or cannot digest; probably the breath of *Job* might have an ill savour, through the continuance of his disease; any long sickness may breed corruption of the breath, and some sicknesses arise from putrifaction in the lungs or inward parts, which necessarily corrupt the breath: 'tis like *Job* had inward sores as well as outward, and that these made his breath unsavory, yet he looks on this as a part of his affliction, that his breath (though not so sweet and pleasant as in former times) should be strange to his Wife.

My breath is strange to my Wife. He adds an aggravation to this unkindness of his Wife, as before to the neglect of his servants; as he intreated them, so he intreated her; *My breath is strange to my Wife*,

Though I intreated for the Childrens sake of my own body.

Some render it distinctly, and make this a description of the undutifulness he found in his Children; *My breath is strange to my Wife, and I intreated my own Children*; implying that they also refused; I intreated the Children of my own body, I was a suppliant to my own bowels. Thus Servants, Wife, and Children, all relations in the family helped on his affliction.

Et orabam filios uteri mei. Vulg.

They who insist upon this interpretation are hard put to it how to make it out, that he intreated his Children; for it may be objected, all his Children were crushed to death with the fall of the house, in *Chap.* 1. how then can he be said to intreat his own Children here?

'Tis answered, First, He might have young Children when his house fell, that were not at the banquet; so that as the violent death of some of his Children was an affliction to him, so also was the preservation and life of his other Children, according to this opinion.

Secondly, Others refer it to his Grand-children, his Sons Sons, whom he might reckon as his own; Childrens Children, are as our own Children. Thus *Jacob* spake to *Joseph* (Gen. 38. 5.) *And now thy two Sons*, Ephraim *and* Manasseh, *which were born unto thee in the Land of* Egypt, *before I came unto thee into* Egypt, *are mine, as* Reuben *and* Simeon, *they shall be mine.*

Filii filiorum sunt instar filiorum.

Thirdly, The Septuagint interpret it for the Children of his Concubines. The Scripture is clear that divers of the Patriarks had Concubines, but that *Job* had any the Scripture is silent; and therefore I pass this, and rather settle upon our reading, which both the Hebrew very well beareth, and most of the Learned follow: this being only an addition to the unkindness of his Wife, to whom (saith he) *my breath was strange, though I intreated her for the Childrens sake of my own body*, or as the letter of the Hebrew is, *Though I intreated towards the Children of my own body.*

Deprecabar ad filios uteri mei. Heb.

Further, The word signifies, *to bewail*, or *deplore*, as well as *to entreat*: so the word is used (*Psal.* 102. 13, 14.) *Thou wilt arise and have mercy upon Sion, for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come, for thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof*; some read it, *they pitty the dust*, they bewail and mourn over the dust of *Sion*. Thus *Job* bewailed his Childrens dust; and then the meaning may be, *My breath, or my complaint was strange to my Wife, even when I was bewailing, or deploring the Children of my own body*; she did not only abhor me, when I cryed out of the loss of my estate, when I complained of my pains and sores, and of the injuriousness of my friends, but when I was bewailing the loss of my very Children, in which she was as much concerned as I am.

Patet uxori anima mea etiam ubi communes liberos deploro. Coc.

Secondly, *I intreated for the Childrens sake*; may carry this meaning, as if the argument which he used to draw his Wife to respect him was his Children. I entreated her by the inviolable band of marriage, and the fruits of it, but she regarded me not. *My breath is strange to my Wife*, &c.

Per sanctum jus conjugii & fructus ejus. Jun.

Hence observe, First, *They who have taken sweetest content in one another, may quickly be loathsom to one another.*

There is nothing in the Creature of any long continuance, much less of any long contentment. Man and Wife ought in duty to take mutual delight and contentment one in another; yet a Wife who is one flesh with her Husband, may count his breath a stranger, and she *who was given for a help, may prove helpless*, in time of greatest need.

When man was created, the Lord said *it is not good for man to be alone, I will make him a help meet for him.* A Wife is made for a help to man; and when doth a man need her help so much, as in the time of sickness, and affliction? That which is good at all times, is at sometimes better. A Wife should ever be a help to her Husband, but then most when he cannot help himself. The vertue of some Wives hath appeared gloriously at such times; and when diseases have made all others loath their Husbands, they have delighted in them. True conjugal love out-lives all changes both of time and state, it knows no decay either by age or sickness.

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Speed's *Chrō. p.630. Sect. 5.*

The Story is famous of Prince *Edward*, wounded with a poysoned knife by a treacherous Assassine, to whom, when other means of cure proved ineffectual, his wife, the Lady *Eleanor* sucked out the poyson, and gave him both ease and healing. How rare a pattern was this woman of conjugal fidelity? How far did she out-act *Job*'s wife in love, who was so far from sucking his wounds or licking his sores, that she could not abide his breath. *Solomon* gives this assurance of a virtuous woman, that *she will do her husband good and not evil all the dayes of her life*: What changes soever be upon him in outward things, her affections change not; whether he be in health or in sickness, whether in riches or poverty, whether his breath be sweet or unsavoury, she doth him good, and not evil all the dayes of her life. True love holds out in duty both to God and man.

Secondly observe, *That Love between man and wife, which begins and is grounded upon outward motives, may soon decay and wither.*

All outward things are decaying, and if the groundwork fall, that which is built upon it, cannot stand. If riches be the motive of love between man and wife, when once they grow poor, they will be as poor in love. If corporal comliness and beauty be the motive, sickness stains that, and there's an end of love. They who love Christ for the loaves, and godliness for worldly gain, will not love them long. And none know how soon their love may end to any earthly and civil relation, if it began upon earthly and meer civil ends.

There are two motives of conjugal love, that will last for ever.

First, Grace in the person loved.

Secondly, Obedience to an Ordinance of God.

The beauty of Grace withers not, though the grace of beauty do. Grace is most beautiful in the greatest declinings and wrinklings of natural beauty. The breath of Grace can never be unsavoury, nor can obedience to an Ordinance of God decay. These continue ever in the same sweetness and strength, and so will that love between husband and wife, which began at them.

Thirdly, Whereas *Job* intreated for the Childrens sake of his own body; observe,

Children are strong obligations of love between man and wife.

A husband hath no greater argument to move a wife by, then to beseech her for the Children that God hath given them. Children are dear to their parents, and an endearing to their parents. As Children encrease, so should Love encrease; Children are one of the principal ends of marriage; the attaining of any end in marriage, puts a further engagement upon us to perform all the duties of it. Children are the living images of their parents; they are their parents multiplied. So that while a husband entreats his wife for his childrens sake, she is entreated for the sake of as many husbands as she hath children. Hence observe,

Lastly, *Strong desires are importunate, and will improve every interest for the obtaining of what is desired.*

What we cannot carry upon our own interest, we labour to carry upon any other more prevailing name or interest. *Jacob* moves the Lord in prayer by the remembrance of his Fathers, *Abraham* and *Isaac*; *O God of my Father* Abraham, *and God of my Father* Isaac (*Gen.* 32. 9.) *Jacob* did not pray to his Father *Abraham*, but he made use of his Fathers name, as a motive in prayer. And though all names and interests are swallowed up in the name and interest of Jesus Christ, as to deserving a grant of what we pray for; yet we may argue and plead with God in prayer, for the Churches sake; yea, for our own childrens sake, that God would do us good, that we may be further instrumental for their good.

Verse 18. **Yea, young children despised me, I rose, and they spake against me.**

עיר *Quod sæpe a'iis accidit contrarias habet significationes. Stulti quoq; despiciebant me.* Vulg.

The word signifies not only a *Child*, but a *Fool*; so some render it here, *Fools despised me*; none but fools despise wise men, nor are the godly contemned by any but the wicked. We say, *young children* newly weaned from the breast, or as the original in strictness bears, *Sucklings*, who are the youngest children, despised me. Children in that state, are not in a capacity either to give honour to, or to despise their Elders: And therefore by *young children*, we are to understand youths, or the younger sort of men, not youngest children. Youths and young men are in common language called Children, in comparison of the Aged. The Prophet *Jeremiah* cries out (*chap.* 1. 6.) *Ah Lord God, behold I cannot speak; for I am a Child:* That is, I am but young. And *Solomon* tells the Lord in *Gibeon*, *I am but a little Child; I know not how to go out or to come in,* 1 Kings 3. 7. Yet at this time *Solomon* had a Child; as appears (1 *Kings* 14. 21.) for he reigned but forty years, and *Rehoboam* his Son was one and forty years old when he began to reign. So that he called himself a Child, because he was young, and with reference to his years, unfit to rule so great a people. Thus here, *Young children despised me*, that is, *young ones despised me.*

I arose, and they spake against me.

Not only did they despise when I stood upon my authority, as an ancient man may do; but when I arose, that is, when I shewed them respect, and (as it were) did obeisance to them. To rise to any man, is a gesture of reverence, as well as to fall down before him. Children ought to rise up, and shew reverence to the aged. *Job* rose to children, and yet they gave him no reverence. Yet some understand it barely of the act; *I arose*, and went away from them, and assoon as I turned my back, they spake against me. As if his meaning were, *Though they durst not speak against me to my face, yet as soon as I turned my back, they reproached and scorned me*; what! Is this *Job*? But I rather take it as before, that *Job* condescended in respects to young ones, who, forgetting their distance, gave him none. As he did not only call his servant, but entreated him; as he did not only speak to his wife, but entreated her; so he did not only deal gently with, but shewed respect to children, and yet they despised and spake against him. Of this he complains, both as their sin, and as his affliction. Hence observe,

Simulat fur vexero & ab illis recessi, mihi detrahunt, qui præsenti non auderet ita tractare Merc.

First, *They that are young, owe reverence to the aged.*

This is seated in the Law of Nature, and we find an express Law for it, given by God himself to his ancient people the *Jews* (Lev. 19. 32.) *Thou shalt rise up before the hoarie head, and honour the face of old men, and fear thy God; I am the Lord.* He that wears the *Silver Crown*, should be honoured, in his capacity, as well as he that wears the *Golden Crown*. As we are to honour our parents, so every old man; for he is as a parent. And if the younger ought to rise up before the hoary head, and give them reverence, how great a perversion is it both of the Law of Nature and of Nations, when the hoary head rising up, is despised by the younger? *Paul* gives caution concerning *Timothy* (1 Tim. 4. 12.) *Let no man despise thy youth.* 'Tis a sin to despise the young who are gracious; what is it then to despise grave and gracious old age?

Secondly observe, *It is an addition to our affliction, to be despised in affliction; especially to be despised by our inferiors, whether in degree or age.*

This is threatned as a sore judgment upon the *Jews*, when an enemy should invade their borders (*Deut.* 28. 30.) *I will bring upon thee a Nation of fierce countenance, that shall not regard the face of the old*; noting that old men should be reverenced, and usually are reverenced among all Nations. *Job* was once reverenced both by young and old (*chap.* 29. 18.) *The young men saw me, and did hide themselves.* When a man of venerable age comes in presence, young men should start back and modestly withdraw; *Tea* (saith he) *the aged rose and stood up*: He had reverence in former times, not only from young men, but from the aged. This shewed the height of his worldly felicity. But now (to shew the depth of his worldly misery) the youngest of young ones, who could despise him, did despise him. It was a crime punishable in the *Spartan* Common wealth, for young men not to rise up and shew reverence to the aged when they passed by. Hence that proverbial speech took its original; *It is only good to be an old man in* Sparta. 'Tis comly in all Common wealths and Families, when every person keeps his rank, when honour is given to whom honour is due. *Rebuke not an Elder* (it is the Apostles rule to *Timothy*,

Assurgendi habitus à pueris & adolescentibus in adventu senioum religiosè observabantur, præsertim apud Spartas, unde dictum, In sola *Sparta* expedire fieri senem. *Plut.*

1 *Tim.*

(1 Tim. 5. 1.) *but exhort him as a Father.* Though we must not flatter or favour any person, to the prejudice of the truth, or holiness, yet while we speak truth, or reprove unholiness, we must put a difference between the persons of men. We must not handle or deal with Elders as we deal with the younger men. When we speak reproof, we must speak respect unto the ancient. The Prophet gives it as the Character of a confused State, when *children behave themselves proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable* (Isa. 3 5.)

Verse 19. **All my inward friends abhorred me, and they whom I loved are turned against me.**

Job proceeds to another rank of friends; he spake of his ordinary friend before, now of those who were as his Council: Though a man hath many friends to converse with, yet some few only are fit friends to take counsel with. We may love many heartily, yet but few should know our hearts. The Hebrew is, *The men of my secrets*, that is, the men to whom I opened my secrets, and with whom I took advice in things of neareſt concernment. In Scripture we find many such Hebraisms (*Isa.* 5. 13.) We translate, *Thy honourable men are famished.* The Hebrew letter is, *Their glory are men of famine.* So (*Obad.* 7.) *The men of thy confederacy*, that is, the men with whom thou hadst confederacy, or didst joyn thy self in league or covenant; so here, *The men of his secrets*, are the men to whom he communicated his secrets: These we call *inward friends.* He is an inward friend, with whom we either advise what to do, or whom we tell what we have done or are about to do; as Christ bespeaks his Disciples (*John* 14. 15.) *Henceforth call I you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Master doth; but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of the Father, declare I unto you.* As if Christ had said, As my Father hath opened his bosom to me, so have I to you. Therefore you are not used like servants, but like inward friends. Of such *Job* complains here, *My inward friends*

חעבו
Est ita abominari aliquem ut reputetur omni familiaritate indignus.

Abhor me.] The word implies such an abhorring of him, as if he had been a man unfit for any familiarity at all, much more for inward familiarity. As if he had said, *The men with whom I joyned heart and hand, will not come at me: They stand off as if I were unworthy to be spoken to, or to be heard speak; they defie my company, and will not have to do with me.* The word is applied to the aversation of all the sences; it is applied to hearing (*Amos* 5. 10.) To smelling (*Isa.* 1. 13.) To the taste (*Gen.* 43. 32.) To touching or feeling (*Isa.* 14. 19.) Thus (saith he) by the men that were to me as my own soul, am I now the abhorrence of their souls, yea, even of all their senses.

In that *Job* had common friends (he described such before) and inward friends; observe,

Wise men make difference of men, but especially of friends,

A wise man knows how to distinguish persons as well as things; he hath (as we may say) inward friends and outward friends. He hath many to whom he doth courtesies, to whom yet he doth not communicate his counsels. Some men have love and faithfulness enough in them to be made the men of our counsel, but they are defective in judgment and understanding; others have understanding and judgment enough to be the men of our counsel, but they want faithfulness; neither every judicious man, nor every faithful man are fit to be men of our counsel, or to be trusted with secrets. He that is fit for this, must have a composition of both in him, and such a man is a rare man indeed. Many will serve for friends to eat and drink with, to talk and discourse with; but few are fit to consult and communicate our hearts with. The heart is a great trust. Observe,

Secondly, *Wise men desire to take advice and counsel of others, they have men of their secrets.*

'Tis best to see with our own eyes, yet 'tis not only good, but necessary to use the sight of other mens eyes. They are but fools who are meerly led by others, or who act only by the advice of other men, and they (which is as bad) are over-wise, who think they have no need to be advised. None have been so much mistaken, as they who take all upon themselves. They make best improvement of their parts and wisdom, who use them much, but trust them little. As we may not trust our own wisdom at all (which *Solomon* calls leaning to our own understanding) in reference to our dependance upon God; so it is very unsafe and dangerous to trust to our own wisdom with contempt or neglect of men. Private men need counsel for the management of their family-affairs, much more do Magistrates need it for the managing of publick affairs. The Orator said, *Men of Counsel are to a Common wealth, as the mind, reason or understanding is to any particular man*: They are to a State, as the foundation is to the building; the whole Fabrick whereof quickly falls and decayes without counsel; therefore in the holy Language *Jasad* signifies to *lay a foundation*, as also to *gather together in Council*, because the foundation of the peace and prosperity of a Nation is laid in good counsel. *Job* being a publick man, had his Council. It was the saying of one of the Ancients, *That Commonwealth is most safe and flourishing, where the heads of ancient men, and the arms of young men are employed and improved* (Prov. 11. 14.) *Where no counsel is the people fall; but in the multitude of Counsellers there is safety.* The worst of Princes have hated counsel. *Nero* was an utter enemy to the *Roman Senate.* And *Cæsar* cared little for their advice. They who would rule by their own will, would rule by their own wisdom; and they who would make all the people their slaves, have no desire to make any of them their Counsellers.

Consilium atque Senatus est mens, ratio, intelligentia reipublica. Cic.

יסד
Significat fundare & convenire in consilio.

Maxima salva est Respublica ubi consilia senum, juvenum arma obtinent. Plut.

And they whom I loved are turned against me.

Having spoken of his friends before, he now speaks of his friendliness to them; *They whom I loved*: There is no friendship without mutual love. Loving may be taken two wayes, either as opposed to hating, or as opposed to a less degree of loving. *Job* loved all his friends, but some more; here love is opposed to a less degree of love; *Those whom I loved*, that is, those whom I loved greatly, those who had so much of my love, that in respect of them, I might be said to love none but them. Christ loved all his Disciples, yet one was called *the Disciple whom Jesus loved.* A man that loves many, may so love one, that comparatively he doth not love any but him. Such should our love to God be, as ballanced with our love to man. Though it be a duty, and the great Commandment, to love one another; yet God must be so loved by us, that we may (in this sence) affirm we love none but God. The Law is express, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength* (Luke 10. 27.) If God be loved with all the heart, then the love that we bear to the creature, is no love in comparison of that we owe to God. And in proportion, the love we bear to some man, so far exceeds our love to others, that they may be said to engross all our love. *Job* spake here distinctly and distinguishingly of such friends as were highest in his favour, and had most room in his heart. These he calls the men *whom he loved.*

Habebat Job quos præ aliis diligeret.

Again, We may consider love two wayes; first, As it is a love of benevolence; secondly, of complacency: *Job* spake before of those friends whom he loved with the love of benevolence; but here of those friends whom he loved with the love of complacency, of those in whom his delight was set, and in whom all the lines of his affections were firmly centred: Such was the love of *Jonathan* to *David*, of whom he saith (2 *Sam.* 1. 26.) *Very pleasant hast thou been unto me, my brother* Jonathan, *thy love to me was wonderful, surpassing the love of Women.* Women love most; *Jonathan*'s love to *David*, was more then the love of women to those whom they love most, their husbands and their children. *Job* had extraordinary out-goings of his heart in love to some; what returns they made to him, we shall see in opening the next clause; *Those whom I loved*

Are turned against me.] As if he had said, I have had most of their hatred, who had most of my love. They who were as my Counsellers, are become my Betrayers. It is one thing to turn from a man, and another to turn against him; it is if friends turn from us in an evil day (as 'tis said of the Children of *Ephraim*, that being harnessed, and carrying bows, they turned back in the day of battel. Thus to turn back in the time of need, is (I say) bad enough) but when they turn against us, and not only do us no good, but do us hurt; this is the utmost departure from, and breach of the bounds and bonds of friendship. Thus *Ahitophel* turned against *David* in the conspiracy of *Absolom*, and *Judas* against our Lord Jesus Christ. To *turn against*, is the act of an enemy, and implies an hostile spirit. *They whom I loved, are turned against me.*

Now

Now ſeeing *Job* who had many friends, had alſo ſome inward friends, whom he calls by way of eminency, *thoſe whom he loved.*

Firſt, Obſerve, *That though all friends are loved, yet ſome may have a more ſpecial intereſt in, and portion of our love.*

All the people of God are his friends, yet *Abraham* had the priviledge above many, to be called *the Friend of God.* God calls but ſome Saints, *his beloved ones, his Jedediahs, his favourites*, though he love and favour all that are Saints. He ſpake of the whole people of *Iſrael, You have I known* (that is, you have I loved) *above all the Nations in the world*; ſo men may ſee reaſon to love with a diſtinction, to place the heat and hight of their affections upon ſome beyond others, to whom they bear good affection.

Obſerve Secondly, *The love of man is ill requited by ſome men*; or, *They to whom we have done many good turns, turn ſometimes not only from us, but againſt us; and ſhew themſelves not only no friends, but enemies.*

That man is leſs then a friend who ceaſeth to do us good, but he is a down-right enemy, who contrives or acts our hurt. What Chriſt ſaid to the *Jews* (*John* 10.32.) we may ſay to ſuch friends (in our meaſure) *Many good works have we done among you, and to you, for which of them do ye ſtone us.* When friends decline in their love, they encline to hatred; and while they are not with us, they may be numbred with thoſe who are againſt us: Neutarlity towards a friend is a kind of enmity; but *Job's* friends became his enemies in kind. Of ſuch *David* complains (*Pſal.* 109.4, 5.) *For my love, they were mine adverſaries, they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my good will.* And again (*Pſal.* 55.12,13,14.) *It was not an adverſary that ſet himſelf againſt me* (Who was it then? it was one whom he once reckoned his choiceſt friend) *It was thou, O man, my companion, my guide, and my familiar friend; we took ſweet counſel together, and went to the houſe of God as friends.* None prove worſe enemies then they that have received the greateſt kindneſſes, when once they turn unkind. As the ſharpeſt Vineger is made of the pureſt Wine, and pleaſant meats turn to the bittereſt humours in the ſtomack; ſo the higheſt love beſtowed upon friends, being ill digeſted, or corrupted, turns to the moſt unfriendly hatred. The Philoſopher ſaith, *They who love one another too much, hate one another moſt.* As no exceſs of love is of any long continuance, ſo when they whom we have loved moderately begin to hate us, they hate us more then ſuch can whom we never loved. *The diſſentions of brethren, are hotteſt, becauſe they are neareſt:* and the diſſention of friends is hotter then that of brethren, becauſe the love of brethren (ſtrictly conſidered) is founded only in nature, but the love of friends is founded in courteſies and profeſſions, which, though not in themſelves, yet to us, becauſe we have been active or receptive in them, are the cloſeſt obligations to love. Now, the cloſer any obligation is, the wider is the breach, when once that obligation is broken, or miſ-improved: if they whom we have loved begin to fall from us, they uſually fall out with us. We have had ſad experiences of this. And 'tis an argument where ever it falls, that ſuch did never love thoſe who loved them upon Goſpel-principles, or in obedience to the command of God. For as they who turn againſt the truth of God, never received the love of it; ſo they never received the love of men in truth, who turn againſt them. Spiritual love cannot turn to hatred, 'tis meer natural love which doth ſo. Holy love ſeldom turns from, but it never turns againſt a friend. When grace is the cement of affections, what can divide them? The ſpecial love of God overcomes thoſe that are loved of him to love him; and though the Lord may ſay of all the Saints on earth, that they have not anſwered his love, with a due proportion of love, and of many that they are fallen from their firſt love; yet ſo powerful is his love, that they never fall either out of his love, or from their own; but the love of man hath no ſuch power over man. And therefore what *Job* once ſaid, others may have cauſe to ſay, *They whom we loved are turned againſt us.*

Thus *Job's* affliction ran through all his relations; he was not only loaded with trouble in his ſtate and perſon, but in his kindred, friends, ſervants, wife, children, Councellors, and chief familiars. All denied him duty, and therefore he cries out for pity in the next Verſe.

Qui ſe nimiũ amant, hi ſe nimiũ odio habent. Ariſt. l. 7. Pol. c. 7. *Proximorũ odia ſunt acerrima.*

VERS. 20, 21, 22.

My bone cleaveth to my skin, and to my fleſh, and I am eſcaped with the skin of my teeth.
Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.
Why do ye perſecute me as God, and are not ſatisfied with my fleſh.

IN the former context *Job* ſhewed what effects his affliction wrought upon others, (all contemned him, or proved unfaithful to him) Here he ſhewes what effect his affliction had wrought upon himſelf, it waſted and conſumed his body, it greived and troubled his Soul; the ſenſe of this took ſuch ſtrong hold of him, that he breaks out into a ſupplication for pittie, (*verſ.* 21.) and into a deprecation of further perſecution, (*verſ.* 22.)

Verſ. 20. **My bone cleaveth to my skin.**

As if he had ſaid, *My afflictions have brought me to skin and bones, I am become a very skelliton. My fleſh faileth; and my heart is almoſt failed; only God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

My bone cleaveth to my skin, and to my fleſh.

The word ſignifieth to cleave together, as thoſe things do that are faſtned with glue; ſo ſome render it here, *My bone is glued to my skin:* and the copulative is rendred as a word of likeneſs by Mr. *Broughton* and others, *My bone cleaveth to my skin as to my fleſh*; that is, whereas my bone (as the bone of any man in health) ſhould cleave to my fleſh, my bone cleaveth to my skin; as if he had ſaid, *there is nothing between my bone and my skin; ordinarily fleſh groweth between the skin and the bone; but my skin is immediate to my bone.* All fleſh is graſs, ready to wither; but my fleſh and the goodlineſs thereof is already withered. The cleaving of the skin to the bones is a proverbial ſpeech, for extream leanneſs, both among prophane Writers, and in the holy Writ. (*Pſal.* 102. 5.) *My heart is ſmitten dead,* &c. *by reaſon of the voyce of my groaning; my bone cleaveth to my skin,* that is, I am become very low and lean. This proverb is uſed alſo by complaining *Jeremie*, *Their viſage is blacker then a coal, they are not known in the ſtreets, their skin cleaveth to their bone* (Lam. 4. 8.) Fat men *are skin and fleſh*, bones appear not; lean men are *skin and bones*, their fleſh appears not.

In pelle meâ & in carne meâ adhæſit os meũ. Heb. μεξεσμον *id morbi genus appellant Græci quum toto corpore ſucco exhauſto, oſſa cuti agglutinatâ cernuntur.* Merc. *Conjunctio & ſumitur pro ſicut. Cuti meæ ut carni meæ adhærent oſſa mea.* Jun. *Oſſa atque cutis ſunt miſera maſcritudine.* Plaut.

And I am eſcaped with the skin of my teeth.

When he ſaith, *I am eſcaped*, he implyes that he had been in danger, and could not eaſily get away. Some evils may be withſtood and conquered, but 'tis well if we can make an eſcape from others. *Job* was as hard put to it, as ever poor man was. He ſpeaks in alluſion to a Battel, or as if he had come lately from the Wars; and indeed his was a ſore war. A man that hath been put to the worſt in a battel, is glad he can eſcape away with any thing; he is glad when all elſe is loſt to eſcape away with his skin, though it be not a whole skin; when all's made a prey, he is well if he hath his life for a prey. *Job* had been in a great battel, and was pittifully battered, he only came off with his life, (that Satan had no commiſſion to touch) but he came off with very little beſides, nothing was left him but the *skin of his teeth*, that was all, and that's a poor all, even as little as may be. The whole skin is not much, but the skin of the teeth is much leſs. This was *Job's* caſe, *I am eſcaped with*

The skin of my teeth.] The Vulgar rendreth it, *I am eſcaped with my lips about my teeth*, or, *there is nothing left me but my lips about my teeth*; They who follow that tranſlation, tell us rather wittily then ſolidly, that his lips were ſpared him not out of pitty, but upon deſign. The Devil who had power to wound him all over, *to touch his bone and his fleſh*, as the Lord ſpeaks (*Chap.* 2.) yet ſpared his lips, leſt he ſhould be diſabled or hindred in ſpeaking, and ſo in blaſpheming God, which was his original plot upon him. A learned Tranſlator, who retains our reading, doth yet expound the skin *of his teeth*, for his lips, the lips being as a skin encloſing

Deriliſta ſunt labia tantummodò circa dentes. Vulg.

Nihil remansit integrum præter sermonis instrumentum. Jun.

the teeth; and gives that Gloss upon it; *He had nothing left him, but the instruments of speech*, which Satan hoped would be the instruments of sin.

Others by the *skin of his teeth*, understand the more immediate skin of the teeth, *his gums*, which are sockets into which the teeth are set and fastned. All these translations and interpretations meet in the expression of this one thing, that his beauty was faded, and the strength of his body utterly consumed, that he was within a step of death, and ready to drop into the grave. When the bone cleaves to the skin, both are near cleaving to the dust. And he who is escaped only with the skin of his teeth, is not like to escape the teeth of death. The next thing which the body hath to loose is life, when all is lost but skin and bone. *My bone cleaveth to my skin, &c.*

Hence Note, First, *A sound mind oft lodgeth in a consumed and crazy body.*

Job had a healthy spirit, but his body was unhealthy. While his bone cleaved to his skin, his soul cleaved to Christ. Some good souls are ill-housed in the body, and some beautiful strong bodies are ill-tenanted by the soul. *A sound body and a sound mind are together a compleat blessing.*

Secondly, Observe how much *Job* layes this to heart, he makes it his complaint once and again, both here and elsewhere.

Hence Note, *Bodily consumption may prove very afflictive to the soundest mind.*

Though a sound mind can bear the pain of the body, yet it cannot but be sensible of the pain of the body. Soul and body are such near neighbours, that they must needs know how each other do. If the body be strong, an afflicted mind will weaken it. And if the mind be well, yet an afflicted body will trouble it. Some who have a fulness and fatness of grace in their souls, have been heard bemoaning themselves in regard of bodily weakness in the language of the Prophet (*Isa.* 24. 16.) *My leanness, my leanness.* In the former part of the Verse, he makes report of what he had heard, and what was that? *From the uttermost part of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous.* All the men in the world (who know what they sing) sing Glory to the righteous, that is, they attest and set forth the happy estate of those who are freely justified, and so reputed righteous by the grace of God towards them; and who are powerfully sanctified, and so made righteous by the grace of God in them. Now though both the glory of Grace, and the grace of glory, even all the good things, or fatness, both of this life, and of the life to come, be the portion, and (by promise) the due of the righteous, yet this righteous Prophet cries out, *My leanness, my leanness.* As leanness of body was the effect of his troubled mind, so his mind was troubled at the leanness of his body.

Job concludes these effects of his affliction with an apostrophe, and a vehement exclamation to his friends.

Vers. 21. **Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.**

Some expound these words as a reproof, not as a supplication; As if he had said, *O my friends, ye have unjustly vexed me, ye have troubled me without cause; now therefore know, that it is your duty to pity me: ye have professed your selves my friends, but hitherto ye have shewed me little friendship: be ashamed of this, return to your duty, and trouble me no more. Will ye still persecute him, whom ye ought to pity?* Thus he is conceived reproving them.

But rather take the words as an humble, yet earnest intreaty, and so we may title them *Job's petition to his friends*; he had argued and disputed with them long, but now he entreats and supplicates. In this supplication we may consider,

First, The substance or matter of it, or what he desires, that is *pity*.

Secondly, We may consider the circumstances or form of it; there is life and spirit in it, 'tis quick, passionate, and piercing, and 'tis quickned two wayes.

First, By an exclamation, *Have pity upon me, O ye my friends.* He doth not only speak, but cry to them for pity. Interjections are imperfect speeches, but they carry the most perfect sense, both of our wants, and of our desires. When our thoughts are too big for our words, and our hearts too large for our tongues, we vent them by exclamation.

Secondly, He quickens his supplication by a reiteration of it, he doubles it upon them. And there are two doublings in this supplication.

First, In reference to the act.

Secondly, In reference to the object.

He doubleth the act in those words; *Have pity, have pity*; he doubleth the object, *me, me: have pity upon me, upon me*; there is *pity, pity*, and, *me, me*; as if he would tell his friends that he was a double object of pity, or that he needed double pity, abundance of pity. *Multiplyed sorrows, call for a multitude of compassions*; and they who suffer much, cannot be satisfied with a little, or with single pity.

Thirdly, He represents the reason or ground of his supplication, why it was that he thus pressed them for compassion, and cried out for pity at their hands. It was (saith he) *because the hand of God hath touched me.* The hand of God hath touched me, let this touch your hearts.

Have pity upon me.] *Pity is the moving of the heart towards those who are in misery.* The Original word signifies to shew favour, whether by word, or deed, or rather both by word and deed. Good words, and good works, make compleat pity; good words are comfortable, but good words without good works are lean and miserable comforters. He that speaks pity doth well, but he that acts it doth best.

חנו *Est favore prosequi, largiri, & cum objectum miserum est, sympathiam & voluntatem levandi miseriam denotat.*

Pity is twofold.

First, Natural.

Secondly, Spiritual.

Natural pity is common to mankind: Man cannot put off pity, unless he put off humanity, and almost cease to be a man. Some beasts are pitiful; those men are worse then beasts who are not. We justly call those men inhumane and unnatural, who have no pity, because pity is seated in the very nature of man; unmercifulness is a sin against the light of nature, as well as against the law of God. And therefore the Apostle puts these two near together, *Without natural affection, unmerciful* (*Rom.* 1. 31.) This natural pity as it provokes us to relieve others, so it is a relief to our selves. That pity which moves us to ease others, is our own burden. It is a burden to see another in affliction, specially if he hath any relation or nearness to us; therefore he easeth his own burden who shews pity to another. We do not alwayes love those personally whom we pity. Some shew pity only out of a common instinct of love to others, and some only out of love to themselves. That Judge who *neither feared God nor regarded men, yet after a while said within himself, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her* (that is, do her justice and relieve her) *lest by her continual coming she weary me* (*Luk.* 18. 4, 5.) And hence we read in Scripture of the *bowels of pity*, of the *bowels of compassion. If any bowels and mercies*, saith the Apostle (*Phil.* 2. 1.) They who have any bowels cannot but have some mercies. In the Hebrew and Greek tongue, the same word signifies both bowels and mercy or pity, because pity causeth a secret motion in the bowels, and affects the body. The harlots bowels yerned, when the living child was to be divided (1 *King.* 3. 26.) The pity of God himself is called the moving or sounding of his bowels; (*Isa.* 63. 15.) *Where is thy zeal, and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards us? are they restrained?* The Prophet speaks of God in allusion to man, whose bowels are said to be straitned, when he is straitned in mercy. When the inferior sensitive faculties in man, the eye, or the ear, take in sorrowful spectacles or reports, these go to our bowels, to our very heart, the issue and effect whereof is compassion to those, whose sorrows are reported to us. Sometimes the eye carries in a vision of sorrow and misery to the heart; *Mine eye affecteth my heart*, saith mourning *Jeremy*, when he saw the ruines and desolate condition of *Jerusalem*. Sometimes the ear conveyeth a report of misery to the heart, and then we may say, the ear affecteth the heart. When word was brought to good *Nehemiah* of the sad affliction and reproach of his brethren, the remnant of the captivity that were left in the Province, and how the wall of *Jerusalem* was broken,

Qui compassione moti subveniunt indigenti, magna ex parte sibi subveniunt, propriam enim compassionem minuunt. Bold.

רחם σπλάγχνα.

broken, and the gates thereof burnt with fire, he sat down and wept, and mourned certain dayes (*Neh.* 1. 3, 4, 5.) his bowels were exceedingly moved. Natural pity may do this, yet that pity of *Jeremy* and *Nehemiah* was more then natural.

There is beside this a spiritual pity, which ariseth out of pure love. There may be pity (as was said) where there is no love to the person, and there may be pity flowing only from natural love to the person; but where pity flows from love, and that a divine love, there's spiritual pity, such pity as is more an act of grace then of nature; to the exercise of this pity the Saints are often called. *Put on* (saith the Apostle, *Col.* 3. 12.) *as the Elect of God holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, &c.* They who have indeed put on, and are cloathed with the garments of holiness, will also put on bowels of mercy as a Garment. Mercy moves us to cloath the naked, and mercy is also our own cloathing. *Have pity upon me,* saith pitiful *Job.*

Have pity upon me.] *Job* is not content to speak it once, but he speaks it again, *Have pity, have pity*; ingeminations, or the doubling of words, are frequent in Scripture, importing much vehemency and intention of spirit in him that speaketh. What we would be sure to have once, we call for twice; and whom we reverence and desire much, we call after more then once. When *Eliah* was rapt up to heaven in a fiery Chariot, his servant *Elisha* calls after him (2 *Kings* 2.12.) *My father, my father, the Chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.* *Father,* is a title of esteem and honour; we count him worthy of double honour, whom we call *Father, Father.* When *David* would shew how ambitious he was to stand in the Lords books as his servant, he saith it, and saith it again; *O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant* (*Psa.* 116.16.) And the same *David* being under a spiritual desertion, recalls the presence of God with a double expostulation (*Psal.* 22. 1.) which is a Prophecy of Christ, who also took up those words when he hung upon the Cross (his Father having vailed his face from him) *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.* Once more; The Prophet (*Isa.* 65. 1.) foretelling the earnest desire of Christ to receive and be acquainted with poor sinners, who had no acquaintance with him, nor desire after him, expresseth him doubling his desire; *I am sought of them that asked not for me, I was found of them that sought me not; I said, behold me, behold me, unto a Nation that was not called by my name.* As if he had said to that strange Nation (us sinners of the Gentiles he means) *Be neither afraid nor ashamed to look upon me, and I would have you view me well, glut your eyes upon me, and take your fill of my beauty; when you have beheld me once, behold me a second time, and see whether ye will not like me as well as at the first: look upon me as often as you please, the oftener you look, the more ye will be pleased, and be sure ye look upon no other, for besides me there is no Saviour; Behold me, behold me, me only, and me alwayes; behold me as much as you will, and have no will to behold any other.* Scripture repetitions (you see) are no where vain repetitions; the more words we have from God, still the more weight; 'tis so here in *Job's* repetition; *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me,*

Saltem vos Amici. Vul.

O ye my friends.] Or, at least, *ye my friends* (as some translate) do ye shew me pity, ye who are friends; let strangers do what they please, let them pass by senseless of my sorrows, but do not ye; or ye my friends who are present with me, let me prevail with you to shew me pity, though other friends who live at a distance are hardned against me. Thus *Job* is conceived making a particular application to his three friends, in opposition to those whom he charged with unfriendliness in the former context. As if finding himself deserted by those, yea by his kindred, by his wife, and children, by his servants, and Councellours, he turned himself to his friends then visiting him, *O ye my friends,* who profess that ye came upon that very errand to comfort me, be not ye unkind as the rest of whom I made that sad complaint. But seeing *Job* in many passages hath taxed those three friends with deepest unkindness, and professeth that he had not experienced any pity from them; I see little reason why he should make application to them here upon that account; And therefore (I conceive) he directs his speech to them, because it was their duty as well as the duty of others to pity him, not because they had given him more hopes of pity then others had.

Further, Consider he doth not say have pity on me, *O ye men*; though there is an obligation in that to pity; nor doth he say have pity on me, *O ye my allies and kindred* (though that be a further obligation to pity) but he puts it upon professing and sometime acting lovers, *O ye my friends.* A friend is a professor of love; and friendship is love not only professed, but frequently acted. As many bare professions of love, so some one act of love doth not amount to friendship. Every man would do himself good often and alwayes. A friend is another self; so *Moses* describes a friend (*Deut.* 13.6.) Where to shew how impartially the Jewes were to proceed against seducers, he expresly forbids any favour to those who might either challenge or deserve the greatest favour, whether upon natural or civil relations. *If thy brother, the son of thy Mother, or thy son or thy daughter, or the wife in thy bosom, or thy friend* (he seems to speak less, but indeed he speaks more then before, if thy Friend) *that is as thine own soul, intice thee secretly, saying, let us go and serve other gods, that thou hast not known, thou shalt not consent unto him, neither shall thine eye pity him, &c.* A special friend is as our own Soul, and many special friends are as if they had but one Soul. *Jonathan* and *David* moved in the highest sphear of friendship; hence 'tis said of *Jonathan, that his Soul was knit with the Soul of* David, *and* Jonathan *loved him as his own Soul* (1 Sam. 18. 1) So that while *Job* bespeaks these men under the title of friends, he moves them by that argument which with most is the most pressing, and which is the most lasting argument. For though brother, and child, and wife, are the nearest ties of love, yet these have received more breaches then that of friend; and friends are more famous for acts of love, then brethren or children, and parents, or husbands, or wives. *A friend sticketh closer then a brother* (Prov. 18. 24.) and, whereas man and wife are *one flesh* (*Mat.* 19.6.) friend and friend are *one Soul.* What common humanitie will not do, what kindred and alliance would not do, friendship hath sometimes done. *Have pity upon me, O ye my friends,*

For the hand of the Lord hath touched me.

The *hand* of God is his power, and this is takeen two wayes in Scripture.

First, For his helping, or his protecting hand; which is called *the good hand of God,* (Isa. 8. 18.) *And by the good hand of God upon us, they brought us as a man of understanding.* So *Ezr.* 8. 18. *Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me*; that is, to help or to do me good.

Secondly, The hand of God is put for the power of God in punishing and afflicting. Thus *Naomi* spake when she was become *Mara*; *The hand of God is gone out against me* (Ruth 1. 13.) We have variety of expressions used in Scripture in reference to the punishing and afflicting hand of God.

As first, to lay the hand, *Exod.* 2. 4. *And* Pharaoh *shall not harken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon* Egypt, *and bring forth mine Armies.*

Secondly, *To lift up the hand* (Isa. 26. 11,) *when thy hand is lifted up* (to smite thine enemies, and deliver thy people) *they will not see.* They had eyes to see, but they had no hearts, no wills to see what God had done.

Thirdly, *To stretch out the hand* (Isa. 9. 12.) *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.*

Fourthly, *To touch with the hand,* which was opened in the first and second Chapters of this Book; *put forth thine hand now* (saith Satan to the Lord) *and touch his bone, and his flesh* (v. 5.) *Job's* bone and flesh had felt that touch, and therefore he speaks in the same form and phrase; *The hand of the Lord hath touched me.*

The finger of God is put for his power in Scripture, as well as his hand. *Pharaoh's* Magicians confessed at last *the finger of God is here* (Exod. 8. 19.) That is, this plague or punishment is a demonstration of a divine power. Some conceive that the word *finger* is there used to note some small part of the power of God; and that as the hand

is greater then a finger, so, to say, *The hand of God hath touched me*, is more then to say, *The finger of God hath touched me*, or, *This is the finger of God*. Indeed the little finger of God is more then the whole hand, yea then the loynes of all Creatures. Fooliſh *Rehoboam*, ſaid, *My little finger ſhall be heavier then my fathers loyns*. The Lord can make his little finger heavier then the loyns of the moſt cruel oppreſſours. The little finger of God is powerful ēnough to plague and ſubdue the ſtouteſt of his enemies; And there are ſome works of God ſo great beyond other of his works, that the one may be ſaid to be done by the finger of God, the other by his arm or hand; yet the finger of God may be takēn in general for the power of God as well as his hand; and therefore Chriſt alluding to thoſe words of the Magicians, when he refuted thoſe who diminiſhed the glory of his miracles, as thoſe Magicians did the miracles wrought by *Moſes*, ſaith (*Luk.* 11.20.) *If I with the finger of God caſt out Devils, &c.* Which another Evangeliſt expounds by the Spirit (who is the great power) of God (*Mat.* 12.28.) So that hand and finger may ſignifie the ſame divine power, not only in kind, but in degree. However *Job* confeſſeth that he felt not the finger, but the hand of God upon him.

But ſeeing he ſaith, this hand had only touched him, doth it not import ſome lighter affliction? *The hand of God hath touched me.*

נגע *Non ſolum tangere ſed etiam percutere denotat, hinc ſæpe de percuſſione lepræ intelligitur.*

I anſwer, the word which we tranſlate *to touch*, ſignifies *a grievous ſtroak*, and is in Scripture applyed to ſmiting with the plague of Leproſie. This touching is a wounding, and leaves its mark and skar behind it, as the Leproſie did. When the Leproſie aroſe in the forehead of *Uzziah*, as he preſumptuouſly uſurped the Prieſts office, the Text (expreſſing it by this word) ſaith, *The Lord had ſmitten him*, (*2 Chron.* 26. 20.) and though, ſtrictly to touch, eſpecially when the word *finger* is the inſtrument of it, ſignifies but a little ſtroak, or a light dealing with a thing, as (*Luke* 11.46.) where Chriſt rebukes the Phariſees, who bound heavy burthens on the people, but themſelves would not ſo much as touch them with onē of their fingers; that is, they would not take the leaſt pains about them; and to ſhew how great vertue there is in a little, or the lighteſt true application by faith to Chriſt, it is ſaid in the Goſpel, that *many beſought Chriſt that they might only touch the hem of his garment* (*Mat.* 14.36.) yet to touch, implies alſo an heavy ſtroak; and we in our common ſpeech joyn it with words of deepeſt impreſſion, as when we ſay, *touch him home*, or *touch him to the quick*: And ſuch I conceive is the meaning here; *The hand of the Lord hath touched me*; that is, he hath made my wound deep, mine are ſore and great afflictions, he hath ſmitten not only my fleſh, but my bone, or he hath ſmitten me to the bone. The Lord hath touched me home, he hath touched me to the quick; *Have you pity upon me, for the hand of God hath touched me.*

First, From the matter of the Petition, *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me*; *Job* being in a troubled condition, what doth he ask for? not for riches, not for honour, he only asketh pity.

Hence Obſerve in General, *Deſire runs out upon thoſe things which are ſutable to our wants.*

'Tis perfect happineſs to enjoy all ſutable good; and the ſupply of any particular good which we want is part of our happineſs. All ſenſitive delight ariſeth from the proportion that is between the object received, and the organ receiving; and ſo alſo doth intellectual delight. Every man frameth (according to his apprehenſion) his Petition to his ſtate, and his prayers to his deficiencies. As all deſire that which is good, ſo that good ſpecially which is the proper cure of their preſent evils. Pity is proper to miſery, and compaſſion to an afflicted condition, therefore the common cry of the afflicted is, *pity, pity*. He that is hungry, begs for bread, he cryes, *Bread, bread*; he that is in pain, begs for eaſe; and he that is ſick, thinks nothing worth the having, unleſs he may have health; he that is condemned, begs for pardon, nothing ſo well come to him as a pardon; he doth not ſue for lands, and large inheritances, for a full Table, or coſtly apparel, no, he ſueth only for pardon. He that is convinced of guilt, crys, *pardon, pardon*; and he that is convinced of his corrupt heart and ſinful deſilements, cries, *Grace, Grace*. Jeſus Chriſt is therefore altogether deſireable, becauſe he hath in him a ſutable ſupply of all our wants. If we are weak, he is ſtrength for us; if we are ignorant, he is wiſdom for us; if we are guilty, he is righteouſneſs for us; if we are hungry, he is bread for us; if we are naked, he is cloathing for us; if we are in the dark, he is light for us; if we are dead, he is life for us. *Chriſt is all in all*; and he is all to all. He is all by way of comprehenſion, as having all fulneſs in him; And he is all in or to all by way of diſtribution, as filling all with his fulneſs. In one Chriſt we have all that we want or can deſire for good; He is called *the Deſire of all Nations*, becauſe all Nations ſhall deſire him, and ſhall receive from him the accompliſhment of all their deſires. And as all our deſires are found in Chriſt, ſo that eſpecially which *Job* ſo earneſtly deſired, *pity*. *For it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful high Prieſt, even touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been in all points tempted like as we are, only without ſin.*

Secondly, Obſerve from the vehemency of his deſire,
Great and pinching afflictions cauſe us to put forth ſtrong and preſſing deſires.

According to the weight of the burthen that grieveth us, is the cry that comes from us; How do poor condemned priſoners cry to their Judges, *Have pity upon us, have pity upon us? David* in the day of his calamities, doubles his prayer for mercy (*Pſal.* 57.1.) *Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me, for my ſoul truſteth in thee, &c. Until theſe calamities be over-paſt.* It was not a ſingle calamity, but a multitude of calamities which compaſſed *David*, and therefore he compaſſeth the Lord about with Petitions. His ſpirit being up in prayer like a bell that rings out, he ſtrikes on both ſides, *Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me.* Chriſt who in the dayes of his fleſh was under ſtrong temptations, *offered up prayers and ſupplications, with ſtrong crying and tears, unto him that was able to ſave him from death* (*Heb.* 5.7.)

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Miſery calls for pity.*

If man had not made himſelf miſerable, he had not needed the pity of God; And when God caſts his people into miſery, that calls for the pity of man. There is a voice in ſufferings, though the ſufferer be ſilent; his wants cry aloud, though he ſay nothing; his wounds and ſoars petition for him, though he do not; and 'tis our duty to anſwer his petition, though we receive none from him. Simpathy is a work of that grace which is in us, and the grace of God towards us ſhould provoke us to the exerciſe of it. The Goſpel acquaints us with the pity of God to us, and it preſſeth us to pity one another. *Be kindly affectioned one towards another; Rejoyce with them that rejoyce, weep with them that weep* (*Rom.* 12. 15.) Again (*Heb.* 13. 2, 3.) *Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that ſuffer adverſity, as being your ſelves in the body. To remember them that are in bonds*, is not a bare act of remembrance, or only to think that ſuch and ſuch are in bonds; to remember them is to pity them, to pity them really, that is, to do them good, to miniſter and exhibit ſuch things to them as they ſtand in need of. How often ſoever we either think or ſpeak of thoſe that are afflicted, we remember them no oftner, then we ſupply ſome refreſhing to them; for as to remember God, is not barely to have God in our thoughts, but it is an obediential act. While *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) cautions the young man, with *remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*; his meaning is, obey and honour him: ſo while the Apoſtle exhorts to *remember them that are in bonds*, it implies the acting of our charity towards them. Or as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaketh (*1 Pet.* 3.8.) it is *to have compaſſion on them, to love them as brethren, to be pitiful, to be courteous.* They who ſhew no compaſſion to man, ſhew they have little or no acquaintance with the compaſſions of God. And they are both forgetful of and unanſwerable to the compaſſion they have received from God, who withhold compaſſion from man. Hardneſs of heart is oppoſed both to repentance and to pity. That hardneſs of heart which is oppoſed to repentance, is the ſign of a wicked man, who loves his ſin; and that hardneſs

of

of heart which is opposed to pity, is the sign of a cruel man, who hath no love to his brethren. Though the former be the worser of the two, yet the latter is so bad that he cannot be good that hath it. The Apostle *John* concludes against such (1 *Ep.* 3.17.) *Whoso hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* That is, the love of God doth not at all dwell in him. Compassion is due to every brother in the flesh who hath need, but most of all to Saints, who are brethren in the faith, and partakers of the same grace with us.

There are two sorts of sufferers; some under the hand of God, and that either chastning or punishing. Others under the hand of man, and these are of two sorts, either such as suffer for righteousnes sake, and, as the Apostle *Peter* expresseth them (1 *Pet.* 4. 15, 16.) *as Christians; others as evil-doers, or as busie-bodies in other mens matters.* Thus the converted thief rebuked his fellow-sufferer who railed on Christ, saying, *We indeed suffer justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this man hath done nothing amiss* (*Luk.* 23. 40, 41.) They who suffer for righteousnes sake under the wrathful hand of men, or to try their righteousnes under the chastning hand of God, as they are the highest objects of our pity, because they are good, so they are the objects of our joy, because their sufferings are good; yet even they also are to be pitied who suffer for their sins, not only because their misery is great, but because the root of the same sin is in us, which might have put forth the same fruit in us, and so have wrapt us up in the same miseries. While we applaud and rejoyce in the justice of God upon wicked men, we may pity them as men; in some cases where God deals severely, it becomes man to deal kindly; and not only is it sinful to vex, but not to ease those whom God hath smitten. God doth not afflict to teach others to afflict, but to give them an occasion to shew mercy, and an opportunity to be charitable. As many of our graces (as faith and patience, &c.) want an opportunity for their full exercise, till we our selves are afflicted; so some of them (as charity and mercy) want an opportunity for their exercise till others are afflicted. That hand of God which we see wounding others, points also to us to pour the oyl of our tendrest compassions into their wounds. And therefore *Job* urgeth his friends by this argument to shew him pity; *For the hand of God hath touched me.* As if he had said, Let not your hand be against me, because the hand of God is; nay rather because his hand hath smitten me, let your hand embrace and support me. Do not ye persecute him, whom God hath wounded; as he intimates they did in the next verse, *Why do ye persecute me as God, &c.*

Non affligit deus ut cæteri affligant, sed ut quē ille percussit benignè tractent; & qua poterant ratione leniant. Pined.

Quamvis deus puniat in nobis humanitatē vult. Nicet.

Observandū est illud quia, nam divinū supplicium proponit pro ratione commovendæ humanæ misericordiæ. Pined.

Fourthly, Observe, *Double or great afflictions call for great or double compassions.*

We ought not only to pity those who are distressed, but we must pity them in proportion to their distresses. A narrow plaister will not help a wide wound. The Apostles word implies both elegantly and comfortably, that the compassions of Christ are of the same extent and dimensions with our necessities. (*Heb.* 5.2.) *He can have compassion* (or compassion in measure) *on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way.* If we be in double wants, Christ gives double supplies; if we be in double sorrow, he gives us double comforts; and so should we one to another; to see our brethren over-whelmed with flouds of sorrow, and to give them but drops of comfort; to see them in great distress, and to give them but little help, is below our duty. He doth much who doth but little, if he doth what he can; but he doth nothing who doth but a little while he can do much, if much be wanting.

μετριόπαθεν δυνάμενος. *Qui quantū satis est possit dolere.* Bez.

Fifthly, In that *Job* lays it home upon his friends to pity him, Note,

There is a special obligation upon friends to shew pity to their distressed friends.

Common humanity moves for pity, much more doth professed friendship. Many enemies have pitied their conquered enemies. When *Alexander* the Great heard of the death of *Darius*, and *Cæsar* of the death of *Pompey*, they both shed tears. When *Titus Vespatian* (who came up as the scourge of God against *Jerusalem*, according to the prediction of Christ, *Luk.* 19) saw the miserable massacre of the *Jewes*, both by sword and famine, he expressed much compassion. Now if ingenuous enemies cannot withhold their pity to fallen enemies, how should they who have both received and promised love, be moved with pity to their afflicted friends?

Sixthly, Though *Job* had received much hard usage, and many unkindnesses from his visiters, yet still he calls them his Friends.

Hence Note, *A good man doth not presently cast those out of the number of his friends, who have dealt unfriendly with him.*

True love doth not make us blind, so that we cannot distinguish between the courtesies and discourtesies of our friends, but it makes us so clear-sighted, that we can easily distinguish between our friends, and their discourtesies. *Job* could say, that God acted towards him as an enemy, yet still he reverenced and loved God as his friend and father. So, in proportion did *Job*, take notice of his Friends doing acts of great unkindnes to him, and yet he retained a good opinion of them that they were his friends.

Lastly, Forasmuch as *Job* cryes out in sorrow, that the hand of God had touched him. Observe,

It is very dreadful to fall into the hand of God.

If it made *Job* complain when he did but fall under the chastising hand of God, how will it make those complain who shall fall under his revenging hand? *Who knows the power of thine anger?* (saith the Psalmist;) I may say (and it is the same) who knows the weight of thy hand? God can strike deep, he can make his sword enter and pass into the very bones and bowels. As it is in spiritual, so in outward smitings; when the hand of God goes forth with the word, it makes deep impressions upon the conscience; *It is quick, and powerful, and sharper then any two-edged-sword, peircing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joynts and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,* (*Heb.* 4. 12.) So when the hand of God smites the body, or the state, it cuts thorough, and layes all our outward comforts wast. If the Lord do but *touch the Mountains* (that is, the highest and the strongest of worldly powers) *they shall smoak* (*Psal.* 144.5.) then in what flames and combustions shall they be, if he lay the weight of his hand upon them, and suffer his whole displeasure to arise against them! *How fearful a thing will it be* for unbelievers and contemners of the Gospel *to fall into the hands of the living God* (*Heb.* 10. 31.) when we hear a godly man thus lamenting the touch of his hand? They who fall into the hand of God, shall certainly fall under it.

Vers. 22. **Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh.**

Some expound this Verse as a correction of the former, implying that *Job* had petitioned his friends in vain; as if he had said; *I desired you to pity me, yet still you persecute me, why are ye so unmerciful? Can ye give me any reason, why you give me so much of your anger?* Indeed we find his friends as sharp upon him as ever, as if they little regarded, or were not at all moved with his cry. But why were they thus inexorable? Why were their bowels shut up, and their hearts still hardned against him? Surely they were not void of humanity, no nor of pity; yet when he begs for pity of them, he found none, what should the reason of this be?

I answer, First, This was from a special dispensation of God, who hath the hearts (as of Kings, so) of all inferiour persons in his hand; friends are kind or harsh to us, easie to be intreated, or inflexible, at the dispose of God. The sensitive powers are stopt by the power of God, the eye while it sees doth not discern if he forbid; as 'tis said of the two Disciples in whose company Christ walked after his resurrection, *Their eyes were holden that they should not know him* (*Luk.* 24. 16.) Now as God holds the eyes from discerning, so the affections from loving and pitying when he pleaseth. And because the severity of *Job's* friends served the providence of God for his further tryal, therefore he bound up their spirits from any relenting towards him, or shewing him any pity.

Secondly, His friends being still prejudiced against him, and looking upon him as an hypocrite who had sinned greatly, and obscured the glory of God by standing up to justifie himself and maintain his integrity when the hand of God was gone out against him (they (I say) supposing him in this ill-temper) thought it unseasonable to pity him, and might possibly conclude, that to be favourable to him would be both dishonourable to God, and disadvantagious to their design, which was to humble him and bring him to repentance. So that lest they should seem to comply with, or flatter him in his sinful way, they kept on their old way of severe reproofs and threatnings, together with bitter insinuations of his hypocrisie and ungodliness. And it must be granted, that if this supposition or suspicion had been just, their perseverance in reproving him, and refusal to comfort him, had been justifiable. Though the patient complain, yet painful operations must not be forborn, nor corroding plaisters taken off till the soar be throughly searched and cleansed. To shew pity to men in their sins, is indeed to be cruel to them. As *withholding more then is meet* (from spending) *tends to poverty*, and proves a scattering of the estate, as *Solomon* speaketh (*Prov.* 11.24.) so withholding more then is meet from reproving, tends to flattery, and proves a fixing of the soul in sin.

Thus we may make out a fair sense of these words, as they refer to his friends hard and severe usage of him after he had made that passionate request for pity; yet I should rather expound them as a reprehension of their former severity. As if he had said; *You need not ask what aileth me thus to cry, pity, pity; for is there not a cause? and have not you given me cause? do I complain before I am hurt? is there not as much reason as passion in my petition? have not you provoked me to it? unless I were senseless as a stone, how can I forbear to speak? and unless you are senseless as stones, you will now at last forbear to strike; Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?*

To persecute is more then to afflict, every act of persecution hath many afflictions in it, but many afflictions may have no persecution at all in them; affliction may rise from irrational, yea from inanimate creatures; any thing may be an affliction to us, but persecution is the act of a rational creature; reason abused or clouded is the spring of persecution, and he that persecuteth thinks he hath reason to do so. We may take the picture of a persecutor from that description of *Saul* (afterwards *Paul*) *Acts* 9. 1. *And Saul yet breathing out threatnings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord, &c.* While a persecuter hath in him the breath of his own life, he breaths nothing but death against others; and those others against whom he breathes death, are such as are most worthy to live, the Disciples of the Lord: Nothing will satisfie him but the death and destruction of such. One wicked man may vex and oppose another even to death, but he persecutes none but Saints. Evil men are punished, but good men only are persecuted; or if they who are indeed evil are persecuted, 'tis because they make some profession or shew (at least) of goodness,

Persecutio est actualis quæda conspiratio in aliquem ex zelo inimicoꝝ procedens.

Why do ye persecute me.

Persecution is the hardest tryal which Saints are put to. There are many promises to such as endure any kind of affliction from the hand of God, but there are more special promises to those that endure persecution from the hand of men; Where we are most comforted, we are most assaulted. (*Mat.* 5. 10.) *Blessed are ye when ye are persecuted for righteousness sake, &c. rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.* See 1 *Pet.* 4. 12, 13, 14. *Revel.* 2. 10, *&c.*

But did *Job's* friends persecute him? Persecution may be considered two wayes.

First, Strictly, as it is *the actual opposition of any man for the cause of God, or for righteousness sake, proceeding from an enemy-like zeal against his person or his peace.* Thus *Job's* friends did not persecute him, they did not at all seek to ruine him, but to reclaim him, and bring him to repentance.

Secondly, Persecution is taken in a large sense, and so to persecute is no more then to prosecute and put to trouble. Thus *Job's* friends had persecuted him all along, and thus notwithstanding his many protestations of his own integrity, and his late cry for pity, they continued to persecute him.

Why do ye persecute me as God?

Job speaks as if his friends had exampled themselves by God in this persecution; did God persecute him? I answer by the former distinction, God did not persecute him as persecution is taken strictly, but as persecution is taken in a large sense for a violent prosecution, so it may be said (with reverence) that God did persecute him while he followed him with afflictions.

But how is it that he saith, They persecuted him *as God?* as if they had set God for their pattern, and had done as they saw him do.

Man is not more unlike to God in any thing then in his persecution of man. The Lord is pitiful when he persecuteth, he in judgment remembreth mercy; he is kind when he is severe. This was the Ground of *Davids* choice (2 *Sam.* 24. 14.) *Let me fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great, and let me not fall into the hands of men.* When did he look for mercy? even when the Lord was resolved to afflict him. *David* did not say, his mercies are great, when he gives me wealth, riches, and honour, when he gives deliverance, and works salvation for his people, but when he is smiting his people, and consuming them with the dreadful pestilence. *The woundings of God have more kindness in them then the kisses of many men.* Man seldom shews pity to those who are smitten, but how rarely doth he shew pity while he is smiting, or mingle mercy with his justice; God usually exerciseth sparing mercy towards his enemies, and he alwayes doth it towards his own people, against whom he never suffers his whole displeasure to arise, though he be often provoked by them, and displeased with them.

And as men are unlike God in the manner of their afflicting one another, so in the design and intendment of it. God afflicts to try and purge us, most men afflict either to vex and trouble us, or to please themselves. *The Fathers of our flesh* (saith the Apostle *Heb.* 12. 10.) *chasten us after their own pleasure*, or as themselves please, yea for their own pleasure sometimes, or to please themselves, but he (that is, the Lord the father of spirits) *for our profit.* He doth it *that the iniquity of Jacob may be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin* (*Isa.* 27. 9.) But man doth it that some injury may be revenged, and this is all the fruit he looks after, that his enemy may be taken away, or that he may take the spoil. It is said of the *Assyrian* (*Isa.* 10. 7.) when God sent him against an hypocritical Nation, against the people of his wrath, to take the spoil, &c. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so. What did he not mean or think? Did he not mean to go to take the spoil when he came thither? yes, he was forward enough to go, and he was greedy enough after the spoil when he was come: But he had no thought nor the least meaning to do this in any compliance, either with the will or purpose of God. All that was in his heart was to destroy and cut off Nations not a few, he only designed to heap up riches, and advance his honour and interest in the kingdoms of the world. This was all that was in his heart, while the work of God was in his hand. There are but few who follow Gods design in doing his work. And though *Job's* friends had somewhat in their hearts suitable to the design of God upon *Job* in his sufferings, even a further humbling and abasing of him in the sight of his own unworthiness, yet they were so unsuitable to God in their handling of him, and of the whole matter, that the wrath of God was kindled against them (*Chap.* 42. 7.) Why then doth he say, that they persecuted him as God?

I answer; First, God afflicted him without cause, as he tells Satan in the second Chapter: That is, without any such cause as Satan suggested against him. *Job* was a perfect man and upright, according to Gods own testimony. Thus *Job* might say to his friends; *Will ye persecute me as God?* God, indeed, out of his prerogative may do it, he hath supream power, and may do what he pleaseth, without giving an account of any of his matters; but it is too great a boldness in creatures to imitate God in this; Will

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ye dare to persecute me, when no reason appears but your own surmises and suspitions? ye know nothing by me, ye can produce no evidence against me, only conjectures. While you deal thus with me, do not you take upon you to persecute me as God in a prerogative way, and because you will. Forbear any longer to set your selves in the place of God. It doth not become you, nor is lawful for you who are my fellow-creatures, to deal with me as God doth. Are ye cloathed with his Majesty and power? Are ye supream and absolute in your proceeding as he? Are ye Gods? You take too much upon you ye sons of men. Either then shew me better reason for what ye do, or do so no more. *Why do ye persecute me as God?*

Num idim vobis licet quod deo? An vos dei Majestatem & imperium atq; judiciariam potestatem adepti estis? Tacitè summam iis arrogantiã objicit, q.d. *nã quid vos dii estis?* Bold.

Secondly, God had counted him as an enemy (as he complained in the sixteenth Chapter, *vers.* 9. *Chap.* 19.11.) *Now* (saith he) *will you persecute me as God?* What if God shew himself an enemy to me, will you my friends, between whom and me there hath been a long profession of love? will you shew your selves enemies also? While the Lord appears in wrath, you should appear in love to your afflicted friend.

Thirdly, God afflicted him without intermission; God smote him incessantly with breach upon breach, blow upon blow, giving him no rest, no breathing, as was shewed before. *Will ye afflict me as God,* and give me no breathing, no rest? Will ye follow me with rebuke upon rebuke, and threat upon threat?

Fourthly, We may refer it to the degree of affliction; God hath greatly afflicted me, he hath laid his hand heavily upon me; will you proportion your hand to his? Shall your hand be heavy, because the hand of God is? Will you lay load on me, as God hath done? In prosecution of which sense, some expound the words by an usual Hebraism. To do *a thing as God,* is to do it with strength; the phrase importeth the most powerful and highest acting of strength; *Will ye persecute me as God?* or, as if ye were so many Gods? Thus he might charge them with an unwarrantable imitation of God in the manner of their opposition.

Quæ à deo fiunt & dei sunt ea maxima esse dicuntur.

But I conceive we need not seek out these Parallels between the manner of Gods afflicting him and theirs, but only look to the matter, or the thing it self in General. *Will ye persecute me as God?* That is, God hath afflicted and persecuted me, and will you do so too, my friends, will you? What reason is there that you should trouble me, because God hath? Though God be righteous in all that he hath brought upon me, yet you are not innocent. While you thus afflict me, you wound your own souls, though it be supposed that, you have God himself for your pattern.

Why do ye persecute me as God?

Hence Observe, *We must not alwayes imitate God.*

There are some things of which God saith, *As ye see me do, do likewise:* He saith; *Be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect* (*Mat.* 5.48.) *and be merciful as I am merciful.* We should be merciful as God, and perfect as God; but we must not be angry as God, nor smite as God. The Lord saith (*Isa.* 47. 6.) *I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thy hand;* yet the Lord reproves them who were extream against them too, *Thou didst shew them no mercy, &c.* As if he had said; Thou shouldest have shewed them mercy when I shewed them none. We must look to the Word of God, and not to his example for these things. It may be sin in us to do that which God doth, and to will that which God willeth in many cases. The revealed will of God is our rule, not his secret will; his secret will shall be done upon us, his revealed will must be done by us. A father is sick, and it is the secret will of God, that his sickness shall be to death, yet it is sinful for the child to will that his father should die: he ought to pray for his fathers life, because the revealed will of God is, that the child should pray for the life of his father; he must not say (possibly) it may be the will of God that my father shall die, therefore I will pray that he may die, or I will not pray that he may live. We are in that to look to our duty, not to the decree of God. So when God afflicteth, or layes his hand upon our brethren, we must not lay our hands upon them too: God calls us to pity, not to vex those that are oppressed with affliction: It is not alwayes the will of God, that we should will that which he willeth. It is the will of God, that many of his pretious servants should suffer, but he doth not will any to put them to sufferings, as if that were a thing suitable to his mind, or to the duty of man. God is just and holy in willing some things, which if man wills, he is unjust and unholy.

Volebat deus Jobum *affligi, sed non mandabat, tanquã rẽ consentaneam imagini dei, quæ est in homine vel hominis officio, vel tanquã rem sibi charam & acceptã.* Coc.

Nec in ea parte homo divinæ adversatur voluntati, quia vult deus ut homo sibi cõgruum expleat officiũ, non invadat quæ dei est, tantũ interest quid deo, quid homini velle congruat. August. Enchir. cap. 105.

It is the genius or disposition of the world, to bless those whom God outwardly blesseth; and to cross those upon whom God layeth an outward cross. Whereas God often afflicts those outwardly whom he loves, and heaps many outward blessings upon those whom he hates. As every man is not good whom God filleth with worldly goods; so neither is every one evil whom God presseth with worldly evils; therefore the outward dealings and dispensations of God to man, are no rule for man either in his opinion of or actings towards man. Yea in this manner to prosecute that which God willeth is to oppose his will; and to act differently from that which God willeth is to do his will; For the contrariety of mans will to Gods will doth not arise from his doing contrary to that which it is the will of God to do, but from his doing contrary to that which it is the will of God he should do. So, to the point in hand, though it be the will of God to afflict any of his people, yet he hath not willed us to afflict them, but to comfort and relieve them, and therefore though in relieving such we do contrary to what himself wills to do, yet we obey what he wills us to do. Nor doth our will cross his, though the object or thing willed be cross. Man is not displeased with what God doth and wills according to the higher cause, his secret will; nor is God displeased with what man doth according to the inferior cause, his revealed will. So then our contrariety to and compliance with the will of God cannot be concluded from the difference or identity of the object willed, but from the difference or identity of the actings of our wills with respect to the will of God. Hence *Job* saith, do not you think that you please God, or comply with his will, while you persecute me as he doth; Seeing though it be his will to do it, yet you cannot produce any warrant, that it is his will you should, *Why do ye persecute me as God,*

And are not satisfied with my flesh.

Et carnibus meis saturamini. Vulg. q.d. *Nane vobis refectio & voluptas sit mei corporis cruciatus?*

Some read it affirmatively; *And ye are satisfied with my flesh;* That is, my flesh is your feast, you feed upon my sorrow; my flesh, that is, the afflictions which wound my flesh are a refreshing to you, it is a pleasure to you to see me in pain. It is a sin not to pity those that are afflicted, what is it then to take pleasure in their afflictions, and to make our selves merry with their troubles, and to drink their tears as sweet wine? But the negative particle in the Original forbids this translation, nor may we conceive him charging his friends with this remorseless inhumanity. Yet

Secondly, Others read it (without the negative particle) as a prayer; *Why do ye persecute me as God, be satisfied with my flesh,* or, *Pray be satisfied with my flesh;* then the meaning is this, do not you force on this my affliction as far as God, *Be you satisfied with my flesh;* God afflicteth my soul, I confess he doth, his arrows stick upon and drink up my spirit, he hath sent trouble into my mind, and tryeth me with inward terrours and temptations. But my brethren, do not you persecute me as God, *be satisfied with, with my flesh;* that is, with the afflictions and troubles of my flesh, do not vex my spirit, as the Lord is pleased to do, be you satisfied with this pained body, with these putrified soars, proceed I pray, no farther, O do not vex my soul! Mr. *Broughton* gives this gloss upon it; *Be contented, that my flesh is wasted, go not about like savage beasts to break my bones also;* as if the opposition were not between flesh and spirit, but between flesh and bones. But the former interpretation carries a fuller sense, and a higher aggravation of his misery. For though to wound and break the bones, be more then to wound the flesh, and Satan (*Chap.* 2. 5.) moved for both, *Put forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh,* yet to wound the spirit is far more then to wound the bones. Our translation which expresseth the negative particle, *And are not satisfied with*

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my flesh, may very well agree with, and be reconciled to this; for while according to this rendring he saith, *Pray be satisfied with my flesh*, he supposeth, that they were not satisfied with his flesh.

Now while *Job* spake thus to his friends, *Ye are not satisfied with my flesh*, his sorrow transported him too far; and while he was begging compassion, he shewed himself too passionate. Good men do not always keep the bounds, either of speaking or of doing. *Job's* friends had dealt harshly with him, but surely they were not thus insatiably cruel. Yet what he saith somewhat over-largly of his friends, is not at all over-large for some mens dispositions. Some there have been, and possibly such there are, who are not satisfied with the flesh of those who are in affliction. And therefore we may hence Note in general,

Such is the cruelty of some men, that they are unsatisfied with the corporal troubles of others, except they trouble their spirits, and vex their souls.

Yea some have risen to that height of wickedness, that nothing could satisfie them, unless they could damn their souls. Flesh will not satisfie them; to take away the life of the body, is a poor revenge; they must destroy the soul, if they can. Such was that exquisite malice of that *Italian*, who not satisfied with the flesh of his enemy, first threatned him into the denial of God, and then, that he might have a perfect revenge, slew him presently, lest he should repent. Such an abomination there is in the heart of some men. And it was an abomination very like this, which was in his heart, who being at the examination of one who had committed a great murther, for which bloody fact he professed much sorrow and repentance, said, *It troubles me to see the villain so penitent, I am afraid he will go to heaven.* The Civil Magistrate and Officers of the State should be satisfied with the outward flesh of most hainous offenders, as the Church ought to be satisfied with the inward flesh, that is, with the destruction of sin in the greatest sinners, and should rejoyce in, yea by all means provoke them to repentance, that their souls may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (*1 Cor.* 5. 5.) Double revenge belongs only to him, *Who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell* (*Luke* 12.5.) Indeed neither the most cruel Magistrates nor murtherers can do more (*Luke* 12.4.) yet they shall be judg'd as having done more, who have either wished or attempted more. That mixture of pride and malice which appeared in *Haman* was monstrous and inhumane, *Who thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, but sought to destroy all the Jewes who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai* (*Hest.* 3. 6.) Personal revenge would not serve his turn, it must be national; yet the malice and cruelty of those exceeds that of *Haman*, who think scorn to lay hands upon the body of a man alone, they must reach at his soul, and do their utmost to make him in one moment universally and eternally miserable. Flesh is too gross a morsel for their revenge, they must feed upon the spirit. Such cannot live like Canibals or savage beasts, upon the carkasses of men, they must like the Devil (that roaring Lyon who goes about seeking whom he may devour) lay waste their consciences, and prey upon their souls. And some there have always been who though they arrive not at this degree of wickedness to desire the damnation of the souls of others, yet they are very hungry after and active in the vexation of their souls, thinking they do not enough, unless they do that, which is a torture to their minds, a grief unto their spirits. Of such also, we may say, *They are not satisfied with flesh.* The cruelty of *Davids* enemies extended only to his flesh (*Psal.* 27. 2.) *When the wicked, even mine enemies and foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, &c.* (That is, to destroy, to make an end of me) *they stumbled and fell.* To eat flesh is a proverbial speech, noting extreamest cruelty; so (*Zach.* 11. 9.) *They shall eat every one the flesh of another*; That is, they shall exercise utmost cruelty one against another; yet this cruelty in eating flesh, in spoiling the lives and estates of men, is a kind of mercy in comparison of theirs who devour souls. The wickedness of the Adulteress is expressed by *Solomon* (*Prov.* 16. 26.) *That she hunteth for the pretious life*; the life of the body is a precious commodity, but the life of the soul is far more precious. The whorish woman may be said to hunt for both, and chiefly for the latter; The taking away of that life is sometime the end which the Adulteress aims at, and it is alwayes the end and issue of her Adulteries, unless the Lord give repentance and pardon. Old *Jacob* saith of his sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*; *Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.* We may say of the Adulteress, Cursed be her love, for it is fierce; and her embraces, for they are cruel; She is not satisfied with flesh, she hunts for the precious life, even the precious life of the never-dying soul.

Thirdly, These words are interpreted as expressing both the spirit and the work of detractors and slanderers, their spirit is full of spight, and their work is to eat up the honour of others. Thus while *Job's* friends judg'd him an hypocrite, and declared him a wicked one, he might say they were not satisfied with his flesh. Slander devours a man alive; and it devours more then flesh, yea that which some esteem more then their lives, their credit and reputation. Now as we may say of all slanderers, *They are not satisfied with the flesh of those they oppose*, so it is very rare that any man opposeth another without some mixture of slander. The Christians in the Primitive times were subjected and willingly gave up themselves to a thousand sorts of death for the name of Christ; but this did not satisfie their persecuters. They always endeavoured as much to slay and kill their credits, as they did their bodies; and were as busie to invent and set a face upon horrible lies against them, as to invent terrible tortures for them. They could no more bear it that their good names should live, then that they should live. And therefore they suggested incest, murther, and what not, as the common practises of their early meetings. That they were Christians, was indeed, their crime, that was capital by the Laws of those times; but their persecuters *were not satisfied with their flesh*, which they might (at pleasure) devour, because they professed Christ, they must fall upon their good names, and charge them with enormities in manners, whom they meant to destroy for the faith. The like methods we have found revived in these latter days; all ways being used to stain their reputation, and heap reproaches upon their persons, whose way and interest hath been opposed. The Apostle warns the Church of *Galatia* (and that is our warning) (*Gal.* 5. 15.) *If ye bite and devour one another, take heed ye be not consumed one of another.*

Est detractoris periphrasis. Obtrectatores vivis pascuntur carnibus. Merc.

But some may say, if men be once bitten and devoured one of another, what is there remaining of them to be consumed?

I answer; By this biting and devouring the Apostle means slandering, backbiting, and evil-speaking one of another. Words which have such a tendency in them, are devouring words, they devour his good name who is concerned by them: Now saith the Apostle, Take heed ye do not devour one another by sharp words, lest that provoke you to cruel actions; usually men first devour one another by the tongue, and then by the hand; detracting words stir up such strife and contention, such distractions and divisions in families, neighbourhoods, and Churches, as prove an utter consumption to them.

Lastly, We may refer this to the contempt and scorn which they powred upon him; under the weight and sence of which he had complained more then once before; as if upon a fresh remembrance of it he had thus bespoken them. O my friends, is it not enough that my body is worn and corrupted with painful soars, unless you pour in the Vineger of sharp invectives and bitter scoffs, to perplex and afflict my troubled spirit? Are these the comforts which you have prepared for your friend? *Why are ye not satisfied with my flesh.*

Annon satis vobis est, quod corpus meum ulceribus cruciatur, nisi insuper me ludibrio habeatis? O saevitiam plusquā ferinā. Merc.

Thus much of *Job's* supplication for pity, and his deprecation of their further persecution; in the next words he calls for audience and attention to what he had yet to offer; *O that my words were written, &c.*

VERS. 23, 24, 25.

O that my words were now written, O that they were printed in a Book!
That they were graven with an iron pen and lead, in a rock for ever!

For

For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon earth, and though after my skin Worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.

THis sorrowful Patient having cryed to his friends for pity, at verse 21, and for sparing, at verse 22, that they would both condole his former, and forbear to give him further sufferings; he now begs (if he fail in those requests) at least due attention to, and serious consideration of what he had yet to say (*vers.* 23, 24, 25, &c.) in which (as some conceive) he reassumes the proof of his integrity, and doth it two wayes.

First, By a vehement wish, that all his words might be brought to a stricter, yea to the strictest tryal; *O that my words were written, &c. vers.* 23, 24.

Secondly, By a strong profession of his faith in the Redeemer, and of an assured expectation of a happy resurrection to a better life, though he should never see good day more in this (*vers.* 25.) The former shews, that he had lived in all good conscience towards men, and the latter that he was ready to die in a right faith towards God.

The argument of the first part may be thus framed up; *He who desires that all his words may not only be heard, but written, and not only written but printed, yea ingraven in a rock, that all posterity may have the skanning of and commenting upon them; this mans conscience doth acquit him, and he stands clear in the apprehension of his own integrity.*

But it is my desire, that my words were written that they were printed, that they were ingraven, that all may skan them, and comment upon them.

Therefore my conscience doth acquit me, and I am clear in the apprehension of my own integrity.

This assumption is laid down in the three and twentieth and four and twentieth Verses, in much variety of high expressions, all concurring in this, that he did not only not fear nor decline the judgment of the present age, or of any mortal man then living; but also that he did neither fear nor decline the judgment of posterity, who use to be more severe and critical in their determinations, being freed from all personal respects and ingagements, which often byas the judgment, and blind the understanding, in reference to those who are present and alive. And though this be only a probable argument, not conclusive, or demonstrative of the sincerity of *Job*, (for many are stiff enough to their errours, and are not afraid to commend them over to the censure of posterity by writing) yet considering that *Job* looked on himself as a dying man, and that he had much more to say for himself, then this his bare *say-so*, or verbal asseveration, therefore the argument carries weight in it, and a fair ground that he was sincere, in what he spake and did, because he cared not who heard what he had spoken, or examin'd what he had done; *Guilty consciences love not to examine or try themselves, much less to be examined and tryed by others.* Thus we may be led into the general scope of the three and twentieth and four and twentieth verses; I shall now briefly open the parts.

Vers. 23. **O that my words were now written.**

As if he had said; *For as much as after all these discourses, I find that there is little will and less care in you to tender my condition, and to do me good, there remains only this last desire which I put up unto you, that what I have both spoken and done, may be faithfully registred and recorded, that some Scribe would now appear while we are in dispute, and faithfully note and set down all the passages which have been between us.* Thus he speaks also in the close of this dispute (*Chap.* 31. 35.) *O that one would hear me, behold my desire is that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a Book:* let a Book be written of these disputes, I care not who writes it. I would trust even an adversary to write it; O that mine adversary would write a Book, *I would take it upon my shoulder, and bind it as a Crown to me*; I am sure, mine adversary could say nothing justly concerning me, but what I may glory in, and make my Crown.

מי יתן *Quis dabit.*

O that my words.] The Hebrew is, *Who will give me?* As if this were such a special favour, that he looking about him could not find any man ready to bestow it on him; as if pen, ink, and paper, and the pains of writing, were a greater bounty then he was like to meet with in the world. The Hebrew expression, imports much difficulty, though not an impossibility; who will do it? As if he had said, it is hard to find a man to undertake this task; *O that my words, &c.* 'Tis queried here, what words he meaneth, or what he meaneth by these words, there are three opinions about it.

First, Some take words in a general notion for the history of all his actions and sufferings in the whole series of his tryal. O that, what I have done, O that, what I have endured were faithfully recorded. Words are put for things by a frequent Hebraisme.

Secondly others restrain these words to what he had said by way of defence or apologie for himself, in this contest with his friends.

Thirdly we may rather refer these words he would have written to what he was about to speak, to which these two Verses seem but a Preface; O that the words which I shall speak next might be written, though that all that I have already spoken be scattered in the wind. Golden words indeed those were and worthy to be written in Letters of Gold. Glorious words concerning the Redeemer, concerning the last Judgment, concerning the Resurrection, and his hope of Glory, come next to be opened; *O that these words* (saith he) *were written, that they were printed in a Book, that they were graven, &c.* There are three steps of this wish.

First, That his words might be *written.*

Secondly, That they might be *printed.*

Thirdly, That they might be *graven*; all three note duration, yet with a gradual difference.

To write a thing, notes the preservation of it; a word heard quickly perisheth, 'tis gone into air, that which is written, is preserved and continueth; We transmit our minds, our opinions and actions to posterity by writing.

But *Job* would have his words not only written, but printed, O that they were *printed, printed in a Book.* The word which we translate *printed*, signifies, first, simply to set down, or describe a thing Historically, or by way of narration: Secondly, It signifies authoritatively to set down a thing as a Law, as a Statute, by way of determination. The word is frequently used in the Old Testament, to express those Laws, Ordinances and Statutes which the Lord prescribed unto his people; And so this word speaks more then the former; Laws and resolutions of State are more strongly confirmed and more carefully preserved, then bare Narrations are.

O that they were printed in a book.

That is, that my words were written as publick Statutes, Ordinances, and Lawes, with a stamp of authority upon them, that they may be preserved as the Monuments of a Commonwealth, and the Records of a Court are. (*Isa.* 10.1.) *Wo to them that decree unrighteous decrees.* The word that we translate to *print*, is there rendered to decree. (*Isa.* 33.22.) *Thou art our Law-giver*, it is this word, or our Statute maker, as we put in the Margent.

Again, When he saith; *O that my words were printed*; We are not to take printing in that strict sense used amongst us, for that new Art or invention opposed to writing. We have no ground to believe that the Art of printing was used in those ages. The first time that ever it was heard of in *Europe* (as our Historians tell us,) was (little more then two hundred years past) in the year one thousand four hundred and fourty. It begun to be practised (as it is said) at *Harlem*, and was perfected at *Mentz*. Here printing is taken in a large sense for the setting down and describing of any thing in the most authentick and strongest manner, for the perpetuating of it. And therefore also he would have it *printed in a book*, not in loose shattered papers, but in a book; for though that use also of binding bookes be not very ancient, their writing (for the most part) being in Roules or Volumes; yet those Roules were under much care and inspection; so that this addition of printing in a book carries in it a further degree of care to preserve what was printed. (*Gen.* 5.1.) *This is the book of the generations of Adam*; (*Matth.* 1.1.) *The book of the generation of Jesus*

Optandi forma Hebræis usitata, valet idem quod utinam. Pronomen quis in scripturis sanctis non pro impossibili sed pro difficili semper accipitur. Hieron. in Eccles. 3. *cuncta quæ pertulit.* Greg. *Verba pro rebus ipsis.* Polychr. *Ea quæ postea de fide & Auctore resurrectionis subjungit, & de adventu domini.* Hier. Epist. 61. ad Pammach. *Quæ dicturus sum de spe, quam in deo firmavi.* Aquin.

Vox audita perit, litera scripta manet.

חקק *Ad ea pertinet quæ tanquam firma & rata perscribuntur ad publicam memoriam, cujusmodi sunt statuta, jura, leges.*

John Gerr. tudenberg first inventer of Printing in *Europe. An.* 1440.

Opto (quasi se corrigens) non tantum scribi communi ratione, sed ut exarentur in libro, majus quippe hoc est & firmius

Jesus Christ; These books were written to be preserved and laid up. That is, of the birth, life, and death of *Adam* and of Jesus Christ. *Job* would have a book of his Generation also; *O that my words were printed in a book*; And which is yet more;

Vers. 24. That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the Rock for ever.

This verse is the same in substance with the former, and contains only a further amplification of his desire; it would not satisfie him that his words were written with a quill, or printed in an ordinary book of parchment, or paper, (there were divers materials, upon which writings were made in ancient times, as also at this day) such books may soon be eaten with wormes and moths, at least, time the eater of all things, will eat them up; but (saith he) I would have my words written with *a pen of iron and lead in the Rock for ever.*

A pen of iron.] The Prophet (*Jer.* 12. 1.) useth the same expression; *The sin of* Judah *is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a Diamond*; implying that it was written to perpetuity: so here, *O that my words were graven with an iron pen*; That is, so graven, that (as he explaineth his intention in the last words of the verse) it might *last for ever*. Those things which continue very long (though they have an end) look like eternity, and so are truly said to be done, or to last for ever. Rocks have a kind of everlastingness in them. And therefore that which is written upon a Rock cannot but be everlasting. God is called *a Rock of Ages* (which we translate, *an everlasting strength*, Isa. 26. 4.) not only because his own strength continueth, and is the same in all Ages, but because all Rocks are of long continuance, and last many, very many, no man knows how many ages. So that to write upon a Rock is opposed not only to writing upon the water, or in the sand which continue not at all, but to all those usual wayes of writing which are of long continuance; this being once done, may be said to be done for ever. In this all agree; but there is some difference what the meaning should be, of this *iron pen and lead*, with which he wished his words might be *graven in a Rock for ever*. The question is whether he means *a pen of lead*, as well as an *iron pen*; And if so, it may be doubted, why having called for an iron pen, he should call for a leaden? What can a pen of lead do upon a Rock? lead being softer then a Rock, how can it make impression, or draw a letter upon it?

There are three things which may be offered for the removing of this scruple, and the further clearing of this Scripture.

Publica instrumenta plumbeis voluminibus reservata. Plin. l. 13. c. 11. *Fortè ferro incidebant, quod postea plumbo colorabant.* Drus. Rab. Selom. *Plumbo per fulcos infuso.* Jun. *Fortè plumbum temperatura aliqua indurabant adeo ut stilo ejus in silice aut petra incidi posset.* Pine. *Optat Job ut sermones sui immortales fiant, & in longum ævum durent, hoc enim efficit, stilo ferreo insculpi, & exarari plumbo.*

First thus; Some render it, *in lead*, as making the pen to be but one, and that of iron; but that the writing should be upon a twofold matter; first, upon lead; and secondly upon the Rock; as if he had said, *I would not have a skin of parchment, or a sheet of paper, but a sheet of lead to write upon*; with which the ancient custom of writing matters of greatest moment, whether decreed or done in lead, agreeth well.

Secondly, Because lead seems to be spoken of here as the instrument of writing, not as the matter upon which they did write. I conceive it may be an allusion to another custome among ancient Engravers, who when they had cut the letters in stone, or (as he saith) in a Rock (that is, in Marble cut out of the Rock) when (I say) they had formed the letters with graving instruments, or iron pens, then they coloured them with lead, or filled the cuts of the letters with lead. Thus they might be said to grave with an iron pen and lead, because when the iron pen had shaped the Characters, they powred lead into the furrows or cuts of the letters, to render them more clear and legible.

Thirdly, They who interpret the lead, by a pen of lead, say that there was an art of tempering lead with other metals, which hardned it, and so made it fit for a graving instrument. But it is not much material, which of these we determine. This is plain, that in this wish he alludeth to some extraordinary way of writing in those times upon Monuments of publick Pillars, that the contents or matter so engraven might be transmitted to posterity, and be made immortal, even to endure for ever.

From these two Verses, which only express the strength of his desire, that what he had to say, might be safely preserved for the Observation of after ages; learn first,

That our honest and just desires, (though somewhat passionate) and gratiously accepted and answered by God.

Job speaks here in some heat, yet his heart was honest, and his aim sincere in what he desir'd, and the Lord granted his desire. He wisheth his words might be written, and his words were written, God provided him a Secretary. *Job's* tongue was as the pen of a ready writer, and God made ready a writer to pen down what he spake with his tongue. Few words have had such a writing, or such a writer; his were written in a book, and written as with an iron pen and lead in a rock for ever; they are preserved to this day, and shall to the end of the World, as Monuments of his patience and uprightness, as also of the Lords power and faithfulness.

Secondly, from this confidence of *Job* in desiring to have what he had said, or what he had to say, written, we may observe;

Truth seeks no corners.] Truth loves to be tryed, it cares not before whose judgment-seat it comes; it would be written, that it might be seen and considered of all men. Pure Gold fears neither the furnace nor the ballance. Error may shew fair till 'tis tryed, but truth shewes alwayes fairest after tryal.

Thirdly, As this writing specially refers to that noble and divine confession of faith, which *Job* made in the next Verse; Observe,

It is a duty to profess our faith openly, when we are called to it.

Job had a call to do this; for though he were not directly (and *in terminis*) invited to make a confession of his faith, yet the dealing of God, and of his friends with him, put him upon it, and bespake it of him. 'Tis high time to declare the ground of our hope, and upon what foundation we are built, when storms either of affliction or persecution assault and shake us; and then 'tis best to do it freely and openly, that our faith may be as famous as our afflictions are. Or (as the Apostle *Peter* speaks (1 *Epist.* 1. 7.) *That the tryal of our faith being much more precious then of Gold that perisheth, though it be tryed in the fire, might be found to praise, and honour, and glory*, not only (as he there saith) *at the appearing of Jesus Christ*, but in the day of our suffering. As we must not hide our talents in a napkin by our idleness, so we must not hide our faith in a napkin by our silence; we should be so far from being ashamed of our hope, that we should glory in it while we are in tribulation, and desire as (with *Job*) that it might be written with a pen of iron in a rock for durableness, so that it might be written as with the beams of the Sun for light, and clearness. The Apostle tells the *Corinthians*; *Ye are our Epistle written and seen of all men* (2 *Cor.* 3. 2.) They held forth the faith, both in their profession and practise; they were *a breathing confession of faith, a living Epistle, read and seen of all*, and so should we be. As faith must be made visible by our works, *Shew me thy faith by thy works*, saith the Apostle *James*, so it must be made audible by our words.

There were a sort of Hereticks spoken of by *Eusebius*, who held this opinion, That there was no need for any man at any time to make open confession of his faith, especially not in times of danger: Then (according to their doctrine) all might conceal and keep their faith to themselves, that so they might also keep themselves in a whole skin, and avoid the danger. This is, indeed, a safe way to avoid persecution and martyrdom, but it is a sinful way. We have just cause to suspect that their faith is dead, who thus hide and bury it. Saints are bound to profess their faith (when called to it) to the death, and to contend earnestly for truth, whatever afflictions and sufferings come after them. The Apostle reports his and the Saints troubles in those times for the Gospel; *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in distress; persecuted, but not forsaken; alwayes bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, &c.* But what did *Paul* (and his fellow-Saints) in those boistrous and bloudy times? Did he politickly preserve himself, or hide his profession? No he, proclaims it, as he saith the Saints of old did before, who were spirited with the same faith (2 *Cor.* 4. 13.) We having the same spirit of faith, according *as it is written*,

Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 38.

I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore we speak. What a Christian believes, he should be ready to speak; and he that believes indeed cannot but speak. The Apostles being threatned, answer, *We cannot but speak the things which we have heard and seen.* Faith is like the oyntment in the right hand, which betrayeth it self; and as it is an evidence, to the Soul that hath it, of those things which are not seen corporally or naturally, so it will give an evidence to others of those things which it self hath seen spiritually.

Fourthly, From the season in which *Job* made this confession; Observe;

There is nothing doth more support and keep up the spirit in times of sorrow and danger, then a free confession of our faith, and confidence in the Redeemer.

The way to overcome all the evils and troubles in the World, is to say, *I believe; Faith is our victory* (1 *Joh.* 5.4.) *Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Christ is the only begotten Son of God.* He that believes overcomes. The profession and holding out of our faith, is our actual conquest and victory over the world. *Faith is our Shield, whereby we quench all the fiery darts of the wicked,* whether men or Devils. Faith leadeth us to a fountain of living waters, which at once refresheth us, and puts out that fire. If once faith get up, all evils and temptations fall before it. *Job* that he might get victory over all the oppositions of men and Devils, holds forth his Shield, and makes profession of his faith in God.

What was that? A compendious yet exact confession of faith it was; as will appear in opening the next Verse, with the context following.

Vers. 25. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth.

For the cleering of these words, I shall premise two general veins of Interpretation.

First, The Jewish Writers interpret this Context of a metaphorical resurrection, in reference to *Job's* outward condition, or of his resurrection from a state of affliction. We have this sense of a resurrection illustriously held forth (*Ezek.* 37.) where the return of the people of *Israel* out of *Babylon* is described by the reviving of dry bones. God himself makes the Comment (*vers.* 11,12.) *Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole House of Israel: Behold, they say, our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesie and say unto them: Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people, and bring you into the Land of Israel.* An estate of extream misery and danger is often in Scripture expressed by death. *Paul* saith, that he had been *in deaths often* (2 *Cor.* 11.23.) and that God had delivered him from a *Great death* (2 *Cor.* 1.10.) that is, from deadly danger. Such a condition deprives us of all the comforts of life, and makes our lives oftentimes more bitter then death; yea, men in such a condition are spoken of as buried and dissolved into dust. In pursuance of which metaphor, deliverance is called, a quickning, a reviving, a rising again, *Psal.* 71. 20. *Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me again from the depths of the earth.* So *Psal.* 80.18. *Psal.* 85.6. *Isa.* 26. 19. *Hos.* 6.2. *Rom.* 11.15. In which last place, the calling and restoring of the Jews, is called *Life from the dead.* Now (I say) the Rabbins generally, as also some of our learned Expositors run upon that strain here; conceiving that *Job* therefore calls God his Redeemer, because he had to that day preserved him alive in the midst of so many deaths and dangers, as also because he had a sure hope that he should through the power of God survive them, and be restored to such an estate of honour and riches, as he had enjoyed in the former part of his life; this they call his resurrection and redemption, and so accordingly they fit an explication to the several passages of this Context; yet their opinion is strongly opposed by others, with much evidence of reason.

Mercer. Calvin.

Three special reasons may be urged against it.

First, the height and spiritualness of *Job's* language tells us, that his thoughts moved, and that his hopes were fixed above this worlds felicity; His faith soared aloft in the meditation of a Redeemer, in the præmeditation of the last Judgment, and in the vision of God: all which argue more then a metaphorical resurrection.

Secondly, Though his expressions in the letter may be fitted to that inferior sense, yet if we remember what hath been touched more then once in the former passages of this Book, we find that *Job* had as it were disclaimed all hope of restoring unto any temporal happiness in this life, affirming, that *his hope was gone,* and that he was worse then *a tree cut down,* of which there is hope, that it will grow again, and put forth tender branches from the root; as for him, as he had no desire, so no expectation of recovering his former beauty and greatness, with promises of which his friends (upon the supposition of his repentance) had often endeavoured to raise his spirits and fill his sails. Therefore it seems altogether improbable, that he should rise to that height of hope about it in this place, contrary to the current of all his former discourses upon that point.

Thirdly, He saith, that *he should see God with the same eyes, that he should see him for himself, and not another;* which argueth that he intended not a resurrection of his outward estate; for what doubt could there be, that if he were raised from affliction, but that he should see God with the same eyes, and that he himself should see him, and not another, or not for another; but to believe the restoring the same body, or the identity of the eyes of his body after all had mouldred into dust, this was a high act of believing. From these reasons it appears that *Job* holds forth his faith in a resurrection, not to a temporal good in this life, but to eternal life. In which second sense I shall open and prosecute the several passages of this Scripture. Besides many others, one of the Ancients gives his Judgment clearly for it; *What* (saith he) *can be more manifest then this Prophesie. None since Christ came in the flesh have spoken so plainly of the resurrection, as this man did before the coming of Christ in the flesh.*

Quid hac prophetia manifestius? Nullus tam apertè post Christum, quam iste ante Christū de resurrectione loquitur. Hieron. Epist. 61. ad Pammach.

I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.

As if he had thus argued; *He that waits by faith in the Redeemer for the resurrection of his body to eternal life, after death hath done its worst, is not a wicked man, or an hypocrite, as you have charged me.*

But such is my faith, I believe in the Redeemer, and I look to rise (after this body is consumed and eaten of worms) to an eternal happy life; therefore I am not such as you judge me to be, neither wicked not hypocrite. You account me as rejected of God, yet I know that God is my Redeemer, I know that he lives for ever, and that he is mine for ever; and therefore do not think, because I have no hope of this life, that therefore I despair of life: do not take upon you, that you only know these mysteries, and that I am ignorant of them, as my friend Bildad *concluded in the eighteenth Chapter (this is the portion of the man that knows not God,) for even I also know that my Redeemer liveth, and shall stand upon the earth at the latter day.*

For I know. What this *knowing* is, hath been opened (*Chap.* 13.18.) upon those words, *I know that I shall be justified.* In brief, 'tis knowing upon the greatest certainty, knowing without all wavering; As if *Job* had said, *My judgment is fixed, and my faith confirmed in this thing, it is as clear to me, that my Redeemer liveth, as if I had already seen him alive. It is as sure to me that I shall rise again, as if I had been dead, and were already risen. My faith makes this as evident to me now, as my experience hereafter shall.*

Verbum Originale omnē dubitationē excludit, & notat mentis firmam adhæsionem & rem satis superque exploratam.

I know. This *knowing* came not in either by sense or any natural demonstration; Faith is the gift of God, and so is the knowledge of Faith, or that knowledge which is the full assurance of Faith. There is an *exceeding greatness of the power of God put forth to those-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead* (*Ephes.* 1.19,20.) *Faith is the evidence of things not seen;* who can make things not seen evident to us, but he who is every where evident, yet no where seen. *Faith is the substance of things hoped for,* as the Apostle gives the definition (*Heb.* 11.1.) Who can make things absent from our enjoyment, present to our comfort, but he who is alwayes present? Saints do not see what they believe, yet they know what they believe. When *Joseph* brought his two Sons, *Manasses* and *Ephraim* to his father *Jacob* for his blessing, *Jacob* put his right hand upon the younger, and his left hand upon the elder; *Joseph* observing this,

this, humbly corrects his fathers error, *Not so my father, this is the first-born, put thy right hand upon his head*; but his father refused and said, *I know it my Son, I know it*, (*Gen.*48.19.) I do not this upon mistake, I know what I do, though the sight of my eye be dim, yet I see clearly enough what I do. Faith sees not upon whom it layeth its hand, but it knoweth upon whom it layeth its hand. (2 *Tim.*1.12.) *I know whom I have believed.* Faith gives us acquaintance with God, before we see him, and when we see him, faith shall be swallowed up.

I know that my Redeemer.

גאל *Significat 1 rem aut personam venditam redimere. 2 captam liberare. 3 interem tã vindicare aut ulcisci.*

The word which we translate *Redeemer*, comes from a root which is applied three wayes in Scripture.

First, To buying again of that which was alienated by sale or morgage, and so to reduce it unto the possession of those whose it was before, *Lev.*25.25.

Secondly, To the rescuing or bringing back of those who have been taken prisoners and led into captivity. There is a double way of redeeming such.

First, By force and power. Thus when *Lot* was taken prisoner by those four Kings that came against *Sodom*, *Abraham* armed his servants, and by force redeemed or brought him back, *Gen.*14.14,16.

Redimere est quasi rursus emere.

Secondly, There is a redemption by price or ransom; *To redeem is to buy again*; captives are often ransomed and redeemed by price; Christ hath redeemed us both wayes, as will be shewed further in the opening of this Scripture. And because when we are surprized by or engaged in any pressing danger, it costs much or calls for much power to vindicate and restore us; therefore this word *redeeming* is often used in Scripture to signifie deliverance from any eminent or imminent danger. (*Psal.* 69.18.) *Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it.* And again (*Psal.*72.14.) *He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence*; that is, from all secret plots and open actings tending to destruction. And thus the Lord is said to *redeem his people from the hand of the Enemy*, (*Psal.* 106.10.) And *Jacob* speaks of the Angel *that redeemed him from all evil* (*Gen* 48.16.) *Job's* redeemer and this Angel who redeemed *Jacob* from all evil, is the same, even Jesus Christ; of whom the Lord speaks to *Moses* (*Exod.*23.20,21.) *Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared; beware of him and obey his voyce, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my Name is in him.* This Angel can be none but Christ, the creating, not a created Angel. Pardon of sin belongs not to creatures, nor is the name of God in them; Some creatures have the name of God upon them; but he only hath the name of God in him, who is of the same nature with God.

Thirdly, This word is applied to the avenging of their death, who have been wrongfully slain. (*Numb.* 35.12.) *Goel* is the avenger of blood, or the redeemer of blood, because he came to take vengance on such as had unjustly shed the blood of his kinsman. He may be said to redeem a man from death, who according to justice pursues him who took away his life. Christ is not only our Redeemer, by restoring us to life, but our avenger by pursuing and spoiling him (that is, the Devil) who was our murderer, or the contriver of our death.

Again, To be a Redeemer is taken two wayes.

λυτρωτὴν i.e. liberatorem

רוצא *Diremptorẽ litium.* Syr.

First, More largly for a deliverer, or helper; so 'tis one of the names of God; and to redeem is both his work and his honour. (*Exod.*6.6.) *I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great Judgments.* In which sense also *Moses* is call'd a deliverer, (*Act.*7.35.) according to the Greek, which the Syriack translates by a word that signifies a Judge, or one that determines a controversie. God sent *Moses* to mannage his controversie with *Pharaoh*, and deliver his people from that state of bondage. And thus God was *Job's* Redeemer, because he pleaded his cause, and determin'd for him, delivering him out of his affliction, as is reported in the latter part of this book. Under this more general notion (I say) God is often call'd a Redeemer; for as he suffers his people to be carried away by, and fall into the hands of their enemies, and sells them into the enemies hands (that they may know the difference between his service, and the service of the Nations, as he speaks, 2 *Chron.* 12.8.) yea he sells them for nought (*Psal.* 44.12.) As sometimes they are said to sell themselves (*Isa.* 51.1.) *Which of my Creditors is it to whom I have sold you.* It was a custome among the *Jews* that parents who were poor and unable to pay their debts, sold their children to their creditors, or their creditors took their children for their debts, as appears by the pitiful complaint of the widow to the Prophet *Elisha* (2 *Kings* 4.1.) In allusion to which the Lord challenges the *Jews* to name his creditors (if they could) to whom he had sold them: As if he had said, *I am not in debt to any man, or Nation of men, that I should need* (as you sometimes do) *to sell my children to free my self; no, for your iniquities* (as it follows) *you have sold your selves.* Now when God fetcheth his people back again, and delivers them from that captivity or misery, into which either he sells them, or they sell themselves (though indeed he never sells them, till they sell themselves) then he is call'd a Redeemer, (*Jer.*15.21.) *I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.* And in *Psal.* 130.7. *With thee there is plenteous redemption*; that is, with thee there are many redemptions, thou multipliest deliverances as fast as our troubles multiply.

More strictly to redeem, and the Title *Redeemer*, is applied to Jesus Christ; to whom also, I conceive, we may particularly apply all those works of redemption, which in the Old Testament are ascribed to God. For he was God the Redeemer from the beginning, long before he was God manifested in the flesh. And all the Redemptions of his Church and people from temporal affliction, as well as from eternal damnation, do properly belong to him. *It was* (saith God) *by the blood of thy Covenant*, that is, by the blood of Christ, with whom God made the Covenant in our behalf; that *God sent forth the prisoners*; that is, their disconsolate state in *Babylon*, *Zech.*9.11.

In this strict sense the word *Redeemer*, suites Christ fully. For *Goel* signifies one that is near to us in consanguinity, one of our blood, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. Hence an ancient Translator renders here, *I know that my kinsman, or he that is near to me liveth.* And such were under a special obligation to redeem, as appears, *Ruth* 3.12. *Chap.* 4. 4,5. where the case is set down between *Boas*, and the other kinsmen. *Boas* was a kinsman and had right to redeem, yet because there was a nearer kinsman, he would not meddle but upon his refusal. As if he had said, you have the first right, and may make use of your priviledge if you please; *If thou wilt redeem it redeem it, but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me that I may know, for there is none to redeem it besides thee, and I am after thee.* From this proceeding 'tis evident that redemption belonged to those that were near of kin, and first to the neareſt. Jesus Christ is near to us, therefore properly and in a strict sense he is (*Goel*) our Redeemer, he is flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, he is one with us. As we are the children of God by Regeneration, so the brethren of Christ by Adoption. *For both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren* (*Heb.*2.11.) Christ and we are *all of one*, that is of one nature; we, and Christ as man, are not only *of one* Father or Efficient cause which is God; but we are of one nature or material cause which is flesh and blood. In which respect he is our Redeemer upon the strictest tearms and laws of redemption. And in that strict sense, besides him there is no redeemer. For though God the Father in the Son by the holy Spirit be indeed our Redeemer, yet properly and according to the signification of this word, Jesus Christ alone is our Redeemer; who taking our nature upon him, and becoming our brother, had right to redeem us, even as being God in our nature, he had full power to redeem us. We are redeemed by the blood of Christ (*Ephes.*1.7.) *In whom we have redemption thorough his blood.*

ὁ ἀγχιστεὺς μὲ *proximus meus.* Theodotio

Redimere est asserere & vindicare aliquid vel ab iniquo vel alieno possessore jure propinquitatis. Redemptoris & propinqui idem nomen in scriptura.

Etsi Deus pater in filio per spiritum sanctum verissimè redemptor noster est, proprio tamen hebraeæ vocis significatio Christo convenit; qui quia frater noster, (assumpta nostra carne) factus est, jus redimendi habet, & certissimam redimendi potestatem quia Deus est in carne manifestatus.

The blood of Christ may be considered two wayes in the work of our redemption.

First, As the price of our redemption, *we have redemption thorough his blood*; that is, blood is the price, by which we are redeemed; *We are bought with a price* (1 *Cor.*6.20.) What that is, we are taught (1 *Pet.*1.20.) *Not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God, as a Lamb undefiled, and without spot.*

Secondly, As the blood of Christ may be considered as it

it is the price of Redemption; so also as it carries the right of Redemption: Blood implies nearness in relation. *God made of one blood all Nations of men* (Acts 17. 26.) that is, the blood of *Adam* the first man hath run in the veins of all his posterity; and so there is a natural relation among all mankind, though not a legal or civil. Now as God made all Nations of men of one blood, so he hath made Christ and us of one blood. *For as much as the Children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the Devil, and deliver them who through fear of death,* &c. (*Heb.* 2. 14.) Thus (I say) the blood of Christ and ours being one, and so one that he is our brother and kinsman, he had the right, yea (we may say with reverence) it was his duty to redeem us. Christ as God had power to redeem us, but as being (*Immanuel*) God with us, one with us, a kinsman, a brother, he not only had a right, but he was obliged to redeem us.

To clear the point a little further, there are five things concurring to compleat the Office and Service of our Redeemer.

First, The Redeemer must be a kinsman.

Secondly, He must redeem upon that ground, or under that notion, as a kinsman.

Thirdly, He must deliver those who were under restraint or captivity, from the hand of their enemies and oppressors.

Fourthly, He must not pay any price to the oppressor.

Fifthly, He must pay the price to the true Lord, or into his hands, to whom the redeemed originally and of right do belong.

These five Considerations meet in Christ our Redeemer; For,

First, He is our kinsman.

Secondly, He redeemed us upon that account, as he was a brother or kinsman.

Thirdly, He hath fetcht us out of the hands of our oppressor the Devil.

Fourthly, He paid nothing to the Devil in lieu of our redemption.

Fifthly, He paid the price into his hand who was our first Lord, even into the hands of his Father.

Mankind fallen, may be looked upon two wayes.

First, As under the power of sin and Satan.

Secondly, As under the power and Justice of God: When Christ came to redeem us, he paid nothing to the Devil but blows; *He spoiled principalities and powers* (Col. 2. 15.) but he did not make them satisfaction; we owed the Devil nothing, he was only an executioner to vex and afflict us; but he paid the price to his Father, under whose justice we were fallen; and so he exactly fulfilled all the duties, and sustained all the parts of a Redeemer to the utmost.

To clear up this Title or Office of Christ yet further, we may take notice that Christ is called in Scripture, *a Mediator* as well as *a Redeemer*, yet these titles are not of equal extent. Christ is a Mediator, yea a head for, and to those, whose Redeemer he is not. The good Angels have Christ for their head and Mediator as well as man, but man only hath Christ for his Redeemer. The evil or fallen Angels could not be redeemed, therefore *Christ took not upon him the nature of Angels* (Heb. 2. 16.) The good Angels, or those who stand in obedience, had no need to be redeemed, yet they had need to be confirmed, and therefore Christ took care of the Angels, and became their head and Mediator. So that as Christ is Mediator between God and man, to make up the breach that is between them; so he is Mediator between God and the elect Angels, to maintain the union that is between them; but he is a Redeemer to man only.

Further, *Job* doth not only profess faith in a Redeemer, but in his Redeemer; *My Redeemer liveth*; every word in this confession is precious and weighty. Here he useth an appropriating word, yet he doth not engross the Redeemer to himself excluding others, but he takes his part with others. Those Pronounes, *mine*, *thine*, *his*, are (*voces amatoria*) *words of love*, and drop like honey-combs with sweetness of affection. *Job's* heart was carried out abundantly to Christ in love as well as in faith. The first work of faith is to believe that Christ is a Redeemer; the second is to rest and rely upon Christ as a Redeemer; the third is to see an interest in Christ as *my Redeemer*. When the servants of *Benhadad* (1 Kings 20. 32.) came to *Ahab* mediating for his life, He no sooner said, *He is my brother*, but they took hold of it, as of a comfortable word. The *Syrians* (as some report them) were South-sayers, who superstitiously observed a good Omen from those words, which they called *Lucky*. 'Tis probable *Benhadad's* servants were skild in such observations, and took it for a good Omen, when *Ahab* said, *my Brother*. The Text implies some such thing, while we read (*vers.* 33.) that, *the men did diligently observe whether any thing would come from him, and did hastily catch it; and they said, thy Brother* Benhadad; they looked upon it as a love-token when once he said, *my Brother Benhadad*. Thus here, *my Redeemer*, shews that *Job* had much interest in and love to the Redeemer; his faith did not run upon generals, but was fixed, set down, and resolved, to live and die by his *living Redeemer*.

Erat valdè amicum verbum propter utramq; vocem & quasi omen; omen est Auguriũ ex verbis captatum Syri erant Auguriis dediti. Pined.

My Redeemer liveth.] To live, implies not only the present being, but the eternity of the Redeemer; as if he had said, though I am mortal and dying, as also you my friends are, yet *my Redeemer liveth*; he saith not, *hath* or *shall live*, but *he liveth*; he speaks of the Redeemers life, without any distinction of time past or to come, *he liveth*. God is for ever, *I am*; Christ as God liveth from Eternity, Christ as man liveth to Eternity. And as Christ God-man was *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world* in the promise, and from eternity in the purpose and decree of God; so Christ as God-man lived from eternity in the purpose of God, and from the foundation of the world in the promise. Christ is compared in the Gospel to many things without life, to water, to bread, to a stone, to a way; yet every one of them hath the addition of life as he is compared to them. He is not called simply *water*, but *living water*; nor simply *bread*, but *living bread*; so also *a living stone*, *a living way*, *and the tree of life*.

Vivit dominus, i. e. aternus est. Drus. *Viventem dicit, i. e. aternum & incorruptibilis vitæ ac virtutis.* Coc.

Secondly, When he saith, *my Redeemer liveth*, we must look on Christ, not only as having life, but as the Lord and *Prince of life* (Act. 3. 15.) Christ as the Eternal Word *hath life in himself* (Joh. 1. 4.) As he is the Son of man he receiveth life of the Father; *For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself*, (Joh. 5. 26.) and that not as every thing which lives hath life in it self; but by way of Eminency, *as a Prince of life*; for, First, he hath his own life in his own disposé. See how like a Prince he speaks of his own life (*Joh.* 10. 18.) *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* Secondly, He gives life to others; *the Son quickens whom he will*, Joh. 5. 21. As Christ hath life in himself, so he hath life to bestow at his pleasure, or upon whom he pleaseth; *He came that we might have life* (Joh. 10. 10.) *He is the life* (Joh. 14. 6.) *And he is our life* (Col. 3. 4.) We were all dead, and lay under the shadow or power of death, the image of death sate upon us all; yea life it self sat (as it were) in darkness, till *Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel* (2 Tim. 1. 10.)

Thirdly, When *Job* saith, *My Redeemer liveth*, it notes the strength, activity, and power of Jesus Christ; not a meer being or subsistence only, but might and strength. As if he had said, *Though I am weak, poor, and miserable, though my life be so low, and my body so dis-sperited, that I may more fitly be numbred among the dead then among the living; yet my Redeemer liveth, he liveth and is mighty.* *David* said of his enemies (*Psal.* 38. 19.) *Mine enemies are lively and strong, or being living are strong.* Many men live who are not strong; and some live who have no strength. But the life of Christ and his might are the same, and shall never be disjoyned. The Psalmist indeed propheſying of the sufferings of Christ, represents him thus complaining (*Psal.* 22. 15.) *My strength is dryed up like a pot sheard, my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.* When Christ died the strength of his body was dryed up, yet Christ did not die for want of strength; for *he gave up the Ghost* (saith the Evangelist) it was not pull'd or snatcht from him whether he would or no. Christ did not die because he could live no longer, but because in obedience to his Fathers will, and in answer to the design of our salvation, he was willing to lay down his life. And so strong was he in death, that he conquered dying, and *spoiled principalities and powers, making a shew of them openly, and triumphing over them* while he was nailed to the

Vivere est vigere.

Crosse (*Col.*2.15.) The death of Christ had more life and strength in it, then the lives of all men and Angels. Again, though Christ died, as death is the disunion of the two parts of the humane nature (soul and body) yet death did not hurt the union between his two natures, the divine and the humane, this remained untoucht and inviolable. In this union the strength of Christ lay, as the strength of *Sampson did in his locks, which were only a sign or an assurance of the nearness and presence of God with him*; and therefore it is said after his locks were cut, he (attempting to put forth his strength as he had done before) *wist not that God was departed from him.* Now for as much as God never departed from our *Sampson* Jesus Christ, no not in death; for then not only was God his Father with him (though he cryed out, *Why hast thou forsaken me*) but the God-head of the Son the second person continued in firmest union with the man-hood which he assumed. And so it may be said of the Redeemer, that when he died, he lived, as well as now we say, he liveth who was dead. Thus he spake to *John*, (*Rev.*1.18.) *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keyes of hell and of death.* The keyes signifie power, and to shew that the life of Christ is not a bare subsistence, but cloathed with power; therefore, as he saith, *I live for ever*, so, *I have the keyes.* And thus while *Job* said, *I know my Redeemer liveth*, he ascribed strength and efficiency to him as well as life. From this part of *Job's* confession, *I know that my Redeemer liveth,*

First observe, *Affliction doth not separate from Christ.*

When *Job* could call nothing in or of the world *his*, he could call Christ *his*; though he could not say, *my health, my strength, my friends, my riches, my beauty*, for he had none of all these, all these being departed from him, yet he could say, *My Redeemer*; for Christ was not departed from him. This was *Paul's* assurance, and the triumph of his faith (*Rom.* 8. 35.) *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? I am perswaded they cannot; nay in all these we are more then conquerors through him that loved us.* Unless Saints were conquered, yea unless Christ himself were conquered, they cannot be seperated from Christ. But all these things, the least of which single do more then conquer worldly men, are more then conquered by holy men; and therefore notwithstanding the united forces of all these, the union between Christ and Saints remains unviolable.

Secondly observe, *That a Believer may arrive at an assurance, at the full assurance of his interest in Jesus Christ the Redeemer.*

Here are two words of assurance, *I know*, there is assurance; *my Redeemer*, there is assurance again. Faith acts upon a sure ground, 'tis bottom'd on the knowledge of a sure word, not upon opinion, and it takes fast hold, 'tis not satisfied until it can say, the Redeemer is mine, and I am his; all's mine, and he is my all. I will not insist upon this point, having in *Chap.* 13. spoken to it, upon those words, *I know that I shall be justified.*

Thirdly observe, *That Jesus Christ was the Redeemer from the beginning.*

The old Fathers who lived before that fullness of time in which Christ came in the flesh, died in this faith, they waited for the *Messias*, they looked for and relied upon the promised seed. Christ speaks of the times as high as *Abraham*, *Abraham saw my dayes, and was glad* (Joh.8.) And the Apostle *Jude* speaks higher of him, that *Enoch* the seventh from *Adam* propheſied of the coming of Jesus Christ to judge the world, therefore certainly he was acquainted with the promise of Jesus Christ to redeem the world. This administers a strong confutation of the *Socinian*-heresie; for if Christ who was manifested in our nature in the latter end of the world, was the Redeemer of those who lived in the first ages of the world; then he was not a Saviour only (as they affirm) by his word and doctrine, or by the example of his life, sufferings, and resurrection; but by his sacrifice and satisfaction. For how could either the personal teachings or example of Christ reach to or be conveyed up to them, who lived before him?

Fourthly learn, *That, there is but one Redeemer.*

My Redeemer.] He speaks in the singular number; one is all, as the Apostle testifies (*Act.* 4. 12.) *Neither is there any name under Heaven whereby we can be saved, but only by the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Fifthly note, *We have a living Redeemer.*

Our Redeemer died for us, but he lives for ever. *Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him* (Rom.6.9.) Death never had any absolute dominion over Christ, for he had no seed of death, that is, no sin in him. (The Throne of death is founded upon sin, as the Throne of life is founded upon righteousnes) Christ submitted himself to death, but *it was not possible he should be holden of it*, or subjected by it (*Act.*2.24.) But now not only hath sin no absolute dominion over him, but no dominion over him; and when the Apostle saith, *Death hath no more dominion over him*, his meaning is, death hath nothing at all to do with him. In this life of Christ our comfort lives. We have a twofold comfort in the life of Christ.

First, *In that he liveth, he liveth to us*; that is, he liveth for our good. So the Apostle concludes (*Heb.*7.25.) *He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* We are assured of a twofold Salvation by the intercession of Christ. First, Of a Temporal salvation from troubles and outward evils: Secondly, Of an Eternal salvation from sin and condemnation. *Therefore* (saith *Paul*, 1 *Tim.*4. 10.) *we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those who believe. The living God* is the Saviour of all men, yea he saveth man and beast (*Psal.*36.6.) by his general providence; but he saveth believers by an act of special providence; and therefore they are ready, not only to do their utmost for him, but to venture the loss of all for him; *they both labour and suffer reproach, because they trust in the living God*, who saveth them above all other men, because Christ ever liveth to make intercession for them, which he doth not for other men.

Secondly, We have this further comfort in the life of Christ, that we live in him; for as Christ *is the life* (Joh. 14. 6.) so, *he is our life* (Col.3.4.) our life is bound up in him. Christ is indeed *the bundle of life* (1 Sam.25.29.) in whom the lives of all believers are bound up. Hence (which is a spring of everlasting assurance and consolation) himself infers (*Joh.* 14. 19.) *Because I live, ye shall live also.* The life of Saints is not in their *private hands, but in Christ their publick head.* And seeing the Spirit hath taught us to say, that He is our life, we may say (with holy reverence, and in an humble dependance upon him) *that our life is as safe as His.*

From this double comfort (which indeed includes all comforts) issuing out of this great truth, *that our Redeemer liveth*, I shall only intimate this single duty (which indeed includes all duties) incumbent upon all believers, *Live to Christ. Paul* had made out this Judgment upon this ground (2 *Cor.* 5. 14, 15.) and so should we, *That if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again.* If Christ had only died for us, that we might live, that had been so great a benefit, and so unspeakable a kindness, that it would have obliged us for ever to live to his name and memory; but when, as he died, so he arose or lived again for us, and is thereby enabled to pour down benefits upon us, and do us kindnesses every day, how much more doth this oblige us to live unto him! Some are apt to forget dead friends, yea though they laid down or ventured their lives for them, yet they are soon forgotten. But shall not he live in our memories, and be the sum of all our lives, who died to redeem us, and yet is our living Redeemer. Though every believer doth not arrive at this clearness and full assurance of faith, to know that the Redeemer is his; yet he that believes cannot but know that he upon whom his soul resteth, as a *Redeemer, liveth.* And therefore, though he doth not yet receive the sweetness of this comfort, *that he shall for ever live with Christ*; yet he ought with *his all*, and in *his ever* to pay the tribute of his duty in living unto Christ. *I know that my redeemer liveth,*

—— And that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, &c.

These

These words contain the second Article of *Job's* holy confession; as if he had said, *I do not only believe that my redeemer liveth*, but *that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.*

יקים *à radice* קום *Surrexit ad stadium, erectus, elatus, elevatus fuit.* יקום *Omne quod stat, subsistit vel vivit in terra. Cadaver, dictum à cadendo, vel ut alii, caro data vermibus. Sic* גבלה *Hebraicè &* πτῶμα, *Græcè idem sonant.* ואחרון *Posterior, postremus, ultimus vel tandem. Theodotio virtit novissimè.*

The word which we translate **to stand**, signifies *to rise up to stand*, or to be erected, or lifted up; and hence *Jecum*, (from the same root) is used by *Moses* (Gen. 7. 4.) to signifie, *every living substance*, so we translate, *For yet seven dayes, saith the Lord, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty dayes and forty nights, and every living substance that I have made* (or every thing that standeth up or subsisteth) *I will destroy.* A living body standeth up, in opposition to which a dead body is (in all the learned Languages) expressed by a word that signifieth *falling down*; *a dead body is a falling body*, a body fallen to the earth from whence it first was raised; or it is *flesh given to the worms*, as some make the Latine word sound, by a nice distinction of each syllable to a word.

Now, saith *Job*, *My Redeemer liveth, and shall live, he liveth and he shall stand at the latter day.* Jesus Christ was *a falling body*, when he died; but he conquered death, and *became a standing body again, and shall stand,*

At the latter day upon the earth.] The Hebrew is, *last, or latter upon the earth*, our Translaters add the word *day*, in a different letter, both to distinguish it from the expresse terms of the original Text, as also to determine what they apprehended as the proper sence and scope of the place.

The *latter* or *last dayes* in Scripture are taken three ways.

First, More generally for the time following, or for hereafter. That which the Prophet *Joel* expresseth thus, *It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh* (Chap. 2. 28.) is cited by the Apostle (*Act.* 2.17.) *It shall come to pass in the last dayes*, &c.

Secondly, The *latter dayes* contain all Gospel time, or all that time elapsed since Christ came and was revealed in the flesh; which, though the Gospel was published presently after the fall (*Gen.* 3.15.) is strictly called the Gospel-time, in opposition to the legal administrations. So we may understand the old Patriark *Jacob* (Gen.49.1.) When he called unto his sons and said, *Gather your selves together, that I may tell you what shall befall you in the last dayes*, that is, *at the coming of the Messias*, or when *Shilo comes*, as he speaketh (*Vers.* 10.) Though withal *Jacob* intends there a prophesie to his sons of their state in all the times following, or as the Hebrew elegancy expresseth it, *In the posterity of dayes*, which Scripture phrase notes also any or all time to come, as was toucht before. Thus the Apostle speaks of *the latter times* (1 Tim. 4. 1.) and of *the last dayes* (2 Tim. 3.1.) These dayes are called last, First, Because all was then consummated, which was prophesied concerning the work of mans redemption, and so is the perfection of all times; or as the Apostle calls it (*Gal.* 4. 4.) *The fulness of time.* Secondly, Because the whole time of the worlds continuance being distinguished into three Great periods, the Gospel time is the last of the three. The first, Was from the Creation to the giving of the Law upon mount *Sinai*. The second, From the giving of the Law till the appearance of Christ in our Nature. The third, From that Appearance in humility, till his appearance in Glory. These are *the latter dayes.*

Finis dierũ denotat extremos dies, sive tempus Messiæ. Schind.

Thirdly, As the *whole Gospel time* is called the *last time*, or *the latter dayes*; so, there is *a latter day*, or a last time, (1 *Pet.* 1.5.) which is more special and particular, and that is the day *of the Resurrection*, or the *day of Judgment*, which we may call the last of the latter dayes. Under both which notions the words may be taken here; first, as referring to the coming of Christ in the flesh to redeem us from death; secondly, to the coming of Christ in Glory to raise the dead, and to Judge both quick and dead.

Further, As this word *last* or *latter*, is expounded with reference to a time, so to a person.

And thus it is taken two wayes.

Ego novissimus super terram, &c: i.e. Ego omnium in terra habitantium miserimus surrecturus sum & victor existam in hac vita. Verba super terram *jungunt, non cum verbo* surget *vel* stabit, *sed cum nomine* novissimus. *Ego novissimus super terram, i. e. omnium in terra habitantium miserrimus erigar, &c.* Bold.

First, Some refer it to the person of *Job*, and joyn the words *on the earth*, not with the word *stand*, but with the word *last*, giving the sence thus, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and the last* (*man*) *upon the earth shall stand*; that is, he who is last, lowest, or meanest upon the earth, meaning himself (*Job* speaks of himself in the third person (say they) the more to move compassion) shall stand upon the earth freed from the bondage of these afflictions, under which now he groaneth, and which is more, as a conquerer in the cause which now dependeth. There is a general truth in this; to call any man *the last upon the earth*, is as much as to say, he is a poor or a miserable man. The *last upon the earth*, is the lowest or meanest upon the earth. Thus *Job* describeth at once the poverty and weakness of his condition, and the strength of his faith; I know that my Redeemer liveth, and though I be last upon the earth, yet I shall stand in this cause, and carry it against my friends, because I have such a Redeemer, such a Deliverer, to undertake for me.

And to make that yet clearer, some expound those words *upon the earth* comparatively, *I, the last upon the earth*, that is, *I, who am viler then the earth*, or (as the Apostle speaks) *the off-scouring of all things* in the account of all men. We have such an expression in our Language, concerning a person who hath low thoughts of himself, or is vile in his own eyes. *He is not worth, or he doth not judge himself worth the ground he goes upon*; that is, he judges himself, as *Job* is supposed to do, according to this interpretation, more vile then the earth. And then the sence of the whole may be thus conceived; as if he had said, *Though I am in my own opinion, or in the opinion of others, more vile then the earth, as the off-scowring of all things, the scorn of men, and the outcast of the people; yet I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall stand right before him, in judgment, when my cause comes to tryal.* In which sence this word *stand* is used (*Psal.* 1. 5.) *The wicked shall not stand in judgment*, that is, they shall not be justified or acquitted, they shall fall before the Judge. Wicked men though they judge themselves more excellent then the heavens, shall yet fall in Judgment when the righteous shall stand, who thought themselves, or were thought more base then the earth. But I shall not stay upon this interpretation, there being so much straining of the Text to make it out.

Si verba super terram vel pulverem, comparative sumeremus, i.e. abjectus & vilis plusquam terra. Emphasin habet. Bold.

Secondly, It is referred to the person of the Redeemer, *I believe that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand the last upon the earth. The last*, is one of the Titles of Christ, who is called *Alpha and Omega, the first and the last* (Rev. 1.7.) It is as great an honour to be called *the last*, as *the first* (Isa. 44. 6.) *Thus saith the Lord, the King of* Israel, *and the Redeemer the Lord of Hosts, I am the first, and I am* (*acaron*, the word of the Text) *the last, and beside me there is no God; first and last, Alpha and Omega* comprehend and carry all. *Alpha* is the first, *Omega* is the last letter of the Greek Alphabet; these are letters of more eminent note then the rest, because being first and last, they enclose all the rest. How eminent then is Christ, who is Himself both these letters! How great is he in whom the terms of greatest distance imaginable, *first and last*, meet and are united; so that Christ calling himself *first and last*, takes to himself absolute perfection, power, soveraignry, eternity, dignity, and Divinity. He is the first, because before all beginning, he was in the beginning with God, and from him all things received their beginning. He is the last, because he shall continue for ever without end, and is the end of all things that had a beginning; *All things were created (not only) by him, but for him* (Col. 1. 16.) He is also *the last*, because when we have attained him, we are at the highest or last of our attainments; we rest and have no more to seek when we have found him, for he brings us to the Father in whom, through himself the Son, we have eternal rest. Thus we may conceive *Job's* faith triumphing in his Redeemer, as the sum and comprehension of all things; *He liveth as the first*, and *the last shall stand*,

Vult dicere, post omnes qui terram incolunt ipse manebit: postremus omnium erit, stabit, i. e. perstabit manebit, vivet postremus & ultimus. Drus.

Upon the Earth, or, **upon the dust.**

על עפר *Super pulverem vel contra pulverem* על *importat Hostilitatem.*

Which is expounded three ways (as I shall shew further.)

First, Of his standing upon the earth, when he was made man.

Secondly, Of his rising up upon the earth (for the word as was toucht before, signifies both to rise up and to stand upon) after he had laid down his life, and abode in the grave three dayes.

Thirdly, Of his standing upon the earth, or *over* the earth (the Hebrew bears that also) when he shall judge man.

Again, Some render, *He shall stand against the dust*; that is, He shall contend with the dust, and shall by his power raise me and all men up out of the dust; he shall conquer the dust; so the word (with this preposition) is used (*Gen.* 4. 8.) *Cain rose*, or *stood up against his brother Abel: Cain's* rising against him, was a contending with him to slay him. (*Judg.*9.12.) *Ye are risen up against the house of my father.* (*Psal.*54.5.) *Mine enemies rise up against me, or upon me.* Thus the Redeemer shall rise or stand up against the earth. What earth?

Stabit supra pulverem ut vindex triumphans, spoliato mortis carcere, qui carnem nostram detinebat. Coc.

This earth is interpreted two wayes; first, for men, who are but dust and refined earth; or for that earth into which the bodies of men are resolv'd in the grave. Christ shall stand up against that earth, to recover the bodies of his people out of it; so a late Expositor gives the sence. This Verse (saith he) declares the manner how Christ shall vindicate our dead bodies out of the hand of corruption. He will stand upon the earth as upon a conquered enemy. Our bodies are sown in the earth, there they are held prisoners; but Christ will recover them out of the earth, he will strive with the dust, and putting forth his Almighty Power, break the bars and gates of that Prison wherein the bodies of his people are detained. Death is an enemy, the last enemy, as the Apostle speaks (1 *Cor.* 15. 25, 26.) where he represents Christ, contending with it, and conquering it. *He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is Death.* Now Death keeps all under its feet, but Christ shall put Death under his feet, standing triumphantly upon the dust in the latter day.

For the further understanding of these words, I shall gather the distinct interpretations and versions of them together, that they may lie the fairer to the Readers eye and judgment.

He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.

In novissimo die resurrecturus sū. Vulg.

First, The Vulgar translation renders this clause, as the former, in the first person, as *Job's* profession of his faith about his own Resurrection. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that I shall rise in the latter day.* The favourers of that translation strive much to vindicate and maintain it, as also to reconcile it to the Original, which is in the third person (as all agree) besides other wide differences, very hardly, if at all, to be agreed. Nor is there any need to expound *Job* speaking in this Verse of his personal Resurrection (unless inclusively with the resurrection of all mankind) that being the business of the two Verses following. For as soon as he had said, *He* (that is, Christ the Redeemer) *shall stand at the latter day upon the earth,* he subjoyns his assurance in the next words, that himself should then be raised up; *Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God.* How strong and confident an assertion of his own Resurrection is couched and contained in that profession, will appear when I come to the opening of it.

Secondly, This clause is understood by some metaphorically; *To stand,* is to overcome and be victorious; *He shall stand last upon the earth,* that is, Christ shall conquer all his enemies, all that oppose him shall fall before him; his enemies shall lick the dust, but he shall stand upon the dust, or continue last upon the earth. This holds out a comfortable truth,

That, *Christ will certainly out-stand and vanquish all his enemies.*

Perpetual duration triumphs over all. Whatsoever Christ hath done, or doth, or is to do, is wrapt up in this, *That he was, and is, and is to come*; or in this, that he is *Alpha* and *Omega, first* and *last*. It is a grand principle among Politicians, *Take time, and you may do any thing.* He that is *first* and *last*, may take what time he will, and therefore he may and will do whatsoever he wills. *The Eternal* will have the last word, and the last blow. He that stands last upon the ground, and keeps the field, carrieth the day against all, and is proclaimed Conquerer. What a mercy is it to have a friend who counts all our enemies his, and who is too hard for all his enemies.

Thirdly, These words (as others conceive) at least imply and intimate to us the Incarnation of Christ, or his taking flesh, *I believe that my Redeemer liveth*, or that he is God from everlasting. There is *Job's* faith in the divine nature of the Redeemer, and *that in the latter day he shall stand on the earth,* that is, that he shall take flesh and be incarnate; there is *Job's* faith, that the Redeemer should assume our Humane nature, and so become *God with us.* He could not have had a true faith in the Redeemer, unless he had believed this; he could not have called Christ *his Goel*, or kinsman, in the former part of the Verse, unless he had believed that he should stand upon the earth, as he expresseth it in the latter. The Redeemer must be God, how else could he satisfie? The Redeemer must be man, how else could he suffer?

Et posteriorem super pulverem resurrecturum. Jun.

Fourthly, Others conceive these words speaking *Job's* faith in the Resurrection of Christ from the earth, or standing up upon the earth. *Junius* (if I apprehend him rightly) translates fully to this sence, *And shall rise the last upon the dust.* Not that Christ shall rise last, for he is *the first-born from the dead,* and the *first-fruits of them that sleep*; but he arose as the *last Adam* in opposition to *Adam*, who was *the first man*, as the Apostle speaks (1 *Cor.* 15.45.) Master *Broughton* agrees also to this meaning, rendring the words, *And at last shall rise upon the dust*; which he thus explains, *My Redeemer shall rise from death.* See then how rich a store we have here of precious truths about the great mystery of Christ in this one Scripture, which the Holy Ghost hath been pleased so to phrase, that it may at once hold forth *Job's* faith in the incarnation of Christ, that he should stand upon the dust in our nature; as also in the Resurrection of Christ, that he should rise out of the dust in our nature. These two involve each other, for unless Christ had taken flesh, and stood upon the dust, he could not die, and so lie down in the dust; and his rising from the dust, necessarily implies, that he had taken flesh, which he laid down by his free submission unto death.

Hæc verba in varios sensus trahuntur, & quidem cum analogia fidei congruentes; commodus & simplex hic quem sequimur est. Æternum sc. esse hunc suum redemptorem, qui tandem pulveri insistens pro imperio mortuo excitet. Merl. *Et novissimo super pulverem (vel terram) staturū.* Mont.

Yet (as I conceive) these words are more strictly to be understood, not of Christs taking flesh, and standing upon the earth in it; nor of the personal rising of his flesh out of the dust (both which are yet included) but of his coming to raise all flesh out of the dust, and then to proceed in judgment with them. And thus a late Expositer concludes, *These words* (saith he) *have various interpretations, all agreeing with the analogy of faith; yet this is a plain and pertinent sence which we follow; Namely, that* Job *believeth his Redeemer to be eternal, who shall at last stand upon the earth, and by his soveraign power or command raise the dead.* Our translation together with our renewed Annotations appear fairest this way; and Mr. *Mercer* (though himself followeth the Rabbins in the opening of this Text, yet) confesseth, that it is the Judgment of most Interpreters, both Ancient and Modern, that these words are to be understood of the general Resurrection, and of the Judgment which shall follow. For when *Job* professeth his assurance, that his Redeemer shall stand upon the earth in the latter day, we are not to stay our thoughts in a bare posture, but are led forth to consider, what his standing there intends, or what the Scripture tells us he shall do when he appears and stands upon the earth in the latter day. Now the work of that day is plainly reduced to these two heads in Scripture, *Resurrection* and *Judgment.* In reference to both which, I shall specificate these general words, and draw them out into expres and particular Observations.

First, Thus, *Our bodies shall be raised out of the dust in the latter day by the power of Christ.*

Man is a creature consisting of visible and invisible, of mortal and immortal, a soul and a body. His mortal and visible part the body fell under the arrest of death, as soon as he was tainted with sin, and by the decree of God it is appointed unto all men once to dye; yet man shall not alwayes abide in this death, which is the seperation of the soul from the body. These shall meet again and be re-united; death it self is under the dominion of Christ the Lord of life; the keyes of the grave are committed unto him. We read of a twofold Resurrection from a twofold death, both effected by his power (*Joh.* 5.25, 28, 29.) *The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear it shall live.* All men are naturally dead in sin, as soon as they live in nature. And as soon as any of these dead hear the voice of Christ speaking by his Word and Spirit, they live in grace. This is called a *new Birth*, a *new Life*, as also *a Resurrection.* The hour

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or seaſon of this ſpiritual Reſurrection (ſaith Chriſt) *is coming, and now is* (verſ. 25.) But at *verſ.* 28, 29. he ſpeaks of a Reſurrection which was coming, but then was not; *Marvail not at this, for the hour is coming, that all that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice and come forth; they that have done good to the Reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the Reſurrection of damnation.* There are but ſome who attain the ſpiritual Reſurrection, but all ſhall attain the corporal: All that are in the graves (whether buried in the Sea, or upon the dry Land) ſhall come forth, even they who ſhut their ears againſt his voice, calling them out of their ſins, preaching peace, and tendring them eternal Salvation, ſhall hear his voice calling them out of their graves, and ſummoning them to the judgment of their eternal Condemnation. As *Pharaoh* lifted up the head of both his great Officers; the chief Butler and the chief Baker, were both brought out of the priſon, but the one he reſtored to his Office, and the other he hanged up. Thus in proportion will it be in the day when Chriſt lifts up the heads of all the priſoners of death out of the grave. Chriſt is ſo much in the Reſurrection, that he calls himſelf *the Reſurrection.* When he was going to the grave of *Lazarus*, he ſaith to *Martha*, *Thy brother ſhall riſe again* (Joh 11. 25.) ſhe anſwered, *I know he ſhall riſe again at the Reſurrection, at the latter day.* Her faith was clear for the Reſurrection, and ſhe expreſſeth the time (as *Job* in the Text) *at the latter day.* Chriſt approved her confeſſion, yet gives her further inſtruction (*verſ.* 25.) *I am the Reſurrection and the life*; and ſo he is, not formally, but cauſally, or virtually, that is, he is the Author of the Reſurrection, and that in reference to both Natures. Firſt, His Divine Nature is the efficient cauſe of the Reſurrection, he ſhall raiſe our bodies out of the duſt, and the duſt ſhall give up its priſoners, by the power of his God-head. Secondly, His Humane Nature is the exemplary cauſe or pattern of the Reſurrection; upon which ground the Apoſtle calls Chriſt, *the firſt-born from the dead*, Col. 1.18. For though ſome were raiſed from the dead before him, yet ſeeing his Reſurrection was the cauſe of their Reſurrection, and will be the cauſe of theirs who ſhall be raiſed, therefore he is called the *firſt-born from the dead.* Hence the Apoſtle argues the oppoſers of the Reſurrection in the Church of *Corinth* (1 Cor. 15.12.) *If Chriſt be preached that he roſe from the dead, how ſay ſome among you, that there is no Reſurrection of the dead?* As if he had ſaid, Do but grant this, that the body of Chriſt is riſen, and you cannot rationally deny a Reſurrection of our bodies; both becauſe his Reſurrection is the exemplar of ours, and becauſe Chriſt and all believers are one myſtical body, he is the head and we the members; nor indeed is Chriſt perfectly riſen, till we all riſe. For though Chriſts perſonal Reſurrection was perfect when he aroſe, and though all believers aroſe repreſentatively when Chriſt aroſe, yet till all believers ariſe perſonally, the Reſurrection of Chriſt hath not received its utmoſt perfection. For as though the perſonal ſufferings and afflictions of Chriſt in the fleſh were perfect, yet till all his members have ſuffered in the fleſh, that which God hath appointed as their portion in ſufferings; *There is ſomewhat behind* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Col.* 1. 24.) *of the afflictions of Chriſt*, which *Paul* for his part rejoyced *to fill up*; ſo we may ſay, that till all believers ariſe in the fleſh, or body, there is ſomewhat behind of the Reſurrection of Chriſt.

We may further take notice from 1 *Cor.* 15. *verſ.* 16,17, & 18. how the Apoſtle turns this Argument: as before he ſaid, *If Chriſt be riſen, how do ſome ſay, that there is no Reſurrection of the dead*; ſo here on the other ſide, *If the dead riſe not, Chriſt is not riſen; and if Chriſt be not raiſed, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your ſins, and they that are fallen aſleep in Chriſt are periſhed.* From all he concludes *verſ.* 20. *But now is Chriſt from the dead, and become the firſt fruits of them that ſleep; for ſince by man came Death, by man came alſo the Reſurrection from the dead; for as in* Adam *all dyed, ſo by Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* There are two roots out of which life and death ſpring: Death ſprings from *Adam*, life from *Chriſt*; and as by *Adam* all die, which are *Adam's* ſeed, or his ſons (as all men naturally are); ſo by Chriſt all who are his ſeed and Children, and ſo only the Elect and Faithful are, ſhall be made alive. But then it may be queſtioned, Shall not all men, even all the ſons of *Adam* be made alive by the Reſurrection of their bodies, which is the general ſubject of that Chapter? I anſwer, they ſhall. Hence Chriſt ſpeaks diſtributively, of them that ſhall riſe, as was ſhewed but now (*Joh.* 5. 29.) *They that have done good ſhall come forth to the Reſurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the Reſurrection of damnation.* But ſhall not the wicked be raiſed alſo by Chriſt? The twenty eighth Verſe anſwers, *All that are in the graves ſhall hear his voice.* Chriſt ſhall raiſe all, yet with a difference; the wicked ſhall be raiſed by vertue of that power or dominion which he hath over all fleſh (*Joh.* 17. 2.) But the godly are raiſed up by vertue of that union which Chriſt hath with their ſpirits, yea with their perſons.

Secondly, Conſider the words as holding out that which follows the Reſurrection, *Judgment*; *Job* is conceived (in reference to his own preſent condition) as having a ſpecial eye at that; for he was hardly judged in thoſe dayes, and therefore might comfort himſelf in this hope, that his caſe ſhould be judged over again at the latter day; as if he had ſaid, *Though I am ſeverely treated by you, and cannot have right judgment here on earth, yet the time will come when I ſhall ſurely have it; My Redeemer ſhall ſtand at the latter day upon earth, to miniſter judgment unto all, and to me among the reſt.*

From the application of the Text,

Firſt obſerve, *That there ſhall be a general Judgment, hath been known and believed in all Ages.*

While *Solomon* ſeems to let the young man looſe to his pleaſures, he preſently gives him a check, or a cooler, upon this account (*Eccleſ.* 12. 9.) *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth*, &c. *but know for all theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment.* The Preacher concludes his penitential Sermon with this point, *God ſhall bring every work to Judgment, and every ſecret thing, whether it be good or evil.* The Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaking of the lapſed Angels, aſſures us at *Verſ.* 6. that, *The Angels that kept not their firſt eſtate, but left their own habitation, he hath reſerved in everlaſting chains under darkneſs, unto the Judgment of the great day.* In *Verſ.* 14, 15. he ſhews how early this doctrine of a judgment was in the Church of God; *Enoch the ſeventh from* Adam, *propheſied of this, ſaying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſands of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly amongſt them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* *Enoch* lived long before *Job*, yet in his time this was a famous well known point of faith; and we find that in the Apoſtles time, it grew into the number of ſacred Proverbs, which are all famous, and commonly known (1 *Cor.* 16. 22.) *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be* Anathema Maranatha, that is, let him be accurſed till the day of Judgment, or till the Lord come to Judgment. The Apoſtle uſeth two words, to note both the vehemency of his own ſpirit in ſpeaking, and the certainty of the thing ſpoken; and he gives the curſe in two Languages (Greek and Syriack, which latter is a daughter of the Hebrew) both to ſhew that men of all Nations, and Languages, who love not Chriſt, are under a curſe, and that they are deſervedly curſed among all Nations. The Greek word uſed by the Apoſtle, *Anathema*, ſignifies execrable. The Syriack word *Maranatha*, is a compound of *Maran Lord*, and *Atha He cometh.* This was uſed in the moſt dreadful ſentence of Excommunication; as if they had cited the perſon to the tribunal of Chriſt at his coming to Judge the world, or left him bound under the curſe of that ſentence until the coming of Chriſt. So that *Maranatha*, ſignifying, *the Lord ſhall come*, was a proverbial ſpeech, implying a day of Judgment coming. And as Scripture authorities are full of it, ſo there are many rational demonſtrations of it: For firſt, The judgments which have been, ſhew that there ſhall be a Judgment; Chriſt hath often, as it were, ſtood on the ground already in Judgment both againſt Perſons and Nations; theſe leſſer dayes of Judgment, are a ſtrong argument of a great day of Judgment. Secondly, As leſſer external Judgment-dayes argue it, ſo do internal Judgment-dayes. There is a day of Judgment kept in the Conſcience of man, which tells us that God

will keep a day of Judgment at last concerning all men. If we were not to be judged, we should never judge our selves; nor be troubled at what we have done, were we not to answer for what we have done. The Apostle is clear in it (*Rom.* 2. 15.) speaking of the Gentiles who had not the Law published to their ear, *Yet* (saith he) *which shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts in the mean while either excusing, or accusing one another.* This *mean while*, is, till the Judgment come; as if he had thus expressed himself, Before the great Judgment comes they judge themselves; or their thoughts betwixt themselves are arraigning and impleading them, or Apologizing for and acquitting them. The reason of this internal antecedent session is, because *as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be judged by the Law* (Vers. 12.) (the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth Verses, are but a parenthesis) *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel.* In this *mean while*, or in this interim till the day that God shall judge the thoughts of men by Jesus Christ, mens thoughts fall a judging themselves. Conscience is the correspondence of the spirit of man with the Law of God in binding or loosing, in condemning, or absolving. And though some mens consciences are so dark, blind, and ignorant, that they do not judge themselves at all; and the consciences of others are so brib'd and biassed, so ill informed and erroneous, that they give a false judgment, and justifie those whom God and his Law condemn; yet that there is such a work of conscience (whether it be true or false, right or wrong, alters not the case) all (who know any thing of its working) do agree; and this is an evident and convincing demonstration, that there shall be a judgment. Conscience is Gods Deputy, and doth but begin what Christ in that Great audit-day, or day of reckoning, will compleat and finish. The Apostle indeed assures us, that *if we would judge our selves, we should not be judged* (1 Cor. 11. 31.) Yet in this he doth not exempt either good or bad who judge themselves from appearing in the great day of Judgment, but only directs the good (for he speaks there to Saints in fellowship,) how to prevent the Lords adjudging them to present chastnings and afflictions, as is clear from *Vers.* 32. *For when we are judged, we are chastned of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.* Holy self-judging and examination may prevent present judgment, but every self-judging is an evidence, yea, an assurance of the future judgment.

Thirdly, Judgment hath not been fully executed in any age of the World, excepting one, that of the old World; and yet then it was not a full execution of judgment, there was a wicked one not judged, there was an accursed *Cham* in the Ark spared from judgment, while the rest of mankind was drowned and overwhelmed with water. And though God hath written wrath and judgment upon thousands of wicked men in red Letters, even in their own blood; yet there are many whose paths swim with Butter, and the rock pours out rivers of Oyl unto them; many upon whose heads the candle of outward prosperity shines, whilst their heads, and hearts, and hands are full of wickedness; judgment is so far from being fully executed in this world, that many are hardned in sin, and some so stumbled or offended in the wayes of holiness, that they are ready to say, *Where is the God of judgment?* And hence it is that the Apostle (*Rom.* 2. 5.) calls the last judgment, *the day of the declaration of the righteous judgment of God.* The judgment of God is righteous now, but it is not revealed, it is not manifested, therefore a time shall come, when there shall be a revelation of his righteous judgment fully; the same Apostle gives a fourth reason (which comes near the case of *Job*) why there must be a day of judgment. *Job's* good name was under a cloud, his credit was exceedingly eclipsed, and he was mis-judged by his friends (as many sincere ones have since been) an hypocrite; now as the Lord will have a time to acquit himself, and to declare the righteousness of his judgment, so he will have a time to quit the integrity of his people, and to set them right in the eye of all the world. In that day as he will destroy the vails of mis-report which have been cast upon his wayes, and the vails of error which have been cast upon his Word; so also he will destroy all the vails of reproach and slander which have been cast upon the persons, speeches or endeavours of his people. He will have a day in which there shall be a fresh Edition of the works of all his Saints, with the comment of their own upright and honest meaning upon them, not rackt and wier-drawn with the malice and mis-conceptions, either of enemies, or mistaken friends. This is the ground of that serious and but needful caution given by the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, till the Lord come, who both shall bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then every man shall have praise of God.* What, every man? Will God praise those who are praise-less? Will he praise the proud and covetous, the drunkards, and unclean? Shall every man have praise of God? Will he flatter men in their sin, and sow pillows of commendation under every elbow? No, the Apostles meaning is, every man that is praise-worthy, shall have praise of God; every good and faithful man, every true believer; all sincere and honest hearts, though they have been called hypocrites, and disgraced, though they have had the dirt of a thousand scandals cast in their faces, yet there is a day coming, when as all tears, so all reproaches shall be wiped away, and every man, that is, every godly man shall have praise of God. *Job* who was called hypocrite, and wicked, shall then again have praise of God, his old certificate or Letters of commendation shall be renewed; *A man perfect and upright, fearing God and eschewing evil.*

Seeing this day of Judgment hath been so long ago spoken of, and believed, seeing there are such undeniable proofs and demonstrations of it; we have cause to be ashamed that we have not more quick thoughts, more lively and working apprehensions of it, that we are not more acquainted with it. One of the Ancients saith of himself, that whersoever he went, whether he did eat or drink, or travel, or study, or whatsoever he was about, he thought he heard the voice sounding in his ears, *Arise ye dead and come to Judgment*; it is good for us to carry this day in our thoughts all our dayes. If we do so, we shall find these two profitable effects of it.

First, It will awaken us; Secondly, It will meeken us.

First, It will awaken us, and keep us awake. The sound of this Judgment made *Felix* tremble; he that trembles is awakened; and it will keep us awake while we remember that it shall come unexpectedly, suddainly; it hath been long in coming, but when ever it comes, it shall come suddainly. So the Apostle describes the coming of that day (1 *Thes.* 5. 2.) *It shall come as a theef*; a theef comes suddainly. Christ describes it by that which is more suddain (*Luke* 21. 35.) *It shall come as a snare*; how suddainly doth a snare take the bird? That the Judgment shall be so terrible and dreadful should awaken us; that it shall be so suddain and unavoidable, should keep us awake.

Secondly, It should meeken us. Why should we judge others, seeing we must all be judged? See how the Apostle takes them up, or rather takes them down, who erected tribunals, and stood on the earth as Judges over their brethren (*Rom.* 14. 4.) *Who art thou that judgest another mans servant?* Proud censuring persons know not themselves, nor doth any man know what they judge themselves to be, who are over busie in judging others. When we in common speech say to a man, *Who art thou?* we argue our own ignorance or nescience of his person. But in speeches of this stile, when we say, *Who art thou?* We either argue the pride of that person whom we already know, or that he doth not know his place and duty, but over-weens himself, and takes upon him beyond his line, which no man doth more then he who takes upon him to judge another mans servant, excepting him only who takes upon him to judge the servants of God. And while the Apostle saith, *Why doest thou judge another mans servant?* he doth but more convince (by that common rule) such as presume to judge the special servants of God. As thus he reproves all peremptory judging of others, because they are servants to another; so he proceeds to a further reproof of it, because they are our brethren (*Vers.* 10.) *Why doest thou judge thy brother? Why doest thou set at naught thy brother? We shall all stand before the Judgment seat of Christ.* But may we not at all judge one another; must all judgment

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be deferred till Christ comes to judge us all? This the Apostle seems to give in charge (*1 Cor.* 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time*; What's the time? We have an answer in the next words, *Until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness*, &c. What coming is this? None other surely, but his coming, or his glorious appearance, when we must appear before his Judgment-seat, to receive according to what we have done in the flesh, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Yet this is not a total prohibition of Judgment, as some pervert that place, urging it against all Magistracy, as if it were unlawful for a man to be a Judge. The Scripture forbids only incompetent Judges, or the unjust Judgment of such as are competent. It forbids only rash Judgment about things or persons without proof, or a Judgment upon persons about such things, of which there can be no proof; *The hidden things of darkness, and the counsels of the heart*, which Christ alone can bring to light and make manifest, as that Text expounds it self: or the Scripture forbids rigid and final judgment concerning the eternal state of any person. For though we may say of many men, considering their actions and outward course, as also the appearing frame and disposition of their spirits, that they are in a damnable and perishing condition; yet we cannot pronounce a final sentence upon any man, that he shall be damned, because every mans judgment is of God, and they who are now abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate, may yet (through Free Grace) be converted and healed, made clean and justified.

Lastly, The Scripture forbids us to judge one another, as having no grace, for the doing or not doing of those things, which may consist with a present state of grace. So the Apostle argues (*Rom.* 14. 3.) in his dispute about the ceremonial observation of meats and dayes, concerning whose abolition by Christ, many believers were then unsatisfied; *Let not him that eateth not, judge him that eateth, for God hath received him*; that is, he hath accepted, and numbred him among his own; therefore do not thou severely reject and cast him out. And as thus in many cases we ought not to judge our brethren at all, so in all cases we ought to judge them with tenderness and meekness, with a kind of trembling and unwillingness, because there is a Judgment to which we also must come to give an account, as of all our wayes, so of the Judgment which we at any time pass upon our brethren.

Secondly observe, *The Redeemer shall be the Judge.*

Though the three Persons in the glorious God-head, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, concur in every work upon the Creature; yet some works are specially appropriated to each person. This great work of Judgment is appropriated to the Son as a part, or as the completion of his Mediatorial Office (*Joh.* 5. 22, 27.) *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to his Son*; that is, the Father alone (as they imagined) without the Son, judgeth no man; for as he created all, so he judgeth all by the Son: *And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man*; for being the Son of man he will be visible to all (*Rev.* 1. 7.) and so most fit to be the Judge. *Peter* speaks this as a special doctrine which he was called to preach (*Acts* 10. 42.) *Him hath God raised up, and shewed him openly, not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before of God; and hath commanded us to preach to the people, and to testifie that it is he that is ordained of God to judge the quick and dead.* As the saving of man by Christ is founded in the will and ordination of God, so also is the judging of man by Christ. The Apostle *Paul* (Acts 17. 31.) stirs up and awakens all to the duties of holiness and repentance, because *God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance to all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.*

Some may object that of Christ himself (*Joh.* 8. 15.) as a disclaimer of this office, *I judge no man*: The answer is at hand, *Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man*; that is, as ye do, *after the flesh*, or by outward appearances (as he speaks, *John* 7. 24.) I judge the Spirit, and after the Spirit, mine is righteous judgment. Again, *I judge no man*; that is, my present work is to save, and to preach salvation; my work is to tender conditions of peace, and to call sinners to repentance, that's my present work; my second coming is for Judgment. But though Christ be Judge, yet it seems he is not the only Judge, himself saith that he had associated his Disciples (*Luke* 22. 29, 30.) *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve Tribes of* Israel. I answer, They shall judge, not authoritatively, but doctrinally. As the word which Christ spake, so the word which the Disciples of Christ spake (or which any of his faithful Ministers spake according to the truth of Christ) *shall judge him* (that hath heard it) *in the last day* (Joh. 12. 48.) The word is the rule of judgment, as Christ is the person judging. Yet, I conceive, that Text in *Luke* imports some special personal honour and priviledge, which the twelve Apostles shall have in the Judgment of the great day, beyond the rest of Saints. Of whom the Apostle speaks (*1 Cor.* 6. 2.) *Know ye not that the Saints shall judge the world?* All the Saints shall judge the world as approvers, they shall Vote as it were with Christ, and say, This is a just and righteous Sentence; but the Apostles shall judge (if I may so express it) as Assessors with Christ, to whom alone the Commission as Judge is given. *The Queen of the South* (saith Christ) *and the Ninivites shall rise up in the Judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them* (Luke 11. 31.) that is, the example of the Queen of the South, who took so long a journey to hear the wisdom of *Solomon*; and the example of the *Ninivites*, who repented at the preaching of *Jonah*, shall be produced as evidence for their conviction and condemnation, who have heard and refused the wisdom of a greater then *Solomon*, and the preaching of a greater then *Jonah*. The great Judgment shall be carried on by many, as Assessors, as Approvers, and as Witnesses; but the Redeemer only shall be the visible and determining Judge.

This day of Judgment will be very terrible. Christ who at his first coming was revealed *in flaming love, shall be then revealed in flaming fire* (2 Thes. 1. 7.) This Judgment will be very glorious. The first appearing of Christ was so obscure, that it was an appearance but to very few; many who saw *the man*, did not see *the Saviour*; but his second appearing will be so full of lustre and glory, that as all shall see *the man*, so all shall see *the Judge*. Thus the Apostle describes it (*Tit.* 2. 14.) *Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* It is said of *Agrippa* (*Acts* 25. 23.) that he came to the Judgment-seat and *Bernice* with great pomp; we may render the Text thus, *He came with great phantasticknes or affected vanity.* When the Lord Jesus Christ shall come to his judgment-seat, it will be with great pomp indeed, but it shall be serious as well as glorious pomp; *For he shall come in the glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels* (Mark 8. 38.) Christ shall have a train of Angels; as the Arch-angel shall give the summons, or cite the world to appear at the bar (*1 Cor.* 15. 52. *2 Thes.* 1. & 5.) so there shall be thousand thousands of Angels attending the Judge: *He shall come in the glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels.* The first coming of Christ, was in the *form of a servant* (Phil. 2.) Yea the Prophet saith (*Isa.* 53. 2.) *He had no form nor comliness.* In his first coming, he was followed by Fishermen, or men of inferior quality; but his second coming will be in the glory of the Father; his glory will be such, as the Fathers glory is; and his followers shall be greater then the greatest of men, and these not a few, but many, even all his holy Angels.

And 'tis but equal that Judgment should be put into the hand of the Redeemer, and that he should come in all this glory, when he comes to sit in Judgment; because he hath been judged, and condemned; because he hath born shame, and dishonour, while himself stood in Judgment. Christ did not only die for us, but he was condemned to death as an evil-doer; there was not only pain in his death, but shame; he in this humbled himself indeed, and which is more, he became obedient, and (which is the lowest obedience) he became obedient unto death, and which is the lowest and most ignominious death, the death of the Cross. The Apostle makes this threefold humiliation, the ground of his threefold exaltation (*Phil.* 2. 9, 10.) *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him*, &c. He exalted him above the grave in his Resurrection, above the

the earth in his Aſcenſion, above the heavens in his Seſſion at the right hand of him the Father, *That at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue ſhould confeſs, that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* Indeed if God be ſo careful to redeem the honour of his Saints and Servants, who have ſuffered reproach, if he will get them fame in every Land where they have been put to ſhame, and make the Sons of thoſe that have afflicted them to come bending to them, and to know that the Lord hath loved them; and if whereas they have been hated, God will make them an eternal excellency, ſurely then, much more will God be careful of the honour of his Son; he that will not let his ſervants honour lie in the duſt, but will repair their credit, and take off the reproach which they have born for his Name, how can he be unmindful of his Son, or not re-inveſt him in that Glory of which he ſtript and uncloathed himſelf, that he might perfect the work of our Redemption!

This honour of Chriſt the Redeemer, to be Judge of the world, together with the glory in which he ſhall appear when he comes to judge the world, carries a twofold effect in it, according to that twofold diſtribution of thoſe who are the objects of this Judgment, good and bad, the godly and the wicked.

Firſt, It carries terror to the wicked, who know not God, and who have not obeyed the Goſpel. What more terrible to unbelievers, then to be judged by him whom they have not believed? What more terrible then to be judged by him whom they have neglected, to be judged by him whoſe grace and mercy they have refuſed? What more terrible then to be judged by him whom they have deſpiſed, and ſaid (at leaſt in their hearts) *This man ſhall not reign over us?* How terrible will it be to thoſe wicked men, to ſtand before Chriſt as their Judge, whom they have trampled underfoot, and counted his blood (the blood of the Covenant) as an unholy thing, and have done deſpight unto the Spirit of Grace?

There is nothing in condemnation more dreadful, then to be condemned by a Redeemer; they who are without Chriſt, are without hope, how hopeleſs then and helpleſs are they who are caſt out by Chriſt? By whom ſhall they be ſaved, who are condemned by a Saviour? As the love of Chriſt is moſt deſirable, ſo his wrath is moſt inſupportable. Who can ſtand before his wrath as a Judge, who as a Redeemer came to deliver us from the wrath which is to come.

There are five things in this Judge, which make his wrath moſt dreadful.

Firſt, He is ſuch a Judge, as the power of the moſt powerful cannot daunt.

Secondly, He is ſuch a Judge, as the wealth of the wealthieſt cannot bribe.

Thirdly, He is ſuch a Judge, as the wit and ſubtlety of the wiſeſt and moſt ſubtle cannot delude.

Fourthly, He is ſuch a Judge, as there is no appealing from his ſentence.

Fifthly, He is ſuch a Judge as there is no repealing of his ſentence. What he ſets down ſhall ſtand for ever. All which *Job* applies to his friends in the laſt words of the Chapter; *Be ye afraid of the ſword: for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword, that ye may know there is a Judgment.*

Secondly, This carries Comfort, and ſpeaks joy to Saints. How ſweet is it to remember, that their Redeemer is their Judge. For as the Apoſtle argueth, *Who ſhall condemn? it is God that juſtifies*; ſo may they, Who ſhall condemn? it is Chriſt that judgeth us. The time of the Judges coming, is the time of their refreſhing. So the Apoſtle *Peter* calls it in his Sermon (*Acts* 3. 19, 20.) *Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the times of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord.* What theſe times are is expreſſed, (*Verſ.* 20.) *And he ſhall ſend Jeſus Chriſt, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens muſt receive, until the times of the reſtitution of all things.* When Chriſt ſhall reſtore and ſet all right, which ſin hath diſordered (which will be a time of Judgment queſtionleſs, if not the time of the laſt Judgment) then it will be a time of refreſhing to all the people of God; even of ſuch refreſhing (and infinitely more) as the weary labourer or tired traveller takes in his repoſe under the cooleſt ſhades (as the word there uſed implies) which fetcheth up his fainting ſpirits, and renews his ſtrength. When God came at once to judge, and reſtore *Adam* after his fall, he came *in the cool of the day* (Gen. 3. 8.) And when Jeſus Chriſt ſhall come to judge and perfect the reſtauration of man, though it will be the heat of the day, or a day of heat to all his enemies; yet it ſhall be the cool of the day, or as the refreſhing ſhadow after heat to all his Saints. That Chriſt is Judge, cannot but be a rejoycing to the Saints. For

Firſt, He being Judge, the Judge is their friend.

Secondly, The Judge is their kinſman, their brother; for though (as we ought not now, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. ſo) Chriſt in that day will not know any man after the fleſh, yet all believers who are as his fleſh, ſhall then be known, that is, accepted with him.

Thirdly, The Judge is alſo their Prieſt and Propitiation; he ſhall judge them, who hath ſatisfied for them, and knows how all reckonings and accounts ſtand between God and their ſouls; for he it is that hath by his own blood ballanced and made them up.

Fourthly, The Judge is their Advocate and Interceſſor; he ſhall judge them, who hath often moved for them, who hath poured out his ſoul in prayer for them, as well as he once poured out his ſoul an offering for them. Surely he who hath ſpoken ſo much for them, will not (though he hath cauſe to blame them for many things) ſpeak or pronounce any thing againſt them.

Laſtly, The Judge is he who was judged in their behalf; and ſeeing he was condemned bearing their ſins, he will not lay thoſe ſins again upon them who have laid hold on him, and ſo condemn them.

All theſe conſiderations laid together, ſhew how ſweet it is for Saints to remember that the Redeemer ſhall ſtand upon the earth to judge them. And hence the Saints are deſcribed.

Firſt, Not fearing but hoping for his appearing (*Tit.* 2. 14. where it is called not only the hope, but the *bleſſed hope*) *Looking for the bleſſed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*; it is the bleſſed hope, becauſe the thing hoped for being once attained, we ſhall be for ever bleſſed.

Secondly, They are deſcribed (not fearing, but) loving the appearing of this Judge (2 *Tim.* 4. 8.) *Henceforth* (ſaith *Paul*) *there is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day, and not to me only, but to all them alſo that love his appearing.* To be a lover of the appearing of Chriſt in Judgment, is the character and almoſt the definition of all true believers. None can love it but they, and they cannot but love it.

Thirdly, They are deſcribed (not fearing, but) praying for it, and that not coldly but earneſtly and importunately (*Rev.* 22. 17.) *The Spirit and the Bride* (that is, the Spirit in the Bride ſaith, or the Spirit preſſeth and provoketh the Bride to) *ſay come, and let him that heareth ſay, come.* Who is thus invited to come, and for what to come? The perſon invited to come, is Chriſt, and he is invited to come to fulfil all the Propheſies of that Book revealed to *John*, and therefore to come to judgment, which as it is there Propheſied, ſo it will be the utmoſt fulfilling of all the Propheſies. And to ſhew that Chriſt approved and accepted this earneſt prayer of the Bride for his coming; he anſwers (at *verſ.* 20.) *He which teſtifieth theſe things* (and that is none but Chriſt, *The Amen, the faithful and true witneſs* (Rev. 3. 14.) he (I ſay) anſwers, and) *ſaith, Surely I come quickly*; and this is the third time that he ſaith it in this Chapter; for he had ſaid *verſ.* 7. and again *verſ.* 12. *Behold I come quickly.* Which threefold promiſe of his *coming quickly*, is ſealed up with *Amen*, and the prayer of *John*, ſeconding the Churches prayer, *Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.* What longing is there for his coming, who having been prayed to come, promiſeth to come quickly, and is yet again prayed *to come.* The preparations and prognoſticks of the coming of Chriſt, are dreadfully ſet down to the amazement of the world (*Luke* 21. 25, 26.) *There ſhall be ſigns in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, and upon the earth, diſtreſs of Nations,* &c. *mens hearts* (that is, the

the hearts of the men of the earth, or of earthly-minded men) *failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth*, &c. *And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.* This glory & terror of the coming of Christ, which shall dazle the eyes and astonish the hearts of all that know not God, shall be delight to the eyes, and rejoyce the hearts of all that obey him. These Christ bespeaks in *vers.* 28. *When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads* (looking up and lifting up the head, is a posture of confidence and of joy) *for your Redemption draweth nigh*; that is, you shall soon receive all the fruits of your Redemption, or Redemption in full. Our Redemption was wrought when Christ came first into the world, but we reap not all the benefits of our Redemption, till Christ comes the second time into the world. Then they who are dead shall be redeemed from the power of the grave, and they who shall be found alive, shall be redeemed from all the troubles and sorrows of this life. Then Christ will wipe all tears from the eyes of every afflicted *Job*; then he will heal all the sores of his *Job's*; then he will supply all the wants, and restore the broken estates of his *Job's*; then he will repair the credit and honour of his *Job's*; then he will rightly interpret the actions and speeches, the works and words of his *Job's*; then he will give his *Job's* a full estate, a double estate, a seven-fold estate to all that they had before; then he will make his *Job's* like himself; they that lay on the dunghil, scraping their sores with a potsherd, when Christ appears, *shall appear with him in glory* (Col. 3. 4.) The diseased and leprous bodies of his *Job's* shall be fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus Christ, by that mighty power by which he is able to subdue all things to himself; yea, when the Redeemer shall stand upon the earth in the latter day, he will marry all his *Job's* to himself, he will take them from the dust, and lay them in his bosom for ever. Therefore well might *Job*, and well may any Saint in his, or in a worse condition then his (if worse may be) rejoyce and triumph in this faith; *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth.*

VERS. 26, 27.

And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.
Whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

IN the former Verse we have considered and improved the confession of *Job's* faith in the Redeemer.

First, As living or eternal.

Secondly, As rising from the dead, or raising the dead to life.

Thirdly, As judging both the quick and dead. He in these two Verses enlargeth the confession of his faith concerning his own personal resurrection. Which

First, He asserts in the close of *Vers.* 26. *In my flesh shall I see God.*

Secondly, In the strong actings of his faith he assureth himself of it, notwithstanding all the difficulties that might obstruct and hinder it; in the former part of *Vers.* 26. and in the close of *v.* 27. *Though after my skin worms destroy this body; though my reins be consumed within me*, yet I believe I shall see God; these impediments do not weaken my faith.

Thirdly, He declares the benefit or happiness which shall accrew to him after the resurrection of his body, which he doth,

First, In those words, *I shall see God.*

Secondly, In those, *I shall see him for my self.* In both which expressions, he sets forth the happiness of the Saints after the raising of their bodies out of the grave, and the reunion of soul and body.

Fourthly, He maintains the identity of his flesh or body in the Resurrection, or that the same body which falls shall rise. And this in a twofold notion.

First, An identity specifical, it shall be the same body in kind.

Secondly, An identity numerical, or individual, it shall be the same particular body which he had on earth, and laid down in the earth. Both which are evidenced and evinced from those passages in the Text: *I shall see him in my flesh; Mine eye shall behold him, and not another; I, my, mine, and not another*, imply nothing, if not himself, or no other thing but himself.

From all we may collect, how excellent a confession of faith *Job* made about that great mystery of the Resurrection, and how firmly his soul was established in it.

Vers. 26. **And though after my skin worms destroy this body.**

I will not stay either upon the opening or disproving of the translation of the Vulgar Latine; which as it varieth extreamly wide from the Original in the close of the former Verse, so at the beginning of this. There instead of, *He shall stand upon the earth in the latter day* (as we translate) 'tis rendred, *I shall rise again in the latter day.* And whereas here we say, *Though after my skin worms destroy this body*; that reading is, *and I shall be again encompassed about (or cloathed) with my skin.* This vast difference in the translation ariseth from hence, because the word which we render *to destroy*, may be derived from a double root; either from a root that signifies *to compass, or circle a thing round*, or as we and most Grammarians derive it from a root that signifies *to break, or to destroy, to diminish, or crumble a thing* (as it were) *into the smallest pieces or atoms.*

Et rursum circumdabor pelle mea. Vulg.

נקפו *vel à radice* יקף *Circumdedit, vel à* נקף *contrivit, fregit.*

A second reading we give in the margine of our Bibles; *After I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet*, &c. Whereas we say in the Text, *Though after my skin, worms destroy this body*; we put in the margine, *After I shall awake*, &c. The reason is, because the same word in the Hebrew which signifies *the skin*, signifies in the Verb, *to awake* or arise from sleep. Mr. *Broughton* gives light to this, in the exposition of his own translation, *And after this my skin is spent.* Which he glosseth thus, in the person of *Job*, *And after worms spend this my skin and flesh, I mean after my Resurrection, and I use a doubtful word to contain both.* As if a word were intentionally used by *Job*, which signifies both *his skin, and his awaking or Resurrection*, that so we might take it both wayes, and neither of them both against, either the scope of the Text, or against the truth ('tis usual in Scripture to compare death to sleep, and the Resurrection to awaking) *When* (saith he) *I awake, though this be destroyed, I shall see God. Or though this skin be destroyed, yet I shall see God.* To this sence another translates, *After worms have digged through this* (that is, this skin or body) *I awaking shall see God in my flesh.* The interlineal varies little, *And after they* (that is, the worms) *have consumed this my skin, I shall see God in my flesh.* The strict letter of the Hebrew is very concise, *And after my skin destroy this.* So that we supply three words in this one clause, to make up that which we conceive the sence; First, The word *Though*; Secondly, The word *Worms*; Thirdly, The word *Body*; neither of which are expresly in the Original. Therefore our Translators have put them in a different character, implying that those words are added to explain the meaning of the place, which is somewhat dark, by reason of that conciseness of expression.

Et postquam vermes confoderint hoc istud evigilante me. Jun. *Et postquam pellem meam contriverint hanc.* Mont.

Some Interpreters take notice of the elegancy of *Job's* speech, who therefore doth not name his body, or say, *this body*; either because with the demonstrative particle, *This*, he used a gesture putting his hand upon his breast, *After worms have destroyed this, which I now lay my hand upon*, that is, this my body, *I shall yet see God in my flesh.* Or as some others conceive he saith only *This*, not *this body*, because his body was so worn and disfigured with his sores and sickness, that it could scarce be called a body; after worms have destroyed *this*, call it what you will, I can hardly find a fitting word to call it by. As if he had more largely said, *After I am dead, and laid in the grave, where worms do not only eat my skin, and consume this upper garment, but my whole body also; yea, and not only the outward limbs and members of my body, but my very bowels and entrals. Though my reins be consumed within me; though worms devour, and rottenness invade whatsoever I am, or have of a body; though I am spent from head to toe, from skin to reins, without and within, yet notwithstanding all this, I believe that I shall rise again, and see God in my flesh.*

Credo carnis resurrectionem & videbo interim consumi renes meos in medio corporis mei. Brent. *Consumor totus ab una parte ad alteram.* Jun.

Hence observe, First, *Death may, yea shall prevail over the whole outward man.*

Death

Death ſpends both skin, and reins; it devours all. Death ſwallows up fleſh and bones. We may well ſay of death, *It makes no bones of any man.* It takes in one part after another, till all be taken in; skin, and fleſh, and bones, and reins, death unmakes us. Hence the ſame word in the Greek that ſignifies to unmake, ſignifies alſo to die; becauſe death is the unmaking of every creature that lives. Man is unmade man, by the firſt act of death; that ſeparates ſoul and body, and this makes him no man: The ſoul alone is not man, the body without the ſoul is not man; therefore the diſunion of theſe unmakes man. And when death hath unmade man, by disjoyning ſoul and body, it proceeds to unmake the body. Though death can do no more to the ſoul then ſeparate it from the body, yet it can do much more to the body then ſeparate it from the ſoul. Death conſumes the body when 'tis alone, it pulls one member from another, till it prevaileth over all; as an old building is pulled down piece after piece, till all be laid in duſt and rubbiſh: not only doth it fade the beauty, and deface the skin, but it enters into the bones, and ſucks the marrow. The Apoſtle *Peter* uſeth a word of this ſence, while he ſpeaks of our death to ſin (1 *Pet.* 2. 24.) *Who his own ſelf, bare our ſins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to ſin,* &c. (ſo we tranſlate:) the word is, that *we being unmade*, or *off-made to ſin:* every converted ſoul is united to, or made up in Chriſt, and unmade to ſin, that is, dead to ſin. Now as ſpiritual death to ſin, is the unmaking of a man, the pulling him in pieces in regard of what he was; the unmaking of his ſinful nature, that he may be made up again by grace: ſo natural death is the unmaking of the body.

There was never any body made, but death (according to the common appointment of God) had or hath a power to unmake it, one excepted, which one was the body of Jeſus Chriſt. Some indeed, as *Enoch* and *Elias* were tranſlated and did not ſee death; and others though they died, yet were raiſed to life by the power of God before death did actually unmake or conſume their bodies; but there was never any body which being dead, death had not a power to conſume, but only the body of Jeſus Chriſt. And therefore the Apoſtle (*Acts* 2. 24.) puts it as a ſpecial excepted caſe: Chriſt died, but death could not do with his body, as *Job* ſuppoſed it might with his, deſtroy his skin and reins; *For* (ſaith he) *God raiſed him up, having looſed the pains of death.* The original which we render *pains*, cometh from a root, which ſignifieth *bands or cords:* for death when it ſeizeth upon man, binds him (as it were) hand and foot, with bands, and cords, and keeps him faſt, that he cannot ſtir till it hath totally devoured him. Death bound the hands and feet of Jeſus Chriſt, and laid him in the grave; *But God raiſed him up, and looſed the bands or cords of death:* And Jeſus Chriſt, who as Mediator, or God-man, laid down his life, had power alſo to take it up again (*Joh.* 10. 18.) As *Sampſon* whom when the *Philiſtines* had bound with new cords, he ſnapped them aſunder, like a threed at the Candle; So Jeſus Chriſt when he was laid in the grave, broke the bands of death, or was raiſed up by God looſing thoſe bands; and why? Not only becauſe he had power to do it, for ſo he hath power to looſe the bands of death from any man as ſoon as they are tyed on, if it were his will and purpoſe to do it; but the Apoſtle aſſigns a reaſon beyond this, ſhewing that Chriſt was raiſed before death could conſume his body, not only becauſe it was poſſible, or in the power, as alſo agreeable to the will of God, ſpeedily to looſe thoſe bands, but *becauſe it was not poſſible that he ſhould be holden of them.* It was poſſible that death ſhould ſeize on Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo it did, he freely yielding himſelf up to it, becauſe a death was owing and to be paid to the Juſtice of God for ſin. But (ſaith the Apoſtle) death could not hold him, and keep poſſeſſion, That was impoſſible. And that upon a twofold account.

First, In reference unto himſelf.

Secondly, In reference to us.

First, It was not poſſible in reference to himſelf; becauſe *he is life*, and life eſſentially; *I am the Reſurrection, and the life* (ſaith Chriſt to *Martha*, *Joh.* 11.) Chriſt is the Reſurrection, becauſe he raiſeth us. He is not formally the Reſurrection (as was ſhewed before) but effectively. But Chriſt is life formally and eſſentially; now it is not poſſible for death to hold life it ſelf longer under its power, then he who is life pleaſeth. Therefore Chriſt being eſſentially life, could not but prevail over and conquer death; or as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Swallow up death in victory* (1 Cor. 15. 54.)

Secondly, It was not poſſible in reference to us; for he having undertaken the work of reſtoring us to life, if his life had been ſubdued by death, if he had been held down by the power of death, alwayes in the grave, we had been loſt for ever; as the Apoſtle argueth, 1 *Cor.* 15. *If Chriſt be not riſen, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your ſins.* We had been ſtill under the power of ſpiritual death, if Chriſt had been held by that corporal death. Therefore it was impoſſible (becauſe Chriſt was to carry the work of our Redemption through) that he ſhould be held down by the cords of death, though he ſubmitted to die. So then here is the difference; the body of Jeſus Chriſt was not deſtroyed and totally unmade by death; death could not ſend in its Armies of worms to eat up his fleſh and conſume his reins, no nor ſo much as in the leaſt to corrupt his body; as the ſame Apoſtle expreſſeth it (*verſ.* 27. out of the *Pſalm*) *Thou wilt not leave my ſoul in hell, nor wilt ſuffer thy holy One to ſee corruption.* He ſuffred his holy One to die, but he did not ſuffer him to ſee corruption; that is, to feel corruption, or be under the power of corruption. Therefore Jeſus Chriſt roſe the third day; and he roſe upon the firſt account, that it could be called the third day; he lay as little time in the grave, as could truly be reckoned three dayes: and ſo (I conceive) he did that he might not give the leaſt advantage to death, or that death might have him no longer priſoner then needs muſt. And upon this conſideration too, he ſaw no corruption. For three dayes (as Naturaliſts obſerve) a body may continue without corruption; eſpecially as it was with Chriſt, who dying and being buried the evening of the ſixth day, lay the ſeventh in the grave, and roſe early in the morning of the firſt day of the week. *Martha* ſaid to Chriſt when he came to the Sepulchre of *Lazarus*, *Lord, he hath been dead four dayes, by this time he ſtinketh* (Joh. 11. 37.) When a body hath been dead four dayes, we may ſay, ſurely it is corrupted; but in three dayes there is no neceſſity of corruption: So that, *God* (as it was propheſied in the *Pſalm*) *did not ſuffer his holy One to ſee corruption*, no not the leaſt corruption; this was peculiar to Jeſus Chriſt. And the Apoſtle is very careful to keep this cloſe to Chriſt; for though it were ſpoken by *David*, yet he ſhews that *David* did not ſpeak this of himſelf, as if he expected any ſuch priviledge (*verſ.* 29.) *Men and brethren, let me ſpeak freely to you, of the Patriark* David, *who is dead, and buried, and his Sepulchre is this day with us. David* who ſpake this is dead, and buried, and lies in the duſt ſtill among us; therefore he ſpake this of another, and that other is Chriſt, whoſe body was ſo exempted from corruption, as none, beſides his, ever was. For though Chriſt (as was toucht before) raiſed ſome dead bodies before they were corrupted, yet every body that dies is naturally ſubject to corruption, and continuing under the power of death, muſt needs corrupt and be deſtroyed by worms.

Secondly obſerve, *The total conſumption of the body of man, is no impediment, no bar in the way of faith to ſtop us from believing the Reſurrection.*

Job ſpeaks in ſuch language as might repreſent the greateſt difficulty to faith, and yet conquers it. And we to reach his ſence, ſupply ſuch words as expreſly ſhew it, *Though and though; Though after my skin, worms deſtroy this body; Though my reins be conſumed within me.* Though it be thus, and thus, yet I believe; as death ſhall triumph over my body, ſo my faith triumphs over death. Chriſt himſelf puts in a *Though* to this point of faith about the reſurrection, ſpeaking to *Martha* (Joh. 11. 25.) *He that believeth in me, yea though he were dead, yet ſhall he live again.* But it may be ſaid, *Lazarus* was dead at that time, why then doth Chriſt ſuppoſe that which was no more then actually was? And how can any man be ſaid to live again who was not dead? Why then doth Chriſt ſay, *He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live.* I apprehend, that by *dead* in that aſſertion or promiſe, ſomewhat more is intended by Chriſt, then barely to be dead, as *Lazarus* was; *He that believes in me, though he were dead*, ſeems to ſpeak not only the ſeparation of the ſoul from the body, yea,

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not only (as *Martha* suspected it was with *Lazarus*) the body beginning to corrupt, but even a total corruption and consumption of it; when (answerably to the expression of the Text) skin and bones, and reins, and all are eaten up. Now *though he were* thus *dead* (saith Christ) *yet shall he live again.* Faith saith to death, Do thy worst; and to the grave, put forth the utmost of thy power, digest me fully, (the grave is a great eater, it hath a strong stomach) assimilate me to thy self (as by the last act of concoction meats received into the stomach are) turn me into thine own substance; make my body look like the grave, make it so like thy self, the earth, that no man can distinguish me from the earth, yet this doth not at all weaken my faith in believing that I shall rise from the dead. Put all these disadvantages upon it, yet the power of God answers, or rather tramples upon them all. The faith of *Abraham* (*Rom.* 4. 18, 19, 20.) moved much after this rate, or in such a sphear of holy hight and strength, in reference to the promise of a son; that a son should be born to *Abraham*, was like the raising of one from the dead. So the Author to the *Hebrews* speaks expresly (*Heb.* 11. 17, 19.) *By faith* Abraham *when he was tryed offered up* Isaac: *and he that had received the promise, offered up his only begotten Son, accounting that God was able to raise him up even from the dead, from whence also he received him in a figure.* See how *Abraham's* faith acted about the receiving of *Isaac* in his old age, (when his body was (in reason) more fit to go to the grave, then to beget a son) like *Job's* for the receiving of his dead body out of the grave. *He* (saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 4. 18.) *against hope, believed in hope.* Every thing stood in the way of this hope, that he should have a son, *yet he believed that he should become the father of many Nations, according to that which was written, so shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body, now dead* (that is, decayed with age) *when he was an hundred years old, nor the deadness of* Sarah's *womb.* This probably was the figure of which the Author to the *Hebrews* writes, when he affirms, that *Abraham* was willing at the command of God to offer his son to death, from whence (by the promise of God) he had received him in a figure. There were two deaths, a double death, to hinder *Abraham* from having a son, and yet his faith lived and prevailed over both. *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully perswaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Faith looking to the power of God, triumphs over our own weakness.* Now as *Abraham's* faith triumphed over those two deaths, or decayes and declensions of his own and his wives body, believing strongly that thorough these two figurative deaths, God would raise him a son: So faith triumphs over, and breaks all those bands, by which death may seem to hold the body in the grave beyond all hope of rising.

We find Faith putting many hard cases to it self; *David* did so (*Psal.* 23. 4.) *Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no ill.* Again (*Psal.* 46. 2.) *Therefore we will not fear, though the earth remove, and the mountains be carried into the midst of the Sea.* You see what *thoughts* faith proposeth to it self, and yet gets over and above them. Faith is not only a purifying, but a prevailing and a conquering grace. Faith is our victory over the world, and all worldly objections. As the grace of God towards man triumphs over all the unworthiness of man, and will do man good, though many stops lie in the way, (*Psal.* 106. 8.) *They understood not his works, they remembred not the multitude of his mercies, they rebelled at the Sea, even at the red Sea.* Every one of these were as a stop in the way of mercy to do that people good, yet mercy got over them all, *Nevertheless he saved them.* Now (I say) as the grace of God triumphs over the unworthiness of man; so faith triumphs over all the improbabilities and impossibilities that seem to lie in the way of God, to hinder him from doing any thing for us, when once we have his word or promise. And as to that special word, or promise of God for the Resurrection of the body, faith seems to speak, yea to glory and boast thus; *He that gave me a being when I had none, can easily reduce me to the being I am in, when I seem not to be what I was before, or no such thing as now I am; though wild beasts of the Earth, and birds of the Air; though Canibals, or men-eating-men devour this body; though fire consume it, though the ashes be scattered in the Air* (as the Church story speaks in the reign of persecuting *Diocletian*) *or thrown into the River, as lost for ever, and never to be gathered up again in the opinion of man; though all these difficulties and encumbrances grow upon my faith, yet I believe I shall be repaired, and see God in my flesh.* Which is the next point of *Job's* faith.

Yet in my flesh shall I see God.

The Hebrew is, *from my flesh*; it is usual in that language to put the Preposition *De* for *In*. Mr. *Broughton* keeps to the letter, and saith, *Yet from my flesh shall I see God.* His meaning is, I being raised and cloathed with flesh, shall see God; or, from my flesh, *When I am in the flesh I shall see God.* There are two things further in those words, *In my flesh.*

Non dicit, per carnem meam, sed in carne mea, q.d. in carne mea ero cum videbo Deum.

First, He saith, **My flesh**, that is, my own flesh: In opposition to another flesh, whether specifical or personal, as was intimated before.

Secondly, *My flesh*, as pointing to his present estate, *My flesh*, this flesh of mine which is now so miserably worn, and will shortly be worm-eaten; this my flesh, which is now unmeet for the presence of any man, much more for the presence of the great God; even this flesh of mine, this diseased and despised flesh shall be fitted for the presence of God, the great and glorious God; I, in my flesh, in this my flesh shall see God.

Shall see God. *To see*, is often used in Scripture to note a divine and super-natural act; hence prophetical revelations are called *visions*, and the Prophets *Seers*. There is a twofold *seeing*, First, Seeing with the eye of the body: Secondly, Seeing with the eye of the mind: a corporal and an intellectual sight: both which may here be understood, according to the twofold acceptation of the word, *God. I shall see God.* The word *God*, may be taken, either, first, *essentially* for the divine nature, and then we must expound the word *see* in the latter sence, I shall see him with the eye of my mind, or intellectually. Secondly, The word *God*, may be taken *personally* for Jesus Christ the Mediator, who having two natures, the divine, and humane, united in his person, or having assumed the humane nature into the divine, which is the person, himself is often called God: So that, I shall see God is this also, I shall see Jesus Christ, God-man, who being glorified in the body, shall be seen with bodily eyes. And so *Job* assures himself that he shall see God in the first sence, with the eye of the body; as if he had said, *I shall have a glorified eye to see a glorified Saviour with.* From or in my flesh, I shall see God. Thus one of the Ancients gives the interpretation of this Text. *Whereas* (saith he) *Job saith, in my flesh I shall see God, he, without doubt propheſied the resurrection of his flesh: yet he did not say, By my flesh, which if he had said, the Text notwithstanding might be expounded of God, who being in the flesh, shall be seen by the flesh; yet we may understand it only thus, I shall be in the flesh, when I see God.*

Illud quod ait Job, in carne mea videbo Deũ, resurrectionem quidem carnis procul dubio prophetavit; non tamen dixit per carnem meam, quod quidem si dixisset posset Deus intelligi, qui per carnem in carne vẽ debitur; nunc vero potest & sic accipi, in carne mea ero, cum videbo Deum. Aug. l. 22. de Civ. D. c. 24.

Hence observe, First, *The body after the resurrection shall be true flesh, or shall have true flesh.*

That opinion hath been condemned as heresie, which some held long since, That when the body riseth again it shall be a spirit, subtile, and thin, like the Air or Wind, not subject to the touch of the hand, or sight of the eye. To which one of the Ancients answereth well from (*Luke* 24. 39, 40.) where Christ when the Disciples were affrighted at his appearance, after his resurrection, thinking they had seen a spirit, *vers.* 37. (for so absurdly they spake, as if a spirit could be seen, Christ, I say) to free them at once from that absurdity, and fear, calls to them, *Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts* (that is, such vain thoughts as these) *arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I my self* (much in the language of *Job*, *whom I shall see for my self*) *handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.* Mine is a true body, composed of flesh and bones, it hath the dimensions and properties of a true body, it may be seen and handled: Christ admitteth the testimony of their own senses, to assure them it was no delusion or phansie which was presented to them, but his real body.

Corpus nostrum in illa resurrectionis gloria erit impalpabile ventis aereis subtilius. Eutic. Constant. Epic.

But, saith not the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 15. 37, 38.) treating of the Resurrection, *That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, as perchance of wheat,*

wheat, or some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it pleaseth him, to every seed its own body. From this similitude some argue, if *that which thou sowest is not that body that shall be when thou reapest*; then the body that dies, and is laid in the Grave, is not that body that shall be in the resurrection; and if it be not the same, but some other body, then it may be an ayereal body.

Non dicit grano seminis deisse quod erat, sed adesse quod non erat; qui autem verũ corpus resurgere denegat, nequaquam dicit adesse quod deerat sed abesse quod erat. Greg. in disput. contra Eutich.

I answer, It is true, corn, or grain which is sowed, doth not rise again in that manner, or after that likeness in which it was cast into the ground. We sow bare seed, but when it comes up again, it comes with a stalk and an ear, and shoots up in much beauty, glory, and verdure. There is a great difference between a grain of wheat in the bushel, and a flourishing stem, or ear of Corn in the field. God gives it another body in the growing up, but yet it is still a body; and there is the same nature in it still, the grain remains still: Only, there is an addition of beauty and greenness when it grows up. So the body that is cast into the ground is like bare grain (the Apostle useth that word) it is a bare body, a naked body: but when it shall be raised again, the body shall have many great additions, it shall have a cloathing, and an excellency of glory put upon it, (2 *Cor.* 5.4.) *We shall be cloathed upon,* yet still it is a true body and the same body. The Apostle *Paul* doth not say, that the body shall be utterly cast away or lost in Glory; but the body that dies is uncloathed, and those bodies of Saints which live at that Great day, shall be *cloathed upon with a house which is from Heaven.* So that in the Resurrection there will be an adding somewhat to that which was before, not a taking away of that that was before; the flesh shall be refined and purified, it shall not be laid aside, or annihilated. The corn grows up, with somewhat that it had not, but it doth not lose any thing that it had; 'tis still a grain of wheat and better. So the body laid down in the grave is raised, not the same in all things, but better in many things; it will not lose any thing of perfection which it had, but it will gain many perfections which it had not, even the excellency and perfection of glory.

Caro nostra post resurrectionem eadem est & diversa, eadem per naturam, diversa per potentiam.

Secondly, It is objected, How can it rise flesh, when the Apostle (1 *Cor.* 15.50.) saith, *Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption?* If no flesh shall inherit that state, how can it be affirmed, that the true flesh shall be raised to enter upon that inheritance?

I answer, by way of grant, that by *flesh and blood* in that Scripture, we are to understand natural flesh and blood, not flesh and blood as it notes a sinful, or corrupt condition: In which sence it is also true, that *flesh and blood shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* But the Apostle speaking there of the resurrection of the body, he means the flesh and blood of which the body is composed and made up; and of that he saith, *It shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* 'Tis true, it shall not, in the state wherein it is, flesh and blood, as it is corruptible, shall not enter into Heaven. Himself seems to expound that we are thus to conceive flesh and blood in the latter clause of the same Verse, *Neither shall corruption inherit incorruption*; that is, corruptible flesh and blood, or flesh and blood that hath the seeds and principles of corruption in it, shall never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; such flesh and blood is unfit to wear the garland of glory. As our souls must be changed before they can be fit for glory, so also must our bodies. Meer natural flesh and blood are too weak to bear the weight of glory. Which the Apostle intimated (*Vers.* 44.) *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.* As if he had said, Such a body as man laid down in the grave will not serve his turn, when he riseth again. Man layes down only a *Natural body*, or as the Greek strictly speaks, an *Animal body*, or a *Soul body*; that is, a body quickned and maintained only by a living soul, such as *Adam's* was in the Creation, whose body being formed out of the dust of the earth, and the Lord breathing into him the breath of life, he became *a living Soul* (Gen. 2.7.) yet such was his soul that it could not maintain his bodily life without helps from without. And so his (as also ours who are descended from him) was but a meer natural body. But when man is raised from the dust, he shall be provided and fitted with *a Spiritual body.* The Apostle saith not, that the body shall be changed into a spirit, but it shall be raised a spiritual body, which yet some urge strongly to prove that the body shall be attenuated into a spirit; but for the removing of that objection and the clearing of the Scripture; I answer, that the body raised to glory is called spiritual these three wayes.

First, Because the body shall ever be subject and serviceable to the spirit; for as the spirit of a man while it is subject to and serveth sinful flesh, is called *carnal* in the language of Scripture; so the flesh of man when it is purely subject to the spirit, may, by the same proportion, be called spiritual.

Secondly, It may be called a spiritual body in regard of the great strength and activity, with which it shall be endowed: Spirits are strong, and so is every thing which is spiritual. Spirit is often in Scripture opposed to flesh, to denote strength. When the Prophet would have the Jews know that the Egyptian Horses were too weak to be trusted too, he saith, *Their horses are flesh, and not spirit* (Isa. 31. 1.) The Devil is called *a spiritual wickedness*, to shew that he is a strong and a powerful wickedness (*Eph.* 6. 12.) In this reference also our bodies after the resurrection are entitled spiritual. It must be a body of mighty strength which is able to bear a weight of glory, or as the Apostle amplifies it, *An exceeding weight of glory.* There is such a weight in Glory that our frail bodies would be crushed under it, unless being made spiritual, they were also made strong to bear it.

Thirdly, 'Tis called a spiritual body, because then the body shall have no need of natural helps. This the Apostle teacheth us in that opposition, *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.* A natural body stands in need of natural supports, but a spiritual body needs them not. When they in the Gospel put that tempting Question to Christ, whose wife the Woman should be at the Resurrection, who had been successively married to seven husbands; Christ gives an answer, implying that such Questions shall then be out of doors (*Matth.* 22.13.) *After the resurrection, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels in heaven.* Marriage will be out in heaven: yea the body shall be so spiritual in heaven, that we shall need, neither sleep, nor meat, nor cloathing, as Angels and Spirits do not. I may give the spiritualness of the body in four words, according to the Schoolmen in their disputes about the state of a glorified body.

Pro immunditiis ulceribus respersum erit Jobi corpus atq; illuminatum, quibusdam quasi punctis luminis & guttis lucis & stellulis clarissimis distinctum & circumdatum. Pin.

First, Clearness and beauty: the face of *Stephen* did shine *as the face of an Angel* (Act. 6.15.) Not that an Angel hath a face or shines visibly, but so 'tis phrased to note excellent beauty; as excellent bread is expressed, by *Angels bread:* there was an amazing beauty stampt upon the face of *Stephen*, because he began to border upon Heaven, and had received some beams of glory approaching. Then instead of those filthy ulcers, with which the body of *Job* was spotted; his body, as also the bodies of all the Saints with him, shall appear (as it were) with stars and studs of light, and resplendent beauty; and which is the beauty of this bodily beauty in Heaven, it will be such as whereof none shall be proud themselves, nor yet by it be a snare to others.

Secondly, Agility, nimbleness, and activity; whereas now our bodies move heavily, they shall then ascend and descend like Angels.

Thirdly, Impassibility, we shall not suffer hunger or cold, sorrow, or pain in the body.

Fourthly, Spirituality, which, I conceive, may rather be the comprehension of the other three. Then that of the Apostle will be fulfilled, *Christ will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body* (Phil. 3. 21.) Not that a glorious body shall be of another fashion then now it is, in regard of the symmetry and disposition of parts and members (the same fabrick and frame shall continue) but it shall be of another fashion in regard of qualifications and endowments; such as those fore-mentioned, and in all those our bodies shall be fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus Christ (which is the highest accent of honour which the body is capable of) and excepting these changes the body shall be the same it was; the same in nature, invested and sublimated with those noble additions of *clarity, agility, impassibility, and spirituality.* Thus it shall be sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body, yet still a body, a true body still. That's

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the first point, the body after the resurrection shall be true flesh.

Secondly, Observe, *Saints raised to life shall see God.*

It will be our whole work, and our whole wages, our whole business, and our whole blessedness to see God. *Job* speaks as if there were nothing to be done in the next life but only to see God; nothing to be had or enjoyed then, but only a sight of God; and indeed there shall be nothing else; *I shall see God* (saith he) that's enough for me, yea, that's all to me (*Psal.* 16. 11.) *In thy presence is fulness of joy:* That is, when I shall see and enjoy thee present (*Matth.* 5. 8.) *The pure in heart shall see God.* (2 Cor. 13. 12.) *Now we see through a glass darkly, then face to face*; that is, intentively and directly, not reflectively or by effects; we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known; according to the utmost comprehension which a creature is capable of, our vessels shall be as full as they can hold, and what would we have more? Yea, our happiness shall be, that we would have no more. Our hearts shall be so full of joy, and our heads so full of knowledge, that we shall desire no more. We see the World, and are not filled; *The eye*, saith *Solomon*, *is not satisfied with seeing.* But the sight of God is satisfying and filling, that will not leave one empty space or corner in the soul. God is enough for us, and we shall certainly have enough when we see him (as then we shall) as he is. That priviledge is assured to the Sons of God (1 *John* 3. 2.) *We shall see him as he is.* In this life the Saints see God; the life of grace is the vision of God, as well as the life of glory: and though it be true, that here the Saints do rather see what God is not, then what he is; yet 'tis true also, that here the Saints see God *as he is*, as those words may note a real seeing of him, though not (as they intend) a full seeing of him. Here we see God by faith; *We* (saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 7.) *walk by faith, not by sight.* We neither walk by sight, as carnal men do, who have no faith, nor do we walk by sight, as glorified Saints, who are above faith. But we walk by faith, which though it be opposed both to the sight of nature here below, and to that sight of glory, which we shall have above; yet that also is a sight, and by that we see God.

First, In his *Promises*; Abraham *saw my day* (saith Christ, *John* 8. 56.) He saw it in the Promise; and there God is seen.

Secondly, In his *Ordinances*; *David* desired to dwell in the House of the Lord all the dayes of his life, to behold his beauty (*Psal.* 27. 4.)

Thirdly, We see God in his *Providences*; in them God is so eminently to be seen, that he is as angry when his People see him not in Providences, as when they see him not in Promises, or Ordinances. In all these we have a sight of God by faith in this life, and we see him truly as he is; yea, God hath been pleased to make himself visible to some of his people in this life, even to their sense, as well as to their faith (*Isai.* 6. 1.) *I saw the Lord*, saith *Isaiah* the Prophet; he speaks not of an intellectual, but of an ocular sight; and *Job*, *I have heard of him by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes have seen him* (Job 42. 6.) And so *Jacob* (Gen. 32. 30.) *I have seen God face to face*; and he calls the place *Penuel*, *The face of God.* Not that he (or they) saw God himself with the eyes of his body, so *no man hath seen God at any time* (1 John 4. 12.) and so *no man can see God and live* (Exod. 33. 30.) But these saw God in some representation of himself, in some such breakings forth, and evident demonstrations of his Glory to the eye, as gave them an undoubted argument of the presence of God with them; yea, sometimes God hath condescended to appear in the form of a man. So that besides that sight of faith which all Saints have of God in this life in his Works and Word, some have had a kind of sight by sense in those illustrious and familiar manifestations of his presence with them; yet all this is but a glimpse to that sight which we shall have of God in heavenly glory, when *we shall see him as he is.* Which words of the Apostle *John*, as they are appliable to the person of Christ, whom we shall then *see as he is*, as that is opposed to *what he was*, while he was here in the form of a servant; so they are also appliable to the Nature of God, or to God essentially taken, whom we shall see in that glorified state, *as he is*, though not with the bodily eye, nor with any full comprehension of our understandings (for how can finite comprehend infinite) yet our understandings shall have such a full apprehension of God, that comparatively to any sight of God which we have had here, we may be said to *see him as he is.* This intellectual sight, being unexpressibly far more excellent and evident then either that sight which every Saint hath by faith, or which any have had by the eye, in those appearances he sometimes hath vouchsafed to dust and ashes here. And therefore that sight of God is called by way (not only of distinction, but) of eminency, *The beatifical vision.*

Thirdly, As this Text is expounded peculiarly of Christ the Mediator, then we may observe yet further for our comfort, that

Saints glorified shall see, and ever behold the glorious body of Jesus Christ.

We shall see Christ in our nature glorified. Therefore some render the Text, Not, *In my flesh I shall see God*; But, *I shall see God in my flesh*; that is, I shall see Christ sitting in glory, cloathed with flesh, or in the likeness of man. *God sent his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, to condemn sin in the flesh* (Rom. 8. 3.) *And he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation* (Heb. 9. 28.) That is, There shall be no likeness of sin upon him at his second appearance, as there was no sin in him at the first. But though he shall then have no likeness of sinful flesh upon him, yet he shall have the likeness of flesh, and that, not as likeness is sometimes taken, for the resemblance of that which it is not, but as likeness imports the truth of that which is. Christ shall be seen in true humane flesh, and this seeing or beholding of Jesus Christ in the flesh, will be (if we may conceive a second there) the second great joy in Heaven, To see the Saints will be great joy. The Disciples saw *Moses* and *Elias* in the transfiguration of Christ (which was a shew of Heaven, *Matth.* 17.) What joy then will it be to see the glorious person of Jesus Christ? Christ is indeed *the Desire of our eyes.* It was the wish of *Austin*, that he might have seen three things. First, *Rome in her flower.* Secondly, *Paul in the Pulpit.* Thirdly, *Christ in the flesh.* To have a view of Christ in the dayes of his humiliation and debasement, was to them, who knew him by faith, matter of great rejoycing. Old *Simeon* desired to see no more of this world, when once he had seen Christ; he wishes to depart and have his eyes closed, when his eyes had seen the salvation of God, that is, Christ, whom God sent to be our Saviour (*Luk.* 2. 30.) What then will it be to the Saints, when they shall see God their Saviour, Jesus Christ sitting cloathed in that flesh that they themselves wear, though in a more excellent cloathing of glory, then a meer creature is able to bear. The Apostle *Peter* foreshews this joy of Saints (1 *Pet.* 1. 7, 8, 13.) *That the tryal of your faith may be found to praise, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love.* As if he had said, If ye love Jesus Christ, now you have not seen him, but have only heard him spoken of, and seen him by faith; If ye having not seen do love him, O how will ye love him when you shall see him! for that is the strength of the Apostles Argument, *Whom having not seen ye love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory.* As if he had said, If ye now rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, believing in Jesus Christ whom you never saw, what rivers of joy will flow in upon you when you see Jesus Christ! And therefore at the thirteenth Verse, the Apostle *Peter* gathers up his own spirit, and the spirits of all the Saints, to the serious expectation of this thing; *Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* There is a twofold interpretation of that Scripture, according to the twofold signification of the word *Grace:* Some read it thus, *Rejoyce for that grace that is brought to you by the revelation of Jesus Christ.* It is matter of highest and purest joy to remember that Grace (whether we take it for the favour of God to sinners, that they may be justified, or for that heavenly principle which the Spirit works in the hearts of sinners, that they may be sanctified) at the revelation of Jesus Christ to the soul in conversion.

Videbo deū in carne mea, i. e. Christum in carne resuscitatum.

When this grace is brought to (and through the effectual working of the Spirit) received by sinners, there's joy in Heaven, and therefore the thought of it should cause joy on earth. Yet

Our translation refers rather to the time future; *Gird up the loins of your mind*, &c. *for the grace to be brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ*. Jesus Christ hath been revealed already, but he shall be revealed yet more plainly. But is that the time of grace? We received grace at the first revealing of Christ, shall we receive more grace then?

I answer, Grace may be put for glory, or for that unspeakable favour and wonderful love, which shall be given out to the Saints when their bodies shall be raised, and Christ appears to them in Glory. So the word *grace* is used (1 *Pet.* 3.) where the Apostle exhorts Husbands and Wives to walk *according to knowledge, as heirs of the same grace of life*. We are possessors and not heirs only of grace in this life; but in this life we are only heirs of the grace of life, that is, of eternal life, or glory. Such is the grace that is given at the revelation of Jesus Christ; that is, when Jesus Christ shall be set forth to the view of our bodily eyes, at the rising again of our bodies. Then fulness of joy is promised, and God hath provided for it every way. He hath provided joy for the eye of the mind, by that vision of himself: He hath provided joy for the eye of the body, by the vision of Jesus Christ. And some have piously conceived it one part of the design why Jesus Christ took flesh, that we might have compleat joy in him, both by seeing the Divine nature in him intellectually, and by seeing him glorious in the Humane nature; for so at once both mind and body shall have fulness of consolation by him.

Fourthly, For as much as *Job*, to comfort himself in his present sorrows, hath recourse to this hope, *I shall see God in my flesh*: As if he had said, I see nothing but visions of horror and amazement now; I see nothing but friendless friends, and miserable comforters now; I see nothing but poverty and want compassing me now; but I shall see God, there's my hope, and there's my happiness.

Hence Observe, *Our compleat happiness consists in the vision of God.*

Christ placeth the future happiness of the Saints in the vision of his Mediatorial glory; *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory that thou hast given me* (John 17. 24.) Glorified Saints shall for ever feed their eyes with unutterable delights in beholding the Glory of Jesus Christ.

The sight of the eye gives much contentment; *It is a pleasant thing to behold the Sun* (Eccles. 11.) How pleasant will it be then with the eye of the soul to behold God, and with the eye of the body to behold Jesus Christ? *Mine eye affects my heart*, saith *Jeremiah* in the *Lamentations*: That's true of joy as well as of sorrow. Sights refresh: How do people flock to see great shews? Now, the clear light that comes into the understanding, brings infinitely more refreshing and gladness to the soul, then that which comes in only by the body. It is joy and happiness to Saints to see God now, as was shewed before, in his Word and Works, in his Ordinances and Administrations. Good *Hezekiah* lamented his feared loss of that priviledge (*Isa.* 38. 11.) *I said I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living*: That is, I thought I should never have gone to Church more (as we use to speak) or to the Temple, there to behold the beauty of the Lord, and partake of his Ordinances. But what *Elihu* promises in a like case (*Job* 33. 26.) was performed to *Hezekiah*, *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy*. When shall he have this joyful sight? Even in this life; as 'tis explained at the twenty eighth Verse; *He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light*: That is, He shall be raised from his sick bed to see the light of the Sun, and then also he shall see the light of Gods countenance. This will be a joyful sight to him here, much more will the sight of Gods Face fill him with joy hereafter.

And the reason why this vision is our joy and happiness, ariseth four wayes.

First, Because our seeing of God makes us like him; like him two wayes, or in a double conformity. First, In holiness: And therefore, Secondly, In blessedness. These two cannot be separated. They that are (according to their capacity) holy as God is holy, shall also (according to their capacity) be happy as God is happy: Now that our seeing of God impresseth upon us a similitude of his holiness, is affirmed by the Apostle *John* (1 Epist. 3. 2.) *We shall be like him*, (Why?) *For we shall see him*. For if the vision we have of God here (in proportion to it) draw a likeness upon our souls (look how much any soul sees of God by faith, by so much is that soul made like to God in holiness) *We all as in a glass behold the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same Image* (2 Cor. 3. 18.) Now if here in Grace, while we in Promises, and Providences, and Ordinances, behold God, we are made like to him, much more shall we be so, when we see him face to face. The true reason why we are not more like God in this life, is, because we see and truly know so little of him.

Secondly, Blessedness is nothing but satisfaction, and content. The Devil is most miserable, because he is nothing but dissatisfaction, and discontent. And hence the Devil labours to put all into a discontented mood, that they may be miserable, as he is. Now as our likeness to God riseth from vision; so our satisfaction, content, and rest, riseth from both. (*Psal.* 17. 15.) *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness*. The Psalmist spake in the former Verse of the utmost happiness of worldly men, who have their *portion in this life*; and in this Verse he speaks by way of opposition to that, of his own happiness, together with the happiness of all the people of God; *As for me, I will behold thy face*, &c. As if he had said, Let others place their happiness in what they will, as for me, or for my part, here is my happiness, To *behold the face of God in righteousness*, (*without holiness no man can see the Lord*,) But what's the benefit of beholding the face of God? The next words expres it; *I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness*. If we understand the Psalmist (as some do) of beholding God here in his favours and mercies, that confirms the point more; for if the soul receive satisfaction in beholding God here as he is pleased in part to reveal himself, then we shall much more be satisfied when he reveals himself fully to us. God is satisfied in and with himself, and therefore he can quickly satisfie us. The very gleanings of God being infinitely more then all the vintage and harvest of the creature.

Thirdly, Our seeing God, is the enjoying of God. How then can we be but happy in seeing him? We see many good things now that advantage us little, because they are none of ours; we do not enjoy them by seeing them, it is but a transient sight: But this sight is enjoyment, and the appropriation of God to our selves. Faith appropriates God here, vision shall much more hereafter.

Lastly, This sight will make us happy, because when once we enjoy God by sight, we shall be filled with assurance of enjoying him for ever. There is nothing but assurance in Heaven, and that not only that our estate is sure and shall continue, but that we shall have a continual sight or manifestation of it. Glory shall never be hidden from our eye, *It shall be revealed in us* (Rom. 8. 18.) This evidence of Glory compleats our happiness in glory. And seeing this vision of God, and the revelation of Glory in us, are the compleature of our happiness, no marvel if *Job* comforts himself in this expectation; *After Worms have destroyed this body, I shall see God in my flesh*. This sight will recompence all our sorrows and sufferings, yea, when once we have attained this sight, we shall not only never see, but forget our sorrows, and remember our sufferings no more.

Verse 27. **Whom I shall see for my self, and mine eye shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.**

Job concluded the former Verse with an assurance, that, *In his flesh he should see God*. This Verse begins upon the same point, *Whom I shall see for my self*; but though it be the same in the matter, yet it comes cloathed with new considerations and additions. He doth not say barely, *Whom I shall see*; but, *Whom I shall see for my self*: There is the first addition. Secondly, *Mine eye shall behold, and not another*: There is a second addition; and this (saith

Job)

Job) I believe *Though my reins be consumed within me*, that's a third.

Whom I shall see for my self.] It is one thing to see, and another thing to see for our selves. In some cases to do or see for our selves is sinful. As, *No man should live to himself*; so in that sence, *No man should see to himself, or for himself.* *Job* promiseth himself a time, wherein he should see, and do for himself without sin. And there is a doing for our selves, or a living to our selves in this life (much more may it be so in the life to come) which is not sinful, nor at all contrary to those Gospel rules of denying our selves, and living unto God. The Original which we render *for my self*, is in the Dative case (as Grammarians speak) which imports favour; I shall see to, or for my self, that is, for my own good, advantage, and comfort: The Prophet speaks in this construction (*Isa.* 9. 6.) *To us a Son is given, to us a Child is born.* He is given to us, or for us; that is, for our benefit, and salvation: There was never such a birth to us as Christ was; and it were better for us never to have been born, then not to have an interest in the birth of Christ. The promise of Christ is the foundation of our comfort; *I shall see him to my self*, (saith *Job*) as having my share, my part in him.

Est Dativus benevolentiæ, favoris, commodi & utilitatis.

Videbo deum mihi, non adversum me sed pro me sententiâ pronunciaturum. Pin. *Videre, hoc loco, mihi sapit forum.* Bold. *Existimo vocem rar esse accusativi casus non nominativi, nec debere referri ad alium vel alios, quam ad deum ipsum.* Bold.

Or, *I shall see him for my self*; that is, as a friend to me, as he that will take my part, and give sentence on my side. Some expound the latter clause of the verse sutably to this; *Whom I shall see for my self; and mine eyes shall behold him, and not another*; that is, not *an adversary*: For the word in the Hebrew signifies not only *alium*, but *alienum*, not only *another*, but *an adversary.* A learned Interpreter puts the word in the Accusative, not in the Nominative case, thus, *Whom I shall see for my self, and not as my adversary (but friend:)* So it refers to God himself, I shall not see God as a stranger to me, much less as an enemy, but shall find his heart opened to me, and him ready to receive me into his everlasting embraces.

It hath been shewed from the former words, that the happiness of Saints after the resurrection consists in vision: Here *Job* riseth up to a fuller assurance of that priviledge, which glorified Saints shall have in Heaven; *Whom I shall see for my self.*

Hence Note, *In Heaven Saints shall have their interest in God clear, undoubtedly clear to them for ever.*

It is the business of faith now to believe in God for our selves; to take Christ for our selves. But though this be the work of faith, yet faith cannot alwayes reach it, or read its own evidences by it. There may be true faith, and yet no sight of Christ for our selves; we may see him, and yet fear we have no interest in him. Come to Saints under temptation, or in times of desertion, and tell them of mercy, and free grace brought in by Christ the Redeemer; they answer, yes, they believe that it is so, Christ is *the Saviour, grace is free, mercy endureth for ever*; But what's all this to them? They see this by faith in the general promise made to sinners, but they see not this for themselves, nor can they make out their share in it; yea, possibly they see God angry; they see him indeed, but not for themselves, but as an adversary to them, or as departed from them; his face is hid, and they doubt whether he will ever unvail it again towards them. This is the state of many Saints here, and there are very few who see God alwayes for themselves in this life, or whose hearts are cleared from all scruples and fears about their interest in Christ. This is reserved for Glory when love shall be perfected: *Perfect love will cast out fear* (1 John 4. 18.) and when fear shall be totally and finally cast out, we shall never have so much as one suspicious doubtful thought, crossing our spirits, or shaking our assurances. Heavenly enjoyments shall not know the least interruption. Saints in this life are in a happy condition above all people in the world: but they meet with many rubs in the making out, and evidencing of their happiness: but in Heaven the favour of God shall ever be in sight, we shall see him continually for our selves. *Job* said in this book, *Thou holdest me for thine enemy.* He found God against him, and dealing with him as if he hated him: but his faith recovered to the highest pitch, *I shall see God*, and he will never act as an adversary any more. God will not so much as personate an enemy in Heaven, though here he smites and wounds his beloved ones, even with the wounds of an enemy; but there's nothing but smiles and embraces in glory; *Whom I shall see for my self.*

Again, This addition to the vision may refer (by way of opposition) to that sight which wicked men shall have of Christ in the resurrection: *I shall see him for my self.* There are others that shall see Christ as well as I, but I shall see him so as they shall not see him, they shall not see him for themselves (*Matth.* 24. 30.) There will be an universal vision of Christ in that great day, *Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then all the Tribes of the earth shall mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory.* All the Tribes of the earth; he speaks of all Nations in allusion to the Nation of the *Jews*, who were distinguished into twelve Tribes, *All the Tribes*, that is, all the Families and Kindreds of the earth *shall see him*: But shall all the Tribes of the earth rejoyce in seeing him? No, all the Tribes of the earth shall mourn. Not that every particular person of every Tribe shall mourn, but many of every Tribe shall mourn. And this Scripture may give us light in the explication of those universal terms about redemption; for as it is said, Christ dyed for all; so here he saith, *All the Tribes of the earth shall mourn* at the appearance of Christ; yet then many shall rejoyce. *Lift up your heads* (saith Christ to the Saints) *for the time of your redemption is at hand.* But all the Tribes, that is, a number of the Tribes, or the greatest number of the Tribes shall mourn. All shall see him, but with a difference: The Saints shall see Christ coming, and it will be a welcome day to them: The wicked shall see him, but it will be a black and a sad day to them (*Revel.* 1. 7.) *Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him;* good, and bad. Which he addeth by way of specification; *Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.* If every eye shall see him, then *they that pierced him* must needs see him; and if so, why are they particularly named? It is usual in other Scriptures, when an universal is first laid down, yet to nominate a particular kind or person, though that be included in the former general. As in the the title of the eighteenth *Psalm*, *A Song of* David *in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies:* There is the universal, and yet it follows, *and from the hand of* Saul. *Saul* was among his enemies, and so was included in the general stile of all his enemies; but he puts in *Saul* by name for special reason, because he was his most mortal enemy. *Samuel* commands *Israel to put away all their false Gods, and* Ashtaroth (1 Sam. 7. 3.) If they put away all, they must needs put away *Ashtaroth*; but he names *Ashtaroth*, because that was a principal Idol. So here, *Every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him.* Under the general *they that pierced him* are included; yet he specifies his piercers, who were of two sorts, and so according to the Text and point in hand, must have a twofold sight of him. Among those who pierced Christ, there were some that repented, and returned (as we read) at that Sermon of *Peter*) Acts 2. *Peter* told them they were the betrayers and murtherers of Christ; this pricked them to the heart, and many repented, embracing and believing on that Christ, whom they had betrayed and murthered. These shall see Christ with joy, though they pierced and put him to sorrow: The death of Christ hath procured mercy for those, whose cruelty procured his death. They who judged Christ worthy to dye, judging themselves so, were through faith delivered from death.

There were another sort that pierced him, who never repented, and they shall see him too, but they shall see him to their sorrow. They would withdraw from this sight, they would not behold him whom they pierced, if they could help it; they would fain be excused, but they shall not. *Every eye shall see him, even they that pierced him.* What a dreadful thing will it be, when they who wilfully and maliciously pierced the Lord Jesus Christ to death, and dyed impenitently in that sin, shall be brought into his presence? This sight of a pierced Christ will pierce their souls with sorrow; yet they shall see him not with sorrow only, but with vexation of heart, and anguish of spirit. They who have not seen a pierced Christ in the sorrows of

repentance, can never see him whom they have pierced, but in the sorrows of despair. To behold Christ with the eye of sense will be most grievous to all those, who have not beheld him with an eye of faith. See him! No, they had rather be covered with the mountains, and that the hills should fall upon them. But they shall see him and be afraid, terror shall take hold of them. 'Tis a promise to some, that they shall see him whom they have pierced, and mourn (*Zach.* 12. 10.) 'Tis a threat to others, that they shall see him whom they have pierced and mourn; every eye shall see him, even they that have pierced him. To see the Saints in happiness, shall be a part of the punishment of the damned (*Luke* 13. 28.) *There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see* Abraham, *and* Isaac, *and* Jacob, *and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and your selves shut out.* You shall be vexed with anger and envy as well as with pain and loss. Now as there shall be a different view and sight at that day in reference to the Saints, Saints shall look upon one another rejoycing; but wicked men shall look on the Saints mourning. It will be a blessed meeting when we shall see *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and our selves let into the Kingdom with them. But the wicked shall see *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* let into the Kingdom, and mourn that themselves are thrust out. Thus also there shall be a different sight of Jesus Christ; Believers shall see for themselves, and rejoyce: The wicked shall see him against themselves, they shall see him as their enemy, and mourn. *I shall see him* (saith *Job*) *for my self.* That's the first addition.

And mine eyes shall behold, and not another.

ראה *verbum conspiciendi hoc loco aliud est à superiori, & significat propriè intendere in rem aliquâ oculis & animo, cum peculiari quodam sensu & experientia rei conspectæ.*

We have in this Text, *see*, and *see*, and *behold*. The word in the Original is different from what we had before. *I shall behold him.* It signifies more then the bare seeing, or the gathering in the species of any object into the eye. It signifies a very vehement beholding; a critical discerning, view, and sight of a thing. *Whom I shall behold.* That is, with deep intention, both of eye, and mind, to find out and rejoyce in all the excellency, beauty, glory, and worth that is in him. A man may come into a room adorned with goodly pictures, he sees them in his passage, he hath a transient view of them, and he takes some pleasure in this view. Another beholds them, to see the workmanship, how the lines are drawn, and features shadowed to the life, he views with skill, and art, this pleaseth much, and gives the accurate beholder high contentment. So here, *Mine eye shall behold him*: That is, I shall even set my self to take a view of him, to gather up (as it were) into my self the idea's of his divine perfections, and so to receive all those delights and contents which rise from such an excellent Object. *Moses* (*Exod.* 3. 3.) had a vision of the burning Bush; *The Angel of the Lord appeared in a flame of fire in the midst of the bush. I will now turn aside* (said *Moses*) *and see this great sight.* He saw it before; for it is said, *The Angel of God appeared to him.* But that did not satisfie? *I* (saith he) *will turn aside and see it*: He useth the word of the Text; that is, I will turn aside to view it yet more exactly, to consider it more fully. I will see it with diligence and intendment, as well as I have seen it with wonder and astonishment. I will get near to observe this miraculous flame, that the bush should burn and not consume. So the word is used (*Eccles.* 1. 16.) *I communed with mine own heart, saying, lo I am come to a great estate, and have gotten more wisdom then all that were before me in* Jerusalem. *Yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.* The Hebrew is, *My heart had seen much of wisdom and knowledge*; that is, I had not only taken a light view, and consideration of those things that concern wisdom and knowledge, but my heart was studying, and beating upon them; I experimented them from time to time, till I was greatly seen in wisdom and knowledge. So here, mine eye shall not only take a glance, or a sight in passage, but I shall feed and satiate mine eye with a fixed observation. But Saints in glory shall come nearer and nearer to God, they shall as *Moses* saith, *turn aside*, to see this great thing the Glory of God, who is *an everlasting burning.* Saints in glory shall ever contemplate the ravishing Excellencies of God, and have a very intimate sight, and apprehension of him; they shall see, and behold him; they shall have as clear a knowledge of, and as free a communion with God as the state of a creature can bear. This the Apostle distinguisheth from our present sight and knowledge of God, which is *through a glass and darkly*, whereas he calleth this *a sight, face to face, and a knowing even as also we are known. Mine eyes shall behold,*

Post primùm illum & jucundissimum sui redemptoris conspectum, ait deinde se attentiùs, observantiùs, diligentiùs prospecturum, intenturumq; oculis & animo in tantam gloriam. Pin.

And not another.] The word which we render, another, signifieth first one differing in heart, condition, and affection, as was touched before: It signifies also any one differing only in name and number: Another person, another man, how much soever he be a friend, or affected to us. This sence of the word our Translators seem to intend: And then the meaning plainly is this, *Mine eye shall behold, and not another*; that is, the sight which I shall have of God in my glorified state, shall not be at the second hand, but such as I shall feel my self: The joy which I shall then receive shall not be from any report or narrative that others shall give me of the Glory of God, but it shall be from mine own personal vision, or sight of God. I shall see with mine own eyes, not anothers, or not by another.

זר *alienus, vel alius, non videbit pro me alius, nã apertim & clarum videbo ipse.*

Now we know God by the reports made to us of him; as those of *Samaria* knew Christ by the report which the Woman made: So, upon the matter the knowledge which we have of God here, is upon the report made to us of God in Ordinances, and in Providences: But as those *Samaritans* came to the Woman and said, *Now we believe, not because of thy sayings; for we have heard him our selves*, &c. So we shall say at last to all, whether things or persons, which have been as means reporting and conveying to us the knowledge of God; now we know, not because you have said it, or shewed it, for we our selves have seen him. We shall behold God our selves, and not by another. Such shall be the difference between all the knowledge we have of God here, and that which we shall have in glory. The knowledge we have here, is but like that which the *Samaritans* had of Christ by the Womans report; but that which we shall have in Heaven shall be like that which they had of Christ when himself came personally among them, and spake immediately. Or we may illustrate it by that of the Queen of the South: The knowledge which we have of God here, and of his Glory and Excellency, is like that of the Queen of the South in her own Countrey; there she heard a report of *Solomon's* person, of his government, of his riches, and dignity, and such a report as did not only affect and astonish her, but provoke her to undertake that great journey, that she might see for her self, and her eyes behold, and not another; and when she came to the Court at *Jerusalem*, and there beheld *Solomon* in his person, and attendance; when she observed the service of his table, and heard his wisdom, there was no more spirit in her (*1 Kings* 10. 5.) that is, she was as one astonished, whose spirits are conquered, and over-matched, or as one in a swoon, whose spirits are sunk and dissipated. Where the natural Spirit doth not act, it is said not to be. When we come to the Court of Heaven, as the Queen of the South to *Solomon's* Court, and there behold how much God is beyond and above all that we have hitherto heard of him here at home in our own Countrey, we shall be rapt up into admiration, and there shall be indeed no more of this low and narrow spirit in us for ever.

זר *alienus à fide dissimilitudinem quandã morum & vitæ indicare potest, significat etiam id quod amico & familiari opponitur, & quod propter insuetudinẽ est horrori & nauseæ.*

Further, The word is taken, not only for another person, or for one differing personally, but for one differing in condition, and in quality, or bearing any dissimilitude in manners; and so it was applyed to him who was an alien from the faith, a stranger to the Covenant, and Commonwealth of *Israel.* As if he had said, I shall behold him, and not another; that is, not *an alien from the Common-wealth of* Israel; *not a stranger from the Covenant*; not a man of another frame of spirit then I now am of, such shall not behold him. Which suggests this Note,

All that behold in Glory, shall be of one condition, of one faith and frame of spirit.

No stranger shall behold him, all shall be brethren; they all shall be as one man, or as if there were not *another* among them all. Heaven hath no mixture. All things and persons shall be as in one state, so of one piece. No tares in that field, nor goats in that flock. Saints enjoy unmixt communion here sometimes, and live together as if there

there were not *another* among them: This Spirit of holiness and of unity was eminently poured out upon the first Gospel-Church, (*Acts* 2. 1.) *They were all together with one accord in one place*, as if they had all but one soul; and they *continued as in the Apostles doctrine, so in fellowship*, v. 42. Thus it is in the truth and height of spiritual communion below; Saints have not a stranger among them. And it is promised as the great priviledge of *Sion*, *The* Canaanite *shall be no more in the Land*; that is, there shall be no Alien among them, (*Nahum* 1. 15.) *Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: O* Judah *keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows, for the wicked shall no more pass through thee, he is utterly cut off.* The wicked, or *Belial* (in the Original) he that will not bear the yoak of God, shall no more pass *through thee*, much less stay and lodge in thee; no man shall be yoaked with you, but he that bears the yoak of Christ: O rejoyce, and keep thy feasts. That will be the day of *Sions* glorious liberty, when all (within her liberties) bear the yoak of Christ, and none shall be unequally yoaked. This is the glory of Saints below; and this shall be perfect in the state above. There shall be no stranger, no *Canaanite* in Heaven, none that are uncircumcised, or unclean: This is the harmony of Heaven, none but Saints shall be admitted there; and all the Saints shall be of one mind, and mind the same things there. *Mine eye* (saith holy *Job*) *shall behold him, and not another.*

Thirdly, Mr. *Calvin* carries the sence of these words to an Identity of the object to be seen, not to an Identity or consimilitude of the subject seeing. *I shall behold him, and not another*; that is, I shall behold him, and *none other*; I shall behold God alone: As he is the adequate, so he shall be the sole object of mine eye. He shall fill me with himself, I shall see God, and not look after, or take notice of any thing besides him: Mine eye shall not wander upon other objects. From that reading we are taught,

That, as in Heaven we shall see God; so we shall eye nothing but God.

We shall then indeed love God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our might, yea, then we shall see him with all our eye, or contemplate him with all our understanding. Our whole man shall be fixed for ever on God, and God alone. Now the Saints have their eye upon God, they behold God by believing, but there are a thousand objects that draw us away from God, and mingle with our sight of him. We behold God, and other things too: We behold God; but we behold men, and many times, *we have mens persons in admiration.* And whereas we should have God only in admiration, we have the wisdom and knowledge, the holiness and graces of some men, the power and greatness of other men in admiration. But then nothing besides the wisdom and knowledge, the holiness and grace, the power and greatness of God shall be admired and exalted. *I shall behold him, and not another. Then God shall be all in all* (1 *Cor.* 15. 28.) All shall behold the Face of God, and that shall be an eternal satisfying feast. Glorified Saints shall not go for one morsel to any creature, they shall have all in the vision of God. It is the duty of faith to do so here; faith is taught to live upon God alone, to behold God, and none other, Christ, and none other; to behold Christ for justification, and none other, that *we may be found in him, not having any righteousness of our own.* This is the lesson that faith is taught here, to look to Christ, and to none other; and so to God, and to none other (*Psal.* 73. 25.) *David* (or *Asaph*) professeth that such was his faith; he speaks as high of his faith here, as he could of his vision in Heaven; *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And whom have I in earth that I desire besides thee? David's* faith beheld God, and none other, in Heaven; and comparatively to God, he valued none upon this earth. I have none in Heaven, neither Saint nor Angel; I have neither *Abraham*, *Isaac*, nor *Jacob*, to rejoyce in; and upon earth I have none, neither Wife nor Child, neither friend nor servant, that I look to, or rejoyce in, in any the least degree with God; *Whom have I upon earth that I desire besides thee? David* was a man deservedly desired by many, and he had doubtless duly bounded desires to many on earth, yet his desire of God had such a holy excessiveness in it, that he might say, *I desire none but him.* This is the business of faith to draw the soul purely to God. Saints are invited (*Psal.* 48. 12, 13, 14.) to walk about *Sion*, as if we were to make it our happiness to behold her strength and beauty; *Walk about* Zion, *go round about her, tell her Towers, mark her Bulwarks, consider her Pallaces, that you may tell it to the Generations following.* We are to busie our selves, to imploy both sense and understanding upon *Zion*; upon her Towers and Bulwarks, upon her Pallaces and Walls; not as if the Saints should be taken up meerly in the admiration of the beauty and glory of *Zions* Ordinances and priviledges. The last verse tells us, we must not stay in *Zions* Bulwarks and Pallaces, while it concludes thus; *For this God is our God for ever and ever, he shall be our guide even unto death.* He saith not, It is this *Zion*, these strong Walls and Bulwarks, these goodly Pallaces, which I call you to look on as your joy and happiness: No, this God, the God of *Zion*, you are chiefly to look on, and he is your chiefest happiness: unless you see God in *Zions* Bulwarks, and Walls, and Pallaces, it is not worth your sight. *This God is our God.* He quite slips the mention of Walls, Bulwarks, and Pallaces, and rests in the mention of God. Thus we should live upon God, not only in the great mystery of Redemption and Justification: In reference to which Christ by the Prophet bespeaks the whole attention of our souls (*Isa.* 45. 22.) *Look to me, and be ye saved*; that is, to me alone; but also in all our enjoyments. This, I say, will be perfect in vision above, we shall have, we shall enquire after nothing there but God, to be filled with, to all eternity.

As God hath none upon the earth that he desires to look on, but only his Saints; he cares not for all the rest of the World, he scarce can give them a look: *To this man will I look* (saith the Lord) *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word* (Isa. 66. 2.) As the Prophet said when there were two great Kings before him, whereof one was very wicked; *Were it not that I regard the presence of* Jehoshaphat *the King of* Judah, *I would not look towards thee, nor see thee* (2 Kings 3. 14.) so the Lord beholds all the children of men from Heaven, yet he is said to look only to the Saints; He beholds the great, the rich, but he looks only to the poor in spirit, and to them he looks, how poor soever they are in the flesh. *To him will I look that is poor*, &c. As if he had said, Mine eye passeth over others lightly, but where-ever I find a man of a contrite heart, I fix mine eye upon him, and rejoyce in such a sight. There is not one humble soul, but the eye of God is on him, and will continue upon him for ever. Now as God is taken up with viewing and beholding Saints; so the Saints are and shall for ever be taken up in beholding God. God sees through all the perfections that are in us in a moment; God needs not look long on us, as if he were unsatisfied what we are; there is no excellency in us, but is open to him: But we can never draw out the perfections of God, how long soever we stay beholding him; some new glory will break forth to us, or rather the whole Glory of God (so far as the most perfect creature is able to take it in) will be everlastingly new to us.

All these conceptions about and interpretations of the Text, are pious and profitable; but that which I rather take to be the proper meaning of these words (*Mine eye shall behold, and not another*) is this, *Job* (as was touched in giving the Analysis of these two Verses) speaks here of the Identity of his flesh in the resurrection: *I shall see him, I shall see him for my self, mine eyes shall behold him, and not another.* That is, *I, the man* who now stand here before you, this same *Job* who now speaketh; I the very same numerical person shall see God in this very flesh, and with these eyes; they shall be indeed new dressed and dyed, trimmed, and made fit to come into the presence of the great and glorious God; yet it shall be even this flesh, and these eyes, in which I shall come into the presence of God, and behold my Redeemer. I shall be altered from what I was, but I shall not be another then I was; I shall be changed into a better condition, but I shall not be changed into another person. My qualities shall have a perfective alteration, but I shall retain the same matter, and be the same man. A man raised glorious and immortal, is what he was, except his mortality; and hath no more then he had, except his glory. The Philosopher acknowledgeth there may be a specifical, but not a numerical restauration of

Idem qui sum, & non alienus. Jun. *Hisce oculis ego ipse, hac ipsa carne, &c. Resuscitatus & glorioſus non erit alius à seipso mortali & nondum glorioſo.* Bold. *Egomet non in aliud quidpiam commutatus.* Bez.

that which is corrupted. But *Job*'s faith was clearer then *Aristotle*'s reason; He believed a personal resurrection, *Mine eye shall behold, and not another*; I shall not be changed into another person, whatever changes I undergo, I shall be *Job* still, the same *Job*.

Quæcunq; substantia est corruptibilis, reintegratur eadem specie non eadem numero. Arist. lib. 2. de Gener.

Hence Observe, *Every man at the resurrection shall receive the same body that now he hath, and be the same man that now he is.*

Resurget cutis mea, quæ perpetitur hæc. Sept.

The Septuagint are full in this; and therefore they translate by way of explication, *My skin that hath suffered these things shall rise again.* We shall be in the resurrection what we are now, except our infirmities and imperfections, our lameness and blindness, our sores and sicknesses; all these shall be done away, but we shall remain; we shall loose nothing but that which is not worth the keeping; we shall loose nothing but that which to loose will be a gain to us. Every man in the resurrection shall be, though not in every consideration, *The WHAT he was*, yet he shall be *The WHO he was*, both name and person. Christ will not loose those particular parts and members of the body in the dust of the grave, which himself hath redeemed from the fire of Hell. There are two Pronouns, the one *possessive*, the other *demonstrative*, in these words, which speak much to this point; *Mine eyes*, and *This*, *Job* did as it were lay his hand upon his breast, and say, *This flesh, this body*; as Christ (*John* 2. 19.) *Destroy this Temple, and in three dayes I will raise it again.* This very Temple, though destroyed, shall be built up again. The Apostle useth such Identical expressions (1 *Cor.* 15. 53.) *This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. This corruptible*, and *this mortal.* He doth not only say corruptible shall put on incorruption, and mortal shall put on immortality, but *this*, and *this*, to shew the sameness of it. It was a custom in the primitive times (as some have observed) when they repeated that Article of the Faith, *I believe the resurrection of the flesh*, to point to their own body, and say, *even of this flesh*; I believe the resurrection of this flesh, of this body.

Etiam hujus carnis.

One of the Ancients hath a large discourse upon this subject, wherein he discovers some, who though they granted the soul immortal, yet denyed the resurrection of the same body: Such were the *Marcionites*, *Basilidians*, and *Valentinians*. These, saith he, went halves with the *Sadduces* in their opinion. The *Sadduces* denyed Spirits. Hence (*Acts* 23. 6.) *Paul* perceiving that the Assembly was mixed of *Sadduces* and *Pharisees* (and wisely considering, that if he did but mind them of their differences between themselves, they would not so strongly agree and combine against him) he made his advantage of it by professing openly that he was a *Pharisee*. And the sacred Historian tells us what the peculiar tenets of the *Sadduces* were (*ver.* 8.) *The Sadduces say there is no resurrection, neither Angel nor Spirit* (they denyed both) *but the Pharisees confess both.* They held, that there were immortal spirits or souls united to the bodies of men, that those bodies should arise and be re-united to the soul. They also confessed that there were Angels, who are Spirits subsisting properly without bodies. Now, as the *Sadduces* denyed the resurrection of the body, so others denyed the resurrection of the same body: These he calleth sharers or halvers in the *Sadduces* opinion: Though not so grosly as they, yet too too grosly departing from the faith. And indeed they who deny the resurrection of the same body, do (by implication) altogether deny the resurrection of the body. For if the same numerical body should not rise, it could not be called a resurrection: Resurrection is the rising of that which fell, and the taking up of that which was before laid. So that it would be the creation of a new body, not the resurrection of the old, if it were not the same body. And it conduceth much to the comfort of Saints, and may be the terror of wicked men, to keep close to the faith of this Article. The Apostle seems to touch it (2 *Cor.* 5. 10.) *We shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things he hath done in his body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* That hand which hath been doing for Christ, that very tongue which hath been speaking for Christ, that whole body, which hath been moved and acted for Jesus Christ, as an instrument of his glory, that shall receive the reward: As also that hand, that eye, that tongue, that foot which hath moved, and stirred against Christ, that also shall be punished, and receive according to the evil committed in the body. Judgment would not be exact, unless as there hath been a co-partnership between soul and body in their works, so also they should be co-partners both in reward and punishment.

Tertullianus eos qui reditum animæ non ejusdem corporis in resurrectione admittebāt (Marcionitas, Barsilidianos, & Valentinianos) *eleganter vocat partiarios sententiæ Sadducæorum, ut qui dimidiā tantum agnoscerent resurrectionē.* Tertul. de resur. car. l. 2.

Si in alio corpore resurrexero, jam ego non ero qui resurgo; non enim resurrectio dici poterit, ubi non resurgit, quod cecidit. Greg.

Judicium integrum non erit, nisi sicut fuit inter animæ & carnem operarum societas, ita etiam sit mercedis aut supplicii. Tertull. *persequitur hoc Argumentum l. 2. de resur. car. c. 14, 15, 16, 17.*

If it be objected, How can the same numerical body rise again, especially in such cases, when thousands of carkasses are mingled, and their dust promiscuously heaped together, or scattered abroad? When the bodies of men are devoured by wild beasts, and digested into the substance of fowls and fishes, especially when the bodies of men are eaten and concocted into the bodies of other men? How can these numerical bodies rise? I answer, First, If we will not rest in matters of faith till we have a clear rational account of them, our faith may quickly be at a stand. I answer, Secondly, That as it is easie to make objections against faith; so faith hath one answer as easie as these objections. The Apostle gives it, and into that all such doubts must be resolved (*Phil.* 3. 20.) for having shewed the present condition or disposition of the spirit of Saints in the former verse, *Our conversation is in Heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.* He presently shews what the future condition of the Saints bodies shall be; *Who shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body* (Who is this, who puts this vile body into such a glorious fashion? Trouble not your selves for that, there is power enough to do it, It is done) *according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.* This is an answer to the hardest objections, Christ can subdue all things, therefore those which are hardest.

There is no difficulty to omnipotency.

You ask how the same body can be restored? I ask how the first body was created? Tell me how God created Heaven and Earth out of nothing? So that as the Apostle speaks (*Heb.* 11. 3.) *Things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear:* How were these things done? If you argue by reason, you will be pos'd and gravell'd in these as well as in that other; yea, you will be at a wall, and not able to answer about that which is ordinary, and every day done, and shall continue to be done in all the Generations of men (*Solomon* puts the question, *Eccles.* 11. 5.) *Tell me how the bones grow in the womb of her that is with child:* Can you tell how the Child is framed? Thou canst not give an account of thy own production, nor find out the work of God in forming the body; How then canst thou tell me? Or how can I tell thee the work of God in raising the body? Or how that scattered mingled dust is severed and recollected to each proper body? I must say as *David* (*Psal.* 139. 6.) *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it*; or as he at the fourteenth verse of the same *Psalm* concerning his making, *We are fearfully and wondrously made: marvellous are thy works, O God.* And must conclude about this point of the resurrection as the Apostle begins about the creation (*Heb.* 11. 3.) *As through faith we understand that the worlds were framed*; so that the body of man shall be raised *by the Word of God.* Therefore as to the manner how such things are done, we must have recourse only to the Almighty power of God, to the All-powerful God, *Who is able to subdue all things to himself. Mine eye shall behold, and not another,*

Though my reins be consumed within me.

I toucht upon the interpretation of this clause before, as it suits with that passage, *vers.* 26. *Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, and though my reins be consumed within me.* Though I be totally consumed, skin without, and reins within, yet notwithstanding, I believe, that I shall rise and see God. Thus it was joyned with the first words of the twenty sixth verse, to shew the triumph of faith over all difficulties that lye in the way of the resurrection. In this sence I have done with it already; and I take that to be the meaning of our Translators, *Though my reins be consumed within me.*

Yet

Yet a little further to open these words, and to give you two or three things from them. The Vulgar translation is extream wide from our reading, though the abetters of it labour to make it out from the Original; *This hope is laid up in my bosom.* *Job* having given a confession of his faith in the Redeemer, and of the resurrection, he (according to this translation) concludes, *This hope, or the hope of these things is laid up in my bosom.* The word rendred *within me* in the Hebrew, signifies the *bosom* or *chest* (as we call it) of the body; and so, by a Metaphor, that wherein we lay up our secrets, our desires, and our hopes; these are all laid up in our bosoms. Jesus Christ is said to come out of the *bosom of his Father*, where his secrets, his hid treasures, are stored up.

Reposita est hæc spes in sinu meo. Vulg.

כלה *significat consummari vel deficere, ut aliis modis sic peculiariter desiderio alicujus rei. Unde etiam usurpatur pro desiderare & diligere. Hinc dicuntur renes*

We say, *Though my reins be consumed within me*; they say, *This hope is laid up in my bosom.* But how come they by the word *hope*, and the word *laid up?* The answer is thus given: The same root which signifies the *reins*, signifies also to *consume*, or to *finish*. And because our desires consume us, (a man by strong desires is as it were wasted and spent:) Or because a man endeavours by all means, to perfect and consummate his desires, by attaining and enjoying the thing desired; therefore the word doth also signifie to *consume*, or to *consummate* as well as to *desire*. And because the reins are the seat of desire, as Naturalists speak, they are therefore in the Hebrew expresst by desire it self. The same word is rendred both *reins* and *desire*, because the reins provoke desire, or to the fulfilling of desire (*Psal.* 26. 2.) *Try my heart and my reins*; that is, Lord try my desires what the things are which I would have. So (*Psal.* 7. 9.) *The Lord tryeth the heart, and the reins*; that is, he finds out or discovers the most secret desires of men; He knows what every one would have, as well as what every one doth; He knows what the motions of the reins are, as well as what the motion of our hands are. And hence because what we hope for, we desire and wait for, therefore the Text is thus read, *This hope is laid up in my bosom.* It's true, Saints treasure up in their breasts the hope of the resurrection, the hope of the glory of the life to come: This they keep among their chiefest treasures; this is the riches, the gold and silver which they lay up in their bosoms; whatsoever they lose in the world, when they are stripped of all, yet they have a chest full of this treasure. *This hope is laid up in my bosom.* Saints have their bosoms full of this hope, when stript of all. But because this reading, though the sence be pious, strains too hard upon the Text, therefore I will not insist upon it.

כליות *quasi concupiscentes aut consummantes, quia in illis videntur consummari desideria. Hinc vulgatus vertit, spes, quæ cum desiderio rei sperata conjuncta est.*

Further, Whereas we say, *Though my reins be consumed within me.* The word *Though*, is not in the Hebrew; there 'tis only *My reins are consumed.* Now because ordinarily in Scripture *reins* are taken for *desires*, therefore this sence is very clearly made out from it, that *Job* having spoken of the sight he should have of God, and the assurance of his own resurrection, concludes with this expression, *My reins, or my desires are spent*; that is, I have nothing more to desire, nothing more to wish and seek after then this, a blessed resurrection, and the enjoyment of God for ever.

כלו כליותי

Desideria, vota intimæ animæ cogitationes & affectiones consummata, ad finem & perfectionem deducta sunt. Nihil habeo quod desiderem.

Hence we may Note, *All the desires of Saints are consummate, yea (I may say) consumed in the hope of a happy resurrection, and of the vision and enjoyment of God.*

These are the consummation, and the very utmost of their desires: The seventy-second *Psalm* concludes thus, *The Prayers of* David *the Son of* Jesse *are ended:* Which some render, The desires of *David* are consumed and finished; *David* had no more to desire. Why doth he put such a conclusion to that *Psalm, The prayers, or desires of* David *are ended?* That *Psalm* is a Propheſie of Christ; *David* was setting faith on work upon the Kingdom of Christ; and when he had done this, he shuts up all, *I have no more to desire*, here I make an end; here is the utmost of my joyes and comforts; not an end of consumption, but an end of perfection, I can go no further; being come to Jesus Christ, I have no more to ask.

Cum hic Psalmus sit de petendo & expectando Messia non solum eo Psalmo suum psalterium clausit David, sed etiã videtur fuisse summa suæ spei desideriorum & precum.

So also *David* (2 *Sam.* 23.) having elegantly described the blessings which follow a righteous Government, shuts up thus (*ver.* 5.) *Though my house be not so with God*: That is, Though I have not such a glorious posterity, and such an illustrious succession upon my throne; or, as the former Verse speaks it, *Though my house be not as the light of the morning when the Sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain; though my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, that is all my salvation, and all my desire*; here is the end of my reins: What though my house do not flourish, nor shine in that outward brightness that now it doth? Are these my chief hopes? Do these carry my strongest desires? No, my hope is laid up in the Covenant of life and peace, the good whereof is all my desire: Doubtless *David* desired that his Children should prosper, and that the Throne of *Israel* might continue in his line, but comparatively with the spiritual benefits of the Covenant of God in Christ, and the enjoyment of him, those were no desires, and therefore referring to them he saith, this is all my desire, or I have no more to desire, *My reins are consumed within me.*

Again, Some render thus; *My reins are consumed by reason of my desire:* As if he had said, I have spoken of death, I have spoken of glory, of the vision of God, and now my reins are consumed, my very desiring part is consumed with desire after these things: I desire these things, so that I am consumed with the desire of them, and my desiring faculty is spent with desiring. Not only were all his desires terminated in this, but his desiring power was swallowed up in the pursuit of this desire; he had such strong affections to God, that he was even ready to fall into a swoon, and faint away.

Hence Note, *Saints upon the discovery of the glory of God, and the happiness of the next life, are filled with longing desires after those enjoyments.*

Lord, I have waited for thy salvation, saith *Jacob* (Gen. 49. 19.) *Jacob* speaks this upon his death-bed, as that which he had been looking for all his life; as if that were the account of all his actions in the world, and the story of his whole life; *Lord, I have been waiting for thy salvation* (Psal. 119. 81.) *My soul fainteth for thy salvation*; that is, it fainteth with desire after thy salvation; and (*v.* 127.) *I have longed for thy salvation.* All desires are summed up in longing. There is a strong desire in Saints here to see God, and such as makes them faint, even to see and enjoy him in his Ordinances. (*Psal.* 27. 4.) *One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that I will seek after* (that is, never give over seeking after till I reach and attain it) *to behold the beauty of the Lord, and enquire in his Temple.* Again (*Psal.* 42. 1, 2.) *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so my heart panteth after God: When shall I come and appear before God?* That is, When shall I behold and enjoy him in these lower Heavens, his spiritual Dispensations and Ordinances. Now if there be so great and so longing a desire to see the Lord through these *mediums*, or in these glasses, how much more to see him immediately and face to face? And if that be *The one thing*, the only thing which *David* desired, if all his desires were summed up in that here, how much more in Heaven, how will that desire swallow all our desires in glory? And indeed we could not abide in Glory with any other desire but that. The Saints are described in their present state by this Periphrasis, *Such as love the appearing of Christ*; as if they loved nothing else. What then will Christ be to them when he shall appear? They who love Christ, whom they have not seen, how shall they love Christ when they see him!

We may speak of the precious things of the Gospel, and of the glorious enjoyments of Christ to carnal hearts, and they never desire them; they are so far from having their reins consumed in the hot love of them, that their spleen is only stirred against them.

From the whole context, consider upon what subject *Job* falls when himself was fallen into that sad condition; he was fallen into the depth and gulf of worldly misery, and outward affliction, the hand of God was heavy upon him; What was his resolve, whither doth he betake himself? He meditates the resurrection; he meditates the estate of Saints after this life, and this bears up his spirit in the midst of all the afflictions with which he was burdened in this life.

Hence

Hence Observe, *Faith in the resurrection to life encourageth us in or against all the troubles and afflictions of this life.*

As Saints find present support and strength in affliction, by what Christ every day administers and gives forth unto them; so by what they hope and are assured he will give and be unto them in that great day. The hope of future good is a present comfort. (*2 Cor.* 4. 17.) *For this cause we faint not*; What cause was that? Because we have this hope, this faith (*ver.* 14.) *That he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.* Expectations from Christ are as the cordials which keep us from fainting under our burthens, and revive us in the sorrows of death it self. The faith of Christ in the resurrection of his own body to life, is spoken of prophetically, as that which bare up his spirit in the hour of death (*Psal.* 16. 9, 10.) *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy holy One to see corruption.* Now as that was Christs support in his sorrows, and sufferings, that he should not be left in the grave, that he should not see corruption: So it is the support of Saints, that though they see, yet they shall not for ever lye under the power of corruption. (*Psal.* 17. 15. *Psal.* 49. 15.) *Thou wilt redeem me from the power of the grave.* The Apostle makes his Doctrine the Canon of Consolation (*1 Thes.* 4. 18.) *Comfort one another with these words:* What words were these? All those words, beginning at the thirteenth Verse to the end of the Chapter: *I would not have you to be ignorant brethren, concerning them which are asleep* (he means dead) *that ye sorrow not even as others that have no hope: for if we believe that Jesus dyed and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him,* &c. The Author to the *Hebrews* is abundant in testifying how the *Jewish* Martyrs comforted themselves with this thing in the midst of those various deaths with which they were encompassed. (*Heb.* 11. 35.) *They did not accept of deliverance, that they might receive a better resurrection.* Why it is called a better resurrection was shewed in opening the fourteenth Verse of the fourteenth Chapter of this Book. The hope of the resurrection was a ground of such strong consolation to the Saints of former times, that it was called expresly, *The Consolation.* We may collect this from the discourse which Christ was pleased to maintain with *Martha* concerning the death of her Brother *Lazarus*, whom Jesus loved. For whereas Christ tells her (*John* 11. 23.) *Thy Brother shall rise again.* *Martha* saith, *I know he shall rise in the resurrection at the last day*: What the Greek calleth *The Resurrection*, the Syriack Paraphrase calls *The Consolation*, reading it thus, *I know that he shall rise again in the consolation.* What strong consolation did the Believers of those Ages draw from their assurance of a resurrection, seeing resurrection and consolation were terms equivalent? When this was but named, the other was understood; we have now the first-fruits of consolation, but our harvest will not be, till our dead bodies, which the Apostle compares to seed sown, spring out of the earth again.

I might further shew, that the resurrection is not only the consolation of Saints, but the consolation of the whole creation: The Apostle speaks of it under that notion (*Rom.* 8. 19, 22.) *For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God.* And again, *The whole creation* (not only living, but sensless creatures, these must be taken in to make up the whole creation) *groaneth, and travelleth in pain until now.* But what would the creature have? *It waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God, and to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. We are now the Sons of God* (saith the Apostle *John*, 1 Epist. 3. 2.) *and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him:* At the appearance of Christ, the Son of God by nature, his Adopted sons shall appear what they are, there will be a glorious manifestation of them when Christ shall appear in glory. This glory (which will be compleat at the resurrection) the whole creation now groaning waiteth for, being subjected under hope to participate (each creature according to its capacity) in the glory of it. Now if all creatures are sustained by this hope, much more man, who is chiefly concerned in it. *Job* is a great example of it, who upon his sorrowful and sick bed raised his soul into consolation, by thoughts of the resurrection. His friends pressed him with hopes and promises of a temporal resurrection, if he did repent: but he disclaimed the hope of such a resurrection, or was not much affected with it, he little minded a resurrection to temporal glory; but he had an assurance of that which served his turn a thousand times better, making him even then, if not joyful, yet patient under all his tribulations. *I shall see God for my self, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.*

Job having thus declared his faith, makes an application of all particularly to his Friends in the two last verses; *But ye should say, why persecute we him?* &c.

VERS. 28, 29.

But ye should say, why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?
Be ye afraid of the sword: for wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword, that ye may know there is a judgment.

THus *Job* concludes, and his conclusion consists of two parts.

Whereof the first is a direction.

The second a commination.

He gives direction (*ver.* 28.) where he tells his Friends their duty, or what resolutions became them concerning him; *Ye should say, why persecute we him?* He subjoyns a reason, or the ground of that direction, *Seeing the root of the matter is found in me?*

The commination or threat is laid down (*ver.* 29.) *Be ye afraid of the sword.* While he bids them be afraid of the sword, he fore-warns them that the sword is coming, and that the judgment of God was ready to overtake, and fall upon them, if they still persisted in their hard thoughts, and uncharitable censures of him.

Here also he subjoyns a reason or ground of this commination; *For wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword.* I warn you of the sword, and I see the reason why; wrath seems to awaken, and who knows what work it may make among you ere long: This I know from many Authorities and experiences, That, *Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword, that ye may know that there is a Judgment.*

First, Consider the direction.

Verse 28. **But ye should say, why persecute we him?**

Ye should say.] The Hebrew is rendred three wayes.

First thus, *For, you will say*, as implying a future ground, or occasion, yea, an urgent necessity, which they should see and be convinced of at last, to say, *Why persecute we him?*

Secondly thus, *Wherefore do ye say?* Intimating their present action, or assertion.

Thirdly, We render it, *Ye should say*; at once shewing their duty, and convincing their neglect of it. As if he had said, *O my friends, ye ought to say, or it is best for you to say thus; look to your selves, this is your duty to say, why persecute we him?* So the Prophet (*Mal.* 1. 6.) *A son honoureth his father*; the meaning is, a son ought to honour his father: There are many sons who dishonour their fathers; but it becomes every son to honour and obey, or by obeying to honour his father. Thus here, *For you say*; that is, you should say, or you ought to say,

בו יאמרו *Potentiale est dicere debueratis, vel vestrum erat dicere.* Merc.

Why [persecute] **we him?**] We had this word (*ver.* 22.) *Why do ye persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?* Here he puts it to them again, *Ye should say, why persecute we him?*

The word which we translate **to persecute**, is a Metaphor taken from wild beasts, or ravenous birds, whose hunger or cruelty makes them swift and fierce to overtake, and so to satiate themselves with their prey. The Greek Translators of the old Testament usually render it by that word which is used in the Greek of the new Testament, to express the vexation of the Saints or Gospel-professors by the World, for the Faith of Christ, and the testimony of a good Conscience. And because this word bears in it the sence of a most earnest and vehement pursuit, therefore when the Spirit of God would put Saints upon the strongest, and most vehement pursuit of any grace, or duty, he useth this word, and exhorts them even to persecute it (*1 Cor.* 14. 1.) *Follow after charity. Persecute charity*; that is, be

רדף *Insecutus, prosecutus, persecutus*; &c.

be as eager after charity as a cruel man is eager to persecute him that is innocent and godly (*Heb.* 12. 14.) *Follow peace with all men, and holiness:* It is this word: As it is the strongest evidence of the sinfulness of any man to persecute those persons who have received grace; so it is an evidence of purest holiness to persecute or earnestly to pursue the highest attainments of grace. There is nothing of freer gift then Grace, and the Kingdom of Heaven; yet the Kingdom of God delights to suffer violence, and then 'tis best when the violent take it by force. The Grace of God to man is free; yet man should be fierce in following the Grace of God. The love of good hath made as hot persecutions as ever wrath hath made against it. But to the Text.

Why persecute we him?] This word may be considered two wayes. There is a persecution in a strict sence; and a persecution in a large sence. I conceive that we are not here to take persecution in a strict sence, as if *Job* did imagine his Friends were (as we may say) bloody *Bonner*'s, or *Nero*'s, or *Diocletian*'s, that they did oppose and vex him directly (or *eo nomine*) for truth and righteousness sake, or that in opposing him, they opposed or suppressed their own light: But here persecution is taken in a large sence, for unfriendly dealing, or for such unkind carriages as are very wide from and unsuitable to those who profess love. There is a threefold persecution, First, A mental persecution, when the spirit of a man riseth up, and opposeth another. Secondly, There is a verbal persecution, when men give hard words, and uncharitable censures. Thirdly, There is a real persecution (there is real persecution in both the former, as real is opposed to imaginary) or a persecution by the hand; such as is the dragging of innocent persons before the Tribunal of the Magistrates: As Christ foretells his Disciples, *Ye shall be brought before Governours and Kings for my Names sake* (*Matth.* 10. 18.) Here we are to take persecution in the second signification. *Job*'s Friends did not hate him, they thought indeed that he had done very wickedly, and that he was very wicked, they concluded that he was leavened with hypocrisie; but I cannot conceive that they were leavened with malice against him, nor was theirs persecution in the third sence; they did not hale him before the Magistrate, nor bring him to judgment and tryal. But it was persecution of the middle rank, hard language, and unfriendly censures. *Job* was under the persecution of the tongue, he complained of that (*Chap.* 12. 4.) *I am as one mocked of his neighbour.* And again (*Chap.* 17. 2.) *Are there not mockers with me?* Mocking is called persecution (*Gal.* 4. 29.) *He that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the spirit. Ishmael* persecuted *Isaac* with scornful language, he mocked him (*Gen.* 21. 9.) Such was *Job*'s persecution, and he bids his Friends give him any reason if they could, why they persecuted him thus. *But ye should say, why persecute we him?* There are three or four readings of the words as joyned together.

Quia dicetis, quis persecutus est eum? i. e. quis persecutus est eum nisi Deus qui omnia merita novit? Cajet.

First, Some thus, *Because you will say, who persecutes him?* As if he had said, *You put it off from your selves, you think you do not persecute me at all, ye say it is the hand of God on me, not yours; we do not touch you, God hath, and Satan hath by his permission. You will say, who persecutes him?* Is it we that have done it? Is not the hand of God on you? Doth not that lead us to speak thus concerning you, and to judge thus of you? Why do you say that we persecute you? It is God who knows very well what you deserve, and now renders to you according to your deservings? It is he (not we) that persecuteth you.

Nam confido dicetis, quid persequimur illum? Coc.

Secondly, Thus, *For I trust you will say, why persecute we him?* As if he had said, I have therefore made this profession; because, I hope, that when you have once heard it, you will deal more gently, favourably, and friendly with me, then hitherto you have done; you will say, why persecute we this man? You will begin to question your selves for what you have done, and take up better counsels and resolves for the future. This is a proper sence of the words, and comes near that intended in our translation.

Quare ergo nunc dicitis, persequamur eum. Vulg.

Thirdly, The vulgar Latine renders, *Wherefore do ye now say, let us persecute him?* This translation makes it a reproof of their purpose to oppose him, or a description of his Friends, still conspiring to persecute him. As if *Job* had heard them combining together, and encouraging one another against him; as some are expressed, against whom *David* prayeth (*Psal.* 64.) *Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked* (ver. 2.) *Who whet their tongue like a sword,* &c. (ver. 3.) *They encourage themselves in an evil matter; they commune of laying snares privily* (Ver. 5.) *They search out iniquities, they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep* (v. 6.) *Solomon* warns his son not to hearken when such sollicite (*Prov.* 1. 10.) *If sinners entice thee, consent thou not; if they say, Come, let us lay wait for blood.* *Job* according to this translation is here conceived reproving and chiding his Friends for such a combination, *Wherefore do ye say, let us persecute him?*

Æquũ jam esset ut in cordibus vestris compũgremini, dicentes, quare persequimur virum probũ, & rectè de deo, dequè divinis sentientem? Rab. Lev.

Fourthly, Our Translation gives the words the sence of an Exhortation, either to consider why they had already opposed him, or to repent of that opposition, *Ye should say*; that is, it is your duty, I exhort or advise you to say, *Why do we persecute him?* It is but time that you should now recollect your selves, and be in a better mind, that your hearts should smite you for what you have done, and that you should put this question home to your own souls, Why have we thus far troubled him? Or why should we trouble him any further?

Some joyn this verse with the former, thus, *My grief and sorrow are so great, my pain is so painful, that my very reins are consumed within me; so that unless you had put off all humanity, unless your compassions were totally consumed in you, you would have said before this time, Why do we persecute a dry leaf? Why do we persecute a carkass, a dead man, a man whose reins are consumed within him.* From the third of those readings, which reproveth their persevering or resolvedness to persevere in the way they were in.

Observe, *To advise and resolve upon any sinful way, is a high aggravation of sin.*

It is bad enough to sin for want of advice; but to sin advisedly is far worse. To fail or sin is common to men, yea, even to the best of men; but to resolve to sin, or to be resolute in sinning, is proper to the Devil, and the character of the worst of men. I have elsewhere in this Book had occasion to raise Observations of near affinity with this, and therefore I only touch it here.

From our reading, *But you should say, why persecute we him? Job* seems to tax his Friends with rashness and inconsiderateness; *You should say*; but you have not, you have not yet examined your own hearts, nor my condition as you ought.

Hence Observe, *That as some speak they know not what, so others do they know not why; their actions out-run their reason, and they are more busie then wise.*

Christ was persecuted to the highest, he was persecuted to death: But had his enemies said, *Why do we persecute him?* had they looked to their ground? Christ (*Luke* 23. 34.) makes their inadvertency the ground of his prayer for them; *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* They have not said, *Why persecute we him? They were resolved, but not advised; Crucifie him, crucifie him*; down with him, down with him: It must be so; but no true cause was shewed why it should be so. Many may say of their sinful wayes according to the letter of the Apostle (*Rom.* 7. 15.) *What we do we know not.* *Paul* speaks of himself as over-powered by corruption, *What I do I know not*; we translate, *That which I do I allow not.* *Paul* speaketh not of his sins of ignorance, or that he had done what was indeed sinful, not knowing, or not being convinced that it was a sin; and therefore we do not translate, *I know not*, as if *Paul* had been in the dark about his own doings; but, *That I do I allow not*; though I cannot but know that I have done sinfully, yet I do not favour or take part with any sin that I have done. When a godly man sins, he alwayes doth the evil which he allows not: but when ignorant men sin, they do the evil which they know not; and wicked men do the evil which they have no mind to know, they cannot endure to consider (as to sinfulness) either what they are doing, or what they have done. The fool offers a sacrifice, and *Solomon* would not have true worshippers like him; *Keep thy foot when thou goest into the House of God, and be more ready to hear then to offer the sacrifice*

of

of fools, for they consider not that they do evil (Eccles. 5.1.) Some by the supplement of an adversative particle, render the Text thus, *They know not but to do evil.* They do evil while they do good, even while they worship God, and they cannot do otherwise. Our rendring is clearer, when they do evil they consider it not, they care not to be acquainted with the evil which they have done, or they act at a venture, whether good or whether evil, fall back or fall edge, never troubles them. Ignorant persons are such fools, that they know not when they do evil; wicked men are such fools, that they never consider or regard it when they have done evil.

Secondly, Observe, *Before we do any thing we should take account of our selves why we do it.*

There are two things we should take account of our selves about before we set upon any action. First, For what end we do it? Secondly, By what rule we do it? These two Questions we should put before all our actings: What is my design? What is my warrant? For according to the design, the heart and hand too are ordered in every undertaking. Singleness of eye, makes all our wayes single. Yet we must look as well to our warrant, as to our design; to our rule, as well as well as to our end. The Apostle bids us *walk circumspectly* (Ephes. 5. 15.) No man can walk circumspectly, unless he take notice of his ground, and see where he treads. To walk circumspectly, is to walk looking round about us. And unless we do so, we shall soon loose our way, and miss our end. We have a proverbial speech, *Look before you leap*; that is, consider before you act; *A fools bolt is soon shot*; he shoots before he sees his mark, and before he takes his aim; he neither observes the art of shooting, nor the mark at which he shoots. And because his bolt is soon shot, therefore his mark is never hit. To question our selves about what we do, is a great means to preserve our selves from doing amiss: And they most usually do well, who fear they may do ill. The Prophet gives this as the reason why many went on so grosly and fearlesly in idolatrous wayes (*Isa.* 44. 19,20.) *None considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burnt part of it in the fire,* &c. therefore it is, that *he feedeth of ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lye in my right hand?* He is not able to put this thing to himself, or to question his heart whether he be right or wrong; he had never fed upon ashes had he but considered, that he had burnt part of his Idol in the fire. That man may do any thing sooner then that which is right and lawful, who never enquireth whether that be right or wrong, lawful or unlawful, which he doth: He cannot deliver his soul from the grossest Idolatry, from worshipping wood and stone, the works of his own hands, while he cannot question, *Is there not a lye in my right hand?* Am I not out of the way? Am I not deceived? If this man would but have asked himself the question, it is probable he might have seen or discovered the lye in his right hand: But he had not a heart to say this, and so his heart was deceived. An unconsidering person may soon be deceived: And the reason why he is not always deceived (if he be not) is only this, because he is not always tempted by deceivers. And hence it is that they, who love errors in opinion, or sinful wayes in practice, do not love to make doubts, or to raise questions concerning either their practices or opinions. As the way to fasten our selves upon duty, is to take up a resolution to do it, yea, to persevere in doing it; and where there is no resolving about what we do, there is nothing but unsetledness in doing it; as the Prophet toucheth (*Jer.* 5. 24.) *This people hath a revolting back-sliding heart:* They are altogether unfixed, you know not where to have them, or what they will be at. What is the reason? *Neither say they in their hearts, let us now fear the Lord our God, that gives us rain, the former, and the latter rain in season.* This was the reason why they revolted; they did not so much as say in their hearts, or pitch upon this thing, *Let us fear the Lord.* Now as men are unsetled in good, because they do not resolve to do this or that which is good; so they fall into evil, because they do not question, *Why do I do this? Or is this which I do good or evil?* They do not so much as say, *Is there not a lye in my right hand?* They ask no question for Conscience sake (as in some cases the Apostle adviseth we should not) and therefore they act so much against Conscience.

Thirdly, The words may have reference as well to what had been done, as to what they intended still to do, *Ye should say, why persecute we him?* That is, Why have we persecuted him? He may speak of an acted or antecedent, as well as of a subsequent or intended persecution.

Hence Note, *To question our selves for what we have done, is an excellent means to bring us to repentance, and to break our hearts for the evil we have done.*

What have I done? Is the question of repentance. The Prophet *Jeremy* (*Chap.* 8.6.) brings in the Lord taxing that people for their impenitency, and layes all upon this, *I hearkened, and heard, but they spake not aright, no man repented of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? Every one turned to his course, as the horse rusheth into the battel:* They sinned resolutely, because they never questioned themselves about their sin. We can never return, till we stop; nor recover out of an evil way, till we check in it. This Question is as it were the stop, the check, or arrest of the soul, *What have I done?* We cannot say to the Lord as *Paul* (*Acts* 9. 6.) *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Till we have first said to our selves, *What have we done?* This shews us the very genius of repentance, or of a repenting person, he is a man questioning what, or calling himself to a reckoning for *what he hath done.* Repentance is the review of our lives, and makes the soul answer to every particular, *What hast thou done?*

Further, If we look to this questioning in reference to the particular act of persecution; you should say, *Why persecute we him?*

Hence Note, Fourthly, *We should be sure of a good ground before we oppose or persecute others.*

We should question our selves in any ordinary thing we do, even in what we do for a friend we should question, Do I well in helping him? Much more when we oppose any man, should we say, *Why persecute we him?* What! persecute a man hand over head, oppose him without ground? It is hard to reprove a brother duly, much more to oppose him duly. We should examine our love, much more our anger. *Be angry, and sin not,* is the Apostles rule (*Eph.* 4. 26.) which implyes that it is no easie matter to be angry and not to sin. If we had a hundred eyes, and as many tongues, 'tis but need we should imploy them all to look about us, and enquire whether we are right or wrong, when we oppose or persecute a Brother. Where it is so easie for us to do wrong, we should consider and consider, whether what we do be right.

Fifthly, Note, *To persecute or oppose another without just cause, is very sinful.*

'Tis sinful not to shew kindness, and express love to those who deserve it; how sinful then is it to express unkindness and wrath towards those who deserve it not? It is a great sin to hold an error, or not to do good; then how great a sin is it to oppose another for doing good, or for holding the truth. To persecute him that walketh in holiness, or holds the truth, is to persecute Christ himself, who is *The Holy One and the True.* Persecution opposeth him whom all should adore, even Jesus Christ. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Christ was persecuted in person while he was on earth, and he is persecuted in his members and servants now he is in Heaven. As to suffer persecution for righteousness sake, is one of the highest acts of grace: So to persecute the righteous, is one of the highest acts of wickedness, seeing this opposeth not only the Saints, but him, who is infinitely better and more excellent, then all the Saints.

The Apostle (*Rom.* 1. 32.) describing the extream sinfulness of the *Gentiles*, gives it thus, *They knowing the judgment of God, that they that commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do it.* He makes it the blackest part of their sinfulness, that they had pleasure in those that did evil. On the other side, we may say it is the blackest part of sin to oppose those that do good? not only not to have pleasure in them that do good, but to be vexed at and vex them that do it, is the fullest

do it, is the fulleſt diſcovery of an evil heart. Moſt wicked men take pleaſure in thoſe that do wickedly, but they are moſt wicked who reſiſt thoſe that do good. As to love truth and goodneſs is better then to know them; ſo to hate truth or goodneſs is far worſe, then to be ignorant of, or to neglect them.

Sixthly, *Job*'s Friends thought they were upon their duty; or that they were employed in a great ſervice for God, while they dealt thus rigidly with this diſtreſſed man.

Hence Note, *Some perſecute others, and yet think they do God and man good ſervice.*

There are two ſorts of perſecutors. Firſt, Such as oppoſe Conſcience; or perſecute others for their Conſcience ſake. Secondly, Such as perſecute others for their own Conſcience ſake; they do (in their own opinion) conſcientiouſly: They think that a duty, which upon tryal will be found their ſin. They do not perſecute, as the bloody Heathens did, to ſatisfie their cruel luſts; or as ſome bloody Chriſtians (in name) have done, and do, oppoſing the Truth againſt their light: But they do it according to their light. There are very few, but as they perſecute the Conſciences of others; ſo they perſecute upon the dictate of their own Conſcience; and think they have done a work acceptable to God, while they thus reject and reprobate their Brethren; yea, they glory in it, and put it among their moſt meritorious acts, as having deſigned the glory of God, and being carried on with zeal (ſuch as it is) for his glory. Theſe are deſcribed by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 66. 5.) *Your brethren that caſt you out for my Name ſake* (as there are many perſecuting enemies, ſo there are ſome brethren-perſecuters) *Your brethren that caſt you out for my Name ſake, ſaid, Let the Lord be glorified.* This was their aim, they did it to glorifie God: Thus they licked themſelves whole, when they wounded their brethren; they did no offence, but ſervice. So (*Jer.* 50. 7.) *All they that found them have devoured them, and their adverſaries ſay, we offend not, becauſe they have ſinn'd againſt the Lord, the habitation of Juſtice, even the Lord the hope of their fathers.* Chriſt is expreſs in this point (*John* 16.2.) *The time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you will think that he doth God ſervice.* This was once *Paul*'s caſe (*Acts* 26.9.) *I verily thought that I ought to do many things againſt the Name of Jeſus*; I was bound in Conſcience, I could not ſuffer theſe men, and theſe wayes in peace, unleſs I would break my own peace. He ſpeaks as if his own Conſcience would have troubled him, unleſs he had troubled others for that which was, indeed, their Conſcience. *Job*'s Friends were far enough from owning the name or title of perſecuters, and yet they did the thing, and ſpake the words which were very ſwords. Many love to perſecute; but all hate to be called perſecuters. As many hate vertue and goodneſs, who yet are proud to be called good and vertuous: So many love evil acts, which they diſdain to be denominated by. *Job* adviſeth his Friends, who eſteemed themſelves nothing leſs then perſecuters, to be beſpeak their own ſouls, and ſay, *Why perſecute we him*,

Seeing the root of the matter is found in me?

Job was aſſured (it ſeems) that the root of the matter was found in him; but it is not eaſie to find what this root of the matter was in *Job*. In general, by *root* we are to underſtand the bottom, baſis, or foundation, that which gave him eſtabliſhment, as the root doth to the tree. The Hebrew is, *The root of the word.* It is ordinary in Scripture to put word for thing, or matter. The root of the *word* is the root of the thing in controverſie between *Job* and his Friends (*Eccleſ.* 12. 13.) *Hear the concluſion of the whole matter*, or, *the end of the word, Fear God, and keep his Commandments. There is nothing impoſſible to God*; the Text is, *There is no word impoſſible to God*; that is, he can do whatſoever pleaſeth him. This root of the matter, or root of the word, is (as ſome ſay) the bottom of the buſineſs, the ſtate of the cauſe, or the cauſe ſtated. The Civil Lawyers call, the *cauſe*, *the thing*. And the Orator uſeth an expreſſion very near this of *Job*, where he titles the main matter in queſtion, *the root of the queſtion*, upon which all dependeth. What root he intendeth, we ſhall conſider further.

שרשרכר *Radix verbi, verbum pro re ſenſu quo apud Juriſconſultos cauſa dicitur res.* Bold. *Radix verbi nihil aliud eſt quam fundamentum cauſæ ſeu rei*; Cicero *vocat ſtirpem queſtionis. Differo etiam*

The Vulgar renders the whole Verſe thus; *Wherefore do ye now ſay, let us perſecute him*, and, *we ſhall find the root of the matter againſt him?* The root of the matter, according to that tranſlation, is taken two wayes.

(inquit) partem quæ eſt quaſi ſtirps quæſtionis. Cic. lib 4. de Finibus. *Radicem verbi inveniamus contra eum.* Vulg.

First, For ſome word which *Job* might unwarily let fall, upon which they would ground a further accuſation, or charge upon him, or juſtifie the charge and accuſation already brought againſt him. As if they had ſaid, Let us follow him cloſe, and he will quickly ſpeak ſomewhat to the diſadvantage of his own cauſe. It is indeed the uſual policy of perſecutors to ſeek matter againſt another, when none appears: And to provoke a man to ſpeak, till he ſpeak awry, or give them an occaſion to enſnare him in his ſpeech. Uſually in the multitude of words there is no want of error; and he that ſpeaks a multitude of words (as 'tis poſſible) without error, may ſoon have ſome of them erroneouſly interpreted. Perſecutors are greedy to hunt for and find out faults; they will rake in every channel, and never give over interrogating and ſifting, till ſomewhat drop, or fall, that at leaſt may bear ſome colour of offence. *They make a man an offender for a word*, ſaith the Prophet (*Iſa.* 29. 21.) A good man may quickly offend in a word; but it is the ſign and the work of an evil man, to make a man an offender for a word; eſpecially for a right, though a ſharp word; of ſuch the Prophet ſpeaks, as appears in the next clauſe; *They lay a ſnare for him that reproveth in the gate*: They get a word from him, and make that matter of offence. That is alſo the meaning of the Prophet when he ſaith, *All my familiars watched for my halting.* They would be glad to ſee him halt, that they might accuſe him for his halting. It is a duty to reprove him that halteth, that is, him that ſinneth; and it is a greater duty to watch over another to keep him from halting. But it is a wickedneſs to watch for a mans halting, in hope that he will halt, and that we may have an occaſion or ground to reprove him; ſuch reproofs proceed not from a ſpirit of love, but of revenge, as the Prophet diſcovers them; *Peradventure he will be inticed* (into ſome ſin or ſnare) *and we ſhall prevail againſt him, and we ſhall take revenge on him.* They were glad to ſee him halt, that they might ſay ſomewhat againſt him for halting. This was the diſpoſition of the perſecuting Phariſees (*Matth.* 22. 16.) *They ſent ſome to entangle Chriſt in his talk.* They had no matter ready, but they ſought it. Another Goſpel ſaith (*Mark* 12. 13.) *They ſent certain Phariſees to catch him in his words:* Chriſt ſpake the word, that he might catch men to ſave them: Theſe men laboured to catch Chriſt in his words, that they might accuſe and deſtroy him. This ſome would faſten upon *Job*'s Friends, but I forbear them.

Qui malò ſtudio benè prolata audiunt, quid aliud quam contra aliquem radicē verbi quærunt ex qua loquendi originem ſumant & ramos pravæ loquacitatis in accuſatione dilatent. Greg.

Secondly, The root of the matter according to that reading is, *Some ſecret ſin*; let us follow him hard, let us but continue with him in diſpute, and we ſhall make him diſcover his boſom and heart at laſt; we ſhall find that hidden under ground evil, which is the root of the matter; even of all his diſtempered ſpeeches and paſſions againſt us, and of all the judgments and rods of God that have been upon him. Some one ſecret ſin is indeed often the root of many open ones; and though we may conclude, that any ſin may be the root of miſery and affliction, yet uſually it is ſome ſpecial ſin, that gives ſuck and ſap to the ſpecial troubles that either afflict the godly, or render the lives of wicked men miſerable. For though God might make every ſinful failing bear gall and wormwood, yet he doth not, but ſpares his people after many failings. And though death (which contains all penal evils) be the wages of every ſin, yet in this World God rarely payes it to wicked men, till their ſins become very full of ſinful evil: This *Job*'s Friends are likewiſe here conceived to call the *root of the matter*, a diſcovery of which they ſuppoſed he would ſoon make (according to this expoſition) were he but a little put to it, and preſſed. Let us perſecute him, and we ſhall find the root of the matter againſt him.

But though this reading may yield ſome profitable meditation, yet I ſhall not inſiſt upon it, becauſe the words plainly appear as ſpoken by *Job*, and not by his Friends.

We ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of the matter is found in me?

Secondly,

Secondly, Some have given this sence of the words, *Ye should say, why persecute we him, seeing* (ye ought to say each one of you judging himself) *the root of the matter is in me?* That is, The fault is in me, or I am the cause of this contention; I by my prejudices and unfriendly jealousies have been an occasion to stir the passion of this afflicted person, and to draw out this troublesome debate between us. Thus the latter words are made that form of acknowledgment, which *Job*'s Friends should make, in charging the blame and fault, the root and rise of all upon themselves. But

Radix metaphoræ & fiduciæ alloquendi dein est fides in servatore in quo habemus accessum. Cocc. Cum pia fide in deum radicatus sim, qua pervexi adhuc in mea integritate & nunc verba veritatis coram eo profero, ut fidei radicatæ in ipso fructus, non autem folia aut fallaces verborum flores quales vos effunditis, &c. Jun.

Thirdly, *Rather say*, These words have the form and force of a reason, upon which *Job* would perswade his Friends to forbear persecuting him, or why they should reflect upon and consider themselves as having persecuted him; *The root of the matter is found in me.*

The *root of the word or matter*, according to this interpretation is, first, grace and faith in his heart: As Believers are said to be *rooted in grace, in love*, &c. (*Eph.* 3. 17.) so grace of any kind is as a root in Believers. Faith in the heart is the root of the word in every mans mouth who believeth; and it is the root of the work in every mans hand that believeth. And so *Job*'s scope in this speech may be thus represented: As if he had said, *O my friends, ye wonder that I have spoken and done thus, I tell you the root of the word and work is in me; Faith makes me speak and do* (*faith is the root of our holy liberty and boldness in speaking and doing both towards God and man*) (Psal. 116. 10.) *I believed* (saith *David*) *therefore have I spoken: We also believe* (saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 13.) *and therefore speak. When once with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, then* (presently) *with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (Rom. 10. 10.) So that *Job* having made such an excellent confession with his mouth in the former words, here he would have his Friends know, that he did not speak by rote, but by the root of the matter which was in him: He believed with his heart, and therefore they should take heed, how they did oppose or persecute him, he being a true Believer. As if he had further said, *This profession of my faith, should move you to bethink your selves better then to persecute me; for though you may find me a sinner, yet you may find that in me also, which doth interest me in the Redeemers love, who takes away sin. I am rooted in the Redeemer by faith, and through his strength I have walked in mine integrity, I have not spoken these things, in a vain flourish or ostentation of my self, but as an evidence of the grace of God in me, from whence as from a root, I bring forth not leaves and blossoms only, but I have my fruit in holiness, waiting for the end, Everlasting life.*

Job *nihil aliud vult dicere quã veritatem à parte suã stare, illam autem eleganti periphrasi vocat* radicem verbi. *Mendacium enim cum nihil sit, illud vere verbum dici debet, quod in veritate fundatur.* Bold.

Secondly, By the root of the matter, we may understand his sincerity, or the uprightness of his heart. The testimony which God gave of him was, *A man perfect and upright*; and his own heart gave him that testimony also: As he professed faith in the Redeemer, so he loved him in sincerity. He had, as the Apostle *Peter* phraseth it (1 *Ep.* 3. 21.) *The answer of a good conscience* in himself, as well as a good answer in his mouth to them. He whose conscience makes a good answer to himself, can answer any man. As if *Job* had said, *When my conscience asks me the question, What I am, and what I hope for? I can give it a good answer; and therefore I can easily answer you, and you should not easily trouble me.* And indeed when once *a man can answer himself honestly, he may answer all the world boldly.* Sincerity is the root of the matter in every godly man. And he who is upright in what he saith and doth, needs not trouble himself what others say of him, or do against him. Men may (as we speak proverbially) cast their caps at him that is upright, they cannot much hurt him; *Ye should say, why do we persecute him* (what can ye gain by it, or what can I loose by it) *seeing the root of the matter is in me?*

ἐπεάτημα.

Our Annotators gloss it thus; *Gods promises are rooted in my heart, and true piety is found there* (both parts fall in with, or fill up the expositions given) *therefore I should not be condemned by you.* Now for as much as *Job* urgeth one of, or all these Considerations, namely, that he had the grace of faith, that he had made a right confession of his faith, that he was sincere, and right-hearted towards God, In all, Seeing (I say) he urgeth these considerations as a reason to stop, or give check to his Friends opposing, and persecuting of him. We may observe;

First, from the expression; and then from the connexion. From the expression, that

Grace and truth are the root of a godly man.

They are as a root under a twofold notion.

First, For establishment: The root is to the tree as the foundation to the building, the strength and stay of it; so are grace and truth, faith and sincerity to a godly man: By these (for in these the strength of Christ is) he stands (*Heb.* 13. 9.) *Be not carried away with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats.* The Apostle means the doctrine of grace, in opposition to the doctrine of meats. The ceremonial Law about meats doth not establish the heart; but the doctrine of grace doth: now as the doctrine of grace, so grace much more establisheth the heart, and will not suffer us to be carried away as the waves of the Sea, or as the clouds of the Air by contrary winds, to contrary points and practices, now forward, and then backward. *They who are come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, thenceforth are no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight (or cogging) of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, they grow up into him in all things who is the head, even Christ* (Eph. 4. 13, 14, 15.)

Secondly, Grace in the heart is a root, because it sends out juice or sap, and is the next cause of our fruitfulness in life: Grace in the heart, buddeth and blossometh at the hand, and tongue, in good actions, and savoury speeches. The whole man is filled with good fruit, where grace is a root in the heart. There is a root of this root, Jesus Christ is the root of our graces: But as Christ is the root of our graces; so the Grace of Christ in us is the root of all our holy actions. Christ is (*Origo originans*) the original and the originating root of our graces. Grace is (*Origo originata*) the originative root, or that root which Jesus Christ planteth in us, that by the continual supplies and moistenings of the Spirit, we may bring forth fruit in him and to him. As Original corruption is the natural root of the matter in us, as to the production of sin, and our unhappy fruitfulness in evil; so Grace infused or wrought in us, is the Supernatural root of the matter in us, as to our germination in holiness, and our happy fructification in goodness.

Secondly, From the connection, or argument couched in these words; *Ye should say, why do we persecute him, seeing the root of the matter*, Grace and Truth, *are in me?*

Observe, *He that hath Grace and holds Truth, root-truths, should not be persecuted.*

The Apostle (*Heb.* 12. 14.) exhorts *to follow* (or as the propriety of the word is, to persecute) *holiness*, that we our selves may reach and attain the highest degree of it: But we must take heed of following those with persecution (though it be but in hard words) who have (through mercy) attained, the least or lowest degree of it. For

First, They should not be persecuted by men, who are imbraced by Christ, nor be cast out by us, who are received by him. Them that hold the fundamentals of faith and holiness, Christ owns, therefore we should own them too. *Job* possibly had failings and errors; but he had the root of the matter: What though you my Friends and I do not agree in all things, yea, what though we differ in many things, and cannot reconcile these differences, yet I have told you the root of the matter. Why do you persecute me? Such a profession of faith as *Job* made contains the sum of the Gospel, or of the mystery of Christ; therefore they who hold it are not to be slighted, much less vexed, though they hold not all the truth, or are deceived into some things which are erroneous.

Dum arbor radicem habet, sperari potest eam repullulaturam & plus fructuum progenituram; ita homines inter vitia & nævos suos sanitatem præcipui capitis fidei retinentes, temere debet rejici.

Secondly, They that hold out the same fundamental truths, have the same Spirit of truth at least to enlighten them.

Thirdly, They who make such an outward profession of faith from a root of faith within, shall certainly be saved; Heaven shall receive them, and shall not we receive them? Heaven will open its gates to entertain them, and shall we thrust them out of the World? *Why persecute ye me, seeing the root of the matter is in me?*

And

And if they be not to be perſecuted, who hold the fundamentals or chief doctrines neceſſary to ſalvation, what ſhall we think then of their perſecution, who oppoſe thoſe that do not only hold fundamental, but moſt ſuperſtructive truths too, which belong to faith and a good life. Many ſuch have fallen under perſecution upon their diſſenting about ſome outward forms of order or worſhip.

Further, *Job* ſeems to be here his own witneſs, he doth not ſtay to receive teſtimony from his brethren, that *the root of the matter was in him*; but himſelf ſaith, *the root of the matter is found in me*; which may teach us,

First, *They who have the root of the matter in them, may know they have it.*

Grace comes from Light, and is Light. Grace carrieth Light to diſcover it ſelf by, unleſs God hide it from us, and put our light into darkneſs, our candle under a bed, or under a Buſhel. He that hath Grace, doth not alwayes know it; this root may lie ſo deep under ground, that he in whom it is, cannot ſee it, or ſay it is in me: Yet this root how deep ſoever, is diſcernable in it ſelf, and is often clearly diſcerned by thoſe in whom it is.

Secondly, *It is lawful, and a duty in ſome caſes, for a man to give teſtimony to himſelf.*

Job's Friends thought there was nothing in him but a root of wickedneſs and hypocriſie; but he ſaith, *the root of the matter is in me. Let another praiſe thee, and not thine own mouth* (ſaith *Solomon.*) That's moſt comly, and ſo it ſhould be; yet ſometimes a man muſt, and may ſpeak for himſelf, to maintain his own innocence, and advance the Glory of God, which may be darkned by the ſilence of man.

Thus far I have opened the firſt part of *Job*'s Concluſion; namely, the direction and counſel which he gives his Friends to take them off from their bitter oppoſition, and to ſweeten or meeken their ſpirits towards him; *Ye ſhould ſay, Why perſecute we him? ſeeing the root of the matter is found in me.* He proceeds to a Commination, threatning them into this duty, if he could not perſwade them to it; *Be ye afraid of the ſword, &c.*

VERS. 29.

Be ye afraid of the ſword; for wrath bringeth the puniſhment of the ſword; that ye may know that there is a judgment.

IN the former Verſe *Job* counſelled and directed his Friends; here he warns and threatneth them.

Be ye [afraid] of the ſword.

The word notes ſtrong fear; ſuch a fear as makes us flee or run from it: So ſome tranſlate the word here; whereas we ſay, *Be afraid of*, they ſay, *flee from the face of the ſword*: Fear puts many to their feet.

גור *Timere aut expaveſcere in alicujus præſentia aut conſpectu terribili. Fugite ergo à facie gladii.* Vulg.

Flee from the ſword; or be afraid of the ſword.

The ſword is an inſtrument of death. The ſword may be looked upon in a twofold hand.

First, In the hand of the Souldier; and ſo it is the ſword of war.

Secondly, In the hand of the Magiſtrate; and ſo it is the ſword of peace. Both ought to be the ſword of Juſtice? yet the latter is more properly called ſo. *He* (that is, the Magiſtrate) *beareth not the ſword in vain*: He beareth it to do juſtice, and to maintain peace. The ſword is one of the chief Emblemes of Magiſtracy and Power. We may take the ſword here as in either of theſe hands; *Be ye afraid of the ſword*; the ſword of the Souldier, and the ſword of the Judge or Magiſtrate.

Gladii nomine vindicta ſignificatur per nymiam inſtrumentalis cauſæ pro effectu.

Again, By ſword in Scripture, all manner of evils, puniſhments and revenges are underſtood; becauſe the ſword brings ſo many evils, and is ſo great a puniſhment, therefore any kind of evil, puniſhment or revenge comes under this title, *the ſword.* The Children of *Iſrael* cry out upon *Moſes*, that when he came to deliver them, he did but more enthral them; and therefore tell him (*Exod.* 5. 21.) *Thou haſt put a ſword into the hand of* Pharaoh *to ſlay us*, that is, thou haſt been ſo far from mollifying the heart of *Pharaoh* towards us, that thou haſt provoked *Pharaoh* to lay new troubles, and lay heavier burdens upon us, not only to our further ſorrow and affliction, but to our ruine and utter undoing. So the Lord ſpeaketh (*Deut.* 32.41.) *If I whet my glittering ſword, and my hand take hold of vengeance*, that is, if I prepare my judgments of what ſort ſoever, *then I will render vengeance*, &c. The whetting of the ſword notes the fitting and preparation of thoſe judgments, by which the hand of God taketh hold of vengeance.

And hence in Scripture, wicked men and oppreſſors, who bring the greateſt troubles, whether upon perſons or Nations, are called the *ſword of God.* (Pſal. 17. 13.) *David* prayes, *Deliver my ſoul from the wicked, which is thy ſword.* He calls them the ſword of God, becauſe they are often uſed by God as inſtruments to puniſh whom he pleaſeth, or rather thoſe (whoſoever they be) that have diſpleaſed him.

Impr vocat dius quia eò ut tanqu gladi punie quos Druſ.

Further, *Job* doth not only ſay, *Be afraid of the ſword*; but *be afraid of the face of the ſword*: Yea, the Original is plural; *Be afraid of the faces of the ſword.* The ſword hath and makes many faces, and they are all ill and ſad ones. In Scripture, ordinarily the face of a thing, notes that very thing whoſe face it is, or the preſence of it; ſo, *the face of the ſword is the ſword* preſent. *Be afraid of the face of the ſword*, that is, of the ſword when it appears. The ſword ſometimes wraps up its face in the ſheath, its face is hid; but when the ſword is drawn, then we behold the face of the ſword. So that to be afraid of the face of the ſword, is to be afraid of the ſwords appearance, of the ſword looking out of its ſcabbard, of the ſword drawn and brandiſhed. Some are very buſie and curious about the *Phyſiognomy of the ſword*, to tell us what the face is. The ſword hath its face. The two flats of it are as the cheeks of the face; and the glitterings of the ſword are as the eyes of the face which ray from it; and the edge of the ſword is the mouth of the face; and the point of the ſword is the tongue of the mouth. Thus they allegorize. I will not ſtay upon ſuch niceties. The face of the ſword is the inſtant preſence of the ſword; and ſo the phraſe is uſed in reference to other things (*Pſal.* 38. 5.) *My wounds ſtink and are corrupt, becauſe of my fooliſhneſs.* The Hebrew is, *Becauſe of the face of my fooliſhneſs*; or, *before the face of my fooliſhneſs*, that is, at the preſence of my ſin, or when I ſee the face of my ſins. Some have abundance of ſins, yet their wounds ſtink not, nor are corrupt, that is, they are never troubled for their ſins; Why? becauſe they do not ſee the face of their ſins: but at the face of my ſins, or the faces of my ſins, my wounds ſtink and are corrupt, that is my ſoul is troubled, and my conſcience is in a ſad condition. The Prophet uſeth this ſtrain in that famous promiſe of deliverance from the *Babyloniſh* yoke (*Iſa.* 10. 27.) *It ſhall come to paſs in that day, that his burden ſhall be taken from off thy ſhoulder, and the yoke ſhall be deſtroyed, becauſe of the anointing*: So we render it. The Hebrew is, *His yoke ſhall be deſtroyed before the face of the anointing. Grammarians* tell us, that *before the face*, in the Hebrew, ſupplies the place of the Prepoſition *becauſe*; which is the reaſon why we render, *becauſe of*, or *for the anointing.* But ſtrictly, *the yoke ſhall be broken at the face of the anointing*, or (as the word is) *at the face of the oyl*; that is, *at the face of him who is anointed with oyl.* Literally, *Hezekiah*, but ſpiritually and typically, *Jeſus Chriſt, the Meſſias, the anointed of God.* At the face of Chriſt, at his appearing, the *Babyloniſh* yoke is broken off from the neck of his people. When Chriſt appears, his enemies diſappear, and his people are freed from the yoke of Bondage. But to the point; as we read of *the face of ſin*, and *the face of oyl* (in thoſe Scriptures) ſo here, *of the face of the ſword.* It may well be ſaid, *Be afraid of the face of the ſword*; becauſe the ſword, of all things, hath the moſt dreadful face. Some men have terror ſtampt in their faces, they ſcare others with their looks. The ſword hath a terrible aſpect. The face of the ſword is as the face of *Goliah* was to the Army of the *Iſraelites* (1 Sam. 17. 24.) *All the men of* Iſrael (like women or children) *when they ſaw the man, fled from him* (we put in the Margin, *they fled from his face*) *and were ſore afraid.* *Goliah* was a monſter among men. A whole Army gave ground at his approach: The face of the man was dreadful, much more was the face of his

A facie ſpientiæ meæ, He i. e. qua ſemper ha ante ocu mens.

A facie, mitur apu Hebræos l co Præpoſi tionis pro ter.

Peculiare eſt gladio & univerſo armorum ge neri ut faci em habere videantur, cum vel ſola facit & primo aſpectu terrorem injiciant.

sword. 'Tis said (*Isa.* 21. 15.) That as soon as the sword appeared and shewed its face, they feared, and fled; *They fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.* Now forasmuch as the sword in kind is so great an evil to man, and so terrible, therefore when that is threatned, we may expect any kind of evil. This one threatning comprehends all threatnings. Where the sword comes, fear will not stay behind (*Jer.* 6. 25.) *Go not forth into the field, nor walk by the way; for the sword of the enemy, and fear is on every side.* When the sword is abroad, all keep at home. So, *Ezek.* 21. 12. *Cry and howl Son of man, for it shall be upon my people, it shall be upon all the Princes of* Israel; *terrors by reason of the sword shall be upon my people, smite therefore upon thy thigh*, that is, use the most significant gestures and expressions of grief and sorrow. Hence observe,

First, *The sword is a very dreadful evil.*

That which is put for all evils, must needs be a very great one; we may spell and read any judgment in the sword: As it shews that peace is a great good, an exceeding great good, because peace is put for all good. When it is said, *Peace be to you*, all good is wished to you, every mercy is included in peace. So when 'tis said, *The sword be to you*, you may write any evil under that menace. While the sword is threatned, all miseries are threatned in one. The sword is a great evil, considered barely in it self; and it is a greater, considered in the consequents and effects of it. It hath it self a very dreadful face, but it leaves a more dreadful face of things behind it. That Land which before it, is as the Garden of God, behind it, is as a desolate Wilderness.

Secondly, In that *Job* thus threatens his friends, and warns them, *Be ye afraid of the sword*; take heed lest some sudden judgment fall upon you; observe,

We may use arguments from fear of judgments, both to dissuade from sin, and to persuade to duty.

Job was a preacher to his friends, and here he is upon a vehement dehortation, to take them off from that persecuting spirit spoken of in the former verse; here we have his argument or motive, the fear of the sword: you may run upon the swords point, while you run this course. The Apostle *Jude* (*v.* 23. of his Epistle) gives direction; *Of some have compassion, making a difference; others save with fear*, that is, *make them afraid*, terrifie and threaten them, that they may be saved. Some spirits must be dealt with gently, others roughly; therefore (saith he) *make a difference*; but rather then let any perish, *save them with fear*, skare them to heaven. Some must be led to heaven by the way of hell, and be cast into the fire, that they may be delivered from it: *Save them with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* 'Tis a desireable fear which is a means to pull a soul out of the fire. We are saved by faith, as that receiveth and taketh hold of Christ; we are saved by fear, as that takes hold of us, and driveth us to Christ. By faith we see and apply our help in Christ, and by fear we are brought to see our need of his help. Christ (*Luke* 12. 4, 5.) useth the argument of the fear of hell, to cure his friends of the fear of man, and to dissuade them from deserting him and the truth of the Gospel. *I say to you my friends, be not afraid of them that can kill the body, and after that, there is no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say to you, fear him.* See how he doubles upon that point of fear; *fear him, yea, I say unto you, fear him.* We may parallel it with that expression of *Paul* to the *Philippians*, *Rejoyce in the Lord, yea, I say again, rejoyce.* I eat not my word, but I aver it, and stand to it; as I bid you rejoyce, so I again bid you rejoyce. So saith Christ to his friends, *fear.* Some might object, Is this suitable counsel to a friend, to bid him be afraid? should they be kept in heaven-way for fear of hell? Enemies have cause of fear, but should friends? *Yea*, saith Christ, *I say again to you my friends, fear him.* 'Tis good to bid a friend fear, when that fear tendeth to his good. *Paul* (Rom. 8. 13.) writing to Saints, and applying the doctrine of free grace to the believing *Romans*, yet tells them, *If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die*, even die eternally; he threatens them with hell, who were candidates of heaven, and points them to death, who were passed from death to life, that he might keep them out of the wayes of death.

Some say, this is base to be kept from evil by fear; they take scandal at those who preach fear, calling it legal preaching.

I answer, It is indeed most noble to obey out of love, *To fear the Lord and his goodness* (Hos. 3. 5.) But yet it is good to fear the Lord and his wrath. It is most excellent to say, we fear the Lord, because there is mercy with him; but it is our duty to fear the Lord, because there is justice and judgment with him. A good heart will improve the judgments of God as well as his mercies, and the wrath of God as well as his love: A good heart is bettered by all the dispensations of God, both in his word, and in his works; if God speak death, it is an advantage to his spiritual life; and he mends upon threatnings as well as upon promises. Every word of God is good, and hath a savour of life unto life in it, by the working of the Spirit. It is best and most Gospel-like, when we can say as the Apostle directs (2 *Cor.* 7. 1.) *Having these promises, we cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord*; but it is well, when we can say, *Having these threatnings, let us cleanse our selves, and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.* It is a choice frame to say, as the Author to the *Hebrews* calleth us (*Heb.* 12. 28.) *Seeing we have a Kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.* Yet it is our duty to say, and a mercy when we can say it. Seeing we live in a Kingdom or in a State that is moved and shaken with judgments and troubles, therefore *let us have grace to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.* Fear, either of trouble threatned, or of trouble felt, may be improved to purer actings of Grace, and a more acceptable serving of God.

I shall only add three things to shew what this fear rightly improved, will do upon the heart.

First, It doth not straighten, but enlarge the heart towards God. Thus the Prophet speaks of that holy fear which should follow, or be an effect of that glory of the Church, in the abundant access of the Gentiles to the Gospel (*Isa.* 60. 5.) *Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thy heart shall fear, and be enlarged.* Fear and enlargement go together. Fear, under a natural consideration, shuts and straightens the heart. A man surprized with fear, is less then he was in all his abilities, and seldom hath the use of any but those which discover his weakness. But spiritual fear, or fear spiritualiz'd, maketh a man more then he was, and better then he was; he is enlarged to God, and only straightned towards evil.

Secondly, This fear of threatnings and judgments will not cause us to run from God, whose the word of threatning or the works of judgment are; but it brings and keeps us nearer to God. As holy fear is a bridle to restrain us from sin, so it is a bond to hold us to duty (*Jer.* 32. 40.) *I will put my fear in your hearts, and* (what will this fear do? will it cause you to withdraw from me? No;) *you shall never depart from me*; the more you fear me, you shall keep the closer to me: None live so near God as they that fear him; as the fearing of God and the eschewing of evil are joyned together in Scripture, so are our fearing of God and strictest obedience to him.

Thirdly, It is such a fear as proceeds from high thoughts of God, not from hard thoughts of God. Some when they hear of judgment or of the sword of God, they have hard thoughts of God, he is severe (say they) wrathful, terrible, and therefore they tremble and are afraid of him. But the fear intended hath a better spring, it flows from pure reverential thoughts of God in his greatness and unparallell'd excellency (*Jer.* 10. 6, 7.) *Forasmuch as there is none like thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy Name is great in might. Who would not fear thee, O King of Nations? for to thee doth it appertain* (or, *it liketh thee*) *forasmuch as among all the wise men of the Nations, and in all their Kingdoms, there is none like unto thee.* Here are high thoughts of God indeed; *There is none like thee, thou art great, and thy Name is great, and among all the Nations there is none like thee:* The wisest are not like thee in wisdom; the greatest are not like thee in greatness; the holiest are not like thee in holiness; therefore, *Who would not fear thee?* To be afraid of the judgments of God from high thoughts of his justice, righteousness, holiness and purity, moving him to do such things, is not a slavish argument, as some have said.

said, but that which may work upon the most ingenious and gracious spirit; and not only so, but (which may be a third Note from these words, *Be afraid of the sword.*)

It is our duty to fear the judgments of God.

We should fear the judgments of God while threatned, and only heard of; What though we see them not? What though we feel them not? What though we are not the persons intended in them, or to be smitten by them? yet the report of them, as directed against others, should make us tremble. When God threatned the old world with the floud, *Noah* was excepted; yet such was the temper of his spirit, that though he were the only favourite of God in all that age, yet his very hearing of that judgment (which he was assured not to feel) had this effect upon him (*Heb.* 11. 7.) *By faith* Noah *being warned of God, of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house.* He heard, and was afraid of the judgment, therefore he applied himself to those means which God had directed him to for the saving of himself and family. We read (*Rev.* 14. 7.) of a Vision which *John* had: *I saw an Angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every Nation, and Kindred, and Tongue, and People, saying, fear God, and give glory to him.* Why? *for the hour of his judgment is come.* When God sends the everlasting Gospel to be preached, he calls it *the hour of his judgment.* The preaching of the Gospel is the hour of mercy to some, but it is the hour of wrath to others, even to all refusers and contemners. Upon this denunciation or threatning of judgment, which should overtake the slighters and neglecters of the Gospel, all are warned to fear God and give glory to him.

Now, if we are to fear God for his judgments threatned, then we are to fear him more for his judgments inflicted. (*Rev.* 15. 3, 4.) *Who would not fear thee, O Lord, and glorifie thy Name?* &c. *for thy judgments are made manifest.* In the old Law when judgments were executed, 'tis said, *They shall hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously* (*Deut.* 17. 13.) They shall hear what hath been already executed upon offenders, and fear to offend. *Moses* there sheweth what all ought to do, not what all did, upon the appearances of judgment; and the executions of divine wrath upon high transgressors.

Fourthly, Observe how *Job* was dealt with by his friends when he thus bespake them, and warned them of the sword. Their words were as a sword in his bowels, they were very sowr and bitter against him; yet foreseeing their danger, and what evils their ill usage of him might bring upon themselves, he forgets both their former unkindnesses, and his own present pains, and minds them of those evils which were like to overtake them, if they persisted in the same mind. Hence note,

A good man will warn others of dangers, and labour to prevent their sorrow, though they have caused his.

Vir sanctus cum à pravis talia sustinet, non contra eos, sed magis pro ipsis dolet, ac mala eis quæ fugiant ostendit. Merc.

While they are doing him hurt, he will be keeping them from hurt; while they trouble him, he discovers much tenderness towards them. He doth not rejoyce, and say, their day is coming, let it come, let it overtake them: No (saith he, as *Job*) *I see a black day coming, even the face of the sword, therefore be ye afraid of it, and labour to get out of the reach of it.* The Prophet speaks much this sence to that hardned generation, who causlesly contrived and called for his death (*Jer.* 26. 15.) *I am in your hands, do as it seems good and meet,* (I do not so much stand on it, what you do with me, it shall be well with me; but I warn you to look to your selves, and to take heed of your own souls) *but know for certain, if you put me to death, you will surely bring innocent bloud upon your selves, and upon this City, and the inhabitants thereof; for of a truth the Lord hath sent me to you to speak all these words in your ears.* He doth not plead to be freed from their hands, but only lets them know their danger if they laid violent hands on him. He was not afraid of their sword, but he would have them afraid of the sword of God; *Be ye afraid of the sword.*

Quia ira iniquitates gladii Heb.

For wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword.

The Hebrew is, *For wrath the iniquity of the sword.* It is a short, and (as to words) an imperfect sentence in the Original. Hence the sence is supplied by Interpreters, with some variety of conjecture; *Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword.* We supply the word *bringeth*; and render that word which properly signifieth *iniquity, punishment* (as it is also used in other places) by a Metonymie of the effect for the cause; punishment being caused by, or being the effect of iniquity; *Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword.* There are divers other readings; I will briefly touch them, but insist only upon this.

Truncata concisa &c. Mo

First, thus; *For, or because the sword is the revenger of iniquities.* When the revenger of iniquity comes, it is high time to look to our selves, that we do no iniquity, or repent speedily of that which we have done. The sword (take it literally) is usually the great instrument in the hand of God to revenge his quarrel upon men of iniquity.

Quoniam vor iniq tatum e cinis est. Vulg.

A second thus; *Be afraid of the sword; for wrath* (namely, the wrath of God) *is the desolation of iniquity.* As if he had said, *Go not on in this iniquity; for the wrath of God will be the destruction of iniquity and of you too, if you persist in this iniquity.* The reason why it is rendred *desolation*, or *destruction*, is from a different rendring of the Hebrew, in which Language, a word of the same sound written with a different Letter, signifies both the *sword* and *desolation*: And as they are near in sound, so nearer in sence; where the sword comes, desolation seldom stayeth behind. How many Cities and Nations have been made desolate by the sword?

Quia ira (supple d iniquitat desolatio

חרב *Gladium.*

כרב *Desolation sign. sæpe.*

Thirdly, *Wrath to the iniquities of the sword*, that is, *wrath hangeth over the iniquities of the sword.* But what doth this translation mean by *the iniquity of the sword?* By the *iniquities of the sword* (some say) those iniquities are meant which are worthy to be punished by the sword. *Wrath hangs over the iniquity of the sword*, that is, *Over great iniquities*; or, as another, *For bloody iniquities stir up the heat of anger; the iniquity of the sword is bloody iniquity*, because great and bloody iniquities call for revenge by blood, and where revenge acts its part, anger is boiled up. Again, *the iniquities of the sword*, may be taken more strictly for those iniquities, of which he spake in the former verse, the iniquities of persecution, and undue vexation of our innocent brethren; these are *sword-iniquities*, and these provoke the wrath of God to take vengeance on persecuters by the sword. Hence another translates, *For the sins of the sword are wraths.* And so 'tis a direct predication, like that (*Isa.* 65. 5.) Where the Prophet brings in the Lord speaking of those hypocrites, that say, *Stand by thy self, come not near us; These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day:* That is, these are such as stir up a smoke in my nose, they make me angry, and these kindle a fire that burns in my breast all the day long, that is, these make me extream angry with them. So here, *the iniquities of the sword* (that is, the vexations of brethren) *are wrath*, that is, they kindle up the wrath of God, and make that wrath flame out to the consumption and destruction of those who have so provoked him. Those are the iniquities of the sword. From this last reading, and these two sences given upon it, take two brief Notes thus,

Ira iniquitatibus gladij. Reg. i. e *ira immine iniquitatibus gladii* Cajet. *Vel ira divina ultio manet ulciscitur iniquitates gladii*, i. e *iniquitates gladio dignas. Nam æstum iræ (excitant) iniquitates cruentæ.* Jun *Nam delicta gladii*, i. e *innocentium. & fidelium persecutio est ardor*, i. e. *excitat ardorem dei, qui ipsum impellat, ut gladio vindicet in persequentes.* Coc. *Nam & hus sunt delicta gladii.* i. e. *excitant furorem & incendium in naribus meis faciunt me ardere ira. Quia iracundi scitis me, est ex iniquitatibus, quæ dignæ sunt ut gladio ulciscentur.* Pag. *Hæc vestra tam acerba adversus me commotio, non minus est letalis quam si gladio me transfoderetis.* Bez.

First, *Harsh judgment, or rigid censuring of others, is a provoking sin.*

It is the iniquity of the sword, it is a sin which hath blood in it. Hence some put the Text into this Paraphrase; *In as much as you provoke me thus to anger, it is such a sin as very well deserves to be revenged by the sword, or by the severest judgment.* Another thus; *Your harsh and bitter words against me, are no less wickedness, then if you stabbed me, or thrust me through with a sword, and it deserveth the punishment of the sword.* David's complaint reacheth that interpretation (*Psal.* 42. 10.) *As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me.*

Secondly note, *Harsh judgment upon others, calls for severe judgments upon our selves.*

This also takes up the sence of our reading.

Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword.

The word translated **wrath**, signifies *burning*. All *wrath* is hot. Some *wrath* is so hot, that there is no abiding it. *Job* having before threatned the sword, here tells us whence the sword cometh, what sendeth the punishment of the sword; *wrath doth it*. What wrath? There is a twofold wrath, with either of which this Text may comply.

אף *Iram, חרה excandescentiam, קצף effervescentiam subitam, quandoque spumam bullamve significat. חמה calorem iræ denotat.*

First, The wrath of God, who is provoked and stirred up by the iniquity of man; as if he had said, you have provoked God to wrath by your unkind dealing with me, that wrath will bring the punishment of the sword, that is, all manner of evils upon you.

Secondly, The wrath of man against man, that also stirreth up and bringeth the punishment of the sword. *Whence are wars?* &c. is the Apostles question (*James* 4. 1.) He answers, *Are they not from your lusts that strive in your members?* And is not wrath among those lusts? So that in reference to both, it is a truth, *Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword*: The wrath of God against man, brings it, and the wrath of man against man, brings it. Hence observe,

First, *If the wrath of God be kindled, terrible judgments may be expected.*

What punishments, what consuming judgments doth wrath bring forth? The wrath of God may be specificated into any judgment, it produceth every evil. As the love of God carries in it any good, any mercy or blessing to his people, so doth his wrath every evil (*Psal.* 2. 12.) *If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, blessed are they that put their trust in him.* When he saith, *Blessed are they that put their trust in him*, he means, wo to those that do not put their trust in him. If his wrath be kindled but a little, if it be but as a spark, it will quickly grow up to a flame, and consume all (*Numb.* 16. 46.) *Moses* bids *Aaron* haste to make the atonement; *for* (saith he) *wrath is gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.* As soon as wrath goes abroad, it brings forth a plague. What that particular plague was, (intended by *Moses*) is not clear. Some take it literally for the sword; *The plague is begun*, that is, the stroak of the sword is among us. However, any plague or stroak may soon rise, when wrath is once risen.

Secondly, As wrath is put here for the wrath of man against man; Note,

The wrath of man brings a sword.

The wrath of man against man, brings the sword two wayes.

First, It brings the sword as it stirs up man to revenge; when men are angry, and give bitter words, they shortly after give blows: most of the wars that have been in the world, have risen from wrath. What the Apostle *James* (*chap.* 1. 15.) affirms of sin, the same we may affirm of wrath, though it be not sinful. *When wrath is finished* (or is come to its height and heat, *it bringeth forth death.* Dying *Jacob* giveth this as the effect of his two sons anger and wrath (*Gen.* 49. 6, 7.) *In their anger they slew a man, and in their self-will they digged down a wall; cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel.* It is good to appease wrath, to heal breaches, to quiet spirits; for if wrath begin its work, who knows where it may end?

Secondly, The wrath of man bringeth the punishment of the sword, as it stirs up God to punish man; the wrath of man against man, is a sin which God will punish with further wrath. God often powreth out wrath, and he suffers men to powr out more of their wrath upon wrathful men. The Apostle speaks as much to the Church of *Galatia* (Gal. 5. 15.) *If ye bite and devour one another*; What was this biting and devouring? Did they like dogs gnaw one another? or like *Canibals* eat one anothers flesh? No; see (*vers.* 14.) what he means; *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self; but if ye bite and devour one another.* Every act opposite to that love which God commands us to exercise towards our neighbour, is a biting and devouring of our neighbour. They that are civil and well bred, yet in this sence may be found men-eaters, and devourers of their brethren. We bite and devour one another, when we are unkind, wrathful and vexatious one towards another. What then? *Take heed ye be not consumed one of another.* Take heed lest by walking so unlike Christians, and so unanswerably to the Law of Gospel-love, you provoke God to kindle such a fire among you and in you, as may prove an utter consumption. When Christians are not careful and ready to walk in love, as Christ hath loved us, God sometimes gives them up to a spirit of contention, and their breaches are like the Sea, which cannot be healed. *Paul* spake this to a Church, a very faulty Church, and this was one of their faults, want of love. What he spake to them, we may speak to any, whether brethren or others. *Take heed that you do not bite and devour one another, lest you may be consumed one of another.* Your unjust and unrighteous walkings, your cruel and harsh dealings, which are yet but to the vexing and heating one of anothers spirits, or to the devouring and eating one of anothers credit, may provoke such judgments, as shall destroy your persons, families and estates, till nothing be left; thus the wrath of man brings the punishment of the sword: As wrath works man to revenge himself, so it provokes God to execute revenges. When men are fierce towards each other, God is angry with them all, and will not suffer them to live in peace, who loved dissention. This judgment of God upon men is both the fore-runner and demonstration of a further, and that the *Final Judgment*. *Job* concludes and closeth his Discourse with a serious premonition of it.

That ye may know there is a judgment.

That ye may know.] That is, that you may be made to understand what ye have taken so little notice of, or do not at all remember.

Secondly, Take it for the event; then, *That you may know*, is, that you may feel what you will not be perswaded of. *I tell you these things* that you may know them, that is, that you may be convinced and perswaded that there is a judgment; or if you will not be perswaded of it, you shall feel it by your sad experience. Thus *David* prayeth against his enemies (*Psal.* 9. 20.) *Put them in fear, O Lord, that they may know themselves to be but men*; that is, that they may be convinced and perswaded of it. He speaks not of such as had either so high an opinion of themselves, that they were Gods; or so low an opinion of themselves, that they were Beasts or Devils; only they acted as if they had been more then men, and were not sensible of their own mortality. They who thus know themselves be to men, will not (in the Apostles sence, *1 Cor.* 3. 3.) walk as men; that is, proudly or contentiously. And as there are but few who thus know themselves to be men; so there are as few, who know that God is the Lord. (*Exod.* 7. 8.) *The* Egyptians *shall know that I am the Lord*; that is, when I bring my judgments on them, then they will be constrained to acknowledge me in my almighty power and greatness, confessing *that I am God alone, and that besides me there is none other.* When men will not know God in his Word, nor in his Works of Creation and common Providence, he will make them know him in his Rod, and his works of Judgment and extraordinary Providence. So here, *Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword. That you may know*, is, that you may be convinced by the Logick of the sword, by pains and punishment.

Hoc dico ut eum ad quem provoco justum judicē prius cogitetis quam id reipsa experiamini. Bez.

Ut cognoscatis quod ex jure est. Jun. *i. e. ut saltem metu & horrore judiciorum ejus ad officium perfungendum ergo afflictū revocemini.* Jun.

That there is a judgment.] The Hebrew word is infinitive, *that to judge.* The meaning is, that there shall be a time of judgment, or such a proceeding as we call judgment. Judgment is of two sorts. First, There is a Judgment of absolution Secondly, A Judgment of condemnation. We may take in both here; God will make you know there is a Judgment.

שרון *pro* אשר רון *Quod judicare, i. e. judicatio Infinitivus, pro nomine verbali.*

First, A Judgment of absolution on my part; God will determine for me according to the innocency of my cause in that day; he will set me right before all the world.

Secondly, A Judgment of condemnation on your part; you will be found faulty, and receive sentence according to your fault. But when should this Judgment be given? There are two times of Divine Judgment.

First, In this world.

Secondly, In the world to come.

We may understand it of both; *That ye may know that there is a Judgment*; that is,

First, That God doth moderate, order and guide things according to his infinite wisdom in this world: The world is not left to chance or hap-hazard; there is a providence of God, and he will bring a sword upon you, that you may

may know that there is a judgment, or an unerring wisdom that orders all things. *To every purpose* (saith *Solomon*, Eccl. 8. 6.) *there is time and judgment.* That is, a proper season and a special manner of acting, upon the due observation whereof, the good success of every action doth depend: Now as there is a skill or judgment of man requisite to eve-your selves in the wrong judgment you give of me, yet ry purpose, to effect it; so there is a wisdom and a judgment of God to every purpose, to order and dispose of it, to reward or punish it.

Again secondly, *That ye may know there is a Judgment*, is, as if he had said, That ye may know a day is coming, wherein God will judge the world in righteousnes, though now you judge unrighteously; though now you please your selves in the wrong judgment you give of me, yet know there shall be a right judgment given of me and you too.

Hence observe, First, *Man is not easily perswaded that God will judge him, that Judgments are coming, or that Christ will come to Judgment.*

Though *Job*'s friends were (in the main) holy and good men, yet he speaks of them as very insensible of their liableness to this judgment. The wicked (*Isa.* 28. 15.) *make a covenant with death, and with hell they are at an agreement*: There is no perswading of them that judgment shall overtake them; though all the world be overflowed with a deluge, yet they hope to stand dry; *When the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us; for we have made lies our refuge, and under falshood have we hid our selves.* But will any man knowingly make lies his refuge, and secure himself by falshood? I answer,

First, Some will. The lies and falshood, the subtilty and guile which they have used or resolve to use, is that which they trust to; they live by their wits and shifts, and so they hope to make an escape from death and danger.

But secondly, I conceive the Prophet represents these men scoffingly speaking the opinion which others, especially the holy Prophets had of all the plots and projects, of all the helps and means which they had prepared for their shelter in that rainy day fore-threatned; as if they had said, we know very well that you call all these (our outward strengths and secret policies, yea, our gods, whom you blaspheme for Idols, all these you call) lies and falshood; well, let them be so, yet we will venture our selves upon their fidelity, not doubting but that the overflowing scourge will have nothing to do with us, though others are undone by it. A man that pleaseth himself in doing evil, cannot easily believe that he shall suffer evil for doing it. And though the heart cannot put off the terror of present judgments, yet it will of future judgment, We are unwilling to know that which checks us in that which we are willing to do.

Secondly observe, *They who do not act according to common principles, may be said not to know them.*

Job speaks to his friends, who were not ignorant that there should be a judgment; but they judged him as if they had never looked to have been judged themselves, their actions did not speak what they knew; therefore he charges them with ignorance (1 *Sam.* 2. 12.) *The sons of* Eli *were children of* Belial, *they did not know the Lord.* Did not they know him, and yet Priests! not know him, and yet bred up under *Eli* the High Priest, a godly man! Could it be said of them, they did not know the Lord? Though they had a form of the knowledge of God in the letter of the Law, yet because their lives were unsuitable, and they acted as they who know not God, therefore 'tis said expresly, *they knew not God.* They threw off the yoke of obedience, they were *sons of Belial*, they walked not in the power of their knowledge, and therefore they are said not to know. When *Manasses* being carried away to *Babylon* in chains, began to come to himself (the Lord having thus humbled him by his affliction) the Text saith, *Then* Manasses *knew that the Lord he was God* (2 *Chron.* 33. 13.) *Manasses* being son to *Hezekiah*, a godly King, no doubt was tutored, and instructed to know that *God was the Lord*; yet *Manasses* never knew God to purpose, till he was taught by the Rod. Whatsoever truth we do not hold forth in life, we may be said not to know it, how much knowledge soever we have about it.

Thirdly, From hence note also, *There shall certainly be a Judgment.*

This point was handled before (*vers.* 25.) consult that verse about it.

Fourthly, From the connexion, when he saith, *Wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword, that ye may know*, &c. From the Connexion we may learn,

That, *The present judgments of God are arguments of a future judgment.*

When we see the face of the sword, some visible judgment, that teacheth us to believe a judgment as yet unseen. The dayes of judgment in this world, are intimations of that great day of judgment at the end of the world: *Those are lesser dayes of judgment.* And, as when God doth not bring judgments on sinners in this life, it hardens many in this opinion, surely there will never be a day of judgment. Atheists are extreamly strengthened in that mis-belief, they flatter themselves that there shall be no judgment, because they see none, and that sinners shall escape punishment alwayes, because they are not alwayes punished. Now as some are strengthened in their unbelief, that there shall be no judgment at all, because they do not see a present judgment; so when God doth visibly bring forth judgments here, it is a confirmation of faith to others, that God will reckon with all men, and bring every work and secret thing to judgment.

Again, Why doth *Job* say, *That ye may know that there is a judgment.* Was there no judgment then? *Job* found Judges, and judgment too: True, he complained often of his friends for judging him, but he looked on theirs as wrong judgment, and so as no judgment. Intimating that another kind of judgment should pass upon him, then what had yet passed. They should know that there is a judgment.

Hence observe, *The judgment of God is an exact and perfect judgment.*

In the day of mans Judgment, some receive good for evil, and others receive evil for good. But when we shall appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, then *every one shall receive according to what he hath done in his body, whether it be good or evil.* Some men are blind and cannot judge aright, others are brib'd or byassed, and so will not judge aright. But Christ knoweth all things and persons, and nothing can turn him aside against his knowledge. His judgment will be straight and equal judgment.

Sixthly, In reference to the persons upon whom he presseth this, *That ye may know.* You my friends, have judged me harshly and severely; he particularly applies his speech to them; which gives us this Note further.

They who judge others harshly, have cause to fear judgment.

Christ speaks as if judgment should pass upon none but such (*Matth.* 7. 1.) *Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye mete, it shall be meted to you again.* Judge not, doth not prohibit the judgment of man on man; not the judgment of the Magistrate, no nor all private judgment; but wrong, harsh, hasty, groundless judgment: with such judgment judge not; why? *that ye be not judged:* As if Christ had said, ye shall certainly be judged if ye do so. But shall only such be judged, shall not all be judged? Yes all shall be judged; but all shall not be judged as this sort of Judges shall, with a judgment of condemnation. In that speech of Christ, to be judged, is to be condemned. Again, 'tis true, this argument is applicable to all sorts of sins and sinners; *Swear not, lie not, steal not, that ye be not judged.* But though it be true of all, yet it is more specially applicable to wrong judgment, and injurious Judges. *Judge not, that ye be not judged.* Such shall surely be condemned. The Apostle (1 *Cor.* 4. 5.) is strict upon that point; *Judge nothing before the time till the Lord come, that will bring to light the hidden things of darkness.* As the former, so this Scripture doth not take all judgment from man, as (if in all cases) we should only appeal to God, or refer every cause to the last Judgment. But when he saith, *Judge nothing before the time*, his meaning is, judge nothing unseasonably, judge no person in reference to his spiritual

state peremptorily or *finally*. We may judge the facts of men but take heed of judging their hearts. We may judge persons as they are, but we cannot conclude what they may be. We may judge what appeareth, but we must not judge by guess or by conjecture concerning those things which are hidden and appear not. The Lord (at last) *will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts*: The Judgment of hidden things and of hearts, are reserved to him to whom nothing is hidden, and who knoweth the heart (*James* 4. 11, 12.) *Speak not evil one of another (Brethren) he that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the Law, and judgeth the Law; but if thou judge the Law, thou art not a doer of the Law, but a Judge. There is one Law-giver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who art thou that judgest another?* Our Law-giver is our Judge, and he who is the Judge of all, is as able to destroy by a sentence of condemnation, as to save by a sentence of absolution.

Lastly observe, *The remembrance of the righteous judgment to come, should keep us in a holy fear, lest we judge our brethren unrighteously.*

The remembrance of that judgment, should keep us in a holy fear of falling into any sin, but especially of falling into this sin of unrighteous judgment. The Apostle *Paul* (*Rom.* 14.) takes brethren off from judging and vexing one another about either the observation or forbearance of meats and dayes, which once had a plain and direct institution from God, and were then indeed abolished and laid aside; yet some judging their brethren for the use, and others for the disuse of them, being unsatisfied about their abolition, In this quarrel the Apostle interposeth (*vers.* 10.) *Why judgest thou thy brother? Why dost thou set at naught thy brother?* (Thus he rebukes and chides them) *we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; for it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* This thought that we must all bow to God in the day of Judgment, may abate our keenness, and cool our heats. This will cause us either in a loving compliance to bow one to another, or to take heed of wrathful violence, whether in word or action, to cause others to bow to us. Whereas they who have blotted the notion of that last Judgment out of their hearts and consciences, will not stand upon those acts which are greatest blots in their lives and conversations. The *Chaldee* Paraphrase glossing upon the History of the murder of *Abel* by *Cain* (*Gen.* 4.) assignes this as the occasion of it; *Cain* and *Abel* went out into the field, where discoursing some points of Religion, *Cain* said there was no day of Judgment, no account to be given of what is done here, no reward after this life; such were the Tenents of *Cain*: *Abel* held the contrary, and said there was a Judgment, and an estate after this life, a reward for the righteous, and punishment for the wicked. *Cain* having drunk in those false principles, not only judged, but rose up and murdered his Brother presently. Whether *Cain* and *Abel* had such a Dialogue or no, is questionable; but it is clear, as to the point in hand, that when a man hath once resolved, that there is no judgment, or hath not the notion fresh upon his spirit, he is apt to judge his brethren harshly, and then to act cruelly against them. No man knows whether either his hand or his tongue will stop in sinning, when once he hath thrown away this Bar, or laid aside the holy Bridle of this principle, *That there is a Judgment.*

Thus far *Job*'s answer to the second speech of his second friend *Bildad* hath been opened; wherein he hath laboured to take all his three friends off from the fierceness of their opposition against him, and the harshness of their opinion of him, by the confession of his own faith, in the former context, and by remembring them in this of the account which they were to give to God of all their words and works, in the Judgment of the great Day. His third Friend *Zophar* takes up the Cause, and persecutes *Job* again upon the old quarrel, that surely he was a wicked man, a man of an evil life, because his life was so full of evils.

CHAP. XX. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Then answered Zophar *the* Naamathite *and said;*

Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this I make haste.

I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon earth,

That the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.

ZOPHAR no whit moved with the miseries, nor with the cries of *Job*, not at all satisfied with the serious confession which he made of his own faith, nor terrified with the severe threats of the sword of God against them, proceeds in his turn and time, to charge *Job* afresh with ungodliness, and that by an elegant description of the sudden and dreadful downfal of ungodly men.

For the clearing of the whole Chapter, we may consider,

First, The sum of what he here delivers, or his Argument.

Secondly, His scope.

Thirdly, The parts into which we may divide his Answer.

The sum or argument which he handleth is this, and he is only in this to teach and inform us, that wicked men enjoy but a very uncertain estate, how high and glorious soever they appear in this world. And that after a short time of pleasure, they are cast down and perish for ever.

His scope or aim in holding out this Doctrine, is to convince *Job*, that he was justly censured and dealt with by them as a wicked man, because God dealt with him as with a wicked man. The high prosperity in which he formerly lived, being vanished as a dream, his light turned to darkness, and all his joy wrapt up in sorrow: As if he had said, *The change which thou hast had in thy outward state, saith to us that thy heart is not changed. If thy conversation had not continued bad, thy condition had continued good.*

The parts of his Answer are three.

First, A short *Exordium*, in *vers.* 2, 3.

Secondly, A long Narration, from *vers.* 3. to the end of *vers.* 28.

Thirdly, We have a quick and cutting Conclusion in the close of the Chapter: *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.*

VERS. 1, 2.

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said;
Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this do I make haste.

THese words are a part of his Preface, wherein he moveth for attention; and he doth it from a kind of necessity that lay upon him to speak; from whence he would infer,

infer, that it was surely a duty in *Job* to hear: When *Paul* said, *A necessity is laid upon me to preach the Gospel*, he implied a necessity in others to hear the Gospel preached. *Therefore now, and for this*, &c.

What doth this refer to? We may give it three wayes.

First, Upon the whole matter; as if he had said, *I having well weighed and considered the tenor of thy discourse upon this great point of Gods dealing with man, and seeing how erroneous thou art in thy apprehensions about it, therefore my thoughts cause me to answer.*

Secondly, And more principally, *therefore*, that is, because of what thou spakest at the close of thy last discourse, threatning us with the sword; *Be ye afraid of the sword, for wrath bringeth the punishment of the sword; Therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer*: As if *Zophar* had said, *You speak terribly to us, you have threatned us with the sword, and have brandished or waved it before our eyes, like that flaming sword, which turning every way, was set to keep the way of the Tree of Life in Paradise, lest* Adam *should meddle with it. So*, saith he, *thou terrifiest us with the sword, as if it were drawn against us in case we should attempt further against thee; but I am so far from being terrified by thy threats, that for this very reason do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this do I make haste. Perceiving how wrongfully you apply the judgments of God, it is time for me to rectifie and reduce you; considering also that the terror you powr out upon us, is fallen upon your self, and that you are wounded with the sword you speak of. Have you not felt the smart of it? doth not this argue that you are the man, and that you have hit your self while you aimed at us?*

Thirdly, It may be referred to those reproaches (as he interprets them) and severe censures of their dealing with him. And then the reason is plain in the third verse, where the account of that *therefore*, is thus given; *I have heard the check of my reproach, therefore do my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this do I make haste*; we may put both these together, as if he had thus more plainly expressed himself, *Thou hast not only threatned, but reproached; not only terrified, but checked and censured me; for this my thoughts cause me to answer, and for this do I make haste.*

רעפי **Therefore do my thoughts.**] Thoughts are the first-born of the soul, our inward motions. The word which is here used in the Hebrew for a thought, is very elegant, properly signifying the boughs of a tree, because our thoughts shoot out from our minds, as branches do from a tree, the force of which word was opened, *chap.* 4. 13. *Therefore do my thoughts*

שוב *Convertere, redire, est in* Hiphil, *ubi propriè significat redire facere, & quando de verbis agitur, respondere significat.* Bold. *Studium eloquendi stimulat, urget ac accelerat me.* Jun.

Cause me to answer.] The expression notes an active putting forward, or a thrusting him on to answer, as if he had not been master of his own spirit, or could not withstand the impulses which were upon him. His thoughts did not only contain the matter which he had to answer; but they provoked, and (as we render) *caused him to answer*; or (according to the Letter) *to return*; *my thoughts caused me to return*; *my thoughts* presse me: As if he had said, *It was my purpose to have given thee over, and to have medled no more with thee; but thy carriage hath been such, that I am compelled to answer*; I must answer whether I will or no. The old Prophets when they received impressions from the Spirit of God, were no more in their own power, or they had not the command of their own words, they must speak what the Spirit dictated to them, they could not forbear. They could not say as the wicked are described (*Psal.* 12. 4.) *Our lips are our own*; no, their lips moved as the Spirit of God moved them. Thus the Apostle *Peter* describes them (2 *Pet.* 1. 21.) *The Prophesie came not in old time (or at any time) by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost.* Such a force there is in the word of the Text. Some interpret, as if *Zophar* would have *Job* understand so much, that he was moved with the Spirit of God, or that God inspired him to speak, and he could not be silent. *David* was under such a constraint (*Psal.* 39. 3.) *My heart was hot within me, while I was musing, the fire burned, then spake I with my tongue. His thoughts caused him to answer.* And in that *Zophar* saith, *My thoughts cause me*, &c. he seems to intimate, that though he spake zealously, yet he did not speak rashly, but had seriously premeditated or thought of the whole matter before-hand.

Hence observe, *Thoughts press us to words.*

They force their way out; it is a hard thing to keep in our thoughts: our thoughts are as conceptions, and our answerings are as the birth. Where the first is, the second must follow. Where there is a conception, there alwayes succeedeth either timely production, or abortion. Thoughts once conceived and formed, strive and struggle to come to the birth and see the light. The Apostle *Paul* useth such an an expression (*Acts* 18. 5.) Where the Text saith, that when *Silas* and *Timotheus* were come from *Macedonia*, Paul *was pressed in spirit*, *Paul* spake before; *he reasoned in the Synagogue every Sabbath* (vers. 4.) But after they came from *Macedonia*, Paul *was pressed in spirit*, or constrained; so pressed in spirit, that he could not hold; therefore it follows, *I testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ*; he had a new gale, a fresh breathing from Christ upon him; or as some render, a Spring-tide came in upon him, his spirit swell'd high, and overflowed the banks. The same word is used (2 *Cor.* 5. 14.) *The love of Christ constraineth me*, that is, the love wherewith Christ loveth me ('tis true also of the love wherewith we love Christ) this love constraineth me. *Paul* was not constrained by an outward violence, but by an internal virtue, to do, to suffer, to speak, to act whatsoever was his duty in the service of Jesus Christ.

Συνεχόμαι *Intus apud se æstuabat.*

Again, Whereas he saith, *My thoughts cause me to answer*; observe,

That, *Before we answer, we should consider.*

We should not speak till we think; nor utter a matter till we have beaten it out plain in our own spirits: *Thoughts must form our words, and words should bear the form of our thoughts.* He that speaks what he thinks not, speaks hypocritically; and he that thinks not of what he speaks, speaks inconsiderately. *Unless the heart work before the tongue, the tongue will make but ill-favoured work.* As we should deliberate long before we determine to do any thing, so we should use some deliberation before every thing we say. When Christ saith to his Disciples in that case of their being brought before Governors and Kings for his Names sake (*Matth.* 10. 19, 20.) *Take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour, what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you.* In this Christ doth not (as I conceive) forbid all care and fore-thought what to say (no more then he forbids all care and fore-thought about the things of this life) when he saith (*Matth.* 6. 25.) *Take no thought for your life*: He only forbids anxious distrustful cares and thoughts what to say; or that they should not like Orators or Advocates, strive to make studied Rhetorical Pleas and Apologies for themselves; forasmuch as in the due improvement and management of their talents, the Spirit would assist and supply them, yea, and if need were, give them immediate supplies, and be with their mouths (as he promised *Moses*, Exod. 4. 12.) to *teach them what they should say.* If their own thoughts could not, he would teach and move them to answer.

And for this I make haste.] The Hebrew is, *Therefore haste is in me*; I find a motion in me, and that motion forbids all delayes; some expound this *haste* by a kind of delight; *for this I delight in answering, it is pleasant to me*; we usually make haste to do those things we delight to do. That's a good sence; as it was prophesied of Christ (*Psal.* 40. 7, 8.) *Lo I come, I delight to do thy will*; there was haste and delight both together in Christ: It was written in the volume of Gods Book that he should do the will of God; and Christ came with haste and delight to do it: *Zophar* speaks near the same; *It is my delight to answer*: we render, *for this I make haste*, or, *for this my haste is in me*: There is a twofold haste; first, a foolish; secondly, a wise haste; a haste of indiscretion, and a haste of diligence; a haste that precedes deliberation, and a haste that follows deliberation; *Zophar* would be understood of the best haste, when he saith, *I make haste*; his meaning is, he made the haste of a diligent man, who having wisely deliberated what to answer, makes haste to answer; he would be understood to make the haste of an industrious man, not of a passionate man. Hence note,

חוש *Et deliciis affluere & festinare significat.*

That, *In a good work it is good to make haste.*

The Apostles rule (*Rom.* 12. 11.) is, *Not slothful in business. Some haste makes waste; and many make waste, because they make no haste*; some make more haste then good speed;

speed; others have good speed, while they make haste. *David* (*Psal.* 31. 22.) spake in too much haste, he spake before he had well thought of it; *I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes.* And again (*Psal.* 116. 11.) *I said in my haste all men are liars*; take heed of such hasty sayings as these: He tells us also of a commendable haste which he used (*Psal.* 119. 60.) *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy testimonies*; this was the haste of diligence, the other was the haste of unbelief; *he that believeth, will not make haste*; either to do or speak what he hath not considered, or finds no warrant for, when he hath considered. To run on in a wrong way, is from our unbelief, or from our ignorance; but he that believeth and knoweth, will run in a right way; nothing provokes so much to a holy haste, as Faith doth. Faith moveth us to do the will of God, and not to delay: The Motto of one of the Ancients was, *Make haste slowly:* Another gives it as a rule, in the observation whereof, he obtained all his successes, *Making no delay.* The right stating of our haste and delay, gives a good issue to all our actions; sometimes haste is best, sometimes stay is best; sometimes we cannot be too hasty, sometimes we can hardly be too slow. *Paul* was resolute (*Gal.* 1. 16.) he made no stop, he would not stay for a conference; *When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:* He went not to counsel, either with his own heart, or with the wisest heads, when once the mind of God was cleared up to him, and his conscience was attached with it. We cannot do that too soon which is alwayes to be done. Yet about many things we may say (as one was wont) *Let us not make much haste, that so we may have done the sooner.*

Again, *Zophar* looking upon *Job* as a man mistaken, and in a wrong way, saith, *For this I make haste.* Hence note,

It is our duty to hasten the recalling and reducing of those that are engaged in any errour, or departed from the way of truth and holiness.

Zophar's supposition is a rule for us to walk by, though his practice be not; he was mistaken in the object of his haste, not in the ground or rise of it. He that seeth his neighbours house on fire, should make haste to quench it; he that seeth him fallen into a pit, should make haste to pull him out; in a desperate disease, we make haste to the Physitian; such were *Zophar*'s apprehensions concerning *Job*: He supposed his soul diseased, and ready to gangrene with erroneous opinions or sinful practices; *and for this he made haste.* As *Paul* speaks (*Gal.* 2. 5.) about false brethren in the things of the Gospel, *to whom he gave not place, no not for an hour.* *Paul* made hast to reduce them, he did not delay, no not an hour; so should we. As the Sun should not go down upon our wrath (we must make haste to be reconciled to an offended brother) so the Sun should not go down upon our zeal, we must make haste to recover a lapsed brother. He that maketh the former delay, *giveth place to the Devil* (as the Apostle speaks) to take an advantage against and prevail upon himself; and he that maketh the latter delay, *giveth place to the Devil*, to take advantage against, and prevail upon his brother.

Verse 3. **I have heard the check of my reproach, and the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.**

Some conceive that as these words hold forth what *Zophar* had heard from *Job*, so with what frame of spirit he heard it; as if he had said, *I have heard it, and let it go; I will neither trouble my self nor thee about it, but take it patiently: I will not check or reproach thee, though I have heard the check of my reproach*; that is, such a check or reproof as tends to my reproach and disgrace.

כלם *Ad confusionem & erubescentiam pertinet.*

The word signifies to make one *blush*; you have spoken such things (saith *Zophar*) as might make me *blush* if I were guilty; possibly he aims particularly at those words of *chap.* 19. 22. *Why do you persecute me as God, and are not satisfied with my flesh?* Where *Job* chargeth his friends with highest cruelty; ye have (upon the matter) eaten my flesh, and will ye destroy my spirit too? Now, saith *Zophar*, *I have heard the check of my reproach.* What! do we persecute you, who are come to comfort you? have we eaten your flesh, who mourn over your soul? why do you shame and dishonour us with this reproach?

Yet I conceive that which *Zophar* calleth the check of his reproach, was *Job*'s stiffness and persistance in his opinion, still dissenting from his friends, and refusing to be brought over to their judgments. Hence note,

Man is apt to account it a reproach to be dissented from and gainsayed in what he affirms as truth.

Every dissent carrieth a reproof, yea, a reproach in it; he must have a patient ear that can hear himself reproved: *Zophar*'s patience was so much moved with it, that he presently adds,

The spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

These words are near in sence with the close of the former verse; there he said, *My thoughts cause me to answer*; here, *the spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.* First, Some interpret it of God, who is the spirit giving understanding: As if he had said, God hath caused me to answer. But rather, Secondly, *The spirit of the understanding* is the highest, chiefest and most sublimate faculty of the understanding; as if he had said, *Not only doth my understanding in general, but the most refined part of it, that which is most free from the dregs of passion, the very spirit of my understanding moves me to answer.* The Apostle useth such an expres (*Eph.* 4. 23.) *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind*; not only be renewed in the outward man, in practice and conversation, but be renewed in your mind; yea, in the spirit of it. Holiness is not only the renewing of the outward man, but of the mind, and not only of the mind, but of the spirit of the mind, that is, of whatsoever riseth up nearest to God, as the spirit of the understanding doth; our minds need renewing, and so doth the very spirit of them, both because corruption is got into the highest powers of the mind, and because we must serve God and answer one another with those highest powers, even with the spirit of our understanding.

Thirdly, *The spirit of the understanding* may be expounded by the force and power of the understanding. The spirit of every thing is the best and the strongest of it. And thus he seems to speak in opposition to the manner of *Job*'s speech, which was such as made it (in his construction) a check rather then a counsel, and a reproach rather then a reproof. A check and a reproach proceed from passion, or from spleen; whereas counsel what to do, and reproof for what hath been done amiss, proceed from compassion, or from love. Thou hast spoken my reproach, and therefore thou hast spoken from thy own passion; but I will not imitate thee, I intend not to answer thee with my passion, but with my reason and with my spirit, the force and best of my understanding.

Lastly, When he saith, *The spirit of my understanding causeth me*, &c. He (possibly) would intimate, that he had understanding or knowledge enough to answer for himself, to retort *Job*'s reproach, and make good his own assertion.

From this last clause of the Verse, observe,

We should not answer passionate speeches with passion.

The more we see others disturbed and heated with passion, the more cool and composed we should be; we should dispose our selves to the highest degree of patience, when we see others impatient; what others speak or write in anger, we should answer in love, and fall to work with our reason, yea, with (that, which hath more of the spirit of our understanding in it) our Graces. When we perceive those we have to deal with, over-wrought with their own distempers and corruptions, when we see plainly that the spirit of pride and contentiousness causeth them to speak to us, then we should strive to speak with them in the spirit of meekness, and the spirit of understanding should cause us to answer. Man hath this priviledge above beasts, that he hath an understanding; and not only so, but in this he is like to Angels, yea, to God himself; but unless he exerciseth his understanding, he acts as a beast: So the *Psalmist* concludes (*Psal.* 49. 20.) *Man that is in honour, and understandeth not* (that is, doth not exercise his understanding, or act suitably to it, but is led meerly by sense, or hurried by passion, this man) *is like the beasts that perish.* It is good to be full of affection; but it is best to work in the *full assurance of understanding*; affections without understanding, are blind,

blind, and quickly run us upon a thouſand inconveniences. That duty which calls up all our affections, yet calls for a work of the underſtanding (*Pſal.* 47.7.) *Sing praiſes with underſtanding.* And if we ought not to perform any publick duty in the Church (thoſe in particular of praying and ſinging) ſo, as that others cannot ſet their underſtandings on work, then much leſs are we to perform any duty without the work of our own underſtanding (1 *Cor.*14.14,15.) *If I pray in an unknown tongue* (that is, in a tongue which others who joyn with me, know not, though I do) *my ſpirit prayeth, but my underſtanding is unfruitful,* that is, to them with whom I pray; my underſtanding in prayer is no benefit to them, unleſs they alſo underſtand what I pray. *What is it then? I will pray with the ſpirit, and will pray with the underſtanding alſo; I will ſing with the ſpirit, I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo;* that is, I will ſing and pray in an unknown tongue by that extraordinary gift of the Spirit, or as the Spirit dictates unto me; yet *I will ſing and pray with the underſtanding alſo,* that is, I will ſo explain or interpret my *Pſalm* or *Prayer,* that others may underſtand it. He is a *Barbarian* to others, who either ſpeaketh or prayeth what they underſtand not; and he is worſe then a *Barbarian* to himſelf, who ſpeaketh what himſelf underſtandeth not. An ignorant perſon wants underſtanding, and a paſſionate perſon cannot uſe his underſtanding; both are unfit to object or anſwer. When we anſwer like men, the ſpirit of our underſtanding cauſeth us to anſwer.

From the Preface thus briefly opened, *Zophar* deſcends to the matter of his anſwer, which he layeth down, firſt, more generally, at *verſ.* 4, 5.

Verſ. 4. Knoweſt not thou this of old, ſince man was placed upon earth?

Theſe words charge *Job* either with groſs ignorance, or a reſolved oppoſition of the truth againſt his own knowledge: As if he had ſaid, *Job, thou wouldeſt perſwade us that thou art a knowing man; haſt thou not this among thy experiences? Is not this laid up among thy treaſures of knowledge? Knoweſt thou not this?* Thus the words are a check of his ignorance or inadvertency. *What haſt thou not known this?* Knoweſt thou not that which every one knoweth? children can ſpeak of this; this hath been the courſe of God of old. As if he had ſaid, *I am not ſpeaking paradoxes to thee and novelties, or things which fall out only now and then,* but of the fixt and conſtant tenor of Gods dealings and adminiſtrations even from the firſt, or of old, long ago, from all ages and generations it hath been thus.

Fixa hæc & conſtituta divinæ providentiæ ratio omnibus nota eſt. Pined.

The word ſignifies ſometimes *Eternity* ſtrictly taken (*Iſa.* 57.17.) *Thus ſaith the high and holy one that inhabiteth Eternity,* that is, who hath neither beginning nor ending. Chriſt (*Iſa.*9.5.) is called *the everlaſting Father,* or, *the Father of Eternity*; not only in regard of the eternity of his being, but as he is the author of eternal life (here begun, hereafter to be perfected) unto all thoſe that believe on him, or have intereſt in him; as alſo becauſe of the everlaſtingneſs of his fatherly care of, and tenderneſs towards them. In other places the word ſignifies only a long time or a diuturnity (*Pſal.* 132.14.) *There will I dwell for ever*; that is, for many ages. So here, *Haſt thou not known of old?* Which is explained in the next words, *ſince man was placed upon the earth?* That is, ever ſince or from the creation of the world; for then man was firſt placed upon the earth. We may read the word *Man,* not as an *Appellative,* but as the *Proper Name* of the firſt man; *Haſt not thou known this of old ſince* Adam *was placed upon the earth?* The ſame word was the proper name of the firſt man, and is the common name of all men. Thus it hath been ever ſince *Adam* was formed and faſhioned out of the earth by divine art, and made up into that goodly fabrick, and then diſpoſed by a divine order to dreſs the Garden. The original word ſignifies to ſettle or place a man in his buſineſs or calling, as *Adam* was preſently after his Creation (*Gen.* 2.15.) *And the Lord took the man* (or *Adam*) *and put him into the Garden of* Eden *to dreſs it and to keep it. Knoweſt thou not this, or that it hath been thus of old ſince man was* (*thus*) *placed upon the earth?* Hence obſerve,

מנו־עֹר
Ex eo quod olim à ſæculo, à ſemper ab æterno, quod frequenter ſumitur pro magna duratione.

שִׂים
Poſitus arte & induſtria fabricatus, diſpoſitus certo loco, non caſu.

First, That, *We ſhould acquaint our ſelves with the hiſtory of Gods dealing in all ages.*

Doſt thou not know?] He ſpeaks it as a reproach to him, that he was not acquainted with what God had done in former times; there are ſome extraordinary caſes, that fall not out in every age: the providence of God hath ſome excentrical motions; but we may draw a line, and ſee the footſteps of many of his diſpenſations in all ages. Many works of divine providence are uniform, and run parallel in all times: Or if their face and appearance be not one and the ſame, yet it is not divers or contrary. Now, as it is a ſhame not to know common principles, ſo not to know common experiences. That which any man may know, every man ought to know, if it be that which is uſeful, and a duty for us to know.

Secondly, From the particular here intended, obſerve,

That, *In all ages God hath declared himſelf againſt wicked men.*

God never ſhewed himſelf a friend to ſinners, or a lover of iniquity; he declared himſelf againſt *Adam* when he ſinned, though he receiveth him into favour again. He declared himſelf againſt wicked *Cain,* he excommunicated him, and caſt him out; he declared himſelf againſt the old world by water: When they were grown ſo vile, that all the imaginations of the thoughts of their hearts were evil, he ſent a deluge, not to waſh, but drown them. He declared himſelf againſt the wickedneſs of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* by fire, not to purifie, but conſume them. God never ſhewed good will to wicked men (he is alwayes conſtant to himſelf) as he never ſhewed ill will to any of the godly; there is not one teſtimony of either upon record in any age of the world.

Thirdly, From thoſe words, *Since man was placed upon the earth*; he doth not ſay, *Since man was upon the earth; but placed.*

Note, *There is a divine ordination that ſets every man in his place upon the earth.* Or, *Man is placed and diſpoſed of by a divine ordination.*

God hath appointed to every man where he ſhall be, and how he ſhall be employed. Time and place are ſet down by God; *And as he hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation* (Acts 17.26.) So the buſineſs of every man in that place of his habitation. When the Lord made man, he took and *put him into the Garden of Eden*; there was the bound of his habitation: And being brought thither, he ſhewed him his work, *to dreſs it, and to keep it* (Gen. 2. 15.) He left him not at large to the whole world for a place, but ſingled him his place; nor did he leave him at large for an employment; but ſhewed him his work. *Adam* did not thruſt himſelf into the Garden, but the Lord took him by the hand, led him to, and placed him in it, directing him what to do. Here was the divine ordination to a Calling. It is our happineſs when we are able to ſay, whereſoever we are, God hath placed us there, we have not thruſt our ſelves in. This is a great ſupport in any ſervice or buſineſs, when we can ſee that God hath called, and his hand conducted us to it; that we have not taken, but received it; that we are not come, but ſent unto it.

Zophar proceeds to expreſs or name that common truth, to which all ages have born, or may bring in their witneſs.

Verſe 5. That the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, and the joy of the hypocrite for a moment.

Job having gained thus much upon his Friends, at leaſt, upon *Zophar,* that wicked men may enjoy outward proſperity in this world, is yet oppoſed upon the ſame account, becauſe, though they do proſper, yet it is but for a little time, ſo little, that they can hardly be known to have been at all in proſperity. For (ſaith *Zophar*) to this Aſſertion all ages give their ſuffrage; *The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort,* &c. We have in the two parts of the Verſe three pair of parallel terms. First, *Triumphing and Joy.* Secondly, *The wicked man and the hypocrite.* Thirdly, *Short and a moment,* Theſe in ſubſtance are the ſame.

The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort.

The word which we tranſlate *triumphing,* ſignifies not only joy, but joy proclaimed, that all may know it: Such is

רנת
Ovatio, triumphus, læta

proclamatio ob fœlicitatem & rem successi; hinc Pavones dicti Rananna, à clamore, vel quia quasi gaudent de pulchritudine alarum suarum. Laus impiorum brevis est. Vulg, *Cætum improborum à propinquo.* Jun.

מקרוב *De propinquo.*

is that of triumphers after victory obtained in battel. It is applied both to honest and to sinful joy; yea, the word is also sometimes applied to sorrow, when sorrow is loud, and maketh an out-cry or lamentation: From this root the Hebrews derive that word whereby they express a *Peacock*; and they give the reason, both from the shrill cry of the *Peacock*, as also from the cause of that cry; the *Peacock* shouts (say Naturalists) looks upon his painted wings and goodly feathers, then he triumpheth; and so do wicked men, when they reflect upon their painted and spreading plumes, when they look upon their worldly splendor and greatness, then they triumph and sing. Some read, *the praise*; others, *the song of the hypocrite.* All rendrings laid together, do but reach the fulness of the Text, in setting out the hypocrites vanity, who ascending (as it were) his Chariot of pride and self-confidence, rides in triumph, and blesseth himself, as the only happy man. But,

The triumphing of the wicked is short.] Or according to the Hebrew, *It is of near*: This nearness may be taken two wayes; First, In reference to its beginning; it is not long since the triumph of such began. Secondly, In reference to its ending; the triumph of such shall not long continue; 'tis but a while since it rose, and within a while it will fall. We read of *new Gods* (*Deut.* 32.17. It is this word in the Hebrew, *Gods of near new Gods*) *which your fathers knew not*; ye have a certain race of Gods that were never heard of but of late, Gods of a late Date or Edition, and it will not be long but they will be out of date again; such is the triumphing of the wicked, it is not long since he began to triumph; a child may number the years which his prosperity hath lived, and the oldest man may out-live it. I find some Interpreters expressing the word by a local distance, rather then a distance of time. *The triumph of the wicked is near*, that is, it is not come from far: its pedigree and original is not from heaven, the far Countrey; but from the earth, to which it is a neighbour; and therefore (as all earthly things) it is fading, transitory, and quickly passeth away.

Hence observe, First, *Wicked men may flourish in great prosperity.*

Triumph is the height of prosperity: If ever Heathen *Rome* were seen in her glory, it was when her *Cæsars* having gotten some great victory, rode in triumph: To such a state may a wicked man ascend. *I have seen the wicked in great prosperity* (saith *David*, Psal. 37.) *flourishing like a green Bay-tree*; yea, they may flourish like the Cedars of *Lebanon*, or like the Oaks of *Bashan*. Let not their prosperity scandalize the Saints, or make them to stumble. Some know not what interpretation to put upon it, or how to bear it. *Wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous then he?* (Hab. 1.13.) This Point I have met with before; therefore I shall not stay upon it. But (which may easily take off this scandal) observe,

Secondly, That, *A wicked mans prosperity is of no continuance.*

It is but like a Statue of Snow before the Sun, soon defaced and melted down. It is but like some goodly Characters drawn upon the sand, which the next puff of wind blots out. He may have the pleasure of sin, but it is but for a season; his pleasures are scarce sweet at all; his pleasures are at best but a bitter-sweet, and that sweetness which is in them, doth not hold long: *The triumphing of the wicked is short*, both because lately begun, and because it shall soon end: yea, short, if we consider the utmost possibility of its continuance. How many casualties, decayes, changings and declinings are ready to invade and seize upon it every moment?

Further, The shortness of their triumph may be considered three wayes.

First, In reference to the constitution or nature of the things about which they triumph, or in which they rejoyce. Thus 'tis short.

Secondly, Short in reference to the general curse which God hath laid upon the creature; the creature at the best, is but a cistern, not a fountain; there is no water in it, but what is put into it; And since the fall of man, the creature is a broken, a crackt cistern, and cannot hold the comforts that are put into it; they quickly leak out and pass away like water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.

Thirdly, That which makes the triumphing of a wicked man yet shorter, is, a particular curse upon him for his personal sins and crooked wayes wherein he walketh. All his enjoyments are in themselves vanishing, and he by his own folly makes them more vain to him then they are in themselves.

From all it follows, That, *A wicked man is a very miserable man.*

His triumphing is short, but his declining is for ever; his prosperity is but for a while, but his misery is everlasting; all his good things will soon be gone, but his evils shall never end; his light is quickly put out, but when once it is dark with him, he shall see the light no more. The affliction which a Believer meets with in this life, is consistent with his happiness; or, he is not unhappy, though afflicted, because his afflictions are short, and his comforts everlasting (1 *Cor.* 4. 17.) *Our light afflictions which are but for a moment*, &c. This makes the life of a Saint happy while he is in affliction, his afflictions are light when heaviest, and short when longest, compared with that *far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*: This also makes the life of a wicked man miserable while he is in prosperity, because his prosperity is but light and for a moment; and we may carry the latter part to the contrary sence, that light, short prosperity worketh for him an eternal weight of misery: For as earthly things are temporary in their nature and use to all, so being ill used and enjoyed without God in Christ, and a good Conscience, they prove eternal in their punishment; for the punishments and miseries that follow them, are eternal, and so they may be said to work an eternal weight of punishment; whereas the afflictions of the Saints are short in their burdensomness, yet eternal in their fruitfulness; for they work (not by the way of price, but of preparation) *an eternal weight of Glory.*

And the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.

Lest the Title of a wicked man should be too broad, and *Job* should not take himself as concerned in this conclusion, because all knew him to be a worshipper of God, and one that made profession of Religion, therefore *Zophar* in this latter clause, adds the word *hypocrite*; which is most proper to those who are highest in profession. *The joy of the hypocrite but for a moment.*

Triumphing, in the former clause, signifies a more open deportment: There's no dissembling nor concealing of a Triumph. Joy may be more secret and retired; so some conceive *Zophar* speaking properly in reference to the usual distinct temper of the wicked and the hypocrite. A wicked prophane man triumphs and rants it, he makes all ring with his jollity. The hypocrite and false professor takes some stiller delights, and more moderate contentments; now (saith *Zophar*) this joy, though it be more reserved and close, is yet but for a moment, 'tis but like a *punctum* or point, which in the *Mathematicks* is so small a thing, that it hath no dimensions, unless imaginable; a point is less then the least line, or only the beginning of a line, it is but putting down his pen, and 'tis done; there needs no drawing, as in making lines. The worldly felicity of an hypocrite toucheth him only as a Globe doth a Table (*in puncto*) in a point; he hath but a touch of it, and then 'tis gone. A point is to a place, as a moment is to time, the least and last division of it: A point is indivisible in place, as a moment is in time. Thus the joy of the hypocrite is brought down to the lowest that words or thoughts can make of it. A hypocrite (against his will) toucheth worldly joy in regard of the time of his enjoying of it, as a Godly man willingly and designedly toucheth it, in regard of that frame or spirit with which he enjoyeth it, only in a point. He hath as little to do with worldly things as he can, he doth not lay the whole dimension of his soul upon them. He rejoyceth in the world as if he rejoyced not. Now this which is at once the duty and happiness of the Saints, shall be the punishment of hypocrite. These whether they will or no, shall have but a point or moment of worldly Felicity; whereas the other reckon

Improbis in mundo tribuitur Jubilum, quia non dissimulant quo gaudent, Hypocritis lætitia animo magis abscondita, quam verbis significata. Coc.

ערי רגע *Ad instar puncti, ad momentum.*

Licet vitam integram hominis duret humana fœlicitas, momentum durat.

reckon upon, and chearfully make account of it, as of no more. Though true joy in worldly things be theirs, yet they lightly esteem that joy. As for spiritual joy, that belongs to them alone. The Apostle (*Phil.* 4. 4.) exhorts all such, and only such, when he saith, *Rejoyce in the Lord; I say again, rejoyce.* The hypocrite hath no right to any joy (sorrow is his portion) yet he can as hardly be kept from rejoycing in the world, as the godly are hardly got to rejoyce in the Lord. Now though the hypocrites joy is most in outward things (he rejoyceth in *Corn, Wine and Oyl*) yet the joy of the hypocrite may go further, he may have joy in spirituals; for the hypocrite doth not rejoyce meerly as a wicked man, in the things of the world, he sometimes rejoyceth in the things of heaven (*Mat.* 13. 20.) *The stony ground received the word with joy.* The hypocrite may get a smatch of some *tastes of the powers of the world to come*, as the Apostle speaks (*Heb.* 6. 5.) For seeing hypocrites are not only enlightened about the things of this world, but also about the things of the world to come; they may have some joy in them; yet this strictly taken, is but a sensitive joy, or at the most, a rational, not a truly spiritual joy: A man may have a joy in and about spiritual things, yet have no spiritual joy; as a man may rejoyce in and about many worldly things, and yet his not a worldly joy; or as a man may have much knowledge about spiritual things, yet no spiritual knowledge of them; thus an hypocrite hath flashes of joy about spiritual things, but no spiritual joy: When a hypocrite hears a well ordered quick discourse and discovery of the joyes and happiness of heaven, of the grace and goodness of God, this from rational grounds may affect his heart, and so cause joy; but this joy of the hypocrite about spirituals, though it be better then his worldly joy, in regard of its object, yet it is no better in regard of its duration; for of this we may also conclude, 'tis but for a moment. As the hypocrite himself, so his joy is not built upon the rock, but upon the sands; it is not a Master-joy, a joy that can carry him out when sorrow cometh: A hypocrite cannot be as sorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing; he cannot (as *Paul* saith, *Rom.* 5. 3.) *rejoyce in tribulation*, because he is not indeed united unto Christ, the true *Isaac*, or laughter of his people, the fountain of their joy. The hypocrites sorrow will last for ever, but all his joyes are only for a moment.

Lastly, Consider the opposite state which *Zophar* would have *Job* take notice of.

The triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment.

Hence it follows that there are some whose triumphing, and whose joyes are permanent and stable: The triumphing of the godly is for ever, and the joy of the sincere shall continue to everlasting. The joy of the Saints here is everlasting in the nature of it, though not in the actings of it; 'tis everlasting, as everlasting is opposed to a period, though not as to a pause. Their joy dieth not in this world, though sometimes it be sick, and languish. Some Saints have had their joy abiding in strength, when themselves were weak, and their joy not only alive, but lively as long as they lived; they have been carried to the grave in the embraces of Christ, and in the smiles of divine love. And as the moment of this life hath been a kind of eternity of joy to them, so eternity shall be to them but as a moment of joy; and yet every moment shall have (as it were) an eternity in it. Saints shall rejoyce for ever, yet their joy shall be alwayes as fresh and green as if new begun; as there shall be no removing of this joy, so no abatement of their sweetness in the enjoyment of it.

VERS. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach up to the clouds.
Yet he shall perish for ever, like his own dung; they which have seen him, shall say, Where is he?
He shall flee away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.
The eye also which saw him, shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

Zophar having given his opinion about the vanishing prosperity of a wicked man, proceeds to amplifie and confirm it. He amplifies it,

First, By an hyperbolical supposition, *vers.* 6. *Though his excellency mount up to the heavens*, &c. The *Antithesis* whereof is laid down, *vers.* 7. *Yet he shall perish for ever; like his own dung*, &c.

Secondly, He amplifies it by elegant similitudes; First, Of a dream. Secondly, Of a night-vision, *vers.* 8. Both which are prosecuted, *vers.* 9. *The eye also which saw him, shall see him no more*, &c.

Verse 6. **Though his excellency mount up to the heavens.**

It is a strong way of arguing, when we put the worst of our case, and yet conclude it good. We shew our selves able to hold out in the worst that is or can be, when we profess a stedfastness in that which is worse then is or indeed can be.

It is also a strong way of arguing, when we put the best of another mans case, and yet conclude it bad. He is not able to hold out in the best that is or may be, who cannot continue in that estate, which is better then any is, or indeed can be. Such is the intended strength of *Zophar's* argument in this place.

Though his excellency mount up to the heavens.

The Vulgar renders, *If his pride ascend even up to heaven.* The word in the original which we translate *Excellency*, he translates *Pride*. Properly it signifies that *which is lifted up*. There is an easie cognation between these two. For that which is high, or he who lifts up himself high, may be said to be proud. The Etymologie of the Latine word, *to be proud*, is to go over another, or to go above him. And usually they who are exalted above others, in high places of worldly honour and excellency, are also lifted up with pride. A lowly spirit in a high place, is very rarely found. The Hebrew word for a Prince, is derived from this Root, both because all Princes are exalted above the ordinary sort of men, and because most Princes are proud in the exalting of themselves. The word is used often in a good sence, as *Psal.* 62. 4. *They only consult to cast him down from his excellency*: That is, to cast *David* from that Royal Throne to which God had exalted him.

Si ascenderit usq; ad cœlum superbia ejus Vulg.

Superbire est super ire.

Princeps dicitur רוֹזֵן *quasi elevatus aut sublimis.*

The *Septuagint* translate, *If his gifts ascend up to heaven.* Gifts may be expressed by this word, because they do indeed lift him up in honour who is endued with them; as also because we are very apt to be lifted up with gifts; as the Apostle speaketh, 1 *Cor.* 8. 1. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* This sence is very suitable to *Zophar's* discourse of a hypocrite, who, though he hath not so much as one talent of true Grace, yet he may have five, yea ten talents of gifts; the gift of Prayer, the gift of Prophesie, the gift of utterance, *&c.* And with these gifts of heaven he is exalted and impregnated with those worst fumes of hell, Pride and Self-conceit.

Si ascenderint in cœlum dona ejus. Sept.

This form of speaking, *to mount up to heaven*, implies a gradation of four steps.

First, Heaven is high. Therefore to mount up to heaven, is to be in a high state of honour and excellency.

Secondly, Heaven is highest, and therefore *to mount up to heaven*, notes the highest ascent and elevation which man is capable of, or is attainable here on earth. When those Builders (*Gen.* 11. 4.) consulted and resolved, *Go to, let us build a City and a Tower, whose top may reach to heaven*, their purpose and plot was to build a Tower as high as it could possibly be builded. When *Bibulus* was extolled by the highest praises and acclamations of the people, *Cicero* the Orator speaks it thus, *Bibulus is in heaven.* The Poet speaks the same language, *With my exalted head I will touch the Stars.* As to be cast down to hell, signifies in Scripture-phrase the lowest dejection or depression; so to be lifted up to heaven, the highest exaltation. We find these two set in opposition (*Isa.* 14. 13, 14.) *Thou* (meaning the proud *Assyrian*) *hast said in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my Throne above the Stars of God, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the most high. But thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit*, that is, thou shalt be cast into the lowest condition, as thou hast aspired to the highest. And thus Christ himself threatens that city

Bibulus in cœlo est. Cic. ad Attic. *Sublimi feriam sidera vertice.* Hor.

which

which did not repent at the ſight of his mighty works (*Mat.* 11.23.) *And thou* Capernaum, *which art exalted to heaven, ſhalt be brought down to hell.* *Capernaum* was lifted up both in her own opinion, and by thoſe real priviledges, the perſonal preſence of Chriſt there, his frequent preaching and Miracles; the contempt or non-improvement of theſe ripened her for ruine, bringing her to deſtruction, which looked like a hell upon earth, and ſweeping her at laſt from the face of the earth into that utter deſtruction in hell. Hell notes the loweſt degree of temporal as well as eternal miſery. And heaven notes the higheſt degree of temporal as well as of eternal happineſs.

Thirdly (which is more) *to mount up to heaven*, implies a kind of rivality with God in happineſs, or man preſuming to ſomewhat more then a man, a kind of Divinity among men. They who can patiently receive ſuch flattery as the *Tyrians* and *Zidonians* with the reſt of that throng beſtowed upon *Herod*, crying out, *The voyce of God and not of man* (Acts 12.22.) and they eſpecially who affect or require to be adored as God, as many Princes and very many of thoſe *Luciferian* Popes have done, theſe indeed may be ſaid to *mount their excellency unto heaven*, though in ſo doing, they have had but a phanſie of exaltation unto heaven, and have really debaſed themſelves below the earth; yea (as it follows in the next verſe) they have become in the eſteem of God and of Godly men, baſer then their own dung. For as that honour which is due and but commenſurate unto man, exalts and ennobles him that receives it, ſo every exceſs, eſpecially this ſpoken of (which is the moſt irregular and exorbitant exceſs) ſhames and depreſſeth him.

Fourthly, *To mount up to heaven*, carrieth in it not only the ſignification of a high, or of the higheſt eſtate on earth, but alſo of that, which is more then the earth can produce or advance any man unto, a certain, yea, an unchangeable and an unremoveable eſtate. There are no changes in heaven, and only there (except in hell) there are none. This earthly world paſſeth away, and the faſhion of it; therefore to have an excellency mounted up to heaven, is a preſumption to be (what God can make, and hath promiſed to make his *Jacob* or choſen people to be) an eternal excellency.

Take in theſe four aſcents, and then conceive how comprehenſive a ſuppoſition *Zophar* makes of the wicked mans worldly felicity, in theſe words, *Though his excellency mount up to heaven.* The next and laſt clauſe of the verſe is alſo of the ſame largeneſs and comprehenſion.

And his head reach unto the clouds.

עב *Nubes obſcurior & craſſior; nubes etiam à ſuperiori radice dicuntur* Neſhim, *quaſi elevationes.*

The word properly ſignifies thick and dark clouds. As if, ſay ſome, *Zophar* would intimate thus much; *Though the wicked man lift up his head above all ſtorms and darkneſs, and ſeemeth to himſelf a ſuperiour to all dangers and diſaſters, yet he ſhall periſh.* The head of a wicked man is above the clouds of heaven in aſpiring projects, while his heart is among or below the clods of the earth in covetous and curſed practices. Yea, he kicks at the God of heaven with his heel, while his head reacheth unto the clouds of heaven. While he *ſaith in his heart, I will aſcend above the clouds of heaven, I will be like the moſt High* (Iſa. 14. 14.) He ſets himſelf as an enemy, and is moſt unlike to the moſt High. Heathens have often perſonated proud men in ſuch a ſtile as *Zophar* expreſſeth them in, walking like the ſtars, and reaching the poſes of heaven with their head. As when the Pſalmiſt would ſhew the ſuper-eminency of the mercy and faithfulneſs of God, he ſaith (*Pſal.* 36. 5.) *Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulneſs reacheth unto the clouds.* So to ſhew the ſuper-eminency of the pride and folly of man, he is deſcribed mounting to the heavens, and reaching out his head unto the clouds.

Æqualis aſtris gradior, & cunctos ſuper, altum ſuperbo vertice attingens polum. Sen. *in* Theiſt.

This whole alluſion may be unto a Tree, full and high-grown, like an Oak, or a Cedar of *Lebanon*. To which the flouriſhing condition of the *Amorite* is compared (*Amos* 2.9.) *I* (ſaith the Lord) *deſtroyed the* Amorite *before them, whoſe height was like the height of the Cedars, and he was ſtrong as the Oaks.* *Nebuchadnezzar*, the greateſt Monarch then living, was repreſented to himſelf in a dream under this ſimilitude of a Tree, the *height whereof was great, and whoſe height reached unto heaven* (Dan. 4. 10, 11.) Thus *Daniel* interprets it (*verſ.* 22.) *It is thou, O King, that art grown and become ſtrong, for thy greatneſs is grown, and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth.* When a mans dominion reacheth to the end of the earth, he in the ſtricteſt ſence of this alluſive language, may be ſaid (as to a worldly felicity) to reach his greatneſs, or that his greatneſs reacheth unto heaven. Hence obſerve,

First, *A wicked man may get to the higheſt of worldly heights, to the greateſt of a worldly greatneſs.*

There is nothing of this world ſo good, but an evil man may enjoy it. No power or honour on earth ſo high, but he may reach after and attain it, whoſe portion is in the loweſt hell. He may have any thing of, or all things upon the earth, about him, who hath nothing of heaven in him. His excellency may mount up to heaven, who hath not the leaſt ſhare in the leaſt heavenly excellency. Though *Zophar*'s ſuppoſition be of impoſſibilities in the letter, yet according to the figure and tendency of them, they are very poſſible, yea, and have been often reduced to act by many Inſtances, both of prophane perſons and of hypocrites, advanced as high as the world could ſet them, or ſet upon the higheſt places and pinacles of power on the earth; and what is that but, in *Zophar*'s ſtile, to be lifted up to heaven, and reach the clouds. Obſerve,

Secondly, *The higheſt worldly height and greatneſs cannot ſecure a wicked man againſt the hand of God.*

The Lord by his Prophet (*Iſa.* 14. 15.) ſpeaks thus to that proud Prince, who would aſcend above *the heights of the clouds, yet thou ſhalt be brought down.* Climbing high hath been the cauſe of many a mans fall, it never protected any man from falling. *Edom* is threatned in the ſame Language by the Prophet *Obadiah* (verſ. 3, 4.) *The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rocks, whoſe habitation is high, who ſaith in his heart, who ſhall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thy ſelf as the Eagle, and though thou ſet thy neſt above the Stars, thence will I bring thee down, ſaith the Lord.* Poſſibly there was no man on earth that durſt accept *Edom*'s challenge, when he thus threw down his Gauntlet, and bid defiance in his heart to all the powers of the world; *Who ſhall bring me down to the ground?* But preſently the Lord accepted (or rather diſdained) the challenge, and undertook that vain boaſter upon higher terms then himſelf propoſed; not only though thou *dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock*, but, *though thou ſet thy neſt* (where no man ever ſet his neſt) *above the ſtars, yet thence will I bring thee down.* *God is the high and lofty one* (Iſa. 57. 15.) *And therefore the loftineſs of man ſhall be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be made low* (Iſa. 2. 17.) God is the high one, *and he inhabiteth Eternity*, that is, he is eternally high, his happineſs is as ſteady as it is lofty. But the higheſt of men (when they inhabit their higheſt longeſt) do but inhabit time; and moſt that are high, inhabit but a little time; yea, commonly they who are higheſt, inhabit the leaſt time. The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort. Men are high, but their time is in his hand who is higher then the higheſt; who is not only high as the heavens (which is the utmoſt ſtretch of mans ambition) but higher then the heavens; and not only higher then the heavens, but the maker of the heavens. And as it is the honour of God to exalt them who are low, ſo to abaſe thoſe who are exalted. He caſteth down the mighty from their ſeats, but exalteth the humble and meek. Many have ſtood faſter by caſting themſelves down before them; but none have ſtood by lifting up themſelves againſt him. As a godly man needeth not to fear, *though he walk in the very valley of the ſhadow of death* (Pſal. 23. 4.) So a wicked man hath cauſe enough to fear, and then to fear moſt, when he walketh upon the tops of the mountains, and ſets his foot upon the hills. This *Zophar* aſſures us in the next verſe.

Verſe 7. **Yet ſhall he periſh for ever like his own dung.**

Ὅταν δὲ δοκῇ πάνυ κατίσχειν, θεὸς αὐτὸν εἰς τέλος ἀπολεῖ. Sept.

The *Septuagint* renders theſe words paraphraſtically; *For when he ſeemeth to be eſtabliſhed, then he ſhall periſh to the end.* The word carrieth total periſhing, as well as the adjunct of time, *for ever*, ſpeaks it final. The word comes from a root ſignifying to overcome. *For ever* overcomes all. That which periſheth for ever, can never be recovered from periſhing. All ſhall be loſt, and it ſhall be alwayes loſt; his wound

wound shall know of no healing, *He shall perish*, not to a not being, but from being what once he was. He shall neither be, nor be any more accounted, happy.

And as he shall perish utterly, so he shall perish basely, not only shall misery be upon him, but contempt; *He shall perish*

גלל *Stercus à convolutione.*

Like his own dung.] And because the word which we render *dung*, signifies to *turn or roll together*, in its original. Therefore some translate here, *He shall perish, as soon as turned about.* Mr. *Broughton* gives that sence, rendering thus; *Turning a little he falls for ever.* But our reading hath a fuller, though that also hath a true sence in it. *He shall perish like his own dung.* What is more base then dung? Because Idols or false Gods, are the basest and most abominable things in the world, they are therefore expressed by this word in the Hebrew; As if we should call them, *Dung-gods*, or stinking dunghil-gods, fit only to be thrown away, and shovell'd out of the world. For nothing makes a thing indeed so bad as an ambition that it should be accounted that which is best, when it hath not the least good in it. An Idol is accounted God, who is the highest and infinitely the most perfect being, when as in truth, it hath no being at all, or is as the Apostle speaketh, *nothing in the world.* And hence also hypocrisie is justly called the worst of sins, because it would be taken for grace, or reckoned for that which is the gathering together of all Graces, *Holiness.* Now as the Scripture calleth Idols dung, compared with God, or as being honoured (to whom they are so unlike) with the like priviledges of worship and dependence, as God is: so, all our real inherent righteousness, yea all things compared with Christ and our union with him upon Gospel Termes, are also called *dung* (*Phil.* 3.8,9.) When the Apostle would testifie with what holy indignation he rejected those things which were good in themselves, when joyned with, and taken in as a supplement to the pure worthiness of Christ, for our acceptance and Justification before God; he saith, *I count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness.* Thus any thing which either is in it self, or comparatively to somewhat else, most vile, is wrapt up in this Title, *Dung.* The Lord threatens *the House of* Jeroboam *to bring evil upon it, and* (saith the Lord) *I will take away the remnant of the house of* Jeroboam, *as a man taketh away dung, till it be all gone* (*1 King.* 14. 10.) Dung is filthy and noysom, and because (as in homogeneal bodies) the least part of dung hath in it the nature of the whole, therefore when we take it away, we take it all away. A little of it offends and stinks, and therefore we cease not sweeping and removing it *till it be all gone.* The least of that which is naught is too much and too bad, unless it be all gone, we have the trouble of its all. The Lord hath a besom very fit for this dung (*Isa.* 14.23.) *I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts.* And when the Lord would testifie with how much loathing he rejected the sacrifices and solemn services of the *Jews*, because of their hypocrisie and formality; he tells them by the Prophet (*Mal.* 3. 2.) *I will spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts, and one shall take you away with it.* The best things corrupted or corruptly used, are worst. The ordinances of God are pure, but to the unbelieving all things are impure. God becomes dross, and holy things but dung to them who are so. Their services are reputed so, and their persons shall perish so, as the Psalmist speaks of the *Midianites, of Sisera and of Jabin, who perished at Endor, and became as Dung for the earth* (*Psal.* 83. 10.) Thus *Zophar* concludes of the wicked, specially including *Job* (whom some personate as sitting upon a dunghil) that he should perish for ever as dung, the vilest excrement, and which holds out yet more abhorrency in it.

Stercus hominis extremæ abjectionis & contemptus symbolum.

As his own dung.] The dung of some creatures is a perfume, and gives a delightful smell; the dung of many creatures is Medicinable and Physical; the dung of almost all creatures is some way or other profitable and useful; but the dung of man, or a mans own dung, is both useless and contemptible, loathsom and noysom. When railing *Rabshakeh* would express the utmost extremity of famine, to which *Jerusalem* should be reduced; he saith (*2 Kings* 18. 27.) *Hath my Master sent me to thy Master, and to thee, hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you?* Implying, that if they presently submitted not, they should quickly feel the utmost miseries of hunger and thirst, and be forced (which is an utter abomination to the apprehension of man) to take in what they had cast out, and be glad to stop the cry of their appetite with that, at which formerly they were wont to stop their noses. *Ezekiel* (to typifie a dreadful judgment) was commanded (among other things concurring in that woful scene) *to bake his bread with dung that cometh out of man in their sight.* And because this was very grievous to the Prophet, therefore though his using dung to bake bread with, could not be dispenced with, yet (by way of favour) the Lord condescended to a commutation of the dung (*Ezek.* 4. 15.) *Then he said unto me, lo, I have given thee cows dung for mans dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith.* Now if it were so loathsom to prepare or bake bread with mans dung, how loathsom is it to eat mans dung in stead of bread? All dung is vile, mans dung is vilest. To perish as dung, notes a very contemptible condition; but for a man *to perish as his own dung*, is to be cast into the lowest imaginable degree of contempt. *He shall perish for ever as his own dung.*

Hence observe, First, *Wicked men shall perish.*

They shall not only be troubled, but ruin'd. *We* (saith the Apostle of himself and fellow-Saints in suffering, *2 Cor.* 4. 8, 9.) *are troubled on every side, but not destroyed.* Trouble so far as tryal and correction is the portion of the godly, but trouble to destruction and perdition, is the lot of the wicked.

Secondly note, *Wicked men perish finally.*

They perish for ever, yea they shall be for ever perishing. They seldom recover when they are down, or rise when they fall in this life; but none of them shall rise or recover in the next. The Church saith, *Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall rise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me* (Mich. 7. 8.) But the wicked have cause to mourn when they fall, not only because they are fallen, but because they shall rise no more, and being once in that darkness, they shall never see light. Some have said (how uncomfortably and erroneously is no place here to discuss) that a godly man may fall from grace totally and finally; but that wicked men persevering in sin, shall fall so, both from their hopes and comforts, is assured us by the truth of God.

Thirdly observe, *Wicked men shall perish disgracefully, as dung, as their own dung.*

Their memory shall rot, and nothing shall remain of them but a stink or an unpleasing savour. It is recorded of King *Jehoram* (2 Chron. 21. 20.) that *he died undesired.* Many wicked men die not only undesired, but abhorred: As the Prophet *Isaiah* concludes (*Chap.* 66. 24.) *They shall go forth and look upon the carkasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring to all flesh.* It is some abatement of misery to find pity, but to be at once destroyed and abhorred, or which is more, to be an abhorring, especially an abhorring to all flesh, is perfect misery. There are few men so bad but now they are esteemed by some; but ere long they shall be abhorred of all. And though all who see their misery shall abhor them, yet the perfection of their misery shall not be seen; as *Zophar* implieth in the latter part of this verse.

They which have seen him, shall say, Where is he?

To be seen may be taken two wayes.

First, Largely or vulgarly, for the bare beholding or view which we have of any thing or person.

Secondly, Strictly or specially, to see with reverence and respect, with much intention and observation; or to be seen as a wonder, with much astonishment and admiration. What is it that either ambition or hypocrisie desires so much as to be seen, and pointed at, *there's the man?* The Pharisees (who were hypocrites of the highest form) did all to be seen of men (*Mat.* 6. 5.) If the ambitious proud man act not in an open scene, and have not store of spectators, all his cost and projects miscarry and are lost. Who

Pulchrum est spectari & digito monstrarier hic est.

puts on his best cloaths, or makes himself very fine to stay at home, and sit in a corner? It satisfieth not a proud man, that he seeth himself (for though many a man is proud in his own eyes, yet he never thinks his own eyes enow to see him) nor is he pleased to stand in the view of a few, especially of his friends and daily familiars, he must set himself in the Sun or in the sight of all. He is never feasted, till he conceives *the many* feasting their eyes with seeing him. He would alwayes stand upon the stage, and be in pride (what the holy Apostles were made in scorn) *a spectacle to the world, to Angels, and men.* Some sinners are all for secrecy, such *Job* describeth (*Chap.* 24. 13, 17.) *They are of those* (the murderer, the theif, and the adulterer he means) *that rebell against the light. The morning is to them as the shadow of death, if one know them, they are in the shadow of the terror of death.* But there are another sort of sinners (the vain-glorious, the ambitious, the hypocrite I mean) who desire nothing more then worldly light. To lie in obscurity, is to them as the shadow of death, if one know them not (as to their appearances) if no man see them, they are in the shadow of the terror of death: Popularity is the Element in which this sort of men live; take them out of it, you take them out of the world. A hypocrite dies, unless (as *Jehu* desired) *you come and see his zeal for the Lord of hoasts.* A proud man is quite defunct and dis-spirited, unless you take notice of his port, and come see how large a sail his vessel beareth in the world, how he is attended, how sued and sought unto. In reference to such a sight as this, I suppose *Zophar* chiefly speaks here, *They who have seen him*, that is, who have seen and admired his splendor and greatness, even these *shall say,*

Where is he?] He who was lately a mark of honour in every mans eye, he who was lately so great and spreading, that he over-shadowed all, and you could scarce see any man for him; is now diminished into an Atom, which no man can see; he is now to be numbred (though not in his nature, yet as to his former state) among invisibles: The man is not to be seen, they who have seen him shall say, *Where is he?* And they shall say this, first, in scorn; as those prophane enemies reproached holy *David* with his God, *Saying daily* (Psal. 42. 10.) *where is now thy God?* Thou didst not only promise but assure thy self of help from him, hast thou not boasted of him, *as thy strength, thy buckler, thy high tower, and thy deliverer?* Thus thou didst phansie thy god, and please thy self in these high Elogium's of him, and delightful dreams of deliverance by him; but where is he? As these (I say) spake prophanely and blasphemously of the great and faithful God, so we may speak truly and soberly of the greatest among faithless men, where are they? Or where is he? Where is that rich oppressor? Where is that ambitious Prince? Where is t'other cunning Polititian, what's become of them and their wealth, of them and their honour, of them and their wit and wisdom?

They shall say this, secondly, in wonder and astonishment, at the strangeness of his fall, and the totality of his destruction. Men shall be amazed to see him at such an ebb, at such a dead low water, who lately swell'd over all banks with such a spring-tide of prosperity. Men shall be amazed to see him groveling in a valley, who so lately walked upon the hills, and nested among the Stars. This shall make them say, *Where is he? What, is he there?* O thevanity of man! O the uncertainty of all worldly happiness! We find such queries, filled with this double mixture of scorn and wonder, propheſied concerning *Babylon* (Isa. 14. 4, 12, 16.) *Thou shalt take up this proverb against the King of* Babylon, *and say, How hath the oppressor ceased? The golden City ceased? How art thou fallen from heaven, O* Lucifer, *son of the morning? How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the Nations? They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the Cities thereof?* Is this the man that did these things? Is this he? How like a wilderness he looks himself? Behold how he shakes and trembles? Behold in how sordid and low a condition he now lies prostrate? He is now so little, that no man can tell what to make of him, or in what place he is to be found; he is now not only like a river running under ground, but quite exhaled and dried up, in so much that all may say, *Where is he?*

Hence observe, *The sin of many men is visible, and may be read in the special judgments which are brought upon them.*

The Lord is righteous in all his judgments, and he is (as we may say with reverence) even curious in some of them. What more exact and sutable, then to see vain-glory punished with obscurity; and that they should be *No-body's* in the world, who had an itch not only to be *Some-body's* (which hath a spice of ambition in it) but the *Only-body's* in the world? What more sutable then that they whose greatest desire was to be seen and taken notice of every where and by every one, should be reduced to such a little, to such a nothing, that no man can see where they are? Hypocrites do all to be seen, and anon themselves are not to be seen. Honour me before the people, say the sons of pride and ambition; and anon all the people see and scorn them, or scorn at them because they cannot be seen. They love the uppermost seats at the Table, and greetings in the Market-place; and anon themselves have not a Table to sit at, and are the cheapest ware, yea the trash and refuse of all the Market.

Now, besides the nature of worldly things and states in themselves (which are all subject to change, and the greater any worldly thing is, the more subject to change and to oppress it self with its own weight, as the very Heathens have often told us; I say, besides what is intrinsecal to the nature of worldly things) we must chiefly ascribe these eminent changes to the special providence of God, who being most high himself, and though invisible, yet only to be seen and adored in all we have or are, cannot bear it to see the creature set up himself to be seen. God would draw, (and it is his due) all eyes and hearts to himself, and therefore he will not long endure those who affect the drawing of mens eyes upon themselves. The eye of God will not spare those who either think highly of themselves, or love to be highly thought of by others. The Lord is pleased to set some of his servants not only high among men, but high in the hearts and thoughts of men; yet he is highly displeased when they or any in a vain ostentation make it their business to be so. And they who would thus be seen and exalted, shall see a day wherein (through their fall) God alone will be exalted. When any are designing to build high and reach Heaven with their Towers, (as they did, *Gen.* 11.) Then the Lord saith, *Go to, let us go down and confound their language.* Wo to high spirits and their high Towers when God saith, *I will go down*, for then both they and their Towers shall assuredly *go down.* No creature can stand when once God goes thus down. If God appear thus where is man? How and whither is he gone? *Zophar* seems to answer these questions in the next words.

Licet arma vacent cessentque doli, sidant ipso pondere magna, ceditq; oneri fortuna suo. Sen. in Agamem.

Vers. 8. **He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found, yea he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.**

This verse contains two similitudes, both which illustrate that one position which *Zophar* laid down in the two former verses, That wicked men shall perish for ever, and be seen no more.

He shall fly away.] To run is more then to go, and to fly is more then to run. Wings are too nimble for legs, and therefore in Scripture those things which move or pass from us with greatest celerity (though they have no wings, yet) are said to fly away. *As for* Ephraim (saith the Lord by the Prophet *Hos.* 9. 11.) *their glory shall fly away like a bird, from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception*; that is, whatsoever *Ephraim* most gloried in, and that was the multitude of their people (according to the Propheſie of *Jacob* (Gen. 48. 19.) and the Etymology of their name (*Gen.* 41. 52.) This glory shall depart suddenly, their numbers shall soon be lessened, either by the death of their children as soon as they are born, or by abortion in the womb as soon as they are formed, yea as soon as they are conceived. They who make such hast out of the world, that they die as soon as they began to live, may well be said to fly from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception. Thus saith

Zophar

Zophar of the wicked man, *He ſhall flie away.* And how ſhall he fly? As a bird? That's very ſwiftly; and the original word implies the flying of a bird, but the ſimilitude leads to that which will out-fly a bird, *A dream or viſion of the night.* A bird, even the King of birds an Eagle is but a ſlug or as a ſlow-worm to a dream. *This wicked man ſhall fly away,*

As a dream.] We may expound it two wayes; Firſt, Of the dream it ſelf. Secondly, Of the thing dreamed. Though ſometime both the dream and thing dreamed are fixed, the dream in the phanſie, and the thing dreamed in its fulfilling; yet many times the dream it ſelf is ſpeedily gone (as 'twas from *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 2. 5, 8, 10.) and the thing dreamed rarely comes. Yet Interpreters carry it rather to the matter or ſubject of the dream, then to the dream it ſelf. Many can retain the memory of a dream, but the matter dreamt of (which poſſibly pleaſed them much while they ſlept) is fled, or proves no ſuch thing when they awake. The Prophet deſcribes this elegantly and fully (*Iſa.* 29. 7, 8.) *And the multitude of all the Nations that fight againſt* Arial, *even all of them that fight againſt her and her mountains, and that diſtreſs her, ſhall be as a dream of a night viſion. It ſhall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth, but he awaketh and his ſoul is empty; or as when a thirſty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh, but he awaketh and he is faint, and his ſoul hath appetite,* &c. I may add, a beggar dreameth of Gold, but he awaketh, and his purſe is empty: The priſoner dreameth of liberty, but he awaketh and findeth himſelf in irons. Such is the wicked man in his proſperity; his joy is but the joy of a dreamer, which quickly vaniſheth. Hence the Ancients phanſied that a dream had wings like a bird of the Air. The Pſalmiſt having learned in the Sanctuary, that the wicked are ſet in ſlippery places, and that as in a moment they are utterly conſumed with terrors, concludes in anſwer to *Zophars* alluſion (*Pſa.* 73. 20.) *As a dream when one awaketh, ſo O Lord when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their image.* When the Lord puts forth his power to the deſtruction of wicked men, then he is ſaid frequently in Scripture to awake. Now when the Lord is pleaſed thus to awake, he quickly awaketh wicked men out of their pleaſant waking dreams, and maketh them ſee that their felicity was but ſuppoſed and imaginary; for he *ſhall deſpiſe their image*, that is, he ſhall utterly ſpoil and make deſpicable, the painted pageant of their outward pomp. Which is elegantly called an *Image*, becauſe as an image it is a thing only to be looked upon, or for a ſhew. Though an image be made to the life, yet it hath no life in it; and ſo is valuable only for its appearance, not for its uſe. Such a dumb ſhew is the glitter and greatneſs of the world, and therefore rightly called, not only by the Holy Ghoſt, but by thoſe common Writers (who had any true judgment of the things of the world) an Image or an Idol; which alſo complies fully with the ſimilitude of a dream, in which the mind frames within it ſelf many images and repreſentations of things, which yet like Characters fairly drawn upon the ſand, are diſcompoſed and ſcattered by the next puff of wind. And becauſe an ordinary dream hath in it the leaſt, the ſhorteſt, and moſt uncertain enjoyment; therefore when we would ſhew that we never had the leaſt thought, or the leaſt to do about ſuch a thing we ſay proverbially, *I did not ſo much as dream of it, or I had not ſo much as to do with it in a dream.*

Antiqui ſomnia Deû fingebant volatilem & alitem. Bold.

Ne in ſomnio quidem, proverbialiter dicitur pro nulla ratione nullo tempore aliquid eſſe.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *The proſperity of a wicked man hath no real comfort in it.*

There is no true ſatisfaction in a dream. And that which hath only a ſhadow or appearance of good in it, leaveth, when 'tis paſt and (as the Text ſpeaks) fled away, real impreſſions of evil. True ſorrows ſucceed imaginary joyes; and every man is made by ſo much the more unhappy, by how much he thought he had attained happineſs when indeed he had not. For, as thoſe things which have only an appearance of terror, are more terrible afar off then at hand; ſo thoſe things which have only an appearance of comfort, afflict more when they are afar off, then ever they comforted us when near at hand, and in a conceited poſſeſſion. As they who have been in a real poſſeſſion of good, ſo they who have had but an imagination of it, are more troubled when it is gone, then ever they ſhould have been, if they had never had it; diſappointments and failings of expectation about thoſe things which we hope to have, are as grievous, if not more grievous then the loſs of what we once really enjoyed. Now though a wicked man hath many good things while he proſpers, yet that which we properly call the dream of his proſperity, he never hath. For ſo much as he imagineth more in what he hath then is or can be in it (and ſo he alwayes doth) ſo much he dreameth.

Secondly note, *The proſperity of a wicked man hath no tack or conſiſtence in it.*

As a dream is not real, ſo it is not laſting. Many things which are real ſtay with us but a while, but thoſe things which are not real, cannot be ſaid to ſtay with us at all. I have from other Texts in this Book met with this point before, and therefore I ſhall not here ſtay upon it; yet there remains one clauſe more of this ſimilitude, which I ſhall only touch to heighten the intendment of it; *He ſhall fly away as a dream,*

And ſhall not be found.] When the Lord would ſhew how fully and clearly he pardoneth ſin, he ſaith (*Jer.* 50. 20.) *In thoſe dayes, the iniquity of* Judah *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none; and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reſerve.* Now as when a ſin is ſo pardoned that it cannot be found, it is an argument of the fulleſt pardon; ſo when a man or his proſperity is ſo fled and deſtroyed that neither can be fonnd, it is an argument of the fulleſt deſtruction. We may apply theſe words to both; the wicked man, his wealth and greatneſs ſhall ſo fly away, that neither of them ſhall be found. We may enquire as was ſaid in the former verſe; Where is he? And where is his? and find neither him nor his. What *Peter* ſaid to *Simon Magus* (*Act.* 8. 20.) is verified of him, his money, his honour is periſhed with him; or as another Scripture ſpeaketh, his *memorial is periſhed with him.* And as if *Zophar* thought it too little to give but one illuſtration of this truth, he confirms it by a ſecond, which is yet of near cognation with that already opened, and therefore I ſhall but name it.

Yea he ſhall be chaſed away as a viſion of the night.

He ſhall fly as a bird (ſaid *Zophar* before) here he ſhall be chaſed as a beaſt; the former word implieth a voluntary motion, this a violent. *He ſhall be chaſed away,*

As a viſion of the night.] There are two ſorts of viſions, as to the time of their appearance. Firſt, Viſions of the day; Secondly, Of the night. Viſions of the day fix more ſtrongly upon us, and are more permanent, viſions of the night paſs ſooner out of our memory, and are more tranſient. Therefore to ſhew the vaniſhing ſtate of the wicked man more fully he compares him *to a viſion of the night.* A viſion hath ſomewhat in it beyond ordinary dreams. All viſions are accompanied with the repreſentation of ſome outward ſhape to the eye or phanſie which many dreams have not; as was further ſhewed, *Chap.* 4. 13. to which place I refer the Reader, and ſhall proceed to the next verſe which bring up the concluſion of both theſe Alluſions.

Verſ. 9. **The eye which ſaw him ſhall ſee him no more, neither ſhall his place any more behold him.**

Theſe words *Zophar* takes out of *Job's* mouth (who ſpake the ſame thing in his own caſe, *Chap.* 7. 8, 10.) as if he would caſt him for a wicked man by his own confeſſion, and turn what he had ſaid upon himſelf. For the ſence of the Text the Reader may conſult that Chapter, there being nothing in theſe words of any ſpecial obſervation, beyond what was there offer'd.

The letter of the Hebrew may be thus rendred, *The eye hath ſeen, and ſhall not add.* 'Tis uſual in Scripture-phraſe, to ſay that he adds to do a thing, which doth that again which he hath done once or often before. And becauſe the Original leaves out the object of this ſight; therefore ſome refer it to the *night viſion*; tranſlating thus, *The eye alſo which ſaw it* (*ſc.* the viſion) *ſhall ſee it no more.* As if he had ſaid, the wicked man is like a night viſion, which being once ſeen diſappears and is ſeen no more. We fix it upon the wicked man himſelf. *The eye which hath ſeen him ſhall ſee him no more.* They who ſaw him

Oculus vidit & non addit. Heb.

Ut ſit Apodoſis præcedentis ſimilitudinis.

flouriſhing ſhall ſee him fading, till he fade quite out of ſight.

Neither ſhall his place any more behold him.

Which words may be expounded by a double figure, both frequently uſed in the holy Scriptures. Firſt, By an *Enallage*, *His place ſhall not ſee him*; that is, he ſhall not ſee his place, or he ſhall not be ſeen in his place: Secondly, By a *Proſopopeia*, by which thoſe acts which are proper to living creatures, or the perſon of a man, are aſcribed to things without life. The ſum and ſence of all returns to that which hath been already obſerved, the total ruine and extirpation of the wicked man, whether hypocrite or prophane.

VERS. 10, 11.

His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor, and his hands ſhall reſtore their goods.
His bones are full of the ſin of his youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt.

IN the former words *Zophar* expreſſed the fleeting proſperity, the uncertain happineſs of hypocrites and wicked men; here he goeth on to enumerate ſome of thoſe evils which overwhelm wicked men, when once their worldly ſtate begins to totter, and the tide of their outward proſperity to turn: The firſt evil which he reckoneth up falls upon the children of the wicked man.

Verſ. 10. **His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor.**

Theſe words, in the face and letter of them, ſeem to ſpeak the ingenuity and piety of the wicked mans children; is it not a vertue to be courteous, civil and charitable to the poor, eſpecially to be ſo courteous and charitable, as not only to relieve, but even to ſeek to pleaſe the poor? Induſtriouſly applying themſelves to their ſupport and help, who were unable to help themſelves. This ſounds like a rare virtue; but if we examine the matter further, we ſhall ſee a very great curſe wrapt up as the portion of the children of the wicked man, in that they are here ſaid, *To ſeek to pleaſe the poor.*

רצה *Favit, placuit, complacuit: propriè ſignificat gratum habere benevolentia proſequi.*

They ſhall ſeek to pleaſe.] It is but one word in the Hebrew, and the root of it ſignifies *to favour, to comply with, to pleaſe, or to be pleaſed with*; it is often uſed in reference to the ſacrifices which were offered to God when he either did, or did not accept of them (*Pſal.* 51.19.) *Then ſhalt thou be pleaſed with the ſacrifices of righteouſneſs:* and in the negative (*Mal.* 1.8.) *Offer them to your Governor, will he accept them, will he be pleaſed?* Read, *Levit.* 19.7. & 22.25. The word is uſed in the ſame ſence (*Job* 33.26.) *He ſhall pray to God, and he will be favourable to him*; he will ſhew him favour by deliverance from his affliction. The old Counſellers ſpake this language to *Rehoboam* (2 Chron. 10. 7.) when he asked their advice how he ſhould anſwer the people that came to have the burden of their Taxes lightened, and their grievances redreſſed; they tell him, *If thou ſpeakeſt favourably to this people* (if thou be kind and pleaſe them as becomes a noble and gracious Prince) *then they will be thy ſervants for ever.* That Prince who hath got the love of his people, ſhall not want their ſervice: they will act obediently and ſerviceably unto thee, if thou doeſt but ſpeak favourably unto them; if thou doeſt but pleaſe them with good words, thou mayſt have thy pleaſure of them: So here, *His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor*; that is, they ſhall ambitiouſly, as it were, deſire the favour and friendſhip, the good will, and good word of the pooreſt; but how comes it to paſs, that theſe deſire to pleaſe the poor, and to have their favour? I anſwer, We are not to take it as if this ſprung from their charity or good nature, from the openneſs of their hearts, or compaſſion to the poor. Thus to pleaſe the poor is an act of Grace, at leaſt a very commendable work in us (as was intimated before) as well as it is a mercy to them. But when he ſaith, *His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor*, his meaning is, they ſhall be forced whether they will or no; they ſhall be neceſſitated to ſubmit to thoſe who are moſt neceſſitous.

דלים a דלל *Hauſtus, exhauſtus fuit, viribus aut facultatibus.*

The word which we render *Poor*, ſignifies thoſe that are ſpent and drawn dry; and it is ſometimes referred to the weakning of a man in his ſtrength, ſometimes to the weakning of his eſtate, when his purſe is drawn dry. Poor perſons are exhauſted perſons, ſuch whoſe veſſels are run down to the very lees; *his children* ſhall *ſeek* to pleaſe ſuch poor, the meaneſt of the poor.

Filii ejus attererentur egeſtate Vulg.

The Vulgar reads theſe words thus, *his children ſhall be waſted with poverty*; prodigality waſteth the eſtate, and poverty waſteth the perſon. The reaſon of this reading is becauſe that tranſlator derives the word which we render *to pleaſe*, from a root which ſignifies *to break, to ſpoil, to daſh one againſt another*; ſo it is uſed (*Gen.* 25.22.) *The children ſtrugled in the womb*, or daſhed one againſt another, as if they had been contending for place before they had a place in the open world. Thus here (ſaith he) his children ſhall be daſhed or waſted with poverty, or by the poor. When the poor riſe and rage, the rich cannot ſtand before them. The poor ſhall impoveriſh his children; the Septuagint renders it, *The leſſer ones, the minors, perſons of the inferior and lower rank ſhall deſtroy his children.* This tranſlation carrieth a clear ſence as to the mind of *Zophar*, and the ſcope of the place; it ſheweth the miſery of a wicked man to the full, to ſay, *The poor ſhall deſtroy his children; the needy, the hungry ſhall devour and eat them up.* There is a ſpecial finger of God in that, 'tis more then to ſay his children ſhall be deſtroyed by the mighty and ſtrong; as when a poor word pulleth down the ſtrength of ſin, and Satan, this advanceth the name of God. And the Apoſtle tells us, that the deſign of God, in ſending out his word in ſo mean a dreſs, and by ſuch powerleſs inſtruments, is, that his own power may be the more ſeen, and magnified. Thus when poor men ſubdue the mighty, the might and revenging power of God is in it. And as this ſpeaks the juſtice and power of God, ſo the miſery of thoſe men. To be oppreſſed by the poor is the foreſt oppreſſion (*Prov.* 2.3.) *A poor man that oppreſſeth the poor, is like a ſweeping rain that leaveth no food.*

Abſtractum pro concreto; egeſtate, i. e. per egenos, q. d. viliſſimi in illos ſævient & dominentur. Pined. *Filios ejus diſperdant minores.* Sept.

Filii ejus placebunt egem.

There is a ſecond reading which differs ſomewhat from ours; whereas we tranſlate, *His children ſhall ſeek to pleaſe the poor*, this ſaith, *His children being poor ſhall pleaſe*; that is, *all ſhall be pleaſed to ſee his children poor*; this hath a clear ſence, ſhewing the portion and puniſhment of a wicked man; every one ſhall like it well to ſee his children go a begging. The evil which befals them will be a kind of good to the beholders, and they will ſay, *'Tis well beſtowed.* Yea, as ſome give the intendment of this rendring; *The poor ſhall think themſelves well paid for all the wrong they have received, and the miſeries they have undergone, when they ſee his children in miſery.* That curſe is threatned (*Pſal.* 109. 12.) *Let there be none to extend mercy to him, neither let there be any to pity his fatherleſs children*; while all is pulled from him, and they left not worth a groat, none ſhall think them worthy of compaſſion, or beſtow a tear upon them. *It is a great miſery when none grieve to ſee us in miſery.* If ſympathy be no eaſe to the afflicted, yet it is an honour to them.

Filii ejus placabunt mendicos vel paupe-res. Reg. Pag. Mont. *Adeo miſeri erunt ut cogantur placare iratos, tenuis fortunæ homines.* Vatabl. *Erunt paupériores pauperibus & miſerrimis miſériores.*

But I ſhall pitch upon our own reading; *The children of wicked men ſhall be brought ſo low, that they ſhall be glad to ſeek the favour and good will of thoſe who are poor*; or thus, *His children ſhall ſeek to appeaſe the poor, even thoſe poor whom their father wronged and oppreſſed.* They ſhall be conſtrained to flatter and fawn upon thoſe, over whom their father inſulted, and upon whom he trampled. Which ſuites well with the next clauſe; *And his hands ſhall reſtore their goods.* The ſum of all is this, *His children ſhall be poorer then the pooreſt, and more miſerable then the moſt miſerable.*

Hence obſerve, That *Children of evil parents fare ill, and are ſcourged as a ſcourge to their parents.*

This point hath riſen from former paſſages, I ſhall only take notice of one dreadful example out of Scripture to verifie and illuſtrate it. We read (2 *Kings* 2. 23, 24.) that more then forty children were deſtroyed by two ſhee-bears for mocking the Prophet *Eliſha*. *Juſtine Martyr* queries upon it; why did the Prophet call for revenge upon children, who hardly underſtand what they do, much leſs do any thing upon deſign? He anſwers, though we ſhould ſuppoſe they were children ſo young that they could not underſtand the evil of this action, yet having learned this from their parents, God ſent this judgment at once to puniſh

Voces ipſas pueri à parentibus edoctí erant, quare puerorum clade parentes flagellavit. Illud enim aſcende calve, proſcindendi per detractionem Eliæ aſſumptionis gratia proferebant. q. d. abripiat te quoq; ſpiritus ut iſtidem à te liberemur. Juſt. Mart. *quæſt.* 8.

the children and the parents; that they might be smitten in this destruction, which fell upon their children, because they had given their children no better instruction, or rather because they received such bad instruction from them. For doubtless they had learned that scoffing language from their Elders, at least by hearing them speak so, if not by teaching them to speak so; *Go up thou bald head, go up thou bald head.* Which scoff and reproach they cast upon *Elisha* in allusion to the rapture or carrying up of *Eliah*; as if they had said, *Go thou up also to Heaven, even as* Eliah *did, that we may be rid of thee as well as we are of him.* Children are apt to imitate their parents in every thing, but they are best at imitating those things which are worst. They quickly write after ill Copies. And they who imitate the moral evils of their Fathers, shall be sure to inherit their penal evils, and have new ones prepared for them.

Secondly observe, *It is a great punishment upon parents, either to see their children come to misery in the world, or if misery come upon their children after themselves are gone out of the world.*

Though *Zophar* here describes the misery of the wicked mans children, yet his scope is to set forth the misery of their parents, who are smitten upon their childrens backs. When *Noah* awoke from his Wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him, as also how *Cham* saw his nakedness, and mocked, he (not out of a vain passion as some parents will when their children displease them, but) by divine inspiration, or being fill'd with a prophetick spirit, pronounceth a curse upon him; yet he put his sons name into the curse, not his: *And he said, Cursed be* Canaan (*Gen.* 9.24, 25.) why *Canaan?* It was *Cham* the father of *Canaan* that sinned, yet when *Noah* comes to curse, he doth not say, cursed be *Cham*, but *Canaan*; not that *Canaan* should be cursed, and his father escape, but it was to shew that *Cham* should certainly be under a curse; for seeing his posterity should be under a curse, then much more he; for as much as besides what fell upon him personally, the curse falling upon his posterity, was also his. When a curse falls upon children the father is cursed, as in the blessing of the children the father is blessed (*Gen.* 48. 15, 16.) *Joseph* brought his two sons *Manasseth* and *Ephraim* to his aged father *Jacob*, that they might receive his blessing, who laying his hands upon their heads, *Blessed* Joseph, *and said, God before whom my fathers* Abraham *and* Isaac *did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.* Now as *Jacob* in blessing the children of *Joseph*, blessed *Joseph* himself; so *Noah* in cursing the children of *Cham*, cursed *Cham* himself. A very Heathen hath observed concerning the Tyrant *Dyonisius*, that though he escaped free and untoucht in person from the vengeance which his sacrilegious wickedness deserved; yet his sons were involved in so much misery, that in them he being past feeling suffered, and being dead paid dearly enough for his stoln dainties. The light of nature, as well as Scripture, tells us that evils falling on posterity are reckoned upon the parents score.

Valerius, *lib.* 1. *cap.* 2.

Thirdly observe, *It is an eminent piece of divine justice when either they or the children of such as have afflicted others, and made them poor, are forced to sue, and submit to them, though poor, and to seek their favour.*

This piece of divine retaliation the Prophet doth at once threaten, and promise; he threatens the enemy with it, and makes a promise of it to the children of God. (*Isa.* 60. 14.) *The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee the City of the Lord, the Zion of the holy one of* Israel. This is the honour that shall be done to *Zion*, and the shame that shall fall on *Zions* enemies. The posterity of those that afflicted *Zion* shall come bending to her. We have a promise near that (*Rev.* 3. 9.) *Behold, I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan* (who are they? Such as oppose the Church of God, bitter yet secret enemies to Christ) *which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; Behold, I will make them to come and worship at thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.* Some will never know nor acknowledge, that God loveth his people, till themselves are put under their feet, and subdued to their power. 'Tis prophesied (*Psal.* 45. 15.) *The rich among the people shall intreat thy favour.* That Psalm holds out the effect of grace; but when the Lord saith in this prophesie, *I will make them come, and worship at thy feet*; it implies only an act of Justice. They who have scorned and trampled thee under their impure feet, shall fall down at thy feet and give thee reverence.

Fourthly observe, *That man is brought to the lowest state of affliction who is put to seek the favour of those who are low; how poor are they who seek to please the poor?*

It was the curse of *Cham*, *A servant of servants shall he be*; that is, he shall seek and submit to those who are meanest; to be a servant is to be in a mean low condition, and therefore Christ is said to humble himself when he took upon him *the form of a servant. To be a servant of Rulers and great ones is to be lessened; but to be a servant of servants is to be as low as low can be.* And therefore *Abigail* spake of her self at the lowest rate when *David* sent for her to be his wife and companion (1 *Sam.* 25. 41.) *Behold let thy handmaid be a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord.* *Solomon* tells us (*Prov.* 29. 26.) *That all men seek the Rulers favour.* When men are in great place and power, no wonder to see all seek to them; but to see a great throng, at the door of a poor man, to see many wait and attend at his gates, putting up petitions to him, doth it not conclude that these suiters are brought to a very low conditon? yet God will make those who have been proud and lifted up, stoop thus low. I find *Job* aggravating his sorrow in a strain near this; for having said at the close of *Chap.* 29. *I chose out their way, and sate chief, and dwelt as a King in the Army; but now* (as he begins *Chap.* 30.) *they that are younger then I have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.* As to be derided and despised by those that are our inferiors, is an affliction in a high condition; so much more to be forced to submit to them and seek their favour. And this not only because it is a disparagement to condescend to the pleasing of those who are poor, and inferior, but because it is so hard to please them. Usually the lower sort of people are people of a low spirit. And commonly they who are Masters of no estate, are Masters but of little reason or ingenuity; how rude a thing is the ragged multitude? How hard a task hath he, who must make it his business to please them? 'Tis no small skill and toil to please some Princes and rich ones; wise men have their humors sometimes, which will neither suffer them to be easily pacified towards those who have offended them, nor pleased with those that serve them. But how shall we please them at any time who seldom if at all know what will please themselves; and who through their want of breeding and discretion insult over and grow upon those most who seek most to please. Any man of a lowly mind may easily be pleased. But men of low estates are for the most part, hardest to be pleased. To please some is a pleasure; but he shall never want work or trouble, who is forced (as these in the Text) *to please the poor.*

And his hands shall restore their goods.

Some render, *For his hands*, &c. making this clause the reason of the former, why the wicked mans children should be in so low a condition as to please the poor, even because their father before his death restored all his ill gotten goods to the right owners, and so had nothing left in stock, wherewith to make provision for them his children.

To restore is a good work; shall the wicked man be in this good mind, to restore the goods which he hath taken from the poor? This were an act of Justice (*a parte post*) and an argument of his repentance for all his injustice which he had acted (*a parte ante.*) Restitution flowing from true repentance and godly sorrow is a work of Grace; but here is restitution without either repentance or sorrow, except because he could hold what he had gotten no longer. For

There is a twofold reſtitution.

Firſt, Willing, upon the touch of conſcience, that we have done wrong to others. So *Zacheus* (Luke 19. 8.) *Behold half my goods I give to the poor, and if I wronged any man by forged cavilation, behold I reſtore four-fold.*

Secondly, There is a forced reſtitution, when the providence of God, not any motion of repentance, maketh a man reſtore: when either juſtice or violence compels him to reſtore; that's the reſtoring here meant; he ſhall reſtore not what he would, but whether he would or no. He ſhall not reſtore from any trouble of his own mind at what he hath done, but becauſe troubled and queſtioned for what he hath done, or as (*verſ.* 20. of this Chapter ſpeaks) *he ſhall vomit it up again.* God will give him that, which will make him diſgorge himſelf of his ſweet morſels. Thus we muſt underſtand it of a violent act upon him, and not of any intendment by him. He hath no mind to do thoſe right whom he hath wronged, but they whom he hath wronged, call upon him for, and demand their right.

There are different readings. Some thus, *His hands ſhall reſtore his iniquity*; that is, the things which he hath gotten by iniquity; others thus, *his hands ſhall reſtore his violence, or that which he hath gotten by violence.* The ſin by which any thing is gotten is ſet as a mark upon it; that is elegantly and juſtly called *violence*, which hath been gotten violently. As that (with like elegancy and juſtice) may be called *fraud*, which was fraudulently gotten. A third ſaith, *His hands ſhall reſtore his ſtrength*; which may run in the ſame channel of interpretation; his ſtrength, that is, that which he by his ſtrength hath forcibly taken away from others. Laſtly, the Text is read, *His hand ſhall reſtore his ſorrow*; which may be explained thus, his hand, or his act (our hands being the chief inſtruments of action, are put for action) ſhall bring ſorrow upon him. He by his ſin ſhall bring upon himſelf that miſchief, or thoſe evils which he hath brought upon others; and this (not unfitly) may be called, the reſtoring of them. A wicked man draweth down miſery upon himſelf, and is the contriver of his own troubles. For as he that doth good to others, doth good to himſelf; ſo (by the rule of contraries) he that doth evil to another, doth worſe to himſelf; therefore their own hand may well be ſaid to reſtore or bring ſorrow and miſery upon themſelves, even that ſorrow and miſery, which themſelves had brought upon their brethren. Thus the Pſalmiſt concludes of ſuch a man (*Pſal.* 7. 16.) *His miſchief ſhall come down upon his own head*; His miſchief is the miſchief which he hath loved and acted. Sin is like a ſtone caſt againſt the wall, which bounds back; or rather like a ſtone caſt up to heaven, which falls on his head who caſt it up. One of the Ancients giveth this ſence of the words, *He ſhall burn his fingers with what he hath done, or ſorrows ſhall burn his hands:* he put out his hand to take away what belonged to others, but he burnt his fingers by it. Theſe various readings are occaſioned by going to a different root for the pedigree of this word; yet all fall into that general ſence which our tranſlation holds forth; *His hands ſhall reſtore their goods which he hath taken by violence and ſtrength of hand, or by any ſecret evil and unlawful way.* So Mr. *Broughton, and his hands recompence his wrongs.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That as he who repents truly doth willingly reſtore what he hath unlawfully gotten, ſo God will force the impenitent oppreſſor to reſtore what he hath gotten whether he will or no.*

As his oppreſſion was an act of violence upon others, ſo his reſtitution ſhall be an act of violence upon himſelf. One Lion makes another Lion give back his prey; all ſhall be reſtored, if not into that particular purſe from whence it was taken, yet into ſome common purſe.

Secondly, Note further, *It is a vexation to a wicked man, to part with, and reſtore that which he hath unjuſtly gotten.*

He doth it not as a duty, but as of neceſſity, as a thing which he cannot avoid. It is his puniſhment not to continue in his ſin; though indeed it is his greateſt puniſhment to continue in the love of his ſin, while he parts with, or rather is ſeparated from the matter of it. I ſhall not here further inſiſt upon the nature of this great duty, the reſtoring of what hath been unduly gotten. That will fall in more properly at *verſ.* 18. of this Chapter.

Only take notice of this one thing from the Text; which ſaith, *His hands ſhall reſtore*; as implying a puniſhment upon the wicked man, not only in this, that they who had been wronged by him ſhould recover their goods again from him, but that he ſhould be forced to return them *with his own hands.* As a godly man rejoyceth to do good with his own hand, ſo 'tis a pain to a wicked man to do it; he would willingly do every duty by proxy, or by his Deputy, eſpecially thoſe (and ſuch is reſtoring) which charge ſhame upon him for his former doings.

Verſ. 11. **His bones are full of the ſin of his youth, which ſhall lie down with him in the duſt.**

Zophar ſeems to retain the ſame order in ſetting down the puniſhment of a wicked man, which God did in the affliction of *Job*; God ſpoiled the outward eſtate of *Job*, firſt, deſtroying his Cattel and his Children, and then filled his body with diſeaſes. Thus the proſperous eſtate of a wicked man, is firſt broken; ſecondly, his Children ſhall be poorer then the poor; thirdly, his body, or *bones are full of the ſins of his youth*: The miſery of the wicked man is here ſet forth from the cauſe of it, *The ſins of his youth.* The alluſion ſtands thus, That look as a deboiſt young man by his wanton and riotous courſes gets bodily diſeaſes which ſoak into his bones, and ſuck out his marrow; ſo the judgments of God of any kind conſume and waſte all the comforts of a wicked man, which together with his wickedneſs, follow or rather drive him out of the world.

The original runs thus, *His bones are full of his youth*, or *of his youths.* The word is plural, and in propriety ſignifies to hide, or to lie hid. For youth or young men come not abroad to action, but are kept cloſe in their Fathers houſes, or in Schools of learning and education. When he ſaith, *His bones are full of his youth*, the meaning is, they are full of thoſe miſeries and ſorrows, which the ſins of his youth have deſerved and acquired. Upon this account ſome render the Text thus, *His bones are full of his ſecrets*, that is, of his ſecret ſins: Man commits many ſins in ſecret, the world takes no notice of them; and his ſin may lie long in ſecret, as ſecretly as the marrow lieth in his bones, though indeed it be not marrow but rottenneſs and poyſon in his bones. The word is uſed (*Pſal.* 90. 8.) where *Moſes* thus complaineth, *Thou haſt ſet our iniquity before thee, and our ſecret ſins* (or ſins of youth) *in the light of thy countenance*; that is, thou ſeemeſt to call us to an account for the ſins of our youth, or for our ſecret ſins; thoſe ſins which have lain in the dark, are not only brought to light, but ſet in the light, and that not only in the light of mans knowledge, but in the light of the knowledge of God. As it is our higheſt mercy when God lifts *up the light of his countenance* upon our perſons, ſo it is our ſaddeſt affliction, or a fore-runner of very ſad afflictions when God ſets our ſecret ſins, or the ſins of our youth in the light of his countenance; ſo that in either reading the meaning is the ſame.

Oſſa ejus repleburtur ipſius adoleſcentia, i.e. pœnis quas ſibi ſceleribus adoleſcentiæ acquiſivit.

Oſſa ejus repleta ſunt occultis. Mont.

There is a twofold expoſition of theſe words, ſome referring them to the puniſhment of this wicked man, others to a further deſcription of his ſin; we may take in both: Mr. *Broughton's* tranſlation gives this as a deſcription of the puniſhment of this wicked man; *His bones ſhall feel full pay for his youths pranks*; that is, he ſhall be fully puniſhed, being an old impenitent. Sin is often put in Scripture for puniſhment. But what are we to underſtand by *theſe bones? His bones are full*; bones in a ſtrict ſence are (as it were) the timbers and rafters of the body which maintain and keep up the whole fabrick. Here by *bones* we may underſtand, firſt, any thing that is ſtrong or firm. So, *His bones are full of the ſins of his youth*, is, his greateſt ſtrength hath fill of puniſhment; for the bones are the ſtrongeſt part of the body.

Secondly, By bones we may underſtand the whole outward man (*Pſal.* 141. 7.) *Our bones lie ſcattered at the graves mouth*, that is, our whole body is ready to drop into the grave; again, *All my bones ſhall ſay*, &c. (*Pſal.* 35. 10.) that is, my whole man, body and ſoul ſhall ſay. Sometimes the bones are put ſpecially for the ſoul (*Pſal.* 51. 8.) *David* prayeth, that *God would reſtore to him the joy of his ſalvation, and that the bones which he had broken might rejoyce.*

Where

Where *by bones*, he means the spirit, the inward part; for though the mind of a man be an immaterial substance, and hath no corporiety in it, yet the strength of a man is in his spirit; as the bones are the strength of the body, so the mind is the strength of the whole man. When a mans spirit is broken, we may well say, *His bones are broken.* In this sence we may understand that of *David* (Psal. 6. 2, 3.) *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord, heal me, for my bones are vexed*; that is, my spirit: so (*Psal.* 38. 3.) *There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones*; that is, the outward, the inward man, my flesh and spirit, are unsound and restless, *by reason of my sin*; so that we are not to interpret *bones*, as opposed to *flesh*, but as they denote the best and strongest of man, body and soul; and then, to say, *His bones are full of the sins of his youth*, is as much as to say, his youthful sins draw trouble quite through him, they leave nothing of him untoucht or untainted. Thus we may expound the words, as implying the universality and extension of the wicked mans punishment, it shall soak into his very bones and marrow. When Satan desired leave of God to touch the skin and bones of *Job*, his meaning was, let me have liberty and commission to strike him quite through, without and within to afflict both soul and body. So that, this phrase, *His bones are full of the sin of his youth*, intimates him both sinful and miserable all over.

Hence observe, First, *That youth is very subject to, and usually very full of sin.*

Every young man commits sin enough to fill his bones when he is old; young men are so prone to sin, that *Solomon* tells us (*Eccles.* 10. 11.) *Childhood and youth are vanity*, and surely youth is more vain then childhood. Children are vain, because little and so unable to do good; youth is vain, because so able and active to do evil. The ancient Poet said of youth, it is like wax to evil, you may work it into the shape of any monster, and put what stamp you will upon it, as upon wax; yet this Text and the point now issued from it are specially intended of those young men, whose wayes have been foulest, and whose lives most vitious; such as act not only vainly, but reproachfully, or so as deserves reproach. What *Ephraim* (*Jer.* 31. 19.) being upon his repentance, spake of himself nationally taken, many have cause to say of themselves personally, *I am ashamed because I have born the reproach of my youth*; that is, now I feel, and am sensible of those sins of my youth, which expose me to reproach: 'Tis our duty to repent of our old-age sins, but repentance insisteth usually most upon the sins of youth; which argueth that those sins press most. *David* in special prayeth (*Psalm* 25. 7.) *Remember not against me the sins of my youth*, thereby implying the sinfulness and slipperiness of that age. The Apostles exhortation to *Timothy* and *Titus*, (1 *Tim.* 4. 12. *Tit.* 2. 15.) both young men, *Let no man despise thy youth*, warned them and teacheth us, that as unconverted young men usually run such courses, so converted young men are apt to fall into such acts of sin, as render them despicable; and the same Apostle fastens some sins in special upon *youth*, as haunting that age and state (2 *Tim.* 2. 22.) *Fly youthful lusts*; old age hath its proper lusts, and so hath youth.

Cereus in vitia flecti, monitoribus asper. Horat. in Arte Poet.

Habet pueritia innocentiam, senectus prudentiam, Adolescentia sola est invalida virtibus, infirma consiliis, vitio calens, &c. Ambros.

There are seven sorts of special sins: First, Such as appertain to, and most commonly shew themselves in this or that age of mans life. Secondly, There are sins more proper to some Countries and places. Thirdly, To the season or times wherein we live. Fourthly, There are special sins of mens special callings, dealings and tradings in the world. Fifthly, Of their conditions, whether poor or rich, great or small. Sixthly, There are special sins following the constitution of the body, whether Sanguine, Chollerick, Flegmatick, or Melancholly. And seventhly, There are special sins hanging about our relations. The bones of some are full of the sins of their relations and constitutions; the bones of others are full of the sins of their conditions and callings; the bones of not a few are full of the sins of the place, time, or age wherein they live; the bones of many are (as the bones of *Job* were supposed to be) full of that special age of their lives, their youth. The sins of their youth-age, are visible in their old-age, and the sins of their first age prove the sorrows of their last.

Secondly observe, *Till sin be repented of, and pardoned, the punishment of it remains.*

It is impossible to remove the punishment of sin from the guilt of it; and it is impossible to remove the guilt of it by any means, but the pardon of it. Bones full of sin, shall not want pain: cast out sin by repentance, take hold of pardon by believing, and then punishment is cast out, and must let go its hold.

Thirdly, As bones are taken extensively for the whole man;

Observe, *That the punishment of sin reacheth as far as sin reacheth.*

If sin get into your bones, punishment will follow; as there are sins of the flesh, and sins of the spirit, so punishments of the flesh, and punishments of the spirit; there is nothing so strong, so deep, or retired, but punishment will find it out: not only the skin and flesh, but the very bones shall smart, yea and the soul too. *Wo to them* (saith the Prophet, *Isa.* 29. 15.) *that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark*; for though their counsel be deep and their works in the dark, yet wrath will see its way to overtake them, and fill their hearts with wo. An impenitent person shall have punishment enough, he shall have his fill of it, till he vomit, yet he cannot vomit it up, or disburden his pained conscience. As he filleth up his measure of sin, so he shall have his measure of sorrow full; the time will come when all the ungodly shall be filled with the wrath and righteous judgments of God, as now they are filled with wrath and unrighteousness one against another. Saints have their fulness of grace in Christ, and having received grace, they fill up their measure, *Till they come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*; and when once they have attained and are arrived to a fulness of Grace, they shall receive fulness of joy in glory. *In thy presence is fulness of joy; all their bones shall then say, Who is a God like to thee?* (Psal. 35. 10.) Not a bone but shall have its fill of joy; every mans bones shall be full at last, *Good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over shall God give into their bosoms.* The bones of the Godly shall be filled with the goodness of God, and the bones of the wicked shall be filled with that wrath of God which their own sins have deserved. *His bones are full of the sins of his youth.*

Again, These words may be expounded as a description of a wicked mans perseverance in sin. The sins which he had in his youth, he hath them still, he hath not lost nor put off one of them. Those filthy lusts which like so many running sores corrupted the forepart of his life, corrupt the latter, running still upon him, and ceasing not.

Hence note, *All the sins of youth remain in and upon the oldest of impenitent persons.*

Old impenitents keep a stock or treasure of their youth-sins, laid up not only in their bones, but in their hearts; as God maketh them to possess the sins of their youth in punishments; so they possess the sins of their youth, if not in practice, yet in affection and pleasing contemplation. Suppose a wicked man grown old and unable by weakness to act sin, yet the habit of sin is not weakned; his sin remains as it were young and green, though he be a sinner of a hundred years old; though he be spent and dry, yet his sins are vivid, warm, vigorous and youthful; *Time weakens sinners, but it cannot weaken sin*; though the marrow be spent out of his bones, yet his spirit is as full of sin as ever his bones were of marrow. Man is a vessel strongly sented and seasoned with sin by nature, and till the grace of God cleanse, and regenerate him, the taste of the cask never goeth out. And as this is true in reference to the pollution and filthiness of sin, so also in reference to the guilt of it. A wicked mans bones are full of that also. Sin unpardoned and unmortified, carries death and wrath in it continually. He is said, *To treasure up wrath against the day of wrath* (Rom. 2. 5.) Why so? because he treasureth up guilt; every sin bringeth in some further guilt, and the guilt of them all, as well as the filth of them all, as also that wrath which is due

due to them all, is treasured up with them; no guilt can be got off from any sin, but by the blood of Christ, and that through the free mercy of God; now this man hath nothing to do with the blood of Christ, and therefore he hath nothing to do with mercy.

Further observe, *It is the greatest misery to persevere in sin.*

As sin brings all misery with it, so it self is all misery. No evil can be added to a sinner so bad as his sin is. As grace and holiness considered abstractly are a greater good, then all outward, yea then many inward blessings and rewards. So sin considered abstractly, is a greater evil then all outward, yea then all those inward curses which are only punishments (*Rev.*22.11.) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still*; that is, let him sin *his bones full and his belly full.* (Ezek.24.13.) *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged*; that is, I have given thee means to *purge thee, but thou wast not purged*; thou shalt not *be purged from thy filthiness any more*; as if he had said, thy remaining sin shall be thy punishment, and that shall draw down punishments in kind, as the Prophet adds, *Till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee. Sin is a bad bed-fellow*, the company of it for a night is burdensom and dangerous, then how *bad a grave-fellow is sin*; yet so it will be to all impenitents, as *Zophar* further expresseth himself at the close of the verse.

Which shall lie down with him in the dust.

Or, *sleep with him when he lieth down*; that is, when he dieth, and goeth to the dust, his sin shall live and go with him. It is an Hyperbolical strain, noting that sin will never leave the wicked man neither alive nor dead, neither in this world, nor in the world to come. It filled his bones while he lived, and it will fill his grave when he dieth: unless a man die to sin before he dieth, his sin will live with him when he is dead. The damned in Hell have all their sins about them; when they shall have been in Hell millions of years, yet then their bones will be full of sin; that which was the cause of their being cast to Hell, shall be their everlasting companion there. For as (*Rev.*14.13.) *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.* When a believer dieth, his righteousness and holiness die not: the good works which he hath done, die not, but lie down in the dust with him; they perfume his memory on earth, and they go up with him into Heaven. So we may say, *Wo to those that die out of the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever, for they shall not rest from their labours, and all their sins, their works of wickedness shall follow them:* How glad would sinners be if they might go to the dust of the grave, yea to the flames of Hell, and sin not go with them. Hell is as full of sin as it is of misery; and if it were not full of sin, the misery would be but little in comparison of what it is; there is weeping in Hell, but neither repenting, nor pardoning; man cannot repent there, and God will not pardon there. And hence it is, that though there be continual weeping in Hell, yet there can be no removing of sin out of Hell; repentance and pardon remove sin, but weeping alone will not do it; therefore Hell is full of sin, though full of tears. So we may apply that of *Moses* (*Deut.*29. 20.) *The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousie shall smoak against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him.* The curse shall lie upon him as long as sin lieth upon him. When Christ spake the utmost evil of the sins of the *Jewes*, and the utmost of their misery in their refusal of himself who came to take away sin; he tells them, *I go my way and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins* (John 8.21.) Ye shall seek me, but it will be too late; it is a misery to live in sin, but O what a misery is it to die in sin? They that die in sin shall rise in sin, and stand before Christ in sin, and how shall they be able to stand before him? The Prophet (*Ezek.*24.6.) compareth the people of the *Jews, to a pot whose scum is in it*; we may say of all impenitent unbelievers, *their scum boils in*; sometimes the scum appears to them, and they may be thinking to take it off, but the scum boils in again, and there it remains for ever. This is the Hell of Hell, sin goeth down to the dust with sinners. We may say (in allusion to that of *Peter*, Act.12.) that every wicked man sleeps in the grave, as he in the prison, bound not only with two, but with a thousand chains. The sins of believers go to the grave before them. Sin dieth while they live, and they have a life which shall never die. The sins of unbelievers go to the grave with them; while they live they are dead in sin, and by sin they fall into that death from which there is no recovery unto life. Some sinners are long lived in the body, and they have a hope of dying to sin, when they are ready to die in nature; as if they carried repentance in their sleeves, and could command it when they pleased: No man hath repentance in his power; and the longer any man lives in sin, the more power sin gets to hinder repentance. And they seldom receive this power of repentance from God, who have long abused his patience; therefore die they shall in their sins. When they cease to live here, sin shall not, nor shall they ever want a will to sin, when they are in that state, wherein (properly) they cannot sin.

Hæc dicendi formula significat non prius cessare peccare quam vivere impium.

VERS. 12, 13, 14.

Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue:
Though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth:
Yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him.

JOB proceeds to describe the miseries of a wicked man, most of all of an Hypocrite, by an elegant metaphor or similitude taken from meats, which are sweet in the taste, but deadly in the effect; and however the passages of this similitude are somewhat obscure and dark, yet the sence and meaning of it is plain and easie; in which we may take notice in general, that a wicked man is compared to a glutton, eating greedily and vomiting filthily. More distinctly,

Introducit impium tanquam gulosũ atq; voracẽ, & quæ summa aviditate voravit, paulo post sædissimè vomentem. Pined.

First, That sin is compared to meat.

Secondly, That the actings of sin are compared to the eating, chewing, and digesting of meat.

Thirdly, The delight that goeth with sin, is compared to the sweetness, and well tastedness of meat.

Fourthly, Continuance in sin, to the holding of meat under the tongue, and keeping it in the mouth.

Fifthly, The punishment of sin is compared to poyson mingled with meat, or to poysonous meat.

Sixthly, The effects which follow this punishment are compared to torments vexing the bowels, and to vomiting.

Seventhly, The issue of all is compared to death; *He shall suck the poyson of Aspes; The Vipers tongue shall slay him.*

Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth.

The word which we translate *Wickedness*, signifies any kind of sin, yet some restrain it here to that particular sin of the mouth, or tongue, evil speaking, oaths, and blasphemy; these are sweet and pleasant to prophane mouths, as the praise of God is to the mouths of the righteous. There is a second restriction of this *wickedness* (which is more proper) to the sins of oppression and fraudulent gain (*Gen.*6.7.) *God saw the wickedness of man that it was great in the earth*; but what was the special wickedness of that age? The holy Story tells us it was an age of violence, there were *mighty men*, who were mighty oppressors of men: They are called, *men of renown*, at *vers.*4. whose *chief was Nimrod, A mighty hunter before the Lord.* We may take wickedness in the Text both wayes; first, in the General; secondly, in Particular; for the sin of violence, and wrongfully obtaining the things of this life, which is specified at *vers.*15. *He hath swallowed down riches.*

Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth.] Sweetness is the suitableness of the humour which is in meat and drink, to the salival humour in the mouth or palate; sweetness to the taste is nothing but this suitableness; wickedness is suitable to corrupt nature, therefore *wickedness is sweet*, and hath a pleasant taste, as those meats which are most congruous to appetite; *Though it be sweet in his mouth*; the *mouth* is added, because sensation is made there; for when the meat is passed from the mouth to the stomach

stomach, there's no more taste of it, unless it send back fumes to the mouth, which are usually unpleasant and distastful. The sensitive part of the soul which is affected with the pleasure of sin, is here compared to the mouth; so that, whatsoever internal delight a man takes in the committing of any iniquity, or in any iniquity committed, that is the sweetness of it in his mouth; while the inferior faculties of the soul are pleased and take contentment in sin, they may be said to taste it.

Optimè per os significatur voluntas inferior & appetitus sensitivus. Tunc peccator versat malum in ore suo dum in concupiscentia & voluntate inferiori illo delectatur. Bold.

From the similitude in general,

Observe, *That, sin is as food to the soul of a natural or carnal man.*

Yea it is as food to the natural part of a regenerate man; sin is the food of lust. The first sin was committed by eating the forbidden fruit, and now every sin is the eating of some forbidden fruit. Sin is meat and drink to the sinner, not only in reference to the effect, because it brings in the bread which some men eat: as *Solomon* speaks (*Prov.* 4. 17.) *They eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence*; that is, they eat and drink that bread and wine, which hath been gotten by wickedness and violence; now (I say) sin is food not only in the effect and consequence of it, but also (as obedience and doing the will of God is to godly men) in the very act; the adopted sons of God say (in their proportion) as Christ said, *John* 4. *This is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father which is in Heaven:* Wicked men say also 'tis their meat and drink to do the will of Satan, who is indeed their Father: Nature is as hungry and thirsty after wickedness, as grace is after righteousness. As there is a hunger and thirst after spirituals, so after carnals: The natural man is not content, till he have his fill of them. The reason why there is so much *labouring pains* taken to commit sin, is, because there is *a hungring pain* provoking to it; we say of natural hunger, *It breaks through stone walls*; that is, it stirs us to overcome all difficulties, and labour hard for the supply of nature. Many have so much bread at home, that it is a trouble to them because they are no more hungry, who yet are so hungry after sin, that it puts them to a continual trouble of breaking through stone walls, the greatest difficulties to come at it. The Philosopher calls those who are given up to pleasure, who (as the Apostle speaks of the wanton widdow, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5.) *Live in pleasure*, as if that were their only element, or who account it their blessedness to do so; he (I say) calls such, *The most importunate men*; I conceive he meaneth that such are most eager in pursuing all those means which may satisfie them with pleasures, and are restless till they have attained them. A poor man pinched with want is an importunate man, you cannot get him from your doors; he is hungry, hunger putteth him on; so it is with every man whose heart is set upon sin, he is an importunate man, nothing can stop him; though he meet with denials, yet he reneweth his motion; though he meet with rebukes, yet he is not answered; yea though he meet with blows, yet he will on again. *Hunger must get somewhat, or loose all; and many of these hungry ones for the getting of a poor somewhat* (a dry crust, a bare bone, indeed a very nothing) *have lost all.*

Qui beatitudinem in voluptate collocant sunt homines importunissimi. Arist. l. 1. Eth. cap. 5.

Secondly observe, *There is a present sweetness in sin.*

Sin is not only meat, but sweet meat; not only bread, but pleasant bread to an evil heart. *Daniel* for some weeks *eat no pleasant bread*; he eat bread to keep life and soul together, but he forbare feasting or good chear. Sin is a feast to a carnal man, it is his good chear, yea it is dainties to him. We have that word (*Psal.* 141. 4.) where *David* speaks of wicked men, *Incline not my heart to any evil thing with them that practise wicked works, and let me not eat of their dainties.* These dainties may be expounded (as was said before) either for the prosperity that comes in by wicked practices (some by wicked wayes get not onely ordinary food but dainties) or those dainties are sin it self, they feasted themselves in doing evil; *Lord let me not eat of their dainties*, if that be their food I had rather starve then eat with them (*Prov.* 9. 17.) *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant: Stollen water and secret bread* are sinful practices, which are so much the more sweet, by how much they are more secret. This bread of secresies is pleasant bread and sweet meats to a wanton spirit; as the Word of God and holy actings are pleasant bread to a gracious heart. *David* saith of the Commandments of God, *They are sweeter to me then honey, and the honey comb* (Psal. 119. 103.) What was thus sweet to him? Not the bare word of the commandment only, but obedience to the Commandment, or these Commandments requiring his obedience; the word of the Commandment is sweet to none but such as do and obey it; the word is gall and wormwood to a disobedient spirit, but to a *David* it is sweeter then the honey, *yea then the sweetest part of honey*; if there be any part of the honey that is more honey then other, thy Commandments are that part; therefore he adds, *They are sweeter then the honey, or the honey comb.* But what sweetness is there in the honey comb? We are not to take the comb alone without the honey; but when he saith, *sweeter then the honey comb*, the meaning is, sweeter then the honey that cometh immediately out of the comb: That honey which drops from the comb without pressing is counted purest and sweetest. There is not only meat and drink to believers in obedience, but honey and sweetness; and such likewise for a while is wickedness to the wicked.

Thirdly, From the intendment or scope of the similitude, which is to shew what putteth carnal men upon the pursuit of sin, what it is that provokes them to it; no man acts but he seeth some reason for it: a beast is provoked with somewhat proportionable to a reason, though he hath no reason. *Zophar* giveth us *this sweetness* as a reason why a wicked man pursues and is so greedy of his sin.

Hence observe, *It is some expected sweetness in sin, which provokes to the acting of it.*

When Satan tempts to sin, he playes the Orator, and presents some consideration of profit, or pleasure, or credit. In the Parable of the Sower it is said the Word of God was choaked (*Luke* 8. 14.) The thorny ground received the Word, but it was choaked; by what? There are three choakers mentioned in that place; first, *The cares of the world*; secondly, *The deceitfulness of riches*; thirdly, *Pleasure*: These choak the Word; that is, they will not suffer a man to practice, and submit to the Word. Pleasure is one of the three choakers, if not the first and chiefest of the three; pleasure quickens the principles of sin, and hightens desire after it. When the woman was tempted to eat the forbidden fruit, the Text saith (*Gen.* 3. 6.) *The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, a tree to be desired to make one wise*, and then she did eat; here were all sorts of motives, external, internal, sensitive, and intellective, to draw her to that sin. And thus the Lord deals with his people, to draw them on in the wayes of holiness; he tells them of the sweetness, pleasantness, peaceableness of his wayes (*Prov.* 3. 17.) *The wayes of wisdom are peace, all her paths are pleasantness:* Thus he allures the soul to walk in his wayes. The wayes of wisdom considered abstractly, are not only the best, and most honourable wayes, but 'tis sweetest also to walk in them; yet because the Lord knows we are flesh as well as spirit, therefore he tells us of sweetness and pleasantness, of peace and profit, of gold and silver to be had in his wayes; and indeed he infinitely out-bids sin and Satan for our service. *Godliness is profitable for all things. First seek the Kingdom of Heaven and the righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be added to you.* What can we desire more then that by which we may obtain all our desires. As God himself is not any particular, but an universal good; so godliness is not profitable only for this or that particular good thing, but for all good things. Thus God is pleased to invite us to himself, and into his wayes by the sweet bait of benefits; and thus Satan provokes into the ways of sin, he perswades, and many find by experience, that wickedness is sweet in the mouth. The carnal man is led by sense, and liveth like a beast; Satan handles and fits him accordingly. He feeds him with sweet meats; *But though wickedness be sweet in his mouth,*

Voluptatum blanditiis delimiti, ad ea gerenda omnia quæ prava sunt impellimur. Arist. l. 2. Eth. cap. 3.

Voluptas bonum pecoris est. Sen. Epist. 92.

Though he hide it under his tongue.

These words carry on the former allusion to eating. For as a glutton that gets a sweet morsel between his teeth, is loath

loath to loose the delightsom taste of it, and therefore doth not hastily chew and swallow it down, but eats it by degrees; such men of appetite and palat-pleasures will say to others when they are eating, *Think what you are doing*, taste pleasure. Thus doth the carnal man deal with his sin, he chews it long, he keepeth it close, and hideth it under his tongue.

כחד *Est negare, negando celare dissimulare.*

The word in the Hebrew which we translate to hide, is more proper to the work of the tongue in speaking then in eating; and may imply thus much, that as a man who hath got a sweet morsel, hides it under his tongue in eating, so a carnal heart that lives and delights in sin, useth his tongue to hide or keep it from revealing. The word signifies hiding with the Tongue. The heart is the shop wherein, and the tongue the instrument whereby those artificial coverings and vails are made, by which the wicked man hideth his sin. The tongue hideth both what we are, and what we have done, as *Rachel* hid her fathers images, or as *Rahab* hid the *spies* who came to *Jericho*, lest the searchers should have found them. Thus the carnal man covers his sin with his tongue. And this is the right character or property of a false hearted hypocrite; so that *Zophar* struck at *Job* secretly, as a hypocrite, while he spake of hiding sin under the tongue.

הכחיר *Est plerumq; de medio tollere aquarium abolere, ut dicere possis non fuisse. Teget peccatum sermone ficto & fraudis pleno. His verbis figurat hypocritam & obliquè Jobum perstringit.* Jun.

Hence observe, *The wicked mans tongue is the cover of his sin.*

The tongue of a sincere heart is the discoverer of his sin. *For as with the heart man believeth, so with the tongue or mouth confession is made* (of our faith in God) *unto Salvation* (Rom. 10. 10.) as also of our sins against God unto pardon and remission. *I said I will confess my sin unto the Lord* (saith repenting *David*, *Psal.* 32. 5.) *and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.* Now as the tongue of a good man discovers his sin, so the tongue of a wicked man hides it; and that three wayes.

First, By plain denying that he hath done it.

Secondly, By dissembling or concealing what he hath done.

Thirdly, And most ordinarily by excusing it; though he cannot conceal the evil done, much less deny it, yet he hath somewhat to say, to render the doing of it less culpable then others conceive it. To which purpose the heart promps the tongue with a thousand excuses; the hypocrite is elegantly said to hide his sin under his tongue, because by carnal reasonings and fair words he makes so many excuses for it; he guilds over the rotten post, and paints the filthy sepulchre of his heart and life with oyly words, dropt from a dissembling tongue. A deceitful heart and a dissembling tongue cannot live asunder. *As it is the glory of God to conceal a thing*, that is, a sinful thing (*Prov.* 25. 2.) *So it is the glory of God for man to declare his sin.* Thus *Joshua* exhorts *Achan*, *My son give glory to God, and make confession* (Josh. 7. 19.) But it is the shame of a man, and a dishonour to God for a man to hide his sin. Many hide their sins for shame, but that hiding will produce greater shame. *He that covers his sin shall not prosper*, (*Prov.* 28. 13.) If we do not cover our sins God will. Our covering of our own sins by excusing them, brings the curse, (few sins hurt except we cover them) but if God cover them by forgiving them, we are blessed (*Psal.* 32. 1.) *Blessed is he whose sin is covered.* God covers the sin of a believing and repenting soul; but the impenitent unbeliever covers his own. *He hideth it under his tongue.*

Again, We find the word used to another sence in Scripture, which may further clear up this point; to hide under the tongue, is sometimes to meditate, or revolve a thing in the mind; for when once a word is spoken, it is out of the tongues keeping, but while we meditate we keep it under the tongue (*Cant.* 4. 11.) *Thy lips, O my Spouse, drop as the honey comb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; honey and milk*, that is, *honey words*, sweet pleasant words are under thy tongue; my Spouse is now meditating and considering how to speak sweat and pleasant words to her beloved, these words are not yet upon but under her tongue. That of *David* (*Psal.* 66. 17.) reacheth this sence; we translate, *I cried to him with my mouth, and he was extolled with my tongue*: The Text may be rendred thus, *I cryed to him with my mouth, and his exaltation was under my tongue*; that is, I was considering and meditating how I might lift up and exalt the name of God, and make his praise glorious; holy thoughts are said to be under the tongue when we are in a preparation to bring them forth; and so are unholy thoughts (*Psal.* 10. 7.) *His mouth is full of cursing, and deceit, and fraud; under his tongue is mischief and vanity*; that is, he speaketh evil and is devising how to speak worse; his words are wicked, and his devisings are more wicked. Thus as in reference both to good and evil, there is a hiding under the tongue to prepare for speaking; so there is a hiding under the tongue that the thing may be concealed, and not at all spoken; that's the hypocrites art; for as prophane persons care not to proclaim their sins, they make their tongues the trumpet of their vanity, they declare their sins as *Sodom*; so the hypocrite is busie to make shadows for his sin, and to gloss it over with fair pretences, lest it come to light.

Cum enim dulce fuerit in ore ejus malum abscondet illud sub lingua sua. Vulg. *Si dulcescebat in ore ejus malitia mentiebatur eam sub lingua sua, i.e. mentiendo tegebat.* Tharg. *Philoxenus.*

Again, We may expound this latter banch as an effect of the former, which also comes up clearly to the point in hand. *Because wickedness was sweet in his mouth, he will therefore hide it under his tongue*: To which sence the Chaldee Paraphrast speaketh, *If wickedness was sweet in his mouth, he did bely it, or hide it by a lye, under his tongue.* As lying is it self a great sin, and every sin hath somewhat in it of a lye, so many sins are concealed by lying. That sweetness which causeth a wicked man to commit it, causeth him also to retain and hold it, or as the Text speaks, *To hide it under his tongue.* We read of an antient Glutton who wished his neck were as long as a Cranes, that so he might keep the taste of his meat; there is such sweetness upon the taste of a natural man in sinning, that he wisheth he might retain it long upon his spirit, and is troubled if he quickly part with the pleasure of his dainty morsels.

Zophar hath not yet done with these suppositions, we have had two of his *Thoughts* already; *Though wickedness be sweet in his mouth, though he hide it under his tongue*, he is not satisfied in these two; but gives us two more in the next verse, one expressly, the other by implication.

Vers. 13. **Though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within his mouth.**

This verse is of the same tendency with the former, which hath been already opened. In *vers.* 14. we have the application of the similitude, whereof this is but a further illustration; *Though he spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still*, &c. This expression for the manner of it, suits that which we read (*Joh.* 1. 20.) where *John* being asked whether he was the Christ, *he confessed and denied not, but confessed I am not the Christ*; so 'tis here said of a wicked man, he spares his sin, and forsakes it not, but keeps it, to shew the intentness of his spirit upon his sin, he will by no means let it go.

Parcius agitur peccato non statim transmittens aut deglutiens elabi sinens. Pined.

The words still pursue the metaphor of eating, for a glutenous person (as was intimated before) eats for eating sake, or for pleasure, not for strength to glorifie God, which should be the end of our eating. Now though this moral glutton be not sparing at all in the eating of his meat, that is, in the committing of his sin; he eats, that is, sins heartily, yet he spares his meat while he is eating it, he will not eat it hastily, but with a kind of deliberation; as some eat their meat so greedily that they scarce taste what they eat, so others eat it so slowly, as if they thought they could never taste it enough, or have enough of it. 'Tis thus also in sinning; some sin in a kind of hurry or suddain passion, they scarce know what they do, while they are doing evil; or they are to any sinful occasion what a carnal heart is to any good occasion or to any occasion of doing good, glad when they are rid of it; but others sin lingringly, and think they never stay long enough upon it; they sin feelingly and desire (as that Roman Tyrant desired men should die) *to feel themselves sin.* Such as these (I conceive, according to *Zophar's* scope and mind) may be said to spare their sin. They do not spare to commit it, but they commit it sparingly, as being loath it should spend off their hands too fast. The Original word here used, signifies to *spare*, as we ought out of pity and compassion; hence not sparing and not pitying are put together, *Ezek.* 5. 11. it signifies also to spare what should not be spared; to spare not only that which is in our

חמל *Dimittere relinquere intactum. Propitius esse.*

our power, but which is our duty to deſtroy. Some ſpare being moved with a fooliſh pity, and others with covetouſneſs. We may find a mixture of both in *Saul's* ſparing the *Amalekites*. His Commiſſion ran ſtrictly, thus (1 *Sam.* 15. 3.) *Go and ſmite* Amaleck *and utterly deſtroy all that they have, ſpare them not*; but *verſ.* 15. *Saul* being queſtioned by *Samuel*, anſwers, *The people ſpared the beſt of the ſheep*, &c. they would ſpare *Amaleck*, when God had ſaid, *ſpare them not.* *Saul* pretends devotion, *it was for ſacrifice*; but indeed 'twas pride or covetouſneſs, or at the beſt a groundleſs pity which prevailed with him. In this ſence we are to take it here: Though he be very tender towards ſin, as if he were afraid the winds ſhould blow upon it; though he deal gently with it, as *David* gave inſtructions to his Army concerning *Abſalom*; though (according to the Alluſion in the Text) he ſpare it as a pleaſant morſel, which he would be alwayes eating and never eat up, yet it will be bitter to him, *&c.*

Hence obſerve, *A carnal man is merciful to his ſin, and favourable to his luſts.*

The Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *God ſpared not his Son*; that is, he did not deal with him in a way of pity when he was in the place of ſinners, *but delivered him up* (namely to death) *for us all*; but ſinful hearts are kind and pitiful to their ſins; though they hear that ſin will damn them, yet they will not give their ſins an ill word, much leſs a wound; they ſpare them, as *Saul* ſpared *Agag* and the fat cattle. Sin is ſpared three waves,

Firſt, When not confeſſed; we bring ſin forth to tryal and arraignment by confeſſion.

Secondly, When we do not paſs ſentence upon it, nor judge our ſelves for it; ſo the Apoſtle ſpeaks (1 *Cor.* 11. 31.) *If we would judge our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged of the Lord.* We ſhould ſay this ſin deſerves death, and we deſerve to die for it, elſe we ſpare it.

Thirdly, We ſpare ſin when it is not actually put to death, though we condemn it; ſome confeſs the iniquity of their ſin, who yet will not part with it. And ſin like a malefactor caſt by the ſentence of the Judge crieth for mercy, or as a priſoner of war for quarter, when the life of it is in danger; ſin ſaith as thoſe ten men to *Iſhmael*, (*Jerem.* 41. 8.) *Slay us not*; Why? What hath ſin to ſay for it ſelf why it ſhould not dye? Uſually it ſaith as thoſe men in the Prophet did, *We have treaſures hid in the field.* Spare us ſay covetouſneſs and oppreſſion, deceit and fraud, *We have treaſures and riches for you*; ſpare me ſaith uncleanneſs, I have pleaſures and delights for you; ſpare me ſaith another, I am but a little one; ſpare me, this is the firſt time, I have been committed but once, or twice; ſpare us cry they all, we are your kindred, fleſh of your fleſh, and bone of your bone. Thus ſin cryeth for ſparing, and the Hypocrite is very willing to hear this cry, and ſpare his ſin, though he thereby wound and be cruel to his own ſoul. Therefore what *Solomon* ſaith concerning the chaſtning of a child, I ſay, concerning the deſtroying of thy ſin, *ſpare not for its crying.* Fooliſh pity deſtroyeth that which is more worth then a City, yea then a world, *the pretious ſoul*; we may ſay (as it was to *Ahab* in that caſe when he ſpared *Benadab* and let him go (1 *King.* 20. 40.) *Becauſe thou haſt let a luſt go which God hath appointed to deſtruction, therefore thy life ſhall go for its life*; take heed of ſparing, and pitying your ſins, as you bear any pity to your own ſouls, or deſire that God ſhould ſpare and pity them; if we ſpare our ſins, God will not ſpare us, *Deut.* 29. 20. Remember God hath appointed every luſt to death, if it hath not a death of mortification here, you ſhall have a death of miſery hereafter; if you ſpare what God hath appointed to death, your lives ſhall go for its life. *There is a ſparing cruelty as well as a puniſhing mercy*; it is mercy to puniſh ſome perſons, and cruelty to ſpare others; but it is mercy to puniſh all ſins, and cruelty to ſpare ſo much as any one; we may call every ſin as Chriſt doth *Judas* the traytor, *A ſon of perdition*, either actively or paſſively; if it be not deſtroyed, it will deſtroy. Sin is actively a deſtroyer, therefore let it be deſtroyed; if you deal not with it as a ſon of perdition, it will be your perdition.

Crudelitas parcens, miſericordia puniens.

Further, The Septuagint read it with a negation, *Though he ſpare it not*; their negative hath the ſame ſence with our affirmative. *Though he ſpare it not*; that is (in alluſion to meats) though he eats freely of it; we ordinarily ſay when friends are at Table with us, *Pray do not ſpare*; ſo when a wicked man gets ſin under his tongue, he eats like a glutton, greedily, ſo the Apoſtle deſcribes ſuch, *Being paſt feeling they commit iniquity with greedineſs*; They eat and ſpare not, they do not ſin with moderation or temperately, but are like Epicures in ſinning, they ſin inſatiably. But becauſe the negative is not in the Hebrew reading I ſhall not ſtay upon it; yet (I ſay) the general ſcope and intendment of both readings is the ſame. For if he ſpareth it, it is becauſe he loves it, and if he ſpare it not, it is becauſe he liketh it. *Though he ſpare it,*

Quamvis non parcet ei. Sept. i.e. *non parcè & moderate, aget cum iniquitate, ſed ardenter & inſatiabiliter.*

And forſake it not.] In purſuance of the ſimilitude of eating, the ſenſe is made out thus; Though he ſpare it, as loath to let it go down into his ſtomach, for when once the meat is down, 'tis loſt to the pallate, therefore he parts with it by leiſure. But more properly *to forſake*, notes theſe two things; Firſt, To withdraw outward communion; Secondly, To withdraw inward affection; the withdrawing of communion is the effect of withdrawing affection; for if once a man withdraw his heart from another, he quickly withdraws his preſence. Every where in Scripture carnal men are ſaid to forſake God both wayes (*Jer.* 2. 13.) *This people hath committed two great evils, they have forſaken me the fountain of living waters*; that is, I have no more of their company, they do not love me, therefore they deſire not communion with me. The word is uſed by *David* the figure of Chriſt (*Pſal.* 22. 2.) as alſo by Chriſt himſelf when he hung upon the Croſs, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* The Lord at that time did interclude or ſtop his preſence from his Son, he did not manifeſt himſelf to him; there was as it were, for that preſent, a kind of intermiſſion of the ſenſible actings of the love of God towards him: Chriſt being thus denied that communion which he had alwayes enjoyed with the Father, cryed out, *Why haſt thou forſaken me?* But as the wicked man ſpares his ſin, and will not hurt it, ſo he would never be out of its company, much leſs forſake it utterly.

עזב *Dereliquit.*

Hence note, That, *a wicked man is very faithful and conſtant to his ſin.*

Solomon gives that rule of love, *Thy friend and thy fathers friend forſake not* (Prov. 27. 10.) a man ſhould not forſake his own friend, much leſs ſhould he forſake his fathers friend, or a friend to the family: Thus ſaith a carnal heart, this ſin is my friend, and he looks upon it as his fathers friend; his ſin poſſibly is as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, (1 *Pet.* 1. 20.) *A vain converſation received by tradition from his fathers*; ſin deſcends as well as land. Many inherit vanity, and hold it (as it were) by their fathers copy. And if at any time a Hypocrite forſakes the practice of ſin, yet he doth not forſake his reſpect to it; he may leave off the exerciſe, yet not withdraw his love. Many conſiderations may break off his actions, but nothing breaks off his affections. A wicked man ſaith to his ſin, as God to *Joſhua*, *I will not leave thee nor forſake thee.*

The laſt clauſe of this verſe, is but the affirmative of this negative.

Nulli manifeſtabit, & propter hoc nullus ei peccatum occultum diſſuadebit nec aliquid remedium adhibebit, quod adhibetur peccata ſua confitentibus. Aquin.

But keep it ſtill within his mouth. Never confeſſing it.

Solomon puts thoſe two together, *He that confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſin ſhall have mercy.* He that hath no mind to forſake his ſin, hath no deſire to confeſs it. He that would keep it in his hands, would alſo keep it within his mouth. But what gets he by this concealment? Let the next verſe inform us, which contains the Application of the whole ſimilitude.

Verſ. 14. **Yet his meat in his bowels is turned.**

Though wickedneſs be ſweet, though he hide it under his tongue; though he ſpare it, &c. Suppoſe all this, that a wicked man hath been very tender of his ſin, and nouriſhed it long, what's the benefit? Where's the fruit? *Yet his meat in his bowels is turned*; that is, the many diſhes and courſes that he hath had in this banquet of ſin, all this *meat in his bowels is turned*; how turned? Every thing that is eaten, if there be a digeſtion made of it, if the ſtomach

can

can do its work, is turned. Naturalists call it *Assimilation*, when the meat eaten is changed or turned into the substance of the body. But here the meaning is, It is turned into another thing then what it was when it was in his mouth; that is, he finds the effect of it in his stomack to be such as if the meat were not that which he had eaten, it doth not turn to nourishment, but to poyson, as the next clause expresseth; *His meat in his bowels is turned.*

It is the gall of Asps within him.

So Mr. *Broughton* reads it, *His meat in his bowels turneth into the gall of Asps within him*; We say, *His meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Asps within him*; The sence is the same; For this turning of his meat in his bowels (as our translation expresseth it) is not the turning of it to nourishment, but into poyson.

Fel serpentũ portione maximè copiosum. Plin.

The gall of some creatures is poyson, yea the most deadly poyson; *Aristotle*, *Pliny*, and others that write the History of Animals, tell us that the gall of Serpents is full of poyson, and they have exceeding copious galls; yet there is a further elegancy in the words, suiting a secret in nature: it was *sweet in the mouth, now it is gall.* Those meats which are sweetest to the taste turne most to bitterness and choller in the stomack. So there is a gradual continuance of the metaphor, sweetness turns to bitterness, and not only to bitterness, but to gall; and not onely to gall, but to the gall of Asps, which is not onely bitter, but poysonous. There is a bitterness that hath wholesomeness in it, and is medicinable, there is also a poysonous bitterness. The wild bitter Gourd put into the pot was deadly; but of all poysonous bitternesses, the bitterness and poyson of Asps is most deadly. There are many remedies or antidotes against Poyson. And there may be remedies found against the poysonous bitings of all Serpents, except that of the Asp, which as the ancients affirm, *killeth in four hours*, notwithstanding the use and application of the most soveraign remedies; insomuch, that the biting of the Asp is gone into a proverb, for *An immedicable evil.*

Quæ dulcia sunt facilè in bilem & amaritudinem convertuntur. Gal.

Adversus viperarum omniumq; serpentum morsus remedium invenitur, aspide una excepta. Ælian.

Morsus aspidis proverbio dicitur de malo immedicabili.

There is another consideration in the gall of Asps, that carrieth the point more fully; for though that gall be death, and death without remedy, yet it causeth a kinde of a pleasant death. The biting of the Asp stupifies, and then kills. The person bitten falls presently into a sleep, which is a short death, and then dies, which is a long sleep. Though the person bitten be in present danger of death, yet the pains of death are not felt. It is storied of *Cleopatra*, Queen of *Egypt*, that when she saw her Husband *Mark Anthony* ruined and dead, having laid violent hands upon himself; when she saw all lost, the City of *Alexandria* (where she thought to secure her self) taken, and her power utterly broken; she so much disdained to be a captive, and to be brought in triumph to *Rome*, that out of the greatness of her spirit, she chose to put Asps to her breasts and die; which she did upon this natural consideration, not onely because she knew they were present death, but because they would put her to least pain, or make her altogether senseless of pain in dying.

Aspidis veneno afflicti somno in mortem solvuntur.

Hence observe, First, That *how pleasant soever sin is in the acting, it is bitter in the end.*

Holiness is sweet in the way and end too: wickedness is sometimes sweet in the way, but alwayes bitter in the end. *Solomon* gives this in plain assertions (*Prov.* 20.17.) *The bread of deceit is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth shall be filled with gravel.* And again (*Prov.* 23.31, 32.) *Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it gives its colour in the cup*; that is, take heed lest the sight of it ensnare thee to intemperance and drunkenness. Some love to see their wine sparkle and brisk in a clear christal glass, it pleaseth them to look upon it, and see it as well as to taste and drink it. But look not on it, so as to lust after it; why? *At the last it bites like a Serpent.* The bread of deceit is gravel *afterwards*, and the sweet wine bites at last; 'tis pleasant to look to in the cup, and pleasant to the taste, but if you be overtaken with it, your bowels will find it turned to the gall of Asps. The Prophet (*Jer.* 2.19.) saith to such, *Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee.* But is sin it self a corrector and a reprover of sinners? The acts of sin do neither correct nor reprove, but the effects of it do both; so the Prophet seemeth to expound himself in the latter part of the same verse, *Know therefore and see* (namely, by the event) *that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God*; that is, thy forsaking of God (such is every turning aside to, and embracing of sin) will procure thee much evil, and provoke God to make thy life bitter unto thee. We may say to every one who delights in sin, as the charge is given against *Babylon* (Rev. 18.7.) *How much thou hast glorified thy self, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow shall be given to thee*; how much of the one, so much of the other. Thy sin was sweet in thy mouth, but it will be turned to the gall of Asps in thy bowels.

Secondly note, *Sin hath not only bitterness in it, but there is death in it.*

All gall is bitter, but the gall of Asps is deadly. Sin is a deadly poyson; for though it be pleasing a while, yet 'tis killing in the end. The bitterness that floweth from sin, is the bitterness of death: If after it hath yielded us a little unsatisfying pleasure, it should only conclude in pain, this might not only discredit it in our opinion, but provoke us to cast it for ever both out of our affection and practice; how then should our hearts be turned from it, and rise against it, when we are assured that this pain is as a poyson, and that this poyson is unto death?

Thirdly note, *Though sin be deadly, yet it leaves the sinner senseless of death.*

Sin destroyes, and the man knows not what hurts him. Every Evil is by so much the worse, by how much it leaves us less apprehensive of the evil it doth us. Those wounds may be most mortal, of which at present we feel least pain.

Lastly observe, *It is a dangerous thing to keep sins counsel, or to conceal it.*

The wages of sin (committed) *is death.* But the wages of sin concealed, is the worst of that death. Every sin acted, hath in it the seed of death, but sin hidden under the tongue, and kept in the mouth, by denying, dissembling, or excusing it, is a deadly poyson. The Gospel hath a remedy against that death which is deserved by the acting of sin; but it hath no Antidote against the poyson of a studied and continued concealment of sin; *'Tis the gall of Asps within him.*

VERS. 15, 16, 17.

He hath swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again, God shall cast them out of his belly.
He shall suck the poyson of Asps, the Vipers tongue shall slay him.
He shall not see the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.

THE similitude between sin in general, and pleasant, though poysonous meat, which *Zophar* pursued in the three former verses, is here contracted to a particular sin, the unjust obtaining of riches, the root of which is covetousness, or *the love of money, and that the root of all evil* (1 Tim. 6. 10. 'Tis the root of all moral evil or sin, and so the root of all penal evil or trouble, whether to our selves or others, as appears in this context.

He hath swallowed down riches.

The word implieth eating with insatiable appetite; every man that eateth must also swallow, but a glutton is rather a swallower then an eater. He throws his meat whole down his throat, and eats (as we say) without chewing. The rod of *Moses* (turned into a Serpent) *swallowed up* the rods of the *Egyptian*-sorcerers. The word is often applied to expres oppression (*Psal.* 35.25.) *Let them not say in their hearts, ah, so would we have it, let them not say we have swallowed him up*; that is, we have made clear riddance of him, he is now a gone man for ever. The ravenous rage of the adversary is described in this language (*Psal.* 124.3.) *If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us* (that is, if we had one less then God, though the greatest of creatures on our side) *then they had swallowed us up quick.* The Church is comforted

(*Isa.*

(*Isa.* 49. 19.) with an assurance of freedom from such swallowers; *They that swallowed thee up are far away*; thou hadst those by thee that were ready to devour thee (as it is said *Revel.* 12. 4. *The Dragon stood before the woman for to devour her child as soon as it was born*) But thy oppressors shall be sent packing; they who heretofore swallowed thee, shall not stay within sight of thee. Thy swallowers are swallowed up. The metaphor is taken from wild beasts which greedily devour their prey; *He hath swallowed down riches.*

Est Metaphora ducta ab immanibus bestiis, quæ alias feras uno ictu deglutiunt.

Hence observe, *Riches are a sweet morsel to a worldly minded man.*

And he is usually most pleased with those riches which he gets by unrighteousness. What he tears from the backs, and pulls out of the bellies of others, delight his back and belly most. Some care not so much for the riches they get, as for the sinful wayes by which they get them; It contents them more to over-reach another, then to enrich themselves. *Augustine* confesseth of himself, that in his youth he would steal fruit, not because he cared for the fruit, but because he delighted to steal; so we may say of these, it is the wrong, not the gain which pleaseth them: *Stollen waters are sweet*, and this makes them sweetest to some, that they are stollen. 'Tis rare, if he that swalloweth down riches, be not a swallower of the poor, if his particular rising and filling, be not the falling and emptying of many.

Appositè significatur per verbum devorare, quod est sine delectu quicquid objicitur, sive salubre sit, sive nocivum carpere.

Again, When a man swallows and devours greedily, he doth not well discern what he eats, he takes little notice whether his meat be wholsome and fit for nourishment or no, he eats without due respect either of quantity or quality. This sets forth the temper of worldly men, and gives us a second Observation.

Greedy covetous persons care not what it is they have, so they may have it.

A just man considers every penny he gets, and asks his own heart, how he came by it; A righteous man is as careful what money he puts in his purse, as a temperate man is what meat he puts into his stomach: He examines his title and enquires whether it be his right or no. He would not enjoy any thing without the good will of God, or with the wrong of his brother. The way in which he gains is more considerable to him, then the gain; and whence he hath it, then what he hath. But all is fish that comes to a wicked mans net, though it prove a Serpent not a fish; as appears by the issue of his greedy getting, or swallowing, laid down in the latter part of the verse; *He hath swallowed down riches, and,*

He shall vomit them up again.

קיא *Vomuit, evomuit, propriè de cibis.*

What we eat moderately, we digest, concoct, and turn to good bloud for the support of nature; but if a man eats intemperately, his stomach turns and he falls a vomiting; A glutton gets more meat down then others, but he gets less strength by it. The Pelican hath his name in Hebrew from this root, because having eaten Shell-fishes he vomiteth them out again as soon as they are a little boiled in his craw, that he may pick out the fish and leave the shell. The Prophet (*Jer.* 25. 27.) tells us of a vomit which the wrath of God gives a sinful people; *Therefore thou shalt say to them, thus saith the Lord of hosts the God of Israel, drink ye, and be drunken, and spue and fall, and rise no more.* What was it they should drink? it was a cup of judgment, they had been drinking liberally the cup of sin before, now God puts a cup of sorrow and bloud to their mouths, and they must drink till they spued, and stagger till they fell, and so fall as not to rise any more. And as wicked men shall drink the cup of wrath till they spue, so themselves shall at last be spued out. They are to a Land as unwholsome meat is to the stomach, the burden of it. Hear that severe warning to the people of *Israel* (*Lev.* 18. 26, 28.) *Ye shall therefore keep my Statutes and my Judgements, and shall not commit any of these abominations, neither any of your own Nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you, that the Land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.*

קאה *Pelicanus à vomitu; conchas enim à calore ventris coctas rursus evomit ut testis rejectis esculenta seligat.* Plin. lib. 10. cap. 30.

But whence is it that the wicked man vomiteth up what he hath devoured? To clear that, consider there are four sorts of vomiting.

First, From the fulness of the stomach, by excessive eating and drinking.

Secondly, From the filthiness or foulness of the stomach, by eating and drinking those things which are unwholesome and unclean.

Thirdly, From the weakness of the stomach; Some are not able to retain, no not a little, and that good food, because their stomachs are ill.

Fourthly, From a secret antipathy, or averseness to that which is eaten. The vomit in the Text is not caused any of these wayes. A wicked man doth not vomit from the averseness of his spirit to his sin, he liketh it well enough; nor from the weakness of his spirit to sin, he is mighty to act and digest the worst of sins; nor doth he vomit because of the foulness of his spirit, that never troubles him; the fouler any mans spirit is, the more retentive it is of sin: nor doth it proceed from his fulness of sin; for how full soever he is, yet he is hungry still, and saith not, it is enough.

Whence is it then that he vomiteth?

I answer, By distinguishing again of a two-fold vomiting.

First, Free and natural: Secondly, Forced or artificial.

Some vomit alone, others have vomits given them; some vomit by the strength of medicines, others vomit by the strength of nature. The wicked man doth not vomit up his ill-gotten goods naturally, but violently; not freely but forcedly. The gain of fraud and oppression may be said to be vomited up two wayes.

First, By repentance; Secondly, by expence.

Repentance in general is called by the ancients, *The vomit of the soul*, and that is applicable to any special repentance. And repentance upon this special account of unlawful gain (as also repentance upon what account soever may be) is two-fold.

First, There is a repentance rising from godly sorrow; thus repenting *Zacheus* vomited up his ill-gotten goods. For when Christ was come to his house, *Zacheus stood and said unto the Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold* (*Luk.* 19. 8.) This gracious vomit his soul received by the power of the Spirit of God, provoking him to repentance; and happy it is for them that have swallowed down riches unduly, if the Lord give them this repentance of godly sorrow to vomit them back again.

Secondly, There is a vomiting of riches by a repentance which ariseth only from worldly sorrow and gripes of conscience, not from any change of the mind; so *Judas* having swallowed down the thirty pieces of silver (the price of bloud) for betraying Christ, vomited them up by repentance, such as it was, a repentance proceeding from worldly not from Godly sorrow (*Matth.* 27. 4.) *Then Judas when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought the thirty pieces of silver to the chief Priests, and Elders, and cast them down, and departed, and went and hanged himself.* The Apostle (2 *Cor.* 7.) saith that *worldly sorrow causeth death.* Sin causeth eternal death, and this kind of sorrow for sin causeth temporal death; some pine and languish to death in worldly sorrow, and others (like *Judas*) by the violence of it thrust themselves violently out of the world, and die. Meer vexation enforceth some wicked men to be honest, and to cast up what they have unjustly gotten; 'Tis not the tenderness of their consciences, but the sickness and pain of them, which puts them upon this. As some men say the reason why they refuse or abstain from eating such or such meat, is not because they do not love it, but because it doth not love them; it makes them sick if they eat it: So the reason why some vomit up the unrighteous mammon which they have swallowed, is not because they do not love it, but because it doth not love them, but hath made them sick. The Whale that swallowed up *Jonah*, found him hard meat, his stomack could not digest that morsel, he must vomit him up for his own ease. Riches in the belly of many an oppressor is like *Jonah* in the Whales belly, a trouble to his stomach, and he must vomit them up again, not out of love to righteousness, or hatred of sin, not out of pity to the oppressed, or charity to the poor, but for his own present ease, and yet, if go no further, how poor an ease will that prove? Such as

this described is all the vomiting here meant. And in this *Zophar* doth not set forth the duty, but the punishment of a wicked man; For though it be better to restore any way, then to retain that which is ill gotten, yet a man is not made better who restoreth only thus. And we may say of such a repentance, it is to be repented of.

Again; As there is a vomitting of riches by repentance, so secondly, by expence. And this also is twofold.

First, By a willing expence; some men swallow down riches for prodigality; they spend profusely, what they get sinfully. What one lust brings in, another lust carrieth out. One lust is as a rake to gather, and another as a fork to scatter. A conjunction of both these may be found in the same man. For there are two sorts of covetous men. Some get meerly to hoard and lay up, their nest is full of eggs, and yet they can scarce afford themselves one, but sit brooding upon them to hatch more. A second sort of covetous persons extort and get meerly to spend; By covetous practices, they make provision for wanton and luxurious practices. These vomit what they have swallowed, by a willing expence.

Secondly, Others vomit what they have swallowed by forced expence; such troubles and Law-suits are brought upon them, that what they have violently or fraudulently gotten from others, they are compelled to refund, and pay back again; as appears yet more clearly in the next clause.

God shall cast them out of his belly.] These words shew what kind of vomit his is. The word in the Hebrew signifies both God and an Angel. The Septuagint render, *An Angel shall cast them out of his belly*; And their Interpreters expound it of an evil Angel, who is the tormenter of this evil man; we refer it to God, as being a part of his divine justice, thus to repay unjust men; *God shall cast them out of his belly.* An oppressour having gotten riches into his possession hopes to hold them; But God sends out his writ of ejectment, and turneth him out of their possession, or them out of his. The word which we render *cast out*, carrieth a double, and that a contrary signification; it signifies both *to possess, and to dispossess*, to put in, and to thrust out of an inheritance. So the word is used (*Josh.* 23. 5.) in reference to the *Canaanites*, whom God dispossessed; *And the Lord your God, he shall drive them out of your sight, and ye shall possess their Land.* In both parts of which verse we find the same word. As God cast the *Canaanites* out of their Land to place his own people there, according to his promise; so God will cast all ill-gotten riches, those riches especially, out of the belly of wicked men, which they have gotten from his people, contrary to his command. (*Zach.* 9. 4.) *Behold the Lord will cast her out* (that is, *Tyrus*) why will the Lord cast out *Tyrus*? *Tyre* was a merchandizing City, an oppressing City; *Tyrus heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets*, verse. 3. yet the Lord will make her poor, and naked, he will level her heaps of gold and silver, *and smite her power in the Sea.* The lot of proud oppressing *Tyrus* and her riches shall be the lot of every oppressour and his riches, *God shall cast them*

Out of his belly.] That is, out of his barns and gardners, out of his chests and store-houses; wheresoever he hath hoarded his riches, that's his belly, and from thence they shall be cast.

Hence observe, First, *The worldly man is unwilling to part with his worldly portion.*

Here's an act of violence, God casts them out of his belly, and pulls them from him by an act of justice, as he had unjustly pulled them from others. He can let his bloud go as easily as his wealth.

Secondly, Note, *Man may get, but he cannot hold what he hath got unjustly.*

What God giveth he will maintain, what is sinfully swallowed down shall be vomitted up with shame. *I will punish Bell in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth what he hath swallowed up* (*Jer.* 51. 44.) What was that? he had swallowed the riches of the Nations round about him. Thus the Prophet *Isaiah* represents him boasting (*Chap.* 10. 13, 14.) *I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people.* But as some Princes politickly connive at their Subjects oppressions, till they get great estates, and then squeese all into their own coffers, and leave them naked; so the great God permits some to fill themselves like spunges, by sucking in the substance of others unrighteously, and then makes them return and render it back by his righteous judgments, *Whatsoever is gotten by sin, is not given by God*; and whatsoever is not given by God, he threatens to take away: they who are rich, but not by the blessing of God, shall be made poor by the curse of God; therefore the Psalmist concludes, *A little that the righteous man hath, is better then the great riches of the ungodly*; This betterness, ariseth two wayes: First, From the excellency of the conveyance, and that in three respects; First, the little which the righteous man hath, comes to him by the purchase of Christ. Secondly, He hath it by the promise. Thirdly, by the special providence and fatherly goodness of God to him. A little thus conveyed to the righteous man is better then the greatest riches of many ungodly. Secondly, It is better in reference to the sureness of it: there is a flaw in the title of wicked men, and therefore God will one time or other question their possession. The righteous hold their temporals as well as their spirituals (*in capite*) by Christ their head; and hence it is that they have a sure estate in and hold of both.

This should admonish all to consider what riches they swallow down; He that hath got much honestly, may spoil all by mingling a little with it dishonestly gotten. For as he that hath eaten divers wholesome meats, may yet lose the comfort and nourishment of them, by feeding upon some one unwholesome dish; and by this means undergoes a double evil; First, in eating that which is bad, and then in vomiting up good and bad together; so 'tis in this case. Christ useth an argument (warning men to take heed of unjust gain) much higher then this (*Mat.* 16. 26.) *What shall it profit a man if he gets the whole world, and loseth his own soul?* Put all unjust gain into the ballance with your soul, and see what you get by that, while you lose this? The argument in the Text is also very pressing; What shall it profit a man to get a mass of worldly riches unjustly, and by that gain lose all that he hath justly gotten. If injurious dealing did indammage our estates only, what advantage is there in dealing injuriously? But *Zophar* urgeth yet further in the next verse.

Verse. 16. **He shall suck the poyson of Asps.**

These words may be taken either as a distinct similitude, or as the conclusion of the former. There is a double reading; some thus; *He shall suck the head of the Asp.* The same word in the Hebrew signifies the head and poyson, because the head in those venomous Serpents holds the poyson. We translate this word (*Rosh*) Gall. (*Deut.* 29. 18.) *Lest there be among you a root that beareth Gall* (or a *head*) *and Wormwood.* That is, lest any person among you should commit this wickedness (namely, Idolatry, or the worship of strange gods) which will be as distastful to God as Gall is to man, and which will be bitter as Gall to the man who commits it, whether we consider the bitterness of repentance if it be pardoned, or the bitterness of pain, if he (persisting in it impenitently) be punished. And hence this very word is used again to signifie *Gall*, in that Prophetick Psalm of the passion and pains of Christ for our sins (*Psal.* 69. 21.) *They gave me also gall for my meat.* Any Gall is so bitter and unsavoury to the taste, so offensive and troublesome to the stomack, that 'tis a kind of poyson, and some venomous creatures carry their poyson in their Gall.

He shall suck the poyson of Asps.] That is, He shall find that most bitter and deadly to him, wherein he thought to find much sweetness and delight. As if he had said; *Thou who hungerst after the estates of the poor, I tell thee, when thou art sucking them as at a honey-comb, thou art but sucking the poyson of Asps.* While the covetous oppressour is in the act of sin, he saith, it is sweet and good, he little thinks he is sucking poyson, the deadly poyson of the Asp: It is misery enough to suck poyson at any time, but to suck poyson while we think we are sucking milk or honey is a greater misery. There are none so mistaken as they who take wrongfully from others. As there is a sinful sparing, so a sinful getting which tends to poverty; and he who thus

ירש *Hæreditavit possedit etiam hæreditate & possessione ejecit.*

ראש *Significat tum caput tum venenũ, quod capite aut dentibus serpentis venenum inest. caput aspidis fugiet.* Vulg.

Perinde edet ei maleficium ac si venenũ hausisset potentissimum, aut à vipera fuisset morsus. Jun.

thus gathers, do worſe then ſcatter; For, *He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſps*, and (which ſpeaks the ſame or a worſe fate to him)

Nullum animat tanta celeritate linguam movet ut ſerpens, adeo ut triplicem linguam habere videatur, cum unam ſit. Plin. l. 6. c. 37. Iſid. lib. 12.

The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.] That is, he ſhall ſurely die, the iſſue ſhall be his ruine. The poyſon of Aſps is deadly, and that the Vipers tongue is preſent death, we have clear evidence (beſides what is aſſerted by natural Hiſtorians) from Scripture record. When *Paul* had eſcaped from Ship-wrack, and was come on ſhoar at *Malta*, the *Barbarians* ſhewed him kindneſs, and made him a fire, out of which when a Viper came and faſtned upon his hand, they looked when he ſhould fall down dead, concluding he was a murtherer, whom, though he eſcaped the Sea, yet, vengeance followed him to land, or (as that Text gives it) *would not ſuffer him to live* (Acts 28. 4.) So that, when *Zophar* ſaith, *The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him*; The meaning is, he ſhall be as certainly and ſuddenly ſlain, as if a Viper had bitten him. The Vipers tongue is worſe then the Lyons tooth, and gives ſo mortal a wound that every touch is death. When *John the Baptiſt*, as alſo Chriſt would ſhew how hurtful and dangerous the Scribes and Phariſees (among the *Jewes*) were, they call them, *A Generation of Vipers* (*Matth.* 3. 7. *Matth.* 12. 34.) Theſe Vipers never gave over till they had ſlain Chriſt. There's no eſcaping if a Viper bite; and of them Chriſt ſaith (*Matth.* 23. 33.) *O Generation of Vipers, how ſhall ye eſcape the damnation of hell?* It ſhews that the moral Viper is as dangerous as the natural, when we read that the former ſhall not eſcape the wrath of God, as man cannot eſcape, being ſtung, by the latter. The Vipers tongue is the Embleme of any remidileſs evil. And ſuch ſhall befal the covetous oppreſſour, *The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.*

Hence note, *The miſchief that a wicked man doth to others, ſhall return upon his own head.*

While he impoveriſheth his neighbour, he undoeth himſelf; while he is ſucking others, he is ſlaying himſelf. *Solomon* deſcribes a combination of evil-doers, *whoſe feet run to evil, they make haſt to ſhed bloud*; But he concludes (*Prov.* 1. 18.) *They lie in wait for their own blood, and lurk privily for their own lives; ſo are the wayes of every one that is greedy of gain, which taketh away the life of the owners thereof:* They made haſt to ſhed the blood of others, but the event proved that they laid wait for their own bloud. Sin is the great Deceiver; The harm-doer is always the greateſt harm-receiver. He that layeth ſnares, layeth them for others, but he catcheth himſelf. And therefore *Solomon* reſolves it directly (which yet we are to underſtand of the event, not at all (which makes their caſe more miſerable) of their intention) *They lurk privily for their own lives.* All their lurking and plotting recoyles upon themſelves; *Their own iniquities ſhall take them, and they ſhall be holden with the cords of their ſin*, as the ſame *Solomon* expreſſeth it, (*Prov.* 5. 22.) As, *He that is wiſe* (that is, holy and righteous) *ſhall be wiſe for himſelf* (*Prov.* 9. 12.) That is, though he only intended the Glory of God, and the good of others, wholly denying and leaving out himſelf, yet himſelf ſhall be the chief gainer by it in the end; ſo he that is fooliſh (that is, wicked and unrighteous) ſhall be fooliſh to himſelf. Though he only intended the hurt of others, yet he ſhall be the chief, poſſibly, the only hurt-receiver in the end, as it follows in the latter part or croſs part of the ſame Proverb, *If thou ſcorneſt, thou alone ſhalt bear it.* The greateſt hurt which any man can do his brother by any wrong done to him, is ſo little comparatively to what he doth to himſelf, that the Scripture caſts the whole upon himſelf; *He alone ſhall bear it.* While he gives his brother a bitter portion to drink, himſelf drinks the poyſon of Aſps; While he wounds his brother with hand or tongue, *the Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him.*

Per linguam viperæ ſignificari poteſt alius impius contraria loquens. Pined.

Viperæ lingua ſymbolū eſt linguæ detractatoriæ.

Further, By *the Vipers tongue*, we may underſtand any oppoſer, who riſeth up againſt and accuſeth this fraudulent or violent oppreſſour. An accuſing tongue, eſpecially a falſely and maliciouſly accuſing tongue, may well be called *a Vipers tongue.* In which ſence, principally, the Scribes and Phariſees are called *a Generation of Vipers.* Detraction wounds deeply, and a wound in the reputation is hardly healed. When the *Ægytians* would deſcribe a man ſmitten with a detracting tongue, they were wont to paint a Baſilisk, who kills ſuch as come near to him with his breath. And the Vipers tongue hath alſo been (among the Ancients) an Emblem of the ſame ſignification.

Hence note, *Oppreſſours ſhall not want accuſers, and they who have ſmitten others in their eſtates, ſhall be ſmitten in their names.*

Such get riches to themſelves, a name, and they (ambitiouſly, as the Pſalmiſt hath it) call their Lands after their own name, hoping thereby to immortalize their memories. But their project fails them, and as they never deſerved nor had *a good name*, ſo they ſhall not long have *a Great one.* If good men do not cry them down, ſome or other as bad as themſelves ſhall. *The Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay them.*

Deus quidam magnam tanquam carnificinam uſus eſt ſumendam de aliis pœnalis Plut. de ſer. Num. vindicta.

Verſ. 17. **He ſhall not ſee the rivers, the floods, the brooks of honey and butter.**

Non ſumi pro jejuno viſu ſed delectabili qualis cum poſſeſſione uſu rerum cietur; in videre pro uti & exviri; vide ad actionem reliquorum ſenſuū tranſfertur. Aug. lib. 10. Confeſſ. 35. & Epiſt. 112 ad Paulin.

Theſe words continue the miſery befalling a wicked man; He hath gained unjuſtly, but he ſhall not poſſeſs what he hath gained. *He ſhall not ſee*; that is, he ſhall not enjoy. *Seeing* is not taken here for a naked hungry ſight of theſe things. He may ſee the floods, rivers, and brooks of honey and butter with his eye, but he ſhall not have a comfortable uſe of them. Sight is ſo noble a ſenſe, that it is put for all the ſenſes; eſpecially for that which is the deſire of all the ſenſes, enjoyment. We render that of the Preacher (*Eccl.* 2. 1.) *Enjoy pleaſure*; the Text is, *See pleaſure.* Pleaſure is the object of every ſenſe, and that which every ſenſe naturally looks for, is the enjoyment of pleaſure. The ſight of the beſt things without enjoyment, doth rather afflict us then pleaſe us. Thus here, *they ſhall not ſee*, that is, they ſhall not have a comfortable or pleaſurable enjoyment, of the *rivers, floods, and brooks*; here is an elegant heap of words, all being of a near ſignification, and concurring to make an Hyperbolical ſpeech, ſignifying greateſt abundance of good things; *honey and butter* are put ſynecdochically for all good things. *Rivers, brooks, floods*, denote the fulleſt ſtore and plenty of them. Or theſe words may note theſe three things to us diſtinctly.

First, Plenty in the word *flood*; we may have water in a pond or ciſtern, but floods are the exceſſes and over-flowings of water.

Secondly, Perpetuity in the word *river*; floods fall quickly; Torrents riſe with the fall of rain, or the diſſolving of ſnow, and when this hath been a while diſſolved and that fallen, they fall again. But rivers keep a conſtant ſtream, being fed by conſtant ſprings. When the Lord ſaith (*Iſa.* 48. 18.) *Then had thy peace been as a river*; The meaning is, that in caſe of their obedience, their peace had been continued. And when the Lord promiſeth (*Iſa.* 66. 12.) *I will extend peace to thee as a river*; He aſſures them that their peace ſhall continue for ever.

Thirdly, The joyning of theſe three together, *floods, rivers, brooks*, may imply variety of kinds, or the confluence of all ſorts of good things, both little and great together. Brooks are little rivers, and rivers are great Brooks. Floods are the inundations or ſwellings of both beyond their banks.

He ſhall not ſee theſe rivers, floods, and brooks, of honey and butter.

And who ever did ſee them? Rivers and brooks of water, as they are uſeful and delectable, ſo every where ſeen. But where ſhall we ſee rivers or brooks of honey and butter? This is a high ſtrain of Rhetorick, noting only (as was toucht before) greateſt abundance; yet in ſome Countries there is ſuch abundance of honey and butter, that, they may be ſaid to have (almoſt) in the letter, rivers and brooks of them. It is ſaid (1 *Sam.* 14. 25.) that *when the people of the Land* (in purſuit of the *Philiſtims*) *came to a wood, there was honey upon the ground*, and (*verſ.* 26.) *the honey dropped.* Here were rivers of honey, flowing honey. The land of *Canaan* is often deſcribed by this Periphraſis, *A Land flowing with milk and honey* (*Exod.* 3. 8, 17. &c.) *Job* ſpeaking of his former flouriſhing eſtate, gives it in this language (*Chap.* 29. 6.) *I waſhed my ſteps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oyl.* They who eat butter and honey are ſuppoſed by ſome to have more then neceſſaries (though others expound it for plain Country food) even dainties to feed upon (*Iſa.* 7. 22.) *Butter and honey ſhall every one eat that is left in the Land.* And this is the food which

the Virgins son our Immanuel was propheſied to eat at the 15th verſe of the ſame Chapter; *Butter and honey ſhall he eat, that he may know how to refuſe the evil and chooſe the good.* That is, that he may grow up to years of diſcretion, and ſo be able to diſtinguiſh between that which is morally good and morally evil.

Further, Some underſtand butter and honey allegorically, for ſpiritual good things; The butter and honey of the Land of promiſe were indeed ſhadows of heavenly things. And this amounts to a ſorer judgment upon the wicked man, whoſe portion, how great ſoever it is in temporals, ſhall be nothing in eternals; His whole lot falls on this ſide heaven, and the things of heaven. But I rather keep to the literal ſence, which ſuits clearly with the words foregoing; *He ſhall ſuck the poyſon of Aſps, the Vipers tongue ſhall ſlay him:* there's an end of him; he ſhall not ſee the rivers, &c. of honey and butter which he looked for.

ic deſcribitur ſordidum avari dominis inſenium, qui quamvis bonorum omnium copia ſuperundet nihil tamen ex bonis ſuis ſumit. Cajet.

Laſtly, Some give the meaning as if the ſordid diſpoſition of a covetous worldling were here deſcribed; who though he doth abound with the things of this life, yet he doth not ſee them; that is, he hath not a heart to make uſe of them, but keeps all in priſon; His rivers and brooks when in their higheſt flood, are as dried up to himſelf; This (I grant) is a judgement viſible upon many covetous wicked men, who as much want what they have, as what they have not. But I paſs this alſo, and ſhall inſiſt only upon our firſt interpretation, *He ſhall not ſee the rivers, &c.* Then he had hopes to ſee, that is, to poſſeſs and enjoy them; He made ſure of them, but they paſſed away, and proved not ſure to him.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *A worldly man hath great expectations, he promiſeth himſelf huge things in the world, whole rivers, brooks and floods of honey and butter.*

Small matters will not ſerve his turn, he dreams not only of Gold, but of golden mountains, and golden ſhowers; he dreams of rivers and floods of gold; What pleaſant dreams of eſteem, honour, and riches hath he; He phancieth that all ſhall not only honour, but humour and adore him; He promiſeth himſelf, that he ſhall be able to do what he will, and make whom he pleaſeth ſtoop to him, that none ſhall dare to ſpeak a word, or riſe up againſt him: What fine imaginations have many about this world, but they reckon (as we ſay) without their Hoaſt. For,

Secondly, Obſerve, *God often cuts wicked men ſhort of their expectations.*

He ſhall not ſee the rivers, &c. of honey and butter; He looks for them, but he ſhall not ſee them; He hopes, but he ſhall be aſhamed of his hope. What the Poets phancied of *Tantalus*, is true and accompliſht in him. He is Tantaliz'd, ſtanding up to the chin in thoſe floods and rivers, of which he cannot drink; he hath pleaſant apples touching and playing upon his lips, which yet he cannot taſte. He thought himſelf happy in getting great things, but, his miſery is, he cannot enjoy what he hath gotten. *Solomon* ſaith of a ſloathful man (*Prov.* 12.27.) *He roaſteth not what he hath gotten in hunting*; his meaning is, he will not hunt for his meat, he will take no pains for his living; if he have any roſt-meat, it is not what himſelf, but what his friends or forefathers have hunted and caught for him. We may ſay the ſame of many covetous men, who though they take pains enough in hunting for their living, who though they riſe early, go to bed late, and compaſs Sea and Land in the purſuit of riches, yet they roſt not what they have got; though they have gotten much in this hunting, yet God denieth them the comfortable enjoyment of it: And he doth it two wayes; Firſt, God ſometimes taketh the man away from his gettings, as is inſtanced (*Luke* 12.) in the rich man, who ſaid to his ſoul, *Thou haſt goods laid up for many years*; He had rivers and brooks, which would never fail, nor be dried up, as he dreamed, but he ſaw them not; for God ſaid to him, *Thou fool, this night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee; then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?*

Secondly, God takes away what he was poſſeſſed of, he pulls all out of his hands, or from between his teeth. When he hath good things about him, and is reſolving to take his fill of them, then God ſends a flood of wrath, and ſweeps away his floods of riches; ſo that he cannot ſo much as behold them any longer with his eye. Thus the Lord threatned his ancient people in caſe of diſobedience (*Deut.* 28. 31.) *Thine oxe ſhall be ſlain before thy eye, and thou ſhalt not eat thereof; thine Aſs ſhall be violently taken away before thy face, and ſhall not be reſtored to thee.* That which he hath laboured for, ſhall be taken away, and not reſtored; his loſs ſhall be irrecoverable. Or himſelf ſhall be compelled to reſtore what he hath laboured for, he ſhall not ſwallow it down, as *Zophar* ſhews in the next verſe, where he gives us in plain words, without a figure, a further account of the wicked mans non-enjoyment of what he had wrongfully ſpoiled and ſtript others of, in hope to make himſelf a happy man.

VERS. 18, 19.

That which he laboured for ſhall he reſtore, and ſhall not ſwallow it down; according to his ſubſtance ſhall the reſtitution be, and he ſhall not rejoyce therein.
Becauſe he hath oppreſſed, and hath forſaken the poor, becauſe he hath violently taken away a houſe, which he builded not.

IN the former verſe *Zophar* aſſures *Job* that the wicked man ſhall not *ſee the rivers, the floods, and brooks of honey and butter*; that is, he ſhall not enjoy the golden abundance he dreamed of. Here *Zophar* tells him why or whence this comes to paſs.

What he laboured for he ſhall reſtore, and ſhall not ſwallow it down.

The Hebrew is, *He ſhall reſtore his labour*; The original is conciſe; What we render by eight words in our language, is but two there. But how can labour be reſtored? We may clear it three wayes.

משיב יגע *Reddet laborem.*

Dabit pœnas pro labore & moleſtia quam aliis inſtixit. Pined.

First, Taking labour for the miſery and trouble which the wicked man brought on others. Then to *reſtore labour*, is to be puniſhed and troubled in proportion to the trouble which he put others to. *Troublers of others ſhall not want trouble themſelves.* Trouble ſhall be reſtored or paid back again into their own boſomes.

Secondly, *He ſhall reſtore labour*; That is, the profit and fruit of their labours, whom he had wickedly oppreſſed or defrauded.

Thirdly, By *labour*, we may underſtand any fruit or profit of his own labour as well right as wrong; our Tranſlation holds forth that ſence; *That which he laboured for* (or the profit which came in by his labour) *ſhall he reſtore.* The word which ſignifies *labour*, is extendable to all kind of labour, but properly to that which bringeth in profit, and advantage, ſuch as men take in trading and commerce, (*Hoſ.* 12.8.) where the Prophet ſpeaks of *Ephraim* under the Title of a Merchant; *And Ephraim ſaid, yet I am become rich, and have found out ſubſtance; in all my labours* (which I have taken for my profit) *they ſhall find none iniquity in me.* (*Prov.* 23.4.) *Labour not to be rich*; and it notes ſuch a labour for riches as is accompanied with much toyl of body, eſpecially with reſtleſneſs of mind: it implyeth not only (as is commanded *Gen.* 3.) *Eating bread in the ſweat of the face*, but in the vexation of the heart.

Græco nomine reſpondet, & notat laborem cum moleſtia & laſſitudine.

Zophar doth not ſay, *He ſhall reſtore his goods or eſtate, but what he laboured for*; teaching us that the things of this world are ſuch as men toylingly yet willingly labour for; riches are ſo much laboured for, that the ſame word ſignifies both labour and riches.

Hence obſerve, *Man is very ready to take pains for worldly things, for the things of this life.*

We can freely beſtow many thoughts upon, *What ſhall we eat? what ſhall we drink? and wherewith ſhall we be cloathed?* Chriſt ſeeing the thoughts of men run ſo much to the world, pull'd them quite out of the world; *Take no thought* (*Matth.* 6.26.) not that it is ſinful to think what we ſhall eat, only we muſt not be thoughtful or full of thoughts about it; or Chriſt ſpeaks comparatively, take no thought for this world in ballance with the next. Beſtow your thoughts upon better queſtions then, *What ſhall we eat? what ſhall we drink? how ſhall we be cloathed?* Labour an anſwer to theſe queſtions, How ſhall we be ſaved? how ſhall

ſhall we make our calling and election ſure? how ſhall we honour God? how ſhall we ſerve our generation? Man is ſo apt to over-act his labour for the world, that Chriſt in another place ſeemeth to put a total prohibition upon that labour (*Joh.* 6. 27.) *Labour not for the meat that periſheth, but for that which indures to everlaſting life*; though a man labour very hard for the things of the world, yet all the way is down-hill to his nature, and the wheels of his ſpirit move ſo faſt, that (as the Ancient Moraliſt ſaid in another caſe) *He hath need of trigging.* In all theſe worldly labours man needeth not a ſpurr, but a bridle. Our ſpirits are ſo fleet in this purſuit, that we muſt have weight laid on us. *Labour not for the meat that periſheth.* The Prophet (*Iſa.* 55. 1.) calls aloud to buy ſpirituals; *Come and buy wine and milk without money, or without price:* But men had rather beſtow their pains and labour for the world, then take heavenly things at the loweſt rates, upon the eaſieſt price, yea without price; as the Prophets rebuke intimates in the next words, *Wherefore do ye ſpend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for what ſatisfieth not.* Bread in Scripture comprehends every good thing, and that which is not bread is good for nothing. Bread ſatisfies the hunger of man and renews his ſtrength, but that which is not bread cannot ſatisfie. All the things of this life (which are our bread) are no bread in compariſon of the things of Chriſt, eſpecially of Chriſt himſelf, who is living bread, the bread of life, and that an eternal life; yet Chriſt who is the beſt bread, better then bread, is little laboured for; and that which hath ſo little of bread in it, that it is not bread, is every mans labour, and the only labour of moſt men.

Etiamſi laboreſuo, lacunam damni à Deo illati expleturus ſibi videatur, fructum tamen non percipiet. Jun.

Again, *Labour* ſignifieth that which a man hath gotten by honeſt endeavours, and in righteous wayes. That which is unduly gotten, is not (properly) ſaid to be gotten by labour, though a man hath laboured much in getting it. Thus labour is oppoſed to ſtealing (*Epheſ.* 4. 28.) *Let him that ſtole ſteal no more* (what ſhall he do then?) *but rather let him labour working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.* So we may take it here, this man hath gotten much wickedly, and he hath gotten ſomewhat honeſtly, he ſhall ſuffer damage in his honeſt gains, becauſe he hath gained diſhoneſtly. He ſhall reſtore his labour, or what he hath laboured for. *A little ill gotten poyſons that which is well gotten*; as was touched before.

And ſhall not ſwallow it down.] The word was opened at the 15th verſe; where it is ſaid, *he hath ſwallowed down riches*; It may be enquired, how *Zophar* ſaith here, *He ſhall not ſwallow it down?* To clear that you may conſider of a two-fold ſwallowing.

Firſt, There is a ſwallowing by rapine, and violence; thus the wicked man ſwallowed down riches at verſe 15.

Secondly, There is a ſwallowing for nouriſhment, and ſuſtenance, for ſtrength and ſupport; Thus 'tis ſaid here, *He ſhall not ſwallow it down.* A man may be ſaid to ſwallow down what he hath gotten, and to digeſt it, when his eſtate thrives, as the body doth with meat well digeſted. This is the ſence of the place here, *What he hath laboured for he ſhall reſtore, he ſhall not ſwallow it down*; That is, it ſhall not be converted either to his perſonal benefit, or to the benefit of his family. As before, *He ſhall not ſee*, is, *he ſhall not enjoy*, ſo now, *he ſhall not ſwallow*, is, he ſhall not thrive or wax ſtrong in ſtate by all his gettings.

Illis non fruetur diu. Merc. *Cum mox vomit perinde eſt ac ſi non abſorbiſſet.*

Yet we are not to underſtand the Text, as if this were plainly the lot of every wicked man, but thus it is with many, and thus in ſome ſence it is with every wicked man. For, Either God doth not ſuffer him to hold that long, which he hath gotten unjuſtly, or it doth him ſo little good while he hath it, that he may be ſaid not to have had it; The longeſt contents of this life, are of ſo ſhort a being, that they may be ſaid not to be at all.

Hence obſerve, *A wicked man hath no true profit by all his labours.*

The promiſe to the Godly is (*Pſal.* 128. 2.) *Bleſſed is the man that feareth, he ſhall eat of the labour of his hands:* He that feareth God, ſtands under the influence of that ſweet promiſe; *He ſhall eat the labour of his hands.* It is ſaid of Chriſt in the Prophet (*Iſa.* 53. 11.) *He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied.* Chriſt laboured hard and he did eat the fruit of his labour; He ſaw and daily ſeeth *of the travail of his ſoul*; many believe and are ſaved; The ſaving of ſouls is the fruit of the travail of Chriſts ſoul. Thus in proportion a Godly man ſeeth of the travail of his ſoul, and is ſatisfied, he labours, he takes much pains, in his place and calling, he hath many weary dayes, and ſome waking nights, but by the bleſſing of God, his labours are fruitfull; He eats his labour to the refreſhing of himſelf and family, and to the bearing up of his credit in the world. The ungodly ſhall not find it ſo at all, or ſhall not long find it ſo; he muſt reſtore his labour, and not ſwallow it down.

According to his ſubſtance ſhall his reſtitution be.

The word which we tranſlate *reſtitution*, ſignifies any kind of change. It is rendred by recompence (*Job* 15. 31.) *Vanity ſhall be his recompence*, or the change that he ſhall have is from bad to worſe, even into vanity: ſo the word is uſed, *Ruth* 4. 7. *Levit.* 17. 10, 23. Some give the ſence thus, *He ſhall be as poor as ever he was rich*; *His change ſhall be according to his ſubſtance.* Our Tranſlation ſuppoſeth *Zophar* giving the rule of reſtitution, *According to his ſubſtance ſhall his reſtitution be.*

Hence obſerve; *If that which is ill gotten be not reſtored, it ſhall.*

If men will not reſtore willingly, God will make them reſtore whether they will or no; though man hath no mind to it, yet he muſt. It is a duty to reſtore what we borrow, much more what any man hath violently taken away. *Owe nothing to any man, but to love one another* (*Rom.* 13. 8.) Love is a debt which is alwayes owing, and ſhould be alwayes paying; *There can be no diſcharge of that bond.* When we have paid much love, we ſtill owe more. But other debts muſt not only be paid, but may be diſcharged. If a man muſt not alwayes owe what he hath borrowed, then much leſs where he hath defrauded. Oppreſſion whether ſecret or open is a crying ſin; and until reſtitution be offered or really made where the party offending is able, or really deſired where he is unable, the mouth of it cannot be ſtopped. This being ſo neceſſary a duty, I ſhall for the clearing of it briefly touch theſe five things, And ſhew

First, What reſtitution is; Secondly, what muſt be reſtored; Thirdly, who muſt reſtore; Fourthly, to whom we muſt reſtore; Fifthly, the proportion of it.

To the firſt queſtion, What is this reſtitution? I anſwer, *It is an act of communicative juſtice, whereby the wrong which we have done to another is recompenced, and he again re-eſtated in his own.* To give to the poor is a duty, yet an act of charity. But to reſtore (though to the rich) is not only a duty, but an act of Juſtice.

Secondly, What muſt be reſtored? That which hath been unjuſtly gotten; yet the meaning is not that a man muſt alwayes reſtore what he hath taken away in *ſpecie*, or the thing it ſelf in kind. If the value and worth of it be reſtored, that ſufficeth; yet it doth not ſuffice to reſtore the bare value of that which hath been taken away. For (as Caſuiſts ſpeak) there are two things to be conſidered in reſtitution.

First, The damage done to the perſon wronged, by detaining his goods. *Damnum emergens lucrum ceſſans.*

Secondly, The hindrance of that profit or benefit, which probably he might have made by their continued enjoyment and poſſeſſion. In ſtrictneſs the wrong doer muſt account to the wrong ſufferer in both theſe, elſe the wrong done is not repaired according to the nature of reſtitution.

Thirdly, 'Tis queſtioned, *Who muſt reſtore?* Some may be concern'd in making reſtitution who were not the immediate actors of the wrong. There are ſeven ſorts of perſons who may be involved under the duty of reſtitution.

First and principally, they who perſonally did the wrong.

Secondly, If they have not made reſtitution, their heirs who poſſeſs their eſtate are bound in conſcience to do it.

Thirdly, They are engaged to reſtore who have given aſſiſtance to the damage of others, either by force, command, or counſel.

Fourthly, They, who though antecedently they had no hand in doing it, neither as principals nor abetters, yet gave their after-conſent or approbation to it.

Fifthly, They, who having power in their hands to prevent the damage or wrong of others, having knowingly neglected to put it forth for them.

Sixthly, They, who having lawfull power in their hand to relieve the wronged, have yet ſuffered them to lie under thoſe wrongs unrelieved.

Seventhly, They, who willingly conceal the wrong which they know hath been done to another, or being called refuſe to give teſtimony, or bear witneſs according to their knowledg, that ſo he might be righted. All theſe are under an obligation to reſtore, becauſe they are all partakers in and ſo guilty of the wrong.

Fourthly, To whom muſt we reſtore? I anſwer; First, Reſtitution muſt be made to the perſon wronged; For to wrong one man and reſtore to another, will not make up a reſtitution. This diſcovers their error and miſtake, who having by their extorſions ground the faces of the poor, yea to enrich themſelves, have impoveriſht many rich, yet think it a ſufficient amends, if they build an Hoſpital for thoſe poor whom they never ſaw, much leſs wronged in perſon; Whereas the Laws of reſtitution ſay, The perſon wronged muſt be repayed. To give to the poor at large is charity, but no reſtitution; yet to give to the poor what is not juſtly ours, is no charity. No man can indeed do an act of charity, but he that hath done or is ready to do all acts of Juſtice. God doth as much hate robbery for charity to the poor now, as he did of old for ſacrifice or burnt offerings to himſelf. So that till a man hath reſtored and done all men right, he is not in a capacity to give to the poor; and to how many poor ſoever he gives, he makes no reſtitution, unleſs he gives to thoſe individual perſons (if they may be found and will receive it) whom he hath perſonally wronged. Secondly, If ſuch be not living, then reſtitution muſt be made to their heirs or Executors, to whom the right and diſpoſition of their eſtate doth belong. Thirdly, If neither the man himſelf, nor his heirs are to be found, then the perſon offending muſt reſtore to God; he muſt put his ill gotten goods into Gods Treaſury. The earth is the Lords, and the fulneſs of it; he gives to all, and yet he looks to receive from many. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance (Prov. 3. 9.)* God hath a double treaſure, to which we are to bring our ſubſtance, that we may honour him. First, All the godly are Gods treaſury; ſuppoſe they are not in extreme want, and ſo need not the gifts of charity, yet God takes it well, and as done to himſelf, when we beſtow upon ſuch the gifts of bounty, for their encouragement and more comfortable ſubſiſtance in this world. Secondly, The poor, chiefly the godly poor are Gods treaſury; I do not ſay we muſt examine every poor man to know whether he be godly or no before we give; but ſuch as we know to be godly we ſhould not fail to give to before others. That's the rule of the Apoſtle; *Do good to All, eſpecially to thoſe who are of the Houſhold of faith (Gal. 6. 10.)* Thus there will never want perſons to whom reſtitution may be made; if the man cannot be had, nor any of his who was wrong'd, then reſtore to God. Any godly man, eſpecially a godly poor man is Gods Treaſury.

The fifth thing queſtioned is the proportion, or how much muſt be reſtored. The Text Anſwers and reſolves it, thus; *He ſhall reſtore all his ſubſtance*, or, all that he hath in the world ſhall go to make good the wrong which he hath done; yet more clearly to the rule of reſtitution, *according to his ſubſtance* is this. Suppoſe he be not able to make full reſtitution, yet according to his ſubſtance, that is, ſo far as he is able, ſo far as his eſtate will reach he ſhall reſtore; *Half a loaf is better then no bread*, in reference both to the receiver and the reſtorer. When we cannot do what we ſhould, yet we muſt do what we can. Further, divers Scriptures reſolve the proportion of reſtitution. The Law given the *Jewes* ſaid (*Exod. 22. 1.*) *If a man ſhall ſteal an oxe or a ſheep and kill it or ſell it, he ſhall reſtore five oxen for an oxe, and four ſheep for a ſheep.* The reaſon of this difference why the Law made the proportion fivefold in oxen, and but fourfold in ſheep, might be this; becauſe the owner loſt the labour of his oxe, and the profit of that was to be valued in reſtitution; but ſheep are not for labour. *Solomon* makes the proportion higher (*Prov. 6. 34.*) *If he* (that is, the thief) *be found, he ſhall reſtore ſevenfold.* But ſuppoſe the man were not worth ſo much as he had ſtoln, how could he reſtore *ſevenfold?* The next clauſe anſwers that caſe; *He ſhall give all the ſubſtance of his houſe*; That is, if he be poor, yet let him not be ſpared, but take all. But ſeeing the Law of *Moſes* made the proportion fivefold, why is it there ſaid, *He ſhall reſtore ſevenfold.* To ſalve this, *Junius* tranſlates (*Septies*) *ſeven times.* And gives the meaning thus; Let him reſtore often, even as often as he is found ſtealing; or this phraſe of reſtoring ſevenfold, imports not any addition in thoſe times to the penalty of the Law, becauſe of the encreaſe of that ſin, and the proneneſs of men to it, as ſome (I conceive unwarrantably) expound the place; but only that the thief ſhould make full ſatisfaction. So the word is uſed *Pſal. 12. 6.* In the 22. of *Exodus* v. 4. it is ſaid; *If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be oxe or aſſe or ſheep, he ſhall reſtore double.* At the firſt verſe the ſtoln oxe was to be reſtored fivefold, and the ſheep fourfold; how doth this conſiſt with the 4th verſe, He ſhall reſtore the oxe and ſheep *double.* The reaſon is, becauſe the firſt verſe ſpeaks of the oxe and ſheep either kild or ſold; This 4th verſe ſpeaks of the thief taken (as we ſay) in the manner, or preſently apprehended with thoſe goods in his hand; The owner being by this ſpeedy diſcovery and recovery of his goods, put to leſs dammage, the penalty of reſtitution was leſſened. Another Scripture ſpeaks of reſtitution in an example (*Luk. 19. 8.*) *Zacheus ſtood, and ſaid to the Lord, behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken any thing from any man by falſe accuſation I reſtore him fourfold.* *Zacheus* makes a double diſpoſition of his eſtate; firſt, to thoſe who were poor; Secondly, to thoſe whom he had impoveriſht whether poor or rich; *Zacheus* was ſure his eſtate would hold out to reſtore fourfold to thoſe that he wronged, elſe he could not have given half his eſtate to the poor.

Now though we cannot in theſe times enforce theſe rules of proportion taken from the Judicials of *Moſes*, ſtrictly upon the conſciences of men; yet we may draw down theſe two concluſions for our direction in this thing.

First, *That in Reſtitution the Dammage of the perſon wronged ſhould be fully repaired.*

Secondly, *That if the wrong-doer be not able to give ſo much as will fully repair the dammage, then according to his ſubſtance, or to the utmoſt of what he hath he is bound to reſtore.*

Reſtitution muſt be made according to the ſubſtance unjuſtly gotten, or according to the ſubſtance of the unjuſt getter. They who reſtore willingly as true Repentants do, will always give back (if they have it) according to the ſubſtance unjuſtly gotten. But they whom divine vengeance forceth to reſtore, ſhall give back, ſore againſt their wills, according to their own ſubſtance, how much ſoever it is, yea though it be much more then they have unjuſtly gotten; *God will take all from him who hath no will to reſtore any thing.* That's *Zophars* meaning when he ſaith here; *According to his ſubſtance ſhall his reſtitution be.*

And he ſhall not rejoyce therein.

Wherein ſhall he not rejoyce? It may be taken two ways.

First, In this reſtitution, it pleaſed him well enough to oppreſs and do wrong, but he ſhall take no pleaſure in reſtoring and doing right; he ſhall not do it willingly as *Zacheus*, who rejoyced more in reſtitution then ever he had done in oppreſſion; but the wicked man here ſpoken of is forced to reſtore, and therefore cannot rejoyce therein.

Secondly, It refers rather to the eſtate which he had gotten by oppreſſion: He ſhall reſtore it, *and ſhall not rejoyce therein*; that is, his ill gotten goods ſhall adminiſter no content to his mind. Beſides, there is more meant by this expreſſion then is expreſſed, when *Zophar* ſaith, *He ſhall not rejoyce in it*; the ſence is, he ſhall have ſorrow with it, or it ſhall be a vexation to him. The word which we render *rejoyce*, is emphatical, it ſignifies *to rejoyce with boaſting*, yea with inſulting, a proud rejoycing. The word is applied unto the Peacock; *Gaveſt thou the goodly wings unto the Peacock, or wings and feathers unto the Oſtrich?* (*Job 39. 13.*)

Solent hujuſmodi extenuationes frequenter inveniri in ſacris.

13.) Gaveſt thou the rejoycing wings to the Peacocks; the Peacock is brag of his feathers, and ſpreads his plumes, and then cryeth out, and ſtrutteth as it were exulting and boaſting in his beauty. This word is alſo uſed (*Prov.* 7. 18.) Where the Adultereſs ſaith, *Come let us take our fill of love until the morning, let us ſolace our ſelves with loves.* Such is the joy of wicked men in worldly enjoyments, they ſpread their plumes, they look upon their eſtates, houſes, and lands, upon their gold and ſilver, as a Peacock on his tail, or as filthy lovers forethink their unclean embraces, and then boaſt and pride themſelves. So did *Nebuchadnezzar* walking in his palace and diſcourſing with his own vain heart, *Is not this great Babel, which I have built, &c.* Thus the worldly man always would, but his joy is often ſtopt. *He ſhall not rejoyce therein.*

Hence note, Firſt, *The things of this world are the matter of a carnal mans rejoycing.*

When a godly man hath the world at will, he hath no will thus to rejoyce in it: he rejoyceth in theſe things (as the Apoſtle directs 1 *Co.* 7. 30.) *As though he rejoyced not.* His joyes indeed are in God. *Many ſay, who will ſhew us any good? David* anſwers (*Pſal.* 4. 6.) *Lord lift thou the light of thy countenance upon us, thou ſhalt put gladneſs in my heart more then in the time when their corn and wine increaſed. Job* (Chap. 31. 25.) gives us this proteſtation of his own integrity, and uprightneſs, that he lived not in worldly joyes, though he had much of the world; *If I rejoyced becauſe my hand hath gotten much, &c.* It is a duty to bleſs God for what we have, and to take comfort in the uſe of it; but to rejoyce in the creature, is to put it into the place of the Creator, and to commit Idolatry with it. As it is the higheſt act of Grace to make our boaſt of God all the day long; ſo it is the higheſt and vaineſt acting of corruption to make our boaſt of the world, though but a moment. *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdome, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, &c.* (*Jer.* 9. 23, 24.) Theſe checks given to humane gloryings, ſhew in what man delights to glory. And when man is moſt ſet and bent upon theſe gloryings, God delights to check him moſt, and to ſay, *He ſhall not rejoyce therein.* We are never ſo near the loſs of theſe rejoycings, as when we make ſureſt of them.

Again, We may take this rejoycing in a lower ſence, for thoſe common contents and refreſhings which by the ordinary providence and bleſſing of God are received in the uſe of the creature. Thus God is ſaid to fill the hearts of men *with food and Gladneſs* (*Acts* 14. 17.) He gives not only meat but mirth, and a kind of natural muſick with it. And indeed when he ſpreads a Table for us, he likes it well to ſee us *eat our meat with gladneſs, as well as with ſingleneſs of heart* (*Acts* 2. 46.) If we take *rejoycing* in this ſence; Then the words, *He ſhall not rejoyce*, yield us this Obſervation.

God can ſeparate joy from the injoyment of the creature.

Many enjoy that which they cannot rejoyce in; there is a vaſt difference between the having of outward things, and taking comfort in them; theſe are diſtinct gifts of God (*Eccleſ.* 5. 19, 20.) *Every man alſo to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoyce in his labour, this is the gift of God.* Whoſoever lives hath a natural power to eat, yet many live in the abundance of riches and wealth, who have not a hearty power to eat; They have a portion, but they cannot take it, or rejoyce in it; They have meat, but no muſick. God can make muſick at a poor mans Table; Though he hath but a cruſt of bread, and a cup of water, yet he ſhall have muſick with it, he ſhall rejoyce in it; whereas though the rich man hath muſick at his Table, yet he ſhall have none in his ſpirit. (*Eccleſ.* 5. 17.) *All his dayes he eateth in darkneſs, he hath much ſorrow: this alſo is a ſore evil.* But how is it ſaid, that *All his dayes he eateth in darkneſs?* What hath he not a candle to eat by? yes he may eat by Sun-light and Candle-light too, he may have outward light enough, yet he eats in darkneſs, that is, with diſcontent, and trouble of mind; he hath no joy in what he hath, his ſweeteſt morſels are eaten with ſour ſawce. He poſſeſſeth much, yet is as having nothing. For this word is gone out againſt him; *He ſhall not rejoyce therein.*

Zophar having thus deſcribed the puniſhment, returns to the ſin of this wicked man.

Verſ. 19. **Becauſe he hath oppreſſed and forſaken the poor; becauſe he hath violently taken away a houſe which he builded not.**

This verſe, as it ſtands between, ſo it gives the reaſon both of the 18th and 20th verſes. Here's the reaſon why he ſhall reſtore what he hath laboured for, *ver.* 18. *Becauſe he hath oppreſſed the poor*; this alſo is the reaſon *why he ſhall not feel quietneſs in his belly* (*ver.* 20.) The word which we tranſlate *to oppreſs*, ſignifies oppreſſion joyned not only (as all oppreſſion is) with injuſtice, but with extremity, tyrannical oppreſſion, without mercy, or moderation, without hoe or hold. Some give full ſcope to their rage, and wrath, they put neither bond nor bridle upon their covetouſneſs and cruelty; ſuch are characteris'd by this word, which moſt properly notes, *breaking in pieces*; we ſay uſually when men fail in their eſtates, *ſuch are broken*; ſome break through their own neglect and careleſneſs, many are broken by the harſhneſs and ſeverity of others. And as the wrath of man breaks many, ſo the juſtice of God breaks not a few (*Iſa.* 24. 19.) *The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean diſſolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.* Wicked men break and oppreſs the poor, God breaketh the richeſt Nations for their wickedneſs. We read in Scripture, firſt, of breaking the head; ſecondly, the teeth; thirdly, the horns; fourthly, the bones; fifthly, the armes of the wicked: All ſhew the breaking of their power, till there be no healing. And thus (to the utmoſt of his power) doth the oppreſſour break the poor. And for this God puniſheth the oppreſſour. *Becauſe he hath oppreſſed, &c.*

רצץ *confregit, contrivit, ad ſummam inopiam redduxit.*

Hence note, *Oppreſſion is a vengeance-bringing-ſin.*

The Lord tells the *Jewes* that it was but a vain thing for them to think of freeing themſelves from feared judgments by prayer and faſting, unleſs they did *let the oppreſſed* or broken *go free, and break every yoke* (*Iſa.* 58. 6.) The Scripture every where thunders againſt this ſin. *They ſhall have judgment without mercy who have ſhewed no mercy* (*Jam.* 2. 13.) With what face can they ask or expect mercy from God, who ſhew none to man?

Secondly, Note; *The poor are moſt ſubject to oppreſſion.*

They meet with moſt oppoſition, who are leaſt able to make defence. We may be deceived and cozened by the weak, but all oppreſſion is from a greater power. And they uſually are oppreſſed, who have very little, or no power at all, *The poor.* And this diſcovers not only the ſinfulneſs, but

Firſt, The diſingenuouſneſs of that ſort of men. They are low-ſpirited and cowardly, they dare not meddle with their match, but oppreſs the poor who are not able to deal with them.

Secondly, It diſcovers their inhumanity and incompaſſionateneſs; they oppreſs the poor, whom they ſhould pity and relieve; they take away from thoſe to whom they ſhould rather give. The Prophet ſpeaks of ſuch (*Mic.* 3. 2.) *Who hate the good, and love the evil, who pluck off their ſkin from off them, and their fleſh from off their bones*; That is, they take from thoſe who have leaſt, and they take all from them; to take away a mans cloaths is an act of extream oppreſſion, but to pull off a mans skin, that's inhumane, yet there is a degree further, they take not only skin but fleſh too; they who are very poor, may be ſaid to have nothing but skin upon them, yet the oppreſſour will have that. *Zophar* proceeds yet further

Becauſe he hath oppreſſed and forſaken the poor.

Or according to the letter of the Hebrew, *left men poor*; that is, having ſpoiled and peeled them, he left them in a poor condition. Some read it as a puniſhment, not as a ſin; *Therefore he ſhall leave them poor*, that is, his own children. But I rather take our ſence, as a diſcovery of his ſin; *He hath forſaken the poor.* To forſake is to withdraw help, aſſiſtance, counſel, protection, any thing which might do another good. Theſe words may be expounded as an aggravation

עזב *deſerere, derelinquere, negligere.*

gravation of the former sin, oppression; As if *Zophar* had said, because he hath not only oppressed but forsaken the poor, denying them all help, when he hath made them unable to help themselves, *Therefore evil shall be upon him, &c.*

Hence note, *That as it is sinful to forsake the poor, though we have never oppressed them, so to oppress and then forsake them is far more sinfull.*

Though we have not taken from them, yet if we have not given them; though we have not made them naked, yet if we have not cloathed them, this will be charged in that Great day (*Matth.* 25. 35, 36.) we find the poor complaining (*Act.* 6. 1.) *In those dayes when the number of the Disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widdows were neglected in the daily ministration.* Neglect of the poor, especially of the Godly poor, is a sin in all, especially in the Churches. How great then is their sin, who make many poor, and then neglect them; let them sink or swim, 'tis all one to them. For a man to take some care of, or bestow some Almes upon the poor whom he hath oppressed, is no satisfaction for his sin, but not to take care of the poor whom he hath oppressed, is a great aggravation of his sin.

Because he hath violently taken away the house which he builded not.

גזל *rapuit, aperte abstulit res aut personas.*

These words are (upon the matter) the same with the former; *He hath violently taken away*; 'tis but one word in the Hebrew, He hath not taken away by stealth, by tricks, and deceits, but in open view. Some take away houses which they builded not, craftily, and upon pretensions or colours of Law and right; others take them away violently without any colour of right. The former is as unjust a way of taking as the latter. But the latter hath not only injustice in it, but impudence. These are so far gone in sin, that they are past shame; *They declare their sin as Sodome, they hid it not.* These are the Nimrods of the earth, mighty hunters. *They violently take away, &c.* There is a twofold interpretation of the words; some make the latter part of this clause as the punishment of the sin spoken of in the former part: *He hath violently taken away a house, and he shall not build it*; That is, he shall not have ability or opportunity to build. He took away a house, intending to fit it for himself, but before he could do it, God took him away. He took away a house, therefore he shall not build it. His oppression of others shall be punished with his own disappointment. Again, Others read thus; *He pulls down mens houses, but he never thinks of repairing them:* He is so far from restoring four-fold, that he would not restore a fourth, no nor a farthing. But rather, as we render, the whole clause is a description of his sin; *He hath violently taken away a house which he builded not*; That is, he hath by force invaded and seiz'd upon that which he had no title to, upon that on which he never bestowed either pains or cost: *House*, is here expressed by a Synecdoche for any thing, whether lands, or goods, or money, which belong properly to another man.

Domum rapuit & non ædificavit.

Hence note, *It is a crying sin to take that which others have laboured for.*

The idle servant (*Matth.* 25. 24.) layed this aspersion upon his Master, *I know thee that thou art a hard Master*; how proved he that? *Thou reapest where thou hast not sown*; if a man sow he ought to reap, and he that hath strawed should also gather. What the idle servant charged God with, is indeed the temper of many earthly minded men; let whoso will build the house, they will take it if they can; if power stand not between them and their neighbours house, between them and their neighbours estate, their own conscience doth not. As to do this to any man is a great sin, so for a man to have this done to him is a great affliction. God threatens it as a sore judgement upon his own people (*Deut.* 28. 30.) *Thou shalt build an house, and thou shalt not dwell therein.* Then who shall? An enemy shall, He shall take away the house which thou hast builded, and turn thee out of house and home. Many rich men gather in the labours of the poor; such seem to act by that rule (which will be no rule for them) *to him that hath shall be given, but he that hath not from him shall be taken away even what he hath.* Some because they have much think they must have all; as for those who have not, that is, who have but little, they think they must have nothing at all. As there are many Idle poor who will not labour for bread to eat; so there are some covetous rich, who eat the bread which the poor have laboured for. The Apostles command to the *Thessalonians* was, *That if any would not work, neither should he eat* (2 *Thes.* 3. 10.) Drones deserve no honey. All the bread which is eaten and not (where ability is) in some way or other laboured for, is stollen. Idle persons shall be judged as Thieves, though they eat that which is freely given them, yea though they have bought it with their money. How then shall they be judged, who will not suffer those who work to eat; nor them to have a house to dwell in, who have been at the pains and charge of building one, who violently take away what they never brought together, nor laboured for; This is the oppressours practice, and his sin, set down in this verse; his punishment hath been spoken of before, and is again expressed in another kind and form with the additions of a strong asseveration to seal it fast upon him in the next verse.

VERS. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.
There shall none of his meat be left, therefore shall no man look for his goods.
In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.
When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath on him, and shall rain it on him while he is eating.

Zophar pursues his former purpose, still drawing out the sad estate of a wicked man: he shew'd us his sin in the former verse, *Because he hath oppressed and forsaken the poor, &c.* Now follows his punishment, *Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly.* He that hath disquieted so many shall have little quiet himself; and he that would not suffer others to rest in their houses, shall have no rest in his own heart. *Surely he shall not feel quietness.* This verse may contain both a description of the sin, and of the punishment of this wicked covetous man. Some interpret it as a description of his sin; of the fury of that sin of covetousness which is never quiet; *He shall not feel quiet in his belly*; That is, his mind shall never be satisfied. Others interpret it as a description of his misery. I conceive we may take in both; This is his sin, and this is his punishment; not only because his sin is his punishment, but because this punishment falls upon him for his sin; his sin was unquiet unsatisfiable desires, and now he is punished with an addition of fresh desires, which will not be satisfied; As he gave up himself sinfully, so God gives him up judicially to vile and earthly affections. The Lord hath many external punishments for sin, and he leaves many under internal punishments, or penal sins. When sin is made a punishment, it is the most dreadfull punishment. But to the words.

Surely he shall not feel quietness.

Non novit pacem, i. e. Non sentiet sedatam sitim aut famem etiamsi nulla voraverit.

The Hebrew is, *He shall not know peace or quietness*, he shall not find his craving appetite, his hunger and thirst after the world appeased, how much soever of the world he hath devoured; no, though he should have devoured the whole world. He shall not (as it were) know the measure of his own belly; nor how to proportionate his desire to a comfortable enjoyment, being meerly led by unsatisfiable and boundless lusts. Thus he feels no quietness in his belly. *Zophars* language continues in the former allusion to a gluttonous eater, who eats till his belly akes, and crammes himself till his stomach is rather sick then satisfied.

By *the belly*, we are to understand the *appetite*, those powers of desire which take in, and concoct faster then the stomach can, and hold infinitely more then the belly can. When the natural belly is full, this is empty and hungry. This *Zophar* might intend while he saith, *He shall not feel quietness in his belly.* For as when there is a convenient portion received into the body; this fulness is the quieting of

of the stomach, and of those natural powers, that draw and suck in the food, and pray for it: so there is a filling of the mind to the staying, appeasing, and quieting of its appetite, which usually exceeds the bodily appetite. There is a moral appetite as well as a natural appetite, and that is most hardly satisfied, and filled. It is so hard to be filled that all the good things in the world cannot fill up the room and stowage of it; and therefore the covetous wretch cannot feel, or know quietness in his belly. This is his punishment, after all that he hath scraped, and hoarded together, yet the man saith not, it is enough. *David* (*Psal.* 17. v. 14.) describes the men of the world, who *have their portion in this life, whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of Children, and leave the rest of their substance for their babes.* That is, thou givest them enough to satisfie nature, thou fillest their bellies; thou openest they treasures, thy store-house, thy granery, thy wardrobe; thou openest all that wherein any good thing is laid up, either for back, or belly: (so by a synecdoche we are to understand it) thou fillest them with thy hid treasures, with treasures hidden in the bowels of the earth; but when they are at the fullest, when they are stuffed till their bellies are ready to break, and enough remains of outward enjoyments for their children after them, yet (as *Zophar* here speaks) *They feel no quietness in their belly.* So the *Tygurine* translation renders it excellently; *The man scrapes together a huge heap of wealth, but yet he shall not find that he is wealthy.* He shall not at all feel his wealth when he hath all this.

Non sentiet in ventre suo quòd opulentus sit. Tygur.

Hence observe, *The desire of a wicked man is never full, how full soever his estate is.*

He hath a moral belly which nothing can fill, though his natural belly be filled (*Prov.* 13. 25.) *The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul.* 'Tis possible a righteous man may not have enough to eat for the satisfying of his body, he may rise a hungry from his dinner, he may rise with an appetite, because he hath not enough; yet if he hath but a little, a morsel of bread, a sallet of green herbs, when ever he eats, he eats to the satisfying of his soul, that is, he blesseth God though he have but a little, and is content: though his hunger be hardly satisfied, yet his soul is plentifully satisfied. But, as for the wicked man (saith *Solomon* there) *The belly of the wicked shall want.* I conceive, *belly* in that place of the *Proverbs* is to be understood as here in *Job*. The punishment which is ordinarily inflicted upon wicked men, is not want in their purses, but want in their spirits; their hearts are in want, while their houses abound. As it is better, so far easier for a man to fill his belly then his eye. Here in the Text the covetous mans belly is his eye, nothing of this world can fill that, and yet he neither desires nor endeavours to have it filled with any thing but the world. Hence, when he is at his highest food and feasting (seeing he hath nothing to feed his spirit with, not a dish for his soul) he doth but increase, not appease his souls appetite; creatures can no more quench that thirst than wood can quench and extinguish fire. For as the Moralist telleth us, The thirst of covetous men is not from want, but from a disease. And that desire which proceeds from a disease, and not from want, is not stopped but provoked by what it receives; so that whatsoever you bestow upon such a man, is not the end of his former longings, but a step to new and fresh ones. What can appease desire, when desire is a disease? Labour to get the disease, the distemper that is in your desires cured, and the wants which your desires move about will soon be supplied, or not complained of.

Avarorum sitis non est vera aliqua naturæ indigentia sed morbus. Quod non ex inopia sed vitio nascitur, quicquid illi congesseris non finis erit cupiditatis sed gradus. Sen. de Consol.

The *Dog-Appetite*, or hunger of which Physitians speak, is like the covetous mans appetite. Some men have such a bodily appetite, they eat, and eat, and yet are hungry; the more they eat, the more they may; they eat, and cannot be satisfied: such is the soul appetite of a covetous worldling; he feels no quiet in his belly, he still calls for more, and when he hath it he would have more, and the more he hath, the more he would have. The horse-leach hath two daughters, *Crying, give, give.* *There are three things that are never satisfied, yea four things say not it is enough* (*Prov.* 30. 15.) This Horse-leach *is desire*, by the two daughters of the Horse-leach may well be meant *covetousness and prodigality*; both these cry, *give, give*; The former cries give, *To keep*; the latter cries give, *To spend*; neither of them saith, *it is enough:* The one would ever have more to keep, and the other would have more to spend: They feel no quietness in their bellies. Their present havings kindle fresh desirings; and in stead of staying, do but whet their appetite.

The Naturalist observes, that the Horse-leach hath no thorough passage, he takes much in, but he lets nothing out, and therefore breaks, and kills himself with sucking. The covetous man is like the Horse-leach in this, he is all for taking in, he would not have any passage out; he would let nothing go by way of expence, but never thinks enough comes in by way of revenue. Nothing can satisfie desire but God, not riches, not greatness, nor power; The blessing and favour of God with what we have satisfieth, and that will satisfie with a little. Therefore if you would feel quiet in your belly, if you would have desire satisfied; Say not, If I had so much I should be quiet, if I had so much I should be well; if I had such a proportion of estate I should be content. That which gives quiet in any portion, is, first the favour and presence of God; secondly, that it is received from the hand of a father; thirdly, that it comes to us in the Covenant of grace; fourthly, that it is the purchase of the bloud of Christ; fifthly, that it is an answer of prayer, and a blessing from above upon honest endeavours. Such considerations as these, whether it be much or little which you have, will make you feel quietness in your belly with what you have. Else the greater your portion is, the greater is your unquietness.

Plinius lib. 11. *Nat. Hist cap.* 34.

Secondly, Note further, That *as this non-satisfaction is the punishment of a wicked man, so it is his sin*; It is a sin not to be satisfied, as well as it is a misery not to be satisfied. The Apostles rule is, *Be content with the things that you have*; that is, be quiet, sit down; we ought to feel quiet in our belly with our portion, and bless God for our allowance in every condition. *Contentation is a liberal portion*; contentation hath been highly honoured as a vertue, by Heathens, It is a grace among Christians. Contentation, is the rest of the soul, or to use *Zophars* language, *The quietness of the belly.* We may further expound this Negative, *He shall not feel quiet in his belly*, as Negatives often are in Scripture, by an Affirmative of the contrary; And so, *He shall not feel quiet*, is, he shall feel much vexation, trouble, and distress; his belly shall be pained, that is, his mind shall be in perpetual turmoyle. There are many Scriptures of the like form with this, which carry more in the interpretation then in the expression, (1 *Cor.* 15. 58.) *Know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.* The Apostles meaning is, your labour in the Lord shall have abundant reward. Again, *Isa.* 57. 21. *There is no peace* (*saith my God*) *to the wicked*; the sence is, Trouble is their portion. Thus here, he shall not feel quietness, is, he shall be much disquieted. There is no middle of participation between these two.

He shall not save of that which he desired.

This clause contains another part of the covetous mans punishment: He is much for getting, and more for saving. But

He shall not save.] The Hebrew word signifies sometimes *to save by flight* (1 *Sam.* 22. 1.) *David escaped to the cave of Adullam.* He saved himself by flight. It is used also to signifie *bringing forth*, or *deliverance in Childbirth* (*Isa.* 66. 7.) *Before she travailed she brought forth, before her pain came she was delivered of a manchild.* We translate it to another sence, *He shall not save*; that is, keep, preserve, or maintain that which he hath desired.

פלט *Liberatus fuit, evasit, peperit, in lucem emisit.*

That which he desired.] The letter runs thus; *He shall not save in or of his desire:* The word in the original signifies an earnest desire, a thing earnestly desired, or extreamly coveted. (*Josh.* 7. 21.) *Achan* makes this confession of sin; *When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold, of fifty shekles of weight, then I coveted them and took them.* It is the word here used; *He shall not save of that which he desired*; that is, of that which he coveted to have with strong desire. *Achan* got a goodly garment and a golden wedge, but he was so far from saving them that he lost his own life. The Prophet *Daniel* is called *a man of desires* (Chap. 9. 23.) that is, a man *greatly desired*, or *beloved*; God was (as it were) in love with

חמד *Summè desiderare. Ad verbum, in* (i.e. *de*) *optato suo non servabit.* q. d. *non fruetur optatis aut iis, quæ ei in deliciis erant.* Drus. *De desiderabili suo non servabit.* Merc.

with him. So (*Cant.* 2. 3.) *As the apple trees among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons: I sate down under his shadow with great delight.* Or delighted, and sate down, or I desired to sit down with great delight. *Christ is the Desire of Nations*, that is, he whom all Nations (to whom his beauty is revealed) greatly desire. Here is the punishment of this wicked man, he shall not save that wherein his chief pleasure lay, his *Benjamin*, the son of his right hand, the child of his desire; The desire of his eyes shall be taken, yea pulled from him. Now according to the two-fold interpretation of the verb before, given, we may here give a double exposition of the whole sentence.

Ἐν ὀπτασίαις αὐτῶν ἐ σωθήσεται. Sept. *Cum re desiderabili sua non proripiet se.* Jun.

First thus, *By that which he desired he shall not be safe, or escape, he shall not deliver himself.* So divers render it. And the Seventy also expres the former clause in the abstract, rendring it thus, *He shall not be saved in his desire*; that is, he shall not save nor deliver himself by it. So Mr. *Broughton*, *By that which he desired he shall not be safe.*

Hence note, *When a wicked man hath gotten what he would, he is never the near, or not the nearer to safety.*

He is not safe by that which he desired. He saith, if I could get such an estate, and make sure such an interest, and engage such friends, I should be safe. But by that which he most desired, he shall not be safe, be it riches, or friends, or correspondency with the best and greatest in the world, none of these shall be his safety. There is such a threatning upon men of the world (*Isa.* 44. 9.) *They that make a graven image are all of them vanity, and their delectable things shall not profit.* It is this word, *their desirable things.* Which you may understand, either by their gold, or by their Gods; either by their riches, or their Idols: Which were their desire, and as they supposed, their safety. *Michah* in the book of *Judges*, when he had got an Idol to worship, and a Levite to his Priest, concluded; *Now know I that the Lord will do me good* (*Judg.* 17. 13.) But their delectable things should not profit them, or be their safety, whether they be things desired superstitiously or covetously, whether they be things of the world, or an Idol, *which is nothing in the world*, as the Apostle speaks (1 *Cor.* 8. 4.) that is, it is of no worth or value, it hath no power or vertue to do good or deliver from evil. These delectable things shall not save them, when God will destroy them. Though a wicked man had his choice of all that he desires for his protection, yet he cannot be safe. His desires rise not above the creature, which cannot save it self, much less be safety to others. There is no safety but under the shadow of the Almighty; we are never hid till we hide our selves in his pavilion. The wicked come not under that shadow, nor shall they ever enter that pavilion. Their desires never carry them indeed that way, and therefore *they shall not be safe by that which they desire.*

Secondly, As his desireable things cannot save him (according to the former reading) so (according to ours) he shall not save of that which he desired; that is, he shall save nothing of it. All shall be wasted and vanish away upon which he built his felicity; Though he have it, yet he shall not be able to hold or keep it; not so much as a bit or a shread of it, not so much as the gleanings or parings of it. That's the meaning of, *He shall not save of that which he desired.* All will escape, get out, and break prison. He thought he had laid up his goods, his gold and silver, safe enough, even as prisoners within Iron grates, under lock, and key, yet these will escape and be gone. Thus Mr. *Calvin* renders, *He shall not keep his desire*, or *that which he hath so much desired.*

Hence observe, *When a wicked worldling hath gotten all that he desires, yet he cannot hold it.*

When he hath what he would, he cannot keep what he hath. There are two usual expressions in Law Conveyances about Lands or houses; *To have, and to hold.* Many come to the *habendum*, but not to the *tenendum*; they *have*, but cannot *hold*: Their goods and gains slip away between their fingers.

The desirable things of the Saints are safe to them; As they *have*, so they shall *hold* them; they shall save the things they desire; and the things they desire shall save them: their great desire is after spirituals, and these will stick by them: *O how great is the goodness that thou hast laid up for them that fear thee*, (*Psal.* 31. 19.) The goodness of God is great, and God hath laid it up: it is in the treasury of God, and his is a safe treasury. When he hath laid up goodness and mercy for us, we need not fear, nor go to any Ensurance Office for security. *The moth cannot corrupt, nor can thieves break through and steal these treasures.* But as for the ungodly man it is not so with him, for he and his, he and his golden mountains shall be as the chaffe which the wind driveth away; *He shall not save of that which he desired.*

Zophar yet enlargeth this dolefull Narrative.

Vers. 21. **There shall none of his meat be left, therefore shall no man look for his goods.**

Zophar had said immediately before, *He shall not save of that he desired*, there shall not be a scrap left; Here he saith, *None of his meat shall be left.* It being of the same sence with the former, I will only open the words and note the different reading.

Non desunt qui שריד *in masculino accipiunt; non erit residuus ei, &c. superstes hæres qui ejus bona fruatur.* Mere. *Nihil fecit residuũ cibo ejus, i. e. nihil reliquit ex iis quæ manibus habebat quod in posterum comederet, confidens se statim rapturum unde viveret.* Rab. Lev.

First, Some for, *None of his meat shall be left, or remain*, render it by a person; *There shall none be left*; The word is used most frequently for a remainder of men, not of things; none shall be left for his meat. If he save any of his worldly estate, if some of his meat be left, yet no heir shall be left to enjoy it after him.

Some of the Rabbins interpret it as a further aggravation of the greedines and cruelty of this man; *There shall none of his meat be left.* He will eat up all at once; he is resolved to oppress and ravine for more against the next meal; he cares not though all be spent to day, he will oppress afresh to morrow. He is resolved not to want as long as any about him have any thing. Such Nimrods (as Christ speaks, but in a quite other sence then Christ spake it, *Matth.* 6. 34.) *Take no thought for the morrow*; Christ would have us do so with dependance upon his provision, they do so upon presumption of their own. Greedy Lyons have no store-houses, but make an end as soon as they can of what is gotten, and then out to get more.

None of his meat shall be left.] The Hebrew strictly thus; *Nothing shall be left to eat.* Though he may leave many eaters behind him, yet *nothing shall be left to eat*, or, *none of his meat shall be left.*

There is a threefold apprehension about these words.

Tam parcus est in victu quotidiano, ut cum vix sibi satis sumat, nullæ remaneant reliquiæ sibi. Cajet. *Describitur gulositas impii qui de abundantia mensæ suæ nulli peregrino refectionem præbet.*

First, Some expound them as intimating the baseness of this mans spirit. He keeps so poor a house (as we say) though he be a rich man, that when dinner is done, there's none of his meat left, there's not a scrap nor a crust, not a bit of broken bread left to give to a beggar waiting and craving at his door. His provision is but just enough to serve for himself and his family.

Secondly, Others expound it not of the base narrowness and niggardliness of this mans spirit, but of his luxury, and lavishness. He is profuse in his own expences; he cares not what he layes out upon his own back and belly; but as for the poor, they may starve at his door, he hath nothing left for them. The rich man (*Luk.* 16.) fared deliciously every day, but had not a crum for *Lazarus*, all was wasted in gluttony and drunkenness. When *David* in distress (1 *Sam.* 25. 11.) sent for some relief to *Nabal*, the Text saith, *Nabal kept a feast at his house like a King*, yet he had nothing for *David*; *Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my flesh, which I have killed for my shearers, and send it to men whom I know not whence they are?* Some feast like Kings at home, and all their bounty keeps at home. 'Tis truly said of these, *None of their meat is left.*

But thirdly, I rather understand this Text as a description, not of his expensiveness, or penuriousness to himself, or others, but of his extream poverty, sent upon him as a punishment by the hand of God.

None of his meat shall be left. That is, he shall scarce have enough for himself. The wicked are oft reduced to a morsel of bread: God never leaves taking from them till all be gone. As *David* professing his own experience, saith, *I have been young and now am old, yet I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor their seed begging bread*; they had alwayes some of their meat left. So *Zophar* (it seems) had observed in his experience, many wicked men forsaken and themselves begging bread. They who have nothing left of their own, must of necessity ask or steal from others; *None of his meat shall be left.* And this interpretation suits best with that which followeth:

Ita omnibus spoliabitur bonis ut nihil reliquum ei erit, quo vesci possit.

Therefore

Vocem Hebræam deducunt à חול parturire, & Itgunt, non parturiet, vel non multiplicabitur bonum ejus. Pagn. Vatabl. Peg.

Therefore no man shall look for his goods.] There is a threefold exposition of this passage also: Some derive the word which we render *to look* from a root that signifies *to bring forth, or to multiply.* And so the sence is given thus; *None of his meat*, that is, of his estate or goods, *shall bring forth for his good, or multiply to his profit.* If a man do not encrease, he comes to nothing; if he spend, spend, spend, if he be always giving out, and never bring in, though his estate be great, 'twill soon be gone; Unless a mans estate be growing and multiplying, he cannot (as we say) *hold his own.* In a short time there will be none of his meat left. As vegitables grow properly, so also inanimates have a kind of growth. A mans estate groweth; gold and silver grow by addition and multiplication, though not by augmentation. Thus riches bring forth. Now I say, if there be continual spending, and carrying out, and no coming in, no growing, or increase, such a man must needs come to poverty. What God said at first to the cattle, and beasts of the earth; he saith to all that a man hath, *Encrease and multiply*; And when he saith, *Multiply not*, all must needs decrease, and the owner must lie under the curse of want, when what he hath is under the curse of Barrenness.

A חיל quod significat robur. Non roborabitur bonum ejus. Rab. Abra. Propterea non manebit prosperitas ejus. A יחל quod est expectare.

Secondly, Others derive the word from a root that signifies to *be strong, or strength*; rendring thus; *His meat or estate shall not be strengthened*; that is, *his prosperity shall not continue.* Mr. *Broughton* renders it so; *therefore his goods continue not*; there shall be no tack in them.

Besides these two rendrings we take a third, and all three meet in the general punishment of the wicked man; *Let no man look for his goods.* We derive the word from a root signifying to expect and wait for a thing; *therefore no looking for his goods*; we put in those words (*no man*) *Therefore no man shall look for his goods.* Which is as much as to say, he shall have nothing left; for if a man hath any thing, some or other will be looking for it, and making title to it. He that hath abundance shall not want heirs. So that, when *Zophar* saith, *No man shall look for his goods*; The plain meaning is, He shall die a beggar, and leave no estate worth the looking after, or suing for. He shall not need to make his Will, or appoint Executors; The wrath and justice of God shall dispose of all before he dieth, there is no man needs to gape for his death. When a rich man is sick, many gape for his death, hoping that somewhat will fall into their mouths. Sometimes children are poring upon the day of their fathers death, and looking for his goods before he leaves them. But this man shall have nothing to leave, and therefore none shall look for what he hath.

Filius ante diem patris inquirit in annos.

Lastly, They who render the former part of the verse by a person, *There shall none be left for his meat*, give the sence of this latter part thus; Seeing none of his children, family, or kindred are left, *Therefore there shall be none to look for his goods.*

Vers. 22. **In the fulness of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits, &c.**

The scope of this verse and the next, is to set forth the season or nick of time in which the Lord will reckon with this sinful oppressour (*vers.* 22.) *In the fulness of his sufficiency*, (*vers.* 23.) *When he is about to fill his belly.* These are the times, or the advantages that God picks out to deal with this man in.

כמלאות מפקן Cum replebitur sufficientia ejus.

In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits.] The letter of the Hebrew is, *When his sufficiency shall be filled.* The word signifies to suffice, or satisfie, and fill up. So (1 *King.* 20. 10.) In that threatning raging Letter sent by *Zenacherib*; *The dust of Samaria should not be enough for handfuls for the men that follow me.* It shall not suffice for handfulls. The word also signifies to clap the hands together, or to smite the hand upon another part of the body, and this under a threefold notion.

First, To clap the hands in anger, and vexation, (*Numb.* 24. 10.) *Balak* clapt his hands *together* (his anger being kindled against *Balaam*) when he could not have his will.

Secondly, In sorrow; *Jer.* 31. 19. *After I was turned, I repented, and after I was instructed I smote upon my thigh.*

Thirdly, It notes clapping the hands for joy; and that two wayes.

First, For joy at the hurt of others: (there is such a wickedness in the heart of man to rejoyce at the fall of his neighbour) (*Lament.* 2. 15.) *All they that go by clap their hands and hiss*, seeing *Jerusalem* in sorrow.

Secondly, For joy at our own good; or when our selves receive good; so in the Text; *In the fulness of his sufficiency*, or when he hath so much that he claps his hands for joy, when he is in the highest plauditie of his own happiness, then he shall be in straits.

In the fulness of his sufficiency.] Here is a gradual elegancy: for a man to have a sufficiency, is a very comfortable estate; *enough*, (as we say, for meat, and cloathing) *is all. Give me neither poverty, nor riches, feed me with food convenient*, was *Agurs* prayer. Sufficiency is, at least, a competency; but the fulness of sufficiency is more. Such sufficiency is abundance, if not superfluity, or *superabundance.* There is an abundant grace of God (*where sin abounds, grace abounds.*) But besides *abounding grace*, there is *superabounding grace*, or (as it were) an excess of grace, an hyperbole of grace (*Rom.* 6. 20.) So some in this life have an hyperbolical estate, an excessive vast estate in riches and creature-comforts. They have enough, and more then enough; such is the importance of this expression; *In the fulness of his sufficiency*,

Cum putabit sibi abunde satis superesse & suppetere & sufficere omnia ad fæliciter & lautè vivendum necessaria, &c. Merc.

He shall be in straits.] There is nothing more opposite to *sufficiency* then *straits*, especially to fulness of sufficiency. *He shall be in straits*; in outward straits, and inward straits, in straits on the right hand, and in straits on the left. In the fulness of his sufficiency, he shall be full of straits. The word is applicable to any kind of trouble, because what trouble soever a man is in, it straitens him; it straitens his spirits, it straitens his designs, every way he is straitned. To be in straits is to be in such affliction, that a man knows not which way to turn himself, or what to do next. Every affliction is a kind of prison; great afflictions, straiten greatly, and shuts us up fast in prison.

Hence observe, *When it is best with wicked men in their own opinion, or according to their present possession, then their worst is approaching.*

I will not stay upon the general discourse of this common theam, but only shew four wayes distinctly in which a carnal man may be said to be in straits in the midst of his sufficiency, or in the fulness of it.

First, Carnal men are in straits in the time of their sufficiency, as being troubled what to do with their abundance. That's the case of some. I need give no other proof of it then that represented (*Luk.* 12. 19.) which at least supposeth, that such a thing may be. There was a certain rich man, whose ground brought forth abundance, and he said, *What shall I do with all this?* The man was troubled what to do with it; he was hard put to it for stowage, or where to bestow it: He must pull down his barns, and make bigger. This is a strait that carnal men are in, in the midst of their sufficiency: but I question whether that be here intended.

In anxietate erit sollicitus quomodo eam conservat. Drus.

Secondly, A real strait is upon him, how to keep his abundance, how to protect what he hath gotten. He is in many straits about this point, how to protect his store that it be not lost, and taken from him. What shall I do to keep this treasure? how shall I hold it? I am afraid it will get away from me. It is a common speech; *A great ship, is a great care*; a great deal of the things of the world are a great worldly burthen; they that are in the fullest sufficiency of outward things, their estates and possessions bring them in as great an increase of troubles as of revenues. As they have plenty of riches, so they cannot avoid plenty of business and labour about them. Some old rich men have said, they were then as hard put to it to keep their riches, as they were in their younger dayes to gather and heap up riches.

Magna navis magna cura.

There is a third strait, which is worse then the former; as he is straitned to keep what he hath; so God in judgement gives him this strait in his fulness, that he fears his fulness is not full enough, and that his sufficiency is unsufficient for him; in the fulness of his sufficiency, he is thus in straits. There is an inward strait in his outward enlargements; when, indeed, he is rich, he is, in conceit, poor. For as it is with hypocrites in reference to spirituals, they think they have a fulness of sufficiency in them, when indeed they are in straits, in poverty and want: as Christ tells the Church of *Laodicea* (*Revel.* 3.) *Thou saist I am rich, and*

and full, and need nothing, and knowest not that thou art poor, and empty, and naked, and blind, and wantest all things. Now I say, as in spirituals hypocrites oft conceit themselves full, when they are really empty: so in temporals, a worldly man often conceits himself empty, when he is really full. He saith, I have nothing, I am a poor man, I have scarce enough to serve another year, when indeed he is rich, and hath gold and silver, lands and goods enough for many years. This strait God brings wicked men into, in the midst of their sufficiency. This is a grievous curse, that while a man is laying field to field, land to land, bag to bag, and heap to heap, yet withal his mind and spirit is troubled and straitned, as if he had nothing, or were worse then nothing. One of the Ancients describes this strait of a covetous man, with abundance of lively Eloquence; *Give me* (saith he) *a covetous man, daily seeking and stretching out the bounds of his habitation, as if he meant to live alone, and exclude all neighbourhood. Tell me now, doth this man (whom the whole earth cannot hold) seem to thee to be enlarged or straitned? Surely how far soever he extends the line of his possession (while that which he hath is not enough to him) he is locked up within the narrow compass of his own opinion.*

Constitue mihi avarũ villarũ quotidie terminos proferentem excludentem vicinos: ntrũ is tibi dilatari an coarctari videtur, quem tellus ipsa non capit? quantacunq; spatia domus suæ porrexerit, claudit tur angustis opinionis suæ finibus, cui quod habet non est satis. Ambros. ser. 6. in Psal. 128.

Fourthly, Besides this internal and metaphorical strait, there is a plain literal strait into which God casts the wicked man, when he supposeth himself setled in the fulness of his sufficiency. That's the time God takes to bring him to it, when he stands upon the highest pinacle of worldly prosperity, then down he goes. In the Prophesie of *Daniel* (Chap. 4. 4.) we read what the Golden head *Nebuchadnezzar* speaks of his fulness. *I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace* (here was a fulness of sufficiency, (*ver.* 29,30.) *At the end of twelve months he walked in the palace, and said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the Kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* Here he boasts of the fulness of his sufficiency; now (*vers.* 31.) *While the word was in the Kings mouth, there fell a voyce from heaven, and said, O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, The Kingdom is departed from thee, &c.* Thus he was brought to straits in the midst of his fulness. Again, *Chap.* 6. While *Belteshazzer* was in his height with his Nobles, in his chear and wine, he saw a hand-writing upon the wall, which made him tremble, and that very night *Babylon* was taken, and himself taken away in the fulness of his sufficiency. So in the Prophesie of mystical *Babylon*, in the fulness of her sufficiency she shall be in straits, (*Rev.* 18. 7, 8.) She shall be glorifying her self, the very moment before her ruine (they who glorifie themselves, judge themselves in a fulness of sufficiency) *By how much she glorified her self, so much torment give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit as a Queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow: therefore shall her plagues come in one day.* When she saith, *I sit as a Queen*, not only free from plagues, but full of majesty; then her plague comes. When the Apostle said to the *Corinthians*, *Ye have reigned as Kings without us* (1 *Cor.* 4. 8.) he checks their conceit of their own spiritual sufficiency, or sufficiency in spirituals, without the contribution of his aid and help, as the former words of that verse expound his meaning; *Now ye are full, now ye are rich.* And when *Babylon* saith, *I sit as a Queen*, her meaning is, that she hath a fulness of sufficiency, both in spirituals and in temporals, and then, even then, her plague comes. (*Psal.* 92. 7.) *When the wicked spring as grass, and all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be destroyed for ever.* And (to give but one instance more, 1 *Thes.* 5. 3.) *When they shall say, peace and safety*, (not only peace, but safety, all is quiet, and all will be quiet,) *then sudden destruction shall come on them as travail on a woman with child, and they shall not escape.* The straits of a woman in travail, and her sorrows, how terrible are they? and as these are alwayes unavoidable to her that is with child, so they are often sudden, when immediately before she was eating or sleeping, at ease and quiet: This is the wicked mans doom, he is not only punished but surprised; *In the fulness of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits.*

Every hand of the wicked shall come upon him.] Then there will be many hands upon him, for there are many wicked; yet there is a difference about that word which we render *wicked*; It hath two other significations besides that in the Text.

First, It signifies *a labouring man*, and in the verb *to labour*; so the rendring is made in these termes; *Every hand of the labourer shall be upon him.* There are two wayes in which that may be understood. First, say some, The hand of the labourer is, the hand of those who labour to help him. The sence which is intended by these Interpreters seems to be that of *Solomon* (*Prov.* 11. 21.) *Though hand joyn in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished*; That is, though many with united forces labour to uphold and defend him, yet the curse of God shall break through and consume him; his helpers shall help in vain, and they who labour for him, shall labour in vain; for the decree is gone out against him, down he must; All the world cannot save him. In the fulness of his sufficiency, he shall be in straits, *even while many are labouring to keep him out of them.* This is a truth, but I pass it, as supposing it not intended here.

עמל *Significat 1 impium. 2 calamitosum. 3 laboriosum. Omnis manus laborantis veniet super eum. Etiamsi accesserit ei omnis manus laborãs. i. e. etiamsi omnes homines laborent in ejus commodum.* Rab. Abra. & Isid. clar. *Manus laborãtis, i.e. pauperum & mercenariorum, quos impius sua mercede & labore fraudavit.* Rab. Lev.

Again, The *hand of the labourer* may rather be the hand of such poor as he set to work. *Every hand of the labourer shall be on him.* He found many poor labourers work, but he did not find them bread, he pinched them, and used them hardly, he oppressed and deceived them in their wages; as the Apostle *James* complains, (*Chap.* 5. 1, 4.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep, and howl, for the misery that shall come upon you; behold the hire of those labourers which have reaped down your harvest cryes.* These poor men who sweat at his work, and were sent home sad with tears in their eyes, not with money in their purses; every hand of these labourers shall be upon him: So Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *Each hand of the injured and grieved shall come upon him*; he injured and grieved the labourers, they laboured in body for him, and his cruel usage was worse then labour to their spirits. But as he took from the labourer, so the labourer shall take from him. *Every hand of the labourer upon him.*

Secondly, The word signifies, a man any way distressed or brought to misery. And then the meaning may be this; not only as before, that the hand of the poor who had laboured for him, but the hand of the rich whom he had impoverisht, the hands of all those whom he had unjustly vexed, shall come upon him and vex him.

Thirdly, The word as it signifies a labourer, and a man in misery; so a wicked man, as we translate it here, and frequently in other places of Scripture. The same word signifies labour, misery, and wickedness; because there is so much labour, and misery, so much trouble and vexation in wickedness; every hand of the wicked shall come upon him; God will let out the spirits of evil doers to take vengeance on him for his evil deeds.

In vadent eum omnes iniqui parati ad injuriam inferendam. Vatabl.

Hence note, *God often makes one wicked man scourge another.*

As God usually makes wicked men the scourge to his own people, so sometimes to one another. One Lyon destroys another, and a ravenous wolf sucks the bloud of a ravenous wolf. This point hath been formerly hinted, and therefore I insist not upon it; but proceed to the next verse, which insists still upon the reason of the wicked mans destruction.

Vers. 23. **When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath on him.**

This verse, as was said before, is of the same sence with the former, setting forth the special time of Gods wrath upon the wicked man.

When he is about to fill his belly.] The Vulgar renders the words thus; *O that he had filled his belly, that God might pour on him the fury of his wrath!* As if he had wished for the filling up of the measure of the sin of this man, that he might come to his punishment; because till sin hath finished its work, the work of Judgment seldom begins. But the words sound threatning, not wishing, and are rather a prophesie then a prayer; *When he is about to fill his belly, God shall do this.*

Utinam impleatur venter ejus ut emittat in eum iram furoris sui. Vulg. *Non votum est sed prophetia.* Merc.

A second renders thus; *Let it be that he fill his belly, yet God will pour upon him the fury of his wrath.* As if he had said, all his riches and fulness shall be no fence against the wrath of God. The wicked call riches, *their strong Tower*, but the strong Tower that riches can make, is no defence, it is but as a paper-wall against the wrath of God. His full belly makes but the fairer mark for the arrows of the Almighty.

Esto ut impleat ventrem suum, Deus tamen emittet ei furorẽ iræ. Tygur.

We

We render it as respecting his action; *When he is about to fill his belly*, when the man thinks to take the fruit of his labours, he having been busie in projecting, and acting, intendeth to sit down in quiet, and feed upon what he had gotten; but when he is about to fill his belly, even in the very act, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him.

Dimittet iram, non cohibebit neq; continebit indignationem suam, sed faciet liberam potestatem suæ justitiæ sæviendi in impium.

God shall cast,] Or send it out. The wrath of God is sometimes (upon the matter) restrained, and kept in; as the Prophet speaks of the compassions of God, what is become of them? *are they restrained?* (*Isa.* 63.15.) The compassions of God used to come forth, but then they were restrained, or did not shew themselves. God was pleased to deal with them as if he had laid aside or put off all bowels of compassion. So the wrath of God is restrained, or held in sometimes. Men sin and wrath stirs not; God deals as if he had forgotten to be angry; But anon wrath lets flie. God shall cast fury and wrath, or the fury of his wrath upon him; he shall cast, and send it, as a dart, or an arrow out of a bow, or as a stone out of a sling, or as a thunderbolt from the clouds: *God shall cast it* upon him; the Text doth not express who, but the scope clears who it is; He, that is, *God shall cast*, either immediately, or mediately by some hand, commission'd by him for that work of judgment. God shall unprison, and let loose *the fury of wrath*, that is, his furious wrath, or hot fuming smoaking wrath upon him. Thus he speaks to shew how extreamly the Lord is heated and heightened against wicked men. Thus Mr. *Broughton* renders; *God will send his hot anger upon him.* The anger of his nostrils. A phrase often used to signifie Anger, because of the appearance and tokens of Anger there, *Exod.* 11.32. *Isa.* 5.25. And in divers other places which the reader may consult. This anger in the nostrils is opposed to the anger in the heart; for when the Scripture speaks of the anger of the nostrils, it notes anger acted, and put forth in execution. The Lord hath treasured wrath, he hath wrath in his heart when he seems to favour wicked men, and to shine upon them: wrath is not alwayes in his nostrils breathed and poured upon them.

Iram naſ. Heb.

God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, or upon it.

בו *Utroq; modo potest accipi. 1. In ipsum impium. 2. In id quod paravit ad ventrem explendum. Masculine tamen potius accipiendum videtur ex eo quod sequitur.* Merc.

It is taken both wayes. If we say upon it; The meaning is, upon his goods, or upon what he hath; *When he is about to fill his belly, God shall pour his anger upon his Table, or upon his meat.* We take it personally, *upon him*, upon the wicked man himself, who when he thinks to receive the greatest pleasure, shall feel the greatest smart, God shall pour fury upon him. The observation which this passage offers, is the same with what was observed in the close of the former verse, therefore I shall but name it.

When wicked men are full of hopes to take their fill of worldly joy, then God fills them with worldly sorrow.

This was said before, *In the fulness of their sufficiency they shall be in straits.* So that when we see wicked men at the fullest, or in their fulness sitting down to rest, to eat, drink, and be merry with what they have gotten, we may look on it as the presage of their approaching ruine. The Angel Intelligencer, who was sent abroad to see what was done in the world (*Zech.* 1.11.) brought back this report, that he had gone to and fro, and Behold all the earth sate still, and was at rest; All were about to fill their bellies. By *earth*, he means *Babylon*, or the *Babylonians*, the temporal power of that State, in opposition to the Church of God, they were all at rest, and said in their hearts, surely the world will never change, yet presently after they felt the greatest change, ruine fell on that Empire. This may comfort the people of God, when they see the real enemies of truth and righteousness in highest security; for then the day of their calamity is near, even at the doors. There is a twofold fulness, which wicked men usually have before their ruine. First, a fulness of sin. Secondly, a fulness of prosperity; they come to their fulness in both, and then comes their end. (*Gen.* 15.16.) *The sins of the Amorites are not yet full*; therefore the *Amorites* cannot be destroyed yet; and the Church of God cannot be delivered yet, but when the sin of the *Amorites* is full, God will destroy them, and deliver his Church. God leaves them as Christ speaks to the Pharisees (*Mat.* 23.32.) to *fill up the measure of the iniquity of their fathers*, and then he will deal with them. Now as there is a fulness of iniquity, so there is also a fulness of worldly prosperity; when the wicked have had their portion, their reward in the world, when as beasts they are fed and fatted with good things, or are about to fat themselves, then they are for the slaughter. So the Lord concludes concerning those oppressours (*Amos* 4.1.) *Hear this word ye Kine of Bashan that are in the mountains of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, &c. The Lord God hath sworn by his holiness, that lo the day shall come on you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks*; when the fulness of your worldly prosperity and fatness is come, then God shall take you away, or send leanness among your fat ones. And again (*Chap.* 6.1.) *Wo to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountains of Samaria, which are named chief of the Nations, to whom the house of Israel came. These* (vers. 3.) *put far away the evil day, and caused the seat of violence to come near; They lay upon beds of Ivory, and did eat the Lambs out of the flock, &c.* While they were thus dissolved into mirth and musick, a woful voice sounded in their ears (*vers.* 7.) *Therefore now shall they go captive with the first that go captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.* The very *now* of their freest joy, was the *now* of their captivation and sorrow. *Zophar*, as if this were hardly believed at all, or could never be enough believed, presseth and repeateth it again, in the last word of the verse in hand.

And shall rain it upon him while he is eating.

This is but an explication or repetition of the former words; *When he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath, and rain it on him while he is eating.* There are two words to be considered in this clause.

First, Raining.

Secondly, While he is eating.

He shall rain it.] Here is a terrible shower, a shower of fury, of wrath, God shall rain it. God is said to rain wrath.

First, To note the suddenness of it; rain (many times) comes very unexpectedly.

Secondly, To note the unavoidableness of it: there is no stopping of the rain, who can stop the bottles of the clouds but God himself? he can stop them up when he pleaseth; but all the power on earth cannot. This rain is such that there is no avoiding of it; we may get out of the ordinary rain into our houses, or under covert; but the rain of Gods wrath soaks through every house, how strongly soever leaded or covered; There is no shelter (but Christ) against the storms of divine wrath. *He is a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest* (*Isa.* 32.2.) but besides him nothing is.

Ideo pluvi-endi verbo utitur, quia ut pluviæ vehementi è cœlo decidenti nemo potest resistere, ita, &c. Merc.

Thirdly, He is said to rain wrath, to shew the quantity of it, there shall be abundance, he will pour it down on you. Rain is opposed to dew: it shall not only come as the dew, or as a few heat drops, but as a soaking sweeping rain. The Prophet exhorts (*Hos.* 10.12.) *Sow to your selves in righteousness, reap in mercy, break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the Lord till he rain righteousness*, that is, till he send Christ, who is made to us of God righteousness in abundance; or till he pour out his Spirit upon you, who will cause you to bring forth the fruits of righteousness abundantly. As the raining of righteousness, so the raining of wrath, notes abundant wrath. *It shall rain upon him*

While he is eating.] There is a threefold rendring of that. For the word which we translate *eating*, signifies *flesh*, either that which is eaten, or that which doth eat; living or eating flesh most properly, though it also signifie dead flesh, or that which is eaten. So Mr. *Broughton*, *He will rain upon him into his flesh*; That is, upon his body; and the body by a synechdoche is put for the whole man, body, and soul. As if he had said, God hath not a quarrel only with this mans estate and his goods, but with his flesh, and bones, yea, and with his soul, too; he will vex him soul and body: So that as before he shewed what God would do upon his estate, that should be consumed; so now what upon his person; wrath falls upon his body, upon his very back; *He shall rain it upon him, into his flesh.*

בשרו *Caro pluet super eum, etiam in carnem ejus, è corpus ejus.*

Secondly, The word signifies as the flesh of a man, or living flesh, so, any flesh, dead flesh prepared to be eaten, or any thing which is eatable. Hence the name of the place where Christ was born was called *Bethelem*, that is, *the house of bread*. And thus it is rendered here, he shall rain it upon him, even upon his bread, or upon his meat. As God, when his own people are eating, and their table spread, he not only rains a blessing upon them, but upon their meat also, that is, he commands their meat to strengthen and refresh them. So when the wicked man is about to fill his belly, the curse falls not only upon him, but upon his meat; *God shall rain on him, even upon his meat.*

לחם *Cibus omnis est a hinc* בית לחם *Bethlehem dicta quasi regio frumenti ferax, domus panis.* Merc.

Our translation refers to the person in the act of eating, not to the meat which he eateth. The general meaning of either translation meets in one; For though wrath may fall upon a mans person, and not upon his meat; he may thrive with what he eats, grow lusty and strong, while he is under wrath; yet whensoever wrath falls upon the wicked mans meat, it is in order to his person or himself. *He shall rain it upon him while he is eating.* How exact is the wrath of God? For at the instant when a man is eating, he of all other times would lay aside fear, be chearful, and rejoyce; Then he unbends himself, though he have been busie all the day; If any come to him he saith, I pray let me alone at meal, that I may be merry with my wife and children, with my friends or neighbours; when I am at my meat, let me be quiet. But when he is eating, wrath is dropping; God picks out that time on purpose to put a sting into his punishment, and to make his misery more remarkable. Such (*Mat.* 24. 38.) is the description of the judgment that came upon the world, it rained upon them indeed, when they were eating; *As it was in the dayes before the flood, they did eat and drink, and were marrying, and giving in marriage, till the day that Noah went into the Ark.* Christ expresseth those things especially wherein men take most worldly contentment, *eating, and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage.* To these that age let themselves loose, or set themselves upon; these are not sinful in themselves, but they used them sinfully, that is, sensually, to satisfie their lusts, and please their senses; therefore the Spirit of God fixeth the judgment upon that season, they were eating, and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage, and then God rained upon them the fury of his wrath. The children of *Israel* lusted after flesh (*Psal.* 78.) and the Lord gave it them; *He rained flesh upon them as dust, and feathered fowls like as the sand of the Sea* (*vers.* 27.) But he rained wrath upon them with it (*vers.* 30, 31.) *While their meat was yet in their mouths,* (while they were eating) *the wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.*

All these instances concenter fully in *Zophars* Text; That *In the fulness of his sufficiency*, and while he is taking his sweetest content in his sufficiency, God rains down wrath.

Pluet super eum bellum suum. Vulg. מלחמה *Bellum a* לחם *vesci, edere, quia in bello homines se invicem cadendo devorant & absumunt.*

Further, The old Latine Translator gives the words thus; *And he shall rain his war upon him.* This difference ariseth from the copiousness of the Original word, *Lechem*, which as it signifies eating, or any thing eaten; so also war and battel. The reason is, because the sword is a devourer, and in war men eat up one another; Nation eats up Nation; as men eat other flesh, so war is an eater, and devourer of men: therefore the same word may well signifie, to eat, and to make war. And this Translation, though the Grammatical form of the Hebrew is wrested by it (and therefore I lay it by) yet renders the scope of the Text fully, and answers that of the eleventh *Psalm* (*vers.* 5, 6.) *The Lord tryeth the righteous, but him that loveth violence his soul hateth; upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest, this shall be the portion of their cup.* Which (I conceive) may (in pursuance of *Zophars* similitude) be thus illustrated, as if he had said, when he is drinking, when he hath a cup of sweet wine in his hand, or some delicious liquor at his lips, God shall rain fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest into or upon his cup; the wrath of God shall fill his cup, and so be (as it were) the portion of it. While the wicked man is drinking, wrath is the portion of his cup; and while he is eating, wrath is the portion of his dish. *God shall rain it on him while he is eating.*

Zophar having thus far carried on this point, shewing what God will do with the wicked man in all his enjoyments, shews yet other wayes and instruments, which God prepareth and armeth to vex and ruine him.

VERS. 24, 25, 26.

He shall flee from the iron-weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through.
It is drawn, and cometh out of the body, yea the glittering sword cometh out of his gall: terrors are upon him.
All darkness shall be hid in his secret places: a fire not blown shall consume him: it shall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle.

ZOphar having said (*vers.* 22, 23.) That God pours the fury of his wrath upon the wicked man when he thinks himself safest and furthest removed from it, *even in the fulness of his sufficiency, and when he is about to fill his belly* (then God deals with him; and rains upon him while he is eating, mingling his blood with his bread, his tears with his wine) He proceeds in this context to shew,

First, The instruments.
Secondly, The effects of that wrath or judgment.

The instruments are four,

First, The iron-weapon.
Secondly, The bow of steel.
Thirdly, The glittering sword.
Fourthly, A fire not blown.

Here are store of arms to make war upon the wicked man. We have here also the effects of this dreadful war, and these are of two sorts.

First, Upon himself.
Secondly, Upon others.

The effects which appear upon himself, are of two sorts.

First, Outward.
Secondly, Inward.

The outward effects, First, he shall be stricken through with them. Secondly, he shall be consumed with them. The inward effects are fears or terrours; which are testified by that consequent, his flight, *He runs from the iron-weapon, and the bow of steel.*

The effect which is upon others is laid down in the close of *vers.* 26. *It shall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle*: not only shall wrath overtake him, but it shall overtake those that appertain to him. Thus of the analysis or parts considerable in this context.

Vers. 24. **He shall flee from the iron-weapon.**

He shall flee.] Flight is the pace of a coward. So the word is used all the Scripture over; *The wicked man hath no heart for good, and he hath as little against evil.* His spirit is gone, and at the approach of danger his body is going or rather running; his spirit is fallen from his heart into his heels; and he defends himself by his feet, not by his hands: when the iron-weapon comes, the righteous will rather die, then run, if duty bids them stay: but the wicked

Shall flee from the iron-weapon.

The word which we translate *iron-weapon*, signifies all sorts of hand weapons, or weapons with which we strike at hand, such as are the sword, and spear. The word properly signifies to salute, or kiss: And the reason why these kind of arms and weapons, are expresst by that word, is, because a man fights with them face to face: and comes near to an adversary, even as if he came to salute or to kiss him. There are weapons with which we may fight at a distance, and never come near our enemy.

נשק *Denotat omne genus armorū quæ manu agitantur; radix significat osculari eò quod hujusmodi armis non nisi cominus & à parte anteriori vultus cui oscula intigisolent, feriunt.* Bold.

He shall flee from the iron-weapon.] That is, from all sorts of hand-weapons, with which we oppose and smite our assailants, or defend our selves.

Some interpret this iron-weapon, not literally, but tropically for the plague, or pestilence, or some deadly disease, which according to the language of Scripture, is compared to that iron-weapon the sword, or to an arrow (1 *Chron.* 21. 27.) when the Angel was sent to destroy the People of *Jerusalem* with the pestilence, after *David* had numbred

numbred them, the Text saith; *The Lord commanded the Angel, and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.* The pestilence is the sword, and the stroak of it is like smiting with the sword. In the ninety first *Psalm*, that other instrument of death, the Arrow, signifies the plague (*vers.* 5.) *Thou shalt not be afraid of the terrour by night, nor of the arrow that flieth by day*; That is, of the pestilence. And even in prophane Authors, terrible diseases, such as the pestilence, are called the weapons of their Gods, with which they contended, and made roar with mortal men. This metaphorical sword, and arrow of the pestilence, is a weapon from which many flee as fast as from the sword of the fiercest enemy. Yet I conceive, that is not intended in this Text; the iron weapon here, including all manner of outward instruments of divine wrath which wound the wicked man. *He shall flee from the iron weapon.* We translate it as a direct assertion; *He shall flee.* Some render it as a supposition; *If he flee from the iron weapon*; Or as Mr. *Broughton*, *When he flees from the iron armour.* And then the other part of the verse joyns with it thus; *When he fleeth, or if he flee from the iron weapon, the bow of steel shall strike him through.* And though there be not that particle of supposition expresst in the Hebrew, yet it is usually understood in Texts of this significancy. *Mal.* 1.4. *They shall build, and I will pull down*; That is, *if they build, I will pull down*; or *whensoever they begin to build, I will begin to pull down.* So here, *He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through*; That is, if he flee from the iron-weapon, or whensoever he thinks to make an escape by flying from the iron-weapon, then the bow of steel shall strike him through. According to this reading the whole verse is a proverbial speech, implying thus much; *That while a wicked man flies, or seeks to avoid one evil, he shall fall into another*; When he flees from the iron-weapon, the bow of steel shall strike him through. Like that of the Latines; *He fell upon the rock, while he thought to escape the gulph.*

Βέλη ἐκεβόλα Απολλωνος. Homer.

Fugientũ ab armis ferreis, transverberat eũ arcus chalibeus. Merl.

Ubi se putavit leviora pericula effugisse, in graviora incidet. Merc.

Incidit in Scyllã cupiens vitare charybdin.

The bow of steel shall strike him through.

The bow, that is, the arrow of the bow, or the bullet put into the bow: for from the bow of steel sometimes arrows, sometimes bullets are discharged; the arrow, or the bullet with which this steel bow is charged shall strike him through. The word rendered *to strike through*, signifies excision or cutting off; and hence the Hebrew phrase, *A Son of Excision*, answering that of the Greek, which we expres, *a son of perdition*, that is, a man devoted to total destruction. The bow of steel shall strike him through, cut him off, or quite destroy him. *A bow of steel* is the strongest bow. *David*, to shew the extraordinary strength which he expected to receive from God, saith, *A bow of steel shall be broken by mine arms* (*Psal.* 18.34.) To draw a bow of steel, shews strength, and to break it shews more strength. A bow of steel gives a deadly blow, and smites home.

חלם excindo unde בני חלום filii excisionis. Drus.

Again, This word, which we translate, *to strike through*, others render, *to change. The bow of steel shall change him*, that is, kill him; death is our great change. Further, The word is rendred *to pass by.* The arrow often misseth the mark, sometime it glides by the mark, or doth but graze upon it. Taking this Translation, the sence of the whole verse riseth thus; *Suppose the wicked man flee, and make his escape from the iron weapon; suppose also that the steel bow be discharged at him, and the arrow pass by, and not hit him; suppose, that he escape the first weapon, and the second, yet* (saith he in the next words) *The glittering sword shall come out of his gall*; *another weapon is ready to do it.*

חלף Pertransire; pertransibit eum arcus, q.d. eia, ita fit quod impius fugerit ab armis ferreis, sed & pertransierit eum arcus, numquid ideo immunis erit. Bold.

According to this exposition, these two verses are connected as they connect the two parts of this verse, who give it (as was lately touched) thus, *If he flee from the iron-weapon, the bow of steel shall strike him through.* Now the supposition is carried one step further. *If he flee from the iron-weapon, and the bow of steel miss him, or glance away, yet the glittering sword shall come out of his gall.* But rather take it according to our reading: *He shall flee from the iron-weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through.* Here are many terms, and variety of warlike instruments; The Text being (as it were) the Inventory of a little Magazine, or Armory of weapons.

Whence Observe, *God hath instruments of all sorts at command, with which to punish wicked men.*

We have here the Iron-weapon, and the bow, here is sword, and fire. God cannot want means to take revenge upon those who rebel against him. As the Lord hath various instruments of mercy for the protection and defence of his cause and people. (*Cant.* 4.) *In the Tower of David there hang a thousand shields*, that is, shields enow. God hath many and manifold instruments of defence to protect and safegard those that trust upon him; he hath a thousand shields for them. Now as the Lord hath a thousand shields, or defensive weapons, for the protection of his own people, so he hath a thousand bows and arrows, and spears, and swords, to wound and destroy his or their enemies. How can God want weapons, who can make any thing a weapon? For as the Baptist told the *Jews* who gloried in their fleshly descent from *Abraham*, as if God were tied to *Abraham's* line, or as if they being out of the way, God knew not how to be supplied with a people; *I tell you* (saith *John*) *God is able of these stones to raise up Children to Abraham*, (*Mat.* 3.9.) As if he had said; Think not that God will be straitned for a people, if he remove you, for he can raise another people to himself out of those who are as unlikely, and in humane reason as much indisposed to shew forth his praise as these stones are. Even thus, if all weapons and visible means for the destruction of wicked men were removed, God can make any thing a weapon, he can make an iron weapon out of a straw, or the grass of the field. As God can easily supply himself with instruments to serve his providence for the good of those who are vessels of mercy and heirs of salvation, so he can quickly have a supply of instruments to annoy those who are vessels of wrath and children of perdition.

Secondly, We may take notice how these weapons are described in their Effectualness, *Striking through, &c.*

Whence Observe, *The weapons and means which God useth for the punishing of wicked men, shall be effectual, they shall do their work.*

What ever weapon God sends on his errand shall do it to purpose, the bow of steel strikes through. It doth not give a light wound, and skare the flesh a little, but goes to the heart, and cleaves the bones. God hath a mighty arm, and according to the might of his own arm, is the might of his instruments. As they act not by their own will, so not by their own might. What the Apostle speaks about the weapons of our spiritual warfare (2 *Cor.* 10. 4.) *They are not carnal, but mighty through God.* What to do? *To pull down strong holds*, to lay all level, to subdue all sinful powers, or the power of sin within us. What, I say, is spoken of those spiritual weapons, is true also of these corporal and visible weapons, the sword, the bow, and the arrow; when God sends them forth to execute his will, and fulfil his counsels, *they are not carnal, but mighty through God.* Though they are weapons of flesh, yet they are not, like flesh, frail and powerless; though they are weapons of flesh, as to matter and form, yet they will declare themselves weapons of spirit, as to the effect and success; they shall prevail over the strongest enemies, and strike through the thickest of their defences. The Lord can weaken the strongest weapons of the enemies, and so blunt their sharpest edge, that they shall do no hurt, but be as a wooden dagger in the hand of him that wields them, of how well tempered metal soever they are made, and how well soever their edge be set. This is it which the Prophet assures the Church of in the name of the Lord (*Isa.* 54. 17.) For having made a promise of salvation and safety to the Church, it might be objected, how can we be safe, who have so many enemies, so many weapons formed against us? how can we be safe when so many Smiths are at work, making swords, and forging instruments of death against us? The Lord answers (*vers.* 17.) *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.* I grant there are many forming weapons, whetting and preparing their swords against thee; but *no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper.* Now (I say) as the Lord gives check to all weapons that are formed against his people, and saith, they shall not prosper, they shall not hurt the least of my children,

the meaneſt of my ſervants. So, if himſelf form a weapon againſt the higheſt and mightieſt of his enemies, it ſhall proſper to their deſtruction; the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike them through, and the fire ſhall conſume them to the very ſtumps. That is a ſecond note from the effectualneſs of theſe weapons here deſcribed.

Thirdly, When God is about to rain down judgment and war upon the wicked man; what doth he? The Text ſaith, *He flees from the iron weapon*; that is, he endeavours to flee from it, he doth what he can to eſcape.

Obſerve this from it, *The ſtudy of a wicked man, when trouble is upon him, is not how to improve, or make good uſe of it, how to get his heart humbled under it, and his life bettered by it; but only how to get it off, or how to get away from it.*

Here is not a word in the Text of humbling himſelf when he ſees the iron weapon, here is no mention of ſuing to God, and ſeeking to make his peace with him, here is no acknowledgment of his ſin, that he deſerved to be wounded and deſtroyed; but all the matter is how to eſcape, how to get out of the reach of danger. He never labours to make his peace with God, but only ſtrives how to avoid the war of God. There is another frame of ſpirit in believers, they do not make it their work to run from the judgments of God, but to make a right uſe and improvement of them; when the ſword comes, or the arrow comes, they enquire how to give God the glory of his ſmitings and woundings, they flee from thoſe weapons only by fleeing to God. Whereas wicked men flee theſe weapons, by fleeing from God; godly men flee them, by flying to God, that is, they make God their refuge, their hiding-place; If they hide themſelves from the iron weapon, they hide themſelves in God; If they run from the iron weapon, they run to God. God is a godly mans Tower, and Fort, and hiding place; he flies unto, and into God, that he may be ſafe.

Fourthly, As this ſhifting and fleeing, when the iron weapon comes, notes the impenitency of wicked men, who never think of turning to but only of running from God: ſo it notes alſo the cowardiſe and baſeneſs of their ſpirits.

Hence Obſerve, *A wicked man hath no courage in an evil day.*

When troubles riſe, his ſpirit falls; though he may make a buſtle, yet he hath no heart, no true fortitude; he either flees, or is meditating a flight. And 'tis no wonder that a wicked man ſhould flee being purſued; when *Solomon* tells us that he fleeth, when none purſues him. It is no marvel if he flee at the ſight of the iron weapon, when he flees meerly from a fanſied weapon. How can he but flee from the ſtroak of the ſword; when another Text tells us, that he flees at the very ſhaking of a leaf. *They who are fearleſs of doing moral evil, are moſt fearful at the appearance of pœnal evils.*

Fifthly, He flees, but what doth he get by it? *When he fleeth from the iron weapon, the bow of ſteel ſhall ſtrike him through.* What gets he now by his flight?

The point is this, *The ſhifts and evaſions of a wicked man ſhall not profit him.*

That is, when he fleeth, he ſhall not flee, or he ſhall not eſcape. If he get out of the ſtroak of one weapon, another weapon ſhall ſtrike him; or according to the ſecond interpretation of the words, ſuppoſe he flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of ſteel miſs him alſo, yet the ſword ſhall come out of his gall. So that by all his evaſions, he ſhall not evade the face of danger. As a carnal heart hath a thouſand deviſes and ſhifts to excuſe his ſin; but his deviſes and excuſes do but faſten ſin more upon him: his conſcience gets no eaſe at all by his wit; yea his conſcience is more wounded by the excuſes and pleas that he makes for his ſin. Such alſo is the fruit of all the evaſions and deviſes of a wicked man to get out of danger; they bring him and danger nearer together, or they entangle him in worſer dangers. We have a clear Text for that, (*Iſa.* 24. 18.) *And it ſhall come to paſs, that he who fleeth from the noiſe of fear ſhall fall into the pit, and he that cometh up out of the midſt of the pit ſhall be taken in a ſnare.* He is remedileſs after all his remedies. There was but *a noiſe of fear*, when he fled, danger was at a diſtance; but while he is fleeing from the noiſe of fear, he falls into the mouth of danger, a pit: And being in the pit, he ſtrives and ſtruggles to get out, hoping yet to find his deſired ſafety and enlargement, but then he falls into a ſnare, a worſe evil then the pit: He that falls into a pit, is at liberty to get out; but he that is in a ſnare is bound faſt, he can get no further, ſtill his caſe is worſe and worſe. We find the ſame ſucceſs in the Propheſie of *Amos*, (9. 1.) *I ſaw the Lord ſtanding upon the Altar, and he ſaid, ſmite the lintel of the door that the poſts may ſhake, and cut them in the head, all of them, and I will ſlay the laſt of them with the ſword.* As if he had ſaid, there ſhall be an utter ſlaughter; for the firſt two or three men may be ſlain, yea hundreds may be ſlain, yet the laſt may eſcape: but when he ſaith, *The laſt ſhall be ſlain*, the meaning is, I will ſlay them all, or all of them ſhall be ſlain. But will theſe men ſtand till the ſword come to them, will the laſt man ſtand when he ſees the ſword deſtroy thoſe ſo faſt that were before him? No, it may be he will flee, yet ſaith God, *I will ſlay the laſt*: for, *He that fleeth ſhall not flee away*, that is, he ſhall not deliver himſelf, nor eſcape by flight. The ſame Prophet ſpake as much before (*Amos* 5. 18,19.) *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkneſs, and not light; As if a man did flee from a Lyon, and a Bear met him; or went into the houſe, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a Serpent bit him.* It will not be either unprofitable or beſides the point, to open this Text a little. *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord.* Why doth the Prophet thunder out wo againſt them that deſired the day of the Lord? Was there ſin in that deſire? was it a fault to wiſh for the day of the Lord? The day of the Lord, of which he there ſpeaks, is a day of judgment, or a day of tryal; why ſhould the Prophet denounce a wo againſt thoſe who deſire that day? It is a part of the character of the Saints in the New Teſtament, *To love the appearing of Chriſt* (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) Saints long for the day of the Lord, they pray for it, and O that the day of the Lord would come; why then doth *Amos* ſay, *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord?*

I anſwer, The Prophet may be underſtood,

Firſt, Of thoſe, who in a kind of prophane boldneſs deſired the day of the Lord, as ſome will do, calling God to judge them, or wiſhing that God would come to judgment; not that they have ground of confidence in the day of judgment, but only to clear themſelves in the judgment, and from the cenſure of men. The Prophet might well ſay, Wo to you who thus deſire the day of the Lord; you think you are hardly dealt with now by man; But it will be worſe with you in the day of the Lord.

Secondly, As there are ſome who in a bold prophaneneſs of ſpirit ſeem to deſire the day of the Lord, ſo there are others who call for and invite it impudently in ſcorn and mockery. Such are deſcribed by the Prophet (*Iſaiah* 5. 19.) *Wo to them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with a Cart-rope. That ſay, let him make ſpeed, and haſten his work that we may ſee it, and let the counſel of the holy One of Iſrael draw nigh and come, that we may know it.* They who draw iniquity with cords of vanity; that is, who make haſt to ſin, ſaid, let him make ſpeed, and haſten. What ſhould he haſten? The day of judgment, or thoſe judgments which the Prophet had often threatned. As if they had ſaid to the Prophet, You have often told us of the day of the Lord, and that he would reckon with us ſhortly; let him make ſpeed, and haſten the work that we may ſee it, and let the counſel of the holy one of *Iſrael* draw nigh; you have long ſpoken of it, as near, even as at the doors, but as we feel, ſo we believe no ſuch thing. The Apoſtle *Peter* Propheſieth of ſuch (2 *Pet.* 3. 3.) *In the laſt dayes there ſhall come ſcoffers, walking after their own luſts, and ſaying, Where is the promiſe of his coming? for ſince the fathers fell aſleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation. Where is the promiſe of his coming?* Pray, let us ſee the performance of it. Wo to you that ſcoffingly deſire the day of the Lord, you will find it no jeſting matter when once it comes, it will be a ſad a black day to you, who now make your ſelves merry with it.

Thirdly, Thus, *Wo to you that deſire the day of the Lord*, being conceited of your own innocency, as ſure (in your own ſence) that God will acquit and pronounce

you

you innocent. For the Prophet speaks of those who had fallen under and were vext with the reproofs of the word; these desired the day of the Lord, supposing he would deal more gently with them then those Prophets had done, he would not be so severe, or not judge them so bad as the Prophets reported them to be; saith he, *Wo to you that desire the day of the Lord*, because you think his Prophets and Ministers handle you too roughly; you know not what you say; if our day be so terrible, how terrible will the day of the Lord be? It will be as if a man should flee from a Lyon, and a Bear should meet him: you think we are Lyons, if you flee from our day, the day of the Lord will be as a Bear, it will tear you worse. When (in this case) you appeal from us to the tribunal of God; it is as if a man leaning on a wall, and a Serpent should bite him; such you will find the day of the Lord when 'tis too late. What's our day to the day of the Lord? The day of the Word is a terrible day of judgment upon the consciences of wicked men. But the day of the Lords Judgment is far more terrible. Some have had a hope that the hell of the damned beyond this life, is not so bad as the hell of conscience, when a man is condemned of himself in this life, and have therefore even wisht for that hell, that they might be eased of this; yea some have ventured upon hell, thrusting themselves by a violent hand out of this world, that they might escape the hell of a perplexed conscience, which they felt in it. Whereas alas, it is but fleeing from a Lyon to meet with a Bear, or going from the heat of the Sun into the heat of the fire. Thus the Text in *Amos* (taken in either of these senses) is a proof of the point in hand, that wicked men who would avoid this or that judgment of God in this life, do but run themselves upon some worser judgment here; even as they who would avoid the judgment of God in his word shall find a sorer judgment at the end of the world. *Moses* useth that phrase *of fleeing seven wayes*, twice in one Chapter (*Deut.*28.7.25.) At the seventh verse, it is threatned against the enemies of the people of *Israel*, in case they did obey; and in the twenty fifth verse 'tis threatned against *Israel*, in case they disobeyed, that *they should flee seven wayes.* The meaning is not that they should have seven or many wayes of escaping, or that in any of these wayes they should be safe; for the intent of *Moses* is to shew that they should no way or no where be safe: For they should be assaulted and compassed about with so many dangers, that they should flee seven wayes, that is, all manner of wayes, endeavouring to escape, but they should escape in never a one of them: though they fled seven or seven hundred wayes, yet God would send a sword, as many wayes after them, or if they mist and escaped one sort of evil, another should be ready at their side; As *Zophar* hath it, *He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him thorow.*

Vers. 25. **It is drawn, and cometh out of his body.**

What is drawn? We may refer it to the arrow of the bow before spoken of; *The bow of steel shall strike him through, it is drawn, and cometh out of his body.* Out of what body? Some by the Original word which we translate *body*, understand the *Quiver* in which the arrow was; for the quiver is to the arrow as the body is to the soul, *The sheath of it.* Now saith he, *it is drawn, and cometh out of his body*; that is, it is pulled out of his quiver, and put into the bow ready to be shot: Thus Mr. *Broughton*, *The Arrow shall be drawn and come out of the quiver:* Others conceive, that by *body*, we are to understand the body of him that shoots, because the Archer hangs his quiver by his side, and when he pulls out an arrow, it is as if he pulled it out of his body.

Lastly, Take it properly, *it is drawn, and cometh out of his body*, that is, out of the body of the wicked man, against whom it was shot, it strikes him through, and cometh out of his body beyond him. And so it is a circumlocution to express a deep and deadly wound. *It is* (that is, the bow is) *drawn, and cometh out of his body*; That is, the shot hits the man and comes out of his body. So the next clause suits it.

Yea the glittering sword cometh out of his gall.] As if he had said; As soon as he is stricken through with the arrow, he shall be run through with the sword too. The word which we translate *glittering sword*, properly signifies *lightning*, and in that language the *blade of a sword*, because when a man brandisheth a well furbished sword, it glitters and flashes in the eye like lightning. So the Prophet *Ezekiel* describes the sword, (*Chap.* 21. 9, 10.) *A sword, a sword is sharpned, and also furbished; It is sharpned to make a sore slaughter, it is furbished that it may glitter.* And as it signifies *a sword*, so also (upon the same ground) *the head of an arrow*; For if the head of an arrow, of steel, or brass, be made very bright, it glitters in the air like lightning, as a sword doth; And we read in Scripture of making arrows bright as well as swords; as the same Prophet speaks in the same Chapter (*vers.* 21.) *The King of Babylon stood at the parting of the way, at the head of the two wayes to use divination: he made his arrows bright.* And (*Zech.*9.14.) *His arrows shall go forth as lightning.* Thus we may render it here, keeping still to the allusion *of lightning*; *The bow of steel shall strike him through, it is drawn, and cometh out of the body, and glittering it comes out of his gall.* So, Mr. *Broughton*; *The arrows shall be drawn and come out of the quiver, the head shall be in his gall*; That is, the head of the arrow. But whether we expound the word (*Barak*) of the sword or of the arrow-head, it makes no difference as to *Zophars* scope, which is only to shew that the wicked man shall certainly receive a deadly blow.

There is yet another translation, which draws up the Text into the form of a similitude, taking the word (*Barak*) in its proper sense, for *lightning*, thus; *The bow of steel shall strike him through, it is drawn, and cometh out of his body, and shall pass through his gall like lightning*; As if he had said, it shall pass speedily and swiftly; an arrow or a bullet from a strong bow passeth like lightning. What makes such speed as lightning? Indeed the motion of an arrow is slow and sluggish in comparison of lightning; and therefore in Scripture the coming of a thing or person like lightning, notes the most sudden coming. When Christ would set forth the quickness and unexpectedness of his appearance, he saith, *As the lightning cometh out of the East and shineth even unto the West, so shall the coming of the Son of man be* (Mat. 24.27. And thus to say, a sword or an arrow shall pass through the gall as lightning, carrieth this sense, it shall pass suddenly. The vulgar translation keeping it to that literal construction of the Hebrew, useth the participle, and *lightning in the bitterness of it*; that is, in the bitterness of that death which follows the wound inflicted: Death is bitter, and those things which death in them, may well be said to have bitterness in them. These words being thus an enforcement of the same thing more lively to describe the unavoidable destruction and sudden death of this wicked man, by some killing weapon, sword or bow, or any of like use and nature, I will only give this Note from it;

The wound which God gives his enemies, is an incurable wound.

He that is stricken through the gall, is past cure; we had that word (*Job* 16.) Where complaining, he saith; *He hath poured my gall upon the ground*; that is, he hath given me *a deadly wound.* When a beast is kill'd for food, the gall is poured out, lest that should imbitter the parts about it: And if once the gall be wounded through, there's no remedy against death. The Lord can send a Judgment, which shall be like an arrow passing through the gall, which all the Physitians in the world cannot heal. When the people of *Israel* saw their wound, they went to this King, and to that King, to the *Assyrian*, and to King *Jareb*, yet they could not heal them, nor cure their wound, (*Hos.*5.13.) They were as a people stricken through the gall. God can give wounds which no Balsom of mans devising or compounding can cure.

Terrors are upon him.] These words shew the inward effects of the judgments of God upon a wicked man; *Terrors are upon him.* The word is *Emims*, which in Scripture is sometimes used, to note a sort of terrible people (*Deut.*2.10.) *The Emims dwelt there in times past, a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims.* The *Emims* were a great and tall people, a race of Giants; and they had their name *Emams* from a root signifying *fear*, because their great stature, and vast limbs raised the passion of fear in their beholders. *Emims are terrible ones.* So, some render it here, *The Emims shall fall upon him*, that is, men of fierce and cruel spirits, men of mighty power, and implacable malice.

Acies vel lamina gladii appellatur Hebraicè ברק *fulgur, quod fulgoris more splendeat.*

Et fulgurans in amaritudine sua. Vulg.

נוח & נר *proprie corpus metaphoricè vagina. Egrediens de vagina sua.* Vulg.

Exlit è corpore i. e. *evagina, quæ est velut corpus gladio intra quam continetur, vel si ad sagittam referas est pharetra.* Merc.

But we take the word properly, as noting inward terrour: fear, and anguiſh take hold of a man, worſe then any *Emims* or Giants in the world; A man were better to have all the ſons of *Anak* take hold of him then the fear of which the Text ſpeaks. This argueth the compleatneſs of a wicked mans miſery, he ſhall not only feel the iron weapon, and the bow of ſteel, and the glittering ſword, outward terrours, but he ſhall be fill'd with inward terrours. His ſoul is wounded worſe then his body. Some interpret it near this ſenſe, of evil ſpirits and furies that vex the minds of wicked men, as if legions of theſe ſhould be alwayes about him. The vulgar Latine ſaith, *The horrible ones ſhall fall upon him.* This point hath been ſpoken to at large (*Chap.* 15.24. & *Chap.* 18.21.) and therefore I ſhall not proſecute it in this place, but refer the Reader to thoſe former diſcuſſions of it. Only take this Obſervation:

Venient ſuper eum horribiles. Vul.

God can wound within, as well as without.

He hath weapons to ſmite the ſpirit, as well as the fleſh; when the arrow and the ſword are in the fleſh, fears and terrours ſhall beſet the ſpirit of his enemies. Man can both ſpeak and act terrible, but God only can ſend out Terrours. *Terrours are upon him.*

Verſ. 26. **All darkneſs ſhall be hid in his ſecret place.**

All darkneſs] Imports darkneſs of all ſorts, and of all degrees. All darkneſs, is whatſoever can be called darkneſs. Or all darkneſs, is perfect darkneſs, pure darkneſs, darkneſs without the leaſt mixture of any light; Darkneſs which hath nothing but darkneſs in it. God is all light; Therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *He is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.* There is not the leaſt tincture of darkneſs in him. The portion of this man is all darkneſs, and no light, no comfort at all, wholly darkneſs. So the word (*Col*) is uſed (*Eccleſ.* 12.13.) *Fear God, and keep his Commandments, for this is* (*Col ha Adam*) *All man*, that is, the whole duty of man. Thus here, *All darkneſs ſhall be upon him.* We may diſtinguiſh this darkneſs, into outward, or inward darkneſs; ſpiritual or corporal darkneſs. I have upon other paſſages ſpoken of both: therefore I forbear here. *All darkneſs ſhall*

Quaſcunque quæſierit latebras, ubi ſe tutũ fore putat & immunem à dei Judicio, id nihil ei proderit, ubiq; ei abditæ erunt tenebræ calamitatũ. Merc.

Be hid in his ſecret place.] Trouble ſhall lie cloſe like a thief to ſurpriſe him; As men hide themſelves in darkneſs, ſo this mans darkneſs ſhall be hid. Both words ſignifie to hide, or to lay a thing up. We may interpret it firſt of trouble upon the ſpirit of the wicked man. The mind and conſcience are ſecret places; Now as the mind and conſcience of the wicked man is defiled (*Tit.* 1.15.) as well as his hand and tongue, ſo his mind and conſcience ſhall be darkned, there ſhall be nothing but darkneſs there.

Secondly, Whereas he ſaid before, *The wicked man ſhall flee*; and he that flees, betakes himſelf to ſome ſecret place (hiding places are ſecret places.) Some therefore interpret it thus; He ſhall flee to ſome hole, or thicket in his retirement; but when he comes thither, all darkneſs ſhall be hid there, that is, he ſhall find no ſafety in thoſe places to which he flees for refuge. When he flees from affliction, he ſhall find affliction. The place whither he goeth for refreſhing, ſhall be filled with ſorrows. And the houſe of his expected freedom from trouble, will be but a ſtore-houſe of trouble, or his houſe of bondage. He that is himſelf unholy and prophane in all places, ſhall never find any place a Sanctuary to him.

All darkneſs ſhall be hid in his ſecret place.

Another renders it thus; *All darkneſs ſhall be hid becauſe of his ſecret*, that is, his ſecret ſins; As if he had ſaid, would you know why this wicked man is followed with ſword and arrow without, and with terrours within; all this pœnal darkneſs is upon him, becauſe ſinful darkneſs is hid in his ſecret place, or becauſe he keeps his ſin ſecret. *He* (as was ſhewed in the former part of the Chapter) *hides it under his tongue, and keepes it cloſe.* All darkneſs ſhall be upon him, becauſe of this beloved darkneſs remaining in him. Mr. *Broughtons* tranſlation ſeems to hold out this meaning, *All darkneſs ſhall be hid up for his ſtore*; and he puts in the margine, *for his ſtore of ſin*; he hath ſecretly laid up a ſtock and ſtore of ſin; which ſtock and ſtore of ſin is anſwered with all manner of darkneſs, with a ſtock and ſtore of puniſhment. This ſenſe hath occurred in divers paſſages, therefore I will only name the Obſervation,

The darkneſs of ſin bringeth darkneſs of ſorrow.

They who lay up ſtore of iniquity in ſecret, ſhall one time or other find a ſtore of miſery laid up for them. If we hide ſin and provide ſecret places for it, God will hide darkneſs for us in our moſt ſecret places. They who (when light comes towards them) love darkneſs more then light, ſhall be ſure to meet with darkneſs, where they moſt expected light.

A fire not blown ſhall conſume him.

What is this fire not blown? This circumlocution ſpeaks more then ordinary fire; we ordinarily make fires by blowing; but this is *A fire not blown.*

There are divers apprehenſions about this fire.

Firſt, A fire not blown, is expounded by ſome, metaphorically, of a fire in the conſcience; Many a wicked man finds fire in his boſome; an evil conſcience is like a flaming furnace, much worſe then *Nebuchadnezzars* furnace of fire when heated ſeven times more then ordinary. None have been ſo tormented and ſcorched, as they who have been caſt into theſe burnings; but I paſs that.

Secondly, Others by *this fire not blown*, underſtand corporal diſtempers; As if *Zophar* in this touched upon *Jobs* diſeaſed body; *A fire not blown, ſhall conſume him.* The Text may very well bear that notion; for there are many hot and fiery diſeaſes. Such fires are threatned (*Deut.* 28.22.) *The Lord ſhall ſmite thee with the conſumption, and the feaver, and with an inflammation, and an extream burning.* Here are three bodily diſeaſes, which (without ſtraining) may be called, *A fire not blown*; *A feaver, and an extream burning, and an inflammation.* God conſumes ſome men by ſuch fires. *Job* had much and very ſad experience of them.

Thirdly, Many of the Greeks interpret this fire not blown, of hell. There needs no bellows to kindle that fire. *The breath of the Lord as a river of brimſtone ſhall kindle it, Iſa.* 30. *ult. Tophet is prepared of old.* It needs no blowing to make it burn. But though the fire of hell may be called a fire not blown, yet I conceive this Scripture hath no relation to it.

Ignis Gehenna cum ſit incorporeus, neque ſtudio humano ſuccenditur, neque lignis nutritur, ſed creatus durat inextinguibilis, & ſuccenſione non indiget, & ardore non caret. Greg.

Fourthly, Others expound this fire not blown, of thoſe extraordinary fires which God ſends from heaven, to deſtroy enormiouſly wicked men. Thus he rained fire upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, which conſumed thoſe Cities (*Gen.* 19.24.) We read alſo of ſuch fires in the firſt Chapter of this Book, where it is ſaid, *The fire of God deſtroyed Job's ſheep*; poſſibly his friends would mind him of that here, as in many other paſſages, they cloſely hint to him the manner of Gods dealing with him.

Fifthly, A fire not blown, may be taken for the extream heats and ſcorchings of the Sun; Theſe in Scripture are called burnings, yea they are called fire, and we may truly call them, *A fire not blown.* (*Joel* 1.20.) *The beaſts of the field cry unto thee: for the rivers of water are dried up, and fire hath devoured the paſtures of the Wilderneſs.* What fire? only the heat of the Sun. God ſent heat and drought which burnt up the paſtures of the wilderneſs; and this the Prophet calls a fire. And beſides the heat of the Sun by day, the very cold of the night is a fire not blown; In the ſpring of the year, while the fruits and corn of the earth are young and tender, God many times ſends a Blaſting, which by a ſtrange kind of cold burns and ſcorches the budding fruits. The Latines call this *uredo*, which properly ſignifies a *burning*, we call it *Blaſting*.

חסיל a rad. חסל *Conſumere; aptiſſimè illa frugum uredo ignis non ſuccenſus dicitur quia non ab homine ſed à deo ſuccenditur.*

Sixthly, A fire not blown may be interpreted of that which is the kindler of all penal fires, namely, the anger and wrath of God. The wrath of God is often in Scripture compared to fire, *Pſal.* 78.21. *Pſal.* 18.4. *Deut.* 4.24. And ſo the ſenſe is, *A fire not blown ſhall conſume him*, that is, the anger of God ſhall conſume him. There is no ſtanding before the wrath of God: when that burns, it burns to conſumption. Hence the Apoſtle exhorts the Saints to beware of this fire (*Heb.* 12. *ult.*) *Let us have grace to ſerve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear*, (take heed of provoking God to anger) *for our God is a conſuming fire.*

Seventhly,

Seventhly, *A fire not blown*, is any great or terrible judgment. War is such a fire (*Ezek.* 20.47.) *Behold I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green-tree in thee, and every dry-tree*; That is, all sorts of people, rich and poor, strong and weak, young and old, shall be consumed; *The flaming fire shall not be quenched.* Great fires need no blowing, the business is to quench, not to kindle them. Fires made of green fewel will not kindle without much puffing and blowing; but dry light fewel is so conceptive of fire, that the very smell of fire puts it into a flame. The Judgments of God take oftentimes as suddenly as fire doth in stubble fully dry, as suddenly as a spark in tinder or Gun-powder; yea the green-tree, is as combustible in this fire as the fear and dry. And as this fire is easily kindled, so it is as hardly quenched. That which the Church speaks of her love to Christ (*Cant.* 8. 6,7.) is as true of the wrath of Christ against the wicked; *The coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench this wrath, neither can the floods drown it.* Mr. *Broughton* renders the Text, thus; *An unquenchable fire shall eat him up.* That fire needs no blowing to kindle it, which cannot be quenched.

Eightly, *A fire not blown*, may be a soft gentle fire; as if he had said, he shall consume secretly, and without noise.

Lastly, That which I rather pitch upon, is, *by the fire not blown*, understand those judgments which come no man knows how, sudden unexpected judgments. We have two sorts of fires; some fires are intentional, that is, we purpose to make them; such fires are for our use and service; nor is any thing more serviceable to us then fire; this intentional fire, is a fire blown. But Secondly, there are casual fires, accidental fires; A fire takes in a house, we see all on a flame, no man knows how. Those Judgments of God, whose beginnings and instruments we see not, are to us, as a casual fire, a fire not blown. I conceive, this is it which *Zophar* chiefly aims at, *A fire not blown shall consume him.* He is consumed, but he can give no account who or what kindled the fire.

Hence Observe, *God can raise up troubles, consuming troubles, immediately, or without any appearances from the creature.*

He causeth some fires without mans blowing; God needs not the help of the creature, either to do good or to do evil; As he *himself forms the light, so he creates darkness*, (*Isa.* 45. 7.) What the Apostle saith of our glorious estate hereafter (2 *Cor.* 5. 1.) *If the earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands*; that is, a house not made by the hand of man, but built by the immediate power of God; the same may be said of the calamitous state of many here, Their house is unmade or pull'd down, not with hands; They are ruin'd, but they cannot say which way; they are consumed, but they cannot say by whom the fire was kindled. There are many fires in the world, that is, troubles and evils which we may easily see how they come, and by whom they were blown up; there are bellows which blow up fires, the fires of discord and contention among brethren. These fires consume, Cities, and Countries, and Nations. The Prophet (*Amos Chap.* 7. 4, 5.) speaks of God contending by fire, which as we may interpret of war and drought, so of discords and jealousies in the bowels of that nation. These fires are too much blown in many places, to the consumption of many, and the hazard of all. And 'tis no hard matter to find out the bellows: We commonly call men of strife *Incendiaries*; they blow up and foment unnatural fires, by bitter speeches and provoking language. 'Tis the study of some men to kindle fires between party and party, between State and State, yea to make them of the same state and party suspitious of one another, till all be in a flame. How hath this fire been blown in these dayes? and we have sometimes seen the bellows themselves (as they well deserved) burnt in it. *By the blessing of the righteous* (saith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 11. 11.) *the City is exalted*; *But it is overthrown by the mouth* (that is, by the contentious words, and dividing counsels) *of the wicked.* These stir the coals, and blow up the fire. (*Prov.* 29. 8.) *Scornful men bring a City into a snare*, or, *set a City on fire*, as the Margin expresseth it. But though such men, and their enflaming practices are often discernable by all, yet sometimes the fire of trouble and contention kindles, while every one stands wondring who blowed it, or which way it was kindled: both Nations and persons have been ruined by an invisible hand; they are consumed and undone, that they know; but how it came about, they know not: as to them it was by a fire not blown. Some have complained, that it was more then all their misery to be under misery whose original they knew not. The Heathens have taken notice of this, as a great aggravation of sufferings. Not so much as this ease is given to the miserable, *to know whence their misery came, or by what hand they were undone.*

Nec hoc levamen deriquearumnis datum est, Videre salte & nosse quo pereant malo. Sen. in Agam. Act. 3.

The Lord hath infinite wayes to kindle fires upon us, and we shall not see who are the bellows that do it. That which is said of the fire in hell, *It hath heat in it, but no light in it*, is verified of many Judiciary fires here on earth; They have heat in them, but no light in them; Not only hath the afflicted no light of comfort in them, but no light of knowledge about them. 'Tis a smothering fire, and in this sense it may also be called a fire not blown; for the breath of the bellows in blowing draws the more subtile vapour out of the fuel, and causeth the flame: where there is no blowing, there is little flame: Such fires like the fire of hell, have heat, but no light. This should make us afraid to blow up the fire of divine displeasure against us, either by open or secret sins; seeing the Lord can consume sinners by secret fires, and kindle a flame upon them without blowing. It may be terrible to the Monarchs and Powers of the world to remember, what is prophesied by *Daniel*, That they shall be destroyed *by a stone cut out without hands* (*Dan.* 2.34.) that is, without any visible means, or humane preparations. It should make all Nations tremble before God, and take heed how they lift up their hands against him who can break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, the Gold, that is, all their power, even their most solid and best compacted power, by a power they never suspected, and whose original and rising they are not acquainted with. *A stone cut out without hands*, and *a fire kindled without blowing*, are expressions of the same general tendency; teaching us what great things God can do without noise, by unobserved yea unsuspected wayes.

Secondly, Note, *If God send a fire, it will take.*

A fire not blown shall consume him. Though it may seem a fire that lies dead, as that commonly doth which is not blown, though it look like a fire that hath no force, no flame in it, yet God will make it a consuming fire. There is no standing before the least of Gods judgments: when he commands them, execution shall be done. As was further shewed in opening the effects of the Iron-weapon, and of the bow of steel, which strike and pass through the gall of those who are the marks of Gods provoked indignation. Neither shall these arrows smite, and this fire not blown consume the wicked man in person only, but they shall reach all that relate and appertain unto him, as appears in the last clause or close of this verse.

It shall go ill with him that is left in his Tabernacle.

The word which we translate *to go ill*, signifies in the root of it, moral evil, as much as penal evil. These two are so near that they may well be expressed by one word: where moral evil goes before, penal evil will follow after. It shall go ill with them that do ill, unless their evil deeds be pardoned. It went ill with Christ while he was procuring pardon for evil-doers; and therefore it must needs go ill with them who are unpardoned. *It shall (surely) go ill with him*, or *he shall be wringed*, saith Mr. *Broughton*,

רַע *aut à* רָעַע *contero, aut à* יָרַע *male habuit.* Drus.

That is left in his Tabernacle.

This is expounded two wayes.

Some thus, *A fire not blown shall consume him*, and though he be *left in his Tabernacle*, yet he shall be afflicted. So 'tis meant of the wicked man himself, who if he escape the danger abroad, yet shall not be safe in his own house. They who give this sense relate it to *Job*; For when the fire of affliction had consumed his estate, yet *Job* was left in his Tabernacle, and supervived those calamities. Now saith *Zophar*,

Zophar, suppose he be left in his Tabernacle, yet it shall be ill with him: As if he had said, *Thy children, and thy substance are consumed, and thou art left in thy Tabernacle; but doth it not go ill with thee? Thou art full of diseases without, and hast a troubled mind within.* There is a truth in that.

But I rather conceive that this latter clause respects those who belong to the wicked man, then the wicked man himself. This renders the judgment more compleat and extensive. The Original word which we translate *left*, is applicable to things and persons. Some restrain it here in the first signification to his estate and goods. As if he had said, Fire shall consume him abroad, and if there be any thing left in his Tabernacle, any goods, fire shall destroy them too. It shall go ill with that which remains, if there be a poor pittance left, he shall be wringed in that, or that shall be wrung from him.

שריד *Tum ad personas, tum ad res referri potest.* Merc.

Secondly, We refer it to a person, to his children, and relations. As he himself shall fare ill, so they that are his shall fare no better. That the sins of wicked men redound to, and draw judgments upon their posterity, or those who are left in their Tabernacle, hath been observed from other Texts of this Book, and therefore I forbear to draw out or enlarge upon that point here.

VERS. 27, 28, 29.

The heaven shall reveal his iniquity: and the earth shall rise up against him.
The increase of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.
This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed to him by God.

Zophar having in the former passages of this Chapter set forth the miserable estate of a wicked man; in these three verses he winds up all, and concludes his discourse with a re-inforcement of his misery, by the joynt suffrage of heaven and earth against him, and by the determinate counsel and purpose of God concerning him.

The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, &c.

In the sixteenth Chapter, *verse* the eighteenth and nineteenth, *Job* had appealed to heaven, and earth, and as it were provoked both, to declare and speak what they could against him; *O earth, cover not thou my blood, my witness is in heaven.* Here *Zophar* tells him he shall have his wish, heaven and earth shall unite to discover his blood, that is, the bloody sins which he had committed, they shall bring in their testimony, and condemn him; *The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him.*

The heaven shall reveal.

There is a twofold revelation.
First, Formal and expres.
Secondly, Virtual and equivalent.

Latini per Metonymiã cœlum pro incolis cœlestibus terram *pro terrigenis accipiunt.*

In proportion to this twofold revelation, there is a twofold notion of heaven.

First, Some by *heaven*, understand the inhabitants of heaven, or they whose place and seat, is chiefly in heaven; *The heavenly dwellers shall reveal his iniquity.* Who are they? First, God himself, whose throne is heaven, as the earth is his footstool. Secondly, The Angels. Thirdly, The Saints; who though they dwell upon the earth while they are in the body, yet even then their conversation is in heaven; and when they go out of the body, their spirits go to heaven, or return to God who gave them; and therefore they may well be reckoned among the dwellers in heaven. If we expound *heaven* in the Text of these, and these revealing the iniquity of this wicked man, then the revelation is formal and expres: God himself, the good Angels, and good men, shall in their several degrees and capacities *reveal his iniquity.*

Secondly, Take the *heavens* properly and literally, and so they may be said to reveal his iniquity virtually, or equivalently, while they by the powerful dispose of God, hold out that which carrieth a signification of it. *As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work* (*Psal.*19.1.) so (in a sence) the heavens declare the sin of man, and the firmament sheweth what his hand hath wrought. Those judgments which fall from heaven cry out of and reveal the iniquity of wicked men on earth; sin troubles not only our own houses, but the powers of heaven. Some interpret the present place, as if *Zophar* did here intimate the fire which fell from heaven upon *Job's* flocks of sheep, and devoured them; as also the wind which smote the house where his children were feasting, and destroyed them. 'Tis proper enough for us to say, and very profitable for us to confess, that the heavens reveal or declare the wickedness of men, as often as extraordinary fires from heaven, or impression from the air by winds and storms scorch and smite them in person, or spoil their possessions.

Further, The heavens declare, when the heavens are shut up, when their influences are stopt, when they withhold the rain. As God threatens in the old Law (*Deut.*28.23.) *The heaven that is over thy head shall be brass*; That is, It shall yield thee no more moisture then brass doth. When the heavens are as hard brass, they declare the hard-heartedness of men, or that their hearts are like brass; as the Prophet concludes of the stubborn and unreformed *Jews* (*Jer.*6. 28.) *Thus the heaven shall declare his iniquity.*

Hence Note, *The iniquity of man shall be revealed.*

Cœlum & terra tanquam testes in ipsam judicis sententiam exequuntur, negando benedictionem & vim suam. Coc.

There is nothing hid, but it shall be made known; and rather then it shall not, senseless creatures shall make it known; and that which hath not a mouth shall utter it. *The heaven shall reveal, &c.* Yea if nothing else will reveal the iniquity of man, mans iniquity will reveal it self. Sin will prove like the ointment of the right hand of which *Solomon* saith (*Prov.*27.16.) that *it bewrayeth it self.* There is no way for us to get our sin covered, but by revealing it, nor hid, but by confessing it, *Psal.*32.1. *Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sin is covered.* Covered, how? Not with any covering of our own. The Prophet complains of such coverings, and shews the uselesness of them. (*Isa.*31.1.) *They cover with a covering, but not of my Spirit.* There are some that cover their sins, but it is with a cover of their own making, not with that covering which the Spirit of God hath made. The covering which the Spirit makes is only the free-grace and love of God in the righteousness of Christ; this is a covering of the Spirits making. Now they who cover with a covering which is not of this making, do indeed discover their sinfulness instead of covering their sin. For as the Prophet there adds, *These coverings are narrower then that a man can be wrapped in them.* And with whatsoever of our own we hide our sin, we do but shew our nakedness. Mercy covereth those iniquities which we confess, and those which we conceal, shall be discovered by Justice. *The heavens shall declare his iniquity.*

Secondly, Observe, *The extraordinary motions or suppressions of the heavenly powers, reveal the sins of men.*

Unusual apparitions in the heavens, fiery meteors and lightning, stormy winds and tempestuous confusions in the air, mind us of those confusions which rage in the lives and hearts of men. When the clouds of heaven are not dissolved into refreshing showers, when they do not give out their vertue to cherish and quicken the earth, these stops and checks are witnesses of mans iniquity; *The heaven shall declare his iniquity*;

And the earth shall rise up against him.

That is, all earthly things shall appear his enemies, and proclaim war against him. *Inanimates*, the very stones of the field, *Vegetables*, the trees of the wood, *Sensitives*, the beasts of the earth shall rise up against him. As when 'tis promised (*Chap.*5.23.) that *the stones shall be in league with the godly man, and the beasts at peace with him* (that is, he shall have benefit by them, and no hurt) this reveals his integrity and innocency. So when the Lord causeth the stones to fall out with a wicked man, and the beasts to turn upon him and rent him, this reveales his iniquity; yea not only these creatures, which are upon the earth, but the whole body or bulk of the earth declares it self his enemy; when God strikes the earth with barrenness, that it doth not bear nor yield its strength, when he denies the wicked man bread to eat, wine to drink, with other common conveniences

ces for this life, then the earth may be said to rise up against him. When man looks to the earth for corn, wine, and oyl, and findeth none, but it is as iron under him; when the grass withers, and the fruits of the earth are burnt up, this reveals his iniquity, and convinceth him of his barrenness in doing good, and fruitfulness in doing evil. Thus *the earth riseth up* (as an enemy, or as a witness) *against him.*

Hence Note, *All creatures arm against the wicked.*

The wicked are Gods enemies, the creatures will take part with their Lord. He is the Lord of Hosts, he can muster an host of worms, of lice, of flies, of any thing, of the most contemptible things upon the earth against the wicked of the earth; *The earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof.* As the earth and the fulness of it is at the Lords command and dispose, so also is the earth and the emptiness of it, the earth and the barrenness of it, at his command and dispose. *The earth shall rise up against him.*

Vers. 28. **The increase of his house shall depart, his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.**

The increase of his house.] The word which we render *increase*, signifies properly, *a bud, a bloom, or blossom.* And it is interpreted two wayes.

First, For the children of the wicked man; and though I find not the word applied in Scripture to children, yet indeed they are the chief increase of a mans house, they are his buds and blossoms. *This increase of his house*

Shall depart.] Or as the Original may be translated, *go into captivity.* So some take it here, *His children shall go into captivity, they shall be made bond-men and bond-women in a strange Land, or unto strangers.*

Secondly, As the word is applied to their children, in a metaphor, so properly to their riches or profits; These also are the increase of a mans house, his buds and blossoms: many wicked men blosom, bud, and grow green in outward prosperity, as *David* speaks, *I saw the wicked like a green bay-tree.* These buds and blossoms, or (as we render) *this increase of his house shall depart.* His treasure shall be led captive, taken and spoiled, or become the portion of strangers.

גלה *Revolare migrare.*

Again, As the verb signifies *to depart and be led captive*, so likewise *to reveal, or to make a thing appear.* Thus 'tis translated in the former verse; *The heaven shall reveal his iniquity.* Some give it that sence here; *The increase of his house shall be revealed, or made to appear:* which may be taken two wayes.

First, Thus, He hath secret riches, or riches in secret, he hath hidden treasures (treasure is expressed by a word in the Hebrew, which imports *hiding*, because men are apt to hide and lay up their treasures) treasures do not lie abroad, they are closely lodged. But saith *Zophar, his treasures that were hid shall appear, or be brought forth.* Those treasures which have not seen the Sun for many years, shall be seen in the open light. So the words are a predictive threat upon the increase of the wicked mans house; he hoarded and shut all up, he kept his gold and silver prisoners under lock and key, under irons and bolts, but a time shall come, when God will reveal the increase of his house, and bring all to light, the locks shall flee open, and the prisoners shall come forth. God will take away their coverings, and present those concealed treasures to the view of spoilers. *The increase of his house shall be revealed.* That's one way.

Secondly, The revealing of his increase may be expounded thus; God will make it appear at last how this man came by his increase, how he got his estate; he hath gotten much, and hath gone long for an honest man in common reputation; but God will make it appear, that he compassed this increase by indirect courses, by fraud, oppression, by deceit, and guile, by grinding the faces of the poor, or by wronging the rich; God will make it appear, that his sin, not his diligence, much less a blessing from above, gave him that great increase. This is a good sence; *The increase of his house shall be revealed*, the man shall be laid open, and it shall be manifest that his goods were ill gathered.

We render according to the signification of the word, not by revealing, or manifesting, but by *departing. The increase of his house shall depart*, or go into captivity; his treasures shall be taken, and transmitted into other hands. Thus the Lord threatned *Hezekiah*, a good King, (yet God threatned him) that the increase of his house should depart, and depart in this sence, that it should be carried captive (2 *Kin.* 20.17.) *Behold the dayes come that all that is in thy house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon, nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.* *Hezekiah* fell under that temptation of pride and vain-glory; He was ambitious to have it known in *Babylon*, what a rich Prince he was; therefore the Lord laid this judgment on him; *The increase of thy house shall depart and be carried captive.* Thou hast been forward to shew thy riches to strangers, therefore strangers shall spoil thy house, and transport thy riches into a far Countrey. Our glory ng in riches, or in any thing but God, provokes God to stain our Glory. Thus *Zophar* threatens the wicked man; *The increase of his house shall depart.*

And his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.

The Hebrew is, *Flowing away in the day of wrath*; we supply those words, *his goods*, yet the sence is full in the Original without them; *The increase of his house shall depart, and flow away in the day of his wrath.* We say, *And his goods shall flow away in the day of his Wrath.*

Flow away.] It is a metaphor taken from waters; and that two wayes; Either from water spilt upon the ground, of which the wise Woman of *Tekoa* said, *There is no gathering it up again.* Or from the ordinary flowing of water; there is an ebbing of water, and a flowing in of water. Here *flowing away* is ebbing. The flowing in of water is the flood; but the flowing away of water is the ebb. His goods shall ebb, they shall decrease, and flow away. The motion of some waters flowing away is swift, and with a kind of violence. Thus the increase of his house shall flow away, there shall be no stopping, no staying of it. What the Psalmist speaks of persons, is true also of things, (*Psal.* 90.5.) *Thou carriest them away as with a flood.* Floods are carried with a mighty force; so the goods of a wicked man flow away, or are carried as with a flood.

Again, The allusion may be to those waters which flow away insensibly. The decrease of some waters is not to be seen, yet they flow away and decrease. Such also is the decrease of some wicked men in their worldly enjoyments, they do not flow away violently, but slowly, and are long in decaying. In deep still Rivers you can hardly perceive the water move, and yet it moves; or that it ebbs, but yet it doth, till it comes to a dead low water. As it is with all trees and plants, we may perceive they have grown, but we cannot see them grow; so it is with many waters, we may perceive they have fallen, but we cannot see them fall. Thus insensibly at least the wicked mans Highest-flown estate, and *the increase of his house shall flee away.*

Thirdly, We may apply the allusion to waters which are carried or divided into many streams or rivolets. Thus the wicked mans increase flows away; God makes many cuts and sluces, to draw out his estate this way, and that way; this part runs into such a channel, and that into another; fire shall consume some, and water some, violent enemies shall take some, secret thieves, and unfaithful servants shall take the rest. Thus it shall be divided into several channels, till the flood be made dry. *The increase of his house shall flow away.*

And when?

In the day of his wrath.

Of whose wrath? In the day of the wrath of God. That is, when God appears angry, and manifests his wrath. There is no change in God; As he is not at all moved by any passion, so that which for our understanding is expressed of him by a passion, doth never move. His love and his wrath, his favour and his displeasure, are fixed from everlasting to everlasting. The Scripture calls that a day of Gods wrath, when he puts forth his wrath in the visible tokens and evidences of it; as that also is called in Scripture a day of his mercy, and grace, of his patience and long-sufferance, when he declares himself in grace and mercy to his people: so then, the *day of wrath* is that season, whensoever it is, wherein nothing but wrath and visions of

amazement

amazement appear to wicked men. There is a twofold day of wrath, a leſſer, and a greater. The leſſer day of wrath is here in this world; when judgment breaks forth, and divine anger is ſtampt upon every former enjoyment. The great day of wrath is in the world to come. Then wrath ſhall be poured out to the utmoſt. That will be a day, as of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God to all, ſo a day of the revelation of the dreadful wrath of God to moſt. *Zophar* here intends the former, the leſſer day of wrath. *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall flow away in the day of his wrath.*

Hence Note, *When judgment goes forth, wrath goes forth.*

There are dayes of great affliction to the godly, which are not dayes of wrath, but of love, *Whom I love I chaſten.* There may be a time, when the increaſe of a believers houſe departs, and all his goods flow away like a ſtream, and yet that no day of wrath, but only a day of trial. Floods of temptation do not drown, but waſh the furniture of grace, that increaſe of the ſoul never flows away. But judgment is ever mingled with the wrath of God, in the cup of ungodly men: perſonal Judgments are ſo, and ſo are publick judgments: Wo to a provoking people when judgment appears, for that is the appearance of wrath, and bears in its face the image of a fiery indignation to conſume the Adverſary. *Moſes* ſaw wrath in that plague with which God ſmote the people of *Iſrael* (*Num.* 16.46.) *There is wrath gone out from the Lord, the plague is begun.* And therefore he haſtens *Aaron* to the duty of his place. *Take* (ſaith he) *a Cenſer and put fire therein from off the Altar, and put on incenſe, and go quickly to the Congregation, and make an Atonement for them.* Thoſe ceremonial atonements, typified the Atonement of Chriſt, who alone delivers us both from preſent wrath, and from that wrath which is to come.

Secondly, From the effect of this day of wrath; *The increaſe of his houſe ſhall depart, and his goods ſhall flow away in the day of wrath.*

Obſerve, *If the wrath of God go forth againſt a man, no good thing will ſtay with him.*

His increaſe will be gone, riches will ſay, we muſt depart and flow away; credit will depart, health will depart, friends will depart, if once wrath come in preſence. God is wroth with thouſands of wicked men, whoſe increaſe doth not depart, nor do their goods flow away, they rather flow in abundantly; but if once God declare and let out his wrath, their fulneſs turns to emptineſs, and their increaſe haſtens to be gone. *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* And if God be againſt us, what can be for us? As the love of God eſtabliſheth the creature to us, and makes that which (like quick-ſilver) can hardly be fixed, as firm to us as a rock of Adamant; ſo the wrath of God ſhakes our hold of the creature, and makes thoſe things which we looked upon as a rock of Adamant, our lands, our friends, our comforts and relations, diſſolve like ſnow before the Sun, and flow away like water. There are three wayes, in which the increaſe of a mans houſe departs and flows away in the day of Gods wrath.

Firſt, By prodigality, and that ſometimes his own; God gives up ſome to ſcatter and ſpend that vainly, which they got here unjuſtly; but moſt uſually it flows away, and the houſe of the wicked man with the whole increaſe of it, is (as we ſay) thrown out at the windows, by the prodigality of a ſpend-thrift heir.

Secondly, His increaſe departs by the oppreſſion of others. As he took violently or fraudulently from others; ſo God gives him up to ſons of violence and fraud, who take all from him. Thus the Prophet threatens (*Iſa.*33.1.) *When thou ſhalt ceaſe to ſpoil*, (A wicked man may ceaſe from ſome ſin, not becauſe he repents of it, but becauſe he is glutted with it, or barred from it; now when thou ſhalt thus ceaſe to ſpoil) *thou ſhalt be ſpoiled, and when thou ſhalt* (upon theſe terms) *make an end to deal treacherouſly, they ſhall deal treacherouſly with thee.*

Thirdly, His increaſe flows away by a ſecret curſe. A man ſees the increaſe of his houſe departing he knows not how, he perceives his goods flowing away, but he can give no reaſon of it. For as ſome men increaſe, and goods flow in unto them they ſcarce know how themſelves, their care and labour hath not been more then other mens, yet they grow rich beyond other men. As the Lilly attains her beauty (as Chriſt ſaith, *Mat.* 6.) without labour or ſpinning, ſo it is with ſome, they get the beauty of the world, though (comparatively) they neither labour nor ſpin for it; wealth drops into their boſoms, and golden ſhowers fall into their laps. Now, (I ſay) as ſome grow rich they know not how; ſo others grow poor they know not how. When they are called to an account, they cannot ſay how their eſtate waſted: Ask them, have you had bad debts? No: Have you had loſſes at Sea? No: They are undone, but ſee not what hath done it. What the Prophet (*Hag.*1.6) ſpeaks of wages earned, is true of all their wealth gained, it is as put *into a bag with holes*, or *pierced through*. While a man takes his mony out at the mouth of the bag, he knows how it goes away, and what becomes of it; but if his bag have holes in it, and his mony ſlip out there, he cannot ſay what's become of it; Holes in the bag are nothing elſe but a ſecret curſe. That alſo is meant by the ſame Prophet (*verſ.*9.) *When ye brought it* (that is, your goods) *home, I did blow upon it, or blow it away.* If God do but blow or breath upon our good things in anger, they are blaſted and preſently blown away, or they melt and flow away. The Prophet (*Iſa.*64.1.) ſpeaks of the flowing down of the Mountians; *O that thou wouldeſt rent the heavens, that thou wouldeſt come down, that the mountains might flow at thy preſence.* Mountains are firm and abide for ever in their place; Rivers flow, but who ever ſaw mountains flow? What mountains doth he mean? not natural, but metaphorical mountains; the mountains of humane ſtrength, riches and greatneſs: theſe, ſome pile up as ſo many mountains, to ſecure themſelves by; they call riches their mountain, and worldly power their mountain. (Holy *David* looked upon his power and riches as a mountain, *Pſal.* 30.7. *Lord in thy favour thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong.*) But if the Lord rent the heavens, and come down in a day of wrath, theſe mountains flow away; and what was ſuppoſed as ſtedfaſt as a rock, proves as unſtable as water.

Zophar in the laſt verſe of this Chapter, winds up all in a rhetorical acclamation.

Verſ. 29. **This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God.**

As if he had ſaid, Review what I have ſpoken, conſider my words again, I cannot abate you one ſyllable, this, and all this that I have ſaid is true, I will not recal a tittle of it; *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God.* Both parts of this verſe carry the ſame mind and meaning.

This is the portion of a wicked man from God.] The word which we render *portion*, ſignifies *ſweetneſs*, as alſo *flattery*, becauſe many are delighted with flattery; flattering words are ſweet words. So 'tis rendred *Chap.* 17.5. Some taking that ſence of the Original, conceive *Zophar* ſpeaking ironically, or in a kind of ſcorn to *Job*. As if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt expected good from God, or that he ſhould ſpeak kindly to thee; thou haſt waited when ſweet ſuggered words ſhould drop from heaven into thine ear: here are the flatteries, theſe the ſoothings which God will give thee; remember what I have at large diſcourſed; that's thy portion; Thy glory ſhall be made as dung; thy Children ſhall beg; the enemy ſhall devour thy ſubſtance; the ſteel bow and the ſword ſhall ſtrike thee through; wrath ſhall rain upon thee when thou art eating; Theſe are delicates prepared for thee, theſe the pleaſant morſels thou art like to have.* We render, *This is thy portion, or thy part.* And ſo it is an alluſion to the manner of feaſting, and banquetting, where the meat is divided into ſeveral diſhes and meſſes, every one hath his part, or portion, or ſo many have their meſs: Now ſaith *Zophar*, this is the meſs of meat that God hath provided for a wicked man, here are the diſhes, and the courſes which ſhall be ſerved up to his Table, in ſorrowful feaſt; *This is the portion* (or proviſion) *of a wicked man.*

Pars, portio tralatio à conviviis, ubi cuiq; ſua portio etiam calix dabatur. Druſ.

From God.] The word is *Elohim*, which is applied to God as a Judge; As if he had ſaid, God the moſt wiſe juſt and impartial Judge, hath ſet this out for his portion. He hath not ſaid this in haſt, or given it out in paſſion, but

but as a Judge upon mature deliberation, and the ſerious weighing of his caſe. God loveth judgment, and this is the award, the Judgment, which he hath paſſed concerning ſuch a wicked man.

And this is the heritage appointed him by God.

נחלת אמרו *Hæreditas dicti ejus. Hæreditas verborum ejus.* Vulg. *Hæc eſt portio quã ipſe ſibi comparat ſermonibus ſuis & maledicentia ſua.* Jun. *Portio ſermonis ejus, i.e. ejus quod adverſus eum dictum eſt & decretum à domino.* Merc. Rab. Sol. מאל *à deo forti & potenti ad exequendum decreta & judicia ſua in impiũ* Merc.

The Hebrew is, *This is the heritage of his word from God:* ſo ſome render it; we put in the margine, *This is his decree from God.* The Original may be taken, either for the word of the wicked man, or the word of God himſelf. Some interpret in the firſt ſence; *This is the heritage of his word, by, or from God*; that is, God hath ſet out this heritage as due to him for his word, or words; all this ſhall come upon him for his ill words, or blaſphemies. *This is the heritage of his word*; this he hath got by his ungoverned tongue, and unſavory language; *Words coſt many a man dear.*

But underſtand it rather of the word ſpoken againſt him by God; And ſo *word* is put for *decree* or *appointment*; as we tranſlate, *The heritage appointed him by God:* That is, God hath determined thus concerning him by an irrevocable decree. As mercies are under an appointment, ſo alſo are Judgments. Every heritage of man is laid out by God.

We have God in both parts of the verſe, but under two different titles in the Original. In the former part, *Elohim*, here *El*. *This is the portion of the wicked man from Elohim the Judge, and the heritage appointed him by El, the ſtrong God, or the puiſſant.* As if he had ſaid, *Let not the wicked man think (though it be a hard ſentence) to avoid the execution of it; for as the Judge is juſt to determine that which is his due, ſo he is ſtrong to ſee the execution done. This is the heritage appointed him by the ſtrong, the mighty, the powerful God; who will not abate any thing in the execution of what he hath ſpoken, and declared againſt him.*

κλῆρος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. Sep. *ab epiſcopo à viſitatore dei haud dubio providentiã & pervigilẽ oculũ in impios qui ſe eum latere putant ſignificare voluerunt. Deus eſt παντεπίσκοπος.* Dionyſ.

The Septuagint render this word ſomewhat differently; *This is the heritage appointed him by the Biſhop or Overſeer*, which is a periphraſis of God, who hath the view and inſpection of all, who is the viſitor General and ſuperintendent of mankind. Hereby intimating the provident and watchful eye of God over all the wayes of men, to protect and reward the righteous, to puniſh and take revenge upon the wicked.

Obſerve Hence, Firſt, *The portion of a wicked man is decreed, and appointed by God.*

The portion and heritage of the Saints is of Gods appointment. And as he doth it, ſo they are willing he ſhould do it, yea, it is their comfort that he doth, and will do it. They would not be their own carvers, nor have the ſetting out of their own portion, either in temporals or eternals; It pleaſeth them beſt that all ſhould be of Gods appointment. Thus it is with wicked men too, whether they will or no. They would fain be their own carvers, they would have another portion, either for matter or meaſure in this world then God aſſigns them. If he aſſign their portion in good things (as he doth ſometimes) yet they would have it larger then he gives, they would have more then he appoints, they are not ſatisfied with his proviſion. But when their portion is aſſigned in wrath and judgments, they cannot at all ſubmit to that, yet they muſt, for it is appointed them by God. The portion of a wicked man may be conſidered under a double notion. Sometime it is called *wages*, ſometimes, *an inheritance*. Wages, is due to a ſervant, an inheritance is due to Children, or to a Son; under both theſe notions the portion of a wicked man is ſet out in Scripture. It is wages for his ſin-work; He is the ſervant of ſin; and, *The wages of ſin is death*, all manner of deaths; ſin payes all its ſervants in Black-money. And as the wages, ſo the inheritance of ſin is death, the portion which wicked men receive as children of wrath, as children of the Devil (ſo Chriſt calls them, *Joh.* 8.44.) is nothing elſe but death, their whole eſtate lies in the valley of the ſhadow of death. The troubles of this life are at leaſt the ſhadows of death, or a kind of death, and they are their portion; The diſunion of ſoul and body at the end of this life, is death in kind, and that is their portion. The everlaſting ſeparation of ſoul and body from the face or favourable preſence of God, is the moſt deadly death. This alſo is *the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him of God.*

That this is their portion, ſtands in a double oppoſition.

Firſt, To the opinion which others have of them. The men of the world account them very happy, and think they have a good portion. But this is the portion appointed them by God; though many flatter, and applaud, admire and adore their felicity, as if they were the only men in the world, yet in oppoſition to this, ſaith God, *miſery is their portion*, they are the moſt unhappy men in the world.

Secondly, This portion appointed by God ſtands in oppoſition to what their own hearts appoint them, or at leaſt point them to; their own hearts ſpeak peace, and aſſure them all is well, and ſhall end well; For as flatterers and fawners never deal plainly with them, nor tell them of their miſerable end, ſo neither do their own hearts. (*Pſal.* 36. 2.) *The wicked man flatters himſelf in his own eyes, till his iniquity be found hateful.* He thinks his way is good, and that his end ſhall be better; he hears of, and delights in nothing but flattery; others flatter him, which is bad and dangerous enough; and he flatters himſelf, which is worſt and moſt dangerous of all. In oppoſition to both theſe flatteries, 'tis ſaid, *This is the portion of the wicked man from God.* God tells him it will be thus, and he doth not flatter. (*Pſal.* 11. 5.) *The Lord tryeth the righteous*; he layes many afflictions upon his own people, *but upon the wicked he will rain an horrible tempeſt, this ſhall be the portion of their cup.* And again (*Pſal.* 75. 8.) *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, the wine is red*; (red with wrath, in the day of Gods wrath) *It is full of mixture* (it hath no mixture of good, no ſweetneſs at all in it, but all ſorts of evil are mingled in that cup) *and he powres out of the ſame* (upon many occaſions he powres it out in the world) *but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring out and drink.* They have not only the cup, but the dregs of the cup, that is, the worſt of the cup; For as in a good cup, the deeper the ſweeter, ſo in an evil cup, the deeper the worſe: the dregs are the worſt, the bottom is the bittereſt of a bitter cup. Therefore God puts this word into the Prophets mouth (*Iſa.* 3.) *Say to the righteous it ſhall be well with him: ſay to the wicked it ſhall be ill with him*; tell him, evil ſhall be his portion, tell him from me it ſhall be ſo. *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven, againſt all unrighteouſneſs; Tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil*; That is, on every ſoul that lives and dies doing that which is evil.

But here a Queſtion ariſeth; *Is it thus with all wicked men?* How are we to underſtand this propoſition; *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God?* Do not wicked men divide the good, the beſt things of this world among them? Is not pleaſure their portion, and riches their heritage? Do not the tabernacles of robbers proſper? as *Job* ſaid, *Chapter* the twelfth, Have not they the fatteſt ſhare, and the faireſt lot in this life? How then doth *Zophar* (ſpeaking of temporal judgments and troubles) ſay, *This is the portion of a wicked man from God?* when we daily ſee wicked men, not a few, enjoying a pleaſant portion. Do not the diſpenſations of God vary from his threatnings and and comminations? or how ſhall we reconcile this propoſition with our experiences?

I anſwer, Though God gives wicked men, many portions of outward good things in this world, yet that doth not abate, much leſs croſs and contradict this commination. God gives ſome wicked men a great portion in the good things of this life upon many accounts, yet the event is not good to them upon any account.

Firſt, God gives them a portion as they are his creatures, how ſhould they live, and ſubſiſt elſe? God maintains all that he hath made, he is the houſholder. Under that relation of creatures they have alwayes ſomewhat in the world, and under another relation they may have very much. For

Secondly, Some wicked men are in the relation of his ſervants. And we may call the good which they have in

in the world, their wages, or a reward for some good service they have done in the world. The purposes of God are fulfilled, and his providences served, even by wicked men, and some wicked men do him eminent service. They who are evil, may do that which is good, for the matter, in the eyes of God. For though it be not possible to please God without faith (*Heb.* 11.7.) yet it is possible to serve him without faith; or though God be never pleased with the person doing a work without faith, yet he may be pleased with that work which is done without faith. A wicked man may do what God would have done, that pleaseth him, and he throws him in somewhat as wages for his work; sometimes, very great wages. *Jehu*, a wicked man, a man of a naughty heart, yet he did the work that was in Gods heart, in destroying *Ahabs* house. *Now*, saith God, *take the Throne for four generations*, a great reward, a whole Kingdom, and for four Generations to a wicked man (2 *Kings* 10.30.) God will not be behind-hand with any. They that have been instrumental for him, shall have so much as their work comes too; they who do it for a temporal reward (many will be very zealous for an outwardly real reformation, both in matters of Religion and civil administration, while not only their hearts are unchanged, but their lives unreformed, and all this they do to set themselves up in a worldly interest; now, even these) shall have their peny, they shall not loose their reward.

Thirdly, There is a kind of necessity that some wicked men should rise high, and be great, that they may be fitted to do the works which God hath appointed; as those others (of whom I spake last) are raised high, to reward and pay them for the work which they have done. As

First, For the scourging of other wicked men. God suffers one wicked man to prosper to vex another. Sometimes he scourgeth a whole Nation, by one wicked man; therefore he must prosper much. Usually there is a proportion between the work and the instrument. Great scourges are made of Great men.

Secondly, For the trying of his own people; if wicked men were not high, powerful, and prosperous, they could not persecute the righteous. *They who will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.* And there are some kinds of persecution which ungodly men (though they never want will, yet) cannot act till they have gotten power. Weak ones can mock and scoff; but they who kill and destroy must be strong.

Fourthly, Wicked men prosper that they may have opportunity to shew what is in their hearts, how vile they are. Half the wickedness of man appears not, if his portion be always short in the world. Many wickednesses in the heart of man cannot discover themselves and appear above-board, till they themselves are above and aloft in the world. For as afflictions upon the people of God, discover many corruptions in them which they did not think of, as murmuring, unbelief, and discontent, &c. They thought in their prosperity, that they could have born such a cross patiently, and quietly, and have taken it well at Gods hands; but when it comes upon them, they find corruptions stir, which till then stirred not. Therefore (*Deut.* 8.2.) God caused the people of *Israel* to wander forty years in the wilderness, to prove and try what was in their hearts. God knew, intuitively, what was in their hearts, but they did not know it, they did not conceive that there was so much vanity, and unbelief there, till God led them about and about to try them. So, wicked men, though their corruptions flow out fast enough, yet if they should be always kept to hard meat and want, their lusts would be stifled and starved, though not at all mortified. As the wit and parts of some are kept down by their poverty, so also are the lusts and wickednesses of many. But worldly affluence and warmth draw out corruption, as well as affliction doth: riches and power let the lusts and wickednesses of men loose as well as their wits and learning. *Hazael* was a cruel man, but he did not believe that there was so much cruelty in his heart as indeed there was (2 *King.* 8.13.) When the Prophet told him what he would do; *Doest thou think I am a dog* (saith he) *that I should do such things as these?* The Prophet replied; *The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be King of Syria.* As if he had said, thou shalt have a great portion, and much power put into thy hands, and then the wickedness of thy heart will appear fully; thou dost not know how nought thou art now, thy lust lies close in thy own spirit; But when thou art King of *Syria*, thou wilt have scope for thy cruelty, and then it will appear that I am a true Prophet in foretelling thee what bloody, what cruel work thou wilt make. *It would never be known how bad some are, if they should not enjoy much worldly good.*

Fifthly, The Lord gives some wicked men a rich portion in temporals, to take off the loves and to dull the desires of the godly to them. For when they see the best things of the world in their hands who are evil, they cannot but remember that God hath provided better things for them. And if God bestow so much upon those who rebel against him, and are his enemies, what hath God in store for them who love him, and are loved of him?

Sixthly, Hereby God commends his own patience, long-sufferance, and goodness. These Attributes are highly honoured and advanced by it. We also by this pattern are instructed to patience, long-sufferance and goodness towards others, though evil men and our enemies. Christ presseth love to enemies, by the example of God himself, (*Matth.* 5.45.) *He makes his Sun to shine upon the good, and upon the evil, and the rain to fall upon the just and unjust.* The Lord gives wicked men a portion here for our instruction; That we might learn to do good to our enemies; to feed them when they hunger, and when they thirst, to give them drink.

Seventhly, The good which evil men receive from God, leaves them without excuse, this stops their mouthes for ever; What can they say, when God pours out the vials of his wrath upon them who kickt against him, while he fed them and fill'd their vessels with abundance of outward blessings. As they who despise this riches of his goodness treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath; so, they shall have nothing to plead for themselves in the day of wrath. These are some of those accounts upon which wicked men, to whom God hath appointed misery as their portion, do yet at present receive a portion of outward prosperity.

But though upon these, and other considerations which might be added, the Lord puts exceptions to this general rule, *That misery is the portion of a wicked man*; yet the truth stands firm. For in that some wicked men are priviledged from it, it is a confirmation that all are lyable to it; *Exceptions ratifie the rule*: that some wicked men are exempted and excused from trouble, shews that is the proper portion of them all.

Again, I answer, First, This is fulfilled in the letter upon very many wicked men: look upon their lives, their portion is misery; though they scrape and heap much together, though they bud and blossom, yet their encrease goes into captivity, and their goods flow away: Their pompe is brought down, and their beauty is stained. 'Tis rare to find a wicked man flourishing to the end of his dayes, or his hoary head going to the grave in peace. As *David* observed of the Godly (*Psal.* 37.25.) *I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.* So they who have been young and now are old, have often seen the wicked who prospered a while, yet at last forsaken, and their seed begging bread.

Secondly, The Proposition stands firm upon this ground; because misery is the desert of wicked men; 'tis their heritage as they are children of disobedience, and their wages as they are workers of iniquity. Wrath is the portion appointed for them, though they have it not presently in their hands. We say of a child who is heir to a great estate, such lands are his heritage, his portion, though he hath nothing in possession, but the bread he eats, and the cloathes which he puts on. We say of a condemned malefactor, death is his portion, because he deserves death, and the sentence is gone out against him, though he be reprieved for many years after.

Thirdly, Though some wicked men are not actually in a miserable outward condition, yet they are subject to it every moment. The cloud hangs over them, and who can tell how soon it may break? The word is out, the decree is past, and who can tell how soon God may

seal

seal the Writ for execution, or command the judgment written to take hold of them, or be done upon them. They have no fence for it, no plea, nothing to keep it off, or avoid it with. *He that may justly expect evil at any time, is at no time free from it.*

Fourthly, The very present prosperity of wicked men is a punishment to them; their Table is their snare, and that which (according to the nature and use of it) should have been for their *welfare*, becomes (as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.* 69. 22.) *a trap*. Their good is evil to them, and it had been better for them if they had never had so much good. For as it had been better for a man not to have known the way of righteousness, then after he hath known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered to him, (2 *Pet.* 2. 21.) so it had been better for a man not to have enjoyed worldly happiness, then while he hath it, to be found out of the way of the holy commandment; seeing as the knowledge of truth, so the fruition of good, encrease the sin, and so the misery of those who abuse and walk unworthy of them. And because evil men always abuse the good which they enjoy, therefore the enjoyment of good is worse to them then the suffering of evil. And as God chastens and smites his own children in love, so he forbears to smite the wicked in anger; not to be punished is their punishment. The soarest stroak which revolting *Israel* felt, was expressed in these words, *Why should ye be stricken any more?* (Isa. 1. 5.) When wicked men prosper, it is a fore-runner of their perdition. So that if they have not misery their portion in kind or in the letter at all times, yet they have it in truth and reality. There is a threefold evil springing to a wicked man out of his present prosperity.

First, Prosperity hardens his heart; that's a spiritual judgment in temporal enjoyments.

Secondly, Prosperity is but fuel to his lusts, it draws out and multiplies the acts of sin. Now that which makes the heap of sin greater, makes the heap of wrath greater. Our suffering of evil is not only deserved, but proportioned by our doing of evil.

Thirdly, Present prosperity hath this evil consequent in it to him that is and continues evil, that, evil, when it comes it is the more grievous to him, by how much he hath been the more a stranger to and unacquainted with it. When God actually powers misery in kind upon a wicked man, who hath had a long time of worldly contentments, this makes him more miserable, because he was in a seeming state of happiness. It will increase his sorrow, when God comes to reckon with him (as possibly he will, in this life, and 'tis certain he will in the life to come) that he hath had a few years of joy. His short joyes will lengthen his sorrows, and he will be for ever the more sorrowful, because he hath had these tastes and glaunces of joy. For as the afflictions of a godly man are a blessing to him many wayes, and especially this way; because as the Apostle speaks, (2 *Cor.* 4. 17.) *Our light afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us* (not by way of merit, but of preparation) *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*: so we may say, the present prosperity of a wicked man is his curse, because it works for him, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of misery.

Lastly, (to shut up the point) As we may say of believers, that outward prosperity is their portion, and the heritage appointed to them by God, because they always stand under those promises of outward prosperity (*Matth.* 6. 33.) *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all other things shall be ministred unto you*: (1 Tim. 4. 8.) *Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promises of this life, and of that which is to come.* Upon these and the like Scripture-promises (I say) we may conclude that prosperity in this life is the portion of every godly man (because they are the heirs of those promises which concern the good things of this life, as well as of those which concern eternal life) though it please God in his wisdom to exercise them under outward wants, and to keep them in heaviness through manifold temptations all their dayes. So it is a truth, that in this life misery is the portion of wicked men, because they always stand under all the threatnings which are written in the book of God. Though it pleaseth God for the reasons before remembred, or for any other reason lockt up in his own bosom, to give them a rich portion in outward blessings, and to cause their cup to overflow with the fading dying comforts of this present life.

Thus far *Zophar* hath spoken, and he speaks no more. *Job* gives answer in the next Chapter, with which possibly he was satisfied, and so joyned in opinion with him; or gravell'd, and so had no more to say against him; or so deeply offended, that he either would not, or saw it bootless to say any more.

CHAP. XXI. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

But Job *answered, and said,*

Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolation.

Suffer me that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, mock on.

As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?

Mark me, and be astonied, and lay your hand upon your mouth.

Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

JOB having received this second charge from his three friends; all three concluding, as in the first, that they are the worst of men, whose sufferings are worst. Having (I say) heard out his friends in their second charge, he now desires that they would hear him, *vers.* 1. But Job answered, and said,

Vers. 2. Hear diligently my speech.

In which speech, *Job* answers their Arguments, and refutes them more clearly and convincingly, then he had done in his former answers; affirming contrary to what *Zophar* had last, and his other friends before him, asserted, *That the best men are not priviledged from the soarest evils, and that the vilest are sometimes not visited with any evil.*

The scope and sum of his whole discourse may be drawn out into these three propositions.

First, *That all wicked men are not always afflicted with great evils in this life.*

Secondly, *That only wicked men are not afflicted with evils in this life.*

Thirdly, *That many wicked men enjoy much good in this life, and have all things to their hearts content, even unto their last breath; and not only so, but their children inherit and succeed them in the possession of those outward blessings which themselves enjoyed.* Which three assertions being confirm'd, the whole building of *Zophar*, and of his two other friends, must needs shake and fall to the ground.

And as in theſe three aſſertions, we have the ſum of *Job's* argumentative part: ſo the whole Chapter may be conſidered in three parts.

Firſt, An Exordium, or Preface.

Secondly, A refutation of their arguments, or his anſwer to their propoſals.

Thirdly, The concluſion, or pre-oration of the whole.

The Exordium or Preface is contained in the ſix former verſes of the Chapter.

His anſwer to their arguments extends from *verſ.* 27. inclusively to the end of *verſ.* 33.

The concluſion is *verſ.* 34. *How then comfort ye me*, &c.

The context under preſent diſcuſſion, contains the Preface; *Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolation.* This Preface hath two things chiefly in it.

Firſt, It tends to the gaining of attention, to what *Job* had further to ſay.

Secondly, It carries in it a reprehenſion of what his friends had already done.

Firſt, It carries in it a deſire of attention to what he had to ſay; and that by a fourfold argument, or he moves for attention upon four grounds.

Firſt, Becauſe if they did hear him diligently, it would be matter of conſolation.

Secondly, He moves for it from the common duty of man, who ſhould not judge, much leſs condemn another, before he hath heard him; and this he layes down, *verſ.* 3. *Suffer me that I may ſpeak, and after that I have ſpoken, mock on:* As if he had ſaid, *It is a duty which all men owe their brethren, to hear them ſpeak before they judge them, eſpecially before they mock them: therefore ſuffer me to ſpeak, and then mock on if you pleaſe.*

The third argument, by which he craves attention, is from the principal object, whom his diſcourſe and complaint concerned, *verſ.* 4. *As for me, is my complaint to man*, &c. As if he had ſaid, *I complain to more then man, I complain to God, and God hears me, therefore ſurely ye ought; if God be intereſſed in what I have to ſay, ye ought not to take your ſelves diſingaged.*

The fourth argument is from the greatneſs of his preſent ſorrows; great enough they were to work aſtoniſhment, therefore ſurely great enough to deſerve attention (*verſ.* 5.) *Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed, and lay your hands upon your mouth.* And (*verſ.* 6.) he tells them, that the very remembrance of them did terrifie him, and that his fleſh did tremble, while he thought of the diſpenſations of God to him; therefore the matter was not light, or unworthy of a hearing.

Further, As in the Preface he challengeth attention to what he had to ſay, upon theſe four grounds, ſo likewiſe he cloſely reprehends what his friends had already done, and that in three things.

Firſt, He reprehends them for not having given him a due liberty of ſpeech (*verſ.* 3.) *Suffer me that I may ſpeak*; as if he had ſaid, *Ye have cut me off heretofore, and interrupted me, now ſuffer me to ſpeak.* While he begs this at their hands, he intimates, that as yet he had been denied it, or that it had not been granted him with ſuch freedom as his caſe and ſtate called for.

Secondly, He reprehends them as having mocked him when he ſpake, or as having ſlighted him when he anſwered; that is implied in the cloſe of *verſ.* 3. *After that I have ſpoken, mock on.* While he ſaith, *mock on*; he chargeth them that they had mocked already: no man can proceed or continue to do that he had not done before. To ſay, *mock on*, is to reprove them for mocking.

Thirdly, He reproves or reprehends them, as not having been duly affected, nor touched with what had touched him, with what he had both ſpoken, and felt: they were inſenſible of his condition, and regardleſs of his diſcourſe. He implieth that (*verſ.* 5.) when he ſaith, *Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed*; as if he had ſaid, Ye would have been grieved, yea, even aſtoniſhed with my condition, had ye markt me, but to this day ye are not; therefore *mark me, and be aſtoniſhed.* You ſhould have trembled in ſilence to hear how God hath dealt with me, whereas you have rather inſulted over me; *Mark me, and be aſtoniſhed, lay your hand upon your mouth.* Thus I have opened the ſcope, and parts of the whole Chapter; as alſo the tendency of theſe ſix verſes, which I have laid together as making up the Preface of his anſwer. Wherein we may note, Firſt, His expectation of attention upon four grounds, and their reprehenſion upon three.

Hear diligently my ſpeech, and let this be your conſolation.

Thus he begins, this is his firſt Argument to move attention, and it may be framed thus;

Ye ought to hear him, whom your very hearing will be a conſolation to:

But if ye give me a diligent hearing, it will be a conſolation to me.

Therefore ye ought to hear me diligently. There are two things upon which this Argument may be enforced.

Firſt, From the common duty of that relation in which they ſtood to him; they told him they were his friends; now the common duty of a friend, coming to his friend in trouble, is, to comfort and counſel him. Ye ſay ye are my friends: now if your diligent attention will be my conſolation, ye ought to hear me, conſidering your relation, and that ye bear your ſelves in profeſſion as my friends.

Secondly, There is another argument which lies cloſely preſt in this, from the deſign of their coming to him; your relation as friends obligeth you to comfort me. But do ye not remember your own errand to me? Do ye not know why ye came this long journey to viſit me? Did ye not ſet this down in your propoſals (*Chap.* 2. 11.) *That ye would come to mourn with me, and to comfort me?* Now for as much as your ſpecial aim was to comfort me, and ſeeing I ſhall take it as a ſpecial comfort to be heard, ye ought to give me the hearing, for that reacheth your own deſign, and anſwers your intendment in viſiting me.

Hear diligently my ſpeech.] The Original ſpeaks double, *hearing hear*, a frequent Hebraiſm. The Septuagint render it, *Hear ye, hear ye*; ſo that here is *Job's O yes, O yes*, as a Cryer ſpeaks when he calls for ſilence and attention in a Court; *Hear ye, hear ye; hearken, hearken.* And we render it well to the ſence of that Hebraiſm, *hear diligently.* To hear, and hear, or hearing to hear, is diligent hearing. The doubling of that word hath theſe two things in it.

Ακουστε ακουστε. Sept. *Non leviter ſed ſolicitè audite & date operam ſedulam ut intelligiatis.* Merc.

Firſt, It hath an excitation of them to attend his ſpeech.

Secondly, It ſhews the confidence of his own ſpirit about what he was to ſpeak. I ſpeak that which I care not if it be twice heard, yea, a hundred times heard. Some ſpeak ſo, that they are content if they have but half a hearing; they who ſpeak ſlightly, care not to be heard ſlightly; but they that ſpeak confidently and weightily, care not if they be heard over and over. *Hearing hear*, or diligently hear, carries as a motive to hear, ſo the boldneſs and aſſurance of his ſpirit about what he was to ſpeak, he cared not who heard him, or how oft it was heard.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *Hearing hear, or hear diligently*, he ſeemeth to require another manner of hearing then he had before: When he openly calls upon them to hear diligently, he ſecretly taxeth them for their indiligence in hearing; as if he had ſaid, *Ye heard me before, but it was as if ye did not hear; let me have a hearing indeed, now hear diligently.* Which may more diſtinctly be conceived in theſe two things.

Firſt, Hear me with more calmneſs and quietneſs, then as yet ye have done. Meekneſs is more then one thing neceſſary, 'tis almoſt *The one thing* neceſſary toward diligent hearing. If the ſpirit be wild, if a mans mind be unfixed and uncompoſed, he will never hear diligently. Hear diligently, be not moved with paſſion or prejudice againſt the ſpeaker, be not moved with impertinent thoughts while I am ſpeaking: Make it your work, to hear what I have now to ſay.

Secondly, It hath this in it alſo, hear with a patient ſpirit. In ſome ſence a patient hearer is the ſame with a quiet hearer, but in a peculiar ſence, a patient hearer is he who not only hears himſelf reproved, or told of his faults, and takes it well; but a patient hearer is he that will hear all out, or continues hearing to the length or end of what is ſaid. A patient hearer is content the ſpeaker ſhould make out his matter, he doth not ſnap him off with replies,

before

before he hath fully opened and unburdened his mind. Such patient hearing is diligent hearing. *Job* now calls his friends to the higheſt exerciſe of the duty of hearing; he would not have them hear him any more with troubled ſpirits, and impatient ears, but deſires they would ſet themſelves to it, and make a buſineſs of it. And there is ſomewhat of argument for this in the word *ſpeech*; *Hear diligently my ſpeech.* The Hebrew ſignifies,

Firſt, A plain ſpeech; as if he had ſaid, *I do not intend to flouriſh it over, and catch your ears with ſtudied oratory, or eloquence: I will ſpeak plainly, therefore hear me.*

Secondly, It notes alſo conciſeneſs of ſpeech; as if he had ſaid, *Do not think, becauſe I call you to hear me diligently, that I intend to ſpeak tediouſly: I have but a word or two to ſay, I purpoſe to contract my ſelf, and to ſpeak much in a little. Do not fear that I will burden and tire you out in hearing me, I intend brevity:* Therefore *hear diligently my ſpeech.*

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *It is no eaſie work to hear well.*

'Tis no hard matter to hear, but 'tis hard to hear well: we may hear eaſily, but it put's a man to it to hear diligently. Hearing may be conſidered as a threefold work.

Verbum ait, quod brevitatem pro mittendo audientiam exambiret.

Firſt, As a natural work, and ſo it is an eaſie thing to hear; no man ſtudies, nor is any man taught to hear; we do it naturally and freely. Thus we uſe to deſcribe the ſpiritual actings of believers, when we ſay, they perform duties naturally; that is, they do them with a kind of eaſe, even as the ear hears, or the eye ſees; the natural work of the eye is an eaſie work, and ſo is the natural work of the ear, there's no labour in it.

Secondly, We may conſider hearing as it is a moral work, or as it tends to the receiving of inſtruction in any point of knowledge or learning; if a man do but receive inſtruction about a worldly buſineſs or truſt, it requires ſome pains, to take his errand right: and hence when we ſpeak to a ſervant to do ſuch a thing, and we perceive he hears but ſlightly, we uſe to ſay, *You are gone without your errand*; there's need of diligent hearing to receive any direction in civil matters, or inſtruction about morals.

Thirdly, Hearing may be conſidered as a ſpiritual work; and ſo it is hardeſt of all, and requires double diligence, hear diligently, hearing hear. Let every word that is ſpoken once, be twice heard. Spiritual hearing hath a fourfold work in it.

Firſt, A work of the ear to take in the impreſſion of words.

Secondly, It hath a work of the underſtanding, which (as it were) garbleth the words which are ſpoken, conſiders, and makes choice of them, trying their truth, their goodneſs, their fitneſs, and their profitableneſs.

Thirdly, There is a work of the affections in ſpiritual hearing; a work of love, a work of joy and delight; many receive the truth, who do not receive the love of it, nor rejoyce in it. Hearing is a work of the internal powers as well as of the external organs, and this requires diligence.

Fourthly, In ſpiritual hearing, there is a work of our graces: there may be a work of the underſtanding, and a work of the affections, without a work of grace. The ſtony ground underſtood the Word, and received it with joy: the underſtanding acted, and the affections acted, but the work went no further. In ſpiritual hearing, there is a work of our graces; Firſt, A work of faith to believe what is ſpoken. Secondly, A work of meekneſs to ſubmit to what is ſpoken. Thirdly, A work of new obedience to practice and follow what is ſpoken. The work of all theſe graces, attendeth ſpiritual hearing. Here is diligence, and we have not heard double, or hearing heard, till we have had this fourfold work in hearing the Word of God, though ſpoken by man. *Hear diligently my ſpeech.*

Secondly obſerve, *Double, or diligent hearing is our duty in all weighty matters.*

That which is ſinful and vain, ſhould not be heard at all; 'tis our duty to ſtop the ear from hearing vanity; ordinary matters, the affairs of the world, the buſineſſes, and concernments of our callings, call only for ſingle hearing; ordinary attention will ſerve the turn for ordinary things. But we cannot be too diligent (we are ſeldom, if at all, diligent enough) in hearing the Word of eternal life. Some words are loaded with the concernments of eternity; there is a ſound, yea a ſavour in them of life, or death, of heaven, or hell, of ſalvation or damnation for ever. Words of this worth, of theſe concernments, call for double hearing: Diligent hearing is more then due in matters thus weighty; we have reaſon to hear that Word judiciouſly, by which we muſt be judged; to hear as for our lives, when we are hearing the Word of life. The ſpeaker hath then reaſon to cry aloud, *hear diligently my ſpeech*; and the hearer hath reaſon to anſwer, I will attend with diligence.

Thirdly, *Job* had before (and he doth it here again) called his friends to diligent hearing. I do not find in all his diſcourſe that he called upon them to anſwer, or provoked them to ſpeak, but ſtill to hear, he is frequent upon that; he thought them forward enough with their tongues, but too ſlow with their ears.

Hence note, *Man is more ready to ſpeak, yea to judge and cenſure others, then he is to hear.*

Job's friends came quick upon him with their cenſures and replies, they were ready with their tongues to cenſure, and reprove him; but he ſuppoſed them dull of hearing, or ſlight in weighing what they heard. The Apoſtles exhortation intimates that moſt men are readier to ſpeak then to hear; or that they who are readieſt to ſpeak, are often indiligent in hearing (*Jam.* 1. 19.) *My beloved brethren, let every man be ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak, ſlow to wrath*; he puts a bridle upon the tongue, but (as it were) ſpurs the ear, *Be ſwift to hear.*

I have from other paſſages (*Chap.* 11. 2. & 18. 2.) noted this before, and therefore I only touch it: *Hear diligently my ſpeech,*

And let this be your conſolation:

Let this, what's that? Your attention to me; let that be your Conſolation. The word which we render *Conſolation*, ſignifies three things in the Verb. נחם:

1 Doluit ſibi vel alteri rebus. 2 Pœnituit vel ſententiam mutavit. 3 Per antiphraſin doluit d. ſtit conſolationē invenit.

Firſt, To grieve, or to be ſorrowful, whether upon our own account, or upon the account of others: to be ſorrowful becauſe of our own ſins or ſufferings, which is the ſorrow of paſſion; or to be ſorrowful, becauſe of the ſins and ſufferings of others, which is the ſorrow of compaſſion; both are comprehended in this word.

Secondly, It ſignifies to Repent, ſo it is applied to God himſelf (*Gen.* 6. 6.) *It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth.* As alſo (1 *Sam.* 15. 11.) *The Lord repented that he had made* Saul *King.* Some take this ſignification of the word here, and render the Text thus, *Hear diligently my words, and repent, or it will be repentance to you*; that is, you who have ſtood ſo ſtifly all this while in your own opinion, and have maintained thoſe poſitions which are ſo unſutable to the common diſpenſations of God; if you would but hear me out, and hear me diligently, you would repent of this your opinion, and change your minds. That rendering is uſeful, there is only this againſt it, that howſoever the Verb ſignifieth to repent, yet Grammarians tell us that the Noun is never found to ſignifie repentance; and therefore I paſs it.

Thirdly, By a contrary kind of ſpeaking (which is very frequent in the Hebrew) as it ſignifies to grieve and repent, ſo to take comfort. And the reaſon why the ſame word notes both repentance and comfort, is, becauſe true repentance, wrought by godly ſorrow, is the way to and concludes in the trueſt conſolation: the neareſt way to peace is by humble confeſſion of, and converſion from our ſins. The word is uſed in this ſence (*Gen.* 24. ult.) *Iſaac was comforted concerning his Mother.* So (2 *Sam.* 13. 39.) *The ſoul of King* David *longed to go forth unto* Abſalom; that is, he extreamly deſired to ſee him again, and rather then not, even to fetch him home himſelf, or at leaſt (could he do it with a ſaving to his Honour and Juſtice) to meet him (upon his return) half way; *for he was comforted concerning* Ammon, *ſeeing he was dead.* Mourning could not recover him from the grave, why then ſhould he continue mourning? The Prophet uſeth the word of the Text, while he deſcribes that woful time wherein many ſhould be mourners, but there ſhould be no comforters,

(*Jer.* 16. 7.) *Neither shall men tear themselves for them in mourning to comfort them for the dead; neither shall men give them the cup of consolation to drink for their father, or for their mother*; that is, none shall be so courteous or sensible of the sorrows of others, as to use any means of comforting them, when they are in the saddest condition, even mourning for the death of father or mother. That expression (note it by the way) *The cup of consolation*, is an allusion to an ancient custom, when in great sorrows some cordial or comfortable drink was given to mourners. *Solomon* intimates that usage (*Prov.* 31. 6.) *Give strong drink to him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts*; that is, give them a cup of consolation, or a consolatory cup. *Job* being in heaviness and sorrow, doth but desire to be diligently heard, and this should be to him, as if his friends in tendrest compassion of his condition, had given him a cup of consolation. As I shall now (passing from the signification and use of the word) further shew in opening the matter.

For here 'tis questioned, whose consolation *Job* means it should be, when he saith, *Hear me, and let this be your consolation.*

First, Some understand it thus, *It shall be your consolation*; that is, it shall be a comfort to you: if ye will hear me speak, my speech shall be your consolation, I shall speak such things, and in such a manner, that ye shall have reason to say, it hath been good for ye to hear, or that ye have received benefit by what ye have heard. This is a fair sence, and carrieth a general truth in it: to hear another speak, *may be our great consolation*: And not only to hear a doctrine of consolation may be consolatory, but to hear a doctrine of reproof. Sowre and bitter words often prove sweet to the hearer. A doctrine steeped in vinegar, words of gall and wormwood, may be honey and sugar (in their effects) to the soul. Any word of truth and soberness diligently heard, may turn to consolation. As the sweet words of flattery and falshood being received are bitterness in the end, so the bittrest words of sobriety and truth being received, are sweetness in the end. *Paul* gives that charge to *Titus* concerning the *Cretians* (Tit. 1. 13.) *Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.* Cutting words have done great cures. Many a diseased festred soul hath been made sound, both in faith and manners, by severest reprehensions. Thus *Job* might say to his friends, *Hear diligently my speech*, and though I should speak nothing but rebukes, yet make use of it; *Let that be your consolation.*

Talia taliq; modo loquaturus sum ut maximã ex meis verbis relaturi estis consolationem. Bold.

But secondly, and more generally, 'tis conceived that *Job* intends here his own consolation, or consolation to himself, *Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolation*; that is, let this be instead of those consolations which you as friends, should administer to me, and which I have long waited to receive from you: As if he had said, *You came purposely to comfort me, but I find very little comfort by your coming; all that you have said to me doth not comfort me, now therefore I desire you to hear what I have to say to you, and I will take that for the comfort which you intended me: hear me speak, and that shall go for the consolation which you promised, and I expected at your coming.* *Job* puts the word in the plural number, he saith not, *this shall be your consolation, or I will take this in part of payment for the consolation you promised me*: but, as if this were the whole sum or the full payment, he expresses it in the plural number, *This shall be your consolations.* I will give you an acquittance and discharge for all the consolations you owe me, if I may now at last have a more respectful and friendly hearing. *Hear diligently my speech, and this shall be your consolations.*

Si me patienter audieritis, id mihi vestrarum consolationum loco erit. Merc.

> Hence note, First, *'Tis a comfort to any man, especially to a man in affliction, to be diligently and patiently heard.*

The afflicted should hear words of comfort, and 'tis a comfort to the afflicted when their words are heard.

First, When their words of petition, or their prayer-speech is heard by God, that's consolation indeed. And 'tis no small comfort, when their prayer-speech or petitions are heard by man. If a poor distressed creature puts up his petition to a man in power, and can but get it received, and heard, he rejoyceth; *my petition is heard* (saith he) somewhat will be done upon it.

Secondly, The afflicted take comfort when their counsel and advice, when their opinion in any case, or their pleadings in their own, are heard. As it is a multitude of consolations to the afflicted when God hears them (all consolations are wrapped up in that one) so many and very great consolations, yea possibly all the consolations which a man desireth of man, may be found in this, if he will but hear what he hath to say for himself. When the afflicted speak, they give vent to their sorrows, and when they are heard, 'tis an income of joy: Though to be heard, be not comfort formally, or directly, yet effectively and virtually there is much comfort in it; yea, God speaks as if he were comforted when he is but heard, or as if we comforted him when we hear him. God beseecheth us, and speaks intreaties to us, that his counsels and commands may be heard (*Psal.* 81. 13.) *O that my people had hearkned unto me.* The Lord tells them indeed it would have proved their consolation (*vers.* 14.) *I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.* Yet while he speaks so pathetically, he seems to include his own consolation in it as well as theirs. *O that my people had hearkned unto me!* It would have been good for them, and it would have given high content to my self. And on the contrary we find the Lord speaking of it as a trouble, and a burthen to him, yea as the breaking of his heart when his people stop their ears, and will not hear him. *I am broken* (saith the Lord) *with their whorish heart which hath departed from me, and with their eyes which go a whoring after their Idols* (Ezek. 6. 19.) Now, when or how doth the heart depart from God? Is it not by refusing to hear his voice, or the voice of those who speak in his Name. This is a grief to God whose the Word is, and a grief to those who are the Messengers of his Word. The faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ can say this from their souls to those that hear them, *Hear our speech diligently, and this shall be your consolation.* This shall comfort us more then all the good things you can bestow on us; do but receive this gift, the truth, the Word of truth spoken to you, and this shall comfort us more then all that you can give. As all the sorrows and miseries which the wicked feel, and shall be compassed about with for ever, arise from this, because they have not diligently heard that which hath been spoken; so, much sorrow ariseth to many who are godly, because what they speak is not diligently heard. How often do they say to stubborn children, to evil servants, to scandalous and loose-walking friends, What joy would it be to our souls, if you would but attend and follow the counsel which we give you? We should look upon this as a great mercy to us as well as to you. Why did *Paul* call the *Philippians his joy and crown*? (Phil. 4. 1.) Why saith he the same of the *Thessalonians*, and more, *Yea are our glory and joy?* (1 Epist. 2. 19.) Was it upon any other account then this, because they had received the Gospel at his mouth and diligently heard his speech? *Paul* received so much consolation and joy when his speech was heard, that he calls his hearers *his joy*, yea *his joy and his crown*; that is, his chief, his principal joy, or that which he rejoyced in more then he could in any earthly crown; it would not have pleased him so much to have been Emperor of the world, as to see souls brought off from the world, by his ministry, to the obedience of the Word. This made them his crown and joy, his glory and joy at present, and this gave him hope (in which sence he calls the *Thessalonians his hope*, vers. 19.) that he should rejoyce and glory on their behalf for ever, yea, that through Free Grace he should receive *the crown of righteousness*, as himself calls it (2 *Tim.* 4. 8.) or as the Apostle *Peter* speaking to the same point, calls it (1 *Pet.* 5. 4.) *A crown of glory that fadeth not away.* How can it be but a consolation to be heard, when such are the consequences of being heard in some things; and in what things soever we are heard, we judge it to be of some consequence to us, if we get nothing but a hearing. We sometimes hear a poor man thus bespeaking the rich; Sir, if you will but hear me open my case to you, though you do nothing for me, I will take it as a favour, and thank you for it: though you give me no relief, yet if you do but lend me your ear a little, that will be an Almes to me. Thus poor *Job*, *Hear diligently my speech, and let this be your consolation.*

Vers.

Verſ. 3. Suffer me that I may ſpeak, and after I have ſpoken, mock on.

We have here the ſecond argument whereby *Job* beſpeaks attention. *Let me ſpeak, and after that mock on*; do not judge before you hear. As approving, ſo mocking or diſapproving ſhould follow judgment, and judgment ſhould follow hearing; no man ſhould judge till he hath heard the matter, nor ſhould he either approve it till he hath judged it ſound and good; nor mock at it, till he hath judged it vain and worthleſs. *Suffer me that I may ſpeak, and after I have ſpoken, mock on.*

נשׂה *Ad pondus referri ſolet. Indicat ſuã orationem onerosam & gravem viſam fuiſſe amicis.*

Suffer me that I may ſpeak.] The word which we render *to ſuffer*, ſignifies to bear a thing as a burthen, and ſo ſome underſtand it here. Bear me though I am burdenſom to you, and though my ſpeech be as a preſſure upon you. Some words are preſſing burthens, and require ſtrong ſhoulders to bear them. Some men are never ſo burdenſom as when they are ſpeaking, it were eaſier to bear any part of them than their tongues; vain words burden the wiſe, and the words of the wiſe are alwayes burdenſom to fools. The Sermons of the Prophets are called *burthens*; *The burthen of* Babylon; *The burthen of* Moab; *The burthen of* Judah, was the word which the Prophet ſpake concerning *Babylon*, &c. Theſe Propheſies were called burdens, becauſe they foreſhewed the heavy judgments of God, which ſhould fall upon thoſe places. And not only is that word burdenſom, which carrieth wrath and judgment in it; but that alſo is burdenſom to many, which carrieth any thing of holineſs or truth in it. And becauſe no man is very willing to bear a burthen, therefore *Job* begs, *Suffer me to ſpeak*; that is, bear with me that I may ſpeak, or bear me while I am ſpeaking.

Further, the words imply that as it was a burden to *Job's* friends to hear him ſpeak, ſo likewiſe to *Job*, that he was not ſuffered to ſpeak, *Suffer me to ſpeak*; his ſpirit was troubled becauſe he had not freedom to ſpeak, *Give me leave, let me have a fair hearing*; ſuch ſpeeches proceed from a troubled ſpirit, from a ſpirit troubled with ſome ſtop, or meeting with ſome impediment in doing that which it hath a great mind to do.

Hence note, Firſt, *Interruptions are troubleſom.*

When a man cannot be permitted to ſpeak his mind, he is moved to ſpeak his paſſion. *'Tis as grievous to be hindred in doing ſome things, as to be enjoyned to do ſome others.*

Secondly note, *Words which do not pleaſe our ſpirits, nor hit our opinions, are very burthenſom.*

Job ſpake the apprehenſion of his friends about himſelf. He ſuppoſed his ſpeech would be burdenſom to his friends, becauſe he knew it would croſs their judgment. Men hear that pleaſantly which ſuits their humour, and complies with their opinions or corruptions. They can hear ſuch diſcourſes all day long with delight; but if that be ſpoken which oppoſeth their judgment, or their intereſt, they are weary to bear it: A few ſuch words are as heavy as a mountain of lead. The falſe Prophet cenſured the words of *Amos* ſo heavy, that they were enough to ſink the earth out of its place; *The land is not able to bear all his words* (Amos 7. 10, 11.) *for thus* Amos *ſaith*, Jeroboam *ſhall die by the ſword, and* Iſrael *ſhall ſurely be led away captive out of their own land.* This was a burdenſom word indeed, and ſo is every unpleaſing word. The Apoſtle ſpeaks this ſence (2 *Cor.* 11. 1.) *Would to God you could bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me.* Folly is alwayes burdenſom, and a fool is uſually moſt burthenſom when he ſpeaks. *Solomon* ſaith (*Prov.* 27. 3.) that the wrath of a fool is heavier then a ſtone, or then the ſand. His wrath is extream heavy, and his breath is not much lighter; he is not to be born when he is angry, and 'tis hard enough to bear him if he do but utter a word; and if nothing elſe be burdenſom in his ſpeech, yet the lightneſs of it is. Therefore *Paul*, as *Job* in the Text, ſpeaks according to the opinion or ſence that ſome, at leaſt, among the *Corinthians* had of him, You judge me but a babler, or that I do but diſcover my own folly when I ſpeak; and I know that cannot but be burthenſom to wiſe men, yet *I would to God you would bear with me in my folly*; if you call it folly, bear it a while, though it be a troubleſom burden. For (as he grows further upon them in that Chapter *verſ.* 19.) *Ye ſuffer fools gladly, ſeeing ye are wiſe*; therefore for once ſuffer me too. 'Tis a ſuffering to hear fools ſpeak, yet you ſometimes ſuffer this, knowing that your ſelves are wiſe, and able to judge what is ſpoken, *Ye ſuffer fools gladly*; ſuffer me patiently while I do that which may incur a ſuſpition of folly, *commend my ſelf.* For a man to commend himſelf, though truly, hath in it a ſavour of vain-glory, and that is folly. Therefore *Paul* with a rhetorical inſinuation begs their pardon, and their patience, while he doth that for their benefit, and the vindication of his Apoſtleſhip, which had a ſhew of vanity in it. Now as all fooliſh ſpeaking is grievous to the wiſe, ſo alſo may that which is wiſely ſpoken, if it croſs the grain of their ſpirits, as was toucht before. Therefore ſaith *Job*, *Suffer me that I may ſpeak.*

Thirdly, *Job* might thus crave their patience, becauſe he had been taxed by his friends with too much ſpeaking; *Should not the multitude of words be anſwered?* (ſaid *Zophar*, Chap. 11. 1.) *Should a wiſe man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the Eaſt-wind?* ſaid *Eliphaz*, Chap. 15. 2. As if they had both ſaid, *This man will never have done, he talkes everlaſtingly.* Now *Job* as to this alſo anſwers their ſence of him; for as they diſtaſted what he ſpake, ſo, as they thought, he ſpake too much; therefore he now adds, Be it that I have ſpoken too much, yet give me leave to ſpeak a little more, *Suffer me to ſpeak*, I have yet ſomewhat to ſay. From this ſuppoſition,

Obſerve, *That a man of many words is very burthenſom.*

This hath been noted from other paſſages, whither I refer the Reader; talkativeneſs hath been diſtaſtful in all times: One of the Ancients in his Character of much ſpeaking, puts this Odium and ſcoff upon it; *If a man* (ſaith he) *would avoid an Ague, or a fit of a Fever, let him keep out of the company of men given to talk.* It is enough to make a man ſick, or to turn his ſtomach to hear ſome ſpeak; and 'tis not eaſie to hear any man ſpeak very much; ſome knowing this, run into a further error, burdening their hearers with many words to excuſe their many words; and (which makes the matter worſe) make long Apologies for their long and much ſpeaking. *Job* ſeems to make an Apology for his, but 'tis a very ſhort one; *Suffer me that I may ſpeak.*

Id genus hominis fugiat oportet quiſquis febre carere vult. Theoph. l. de Char. c. de Garrul.

And after I have ſpoken, mock on.] The Hebrew is in the ſingular, *After I have ſpoken, mock thou on*; and hence ſome conceive that *Job* applies himſelf, eſpecially to *Zophar*, having obſerved him, more then the reſt, contemptuous, and ſcornful, *mock thou on* Zophar; yet under the ſingular number, all may be comprehended, and what he ſpeaks to one he means of the whole three, *mock on.*

Rogat ut priuſquam habenas laxent ad videndum, audiant quæ ſit diſcrepantia; fore fortè quod conſilio mutent, vel ſi non ſe non curaturum. Merc.

In ſaying ſo, *Job* doth not encourage them to mock, or counſel them to ſcorn him or his words; he had checkt and reproved them for mocking more then once before. But we may underſtand him,

Firſt, That he ſpeaks *permiſſively*, or by way of grant; *Do but hear me, and then I give you leave to mock. Or when I have ſpoken again, if I do not ſpeak to purpoſe, if I do not anſwer your arguments, and offer that which may ſatisfie any reaſonable man, I am content to be laught at, mock on.* As if he had ſaid, *Before you give your ſelves full ſcope in mocking me, before you let your ſelves looſe to contempt, and ſcorn, let me adviſe you to hear me once more, and I deſire it for your own ſakes as much as for mine own, that it be not ſaid that you condemn me, much leſs, ſlight and mock me unheard: therefore hear me firſt, and then mock on; you will have time enough, and more occaſion, if I ſpeak beſides the point, or not home to it, to mock when I have done ſpeaking.* From this firſt interpretation we may obſerve,

That, *He who hath ſpoken his conſcience, and hath ſpoken it conſcientiouſly, is at a point (ſo far as concerns himſelf) how his ſpeech is entertained.*

Poſtquam quod ſui muneris eſt præſtant ſancti doctores ſi vedeantur ab auditoribus ſuis, ſuſtinent patienter. Greg.

Let me ſpeak my mind, and then come on't what will. The Prophet *Ezekiel* received his Commiſſion in this ſtile, *Thou ſhalt ſpeak to them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear* (Ezek. 2. 7.) Do you your duty; if they hear it, well and good, if they forbear, yet you are accepted. He that faithfully delivers the truth and mind of God (as *Job* was about to do) whether his ſpeech be received

or rejected, he is satisfied. If it be received he rejoyceth, and he is not discouraged if it be rejected: whether they consent or dissent, whether they return approbation or scorn, whether they imbrace or mock, as to himself the care is taken, though (as *Jeremy* speaks, *Chap.* 13.) *his eye shall weep in secret* for the pride of those who reject and mock, as also for the misery that is coming upon them, except they repent. 'Tis sinful, and so, dangerous enough when the Word of God is not received, much more when it is scorned and mocked; yet the faithful Ministers and Servants of Jesus Christ may take comfort in that dispensation, which the hearers receive with scorn; they have done their Masters will, and are, as the Apostle speaks (2 *Cor.* 2. 15.) *unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that perish*; in them that entertain the Word, and in them that mock at it.

Secondly note, *Some are readier to mock those who oppose them, then either to answer their arguments, or to recover them from their supposed errors.*

Surely *Job* took notice of such a spirit moving in his friends, else he had not suggested this unto them. A man of judgment and understanding falls upon the Arguments of his opponent with reason, not upon his person with spleen. A tender heart pities those that are mislead, and mourns over them whom he conceiveth in an error, he doth not mock or triumph over them. Yet 'tis often seen that when men of contrary perswasions ingage upon a dispute, whether about matters of Providence (as *Job* and his friends did) or of Faith; they who judge themselves victors, deride the weakness and hiss at the mistakes of their brethren; and they who are overcome and have nothing more to say, will yet wrangle and revile, rather then say nothing.

And thus 'tis not only in speaking, but in writing; pens as well as tongues drop scorn, when they think they have their adversaries at an under, or are not indeed able to deal with their adversaries. We may say to such (though they are, not only in their own conceits, but in common esteem, as strong as Oaks in judgment, and as tall Cedars in knowledge) as the Lord doth in the Prophet to *Jerusalem*, because of her spiritual adulterers (*Ezek.* 16. 30.) *How weak are your hearts, seeing ye do all these things, the work of an imperious whorish woman.* To mock and scorn any man upon such terms as these, is below a man, yea below any humble-minded modest woman; How much then do they degrade themselves, below man, below reason, and good manners, who fall to mocking the person, instead of answering his arguments, or who mock those who may possibly fail either in arguing or answering? He is weak who indeed fails thus, but he is weaker who mocks thus.

Secondly, *After I have spoken, mock on*, carrieth in it the sence of an ironical concession; as if he had said, *Let me speak out, and then mock if you can. I doubt not but I shall take you off from mocking, or I believe you will have little mind to mock by that time I have done with you.* Hence the Septuagint render by a direct Negative, *Let me speak; and when I have spoken, you will not mock me.* One of the Greek interpreters gives it in this Affirmative, *When I have done my speech you will be quiet*; I shall make you as quiet as Lambs, you will give over mocking, by that time I give over speaking.

Deinde non irridebitis me. Sept. *Post sermones meos quiescetis, i. e. cessabitis a ludibriis & irrisione.* Sym.

Hence observe, *When truth is put home, it will put the wittiest besides their jesting, and the proudest besides their scorning.*

Truth is strong and will prevail. The wit of man is no match for the Word of God. Some have come purposely to mock at a Sermon, who before they have gone away have had little mind to mock; they who have come to laugh at the Preacher, or his Doctrine, have found it no laughing matter, they have been sent weeping and crying home; they who have come to catch at the Word, rather then to hear it, the Word heard hath caught them; the Word hath arrested and laid hold upon them with irresistible, unanswerable convictions, and so (which proves the noblest freedom) they and their wits have been led captive to the obedience of Christ. *Austin*, some where, confesseth of himself, that he came to hear *Ambrose* (a man of an excellent spirit) rather to pick quarrels, then to receive instruction; but before he went away his heart was toucht, and then he had little leisure and less desire to play the critick with what was spoken. The word of God subdues the soul, it makes a man stoop, and take in his flag, it makes the scorner serious, and the lofty lowly. They who were most quarrelsom, have not had a word more to say against the Word, much less to scorn it.

Lastly, These words, *After I have spoken, mock on*, may very well bear the sence of a dreadful threatning.

Hence observe, *The greatest threatning of evil against sinners, is to bid them sin, or go on in doing evil.*

There are many terrible threatnings in the Word of God against those who continue in sin; but to be bid continue in sin, is the most terrible threatning in all the Word of God. That seemingly favourable permission or dispensation granted to wicked men, is a most fearful commination or threat against them (*Rev.* 22. 11.) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still*; you that are mockers, mock on still; and you that are despisers, despise still; to be given up to vile affections, and to be given up to wicked actions, is an argument of wrath given out to the utmost. And as it is unspeakably sad to be given up to do evil, so it is unspeakably worse to be given up to mock at that which is good. Let mockers fear and tremble, least God give them up to a spirit of mocking. How shall they escape or be delivered from evil, who mock at that which is for their good? *Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong* (Isa. 28. 22.) 'Tis sinful enough not to obey the Word, but it is the height of sin to mock at it: They shall have strong bands that obey not the Word, how strong then shall theirs be that mock at it? The bands that are upon the most sober sinners (so we may call some sinners comparatively to others) are stronger then they shall ever be able to break, but God will make bands for mockers sevenfold stronger. Their danger is great, who walk in the counsel of the ungodly, theirs is greater who stand in the way of sinners; but their case seems desperate, past help or hope, past cure or recovery, who sit down in the seat of the scornful.

VERS. 4, 5, 6.

As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?
Mark me, and be astonied, and lay your hand upon your mouth.
Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

THe first six Verses of this Chapter (as hath been shewed already) are a preface to the whole. In which, upon many pressing considerations, *Job* bespake his friends attention. Two of them were discovered in *vers.* 2, 3. He comes now to a third in *vers.* 4.

Vers. 4. **As for me, is my complaint to man? and if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?**

The word which we render *Complaint*, signifies either a complaint formed out in words, or a complaint onely wrought and retained in the heart; here we may understand it both wayes; *Job* was much in meditation, and he was much also in discourse; he was answering his friends, and he enquired of them, *Is my complaint, my open complaint, the bill of complaint which I bring in, is it to man? Job* was both Plaintiff and Defendant; while he defended himself against man, he was forced to complain of men to God. But to whom was *Job* speaking? Was he not before his friends? Had *Job* a Congregation of Angels to speak to, or was he admitted immediate access to God? Or why, saith he, *Is my complaint to man?* Some render the word, *Le Adam, against man*, or, *of man*; *Is my complaint against man?* As if he had said, *Had I no greater trouble to complain of then man is able to give me; though I might have, and upon that ground have just cause of complaining; yet I should have less cause to complain: but the truth is, I have greater cause of grief then that, for the hand of God hath touched me, and the terrors of the Almighty encamp against me.*

שיח *Meditatio conquestio.*

לאדם *Contra hominem vel ad hominem? Numquid contra hominem disputatio mea?* Vulg.

me. But rather as we, *Is my complaint to man?* Is he the object of my complaint? Or do I make my moan to him? Others interpret, *to man*, by, about, or concerning the things or dealings of men; as if he had said, *Do I complain of the wrongs received from men, or do I complain because I receive no help from man, my wound is from the hand of God, and from him my help must also come. Is my complaint to man?*

Ad hominē, i. e. super ulla re humana, de qua apud hominem conqueri possim, nihil malorū meorum illatū est humana industria sed divina providentia res omnes moderante.

And if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?

And if (*it were*) we supply those words: The Original is only, *And if*; *If it were so, why should not my spirit*, (*my breath* say some) *be troubled?* The words which we render *to trouble*, signifies to *abbreviate* or *shorten*. *Why should not my breath be shortned*; and then the sence is made up in this manner; *Did I speak to men only, why should I not quickly make an end, and shorten my speech, why should I spend so much breath upon them?* Others by the word *ruarkh*, understand *the mind*, or, *the whole inward man*; *Why should not my mind be troubled, or shortned?* Shortning of the mind, or shortness of mind is applied in divers Scriptures to men under grief and trouble of mind, (*Exod.* 6. 9.) Moses *spake to the Children of* Israel, *but they hearkened not to* Moses, *for the anguish of their spirit*, or, *for shortness of spirit.* Again (*Numb.* 21. 4.) *And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea to compass the Land of* Edom, *and the soul or spirit of the people was much discouraged* (we put in the margine, *shortned*) *because of the way:* Either because of the troublesomness and danger of the way, or because of the length of the way, their spirit was discouraged; there was a Lion (danger) in the way: or, the way was long, and this shortned their spirits, that is, they thought they should never get thorough that vast wilderness. The soul of the people was discouraged or shortned, because of the way.

קצר

Abbreviatus, decurtatus, denotat contristationem animi, quod afflictis spiratio sit brevior ob angustiā spiritus.

We find this Negatively expressed concerning the spirit of God (*Mic.* 2. 6, 7.) while some were about (as it were) to silence and suspend the spirit it self; *Prophesie not, say they, to them that prophesie. They shall not prophesie to them, that they shall not take shame. O thou that art named of the house of* Jacob, *Is the spirit of the Lord straitned?* so we render, and put *shortned* in the margine: As if the Prophet had said, *You may shorten or straiten the spirit of man, but you cannot straiten the spirit of God, you cannot shorten his spirit. Is the spirit of God shortned? Cannot he inlarge himself, and speak out by the meanest of his messengers, notwithstanding all your oppositions and contradictions?* Or, *Is the spirit of the Lord straitned?* that is, *Is the spirit of the Lord so weakened that he cannot make his word effectual?* so it follows in the close of the same verse; *Do not my words do good to him that walketh uprightly?* As if he had said, *Is the spirit of the Lord straitned from doing good to those that receive the word?* And if the word threaten you with evil, you may thank your selves for it: you should not hear of evil from my word were it not for sin, nor should you feel it, did you not continue and persist impenitently in your sins; therefore know that the Spirit of the Lord is not straitned, either in doing good to those who accept and obey the Word, nor in bringing evil upon those who reject and disobey it.

In *Job's* Text the word is applied to grief or sorrow, this shortneth the spirit every way. Sorrow shortneth the spirit of man, as spirit is taken for life: sorrow cuts asunder or breaks the thread of life. *The sorrow of the world causeth death,* (saith the Apostle 2 *Cor.* 7. 10.) 'Tis a killing sorrow. 'Tis a shortner of the Spirit also, because we cannot do that good we might; sorrow over-acted, weakens the whole man, and leaves him unable to put himself forth in action. Joy is the dilatation or widening of the heart; a heart full of joy, is enlarged, much joy makes the spirit free to act. Therefore the Sun is said *to rejoyce as a strong man to run a race* (Psal. 19. 5.) A strong man rejoyceth, and joy makes him run strongly, and put himself forth mightily. Now as joy enlargeth and openeth the heart, so sorrow is a straitner of it, it makes a man narrow-hearted, and narrow-handed, it stops him in his actings, or stayes him from acting. Therefore when the *Jews* were overpressed with sorrow, away with it saith *Nehemiah* (Neh. 8. 10.) *The joy of the Lord is your strength*; and I may say, the sorrow of man is his weakness, and the shortness of his spirit.

Why should not my spirit be troubled, and shortned?

Job speaks passionately and appeals to their judgment. Can ye shew me any reason why I should not be troubled under my afflictions, yea though they were but such as men usually inflict, whereas mine speak the arm of God. Being thus pressed you will confess, that it is as hard for me not to complain, as it is to keep due bounds in complaining.

Having given these touches from the single tearms, I shall offer three or four interpretations upon the whole.

As for me, is my complaint to man?

The question denies, my complaint is not to man. Though *Job* spake to man, yet man did not determine, or bound his speech, he spake beyond man. Taking the question in this negative sence, the latter branch of the verse may be understood as a proof that he did not speak to, or that his speech was not bounded in man. As if he had said, *If I were to deal, or had to do with men alone in proving this point, or in approving my person; if I had not an outlet to God, if my thoughts did not work towards him, my spirit must needs be troubled: it could not be otherwise, but my spirit must be shortned, or straitned, I must fail and sink under the burthen you have laid upon me; but I subsist, and my spirit bears up, I maintain and stand my ground still, yea my heart is enlarged, therefore this is an argument I have not to deal with man only but with God, who supplies me with fresh spirits, and renews my strength.*

Secondly, These words (as hath been toucht before) are an argument to move attention; *As for me, is my complaint to man?* As if he had said, *My work is not with you, not with you alone; my soul ascends to heavin, and there I have liberty of speech, God admits me, and I have access to him: therefore why should I not have audience and acceptance with you also?*

Others upon that account interpret thus, *Let me have your attention, for I speak not of earthly mundane matters, but of the weightiest heavenly truths; I stand up to maintain the honour and justice of God in his dispensations to the children of men, therefore hear me;* these things require much seriousness from me in speaking, and no less diligence from you in hearing.

Hac attentum auditorem & serium postulant oratorem.

Thirdly, The words may be expounded disjunctively, and so like a bell that rings out, they strike on both sides; *As for me, is my complaint to man? And if it were so,* &c. As if he had said, *Which soever of these you take, whether you say my speech and complaint is to man; or whether you say it is not to man but to God; which of these soever you take, why should not my spirit be troubled? If you say my complaint is to man, have I not reason to be troubled at his hard dealings, and unkind censures? When my words find such ill construction, and my person such ill entertainment, have I not reason to be troubled? Or be it that my complaint is to God, have I not reason to be troubled? For doth he not deny me present deliverance, doth he not hold me yet in darkness? Is he not pleased to hide himself and all those comforts from me, which I am waiting for? So, that whether my complaint be to man, or to God, why should not my spirit be troubled, considering the present posture of my condition; seeing things go thus with me. As for me, is my complaint to man?*

First observe, *Great and painful sufferings put the best to complaints.*

Job denied not that he complained, he only denied that man was the sole object of his complaint. What man in pain, especially in such pain as *Job's* was, can forbear complaining? An eminent Martyr in the Marian persecution, said thus to the Smith that was fastning the chain with which he was to be bound to the stake; *Be sure you make it fast, for the flesh will have its course:* Though the inordinate courses of sinful flesh are stopt and mortified, yet sensitive flesh, being pinched and pained will have its course, even in those that are spiritual. The title of *Psal.* 102. is *A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint.* And again (*Psal.* 55. 2.) *I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise.* Such confusion was upon his spirit, that he rather made a noise then spake; to utter a voice is an act of reason; inanimate and irrational creatures

tures make a ſound, or a noiſe. *David* was ſo diſturbed in his complaint, that he rather made a noiſe, like the winds, or like a beaſt, then formed an articulate voice like a man, *I make a noiſe in my complaint.* So when he made his prayer in the cave (*Pſal.* 142. 2.) *I poured out my complaint before him.* *David* was ſhut up in the cave, and though it were a willing impriſonment (for he went thither to ſecure himſelf, he was glad to go to the cave for ſhelter) yet he complained and begged of God that he might not have occaſion of going to the cave for ſhelter. We find *Aſaph* in ſuch complaints (*Pſal.* 77.) and *Heman* (Pſal. 88.) and *Hezekiah* (Iſa. 38. 14.) He complained and chattered like a Crane or a ſwallow. Indeed that queſtion put by the Prophet hath a negative ſence in it, (*Lam.* 3. 39.) *Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſins?* As if he had ſaid, *What reaſon hath a man to vex himſelf or murmur againſt God, as if he dealt rigorouſly and roughly with him, when all his ſufferings are procured by his own ſins?* And hence an ancient Verſion renders the Text thus, *Why doth the living man complain? Let each man complain for his own ſin.*

There is a twofold complaint.

The firſt ariſeth meerly from the ſence of affliction, or the feeling of what we ſuffer; this is natural, this even Chriſt himſelf was under, while he was on earth in a ſuffering condition.

Secondly, There is a complaint which ariſeth from diſcontent and murmuring at our afflictions, vexing our ſelves at the things we ſuffer. This is ſinful, ſuch complaining becomes not the people of God; though they complain under the feeling of affliction, yet they muſt not murmur at affliction, but bewail their own tranſgreſſion; the beſt of Saints under affliction have cauſe to complain of their own ſin, and the ſin of many is the cauſe of all their afflictions. Every complaint which hath murmuring in it, is evil, and all the complaints of evil men are murmurings. The Apoſtle puts ſuch murmurers and complainers together (*Jude* 16.) *Theſe are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own luſts.* Complaining, which comes from, or is accompanied with murmuring, hath its original in luſt, and is their work who walk after their own luſts. We may complain, but we muſt not murmur; God doth not deny us to bemoan our ſelves, when he is pleaſed to lay his hand upon us, but he will not bear it if we murmur at his hand.

Secondly, From the object of *Job's* complaint, *As for me, is my complaint to man?*

Obſerve, *A good man eyes God chiefly even while he is complaining to man.*

Job was before men, but his complaint was to God. There is little gotten by complaining barely to man; and as there are but few who can give any eaſe to our complaint, ſo there are not a few, who encreaſe and add to it. To tell them that it is ill with us, makes our caſe worſe. For,

Firſt, Many are inſenſible of the ſufferings of others, they lay them not to heart, they are to the complaints which come before them about matters of affliction, as *Gallio* was to thoſe who complained about matters of religion; *he cared for none of thoſe things*, he regarded them not; you were as good ſpeak to a wall, or a rock, as to ſome men, they are inſenſible of what others feel, therefore why ſhould they be complained to?

A ſecond ſort are over-ſenſible, and account it a great burthen to receive complaints from the poor and diſtreſſed; 'tis indeed a burthen, yet ſuch a burthen as we ought to bear; and we may number it among thoſe which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of (*Gal.* 6. 2.) *Bear ye one anothers burthens, ſo fulfilling the law of Chriſt.* That we have our ears open, to receive the complaints, and our hearts ready to grieve for the miſeries of our brethren, is a burthen which the law of Chriſt hath laid upon us; and the bearing of that burthen is therefore called *the fulfilling of the law of Chriſt*, becauſe much love (which is the fulfilling of the law) goes out and is acted in bearing it.

Thirdly, There are others, who though they give the hearing contentedly, and will haply tell you they are ſorry to ſee your afflictions, yet they ſay little and do leſs to eaſe your ſorrow: at moſt they give you but a mouth-full of good words, a breath of charity, or charity only upon the breath. Of ſuch the Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks (*Chap.* 2. 15, 16.) *If a brother or ſiſter be naked and deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſay to them, depart in peace, be ye warmed, and filled; notwithſtanding you give them not thoſe things that are needful for the body, what doth it profit?* Such kind of cheap relief, a wiſh it were otherwiſe with you, be you warmed, and filled, and cloathed, is all that many give; they give nothing that is real ſuccour, either for ſoul or body; and who would complain to ſuch a generation as this?

Fourthly, There are a ſort who anſwer complainings with deſpiſings, who mock at miſery, and take advantage to inſult over others in their neceſſities; they will not give ſo much as a parcel of goods words, nor be at the charge of a good wiſh to thoſe who are compaſſed about with evil. Such entertainment *David's* complaint had when he ſent to *Nabal* (1 Sam. 25. 10.) *And* Nabal *anſwered and ſaid, who is* David, *and who is the ſon of* Jeſſe? *There be many ſervants now adayes that break every man from his Maſter:* as if he had ſaid, *what is he but a fugitive?* Thus he reviled him, *Shall I take my bread, and my water, and my fleſh that I have killed for my ſhearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be?* A company of runagates and wanderers, do you think I will have to do with ſuch as he and his, or give them relief? How common is it to ſnap up complainers, with, *What are you? whence come you? what's that to me? what can I do for you? or why ſhould I though I can? upon what acquaintance, pray?* An ingenuous ſpirit can eaſier die under his burthen, then ask help at the hands of ſuch.

Fifthly, Complain to ſome, and they will tell you, they have it not for you, they cannot relieve you, when yet it is in the power of their hand to do it. Some who never want money for a good bargain, or a profitable purchaſe, will alwayes be in want when they ſhould do a good work, or give to thoſe who have nothing. They who have enough to buy out two or three rich men, have not enough to relieve one poor man; they will rather make themſelves poor then help the poor, and be accounted weak rather then ſupport thoſe who are ready to ſink under their burdens; who would complain to men of ſuch a temper as this?

Sixthly, There want not ſome to whom if you complain, they will tell you plainly they will not relieve your wants, they make no excuſes, but refuſe down-right.

In the ſeventh and laſt place, very many are indeed unable to help thoſe who complain to them; though they are free enough, and have cordial deſires to do what is deſired, yet they cannot. They cannot reach ſuch relief as the complainers caſe calls for; they are not able to do it though they would. The line of the creature when it is longeſt and ſtretched to the utmoſt, may yet be too ſhort for our help. A great King had not wherewith to ſtop the cry of a poor woman (*2 King.* 6. 26.) *And as the King of* Iſrael *was paſſing by upon the wall, there cryed a woman unto him, ſaying, help my Lord O King. And he ſaid if the Lord do not help thee, whence ſhall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-preſs?* There was nothing in the barn-floor, nothing in the wine-preſs; therefore he turns her over to God: the Lord muſt help thee, I cannot. As in that caſe ſo in many the creature is ſhort-handed, it hath no help. The Prophet gives an elegant deſcription of this, (*Iſa.* 3. 6, 7.) *When a man ſhall take hold of his brother of the houſe of his father, ſaying, thou haſt cloathing, be thou our ruler, and let this ruine be under thy hand.* In proſperous times men are ambitious of preferment, they bribe and beg for places of truſt and power, but in calamitous and confuſed times preferments and great places go a begging, and are refuſed. *In that day ſhall he ſwear, ſaying, I will not be a healer: for in my houſe is neither bread, nor cloathing, make me not a ruler of the people;* as if he had ſaid, *What do you mean to make me a ruler? I have nothing ſuitable to ſuch a ſtate; your ruine cannot be under mine hand; your ruine is too ruinous, and your trouble is too troubleſom for me to engage in.* As 'tis ſaid of ſome diſeaſes, *they are the Phyſitians reproach*, they cannot cure them; ſo the wounds and breaches of a State may be ſuch as no man dares undertake their cure and healing. And as publick, ſo private and perſonal evils are ſometimes ſo deſperate, that every man ſtands off, and ſaith, I will not, I cannot be a healer, I have

have neither bread nor cloathing enough for it; this ruine cannot be under my hand.

All these considerations tell us aloud, that as 'tis sometimes in vain to complain to man, so 'tis alwayes best complaining to God, either immediatly, or whensoever we complain to man, to have God in our eye.

For the contrary of those seven discouragements, in reference to our complaint to man, may be affirmed of God;

First, He is sensible of our sorrows.

Secondly, To hear our complaint is no burthen to him.

Thirdly, He doth not use to send any away with good words only.

Fourthly, He doth not despise those who complain to him.

Fifthly, He doth not deny himself able to help.

Sixthly, 'Tis rare that he gives any a flat denial.

Seventhly, He never denies help to any because their condition is past his help; he needs not to answer in my house is no bread nor cloathing, no help, nor healing, for with him is all power at all times: therefore let us complain to him. And besides all this, we have not only a command from God to complain to him, but his promise to hear and help when we complain; and which is yet more, we honour God in complaining to him. We do a great honour to man, when we complain to him, yea it puts a piece of divinity upon him; and upon this account Magistrates to whom complaints are both most commonly and most properly made, are called in Scripture language, *Gods*. This is originally the Honour of God; for this speaks our faith, that all power is in him, and that he is able to support and relieve us in all our complaints. A beggar doth not make his complaint to a beggar who hath not a penny in his purse, or is as poor as himself: but he complains to those of whom he hath an opinion that they are able to help him. This perswasion of faith, that God is able to help, is not only a motive, but the ground of our complaining to him. *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, (Heb. 11.6.) As it is our duty to believe this when we come to God with our prayers and complaints, so unless we believe this, we have neither any true foundation nor hope when we come. He that considers the Allsufficiency of God, and Insufficiency of man, will see reason enough in all his troubles to say with *Job*, *As for me, is my complaint to man?* In this *Job* did well, and spake both wisely and holily; But,

When he saith in the latter part of the verse, *And if it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?* Was this a becoming speech? Should not *Job* rather have laboured to stop the trouble of his spirit, then thus encourage it? Should he not rather have checkt then backt his own unquiet heart? We may learn this from it,

That *Good men sometimes are ready to give too much way to their own grief and unquietness of spirit.*

Why should not my spirit be troubled?] Is the language of many in their troubles. Many reasons may be given why we ought to sit down in the midst of our troubles with quiet spirits. 'Tis dangerous to perswade our selves that we have reason to be troubled at any thing but sin. Our spirits are rarely troubled enough with the evil of sin, and usually too much with outward evils. *Rachel weeps, and refuseth to be comforted*; some fasten upon sorrow, and are greedy of grief; that which we translate (*Job* 10. 20.) *Let me alone that I may take comfort a little*, is by some rendred, *Let me alone that I may mourn a little*; let me have my scope in mourning. In *Psal.* 77. *Asaph* speaks out the trouble of his spirit, *My sore ran in the night, and ceased not; my soul refused to be comforted.* They give too much way to their troubles, who argue against their comforts, and put by the offer of them. When the Lord reproved *Jonah* for his passion (*Chap.* 4. 9. *Doest thou well to be angry?* He replied, *I do well to be angry to the death.* What he said of his passion of anger, others say of their passion of sorrow; *We do well to be sorrowful; why should not our spirit be troubled?* They think they have reason for it, though their reasons have no more reason in them, then that of *Micah* had (*Judg.* 18. 23.) who when the children of *Dan* asked him, *What ayleth thee? Answered, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the Priest, and what is this that ye say, What ayleth thee?* Have I not reason to complain, and be troubled when you have robbed me of my gods? Thus when they have lost but an Idol (as he had) somewhat that they over-prized and put in the place of God, yet being questioned, why are ye thus troubled? They answer, why should we not be troubled?

Christians should rather remember *David's* question, then imitate *Job's* (Psal. 42. 5.) *Why art thou disquieted O my soul? why art thou cast down?* He put his soul to answer for it, why art thou disquieted? He saith not with *Job, Why should not my spirit be disquieted?* But, *Why art thou?* Give an account of it. When we find such guests blustering upon our spirits, we may do much towards the quieting of them, by asking why they are so disquieted? And 'tis both our wisdom and our duty, if that will not do, to use all holy means to quiet them. When Christ (*John* 14. 1.) foresaw a storm, a black day, a day of trouble coming upon his Disciple, he prevents and way-layes the trouble of their hearts, by forbidding it, *Let not your hearts be troubled*; be not disturbed in your minds with cares and sorrows concerning the issue of my absence from you; say not, Our Lord and Master is gone, O what will become of us? *For I go to prepare a place for you, and I will come again and receive you to my self, that where I am there ye may be also.* Christ tells them he went to prepare a place for them, that he might thereby prepare their hearts patiently to bear his going away? Christ knew well, that if once trouble of heart did gather and grow upon them, it would work strange effects, and either carry them beyond or leave them short of the bounds of duty. Our danger is great when sorrow is in power. I will shew you a twofold danger of it.

First, Satan makes great use of any over-powerful passion. As he tempts some with joy, so others with sorrow: some are drowned while they intend only to swim, and bath themselves in pleasures: Others are drowned while they swim and bath in sorrows. Satan takes advantage of all extreams. Hence the Apostle adviseth about the incestuous person, who was much grieved and afflicted, that the *Corinthians* should comfort him (2 *Cor.* 2. 7.) He would not have him lye too long under those troubles of spirit, *Lest he should have been swallowed up of too much sorrow.* And (*vers.* 11.) *Lest Satan shall get advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.* Now as Satan would get an advantage against the whole Church by blemishing their discipline (which should alwayes be tempered with love, and tend only to the salvation of the offender) as rigorous and immoderate; so he would be busie to work his advantage upon the poor man himself, and swallow him up with too much sorrow. We know what black work some have made by the over-workings of sorrow. Satan doth his work in us, or tempts us to do his work in darkness; and that in a twofold darkness; First, in the darkness of Ignorance; Secondly, in the darkness of Sorrow, or of a troubled mind. And as he *who lets the Sun go down upon his wrath* (that is, who continues long in, and cherisheth his wrath) *gives place to the Devil* (Eph. 4.26, 27.) so also do they who let the Sun go down upon such sorrow.

Secondly, Such sorrow or trouble of spirit, unfits the soul for duty, such can neither pray nor hear as they ought. As some trouble of spirit is an occasion of quickning us to duty, so there is a trouble which dulls and deadens us. And as it unfits for spiritual, so for civil duties and employments: it makes a man careless, and ready to throw up all: take heed of such sorrows; say not, *Why should not my spirit be troubled?*

Job having by this third Argument provoked his friends to attention, brings forth a fourth.

Vers. 5. **Mark me, and be astonied, and lay your hand upon your mouth.**

Mark me.] The word signifies properly to turn the eye or face upon some remarkable object. And as it signifies an attentive view of the eye, so likewise the serious attention of the mind. When *Job* saith, *Mark ye me*, he doth not so much call for their eyes, as for their understandings. Nor was it his person which he would draw them to look at, but his cause. He was in no such comly case to invite be-

beholders, his sores and sickness rendred him little pleasing to the eye.

Mark me, that is, First, *Mark* what I speak, or attend my speech.

Secondly, *Mark* what I suffer, mark what is fallen on me. As if he had said, *Surely my friends, though ye have been a great while with me, yet ye have not heeded me.* 'Tis possible to be long in the presence of a man, and not see him; that is, not consider his state and condition. Therefore after all this discourse *Job* admonisheth his friends to take better notice of him. *Mark me;*

And be astonied.] The word imports such astonishment as is caused by standing upon a high place, or beholding things from on high. He that stands upon a high cliff or tower, is astonished to look down. Look down upon me, saith *Job*, mark the huge deep of sorrow, which I am in, *and be astonied.* Astonishment is the conquest of sense, and and of reason too; we are never astonied while either sense or reason can act orderly, but when they are in a kind of huddle, this is our astonishment. Strange events, things seldom heard of, or rarely seen, breed astonishment. Astonishment is a degree beyond admiration; a man may wonder at that whereat he is not astonished. Thus the Prophet represents the posture of the neighbouring Nations at the fall of *Tyrus* (Ezek. 28. 19.) *And all they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.* The fall of mighty Princes is matter of amazement and terror to all who hear of or behold it. Thus 'tis said of the *Babylonian* (Isa. 14. 16.) *They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?* And (*vers.* 10.) *Art thou also become weak as we, art thou become like us?* Who could have believed this? Who ever expected to see such a change? And the Lord himself calls the heavens to astonishment at the strangeness of his peoples dealing with him, (*Jer.* 2. 12.) *Be astonished O ye heavens at this, and be horribly afraid; be ye very desolate saith the Lord; for my people have committed two evils,* &c. And those evils were such and so great, as few if any had ever committed before them; they had sinned without and beyond example, as is plain by the former verse, *Hath a Nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods?* Where can you find a Nation changing their gods? The most barbarous Nations are tenacious of and zealous for their gods? They stick to their gods, though they be but Idols; *Hath a Nation changed their god?* Can you give me an instance of a people that have changed their gods, and turned them out of doors, though they are yet no gods: *But my people have changed their glory*, that is, their God (God is the glory of a people, his presence is at once our honour and our safety.) Now when such a thing as this was done, which was never done before, of which no example could be given for any records, then *be astonished O heavens.* Now, as the sin of *Jerusalem* was an unparalleld sin, so also was her punishment; and therefore she calls all to behold and be astonished, *Lam.* 1. 12. *Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.* Thus *Job* seems to bespeak his friends, was there ever any mans sorrow like mine? Mine is a rare case, and may therefore justly breed astonishment. *Mark me, and be astonished.*

בהל *Vehement significationis verbum, quod vix usurpatur nisi ob aliquod inopinatum eventum, aut ob aliquam rem ineffabilem & admiratione dignissimam.* Bold.

Hence note, First, *A man, especially a man in affliction, loves to have his case and discourse throughly weighed.*

Unless you mark his affliction, you encrease it; and unless you mark his words, you diminish his person. Slight attention is displeasing to man, much more to God; yet how oft doth God speak, and we scarce mark? He hath reason to call upon us, *mark me*, both in what he saith, and in what he doth. We neither mark the words, nor the works of God as we ought. If men take it ill when they are not marked, how ill may the great God of heaven take it?

Secondly, *Job's* friends had censured and judged him, but they had not markt him.

Hence note, *Some are more forward to censure then to consider.*

They give judgment before they hear, and pass sentence before they mark; common reason bids us mark before we judge, and consider before we give our opinion either about the actions of others or their doctrines. The Apostles rule and counsel leads us to this (1 *Thes.* 5. 21.) *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* The rule holds also, *Prove all things*, and then reject that which is evil. 'Tis not praise-worthy to hold that which is good, till we have proved it so; nor can we be excused in rejecting that as evil which is evil, till we have proved it to be so.

Thirdly, While *Job* saith, *Mark me, and be astonied*, He seems to intimate thus much to his friends; hitherto ye have neglected me and my sufferings, but did ye *mark me*, ye would be astonied: He speaks not imparatively, as commanding their attention; but optatively, desiring them to mark him, and sheweth what would follow, *Mark me*, and (certainly) *ye will be astonied.*

Hence note, *The reason why we are little affected with great things, is because we do not enough consider and mark them.*

That which scarcely moveth us, would astonish us; that which is small in our eyes and estimations, would be great, if we did but weigh it. Did we throughly consider what sin is, many would tremble, who now make a sport of it. The mercy of God, the unspeakable love of Jesus Christ, are little valued and prized by many, because they enter not into a due consideration of them, they take no pains to know what Redemption, Justification, and Salvation mean, and therefore (as the Apostle speaks, *Heb.* 2. 3.) *they neglect so great salvation.* The Apostle *Peter* writing of the things of the Gospel (1 *Pet.* 1. 10.) shews how industrious some of old time were about them, *Of which salvation the Prophets have enquired and searched diligently.* And (*ver.* 12.) *Which things the Angels desire to look into them.* Angels pry into the secrets of the Gospel, they (as the word used by the Apostle implieth) do, as it were, stretch out their necks to see the glory of those mysteries. Were we but thus busie and intent upon them, how should we be swallowed up and transported with the riches of that Grace, with the freeness of that love which is manifested to the sons of men! The works of providence, whether works of mercy, or of judgment, are full of mystery, *they are great, and sought out of all that have pleasure in them* (Psal. 111. 2.) If we would seek them out, and scan their circumstances, we should stand amazed, both at the wisdom and power of God discovered in them. At this time it would be said, *What hath God wrought? How unsearchable are thy judgments, and thy wayes past finding out; who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?*

Fourthly observe, That *the dealings of God with some godly men are full of astonishment.*

David himself said (*Psal.* 119. 120.) *My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.* Those Judgments which cause trembling before they come, being come cause astonishment. As the mercy which God sometimes bestows upon his servants, is beyond their faith, so many of his chastnings are beyond their fear; and as themselves are astonished at what God hath laid upon them, so others also ought to be. The Judgments of God upon *Jerusalem* were so strange, that the Kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed them; where faith ends, wonder must needs begin. What God did to *Jerusalem* for the punishment of her sin, he did to *Job* for the tryal of his graces; even such things as no man who knew his integrity would have believed, though it had been told him before he saw it; and therefore he had reason to say, *Mark me, and be astonied,*

And lay your hand upon your mouth.] This action follows astonishment before spoken of (*Mich.* 6. 16.) *The Nations shall see and be confounded at all their might* (that is, to see their own might confounded and weakned) *and shall lay their hand upon their mouth.* The Image of *Harpocrates* (whom the antient Idolatrous *Egyptians* adored as the God

Harpocratem simulachrum qui Deus putabatur silentii sic exprimebatur ab Ægyptiis ut digitum apprimebat labris. Car. Steph. Lex. *Cum veniet contra digito compesce labellum.* Juv. Sat.

of

of silence) was formed and set up in the Temple of *Isys*, with his hand laid upon his mouth. And this hath long obtained the honour and authority of a proverbial speech, signifying thus much, that we will say no more, or that we have no more to say. This phrase is often used in Scripture; for, besides that it is used twice more in this book (*Chap.* 29. 9. & 40. 4.) we also read, how the *Danites* said to *Michah's* Priest, who began to make a bustle against them, and to demand, *What do ye?* (Judg. 18. 19.) *hold thy peace, lay thy hand upon thy mouth. Solomon* gives advice, (*Prov.* 30. 32.) *If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thy self, or if thou hast thought evil, lay thy hand upon thy mouth*; that is, if thou hast done evil, do not defend it, but repent of it; or if thou hast framed evil thoughts in thy heart, yet let not thy mouth speak them out in evil words; smother those sinful conceptions, let them never see the Sun, for 'twil encrease thy sin, and procure thee shame. Among the several stations which the *Israelites* made through the wilderness, one was in *Punon*, or *Phinon* (*Numb.* 33. 42.) which as one of the Ancients observeth, signifieth, *silence* or *sparingness of speech*; upon which he maketh this useful application, *Let us be careful to take up our station here sometimes, while we are travailing through the wilderness of this world.* It may be our wisdom to pitch in silence. The hand is well imployed while we stop the mouth with it from broaching and maintaining that which is evil, or from opposing that which is good. As to open the mouth, importeth readiness to speak, and boldness of speech; so to lay the hand upon the mouth, notes silence, and properly silence upon conviction; that is, when a man hath heard such reasons as he cannot oppose or contradict. We use an expression near this, *Lay your hand upon your heart*; that is, take the thing deeply to heart, apply it home. As to lay the hand upon the heart, notes internal speech; so to lay the hand upon the mouth, notes the stopping of external speech. *Lay your hand upon your mouth*, is as if *Job* had said, *Mark me, and you will have little reason and less forwardness to speak any more*; or, *My counsel to you my friends, is, That ye would hear more and speak less; yea, that in this case ye would now be silent and speak no more.*

Ambros *de* 42. *filiorum* Israelis *mansionibus.*

There are two things which should stop the mouth, and impose silence.

First, The plainness and evidence either of reason or of proof (*Rom.* 3. 19.) *What the law speaks, it is to those that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be guilty*; that is, the law brings such plain evidence and conviction, that no man shall have a word to speak against it. If God should spread before men their lives, and his law in the purity and spiritualness of it, every man must sit down silent, and lay his hand upon his mouth.

Secondly, The mouth is stopped by the depth and darkness, by the inevidence and obscurity of that which is before us; when things are so vailed and clouded that we cannot see into them, what can we say to them? 'Tis then high time to lay our hand upon our mouthes, and instead of speaking to admire. We may conceive *Job* intending both these *stop-mouthes* to his friends. First, That the reason of Gods dealing with him was secret and dark. Secondly, That he intended to answer their objections with so much plainness of speech, and evidence of reason, that either they should not be able to resist him, or it would be very dangerous for them if they did; and therefore (saith he) *lay your hand upon your mouth.* Which he presseth upon them yet further in the words following.

Vers. 6. **Even when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.**

This verse contains *Job's* last Argument, moving his friends to attention. The reason stands thus; the very remembrance of that which I am about to speak to you makes me afraid and tremble, therefore you have reason to attend and mark what I speak; surely I speak not of slight matters, nor do I tell you stories of I know not what, I am serious, be you so.

Doctis quibusdam placet hic sensus Jobum *partim de-*

When I remember, I am afraid.] When I remember, what? First, say some. The trouble and affliction, the pains and sorrows which I am in. Secondly, say others, When I remember *what prosperity God gives the wicked*; as in the next verse, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?* When I remember these dispensations of God, it strikes me with terror.

loris sui recordatione, partim mira Dei administratione de qua mox dicturus est, sic conturbari ut totus horreat. Merl.

Trembling taketh hold of my flesh.] This clause highteus the former, I am altogether afraid, I do not only tremble, *but trembling taketh hold of me. Moses* speaks in this form (*Exod.* 15. 13.) *Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed*, &c. God had but just put them over the Sea, and yet, by the spirit, *Moses* saw them put into the possession of *Canaan*, and his faith prophesied what posture other Nations should be in when God should do these things, *The people shall hear and be afraid, sorrow shall take hold of the inhabitants of* Palestina. He saith not that they shall be full of sorrow, but *sorrow shall take hold of them*, as a Sergeant takes hold of a man to arrest and carry him away: So it follows, *Sorrow shall take hold of the Dukes of* Edom, *the mighty men of* Moab, *trembling shall take hold of them.* In this the Scripture sets forth the excessiveness of their troubles, that fear should not only fall upon them, but take hold of them. Thus saith *Job*, I am not only afraid, *but trembling hath taken hold of my flesh.* And if the remembrance of these things makes me afraid and tremble, how can you who are present but be troubled and deeply affected with the sight of them?

Si tantæ calamitatis sola recordatio me consternaret quanto magis vos præsentes si animum advertetis necessarium est obstupescere ob calamitatem meam. Jun.

I need not draw out particular Observations here, having shewed upon other places how dreadful the judgments of God are, and what effects they have produced upon the spirits of good men. *Habakkuk* who had only a prophetical vision of them, expresseth his sence in the highest language of amazement (*Chap.* 3. 16.) *When I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenness entred into my bones, I trembled in my self, that I might rest in the day of trouble.*

Only here observe a double difference.

First, Between the godly and the wicked at all times.

Secondly, Between the godly of those times under the law, and the godly who live in these Gospel times.

To the first, A godly man trembles at the judgments of God, a wicked man is little moved at them: The foresight or remembrance of Judgments makes a godly man fear, but a wicked man is hardned in the sight and under the feeling of them.

To the second, The people of God under the Law, being dealt with more by visible dispensations of mercy and judgment in the times of the Law (as is evident, especially throughout the twenty-sixth Chapter of *Leviticus*, and the twenty-eighth of *Deuteronomy*) they were more subject to fear and despondings of spirit, upon sad providences and appearances, then now believers are under the Gospel. The grace of God appearing more eminently in these Gospel times by Jesus Christ, and the love of God being more abundantly shed abroad in the hearts of believers by the Holy Ghost, they are delivered from that spirit of bondage, and the pressures of servile fear, under which formerly they were extreamly held in subjection; and have therefore clearer cause of rejoycing and glorying in tribulation then they had; and of saying with *Paul, We are only as sorrowing, yet alwayes rejoycing, as having nothing, yet possessing all things*: For as perfect love casteth fear (that fear which hath torment) quite out, (1 *Joh.* 4. 18.) so the more love is perfected, the more is fear cast out.

VERS. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?
Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their off-spring before their eyes.
Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.
Their bull gendreth and faileth not, their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

JOB having finished his Preface, proceeds to refutation, which he grounds not only upon reason, but (and that chiefly in this place) upon experience, teaching his friends by their sense, and bidding them ask their own eyes, whether he did not speak truth, and themselves an error?

Vers.

Verſ. 7. **Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power?**

As if he had ſaid, *Do you ſee all or many wicked men in an afflicted eſtate? Why then have you thus concluded againſt me that I am wicked, becauſe afflicted?* The whole context of the ſeven verſes next enſuing, are a continued deſcription of the wicked mans proſperity.

His proſperity is deſcribed;

First, What it is in life, or while he liveth.

Secondly, What it is when he is dying, or in the manner of his death.

The proſperity of his life may be conſidered, either, as to his perſon, or as to his relations. His perſonal proſperity is deſcribed (*verſ.* 7.) His proſperity in relations, is deſcribed, First, In his children (*verſ.* 8.) Secondly, In his whole family, or in all within doors (*verſ.* 9.) Thirdly, In his cattel or ſubſtance without doors (*verſ.* 10.) And all this outward proſperity is hightned by the joy, mirth, and gladneſs with which he and his abound, while he aboundeth in theſe outward enjoyments, *They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ* (verſ. 11, 12.) Thus we have the reſolution of this context in the deſcription of the wicked mans proſperity, while he lives. His proſperity in death is ſet down, *verſ.* 13.

Verſ. 7. **Wherefore do the wicked live?**

This verſe contains the perſonal proſperity of the wicked man, and therein we have a gradation of three ſteps; or his proſperity riſeth by three ſteps.

First, *He lives.*

Secondly, *He becometh old.*

Thirdly, *He is mighty in power.*

To all this *Job* prefixeth *a wherefore*, and why all this? Or how comes it to paſs, that the wicked man liveth, and not only liveth, but becometh old, and not only becometh old, but waxeth mighty in power; *Wherefore is all this?* He ſpeaks either admiringly, or chidingly; give me an account of it. If (as you my friends have often told me) wicked men are alwayes puniſhed in this life for their ſins, I wonder whence it comes to paſs, that ſo many wicked men live, and not only live, but proſper? And whence is it that I ſuffer all theſe miſeries (as you ſay) for my ſins, if the wicked, as your eyes may teach you, enjoy ſo much proſperity? Unriddle theſe queries, reſolve theſe doubts.

Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, and mighty in power?

This *wherefore* may have a double reference; First, To the opinion of his friends, who held that God diſtributeth evil to wicked men, and good to good men in this life. Now, ſaith he, for as much as this is your principle and your opinion, reconcile your principle, and this experience together, *Wherefore do the wicked proſper?* For as much as you have ſaid, God gives out allowances, and lots to men, as men are good or bad; to the good he gives good things (ſay you) and to the evil, evil. As the *wherefore* is thus applied, take this note from it.

No reaſon could be given why wicked men ſhould proſper in this life, if God dealt with all men in this life according to their deſervings.

If deſert were the rule, we were not able to give a reaſon why wicked men proſper, who indeed deſerve not to live in the world; nor why godly men, whom the world doth not deſerve, ſuffer ſo much while they live. As the world is not worthy that it ſhould have godly men to live in it, ſo ungodly men are not worthy to live in the world; how then ſhall we anſwer if ſelf-worthineſs carry it, when commonly 'tis worſt with the beſt, and beſt with the worſt?

Again, The word *wherefore* may have reference to *Job's* own doubt; wicked men proſper, why do they proſper? *Wherefore do the wicked live?* And this is a quere which hath all along troubled the ſpirits of the Saints, eſpecially in thoſe times, nor are they alwayes or eaſily ſatisfied in theſe about it; many were then puzzled, and ſo they are now when they ſee wicked men proſper, and godly men afflicted. That a wicked man is vexed or afflicted, no man wonders at it; every one can tell *why*, and give you a *wherefore*: but that he ſhould live, and proſper, this is hard to reſolve. Again, that a godly man is bleſt, and thrives, and lives comfortably, no man wonders at this; for he hath the promiſes of this life as well as of that which is to come. But to ſee godly men afflicted, trod under foot, and ſtript of all; theſe diſpenſations put many to a ſtand, *Wherefore is it that the wicked proſper?* And, *Wherefore is it that the godly are afflicted?* That God is juſt, a godly man knoweth, and ſaith as *Abraham* (Gen. 18. 25.) *Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* God is juſt, and therefore doth juſtly. The people of God have it alwayes upon their ſpirits, to honour God thus. And they give him glory in that other principle which *David* aſſerts (*Pſal.* 5. 5.) *That the fooliſh ſhall not ſtand in his ſight, and he hates all workers of iniquity.* Theſe things are unqueſtionable with them, and therefore they are often ſcanning upon, queſtioning and enquiring about this point, *Why do the wicked proſper?*

Hence obſerve, *It is ſome trouble to good men to ſee evil men flouriſh and live free from trouble.*

It hath been ſo, and 'tis ſo to this day; many a good man hath had much ado to digeſt this morſel, and to get above this temptation. While *David* admoniſheth (*Pſal.* 37. 1.) *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of the wicked man, and be not envious at the evil doer*; he more then intimates that the beſt of men are ready to envy and fret when they proſper. And either he or *Aſaph* tells us how he found it working upon his own heart (*Pſal.* 73. 3.) *I was envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked.* And he ſtaid not here, but was over-born by the ſtrength of this temptation, to make a very unbecoming and dangerous concluſion (*verſ.* 13.) *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued and chaſtned every morning.* He indeed corrects himſelf, *verſ.* 14. *If I ſay I will ſpeak thus, behold I ſhould offend againſt the generation of thy children*; and when *he thought to know this* (that is, to ſee the reaſon of it) *it was too painful for him, till he went into the ſanctuary of God*, (that is, till he conſulted with God) *then he underſtood the end of thoſe men.* Till we look to that reckoning which lyeth beyond this life, we get no reſolution of this doubt.

We may anſwer this quere further (*Why the wicked proſper in this life?*) two wayes.

First, Negatively.

Secondly, Affirmatively.

If you ask, Wherefore do the wicked proſper?

I anſwer, First, Negatively; and I ſhall give you a five-fold negation.

First, It is not becauſe God loves their perſons, or bears them (as ſuch) any good will.

Secondly, It is not becauſe God approves their wayes, or likes their doings.

Thirdly, It is not becauſe God intends them good, or hath a purpoſe to beſtow further bleſſings upon them.

Fourthly, It is not becauſe God cannot pull them down, lay them low, and cut them off: he can weaken the ſtrongeſt, and cauſe the greateſt to fall before him; he can cruſh them as the moth.

Fifthly, It is not becauſe he dares not deal with them, or is affraid to provoke their power. Some Princes of the world have been forced to let ſome wicked men alone, to live long and grow mighty in power; they durſt not provoke them, they knew not what fires they might ſtir againſt themſelves. The ſons of *Zerviah* were too hard for *David*, but there are none too hard for God. For none of theſe reaſons doth the Lord ſuffer wicked men to live, become old, and mighty in power.

We may anſwer the queſtion Affirmatively three wayes.

First, In reference to God.

Secondly, In reference unto the godly, and

Thirdly, In reference to the wicked themſelves.

First, Wherefore do the wicked live, and proſper? They are ſuffered to do ſo in reference to God himſelf.

First, To glorifie his patience, and long-ſuffering. Theſe attributes would not ſhine forth with ſuch luſtre in the world, did not wicked men live and thrive in the world; if

If God ſhould immediately deſtroy every one that doth wickedly, he ſhould be very juſt, and his holineſs would appear in this; but thoſe Attributes of patience and long-ſuffering would not appear: but when God ſuffers the wicked to continue, and thoſe whom he is able every moment to deſtroy, to ſurvive many years, how doth this lift up his glory, and tell us, that he is *ſlow to wrath, though he be great in power.*

Secondly, In reference to God. The Apoſtle gives us an account why (*Rom.* 9. 22.) *What if God willing to ſhew his wrath, and make his power known, endured with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction?* What hath any man to ſay, if God reſpecting the further manifeſtation of his own wrath, ſeem to favour wicked men? If it be thus (ſaith the Apoſtle) what hath any man to ſay to it? If as God ſuffers them, to ſhew forth his own patience and long-ſuffering here, ſo to have the fuller blow at them hereafter, and to take (as it were) the more advantage in making his power known, even the power of his wrath: For this reaſon he endureth with much long-ſuffering the veſſels of wrath, *fitted to deſtruction*; they are fitted to deſtruction already: and they are veſſels of wrath, ſuch as deſerve to be filled with wrath, brim-full with wrath every day; yet they are full of comforts, and continue ſafe a long time, that their periſhing at laſt may make God more known in the greatneſs and irreſiſtibility of his power. The power of God is the more known when once it acteth, by how much it ſtayeth the longer before it acteth upon wicked men.

Thirdly, It is, becauſe *the Lord hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world by Jeſus Chriſt in righteouſneſs.* A day is coming which is the day of the revelation of his righteous judgment (*Rom.* 2. 5.) Therefore he lets things go thus at preſent. He will at laſt render to every man according to his work; but now he doth not: And becauſe he hath this in his heart, he ſpares wicked men a while, gives them a reprieve, and doth not ſeal the Writ for their execution.

Secondly, We may anſwer this Queſtion (*Wherefore do the wicked live?*) affirmatively, in reference to the godly.

Firſt, To teach them patience towards all men, to love their enemies, to do good to thoſe that hate them, as was further ſhewed, *chap.* 20. *v.* 29.

Secondly, God ſuffers the wicked to proſper in ſin for trial of the Graces of his ſervants. There are many Graces which would come to little trial, if wicked men ſhould not thrive in their ſins. The grace of Patience is tried by this means; becauſe wicked men proſpering, get power to vex and perſecute them; yea, their patience is alwayes tried by the proſperity of the wicked, though they hurt them not with their power; though they are not thorns and briars to tear and trouble them, yet to ſee them proſper, is an exerciſe of patience under, and ſubmiſſion to the will of God.

This alſo trieth the ſoundneſs and ſteddineſs of their judgment, whether they will alter their opinion, either concerning themſelves or wicked men, becauſe of outward diſpenſations. Then a godly man is eſtabliſhed indeed, when he neither thinks the worſe of himſelf becauſe he is afflicted, nor the better of wicked men, becauſe they thrive and proſper.

Laſtly, We may anſwer this Query (*Why do the wicked proſper?*) affirmatively alſo, in reference to the wicked themſelves, in two things.

Firſt, It renders them more inexcuſable in the day of wrath.

Secondly, This gives them opportunity to ſhew what they are, both which points were inſiſted upon, *chap.* 20. *v.* 29. Whither I refer the Reader.

Thus we may anſwer *Job*'s Queſtion, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?*

I ſhall now ſpeak more diſtinctly to theſe words, as they lie in this gradation.

Wherefore do the wicked live?

Some read in the time paſt, *Wherefore have the wicked lived?* Others in the time to come, *Wherefore ſhould the wicked live?* We tranſlate in the preſent time, *Wherefore do they live?* To live, in Scripture is taken two wayes.

Firſt, For a bare ſubſiſtence in the world, or for the holding (as we ſay) of life and ſoul together, to be kept out of the grave, or to be above ground; this is to live: So ſome reſtrain it here; *Wherefore do the wicked live?* That is, wherefore have they ſo much as a breathing-time in the world? that's too much for them. Wherefore are not their filthy and unclean ſouls preſſed by death out of their bodies? why are they not tumbled into the grave? why are they not tumbled down into hell? why do they cumber, ſtill cumber the world? A wicked man is not worthy to live, much leſs is he worthy of the comforts of this life. If a wicked man had his deſert, he ſhould have nothing but wrath. *The wrath of God is revealed againſt all unrighteouſneſs. The wages of ſin is death*; that's all he earns, why then doth he live?

Secondly, To live, ſignifies not barely to live, but to live comfortably, to have content with our life; to live is to proſper. Thus the word is often uſed in Scripture (*Pſal.* 118. 17.) *I ſhall not die, but live. David* did not look upon himſelf as immortal, or that he ſhould never die; he knew he was ſubject to the ſtatute of death: but his meaning is, I ſhall not die now, I ſhall not die by the hands of theſe men, I ſhall not die the death which they have deſigned me to; or when he ſaith, *I ſhall not die, but live*; his meaning is, I ſhall live comfortably and proſperouſly, I ſhall live as a King. That which we tranſlate (*1 Sam.* 10. 24.) *God ſave the King*, is, *Let the King live*, that is, let him proſper and have good dayes; let him have peace with all, or victory over his enemies. 'Tis ſaid in that Propheſie of Jeſus Chriſt (*Pſal.* 72. 15.) *He ſhall live.* Chriſt hath not only a being, but a glorious being. Though Jeſus Chriſt had no outward pomp, while he was in the world, yet they who knew him, honoured him; and all power was committed to him. *He ſhall live, and to him ſhall be brought of the Gold of* Sheba; *prayers ſhall dayly be made to him, and dayly ſhall he be praiſed.* Chriſt lives and reigns, all his foes ſhall be made his footſtool. When *Paul* ſaith (*1 Theſ.* 3. 8.) *Now I live, if ye ſtand faſt in the faith*; he would have the *Theſſalonians* know, that his life would be a continual death, if he ſaw them go back in Grace, and decline in Faith; and that it would add joy, yea, a Crown to his life, if they ſtood faſt in the faith, and keep cloſe to the profeſſion of the Goſpel. The two witneſſes (*Rev.* 11. 8.) are ſaid to be ſlain; which is underſtood, not of a corporal, but of a civil death. While the witneſſes of Chriſt live in the body, they are ſaid to be ſlain and dead, becauſe they live in affliction and trouble; and as that Text ſpeaks, propheſie in ſackcloath, that is, are poor and low in the world. To be ſtript of the comforts and contentments of this life, is in Scripture-language, to be ſtript of life it ſelf. As there is a life of Grace, and a livelineſs of Grace; a living hope, and a lively hope (*1 Pet.* 1. 4.) ſo there is a life of Nature, and the livelineſs of Nature. We may underſtand this Text of both, ſpecially of the latter; 'tis more then a wicked man can expect, that he ſhould live; but that he ſhould be lively and ſtrong, that he ſhould live richly, comfortably, joyfully, this offends and ſtumbles many, and they cannot but put *Job*'s Queſtion, *Wherefore do the wicked live?* yet that which follows, offends more; they do not only live, but *become old.*

Non eſt vivere ſed valere vita.

The ſecond ſtep of their proſperity is the length of life. *Zophar* (*chap.* 20.) grants that a wicked man may triumph, he may have his fill of joy; *but* (ſaith he) *the triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment.* Here *Job* oppoſeth *Zophar*, affirming not only that wicked men live, but live long; they do not only proſper, but proſper many years; they become old in proſperity. The word which we render *to become old*, ſignifies ſo to become old, as to continue ſtrong in old age, and to have, as a renewing of years, ſo, of abilities. The old age of ſome men is nothing but weakneſs, infirmities ann diſeaſes overtake them, and make their lives a burden, both to themſelves and their friends; but others are ſtrong and luſty, they have a good old age. The word is uſed to expreſs the antiquity of God himſelf (*Dan.* 7. 9.) Where he is called *The ancient of dayes.* Now though the Lord be the ancient of dayes, yet there is no decay upon the Lord; he is as ſtrong and powerful now, as he ever was, and ſo he ſhall be to everlaſting. As his years fail not, or have no end (*Pſal.* 102. 22.) So his

עתק *Veteraſcere, ſeneſcere.*

עתיק יומין *Durabilis cujus dies non deficiunt; qui ſemper idem eſt*

strength faileth not, nor hath any end, his power is not abated, his hand is not shortned by time, no, nor by eternity. Thus (in proportion) we are to understand it here; *Job* saw wicked men, having an old age like youth, a winter with a spring in it, natural vigour flourishing, when (as *Solomon* describes old age, *Eccles.* 12. 5.) *The Almond tree flourished.* There is yet a third step; *Job* observed wicked men not only to live and grow old, but,

חיל *Pollent opibus. Nam in opibus potentia hominis consistit. Confortavi divitiis.* Vulg. *Etiam comparant divitias.* Tharg.

To be Mighty in power.] In the two former words, *to live and become old*, we had their natural power; in this, their civil. *They are mighty*, or, *strengthened in power.* The word which we translate *power*, signifies also *riches.* Thus some render it here; *They are mighty in riches*, saith Mr. *Broughton.* Riches are so expresst, because there is a power in them; and most rich men are powerful men. The *Chaldee* Paraphrase gives this reading, *yea, they gather riches.* Some grow old and poor, they lose their wealth, while they heap up dayes; *These grow old, and gather riches.* So that now we are at the height of the wicked mans prosperity; he lives many dayes, and with many dayes, he hath abundance of riches; and with his riches, power and authority; for that is a second signification of the word, which our Translation rather enclines to. He is not only a rich, but a powerful man; he is cloathed with authority and command; he is advanced to Magistracy, and all submit to him: He is the Head, and doth what he pleaseth; he speaks, and all obey him; *He is mighty in power.* This is the highest step of the wicked mans prosperity. The Orator long ago spake with indignation concerning *Cataline* the Conspirator, *The man lives*; he adds, *and comes into the Senate*: As if he had said, It is too much for this man to live, yet behold he lives in power and authority. So, *Job*, to set forth the glory of wicked men, saith, *They live, and become old, and are mighty in power.* They are placed upon the very pinacle of honour, and are lifted up above their brethren. From the personal prosperity of wicked men, *Job* proceeds to that of their Relations.

Vivit, imo in Senatum venit. Cic. *de* Catal.

Verse 8. **Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their off-spring before their eyes.**

Not only are they, but their children also are established. This is a great addition to their worldly happiness. *Abraham* was a man possessed of great riches and power, and (which was more then all his possessions) God told him (Gen. 15. 1.) *I am thy Shield and thy exceeding great reward*; yet *Abraham* said, *Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?* vers. 2. This want sowred all his enjoyments; though he were the beloved of God, yet he was pinched with this, *I go childless*: A child was more to him then all other worldly gifts; yet, I grant, it was not a meer natural child which he waited for, but a child of promise. So that his fear was not (indeed) so much that he should have no children, but lest the promise of the blessed Seed should not be accomplished in him: Such a child was most in his eye, nevertheless, a child was much in his eye, as that blessing, without which all his outward blessings would come short of his desires, and be imperfect. Therefore *Job* describes the prosperity of wicked men, not only by their riches and abundance, but by their children. *Their seed is established in their sight.*

Their seed.] That is, by an ordinary Metonymie, their children are established.]

The word signifies to stablish, first, Firmly. Secondly, To establish orderly and rightly, or an exactness of establishment: *David* useth this word in his prayer to God about the settlement of his own house (2 *Sam.* 7. 26.) *Let thy name be magnified for ever, saying the Lord of Hosts is the God over* Israel, *and let the house of thy servant* David *be established before thee*, that is, let the posterity of *David* be orderly stablished. And it is applied to the settlement of all the Saints in their generations (*Psal.* 102. 28.) *The Children of thy servants shall continue, their seed shall be stablished before thee.* They shall continue, and not only continue, but be strong; they shall have an orderly and a firm establishment. Thus (saith *Job*) *The seed of the wicked is established.* And which is more, they are established *in their sight.* It is a blessing to have them established; but 'tis a greater blessing to have them established *in their sight.* It adds to the blessing, that their children should not only prosper, but that they should see it. The Hebrew is, *before their face*; it is a great aggravation of our sorrow when our children come to misery before our face. As it is said, Jer. 39. 6. *The King of* Babylon *slew the sons of* Zedekiah *before his eyes.* He not only slew his sons, but made him witness of it; *Zedekiah*'s own eyes were put out shortly after, (his sorrow had been less if they had been put out before he had beheld that doleful spectacle) the cruel death of his own children. The glory of the children of God shall afflict the wicked, because they shall see it. Christ puts that in expresly (*Luke* 13. 28.) *When you shall see* Abraham, Isaac *and* Jacob *sit down in the Kingdom of heaven, and ye your selves shall be thrust out.* They shall enter heaven before your eyes, or in your sight, you shall see them. If they should not see them there, it would not trouble them so much; but to see them happy, will be their misery. Now, as it is an affliction for any man to see his children slain before his eyes, or to see the prosperity of others before his eyes, in which he cannot partake; so to have our children prosper before our eyes, and our seed exalted in our sight, is a great advancement of our happiness. If a father hath only a promise that when he is dead, his children shall prosper, this comforts him; but when himself lives to see it, this is much more comfortable. This mercy *Job* took notice of as the portion of the wicked; *Their seed is established in their sight.*

Ad facies eorum. Heb.

Further, The word in the Original, which we translate *in their sight*, is used sometimes comparatively, or by way of similitude (*chap.* 4. 19.) *They shall be crushed before, or as soon as the moth.* The Hebrew is, *They shall be crushed before the face of the moth*, that is, as soon as you can crush a moth, so are the proudest crushed by the hand of God. Thus some expound here, *Their seed is stablished in their sight*, that is, *as much as they*; as they live long, so do their children, as they become old, so do their children. They and theirs prosper together, or theirs prosper as well as they.

Ad facies eorum, i. e. *sicut vel quantum ipsi.*

And their off-spring before their eyes.] This clause is of the same meaning with the former; the word *off-spring*, signifies the shoot of a tree, or a sprig that grows out of the earth; children are as plants and sprigs. In both parts he answers what *Zophar* spake (*chap.* 20. 10.) Where he told *Job*, *That his children should seek to please the poor*, that is, his children should be brought to such a low and mean condition, that they must submit to the lowest, and ambitiously pursue the favour of the meanest, even seek to please the poor. Now, saith *Job*, my observation (and so may yours) hath taught me otherwise; I have often seen the seed of wicked men established in their sight, and their off-spring before their eyes. He answers also that of *Eliphaz* (chap. 15. 33.) *He shall shake off his unripe grapes as the Vine, and shall cast off his flower as the Olive*; that is, his children shall come to an immature end, they shall die in their youth, yea, *in their infancy.* But (saith *Job*) I have seen the seed of the wicked established, they have lived long, and taken root, and come to maturity; they have not been shaken off as unripe grapes, and as the flower of the Olive.

צאצאים *Germina, appellantur ab exeundo, quasi ἐκπεφυκότα dicas.* Drus.

The Prophet *Isaiah* seems to oppose *Job*'s experience, and to subscribe to the opinion of his friends (*Isa.* 14. 20, 21.) *The seed of evil doers shall never be renowned: Prepare slaughter for his children, for the iniquity of their fathers.*

I answer, The original Text may be thus rendred in the Letter; *The seed of evil doers shall not be called* (or renowned) *for ever*; as if he had said, suppose they have a name for a while, or be established in the sight of their fathers, that is, while they live; yet this shall not last always, ere long they shall be cut off: we translate, *not for ever*, by *never*, or, *not at all*; which must be understood of the continuance of their seed in renown. Nor doth that which *Job* asserts, the prosperity of some one or more of the seed of a wicked man, stand in the light of the Prophets position; *That the seed of evil doers are not renowned for ever*; or, *that they shall never be renowned.* For the Prophet speaks according to the general rule and law of Gods proceedings with wicked men, by which, as themselves are usually cut off, so also are their seed and posterity too; yet as most other general rules have their exceptions, so also hath this. Grammarians give general rules about the government of words, yet they have Heteroclites and Anamolies, which vary from the ordinary construction

struction; so the Wisdom and Justice of God propose general rules of administration towards men, and this amongst the rest, is a sure and noble one, that *The seed of evil doers shall never be renowned*; yet the Lord hath some except cases, wherein he sheweth his own liberty and soveraignty in permitting the seed of evil doers to prosper for a time; but he will make it good in the close, that *the seed of evil doers shall never be renowned.*

Verse 9. **Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them.**

This temporal flourishing estate of a wicked man is here further described: We heard before, First, Of his personal prosperity. Secondly, Of the prosperity of his Children. This verse extends it to his whole Family.

First, Affirmatively.

Secondly, Negatively.

We have the affirmative part in the beginning of the verse, *Their houses are safe from fear*; that is, they have peace in their houses. Understand by their houses, not only the dwelling place it self, their seat, but all they have in and about their houses, all are safe from fear. The Hebrew is, *Their houses are peace from fear*, that is, their houses are so far from fear, that there is nothing in their houses but peace; a house full of peace, is a house full of good things. This may be expounded two wayes; *Their houses are full of peace*, that is,

שלם
Domus eorum pax à timore, i. e. summa quædam tranquilitas omnis timoris expers.

First, Their houshold, their servants, their children, all that belong to them are at peace one with another, there is no contention, no bitterness of spirit, no breach among them. The consent of domesticks is a great mercy. Dissentions endanger Families as well as Nations, and hinder the prosperity of them; where some go one way, and some another; usually (as to common good) they all go wrong. *A house* (saith Christ) *divided against it self, cannot stand.*
Benevola consensio domesticorum.

Secondly, As it notes harmony and good agreement among the persons, so the quiet possession of the goods of the house: All that he hath laid up in his house is at peace from fear; thieves do not break through and steal, nor any of the sons of violence come openly upon him to make him afraid. And as they are free from present danger, so from the very fear of it; *Their houses are safe or peace from fear.* This word was used ordinarily by the *Jews* in their salutations, as containing the wish of all welfare to a person or family (1 *Sam* 25. 5.) *Thus shall you say to him that lives in prosperity* (that is, to *Nabal*) *Peace be to thee, and to thy house, and to all that thou hast.* Here is a threefold distribution of peace; first, *Peace to him.* Secondly, *To his Family.* And thirdly, *To all that he had.* Thus here, they have peace from fear, or are safe from fear; they, their families and their goods, they have no breach, no dissention among themselves, no invasion, no violence from abroad. What can be desired more to the compleating of outward prosperity?
Secura possessio bonorum.

Neither is the rod of God upon them.

These words contain the negative part of their prosperity. The rod of God may be opposed unto the rod of men. *Their houses are safe from fear*, that is, from any violence used by men; *Neither is the rod of God upon them.* There are some houses that are not visited with any evil from the creature; the thief doth not break through nor steal their treasures, yet their treasure is destroyed by the rod of God. There are some whose cattel are safe from the violence of men, *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* do not invade them, yet the rod of God dissipates their flocks, and his curse eats them up; therefore *Job* to set out the perfect happiness of a wicked man in temporals, tells us, that as he hath no trouble either from neighbours or strangers, so neither is the rod of God upon him. Immediate evils are properly called the rod of God; when we see no hand that smites us, then (in strict sence) the rod of God smites us.
Μάστιξ δὲ πατρὸς κύριος ἐν ὅσῳ ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς. Sept.
Plaga divinitus inflicta est virga Dei. Drus.

Secondly, By the rod of God we may also understand those afflictions which we receive mediately by the hand of man. Cruel men are expresly (in Scripture) called the rod of God (*Isa.* 10. 5.) *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.* God made that Prince his rod, to scourge and vex his own people. And some of the great troublers of the world, and spoilers of the Nations with fire and sword, have with a kind of ambition, taken that stile upon them, and would be known by this name, *The Scourge of God.*
Flagellum Dei se vocavit Attilas.

Further, The *Rod of God* may be considered in opposition to the rod of man, not only as to the differeuce of the hand that smites, but also as to the difference of the degree or measure in which we are smitten. So some expound this Text, *The rod of God is not upon them*; that is, there is no heavy, no sore rod upon them. Thus, as by a known Scripture-Hebraism, *The river of God* notes any very pleasant and commodious river; and the *mountain* or *hill of God*, a very high and strong hill or mountain; so the rod of God (by the same Hebraism) is a heavy rod, or any extreamly pressing or painful affliction. We have this opposition intimated (2 *Sam.* 7. 14.) *I will be his father, and he shall be my son; if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men.* As if he had said (in compliance with this exposition) If thy son sin, he shall not escape the rod, only I will correct him gently; I will chastise him with the rod of men, that is, with such a rod as men chastise with, or are chastised with. I will chastise him with such rods as the weak arm of man useth; I will not bring heavy and breaking judgments upon him, I will not put out my power to crush him, I will not chasten him with the rod of God; but I will chastise him with such a rod as a man may wield. What are the stripes and stroaks which men give, in comparison of those which God can give?

Again, Take the rod of men for such rods as men use to be corrected and chastised with; so we may take notice of two words used in that Text of *Samuel*; first, *The rod of men* (*Anaschim*) that is, say some, such a rod as is laid on the children of honourable men, who are not corrected as slaves and inferior persons usually are. The children of great men are chastened with a lesser rod, or they are not so severely dealt with as others. Secondly, *The stripes of the children of men*, or *of Adam*, that is, of weak and frail ones; whose original is from the dust: As if the Lord had said, If thy son sin, and so provoke me to punish him, yet I will remember that he is but earth and clay, and shall accordingly moderate my hand; his shall be but such *stripes* as one of the children of men, dust and ashes may well bear. Besides the Hebrew word which we translate *stripes*, signifies rather *touches*; I will chasten him with the touches of the children of men, he shall have but a touch. Now as that affirmative promise in *Samuel*, *I will chasten him with the rod of men*; so this negative experience of *Job*, *The rod of God is not upon them*, may import only some easier and more gentle affliction. As if *Job* had said, I see the houses of the wicked safe from fear, and if trouble come upon them, 'tis not alwayes to ruine and present destruction. The rod of God is not upon them, as you my friends, affirm.
1. *Virga Anaschim ferte, Nobilium qui mitius aliis castigari solent.* 2. *Virga filiorum Adam*, i. e. *fragilium utpote ex terra constantium.* Bold.

Job having thus discovered the happiness of wicked men in the settlement of their seed, and in the safety of their family; shews it also in the increase of their flocks and cattel. *Job*'s prosperity was described by Oxen and Sheep, by Asses and Camels (*chap.* 1.) And he also had observed the worst of men abounding in this peice of prosperity.

Verse 10. **Their Bull gendereth, and faileth not; their Cow calveth, and casteth not her Calf.**

Of these words I shall only say, that they are an expression of the fruitful breeding of Cattel, and that a very full one. *Job* speaks of the fruitfulness both of the male and female Cattel, of the Bull and of the Cow distinctly; and of both (to assure the truth more) he speaks two wayes. First, Affirmatively. And secondly, Negatively. *Their Bull gendreth, their Cow calveth*; there's the affirmative part. *Their Bull faileth not, their Cow casteth not her Calf.* There's the negative part of this outward blessing. When cattel have constant conception, and no abortion, they must multiply exceedingly. *Jacob* useth this argument to convince his ungrateful uncle *Laban*, of the great blessing which his stock had under his care (*Gen.* 31. 38.) *These twenty years have I been with thee, thy Ewes and thy Shee-goats have not cast their young.* The Lord puts this into the form of a promise to the Nation of the *Jews* (Exod. 23. 26.) *There shall*

nothing caſt their young, or be barren in the Land. And again (*Deut.* 7. 14.) *Thou ſhalt be bleſſed above all people, there ſhall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattel.* The Pſalmiſt numbers this among the bleſſings which render a people happy; *Happy* (ſaith he, *Pſal.* 144. 13, 14, 15.) *is that people that is in ſuch a caſe, having their oxen ſtrong to labour, and their ſheep bringing forth thouſands and ten thouſands in their ſtreets*: But moſt *happy* (as he there concludes) *is that people whoſe God is the Lord.* The men of this world receive thoſe bleſſings from the general providence of God, which his own people receive by ſpecial providence. And though many wicked men have Corn and Cattel from the Lord, yet none of them have the Lord for their God. Thus far *Job* hath ſhewed us the wicked full of dayes, and full of riches: In the next place, he ſhews them and their children rejoycing in this fulneſs, and ſaying to their ſouls, Let us eat, drink and be merry till we die. How many are there who have goods laid up for many years, who yet never had one ſerious thought of laying up any thing for eternity?

VERS. 11, 12, 13.

They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.
They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the ſound of the Organ.
They ſpend their dayes in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

JOB hath already deſcribed the outward felicity of many wicked men; Firſt, By long life. Secondly, By their riches. Thirdly, By their power. Fourthly, By the flouriſhing of their children. Fifthly, By the ſecurity of their eſtate; they are ſafe from the violence of men, and free from the rod of God. Sixthly, By the abundance of their Cattel. He proceeds in theſe three verſes to deſcribe their felicity, by the pleaſure and worldly pomp in which they live, and by the eaſineſs of their death. Some men live and encreaſe in riches, they have much Corn, many Children, a full and ſecure eſtate, no conſiderable croſs upon them, yet they take no pleaſure, no contentment in all this. *Solomon* deſcribes ſuch a man (*Eccleſ.* 6. 2.) *to whom God hath given riches, wealth and honour, ſo that he wanteth nothing for his ſoul of all that he deſireth; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a ſtranger eateth it; this is vanity, and it is an evil diſeaſe.* Therefore to compleat the outward felicity of wicked men, *Job* adds,

Verſe 11. **They ſend forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.** Thus they live in pleaſure.

To which he ſuperadds the ſweetneſs, peaceableneſs and quietneſs of their death, *verſ.* 13. *They ſpend their dayes in wealth, and go down to their grave in a moment.*

They ſend forth their little ones like a flock.

עוללים *forte à* עלר *ut ſit ea ætas quæ homo agendi ſimilitudinẽ exhibet; vel potius à* עול *quia in pueris nihil niſi injuſtitia eſt, & quia dum agunt pravè agũt omnia.* Coc. *Puer ſic dictus, quaſi purus.* Becm. de orig. Ling. Lat.

They ſend them forth under Guardians and Guides, ſo a flock is ſent forth; Children are not ſcattered, but ſent in an orderly way. The Original which we tranſlate *little ones*, ſignifies any ſort of children, who are yet under government and tuition. The word hath a double derivation; Firſt, From a root which ſignifies *a yoke or labour*, importing ſuch young ones as are fit to be ſent forth to ſeek employment, or to labour in the world. Secondly, From a root which ſignifies *evil* or *wickedneſs, unrighteouſneſs, naughtineſs*; intimating what our little ones are, both by nature and in their lives, till converted, even corrupt and depraved; for though children are ſo called from their purity (ſay ſome) in the Latine, yet it is only comparatively, not abſolutely. Children may be called white paper, compared with thoſe who have lived long, and blotted their lives with many abominations; yet children have impurity in them, our little ones are conceived in ſin, and brought forth in iniquity. The Spirit of God uſually gives names or denominations proper to the ſtate of things and perſons. Children are polluted in nature, polluted alſo in life and converſation; they are ſinful, and what they do, they do ſinfully: If children did not carry corruption in their natures, they ſhould not bear it in their names. And if little ones are corrupt, how corrupt are they who have perfected their corruption, having heightened and improved the ſtock of ſin which they brought into the world?

Theſe little ones *they ſend forth like a flock*, that is, like a flock of ſheep; which implieth three things.

First, That they had many children, a flock of them; flocks conſiſt of many; *to ſend forth a flock* is a proverbial ſpeech, noting a multitude ſent forth: So the word is uſed (*Pſal.* 107. 41.) *Yet ſetteth he the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock*, that is, he maketh him to have a numerous family, a great houſe: *Abraham*, who had an army in his family (he armed two hundred men, all of his own houſe) he had his family like a flock, that is, many in his family; ſo, *Ezek.* 36. 38. When the Lord would ſhew what a multitude his people ſhould encreaſe to, he ſaith, *As the flocks of* Jeruſalem *in her ſolemn feaſts; ſo ſhall the waſte Cities be filled with flocks of men.* *Jeruſalem* was filled with flocks of Cattel three times in the year, or at their three ſolemn feaſts; the Lord promiſed that the waſte Cities which had no Inhabitants, ſhould be filled with flocks of men, that is, they ſhould have abundance of Inhabitants, or be very populous.

Secondly, As the ſending forth of *little ones like a flock*, imports their number great, ſo, that they are under an order, that they are governed; for a flock is ever under inſpection: Savage and wild beaſts have none to take care of them, or to overſee them; but flocks of ſheep have their overſeers.

Thirdly, Some interpret theſe words, *They ſend forth their Children as a flock*, to note the union and love which was amongſt them, they lived together like a flock. The union of the Church of Chriſt is ſignified under that notion, the Church is called a *flock*; *Fear not little flock* (ſaith Chriſt, *Luke* 12. 32.) The Church is a little flock, in oppoſition to the huge herds and droves of the men of the world; Saints are but few. Firſt, It is called a flock, becauſe of the care and government of Jeſus Chriſt over it. Secondly, It is called a flock, becauſe it is at unity within it ſelf. Though the Church be ſcattered over the world, yet it hath a holy combination of the members; every breach there is a departure from their Duty and Order.

They ſend forth their little ones as a flock.] Thus he deſcribes their felicity in the education and diſcipline of their little ones.

And their children dance.] He ſtill proſecutes the alluſion of a flock; for the word which we render *to dance*, is applied to Calves (*Pſal.* 29. 6.) Where the Prophet thus deſcribes the glorious power of God, *He maketh them alſo to skip like a Calf*; Lebanon *and* Syria *like a young Unicorn.* The word is applied alſo to Rams and Lambs, *Pſal.* 114. 4. *The mountains skipped like Rams, and the little hills like Lambs.* Thus they ſend forth their little children like flocks; they dance and skip; which argues the proſperity of their family.

Dancing may be taken two wayes; either, firſt, Strictly, for the exact motion of the body in meaſure, which is artificial dancing; or ſecondly, Dancing is taken more largely, for any kind of joyful moving of the body, for any bodily exerciſe in ſport or play; this in a common ſence is called dancing. We may take it here four wayes; *their children dance*, that is, they are inſtructed and taught the art of Muſick and dancing; or, there is rejoycing among them; this is proper to the age and ſtate of children. Some derive the Greek word for *children*, from a root which ſignifies to play or ſport, as if playing were the work of children, and ſporting all their labour. Chriſt himſelf ſpeaks as if this were the trade of children (*Matth.* 11. 16.) *Whereunto ſhall I liken this generation? They are like children ſitting in the market-place* (what do they there? are they buying or ſelling? are they bargaining or trading? No, that's the buſineſs of men; what do the children there?) *They call to their fellows, and ſay, we have piped to you, and you have not danced; we have mourned to you, and you have not lamented.* Piping and dancing is the delight and buſineſs of children. We find it given as a promiſe of bleſſing upon the Church of God, that their children ſhould be ſo employed (*Zech.* 8. 4, 5.) *Thus ſaith the Lord*

Luſus ita naturalis eſt puero, ut à ludo puer Græcè vocetur.

Lord of Hosts, there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age, and the streets of the City shall be full of boyes and girles (what shall they do?) *playing in the streets thereof.* To shew the felicity of the people of God in *Jerusalem* after their return from *Babylon*, 'tis promised, that as they should have old men leaning upon staves, so boyes and girles playing in the streets. And thus *Job* expresseth the external felicity of wicked men in family-blessings; *Their children dance.* And they have musick to their dance, as it followeth.

Vers. 12. **They take the Timbrel and the Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ.**

They take the Timbrel.] They, who? Who is the antecedent to *they?* doth he mean the parents or their children, or both? I conceive we may best expound it collectively, *they*, that is, they and their children, old and young, they take the Timbrel and the Harp, yea they are taken with the Timbrel and the Harp; thus they delight and sport themselves in the abundance of all things. *They take the Timbrel*, &c. We have here a specification of those musical Instruments which were then chiefly used. There is a threefold reading of these words; *They take the Timbrel and the Harp.*

Attollunt, sc. vocem sicut tympanum, personant velut tympano. Merc.

First, They lift up their voyces with the Timbrel and Harp, that is, they play and sing, which sheweth the compleatness of their musick, it was both by Voyces and Instruments; or they lift up their voyces like musical Instruments. 'Tis said of *Balaam* (Num. 23. 7.) *He took up a Parable*, that is, he spake, or he pronounced a parable.

In Hebræo est נשׂא *cū* ב *quod aliàs significat ferre partem rei, ferre cum alio.* &c. Coc.

Secondly, They take or lift up their bodies in dancing with the Timbrel and the Harp. When the Musick sounded, they followed or answered it with the motion of their bodies.

Thirdly, *They take the Timbrel*, may be rendred, *They play upon the Timbrel and the Harp*, they touch them artificially. 'Tis said, *Gen.* 4. 21. (where the original of musical Instruments is reported) *His brothers name was* Jubal, *he was the father of all such as handled* (or touched) *the Harp and the Organ.* Thus we have their mirth and musick: *They take* (or touch) *the Timbrel and the Harp*, they live in pleasure. Hence observe,

Worldly men breed their children vainly.

Here is a description of their education; they are sent forth as a flock in a Dance, playing upon the *Timbrel*, &c. Here's all the knowledg and literature they are brought up to; here is all their Religion, all the Catechism that they are taught. The Lord giveth this report of *Abraham*, who had a numerous Family; *I know him that he will command his children, and his houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord* (Gen. 18. 19.) (*Abraham* did not teach his to dance, *but to keep the way of the Lord*) *to do justice and judgment; that the Lord might bring upon* Abraham *what he had spoken.* Here was education in the fear of the Lord. *Abraham* gave his children such breeding as became the father of the faithful. This doth not condemn the instruction and teaching of children in Musick, that skill is commendable, and the gift of God: To learn a due poise and composure of the body, is not unlawful; only we forbid the excess, when it takes up the whole time, and is made a business; or when 'tis used as a provocation to lust, or a nurse of pride and vanity. When much time is spent in this, time is mispent; when this which should be as Sauce, is made the whole Dish; when this which is but an unnecessary circumstance, is insisted upon, as if it were all man, then it is sinful.

Musicam & honestam voluptatem non damnat Scriptura, sed eorum damnat securitatem, qui his velut inebrietati Deum contemnunt & ejus opera negligunt, Merc.

Again, Consider the trade of carnal men and their children; *They dance and sing, they and their Families.*

Hence observe, *Sensitive joyes and contentments are all that carnal men are taken up with.*

They rejoyce at the sound of the Organ.] Here's not a word of rejoycing in the goodness of God; here's not a word of thankfulness and praise to God, who gave them good things, and enricht them with those outward blessings; they only seek to make themselves merry, they never sought to make the Name of God glorious. The holy Patriarchs had riches and children, cattel and great substance, so we read of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*; yet how different a character doth the Holy Ghost give of them (*Heb.* 11. 13.) They accounted themselves pilgrims, they had no mind to their countrey; *but they sought a City whose builder and maker was God.* This was their frame in their greatest worldly enjoyments; they had riches, but they did not rejoyce in them; they had them, but they did not give up themselves unto them. Worldlings cry (*Psal.* 4. 6.) *Who will shew us any good?* What saith *David? Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance upon me; that will cause joy in my heart, more then when corn and wine encrease*; as if he had said, worldly men take the Timbrel when corn and wine and oil encrease; but if the Lord lifteth up the light of his countenance upon me, this shall be my musick and my song. And though in the good providences of God to him, he called for the Timbrel, and awakened his musical Instruments, yet he adds, *I my self will awake right early*; his was not bare rejoycing in the creature, but in God. A godly man can rejoyce when he hath none of these creature-comforts, he can then rejoyce in the Lord; then the Lord is to him more then an Organ, Tabret or Harp, infinitely more then in all these; he can rejoyce in the Lord more then in all manner of musick, even then when he wants not only musick, but meat (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Though the labour of the Olive shall fail*, &c. *yet will I joy in the Lord, and rejoyce in the God of my salvation; and the Lord is my strength, and he is my song.* Thus he rejoyceth when stript of all those things which alone occasion the worldly mans joy. God is a feast to him in famine; and when there is not any thing of the world to be had, he hath all in God; and how much soever a godly man hath of the world, he rejoyceth not in that, but in God, the creator, disposer and giver of it. He rejoyceth when he hath the creature, but he rejoyceth not in the creature; his joy is in the Lord. He rejoyceth to see the good hand of God with him, but he rejoyceth not because his hand hath gotten good. We find this holy man *Job* professing, that he had not, and using a strong imprecation upon himself if he had done so (*chap.* 31. 24, 25.) *If I have made Gold my hope, if I have rejoyced because my wealth was great, and because mine hand had gotten much, then*, &c. *Job* was not a man of a dark spirit, he knew how to rejoyce when the Candle of God shone upon him; but, saith he, whatsoever my worldly estate was, my rejoycing was in God, it was not in my worldly estate: But the carnal man rejoyceth in the world it self, and indeed he hath nothing more to rejoyce in; he hath not a God or a Christ to rejoyce in, he hath not pardon of sin, or the Grace of God to rejoyce in.

Before I pass this point, I shall add somewhat more distinctly, concerning our rejoycing in and about the things of this life. We do not censure all joy, or think that they must needs be wicked who rejoyce and live comfortably in a prosperous outward condition. There is a threefold joy spoken of in Scripture; First, A spiritual: Secondly, A sensitive or natural: Thirdly, A sensual joy.

Spiritual joy is either purely in spiritual things, when we rejoyce in God, in the grace and favour of God, in the light of his countenance, and in the pardon of our sins. Or when we rejoyce spiritually about worldly things, and the good providences of God to us, either publick or private. There may be spiritual joy about that which is not spiritual; we may reioyce spiritually, though the things be temporal in which we rejoyce; and it is one of the highest actings of Grace, to rejoyce spiritually about temporal things.

Secondly, There is a natural sensitive rejoycing, which in it self, is neither good nor evil; it belongs to man as man; and *Job* speaks of this at the twenty fifth verse of this Chapter; *Another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure*; he meaneth not sinful pleasure; but thus, he hath no natural contentment, no relish of, or joy with his meat; we say, a mans meat rejoyceth him, when it suits with his stomack, and pleaseth his palat. As there is natural sorrow and fear, which are specificated good or evil, as we act and put them forth; so there is also natural joy or pleasure. In this sence the word *Pleasure* is used (*Eccles.* 12. 1.) Where *Solomon* gives advice to the young man *to remember his Creator in the dayes of his youth, before the evil dayes come, and the time wherein he shall say, I have*

I have no pleasure in them; he meaneth not sinful pleasure, but natural pleasure, such as a man takes in what he eats and drinks. When *David* called *Barzillai* to Court, *What shall I do there?* (saith he) *Can I taste what I eat?* &c. As if he had said, those dayes are come upon me in which I have no pleasure.

Thirdly, There is sensual pleasure, when the heart is as it were steeped, drenched and drunken with delights (*Jam.* 5.5.) *Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton, ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter.* Which some render, unto a day of slaughter, as beasts are fatted to be killed; or as in a time of feasting, which is a day of slaughter to beasts and fowls, for the feeding of man. Therefore he threatens them (*vers.* 1.) *Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl*; pleasure hath been your element, ye have lived in that: now sorrow shall be your element, and your employment weeping (1 *Tim.* 5. 6.) *She that liveth in pleasure*, that is, who giveth her self up to delicacy, wantonness, lasciviousness; he doth not say, she that takes pleasure in her life; there is no hurt in that: but, *She that lives in pleasure, is dead while she liveth*: And if she be dead while she liveth, how dead will she be when she dieth?

Further, We may consider these sensual pleasures or joyes in their sinfulness, two wayes.

First, There are some joyes sinful in their very nature, others in reference to circumstance, in both sences we are to understand this Text, *They rejoyce*, that is, they rejoyce with such a kind of joy as is sinful in it self; and though there be no sin in the Harp, Timbrel and Organ, yet there may be a sinful way of rejoycing in these (*Heb.* 11.21.) Moses *chose afflictions with the people of God, rather then to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*: Whether those pleasures were sinful in their nature, or sinful in their circumstances, *Moses* refused them. He did not refuse pleasure and comfort in his life, but the pleasures of sin; any evil that was in the pleasure of this life, he refused, that pleasure was a pain to him, and he chose affliction rather.

But when are our rejoycings sinful in their circumstances? or what makes them sinful to us when they are lawful in themselves.

I answer, Joy may be lawful in it self, yet sinful; first, In the measure of it, if excessive. Which the Prophet gives us (*Isa.* 41. 8.) *Therefore hear now this thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelesly.* When a man is given to pleasure, he will soon be excessive in it; for this shews that pleasure overswayes his spirit, and hath gotten his heart. The Apostle would have Believers given to *hospitality*, that is, he would have them given to hospitality, but not given to pleasure. Some are given to hospitality meerly because they are given to pleasure; they love not so much to feed others, as to glut themselves.

Secondly, There is a sinfulness in rejoycing, when unseasonable; *There is a time to rejoyce, and a time to mourn.* To rejoyce in some times is matter of great mourning; yet some will rejoyce let the time be what it will, the seasons and dayes what they will; such rejoycing is not good. Our rejoycing may be sinful upon this account of unseasonableness, three wayes.

First, When much of any time is spent in it. The time we spend in rejoycing, should be but so much as may fit us for our serious and working times. When the Apostle exhorts Saints *to rejoyce evermore* (1 Thes. 5. 16.) he means it of spiritual, not of worldly rejoycing.

Secondly, It is sinful in regard of the season, to be taken up with worldly rejoycings in any time set apart for the holy duties of fasting and humbling the soul before the Lord. The Prophet complains of this (*Isa.* 58. 3.) *They find their own pleasure upon a day of fast.* To give the least portion of time to worldly pleasure upon a solemn day of Fast or holy rest, is sinful.

Thirdly, Joy may be sinful, as specially in a day of fast, so when sad, troublous, calamitous seasons continue many dayes (*Isa.* 22. 13.) *In that day the Lord called for weeping*, &c. *but behold mirth and rejoycing, slaying oxen and killing sheep.* So, *Amos* 6.4, 5, 6. *They sit upon beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; they chaunt to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves instruments of Musick like* David; *but they are not grieved for the affliction of* Joseph. They had musick like *David*, but they were far from such a heart as *David* had. Many pattern themselves by holy men in the things they do, who will not imitate their pattern in doing them. 'Tis our duty to sympathize with the seasons, and to forbear our personal comforts, when the publick sits in sorrow. They who rejoyce when the people of God mourn, shall mourn in their rejoycings. They shall not rejoyce in the joy of Gods people, nor be glad with his inheritance, who have been at all glad at their mournings, or have not refrained gladness in the dayes of their mourning.

They rejoyce at the sound of the organ.] And, which is a further description both of their worldly prosperity, and of their sin.

Verse 13. They spend their dayes in wealth.

They spend.] There is a double reading of the word, but the sence of both is the same. Some thus; *They grow old*, or they consume all their dayes; the indefinite is universal; *They spend their dayes*, that is, their whole life, *in wealth*; so we render. The Hebrew is, *in good*: What good? There are three sorts of good. First, Spiritual. Secondly, Civil. Thirdly, Corporal good; when he saith, *they spend their dayes in good*, he means not the first; they are far enough from spending their dayes in what is spiritually good; they deal but little in that which is morally or civilly good; their time and strength are laid out chiefly in those things which are but corporally good, or good only for the body; and, as they use them, scarce good for, yea, mostly hurtful unto that; therefore we translate well, *they spend their dayes in wealth*; wealth is but our bodily good. In common speech a mans possessions and riches are called *his goods*, because these are a good to the outward man; so the Vulgar translates the Text, *They spend out their dayes in good*, or in good things, in the good things of this life. The word is used (*Luke* 16.25.) *Abraham* in the Parable speaking to the rich man, tells him, *Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise* Lazarus *his evil things*, that is, sores and sorrows, his pain and poverty. When *David* (1 Sam.25.8.) sent his messenger to *Nabal*, desiring some recruits of victual for his Army, which had been a good neighbour to him; *Send thy blessing to thy son, for we are come to thee in a good day*; what day was that? a day of feasting; when there was a plentiful provision made of good things. It was sheep-shearing day, and then they had store. The things of the world are expressed under this title, *good*, (and they are all the good which some look after) in a threefold consideration.

In Scriptura est יבלו *vetustate consumant in Lectione* יכלו *Consumunt simpliciter scriptum* Beth, *lectio* Caph, *sensus in idem recidit.* Dr. *Ducunt in bonis dies suos.* Vulg.

First, In reference to the judgment of the world, or the vulgar opinion. They are good things, and many account them very good, yea some account them the chief good, placing felicity in them. The Holy Ghost speaks the hearts of worldly men, *They spend their dayes in good.*

Secondly, Riches and the things of the world, are good as they are the creatures of God; these he made, and he made all things good.

Thirdly, They have not only a goodness of entity, but a goodness of use in them; the Lord hath made them very suitable to the needs and necessities, to the relations, affairs and businesses of this life. And in these good things, worldly men spend all the dayes of their lives. They spend their dayes in spending it, or in bestowing it upon their lusts. The Text intends the latter; having gotten enough to spend, they give themselves to the spending of it all their dayes.

They spend their dayes in wealth.

Hence observe; That, *The chief business of a worldly man is about his wealth.*

He mindeth little or nothing but his wealth; he spends his dayes in a threefold care about it.

First, In getting.

Secondly, In keeping.

Thirdly, In taking out those pleasures which wealth brings in.

Some get wealth, but have no heart to use it; others get wealth, and over-use or abuse it; they spend their dayes in spending it, in feeding their lusts, in pleasing their appetite

petite with it. The rich Glutton would have his share of what he had; he would not leave all to his Children, or to Executors. How poor an account is this of the expence of a mans dayes, that he hath spent them in wealth? Yet 'tis hard for those who have much wealth, not to do it. A godly man who hath much wealth, is hard put to it, to keep himself from spending his dayes in it. Riches have more of the snare in them, then of comfort in them. Some have perished with want, but more have perished with abundance. Hypocrites make a gain of godliness; and when they have gained their ends, they lay by their godliness, and spend those dayes in wealth, which they once professed they would spend in walking with God. Many really godly, lose much in spirituals, having gained much in temporals; they have been impoverished by their riches; their best part hath decreased, while their worser hath encreased. Now if it be so hard for those who have a good stock of Grace, and a seed of eternal life in them, to mind heaven, while they have a great stock on the earth; how is it possible but that a hypocrite should quite lose those spirituals which he seemed to have, when he hath gotten much in temporals? and that prophane men should not be quite drowned and swallowed up in temporals, who did never so much as seem to have any thing in spirituals. Therefore (saith Christ, *Mat.* 19. 24.) *It is easier for a Camel to go through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* *Mammon* calls for the whole man, and stands in the way both of Grace and Glory. *The poor have the Gospel preached to them* (Matth. 11. 5.) But is not the Gospel preached also to the rich? Yes, the rich hear the Gospel, but the poor receive it, or, as the word imports, are *Gospelized*; they receive the love of it, and impressions from it; they receive the stamp of the Gospel, and feel the power of it: Whereas usually the rich hear only a sound of words, and have only a form of knowledge, but have no knowledge of the power. Riches fill with cares; a multitude of riches with a multitude of cares: And they who have many cares about those things which are but accessories, take little care about that one thing necessary, the due hearing of, and believing application of the Gospel. They who are very diligent either about assuring or employing worldly wealth, about laying up or laying out the treasures of the earth, seldom give any diligence about making their calling and election sure, or about laying up treasure in heaven. They are indeed rich in grace, whose graces are not hindred by riches, whose souls prosper when their bodies prosper; as the Apostle *John* speaks in his third Epistle. Or, who (as 'tis prophesied, *Psal.* 45. 12.) being full of worldly blessings, are yet hungry and eager in their pursuit after Christ. *The daughter of* Tyre *shall be there with a gift* (saith the Psalmist) *the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour*; that is, either the favour of Christ himself, or the favour of the Church, by reason of that spiritual excellency and inward glory which she hath received from Christ. Now to see the rich bring their gifts, and which is the thing chiefly aimed at there, giving up themselves to Christ, this is a rare sight, and a remarkable work of Grace.

And because there is so much danger that they who have wealth, should spend their dayes in it, or give themselves up to it, and not to Christ, take two or three Rules of caution or admonition about this thing.

First, When God puts wealth into your hand, suspect your own hearts, and pray that ye may put it under your feet. The woman (*Rev.* 12. 1.) *cloathed with the Sun, had the Moon* (that is, all earthly things) *under her feet*; she kept them under, and had them only for her use, her heart was above them.

Secondly, Labour to get a right value of wealth, if you would not spend your dayes in it. We seldom err in our affections, till we err in our judgment; if we did not over-value wealth, we should not bestow our all upon it; no man will lay out his time and strength about that which he thinks meanly of. Know then, First, That though riches are good things, yet they are an inferior good. Secondly, Though they are good, yet but a mutable good. Thirdly, They are to us as we use them; some things are so good, that he who hath them, cannot but be good. The Grace of God to us, and the Graces of his Spirit in us, find us evil, but make us good. But no man was ever made good by riches and worldly wealth; these have found some really good, and made them less good then they were; and they have found many seemingly good, whom they have made stark naught.

Thirdly, Use the Creature, but do not enjoy it; what we use, is used for some other end; what we enjoy, is enjoyed for it self. The creature must only be used, because it should alwayes be directed to some further end; God ought to be loved for himself, and therefore he only is to be enjoyed. They who understand this distinction, will not spend their dayes in satisfying their lusts with wealth, but in serving the living God. *Job*'s character of these men, may serve all men, who having wealth, have no faith in God; *They spend their dayes in wealth.*

And in a moment go down to the grave.

There is a double interpretation of this last clause; some expound it of the miserable end of wicked men; others of their comfortable end.

First, The words may hold out the miserable end of a wicked man, who, though he hath all outward good things, though he be mighty in power, and his house be established, yet *in a moment he goeth down to the grave*; he suddenly vanisheth out of this world; and whither then? We read, *he goeth down to the grave*: others read, *He goeth down to hell.* The Hebrew word signifies both, and the doctrine of the Text is true both wayes; his body goeth down presently to the grave, and his soul to hell; that's his place, and thither is his downfal, there's the end of his wealth and voluptuous life. Thus he is concluded in the Parable (*Luke* 16. 22, 23.) *The rich man died and was buried, and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torment*, &c. This rich man *was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciously every day* (vers. 19.) He is described fully, spending his dayes in wealth, and ending his dayes in wo; he in a moment went down to hell. But,

Et in punctō ad infera descendunt Vulg.

Secondly, I rather interpret this clause in a suitableness to what went before, as a description of the comfortable death of a wicked man; who, as he flourished all the dayes of his life, so (to compleat his bodily comforts) he hath a very kind and peaceable death. The word which we render *moment* (implying the suddenness of his change) signifying also *quietness* or *peaceableness*, and to be *quiet and rest* (Isa. 51. 4.) *Hearken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my Nation; for a Law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment* (that is, the doctrine of holiness) *to rest* (that is, I will quietly settle it) *for a light to the people*, that is, to enlighten their minds with the clear and saving knowledg of the truth. In this sence (for *rest*) the word is again used (*Jer.* 50. 34.) It may bear both sences in this place; They spend their dayes in wealth, and go to the grave in a moment and suddenly, or in quiet and in peace, they have no trouble in death. This their rest or quietness in death, may be understood two wayes.

Significat punctum, momentum & placidā quietem, vel quievit, per antiphrasin

In quiete descendunt in inferno.

First, They have no inward trouble of Conscience, no gnawing of the worm though the worm of Conscience be hungry, and hath matter enough in them to feed upon, yet it is not permitted to feed upon them, that is, to vex and torment them. A wicked man may die quietly, without any the least question upon his spirit about his spiritual condition, as if all were well, and would be well with him for ever: Whereas indeed, the quietness that he hath, is not from any knowledge of his good estate, but from ignorance of his ill estate; he knoweth not that the wrath of God hangs over him, and that the justice of God is bent against him, and therefore he goeth quietly to the grave. A godly man dieth in peace, because he knoweth his estate is good; but if a wicked man die in peace, it is because he knoweth not his estate is evil.

Multi cum hac spe ad æternos cruciatus descendunt.

Secondly, They have no outward trouble, no pain in the body, or disturbance in their outward affairs; thus wicked men may die a peaceable, yea, a pleasant death; they are not tired with long sicknesses, they are not put upon the rack of tormenting diseases before they die; they are not afflicted with nauseous medicines and tedious courses of physick, which to many are more grievous then sickness or death it self. Many who have escaped the sorrows of eternal death, meet with much sorrow in their temporal death. They whose peace is made by the death of Christ, find much pain and trouble when they come to die; where-

as many wicked men die (as it were) in health, and go not only quickly, but quietly to the grave, having rest, such as it is, both in body and mind, when their bodies are laid down to rest, even their dying may look like sleeping.

Morte placidissima & quæ disturbare non affligit de medio tollitur, quasi ponte naturæ concedēs Plin.

And as this word shews the easiness of their death, so the speed and suddenness of it. Thus we translate expressly; *In a moment they go down to the grave.* He dieth without stop or stay, his is not a lingring death; if a man have not much pain in sickness, yet if he lie long sick, his living is a kind of dying. *David* or *Asaph* (*Psal.* 73. 4.) describes the prosperity of wicked men both in life and death; *I was envious when I saw the prosperity of the wicked*, &c. *There are no bands in their death, their strength is firm*, that is, when they die they are not bound by diseases, nor held down by chronical or lasting and grinding pains; they die, and it can hardly be discerned that they were ever sick; they fall off as fruit from the tree fully ripe, with the least touch, and this is their prosperity in death. The Prophet *Jeremy* aggravates the misery of the *Jews* in their captivity upon this consideration (*Lam.* 4. 6.) *The punishment of the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater then the punishment of the sin of* Sodom, *that was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands stayed on her.* *Sodom* was destroyed in a moment, but *Jerusalems* destruction was long a working, she maintained a war, which procured many miseries, especially that of Famine; which as it is the most painful, so the most dilatory or lingring way of dying. *Job* to shew the happiness of wicked men in death, tells us, they die in a moment, they slip out of the world they know not how, or before they are aware of it.

Mors est crudelior quo segnior.

Sudden death is alwayes evil, but speedy death is good. The slowest death is the most cruel. Tyrants kill men by piece-meal, they will have them take notice that they are dying, they will not dispatch them at a blow, but let them die limb by limb. *Dyonisius* the Tyrant is said to have envied a Beast whose throat he saw cut, because he died so soon. *Cæsar* reading in *Zenophon*, what care *Cyrus* took in his life for his Funeral, scorned him for it, wishing he might die speedily. That's a good death to Nature, which is neither feared nor expected; yet that is the best death which hath been longest expected and prepared for. And hence,

Mors jucunda cujus nulla præcessit expectatio aut metus.

Some may say, It were better wicked men should have some delayes in death, for then possibly they might repent.

Answer; First, *Job* speaks not to the spiritual or eternal state of wicked men; and as to their temporal state, a speedy death is better then a lingring death. I may answer,

Secondly, *Sick-bed repentance is usually a very sick repentance.* We set no limits to the mercy and grace of God, but we speak what is usual among men.

Thirdly, They that neglect repentance in health, seldom mind it in sickness; some have made sad complaints of the misery of their friends, because so suddenly taken away by one stroak without any time to repent. But they might remember that many have been shut up close prisoners in their chambers, and chained down to their beds, for divers moneths, who never thought of repenting and turning to God. Death is never sudden to them who live well; and they who live ill, seldom mend when they die, though they are long a dying. Thus *Job* hath opposed the experience of many to the opinion of his friends, about the present state of wicked men, and Gods dealing with them both in life and death. In the following words he shews us how their prosperity wrought with them, how they took occasion from these outward blessings in which they abounded, to arm and encourage themselves in their rebellion against the Lord, who poured out those benefits and earthly blessings upon them in abundance, and exercised long-sufferance and patience towards them, till they had spent their dayes in pleasing themselves and provoking him.

VERS. 14, 15.

Therefore they say unto God, depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.
What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?

IN these two verses we have the picture of a wicked man drawn to the life (or rather to the death) of his state and disposition. For lest it should be thought that while *Job* spake of the prosperity of the wicked, he meant it of such only as used a kind of moderation in sinning, or had some mixture and appearances, at least, of some eminent virtues among their enormous vices, he therefore by a Rhetorical imitation of their blasphemous speeches and opinions concerning the most holy God and his wayes, assured his friends that his experiences had taught him, that even they who have not in them the least imaginable spark or ray of goodness, are yet filled with abundance, and yet enjoy an affluence of worldly goods: As if he had said, My friend *Zophar*, according to the tenour of thy Doctrine, they must be reckoned for very holy and good men, as the Darlings, special Favourites and bosom-friends of God, who enjoy such earthly prosperity as I have spoken of; but behold these men, and tell me what goodness thou findest in them, *Who say unto God, depart from us*, &c.

These men are personated by *Job*, as offering a fourfold indignity unto God.

First, They tell God (as we do those whom we hate, or at least, deeply disrespect) that they had rather have his room then his company; *They say unto God, depart from us.*

Secondly, They slight his doctrine and his institutions; *We desire not the knowledge of his wayes.*

Thirdly, They esteem him unworthy of any attendance or worship; *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?*

Fourthly, They conclude his worship and service as vain and fruitless; *What profit should we have if we pray unto him?*

Verse 14. Therefore they say unto God depart from us.

The Hebrew is, *and they say:* It is usual in Scripture to give that conjunctive particle the efficacy of a causal. So we render it here; Therefore, or for this reason, namely, because they flourish and are full, therefore they grow weary of, and are burdened with the thought of God; *They say unto God*, &c. How do they say it? They say thus three wayes.

First, Some are so bold and impudent, as to say it with their mouths, they say it explicitly and in plain terms; they speak it out to God, *Depart from us.*

Secondly, All wicked men say this in their hearts and minds; they speak it internally, this is the daily language of their spirits to God, *Depart from us.* They who love not God with their hearts, would be rid of God with all their hearts. So the Apostle describeth the Gentiles (*Rom.* 1. 28.) *They did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, or (as we put in the Margin) *to acknowledge God.* They cast the notions of God out of their minds or understandings, as a worthless piece of knowledge.

Thirdly, Wicked men (the fairer sort of hypocrites only excepted) say this with their works (*Tit.* 1. 11.) *They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him; being abominable, disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.* Prophane persons are ashamed to profess the knowledge of God; gross hypocrites boast in a profession of God, but their practice is a denial of God. *The transgression of the wicked* (saith holy *David*, Psal. 36. 1, 2.) *saith within my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes.* The profession of some wicked men saith they fear God; but their transgression or trade of sin saith, there's no such matter. We may interpret this Text of the wicked man saying thus, all these three wayes. Some say it with their their mouths; all, even the most modest of them, say it in their hearts; very many say it in their lives, their doings being a daily defiance against God, and a kind of command upon him to depart.

Again, *To say*, hath in it more then a bare word, or *say-so*, it implyeth a decree or statute, a full purpose or resolution about the thing. When *David* (*Psal.* 32. 5.) expresseth himself thus, *I said I will confess my sin*, &c. And *Psal.* 39. 1. *I said, I will take heed to my wayes*, he intends a fixed and immoveable resolve upon godly repentance in the one, and of Godly watchfulness in the other. And though this

this Text is not so full for it in the letter, as the two alledged, yet without breach of charity, or wresting Scripture, we may expound this as high. *They say* (as resolved and set upon the thing) *to God, depart.*

Nomen El *fortitudinē denotat.*

The word *El*, by which God is here set forth, speaks his strength and power, *The strong God*; which we may note to argue both the folly and the impudence of the creature in speaking thus: The weakness of God is stronger then man, and yet weak man lifts up himself against the strong God; and while he thus tells him, that he cares not for his presence, doth indeed dare him in the utmost of his power.

There are four words by which God is expressed in Scripture, upon a distinct consideration of four eminent excellencies in him.

First, When the self-being and unchangeable nature of God are chiefly intended, He is called by his Name *Jehovah*.

Secondly, When the efficiency and governing power of God in the administration of all things both in heaven and earth are signified, he is called by the Name *Elohim*.

Thirdly, When his goodness, bounty and munificence are exalted, he is called *Shaddai*.

Fourthly, When the irresistible strength and force of God to accomplish his own decrees and counsels, both of mercy and justice, are described, he is called by the Name in the Text, *El*.

Nor will it be unuseful here to add, that in Scripture, man is expressed by four different Names, to hold out a fourfold condition or state of man.

First, When the virtues and best perfections of man are spoken of, he is properly represented under this title of *Job*.

Secondly, When his strength, honour and greatness are aimed at, he is called *Geber*.

Thirdly, To note his original of earth, and his natural weakness, he is termed *Adam*.

Fourthly, His accidental misery, poverty, sorrows and infirmities, denominate him *Enos*.

Now take man, not only as his name *Adam* imports, which is common to all; or as his name *Enos* speaks him, which is the lot of most; but also as he is *Ish* or *Geber*, which names are competible but to very few; yet for man at the highest pitch attainable of his strength or perfections, to speak proudly to God, to say unto *El*, the strong, mighty, the almighty God, depart from me, how abominable! Yet thus the wicked say to God.

Depart from us.] The word signifies properly to divert or recede from a place, or to give and make room, that the way may be clear and un-obstructed for the passage of another. As if wicked men should say to God, *Room for us*; as if one house, one place, yea one world could not hold God and them. Indeed God filleth heaven and earth, yea the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, yet God straightens no man by his presence, though wicked men think they can never have room enough where God is present. Hence it is that wicked men are called, *Men far from God*, Psal. 73. 27. *Lo, they that be far from thee shall perish.* And who these are, *David* telleth us in the latter part of the verse; *Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee*: As a man who cares not for his wife, would willingly put her away from him, and goeth himself to an adulterous bed; so the wicked man, having no love in his heart to God, bids him be gone, and goeth himself a whoring from him, that is, he embraceth the creatures, and giveth his heart up into the hands of the world; therefore he is called, *A man far off*. In opposition to which, the people of God are called, *his Nigh Ones*, or those *who draw nigh unto him* (Lev. 10. 3.) And *David* in the next verse of the Psalm last cited, concludeth, *But it is good for me to draw nigh unto God.*

רחוקי אל *Longinqui Dei.*

קרובי אל *Propinqui Dei.*

Further, This phrase, *depart from us*, may imply the rejection and distaste of those tenders and offers of good things, which God makes to wicked men, inviting them home to himself. As we use to say to those, who over-officiously proffer us their wares or commodities as we pass in the streets of some City, why do you thus press upon us, and trouble us? be gone, we have no mind or no leisure to buy. Thus *they say to God, depart from us.* Hence observe;

First, *Riches and worldly prosperity provoke or occasion wicked men to have contemptuous thoughts of God.*

The causal particle leads us to this Observation; *Therefore they say*, &c. *David* having confessed his own sin (Psal. 73. 3.) *I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked*; sheweth (*vers.* 6.) what sin prosperity bred up in them. *Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain, violence covereth them as a garment.* (vers. 8.) *They are corrupt and speak wickedly.* (ver. 9.) *They set their mouth against the heavens*, that is, they spake blasphemously against the God of heaven. They charged their mouths with insolent words, and then (their tongues being set on fire by hell) they discharged them like a thundering Canon against heaven. *Moses* warns the *Israelites* (Deut. 8. 10, 11, 12.) *When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good Land which he hath given thee; then beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, lest when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God.* How jealous was *Moses*, or rather the Spirit of God by *Moses*, over that ancient people, lest they should forget God when he had remembred them? lest they should then make void the Commandments of God, when he had made good his Covenant? lest their hearts should be lifted up against God, after his hand had been so often lifted up for them? And what *Moses* here by way of prophesie (foreseeing the naughtiness of their hearts, cautions them not to do) the same *Moses*, in the same Book (*chap.* 32. 15.) by way of history, reproves them that they had done. *But Jesurun waxed fat and kicked, thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness, then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.* Even *Israel* being grown fat as a beast in the green pastures of a worldly prosperity, played the beast and kicked with the heel; but against whom did he kick? he kicked against God, and against him in a twofold relation: First, As his Creator; *He forsook the God that made him.* Secondly, As a Preserver or Saviour; *He lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation:* No wonder *if their rock sold them* (as it followeth, *ver.* 30.) when they valued their rock at so low a price. God made his people of great value (yea, he called them his *peculiar treasure*) and then they grew to such high thoughts of themselves, and were so great in their own eyes, that presently God was undervalued and little in their eyes. Thus the Lord complained of them long after by his Prophet (*Hos.* 13. 6.) *According to their pasture, so were they filled; they were filled, and their heart was exalted* (not in thankfulness and in praise, but in pride) *therefore they have forgotten me.* As to remember God (in Scripture-language) is to obey, serve and honour him; so to forget God, is to rebel and rise up against him. This moved the Apostle *Paul* to give *Timothy* his lesson for rich men (1 *Tim.* 6. 17.) *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us all things to enjoy.* They who are rich in this world, are usually most poor for the world to come; and while their estates are high, their minds are higher. Low things make the mind high, but with such a highness, as is indeed not only the lowness, but the baseness of the mind. While the mind is heightned by the use and possession of low things (such comparatively are the highest of earthly things) it is it self made lower then the lowest, and less (not in humility, but in vanity) then the least of things. Then both mind and man are lowest of all, when they neglect or lightly esteem the high God. To this departure from God, the presence and abundance of the world endangers every man, and wicked men are ever ensnared with the danger; *Therefore they say to God, depart from us.*

Secondly observe, *Wicked men have no mind to God, they cannot abide his presence.*

There is in them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God (Heb. 3. 12.) and in saying to God, *depart from us.* God saith to his people *Hos.* 9. 12. *Wo unto you when I depart*; they think it best for them when God departeth. Saints know not how to live a comfortable day, much less to be happy without him; wicked men know not how to live a comfortable hour, much less to be ever happy with him. The Church saith to God, *Leave us not* (Jer. 14.)

The

The world saith, *O that God would leave us.* When shall we be eased and unburdened of his presence? *There is nothing so joyous to the righteous, nor so grievous to the wicked, as to have God near them.*

But it may be said, Is God near the wicked? or have they any need to desire the Lord to depart from them? Is he not already departed and gone far from them?

I answer; Wicked men are far from the favour and love of God, but they are not far from his eye and knowledge. God is already departed from wicked men, or rather was never near them, in regard of his special presence; but he is near even to them in regard of his general and common presence. Yea, wicked men find and feel God often in their Consciences, though they never found him in their Affections. God makes offers to wicked men, and though God be not actively in all their thoughts (as the Scripture speaks, *Psal.* 10. 4.) that is, they do not willingly meditate or think of God, they maintain no correspondence or communion with him in their inner man; yet God doth (like an unbidden and unwelcome Guest) put himself into their thoughts, and moves in their minds; this proves their trouble, and becomes a pain unto them. *As God is not far from every one of us* (good and bad) because (as the Apostle argueth with those at *Athens*, Acts 17. 27, 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*; so we may say, that he is not far from many wicked men, because he moveth and stirs in them, he presents to their minds some manifestations of himself in his Justice and Holiness; yea, of his Truth, Long-suffering and Goodness, in none of which they either desire or accept acquaintance with him; and therefore say to God, depart from us, trouble us not; and when once they can banish these thoughts, and live thus without God in the world, then they think they live indeed; and till then, they reckon their lives a kind of death: And hence it is, that (as we have seen by sad examples) some have thrust themselves out of the world with their own hands, because they could not thrust these thoughts of God out of their hearts and consciences. Their souls have sometimes proved a burden to their bodies, to whose souls the thought of God was a burden. And they, who upon these terms, part soul and body, have indeed said to God, *Depart from us.* Hence note,

Thirdly, *To be weary of the presence of God, is the strongest argument that a man is wicked.*

Purely to love and pray for the presence of God, is the surest sign of a gracious heart; therefore purely to desire and wish the absence or departure of God, must needs conclude that heart ungracious. *One thing* (saith *David*, Psal. 27. 4.) *have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after*, that is, I will earnestly pursue, and unweariedly prosecute the grant of this desire) *that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the dayes of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple.* And again he breathes the same spirit of holy impatience, till he might enjoy that favour (*Psal.* 42. 1, 2.) *As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God; my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, when shall I come and appear before God?* In these strains of divinest Rhetorick was the soul of *David* carried out after God. He was the One thing, He was the Only thing he longed for; without God all was nothing with him; in Him he had all: His presence was enough for him. All company, multitudes and throngs of men, yea, of Saints, or good men, was but solitariness and widowhood to him, without the presence of God. This was the highest ascent of his holiness. Is it not then the lowest descent of unholiness, to be troubled at the presence of God? Is it not a full conviction of a carnal man, and of a wicked man, to think it long till God be gone, or to deprecate his presence, and urge his departure? This frame of heart is the very blackness of hellish darkness, and the express the Image of the Devils person. Such are (though not possessed with, yet) under the possession of the evil Spirit: The Gospel (*Matth.* 8. 28, 29.) makes report of *two men possessed with Devils, coming out of the Tombes, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass by that way; and behold they cried out, saying, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus the son of the living God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?* It is the Devils torment to be near Christ, or to have any appearance of God; are not they then nearest the Devil to whom God is a torment? Or who (like these in *Job*) do as those *Gadarens* to Christ in the last verse of that Chapter, come and beseech him, that he will depart out of their Coasts, that so if it were possible, they might never more hear of him, nor from him. Which is plainly imported in the next clause of the Verse.

For we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.

Though God, in himself considered, be the first and chiefest object of a wicked mans enmity, yet this quarrel usually breaks out at the discoveries of his will and wayes. Thus in the Text, they reject God because of his wayes. The wayes of a wicked man (as the Psalmist hath it) are always grievous to God as well as man; and so are the wayes of God grievous to wicked men, and therefore they desire no acquaintance with, no knowledge of them. As if *Job* had thus spoken in their person. *If the case stand thus, O God, that we cannot have thee and the good things which thou hast promised, unless we also learn and submit to thy wayes, then be gone; for thy wayes are a loathing to our souls, thy wayes are rough, sharp, sad and unsuitable to our spirits and genius. If we should fashion our selves, and shape our course according to the rules which thou prescribest, should we not be exposed to the laughter, if not to the danger of all the world? Should we not bury our selves alive, and be deprived of all the comforts of our lives? must we not spend our time in sorrow or silence, and never see good day more? As for us, we know so much of thy wayes already, that we have no desire to the knowledge of them; we are provided of better wayes, of wayes more easie, smooth, plain and pleasant; and therefore what desire can we have to thine?*

For we desire not.] The word signifieth to take pleasure or delight in, as well as to desire; because those things which we delight in, are most desired by us; so we read it, *Psal.* 1. 2. *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord.* And (Psal. 4.) *Thou art not a God that takest pleasure in* (or, *a desire unto*) *wickedness.* So here, *We desire not* (*or we have no pleasure in*) *the knowledge of thy wayes.* And when they say, *we desire not*, &c. more is intended then the bare Negative of their desire; we may resolve this Negative into an Affirmative, we dislike, yea, we hate the knowledge of thy wayes. *He that is not with me* (saith Christ) *is against me*: We also may say, He that is not a well-wisher to, and desirous of the wayes of God, opposeth and rejects them. So that in this we have a description of affected ignorance. He that doth not know the wayes of God, is ignorant; for it is every mans duty to know them: but he that hath no desire to that knowledge, is in love with his own ignorance, and is pleased with it.

חפץ *Non tam velle significat quam delectari re aliqua.*

But what are *these wayes of God*, which find so little acceptance with wicked men?

I answer first in general, that by the wayes of God, he doth not here intend those wayes in which God walketh, but those which God hath made for man to walk in. More distinctly, the wayes of God are threefold.

First, The wayes of his counsel and decrees: To endeavour or desire the knowledge of these wayes, is not our duty, but our curiosity; as these ought not to be searched, so they are past finding out, *Rom.* 11. 33.

Secondly, The wayes of his providence and outward administration, of which the Psalmist speaketh (*Psal.* 145. 17.) *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works.* And though some of these wayes are not knowable, for (*Psal.* 77. 19.) *His way is in the Sea, and his paths in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known*, that is, his footsteps many times in his wayes upon the Land, are no more seen then a way is to be seen in the Sea, or a path in the great waters. Frequent passage makes a track or beaten path upon the Land; but how frequently soever passages are made upon the face of the Sea, no print nor path remains. Thus it is with many of the wayes of God, we cannot see where he hath gone, yet it is our duty to see his goings, and to desire the knowledge of these wayes.

Thirdly, The wayes of God are his Commandments, or those Rules of life, in and by which we ought to walk, and regulate our whole course: and these are of two sorts.

First,

Firſt, The wayes of worſhip. Secondly, the wayes of practice, or of manners. Theſe are called the wayes of God, becauſe they lead unto God, and land us (through Chriſt) ſafe in heaven. Here in the Text, the wayes of God, the knowledge whereof wicked men do not deſire, are the ſecond and third; as for the firſt, it is a part of ſome mens wickedneſs over-boldly to preſs and pry into them. And while they neglect the revealed will of God, which they ought both to know and do, they are very buſie about his ſecret will, which they cannot know, but may be (though intentionally on their part it never be) done by them, and ſhall (judicially on Gods part) be done upon them. Hence obſerve,

Firſt, *Wicked men bear no love to, nor have any delight in the knowledge of the Commandments and Ordinances of God.*

Thus *Solomon* reproves them (*Prov.* 1. 22, 25, 29, 30.) *How long ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity?* (He means it not of that ſimplicity which is oppoſed to craftineſs and double-mindedneſs, but of that which is oppoſed to wiſdom and ſpiritual-mindedneſs, as the next words expound it) *and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning?* (ſc. at the wayes of God) *and fools hate knowledge?* He means not the ſimple fool (for though ſuch have no knowledge, yet they cannot be ſaid to hate it) but the filthy fool, or the wicked man in the Text, theſe hate knowledge; and to theſe he ſpeaks (*verſe* 25.) *Ye have ſet at naught all my counſel, and would none of my reproof.* And again of theſe (verſ. 29, 30.) *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counſel; they deſpiſed all my reproof.* We are not to underſtand *Solomon* in theſe paſſages, as giving the character of ſome ſpecial wicked men; for though ſome are more exceſſive then others in their love to the wayes of ſin, yet they all (even the moſt temperate) meet in this, that they deſire not the knowledge of the wayes of Holineſs.

Here it may be queſtioned, Why doth the knowledge of the wayes of God trouble them ſo much? Indeed the practice of and obedience to them, may be burdenſome to natural men, but what can their knowledge hurt or grieve them?

I anſwer, Firſt, It is not eaſie to fleſh and blood to ſtudy for, or make application to the means of any knowledge, much leſs of the wayes of God; Knowledge will coſt ſome pains; knowledge, eſpecially divine knowledge, is the gift of God; yet it calls for our induſtry, not only to do what we know, but alſo to know what to do (Prov. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4.) *My ſon, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my Commandments with thee, ſo that thou encline thine thine ear unto wiſdom, and apply thy heart to underſtanding.* To the receiving of the Word and Commandment of God, which hold forth the knowledge of his wayes, there muſt be an *inclining of the ear*, that is, frequent hearing; and *applying of the heart*, that is, frequent meditation. The two next verſes import yet a ſtronger diligence, even *a crying after knowledge, and a lifting up the voyce for underſtanding; a ſeeking her as ſilver, and a ſearching for her as for hid treaſure.* Hence the concluſion of the Preacher (*Eccl.* 1. 18.) is in ſome ſence extendible to all ſorts of knowledge; *He that increaſeth knowledge, increaſeth ſorrow*: for though to know be a delight, yet the means of increaſing knowledge, hath ſomewhat of pains and trouble in it.

Secondly, The knowledge ſpoken of in this Scripture, is not a meer aery, notional, ſpeculative knowledge, but an experimental and a practical knowledge; if it were only a knowledge of the wayes of God, that we might be able to talk and diſcourſe of them, that would ſuffice, many wicked men might be deſirous of that knowledge; but becauſe this knowledge obligeth to obedience, and they are called upon to know the Commandments of God, to do them, and to know the wayes of God, to walk in them, therefore they deſire not that knowledge.

Thirdly, They deſire not to know the wayes of God, leſt they ſhould be troubled for not walking in them. Their ignorance of them, they conceive to be ſome excuſe or extenuation of their ſin in not doing them (though indeed their ignorance being affected, is one of the higheſt aggravations of their ſin) for it is far eaſier to ſin without light, then againſt it; and to err by not receiving the truth, *then by holding it in unrighteouſneſs* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* 1. 18.) Light and knowledge where they are, will be urging duty upon the Conſcience. It is no little trouble to put by theſe motions, and keep down this light, and it is far more troubleſome to go contrary to them.

Knowledge hath three things attending upon it.

Firſt, An obligation to duty: A man is not free from his own bands (though he be from others) to forbear the doing of what he knoweth.

Secondly, As knowledge is an obligation, ſo it is a provocation to duty; it will put a man on, and urge him, it will be as a ſpur in his ſide to make him go, yea, run the wayes of God.

Thirdly, Knowledge hath a ſting, a vexation in it when we neglect duty. The Conſcience of a wicked man doth often break in upon him, and ſmite him, when he knowingly breaks out of the wayes of God. Now leſt the knowledge of the wayes of God ſhould be troubleſome to wicked men in any of theſe three things, therefore to way-lay and prevent their own trouble, they have no deſire to the knowledge of thoſe wayes. Beſides, their deſires after the knowledge of thoſe wayes is ſtopt and quencht by a multitude of prejudices and hard thoughts which they have of thoſe wayes; as firſt, That they are unequal and rigorous; therefore the Lord taxeth his ancient people for that apprehenſion (*Mal.* 1. 13.) *Ye ſaid alſo, behold what a wearineſs is it?* And he calls them by the Prophet *Micah*, to give an account in what (*Micah* 6. 3.) *O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee, teſtifie againſt me.* Secondly, As diſhonourable and contumelious; they think the wayes of God too low and ſimple for their ſpirits, and are aſhamed to be found in the practice of them. The word of God is in that ſence, a reproach to them. Thirdly, As fruitleſs and unprofitable; they ſee not what they can get by them, and then why ſhould they go in them? Which prejudice is expreſly held out in the latter clauſe of the following verſe.

Secondly obſerve, *Not to deſire to know the wayes of God, is more ſinful and dangerous then the ignorance of them.*

There are three ſorts of ignorance. Firſt, A groſs or invincible ignorance, which proceeds either from the total abſence of all means of knowledge, or from a total inability to manage and improve thoſe means. Secondly, There is an unwilling ignorance in the midſt of means and abilities to know; a man may be ignorant of ſome things which he is willing enough to know, and this ignorance may run him upon that evil which he had not (premeditately and purpoſely) a will to do. Thirdly, There is a willing ignorance; when a man hath no will to know, yea, reſiſts all the means of knowledge. When he not only doth not know the evil which he doth, but therefore refuſeth knowledge, that he may more freely do evil, and may have this to ſay for himſelf when he doth evil, that *he knew not how to refuſe the evil, and chuſe the good.* As that is a high wickedneſs ſpoken of by the Prophet (*Iſa.* 5. 20.) knowingly to call evil good, and good evil, to put light for darkneſs, and darkneſs for light; ſo it is not a wickedneſs of a lower ſtature, willingly to refuſe knowledge, that ſo we may not be able in our actings to diſtinguiſh light from darkneſs, good from evil, but may run blind-fold upon any thing which our own luſts and advantages prompt us to do. The Prophet (*Iſa.* 58. 2.) ſpeaketh of ſome, who *delighted to know the wayes of God, as a Nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the Ordinance of their God.* Such are hypocrites. But there are a ſort who delight not to know the wayes of God, that ſo they may do unrighteouſneſs, and never be engaged to live up to the Ordinances of God; ſuch are prophane. Both fall into the ſame condemnation; the one for not doing what they pretend they have a delight to know, the other for not delighting in the knowledge of that which they ought to do. The prophaneneſs of this latter ſort is perſonated in this verſe, and is yet ſet in a more open light in the verſe which followeth.

Verſe

Verse 15. **What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?**

This verse assignes the reason (such as it is) which lieth in the bottom of the hearts of wicked men alwayes, and sometimes appeareth at their lips, as the reason why they *say to God, depart from us*, &c. They who bid God be gone from them, have said in their hearts, and are ready enough to say it with their mouths,

What is the Almighty? &c.] Some read it in the Masculine Gender, *Who is the Almighty?* We in the Neuter; the sence of both is one, and that as bad a one as is imaginable or utterable: As if they had said, What is there in God more then in another? we see nothing in him extraordinary, why he should expect, or why we should give him any extraordinary service. Such queryings, whether concerning things or persons, God or man, signifie the highest contempt and disesteem of either. When *Moses* said to God concerning himself (*Exod.* 3. 11.) *Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?* He laid himself quite below that important service. When *David* said to God concerning himself (2 *Sam.* 7. 18.) *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* He laid himself quite below that eminent mercy. When *Nabal* said to *David*'s Messengers requesting a supply of victual for his Army (1 *Sam.* 25. 16.) *Who is David? and who is the Son of Jesse?* He laid him quite below that desired courtesie. When *David* saith, *Psal.* 8. 4. *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* He layeth him quite below the least mindings or thought of God. So when *Pharaoh* said to *Moses* concerning God (with these in the Text) (*Exod.* 5. 2.) *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let* Israel *go?* He laid the Lord (as they did here) quite below that required duty. Such Questions as these, do not so much imply a doubt, who or what God is, whom they are commanded to obey and serve, as a resolvedness that he is unworthy their service and obedience; or that they judge him such a one as they have no cause either to fear or love. Which we may further evidence from the peculiarity of that Name with which God is cloathed in the Text; *Almighty: What is the Almighty?* The word *Shaddai* here and elsewhere rendred *The Almighty*, hath a double derivation: First, From a root (*Sadad*) which signifieth to waste or to destroy, implying the almighty power of God to subdue and subjugate the greatest powers to himself. According to this meaning of the word, the question of these wicked men intimates thus much, that they fear no hurt from God; though he be reported for Almighty, yet they look upon him as weak and impotent, and therefore as slighting his strength, and daring him to do his worst, they say, *What is the Almighty that we should serve him?*

Secondly, The word may be deduced from a root (*Dai*, to which the Letter *Sin* is added as subservient) which signifieth sufficiency, plenty, and abundance. According to this interpretation of the word, their Question holds out thus much, That they being in so flourishing and full a condition themselves, neither needed nor hoped for any thing from his fulness; they could subsist well enough without him, or any supply from him; why should they serve or wait upon him in hope of more, when they had enough in their own hand and possession already? Nor had they faith to believe it would be better with them, or that they should receive any good from him, how much, how long, or how well soever they should serve him. What is the Almighty, or what hath he in store for us, that we should serve him? If we knit and conjoin both these considerations of the word together, we may parallel or exemplifie the whole compass of their question with that lewd and Atheistical speech recorded from the mouths of some sons of *Belial* in his time, by the Prophet *Zephany* (chap. 1. 12.) *It shall come to pass at that time, that I will search* Jerusalem *with candles, and I will punish the men that are setled on their lees, that say in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.* Whereas the Lord by his holy Prophet *Isaiah* (chap. 41. 23.) challengeth the false gods or Idols, to give testimony and proof of their divine power, or that they are gods, by shewing things to come, and by doing good or evil, these conclude that God cannot give proof of his divine power, by doing either good or evil; which is as much as to say, that he can do nothing at all; for seeing all things that are done, are either good or evil, he that can do neither, cannot do any thing. Thus they wickedly imagined the Lord to be what Idols indeed are, who have eyes, and see not; ears, and hear not; feet, but walk not; and hands, but cannot act or execute. And that's the sum of this blasphemy, which *Job* ascribeth here to the wicked, *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?* We neither regard the benefit nor the dammage that he can do us; we are neither troubled at his omnipotency, as if he could destroy us in his wrath when he is displeased at us; nor are we hungry after his All-sufficiency, as if he could sustain us in his love, were he every way pleased by us. *What is the Almighty?*

That we should serve him.] Why should we take upon us his Livery, and become his servants? What wages shall we have, or what preferment can he give us? as it followeth by and by. To serve God, or to be a servant to God, is a comprehensive term, taking in all the duties of man in holiness. *I and my house* (saith *Joshua*, chap. 24. 15.) *will serve the Lord*: And such is the resolution of every godly man; but against this the wicked are resolved, while we hear them putting the Question, *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?* As if they had said, he is such a Master (or let him be what he will) that we will not serve him. To serve God is to give him all the duties both of natural and of instituted worship: We serve God while we love him, while we fear him, while we believe in him, while we trust upon him; yet all these have distinct and proper respects to God. We trust God as he is faithful, we believe on him as he is true, we fear him as he is great, we love him as he is good, we serve him as he is Soveraign and Lord of all. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve* (Deut. 6. 13.) There is a service due from man to man; but comparatively to our service of God, we must not *be the servants of men* (1 Cor. 7. 23.) We ought to serve men heartily; but we must serve none but God with all our hearts. And if God be not served with all, he counts himself not at all served. A wicked man may possibly serve God with his tongue and hands, with words and outward works, but he never serveth him with his heart; and most usually they cast off the service of hand and tongue, using both to his disservice. In this largest sence of observing, we may expound this Text, and apply it to the greatest number of wicked men, and in that stricter sence 'tis true of them all; They say, *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?*

Hence observe, First, *Wicked men have low and slight thoughts of God*:

Their wisdom (the best that is in them) *is but the wisdom of the flesh*; and that, at the best, *is enmity against God* (*Rom.* 8. 7.) And can they do otherwise then lightly esteem him with whom they are at enmity? They who know not the worth and excellency of a person, cannot have high thoughts of him. Wicked men, one and other, know not God (that's the definition which *Bildad* giveth of them, *chap.* 18. 21.) How then can they duly prize him whom they do not know? As we do not desire, so we cannot honour that which is unknown. All the services, such as they are, which a wicked man tenders to God, may bear the same inscription which the Altar observed by *Paul* among the *Athenians* did (*Acts* 17. 23.) *To the unknown God. If thou hadst known the gift of God* (saith Christ to the woman, *John* 4. 10.) *and who it is that saith unto thee, give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.* Did wicked men know the living God, they would ask after him, and reckon their lives, with all that they have, nothing worth without him. Believers having attained some good knowledge of God (though it be little to what they might attain in Grace, and less, yea, as nothing to what they shall receive in Glory) are lifted up with holy glorying in and of God. Thus *Moses* in his triumphant Song after the overthrow of *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* Host in the Red Sea (*Exod.* 15. 11.) *Who is like unto thee, O Lord, amongst the gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?* Thus the Psalmist crieth him up

in

in his excellencies, *This God is our God for ever and ever* (*Psal.* 48. 14.) So the Church is brought in by the Prophet admiring God (*Isa.* 25. 9.) *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: This is the Lord, we have waited for him,* &c. The words have a sound of victory and triumph in them, intimating that some had in scorn (as they did *David*) asked, *Where is now your God?* Or as in the Text, *What is the Almighty?* Therefore his people, upon some gracious and strange appearance of God for them, do, as it were, hold him up at once to the view and astonishment of all the World, especially of their enemies; *Lo this is our God, this is the Lord.* Behold and consider, who is a God like unto him? Your rock is not as our rock, even your selves being Judges. *Who have I in Heaven but thee?* (saith *David*, Psal. 73. 25.) *and there is none upon earth I desire besides thee.* We see how the opinion and estimation which the Saints have of God, is as different from that of wicked men, as their state is different. They make their boast of God all the day long; these are ashamed of him, and say, *What is the Almighty that we should serve him?* The Daughters of *Jerusalem* enquire of the Church (*Cant.* 5. 9.) *What is thy Beloved more then anothers beloved, O thou fairest among women? What is thy Beloved more then anothers beloved, that thou doest thus charge us?* They demand what, and what is thy Beloved, out of an earnest desire of further information. But wicked men ask, *What is the Almighty?* Not out of a desire to know what he is, but in scorn and derision of what they vainly and ignorantly conceive him to be, even too mean to be served by them.

Secondly, Observe, *A wicked man thinks scorn to serve God.*

No man can serve two Masters (saith our Great Master, *Matth.* 6. 24.) That is, two Masters of contrary interests, and who issue out contrary commands. Every wicked man serveth more Masters then two; but he serveth not that one who is infinitely better, and more deserving our service then all. He is a servant to lust, yea, *He serves divers lusts and pleasures* (Tit. 3. 3.) He serves at the pleasure of every lust, and therefore he can have no pleasure in serving the Lord: And unless we make it our pleasure as well as our work to serve the Lord, he hath no pleasure neither in us nor in our services. We cannot serve God unless we deny our selves, and resolve our will into his. But every wicked man is a self-seeker, therefore he cannot serve God. And as in that state he cannot, so he hath no will, no mind to serve the Lord. He looks upon his service as slavery, and calls the Commandments of God cords and bonds, and submission to them bondage; therefore he saith, *I will break those bonds asunder, and cast away those cords from me* (Psal. 2. 3.) Till we are made free from sin, we are never free to serve the Lord. The Apostle joyns those two in consequence, *Rom.* 6. 20, 21. *When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness* (not free by any liberty given, but by a liberty taken, which is licentiousness) *but now being made free from sin* (Christ manumitteth all whom he redeemeth) *and become servants to God:* There is a blessed transition from that freedom which is indeed slavery, into a service which is indeed freedom. He is incomparably more free that serveth the Lord, then he who, not serving him, ruleth the World. *I serve* (God being my Master) may be the Motto, and is the Honour of all the Saints. The Yoak of Christ, yea, the Cross of Christ, are sweet, easie, and honourable to the Saints. They who have tasted how gracious the Lord is in his Promises, will rejoyce in his Commandments. And it is as much their desire to serve him, as it is their happiness to be saved by him. The wicked are strangers from the Covenant of his Promise, and therefore they are estranged from his Precepts, and in stead of receiving his Law into their hearts, cast it behind their backs. *What is the Almighty* (say they) *that we should serve him?*

And what profit should we have if we pray unto him?

We use to look to the end of our actions before we begin; and we may justly think it is not good for us to do that which will do us no good when we have done it. Did a godly man see no benefit, no good coming in by prayer, he would not pray. And because a wicked man seeth no benefit in prayer, therefore he doth not pray. His reason were good if it were true. We cannot profit God by prayer; but we may profit our selves. We may turn the Argument and say, What profit shall we have if we do not pray? Though God giveth sometime before we ask, yet we have no ground to expect till we have asked. Wicked men receive many good things from God, for which they never prayed; but because they do not own him as the Author and Fountain of their good, therefore they will not pray. They ascribe their profits to themselves; What profit then can they conceive in prayer? *What profit shall we have*

If we pray unto him?] The Hebrew is, *If we meet him.* 'Tis a Metaphor taken from those, who rise up when grave and great men come towards them, and in honour to their persons go forth and meet them. This elegancy of the word heightens the impiety of wicked men, who are so far from following God with their prayers and supplications, when he departeth far from them, that they will not so much as stir a foot to go out and meet God when he cometh towards them, either in judgment, to divert and turn him back, or in mercy, to invite him forwards, and give him thanks; as if they did not at all, either fear his anger, or regard his love. Prayer is our meeting with God; and this word is specially applyed to our meeting God in prayer, when he appeareth angry and displeased. Thus the word is used (*Jer.* 7. 16.) *Therefore pray not thou for this people*, do not thou (saith the Lord to his Prophet) meet me when I come out against them, do not thou strike in between me and them (as *Moses* sometimes did) to intercede and mediate for them, for I am resolved to destroy them. That Scripture (*Isa.* 47. 3.) which we render, *I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man* (that is, weak in power, or with compassion, such as men sometimes shew; but in full power, and with unmoveable purposes, as God; that Scripture, I say) is thus rendred by others, *Man shall not resist me*; that is, he shall not hinder me of my purpose by prayer; or as some of the Rabbins translate, or rather paraphrase that Text, *I will not admit of any intercession for thee.* Whereas in another place of the same Prophet (*Chap.* 59. 16.) *The Lord wondred that there was no Intercessor*; none to meet him with a good word for that people. In which sence we find the word, *Jer.* 27. 18. & 36. 25. *Abigail* went out to meet *David*, and by her mediation to stop him from shedding blood (2 *Sam.* 25. 23.) The Lord calls his people to meet him (*Amos* 4. 12.) *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this, therefore prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.* How to meet him? What with Armes or Armies, with the preparation of outward force? No: What can the strongest Hosts of men do against or with the Lord of Hosts? This meeting then must be by repentance and humiliation, by weeping and invocation. God meeteth him (with blessings) in his way, that rejoyceth and worketh righteousness: And he loves, yea, expects that we should meet him in his way, mourning and praying, when he is about the works of his Judgment. Many godly men have met God with these weapons, and have prevailed, But the wicked man, either hath no hopes, or thinks he hath no need either to prevent evil or obtain good by such a meeting. And therefore he saith, *What profit shall I have if I pray unto* (or meet) *him?*

פָּגַע *Significat occurrere, obviare, sæpe autem deprecari vel instanter orare.*

Hence Observe, First, *Wicked men are led by their worldly profit in all they do.*

They are ready to do any evil which they suppose may profit them; and they will not do (which is all they can do) so much as the outside of any good, by which they can get no visible profit. The Apostle *Paul* speaks of such *who supposed that gain was Godliness*; but they were far from supposing *that Godliness* (as indeed it is, even bare Godliness) *is great gain* (1 *Tim.* 6. 5, 6.) While wicked men have a hope to gain by a profession of Godliness (because gain is savory to them, though it proceed from that which to them is most unsavory) they will be pro-

feſſors, and condeſcend to that which they eſteem no more in it ſelf, then the dirt under their feet, the thing called *Godlineſs*. But when once they ſee they cannot gain by it, or think they have gained enough by it, then they meddle with it no more; off goes their viſor, and they ſhew you (having made a ſhew of what they were not) what they are. Many now receive the Goſpel upon the ſame Argument, by which the *Sichemites* were perſwaded to receive Circumciſion (*Gen.* 34. 23.) *Shall not their cattel, and their ſubſtance, and every beaſt of theirs be ours?* They are zealous for Chriſt, upon the ſame terms that *Demetrius* was zealous for the worſhip of *Diana* among the *Epheſians* (*Acts* 19. 24.) they make or gain *Silver ſhrines*, and by this they get their living. As *Judas* betrayed Chriſt, ſo they will pretend to adore him, if their queſtion be well anſwered, What will you give us? Or what ſhall we get by it? The Needle of the Compaſs never reſts nor is quiet, till it pointeth to the North, nor are they till they point at profit, and have carnal advantages in their eye. What profit ſhall we have if we hear him, or pray unto him?

Secondly, Obſerve, *Wicked men have an opinion that prayer and attendance upon God in holy duties are unprofitable.*

While they ask, What profit ſhall we have if we pray? Their meaning is, that prayer yields no profit, and that ſerving God is a very poor trade. Such the Prophet *Malachy* at once diſcovers and reproves (*Chap.* 3. 14.) *Ye have ſaid, It is in vain to ſerve God; And what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hoſts. And now ye call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedneſs are ſet up, yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.* As if they had ſaid, We get nothing by the ſervice of God; and not only ſo, but they who rebel againſt him, the proud, they who make wickedneſs their work, their buſineſs, they who do not only neglect God, but tempt him, ſinning preſumptuouſly, daringly, theſe get all, theſe are happy, theſe are built up high in good things, honour and riches, and theſe are delivered and protected from evil, dangers, and diſtreſſes. A prophane Souldier at the ſiege of a Town paſſing a place of danger was heard ſwearing, and when one that ſtood by warned him, ſaying, *Fellow-ſouldier, do not ſwear, the bullets fly*; he anſwered, *They that ſwear come off as well as they who pray*; ſoon after a ſhot hit him, and down he fell. This is the judgment both of poor, ignorant, and knowingly wicked men, *What profit is there if we pray?* Whereas indeed they ſhould rather ſay, What profit is there in any thing without prayer? Or what profit is there not in prayer? *Godlineſs is profitable for all things, having the promiſe of this life, as well as of that which is to come* (1 Tim. 4. 8.)

Thirdly, Obſerve, *Wicked men throw up or give over the duties of holineſs, when they find no preſent profit or outward advancement coming in by them.*

They ſerve God no longer then he ſerveth their turns. They who follow Chriſt for the loaves, leave him when the loaves are done. Surely many old Formaliſts were wont to pray meerly for filthy lucre, which gave occaſion for that common Proverb, *No penny, no pater-noſter*; which we may tranſlate into the ſtile of the Text, *No profit, no prayer.* Saints find reward in their work; but Hypocrites muſt be rewarded and paid in hand for their work, elſe they will work no more. A godly man will pray and perſevere in prayer, becauſe God commandeth him to pray alwayes; not becauſe he alwayes finds the grant of the thing prayed for. He knows his prayers can never turn to loſs, though he pray long and feels no profit, not only not in temporals, but not in ſpirituals, and inward comforts. He conſiders, what God requires of him, not what he receiveth from God, is the ground of every duty. And whereas that wicked King ſaid (2 *Kings* 6. 33.) *This evil is from the Lord, why then ſhould I wait upon the Lord any longer?* He ſaith, I will yet, yea, for ever wait upon the Lord, though he defer to do me good.

VERS. 16, 17, 18.

Lo, their good is not in their hand, the counſel of the wicked is far from me.

How oft is the candle of the wicked put out? And how oft cometh their deſtruction upon them? God diſtributeth ſorrows in his anger.

They are as ſtubble before the wind, and as chaff that the ſtorm carrieth away.

IN the former words, *Job* having deſcribed both the proſperity and the blaſphemy of wicked men, whom he repreſents thruſting the Lord from them, and diſcharging him their company, *Depart from us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes*, &c. (Having thus, I ſay, deſcribed their proſperity, and their blaſphemy; leſt he ſhould ſeem to attribute more happineſs to them, then indeed they have, or at all to have approved of their courſe and counſel, which at all he had not) he ſubjoyns by way of prevention, his opinion of both in this ſixteenth Verſe.

Lo, their good is not in their hand, the counſel of the wicked is far from me.

As if he had ſaid, *I have not aſſerted the great ſucceſs of wicked men, as if God neglected the affairs of the world, or cared not into what hands they were diſtributed; as if he had left wicked men in their own power, to be the founders and contrivers of their own greatneſs; or as if I my ſelf were taken with, or envied at any of their felicity: for I am well aſſured that God diſpoſeth of all theſe things in much wiſdom, but in no love at all, or good will to them: Lo, their good is not in their hand, the counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

In theſe words *Job* gives his opinion about the ſtate of wicked men, in the midſt of all their outward pomp and worldly ſplendor; *Lo, their good is not in their hand.* The Septuagint read this firſt part of the Verſe without a negative particle; whereas we (from the Hebrew) read, *Their good is not in their hand*, they ſay, *Their goods were in their hands.* Which ſome explain, As if *Job* in theſe words aſſigned the reaſon whence it comes to paſs, that wicked men ſpake with ſo much boldneſs and impudency in the Verſe before, *What is the Almighty? And what profit is it that we pray to him?* Why are they thus bold with God? Why do they ſlight the Almighty? *O* (ſaith *Job*) *their good is in their hand*; that is, they have enough already, they are full of the world, and they care not how empty they are of God; they have as much as they deſire, they are ſatisfied with the creature, therefore they have no deſire to the Almighty, the Creator; they have their portion, and ſuch will not pray for more who think they have all in poſſeſſion. What need they beg any good thing at the hand of God, when they have all good in their own hand? *Their good is in their hand, therefore they ſay, What profit is it that we pray to the Almighty?* This is a truth, but I will not proſecute this reading, becauſe it is not clear from the original Text.

Ἐν χερσὶν γὰρ ἦν αὐτῶν τὰ ἀγαθά. Sept.

We render according to the letter of the Hebrew, *Their good is not in their hand.* That is, ſay ſome, They have many worldly good things, yet they uſe none of them. They have good in their houſes, good in their cheſts, but they have none in their hand. The righteous man hath outward good things in his hand, he is ready to uſe and imploy them, he is maſter of them, he makes them ſerve him; but meer carnal men ſerve their goods, or are ſlaves to them; their goods have them in their hand; their good is not in their hand, they are ruled by what they have; they do not rule what they have. *Lo, their good is not in their hand.* They are not maſter of their own. There is a truth in this expoſition; and therefore *Solomon* in *Eccleſiaſtes* diſtinguiſheth the poſſeſſion of the things of the world from the uſe of them. It is one gift of God to put the things of the world into our hand, and another to give us a heart to uſe them (*Eccleſ.* 5. 19.) *Every man to whom God hath given riches and wealth* (there is one gift) *and given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and rejoyce in his labour, this is the gift of God*, there is another gift. Many receive the firſt gift from the hand of

of God, who are denyed the latter. But neither will I give this as the scope of *Job*'s Text.

Again, *Their good is not in their hand.* By *good* here, we are to understand all that which is before set down, as the portion of wicked men: We had an Inventory of their goods, a very large and fair one. *Lo, Their good.* Why the things of the world are called good, see before (*ver.* 13.) *They spend their dayes in wealth*, or, *in good.* And though they did, yet here he saith, *Their good is not in their hand.* But how can a man spend his dayes in that which is not in his hand? Many have that in their hand or possession, in which they do not spend their dayes. But it sounds hard to say, A man spends his dayes in that which is not in his hand.

Lo, their good is not in their hand.

I answer; The being of a thing in our hand imports.

First, That it is attainable by our own industry, or that it is within our reach and power. So, when *Job* saith, *Their good is not in their hand*; his meaning is, their riches and worldly abundance was not attained by any self-sufficiency. Not only is it true in spirituals, but also in temporals (though in these we can do no more) that we can do nothing effectively of our selves, or by our own strength and wisdom, our sufficiency is of God. Whatsoever we have in this world comes from another hand, not from our own. Master *Broughton* renders fully up to this sence; *Lo, their wealth cometh not by their own power.*

Cum scripturæ dicit aliquid esse in manu; potius potestatem in conservando quam diligentiam in acquirendo significat. Bold.

Secondly, *Their good is not in their hand*; that is, they have not a power to hold the good which they have received; this I have seen (saith *Job*) in the state of wicked men, that neither the good they have was purely in their power to attain it, nor in their power to retain and hold it. This latter sence some conclude, as specially intended by this phrase all the Scripture over. As if to be in the hand, did rather imply an ability in keeping, then industry in acquiring the things of this life; yet I conceive the former sence as fair and pertinent as the latter, and therefore from thence note,

First, *Men get not their greatness, whether in wealth or rule, by their own power.*

What *Job* affirms of evil men, is true of good men too, it is a general truth, *Their good is not in their hand to get it*; every good gift comes from above. Even the things of the world (which are good gifts, though they be a lower sort of good gifts) are sent by a higher hand. Earth is dropt down to us out of Heaven. Outward comforts are not from the hand of man, either meritoriously, or efficiently. They are not from his hand meritoriously, he deserves not a bit of bread; he is so far from deserving Heaven, and Glory, and the Favour of God, that he deserves not a piece of this earth to stand or lye down upon. No nor efficiently: Proud man hath such an opinion of himself, he is full of these thoughts, that at least the things of the world are within his compass, that he can reach and attain them by his own power, activity, and policy. *Isa.* 10. 13. The *Assyrian* is brought in glorying thus; *For he saith, by the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom, for I am prudent, and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants of the earth like a valiant man.* Here is the language of a proud mans heart, he saith, by the strength of my hand I have done it. And the Lord was very jealous of his own people, that they would be attributing their good to their own hand, and he could not bear it that they should. (*Deut.* 8. 16, 17.) Therefore he admonisheth them, that when they came to *Canaan*, and had got great estates, and had eaten, and were full, to take heed least their hearts should be lifted up (*Vers.* 17.) *And thou say in thy heart* (suppose it do not break forth into words) *my might and my power hath gotten this wealth* (take heed thou do not speak such language in thy heart) *but thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that gives thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his Covenant which he sware to thy fathers.* See here, the things of the world are not in our hand, God gives us power to get our bread. And consider, if the Lord be so jealous in this point, that he will not indure men to ascribe to their own strength or hand, the getting of the treasures of the world: How will he take it at their hands, that say Heaven it self is in their hand, the good of eternal life is in their hand, or that they can fetch it in by their own earnings; that they are not beholden to Christ only, or alone for it, but they can merit for it? There is a touch of this in all our hearts, though we come not to the grosness of the Papists; we would have somewhat of our own gaining and fetching in, for life and glory. But if the things of the World be not in our hand, then much less are the things of Heaven: If not temporals, then surely not spirituals and eternals. (*Psal.* 76. 6, 7.) *Promotion is not from the East, or West, or South, but it is of God, who pulleth down one, and setteth up another.* It is a piece of our spiritualness to confess God the giver of our temporals. It is an act of grace to say, *Lo, our good is not in our hand.* That principle of policy, *Every man is the contriver of his own condition*, is false in Divinity. Man may be considered in a threefold capacity or state, and God the Author of them all. In his natural state, *as a living man:* In his spiritual state, *as a holy man*: In his civil state, *as a rich or great man:* All that he is in any of, or all these, is all from God.

Quisq; fortunæ suæ faber.

Secondly, Observe, *It is not in the power of man to hold or perpetuate his own prosperity.*

As our good is not got by our hand, so not held, it will run or slip out between our fingers, if we only hold it; we put our earnings into a purse with holes (*Hag.* 1. 6.) if God do but blow upon it. As the Lord gives, so he can take away, let us hold as fast as we will; unless the Lord hold what we have for us, we cannot hold it. The creature is a flitting thing; unless God establish it to us it may be gone every moment. Our spirituals are not in our own keeping; we cannot bring grace into our own hearts, and we cannot keep grace in our own hearts; our good of grace is in the hand of Jesus Christ, it is he that preserves his own graces bestowed upon us. Were it not for the hand of Christ holding our hearts, we should let out all the grace we have quickly; our faith and love, with all those spiritual treasures, would soon be scattered, were not we kept by the power of God; *Lo, their good is not in their hand.*

Thirdly, When *Job* saith, *Their good is not in their hand*, he seems to intend, that though these men had a great deal in their hands; yet *their good*, or that which indeed will do them good, was not in their hand. The men of the world have their portion in this life; and that is not a portion: They have goods in their hand; but that which is indeed their good is not in their hand.

Hence Note, *That which is truly good, or will really do any man good, is not in the hand of a wicked man.*

Let him have what he will in his hand, his good is not in his hand; yea, it had been better for him not to have had this good in his hand, unless he had somewhat that is better. (*Psal.* 4. 6.) The men of the World cry out, *Who will shew us any good?* What is their good? *David* tells us, *Corn, and wine, and oyl, gold and silver*, the riches and greatness of the World; these are a very low sort of good, and comparatively these are no good at all. *Give me the light of thy countenance* (saith he) this good they have not in their hand: They have not the grace or favour of God in their hands; they have not a portion of spirituals in their hands; their good is not in their hand, because that is not there which indeed would make them happy. *Job* did not look on wicked men as truly happy, though he spake so much of this outward happiness; *Their good is not in their hand.*

The counsel of the wicked is far from me.

In these words *Job* makes a modest comparison between his own and the condition of the wicked; *The counsel of the wicked is far from me.* *Counsel* is not to be taken here strictly for that which is the preparation to action, after inquisition and debate; for the issue of both is counsel. But here *counsel* is to be understood in a larger sence; *The counsel of the wicked*, is, their course, their opinion, their way, their purpose, whatsoever is decreed and resolved by them, that is their counsel. Now,

saith he, *This counsel* (or course) *of the wicked, is far from me.*

Consilium ponitur pro tota agendi ratione.

But how was their counsel far from *Job?* Every good man cannot keep evil counsel far from him. Evil men may give good men bad counsel; yea, a good man cannot keep himself from the evil counsel of the Devil; Why then doth he say, *The counsel of the wicked is far from me?* Satan will be instilling hellish counsel into the hearts of the best; How then is he thus confident, *The counsel of the wicked is far from me?*

The meaning is, *I am far from the counsel of the wicked*: For though we cannot keep the counsel of wicked men, or the counsel of Satan, his suggestions, and motions, far from us (for these will be buzzing about us) yet we may keep our selves far from them; that is, we may keep our hearts at a distance from them. Now that is the meaning of *Job*, *The counsel of the wicked is far from me:* That is, I am of another opinion, and mind, I do not fall in with them, I do not say as they, I do not affirm what they affirm, or deny what they deny. *The counsel of the wicked is far from me.* It shews that he had a quite different judgment of things from the wicked; nor did he like their way, notwithstanding their prosperity and success. As if he had said, *I am not in love with their good and greatness, much good do it them; it is far from me to wish it in their way, and upon their terms; for I never trod in their path, nor walked in their counsel.*

Hence Observe, First, *The counsel or course of a wicked man is foolish and preposterous in the opinion of the godly.*

As himself is, so is his counsel, both nought, therefore a good man abhors them. What is the counsel of a wicked man? What is his course? His counsel is to follow the world, to heap up riches, to engross earth, neglecting Heaven, to be very eager after the things that are seen, not regarding the things that are not seen. This is foolish counsel: *For* (saith *Paul*, 2 Cor. 4. *ult.*) *we look not at things that are seen.* How can a man look at things that he doth not see? How can he aim at a mark that he doth not reach with his eye? Indeed Believers look at nothing but what they see, though they do not look at the things which are seen. Here is the excellency of Believers, they aim at things that are not seen by the corporal eye, but they have a sight of them by the eye of faith, they see them with a spiritual eye, or else they could not aim at them. Now, *We look not* (saith *Paul*) *at things that are seen* (which is the counsel of the wicked) *but at things which are not seen; for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.* The things which are most seen now, will not be seen long, no, nor be long. As it is said of *Tyre* (Ezek. 27. 36.) *The Merchants among the people shall hiss at thee, thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt be any more, or shalt not be for ever.*

Secondly, Observe, *Godly men are not at all pleased with the way of the wicked, how much soever they thrive in it.*

Job had said much of the greatness, riches, and glory of the wicked; but, saith he, however, *The counsel of the wicked is far from me.* The wayes of the godly and the wicked differ, as much as their ends; and their counsels are as distant as their conclusions will be. Every good man saith of the counsels and wayes of the wicked, how prosperous soever, as *Jacob* said of his sons, *Simeon* and *Levi* (Gen. 49. 6.) *O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united.* Let me be far from their secret; that is, *from their secret counsel, from their cabinet counsel, and close committees: O my soul, come not thou into their secret.* The further we keep from their counsel, the nearer we are to blessedness. (*Psal.* 1. 1.) *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.* And as the godly are far from the counsel of the wicked, so the wicked are as far from the counsels of the godly; they also say, *The counsel of such is far from us*, we cannot abide their counsel (*Psal.* 14. 6.) *Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor*; that is, ye are ashamed of his counsel. What poor doth he mean? He means it not of any poor; though it be a truth, that a poor mans counsel is seldom heard (great men are usually ashamed of poor mens counsel, as *Solomon* speaketh in his *Ecclesiastes*, (Chap. 9. 16.) *The poor mans wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*) But here by *poor*, he means the godly poor, men fearing God, as it is plain in the latter end of the Verse: You are ashamed of the counsel of the poor, Why? *Because the Lord is his refuge.* His counsel doth *depend on the Lord: Trust in the Lord, walk in his wayes*, shelter your selves under his protection, this counsel the poor man gives; and he must needs be a godly man that gives this counsel. This counsel you have shamed; that is, despised. What have we to do with this counsel, to make the Lord our refuge? No, we will take our own course, and work it out by our own wit. Thus wicked men are far from the counsel of the godly; and godly men are as far from the counsel of the wicked.

Job proceeds.

Verse 17. **How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?**

Here begins the second part of the Chapter. As in the former he proved by clear experiences, the prosperity of the wicked, so now he proves that the wicked are not alwayes prosperous, but meet with checks and contrary blasts as well as others. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* There are two opinions concerning the general tendency of this latter part of the Chapter. Some think (as hath been toucht) that *Job* having before declared the outward happiness of wicked men, doth here, as it were, turn the Tables, and describe their misery by way of admiration. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Or if they escape, their children pay for it, as it follows *ver.* 21. This may seem to contradict what he spake before of the flourishing state of wicked men, presently to add, *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* But indeed it only contradicts what his Friends spake before, whose opinion was, That God sorteth out the things of this life so distinctly, that to the wicked he gives nothing but misery and sorrow; and to the righteous nothing but mercy and comfort. Now *Job* takes this off; he affirms that wicked men are usually filled with worldly abundance, which is against their opinion; yet he affirms also, that wicked men are often plunged into outward misery, that they also are brought into straits and darkness. Thus he renders the opinion of his Friends altogether inconsistent with his experiences; they said, that evil men receive only evil; no, saith he, evil men receive abundance of good in this World; yet I do assert that evil men also receive evil too; so that there can be no distinguishing of mens spiritual estates by their temporal sufferings or enjoyments, seeing wicked men sometimes are not punished here, and sometimes are.

Concludit contra amicos suos bona & mala in hac vita aque a Deo bonis ac malis dari. Refutatur amicorum sententia impios semper hic puniri, quum utrumque aque accidat & eos punire & non punire. Merc.

Secondly, Others understand the whole context thus, as if *Job* were still describing the prosperous state of the wicked, and continued the same discourse to *ver.* 21. And then the questions here are to be expounded negatively; *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Can you give many instances of it? Is this very oft? Are wicked men commonly found in darkness, or in trouble? So he meets with both the assertions of his Friends. *Bildad* said (*Chap.* 18. 5, 6.) *The light of the wicked is put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine; the light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his candle shall be put out with him.* Well, saith *Job*, this is your opinion, I pray, tell me, *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Have you seen this frequently, that you make such a direct conclusion of it? Again, *Zophar* in the close of the twentieth Chapter, when he had drawn out the judgments of God in many particulars, concludes (*ver.* 29.) *This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed him by God.* Now *Job* answers, whereas you, O *Zophar*, conclude your ennumeration of evils, with, *This is the portion of a wicked man from God.* I pray, how oft doth God distribute such evils to them in anger? Doth he it so often, as gives you a sufficient ground to make so peremptory a conclusion? *This is the portion of a wicked man from God.*

Take the words either of these wayes, there is a fair correspondency with the scope of the place, and with *Job's* purpose; nor do either of these interpretations give any strain or offer violence to the original Text. For

the

Quoties potest exponi in defectu, q.d. Etsi id fiat aliquando, raro tamen fit; ac sæpius florent impii contra quã vos dixistis. Merc.

the first word that we render *how oft*, is expounded sometimes by way of *increase*, sometimes by way of *diminution*. In the former sence, *how oft*, sounds a thing done very frequently: In the latter, *how oft*; sounds a thing seldom, or rarely done: How oft have you had such experiments? That is, You have rarely had them. How oft is such a thing done? That is, It is seldom done. Mr. *Broughton* translates clearly to this exposition, *Not so often is the candle of the wicked put out*, &c.

How oft is the Candle of the wicked put out?

By the *candle of the wicked*, some understand their lives, that is, How oft do wicked men come to a sudden and unexpected death? *Job* said before, *They grow old*: His Friends had said, *They are cut off*. Here, according to the latter exposition, he queries, Can you give many instances that the candle of the wicked hath been put out? That their lives have been extinguished? The life of man may well be called his candle; and the life of man goes out after the manner of a candle. A candle goes out three wayes, and so doth the life of man: First, For want of moisture to feed it: Thus the life of man goes out when the moisture of the body is spent, and consumed; when it is drunk and dryed up by old age, or hot distempers, then out goes the life of man like a candle. Secondly, A candle goes out, through the redundancy of moisture; the oyl sometimes drowns the lamp, as well as feeds it. Thus also moisture overflowing the body of man, puts out or quencheth life. Thirdly, A candle is extinguisht by a vehement wind that blows it out: And the lives of many men are put out by violence, their candle doth not burn out, but is blown out. And thus especially the lives of wicked men are put out: They are cut off by a hand of Justice before they have lived out half their dayes; or if they attain to fulness of dayes, their hoary head descends not to the grave in peace.

Secondly, Others understand by *Candle*, their *Children*: A mans children are as so many lights in his house; as they dye, his candles are put out; and if they all dye, his candle is quite put out.

Thirdly, and more generally, the word is used to signifie any, or all sorts of worldly prosperity. The light of the wicked can be nothing but outward prosperity, in all the sorts of it. So the word is frequently used (*Prov.* 13. 9.) *The light of the righteous rejoyceth; but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out*; that is, their prosperity shall cease; read 2 *Sam.* 27. 11. 2 *Kings* 8. 19. *Psal.* 132. 17. in all which places, light, lamp, and candle, express outward splendor and prosperity. *How oft is the candle of the wicked put out?* Taking the words in the first sence, How oft? That is, very oft.

Observe, *The worldly glory and outward pomp of wicked men is many times put out in darkness.*

Taking the words in the second sence, How oft? That is, not often: You cannot give frequent experiments of this.

Note; *Most wicked men continue their candle, and the light of their prosperity a long time.*

As we have seen the one, so the other; there are experiments on both sides. Therefore we can make no distinction of men, either by the shining and burning, or by the putting out of their candle. The former point hath been given from other passages of the Book, and the latter being one general scope of the whole Book, it may suffice only to collect and specifie them.

And how oft cometh destruction upon them?

The sence is the same with the former, only the words are varied.

אֵיד Extremam denotat ruinam vel calamitatem nubis & pluviæ more supervenientem.

Their destruction.] The word which we render **destruction**, carrieth in it utter ruine, or an undoing calamity; properly it signifies a cloud; and because storms are wrapped up in clouds, and from them hail and snow, thunder and lightening, break forth, not only to the terror of hearers and beholders, but even to their destruction; therefore the same word signifies both a cloud, and also destruction. And hence the Vulgar reads, *How oft is there an inundation upon the wicked?* When clouds dissolve, an inundation, a deluge follows, which sweeps all away. In which sence the Prophet (*Isa.* 28. 15.) calls it an *overflowing scourge*, that is, a judgment which breaks all the banks and fences which the wit and power of man set up against it.

Note, *Wicked men shall not only be afflicted, but destroyed.*

Destruction is their portion. The hand of God upon a wicked man is for ruine; but upon his own people for correction. The Apostle speaks this sence clearly (2 *Cor.* 4. 8, 9.) where he tells us that himself and other holy men were in a very sad condition, but it came not to destruction; *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.* As for wicked men, *How oft cometh destruction upon them?* They are not only troubled, but distressed; not only perplexed, persecuted, and cast down, but in despair; forsaken and destroyed.

From the manner of their destruction; it comes like a tempest, or a shower.

Note, *The destruction of wicked men is irresistible.*

Who can avoid the shower, or the storm? Yes, you will say, we may run to covert; but there is no covert which the Lord cannot rain quite through; though sinners hide themselves under rocks and mountains, he can send a rain which shall soak unto them. There is no shelter against the wrath of God; he can pierce all the coverings of the creature; his wrath smites down to the very bottom of hell. When storms and tempests are up in the World, Saints have a covering; But what is it? Not any worldly covering, or creature refuge; these cannot protect them from the storm; but the Prophet tells us what or who will (*Isa.* 32. 2.) *A King shall reign in righteousness, Princes shall rule in judgment. And a man* (that is, Jesus Christ) *shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.* Christ is a covert from the tempest, as a hiding place from the wind; but wicked men have no help by him, he is no covert, no hiding place to them; therefore their destruction comes unresistably, and unavoidably. Such was the shower of fire and brimstone upon *Sodom*; the *Sodomites* expected not an enemy that way, their destruction came as a shower from a cloud; The Lord rained fire and brimstone upon them from the Lord out of Heaven. The cloud which hangs over and lowres black upon wicked men, is not a little cloud that soon passeth away, but a cloud that shall make the wicked pass away; when that breaks, they shall be broken, and fall, and perish.

Nubecula est cito transibit.

God distributeth sorrows in his anger.

חלק *Divisionem denotat inter plures. Trãslatio ab iis qui funiculis agros dimetiebantur, quos deinde dividunt inter se missis sortibus.* Drus.

The word implyeth the dividing of a thing among many; to divide by lot; to apportion out an inheritance or share; a mans share is called his lot; this is my lot, and that is yours; every one hath his lot. Thus land in a common field is divided; and thus *Joshua* divided *Canaan* among the twelve Tribes, he divided it to them by lot; such a distribution the word signifies; *God shall distribute sorrows to them by lot.*

חבלים *Dolores, funes, partiebatur, funiculis hæreditates dividebantur.*

He distributeth sorrows.] That word signifieth a cord, or a line, that line with which an inheritance is divided, a measuring line, a line to measure land by. So (*Psal.* 16. 6.) *The line is fallen to me in a fair place*; that is, my inheritance is divided, or shared out to me in a fair place, I have a fair lot. The elegancy is remarkable. God distributeth sorrows by a line, as the portion and inheritance which wicked men shall receive (*Luke* 12. 46.) *The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looked not for him*, &c. *and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. God distributeth sorrows.* To say God distributeth a portion in anger were sad enough; for every portion that God distributeth in anger can be nothing but sorrow. But to distribute sorrows in anger, imports the most sorrowful distribution. And besides, the word signifies not only sorrows, but the greatest sorrows, those sorrows that straiten as a cord, which binds the part so hard, that it causeth pain, or such sorrows as a woman hath in travel. The Greek Translators express it by a word

noting the pangs and throws of a travelling Woman. *God distributes these sorrows*

In his anger.] That is, God being angry, or when he is angry he distributes these sorrows. In what sence anger or any other passions are said to be in God, hath been shewed from other Texts of this Book. And when it is said, that *God doth a thing in anger*, the meaning is not, that he doth some things in a quiet temper, and other things in a distemper, as men often do; but that he doth some things for the good and benefit, other things for the hurt and vexation of man; yet as the one in mercy, and the other in judgment, so both according to the highest rules of reason and righteousness.

Thus the woful condition of a wicked man is described, under the displeasure and angry dispensations of God.

Hence Note, First, *Sorrow is the portion, or inheritance of the wicked.*

The lot of the wicked falls in the land of sorrow and darkness, of mourning and lamentation, this is their proper lot: Though at present they live in the light of outward joy, yet their portion is darkness and sorrow. What else can be their inheritance but sorrow, who abide under the anger of God? Believers are Heirs of the Promise, and therefore peace and joy are their portion. The wicked are Heirs of the Curse, they are as surely Heirs of the Curse, as the Saints are of the Promise, and therefore sorrow is their portion. The Anger and Curse of God have nothing but evil in them, as his Favour and the Promise have nothing but good in them.

Secondly, Observe, *The sorrows of wicked men are divided to them by the hand of God.*

His hand is in the work; God distributes to every man his portion. All our lots are set out by his hand. The word (*God*) is not expreſt in the Hebrew, but he is in it; Who is the distributer, but the Lord? He distributes evil as well as good. The Prophet challengeth all false Gods; *Let them do good or evil, that we may know that they are Gods* (Isa. 41. 23.) The distribution of evil speaks God as much as the distribution of good: It is the honour of God to be the distributer of both. And since it is in the hand of God to distribute, and apportion out to wicked men their due, they shall be sure to have it; for he is a just God, and he seeth all the wickedness of their hearts, and he will not be taken off by intreaties, or blinded by gifts; they can plead nothing to take him off from this distribution; 'tis their due, and they shall have it. *God distributeth sorrows in his anger.*

Thirdly, Observe, *It is very dangerous to provoke God to anger.*

To do so may quickly be to our sorrow, for he distributes sorrows in his anger. Therefore the Psalmist exhorts (*Psal.* 2. 12.) *Kiss the Son* (that is, with a kiss of homage and submission) *least he be angry.* Why, what's the danger of that? The next words shew it, *And ye perish from the way* (of your purposes, and never reach your ends) *when his wrath is kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him.* The Psalmist leaves us to imagine how cursed and miserable their estate will be who provoke God, while he thus elegantly goes off from it (the file of his speech calling him rather to speak that) and concludes, *Blessed are all they that trust in him.*

Fourthly, Observe, *The sorrows of wicked men flow from the wrath and anger of God.*

God distributeth sorrows to many of his own people, he gives them sometimes a very uncomfortable portion; but he doth not distribute sorrows to them (purely) in anger. All the sorrows he distributes to his own people, have a mixture of love and mercy. To be under the anger of God is more grievous, then to be under sorrows from God. The anger of God is worse then sorrow. Therefore *David* deprecates it (*Psal.* 6. 1.) *Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.* He doth not deprecate rebuking, or chastening, he doth not pray against these; but he prayes against *rebuking in anger, and chastening in hot displeasure.* Gods anger is more terrible then his rebuking; and his displeasure then his chastening. Therefore (saith he) Lord, whatsoever thou doest to me, do nothing in anger; yet so the Lord rebukes wicked men, he gives them sorrow and anger together (*Psal.* 11. 5.) *The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loves violence his soul hateth;* (From this hatred what follows?) *Upon the wicked God shall rain fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup.* Their cup hath not only fire, and brimstone, and tempest in it, but hatred in it; this makes their cup so bitter; this is the very dregs of it. The enemies of the Kingdom of Christ are thus threatened (*Psal.* 2. 5.) *He shall speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure:* He saith not with it, but in it. When he is in his highest displeasure, and wrath, then he shall speak. God speaks terrible words when he speaks in wrath; and he vexeth man to purpose when he vexeth him in his sore displeasure. Thus he speaks to the Kings of the earth, and the Princes, and to all the inraged multitude, who combine to break his bands, and to cast his cords from them, who would hinder the great design of the Father in advancing the Scepter of his Son over the World. And when God deals thus with any sort of sinners, he takes a kind of comfort in it (*Ezek.* 5. 13. *Thus my anger shall be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them.* If the fury of the Lord do but touch a man, wo unto him: But when a man is made as the resting place of the fury of the Lord, how can he abide it? How restless must he be? Yet thus saith the Lord, *I will cause my fury to rest upon them*) *and I will be comforted, and they shall know that I the Lord have spoken in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them.* As (in reference to his own people) when the Lord accomplisheth his love in them, and causeth his favour to rest upon them, then he is as it were comforted, it pleaseth him very much. So, when he pours out judgments and evils upon wicked men in fury and wrath, in the height and heat of wrath, this comforteth him, and pleaseth him. God sometimes distributeth sorrow with sorrow, and he speaks of himself as grieved when he puts men to grief; but when God doth not only distribute sorrow in anger, but in comfort; that is, when he doth not only expres himself as angry, but as comforted, while he dealeth out sorrows to the sons of men; as their course before was out of measure sinful, so their present case is out of measure sorrowful. Which *Job* shews more fully in the next Verse.

Verse 18. **They are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carries away.**

Thus is it with wicked men, according to our reading; and according to the second interpretation of, *How oft is their candle put out?* We may add, *How oft are they as stubble.* 'Tis usual in Scripture to compare wicked men to stubble and chaff; we have them both here, stubble is the stalk, stubble is that which is left after the Corn is reaped, and the chaff is that in which the Corn is wrapped in the ear, till it be threshed and winnowed. The stubble is nothing to the ear, and the chaff in the floor is nothing to the Corn in the floor; the wicked are but these, *stubble and chaff.*

They are as stubble before the wind.

That is, They are as easily dissipated, and quickly carried away. Stubble makes little opposition against the wind; the war is not great between the wind and the straw, between the chaff and the storm: Stubble and chaff are as much a match for winds and storms, as the wicked are for the wrath of God. Holy *David* (*Psal.* 1.) having spoken of the stability of the godly, subjoyns, *The ungodly are not so, but as the chaff which the wind driveth away.* And when *David* saw his enemies deserted of God, notwithstanding their seeming devotions and earnestness in calling to him for help; he presently adds (*Psal.* 18. 42.) *Then did I beat them small as the dust or chaffe before the wind.* It is an easie matter to destroy those whom God refuseth to help, and to make them as chaff, whose rock the Lord refuseth to be. The holy Prophets are frequent in this similitudinary language, *Isa.* 17. 13. *Hos.* 13. 3, *&c.* Every man is but as dust and chaff (easily carried away) in regard of his natural constitution: Wicked men are so, much more, before the indignation of God, in regard both of their natural and actual corruption. Some by the wind

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in the Text, understand evil spirits, who are called also the fury of the Lord, and by whose ministry God sometimes executes his vengeance upon the wicked (*Psal.* 35. 5.) *Let them be as chaff before the wind, and the Angel of the Lord scattering them.* Angels are mighty in power: And not only good, but evil Angels receiving permission or commission from God, can scatter the wicked as stubble before the wind.

Or as the chaff that the storm carrieth away.

Here he sets the storm against the chaff, as before the wind against the stubble. The word signifies an extraordinary storm, a violent storm, a kind of *hurricane*, which is able to throw down trees and houses, yea, even to shake rocks and mountains; what work then will it make with chaff? Thus the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 17. 13.) *The Nations shall rush, like the rushing of many waters; but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing before the whirlwind.* We put in the margin, *As the thistle-down*, or, *the down of the thistle*; when the thistle sheds its down, we see how it rolls before the wind. Now, saith he, as the chaff before the wind, or as a rolling thing before the whirlwind, so shall the Nations be. The day of vengeance that comes upon hardened and impenitent sinners shall make them like chaffe (*Zeph.* 2. 1, 2.) *Gather your selves together, yea, gather together O Nation not desired, before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff. Gather your selves together.* Some read, *Fan your selves*, in allusion to the chaff, fan or winnow your selves, get out all the chaff from your selves, by a work of serious repentance, then we winnow or fan our selves. Why doth the Prophet stir them up to this duty? Else (saith he) the decree will bring forth; that is, God having decreed judgment, the decree will bring forth judgment. The decree is big, it hath judgment in it, and it will bring forth shortly: There will come a storm, a tempest, a whirlwind, when the decree brings forth. I would have you get the chaff out of you, *before the day pass as the chaff*; that is, before that day come that shall make the chaff pass away. When he saith, *Before the day pass*, he doth not mean, as if the time should pass as the chaff; but the meaning is, before the time come that wicked men shall pass as the chaff before the wind. Therefore I advise you to fan, and winnow your selves, get out the chaff; for if you be chaff, the day will come, and make you pass as the chaff, and carry you away.

Further, *As chaff which the wind carries away.* The word signifies, to *steal away* as a thief, suddenly and secretly. The coming of Christ to Judgment is compared to the coming of a thief (1 *Thes.* 5. 2.) Wind and storms scatter the chaff no man knows where; nor doth any man know how to gather it up. Wicked men are compared to stubble, and chaff, in three things.

First, They are (if duly considered) but chaff in their understandings, they have no solidity there: for they follow things that are but vain, and cannot profit. Now that man, how high soever, is but chaff in his understanding, who pursues vain instead of solid things. Though such a man be reputed deep in policy, and well ballanced in judgment, yet indeed he is but light in the ballance, and is justly counted a chaffie man.

Secondly, They are as chaff; that is, *little worth.* The wicked man is of little value or worth in the eyes of God and good men. Every Believer is precious in the eyes of God. (*Isa.* 43. 4.) *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable.* The godly are as wheat; the wicked are as chaff. (*Jer.* 32. 28.) *What is the chaff to the wheat?* If we set a bushel of chaff by a bushel of wheat, what is the chaff to the wheat? Of no value or price in comparison. Wicked men are of no more value in comparison of them that have true Grace, then the chaff is to the wheat, or the straw to the corn. *Solomon* saith (*Prov.* 10. 20.) *The tongue of the just is as choice silver; but the heart of the wicked is little worth.* *Solomon* makes not the comparison upon even terms, between the tongue of the just and the tongue of the wicked; but he preferrs the tongue of the just (an inferiour member) before the heart of the wicked; which (though in a moral consideration it be his worst part, yet) in a natural consideration is his best and noblest part. Now *if the tongue of the just* (that is, his ability and manner of speaking) *be as choice silver*, then surely his heart (that is, his ability and manner of thinking and reasoning) must needs be as the finest gold. And if the heart of the wicked be little worth, his tongue cannot be worth any thing at all. Who would give any thing for thoughts of dross, and words of chaff? Yet these are all that the heart and tongue of a wicked man can produce.

Thirdly, They are stubble and chaff, because though alone they are worthless, yet they have a kind of usefulness even to godly men in outward society. The straw or stubble hath usefulness to the ear, it bears up the ear; and the chaff hath usefulness to the wheat, it covers the wheat, it keeps and preserves the wheat. The Lord in this sence often makes wicked men stubble and chaff to his people; that is, they are useful to them. I need not strain the similitude, but take it up only in general. The providence of God hath so ordered it to view, that many wicked men are a protection to the peace, and very subservient to the comfort and present welfare of his people in this World; though they be chaff, yet they cover the wheat; though they be straw or stubble, yet they shall bear up the ear, and minister some way or other to their help. Though wicked men are in themselves as that chaff threshed out of the ear, which the storm carrieth away, yet they often are to the people of God, as the chaff in the ear, which binds and holds in the corn, so that the storm cannot carry it away.

From the proper scope of the similitude as here applyed,

First, Observe, *It is an easie thing with God at any time to destroy wicked men.*

Secondly, That, *All the preparations and powers of wicked men to resist the wrath of God, or to save themselves from it, is to no purpose.*

All their power is no more then the chaff to the storm, and the stubble to the wind. Though the wicked flatter themselves in their power and greatness, as if they were out of danger, yet they are but stubble and chaff, God can quickly blow them away. How many experiences have we seen of wicked men, who thought their mountain so strong that it should never be removed, which yet hath appeared but as chaff before the wind, and the storm hath carried them away. And if God joyn with the weakest, they are too strong for the mightiest (*Isa.* 41. 15.) *Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth.* Who was this? The former Verse answers, it was *the worm Jacob*: God did not make an instrument for *the worm Jacob*; but he made *the worm Jacob* his instrument; *Behold I will make thee* (not for thee) *a new sharp threshing instrument.* All men are worms compared with God; and no man is so fit an instrument, for God to do great things by, as he who looks upon himself (so Jesus Christ did, by whom God did the greatest work that ever was done) *as a worm and no man.* But what shall this worm *Jacob* do? The words following answer, *He shall thresh the mountains, and break them small, and shall make the hills as chaff.* The mountains and hills to be threshed and fann'd, are the mighty ones of the earth, even all earthly might rising up against the wayes and designs of the God of Heaven, these the *worm Jacob* shall thresh, and fan, and make as chaff, *and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them.* Therefore let not the mighty man glory in his might. The Lords anger is as a storm, or a wind; and the meanest worm that he useth, as a new sharp threshing instrument, to break them into chaff. And this he doth, in his anger, not only to single persons in power, but to the most powerful States and Nations of the World, as is represented in that most illustrious Prophetical vision of the four Monarchies ruin'd by a fifth (*Dan.* 2. 35.) *Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threshing-floor, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them, and the stone that smote the Image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.* We see how it is not only with wicked persons, but wicked powers (this great Image, the iron, and clay, and

and brass, and silver, and gold, typed all the Powers of the World opposing the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, openly, or secretly, directly, or indirectly) *they are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm carrieth away.*

VERS. 19, 20, 21.

God layeth up his iniquity for his children: he rewardeth him, and he shall know it.
His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.
For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

IN the former words *Job* spake in the plural number, *They are as stubble, and as chaff before the wind.* Here in the singular, *God layeth up his iniquity for his Children.* And yet he still speaks to the same point, and of the same persons. Such varyings of the number are not unusual in Scripture. Read *Hosea* 2. 17, 18, *&c.*

The words are a continuation of the former Argument, as was opened before.

Verse 19. God layeth up his iniquity for his Children.

The wicked mans iniquity is laid up by God as a treasure; for so the propriety of the word beareth. God layeth up his iniquity safe; for so we desire our treasure should be. When men lay up their treasures, they will have them (as we say) forth coming. The wicked scatter their iniquities, but God gathereth them together, and will have them forth coming in due time.

He layeth up his iniquity, *or pain, or sorrow.*

אוֹן *Nunc dolorē nunc iniquitatem significat; quia siquis aliquid iniqui commisit dolor & perturbatio sequitur.*

One word signifies iniquity, pain, and sorrow, because they who do iniquity, suffer pain and sorrow for it; iniquity is indeed such dross, that it is not worth the treasuring, *Yet the Lord layeth it up:* Or, *He layeth up his iniquity*; that is, the punishment of his iniquity. We lay up sin, and God layeth up judgment; he layeth up the rewards and recompences of iniquity.

Some render, *He layeth up strength.* And then it is expounded, not for the strength of the wicked man, but for the strength of God: As if he had said, *Though God hath scattered the wicked man himself as with the wind, and as the chaff before the whirlwind; yet he layeth up his strength for his Children*; that is, *God hath yet greater judgments, sourer evils to bring upon his family, and posterity, then ever yet fell upon himself: He hath laid up strength for his Children.* As if God did afflict him but with his weakness, with his little finger, and reserved his arm to strike his Children with; as if he would make his little finger heavier upon his Children, then his loins had been upon their Fathers; or as if having chastized the Fathers with Whips, he meant to chastize the Children with Scorpions. Either of these interpretations the single terms will bear; yet the difficulty remains in making out the scope and tendency of the whole Text. There is a fourfold explication given of it.

Deus reservabit filii ejus robur suum. Mon. q. d. *adhuc majorem iræ suæ procellosæ vim ei reservabit in futurum, nempe cum filios suos penitus abolebit.* Bold.

First thus, Some expound the whole by repeating the foregoing Interrogation negatively, as I shewed upon the former Verses; *How oft* (saith he) *is the candle of the wicked put out?* That is, Their candle is not often put out, or it is seldom put out. Thus here, *How oft doth God lay up his iniquity for his Children?* Not often: For as himself prospered in person, so many times his Family and Children prosper. 'Tis but rare that God layeth up iniquity for his Children. And so, according to this exposition he carrieth on the flourishing state of the wicked man, who as he lived himself in all prosperity, so do his Children after him. 'Tis an experienced truth, that God hath suffered both wicked men and their children to flourish, and grow great in the world; he doth not presently reckon with the children, as he did not with their fathers.

q. d. *raro hoc fieri viden & frequentius tū ipsius impio, tum eorum liberos impunè abire & securè vivere calamitatum expertes.* Merc.

Secondly, some of the Rabbins expound *Job* in these words, taking off the affliction from the children, and fastening it upon the father. As if he had said, What! *Shall this wicked man live, and prosper all his dayes? Shall he who hath done so much evil feel none? Shall he carry it without any the least touch from the hand of God, and shall the load and burthen of the judgment light only upon his children? What? will God lay up all the punishment of his iniquity for his posterity? Is this justice? Doth this look like the doings of God, that the father thrive, and his children only be undone?* Which sence they conceive continued in the latter part of the verse, which commendeth the justice of God, and exalteth his righteousness in this determination; God will repay him into his own bosom as he hath deserved. *God will reward him, and he shall know it, his eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.* God will not lay up iniquity for his Children, and let him escape. No, himself shall be punished, and smart for his folly; he shall taste how evil and how bitter a thing sin is. This also hath been verified by frequent examples. The judgment of many wicked men doth not sleep, nor their destruction slumber; God presently cuts off such parents in the light and heat of their iniquities.

An iste impius tota vita impunè feret & punitio in filios usque differetur? *boccine patietur dominus.* Rab. Sel.

Thirdly, (near this sence) The words are read, as an answer to an Objection. This having been affirmed by *Job*, that the Lord doth not often put out the lamp of the wicked, that he doth not make them as chaff and stubble, but that they prosper, and grow great in the world. *Zophar* (whose opinion is here opposed) is supposed to reply, *What though God do not afflict the wicked man himself, and put out his lamp, yet he layeth up his iniquities for his children.* Thus Mr. *Beza* seems to interpret this Text; *But you will say to me, though the wicked man himself be not punished, yet God layeth up his iniquity for his children; the fathers sin, shall be the childrens portion.* To which Objection *Job* is conceived making answer in the next words: No (if what you affirm were the law and constant rule of his proceeding) God would rather *repay the wicked man himself, and make him know what it is to sin against him, his eyes should rather behold his destruction, and he himself deserves much more to drink of the wrath of the Almighty then his children. Besides, what cares he for his house, or what becomes of his family, when the number of his months is accomplished, and cut off in the midst? He being dead feels neither the smart nor the comfort of his children; whatever the Providence of God dispenceth or allotteth them, concerns him little, and will not then touch or trouble him at all.* As if *Job* had said to *Zophar*, *Though I deny not the thing, that God doth lay up the iniquity of the parents for the children, yet, according to your principle and position, it seems more consonant that the wicked man should be punished in his own person, then in his posterity.*

Deus (inquietis) reponet filiis ejus violentiam ipsius. Redderet illi & (hoc) sciret, & viderent oculi ejus exitium suū, &c. Bez.

Fourthly, Most, both of the Latine and Greek Interpreters, agree in this exposition, that *Job* here describes the misery of a wicked man, and the judgment of God upon him, as in reference to his own personal sorrows, so in reference to those which afterwards befal his children and family; *How oft is the candle of the wicked man put out? How oft doth God drive him as chaff before the wind? Yea, and not only so, but God layes up his iniquity for his children*; that is (as elsewhere frequently in Scripture) the punishment of his iniquity. They shall smart as well as he himself did, and be wrapt up in those calamities which were bred in their fathers sins, and perfected in their own.

Cum describit extremū impii supplicium, affirmat etiā redundaturem ad filios.

Hence Observe, *The sins of parents are justly punishable in their posterity.*

As many parents, by wickedness, store up riches for their children; so, because of their wickedness, God stores up wrath for their children. Nor may it seem unreasonable, or unjust, that he doth so; for the son succeeds into all the rights of his deceased father, and this is one of them: He hath but his right in whatsoever he is punished. As God may justly punish the sin of a man in his cattel and estate, so also in his children; because they not only belong to him, but are a part of him. But it may be objected, How then doth the Prophet *Ezekiel* affirm from the Lords mouth, that *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father; and the soul that sinneth shall dye* (Ezek. 18. 20.) And how shall we reconcile this of the Prophet with that which God himself spake in the Law, threatning the children of the wicked, and their childrens children, for their iniquity (*Exod.* 5. 20.) *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth*

Naturalis consecutio est, ut hæres succedat in omne jus defuncti. Nihil incommodi est, si illorū cum sint habeant quæ illorum sunt. Coc.

fourth generation of them that hate me. One Scripture saith, *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father*; and another saith, *That the son shall bear the iniquity of the father*; or, *That God will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation.*

I answer, for the clearing of those Scriptures, that when the Prophet saith, *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father*, it may be understood either of these two wayes. First thus, He shall not bear it, in reference to eternal punishment, God will not damn a son for the sin of his father; but he may bring many chastisements and sorrows upon a son, for the sins of the father. Secondly, We may understand the Prophet thus, *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father*; that is, if the son depart from the iniquity of the father, if the son do not imitate the fathers iniquity, then the iniquity of the father shall not redound to the son; but if the son tread in his steps, and write by his copy, then the son shall not only bear his own iniquity, but the iniquity of his father shall redound to him, for he makes his fathers sin his own by imitation, as much as his own is his by commission. (*Matth.* 23. 32.) Christ saith to the *Jews*, *Fill ye up the measure of your fathers.* Their fathers had slain the Prophets. and though themselves adorned their Sepulchres, professing (*ver.* 30.) *If we had lived in the dayes of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the Prophets*; yet Christ tells them plainly (*Luke* 11. 48.) *Ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers*, because he saw in them not only a spirit, but the practice of persecution against the living Saints, while they seemed thus compassionate toward the dead Saints ('tis common for the worst of men to pretend love and honour to good men when they are dead (the dead bite not) who cannot abide goodness, nor any good man while he liveth, but persecute him to the death; now, I say, Christ seeing this in the Pharisees) gave them up to the fulfilling of their lusts. And because they were resolved to do that which the righteousness of God had forbidden, he in wrath bids them do it, *Fill up the measure of your fathers.* As if he had said, *Your fathers stored up much wrath by killing the Prophets, but the measure is not yet full; do ye fill it, for I perceive ye will, by killing him who is greater then the Prophets. They slew the servants, ye will slay the Heir.* Children fill the measure of their fathers in sin; and then God fills the measure of the children in punishment. So Christ infers in that place of *Luke* (*Ch.* 11. 50.) *That the blood of all the Prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of* Abel *unto the blood of* Zacharias, *which perished between the Altar and the Temple. Verily, I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.* The blood of former generations had not been required of that, if they had not been as bloody as the former generations: But where old sins are continued and approved by being newly acted, there the old sins as well as the new are justly punished.

Thus we may answer that Scripture, *The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father*, unless he do it. 'Tis childrens imitation of their fathers iniquity, which brings the iniquity of their fathers upon them. We may say of some children, that they are of their fathers, not only naturally, but morally; they carry the moral likeness of their fathers more then the natural, and appear not only in their bodily image, but in their soul-image too, together with the image of their actions or course of life. Childrens imitation of their parents in life, is the image of their parents actions, as the corruption of their nature is the image of their natural condition. So that while they imitate their parents sin, they are their children formally as well as lineally. And thus one of the Ancients speaks excellently of that fatherhood, or paternity, which the Devil hath in relation to wicked men (*John* 8. 44.) *Ye are of your father the Devil*: The Devil bears the relation of a father to all wicked men, and this fatherhood doth not proceed from the act of the father, but of the children; for the Devil doth not make wicked men his children by begetting them; but wicked men make the Devil their father by imitating him; here is the way of that paternity. Now as all wicked men have the Devil for their father, not as being begotten of him, but as imitating him; so some children may call men their father, not only because they have begotten them, but also because they imitate him; and when they do so, they must look to suffer for the sins of their fathers as well as they take delight and pleasure in their sins. For as we may grant that some children suffer in outward things for their parents sins, who do not imitate them, so we must conclude, that they who do imitate their sins, shall surely suffer.

Hæc est quædam paternitatis ratio, quam non tam pater ipse constituit quam filii; Nos enim illum imitando patrem facimus, non ille nos creando filios. Auguſt. in Pſal. 64.

And therefore parents are hence admonished to take heed of sinning against God, lest they be found unmerciful, unnatural, and hard-hearted to their children. Wicked parents do what they can to make their children miserable, even while they are projecting to make them great and happy. They intend to raise them, yet the way they take to do it, proves their ruine and undoing. *Tertullian* (a learned Writer treating of this point, supposeth that God aimed at this in giving the Law, when he threatened to punish the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation: This (saith he) God spake in reference to the hardness of their hearts, that if no other argument would move them to keep close to the rule of the Law, to take heed of idolatry, and false worship; yet meer compassion to their own children might do it. All parents have a natural love to their children. So that they who have not a spiritual principle moving them to forbear those sins, because they love God, and delight in his Law, may yet be moved by a principle of natural love, to avoid those sins for which (by name) God tells them, he will surely afflict and punish their children. *He layeth up his iniquity for his children.*

Eſt patrum delicta ex filiis exigebat, durilia populi, talia remedia cõpulerat, ut vel poſteritatibus ſuis proſpicientes legi divinæ obedirent. Tertul. adverſus Mar. c. 14.

Lastly, *Job* is here describing the punishment of a wicked man; in confirmation whereof he subjoyns, that God *layeth up his iniquity for his children.*

Hence Note, That, *The evils which fall upon children, are the punishments of their parents.*

Yea, in this their parents punishment is compleated; for as the sin which began in the parents, is perfected by their children; so the punishment which began in the parents, is perfected in their children. There is not only a nearness and strictness of relation, between parents and children, but a kind of sameness: The child is not like an artificial piece of work made by the parent, but he is made out of his parent, and so is a part of him, or himself multiplyed into another individual: And this must needs make a community between them in their good and evil, in their joyes and sorrows, in their sufferings and enjoyments. This hath been further spoken to, *Chap.* 20. *ver.* 10. and therefore I desist.

Quod genitum eſt, non item ut opus artis, ſtatim atque effectum eſt à gignente diſcedit. Nam ex illo, non ab illo factum eſt. Quare habet & retinet aliquam illius in ſeſe partem quæ convenienter & honore & pœnâ afficitur. Plutarch.

He rewardeth him, and he shall know it.

The word signifies the paying of a debt, and properly to be at peace: The reason is, because when debts are paid, a man is at quiet, no more can be demanded. And there is a twofold paying; either in kind, or in that which is equivalent; that is, of the same worth, though of another matter; which difference is more plainly expressed by two different words in the Hebrew. The word here used doth not strictly imply a paying back in (*specie*, or) in the same thing; as put case a man borrow money, to pay money; but any return to the same worth and value. *He rewardeth or payeth him.* Now in what coyn or matter doth the Lord repay him? Or with what is he rewarded? The Text is silent about that; but we may easily conceive what it is. There are two sorts of rewards: First, Rewards of punishment: Secondly, Rewards of favour. The rewards of punishment are deserved; the rewards of favour are promised. When 'tis said, *He shall reward him*, we are not to understand it of the reward of favour, but of punishment; such a reward as a wicked man deserves, he shall have. And whereas the particular matter of the reward is not exprest, this imports the greatness of it; when the Lord doth not tell us what the punishment is, he intimates it such a punishment as can scarcely be told what it is. *He rewardeth him.* This concealment speaks much in the aggravation of it. Conceive the worst you can, that shall be the wicked mans reward.

שלם eſt reddere pretium aut æquivalens rei debitæ ad differentiam verbi השיב *quod rem in natura (quod aiunt) reddere ſignificat.*

Hence Observe, *All the evils that fall upon a wicked man are deserved.*

They are rewards; the rewards of punishments are deserved. The rewards of punishment may be considered, either

either in reference to this life, or the life to come. The rewards of punishment in this life are all deserved; yet they are less then sin deserves. Take the greatest punishment that befals any wicked man on this side Hell, it is less then his sin deserves. *Ezra* concludes thus of all the calamities with which the Jewish Nation was rewarded (*Chap.* 9.13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less then our iniquities deserve*, &c. And yet theirs was no little punishment: For the Prophet *Jeremy* (*Lam.* 1.12.) personating *Jerusalem*, calleth all to behold and see, *If there were any sorrow like unto her sorrow, which was done unto her, wherewith the Lord afflicted her in the day of his fierce anger.* As if he had said, You cannot make a parallel of the sorrows and sufferings of this people, with the sufferings of any people that ever were in the world: So then, theirs was no small punishment; and yet he saith, *Thou hast punished us less then our iniquities deserve.* Let punishment go as high as it can in this life, it is less and lower then iniquity.

But in the life to come God hath a reward for iniquity sutable to it: Sinners shall then receive as much as they deserve; and because they cannot bear so much as they deserve at once, therefore they shall be for ever bearing it. Their reward shall be no more, nor at all less then sin deserves. God will not put so much as the least dram of sorrow into their ballance more then iniquity hath put into it, and of that he will abate them nothing. *He rewardeth him.*

Experientia Magistra docet malos divinitus puniri. Drus.

And he shall know it.] There is a twofold knowledge: First, By teaching and instruction: Secondly, By sence or experience. The latter is here meant, he shall have an experimental knowledge. But what shall he know? He shall know or be convinced of these two things, which he would not learn before. First, That there is a wise and a powerful providence of God, over-ruling, ordering, and disposing all the affairs and motions of this life. Secondly, That God hath decreed and appointed wrath, for the portion of all impenitent sinners; *He shall know these things to his cost.*

Hence Note, First, *Wicked men will not know the evil of sin, till they feel it.*

The wicked might know this by instruction, they have been told as much again and again, but they would not believe it. *Paul* saith (2 *Cor.* 5.11.) *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perswade men.* How did he know it? *Paul* knew that terror of the Lord, not by experience (for he spake of the terror of the great day, which day was not then come) but he had received instruction about it, and he believed it would be a black day to many. A godly man knows the terror of the Lord by the teachings of the Spirit in the Word. But a carnal man will not know the terror of the Lords Judgment, till he be summoned to Judgment. When the Prophets in the Name of the Lord threatened the *Jews* with a day of evil, 'tis usually added, then *They shall know that I am the Lord.* As if the Lord had said, They have been told this often and often; they have had line upon line, and threat upon threat, yet they would not know it, but they shall know it, I will teach it them another way: Seeing they will not believe the judgment which is both spoken and written in my Book, I will write my judgments upon their own backs, and with their own blood; I will write them in red letters, that he who runs may read: *And then they shall know that I am the Lord.* So (*Psal.* 83.18.) *David* calls down the wrath of God upon publick enemies; *Let them be confounded, and troubled for ever, yea, put to shame, and perish* (*Why?*) *That men may know that thou whose name alone is* Jehovah, *art most high over all the earth.* Carnal men will not know the Soveraignty of God, or they are ashamed to acknowledge it, till they see such as themselves utterly confounded and put to shame. They never exalt God, till they see men cast down. There is a translation of that Text (*Isa.* 28.19.) which adds much clearness to the Observation in hand; *From the time that it goeth forth it shall take you: for morning by morning shall it pass over; by day, and by night, it shall be a vexation only to understand the report.* Some evils are so great, that the hearing of them is vexation enough, it is a vexation only to understand the report. The blow, the wound, which they give the ear, goes to the heart, and is a pain to the spirit. Others render the Prophet thus, *It shall go forth, it shall take you morning by morning, it shall pass over by day, and by night.* That is, continually, it shall make haste; judgment being sent on this journey shall never bait or rest by the way, it shall travel night and day. But why is all this? The next words answer; *And only vexation will cause you to understand*, or, *give you an understanding of these things, or doctrines* (so we put in the margin, *When he shall make you understand doctrine.*) What shall make them understand doctrine? Only vexation; God will command an overflowing scourge to come, it shall come by night, and by day; for he sees that vexation will make you understand doctrine, and that you will know the Lord in his Judgments, who would not know him in his Commandments. This is a good sence of the Place, and comes clearly to the truth in hand. Vexation gives understanding of doctrine. Many must be taught as *Gideon* taught the men of *Succoth*, *With bryars and thorns*, (Judg. 8.16.) A word and a blow, teaching and striking must go together; and they who will not learn by words, shall be taught by blows. Let sinners consider which is the easiest way of attaining knowledge; or in which of these two wayes they may attain knowledge with greatest ease. The Lord would teach us by his Word, let us take heed we put him not to blows; he would do it by instruction, let us take heed we put him not to do it by correction, yea, by destruction. God will be known by all the World, the Heathens shall know at last that he is the most High over all the earth. *He rewardeth them, and they shall know it.*

Tantùmodo sola vexatio dabit intellectum auditui. Vulg.

Verse 20. **His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.**

His eyes shall see his destruction.] Were it not enough to say he shall see his destruction, but *His eyes shall see it?* Or how can he see without his eyes? To say a man sees, implyeth that he sees with his eyes. This Hebraism is usual in Scripture language to make the sence more full; as to say, *He hears with his ears*, so, *He sees with his eyes*, is, he fully and plainly hears and sees. What shall he see? *He shall see his destruction*; *His death*, say some; *His ruine*, say others; we may say, *His damage, his breaking.* Destruction is, and hath all these evils in it. *His eyes shall see his destruction.*

Note this from it, That, *The sight of evil is a grief to us, as well as the feeling of it is a pain.*

Duplex tormentum est videre pœnas quas sustineas.

Job had spoken much before of the misery of the wicked man; now he adds, *His eyes shall see his destruction.* The sight of destruction doubles the torment of it. Sorrow comes in at every sense as well as joy; joy comes in at the ear, so doth sorrow; joy comes in at the eye, so doth sorrow. As the good which is unseen affects little, so the evil which is unseen afflicts little in comparison of that we see. And hence usually in great sufferings, especially the suffering of death, *men cover their eyes*, as being better able to endure death, then to behold the preparations to, or manner of it. The Apostle useth an expression, which (in the letter of it) carries this point clearly (*Heb.* 11.5.) *By faith* Henoch *was translated that he should not see death*: As if the greatness of the favour, lay not so much in his not dying, as in his not seeing of death, or as if that which troubles more then death is the sight of death. For though I conceive the seeing of death (in that place) is not strictly tyed up to that sence, but one sence is put for another, and so we may expound *Enoch*'s not seeing of death, by not feeling it, or by not coming to any nearness, or at all under the power and into the possession of it; yet 'tis a truth, the terror of death is extreamly aggravated, when to our feeling of it, our sight of it is superadded: Whether it be our own destruction, or the destruction of those we love, our sorrow is much abated when our eye seeth it not. That's compleat destruction, which is not only felt but seen. Salvation and Glory believed, take much upon the heart; But what will the sight of these things be? Old *Simeon* desired no more, when he had attained but the sight of Christ, whom he had long believed and embraced by faith (*Luke* 2.29, 30.) *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy*

thy Salvation. And while the Apostle *Peter* affirms that the Saints then living did love and rejoyce in Christ unseen (*1 Pet.* 1.8. *Whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, ye rejoyce*) he therein intimates that Saints shall love and rejoyce in him much more when once they see him. To see good hath so much of joy in it, that the joyes of Heaven are called, *sight or vision.* Now as the sight of good is to joy, so the sight of evil is to sorrow, the advance and heightning of it. *His eye shall see his destruction,*

חמת *Excandescentia à* יחם *incaluit, quando, scilicet, sanguis incalescit circa cor.*

And he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.

To drink, notes the taking in of a quantity. *He shall drink*, is, he shall be filled with the *wrath of the Almighty.* The word signifieth heat of wrath, or such wrath as hath much heat in it. We commonly say when we see any one very angry, *The man is in a heat.* Wrath heats the heart; as the holy Ghost speaks of the Avenger (*Deut.* 19. 6.) *Lest he pursue the slayer while his heart is hot*; that is, in the height of his anger. God will pursue the wicked man while his heart is hot. He shall drink not only the wrath, but the heated scalding hot wrath.

Of the Almighty.] *Shaddai*, who is able to make good his word in the saddest effects of it. In the former Verse the sense of seeing was afflicted, *His eyes shall see his destruction:* Here the sense of tasting; drink affects the taste. And he that drinks wrath, hath not only store of it, but all that he hath, he hath it in him. Wrath is to some as the clothes upon their back, 'tis to others as meat or drink in their bowels. Again, this drinking wrath may be considered two wayes. Fitst, That pure wrath, or wrath alone, shall be put into the cup of a wicked man: Or secondly, That whatsoever he drinks, or how pleasant soever his cup is, yet wrath shall be mingled with it. *He shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.*

Hence Observe, First, *God hath abundance of wrath ready for wicked men.*

He will make them drink it; he hath not only drops, but whole cups, flagons full, and whole vessels full of wrath, yea, he hath not only flaggons and vessels, but rivers full, even a sea full of wrath. As there is a sea of mercy, so there is a sea of wrath in God. The one as well as the other hath neither bank nor bottom. The wrath of God as well as the love of God is infinite. Wicked men shall drink, and have enough of it. What can be said more sadly of the state of a wicked man then this, that he shall drink wrath. As drinking the love and favour of God in Scripture, shews the happiness of the Saints in their fullest and freest enjoyments of him; so the drinking of wrath, shews the misery of the wicked under the highest and fullest tokens of his displeasure. *He brought me* (saith the Church) *into the wine cellar*, or, *house of wine: stay me with flagons* (Cant. 2. 4, 5.) *with what flagons?* What, with empty flagons? No, empty flagons will not stay the Church, though they be flagons of gold: They must be full flagons; but of what? Of the love, mercy, and kindness of Jesus Christ. These are the wine of his cellar. *Stay me with flagons of love*, saith the Church; you cannot stay and bear me up, unless you give me these flagons. Now as the Lord hath these cellars and flagons of wine, that is, of joy and favour for his people, so he hath flagons and cellars of wrath for sinners. This drinking of wrath is expressed in Scripture not only in reference to past and present, but future evils (*Isa.* 51. 17.) The past afflictions of *Jerusalem* are elegantly shadowed under this notion, *Awake, awake, and stand up*, O Jerusalem, *which hath drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of fury, and wrung them out. There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth, neither is there any that taketh her by the hand.* He speaks to *Jerusalem* as made drunk with the cup of trembling: A little draught, or the drinking of a little, doth not cause drunkenness; *Jerusalem* drunk wrath to drunkenness, she drank deep. Now when a man is drunk (though it be a shame to own such, yet) some friend or other will lead and guide him home, when he cannot guide himself. But *Jerusalem* was drunk with the cup of the Lords wrath, and there was not a man to guide her among all the sons whom she had brought forth, neither was there any to take her by the hand. *Jerusalem* could not stand alone, she was so drunk with the wrath of God, and there was none to take her by the hand to lead her; that is, she had neither King, Priest, nor Prophet, to comfort and support her in her affliction, or to counsel and direct her what course to take that she might be delivered out of it. And thus the Prophet *Jeremy* sets forth the future calamities of the Nations round about. (*Jer.* 25. 15.) *Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the Nations to whom I send thee to drink it; and they shall drink and be moved, and be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them.* What was the wine cup, or the wine in the cup? It was a cup of blood; *I will send a sword, and they shall drink.* The wine which the sword makes is not the blood of grapes, but the blood of our veins. And though the sword draw not a drop of blood from us, yet it fills many cups of sorrow for us to drink. All who partake with *Babylon* in her sin, and receive her mark, *Shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, that is poured out without mixture in the cup of his indignation* (Rev. 14. 10.) And as the punishing of those who secretly or openly yield obedience to *Babylon*, is expressed by drinking the wine of Gods indignation, so their communion with *Babylon* is expressed by drinking the wine of her fornication. For as old literal *Babylon* (*Jer.* 5. 7.) was *a golden cup in the Lords hand, which made all the earth drunken. The Nations have drunkem of her wine* (saith the Prophet) *therefore the Nations are mad.* How did *Babylon* make the Nations drunken? Because the Babylonish Empire was an Instrument which God used to execute his judgments upon others, and to cause them to drink deep of the wine of his wrath. So mystical *Babylon* hath a golden cup in her hand, and she makes the Nations drunk with the wine of her spiritual fornication; that is, of her Idolatry, error, and superstition. Now the Nations having made themselves drunk with this sinful wine of *Babylon*, shall be made drunk with the wrathful wine of God. The sufferings of Jesus Christ, who tasted and took down all those evils which the sin of man deserved, are expresst by a cup (*Matth.* 26. 49.) *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass.* He saw what was in the cup, and prayed thrice to be excused the drinking of it, or that it might pass away, yet with submission to his Fathers will: *Not my will, but thy will be done.* Christ took up and drunk the suffering cup, that we might take up and drink the cup of Salvation. Our sins and sorrows were the portion of Christs cup, that the favour and love of God might be the portion of our cup. *The Lord* (that is, the favour of the Lord, saith holy *David*, Psal. 16. 5.) *is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup.* My drink is the Lords love, his favour is mingled with my drink: Divine goodness sweeteneth and spiceth my cup; *The Lord is the portion of my cup.* And hence the same *David* crieth out (*Psal.* 36. 7, 8.) *How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God, therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; thou shalt make them to drink of the rivers of thy pleasure.* Saints drink at rivers, and not only at pleasant rivers, but at rivers of pleasure; they shall have that which is sweet, and enough of it. Thus as the Lord gives his own people cups and rivers, abundance of pleasures; so his enemies shall drink cups and rivers (that is abundance) of wrath.

Secondly, Observe, *There is no avoiding of the wrath of God.*

He shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty. How few, indeed none, would drink of this cup if they might be spared. Who thirsts for a cup of wrath? Who would so much as taste or touch it with his lips? But the wicked shall; though they have no mind to it, they must; though it be nauseous, and their stomack turn at the sight of it, yet they must drink it: They cannot be excused or dispenced with; this cup must go round them all. As drunkards say to their companions, you shall drink, you must pledge us, we will pour it down your throat else: So the Lord saith to his enemies, you shall drink, I will pour it down your throat else. If Jesus Christ, when he stood in the place of sinners, could not be spared, shall any, who stand in their own place as sinners, presume to be spared? What

can

can they plead before God to excuse themselves, when Christ himself was not excused when he prayed so earnestly that he might. Every soul that hath not part in Christ, who drank the cup of his Fathers wrath, shall himself and for himself drink a cup of wrath.

Note again, *All the evils that befal wicked men, proceed from, or are issues of the wrath of God.*

This was noted before upon those words of the seventeenth Verse, *He distributeth sorrows in his anger*; therefore I only name it here.

Verse 21. For what pleasure hath he in his house after him, when the number of his months are cut off in the midst?

There is some difficulty in fitting these words to the former. There are three interpretations given.

First, The words are interpreted as a reason why God sends out judgment both against a wicked man and his family, why he and his shall drink the wrath of the Almighty; Why is all this? 'Tis because *God hath no pleasure in his house after him*: *He*, that is, *God*, cares not what becomes of this man, or of his children: What pleasure, what delight hath God in him or his? They are (as it were) out of the care of God, being out of his Covenant, and therefore let what will come of them, let him and his sink or swim, let all go at six and sevens, God regards it not. This carries a truth in it: As all they who are in a state of mercy and salvation take pleasure in God; so they and theirs shall surely perish, in whom God taketh no pleasure: Yet I conceive this exposition improper to this place; which rather describes the state and spirit of a wicked man when he dyeth towards his house, then the heart of God towards him and his house while they live.

Secondly, The words are expounded as holding out an Argument, that a wicked man (so living and dying) shall be punished everlastingly. What do you tell him that God will lay up iniquity for his children? If himself may escape the storm, and live all his dayes in pleasure, what cares he: For what pleasure or pain hath he in his house after him? (There is the same reason of both) If his house prosper, what pleasure hath he in it? Or if his house perish, what is that to him when he is not? Therefore unless there remain an estate of misery for himself in person after this life, the miseries threatened his posterity when he dyes, will work little on him.

Thirdly, And rather these words give an account why God not only layeth up iniquity for the children of the wicked man, but doth also personally afflict him in this life, causing his own eyes to see his destruction, and himself to drink the wrath of him the Almighty. And this account, or the reason of this may be twofold. First, Because (as was last said) his childrens afflictions cannot reach him when he is gone: *For what pleasure hath he in his house after him?* That is, no pleasure. And as his joy, so his sorrow; as his comforts, so his troubles end in reference to all worldly things, whether they concern his family or himself, at the grave. A dead man is not in a capacity to be affected or afflicted with what is done or suffered in the world, as was shewed, *Chap.* 14. 21. Secondly, Because wicked men do not usually trouble themselves about the next Age; if they can but rub out their own time, let them that come after shift for themselves. They do not study how to procure the good of posterity, nor do they lay to heart the evils which threaten them; as no evil threatened their own persons, so much less that which is threatened upon their children doth press their spirits. Many professed wicked men, yea, some who go under the name of Christians, and make some outward profession of the Gospel, are yet of the same temper with that Heathen Emperor, who having made havock of all, and stirred such trouble in his dayes, that it might be thought the World would end with him, yet pleased himself with this apprehension, that he then should be out of the danger, *If I dye, let Heaven and Earth mingle: If the World hold my time, let it break when I am gone.* Such baseness and narrowness is in the hearts of some men, that they care not what the next Age inherits. If God do not trouble them while they live, they will not trouble themselves with what shall befal their families when they are dead.

ἵνα θανόντος γαῖα συγχυθῇ πυρί. Suet. de Tiber.

Thus a learned Translator renders, *What is his study or care about his house after him.*

Quodnam est studium illius de familia sua post se. i. e. ut Deus ipsum viventem non excitat malis, sic non excitat ipsum animus ejus ut sit solicitus de rebus familiæ suæ eventuris post mortem. Jun.

When the number of his months shall be cut off in the midst.

That is, when he shall dye: The words are a periphasis of death; which we may significantly enough call, *The cutting off the number of our months.* And as in general 'tis a description of death, so we may take it more specially as a description of early death. An immature death is most properly, *The cutting off the number of our months in the midst.* Thus the Psalmist prayed, *Take me not away in the midst of my dayes* (Psal. 102. 24.) And another Psalm saith, *The wicked shall not live out half their dayes*; that is, the number of their months shall be cut off in the midst. Yet here I rather conceive it intended as a description of death in general, *What pleasure hath he in his house, when the number of his months are cut off in the midst?* That is, when he dyes.

Mortis periphrasis, dimidiari vitam annos dies, idem est quod rescindi, secari, dividi.

Hence Note, *When a wicked man dyes he thinks all dyes with him, he hath no care beyond himself.*

Nor is it any wonder that such take little care of others *for hereafter*, seeing indeed they take no care what shall be for themselves hereafter; if they may but have things present to serve their lusts, and satifie their desires in this World, they will (as the saying of some of them is, though they do nothing less) trust God for the next. In respect of temporals Christ gives this counsel (*Matth.* 6. 34.) *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self*: That is, to morrow, or the time to come will bring thoughts enough upon you when it comes; ye need not foresta it, or take up the thoughts and cares of it beforehand. Or, to morrow will bring meat in its mouth; as it calls to new expence, so it will offer new provision, do not trouble your selves what shall be next; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof; and sufficient unto the day will be the good thereof, you shall have daily bread. This counsel of Christ is far from the wicked; they take overmuch and over many thoughts for to morrow in respect of temporals; but they take no thought for to morrow in respect of eternals; or if they do 'tis about eternals of their own imagination, not of Gods institution. Some wicked men are much upon that thought, or, *Their inward thoughts are that their houses shall continue for ever, and they call their lands after their own name* (Psal. 49. 11.) they hope for a succession in their name for ever, this is their project, and the highest pitch of their expectation. They would seem to have much pleasure in their house after them, and to desire nothing more then the advancement of their children; yet their courses proclaim to all good men, that as when they are dead they can take no pleasure, nor feel any pain in reference to their house, or those that are left behind them (which I take to be the most proper scope of this Text) so, that, while they live, they have no due regard to their children, nor any pleasure in their house to provide for the real prosperity of it, when the number of their own months shall be cut off in the midst. Wicked men are either altogether careless of the good of their house after them, or all the care they take is an evil to their house.

Further, From this circumlocution of death,

Observe, First, *Man hath his months appointed or numbred out to him.*

Though the most that any man can have are scarce a number, yet whatsoever any man hath, or shall have, are exactly numbred. Our times are in Gods hand, as in regard of the issues and events of them; so also in regard of the length or continuance of them; God teacheth man the spiritual number of his dayes, or the art of numbring his dayes *spiritually*; but he himself hath numbred them (and that number he reserves to himself) *Arithmetically.*

Secondly, Observe, *Death is the cutting off of our months.*

The months actually past, are cut off from the months which possibly were to come. Take the meaning of it yet more fully in the next point.

Thirdly,

Thirdly obſerve, *God often ſhortens the lives of wicked men, and cuts the number of their moneths off in the midſt.*

Though every man, even the vileſt and moſt wicked man that ever lived in the world lives out the full number of thoſe moneths which the counſel of God hath appointed him perſonally; yet many wicked (and ſome good) men are cut off in the midſt of thoſe moneths which God hath appointed to mankind generally. The dayes of the years generally appointed to mankind, *are threeſcore years and ten* (Pſal. 90. 10.) yet half mankind doth not live out half the number of theſe years; ſome have the number of theſe years or moneths cut off in mercy, very many have them cut off in wrath and judgment; God takes ſome away from the evil which is to come, and God takes others away becauſe of the evil which they have already done, or leſt they ſhould do more evil. Theſe obſervations have occurred in other parts of this book, eſpecially in *Chap.* 14. and therefore I only mention them here, referring back the Reader to a larger diſcuſſion of them in thoſe places.

VERS. 22.

Shall any teach God knowledge, ſeeing he judgeth thoſe that are high.

JOB having given his experiences of the dealing of God with wicked men; now gives his approbation of it. He chalengeth all the wiſdom of the world to direct a more convenient courſe, or method, then the divine wiſdom proceeds in for the diſpoſal both of things and perſons here below. *Shall any teach God knowledge?* The queſtion is a negation; yea the queſtion is full of indignation, when he ſaith, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* He means that none can; and when he ſaith, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* His meaning is, that 'tis higheſt preſumption for any to think he can.

Shall any teach God knowledge?

Hæc ſententia in medio poſita ſuam vim ad utramq; partem exerit tam adea quæ dicta ſunt, quam ad ea quæ ſequuntur de divina providentia. Bold.

The words are either the concluſion of what was before diſputed, or they are as a Preface to that which follows; ſome take them reſpecting as well the diſcourſe that comes next, as that which went before.

לאל Pro Deo. Quis veſtrũ hujus rei rationem pro Deo reddere poteſt. Rab. Sel.

Jewiſh Writers read the words thus, *Shall any teach knowledge for God?* As if *Job's* meaning were this; Doth God need any to apologize for him, or to take his part? Needs he an advocate to plead his cauſe, and to aſſiſt him in the juſtification of his own way, in giving out either good or evil? *Shall any teach knowledge for God?* And ſet out more plainly and clearly then he hath done; why ſome good men mourn all their dayes, and in the end of their dayes dye mourning? Why ſome wicked men flouriſh all their dayes, and in the end of their dayes dye flouriſhing? Can any unriddle theſe diſpenſations, and render a more ſatisfying anſwer about them?

But I rather conceive the words according to our reading, not as a forbidding of that office, that any ſhould undertake to plead for, or vindicate the juſtice and righteouſneſs of God in what he hath done; but as a reproof of mans preſumption in directing God what to do. *Shall any teach God knowledge?* As if *Job* had ſaid, *doth God need any tutor, or maſter, to teach him his leſſon? Needeth he any to point him how to order the affairs of the world, what to do to the wicked, and what to the godly? Surely he needs none to teach, nor to inſtruct him.* So the words are a reproof, a vehement reproof upon *Job's* friends, whom he perſtringeth as over-daring about, and intruding into, thoſe things which were above them.

Theſe words, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* imply five things, which I ſhall draw forth into ſo many Obſervations, and proſecute them in order as they riſe.

Firſt, Take the queſtion, *Shall any man teach God knowledge?* As a down-right negation, and then it gives us this inſtruction.

God cannot be taught.

Some men are ſo fooliſh that they cannot be taught, they are not capable; ſuch a one (we ſay) is not capable to be a Scholler, he is of ſuch weak parts, of ſo ſhallow an underſtanding, that he cannot be taught. But God is ſo wiſe that he cannot be taught, he is infinitely beyond the School (*Iſa.* 40. 13, 14.) *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his Counſellor hath taught him?* The wiſeſt Kings and States of the earth have their Counſel Tables, and 'tis but needful they ſhould. *In the multitude of Counſellors there is ſafety* (ſaid the wiſeſt of Kings) many eyes ſee more then one. But God who is *only wiſe* and *all eyes*, ſeeth more then many or then all the ſons of men. *Who hath been his Counſellor?* (bring forth the man, bring forth the Angel with whom God took counſel) *who inſtructed him, and taught him in the paths of Judgment, and taught him knowledge, and ſhewed him the way of underſtanding?* This Prophet ſpeaks fully to the ſence of *Job*; and his Text may be a Comment upon this before us, and tell us what *Job* means when he ſaith, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* He needs none to make him underſtand, none to direct him the courſe of Judgment; how to mannage his affairs with diſcretion, or duly to put his purpoſes and reſolves in execution. The Apoſtle *Paul* takes up the ſame language (*Rom.* 11. 34.) *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counſellor? O the depth of the riches both of his wiſdom and knowledge! How unſearchable are his judgments, and his wayes paſt finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord?* Hath no man known the mind of the Lord? Yes, there is a mind of the Lord which is known to man; there is a revealed mind of the Lord, a mind of the Lord which he hath made known: but beſides that revealed mind of the Lord, the Lord hath a ſecret mind (as we may call it) or a ſecret will; he hath a cabinet, and cloſe counſel lockt up in his own breaſt, which was never opened to the creature: Of that the Apoſtle ſaith, *Who hath known the mind of the Lord?* We know his mind, what he would have us do; what to believe, what the way to life and ſalvation is we know. He hath told us how we ſhould honour him, and work out our own ſalvation with fear and trembling. The Prophet reports ſome making that queſtion, *Wherewithall ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the moſt high God?* (Mich. 6. 6.) They enquired, as if God had left them in the dark about the way of his worſhip, and ſervice. No, ſaith the Prophet (*verſ.* 8.) *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee.* Thus far we know the mind of the Lord, what he would have us do; but we do not know the mind of the Lord, what he himſelf will do, that's a ſecret; *Who hath known this mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Councellor?* Thus again (*1 Cor.* 2. 16.) *Who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may inſtruct him? But we have the mind of Chriſt.* We know the mind of the Lord for our own inſtruction; but we know not the mind of the Lord for his inſtruction, or that we might inſtruct him. When man inſtructs man, he doth but make his own mind known to him; but when God inſtructs man, he not only makes his own mind known to him, but knoweth his; and ſo alſo muſt that man who takes upon him to inſtruct God.

Secondly, When it is ſaid, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* it plainly teacheth us. *That God knoweth all things, or, that he is infinitely and perfectly wiſe and knowing.* He for whom no teacher can be found, or he to whoſe treaſure of knowledge no knowledge, not the leaſt mite of knowledge can be added, muſt needs be infinitely wiſe and knowing: for *that is infinite to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away.* Now thus wiſe is God, thus knowing is God, he cannot admit more wiſdom, therefore he is infinitely wiſe. God is the firſt rule, the ſupream rule of knowledge, and wiſdom; yea his knowledge and wiſdom is himſelf. The wiſdom of God is the wiſe God, and the knowledge of God is the knowing God: ſo that, as nothing can be added to God himſelf, ſo, nothing can be added to the wiſdom of God: for the wiſdom of God is God, therefore he is perfect in wiſdom and in knowledge. *Job's* argument that God needeth no teaching, is a clear demonſtration of it. For among men, they that are paſt teaching how wiſe are they? How wiſe are they in their own thoughts (though indeed it be ignorance and fooliſhneſs enough that they think ſo) who think they are paſt teaching, or too wiſe to be taught. There are ſome men that think they need no teaching, and there are none who need more then they; uſually they are under a dearth and ſcarcity of knowledge, who ſuppoſe they have ſuch

abundance, that they are beyond the school, beyond the Church, beyond teaching, and counsel, beyond helps and ordinances; such as have these apprehensions of themselves, do least apprehend themselves. For as they who think they need not be better, draw a just suspition that they were never good: so they who think they know enough, may be concluded to know nothing yet as they ought to know. When any say they are so rich in knowledge that they need know no more, I may say they need at least this piece of knowledge, *To know how poor they are in knowledge.* But if any one had so much knowledge indeed that no man could teach him further, he were abundantly knowing. Now thus it is with God, *shall any man teach God knowledge?* they cannot; therefore his knowledge is infinite, and perfect. And so it is, First, About things; he knows all things, what they are, and for what they serve, what their nature is, and what their usefulness is. Secondly, About persons, *He knoweth all men, and needeth not that any should testifie of man, for he knoweth what is in man* (Joh. 2. 24, 25.) He knows every man fully, he knows him within and without. He knows all our outward actions, yea the very internal motions of the heart; he knoweth not only what men do, but all their aims and secret intendments in doing it.

Thirdly, This question, *Shall any teach God knowledge?* intimates, That,

Some men, do even attempt, and take upon them the boldness to teach God.

What need this chiding question else? Why should *Job* speak thus to his friends, unless he had discovered, or at least suspected, such a spirit in them; that they had spoken or done such things as did amount to, or might be interpreted a teaching of God.

You will say, surely, no man ever attempted to teach God, we indeed are taught of God; and that we shall be so is the promise of the covenant of grace, *Heb.* 8. But did ever any man go about to teach God? He hath his chair in Heaven (as the ancient speaks) that teacheth the heart of man; but where have they their chair, and where is their School, who undertake to teach the God of Heaven?

I answer, the teaching of God, may be considered two wayes.

First, Directly, and formally.

Secondly, Implicitly, or by way of interpretation.

'Tis I grant exceeding rare that any rise to such a height of boldness, as avowedly, directly, explicitly, and formally, to say we can, or we will teach God: but there are many who say as much implicitly, and by way of interpretation, that is, they speak, hold or do that which plainly implies a teaching of the Almighty, or a taking upon them to direct his counsels. For the justifying of this charge, we may cast such into two sorts.

First, In reference to his Word, some would teach the Lord how to speak.

Secondly, In reference to his Works, others would teach the Lord what to do.

For the former, there are those who would teach God how to speak, by adding to, and diminishing from the Word which he hath spoken. That there is such a proud principle in the heart of man, is plainly proved by those cautions given both in the Law and in the Gospel (*Deut.* 4. 2.) *Ye shall not add to the Word which I command you, neither shall you diminish ought from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you:* and (*Prov.* 30. 6.) *Add thou not unto his Word, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.* Though we may add a Comment to explain the Word of God where it is hard, yet we must not add a supplement to the Word of God, as if it were defective. One of the first things to be believed unto salvation is, that the Word of God is sufficient, or contains all things needful to salvation. The whole book of God concludes thus (*Rev.* 22. 18.) *If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add to him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the Words of the book of this Prophesie, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.* What fearful additions and substractions will God make concerning those who add to or substract from his Word. The Lord foresaw a spirit in man to be medling with his Word, else he had never made this Law against medlers with it. Now as he that reads any mans Work and takes upon him to add a line, or to dash a line out of it, he undertakes to teach the Author knowledge; much more do they who add or diminish a line or word of the Word of God. Yet many such there are who practise upon the Word of God both by way of addition and substraction. Some have done this openly, and others closely. Every carnal man doth this closely; for he that would set up his lusts for a Law, would surely blot out the Law of God; he would make the commandments of God void, and rescind the statutes of Heaven, who hath no mind to obey and submit unto them.

The Papists especially (besides some others) do this openly. For they say, first, The Scriptures are obscure; therefore they would teach God to speak more clearly. Secondly, They say, the Scriptures are insufficient without their patchments of Tradition; therefore they would teach God to speak more fully. Others have complained that the language of the Scripture is homely and bare, these would teach God to speak more eloquently. Nay, some have said, there are contradictions in Scripture, these would teach God to speak more truly; others complain, there are dangerous expressions in Scripture; and these would teach God to speak more warily. All these take upon them to teach God knowledge, about his Word.

Secondly, There is also a generation who would teach God knowledge about his Works. They forbear not that first eternal work of God, *Election.* We have their arguings set down (*Rom.* 9. 11, 12, 14, 15.) *For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written,* Jacob *have I loved, but* Esau *have I hated.* The heart of man riseth here; is this work of God right? If God proceed thus in his election of men, *Is there not unrighteousness with God?* The wisdom and reason of man saith, Surely God should rather elect upon foreseen works, or faith, or perseverance in both. But God saith otherwise, What then? *Is there unrighteousness with God?* God forbid: for he saith to *Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.* What do you tell me (saith God) of your will, my will shall be the rule of election; *Yea, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.* Thus the Apostle asserts the absolute election of God. But still the heart of man is unsatisfied, as the Apostle sheweth in the next words; *Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?* If it be thus, may we not lay all the sin of man at Gods door, and cast dirt at Heaven: why doth God complain, if all be from his own will? Thus man would teach God knowledge; *Nay but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?* Shall the clay teach the potter how to make it, or in what form to cast it?

Secondly, Others have found fault with God, and would teach him knowledge about the work of Creation. The Naturalist complained, that man was sent forth naked and helpless into the world, that other creatures had the advantage of man, having natural armor and defences which man wants. Such would teach God how to create.

Thirdly, How often do men take the chair, and like great Doctors offer God knowledge about his works of Providence. How many are there who think themselves wiser then God, or that they could direct him a better way for the Government of the world, then he is in. If they had the power, things should be in a fairer state then they are. They insinuate against the Government of God much like *Absalom* against his father *David's* Government, *O that I were judge in the Land,* you should see what I would do, what a world would I make? I would set all right. Such vain thoughts lodge in the spirits of vain men about the providences of God.

And not only they who in this open manner contest with God about his providence; but such also may be charged as taking upon them to teach God knowledge, who

do

do but murmur through discontent, and are unsatisfied with his doings. When a man is displeased with what another doth, he thinks he could do it better. All they who are displeased with or murmur at what God doth, say plainly in their hearts they could do things better then God, they could teach him knowledge.

Fourthly, From *Job's* question, as it carrieth not only a Negation of the thing, but indignation at it.

Observe, *It is most sinful to go about to teach God.*

The height of pride, presumption is in it (presumption is the pinacle of pride) therefore the height of sin is in it. As it is a great condescention in God to teach man knowledge, and to turn tutor to the poor creature; so it is highest presumption in man to teach God knowledge, and to turn tutor to his Creator. And as an attempt to teach God in or about any thing is sinful and presumptuous, so especially (which the subject here handled by *Job* leads us to) to teach him about his distributions of rewards and punishments: and that in any of these five particulars.

First, To teach God whom he shall reward or punish.

Secondly, To teach God when he shall reward or punish.

Thirdly, To teach God how or in what manner he shall reward or punish.

Fourthly, To teach God the measure, or how much he shall reward or punish.

Fifthly, To teach God the time, how long he shall reward or punish.

There is an intruding upon the prerogative of God in all these. And the sinfulness of this intrusion may appear upon a fourfold consideration.

First, Because it is an abasing of God, and a heightning of man. This sets ignorance above knowledge, and folly above wisdom: This sets the Dial above the Sun, yea darkness above the light. Man is not only in the dark, in the darkness of ignorance, but he is darkness. God hath not only light in him, but *he is light, and in him is no darkness at all.* Now what an affront, what an indignity is it for darkness to go about to teach light? For ignorance to teach knowledge? For a fool to teach the oracle of wisdom? The greatest oracle, the wisest among men is a fool to God, whose very foolishness (as the Apostle speaketh) is wiser then men. And are not men now, the wisest of men, trim teachers of God?

Secondly, What knowledge or light soever any man hath, he receives it from God, and shall man teach God with his own knowledge? Man hath no knowledge of his own to teach God? *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* What gift, or grace, what skill, what endowment hast thou that thou hast not received; and thou hast received it from God; and shall he who receives all his knowledge from God, teach God knowledge? *He is the father of lights, from whom is every good and perfect gift*; and shall we be giving light to him from whom we receive it? *David* saith, *In thy light we see light* (Psal. 36. 9.) And shall we think that God needs our light to see by? The common light of the world is the Sun; will any man offer light, or hold up a candle to the Sun? Water comes from the fountain, and from that great feeder of all fountains, the Sea; will any man carry water to the fountain, or make a Conduit to supply the Sea?

Thirdly, When man hath conceived as much light of knowledge from God as he is capable of, so that his vessel is brim full; when like *Paul* (who by his abundance, or great measures of revelation was in danger to be exalted above measure) he hath as much as he can bear; what is all that abundance but scarcity, what is all that fullness but emptiness, compared with that aboundance and fullness which is in God? There is no shadow of a comparison between that light of knowledge which shines out from God unto the most comprehensive man or Angel, to that which is in God, or rather to that which God is, and shall any teach him knowledge? The Apostle said of all our knowledge on this side glory (1 *Cor.* 13.) *We know but in part*; and shall we who know but in part, teach him that knows all? What we know of God and his wayes, is far less then that which we know not. The most of God and of his wayes is (*Terra incognita*) not yet discovered to us, and shall they teach God knowledge, who know so little of God? Again, that part which we see, or know, we know and *see darkly, and through a glass*; that is, we see it only reflexively, or by some other medium; and shall we teach him that sees all things immediately, directly and intuitively in their own nature? When *Job* had spoken much of God, he concludes (*Chap.* 26. 12.) *Lo these are part of his wayes, but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand?* So that, when we have received the utmost knowledge of God, it is but in part, and but a little part; *How little a portion is heard of him?* So little that it is scarce discernable; so little that the Apostle saith, *Knowledge* (that is this kind and degree of knowledge) *shall vanish away* (1 Cor. 13.) The knowledge we have here shall be swallowed up in the knowledge that we shall have in Heaven, like a drop of water in the Ocean; yet that knowledge which glorified Saints shall have in Heaven, will be but as a drop to the vast Ocean of the knowledge of God. The knowledge we have here is little to that we shall have above; what a nothing then is it to the knowledge of God who is above?

Fourthly, 'Tis sinful to teach God knowledge about his wayes, because his wayes cannot be known. Shall they direct God which way to go, who cannot find out the wayes which he hath gone (*Rom.* 11. 33.) *How unsearchable are his judgments, and his wayes past finding out?* If the wayes of the Lord be past finding out, then we must not find fault with his wayes. If we cannot find out their perfection, we must not say there is imperfection in them. *O the depth and riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God?* The well is deep, and we have nothing to draw; we have not line enough to let down our bucket into the deeps of divine wisdom and knowledge. The Judgments of God are a great deep (*Psal.* 36. 6.) and the Judgment of man is but a shallow. We may quickly loose our selves while we labour to find these wayes and Judgments of God. 'Tis safest in every point of wisdom (but chiefly in such as these) *To be wise*, as the Scripture saith, *unto sobriety* (Rom. 12. 3.) and wisdom to sobriety is this (1 *Cor.* 4. 6.) *to be wise according to that which is written.* If wisdom to sobriety, be wisdom according to what is written, how sinful is it to teach God knowledge, which is not only besides, but against that which is written. That wisdom comes not from above which provokes us to teach rather then to obey him that is above. Beware of this dry drunkenness. 'Tis an excellent vertue to eat and drink to sobriety, yet that excels it, *To be wise unto sobriety. Festus* said to *Paul*, *Thou art besides thy self, much learning hath made thee mad.* They who are wise so much beyond sobriety, as any way to offer at the teaching of God, are indeed besides themselves, and much ignorance of their duty hath made them thus mad.

The fifth and last proposition which riseth from this question (*Shall any teach God knowledge?*) is this,

It is impossible that any better way should be directed then that which the Lord useth in governing the affairs of mankind, or in the disposing of all things here below.

For, First, *All the works of God are done in truth* (Psal. 111. 8.) As the Word of God is a word of truth, so all his works are works of truth: for his works are nothing else but the making good of his Word, or his works are the image of his Word. The truth of works is their answerableness to words. The works of God are answerable to a threefold word.

First, To his Word of Propheſie. Whatsoever changes God makes in the world, they hit some Word of Propheſie; all is done that what he hath spoken or written may be fulfilled.

Secondly, The works of God are answerable to his word of threatning. God threatens before he smites, and he never smote any man with rod or sword, with judgments or corrections, but according to his threatning.

Thirdly, The works of God are answerable to his Word of promise. All mercies are promised, and every work of mercy is the fulfilling of some promise. Now seeing all the works of God are reduceable either to propheſies, threatnings, or promises, they are done in

truth, and what can be better done then that which is done in truth?

Secondly, All the works of God are done in Justice as well as in truth (*Psal.* 145.17.) *The Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works.* The rebellious *Jews* charged God with injustice, as if because *the fathers had eaten sowre grapes, therefore the childrens teeth were set on edge.* And hence they inferred that blasphemous conclusion (*Ezek.* 18.25.) *The way of the Lord is not equal.* But saith the Lord, *Hear O house of* Israel, *Is not my way equal? Are not your wayes unequal?* Though they complained, yet upon a due search they must needs acquit the Lord and condemn themselves. And though now many quarrel with the wayes of God as unequal, unjust, and unrighteous, yet the conscience of every man shall give testimony to God in the day of the revelation of his righteous Judgment, that all his wayes are righteous; and what can be better done then that which is done in righteousnes?

But it may be said, Is it just and righteous that unrighteous and unjust men should prosper and be exalted in the world, and that the righteous and godly should suffer and be afflicted?

Were it not better that the wicked should be alwayes suppressed, and the godly alwayes flourish?

I answer, The prosperity of the wicked, and the afflictions of the righteous, are no arguments of unrighteousnes in God, but only of his soveraignty and wisdom. For,

First, If God should arrest and punish all wicked men presently with visible judgments, mankind would be confounded, and the ligaments of humane society dissolved; for the greatest part of the world are wicked; therefore the wisdom of God doth so attemper and moderate his Justice, that he punisheth the parts in such a method as may consist with the preservation of the whole.

Secondly, If present vengeance were taken upon all wicked men, we should walk by sight rather then by faith, and be terrified rather then perswaded to obedience.

Thirdly, If the Lord should be quick in his judgments upon all wicked men, it would not appear how wicked some men are. These considerations with many more which have been already offered and enlarged upon, *Chap.* 20. *vers.* 29. of this book, besides what hath occurred in other places about the same argument, may satisfie any man who is but rational, that the Lord doth only act up to his soveraignty, and according to the dictates of his infinite wisdom, not at all contrary to the rules of Justice, while he lets wicked men thrive, grow great and high in the world.

Again, As to the manifold troubles and afflictions of many righteous, neither do these charge unrighteousnes upon God. For,

First, Themselves acknowledge that it is good for them that they are afflicted; why then should standers by say it is evil. They find the mercy of God in their affliction, why then should any think God is unjust in afflicting them?

Secondly, Their afflictions disingage them from the world, and cause them to live nearer to God, there is no hurt in this; trouble on earth occasions them to have their conversation more in heaven. What dammage is there in that?

Thirdly, The troubles which they meet with in this life, cause them to groan earnestly for the next life; present wants stir them up to look at future enjoyment; a sight of which by faith, and the expectation of which by faith, is better then the possession of any outward present enjoyment. This can be no wrong to them.

Fourthly, Though they be straitned with outward afflictions, yet God makes it up to them in spiritual consolations, there is no loss in that. So then, none have reason to murmur or complain either about the prosperity of wicked men, or the pressures of the godly. All is done in wisdom to the one, in mercy to the other, and according to the unquestionable prerogative of God in both.

Take this Corollary from the whole,

Shall any teach God knowledge?

Then submit quietly to the will of God, let us imprison our own reason, that the will and power of God may have their liberty: while we give reason too much liberty, we (upon the matter) imprison the will and power of God. Meer humane reason is no competent Surveyor of the wayes of God. Not that any of the wayes of God are against reason, but many of them are above our reason. The wayes of God are ordered by the quintessence of reason, and that is not to be found under every mans (I may say not naturally under any mans) cap: and when we measure the wayes of God by the standard and scantlings of our common reason, what a disguise do we put upon them? Yea, how do we disguise God himself? God is our maker, yet such make and form a justice for him like their own, a holiness like their own, a mercy like their own; and then what a God will he be? *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my wayes your wayes said the Lord* (Isa. 55. 8.) And shall any reduce and shrink up the thoughts and wayes of God to their narrow and straitned model? The Lord said of *Adam* in scorn when he attempted a likeness to God; *Behold the man is become as one of us* (Gen. 3.22.) How doth God scorn them who would make his wayes and thoughts as their own. Therefore let man dispute the wayes of God no more, but submit quietly to his will.

First, In what he hath said, or to the rule of his Word.

Secondly, In what he hath done, or to the righteousness of his Works. *Aaron held his peace*, he submitted when God had slain his two sons (*Lev.* 10.3.) And when that sad message was brought to old *Eli*, that God would do such things to his house as should make the ears of them that heard the report to tingle, he only said, *Good is the Word of the Lord* (1 Sam. 3.18.) So, when the Prophet told *Hezekiah* from the Lord, *Behold the dayes come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store until this day shall be carried to* Babylon, *nothing shall be left, and of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, they shall take away*, &c. When (I say) he heard all this, what said he? Even this, *Good is the Word of the Lord* (Isa. 39.8.) He doth not repine, nor dispute the case with God; What! give up *Jerusalem* the holy City into the hand of *Babylon?* Shall my sons descended from *David*, and of the seed of *Abraham*, fall into the hands of the uncircumcised? We hear of no word from him, but that which breaths humble submission, *Good is the Word of the Lord. David* was dumb with silence, when God spake rebukes to him (*Psal.* 39.9.) There is no contesting with God; 'tis fit our wills should be swallowed into the will of God, and 'tis our duty to say (as Christ did) *Not our will be done, but thine.* The Psalmist invites all to a very sad spectacle (*Psal.* 46.8, 10.) *Come, behold*, What is the sight? What's to be seen? *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.* How are we to behold these desolations? We may and ought with sorrowful hearts, but we must not with discontented hearts (*vers.* 10.) *Be still, and know that I am God?* As if he had said, I know you will be ready to query, why are the Nations shaken, and people made desolate? Why are these changes in the earth? The Lord in stead of answering their questions, commands their silence; *Be still, and know that I am God?* That's enough to quiet the thoughts of man. Some parasites have sacrilegiously flattred the Pope into this divine priviledge; *No man must question him, do what he will, if he carry thousands to hell, who shall say, why do you so?* 'Tis as dangerous to ascribe this to man, as it is to deny it unto God. If he shake the frame of heaven and earth, we must be still. *For he doth in heaven and in earth whatsoever pleaseth him*, and no man must say (displeasedly) What dost thou? Or why dost thou so? He that upon those terms would know what God doth, or why he doth so, goes about to teach God knowledge. But *Shall any teach God knowledge,*

Seeing he judgeth those that are high?

Some read thus, *Shall any man teach God knowledge, wherewith to judge those that are high?* As if he had said, Shall they teach God how to dispose of, or deal with those that are high? So Mr. *Broughton, Can a man teach the Omnipotent knowledge, how he shall judge those that are high?* As if this were the special case in which no man must meddle to direct God

Quâ ipse excelsos Judicet. Jun.

God, how to handle, and take a course with the great ones of the world. Indeed, God knows well enough how to deal with the great ones, the high ones of the world, he knows how to pull down the mighty from their seats and to break their power, he knows how to scatter their forces and infatuate their counsels without receiving counsel from us. *Shall any teach God knowledge, how to judge those that are high?* He hath wayes and means at command (when he purposeth it) to effect that purpose. That is a good interpretation.

Yet we render it (and I conceive more clearly to the mind of the Text) as a reason of the former question, why no man should presume, or why it is high presumption in any to teach God knowledge? The reason is grounded upon his prerogative and supremacy. He is the most high, and therefore must not be taught: he is the judge of those that are high, and therefore he is most high, and therefore he must not be taught by any that are here below. He that knows how to judge them that are high, is himself too high to be taught knowledge. Again these words, *He that judgeth those that are high*, are a periphrasis, or a descriptive circumlocution of God. To judge those that are high, is to be God.

He judgeth.] What is here meant by Judging?

First, To judge, is to discern, to look to, yea to look through the state and condition of a person or a thing. Thus the Lord judgeth those that are high, he discerns, he knows them and their wayes perfectly.

Secondly, To judge, is to give sentence or judgment upon trial or due process of Law: when matters are alledged and proved, the Judge gives sentence.

Thirdly, To judge, is to punish. So the word is used, (*1 Cor.* 31.) *If we would judge our selves.* There judgment may be taken for the judgment of discerning, trying, and examining (as well as of sentencing) as the Apostle said before, *Let a man examine himself. If we would judge*, that is, try and examin our selves, *we should not be judged*, that is, not afflicted, not punished, as it is said there; *For this cause some are sick and weak among you, and some are fallen asleep.* Which sence the Apostle explains further, (*vers.* 32.) *But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord.* To judge, is to chasten, or to punish. So here, *seeing he judgeth*, that is, punisheth, and layes his revenging hand upon those that are high.

But who are the *high ones*, that come under the judgment of God?

First, Some by the *high ones* understand the Angels, who are the highest or first classis of creatures. God did judge the Angels, he discerned, and passed sentence upon them, and, *They are held in chains of darkness to the judgment of the great day* (*Jude* 5.) Hence some conceive that *Job* gathers his argument, Shall any teach God knowledge, how to judge poor creatures on earth, how to throw down, or exalt man, since he judgeth the Angels? The Apostle useth an argument near this in reference unto the people of God, to shew that the Saints are fit to judge things of their own concernment and interest: *Do you not know that the Saints shall judge the world? And if the world be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?* (1 Cor. 2. 3.) And he carrieth the argument yet closer to the point in the next verse; *Know ye not that we shall judge Angels, how much more things that pertain to this life?* *Job* might say also, Know ye not that God hath judged Angels, those that are high, the highest part of the whole creation? And shall any teach him knowledge, how to judge the inhabitants of this inferior, this lower world?

Secondly, Others understand it of those who are high in wisdom; the highest Graduates in Schools, and Universities; the most learned Rabbies, and Doctors, the Sophies, the Philosophers of the world; so the sence runs thus, *Shall any man teach God knowledge, by whom the wisest, the most knowing are taught, who espieth faults in the wisdom of the wisest?* God is able to instruct all the masters of knowledge, therefore he is not a learner. *Shall any teach God knowledge*, seeing he judgeth or correcteth those who are high, the highest in knowledge?

Per excelsos intellige potentissimos atq; opulentissimos mines, quorum dicio a supplicio fere unius hoc put est. Pined.

Thirdly, Rather by *the high* are meant such as are in high place and power, the Judges and Princes of the earth, who are so high, that God gives them his own stile, *I have said ye are gods.* Though they be thus high, the Lord judgeth them: therefore seeing it is the right of his soveraignty to judge the highest, even the Kings and Rulers of the world, *Shall any teach him knowledge?*

Hence note, First, *God judgeth the high ones.*

The *highest on earth are below God.* Let all High ones remember, that, *There is one higher then the highest* (Eccl. 5. 8.) *One higher then the Kings of the earth* (Psal. 89. 16.) *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*

Secondly, *God discerns and throughly looks into the estates and actions of the highest in the world.*

The high ones of the world, may put a skreen of secrecy between them and inferiors, they may draw a curtain between themselves and mean men, but they cannot put a skreen or draw a curtain between themselves and God; he judgeth those that are high, therefore he knoweth them. No man can give a righteous judgment either of things or persons till he knows them. And though he that judgeth before he knoweth, may possibly sometimes give a righteous judgment, yet he is alwayes an unrighteous Judge. *Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right, and be righteous?*

Thirdly, *No man is so high but God can punish and chastise him, yea ruine and pull him down.*

He can make his sword reach the highest, and his judgments take hold of those that are strongest (*Isa.* 2. 11, 12, 13.) *The Cedars and Oaks, the high walls or mountains*, are men on high; yet the day of the Lord, that is, the day of his vengeance is against them all, and, *The loftiness of man shall be brought down, and they shall run into the holes and clifts of the rock, to hide them from the presence of the Lord when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* The Lord tells *Job* out of the Whirlwind, *That the high arm* (that is, the strongest arm, or the arm lifted up to strike) *shall be broken.* The Lord insults over *Lucifer* in his heights, *How art thou fallen from heaven, O* Lucifer, *thou son of the morning*, &c. (*Isa.* 14.) *Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence saith the Lord* (Jer. 49. 16.) The highness of man is so far from securing wicked men, that it rather makes them the fairer mark for the wrath of God.

Yet let not the low ones think they shall escape, God judgeth the high ones (say some) surely then he will not trouble himself with those that are low, with poor and mean men; he will have nothing to do with them, they shall not be taken notice of in the croud. As if it were either unsutable or below the Majesty of God to punish mean ones, or as if their meanness might plead their impunity. It is indeed an humbling of God to behold the highest; *He humbleth himself* (saith the Scripture, *Psal.* 113. 6.) *to behold the things that are in heaven*; yet he is pleased to humble himself (saith the same Scripture) *to behold the things in earth*, even the lowest things which are done, and the lowest persons which are here below. And as it is the prerogative of God to judge those who are high, so it is both his purpose and his praise not to let the lowest pass unjudged. The poorest believing Saint shall be accepted and rewarded, as well and as much as any believing Prince, who is not more believing nor more a Saint then he; and so there is not the meanest unbelieving son or daughter of *Adam*, not the poorest man or woman continuing in sin, but shall be judged as well as the highest. We find bondmen as well as freemen, Kings and Captains trembling before and running from the Lamb sitting upon his throne (*Rev.* 6. 15, 16.) As it is the glory of God that he can make the mightiest Kings stoop, so it is the glory of God, that the eye and hand of his justice stoopeth to the poorest captive. God will not favour the wicked, because they are great, nor spare them because they are little either in this world, or in that to come. He that dwells in a corner or in a cottage, shall no more escape, then the greatest Prince that dwelleth in a Pallace Royal, and sitteth upon a Throne.

VERS. 23, 24, 25, 26.

One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.
His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistned with marrow.
And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure.
They shall lye down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.

IN the former verse *Job* exalted the Lord above mans teaching and controling, *Shall any teach God knowledge, seeing he judgeth those that are high?* God is so wise that no man can teach him, so free and absolute in his power, that none may dare to controle him. And as this appeareth from what *Job* hath formerly asserted, so also by that which followeth; he spares whom he will, and smites whom he will, for what continuance of time he will, and in what measure he will; he summons one to the grave, even then, when he is most likely to live, and when he hath least fear of death, when there is not the least symptom or appearance of the approach of that King of terrors, not any decay in nature to proclaim the return of the flesh to dust, the man is in his spring and prime, yet then he is cut off and dies. Mean while another (no man knows why) pines and lingers out all his dayes in pain of body and trouble of mind, he lives and dyes under woful pressures of soul and body, of estate and relations, never injoying any good, nor seeing good day to the end of his dayes. Thus *Job* exemplifieth his general assertion concerning the soveraignty of God, and his various dispensations toward men.

There are three opinions as to the common scope of these words; I shall touch at them, and then come to a more particular explication.

Most of the Greek Writers understand these words as distinguishing the state of the wicked and the godly in this life. *One dieth in his full strength*, that is, wicked men have no trouble in their lives, no sicknesses when they dye, they go gently out of the world, or as it is said in *vers.* 13. of this Chapter, *In a moment they go down to the grave.* Whereas godly men usually live in trouble, and are tired out of the world with tedious and painful diseases when they dye. Thus the words describe the difference of the godly and wicked in regard of their natural death: Whereupon they infer, that they must necessarily have a different estate after death. Wicked men (say these Interpreters) have more happiness in their death then the godly, therefore the godly shall have a happiness which the wicked shall not have after death.

Secondly, Others take this to be *Job's* intendment, who having shewed before that poverty and riches are alike given to good and bad while they live: here asserts that death doth alike overtake weak and strong, sound and sick, young and old, such as are in a prosperous and such as are in a sad and in an afflicted estate; death catcheth away the one as well as the other: death carrieth an impartial hand, and hath a powerful hand, the strong can no more stand in the hands of death then the weak, nor can the young or rich make any better resistance when death assaults them, then the old and poor. *One dieth in his full strength*, &c. *Another dieth in the bitterneß of his soul.* Death pitties not the one, nor doth it flatter the other; there is a truth and an usefulness in this interpretation.

Thirdly, Rather understand the words, as teaching us, that God according to the freedom of his own will and pleasure, and the usual tenor of his providence in outward things, handles neither the godly nor the wicked alwayes in the same manner. One man, let him be good or bad, believer or unbeliever, dies in his full strength, and in the height of his prosperity; another, whether wicked or godly, dieth in the bitterness of his soul; some wicked men live and die in trouble, it is so also with some who are godly. This scope of the place makes good the assertion of the Preacher (*Eccles.* 9. 2.) *All things come alike to all*, that is, all worldly things. There is such a mixture of events, that no man can determine what any person is, either by what he injoyes, or by what he suffers. As the persons of good and evil men are mingled in the world, so also are their conditions. Good men suffer evil, and evil men injoy good: and again, good men receive good, and evil men endure evil. Thus *Job* holds forth the liberty which God useth as to the distribution of temporal good and evil, both to the evil and the good: So that he will not let us know *love or hatred by any thing that is before us.*

One dieth in his full strength.

He dieth not only *strong*, but *in the strength of his perfection*, so we read in the margin. The perfection of every thing is the strength of it; and he is strong indeed who is in the strength of his perfection. The glory of young men is their strength. One dieth at the height and top of this glory. The Septuagint render the Original word which signifieth *perfection*, by *simplicity*; that which is simple is perfect, God who is most simple is most perfect, the simplicity of God is the glory of his perfection. *One dieth in the strength of his simplicity*; that is, when the health of his body or his constitution is (as it were) unmixed, or not mixed with any disease, as also when his outward state is not mixed with any trouble; he dieth in the strength of this double simplicity, when as it were nothing unlike strength, nothing unlike prosperity hath so much as set its foot within his borders; when his light shines so clear, that there is no appearance of darkness in it; and when his comforts are so pure, that he hath no acquaintance with that thing called *sorrow*; when he hath not a cloud in his day, nor any taste of bitterness in his cup, then, even then in that strength of his simplicity he dieth. Some of the Greeks (I confess) take the word *simplicity* in the worst sence, rendring thus, *He shall die in the strength of his folly*; but I leave that under the censure of at least an unwary translation; and waving that also which I mentioned last before, shall insist only upon our own. *One dieth in his full strength*; which we may expound in the latitude of a threefold strength.

בעצם חמו
In robore perfectionis aut integritatis suæ. Moritur robustus. Vulg.
ἐν κράτει ἁπλοσύνης αὐτῦ. Sept.
ἐν κράτει ἀφροσύνης.

First, *In the strength of his body*, when he hath perfect health, and not only health, but much strength with it; some have health, who yet have but little strength.

Secondly, In the strength of his outward estate, of riches and relations; these are a mans strength, therefore the same word in the Hebrew signifies both riches and strength. Rich men are apt to idolize riches as their strength or strong tower, and so turn away from God, who is indeed our strength and our tower.

Thirdly, To compleat the fulness of his strength, we may add, In the strength of his spirit, when his mind is not troubled, when he hath no disquietments there: a man may have much strength of body, and a strength of estate, and yet be in perplexity of spirit; and then he is so far from being in his full strength, that he is in much weakness. *The spirit of a man* (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 18. 14.) (that is his mind and conscience being sound and whole) *will sustain his infirmity*; that is, it will cause him to bear up against all the sicknesses of his body, and afflictions in his state; but all the fulness of a mans estate and the exactest health of his body cannot bear up the infirmities of his spirit, or his wounded spirit. When *Job* saith, *One dieth in the fulness of his strength*, we may understand the concurrence or complication of all these strengths. That man who hath a strong body, a strong purse, with peace and tranquility of mind, is in full strength indeed; yet saith *Job*, twist all these strengths, this threefold strength together, and though (as *Solomon* speaks in his book of the Preacher) *a threefold coard is not easily broken*; yet death will as easily break this threefold coard of life, *as a threed of tow is broken, when it toucheth (or smelleth) the fire.*

One dieth in his full strength. This exposition is more fully given in the next words of the Text.

Being wholly at ease and quiet.

That is, at *ease* in body and *quiet* in mind; or at ease and quiet both in mind and body, yea in whatsoever else a man may be said to be at ease and quiet. *He dieth rich and happy*, saith the Vulgar Translation; *Wholly well setled*, say the Septuagint; *Rejoycing and abounding*, saith a third; the Hebrew

Totus ipse quietus & pacificus.

Hebrew is, *whole, he being at ease and quiet,* or as we render, *being wholly at ease and quiet.* All these readings center into one common sence, that he dieth when he is in as good a case to live as any outward advantage or interest can make him. Which is particularly exemplified in the words which follow.

Vers. 24. His breasts are full of milk, &c.

עטינים *Ubera mămæ.* Targ. Rab. Mard. *Mulchratia.* Rab. Dav.

The word which we render *Breast,* is used but this once in all the book of God. I find some variety among the Learned in expressing it.

First, Divers of the Rabbins, as also other Writers translate it, *Milk pails, His milk pails are full,* or, *His pailes are full of milk.* So the words are a description of his outward plenty. The Land of *Canaan* is called, *A Land flowing with milk and honey*; that is, a very fruitful Land. To say a mans milk pails are full, is to say that he hath abundance.

Apud Talmudicos denotat vasa in quibus congregabatur pinguedo olivis expressa. Ego vasa magna putarim, quibus ut nunc in Gallia Narbonensi oleum asservabatur. Merc. *Viscera ejus plena sunt adipe.* Vulg. Sept. *Hæc verba jocosam & adagiosam continent loquendi formam, quæ de robustissimo fœcundissimoq; viro diceretur. Medulla humidis annumeranda est, propterea conceptaculis quibusdã tanquam vasculis continetur.* Arist. l. 4. de Hist. Animal. c. 20. μυελὸς τροφὴ ὀστέων. Hip. lib. de Alim. Plato in Timæo.

Others conceive the word signifieth those vessels, wherein either wine, oyl, or any useful liquor was preserved. This rendring meets the former in setting forth an over-flowing prosperity in worldly things. That man who dieth with his vessels full of milk, wine, and oyl, hath enough of the creature about him to keep him alive.

A third sort translate thus, *His bowels or entrails are full of fatnes.* He is enclosed with his own fat (*Psal.* 17. 10.) and he hath much fat enclosed, his bowels are well lined, and his back is well larded. His stomach hath served him to eat his meat, and the meat which he hath eaten hath served his stomach. The man dieth when he is in this good case to live. As the two former rendrings appertain to the plenty of a mans estate, so this last, *His bowels are full of fat,* and ours, *His breasts are full of milk,* appertain to the strength, health, and constitution of the body. Which soever of these we take, it complies well enough with *Job's* scope, yet our translation complieth best with it, as also with the words which follow.

And his bones are moistened with marrow.

Which is only an amplification of what he said before, shewing a good habit and state of body. Marrow is moist and fluid; blood flows in the veins, and marrow is kept in the bones. Naturalists tell us, that, what blood is to the flesh, that marrow is to the bones; blood moistens the flesh, and marrow moistens the bones. The learned Physitian, calls *marrow the meat or food of the bones*: The bones live upon it. So that when *Job* saith, *His bones are full of marrow,* He speaks the exactest state of nature. 'Tis the opinion of a Prince in Philosophy, That the marrow is not only the sourse and seminary of generation, but the very seat of life. So that, the body is then in its full strength when it hath store of marrow to moisten, supple, and feed the bones. And thus the Scripture elsewhere expresseth a strong and healthy constitution of body (*Prov.* 3. 8.) *Be not wise in thine own eyes, fear the Lord and depart from evil, it shall be marrow to thy bones*; that is, it shall be that to thee which marrow is to thy bones. In opposition to which *Solomon* speaks of drying the bones (*Prov.* 17. 22.) *A merry heart doth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dryeth the bones.* The mind hath a powerful influence upon the body. A chearful spirit is as good as meat or medicine. The body thrives and recovers by it, the body gathers strength and health by it: *but a broken spirit* (he means, not a spirit broken with godly sorrow, but broken with worldly sorrow and distracting care, a spirit thus broken) breaks the heart, and dries the bones. In a holy fast, the heart ought to be broken with godly sorrow; yet to those who keep such a fast, the Prophet makes this promise from the Lord; *He shall guide thee continually, and satisfie thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones* (Isa. 53. 11.) There is a breaking of the spirit which drieth the bones, and there is a breaking of the spirit that fattens and moistens the bones. We read of a sweet vision which the people of God shall have (*Isa.* 66. 14.) *When ye see this, your hearts shall rejoyce.* As the vision which Saints have in heaven makes their hearts rejoyce, so God will give such visions as shall make their hearts rejoyce on earth; and what follows, *and your bones shall flourish like an herb*; that is, you shall have comforts both inward and outward, both for soul and body; not only *shall your hearts rejoyce, but your bones shall flourish like an herb.* Herbs flourish when they have suitable moystnings, and so do bones. And as showers moysten the herbs, so marrow moystneth the bones. Thus *Job* tells whom he means, by the man who *dieth in his full strength,* even the man who is *wholly at ease and quiet, with his breasts full of milk, and his bones moystned with marrow.*

Hence observe, First, *That bodily health and strength are no defence at all against death.*

Do you think you must needs live long, because you are healthy and strong; let not death be a stranger to you, because you are not acquainted with sickness; for, *One dieth in his full strength.* The abundance of riches is no defence against poverty, as *Zophar* spake (*Chap.* 24. 22.) *In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in streights.* Now as a man who is very rich, hath no ground to say in his heart I shall never be poor, because in the fulness of sufficiency a man may be in streights; so a man who is very strong, hath no reason to flatter himself in the hopes of long life, or to say in his heart, I shall not dye till I am old and weak; for *in the fulness of your strength you may be in death. One dieth in his full strength,* and so may you; nothing is any stop to, or can lay a bar in the way of death, but only grace and holiness. For though they who are holy and gracious, dye as well as others, yea though many who have much grace dye before they have attained to many years, even in the fullness of their strength; yet the Lord hath made a promise of long life unto those who are gracious and holy, but he never made a promise of long life to the healthy or strong. The Lord hath not said any where in Scripture, that, *The strong man shall live long*; but he hath promised long life to those who are of a gracious spirit and holy life (*Exod.* 20. 12.) And the Apostle urging that duty upon children from the Commandment, calls it the *First Commandment with promise* (Ephes. 6. 2.) that is, with an explicite promise, for every Commandment hath both a threatning and a promise implied in it, and annexed to it; but this is the first Commandment with a promise expressed, and that is a promise of long life. *Honour thy father and mother, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth.* So that if any thing be a bar in the way of death, 'tis holiness; and if man had continued in perfect holiness, that had been an everlasting preservative against death. Death had never broken in upon us, if we had not broken the Commandment of God. And now by how much any man doth more wickedly break the Commandments, by so much he is the more liable to the breaking in of death. As for the strength of any man, though a *Sampson,* this great *Leviathan Death,* counts it but as straw; and the soundest purest health, but as rotten wood. There are no sons of *Zerviah* too hard for death; nor doth death stay to take men at an advantage, when they are weakned with age and sickness, or (as *Simeon* and *Levi* did the *Shechemites,* Gen. 34. 25.) *when they are sore.* Death can do its work easily and as speedily in health, as it can in sickness; in strength, as well as in weakness; when we handle the sword, as well as when we lean upon a staff; in the prime and summer, as well as in the fall and winter of our lives. Nor can any man plead with God to forbid the approach and arrest of death, because he is healthy, young or strong; these pleas bear no weight with God, because God hath made no promise to them. We can plead nothing but our integrity, uprightness, and holy walking with God: So *Hezekiah* did, when he received a message with the sentence of death from the Lord (*Isa.* 38. 2, 3.) *He turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, and said, Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth, & with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.* Upon this plea his dayes were lengthned, and a prohibition was issued out from the high Court of Heaven to stay the proceedings of death. Thus the promise of wisdom runs (*Prov.* 3. 2.) *My son, forget not my Law, but let thy heart keep my Commandments; for length of dayes, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee:* The Hebrew is, *years of life,* which may be understood either as an addition, to note the certainty of the promise, or as an explication of the promise; *Thou shalt have length of dayes,* that is, *many dayes, and years of life,* that is, *comfortable years*; for some have long dayes, and yet

but

but ſhort lives; a man liveth no more years indeed, then he liveth comfortably. So that when wiſdom ſaith, *Long life, or years of life ſhall they add to thee*; the meaning is, thou ſhalt have a life not only long but pleaſant, or a life as full of peace as of dayes and years. What the Moraliſt ſaid of an idle life, *That it is the burial of a man alive*, an idle man is a living man buried: that I may ſay of a troubleſom miſerable life, *It is the burial of a man alive.* A miſerable man is a living man buried. And how many are there who prefer death before a miſerable life. Therefore ſaith wiſdom, *My ſon, forget not my law, but let thy heart keep my Commandments, and they ſhall add to thee* (that is, thou ſo doing, God will add to thee) *long life and peace.* Only grace and holineſs have the promiſe of long life, they are a defence againſt death; but as for ſtrength and health, breaſts full of milk, and bones full of marrow, they have no promiſe of life, nor are they any ſtop to the power of death; but rather render a man the fairer mark, and the ſweeter morſel for that King of terrors to hit and feed upon. And from this general truth, we may draw down theſe two deductions.

First, *Then prepare for death, though you have no appearance of death upon you.*

When you ſurveigh your bodies from head to foot, and cannot ſee the leaſt ſhadow of death, nothing looking like death upon them; yet, I ſay, *prepare for death*; for, *one dieth in his full ſtrength*, when there is no ſymptom of death to be ſeen upon him. When we look upon ſome men we may ſee (as he ſaid of a ſad time) many images or repreſentations of death; we may ſee death in their dim eyes, in their palſied hands, in their trembling knees, and withered faces; we may ſee death looking in at their windows, and out at their windows. Look upon others, they have no ſign of death, nothing that looks like death; yet let ſuch prepare, *for one dieth in his full ſtrength.* The Preacher (*Eccleſ.* 12. 1.) exhorts *young men to remember their creator in the dayes of their youth.* And he giveth a forcible reaſon for it there; but I ſhall give another from this Text. The reaſon which he gives, why young men ſhould remember their Creator is, *Becauſe their evil day is coming* (he meaneth not dayes of ſinful evil, but of painful evil, as the next words expound him) *the years draw nigh in which you ſhall ſay, we have no pleaſure in them*; bethink your ſelves of a ſpiritually better eſtate now in your youth, for a naturally evil eſtate is coming; old age with its train and retinue of weakneſſes and infirmities is coming, yea it is haſtning upon you; therefore make haſte, up, and be doing in all holy duties. This is a good argument why we ſhould remember our Creator in the dayes of our youth, becauſe evil dayes are coming. Yet take here another, if not a more preſſing argument, *Remember your Creator in the dayes of your youth*, becauſe thoſe evil dayes may never come; you may be taken off in your good, yea in your beſt dayes: you may be taken off when neither the Sun, nor the Moon, nor the Stars are darkened; as he ſpeaks there, when the clouds do not return after rain, when the keepers of the houſe ſtand faſt, *&c.* So then as they that are young and ſtrong have reaſon to prepare for death, becauſe evil dayes are coming; ſo they are to prepare for death, becauſe it is very queſtionable whether ever thoſe evil dayes ſhall come, or whether they ſhall ever come to thoſe evil dayes; they may die in their good dayes, in their beſt dayes, in thoſe dayes wherein they ſay, we have pleaſure, all manner of pleaſures in them. For as *Job* here affirmeth, *One dieth in his full ſtrength, being wholly at eaſe and quiet.*

Plurima mortis imago.

A ſecond deduction is this,

Death doth not obſerve the laws of nature, but the appointments of God.

The law of nature ſaith not that a man is likely to die in his full ſtrength; the law of nature ſets death at the greateſt diſtance from thoſe men whoſe breaſts are full of milk, and their bones moiſtned with marrow; the law of nature ſaith to death, go to the wrinkled face, to the dry bones, to the dry breaſts, meddle not with this young man, touch not this beautiful woman, he or ſhe is now in the flower, in the prime and pride of nature; go to yonder old man, go to that withered woman, let theſe alone. Oh, but death will not receive theſe commands; death will not obſerve the laws of nature, but the appointments of God, who is the Lord of nature. *It is appointed for all men once to dye*; and as God hath appointed all to dye, ſo he appoints the ſeaſons of death; and the ſeaſons which he appoints, are as various as the kinds, occaſions, and wayes of death are. And therefore death knocks as often at the young mans door, as at the door of the old man; death attacheth and carrieth away the ſtrong, the healthy man, priſoner to the grave as often as the weak and ſickly. *One dieth in his full ſtrength.*

Secondly, As theſe two verſes are a deſcription of the outward proſperity of man,

Obſerve, That, *As bodily health and ſtrength are no defence againſt death, ſo riches are not.*

Your pails full of milk, your veſſels full of wine and oyl, your ſhops full of wares and goods, your purſes full of gold and ſilver, your lands ſtockt with corn and cattel, and your ſelves wholly at eaſe and quiet in the poſſeſſion of them, cannot ſtave off death one minute, one moment. The rich mans barns were full, yet the Word came, *Thou fool, this night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee* (Luke 12. 20.) *and then whoſe ſhall all theſe things be, that thou haſt provided?* they can be no longer *thine*, nor thou *theirs*. Whoſe ſhall they be? Though thou haſt not made thy Will, nor haſt any will to make it; yet they can be no longer thine; thou canſt not bribe death to depart; riches avail not in a day of wrath. *One dieth in his full wealth, when his pails are full of milk, and his veſſels running over with wine and oyl.*

Verſ. 25. **And another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eateth in pleaſure.**

This verſe ſtands in oppoſition to the former; the Text in ſtrictneſs of Grammar may be read thus, *Another dieth in a bitter mind, or in amind of bitterneſs.* And this may be underſtood both of good and evil men; ſome godly men dye thus, many wicked men dye thus, both or either may dye in the bitterneſs of his ſoul. What's that? Or when is the ſoul in bitterneſs? The bitterneſs of the ſoul, is the carefulneſs, ſadneſs, and uncomfortableneſs of it. Soul-bitterneſs is ſoul-miſery and ſorrow. Afflictions are compared to wormwood and gall (*Lam.* 3. 15.) *He hath filled me with bitterneſs, he hath made me drunken with wormwood.* What he means by both is clear (*verſ.* 19.) *Remembring mine affliction and my miſery; the wormwood and the gall.* Godly ſorrow is alſo expreſſed by bitterneſs, (*Zach.* 12. 10.) *In that day the Lord will cauſe them to mourn, and they ſhall be in bitterneſs as one that mourneth for his firſt born.* To be in bitterneſs is to be in ſorrow; not only in worldly ſorrow, but in godly ſorrow, in that ſorrow which worketh repentance not to be repented of. Sorrow is a bitter cup; worldly ſorrow is a bitter and a deadly cup; godly ſorrow is a bitter, though a wholſom and a medicinable cup. Spiritual, natural, and worldly ſorrows are as bitterneſs to the ſoul. Death hath its peculiar ſorrows (*The ſorrows of death hath compaſſed me about*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 116. 3.) and ſo hath life. Many dye not only in the ſorrows of death, but in the ſorrows of life; that's the intendment of *Job* in this place, while he ſaith, *Another dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul,*

בנפש מרה *In animo amaro.*

Morbi & dolores vitam efficiunt acerbam.

And never eateth in pleaſure.] Or nearer the letter, *He eateth not in good.* In eating there are two things conſiderable; firſt, the meat; and ſecondly, the ſauce. Some have meat to eat, but they have no ſauce with it. Good or pleaſure is the ſauce of our meat. A dinner of ſowre herbs is ſweet with this ſauce; and a ſtalled ox without it, is not. And this ſauce is in the eaters heart, not in his diſh. He that hath not ſauce there, though he have both meat and ſauce in his diſh, yea though he have a ſong and muſick at his Table, yet never eateth in pleaſure. There is a threefold pleaſure; firſt, ſenſual; ſecondly, ſpiritual; thirdly, ſenſitive. All ſenſual is ſinful pleaſure. *Job* ſpeaks not here of ſuch a man as dieth in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, and never eats as a glutton or an Epicure (whoſe buſineſs, yea whoſe religion it is to ſerve his belly and pleaſe his pallate, whoſe only care it is to keep his skin fair and body fat, I ſay he ſpeaks not of ſuch a one who never eats)

בטובה *In bono*, i.e. *in jucunditate eſt lætitia.*

in

in sinful sensual pleasure. Again, all spiritual pleasure is holy pleasure: As the former is too low, so this is too high for *Job's* scope in this assertion. He speaks not here of a man who dieth and never eats in the pleasure of divine love and heavenly enjoyments. To eat in this pleasure, is the peculiar portion of Saints: So then, the pleasure here meant is the third, meer *sensitive pleasure*. Some die, and never eat in this pleasure; that is, they eat but taste no sweetness in what they eat: Their palates are so distempered with sickness, or their spirits are so distempered with sorrow while they are in health, that they find no savour, no relish in what they eat. The best prepared meats are to them but as a dry stick, or the white of an egg; I cannot (saith one) taste my meat, I eat this, and I eat that, but I taste neither; or if I taste what I eat, and find it sweet to my palate, yet I have such sowre sauce with it, so many afflictions press my spirit, that pleasant bread is as gall and wormwood to me; I never eat in pleasure. We are (I conceive) to understand the Text of this natural sensitive pleasure which man takes by the ordinary blessing of God in the use of creatures. This is denied to many, they eat not in good, and it may therefore be said, as the Septuagint render here, *They eat no good*. How good soever the meat is, it is not good to them that have no content in eating it. Yet further, as they never eat in pleasure, though they sit every day at full and well furnished Tables, whose bodies are ill affected by sickness, or their minds with sorrow; so there are many of whom it may be said, that they never eat in pleasure, because they have but little of any thing, and nothing of that which is pleasant to eat. A rich mans bread may sometimes be called the bread of adversity, and his water the water of affliction, but an extream poor mans bread and water are alwayes so. What pleasure have they in their lives, who can hardly be said to live; or what pleasure have they in eating, who are only preserved from starving. Such pitiful poor ones are literally in *Job's* Text, *They die in the bitterness of their soul, and never eat in pleasure.*

Hence observe, *The difference which God makes among men, even in outward things, is very great.*

One lives and dies in his full strength, wholly at ease and quiet; another never eats in quiet, nor knoweth what it is to be at ease; one hath pleasant bread prepared for him every day, and he daily eats in pleasure; another doth not only eat the bread of sorrow (*Psal.*127.2.) that is, bread gotten with the sweat of his face, with hard labour and care, but he eateth his bread with sorrow. As the sleep of a labouring man (*Eccles.* 5. 12.) so the bread of a labouring man is usually sweet to him, whether he eat little or much, yet even to some labouring men their bread is not sweet.

We may draw up these four Conclusions, about the state of man in this life.

First, *There is no man who hath all pleasure, or nothing but pleasure in his life.*

For though it be said in the former verse of one man, *he is wholly at ease and quiet*, yet we must not understand that strictly and precisely, as if any man ever lived who met not with some trouble or pain, at one time or other before he died. No man ever arrived at such a degree of worldly happiness, as never to feel any cross in this world. The life of man here, is not perfect in any capacity. As the lives of good men are not perfect in spirituals, so neither is the life of any man, whether good or bad, absolutely perfect in temporals. In the next life, there will be no mixture in any mans condition; they who are miserable shall know nothing but sorrow, and they who are happy shall know nothing but pleasure; but in this each state hath a taste of both, though (as the elements in the mixture of bodies) some one be predominant.

Secondly, *Most men have less pleasure then pain, more ill dayes then good dayes in this world.*

The life of man here is at best but like checquer work, which hath a black and a white, or like a bitter-sweet, or like twilight when 'tis neither dark nor light; but usually our lives have more of the black then of the white in them, more of the bitter then of the sweet, of the dark then of the light. The part predominant is most commonly the worst. Hence the third conclusion.

Thirdly, *Most have little pleasure, but trouble and sorrow very much.*

Their evil dayes out-number their good, and their sorrows out-weigh their comforts. They have doubled sorrows, or sorrow upon sorrow; they have but single comforts, here a little, and there a little; now a little, and then a little.

Fourthly, We may conclude with the Text,

That some have no pleasure at all.

Yet this conclusion, as the Text whence it riseth, is not to be understood strictly. No man (I believe) was ever so miserable, whether in regard of his body or estate, as never to enjoy the least pleasure; for as there is no perfect happiness in this life, so there is no perfect misery in this life; the perfection of both is reserved for the next. Such a state of misery as hath not the least mixture of good in it, is the portion of wicked men in Hell: And such a state of pleasure as hath not the least mixture of evil in it, is the portion of the Saints in Heaven. Yet some there are who have so little pleasure and joy in their lives, that we may according to common understanding conclude of them, *That they never eat in pleasure.* That which is very rarely done or enjoyed, is said (in Scripture language) never to be done or enjoyed. Hence take this twofold Admonition.

First, Let such see the mercy, and the gracious dealing of God with them, who eat every day or very often in pleasure. How often do we sit down at our Tables, and our morsels are sweet to us? God fills our hearts not only with food but gladness. Whereas not a few of our brethren, of the same mould with our selves, and possibly of better desert then we, eat ashes for bread, and mingle their drink with weeping, or as *Job* speaketh, *Never eat in pleasure.*

Secondly, If this be the lot of some, that *they never eat in pleasure*; let them be admonisht who complain, if they eat not alwayes in pleasure; who if they have but now and then a hard day of it, a short meal of it; if their pallate be but sometimes out of taste, and their stomachs sick; if they are only now and then in pain, presently murmur and are discontent. Shall any repine at pains which come but seldom, when we hear of others that never eat in pleasure?

God doth us no wrong if he giveth us nothing but sorrow; he doth us no wrong, if he lets us linger, and pine, and die in the bitterness of our souls. Wicked men do nothing but sin, and then, what is their due but sorrow? And as the wicked do nothing but sin, so the godly sin in all they do, therefore God is not unjust if he mingle sorrow with all they have. While there is so much sin in the best, 'tis mercy that it is no worse with them; and while so much evil is done, what reason have we to complain that so much evil is felt. If there were no other account to be given of Gods severest dispensations, this is enough to acquit God and quiet our own spirits. 'Tis an evil and a bitter thing, in the nature of it, to sin against God; no wonder then if it be so in the effects of it. The bitterness of sin will cause bitterness of soul, and while we do so much of that wherein God taketh no pleasure, we have cause to expect but little, and to justifie him though we should *never eat in pleasure.*

Vers. 26. **They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them.**

There is difference among men while they live, and in in the manner of their death; *One dieth in his full strength*; another *dieth in the bitterness of his soul*; *but they shall lie down alike in the dust.* When we are removed by death, these differences will be removed. *To lie down in the dust*, is to dye; and we read of the *dust of death*, Psal. 22.15.

They shall lie down alike. The *Verb* signifieth to *unite or joyn together*. The *Adverb* which is here used, hath four significations in Scripture. יחד *Verbum univit, unum fecit, in adverbio, simul pariter.*

First, 'Tis rendred *alone, or without company* (Job 34. 29.) *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hides his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation, or a man only*; a man alone, that is, a single person.

Secondly, Usually it is translated *together*, or with company: So (*Ezra* 4. 3.) The *Jews* refusing the help of

Tobiah

Tobias and *Sanballat* said, *We will build together.* Their meaning is not, we and you will build together; but we *Jews* will build together by our selves, we will not mingle and incorporate with you in this work.

Thirdly, The word is expressed, by *wholly, or every whit* (Job 10.8.) We translate, *Thy hand hath made me, and fashioned me together round about*; that is, *thou hast made me wholly, or every whit*, one part as well as another; my hand as well as my head, my little finger as well as my foot is of thy making.

Fourthly, It signifies *alike*, or one as well as another, (*Psal.*33.15.) *The Lord from Heaven beholdeth all the children of men, he fashions their hearts alike*; not that all mens hearts are alike, or of one form and fashion, for if they were, their way, their course, and their end would be alike; but *the Lord fashioneth their hearts alike*; that is, as he fashions the heart of one man, so the heart of another; 'tis as easie with God to fashion the heart of the greatest Prince, as of the meanest Plebeian. The Lord is the fashioner of all mens hearts, and he alone can fashion the heart.

We render the word here in the fourth or last sence, *They shall lye down alike in the dust*; that is, they shall all lye down in the dust, and in the dust they shall be as one. Yet some render it in the third sence, *They shall lye down every whit, or wholly in the dust*; that is, all their pride, and pomp, their beauty and strength shall lye down every whit and wholly in the dust, they shall not save nor deliver the least piece of themselves from the dust of death. Again, others read it in the second sence, *They shall lye down together in the dust*; that is, good and bad, high and low, rich and poor, weak and strong, beautiful and deformed, shall be tumbled and mixed together in the grave. Death and the dust make no distinctions of men; and they unmake (as to corporals and externals) those that were. Though every man should have (as many have) a distinct grave when they dye, as they had distinct houses and dwelling places while they lived, yet the grave quickly blots out all distinctions. So that they who were far enough asunder in state and manners and affections while they lived, may yet be said when they dye, *to lye down alike or together in the dust.*

And the worms shall cover them.] We have here only a further description of the dead. Thus the Prophet speaks of the proud *Babylonian* (Isa.14.11.) *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.* Those words are a holy scorn cast upon the funeral pomps, in which Kings, Emperors, and mighty men were wont to be buried. Their carkasses had curious Carpets and fine linnen spread under them, and laid upon them; they were embalmed, spiced and perfumed; yet saith the Prophet of a chief one, *Thy pomp is brought down to the grave*, the worms are a Carpet under thee, and the worms are a covering over thee. Thus here, *The worms shall cover them:* Dust shall be their *down-bed*, and worms shall be their *bed-cloaths.* The body alive is but living dust, and when a man dieth his body first returns to, and then turns, or is resolved into dust. Living man is but a worm, and when he dieth worms come about him, and come of him; *The worms shall cover them.*

From the whole verse observe,

Death makes no difference among men.

While men walk upon this dust their distances are many, but when they lye down in the dust they are all alike, or they lye down alike. *Death is the great Leveller.* And they who, indeed, are so, seem like death, to act more for the dissolution of the world, then the reformation of it. Men will not be fit to live in an equality, till they have been first made equal by death (*Eccles.*2.16.) *How dieth the wise man, as the fool?* Moral wise men dye as fools, yea spiritual wise men dye as fools, as to their state in death, though there be the greatest unlikeness between them as to their state beyond death. As godly wise men and fools, are not, as to spirituals, alike in their lives, so after death they are everlastingly divided as to eternals; yet the fool and the wise, good and bad are alike, as to their present entertainment in and under the Dominion of natural death. To clear this a little further, Man may be considered in a threefold state.

First, In the state of this life; here they are both alike, and unlike. We see some good men prosper, and so do many wicked; we see unjust men sometimes troubled, and so are the righteous often. Thus they are alike, and run parallel in their outward condition. Again, here we see a godly man afflicted, and the ungodly prosper. Your next prospect may be an ungodly man mourning, and the godly rejoycing. Thus they are unlike, and run cross in their outward condition, as to this life.

Secondly, Consider them in reference to the death of the body, of which this Text speaks; as to that, good and bad, one and other, are all as one; you cannot distinguish between the dust of holy, and unholy men; you cannot read the difference of sin and grace upon their graves. In this they are alike.

Thirdly, Men may be considered in reference to the state of the next life, there they are unlike, and there they shall be utterly unlike for ever; there they part, and shall never meet in any nearness or likeness of state any more. In what condition death finds men, Judgment shall deal with them. There is no work nor device in the grave for the bettering or altering of any mans condition. As men fall, so they shall rise, and then all men shall be dealt with by the open rule of Justice, even *according to what they have done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be evil.* The Lord hath sometimes made the difference between his people and the wicked very discernable in temporals; he hath distinguishing mercies for his even in this life (*Mal.* 3.18.) *Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked.* The Prophet (I conceive) doth not refer only (if at all) to the state of the wicked and righteous in the world to come; but to some eminent turn or change which the Lord would make in this world, by visible judgments upon the wicked, and salvations wrought for the righteous. Thus the Lord made a difference to the eye between his people and the *Egyptians* by the death of their first-born, and by drowning their huge Army in the Sea. As in that, so in all dispensations wrought with an high and open hand, 'tis easie to *return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked.* The difference between the righteous and wicked in their soul-state is alwayes great, but it is not alwayes plain, the natural eye cannot see it: the character is too spiritual for such a sight. Yet a time will come, when a carnal eye shall see the difference and and easily discern that there is a reward for the righteous, and that the wicked were but reserved to a day of wrath. And that, though all lye down in the dust alike, yet when men are raised up out of the dust, a vast unlikeness will appear among them. They will appear as unlike, as goats and sheep, chaff and wheat, as gold and dross, as light and darkness; nor shall any be like another in the face of his enjoyments, who is not like him in his heart and spirit.

VERS. 27, 28, 29.

Behold, I know your thoughts, and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.
For ye say, where is the house of the Prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?
Have ye not asked of them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?

JOB now prepares and buckles himself to draw up his Conclusion, not only to what *Zophar* had lately spoken, but generally to all that had been spoken by any of his friends from the beginning of the disputation.

Behold, I know your thoughts.

Job seems to deal with their thoughts as well as with their words, with their intentions as well as with their arguments. *Behold!* He might well put *a Behold* before this; for 'tis a wonder. *Come see a man* (said that woman with admiration, *Joh.*4.29.) *which told me all things that ever I did.* And we may say with no less admiration, *Come, Behold a man, that can tell us what we think*; A man who not only heareth what men are speaking, but seeth what they are thinking.

Behold (saith *Job*) **I know your thoughts.**] The Hebrew word which we render *Thoughts*, is not meant of any ordinary מחשבות

ordinary transient thoughts, which slip in and out unregarded; but of setled thoughts, well wrought thoughts, thoughts made up and curiously formed into conclusions or resolutions. It notes a kind of Art in thinking; though to think be a natural work, yet there is nothing wherein man acteth the Artist more then he doth in thinking; in this much of the hellish and black Art, and in this much of the heavenly and holy Art is exercised, though in neither of them it be shewed. Thoughts are close, secret work; and yet there is much art in hiding this art of thinking, or at least in hiding what we have thought, till the seasons of discovery. *Job* speaks as if he had prevented his friends discovery, and without their telling, could tell what they had been thinking.

Scio vos. Sept.

Behold, I know your thoughts.] The Seventy translate, *Behold, I know you*; as we use to say to a man whose intentions and designs we suppose are known to us, *We know you well enough.* And that's as much as to say, *I know your thoughts.*

But is it not the sole Priviledge of God to know the thoughts? Is not the heart his peculiar, a Cabinet which none can unlock or look into but the most High? Is not this his stile? *I search the heart.* And what is the heart which God searcheth? or what doth God search for in the heart? The heart is nothing else but the treasury of our thoughts; and God searches for nothing else there but our thoughts; either simple, as they are in our meditations, or compounded as they are in our affections. *David* ascribes this glory to the Lord (*Psal.* 139. 1, 2, 3.) *O Lord, thou hast searcht me, and known me; Thou knowest my down sitting and mine up rising*; that is, all my outward motions; but is that all? No (saith he) *Thou understandest my thoughts afar off.* Our thoughts are evident to God, *even before they are*; our thoughts are said to be afar off, when they are not thought; yet then they are as nigh to God as they are to us when we are thinking them, even actually present; our thoughts are as audible to God as our words are to men; he hears the language of our spirits, what our hearts say, when our tongues are silent. When our tongues speak *plain English* to men, yet, as to our thoughts, we may be *Barbarians* to them. As the Apostle saith of him that speaketh in an unknown language, he is a *Barbarian* to the most learned man in the world, in regard of his thoughts. Man knows not the meaning of mans thoughts while he is speaking, unless he speak (which some do not) his thoughts. But let the tongues of men be never so cross to their hearts, and what they speak, not a light to discover, but a shadow to darken their thoughts; yet God knoweth them, and by this we know that he is God. 'Tis said of Christ in the Gospel, *That he knew their thoughts* (Matth. 9. 4. & 12. 25. Luke 5. 22.) And this was an unanswerable argument of his divinity, or that he was God. Only God, or (as Christ was) *God-man*, can reach the thoughts of man. That's an eminent Text (*Joh.* 2. 24, 25.) *Jesus came to* Jerusalem, *and many believed in his Name, when they saw the miracles which he did, but Jesus did not commit himself to them*; that is, he did not trust himself with them, or (according to the letter) *he could not believe himself into the hands of those believers.* But why did not Christ commit himself to believers? Sure if Christ might be safe in the hands of any men, he might be so in the hand of believers. The Text gives the reason, *Because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testifie of man, for he knew what was in man.* Christ would not believe these believers, for though they had a fair outward appearance, and made profession, yet he knew what was within as well as what was without; and he knew that all was not right within: he knew that many of their hearts were nought and rotten, and therefore could not trust himself with them. And he needed none to witness this concerning them, for he knew what was in man; he saw the falsness of their hearts through the covers and visards of their fairest professions. And to do so is the priviledge of God alone.

Doth not *Job* then usurp and intrude upon it, while he saith, *Behold, I know your thoughts!*

I answer, *Job* doth not here take upon him, or assume to himself a power to unlock their hearts, and see immediately what thoughts lay there; he was more holy, and more humble, then to boast thus beyond his line. His meaning is only this, *I know your thoughts*; that is, *I do easily collect what is in your hearts, what is in your breast*: though you do not speak the thing directly, yet I perceive your meaning well enough; I know what you would have me understand and take to my self by your so often repeating and insisting upon the destruction of wicked men, and the overthrow of the ungodly; I know that in all this you mean me; you think that I have been overthrown as a wicked man, and that I have been destroyed as an ungodly one; your discourse hath so often fallen and insisted upon that point, that now 'tis easie to conjecture what you think of me and my condition; though you hover in generals, and speak in a third Person, though you do not bring it home to me and say, *Thou art the man*, yet I perceive clearly what and whom you drive at. And thus wise men can somewhat more then guess at random what the special thoughts of other men are, by those things which are spoken generally and afar off. So then while *Job* makes this peremptory conclusion, *I know your thoughts*; 'tis as if he had said, *I clearly apprehend without any further explication or comment, whither all this tends which you have been speaking; what you aim at, what you drive at, what lyes at the bottom of all this, is plain to me; I have not been sleeping while you have been arguing; I have not onely consider'd the letter of your discourse, but the tendencies of it; and I understand the inside as well as the outside of all.*

Cogitationes eorum se nosse dicit non quasi divinaret, aut sibi eorum animos scrutandi vim tribuerit, sed quia ipsi facile fuit videre quid illi sibi vellent illa toties repetita commemoratione exitii improborum. Merl.

Hence observe, That, *'tis possible for man to know the thoughts of man.*

We are taught this by *Solomon* (*Prov.* 20. 5.) *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep waters.* The heart of man is deep, as deep and wide as the Ocean, wherein (to allude to the Psalmist, *Psal.* 104. 25.) *There are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.* There are light and easie imaginations, which float on the top, and there are weighty and sad meditations which keep at the bottom. Such are the counsels of mans heart; Counsels are thoughts contrived and wrought in the heart; Counsels are thoughts shaped and formed up between Imagination and Judgment; these Counsels in the heart are *like deep waters*; 'tis hard to draw or pump them up. Few can reach so deep as the Counsels which are in the heart of man; yet some men can: And *Solomon* tells us who can, *A man of understanding will do it.* But is not every man (except meer fools and mad-men) *a man of understanding?* Not so; for though every man hath an understanding, yet there are not many *men of understanding*; *A man of understanding*, is a man of great or much understanding. As by a like Hebraism, *A man of desires*, is a man much or greatly desired; and *a man of bloods*, is a very bloody and cruel man; so *a man of understanding*, is a very understanding man; or a man who seems nothing else but understanding. Such a man will draw the counsel of other men out of their hearts. A man of the greatest understanding, and most reaching head, cannot go down into these deep waters of the heart; all that he can do by all his wit and skill, by the strongest engines of his brain, is only this, to draw it out. This gives light to the Text of *Job*, and to the point in hand, shewing us how man may be said to know the thoughts of man; and that the difference is great between the manner of Gods knowing the thoughts of man, and mans knowing of them. Which I shall yet more distinctly open. We may conceive it thus; Man knows the thoughts of man by some argumentation or inference; so that his knowledge of the thoughts of man is but conjectural at the best. Man cannot determine unerringly what the thoughts of another are. And therefore it is not lawful to make the thoughts of any man the matter of his accusation; because we cannot infallibly know the thoughts of any man, unless himself will make them known to us. So that, to say such a man thought so, is not a legal testimony against any man. Conjectures amount not to proofs. And because God knows the thoughts of man intuitively, directly, and infallibly (he is as certain what our thoughts are, as what our actions are) therefore God may judge men for their thoughts as much as for their words, or works, and so he will.

Further, Man may attain this conjectural knowledge of thoughts divers wayes.

First,

First, By words, I mean not words which are the expreſs image of a mans thoughts, and were ſpoken purpoſely to diſcover them; as ſometimes we ſay to a friend, I will tell you my thoughts, or what I think; for any fool may know the thoughts of a man if he will tell them; but a wiſe man will collect what lodges in the thoughts unuttered, by that which is uttered in words darkly and indirectly; he will ſail in thoſe deep waters of the heart (as *Solomon* calls them) by a ſide-wind, by a half-wind, yea ſometimes by a contrary wind. He will collect meanings by remote intimations; as *Benhadad's* ſervants did when *Ahab* did but ſay, *he is my Brother* (1 *Kings* 20. 33, 34.) hence they inferred, that *Ahab* had thoughts of peace in his heart to *Benhadad*.

Secondly, A man may attain the thoughts of another by his ſilence. As he that ſaith nothing thinks the more; ſo much of a mans thoughts may be known, concerning a buſineſs by his ſaying nothing. Not to anſwer hath much of an anſwer in it, and to be ſpeechleſs is to ſpeak.

Thirdly, The thoughts of the heart are oftentimes known by the Countenance, and the heart is Printed upon the face (*Iſa.* 3. 9.) *The ſhew of their Countenance doth witneſs againſt them.* 'Tis likely enough that the people of whom the Prophet ſpake, ſhewed their ſin more wayes, then by *the ſhew of their Countenance*. They were ſo impudent that *they declared ther ſin as* Sodom, *and did not hide it:* yet the countenance will ſhew ſin, though it be otherwiſe hid. The face doth often betray the heart, and ſpeaks that which the tongue conceals. They who are critical and curious in ſtudying men whom they converſed with, obſerve the caſt of their eyes, and the changes of their countenance, as much as their diſcourſe; and in theſe they read a diſcovery of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The *Italians* have a Proverb, *That a man with his words cloſe, and his countenance looſe, may travel undiſcovered, what he is, or goeth about, all the world over.*

Fourthly, The thoughts of the heart may be known by the geſtures of the body. Some have no other way to make known their thoughts but by ſigns. They literally ſpeak with their feet, and teach with their fingers, as *Solomon* ſaith, many do in a figure (*Prov.* 6. 13.) Thus the dumb ſpeak; and thus the reſerv'd thoughts of thoſe who can ſpeak freely enough are ſometimes known. A nod with the head, a ſhrug with the ſhoulders, the folding or ſtretching out of the hands, the pointing of a finger, all or any of theſe tell the thoughts of the heart.

Fifthly, Thoughts are often known by events. A ſuddain accident opens the cloſet of the heart. So we may underſtand that ſpeech of old *Simeon* to the *Bleſſed Virgin* (Luke 2. 35.) *Yea a ſword ſhall paſs through thine own ſoul alſo, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.* That ſword was the heart-ſorrow which *Mary* conceived when her Son and Saviour ſuffered. This ſad event occaſion'd the revealing of many a mans heart, and the bringing forth of thoſe thoughts in the various tempers of men about it; which elſe, poſſibly, had never ſeen the Sun. The providences of God whether proſperous or afflictive, turn the inſide of many men outward, and make them appear as they are. And this two wayes, Firſt, The thoughts of a man are ſo revealed to himſelf; many would not believe that their own hearts had ſuch lodgers in them, ſuch proud, ſuch envious, ſuch timerous, ſuch revengeful, ſuch covetous, ſuch diſcontented thoughts, did not ſome providence draw them out. Secondly, Thus alſo the thoughts of other mens hears are revealed to us. 'Tis ſaid (*Deut.* 8. 2.) that the Lord led the children of *Iſrael* fourty years in the Wilderneſs, to prove them, and *to know what was in their hearts*; not that God needed to go ſo far about, or to fetch ſuch a compaſs to know what was in their hearts; but he ſpeaks there either after the manner of men, who by various turning and ſuddain events come to know the minds of others; or when 'tis ſaid, he did this *to know what was in their hearts*; the meaning is, he did it to make their hearts known (which elſe had been a ſecret) both to others and themſelves.

Sixthly, We may know the thoughts of another, by comparing his actions and the occaſions of them together; that which leads a man into any work, ſhews the bent of his heart. *Pilate* appear'd very unwilling to condemn and crucifie Chriſt, he ſtood long upon it, and contended with the *Jews* about it; but at the laſt, when the *Jews* cryed out (*John* 19. 12.) *If thou let this man go, thou art not* Cæſar's *friend.* When *Pilate* heard that ſaying, he brough Jeſus forth. His delivering up Chriſt, upon the occaſion of this ſpeech, plainly diſcovered the ſtrain of his thoughts, that they were covetous, ambitious, and cowardly thoughts; he was afraid to do juſtice, leſt he ſhould diſpleaſe *Cæſar*; he was afraid to deliver an innocent man, leaſt he himſelf ſhould be dealt with as a guilty man; he ſaw no rule why he ſhould condemn Chriſt, but when once they told him that he was not a friend to *Cæſar* if he did not, that word over-rul'd him. Thus his heart came out, and he appear'd thus thoughted, that rather then he would part with his Authority, he would part with a good Conſcience.

Yet be cautious in tampering about the thoughts of others; it is Gods Royalty to know thoughts, and therefore we ſhould not be over-buſie with them. It may quickly be our own ſin, and our brothers wrong, to be gueſſing at thoughts. And this hath cauſed many a breach, not only of the rules of love and charity, but of juſtice and righteouſneſs. 'Tis too bold an adventure to conclude peremptorily the meaning and thoughts of others, without clear conſequential proof, either in words or actions. If *Job* had not had more then bare preſumptions, his preſumption had been very blameable; while he ſaid, *Behold, I know your thoughts,*

And the devices which you wrongfully imagine againſt me.

This part of the verſe is of near affinity to the former. Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *And your injurious imaginations againſt me.* And another thus, *I know your endeavours to affright me.* The word which we tranſlate *devices*, is, as the learned in that Language tells us, of an ambiguous ſignification; ſometimes it is taken in a good, and often in an evil ſence. Which variety is uſually diſtinguiſhed and determined by ſome adjunct, antecedent or conſequent. The ſcope of this Text carrieth the worſer ſence, and the following adjunct (*wrongfully*) explains it ſo, *The devices which you wrongfully imagine againſt me.* This word is uſed (*Gen.* 11. 6.) when God complains of the builders of *Babell, This people are one, and they have all one language, and this they begin to do, and now nothing will be reſtrained from them which they have imagined* (or deviced) *to do.* Let the device be never ſo fooliſh and vain, never ſo proud and mad, while they are thus one, they will on, nothing ſhall reſtrain them. 'Twas an evil device which *Job* meant, when he ſaid, *I know the devices which you*

מומה *Vocabulum medium eſt, in bonam partem ſumitur & in malam.*

Wrongfully imagine againſt me.] The word which we render, *wrongfully imagine*, ſignifies to ſnatch a thing by force, or to offer violence. The Vulture, that bird of prey, is expreſſed in the Hebrew by this word, according to which propriety of the word, the Text may more ſtrictly be rendered thus, *I know your thoughts, and the devices which you violently catch up againſt me*; you act as if ye came rather to catch me, then to comfort me; ye hook in matters againſt me, and even ſtrain your ſelves to make me guilty. *Job* looks upon his friends, as if they had not conſidered his caſe in the ſimplicity of their ſpirits, or with ſincere intentions; but came as engaged men, to ſtudy arguments how they might oppoſe him, rather then reſolve and ſettle him: or as if they had ſet their wits awork, like them who contend for victory, rather then for truth, and deſire rather to pleaſe a party, then to maintain that which is right; *I know the devices which you wrongfully imagine againſt me.*

חמס *Eſt rapere & injuſtè facere.*

Note hence, Firſt, *Wrong doing begins at wrong deviſing.*

Thus wicked men combined againſt the Prophet (*Jerem.* 18. 18.) *Come, let us deviſe devices againſt him.* They did not find him guilty, but they reſolved to make him ſo; and becauſe they knew of no evil he had done, he muſt be as evil as they could deviſe or think him. Thoughts are the mould's of our actions, whether good or bad. And they

who

who intend no good to a man, can easily think evil enough of him.

Note Secondly, *Some rather then they will not wrong others, force a way to do it.*

So much the word Imports, you force devices against me; you put your selves hard to it, that you may deal hardly with me. As *Saul* said to *Samuel* (1 *Sam.*13.2.) *When I saw thou tarriest not within the dayes appointed, I forced my self therefore and offered a Burnt-offering.* As if he had done a kind of violence to himself, before he could bring his heart to do that service. Thus many a man forces himself to vex another, not because he wants a mind to do it, but because he wants matter to do it, because nothing appears naturally, he forceth every thing. And if no fault can be forced and fastned upon him, his very innocency shall be his fault, and his not-guiltiness his accusation. The Apostle speaks of some (2 *Pet.* 3. 16.) who offer violence to the word of God; *Unlearned and unstable men wrest the Scriptures*; they put the Scriptures upon the rack and torture them, to make them confess that sence or meaning which they have not at all in them, they studiedly draw forth interpretations which the Spirit of God never put into them. And thus some who are uncharitable and censorious, wrest the speeches and actions of men, or the dealings of God with them, and draw unnatural conclusions from them. *Job* apprehended himself under such an unfriendly force, as gave him just occasion to say, *I know the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me.*

The next verse holds out the intendment of this yet more clearly.

Vers. 28. **For ye say, Where is the house of the Prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?**

As in the former words *Job* asserts that he knew the thoughts of his friends, so in these he seems to tell us their thoughts. 'Tis a speech of like form with that (*Luk.*4.22, 23.) Where Christ prevents the thoughts of the *Nazarens*; *Ye will surely say unto me this Proverb, Physitian heal thy self*; I know what you will be saying, or objecting; *Physitian heal thy self*; *Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy Countrey.* Heal thy self, do miracles for thy self, that is, for thy own flesh and blood, for thy kindred and Country-men as well as for or among strangers. Thus here, I know your thoughts; for ye say, or this ye are about to say, *Where is the house of the Prince?* The Septuagint read, *Ye will say this*; as noting their perseverance, or persistance rather in that opinion, as if they had resolved to abide by it; I know, what ye have said, you will say; what ye have thought of me, ye will think of me still; ye will say, *Where is the house of the Prince? and where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* These words are uppermost in your thoughts now, and these thoughts ye are ready and resolved to form into these or the like words; *Where is the house of the Prince? &c.* These things had been said in effect before, while his friends so often minded him of the falls of Great Ones, and their dwellings. *Eliphaz* said it (*Chap.*15.34.) *The Congregation of hypocrites shall be desolate, and fire shall consume the Tabernacles of bribery.* *Bildad* said it (*Chap.*18.21.) *Surely such are the dwellings of the wicked, and this is the place of him that knoweth not God.* *Zophar* also said it (*Chap.* 20. 28, 29.) *The encrease of his house shall depart, and his goods shall flow away in the day of wrath. This is the Portion of a wicked man from God; and the heritage appointed to him by God.* These things ye have said, and I know your thoughts, ye will continue to say these things still,

Where is the house of the Prince? &c.

As if he had said, *Ye have indeed laid down this only in a general Thesis, but I am the Hypothesis*; I am understood, and the man aimed at in all your discourses concerning the overthrow of wicked men: ye might as well have spoken it out, *Where is the house of the Prince?* that is, of *Job*? *And where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* That is, *of my children, for 'tis I and mine whom ye mean.* Thus by a general discourse of the devastation of the dwellings of wicked men, they put *Job* into the same number; and concluded, because the same things, or the like, happened to him as to them, that therefore both they and he were alike.

Where is the house of the Prince?] First, Some interpret these words, as relating only to wicked men in general. As if *Job* had said, ye suppose that ye have sufficiently disproved my opinion, and proved me an hypocrite, by pointing me to the ruined houses of wicked Princes, and bidding me behold their desolations. As the Lord said to the hypocritical *Jewes*, (*Jer.*7.12.) *Go ye now to my place which was in Shiloe, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel.* So (according to this exposition) *Job* represents his friends, saying to him, Go to the house of the Prince, of this and that and t'other Prince, and see what work God hath made among them, and therein see what God hath already done to you, and what he will further do unto you, unless you humble your self and repent. As their houses are no where, so where is yours? But

Secondly, We may also expound it particularly of *Job's* house, and of the houses of his children. *Where is the house of the Prince?* That is, where is the house in which thou as a Prince didst formerly live and flourish? doth it not lie wast? where formerly there was a great concourse of men, there now Owls and Bats inhabit, there nettles and brambles grow. The Prince of the Land of *Uz* lived in much splendor and magnificence, but where's his house now? As much as to say, his house is no where, 'tis gone. When the wicked said to *David* (*Psal.*42.) *Where is now thy God?* Their meaning was, *Thy God is no where for thee*; he is not to be found for thy help; So here, *Where is the house of the Prince?* That is, 'tis down, 'tis in the dust. Thus he conceives them reproaching him with his former Glory.

Again, (say others) this upbraiding question may have respect to the house wherein he then remained as a leperous and diseased person. This man lived in a Palace, where is his house now? He dwells among the Leapers, his house is but a Pest-house, or an Hospital, he dwells among the diseased. See what a goodly Palace the Prince hath, *Where is the house of the Prince?* But I shall not insist upon this; as conceiving the word *house* not to be restrained here to the place or Palace where he either formerly or then lived, but to be extended to his whole outward state and condition. As *David* saith (2 *Sam.*23.5.) *Although my house* (that is, state and family) *be not so with God, &c.* And the same *David* reporting the vain dreams of worldly men, saith (*Psal.*49. 11.) *Their inward thoughts is that their houses* (that is, their great port and splendour) *shall continue for ever.* So here, *Where is the house* (that is, the riches, the relations, the train and retinue) *of the Prince?*

The word rendred *Prince*, signifies one that is liberal or free, a person open-handed and open-hearted, a man of a royal and bountiful spirit; So all Princes are expressed, because they ought to be so, and 'tis their honour to be so. Close-handedness or close-heartedness is most uncomely for a Prince; the Spirit of God hath the addition of this word (*Psal.* 51. 12.) *Uphold me with thy free* (or Princely) *spirit.* The Spirit of God is infinitely free and liberal, ready to do good to all: As if *David* had said, *O Lord, let me not have such a low spirit as formerly or lately I had when I yielded to the temptation of that base lust, to defile the wife, and murther the husband; O how narrow, how unprincely a spirit was this? Now Lord, uphold me with thy free Spirit, that I may never do any such unworthy act again. Let me always have a spirit touched with thy Spirit, the spirit of a Saint, that's a Princely spirit indeed.* The name of Princes tells us that they are, and themselves, that they should be of a free and large, of a noble and liberal Spirit.

נדיב *Liberalem, magnificum denotat; ubi est domus illius, qui in omnes munificus esse solebat? ivo icè dictum.*

The word used in the Greek for *Great Ones*, comes up to this sence (*Luke* 22. 25.) *The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them; and they that exercise Authority upon them are called gracious Lords*; or as we render *Benefactors.* As if all that Kings, as Kings, are to do, or their whole business, were to do good, or acts of Grace, they are called *Benefactors*, or, *Gracious Lords.* *Where is the house of the Prince?*

And where are the dwelling places of the wicked?

Here's a second Query, but 'tis of the same scope with the first. Mr. *Broughton* renders it, *Where is the Tent and*

Pavilion of the wicked? Another, *Where is the Tent of the dwellings of the wicked?* A third, *Where is the Tabernacle of the Tabernacles of the wicked?* That is, their chiefest Tabernacle, or their most glorious dwelling place. As if they had said; We do not ask where are the Cottages of poor wicked men, but where are the stateliest Palaces of the wicked, their Tabernacle of Tabernacles. Thus it answers that Hebraism which we have often in Scripture, to note any Superlative excellency; as, *A Song of Songs*, that is, the chiefest Song; and, *The holy of holies*, that is, the most holy place. So here, *Where are the Tabernacle of Tabernacles?* That is, the choice, the chief, the most beautiful Buildings that ever the wicked had? What's become of them? And here, as was said before of the house of the Prince, we must not understand the bare dwellings of the wicked, but all the port and greatness belonging to them.

אהל משכנות Ubi tentoria habitationū impiorum. Jun. i.e. *Magnificum ex multis habitationibus cōstans.* Jun. *Tabernaculū tabernaculorum*, i. e. *præcipuum habitaculū.* Lavat. *Quasi illarū ruinæ vestrā ad versum me sententiam confirment.* Bez.

Further, Some distinguish this part of the Verse from the former, by conceiving the Tabernacle here spoken of to be *a place for worship*, not an ordinary dwelling place; As if he had said, *Where are the stately Temples which hypocrites frequented? Job* was accounted hypocritically wicked by his friends, not prophanely wicked. Now (say they) his house is down, and his Chappel is down; his state is gone, and his Religion is gone, all is gone.

And whereas the former part of the verse speaks of a *Prince*, and the latter of the *wicked*; Some understand them of a distinct, and others of the same person, implying that Princes are commonly wicked; and that they who carry *Greatness* in their titles, seldom carry *goodness* in their hearts. Princes have the same corruptions in them, and more temptations round about them then other men; and therefore 'tis harder for a Prince then for a poor man not to be wicked. But I pass these things, though truths in themselves, because I cannot offer them with any confidence as the intendment of the Holy Ghost in this Text.

And having spoken before, oftener then once, of these devastations and ruines which God brings upon wicked men and their houses, I shall not insist upon any such observation here,

> Only Note, First, That, *the estates and houses of Princes, though strong and sumptuous, yet come to ruine and vanish as well as the meanest Cottages or the estates of meanest men.*

Where is the house of the Prince?] He doth not say, where is the house of the poor man? we can scarce see their houses above ground at the best. As bodily death breaks open the door of the Prince, as soon as of the poor man; so civil death or destruction takes hold upon the estate and house of the Prince, as soon and sooner, then upon the house or estate of a poor plebeian. These dispensations have a voice, and their voice like that in the Prophet saith, cry; *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth, but the word of God endureth for ever.* It will never be said, *Where is the word of the Lord? What is become of the Promises?* Some in the prophaneness of their hearts say, *Where is the promise of his coming? Where is the word of the Lord?* Yea some in the pride and blasphemy of their hearts say so of God himself, *Where is he?* But it can never be truly said, *Where is the word of God? Where is his Promise?* These shall abide, these have no seed of death or decay in them; *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one Iota, one title of the word of God shall in no wise pass away till all be fulfilled.* But of all the things of the world, the goodliness of man, the Pallaces of Princes, the dwelling places of the wicked, it will shortly be said, and of many of them it hath been said already, Where are they? what's become of them? they are even like withering flowers; as the grass withers, and the flower fades, so have those dwellings and estates which seemed to challenge all changes, and bid time do its worst. Secondly, Note,

> *Wickedness is the ruine of the houses and estates of Princes.*

'Tis sin that rots the timber; yea sin will rot the very stones, and cause the marble pillars to moulder away like dirt; sin hath brought a rot upon all worldly things, and blasted the beauty of the creature. The houses of Princes, with all their goodly array and furniture, will soon corrupt through the wickedness of Princes; *Where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* If any desire the resolution of this and the former query, or are yet doubtful and unsatisfied about them, The next verse puts them another question, which shews how and by whom they may be satisfied and receive a resolution of their doubts. Or taking the queries of the former verse, as put to *Job* by his friends, here *Job* puts queries to them. As if he had said, I know ye will enquire of me, *Where is the house of the Prince? &c.* But ye might spare my pains, for any one will answer your question if you will but ask him.

Vers. 29. Have ye not asked of them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?

Ye ask, *Where is the house of the Prince? Ask of them that go by the way?* Mr. *Broughton* renders, *Can't you ask them that go by the way?* You say where's the house of the Prince? what need you ask me? Can't you ask them that go by the way? The Vulgar reads it thus, *Ask any man that goes by the way, and you shall know that he understands these things*; ask the next man you meet, and he will inform you, *that the houses of many Princes prosper, and that the dwelling places of many wicked men flourish unto this day. Have ye not asked of them that go by the way?*

Interrogate quemlibet de viatoribus, & hæc eadem illum intelligere cognoscetis. Vulg.

Two things are here to be enquir'd into, for the clearing of these words.

First, About what they should enquire, or what's the thing to be asked.

Secondly, Who are these travellers or goers by the way, to whom the question is to be put, or who are to be asked?

First, What's the matter to be asked? Some conceive that *Job* bids them enquire about his dealings, with men, whether just or unjust, whether he had been an oppressour, or covetous, or proud? ask of them that go by the way and see if they can joyn in the report that you give of me? Surely you have made no enquiry of me, otherwise you would not make this judgment of me. Thus *Job* seems to speak, in his integrity, as *Samuel* did (*1 Sam. 12. 3.*) *Behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed, or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith, and I will restore it to you.* Can they who go by the way testifie any such thing of me; if they can, let them; if they cannot, why do you my friends judge thus of me?

Non interrogastis de me viatores & signa eorum quæ dixerūt vobis de justitia mea non potestis negare. Vatabl.

Secondly, Ask about the doctrine which I have held forth concerning the dealings of God with wicked men. You think I am departed from the truth because I maintain, that God useth much liberty in disposing the things of this life. But ask them that go by the way? hear their Judgment, they'le tell you, that wicked men sometimes prosper, and that Godly men are often afflicted in this world. Have ye asked this or that other question, or any question which tends to the clearing up of my innocency, or the resolving of this controversie between us? Have ye asked such questions *of them that go by the way*? But who are they? that's the second question.

First, Some understand the Text of those who are at the end of their way; who are no longer as passengers in this world, but are passed out of it. So the words are conditional, or spoken upon supposition; as if *Job* had said, *O that you could but ask some of those that have travelled through this world, and have ended the journey of this life, concerning the state of wicked men: if you had their testimony the whole controversie were at an end. We should not need to stand troubling our selves about their prosperity in this life, seeing they are shut out of all the comforts of the next life.* If we could lay our ears to the gates of hell, and hear what *Cain* saith, and what *Judas* saith, and what other damned wretches say, who have lived and died in sin and unbelief; they would satisfie us, that we need not fear wicked men shall not be punished enough, because they are not alwayes punished here.

Utinam liceret quemliber de viatoribus, qui confecto hujus vitæ itinere ex hac vita demigrarūt, convenire atq; testem proferre. Pined.

Secondly,

Secondly, Others understand the words Anologically; *Ask those that go by the way*; that is, ask the faithful? ask believers who are in the present state of travellers, pilgrims, and strangers in this world. As if *Job* had said, *If ye would be resolved about this thing, do not enquire of men that are worldly and carnal, who have their portion in this life; who have no Country but this below, who make this their end and their all. But I would have you ask those who make this world but their way, and do not take up their felicity here.* These are the only men that are likely to answer the scruple, and decide the question between us. But I wave this also, though it be a truth, that men who make this world their passage only, not their home, are best able to give an account about the dispensations of God in the world.

Qui nō constituunt fiē in bonis tēporalibus, sed per viam hujus vitæ transeunt ad terminū fœlicitatis futuræ, hi non habent mentē obscuratā pravis affectibus, & ideo rectè possunt judicare. Greg. Aquin.

Thirdly, *By those that go by the way*, say others, are meant *the Jews*; whose life was in a special manner a life of travel, from their going out of *Egypt* to their entrance into *Canaan*; As if he had said, *Enquire of that people who have the Oracles of God, to whom God hath communicated himself more then to any people in the world; go, ask them, enquire of them; they will tell you, they will give you tokens, and resolve this doubt. We dwellers in the land of* Uz, *have the mind of God somewhat obscurely revealed to us, but ask the wise men among the Jews, to whom the Oracles of God are committed, and among whom his Name is especially known by signs and wonders and tokens wrought among them; They will resolve you about this truth.* But I pass this also.

Viatores intelligit Israelitas qui exeuntes ab Egypto verā legē atq; revelationem mysteriorum susceperunt signis & prodigiis confirmatas, quos facilè audire & cōsulere potuissent amici Job. Burg.

Fourthly, Some of the Rabbins interpret yet higher of the old Patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, ask their judgment in this thing; ask what *Abraham*, what *Isaac*, what *Jacob*, thought of these things; ask those ancient *Hebrews*. The word *Hebrew*, signifies *A passenger*, or a goer by the way; and they (as some tell us) were so called from their uncertain motions. They going out of their own Land, and being for many ages but strangers and pilgrims in every Land. Yet others rather conceive that the Hebrews had their name from *Heber*, *Gen.*10.11. I leave this also, and conclude.

Hebræus à עבר *transire, quasi transiens, quod nomen impositum fuisse Abrahamo à Chananeis, contendit* Rab. Sal. *Ex quo dictus fuit Transitor, vel Trāseuphratæus sicut transelpinos vocamus.* Pined.

Fifthly, That when he saith, *Have ye not asked them that go by the way?* The meaning is either this, Have ye consulted with men of experience, who by long travel in divers Countries have made observation of the various providences of God? Or the words are proverbial, *Denoting men of ordinary capacity, men unlearned, or the vulgar*; As if he had said, *I need not refer this to some special men, to hear their award, I need not chuse the most wise, solid, grave, learned and judicious men to answer and resolve this doubt; but I dare refer my self, and my cause, to the next man I meet, to a meer stranger, be he what he will, learned or unlearned, if he be but a man that understands common sence, or is not a stranger to the reason of a man.* Thus the Latines, when they would express a thing that is commonly known, say, *Every blind man, every handy-crafts man knows this.* Thus here, to say, Every man that goes by the high way knows this, is as much as to say, 'tis a thing easily and universally known. So that *Job* by referring the umpirage and determination of this business to men that go by the way, asserts it a plain case, and such as might be determined (if his friends had been peaceable) with little study or trouble. *Job* spake this more roundly (*Chap.*12.7.) where he upbraids his friends with the same thing, and doth (as it were) refer the business to the Beasts. *Ask the Beasts and they shall teach thee, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee, &c.* This is so plain a case that the beasts of the Earth, and the fowls of the air may give a resolution in it, therefore, surely, they who go by the way may. *Ask them that go by the way.* I need not draw out a select Committee, the next traveller will serve the turn; *Have ye not asked them that go by the way?*

Quasi proverbiali loquutione, viatores dicuntur imperiti, ignari vel obvii quique. Quod Latinis Lippis & tonsoribus notum, id Idumæis forsan, viatoribus notum.

And do you not know their tokens?

The words may be read, *Certainly you will be able to know their tokens.* Some give the sence thus, *If the men you meet with, prove unable to express their minds, they will make signs significant enough to speak this; if they cannot debate and argue the case, yet they will hold up their hands and give a token of their consent with me in this point of difference between you and me.*

Secondly, These tokens or signs are rather Examples, of which travellers have store in their books or memories. As if he had said, *There is no traveller of note, but hath examples in his note book, yea scarce a common goer by the high-way-side, but can produce some president out of History or Experience to confirm what I have all along affirmed; Have ye never heard travellers tell stories of the greatness, power, and magnificence of wicked men?* And whereas we translate, *Do you not know their tokens?* the Hebrew may be thus rendred; *And their tokens you shall not be estranged (or alienated) from.* Though travellers and they that go by the way be strangers to you, yet they will give you plain tokens, such as you cannot be strangers to. Mr. *Broughton's* Translation consents to this. So *ye would not make their signs strange.* There will be so much clearness in what they say, that you will not be able to gainsay it.

Per signa intelliguntur exempla quæ veniunt alis sunt documento, hæ autem explicantur versibus sequentibus. Jun.

Signa eorum non alienabitis; vel, non aliena ducetis. Nunquamnō illos (scilicet viatores) magnificorū illorū potentiæ indicia commemorantes audivistis? Be:

Si... perfi... mi... quod viatores signa virarum observare solean memoriæ causa.

Lastly, When he saith, *Do you not know their tokens?* we may understand *Job* persisting in the metaphor of travellers, who to help their memory, have certain tokens to observe their way by, or what is remarkable in the way: If you enquire of them which is the way to such a place, they will give certain tokens: Such a tree, or such a house, such a Castle, or such a pillar. They will give you a token for every turning of the way, and do ye think they have made no observations about this thing? cannot they (think you) give such signs and tokens as may warrant your assent to what I have asserted. As if *Job* had thus more plainly formed his speech; *You seem much offended with my tenets about the afflictions of good men, and the prosperity of the wicked. But why are you ignorant of that, which they that go by the way can inform you in, and give you many pregnant examples and tokens of, which the unlearned know, or which you may learn of every Passenger you meet, that God deals variously with men; that sometimes the wicked prosper, and that only sometimes they are destroyed; that judgment comes suddenly upon some of them, and that others are reserved to the day of Judgment; This is such a known truth, that every Passenger is able to resolve you in it, and therefore 'tis very dishonourable for you to be ignorant of it.* Thus *Job* rebukes their negligence about, or their nescience of the point in question. *Have ye not asked them that go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?*

Reprehendit Job tam supinam in amicis ignorantiam quæ vel à viatoribus ipsis discere poterant ultra ignorare nunt. Merl.

Hence Observe, First, *Some doctrines and dealings of God are so plain, that any man may know them.*

There are wayes of God past finding out; you cannot know them, not only of the next man you meet by the way, but not of the wisest in the world, no nor in the meetings of all the wise men in the world. These met together, cannot shew you the hidden wayes of God. And as some Providences and works of God are dark, so also are some doctrines of faith: some truths are so mysterious, that they amaze the understanding of the wisest, and the more they are lookt into, the less they are seen. But there are both words and works of God very plain, so plain, that he who goes by the way may know them, the meanest capacity may reach them; they are milk for babes. As there are several degrees and measures of spiritual understanding, so spiritual things of several degrees and measures are presented to the understanding. And though there are some spiritual things which the highest understanding cannot fully reach, yet there are spiritual things enow both for the attaining of salvation hereafter, and the due ordering of our conversation here, which the lowest spiritual understanding may savingly reach unto, and they that go by the way resolve you in.

Secondly, Note, *What we know not our selves, we should be willing to learn of any, though (in many things) inferior to us.*

It is a sin not to know what is our duty, but it is more sinful not to enquire after it, though it be of them that go by the way. We should be ashamed of our ignorance, but let no man be asham'd to have his ignorance cur'd by the meanest helps. The holy Ghost sends the sluggard to learn his duty of the Pismire, *To consider her wayes, and be wise.* The Lord by his Prophet (*Isa.*1.) sends the *Jews* to the Ox, and to the Ass; *The Ox knows his owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib, but Israel hath not known;*

my people doth not consider. Unreasonable creatures may in some things act nearer reason, then some men, and may therefore teach such men reason; how much more may the meanest of men, ordinary way-goers, or carriers do it, who being endued with reason, are also furnished and adorned with Grace.

Thirdly, Note, *The Examples of former ages, are for our Instruction.*

As what was written aforetime was written for our Instruction; So what was done aforetime was done for our Instruction. All the former Examples of Gods dealing with good and bad, with the godly and with the wicked, are significations of his mind to us. What God hath done, shews us not only what he hath alwayes power to do, and may justly do, but what ('tis probable) he will do.

Lastly, Whereas *Job* sends his friends who were learned and wise men to common passengers for resolution, or assures them that even such might resolve them.

Observe, *The wise and prudent are sometimes ignorant of those truths which mean men have attained to.*

Wise men are not alwayes wise, much less are they alwayes wise in all things. They who know most, know but in part; and many know much, who know little or nothing of the better part. The eyes of some are darkned, and shut up by God. (*Mat.* 11.25.) *Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes*; that is, to mean men, to the poor and weak, to those that are but infants and children in knowledge. Not a few shut their own eyes, and their hearts are prepossessed with prejudices. They are hindred from receiving truth in the love of it, by the love of themselves and of the world. The Scribes and Pharisees were knowing and learned men; yet the men that went by the way, understood more of the Gospel then they: yea *Publicans and harlots* (who were the worst sort of people that went by the way) *entred into the kingdom of God* (that is, received the Gospel) *before them* (*Mat.*21.31.) The opinion which some have of their wisdom, keeps them on this side many points of wisdom. The Apostle saith, (1 *Cor.*1.21.) that, *The world by wisdom knew not God*; that is, not by their own wisdom. God is only known by wisdom (as it is our only wisdom to God) but he can be known by no wisdom but his own; that is, by no wisdom but that which himself gives. But it should seem by the Apostle, that a man cannot know God by that wisdom neither, for he saith in the same place, that *the world by wisdom knew not God* (*no not*) *in the wisdom of God.* And if God be not to be known in that wisdom, in what or by what can he be known? I answer, The wisdom of God there intended, is not the wisdom which God works in us by his Spirit; but the wisdom which man may see in the things which God hath wrought. So that when the Apostle saith, *In the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God*, His meaning is, that the wisest of men did not arrive at a saving knowledge of God (though they did arrive at a knowledge of God which left them without excuse, *Rom.* 1.) by beholding the frame of the creature, upon which very much of the wisdom of God is engraven. Yea not only do they fall short of the saving knowledge of God in that wisdom of God which may be read in the book of the creature, but in that wisdom of God also which is revealed in the book of Scripture. One of the Ancients compares the School-men, who were men of the largest parts and subtlest wits, to such as having good bread before them, did yet alwayes grate their teeth upon stones; or to such as having excellent wine before them, yet continually suck'd in the wind. For though they had the best Gospel doctrines and truths of God before them, yet they spent their time and talents about unprofitable questions and airy notions, which puff up, but do neither edifie nor nourish. So that whilst many simple honest souls (having truth of grace) found bread and wine in the word of God for the strengthening and refreshing of their hearts: These learned Rabbins did but whet their teeth upon stones, and fill their stomachs with the wind. And this caused one, more Ancient by much then the whole race of School-men, to cry out, *The unlearned and ignorant* (*the men that go by the way*) *rise up and take heaven, when many that grow old in the Schools and Chairs of the Learned, moulder away in Vanities and Niceties.* 'Tis not natural wisdom, nor acquired knowledge, that can give us a pure discerning of the things of God; 'tis possible for men that go by the way, for common ordinary men to understand the matters of faith and worship, as also the works of God, more solidly and soundly then they who bear the name of learned and knowing men. I am far from numbring *Job's* friends among formalists in knowledge; yet (which may give ground enough for this observation) *Job* seems to reckon their knowledge (as to the point in Question) below what might be both expected and found among men in degree and profession far below them.

urgunt inepti & cæcum rapiunt.

VERS. 30, 31.

That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.
Who shall declare his way to his face? and who shall repay him what he hath done?

THese two Verses make up the report, which they *who go by the way*, were supposed ready to make, had they been asked the Question; *Where is the house of the Prince?* or, *Where are the dwelling places of the wicked?* Their answer would have been to this effect.

Hoc est illud quod viatores vos docebunt, sæpe cum calamitates orbi à domino imituntur impios illas evadere. Merc.

Vers. 30. **That the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction; they shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.**

That the wicked is reserved.] The word which we render *reserved*, signifies to stop, hinder, restrain, or keep back. *David* speaketh thus upon the news of *Nabals* death, (1 *Sam.*25.39.) *Blessed be the Lord that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach, from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from avenging himself.* As God kept or stopt *David* from acting revenge for himself unduly, so the wicked man is kept or stopped by God from falling under the vengeance which is every way due unto him. Yet this stop hath a revenge in it; for, *he is reserved*, not so much from (though it be from) as to a day of destruction; as appears more fully in the words which follow.

In die calamitatis subtrahitur malus. Jun.

They shall be brought forth to the day of wrath.] The former clause is in the singular number, this in the plural, 'tis usual in the sacred language, (as hath been toucht formerly) to change numbers, while the same persons and things are intended: yet the change of the number in this place, may have this special intimation; that though, now, here and there, a wicked man, this or that single person may escape present judgement, yet they shall all be, as it were, chained together at last, and brought forth to a day of wrath.

Dies furorũ i. e. vehementissimi furoris.

The Hebrew is, *To the day of wraths*; that is, to the day of extream fierce wrath, when many wraths shall be wrapt up in one. The root signifies *to pass away*, and in *Hithpael* to *be angry and enraged*; because such anger passeth the bounds of reason sometimes, and alwayes passeth the bounds of ordinary moderation. And though the wrath of the Lord doth never pass the bounds of his own justice and righteousness, yet many times it passeth the bounds of mercy, or is wrath without mercy. To a day of such wraths, the wicked is reserved.

עברות a עבר

In conjugatione Hithpael significat vehemẽtèr & cum excessu quodam irasci.

So then (according to this interpretation) the *day of destruction* spoken of in the first part of the verse, is to be understood of lesser judgments; and *the day of wrath* in the latter part of the verse, of the most terrible and dreadful judgments; implying, that howsoever the wicked man may escape many black dayes, yea though he should escape all black dayes in this world, and die (as we say) in a whole skin, yet there is a day of wraths to which he shall be brought forth, and destroyed for ever.

In die contritionis prohibebitur malus ne attingat eum, contritio in die irarum ad quem ducuntur alii ipse prohibetur. Pagn.

Further, Some render, or rather paraphrase the whole verse, thus; *In the day of destruction the wicked shall be kept least evil touch him, and in a day of wrath to which others are brought forth he is spared and passed by.* As if the whole verse were of one tenour, and did expres in both parts of it the frequent impunity of wicked men; but I rather adhere to and rest in the sence of our own translation. In pursuance whereof the whole verse is by others read

Impius prohibetur ne parva afflictione attingatur, ideo in die iræ ſubiturus erit ingentes pœnas. Caje.

read thus; *That in the day of calamity the wicked are kept back, and are carried out in the day of wrath.* For that tranſlation in which both parts of the verſe ſpeak the ſparing of wicked men from puniſhment, is yet expounded only of a temporal ſparing. And the difference between our rendring and that, is only in the time, not in the thing. Or that ſpeaks only of their being ſpared, yet ſuppoſeth they ſhall be puniſhed at laſt; ours expreſſeth both their ſparing and their puniſhment. That is, they are ſpared or exempted from lighter afflictions or troubles; but a day of wrath is coming in which they ſhall be produced by the righteous judgment of God, and dearly pay for all. But whether we take the words according to this and our reading, or that other before remembred and inſtanced in, the ſcope and general tendency is one and the ſame, as will appear in theſe three following obſervations, grounded upon and riſing from them,

Pravis parcitur ad diē pernicieī & ad diem iraꝝ adducuntur. Tygur.

First, *Some wicked men are reſerved from preſent judgments, are hid in the ſtorms of common calamity.*

That's the point upon which *Job* inſiſts in anſwer to his friends, who not only took it for granted, that if ever any ſtorm aroſe it would certainly ſweep away the wicked, but that all ſtorms were prepared and ſent out on purpoſe for them alone. *Job* oppoſeth them in this, all the Chapter over, ſhewing that many wicked men flouriſh, they and their children, and that, though they are reſerved to a day of wrath, yet they are preſerved in many dayes of wrath; and that though they are under a ſentence of condemnation, yet they are reprieved from execution. The Lord to comfort his people in *Babylon*, tells them by the Prophet, (*Ezek.*11.16.) *I will be a little Sanctuary to them in the Countries where they ſhall come*; that is, I will protect them; God is ſomewhat like this to wicked men for a ſeaſon; though he be not a ſanctuary, yet he is a ſhelter to them, he hideth them for a time. But where doth he hide them? and what's their ſhelter? He hideth them in his patience, and long-ſufferance. When God hideth his own people from evil, they are hid not only in his patience, but in his love; God hides them in his heart, he layes them in his boſom, the love, the good will of God is their Sanctuary. But God never hides or ſhelters the wicked in his boſom, or in his love; they are not hidden in his heart. The ſouls of ſuch lodge not (as the margine of *Pſal.*25.13. tells us the ſouls of them who fear him do) *in goodneſs*. Their ſanctuary is only in the patience, and long-ſufferance of God. The patience and long-ſufferance of God, is the ſheath in which he hideth his ſword that it deſtroy not the wicked, as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Ezek.*21.3,4, 5.) *Say to the land of Iſrael, thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I am againſt you, and will draw forth my ſword out of his ſheath; Therefore ſhall my ſword go forth out of his ſheath againſt all fleſh, from the South, to the North, that all fleſh may know that I the Lord have drawn forth my ſword out of his ſheath, and it ſhall not return any more.* As if he had ſaid, *I will call in my ſword no more, it ſhall never find its way back again into my ſheath.* One of the Ancients puts the Queſtion, What is this ſheath to which the Lord ſaith his ſword ſhould not return? He anſwers, *The ſheath is the patience of God.* Now as the patience of God is a ſheath which hideth the ſword till it be drawn and receiveth Commiſſion to deſtroy the wicked of the earth, ſo the patience of God is a ſhelter to ſome wicked men, and hides them from deſtruction when the ſword is drawn. Thus they are reſerved in a day of deſtruction. And though they continue long in their ſins, yet the long-ſufferance of God may be a ſhelter to them. While the Preacher ſaith (*Eccl.*8.11.) *Becauſe ſentence is not ſpeedily executed againſt an evil work*, &c. He doth more then intimate that ſentence againſt an evil work is not alwayes ſpeedily executed: he doth not ſay, that ſentence againſt an evil work is not ſpeedily given or pronounced, for indeed the Lord never forbears an hour to give ſentence againſt an evil work, yet ſentence againſt an evil work is not alwayes preſently executed. The execution may be ſtay'd, though the ſentence be given. For as there is not any prayer that comes up with acceptation before the Lord, but an anſwer is given to it preſently, yet the anſwer is not performed preſently; a believer may wait long for the fulfilling of his requeſt, though his requeſt be preſently granted; ſo againſt

Regis ergo quæ ſit vagina in qua reconditur gladius? Reſp. eſſe longanimitatem dei. Theodor.

every evil work of a wicked man, the ſentence is given preſently, but every ſentence is not preſently executed. The ſame *Solomon* in the next verſe of the ſame Chapter makes another ſuppoſition, which alſo implies this poſition; *Though a ſinner doth evil an hundred times, and his dayes be prolonged.* Which ſuppoſition (though many ſuppoſitions in Scripture cannot) may be reſolved into this poſition, *That a ſinner doing evil an hundred times*, that is, *very many times*, (that great certain number is put for a great if not a greater uncertain number) *may yet, through the patience of God, paſs unpuniſhed, his dayes may be prolonged, and he reſerved from the touch of any affliction.*

Secondly, Obſerve, *A day of wrath is coming in which wicked men ſhall be brought forth to puniſhment.*

Though they eſcape many dayes of judgment, yet they ſhall not eſcape all dayes of judgment. The Prophet *Iſaiah* ſaith, (*Chap.* 57.1.) *The righteous periſh, and no man layeth it to heart, merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* Now as the righteous periſh, that is, die, and merciful men are taken away by death, few or none conſidering the deſign of God in it; that they are only taken out of harms way, or from the evil to come. So unrighteous men are preſerved from preſent periſhing, and are not taken away by a ſudden deſtruction, few or none conſidering the deſign of God in it, that they are only reſerved to the evil which is to come, and that their puniſhment is deferred to a day of greater puniſhment. We have a very remarkable paſſage to that purpoſe (*Jer.*12.3.) *Thou O Lord knoweſt me, thou haſt ſeen me, and tried my heart towards thee*, (he ſaid before of the wicked, that God planted them, and they took root, they were vigorous and flouriſhing, in fruitfulneſs, yet preſently he adds) *pull them out like ſheep for the ſlaughter*, (when are ſheep pulled out for the ſlaughter, is it not after they have been fatted in the green fields and pleaſant paſtures? then prayeth he, pull them out for the ſlaughter) *and prepare them for the day of ſlaughter.* Which ſome render (according to the ſtrictneſs of the letter) *Sanctifie them for the day of ſlaughter.* The Original word ſignifies *to ſanctifie.* But what meaneth the Prophet when he prayeth to ſanctifie them for the ſlaughter? if they had been ſanctified, that might have kept them from the day of ſlaughter; how then doth he ſay, *Sanctifie them for the ſlaughter?* I anſwer, *To ſanctifie them*, doth not imply the making of them holy, or the infuſion of grace, but only the ſetting of them apart, as perſons deſtinated to deſtruction. 'Tis a borrowed ſpeech taken from thoſe ceremonial rites which were uſed either about the preparing of beaſts for ſacrifice, or of perſons to partake of a ſacrifice, the Law commanding both to be ſpecially prepared and ſet apart for that purpoſe, (*Exod.* 12.3,4. 1 *Sam.* 16.5.) So that, it is as if the Prophet had ſaid, *Set them out, appoint them unto the day of deſtruction, let them be untouched of other evils, let no judgment meddle or have to do with them, as with ſacred things, till the great day of ſlaughter come upon them.* The Vulgar gives that reading (*Amos* 6.3.) which I approve not as conſonant to the Original; we read it better actively deſcribing the evil frame of voluptuous and ſenſual men, whoſe belly is their God, and who are ſwallowed up in pleaſure, *They ſing to the ſound of the Viol, they lie upon beds of Ivory, and put far from them the evil day.* Their work all the day long is to do evil, and yet they *put the evil day afar off from them.* This is the ſence of our tranſlation. But the tranſlation lately mentioned renders the Text paſſively; not as if they had ſeparated or put far from them the evil day, but as being by the juſtice of God put upon, or ſeparated and ſet apart to the evil day. *Ye are ſeparated unto, or for the evil day.* As if it had been ſaid, *Ye have all this while lived at the higheſt rate of voluptuouſneſs and ſenſuality, and ſeem removed at furtheſt diſtance from an evil day, yet ye are only marked out, and ſeparated for the evil day.* All the evil dayes which ye have hitherto eſcaped do but lead you to an evil day, from which there will be no eſcaping. *Solomon* aſſerts as much (*Prov.*16.4.) *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf*, ('tis the priviledge and happineſs of God to be his own end in all that he doth; whereas nothing doth more aggravate the unholineſs of man in what he doth, then to make himſelf the

Sanctificabo eos in die occiſionis ſervabo inte- ctos uſq; diem occi- nis cui de- ſtinati ſu-

Separati iſtis in di malum, i. longe ſemo à præſenti bus malis. Separati ſtis in die malū. Vul

end of doing it, but, *The Lord hath made all things for himself) yea even the wicked for the day of evil*; That is, he hath destinated them for that special day, in which he will call them to an account, and manifest the glory of his justice upon them. A Learned Hebrician gives his opinion, that this Text in the *Proverbs*, may be thus translated more suitably to the Original; *God hath made every thing for that which shall be answerable to it, even the wicked for the day of evil.* Now what is more answerable to a wicked or an evil man, then an evil day; sin and sorrow will meet at last, and do alwayes best match together. *The wicked may often escape trouble, but they are never delivered from it:* all their preservations from evil, are but reservations to further evil. *The Lord* (saith the Apostle *Peter*, 2 *Epist.*2.9.) *Knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished.* The knowledge of the Lord extends to both, he knoweth wayes enow, he hath many wayes in store to deliver the Godly; but (considering the tenour of his revea'ed will) he knoweth no way to deliver the wicked, they having refused all wayes of his appointment for their own deliverance. Therefore as to them he knoweth only (and for that he knoweth many wayes) how to reserve them to the day of judgment to be punished.

Tremellius.

Thirdly, By way of deduction or corollary from the whole verse, take this Observation,

Wicked men are not spared in mercy, but in wrath.

Their sparing is to smiting, and the salvations which they have (if they may be called salvations) are to destruction. When ever they are reserved from judgment, 'tis only that they may (in fittest season) be brought to a greater judgment; there is no mercy in such sparing. The long-suffring of God hath a tender of and a tendency to mercy in it; but wicked men who go on in their sins get nothing but more blows, while the patience of God doth (as it were) hold his hand from smiting them. As the Apostle is express (*Rom.* 2.4,5.) *But thou after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.* A wicked man makes a very ill market of the long day of patience. The treasure that he gets is all *black money*, his earnings are wrath, and that against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. And so, that patience, which, in it self, is an act of grace, proves, in the event, an aggravation of his sin. 'Tis better not to be spared, then not to be bettered by it. The stroak is the heavier, and wounds the deeper when it comes, by how much it is the longer before it cometh. Which some note from the Hebrew word here translated *wrath*, which in the Verb signifies both to be angry, and to defer, protract, or put off. From the Analogy of which two significations, we may infer, That when God doth only forbear to shew his anger he is indeed most angry, and that the slowness of punishment shall be recompenced in the weight of it. In the time that wicked men are spared they sow more seed of sin, and so they must reap the greater harvest of wrath. For, as a river which is stopped up by some Lock, when that is removed, poureth it self forth with greater violence; or as an arrow the further it is drawn back from the mark by a strong arm, flies the more swiftly to the mark when it is discharged, and makes the deeper impression in it; so all the stops, defers, and draw-backs of divine wrath, do but procure and draw out the fierceness and violence of it against all abusers of divine patience.

Job having thus declared the report of the travellers concerning wicked men (*That they are reserved to or in a day of destruction, and brought forth to a day of wrath*) gives us also a report of the frame of their spirits; and as he had intimated, that God spares them long, so he tells us plainly why men do.

Vers. 31. **Who shall declare his way to his face? who shall repay him what he hath done?**

o declei verba i mihi fa- e persua- q. cc.

Some interpret this verse in application to God; *Who shall declare the way of God to his face?* And so 'tis the answer of a secret objection, which he possibly might make to whom that report should be made. *The wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, &c. Why should not a wicked man have present punishment? Why should he live in pleasure, who is unworthy to live? Why should God exercise so much patience, and not cut him off from cumbring the ground?* To these bold interrogatories, the Text answers (according to this interpretation) by two more.

Quis stare audebit ante faciem dei, ad annunciandum ei quomodo in hoc procedere debeat. Bold.

Who shall declare his way to his face? Who shall repay him? &c.

That is, *Who shall take upon him to argue this with God? or find fault with the way of his dealings with the most faulty men? Who shall do this? Let me see the man that dares.* So it suits well with that (*Chap.* 9.12.) *Behold, he taketh away, who can hinder him? Who shall say to him, what dost thou?* And 'tis of the same sence with that of *Job* again (*Chap.* 23.13.) *But he is in one mind, who can turn him? what his soul desireth, that he doth.* We may parallel it also with the two and twentieth verse of this Chapter, *Shall any teach God knowledge? seeing he judgeth those that are high.* What if God reserve the wicked man to the day of destruction, who shall say, why doth he so? Who shall challenge him for so doing? The latter branch is likewise rendred in compliance with this interpretation; *He hath done it* (or disposed of it) *who shall reply upon him for what he hath done?* The word (as this Author tell us) signifies not only to *repay* or *return by action*, but by word. To reply or retort a thing upon another, is a kind of repayment of it. This is a fair sense, and a great truth. The Lords actions are unquestionable, both in smiting the Godly, and in sparing the wicked; as hath been shewed upon divers overtures given in this Book. Yet

Et hoc disposuit, quis replicabit ei? Bold.

Secondly, I rather conceive the wicked man to be the subject, and person intended in this verse.

Who shall declare his way to his face? As if he had said; *This wicked man is so sturdy and sullen, so big and boisterous, that no man dares speak to him, or declare that to his face which he is ready enough to do in the face of every man.* As if he had said; *This man is not only not smitten with the sword of God, but not with the word of man; he goes on without check or controul; as God doth not, so man dares not meddle with him, either by way of punishment or reproof. Who shall declare his way to his face?* The word (I grant) here used to *declare*, signifieth only a bare *declaration*, as to tell a story, or make a narrative, and so, *to declare*, put alone, is no more then to speak. But *to declare to the face*, implies both boldness and smartness in speaking. So the Vulgar renders it, *Who shall rebuke his way to his face, or before him?* who shall reprove the sinful way, the wicked course he liveth in. The constant and usual practice of a man, whether good or evil, is commonly called *his way* in Scripture.

Quamvis verbum originale simplex sit & lene, tamen ex eo quod sequitur (in facie ejus) videtur vim accipere & ad scelerata vita reprehensionem pertinere. Pined.

Quis arguet coram eo? &c. Vulg.

Who shall declare his way to his face?] Possibly some will speak afar off, or behind his back, but who will tell him his own plainly, and to his face? In which sense the word is used (*Gal.*2.11.) *When Peter was come to Antioch, I* (saith *Paul*) *withstood him to his face*; That is, I did not go to the Disciples and brethren, and tell them that *Peter* had done amiss, but I came to *Peter* himself, and dealt roundly with him. Many will speak truth enough of the wicked at a distance, and tell stories of their wayes in corners, but 'tis not every mans work to declare their way to their face, or to shew it as a glass shews a man the spots of his face; which is the emphasis of the word here used.

Hence Observe, First, *Many wicked men are not convinced of their wickedness, nor is it an easie matter to convince them.*

And as there is alwayes difficulty in it, so sometimes there is danger in it; to do so is like taking a Bear by the tooth, or a Lyon by the beard. They act blindly, and therefore boldly; and he had need be bold who declares against their actings. Some sin against light, many sin for want of light. Some do evil against their knowledge, many are not perswaded that they have done evil. Of such the Prophet speaks, (*Jer.*2.34,35.) *Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the poor innocent; yet thou sayest because I am innocent, surely his anger shall turn from me;*

(they

(they were polluted with blood, and yet clean in their own opinion) *Behold, I will plead with thee, because thou sayest I have not sinned.* As if the Lord had said, *I will declare thy sin to thy face*, because thou sayest *thou hast not sinned*; Thou sayest who can charge me, who can say black is my eye; *Behold, I will plead with thee, and shew thee how black thou art.* 'Tis hard to declare sin to their faces, who say in their hearts *they have not sinned.* The Prophet is commanded (*Isa.*58.1.) *Lift up thy voice like a Trumpet, cry aloud, spare not, shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.* They see not their sins, therefore shew them their sin, they call their evil wayes good, and their transgression obedience; such must have a voice lifted up like a Trumpet to make them hear. All who are dead corporally, shall at last hear the voice of the Angels Trumpet; but they who are dead spiritually, will not hear that voice which sounds like a Trumpet, unless the Spirit of God be in the voice of man.

Secondly, Note, *It is a duty to declare the wayes of wicked men to their faces.*

Though every man be not called to be a reprover, and though no man be called to be every mans reprover; yet every sin calls for reproof, and some or other are called to reprove it; some should speak plain English, and home to sinners, and rebuke them not only in a parable, or in the clouds, by remote intimations, but directly and to their faces. *Them that sin* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Tim.*5.20. that is, who sin openly and scandalously) *rebuke before all*, rebuke them to the faces of others. And how secretly or privately soever any man sins, he should be rebuked to his own face, freely, and clearly. Some commit their abominations as the Prophet *Ezekiel* shewed in vision (*Chap.* 8. *vers.* 8, 9.) behind a wall. *And he said unto me, Son of man dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door, and he said unto me, go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.* Though men sin out of sight, and use a kind of modesty in committing their abominations, yet the wall must be digged, and the door must be opened, and they who possibly were ashamed to do evil, unless behind the backs of others, must be told of it to their faces.

Thirdly, Observe, *That there are not many to be found who dare declare the wayes of wicked men to their faces.*

When the Lord said (*Isa.*6.8.) *Whom shall I send; or who will go for us?* That inquiry intimated that there were not many to be had fit for such a service as was there charged upon the Prophet (*vers.*9,10.) So when *Job* saith here, *Who shall declare their way to their face?* It argues that there are not many fit, much less forward to do it. To reprove any for sin is a hard service, especially such as are rich and Great. The flattering Prophet *Amaziah* would not endure, that down right *Amos* should propheſie at *Bethel*, (*Amos* 7.12,13.) *And Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou Seer, go flee to the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and propheſie there, but propheſie not again any more at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chappel, and it is the Kings Court.* As if he had said, go into the Villages and reprove the Countrey people as much as thou wilt, but take heed of medling with Princes. It is no wonder, that *Amaziah* could not bear *Amos* preaching reproofs at Court, but it is a great wonder that *Amos* had the holy boldness to do so. 'Tis rare to have the wayes of wicked Princes pleaded to their faces; Kings have clouds in their brows, as well as Crowns upon their heads, and are terrible to their reprovers; They command silence with a look, and would be adored as Gods, not reproved as men. The Prophet *Jeremiah* being sent to reprove high and low to their faces, complaineth (*Chap.*15.10.) *Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast born me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth.* Why was *Jeremy* a man of strife and contention? What! because of his proneness to contention, or because he was of a quarrelsome spirit, and loved to fish in troubled waters? No, his contentiousness was not from his disposition, but from his Commission; not from the temper of his spirit, but from his calling. He was a quiet and peaceable Prophet, but he was commissiond to propheſie terrours and troubles; he was sent forth to declare the way of that people to their faces, and he was faithful in doing it, he spared none; and therefore though he medled not *in buying, or selling, in giving upon usury, or taking upon usury*, though he had no worldly negotiations among them, nor mingled himself with those affairs which usually cause strife and contention among men, yet *he was a man of contention.* The Egyptian Lawes made it a capital crime for any to call the Idol *Serapis* a man, or to number him among mortals, and therefore ('tis said) they placed the Emblem of silence in all those Temples where his image stood, and he was worshipped; implying that all must be husht, and not a word spoken in derogation of him. Thus wicked men would impose silence upon all (but such as flatter them) least their wayes should be discovered. Their wayes and their tongues are their own, who is Lord over them; yet they would Lord it over all mens tongues, that none may dare to declare their wayes. And as few dare, so there are not many fit to declare their ways to their faces. To do so, requires; First, a man of knowledg and understanding, and, which is more, Secondly, a man of prudence and discretion; and which is yet more, it requires, Thirdly, a man of uprightness and integrity; yea which is more rare, Fourthly, a man of self-denial and contempt of the world. A conjunction of all these qualifications in one man is not to be found under every hedge, no nor in many well built houses. Where shall we find a man of all these ingredients? A man of knowledg, prudence, integrity, self-denial, and contempt of the world, is a kind of wonder in the world, and therefore who shall declare the wicked mans way to his face? When the Lord sent forth his Prophets to declare the wayes of wicked men to their faces, how doth he prepare and arm them for the work, lest they should be discouraged and withdraw from it. The Prophet *Jeremy* is not only cheared up, but threatned to it (*Chap.* 1.17.) *Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, speak to them all that I command thee, be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.* Least danger should deter him from speaking to their faces, God sets a greater danger before his face if he did not speak. So again (*Ezek.* 2. 3, 4.) *And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious Nation, &c. For they are impudent children* (or *hard of face*) *and stiff-hearted: I do send thee unto them, and thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord God: and they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, for they are a rebellious house, yet shall know that there hath been a Prophet among them.* *Ezekiel* being to do this Message, the Lord cautions him, (*vers.* 6.) *And thou son of Man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among Scorpions, be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks.* When they, their words, their looks were all dreadful, when in dealing with them the Prophet was to deal with briars, thorns, Scorpions, had he not need to be well backt and supported? When the Prophet *Michah* was to declare the wayes of wicked men to faces, see how he was empowered; *Truly* (saith he, *Chap.* 3.8.) *I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.* Who but an *Eliah* could have declared the sin of *Ahab* to his face? and who but the Baptist, (who came in the power and spirit of *Elias*) could have declared the sin of *Herod* to his face, not only to the peril, but loss of his own head?

Fourthly, By way of Corollary, Observe, *That some wicked men are usually flattered.*

They are flattered to their faces, and reproached behind their backs; and they who will not be reproved to their faces, shall be sure to have store of reproaches behind their backs.

Lastly, Observe also by way of Corollary, *It is a part of the misery of wicked men not to be reproved.*

As it is their sin that they will not be reproved, so their misery that they are not; they indeed look upon it as their priviledge that they are above reproof, that they can sin and no man say, why do ye so? That though (as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.*49.13.) *their way be their folly, yet* not only (as it follows there) *their posterity*, but their contemporaries, or they who are present with them, *approve both their sayings and their doings*, saying yea, to their yea, and nay to their

constitutu est ut quis quis illum homirē in se dixiſſet capitale pe deret pœna & quoniā in omnibus templis ubi colebatur I & Serapis erat etiam ſi nudachrus quod digit labiis im preſſo adm nere videre tur ut ſilen tium fieret hoc ſignifi care Varro exiſtimabat ut homines eos fuiſſe fa cerctur. Auguſt. l. 18 de Civitat. dei. c. 5.

their nay, chiming in with all their opinions and actions. Thus they pleaſe themſelves in being alwayes pleaſed by others, which yet is at once their miſery and their curſe; for by this means they hear any thing rather then the truth of their own wayes and practices, and are deprived of the greateſt benefit of friendſhip and humane ſociety, faithful admonition. What ſhould a man deſire more of a friend then to be made better by him, or to be admoniſhed in what he doth amiſs. The Lord (*Hoſ.* 4.4.) threatens it as one of the ſoareſt judgments, *Let no man ſtrive*; He doth not mean it of corporal ſtrife, or of ſtriving with blowes and weapons, but of a ſtrife by convictions or arguments: ſo 'tis expounded in the next words; *Let no man ſtrive or reprove another.* To reprove another is to ſtrive with him for his good; And 'tis one of the ſaddeſt reproofs and greateſt evils that can fall upon man, when God ſaith, *Let no man reprove another.* When once God ſaith of a ſinner, *he ſhall not be reproved*, 'tis *more then probable that he hath ſaid of his ſin, it ſhall not be pardoned.* The Lord parallels their ſins, of whom he ſaid, *Let no man reprove another*, with the greateſt ſin; *For thy people are as they who ſtrive with the Prieſt.* They who then ſtrove with the Prieſt, ſtrove with God himſelf, in whoſe name the Prieſts adminiſtred holy things. When any ſo ſtrive with men that they ſtrive with God alſo, no marvel if God forbid men to ſtrive with them any longer. To be reproved hath ſo much good in it, that to be reproved is better then to be loved. *Solomon* aſſures us (*Prov.* 27. 5,6.) That *open rebuke is better then ſecret love; faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kiſſes of an enemy are deceitful.* By the wounds of a friend, he means not ſword-wounds, but word-wounds, or thoſe blows which a friend gives by rebuking; *Faithful are theſe wounds of a friend*; That is, by theſe a friend gives teſtimony of his faithfulneſs. *But the kiſſes of an enemy*; That is, his flatteries and ſoothings are deceitful; that is, they teſtifie his deceitfulneſs. Many betray their friends with theſe metaphorical kiſſes, as *Judas* did Chriſt with a literal kiſs. Theſe are killing kiſſes, bloody kiſſes. *David* prayeth for ſmitings, in oppoſition to theſe kiſſings, (*Pſal.* 141. 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me*, how? with his hand or ſword? No, yet ſuch ſmiting is far more eligible then that kind of kiſſing, but let the righteous ſmite me with his word, with his tongue, as the next words explain his meaning) *Let him reprove me, and it ſhall be as an excellent oyl that ſhall not break my head.* This Law was given the *Jewes*, that they ſhould exerciſe their love in rebukes, (*Lev.* 19. 17.) *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* To hate a brother and not to rebuke him are equivalent expreſſions in that Law; and we may thence alſo infer, that as it is a ſin to hate our neighbour, and an affliction to be hated by our neighbour, ſo it is a ſin not to rebuke our neighbour, and an affliction (when there is cauſe) not to be rebuked by him. And he who wiſely declares a mans ſin to him, declares his love to him; and beſtowes as many kindneſſes upon him, as he doth deſerved reproofs. *Who ſhall declare his ſin to his face?*

Yet further, when *Job* ſaith, *Who ſhall declare, &c.* We may expound it not only of declaring by reproof, as one friend declares the ſin of another to him, or as the ſins of men are declared by the Miniſters of the Goſpel. But we may take it for a judiciary declaring, and that two wayes; Firſt, by way of evidence; Secondly, by way of ſentence. A witneſs declares the way of a wicked man to his face (for the witneſs and he that is witneſſed againſt, ought to come face to face) by giving evidence. A Judge declares the way of a wicked man to his face by giving ſentence. Thus 'tis as if *Job* had ſaid; Who dares either be a witneſs to accuſe, or a Judge to condemn this wicked man. Which ſence doth ariſe more fully from the laſt words of the Text,

And who ſhall repay him what he hath done?

That is, who ſhall puniſh him according, or up to the deſert of his deeds. This follows clearly from what was ſaid before; if no man can be found to declare his way to him, or to tell him what he hath done, then ſurely none will be found to repay him what he hath done. And therefore no marvel if the wicked man paſs untoucht through the world; God oftentimes ſpares him in wrath, and men ſpare him oftener for fear. Men dare not puniſh, and God will not puniſh him here, therefore this man muſt needs eſcape unpuniſhed.

Hence Note, Firſt, *Puniſhment is payment, juſtice is the giving of every man his due.*

The Original word here tranſlated *repay*, notes the ordinary paying of a debt, and in its firſt ſignification to make peace. And the reaſon is, becauſe both when any man payeth his private debt, he procures his own peace by it; as alſo when Magiſtrates pay wicked men their due judicially, the publick hath peace by it; and that not only from the promiſe of God, but alſo from the very nature of the thing. When juſtice payeth every man his due, both reward and puniſhment, who can complain? or be adhered to, if he do? When Juſtice runs down (as it ought) *like a ſtream*, (that is, freely and indifferently to all) *Then peace ſhall be* (as 'tis promiſed) *like a river*; that is, comfortable, and continued unto all. When the juſtice of man is like the juſtice of God (which now awards to every man according to his deeds, and will at laſt render to every man according to what he hath done, whether it be good or whether it be evil) when (I ſay) the juſtice of man is thus (in proportion) like the juſtice of God) then the peace of man ſhall be (in his proportion) like the peace of God, a great and a laſting peace. It breeds as much trouble to States and Nations, when offenders are not paid according to what they have committed; as it doth to private perſons when their creditors are not paid according to what they have borrowed. Again, when *Job* ſaith, *Who ſhall repay him what he hath done?*

He implies this ſecond Obſervation,

That, *Some wicked men do even out-grow the reach of mans juſtice.*

They are ſo fortified with power, with riches and relations, that there's no coming at them; Where ſhall we have a witneſs to declare the truth againſt them according to his knowledge of the fact? Where ſhall we have a Judge that will declare the truth againſt them according to his knowledge of the Law? or having given ſentence, will ſee it executed? no man ever out-grew the juſtice of God, but many have out-grown the juſtice of man; not that the greateſt of men are at any time priviledged from the juſtice of man, but becauſe many times juſtice is over-born by great men. For as ſome men are ſo low, weak, and miſerable, that only God hath power enough to raiſe and heal them, they are ſo far gone (as we ſay) that the creature cannot cure or recover them, and therefore we uſe to ſay of ſuch, that *we leave them to the mercy and power of God, we can do no more, the Lord muſt help you, for we cannot*; Now as ſome men are ſo weak and low, that we muſt leave them to the help of God, ſo there are others ſo high and great, ſo ſtrong and powerful, that we muſt leave them to the juſtice of God. And (to be ſure) as the day of divine juſtice hath been, ſo it will be upon thoſe that are lifted up, as well as upon thoſe that are low, upon the ſtrong Oaks and tall Cedars, as well as upon the muſhrooms and the ſhrubs. God will repay every man what he hath done, though man neither doth nor can.

VERS. 32, 33, 34.

Yet ſhall he be brought to the grave, and ſhall remain in the tomb.

The clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet unto him, and every man ſhall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him.

How then comfort ye me in vain, ſeeing in your anſwers there remaineth falſhood?

IN the former verſe the wicked man was repreſented ſo ſtout and daring, that no man durſt check him, or ſhew him the ugly viſage of his wayes in the glaſs of truth. But (as our tranſlation ſeems to carry it) this verſe checks him to purpoſe; and whereas none durſt declare his way to his face, this declares his end to his face. Though (as *Nabals* ſervant ſaid of him, 1 *Sam.* 25. 17.) *he were ſuch a ſon of Belial, that a man could not ſpeak to him*, yet death ſpeaks with him.

Verſ.

Vers. 32. **He shall be brought to the grave, and remain in the tomb.**

Let men be as stout as they will against God or man, yet to the grave they must. This may be a cooler to wicked men when they are in their greatest heats, and a block in their way, when they are most forward to pursue *the way of their own hearts*, that is, *their lusts*. Do or say what they can, they must return to the dust, their stiff-necks must stoop, and look into the grave, into the dark and silent grave. *Solomon* hath an excellent expression of this (*Eccl.* 8.8.) *There is no man hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit*; that is, as the word *Spirit* is often used (*Gen.* 6. 19. *Job* 7. 7. *Isa.* 42. 5.) no man hath power over his breath or life to retain it. The strength, authority, wisdom, and industry of man, cannot hold his life when once death, by commission from God, calls for it: *And* (as it follows in the same verse) *there is no discharge in that war.* The Original word translated *discharge*, signifies, *mission* or *sending forth.* When death assaults and makes war upon us, 'tis in vain either to send out forces to make resistance against it; or to send out Ambassadours to make peace with it. Some have made a covenant with death (*Isa.* 28. 15.) but none could ever make peace with it; as no force, so no treaty nor entreaty can stay it, when 'tis resolved to come. And as there is no mission, so (according to our reading) there is no discharge or dismission in that war. No man can have leave to depart the field and go home, when he is summon'd to depart the world, and go to his long home. And therefore the same *Solomon* while he seems to give the young man liberty, bidding him take his full swing, (*Eccl.* 11. 4.) *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, let thy heart chear thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thy eyes*, yet gives him a check at parting, *But know thou that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment.* In this Text *death* is the stop, and in that *judgment.* Though a man wallow in pleasure, and live in sin all his dayes, yet God will bring him first to death, and after that to judgment; *Yet he shall be brought to the grave, &c.*

Occupatio objectionis. Jun.

Secondly, These words are conceived as the prevention of an objection against the whole matter before spoken. For *Job* having asserted the outward prosperity of wicked men, in opposition to his friends; some might say, what do you speak so much of, and cry up their prosperity, they die, they are brought to the grave, they rot and consume there as well as other men. To this *Job* is supposed answering three things.

First, That he had done enough, as to the establishment of his own tenet, when he proved that many wicked men live a peaceable and flourishing life; he never undertook to prove that they were exempted from death, or priviledged from the grave.

Secondly, Let it be, that they die, that's no argument against their prosperity; for their very death is a kind of prosperity; *verse* the thirty third, *The clods of the valley shall be sweet to him.*

Thirdly, That there is no reason why this should be objected to stain the present prosperity of the wicked man; for as much as this is the lot of every man; in the latter part of the thirty third verse; *Every man shall draw after him, as there are innumerable before him.*

Perstat adhuc Job *in suo illo proposito confirmando sc. sæpe impios vivere fælices nec non supremum etiã funeris honorem conferri illis amplissimè.* Pined.

Thirdly, For the understanding of these words, *Yet he shall be brought to the grave*, I conceive that *Job* here continues his own discourse, and confirms that opinion which he had before laid down, concerning the prosperity of wicked men, rather then answers objections against it. As if he had said, *Such live happily, yea and they die happily too, or they have a kind of happiness in their death, as much happiness as the natural man is capable of in death.* So that, whereas ye my friends have affirmed, that if God do at any time spare a wicked man while he lives, or suffers him to live comfortably, yet God will surely brand him with some remarkable judgment at his death. I affirm, That many wicked men live in plenty, die in peace, and are brought to their graves with honour.

Yet, or as some render, *yea, he shall be brought to the grave*; As if he had said, besides all that I have spoken of the outward felicity of the wicked man, I add this further, *He shall be brought to the grave.* But what is there of singularity or priviledge in this? a man that lives in misery and dies a beggar is yet usually brought to a grave when he is dead: And he that hath been a meer attendant or a slave all his dayes, shall yet have some to attend his body to the burial. I answer, The Hebrew word signifies not only the common action of bringing to the grave; in which sense 'tis used (*Job* 10. 9.) *Remember I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again?* That is, shall I die presently and return to the dust out of which man was moulded at the first. But besides this ordinary sense of the word, there is a higher, which denotes a studied preparation, or a kind of pompous celebrity in bringing man to his grave. And the state and pomp of men while they live, is usually suited with a funeral pomp when they die. In strictness the word implies a bringing to the grave with sound of Trumpets, which instruments render a doleful tone as well as a pleasant, and can make sorrowful as well as joyful musick. Trumpets were so much used in the year of Jubilie, that the Jubilie is so called from a Trumpet. Death is to some in every respect a day of Jubilie, they attain freedom from all evils; and it is a day of Jubilie to all in some respects, every man receives freedom by death from many evils.

יובל *Denotat pompã quãdam & apparatum deducendi cũ cantu & musicis instrumentis, hinc Jobel Buccina cujus in Jobeleo usus erat.*

Thus the wicked man *is brought to the grave*; that is, he hath an honourable and a solemn burial; His dead carkass is not thrown into a ditch, he hath not (as *Jehoiakim* was threatned, *Jer.* 22. 19.) the burial of an Ass, to be drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of the City, (as the burial of an Ass is there described by the Prophet) but he hath even a whole City to accompany and carry forth his corps to the place of burial. He hath mourners at his funeral, and he hath his funeral musick, to heighten the affection of sorrow. Such usages are reported by Heathen Poets at the more pompous interments of their dead. And we find the footsteps of that custom in the Gospel, (*Matth.* 9. 23.) Christ being sent for to cure the daughter of the Ruler of the Synagogue, when he came into the house, *He saw the Minstrils and the people making a noise.* They knowing that she was dead, and supposing her past recovery, were addressing themselves for her burial; or as *Job's* Text speaks, to bring her to the grave.

Hinc tuba candelæ tãdemq; beatus alto cõpositus lecto crassisq; lutatus amomis. In portu rigidos calces extendit. Pers.

Further, The first particle of the verse is that common conjunction copulative *and*, we render it (as elsewhere often) *yet*, which carrieth in it a sound of admiration. Thus *Amos* 4. 6. *I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your Cities, and want of bread in all your places, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*; As if he had said, What a wonderful thing is it that ye being thus afflicted should not return. Thus here, Though it may seem strange to you, *Yet he shall be brought to the grave; though the man were so wicked that no man would adventure to tell him of his wickedness, yet he shall be brought to the grave*; and when he saith, *He shall be brought to the grave*, it may have a twofold opposition.

First, To another kind of death, even a violent death. As if he had said, *This man living so lewdly, deserved indeed to be brought either to the block, and have his head cut off, or to the Gibbet, and be hanged up before all the people; yet though he was so vile as to deserve a violent death from the stroke of justice, he shall die a natural death, and be brought to the grave with honour.* It was anciently said, *That few Tyrants died a dry death*, they were usually drencht in their own blood when they died, either by some sudden assassination, or by some judiciary sentence. Yet some Tyrants who have thrust others violently and unjustly out of the world, go out themselves naturally, and are brought to the grave pompously. For

Secondly, *To be brought to the grave*, according to the true sence of the word, and the interpretation given, stands in opposition to an obscure and vulgar way of burial. He lived in state, and he shall be brought in state to the grave.

Hence Observe, *Men inglorious by their wicked lives, may have glorious funerals when they die.*

And it hath been no small part of some such mens care

to leave order for a funeral. They who never had a truly ſerious thought how to diſpoſe of their ſouls when they were to die, yet have taken care very ſeriouſly how to have their bodies diſpoſed of, and have ſet down in what place, in what tomb, and at what rate they would be buried. Some order a Sermon at their burials, who never regarded Sermons in their lives, though (like enough) they heard many. Their friends ſhall eat the ſweet, and drink wine in bowls at the bringing of their bodies to the grave, while their ſeparated ſouls, ſeparated for ever from God, as well as from their bodies for a ſeaſon, are feeding upon gall and wormwood, and drinking the wine of Gods fierce indignation, poured out without mixture. Such pomp (if that be poſſible) makes mirth in hell, and ſets the Devil a laughing. Such funerals have a number of viſible mourners, and they have innumerable inviſible rejoycers: The God of this world, and the powers of darkneſs, deride thoſe ſolemnities, which give ſo much honour to a body, whoſe ſoul is not only departed, but condemned to eternal anguiſh and infamy. A Heathen could ſay, *The loſs of a funeral, or of a Sepulcher, is an eaſie loſs*; but Chriſtians know, that *the loſs of a ſoul, the loſs of heaven, the loſs of glory*, are not only ſad but unvaluable; and not only unvaluable, but irreparable loſſes. A Believer careth not much, where his body finds a grave, ſo his ſoul find Chriſt. What Glory ſoever the bodies of wicked men have when they are buried, only the bodies of the Saints ſhall have glory, when they are raiſed again. *He ſhall be brought to the grave,*

Facilis jactura ſepulchri.

And ſhall remain in the tomb.] Theſe words are a continuation of what was ſaid laſt. There is ſome variety in the reading of them. The Hebrew is, *He ſhall watch in the Heap*; ſo we put in the margin of our Bibles; *He ſhall be brought to the grave, and watch in the heap.* The Original word ſignifies *both to watch, and to remain*; becauſe a watchman keepeth his place, and ſtayeth by it; he is not as we ſay, up and down, here and there, but fixed where he is appointed. And the word ſignifies not only a bare watching, (as when a man keeps his eyes open, and doth not ſleep) a watching meerly oppoſed to ſleeping; but it notes watching with an intentive ſpirit as well as with an open eye. The word is uſed fully to that ſence, (*Prov.* 8.34.) *Bleſſed is the man that heareth me* (ſaith wiſdom) *watching daily at my gates.* What do we, when we watch at wiſdoms gates, if we do as we ought? is it only the placing of our bodies there, and the keeping of our eyes open there? 'Tis much more then both theſe. *Watching at wiſdom's gate* is the work of our ſpirits, 'tis the ſetting of the heart to receive what wiſdom utters; This is watching indeed. But you will ſay, This ſence ſeems very incongruous to and remote from a dead mans caſe; how can he watch at all whoſe eyes are cloſed in darkneſs? I conceive, The dead mans *watching in the heap or tomb* (which tranſlation divers learned Interpreters adhere to) may have a double reference; either, firſt, to the cuſtome of preſerving the bodies of great men from putrefaction. To which end their bodies were ſo ſpiced and imbalmed, that they were kept, as it were, alive, and being ſet in vaults, they looked as if they were keeping continual watch.

ſuper acervo vigilat. Mont. *Ne. aſſiduus vel vivuſq; exiſteret.*

שקד *ſignificat non ſolum vigilare ſed intentũ eſſe & aſſiduum in opere alio.* Merc.

Secondly, I may refer, if not to the embalmed bodies of the dead, yet to their repreſentations or ſtatues, which (as we ſee) in our dayes are placed upon their tombs or ſet upright in preſſes. Theſe Statues were made as neer as art could reach to the life, and ſo might be ſaid to watch there as if they lived; yea, upon the ſame account they might be ſaid not only to watch, but to pray there; for ſuch Statues are uſually (among us) ſet up in praying poſtures, kneeling, and lifting up both hands and eyes (ſuch as they are) to heaven; you ſhall ſee the figure of a man, who hath (poſſibly) been a neglecter of prayer all his dayes, yet fixed to his tomb not only in a watching, but in a praying poſture; Many being dead ſeem to pray alwayes, who only ſeemed to pray when they were alive; They made dead prayers, or they prayed without watching while they lived, and being dead, they would be looked upon both watching and praying. To either of theſe cuſtoms the Text may allude fairly; and ſo carry on *Job's* diſcourſe concerning the wicked mans proſperity in death.

Forte alludit ad conſuetam mortuorum cadaveris, cum beneficio naturæ à putrefactione per multa ſecula atq; ſæcula ſervare, duxe & vide- Pined.

Again, Some read (not, he ſhall watch, but) *he ſhall be watched, or others ſhall watch him in the heap.* They ſhall watch there, either as conſtant mourners for his death, or they ſhall watch there as protector of his duſt; leſt any offer violence to his grave, or diſturb his bones. Both theſe may ſuite with the ſcope of the Text as ſignifications of honour and reſpect to the deceaſed. *He ſhall be watched in the*

Tomb or heap.] That Original word is uſed but four times in the whole Scripture, and in this place only it is tranſlated *a tomb*; properly it ſignifies a heap of corn. (*Job* 5.26.) *He ſhall be brought like a ſhock of corn in full age.* A ſhock of corn, is a heap of corn, that is, many ſheaves laid or built up together by the art of the huſbandman. And hence ſome interpret this Text as if the wicked man ſhould be buried abroad in the fields among the heaps of corn; but there is no neceſſity to carry it ſo ſtrictly. A tomb or grave, any where made, is an heap or aggregation of earth, as a ſhock of corn is an heap or aggregation of ſheaves. And the tomb is ſo called in a double conſideration.

גדש *Significat proprie acervum frugum qui in area in modum pyramidis in ſublime attollitur.* Merc.

Firſt, Becauſe the dead bodies of men are brought and heaped together in the tomb. That periphraſis of death ſo often uſed in the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, *He or they were gathered to their fathers*, is by ſome expounded in compliance with the point in hand, as noting the gathering of the bodies of the dead into one common heap. And though I rather conceive it intending the gathering of their ſpirits unto the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; yet the Text ſpeaks in the caſe of *Joſiah* (2 *Chron.* 34.28.) concerning his being gathered to the grave, as well as to his Fathers; which neceſſarily infers the gathering of his body to theirs, and of his duſt to theirs, all making but one heap of duſt. The grave or tomb are as a floor wherein corn is heaped up until the great threſhing and winnowing day cometh, when the bodies of men ſhall be raiſed and purged from the chaff of their natural condition; for then, *this corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and this mortal muſt put on immortality* (1 *Cor.* 15. 54.)

Secondly, As the tomb is called a heap, becauſe the bodies of men are heaped there together; ſo becauſe a tomb or a grave, though but one body be laid there, ſwells up like a heap. The body being put into the earth, riſeth by ſo much as the ſpace is which the body filleth. And hence Criticks tell us, that the Latine word for any tomb or grave, notes the ſwelling of the earth. But eſpecially the ſtately tombs of Princes and Great men, ſwell high, and are raiſed upon Arches and Pillars. Nor have men left in any thing plainer marks of the ſwelling of their minds with pride and vain-glory, then in appointing ſuch towring and ſwelling Monuments of their frailty. Yea ſome ſeem to have had an ambition to immortalize the memory of themſelves and of their greatneſs by theſe memorials of their mortality. They for whom ſuch vaſt and ſtupendious heaps have been raiſed, may well be ſaid in anſwer to this tranſlation of *Job's* Text, *To watch in the heap.*

Significanter latinè tumulũ vertas à tumendo.

Laſtly, We (as others alſo) render plainly, *He ſhall remain in the tomb*; His dead body being brought to the grave, remains in the tomb, and moves no more, till God calleth it forth, and by his Almighty power reſtoreth it to life again. *The Grave is a priſon, and death is a ſure keeper. Death will hold its own, till the Lord of life gives command to let go.* Living men are of ſo little permanency, that they can ſcarce be ſaid to remain any where. Only the dead know nothing of removing.

In tumulo manebit fugiter. Pagn.

Again, When *Job* ſaith, *He ſhall remain in the tomb*, he ſpeaks this (in purſuance of what he had ſaid before) as a priviledge which a wicked man may have; he ſhall not only be brought to the grave with honour, but ſhall remain there in ſafety.

Hence Note, *It is a favour (yet ſuch a favour as wicked men are often partakers of) when our bones reſt and remain quietly in the grave.*

Many have been brought to their graves with much ſolemnity, who have not remained there. The *Aſſyrian* is threatned (*Iſa.* 14.18,19.) that he ſhall not have the honour of burial in the Graves of his Predeceſſors, or in the Grave which he had appointed for himſelf, *All the Kings of the Nations, even all of them lie in Glory, every one in his own houſe*; that is, in his own grave, (the grave is called the houſe

houſe of all living) or in the grave which each one prepared for himſelf near his own houſe. Thus all the Kings of the Nations lie in their ſtately tombs, *but thou art caſt out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of thoſe that are ſlain thruſt thorough with the ſword, that go down to the ſtones of the pit, as a carkaſs trodden under feet, thou ſhalt not be joyned with them in burial*; that is, thou ſhalt not have the honour of ſuch a burial as they. *Thou art caſt out*, (that is, kept out) *of thy grave.* Now if it be a ſore judgment, upon a wicked man eſpecially, all whoſe portion conſiſts in outward reſpects and priviledges, not to be admitted to a grave, but as the Pſalmiſt bewails the ſad affliction of the Saints and ſervants of God, (*Pſal.* 79. 2.) to have their dead bodies given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven, and their fleſh to the beaſts of the earth; Then how great an evil is it to have the dead body torn and pulled out of the grave, and thoſe bones diſquieted which were at reſt. Yet the Lord threatens *Jeruſalem* with an enemy, who provoked either with covetouſneſs, or with malice, ſhall riſle their very graves. The wrath of God doth not only purſue ſinners while they live, but in death, it purſueth them to the grave, and in the grave. (*Jer.* 8. 1.) *At that time, ſaith the Lord, they* (that is, the cruel enemy) *ſhall bring out the bones of the Kings of Judah, and the bones of the Princes* (in whoſe Sepulchers, they might hope to find rich ornaments, Jewels, and treaſure.) *And the bones of the Prieſts, and the bones of the Prophets* (that is, of the corrupt Prieſts and Prophets eſpecially, who had flattered the Princes, and perverted the people, this doom is paſſed upon them alſo who had been either perverted by the falſe Prophets, or had oppoſed the faithful Prophets) *and the bones of the inhabitants of Jeruſalem out of their graves, and they ſhall ſpread them before the Sun, the Moon, and all the hoaſt of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have ſerved, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have ſought, and whom they have worſhipped.* How exact is the Juſtice of God, and how terrible? Their bones muſt be ſpread before thoſe creatures of Gods making, whom they (by ſpreading their hands before them, and worſhipping them) had made their Gods: and as they were threatned to have their bones unburied, ſo that they ſhould not be reburied; for thus it follows, *They ſhall not be gathered, nor buried, they ſhall be as dung upon the face of the earth*; that is, they ſhould lie above-ground, as Monuments of their wickedneſs and of divine vengeance, till they be utterly conſumed, and mouldred into duſt. That God will raiſe our bodies out of the grave is a matter of faith, and of great conſolation to the Godly; but to have the body pulled out of the grave by men, is matter of fear and terrour to the wicked. Yet many of the wicked eſcape this Judgment, they are fairly brought to their graves, and abide unmoleſted there. *Job* is here expounded, as deſcribing this piece of proſperity incident to a wicked man, while he ſaith, *He ſhall remain in the Tomb*, which interpretation ſeems to have the free conſent of the next verſe, as continuing a deſcription of the ſame thing.

Verſ. 33. **The clods of the Valley ſhall be ſweet unto him.**

רגבים *Glubæ lapides, glareæ.*

The word which we render *clods*, undergoes variety of tranſlations; ſome ſay, *the ſtones of the brook or valley*; ſome, *the gravel*; others, *the duſt or ſand of the vallies.* But as here, ſo again in the thirty eighth Chapter of this book, and the thirty eighth verſe, we tranſlate it *clods. When the duſt groweth into hardneſs, and the clods cleave faſt together.*

Dulcis fuit glaruus Cocyti. Vul. *Tanti ſc. erat lectionē poetarum oſtentare ut eorum mendacio, in verſione Authentica regio mortis deſcriberetur.* Coc.

The clods of the valley are ſweet unto him.] As this word, ſo likewiſe the whole clauſe is diverſly rendred. The Vulgar alluding to an old Poetical fable, gives it thus; *He ſhall be ſweet to the ſand of Cocytus*, which was phancied by Heathens for one of the rivers of hell, or an infernal lake, ſo called from the lamentations there made; as if *Job* here intended a deſcription of the wicked mans puniſhment in hell. A late learned Expoſitor upon this Book juſtly perſtringeth that tranſlation as affecting the accommodation of the holy Scripture to ſuch a fiction, in deſcribing the region of death, or the ſtate of wicked men when they are dead. Yet 'tis (in it ſelf) a truth, that the wicked are a ſweet morſel to helliſh tormenters; And they who in their life time have ſwallowed down ſo many ſins, not only gnats but camels, being dead, are in a moment ſwallowed up in hell. We may ſay of ſuch men (as the Prophet doth of the *Aſſyrian* Prince, (*Iſa.* 14. 9.) *Hell from beneath is moved for them to meet them at their coming.* The more wicked a man is, the more is hell delighted to receive him; as the more holy a man is, the more is heaven delighted to embrace him. When he who was a hell upon earth, drops to hell, he is pleaſant fewel to thoſe devouring flames.

Secondly, This verſe is better expounded as a continued diſcourſe of the happineſs of the wicked man in regard of his natural ſtate in death. He ſhall not only continue in the tomb, but have (as it were) a contentful being there. Earth is (as to matter) the common parent of us all; from the earth we came, and thither we return; and when the wicked man returns, the earth will not hurt him. The grave will not entertain him with a frown, but he ſhall be as welcome and as kindly uſed there by the clods of the valley as any other man. The bodily being of the righteous and of the wicked in the bowels of the earth knows no difference. And as no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him (as to his body) on earth, ſo not as to the ſtate of the body while it remaineth under the earth. The ſuperſtitious Heathen (which may ſomewhat anſwer the phraſe of this Scripture, though far from the ſcope of it) were wont to pray for a dying friend in this form; *Let the earth be favourable and caſie to thee, let it not preſs thee hard.* They had a conceit that if the earth laid too great a load upon the dead, they could not get up to the higher regions, therefore they prayed, that the clods of the valley, or the earth where their friends were buried, might be ſweet and favourable to them. *Tertullian* mentions this Heatheniſh cuſtome, and *Pliny* a Philoſopher of their own laughs at them for it; *Becauſe they prayed for the favour and good will of that to them, which could not be angry with them, nor do them any hurt.* Such were the vain imaginations and fears of the dark-minded Heathens, dreading the unkindneſs or cruelty of the earth to dead bodies, but little dreading the miſery of their blinded ſouls. How vain is it to fear, that either a ſenſleſs body ſhould be pained, or that things without ſenſe ſhould be offended and put it to pain. The clods of the valley are alike ſweet to all.

Molliter ſuaviter tractatur à terra, quam felicitatem priſci precabuntur ſuis defunctis his verbis, Sit tibi terra levis. *Terrā gravē ne imprecaris, &c.* Tertul de Teſtim Animæ c. 4. *Tanquam neſciamus hanc eſſe ſolam, quæ nunquam iraſcatur homini.* Plin. Nat. Hiſt. lib. 11. cap. 63 de terra. *Oſſa quieta precor, tuta requieſcite in urna. Ut ſit humus cineri non onerоſa tuo.* Ovid. 3. Amor. Eleg. 8. *Hyperbolæ per proſopopeiam ſenſus & humanas actiones mortuis tribuentes.* Jun. *Sepulchro ſuaviter hæret nec quæ hic aguntur curat.* Mer.

Thirdly, Some give the ſenſe of theſe words, as deſcribing the ſad concluſion of the wicked man, who though he ſpend moſt of his dayes in pleaſure, yet a little before his death, he ſhall meet with ſuch ſorrows, that *the clods of the valley will be ſweet unto him*; that is, he will even deſire death, as the only means (which he knows of) to give him a releaſe from them. 'Tis truth, that though death be bitter to a carnal man who is at eaſe in his poſſeſſion, yet death is eaſie and ſweet to any man that is in bitterneſs; and 'tis poſſible for a man to taſt ſo much bitterneſs while he treads upon the clods of the earth, that the clods under the earth may be reckoned ſweet to him.

Laſtly, This is plain, that *Job* ſpeaks here in figures, and wrappeth up a *proſopopeia* and an *hyperbole* together, while he aſcribes ſenſe and the affections of a living man to a dead body. The ſumme of all may be this, *The clods ſhall be ſweet to him*; that is, he ſhall have the utmoſt conveniency and happineſs, that any man (as to his bodily capacity) can have in death. He ſhall feel no more trouble nor pain there, he ſhall be free from care and fear, when once he is gotten thither. *The clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him.*

Hence Note, *The bodies of wicked men are as free from pain or evil in the grave, as the bodies of the Saints.*

Death is the concluſion of and gives ſtop to all the worldly ſufferings of all men. (*Revel.* 14. 14) *Bleſſed are the dead that die in the Lord, for from henceforth they reſt from their labours.* And whether men die in the Lord, or out of the Lord, they reſt from their outward labours. This bodily reſt, or reſt from bodily labour and trouble is a favour to Saints, and 'tis much more then any wicked man hath right to, that his body ſhould reſt from trouble and labour all that time which runs out between death and judgment. We may call that reſt, the negative happineſs of wicked men. And as it is, in ſome ſence, a favour that they live ſo many years on earth, their ſouls being kept all that

that while out of hell; so that they lie and continue for so long a time after death in the earth, or (as *Job* speakes) among the clods of the vallies, their bodies being kept all that while out of hell; For as the perfection of the glory and blessedness of Saints will be after the re-union and marriage of soul and body; so the perfection of the misery and torment of the wicked will be at the like re-union. Therefore it may well be said of a wicked man, not only in reference to the pains of this life, which he is quite freed from, but also in reference to the pains of the next life, from which for a while the grave detains him, that, *The clods of the valley are sweet to him.*

And every man shall draw after him.

Mr. *Broughton* reads, *He draweth all earthly after him*; as if the dead man were active in pulling the living after him into the grave; we render it as if living men were active in hastning after the dead unto their graves; *Every man shall draw after him.* Some taking the former translation, understand it of *a moral drawing*; his wickedness attracts many to the imitation of him. Multitudes follow his ill example. But though it be true that ill examples (as some diseases) are very catching, or, like a Load-stone, very drawing and leading, yet I conceive that is not the intendment here. The Latine Translator expresseth it so, but expounds it, in pursuance of the pomp of his burial, *He shall draw all men after him*; That is, when he dieth his funeral will draw the whole City and Country together to attend, or gaze upon it: some will come out of respect to honour him, and many in curiosity to please themselves in beholding the magnificence and stateliness of his interment. But I pass this also, as much below the Text.

Post se omnē hominē trahit. Vulg.

And conclude, that these words, *All men shall draw after him*; do only remove an objection, which some man might make against *Job's* position, about the prosperity of wicked men. What tell ye me (might such a man say) of a pompous funeral, which the wicked man shall have when he dieth, and that the clods of the valley shall be sweet to him; When the man is dead, what's all this to him? *Job* answers, What though the wicked man die? there is nothing of weight in that objection against the prosperity of the wicked; For death is common to all, both good and bad. Death is not peculiar to wicked men, for righteous men die too; *All men shall draw after him*, so that there is no difference in this between the godly and the ungodly, the holy, and prophane; for all die, or as the Scripture of the New Testament affirms, *It is appointed unto all men once to die.*

Si dicas illi esse pœnam quod moriatur; respondeo omnibus hoc accidere, Vatab.

That all men shall die, is a common theme; I shall only touch a little upon this way of phrasing or expressing it. *All men shall draw after him.* Every man is daily drawing to the grave; dying is (as it were) a continued act. What *Paul* spake in a sense proper to his own case, we may take in a common sence, *I die daily*; and 'tis appliable to all men, *they die daily*; while one man dieth, *all men draw after him.* When a man is very sick and dying, or sick to death, when he stands (as it were) upon the borders of death, or (though I know that Scripture-speech hath another meaning then here I use it for) *between the living and the dead*, as if it were hard to determine to which of them he doth belong, when his breath sits upon his lips ready to take its flight and be gone, then we say, *the man is drawing on*; but we may say it also of those who are not only alive, but lively; not only strong, but *in their full strength* (as *Job* spake before) *their breasts full of milk, and their bones moistned with marrow*, we may say it of those that are walking, riding, running, travelling in the hottest pursuit of their businesses, or pleasures, *they are drawing on.* Every living man is drawing on to death, and all men alive shall draw after him that is already dead. Nor should it seem strange, that all men who are, should be drawing after in that way, which all men that ever were (the excepted persons are not considerable for number) have gone before, which *Job* gives us more fully in the next words.

As there are innumerable before him.

ante ipsum nec numerus. Heb.

The Text word for word is thus rendred; *Before his face no number*; that is, as all men are following, or drawing after him that dieth, so those are innumerable that are already dead. This manner of speaking (*no number*) in the Hebrew, is sometimes the denial of any number, sometimes of all number or numerability. To say of such a thing, *There is no number of it*, is either to say there is no such thing, or but one of it, *which indeed makes no number*, or at most but very few, which in common account are no number. Some applying these words to the burial of the poor, give the meaning thus; rich men draw many after them, or have great numbers attending them to their graves, but the poor man hath no number, or but a very small number of followers to his grave. But I conceive, the plain scope of *Job* puts this exposition of *no number* quite out of the number of those expositions which are suitable to this place. And that therefore *no number* doth not signifie those who are so few, that they scarce make a number; but those who are so many that they can hardly be numbred. His business being to shew the innumerableness of those whether rich or poor who are already dead, not the fewness of those who follow the poor to the grave when they are dead. S. *John* (*Rev.* 3. 9.) having spoken Arithmetically of the sealed ones of the twelve Tribes, ascribing to each of them twelve thousand, (which though it sheweth that the number of the elect *Jewes* is certain, yet it doth not infer, that the number there specified is the certain number, but S. *John* having heard this number) shuts up with, *After this I beheld and lo a great multitude which no man could number, &c.* So here (when *Job* saith) *Before him no number*; his meaning is, A great multitude are gone before him, which no man can number. Or as we render it clearly; *There are innumerable gone before him.*

Ut, non numerus *negaret numerū, nō numerabilitatem, intelligens hanc partem versus, de sepultura pauperum.* Bold.

Hence take two Deductions, First, *That the dead are more then the living.*

This hath been a truth ever since the first Ages of the world. When the world was young, or in its non-age, the living were more then the dead; but the dead of many ages must needs be more then the living in any one. Hence the dead are called, *The more*, and *to go the more, or to those who are most in number*, sounds (among the learned) *as much as to die.* As among those who yet enjoy a natural life, there are more spiritually dead, then spiritually living; so they who are naturally dead, are more then they who live the life of nature. Every one that dieth encreaseth the number of the dead, yet there are innumerable before him.

Ut Anna numero caret, sic defuncti, Quocirca plures *vocantur: unde* ad plures migrare, *nam plures sunt quam viventes.* Drus.

Secondly, *'Tis no new thing to die.*

Most are as unwilling to die, and as unwonted to death, as if none had gone before them, as if they were to break the Ice for all mankind. Where we see one going before, we usually take courage to follow after. There have innumerable gone before to the grave, yet few take courage in following after. And I confess, it is but a poor encouragement to die, because other men like us have died before us. That which makes a man die with true courage, and step with holy boldness into the grave, is believingly to remember that Jesus Christ died and lay in the grave not only before us, but for us; that he hath conquered and worsted that King of terrours upon his own ground, the grave; 'Tis enough not only to make us chearful, but alive in death, to know savingly that *This One* is gone before us; 'Tis at most but a moral argument to perswade men to be chearful in dying, because men innumerable are gone before them; but Christ's going thither before us is a spiritual and prevailing argument. They who lived before Christ died in the flesh, might comfort themselves against the fear of death, by believing the holy Prophecy that he should die for them, much more may we by believing the holy History of his death. That he hath gone before us in dying and died for us who is alive and liveth for us, is ten thousand times more consolation to us when we are going out of this world, then that innumerable (such as our selves) are gone before us, or though any one of us should have the priviledge to abide in the flesh, till all were gone before him.

Job having thus far sifted, weighed, and replied to the answers of his friends, gives his judgement upon them as unfit to administer any solid comfort him; and therefore concludes roundly with them in the last verse of this Chapter.

Vers.

Verse 34. **How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falshood?**

Mr. *Broughton* renders, *And what do ye comfort me with vanity?* We say, *In vain*, or with vain words. A thing is done in vain three wayes.

First, It is somewhat in vain when the end for which it is done is but imperfectly attained.

Secondly, It is much in vain when the end is not at all attained.

Thirdly, It is then done most in vain when the issue is quite contrary to the end for which it was done.

Job's Friends *comforted him in vain* all these wayes; for they did not only not attain their end perfectly, but not at all; yea, in stead of comforting they troubled him; so that as *Balac* said to *Balaam* (Numb. 23. 11.) *What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.* Thus *Job* seemeth to say to his Friends, What have ye done unto me? Ye came to comfort me, and ye have grieved me altogether, as hath been shewed from other passages of this Book, especially from those, where he titles his Friends not only *Physicians of no value*, but *Miserable Comforters.* And he gives a further and a full account, whence it came to pass that he got no comfort by all the discourse which they had with him, in the last clause of this Verse and close of his speech.

Seeing in your answers there remaineth falshood.

Master *Broughton* renders thus; *Great offence remaineth in your disputation.* The word rendred *Answers*, signifieth a debate between two or more, when Arguments being given are returned, which we commonly call answering.

In your answers there remaineth falshood.

מעל *Est prævaricatio, transgressio cum contemptu, repugnando illi cui quis debet se submittere, tanquam inferior.*

מעל *Notat violationem officii dissimulatam, sub jactatione officii à* מעיל *tunica.* Coc.

The word carries not only falshood upon mistake, ignorance, or misunderstanding, but falshood by art or prevarication, when like a Sophister a man would foyl his Adversary by fallacies. It imports also somewhat of contempt, when he that is inferiour doth not (as he ought) submit to the judgment and reason of his superiour. Thus some expound *Job* complaining, that he was not only unkindly, but fallaciously and unreverently dealt with by those who ought not only to be faithful to him, but to give him respect and honour. And (which is yet worse) that they did him (as the meaning of the word is further carried) a real unkindness under the cloak or colour of fair and friendly pretences. A Prevaricator dealeth falsly with his Client, while he professeth to plead his cause, or undertakes to support his person. The unfaithfulness and falshood of man to man, walks alwayes under the cloak of professed courtesie. But I would not suppose *Job* so much as suspecting his Friends of any such studied unkindness towards him; especially considering, that this word which some strain so hard, is also used by the holy Ghost in a more gentle signification (*Levit.* 5. 15.) where it is applyed to a sin of ignorance: And that notion of sinning under a cloak may hold in sins of ignorance, as well as in those which are committed against knowledge; only with this difference, malice and hypocrisie use a cloak to hide the evil from others; Ignorance is a cloak which hides the evil from our selves. Thus in the present case, the falshood which *Job* chargeth the answers of his Friends with, proceeded not, surely, from any cunning purpose in them to vex and trouble him, but from their unskilfulness in comforting him. *How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falshood?* He doth not say, that all their answers were false, or that they had knowingly falsifyed with him in their answers. All he chargeth them with, is, that there was falshood in their answers: That is, that their answers contained false or unsound assertions. Such as these,

First, *That godly men are rarely afflicted in this life.*

Secondly, *That the godly shall in this life be speedily delivered when ever they are afflicted.*

Thirdly, *That wicked men seldom or never prosper in this life.*

Fourthly, *That if they do, yet their prosperity shall soon be blasted.*

Thus while his Friends went about by these affirmations to vindicate the Justice and Holiness of God from any the least complyance with wicked men, they unawares set limits to his Soveraignty, and his Power. As if God were not at liberty to dispose of these outward things, when and to whom himself pleased. These Positions (saith *Job*) I have proved false; and ye have not yet taken off my Arguments by any of your answers; therefore in your Answers there still remaineth falshood, and your labour in comforting me, hath been but labour in vain.

Hence Observe, First, *False and unsound principles, can never produce sound and true comforts.*

Solid comfort cannot rise from any ground, nor rest upon any bottom but truth. As truth only works true grace in the heart, and sanctifieth (*John* 17. 17.) *Sanctifie them through thy truth* (was the prayer of Christ) *thy word is truth*; so truth only worketh true joy in the heart and comforteth: If you would comfort a poor dejected soul, you must comfort him with the truth, the word is truth. Error can neither kill our sins, nor remove our sorrows. And there is the same reason of both. For it is the office of the holy Spirit both to sanctifie and to comfort; now, the holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and therefore he will not work by a falshood, or cloath an error with his Divine power, either for sanctification or consolation. The Prophet *Hosea* (*Chap.* 7. 3.) reproves those *who made the King glad with their wickedness, and the Princes with their lyes.* 'Tis possible, that a doctrinal lye (or a false doctrine) as well as an historical lye, may make a man glad for a while; but it is impossible that it should administer lasting comfort, or comfort at last to any man. If they who are in darkness will as the Prophet speaketh (*Isa.* 50. 11.) *Kindle such false fires, and compass themselves about with such sparks; let them* (as the Prophet in holy scorn bids them) *walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled, yet, This they shall have of mine hand* (saith he) *they shall lye down in sorrow.* When such lye down upon their beds to rest, they shall find little; and when they lye down in the grave (except a while for their bodies) they shall find less.

Secondly, *Good men may be mistaken, and err in judgment.*

As the wills and affections of the Saints on earth, have some corruption remaining in them, so also have their understandings. And therefore as their practice, so their opinion, may be soyled and faulty. 'Tis no wonder, if falshood be found in their answers, who are themselves so full of failings.

Thirdly, Note, *Good men may continue long under some mistakes and errors of judgment.*

Job found his Friends in these errors at their first dispute, and he found them so in the second; they did not mend their answers, though they multiplied them; *In your answers there remaineth falshood.* As 'tis hard to part with an evil in practice, so with an error in opinion. That man is come to a great pitch of humility that confesseth he is out. Most will answer, and answer, come thick and threefold, with replications and triplications, and yet still in their answers there remaineth falshood. *When any man maintains an error, the more he answers, the more he errs.*

Thus by the good hand of God with me, I have finished the Exposition of this Chapter, and of the whole second dispute, between *Job* and his three Friends. There yet remains a third dispute, but that's between *Job* and two. The third gives out, and quits the next field. What was done there by those who still held out, may, if God, in whose hand our breath is and all our wayes, continue help and life, be reported at another time.

CHAP. XXII. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Then Eliphaz *the* Temanite *answered and said,*

Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise is profitable unto himself?

Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to him that thou makest thy wayes perfect?

Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? Or will he enter with thee into judgment?

ELiphaz now enters his third and last contest with *Job*; in which some tell us, that he behaveth himself like a man who seeks Victory rather then Truth; who though he hath been sufficiently answered, yet will not seem to be overcome; yea, that he takes up the same weapons to maintain this third, with which he maintain'd his two former Encounters: The first in the fourth and fifth *Chapters*, and the second in the fifteenth, as if he were resolved to contradict though he could not confute the reasons wherewith *Job* had made his defence.

But as such a carriage as this in Disputation is altogether vain in it self, so it is most uncomely in a wise and godly man; who ought not to refuse truth and reason, though spoken by an Adversary, but rather modestly to sit down and confess his own error and mistaking: And therefore though *Eliphaz* in this answer or triplication doth but roll the same stone, and move upon the same hinge in general; still adjudging *Job* to suffer for his sin, and to be punisht as an evil doer; yet he puts all into a new method, and varies the scene or the manner of his argumentation, which may be reduced to this form: As if *Eliphaz* had said, *O* Job! *if thou sufferest all these evils for some cause (as certainly thou dost, for these things could not come by chance, but by the wise disposure and providence of God) then that cause or reason for which thou sufferest, must either be found in God or in thy self: If thou sayest the reason is in God, and that he doth it by his prerogative, thou dost rashly intrude thy self into his secrets, and art over-bold or curious in searching into his hidden counsels; and when thou hast made out thy conjectures, we may as easily deny as thou dost affirm; but if thou hast recourse to, and reflectest upon thy own self for the cause of thy sorrows and sufferings, surely thou canst find out or pitch upon nothing else but thy sinfulness and abounding transgressions, which while thou refusest to acknowledge, thou dost but harden thy heart against God, and growest impatient under the rebukes of his afflicting hand. Therefore I admonish thee to repent*, &c. This seems to be the sum of that whole discourse which *Eliphaz* gives in this Chapter, as will further appear in the explication of the parts.

Again, we may contract his scope and give it in this brief; Job *having constantly affirmed against his Friends, that God equally afflicts the righteous and the wicked; and having said (which might have gained respect to what he was about to say) that he pleaded for God* (Chap. 21. 4. *As for me, is my complaint to man, or for man? No, it is to God, or in Gods behalf.*) *Hereupon* Eliphaz *taxes him with this presumption, as if he would needs undertake to be a Patron for God, and so to bring him in some advantage, or to stand him in stead, for the maintaining of his cause; therefore he begins his speech with this chiding expostulation, Can man be profitable unto God? Or (suppose thou wert (which I shall presently disprove) as thou hast often boasted, righteous, yet) is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?*

This seems to be the intent of the whole Chapter, in which we may further take notice of two distinct parts. The first is reprehensory, *Eliphaz* reproves and rebukes *Job* sorely, to the end of the twentieth Verse.

The second is hortatory, *Eliphaz* moveth *Job* earnestly to repentance, in which he coucheth many promises, and gives assurance that it shall not be in vain, from the twentieth verse to the end of the Chapter; *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee*, &c.

The first part, his reprehension, begins at the second Verse.

Verse 2. Can a man be profitable unto God?

There are three readings of these words.

First thus, *Can a man be compared to God?* Some labour much in the defence of this reading, but I shall not stay upon it. For though it be a truth that man cannot be compared to God, how wise or how good soever he is. What's the wisdom or goodness of man to God? Yet the Original Text doth not freely yield it self up to that translation which bears this truth.

Numquid Deo comparari potest homo etiam cum perfectæ fuerit scientiæ. Vulg.

Secondly, Master *Broughton* renders thus, *Can the humane wight teach the Omnipotent?* That word which we render *to be profitable*, he, to *Teach*: The Chaldee Paraphrase favours this translation, and some render it so in both parts of the verse; *Can a man teach God, as he that is wise may teach himself?* If a man should be so bold to take upon him to teach God, would God regard his teachings? But I shall pass by this also, especially considering that *Eliphaz* had no reason to tax *Job* with such a presumption, as if he had taken upon him to direct God how to order his affairs; when as *Job himself* (*Chap.* 21. *ver.* 22.) had strongly repressed and condemned such a boldness. *Shall any teach God knowledge? Job* having so lately exalted God above mans teaching (as was shewed in opening that verse) it is not probable that *Eliphaz* should reprove him, as conceiting himself wise enough to teach God: Or that he thought *Job* either had done, or was about to do that which with his last breath almost, he confessed no man could do.

Quidam verbum יסבון *pro docere exponunt in utroque hemistichio.* Merc.

The third is our reading, *Can a man be profitable unto God?* Can a man? He doth not mean an ordinary, weak, sickly, frail man; but a man, yea, any man at his best: The word here used notes a man in his health, strength, and glory; a man in the flower and perfection not only of his natural abilities, but in the richest furniture and array of his acquired, yea, inspired abilities. Take this man, a man of these attainments, a man thus accomplisht, and *Can he be profitable to God?* For as when the Psalmist saith (*Psal.* 33. 17.) *A Horse is a vain thing to save a man.* By the Horse there, we are not to understand a lean, poor, weak, slow-pac'd Horse, or a strong, swift Horse unman'd; such a Horse is indeed a very vain thing to save a man by; such a Horse may do a man more hurt then help, when he comes into danger; but the Psalmist means a Horse of the greatest strength, courage, and swiftness: A Horse exactly man'd, and taught all his postures, even such a Horse is a vain thing to save a man. Again, when the Scripture saith, *Christ came to save sinners*, we must not understand it of lesser, lower, or of the ordinary sort of sinners only, but even of the highest and the greatest, for such Jesus Christ came to save as well as the least of sinners. So here when 'tis said, *Can a man be profitable to God?* We must expound it of the highest of the learnedst, of the holiest, of the best of men; *Can a man be profitable unto God?* The word is *El*, *The strong God*: Can the strongest man be profitable unto the strong, the Mighty, Omnipotent, the Almighty God? *Can he be profitable?* Can he bring any advantage, gain, or profit to God? *Should he reason with unprofitable talk?* (saith *Eliphaz*, Chap. 15. 3.) Or with words that

that bring in no profit? A word of the same root, signifies a *Treasurer*, who is a keeper of publick profits (*Isa.* 22. 15.) *Go, get thee unto this Treasurer, even unto* Shebna. *Can a man be profitable?* Thus *Eliphaz* reproves *Job* for insisting so often upon his own innocency, as if that were an advantage to God. As if he had said, How holy or righteous soever any man is, the Lord receives no advantage by him. So that *Eliphaz* (it seems) apprehended *Job* trusting or boasting of somewhat in himself, as if he had thought God his debtor, or that he had done somewhat for which God was beholding to him. And upon this ground, that God is debtor, or beholding to no man, *Eliphaz* undertakes *Job*: And though his supposition was false, yet his position was true, and gives us this profitable Observation,

That the best of men cannot oblige God, or merit any thing at his hand.

That which is our duty to do, cannot merit when we have done it. We cannot oblige either God or man by performing our own obligation. Thus Christ argues, *Luke* 17. 7. *Which of you having a servant ploughing or feeding Cattel, will say unto him by and by when he is come from the field, go and sit down to meat? And will not say unto him, make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thy self, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken, and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye have done all these things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do.* Where Christ proves, that because the servant had done no more then was his duty to do, therefore he did not merit in doing it. *When you have done all that is commanded you, say, ye are unprofitable servants.* He that doth all those things that are commanded him, is *a man indeed, a man of worth, a man of men*, yet (let that be granted that he reacheth to the utmost line of the Command) he is an unprofitable servant, he hath but done his duty.

There is another parable in this Gospel of *Luke* that seems to be somewhat opposite to this (*Chap.* 12. *v.* 36, 37.) *And ye your selves be like unto men that wait for their Lord when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom, when the Lord cometh, he shall find so watching*; that is, at their work. Watching is not meant here of a bare waking, or not being asleep, for a man may watch, in that sence, and yet be as bad as a sleeper: To be found awake, and yet idle, to be found awake yet doing nothing, is as blameable as to be found asleep: So that to be found watching is to be found intent upon, and labouring in the work of the Lord. *Blessed are those servants whom their Lord when he cometh shall find so watching:* What will he do? *Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth to serve them.* In the seventeenth Chapter Christ saith, if a servant have been hard at work in the service of his Lord, even as a man that is come from Plough, or from feeding his Cattel, yet his Master doth not say to him, sit down to meat, but first bids him gird himself and serve him, and afterward go to meat. But here 'tis said, the Lord presently girds himself, and makes his servants sit down to meat, and will come and serve them: So that here he speaks, as if the Lord were much beholden to these servants, whereas before he speaks of them as unprofitable servants, to whom he was not at all beholding.

For the clearing of these two Parables, we are to distinguish them by their scopes. The scope of the Parable in the twelfth Chapter is to shew, that the diligent servant shall receive much from the hands of the Lord, or that the labour of the diligent servant shall not be in vain, or unprofitable to him.

But the scope of the Parable in the seventeenth Chapter, is to shew, that the most diligent servant cannot do any thing that is profitable unto his Lord: He may do that which may be profitable to himself, but he can do nothing that can be profitable to his Lord; that's the scope of the seventeenth Chapter, which falls in fully with the Text, and Observations that I am now upon. There is a wide difference between these two Parables. To shew what a diligent servant may expect is one thing, and what the most diligent servant can challenge or require is another. For indeed those servants in the twelfth Chapter, to whom the Lord administers the Supper, or to whom he ministers at Supper, must say, that they are unprofitable servants to the Lord; though they are to acknowledge (to the praise of their Lord) that his service hath not been unprofitable unto them, and they must say so upon these considerations.

First, He is their Lord, they his servants, not their own (1 *Cor.* 6. 20.) *Ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own, therefore glorifie God in your bodies, and in your spirits, which are Gods.* God is the owner of our bodies and spirits, our selves are the Lords. Now if we our selves, our bodies, and our spirits are the Lords, then much more are our services his. If the person be anothers, all the work done by him must be his too.

Secondly, The house wherein these servants are feasted is the Lords. The whole fabrick of Heaven and Earth is his House; He hath set it up to entertain and feast his people in.

Thirdly, All the chear and good things with which the Lord feasteth his servants (all the comforts which Grace holds out in this life, or glory in the next life) are of his own provision; the whole furniture of the Table is of his cost and charge, therefore they are obliged to their Lord, not their Lord to them; he is indeed profitable unto them, but they are not profitable unto him: They by their sloath and idleness might deserve to be sent supperless and hungry to bed, but by all their pains and diligence they could not deserve their Supper; *Can a man be profitable unto God?*

Secondly, Observe, *That God is absolutely Independent and perfect in himself.*

If there be any impossibility that man should be profitable unto God, then he is Self-sufficient, and altogether Independent, in reference to man: He that cannot receive any addition is perfect in himself, and he that is self-sufficient needs not: to receive any addition from another, is an argument of imperfection. And seeing God neither receives, nor can receive any thing from another, he must needs be perfect in himself. *David* (*Psal.* 16. 2.) speaking of himself (as the type of Christ) saith, *O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord* (that is, thou art my Portion and my All) but *my goodness extendeth not to thee*, I am not able to do any good which reacheth to thy benefit, or increaseth thy happiness, for thou art mine. In the fiftieth *Psalm* the Lord asserts this his own independency, *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.* If I had any hunger (that is, any defect upon me) I need not go to the creature to ask a supply, I could supply my self if there were any need; but there's none: The Lord he is infinitely above all hunger, above all wants and defects whatsoever. He indeed threatens Idolaters, that he *will famish all their gods* (Zeph. 2. 11.) Idols shall be hungry, they shall be famisht, and have none to administer any thing to them. This the Lord doth, when he withdraws their respect and worship, that name and reputation which once they had in the world from them; worship is the food of Idols, that keeps liveless Idols (as it were) alive, and therefore false gods are famished, when their false worship is cast down: But who can famish the Lord? If I were hungry, &c. I would not tell you: *Can man be profitable unto God?*

But it may be objected, Cannot a man be profitable to God? Is man no advantage, no help to him? Why then (*Judg.* 5. 23.) sings *Deborah, Curse ye* Meroz, *said the Angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty?* It should seem then that the Lord had need of the help of these Inhabitants of *Meroz*, and if they had come forth, it had been an advantage to him, why else were they cursed for not coming forth to the help of the Lord?

I answer, Man is said to help the Lord, when he helps in the Lords cause. Personally the Lord needeth not any help; but the Lord may be helped relatively, in his cause, and in his people. Thus we help the Lord, when we help man, when we help the Church, and people of God: It is our honour as well as our duty, to help his people, and give assistance in his Cause: This the Lord takes so well at

our hands, that he reckons it as help given to himself.

Again, if we consider the help as given to the Lords people, we are not to conceive that the Lord needed the help of these men of *Meroz*, as if he could not help them himself without the assistance or aid of man. For when he seeth *that there is no man, then his own arm brings salvation*, Isa. 59. 16. 'Tis the duty of man to come forth and draw his Sword in the Lords quarrel against the mighty, but the Lord needeth not the sword of man to subdue the mightiest.

Secondly, It may be objected; *Cannot man be profitable unto God?* He speaks of the Church of the *Jews*, in such language as implyes them a profit to him. *Exod.* 19. 5. *Now if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then shall you be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.* And is there no profit in a treasure? Again, *Deut.* 32. 9. *The Lords portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.* Hath a man no profit by his portion? No advantage by his Inheritance? Now if the Lords people be his Portion, his Inheritance, his Treasure, his peculiar special Treasure, how then can it be said, they are no profit, no advantage to him?

I answer, The Lords people are his treasure, not because they inrich him, but because he hath a high esteem of them. The Lords People are his treasure, not because they profit him, but because he protects them: If I say to a man, you shall be a treasure to me; I may do it, not because I expect any profit from him, but because I have a high esteem of him, and resolve to protect and defend him, as I do my own portion and treasure: In this sence doth the Lord say of his people, *Ye are my treasure.* We esteem treasure, and treasures are under protection, lest any take them from us. Thus the Lord speaks of his people, not that he hath any profit or gain by them, as men who ordinarily have Portions and Inheritances in Fields or Houses which are their stock and livelihood. Indeed there is a Revenue which the Lord hath by his people as they are his portion; that is, a Revenue of glory and honour, not a Revenue of profit. But if you say glory and honour is profit, and an advantage to man, is it not then an advantage to God to be glorified by man?

I answer, It is no advantage to God when he is glorified by man. Our glorifying of God doth not add any glory to him that he had not, but it is only the setting forth of that glory which he had: There is no encrease of his fulness by all the honour and glory that the creature gives him. We are commanded to glorifie God (*Matth.* 5. 16.) *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* But God doth not receive any additional glory by us, how much or how clearly soever our light shineth before men. A candle adds more light to the Sun, then all the creatures in the world can add to the glory of God, when they have studied his glory, and laboured to glorifie him to the utmost all their dayes.

Thirdly, That of *David* may be yet objected, *Psal.* 4. 3. *The Lord hath set apart for himself the man that is godly.* And if so, then it seems he intends to make some profit of him. It is an allusion unto those that vend wares: A Merchant looks upon this and that commodity, and then saith, this is for my turn, this I like, *set it apart for me.* Seeing then the Lord sets the godly apart for himself, it sounds as if he meant to make some gain or advantage by him.

I answer, The meaning of that Scripture is not, that God sets a godly man apart as one that he gets profit by, but as one that he intends to bestow mercy upon; or he sets him apart for service, not for gain: The Lord serves his own ends by the service of man every day, and sets apart the godly man for his special service.

Yet a little further, I shall demonstrate that a man cannot be profitable to God.

First, God had all perfection before man was, therefore man cannot profit God. *Psal.* 90. 2. *From Everlasting, and to everlasting thou art God,* that is, thou art infinite in glory and excellency from everlasting. God was God as much before there was a creature, as he hath been ever since the creatures were; therefore creatures add nothing at all to him.

Secondly, All the goodness and profitableness of man comes from God, therefore no profit goes unto God from man; that's the Apostles Argument, *Acts* 17. 25. where he shews that man cannot advantage God, no not by worship. *He is not worshipped with mens hands as though he needed any thing.* What, do you think God calleth for your worship, because he needs your worship? or as if he could not tell how to be without your worship? Nothing less; *Seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things.* He that gives all things to all men, needs nothing of any man; here's the Apostles Argument, the Lord giveth out all things, life, breath, and all comforts whatsoever to all men, therefore he needs nothing of any man, no not the worship of any man. 1 *Cor.* 4. 7. The Apostle assigns that reason against boasting, *What hast thou that thou hast not received, wherefore then dost thou boast?* When do men boast? Even when they think they have done God a good turn. *What hast thou that thou hast not received? Therefore why dost thou boast as if thou hadst not received it?* What can he receive of us from whom we receive our all? And *though we must return all to him in a way of thankfulness and duty, yet God needs not that we should return any thing to him in a way of largeness or supply.*

Thirdly, Take this demonstration of it; they who live much in God, even they (upon the matter) need little or nothing of the creature; they (upon the matter) are Independent as to the creature who depend fully upon the Creator. The good or evil of this world is not much to them, who are much with God. They have but little to do with the creature, and can do well enough without the creature. (*Hab.* 3. 17.) *Although the Fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the Vines; the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the Flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no Herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.* As if he had said, What if all creature-comforts are taken away from me, I can live upon God alone. The life of a Believer is much above the creature; How much more is the life of the Creator? The Apostle (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) speaking of himself, saith, *As having nothing, and yet possessing all things.* If *Paul* by the high actings of his faith and dependencies upon God could say he possessed all things, while he was as having nothing in the creature. Surely God hath all, when he hath nothing of or from the creature: He may say in the strictest sence, *Having nothing (of these things) and yet possessing all things.* Lay these two Observations together.

First, *That the Creature cannot oblige God.*
Secondly, *That God is Independent, absolute, perfect without the creature.*

The result of both will rise up in these eight Conclusions.

First, This will follow, *That we should not murmur, nor be discontented with our Estate,* whatsoever it is: Why? We are not profitable unto God, we have deserved nothing at his hand. Discontent ariseth from Pride, from an opinion that we are not answered according to our worth; we should never be discontented, were we convinced that we are altogether worthless. Do but sit down in this thought, that man cannot be profitable unto God in any state, and then be discontented with your state if you can.

Secondly, If the Creature cannot be profitable unto God. Then, *All that God doth for man, yea, for Angels, proceedeth from his free grace.* We give him nothing aforehand, nor any thing afterward, therefore it is grace before, and grace after grace in all. We receive grace when we have no grace, and we receive more grace when we have it; yet by the grace we have we do not deserve to receive more: As we received the first grace meerly of grace, so we do the second. No man is aforehand with God; if any think they are, let them shew their Bills, what they have brought in, and it shall be acknowledged. *Rom.* 11. 35, 36. *Who hath first given, and it shall be recompenced to him again?* For *of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever, Amen.*

Thirdly, If man cannot be profitable unto God, then as none should dare to come to God in their own worthiness; so none should fear to come to God because of their unworthiness. We should not be discouraged, though as yet dead and fruitless, though vain and unbelieving: The worst

of

of men should not keep off from God, because they are unprofitable, seeing the best cannot profit him. *If we have done much, it is nothing to the Lord; and if we have done nothing, it is no bar to the Lords doing much for us.* God will not turn us back because we bring him nothing, nay, he invites us to come without any thing (*Isa.* 55. 1.) *Ho every one that thirsteth, come to the Waters, buy,* &c. Here is buying, but for what? for profit? No, but *come buy Wine and Milk without money and without price.* God doth not expect any profit; there is a kind of buying, but its not for money, nor for money-worth. As the Lord sometimes sells his people, so he alwayes sells his graces and comforts, *for nought* (Psal. 44. 12.) *Thou sellest thy people for nought, and doest not increase thy wealth by their price:* That is, Thou leavest thy people under miseries and afflictions, by which it doth not appear that thou gettest any honour. Now as the Lord doth sometimes sell his people, so he also sells his mercy and grace to his people (as to any desert of theirs) *for nought*; he sells without money and without price, therefore be not discourag'd if you have nothing of your own of any worth to present unto him. Say not, *Wherewith shall we come before the Lord?* The poorer you come in your own thoughts, the richer you shall return; For *He filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich he sendeth empty away.*

Fourthly, If man cannot be profitable unto God, then our gifts and parts, yea, our holiness and graces do not make us necessary unto God. God may say unto the great Ones of the Earth, I have no need of you; and to the rich, I have no need of you; and to the wise, I have no need of you; yea, he may say unto the godly, and to the holy, I have no need of you neither. There is no creature necessary to God, seeing he cannot only (as we say) live, but live in the heights of happiness without the creature.

Fifthly, *If no man can be profitable unto God,* then whatsoever God requires of us, he aims at our profit, and not at his own; all is for us, or for our good, which will appear more fully in the opening the next clause; *He that is wise may be profitable to himself.* The Lord hath designed all our wisdom and obedience to our own benefit: so *Moses* spake to the people of *Israel* (Deut. 6. 24.) *The Lord commanded us to do all these Statutes, to fear the Lord our God for our good alwayes, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day.* It is not for the Lords good, but it is for our good that he commands, and we obey. And as the Lord commanded all things in the Law for our good, not for his own; so he commands us to believe the Gospel not for his good, but for our own; he is not to be saved by it, it is we that are to be saved by it. He doth not call us to work as men do their servants, that he might play the good husband, and get some profit by keeping us hard at labour. Indeed the Lord keepeth his Servants hard at labour night and day, they must be continually upon duty: But he doth it not (as I may say) to play the good husband, to increase his stock by it, but it is for our profit. That which Christ speaks (*Mark* 2. 27.) about the Sabbath, is true of all other the Commands of God; we are apt to think, that God requires a seventh day, because it is for his profit and advantage; No, saith Christ, the Lord hath not an eye to himself, but to man; *The Sabbath was made for man*; that is, for mans advantage, that he might look Heaven-ward, that he might work in the things which concern his own blessedness, therefore hath the Lord appointed him a resting day. *The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.*

Sixthly, Then our disobedience cannot hurt God, our sins cannot disadvantage him, impair his blessedness, or diminish his glory. As mans obedience is no profit; so his disobedience is no disprofit to God. Sinners shall be punished, as they who have wronged and dishonoured God, they shall be dealt with as such: But really, all the sins of the world do not bring any dammage or disadvantage to God: *Elihu* is expres to this point, in the thirty-fifth Chapter of this Book, *vers.* 6, 7. *If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him?* (Every sin is against the mind of God; but no sin is against the happiness of God.) *Or if thy transgressions be multiplied, what dost thou unto him?* Is God impair'd by it? Surely no, God doth not lose a pin from his sleeve (as I may say) by all the sins committed in the world: He hath no dependance at all upon our obedience for his blessedness; our sins cannot hurt him, as our obedience cannot help him, which *Elihu* shews in the next verse; *If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? Or what receiveth he of thine hand?*

Seventhly, Hence see the honour of God, that hath made so many creatures, and man especially, of whom himself hath no need, that hath so many to serve him, and yet needs none of their services. Give God this glory: We think those men are very glorious and honourable who have but as much of the Creature as will serve their turn, all creatures are the Lords, yet he is not necessitated to serve his turn by any of them.

Eighthly, Then see what an obligation lyeth upon us continually to bless God, to be thankful to him, to walk humbly with him, who gives us so many profits, when as we do not profit him at all. God prizeth that highly by which himself hath no benefit; he prizes the actings of faith and holiness highly, but he hath no advantage by them: God gives us profit by these, though himself be not profited; though he is not the better by any thing we do, yet we are the better: The Lord binds himself by promise, that the least good we do in sincerity shall have a good reward; *He that gives but a cup of cold water to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, shall not lose his reward.* But if we give thousands of Gold and Silver to poor Disciples, what profit hath God by it? And yet though none of the profit comes to his hand, yet he reckons it as if all were put into his hand. All the charity and compassion shewed to his people, Christ taketh to himself (*Matth.* 25.) *In that ye have done it unto these, ye have done it unto me.* Christ had no need of alms, of visiting, or cloathing, yet he counts it as done to himself, when we do it to any of his.

Can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself?

Some give the meaning of the words thus: Doth it follow, that a man can be profitable unto God, because a wise man may be profitable to himself? Our reading reaches the same sence; *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself?* It doth not follow, because *A man may profit another man, or profit himself, that therefore he may profit God.* That's the sum of the Argument.

As he that is wise.] The word in the root of it signifies to understand, to be prudent; and by a Metonymie to be happy, or to prosper; because usually affairs succeed well and prosper in the hands of wise men, and happiness usually follows wisdom; therefore to be wise, and to be profitable, are signified by one and the same word in the Hebrew. So in this Text, *He that is wise is profitable to himself*; that is, his affairs shall prosper. We find this Title prefixt to divers Psalms, *Maschil*, which is as much as *A teaching Psalm, a Psalm making wise, a Psalm for Instruction.* This Title is given those Psalms, which as they have some extraordinary matter, so usually they are Psalms of complaint under affliction; and the reason of that is, because there is much instruction in correction; much light of holy knowledge is to be had in the School of the Cross; therefore usually those Psalms that describe the afflictions of the Church are called *Maschil, Psalms of Instruction.*

שבר *Intellexit, prudens fuit, per Metonymiam fœlix, prosper fuit, quòd prudentibus omnia fœliciter cedant; prudentiam fœlicitas sequitur.* Maschil, *intelligens prudès, carmen eruditè ode didascalita. Ipsius titulis Psalmorum ter & decies legitur. Schola crucis, Schola lucis.* Luth.

He that is wise, and instructs; or he that is wise as having received instruction may be profitable to himself. All wisdom is not profitable to man; for there is a wisdom of which the Scripture saith, that *God will destroy it*; a man cannot profit himself by that; and there is a wisdom which is *earthly, sensual and deviliſh* (James 3. 15.) A man (be he never so wise according to this wisdom) shall not profit himself by it. There are a sort of wise men *whom the Lord will take in their craftiness* (1 Cor. 3. 19.) And how can such profit themselves by their wisdom? There are wise men whose thoughts *the Lord knoweth to be but vain*; that is, unprofitable; therefore these cannot profit themselves: Then what is that wisdom which *Eliphaz* means when he saith, *He that is wise may be profitable to himself?*

I answer, The wise man here intended is not the man that is politickly wise, worldly wise, carnally or craftily wise; but the man spiritually wise, his wisdom will bring him in profit. He that is guided by holy and godly wisdom, shall reap the benefit and eat the fruit of it. We have

such wisdom described (*Psal.* 111. 10) *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that keep his Commandments:* He doth not say, a good understanding have all they that know his Commandments, for many may know the Commandments, and yet not have a good understanding; but they have a good understanding indeed that do his Commandments. And when the Psalmist saith, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*, the word *Beginning* signifies not only the first step or entrance into a thing, but the *head* or height of it; so that *Beginning* is as much as *chief*, or *principal*; the best wisdom, the chief, the top wisdom, the head-wisdom, or the head of wisdom, is the fear of the Lord. *Job* gives the same description of wisdom, in the last words of the twenty-eighth Chapter, *Behold, the fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, that is understanding.* Would you know what is true wisdom? 'Tis the fear of the Lord. Would you know who is wise? The godly man is the truly wise man, yea, he is the only wise man.

But then it may be questioned, *May a wise man be profitable to himself?* Doth not the Apostle say (*Rom.* 14. 7.) *None of us liveth to himself*, &c. Then how can a man be wise to himself? And doth not the Apostle give the rule (2 *Cor.* 5. 15.) *Christ dyed for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves?* If we may not live to our selves, how then doth he say here, that the wise man is profitable to himself? He that is profitable to himself, lives to himself, doth he not?

I answer, First, The wise man must not make his own profit the end or the design of his wisdom, but he may look upon his own profit as that which will be the issue, fruit and consequent of his wisdom. A carnal man looks to and loves his work for the rewards sake: A godly man may look to and love his reward for the work sake. (*Prov.* 9. 12.) *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thy self*; that is, the fruit or the good of thy wisdom will drop into thy own bosom. *A wise man may look for his advantage in the end of his work, though he is not to make his own advantage the end of his work.* We are not to make either temporal or eternal advantages the end of our wisdom; but we may look upon them as fruits and effects that God leads us to by the exercise of wisdom.

Secondly, I answer, A wise man cannot be profitable to himself, as the founder of his own happiness, or as having a sufficiency in himself to make himself happy; but a wise man may be a means or an instrument of his own happiness; and walking in the way of wisdom, he walks in the way to his own happiness. Thus he that is godly wise, or that feareth God, may be profitable to himself.

Hence Observe, *He that is truly wise, godly and holy, shall find fruit and benefit by it.*

The Apostle (1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) assureth us that *Godliness is profitable for all things.* The greatest gain in the world is Godliness; *It hath the promises of this life and of that which is to come.* Whatsoever drops out of any promise of the Gospel, falls into the lap of a godly man; the promises are his, and therefore the good of the promise is his. When the promises open at any time, and give forth their vertue, they must needs give it forth to him that is wise, to him that is godly, for godliness hath the promises. When the Apostle had rebuk'd a sort of men that made godliness only a stalking-horse to get gain, he presently adds, *But godliness is great gain, if a man be content with what he hath.* Godliness it self is great gain, if we have no more; but Godliness brings in gain, abundance of gain, besides it self. (*Matth.* 6. 35.) *Seek first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added* (or cast in as an advantage) *to you.* The Apostle (*Rom.* 6. 21.) puts a kind of holy scorn upon sinners, come, tell me, *What fruit had you of those things whereof you are now ashamed?* What fruit have you by your folly, pride, worldliness, envy, what fruit have you found in these things? Bring me in an account of your gain by trading in any sin. *The end of these things is death*; there is no great profit in that. *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.* Here are fruits good store, and all good fruits both for here and hereafter. We can never want fruit our selves, while we are bringing forth fruit unto God: All obedience is attended with a blessing, and though, as was toucht before, we cannot be the founders of our own blessedness, nor must we meerly design our own happiness, or aim at our own profit (for that is mercinary service) yet we may look at our own happiness and profit, yea, and *Lay up for our selves a good foundation*, as *Paul* adviseth rich men (1 *Tim.* 6. 19.) We then make the best of our riches, when we lay up for our selves a good foundation. But can a man lay a foundation of his happiness in his riches? What a rotten foundation will that be? What Hay and Stubble (in this sence) will Gold and Silver be? What's the meaning of it then when the Apostle saith, *Laying up for your selves a good foundation?*

I answer, We do it by the right improvement of riches (for he speaks there to rich men) not that we can lay any foundation to build upon beside Jesus Christ; for other foundation can no man lay then that which is laid, even *Jesus Christ*; but when our hearts are not glued to the creature, but we use them in a holy manner, here's our laying up a good foundation. A godly wise man may look upon his right improvement of worldly riches, as an effect of the grace and love of Christ dwelling in his heart; and thus he may be said to lay up for himself a good foundation. And further, a Believer may look upon his worldly profits as a fruit of the same grace, the Lord having promised, that he will bless and provide for him; so that every way a wise man may be profitable to himself. Thus *Eliphaz* hath at once asserted a possibility for a man to be profitable to himself, and denyed any possibility that a man can be profitable unto God; which he further explains in the next words.

Verse 3. **Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it any gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect?**

In the former Verse *Eliphaz* denyed in general, that God receiveth any benefit from man: In this third Verse he speaks the same thing, but somewhat more distinctly, denying, first, that he receives any pleasure which might add to his blessedness; or secondly, any gain which might add to his abundance. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Is it any gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect?* As if he had said, *Is the blessedness of God increased by thy righteousness? Or doth the perfection of thy wayes augment his Treasure? Is he either the happier or the richer by any thing thou art or canst do?* That's the scope and sence of the words in general.

Is it any pleasure? The word which we translate **Pleasure**, signifies the *will*, and because it is so great a pleasure unto man to have his will, therefore the same word signifieth both pleasure and the will. So the word is used (*Psal.* 1. 2.) *Blessed is the man whose delight is in the Law of God*; that is, whose will is there, or who takes pleasure in the Law of God, his will being resolved into the will of God. Then we take pleasure and delight in a thing when we conforme to it, or close with it. The Judgment of God is so expressed upon *Coniah* (Jer. 22. 28.) *Is this man* Coniah *a despised broken Idol? Is he a vessel wherein there is no pleasure?* A vessel for the lowest use, as 'tis interpreted, *ver.* 21. A vessel in which there is no complacency, it is only for necessity. So the word is taken also (*Prov.* 3. 15.) *He is more precious then Rubies, all the things thou canst desire* (or have pleasure in) *are not to be compared to him.* And again (*Isa.* 58. 13.) *If thou forbear to do thy pleasure upon mine holy day.* What is the pleasure of a carnal man upon the Sabbath, upon the holy day of God? It is to do his own will, and not the will of God. *If thou forbear to do thine own pleasure*; that is, thine own will upon my holy day. Thus here, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* The Septuagint translate somewhat differently, *What cares the Almighty if thou art unblameable in thy wayes?* Thus a man usually speaks of that wherein he hath no pleasure, *What care I for it? Is it any pleasure?* &c.

חפץ *Notat voluntatem cum complacentia, vel acquiescentia.*

Vas in quo non est voluntas.

Τί χάρις μέλει τῷ κυρίῳ, &c. Sept.

That thou art righteous? Righteousness is two-fold: First, Of Justification (so some understand it here) *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art justified?* Or secondly, There is a righteousness in Conversation, so most understand it here, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou*

thou art holy? Which is the same with the latter clause of the Text, *That thou makest thy way perfect?*

Further, the word signifies to plead our own justice, as well as to have a justice or righteousness of our own: And thus it may be expounded in this place, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* that is, that *Thou dost justifie thy self?* Or (as Mr. *Broughton*) *Pleadest justice?* Dost thou justifie thy self, or stand upon thine own integrity, and then think to please God, or to carry the day against man, upon those terms? *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty?* That word fully hits the design of *Eliphaz*, it signifies both *Almighty* and *All-sufficient*; one that hath all in his own compass, that needs not go out of himself to fetch in any supplies or aid from abroad. He is Self-sufficient, and he hath a sufficiency for all others. *Is it any pleasure to this Almighty One, that thou dost justifie thy self?*

An oblectationi est omnipotenti quod justificas te? Jun. Se justificare non tam est justum esse quam contendere & conari adversus calumnias & scelera sibi objecta & ex ratione coram judice respondere.

Or is it any gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect?

As it is *no pleasure*, so *no gain*. The second Verse before opened, clears the mind of this clause. What there he calleth *profit*, is here called *gain*, in different words: And the word here used is rendred indifferently both gain and profit. (*Gen.* 37. 26.) When *Joseph* was cast into the pit, *Judah* said, *What profit is it to slay our Brother? Let us sell him*; let us make gain of him that way; slaying him will be no profit to us. And as it signifies gain, so covetousness; and the reason is, because covetousness hath gain for its object; covetousness provokes men to seek gain. *Jethro* (*Exod.* 18. 21.) gives counsel that Magistrates should be *Men fearing God, and hating Covetousness*, or hating *gain*; that is, not only all covetous practices, but inordinate desires of gain, for these lead into unlawful wayes of gain, even to the perverting of Justice.

Is it any gain to him that thou makest [thy way] perfect? That is, Thy life, thy conversation, thy course. What though thou striveſt after the highest attainments of grace, the purest purity of life, is this any gain to the Lord? The Septuagint render, *That thou makest thy way simple?* The simple sincere, plain way is the perfect way. The perfection of our way is the simplicity, sincerity, and uprightness of it.

Another reads, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thy way is undefiled*, or clean? that thou dost sweep and wash thy way, so that there is no spot to be seen upon it? (*Psal.* 119. 1.) *Blessed are the undefiled or perfect in the way.* The several parts of this Psalm begin with a new Letter, according to the order of the Hebrew Alphabet, intimating that it ought to be learned even of Children, as one of the Ancients infers from it. The undefiled in the way are such (properly) as have been holy or pure from their youth, such as did never corrupt their wayes. *Timothy* is said *from a Child to learn the Scriptures.* Suppose thy way thus perfect, that none could tax thee with any gross sin even from thy Childhood, could this be any gain to the Almighty?

Alphabetarius est hic Psalmus, ostendens parvulos ab ipsis statim elementis & pueritia informandos esse ad pietatem. Hilar,

There is yet another Translation, which implyeth not only the study of holiness, but a boasting in holiness, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou dost justifie thy self? Or is it any gain to him that thou dost affirm thy wayes are perfect?* So it falls in with the third rendring of the former clause.

Aut an lucro quod integras asseris vias tuas. Jun.

For the understanding and further clearing of these words, I shall draw them forth into distinct propositions, which will be as so many Observations from the Text. It may seem a very Paradox to assert, that it is no pleasure to the Almighty that a man makes his way perfect, therefore take the sence first in three affirmative Propositions, and then in three that are Negative.

First, *The Lord hath pleasure in us as we are righteous in Christ.*

Yea, he loves to hear us boast of this righteousness, and glory in it; and the more we do so, the more pleasure he taketh in it (*Isa.* 45. 25.) *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness, even to him shall men come*, &c. *In the Lord shall all the seed of* Israel *be justified, and shall glory.* The seed of *Israel* are righteous in the Lord, and glory in that righteousness; yea, the Lord is pleased to hear them glorying in that righteousness, for that's the righteousness of his Son, *In whom he is well pleased* (*Matth.* 3. 17.) And because the Church is cloathed with this righteousness, therefore she is called, *The Lords delight* (*Isa.* 62. 4.) *Thou shalt no more be called forsaken, neither shall thy Land any more be termed desolate, but thou shalt be called* Hephzibah, *and thy Land* Beulah, *for the Lord delighteth in thee.* Thou shalt be called *my delight, or my pleasure is in her.* The word of the Text, the Lords pleasure is in the Church, and therefore the Lords pleasure is in the Church, because the Church is adorned and beautified with the righteousness of Jesus Christ; this is it which causeth the Lord to call his Church *Hephzibah, My pleasure is in her.* When *Eliphaz* enquireth, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* We may answer, The Lord hath pleasure in this righteousness, and as he tells the Church, so every particular Believer, his delight and pleasure is in him.

Secondly, *God takes pleasure also in us as we are righteous in Conversation.*

David (*Psal.* 147. 10, 11.) gives a clear proof of it both in the Negative and in the Affirmative. *The Lord delighteth not in the strength of a horse, he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man.* The Lords delight is neither in horses, nor in men; neither in their strength, nor in their beauty: Wherein is the Lords pleasure then? The next words shew us where, *He takes pleasure in them that fear him and hope in his mercy.* This Scripture seems to speak directly contrary to *Eliphaz* in *Job*, he saith, *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?* But *David* saith, *The Lord takes pleasure in those that fear him*: Therefore we must not understand *Eliphaz* in this sence, as if the Lord had no delight or contentment at all in the holiness of his people, as if it were all one to him whether they are holy or unholy: There is a Generation who say, That all actions are alike, and that it is all one before God, whether men be righteous or unrighteous, whether they do good or evil: Woe to them that understand this Scripture in such a corrupt sence, for the Lord doth not only hate iniquity, but he is *of purer eyes then to behold any iniquity.* He hath no pleasure either in unrighteousness, or in the unrighteous; but both righteousness and the righteous are his pleasure. There are three things which I shall touch for the confirmation of it.

First, The Lord cannot but take pleasure in his own Image: Now that righteousness which is implanted in us, and put forth by us, the righteousness of our natures and of our actions, as we are regenerate, is nothing else but the Image of God renewed upon us. Seeing then God cannot but take pleasure in his own Image, therefore it is a wickedness to think that God takes no pleasure in a righteous man, or in his righteousness.

Secondly, As this righteousness is the Image of God in us; so it is the very workmanship of God upon us (*Ephes.* 2. 10.) *For we are his workmanship:* We are so not only first in our natural capacity, as we are men; and secondly, in our civil capacity as such or such men, high or low, rich or poor; but also (which is the thing intended by the Apostle) in our spiritual capacity as Saints. Thus we are *the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* The same Apostle saith again, *He that hath wrought us for this self same thing is God* (2 Cor. 5. 5.) Is it possible that God should have no pleasure in his own works? We read in the first of *Genesis*, that when he had made the world, the Lord *saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good.* God hath an All-seeing eye, he always beholdeth all things; but when 'tis said, he saw all that he had made, this imports a special act of God, after the manner of men, who strictly view and behold what they have done, delighting in it: Thus the Lord saw all that he had made; he (as it were) came to view his own work, he saw and behold it was very good, he took pleasure in it. Now if God took pleasure in that structure and fabrick of the world, the first creation, how much more pleasure doth he take in that holiness which he hath wrought in the hearts of his people, which is a second creation? And that's a more curious and noble structure then this visible world is. *The new Creation is more excellent then the Old.* Therefore the Lord cannot but delight in

in a righteous person, for he is his workmanship. What *Job* (*Chap.* 14. 15.) assures himself of, is most true in this respect, *Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.* *Job* speaks there of his outward man: My body (he means) was made by thee, 'tis the work of thy hands, and thou wilt fetch it back again, thou wilt redeem it from the dust. Whatsoever hath the workmanship of God upon it, he hath pleasure in it as it is his work, and a special pleasure in that, which (as any work of Grace is) is his special work.

Thirdly, This Consideration shews that the Lord must take pleasure in a righteous person, because he bears the form of his will revealed in his word. Holiness is our conformity to the will of God: Now the Lord cannot but take pleasure in those who conform to his will. *Samuel* tells *Saul* (1 *Sam.* 15. 22. and there he useth this word in the Text) *Hath the Lord as great delight in Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?* God gave thee a Word, a Command, to which he expected thy conformity, but thou hast thought to please the Lord with Sacrifices, which he commanded thee not; this was thy mistake and thy folly. We honour God when we do his will; surely then we must needs take pleasure in those that do it. Man takes pleasure when he can have his will (though it be a corrupt and sinful will) fulfilled: It cannot but be a pleasure to God when his holy will is fulfilled, or done on earth as it is in Heaven. Thus we see the second Proposition cleared, for the understanding of these words, That as the Lord takes pleasure in those who are righteous by the imputed righteousness of his Son, so even in those also who are righteous by the implanted righteousness or holiness of his Spirit.

Thirdly, *God takes pleasure to see a sincere and upright person justifie himself, or plead his own justice against all the false accusations and suspicions of men.*

The Lord likes it well to hear a man who is falsly accused, to stand up and maintain his own innocency; yea, iti s our duty, and we are bound in conscience to maintain our own innocency. So *David* in the seventh Psalm, and in the eighteenth Psalm, justified himself against *Saul*. And thus *Job* all along in this Book justified himself against the opinion of his Friends; in this sence God takes pleasure, when we are so righteous in all our dealings, and perfect in all our wayes, that we dare encounter whosoever speaks the contrary, and can wash off all the aspersions which either misguided and mistaken friends, or professed enemies cast upon us. You have now had those three affirmative Propositions for the understanding of the Text. Take three more in the Negative.

First, *God hath no pleasure to see us justifie our selves before him, or to plead our own righteousness with him, yea, he is extreamly displeased at it.*

This some conceive the chief thing which *Eliphaz* aimed at. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou dost justifie thy self?* No, thou dost highly provoke him in doing so; to plead with or to justifie our selves before God that we are righteous, is worse then all our unrighteousness, for this overthrows the whole design of the Gospel, which is (1 *Cor.* 1. 29.) *That no flesh should glory in his presence, but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* And (*Rom.* 3. 19, 20.) The Law convinceth all, *That all the world may become guilty before God, therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall be no flesh justified in his sight.* God will have every mouth stopped, or cry guilty; and therefore for any one to open his mouth and justifie himself before God, is to overthrow the Gospel. They are *ignorant of the righteousness of God, who go about to establish their own righteousness* (*Rom.* 10. 3.) And as God hath no pleasure in them who boast of their righteousness to justifie themselves before him, so,

Secondly, *God hath no pleasure in them who boast of their own righteousness, and contemn others.*

Though a man may assert the righteousness of his Conversation against all them who question it; yet God resents it highly when any proclaim their own righteousness to the despising of others. Christ speaks a Parable against those (in *Luke* 18. *v.* 9, 10, 11.) who *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. Two men went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican: The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, Extortioners, Adulterers, Unjust, or even as this Publican.* Here was one that advanced his own active righteousness, and he did it with the contempt of another. *I am not as this Publican.* The Lord takes no pleasure in this; yea, the Lord is highly displeased with this. And (*Isa.* 65. 5.) the Prophet represents the Lords indignation against this Pharisaical spirit in dreadful eloquence, *Stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier then thou.* Thus they pleaded their righteousness in contempt of others. *These* (saith the Lord) *are a smoak in my nose* (that is, grievous, and displeasing) *a fire that burneth all the day.*

Thirdly, *God hath no pleasure at all in any of our righteousness, either in the righteousness of our justification, or the righteousness of our sanctification, as the least addition to his own happiness.*

The reason of it is, because (as was shewed from the former Verse) God is Self-sufficient, and hath no dependance at all upon the Creature: So that what pleasure soever the Lord hath in the righteousness of our Justification, or of our Sanctification, we cannot put it to this account that we add any thing to his happiness.

All the pleasure which God taketh is in himself, or in the fulfilling of his own good pleasure in Christ.

Deus nullis rebus quæ extra ipsum sunt, tangitur aut mutatur.

And therefore the work which Jesus was to do on Earth, is called, *The pleasure of God* (Isa. 53. 10.) *It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his dayes, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.* That pleasure of the Lord was the work which the Lord put into his hand, or which he gave him to do, even the bringing about his eternal purpose, for the recovery of lost man; that's a work in which the Lord takes pleasure, so much pleasure, that the Prophet calleth it *His pleasure.* And thus the Apostle speaks (*Eph.* 1. 5, 6.) *Having predestinated us to the adoption of Children, by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his own will,* &c. The good pleasure of God is only in his own will, that's his pleasure. The Lord delights to see his will accomplisht in the saving of sinners, as well as in the obedience of Saints; that's a part of the good will of God: Why doth he take pleasure in the obedience of Saints, even because his own will is done? It's not any thing in us that doth it. So when he saves us, the pleasure which he takes, is in the fulfilling of his own will, rather then in our salvation. *Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous?*

Verse 4. **Will he reprove thee for fear of thee? Will he enter with thee into judgment?**

The Question is to be resolved into this Negative, *He will not reprove thee for fear of thee,* &c.

Will he reprove thee? The word signifies first, to argue or dispute, and so to convince by the authority of reason.

יכח *Arguit, redarguit, corripuit, judicavit,*

Secondly, To plead so as to convince by evidence of the Law and fact (*Mich.* 6. 2.) *Hear ye, O Mountains, the Lords controversie, and ye strong foundations of the Earth, for the Lord hath a controversie with his People, and he will plead with* Israel. The Mountains and the strong foundations of the Earth, are the Great men of the Earth, or Magistratical powers, with these the Lord threatens a Controversie, and that he will plead or argue his cause with them.

Thirdly, It signifies to argue or plead not with words only, but with blows, to reprove with correction, *Job* 5. 17. *Happy is the man whom thou correctest.* The word which here we render *reprove*, is there rendred to *correct*, which is reproving by blows.

Fourthly, Some translate it to evidence, *to evince*, and determine: Thus it is said (*Gen.* 25. 16.) That *Abimelech reproved Sarah*; that is, gave evidence that she had a Husband: And *Abraham's* Servant said (*Gen.* 24. 44.) She that saith to me, *Both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy Camels, let her be the Woman whom the Lord hath appointed for my Masters Son:* That is, Let this token be an evidence

evidence to me, that it is she whom thou hast appointed for his Wife. Some here take it so, *Will God evidence*, or determine, *concerning thee, by thy fear, or the worship which thou givest him, That thou art righteous?* We express it fully enough, *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?*

Or will he enter with thee into judgment?

Both these expressions are of the same sence; and these words [*For fear of thee*] may be read in the close of the Verse, *Will he reprove thee, or will he enter with thee into judgment for fear of thee?*

Fear may be taken here two wayes: Either first Actively; or secondly, Passively.

Putasne te pleeti ob religionē tuā?

Take it Actively, and so it notes the fear of *Job*, *Will he reprove thee because of thy fear?* And then by his fear we are to understand his Religiousness or Holiness: So Master *Broughton*, *Would he reprove thee for thy Religion?*

An de religione tua arguevet te? Jun.

Take this Fear Passively, and then it implyeth a Fear which God himself might be thought to have of him: As if *Eliphaz* had said, *God is not afraid of thee.* The Prophet saith (*Isa.* 51. 12.) *Who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man?* &c. Much more may we say, who or what is man that God should be afraid of him? One of the Ancients following this Interpretation, professeth, that no fit or comely sence can be given of these words, but concludes that *Eliphaz* spake very foolishly and grossly, or as a man forsaken and left of God: *For* (saith he) *can any one imagine such a thing as this, that Job should have a thought that God was afraid of him?* But we may very well accommodate the sence in either of these considerations of Fear, whether Actively, or Passively, and judicious Interpreters carry it both wayes. Let us weigh it a little in both.

Quis vel hoc despiens sentiat, quod Dominus ex timore nos arguat & ex metu judicium suū contra nos proponat. Greg.

First Actively, As fear is taken for the fear which *Job* feared; that is, for his religion and worship, or the exercise of it, then the meaning is this, *Dost thou think that God doth punish thee for thy goodness, or because thou art righteous? No, it is because thou art irreligious: Is not thine iniquity great, and thy sin infinite?* As he speaks out in the next words, *Dost thou think that God punishes thee for thy holiness?* No, he can find sins enough to do it for. And *Eliphaz* might speak to such a sence (I conceive) because *Job* pleaded his integrity so much, as if he should say, *Never think that God afflicts thee for thy holiness; or righteousness, but rather acknowledge thy sins and thy wickedness to be the cause of thy afflictions: Are not thine iniquities manifest?*

Putasne quod ille te affligat quia religiosus sis & Dei timens ac integer ut de te ipse predicas? minime vero, quin potius quod sis irreligiosus. Merc.

There is a truth in this, *God doth correct many who fear him; but he doth not correct any one for fearing of him: Many holy persons are afflicted; but no man was ever afflicted for his holiness.* God hath made many promises to the godly man, that he will reward him, and do him good; *Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him. Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promises of this life, and of that which is to come.* Therefore no man needs fear that God will hurt him for his holiness: Though a holy man may receive many rods and scourges from God, yet holiness never received the least scourge from God.

Numquid ex timore tuo judicabit te? Deus quando te judicabit, non respiciet ad timorē tuum tantam & connivebit ad mala quæ feceris. Hoc sine subjicit, nonne malum tuum amplum est? *Ostendit autem nullam pietatem hominis esse perfectam, ut inde justus judicari deo possit.* Coc.

Again, as Fear is taken Actively for Religion, or for Holiness, the sence may be given thus, in pursuance of the fourth signification of the word *Reprove*; before explained. When God comes to judge thee, or when he declares what thou art, he will not look to thy fear only, to thy profession of Religion and Holiness, and over-look or wink at thy sins; and therefore he presently subjoyns, *Is not thy wickedness great?* Hereby arguing, that no mans piety is so perfect, that thereby he can be accounted just or righteous in the sight of God, or that a mans profession, yea, and practice of Religion is of no value, either to escape the punishment of his sin, or to deserve a reward at the hands of God. Some expound that (*Psal.* 50. 8.) in a parallel sence to this, the word being the same. *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices* (which is the same with *Fear* in the Text, according to this Interpretation, being put for all outward worship or religiousness) *or for thy burnt-offerings continually before me.* For those words, *To have been*, which our Translators supply, may be left out, and the sence remain perfect: Or if those words be continued, then the negative Particle *not*, is (as in many Scriptures it is) to be reassumed out of the first part of the verse, and the whole read thus, *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices, or for thy Burnt-offerings not to have been continually before me:* That is, I will not charge thee with a neglect of outward duty or worship, the inward and spiritual (of which he speaks, *ver.* 14.) being that which is most pleasing unto me. Now as to the paralleling of this place in the Psalms, with the sence of *Job*'s Text now under hand, we must read them thus, *I will not judge thee for thy Sacrifices*; that is, when I determine concerning thy righteousness, I will not do it by having an eye to, or respecting thy Sacrifices, thy religious course and exercise of holiness, though thou hast been much, yea, even continually conversant in them; I shall only argue and declare thee righteous as thou trustest in me, and by faith takest hold of my Covenant. Thus as the Lord is conceived saying in the Psalm, I will not judge or declare thee righteous for thy Sacrifices, so here *Eliphaz*, *Will he* (that is, certainly he will not) *judge or declare thee righteous for thy fear?* And so the latter part of the verse may receive the same Exposition, *Will he enter with thee into judgment*, namely, *for thy fear?* Will God deal with thee upon the account of thy piety? And when he comes to justifie thee, will he impute that to thee? Or when God enters into judgment with thee, will he suffer thee to present thy fear, thy piety, or goodness to him, and so thereby answer his plea, or take away the action which he brings against thee? When God enters with us into judgment, we may boldly plead our interest or Faith in the Mediator, but we must not plead our fear, the Grace or Holiness either of our persons, or of our services.

Eliphaz *propositum est ostendere quod religio hominis non prosit ad demerendum deum, vel peccati pœnam evadendam.* Coc.

Thus we see the Doctrine of the Text according to this Exposition, and the active signification of the word *Fear*, carrieth in it the very life and spirit of the Gospel. All the worth and merit of our works, as to Righteousness, is null'd and laid prostrate, and we taught to glory in nothing but the free gift and grace of God by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, As *Fear* is taken Passively, *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* That is, Is God afraid of thee? Doth he pick quarrels with thee for fear of thee? Or seek occasions against thee when there is none, only lest thou shouldst stand in his way, or be a detriment to him? This appears plainly to be the sence of our Translators.

Whence Observe, *God is above the fear of the Creature.*

As in the former verse God is above any advantages or hopes that the Creature can give him; so he is above the fear of any hurt that the Creature can do him. As the goodness or righteousness of man cannot benefit the Lord; so the wickedness and sinfulness of man cannot at all impair the eternal glory and happiness of the Lord. Though the wickedness of man be a darkening to the manifestations of his glory (and for that wicked men shall be judged) yet as to his essential glory all the wickedness in the world cannot darken that, nor be the least abatement to it. *Will he reprove thee for fear of thee?* No, man cannot hurt the Lord by all his wickedness, and therefore

The punishment which God layeth upon wicked men is not after the manner of men. God doth not punish as man punisheth.

Eliphaz here speaks of that which is often indeed a true ground among men why they reprove or punish other men. Some reprove others upon a vain fear of them, and some upon a just fear of them. Why did the *Jews* accuse and reprove Christ? Was it not for fear of him? At least they pretended a fear, why else were they so hasty to have Jesus Christ brought to judgment? (*John* 12. 47, 48.) *Then gathered the Chief Priests and Pharisees a Council, and said, What do we? For this man doth many Miracles: if we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the* Romans *shall come and take away both our place and Nation.* They crucified Christ for fear (though it was but a vain fear) that he would be the ruine of their state; the *Romans* must needs come and destroy them, if they let him alone. *Fear makes men cruel*; and they are most ready to hurt others, who continually suspect hurt from others. It hath been an ancient Observation, That *Cowards are murderous and revengeful:*

vengeful: While a man fears that such a man will be his ruine, he ruines him if he can, and removes that out of his way which he supposeth standing in the way of his own safety. Why did *Pharaoh* give command to slay the Male-children of the *Jews*, and oppress that people? It was upon a vain or cowardly fear, *Come let us deal wisely with them, least they multiply, and it come to pass that when there falleth out any war, they joyn also with our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the Land* (Exod. 1. 10.) It is said at the seventeenth verse of that Chapter, that *The Children of* Israel *were fruitful and* (God fulfilling herein his Promise made to *Abraham*) *increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty, and the Land was filled with them.* When God thus cast a gracious eye upon them, *Pharaoh* and his Councellors cast a jealous eye upon them; began to suspect their multiplying might at last diminish him, that their rising might prove his ruine. Therefore upon *reason of State* he must find out a way to suppress and keep them under as slaves and bondmen, whom his Ancestors received as welcome guests, and had to that day enjoyed as faithful friends. *Pharaoh* being captivated with this fear, saw no way to free himself, but by taking away the freedom of that whole people. As some, through the prevalency of their own fears dare not do justice; so others through the prevalency of fear do that which is unjust. Take one Instance more, Why did *Herod* (*Matth.* 2.) send out to slay all the Children? It was for fear of the King of the *Jews*; he was afraid of Christ, and therefore that he might murder him, he gave that horrible sentence to slay all the Infants. Again, some reprove and judge upon a due fear; for as Tyrants and wicked men are full of fear because full of cruelty, and have suspitious thoughts that others will wrong them, because they have a mind to wrong every man; so just and righteous Magistrates when they see evil working, they must reprove and punish it, lest it spread to the endangering of the publick Peace. This is a just fear, and such as becomes a man, even a man of courage and integrity; such may fear, that if seditious spirits be let alone, they will undermine a whole Nation, and destroy thousands. A Magistrate reproves and judges Thieves and Murderers out of fear that if they increase no man shall live quietly. Such as either openly or secretly contrive evil against a Nation, the Magistrate from a just ground of fear deals with them and reproves, lest they should disturb or infect the whole.

But the Lord doth not reprove any man for fear of him, he is of such infinite strength and stability, so far out of the reach of all the plots and contrivances of the wicked, that he needs not call them to account, lest they should hurt his State, pull him out of his Throne, spoil his Kingdom, or get his Dominion from him; the Lord is not afraid of any of these things; but the true reason why the Lord reproves wicked men, is, because he hates their iniquities, and is a God of truth and judgment. Though Magistrates may punish not only out of the love of Righteousness and Judgmen, but because they fear a State may be ruin'd if they do it not; yet the Lord hath none of this fear, in regard of his State, but he doth it meerly out of love to Justice, and as a hater of wickedness.

He reproves man because he hath sinned against him, not because he is afraid of him, as *Eliphaz* shews in the words which follow.

erissimum illud, uod inter gumen-andum af-mit Eli-haz, ex ti-ore fre-uenter nas-aut ve-mentius ccendi so-re severi-tem in ir-gando pplicio. ned.

VERS. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquity infinite?
For thou hast taken a pledge of thy Brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their cloathing.
Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.
But as for the mighty man he had the earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it.
Thou hast sent widdows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

IN this Context *Eliphaz* intends to shew the true reason why God reproved *Job*, and entred into judgment with him, it was not (as was said at the fourth Verse) either because God was afraid of him, or because he feared God, but it was for his wickedness, as *Eliphaz* (though mistaken) concluded against him: As if he had said, *God doth not punish thee because he is afraid of thee, but because he loveth justice, and hateth iniquity: Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquity infinite?* That's the scope of these words, which we may fitly call *Job's Indictment*, and this Indictment is laid down first in general words. *Vers.* 5. *Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquity infinite?* And here *Job* is not charged with wickedness and iniquity barely, but under a two-fold aggravation.

1. *Great.*
2. *Infinite.*

Secondly, We have his Indictment drawn out into particular Charges, or a specification of some notorious sins given against him the Verses following.

This particular Charge consists of two heads.

First, Sins against man: Secondly, Sins against God: His supposed sins against man, contained in the words now read, are of two sorts: First, Sins of commission, or of the evil which he had done: Secondly, Sins of omission, or of the good that he had not done. The evil which he chargeth him to have done, is two-fold: First, An act of injustice, *Taking a pledge*, in the sixth verse. Secondly, An act of uncharitableness, *Stripping the naked*, in the same verse.

Both which evils, or miscarriages towards the honest poor are aggravated (*ver.* 8.) by his undue connivence at the wicked rich; as he was too severe against the poor, so he was over-favourable towards the great and mighty; *But as for the mighty man he had the earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it:* As if he had said, *Thou didst never set thy self to do justice upon the great ones, be they and do they what they will, they have the earth; thou didst never put forth or exercise thy power to suppress and oppose their insolencies; thy edge was turned only against inferiour ones: Thou tookest a pledge from the poor, and hast stripped the naked of their cloathing.*

His sins of omission are expressed in the seventh verse; *Thou hast not given water to the weary; thou hast withholden bread from the hungry:* And in the ninth verse, *Thou hast sent widows away empty, and the armes of the fatherless have been broken:* Which may be either taken thus, Thou hast broken their armes, or thou hast not given thy help and assistance to restore and relieve them when broken. Thus we have a light into the meaning of these five Verses, as they are a Charge of sin upon *Job.*

Verse 5. Is not thy wickedness great?

The Question may be taken two wayes; either conjecturally and doubtingly, or assertively and affirmingly. Usually in Scripture such Questions are resolved into Assertions, and so divers interpreters resolve this here; *Is not thy wickedness great?* That is, I conclude against thee, *That thy wickedness is great, and that thy iniquities are infinite:* So Master *Broughton* renders, *Doubless thy evil is great.* Others conceive it more clear to the mind of the Text, that this Question should be interpreted conjecturally, *Is not thy wickedness great?* That is, May we not suppose, that thy wickedness is great? May we not from (at least) probable grounds think thus of thee? And that, first, from the general state of man by nature; mans heart being sinful, he may sin, and sin (as it were) without bounds, greatly. *There is no man* (saith *Solomon*, 1 Kings 8. 46.) *that liveth and sinneth not: Solomon* puts it as a parenthesis in his prayer, but it is such a parenthesis, as hooks in all mankind, it takes all in, *Who is there that sinneth not?* So (*Prov.* 20. 9.) *Who can say I am clean from my sin?* Now upon this general ground *Eliphaz* might suppose, *Is not thy wickedness great?* All men have this in their nature, and hast not thou made improvement of it in thy life? All men being sinful by nature, art not thou extreamly sinful in practice?

Non tam hæc ei ex professo objicit, quam cogitandum ei relinquit, num hæc fecerit. Merc.

Again, He might make the supposition upon this ground, his present condition, or his affliction: Thou art greatly afflicted, thy afflictions are not of an ordinary size, or measure, therefore is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquity

quity beyond the ordinary measure? Upon this common rule he might suppose his sin very great; for usually God doth proportion and measure out punishments by our sins. Thy sufferings are very great, therefore are not thy sins great too? Thus he might speak conjecturally upon both these considerations: And yet if we consider how positively he speaks of particulars at the sixth and seventh verses, *&c. Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their cloathing*, &c: He gives us but too much ground to think, that he did more then barely conjecture, while he said,

Is not thy wickedness great?

רעתך *Malum tuũ vox Hebræa pertinet ad improbitatẽ quandã & impudentiã, contra jus & æquum omnia conculcantem.*

The word which we render *wickedness*, is by some specially expounded of that wickedness which hath a kind of impudence in it, and which doth not only break, transgress, or step over the Law, but spurns against it; every man that sinneth steppeth over the Law, over the line, but there are some that kick at it, some who trample upon it, yea, they would destroy it; so some heighten the emphasis of the word.

Malitia in sacris interdum est afflictio, ærũna vexatio, pro malo pœnæ non culpæ accipit, Rab. Lev.

Again, the word is rendred by others as signifying the evil of punishment in this part of the verse, and not the evil of sin; *Is not thy affliction great? Therefore thy iniquity is infinite.* The Greek word (*Matth.* 6. 34.) answers this, *Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof*; that is, the trouble and the sorrow of it: (*Amos* 3. 6.) *Is there any evil in the City which the Lord hath not done?* So here, *Is not thy evil great?* Thy evil of punishment? Therefore thy iniquity is infinite. But I rather fix it upon the former; though the word sometimes signifies the evil of affliction, yet here I shall take it for the evil of sin, or as we translate, *wickedness*, which denotes not ordinary but great sin; for though every wicked man be a sinner, yet every sinner is not properly a wicked man.

Malitiam dicit plurimam, sed iniquitates infinitas, quia in pluribus peccat homo omittendo quam committendo. Aquin.

Further, wickedness in the former, and iniquity in the latter part of the verse, may be thus distinguished; *wickedness* specially respects those acts by which we hurt and wrong others; *iniquity* those in which we pass by or neglect the duty which we owe to others; and therefore *Eliphaz* calls his wickedness *great*, but his iniquities *infinite*; because sins of omission are more in number then sins of commission: Man fails oftner by not doing the good required, then by doing the evil forbidden. Nature can easier forbear that which it likes, or pleaseth it, then be conversant in that which it likes not, or with which it is displeased.

Is not thy wickedness great?

The word signifies both magnitude and multitude, and it may be taken both wayes here, for great in bulk, and great in number.

But it may be said, Whose wickedness is not great? Or is any sin little? Why then doth *Eliphaz* fasten this upon *Job*, *Is not thy wickedness great?*

I answer, First, That it is unbecoming any man, to say his sins are little; we should not little, or lessen our sins, or have low thoughts of them: As we ought not to have low thoughts of any of the mercies of God, but to think them all great to us, yea, too great for us; so we should not have light thoughts of any of our sins, but judge the least of them great, and the lightest of them heavy, yea, even too great and to heavy for us to bear. Nor doth any thing more greaten a mans sin, then his opinion that it is little.

Secondly, I answer, That indeed no sin is little: In the least sin that ever was committed, there is a greatness, as committed against the great God, as it is a breach of the Law, and an abuse of the love of the Great God. Nevertheless, though every sin, thus considered, is great, yet comparatively some sins are but little; and sins being weighed one with the other, we may give this distinction of them into little and great, light and heavy. And as some godly men are faithful, and fear God above many; so some wicked men are sinful and dishonour God above many. *Is not thy wickedness great?*

Hence Note, *'Tis our duty not only to take notice of our sins, but of the greatness and degree of our sins.*

Eliphaz doth well to put *Job* upon that inquiry, *Is not thy wickedness great?* Though he did ill so groundlesly to suspect, much more to conclude that it was so. When *Moses* (*Exod.* 32. 31.) interceded for the people, after they had made the golden Calf, he makes report of their sin to God in the fullest aggravation of it: *Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them Gods of Gold:* He doth not only confess in their behalf, that they had sinned, but they had sinned greatly, *They have* (saith he) *sinned a sin*; that's more then to do a thing that is sinful, and which is yet more, *They have sinned a great sin*; and which is most of all, *They* (though they have been taught, and have professed that God made them) *have made them Gods of Gold. David* makes this the ground why he did beg pardon of his sin (*Psal.* 25. 11.) *Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.* As we are to look upon the greatness of sin, to humble our souls with godly sorrow; so we are to look upon the greatness of sin when we sue to the Lord for pardon; pardon my sin for it is great: our very sensibleness that our sin is great, is a prevailing Argument with God to pardon it; and our insensibleness that our sins are great, gives the greatest stop to the pardon of them. And as every sin hath the more need of pardon, by how much the greater it is; so God will have the more glory in pardoning it, by how much the greater it is. The great wounds and sicknesses of the Patient have the more need of curing; and if a Physitian cure a great wound or sickness, he hath the more honour by the cure. Now that we may take the truest measure of our sins, we must look upon them, first in their nature and kind, of what sort they are, and to what they relate in their commission; secondly, in their circumstances, when, how, and in what manner they have been committed. That sin which is but little in the nature of it, may be a very great one in the circumstances of it. As there are some mercies which we receive from God, little in their kind, yet great in their circumstances, and very obliging; so are our sins. Some sins are very horrid in their own nature, they lay the Conscience waste, and eat out the very principles of Godliness, such are Atheism, Blasphemy, and Idolatry. The sin of the people of *Israel* in making Gods of Gold, how detestable was it? A golden God, what an ugly sight is that? And indeed there are many sins which by how much they have the more external beauty and glory upon them, the more ugly and filthy they are. Other sins are small in their kind, yet by additional considerations they swell into an immense vastness, and become out of measure sinful.

For instance, First, To sin against light, that is, not only to commit a known sin, but to commit it knowingly ('Tis possible, that while we know such a thing to be a sin, yet to do it unknowingly, or not to know that we have done it: He that knoweth it is a sin to tell any untruth, may yet tell one, and not know it: But) when we do that which is a known sin, and likewise know that we do it, then we have no cloak for our sin.

Secondly, To sin against many received mercies, greatens it exceedingly: Thus the Lord aggravates the sin of *David*, I have done thus and thus for thee, and if this had been too little, I would moreover have given thee such and such things; *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight*, 2 Sam. 12. 8, 9.

Thirdly, It greatens sin when continued in after warnings, and renewed admonitions; *He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy* (Prov. 29. 1.) The greatness of his punishment (he shall be (not afflicted, but) *destroyed*) the quickness of it (he shall *suddenly be destroyed*) the irrecoverableness of it (and that without remedy) all these with one consent vote the greatness of that sin, whatsoever it be in its kind, which is persisted in after perswasion to desist and depart from it. The Church is commanded to pass her extreamest censure upon that offending brother, who having been told his fault; first, by that brother alone whom he hath offended; secondly, by him and two more associated as witnesses; thirdly, then, by the Church gathered in the Name of Christ (*Matth.* 18. 16, 17.) *But if he will not hear thee, then take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a Publican. It is dangerous enough to sin against a rule; but 'tis more dangerous to sin*

ſin againſt a reproof, eſpecially againſt the reproof of a whole Church.

Fourthly, When we ſin in the ſight of judgments upon our ſelves, or others, whether for the ſame, or other ſins: This is as if a thief ſhould ſteal before the Judge, or under the gibbet, while he ſeeth others arraigned or executed for ſtealing. It is very evil to ſin againſt Judgments threatened; but it is far worſe to ſin againſt Judgments executed. That wrath which is revealed from Heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs to the ear in the Word of God, ſhould ſtop us from ſin; much more that which is revealed to the eye in the works of God.

Fifthly, When we ſin againſt our own promiſes not to ſin, when our own words condemn us, as well as the Word of God, this ſtains every ſin with a double guilt.

Sixthly, The greatning of a ſin is from the repeating of it after it hath been repented of. To fall into any ſin out of which we have riſen, makes our fall the more grievous; when a ſinner licks up his own vomit, when he builds again the things which he had deſtroyed, he makes himſelf a tranſgreſſor indeed. They who repent not cannot expect mercy; what remains then for them but a certain fearful expectation of Judgment, who repent of their repentings?

Seventhly, Sin is greatly increaſed when acted with deliberation; to be hurried into a ſin though great, is not ſo great as to do a leſs evil conſultively, or to adviſe upon it and do it; ſome ſin for want of advice, many ſin againſt advice, and not a few ſin with advice, that is adviſedly. *'Tis hard to find out a way to give them comfort, who ſin with counſel.* They who are wiſe to do evil, or who do evil as a piece of their wiſdom (ſuch every deliberate action is eſteemed to be) will be found the greateſt fools. *All ſin is folly, but thoſe ſins have moſt of the fool in them, which we think we do wiſely.* In all theſe caſes we may well ſay to any man, as *Eliphaz* here to *Job*, *Is not thy wickedneſs great?*

And thine iniquity infinite?

עונתיך *Perverſitas & non finis iniquitatibus tuis.* Heb. ἀνακείφαλαιωσις. 70. *Rebellio æterna.* Vatabl.

The word which we tranſlate *iniquity*, implyeth perverſeneſs, or frowardneſs in ſinning; *Is not thine iniquity infinite?* The Hebrew is, *There is no end to thy iniquity*; or thou doſt commit iniquity without end. The Septuagint render it thus, *Are not thy iniquities ſo many that they cannot be numbred? Are they not innumerable?* Another thus, *Is not thy rebellion eternal?* And ſo the ſence reacheth either the multiplication of acts, or the continuation of time. Our reading is comprehenſive of both; *Is not thine iniquity infinite?*

But how could *Eliphaz* make ſuch a ſuppoſition as this? Seeing there is nothing infinite but God, and it is altogether impoſſible that there ſhould be *two infinites*. *The Heavens cannot hold two Suns, much leſs can the world hold two Infinites.* God is the only Infinite; therefore ſin is not infinite as God is infinite: Firſt, That is infinite which is without end: Secondly, That is infinite which is without bound; in both God is infinite: As he had no beginning, ſo he ſhall have no end or period of his being; He is infinite in reference to duration or time; and he is infinite in reference to place or extent: He fills Heaven and Earth, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him. The Hebrew phraſe in the Text, *without end*, anſwers our tranſlation, *infinite*; for infinite is that which hath no bounds or end. So then in a ſtrict and proper ſence, there is nothing infinite but God. And infinity runneth through all the titles of God; he is infinite in power, infinite in wiſdom, juſtice, righteouſneſs, and mercy: It remains then to be further conſidered, how we may underſtand this queſtion, *Is not thine iniquity infinite?*

I anſwer, Sin is not infinite properly, yet in a vulgar ſence ſin may be called infinite; for according to common acception, we call that infinite which is very great, or which exceeds all ordinary bounds, though not all bounds; only that is properly infinite which exceeds all bounds; but we uſually ſay, that is infinite which exceeds ordinary bounds. Thus ſome mens ſins only are infinite. For though every ſin be a breaking of the bounds which God hath ſet us, either in exceſs or in defect; yet they who ſin after a common rate or proportion of ſinning, may be ſaid to keep their bounds in ſinning. For what the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome tryals and temptations (1 *Cor.* 10. 13.) the ſame may be ſaid of ſome ſins and tranſgreſſions, that *they are common to man.* But they who ſin (as the Prophet ſpeaks) with a high hand, or with both hands greedily, they who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and ſin as it were with cart-roaps, theſe do not only break the everlaſting bounds of the Law, but the ordinary bounds of ſin. Their ſins are not common (in the act, though the principle be) to man. They ſin as few men ever ſinned, they ſin like Devils rather then like men, and therefore (under this notion) their ſin is deſervedly called infinite.

Secondly, We may ſay, that ſin hath an infiniteneſs in it in reference to the object, God; and ſo not only a great ſin, and many ſins, but ſmall ſins, or any one ſin may be ſaid to have an infiniteneſs in it, becauſe it is committed againſt an infinite God. And hence it is that nothing can expiate ſin but what hath an infiniteneſs in it; the leaſt ſin calls for the blood of Chriſt to take it away, which blood hath a kind of infinity in it; for though the ſufferings and blood of Chriſt were not properly infinite, becauſe they were the ſufferings of the humane nature; yet the Divine nature ſhed forth an infinite worth and value upon his ſufferings; and therefore we are ſaid to be *redeemed* (or purchaſed) *by the blood of God* (Acts 20. 28.) That is, by the blood of that perſon who is God, though the humane nature only was capable of having blood ſhed. Thus we may ſay, that the leaſt ſin, with reſpect to the object, is infinite, God himſelf being offended and wronged by every ſin.

Thirdly, As this infiniteneſs may be conſidered in reference to the extent of any one ſin (that reaching as high as God) ſo to the number, or rather to the innumerableneſs of our ſins. There is an Arithmetical as well as a Geometrical infinity in ſin. Thus the Septuagint (as was ſaid before) render the Text, *Are not thine iniquities innumerable?* That hath a kind of infinity which cannot be numbred: But cannot our ſins be numbred? Are they infinite in number?

I anſwer, Sins may be conſidered two wayes: Firſt, In their ſpecies and kinds: Secondly, In their acts: If we conſider ſins in their ſpecies and kinds, ſo they are not innumerable, for it is poſſible to number up all the ſeveral heads, diviſions, and kinds of ſin; but if we conſider ſin in reference to acts, ſo every mans ſins are innumerable; yet this innumerableneſs of ſins, in reference to acts, may be conſidered either abſolutely, or as to us. The acts of ſin are not abſolutely, or in themſelves innumerable, but as to us they are innumerable; they are more then any man can number. *John* ſaith (*Revel.* 7. 9.) *After this I beheld, and lo a great multitude, which no man could number* (beſides thoſe that were ſealed of every Tribe) *of all Nations, and Kindreds,* &c. This great multitude was not in it ſelf without number, but as to mans Arithmetick it was, no man could number it. The hairs of our head, and the ſands of the Sea, are numerable to God, but to us innumerable. *David* (*Pſal.* 40. 12.) ſpeaks firſt of *innumerable evils*, and then of *innumerable ſins*; *Innumerable evils compaſs me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up; they are more then the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me*: When he ſaith, *They are more then the hairs of my head*, his meaning is, they are innumerable; I can no more tell the ſum of my ſins, then the ſum of my hairs. Chriſt to aſſure his Diſciples in time of their afflictions and ſufferings, that he will take care of them, tells them, *The very hairs of your head are all numbred* (*Matth.* 10. 30.) As if he had ſaid, Seeing God taketh care of thoſe inconſiderable (not parts, but) excrements of the body, ſurely then he will take care of thoſe more noble parts of your body, and moſt of all of that moſt noble part of you (which is your all) your ſouls. The hairs of our heads are innumerable to us, but God numbers them. The ſins of our hearts and lives are all numbred by God. *Thou telleſt my wandrings* (ſaith holy *David*, Pſal. 56. 8.) He means it of his wandrings by perſecution, and 'tis as true of his wandrings by tranſgreſſion. But what man knows the errors or wandrings either of his heart or life? (*Pſal.* 19. 12.) He that hath feweſt ſins, hath more then he can number; and therefore every mans ſins are to him in number infinite.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Iniquities may be called infinite in reference to the will, or the spirit of him that committeth those iniquities: Those sins are without bounds, to which man would never set a bound. The natural man would never end sinning, therefore his sins are without end, or infinite. The Prophet (*Jer.* 13. 27.) speaks reprovingly to that people in the name of the Lord; *I have seen thy adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields; wo unto thee, O Jerusalem, wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be?* As if he had said, *O Jerusalem*, thou hast no will to be made clean; or, thou wouldst never be clean, if thou mightest have thy will; *When shall it once be?* The time is yet to come when thou wouldest have it to be so; thou hast a mind to pollute thy self still, but no mind to wash thy self from thy pollution. The sins of a person or people are then infinite, or without end, when they discover that they have no mind to leave sinning. A godly mans desires to do good, are infinite, and so are the desires of a wicked man to do evil. This Prophet had spoken to *Jerusalem* in the same Language (*chap.* 4. 14.) *How long shall vain thoughts in thee?* When wilt thou be weary of these Lodgers? when wilt thou bid these Guests be gone, which thou hast thus long bid welcome? The Church of God doth sometimes suffer evil to lodge very long in her, even in the midst of her, as it were, at her very heart; but the *world* lodgeth or *lieth* (continually *in evil* (1 John 5. 19.) and there (as it is the world) it will lie for ever, soak'd and steep'd in evil. Some give this as one reason to justifie the infiniteness or everlastingness of the punishment that is laid upon impenitent sinners in hell. The damned are under endless sufferings, because they would have sinned without end: A wicked man would live long, yea, he would have no end of his life here, he would live ever, that he might sin for ever; therefore the Lord giveth him a life, not such a one as he would have, but such a one as he deserves to have; which is a death for ever. They die eternally for sin, who would have lived eternally in sin. Take a Scripture or two more to illustrate this way of the infinity of mans sin (*Jer.* 8. 5.) *Why is this people of* Jerusalem *slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return*: Here are three phrases noting this one thing. First, *They hold fast deceit.* Secondly, *They refused to return.* Thirdly, *Theirs was a perpetual backsliding*; or, as some read it, *an eternal rebellion, an obstinate rebellion, a strong and mighty rebellion*; the *Seventy* call it *an impudent, shameless rebellion*: All these are proper Epithetes of that obstinacy and setledness of resolution which is in the heart of man by nature to continue in sin; yet there is a further rendring of the words, which as the Original will bear, so it hath an elegancy in it: *Why is this people of* Jerusalem *slidden back by a conquering, or a prevailing backsliding?* A perpetual Backsliding hath conquest or triumph attributed to it upon a twofold consideration; first, In reference to others sins. Final obstinacy or impenitency lifts up its head above all other sins, and sits as King among them; impenitency under any sin committed, is greater then the sin committed; not to repent of the evil we have done, is worse then the evil which we do. Impenitency seals the soul under condemnation. Repentance conquers sin, but impenitency is the conquering sin. Secondly, 'Tis called triumphing or conquering sin, because it seems (as it were) to carry the day against the mercy and goodness of God; that's a sad conquest indeed: not that any sin, no, nor impenitency for sin, exceeds the mercy and goodness of God; for his thoughts of mercy are as high above our acts of sin, as they are above our thoughts of his mercy, and that is as high as the heaven is in comparison of the earth (*Isa.* 55. 9.) But the mercy of the Lord is said to be overcome by perpetual backslidings, because the Lord will not be merciful to such; thus final impenitency may be called a triumphing or conquering sin, seeing the mercy of God seems to yield unto it. They will not humble themselves to seek mercy, yea, they slight and despise mercy, therefore they shall not find mercy. The Prophet *Jeremy* represents the Lord thus expostulating again with the Jewish Nation (*ch.* 5. 22, 23.) *Fear ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the Sand for the bound of the Sea, by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it, and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; and though they roar, yet can they not pass over it; but this people hath a revolting and rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone.* The words, as I conceive, have these two things in them; First, That the Lord is to be feared, who doth such things, who set bounds to the Sea, &c. Secondly, That the wickedness of mans heart is admirable, or rather, that we are to be astonished at the wickedness of mans heart, which is more boisterous and disobedient then the raging waves of the Sea. The Lord sets bounds to the waves of the Sea; which waves in their own nature are altogether boundless; liquid waves have no bounds of their own, yet the Lord having put bounds to them, they are kept in bounds. *The Sand bounds the Sea, so that though the waves thereof toss, they cannot prevail; though they roar, they cannot pass over; but this people have revolted and are gone*; as if he had said, I the Lord have put a bound to the Sea, I have also set a bound to the wickedness of mans heart; what is that? My Word, my Law. The Law of God is a moral bound to stop and keep in compass the raging waves of mans corruption. God doth not alwayes put an external bound by sword and judgment to stop men whether they will or no from sin, but he alwayes sets a moral bound to stop them; this is supposed in the Text, I put a bound to the Sea, to the Sea also of mans heart, to the wickedness that is there; but this people are revolted and gone, they have broken all my bounds, even that perpetual decree of my righteous Law. Now as when the Sea breaks its bounds, the waters flow infinitely, there is no stopping them; so when the heart of man breaks bounds, revolts and is gone, he sins infinitely, he makes no end of sinning. By these Scriptures we may understand in what sence the iniquities of wicked men may be said to be infinite; though nothing is infinite in a strict and proper sence, but God himself.

Vellet sine fine vivere, ut posset sine fine peccare. Greg.

Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquity infinite?

But hath *Job* given *Eliphaz* any just occasion of this surmise, that his sin was in this sence infinite? Did he ever observe either wickedness in general, or those particular wickednesses which he presently enumerates; taking a pledge, denying relief of the poor, stripping the naked, &c.? Had he seen any of these evils acted by *Job*? Certainly he had not. *Job* was a man of another frame of life then these things import; these black lines and colours would never make the picture of *Job*'s heart or life; this is as ill a draught of a man as could be made; yet *Eliphaz* puts all this upon *Job*, at least, by supposition; Is it not thus? But what reason had he for this supposition? None but this, the greatness of his affliction, the infinite troubles that were upon him. God set no bounds to *Job*'s sorrows; therefore he thought *Job* had sinned beyond all bounds. Hence observe,

We are ready to judge their sins great, who are the greatest sufferers.

Though we know nothing by them, though we can charge nothing upon them, yet this thought riseth naturally in us, when we see any under great and extraordinary sufferings, surely they are great and extraordinary sinners. The worst of sinners never suffered more in this world, then the best of Saints: Witness those Jewish Worthies, whose torments are reported by the Author to the *Hebrews* (chap. 11. 37.) And as these were adjudged to suffer, because they were thought the worst of sinners, so, doubtless, many who saw them suffer, thought them such, though they knew nothing done by them to make them such. Read also this Spirit (*Luke* 13. 2. *Acts* 28. 4.) This hath been formerly observed from other passages in this Book, and therefore I only touch it, and pass away.

Again *Eliphaz* seems to take *Job* off from the wrong ground of his sufferings, and tells him, though he looked to other reasons, yet the true reason was the greatness of his wickedness, and the numberlesness of his iniquities. Hence observe,

That, *Few think of, or hit upon any other cause of suffering, but sin.*

Sin is so much and so often the cause of suffering, that we do it no wrong to suspect it as the cause of all sufferings; and it is indeed one kind of cause (*causa sine qua non*) of all our sufferings, so that we can hardly wrong sin by this suspition,

but we may easily wrong both God and man by it. When the blind man came before Christ, his Disciples asked him, saying, *Master, who did sin, this man or his Parents, that he was born blind?* They could hit upon nothing but sin, why the man was born blind (*John* 9. 2.) But at the third verse, Christ answered, *Neither hath this man sinned nor his Parents*; he vindicates both from this suspition. What man was this? and who were his parents, that they sinned not? Were they clean from sin? Not so neither; but the meaning of Christ is this, neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, so, as that either his sin or theirs should be reckoned the special cause why he was born blind. There was somewhat else in it, which the Disciples took no notice of, nor did they understand. Christ doth not deny but that a mans own sin, and the sin of his parents may be a cause of blindness; but neither the one nor the other was the cause in that mans case: as if Christ had said, Can you think of nothing else why a man is afflicted, but only his sin? There are many other causes of suffering besides that. The cause why some some suffer, is the trial of their Graces. The cause why many suffer, is to bear witness to the Truth, and to encourage others both in the profession of it, and in persecutions for it. And Christ particularly assignes another cause of the sufferings of the blind man, *That the work of God might be made manifest in him*: That the work of God in his power and mercy might be seen in restoring this man to his sight, therefore was he born without the power of seeing. The blindness of that man was an occasion to make a very glorious discovery of God. Much of God had not been so eminently seen at that time, if that man had alwayes seen. Many are cast down upon beds of sickness, or into a state of poverty, that the work of God in raising them up to health and plenty, may be made manifest. The design of God looks beyond the sin of man in the afflictions of most men, yet man seldom looks beyond it. Note from the whole verse,

Thirdly, That, *We are more ready to judge the sins of others great, then our own.*

Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquities infinite?] *Eliphaz* might have said as much of himself and his own sin; and it had been but a duty to have done so; we should not aggravate the sins of others, nor extenuate or lessen our own; we should not set the sins of others in open light, nor provide coverings for our own, yet most commonly we run the contrary course; we have a favourable opinion, and excuses ready for what we have done, while we have hard thoughts of, and give harsh censures upon what others do; our own sins we can call moats, and the sin of others beams. The better any man is, the better he judges others, and the worse of himself. *Paul* spake no complement, while he said, that *he was less then the least of all Saints, and the chief of sinners*; usually they who are the severest observers and censurers of others, either flatter, or have not well observed themselves.

Fourthly, Forasmuch as *Eliphaz* seeing *Job* under great sufferings, saith to him, *Is not thy wickedness great?* The counsel in it self was seasonable. Hence observe,

That, *In time of suffering, it is good both to put our selves and others upon enquiry about our sins.*

So the Prophet (*Lam.* 3. 39, 40.) *Why doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our wayes, and turn again to the Lord*: Times of afflictions should be times of inquisition; when the Lord is smiting, we should be searching; when we have received many wounds, it is time for us to be suspecting our selves of many sins; and the counsel of others is not to be rejected, when seeing us in sorrow, they advise us to consider what our sins are, how great and how many. For though we should be tender in pressing those who are under the load and burden of affliction, with the burden of their sins, yet they who are so, shall do well and wisely, to press it upon themselves.

Fifthly, Whereas *Eliphaz* saith, *Is not thy wickedness great, and thine iniquity infinite?* And in the next verse, concludes upon it; *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought*, &c. All which were but conjectures and suspitions; observe,

That, *Suppositions and conjectures are no fit grounds, upon which to build a judgment concerning the faultiness of others.*

We must not censure upon *I hear so, I suppose so, I think so*; but upon *I know it is so*: Many have run into great sin by judging the sins of others great. *Judge not* (saith our Saviour, *Matth.* 7. 1.) *that ye be not judged.* He speaks not against all judgment; but either, First, Against severe and harsh judging; or, Secondly, Against false judging; or, Thirdly, Against inconsiderate or rash judging. When we judge without due ground, *not knowing the why or wherefore* of our judgment, take heed of such judging, *that ye be not judged*, that is, lest having judged others unduly, ye receive your due in judgment. *Eliphaz* had nothing upon knowledge to charge *Job* for, yet while he questions, *Is not thy wickedness great?* He doth more then seemingly conclude that his sin was very great, and his iniquities infinite. And in the next verse, in stead of querying, he comes to peremptory concluding.

Verse 6. For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their cloathing.

Now begins the special Charge or Indictment; now he enumerates several sins: As if he had said, *What dost thou stand looking for matter or reasons why thou art thus afflicted? Here are the reasons, I will name them to thee; Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.* Thus *Eliphaz* poureth upon him, and discharges whole vollies of shot, but all at random, and besides the mark. Before, he spake in the third person; he speaks now in the second: *Thou, thou art the man, thou hast taken a pledge.* Again, *Eliphaz* had formerly dealt with *Job* as an hypocrite: he then granted that he had some shews of holiness, and some appearance or counterfeit of goodness at least; now he denieth that: now he pulls off his vizor or mask, and objects against him bare-faced. Before he charged him with falseness of heart, while he professed and practised Religion; but now he objects such practices against him, as no man doth, who hath but a profession of Religion. He objects those crimes against him which are proper to prophane open sinners, to common oppressors, who raise themselves upon the ruines, and enrich themselves by the spoiles of their weaker brethren: These are sinners not only against the Law of God, but light of Nature; these are acts not only of impiety, but of cruelty, inhumanity and tyranny.

Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.

Job was a Magistrate, and this would have aggravated his sin exceedingly, if it had been true; for any man to oppress another, is very wickedness; but for a Magistrate, who is set up to be a protector, a reliever of others, a helper of the friendless, and a Judge of the widow, for him to carry himself thus, for him to oppress and grind the faces of the poor, is most tyrannical. Thus *Aristotle* defines a Tyrant; *He is one that rules so as to turn all to his own private benefit or profit*: He that governs so, governs for himself; whereas true government seeks and respects the good of others. Just Governors are a general blessing, and their aim is the *common*, not their *private wealth*. Thus *Eliphaz* renders *Job* a very Tyrant, who, when he should be a nursing-father to his Countrey, proves a devourer of it; and when he should provide bread for those about him, he takes their bread, yea, their blood from them, and gives them a stone. *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought.*

Tyrannus est, qui ita dominatur, ut ad proprium commodum & utilitatem omnia conferat. Ar. l. 4. Polit. & 1. Eth.

There are three aggravations of his sin supposed in these words.

First, That he took a pledge.

Secondly, That he took it of a brother.

Thirdly, That he took it for nought.

Thou hast taken a pledge.] The Hebrew is no more then this, *Thou hast pledged.* The word signifies also to bind or fasten a thing as with a cord; and the reason is, because a pledge given is an obligation, a tie or bond to perform the promise made, or pay the debt contracted. A promise is an audible bond, but a pledge is a visible bond. It is no sin, in it self, to take a pledge, no more then it is a sin to buy, sell, or to engage a man any other way, to perform a bargain, or repay a debt. The Law of God published by *Moses*, allowed the taking of a pledge; what is it then which *Eliphaz* chargeth upon *Job* as sinful in taking a pledge? I conceive there are two things which shew sinfulness in taking a pledge, and that both are implied here.

In Hebræo simplex est verbum חבל *quod est pignorare, aut pignus accipere, idem est obligare.*

First,

First, He intimates that *Job* did not wait to receive a pledge at the hand of his brother, but he did, as it were, rush in upon him, and took the pledge; for so tender was the Lord in reference to the poor of his people, or to those that should be in need to borrow of their brethren, and so give a pledge for security, that he giveth this special order (Deut. 24. 10.) *When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge* (It was not unlawful to receive a pledge from his brother, but to go into his house, was against the Law) *but thou shalt stand abroad, and the man shall bring it out to thee.* Some conceive that this was the sin charged upon *Job*; *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother, thou hast not according to this expres Law of God, tarried for it*; and supposing that *Eliphaz* and *Job* lived before the giving of that Law, yet the Light of Nature teacheth, that we should not press a man, or pull his pledge from him, but that the borrower should go into his house, and bringing his pledge, deliver it up freely with his own hand into the hand of the lender. It is an affliction to have need to borrow, and therefore the borrower should be so tenderly dealt with by the lender, as not to add affliction to him. It is a courtesie to lend to him that is in need, but as some in giving, so most in lending, spoil all the courtesie of it; while they lend their money, they snatch or gripe at their security; whereas the old Law said (the equity whereof, though not the formality, remaines to this day) *Thou shalt not go into thy brothers house to fetch his pledge, but thou shalt stand abroad, and the man shall bring it out to thee.* Some Criticks tell us, that this is signified in the Etymology of the Latine word, which signifies a *pledge*: Namely, that the Lender should not take, but receive it from the hand of the Borrower. It is the duty of borrowers to pay: *The wicked borroweth and payeth not again* (*Psal.* 37. 21.) The Apostles rule to the godly is, *Owe no man any thing but to love one another* (Rom. 13. 8.) Now, as it is the duty of the borrower to pay, so of the lender to be moderate, and not to exact or impose heavily upon him, for the assuring of his payments. As he that buyeth, should be as if he bought not, so he that lends, should be (in this respect) as if he lent not; he should lend with so much mildness and meekness of spirit, as if he gave rather then lent; or as if (the contrary whereof *Solomon* found in his experience, *Prov.* 22. 7.) himself the lender, were servant to the borrower. *Job* is charged first with failing in this; as if he had over-eagerly pressed upon his brother for a pledge; *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother.*

Ipsa pignoris Etymologia, docere hominem videtur pignus non tam propria manu auferendum ab invito & misero debitore, quam accipiendum nonnisi ipsius debitoris manu oblatum: pignus enim appellatum est a pugno, quia res quæ pignori dantur, manu traduntur. Cajus.

Secondly, The taking of a pledge from a brother, may be expounded of with-holding a pledge when it is called for, or of the not restoring it, when the Covenants are performed. This is not only to take it, but to take it away; suppose the pledge hath been given into a mans hand, yet if he will not restore it, or give it back out of his hand when called for, but make excuses or delayes, *This is to take away the pledge.* And thus some make out the sin of the Text, *Thou hast taken a pledge*, that is, thou hast swept it quite away, thou hast refused to restore the pledge, when that which was borrowed upon it, hath been in due time tendered to be payed or restored. The Prophet *Ezekiel* (*chap.* 18. 14, 15, 16.) numbers the contrary practices among those Negatives for which the Lord declares himself much pleased with the son of a wicked father; *A son that seeth all his fathers sins that he hath done, and doth not such like, that hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lift up his eyes to the Idols of the house of* Israel, *that hath not defiled his neighbours wife, neither hath oppressed any; that hath not withholden the pledge, neither hath spoiled by violence,* &c. *He shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live.* Here sinning in the matter of a pledge, is pitcht upon with-holding it, not upon taking it: For though a man have a pledge fairly delivered up to him, though he doth not rush into the borrowers house, and there be his own carver, taking what himself listeth, to secure that which he hath lent, yet if he with-hold the pledge when it is required and desired to be returned upon promised satisfaction made, this very sinful and oppressive. Some, when they get a good thing in their hands, they are loth to part with it, and will have a device to prove it forfeited by the Borrower, when indeed 'tis only coveted by the Lender. Hence note,

That, *Violently to take, or unjustly to detain the pledge committed to us, is to act the part of the oppresser.*

That Law which saith, *Thou shalt not steal*, doth as much forbid the detaining in our hands, as the laying of our hands upon that which is our neighbours. And he that with-holds the pledge when the debtor is ready, and offers to redeem it, is like him that with-holds the debt when the lender desires him, and he is able to repay it. Thou hast taken or with-holden *a pledge*; that's thy sin.

Secondly, There is a further aggravation of sin in the words respecting the person from which the pledge was taken; *a Brother*: *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy Brother.* This addeth to the sin; we should be kind to all, but especially to a brother. A brother may be taken either strictly, for one next or near by birth or blood, a brother by consanguinity; such are in the most proper sence, our brethren and our own flesh. Or the word *Brother* may be taken in a large sence, for any that are near to us, as being either of the same profession of Religion with us, or living in the same City, Society, or under the same Government with us. These are our brethren and our own flesh too. And so the Prophet calleth them, even when pinched with hunger and nakedness, the more to move the bowels of our compassion towards them (*Isa.* 58. 7.) *When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thy self from thy own flesh*: As richly cloathed as thou art, and as naked as they are, thine own flesh they are. When *Eliphaz* saith, *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother*, he takes in brethren under all distinctions. This he adds to heighten *Job's* sin; *Thou tookest a pledge from thy brother.* Hence note,

That, *As it is unjust and uncharitable to wrong any man, so most of all, those that are near to us.*

To wrong a brother of any latitude or degree is sinful, and still the nearer the brother is, the more sinful it is to wrong him; the sin which a man commits against himself, is therefore greatest of all, because a man is nearest to himself; so in proportion the nearer any one is to us in any relation, the more we sin in wronging him. The Apostle puts it under that notion; *If a brother or a sister be naked and destitute of dayly food*, &c. *Jam.* 2. 15. And again, 1 *John* 3. 17. *Whosoever hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* That is, the love of God doth not at all dwell in him, or at best it dwelleth very poorly and undiscernably in him. To see strangers, yea enemies, destitute, and not relieve them, is uncharitable; but to see a brother or a sister, and chiefly a brother or a sister in spiritual relation (for of such I conceive the Apostle speaks particularly in those places) I say, to see such destitute, and not to relieve them, this is highest uncharitableness.

Again, Some render thus (not, *Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother*, but) *Thou hast taken thy brother for a pledge.* This speaks yet louder, and is a sin of a blacker colour then the former; thou hast not only taken thy brothers pledge, but himself, his very person for security or for paiment. But what is it to take a mans brother for a pledge? or how was that done? These two things may be in it; Either first, More generally; Thou hast imprisoned him: As (*Matth.* 18. 28.) 'Tis said of the cruel Creditor, that he took his brother, *and cast him into prison till he should pay the utmost farthing*: Now though all kind of imprisonment be not sinful, not only as to the Law of Nations, but as to the Law of God; yet cruel imprisonment is very sinful; *Thou hast taken thy brother for a pledge*: Thou hast not spared his person when he had not a purse to pay thee; *Thou hast* (as it hath been said among us) *made Dice of his bones.* Some would never pay, were it not for fear of a prison, but to put and detain a poor man in prison when he hath nothing to pay, is not only unchristian, but barbarous and inhumane. Or secondly (which was used in ancient times) *Thou hast taken thy brother for a pledge*, that is, thou hast made him thy slave: To be cast into prison, is a slavery, and a man may be made a slave, yet not imprisoned. And though it may be a duty (when we have nothing else to satisfie it with) to work out a debt, yet it is a very high severity for to force a debtor to pay with his work. We read how the poor Widow came to *Elisha*

In pignore accepto fratris tui Sept.

the Prophet, and bemoaned her case to him (2 *King.*4. 1.) *Thy servant my husband is dead, and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord, and the Creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.* This is to take a brother for a pledge: The Prophet seems to aim at this, while he describes those hypocritical Fasts among the Jews (*Isa.*58. 6.) *Is not this the Fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?* To fast, and not to reform, is to mock God rather then to humble our selves. Here are the true fruits of fasting; and they all run into the point in hand, the avoiding and turning from all injurious and vexatious dealings with our brethren. First, *The bands of wickedness*, that is, of oppressing Laws or pinching Contracts. Secondly, *Heavy burdens*, either of services or taxes: From these the oppressed should be freed, and every yoke imposed by these or any other way of grievance, broken off from the necks of our brethren.

There is yet one word more very considerable in the Text, for the heightning of this sin.

Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought, or without cause. This word was opened (*chap.* 1. 9.) Where Satan suggests against *Job*'s sincerity; *Doth* Job *serve God for nought?* And again (*chap.* 2. 3.) Where the Lord asserts and vindicates the sincerity of *Job* against Satans calumniations; *Thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause*; that is, thou hadst no cause to move me so against him; he is no such mercenary servant as thou hast maliciously pretended: Thus here; *Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought*, or, *without cause*, that is, without any necessary cause; there was no reason thou shouldest take a pledge from thy brother when thou tookest it; thou mightest have trusted him, but thou wouldest not any further then thou hadst full security put into thy hand, or rather, then thou didst take it into thy hand whether he would or no. As if he had said, Thou wouldest not relieve thy brothers poverty, upon the promises which God makes to those who charitably relieve the poor; thou wouldest neither take Gods word, nor trust thy brother in any case, further then thou didst see him; unless he would put into thy hand, thou wouldest not put into his. True charity must and will make some ventures; *Cast thy bread upon the waters* (saith *Solomon*, Eccl. 11. 1.) A good man is a Merchant, and will trust his bread where he hath no more assurance of a safe return, then the Merchant hath of his Ship and Lading from the winds and waters.

Thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother. Again, *Without cause, or for nought*, may have this meaning, thou didst oblige thy brother to restore that which really and indeed he never received from thee; thou didst put a debt to thy brothers account which he never made by borrowing. *David* complains of such kind of unkind usage (*Psal.* 69. 4.) *They that hate me without cause, are moe then the hairs of my head: They that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away*, that is, which I took not away, either as borrowed of them, or as stoln from them. I was neither debtor nor a thief, I had nothing of theirs in my hands, yet I was forced to restore. This is the worst sort of *taking a pledge for nought.*

Thirdly, *For nought*, that is, when there was no reason to take so great a pledge of thy brother; the thing which thou didst lend him, was but some trifle, yet thou wouldst have a pledge of thy brother for it; thou wouldest have great security for an inconsiderable debt; that's the course of many oppressors, by lending a little, they will have much to secure it. And this is to take a pledge of a brother for nought; there should be some equality between the debt and the security; he that lends a trifle, a small matter, and requires great assurance, takes a pledge of his brother for nought: So that all unreasonable and unequal demands for security, either taking it (wherein charity bids us trust) from the poor, or taking (where in justice we should not take any thing) when nothing was lent, or when there is no reason we should take so much; any of these harsh and injurious practices, is the *taking a pledge of our brother for nought.* Hence observe,

That, *The less cause we have to do any evil, the greater is the evil which we do.*

But hath any man a cause to do any evil? he hath not; by cause, I mean a provocation; there is no cause for which we should do any evil; but there may be many provocations or temptations to do evil. *Peninah* provoked *Hannah* sore to make her fret (1 *Sam.* 1. 6.) It was not for nought or without cause that *Moses* his passion was stirr'd, and that he spake unadvisedly with his lips; the murmurings and complainings of that unsteady people *provoked his Spirit* (*Ps.*106.33.) Now the less provocation, the greater always is the sin; as to sin against admonition, or against any of those means that might keep us from sin, makes the sin the greater, so, when there is no occasion leading us unto sin. This was one reason of greatning the sin of our first Parents, in eating the forbidden fruit: Why did they eat? were they ready to starve? were they in any streights? had they not the whole Garden before them? did they not *eat the forbidden fruit without cause*, or *for nought?* *Solomon* saith (*Prov.* 6. 30.) *Men do not despise a thief if he steal to satisfie his soul when he is hungry*; for though to steal for meer hunger, doth not take away the sinfulness of the fact, yet it doth much abate it; because the man is provoked to do it for the supply of his present and pressing need; but for a rich man (who hath no need) to steal, for a man to steal who is not hungry, how sinful is it! Our greatest necessities cannot wholly excuse our sin; but to sin where there is no necessity, doth greatly increase our sin. *Saul* thought he should come off without blame when he had so much to say for his rash Sacrifice (1 *Sam.* 13. 12.) *I said the* Philistims *will come down upon me to* Gilgal, *and I have not made supplication unto the Lord; I forced my self therefore, and offered a burnt offering.* But doth *Samuel* approve this Plea? We have his resolution in the next verse; *Thou hast done foolishly, thou hast not kept the Commandment of the Lord thy God.* Though *Saul* found himself under a moral force to do what he did, yet that did not free him either from guilt or punishment when he ventured to do it. *David* smarted for numbring *Israel*, though *Satan stood up against* Israel, *and provoked* David *to number them* (1 Chron. 21. 1.) What shall we say then of those who do more then *David*, altogether unprovoked by Satan? who rather tempt themselves, then are tempted unto evil? As the good we do is so much the better, so the evil we do is by so much the worse, by how much we do it the more freely and unconstrained. Thus *Eliphaz* aggravates the first instance of *Job*'s supposed wickedness. To take a pledge from a man in the manner expounded, is not only illiberal, but sinful; To take a pledge from a brother in distress, is more sinful; but to take a pledge from a brother for nought, is a degree of sin which hath many degrees of sinfulness beyond both the former. *Eliphaz* had yet but begun *Job*'s indictment, this is the first Crime objected: A second, and a third, and more are following. *Thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought,*

And stript the naked of their cloathing.

It may be questioned, If they were naked, how could they be stript of their cloathing? He that is naked, hath no cloaths to be stript of. 'Tis gone in a Proverb, *A naked man cannot be stript by a hundred men*; he that hath nothing, can lose nothing; how then is it said here, *Thou hast stript the naked of their cloathing?*

Nudus nec à centum viris spoliatur.

I answer, *The naked* are not here to be taken strictly for such as have no cloaths at all; but for those who have but few cloaths, or for such as are but meanly and thinly cloathed; any that are poor and low, any who are in want, may be numbred among the naked. 'Tis frequent, as in Scripture, so in common speech, to express those as being quite without that of which they have but little. We say of a man that hath but a little knowledge, he is an ignorant man; and of a man who hath but a little learning, that he is an illiterate or an unlearned man. Thus we may say of a man that hath but little store of cloaths, little store of the world about him, that he is naked, that he hath nothing. The Apostle useth this Language (1 *Cor.* 4. 11.) *Even to this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked*, &c. Not that the Apostles went about without cloaths, but they were but mean in their apparel, poor in their appearances, and that he calls nakedness. So the Apostle *James*, in the second Chapter of that Epistle, *ver.* 15. *If a Brother or a Sister be naked*, &c. He doth not mean it only of

Quædam etiamsi vera non sint propter similitudinē eodem vocabuto comprehensa sunt; sic qui malè vestitum & pannosum videt, nudum se vidisse dicit. Sen. *l.* 5. Ben. *c.* 13.

of such as have never a rag to cover their nakedness, but of such as are ill furnished with cloaths. The Lord threatens his own people (*Deut.* 28. from *vers.* 4. to 48.) in case of disobedience, with this affliction; *Because thou servedst not the Lord with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness*, &c. That is, thou shalt not have thy Wardrobes stored and filled with change of rayment, but thou shalt feel and be pincht with want and poverty. So here; *Thou hast stript the naked of their cloathing*; that is, those that were evil cloathed, thou hast uncloathed, and instead of relieving their wants, thou hast encreased them.

And thus the words may allude to the taking of a pledge, about which *Eliphaz* spake before; *Thou hast stript the naked of their cloathing*, that is, thou hast taken a pledge from thy neighbour, and stript him quite of it. Therefore the Law provided against this oppression (*Exod.* 22. 26.) *If thou at all take thy neighbours rayment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it to him before the Sun go down, for it is his covering.* The breach of which Law is discovered and reproved (Amos 2. 8.) *And they lay themselves down upon cloaths laid to pledge*, that is, they detained them all night, whereas they should have delivered them before the going down of the Sun. And thus their sin is aggravated, in that it is said in the next words, that they did this by *every Altar*. It was their sin to make many Altars; and this encreased their sin, that they durst do acts of wrong to men, where they pretended to worship God. The like Law is given about the pledge, *Deut.* 24. 6. *No man shall take the upper or the nether milstone to pledge, for he taketh a mans life to pledge*; that is, he takes the thing away without which he cannot live; if his milstone be taken away from the Mill, how shall he grind his Corn to make Bread, which is the Staff of life? And again, at *vers* 13. of the same Chapter, the Law is renewed in reference to rayment; *In any case thou shalt deliver the pledge again before the Sun goeth down, that he may sleep in his own rayment and bless thee; and it shall be righteousness unto thee before the Lord thy God.* Thus we may conceive *Eliphaz* speaking here, though not eying that express Law, yet from the common light of Nature, which teacheth that the poor and naked should not be stript of that little provision and small pittance which serves only to protect them from cold and starving.

Chaldeus legit lectulos oppigneratos. Vel certe pro illo ipso vestimento quo & se operiebat diu nocteque jacens se contegit.

Further, By these words, *Thou hast stript the naked of their cloathing*, we may understand not cloathing only, but all the necessaries of this life, any thing which is of such concernment to our lives as our cloaths are; for as bread in Scripture is put for all the necessaries of this life, so is cloathing, *Isa.* 3. 6, *When a man shall take hold of his Brother, saying, Thou hast cloathing, be thou ruler over us*, &c. Thou hast cloathing, that is, thou hast Goods, thou hast an Estate, thou canst make provision for us; there *Cloathing* is put for all outward conveniences, as in other Scriptures, *Bread* is. So that according to the extent of this interpretation, *Thou hast stript the naked of their cloathing*, takes in all sorts of bodily grievances put upon the poor.

Hence observe, That, *To oppress the poor, is the highest and greatest oppression.*

It is our duty to cloath the naked, how great then is their sin who strip the naked of their cloathing? It is sinful and unjust violently to take cloaths from him that hath greatest variety of cloathing; we may not rob the rich, what is it then to take from them who have not? or (as we say) *to rob the Hospital? Solomon* (Prov. 28. 3.) tells us of an oppression which is very grievous, and that is the oppression of a poor man; which is true both actively and passively, when the poor man is the oppressor, 'tis so; 'tis so also when the poor man is the oppressed. *Solomon* intends both; for he makes the poor to be the oppressed, and a poor man the oppressor. *The poor man that oppresseth the poor, is as a sweeping rain, which leaveth no food.* 'Tis worse with the poor when the poor oppress them, then when the rich oppress them; the rich may oppress them much, but they come not so near, as when a poor man oppresseth; for as the imbecility of the oppressed poor man can give him no help, so the necessity of the oppressing poor man will shew him no mercy. Nothing doth more harden the heart of a man, then his own want; and he hath little feeling of anothers misery, who is under the feeling of his own; he that hath nothing takes what he can get, and his own hunger devoureth all. The rich man oppressing the poor, is a *dashing rain*; the great man oppressing the poor, is a *thundering rain*; but the poor man oppressing the poor, is a *sweeping rain*. As they who never knew poverty, so they who know it most, have the least stock of pity for the poor. Such are a sweeping rain indeed. There is a refreshing, a fatning, a filling rain, which the Lord sends upon the thirsty earth, this produceth store of food. It rains corn and wine, milk and butter: There is also a sweeping rain that takes away food, and destroyes the fruits of the earth. Such a rain is a poor man oppressing the poor. *Want is the greatest spoiler.*

Secondly, We may expound the Text thus; *And stript the naked of their cloathing*, that is, Thou hast stript them till they are naked; for in Scripture we find the denomination to be taken from the end of the action, or that which the action tends to: As to illustrate it a little (*Isa.* 47. 2.) *Take the milstones, and grind meal.* Now we do not grind meal, but whole corn, to make meal. So *Isa.* 44. 15. *He baketh bread*: Now we do not bake bread, but dough, that it may come to be bread; when it is bread once, it needs no more baking. So (*Dan.* 2. 21.) *He giveth wisdom to the wise*, that is, he giveth wisdom to those who before were rude, and so makes them wise. Thus here, the denomination of the act is given from that to which the act hath a tendency, *Thou hast stript the naked*; not that they who are naked indeed, can be stript; but thou hast stript them, and so made them naked. This very phrase is used (Hos. 2. 3.) *Lest I strip thee naked*, saith the Lord to the Church, that is, lest in stripping thee, I leave thee naked; lest I take away all the good things with which thou art encompassed. So here, *Thou hast stript the naked of their cloathing*, that is, thou hast stript them till thou hast made them naked.

From this learn, That, *There is such a Principle of unnaturalness in the nature of man, as to take away all, and leave nothing.*

We find more then cloaths taken away by some, they go closer then to the cloathing (as the Lord complains, *Mic.* 3. 3.) *Who eat the flesh of a people, and flay their skin from off their backs*: There's oppression and cruelty in their blackest colours; they will not leave them so much as their skin upon their backs. Skin is natural cloathing, as Garments are artificial cloathing. These took away not only the cloathing which art, but that which nature had provided and put upon them, they flayed their skins from off their backs; yet we are not to conceive that they were so cruel to pull off their skin, but because they would have all to their very skin, therefore they are said to take skin and all. They who are so unmerciful, that they will not leave a rag to cover their skin, are justly charged with that unmercifulness, which will not leave so much as their skin to cover their flesh; yea (as it follows in the same place) *that they would gnaw their bones*; they will have all, cloaths, skin and bones from another, rather then not have enough for themselves. *Cruelty joyned with Covetousness, knows no bounds.*

Eliphaz having shewed some of those particular evils, which he supposed *Job* had done, proceeds to shew what good he had not done. *Sins of omission render men as foul and vile as sins of commission do.* He that doth not the good which he ought and can, doth evil.

Verse 7. *Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, thou hast withheld bread from the hungry.*

Thou hast not given water to the weary.

Water is a very common thing, and the word which is here used, takes in all natural waters, the whole Element of water. Seeing then water is not under lock and key, but lies open to all comers, how comes it to be any mans gift? I answer, First, If we understand the words literally and strictly, yet sometimes, and especially in some places, to give a cup of water to drink or a bucket of water to wash in, is no small charity to a wearied traveller. But secondly (I conceive) *Job* is taxed with *not giving water*, to shew his refusing to do the smallest charity. So we find it expressed

(*Matth.* 10. 42.) When Jesus Christ would assure us that the least office of love or respect which we do to a distressed Saint or a Believer, upon that account as he is a Believer, shall be rewarded; he gives it in this language, *Whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water, only in the name of a Disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.* As by one of these *little ones*, he means any, the least of Believers or righteous persons; so by the gift that he speaks of, *water*, or *cold water*, *a cup of cold water*, he means the least of favours. Cold water is a cheap commodity, and a little cold water, only a cup of it, cannot (as some things cannot, because they are worth so much) be prized, because it is worth so little; yet he that gives but this little thing, this (almost) nothing in the name of a Disciple, *he shall not lose his reward.* So here, to set forth the hardness of *Job*'s heart (as *Eliphaz* conceived) he puts it in these terms, *Thou hast not given water* (no not cold water) *to those that are weary*; as if he had said, thou hast not only denied a feast or a banquet of wine, which might put thee to some cost and charges, but thou hast denied them water, cold water, which is not chargeable at all, which doth not so much as put thee to the cost of a little fire to heat it, or of any ingredient to mix with it; thou hast denied them this cheapest charity. An old Poet (speaking of a place where water was sold) saith, *That which is lowest prized, a thing of no price, Water, is sold here.* Thus far hast thou, O *Job* (saith *Eliphaz*) fallen below the Law of Love, *Thou hast not given water*: And to whom did he not give it? The next word answers that Query.

Non inania in eos etiam levia quæ sub frigidæ aqua nomine designat officia esse decerint. Hilar.

——venit vilissima rerum hîc, Aqua. Hor. Sat. 1.

To the weary.] That is, thou hast not given water to whom it doth most properly belong, or who had perfect need of it, *the weary, the thirsty.* There are some to whom we may very well refuse to give water, or any other refreshment of nature; they have enough, if not too much already, not only in possession, as the rich; but in use or abuse rather, as the intemperate and the drunken: To give water to such, is to powre water into the Sea; but thou hast not given it to the weary, nor to those who are like the dry and parched ground.

In that the matter of charity is placed in water, observe,

That, *Charity is accepted, and uncharitableness condemned in the smallest matter.*

It is not the quantity of the gift, but the affection of the giver; it is not the quantity of that which is denied to be given, but the heart of him that denies it, which the Lord takes notice of; be it much, or be it little that is given, if it be given with an honest and willing mind, the Lord accepts it; and be it much or be it little that is denied, if it be denied with a churlish and uncharitable spirit, the Lord is displeased with it; and the less that is which is denied, the more sinful is the denial, and the more is the Lord displeased with it. When crusts or crums of bread, which fall from our Table, are denied, when a cup of cold water is denied, how cold is charity? And is it not crumbled into a lesser nothing then those crums? We should honour the Lord with our substance, and our charity should not only have cost in it, but liberality in it; how do they honour the Lord with their substance, who will hardly give to him (that is, to his poor) the shadow of their substance? If the Lord should command us to give some great thing to testifie our charity, should we not do it? how much more when he saith, give but water to the weary for my sake, and I account you charitable?

Secondly note, That, *Churlish and hard-hearted persons stick at small matters as well as at great.*

It is supposed (*Acts* 5. 15.) that the very shadow of *Peter* was healing to the sick. There are some so hard-hearted, that they would hardly bestow their shadow upon the poor to do them good. It troubles them to part with the least imaginable benefit, or do the least imaginable courtesie, not only great things, but small things, even the smallest things, the chipping of their Loaf, the parings of their Apple, yea, the very huskes which their swine eat (as the Letter of the Parable concerning the prodigal intimates, *Luke* 15. 16.) are stuck at as too much for them who have nothing. And thus the heart of a wicked man is stated to the whole business of obedience; his heart is much against obedience in a small matter, as in a great; he is so far from swallowing the Camel of holy duty, that he strains at the very gnats of it; and if a mans spirit be against obedience it self in its own nature, if his spirit be unsuitable to it, let it be a duty of the least or lowest degree, he cannot but stick at it. The servants of *Naaman* the *Assyrian*, said to him, *Had the Prophet bid thee do some great matter, wouldest thou not have done it? how much more when he saith unto thee, Wash in* Jordan *and be clean?* There is a reason why we should rather do small things then great, as to the outward act; but, I say, if the Spirit of a man be cross-grain'd, and lie against the duty, he is as unfit and as backward to do a little, as to do a great deal; he will not so much as give water to God or man; or if he do give it, he doth not give it with a heart let out in love to God, or in compassion to the most needy man. It is a hard matter with him to give or do at all; but it is an impossible matter for him to give or do with a ready or chearful mind. Thus the covetous man, the hard-hearted worldling cannot give so much as water; a worldly man never thinks that himself hath enough of the world, and he never thinks that others have too little; when he is full, he thinks all others are full enough too. Such narrow-hearted creatures the Prophet *Isaiah* describes (*c.* 32. 6, 7.) Who, as they *practice hypocrisie, and utter error against the Lord*, so they practise oppression and utter cruelty against man; *to make empty the soul of the hungry, and to cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments of the Churl are evil.* What instruments doth he mean? Some say, the instruments of his commerce, his weights and measures, he pincheth the poor there; that's true, those instruments of the churlish Merchant or Tradesman are evil: Yet we may rather expound it more largely for all the means, whether persons or things, whether Agents and under-officers, or courses and devices, which the churlish man useth as instruments to compass and bring about his purposes; all these savour of himself, they are evil, that is, false, treacherous, and lying in wait to deceive. For (as it follows) *He deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh right*; or (as we put in the margin) *when he speaketh against the poor in judgment.*

Thirdly note, That, *A little is much reckoned upon by those that are in need, or have nothing.*

Water is a welcome mercy to the thirsty, to the weary, to those who are ready to die with heat and travel. The rich man in hell, would have been glad of a drop of water to cool his tongue. *Sisera* the General of *Jabin*'s Army, begs of *Jael*, to give him a little water; for (saith he) *I am thirsty* (Judg. 4. 19.) The full soul loaths the honey-comb, that which is sweet and delicious, the full stomach loaths it; but they that are weary, hungry and thirsty, a piece of bread, a cup of water, how pleasant! how sweet! Such are glad of any thing, who are in want of all things. Much is little to them who have much, a little is much to them who have but little. The weary will thank you more for water, then the wanton will for wine. The weary asked but water to drink, and could not get it, thou wouldest not give it.

Fourthly, *Eliphaz* describing a wicked man, fixes most upon this sin, his unmercifulness to the poor. And there is a general truth in it.

That, *To be without compassion to the poor, is the mark of a wicked man.*

They who have found the compassion of God to their own souls (as every godly man hath) cannot shut up the bowels of their compassion towards the pined body of man. The Apostle *John* puts the question (1 *John* 3. 17.) *How dwelleth the love of God in him*, that do so? The love of God, either as taken for the love of God to us, or for our love to God, dwelleth not in him in whom there is no love to man. Now if the love of God dwell not in a man, God dwelleth not in him; and if God dwelleth not in him, Satan doth: And what can he be called but *wicked*, in whom *the wicked* or *the evil one* dwelleth? Thus the wicked *Edomites* dealt with the people of God when they were wearied in their March through the Wilderness. We read the children of *Israel* thus bespeaking the *Edomites* (Num. 20. 17, 18, 19.) *Let us pass I pray thee, through thy Country, we will*

will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells, &c. We will put you to no trouble, no charge, we will be content with the common waters which we find abroad; this is all which we desire when we shall be weary and thirsty in our travels. And *Edom* said unto him, *Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I cut thee off with the sword: And the Children of* Israel *said unto him, we will go by the high way, and if I and my Cattel drink of thy water, I will pay thee for it; I will only* (without doing any thing else) *go through on my feet.* See what a spirit *Edom* was of; when *Israel* put it to the lowest, we will drink none of the water of your wells, or if we do, we will pay for it: No, *Edom* was so hard-hearted, that he would neither give, nor sell them water; they shall not have it either of free-cost or for money; thus uncompassionate was he towards a people that were travelling, that were weary and thirsty. The Inhabitants of *Teman* are commended for their tenderness to men in distress (*Isa.* 21.14.) *They brought water to him that was thirsty, they prevented with their bread him that fled*: They gave water and bread unasked; the wants of the distressed moved them, though they made no motion for the supply of their wants. They act most like God, who prevent us with their favours. Even the light of Nature leads to it. How unnatural then are they who deny water to them, who being weary and thirsty, beg for it? The mercy of God by Jesus Christ is highly commended to us upon this consideration, that he gives it not only in bounty, but in compassion; there is not only liberality, but there is a pity in it; therefore he saith (*Matth.* 11.28.) *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* To give ease and refreshment to those that are weary and heavy laden, hath not only bounty and liberality, but pity and compassion in it (*Psal.* 136.23.) *Thanks to God who hath remembred us in our low estate.* It is an act of Grace for God to remember us in our highest estate, in our most flourishing estate; but to remember us in our low estate, then to give us in refreshings and comforts, this is a clearer act of Grace. As it is said (*Psal.* 68.9.) *Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance when it was weary.* As the goodness of God is most seen in giving water to the weary, so is the wickedness of man in denying it. *Eliphaz* urgeth *Job* further with this uncharitableness.

And thou hast with-holden bread from the hungry.

Verbum עצר *significat abscondere, negare, fraudare. Subtrahebas ei si habebat & prohibebas si non habebat*, i.e, *nolebas ei panem dare.* Deus. *Esurientium subtraxisti fructum panis.* Ambr.

He gave no water, and he *with-held bread.* The word is sometimes rendred, *to hide, to deny*; and sometimes, to *deceive* a man of that which is due to him. Our Translation (*Thou hast with-holden*) carries that sence in it: Properly we are said to with-hold only that from a man which he hath a right to; *Thou hast with-holden bread from the hungry.* As hunger and thirst are put for all manner of extremity, so bread and water are put for all manner of supplies generally. The Greeks and some Latines interpret this strictly of a morsel of bread; *Thou hast with-holden a morsel of bread*; as the rich man in the Gospel did: *Lazarus* desired but the crumbs that fell from his Table, but could not get them. So here, thou hast with-holden not only a full Table, but a morsel of Bread; This latter clause and the former, are of the same sence; yet from that word *with-holden*, which implieth a wrong done to the poor, note,

First, That, *The poor have a right in what rich men have.*

And if they with-hold all from them, they shall be condemned not only as uncharitable and illiberal, but as oppressors and unjust; not only as not having given them relief, but as not having done them right (*Prov.* 3.27.) *Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it.* A thing is due upon a double account; first, By the Law of Justice; secondly, By the Law of Love: I conceive here that the Proverb is to be understood of a dueness, not by the Laws of common Justice (as if a man have his brothers estate in his hand, he cannot with-hold it from him without transgressing the Law of Justice) but of a dueness by the Law of Love, or more strictly, by the Law of Charity; thus it is a duty to do good to those that are in want; 'tis not only a favour that we shew to them when we relieve them; but there is a duty in it, which we owe to God, who hath commanded that their poverty should be supplied by the plenty and abundance which he hath given to others. If therefore it be demanded, who are they to whom this doing of good is due? I answer, not only they to whom thou art indebted in Justice, *witness thy Hand and Seal*; but even they to whom thou art indebted in Charity, *witness their Want and Need.* The poor have a right to what we are able to give, and can conveniently spare; yea, sometimes their right may lie somewhat beyond the line of our conveniency. So then there is a point of Justice in it, as well as of charity, in relieving the poor; and if (as the next words in *Solomon* imply) it be sinful to delay them till to morrow, it must needs be a wickedness to deny them for ever. Therefore the same *Solomon* (*Prov.* 22.2.) Speaking of the poor and the rich, puts them together; *The rich and the poor meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.* Now the Lord is the maker of the poor and of the rich, not only in their natural constitution, as they are men consisting of body and soul (so indeed he hath made the poor as well as the rich, and they are both alike the work of his hands) but the Lord is the maker of them in that capacity or state wherein they are; he makes the rich man and the poor man, that is, he makes the one rich, and the other poor; he is the maker of them both: And *Solomon* (I conceive) puts that in, to shew first, that poor men should not envy the rich man; why? For the Lord hath made him rich: Why should thy eye be evil because the Lords eye is good?

And again, that the rich man should not despise the poor, or withdraw the bowels of his compassion from them: the Lord could have made thee poor too if he had pleased; therefore be compassionate towards them, for the Lord is the maker of you both. And this answers that Objection commonly given by some, Why, are not my goods my own? may I not do with them as I please? I have not stoln them, I have wronged no man in the obtaining them; It is well when men can say thus, that they have done no wrong in getting riches: but this is no argument (how justly soever any man hath got his Estate) that he should keep it all to himself, and not give a portion to those that are in want. The rich man with-holds what is due to the poor, when he with-holds relief from them. It is true, your estate is your own, it is yours, no man can challenge or claim it from you; I but God can claim it from you; you are possessors and masters of your estate in reference unto men; but you are but stewards and servants of your estate, in reference unto God. Now a Stewards business (you know) is not only to receive and lay up the estate of his Master, but it is his business also to pay or lay out according as he receives command or order from his Lord; thus it is in this case: Rich men are but Stewards to the Lord in reference to all that they have; therefore as they receive from him, and receive of the fulness of the earth, which is his (for the earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof) so they must issue it according to his order and command: Now he hath left a standing order for all times, that the rich should distribute to the necessities of the poor and hungry. Rich men must not think themselves Stewards only to receive in, but also to pay out what their Lord calls for; and therefore as they would give a good account of their Stewardship at the great *Audit-day*, let them take heed how they *with-hold bread from the hungry.* I might shew further, that the rich are not only obliged to give, or that it is their duty to give, but that they ought to give chearfully and readily, not upon constraint (2 *Cor.* 9.7.) That they ought to give liberally and bountifully, not with restraint; and that they ought to give sincerely, not thinking thereby either to merit at the hand of God, or to get the praise of men.

Secondly, From the matter of this Charge, *Thou hast with-holden bread from the hungry*, we may observe,

That, *Not to do good, or the omission of doing good to the poor, renders us culpable, as well as the doing or commission of that which is evil or injurious to them.*

Not to relieve the poor, is a sin, as well as to injure or oppress the poor; yea, not to relieve, hath injury and oppression in it. The reason of it is clear from the former point, because the poor have a right to so much of a rich mans estate, as is a relief of their pressing necessities, to preserve them from perishing. And every man must acknowledge that to deny any man his right (by what title soever the right ariseth) is

to

is to oppress him. Nor is it enough to give them good words (which is yet more then some will give) unless we do them good (*Jam.* 2. 15, 16.) *If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of dayly food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace, be warmed and filled; yet notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit?* Though you give them good words, yet if you give them no supply, what doth it profit? We may understand it two wayes.

First, What doth it profit the poor? Can they feed upon your good words? or will your good words cloath them? What doth it profit them, if ye say, be fed, and be cloathed, if you give them neither food nor rayment?

Secondly, What profit is it to you who say so? Will God take it well at your hands, that you have spoken kindly to the poor, when you did them no kindness? Therefore with-hold not thy hand, *&c.* And if it be so great a sin to with-hold our bread from the hungry, what is it to take their bread from them? *Eliphaz* having thus taxed *Job* with neglect of the poor, he proceeds in the next verse to tax him with an undue and partial respect to the rich. As he was rigid to them who had nothing, so he was indulgent to those who had enough, if not more then enough before.

Verse 8. **But as for the mighty man, he had the earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it.**

There is a twofold interpretation of these words; Some understand them so, as if *this mighty man here meant, had been* Job *himself*; and then the sence is thus rendred, *All these evils were done by thee, and these good things not done, when thou wast a man in power, and so hadst no need to do any such evil, and hadst power enough in thy hand to do good.* The Vulgar Translation reads it (according to this exposition) personally of *Job*; *In thy might thou didst possess the earth, and being most powerful, thou didst dwell in it:* That is, thou wast a man in power, thou hadst all in thy hand, thou hadst water and bread enough when the poor wanted it; thou canst not say that thou wast necessitated to keep the pledge, or strip the naked; but thou in thy greatness and might didst oppress them: this interpretation (though I assent not to it) aggravates his sin exceedingly; for *the more power any one hath in his hand, the greater is his sin, as in the evil which he doth, so in the good which he doth not, or leaves undone*; yea, it may be said that we do evil more then they who do it, when we have power in our hand to hinder them from doing it, and do not.

But Secondly, Take the words as they import the partiality of *Job*; *The mighty man had the earth*; thou hast been over-kind and favourable to him, how hard or churlish sever thou hast been to others.

The mighty man.] The Hebrew is, *The man of arm*; and it is usual in Scripture to call a strong man a mighty man, or a man in authority, *a man of arm* (Ezek. 22. 6.) *Behold the Princes of* Israel, *every one of them were in thee to their power to shed blood.* The Hebrew is, *They were to their arm*, that is, as far as they could reach forth their arm, or to the utmost of their power to shed blood, that is, to do mischief and wrong, to afflict and vex others even unto death, or the shedding of their blood. They who are evil, know not how to bound themselves in doing evil; if they want not power, they seldom want will to do it more and more. Thus the Prophet reproves that perverse generation; *Behold thou hast spoken and done evil as thou couldest* (Jer 3. 5.) That is, to the utmost extention of thy ability and opportunity. As those Princes *shed blood to their arm*, or as far as they could reach out their power; so did this people. And as the power of man, so the power of God is expresst by this arm (*Job* 40. 9.) *Hast thou an arm like God? Canst thou thunder like him?* That is, Hast thou power like God? (Isa. 30. 30.) *The Lord shall cause his glorious voyce to be heard, and shall shew the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire.* The revenging power of God, like a Bird of prey, hovers over the heads of wicked men, but at last it lights down, and (as the word rather signifies) rests upon them.

Again, Some understand here by the *arm* of the wicked man, those who are his instruments, those who serve him, or whom he uses to supplant or suppress others, and reach his own ends by; such may well be called the arms of mighty men, the arms of the men of the earth. Evil men have their Seconds or Instruments to do evil. Upon this consideration it was said anciently, *Do you not know that Princes have long arms?* The meaning is, they have Agents and Servants in the several parts of their Dominions, who are their hands or arms, both for protection of those who are peaceable, and to take revenge upon the rebellious. We commonly say of a Servant that is discreeet and faithful, he is his *Masters right hand.* The mighty have many helpers, many arms and hands to carry on their designes, and to do their wills.

An nescis longas regibus esse manus?

As for the mighty man, or the man of arm, he had the earth.

This stands in opposition to what was spoken before, the poor man could not get a drop of water, nor a crust of bread, but the mighty man he had the earth: As if he had said, *O* Job, *thou being in power, didst pass away great possessions to the mighty, thou gavest both thy sentence and assistance, that they should have the earth, but thou wouldest not help the poor so much as to a piece of bread or a cup of water; The mighty man had the earth:* He speaks indefinitely, as if all the earth were his. Wicked men are called *men of the earth* (Psal. 10. 18.) *To judge the fatherless and the oppressed; that the men of the earth may no more oppress.*

But it may be objected, Is not every man a man of the earth? As *Adam the first man was of the earth, earthy*; so all men are of the earth, earthy: why is it then said of a wicked man, that he is a man of the earth, as if any man were of another pedigree or extraction?

I answer, A man of the earth is put in opposition to a man of heaven, to a man that hath his estate, or hope, or portion in heaven; the Saints have their conversation in heaven, and though they live upon the earth, yet they are not men of the earth: Carnal men are earthly-minded, they mind the earth, and that's both their hope and business; they are not only earth in their constitution, but earth in their affections; therefore they are called men of the earth; these men had much of the earth in their possession, as well as they had all of it in their affections and desires. *The mighty man he had the earth.* Hence observe,

That, *Evil Magistrates in power, are more ready to favour great men, then to relieve poor men.*

Eliphaz knew that *Job* was a Magistrate, a man in power, and he supposeth that under his government, the poor got no bread, but the mighty men had the earth; they had favour to have and do what they list. It is very common with the men of the world to be very free to those that are of the world; they are like those clouds which we may observe sometimes blown over the dry land, and emptying themselves into the Sea. The mighty that had store before, have more, and the poor, who had nothing, have nothing at all: Men love to bestow kindnesses upon them only to whom they are like, or whom they love. A good man helps those that are good, and wicked men care for none but such as themselves. Wicked men are called *Oaks* (Zech. 11. 2.) *Howl ye fir-trees, for the Cedar is fallen* (that is, the great man is fallen) *because all the mighty are spoiled; howl O ye Oaks of* Bashan, *for the forest of the vintage is come down.* The Chaldee Paraphrase saith, *Howl ye Governors of Provinces*: And he calls these Governors Oaks; first, Because of their strength; and secondly, Because of their fruit. What fruit do Oaks bear? Only Acorns; and who are fed with Acorns? only swine; Acorns are but hogs-meat: he gives the allusion thus, wicked men in power, bear fruit, but it is only for swine, that is, for wicked men; they bestow the tokens of their bounty, the overplus of their plenty upon hogs and swine, that is, upon carnal and sensual men; they have nothing for the people of God, for those that are the true objects of charity; they make their horses fat, their dogs fat, none are lean but Gods poor. Thus one of the Ancients reprehends those great ones of his time, *Ye cloath the walls of your houses with Gold, with Arras hangings, and ye let the poor go naked; the poor ask bread, and give it them not; it may be your horse chews a golden Bit, and the poor man hath not a bit of bread.* The spirits of carnal men are carried out from that which is their duty, they care not how profuse and lavish they are to those who

Pariettes vestitis auro, homines vestis nuditate? panem postulat homo, & equus tuus aurum sub dentibus mandit. Ambros.

suit

suits with their own hearts; the poor having nothing, while the mighty man hath the earth. Thus *Eliphaz* reproved *Job*, though indeed it was otherwise with him; as appears in the defence which he afterwards made for himself against these gross insinuations. And as to this particular, he answers (*chap.* 29. 17.) *I brake the jaws of the wicked, and pluckt the spoyl from between his teeth*; he indeed pull'd the earth from the mighty, or the mighty from the earth; though *Eliphaz* here said, *The mighty had the earth*, and,

Acceptus vel elevatus facie habitabat in ea. Heb.

The honourable man dwelt in it.] The Hebrew is, *The man whose face is lifted up*; which phrase is interpreted two wayes.

First, Passively. Secondly, Actively. Passively thus; the man who is lifted up by others, that is, who is respected, who is reverenced according to his place or worth: All which agree with our rendring, *the honourable man*. And in the Hebrew, Princes and great ones are expreſt by that word which signifies to *lift up the face*; because such are lifted up above others, and are much respected by others. So the word is used (*Gen.* 19. 21.) *See* (saith the Angel to *Lot*) *I have accepted thee*: The Hebrew is, *I have lifted up thy face*, that is, I have respected and honoured thee by granting thy request.

Hebræi principes vocat Nasi, quasi elevatum facie & ab aliis acceptum.

Secondly, It may be taken actively, *The man that lifts up the face dwells in the earth*. What is it to lift up the face? It is to accept persons in Judgment, to accept him that hath the worst Cause, and to reject him that hath the best Cause, for private ends. As if *Eliphaz* had said, *He that respects persons, that is, who perverts justice, he hath the Earth*; and so here seems to be a description of all sorts of wicked men flourishing in *Job*'s time, and under his wing. Some oppress openly, the mighty man, the man of Arms, comes by main force, and obtains the earth, or the riches and fatness of the earth. Others oppress secretly and cunningly, they accept persons, and are byassed in Judgment by their own Interest and Advantages: The man of this strain *dwelt in it*.

Acceptor personarum habitabat in ea. Pagn.

προσωποληπτεῖ est habere respectum personarum, sc. quod pauper sit aut dives, aut nobilis, aut honoratus,

The word notes two things. First, *To continue*; he dwelt there, thou let'st him abide; whereas if he had come into the Land, thou shouldest quickly have rooted him out. Secondly, The word signifies not only to dwell, but to sit; and to sit, in Scripture-Language, notes authority or dominion; he *dwelt or sate in it*, that is, he was the man in authority; he had the power, and the great places of government were entrusted in his hand. From both these, observe,

יָשַׁב *Habitare, sedere.*

First, That, *Evil Magistrates are apt to pervert Justice, in favour of those who are great in power.*

Favour should be shewed according to the justness of mens Causes, and not according to the greatness of their persons. But usually the mighty men have the earth, all goes on their side; and the honourable man dwells there, he sits safe and quiet, well and warm. This is so commonly seen, that 'tis become a Proverb, *The mighty man hath the whole Earth for his house to dwell in; the poor man lies every where, but seldom dwells any where.* The wicked are said to have their portion in this life, they would have the Earth to themselves, and they shall have nothing but Earth. So the Prophet describes them (*Isa.* 5. 8.) *Wo unto them that joyn house to house, that lay field to field, that there may be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the Earth.* Man is naturally a sociable Creature, and it may seem strange that he should desire to be alone in the midst of the Earth; therefore by his desire to be alone, we must not understand a strict loneness or solitariness; as if rich men had a mind to live alone, so as to have none about them or with them; but the meaning is, they would have none in power but themselves, none in possession but themselves; they are unwilling that any should have an Estate but themselves; they would have all others to be their Underlings and Tenants, their Servants and Villains, to till their ground, and gather in their revenues; they only would be Freeholders, all others must hold by their Copy, and do them homage. If the greatest man in the world were turned alone into the world, he would have but an ill being of it; therefore the meaning of the Prophet is, that they would be placed alone in the midst of the Earth to command and rule; all others must serve them. And they whose pride, ambition, or covetousness provokes them to dwell thus alone in the earth, shall find nothing beyond this earth, but to dwell in fire.

Potentis est terra; pauper ubique jacet.

Secondly observe, That, *For a Magistrate to favour men because of their greatness and power, is an utter departure from his duty.*

The poor man should have the Earth, that belongs to him as well as the rich. The mean mans right to his little, is as good, as the mighty mans to his great deal. Justice gives every man his own, without respect to the Owner.

Thirdly, Consider the words as a Charge brought against *Job*, he being a man in authority, and in place. Hence note,

He that lets wicked men oppress or wrong others, when he is invested and intrusted with power to hinder them, betrayeth his trust, and loseth the ends of his investiture.

The Lord chargeth *Eli* (1 Sam. 3. 13.) because of the great iniquity which his Sons committed; but it might be said, What was their sin to him? Yes, it lay in his power to hinder them; for *Eli* was the chief Magistrate in *Israel*, and therefore the Lord concluded, *I will Judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth, because his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*: But did not *Eli* restrain them? There is a restraining,

First, By way of counsel and advice; and in this sence *Eli* did restrain them (*chap.* 9. 23, 24.) *He said unto them, why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings with all the people; nay, my Sons; for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lords people to transgress.* Thus he puts a moral stop in their way, shewing the hainousness of their sin, and dehorting them from it; but *Eli* being a man in power and authority, might have gone another way to work with them, he might have punished them for their sin: And because he did not, here was *Eli*'s sin; and this is suggested as *Job*'s sin. He was a man in power, yet he winked at those violent ones, and let them carry all the Earth, whenas he might have mended the matter, by checking their insolencies, and doing the poor right. This is charged on *Thiatira*, in reference to the neglect of using their Church-power (*Rev.* 2. 20.) *Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman* Jezebel, *that calls her self a Propheteſs, to teach, and to seduce my Servants to commit fornication*, &c. That Angel suffered her; how did he suffer her? He did not use that power that Christ had committed to the Church, to admonish, to reprove, to cast out, he did not stop that seducing Propheteſs by a due exercise of spiritual power, but suffered her to seduce uncontrouled. The more power we have to prevent or remove either spiritual or civil evils, the greater is our sin when it is not done; if *Eliphaz* had not supposed *Job* a Magistrate, he could not have laid this burden upon him, or have represented him in fault, because the mighty man had the Earth, and the honourable man dwelt in it, oppressing the weak, and vexing those of low degree.

Eliphaz goes yet one step further in the prosecution of this Charge, and arraignes him for another Crime, and that a very great one; *The mighty man had the Earth, the honourable man dwells in it*: But,

Verse 9. **The widow thou hast sent empty away, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken.**

As if he had said, Thou didst fill the full with good things, but the hungry thou hast sent empty away; the honourable have been provided for, but they who were destitute of all friends, found no friendship at thy hands, unless the breaking of their arms.

Thou hast sent widows away empty.

שָׁלַח *Verbum dimittendi violentiam quandam affert, ut sit idem quod ejicere, extrudere, expellere.*

There is somewhat considerable in the nature of the word which we render *sent*; for it implies a putting away with a kind of violence; thou hast cast them out, or bid them be packing; thou hast put them off with rigor and distaste. As if he had said, *Thou hast not only let them go from thy house unrelieved, but thou hast reviled them and thrust them away, because they asked relief.* So we may expound it by that (*Gen.* 3. 23, 24.) *And the Lord God sent him* (that is, *Adam*) *forth from the garden of* Eden, *to till the ground from whence he was taken.* What this sending forth was, is expressed in the next verse; *So he drove out the man.* Such a sending away is here intended, thou hast sent widows away (as we speak) with a witness; thou hast chid or rated them

them out of thy presence. As it is said of *Gallio* (*Acts* 18. 16, 17.) *That he cared for none of those things, and he drave them from the Judgment-seat.* Thus thou hast sent widows away.

Complutenses. Further, In the Chaldee Language, the word signifies to strip, or to pluck off the very skin. This is yet more tyrannical, Thou hast sent them away spoiled and stript, or, as it followeth in the Text, *empty*. *Thou hast sent widows away*, &c. It was not the *mighty man*, nor the *great ones* of the earth that he is charged to deal thus unkindly, or rather cruelly with, but the *widow*; that heightens the sinfulness of his tyranny. This very word by which a widow is expressed in the Hebrew, as well as her condition, calls for help and pity: It comes from a root that signifies, either to *bind*, or to be *silent*; taking it in the first signification, to *bind*, the widow may be so called for two reasons: First, Because the widow is (as it were) bound about with afflictions and sorrows; she hath many troubles about her, as so many bonds from which she cannot free her self without running into many other troubles. Secondly, The widow is so called, by the rule of contrary speaking; *bound*, that is, *not at all bound*, but free or loosed from her husband. Thus the Apostle speaks (*Rom.* 7. 1, 2, 3. 1 *Cor.* 7. 39.) Her marriage-knot is untied by death; *If her husband be dead, she is loosed from the Law of her husband.* she is left to her self, and her own dispose alone. Take the word in the second signification, *to be silent*: A widow is so called, because she seldom hath that natural, and never hath that civil liberty or freedom of speech her husband had, and therefore she needs others to speak for her, or must speak her mind by others, her self being either unable, or disabled to speak in her own case, or to speak for her self. This being the widows state, he hath the greater sin who deals unkindly with her. What? Thrust away the widow, whose heart is bound about, yea, and thrust through with many sorrows! What? thrust away the widow, who is unable to manage her own cause, and defend her self in her right! yet this thou hast done; *Thou hast sent widows away*

אלמנה *à verbo* אלם *Quod est colligare, ergo ligata dicitur per contrarium intellectum, quia jam soluta viro. Significat etiam habere linguâ colligatam, i.e. obmutescere aut mutum esse, quod mortuo viro non valeat loqui & litigare, quam vis contra æquum & jus rapinam bonorum suorum patiatur.* Rab. Mor.

A radice ריק *quod est effundere vel evacuare.*

Erat ergo contumeliosum verbum dicere fratri Raka, *i. e. vocare pauperculum & bonis omnibus exhaustũ*

Empty. That is, without any help or comfort. The word is used to signifie the emptiness of a vessel (2 *Kings* 4. 4) It is used also concerning the Dreamer, who thinks that he hath eaten, but when he awakes, *his soul* (that is, his stomach) *is empty* (Isa. 29. 8.) So we may expound the word *Racha* (Mat. 5. 22.) *He that saith to his Brother Racha*; which some understand, not of a man that wants wit or honesty only, but wealth or plenty. And then to call a man *Racha*, is to upbraid him both with poverty and simplicity: As if it should (in disgrace) be said to him, *Thou poor snake, thou silly fellow, what dost thou talk? thou who hast so little wit, thou who art not worth a groat?* In the Story of *Jephthah* (*Judg.* 11. 3.) Such a sort of men are spoken of as his aiders and assistants; *Then* Jephthah *fled from his brethren, and there were gathered together vain men to* Jephthah, *and went out with him.* Some translate, *poor men were gathered together, and went out with him. Vain men* are usually idle fellows and vagabonds, and we may conceive his company or followers to have consisted of poor men rather then of vain men: And in that sence the word is used (*Neh.* 5. 13.) *Even thus be he shaken out and emptied*; that is, impoverished and reduced to nothing. And thus also the low estate of Jesus Christ is expressed (*Phil.* 2.) *He emptied himself*, namely, of his divine glory and splendor; that is, he shewed not his Majesty whilest he was in the flesh, but covered and vailed it, and was in appearance as a poor empty man, having voluntarily made himself of no reputation, though he were Lord over all. Such was the emptiness in which these widows were sent away by *Job*, as *Eliphaz* accuseth him. And this act may have a threefold interpretation. First, They were sent away *empty*, that is, not filled or relieved by thy charity; thou didst not open either thy heart or thy hand to supply their necessities, or to make them up in what they wanted and humbly desired.

Heb. Vacui, *non ut putat* Vatablus, *Otiosi, sed ut alii inopes & bonis exhausti.*

Secondly, *Thou hast sent widows empty away*, that is, thou hast given them no relief by thy Justice; some widows beg meerly for alms; others bring their case and cause to the Magistrate or man in Authority, for help against their oppressing Adversaries. In *Luke* 18. The importunate Widow saith to the Judge, *Relieve me against my adversary*; I beg not your Charity, but your Justice; The widow is sent away empty, when her Suit is not heard. We may understand *Eliphaz* either way, that when the widow sued for her right, she found no Justice, and when she came for an Alms, she found no Charity.

Thirdly, We may interpret it yet higher; *Thou hast sent widows away empty*, that is, widows came to thee full, or in a good condition, but thou hast emptied them by oppression, and taken away what they had. Covetous Magistrates care not how or of whom they get it, so they can get it; they empty the widows purse, yea, widows houses to fill their own. Christ reproved the *Pharisees* for this (*Matth.* 23. 14.) *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, for ye devour widows houses*; ye eat them out of house and home, either by living upon, or by taking away their livings. We may understand *Eliphaz* in this sence also; *Thou hast sent widows away empty*, that is, widows came to thee for protection, and thou didst promise it; but then to make thy own market upon them, and serve thy self, thou hast oppressed them; they came to thee to do them right, and thou hast undone them by unrighteousness. It is ill enough to deny widows Charity, it is worse to deny them Justice; but it is worst of all to undo them by unjustice: yet those two Horse-leeches, Pride and Covetousness will not forbear to draw from the widow. Some rich men undertake the widows cause, only to enrich themselves by the spoils of the widow; and for this reason they promise help to those who are in misery, that they may make them more miserable, instead of helping them; *Thou hast sent widows away empty.* Thus *Job* was supposed to have dealt with widows.

Tradunt se ad tuendum majoribus, dediditias se divitum faciunt. Illud grave est, quod hac lege tueri pauperes videntur ut spoliant; hac lege defendunt miseros ut miseriores faciant defendendo. Salv. *lib.* 5. De Provid.

See next how *Eliphaz* chargeth him for his dealings with the fatherless.

And the arms of the fatherless have been broken.

Duo ista nomina in quantum despectui humano, in tantum misericordiæ divinæ exposita, Tert. *l.* 1. ad uxor. *c.* 8. *Per viduam & pupillum omne genus miseriorum hominum significatur.* Pined.

These two desolate names are alwayes found alone, but often as one in Scripture; the widow who is disjoyned from her husband, and the fatherless, who are bereaved of their parents, are commonly joyned together. And these two Names are taken in Scripture, either strictly, or more largely; strictly, to signifie only such persons as have either lost their husbands or parents; largely, and so the widow and fatherless signifie any that are in distress, or need our charity; because the widow and the fatherless stand often in need of charity, therefore these names in Scripture, signifie any that need our charity. While the Prophet saith (*Hos.* 14. 3.) *With thee the fatherless findeth mercy*; we are not to straighten his sence only to Orphans, but to any that are in distress; he that is a father may be called fatherless, and the child that hath a father, may be called fatherless, when extreamly needing the help either of God or man. And so the word *widow* must be understood (*Rev.* 18. 7.) Where *Babylon* boasteth, *I sit as a Queen, and am no widow*, that is, I am neither friendless nor helpless; or as the next words seem to expound it, *I shall see no sorrow*; which is usually the widows portion. Thus in the Text, by the *widow* and the *fatherless*, we must understand not only those who are formally so, but all in affliction, who are equivalently so.

The arms of the fatherless have been broken.] In the former part of the verse, he saith, *Thou hast sent the widow away empty*; charging the sin personally upon *Job*: here he only saith, *The arms of the fatherless have been broken*; as if he did not place the fault directly upon him: yet some translate it so; *Thou hast broken the arms of the fatherless*; making it *Job*'s act: However our rendring layes fault enough upon him, and leaves him in particular without excuse, while it speaks only in general, *The arms of the fatherless have been broken*: For it is as if he had said, thou hast permitted their arms to be broken. And if he should object, What if the arms of the fatherless have been broken? what is that to me? Yes, you being in place and power, and having strength in your own hands to preserve the fatherless, if the arms of the fatherless have been broken, the sin must lie at your door. *Every man is guilty of all the evil which he hath power and a call to hinder, and doth not hinder.*

The arms of the fatherless.] Arms may be taken either properly or figuratively. The arm properly is a noble and most useful Limb of the body; we are not to understand it so here, as if he had broken the natural arms of their bodies: A mans arm is broken, when his power

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is broken, though his skin be not so much as toucht. So then,

Per brachia robur, divitiæ, facultates quæ orphano pro brachiis & manibus esse possunt, intelliguntur.

By the arms of the fatherless, we are to understand whatsoever is the strength, or makes for the defence of the fatherless. *The arm* (as we toucht in the former verse) is put for strength, because the arm hath much strength and activity in it for the defence and use of the whole body. The estate, the friends, the kindred, all the means, helps and aids which are subservient to the good and protection of the fatherless, are by a Figure called the *Arms of the fatherless*. These arms, saith *Eliphaz*,

Confringere, contundere. 1. Non subveniendo. 2. Detinendo substantiam ipsis à parentibus relictam.

Have been broken.] The word notes an utter breaking, a breaking to pieces; to break as a thing is broken in a Mortar with a Pestle. This breaking may be also considered two wayes; either as done by a positive act, or by a negative act, that is, by with-holding that help which might preserve them from breaking. The arms of the fatherless are broken by denying them protection, as well as by exercising oppression by them. Thus we see what a Bill of Indictment is here drawn up against *Job*, how he is charged with crimes which are not only against the light of Scripture, but even against the very light of Nature; even with those crimes which his hand was far from, and his heart further from, with those crimes which he did not only forbear to practise, but which his soul did abhor. Hence observe,

That, *The most innocent persons are often charged with the foulest and sinfullest crimes.*

Job was so clear in his own Conscience from this accusation, that he not only professeth openly that he never did, but imprecates a like vengeance upon himself if ever he had done it (*chap.* 31. 21.) *If I have lift up my hands against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the Gate* (that is, when by reason of my great power and authority in the place of judgment, I could easily enough have done it, no man daring to oppose or hinder me, but all rather being ready to countenance or assist me in it; if (I say) when I had these advantages over the fatherless, I did ever break their arms) *then let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone:* As if he had said, If I have done this thing, let a divine and visible retaliation point me out for the man; let all the world see and read my sin in my punishment, and my injustice against man in the most discernable judgments of God upon my self. Thus free and innocent was *Job*, and yet thus accused. And indeed, if to accuse were enough, there is no man in the world could be innocent or free. Who is there of so unspotted a conversation, that may not be spotted with accusation? who, while his Conscience is pure, may not have much dirt cast in his face?

Secondly, *Eliphaz* accuses *Job* of all this, not because he knew it to be so, but because he thought it was so. Whence note (which hath formerly been toucht at)

That, *To charge any man upon surmise, with things that we cannot prove, is a high breach not only of Charity, but of Justice.*

The *Lord* reproves *Job*'s three Friends in the last Chapter of this Book, because they *had not spoken of him the thing that was right*; and as they had not spoken the thing that was right of God, so not of *Job*. They pitcht upon no reason why they condemned him so much, but only because he endured so much. They concluded him a man of sin, because he was a man of sorrow. The Apostle gives us the true *Genius* of Charity (1 *Cor.* 13. 3, 4.) *Charity believeth all things*; not that Charity is so credulous as to take up every thing for truth which is scattered by any common and ungrounded report; thats no commendation in any man, much less is it the commendation of a godly man; therefore when the Apostle saith, *Charity believeth all things*, the meaning is, Charity interprets every thing in the best sence which it will bear, and makes the fairest construction which every mans case and condition will admit. And again, at *v.* 5. *Charity thinks no evil*, that is, it thinks no evil of others; as a godly man will not maintain evil thoughts, or suffer them to lodge within him, in reference to any sin, which himself is tempted to commit, so, a charitable man will not maintain or lodge evil thoughts of others, in reference to any sin which he can only suppose that they have committed. Again, as Charity *thinks no evil*, that is, it doth not plot evil against others; so thinks no evil by a rash surmising it of others. Thus, *Charity believes all's well, and thinks no evil.* How uncharitable then are they, yea, how unjust who believe all's ill, where they know of none; and think the worst of them in whom they never saw any thing but what was good? It is not enough for a man to say he doth not judge his brother maliciously; he ought not to judge him ignorantly. Though to speak or judge ill of another, because we wish him ill, be the greater sin, yet barely to speak or judge ill of another, by whom we know no ill, is very sinful: And then 'tis most sinful, when we do it not only as not knowing any evil they have done, but because we know, hear or see the evils which they suffer. 'Tis dangerous as well as improper to make the hardest and harshest dealings of God with any man, the ground of our hard and harsh thoughts of him.

Thirdly consider who they were whom *Job* is supposed to have oppressed; they were not the great ones, not the mighty men of the earth, but the fatherless and the widow. Hence note,

That, *The poor are usually the subject of oppression.*

The greater fish in the sea of this world devour and live upon the lesser; the strong should support the weak, and they who are uppermost, should uphold those who are under them. But because the weak and the underlings may most easily be oppresst, therefore they are most usually oppresst. As covetousness is cruel, so 'tis cowardly, and dares not meddle with its match. God in reference to spirituals, *filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich he sendeth empty away* (Luke 1. 23.) Ungodly men in reference to temporals, would send the rich empty away if they could; but they are so far from filling the hungry with good things, that they take away all the good things they can from the hungry; they care not if they starve the hungry, if they make the poor poorer, and take all from them who have but little,

Fourthly, *Job* having been a Magistrate, and so (by his place) a Minister of Justice, is strongly pressed with the doing of injustice. Hence note,

First, That, *They who have power, may easily, though not always justly, be suspected for the abuse of it.*

To have a power in our hands whereby we may do good, is a temptation to do evil. 'Tis hard to keep power within its bounds, and to rule that by which others are ruled, The Prophet (*Isa.* 1. 10.) calls the rulers of *Sion, rulers of Sodom*, because they ruled like them, or rather worse then they, eating up the people under their charge, rather then feeding them, and vexing those whom they undertook to govern, and to be a Shield unto against the vexations of others.

Secondly note, That, *As oppression is a sin in any man, so it is most sinful in those who have power in their hands to relieve the oppressed.*

Such act not only contrary to a common rule, but contrary to their special duty; by how much we have the more obligation not to do a thing, by so much we sin the more if we do it.

Thirdly note, That, *As it is very sinful in Magistrates to wrong any man, so it is most sinful to wrong them, or deny them right, who have most need of it, the widow and the fatherless.*

Magistrates are called Gods; and God who hath honoured them by putting his name upon them, expects that they should honour him, by imitating or acting like unto him. What a Magistrate doth, he should do like God; he should do it so, that every one may be convinced that God is in in him and with him of a truth. As God takes care of the widow and of the fatherless, so should he. God is known by this Title, *A father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widow, is God in his holy habitation* (Psal. 68. 5.) That is, in in Heaven; for that's the habitation of his holiness, and of his glory; there he dwells, *judging for the widow and the fatherless.* And as that is the special business (as it were) of God in heaven, so they who are Gods on earth, ought to make it their special business to judge for the widow and

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the fatherless. Hence we find the widow and the fatherless commended by name to the care of the Magistrate. The fatherless have no natural parents living, or none near of kin remaining to maintain and defend them; therefore the Magistrate, who is (*pater patriæ*) the common father of his Countrey, should be their Foster-father. They who want power are the charge, and should be the special care of those in power. Thus they are commanded (*Psal.* 82. 3, 4.) *Defend the poor and fatherless, do justice to the afflicted and needy; rid them out of the hand of the wicked.* Here's their work; and the neglect of this work (how busie soever Magistrates are about other work) is often complained of aloud in Scripture, as a crying sin, as a sin that ruines Nations, and draws down publick Judgments upon a people. (Isa. 1. 17.) *Cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.* And at verse 23. *They judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.* Again (*Jer.* 5. 28.) *They judge not the cause of the fatherless.* It is a sin not to judge any mans Cause, not to judge the Cause of the richest, of the greatest; yet it is more sinful not to judge the Cause of the widow and the fatherless. And when he saith, *They judge not the Cause*, &c. The meaning is, they judge not the Cause of the fatherless impartially and righteously. And indeed, he that doth not judge righteously, doth not judge at all: And when the Prophet saith, *They judge not the Cause of the fatherless*, it is as if he had said, *Among all the Causes that lie unjudged, this is the Cause that God takes most notice of, and is most displeased with the neglect of it, even when the Cause of the fatherless is not pleaded, or judged.* All are forward enough to plead the Cause of the rich; but when the Client is poor, and appears (*in forma pauperis*) his Cause seldom finds any but a poor and formal pleading. We read (*Acts* 6. 1.) That *there was a great murmuring of the* Grecians *against the* Hebrews, *because their widows were neglected in the dayly administration.* Church-Officers (in their capacity) as well as State-Officers (in theirs) ought to have a careful eye upon widows that are in want. And the Apostle *James* (*chap.* 1. 27.) sums up (as it were) all Religion into this one duty; *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widow.* Not as if this were indeed all Religion, or the *all* of Religion; but as when the Spirit, in Scripture, hath to do with prophane persons, or meer moral honest men, who place all religion in civil righteousness and works of charity, then he calls them to first-Table duties, or to the sincere worship of God; so, when the Spirit is speaking to those who place all their religion in worship, or in first-Table duties, neglecting the duties of charity and righteousness, then we find all religion placed in second-Table work, in giving every man his due, in compassion to the poor, in helping the helpless, in feeding the hungry, in cloathing the naked, in comforting the sorrowful, and, by name, the fatherless and widow. *This is pure religion, to visit the fatherless and widow*; that is, this is the practical part, or the true practice of Religion, without which all Religion is vain. Therefore when the Apostle had said (*v.* 21.) *Receive with meekness the engraffed word*: Lest any one should stay there, and think he had done enough, when he had been a hearer, he adds, *Be doers of the word*, that is, look to the practical part of Religion; be diligent in the duties of love to men, as well as in those of the worship of God.

Take these two Inferences from the whole Verse.

First, Seeing God taketh so much care of the widow and the fatherless, *Let the widow, let the fatherless trust in God.* They who receive peculiar promises from God, should put forth suitable acts of faith towards God. Faith cannot work without a word, and where it hath a word, it ought to work. We have both put together in the present case (*Jer.* 49. 11.) *Leave the fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let the widows trust in me*: As if God had said, if none will take care of them, I will; I will take care of them, I will be a father of the fatherless, a husband to the widow, leave that care to me. Therefore let the widow and fatherless trust in God: A word from God, is a better and a bigger portion then all the wealth of this world.

Secondly, Seeing the Lord is so jealous over them, and so ready to take their part against all their adversaries, this should provoke them to be full of zeal for God. God stands up for their protection, therefore they should stand up for God their Protector and Patron. How careful should they be to please him who is so watchful to preserve them? Special promises call for special obedience, as well as for special faith: The more God engageth himself to do for us, the more should we engage our selves (in his strength) to do for him. *None have more reason to be rich in faith and love to God, then the poor and fatherless.*

Thus far we have examined the Indictment or Charge which *Eliphaz* brought against *Job*; now see what he infers upon it, here's thy sin, and there's thy punishment.

VERS. 10, 11.

Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee;
Or darkness that thou canst not see, and abundance of waters cover thee.

THese two verses have variety of expressions, but the intendment of all is one and the same; *Snares and fears, and darkness, and abundance of waters*, signifie all manner of evils: All these are upon thee, because thou hast sent widows away empty, and hast suffered the Arms of the fatherless to be broken; because thou hast done these things, therefore

Snares are about thee.

Some render the Original Text to another sence, not as bearing an effect of the former words, not as if he had been punished with these evils for those sins; but as if these evils had caused him to sin; and so the words are expounded as a kind of scorn; as if *Eliphaz* had said, *When thou didst those things, no doubt snares, or fears, or darkness, or waters came upon thee, thou wast forc'd by suffering these evils, to do all this evil, wast thou not? was it not because thou wast prest with snares, and fears, and darkness, and waters, that thou didst oppress the widow and the fatherless?* All which Questions are reducible to these plain Negations: *Thou wast not pressed with any of these perplexities upon thy self, to oppress the poor; there was no snare, no nor any fear near thee, darkness did not hinder thy sight, nor did the waters of affliction cover thee: Thou hast not been thrust upon sin by these temptations, nor constrained by the moral violence of any incumbent necessity, but thou hast done it freely; to sin even in this manner, and at this height, hath not been thy refuge, but thy choice: Thou hast not acted these iniquities by any instigation, either from Persons or Providences, but upon thine own election.* This is a fair sence, and a mighty reproof; seeing (as was lately noted) every evil we do is by so much the worse, by how much we have had the less provocation or solicitation to do it.

עֹרְבִין *Non significat illationem aut convenientiam consequentis ad antecedens, sed convenientiam aptitudinemq; antecedentis ad consequens.* Coc.

But I rather take the words as we render them, to express the sad effect and fruits of his sin; as if *Eliphaz* had said, *Because thou hast taken a pledge of thy brother for nought*, &c. *because thou hast sent widows away empty, and the arms of the fatherless have been broken*, therefore *snares are round about thee*, &c. The words may have a threefold allusion.

First, To the besieging of a City; snares are round about thee, thou art now hemm'd in on every side with troubles; as Christ threatens *Jerusalem, thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee*, &c. A trench is but a great snare to catch men, as men catch birds or vermine in snares. Or,

Hostile aliquid & obsidionale significat.

Secondly, The allusion may be to imprisonment; thou art compassed with strong walls, and shut in with gates, thou art shackled with iron snares.

Thirdly, The words may allude to hunting and fowling; in such disports Nets and Snares are set to take the intended Game. Snares are often spoken of in Scripture, to intimate or set forth the afflictions and sorrows that intrap and hold the sons of men. So that to say, *Snares are round about thee*, is no more but thus, troubles are round about thee; and these snares are sometimes set by the hand of man, sometimes by the immediate hand of God. Good things are often made a snare to the undoing of evil men, and evil things are often made a snare to the troubling, though not to the undoing of good men. But I shall not prosecute this Allusion, having spoken of it *Chap.* 18. *vers.* 6, 7. 8.

Where

where *Job* complains that God had taken him in his snare; as also in *Chap.* 19. 5.

And sudden fear troubleth thee.

We may understand this fear; First, For the passion of fear, or for fear within: Secondly, For the occasion of fear, which is fear without. *Sudden fear troubleth thee*, that is, the appearance or apprehension of some terrible thing causeth thee to fear. Fear is often put in Scripture for the thing feared, for the object of fear, or for that which causeth fear. Thus also hope is put for the thing hoped for, and *vision* for the thing seen, or the object of the vision.

Passio pro objecto & materia sunt in omni idiomate familiare. Sanct.

Thirdly, Some expound fear in the Text, for that special fear which riseth from guilt, or for terror of conscience. *Sudden fear troubleth thee*; that is, thy conscience flyes in thy face and affrights thee; thy fear flows not from any outward troubles that threaten thee, or from wants that afflict thee, but from those wickednesses which have been committed by thee; thy conscience vexeth and tormenteth thee, not only with fear, but with suddain fear; fear rusheth upon thee unexpectedly, violently, like an armed man. *Sudden fear troubleth thee.* Taking fear in all or any one of these interpretations.

Note, *Sudden fear surprizeth securest sinners.*

When they shall say peace and quietness, then sorrow and anguish come upon them as pain upon a woman in travel, and they shall not escape. The Prophet in a vision (*Zech.* 5. 1.) *Saw a flying roll*; that flying roll was the Curse: And it was called a *flying roll*, to note the speedy and sudden coming of those judgments that were written in it; they came not only upon the spur, but upon the wing; they came flying; flying is a swift motion, and that motion is applied to judgement, when once God giveth it a Commission to come. Hence also (*Deut.* 32. 41.) the sword is called a lightning sword, or a sword that hath lightning in it; *If I* (saith the Lord) *whet my glittering* (or lightning) *sword.* The sword of the Lord is as lightning; it hath burning and swiftness in it; divine vengeance cometh as lightning. It is called also the overflowing scourge (*Isa.* 28. 15.) 'Tis a scourge because the lashes of it cause much smart and pain, and 'tis *an overflowing scourge*, to note the suddenness of it; the scourge comes in like a mighty flood.

Again, This suddenness of fear, or of things feared, may have reference unto the security of wicked men, who though they have often heard of dangers, and judgments have been threatned upon them, yet they alwayes come suddenly upon them, because they never prepare for them. To such as are unprepared, evils are alwayes sudden, how often soever they have been warned of them. As to him that is prepared, death is never sudden, though he dye (as we Vulgarly phrase it) a sudden death. So he that is unprepared for death, dieth suddenly, though he die that which we commonly call a lingring death. Thus death and judgment shall come suddenly upon all ungodly men. *It shall be* (saith Christ, *Matth.* 24. 37.) *as in the dayes of* Noah, *they were eating and drinking, they were marrying, and giving in marriage, till the day that* Noah *entred into the Ark, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away.* But did they not know of the flood, till the flood came; assuredly they did, for *Noah* foretold them of and preached the coming of the flood, a hundred and twenty years before it came (*Gen.* 6. 3.) *My spirit shall not alwayes strive (I will not alwayes be contending) yet his dayes shall be an hundred and twenty years*; that is, he shall have an hundred and twenty years warning; all that time the old world had warning of the flood, and *Noah* preached upon that Text all that time; yet the flood came upon them (saith the Text) and *they knew it not*; that is, they regarded not what *Noah* said, they took no thought neither to prevent the flood, nor to prepare for it. The Author to the *Hebrews* tells us, that *Noah by faith being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world* (that is, the then world of unbelief and hardness of heart) *and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith* (Heb. 11. 7.) He had a holy fear in him, and a faith also; a faith that the thing should be done, and a fear of God who threatned to do that thing. *Thus by faith being moved with fear, he prepared an Ark for the safety of himself and of his household.* Why did not the rest also make preparation? They did not believe, nor did they fear. Christ rebuked his Disciples in the storm at Sea (*Matth.* 8.) with, *why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith*; the old world might have been rebuked with, why are ye fearless, even because ye are of little, or rather of no faith at all. *Unless dangers threatned be believed, they are never feared; and unless they be both believed and feared, they are never avoided. Whensoever the Lord of such servants shall come, he cometh in a day, when they look not for him, and in an hour that they are not aware of* (Matth. 24. 50.) that is, he cometh suddenly. What can come more suddenly upon any man, then that which he looked not for, nor was at all aware of. Thus he shall come *to cut them asunder, and to appoint them their portion with hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Sudden fear troubleth thee;*

Vers. 11. **Or darkness, that thou canst not see, and abundance of waters cover thee.**

Some render this verse by way of interrogation; *Shalt thou not see darkness? And shall not the abundance of waters cover thee?* Shalt thou only not see darkness, and pass unpunished for such monstrous wickednesses? As if he had said, thou seemest to wonder, that darkness is upon thee, thou makest strange of it, that flouds or abundance of waters cover thee. But hast thou not deserved and called forth these Judgments, by many sinful provocations?

Aut autu[m] solus tenebras non videres & tanta scelera impunè ferres?

Others render this Text, not as a Question, but as a direct Assertion; *Thou thoughtest, that thou shouldest, or thou hadst a conceit, that thou shouldest never see darkness, nor any trouble coming upon thee, thy heart was lift up in hope of impunity; thou didst perswade thy self, that God had as high an opinion of thee, as thou hadst of thy self, or thou hast flattered thy self in thy sinful way, and thou thoughtest that God would have flattered thee also.*

But I shall rather (as we) connect it with the former verse, carrying on the same intention;

Or darkness, that thou canst not see.] Darkness may be taken either properly, or improperly; darkness properly taken is that of the Air by the withdrawing of the Sun: This is not here intended. Darkness improperly taken is that of our state, and it is twofold. First, Internal, which is indeed ignorance, or the darkness of the mind; as if he had said, darkness veils the eye of thy understanding, that thou canst not see, either the hand of God upon thee for thy sins, or those thy sins which have caused God to lay his heavy hand upon thee. Thy understanding is darkned, that thou canst not see; this intellectual or internal darkness is twofold.

First, Natural or inbred, every man hath naturally so much darkness in him, that as he cannot see the truths that are in the Word of God, so he cannot see the intendment of the Works of God.

Secondly, Judiciary, or inflicted (*Isa.* 6. 9.) *Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not: and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes.* What were these eyes and ears that were to be made heavy and shut? Surely, they are to be understood, not of Organical, but of Intellectual ears and eyes. But who was to shut these eyes? A holy Prophet. And how was he to shut them? By propheſying or speaking to them in the Name of the Lord. The proper work of the Word is to open the eyes, and enlighten the mind. But when a people have long shut their own eyes against, or only dallyed with (that transcendent mercy) the light, then God (which is the severest judgment) shuts their eyes, and darkens them with light. Of this Judiciary darkness, some interpret the present Text, as if *Eliphaz* had said, there is a worse plague upon thee, then all those spoken of, even blindness and confusion of mind, so that thou canst neither see what brought thee into them, nor how to find thy way out, but art as a man under water, or in the dark, amazed in these thy afflictions, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn thy self.

Stupidas es planè nisi tua scelera harum tuarum calamitatum aquæ more inundantium & obruentium causam esse vides. Mere.

Secondly, Darkness taken improperly is External, so a state of sorrow and affliction, is a state of darkness. As before *snares*, so here *darkness*, notes any troublesom con-

dition, or the trouble of any mans condition. And when to darkneſs, this is added, *Darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee*, it may import the greateſt degree of darkneſs, even darkneſs in perfection, or as the Scripture ſpeaks, *thick darkneſs*, yea, *outer darkneſs*. There is a darkneſs in which we may ſee, a darkneſs which hath ſome kind of light in it; but when darkneſs is ſo thick that we cannot ſee, that is, that we cannot ſee any thing in it (as we commonly ſay of extream darkneſs, 'tis ſo dark that we cannot ſee his hand) then 'tis perfect darkneſs. Light is not (properly) ſeen, but 'tis the medium or means by which we ſee; much leſs is darkneſs ſeen, it being properly that which intercepts and hinders ſight; yet 'tis rare to meet with darkneſs which hath not ſome mixture or tinctures of light, or with ſuch darkneſs as in which nothing at all can be ſeen: yet ſuch was this metaphorical darkneſs, with which he ſuppoſed *Job* was muffled up. I have more then once in other paſſages of this Book, met with and explained this term, ſhewing how and why afflictions and troubles are expreſſed by it, and therefore I ſhall not now ſtay upon it. Only here take notice, that the old Heathens had ſuch conceptions of darkneſs, and therefore being in a proſperous ſtate they had recourſe to the *Sun*, to *Jupiter*, *Minerva*, *Mercury*, their Idol-Deities, as the diſpenſers of light and comfort; but being under ſufferings and ſorrows, they made their aplications to the *Earth*, to *Neptune*, and others, whom they vainly believed, were Rulers of the night and Lords of darkneſs, as if theſe could command and chaſe away all evils from them. Scripture Language is full of ſuch deſcriptions about men in ſorrow. *Darkneſs, that thou canſt not ſee;*

Gentiles idē ſentire guſtabant dū, non reſdum in proſperis, quos in adverſis adibant Deos. In proſperis quidem ſolē, Jovem opulentum Minervam, Mercuriū, Apollinē, *hos omnes quaſi lucis & ſecundarum rerum largitores: at in adverſis tellurem,* Neptunum *& alios malorum depulſores, nocte multū potentes, quaſi tenebrarum ipſi domiai eſſent.* Bold.

And abundance of waters cover thée.

* The word rendred *Abundance*, ſignifies a company or troop of waters, which meet and march together, even as horſes prepared for battel, and ready to give the charge. So the word is tranſlated (2 *King.* 9. 17) *a watchman from the Tower ſaid, I ſee a company.* And that was *Jehu* with his troops, who came marching furiouſly with the revenge of God in his hand upon the houſe of *Ahab*. And ſo *Ezek.* 26. 10. *By reaſon of the abundance of their horſes, their duſt ſhall cover thee; thy walls ſhall ſhake at the noyſe of the horſemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots.* Read the ſame uſe of the word (*Iſa.* 60. 6.) *The multitude* (ſome read the inundation) *of Camels ſhall cover thee;* They ſhall come in ſuch abundance, that they ſhall come like a floud, and ſhall be as the gathering of many waters. Troops of Horſes and Camels ruſh together as many waters; and waters ruſh and throng together, even as many Horſes. Thus, here abundance, or an Army of waters come in upon thee and cover thee. Waters in Scripture frequently ſignifie afflictions (*Iſa.* 43. 2.) *When thou paſſeſt thorough the waters* (that is, through great afflictions) *I will be with thee* (Pſal. 18. 16.) *He drew me out of many waters*; that is, out of many afflictions (*Pſal.* 66. 12.) *We went through fire and water, but thou broughteſt us forth into a wealthy place.* Fire and water, note all ſorts of afflictions, hot and cold, moiſt and dry. And ſome conceive that water in a metaphorical ſence is ſo often uſed in Scripture to ſignifie affliction; becauſe water in a proper ſence did once afflict the whole world. As the general Judgment upon the world at the laſt day ſhall be by fire, ſo the firſt general Judgment upon the world, was by water; it was a floud of waters, by which the Lord deſtroyed the whole world. Likewiſe *Pharoah* and his Hoſt of *Egyptians* (which was the ſecond moſt Eminent judgment, that ever was in the world) were overwhelmed by the waters of the red Sea. Thus *Moſes* ſang, (*Exod.* 15. 4, 5.) *Pharoah's Chariot and his hoſt hath he caſt into the Sea, his choſen Captains alſo are drowned in the red Sea; The depths have covered them, they ſank into the bottom as a ſtone.* And again (*verſ.* 10.) *The Sea covered them, they ſank as Lead in the mighty waters.* Water being the Element and the Inſtrument, which God hath ſo often uſed in his angry diſpenſations towards ſinful men, it may emphatically expreſs any diſpenſation of his anger. Yet if we conſider the very nature of the thing it ſelf, it carrieth ſignificancy enough to be the Emblem of ſaddeſt and ſoareſt affliction.

* שמע *Quamvis multitudinem aut inundationem ſignificat cum celeritate quadā & ſtrepitu.*

Firſt, There is in water a ſwallowing power; as water is eaſily ſwallowed, ſo it ſwallows all up. Man cannot ſubſiſt in it when it is moſt peaceable, and he can hardly eſcape out of it when 'tis enraged. Sorrow and affliction are ſwallowers alſo, unleſs mercy appear and moderate them, they drown and overthrow all. The Apoſtle uſeth that expreſſion when he adviſeth the *Corinthians* (2 *Epiſt.* 2. 7.) *To forgive and comfort the inceſtuous perſon*, whom, according to his advice, they had formerly Excommunicated or caſt out from fellowſhip in the Church; *Leſt* (ſaith he) *ſuch a one ſhould be ſwallowed up with over-much ſorrow.* Sorrow of any ſort, even ſorrow for ſin may poſſibly have an exceſs, or an over-muchneſs in it; and when ever it hath ſo (beyond the end for which it ſerves, for ſorrow is not of any worth in it ſelf, but as it ſerves to a ſpiritual end; when (I ſay) ſorrow hath ſuch an exceſs, then) not only the comforts, but the gifts and uſefulneſs of the perſon ſorrowing, are in danger to be ſwallowed up by it.

Secondly, Water doth not only ſwallow up, but enter in; while it covereth the body, it fills the bowels. Thus affliction like water, fills within as well as covers without. *David* complains that his afflictions did ſo (*Pſal.* 69. 1.) *Save me O God, for the waters are come in unto my ſoul.* Not only have theſe waters ſweld over me, but they are ſoakt into me. Inward or ſoul-afflictions, as well as outward, and bodily afflictions, are ſet forth by waters (*Pſal.* 109. 18.) *As he cloathed himſelf with curſing, like as with his garment, ſo let it come into his bowels* (or within him) *like water, and like oyl into his bones.* Liquids penetrate, ſo do afflictions.

Thirdly, As the water is not mans proper Element, he lives and breaths in the Air, not in the Water; ſo affliction is not our proper Element, though it be due to our ſin, yet it is not proper to our nature. Man was not made to live in affliction, as the fiſh was made to live in the water; and therefore as it is ſaid, *The Lord doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men* (Lam. 3. 33.) 'Tis (as it were) beſides the nature of God, when he afflicts the children of men. So it is ſaid (*Heb.* 12. 11.) *No chaſtning for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous.* Man is out of his Element when he is under chaſtnings. He was made at firſt to live in the light of Gods countenance, in the ſmiles and embraces of divine love. As man is out of his way when he ſins, ſo he is off from his end when he ſuffers; he was not deſigned for the overwhelming choaking waters of ſorrow and judgment, but for the ſweet refreſhing air of joy and mercy. It often proves a mercy in the event to be covered with theſe waters; to be covered with them, that we may be waſhed by them is a mercy; but only to be covered with them, eſpecially (as *Eliphaz* here ſaith of *Job* was) to be deeply covered with them is a deep and ſoar affliction. *Abundance of waters cover thee.*

> Hence note, *That as God hath treaſures of mercy, and abounds in goodneſs, ſo he hath treaſures of affliction, and abundance of wrath.*

As God hath abundance of waters ſealed up in the clouds, as in a treaſury, and he can unlock his treaſury and let them out whenſoever he pleaſeth, either to refreſh or overflow the Earth; ſo he hath abundance of afflictions, and he can let them forth, as out of a treaſury, when he pleaſeth. And as we read (*Ezek.* 47.) that the waters of the Sanctuary, thoſe holy waters were of ſeveral degrees; firſt, to the ankles; ſecondly, to the knees, then to the loins; and then a river that could not be paſſed over, abundance of waters. Thus alſo the bitter waters, the waters of affliction are of ſeveral degrees: ſome waters of afflictions are but ancle deep, they only make us a little wet ſhod, there are other waters up to the knees; and others to the loins, and others we may rightly call abundance of waters, a Sea of waters; *I am come into deep waters* (ſaith *David*, Pſal. 69. 2.) or *into the depth of waters, where the flouds overflow me.* And having ſaid (*Pſal.* 42. 6.) *O my God, my ſoul is caſt down within me.* He adds in the next words (*verſ.* 7.) *Deep calleth unto deep at the noiſe of thy water-ſpouts: All thy waves and thy billowes are gone over me.* Where, by deep to deep, by water-ſpouts, by waves and billows, he elegantly ſets forth his diſtreſs, in alluſion to a Ship at Sea in a vehement ſtorm and ſtreſs of weather; when

when the same wave upon whose back the vessel rides out of one deep, plungeth it down into another; thus the afflicted are tossed and overwhelmed in a Sea of trouble, till they are at their wits end, if not at their faiths end.

Take two or three Deductions from all these words laid together. We see, by how many metaphors, the sorrows of this life are set forth, even by *snares, and fears, and darkness, and waters.*

Hence note, First, *That as God hath abundance of afflictions in his power, so he hath variety of wayes and means to afflict the sons of men; either for the punishment of their sin, or for the trial of their graces.*

If one will not do it, another shall; if the snare will not, fear shall; if fear will not, darkness shall; and if darkness will not, the waters shall; and if waters of one hight will not do it, he will have waters deep enough to do it, abundance of waters shall do it; he hath variety of wayes to deal both with sinners and with Saints.

Secondly, Consider the inference which *Eliphaz* makes, *Therefore snares, &c. are upon thee*; that is, because thou hast done wickedly in not relieving and in oppressing the poor, *therefore* snares have entangled thee. This (though false in *Job's* particular case, yet) is a truth in general; and it teacheth us, That, *there is an unavoidable sequel between sin and sorrow.* Look upon sin in its own nature, and so the sequel is unavoidable, sin is big with sorrow; as affliction burdens the sinner, so sin is burdened with affliction. Sin hath all sorts of affliction in its bowels; and we may say of all the evils that afflict us, *they are our sins.* Sin is formally the transgression of the Law, and sin is virtually the punishment of transgressors. Many (I grant) are afflicted for trial of their graces (as hath been shewed before) but grace had never been thus tryed if man had not sinned. Sin is the remote cause of all afflictions, and it is the next or immediate procuring cause of most afflictions. Would any man avoid the snare, let him fear to sin; would he avoid fear, let him fear to do evil; would he keep out of darkness, and not be covered with abundance of waters, let him take heed he drink not iniquity like water, let him have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. God tells the sinner plainly what portion he is to expect, *Say, wo to the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him* (Isa. 33. 11.) We may as well hope to avoid burning when we run into the fire, or dirtying when we run into the mire, as to escape smarting when we run into sin.

Yet more distinctly, we may consider all those evils comprehended under those words in the Text, *Snares, darkness*, &c. either in reference to wicked men, or to the Saints. Snares and darkness upon the wicked, are the issues of divine wrath. While these sad dispensations are sent out and meet with Saints, they are the issues of divine love. For though a godly man may provoke God to anger, and find by many evidences that God (as to his actings) is angry with him, yet as to his person he alwayes loves him. And therefore (as a wicked mans Table is made his snare, so) he is assured that his snare shall be made to him a Table, that his darkness shall work light, his evils good to him. He is also assured that the Lord will deliver him out of these snares, and cut the cords of the wicked (*Psal.* 129. 4.) That he will deliver him from fear, from darkness, and bring him up out of the abundance of waters which cover him, as *David* speaks (*Psal.* 36. 2.) *For this* (that is, because thou art so gracious) *shall every one that is godly pray unto thee, in a time when thou mayst be found* (the Hebrew is, *in a finding time*) which according to our translation, notes the season when God may be found, as the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 55. 6.) Yet it may be well expounded for the time when trouble finds, that is, takes hold of the godly man: And so the word is used (*Psal.* 116. 3.) *The pains of Hell gat hold of me* (we put in the Margin) *found me.* In which sence the word is used also (*Psal.* 21. 8.) *Thine hand shall find out* (that is, take hold of, and apprehend) *all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.* Now in *this finding time*, either when God may be found, or when trouble finds a godly man, he (setting himself to pray) hath this promise, *surely in the flouds of great waters, they* (that is, the flouds of great waters, by which are meant, great dangers) *shall not come nigh him* (that is, the godly man) to hurt or drown him. Sometimes prayer keeps the flood off, and alwayes prayer delivers the godly man out of the flood. Wicked men have no mind to come nigh God with their hearts (and so some interpret the latter part of this verse in the Psalm) nor will God admit them nigh unto himself, in the flouds of great waters. And the flouds of great waters shall not (which is the scope of our reading) come nigh the godly man for his hurt, when he draws nigh to God in prayer with his heart.

Thus we have seen the sins of *Job* drawn out into a charge, and the Judgment of *Eliphaz* upon it, what the event, the sequel, or issue of those sins was, *snares, and fears, and waters, and darkness.*

There is yet one thing further, that I shall here take notice of from the constant course of *Job's* friends in dealing with him. We see that still they charge him with sin, and still insist upon it, that all his afflictions and miseries were the fruits of his sin. *Job* (as hath appeared in opening several passages of this Book) hath as often disproved their inference, and denied that his sufferings were caused by his sin, at least not by any such way of sinning, as they charged him with. Labouring also much to enform them, that God hath many other reasons why he afflicts his people; and that God might take liberty to afflict him, though he were no such kind of creature as they rendred him; yet notwithstanding all he could say, either to purge himself or better conform them, they persevered in the same opinion, both concerning his person, and the cause of his afflictions.

Whence note, *It is hard to convince those who are under a mistake, whether about persons or doctrines.*

Error is as binding upon the conscience, and as strongly embraced by the affections, as truth is; for it binds and is embraced, not in the name of an error, but in the name of truth. And men are therefore wedded to, and in love with their own conceptions, because (how monstrous and hard favoured soever in themselves, yet) nothing is more beautiful in their eye then they, *No man* (saith the Apostle) *ever hated his own flesh, but loved and cherished it.* The flesh of our minds (such are all false principles and positions) is more loved and cherished by us, then the flesh of our bodies. Besides, when men have once taken up an opinion, they think it a dishonour to lay it down again. 'Tis rare to find a man that will yield up his Judgment, though it be a misguided one, or acknowledge that he is in an error, though he begins to take some knowledge, or at least some suspition of it. A light intimation or only the appearance of a probability will amount to a proof against either persons or doctrines which we like not; but the clearest demonstrations will hardly raise a jealousie against what we like. Let *Job* say what he will in his own case, he cannot be believed by his friends; and his friends will say again what once they had said, though it had been more then once before fully answered. The present age hath given us sad experiences of the thing. For, as many have been unstable, and tossed to and fro with every wind of (false) doctrine, so others have been stubborn and unmoved from their errors, though the strongest winds of truth have breathed, yea blown hard upon them. And those prejudices which have (with so much severity) been taken up by brethren against brethren; how do they remain, in many minds, as mountains unmoved to this very day?

I know not which is worse, unsetledness in the truth, and an easiness to let it go, or tenaciousness in an error, and a hardness to let it go. Nor do I well know which is worse, a readiness to take up hard thoughts of our brethren, or an unreadiness to lay them down. Were the laws of love to man, and zeal for God observed, these extreams would alwayes be avoided. Pure zeal for God would fix us in the truth, and make us more easie to be brought off from our most applauded errors. True love to man, would cause us to examin every ground of suspicion against a brother twice, before we do indeed suspect him once; and it would cause us to rejoyce in any appearance of his innocence, whereby we might discharge our own spirits of all suspicions concerning him. Our *love* (as the Apostle

prayes, *Phil.* 1. 9.) *ought to abound in knowledge and in all judgment*; that is, we ought to love judiciously as well as affectionately or sincerely. So that, true love will not over-look the faults of another, nor will it approve against light. Yet true love is ready to entertain any light offered, that grounds of suspition may be removed, and we restored to a right understanding of our brethren.

VERS. 12, 13, 14.

Is not God in the height of Heaven? and beholds the height of the Stars how high they are.
And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?
Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of Heaven.

IN the former part of this Chapter, we have found *Eliphaz* charging *Job* with those hainous crimes, injustice and uncharitableness towards man; in these three verses he proceeds to charge him with a higher crime, even irreligiousness and impiety against God; as if (at least) *Job* doubted, if not denied the providence of God about what is done here below, or affirmed that he neither rewarded the righteous according to their good, nor punisheth the wicked according to the evil which they have done. That's the scope of this context, in which we may observe,

First, A twofold truth held forth.

Secondly, A wrong suggestion of two errors, as arising from those truths.

Thirdly, An indeavour to prove and make good what he had wrongfully suggested.

These two truths are contained in *vers.* 22. first, *God is in the height of Heaven*; secondly, *The Stars are very high*; these are clear truths; from these *Eliphaz* makes a wrong suggestion, as if *Job* upon those grounds of Gods being in the height of Heaven, *&c.* had pleased himself with this conceit, that God could not (at such a distance) take notice of what passeth among, or is acted by men in this inferior world.

(Vers. 13.) *And thou sayest, how doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?* As if he had said, God being in the height of Heaven, cannot know, much less judge concerning the state of things here below; why what should hinder? He tells us what in *vers.* 14. where (which was the third thing) he endeavours to prove his suggestion; *Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not*, that's the first proof: and then we have a second, in the latter end of that verse, God hath other things to do then to mind what is done here; he hath higher business and imployments then to look upon us, who are creeping upon mole-hills, and engaged about a heap of earth; for, *he walketh in the circuit of Heaven*; that is, there lieth his great work, he hath enough in a nobler Sphear to imploy himself in; and therefore surely, thou thinkest, that God takes no care at all, or not such special care about the affairs and wayes of men. This is the sum and scope of these three Verses. They are a new charge of impiety upon *Job*, as shutting up or restraining the providence of God to the things of Heaven alone; and we seek how *Eliphaz* frames arguments and proofs of the point for *Job*, which (as will appear afterwards) never came into his heart.

Now though *Eliphaz* misapplied all this to *Job*, yet herein he fully characters, and clearly paints out the spirit of carnal men; for such secure themselves in their evil wayes upon this presumption, that God takes no notice of them, or that he hath something else to do then to trouble himself with what they are doing.

Vers. 12. Is not God in the height of Heaven?

There are divers readings of these words; first thus, *Is not God higher then the Heavens?* A second thus, *Doth not God possess the high Heaven?* The Original may strictly be rendred, *God the height of Heaven*; that is, *God is above all heavens*: we render well, *God is in the height* or *sublimity of Heaven.*

This Question, *Is not God in the height of Heaven?* is taken three wayes.

First, Some read it as an Exhortation given by *Eliphaz* to *Job*, to draw off the motion of his thoughts, and most of all the setled bent of his heart from those inferior things, his losses and troubles, his sorrows, pains, and sicknesses; he would divert his mind from these worldly sorrows, and raise it up to heavenly enjoyments, *Is not God in Heaven?* As if he had said, *Why standest thou poring upon things below? Why dwellest thou so much upon thy dunghill, and thy present poverty; God is in the height of Heaven, consider him there.* This is both a safe and a very spiritual way to ease our minds of all the troubles and sorrows which we meet with in this world; could we but ascend in Spirit to the height where God is, could we by an eye of faith look to him, live upon him, and in him, all burdens would be light, and pressures easie to us.

Deus sublimitas cœlorum. Hebr.

Secondly, This question may be taken as a plain assertion or affirmation, and it is of the same value and signification with this; *God is in the height of Heaven, there he is, and from thence he beholds all the children of men, their wayes and works.*

Thirdly, *Is not God in the height of Heaven?* May be understood not as the question of *Eliphaz*, and so his affirmation; but as the question of *Job*, and so his supposition. As if *Eliphaz* apprehended *Job* thus speaking in his heart, *Is not God* (sayest thou) *in the height of Heaven?* Or, doest not thou, O *Job*, say thus, *God is in the height of Heaven?* I grant that he is there; but I deny that he is there, in thy sence, or according to thy opinion. He is not concluded, or shut up there, he is not so in the height of Heaven, but that he mindeth what is done upon the Earth, yea in the very depths of Hell. As if he had said, *Thy thoughts and conceptions of God are too strait and narrow; thou speakest much below God, while thou sayest he is in the height of Heaven. While thou confinest God to Heaven, thou makest him like thy self on Earth.*

Annon Deus est (inquis) in altitudine cœli? Jun.

From these words in the two former Expositions,

Observe, *That the height of Heaven, or Heaven above, is the place of Gods special residence.*

Heaven is my throne (saith the Lord, *Isa.* 66. 1.) The throne is the seat of a Prince, there he declares his power, and his state; his glory shines from his throne. A Prince looks like a common man when he is abroad in the world, but when upon his throne, then the rayes of Majesty break forth, and he appears as he is. Thus the holy Prophet begs a gracious look of the Lord from Heaven (*Isa.* 63. 15.) *Look down from Heaven, the habitation of thy holiness, and of thy glory.* Heaven is called the habitation of Gods holiness, and of his glory; because his holiness and glory shine forth more in Heaven, then upon the Earth; little of the holiness of God is discovered to us here, though so much of it breaks forth here as causeth the heart of carnal men to quarrel with it continually. Nor are any able with these eyes, or rather with these hearts to bear the glory of God, or endure his holiness. When but some extraordinary glimpses of these appeared to *Isaiah*, he cryed out, *Wo is me, I am undone* (or *cut off*) *because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts* (Isa. 6. 5.) As God is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, so man is of impurer eyes then to behold the glory and holiness of God in clear manifestations of it, and therefore Heaven is the seat, the habitation of his holiness, and of his glory. Hence we may take two further inferences.

First, That *our hearts and our eyes should be lifted upwards.* The whole current of Scripture speaks of God as above in Heaven: And that's the reason why the Apostle (*Col.* 3. 1.) exhorts, *Set your affections on things above, and not on things here below*; and as on things above, so most of all upon God who is above. The old word was, *Lift up your hearts*; and *David* saith in prayer (*Psal.* 25. 1.) *I lift up my soul to thee.* And again (*Psal.* 123. 1.) *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens.* Yea our Lord Jesus Christ himself when he prayed (*Joh.* 17. 1.) *Lift up his eyes to Heaven, and said, Father the hour is come, glorifie thy Son*, &c. The eye lift up to Heaven is a sign of the heart lift up to Heaven; and that corporeal visible action, serves to fix our most spiritual affections upon the invisible God. 'Tis indeed an easie thing to lift the eyes up to Heaven, but it is very hard yea impossible, without a divine assistance, to lift up the heart to Heaven; the heart of a prophane worldling muds

Sursum corda.

so

so much in the Earth, that he seldom lifts up so much as his eyes to Heaven; and how much or how often soever a hypocrite lifts up his eyes to Heaven, yet still his heart muds in the earth. The eye looks upward naturally, but if ever the heart look upward, 'tis a work of Grace.

Secondly, Then *serve the Lord with reverence and holy fear, in all your addresses to him and appearings before him.* We reverence those who are high on earth, and shall we not reverence him who is higher then the highest, him who is in the height of Heaven? While Christ bids us say, *Our Father which art in Heaven*; he teaches us, as to pray with confidence, because God is our Father; so to pray with reverence, because he is a Father in Heaven (*Matth.* 6. 9.) The Preacher (*Eccles.* 5. 2.) makes this an argument why we should be taken up in high thoughts of God, why we should speak in a reverential manner both of him, and to him? *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.* He puts (as it were) a double bridle upon man in his drawing near to God; first, upon his mouth, *Let not thy mouth be rash*; and secondly, upon his heart (for the heart will talk at random as well as the mouth, yea the heart will talk more at random then the mouth can; and there is praying with the heart alone, as well as with the heart and mouth together; therefore saith he) *Let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God*; Why? *for God is in Heaven, and thou art upon the earth, therefore let thy words be few.* Here are indeed two arguments to enforce this composure of spirit; first, the highness and greatness of God; secondly, the lowness and vileness of man. Consider God is above, and thou art below, not only in regard of place, but of state and dignity, of power and majesty. The being of God in Heaven, notes not only a power of soveraignty to command us, but a power or ability both to punish and to provide for us; to punish our rashness, and to supply all our wants wherewith we acquaint him, and humbly mention before him; therefore *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty*, &c. The same *Solomon* in the same book, allegorically describing the declined decrepid condition of man, saith of the old man, that he is *afraid of that which is high* (Eccles. 12. 5.) Young men will be clambering and ascending, but old men are *afraid of that which is high*; they dare not go up a high steep place, least their strength or breath should fail, or least their brain should turn, and they through giddiness tumble down. Old men love to keep upon level or even ground, and are afraid of that which is high. Surely both young and old, have reason to be afraid of *him that is high*, to have reverential thoughts of God, who is in the height of Heaven, higher then the Heavens. The distance of man from God, as God is in Heaven and man on earth, is great; and the dissimilitude of man to God, as God is holy and man corrupt, is far greater; either of these Considerations single is enough, but both these laid together, is abundantly enough to keep the heart in an humble self-abasing frame before the Lord.

Secondly, Taking these words, *Is not God in the height of Heaven?* As the supposed speech of *Job*: thou sayest God is in the height of Heaven, that is, confined to Heaven, so, that he looks no further; but thou art deceived, God is not lockt up in Heaven, he looks to all things here on Earth. As the Earth is the Lords, and the fulness of it, as to right and propriety; so the Earth is the Lords, with all the fulness of it, as to care and providence. Though there be a distinctness in the manner or manifestation of his being in Heaven and on Earth; yet he is as truly and as much on Earth as he is in Heaven.

Hence note, *God is omnipresent, or every where.*

Though we are to adore and worship God as in Heaven, yet we must not shut up God in Heaven; as he is in Heaven, so he is upon the Earth also; he is with us, yea he is in us; he is in all places, not circumscribed by any, nor limited to any place. God is present in all places, and fills all places with his presence, only he doth not declare his presence alike in all places. The Lord appears where and as he pleaseth, but he cannot be otherwise or otherwhere then he is, and that is every where. While the Psalmist queried, *Whether shall I go from thy presence?* He was so far from imagining that any such place could be found, that in the very next words he concludeth God to be every where, by an enumeration of all places (*Psal.* 139. 7, 8.) *If I ascend up to Heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in Hell, behold thou art there* (Hell standeth in utmost opposition to Heaven; as Heaven in Scripture-language is the highest, so Hell is the lowest place; now saith *David*, *If I make my bed in Hell, thou art there*) *If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the Sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me*; that is, there I shall find thee efficaciously present with me. The Lord having said (*Isa.* 66. 1.) *Heaven is my throne*, presently adds, *and the earth is my footstool*; so the earth is called, because its scituation in nature is below the Heavens; his throne is there, his footstool is here. (*Jer.* 23. 23, 24.) *Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill Heaven and Earth, saith the Lord?* All these expostulating questions, are resolved into this one position. God is every where; and though some read the first, not as a Question, but as an Assertion, thus, *I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off*, yet the sence is the same; God therein affirming, that he is ever near us, and never afar off from us, whersoever we are. Though God be in those places which are furthest off from us, as well as in those that are near at hand; yet God himself is never afar off from us, but alwayes at hand. When *Solomon* had set up the Temple (1 *King.* 8. 27.) he was sure of the presence of God in it; and therefore did not speak doubtingly, but admiringly, when he asked, *But, will God indeed dwell on Earth?* (that is, will God manifest himself gloriously on the Earth?) *Behold the Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded? Solomon* knew that Heaven could not contain, that is, limit God, much less could the house which he had builded. Yet the Lord made the Temple another Heaven to himself, it was as his second Heaven; there the Lord had a kind of glorious residence, beyond what he had in any other part of the world. Now the Assemblies and Congregations of the Saints are in a special manner the dwelling place of God, and his second Heaven; he dwells so much in the Churches that he seems not to dwell at all in any part of the world beside (2 *Cor.* 6. 16, 17.) *I will dwell in them, and walk in them. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye seperate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* God who is in all the world, dwells only in and with his people. They who separate from whatsoever is unholy, have him nearest them who is altogether Holy. To conclude this point, we may make use of that distinction of the Schools to clear the difference, how a corporal substance, and a spiritual, as also how a spiritual created and uncreated substance, may be said to be in a place. All bodies are in place *circumscriptively*, spiritual substances created, Angels and souls of men are in place *definitively*: We cannot draw a line about an Angel, as about the body of a man; yet the Angel is so in this place, as not in another: but God who is a spirit and uncreated, is in place *repletively*, that is, he filleth all places where he is, but is not limited by any place where he is: He is (as some have not unfitly spoken) *a Sphear whose center is every where, and whose circumference is no where.* This is a mystery which indeed we are not able to comprehend by reason, but we must take it down by faith. The Lord is in the height of Heaven, yet so there, as he is not shut up there.

But if any shall yet query, *How is the Lord every where?* How is he in Heaven, and in Earth? Is it so as the Sun may be said to be every where? The Sun is seated in Heaven, yet is by way of communication on Earth; the Sun by light, heat, or influence, is all the world over, in some degree or other, yet the Sun moves only in his Orb. Or is God so every where, as a Soveraign Prince, who though in person he reside here or there, yet in power and authority he is every where within his own Dominion? I answer, No, these allusions are far below this truth. God is every where, not only as the Sun by light, heat, and influence; not only as a Prince, by his power and authority, but (as we speak) in person, and in his Essence. Further, the Lords presence in all places is not as that of the Air, which is more every where then the Sun; the Air is every where filling all places,

and so encompassing all bodies, as if it made them all but one great body; yet that part of the Air that is in one place is not in another, for the Air is divisible. But we must not take up any such apprehensions of God, for as he is every where, so he is wholly every where; God cannot be divided or parted as the Air is and may. *The divine Essence* (as one of the Ancients hath expressed this astonishing mystery) *is whole within all things, and whole without all things; no where included, no where excluded; containing all things, contained of nothing; yet not at all mingled with the nature of these things, nor defiled with their pollutions.* That which the Philosopher speaks of the soul of man (*That it is all in the whole body, and whole in every part of the body*) comes nearest this mystery. Some quarrel at that expression about the soul, yet there is a truth in it. The soul is indivisible, much more God; wheresoever he is, he is all and altogether; he is every where, and every where all. So he is in the height of heaven, and so he is on earth below.

Divina essentia est tota intra omnia & tota, extra omnia nusquam inclusa aut exclusa, omnia continens, à nullo contenta, nec propterea immistu rebus aut rerum sordibus inquinata. Augustin. Epist. 55. ad Dard.

But if God be every where, why doth Christ teach us to pray, *Our Father which art in Heaven* (Matth. 6. 13.) And when the Heathen made that scoffing demand, *Where is now their God?* Why did *David* answer, *Our God is in Heaven* (Psal. 115. 2, 3.) To these and all other Texts of like import, we may answer, Heaven is not there spoken of as bounding the presence of God, but as guiding the faith and hope of man. *In the morning* (saith *David*, Psal. 5. 3.) *will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.* When the eye hath no sight of any help on earth, then faith may have the clearest visions of it in Heaven. And while God appears so little in any gracious dispensation for his people on earth, that the enemy begins to scoff, *Where is now your God?* Then his people have recourse by faith to Heaven, where the Lord not only, is, but is glorious in his appearings. From whence as he seeth how it is with us, so he seems to have a kind of advantage to relieve us.

But as some Scriptures seem to confine God to Heaven, so other Scriptures seem to deny that he is every where on earth. Thus *Moses* said to the people of *Israel* (Numb. 14. 42.) *Go not up for the Lord is not among you.* And again (*Deut.* 7. 21.) *Thou shalt not be affrighted at them, for the Lord thy God is among you*; with some the Lord is, with others the Lord is not; and he is with the same persons at one time, not at another; how then can it be said, that the Lord is every where present? I answer, when *Moses* saith (and many other Texts which speak in the same form) that God was sometimes with his people, and sometimes not; we are not to understand it at all of a local presence, or absence, but of a favourable presence or absence. Thus God is with some persons, and not with others; thus he is sometime present with, sometime absent from the same person. It was this favourable presence for which *Moses* did so earnestly entreat the Lord, (*Exod.* 33. 15.) *If thy presence go not with us, carry us no further*; that is, unless thou please to be with us, to prosper our way, and protect us in it, let us stay where we are. This presence of God is a high favour indeed, and God is thus present but in few places (comparatively) of the whole earth.

Once more, those Scriptures may seem to imply that God is so in Heaven, that he is not also upon the Earth; which speak of his coming down from Heaven to Earth, (*Gen.* 11. 5.) *And the Lord came down to see the City and the Tower which the Children of men builded.* Whence some may infer, if he came down to see the City, then he was not there before, and if so, then he is not universally present in all places. Again (*Gen.* 18. 20, 21.) *And the Lord said, because the cry of* Sodom *and* Gomorrah *is great; and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me, and if not, I will know.* This passage yields the same difficulty and objection; to both which we may add that of *David* (Psal. 14. 2.) *The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand*; he doth not say, God was among the children of men here below, but being in Heaven (as a man standing upon a high place or Tower) he looked down.

I answer, These Texts speak of God after the manner of men, or they speak thus, not to teach us, how God knows what is done on earth; but to confirm, and assure us that the Lord doth clearly and certainly know whatsoever is done by, or among men on Earth; even as clearly and certainly as a man knoweth any thing by his view upon the place. God knoweth all things presently, without searching, though never so secret; and all things certainly without enquiring, though never so doubtful. God neither ascends, nor descends; he doth not come down by any motion, but he comes down to our apprehension; he shews us after our way, that he knoweth, because we cannot conceive his way of knowledge. If I would assure another man that I certainly know such a thing, I tell him, I came from the place, I saw it, or I beheld it with my own eyes; now that's all that is intended, when 'tis said, the Lord came down from Heaven to behold, and see the Tower of *Babell*, and the condition of *Sodom*; or it is, to admonish all Magistrates and Judges, that they pass no sentence of punishment, either upon places or persons, upon bare here-say and reports; but that they first enform themselves fully of the matter of fact, as *Job* professed his course was in all legal proceedings (*Chap.* 29. 16.) *The cause which I knew not I searched out.* Thus we see notwithstanding all these appearances from Texts of Scripture to the contrary, that this Scripture truth standeth firm. The Lord is so in the height of Heaven, that he is every where also here upon the Earth.

From which take these two Deductions,

First, *Seeing the Lord is every where present, we should be every where holy.*

For wheresoever he is, he is the holy Lord. That was the charge which God gave to *Abraham*, *Walk before me, and be upright*; as if he had said, Wheresoever thou walkest, walk as having me present with thee, and be upright in my presence. *I* (saith *David*, a type of Christ, *Psal.* 16. 8.) *have set the Lord alwayes before me; he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.* He that by faith eyes God continually as his protector in trouble, shall not be moved with any evil that he suffers; and he that eyes God by faith as his pattern in holiness, shall not be moved from doing that which is good. This thought, *The Lord is at our right hand*, keeps us from turning either to the right hand or to the left. It is said of *Enoch*, that he *walked with God* (Gen. 5. 22.) and though the History of his life be very short, yet 'tis said of him a second time (*vers.* 24.) that he *walked with God.* He walked so much with God, that he walked as God, he did not walk (which kind of walking the Apostle reproves, 1 *Cor.* 3. 3.) *as men.* He walked so little like the world, that his stay was little in the world. *He was not* (saith the Text) *for God took him*; he took him from the world to himself, or (as the Author to the *Hebrews* reports it) *he was translated that he should not see death; for he received this testimony that he pleased God.*

Secondly, It followeth, if God be every where present,

That the godly are never out of the reach of God to help them, and that the wicked are never out of the reach of God to punish them.

(Isa. 43. 2.) *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt.* The presence of God is the protection of Saints in the evil which they suffer; and they who do evil cannot be hid from his punishing presence. There is no running from God. It is said of *Jonah* (Chap. 1. 3.) *That he fled from the presence of God.* Whether fled he? The Text saith he fled to Sea, but did not God find him there? He fled from the commanding presence of God, but he fell into the angry presence of God. We have a large description in *Amos* 9. how carnal men hope to shift out of the hand of God. *I* (saith the Lord) *will slay the last of them with the sword, though they dig to Hell, thence shall my hand take them.* We read what wise counsel the servants of the King of *Benhadad* gave him after he had been defeated by the King of *Israel* (1 King. 20. 23, 24, 25.) *Their Gods are Gods of the hills, therefore they were stronger then we, but let us fight against them in the plains, and surely we shall be stronger then they. Make thee an Army like the Army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot*

chariot for chariot, and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger then they, and he hearkened to their voice and did so. Why did they desire to fight them upon the plain? They thought God was a God of the hills and not of the valleys; but (*ver.* 28.) *A man of God said to the King of* Israel, *thus saith the Lord, because the* Assyrians *have said, the Lord is God of the hills, and not of the valleys, therefore will I deliver this great multitude into thy hand.* As if he had said, however you deserve not in the least that I should own you, or assist your cause; yet that I may confute the blasphemous and derogatory principles of these *Syrians*, I will give you a second victory against them, even in the valleys, where they suppose they have you at an advantage, and shall deal with you beyond the extent of my power and Territory. Though God had no cause to respect the honour of the *Israelites*, yet he could not forget the honour of his own Name, which was obscured by those superstitious *Syrians*. The most received Doctrine and Divinity of the Heathens confined their gods to certain places, some to this City, and some to that; some to the hills, and some to the plains; some to the Sea, others to the Land. 'Tis said that the same night in which *Alexander* the Great (of whose Conquests *Daniel* Prophesied) was born, that the Temple of *Diana* at *Ephesus* was burnt to the ground. And the Heathens gave this as the reason of it, because *Diana* was absent from her Temple, being gone to assist at the birth of *Alexander*; implying that their Goddess was so in one place, as she could not attend what was done elsewhere. Such were the gross conceits which they had of their gods, and they imagined the God of *Israel* to be such a one, as their own. The veriest Idolater in the world presumes his god as good as any is. But *Jehova* the living God hath taught us to say, *Who is a God like unto thee?* And our experiences have sealed to it, that *there is none like the God of* Jesurun, *who rideth on the Heavens for thy help, and in his excellency on the Skyes* (Deut. 33. 26.) And we have learned to comfort our selves in all places and streights, in this assurance, that he is *the God of the hills, as well as of the valleys; of the Sea, as well as the dry Land; and that he is as truly present in the lowest depths, as in the highest Heavens. Is not God in the height of Heaven?*

And behold the height of the Stars how high they are.

The Hebrew is, *Behold the head of the Stars*; The head of a man is the highest part of him, and the head of any thing is the top of it. *Behold the head or height of the Stars how high they are*; Stars are high, but God is higher; many creatures are high, but God is high above all creatures. The creature is strong, but God is stronger; the creature is wise, but God is wiser; the creature is glorious, but God is infinitely more glorious: The glory, wisdom, strength, and highest height of the creature, is but a glimpse of what God is. *The Stars are high.* I shall not enter into an Astronomical discourse about the Stars, or the height of Stars. I shall not meddle with a *Jacob's staff*, to take the elevation of the Stars, no need of such discourse here; all that is intended by *Eliphaz*, is a proof that God is infinitely exalted in his highness and majesty above the Stars.

Behold the height of the Stars how high they are.] This word *Behold* in Scripture is often applied to things of *wonder*; to say, *behold*, is not a calling for the bare act of the eye to see the height of the Stars; but it calls for a work of the mind, duly to consider of, and to wonder at their height. Some creatures, especially the heavenly, are not only useful, but wonderful; and 'tis as hard to understand them, as it is comfortable to enjoy them. The Hebrew word for *Heaven* cometh from a root which signifies to amaze and astonish; and indeed there are natural wonders and mysteries enough in the Heavens to astonish any considering man. And the true reason why we are no more astonisht at them, or do no more admire them, is because we do so little consider them. We often *see* or *look* upon the Stars, but we seldom *behold* them: And therefore *David* saith (*Psal.* 8. 3.) *When I consider the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him?* As the beholding and consideration of our own works will make us ashamed, because they appear so bad; so the consideration and beholding of the works of God will make us astonisht, because they appear both so good and great. *Behold* (saith the Apostle, 1 *John* 3. 1.) *what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God*; even this transcendent Love of God in our Adoption is passed by as a small matter, by those who will not take the pains (or rather the pleasure) and leisure to behold and consider the manner of it. No mervail if the power of God in making the highest Stars, be passed by as a low thing, by those who do not behold, that is, diligently consider them *Behold the height of the Stars how high they are.*

We are called to consider this,

Hence note, *That it is our duty to contemplate the excellency of the creature.*

God hath not only given us the book of the Scripture, but of the Creature, and we must attend to the reading of this as well as of that, even to the reading of every leaf and line of it. There are four great leaves of this book. First, The Heavens; Secondly, The Earth; Thirdly, The Sea; Fourthly, The Air. These are the four great leaves of this book of the creature; in every one of which we should labour to be expert Scholars, and spell out the name and mind of God in them. For though (as I said before) beholding notes wondering, yet we must not behold them to wonder at them, like children; but we must behold them to learn somewhat from them, or to be instructed by them as men.

Behold the Stars.] First, In their number; as God said to *Abraham* (Gen. 15. 5.) *Look now towards Heaven, and tell the Stars if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, so shall thy seed be.* 'Tis matter of wonder that God should make so many of those eminent Lights, that he should set up so many flaming torches in Heaven for man to see his way, and work by on Earth. That God who hath spread this Canopy over our heads, should also embroyder it with such a multitude of golden spangles, which render it as much our delight, as it is our duty, to behold them.

Secondly, Behold the Stars in their order, they move by rule, they keep their ranks, none of them go out of their place, or forsake their station. They who are skilled in the motion of the Stars, know where to have them a hundred years hence. In *Judges* 5. it is said, *The Stars in their courses fought against* Sissera.

Thirdly, We should consider the Stars in their magnitude, what vast bodies they are; some of them are bigger then the whole body of the Earth (as Philosophy teacheth us) though, to apearance not bigger then the blase of a candle, nor broader then the palm of a hand.

Fourthly, Consider also the difference of the Stars in their greatness, and magnitude; they are all great, but not all of a greatness, not all of one size. Astronomers divide the Stars into six magnitudes. We should likewise observe, and wonder at their light, which is their glory: the light of the Stars is the glory of the Stars, and so the more light any Star hath, the more glory it hath. Thus *one Star differeth from another Star in glory* (1 Cor. 15. 41.) But I shall not stay upon these things, having insisted somewhat largely upon them at *Chap.* 9. *vers.* 9. Whether I refer the Reader. Only note here, that as the Stars of Heaven are of several degrees; God hath not levell'd them, either in light or magnitude: so he hath diversly distributed the light of parts, and gifts; of understanding and knowledge; of estate and power, to and among the children of men here on Earth. 'Tis good for all, that all are not alike; the universe could not be either so beautiful, or so orderly, if every particular had the same beauty, or were of the same order. And he that cannot be content to have less, and to be lesser then another, is altogether unfit, not only to be as great, or to have as much as another, but to be or have any thing at all. Nor is any man more fit to be more then he is, then he that can rejoyce while another is more then he.

Secondly note, *The creature leads us to God.*

That's the tendency and scope of all that is here asserted. *Eliphaz* calls not *Job* to the meditation, or contemplation

of

of the Stars to leave him there. Some study the Heavens much, but their lives are earthly; they study the Stars, yet there is nothing but dirt in their hearts; and the reason is, because they study the Stars for the Stars sake, and not for Gods sake; and make the Stars their end, not their way, or as Stars, to lead them to God. This is the reason why many Astronomers and Philosophers, who busie their heads and minds much in speculation about the nature of the Heavenly bodies, know not at all what it is to have their conversations in Heaven, or to mind the things that are above. We should so behold the glory of the Stars, as from thence to infer, that God is much more glorious; yea, that these things which were made glorious, have no glory in comparison of that Glory which made them. *Plato* taught his Schollers to say, *The Earth is beautiful, the Heavens are more beautiful; but God who made the Earth, and the Heavens, is more beautiful then both.* The visible creature shews the invisible God (*Psal.* 19. 1, 2.) *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the Firmament sheweth his handy work.* But O how glorious is the invisible God, who hath made such visible creatures? And what a work-Master is he who hath set up such a work? (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and god-head.* The things that are made, carry us to the maker of them; and they tell us, that none but he who hath an eternal power and god-head, could possibly make them. The Heathen thought the Sun, Moon, and Stars to be gods, therefore certainly there is much of God to be seen in them. And *Job* saith (which doth plainly shew that in nature it is so, *Chap.* 31. 26.) *If I beheld the Sun when it shined, or the Moon walking in brightness, and my heart hath been secretly inticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand; this also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge, for I should have denyed the God that is above*; that is, if I have been inticed to worship the Sun, or Moon, as ravisht with their beauty (for 'tis so far from being a sin, that 'tis a duty to behold the Sun when it shineth, and the Moon walking in brightness; but so to behold them, as to adore them, or do obeysance to them (which was the custom of the Heathen, expressed it seems among them by kissing their hand, as we do at this day in token of respect and reverence to men above us) this is an iniquity, even that gross iniquity of Idolatry, or *worshiping the creature instead of, or more then the Creator, who is blessed for evermore.* Now (I say) inasmuch as these creatures have so much of God in them, that many Heathens have mistaken them for God; how will it condemn us of dulness and stupidity, if we be not led to God in the knowledge and beholding of them? For as to make these creatures gods, so not to see God in these creatures, is to deny the God that is above.

Thirdly, While we behold the Stars of Heaven, it should exceedingly both humble us and make us thankful, for whose use, comfort, and accommodation in this life, God set up those Glorious Lights. God did not make them for his own use, he had no need of them, he was from everlasting without any of these creatures. The Stars are nothing to him; the Sun is nothing to him; yea in that state of glory we shall injoy God for ever, we shall have light without Sun; so that these lights were made for our use, and for ours only, while we are walking in the dark vale of this present world. Now, while we *behold the height of the Stars how high they are*, and consider for whom as well as by whom they were made; even for us, for poor us, who are but dust and ashes: This should at once lay us low in humbleness (looking upon them as an honour too great for us) and raise us up in thankfulness, because the benefit and comfort of them is so great to us. Thus *David* speaks in that excellent propheste of Christ (*Psal.* 8. 3.) *When I consider the Heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?* As if he had said, thou hast made all these creatures for man; see what a Heaven, what Stars God hath framed, and set up for man. *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* Thus *behold the height of the Stars, how high they are*; as to lead thee unto God, and to admire his highness, so to be humbled at thy own baseness, and to be thankful for his benefits.

Eliphaz having laid down these two Propositions, *God is on high, and the Stars are high*; proceeds to make an inference from both, which he formeth up (by way of supposition) from *Job's* own mouth.

Vers. 13. **And thou sayest, how doth God know?**

As if *Eliphaz* had said, thou art so far from making that right improvement which thou oughtest of these truths; that the Lord is in the height of Heaven, and that he hath made those high and glorious lights in Heaven, that indeed thou doest quite pervert his meaning in making them; *Thou sayest, how doth God know?* Instead of honouring God who formed these lights, thou art darkning his honour, and eclipsing the light of his omniscience. For whereas thou shouldest have said, seeing God is on high, and hath made the Stars, which are so high, surely nothing can be hid from his knowledge. Thou sayest, *How doth God know?* And there is a twofold saying of this; first, a saying with the tongue; secondly, with the heart: The vain heart of man hath many sayings, and this among the rest, *How doth God know?* (Psal. 14. 1.) *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.* And he that saith in his heart, *How doth God know?* speaks as foolishly as that fool doth, who saith, *There is no God.* To deny that or doubt whether God knoweth all things, is not only to doubt, but to deny that God is at all; he is not God who knoweth not all things.

Dicit, 1 verbis prolatis, 2 mentis cogitatione & falsa persuasione.

And thou sayest, how doth God know?] The conjunctive particle *And*, is here put as a causal, *And thou sayest*; that is, *therefore thou sayest, how doth God know?* So the sence is more clear, *Is not God in the height of heaven?* &c. He is. And what then? The use thou makest of it is this, *Thou sayest, how doth God know?* So the particle is used (*Gen.* 49. 15.) *He saw that rest was good, and he gave his shoulders to the burthen*, &c. that is, *therefore he gave his shoulders to the burthen.*

Thou sayest, how doth God know?] We may answer, first, Negatively, Not by sense, as we; eyes and ears are ascribed to God improperly in Scripture; nor doth God know by discourse, drawing one thing from another; but in the Affirmative, he knows intuitively, he knows every thing nakedly in it self.

Again, Some read, *What doth God know?* How far doth his eye extend? What are the objects of his knowledge? To this we may answer, God knoweth all things, even the hearts of all the children of men, there are no secrets to God. But whether we expound it of the manner or matter of divine knowledge, the sence is the same; either an affirmation that God did not know all things, or at least a doubt whether he did or no. *Thou sayest, how doth God know?* But where, and when did *Job* say this? *Job* might challenge *Eliphaz*; bring your proofs and witnesses against me; why do you impute such thoughts to me, and frame such imaginations in my breast? certainly *Job* never spake this, and as surely *Job* never thought this, yet *Eliphaz* puts it directly upon him. What was his ground? Only as the former crimes of uncharitableness and injustice, his breaking the arms of the fatherless, *&c.* were fastned upon him, because of the fears, snares, and darkness in which he was; as if he must needs have done those evils, because he endured so much evil. *Job's* sufferings were great, and therefore according to the Logick of *Eliphaz*, his sins must needs be very great. So here, he hath only this to prove his supposition, that *Job* said, *How doth God know?* Because *Job* had said, that God doth sometime prosper wicked men, and afflicts the righteous. As if he who saith, that God suffers wicked men to prosper in this life, must needs also say, that God regards not the things of this life; so that *Eliphaz* seems to speak thus, *We have heard thee saying, that the wicked prosper, and that the godly are afflicted*; what need we any further witness, that thy opinion is, *God neither takes notice nor care of the things here below.* Out of thine own mouth we condemn thee as guilty of this blasphemy, that, *Thou sayest, how doth God know?*

Existimabit hæc consequi ex Jobi dictis, quasi necesse sit eum qui dicat improbos prosperè agere, existimare etiam Deum res humanas non curare. Merl.

Hence observe, First, *That good men are sometimes charged with saying and doing the worst and vilest things.*

Thus (1 *King.* 21. 13.) *Naboth* was accused of *blaspheming God and the King.* Christ himself was taxed with blasphemy

blasphemy more then once (*Matth.* 9.3.) *And behold certain of the Scribes said within themselves, this man blasphemes.* There they did not only aver it, but they said it within themselves. At other times they spake it openly, (*Joh.* 10.33.) *The Jews answered and said, for a good deed we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; because thou being a man makest thy self God.* And again (*Matth.* 26.65.) *He hath spoken blasphemy, ye have heard his blasphemy.* To speak or do well and hear ill was the portion of Christ, and may be the portion of the holiest of those who are Christs.

Secondly note, *That when men are heated in dispute, they are apt to make false inferences from the tenets and sayings of their opposers.*

Eliphaz saith, *Job* denied providence, whereas *Job* adored it; that he denied Gods knowledge of the good and evil done in the world, because he maintained, that good men receive evil, and evil men good in the world. When we deny Transubstantiation, or that the bread is changed into the very substance of the body of Christ; Papists infer, that we deny, that Christ spake truly, when at his Last Supper he said, *This is my body*; and they will hence force it upon us, that we say, *God is not omnipotent*, because we affirm that it is inconsistent with the nature of a true humane body (such as Christ hath now in Heaven, though glorified and spiritual) to be in many places at once. For as some deny the omnipresence of the Divine Nature, so Papists affirm the omnipresence of the Humane Nature; and (say they) while we deny this, we deny the omnipotency of God. Others charge us that we make God the author of sin, and that, according to our tenet, all the impiety and wickedness that is in the world lieth at his door; because we affirm, that God hath passed an Eternal absolute and unchangeable decree concerning all the sons of men. When all other arguments fail, how usual is it to make the divinest truths guilty of the most uncomly and ugly consequences that are imaginable.

Further, Thou sayest, *How doth God know?* Take it either of the inward or of the outward saying, either of the tongue or of the heart, saying so; *Eliphaz* would prove from it, that certainly *Job* was a wicked man. And his inference had been true, if he could have proved it true, that *Job* had so.

Hence observe, *That to have evil thoughts, or to speak evil of God, is the character of a wicked man.*

He that is good, must needs both think, and speak good of God. *David* doth often aggravate the wickedness of his enemies, from the language of their hearts and tongues, (Psal. 10. 11.) *He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hides his face, he will never see.* And again (*Psal.* 144.7, 8, 11.) *Send thy hand from above, rid me, and deliver me out of great waters, from the hands of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falshood.* If the mouth speaketh vanity, the hand is full of falshood; we may even feel deceit in their hands, whose mouths speak any kind of vanity; but especially this, which is the vainest vanity of all, *How doth God know?* or surely God doth not know. Such the Psalmist rebukes (*Psal.* 94.4, 5, 7.) *How long shall they utter and speak hard things?* What things were those? The next words shew us, *They brake in pieces thy people*, &c. *yet they say, the Lord shall not see*, &c. *understand ye brutish, among the people, he that formed the eye, shall he not see?* There is no greater argument of brutishness and ignorance, then to question the knowledge of God, or to say, *How doth God know?*

And (which is the same in other words) *can he judge through the darke cloud.*

As if *Job* had further argued thus, I am safe enough from the knowledge of God, for as he is high above me, so there are dark clouds between him and me; *Can he judge through the dark cloud?* My opinion is he cannot. For knowledge goeth before judgment; he that knoweth not certainly, can never judge rightly. Justice is pictured blind, in reference to persons, but not in reference to things or causes; Justice must take no notice of this or that man, whether he be great or little, high or low, a near friend or a stranger; Justice is blind as to all these considerations, and knoweth no man; but Justice must know every mans case and cause; unless man know that, how can he judge? And if God know not that, how can he judge? He must have light to see what is done, before he pass sentence upon what is done; therefore, *Can he judge through the dark cloud?* Surely he cannot. Thus the Atheist concludes indeed, and thus *Eliphaz* represents *Job* concluding in his own heart; there is not only a great distance between God and me, not only is he in the height of Heaven, and I below on Earth, but there are many gloomy clouds between him and me; as he is high above me, so there are such impediments in the way that he cannot see me. The Vulgar reads, *He judgeth as through darkness.* Now the best of Saints *see God through a glass darkly, or in a riddle* (1 Cor. 13. 12.) And secure sinners think that God seeth them only through a cloud darkly, or (as *Eliphaz* speaketh) *through a dark cloud*, he knoweth not clearly but dimly. To judge through a cloud, is to judge of things confusedly, not distinctly; by guess or conjecturally, not exactly or face to face. This is all the sight which an evil heart alloweth God (if he allow him any) concerning his wayes and actions. They who do things which cannot abide the light, are willing to believe that all they do is in the dark. Theirs are works of moral darkness, and therefore they please themselves with thinking that their works are hid either in natural or artificial darkness. It is said of the Lord in Scripture (*Psal.* 97. 2.) *Clouds and darkness are round about him, while judgment and righteousness are the habitation of his throne*; but these imagine that God cannot proceed in judgment and righteousness, because clouds and darkness are round about him. It is said (1 *King.* 8. 10, 11, 12.) *The cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the Priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord. Then spake* Solomon, *the Lord said that he will dwell in the thick darkness.* Read, *Exod.* 20. 21. *Deut.* 5. 22. *Psal.* 18.11. *God is light* (saith the Apostle, 1 *John* 1.) *and he dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto* (1 Tim. 6. 16.) How then can he be said to dwell in thick darkness? I answer, those Scriptures which say that God dwells in darkness, that clouds and darkness are round about him, teach us, that God and his wayes are much hid from us; we are not able to look up to him, or see clearly what he doth, much less can we see what his counsels are. The clouds and darkness which are about him, do not hinder his sight of us, but our sight of him. Our darkness is no darkness to him; but his darkness, yea his light is darkness to us. Again, God is said to dwell in a cloud, to reprove our boldness and curiosity, who are too apt to pry into what is not to be known, and to neglect our duty in what we know, or to neglect the knowledge of our duty. God hath some reserves in counsels; some of his providences are wrapt up in clouds. He will be trusted and honoured in what he is not seen or known. Not to know these things is indeed our nescience, but not our ignorance; and not to seek after the knowledge of these things, is our duty, not our sloath. Thus God who dwells in light, dwells also in a cloud; for he *dwells in light that no man can* (no nor ought to) *approach unto.* We may come near his light by faith, but we cannot come near his light by knowledge. There is such an infinite, such an overcoming light in God, that it is a darkness to us; the most Eagle like eye of a humane understanding are not only dazzel'd, but quite blinded with his brightness. Now as no man can judge through this light of God, so some men are ready to say (and thus *Eliphaz* brings in *Job* saying) that God cannot judge through dark clouds, through clouds and darkness. Nor doth *Eliphaz* bring in *Job* saying thus only by way of doubt or question, but by way of averment and resolution in the next verse.

Et quasi per caliginum judicat. Vulg.

Sit non novit ergo nec judicare potest, ad rectum enim judicium requiritur cognitio causæ.

Vers. 14. **Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he seeth it not.**

This verse is but an explication of the thirteenth, *Can he see through the dark cloud?* There he puts the question, here he gives a peremptory answer, he cannot certainly; for, *Thick clouds are a covering to him, that he cannot see.* The Hebrew for *thick clouds* is but one word, which in the root, signifies *Thickness*, or, *to be thick.* Some clouds have a kind of thinness in them, and are as it were transparent.

עבים *Nubes dictæ sunt à densitate, à radice* עבה *densum esse.* q.d. *sicut nos latet Deus, ita Deum latent nostra cœlestia, illi tantum patent.*

parent. Others are more gross and opacous, quite hindering and intercepting our sight of all that is beyond them; with these (saith *Eliphaz*) thou O *Job*, vainly conceitest, that the sight of God also is intercepted, so that, as we cannot see God, so God cannot see us; a vail of thick clouds seclude his sight. Nor is this the only reason why thou art overcom with this ignorant perswasion. Thou hast a second, which though possibly thou wouldest conceal, yet will not I; and this is it, Thou also sayest,

He walketh in the circuit of Heaven.] As if thou hadst said, suppose God can see through the thick cloud, and so my former reason should fail; yet I know well enough that the great God of Heaven hath other matters to meddle with, other affairs to busie himself about, then to trouble himself with me. *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven*; we are not to take *walking* as a meet motion, but as *walking* notes imployment; *He walks in the circuit of Heaven*, that is, he is wholly taken up there. When the Lord asked of Satan, *Whence comest thou?* he answered, *From going to and fro in the Earth, and from walking up and down in it.* Now what doth Satan when he walks up and down the world, doth he walk like an idle vagrant that hath nothing to do? Doth he walk with his hands in his pockets, as having no business? Doth he walk meerly to take the Air, or to take his pleasure, to see, and be seen? No, when Satan walks about the world, *his walking is working*, he goeth about to tempt, to try, to lay snares and baits, to catch and captivate the souls of men. So here when it is said, *God walketh in the circuit of Heaven*, the meaning is, his business, yea even his whole business lies there; he hath enough to do in Heaven, and therefore hath no leisure to attend what is done on Earth. That's the scope and tendency of these words which *Eliphaz* fastens upon *Job*; *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven.* We are sure enough of him. The words carry the same sence, with that speech of the whorish woman (*Prov.* 7. 18, 19, 20.) *Come* (saith she) *let us take our fill of love till the morning, let us solace our selves with loves.* But the young man might possibly object, your husband will come home, and that will spoil all: No (saith she) never fear it, he is far enough out of the way; *The good man is not at home, he is gone a long journey; He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed*; that is, he will not come home till the day appointed, he hath great business abroad, and he hath carried money enough with him to bear his charges till he hath done his business. He is riding and running in a far Country, and minds not home, nor hath he the least suspition of what we do at home. Thus when the sinner is about to depart far from his duty, he puts or conceives God far from him. *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven.* From the general scope of *Eliphaz* in the thirteenth and fourteenth Verses,

Hoc verbo videtur connotari studium inquirendi. Pisc.

First observe, *Carnal men frame conceptions of God like themselves.*

Thus the hypocrite is described (*Psal.* 50. 21.) *Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self.* Not that he thought God was a man, but that God had such thoughts of good and evil, as man hath. As if what is right in mans eyes, were so in the eyes of God also; or as if what did not displease man, were pleasing, or not much displeasing unto God. When the Lord saith (*Isa.* 55. 8.) *My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your wayes my wayes*; he doth plainly intimate, that they did begin to frame thoughts of God like their own; but saith God, *As the Heavens are higher then the Earth, so are my thoughts then your thoughts, and my wayes then your wayes*; that is, as my thoughts have a vastness in them to all things beyond yours, so especially in this thing, the performance of my promise for the pardon of sin. O how unlike is God to man in this? God is not more unlike man in his absolute freedom from the least inclination to commit any, the least sin, then he is in the admirable freeness of his inclination to pardon any, even the greatest sin. Men are commonly not only unmerciful to those who wrong them, but revengeful, and when once offended are hardly drawn to a reconcilement; and seldom so fully reconciled, but that somewhat of offence stayeth behind. But the thoughts of God are not so. He is slow to wrath, and ready to forgive. He quickly pardons the offence, and receives the offender into favour; no more retaining the memory of his offence (as to his hurt) then if he had never offended. Thus the Lord would assure sinners, that his thoughts in pardoning sin are not as theirs. And it is but need he should do so; for when sinners begin to be awakened, they frame such thoughts of God, as to pardon of sin, as they have in themselves: when they look upon their sins as too big to be pardoned by man, they conclude presently the Lord cannot or will not pardon them. And as many under temptation, frame thoughts of God like their own about the pardon of sin; so it is the constant course of wicked men (which is indeed the worst of their sins) to frame thoughts of God like unto themselves, while they commit and continue in sin. Man should not dare to imagine any thing of God in reference either to his justice or mercy, either about the punishing or pardoning of sin, but what he hath declared of himself; all that we imagine beside that, is the making of another God. There are many false gods made with mens hands, but the hearts of men make many more. The heart of man makes thousands of false or strange gods. Every undue, every wrong imagination of God, is the forming up of a strange, of a new god. When we ascribe to God such a kind of power, such a kind of knowledge, such a kind of holiness, such a kind of justice, such a kind of mercy, as is common to the creature, in all this we frame up a new god to our selves. And thus those Gentiles of whom the Apostle speaks (*Rom.* 1. 21, & 25.) *Became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned*; in what was their foolish heart darkned? in false notions of God; therefore they are said (*Vers.* 29.) *To change the glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, four footed beasts, and creeping things.* Now as there is the changing of the glory of the incorruptible God into the Image of a corruptible man, that is, into the external Image of a corruptible man (for some set up false gods in the likeness of men;) so there is a changing of the glory of the incorruptible God, into the internal Image of a corruptible man, that is, into such thoughts and conceptions as are ordinarily in men. Let such consider, that, if to make a worship of our own for the true God, be indeed to set up a false god; (all they worship false gods who set up a strange worship for the true God; now, I say, if they who do but set up a new worship for the true God make a strange god) what then do they who in their hearts set up a new god, that is, who frame conceptions of God which himself never gave ground for in his Word? Such was the conceit which *Eliphaz* had of *Job*, when he presumes him saying, *How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud?*

Secondly, From the particular misapprehension of God imposed by *Eliphaz* upon *Job*; *And thou sayest, how doth God know?* &c.

Observe, *Sinful men fancy to themselves that God either doth not or cannot take notice of them in their sinful wayes.*

Thus they reason, *Can he see through the dark cloud?* and conclude, *Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of Heaven.* What *Eliphaz* layes to *Job's* charge falsly, is often charged by the Holy Ghost upon wicked men truly (*Psal.* 10. 11.) *He hath said in his heart God hath forgotten, he hides his face, he will never see it.* Who this *He* is, whose heart speaks this language, appears clearly in the former part of the *Psalm*, where he is more then once called *The wicked* (*ver.* 2, 3.) and where more then one of his wickednesses are described (*ver.* 7, 8, 9, 10.) *His mouth is full of cursing and deceit, and fraud; under his tongue is mischief and vanity: he sitteth in the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murther the innocent*, &c. After all this, he *saith in his heart God hath forgotten*; that is, he hath forgotten the poor whom I have under my power, therefore I may safely oppress them. *He hideth his face, he will never see it*; that is, God will never take any knowledge, either of my doings or of their sufferings. We have a sample of the same impiety (*Psal.* 73. 11.) *And they say, how doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most high? behold, these are the ungodly in the world*, &c. And again (*Psal.* 94. 6.) *They slay the widdow, and stranger, and murther the fatherless* (here are their works of darkness)

yet

yet they say, the Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob *regard.* Not only did they presume that the Lord did not see, but that he should not; *The Lord shall not see!* As if they could stop or blind the eyes of God as easily as they had blinded their own Consciences. Take one instance further (*Ezek.* 8. 12.) *Then said he unto me, Son of man, Seest thou what they do? hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of* Israel *do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The Lord seeth us not, he hath forsaken the Earth.* Much like the language here, *He walketh in the circuit of Heaven*; he hath other business to do then to mind us. As God is sometimes said to forsake the Earth in wrath, to punish the sin of Man; so wicked men say, he always forsakes the Earth in neglect both of their sin and punishment. And as Idolaters who have a mind to other gods, are willing to believe that God hath forsaken the Earth, as to the protection of them; we (say they) are in danger, God takes no care of us, therefore blame us not if we betake our selves to other gods for protection; *If he had not forsaken us, we had not forsaken him*: So all sorts of resolved transgressors, who have a mind to any sinful way, are willing to believe that God hath forsaken the Earth, as to any observation of them. We may do what we list, for God doth not mind or regard what we are doing. If we thought he did indeed see us, we durst not thus sin against him: But seeing he doth not trouble himself with any care about us, why should we trouble our selves with any fear about him? Now, this *Presumption that God doth not see us in what we are doing, opens a door to the doing of all evil.* Security from danger is the great encouragement unto sin. Though wicked men would not be less sinful, yet they would not sin so much, or be so full of sin, did they not vainly flatter themselves out of the sight of God. Every man would fain believe that God doth not see him when he is doing that which he would not have seen or be seen in doing it. And how do men please themselves in this false hope that God doth not see them, when they do that which is displeasing unto God!

From the intendment of *Eliphaz* to convince *Job*, that the clouds are no covering to God, and that the circuit of Heaven doth not confine him.

Thirdly observe, *God is omniscient, he knows all things.*

Thou sayest thus, *How doth God know?* I tell thee God doth know; and thou hast an argument upon thy back, if thou hast none in thy heart to prove it; thy sence or feeling may teach thee, if thy reason or understanding do not, and by thy suffering thou mayst see that God seeth what thou hast been doing. This great truth, *That God is omniscient, or knows all,* may easily be known, and ought to be believed by all. When the Lord had made the world in six dayes (*Gen.* 1. 31.) *He saw all that he had made*; all was in view at once, he had a prospect of the whole creation in his eye. And as all his own creatures, so all our creatures are seen by God; he seeth all that himself hath made, and he seeth all that we have made, or are making day by day (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the Earth, and that every thought of the imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, or every day. The Lord saw*, that is, the Lord knew fully (infinitely more fully then we know those things which we see) every imagination or figment of the thoughts of mans heart. The figment of our thoughts, is what the mind fashioneth or maketh up within it self by thinking: corrupt nature keeps a constant mint of evil imaginations in the head, as it hath a sink of filthy affections in the heart. The mind of man hath a formative faculty in it: And the same word which the Holy Ghost useth to signifie the work of God in making man (*Gen.* 2. 7.) *The Lord God formeth man out of the dust of the Earth, or dust out of the Earth* (the same word, I say) is used in the Noun (*Gen.* 6. 5.) to signifie, *the imagination of man,* because that is always shaping moulding or forming one sort of thoughts or other, and, naturally, none but ugly evil thoughts. These are the creatures which man (as fallen) is the maker of; and he maketh (as I may say) infinite creatures, he is forming them continually in his imagination; that's the shop wherein there's a dayly Creation (such as it is) of monstrous wickednesses, till God by his new Creation changeth the frame and nature of it. Now (I say) as God seeth his own creatures, so he seeth all our creatures, though we make them in the shop of our darkest imaginations. And much more doth he see all the creatures which we make without, that is, all our bodily and external actions (*Jer.* 17. 10.) *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins*; if he search our hearts, then surely he searcheth all our wayes; if he seeth our thinkings, then surely he seeth our walkings. Therefore 'tis said (*1 Sam.* 2. 3.) *The Lord is a God of knowledge*; the Hebrew is, *The Lord is a God of knowledges*; that is, all things fall under his knowledge; he is perfect in all knowledges there is nothing knowable, but the Lord knows it; *and by him actions are weighed*: now the weighing of actions is more then the seeing of actions; many see that which they cannot weigh. *He weigheth actions*, that is, he takes not only the action it self, but every circumstance of it into consideration; he takes his ballances, and tries fully, how much each ingredient weighs, and what it comes to. He weighs whole States, Kingdoms, and Nations. So it was said to the Babylonian Monarch *Belteshazzar* (*Dan.* 5. 26, 27.) Mene, *God hath numbred thy Kingdom and finished it*; Tekel, *Thou art weighed in the ballances, and art found wanting.* Thy councels, thy policies, thy undertakings, the whole compass, all the contrivance of thy Government are weighed and found too light. And as God weigheth the actions of Princes, so of private persons (*Prov.* 5. 21.) *The wayes of a man* (that is, of every man, even of the meanest man) *are before the Lord, and he pondereth all his paths*; he puts them into a Ballance, and doth not only see them, but ponder or weigh them. *David* saith of some wicked men that they weigh the violence of their hands in the Earth (*Psal.* 58. 2.) though they do violence, yet they do it not violently, but with a kind of skill and deliberation. They do wrong and oppress with a shew of Justice, whereof weights are the common Emblem. Now as some men do evil, not hastily, rashly, or all at once, but give it out by weight, and with a seeming gravity and zeal for Justice. So the Lord doth never look over the wayes of men rashly or hastily, but weighs them out even to a grain, yea to the dust of the ballance he pondereth all their paths; that is, he knows them throughout. Therefore *David* (*Psal.* 139.) having spoken much to this point of the exactness of Gods knowledge, concludes at *vers.* 6. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, it is high I cannot attain unto it.* Some expound this Text, not of the knowledge of God concerning us, but of our knowledge concerning God. *Thy knowledge or the knowledge of thee is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it.* Others thus, *This thy knowledge* (namely that which he had before described) *is more wonderful* (or more exact) *then that I should be able to deceive it.* We may impose upon and deceive the most knowing man, but we cannot impose upon or deceive God. I conceive our reading to be most sutable both to the Text and Context. *Such knowledge*, that is, such knowledge as thou hast of me, of the least and greatest things, even of all things that I or any man doth, is too wonderful for me. For though we may know some actions of men, yet we cannot know them all, and we can hardly weigh any of them to the utmost. And in this acknowledgment we may take notice of the Psalmist modesty, who though he had the immediate assistance of a prophetical Spirit; yet confessed, that he was not only not able to know God, but not to know himself, his thoughts, words, and wayes, as God knew them. Such knowledge of my self as thou O Lord hast of me, is *too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it.*

Some perhaps may query upon this, if the Lord knoweth all the wayes of men, and pondereth all their actions, is not this a trouble to God? Is not this a disturbance of his peace, and a distraction to him?

I answer (as I said before) this is to frame a God like our selves, for to him that is omniscient, it is all one to know all, and to know but one thing: it is no more distraction, no more trouble to God to know all that we do speak, or think, then to know any thing. If two or three speak to a man together, he is not able to take in their sence; the variety of their discourse makes such a hurry and trouble in his spirits, that he looseth all that is spoken. But the application of Thousands or of Millions at the same time in speaking to the ear of God, is no more trouble, then if but one did speak; an infinite ears hears all, and

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an infinite eye ſees all, without any the leaſt diſtraction; the infinite knowledge of God takes in all the actions of all men, as eaſily as the ſingle action of any one man.

Again, Others may ſay, ſurely the Lord will not take ſuch exact knowledge of all the actions of men, eſpecially of mean men, or ſurely not of the mean actions of meaneſt men; poſſibly of ſome perſons in great place, and of ſome great things done by thoſe perſons he may take notice; but to ſtoop to ſmall things, if it be not a trouble, yet it cannot but be a diſhonour to, and too great a condeſcention for the great God. The Heathens ſaid their *Jupiter* had no leaſure to deal in ſmall matters; and may not we Chriſtians ſay, Is it not honourable enough for our God, to have to do with ſmall matters.

I anſwer, This alſo is to frame a God like our ſelves; as it doth not weary God to behold, to try and ponder all the wayes of all men (which was the fear concerning *Moſes* that he ſhould be tired out with the various caſes and affairs of that great people; and was therefore adviſed by *Jethro* to make more Judges, that ſo the weightier matters only might be brought before and judged by him) So it is no diſhonour at all to God, no, it is his honour that he takes cogniſance of the ſmalleſt matters as well as of the greateſt, of the loweſt as well as of the higheſt concernments of the children of men (*Pſal.* 113. 5, 6.) *Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high? who humbleth himſelf to behold the things which are in Heaven, and in the Earth.* Who is like to God in this? This is the honour of the high God that he will humble himſelf to behold the loweſt things, the things which are in the Earth, as well as things in Heaven; and the leſſer, the leaſt things in Earth, as well as the greater or the greateſt. *Though the Lord be high yet he humbleth himſelf unto the lowly* (Pſal. 138. 6.) and as to *lowly perſons*, ſo to the *loweſt things*. Indeed the Lord doth humble himſelf to behold the things which are in Heaven, it is a condeſcention in him to take notice of any Creature; yet he doth not only humble himſelf to behold things in Heaven, but things in the Earth, and in this who is like unto the Lord our God? This is his glory, and for this he is to be glorified, yea to be cryed up with this admiring Elogium, *Who is like unto the Lord our God?* None among the ſons of men are like him in this, yea there is no God like unto the Lord our God in this. We have cauſe to ſay (conſidering our vileneſs) *What is man that thou ſhouldeſt take notice of him?* 'Tis too great an honour for man, but it is no diſhonour to God to take notice of the meaneſt man. The greatneſs of God appears as in the making, ſo in the governing and diſpoſing of the ſmalleſt things. The power of God is ſeen in making a fly or a worm, as well as in making an Elephant or the vaſt Leviathan; ſo alſo is his wiſdom and providence ſeen in the obſerving and ordering of thoſe buſineſſes and motions of the creature, which compared to others are but as a fly to an Elephant, or but as a worm to Leviathan. There is nothing doth more detract from the greatneſs of God, then the denyal or diſ-belief of his cogniſance of and care about little things. And as it ſhews the exacteſt perfection of holineſs attainable by man in this life, when he taketh an account of and reproves himſelf for the leaſt ſins, whether they be omiſſions of that good which he is commanded to do, or comiſſions of that evil which he is forbidden to do. So it is an undeniable argument of the exactly and abſolutely perfect holineſs, juſtice, goodneſs and faithfulneſs of God, that he taketh an account of, and will certainly reward or puniſh every man for the leaſt good or evil which he hath done. This is the glory of him who walketh in the circuit of Heaven, that he ſees all to the center of the Earth. *Eliphaz* having thus detected and reproved (as he thought) thoſe thoughts and aſſertions of *Job* which detracted ſo much from God, as if he did not mark the wayes of men; proceeds to put the queſtion to him, whether himſelf had well marked the wayes of wicked men.

VERS. 15, 16.

Haſt thou marked the old way which wicked men have troden.

Which were cut down out of time, whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood?

THE word tranſlated *to Mark*, notes a diligent obſervation; ſo it is uſed (*Chap.* 10. 14.) *If I ſin then thou markeſt me* (that is, thou takeſt exact or ſtrict notice of me) *and thou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity* (Pſal. 37. 37.) *mark the perfect man, and behold the upright*, that is, take ſpecial knowledge of him, *for the end of that man is peace* (Pſal. 107. 43.) *Who ſo is wiſe will obſerve*, or mark, *theſe things, he ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.* So here, *Haſt thou marked?* Haſt thou with diligence and ſeriouſneſs of ſpirit obſerved, *the old way which wicked men have troden.* The Hebrew is, *The way of age, the way of ages*, or as ſome read, *the Eternal way, the way of Eternity.* *David* prayeth (*Pſal.* 139. 23, 24.) *Lead me in the way everlaſting*; that is, Lead me in the way of holineſs and righteouſneſs, which leads to eternity. Which yet one of the Rabbins expounds, as a periphraſis of death; for death is called, *The way of all the earth* (1 King. 2. 2.) *The way of all fleſh* (Joſh. 23. 14.) As if *David* had ſaid, Lord, if upon ſearch thou findeſt that I walk in any way of wickedneſs, that is, of wilful ſinning, then deſtroy me, lead me to my grave, yea caſt me with the wicked to Hell, or to everlaſting condemnation. Maſter *Broughton* thus, *Haſt thou marked the way of the old world?*

But what was this way of the old world, about which *Eliphaz* queſtions *Job*, whether he had taken notice of it yea or no? The way of the world may be taken two wayes.

Firſt, For the way of their ſins.

Secondly, For the way of their puniſhment.

Firſt, *Haſt thou marked the old way* of their ſin? And the old way of their ſin may be conſidered under a twofold notion.

Firſt, As it was the way of their opinion. Secondly, As it was the way of their practice: Some reſtrain it here to the way of their opinion, and interpret *Eliphaz* as chiefly intending that, *Haſt thou obſerved the old way*, that is, the old Erroneous opinions which were in the firſt ages of the world? In thoſe times there were not a few like thy ſelf, who either flatly denyed or belied the providence of God, who ſaid (as thou doeſt) *How doth God know?* Surely he hath forſaken the Earth, and intermedles not with what is done here below. Thus a Learned Interpreter expounds the Text, with reference to their ungodly opinion, *They* (ſaith he) *who lived in the time of the flood denyed providence*; haſt thou (O *Job*) marked their opinion and conſidered it? And that this wicked Error did prevail in thoſe times, may be Collected from what is reported by *Beroſus* of the Giants (of whom we read in *Geneſis.* 6. *v.* 4. *There were Giants in the Earth in thoſe dayes*) Among other of their abominations, this (ſaith he) was one, or this was a Chief one, the root, or ſource of them all; they blaſphemed God, and contemned Religion, they thought there was no ſupreme Power, none to whom man was accountable for any of his actions. *Haſt thou marked this old way* of Error?

In purſuance of which Interpretation, the words which we render, *Haſt thou marked*, may be expounded thus, *Haſt thou taken up the old way?* Art thou a follower of that Sect, of that Tribe who have gone in that wicked way? Doeſt thou alſo maintain their blaſphemy, that God takes no notice of man? This notion holds fair with what he had ſaid before.

Secondly, As it may be referred to thoſe abominable, Atheiſtical opinions which reigned in thoſe times, ſo to the wicked Practices, to the old Cuſtoms and ſinful Courſes which were followed in thoſe times; for where a wicked opinion is lodged in the heart, what kind of wickedneſs is there that they may not break forth in the life? And ſo here *the old way* is the way of ſin, the corrupt courſe and practices of that debauched generation, eſpecially the way of pride and ambition, which appeared much in the titles given them, *Mighty men, men of name*, or as we render, *Men of renoun.* They were men of honour and name with men, but we read not of any honour they did to or received from God. It is the higheſt diſgrace, to be memorable for actings againſt grace, or for ungracious actings.

Again,

שמר

Obſervare Dei actiones imprimis ipſius judicia magna pars ſcientiæ eſt.

Senitam ſæculorum vel ſeculi, æternam aut æternitatis, nam ea omnia denotat vox עלם Rab. Kimchi.

Ad eos opinio hæc referenda eſt, qui vixerunt tempore diluvii cenſebantq; tollendam providentiam. Vatabl. *Gigantes religionis contemptores.* Beroſ.

Cuſtodiendi verbum proſequi exponitur. Merc.

Num observavit perpetuum ordinem, quem in puniendis talibus impiis tenuit Deus, postnatos homines, Merc. *Putat hunc esse perpetuũ ordinem domini ut impios hic puniat, sed fallitur.* Merc.

Again, The old way may be taken for the way of punishment, or for that course of divine Justice which was executed upon wicked men in those elder times. There is a way of Judgment which God takes, as there is a way of Sin which man takes. Sinful wayes lead into troublesom wayes, and end in death. Hast thou considered the way of justice which the Lord went in towards those old sinners, pouring out his wrath, and emptying the vials of his indignation upon them, till he had consumed and swept them off as rubbish from the face of the earth? *Hast thou marked the old way*, which either the lusts of wicked men have led them into, or which the justice of the Lord hath brought them into? *Hast thou observed the old way?*

Which wicked men have trodden?

The Hebrew is, *Men of Iniquity*; Which phrase plainly imports, that he doth not speak of the ordinary race, or rank of sinners; but of the extreamest sinners, men so full of Iniquity, that they deserved this black Title, *men of Iniquity.* Antichrist is called not only a *man of sin*, or *the man of sin*, but (which implyeth a sinner of a higher form, then both the former) *That man of sin* (2 Thes. 2. 3.) He being indeed not only amongst the chiefest sinners, but the chief of sinners. The phrase in the Text is a degree lower then that, yet it notes a very great degree. And therefore when the Prophet would assure the greatest sinners repenting and returning to God, of the readiness of God to pardon, he expresseth them in this stile (*Isa.* 55.7.) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man*, or (as the Original Text hath it) *the man of iniquity, his thoughts, and* &c. As *a man of Bloods*, notes a very bloody man, a man given up to that particular sin of cruelty: So *a man of iniquity*, is one given up to sin in general. Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men; men of iniquity, have

Trodden. This word, *Trodden*, referred both to a sinful and a suffering way, notes the frequency of their going or being in those wayes. And as it is referred to their sinful way alone, it notes first, their boldness in sinning; secondly, their resolvedness to sin: A trodden way, is such a way as a man hath often gone, and in which he is not afraid to go. *Hast thou marked the old way.*

Hence note, First, *The way of sin and Error is an old way.*

The Devil sinned from the beginning, and men have sinned from their beginning; not only have there been sinnings, but great sinnings from the beginning; the old way is the way of sin, though the oldest way be not. There was holiness before there was sin, and truth before there was error; so that the way of sin is the old way, but not the oldest way. God, all whose wayes are holy, was from everlasting. The Angels who have been holy as long as they have been, were from the beginning. And the first beginning of man in his conversation, was, no doubt, like his constitution, holy. He quickly went out of the way, but surely his first step was not out of the way, he went right before he went wrong, and stood before he fell. Again, if you take the way for the way of punishment,

Note, *That God in all ages hath punished sinners in their sinful wayes.*

God hath every where, and every when, left the tract and print of his anger and displeasure upon sinners; though some particular sinners have gone unpunished in some age, yet there was never any age wherein sin was not punished in some. The Lord gives a moral stop to sin perpetually, that is, by his Laws he declares against it; his Word is express against all ungodliness, both the Word of his Command, and the Word of his threatning. Now as the Lord doth alwayes put this moral stop in the way of sin, so, he often puts a Judiciary stop, or a stop by way of Judgment. And as in *Genesis* 3. he sets a flaming Sword in the way of the Tree of Life; so he continually sets a flaming Word, that is, a threatning to keep the way of the Tree of Death, that is, of sin. Thus he alwayes meets sinful men in the way of their lusts (as the Angel met *Balaam* when he went to curse the *Israel* of God) with a drawn Sword to stop them in their way; the Lord hath set many drawn Swords in the way of every sin; and he hath left the prints of his wrath upon the backs of many sinners, that we should take heed of sinning. The Lord hath left many sad examples upon record against sin, nor hath he at any time favoured it, or done any thing which might indeed encourage sinners; for though sometimes wicked men have prosper'd, yet, should we look into all times, we cannot find that wicked men were ever blessed; Judgment hath overtaken them sooner or later. And if it hath at any time come too late to overtake them in this world, yet it will come soon enough to overtake theirs in this, or themselves in the world which is to come. No man is blessed, at any time, who comes at last to be miserable.

Thirdly, In that he saith, *Hast thou marked the old way?*

Note, *It is our duty to observe and mark, as the way of sinful men, so the way in which God punisheth their sin.*

All the wayes of God are to be marked; as we are to observe what the Lord speaks, so what he doth; his Works as well as his Word are remarkable. *Whoso is wise* (saith the Psalmist, *Psal.* 107.43.) *and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord.* I may say also, that they shall understand the judgments of the Lord. And again, the Prophet confirms it (*Hos.* 14. 9.) *Who is wise, and he shall understand these things; prudent, and he shall know them: for the wayes of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein.* The wicked fall in the way of his commandments, and therefore surely they shall fall in the way of his judgment. And as the Lord hath given us Examples of this, so he hath given this as the use of those Examples, that we should mark and observe them. The Apostle (1 *Cor.* 10.) shews that all the dealings of God with that his ancient people the *Jews*, are written and recorded as our Examples (*Vers.* 5, 6, 7.) *With many of them God was not well pleased, but they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they lusted, neither be Idolaters, as some of them were, nor fornicators, nor tempt Christ, nor murmur*, &c. He shuts up all with the same doctrine (*vers.* 11.) *Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the earth are come; therefore let him that standeth take heed least he fall.* The Apostle *Peter* also (2 *Pet.* 2.) brings in; first, The instance of the Angels that fell; secondly, Of the old world; thirdly, Of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, *Whom God condemned with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.* The Scripture speaks of two sorts of Ensamples. First, for Imitation; secondly, for Caution; the lapsed Angels, the old world, these Cities *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, are all left as Ensamples for caution, that all after ages marking the old way of their sin and punishment, might fear to sin and suffer as they have done.

Fourthly, From the manner of this expression (*which wicked men have trodden*) taking the way conjectively, for the way both of sin and punishment, this troddenness of it notes the frequent passage which many have made through it. They have not gone it once only, but often.

Hence observe, *As wicked men offend often, so the Lord hath punished often; as they have made paths in sin, so God hath made paths in judgement.*

It is easie to follow sinners (as it were) by the print and tract of those evils which have overtaken them. But I pass it here, because *Eliphaz* proceeds more directly to describe the punishment of wicked men in the next words.

Vers. 16. **Which were cut down out of time, and whose foundation was overflown with a flood.**

At this verse the Original hath a very conspicuous note of distinction. The Jews are very exact in observing the letters and the verses of every book in the Bible, and between these two verses is the middle of the book: there being exactly the same number of verses behind as we have had before in this whole book of *Job* (taking *vers.* 16. Inclusively) So that now we are half the book over according to the number of verses. The whole containing One thousand and seventy. The former part hath had Five hundred and thirty five, and as many remain for the latter part. This I touch only by the way.

חצי הספר

קבט *Plerique reddunt ſuccidi ſunt; ſed verbum hoc nunquam occurrit in ea ſignificatione in ſacris literis, ſed tantum apud doctores Hebraorum idq; per metathesin literarum à verbo* קמם *Cum enim tantum occurrat in libro* Job, *ibi vertitur rugare aut corrugare aut rugas contrahere.* לא עת *Sine tempore, vel non tempus, i. e. antequam explerent vitæ annos, ſecundam communem naturæ legem.*

לא עת *Sine tempore verti poteſt, ſine æqua.*

m potuiſſet diutive ſiſtere. gur. pti ſunt naturi. pt.

Which were cut down.] The words carry an alluſion to the felling of trees; as if he had ſaid, theſe men were like great Oaks and tall Cedars, but the Lord cut them down. The word is conceived more properly ſignifying to wrinkle, or to make furrows in the face; for this word is uſed but once more in all the Bible, and it is in *Chap.* 16. of this Book, *verſ.* 8. and there we tranſlate, *wrinkles*; *Thou haſt filled me with wrinkles, which is againſt me.* So ſome render it here, *Who were wrinkled out of time.* Now what are wrinkles? They are the marks of old age, and they ſhew that weakneſs is coming upon us, or that we are in our declining condition; ſo that it is a very Elegant expreſſion to ſay, *They were wrinkled out of time*, that is, *they were old afore they were old*; before they were old according to the nature of man, they were made old by the Judgements of God; they lookt as if they were worn, ſpent, and eaten out by time, whereas indeed they were ſpent, eaten and worn out with the wrath and indignation of God which fell upon them. Thus *they were wrinkled out of time*, or *before their time.*

They were cut down, and no time, as ſome render: but it may be ſaid, as *Solomon* did (*Eccleſ.* 3.1.) *There is a time for every thing*; how then could they be cut down in no time? There may be a twofold interpretation given of this Hebraiſm.

Firſt, This, to ſhew that they died a violent not a natural death, that either God by his immediate Judgments did cut them off, or that he gave them up to the Juſtice of man, who cut them off before their time. Man hath a ſet time, an ordinary time of dying (the dayes of man are threeſcore years and ten, this is the ordinary time of dying) they that dye before, are in Scripture ſence, *Cut down out of time*, or *not in time*, that is, not in that time at which men uſually dye according to the courſe and cuſtom of nature.

Secondly, When 'tis ſaid, *They were cut down without time*, the meaning is, they were cut down very ſuddenly, as if it were done without any time at all; God was ſo far from lingring or taking up long time to deſtroy theſe men, that he cut them down (as it were) without any time at all, even in a moment, in an inſtant, as ſpeedily as a man can think it, far more ſpeedily then any man can do it. He did it without delay: As uſually the grace of God, ſo often the wrath of God makes no demurs.

Obſerve from the manner of Expreſſion, *Cut down*,

That, *God brings ruining judgments on the ſtouteſt of ſinners.*

He doth not only pull off ſome of their fruit, and leaves, or lop off their branches; but he cuts them down, yea he ſtubs them up by the roots, till there is nothing left, they are cut down *root and branch.* Thus the Lord threatned the houſe of *Jeroboam* (1 *King.* 14. 10.) *Behold I will bring evil upon the houſe of* Jeroboam, *and will cut off from* Jeroboam, *him that piſſeth againſt the wall* (that is, every man of his houſe) *and him that is ſhut up and left in* Iſrael (that is, him that is moſt eſteemed, as things ſhut up are; and him that is leaſt eſteemed, as things left abroad are; or thoſe who are ſecured or have ſecured themſelves in ſtrongeſt holds, as men ſhut up are, as well as thoſe who are left naked and expoſed to the eaſieſt dangers, as men left at large are) *and will take away the remnant of the houſe of* Jeroboam (that is, all who have eſcaped or ſurvived the former troubles) *as a man taketh away dung till it be all gone*; that is, till his houſe be utterly exterminated: for dung being a filthy and noyſom thing, men never leave taking it away, from places where it is an annoyance, till they have taken it all away. *That which is offenſive in the whole nature of it, is offenſive in the leaſt degree of it.*

Again, When 'tis ſaid, *He cuts them down without time, or before their time*, We may Obſerve,

Wicked men are often ripe for Judgment, before they are ripe in years.

It is ſaid in *Geneſis* 15. *The iniquity of the* Amorites *is not yet full*, their ſin is not come to a full ſtature; for as there is a fulneſs of ſtature in holineſs unto which Saints at laſt arrive in Chriſt, ſo there is a fulneſs of ſtature in wickedneſs to which the Lord ſuffers ſinners to arrive; and as when Saints have attained their full ſtature in holineſs, they are received into glory; ſo when wicked men have attained a full ſtature in wickedneſs, they are cut off and turned down to deſtruction. Though the Lord ſuffer long, yet he will not alwayes ſuffer. And as ſome are but young men, yet old Saints, and have had much experience of God, and of the wayes of grace, though but little of the world (that diſtinction which the Apoſtle gives of Saints into little children, young men, and fathers (1 *Joh.* 2. 13, 14.) is not to be underſtood in reference to natural years, but to ſtanding in grace, or to a growth and progreſs in holineſs) ſo ſome wicked men, are but of few years, or but young in reference to their natural age, who yet are old in ſin, aged in wickedneſs, they are fathers in abomination, while but children in time, and ſo are cut down before time. *Wicked men are never cut down till they are ripe in ſin, but they are often cut down before they are ripe in nature.*

Thirdly, *Which were cut down out of time*; namely, in little time, or without delay.

Hence note, That, *God can quickly make an end of wicked men.*

He needs not take any long time to do it. He took but very little time to make the world, it was made in ſix dayes, which in reference to the greatneſs of the work is no time: when a great thing is done in a little time, we may ſay it was done without any time at all. Now if the Lord could frame a world without time, ſurely he can cut down the world, or the inhabitants of it in a little time? *Ruining work is eaſier then building work.* He that built (in this ſence) without time, can pull down without time; we need not trouble our ſelves with ſuch thoughts as theſe, when we ſee wicked men, enemies of God and his people in their height and ſtrength; O what a length of time will it require? O how many years muſt be ſpent in cutting down theſe ſtrong Oaks, thoſe tall Cedars? The Lord can cut them down in a moment. Our late experiences have ſhewed us wicked men cut down without time; before they thought they could be ſhaken, yea toucht, they have been cut down; when they concluded they could not be reached, they have been ruined. The Jeſuites and other Machavillian politicians have a received Maxim of State among them; *Take time, and ye may do any thing.* If you are diſappointed in a project this year, wait a few years longer (ſay they) and you ſhall either find or make a way to accompliſh it. But the Lord can do any thing he hath a mind to at any time, or without taking time. The Apoſtle propheſying of the Antichriſt ſaith (2 *Theſ.* 2. 6, 7.) *Now ye know what withholdeth, that he may be revealed in his time; for the myſtery of iniquity doth already work, only he who now letteth will let, till he be taken out of the way.* The power and ſplendor of the *Roman* Empire ſtood in Antichriſts way, and he could not cut it down without time; he was hacking and hewing, heaving and thruſting many years, yea ſome ages before he could remove that block out of his way, and ſo make a way for his own greatneſs. The wiſeſt of men muſt have time to bring about their ends. Only God, the only wiſe God, can cut down and remove whatſoever ſtands in his way (though it ſtand like a great mountain) without time or without taking time, if once his time be come in which he would have it removed. The wicked of thoſe elder times were cut down ſuddenly, without time. *Eliphaz* confirms it further in the next words,

Whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.

In this latter clauſe *Eliphaz* ſeems more clearly to hint at ſome particular wicked men, or to ſhew who thoſe wicked men were that he intends as the object of his obſervation, namely, thoſe *whoſe foundation was overflown with a flood.* It is uſual in Scripture, by ſome one word to allude to great actions and changes paſt. Take two or three inſtances for illuſtration of this (*Pſal.* 55. 15.) *David* imprecates vengeance upon his enemies in this language; *Let them go down quick into Hell.* Which expreſſion carrieth a plain alluſion unto that dreadful judgment (*Numb.* 16. 31, 32.) *It came to paſs as he* (that is, *Moſes*) *had made an end of ſpeaking all theſe words, the ground clave aſunder that was under them; and the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed them up and their houſes, and all the men which appertained*

pertained unto Corah, *and all their goods. They and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit*, &c. This historical Narration the Psalmist hints at in his imprecation, as is plain by that word *quick* or *alive*; *Let them go down quick* (or alive) *into Hell*; that is, let such wrath seize upon them, as seized upon *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, on whom *the Earth closed, and they perished from among the Congregation*. Again, when the Apostle makes promise to Saints in the behalf of Christ, what assistance they might expect from him in time of temptation, and what issue from it, he thus assures them; *The God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly* (Rom. 16. 20.) Which plainly bears upon that first grand Promise, that (*Christ*) *the seed of the Woman should break the Serpents head* (Gen. 3. 15.) for it is by virtue of that act of Jesus Christ bruising the head of Satan, that Satan is trodden under our feet. As Christ bruised him under his own feet, so he will bruise, or tread him under our feet; the seed of the woman in person, as well as in their representative, shall break the Serpents head. Lastly, those words (*Rom.* 9. 16.) hold a clear correspondence with that story (*Gen.* 27.) concerning *Jacob* and *Esau*, *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*. He had said before that *God loved* Jacob *and hated* Esau; and concludes upon it, *So then, it is not of him that willeth*, &c. We may take notice in that famous piece of divine History, that much means was used that *Jacob* might obtain the blessing; *Rebecca* her heart was set upon it, she did what she could to procure the blessing for her younger Son, her will was wholly in it; and *Jacob*, he run for it too; for as soon as ever his mother had given him counsel, he ran presently to the flock and brought in a Kid to make the savoury meat for *Isaac*; now the Apostle *Paul* to advance the freeness of grace, doth not only instance in those two persons; but useth a phrase of speech which savours so much of that passage, that though he had not named the men, yet every man who knew the Scriptures must needs understand both of whom and of what he meant it; *It is not of him that willeth*, &c. that is, it was neither *Rebecka's* will to have it so, nor *Jacob's* haste (which appear'd in his running to the flock) to have it so, that gave him the blessing, but it was of God that shewed mercy. And as it was then, so it is now, though a man be as willing as *Rebeckah*, or though he make as much speed as *Jacob* for his blessing, yet all comes freely by the grace of God. Thus the frequent usage of Scripture shews us how much the Spirit of God delights to lead our thoughts (by the light of some one word) a great way back into the consideration of what had been done and written of old for our instruction. The words of the Text now under discussion (*Whose foundation was overflown with a flood*) are surely an allusion to some particular persons or action in the dayes of old, and they may be applied three wayes.

First, To the drowning of the whole world in the time of *Noah* by a flood, when the Lord opened the windows of Heaven, and overwhelmed both man and beast in those mighty waters, which universal judgment is (by way of eminence) called, *The Deluge*, or, *The Flood*, unto this very day.

Secondly, They may have respect to the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, which Cities, though they were destroyed by fire, yet it was with a flood of fire. The Text saith expresly (*Gen.* 19. 24.) *Then the Lord rained upon* Sodom *and upon* Gomorrah *brimstone and fire from the Lord out of Heaven, and he overthrew the Cities and all the plain*, &c. They were overflown with a flood of fire.

Thirdly, The allusion may be carried to the destruction of *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* in the red Sea; they also *were overflown with a flood*. The waters of the red Sea which stood up as a wall for *Israel* to pass thorough, at the Command of God returning upon the *Ægyptians*, swallowed them up, them and their Chariots and their Horses. *The enemy said* (thus *Moses* describes that fatal overthrow, *Exod.* 15. 9, 10.) *I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil: my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them*. Thus the enemy raged and foamed with revenge, like a tempestuous Sea, and had opened all the sluces of his will to overflow them. And when the enemy had thus breathed out his wrath in a four times repeated, *I will*; then the *Lord did blow with his wind, the Sea covered them*; *They sank as lead in the mighty waters*. So then the words may relate to any of those three signal Judgments, to the drowning of the old world with a flood of water, to the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* with a flood of fire, or to the overthrow of *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian* host in the red Sea.

Hunt locum à v. 15. ad v. 20. omnino respicere ad dimersionem Pharaones *& Egyptiorum non levibus suadeor conjecturis.* Pined.

But more particularly, for the explication of these words, *whose foundation was overflown with a flood*.

Whose foundation. This word *Foundation* taken in a proper sence, refers to a material building. And the foundation of any building is the stability and strength of it; by *Foundation*, in a metaphorical sence, we are to understand all those things by which the state of persons or things is upheld; and here whatsoever wicked men support and bear up themselves by, as a building is born up by the foundation, is to be understood as their foundation. So their Power, their Riches, their Councel, their Wisdom, their Friends and Confederates; whatsoever, I say, is the support of their worldly State, that's their foundation. And thus it is here said, *their foundation was overflown*,

Ea omnia quæ illis velut fundamenti loco erant, in quibus spē & præsidium ponebant, &c. Mere.

With a flood. In two of the former instances, to which the allusion was made, their foundation was overflown by a flood properly taken. If we take it more generally for all wicked men, who at any time have been overthrown, we may say, that they have all been overflown by a flood metaphorically. For so

First, The displeasure of God, by what means or instrument soever put forth is called a flood; whether it be by Sword, or by Famine, or by Pestilence, it is a flood (*Isa.* 8. 7.) We read War compared to a flood, *Now therefore behold the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many* (what were these waters? *Even the King of* Assyria, *and all his glory*; the King of *Assyria* with his Armies, in which he gloried, or which he counted his glory, were the waters of the river, strong and many) *and he shall come up over all his channels, and go up over all his bands* (that is, the former limits of his Dominion) *And he shall pass thorough* Judah, *he shall overflow and go over*. There the Sword is compared to a flood, or to a mighty river, which bears down all before it. The same Prophet speaks again in the same language (*Isa.* 59. 19.) *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against him*; as if it had been said, *The enemy shall come rushing in like a mighty torrent*; *but the Spirit of God, like a more mighty wind, shall blow and rush upon him*, causing him to recoile and give back, or (as our Margent hath it) *put him to flight*. Again (*Ezek.* 13.) The Prophet foreshews the approaching calamity upon those who had seduced the *Jews* into a vain security; which is there called, *the building of a wall with untempered morter*. A wall he calls that prophesie, because it promised safety, and defence; but he calls it also a wall built with untempered morter, because that false prophesie was a weak prophesie, and should shortly fall. The manner how, he gives us in the notion of the Text (*vers.* 13.) *Wherefore thus saith the Lord God, I will even rent it with a stormy wind in my fury, and there shall be an overflowing shower in mine anger*, &c. that is, wrath shall be upon it (the Babylonian Army was the special judgment in which that wrath was expressed) and that *shall be an overflowing shower*. Great and continual showers will try the strongest buildings, and quickly overthrow the weak. A wall of untempered morter is no match for a storm. As our Saviour also assures us in the close of his Sermon on the Mount (*Mat.* 7. 27.) where all those evils, troubles, afflictions, sorrows, and persecutions, whether sent upon such as are really godly, or only in name and outward profession, are called *rain, floods, winds*. So saith the Text, *The rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon the house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it*. While it stood, it stood to no purpose but for a shew; but when it fell, it fell to purpose, *The fall thereof was great*. Thus it is more then evident from Scripture phrase, that rains and floods signifie all sorts of afflicting evils; and therefore we need not restrain the word *flood* in the Text to a deluge of Elementary water, or of water in a proper sence, but we may enlarge it to any kind of afflicting evil or trouble whatsoever that falls upon man. And the Scripture is (I conceive) so frequent in the use of this metaphor of a flood, and of waters, where great calamities are set forth, for these two reasons.

First, To note the swiftness and suddenness of the judgements of God. Floods come often very suddenly, and rise not only beyond expectation, but before there is any the least expectation of them. *Noah's* flood was long foretold before it came; but when the time came, wherein it should come, it came at once. Though God give long warning of his judgments, yet most men are surprized with them, they come like a flood.

Secondly, To note the irresistibleness of the Judgments of God. Who or what can stand before mighty waters? Great floods do not only wash and over-flow all, but ruine and overthrow all, there's no resisting. Such are the Judgements of God, they are a flood both for their suddain rising and breaking in upon sinners, and likewise for their irresistible violence in breaking and ruining them.

Further, It is not to be passed by, that *Eliphaz* doth not only say, They were *overflown*, but, *Their foundation was overflown with a flood.* He calls it the overflowing of their foundation, to note, that they were totally or utterly ruined and overthrown: for when the foundation is destroyed, all is destroyed; destruction to the foundation is the worst of destructions. The cruel enemies of the *Jews* cryed, *Rase it, rase it even to the foundation thereof* (Psal. 137.7.) but to rase the foundation it self is more cruel then rasing to the foundation. When the Lord threatned a full and final destruction of those foolish Prophets who had seen vain visions for his people, he said (*Ezek.* 13. 14.) *I will break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered morter, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered*, &c. that is, I will destroy it as far as destruction it self can go. There shall not only not a stone be left upon a stone of this building above ground, but even the under-ground stones shall not be left: The very foundation shall be opened and discovered. That which lyeth at the bottom, or the bottom it self of those flattering prophesies, all the wiles and secret wayes of them shall be revealed. *David* complains of those irreparable breaches made upon the civil state in this stile (*Psal.* 11.3.) *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?* The civil foundation of a Nation or People, is their Laws, and Constitutions, the order and power that is among them, that's the foundation of a People; and when once this foundation is destroyed, *what can the righteous do?* What can the best, the wisest in the world do in such a case? What can any man do, if there be not a foundation of Government left among men? There is no help nor answer in such a case, but that which follows in *vers.* 4. of the same Psalm; *The Lord is in his holy Temple, the Lords throne is in heaven, his eyes behold, his eye lids try the children of men.* As if he had said, in the midst of these confusions, when as it is said (*Psal.* 8. 5.) *All the foundations of the earth are out of course*; yet God keeps his course still, he is where he was and as he was, without variableness or shadow of turning. We read in the vision of the four Monarchies (*Dan.* 2. 34.) That *the stone cut out without hands smote the Image upon his feet that were of Iron and Clay, and brake them to pieces.* The stone did not strike the Image upon the head, or upon the breast, the golden head, the silver breast, *&c.* but upon the feet that were of Iron and Clay. Now the feet are to a natural body, as the foundation is to an Artificial body; a mans feet are the foundation of his body; if the feet be smitten and broken to pieces, the body must needs fall. And therefore as soon as ever it was said, That *the stone brake the feet to pieces*, the ruine of the whole Image is described in the immediately following words of the vision (*vers.* 35.) *Then was the Iron, the Clay, the Brass, the Silver, and the Gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the Summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.* The breaking of the feet, was the breaking up of the foundation, and so the *breaking down of all. Whose foundation was overflown with a flood.* Hence note,

First, *Wicked men think themselves very sure, they have foundations, they lay foundations.*

The people of God are sometimes over-conceited about the strength and stability of their worldly foundations. Holy *David* said, In his prosperity, *I shall never be moved: Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong* (Psal. 30. 6, 7.) And if a godly man may, by the strength of temptation, thus over-reckon the strength of an Earthly state; what may they do whose state, yea whose minds are altogether earthly? How often do they judge themselves wise and politick enough to lay for themselves an everlasting foundation in things which cannot last? And that they are so surely bottom'd in the favour of men, that they *shall never be removed*? *Babylon* thinks her self setled at this day upon such everlasting mountains, upon such perpetual hills of power and policy, that certainly her foundation shall never be overflown. Thus she spake her heart out, while *she said in her heart* (Rev. 18. 7.) *I sit a Queen, and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow.* Babylon is bottom'd and foundation'd upon so many hills, that is, upon so many interests and advantages of strength, as render her (to her self) impregnable and unremoveable. And as this vain confidence bears up the Spirit of that Man of sin, so of very many sinful men, who presume they are upon a sure foundation, when indeed none but the godly mans foundation is sure (*Prov.* 10. 25.) *As the whirlwind passeth, so is the wicked no more: but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.* The wicked man supposeth himself founded as on a Rock of ages, an everlasting strength, such as the righteous man hath in God, or such as God is to a righteous man (*Isa.* 26. 3.) *Yet as the whirlwind he passeth away, but the righteous is an everlasting foundation.* We find not the Copulative word, *is*, expressed in the Hebrew, there 'tis only, *but the righteous an everlasting foundation*; so that I should rather read it thus, *But the righteous have an everlasting foundation:* wicked men seem to have, but the righteous man indeed *hath an everlasting foundation.* There is no earthly foundation everlasting; for all earthly things pass away, and are so far from lasting for ever, that they last but (as it were) for a little, for a moment. What then is this everlasting foundation? It is a foundation laid in heavenly things; the foundation which is laid in things above shall abide; the things which are not seen, and they only, are eternal (2 *Cor.* 4. 18.) but the strongest foundation laid in things below, endures but for a *season*; *The things which are seen, are temporal*, as the Apostle speaks in the same place. Such foundations are soon overflown with a flood. As will appear yet further in the next Observation; which take thus,

The flood and storm of Gods anger will overflow all the foundations, the strongest foundations of wicked men.

Their Riches, their Power, their Wisdom, their Councels, whatsoever they have imagined, laid and made for a foundation to themselves, either of honour or safety, shall be overflown and swept quite away; yea all their refuges laid together will prove *but a refuge of lies* (Isa. 28. 17.) *Judgment also will I* (saith the Lord) *lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lyes, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place*; that is, those places wherein they thought to hide and secure themselves against the overflowing scourge. A wicked man is in greatest danger when he thinks himself in greatest safety, and then most ready to fall when he saith in his own heart, or boasteth it out to others, that he is upon a sure foundation; for whatsoever opinion he hath of it, yet the truth is, his foundation is but sand; and (which makes his case more miserable) though he be told so, and others have found it so, yet he will not believe it. While (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 44. 20.) *He feedeth of ashes, a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lye*, or (as the former Scripture hath it) *a refuge of lies in my right hand.* Only *the righteous is, or hath* (as *Solomon* speaks) *an everlasting foundation.* A righteous man hath two foundations which shall never be shaken, much less overthrown; whoso are setled on those foundations may be as confident as confidence it self.

The first of these two foundations is Gods eternal Decree, his Decree of Election, that's an unmoveable foundation, and that is the foundation upon which believers build their hopes. The Apostle (2 *Tim.* 2. 19, 20.) is proving that even in the house of God, that is, among the outward professors of the name of God, there are of all sorts, vessels of Gold and Silver, vessels also of Wood and of Earth; *Some to honour, and some to dishonour*; and when he had said of *Himeneus* and *Philetus, that they had erred concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is past already,*

ready, and so had overthrown the faith of some, vers. 18. He presently adds, What though it be thus, what though some men have fallen from their foundation, *Yet the foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth who are his*, vers. 19. Where we have, first, the foundation of God, namely, his decree of Election: Secondly, the Seal or assurance of it, as to him, even his own certain knowledge of the Elect, *The Lord knoweth who are his.* So that while hypocrites or meer verbal formal professors back-slide and Apostatize from the faith, yet the Elect are safe and stand fast in the purpose of God; and while many discover themselves to be vessels of dishonour in the house of God, Wood and Earth, of base and brittle materials; yet Saints, indeed, who are vessels of honour made of purest metal, of Gold and Silver, these shall abide for ever. He that is once a vessel of honour, shall alwayes be so, *For the foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, The Lord knoweth who are his.*

Secondly, As there is this more hidden foundation, upon which Saints are sure, and which no flood can overflow; so there is another sure foundation, and that is *Jesus Christ*, upon which Saints are built; and therefore the holy Prophet having discovered that refuge of lies which he threatens should be swept away by the overflowing scourge, subjoyns by way of Opposition in the next verse (*Isa.* 28. 16.) *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation, a stone, a tryed stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, and he that believeth shall not make hast.* Whom the Prophet means by this sure foundation, the Apostle tells us expresly and by name (1 *Cor.* 3. 11.) *Other foundation can no man lay then that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*; and they that are built on him the living Rock (as all Believers are) have eternal life, and shall never perish. This Christ himself teacheth us (*Matth.* 7. 24, 25.) *Whosoever heareth these sayings (of mine) and doth them, I will liken him to a wise man that built his house upon a Rock.* And what's the Rock that these wise men build upon? This Rock is Jesus Christ, he is the Rock of Ages; he fails not, nor can they fail who are in him; as it followeth, *Then the rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew and beat upon the house, and it fell not, for it was founded on a Rock.* Saints are *lively stones*, and they *coming to Christ* (by faith) *who is a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, are built up a spiritual house* (1 Pet. 2. 4, 5.) If this house should fall, Christ must fall too, for though Christ and his house are distinguished, yet they are not divided; Christ and his house are one: So then, though the flood of angry men, and of enraged Devils beat upon it, yet they shall return foaming out their own shame; and when they have done their worst, they shall but wash this house, leaving it somewhat more clean, but no whit unsetled. This is the glory and priviledge of Believers, that while the strongest foundations of the earth are overflown with a flood, they have a twofold foundation; that of Election in the Love of God, and that of Redemption in the Blood of Christ, which cannot be overflown by any the most violent and impetuous flood.

So then, ungodly men are miserable, when they appear most happy, and at their best estate are altogether vanity; for either their estate hath no foundation, or but such a foundation as cannot stand, and that is as bad or rather worse then none at all; it is better to have no appearance of strength, then to have nothing but an appearance of it.

Further, may we not from the opposite state of godly men (at least intimated in this, and toucht before) conclude, that they are happy when they appear most miserable? And that at their worst estate, they are altogether above uncertainty? For as they have a foundation, so such a foundation as will stand all storms and weathers; what can be added to their felicity, who are in an estate so good (in the nature of it) that they need not desire a change; and so sure in the foundation of it, that they need not fear a change, much less an overflowing flood?

Eliphaz proceeds to describe the particular wickedness of those men, or how they did express their wickedness; *Whose foundation was thus overflown; They say unto God depart from us*, &c.

VERS. 17, 18.

Which said unto God, Depart from us, and what can the Almighty do for them?
Yet he filled their houses with good things: but the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

IN the former context *Eliphaz* had charged *Job* with impiety against God, and called him to consider the dispensations of God in former times towards impious men; here he shews us what their impiety was, it was impiety hightned into blasphemy; the several abominations which were in their hearts, brake out at their lips, and were vomited out of their mouths in black coller, in coller as black as Hell.

Vers. 17. **Which said unto God, Depart from us?** &c.

These words are filled with the very spirit of malice against God himself; and we have the same breathed out in the same language in the former Chapter at the fourteenth verse: there the Reader may find them explicated, and I shall add somewhat for a further explication here.

Which said to God, Depart from us.

To this height of madness do some wicked men arise; their spirits being big with sin, they bring forth or belch out this monster of words; *They say to God, Depart from us.* They (as it were) send God a Writ of Ejectment, they do not pray or entreat God to depart from them; but with as much rudeness and incivility, as unholiness and prophaneness, *Say unto God, Depart from us.* 'Tis a word of command, from man, but such a one as breaks all the commandments of God. *Moses* (Numb. 16. 26.) beseeches the people, saying, *Depart I pray you from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs*; but here we have wicked men not praying God to depart, but bidding him, *they say, Depart from us.* *David* speaks to the wicked (*Psal.* 119. 115.) *Depart from me ye evil doers, for I will keep the Commandments of my God*; he bids them begone, he would not give them the least welcom or entertainment. And so Jesus Christ is described speaking to the wicked in the day of Judgment (*Matth.* 7. 23.) *Depart from me*, away, get you out of my presence, I will not have to do with you, I will do nothing for you; *Depart.* His is a word of command, indeed, which though they have no will to obey, yet they shall obey it whether they will or no. Thus in the present Text wicked men presume to say to God himself, *Depart from us*, &c.

Hence note, First, *That wicked or meer carnal men, have some appearances and impresses of the presence of God upon their spirits.*

They could not say to God, *Depart from us*, had they not some impressions and notions of God, of the will and Law of God, of the truth and power of God upon them. They who are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, do yet feel a presence of God with them (*Act.* 17. 27.) *That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.* Take mankind in general, good and bad, believers and infidels, there is a nearness of God unto them, unto them all: and that not only a nearness of God in what the Apostle there speaks of, common preservation (*vers.* 28.) *In him we live, and move, and have our being*; or of natural communications, of which the Apostle speaks there also, *From him we receive life, and breath, and all things* (*vers.* 25.) But further, God is with them, by a twofold light; first, by a light of Direction; secondly, by a light of Conviction. All have a light of Direction, first, by the Law written in their hearts; the Apostle is express for this (*Rom.* 2. 14.) *For when the Gentiles* (he means it of Gentiles unconverted) *which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law; these having not the Law* (that is formally published and preached to them) *are a Law unto themselves. Which shew the work of the*

Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, &c. And as all have a light of direction from the Law written in their hearts, or in the book of Conscience; so also, secondly, they have a light of direction from the Law of the creation, or from that which is written of God in the Book of the creature. The same Apostle makes this the ground of the righteousnes of God in that dreadful *Revelation of his wrath against all ungodlines and unrighteousnes of men* (be they who they will) *who hold the truth in unrighteousnes, because that which may be known of God is manifested in them* (or to them) *for God hath shewed it to them.* But how or where hath God shewed them this? The Apostle answers in the next verse (*Rom.* 1. 20.) *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.* So that though all men have not a light of direction from God so powerful as to change them and make them holy, yet they have a light so clear and full as is enough to make them guilty. And when they refuse to follow this light of direction in doing what is right, then follows that other light of conviction, their consciences troubling them (or as the Apostles phrase is, *Rom.* 2. 15.) their thoughts accusing them, because they have done that which is not right. This presence of God is common to all men, to the worst of men, and this is it which provokes them to *say to God, Depart from us.* And this is argument enough to stop the mouth of the Atheist, who saith in his heart, *there is no God*; when as yet he cannot stop the mouth of his own conscience from saying *there is a God*, while he saith (and this he alwayes saith, either in plain terms, or in that which is equivalent) *to God, Depart from me.* And from hence we may observe,

Secondly, *That the presence, and manifestations of God to wicked men, are a trouble to them.*

None are troubled with the nearnes of God to them, but they who are far from him; all natural men are far from God in state and in heart, and God is near all natural men, either in his word or in his works, either speaking his mind to their ears, or sending it in to their consciences. This light of God is not only not pleasing but vexing. They who love darknes cannot abide the light of direction, much les the light of conviction; so that if ever God be *near in their mouth*, near in their ear, or near in their conscience, yet as the Prophet speaks (*Jer.* 12. 2.) *He is far from the reins*; that is, though they speak, hear or think of God, yet they delight not in him, they have no desirings, no breathings after him; yea the more he offers himself to them, the more weary are they of him. What *David* spake in a temptation, they speak from their disposition (*Psal.* 73. 3.) *I remembered God and was troubled.* It troubles them when they are put in mind of God, it troubles them when God comes into their mind. God is holy, and they are unholy. The holy God must needs be a burden to an unholy heart. The Prophet puts the Question (*Amos* 3. 3.) *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* they cannot. That company is alwayes unpleasant to us, which is unsuitable to us; they who are not at one, are best pleased when they are furthest asunder. *The wayes of God are grievous to wicked men, much more is God himself*; they say what a wearisomnes is it to serve the Lord, they say his yoak is heavy, and his burden insupportable; the very outside of heavenly and spiritual work is burdensom to them; how then can they maintain communion with God (in truth of spirit) *who is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in Spirit and in truth?*

Thirdly note, *Natural men are blind and foolish, they know not wherein their own happines doth consist, they forsake and throw away the mercies offered them, for lying vanities.*

They who are not taught of God are full of mistaken and false principles, among which this is a principal one; *They suppose they can do well enough without God, whereas indeed there is nothing can do us good without him, who is the chief good.* Now, that the natural man believes he can do well enough without God, is plain from this abominable and hateful motion which such make to God in the Text, *Depart from us.* No man would desire God to depart from him, if this perswasion did abide upon his heart, *That he could not subsist without him, or that he depended upon God for his subsistence.* Therefore this is their opinion (though possibly they are as far from acknowledging it, as they are from the true knowledge and love of God.) *That they can do well enough alone, that they can stand upon their own bottom without God, yea that they are self-sufficient, as God is*; for whosoever doth not see an emptines and insufficiency in himself, and so place his All in God, makes himself a God. This is the way of wicked men, and this their way is *their folly* (as the Psalmist speaks, *Psal.* 49. 13.) *Though their posterity approve their sayings.* Who but they? They can maintain their being, yea their well-being without God; they can live and live happily whether he will or no. Surely if they thought they were beholding to him, either for being or well-being, either for life, or a happy life, they had never been heard *saying to God, Depart from us.* And if this be a truth that they have said so, and say so still every day; we need not stay to prove this a truth, that they shew their blindnes and foolishnes in saying so. Is not he foolish who would have the Sun depart from him, which enlightens him? Or who would have the Shield depart from him, which protects him? Or who bids the fountain be gone which gives him drink? God is all this to all men in some degree or other, and he promiseth himself such in the highest and best degree to all such as walk uprightly, even to be their Sun, their Shield, their Fountain, their Spring. Then, can folly it self utter more foolishnes then this, *To say to God, Depart from us?* Further, how foolish are they to refuse that, as if it were a hurt to them, which Saints who have the true wisdom, have prayed for; and still do pray for, as the greatest blessing and priviledge, The presence of God with them? How foolish are they who ask and desire that as a blessing, which God the only wise God threatens as the forest curse? (*Jer.* 6. 8.) *Be instructed, O* Jerusalem, *lest my soul depart from thee, lest I make thee a Land desolate, not inhabited.* Utter desolation is the consequent, yea the effect of the Lords departure from a Land; and when he ceaseth in regard of his favourable presence to inhabit a Land, either none shall inhabit it, or none shall have a comfortable habitation in it. The Lord threatens this departure as the last and forest, or as the sum of all his judgements; and wicked men desire this, as if to be without God, were the chief or sum of their enjoyments. See another instance of this folly, among all the threatnings of God against sinful men, this is one of the greatest, that he will take away his Gospel, and the light of his Word from them; yet this a wicked man desireth, let the Gospel go, let the light of the Word go; he wisheth it gone, 'tis but a trouble to him, he is sick of it, it is a death to him. The best of good things is refused, and the worst of evils chosen by those that are evil. As their understanding is so blinded and distempered, *that they call evil good, and good evil; that they put darknes for light, and light for darknes; that they put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter* (Isa. 5. 20.) So their will and affections are so perverted, that they choose and embrace darknes for light, evil for good, and that which is most bitter, for that which is sweeter then the honey and the honey comb.

Fourthly observe, *Wicked men are not only foolish, but wild and furious.*

See at what a rate they speak, even as if they had God at their command; *They say to God, Depart*; as if God could not be where he pleased, as if God were at their limitting, and disposing. Here's madnes, like madnes it self. As there is madnes in the heart of man in the enjoyment of the creature (*I said of laughter it is madnes*, saith *Solomon*) Some are so over-acted with joy and laughter, in their creature-enjoyments, that whereas laughter is the proper passion of a rational creature, there is nothing more irrational then their laughter; 'tis plain down-right madnes. Now (I say) as some carnal men are mad in their manner of enjoying the creature, so they are more mad, in refusing the enjoyments of God the Creator. Who can tell how mad they are who desire God to depart from them? *They are mad to purpose who would put God from them, yet they more, who think they can.*

Fifthly note, *That the godly and the wicked have quite contrary both desires and fears.* What

What are the desires and fears of a wicked man? he desires to have God depart, he is afraid of the presence of God: what are the desires of a godly man? he desires nothing more then the presence of God; he sayes as *Moses* (Exod. 33. 15.) *If thy presence go not with me, carry me no further*; I desire to be no where, but where God manifests himself to be; let me see the day of my departure out of the world, rather then the day of Gods departure from me in the world; let riches go, let liberty go, let friends and relations go, so God stay with me. All company is solitarinesse to me, all fulnesse is emptinesse to me, and the most populous City worse then a desolate wilderness to me, where I find not the presence of God with me. I fear nothing like this, the departure of God from me. I read indeed (*Luke* 5. 8.) that *Peter* once said to Christ, *Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.* But the reason was not because he was weary of the presence of Christ, but because he thought himself altogether unworthy of the presence of Christ. And therefore at another time *when many of Christs Disciples went back and walked no more with him*; and hereupon *Christ said to the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then* Simon Peter *answered him, Lord to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of Eternal Life* (Joh. 6. 68.) He who would not go from Christ, could not indeed desire that Christ should go or depart from him. They who have tasted how gracious the Lord is, can never totally depart from God, nor can they at all bear it, that God should depart from them. Thus the Church complains (*Jer.* 14. 9.) *Why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the Land, and as a wayfairing man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name, leave us not:* Whatsoever thou doest to us, do not leave us; let any evil come, but do not thou go; let sword come, let famine come, let plague come, but do not thou depart; *leave us not.* Thus the Saints cling about a departing God, while wicked men are willing he should depart. And considering the opinion which these wicked men had of God, 'tis no wonder though they press him to depart; for what should God do with them, if he can do nothing for them, or do them no good: Such was their apprehension of God, as appears in the next clause.

And what can the Almighty do for them?

They should rather have said, *What cannot the Almighty do for them?* If the question be put, what the Almighty can do? The answer is at hand, he that is Almighty, can do any thing; yet these wretches say, *What can the Almighty do for them?* Almightinesse it self is questioned as weaknesse, and omnipotency as impotency by unbelievers.

Et quid operabitur omnipotens? Heb.

From the general sence of this Infidels question.

First observe, *That worldly wicked men have low, and slight thoughts of God.*

It is said of a wicked man (*Psal.* 10. 4.) *God is not in all his thoughts*; that is, he is in none of his thoughts, or God is not at all in all his thoughts. But is any man so void of God, that God is not in all his thoughts? Can any man utterly extinguish or blot the thoughts of God out of his heart? Is not the notion of a God written with indelible Characters upon the heart of man by nature? If not, how is the Law written there by nature? I answer, wicked men have thoughts, and cannot but have thoughts of God. But, first, *They like not to retain God in their thoughts*, or (which is the same) *in their knowledge* (Rom. 1. 28.) Secondly, The thoughts which they have of God, are unworthy of God; while they think of God, they think below God, and so indeed their thoughts are not at all the thoughts of God. While we think of God otherwise then he is, and hath revealed himself to be, we do not think of the God that made us, but we make an Idol-god in our own thoughts. Now wicked men think either that God hath no strength, power, goodnesse and wisdom, or can do little with what he hath; *What can the Almighty do for them?* They who are afar off from God by unbelief, are not able to discern his power, his goodnesse, his wisdom, his faithfulnesse, his All-sufficiency: They neither understand what God affirms of himself, nor give credit to what he hath promised unto us. We say of those things, *which appear more then they are, that they affect more afar off then near at hand; but those things which are more then they appear, affect more when they are nigh, then when they are afar off.* God is infinitely more, then he appears; and he being near to those who believe, affects them wonderfully: But God is far from unbelievers, and they are far off or in a state of fartheſt distance from God, therefore they are not affected with him; but say, who is God? What is Gods power? What is his Almightinesse? We have heard much of him, but we see little in him. They look upon God, as if he were like the Idols (described, *Psal.* 115. 4, 5, 6, 7.) *Who have eyes, and see not; ears, and hear not; hands, and handle not,* &c. All the attributes of God, that he is Almighty, Unchangeable, *&c.* are but a sound of words or empty titles in their ears. A believer can make a living out of any attribute of God; for when the Scripture saith, he lives by faith, the meaning is, he lives upon the goodnesse, mercy and power of God, revealed in the promise, and laid hold on by faith. Thus the just live by faith upon God, but the wicked and unbelievers cannot live upon those terms; they see little or nothing in God to make a living of, and therefore they say, *What can the Almighty do for them?*

Secondly note, *That carnal men count the service of God unprofitable.*

What can God do for them? If they serve him, what profit is it? His is a lean service, they shall but starve themselves by attending upon him, and undo themselves by doing his work. Thus they said in the former Chapter, and so they say again in this. The carnal man accounts nothing good, but that which is outwardly good: *Who will shew us any good?* (Psal. 4. 6.) they know that all good cometh through the hand of God, that it cometh in at the door of the promise; they can look no further then they see, and therefore because they see no profit, they look for none; they do not see that God doth any thing for them, and therefore they conclude he cannot: *What can the Almighty do for them?*

Thirdly note, That, *The spirits of worldly men are meerly mercenary.*

If they do any thing for God, or at the command of God, they do it only upon hopes of reward, they never obey commandments for the holinesse that is in them, but for the benefit that comes by them. *What can the Almighty do for them?* As when *Judas* betrayed Jesus Christ, he went out with a mercenary spirit to do that wickednesse; *What will you give me, and I will betray him?* So when a carnal man serves Jesus Christ, he saith, What will he give me? What can he do for me? He cannot *serve God for nought*, that is, freely, as Satan charged *Job* in the beginning of this book; *Job* serveth thee, said Satan, because thou hast done so much for him, because thou hast served his turn, and made a hedge about him; this was Satans slander upon that good man; but 'tis no slander to say so of carnal men, *Do they serve God for nought?* They do not, they cannot; if they may gain by godlinesse, they will do somewhat, which shall have a shew of godlinesse; profit will make any thing pass with, and pleasing to a carnal mind, though in it self it be never so displeasing. Such is the nobleness of the people of God, that though there be a reward in serving of him; yet they are ready to serve him without reward, they can serve him upon a bare command, abstract from promises and profit; they can obey God as a Creator, though he should not be a rewarder. Godlinesse is profitable for all things, and hath the promise both of this life, and of that which is to come; yet a gracious heart loves godlinesse more then profitableness, and eyes the work of God more then his reward.

Further, for the opening of these words; some read thus; *What can the Almighty do against them?* The Hebrew particle stands indifferently to both, and may be translated *for*, or *against*; in which sence we find it in the thirty fifth of this Book, *vers.* 6, 7. *If thou sinnest what dost thou against him?* that is, what hurt dost thou to God? Thy sin cannot reach, or wound him, what dost thou against him? Thus here, *They say to the Almighty, depart from us, and what can the Almighty do against them?* Surely the Almighty

Si peccaveris quid ei nocebis? proprie, quid ei facies?

mighty is not able to hurt us; from him we expect no good, and from him we fear no evil. Were not these mighty men think you, who thought the Almighty could not match them? These were mighty men indeed, Giants, sons of *Anak* no doubt they were, but Giants in wickedness. And so this reading gives us a further character or discovery of a wicked mans Spirit.

Hence observe, *Some wicked men have this presumption, that let God do his worst, he cannot hurt them.*

I find in Scripture a threefold false and presumptuous apprehension, which evil men have of God while they are doing evil.

First, Some presume that God will protect them from evil while they do evil (*Mich.* 3. 11.) *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us.* These were such as made it their business to break the Law of God, yet they thought God would not suffer any trouble to break in upon them.

Secondly, Others presume that, at least, God will not be so severe as to inflict those evils which he hath threatned. The old world was threatned with a Deluge, but they could not believe that God would make good his Word, they even mockt at the credulity and simplicity of *Noah*, to see him build that great Ship or Ark upon the dry Land, as if he meant to sail his vessel without water: As for them, they neither believed nor feared a flood. So they (*Isa.* 5. 19.) will put the Lord to a trial, *Let him hasten his work that we may see it*; let us see what he will do. As if they had said to the Prophet, you told us what he would do, how severe he would be, what meaneth all your talk, we would see something done. What will the Almighty do against us? Surely nothing, he is not so strict as you make him. The Prophet describes the worst of men, the *men setled on their lees*, speaking thus (*Zeph.* 1. 12.) *They say in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil*; that is, he will neither reward nor punish, he will neither help nor hurt. To say either of these is alike dishonourable unto God; to say either, much more both (though indeed to say either is to say both) is to say, not only that God is neither to be loved nor feared, but that he is not at all. It is the glory of God to do the one as well as to do the other, and unless he could do both, he could do neither (*Isa.* 45. 7.) *I form the light, and create darkness* (the darkness of trouble is of God as much as the light of comfort) *I make peace and create evil*; the evil of punishment is as much the creature of God as peace is, and God doth as much appear a Creator in the one as in the other; the doing of this kind of evil doth as much shew the power, and providence of God, as the doing of good; yet those in the Prophet said the Lord will do neither; *He will neither do good, neither will he do evil.*

Thirdly, Those in the Text were raised to a higher pitch of presumption then both the former; for they said, what can the Almighty do against us? As if they had said, let him do his worst, we fear him not; to think that God will shield us from the evil which others threaten, or that he will not bring that evil upon us which himself hath threatned when we do evil, are very high actings of presumption: But to think that God can do nothing against us, to think that the Arm of God is shorter then that it can reach us, or weaker then that it can over power us; to think that we have out-grown Divine Justice, and are too big or too strong to be dealt with by the Almighty, is presumption to madness; wo to those sinners who secure themselves in the goodness of God to them; more wo to those who secure themselves in Gods neglect of them; but above all, wo is their portion who secure themselves as it were in the weakness of God, even while in words they acknowledge his power, saying, *What can the Almighty do against us?*

Thirdly, Others read the words thus; *They say to the Almighty, Depart from us, and what hath the Almighty done against them?* That is, what hurt hath God done them? They are troubled at the presence of God; but what cause hath God given them to be troubled at his presence? And then we may connect these words with the words of *vers.* 18. *What hath God done against them? yea he filled their houses with good things*; that's all the dammage he did them? This is a fair sence, and consistent with the Original Text: leaving the Reader to his choice, I shall only give the observation which riseth clearly from this.

God never giveth wicked men any just cause to be weary of him.

He never doth them any wrong, and he often gives them many a blessing, and have they any reason to bid him depart? He is usually very patient towards them, and doth never bring any evil upon them till they have doubly deserved it; and have they any reason to be displeased at that? Yea whensoever he punisheth them in this world, he punisheth them less then their sins deserve; indeed there is a punishment behind adæquate and commensurate to their sin, but they shall never be punished beyond what or more then their sin deserves. Seeing then their punishment in the next life, though it will be great beyond imagining, yet shall not be great beyond deserving; and all their punishments in this life are less then the demerit of their sin (As was penitentially confessed by *Ezra* in the name of the *Jews* after they had been broken by the sword, and brought into captivity for their sin, *Chap.* 9. 13. Seeing (I say) 'tis but thus with them when 'tis worst with them) What hath the Almighty done against them? Is not all their destruction (meritoriously) from themselves?

Again, How much soever God punisheth them in this life, they have no reason to complain, or *say to God, Depart from us:* for even those punishments are messages from God to awaken them out of their sins, and so to prevent worser punishments; therefore when God perceived that stubborn people going on in their sins, he telleth them he will smite them no more, as implying that it was his favour to smite them (*Isa.* 1. 5.) *Why should ye be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more.* Surely then such have no reason to *say to God, Depart from us,* when he smites them, as if he did them either hurt or wrong, seeing he smites them, that they might return unto him; those judgments of God are a mercy, which are sent to teach man his duty. Now if the judgments of God have sometime mercy in them, and never have any injury in them, what hurt or injury can there be to man in the service of God? Hath the Almighty done any thing against them, whom he lovingly invites to the doing of his will? And yet some complain of wrong when they are only called to do what is right, and cry out as if God hurt them, when he doth but govern them. The Lord calls his murmuring people to account about this thing (*Mich.* 6. 3.) *O my people, what have I done to thee* (that is, what hurt, what wrong have I done unto thee) *and wherein have I wearied thee, testifie against me*; as if he had said, thou hast nothing to bring against me in evidence, unless it be my kindness, as it follows (*vers.* 4.) *For I brought thee up out of the Land of* Egypt, *and redeemed thee out of the house of servants, and I sent before thee,* Moses, Aaron, *and* Miriam. *O my people, remember*, &c. Consider all my dealings with thee, all the deliverances I have wrought for thee, all the Statutes and Ordinances, all the Laws and Commandments which I have given thee, and then let thy Conscience speak; what have I done unto thee, which is an evil to thee? Or wherein have I wearied thee, in the things which I have required thee to do? I have done many good works for thee, and I have commanded thee to do many works, such works as are not only good in themselves, but good for them who do them; for which of these is it that thou art weary of me? *There is not that wicked man in the world but God may say to him, what have I done to thee, or what have I called thee to do, that thou shouldest be weary of me?* That thou shouldest desire me to depart from thee? Thus if we read the words in this latter sence; *What hath the Almighty done against them?* They carry a reproof of their ingratitude against God, who had not hurt them, yea who had done them good. If we read the words in the second sence, *What can the Almighty do against them?* They carry a high contempt and slight of his power, as if God could do them no hurt. If we read the words in the first sence according to our translation (which I rather pitch upon) they carry (upon contrary terms) a like contempt of the power of God, as if he could

could do them no good; *What can the Almighty do for them?*

Verſ. 18. **Yet he filled their houſes with good things.**

The Hebrew is, *And he filled their houſes with good things*; we tranſlate *yet*, which better clears the meaning and ſcope of the Text, according to our reading of the former verſe; *They ſay to God, depart from us, and what can the Almighty do for them? Yet he filled their houſes with good things*; as if he had ſaid, they thought God could do nothing for them, whereas indeed he did all for them; all the good they had, they had it from God, *He filled their houſes*; that is, he gave them abundance; he did not only put ſome good things into their houſes, but he filled their houſes with good things, they had a plentiful eſtate; God gave them a rich portion in the good things of this world, his Corn, his Wine, his Oyl, his Flax, his Gold, his Silver, were their portion. He filled them, and they rebelled againſt him; he beſtowed many benefits upon them, which they abuſed to ſerve their luſts, and vainly triumphed in what he freely gave them, as if they had been ſpoils forcibly taken from him.

Horum quidem domos ipſe implevérat bonis. Jun. q. d. *Dei beneficiis abuſi ſunt impii & tanquam de ſpoliis Dei ipſius triumpháverunt.* Jun.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That God doth them good that are evil.*

Chriſt perſwaded his hearers (and us in them) upon this account to love their enemies, *That they and we might be the children of our father which is in Heaven; For he maketh his Sun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt* (Matth. 5.45.) As God hath ſome peculiar people, ſo he hath ſome peculiar bleſſings, and good things, which the world in common ſhares not in; but he hath a ſort of bleſſings, and good things, which are the common ſhare of the world; Rain and Sun, Fat and Sweet, Gold and Silver are ſuch good things as their hearts and houſes are often filled with, whoſe hearts and houſes are empty of goodneſs. Theſe good things God gives them, who know no more why he gives them, then they did, why he did not ſuddenly bring evil upon them; of whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks (*Rom.* 2.4.) *Deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance?* when God doth good to thoſe that are evil, whether it be by beſtowing good upon them, or by withholding evil, he doth it uſually for one of, or both theſe reaſons.

Firſt, That they might repent and live; knoweſt thou not what Meſſage the goodneſs of God brings? Speaks it not thus, *Repent, repent*? yea doth not divine goodneſs (taking thee by the hand) lead thee to repentance?

Secondly, The Lord doth them good who continue in the evil of ſin, that they might be left inexcuſable when the evil of wrath and puniſhment falls upon them; every mouth ſhall be ſtopped, and all the world of wicked ones become guilty before God, when they remember that they ſinned, and went on to ſin againſt the God that fed them, againſt the God that cloathed them, againſt the God *that filled their houſes with good things*, and protected them in the uſe and injoyment of thoſe good things, with which he had filled their houſes.

Secondly, In that he doth not only give them good things, but filled their houſes with good,

Obſerve, *God giveth great portions of good things to wicked men.*

They have not only enough to live upon, but they have enough to live comfortably upon; they have not only enough to live upon themſelves, but they have enough to lay up for their children after them; the Lord is not only good, but he is liberal and bountiful (in its kind) to the worſt of men: they whoſe hearts are ſhut to him, his hand is open to them; he is inlarged towards them who are ſtreightned towards him: And this is added not only to render the goodneſs of God more glorious, but the ſin of man more ſinful and odious in our eyes. Whence obſerve,

Thirdly, *Sin hath by ſo much the greater evil in it, by how much it is committed againſt the greater goodneſs.*

It is a horrible wickedneſs to *ſay to God depart from us*, though he empty our houſes of all good things; but it is much more horrible wickedneſs, to ſay ſo when he filleth our houſes with good things. What? When God hath filled our houſes, ſhall we kick him out of doors? This was the ſin of *Jeſurun, that when he waxed fat kicked*, as *Moſes* ſaith (*Deut.* 32 15.) *Thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatneſs; Then he forſook God that made him, and lightly eſteemed the rock of his ſalvation.* Their ſin is great who lightly eſteem God while he makes them lean; but how ſinful is their ſin, who ſlight God that hath made them fat? As good things received, bind us ſtronger unto duty; ſo good things abuſed, bind us ſtronger under guilt.

Fourthly, As we connect theſe words with the latter branch of the former verſe; *What can the Almighty do for them? Yet he filled their houſes with good things.* We may take this Obſervation,

Though carnal men receive many good things from God, yet they know him not as the fountain of them.

They who are evil cannot own God purely, either in good or evil. It is but ſeldom that they ſay, with that wicked King, *This evil is of the Lord* (2 Kings 6.33.) And it is ſeldomer that they ſay, This good is of the Lord. They ſay, what good doth God for us? Even while he filleth their houſes with good things. Indeed the beſt of Saints receive many good things from God which they know not of; they receive many ſecret mercies, ſecret I mean not only to others, but to themſelves; and ſo they are not able to give God the glory of them diſtinctly, becauſe they have not a diſtinct knowledge of them. But all the good things which the wicked have are to them of an unknown original. Though they know what they have, yet they know not from whence or from whom they have what they have; they know not who feeds them, who cloaths them, who provides for them: yea though they make many formal acknowledgments of this, and will tell you of Gods goodneſs to them; yet really they know it not, nor do they cordially acknowledge it. The Lord complains of his people about this (*Iſa.* 1.3.) *The Ox knoweth his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters crib* (he upbraids them not only as below other men, but as below the beaſts, as if the reaſonleſs creature had acted more rationally then they) *but* Iſrael *doth not know, my people do not conſider:* What was it they did not know, nor conſider? They knew not nor conſidered what the Ox and the Aſſe knew and conſidered; *The Ox knoweth his owner*, he knoweth that his Maſter feeds him, as well as works him. Thus alſo *the Aſs knoweth his Maſters crib*; as he knoweth that his Maſter imployeth him; ſo he knoweth that his Maſter provideth for him. The dull Aſs takes notice of the crib, and knows where and by whom he receiveth good; but ye my people know not me, ye do not conſider him that feeds you; For I *have nouriſhed and brought up children, and they have rebelled againſt me*, they never honoured me as the fountain and founder of their felicity. The Prophet *Hoſea* reproves the ſame ſottiſhneſs and blindneſs in that people (*Chap.* 2.8,9.) *For ſhe did not know that I gave her Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, and multiplied her Silver and Gold, which they prepared for* Baal. *Therefore I will return and take away her corn in the time thereof.* As if the Lord had ſaid, I will make them know that I can take theſe things away, ſeeing they would not know, or at leaſt not acknowledge that I am he who gave them. Carnal men attribute their good things, and the filling of their houſes with them to any thing rather then to God: they thank their friends or their good fortune: they thank themſelves, their policy, their induſtry, for what they have: they aſcend not up to God in thankfulneſs for what they have: they who ſay, *What can the Almighty do for them?* How ſhould they acknowledge, that the Almighty hath done any thing for them? The Prophet (*Hab.* 1.16.) ſpeaks of men *whoſe portion was fat, and their meat plenteous*; but to whom did they refer all this? Whom did they acknowledge for their benefactor, or as the cauſe of thoſe great ſucceſſes? The Prophet tells us, *They ſacrificed to their nets, and burnt incenſe to their drags.* The words carry an alluſion to fiſhing, in which Work or Art, nets and drags are the inſtruments of the fiſher-man; ſo that to ſacrifice to the net or to the drag, is to give the honour and thanks of all our attainments to ſecond cauſes, and creature helps, to our own wit,

wit, power, and induſtry, *&c.* To theſe ſaith the Prophet *they ſacrificed*, that is, they honoured them in the place or ſtead of God: *Sacrifice is proper and peculiar to God*, and therefore he that offers ſacrifice to any thing, makes it his god, or puts it in the place of God; they who thank themſelves for the good they have, are a god to themſelves. And thus we find the *Aſſyrian* aſcribing all to his own power (*Iſa.* 10. 14.) *By the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and by my wiſdom, for I am prudent; and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures, and I have put down the Inhabitants like a valiant man*; he did not think that the Lord did it by his hand, *but* (ſaith he) *by the ſtrength of my hand I have done it: my right hand is my God, my wiſdom is my god.* Theſe, theſe, *have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treaſures.* See how the Lord checks this inſolency (*verſ.* 15.) *Shall the ax boaſt it ſelf againſt him that heweth therewith? Or ſhall the ſaw magnifie it ſelf againſt him that ſhaketh it?* Men (I grant) are living inſtruments, yet they can do no more then inſtruments without life (the ax and the ſaw) unleſs God act them, or act by them. An ax or a ſaw can do as much without man, as man can do without God; yet vain proud man is as full of boaſting as if he could do, or had done all alone.

Fifthly obſerve, *That the portion of wicked men lyeth all on this ſide Heaven, and heavenly things.*

God filleth their houſes with good things, but they are the good things of this life; they have nothing that reacheth to eternal life. They have nothing that concerns pardon of ſin, or grace, much leſs have they glory for their portion (*Act.* 14. 16, 17.) *God did not leave himſelf without witneſs* (among the Heathen Nations) *in that he did good, and gave rain from Heaven, and fruitful ſeaſons, filling their hearts with food and gladneſs*; ſo much they received from God, as filled them with food for their bodies, and made their lives comfortable; but no more, that was all they had. As *Abraham* in the parable tells the rich man in Hell (*Luke* 16.25.) *Son, remember that thou in thy life time haſt had thy good things.* And what were the good things which he formerly had? We have an anſwer at *verſ.* 19. *He was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared deliciouſly every day.* As the Pſalmiſt is expreſs (*Pſal.*17. 14.) that *the men of this world have their portion in this life*, ſo, his purpoſe is to ſhew, that they have their portion in the things of this life; for he adds, *Whoſe bellies thou fillest with thy hid treaſures*, that is, with thoſe treaſures of corn, wine, and oyl, which are virtually hidden in the Earth, and brought forth by the Earth. God fills the bellies of the wicked, but he fills the Spirits of the godly; he fills the former with the hidden treaſures of the Earth, he fills none but the latter with the hidden treaſures of Heaven.

Laſtly note, *That the gifts of God even in temporal things are free and undeſerved.*

Not only are ſpiritual gifts and graces, together with eternal life undeſerved, but even temporals, and the things of this life. The Lord gives them unto his enemies, to thoſe that ſay to him, *depart from us*; and what do theſe deſerve at his hands, but ſtripes and death? He gave Chriſt to us while we were moſt unworthy of him; when we were yet enemies Chriſt died for us; ſinners do no more deſerve bread then they deſerve Chriſt; we no more deſerve the comforts of this life then eternal life; the one is of free grace to the elect, and the other is of bounty and goodneſs to the wicked. The old *Egyptians* (as ſome writers report them) were careful to confeſs the undeſervedneſs of thoſe outward favours, the plenty and abundance of corn and cattel, with which *Egypt* was ſtored; in teſtification whereof they every year brought into the Temple of their Idol *Serapis*, a meaſure ſhewing how high the river *Nilus* roſe and overflowed its banks (for *Egypt* being a flat Country, is watred by the overflowings of *Nilus*) and by the riſing of thoſe waters they could (very probably) prognoſticate the plenty or ſcarcity of the year enſuing. And they therefore took an exact account how many cubits high the river ſwell'd, leaving it in the Temple of *Serapis*, thereby acknowledging (as ſome conceive) that their Idol god was the beſtower of all that plenty, or (as *Eliphaz* here ſpeaks) that he *had filled their houſes with good things.*

But the Counſel of the wicked is far from me.

We had theſe words before (*Chap.* 21. 16.) *Job* made uſe of them there, and here *Eliphaz*, therefore I ſhall add but little for explication in this place. In general know, they are a *proverbial ſpeech*, by which the abhorrence of our ſpirits concerning either things or perſons is ſet forth to the utmoſt; as when we ſay to any man, *be gone, depart from me*, or as Chriſt to Satan, *Get thee behind me*, we ſhew our vehement deteſtation of his perſon. So when a man ſaith, ſuch or ſuch a thing *is far from me*, his meaning is, he utterly deteſts it, or that the thing is the very abomination of his ſoul. Therefore while *Eliphaz* ſaith, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me*, it is, as if he had ſaid, *I cannot indure to have any thing to do either with the wicked, or with their counſel; O my ſoul come not thou into their ſecret, unto their aſſembly; O mine honour be not thou united* (as dying *Jacob* beſpake his ſons *Simeon* and *Levi*, Gen. 49. 6.)

Puto Vulgarem eſſe dicendi modum, quo homines aliquid execrantur & à ſe arceri longiſſime jubent; Qualia ſunt, apage, avertat Deus. Pined.

But what is the counſel of the wicked? Their counſel may be taken, firſt, for that diſhonourable opinion which they held of God, that he could do nothing either for them or againſt them. I (ſaith *Eliphaz*) am of another mind, of another faith and perſwaſion. Their counſel is far from me who either deny the providence of God, or think they can hide themſelves from the eye of his providence; I believe that his eye beholdeth all, and that his hand worketh whatſoever pleaſeth him.

Secondly, Others by *Counſel* underſtand the ſcope of wicked men; ſo *Calvin* reads, *the intent of the wicked is far from me*; I have other purpoſes and deſigns then they have; *The plowing of the wicked* (ſaith *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 4.) *is ſin*; that is, the ſtirring and plotting of his mind to get his deſires ſatisfied is ſinful; I deſire not (ſaith *Eliphaz*) to put my hand to their plow. *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

Thirdly, As the deſign and plot, ſo the courſe and way of the wicked *is far from me.* The counſel of a man is put for the means by which he acteth his deſigns, as well as for the method in which he layeth them. We ſhall not wrong the drift of the Text in which ſoever of theſe three ſences we underſtand this proteſtation, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

Again, There is a threefold difference about the reading and relation of theſe words, which put together will give us yet a further light and underſtanding about them.

Firſt, The Septuagint read thus, *The counſel of the wicked is far from him*; and the antecedent, *to him* (according to their ſence) is God himſelf. As if *Eliphaz* had ſaid, the counſels and reſolutions which the wicked take up, God cannot abide, *they are far from him. His are holy, theirs are unholy counſels.*

Quæ conſilia illi ineunt longe ſunt à Deo.

Secondly, Others apprehend, that *Eliphaz* ſpake thus in the perſon of *Job*, and only reaſſumed what he had ſaid (*Chap.* 21. 16.) *O this is the man that ſaid even now the counſel of the wicked is far from me: Pray conſider, this is the man that profeſſed he would not ſo much as come near a wicked man, he would have nothing to do with their counſels, not he; he would be taken for a man of another ſpirit, of another frame then they; but ſee what he is, ſee how he joyns with them, how he walks in their wayes, how he follows their counſels; though he denies them with his lips, and makes ſtrange as if he knew them not, yet indeed he is of the ſame piece and ſpirit with them: and while he ſaith, the counſel of the wicked is far from me (behold his hypocriſie) the counſel of the wicked lieth in his boſom, and is embraced by him.*

Quaſi Job *ore tenus non reipſa impiorum conſilium improbaret. q.d. Num poteris dicere, te non ſentire cum improbis, cùm tu, ut ipſe providentiã Dei tollas.*

Thirdly, Which is more plain and clear, we may expound theſe words not only as ſpoken by *Eliphaz*, but as therein ſpeaking of himſelf; *The counſel of the wicked is far from me*; that is, I am a man of another ſtrain, of another grain then they, I am a man of another mould and make then they. Therefore O *Job*, what you ſpake before I ſpeak again, and I ſpeak it upon better grounds, with a better heart then you; you ſpake with your lips, or from the teeth outward, that *the counſel of the wicked is far from you*; but I have proved that you approach too near them both in courſe and counſel; I ſay, what you ſaid, but I ſay it (which you did not) in ſincerity; I profeſs, and what I profeſs is true, that *the counſel of the wicked is far from me. The ſame truth may be profeſſed by different perſons, upon different grounds, and to different ends*: the ſame premiſes do

Hæc ſunt ipſius Eliphaſi *verba, quibus ſeipſum commendat; ut qui potiori jure quam* Job, *& multo verius poſſit aſſerere ſe toto cœlo ab impiorum ſententia diſcedere.* Jun. Piſc.

Eliphaz *vult ex uno cum* Jobo *principio iiſdemq; præmiſſis contrariam elicere concluſionem.* Bold.

do not alwayes yield the ſame concluſions in the minds of men, though in themſelves they do. *Eliphaz* thought his counſel as far from *Job's*, as *Job* had profeſſed himſelf to be from the counſel of the wicked. When *Job* ſaid, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me*; his purpoſe was to ſhew, that though he was afflicted while many wicked men were proſpered, that yet he was not at all ſpirited or principl'd like wicked men: And that therefore his friends aſſertion muſt needs be falſe, who numbred him with the wicked becauſe he was afflicted. *Eliphaz* ſeems to retort this upon *Job*, and to ſay, if this be ſo, as thou affirmeſt, ſurely then God hath laid aſide the care of this world, and let all things run at ſix and ſevens; for ſurely if he took notice of men, either what they were, or what they were doing; he would never ſuffer the wicked to proſper, no nor to eſcape unpuniſhed. And ſeeing thou continueſt ſo ſtiff in thy opinion, that thou doſt not ſuffer theſe grievous calamities for thy ſin, thou ſeemeſt to me plainly to comply with their blaſphemy, who query, *How doth God know? Can he judge through the dark cloud?* This counſel of the wicked is far from me. And ſeeing as *Job* before, ſo *Eliphaz* here aſcribes counſel (which is the moſt deliberate act) to the wicked,

We may Obſerve, Firſt, *That wicked men ſin adviſedly; or, that many of their ſinful wayes, are ſtudied wayes.*

And as the more ſtudied they are, the more ſinful they are; ſo they ſtudy moſt for thoſe which are moſt ſinful. They are not hurried into ſin by paſſions, or thruſt on upon ſin meerly by the violence of temptation: They ſit down and go to counſel how they may compaſs their ungodly purpoſes. A godly man doth not conſent unto ſin, much leſs doth he conſult about it; *The evil which I do I allow not: I* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *conſent to the law of God that it is good* (Rom. 7.) A godly man ſins dayly, but ſin hath not his conſent or allowance when he hath done it, much leſs doth he conſult or adviſe how to do it. Sin doth not pleaſe him conſequently, much leſs doth he project it antecedently. 'Tis the character of a wicked man, that his ſin is his counſel, and that his art is in it as much as his nature: *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

Secondly, *Eliphaz* doth not ſay how far the counſel of the wicked was from him, but that it was far from him, and *by far*, he means *furtheſt*; as if he had ſaid, it is as far from me as far may be, I have no compliance with their counſels.

Hence obſerve, *That the ſpirit and way of the godly and the wicked are as different as their end and concluſion ſhall be.*

They are at furtheſt diſtance; they are like two parallel lines, which how far ſoever they run together, they never meet together, nor touch in a point. The concluſion of a wicked man or his end is far from that of the upright: the end of the one is light, the end of the other is darkneſs; the one ends in ſorrow, the other in joy; the end of the one is peace, of the other trouble. And ſo the way of the one is ſin, the way of the other is holineſs; the way of the one is oppreſſion and covetouſneſs, the way of the other is juſtice and righteouſneſs; the way of the one is faith, the way of the other is unbelief. Now as darkneſs and light, joy and ſorrow, peace and trouble, can never comply or be united; ſo neither can ſin and holineſs, oppreſſion and juſtice, faith and unbelief. There's no communion between theſe contraries, between theſe wayes and ends, counſels and concluſions. And unleſs we keep far from the counſels of the wicked, we cannot go far from their concluſion; nor can we avoid their end, but by avoiding their way. The ſame way brings the ſame end, whether we reſpect good or evil. And hence it is that the Spirit of God by *Solomon* gives ſuch a vehement admonition, to beware of the way of wicked men (*Prov.* 4. 14, 15.) *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away.* As in the former context, *he as a careful Father*, had preſſed his Son to the cloſeſt purſuit of wiſdoms way; ſo here, he as earneſtly preſſeth him to depart from the path of wickedneſs; he would have his Son not only not go into it, but not ſo much *as paſs by it*, that is, not go near it; as the next words intimate, *turn from it*, as if he had ſaid, keep at a diſtance, keep aloof off, do not ſtay ſo long within ſight of it as to look upon it; that's his laſt counſel, *paſs away*, not to return or come near it any more. And while we conſider whither that way leads, we ſhall eaſily grant that when all is ſaid, little enough is ſaid to lead us away from it. Where the way is ſin, the wages is death. Therefore let him who deſires to avoid the concluſion of the wicked, ſay, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.*

VERS. 19, 20.

The righteous ſee it, and are glad, and the innocent laugh them to ſcorn.
Whereas our ſubſtance is not cut down; but the remnant of them the fire conſumeth.

ELiphaz ſtill purſues the ruine and extirpation of wicked men; he ſhewed us before the ſinfulneſs of their practices towards man, and the folly of their opinion, *in ſaying to God depart from us*; who had never hurt them, nor given them any cauſe to be weary of his preſence, unleſs this diſpleaſed them, that *he filled their houſes with good things.* And becauſe they declared themſelves thus vain, therefore *Eliphaz* rejected both them and their way, *The counſel of the wicked is far from me.* Now, in this verſe he acquaints us with the event or iſſue of their counſels, and how the righteous carry themſelves, when God calls the wicked to an account, and reckons with them for their prophaneneſs and irreligion.

Verſ. 19. **The righteous ſee it, and are glad.**

Who the righteous man is, and what denominates a man righteous, hath been ſhewed before. *The righteous ſee it*, what do they ſee? That which they believed and looked for; the fall of wicked men. The act of ſeeing may be referr'd either to the *perſon ſeeing*, or to the *object ſeen*: as 'tis referr'd to the perſon of the righteous, ſo *ſeeing* notes both their priviledge and their pleaſure. They are admitted to ſee this ſpectacle of divine Juſtice, and it is their happineſs to ſee it. This *David* intimates (*Pſal.* 37. 34.) *Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he ſhall exalt thee to inherit the Land: when the wicked are cut off thou ſhalt ſee it.* The righteous ſhall be honoured with this ſight, yea and pleaſed with it, the cutting off of wicked men by the hand of God. The righteous man hath a promiſe to ſee this (and promiſes are the conveyances of mercies (*Pſal.* 91. 8.) *A thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee, only with thine eyes ſhalt thou behold and ſee the reward of the wicked.* Thou ſhalt be a ſpectator, not a partaker in that calamity. Wicked men ſometimes glut their eyes with beholding the troubles of the Saints, and they account it a happy day, when they can have ſuch a ſight. They ſign that day with a white ſtone, when the black ſtone of the moſt unjuſt and cruel condemnation proves the preſent lot of the righteous. *David* diſcovered ſuch a ſpirit in his enemies (*Pſal.* 35. 21.) *They opened their mouth wide againſt me, and ſaid, aha, aha, our eyes have ſeen it.* What had they ſeen? The former verſe tells us, *They ſpeak not peace, but they deviſe deceitful matters againſt them that are quiet in the Land.* When theſe deviſes took, and had ſucceſs; then they were pleaſed, then they had what they would, and ſaw what they deſired. And thus the enemies of the Church are deſcribed (*Mich.* 4. 11.) *Now alſo many Nations are gathered againſt thee, and ſay, let her be defiled,* (there is a twofold defiling, a defiling with ſin, and a defiling with blood and miſery, the latter is meant by the Prophet, *let her be defiled*) *and let our eyes look upon Sion.* They counted it a bleſſed ſight to ſee *Sion* bleed; the wicked would have ſuch ſights often, though uſually their eyes fail with waiting, and their hope is as the giving up of the ghoſt; but righteous men ſhall ſee (the righteous God hath ſaid it) vengeance poured upon the wicked.

Voluptatem importat hujuſmodi aſpectus.

Again, we may expound this act of ſeeing with reference to the object ſeen: and ſo it imports two things, firſt, the cer-

certainty of their fall: wicked men ſhall undoubtedly be deſtroyed, and there ſhall be eye witneſſes, honeſt and faithful witneſſes, teſtifying their deſtruction; *The righteous ſhall ſee it*, and report it to after generations.

Secondly, As ſeeing notes the certainty of their fall, or the evidence and clearneſs of it, ſo the publickneſs of it; that which is done to the eye, is done openly. What the juſtice of God doth againſt the wicked ſhall not be done in a corner, but as upon the houſe top. The reading of the *Septuagint* is full to this ſence; *They ſhall be made publick examples.* It is the care of juſt and wiſe Magiſtrates, not only to puniſh malefactors, but to puniſh them openly, that ſo all may ſee and fear and do no more preſumptuouſly. There are three ſpecial reaſons why offences are puniſhed; and the Greeks expreſs each puniſhment by ſuch a word as carrieth a diſtinct ſignification of thoſe reaſons. Firſt, Some are puniſhed, that themſelves may amend and better their manners; this they called σωφρονισμος. Secondly, Others are puniſhed, to repair the honour or maintain the dignity of thoſe againſt whom they have offended, leſt if ſuch ſhould eſcape without condigne puniſhment, authority ſhould be contemned, grow cheap, or be lightly valued; this they called τιμωρια. A third ſort were puniſhed for example, that others might be deterred from doing the ſame things, leſt they alſo incur the ſame ſufferings; this was called παραδειγμα. As much as to ſay, the holding of a man forth in his ſufferings to the open view, that he may be ſeen of all men, and that all may be warned to avoid his error. And thus the Lord who is the righteous Judge of all the world puniſheth wicked men. The ſame word is uſed by the Evangeliſt *Matthew* (Chap. 1. 19.) *Joſeph* being troubled that *Mary* was with child (for he knew not the myſtery of her over-ſhadowing by the Holy Ghoſt, *was minded to put her away ſecretly, and would not make her a publick example*; he was unwilling to bring her to juſtice, or that others ſhould ſee either her (ſuppoſed) ſin or puniſhment. But as God doth work many glorious ſalvations for his people, that the wicked may ſee it, and be aſhamed; ſo he brings many viſible deſtructions upon the wicked, not only that the righteous may ſee it and *rejoyce*, or be glad (which act follows next to be opened) but that the wicked may ſee it, and tremble to do wickedly.

Hence obſerve, Firſt, *That the Lord ſets up wicked men many times as examples of his wrathful juſtice.*

Not only do they feel wrath upon themſelves, but others ſee it; the Lord ſometimes chaſtens his own people in the view of the world, and ſets them up as examples of his fatherly diſpleaſure. Thus *Nathan* ſpeaks in the name of the Lord to *David* (2 Sam. 12. 12.) *Thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this thing* (what thing? I will afflict and chaſten thee for this great offence) *before all* Iſrael, *and before the Sun*; that is, in plain and clear light: Though thou haſt done this evil in the darkneſs of many cloſe contrivances, yet I will draw the curtain, and make the penal effects of thy ſin as conſpicuous as the actings of thy ſin have been cloſe and covert. Again (*Numb.* 25. 4.) when the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of *Moab*, and *Iſrael* had joyned himſelf unto *Baal-peor*, ſo that the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt *Iſrael*; *Then the Lord ſaid to* Moſes, *take all the heads of the people* (that is, the capital offenders, or chief rulers, who gave way, or at beſt gave no ſtop to ſuch wickedneſs) *and hang them up before the Lord againſt the Sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from* Iſrael. To hang them up before the Sun, is a phraſe of ſpeech importing the publickneſs of their puniſhment (as it is ſaid of the ſeven Sons of *Saul*, that they were *hanged on the hill before the Lord*, 2 Sam. 21. 9.) for caution unto all; whatſoever is done in the ſight of all, or ſo that all may ſee, is ſaid (in the Language of the *Jews*) to be done before the Sun. To which ſence alſo we may interpret that viſion of the Prophet *Zechariah* (Chap. 5. 6, 9, 10, 11.) at *verſ.* 6. we read of an *Ephah*, and this *lift up* (verſ. 9.) *between Earth and Heaven*; the *Ephah* was a meaſure of dry things among the *Jews*: and in that viſion it ſignified that the ſin and puniſhment of the *Jews* were meaſured and proportioned; this *Ephah* being lifted up and carried, *I* (ſaith the Prophet) *ſaid, whither do theſe bear the Ephah?* (verſ. 10.) *And he ſaid unto me, to build it an houſe in the land of* Shinar, *and it ſhall be eſtabliſhed and ſet there upon her own baſe.* The building it an houſe in the land of *Shinar* (that is, in *Babylon*) ſignified the laſtingneſs or continuance of their ſin in the ſad conſequents of it, their puniſhment and baniſhment in ſtrange lands, not for the ſpace of ſeventy years only, as by the *Babylonians*, but (as ſome of the Learned expound the viſion) for many ſeventies by the *Romans*: and as this *Ephah* had a houſe built for it, noting the ſetledneſs and duration of the Judgment which ſhould come upon them for their ſin; ſo alſo it was ſet upon its own baſe, to ſignifie the notoriouſneſs or conſpicuouſneſs of the Judgment, it being as a houſe ſet upon pillars for all to behold and take notice of: as we ſee fulfilled to this day, ſince the firſt overthrow of their eſtate by *Titus Veſpatianus*, and their final diſperſion by *Ælius Adrianus*. There are I grant other conceptions about that viſion, but as this ſuits well with the point in hand, ſo with the calamitous ſtate of that people to this day.

And thus the Lord threatned the King of *Tyrus* (Ezek. 28. 17.) *Whoſe heart was lifted up becauſe of his beauty, and who had corrupted his wiſdom by reaſon of his brightneſs.* Now what will the Lord do? What courſe will he take with him? The next words enform us; *I will caſt thee to the ground, and I will lay thee before Kings, that they may behold thee*; he doth not ſay, *I will caſt thee into the ground*, but *to the ground, and lay thee before Kings*; that is, thou ſhalt be a ſpectacle for all the Kings of the Earth, that they may behold as what thy pride and ſelf-confidence have brought thee to, ſo what their own (if they tread thy path) either will or juſtly may bring them unto. Thus alſo in *verſ.* 7. of *Judes* Epiſtle, the Apoſtle ſaith, *That* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *and the Cities about them in like manner, giving themſelves over to fornication, and going after ſtrange fleſh, are ſet forth for an example, ſuffering the vengeance of Eternal fire.* The Judgments of God are not only puniſhments to them who went before, but premonitions to them who come after.

The righteous ſee it, and are glad.] Here is the effect which that ſight wrought upon the righteous: *The eye affects the heart*, and the heart is affected ſutably to the object, either with joy or with ſorrow. The deſtruction of men is a ſorrowful object, and therefore we might rather expect that the righteous beholding it ſhould be affected with ſorrow; but the Text affirms a direct contrary effect of this ſight; *The righteous ſee it, and are glad.*

Hence obſerve, *The judgments of God upon the wicked are matters of joy to the righteous.*

It is the duty of Saints *to mourn with them that mourn, and to rejoyce with them that rejoyce* (Rom. 12. 15.) But then we muſt underſtand theſe mourners and rejoycers to be ſuch as themſelves are. Saints muſt mourn with mourning Saints, and rejoyce with rejoycing Saints. The godly are not bound either to joy the joys, or ſorrow the ſorrows of the wicked. The judgments of God upon the wicked have a twofold effect eminently noted in Scripture. Firſt, They cauſe fear: And ſecondly, They cauſe joy. When exemplary juſtice was to be done (according to the Law of *Moſes*) upon preſumptuous tranſgreſſors, it is ſaid (*Deut.* 13. 11.) *All* Iſrael *ſhall hear, and fear, and ſhall do no more any ſuch wickedneſs.* *David* (Pſal. 64.) having complained to God in prayer of the cruelty of his enemies, and begged protection from their malicious practices, grows up to much aſſurance, that down they muſt (*verſ.* 7, 8.) *But God ſhall ſhoot at them with an arrow, ſuddenly ſhall they be wounded*; and then (*verſ.* 9.) *All men ſhall fear, and ſhall declare the work of God, for they ſhall wiſely conſider of his doings.* Thus fear is the iſſue of divine judgement; and yet joy is the iſſue of them at the tenth verſe of the ſame Pſalm; *The righteous ſhall be glad in the Lord, and truſt in him, and all the upright in heart ſhall glory.* Fear is a common effect; *All men ſhall fear*: Gladneſs, faith and glorying (which is faith triumphant) are peculiar to the upright, when the arrow of God wounds the wicked. We have this double effect again expreſt upon the ſame occaſion (*Pſal.* 107. 42.) *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and cauſeth them to wander in the wilderneſs where there is no way, but he ſets the poor on high: The righteous ſhall ſee it and rejoyce.* What ſhall they ſee? Not only

only the godly poor set on high, but ungodly Princes filled with contempt, that's part of the spectacle which the righteous shall behold, and beholding rejoyce: yet this is not all, for it follows; *And all iniquity shall stop her mouth*; The abstract is put for the concrete, iniquity for men of iniquity: And so the meaning is men of iniquity, or wicked men shall stop their mouths: their mouths shall be stopt with shame and fear, they shall have nothing to say when the Lord doth this; They shall not mutter a word against the works of God: but as *Hannah* speaks in her Song (*1 Sam.*2.9.) *shall be silent in darkness.* A like report raiseth the hearts of the people of God into a holy merriment (*Psal.*97.8.) *Sion heard, and was glad, the daughters of Judah rejoyced.* What was the matter? what good news came to *Judah?* what to *Sion?* the Text resolves us; *Because of thy judgments O Lord:* The answer is not, *because of thy mercies*, or because of thy goodness O Lord, but because of thy judgments, and those were dreadful ones (v.3.) *A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. Confounded be all they that serve graven Images*, &c. v.7. *Sion heard of it, and was glad.* Once more (*Psa.*58.10.) *The righteous shall rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance, he shall wash his feet in the blood of the ungodly.* Not that the righteous delight in blood, or proudly insult over the worst of enemies; the Psalmist doth only in hyperbolical strains of Eloquence, borrowed from the language of triumphant conquerers, express a compleat and glorious victory. The stile is of the same signification with that (*Psal.*68.23.) *That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same.* When so much bloud is shed that the foot may be dipt and washed in it, that dogs may lay it up like water, this argues a great destruction; and when the wicked are thus destroyed, the righteous shall rejoyce.

But here it may be queried, What matter of joy is this? why should the righteous rejoyce in the sorrows of the wicked? is it not alike sinful to be troubled at the joys, and to rejoyce at the troubles of our brethren? The light of nature condemns rejoycing over those who are in misery; and we have an express Scripture against it (*Prov.* 24.17.) *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, let not thy heart be glad when he stumbleth.* And *David* puts it among the sins of his enemies (*Psal.* 35.15.) *In my adversity they rejoyced.* And he professed (*vers.*13.) *that when they were sick his cloathing was sackcloath, and that he humbled his soul with fasting. David* was so far from rejoycing when his enemies were ruined, or dead, that he mourned when they were but sick, and would not eat, when they could not. And as *Davids* holy practice denied it, so doth *Solomons* divine precept; *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth.* How then shall we reconcile these Texts?

I answer, there may be a rejoycing at the afflictions and troubles of others, which is not only unbecoming and unseemly for the righteous, but very sinful. As

First, To rejoyce, and be glad, meerly because an enemy is fallen into misery, is both unseemly and sinful. And so we are to understand *Solomons* Proverb; *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth.* Some understand this of falling into sin. He makes himself a sinner indeed, who rejoyceth because another hath sinned. He that rejoyceth because another hath sinned, rejoyceth upon the matter because God is dishonoured. Such joy is a kind of thanksgiving for Satans victory. But as to rejoyce because another falls into sin, is the worst fall into sin; so to rejoyce meerly because an enemy falls into misery, is worse then our own falling in misery. He shews that he hath not the heart of a man in him, who is glad at the misery of any man. And he who rejoyceth thus when his enemy falleth, doth himself fall much worse. The ruine and down-fall of an enemy (suppose him the vilest enemy) considered in it self, is meat and drink to none but revengeful and envious spirits. *David* was much troubled and chargeth it as an extream piece of folly upon himself, *Because he was envious at the foolish when he saw the prosperity of the wicked* (*Psal.*73.3.) Now it is an issue flowing from the same principle, purely to envy the prosperity, and purely to rejoyce in the adversity of the wicked. *Nero* was justly reckoned a monster among men, who could sing when himself had set *Rome* a fire: And they have some-what of a Neronian spirit in them, who can sing when they see their enemies consuming in the fire. God delights not in the misery of man (as it is misery upon man) nor do they, who are taught of God.

Secondly, As to rejoyce or be glad at the destruction of enemies, meerly because they are destroyed; so to rejoyce upon private ends or respects, because they being taken out of the way and removed out of the world we hope to have more scope and room in the world for our selves; or because we hope to step into their places, to sit down in their seats, to possess our selves of their lands and riches, to fill our selves with their spoils; upon this account to rejoyce when wicked men fall, when the Lord pours out contempt upon Princes (because (I say) we hope to be gainers by it) is altogether uncomely for the righteous. Let the righteous take heed to themselves, that they be not found thus rejoyceing in the calamities of the wicked. They who do so are either but pretenders to godliness, men who are only of the faction of the righteous (for though they who are righteous indeed are far from a faction, yet there are a sort of men, who profess righteousness as if it were nothing but a faction, now (I say) they who thus rejoyce are but either of the faction of the righteous) while they are really of the number of the wicked; or if they are really righteous who do so (and I confess that a righteous man may do so, *David* (which was acting the counter-part) envied their prosperity, and by the same reason any godly man may be acted out in joy at their adversity; but now, (I say) if they who are really righteous do so) we must conclude them under a sore temptation, and they will at last conclude of themselves as *David* did in the counter-case, (*Psal.*73.22.) *So foolish have we been and ignorant, even as a beast before thee.*

You will say then, how may or do the righteous rejoyce when the ungodly fall, and not fall into sin themselves?

I answer, First, The righteous rejoyce at the fall of the wicked, as blessing God who hath kept their feet from those wayes in which the wicked have fallen. As 'tis a great mercy to be kept out of those ill-wayes, to be kept from siding with those corrupt interests, in the pursuit of which we see many broken; so 'tis a duty to rejoyce that we have not walked in their way whose end we see to be nothing else but destruction.

Secondly, The righteous have cause to rejoyce and bless God when they see the wicked fall, because themselves are saved, and keep their standing; because themselves have escaped the danger, and the Lord hath been a banner of protection over them in the day when the wicked fell. *Moses* after the destruction of *Amaleck built an Altar, and called the name of it Jehova-Nissi* (*Exod.*17.15.) that is to say; *The Lord is my banner.* And in like cases the joy of the Saints is not properly in the destruction of the wicked, but in their own deliverance, through the mighty power and good hand of God with them. It is the presence of God with them, the appearance of God for them, which is the gladness of their hearts.

Thirdly, The righteous then rejoyce, because the Church and people of God are in a fair way to peace; when the Lions are destroyed, the sheep are in safety; when the Wolves and the Bears are cut off, the flock rests quietly: so in this case when men of devouring cruel spirits, wicked and ungodly ones, are removed, the flock of God, the sheep of his pasture feed quietly, none making them afraid. The fall of the enemies of *Sion*, is the establishment of *Sion*; yea in a great measure of mankind. As the Prophet most elegantly sets it forth (*Isa.* 14.6,7,8.) *He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the Nations in anger, is persecuted and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing, yea the fir-trees rejoyce at thee, and the Cedars of Lebanon, saying, since thou art laid down no feller is come up against us.* How often have wicked men in power felled not only the Fir-trees and Cedars of the world, but the goodly trees of righteousness in the Lords plantations; have they not therefore reason to sing when such fall, seeing the Fellers themselves are then felled and fallen?

Fourthly, Joy ariseth to the righteous, because God is honoured in the fall of wicked men; And that's their chiefest joy. That God is honoured is more joy to the righteous, then that themselves are saved, how much more then, that the wicked are destroyed? There is a threefold honour arising to God when the wicked fall.

First, God is honoured in his justice; such a day *is the day of the declaration of the righteous judgment of God*; as the Apostle speaks of the great day of Judgment (*Rom.* 2.5.) *Thou after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest*

treasurest up to thy self wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Some do even question the justice of God when wicked men prosper, but he is vindicated in his justice when wicked men fall. It cannot but please righteous men, to see the righteous God exalted, or God exalted in his righteousness. They know and believe that God is righteous, when the wicked prosper (*Jer.* 12.1.) But when the wicked are punished, they proclaim his righteousness. Then *they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy wayes thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear thee O Lord, and glorifie thy Name, &c. for thy judgments are made manifest,* (*Rev.*15. 3,4.) The Lord is alwayes alike just, but it doth not alwayes alike appear how just he is. And as, that God is just is the faith and stay of the Saints, so the appearances of his justice are their joy and triumph.

Secondly, God is honoured much in the attribute of his truth; in the truth of his word, in the truth of his threatnings, when the wicked are punished. God hath spoken bloody words concerning wicked men; not only in reference to their future estate in the next life, but to their present estate in this. *Say to the wicked it shall be ill with him, the reward of his hands shall be given him.* But what is this reward? There are two sorts of rewards; First, Rewards of love and favor according to the good which we have done; Secondly, Rewards of wrath and anger, pœnal rewards, according to the evil which we have done. Now when the Lord puts these pœnal rewards into the hands of the wicked, or pours them upon their heads, he is honoured in his truth as well as his justice, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. As *the promises are yea and Amen* (2 *Cor.* 1.20.) So also are the threatnings, *unto the glory of God by us.* But as when *David* saw his life in danger every day, he began to question the truth of God, in the promise, that he should live to reign and sit upon the throne of *Israel*; for saith he (*Psal.* 116. 11. when things went thus with him) *I said in my hast all men are liars,* even *Samuel* among the rest, who assured me of the Kingdom by express message from God, but surely he also is deceived, and hath fed me with vain hopes. Now as these words of *David,* according to our translation of them, and the truth of the thing in frequent experiences, shew, that Godly men are apt to question the truth of the promise, when themselves are by seemingly contradicting providences much afflicted; so they are apt to question the truth of the threatnings when they see outward providences prospering the wicked; Therefore when the threatnings have their actual *yea and Amen,* that is, when they are executed upon the ungodly, this also is *to the glory of God by us,* that is, God is glorified by all his people, who hear of it in the truth of what he hath spoken. Again, as God is magnified in the truth of his threatnings, when any particular wicked man is punished; so when common calamities come upon the wicked, the truth of God, or God in his truth, is magnified two wayes. First, As such calamities are a fulfilling of many Prophesies; Secondly, As they are the answer or return of many prayers. The vengeance which falls upon the Enemies of the Church of God is drawn out by prayer, *Luk.* 18.7,8. And there is nothing wherein God is more honoured, then when prayer is answered; For as therein he fulfils our wants, so his own word; *Who hath not said to the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain.*

Thirdly, When the wicked fall, the Lord is honoured in the attribute of his power; How great is his power, who pulls down great power? It argues the Almightiness of God, when he puts the mighty from their seats: when the Oaks and the Cedars, when the high walls and mountains are shaken and removed by his blows and batteries. When *Pharaoh* and his Egyptian host were drowned in the red Sea; Then *Moses* magnified God in his power (*Exod.*15.2.) *The Lord is my strength and song* (that is, I will sing of the strength of the Lord, not of the strength of man) *he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my fathers God, and I will exalt him.*

In these three attributes, justice, truth, and power, God is honoured, when the wicked are destroyed; and therefore it cannot be uncomely for the Saints to rejoyce when they are destroyed. The Lord by his Prophet assures the Church his *Jacob,* that all the enemies thereof shall be scattered (*Isa.* 41.15.) *Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, thou shalt thresh the Nations and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff, &c.* The mountains and the hills to be threshed, were the mighty ones of the earth, setting themselves against the wayes and designs of heaven. The Instrument or flayl wherewith they were to be threshed was the *worm Jacob* (*vers.*14.) God did not so much make an Instrument for the *worm Jacob,* as he made the *worm Jacob* his Instrument. *Behold, I will make thee,* (not for thee) *a new threshing Instrument*; But when the worm hath done this great work, when he hath threshed the mountains, and made the hills as chaff; What must he do then? The sixteenth verse tells, *Thou shalt rejoyce in the Lord, and shalt glory in the holy one of Israel.* Glorying is more then rejoycing: Glorying is a kind of rapture or extasie of the soul. As there is an extasie of infatuation, so there is an extasie of Gracious admiration. Fools and mad men are besides themselves for want of reason; the wisest and best of men, are besides themselves through the abundance of the Grace of God in them, and the abundance of the goodness of God towards them. When the goodness of God acted mightily towards us, meets with the Grace of God acting mightily in us, we are lifted up so far out of our selves, that we can see nothing in our selves, and then in whom or in what can our rejoycing be, *but in the Lord the holy one of Israel?*

Gaudebunt de eorũ exitio, non vindictæ cupiditate, sed zelo dei accensi qui hoc modo declarabit sibi cura esse res humanas. Drus.

This joy is not, First, the joy of the Epicure; A sensual joy, in wine and belly chear, in eating the fat, and drinking the sweet, in carnal merriments and musick. Nor is this, Secondly, a cruel joy in the ruine and destruction of men, which the Prophet rebukes (*Obad. v.* 12.) *Thou shouldest not have rejoyced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction.* Nor is this, Thirdly, a proud joy, or a joy of ostentation, when men spread their plumes, and publish their own wisdom, greatness and power. Nor is it, Fourthly, a covetous joy, such as theirs is who are glad because they have fill'd their purses, enriched their families, and their hand hath gotten much. Nor is it Lastly, a secure joy, because when evil men are cast down we hope to sit warm and well, safe and quiet upon their ruines. But this joy consists, First, in high thoughts and valuations of God; *Whom have I in heaven but thee, &c.* (*Psal.*73.25.) *Who is like unto thee O Lord among the Gods* (*Exod.*15.11.) It consists, Secondly, in a sweet rest of complacency in God. *Return unto thy rest O my soul*: that is, turn in to God, live nearer him, saith a Godly man (to his soul) in such a case (*Psal.*116.7.) This joy is the rest of the soul in God; He who is rest to himself (as God is) may be so infinitely more to us. Thus, *The righteous see it, and are glad.*

And the innocent laugh them to scorn.] This heightens the sence of the former part of the verse; not only are the righteous glad when the wicked are destroyed, but they *laugh them to scorn. The righteous,* in the former part of the verse are the same *with the innocent* here: yet we may distinguish them. The innocent are taken two wayes in Scripture; First, the innocent are they who are pure from sin; Secondly, the innocent are they who are pure or free from punishment, or from trouble; freedom from sin, and freedom from trouble are so dependant upon one another, that one word may well express both. Thus the word is used (2*Sam.*14.9.) *The woman of Tekoah said to the King; My Lord O King, the iniquity be on me, and my fathers house, and the King and his throne be guiltless or innocent,* that is, free from all evil and trouble. While she saith, *The iniquity be upon me,* her meaning is, *let the punishment of the iniquity be upon me, let the King and his throne be guiltless*; let no punishment of iniquity fall either upon the King in person, or, upon his government. In the same sence the word is read (*Exod.*19.21.) *If he* (that hath been smitten) *rise again and walk abroad upon a staff, then he that smote him shall be quiet*; the Hebrew is, *then shall he be innocent,* that is free from punishment, he shall not have any censure, or judgment for it. We have the like use of the word (*Numb.*5.19.) in the case of the woman suspected by her husband for disloyalty in breaking her marriage vow; she being for her purgation to drink the *bitter water,* the Priest was to bespeak her in this manner: *If no man hath lien with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness with another in stead of thy husband, be thou free* (or innocent) *from this bitter water that causeth the curse*

Innocens in Scriptura sumitur, non solùm activè, pro eo, qui nemini nocet, sed etiã passivè, pro eo cui nemo nocet.

Innocens iste ab aquis istis amarissimis. Heb.

curse, that is, let the water do thee no harm; as if he had said, *thou shalt feel no evil of pain by it, if thou art not guilty of the evil of sin.* Thus some expound the word here. *The innocent shall laugh them to scorn*, that is, they who are free from those troubles with which the wicked are over-taken and undone, those particular righteous men who escape the storm untouched, *laugh the wicked to scorn.* Many of the Hebrew writers fix upon a special person; and by the *Innocent*, understand *Noah*, as if it were a report of what was done upon the old world; Then *the righteous*, that is (as the Chaldee Paraphrase explains it) the sons of righteous *Noah saw* (the flood) *and were glad*, and innocent *Noah* laught the prophane old world to scorn. When *Noah*, and his sons were building the Ark, the old world in stead of believing and fearing the report or prophecy of a deluge, laught them to scorn, and in derision, doubtless, ask't them what voyage they intended, and whether they meant to sail their Ship over the dry Land; as for them they never dreamt of a Sea hanging in the clouds, and ready to drop down upon their heads. Now as the ungodly world derided *Noah* and his Sons for their credulity before the flood came, so 'tis probable enough that when the flood came upon that world of the ungodly, *Noah* and his Sons laught and derided their incredulity. *They who laugh at divine threatnings, deserve to be laughed at under divine sufferings.*

Videbant filii Noë justi & lætabuntur, & Noë innocens subsannabit eos. Targ.

Others apply this particularly to the Tragedy of *Pharoah* and his Egyptians overwhelmed and drowned in the red Sea, of which it is said, (*Exod.*14.30,31.) *Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the shoar; and Israel saw that Great work, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians.* The effect of this sight is two wayes described in that holy History: First, By the acting of fear and faith: *And the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses.* Secondly, by the acting of their joy in the Lord, and their holy insultation over the drowned Egyptians (*Chap.* 15. *vers.* 1.) *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this Song unto the Lord, and spake saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the Sea.* Thus also that innocent people saw the ruine of their wicked enemies, *and laughed them to scorn.*

Yet I conceive *Eliphaz* speaking here rather upon a generally experienced and positive truth, then strictly and particularly aiming at those ancient Examples. *The Innocent*, that is, any innocent person, whether innocent in reference to the doing of evil, or having escaped the sufferance of evil, *laugh them to scorn.*

Before, he said, *the righteous see it, and are glad*; now he saith, *the innocent laugh them to scorn*: it is one thing for a man to be glad in himself, and another thing to laugh other men to scorn: for though to *be innocent* carries in it somewhat less, or at the most but so much as to be righteous, yet to laugh the unrighteous and wicked to scorn when they fall, carries in it much more then to be glad when they fall. And besides, the word in the Hebrew signifies the most scornful laughter, such a laughter as is expressed, by a distortion of the mouth, and lips, or by a kind of fained lisping with the tongue, and artificial faultring in speech; For as they that lisp and faulter in speech are usually derided and laught at, so they that deride and laugh at others will purposely lisp, or faulter in speech. Stammerers are contemptible; and many stammer at others in contempt; *This imitation of a defect in nature shews the excess of malice.* Such is the force of this expression, *The innocent laugh them to scorn.*

לעג *Denotat gestum qui fit ore, labiis, & ficta balbutie, sive quod balbutientes irrideri soleant, sive quod irrisores balbutiant, per contemptum & malignam imitationē.*

Here it may be questioned, how a good man, an innocent person can do such a thing; can he thus laugh the wicked to scorn? it is difficult enough to salve it as consistent with Grace, for a righteous man to rejoyce at the fall of the wicked, but it is far more difficult to salve it, how a righteous man may laugh them to scorn: scorning and deriding are the practices of lewd persons, of sons of *Belial*; such indeed are usually scorners and jeerers. The enemies of Jesus Christ are so described (*Psa.*22.7.) *All they that see me* (that is, all the wicked that see me; for many Disciples saw Christ in his sufferings, and did not only pity him, but honour and believe on him, but (saith he) *all they* (who are mine enemies) *that see me*) *laugh me to scorn, they shoot out the lip, and shake the head.* And *David* tells us (*Psal.*1.1.) that to *sit in the seat of the scornful*, is the conclusion of those who have first *walked in the way of the ungodly*; and Secondly, *stood in the way of sinners.* The common Latine translater renders that in the *Psalm*, not the seat of scorners, but the seat of the pestilence. And indeed they have spiritual plague-spots upon them, and the surest tokens of eternal death, who are given up to be scorners. Therefore question it again, how are the Innocent scorners?

I answer, That as when humane affections, which are below the divine nature, are attributed to God, (such are *to repent, to be grieved at the wickedness, and to laugh at the calamity of the wicked*) we say these note only an effect upon the creature, not a change of affection in God (for, in him there is no variableness nor shadow of change) so when those actions, which are below or unsutable to a renewed regenerate nature in man, are attributed to the Saints (such as these, *to wash their feet in the blood of the ungodly, to laugh them to scorn in their saddest miseries*) we must say, that these note rather what the wicked deserve, then what the godly do. The godly are no scorners, but there is that in wicked men which is worthy to be laughed to scorn; or wicked men do that, for which they deserve to be laughed at; whatsoever is evil in such like actions, is far from the heart and spirit of the godly. And therefore as Scriptures of such a tenour are to be interpreted and understood in such a manner as becomes and is consistent with the holiness of God, so also (in their proportion) to the holiness of the Saints. The laughter of the Saints in these dispensations is serious; and their scorning, the acting of their graces, not of their corruptions. And thus it is said of God himself (*Psal.*2.4.) *He that sitteth in heaven shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.* And (*Prov.*1.26.) *I will mock at your calamity, and laugh when your fear cometh: when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, &c.* that is, I will carry my self so towards you, I will pity you (who have been scorners of my word, *and have set at nought my counsel*) no more then men pity those, whom they laugh to scorn; such is the laughter of the Saints at the calamity of the wicked. And thus *Eliah* derided *Baals* Priests, while they wearied themselves in their foolish superstition (1 *King.* 18.27.) *And it came to pass at noon that Eliah mocked them, and said, cry aloud, for he is a God; either he is talking, &c.* Thus *Hierusalem* is expressed (*Isa.*37.22.) when *Sennacherib* sent up that proud threatning message, the Lord sent a comfortable message to his people by *Isaiah* the Prophet; *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib the King of Assyria, this is the word which the Lord hath spoken concerning him; the virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn, the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.* The daughter of *Zion*, and the daughter of *Jerusalem* are but one and the same; she was called a virgin, not (as some have conceived) because she was never taken or forced by any enemy, nor was she so called, because she had preserved her self pure and chaste in the worship of the true God (for she had her failings and Idolatrous dalliances before that day) but she was so called because of that special care which God had of her to protect and save her against the insultations of the enemy then ready to assault her, even as a virgin is protected from violence in her fathers house. And the Prophet to assure them that it should be so, speaks of the ruine of *Sennacheribs* Army, and *Jerusalems* laughter, as accomplisht and come to pass already; *The virgin daughter, &c. hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn, and shaken her head at thee.* What God saith shall be done, is as good as done already. The *Assyrians* were yet in their Jollity, laughing at *Jerusalem*, and promising themselves the spoil of the people of God, yet (saith the Lord) *Jerusalem hath laughed thee to scorn*; that is, assuredly she shall. And as the people of God do sometimes formally and explicitly laugh at the downfal and witherings of the wicked, so they always virtually and secretly laugh them to scorn, even when they stand and flourish in their greenness and prosperity: For while the Godly are not daunted with the power and splendour, while they are not terrified with the threats and high looks of the wicked, but in the singleness and simplicity of their hearts, keep close to God, his wayes and truths; even this, though they use the duest respect to them in regard of their authority, both in word and gesture, is a laughing them to scorn: For this is as a thorn in the sides of evil men, and as a prick in their eyes; when they see they will not stoop to their

Irrisio, & ὅσα κερκετικὰ, & similia quæ affectum humanū significant, uti à deo longè absunt, ita quæ mali moris sunt ab ecclesia. Coc. *Ut hæc de deo σκοπευτικῶς ita de sanctis ἀγιοπρεπῶς sunt intelligenda.*

greatness in any sinful compliance with their commands. This is a truth, but the former is the truth intended in this Text.

Hence Note, *That wicked men are not only miserable but ridiculous.*

They are the laughter of the innocent, upon more accounts then one.

First, Because they do such childish and ridiculous things, such things as can never reach the ends they desire and purpose: they are justly laughed at, whose counsel and courses are unsuitable, much more, when contrary to their designs.

Secondly, Wicked men become ridiculous, while the Lord frustrates their wisest counsels, and blasts those hopes which were bottom'd upon the most probable principles and foundations, while he takes them in their own craft, and entraps them in the snare which they laid for others.

Thirdly, While he over-rules all that they plot or act to serve his own ends, and fulfil his own holy counsels. Hence the enemies of God are said *to pine away*; *this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people, that have fought against Jerusalem, their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet* (he doth not say, that they shall be slain, but their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet) *and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth* (*Zech.* 14.12.) which as some interpret of their bodily languishment, that they shall live dying continually, or that their life shall be a continual death, so all interpret the cause of *this consumption* to arise from vexation of spirit, because they shall see themselves scorn'd and laughed at, or that they are become ridiculous to all the world, but chiefly to *Jerusalem*, the Church and people of God, whom they shall behold in good condition, notwithstanding all the opposition which they have made against them; which *Eliphaz* also clearly expresseth in the next words.

Vers. 20. **Whereas our substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumes.**

There are divers readings and rendrings of this verse: First, Some with an affirmative interrogation; *is not their substance cut down?* that is, it is cut down; And then this verse is a continuation of the former discourse concerning the utter extirpation of the wicked; *The righteous are glad, they laugh them to scorn; is not their substance cut down? and doth not the fire consume the remnant of them?* As if *Eliphaz* had said, Whatsoever they had of any substance or moment is cut down, and if possibly there be any small inconsiderable remainder of them, fire (that is, some devouring Judgement) will meet with it, and make an utter end of it.

Innocens subsannabit eos, quia nõ fuit succisa substantia nostra, &c. q. d. ut qui se & res suas salvas, illos autem penitùs igne illo divino videant jure absumptos. Bez.

Secondly, Another understands this twentieth verse as a reason of the former; *the righteous are glad* (when the wicked fall) *the innocent shall laugh them to scorn, because our substance was not cut down*; as if he had said, our safety will be matter as of praise to God who hath preserved us, so of holy scorn and insultation over ungodly men, who longed to see our destruction, and said in their hearts, that surely our day was not only coming, but hastning; whereas indeed we see the day come upon them which burneth as an oven, and themselves as stubble. Wicked men are for the most part doubly disappointed; First, By their own fall, when they looked to stand: Secondly, By the standing of the righteous when they look, yea, and long for their fall; This double disappointment doth at once double their sorrow, and the joy of the Innocent, who laugh them to scorn, because *their own substance is not cut down, but the remnant of them the fire consumeth.*

Innocens subsannabit eos dicens, etsi non est succisa substantia nostra, tamen excellentiã illorum consumpsit ignis. Pisc. *Cæ nondum abscinditur substantia nostra & residuũ illorũ absumit ignis, assuesce quæso cum illo.* Jun.

There is a third translation which makes these words the form in which the innocent express their laughter at the wicked. When *the innocent laugh them to scorn*, they will thus bespeak them: *Whereas* or *Although our substance is not cut down, yet the remnant of them, or the best the excellency of them the fire hath consumed.*

There is a fourth reading, which makes the second part of the Chapter begin with this verse. For hitherto *Eliphaz* hath been describing the sinfulness of wicked men, and the wrath of God upon them for their wickedness. But here he is supposed entring upon a very serious exhortation to repentance, after this manner, or to this effect; *O Job, now while our substance is not quite cut down, and the fire consumeth the residue or the remnant of the wicked, acquaint thy self with God*, or apply thy self to God; as if he should say, *before thou art clean cut down, before thou art utterly ruined, as many wicked men have been heretofore, and now are, humble thy self and seek to God, that thy sin may be forgiven, and thy wound healed.* Some parallel this in sense with that of the Preacher, *Eccl.* 12.1. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh wherein thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.* Thus *Eliphaz* is conceived exhorting *Job*, *While our substance is not cut down, while we are not totally undone, while the fire of Gods wrath is consuming the remainder of wicked men, do thou acquaint thy self with God, and repent.* And though our translation makes not this connection, yet it joyns fully in the sense of the Original.

Quum subsistentia nostra non sit excisa, reliquias autem iterum ignis assumpserit. Tygur.

Ita bene ut nihil melius. Bold.

קימה *ἡ ὑπαρξις, existentia vel potius τὸ ἕστηκὸς ἢμῶν quo subsistimus duramus, vel subsistantia, i. e. vita qua subsistimus, nam stare valet interdum superstitem esse.* Drus.

Whereas our substance is not cut down.

So this verse is an ellegant conclusion of the whole matter hitherto insisted upon by *Eliphaz*, and he shuts it up in two parts: First, shewing the state of the innocent, who are brought in speaking thus, *Our substance is not cut down*; strictly, that by which we stand or subsist, our substance or subsistence, which some expound not by goods, but by life; we may take it both wayes, our life, and that by which our life is maintained, or by which we and our families subsist, *is not cut down.*

There is yet a difficulty in regard of the Grammatical sense of these words. For *Eliphaz* having spoken before in the third person plural, *The righteous are glad, and the innocent laugh them to scorn*, should (as it may be thought) rather have continued his speech in the same form, and have said, *Whereas their substance is cut down*, but he puts it in the first person plural, *Whereas our substance is not cut down, &c.*

We may answer two wayes; First, that it is usual in Scripture to vary the number, while the same person or persons is or are spoken of, take only one Instance, *Hos.* 12. 4. *He* (that is, the Angel of the Covenant) *found him in Bethel*, that is, *Jacob*: *And there he spake with us.* It should according to Grammar be read thus; *And there he spake with him.* Having found *Jacob* in *Bethel*, he spake with him in *Bethel.* But we see both the person and number are varied, the former words running in the third person singular (being meant particularly of *Jacob*) the latter in the first person plural, *There he spake with us*; The Spirit of God thereby signifying, that, what God spake at that time to *Jacob* personally, he spake to all the spiritual seed of *Jacob*, whether of the Circumcision or Uncircumcision, virtually. He so spake to *Jacob* as that the substance and effect of his speech reacheth down to and hath an influence upon *us*, believers, who are his posterity according to the Spirit. Besides this, other Scriptures hold out the like variation of the number, as in the Text, which is the first answer.

Secondly, *Eliphaz* might purposely vary the number, that himself might put in for a share, and be numbred among those, who had obtained that sparing mercy, not to be cut down while others were consumed. And so this reason of the change is purely spiritual, much like that last opened out of *Hosea.*

Whence Note, *That the righteous are often preserved in common calamities.*

(*Psal.* 20.8.) *They are brought down, and are fallen, but we are risen and stand upright, our substance is not cut down.* God takes special care of his own people; they are under a promise; there can be no greater safety, no better security then to be under a promise: the promise is the best shelter in a storm, and the best shield against the dart. The Apostle *Peter* gives us two famous examples of this, (*2 Pet.* 2.5,6.) *God spared not the old world, but saved Noah, &c. bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly. And having turned the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, &c. and delivered just Lot, &c.* From both which examples he concludeth (*vers.* 9.) *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished. When judgment begins at the house of God, what shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God?* as the same Apostle speaks (*1 Pet.* 4.17.) It is a sure argument to the wicked that they shall be judged, when they see God bringing judgements upon his own

house

house and people; but the wicked are many times judged while the house and people of God are preserved and untoucht; and when both good and bad, both the innocent and the wicked are wrapt up in the same calamity, when they are (as it were) thrust together into the same furnace, the Lord makes a difference, they are not cut down as the wicked are cut down, nor consumed as they are consumed. When the righteous are cast into the fire, they are purged, but not consumed; but (as it follows in the second part of this conclusion, shewing the state of the wicked)

The remnant of them the fire consumeth.

Fire in this place is not taken strictly, as opposed to water; God indeed hath often made fire in kind his scourge. And the Apostle *Jude* saith of *Sodom*, That it suffered the vengeance of eternal fire: But all the judgments of God are in Scripture compared to fire (*Mal.* 4. 1.) *Behold the day cometh that shall burn like an Oven, and all the proud, yea all that do wickedly shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.* There is a burning, and not by fire; There is so great a judgment and terror in fire let loose and breaking its bounds, that it may well signifie all judgments, or any thing that is terrible. (*Isa.* 5. 24.) *As the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaffe, so their root shall be rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust.* Thus here, *the remnant of them the fire consumeth*; that is, the wrath of God appearing in some visible judgment, consumeth the remnant.

But what is this *remnant* which the fire consumeth?

I answer, First, we may expound it of persons. The remnant of persons, all that are left of their family, their children and posterity, their kindred and relations are taken away and consumed from off the face of the earth.

Secondly, We may expound it of things, the remnant of goods, whatsoever remains of their estate, the odd ends, the very gleanings and leavings of their great riches and worldly substance, are all eaten up and brought to an end, so that nothing of them or theirs remaineth.

Thirdly, The remnant of them may be *the remembrance* of them. A fire shall consume their name and memorial, they shall never be thought of, nor spoken of any more with honour.

יתר *Significat illud quo quis alium excellit, ideo reliquiarum nomine impiorum excellentem & supra cæteros mortales ingentem fœlicitatem intelligo.* Pined.

Fourthly, The word *remnant*, as it signifieth in the Original any thing which remaineth, so especially that which remaineth in way of excellency, or eminency; not as we say the fagg-end of a thing, but even the uppermost and best of it. So that (after this translation) *the remnant of them* is *the excellency of them*, that which they thought most durable, and honourable, that which they looked upon as most substantial and intrinsecal to their greatness, that very thing *the fire shall consume.* So the word is used (*Psal.* 17. 14.) *Deliver my soul from men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world,* &c. *whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasures, they are full of children, and leave the rest* (or as we supply, *the rest of their substance*) *to their babes*; the rest, that is, *the best*; their bellies are full of hid treasures while they live, that is, they have and use abundance of the things of this life themselves; and they *leave the rest*, he doth not mean the scraps or parings after they had filled their own bellies, but *by the rest* or the *remnant*, ('tis the word of the text) he meaneth the choicest of what they had; even that they leave to their babes or children, when themselves must be gone and leave the world. Thus we may understand the word *remnant* in this place, not for a poor pittance, but for the best, the choicest things, for the flower and cream of all they had, even these things *the fire shall consume*, vengeance shall pursue and follow, till all be turned into smoak and ashes.

I have in divers other passages of this book met with Texts shewing the utter consumption of wicked men, therefore I shall not stay upon it here; only take this brief note;

That the Lord hath a different fire for the righteous and the wicked.

He hath a fire for his own people, but it is *a purging fire, a cleansing, a refining fire.* Like that (*Mal.* 3. 3.) *He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.* The Lord also hath a fire for the wicked, but it is a consuming fire. He kindles many fires upon them, and himself is a consuming fire to them. But it may be said, that God is a consuming fire also to his own people; for the Apostle speaking of himself and other believers, saith (*Heb.* 12. 29.) *Our God is a consuming fire.* I answer; First, 'Tis true, the God of Believers is a consuming fire, but he is not a consuming fire to believers; even the hearts of believers ought to be over-awed with a holy fear of that in God, which they shall never feel from God. Secondly, God is sometimes a consuming fire to believers; but it is only to consume their corruptions, or their corruptible comforts: He will never consume either their Graces or spiritual interests. These he will not consume, whatsoever he consumes. But the whole of a wicked man is as combustible matter before him. *There went up a smoak out of his nostrils, fire out of his mouth devoured* (*Psal.* 18. 8.) That is, God poured out wrath, which devoured them like a fire. Fire (I mean natural fire) is a great devourer, it hath a strong stomach, there's nothing but pure Gold too hard for its digestion; but mystical fire, the fire of divine wrath is infinitely a greater devourer. Wrath kindles many devouring fires, but wrath it self is the most devouring fire; who can stand before it? who can abide the heat and flames of it? This is the *Tophet* prepared of old for the wicked; This fire is able to consume branch and rush, the root and top of the wicked in one day, and yet it will continue consuming them to eternity. *The remnant of them the fire consumeth.*

Eliphaz having thus far prosecuted a description both of the unrighteousness and of the ruine, both of the sin and punishment of wicked men, closely insinuating that *Job* was the man concern'd in all this large Discourse, he, in the latter part of this Chapter, turns his speech into a serious Exhortation to move *Job* to repent, and seek God, giving him many assurances and promises, that (in case he did so) it should not be in vain.

VERS. 21, 22, 23.

Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.
Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.
If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity from thy Tabernacles.

ELiphaz having reproved *Job* for sin, and prest him with the remembrance of the Judgments of God against sinners: now turns his speech into a serious Exhortation moving him to seek the favour of God, and humble himself, *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace.* From this course and method in which *Eliphaz* deals with *Job*, take this note:

That in dealing with sinners we are not only to threaten, but to perswade and propose the promises of peace to them.

Daniel dealt so with *Nebuchadnezzar*; yea, though he had told him of a decree in heaven past against him (*Dan.* 4. 22. 27.) yet he gives him faithful counsel, and exhorts him *to break off his sins by righteousness, and his iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor, if it might be a lengthning of his tranquility*, or (as we put in the Margin) *a healing of his error.* Hopes of mercy prevail with many, more then fear of wrath, and they are sooner led then driven unto Christ. Thus *Eliphaz*; *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace.*

This verse 21. contains two general Propositions. First, a Proposition concerning duty, in the former part of the verse; *Acquaint now thy self*, &c. Secondly, Concerning mercy in the latter, *thereby good shall come unto thee.* The duty of acquainting himself with God, and being at peace with him, is explained in vers. 22. *Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.* That's a good Comment upon, *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace.* The Proposition of mercy, or the promises laid down in the close of that verse, are drawn out in all the following part of this Chapter, in which *Eliphaz* by most ample proposals of good things, doth provoke *Job* to turn from those sins of which he supposed him guilty, and to return to God.

Promissionibus invitat amplissimis, quæ & in se verè sunt & cum lege cõsentiunt, non tamen perpetua ut Eliphaz putat. Merc.

Acquaint now thy self with God.

The Original word which we render *to acquaint*, hath some

variety of significations: As first to be familiar with another. And so it is used by *David* (Psal. 139. 3.) to shew the Intimacy which God hath with all our wayes, works, and thoughts; *O Lord* (saith *David*) *thou hast searched me and known me*, &c. *thou art acquainted with all my wayes*; As if he had said, *Lord, thou knowest my wayes infinitely more clearly and distinctly, then any of my neerest acquaintance, who converse with me every day.* It is used secondly, to express the customary doing of a thing (*Numb.* 22.30.) *Balaams* Ass spake thus by a miracle, *Was I ever wont to do thus unto thee?* Hath it been my custom, or have I familiarly served thee thus, said the Ass, when he thrust *Balaam* against the wall.

שכן *Profuit, commodus, aptus fuit. Profice cum deo.* Rab. Mos.

Thirdly, *To profit*; one of the Rabbins translates the Text thus, *Profit with God*; as who should say, thou hast been an unprofitable servant to God all this while, be thou now profitable unto him, serve him and his Providences, advance his name and glory; or thus rather, Thou hast but played the Truant hitherto, be thou now a good proficient in the School of Divine doctrine and discipline under the holy precepts and various providences of God. We find it applied to that sense at the second verse of this Chapter; *Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself?* Man cannot be profitable unto God, or add any advantage to him by what he doth, but man may be profitable unto himself, or do himself good in doing the good will of God; yea God reckons it, and rewards man for it, as if he had been profitable to him, when he acts as becomes a faithful servant to him. So some expound it here, *be profitable unto God*, be a faithful and industrious servant unto him: having received his talents, do not lay them up in a napkin, hide them not in the earth.

Thirdly, Master *Broughton* reads thus, *Reconcile thee now unto him.* That's Gospel language, like that of *Paul* (2 Cor. 5. 20.) *Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be ye reconciled to God.* So he conceives *Eliphaz* speaking here, *I pray thee now reconcile thy self unto God.* Master *Beza* reaches that sence fully, *Return into his favour*, get into his heart again; God hath as it were lockt thee out of his heart, and shut the door upon thee, now get in again; and the Tygurine reads very aptly, *Accommodate thy self to him*, that is, every way suit thy self to him; thou hast heretofore been humorous, or hast followed thine own spirit, and hast labour'd to please thy self, now accommodate thy self to him, or comply with him in every thing, be no more at thine own but at his dispose. All these rendrings comply well both with the words and the general scope of *Eliphaz* in this part of his discourse. Our translation fully joyns with the first of them.

tedi cum oso in g a- iam. Bez. *Accommo- a te illi.* Tygur.

ssuesce cum Pagn. *eg. atabl.*

Acquaint now thy self with him.] Get into a familiarity with God. The word implieth a likeness, or a suitableness between two in their wills and affections, in their wayes and counsels; for from likeness in these familiarity or acquaintance doth arise. So that *Eliphaz* here speaketh to *Job* as one that had estranged himself and departed from God, as one who had broken off Communion with God, and so he must needs have done, had he run such a course of wickedness as *Eliphaz* charged him with, in the former part of this Chapter. Therefore upon that supposition he gives *Job* wholesome advice, *Acquaint now thy self with him.*

Hence observe, First, *That as man by nature is a stranger from God, so every act of sin, especially great and continued actings of sin, breed a further estrangement from God.*

We act the part of nature every time we sin, and that in a proportion brings us back in some degree to what we were by nature, *strangers unto God.* A godly man (who hath had acquaintance with God) sinning puts back his acquaintance, and a distance grows between God and him. Believers after great sins and follies committed, are not forward to come into the presence of God, they have a kind of listlesness to duty, a listlesness to prayer, and to all acts of communion with God. And God himself appears as if he did not much care for them when they come, they have not those Communications from God which he usually vouchsafeth his. God doth not give them the meeting as formerly; they do not find the Lord presently, though they seek him earnestly. So that both wayes there is an Estrangement; sin separates between God and the soul, not onely judicially but naturally. If God should not depart from sinners, or command them to depart from him; yet they would of themselves depart from him. It is not possible for one, who willingly lives in sin, to live willingly in the presence of God: For as to be cast out of the presence of God, is the extreamest punishment of wicked men, so also is their being in his presence. The same thing is both their desire and their punishment. They are punished with a departure from God, and they desire nothing more then to be out of his presence.

Acquaint thy self now with God.] Secondly, Whereas *Eliphaz* exhorting *Job* to repentance, counsels him to acquaint himself with God,

Observe, *That Repentance is the renewing of our Communion or acquaintance with God.*

As sin is a turning from God, so repentance is a returning to God; 'tis a change first of our mind, and then of our way. Impenitency brings the soul into an acquaintance and unholy familiarity with Satan; Repentance brings back the soul into its former acquaintance, and holy familiarity with God. As the first conversion (which is from a state of sin) so the second and every renewed conversion (which is from our falls into sin) renews our converse with the most high.

Thirdly, take this general observation;

A godly man is (as we may say) one of Gods acquaintance or familiars.

God calleth *Abraham* his friend; friendship cannot be without familiarity, there must be acquaintance before there can be love; if therefore there be friendship and love between God and man, there must be Acquaintance; we cannot love either persons or things, while unknown.

But it may be said, How can we, who are at such a distance, acquaint our selves with God?

I answer, we (who of our selves are afar off) are made nigh by the bloud of Jesus Christ, and being thus made nigh in our state, we draw nigh or acquaint our selves with him by several Acts. As first, To think or meditate of God, is to acquaint our selves with and draw nigh to God; meditation is an inward discourse and converse with God, it is a Soliloquie between God and the soul. Acquaintance is got by Conference: when friends meet and confer, that doth not only begin, but confirm, strengthen, and heighten their acquaintance. Saints have many thoughts of God, and that's their acquaintance with God. *How precious are thy thoughts to me, O God!* (saith *David*, Psal. 139. 17.) *how great is the sum of them! when I awake I am still with thee.* How was *David* still or ever with God? He was so in his thoughts, and meditations, in the actings and goings forth of his soul to him. Now he that is still or ever with a person, must needs be acquainted with him, *I am still with thee*, alwayes meditating upon thee. We find him again in the same holy frame (*Psal.* 63. 5, 6.) *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips; while I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches.* As the Lord is ever thinking upon his people, they are written upon his heart, and graven upon the palms of his hand; and when his outward actings towards them are such, as may seem to intimate that his heart is withdrawn from all intimacy with them, yet even then he thinks most of them. This he acknowledgeth concerning *Ephraim* (Jer. 31. 20.) *Since I spake against him I do earnestly remember him still.* Since I spake against him, that is, since I spake against him by words of rebuke and correction, since I spake against him by rods of chastisement and correction, (as *Ephraim* found and confessed he had; *Thou didst chastise me, and I was chastised*) since I spake thus against him, *I do earnestly remember him still.* I remember him, and I remember him strongly, my heart is much upon him. And when the Lord saith thus, we are not to understand it as a man will remember an Enemy, when he speaks against him; he'l remember him indeed, and that earnestly to plot mischief against him, and to execute his revenge; but the meaning is, I remember him in mercy, my affections go out to him, my bowels are moved towards him. Such is the remembrance which God had of *Ephraim*, even when he was speaking against him and smiting him. Now as the Lord doth remember his people at all times, and earnestly remember them

them at ſometimes. So his people in their proportion do earneſtly remember the Lord, they mind him often, they would mind him alwayes, they like to retain God (which the natural man liketh not, *Rom.* 1.28.) in their knowledg, or to acknowledg God; They have not ſome flitting tranſient thoughts and acknowledgments of God (as a carnal man may have) but they fix and retain God in their thoughts and acknowledgments; they think of God, what he is in his nature, they think what God is in all his perfections, they meditate of all his glory, of his juſtice, of his mercy, of his faithfulneſs, of his power, of his truth, of his unchangeableneſs, of his all-ſufficiency, they acquaint themſelves with God in all theſe; for indeed we are never acquainted with God, till we come to a diſtinct knowledg of him in all theſe parts of his glory, which yet are all but one and the ſame glorious God. To know only in general that there is a God, is not to acquaint our ſelves with God; our acquaintance with him conſiſts in a ſpiritual and fiducial knowledg of all his revealed perfections, ſo far as it is poſſible or lawful for man to ſearch and know. To be acquainted with any man, notes more then a general knowledg of him, how much more to be acquainted with God.

Secondly, We acquaint our ſelves with God, not only when we ſtudy his nature, or what he is, but when we ſtudy his works, or what he hath done. God is viſible in his works. *That his name is near, his wondrous works declare* (Pſal. 75.1.) We may acquaint our ſelves much with God in the works of Creation, but more in the works of Providence, in thoſe we may moſt legibly read his name, that is, his greatneſs and power, as alſo his goodneſs and mercy.

Thirdly, We acquaint our ſelves with God in the ſtudy of his Word; there he hath made a full diſcovery of himſelf and of his Will; *O how I love thy Law* (ſaith *David*) *my meditation is in it night and day.* The word of God is the demonſtration of the holineſs of God. There he hath ſet forth himſelf, how juſt, how pure, and how gracious he is. The Word is a glaſs in which God is ſeen, therefore acquaint thy ſelf with the word of God, and thou ſhalt be acquainted with God: reading and hearing the word of God is our going to God for Counſel. As we acquaint our ſelves with a man when we go to him, and ask his advice and counſel in any matter, or conſult his books; ſo every time we either read or hear the word of God in faith, we are asking counſel of God, and ſo acquainting our ſelves with him.

Fourthly, We eſpecially acquaint our ſelves with God in Prayer. That is nothing elſe but the opening of our hearts to God, a declaring of our wants to him. *Prayer is the aſcending, the lifting up of the ſoul to God*, therefore in prayer we acquaint our ſelves with God.

Fifthly, Our daily holy walking, is a daily acquainting our ſelves with God, every ſtep of a holy life is both towards and with God. The life of *Enoch* (who was too holy for a life here on earth, and therefore he *was tranſlated that he ſhould not ſee death*, his life I ſay) is deſcribed thus, *Enoch walked with God* (Gen. 5.24.) God and *Enoch* were like two familiars or intimate friends walking together; And becauſe he took ſo much delight in Gods acquaintance, God took him from all acquaintance with men; ſo ſaith that text, *Enoch walked with God, and was not, for God took him.* He was ſo taken with God, that God took him; or as the Author to the *Hebrews* ſaith, *Tranſlated him* (Chap. 11.5.) He was before tranſlated from nature to Grace, and he proved ſo great a proficient in that ſchool, that he was tranſlated from Grace to Glory (as it were *per ſaltum*,) by a leap over the grave; for he ſaw not death; From which ſad viſion, but one more (that I read of in all the Scripture, *Elias* by name) was excuſed before he was admitted to the beatifical viſion. *Holy walking is the ſum of all our acquaintance with God, and our fulleſt acquaintance with God is but the iſſue of our holy walkings.*

To draw towards a cloſe of this point, we may take notice, That there is a twofold acquaintance with God: Firſt, from neceſſity, when we come to him, and deſire to have to do with him, preſt with our own wants, fears, or afflictions; of this the Prophet ſpeaketh (*Iſa.* 26.16.) *Lord, in trouble have they viſited thee, they have poured out a prayer when thy chaſtning was upon them.* And of this the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks (*Pſal.* 78.34.) *When he ſlew them they ſought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: nevertheleſs, they did but flatter him with their mouth*, &c. Theſe make God their refuge, not their choice. They, I grant, who have made God their choice in good times, may comfortably make him their refuge in evil times. But to neglect God while it is well with us; and only to run to him while it is ill with us, or to have our evils and burdens removed, is to acquaint our ſelves with God, becauſe we cannot chooſe, or becauſe we cannot be without him, not becauſe we have choſen him, or deſire to be with him. As there is a patience, ſo there is an acquaintance perforce. Though God doth not refuſe acquaintance with many poor ſouls, when their neceſſities drive them to him, yet it is beſt to acquaint our ſelves with him for the love we bear to him, or the deſire we have to enjoy him, rather then (though we all have need of him, and are bound to come to him becauſe we have) for the need we have of him. And therefore, ſecondly, there is an acquaintance with God from pure love. As when we come to a friend, having nothing to do but to ſee him, and to renew or ſtrengthen our acquaintance with him. We do not come to load him with our cares, or adviſe with him about our buſineſſes, or deſire a courteſie of him, but, meerly and purely to ſhew our love to him. Thus to come to God when we are not preſt with fears, nor pincht with wants, nor clouded with doubts, nor vexed with troubles, is the moſt noble and ingenuous way of acquainting our ſelves with him. When we (as it were) make a journey to God, having nothing to do with him, but to viſit him and to deſire further communion with him; nothing to do with him, but to behold his excellency and his glory; nothing to do with him, but to tell him what our hearts are towards him; how we love him, how we depend upon him, how we deſire to pleaſe him, and to commit our wayes to him, to acquaint God with thoſe things which only concern our holy walking with him; this is to ſeek pure acquaintance with him. The Lord ſaith of *Abraham* his acquaintant or friend (*Gen.* 18.17.) *Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I am to do?* I ſhould not deal with him as with my friend, if I did ſo. A friend who is as our own ſoul (*Deut.* 13.6.) ſhould know all that is in our ſouls. Now as God (whether we will or no) is acquainted with all that is in our ſouls; ſo a ſoul acquainted with God, will let him know all: Shall I hide from God the thing that I am about to do? ſhall I not tell him how it is with me? To acquaint our ſelves thus with God is a ſweet and precious duty. Much might be ſaid about it, I ſhall only adde theſe two things; Firſt, That all our acquaintance with God muſt be had through the mediator; There is no getting neer the Father but by the Son. Secondly, That the more we are acquainted with God, the more we are transformed into his likeneſs. Some have altered the habit of their bodies, yea the diſpoſitions of their minds by long acquaintance with others, and have looked or appeared like them, by often looking upon or being with them. When *Moſes* had been forty dayes in the Mount talking with God, his face ſhone, ſome rayes of a divine glory darted out from him, ſo that *Aaron and the children of Iſrael were afraid to come nigh him* (Exod. 34.30.) And thus every one who gets up into the Mount by faith, and acquaints himſelf with God, gets ſomewhat of God, which will draw a reverence upon him among men. As when Chriſt ſhall appear hereafter to us in glory, *we ſhall be like him* (ſaith the Apoſtle *John* 1 Ep. 3.2.) for we ſhall ſee him as he is; ſo according to the ſight which we have of and our acquaintance with Chriſt in the wayes of grace here, will our likeneſs be unto him. *The more we are with God, the more we have of God. Acquaint now thy ſelf with him,*

And be at peace.

There is a threefold Interpretation of this clauſe.

Firſt, it may be taken as an Effect of what was ſaid before, *Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and be at peace*; that is, *If thou acquaint thy ſelf with God, thou ſhalt have peace.* So in the Hebrew often the Imperative mood is put for the future tenſe, as, *Do this, and live*, (according to the tenure of the Covenant of works) that is, *Do this, and thou ſhalt live.* So *acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace*; that is, thou ſhalt have peace. Peace comprehends all good; good of the mind, good of the body, good of the eſtate. When the Hebrews ſay, *Peace be unto you*, they ſay as much in that one word, as the Greeks ſay in three; whereof the firſt reſpects the welfare of the mind; the ſecond, the welfare or health of the body; and the third the ſucceſs of all our affairs and undertakings. So that while *Eliphaz* ſaith to *Job* according to this reading, *Thou ſhalt be at peace*, it is a promiſe of all manner of good flowing in upon the renewing of his acquaintance with,

Imperativi pro futuro paſſim in lingua. Merc. *Quando Hebraei dicunt pax tibi, ſignificant id quod Graecis verbis enunciant, χαίρειν, γίνεσθαι, εὐπραγίαν quorum primum ad animum refertur, ſecundum ad corpus, tertium ad affectiones exteras.* Druſ.

with, and his returning to a reverential converse with God. But because this promise follows in the next words, *thereby good shall come unto thee*, therefore I understand this clause as a duty, and not as a promise. *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace.* To be *at peace* is a distinct duty from that of acquainting our selves with God, yet necessarily following upon it; The words may have these two things in them.

Sedatiore animo esto. Bez.
Acquiesce in castigationibus Dei, atis repugnâsti; satis roterve rejectatus es, ergo mitesce.

First, *Be at peace*, that is, be quiet and content under the chastening hand of God, do not murmur, do not repine. Thou hast strugled enough already, now lay aside all impatiency and passion, all discontents and animosities; as, do not rage and rave, do not distemper and discompose thy self as thou hast done; There is a storm upon thee, but be thou of a calm and quiet spirit, kiss the rod, be not angry with it; we may express this frame by that which the Apostle *Peter* makes the chief adorning, or ornament of a woman, that she be of *a meek and a quiet spirit, which with God is of great price*; As meekness is a Jewel of the greatest price that women can wear; so it is a most rich and precious Jewel for a man to wear: and as at all times, so then especially meekness and peaceableness of spirit becomes man, when God seems to come in anger and to be at war with him. *Bildad* said of *Job* (*Chap.* 18. *v.* 4.) *He teareth himself in his anger*; As if he had said, the man's mad or distracted: now *Eliphaz* adviseth him, Be at peace, be quiet; This is a good interpretation, and we may note from it,

That it is our Duty to sit down quiet and satisfied under the saddest dispensations of God.

A submitting spirit under an afflicting hand, how comely is it? To be at peace in our selves, when all is unquiet about us, how blessed a sight is it? There are some who trouble themselves a great deal more then all the troubles that are upon them can. Man is naturally a very unquiet creature, *an angry piece of flesh*, when God is angry, he is apt to storm: *till his heart is subdued to God, he cannot bear the hand of God.* Wicked men naturally (as the Prophet *Esay* found them, Chap. 51. 20.) *are like a wild bull in a net, full of the fury of God*; and not only so, but full of fury against God, throwing up the dust, and moyling themselves when the net of God hath caught them, or when God hath caught them in his net. God catcheth his own people in his net many times as well as the wicked. His own people are like a dove in a net, but the wicked are like a wild Bull in a net. I grant, the Doves will flutter a while when the net hath caught them. Impatiency doth often break out in the best of Saints: it is a hard thing to keep the heart quiet within while our estate is unquiet without, and to be at peace in our selves, when God seems to be at war with us. It is hard for us to hold our peace, much more to be at peace in an afflicted condition; yet this lesson, though very hard, Saints have learned. *David* saith (*Psal.* 39. 9.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it.* His was not a sullen silence, but a patient silence. He had not a word to say against God, when God spake hard words against him, yea, when God was at blows at sharps with him. *Paul* also had learned in every estate to be content (*Phil.* 4. 11.) However the world went with him, *he was at peace.*

In eo patiebabe, in tiam requi nunc natus es, velut is.

Secondly, *Be at peace*, may refer unto God, and so it is but the heightning of our acquaintance with him; for, first there must be an acquainting, and then a making up of peace; when friends fall out, they must first speak with one another, before the breach can be healed; if they do not treat, there can be no reconciliation. After treating comes peace; As peace is *the fruit of the lips* (Isa. 57. 19.) when God treats with man by man, so when man treats with man, and when man treats with God. *Acquaint now thy self with him*, call for a treaty, and therein make thy peace. *Be at peace with him*, do not any longer continue thy unholy war with God. *Eliphaz* supposing *Job* as a man setting himself against God, had reason to bespeak him thus.

Hence note, *That till we do acquaint our selves with God, we can have no peace with him.*

The wicked are like the troubled Sea, whose waves cast up mire and dirt; there is no peace to the wicked, saith my God (*Isa.* 57. 21.) Why no peace to the wicked? The wicked have no acquaintance with God, they are strangers, they are afar off from God, and God beholds them afar off, therefore there is no peace to them: if they have any peace, it is a false peace, a deceitful peace, or it is but a short peace, which will quickly break out into a war again: when once Conscience is awakened, when that sleeping Lyon is rouzed, what will become of all their peace? they will then find, indeed, that their soul is among Lyons; and that they have been only secure, not safe; or that theirs hath been at best, a truce only, not a peace; no peace till acquainted with God, and no acquaintance with God can produce peace, but that which is by Jesus Christ: He is the Peace-maker, who is also the Mediator; sinners cannot have peace by any immediate acquaintance with God, for he is a consuming fire, and sinners standing alone, are but as dry stubble before him. When we are made nigh to, or acquainted with God by the blood of Jesus Christ (and not till then) are we at peace with him. *Acquaint thy self with him, and be at peace*: no peace without acquaintance with God, no acquaintance with God but by Christ; therefore no peace but by Christ.

Secondly, Observe, *That God is ready to give peace to, or to be at peace with those that acquaint themselves with him.*

Acquaint thy self with him, and be at peace; as if he should say, thou shalt certainly be at peace with him, if thou doest but acquaint thy self with him; for the Lord will not *always chide*; his love is everlasting, but his anger towards his, continues but for a moment; As the wisdom of God in man, so much more, the most wise God, is *gentle, and easie to be entreated. The Lord is found of those who seek him not* (Isa. 65. 1.) Surely then he will be found of those that seek him; he is not implacable, no, nor inexorable. The Lord hath declared himself full of Compassion to returning sinners, so full of compassion that he seeks the acquaintance of sinners, and beseeches them to be reconciled to him; much more will he be acquainted with them who beseech him that they may be reconciled to him. *Fury is not in me* (saith the Lord, *Isa.* 27. 4, 5.) *who would set the bryars and thorns in battel against me?* that is, who would be so foolish as to encourage sinful men to be so fool-hardy as to stand out against me, or contend with me, for alas, (as it follows in the text) *I would go through them, I would burn them together.* There's no dealing with me upon those terms; but I will tell you upon what terms a sinner may deal with me; *Let him lay hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me*; that is, he shall not lose his labour, he shall find peace, if he take hold of my strength. One would think he should rather have said, let him take hold of my mercy and goodness, but he saith, *Let him take hold of my strength.* To oppose the strength of God is most dangerous, but by faith to take hold of it, that's both the duty and the priviledge of an humbled sinner. Proud sinners oppose the strength of God, humbled sinners take hold of it, as their strength. As a man seeing another whom he hath offended, but is unable to resist, or make his party good with him, with much submission takes hold of his arm or weapon, endeavouring by earnest suit to stay him from smiting. And indeed to take hold of the strength of God, is to take hold on his mercy: The strength of God to save sinners, lies in his mercy, and that mercy is in his Son, who is his strength to save sinners; if a sinner lay hold of this strength, the mercy of God in his Son, *that he may make peace* with God, if this be his design, *he shall make peace*; there shall not be a treaty with God in Christ for peace in vain; if a sinner should take hold of the strength of his own righteousness and performances, if he should take hold of the strength of all the Angels in heaven, he could not make peace with God, nor would God agree with him upon those terms. Such a soul must return (*re infecta*) without his errand. God is ready to be at peace with us, but we must have our peace in his way, not in our own. *Acquaint now thy self with him, and be at peace.* And this peace, whether in our selves or with God, is no light or unprofitable thing, as *Eliphaz* to provoke *Job* to pursue and seek after it, tells him in the last words of this verse,

Thereby good shall come unto thee.

Thereby; whereby? or by what? what is it that shall procure, or produce this good? The answer is at hand; Thy acquaintance with God, thy being at peace will procure all good things for thee. *Acquaint thy self with him, and be at*

peace:

peace: be at peace to thy own ſpirit, be quiet; be at peace with God, be reconciled, every way *good ſhall come unto thee.* M. *Broughton* renders, *Proſperity ſhall come unto thee:* the ſence is the ſame. Others read, inſtead of *good ſhall come unto thee, thy comings in ſhall be good:* thou ſhalt have a good revenue, a good in-come: whereas before evil came upon thee, now thy comings in ſhall be good. This is of the ſame meaning with our tranſlation. I ſhall not need to ſtay upon the opening of the words, there is no difficulty in them.

Proventus tuus erit bonus. Druſ.

From their dependance, in that he ſaith, *Acquaint thy ſelf with him, and be at peace, ſo ſhall good come unto thee,* Theſe words are brought in by way of inference upon the former, whence

Obſerve, *That when we are eſtranged from God, good is ſtranged from us.*

God can ſtop the Influences of all our mercies from us, he can lay an embargo upon all Creatures from bringing any good to us; though there be ſtore of treaſure and rich Commodity in the place, yet he can bar up all, that no good can come unto us; yea, the Lord in ſuch caſes doth often lay a ſtop upon the ſpirit of prayer in his own people, and when the heart is ſtopt that we cannot pray, then uſually good is ſtopt and kept back from coming to us; Prayer is that which fetches in mercy and good things through the love of God in Jeſus Chriſt. Prayer may have a twofold ſtop. Firſt, Prayer may have a ſtop in the heart; Secondly, Prayer which comes forth of the heart may have a ſtop in heaven; the Lord doth even ſhut out prayer ſometimes, and when prayer is ſhut out, no good can get out to us. Prayer is ſent upon a meſſage to heaven; and if our meſſenger be ſhut out of doors and not admitted in, what anſwer can we expect by his meſſage? And the Lord as he doth ſtop ſuch from the receiving of further good, ſo from receiving of good by what they have already. We may have that which in the nature of it is good, and yet have no good by it; God can ſtop the creature in our hands, that it ſhall not at all give us any Comfort, as well as he can ſtop any creature comfort from coming into our hands. Unleſs the Lord (in one ſence) ſtop the creature, it quickly leaks out all the Comfort which he hath put into it, and proves to us indeed, what ſin hath made it, *a broken Ciſtern:* And unleſs the Lord open the creature, the creature cannot give forth that good which it hath; It will be to us as a Ciſtern without a vent to paſs out the water for our uſe. There's many a one who hath enough in his hand (take it in any kind) but he enjoys nothing of it, becauſe the Lord locks up the conduit, or the ciſtern, and then how much good ſoever there is in it, there's none for him. It is all one to us, whether we have only a broken Ciſtern for our portion, or a Ciſtern always lock't up; for as the one lets all the water run out, ſo the other holds all the water in; we are as far from good, if our Ciſtern hold all, as if it held nothing at all. It is then not only our duty and our holineſs to acquaint our ſelves and be at peace with God, but our wiſdom and our intereſt; For it is as he pleaſeth, always, and uſually as we pleaſe him, that either we have any thing that is good coming to us, or that any good cometh to us by that which we have.

Secondly, Note (which is a Corollary from the former Obſervation,)

That the renewing of our Communion with God, and making peace with him, is followed with all manner of mercies and good things.

So ſhall good come unto thee.] There was never any man a looſer by acquaintance with God: Gods acquaintance is a gainful acquaintance: Our acquaintance with God, ſhould we conſider it abſtractly and ſeparate from all benefit but his very acquaintance, yet that is benefit enough; God is the chiefeſt good, and therefore when we enjoy him, we enjoy all good. The enjoyment of God himſelf is infinitely more then the enjoyment of all created good things that come from God. Friends are ſometimes in thoſe heights of friendſhip and nobleneſs of ſpirit one to another, that they count the enjoyment of one another to be more then all the benefits they can heap upon or reap by one another; it is your good Company, ſaith ſuch a friend, and your acquaintance that delights me more then all the good you can beſtow upon me. And is not God much more ſo to us? Thus (I ſay) acquaintance with God alone is all good; but beſides (as the point leads us to conſider) God gives out good things from himſelf, to all his holy acquaintants; temporal or bodily good comes to us by his acquaintance, and ſo alſo (and that chiefly) doth ſpiritual or ſoul good. Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and the dews of grace, ſhowers of the Spirit ſhall fall into thy boſom. Acquaint thy ſelf with God, and ſpiritual comfort ſhall flow in unto thee, ſpiritual ſtrength ſhall flow in unto thee, thy ſoul ſhall be filled as with marrow and fatneſs. And as good ſhall come to thee in perſon, ſo to thine; to thy family and poſterity good ſhall come. And as God will cauſe good to come to ſuch, ſo to ſtay and abide with them. As good comes, ſo good continues according to the command and commiſſion which it hath from God. Thus he promiſed in the Prophet (*Iſa.*48.18.) in caſe his people had harkned to his commandments; *Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy poſterity as the waves of the Sea.* Thy peace and proſperity had not been as a Land flood or brooks of water which fail in ſummer when we have moſt need of them (all worldly things are apt to do ſo) but they ſhould have flowed perpetually as a river doth, which is fed by a conſtant Spring, or as the Sea doth which is the feeder of all Springs. A godly man gets not only a large portion of good things, but a laſting portion, yea a portion of thoſe good things which are everlaſting, by acquainting himſelf with God. And becauſe by acquaintance with God ſo much good comes to us; therefore *Eliphaz* preſſeth *Job* further to it in the next verſe.

Verſ. 22. **Receive, I pray thee, the Law from his mouth, and lay up his words in thine heart.**

Receive,] That is, learn from his mouth; he that teaches gives, and he that learns receives; and the Hebrew word which we render here to *Receive,* ſignifies not ordinary receiving, but receiving with an earneſt deſire; yea, it implyeth a kind of violence in deſire, ſuch as they have who take ſpoils in war. They flie upon the ſpoil, and catch it with as much eagerneſs as they won it with courage. So *Receive the Law from his mouth. David* ſaith, *I have rejoyced in thy word, more then they that find great ſpoils* (*Pſal.*119.162.) O how ſtrongly did his heart run out to the word? and there is an Elegancy alſo in it, that this word which ſignifies to receive the Law, doth alſo ſignifie the Law or doctrine to be received (*Prov.*4.2.) *I give you good doctrine, forſake you not my Law.* The word which is there uſed for doctrine is the ſame that is here rendred *to receive,* the reaſon is, becauſe wholſome doctrine is worthy to be received, and ought to be received willingly, chearfully and gladly, and therefore the Goſpel which is the higheſt and moſt precious doctrine is called an Acceptable doctrine: *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all Acceptation* (*1 Tim.*1.11.) The Goſpel is worthy not only of Acceptation, or of great, but of all Acceptation, and that from all men, even from the Greateſt; And ſo alſo is the Law, for, as ſhall be opened further afterwards, the Law in this place comprehends the Goſpel alſo. *Receive the Law at his mouth.*

Dat Magiſter quando docet, capit diſcipulus quando diſcit. Druſ.

לקח *Verbum hoc ad prædam quæ cum violentia tollitur referri poteſt. Ex hac radice dicitur doctrina.*

לקח *quaſi accepta vel accipienda, quia ſc. lex debet accipi grato & lubenti animo.*

Further, The word which we expreſs *Receive,* is rendred by ſome to *buy*; we may connect both ſences here. Receive the Law as a thing bought, and carry it home with thee. That of *Solomon* (*Prov.*23.23.) Suits it well; *Buy the truth, and ſell it not.* Truth is a Commodity the trade whereof goes but one way; all Civil Trades and Merchandizes are continued by buying and ſelling, but this ſpiritual trade is continued by buying only, without ſelling; it will be our profit to have this Commodity always upon our hands, or rather always in our hands. Thus here, *Receive the Law* at a price, buy it, and keep it; not that the Lord doth expect any price from us, or that we can bring any thing to him valuable for it. We buy it, when we take pains for it, when we do our utmoſt endeavour to receive the truth, when we receive the truth, not only as it is offered and brought home to us, but when we go out for it, and ſeek after it in all the means which God hath appointed as conveyances of it, that's buying the Law of truth.

Receive the Law.] Again, We may profitably conſider a double derivation of that word which we tranſlate, *Law.* Some ſay it is from a root that ſignifies *to behold or Contemplate, to Conſider, to look about*; and the Law is well expreſt by a word of that ſence, becauſe the whole Law is diligently to be obſerved and conſidered, looked into, and meditated upon, we are alwayes to behold it, and that in every part. For the whole Law is copulative, and he that offends in one part offends in all. *David* ſpeaking of the righteous man,

תורת *à radice* תור *Explorare aut circumquaq; luſtrare quia lex univerſa eſt diligenter obſervanda, ni quis in uno offendat.*

man,(*Pſal.*1.2.) ſaith, *he meditates in the law of the Lord day and night.* What's meditation? but the Inward view of a thing,or the beholding it with an Intellectual eye; meditation is the continual turning of things over in the mind, to behold the excellencies and perfections that are in them.

A radice יָרָה *Quod eſt pluere irrigare; quare commune & fere idem eſt nomen,*pluviæ Doctoris & legiſlatoris.

Secondly, Say others, it proceeds from another radical word, that ſignifies *to rain*, and that not only ſome ſmall driſsling dewing rain, but full ſhowers, or as we ſay to pour down; and in the Hebrew,the ſame word ſignifies, *to rain, and to teach*,becauſe teaching by the word is like raining,or the ſending down of rain. The Apoſtle(*Heb.*6.7.) alludes to it.*For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it*,&c.by the earth he means thoſe who hear the word or doctrine, which comes down upon them like rain to ſoften their hearts, and make them fruitful. There are two other Texts of Scripture very ſuitable to this Expoſition (*Iſa.*30. 20.) *Though the Lord give you the bread of adverſity,and the water of affliction, yet ſhall not thy teachers be removed into Corners any more, but thine eye ſhall ſee thy teachers. Thy teachers ſhall not be removed*,ſo we render: but ſtrictly from the letter of the Hebrew we may read it thus: *Though the Lord give thee the bread of adverſity*,&c. *yet ſhall not thy rain be removed from thee.* It may ſeem ſtrange that they ſhould have the bread of adverſity, and the water of Affliction, and yet have alſo rain which naturally cauſeth the earth to bring forth bread, and fills the pools with water. But the Prophet who ſpeaks of corporal bread and water in the former part of the verſe, ſpeaks of ſpiritual rain in the latter, making this ſo full a compenſation to the people of God, for the want of the other two, that they ſhould have no cauſe to complain of it.As if the Prophet had ſaid,*Though you are cut ſhort in outward things, yet you ſhall not be ſhortned in ſpirituals, the rain of holy doctrine ſhall not be removed from you*, or as we tranſlate, *thy teachers ſhall not be removed*, &c. Some amongſt us would have the teachers of holy doctrine removed, leſt by feeding them the bread and water of the Land ſhould fail; as if the charge of publick preaching the riches of the Grace of Chriſt would be an undoing, or at leaſt an impoveriſhing of the Nation. Whereas (I touch it only by the way) the Prophet comforts the people of God in the midſt of all their wants and outward afflictions, that they ſhould not want the preſence of their teachers, nor the ſhowers of holy inſtruction by them. Again (*Joel* 2.23.) *Be glad O Zion, and rejoyce in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cauſe to come down the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the firſt month.* That which we render,(*The former rain moderately*) others tranſlate, *a Teacher of righteouſneſs*, or *according to righteouſneſs*; ſo you may find in the Margin of your larger Bibles. And that's the great mercy which *Zion* is to rejoyce in; for can we think that *Zion*, the children of *Zion* ſhould be called ſo earneſtly to rejoyce meerly in natural rain, or the effects of it;becauſe of the abundance of Corn and Wine and Oyl, which the earth well watered uſually produceth? This is too poor a thing (conſidered alone) for *Zion*, to rejoyce in! *Zion* or the people of God do and muſt confeſs themſelves unworthy of the leaſt outward mercy, even of a ſhower of rain, or of a ſheaf of corn, and they ought to praiſe God, and be very thankful for theſe; But theſe are not properly, the matter of *Zions* gladneſs and rejoycing. In theſe the world rejoyceth, *Who will ſhew us any good?* (*Pſal.*4.7.) They are for Corn, and Wine, and Oyl; but *Lord* (ſaith *David*) *lift up the light of thy Countenance upon me. Thou haſt put gladneſs in mine heart, more then in the time that their corn and their wine encreaſed*: As if he had ſaid, Worldly men rejoyce in Corn and Wine; but I rejoyce more in the light of thy countenance. The light of the favour of God, and the light of the knowledge of God, are the chief matters of a believers joy.And this light of holy joy comes in uſually with and by the rain of that doctrine, which falls upon us from the mouth of God in the teachings of his Divine Law. *Receive the Law from his mouth.*

Non elongabit arte pluviam.

anſtè coldit prophetа nomibus doctoris ſeu legiſatoris & uviæ, ſeu nbris matinæ & otini.

But you will ſay, What is this Law which comes down like rain from heaven, and which we are to receive from the mouth of God?

I anſwer, The Law may be taken two wayes.

First, Strictly for the ten Commandments, or the five Books of *Moſes*, which are called the Law.

Secondly; More largely,and ſo the whole word of God is the Law. Chriſt himſelf calls the Book of *Pſalms* the Law two or three times in the New Teſtament (*John* 10.34.) *Jeſus anſwered them, is it not written in your Law, I have ſaid ye are Gods*? where was that written? in the 82 *Pſal.verſ.*6. And ſo again, (*John* 15.25.) *But this cometh to paſs, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their Law, they hated me without a cauſe.* What Law doth he mean? thoſe words we find (*Pſal.*35.19.) Take one text further? (1 *Cor.*14. 21.) *In the Law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I ſpeak unto this People.* Where is that written? (*Iſa.*28.11.) So that the *Law* in a large ſenſe, is taken for the whole body of the word of God,or for the general Revelation of the myſtery of his will,in which ſenſe we may ſay the Goſpel is the Law: And the Goſpel is expreſly called the *Law* (or rule) *of faith* (*Rom.*3.27.) So that by *Law* here we may underſtand whatſoever the Lord hath given us,either as a rule of life, or as a rule of faith. The Seventy tranſlate *Eliphaz* ſpeaking in that latitude, *Receive whatſoever God delivers, declares, or puts forth. Receive, I pray thee, the Law* Ἐξηγοεῖσαν.

From his mouth.] From whoſe mouth? from the mouth of God; how can that be? Indeed *Moſes* went up into the Mount, and was with God fourty dayes, and there received the Law from his mouth; but could *Job* receive the Law from his mouth as *Moſes* did? I anſwer, If God had called him to it, as he did *Moſes*,he might. But that's not the purpoſe of *Eliphaz*. Neither are we (I conceive) to underſtand him of ſuch a *Receiving from the mouth of God*, as the old Prophets had who received the mind of God by Immediate Inſpiration, and dictates from God himſelf: for though they were not called up ſolemnly into a Mount (as *Moſes*) to receive the Law, yet the Spirit was ſent to make known the mind of God to them. And in that ſence the Prophet *Jeremiah* is ſaid to warn King *Zedekiah from the mouth of the Lord* (2 *Chron.*36.12.) *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the Lord his God, and humbled not himſelf before Jeremiah the Prophet ſpeaking from the mouth of the Lord*,that is, he received a word from God by an Extraordinary Revelation to carry unto the King who yet humbled not himſelf. And ſo (*Iſa.*30.2.) the Lord complains of his people *that walked to go down into Egypt to ſtrengthen themſelves with the ſtrength of Pharaoh, &c. and yet had not asked at his mouth*, that is, had not asked direction in the thing according to the wayes of Revelation then in uſe, by enquiring of the Prophets, or of the high Prieſt. And the Lord tells the Prophet *Jeremy* (*Chap.*15.19.) *That he ſhould be as his mouth if he would take forth the precious from the vile*; as if he had ſaid, if thou art faithful in my work, I will reveal my ſelf to thee, and thou ſhalt ſpeak even as I my ſelf ſpoke, thou ſhalt be as my mouth. Now, I conceive, *Eliphaz* doth not go thus high when he bids *Job receive the Law from the mouth of God*, as if he were to expect immediate direction and advice from him. For then, we may be ſaid to receive a rule or a law from the mouth of God, when we receive that which God hath manifeſted at any time as a rule and law for us with the reſt of his people to walk by: they who receive that law once delivered from the mouth of God, may be ſaid to receive the law from his mouth, though they are not the immediate receivers of it, yea, though it were publiſhed ſome thouſands of years before they were born. Some from theſe words, collect that the books of *Moſes* were written before this time, and that *Eliphaz* did refer *Job* to thoſe, bidding him receive that law which the mouth of God had ſpoken to *Moſes*; but though whether the law were then formally ſpoken or no is a diſpute, yet it is without all diſpute, that the mouth of God had then given a law or rule of life to his people; and ſo *Eliphaz* might ſafely and truly ſay, *Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth*, there having been a Revelation of the mind of God among the faithful in all ages and times. God never left his people to their own will, nor them to be their own Guide and Counſeller. For when the Apoſtle ſaith (*Rom.* 2. 14.) that *the Gentiles having not a law are a law unto themſelves*; his meaning is not that they had no law, but one of their own deviſing. They indeed had not the law of God formally ſpoken to their ears, and preſerved in tables of ſtone, but they had the ſubſtance of the law of God naturally written in their hearts. So then, there hath alwayes been a law from his mouth formally in the Church, and naturally in the world.

Prophetæ ſunt quaſi os dei quia per ipſos loquutus eſt.

Therefore

Therefore saith *Eliphaz*, *Receive the law from his mouth*; and when he saith, *Receive the Law from his mouth*, it may have a double Opposition.

Ex ore ejus notanter dicit, i.e. non ex ore aut arbitrio tuo. Merc.

First, To the will and wisdom of *Job*; As if *Eliphaz* had said, *Thou hast been hitherto a law to thy self*, that is, thou hast followed thy own advice, run on upon thy own head, now receive the law from his mouth. Man naturally hath high thoughts of himself; and would be a law to himself. Not as (*Rom.*2.14. which place was touched before) *The Gentiles having not a law, were a law to themselves*; that is, they had the law of God written in their hearts by nature: but besides that, there is a law which man would be to himself against that law of nature written in his heart, and against the light of nature shining in his conscience, he would set up a law, even his own Lust, in opposition to the law of God. Thus he would be a law to himself, and not *Receive a law from the mouth of God*. Therefore saith *Eliphaz*; Now *receive the law from his mouth*.

Secondly, (from his mouth) may be opposed to the mouthes of others; as if he should say, if thou wilt not trust us, nor take our word, then trust God, we would not have thee depend upon us, nor upon any man living, not on the judgment or Authority of any Creature, but receive the law from his mouth; there is a law and a truth come from God, let thy faith be guided, and thy life ordered by that.

Hence Note, *It is our duty to receive the rule from God.*

The Lord hath power to give us the law, and we must receive the law from him. None have power to impose a law upon us but God himself, nor may we devise a law for our selves: *God is the only Master of the Conscience*, he alone can say, *Receive the law at my mouth*. If you ask, what is it to receive the law? I answer, it is more then to give it the hearing. To receive, is, First, to believe the law; Secondly, to receive, is to honour and reverence the law; Thirdly, to receive the law, is to yield up our selves to the obedience of it, to be cast into the mould of it, to subject our selves wholly to the mind of God in it; Then we receive the law when we take the Impressions of it, and have as it were the Image and stamp of it upon our spirits, and in our lives. Fourthly, then we receive it when, as it follows in the Text, *we lay up his word in our hearts*: barely to receive it is not enough, you must lay it up, treasure it up.

And lay up his word in thy heart.

This is opposed,

Præcidentis partis expositio & amplificatio. Ita legē suscipe ut ponas proprie, disponas arte cura sollicitudine observandi.

First, To forgetfulness of the word, receive the law and let it not slip out of thy memory.

Secondly, It is oppos'd to negligence in the practice of the law, lay it up that it may be forth coming to direct thee in every duty. In Conversion the law is written in the heart; every godly man hath a Copy of the law in his heart: That's the description of a godly man, (*Psal.*37.31.) *The law of God is in his heart, none of his steps shall slide*; which is not an universal exclusion of all failing and slipping, as if every godly man were as much past sinning, as he is past perishing: but when 'tis said, *none of his steps*, the meaning is, few of his steps shall slide, or he shall never slide so in any of his steps as not to recover his feet and get up again. He shall walk very holily, so holily as if all his walkings were but one continued act of holiness. But, to the text, None of his steps shall slide quite and for ever out of the way, because the law of God is in his heart. What *David* speaks in that prophetical Psalm of Christ (*Psal.* 40. 8. *Thy law is within my heart*) is true in its degree of every Christian, all the laws of God are in his heart. That Character is again given of them (*Psal.*84. 5.) *In whose heart are thy ways*; there is a suiting of the mind of God and the heart of man together in regeneration. But now the duty spoken of in the Text is another thing; for a man that hath the law written in his heart, may yet possibly forget to lay up the word and law of God in his heart, he may (under temptation and the pressures of corruption) be negligent in that; it is the work of a godly man, who hath the law of God in his heart already, continually to lay up the law in his heart; and so we are to understand such Scriptures as these (*Prov.*7.3.) *Keep my Commandments and live, and my law as the apple of thine eye, bind them on thy fingers, write them on the table of thine heart, &c.* The first writing of the law in the heart is by the finger of the Spirit, by Gods own finger. As it was God that first wrote the law in tables of stone with his own finger, so it is he that writes the law in these fleshly Tables of the heart by the finger of the Spirit: yet *Solomon* perswades his son to write the law upon the Table of his heart: when grace is received, and the law once written in our hearts, we do as it were put in several fresh Copies of the law, we are continually writing divine notions and Instructions upon our hearts; this renewed act is ascribed to us, because we through grace joyn in it. We have an Expression of like import (*Prov.*4.21.) *My son attend to my words, encline thine ear to my sayings: let them not depart from thine eyes, keep them in the midst of thine heart.* The heart is said to be the midst or Center of the body; now, saith he, *keep the law in the very midst of thine heart*, in the safest place; as the heart is the safest place, the middle of the body, so the middle of the heart is the safest place of the heart. So we may understand that of *David*, *I have hid thy Commandments in my heart* (*Psal.*119.11.) And (*Deut.*6.6.) *These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart*, that is, *thou shalt lay them up there.* Of this laying up the law in the heart we are to understand *Eliphaz* here; as if he had said, *O Job, thou hast often heard of the law, but thou hast been a forgetful hearer, now hear it, and hold it now* (as the Apostle exhorts the *Hebrews*, *Heb.*2.1.) *Give the more earnest heed to the things, which thou hast heard, or shalt hereafter hear, lest at any time thou shouldest let them slip, or thou shouldest run out* (as we there put in the margine) *as a leaking vessel.*

Further, This laying up the word in the heart, is oppos'd unto a bare barren knowledge; it is not enough to have the word of God in our heads, that is, to know it: it is not enough to have the word of God upon our tongues, that is, to speak of it, but we must lay it up in the heart; For though the heart in Scripture takes in the understanding, and the whole soul, yet chiefly it respects the affections: *lay up the word in thine heart*, that is, let thy affections be warm'd with it, while thy memory retains and keeps it, and thy understanding is enlightned with a true notion of it.

Hence Observe, First, *The word of God is a precious thing.*

We do not lay up trifles and trash, but precious things, and treasure; we lay up our Plate and Jewels, our Gold and Silver; the word of God should be more to us then thousands of Gold and Silver, it is the most precious Jewel, 'tis treasure, and therefore it must be laid up.

Secondly, *The heart is the Ark or Cabinet, in which the word must be laid up.*

There was an Ark or Chest provided for the law (*Exod.* 25.21.) and that Ark was Christ, he was typified by it; and indeed the law would be too hot for our hearts, too hot to lie there, if it had not first lain in the heart of Christ; we (since fallen) could never have been an Ark for it, if he had not been. The tables of the law were laid in the Ark, and the Ark (in which the law was put) had a mercy-seat which did cover it all over. (The dimensions of the Ark and of the mercy-seat were exactly the same, two cubits and a half in length, and a cubit and a half in breadth, (*Exod.*25.10,17.) So that nothing of the law could appear or rise up in Judgment against poor sinners. The propitiatory or mercy-seat covered all. Now as Christ hath been the Ark of the law to protect and cover us from the condemning power of it; so the hearts of believers must be the Ark of the law, where it must be laid up with a readiness of mind to yield our selves up to the commanding power of it. *David* propheeying of Christ saith (*Psal.*40.10.) *I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart*; yet he had said before, *I delight to do thy will, thy law is within my heart.* To clear which Scripture take notice that there is a twofold hiding of the righteousnes or word of God in the heart. First, So as to obscure or conceal it from others; in that sence *David* saith, *I have not hid thy righteousness in mine heart, I have declared, thy faithfulness and thy salvation, and not concealed thy loving kindness and truth from the great Congregation.* And thus no man ought to lay up the truths, the law, the promises of God in his heart to conceal and stifle them there. Secondly, There is a hiding of the law in our hearts, First, That it may be safe, lest Satan or the world should snatch it from us. Secondly, That we may further consider of it; when a man hath got an excellent truth, or Scripture, he should lay it up

in

in his heart to ponder and meditate more upon it, to draw out the sweetness, and to experience the power of it. Thirdly, That we may have it ready at hand for our use; and so the Scribe instructed for the kingdom of heaven is described by bringing forth out of his treasury things both new and old. How sad is the condition of many that have heard much, but laid up little or nothing at all of all that word which they have heard. Some having laid it up in their note books, are satisfied with that; 'tis good and useful to do so; but do not let it lie there, get a Copy of it in your hearts; a few truths in your hearts are better to you then many truths in your books; no man was ever saved by the word in his book, unless that word were also written in his heart. God commanded the *Jewes* (*Deut.* 6, 8, 9.) to write the law upon the *post of their houses, and on their gates, to bind them as a sign upon their hand, and as frontlets between their eyes.* They were commanded also to put fringes upon the borders of their garments (*Numb.* 15.38.) which our Saviour calls *Phylacteries* (*Mat.* 23.5.) these were ribands of blue silk, or as some say, scroles of parchment upon which the law being first wrought or written, and then bound upon their garments, *they were to look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the Lord* (*Num.* 15.39.) *Now*, saith Christ, *they make broad their Philacteries, and enlarge the borders of their Garments*, as much of the law as you will upon their Cloaths, but none of it in their hearts. Thus the proud Scribes and Pharisees went about as it were Cloathed with the word of God, but his word was far from their hearts, nor did it appear in their lives; it is a meer vanity to have much of the law in our books, while we neglect to keep it in our hearts, and act it in our wayes. The former is good, but it doth no good without the latter. The want of this, the laying up the word in the heart, causeth the great want of Saints in the things of God; and as many loose that grace which they seemed to have, so many are at a loss in the use of that grace which they have, because they have not laid up the word of God in their hearts so carefully as they ought. We say proverbially, *Sure bind and sure find*; *They who would surely find the comfort of the word of God when they need it, had need to bind it sure, when they receive it.*

Vanissimi professio Pharisæi illi, qui cum ipsi non servarent in corde mandata, at membranulas decalogi complicantes & quasi coronam capiti facientes. Phylacteriū ex sua proprietate, custoditorium est. Bold.

VERS. 23, 24, 25.

If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacles.
Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.
Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.

ELiphaz having invited *Job* (at the one and twentieth verse) to renew his acquaintance with God, and now again pressing him to return to God, he reckons up those advantages which might move, and incourage him to it; he tells *Job* what will follow his return to, and acquaintance with God, and these advantages are of two sorts.

First, Temporal, and outward; Secondly, Spiritual, and inward; the temporal good things which he assures him of in case he repent, and turn to God, are set down, First, more generally in the three and twentieth verse, *Thou shalt be built up.* Secondly, They are set down particularly; First, He should then have riches, gold and silver, in the four and twentieth verse; Secondly, protection, *The Almighty shall be thy defence*, (in the five and twentieth verse) as he will fill thy house, so he will guard thy house and keep all safe.

In the following parts of the Chapter, *Eliphaz* assures him of eight blessings spiritual.

First, Joy in God, in the six and twentieth verse, *Thou shalt have thy delight in the Almighty.*

Secondly, Confidence, or holy boldness before God; *Thou shalt lift up thy face unto God*; thou shalt not hide thy head, and run into corners, but *lift up thy face.*

Thirdly, (which is an effect or part of the former) freedom in prayer; *Thou shalt make thy prayer to him*, (in the seven and twentieth verse.)

Fourthly, He assures him of audience, or of an answer to his prayer in the same verse; *He shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows*; that is, thou in thy prayer having made vows to God, God shall hear thy prayer, and so give thee occasion to pay thy vows.

Fifthly, He promiseth him not only that his prayer shall be heard, but that his very purposes and designs shall be fulfilled; *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established to thee*, in the eight and twentieth verse. When thou resolvest upon such a way or course in thy affairs, thou shalt have this priviledge, *thy decree shall stand.*

Sixthly, He promiseth him direction and counsel, what way he should take, what course to run, in the close of the same verse; *And the light shall shine upon thy wayes*, that is, thou shalt see what to do, the Lord will give thee counsel.

Seventhly, He gives him hope of rising out of any trouble, or that when others are overtaken with calamities, he should be preserved, at the nine and twentieth verse; *When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, there is a lifting up, for God will save the humble person.*

Eightly, He promiseth, that he shall not only have blessings personal, and family blessings, but he shall be a publick blessing, (in the thirtieth verse,) *He shall deliver the Island of the innocent, and it is delivered by the pureness of thy hand.* Thus you have both the general scope of this latter part of the Chapter; which is to stir up *Job* to return to God, and likewise the particular blessings and mercies which are held forth as arguments moving him to return.

Vers. 23. **If thou return unto the Almighty.**

To Return is used frequently in Scripture in a metaphorical sense, and signifies as much as to repent; sin is a going away from God, great sinning is a going far from God, a going, as it were, into a far Country, such sinners would go out of Gods sight, and fall out of his memory. *Eliphaz* had charged *Job* deeply with such departures; and now he speaks to him of returning.

And here we may consider the condition or state of *Job*, and the season in which *Eliphaz* presseth him to this duty, he was in an afflicted condition, the hand of God was upon him. Now *Eliphaz* adviseth him to return; intimating at least, that the present dispensation of God towards him, was a special opportunity for the duty he moved him unto.

Hence Note, *When God afflicts us, when his hand is upon us, he speaks to us, repent, or bespeaks our repentance.*

How often in Scripture doth the Lord complain as if he were wholly frustrated of his design, when either nations or persons being smitten by his judgments did not return unto him, or repented not? (*Isa.* 9.13.) *They turn not to him that smiteth them*: that is, they turn not to me the Lord: I have smitten them, and I alone can heal them, *yet they turn not to me*; as if the Lord had said, I therefore smote them that they might bethink themselves of returning, but they turned not to me. As they turned not at my word, or to me speaking, so they turned not at my sword, or to me smiting. I see they are not only *Sermon proof*, my Prophets spake to them in vain, but they are *judgment proof* also, my hand is upon them in vain, they return not. And as it was then, so at this day; for may we not observe, some mouldering in their estates, crushed in their hopes, crossed in their children, blotted and blasted in their credit, weak and sick in their bodies, even tired and worn out under several afflictions, yet no thought of returning to the Lord, or of making their way perfect before him. So that the Lord may say to them, as he once did to his ancient people the *Jewes* (*Isa.* 1.6.) *Why should ye be smitten any more, ye will revolt more and more.* The returning of many is like that which *Solomon* speaks of (*Prov.* 26. 11.) *As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly*; *As Jesurun waxed fat, and kicked*, so some will be kicking while they wax lean.

עד שדי *Revertere usq; ad dominum, videtur idem esse cum* אל שדי *Si plane & serio, toto corde, non ut ante hypocrita fuisti, &c.* Merc.

Further, *Eliphaz* doth not speak barely to *Job* of returning, but he directs him to the object; *If thou return*

To the Almighty] And that is expressed in some translations very emphatically, *Return home to the Almighty*, return till thou comest to or reachest God, *be thou sure to repent home*; so the word is used (*Hos.* 14.2. *Joel* 2.12. *Amos* 4.6.) return home to God, stay not short of him in your repentance, that is, repent fully, seriously; And the intendment of *Eliphaz* in speaking thus, might be to reprove *Job* for his former (by him supposed) hypocrisie: thou hast returned before, but not to the Almighty, surely thou didst repent only as an hypocrite in former times when thou madest the greatest shews of

of repentance. Therefore now repent is a sincere Convert. Thy former repentance was to thee a fruitless repentance, and therefore doubtless but a fained and false repentance. Thou couldst never after it recover out of thine afflicted, thy ruinous condition, and therefore surely thou didst never by it recover out of thy sinful condition, or from thy sins. But now, I promise thee, *If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built.*

Hence Note, That, *True repentance is a full, a home returning to God.*

Much of the progress of a Christian is to go backward, backward (I mean) from those sins and evils to which he hath (by temptation) been carried forth; nor (having sinned) can any man go forward till he return to God. We read in Scripture, of God returning to us, as well as of our returning unto God, in both there is repentance; when God returns to us, he repents of the evil of punishment, that he hath brought upon us; and when we return to God, we repent of the evil of sin which we have committed against him; only be sure (as the point directs) that ye return home to God. The Prophet found *Israels* repentance defective in this (*Hos.* 7. 16.) *They return* (that is, they make a shew of repentance) *but not to the most High.* There is a repentance which brings the soul never the nearer unto God: And that's a repentance (as we speak) *never the near*, or to no purpose. Thus another Prophet taxeth their fasting (*Zach.* 7. 5.) *When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month, even those seventy years, did ye at all fast unto me, even to me?* Observe how he doubles it upon that point, as if the whole emphasis of repentance lay upon that point, *To me, even to me.* As *David* in confessing of his sin (*Psal.* 51. 4.) *Against thee, thee, thee only have I sinned*, &c. Many fast, but not at all to God, they return, but not at all to God. They fast to themselves, and return to themselves; that is, their own interest, not the honour of God, is the motive and end of their fasting and repenting. And hence the Prophet is plain and downright with *Israel* in this case (*Jer.* 4. 1.) *If thou wilt return, O* Israel, *saith the Lord, return unto me*; as if *Israel* had used to return, but always short of God, or not to God; *Israel* made some stop in the work of repentance before he came at God. Now then (saith the Lord by his Prophet) *O* Israel, *if thou wilt return, return to me.* If thou hast any further purpose to return, be perswaded to return to some purpose. Let not thy repentance be any longer, such as is to be repented of. All our returnings are but wanderings, unless we return to God.

But when may we be said to return to God?

I answer: First, When we return out of a sence of sin against God, as well as of smart upon our selves; for when we return only because of smart, we return to our selves rather then to God; as when it is said in *Hosea* (Chap. 7. 16.) *They returned, but not to the most High:* We may see the reason of this charge at the fourteenth verse, *They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and for wine, and they rebel against me:* As if he had said, All their crying and howling is not because they have sinned against me, but because their sins have pincht them; they do not mourn because of their wickedness, but because of their wants. 'Tis famine that moveth them, not my fear. They would fain be at their full tables again; they are all for corn and wine, nothing for grace and holiness. We may say of some persons repenting, as *Job* (Chap. 6. 6.) of the wild Ass braying, *Doth the wild Ass bray when he hath grass, or loweth the Ox over his fodder?* He applyed it to his own case, that he did not cry out without cause, nor complain when he felt no pain; but (I say) we may apply it to some persons repenting. *They would never bray if they had but grass enough, nor low if they had fodder enough:* That is, if they had but outward comfort enough, corn and wine, health and strength enough, did they but abound in these, you should never hear them complain, nor shed a tear, how much soever they abound in sin: All the world cannot satisfie the soul of a godly man, till (after sinning) he be reconciled to God: His soul is hungry and thirsty, notwithstanding all his corn and wine, till he be filled with the favour of God. And this is indeed *to return to the Almighty.*

Secondly, Then also we return to the Almighty, when we turn especially from and mourn for that sin whereby we have most provoked the Almighty; when that which hath most offended God, is most offensive and burdensom unto us. For though in repentance, every sin is to be repented of, yet some more: As *Samuel* said to the house of *Israel* (1 Sam. 7. 3.) *If you do return to the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange Gods and* Astaroth. But why doth he exhort them to put away that strange God *Astaroth*, by name, more then any other of their strange Gods? I answer, It was because they had most provoked the true God by worshipping that strange God, and therefore he counsels them as ever they would approve themselves to have returned to God in their repentance, to look to it, that they turned from *that Idol.* If every strange God must be put away when we return to God; How can we return to God, if we put not away *our Astaroth.* Thus the rule was given by the King of *Nineveh*, in proclaiming a fast (*Jon.* 3. 8.) *Let them turn every one from his evil way* (that is, from his beloved sin) *and from the violence that is in their hands*; that is, from the sin of oppression, by which they got much into their hands. But why doth he instance in that sin? Surely because that was the common sin of that City; they were an oppressing people, and loved the gain of oppression, or to get by violence: They lived more by the blood of others, then by their own sweat, more by the violence, then the labour of their hands, therefore they must particularly repent of that sin. If the covetous man return to God, he must turn from every sin, and from his covetousness. If the proud man return to God, he must turn from every sin, and from his pride; this is the nature of returning to the Almighty. Yet,

Thirdly, Unless we do all this with the whole heart, we do not return to the Almighty (2 *Chron.* 6. 38. *Jer.* 3. 10. and 24. 7.) The wicked are serious and cordial in sinning, they must be so in repenting. But some sinner possibly may say, I have gone away too far to return: No (*Jer.* 3. 1.) *Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, saith the Lord.* Another will say, I have slidden back and relapsed, I have, as it were, repented of my repentance. The Prophet answers this doubt (*Jer.* 3. 12.) *Return thou back-sliding* Israel, *saith the Lord.* And again (*ver.* 14.) *Turn, O back-sliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you*, &c.

If thou return, &c.] *Eliphaz* having thus shewed him that it is his duty to *return to the Almighty*, now proceeds to shew that it will be his happiness; and this he doth by an enumeration of those manifold blessings which follow our returning to him. Whereof the first is,

Thou shalt be built up.] Affliction and trouble, which are the fruit of sin, pull down, and lay us waste; godly sorrow and repentance, which are our turning from sin, have a promise of this good fruit, *That we shall be built up again.*

This building up may be taken two wayes: First, More generally for an encrease in all good things: Secondly, More specially for an encrease in Children. In the Hebrew the same word, which signifies *a son*, signifies *to build*, because Children build up their Fathers house, or are their Fathers building; in that sence the word is often used (*Gen.* 16. 2. *Gen.* 30. 3. *Ruth* 4. 11.) It is said (*Exod.* 1. 21.) that *God built the Midwives houses*; which some interpret, he gave them Children, or made them more fruitful in child bearing. We read in the Law how that man was to be dealt with, who refused to take his Brothers Wife, according to the commandment of God in those times; and the conclusion of all is (*Deut.* 25. 9.) *So it shall be done to the man that shall not build up his Brothers house*; that is, who refuseth to marry his Brothers Widow, and (through the blessing of God) to have Children by her, which would be as the building up of his house, or the continuance of his name and family. Thus some understand the phrase here; *Thou shalt be built up*; that is, thou, who hast lost all thy Children; thou, whose house hath been pull'd down by the fall of a house, (*Chap.* 1. 19.) shalt have more Children and so thy house built up again. But I rather take the phrase here in that larger sence, and so *to be built up*, implyeth all kind of prosperity in outward things. (*Mal.* 3. 15.) *Now ye call the proud happy, yea, they that work wickedness are set up*, we put in the Margin, *are built up*; that is, they are very prosperous, they may have what they will in this world, or (as we say) *the world at will.* And (note that by the way) 'tis the worst character of

בן *Filius inde dictus, quod ædificium sit & structura parentium.* Merc. *Prolem dedit.* Merc.

an Age, *When they that work wickedneſs* (which ruines the beſt built State) *are built up.* The Lord makes a Promiſe in the language of this Metaphor to the Church (*Jer.* 31.4.) *I will build thee, and thou ſhalt be built, O Virgin of* Iſrael: As if he had ſaid plainly, I will bleſs thee, and raiſe thee up out of the duſt of thy preſent deſolate condition, into a glorious fabrick of proſperity and honour; ſo it follows in the ſame Text, *Thou ſhalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and go forth in the dance of them that make merry.* This ſence of the word is clear in that oppoſition uſed in the Pſalm (*Pſal.* 28.5.) *Therefore, ſaith the Lord, I will deſtroy thee, and not build thee up*; that is, thou ſhalt be deſtroyed for ever; I will never repair any of thy ruines, thine ſhall be as *Aſaph* ſpeaks (*Pſal.*74.3.) *Perpetual deſolations.* So that, when *Eliphaz* promiſeth *Job, Thou ſhalt be built up*, his meaning is; thy ruin'd ſtate ſhall be repaired, and thou ſhalt have not only a beautiful, but a well foundation'd felicity.

Hence Note, *It is no vain nor unprofitable thing to repent and turn to the Almighty.*

If we by repentance pull down the ſtrong holds of ſin, if we forſake and lay waſte our luſts, the Lord will build us up, he will build us up with all manner of bleſſings; repentance is fruitful: There are many who profeſs they repent, but they do not bring forth fruits meet for repentance; but as true repentance is accompanied with our fruits of holineſs and obedience towards God, ſo with Gods fruits, the fruits of his love and mercy towards us. There is a kind of repentance in Hell, there's weeping, wailing and gnaſhing of teeth; but that's a fruitleſs repentance, as well as a faithleſs repentance; the damned are under chains of everlaſting darkneſs. Unſound repentance, or the repentance of Hypocrites in this life, is like the repentance of the damned in the next life; but true repentance is fruitful. If we as the *Baptiſt* exhorted the *Jews* (Matth. 3.) *Bring forth fruit meet for repentance*, our repentance will bring forth fruit meet for us; we ſhall have good things of all ſorts, if we ſorrow (as the Apoſtle ſaith the *Corinthians* did) after a godly ſort; godly ſorrow is rewarded with joy; if we humble our ſelves, God will lift us up. The ſorrows of Goſpel-repentance are like the ſorrows of a woman in travail, who (as Chriſt ſpeaks, *John* 16.21.) *ſtraightway forgets her pain, for joy that a man is born into the world.* The pangs and throws of godly ſorrow are therefore ſaid by the Apoſtle to cauſe repentance not to be repented of, becauſe that repentance brings forth joy to be rejoyced in, a maſculine joy, joy that a Man-child of Grace to build up our ſpiritual houſe is brought into the world. *If thou return to the Almighty thou ſhalt be built up.* And

Thou ſhalt put iniquity far from thy Tabernacles.

The word imports, Firſt, Putting away with indignation: Secondly, Putting away to the utmoſt diſtance: Therefore we tranſlate, *Put away far*; 'tis but two words in the Original: *Thou ſhalt put iniquity far*, &c. Iniquity may be taken either for ſin, or for the effects of ſin, that is, puniſhment: if we take it in the firſt ſence for ſin it ſelf, then this latter clauſe muſt be underſtood as a duty; *If thou return to the Almighty, thou ſhalt be built up, thou ſhalt put away iniquity far from thee*; that is, it is thy duty to *put away iniquity far from thee*; as if *Eliphaz* here did ſet forth more fully what repentance is; *Thou ſhalt be built up, if thou return to the Almighty*; that is, if thou return ſo as to put thy iniquity far from thee. If we take iniquity in the ſecond ſence, for the puniſhment of iniquity, then the words are a promiſe: As if he had ſaid, *If thou return*, &c. then thou ſhalt rid and diſcharge thy ſelf and thy houſe of all the troubleſome effects of ſin; Thou ſhalt put iniquity, or all the ſad iſſues and conſequents of iniquity far from thee, none of them ſhall touch thee to annoy thee.

Maſter *Broughton* pitcheth upon the former ſence in his tranſlation, *If thou caſt far off unrighteouſneſs from thy tents.* That gives a perfect ſence to the whole ſentence.

Hence Obſerve, That, *In true repentance ſin muſt be utterly caſt off and put away.*

We return not at all to the Almighty, till we wholly turn from ſin; nor will the Almighty build up our houſe, till we put iniquity quite out of our houſe; till we turn it out of houſe and home; out of the houſe of our family, out of the home of our hearts; nor is it enough to put ſin away a little, or a little way, but it is muſt be put far away. There are ſeveral degrees of putting away ſin: Firſt, there is a putting it away out of our practice, or converſation, ſo that it hath no viſible being or abode in us or with us. This is a putting of ſin away; but this is not a putting of ſin far away. Secondly, There is a putting of it out of our affections, or out of our hearts; not as if we could keep it (while we are in the body) from having a place or dwelling there; but as keeping it from having a throne or reigning there. This is to put ſin very far away from us; it is no great thing to put ſin out of our hands; but it is hard to get it out of our hearts; Hypocrites will (poſſibly) lay down the practice of it, but ſtill their ſpirits cleave to it; they are not at all alienated from the love of it, but only reſtrained from the acting of it; ſuch are oftentimes kept from doing iniquity; but they do not at all put away their iniquity, much leſs put it far away. As it is with a natural man in reference to his doing of good, ſo to his not doing of evil: If good be at any time in his practice, yet it is far from his ſpirit, he hath no mind to it, he cannot ſay the Law of God is in his heart, or that he delights to do it; ſo if evil be at any time put out of his practice, yet it is ſtill in his ſpirit, his mind is toward it, he cannot ſay that his heart is withdrawn from it, or that he hates it. No, but as the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeaks of the ſtubborn *Jews* (Ezek. 11.21.) *Their heart walketh after the heart of their deteſtable things.* As every godly man is (in the main) like *David*, A man after Gods own heart, and walketh after the heart of God; ſo every ungodly man is a man after the heart of the Devil; and every Idolater or worſhipper of falſe Gods (who is one of the worſt of ungodly men) is after the heart of his falſe Gods, and he walketh after the heart of his falſe Gods, which the Prophet calls *deteſtable things*: Whatſoever is moſt after the heart, or according to the deſires and commands of an Idol, that the idolatrous heart walketh after, that is, he loves it, he delights in it; and thus doth every natural mans heart walk after the heart of his luſt, though ſometime his feet walk not after it, or he may ſeem to lay it out of his hand. But he that turns indeed from ſin, deals with it, when he is repenting of it, as the Lord doth when he is pardoning it. How is that? The Lord in pardoning ſin, puts it far from us (*Pſal.* 103.12.) *As far as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, ſo far hath he removed our tranſgreſſions from us*: That is, He hath removed them from us to the utmoſt imaginable diſtance; for ſuch is that of the Eaſt from the Weſt: They and we ſhall no more meet together again, then the Eaſt and Weſt ſhall or can meet at all. And thus in repenting a godly man deſires to put his ſin as far from him as the Eaſt is from the Weſt, that he and they may never meet together in the practice of them, as he is aſſured that God hath ſo pardoned them that they and he ſhall never meet together in the puniſhment of them. *Thou ſhalt put iniquity far*

From thy Tabernacles.] In which words he includes more then his own perſonal repentance; for by the *Tabernacles*, we are to underſtand the whole family or houſhold; the Tabernacle containing, is put for the perſons contained; in this *Eliphaz* ſeems to ſtrike at *Job* for his former courſe: As if he had ſaid, *Wickedneſs hath lodged not only in thy heart, but in thy houſe, in thy family, children, and ſervants. And this ſurely was it which provoked the Lord to cruſh thy family of children and their ſervants with the fall of a houſe; now therefore I counſel thee to put away iniquity from thy Tabernacle, that is, from all that belong to thee, from all that are under thy ſhadow, and are committed to thy truſt and charge.*

Innuit ante hac nec Jobum nec ejus filios culpa vacaſſe, ideo eum everſum & filios extinctos. Mere.

Hence Obſerve, *That they who repent truly ſhould indeavour to purge ſin, not only from themſelves, but from all that belong to them.*

They ſhould cleanſe not their perſons only, but their families, they ſhould ſweep their houſes, as well as their hearts from ſin. (*Gen.*35.2.) *Then* Jacob *ſaid to his houſhold, and to all that were with him, put away the ſtrange Gods* (or, the *eſtranging Gods* (ſuch are Idols, they are not only *ſtrange*, becauſe new Gods; and *ſtrange*, becauſe 'tis a ſtrange or wonderful thing that man ſhould be ſo beſotted as to worſhip ſuch things for Gods; but they are eſtranging Gods) becauſe they withdraw or ſteal away the heart from the

true

true God; therefore said *Jacob*, *put away the strange Gods*) *that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments.* This outward changing of their garments signified the changing or cleansing of their souls. God principally looks at that, and the outward ceremony hath no acceptance at all without the inward sincerity: In comparison of which, as the Lord said in *Joel*, *Rent your hearts, and not your garments*; so he would say here, *Change your hearts, and not your garments.* Now *Jacob* was very careful that this blessed *change of garments*, betokening the change and cleansing both of heart and life, should be the livery of all his family and household Family sins bring family judgments as well as personal: and they that have the charge of a family, have (in a great degree) a charge of souls as well as of bodies; every Master of a family hath *cure of souls*: And he is to see so far as lyeth in him, that no sin nor wickedness remain or be harboured in his family, that his children and servants live not in ignorance; nor in any evil. In *Numb.* 6. *Moses* gives charge to the Congregation, *That they should depart from the tents of those wicked men*, Corah, Dathan, *and* Abiram. It is dangerous to be near the families of the wicked, but it is more dangerous to have wickedness remaining in our family, in our servants, or in our children. And if Masters endeavour not by all due means to remove sin out of their family, that in a little time may remove them out of their family, or (as we say) eat them out of house and home. *Thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacle.* Thus much of this part of the verse, in the first sence, as *iniquity* is taken for sin; yet,

Further, As the word *iniquity* is taken for *punishment*, *Thou shalt put away iniquity* (or the effects of iniquity) *far from thy Tabernacle*; and then the words are both a new Promise, and a further explication of what is meant by being *built up*, which was the former Promise, *Thou shalt be built up, and all evil shall depart away from thy Tabernacle. Iniquity*, which properly signifies the evil of sin, is often put in Scripture, for the evils of trouble and suffering; and as all acknowledge this to be a truth, so some judge it the truth specially intended in this place. I shall therefore briefly note from it,

That, *When we truly return to God from sin, then suffering evils depart from us and ours.*

For though the Lord be pleased to dispence variously for trial of his people, and often suffers the evil of affliction to hang about their Tabernacles, who desire sincerely, and endeavour faithfully to *put all iniquity far from their Tabernacles*; yet this is the Promise of God, and this hath been often experienced by Godly men, That God hath turned trouble out of their doors, when they have humbly and zealously laboured to turn sin out of their hearts.

Eliphaz having incouraged *Job* by this general Promise, he draweth it forth into particulars. And that, first, in reference to outward things.

Verse 24. **Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks.**

בצר *Munire. Aurum lectissimum quasi ab igne munitum, aut quod sit homini munimentum.*

Then] That is, when thou hast acquainted thy self with God; then, when thou hast laid up his Law in thy heart; then, when thou hast returned to the Almighty thy self, and put away iniquity far from thy Tabernacle, *Then thou shalt lay up gold as dust*, &c. The word which we render *Gold*, signifies to fortifie, or to defend, and it is translated *a defence* at *ver.* 25. *Solomon* saith (*Eccles.* 7. 12.) not only, that wisdom is a defence, but that *money is a defence* (that is, it procures defence) and Gold is the chief of money. Though Gold be not a defence *formally*, yet *virtually* it is; Gold defends it self against all the forces of fire; and it is a principal means of defending us against the fire and fury of the greatest dangers. *Thou shalt lay up gold as dust*, &c. But Christ saith (*Matth.* 6. 19.) *Lay not up treasures for your selves on earth.* And it was a Rule given concerning the King of *Israel* in the Levitical Law, long before *Israel* had a King (*Deut.* 17. 17.) *He shall not greatly multiply to himself silver and gold.* How then doth *Eliphaz* say, that he who repents *shall lay up gold as the dust?* Is that fit work for him? I answer, The words are not to be understood as an exhortation to bend his endeavours to the gathering of riches; but as a promise from God that he shall, by a blessing from above, gather store of riches here below. *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust.* By gold here, and silver in the next verse, we are to understand all manner of riches; because gold and silver are the chief riches, therefore all is contained under them. And when he saith, *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust*, the words receive variety of rendrings: Some thus, *Thou shalt lay up gold above the dust*; as if he should say, thou shalt have more gold then dust, which is a strain of Rhetorick, expressing abundance: Others read, *Thou shalt lay up gold upon the dust*: As (*Psal.* 24. 2.) *He hath founded it upon the Seas*: A third renders, *Thou shalt lay up gold by the dust.* Like that (*Psal.* 1. 3.) *A tree planted by the river side*: A fourth thus, by way of counsel, *And lay gold in the dust.* Which two latter readings are expounded as a direction given to *Job*, how he should lay up gold; he must not lay up gold in his heart and spirit, but in the dust, or by the dust. As if he had said, *Put that purer dust, that better concocted and refined dust, in the common dust; put the dust to dust; put thy gold in its proper place, where God and Nature put it.* 'Tis but dust, *and so a fit companion for the dust*: Yea (say some) 'tis as if *Eliphaz* had said, *Do not so much as make room for it in thy house, provide not chests for it, let it lye where it had its original: It came from the dust, there leave it, return it back to its own Country, to the place of its nativity.* A Heathen hath this notion concerning gold and silver, &c. And he labours much to shew, that the site and position of these things in Nature holds forth how we ought to receive and estimate them; *Even Nature* (by which he means the ordinary course set in Nature) *draws us off from coveting gold and silver; there is nothing which may provoke or stir up covetousness, which God hath advanced or set up high in the order of Nature: Gold and silver are the chief objects of covetousness; now both these, as also whatsoever else man is pressed about, and as it were trodden under foot in the dirt for, by burdensom or covetous cares, God hath thrust or trodden under our feet. Gold doth not fall out of the Clouds of Heaven, but lyeth under the Clods of the Earth*: There God hath put them to be trampled and trodden under our feet, that we might scorn to have our affections trampled upon and trodden under foot by them, or such things as they. So then, all that this interpretation or translation aims at in saying; *Gold must be put in the dust*, is only to shew us, that our estimations should be taken off from it, or that we should place it as low in our thoughts, as God hath placed it in the order of Nature. And this is a spiritual sence, suiting that of our Saviour, *Lay not up for your selves treasures on earth*; make not great preparations to keep your earthly treasures, especially let them not be kept in your heart, or lye there where Christ only and the treasures of Heaven ought to be laid up. Put your gold in the dust, or let it be esteemed as dust, seeing at best it is but well concocted dust. So gold and silver are called (*Amos* 2. 7.) *That pant after the dust of the earth upon the head of the poor.* So the Prophet describes their extream covetousness, who will be rich though it be by impoverishing those who are poorest.

Et pone in pulvere Aurum. Coc. *Noli animum auro apponere, nimisq; illud diligere, sed nihili æstima; dejice in terram unde ortum est, æstima ut terram & lapides petræ.* Scult. *Pone ubi deus & Natura posuit.* Coc. *Nulli nos vitio naturæ conciliat, nihil quidē quod avaritiam nostrā irritaret posuit in aperto: pedibus aurum & argentum subjecit, calcandum ac premendum dedit, & quicquid est propter quod calcamur & premimur.* Sen. ep. 94.

Yet, I conceive, in this place *Eliphaz* hath another aim: And that where he saith, *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust*, his meaning only is, *Thou shalt lay up plenty of gold*, or thou shalt gather much riches; for the dust of the earth, or sand of the sea, are used frequently to signifie abundance, or the exceeding numerousness of things, or persons; *Who can count the dust of* Jacob? *and the number of the fourth part of Israel?* (Numb. 23. 10.) That is, they are as the dust that cannot be counted, or numbred. That was the Promise made to *Abraham* (Gen. 13. 16.) *I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth.* So here, *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust*; that is, gold more then thou canst tell, or cast up: Thou shalt have not only enough, but even more then enough. *Job* was very rich before; now saith *Eliphaz*, *Thou shalt have gold as the dust*; thy riches shall be increased, thou shalt have a greater store and stock then ever, *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust.* *And*, as it followeth,

The Gold of Ophir **as the stones of the brook.**

'Tis the same thing in another tenour of words; the Hebrew is, *Thou shalt lay up* Ophir *as the stones of the brook.* The word *gold* is not expressed in the Original; yet it may well be understood; *Ophir* is put for the Gold of *Ophir*, because *Ophir* was the place of Gold, yea, of the richest Gold (1 *Kings* 9. 27, 28.) *They came to* Ophir, *and fet from thence gold four hundred and twenty tallents, and brought it to King* Solomon.

Ophir *nomen Insulæ unde aurum primæ notæ adferebatur quod inde* Ophir *appellatum, hoc est, ut quidam opinantur* Obrysum *quasi* Ophirisum. Drus.

Solomon. *Ophir* was a noted place in those times for Gold, both in reference to the plenty and purity of it. 'Tis a question much controverted, where *Ophir is*; some making it to be an Island in *Africa*; others place it in *India*; since the discovery of *America*, or the *West-Indies*, many contend, that *Ophir* is now called *Peru*; And they have (as they conceive) a probable ground for this opinion from that place in the holy Story (2 *Chron.* 3.6.) Where 'tis said, *He* (that is, *Solomon*) *garnished the house with precious stones for beauty, and the gold was gold of* Paruaim, which is near in sound to the name of that Gold-abounding Countrey in *America* called *Peru*. I shall not undertake to decide this Geographical Controversie about *Ophir*: That which is agreed on all hands is enough for my purpose, and the explication of this Text, that *Ophir* was a Countrey famous in ancient times, both for the plenty and excellency of the Gold found there, and brought from thence. Therefore said *Eliphaz*, *Thou shalt lay up* Ophir, that is, *the Gold of* Ophir, pure and precious Gold.

Vide Bold. *in hunc locum* Jobi.

As the stones of the brook.] That is, thou shalt have abundance of gold; to lay up gold *as the dust*, and to lay it up *as the stones of the brook*, or as the stones of the valley, are parallel expressions for plenty of Gold, sutable to those Hyperboles (2 *Chron.* 1.15.) *The King made gold and silver at* Jerusalem *as plenteous as stones*, &c. And *Ch.* 9. of the same book (*v.* 27.) *The King made silver in* Jerusalem *as stones, and Cedar trees made he as the Sicamore trees that are in the low plain in abundance.* Thus in the Text *Job* is promised to lay up the Gold of *Ophir*, *as the stones of the brook*.

Dabit pro terra filicē & pro silice torrentes aureos. Vulg.

The Vulgar translation reads differently, *He shall give thee for earth a Rock, and for a Rock streams of Gold*; which is a proverbial speech, implying a change for the better: As if he had said, Thou before who hadst a sandy foundation, shalt now build upon a Rock, as (*Matth.* 7.27.) And we find such language in the Prophet (*Isa.* 60.7.) where the Lord promiseth, *For brass I will bring gold, for iron silver, for wood brass*, &c. So here, *For earth I will give thee stone, and for stone golden brooks, or brooks of gold*; that is, *those brooks where gold is*; or, *I will give thee much gold out of those brooks*.

Idq; ponendo pro pulvere lectissimum aurum & pro rupe Ophirinū *fluviatile.* Jun.

Junius seems to favour this translation most of all, rendring the whole verse thus, connecting it with the former; *Thou shalt be built up*, &c. *and that by giving thee for the dust the choicest gold, and for the rock the river gold of* Ophir. By all assuring *Job* of a happiness in his civil state in case he did change or mend in his spiritual state. Then he who had so great a change in his worldly state for the worse, should have a greater change in his worldly state for the better. The next verse is a continuation of the Promise, much to the same intent, and almost in the same words, and therefore I shall open that also before I give any Observations.

Verse 25. **Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.**

There is some difference in the reading of this Verse, for the word which we translate *defence*, is the same which we translate *gold* in the former Verse. And hence some translate thus, *Thy gold shall be mighty*. Making the word *Shaddai* (which is one of the names of God, and usually rendred Almighty) to be as an Epithite to the word *Gold*. *Thy Gold shall be strong or mighty*. And thus some Translations render the word *Shaddai* (Ezek. 1.24.) where the Prophet saith, *I heard the noise of their wings like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty*; so we render; but others thus, *As a mighty voice*: So in the present Text, whereas we say, *The Almighty shall be thy defence*, or according to the strictness of the word, *The Almighty shall be thy gold*: Others give it thus, *Thy gold shall be mighty*. And this answers the latter clause of the verse, where we read, *Thou shalt have plenty of silver*; yet put in the Margin, *Thou shalt have silver of strength*, or *strong silver*. These readings have an elegancy in them.

But I shall keep to our own, which is profitable to us, and suitable to the Text; *Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defence*; the Particle (*Yea*) sheweth, that this is a higher step of mercy then the former: As if he had said, *Thou shalt not only have gold, which is a defence, but better then gold, even the Almighty for thy defence*; or, *God, who is better then gold, will be thy defence, and the defence of thy gold*. The Hebrew word is plural, *Defences*, which intimates; First, All sorts of defence: Secondly, Strong defence; *The Almighty shall be thy defences*: All manner of defence, and a strong defence unto thee.

Hence Note, *God himself is pleased to be the Lord Protector of his people (who repent and turn to him) both in their persons and estates.*

There are many in the world who have gold; but there are few who have this defence for it. The Prophet *Haggai* speaks of those who earned money, but put it *into a bag with holes*; that is, they could not hold or keep what they had gotten. It is the Lord that establisheth the creature to us, and defends it for us. The best things in the world take wings and are gone, unless the Lord stay them with us; and unless the Lord defend and keep them for us, they would soon be pull'd out of our possession. Some mens estates wast away they know not how, there is a hole in the bottom of the bag they thought not of. Others have their estates violently taken away from them, because the Lord is not their defence. The Lord is the Protector of his people, the Lord is a Castle, a strong Tower, all manner of fortifications about his people, to defend their estates and persons, much more their souls. And *Eliphaz* seems to mind *Job* that he once had, but now had lost this defence; God once made a hedge about him, or rather was a hedge about him, but he opened a gap or withdrew, and then in came the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* and spoiled all. Now then (saith he) return to the Lord, and he will once again be thy defence. *How safe are they that have God for their defence, who live under the shadow and covert of the Almighty! How safe are they* (I say) *and all that they have.*

Eritque omnipotens contra hastes tuos. Vulg.

The vulgar Latine is so full of this sence, that he leaves out the word *defence*, and only saith, *The Almighty shall be* (*or shall stand up for thee*) *against thine enemies*; and in this perfect outward happiness consisteth. For to have much, and that secured, is all we can desire for the things of this world. Many have gold, and riches store, but the thing that troubles them is this, how to make all sure; *Return to the Lord, and he shall be thy defence*; he shall be an *Assurance Office to thee*, he shall protect thee against all winds and weathers, against all enemies and pirates: The Almighty shall be thy defence, and the defence of thy gold.

Eritque omnipotens lectissimum aurum tuum & argentū virefque tibi. Jun.

Further, Because the word which we render *defence* signifieth gold also, as was shewed; therefore some keep to that reading, and thus translate this twenty-fifth verse, *And the Almighty shall be thy choice gold, and silver, and strength unto thee*. Which reading is likewise followed by Mr. *Broughton*, *And the Almighty will be thy plentiful gold, and silver of strength to thee*. This sence of the word is comfortable indeed: for to have told *Job* only this, *Thou shalt lay up gold as the dust, and gold of* Ophir *as the stones of the brook*; this had been (though a great mercy, yet but a common mercy) such as the men of the world have and enjoy. *Many that know not God lay up gold as the dust*; *and they who serve him not have often store of silver*. But when God himself saith, *I will be your gold and silver*, this is not only the richest of temporal, but the riches of all spiritual mercies. For when 'tis said, *The Lord shall be thy choice gold and silver of strength to thee*, the meaning is, he will be better to thee then the choicest gold, and a greater strength then silver unto thee. This is a rare and a distinguishing mercy. *Wicked men may have gold from God; but no wicked man hath God for his gold.*

Hence Note, *That God himself is the riches, and fulness, the gold and silver of his people.*

The Lord is my portion, saith my soul: Whose soul said this? It was the soul of a mourning *Jeremy*. And when said he this? Even then, when their lands and houses were possessed by the enemy; even then, when their gold and silver with all their goodly things were carried captive into *Babylon*; then *Jeremy* said, *The Lord is my portion* (Lam. 3.24.) the gold and silver which I had in my house are gone, but my gold and silver in Heaven is not gone into captivity, he is my portion still and for ever. *They who have God for their gold and silver, are happier and richer then gold and silver can make them*: *What can be said more to draw our hearts to God, then this promise, that God will not only give us riches, but that himself will be our riches?* What can be said

said more to take a covetous mans heart off from the love of his gold then this? Take thy heart off from thy gold, and God will be thy gold. And so what can be spoken more prevailingly to the voluptuous man, who delights to swim in rivers of sensual pleasures: O take off thy heart from these pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, and God will be thy pleasure for evermore? What stronger Argument to take down the ambition of man, who hunts after high places and dignities in the World, then to tell him, withdraw from this pursuit, and *God will be thy honour, and thy high place*? We may say to the ambitious, to the covetous, to the voluptuous, and in a word, to all sorts of sinners, Ye shall find all that your sins can offer you, and infinitely more in God; your honours, and pleasures, your gold and silver, you shall have altogether in him. One of the Ancients speaks well and truly to the point; *That man is too too covetous whom God doth not suffice*; or, *who is not satisfied with God.* The only true reason why any man is not satisfied with God, is, because he *knoweth not God*: He that can say knowingly, *The Lord is my God*, cannot but say, *I am satisfied. When God is ours, all is ours.* And the pooreſt who are rich in faith, have as great a share in this riches, as the richest. *God is the poor mans gold*; they that have neither gold nor silver in their purse (as *Peter* said to the impotent man) may have gold in their hearts. The Almighty is their gold and silver too, as it followeth in the Text.

Nimis est avarus cui deus non sufficit. Bern. *Deus meus & omnia.*

And thou shalt have plenty of silver.

Some render, *Thou shalt have silver of wearinesse*: He means it not of silver, as it wearies a man in getting of it; but he means it of so great a quantity or sum of silver, as shall weary a man to tell it, or trouble him to weigh it. The manner of accounting silver was anciently by weight, hence that is paid in money is called a *Pension*. We translate fully to that sence, *Thou shalt have plenty of silver*; for they that have so much as tires and wearies them to tell or weigh, have store enough. We put *silver of strength* in the Margin. Silver is a strong metal, and it is strength, great strength to man. This rendring suits best with the beginning of the verse, *The Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have silver of strength, or silver to strengthen thee.* As for plenty, that was fully set forth in the former verse, where he is promised *Gold as the dust, and the Gold of* Ophir *as the stones of the Brook*. Besides, the word is divers times applyed to expresse strength by; but rarely, if at all in Scripture, to expresse plenty by; and here our Translators render it so, not properly, but tropically, as appears before; for properly it expresseth the greatest strength: As first, *The strength of the Unicorn* (Num. 23. 22.) *God brought him out of* Egypt, *he hath as it were the strength of an Unicorn.* Secondly, *The strength of Mountains* (Psal. 95. 4.) therefore I conceive it is best rendred *silver of strength*; as gold is cloathed with a word which signifies *defence*, so silver is joyned with a word that signifies *strength*, because there is much strength and defence in both, money being the sinews or strength of war: So that to say, *Thou shalt have silver of strength*, is as if he had said, *Thy silver shall be a strength, or a blessing to thee.* Some have silver, and it is no strength to them; or he calleth it, *Silver of strength*, because it should be confirmed and established for his use, and in his possession. He should find, by experience, that there was tack in it, that it was solid silver, or silver that had strength in it. So then, these are but several expressions of the same thing, all which gathered together heighten up the promise of this outward mercy; he should have gold, and God would be his defence, yea, his gold, and he should have silver plenty, enough of it to make a man weary to tell it; or he should have silver of strength, his silver should be a strength to him, and all this is assured him upon his repentance and return to the Almighty.

וְתוּעֲפוֹת *à radice* יעף *lassus fatigatus fuit. Argentum lassitudinū; quod præ copia lassos reddit homines numerando illud vel certè appendendo. Nam olim appendebant argentum, unde* Pensionis *vocabulum in sermone latino.* Drus. *Nihil tam sanctum quod violati, nihil tam munitum quod non expugnari pecunia possit.* Cic. בסף תועפות

Hence Note, First, *That Godliness is the best and neareſt way, even to worldly gain.*

Godliness is gainful, though a godly man should dye a beggar; but besides there is worldly gain in it, these promises are not made in vain. Christ speaks as much (*Matth.* 6. 33.) *Seek first the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all other things* (even gold and silver) *shall be added to you.* And the Apostle is full for it (*1 Tim.* 4. 8.) *Godliness is profitable for all things*; 'tis good to make men rich, it will bring in worldly profits; Godliness hath the promise of gold as well as of grace; of silver, as well as of pardon and peace; do not think that godliness is barren of outward blessings, or that we must needs lose all gain in this world, by getting that which fits us for the Glory of the next world. Know, that as the Lord makes his wayes sweet to his people by inward communications of himself, revealing his love and grace to them, yea, in them, so he makes his wayes sweet to his people, by giving them outward good things, blessing their basket and their store, filling their hearts with food and gladness.

Secondly Note, That, *The godly man may lawfully poſſeſs earthly riches, gold and silver.*

It is no sin to be rich, but when riches are got by sin: Poor *Lazarus* lay in the bosom of rich *Abraham*: As many poor men may be called the Devils poor; so some that are rich may be called Gods rich men. Again, if godliness have a promise (as it hath) of riches, then the godly may lawfully possess riches; which also may be instruments in their hands of glorifying God, and doing good among men. Nor can it be denyed that they know best how to use the things of the world and how to be the best Stewards of earthly treasures, who are instructed for the Kingdom of Heaven, and are (as the Apostle *Peter* exhorts Saints to be (*1 Pet.* 4. 10.) *Good Stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Thirdly, Note, *That riches, gold and silver, are at Gods diſpoſe.*

He bestows them where, and upon whom he pleaseth. This promise of plenty of gold, upon repentance and returning to the Almighty, must needs procede from this supposition, that the Almighty hath gold and silver in his power. *The world is the Lords, and the fulneſs of it* (Psal. 50. 12.) *God is the best* Indies *for gold.* If any would trade for gold prosperously, let them trade heaven-ward; for God is every where Lord of the soyl, and he saith of all the precious *mines* hidden in the bowels of the earth, *They are mine.* See how the Lord speaks as the great Proprietor of all the gold and silver, of all the good things of this world (*Hos.* 2. 8, 9.) *She did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oyl, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for* Baal: *therefore I will return, and take away my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof, and will recover my wool and my flax*, &c. *All's mine.* Thus the Lord voucheth himself the great owner of all these things; all the gold and silver, all the wool and the flax, all the corn and wine are his. When the people and Princes of *Israel*, with *David* their King, offered so willingly and so liberally gold and silver, &c. for the building of the Temple, *David* makes this confession for them all (*1 Chron.* 29. 14.) *All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.* And may he not do what he will with his own? Men think they may, surely God both may and will.

Fourthly Observe, That, *the plenty and ſtability of the creature, is from God, as well as the poſſeſſion of it.*

Eliphaz promiseth *Job* from the Lord, *Gold as the dust, and as the stones of the brook, with silver of strength.* That we have it in such or such a proportion is from the Lord, as much as that we have any thing at all; he can give much as well as little; and that our proportion hath a defence and strength in it, is from the Lord; therefore we should honour the Almighty for every portion and proportion of worldly riches, and for the establishment of our portion whatsoever it is. Silver and gold have no strength in them unless the Lord who giveth these give them strength, and bid them stay with us to do us good.

Lastly, Observe, *We may lawfully poſſeſs abundance of outward things.*

'Tis sinful to make abundance our aim, or to contend for much in temporals; to do so in and about spirituals is our duty, and our contention for the highest degree, our commendation. We should design it, to lay up the Gold of Grace, as the dust, and the Silver of Sanctification, as the stones of the brook: We should forget all that we have, that we might get what we have not. Our desirings while pitcht upon an eternal object cannot be immoderate, but in temporals they quickly may: and therefore as to them, our moderation should be known to all men. Yet if God give in abundance

of temporals in the lawful exercise of our callings, we may warrantably enjoy it as a blessing from him. The providence of God doth often bound us to a little, and we ought to be contented with the least portion of outward things, with bare food and raiment; but the Word of God doth not bound us to a little, nor doth it say, it is unlawful to have much. And as it is not unlawful to have much of the world; so it is a great exercise and tryal of our Graces to have much: As there are some Graces of a Christian which come not to tryal till we are in want; so there are other Graces which come not to tryal unless we have abundance. Want tryeth our patience, and our dependance upon God for a supply of what we have not; and abundance tryeth our temperance, our humility, our liberality, yea, and our dependance upon, and faith in God, for the sanctifying, blessing, and making of that comfortable to us which we have. When a rich man seeth an emptiness in his abundance without the enjoyments of God in it, he exerciseth as high a grace, and sheweth as heavenly a frame of mind, as that poor man doth who seeth and enjoyeth a fulness in God, in the midst of all his emptiness. And therefore *Paul* puts both these alike upon a divine teaching (*Phil.* 4. 12.) *In all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.* And had it been unlawful to enjoy plenty, *Eliphaz* had never pressed *Job* to repentance by this motive, *The Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt have plenty of silver.*

VERS. 26, 27.

For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God.
Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy Vows.

IT hath been shewed from the former Context, how *Eliphaz* encouraged, yea, provoked *Job* to repentance, and returning to God, by the proposal of many promises, by promises of outward and temporal mercies, gold, silver, and protection. He might have what he pleased of God for the comforts of this life, if his life were once pleasing unto God. In this latter part of the Chapter he riseth higher and proposeth spiritual promises: And he begins with the best of spiritual promises, *The free enjoyment of God himself.*

Verse 26. **For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, &c.**

As if *Eliphaz* had said, *If thou dost indeed repent and turn from sin, thy conscience which now troubles, yea, torments thee, shall have sweet peace in God, and thou who now grovellest with thy eyes down to the ground, by reason of thy pressing guilt and misery, shalt then with confidence lift up thy face unto God in prayer, and thou shalt find God so ready at hand with an answer, that thou shalt see cause chearfully to perform thy Vows, which thou madest to him in the day of trouble:* That's the general scope of this latter part of the Chapter. I shall now proceed to explicate the particulars.

For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.

The first word implyeth a reason of what he had said before. Having spoken of temporal promises, he confirms his interest in them by assuring him of spiritual; *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.* As if he had said, *God will not deny thee outward comforts in the creature, seeing he intends to give thee the highest comforts, even delight in himself.* 'Tis an Argument like that of the Apostle (*Rom.* 8. 32.) *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Thus *Eliphaz* seems to argue, seeing God will give thee himself to rejoyce in, or to rejoyce in himself, how can he deny thee gold and silver with those other conveniencies which concern this life? These being indeed as *nothing* in comparison of *himself.*

Then shalt thou delight, &c.] **Then,** that is, when thou returnest to God, and not till then, then thou mayest expect to receive much sweetness from him, such sweetness as thy soul never tasted or experienced to this day.

Then shalt thou have thy delight.] The word signifies to delight, or take contentment, whether it be outward contentment, or inward contentment, the delight of the body, or the delight of the mind; and so an universal delight, thy whole delight shall be in the Lord. *Moses* (*Deut.* 28. 56.) describes those women by this word, who were made up of delight, *Thy tender and delicate woman*; that is, such as are so delicate, that they are the delight of all who behold them, or who are themselves altogether devoted to their delights, who (as the Apostle *Paul* speaks of the wanton widow (1 *Tim.* 5.) *live in pleasure*; these are threatened with such calamities as should render their very lives a pain to them. The word is used again (*Isa.* 58. 13, 14.) Where the Prophet speaks of keeping the Sabbath; *If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight*; What then? *Then shalt thou delight thy self in the Lord*, thou shalt have curious delight, all manner of delight in the Lord, *If thou call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable and shalt honour him*; if thou hast a delight in duty, thou shalt have the delight of reward.

ענג *Delectatus fuit corpore vel animo. Sonat etiam aliquid delicatum & molle.*

Thus *Eliphaz*, *Then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty.* And 'tis considerable that he doth not say, thou shalt have thy delight in the merciful, or gracious God, but in the Almighty; in him thou shalt have thy delight, whose power is over all, and who is able to do whatsoever pleaseth him. Even the power and all-mightiness of the Lord shall be as pleasant to thee as his mercy and loving kindness.

Further, *delight*, in the general nature of it, consists in these two things.

First, In the suitableness and conveniency of the object, and the faculty, whether sensitive or intellective.

Secondly, It consists in the reflection and application of the faculty upon the object. So that to delight our selves in the Almighty, hath these two things in it.

First, A suitableness in our souls to the Lord.

Secondly, The souls reflecting upon the Lord as good and gracious unto us. This reflect-act breeds and brings in delight, and works the heart to an unspeakable joy in God. By this last and highest act of faith, we take in the sweetness of the Almighty, and delight our selves in him mightily. This Faith doth not only suck the Promises, wherein the love of God is evidenced to us, but is it self an evidence of the love of God to us. *We suck and are satisfied with the breasts of consolation* by believing (*Isa.* 66. 11.) that is, we believing draw forth that sweetness of the promise which the Word declares to be the portion of Believers. Thus spiritual delight is made up; and therefore Saints are said *to rejoyce in believing, with joy unspeakable and full of glory* (1 Pet. 1. 3.) That is, having as much and as clear a manifestation, yea, participation and taste of that Glory in believing, which is prepared and reserved for them against the next life, as they are capable to receive, and more then they are able to express, in this life. *Then shalt thou delight thy self in the Almighty.* We may look upon the words first as a Command; and then observe,

That, *It is our duty to delight our selves in God.*

Delight in God, is both a priviledge and a duty, it is commanded in the Law, and it is promised in the Gospel. God is pleased to give us many things in the world, not only for necessity, but for delight. A Heathen looking upon the various provisions which the Great Creator hath made, not only for the maintenance of man in his being, but for his comfortable and pleasurable being; some of which affect the senses, the eye, the ear, the taste, *&c.* others are sweetly contentful to the understanding, with all the faculties of the soul, He (I say) concludes this from it, *The bountiful Creator hath provided for more then our necessity, or he hath provided more then will barely serve our turns to live upon, we are loved even up to our delights.* Now I say, though the Lord hath provided delights for us in the creature, yet it is our duty, our greatest, our highest duty to delight chiefly in the Lord, to delight in him first, and to delight in nothing but in reference unto him; nothing should be pleasing to us, but as there is an impress or stamp of the love of God upon it, or as it tastes of his goodness. And indeed what can delight us long but *this thought*; That God

Neq; enim necessitatibus tantum nostris provisum est, usque in deliciis amamur. Sen. l. 4. de Benefic. 5.

God delighteth in us, or that we are a delight to God; that God is good, and that God is good to us? having tasted his goodness, we should love and delight in him, above all our delights. The Psalmist (*Psal.* 137. 6.) preferred *Jerusalem* above his chiefest joy; How much more should we prefer the God of *Jerusalem* above our chiefest joy. God delighteth in man whom he hath made, and who is his Son by Grace, next to Jesus Christ, who is his Son by Nature; and Jesus Christ delighteth in man whom he hath redeemed; And should not man delight in his Maker, in his Father, in his Redeemer? We have a most divine description of the delight which the Father takes in Christ his Son, and which Christ taketh in his redeemed ones (*Prov.* 8. 30, 31.) *Then was I by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight* (Christ was the delight of his Father; and he delighted in his Father) *rejoycing always before him; rejoycing in the habitable parts of his earth, and my delight was with the sons of men.* Jesus Christ himself takes up many of his delights with the sons of men, whom he calls *the habitable parts of the earth*, even those of the sons of men that are a habitation of God through the Spirit. Now (I say) as the delight of the Father is in the Son, and the delight of the Son in the Father, and the delight both of Father and Son in the Saints, *in the habitable parts of the earth*, or *with the sons of men*; so the delight of the sons of men should be in the Father, and in the Son; there should our delight be, there should we take our highest contentment.

Hæ sunt piorum deliciæ & suavissimæ voluptates, deo placato frui, cujus etiam deliciæ sunt habitare inter eos qui ipsum animo reverentur & colunt.

Secondly, The words are rather to be taken for a Promise; *Then shalt thou have thy delight in the Lord*: *Then*, that is, when thou turnest from sinful delights, or delightest not in sin, I assure thee of spiritual delight.

Whence Observe, *That they who mourn for, and turn from sin, shall have delights in the Lord.*

When once sin is bitter to us, the Lord will be sweet to us; and until sin be bitter to us, the Lord is not sweet to us; sin hinders our delightful enjoyment of the creature, it puts gall and wormwood into our dish and cup, it is that which makes all relations grievous and burthensome to us; yet this is but a small matter, that it hinders us from the contentment and sweetnesses which are to be had in the creature; sin takes us off from delighting in God. That soul cannot delight in the Almighty, who loveth and continueth in the love of sin. If such profess delight in God, it is but a false boast, and a high presumption; it is impossible for such to delight in the Lord indeed. *Job* (*Chap.* 27. 10.) saith of the Hypocrite, *Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?* He may pretend to a delight in the Almighty, he may have some flashes, some raptures, but his joyes and delights are not in the Almighty; what joyes soever he hath they are in somewhat below God; the Hypocrite may delight himself in somewhat received from the Almighty, in some present benefit, or future expectation that he hath from the Almighty; he cannot delight in the Almighty himself, or in God as God.

As it is impossible in the nature of the thing, for a man to delight in sin, and in God too; so God hath said, that he who hath a delight in sin, shall not find any delight in him. God hath said, *Delight thy self in me, and I will give thee the desires of thy heart* (Psal. 37. 4.) But if any man will follow the desires of his own heart, he shall not delight himself in God. *Sin separateth between God and us* (Isa. 59. 2.) That is, it separates between the comforts and mercies which are in God, and us; sin doth not, cannot separate us from the power, or presence, from the eye, or justice of God; so sin doth not separate (for God is nigh to sinners both to see what they are doing, and to punish them for what they have done sinfully) but sin separates from all those delights that flow from God, from those joyes which his people take in him; yea, sin breeds a strangeness between God and the soul, so that the soul that loveth sin, cannot have any holy familiarity or converse with God. The Lord saith to those who repent (*Isa.* 1. 18.) *Come let us reason together*, &c. As if he had said, I am now ready to debate the matter with you that repent, and how great soever your sins have been, they shall be blotted out. Whereas before, the Lord tells them that he was weary of them, and that they were a burthen to him in all their services: Now when we are a burthen to God, God is never pleasant to us; if the Lord say he is weary of us, we cannot say we delight our selves in him. Our delight and pleasure in God is the fruit of his delight in, and well-pleasedness with us.

Thirdly, *Eliphaz* proposeth this delight in the Lord, as the most winning promise.

Hence Note, *Delight in the Lord is the highest and choicest mercy.*

There is nothing better, nothing sweeter then to delight in the Lord; delight in the Lord hath all true delights in it. *David* speaks this out fully in that place lately quoted to another occasion (*Psal.* 37. 4.) *Delight thy self in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart*; that is, thou shalt have all thy desires fulfilled in this thing; delight in the Lord will be the fulfilling of all thy desires; not only shall they who delight themselves in the Lord, have all their desires filled up; but their very delight in the Lord is the fulfilling of all their desires. What is the glory of Heaven, but delighting in the Lord? And he who delights in the Lord, feels not the want or absence of any earthly Good. *In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore* (Psal. 16. 11.) Heavenly glory is nothing but delight in God; and all earthly good is nothing without delight in God. We may affirm four things of this delight, in opposition to all worldly delights.

First, This is a real delight; worldly delights are but shadows, or pageant like shews of delight. The joyes of a hypocrite, are like his holiness, meer appearances of joy; he hath no real, no true joy, as he hath no true, no real holiness. That man doth but fain a taste of joy, whosoever he is, that doth but fain the practice of holiness. Thus who wickedly hold out a holiness which they feel not, shall talk of joyes which they find not.

Secondly, Delight in the Lord is a strong delight; yea, it is a strengthening delight: That must needs be strong joy, which is strengthening joy; such is the joy of the Lord, as *Nehemiah* told that people (*Nehem.* 8. 10.) *The joy of the Lord, is the strength of the soul, the strength of the inward man, it makes us mighty, it makes us Giants to run our race, the race of holiness.* The Giant rejoyceth to run his race, because he is strong, and knows he can do it. The joy of the Lord is our strength, and is both an evidence that we are strong, and a means to make us so. Worldly delights are weak, and they weaken us; Delight in the Lord is strong, and it strengthens.

Thirdly, It is a lasting delight; not like the *crackling of thorns under a pot* (to which *Solomon* elegantly compares the *laughter of the fool*, Eccles. 7. 6.) that make a noise, and a blaze for a while, but are presently extinct. Now *Solomon*'s fool may be either, first, the prophane man in the World; or, secondly, the Hypocrite in the Church. All the joyes of this pair of fools, the prophane worldling, and the formal hypocrite, are soon in, and soon out, like crackling thorns. But joy or delight in the Almighty is a lasting delight; it is not for a fit, or a pang, but for a continuance; yea, it continueth in the midst of all worldly sorrows, for it overcomes and conquers them. There is a laughter in which (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 14. 13.) the heart is sorrowful, and there is a sorrow in which the heart laughs; *As sorrowful, yet always rejoycing*, saith the Apostle (2 *Cor.* 6. 10.) Spiritual joy, or joy in the Lord is not extinguished, though surrounded with worldly sorrows, *Many waters cannot quench this vehement flame, this flame of God* (as *Solomon* speaks of love, *Cant.* 8.) *neither can the floods drown it.*

Fourthly, Delight in the Almighty is a holy delight, a delight which makes us more holy; the delights of the world are impure, and they defile us; we seldom take in worldly pleasures, but they leave some spot and taint upon our spirits or conversations; but the delights we have in the Lord are all pure, yea, purifying delights, they make the soul more clear, more holy, more heavenly; they make us like unto the Almighty, in whom our delight is. For what the object is in which we delight, such is the spirit of him that takes that delight; now the Lord in whom this delight is, being altogether holy, they that take delight in him, must needs be made or kept holy by it. As

delight

delight in worldly things makes the heart worldly, base and dreggith, so this refines and purifies it. The more we drink of the rivers of this pleasure, the more sober we are; *To be an Epicure* (as it were) *in these delights*, is the highest temperance. Our feeding cannot be too full, nor our draughts too large upon these delights. *Solomon* (*Eccles.* 2. 2.) who had run a course through all worldly delights, and tryed them to the utmost, said *of laughter, it is mad, and of mirth what doth it?* There is a madness in the mirth of the world, what doth it? That is, What good doth it to any man? Many things it doth, it makes men vain, foolish, dissolute, dis-spirited for any goodness; But what good doth it? Doth it make any man better, more holy, more wise or fit for duty? No, it can do none of these things. But delight in the Lord, is all this, and can do all this, it is true, strong, strengthening, lasting, holy, a delight that makes us more holy. This is the portion of Saints at all times, though paid them in more or specially at some times; and that either, first, respecting the state and disposition of their own souls, as in the rest; or secondly, the state of and promised dispensations of God to the Church. (*Isa.* 65. 14, 18. *Isa.* 66. 11.) *Then* (also in a special manner) *shalt thou have thy delight in the Lord.* And because every man doth freely or willingly look to that in which he is delighted, therefore *Eliphaz* addeth,

Quum unusquisq; libenter spicit id in quo delectatur, subdit, ver. seq. Aquin.

And shalt lift up thy face to God.

But some may say, Is that such a great matter: Is it any special favour to lift up the face to God, seeing to do so is common to mankind? The Naturalist saith, *That whereas other creatures look groveling downward, God gave man an erect countenance, and bid him look heavenwards.* How then doth *Eliphaz* promise, *Thou shalt lift up thy face to God?* We had the like expression (*Chap.* 10. 15.) *If I be righteous, yet I will not lift up my head.* And (*Chap.* 11. 15.) *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot.* The lifting up of the head, and the lifting up of the face, are the same; implying confidence, or well-grounded boldness in him that doth so: For all these phrases of speech imply a lifting up of the mind or spirit to God. As *David* saith (*Psal.* 25. 1.) *Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. Eliphaz* means not the lifting up of a heartless face or head, such as the Hypocrite or Formalist lifts up to God in worship; nor the lifting up of a meer living head or face, such as all men lift up to God according to the form or frame of their natural constitution, but the courage and confidence of the soul, and that a holy courage and confidence is here intended. And there are not many, who can thus lift up their face to God, as is promised here to *Job* by way of priviledge.

Os homini sublime dedit. Ovid.

Æquiparanda sunt cæteris ut vel oculos vel faciem vel animam ad deum tendere. Bold. *Audiendum admonebis recurrendi ad deum.* Aquin.

And shalt lift up thy face to God.

To lift up the face, is taken under a twofold notion in Scripture: First, As a gesture or bodily position in prayer: He that prayeth doth usually lift up his face to God; and so to lift up the face to God, is to pray unto God. A corporal posture being put often in Scripture to signifie a spiritual duty. Thus some understand it here, *Thou shalt lift up thy face to God*; that is, thou shalt pray: Secondly, (which further complyes with the duty of prayer) To lift up the face, notes (as was touched before) confidence of spirit, and boldness, courage, and assurance towards him, before whom the face is lifted up, whether God or man.

Excitet elevatio oranis habitus Pined.

Multum attollit qui sibi bene conscius est animi confidenti. Rus.

The Septuagint, who rather paraphrase then translate this Text, give this sence fully, *Thou shalt be confident before the Lord* (*or thou shalt act fiducially and boldly before him*) *and behold Heaven chearfully.* This lifting up the face is opposed to casting down the face, and that is a phrase used in Scripture to signifie shame and failing of spirit. When courage is down, the countenance is down too; as we say, such a man *hath a down look*; that is, there is an appearance of guilt upon him. The face is cast down three wayes: First, By fear: Secondly, By sorrow: Thirdly, By shame. (*Ezra* 9. 6.) *O my God, I am ashamed and blush, to lift up my face unto thee; for our iniquities are increased over our heads.* So (*Luke* 18. 13.) the *Publican durst not lift up his eyes to Heaven*: and possibly there was a complication of all these three causes why he durst not, fear, sorrow, shame; he was so much terrified, so much grieved, so much ashamed of himself, that he durst not lift up his eyes to Heaven. It was the speech of *Abner* to *Asahel* (2 Sam. 2. 22.) *Turn thee aside from following me; Why should I smite thee to the ground? How then should I hold up my face to* Joab *thy Brother?* That is, If I slay thee I shall be afraid to look him in the face, nor can I have any confidence of his favour; and it is well conceived, that he spake thus (for it is indeed a very unusual thing for the General of an Army, in the very heat of war, to look after the favour of the General of the opposite Army; but (I say) 'tis conceived he spake thus) as being convinced that he had undertaken a bad cause in upholding the house of *Saul* against *David*, and therefore had misgivings that he might shortly fall into the hands of *Joab, David*'s General, and was therefore unwilling to provoke him by killing his Brother. This made him say, *How shall I hold up my face to thy Brother* Joab? As if he had said, I shall obstruct the way of my own reconciliation to thy Brother (in case the turn of things in this war cast me into his hand) by killing thee. Again, we may look back to *Gen.* 4. 5. where it is reported of *Cain*, That he *was wroth, and his countenance fell*; anger, and sorrow, and shame, falling at once upon him (because the Lord had respect to *Abel* and his offering, but had no respect to him or his) caused his countenance to fall; which phrase stands in direct opposition to lifting up the face in all the three occasions of it. For it implyeth, first, fear, which is opposed to boldness; secondly, sorrow or anger, which are opposed to content and joy; thirdly, shame, which is opposed both to freedom of appproach, and liberty of speech. We have an expression which parallels much with this, in that Prophecy of Christ (*Psal.* 110. 7.) *He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall he lift up his head*; that is, he shall rise and appear like a mighty Conqueror, with boldness, honour, and triumph. So Christ himself prophecying of the troubles which shall be in the latter dayes, comforts the surviving Saints in this language; *When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads* (that is, then take heart and boldness) *for the day of your redemption draweth nigh* (*Luke* 21. 28.) That is, the day is at hand, wherein you shall be freed from all fears and sorrows.

Quod legitur Exod. 14. 8. *egressos filios* Israel *in manu excelsa, Chaldaicè dicitur, capite discooperto, i. e. palam, confidenter sine metu.*

Hence Observe, *Holiness hath boldness and freedom of spirit with God.*

Then shalt thou lift up thy face unto God. As soon as *Adam* sinned, he hid himself from the presence of the Lord amongst the Trees of the Garden (*Gen.* 3. 8.) He ran into the thickets for shelter, he durst not appear or shew his face. But when once we are reconciled to God, and sin is taken off, when we are freed from the bonds of guilt, then we have boldness; reconciliation is accompanied with the Spirit of adoption, *Whereby we cry Abba, Father*; we can then speak to God as a Child to his Father; the Child dares lift up his face to his Father, and speaks freely to him. *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty* (saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17.) And that's a threefold liberty. First, A liberty from sin: Secondly, A liberty unto righteousness, or a freeness and readiness of spirit to do good: Thirdly, Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is a liberty of speech, or access, with boldness in all our holy Addresses unto God. As the Apostle clearly sheweth at the twelfth Verse of the same Chapter; *Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness* (*or boldness*) *of speech*, as we put in the Margin of our Bibles to express the significancy of the Greek word in the full compass of it. For as because we have such hope we ought to use great plainness of speech towards men in preaching and dispensing the Gospel to them; so great boldness towards God in receiving the offers and promises of the Gospel, for our selves. *Eliphaz* having thus shewed what freedom *Job*, truly repenting, might have with God in prayer, proceeds in the next Verse to shew what success with God, or what fruit he should have in prayer.

Verse 27. **Thou shalt make thy prayer to him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy Vows.**

In these words we have a further promise, leading to a further duty; as before the duty of returning to the Almighty,

mighty, had a promise annexed to it of lifting up the face to God, or boldness in prayer. So now the promise of being heard in prayer, is followed with a duty, The payment of Vowes.

Thou shalt make thy prayer to him, &c.

עתר *Multiplicavit, propriè verba fortia fudit in Oratione.*

The word notes the pouring out of many prayers, or of a multitude of words in prayer; yet not of bare words, but of words cloathed with power, strong prayers as well as many prayers. For as the Gospel comes from God to us, *not in words only, but in power, and in the holy Ghost, and in much assurance* (1 Thes. 1.5.) so prayer should go from us to God, not in word only, but in power, and in the holy Ghost, &c. Thus saith *Eliphaz*, *Thou shalt make many, and mighty prayers, strong prayers, prevailing, conquering prayers*; so the word is used, (*Gen.* 25.21.) *Then* Isaac *intreated the Lord for his Wife, because she was barren*; that is, he made many prayers to God; he made a business of praying that he might have a Son. Though there was a sure promise made to *Abraham*, that he should have a Son, and that in him, and from him should come the promised seed; yet *Isaac* was long without a Son, and he leaves it not carelesly in the decree of God, resolving idly, *God hath said I shall have a Son at least, if not many Sons, why should I trouble my self in the thing?* No, *Isaac* had not so learned the mind of God, he was better skill'd in Divinity then so, to separate the means from the end, or to conclude that we need not pray for that which God hath purposed and promised. He, I say, was better instructed then so, and therefore though he (doubtless) did fully believe that God would fulfil the promise made to *Abraham* in giving him a Son, yet *he intreated the Lord for his Wife, because she was barren*; and *he intreated the Lord earnestly*, he made plenty, abundance of prayers; for it cannot be supposed but that he had prayed for that mercy long before (for it was near twenty years since his marriage to *Rebeccah*, as appears plainly by comparing the twentieth Verse of that Chapter with the twenty-sixth, the former telling us, that he was forty years old when he married *Rebeccah*; and the latter, that he was threescore when *Rebeccah* bare *Jacob* and *Esau*. So that I say, we cannot suppose but so holy a man as *Isaac* had been suing out the good of the promise before) but when he perceived it sticking so long in the birth, then his soul fell in travel about it, then he was very fervent in prayer, and would give the Lord no rest; *Then he entreated the Lord*, &c. The same is said of *Manoah* (Judges 13.8.) *Then* Manoah *intreated the Lord, and said, Oh my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we should do unto the Child that shall be born*: He prayed then with much earnestness, or made prayers for direction in that thing. The word is often used to signifie abundance (*Isa.* 35.2.) *It shall blossom abundantly*, (Jer. 33.6.) *Behold, I will bring it health, and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace, and truth.* Not only shall they have peace, and truth, but abundance of them. So here, thou shalt not only pray, but a spirit of prayer shall be poured out upon thee abundantly. *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him.*

Hence Note, First, *Prayer is a duty.*

We owe prayer to God as his creatures, or in regard of our natural dependance upon him, much more as new creatures, or in regard of our spiritual dependance upon him.

Secondly, Note, *It is our duty not only to pray, but to pray much, or to pray with much fervency.*

The emphasis of the Original word here used, leads us to this as well as many Scripture Authorities. Cold asking invites a denyal; 'tis effectual or working fervent prayer that prevails much (*Jam.* 5.16.)

Thirdly, Note, *Prayer is due only to God.*

Prayer is a part of holy worship, and all such worship is proper to God alone, *Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him.* Saints and Angels worship God with us; we must not worship either Saint or Angel with God, no nor God by the help and mediation of Saints or Angels. We know no Mediator of intercession, but he who is the Mediator of redemption, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Fourthly, Taking in the consideration of the time, as before in the former part; *Then shalt thou have thy delight in the Lord, then shalt thou make thy prayer to him.*

Observe, That, *We are never in a fit frame for prayer, till we turn from every sin by repentance.*

As the Lord will not hear us when we pray, *if we regard iniquity in our heart* (Psal. 68.18.) so neither are we in a fitness to speak to God in prayer, if we regard any iniquity in our hearts. Repenting and praying must be of the same length; unless we repent continually, we cannot pray continually, because we sin continually. *The more holy we are, the more free we are to pray.* Sin clogs and checks the spirit in this great duty; cast off that weight, and *then shalt thou make thy prayer to him,*

And he shall hear thee.] To hear prayer, is more then to take notice of the matter or words spoken; to hear prayer, is to grant what we pray for. As our hearing the Word of God is more then to take in the sound or the sence of what is spoken; it is to submit to and obey what is spoken: Now as we hear no more of the Word of God, then we believe and practice; so the Lord heareth no more of what we pray (in a Scripture sence) then what he granteth. There are two expressions in Scripture which note this.

First, To have regard to a person, or to a prayer (1 *Kings* 8.28, 29.) when *Solomon* prayed at the dedication of the Temple, the Lords hearing of prayer, which he then begged, is thus described, *Have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication*, &c. *that thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day.* So it is said of *Abel* (Gen. 4.4.) *That the Lord had respect to his Offering*, the Lord looked towards him, and accepted of him; to accept a prayer, is to hear a prayer. *Respicere est audire.*

Secondly, The hearing of prayer is described by the presence of God with those that pray (*Isa.* 58.9.) *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, here I am.* This is a wonderful condescension, 'tis even as when a Master calling to his servant, he answereth, *Here, Sir, here I am*; and that is as much as to say, *I am ready to your command, I am ready to do what you will have me, here I am*: So saith that Promise in the Prophet, *Thou shalt cry, and the Lord shall say, here I am*; that is, *I am ready to what you ask, I am even ready* (O unspeakable Goodness) *at your command* (as our translation of the eleventh verse of the forty-fifth Chapter of *Isaiah* speaks out in plain terms) or, *I am willing to do what you will have me to do.* All which is in effect and vertually contained in the word of the Text. *He shall hear thee.* This teacheth us, *Adesse est audire.*

First, *That God is the hearer of prayer.*

It is the Lords Title, *O thou that heareſt prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come* (saith *David*, Psal. 65.2.) God is not only *A hearer of prayer*, but he is *The hearer of prayer*; to hear prayer is his peculiar prerogative and priviledge as well as his goodness and mercy; none in Heaven or Earth have a will to hear prayer as God doth, nor have any a power to do it. No creatures ear is long enough to reach the complaints, nor his stock large enough to supply the wants of all his fellow creatures. The Crown of this honour fits none but God himself. *He shall hear thee.*

Secondly, Note, *It is a great mercy, a mercy comprehending all mercy, to be heard in prayer.*

He shall hear thee.] *Man cannot desire a richer favour then to be heard of God.* To have audience in the Court of Princes, and among the great men of the earth, is a great favour. What greater worldly priviledge can a man have then this, that he hath the ear of those who are greatest in the world? When a man saith, I have the Princes ear, I can be heard when I speak, we think he hath spoken enough to make him a man. How great a mercy is it then to have the ear of God? To have ready audience in the Court of Heaven? That as soon as we call the Lord is ready to answer, *Here I am*; *What's the matter? What would you have? It shall be done*; *your request is granted.* And to shew that to be heard by God is the sum of all mercies, or all our mercies wrapt up in one, the Scripture testifies that not to be heard of God is the sum of all judgments, or all judgments

wrapt

wrapt up in one. When the Lord refuseth to hear, or saith he will not hear those that pray, then wrath is coming upon them to the uttermost. Thus the Lord threatened the *Jews* (Isa. 1. 15.) *When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you, yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear, your hands are full of blood:* As it is an argument of the greatest sinfulness of man against God, not to pray; *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy Name* (Jer. 10. 25.) So it is an argument of the greatest wrath of God upon man not to be heard in prayer. He that is not heard receives nothing; and he that is heard receives all. And this is the Saints priviledge by Jesus Christ, their prayers are heard, they have welcome audience at the Throne of Grace continually. And hence by way of Corollary from the former Observation, we learn, that

Holy prayers are fruitful and gainful prayers.

God hath not said to the seed of Jacob, *seek ye me in vain; He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious fruit* (this precious fruit, faith and prayer, or the prayer of faith) *shall doubtless* (there's no hazard nor peradventure in the case) *come again rejoycing, bringing his sheaves with him.* His showry seed-time shall be blessed with a fruitful and plentiful harvest. The wicked make many adventures, many voyages by prayer, such as it is, Heaven-wards, yet come home without lading, without any fraight at all. Their prayers are all lost, and turn to no profit; and indeed theirs are not prayers but words, or babling rather. But holy prayer, the prayer of the holy, is prevailing: Those showers of prayers and tears which Believers send up to Heaven, are like *the rain* (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa.* 55. 10.) *which cometh down, and the snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.* Even thus the word of prayer which goeth out of the mouths, or hearts rather of Believers, returns not to them void, but prospers in the thing whereto they send it. As appears yet more fully in the next words of this verse spoken by *Eliphaz*, *He shall hear thee*: What then?

And thou shalt pay thy Vows.

That is, God will give thee the mercies which thou didst pray for, and thereby give thee occasion to pay the Vows which thou didst make to him in case he performed thy desire in prayer. *Eliphaz* is not exhorting *Job* (directly) to pay Vows; but he is assuring him that his prayer shall be heard, and so fully answered, that he shall see reason and have abundant cause to pay them, and to pay them both fully and chearfully.

Thou shalt pay thy Vows. The word signifies *free votive promises made to God, yet obligatory upon man*; for howsoever, as the word implyeth, there ought to be the greatest freedom and voluntariness in making a Vow; yet a Vow being made, there is an obligation, a bond or tye upon him that made it to perform or pay it: He that voweth binds himself, but he cannot unbind or absolve himself from his Vow, nor can he retract or call in his lawful Vow.

Eliphaz, I suppose, here mentions the payment of Vows, because the godly in those times did often make Vows. When *Jacob* (*Gen.* 28. 20.) fled from his Brother *Esau*, he in case of his safe return, *vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and rayment to put on, so that I come to my Fathers house again in peace, then shall the Lord be my God* (that is, I will own and honour him, love and depend upon him more then ever) *And this stone which I have set up shall be Gods house, and of all that thou shalt give me I shall surely give the tenth to thee.* Here's the tenour and form of the most ancient and famous Vow that ever was made. Likewise *Hanna* (1 Sam. 1. 11.) *vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy handmaid, but wilt give to thy handmaid a man-child, then will I give him unto the Lord.* We read often in the Psalms of paying of Vows, *Psal.* 61. 13, 14. and 50. 14. and 76. 11. and 116. 14. And we have the command for it (*Eccles.* 5. 4.) *Pay that which thou hast vowed.*

Further, To explicate this Text, It may be inquired what a Vow is?

I answer, *A Vow is a solemn, free and voluntary promise made to God, of things lawful, weighty, and possible, to further and help us to glorifie God in our obedience.* In which description we have, First, The nature of a Vow, *It is a solemn promise, not a bare promise.* Secondly, The object, *It must be made to God.* Thirdly, The manner of it, *It is a free and a voluntary promise*; for though a lawful Vow layeth a necessity upon us to keep it, when once we have made it, yet there is not an antecedent necessity of compulsion upon us to make it; so that a Vow ought to be a most free and voluntary act. Fourthly, In this description of a Vow we have the general matter of it. As first, It must be of things lawful, we may not vow that which we may not do, either expresly, as they did (*Acts* 23. 12, 13.) who vowed to kill *Paul*; or implicitly, as *Herod* did, who promised to give the Daughter of *Herodias* whatsoever she should ask, limiting her only as to the quantity of her demand, she must not ask above half the Kingdom, but leaving her without limits, as to the quality of her demand, whether good or evil, lawful or unlawful made no matter. And thus many conceive *Jephtah* failed, implicitly vowing to do that, which was unlawful for him to do (*Judg.* 11. 30, 31.) Secondly, A Vow must be of things weighty and serious, we must not vow about trifles. Thirdly, It must be of things possible, through grace; though we must vow weighty things, yet we must not vow things impossible, either in their own nature, or without extraordinary assistance and strength from God. Fifthly, We have here the ends of a Vow: First, To glorifie God: Secondly, To oblige us more strictly to obedience.

Hence Note, First, *It is lawful to make a Vow.*

All the Scripture testimonies before alledged confirm that Proposition.

Secondly, *Vows lawfully made ought to be kept.*

Thou shalt pay thy Vows, hath in it the nature both of a Promise and of a Command: Vows are bonds, we must take heed of breaking them; if we break our Vows, God will break our peace. The word which we translate *to pay a Vow*, signifies also to give peace and quietness, implying that till the Vow be paid we cannot have peace. A man that is in bond to men hath no peace till he dischargeth, or hath prepared to discharge his debt; and therefore an acquittance or a discharge for a debt, is commonly called, *A quietus est*, implying, that till a man hath got a discharge, he is not at quiet. We are at our liberty whether we will vow or no; but we are not at our liberty whether we will pay our Vows or no. And therefore *Solomon* doth not only exhort to the payment of Vows, but to the speedy payment of them (*Eccles.* 5. 4.) *When thou vowest a Vow unto God, defer not to pay it, for he hath no pleasure in fools:* That is, He is greatly displeased with fools; he means it not of such as are called fools for the want of a natural understanding, but for the want of a good conscience, and such are all they, who flatter God with their hastiness in making Vows, and then mock him by their slowness in, or neglect of paying them. And therefore take four Cautions about Vows.

First, Be not frequent in making Vows; vowing must not be like praying, *an every dayes work*; we may not vow as we must pray, alwayes, and without ceasing. Many have brought themselves into great snares, by multiplying Vows, and we have need to be caution'd in this thing, because the nature of man is carried much to it. The Heathens made many Vows, especially when they were in any distress; and so meer carnal men will do to this day, vow great things, what they will be, and what they will do, if trouble be upon them. It is said, that those Heathen Marriners made Vows when the storm was over and the danger past (*Jon.* 1. 16.) Many make Vows in a storm, whether at Sea or Land, which they little mind when the storm is done. But those Heathens (which may be a rebuke to some Christians) made Vows of praise and thankfulness when they had escaped the storm. And this is a further proof of that naturalness which is in man to make Vows. And the reason of it is, because this satisfieth a natural man, and fills him with confidence that he shall receive good from

from God, because he hath vowed duty to him. Man loves to be upon his own bottom, and thinks he shall surely engage God to be merciful, while himself promiseth to be dutiful and thankful. Now (I say) though there be still a lawfulness of Vows in these Gospel times, yet take heed of making many Vows, especially of conceiting to oblige God by any of them. As the former may prove a snare, and an entanglement to us; so the latter is a dishonour to God, who never shews us mercy more freely, then when we bind our selves most to duty.

Secondly, *When ever you vow, be sure you do it in the strength of Christ.* None discover more weakness in keeping Vows, then they who make Vows in their own strength, or not wholly in the strength of Christ. Some have vowed never to commit such a sin more; and they never committed it so much as after they had vowed. Some have thought to get cure and remedy against such a corruption or lust by a Vow, and yet that lust or corruption hath prevailed more upon them after their Vow. The reason of all is, because they have either put their Vow in the room of Christ, as if that could help them alone, or else they have made their Vows alone, without relyance upon the power of Christ. That rule of the Apostle which obtains in all cases of duty, doth most in this; *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him* (Col. 3.17.)

Thirdly, In things which are directly commanded, or directly forbidden in the Law of God; we are not to vow the doing or not doing of the thing in it self, but only a greater care and stricter watch over our selves, either for the doing of the one, or not to do the other. As for example, We should not vow absolutely, that we will not worship Idols, that we will not swear, that we will keep the Sabbath, that we will honour our Parents, that we will do no murder, for all these duties are expresly commanded by God, and are therefore past being vowed by us. Only thus, we (observing the treachery of our own hearts) may vow more care and diligence in and about all these things. And thus we are to understand that of *Jacob* (*Gen.* 28.21.) vowing *That the Lord should be his God*; as also that of *David* (*Psal.* 119.106.) *I have sworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments. David* kept them before; but now he would be more strict then before in keeping them. So then, when we vow things already commanded or forbidden, we must pitch and place our Vow, not upon the matter of the Commandment, but upon the manner and intensenes of our spirits in keeping it.

Fourthly, Let not Vows about indifferent things be perpetual. All Vows about things expressed in the Law of God must be perpetual, because the things themselves are alwayes a duty. For the affirmative Precepts of the Law are at all times binding; and the negative bind at all times. But as for things which are not precisely under a Law: As for example, In the affirmative to pray so many times in a day, to read so many Chapters of the holy Scriptures in a day, to hear so many Sermons in a week: and in the negative, not to drink any wine or strong drink, not to wear silk or lace for or upon our apparel, not to take such or such a recreation, in it self lawful; I say, in these cases, let not Vows be perpetual, but limited to a season, lest thereby we entangle our own souls, and cast our selves into temptation, while (through a zeal, not according to knowledge) we use such means to avoid it. Make no Vows to bind your selves at all times in things which are not necessary at all times, either to be done, or not to be done.

From the whole Verse observe, That, *The answer of prayer received from the Lord, doth call us to pay and perform all the duties that we have promised or vowed to the Lord in prayer.*

Though we do not alwayes make strict and formal Vows when we pray, yet every prayer hath somewhat of a Vow in it; so that having prayed at any time, we may say, *The Vows of God are upon us*; for when we pray we promise, and then especially we do so, when we pray under any pressure of trouble, or when we have any extraordinary request to make; then, I say, we engage our selves in a more solemn manner to serve and walk with God: And so the return or answer of such prayers ingageth us more strongly to duty. For wheresoever the Lord soweth, there he looks to reap; and where he hath sowed much, he looks to reap much; but then and there chiefly, when we promise him fruits of duty for our receipt of favour and mercy. Did we take notice of this, we should not be found as we are so much in arrear to the Lord, either for our private or publick mercies. What promises have we made in the day of our distress? That we would be holy, that we would strive against and mortifie our sins, or the deeds of the body, through the Spirit and power of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now let Conscience speak; have we performed our promises? Have we paid our Vows? We can hardly say that we have put up a prayer which hath not had an answer by blessing and successes; God hath been to us a *prayer-hearing God*; Have we been to him a *vow-paying people?* Who amongst us is now more active for God? Or more careful to please him then before? Who amongst us is more watchful over his heart, or more circumspect in his walking then he was before? Who is more careful over his family, that it may be holy? Or more zealous for the publick, that it may be reformed, then he was before? What manner of men should we be in all holy conversation and godliness, did we but pay those Vows and make good those Engagements which have gone out of our lips, and we have laid upon our selves before the Lord, in the day of our trouble? How just, how pure, how righteous a Nation should we be, were we what we promised our outmost endeavours to be? The Lord hath done much for us; let us up and be doing for him; let us make good what we have spoken to the Lord in vowing and promising, seeing the Lord hath performed what we have spoken to him in praying and calling upon his Name. God hath answered us at the first call, yea, sometimes before we called; let us not put God to call a second and a third time, much less often and often for the payment of our Vows. For though the Lord in patience wait many dayes for the payment of Vows, yet according to righteousness we should not let him wait one day for it. *All these spiritual debt-bills are payable at sight or upon demand*; God shews us our own bills and bonds wherein we stand engaged to his Majesty every day, and every day (by some or other of his Attorneys; that is, by some means or other) he makes his demand: therefore pay to day, pay every day, for we can never come wholly out of these debts to God, or say, we owe him nothing, how much soever, we have paid him. And know, that if when God hath heard us, we be sloathful in paying our Vows, either God will hear us no more, or we shall hear of him (and that, as we say, with both ears) till he make our ears tingle, and our hearts ake for not paying them. Swift Judgments have often followed these slow payments. And though they have not been swift in coming presently upon the neglect, yet when they have come, they have come swiftly upon the neglecters. And as we may alwayes say of the evils and judgments which come upon any of the people of God, as the Prophet in a like case doth to the people of *Israel* (Jer. 4.18.) *Thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee, this is thy wickedness.* So in most cases, when evils and judgments fall upon and afflict the people of God, we may say, *Your not doing what you have promised, hath procured these things unto you, This is your vow-breaking or your neglect of paying your Vows.* And how just is it that their troubles should not only be renewed, but even doubled and trebled, yea, seven times more encreased upon them, who slight and throw off those very duties which they took upon them in the day of their trouble, in expectation to have their troubles removed. Every mans mouth will be stopt, when he suffers for not doing that good which the mouth of the Lord hath spoken: How much more will his mouth be stopt, and he have nothing to say for himself, who suffers for not doing that good, or for not forbearing that evil, which his own mouth hath spoken, and solemnly charged upon himself as a duty in the presence of the Lord. They will have least to say for themselves who go against or come not up to what themselves have said. Then *pay your Vows.*

VERS.

VERS. 28, 29, 30.

Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee; and the light shall shine upon thy wayes.
When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person.
He shall deliver the Island of the Innocent; and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

IT hath appeared in opening the whole Context (of which this is a part) how *Eliphaz* presseth *Job* with Promises, assuring him, that not only good, but great good should accrue to him by his returning to God, and acquainting himself with the Almighty. And in the foregoing verse, *That* great benefit was shewed, The Lords hearing the prayer of such as do so; *Thou shalt make thy prayer to him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows:* Here *Eliphaz* gives in another excellent Promise, *Thou shalt also*, &c. that is, moreover and beside what I have said, I add this,

Verse 28 **Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.**

Thou shalt decree.] The word here translated *to decree*, signifies properly to divide, to cut asunder. So it is used (*1 Kings* 3. 25.) when *Solomon* gave sentence between the *two women that were Harlots* concerning the *living Child*, he saith, *Divide the Child*; my decree is that the Child shall be divided. Now hence, by a Trope, the word signifies also to *decree*, to decide, or to determine a matter, because in all decrees about or determinations of a Controversie, there is (as it were) a cutting off the business, a laying aside of one thing, and a sticking to another. When the whole matter is debated and weighed in Council, then the result and issue of all is drawn up and given out in a decree. So that to decree is to divide, or separate one thing from another, resolving upon that, which we conceive most just and reasonable.

Thou shalt decree a thing.] The Hebrew is, *Thou shalt decree a word:* It is usual in that language to put *word* for *thing*. And when he saith, *Thou shalt decree a thing*, we are not to understand it at large, as if whatsoever were decreed should be established; but the meaning is, thou shalt decree that which is right and good in it self, and good for thee. For the decree being made by a godly man, we cannot suppose that he should decree any thing but that which is just and good; and so the signification of the former word is well applyed to this, *Thou shalt decree*; that is, thou having by deliberation and serious discussion considered what is right, and having cut off all evil from thy sentence, thou decreeing such a thing, *It shall be established unto thee.*

There are yet two Opinions concerning this decree, as it is an exposition of the former promises, *Thou shalt be heard*, and, *Thou shalt pay thy Vows*; that is, what thou suest for by prayer on earth, shall be decreed for thee in Heaven. That is, thy prayer shall certainly be performed, thy prayers shall not be lost, no, they shall be as the Statutes and decrees of Heaven. It is said of *Eliah* (*1 Kings* 17. 1.) what he decreed was done: And what was his decree? His decree was his prayer: See how he speaks, as if he had the command of Heaven and Earth; as if he had carried the Keyes of the Clouds at his girdle; *As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.* But what was this word of *Elijah?* The Apostle *James* expounds that for us, he telleth us what this word was, when *Eliah* said, *It shall be according to my word* (James 5. 17.) Elias *was a man subject to the like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth, for the space of three years and six months: And he prayed again, and the Heavens gave rain, and the Earth brought forth her fruit.* The Apostle explains, what the word of *Eliah* was, even a prayer-word, he prayed and sought the Lord in that thing, and his prayer was as certainly performed to him, as if he had the whole power of decreeing what he would have. Thus here, thou shalt pour out a prayer, and thy prayer shall be as a decree established with God. So we read (*Gen.* 32. 24.) in the report of *Jacob*'s wrestling with the Angel, that the word of *Jacob* was as a decree, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*; I will have a blessing; and it is said, *As a Prince hast thou power with God, and with men, and hast prevailed.* *Jacob* had what he would in prayer, he decreed a thing, and it was established to him. *The prayers of Saints are decrees with God:* And 'tis but reason they should be so; because their prayers answer the decrees of God, or they pray for that which God hath decreed; and indeed there is no Saint or godly man would pray any other prayer, or ask any thing of God, but what God hath determined and decreed before to give: *As a godly man would do nothing but what God hath commanded, so he would ask nothing but what God hath decreed.* This is a comfortable truth; yet I rather conceive the sence of this place more general, and not tyed up to that of prayer: And therefore,

Secondly, *Thou shalt decree a thing:* That is, thou shalt take up a resolve, or a purpose; thou in thy wisdom and prudence shalt say in thy heart, I will do such a thing, or I would bring such a thing to pass, and it shall come to pass or be established. For as many men met together in Council, make Decrees; so any man in himself may make a decree; and we alwayes make decrees in our own minds before we joyn in any decree with others: First, We speak in our minds, then we speak out our minds; *Thou shalt decree a thing*; that is, thou shalt resolve to go such a way, or to do such a thing, and it shall be done. Now, this case of decreeing must be understood with a caution; suppose the thing it self be just and lawful (as we touched before) yet a man must not make absolute decrees (that's the priviledge of God, he only can make peremptory decrees, who hath all things in his power) we must decree submissively to the will of God, and say, *If the Lord will, if the Lord please* we will do such a thing. The Apostle (*James* 4. 12, 13, 14.) reproves those that would make peremptory decrees of what they would do in reference to outward affairs, *Go to now ye that say to day or to morrow we will go into such a City*, here is a decree, *we will go to such a place, or do such a thing, we will continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain.* It is lawful for men to take up a purpose to go to such a place, and follow their trade to buy and sell, and get gain in an honest way; but no man must be peremptory in this, because we know not what shall be on the morrow; therefore, the Apostle directs, *Ye ought to say, if the Lord will we shall live, and do this or that.* Such decrees must be made with the Lords good leave, or with a reference to his pleasure who alone doth whatsoever pleaseth him. As the persons so the works of all men are in the hand of God (*Eccles.* 9. 1.) And there they are: First, As to the performance of them: Secondly, As to the success of them. They take themselves for more then men, who decree the doing of lawful things without the leave of God. We must not only see what we do is according to the will of God; but we must have his good will for the doing of it: That is, as we must have a Law from God for what we do, so leave from God. Thus *Paul* teacheth us to speak by his own example (*1 Cor.* 4. 19.) *I will come unto you shortly, if the Lord will.* And again (*Chap.* 16. 7.) *I must tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.* Once more (*Phil.* 2. 19.) *I trust in the Lord to send* Timothy *to you shortly.* And even Heathens themselves, by the light of Nature, have acknowledged such a submission as due unto their superiour Powers, *their gods*; therefore they used to express their resolutions thus, *If the gods will*; much more must Christians speak thus in all they undertake to do, we will do it, *if God will. Thou shalt decree a thing,*

Ordinabis per tuam providentiâ facturum aliquid, & quasi rem non futuram & incertâ, sed quasi divina jam voluntate constitutam illam habebis. Aquin.

Ethnicis illudi in ore frequens erat, si dii volunt.

And it shall be established unto thee.

That is, Thou shalt have success in it, it shall be confirm'd. The word in the Original signifies to rise up, as also to stand. So some render it here, *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall rise up to thee.* When a thing that we are determined upon, prospers and comes well on, we say, it riseth up to us; whereas a business that fails, falls off from us, or goeth backward. But saith *Eliphaz* to *Job*, *The thing which thou decreest shall rise or come up to thy mind, to thy desire*; or as some read, *It shall come to thee*; we say, *It shall be established.* So the word is used frequently in Scripture (*Isa.* 40. 8.) *The word of the Lord shall stand.*

יקם *Surget tibi, surgere pro existere vel effectum dare.*

Veniet tibi Vulg.

Now

Now as the Word of the Lord shall stand, so shall the word of man while it is according to the Word of God. So the word is used in the Case of a virgins making a vow (*Numb.* 30.4.) *If the father hear it and say nothing, it shall stand, or be confirm'd*; otherwise if he dislike, it is a void vow, a null vow. So that here, to rise up, or to be established, notes only the effectiveness and success of those decrees which this godly man should make; these shall be established unto him for his good, he shall have the comfort and benefit of them, while he aims at the glory of God in them.

Hence note, First, *The success of our Councels and Decrees is a great mercy.*

Eliphaz brings it in by way of promise, *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.* Success in any of our right actions is to be acknowledged as a mercy; and therefore the Lord doth so distinctly specifie the successfulness of the *Jews* after their return from *Babylon*, in their rural and houshold businesses, for neglecting to build his house (*Hag.* 1.6.) to shew that he had a controversie with them; *Ye have sown much, and brought in little* (no success) *ye eat, but have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink* (that is, ye are not satisfied) *ye cloath you, but there is no warmth* (which is the effect of cloathing) *and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.* Which is a proverbial speech, implying that nothing sticks, nothing stayes by a man, no more then mony doth in a bag that hath holes in it, or water in a sieve, or in a leaking vessel. Successfulness attended them in all they did, and that was their affliction. So when our Councels prosper, when what we advise to be done thrives in the doing; when the directing word of a man proves like the Creating word of God (*Gen.* 1.) who did but say, *Let there be light, and there was light; let there be a firmament, and there was a firmament*, &c. Thus when a man shall say, let such a thing be done, and it is done; when every thing comes forth at a word, like a new Creation, how great both a mercy and honour is this? When he saith, let there be deliverance, and there is deliverance; let there be victory, and there is victory; let there be peace, and there is peace; when in cases of greatest difficulty and utter impossibility to flesh and blood, he speaks like magnanimous *Joshua* (Josh. 10.13.) in a commanding language to the creature, while with strongest confidence in and humblest dependance upon God, *Sun stand thou still upon* Gibeah, *and thou Moon in the valley of* Ajalon; *and the Sun stood still, and the Moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.* Who of the sons of men (who were not also the sons of God) were ever crowned with such an honour?

Secondly, He doth not say, he shall decree a thing and establish it; for man may decree a thing, but man cannot establish it; the decree is from one, the establishment is from another; and who is that other? *Eliphaz* doth not express who by name, but we may easily understand who it is, even God himself. For as it is God alone who hath given a being to all things, so he alone gives all things their establishment, whether they be things wrought by him, or wrought by us; *God shall establish it*, or *it shall be established by the fiat, and consent of God.*

Hence observe, *The success of our Councels and decrees is from God.*

There are many who take wise, yea honest Councels, which yet are not established, because the Lord is not pleased to establish them; and the Lord doth often overthrow evil and malicious Counsels. We read (*Isa.* 7.5, 6, 7.) of Councels and Decrees made, *Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken evil Councel against thee, saying* (they decree a thing, what was it?) *let us go up against Judah to vex it* (there was the decree) *let us make a breach therein for us, and set a King in the midst of it, even the Son of Tabeal.* Here was their decree, we will vex this people, we will set a King among them, the Son of *Tabeal*. But what saith the Lord to this? *Thus saith the Lord God* (vers. 7.) *it shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.* It is this word in the Text, *it shall not be established.* You have made a decree, but you have not my consent for the establishment of it, and therefore it shall not stand, it shall not come to pass. Take another Scripture (*Isa.* 8.10.) the Lord doth as it were give them leave to make decrees: make as many decrees as you will, and sit together in Councel, lay your Councels as deep as you can, *take Councel together, and it shall come to nought* (you may take Councel, but it is in my power whether it shall succeed or no, and I have decreed concerning your decree, that it shall come to nought) *speak the word, and it shall not stand.* The standing or not standing, the frustrating or the fulfilling of our Decrees and Councels, it is from the Lord.

Thirdly, When he saith, *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.*

We may Observe, *The Councels of the godly are under a promise of good success.*

They have a kind of assurance that what they say shall come to pass; though they have not an absolute assurance, yet they have much assurance; though we cannot say in every particular case, that their decree shall be established to them, yet their decrees in general are under a promise of establishment. Christ speaketh concerning the decrees of a Church-Assembly (*Matth.* 18.18.) *Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven*; that is, I will establish your decrees. If when you meet together in my name, you decree concerning a person to bind sin upon him, he shall be bound; if to loose or pronounce him pardon'd, he shall be loosened; your decree on Earth, shall be a decree in Heaven; I will bind what you bind, and loose what you loose. Now in proportion, the Lord speaks the same concerning the decrees of any godly man; what he binds on Earth, the Lord doth bind in Heaven, and what he looseth on Earth, God looseth in Heaven; that is, there is an establishment of his decrees: and as the Church there hath a promise that the Lord will joyn with her in her decrees; so a godly man hath a promise here that the Lord will joyn with him in his decrees. We have also an excellent confirmation of it (*Isa.* 44.25, 26.) The Lord is many wayes described in Scripture, but here he is described by disappointing and establishing the Councels of men. *He it is that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolishness.* Here is a description of God in reference to the disappointments which he puts upon his enemies, in frustrating their Councels and Decrees; they boast of these and these tokens that assure them of good success, but the Lord frustrates their tokens. The Diviners say, O the Stars promise good luck, and tell us we shall have good fortune; thus diviners boast, but the Lord *maketh the diviners mad*; how doth he make them mad? By making them see things fall out quite cross to what they have foretold or prophesied. Again, *he turns wise men backward*; that is, he turns the Councels of wise men backward, when they have resolved such a thing, the Lord sets it quite another way: this is the glory of God that he can give check to the Councels of the greatest Politicians, and deepest Machiavels, he turns them backward. Thus the Lord is set forth overthrowing the decrees of the wicked; but at *vers.* 26. He is set forth establishing the decrees of the godly. He it is *that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the Council of his messengers; that saith to* Jerusalem, *thou shalt be inhabited; and to the Cities of* Judah, *ye shall be built*, &c. God *confirmeth the word of his servant*; which may be understood not only of the word of Prophesie (though that be the scope of that place; as if it had been said, when the Lord sendeth forth his Prophets and holy Diviners, 'tis not with them as with false Prophets and heathenish Diviners, who making promises from the Stars of Heaven, not from the God of Heaven, are frustrated and disappointed; 'tis not thus with the *Lords holy Diviners*, for *he confirmeth the word of his servants.* Now, I say, we may understand that Text not only of that word of prophesie which the Lord puts into the mouths of his servants by an immediate inspiration) but also of that word of prophesie, or decree, which any one of his faithful servants speaketh or maketh according to his already revealed will. This word of his servants the Lord confirmeth also, and *performeth the Council of his*

messengers. And the reason is (as was touched before about prayer) because there is a suitableness between such words and decrees of his servants, and his own decrees; for the designs of his servants falling in with his own designes, and so their decrees with his decrees; he in establishing their decrees, doth indeed but establish his own. For the servants of God desiring that their decrees may be suitable to the written or revealed will of God, they seldom miss of a suitableness to the decrees of his hidden and secret will. So that their decrees are (as it were) the *Duplicate* or *Counterpanes of the Decrees of God*; and therefore no wonder if they be under such a promise of success and establishment. The Lord saith concerning his own decrees or thoughts, *Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass* (*Isa.* 14. 24.) Now if we think as God thinketh, then what we think shall come to pass too) *and as I have purposed so shall it stand*; if we purpose as God purposeth, then our purposes shall stand too. Again (*Isa.* 46. 10.) *I am the Lord, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me: Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My councel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.* If then the councels of the Saints be the councels of God, he will do all their pleasure. That's the sum of this promise to *Job*, *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.* Which appears further from the last clause.

And the light shall shine upon thy wayes.

Eliphaz in this promise might possibly have respect to *Job's* former complaint (*Chap.* 19. 8.) *He hath fenced up my way that I cannot pass; and he hath set darkness in my paths*; as if *Eliphaz* had here said, thou didst complain a while ago that God set darkness in thy paths, do thou return unto the Lord, *and the light shall shine upon thy wayes*, or there shall be light in stead of darkness in thy paths. This light may be taken three wayes.

First, A light of direction, thou shalt see what to do; so it answers the former promise, *Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee.* Thou shalt not make blind decrees, or decrees in the dark; thou shalt not decree at a venture, or at random; the light shall shine upon thy wayes; thou shalt have the light of the Word, and the light of the Spirit to direct thee in making thy decrees, and for the ordering of thy whole conversation.

Secondly, Light shining upon his wayes, is the prosperity of his wayes; as if he had said, success shall attend thy undertakings, the favour of God and his blessing shall be upon what thou takest in hand; as the Sun shining upon the earth ripens the fruits thereof, so the light, heat, and influence of divine favour shall ripen thy undertakings and bring them to a desired perfection. Light, in Scripture, is often put for prosperity, as hath been shewed from other passages of this book.

Thirdly, *The light shall shine upon thy wayes*; that is, thou shalt have personal comfort and contentment in thy wayes; that's a different blessing from the former; 'tis possible for a man to be in a prosperous way, and yet himself to take no comfort nor contentment in it. When these three lights shine upon any man in his way, or upon the wayes of any man, when the Lord shews him what he should do, when he prospereth and succeeds what he doth, and when he hath comfort and joy in what he is doing or hath done, then the blessing is full. As the Lord *meets him that rejoyceth in his way and worketh righteousness*, so the Lord doth often meet those that work righteousness in their way, causing them to rejoyce; and then the light shines upon their way indeed. This is a further addition unto the promise of success before given.

From the first notion of light,

First observe, *The righteous are under a promise of direction and guidance by God; they shall see their way, and know what to do, by a divine light.*

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord (Psal. 73. 23.) that is, the Lord gives him light to see how to order his steps. He hath not only an outward natural light shining in the Air, and an outward spiritual light shining in the rule; but he hath an inward spiritual light shining in his heart, or that outward rule planted within, as it follows at *vers.* 31. of the same *Psalm*, *The law of his God is in his heart, and none of his steps shall slide:* The law in the heart is a rule within, which directs the good man what to do, and gives him such good direction, that *none of his steps shall slide.* He shall not walk like a man upon glass or ice, all whose steps are slips, or in danger of sliding; but he shall walk like a man upon plain firm ground, whose very steps are as sure as standings. As Saints who were darkness are made light in the Lord, in reference to their state; so they have light from the Lord, in reference to their walkings; and as they receive a light from God whereby they know all things, that is, those great things which concern eternal life (1 *Joh.* 2. 20.) *Ye have an unction from the holy One, and ye know all things.* Now as they have a light promised them, that they may know all things, that is, all necessary saving truths, or doctrines of salvation for attaining the next life; so a light is promised them whereby they may do all things, that is, all their necessary works, businesses, and affairs, which concern their duty in this life.

From the second notion of light,

Observe, *Righteous men, such as turn unto the Lord, shall have a blessing in their way, their way shall prosper.*

As they shall have a light shining to shew them their way, so to prosper them in their way: God is a Sun, and he is a Shield (*Psal.* 84. 11.) And as he is a Sun to give light, and a Shield to protect, so, *no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*; that is, he will not hinder or stop those good things from them which their souls desire, or move after; they shall prosper in their way: yea, when 'tis said, *He will not withhold*, &c. there is more intended then expressed; for the meaning is, he will plentifully give forth or pour out all good things to and upon them, *who walk uprightly.*

From the third notion of light, Learn,

That the Lord gives godly men joy and comfort in their way.

Though their way be a way of much labour, yea and a way of much danger too, though it prove a way full of sweat and trouble; yet the Lord will cause a light to shine upon them, and refresh them in their way; *To the righteous there riseth up light in darkness.* The light of joy in the darkness of sorrow, the light of comfort in the darkness of trouble; they who walk in the light of truth and holiness, usually find the light of joy and comfort in their way, and are sure to find it in their end. *The way of wisdom* (saith *Solomon*, Prov. 3. 17.) *are wayes of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*; and if at any time her wayes and paths are not peace and pleasantness (as to the outward man they often are not) while we are travelling in them, yet they are alwayes so in the close of our travels (*Psal.* 37. 37.) *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* Yea when others find most trouble in their way, then God is nearest to him for support, as it follows in the next words.

Vers. 29. **When men are cast down, then thou shalt say there is a lifting up, and he shall save the humble person.**

In this and the following verse, *Eliphaz* gives a firm assurance to *Job* by way of promise, that he should not only be delivered, but should have two further priviledges.

First, That himself should be exalted when others were cast down, or that he should be saved in times of common calamity, *vers.* 29.

Secondly, That he should be a means of safety to others, and should prevail with God for their deliverance: *he shall deliver the Island of the Innocent*, &c. *vers.* 30. That's the general scope of these two verses, according to our translation; as will further appear in the explication of them.

When men are cast down.

When they are prest, or oppress with mountains of affliction and trouble. So the word is used (*Isa.* 2. 17.) *The loftiness of man shall be bowed down*; that is, the lofty man shall be bowed down, as a man with a heavy burden upon his back. We say, *when men are cast down*: the word, שפל *Depressus prostratus.*

men,

men, is not expreſſed in the Hebrew Text, 'tis there only, *when caſt down*: and becauſe that word is not expreſt, therefore ſome ſupply out of the former clauſe, the word, *way*, *The light ſhall ſhine upon thy way when it*, that is, *when thy way is caſt down*; though thou be now in a low condition, and though thou ſhouldeſt hereafter be caſt into a low condition again, yet *thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*, or, thou ſhalt be lifted up. If at any time thy wayes be caſt down in darkneſs, the light ſhall ſhine upon them, thou ſhalt ſay in faith, *there is a lifting up*. The Apoſtle ſpeaks (in a language like this) of himſelf and of his fellow Apoſtles (2 *Cor.* 4. 8.) *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; perplexed, but not in deſpair; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* Thus here, *when there is a caſting down*, or, *when thy wayes are caſt down, yet thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*; thou mayeſt be caſt down, but not deſtroyed. Yet, I conceive, that Supplement of the word, *men*, which we put into the Text, is more ſuitable to the ſcope of it, and then the ſence is this, *When men are caſt down*, that is, when ſinners or ungodly men are caſt down, when God comes to ruine his enemies, and make them deſolate, *then thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up*; A lifting up for me, and for ſuch as I am.

Cum humiliata fuerint viæ tuæ dicas, elatio illa eſt, i. e. *mox ſenties conditionem tuam exima factam optimam. Contextus mirè conciſus eſt, ideo variè intelligitur.* Merc.

Thou ſhalt ſay.] This ſaying may be taken two wayes, and in both 'tis the voice of faith.

Dicts, ſc. *in tuis ad Deũ precibus exaltatio ſit*, ſc. *illi depreſſo*, i. e. *ex alta illũ O deus.* Piſc.

First, *Thou ſhalt ſay* in prayer, or thou ſhalt pray, *O Lord, let there be a lifting up*. Thus it is expounded as a promiſe to *Job*, that when others were caſt down, he ſhould help them up again by prayer; thou ſhalt ſay, *There is a lifting up, or, O Lord, let there be a lifting up, namely, of him who is caſt down; lift him up, O Lord.* As prayer is in its own nature a lifting up of the ſoul to God (*Pſal.* 25. 1.) ſo prayer in the effect of it hath a mighty power and prevalency with God for the lifting up both of our own bodies and outward eſtates, as alſo the bodies and outward eſtates of others out of the deeps of miſery and trouble. Many a godly man hath lifted himſelf and others out of the mire by prayer, while ſeeing a caſting down, he hath ſaid, *There is a lifting up, or, O Lord, let there be a lifting up.* This ſence carrieth a high priviledge; but I rather conceive that intended in the next verſe. And therefore

Pollicetur Jobo, Eliphaz *eximiã fœlicitatem, impiis alijs atque etiam hoſtibus ſuis ad extremũ infœlicitatis gradum præcipitatis*

Secondly, I ſhall take theſe words of *Eliphaz* as a promiſe, *When men are caſt down, thou ſhalt ſay* (or confidently affirm this thing) *there is a lifting up*; that is, I promiſe or aſſure thee, O *Job*, that when thou ſhalt ſee the Lord bringing vengeance upon the wicked, when thou ſeeſt them fall on this ſide, and on that, when nothing is viſible but the ruine and deſtruction of men and families, yea of Nations; that even then thou ſhalt ſay, *there is a lifting up*; that is, thou ſhalt have faith for thy ſelf, that both thou and thine ſhall be lifted up, or ſaved and delivered in a time when many wicked men or thine enemies fall and periſh, and ſhall never (as to any worldly enjoyment) riſe any more.

Hence obſerve, *That a godly man may have much aſſurance when others are caſt down, that yet he and others ſhall be preſerved and lifted up.*

When men were caſt down in *Sodome*, when *Sodome* was overthrown, *Lot* was lifted up, and aſſured of his preſervation. When all the men in the world were overwhelm'd and ſwept off the face of the earth with a Deluge, there was a lifting up for *Noah* and his family; he and his were ſafely houſed in the Ark floating upon the Waters. Thus the Lord had made proviſion for the preſervation of his people, when thouſands have been undone, and caſt down on the right hand and on the left by common calamities; yea when they have been caſt down, his people have been not only preſerved, but exalted and lifted up. *Thou ſhalt ſay there is a lifting up,*

And he ſhall ſave the humble perſon.

ὅτι ἐταπείνωσας σῶσον. Sept. *Interior animi faſtus & tumor per oculos & per omnes ſimulari poſſit.*

That is, the Lord ſhall ſave him; the Vulgar reads thus, *He that is humble ſhall be in glory*; the Seventy thus, *Becauſe thou haſt humbled thy ſelf thou ſhalt be ſaved.*

But I ſhall keep to our reading, *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon* (or according to the ſtrictneſs of the Hebrew) *He ſhall ſave him that is low of eyes*; 'tis frequent in Scripture to expreſs an humble perſon in this form, *A man that hath low eyes*; as *high looks and lofty eyes*, are every where in Scripture the periphraſis of pride. *David* ſaid (*Pſal.* 101. 5.) *him that hath an high look and a proud heart will I not ſuffer*; for you may ſee pride in the eye, pride ſits upon the eye; therefore *David* puts a high look and a proud heart both together there. And again (*Pſal.* 131. 1.) *Lord, mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty.* So that, I ſay, an humble perſon, and a perſon of low eyes is the ſame; as a proud perſon, and a perſon of lofty eyes is the ſame in Scripture ſence, and both are very ſignificant expreſſions; *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon*, this humble perſon may be taken two wayes, either Paſſively, or Actively.

Non tam modeſtum qui ſeſe ſubmittit (ut virtutem ſignificet) intelligo, quam afflictum eſſe illud etiam ſententiæ non repugnat, imo utrumq; rectè intellexeris? Merc.

Paſſively, ſo 'tis he that is caſt down and laid low by affliction. Thus the humble perſon is the ſame with the humbled perſon; affliction is an humiliation, however the afflicted take it or carry it; and uſually it makes men humble, at leaſt in appearance, and lowly in their looks; whereas in proſperity men lift up their eyes uſually, and look loftily, as if they would reach Heaven with their heads, while their hearts are far from it. But affliction makes men ſtoop. We may underſtand the Text of a perſon who is humble, when humbled, who ſtoops down quietly to take up and bear his croſs; and doth not in ſtouteneſs ſlight it, or in wantonneſs play with it, but is ſerious under the rebukes of God; *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon.*

Dimiſſus oculis eſt, qui ſuo judicio & exiſtimatione ſibi ipſi vileſcit.

Secondly, It may be taken Actively, *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon*; that is, the perſon who is low in his own eyes, while in the greateſt worldly heights, the perſon that humbles himſelf and walks humbly with God and men when moſt exalted. Thus the Apoſtle *James* exhorts the brother of high degree, or the rich brother, *to rejoyce in that he is made low* (Jam. 1. 10.) But if he be rich, how is he made low? He means it not of a lowneſs in ſtate, but of a lowneſs or rather lowlineſs of ſpirit. The brother of high degree hath no cauſe to rejoyce in his highneſs, but when he is low in his own eyes. Lowneſs of eyes is more then a vertue or common modeſty, 'tis a grace; that's in a ſpiritual ſence the moſt graceful look, which is the moſt humble look. *He ſhall ſave the humble perſon*; but with what ſalvation? I anſwer, Salvation is either temporal and bodily, or eternal, uſually called the ſalvation of the ſoul. We may expound this Text of both, the Lord ſaveth the humble perſon both body and ſoul, both temporally and eternally.

Where note, *That the Lord takes ſpecial care of humble ones.*

The Lord ſeems to take ſo much care to ſave the humble, as if there were none elſe that he took care to ſave, or regard what became of them, whether ſaved or no. And the Lord ſpeaks of proud perſons, as if he contemn'd none but under that name and notion (*Jam.* 4. 6.) *He reſiſteth the proud*; he that is proud of his perſon, or parts, or eſtate, or wit, or power, the Lord reſiſteth him. And he ſpeaks of the humble as if none were ſaved but under that name and notion, *He ſaves the humble perſon*; or as that Text in *James* hath it, *He giveth grace to the humble.* What grace? There is a twofold grace, and both are given to the humble; firſt, he gives them the grace of favour or good will, he is kind to and reſpecteth the humble, or (as this Text in *Job* hath it) *He ſaves the humble perſon.* Secondly, He gives much grace to the humble, as grace is taken for that gracious work of the Spirit in us, forming up faith, love, *&c.* in our ſouls. The Lord gives more of this grace alſo to the humble, that is, he addeth unto the graces which they have, and makes them more humble, more gracious; a man cannot be (in that ſence) an humble perſon without grace; humility it ſelf is a great grace, and the greater our humility is, the greater acceſſion we have of other graces. Thus, I ſay, we may underſtand the Text in *James* both wayes; *He giveth grace to the humble*, that is, he favours and reſpects them, becauſe they are gracious, and he addeth to or increaſeth their graces. We have a promiſe very parallel to theſe of *Eliphaz* and *James* (Pſal. 18. 27.) *Thou wilt ſave the afflicted people, but wilt bring down high looks.* The word which we tranſlate *afflicted*, ſignifies alſo one humbled, and humble, and ſo we might render

externos geſtus ſe prodit. Non enim is ſuperbiæ mos eſt, qui latere aut diſſimulari poſſit. Pined.

the *Psalm*; *Thou shalt save the humbled or the humble people*; and that the humble are to be taken in to partake of the priviledge of that promise, is plain from the opposite Term in the latter clause of the verse, *High looks*; that is, *high lookers God will bring down, but he will save the humble person.* Men of low and mean estates are usually wrapt up with great ones in the same judgment, as the Prophet speaks (*Isa.* 5. 15.) *The mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled; the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled*; there we have the mean man and the mighty man under the same wrathful dispensations of God. The wicked whether high or low, are far from salvation; but God knows how to make a distinction between the humble and the proud, when his wrath makes the greatest confusions in the world. *Humility it is not only a sweet, but a safe, yea a saving grace; we never go under the covert of God so much as when we walk humbly with God; He will save the humble person.*

Vers. 30. **He shall deliver the Island of the Innocent, and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.**

The promise is continued to the man that returns to God, *He shall deliver the Island of the Innocent*; or as some translate, *the Innocent shall deliver the Island.* The sence is the same, *He shall deliver the Island*, that is, the Inhabitants of the Island; all shall be safe, the Island and they that dwell in it. There is another reading of the Text, which yet falls in fully and clearly with this; whereas we read, *He shall deliver the Island of the Innocent*, it may be read, *He shall deliver him that is not Innocent.* Now because this may seem a very wide difference in the translation, we are to consider the ground of it, how this can be made out, that the same Text should be rendred, *the Innocent, and him that is not innocent?* The reason is because the word which we translate, *Island*, is taken by many of the Hebrew Doctors, as also by other translators, only for a negative particle, signifying *not*, or that which is *not.* So the word is rendred (1 *Sam.* 4. 21.) when *Phineas* his wife dying in travel gave the name to her Child, she said, *He shall be called Ichabod, There is no glory*, or, *not glory.* And again (*Prov.* 31. 4.) The word is used in the same sence, *It is not for Kings, O* Lemuel, *to drink wine; strong drink is not for Princes.* So here, *Thou shalt deliver the nocent, or the not Innocent.* And so the whole verse is thus translated, *God, because of or for the pureness of thy hands, will deliver the nocent, or those who are not Innocent.* Whereas we say, *Thou shalt deliver the Island of the Innocent*, or *the Innocent shall deliver the Island.*

Liberabit noxium. Pisc.

Vocula אי *quæ hic redditur insula, idem valet quod* לא *non.* Pisc. *Ego cum veteribus* אי *pro negatione exponerem. Erit; facilis sensus, sc. Deus puritate manuum tuarū etiam nocentem, vel non innocentem liberabit.* Merc.

And it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands.

Eliphaz spake before in the third person, here in the second; 'tis probable he did so purposely to make *Job* understand that he meant him. *It is delivered*, &c. that is, the Island is deliver'd; according to our translation, how is it delivered? *By the pureness of thine hands.* The word notes the most exact purity and cleanness, like that of gold when it is refined in the fire, or of garments that are washed with Soap or Nitre; *By this pureneß it, or the Island, shall be delivered:* and by the *pureness of his hands*, he means the pureness of his actions or administrations. The hand is the instrument of action, and pure or clean hands in Scripture are put for the purity or cleanness of our actions or conversations. While our doings are holy, our works righteous, just, and good, it may be said our hands are pure. And we may refer this especially to prayer, *Thou shalt deliver the Island of the Innocent, and it is delivered by the pureness of thine hands*; that is, thou praying in the purity of thy hands, or with pure hands, shalt deliver the Island of the Innocent, or (according to that other reading) those that are not Innocent. And then, pureness of hands, or *pure hands*, are put as a sign for the thing signified; the gesture, for that which is done in that gesture. The lifting up of hands is a gesture in prayer, and the lifting up of pure hands, notes the purity of prayer (1 *Tim.* 2. 8.) *I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy or pure hands.* Now because 'tis usual in prayer to lift up the hands; and in prayer no hands but morrally pure or holy hands should be lifted up (and so theirs are in Scripture sence whose lives are holy) therefore we may well conceive, that when he saith, *It shall be deliver'd by the pureness of thy hands*; his meaning is this, it shall be delivered by holy prayer, or when thou prayest holily, it shall be delivered. Thus *Eliphaz* doth not only promise *Job*, that himself in person should be lifted up and saved when others are cast down; but that he should be a means of saving and delivering others, and those not some few, or all his own family, but that the whole Nation or Island in general should escape and fare the better for him. *It shall be delivered by the pureness of thy hands.* Learn hence, this great and famous truth;

Manus puræ sunt opera inculpata & quæ crimine vacant Drus.

That, a godly person is a Common good.

He doth good not only within his own walls, or to his own personal relations; but he is a Common good, a publick mercy, a general blessing; whether we consider general blessings either Negatively, or Affirmatively, that is, either as delivering from evil, or as bringing in of good; every way the godly man is a general blessing, he shall deliver the Island of the Innocent, yea those that are not Innocent; the Lord will accept his prayer, and hear his request for the deliverance of a place, though there be many wicked ones in it. *Abraham* (Gen. 18. 32.) had that priviledge granted him, that for his sake and at his suite the Lord would have spared the wicked, the not Innocent, those who were most abominably polluted: if there had been but ten righteous persons there, *Sodome* had been saved from burning at the suit of *Abraham.* Much more will the Lord spare the Island of the Innocent; that is, where there is a great many Innocent ones, at the prayer and request of an *Abraham*, a man eminent in faith and holiness. How often did *Moses* turn away the wrath of God, when it was breaking forth against the people of *Israel* (Psal. 106. 23.) *He said, he would destroy them* (that is, the Lord said it) *had not* Moses *his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath lest he should destroy them.* The Lord had as it were made a decree that he would destroy that people; but *Moses* comes and interposeth for them, and the Lord spared them. We read (*Exod.* 32. 9, 10.) that how the Lord said to *Moses*, *I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people; Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great people.* But did *Moses* accept this offer of advancement upon the ruines of that people? No, he deprecates his own honour, as it follows (*vers.* 11.) *And* Moses *besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord why doth thy wrath wax hot against this people?* &c. Then at *vers.* 14. *The Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.* Thus *Moses* by the pureness of his hands, holy prayer, delivered a Nation that was not Innocent, from consumption in the flames of the Lords provoked jealousie. Again (*Jerem.* 5. 1.) the Prophet is commanded *to run to and fro through the streets of* Jerusalem, *to see and know in the broad places thereof, if he could find a man, if there were any that executed judgment, that sought the truth, and I will pardon it, saith the Lord.* One man should deliver the City that was not Innocent by the pureness of his hands. We see the Lord puts the whole issue upon this, *if thou canst find a man.* But were there not multitudes and throngs of men in *Jerusalem?* Why then was it proposed as a matter of difficulty to find a man there? Doubtless *Jerusalem* was a populous City and was filled with men, but a man so qualified, a man of Justice, a man that sought the truth was hardly to be found there, and therefore *if thou canst find* (such) *a man, I will pardon it, saith the Lord.* How pardon it? There is a twofold pardon; first, a pardon of the guilt of sin; secondly a pardon of the punishment of sin. The Lord, upon the finding out of such a man, would not pardon the guilt of all that were there, nor give them an everlasting pardon; but pardoned they should be as to present punishment and ruine, they should be pardoned or saved from destruction for that time, if such a godly man could be found among them. Godly men save the wicked three wayes.

First, They save them, when by their good Councel and Instruction they turn them from their sins, and bring them to repentance; this is a happy way of saving them. And thus a godly man may save the wicked: every godly Minister of the Gospel is said to save not himself only (but in this sence) those that hear him; because he offers and urgeth upon them the means of salvation (1 *Tim.* 4. 16.)

Secondly,

Secondly, As they may ſave them thus by being a means of their Converſion, ſo they may ſave them by being a means of their Direction; one godly man may ſave a whole Land by his directing Counſel, as well as he ſaveth many by his converting Counſel. Of this *Solomon* ſpeaks clearly (*Eccleſ.* 9.14,15.) *There was a little City, and few men in it, and there came a great King againſt it,* &c. *Now there was found a poor wiſe man in it, and he by his wiſdom delivered the City*; that is, he gave wiſe and wholſom Counſel, which being followed, proved an effectual means for the deliverance of the City.

Haud tamen Deus id ſemper facit, neq; eſt quod quiſquam in hac re certã ei legem imponat, fallitur ergo Eliphaz ſi hoc perpetuũ eſſe putavit. Merc.

Thirdly, A godly man may be a publick good to ſave and deliver others by his Prayers and Interceſſion, by ſeeking the Lord that they may be deliver'd, as the latter branch was opened; he ſaves them by the pureneſs of his hands, lifted up in prayer. Yet we muſt take this with a caution, for we cannot affirm it univerſally, that the righteous have alwayes this priviledge (in the event) to deliver the Iſland or Nation wherein they are. But we may ſay, that this is a priviledge which Saints have often been honoured with, and which none but Saints have been honoured with at any time, to be the Saviours and Deliverers of a people among whom they dwell; for we know the Lord himſelf hath given expreſs Exceptions to this rule (*Jer.* 15. 1.) where he tells the ſtubborn *Jews* by his Prophet, *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people; Caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth; and it ſhall come to paſs if they ſay unto thee, whither ſhall we go forth, thou ſhalt tell them, thus ſaith the Lord, ſuch as are for death, to death; and ſuch as are for the ſword, to the ſword; and ſuch as are for famine, to famine.* When he ſaith, *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me*; ſome may ask, what to do? I anſwer, we are not to take it for a mute ſtanding before the Lord; but a ſtanding before the Lord with earneſt Prayers, Interceſſions, and Supplications, for the ſparing of that people: now ſaith the Lord, though *Moſes* and *Samuel* (who in their generations were eminent godly men, and eminent favourites of God) though theſe ſhould ſtand before me, earneſtly praying for this people, yet *my mind could not be toward them*; that is, I would not ſpare them, nor ſave them from death, ſword, famine, or captivity, no not at their entreaty. And we have a like Inſtance (*Ezek.* 14. 14.) *Though theſe three men,* Noah, Daniel, *and* Job *were in it* (there were but two named in *Jeremy*, but here three, though theſe three men, *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* were in it) *they ſhould but deliver their own ſ[illegible]s by their righteouſneſs, ſaith the Lord God.* They might have the priviledge mentioned by *Eliphaz* in the former verſe, *When men were caſt down, they might ſay, there is a lifting up*, or there is preſervation for us; God will take care of us; but God would not be perſwaded, no, not by *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job*, to ſave the reſt. So that there are caſes wherein the Lord will not hear the Interceſſions of the beſt of men for a ſinful people. The Iſland of the wicked, or of the not Innocent ſhall not be delivered, no, not by the pureneſs of their hands; yet 'tis an experienced truth, that God hath ſpared a people for the ſake of ſome godly found among them; yea the reaſon why the Lord doth not deſtroy the world which lies in wickedneſs, is much, in reſpect of them who walk in holineſs. For were it not (as *Eliſha* told *Jehoram* to his face in reference to good King *Jehoſaphat*, 2 Kings 3. 14.) that God hath regard to their preſence in the world, God would not ſo much as look towards the ungodly, nor ſee them for good. This honour have all the Saints, and how great an honour is it to be a publick good, to be a Saviour to an Iſland, to a Nation? Some indeed are of ſuch narrow ſpirits, that if they may ſave themſelves, and keep their own ſtakes, they care not what becomes of the publick. But as it is a great honour to be active for the ſaving and delivering of a Nation, ſo it is a greater honour to have the ſafety and deliverance of a Nation attributed or given in to us by God himſelf (though not at all by way of deſert, yet) in a way of favour. *Paul* was at Sea with no good company, yet when all looked to be ſwallowed up, *An Angel of God appeared to him, ſaying, Fear not* Paul, *Thou muſt be brought before* Cæſar, *and lo, God hath given thee all them that ſail with thee* (Acts 27. 23, 24.) that is, for thy ſake, or becauſe they are now in thy company, they alſo ſhall eſcape the rage of this tempeſt. They all ow their lives to thee henceforth as well as to me, for *to thee have I given them.* The men of this world might hence take notice of their own folly, who can hardly afford them a good word, or room to live in the world, for whoſe ſake it is that they live. How often do they wiſh and ſeek their deſtruction, for whoſe ſake it is, that themſelves are not deſtroyed? How often do they accuſe the godly, as the troublers of a Nation, as the hinderers of publick good? Whereas they *are indeed a common good, the Chariots and Horſemen*, the Protection and Defence, the Salvation and Deliverance of thoſe States and Nations where they are. The breaches which wicked men make by ſinning, they make up by praying, to turn away the Lords wrath, that they be not conſumed. We read how the Lord complains, that there was *none found to make up the hedge*, to ſtand in the gap when he was coming to deſtroy them (*Ezek.* 22. 30.) And it is ſaid of *Moſes* (*Pſal.* 106. 23.) that *he ſtood before the Lord in the breach, that he ſhould not deſtroy the Iſraelites.* Which phraſe of *ſtanding in the breach* ſeems to bear an alluſion to an Army beſieging a City, who firſt plant their Canon, and make a breach, and then come to the ſtorm. Thus the Lord deals many times with a people, he encamps againſt them, and batters them; he makes ſome breach upon them by troubles and diviſions, and then expects that ſome ſhould ſtand in the breach, and beſeech him not to ſtorm them with the whole Army of his Judgments. And the Lord takes it well when any of the Valiant ones, when any of the Worthies of his *Iſrael* preſent themſelves in the breach, praying with utmoſt importunity, that the Lord would withdraw thoſe evils which threaten to come in at the breach like armed men and lay waſt a Nation.

And foraſmuch as men *of pure hands*, or godly men have this priviledge to be a *common good*, by being the deliverers of Nations from *common evils and calamities*; I ſhall hint ſome few things from it more diſtinctly.

Firſt, We ſee wherein (under God) the ſtrength and ſafety of Kingdoms and Common-wealths doth conſiſt. It is not, ſo much, in the wiſdom of the Counſeller, or in the courage of the Souldier; it is not, ſo much, in Armies at Land, or Navies at Sea; it is not, ſo much, in walled Cities and fortified Caſtles; it is not, ſo much, in union at home, or in Leagues and Confederacies abroad, as it is in the *purity of mens hands*, or in the holineſs of their lives. *Godlineſs is the* Sampſons *lock, wherein the ſtrength of a Nation lyes.* A Heathen could ſay, that *A people were never ſafe by the ſtanding of their walls, while themſelves were falling in their virtues.* It is therefore (if there were nothing better in it) good policy to encourage piety, and to endeavour the encreaſe of a holy Seed in any Nation. For as the Prophet ſpeaks (*Iſa.* 6. 13.) *As a Teil tree and as an Oak whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves, ſo the holy Seed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof.*

Secondly, In this we ſee the honour which God puts upon godly men. What can be greater then this, to be really (though perhaps far from being accounted ſo) the Deliverers and Saviours of their Country? What an honour was it to *Abraham* when God told a King, that he was beholding to *Abraham* for his life, or that that favour muſt be granted to him at the ſuit and as it were ſent him by the hand of *Abraham* (Gen. 20. 7.) *He ſhall pray for thee, and thou ſhalt live.* An honour much like this God put upon *Job* alſo, at the latter end of this Book (*Chap.* 42. 8.) *My ſervant* Job *ſhall pray for you, for him will I accept, leſt I deal with you after your folly.* Such an honour (in ſome degree) have all the Saints.

Thirdly, Let men honour thoſe whom God honours thus; and let the Princes and powers of the world be glad when they hear that they have many ſuch in their Dominions; when ſuch are ſubject to them, as rule with God. It is ſaid of *Xerxes* (the greateſt Monarch in the world in his time) that when *Themiſtocles* came over to him (who was a man Eminent for Wiſdom and Eloquence) that being over-joyed at ſuch a treaſure, he cryed out in his ſleep, *I have got* Themiſtocles *the* Athenian. Spiritual wiſdom renders men a greater treaſure to States, then moral wiſdom can. Surely then they who are ſpiritually wiſe deſerve to be rejoyced in. I am ſure it is not ſafe to let them be diſcouraged by whom our ſafety is eſtabliſhed; much

leſſe is it ſafe to let them fall by whom in their capacity Kingdoms ſtand; leaſt of all, it is ſafe to caſt them down, who (by the rule of divine politicks) *are State-upholders*. Therefore let me ſay this to all *the powers of this world*, do not deſtroy thoſe who have the priviledge to be *Saviours and Deliverers*: Yea, Take heed of deading and ſtraitning their ſpirits in prayer for you; above all, take heed of turning their prayers againſt you. Do not provoke your own Horſemen to fight againſt you, and your own Chariot-wheels to run over you. As theſe are the beſt friends to a Nation, ſo the worſt enemies. Better have many outwardly oppoſing you, then one (upon juſt ground) ſecretly praying, or but complaining to God againſt you. They who have no power at all in their hands, no not ſo much as to help or ſave themſelves, may yet deſtroy many by the *pureneſs of their hands*; that is, they holding up pure hands in prayer, may bring down deſtruction upon many who are wicked, and the adverſaries of Chriſt becauſe their adverſaries. But that which they moſtly do, and that which they moſt of all deſire to do, is, *That Lands and Iſlands may be delivered by the pureneſs of their hands*.

To ſhut up this Point and Chapter, we ſee, *that as the Saints are killed all the day long*, by the wicked world, *for the Lords ſake* (Rom. 8. 36.) that is, becauſe they own the Lord and his wayes: ſo the wicked of the world are ſpared even all the day long, or as often as they are ſpared by the Lord, for the ſake of the Saints; that is, becauſe the Lord owns and approves them and their wayes, and doth therefore give peace to the world, that ſo in their peace they alſo may have peace.

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AMOS.

1 3 454
2 8 2159
9 1755
14 1100
14, 15 1192
3 2 1059
3 835
6 388
6 108
8 108
4 6 283
7 778
6, 8 457
8 410
12 2956
5 8 791
10, 11 1214
13 170
16 201
17 798
18, 19 1990
21 622
6 3 253
3 2112
4, 5, 6 2041
7 1, 2, 3 1541
4, 5 1995
8 661
8 797
8 3, 10 195
5 1453
9 1, 2 296
1 377
1 1053
1 1990
5 774

OBADIAH.

1 3, 4 1934
12 163
12 1818

JONAH.

1 3 2186
17 592
2 8 1476
3 6 139
8 2248
9 549
4 4 41
9 1704

MICAH.

1 3 785
15 1748
16 94, 95
2 6, 7 2019
3 2 298
2 1972
3 1799
4 11 2220
5 1 1526
5 455
6 2 2142
3, 4 2214
6 648
11 1153
15 378
16 2026
7 2 1475
3 244
3 395
5 1825
9 365
16 436
18 48
18 430
18 663
18 841
19 664
19 876

NAHUM.

1 9 1088
15 1429
15 1895
2 7 1622
11, 12 297
12 13
12 1720
3 6 161

HABAK.

1 2, 3 1792
6, 7 84
4 1796
6 192
7 1233
8 598
16 2216
2 2, 3 1355
3 1654
9, 10 1487
12 1566
3 6 809
8 180
8 772
14 369
16 314
17 459
17 573
17 2040

ZEPHAN.

1 12 933
12 957
12 2053
12 2213
2 1, 2 2067
11 1519
11 2132

HAGGAI.

1 6 290
6 2002
6 2271
7 1059
9 295
9 1471
2 4 1513
6, 7 773
14 132
14 1326

ZECHAR.

1 8 335
10 43
10 565
11 1983
12 1588
13 163
15 371
15 923
18, 20 1725
2 5 55
5 653
8 1452
13 695
13 1022
4 7 626
7 767
10 43
10 700
5 1 2175
6, 8, 11 2221
7 1 788
5 2248
7 1533
13 292
8 4, 5 2038
9, 13 267
23 734
23 1772

MALAC.

1	4	697
	4	1144
	4	1987
2	13	1101
	2	497
	7,8	1170
	9	1219
	17	857
3	2	1806
	9	173
4	2	206

MATTH.

1	19	1619
	19	2221
3	7	1963
	9	707
	9	1988
	17	40
4	3	778
	6	473
	9	52
	9	852
	16	186
5	1	173
	8	1268
	19	1612
	22	152
	22	1060
	22	1701
	22	2169
	39	1774
	39	1525
	45	411
	45	780
	45	2215
6	3	1071
	7	1391
	16	413
	24	2055
	25	1503
	26	1966
	33	371
	33	442
7	1	1643
	1	1920
	1	2154
	6	1214
	9,10	1113
	22	551
	22	717
	22	724
	23	167
	23	251
	23	2208
	24	1765
	24,25	2207
	27	2024
8	12	1758
	17	497
	25	282
	25	695
	26	785
	27	87
	29	42
	18	889
9	23	203
10	10	893
	13	1717
	14	1550
	19	1503
	19,20	1924
	21	1817
	25	1187
	30	57
	30	2150
11	42	2161
	5	2043
	16	2038
	16,17	1511
	22	139
	23	1933
	25	1430
	25	1609
	29	361
12	20	1119
	36,37	184
	37	1393
	44	1068
	57	281
13	10,14	1608
	21	368
	42	1554
	44	245
15	20	107
	26	969
16	19	1145
	22,23	149
	25	127
	26	318
18	5	1096
	10	37
	18	2272
	21,22	1773
19	24	1064
	26	127
	28	1351
20	15	107
	15	829
21	19	548
	21	769
	25	1577
22	13	189
	31,32	1746
23	2,3	566
	4	244
	4	395
	5	2245
	8,9	1701
	14	377
	14	2170
	15	1827
	32	2071
24	12	1823
	15	903
	22	587
	22	1317
	24	1475
	25	253
	30	1892
	37	2175
	38	1985
	40,41	457
	50	2176
	51	1266
25	29	1708
	35	820
	36	162
	36	232
26	24	220
	33,35	1638
	38	238
	39	444
	49	2076
	56,58	1777
27	19	620
	25	1569
	38,46	181
	45	777
	46	666

MARK.

2	27	2135
4	38	785
6	2,6	406
	8	893
	4	1510
	16	413
8	38	1775
9	49	389
14	65	854
15	22	1087

LUKE.

1	6	1557
	6	30
	10	28
	19	38
	25	1785
	35	1440
	46	627
	51	414
	68	635
2	30	1888
	34,35	1537
	35	2101
	37	168
4	13	117
	20	1408
	22,23	2103
	23,24	1510
	24	1590
5	8	2211
6	25	467
	25	747
	38	468
7	15	1904
8	14	1952
9	3	893
10	4	821
	9	995
	19	1744
	2,3	1757
	30	160
11	20,46	1845
	31	1876
	48	2071
12	4,5	1913
	19	256
	19	584
	20	213
	20	367
	32	2038
	36,37	2131
	50	1713
13	1	88
	9	665
	26	602
	28	1893
	28	2034
14	12,13	30
	31	1456
15	7	167
	17	576
	17	1642
	32	553
16	3	1095
	9	995
	15	145
	15	885
	15	1261
	29	710
17	4	1773
	4	663
	27	31
18	5	1096
	8	416
	14	322
	31	216
19	41	211
	41,42	1610
	42	75
21	19	1655
	28	1879
	28	2262
	34	89
	34	906
22	28	162
	28	1822
	29,30	1876
	44	121
	61,62	1523
23	24	53
	30	1348
	31	1349
	31	1483
24	37	315
	38	1647
	39,40	1884
	53	168

JOHN.

1	5	430
	11	166
	16	125
	20	190
2	4	74
	19	1897
	23,24	334
	24,25	2099
3	6	954
	14	659
	16	189
	16	282
	19,20	200
	21	195
	24	1542
	30	1120
	35	68
4	42	1272
5	17	397
	22,27	1875
	25,28	1870
	31	1026
	35	1120
	35	1620
6	26	54
	67	1111
7	24	873
	24	1580
	38	549
	39	116
8	5	1784
	13,16	837
	14	1026
	15	1875
	21	1949
	44	79
9	2	123
	2,3	2153
	4	418
	27	488
10	13	589
11	23	1901
	25	1871
	25	1882
	35,37	1882
	55	22
12	19	421
	24	1340
	24	1747
	28	40
	35	1720
13	2	78
	7	331
	7	1039
	33, 36	1578
14	1	2024
	2	1578
	18	433
	21	1274
16	2	1221
	21	1085
	23,24	1561
	30	927
17	1	1073
	1	2182
	3	1765
18	6	1461
	11	444
	37	1824
19	12	2102
	13	1238
	25	1378
	30	1737
20	15	103
	23	663
	25	689
21	18	656

ACTS.

1	15	110
2	2,3	676
	21	1794
	24	1866
	25	1032
	27	1882
	31	168
	42	1517
3	19,20	1877
4	19	266
	28	62
	28	945
	30	61
5	3	78
	10	213
	38,39	1452
	39	765
6	1	1973
	15	1886
8	21	1069
	23	663
	23	1302
9	1	504
	1	1849
10	25	99
12	23	136
13	10	39
	10	418
	18	902
	22	528
	33	1357
	46	563
14	13	93
	16	684
	17	412
	17	1729
15	9	1069
16	25	232
17	3	1321
	18	1017
	25,27	2208
	26	851
	27	429
	28	962
	30	187
	30	684
	30	1042
18	5	1924
20	24	127
	24	241
22	23	168
23	1,2	1526
	6,7	1897
26	9	1907
	28,29	1505
27	23,24	2279
	33	169
28	3	88
	27	429

ROMANS.

1	1	1236
	1	1756
	9	1573
	18	524
	18	1228
	20,26	684
	20	1046
	20	2189
	20	2209

	21,29	2194
	32	1906
2	4	1109
	5	174
	5	1873
	5	1948
	12	680
	14	340
	14	2242
	15	1873
	15	2209
	17	724
	19	272
	23,24	566
3	4	105
	4	1643
	7,8	1217
	19	1559
4	5	688
	18	531
	18,19	1883
	20	825
	21	1274
5	3	219
	4	435
	6,7	539
	14	214
	20	1980
6	20,21	2056
	21	1476
	21	1776
	21	2137
	23	2003
7	9,13	1040
	13	884
	15	1904
	24	907
	25	1489
8	7	757
	13	1913
	15	1350
	19	1128
	26	1562
	31	476
	31	1018
	31	1276
	32	522
	32	664
	32	1543
	35	1634
	35,36	469
	36	349
	36	1249
9	11,12	1219
	16	2203
	18	885
	19	910
	20	756
	20	1410
	22	2031
	23	550
10	18	795
11	11	1601
	13	627
	17,18	1782
	20	252
	20	1410
	32	1146
	33	402
	34	2080
12	14	176
	15	2222
	19	1507
	20	1508
13	8	1968
14	3	1783
	3	1875
	4	1874
	6	187
	7	2137
	11	656
15	15	1212
	30	205
16	18	1612
	18	49
	20	2203
	20	1744

I. COR.

1	21	419
	25	425
	25	834
	28	1750
2	4,14	813
	12	940
3	2	578
	13	1761
	19	423
4	4	323
	4	340
	4,5	1874
	4	1875
	5	1188
	5	1920
	8	556
	8	1449
	8,10	1106
	9	1625
	11	2158
	13	1761
	21	1785
5	2	226
6	2	1876
	20	173
	20	556
	20	2132
7	5	25
	20	586
	23	2054
	30	76
	30	1534
	31	256
8	31	479
	1	569
	1	1061
	2	560
	2	707
	4	625
	4	1977
	11	1212
	11	1498
9	9	633
	22	515
10	3,4	1591
	11	689
	11	1619
	12	1784
	13	71
	13	249
	13	906
	16	57
11	7	194
	7	1799
	14	1110
	16	755
	31	1873
12	9	1254
13	2	769
	3,4	2171
	9	305
	12	211
	12	1049
	12	1887
14	1	1902
	14,15	1927
	24,25	101
	36, 37	1106
15	8	227
	12	1871
	16,17	1871
	26	241
	28	1895
	32	602
	34	1763
	37	288
	37,38	1885
	40	316
	50	1885
	53	597
	53	1897
	54	956
	55	468
16	13	1454
	22	1872
	26	1418

II. COR.

1	3	866
	3,4	1402
	17,20	552
	23	1573
	24	1398
2	6,7	1784
	7	2178
	7,11	2024
3	2	1858
	6	92
	10	325
	17	2262
	18	528
4	3,4	429
	6	778
	7	343
	8,9	285
	12,17	441
	16	133
	17	174
	17	632
	17	2008
	17	2262
	18	2061
5	1	343
	1,2	908
	4	104
	4	1885
	5	1603
	7	1196
	7	1887
	9	1575
	10	1897
	11	507
	11	1073
	14,15	1866
	14	1924
	15	2137
	16	1220
	21	478
	21	1272
6	4	1025
	10	157
	10	256
	16,17	2184
7	1	1513
	6	1403
	10	1553
	10	2019
	11	1703
8	9	128
9	2	1662
	6	288
10	4	305
	4,5	423
	12	754
11	1,19	2015
	5	1108
	5	1203
	14	335
	20	1525
	24	1542
12	1	310
	2	217
	9,10	1638
	10	219
	10	434
13	8	391
	8	1506
	12	800

GALAT.

1	16	317
	16	1925
2	9	776
	11	66
3	1	1405
	20	1587
4	4	1311
	5	116
	13,14	130
	29	1115
5	3	1044
	12	231
	15	1917
6	1	265
	1	268
	1	1785
	2	163
	2	2021
	3	755
	7,8	288
	14	219

EPHES.

1	21	37
2	2	77
	2	90
	10	2140
	12	90
	13	373
3	8	227
	8	813
	13	749
	18	1051
	18,19	897
4	10	1578
	13	1083
	18	902
	23	1926
5	8	185
	14	560
	15	177
	15	1905
	15	417
	18	1150
	18	1463
	27	1519
6	2	2092
	12	10
	12	57
	12	507
	19	174
	28	34

PHILIP.

1	9	2181
	23	241
	23	908
	25	1714
	28	556
2	5	48
	7	2169
	9,10	1876
	12	1070
	15	1080
	16	524
	27	1545
	27	962
3	2	674
	8,9	1935
	19	1776
	19	1462
	20	225
	20	1898
	21	1886
	21	597
4	1	2014
	5	76

COLLOS.

1	15,18	1739
	18	1357
	18	1871
	20	340
	24	219
2	2	1273
	15	556
	17	708
3	3	214
	3	1249
	11	235
	19,20	1600
4	6	516
	6	1389

I. THES.

2	5	1573
3	3	1538
	3,4	1630
	8	2032
	16	1360
4	3	76
5	6	195
	17	34
	18	111
	20	446
	23	66

II. THES.

1	10	1761
	10	950
2	2	76
	2	303
	3	282
	3	2199
	6,7	2202
	8	1471
	11	1022
	11	1157
	19	2014
3	10,12	585
	10	1974
	12	1750

I. TIM.

1	9	469
2	5	1589
	8	1562
	8	2277
	14	1311
3	3	462
	4,5	481
4	10	1866
	12	446
	16	867
5	1	1837
6	1	236
	1,2	1832
	6	105
	7	104
	9	1466
	16	338
	17	107
	17	76
	19	2138

II. TIM.

1	10	1592
	12	1861
	16	1777
2	3	521
	15	398
	15	515
	19,20	2206
	26	45
	26	77
3	1	1867
	2	1828
	9	1156
4	16	1822
	17	297
	17	1790

TITUS.

1	7	462
	10,11	676
	13	2013
	15	1326
2	16	1420
	9	811
	9	1410
	9	1830
	15	446
3	10	563
	14	1394

HEBR.

1	1	368
	3	637
	3	1294

	5	37	
	6, 7	1811	
	7	82	
	14	38	
	14	332	
2	8	1801	
	10, 15	871	
	11	1862	
	14	1862	
	17	1588	
	17	1590	
3	8	163	
	8	1600	
	8	1602	
	11	573	
	12	32	
	13	393	
	19	219	
	19	1462	
4	1	2014	
	13	935	
	13	1270	
	15	498	
5	2	1847	
	7	667	
	7	1795	
	12	1139	
	14	429	
	14	1109	
	14	1737	
6	5	1266	
	7, 8	558	
	11	1273	
	18	1662	
7	22	340	
	25	1866	
8	5	708	
9	8	116	
	24	1587	
	27	16	
	27	234	
	27	1313	
	28	1888	
10	1, 2	871	
	4, 10	649	
	9	1607	
	14	6	
	22	1563	
	22	1273	
	24	1601	
	26	1453	
	26, 31	892	
	30	1479	
	31	62	
	32, 33	1771	
	34	164	
	34	1637	
	36	1654	
11	1	564	
	1	1588	
	3	1133	
	4	710	
	5	2074	
	7	253	
	7	2175	
	8	1196	
	10	346	
	17, 19	1883	
	21	2041	
	24	800	
	35	1622	
	36	233	
12	1	361	
	2	360	
	4	1565	
	5	96	
	5	446	
	6	268	
	10	442	
	14	529	
	14	1910	
	15	1301	
	16	126	
	29	1807	
	29	2232	
13	2, 3	1846	
	3	163	
	8	706	
	9	1082	
	9	1910	
	12	2232	
	13	1528	

JAMES.

1	2	469
	3	1131
	4	1655
	6, 7	824
	10	2276
	17	105
	17	542
	17	624
	17	708
	19	1018
	19	1699
	27	163
	27	636
	27	2173
2	2, 3	926
	10	1558
	14, 15	539
	15	258
	15, 16	2022
	15, 16	2165
	18	278
	20	1060
3	1	1131
	3, 4, 5	1508
4	1	615
	1	1807
	3	1561
	6	2276
	9, 10	142
	12, 13	2270
	14	127
	16	691
5	1, 2	1309
	13, 14	130
	17	411

I. PET.

1	6	445
	6, 7	1707
	7, 8	1888
	8	2258
	10	2026
2	1	1406
	11	1454
	22	660
	24	1881
3	7	1081
	7	1889
	19	1146
	21	1909
4	3	674
	12, 13	1630
	14	111
	14	468
	19	70
	19	395
	19	1249
5	4	1803

II. PET.

1	4	48
	4	527
	4	754
2	9	2113
	12	393
	12	1726
	18	568
	20	1183
3	3	1990
	8	44
	8	755
	9	931
	16	402

I. JOHN.

1	1	1425
2	1	30
	1	112
	1	1557
	3, 13	1272
	4, 5	1023
	11, 12	1139
	12	664
	14	1638
	16	363
	19	1635
	20	390
	20	1039
	21	1208
	24	390
3	2	211
	2	800
	2	1887
	9	1387
	9	1505
	18	1822
	20	1260
4	5	1413
	18	10
	18	252
	18	1084
	18	1273
5	8	800
	8	940
	13	1273

JUDE.

	6	42
	10	1763
	12	552
	13	786
	15	233
	16	568
	17	1237
	22	516
	22, 23	559
	22, 23	1499

REVEL.

1	7	1868
	7	1892
	18	1865
	14	923
2	9	1027
	10	79
	10	134
	10	1772
	20	2168
	24	1050
3	2	9
	3	1145
	9	100
	9	1097
	9	1943
	14	1739
4	6	1117
	6	670
5	8, 9	470
6	9, 10	218
	10	70
7	9	407
	9	2150
9	11	132
	11	1737
	12	282
11	8	2032
	11	1236
12	1	68
	1	1803
	1	2043
	16	808
13	8	1588
14	3	851
	7	1915
	10	2076
	13	215
	13	288
	13	1337
	13	1949
15	3	400
16	9	131
	15	304
	20	773
17	8	1750
	16	1516
	2, 3	1711
18	4	1429
	6	291
	7	771
	7	1118
	7	1516
	7	2170
	7	2206
	7, 8	1981
	8	89
	21	664
	22	195
20	2, 3	1155
21	19	346
	27	289
22	8	99
	11	685
	11	1635
	17	1878
	18	2081

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